

**RECASTING THE CHINESE EMPIRE:
QING CHINA AND CHOSŎN KOREA, 1610S–1910S**

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RECASTING THE CHINESE EMPIRE: QING CHINA AND CHOSŎN KOREA, 1610S–1910S

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My dissertation examines the transformation of China from a pre-modern cosmopolitan empire into a modern multiethnic sovereign state between the seventeenth and twentieth centuries. I explore, in particular, Qing China's changing relations with Chosŏn Korea over that period, which both reflected and contributed to shifts in the nature of the Chinese polity. It aims to explore the unique trajectory of China's changes within the context of international relations in East Asia and the world from the early seventeenth century onward. It reconstructs the narrative of Qing China's Zongfan (tributary) relations with Chosŏn Korea (1392–1910) by re-evaluating conventional scholarly appraisals of the following four questions: (1) when the Qing (1636/1644–1912) first identified itself with "China"—the Central Kingdom, or *Zhongguo*—in the Chinese world; (2) how Qing China built an imperial enterprise and governed its expansive Eurasian empire in a multiethnic and multicultural context; (3) whether the China-centric Zongfan system was thoroughly replaced by the treaty port system; and (4) whether China exercised imperialism in Central Asia in the eighteenth century and in Chosŏn Korea in the late nineteenth century. The dissertation offers new explanations of these issues by using rich Chinese, Manchu, Korean, Japanese, and English historical archives.

First, I argue that the Manchu regime had gained a political identity as "China" by claiming centrality in the Chinese world already in the 1630s. I further argue that the Manchu regime strengthened this "China" identity through its intensive practice of the Zongfan arrangement with Chosŏn Korea from 1637 to 1643, a time *before* the Manchus crossed the Great Wall to conquer the Ming's territories and march westward. This pre-1644 redefinition of the Manchu regime in light of its Zongfan relations with Chosŏn, against the time-honored Chinese orthodox and politico-cultural background of the civilized–barbarian distinction, helped lay the foundation for it later to position itself as the exclusive civilized center of the Chinese world.

Second, I demonstrate that as the Qing built a gigantic Eurasian empire and a China-centric cosmopolitan order in the eighteenth century, it used its Zongfan relationship with Chosŏn as a yardstick for managing its external relations with other political entities. I term the Qing–Chosŏn relationship the "Chosŏn Model" because of its prototypical status. Through this model, the Qing accomplished its prolonged process of institutionalizing its self-identification as the civilized Central Kingdom and "Heavenly Dynasty," on the one hand, and its identification of Chosŏn as well as other subordinate countries of the Qing as "countries of barbarians." This dual institutionalization demonstrates that the Qing and Chosŏn legitimated each other through the transformation of their relations, and on this basis acquired mutually constitutive political identities in the China-centric world framework. Viewed from this perspective, the Chinese empire under the Qing manifested itself in two different dimensions, which could explain the transformations of both China and its subordinate

countries in the late imperial and modern times.

Third, I put forward a new analytical framework for understanding the unprecedented changes of the Zongfan system in the late nineteenth century, when both Qing China and Chosŏn Korea were introduced to the treaty port system and international law, which, imported from the West, regarded the two as coequal sovereign states. I argue that the Zongfan system at the time consisted in two co-existing and correlative dual diplomatic systems, including what I term the “outer dual system” and the “inner dual system.” The two systems related Qing China, its “outer *fan*,” and Western powers in different yet similar relationships of reciprocity. This new analytical framework also demonstrates that the Qing did not exercise imperialism in Korea in the late nineteenth century. Meanwhile, I point out that the Zongfan system was only partly destroyed by the Sino–Japanese War of 1894–1895. Rather, this system persisted in an altered form, crossing the 1911 and 1949 divides, into the contemporary era. The historical legacies bequeathed by the Chinese empire under the Qing have been acting as a vehicle for China’s transformation into a multiethnic modern sovereign state and for China’s maintenance of political legitimacy and unification within the post-1949 Chinese state.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Yuanchong Wang was born in January 1979 in Zhaoyuan, Shandong province, China. Growing up in a small village in Zhaoyuan in the 1980s, he experienced the last days of the production-team system and witnessed the unprecedented modernization of Chinese rural life and demise of traditional local cultural practices on the Shandong peninsula. He received his elementary education in his village and his middle school and high school education in the town of Zhaoyuan, where he successfully passed the Chinese National Higher Education Entrance Examination in 1998 and was admitted to Shandong University in Jinan, Shandong. After receiving a B.A. in history from Shandong University in 2002, he matriculated in the Department of History at Peking University to pursue an M.A. degree in history, where, under the guidance of Haijian Mao, he began to focus on modern Chinese history and modern China's foreign relations. At Peking University he received more specialized training in the discipline of history and started intensive archival research in Beijing, which laid the groundwork for his academic career. From March 2005 to March 2006, he studied the Korean language in the Korean Language Institute of Yonsei University in Seoul, South Korea, as a fellow of the Korea Foundation. After being awarded an M.A. degree in history from Peking University in 2006, he commenced his studies at the university as a Ph.D. student in the history program for a year, before joining the Ph.D. program in the Department of History at Cornell University in 2007. At Cornell University, he focuses on late imperial and modern China, modern Sino-Korean relations, and modern East Asian international relations history, under the guidance of his advisor and Special Committee chair Chen Jian, and the two other members of the committee, Sherman Cochran and Julien Victor Koschmann. After passing his qualifying examinations in 2010, he spent a year conducting archival research in Seoul, South Korea, as a visiting scholar and fellow of the Korea Foundation at Yonsei University. Then, the following year he conducted another year of archival research at the University of Tokyo in Tokyo, Japan, as a visiting scholar and fellow of the Japan Foundation. His academic training at Cornell University and two years of archival research in East Asia have stimulated him to contribute new perspectives to certain historiographical debates. He has been married to his wife Na Liu since 2007, and the couple gave birth to a daughter, Amber Yujia Wang, in 2013.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

This dissertation follows the Pinyin Romanization system for Chinese, Möllendorff for Manchu, McCune–Reischauer for Korean, and Hepburn for Japanese. The abbreviation “Ch.” means Chinese, “Ma.” means Manchu, “K.” refers to Korean, and “J.” refers to Japanese.

Abbreviations Used in Notes

<i>B. P. P.</i>	<i>British Parliamentary Papers</i> . London.
<i>FHAC</i>	<i>Zhongguo diyi lishi dang’anguan</i> (The First Historical Archives of China), Beijing.
<i>FO 17</i>	<i>Foreign Office Record Group 17, China Correspondence</i> . Public Record Office, London.
<i>FRUS</i>	<i>Foreign Relations of the United States</i> . Washington, D.C., U.S.A.
<i>GXZP</i>	<i>Guangxu chao zhupi zouzhe</i> (The palace memorials with Emperor Guangxu’s imperial instructions). Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1996.
<i>HKMS</i>	<i>Kuhan’guk oegyo munsŏ</i> (The records of foreign affairs of the old Korea). Seoul: Koryŏ taehakkyo ch’ulp’anbu, 1965–1969.
<i>JJCZ</i>	<i>Qingdai gongzhongdang zouzhe ji junjichu dang zhejian</i> (The palace memorials of the Forbidden City and the Grand Council), in Guoli gugong bowuyuan (National Palace Museum), Taipei.
<i>LFZZ</i>	<i>Junjichu hanwen lufu zouzhe</i> (The Chinese copies of palace memorials of Grand Council), in <i>FHAC</i> , Beijing.
<i>LHZQJ</i> (1997)	<i>Li Hongzhang quanji</i> (Complete collection of Li Hongzhang). Haikou, Hainan: Hainan chubanshe, 1997, reprinted.
<i>LHZQJ</i> (2008)	<i>Li Hongzhang quanji</i> (Complete collection of Li Hongzhang). Hefei, Anhui: Anhui jiaoyu chubanshe, 2008.
<i>LKSS</i>	<i>Neige like shishu</i> (Chronicle of the Ministry of Rituals censorate section of Grand Secretariat), in <i>FHAC</i> , Beijing.
<i>MWLF</i>	<i>Junjichu manwen lufu zouzhe</i> (The Manchu copies of palace memorials of Grand Council), in <i>FHAC</i> , Beijing.
<i>NHGB</i>	<i>Nihon gaikō bunsho</i> (Documents on Japanese foreign policy). Tokyo,

Japan.

- QJZRH* *Qingji zhong ri han guanxi shiliao* (Historical materials pertaining to the relations between China, Japan and Korea in the late Qing). Taipei, 1972.
- QSCJ* *Qinshi fengming qianlai ciji chaoxian guowang mufei juan* (The imperial envoys came to Chosŏn to express emperor's condolence on king's mother Dowager Cho). In "Zhu chaoxian shiguan dang, Yuan Shikai" (The section regarding Yuan Shikai of archives of Chinese legation to Chosŏn), no. 01-41-016-08. Archives of Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, Taipei.
- WJZA* *Neige waijiao zhuan'an, chaoxian* (Diplomatic categories of Grand Secretariat about Chosŏn), in *FHAC*, Beijing.
- WLGS* *Qing ruguanqian yu chaoxian wanglai guoshu huibian, 1619–1643* (Collections of sovereign letters between the Qing and Chosŏn, 1619–1643). Taipei, 2000.
- YSFHHB* *Yingshi majiaerni fanghua dang'an shiliao huibian* (The collection of archives on the Macartney embassy to China). Beijing, 1996.
- ZCSLHB* *Qingdai zhongchao guanxi dang'an shiliao huibian* (Collections of archives on Sino–Korean relations in the Qing period). Beijing, 1996.
- ZCSLXB* *Qingdai zhongchao guanxi dang'an shiliao xubian* (Continuing collections of archives on Sino–Korean relations in the Qing period). Beijing, 1998.
- ZLGXXB* *Qingdai zhongliu guanxi dang'an xubian* (The second collection of archives on Sino–Ryukyu relations under the Qing dynasty). Beijing, 1994.
- ZRJSSL* *Qing guangxu chao zhongri jiaoshe shiliao* (Historical materials on Sino–Japanese negotiations in Guangxu period of the Qing). Beijing, 1932.

CHINESE AND KOREAN REIGN PERIODS, 1600–1911

China (Late Ming and the Qing)			Korea (Late Chosŏn)		
* Wanli	萬曆	1573–1620	Kwanghaegun	光海君/광해군	1609–1622
Tianming	天命	1616–1626			
* Taichang	泰昌	1620–1621			
* Tianqi	天啟	1621–1627	Yinjo	仁祖/인조	1623–1649
Tiancong	天聰	1627–1643			
* Chongzhen	崇禎	1628–1644	Hyojong	孝宗/효종	1649–1659
Shunzhi	順治	1644–1661	Hyŏngjong	顯宗/현종	1660–1674
Kangxi	康熙	1662–1722	Sukchong	肅宗/숙종	1675–1720
Yongzheng	雍正	1723–1735	Gyŏngjong	景宗/경종	1721–1724
Qianlong	乾隆	1736–1795	Yŏngjo	英祖/영조	1725–1776
Jiaqing	嘉慶	1796–1820	Chŏngjo	正祖/정조	1777–1800
Daoguang	道光	1821–1850	Sunjo	純祖/순조	1801–1834
Xianfeng	咸豐	1851–1861	Hŏnjong	憲宗/헌종	1835–1849
Tongzhi	同治	1862–1874	Ch'ŏlchong	哲宗/철종	1850–1863
Guangxu	光緒	1875–1908	Kojong	高宗/고종	1864–1907
Xuantong	宣統	1909–1911	Sunjong	純宗/순종	1908–1910

Note: The Chinese reign titles with asterisk are those of the Ming dynasty.

INTRODUCTION

Revisiting the “Chinese Empire” through the Lens of Sino–Korean Zongfan Relations under the Qing

On May 23, 1618, a band of furious Bohemian Protestants threw two Catholic royal governors out of the window of Hradčín castle in Prague to show their discontent over the policies of Ferdinand of Styria, the king of Bohemia appointed by the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. This incident, known as the Defenestration of Prague, marked the beginning of the Thirty Years’ War in Europe.¹ Sixteen days before the Bohemians revolted, Nurhaci, the khan of the Houjin founded by the Manchus in 1616 in Manchuria, rebelled against the ruling regime of the Chinese empire—the Great Ming (1368–1644)—and started their own thirty years’ war, with the Ming. Both Europe and China were undergoing epoch-making transformations of their own worlds. When the two wars ended in the 1640s, a new principle of international relations came into being with the demise of the Holy Roman Empire and began permeating into political entities in Europe. In China, the Manchu-ruled Great Qing (1636/1644–1912) vigorously replaced the Ming and embraced the Chinese conventional framework of international relations based on Chinese cosmopolitanism to reinvent the Chinese empire.

Just as the war spread quickly from Bohemia to other countries in Europe, the war between the Houjin and the Ming spread rapidly from Manchuria to Chosŏn Korea. Since the 1390s, Chosŏn (1392–1910) had maintained a Zongfan (a.k.a. tributary) relationship with the Ming for more than two centuries. In the bilateral framework, Chosŏn served as a loyal subordinate to the Ming and its king as a faithful subject to the Chinese emperor

¹ See, for example, Mitchell B. Garrett, *European History, 1500–1815*, 241-243; S. H. Steinberg, *The ‘Thirty Years War’ and the Conflict for European Hegemony, 1600–1660*, 36; Josef. V. Polišenský, *War and Society in Europe, 1618–1648*, 55-57.

who claimed to be the “Son of Heaven” (Ch. *tianzi*). Twenty years before Nurhaci revolted, Chosŏn was rescued by the Ming from an aggressive Japanese invasion, an event which made the country even more committed to the Ming. In 1619 Chosŏn sent forces to Manchuria to help the Ming attack the Manchus, but its involvement led to two fierce Manchu invasions in 1627 and 1636. In early 1637, the Manchus forced Chosŏn to accept terms of submission, through which the Manchu regime, with a new reign-title of the Great Qing since 1636, officially established a Zongfan relationship with Chosŏn that would last for 258 years, until 1895 when this relationship was violently terminated by the Sino–Japanese War. The establishment of the Zongfan relationship between the two regimes was a watershed event in the history of the Qing’s prodigious enterprise of remaking the Chinese world since the 1630s.

Although the Manchus did not cross the Great Wall to take over Beijing until 1644, the Manchu regime strategically initiated its contest with the Ming for the legitimate status of being the Central Kingdom by employing the shared politico-cultural discourse embedded in the Zongfan norms at least from the 1630s, rather than from 1644 as scholars have commonly believed. In the bilateral Zongfan framework after 1637, the Qing, who had been treated both by Chosŏn and the Ming as benighted “barbarians” (*yi*), replaced the Ming as the “Central Kingdom”—China, or *Zhongguo* in Chinese²—which was the *sine qua non* for its new identification as “civilized.” Simultaneously, Chosŏn, long identifying itself as the civilized “Little China” (Ch. *xiao Zhonghua*; K. *so Junghwa*) in the Ming-centric Zongfan world, was gradually converted by the Qing into a prototypical “outer subordinate”—*waifan* (outer *fan*) or *shuguo* (subordinate country) in

² The three terms of “China,” “the Central Kingdom,” and “Zhongguo” are interchangeable in this dissertation.

Chinese—thus falling into the category of “barbarians” on the periphery of the *new* Central Kingdom. This reverse hierarchical framework was a revolutionary transformation, allowing the Qing to position itself within the pedigree of the Central Kingdom against the long-lasting historical and politico-cultural background of the “civilized–barbarian distinction” (Ch. *huayi zhi bian*; K. *hwa-i ūi chai*). By entering the pantheon of the Central Kingdom, the Qing began seeking the “orthodox legitimacy” (Ch. *mingfen*, or *zhengtong*; K. *myōngbun*; J. *meibun*, i.e., name and status, the universal ideological, moral, and ethnical rationale behind the legitimate status of a political entity in the Chinese world) in order to support, consolidate, and display its new identity as the exclusive civilized center of “all-under-Heaven” (Ch. *tianxia*) and the unique agency of the “Mandate of Heaven” (Ch. *tianming*).

In practice, the Zongfan arrangement and the Qing’s new identity were substantiated by the intensive contacts between the Qing and Chosŏn from 1637 to 1643, from which the Qing developed a mature model for managing its relations with its newly conquered political entities. We term this model the “Chosŏn Model” (Ch. *Chaoxian shili*),³ a pattern by which a country or a political entity could follow Chosŏn into the Qing-centric Zongfan system primarily by receiving imperial investitures and norms from the Qing, adopting the reign-title of the Qing to count dates, and sending emissaries and tribute to the Qing. The rationale for this model was to propagate the embracement of the

³ This term is in Gao Hongzhong’s memorial to Hongtaiji in 1630, in which Gao suggested that the Manchu regime “follow the Chosŏn Model to receive the Ming’s investiture and to use the reign-title of the Ming to count the date” (Ch. *bi Chaoxian shili, qing feng wangwei, cong zhengshuo*). See *Ming Qing shiliao* (Historical documents on the Ming dynasty and the Qing dynasty), series 3, vol. 1, 45. After 1644, the Qing followed this model to handle its relations with other countries, see *Qinding daqing huidian* (The collected statutes of the Great Qing, imperially ordained) (1899), vol. 39, 10b. For Ryukyu, see *Qinding libu zeli* (The regulations and cases of the Ministry of Rituals, imperially ordained) (1844), vol. 173, 6b, 10a; for Vietnam, see *ibid.*, vol. 174, 8a, 11a, 13b; for Laos, see *ibid.*, vol. 175, 5b, 6a; for Thailand, see *ibid.*, vol. 176, 6b, 8a.

Qing as the exclusive civilized center of the world with the supreme political and cultural position, replacing the old Ming-centric with a new Qing-centric Zongfan order.

The Qing–Chosŏn Zongfan relationship was thus far more than a part of the long-lasting Sino–Korean Zongfan history; it was indeed the final part of this history. Rather, it buttressed the rationale of the entire Zongfan system in the late imperial era, which kept the Chinese empire informed and transformed on the periphery when the empire was remade at the core by the Manchu regime. The consensus on the Qing’s Zongfan system has been that the Qing simply adopted the Ming’s Zongfan mechanism. This assumption has led scholars to the neglect of the Qing’s sedulous efforts to reconstruct the system in a unique way, drawing inspiration from its relationship with its outer *fan*, such as Chosŏn, that did not become a part of Chinese territory after the fall of the Qing in 1912. This neglect has further caused scholars to underappreciate the critical relationship between the Qing’s painstaking efforts to construct the Qing-centric Zongfan system and their earnest attempts to define the identities of both the Qing and its outer *fan*. Research on the Qing’s rise as a massive empire has adopted an intellectual framework that is delineated by the Chinese nation formed *after* the end of the Qing, in which nationhood is correlated with China’s national borders after 1912, in particular 1949. Employing the post-1949 borders as a framework for exploring the Qing’s post-1644 expansion, however, scholars cannot grasp the vital role that the Qing’s relationship with its outer *fan*—in particular the first Confucian outer *fan*, Chosŏn—played in institutionalizing the entire Zongfan system and creating the Qing’s politico-cultural identity as a *Chinese* empire.

As the Qing occupied Beijing in 1644, continued to conquer inner China proper,

and marched west and southwest, it exploited the Chosŏn Model as a handy soft-power weapon to consolidate its new position as the civilized Central Kingdom, possessing the source of legitimacy for other political entities in the Sinocentric world. By institutionally exploiting the Chosŏn Model, as Chapter 2 will demonstrate, Qing China converted Chosŏn and other countries or polities into “subordinate countries of foreign barbarians” (Ch. *waiyi shuguo*; Ma. *tulergi gurun*) on its periphery. Once its identification as the civilized center of “all-under-Heaven” was established by the highly institutionalized norms of these hierarchical Zongfan relationships, the Qing was able to succeed the Ming in the dynastical lineage as Zhongguo and the “Heavenly Dynasty” (Ch. *tianchao*), the possessor of the orthodox legitimacy. At the same time, Qing China became the only mechanism for Chosŏn and other outer *fan* to pursue their own orthodox legitimacy, thus ensuring their domestic governance and stability and their status in the big and patriarchic Qing China-centric family.

For the Qing, taking over Beijing in 1644 was not sufficient to secure its legitimate governance as the ruler of Zhongguo. Challenging the Qing’s power, the Southern Ming (1644–1662) emerged in South China, just as the Southern Song (1127–1279) had done after the Northern Song (960–1127) was conquered in 1127 by the Jin (1115–1234), which was founded by the Jurchens, the Manchus’ ethnic ancestors. If the Southern Ming has been able to endure as long as the Southern Song had done, Chinese history since 1644 would have been completely different. Yet the vigor of the Manchu Eight Banners, along with the feebleness of the Southern Ming regime, excluded this scenario. In addition to its military power, the Qing significantly enhanced its orthodox legitimacy as Zhongguo through the Chosŏn Model during the steady growth of the

Qing-centric Zongfan order after 1644, which stabilized its rule over its vast conquered lands and population. Moreover, along with its rapid expansion into Inner Asia, the Qing adroitly applied the Chosŏn Model to the political entities in those areas, progressively incorporating them into its territory as outer *fan* in the big Qing-centric family. By the end of the eighteenth century, the Qing had accomplished its construction of a new imperial order within and without its multiethnic and multicultural Eurasian empire by substantially defining itself as Zhongguo and the Heavenly Dynasty.

China underwent another profound transformation in the nineteenth century, when European powers encountered the Chinese Zongfan world in their contacts with such outer *fan* as Annam (Vietnam), Ryukyu, and Chosŏn. These powers were represented by Britain, which had been institutionally “barbarianized” by Qing China in the 1760s—that is, Britain was termed “a country of barbarians” on China’s periphery by the Chinese imperial codes and diplomatic discourse, as the well-known Macartney mission to China in 1793 illustrated. In the nineteenth century, these European powers successfully changed their image and status vis-à-vis China through gunboat diplomacy and unequal treaties, promulgating the treaty port system in the local countries. In the new setting, China, China’s outer *fan*, and the European powers were theoretically put on an equal footing in terms of their sovereignty under international law. Yet the newly imported political and diplomatic discourse could not change the nature of the China-centric hierarchical relationship between China and its outer *fan*. Both sides of the Zongfan hierarchy still needed to acquire orthodox legitimacy to maintain their legitimate status in the Chinese world.

As a result, in their contacts with China’s outer *fan* in the late nineteenth century,

the Western powers were confused by the nebulous nature of the Zongfan mechanism and were constantly directed to negotiations with Beijing, the only place where diplomacy with outsiders could be conducted. The risky disputes emerging from China's periphery were thus transferred to the center of the empire through Zongfan tenets, where they converged as an accumulative force to trigger certain reforms within China that in return spread to, and deeply influenced, the periphery. This model seems similar to the relationship between a metropolis of a European power and its overseas colonies of the day, but it possessed different structural fundamentals in the way in which legitimacy was mutually constituted within the Chinese world, as will be elaborated in later chapters. Among all the manifold and interwoven disputes in the second half of the nineteenth century, the most significant arose in Chosŏn, the prototypical outer *fan* of the Great Qing since 1637. This dispute led both Chosŏn and China into a series of legal quagmires and finally to the irredeemable end of their Zongfan relationship in 1895, fifteen years before both states ceased to exist in the early 1910s.

This dissertation suggests that, from the early seventeenth to early twentieth centuries, the process unleashed by the Qing's extraordinary efforts at exploiting and adjusting its Zongfan relations with Chosŏn propelled China's transformation from a cosmopolitan empire informed by the politico-cultural ideology of "all-under-Heaven" into a multiethnic sovereign state as a member of the "family of nations." The Qing reinvented the Chinese empire by using its Zongfan relationship with Chosŏn as a yardstick for managing and reconfiguring its foreign relations with other political entities, revealing that the macro-transformation of the Qing's self-identity in the Chinese world was deeply connected with its micro-transformation within the Sino-Korean bilateral

political arrangement. This prolonged transformation began in the 1610s when the Manchu regime rapidly rose from Manchuria and began reshuffling the political order of the Chinese world. In the second half of the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries, the Qing became a multiethnic and multicultural Eurasian empire and, shadowed by its former identity as a state of “barbarians,” made great efforts to pursue “Chineseness” in order to enhance its legitimacy as a *Chinese* empire in the pedigree of “China”/ Zhongguo. To that end, the Qing took full advantage of the political and cultural resources of the Zongfan system to regulate the discourse and norms of a Chinese empire, particularly in its perennial contacts with its first Confucian subordinate country and the “Little China,” Chosŏn. In the long nineteenth century, the Chinese empire under the Qing experienced another great transformation of its political order, which was crystalized by the significant reconfiguration of China’s relations with its outer *fan*, prominently Chosŏn, where the empire began to collapse. Qing China fell in 1912 as a result of the Revolution of 1911, yet certain principles underlining the Chinese empire and Zongfan system survived the 1911 divide and persisted in altered forms in the Chinese approaches toward the outside world in the twentieth century and beyond.

The Zongfan System: Its Origins, Ideals, and Practices in the Late Imperial Period

We adopt the Chinese term “Zongfan,” rather than its oft-cited English equivalent “tributary,” to refer to the relationship between the Ming or the Qing, as well as their predecessors, as “China” in history, on the one hand, and the countries that regarded the Ming or the Qing as “China,” from which they sought orthodox legitimacy to rule over the lands on behalf of the Chinese emperor, on the other. The term “Zongfan” encompasses two sub-terms, *zong* and *fan*. *Zong* refers to the royal lineage of the Son of

Heaven, who resided in the Central Kingdom with absolute patriarchal authority and exclusive orthodox legitimacy as the human agent of the Mandate of Heaven. *Fan* originally meant the clan(s) of the royal family who established outposts on China's borders, where the rulers' legitimate rule was fully dependent on investiture by the Son of Heaven. The two sides of the kinship constituted the familistic Zongfan hierarchy, which highlighted the primordial framework of "all-under-Heaven"—the Chinese *Weltanschauung*.

As a politico-cultural structure, the Zongfan system is believed to have been established in the Western Zhou period (ca.1027–770 B.C.).⁴ It was associated with the kinship-based feudalism (Ch. *zongfa fengjian*) of the day,⁵ according to which the Zhou court was the center of the world—China, the Central Kingdom, or *Zhongguo*—and polities on China's peripheries as the "Five Submissions" (Ch. *wufu*) or "Nine Submissions" (Ch. *jiufu*) could be called China's *fan*. (Figures I. 1 and I. 2) The *fan* gradually became the equivalent of "subordinate kingdoms or countries"—*shuguo* in Chinese—when the notion of "country" or "state" (Ch. *guo*) evolved from a walled city to a larger political unit encompassing many walled cities, lands, and a population.⁶ The connotation of China's periphery likewise evolved on this feudalistic model by incorporating all countries or polities outside of the Central Kingdom into the category of China's *fan*.

In addition to being defined by its geographical distance to China or the central court, the *fan* could be characterized in kinship terms inner *fan* and outer *fan*. The inner

⁴ *Guoyu* (Discourses of the States), 4.

⁵ Wang Guowei, "Yinzhou zhidu lun" (A discussion of the systems of the Shang and the Zhou dynasties), in *Guantang jili* (Collections of Wang Guowei), vol. 2, 451-480.

⁶ Qian Mu, *Guoshi dagang* (Outline of Chinese history), 54-68.

fan maintained a strong blood relationship with the Son of Heaven, but the outer *fan* did not. Such a dual structure of the *fan* could be clearly found in the Ming for the last time in Chinese history, but it became quite vague during the Qing period due to the multilayered nature of the outer *fan* and the mixed usage of the term in political discourse.⁷ It should be noted that relations between the Central Kingdom and the outer *fan* were not always as peaceful as this ideal structure might suggest. In practice, the Central Kingdom could not always control its powerful subordinates, as happened during the Warring States Period (453–221 B.C.),⁸ yet it possessed the exclusive and divine authority over them—the Mandate of Heaven.

Figures I. 1 and I. 2. The Arrangements of the “Five Submissions” and the “Nine Submissions” in the Western Zhou

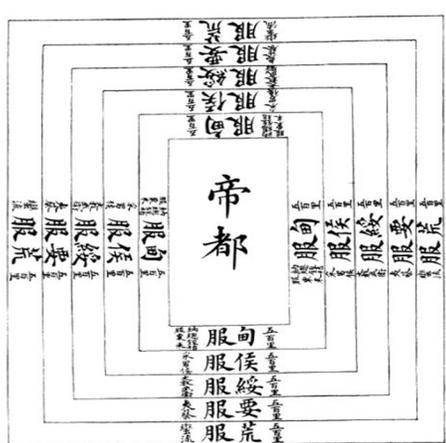


Figure I. 1. The “Five Submissions”

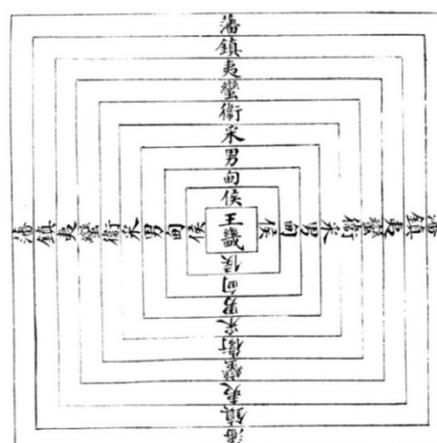


Figure I. 2. The “Nine Submissions”

Sources: *Qinding shujing tushuo* (Illustrations of the Classic of History, imperially ordained), vol. 6, 87a; vol. 33, 2b. The echelon of “Five Submissions,” emanating from the center, namely the imperial court (Ch. *didu*, or *wangji*) or “Central Kingdom,” consists of “royal submission” (Ch. *dianfu*), “princely submission” (Ch. *houfu*), “pacifying submission” (Ch. *suifu*), “restrictive submission” (Ch. *yaofu*), and “cultivating submission” (Ch. *huangfu*). The distance between each submission was 500 *li* (the standard of Chinese *li* kept changing in history and in late imperial times 1 *li* was about 1/3 mile). See *Sibu beiyao* (The complete essentials of the Four Categories), case 9, vol. 6, 17b-18b. According to *Zhouli* (The Rites of the Zhou dynasty), the system of “Nine submissions,” encompasses “princely submission” (Ch. *houfu*), “royal submission” (Ch. *dianfu*), “baronial submission” (Ch. *nanfu*), “self-supporting submission” (Ch. *caifu*), “defensive submission” (Ch. *weifufu*), “uncivilized submission” (*manfu*), “barbarian submission” (Ch. *yifu*),

⁷ See, for example, Zhang Shuangzhi, *Qingdai chaojin zhidu yanjiu* (A study of the pilgrimage system of the Qing dynasty), 238-261.

⁸ Yang Kuan, *Zhanguo shi* (History of the Warring States Period), 126.

“obedient submission” (Ch. *zhenfu*), and “frontier submission” (Ch. *fanfu*). See *Sibu beiyao*, case 2, vol. 33, 8b.

According to the ideal Zongfan tenets, the outer *fan* should dispatch emissaries, “ministers of ministers” (Ch. *peichen*), bearing taxes or tribute to the central court on a regular basis, where they would offer appropriate obedience to the Son of Heaven and receive largess or gifts. In return, the Central Kingdom would dispatch envoys to the *fan* to invest the rulers with legitimate titles and perform its duty of protecting the *fan* whenever necessary. This reciprocity thus formed the policy of “serving the big country” or “serving the great” (Ch. *shida*; K. *sadae*) for the *fan*, and of “cherishing the small country” or “cherishing the small” (Ch. *zixiao*; K. *chaso*) for the Central Kingdom. The exchanges of emissaries between the two sides through ritual codes acted as the vehicle for running the Zongfan system. From the first days of the Zongfan contacts, ritual practices played a key role in maintaining the hierarchy and synergizing the orthodox legitimacy of both sides. This model later evolved into a basic philosophy of foreign policy of Chinese dynasties.⁹

Meanwhile, the notion of “civilized China” (Ch. *Huaxia*) and its counterpart, “barbarians” (Ch. *yi*, or *man*), took root in the Zongfan norms as two key concepts respectively addressing the status of the Central Kingdom and its outer *fan*. The two terms derived from the notion of all-under-Heaven, which had developed into a worldview in the Xia, Shang, and Zhou periods, through which the three dynasties sought the orthodox legitimacy of their divine rule. In the same period, the political entities spanning China’s land identified *xia*—not referring to the Xia dynasty, but to a larger area where the regime once resided—as the symbol of a civilized community possessing the

⁹ See, for example, John King Fairbank, “A Preliminary Framework,” in *The Chinese World Order*, 7-11; Wang Gungwu, “Early Ming Relations with Southeast Asia: A Background Essay,” *Ibid.*, 37-41.

Mandate of Heaven, namely *Zhongguo*, *Zhongyuan* (the central plain) or *Zhongtu* (the central lands), and called it “civilized China.” At that time, the term “barbarian” primarily referred to those entities that were on the peripheries of the “central plain” and were quite reluctant to identify and embrace the concept of “civilized China,” as the state relationship between the Qin and the Chu illuminated.¹⁰ Yet the originally geographic notion of “barbarian” gradually became an instrument used by some political forces to deprecate their antagonists during the movement of the so-called “revering the court of the Zhou and expelling the barbarians” (Ch. *zunzhou rangyi*) in the Eastern Zhou (770–256 B.C.), a chaotic time moving Confucius (551–479 B.C.) to call for restoring the ideal order of “proper conduct” (Ch. *li*) of the Western Zhou. Due to the fierce inter-state rivalries, the civilized–barbarian distinction was consolidated into a politico-cultural ideology and became the orthodoxy allowing Chinese dynastic regimes to acquire their centrality in the Chinese world and pursue the Mandate of Heaven and political legitimacy by continuously interpreting and reinterpreting the notion in the next two thousand years until the Revolution of 1911.

After the Han dynasty (202B.C.–A.D.220), with the expansion of the concept of “all-under-Heaven,” the civilized–barbarian distinction became a critical theoretical framework in which the Chinese court managed foreign relations.¹¹ In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, with the rise of ardent assertions of orthodox legitimacy by some leading scholars of the Northern Song, who were facing grave challenges from “northern

¹⁰ Tong Shuye, *Chunqiu shi* (History of the Spring and Autumn period), 277-279; Zhang Jinguang, *Qin zhi yanjiu* (Studies on the institutions of the Qin dynasty), 39-51.

¹¹ See, for example, Takeo Abe, *Chūgokujin no tenka kannen: seiji shisōshiteki shiron* (T’ien-hsia idea of the Chinese: a discussion on history of political thought); Yü Ying-shih, *Trade and Expansion in Han China: A Study in the Structure of Sino–Barbarian Economic Relations*; John King Fairbank, ed., *The Chinese World Order: Traditional China’s Foreign Relations*.

barbarians,”¹² the distinction became an essential cultural instrument with which the Chinese elites fit certain regimes into the pedigree of “legitimate historical narratives” (Ch. *zhengshi*) by expelling competing polities from these narratives. Some intellectuals, such as Shi Jie (1005–1045), the author of *A Treatise on the Central Kingdom* (Ch. *Zhongguo lun*), and Ouyang Xiu (1007–1072), the author of *A Treatise on the Orthodox Legitimacy* (Ch. *Zhengtong lun*), depicted the Song as the exclusive civilized center of the world and those political polities on the Song’s northern border as the uncivilized. One of the most influential chronological historical works, edited by Sima Guang (1019–1086), *A Comprehensive Mirror to Aid in Government* (Ch. *Zizhi tongjian*), drew a clear lineage of various states identified as “China” possessing orthodox legitimacy from 403 B.C. to A.D. 959. These intellectuals’ efforts paid off, for their rhetoric triumphed over that of the northern regimes, especially when neo-Confucianism, created and elaborated by such Song intellectual vanguards as Cheng Hao (1032–1085), Cheng Yi (1033–1107), and Zhu Xi (1130–1200), who emphasized the discourse of social order and orthodox legitimacy, became China’s official ideology in the Yuan (1271–1368), Ming, and Qing dynasties. This intellectual history could help explain why the official historical narrative of the People’s Republic still celebrates the Song for its legitimate status as *Zhongguo* and marginalizes the Liao (907–1125), Xixia (1038–1227), or Jin (1115–1234), treating them as “countries of barbarians” established by “ethnic minorities” (Ch. *shaoshu minzu*).

In addition to the official efforts to install such civilized–barbarian distinction ideology from the top down, in the late imperial times the popular culture promulgated this consciousness from the bottom up. For instance, some operas popular among

¹² See Ge Zhaoguang, *Zhaizi Zhongguo: chongjian youguan “Zhongguo” de lishi lunshu* (Residing in Zhongguo: reconstructing the historical narrative about “Zhongguo”), 41-44.

commoners (Ch. *zaju*, lit. variety play) in the Ming depicted Ming China as the “central civilized country” (Ch. *Zhonghua*) bordered by “barbarians from four directions” (Ch. *siyi*) who paid homage and symbolic tribute to the Central Kingdom on a regular basis. The “barbarians” in these operas often found Chosŏn, Annam, Ryukyu, and political units in Inner Asia as representatives.¹³ The consciousness of China’s centrality in the world and the civilized–barbarian distinction behind such popular culture might have motivated Emperor Qianlong (1711–1799, r. 1735–1795) of the Qing to initiate the ambitious project of constructing the Qing as the Heavenly Dynasty and the “central civilized country” in the 1750s, as Chapter 2 will explain.

It is worth noting that the Zongfan system underwent dramatic transformations through history, so its specific presentation differed from time to time. Since the sixth and seventh centuries, when the Ministry of Rituals (Ch. *Libu*) was created as a central institute of the Chinese bureaucracy, the Zongfan affairs were principally under the charge of the ministry and began to be institutionally regulated by intricate ritual norms. The unprecedented military expansion of the Mongolians under the Yuan broke the moderate nature of the system, for the Mongolian conquerors almost colonized Korea and Indochina, two pivotal venues of China’s outer *fan*. In the wake of the fall of the short-lived Yuan, the Han-Chinese rulers of the Ming, who claimed they were expelling the “northern barbarian” Mongolians and restoring the civilized Central Kingdom, adopted conventional Zongfan norms by following the classical theory and arrangement of the Zhou to manage the Ming court’s royal groups and foreign relations. Along this trajectory, the Ming defined its outer *fan* as polities with the right of autonomy or

¹³ “Zhu wanshou wanguo laichao” (Ten thousand countries devoutly came to celebrate the emperor’s birthday), in *Guben yuan ming zaju* (The only existing copy of the operas in the Yuan and Ming times), vol. 32.

self-rule, or *zizhu* in Chinese. In the late fourteenth century, the number of countries counted among the Ming's outer *fan* reached fifteen, the majority of which became the Qing's outer *fan* from the early seventeenth century, principally including Chosŏn, Ryukyu, Annam, Lanchang (Laos), Siam (Thailand), Sulu (the Philippines), and Burma.¹⁴ For more than five centuries, from the late fourteenth to the late nineteenth, China maintained the Zongfan relationship primarily with these Asian countries, Chosŏn predominant among them.

The long Chinese history, however, is never short of myths, legends, and misinterpretations. The Chinese historian Gu Jiegang argued in 1921 that ancient Chinese history was “an accumulated history with multilayers,” in which the later the historical narratives were made, the longer the ancient history and the more significant the key figures in this history would become.¹⁵ This situation is true for the Zongfan history, as well. The narrative of almost every case study on the Zongfan system, including that in this dissertation, prefers to give the system credit for its remarkable historical continuity and longevity,¹⁶ while agreeing that it became more elaborate and sophisticated in late imperial times.¹⁷ What further contributed to this complexity was the fact that “the ideas and institutions of this empire were neither constant over time nor uniform through

¹⁴ *Daming huidian* (Collected statutes of the Great Ming), vol. 105, 1b; *Huangming zuxun* (The Ming emperor's instructions) in *Siku quanshu cunmu congshu* (The collections of the books that only have titles in the Complete Books of the Four Categories), vol. 264, 167-168. For the Qing period, see *Daqing huidian* (The collected statutes of the Great Qing, imperially ordained) (1899), vol. 39, 2a-3a.

¹⁵ Gu Jiegang, *Gushi bian* (Textual research on ancient Chinese history), vol. 1, 60. In 1909, the Japanese scholar Shiratori Kurakichi (1865–1942) also pointed out that myths existed in ancient Chinese history, see Stefan Tanaka, *Japan's Orient: Rendering Pasts into History*, 117-122.

¹⁶ For example, Lien-sheng Yang and John King Fairbank suggest that the origin of the Chinese tributary system originated in the Zhou dynasty, see *The Chinese World Order*, 3-9, 20-22. Morris Rossabi and Joanna Waley-Cohen prefer the Han dynasty, see Morris Rossabi, *China and Inner Asia: from 1368 to the Present Day*, 18-20; Joanna Waley-Cohen, *The Sextants of Beijing: Global Currents in Chinese History*, 14.

¹⁷ For an introduction to the multidimensional tributary system in the Qing period, see Mark Mancall, “The Ch'ing Tribute System: An Interpretive Essay,” in *The Chinese World Order*, 63-89; Takeshi Hamashita, *Chōkō shisutemu to kindai ajia* (The tributary system and modern Asia), 9-24.

space,”¹⁸ a critical statement that could be well supported by the Qing–Chosŏn case analyzed in this dissertation and the Qing–Siamese case discussed by others.¹⁹ The above brief review of the evolution of the Zongfan system from the Western Zhou down to the Qing certainly risks being challenged by the rich literature on this system,²⁰ but it should be able to reveal basic features of the system sufficient for the purpose of analyzing the Qing–Chosŏn relationship.

The review here aims to underpin the fact that the rationale for the Qing–Chosŏn Zongfan order lay in classical Chinese theories nourished in ancient China. The Ming’s passionate restoration of the Zhou’s Zongfan system determined that this system under the Qing was directly connected with the classical and ideal tenets of the Zhou. A typical case highlighting this point was an official note of Li Hongzhang (1823–1901) in 1883, in which Li cited the Western Zhou’s Zongfan tenets to articulate that Chosŏn’s king was “outer vassal” (Ch. *wai zhuhou*) of the Son of Heaven, so this king was equal to China’s governor-generals and provincial governors, who were “inner vassals” (Ch. *nei zhuhou*), whereas the officials of Chosŏn were correspondingly on an equal footing with their Chinese counterparts below the ranks of governor-generals and provincial governors.²¹

¹⁸ R. Bin Wong, “China’s Agrarian Empire: A Different Kind of Empire, A Different Kind of Lesson,” in Craig Calhoun, Frederick Cooper, and Kevin W. Moore, eds., *Lessons of Empire: Imperial Histories and American Power*, 190.

¹⁹ See, for example, Chuang Chi-fa, “Xianluo guowang Zhengzhao rugong qingting kao” (A study of King Taksin’s sending tributary mission to the Qing court); Masuda Erika, “Siam’s ‘Chim Kong,’ Sending Tributary Missions to China, A Study of the Diplomatic Aspect of Sino–Siamese Relations during the Thonburi and Early Rattanakosin Periods (1767–1854),” and “The Fall of Ayutthaya and Siam’s Disrupted Order of Tribute to China (1767–1782).”

²⁰ For recent works about the general introduction to the Zongfan system, see, for example, Li Yunquan, *Chaogong zhidu shilun: Zhongguo gudai duiwai guanxi tizhi yanjiu* (History of Chinese tributary system: a study on Chinese foreign relations system in ancient times), Chen Shangsheng, ed., *Zhongguo chuantong duiwai guanxi de sixiang, zhidu yu zhengce* (The ideas, institutions, and policies of China’s traditional foreign relations), and Zhang Shuangzhi, *Qingdai chaojin zhidu yanjiu* (A study of the pilgrimage system of the Qing dynasty).

²¹ Li to the Zongli Yamen, January 3, 1883, in *Qingji zhong ri han guanxi shiliao* (Historical materials pertaining to the relations between China, Japan and Korea in the late Qing, hereafter referred to as

In many works on the Qing–Chosŏn Zongfan contacts in the late nineteenth century, one will find that both the Qing and Chosŏn continuously solicited legal support for their policies toward each other from Zongfan precedents from the Western Zhou down through the Ming times.

Here it is worth noting why we use “Zongfan” to address the Qing–Chosŏn relations. The Ming followed the Zhou’s principles to restore the Zongfan system within China, and in 1402 Emperor Yongle (1360–1424, r. 1402–1424) awarded the king of Chosŏn the official robe in accordance with the rank of first-degree prince (Ch. *qinwang*; K. *ch’inwang*, a brother of the emperor), which substantially added Chosŏn to the Ming’s Zongfan system, an arrangement identified by Chosŏn.²² The Qing did not change this nature when it replaced the Ming in the bilateral Zongfan system after 1637. This was the historical reason why in 1886, when Yuan Shikai (1859–1916), who resided at Chosŏn since 1884 as the “His Imperial Chinese Majesty’s Resident” (Ch. *Qinming zhuzha Chaoxian zongli jiaoshe tongshang shiyi*), asked Li Hongzhang what level of ritual he should perform in front of the king, Li noted that it would be courteous for Yuan to follow the rituals for Chinese provincial-level officials (Ch. *sido*) to visit the first-degree princes (Ch. *qinjunwang*).²³ Zongfan is thus the most appropriate term to address the Ming/Qing–Chosŏn relations.

Under the Qing, the Zongfan order was maintained and embodied by the exchange of emissaries between the Qing—the host—and its “subordinate countries of foreign barbarians” (Ch. *waiyi shuguo*; Ma. *tulergi gurun*)—the guests. All exchanges

QJZRH), vol. 3, 1072-1075.

²² *Sejong sillok* (Veritable records of King Sejong of Chosŏn), vol. 4, 699.

²³ Li to Yuan, February 1, 1886, in *Li Hongzhang quanji* (Complete collection of Li Hongzhang) (hereafter referred to as “LHZQJ (2008)”), vol. 21, 655.

were conducted in accordance with the imperial code—*The Universal Tributary Regulations* (Ch. *Chaogong tongli*)—codified by the Ministry of Rituals, and the performance of the exchanges was supervised by the Host–Guest Office (Ch. *Zhuke qinglisi*; Ma. *juke cing lii sy*) of the ministry. These regulations primarily consisted of the seven mandates: 1) Investiture (Ch. *cefeng*), under which the Qing emperor gave the king of each *fan* a patent of appointment and an official seal for use in correspondence; 2) Reign-title (Ch. *nianhao*), under which the *fan* adopted the Qing’s reign-title as a way of counting the years; 3) Calendar (Ch. *shuoli*), under which the *fan* used the Qing’s calendar; 4) Paying tribute and sending emissaries to the Qing (Ch. *chaogong*), under which the *fan* sent tributary emissaries to Beijing to pay symbolic tribute, usually local products, to the emperor with a frequency to be individually determined; 5) Conferring noble rank on the late king or royal members of the *fan* (Ch. *fengshi*), under which the king or royal members of a *fan* who died received a noble rank from the emperor; 6) Reporting events to the Qing (Ch. *zoushi*), under which the *fan* informed the emperor of its important events, but did not need to ask for instructions and could assume that the Qing would not intervene in its domestic affairs; and 7) Trade (Ch. *maoyi*, or *hushi*), including trade at the frontiers and trade at the Foreign Emissaries’ Common Accommodations (Ch. *Huitong siyi guan*; Ma. *acanjime isanjire tulergi gurun i bithe ubaliyambure kuren*) in Beijing.²⁴ All “subordinate countries of foreign barbarians” had to strictly follow these formalities in their communications with Qing China. The practice

²⁴ *Qinding libu zeli* (1844), vol. 171, 1-14; vol. 172, 1-22; vol. 181, 1-7; vol. 184, 1-6; vol. 185, 1-3; vol. 168, 1-5. For some discussions on the regulations, see John King Fairbank, “A Preliminary Framework,” in *The Chinese World Order*, 10-11; M. Frederick Nelson, *Korea and the Old Order in Eastern Asia*, 16-20; Shigeki Iwai, “Chōkō to goshi” (Tribute and trade), in Haruki Wada et al., ed., *Higashi Ajia sekai no kindai: 19 seiki* (Modern East Asia: the 19th century), 134-153. John King Fairbank and S. Y. Têng have translated the tributary regulations in the *Daqing huidian* (1690 edition) and the “Ceremonies for the Guests” (Ch. *binli*) in the *Daqing huidian* (1764 edition), see “On the Ch’ing Tributary System,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 6 (1941): 163-167, 170-173.

of the Zongfan order between Qing China and its prototypical *fan*—Chosŏn—is detailed in explanations of the Chosŏn Model in Chapter 2.

Careful reading of the terminologies of the seven mandates is essential for grasping the key characteristics of the system and perceiving the discrepancies between the Chinese terms and their English renderings. This point could be highlighted by the prevalence of the fourth mandate mentioned above, namely *chaogong*, or paying tribute and sending emissaries to China, which concerns the general understanding of the entire system. The perennial activity of paying tribute was the most sensational and visible part of the bilateral contacts between Qing China and its *fan* on a regular and ritual basis. Therefore, it easily attracted the eyes of observers, prompting them to render this functional framework in English parlance. At least since the late eighteenth century, some Western travelers, observers, and diplomats who visited the Chinese world began adopting the term “tributary” to describe the nature of the relationship between China and Korea, Vietnam, and other “tributary countries” or “states tributary to China” in their books and reports.²⁵ Their descriptions constituted the first step toward using “tribute system” or “tributary system” to refer to the Zongfan system in Western literature on China and East Asia.

In the first half of the nineteenth century, when the Western powers brought international law to East Asia, the Western invention and understanding of the “tribute system” was further enriched and misconstrued by the analogy between the East and the West made by Western diplomats. When the Western powers gradually integrated China and Japan into the European-norm-based family of nations, they found that Chosŏn maintained a special relationship with China which they could not explain in the context

²⁵ See, for example, Jean-Baptiste Grosier, *A General Description of China*.

of international law. Thus, “searching back into the categories which their international system listed, they hit upon that of suzerain and vassal as most nearly fitting this East Asiatic relationship, and they then proceeded to apply the legal attributes of vassalage to the non-legal status of a *shu-pang*.”²⁶ As a result, the Sino–Korean relationship was depicted as a suzerain–vassal variety that could fit into the Western setting.²⁷ The special relationship between Egypt and the Ottoman Empire at that time was seen as an instructive analogy, crystalized by Japan’s arduous strategy of using European legal terminology to undermine the Sino–Korean relationship.²⁸

This suzerain–vassal rendering of the Zongfan order quickly drew Western powers into a legal quagmire regarding the legal status of Chosŏn. Both China and Chosŏn declared that Chosŏn was China’s “subordinate country,” namely *shuguo*, with the right of “autonomy” or “self-rule,” namely *zizhu*, but the Western countries and Japan argued that it was an independent sovereign state with all international rights. The *Wanguo gongfa* (lit. the common law among ten thousand countries), the Chinese translation of Henry Wheaton’s *Elements of International Law*, was published by the Zongli Yamen (i.e., the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) in 1864 after it was translated by an American Presbyterian missionary, W. A. P. Martin (1827–1916). Yet this first Chinese edition of Western international law could not help the two parties settle disputes, because it adopts Zongfan concepts to translate and interpret English terms. For example, the English term “colony” was translated as *pingfan* (fence) or *shubang/ shuguo* (subordinate country); “dependency” as *shubang*; “vassal state” as *fanshu* (subordinate

²⁶ M. Frederick Nelson, *Korea and the Old Orders in Eastern Asia*, 292.

²⁷ See, for example, George N. Curzon’s book, *Problems of the Far East: Japan–Korea–China*.

²⁸ As for how Japan’s view about Asia in reference to Egypt, see Tamura Airi, “Ejiputo kenkyu kara mita kindai nihon no ajia kan” (Modern Japanese views of Asia in reference to Egyptian studies), *Gakushuin shigaku* (Gakushuin historical review) 9 (1972): 59-64.

and dependent country); “sovereign states” as *zizhu zhi guo* (countries with the right of self-rule); and “right of sovereignty” as *zizhu zhi quan* (the right of self-rule).²⁹ These discrepancies reflect what M. Frederick Nelson has pointed out: “the East Asiatic Confucian society, national and international, was familistic and natural, not legal. It lacked such Western concepts as those of law, the state, sovereignty, and the legal equality of states.”³⁰ As a result, the terminological conflicts led to great confusion over the nature of the Zongfan relationship.³¹

Given these terminological discrepancies, which could be dated back to the 1780s at least,³² the Sino–Korean Zongfan relationship was understood by foreign diplomats in China after the 1850s as a “nominal” one, with China exercising “no real authority” over Chosŏn.³³ In the late 1880s and early 1890s, Western diplomats were still struggling with the confusion, as William W. Rockhill (1854–1914) confessed in his study on Sino–Korean relations, in which he tried to clarify “a puzzle for Western nations” of whether Korea was “an integral part of the Chinese empire” or “a sovereign state enjoying absolute international rights.” He critically pointed out that the Chinese term *shuguo*, “generally translated in English by ‘vassal kingdom, fief,’ etc.,” which were “misleading,”

²⁹ See *Wanguo gongfa*, 2b-3a, 25a-28b; *Elements of International Law*, 44-50, 79. As for the Chinese translation of the international law by W. A. P. Martin, see Lydia H. Liu, *The Clash of Empires: The Invention of China in Modern World Making*, 108-139.

³⁰ M. Frederick Nelson, *Korea and the Old Orders in Eastern Asia*, 289. For similar comments, see Odd Arne Westad, *Restless Empire: China and the World since 1750*, 81-82.

³¹ See, for example, Takashi Okamoto, *Zokkoku to jishu no aida: kindai Shin Kan kankei to higashi Ajia no meiu* (Between the tributary state and self-rule: the modern Ch’ing–Korean relations and East Asia’s fate), and *Sekai no naka no nitsu shin kan kankei shi: kōrin to zotsu koku, jishu to dokuritsu* (History of relations between Japan, the Qing, and Korea in the world: “communicating with neighbor country” and “subordinate country”, “autonomy” and “independence”).

³² Jean-Baptiste Grosier, *A General Description of China*, 244.

³³ See, Sir Edward Hertslet, “Memorandum respecting Corea,” Dec. 19, 1882, in *British Documents on Foreign Affairs, Reports and Papers from the Foreign Office Confidential Print, Part I, Series E*, vol. 2, 2-3; *Low to Fish*, November 23, 1871, Roll 32, in Davids Jules, *American Diplomatic and Public Papers: The United States and China, 1861–1893*, vol. 9, 184; Mori Arinori to the Zongli Yamen, January 15, 1876, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 270.

was “the key-note to the whole system of Korean dependency.”³⁴ What led Rockhill to this “puzzle” must have been the European colonial experience of the day: the relationship between a colonial power and each of its overseas colonies, such as France vis-à-vis Algeria or Britain vis-à-vis India, was very clear, and the colony was undoubtedly an integral part of the empire, fully subject to the imperial administration. Some questions of Chosŏn’s relations with China raised by George N. Curzon in the early 1890s reflected such colonial discourse.³⁵ These concerns reflected the fact that the diplomats regarded the Zongfan system, just like their own colonial systems, as a legitimate system. This analogy that Western observers drew between the Zongfan system and colonialism might be why European powers never publicly denied that Chosŏn was a dependency of China before Japan did so in 1895.

In the twentieth century, the promulgation of the term “tribute system,” combined with the concepts “suzerain” and “vassal,” owes a great debt to the popularity of a more neutral phrase, “Chinese world order,” proposed by John King Fairbank from the 1940s to the 1960s, when he convoked a constellation of historians and political scientists to explore the rationale behind China’s foreign relations in the late imperial times.³⁶ Although Fairbank was fully aware of the complexity of China-centric cosmopolitanism, or “Sinocentrism,” the term “Chinese world order,” which he preferred to use to broadly address this system, became a rough equivalent of the “tribute system,” allowing scholars in different fields to accept this English rendering and treat it as a counterpart to “treaty system” or “treaty port system.” Since the 1940s, some scholars have questioned the

³⁴ William W. Rockhill, “Korea in Its Relations with China,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 13 (1889): 1-33.

³⁵ George N. Curzon, *Problems of the Far East: Japan–Korea–China*, 209-222.

³⁶ See John King Fairbank and S. Y. Têng, “On the Ch’ing Tributary System,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 6 (1941): 135-246; John King Fairbank, ed., *The Chinese World Order*.

appositeness of “tributary system” or “suzerain–vassal relations,”³⁷ yet their efforts have not changed the entrenched renderings and paradigms, and the conventional English parlance still profoundly influences scholars’ understanding of China’s foreign relations.

The underlying problem with the term “tribute system” is that it can convey only a part of the connotations of the Zongfan system, while it blurs the multilayered nature of the system by trimming it down to a China-centric trade structure. Thus, it should not be loosely used as a master concept to address the entire structure. This is not to suggest, however, that the term “tribute system” will lose its power to analyze the structure when it is used as a conceptual interpretive tool. This point is clear in the debate among certain historians over the issue of when the practices of the Zongfan order became as mature, institutional, and systematic as they were in the Ming and Qing periods. John E. Wills, Jr., argues that “the tribute system as a system cannot be traced back farther than the Ming. In Ming times, it embraces all aspects of relations with all foreign countries, in theory and to a large degree in practice.”³⁸ By further asserting that “the years from about 1425 to 1550 were the *only* time in all of Chinese history when a unified tribute system embodying these tendencies was the matrix for policy decisions concerning all foreigners,” Wills suggests that “we should reserve the term ‘tribute system’ for this Ming

³⁷ See, for example, M. Frederick Nelson, *Korea and the Old Orders in Eastern Asia*, xv, 288-297; Mark Mancall, “The Ch’ing Tribute System: An Interpretive Essay,” in *The Chinese World Order*, 63; John E. Wills, Jr., “Tribute, Defensiveness, and Dependency: Uses and Limits of Some Basic Ideas about Mid-Ch’ing Foreign Relations,” *The American Neptune* 48. 4 (Fall 1988): 225-229; *China and the Maritime Europe, 1500–1800*, 2-5; Masataka Banno, *Kindai Chūgoku seiji gaikōshi: Vasuko da Gama kara goshi undō made* (Modern Chinese political and diplomatic history: from Vasco da Gama to the May Fourth Movement), 76-78; Frederick Foo Chien, *The Opening of Korea: A Study of Chinese Diplomacy, 1876–1885*, 14-15; James L. Hevia, *Cherishing Men from Afar: Qing Guest Ritual and the Macartney Embassy of 1793*, 9-15; Zhang Feng, “Rethinking the ‘Tribute System’: Broadening the Conceptual Horizon of Historical East Asian Politics,” *Chinese Journal of International Politics* 2.4 (winter 2009): 545–574; Song Nianshen, “‘Tributary’ from a Multilateral and Multilayered Perspective,” *Chinese Journal of International Politics* 5. 2 (Summer 2012): 155-182.

³⁸ John E. Wills, Jr., *Embassies and Illusions: Dutch and Portuguese Envoys to K’ang-hsi, 1666–1687*, 173.

system and not use it loosely to refer to the less systematic and more varied diplomatic practices of other times.”³⁹ By addressing the issue from the perspective of Qing China’s cartography, on the other hand, Richard J. Smith has contended that “as long as tributary institutions, regulations, policies and rhetoric were a significant part of the Chinese world view and self-image...until the very end of the nineteenth century, the term ‘tributary system’ is apposite.”⁴⁰ What Smith calls the “tributary system” has virtually the same parameters as the Zongfan system.

Fully aware of the existing and potential terminological problems, we adopt the term “Zongfan” or the neutral phrase “Chinese world order” to refer to the system, reserving “tributary” to address certain countries’ emissaries to China. Addressing relative issues of late imperial and modern China in the Zongfan framework, this dissertation discusses how the high politics of the Qing and Chosŏn regulated the running of the Chinese empire in certain ways, including the symbiotic legitimacy of Qing China and its other *fan*; the intricate ritual regulations and ritual performances both in Beijing and Hansŏng (Chosŏn’s capital, known as Seoul today); and the perennial exchanges of emissaries from the early seventeenth to late nineteenth centuries. This approach might risk being categorized as a cliché of the conventional Chinese point of view on foreign relations,⁴¹ but as the Korean historian Hae-Jong Chun has pointed out, “the nature of the Sino–Korean tributary system can best be explained from the point of view of politics.”⁴²

³⁹ John E. Wills, Jr., *China and Maritime Europe, 1500–1800*, 3. Wills’ understanding of “all foreigners” might be problematic because it does not match the Ming and Qing’s perception of “all-under-Heaven” in Chinese historical contexts. In addition, as a matter of fact, beyond the years from 1425 to 1550, the “tribute system” was very systematic too, as Chapter 2 of this dissertation demonstrates.

⁴⁰ Richard J. Smith, “Mapping China and the Question of a China-Centered Tributary Trade System,” *The Asia–Pacific Journal* 11.3 (January 28, 2013), online, accessed on May 6, 2014.

⁴¹ See, for example, Morris Rossabi suggests that historians pay more emphasis on economic motives of China’s foreign policies. See Morris Rossabi, *China and Inner Asia*, 18–22.

⁴² Hae-Jong Chun, “Sino–Korean Tributary Relations in the Ch’ing Period,” in *The Chinese World Order*,

In this way, one can best grasp the significance and magnitude of Qing–Chosŏn Zongfan relations and comprehend Qing China’s epoch-making recasting of the Chinese empire.

The Civilized–Barbarian Distinction and Beyond: The Magnitude of the Chosŏn Model and Historical Narration of Late Imperial and Modern China

Scholars have reached a consensus that Sino–Korean relations were the quintessential manifestation of the “tributary system.”⁴³ With this understanding in mind, many scholars tend to attribute this uniqueness to the shared Confucian culture, in particular neo-Confucianism, rather than to China’s political or military influence or control in the hegemonic sense.⁴⁴ This approach suggests that the Zongfan relationship represents the acculturation of Korea into Chinese institutions, which further indicates that the Qing–Chosŏn relationship was no more than an elaboration of that between the Ming and Chosŏn. This Chinese culture-centric methodology has its own logic, but it concurrently homogenizes the Qing–Chosŏn relationship with the monolithic Zongfan system before the Qing and therefore cannot explain the distinctive characteristics of the bilateral contacts in the Qing period.⁴⁵ In this sense, what this dissertation attempts is not to enshrine the Qing–Chosŏn Zongfan relationship in the pantheon of the Chinese Zongfan presentations since the Western Zhou, but to explore the uniqueness of this relationship and how it contributed fundamentally to the remodeling of the Chinese empire under the Qing. The best way to fulfill this task is to examine the Zongfan relationship from the

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⁴³ See, for example, Benjamin I. Schwartz, “The Chinese Perception of World Order, Past and Present,” in *The Chinese World Order*, 276; Hae-Jong Chun, “Sino–Korean Tributary Relations in the Ch’ing Period,” *Ibid.*, 90.

⁴⁴ Yur-bok Lee, *Diplomatic Relations between the United States and Korea, 1866–1887*, 19–22.

⁴⁵ The research on Sino–Korean Zongfan relations has a rich literature, but the majority of the works have only described a rough picture of the relations due to difficulties of accessing and deciphering materials. Numerous valuable archives written in Chinese, Manchu, Korean, Japanese, English, Russian, and other languages from the early 1610s to the early 1910s are preserved in Beijing, Taipei, Seoul, Tokyo, London, Washington D.C., and other places.

first days of its establishment against the background of the civilized–barbarian distinction.

The civilized–barbarian distinction constitutes the matrix of key analyses, in this dissertation, of the transformations of the political and cultural identities of the Manchu regime—the “Country of the Great Qing” (Ch. *Daqing guo*; Ma. *daicing gurun*) after 1636—and the transformations of Sino–Korean relations after the 1610s, including the last days of the Ming–Chosŏn Zongfan relations and the ins and outs of the Qing–Chosŏn Zongfan arrangement. If there is any key to discovering the rise and fall of the Chinese empire during the Qing, it is precisely this distinction, with which the Qing saturated the discourse of its imperial enterprise both within and without its borders. Until the very late nineteenth century, Qing China’s worldview never detached from this orthodox ideology, for it concerned the very basis of the Qing’s legitimacy as *Zhongguo*. Chosŏn is the best case in foreign relations for epitomizing the historical rise of the Manchu regime and the serious challenges that the regime encountered in late imperial times. This is one of the main reasons why this dissertation explores late imperial and modern China through the lens of Qing–Chosŏn Zongfan relations.

Behind this approach stand two questions. The first is whether the Manchu regime could be regarded as “civilized,” which profoundly concerns the “Sinicization” (generally rendered into *hanhua* in Chinese) or “Sinification” (Ch. *huahua*) of the Manchus.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ See, for example, Mary C. Wright, *The Last Stand of Chinese Conservatism: The T’ung-Chih Restoration, 1862–1874*; Gertraude Roth Li, “The Manchu–Chinese Relationship, 1618–1636,” in Jonathan Spence and John E. Wills, Jr., eds., *From Ming to Ch’ing: Conquest, Region, and Continuity in Seventeenth-Century China*, 2-38; Evelyn S. Rawski, “Reenvisioning the Qing: The Significance of the Qing Period in Chinese History,” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 55.4 (1996): 829-850; Ho Pingti, “The Significance of the Ch’ing Period in Chinese History,” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 26.2 (1967): 189-195, and “In Defense of Sinicization: A Rebuttal of Evelyn S. Rawski’s ‘Reenvisioning the Qing,’” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 57.1 (1998):123-155; Pamela Kyle Crossley, *Orphan Warriors: Three Manchu Generations and the End of the Qing World*, *The Manchus*, and *A Translucent Mirror: History and Identity*

Discussions of this point have focused so far either on how the Han Chinese culturally assimilated the Manchus or on how the Manchus tried to retain their ethnic identity; both primarily concern the post-1644 Han Chinese culture-dominated period, in which the Manchu regime was facing grave challenges as “barbarians” in its daily life in both a cultural and an ethnic sense. This point is highlighted by several phenomena, including: 1) the book *Great Righteousness Resolving Confusion* (Ch. *Dayi juemi lu*), written by Emperor Yongzheng (1678–1735, r. 1723–1735) in the 1720s, in which the Manchu emperor painfully confessed that the Manchus once belonged to the “barbarians;” 2) the Taiping Rebellion in the 1850s, in which the fervent Han Chinese rebels mobilized its ethnic countrymen through the instigation of anti-Manchu propaganda; and 3) the Nationalist revolts in the 1900s, in which ardent Han Chinese revolutionaries again labeled the Manchu-ruled Qing a foreign “barbarian” presence. In this sense, the Qing was never free from the shadow of the civilized–barbarian distinction. Therefore, a helpful perspective on the debate concerning the Qing’s rise and its capable governance of its huge empire might be gained by examining the rise of the regime’s political discourse itself and the substantial roles it played in converting its identity into “China” in the setting of the civilized–barbarian distinction before and after 1644, although this approach risks being misinterpreted as a version of the Sinicization hypothesis.

This dissertation addresses this question by examining the Manchu regime’s strategic goal of establishing, enhancing, and reinforcing their political identity as the

in Qing Imperial Ideology; Mark C. Elliott, *The Manchu Way: The Eight Banners and Ethnic Identity in Late Imperial China*, and *Emperor Qianlong: Son of Heaven, Man of the World*; Pei Huang, *Reorienting the Manchus: A Study of Sinicization, 1583–1795*; Zhao Gang, “Reinventing China: Imperial Qing Ideology and the Rise of Modern Chinese National Identity in the Early Twentieth Century,” *Modern China* 32.1 (2006): 3-30; Huang Xingtao, “Qingdai manren de ‘Zhongguo rentong’” (The Manchus’ ‘Zhongguo identity’ in the Qing dynasty), *Qingshi yanjiu* (The Qing History Journal) 1 (2011): 1-12.

exclusive civilized center of the world by appropriating the orthodox Zongfan ideological norms and rituals after the 1630s. Through an intensive comparison of Chinese and Manchu terms specifically and purposely applied to the discourse based on which the Manchu regime began to reconfigure its worldview in the 1630s, the dissertation points out that the regime at the time was determined to “gradually develop the institutions of Zhongguo” (Ch. *jianjiu Zhongguo zhi zhi*), claiming that only in this way could it manage its great enterprise after it conquered the “barbarian place” of the Ming (Ch. *manzi difang*).⁴⁷ As it subordinated “countries”/“states” (Ma. *gurun*) and other political entities in Manchuria and converted them into “barbarians” on its periphery through its political discourse before 1644, the Manchu regime advanced the consciousness of itself as Zhongguo, substantially strengthening this identity through highly formalized rituals in its intensive and institutionalized Zongfan contacts with Chosŏn.

On the other hand, identifying itself as “Little China” and the successor to the defunct Ming, Chosŏn regarded Qing China as the “barbarian” for a long time after 1644,⁴⁸ although on the surface it devoutly followed the convention of “serving the great” to dispatch emissaries with tribute to Beijing. Yet this situation progressively changed, as Qing China grew more prosperous and powerful, and the bilateral relationship became more stable. Some Korean intellectuals who saw China’s prosperity in person in the eighteenth century enthusiastically called for their country to learn from Qing China, which transformed itself into the “civilized.” This perception violently shook

⁴⁷ Ning Wanwo’s memorial, September 11, 1633, in *Tiancongchao chengong zouyi* (Palace Memorials of Han Chinese officials during the Tiancong period, 1627–1636), vol. 3-1, 35a-35b.

⁴⁸ For recent study on Chosŏn’s ideology of “Little China” during the Qing period, see Sun Weiguo, *Daming qihao yu xiao Zhonghua yishi: Chaoxian wangchao zunzhou siming wenti yanjiu, 1637–1800* (The Great Ming dynasty and the ideology of Little China: Studies on the issue of revering the Zhou dynasty and recalling the Ming dynasty during the Chosŏn dynasty, 1637–1800); Wang Yuanzhou, *Xiao Zhonghua yishi de shanbian: jindai zhonghan guanxi de sixiangshi yanjiu* (Transformations of the ideology of Little China: a study on modern Sino–Korean relations from the perspective of intellectual history).

the foundations of the pro-Ming, anti-Qing cultural creed among the Korean elite. Pro-Ming rhetoric actually evolved into a shared, lamentable historical memory among Korean intellectuals that facilitated the building of a spiritual home where they could claim to be the “civilized” and even dream about launching a northern expedition against the Manchu “barbarians” to restore the Ming. Pro-Qing pragmatism, meanwhile, increasingly became an indispensable part of the country’s daily life that endorsed the Qing’s position as the civilized China and ensured the means for Chosŏn to seek political legitimacy. In the nineteenth century, when Chosŏn refused to negotiate with Britain, France, the United States, and Japan in foreign affairs and directed them to Beijing, followed by the Qing’s committed fulfillment of “cherishing the small country” to protect Chosŏn’s interests, the Qing in Chosŏn’s eyes was no different from the Ming in terms of its identification as the civilized Central Kingdom.

The second critical question behind the Chinese–Barbarian Distinction is whether Chosŏn could be called a “country of barbarians” in the Qing period, given that it was proud of its “Little China” identity, which encouraged Korean intellectuals to see the Manchu-ruled Qing as “a country of barbarians.” On Qing China’s side, Chosŏn’s identification as “Little China” was widely accepted by both ethnic Han and Manchu intellectuals. The Chinese officials and savants did not treat their Korean counterparts as “barbarians,” as they did the Europeans. Yet it was a fully different case when the Qing’s imperial political and cultural discourse located Chosŏn in the multileveled structure of “all-under-Heaven,” according to which Chosŏn was a “country of barbarians” on China’s periphery. This description could be dated back to the seven years from 1637 to 1644, when the Qing gradually converted Chosŏn into “a country from afar” (Ch.

yuanguo) that sent emissaries as “men from afar” (Ch. *yuanren*) bearing tribute to Mukden (Shenyang) “to be civilized” (Ch. *laihua*). After 1644, Chosŏn became the Qing’s prototypical *fan*, namely the prime exemplar of the “subordinate countries of foreign barbarians” (Ch. *waiyi shuguo*). This transformation fully restored Chosŏn’s status as “a country of barbarians,” to which it had been confined in the former Ming-centric world. This dissertation refers to this process as the “barbarianization” (Ch. *yihua*) of Chosŏn under the Qing. Local practices were consistent with this process. For example, Qing’s local authorities along China’s coast always termed people from Chosŏn and other countries, who suffered sea storms and were rescued by Chinese, as “barbarians who suffered from storm” (Ch. *zaofeng nanyi*; Ma. *edun de lashibufi jobolon de tušaha i niyalma*). Such local practices lasted for more than two centuries, until the early twentieth century, a time when Chosŏn declared to be an independent, sovereign state.

Although the Chosŏn Model provided a general pattern for the Manchu ruling house to deal with other political entities, it is necessary to specify its leading role in the entire historical background of the Qing’s Zongfan framework. For the purpose of analysis, it is worth clarifying what kind of *fan* or outer *fan* that Chosŏn specifically represented, given the fact that the term “outer *fan*” in the Qing period could refer to the political entities whose affairs were under the management of the Mongolian Superintendency (Ch. *Lifan yuan*; M. *tulergi golo be dasara jurgan*) and the foreign countries whose contacts with China were under the management of the Ministry of Rituals. The Mongolian Superintendency was established in 1638 by reorganizing the Ministry of Mongolian Affairs (Ch. *Menggu yamen*; M. *monggo jurgan*) created in 1636. Over the Qing period, the Mongolian Superintendency and the Ministry of Rituals were

two parallel central institutes responsible for the affairs of outer *fan*: the former managed mainly those *fan* from Qing China's north and west (Inner Asia), while the latter managed those from the east, the south, and the West. This dissertation mainly discusses the outer *fan* under management of the Ministry of Rituals, rather than those under the Mongolian Superintendency, although the two types of outer *fan* were closely associated through the Chosŏn Model, as Chapter 2 will demonstrate.

Viewed from the “subordinate countries of foreign barbarians,” the Qing made considerable changes to the Zongfan system that it inherited from the Ming. The Ming had had *The Universal Tributary Regulations*, by which the Ministry of Rituals of the Ming managed routine exchanges between China and the “subordinate barbarian countries on the four quarters” (Ch. *fanguo*, or *siyi*)—Chosŏn, Ryukyu, Annam, Jurchen, Mongolia, and other countries or political entities and also managed the exchanges between the Ming and “indigenous chieftains” (Ch. *tuguan*, or *tusi*), including those local chieftains in Yunnan, Guangxi, Guizhou, Sichuan, Hunan, and Hubei provinces.⁴⁹ The list of “foreign barbarian countries” in the new regulations of the Qing displayed at least two significant changes in the coverage.

First, the “indigenous chieftains” under the Ming were excluded from the Qing's list of tributary regulations as a result of the Qing's policy toward “barbarian chieftains” (Ch. *yimu*) in southwestern China. Known as “transforming the hereditary indigenous chieftains system into an official nomination system” (Ch. *gaitu guiliu*), the policy had started in the Yuan and Ming, but only in the Yongzheng period of the Qing was it carried out on a truly large scale. This policy made the local chieftains part of the Qing's bureaucracy, receiving official titles and ranks from the court. Those areas and

⁴⁹ *Daming huidian*, vols. 105-108; vol. 108, 9a-11a.

populations under the chieftains' control were simultaneously integrated into the Qing's territory and household registration system.⁵⁰ As a result, these "indigenous chieftains" were excluded from the list of tributary regulations and were no longer supervised by the Ministry of Rituals. The line between "barbarians" from these political units and "barbarians" from other countries was very clear in the minds of the Manchu rulers at court and their deputies in provinces.⁵¹ Second, the Western countries gradually disappeared from the list of tributary regulations. From the 1760s to the 1840s, the list included Holland and "Western Ocean countries" (Ch. *xiyang*) in addition to Chosŏn, Ryukyu, Annam, Lanchang, Siam, Sulu, and Burma,⁵² but in the 1890s the list covered only these seven Asian countries.⁵³ This change showed that China's worldview had greatly transformed over this period.

Whereas in the Qianlong period the Mongolian, Tibetan, and Muslim areas under the management of the Mongolian Superintendency had "all entered [the Great Qing's] map and registers" (Ch. *xianru bantu*) "like prefectures and counties" (Ch. *youru junxian*),⁵⁴ the "subordinate countries of foreign barbarians" under the superintendence

⁵⁰ For the Qing's expansions to the southwestern areas, see Laura Hostetler, *Qing Colonial Enterprise: Ethnography and Cartography in Early Modern China*, and Bin Yang, *Between Winds and Clouds: The Making of Yunnan, Second Century BCE to Twentieth Century CE*. About the Qing's policy of transforming the indigenous chieftains, see Gong Yin, *Ming Qing Yunnan tusi tongzuan* (A general compilation of the indigenous chieftains in Yunnan over the Ming and Qing periods), and Li Shiyu, *Qingdai tusi zhidu lunkao* (Research on the indigenous chieftains system in the Qing period).

⁵¹ See, for example, palace memorials of Gao Qizhuo in the first years of the Yongzheng period, when he was in charge of the affairs of indigenous chieftains as Governor-General of Yunnan and Guizhou, in *Zhupi yuzhi* (Palace memorials with Emperor Yongzheng's comments and instructions), vol. 45, 1a-81a.

⁵² *Qinding daqing huidian* (1764), vol. 56, 1a-2b; *Qinding libu zeli* (1844), vols. 171-180.

⁵³ *Qinding daqing huidian* (1899), vol. 39, 2a-3a. The successive changes on the list over the Qing periods were highlighted by the five editions of *Daqing huidian* (1690's, 1732's, 1764's, 1818's and 1899's). John King Fairbank and S. Y. Têng have done intensive research on this change, see Table 2 of their article "On the Ch'ing Tributary System," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 6 (1941): 174; see also Banno Masataka, *Kindai Chūgoku seiji gaikōshi*, 87.

⁵⁴ *Qinding daqing huidian* (1764), vol. 80, 1a, 10b. Of course, as Peter C. Perdue points out, this claim "was much mythical as real." See Peter C. Perdue, *China Marches West: The Qing Conquest of Central Eurasia*, 527.

of the Ministry of Rituals actually referred only to those that were not integrated into the territory of the Qing. Neither would these countries be treated as parts of the Republic of China and the People's Republic of China in the twentieth century. By the same token, the dual management system regarding the outer *fan*—the Mongolian Superintendency and the Ministry of Rituals—made it difficult for people outside this institutional mechanism under the Qing to clearly draw a line between them. This might explain why, in the late nineteenth century when issues concerning Chosŏn became extremely complicated, some Qing officials suggested that Beijing apply its policy toward Mongolia and Tibet to Chosŏn by converting it into “prefectures and counties,” as it seemed to be in the Qianlong period.⁵⁵ The rationale behind this suggestion concerned the basic structure of the Chinese empire under the Qing.

The magnitude of the Qing–Chosŏn Zongfan relationship is thus significant. The relationship should not be anachronistically treated simply as a specific embodiment of the Zongfan system, as scholars have preferred to do so far. Rather, it will be best understood from its prototypical role in prompting the formation of the Qing's Zongfan system and its unparalleled role in helping the Manchu regime transform political identity so that the regime could claim centrality and access the orthodox legitimacy in the process of reshuffling the Chinese world. In short, the Qing–Chosŏn relationship was the seedbed of the Qing's entire Zongfan arrangement, from which the political legitimacy of both sides became mutually dependent and mutually constitutive.

By exploring this process of mutually defining legitimacy, this dissertation uses a long-term perspective to break the entrenched divide between *premodern* and *modern* Chinese history. Scholars basically identify the Opium War of 1839–1842 as the

⁵⁵ He Ruzhang to the Zongli Yamen, November 18, 1880, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 439-442.

beginning of the twilight of *premodern* China—which was often considered as an arrogant, stubborn, and stagnant polity after the late eighteenth century—and the dawn of *modern* China.⁵⁶ Although the China-centric approach arose during the 1980s,⁵⁷ many scholars still frame their questions about China in the entrenched paradigm informed by *modern* European history.⁵⁸

Reviewing Britain’s position in the Zongfan infrastructure before the Opium War can help us move beyond the 1840 or 1800 divide. As Chapter 2 will show, Britain had been institutionally portrayed as a “country of barbarians” by Qing China in the 1760s and was permitted to trade with China at Canton (Guangzhou). That the British were “barbarians” in the eyes of the Chinese is a cliché for scholars who, embracing the post-Westphalian international principles and a set of philosophical rules prevailing since the Enlightenment, prefer to deride the superciliousness of this Chinese worldview. Yet they have neglected that Sino–British contacts on China’s southern border were only a part of the entire institutionalized infrastructure, as those with Chosŏn were on the eastern border, with Russia on the northern border, with Ryukyu on the southeastern border, and with Vietnam, Burma, and Siam on the southwestern border. The Treaty of Nanjing of 1842 allowed Britain to establish five treaty ports along the Chinese southeastern coast, but the rise of the treaty port system did not coincide with the synchronous decline of the Zongfan system. On the contrary, the latter was as vibrant as before, both on China’s borders and in the capital. Recent research on China’s customs system after the 1850s has

⁵⁶ See Alain Peyrefitte, *The Immobile Empire: The First Great Collision of East and West, 1792–1794*, trans. Jon Rothschild.

⁵⁷ See Paul A. Cohen, *Discovering History in China: American Historical Writing on the Recent Chinese Past*, 12-55; James L. Hevia, *Cherishing Men from Afar*, 9-15; Laura Hostetler, *Qing Colonial Enterprise*, 2.

⁵⁸ For example, Kenneth Pomeranz has done so in his well-known work, *The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy*.

revealed that the Western customs system established and served primarily by the British, the Imperial Maritime Customs (Ch. *Shuiwu si*), never replaced or significantly weakened China's local customs system under the "Superintendent of the Customs" (Ch. *Haiguan jiandu*).⁵⁹ This critical finding suggests that the treaty port system might have not penetrated and remade the local polity as deeply and widely as has been presumed.

The mainstream narrative of the Zongfan system, along with this said dichotomy, argues that tribute system was *premodern* and incompatible with the *modern* treaty system and was eventually replaced by the latter. The most significant problem with this paradigm might lie not in its Eurocentrism *per se*, but rather in its neglect of those factors that bridged the *premodern* and *modern* periods without significant inner changes but continuously nourished China's systematic mechanism of foreign relations. In other words, the factors that have been widely claimed to lead to its "stagnation" before China encountered the industrialized West constitute the very key to understanding late imperial and modern China, for "the absence of apparent change suggests the reproduction of a set of relationships or conditions."⁶⁰ All in all, China was defined by indigenous norms, not Western ones. Exploring these indigenous factors is essential to depict the trajectory along which Qing China remade the Chinese empire.

Beyond the Qing–Chosŏn Zongfan System: The Chinese Empire under the Qing and the So-called "Qing Imperialism"

At the risk of trimming down its connotations, this dissertation defines the "Chinese empire"—often rendered into *Zhonghua diguo* in Chinese—as a multiethnic and multicultural polity that had the Central Kingdom or *Zhongguo* as its political and culture

⁵⁹ Ren Zhiyong, *Wanqing haiguan zaiyanjiu: yi eryuan tizhi wei zhongxin* (A restudy of the Chinese customs in the late Qing: Focusing on the system of duality), 18-25.

⁶⁰ R. Bin Wong, *China Transformed: Historical Change and the Limits of European Experience*, 3.

core against the background of the civilized–barbarian distinction and took the two concepts of “Mandate of Heaven” and “all-under-Heaven” as constitutional ideologies for its political legitimacy. When he defined the formation and rise of the “civilized China” (Ch. *Huaxia*) community, the Chinese historian Zhang Jinguang pointed out the following four distinguishing features: 1) Its geopolitical consciousness gradually expanded from a smaller China to a larger one; 2) Its economic base was an advanced agrarian economy; 3) Its cultural connotation was a nation of “proper conduct” (Ch. *li*) performed by “men of honor” (Ch. *junzi*); and 4) Its spiritual characteristic was introverted, attached to the native land and reluctant to leave, and embracing peaceful coexistence.⁶¹ To a large degree, these four parameters delineate the perimeter of the “Chinese empire” defined here.

In late imperial times, in particular from the early seventeenth to late nineteenth centuries, the Chinese empire considerably expanded Zhongguo by integrating Manchuria, Inner and Outer Mongolia, Xinjiang, Tibet, and southwestern regions into its territory; formed a multiethnic and multicultural Chinese nation principally through domestic migrations from Inner China to the borderlands and through the simultaneous extension of the civil administrative systems; encouraged an agrarian economy and transferred this model to borderlands like Xinjiang; gave precedence to imperial civil service examinations to honor intellectuals and incorporate them into the meritocracy; promulgated “proper conduct” for people’s social behavior; and maintained the Zongfan system to manage foreign relations for peaceful coexistence with others. In many senses, China under the People’s Republic since 1949 is continuously being remade by the historical legacies bequeathed by the Chinese empire of the late imperial times.

⁶¹ Zhang Jinguang, *Qinzhi yanjiu*, 33.

When China is viewed as an empire, a number of questions immediately follow. First of all, it is necessary to clarify in what sense Qing China could be defined as an “empire” and “Chinese empire.” Indeed, China’s history was full of imperial experiences, starting at least from the rise of its first “emperor” (Ch. *huangdi*) of the Qin (221–107 B.C.) in 221 B.C., which had conquered six other states and unified China, to the demise of the Eurasian Qing dynasty in 1912.⁶² If an empire could be broadly defined as a political entity in which different peoples are governed differently,⁶³ Chinese history from 221 B.C. to the present is no more than a history of empires, represented by the massive Eurasian Tang (618–907), Yuan, and Qing dynasties. Although historians barely question that China has been manifesting itself as an empire after 221 B.C., none of the Chinese dynasties ever claimed to be an “empire” (Ch. *diguo*). It seems that the term “empire” as a European political concept that would always be traced back to the Roman empire did not exist in China’s political lexicon until 1895, when the Qing was officially addressed as the “Great Qing Empire”—*Daqing diguo* in Chinese—in Chinese characters for the first time in the Treaty of Shimonoseki as a counterpart of the “Great Japanese Empire” (J. *Dai nippon teikoku*).⁶⁴ Yet the term was not popular in China even after 1895. The second time it was conspicuously used was in a map collection titled *Map of the Great Qing Empire* (Ch. *Daqing diguo quantu*), published in Shanghai in 1905, when the European and Japanese empires intensively competed for superiority in China. (Map I. 1)

Map I. 1. Map of the “Great Qing Empire” (Ch. *Daqing diguo*), 1905

⁶² For the rise of empire in Chinese history, see Michael Puett, *The Ambivalence of Creation: Debates Concerning Innovation and Artifice in Early China*, 141-176.

⁶³ Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, *Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference*, 8; Frederick Cooper, *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History*, 27. Of course, the meaning of “empire” and the way of defining an “empire,” which is primarily based upon European history, has varied over time, and the author is aware there is a huge literature on “empire.”

⁶⁴ *The Treaty of Peace*, in *Nihon gaikō bunsho* (Documents on Japanese foreign policy, hereafter referred to as *NHGB*), vol. 28 (2), 363-372.



Source: *Daqing diguo quantu*, Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1905.

On the other hand, addressing the Manchu-ruled Qing as a “Chinese empire” was a long convention among European missionaries in China. In the Qing–Russian Treaty of Nerchinsk of 1689, whose original text was written in Latin by the French Jesuit Jean-François Gerbillon (1654–1707), serving the Manchu court, the Qing for the first time in history was officially called *Sinici Imperii* (Sinic empire or Chinese empire) in Latin as a counterpart of *Rutheni Imperii* (Russian Empire) and rendered into *l’Empire de la Chine* (Empire of China) in French as a counterpart of *l’Empire de Moscovie* (Empire of Muscovy).⁶⁵ Several factors might have led missionaries to question the “Chineseness” of Qing China, including the following: 1) the ethnic difference between the Manchu rulers and other peoples; 2) the presentations of the Manchus’ “Sinicization”; and 3) the “Chineseness” that the Manchu regime possessed against the background of the civilized–barbarian distinction. None of these factors, however, diminished missionaries’ perception that the Qing was *the* Chinese empire as long as the Qing was China.

Nevertheless, the concept of the “Chinese empire” is not completely equivalent to the concept of the “Great Qing Empire.” While the “Great Qing Empire” specifically means the polity of the Qing, the “Chinese empire” is generally presumed to refer to all

⁶⁵ *The Treaty of Nerchinsk*, in *Treaties, Conventions, etc., between China and Foreign States*, vol. 1, 1-13.

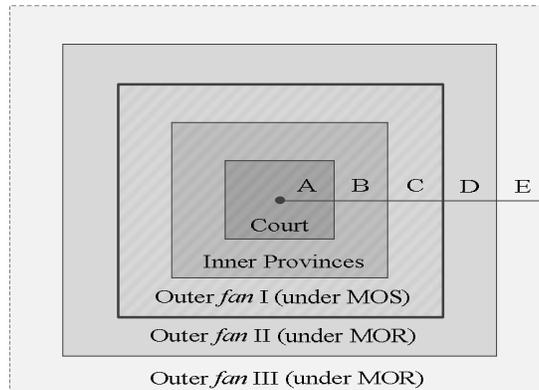
unified political units that claimed to be the Central Kingdom in Chinese history, including such dynasties as the Qin, Han (206 B.C.–A.D. 220), Tang, Song, Yuan, Ming, and Qing. In the Qing period, the Chinese empire manifested itself in two dimensions: the territorial Chinese empire and the politico-cultural Chinese empire. The territorial Chinese empire was equal to the Great Qing, composed primarily of the Manchu court, the inner provinces, and the outer *fan* under the management of the Mongolian Superintendency (except for Russia). The politico-cultural Chinese empire encompassed these said political entities and the outer *fan*, but these outer *fan*'s contacts with China were managed by the Ministry of Rituals (such as Chosŏn, Ryukyu, and Annam) and they commonly identified the emperor in Beijing as the highest sovereign in the world. The following figure elucidates this structure. (Figure I. 3)

The common approach among scholars to describing the multilayered Chinese world order in late imperial times does not see such countries as Chosŏn as a component of the Chinese empire.⁶⁶ This view cleaves closely to a territorial definition of Chinese empire. The Chinese empire as a politico-cultural unit, however, stretched to its outer *fan* beyond China's borderline, where China's centrality was further constructed by local manifestations of the divine authority of the Chinese emperor. Before the European international law and the ideas embedded in it reached East Asia in the nineteenth century and acted as a catalyst for national independence attempts by challenging the Zongfan order, such as Korea's anti-Chinese coup in 1884, China's outer *fan* worshiped the same Chinese sovereign in Beijing, used the calendar issued by Beijing, pursued the legitimacy of their governance from Beijing, and espoused the principle that only the emperor

⁶⁶ See, for example, John King Fairbank, "A Preliminary Framework," in *The Chinese World Order*, 13; Hamashita Takeshi, *Kindai chūgoku no kokusai teki keiki: chōkō bōeki shisutemu to kindai ajia* (The international opportunities of modern China: tribute trade system and modern Asia), 32-33.

possessed the power of communicating with foreigners coming from outside the Chinese sphere. This phenomenon of the running of the Chinese world thus concerns three key issues relating to the outer *fan* that would be questioned within the context of the rising nation-state order, namely: sovereignty, citizen, and border.

Figure I. 3. The Structure of the Chinese Empire during the Qing Period



Notes: MOS=the Mongolian Superintendency; MOR=the Ministry of Rituals. A=the Manchu court; B=Inner provinces (Ch. *sheng*, or *xingsheng*); C=outer *fan* that under MOS except for Russia, such as Cahar Mongol, Tibet, and Xinjiang; D=outer *fan* under MOR, primarily Chosŏn, Ryukyu, and Annam; E=Western countries that were listed by the Qing as outer *fan*. AB=Inner China (Ch. *Zhongyuan*); ABC=the “Country of the Great Qing” (Ch. *Daqing guo*), or the territorial Chinese empire; ABCD=the politico-cultural Chinese empire; ABCDE=“All-under-Heaven” (Ch. *tianxia*).

Under the Chinese empire, each outer *fan* enjoyed the right of “autonomy” or “self-rule”—*zizhu*—within the boundaries of its own country, so the king was an independent and supreme sovereign in his own lands, as Jean-Baptiste Grosier and George N. Curzon observed in 1788 and 1894 respectively.⁶⁷ The kings of the Nguyễn dynasty (1802–1945) of Vietnam went even further, claiming to be “emperors” and calling Vietnam the “Central Kingdom” in the first half of the nineteenth century,⁶⁸ which was not exceptional in Vietnamese history.⁶⁹ Yet the kingship, with the embedded

⁶⁷ Jean-Baptiste Grosier, *A General Description of China*, 244; George N. Curzon, *Problems of the Far East: Japan–Korea–China*, 158.

⁶⁸ See, for example, Alexander Barton Woodside, *Vietnam and the Chinese Model: A Comparative Study of Vietnamese and Chinese Government in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century*, 9-10, 18-22.

⁶⁹ See, for example, Guo Zhenduo and Zhang Xiaomei, eds., *Yuenan tongshi* (The general history of Vietnam).

right of *zizhu*, was eventually subjugated to the Chinese emperorship. The emperor possessed absolute patriarchal power over the kings of Chosŏn, Ryukyu, and Annam, as demonstrated in Emperor Qianlong's abolishing the king of Vietnam, Lê Duy Kỳ (1765–1793), and investing a new king in 1789. In the Sino–Japanese War of 1894–1895, some Chinese officials also proposed to abolish the king of Chosŏn. The patriarchal and divine imperial power was always real and effective, even though Beijing barely exercised it. In this sense, the prevalent argument among foreign ministers in China after the 1850s, that Sino–Korean relations were “nominal,” was superficial.

What made the kingship dependent upon the emperorship were not China's military power or geopolitical gravity, but the classical *Zongfan* tenets and Confucian ethos of undergirding the orthodox legitimacy. For the sovereign of an outer *fan*, challenging the emperorship was no different from a denial of his own position. Therefore, the nature of the sovereign of an outer *fan* was twofold: fully independent in terms of the territorial Chinese empire and fully dependent in relation to the politico-cultural Chinese empire. In 1832, the king of Chosŏn firmly refused to trade with British merchants on the grounds that “subordinates of a *fan* have no right to conduct diplomacy” (Ch. *fanchen wu waijiao*), winning high praise from Emperor Daoguang (1782–1850, r. 1821–1850).⁷⁰ In the 1870s, the king of Chosŏn still firmly refused to negotiate with Western powers, noting that he, as a subordinate of the Chinese emperor, had no power to conduct “diplomacy” (Ch. *waijiao*) with Western foreigners. As mentioned above, in 1883 when Chosŏn had been defined as an independent sovereign state by its treaty with the United States in 1882, according to which the king was a

⁷⁰ *Ming Qing shiliao* (Historical documents on the Ming dynasty and the Qing dynasty), series. 7, vol. 5, 491b.

sovereign undoubtedly equal to the U.S. president, the Chinese official Li Hongzhang made it very clear that the king was “outer vassal” of the Chinese emperor and thus equal to the governors-general and provincial governors of China, who were “inner vassals.” Vietnam also held the same ideology until the 1880s.⁷¹ Such a fully dependent status of an outer *fan* could explain why Qing China was deeply involved in wars with France in Vietnam and with Japan in Chosŏn in the 1880s and 1890s.

The differences between peoples and borders were clear between Qing China and its outer *fan*, but these distinctions did not exist in a nation-state sense. Under the Chinese empire, the territorial border between China and the outer *fan* did not matter as much as it does today, because it could be fully blurred by the ideology of “all-under-Heaven.” This was particularly true for the Qing, because the Manchu rulers tried to show their regime’s “Chineseness” through classical Chinese cultural ideology. Many Chinese-made and Korean-made maps of the world by Qing China’s and Chosŏn’s cartographers in the eighteenth century presented and substantiated such cosmopolitan ideology.⁷² A case par excellence was that of 1727, when Emperor Yongzheng, believing that all lands of the outer *fan* were indiscriminately under his rule, demarcated a new borderline with Annam that allowed Annam’s line to extend 12.45 miles (40 Chinese *li*) farther toward China.⁷³ For the Manchu court, such a borderline was fully subject to the imperial authority, so the issue of territorial increase was moot. Similarly, intellectuals of China’s outer *fan* were presumed in the first place to identify themselves as sincere followers of Confucianism

⁷¹ Sun Hongnian, *Qingdai zhongyue Zongfan guanxi yanjiu* (Study on Sino–Vietnamese Zongfan relations during the Qing period), 92-93.

⁷² See, for example, Richard J. Smith, *Mapping China and Managing the World: Culture, Cartography and Cosmology in Late Imperial Times*, 48-88; Laura Hostetler, *Qing Colonial Enterprise*, 33-49; *Haedong chido* (Maps of Korea), vol. 1, 2-3.

⁷³ *Qing shizong shilu* (Veritable records of Emperor Yongzheng of the Qing), vol. 7, 999-1001. For comments on Emperor Yongzheng’s edict, see Shao Xunzheng, *Zhongfa yuenan guanxi shimo* (The ins and outs of Sino–French relations regarding Vietnam), 38.

and subjects of the Chinese emperor, not as citizens of their own countries, as people would do in the twentieth century.

Such conventional ideas strongly influenced Sino–Korean relations. In 1882, when the Chinese governors in Manchuria informed Beijing that many poor Korean peasants were crossing the border to cultivate Chinese lands, Emperor Guangxu (1871–1908, r. 1875–1908) noted that “in the eyes of the local officials, there is certainly a line between them and us (Ch. *bici zhi fen*); yet in the eyes of the court, there is originally no difference between the inside and the outside (Ch. *neiwai zhi bie*).”⁷⁴ Korean students learning Western technologies in Tianjin in 1882 were also treated by Chinese officials as the “loyal subjects of the Heavenly Dynasty” (Ch. *tianchao zhi chizi*) and were free from tuition.⁷⁵ For Qing China, Chosŏn was equal to a “domestic subordinate” (Ch. *neichen*),⁷⁶ which might propel some Chinese officials in the 1880s and 1890s to suggest Beijing convert Chosŏn into China’s “prefectures and counties”—called the “provincialization” of Chosŏn in this dissertation. These facts suggest that the nation-state perspective that became popular after WWII among Asian countries could neither encompass nor grasp the nature of the politico-cultural Chinese empire. It would otherwise be impossible to explain why national independence movements of China’s outer *fan* in modern times, such as Korea’s anti-Chinese coup in 1884 and anti-Japanese independent movement in 1919, had never before occurred under the Chinese empire.⁷⁷

The second critical problem regarding the Chinese empire under the Qing is

⁷⁴ Mingan to Emperor Guangxu, March 14, 1882, in *Guangxuchao zhupi zouzhe* (The palace memorials with Emperor Guangxu’s imperial instructions), vol. 112, 243.

⁷⁵ Kim Yun-Sik, *Ŭmch’ōngsa* (Cloudy and sunny diary), 40-41.

⁷⁶ *Qing gaozong shilu* (Veritable records of Emperor Qianlong of the Qing), vol. 24, 297.

⁷⁷ The same question could be asked in the case of the Roman Empire, see Gary B. Miles, “Roman and Modern Imperialism: A Reassessment.”

so-called “Qing imperialism.” The concept of the politico-cultural Chinese empire defined above would face this issue as well, for it provocatively includes those countries that later became independent sovereign nation-states in the twentieth century.

For scholars of China and East Asia, “imperialism” is generally identified with Japan or the West. In this context, it generally refers to a system that encompassed a series of aggressive political, economic, or diplomatic policies of Western and Japanese powers. These policies consisted in the powers’ attempting to reap the highest possible profits from certain countries, while competing with each other for power balance by extracting privileged priorities from the countries they subjugated through unequal treaties. Imperialism in East Asia is usually interpreted as a holdover of Western capitalism (Ch. *ziben zhuyi*) and colonialism (Ch. *zhimin zhuyi*) that reached the Chinese world after the 1840s.⁷⁸ The Sino–Japanese War of 1894–1895, along with the Treaty of Shimonoseki, is commonly seen as the mark of the rise of imperialism (Ch. *diguo zhuyi*) in East Asia, from which China painfully suffered as a complete victim.⁷⁹ In this context, the term “imperialist,” the agents of “imperialism,” is applied *only* to Western and Japanese powers, leaving the victimized Qing China outside the genre. The historical narratives of modern Chinese history following this methodology have been nourishing Chinese nationalism in the revolutionary and post-revolutionary milieus since the beginning of the twentieth century.

If “imperialism” can be loosely defined as “an unequal power relationship between two states in which the dominant state exercises various forms of control, often

⁷⁸ See, for example, Paul A. Cohen, *Discovering History in China*, 97-147; Odd Arne Westad, *Restless Empire: China and the World since 1750*, 53-86.

⁷⁹ Akira Iriye, “Imperialism in East Asia,” in James B. Crowley, ed., *Modern East Asia: Essays in Interpretation*, 122-150; William Rome, *China’s Last Empire: The Great Qing*, 231-243.

forcibly, over the weaker state,”⁸⁰ one will easily find imperialism in Chinese history, at least since the Warring States Period, when stronger states coercively manipulated and exploited the weaker states. Since the 1990s, with the sharp rise of the People’s Republic of China on the world stage and fierce and controversies regarding China’s rise to superpower,⁸¹ the common understanding that Qing China was a victim of imperialism has been questioned by two groups of scholars. The first group comprises students of the High Qing, namely from the Kangxi (1654–1722; r. 1662–1722) to Qianlong periods in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, who have promulgated the “New Qing History” paradigm.⁸² The second group consists in some students of Sino–Korean relations who have depicted Qing China in the late nineteenth century as an imperialistic power that exercised dominance over Chosŏn. The approach of the first group might be called “High Qing imperialism,” and that of the second group “Late Qing imperialism.”

The High Qing imperialism school suggests that, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Qing China manifested itself as an expansive empire characterized by three principal features: 1) territorial expansion to Inner Asia, Central Asia, and southwestern areas; 2) cultural expansion and human migration to the new conquered areas and frontiers; and 3) introduction of the Chinese civil administrative apparatus to the said areas. The requisite for this label is that Qing China shared certain features manifest in the expansions of European empires. Imperialism is thus interpreted as a system of coercive instruments aiming to extend the core area of an empire and keep it

⁸⁰ Craige B. Champion and Arthur M. Echstein, “Introduction: The Study of Roman Imperialism,” in Craige B. Champion, ed., *Roman Imperialism: Readings and Sources*, 3.

⁸¹ For example, see David Kang, *China Rising: Peace, Power, and Order in East Asia*; Martin Jacques, *When China Rules the World: The End of the Western World and the Birth of A New Global Order*; Peter J. Katzenstein, ed., *Sinicization and the Rise of China: Civilizational processes beyond East and West*.

⁸² See Mark Elliott, *The Manchu Way*, 32-35.

functioning. Some students of the High Qing have made this point clear. In his research on Qing China's activities in Xinjiang from 1759 to 1864, James A. Millward knows how controversial the term "imperialism" could become when it is applied to Qing China, but this realization did not prevent him from asserting that "where there is an empire, there must be imperialism—the dynamic set of motivations, ideologies, policies, and practices by which that empire is gained, maintained, and conceived."⁸³ Along the same intellectual line of deconstructing Chinese nationalist historiography, Peter C. Perdue depicts how Qing China conquered central Eurasia and incorporated it; Laura Hostetler highlights Qing China's aggressive political and cultural policies toward the ethnic peoples on its southwestern frontiers, which had all the hallmarks of "colonialism;" James L. Hevia treats the Sino-British conflict in the Macartney mission in 1793 as taking place "between two expansive imperialisms;" and Satoshi Hirano discusses the formation and collapse of the multiethnic unification under Qing China in the case of Tibet.⁸⁴ By primarily focusing on Qing China's territorial expansion, these narratives have portrayed the High Qing as an institutional agent of colonialism and imperialism.

High Qing imperialism, at its best, has further deconstructed the nationalist historiography and anachronistic discourse prevalent in post-1912 China. Yet such deconstruction is precisely the Achilles' heel of this approach. If the High Qing were an agency of imperialism, one would immediately reach an impasse, in which the following question could be asked: Which regime in Chinese history that unified China or broadened its border—including the People's Republic since 1949—would not fall into

⁸³ James A. Millward, *Beyond the Pass*, 17.

⁸⁴ See Peter C. Perdue, *China Marches West*; Laura Hostetler, *Qing Colonial Enterprise*; James L. Hevia, *Cherishing Men from Afar*; Satoshi Hirano, *Shin teikoku to chibetto mondai: taminzoku tōgō no seiritsu to gakai* (The Qing empire and the Tibet issue: the formation and collapse of the multiethnic unification).

this category? In other words, the subject of this kind of imperialism is not unique to Qing China, but replaceable and interchangeable. These regimes, each of which fiercely competed with its political adversaries, could thus constitute an opulent repertoire for such replacement. In short, what the “High Qing imperialism” has actually captured is the ceaselessly changing nature of “China”—the Central Kingdom, Zhongguo—itsself.

Compared with High Qing imperialism, “Late Qing imperialism” has made Qing China distinct from its counterparts in Chinese history by asserting that it exercised imperialism through coercive means characterized by power politics in the Western sense, such as unequal treaties and military intervention overseas as practiced by European colonial empires. Indeed, the leading proponents of this argument agree that the late Qing was a victim of Western and Japanese imperialism, yet this understanding does not soften their assertion that the victimized Qing itself exercised imperialism over a weaker country. Martina Deuchler argues that China’s policies after 1882—the year China helped Chosŏn to sign a treaty with the United States, dispatched troops to Chosŏn to suppress a mutiny, and signed the first Western-style convention with Chosŏn—demonstrate that “the tributary system gave way to power politics.”⁸⁵ Key-hiuk Kim elaborates upon this argument, asserting that after 1882 “the traditional suzerain–vassal relationship between China and Korea gave way to a new type of relationship between imperialist power and colonial dependent.”⁸⁶ Borrowing the political concept of “informal empire,” Kirk W. Larsen argues that Qing China practiced “imperialism” in Chosŏn in the late nineteenth

⁸⁵ Martina Deuchler, *Confucian Gentlemen and Barbarian Envoys: The Opening of Korea, 1875–1885*, 220.

⁸⁶ Key-hiuk Kim, *The Last Phase of the East Asian World Order: Korea, Japan, and the Chinese Empire, 1860–1882*, 348.

century, making the Chinese merchants its vanguard.⁸⁷ All these assertions reflect a misconception common in the late nineteenth century, which M. Frederick Nelson summarized in the 1940s: “Under the assumption that China had nothing but a religious and ceremonial connection with Korea, Westerners viewed her growing *de facto* control of Korea as pure and unjustified power politics directed against an independent state.”⁸⁸

This relationship must therefore be examined beyond this assumption. As Chapters 4 to 6 of this dissertation suggest, all critical historical events in the 1880s, which according to many scholars marked China’s efforts to strengthen its “suzerainty,” including the true situation of Yuan Shikai in Chosŏn, actually manifested themselves in a very different way within the Zongfan system. By discussing these events, I will show that “Zongfanism”—if one can use “-ism” in this way—was different from both colonialism and imperialism.

An essential issue that can connect and challenge the two kinds of “Qing imperialism” discussed above is the basic historical fact that the Qing never colonized Chosŏn. The relationship between the Qing and Chosŏn remained a non-colonial one from the 1630s, when the Qing thoroughly conquered the country, to the 1880s, when many Chinese officials suggested Beijing convert Chosŏn into Chinese territory. The Zongfan precedents included some cases of provincialization of both Korea and Vietnam in the Yuan and Ming periods, but Qing China never moved in the colonial or imperialist direction. Comparing China’s policies toward Chosŏn with those of Japan in the late nineteenth century, one finds why China had to help Chosŏn by fulfilling its political and moral commitments as *Zhongguo*, made under the Zongfan tenets since the 1630s, while

⁸⁷ Kirk W. Larsen, *Tradition, Treaties, and Trade: Qing Imperialism and Chosŏn Korea, 1850–1910*, 11-19.

⁸⁸ M. Frederick Nelson, *Korea and the Old Orders in Eastern Asia*, 294.

Japan, without such a heavy burden, could play the game of power politics. What drew China into the subsequent war with Japan was not the territorial Chinese empire, but the politico-cultural Chinese empire that intellectually regarded the outer *fan* as a part of itself. Similarly, what Japan defeated was the former, rather than the latter—an invisible empire beyond the Japanese world, a point that could help explain why Sino–Korean relations remained awkward from 1895, when Chosŏn was defined as an independent sovereign state, to 1910 when it was annexed by Japan. In the long run, it goes far to explain the special Sino–Korean relationship in the communist movement during the Cold War and thereafter. The two dual systems that the author of this dissertation puts forward and demonstrates in Chapters 4 and 5, namely the “inner dual system” and the “outer dual system,” aim to re-envision the Sino–Korean relationship since the middle of the nineteenth century. In this way, a new narrative of China’s great transformations in its late imperial and modern times can be constructed.

Structure of This Dissertation

This dissertation addresses the above mentioned issues by examining the changes in Sino–Korean relations from the 1610s to the 1910s in chronological order. Chapter 1 examines the unique process by which the Qing established its Zongfan relationship with Chosŏn. In contrast to mainstream interpretations, this chapter uses significant Chinese, Manchu, and Korean archival materials to demonstrate that the Qing’s transformation of its relationship with Chosŏn established its political identity as “China”—the Central Kingdom, or Zhongguo—prior to 1644. Chapter 2 investigates the process through which Qing China exploited Chosŏn’s prototypical position as outer *fan* to develop the “Chosŏn Model” and used this model to manage its relations with other political entities and to

construct its politico-cultural identity as the Heavenly Dynasty in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In this prolonged process, Qing China gradually portrayed Chosŏn as “a country of barbarians” on the periphery of the China-ruled “Chinese empire.” This chapter also interprets the bilateral ritual practices. Chapter 3 describes the operation of the Zongfan order by examining several cases of Sino–Korean, Sino–Vietnamese, and Sino–British contacts in the era when Qing China institutionally portrayed these countries as “countries of barbarians.” Through comparisons of these cases, this chapter explores how the rulers of the Chinese empire navigated the balance between the political rhetoric of China’s foreign policies, on the one hand, and the practical consequences of China’s preeminence in the Zongfan world, on the other.

Chapters 4 and 5 scrutinize the political and diplomatic conundrum of Chosŏn’s status as China’s *shuguo* and reinterpret the interwoven modifications of the two countries to their relations in the context of the two dual diplomatic systems, namely the “inner dual system” and the “outer dual system.” This reinterpretation contextualizes the legal dilemmas that China, Chosŏn, Japan, and Western powers encountered in a long-standing and consistent Zongfan lineage between China and Korea that both preceded and outlasted Qing–Chosŏn Zongfan relations. Chapters 6 and 7 examine the process in which Qing China and Chosŏn eventually identified each other as sovereign states as a result of the partial disintegration of the Zongfan system in the 1880s and 1890s. The two chapters also reveal that the two countries’ adjustments to their relations after the Sino–Japanese War kept the fundamentals of the Zongfan arrangement virtually untouched, for neither side of the hierarchy could overcome the ultimate dilemma caused by their mutually constitutive legitimacy in the Confucian world. Following this

trajectory, the conclusion demonstrates that the Chinese empire, manifested in the framework of Zongfan duality between China and Korea, persisted in an altered form, crossing the 1911 and 1949 divides, into the modern and contemporary era. It explores the historical legacies bequeathed by the Chinese empire under the Qing to post-Qing China, which continues to exist as a multiethnic sovereign state.

CHAPTER 1

Conquering Chosŏn: The Rise of the Manchu Regime as the Central Kingdom, 1616–1643

With its rapid rise from the late 1610s to the early 1630s in Manchuria, the Jurchen/Manchu regime reshaped its political perceptions of other polities and eliminated its long-lasting identity as “barbarians” against the politico-cultural background of civilized–barbarian distinction. A main source from which it derived political and cultural resources was its relations with Chosŏn, which validated and reinforced its position as the Central Kingdom within the newly established hierarchical system. In the 1630s, it expressed a strategic goal to become Zhongguo. Simultaneously, it gradually appropriated the Ming’s Zongfan discourse to term other countries—including the Ming—“barbarians,” initiating a prolonged process that we term “barbarianization” of other polities in this dissertation. The regime’s intensive exchanges of emissaries with Chosŏn from 1637 to 1643, based on highly programmed formalities, consolidated its identity of Zhongguo and propelled the Sinicization of the regime and the barbarianization of other political entities by the regime. The Great Qing, the Manchu regime’s new title since 1636, had actually transformed into Zhongguo before the Manchus crossed the Great Wall in 1644.

1.1 Barbarians, Rebellions, and Wars

THE REBELLION OF THE NORTHEASTERN BARBARIANS

On February 17, 1616, the Chinese New Year’s Day and the first day of the Forty-fourth Year of Wanli, many high-ranking officials of Ming China and tributary emissaries of Chosŏn and other outer *fan* of China assembled in the Meridian Gate (Ch. *Wumen*) of the

Forbidden City in Beijing, waiting to enter the imperial hall to present Emperor Wanli (1563–1620, r. 1573–1620) with their congratulations on the New Year. The day also marked the beginning of the two hundred and forty-ninth year of the Ming since it was founded in 1368. Finally, these officials had to pay the ceremonies in front of the gate because the emperor had no plan to give them an audience.¹ For the officials, this was not surprising at all, because since 1587 the emperor had been uninterested in such ceremonies and many high-ranking officials in Beijing never saw the hermit-like Son of Heaven. No officials exactly knew what the emperor was busy with in the Forbidden City. As usual, the New Year started with no significance.² The gigantic Heavenly Dynasty of the Ming and its lethargic human agent seemed to have fallen asleep.

The day, however, was significant in Hetuala, a small Manchurian town around 700 miles northeast of Beijing, where a tribe called Jianzhou Jurchen founded its own country under the leadership of its chieftain, Nurhaci (1559–1626). Proclaiming himself the “brilliant khan caring for all countries/peoples” (Ma. *abka geren gurun be ujikini seme sindaha genggiyen han*; Ch. *Tianren fuyu lieguo yingming han*), Nurhaci accepted the congratulations of Jurchen and Mongolian officials and generals, took the reign-title of “Tianming” (mandate of heaven; Ma. *abkai fulingga*), and named his country “Houjin” (the later Jin).³ He thus defined his regime as the successor to the Jin dynasty established

¹ *Ming shenzong shilu* (Veritable records of Emperor Wanli of the Ming), vol. 541, 10283.

² See Ray Huang, *1587, A Year of No Significance: The Ming Dynasty in Decline*.

³ *Manbun rōtō* (Old records written in Manchu), vol. 1, 67. The Japanese translation of Nurhaci’s title is “ten ga shūkuni o onyōsuru yaonito ninjita Genggiyen Han” (Genggiyen Han appointed by the Heaven to take care of all countries). *Qing taizuchao manwen yuandang* (The Manchu records on the Nurhaci period of the Qing) has the same meaning (Kuang Lu and Li Hsüeh-chih, comp. and trans., vol. 1, 63). *Chongyi manwen laodang* (Retranslations of the old records written in Manchu) follows the same way to translate into Chinese “tian renming de fuyu lieguo de yingming han” (brilliant Han appointed by Heaven to care for all countries) (vol. 1, 37). In *Qing taizu shilu* (Veritable records of Nurhaci), the title appears in Chinese as “fuyu lieguo yingming huangdi” (brilliant khan caring for all countries), which must be modified by Nurhaci’s inheritors (vol. 1, 63-64). The Korean translation from *Mongmun Manju sillok* (The veritable

by their ancestors.⁴

The establishment of the Houjin indicated that Nurhaci's political ambition extended far beyond unifying the local tribes. Nurhaci soon proved it on May 7, 1618, when he attacked the Ming's forces after announcing the "Seven Grievances" (Ma. *nadan amba koro*; Ch. *qi dahan*).⁵ Nurhaci had visited Beijing three times to present tributes to Emperor Wanli, and had been appointed by the court to govern the Jianzhou Jurchen, which were considered by the Ming to be "northeastern barbarians" (Ch. *dongbei yi*).⁶ In the "Seven Grievances," Nurhaci identified Jianzhou as an "outer barbarian tribe" (Ch. *waifan*) that had guarded the Ming's border for a long time.⁷ Yet various conflicts among his tribe, other tribes, and local leaders of the Ming contributed to his rebellion. The war thus started and would see the fall of a Chinese empire and the rise of a new *Chinese* empire over the following three decades.

records of the Manchus written in Mongolian) is "manmin ūl taedanhi chaehago puchihancha t'aejo yǒngmyǒng hwangje" (brilliant Emperor Taizu who generously loves and supports all people), and the translator notes that the Chinese equivalent is "lieguo enzhan yingming huangdi" (brilliant emperor whose kindness is shared by all countries) (Choi Hak-kūn, trans., vol. 1, 391). The Manchu term "han" has been understood as khan or emperor (Ch. *huangdi*), such as that in *Manbun rōtō* (vol. 1, 88). For more discussions on this issue, see Huang Chang-chien, "*Qing taizu tianming jianyuan kao*" (On the Reign-title "T'ien-ming" of Nurhaci), "Lun qing taizu yu chenghan hou chengdi, qing taizong jiweishi yi chengdi" (Respective Dates of Assuming Imperial Title by Nurhaci and Huang-t'ai-chi). The translation of this term can prove whether Nurhaci claimed himself emperor in the Chinese sense, which further concerns the competition of legitimacy between the Houjin and the Ming regarding the exclusiveness of Son of Heaven. See Iwai Shigeki, "Kanjin to chūgoku ni totte no Shinchō, Manju" (The Qing dynasty and Manchu that took over Han Chinese and China).

⁴ Franz Michael, *The Origin of Manchu Rule in China*, 44. The Chosŏn's officials also reviewed that the Houjin liked claiming to be descendants of the Jin, see *Kwanghaegun ilgi* (The annals of Kwanghaegun), vol. 29, 501. For the official narrative of the origin of the Manchus and their relations to the Jin, see *Qinding manzhou yuanliu kao* (Researches on Manchu origins, imperially ordained); Pamela Kyle Crossley, "*Manzhou Yuanliu Kao* and the Formalization of the Manchu Heritage."

⁵ The "Seven Grievances" in *Manbun rōtō* (vol. 1, 86-89) and *Qing taizu shilu* (vol. 1, 69) might not be the original text. According to the Chinese historian Meng Sen, the text included in an official notification written in Chinese and issued by the Manchu leaders in 1630 might be the original version of the Seven Grievances. See Meng Sen, "Qing taizu gaotian qi dahan zhi zhenben yanjiu" (A study of the original text of Nurhaci's Seven Grievances). Meanwhile, the 1630 edition reveals that the Manchu leaders tried to hide the Manchu's self-identity as "barbarians" in Nurhaci period.

⁶ See *Daming huidian* (Collected statutes of the Great Ming), vol. 107, 7a, vol. 113, 6a; Meng Sen, *Qingdai shi* (History of the Qing Dynasty), 105. See also Yao Ximeng, "Jianyi shouguan shimo" (The ins and outs of Jianzhou barbarians appointed by the Ming dynasty).

⁷ Meng Sen, "Qing taizu gaotian qi dahan zhi zhenben yanjiu."

The Ming was confident about suppressing Nurhaci. It enlisted the tribe of Yehe, a long-time powerful enemy of the Jurchen, and Chosŏn, China's most loyal outer *fan* since 1392 when it was established, to attack the Jurchen. Viewing its relationship to the Ming in father-son and monarch-subordinate terms, Chosŏn, regarded Nurhaci's rebellion as intolerable and the military assistance to the Ming as a "legal and moral duty" (K. *chikbun*, or *ũibun*). Following the convention of "serving the big country" or "serving the great," the king, Yi Hon (r. 1608-1623), known as Kwanghaegun in history, appointed General Kang Hong-rip to support the Ming's "heavenly soldiers and heavenly officers" (K. *ch'ŏnbyŏng ch'ŏnjang*), although the king was worried that his forces would be defeated.⁸ From April 4 to 7, 1619, General Kang, with 13,000 soldiers under his command, crossed the Yalu River to join forces with the Ming army in Manchuria.⁹

The united forces soon suffered a fiasco in the battle of Sarhū on April 17, in which General Kang surrendered to Nurhaci after more than 6,000 Korean soldiers were killed.¹⁰ The surrender was attributed to such factors as food shortages and inefficient logistics,¹¹ but the king's practical strategy toward Nurhaci and his secret instructions to General Kang on negotiating with Nurhaci mattered much.¹² Significantly, the surrender, ending Chosŏn's military engagement in the war, provided Nurhaci with a golden opportunity to open an official channel of communication with the sovereign of Chosŏn. In addition to seeking a peace agreement with Chosŏn to reduce the military risk on the Houjin's eastern flank, Nurhaci showed a strong intention of changing relations with

⁸ *Kwanghaegun ilgi*, vol. 29, 433, 508, 512, 521-522

⁹ *Kwanghaegun ilgi*, vol. 30, 92; Yi Min-hwan, *Ch'aekjung illok* (Diary in prison), in *Ja'am jip* (Collection of Yi Min-hwan), vol. 5, 5.

¹⁰ *Kwanghaegun ilgi*, vol. 30, 103; *Qing taizu shilu*, vol. 1, 83.

¹¹ Yi Min-hwan, "Cha kŏnju hwanhu jinjŏngso" (Statement of what had happened in Jianzhou after coming back to Chosŏn), in *Ja'am jip*, vol. 2, 1-2; *Ch'aekjung illok*, in *Ja'am jip*, vol. 5, 3-6; *Manbun rŏtŏ*, vol. 1, 132-135; *Kwanghaegun ilgi*, vol. 30, 110.

¹² *Kwanghaegun ilgi*, vol. 30, 116, 119, 325.

Chosŏn by identifying his newly founded regime as a state equal to Chosŏn, rather than a state of lower-status in the framework of Jurchen–Chosŏn relations that bore a striking resemblance to Ming–Chosŏn Zongfan relations.¹³ This political ambition posed a grave challenge to Chosŏn in the setting of civilized–barbarian distinction, initiating an invisible war of political discourse between them.

THE CONUNDRUM OF THE SOVEREIGN LETTERS

The bilateral communications started with exchanges of letters. On May 3, 1619, Nurhaci sent a captured officer, Chŏng Ŭng-jŏng, back to Chosŏn to present a “sovereign letter” (Ch. *guoshu*; K. *kuksŏ*) and a copy of the “Seven Grievances” to the king.¹⁴ After explaining why he fought with the “big country” (Ch. *daguo*; Ma. *amba gurun*)—the Ming, Nurhaci asked the king to make common cause with him against the Ming.¹⁵ Chosŏn had contacted with Nurhaci by letters through a local officer in the town of Manpo (K. *manpo ch’ŏmsa*) on northern border in the 1600s,¹⁶ but now Nurhaci’s “barbarian letter” (K. *hosŏ*) reached the court and posed a big problem for the king as to how to reply.

After a fierce debate among officials, the king appointed Pak Yŏp, Governor of P’yŏng’an-do holding a vice second rank, to reply to Nurhaci, but the format of the reply, in particular how to address Nurhaci, turned out to be a big challenge. In Nurhaci’s letter, the Mongolian characters of his stamp read “Emperor Tianming of the Houjin” (K.

¹³ See, for example, Kawachi Yoshihiro, *Mindai Joshin shi no kenkyū* (A study of the history of the Jurchen tribes in the Ming period), 424-450.

¹⁴ *Qing taizu shilu*, vol. 1, 84-85; *Qing ruguan qian yu Chaoxian wanglai guoshu huibian, 1619–1643* (Collection of sovereign letters communicated between the Manchus and Chosŏn, 1619–1643) (hereafter referred to as *WLGS*), 1-2.

¹⁵ *Manbun rŏtŏ*, vol. 1, 143.

¹⁶ *Sadae mungwe* (Records about serving the big country), vol. 46, 28b-31a.

Hugŭm ch'ŏnmyŏng hwangje),¹⁷ which greatly shocked the king and the Border Defense Command (K. *pibyŏng sa*) because they believed the Ming emperor was the exclusive emperor in the known universe. Additionally, Chosŏn always called Nurhaci “old chieftain” (K. *roch'u*), “barbarian chieftain” (K. *noch'u; ich'u*), and “chieftain of thieves” (K. *chŏkch'u*), so in no way would it endorse Nurhaci’s self-proclaimed imperial title. Finally, the king, pretending that he could not understand the characters on Nurhaci’s seal, instructed Pak Yŏp to send a letter to the “assistant general of Jianzhou garrison” (K. *Kŏnjuwi mabŏp*; Ch. *Jianzhouwei mafa*).¹⁸

The reply tried to kill two birds with one stone. First, it used the conventional term “Jianzhou garrison” (K. *kŏnjuwi*; Ch. *Jianzhouwei*) in accordance with the Ming’s border garrison system to refer to the Jurchen polity, rather than the “Houjin” or the “Jin”, indicating that Chosŏn did not acknowledge Nurhaci’s regime. Second, it called the addressee the “assistant general” (K. *mabŏp*; Ma. *mafa*; Ch. *mafa*), rather than “khan” or “emperor,” suggesting that Chosŏn did not endorse Nurhaci’s position as a sovereign and the letter should be delivered to an assistant general (K. *p'yŏnbi*) of Nurhaci, not to Nurhaci himself.¹⁹ The letter also called the addressee “You, the assistant general of the Jianzhou garrison” (K. *Kŏnjuwi mabŏp chokha*) and the term “You” (K. *chokha*) was used among officials equal to each other, not sovereigns.²⁰ A good example about the

¹⁷ It was likely that the Korean translator interpreted the Mongolian term “khan” into “emperor” (K. *hwangje*; Ch. *huangdi*) in the Chinese sense. Simultaneously, this interpretation proved that the name of Nurhaci’s regime was “Later Jin” (K. *Hugŭm*; Ch. *Houjin*) at the time.

¹⁸ *Kwanghaegun ilgi*, vol. 30, 118, 127; *WLGS*, 3.

¹⁹ *Kwanghaegun ilgi*, vol. 30, 128. Taisuke Mitamura argues that the term *mafa* was frequently used as a respectful title by the Jurchens to refer to the local officials of the Liaodong province of the Ming. See *Shinchō zenshi no kenkyū* (A Study of the Ch’ing Dynasty in the Manchu Period), 277, note 13. It seemed that Nurhaci had used the same term to call Chosŏn’s officials. *Mafa* is a Manchu term referring to ancestor or grandfather (Ch. *zu*), see *Manbun rŏtŏ*, vol. 4, 3; Yao Yuanzhi, *Zhuyeting zaji* (Miscellanies of Zhuyeting), vol. 7, 158.

²⁰ *Kwanghaegun ilgi*, vol. 30, 126.

embedded political indications of this term was that in 1636 the Japanese officials of the Tsushima Island called the Ministry of Rituals of Chosŏn (K. *yecho*) “You” (K. *chokha*) in their letter, instead of the previously honorific term “Your Excellency” (K. *kagha*), resulting in Chosŏn’s rejection of the letter.²¹ Such subtle format issues in Pak’s letter to the Houjin, including stamping Pak’s own official stamp instead of the king’s on it, aimed to highlight Chosŏn’s political position. In this way, the king could avoid corresponding with the khan, sidestep the sensitive issue of the Jurchen regime’s legitimacy, and downgrade the communication with the Houjin to a provincial level.

In his letter, Park noted that Chosŏn and the Houjin had been subjects (K. *sin*) of the “Heavenly Dynasty” for 200 years, so he suggested Nurhaci pledge allegiance to the “Imperial Ming” (K. *hwangmyŏng*; Ch. *huangming*) which would bring the reconciliation between Chosŏn and the Houjin too.²² This strong pro-Ming attitude made the Houjin uncomfortable.²³ In his reply, calling himself *gu*, a Chinese term only used by a sovereign to refer to himself, Nurhaci inferred that the “Heavenly Dynasty” that Chosŏn referred to must be the “southern dynasty” (Ch. *nanchao*)—the Jurchen’s appellation for the Ming, indicating that the Houjin did not endorse the exclusively divine position of the Ming anymore. The khan clearly required the king to ally with him and suggested that the two countries kill a white horse and a black bull to offer to heaven and earth, smear the blood of the sacrifices on the mouths, and burn incense to swear an oath.²⁴ The ceremony

²¹ *Yinjo sillok* (Veritable records of King Yinjo of Chosŏn), vol. 34, 618, 627.

²² *Kwanghaegun ilgi*, vol. 30, 128.

²³ Yi Min-hwan, *Ch’aekjung illok*, in *Ja’am jip*, vol. 5, 18-19.

²⁴ *Kwanghaegun ilgi*, vol. 30, 169. In *Kwanghaegun ilgi*, the Ming was referred to as the “Heavenly Dynasty” or “Imperial Ming” by Chosŏn, and there was no single Chinese character of “Ming” in the letter to the Houjin. However, in the copies of Chosŏn’s letter in *Qing taizu shilu* (vol. 1, 85; see also *WLGS*, 3-4), the “Heavenly Dynasty” was replaced by the “Great Ming” (Ch. *Daming*) or the “Ming Dynasty” (Ch. *Mingchao*). In addition, in the *Qing taizu shilu*, the term “Jianzhouwei mafā” was replaced by “manzhou guozhu” (the monarch of Manzhou country). I would like to identify Chosŏn’s record as the original. It

of swearing an oath that Nurhaci suggested was a long traditional custom in Chinese history when two or several countries or organizations allied with each other. Nurhaci had actually done this ceremony with such polities as Yehe, Hada, Ula, and Hūifa in 1597 and with the Ming in 1608. Later, Nurhaci started wars with these entities on account of their actions of disobeying the oath.²⁵

XU GUANGQI'S PROPOSAL TO "SUPERVISE AND PROTECT" CHOSŎN

Chosŏn was uninterested in Nurhaci's offer, particularly in the face of the Ming's suspicious reaction to its contacts with the rebellious "barbarians." The Ming officials, such as Xu Guangqi (1562–1633), suspected that Chosŏn would be joining the Jurchen's rebellion against the Ming, so that they started to consider controlling Chosŏn in such a critical time. Xu was famous for his close relations with Western missionaries in China, predominantly the Italian Jesuit priest, Matteo Ricci (1552–1610), and for his remarkable achievements in introducing European science into China. In the wake of the Ming's debacle in Manchuria, Xu put forward his new military strategy in a palace memorial to Emperor Wanli on August 7, 1619, in which he also brought forward a policy toward Chosŏn.²⁶

Xu argued that Beijing should follow historical precedents in the Zhou and Han dynasties to send an official to Chosŏn to "supervise and protect" (Ch. *jianhu*) it. Xu enthusiastically volunteered to take this position, while the Ministry of Personnel (Ch. *Libu*) and other central institutes strongly supported him. Yet the emperor, who had sent

seems that the Qing royal historians made some changes in the Hongtaiji period or after 1644. After 1616, Nurhaci sometimes still called the Ming "Great Ming" (Ma. *daiming*), see *Mongmun Manju sillok*, vol. 1, 391.

²⁵ *Qing taizu shilu*, vol. 1, 42, 50, 46, 60.

²⁶ Wang Zhongmin, ed., *Xu Guangqi ji* (Collections of Xu Guangqi), vol. 1, 106-117; *Ming shenzong shilu*, vol. 584, 11172-11173.

the Chinese forces to Chosŏn to save the country from the Japanese invasions in the 1590s, did not grant this proposal.²⁷ For people who embrace ideas of modern international law, particularly the idea of the equality between sovereigns after 1648, Xu's plan was a clear manifestation of "colonialism," insomuch that the official who would "supervise and protect" Chosŏn seemed to be no different from a viceroy appointed by a colonial power, as what Japan did in Korea after 1910. However, it was exactly on this aspect that the Zongfan system showed different nature from that of the European international relations system. The discrepancies between the two systems would be exemplified in an unprecedentedly intensive way by the residence of the Chinese official Yuan Shikai in Chosŏn in the 1880s, when the Western ministers had to negotiate Yuan's legal position with Beijing. In the 1610s, for Xu, who was free from those would-be imported Western political and diplomatic principles, the Sino-Korean relationship should be managed based on the classical Zongfan ideology of the ancient Zhou dynasty and the historical precedents of the Han dynasty.

Moreover, Xu knew that the Mongolian empire of the Yuan dynasty, which was overthrown by the Ming in 1638, had conquered the Korŏ dynasty of Korea (918–1392) and converted the country into the "Eastward Expedition Province" (Ch. *Zhengdong xingzhongshusheng*) in the 1280s.²⁸ The Yuan's imperial court conferred official title of the province upon the king and sent Darughachi—a local superintendent served by ethnic Mongolians—as a supervisor to manage affairs together with the king. The primary purpose of the Eastward Expedition Province was to serve as a frontier base for the

²⁷ *Xu Guangqi ji*, vol.1, 117.

²⁸ *Yuanshi* (History of the Yuan dynasty), vol. 208; *Yuan gaoli jishi* (History of the Yuan dynasty and the Korŏ dynasty), 44; Kim Han-gyu, *Hanjung kwan'gye sa* (A history of Sino-Korean relations), vol.1, 502-531.

Mongolian invasion of Japan, so it was different from other inner provinces of the Yuan and was soon abolished. Yet, in 1302, the officials of Liaoyang province of the Yuan suggested the emperor annex the Eastward Expedition Province to Liaoyang and moved its capital to Liaoyang. The emperor did not endorse this plan; otherwise, Korea could have totally incorporated into territory of the Chinese empire.²⁹ For the Chinese Confucian officials like Xu, soliciting classical theories and historical precedents was an efficient and legal way to form and legitimize China's would-be policies toward Korea, a point would be outstandingly proved again and again in the late nineteenth century.

Similarly, Chosŏn would not challenge the legitimacy of China's practices in the country based on Zongfan precedents. Had Emperor Wanli endorsed Xu's proposal in 1620, Chosŏn would have accepted the supervision and protection of the Chinese imperial envoys. In fact, what really proved provocative for Chosŏn in Xu's proposal was his assumption that it was collaborating with the Jurchen "barbarians" against the Ming, a very serious and intolerantly moral charge in the civilized–barbarian distinction setting. After he learned Xu's proposal, the king immediately sent emissaries to Beijing to make a defense on the matter.³⁰ Indeed, Chosŏn was not collaborating with the Jurchens, yet maintaining its political and moral allegiance to Beijing would not reduce the risk of an attack by the Jurchens. Therefore, rather than completely leaning to the Ming, the king adopted a practical approach by tactically maintaining connections with the Houjin but confining it at the local level. This pragmatism challenged the king's loyalty to the Ming and eventually resulted in a bloody coup that cost the king's rulership.

²⁹ *Korŏ sa chŏlyo* (Abstracts of history of the Korŏ dynasty), vol. 22, 29-30.

³⁰ *Kwanghaegun ilgi*, vol. 30, 223, 225, 231.

CHOSŎN'S ENDORSEMENT OF THE JURCHEN REGIME IN 1622

The king, Yi Hon, and many high-ranking officials never hesitated to express their pro-Ming and anti-Houjin attitudes in passionate rhetoric, in which they referred to the Jurchens as “thieves” (K. *chŏk*) or “barbarians” (K. *ho, i, no, orangk'ae, ro, or tal*). Yet the monarch and a couple of his confidants frequently indicated that Chosŏn should not become an enemy of the Jurchens for the sake of Chosŏn's safety.³¹ Consequently, Yi Hong's strategy was to maintain the twofold neutral policy mentioned above. The king had reasons to take such a dual policy, as the situation of the Ming–Chosŏn alliance was not sanguine. Two emperors of Ming China died within two months in 1620, while the new emperor, with the reign title of Tianqi (1621–1627), was not good at managing crises and caused unstable political situation in the court and inconsecutive military policies toward the Houjin. On the battleground, the Ming was losing more and more lands to the hands of the Houjin. In May 1621, the Jurchens occupied Liaoyang, an important military fortress in Manchuria, and made it the Houjin's new capital, cutting off the overland route of contacts between Chosŏn and the Ming.³²

In the face of Nurhaci's fast expansion and aggressive posture, the king secretly sent a military officer of Manpo to negotiate in vain with Nurhaci for peace in late 1621.³³ In October 1622, the king made a risky move to send Nurhaci his first sovereign letter through a civil official of the Ministry of Rituals in Hansŏng. In this letter, the king addressed Houjin as “a neighboring country” (K. *rin'guk*) and Nurhaci as “Khan of the Houjin country” (K. *Hugŭmguk kahan*). The letter followed the same format of those sent to Japan in accordance with the policy of *Kyorin*, namely communicating with a

³¹ *Kwanghaegun ilgi*, vol. 29, 501, 503, 516; vol. 30, 193, 203, 559, 572; vol. 31, 57, 83, 87, 97, 106.

³² *Kwanghaegun ilgi*, vol. 31, 3.

³³ *Kwanghaegun ilgi*, vol. 30, 641-645.

neighboring country.³⁴ By officially endorsing the Houjin as a legitimate neighboring country, these terms enhanced their bilateral communication to the monarch-to-monarch or sovereign-to-sovereign level.

The king, however, was suddenly abolished on May 11, 1623, by a coup launched by his nephew, Yi Jong (1595–1649, r. 1623–1649).³⁵ A primary charge against the king was that he failed to embrace the monarch–subordinate and father–son relationship with the Ming.³⁶ With the high moral standard, Yi Jong became the new king and his fervent pro-Ming attitude won him the investiture from the Ming.³⁷ In addition to mobilizing his subjects to prepare for another war with the Houjin and even planning to lead army by himself to attack the Jurchens, the king stopped the exchange of messengers with Nurhaci and imposed trade sanctions on him.³⁸ Meanwhile, he firmly assisted the Ming general Mao Wenlong (1576–1629), who escaped to Chosŏn after Liaoyang was occupied and stationed his forces on the Ka Island (K. *Kado*, also known as Pi or Chik Island), an island close to mainland Chosŏn, to carry out a guerrilla war in order to prevent the Houjin from entering the Shanhai Pass.³⁹ With more fugitives escaped to the island from Manchuria, Mao demanded more logistic support from Chosŏn to support his men. The overseas Chinese forces became a tremendous burden for Chosŏn, but the king strongly

³⁴ *Kwanghaegun ilgi*, vol. 31, 129, 165-167; *WLGS*, 8.

³⁵ See Yi Kŭng-ik, *Yŏllyŏsil gisul* (The records of Yŏllyŏsil), vol. 3, 324-332; *Kwanghaegun ilgi*, vol. 31, 256-257.

³⁶ *Kwanghaegun ilgi*, vol. 31, 257; *Yinjo sillok*, vol. 33, 503.

³⁷ *Yinjo sillok*, vol. 33, 512, 522; *Ming shi* (History of the Ming), vol. 27, 8303.

³⁸ *Yinjo sillok*, vol. 33, 27; vol. 34, 244. See also Li Kuang-tao, “Qingren ruguan qian qiukuan zhi shimo” (An account of Manchu Khan’s petition for peace to the court of the Ming empire), “Ji jinguohan zhi po’erqiukuan” (An account of petition of Khan of Houjin country for peace to the court of the Ming empire); Kim Sŏng-gyun, “Ch’o’gi ūi chojŏng kyŏngje kwan’gye gyosŏp yaggo” (A brief history of Chosŏn–Qing economic relations in the early period).

³⁹ *Kwanghaegun ilgi*, vol. 30, 610.

aided them,⁴⁰ as a result of which Mao could expand the range of his guerrilla war.⁴¹

Chosŏn's new policies of active involvement posed considerable military and economic threats on the Jurchens, but the king had underestimated the power of his opponents. In 1625, Nurhaci occupied the most important city in Manchuria, Shenyang, and made the city his new capital. The regime also preferred to present itself as "Jin," instead of "Houjin." After Nurhaci died in 1626, his son Hongtaiji (1592–1643, r. 1627–1643) became the new khan and immediately changed his father's policy of not invading Chosŏn. In 1627, the first year of the Jin's new reign-title of "Tiancong" (Ma. *abkai sure*), Hongtaiji launched an attack on Chosŏn.⁴²

1.2 Becoming the Elder Brother of Chosŏn: The Jin and the First Manchu–Chosŏn War of 1627

On February 23, 1627, Hongtaiji ordered an expedition to Chosŏn. Within two weeks, the Jin forces under Amin's command swept into northern Chosŏn, drove Mao's army back to the Ka Island, and captured Pyongyang, forcing the king, who had escaped to the Kanghwa Island, to send emissaries for peace negotiations.⁴³ As the preconditions for withdrawal, Amin required the king to swear an oath to heaven, through which Chosŏn would end its relations with the Ming and establish an "elder brother" (Ch. *xiong*)–"younger brother" (Ch. *di*) relationship with the Jin, treating the latter as the elder brother.⁴⁴ The request created a stir in Chosŏn. Many Confucian officials and students presented petitions and memorials to the king, arguing that Chosŏn should not end

⁴⁰ *Yinjo sillok*, vol. 33, 569, 614, 616; vol. 34, 16; Li Kuang-tao, "Mao Wenlong niangluan dongjiang benmo" (The Piracy of Mao Wen-lung in Tung-chiang at the End of the Ming Dynasty).

⁴¹ *Qing taizu shilu*, vol. 1, 128-129, 136; see also Chang Tsun-wu, *Qing Han Zongfan maoyi, 1637–1894* (Sino–Korean Tributary Trade, 1637–1894), 7.

⁴² *Qing taizong shilu* (Veritable records of Hongtaiji), vol. 2, 31-32.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 35-39.

⁴⁴ The letter of Amin to the king of Chosŏn, March 18, 1627, in *WLGS*, 12.

relations with the Ming and should stop negotiating with the barbarians, kill their messengers, and fight to the death. Proclaiming that Chosŏn would rather die than follow the terms of the “Jurchen clown” (K. *yŏjin soch’u*), the king told his subjects that the peace negotiations with the Jurchens were only stalling tactics, known as the “loose rein” policy (K. *ki’mi*; Ch. *jimi*).⁴⁵ In this way, the king deflected the domestic moral challenge and continued to negotiate with Hongtaiji through sovereign letter.

In his letter stamped with his seal, the king endorsed Hongtaiji’s political position by addressing him as “Khan of the country of the Jin” (K. *Kŭmguk han*),⁴⁶ but he purposely selected certain neutral terms to call the Jin and Chosŏn. He called Chosŏn “our country” (K. *oguk*), instead of “our humble country” (K. *p’yeguk*) or “our small country” (K. *sobang*) that he would use in his memorials to the Ming, while he called the Jin “your honorable country” (K. *kwiguk*). No honorific expressions about Hongtaiji appeared at the beginning of the letter.⁴⁷ In addition, the king articulated that Chosŏn would follow the policy of “communicating with a neighboring country” toward the Jin and that of “serving the big county” toward the Ming. By suggesting that he would not betray the Ming,⁴⁸ the king used the Ming reign-title of “Tianqi” to count the date in his letter, resulting in the deadlock in the peace negotiations.⁴⁹ Eventually, the king used the format of a “notice” (K. *kech’ŏp*; Ch. *jietie*;) for the letter, on which he did not need to put a reign-title,⁵⁰ which helped the two sides reach an agreement with Chosŏn on swearing an oath.

⁴⁵ *Yinjo sillok*, vol. 34, 168; Yang Lien-sheng, “Historical Notes on the Chinese World Order,” in *The Chinese World Order*, 31-33.

⁴⁶ *Yinjo sillok*, vol. 34, 163, 208.

⁴⁷ *Yinjo sillok*, vol. 34, 168; *Sadae mungwe*, vol. 17, 4b.

⁴⁸ *Yinjo sillok*, vol. 34, 176; *Yŏllyŏsil gisul*, vol. 3, 412.

⁴⁹ The letters of Amin to the king, March 23 and April 6, 1627, in *WLGS*, 14-15, 17.

⁵⁰ *Yinjo sillok*, vol. 34, 177; *Qing taizong shilu*, vol. 2, 61-62, 182-183; *Yŏllyŏsil gisul*, vol. 3, 426-431.

The oath-swearing ceremony occurred on April 18 at the palace on the Kanghwa Island. The king burned incense and the oaths to Heaven after one of his officials read them aloud. He then returned to his palace residence. After the Jin officials killed a white horse and a black bull and put their blood, flesh, and bones in vessels at the altar, nine highest officials of Chosŏn and eight high-ranking officials of Jin read their own oaths.⁵¹ The Korean and Manchu records reveal that neither the king nor his officials performed the ceremony of kowtow. Nor did these records show that the king and the Jin officials practiced any hierarchical rituals to each other. Another oath-swearing ceremony took place on May 3 in Pyongyang between Amin and a brother of the king who had been sent to the Jurchen side as a hostage.⁵² The Pyongyang oath stated that the king should present gifts to the khan, host the Jin emissaries as he did for those from the Ming, and not reinforce the city walls or conduct military drills.⁵³ The two ceremonies marked the arrival of a long peace that would last for a decade between the two countries.

The Jin reached certain political and economic goals through the war. First of all, Chosŏn officially endorsed the Jurchen regime as a state with a supreme sovereign, helping to enhance the regime's political legitimacy in the geopolitical setting. Meanwhile, as Chosŏn, the Confucian country as well as the "Little China," would regard the Jin as its "elder brother," the Jin's politico-cultural self-identity would change from the "barbarian" that was imposed by the discourse of the Ming-centered cosmopolitan order to the "civilized." Economically, in addition to setting up trade channels by asking Chosŏn to open markets at several towns on its northern border, the Jin requested Chosŏn

⁵¹ *Yinjo sillok*, vol. 34, 181; *Manbun rōtō*, vol. 4, 51.

⁵² About the Pyongyang swearing ceremony, see Liu Jiaju, *Qingchao chuqi de zhonghan guanxi* (Sino-Korean relations in the early Qing period), 15-16.

⁵³ *Qing taizong shilu*, vol. 2, 39-40.

to present “yearly tributes” (K. *se’pye*; Ch. *suibi*), as the following table shows (Table 1.1).

Table 1. 1. Items and Quantities of Chosŏn’s Tribute to the Jin, 1627–1636

Items	Quantities	Items	Quantities
Red silk	200 pieces	Mats in multicolor	50 pieces
Grass green silk	200 pieces	Mats in other colors	50 pieces
White silk	200 pieces	Thin mats with dragon pattern	1 piece
White ramie cloth	200 pieces	Sapan wood	200 catties
White cloth	400 pieces	Good swords	8
Red ceiba cloth	300 pieces	Small swords	8
Black ceiba cloth	300 pieces	Pepper	10 pecks (Ch. <i>dou</i>)
Blue ceiba cloth	400 pieces	Yellow chestnuts	10 pecks (Ch. <i>dou</i>)
White ceiba cloth	1,000 pieces	Jujubes	10 pecks (Ch. <i>dou</i>)
Ceiba cloth	5,000 pieces	Ginkgo nuts	10 pecks (Ch. <i>dou</i>)
Leopard skins	50 pieces	Dried persimmons	50 units (K. <i>ch’ŏp</i>)
Otter skins	200 pieces	Abalones	10 units (K. <i>ch’ŏp</i>)
Black squirrel skins	160 pieces	Tianchi tea	50 sacks (K. <i>pong</i>)
Korean Jute paper	500 rolls	Queshe tea	50 sacks (K. <i>pong</i>)
White cotton paper	1,000 rolls		

Sources: *WLGS*, 138-139, 152-153; *Yinjo sillok*, vol. 34, 623; Chang Tsun-wu, *Qing Han Zongfan maoyi*, 7.

1.3 Constructing A Jin-Centric Quasi-Zongfan System: The Jin’s New Position in Manchu–Chosŏn Relations, 1627–1636

THE SUBTLE JIN–CHOSŎN RELATIONS AFTER 1627

As his army withdrew from Chosŏn, Hongtaiji sent the king a letter, explaining why the Jin fought with the “southern dynasty”—the Ming—and attacked Chosŏn. He said, “The southern dynasty only regards itself as Son of Heaven and views people of other countries as inferior servants...The Mandate of Heaven is extremely righteous by assisting us with punishing it...In the future, our two countries should be brothers forever and never bully others as the southern dynasty does.”⁵⁴ By invoking the theory of the Mandate of Heaven, the khan challenged the Ming’s divine position as the center of the

⁵⁴ *Yinjo sillok*, vol. 34, 208. It is worth noting that in this context Hongtaiji referred to the Ming dynasty, rather than the emperor of the Ming dynasty, as the “Son of Heaven.”

known universe. In the following decade, his regime's construction of a Jin-centric quasi-Zongfan system gradually changed the Jin's position in the Jin–Chosŏn relations.

During several years after the attack on Chosŏn in 1627, the Jin actually lacked a clear-defined long-term political strategy toward Chosŏn and the Ming. Given the military and economic situations, the Jin did not force Chosŏn to stop exchanging emissaries with Beijing. The elder brother–younger brother relationship blueprinted by the Jin, one way or another, indicated that the Jin still identified the Ming as the father of the big family. Although Hongtaiji was challenging the Ming's authority, it seemed that he had no plan to remove the Ming from power at the time. Rather, his primary goal was to reach a peace agreement with the Ming, through which the emperor could acknowledge the Jin's status. The Jin made some efforts to sue for peace, including launching a highly risky attack on suburb of Beijing in 1629,⁵⁵ and asking his “younger brother”—Chosŏn—to forward touching petitions to the emperor in 1633 and 1634.⁵⁶ Some Han Chinese intellectuals serving the Jin court were also considering the ways of making peace with the Ming. In a palace memorial to Hongtaiji in 1630, Gao Hongzhong suggested that the Jin “follow the Chosŏn model to receive the [Ming's] investiture with kingship and to use the reign-title [of the Ming] to count the date” (Ch. *bi Chaoxian shili, qing feng wangwei, cong zhengshuo*).⁵⁷ Yet the Ming would never agree to negotiate with the “barbarian” rebels, so the war persisted.

As long as the war continued, the Jin's security would be at risk, in particular when it was exposed to the military threat of the three-side-blockade policy of the Ming,

⁵⁵ *Manwen laodang* (Old records written in Manchu), 969, 996-997, 1025-1026, 1034-1035. See also Li Kuang-tao, “Lun Chongzhen er'nian ‘jisi lubian’” (An account of the “barbarian rebellion of 1629”).

⁵⁶ *WLGS*, 121-122, 145-146.

⁵⁷ Luo Zhenyu ed., *Tiancongchao chengong zouyi* (Palace Memorials of Han Chinese officials during the Tiancong period, 1627–1636), vols. 2-3; *Ming Qing shiliao*, series. 3, vol. 1, 45.

in which Chosŏn, that in no case would it fulfill what the new “elder brother” expected, was involved.⁵⁸ On the contrary, the country maintained his entrenched point of view as to the Jurchens, while the ideology of the civilized–barbarian distinction was reinforced by the 1627 invasion, which was known as “barbarian invasion of 1627” (K. *Chŏngmyo horan*, or *Chŏngmyo roran*) in Chosŏn. As a result, more conflicts arose in Jin–Chosŏn economic and political contacts during this period.

Due to serious economic difficulties as a result of the war, the Jin required Chosŏn to open markets for trade in a northwestern border city, Ŭiju. After intensive negotiations in early 1628, Chosŏn agreed to open the markets twice a year, respectively in spring and autumn, rather than three times as Jin wished.⁵⁹ On March 31, 1628, the Ŭiju market opened for the first time and the Jin emissary, Inggŭldai (1596–1648), guided eight generals and more than one thousand people from Manchuria to the market. Yet it turned out that the Ŭiju market could not fulfill the Jin’s need because Chosŏn was not able to provide enough grain after the war. Hongtaiji urged Chosŏn to open another market on a northeastern border city, Hoeryŏng, but the Korean merchants were reluctant to go to Hoeryŏng in that the business at the city had declined for many years.⁶⁰

In the midst of difficulty, the Jin, one way or another, relied heavily on the “yearly gifts” presented by Chosŏn’s emissaries, who visited Shenyang in spring and autumn every year under the names of “Spring Emissary” (K. *ch’un sinsa*) and “Autumn Emissary” (K. *ch’u sinsa*). From 1627 to 1636, the categories of the gifts reached 85, but

⁵⁸ See Chang Tsun-wu, *Qing Han Zongfan maoyi*, 8.

⁵⁹ *Yinjo sillok*, vol. 34, 262.

⁶⁰ *Yinjo sillok*, vol. 34, 251, 260, 262; *Qing taizong shilu*, vol. 2, 55; *WLGs*, 41. See also Kim Sŏng-gyun, “Ch’o’gi ũi chojŏng kyŏngje kwan’gye gyosŏp yaggo,” in *Sahag yŏn’gu* 5 (1959): 26-29; Liu Jiaju, *Qingchao chuqi de zhonghan guanxi*, 54-57.

the amounts of the gifts kept changing due to the Jin's needs or Chosŏn's concerns,⁶¹ which became a barometer of their relations. For example, in 1630, when the king learned that Amin's army was defeated by the Ming in a battle, he immediately reduced the amount of the gifts.⁶² In 1633, Hongtaiji required Chosŏn to present 100 taels of gold and 1,000 taels of silver as parts of the yearly gifts, but encountered the firm refusal of Chosŏn.⁶³

Although such conflicts, as a nettlesome issue for both sides, fueled Hongtaiji's dissatisfaction with Chosŏn, the Korean emissaries did bring commercial opportunities to Shenyang. Along with the emissaries, many Korean merchants went to Shenyang to do business. The rapid rise of this market was so significant that the Border Defense Command of Chosŏn reported in 1631 that "the dispatches of emissaries were no different than going to open markets there."⁶⁴ Yet the Shenyang market, in common with the Ŭiju and Hoeryŏng markets, suffered from big differences in prices of consumer products of both sides, in particular those of black cloths and ginseng, which made it difficult for the Jin to make a profit.⁶⁵ The trade imbalance manifested by the three markets in Ŭiju, Hoeryŏng, and Shenyang eventually contributed to the Jin's invasion of Chosŏn in 1636.

THE RISE OF THE JIN-CHOSŎN QUASI-ZONGFAN ORDER

On the political side, Chosŏn and the Jin had very different understandings of their new relationship, as manifested by their political discourse applied to each other. Chosŏn

⁶¹ See *Qing taizong shilu*, vol. 2, 110; *Yinjo sillok*, vol. 34, 308; *WLGS*, 51-167. See also Kim Sŏng-gyun, "Ch'o'gi ŭi chojŏng kyŏngje kwan'gye gyosŏp yaggo," 37-40; Choi So-ja, *Myŏngch'ŏng sidae junghan kwan'gyesa yŏn'gu* (A study of Sino-Korean relations in Ming-Qing period), 107-108.

⁶² *Qing taizong shilu*, vol. 2, 110; *WLGS*, 75-76.

⁶³ *WLGS*, 99-100, 103-105.

⁶⁴ *Yinjo sillok*, vol. 34, 414.

⁶⁵ Liu Jiaju, *Qingchao chuqi de zhonghan guanxi*, 57-68.

continued its *Kyorin* policy toward the Jin and put the Jin on an equal footing with itself. It called its emissaries to the Jin “messengers” (K. *sinsa*; Ch. *xinshi*), not “tributary emissaries” (K. *kongsa*; Ch. *gongshi*) like those to the Ming. The yearly gifts to Shenyang were “gifts” (K. *yemul*; Ch. *liwu*), rather than “tributes” (K. *kongmul*; Ch. *gongwu*) like those presented to Beijing, and the name of the gift list was “list of gifts” (K. *yedan*; Ch. *lidan*), not “list of tributes” (K. *kongdan*; Ch. *gongdan*). These terms suggested that Chosŏn treated the Jin as a country that was lower than the Ming in the Ming-centric world. As the king noted in 1633 to Hongtaiji about the yearly gifts, “It is the proper principle (K. *ye*; Ch. *li*) that our two countries give each other local products in communications via emissaries.”⁶⁶ For Chosŏn, the Ming-centered political arrangement of the world had not really changed.

By contrast, the Jin progressively developed a new political discourse to nourish its self-identity as the center of the region that possessed a higher position than Chosŏn. With the steady rise of the Jin’s military power, especially after the Jin triumphed over the Ming’s forces in the battle at Dalinghe in late 1631 and early 1632, Hongtaiji dictated considerable reforms to the Jin’s political structure by abolishing the co-leading system at the highest level of the Jin’s court, making himself the exclusive and most powerful sovereign.⁶⁷ Since 1632, in his letters to the Ming and Chosŏn, Hongtaiji had begun to call himself “the brilliant khan of the country of the Manchus” (Ma. *manju gurun i sure han*), rather than “the khan of the country of the Jin” (Ma. *aisin gurun i han*) as before.⁶⁸ More importantly, he imitated the Ming’s bureaucratic system to establish Six Ministries

⁶⁶ *WLGS*, 100; *Qing taizong shilu*, vol. 2, 179-180.

⁶⁷ *Manbun rōtō*, vol. 5, 619-621.

⁶⁸ See, for example, *Manbun rōtō*, vol. 5, 803, 853.

(Ch. *liubu*; Ma. *ninggun jurgan*) in Shenyang,⁶⁹ and instructed his Manchu officials, such as Dahai, to translate Chinese classics into Manchu language (Ma. *manju gisun*).⁷⁰ From then on, the regime substantially accelerated its Sinicization from the top down, which was featured in its institutional construction through the great efforts of a group of Han Chinese officials and intellectuals, such as Ning Wanwo, Fan Wencheng, Gao Hongzhong, Bao Chengxian, and Yang Fangxing. One of the most significant acts of these elites was to persuade Hongtaiji to produce annals of the monarch and the regime in both Chinese and Manchu languages.⁷¹

The Chinese terms that these Han Chinese savants adopted to describe the exchanges of emissaries and diplomatic relations between the Jin and Chosŏn in the annals were crucial to change the Jin's political identity. According to the Manchu records written by the Manchu intellectuals, the emissaries of Chosŏn (Ma. *solho i elcin*) “arrived [in Shenyang] and delivered the local products as gifts” (Ma. *baci tucire doroi jaka benjime isinjiha*). When they left, the khan “gave” (Ma. *unggihe*) or “awarded” (Ma. *šangnaha*) them and the king (Ma. *solho wang*) gifts.⁷² Although these Manchus terms were largely vernacular and had no strong hierarchical or political meaning, except *šangnambi*, a synonym of the Chinese term *shang* (to award from the superior),⁷³ their Chinese counterparts in the Chinese-language records portrayed a very different relationship between the two countries. The visit of the emissaries, who were addressed as “tributary emissaries” (Ch. *gongshi*) with “tribute” (Ch. *gongwu*) or “local product”

⁶⁹ *Tiancongchao chengong zouyi*, vol. 2, 1a-3b, 20b; *Qingshi gao* (The draft history of the Qing dynasty), vol. 12, 3282.

⁷⁰ *Manbun rōtō*, vol. 5, 825-826.

⁷¹ *Tiancongchao chengong zouyi*, vol. 2, 44b-45b; Gertraude Roth Li, “The Manchu–Chinese Relationship, 1618–1636.”

⁷² *Manbun rōtō*, vol. 4, 92-95; *Manwen laodang*, 861-862.

⁷³ Tōru Haneda, ed., *Man–Wa jiten* (Manchu–Japanese dictionary), 396.

(Ch. *fangwu*), became “the coming to the court to present themselves before the sovereign” (Ch. *laichao*), suggesting that the emissaries came to the Jin not because of the latter’s formidable military might, but its outstanding merits.⁷⁴ Similarly, Hongtaiji’s gift-giving to the king and emissaries was “bestowing from the sovereign” (Ch. *ci*), a term in such setting always used by a Chinese emperor.⁷⁵ These Chinese terms comprised a hierarchical relationship between the sovereign—an emperor in the Chinese sense—and his subjects within the Zongfan system, such as Chosŏn, Vietnam, Ryukyu, and certain Central Asian states.⁷⁶ Meanwhile, the Jin invoked this political and diplomatic discourse that it developed toward Chosŏn to apply to the forces or political entities that sought shelter with, or surrendered to, the Jin.⁷⁷

This new discourse won the support of the steady rise of the Jin. In 1634, Hongtaiji changed the name of Shenyang into “Mukden” in Manchu or “Shengjing” (lit. prosperous capital) in Chinese, and next year he instructed his people to address the country “Manzhou” (M. *manju*; the Manchu state), not Jurchen or others.⁷⁸ It indicated that the regime’s institutional construction was facilitated by the very clear ethnic identification. Furthermore, the Jin officials, particularly the Han Chinese, started to address Hongtaiji as “emperor” (Ch. *huangshang*, or *huangdi*). Some of them went further to suggest Hongtaiji perform conventional rituals established in the Han dynasty,

⁷⁴ *Qing taizong shilu*, vol. 2, 171. For connotations of such Chinese terms as *laichao* in Chinese and East Asian history, see Li Hu, “Yindai waijiao zhidu chutan” (A study on the diplomatic system of the Shang dynasty); Chun Hae-jong, “Tongyang kodaesa e issösö üi kwihwa üi üüü” (Some notes on “Naturalization” in early East Asian history); John K. Fairbank, “Tributary Trade and China’s Relations with the West.”

⁷⁵ For example, see *Qing taizong shilu*, vol. 2, 45, 51-52, 54, 57, 105, 110, 192-193.

⁷⁶ See Joseph F. Fletcher, “China and Central Asia, 1368–1884,” in *The Chinese World Order*, 206-224; for the issue of the “tributes” and different political understandings of their relationship between Ming China and Central Asian states, see 206-209.

⁷⁷ For example, Bar Baturu, Nomun Dalai, and Coir Jamsu from Alakcot of Cahar went to the Jin in 1627, and Hongtaiji “awarded” them lands and live stocks. See *Manbun rötö*, vol. 4, 99-100. The surrender of the Ming General Kong Youde was another good example, see *Qing taizong shilu*, vol. 2, 190-191.

⁷⁸ *Qing taizong shilu*, vol. 2, 330-331.

through which the khan would claim to be “Son of Heaven” in the Chinese sense.⁷⁹ More importantly, these officials invoked the principles of the civilized–barbarian distinction to brand the Ming “barbarian” (Ch. *manzi*) and those Chinese who surrendered to the Jin “Han Chinese barbarians” (Ch. *hanyi*),⁸⁰ thereby appropriating and completely reversing the Ming’s language as to the center of the world.

With the consequential change of its worldview, the Manchu regime began to play the role of the exclusive institutional agency of the Mandate of Heaven with great virtue, to which “all barbarians on four quarters of the world willingly came in submission” (Ch. *siyi xianfu*).⁸¹ When the Ming generals Kong Youde and Geng Zhongming surrendered to Hongtaiji in 1633, the Jin jubilantly described it as “people from afar willingly coming to our court for civilization” (Ch. *yuanren laigui*).⁸² The euphoric adoption of the Chinese term “willingly coming to our court for civilization” (Ch. *laigui*, or *guihua*) demonstrated that the Manchu regime was purposely constructing a self-identity as the center of the world—the Central Kingdom—that possessed cultural superiority over “barbarians from afar” or on its periphery.⁸³ These momentous changes in the political discourse were deeply rooted in orthodox Chinese political theory articulated in Confucian classics, such as *Analects of Confucius* (Ch. *Lunyu*) and *Doctrine of the Mean* (Ch. *Zhongyong*), showing the prodigious significance of both the Sinicization of the

⁷⁹ Liu Xuecheng’s memorial, February 1, 1635, in *Tiancongchao chengong zouyi*, vol. 3-1, 10a-11b.

⁸⁰ Ning Wanwo’s memorial, September 11, 1633, in *Tiancongchao chengong zouyi*, vol. 3-1, 35a-35b; Chen Jin’s memorial, March 13, 1635, in *ibid.*, vol. 3-2, 15b.

⁸¹ Yang Mingxian’s memorial, March 28, 1635, in *Tiancongchao chengong zouyi*, vol. 3-2, 18a.

⁸² Huang Chang and Yu Yuelong’s memorial, May 19, 1633, in *Tiancongchao chengong zouyi*, vol. 3-1, 11b; Ding Wensheng and Zhao Fuxing’s memorial, June 28, 1633, *ibid.*, 21b. For the comparison between the Chinese records and the Manchu records regarding the surrender of Kong and Geng, see Kanda Nobuo, “Kō Yūtoku no kōkin e no raiki” (The submission of Kong Youde to the Houjin).

⁸³ For the cultural superiority that the center possessed over others, see J. K. Fairbank and S. Y. Têng, “On the Ch’ing Tributary System,” 137-138. Fairbank and Têng also analyzed the term “come and be transformed” (Ch. *laihua*), an equivalent of the term mentioned here.

Manchu regime and the Barbarianization by the regime. Such orthodox ideology would continuously assist the regime to define itself as the Central Kingdom until its very last years in the early twentieth century.⁸⁴

The use of the Chinese political rhetoric of this sort was no mere imitation of the Ming's political discourse to please Hongtaiji. Rather, it meant to achieve a political goal by transforming the regime from a barbarian on the periphery of the Ming-centric world into a new center of gravity in a Jin-dominated one, which the young and vernacular Manchu language—including the “New Manchu” (Ma. *ice manju hergen*) developed in 1632—was incapable of procuring.⁸⁵ The Manchu–Chosŏn contacts were conducted in accordance with hierarchical principles within in a quasi-Zongfan system *per se*.

All of these, with distinct hallmarks of Chinese political concepts, occurred in the late 1620s and early 1630s, when the Manchu regime was under new constructions with Ming China as the model. Some historians have argued that at the time the Manchus mainly derived political concepts of imperial rule from their Mongolian allies, rather than from Chinese.⁸⁶ Yet, the concurrent transformation of the Manchu–Chosŏn relationship of the day suggested a very different story beyond the dichotomy between the Manchu–Mongolian and Manchu–Ming communications. The synchronous transformation of the

⁸⁴ See Chapter 16 of *Lunyu* and Chapter 20 of *Zhongyong*. Both of the chapters articulate the court where Son of Heaven resides should utilize rituals and moral merits to attract and cherish the “people from afar.” For the case in which such political terms were used in the early twentieth century, see the letter of China's minister to Japan, Hu Weide, to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Beijing on August 13, 1909, in *Qing waiwubu shoufawen yilei cunqao* (The remained categorized copies of letters or telegrams that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs received and sent), 335.

⁸⁵ The first Chinese edition of *Qing taizong shilu* was produced in 1655, and the most popular Chinese edition available now was accomplished in 1739. For now the earliest Chinese manuscript should be *Qing taizong shilu gaoben* (The draft veritable records of Hongtaiji), written in the Shunzhi period, through which one could see how the Qing officials defined relations between the Manchu regime and other political units. In terms of the argument here, the memorials written in Chinese during the Hongtaiji period are the best evidence for one to grasp the process of the construction of the regime's new political discourse in the early 1630s.

⁸⁶ David M. Farquhar, “The Origins of the Manchus' Mongolian Policy,” in *The Chinese World Order, 199-200*; Peter C. Perdue, *China Marches West: The Qing Conquest of Central Eurasia*, 122-127.

Manchu regime's understanding of its relations with neighboring nomadic and Confucian states indicates that the regime was enthusiastically constructing its new politico-cultural self-identity as the center of the known world by appropriating and exploiting the Chinese Zongfan discourse that had been used by the Ming and Chosŏn. This process also occurred much earlier than the "documentary institutionalization" that happened in the post-1644 era.⁸⁷ The fundamental changes in the Manchus' relations with their neighbors thus illuminate the fierce debate regarding the Sinicization of the Manchus.

THE REGIME'S STRATEGIC GOAL OF TRANSFORMING ITSELF INTO "ZHONGGUO"

While the Chinese quasi-Zongfan discourse connoting strong political meanings was remaking the self-image of the Manchu regime in the Chinese sense, the Manchu language provided the regime with an international setting by framing the Jin's relations with other political entities as state-to-state relations. In Manchu records, the Jin, the Ming, Chosŏn, and such Mongolian polities as Korcin were all defined as *gurun*.⁸⁸ The term *gurun* has several meanings, including "country" (Ch. *guo*), "tribe" (Ch. *buluo*), "people of a tribe" (Ch. *zuzhong*), and "race" (Ch. *zhongzu*). Simply put, it has two primary meanings: "people" (only in plural) and "country." For instance, *amba gurun* could mean "big country" or "adults" and *ajige gurun* could mean "small country" or "children," while *haha gurun* refers to "men" and *hehe gurun* refers to "women."⁸⁹ In specific political contexts in which the Manchus used the term to define the above-mentioned polities at that time, it primarily meant "country," such as *aisin gurun*

⁸⁷ Pamela Kyle Crossley, "Manzhou Yuanliu Kao and the Formalization of the Manchu Heritage."

⁸⁸ For the coexistence of these *gurun* and the Mongolian influences on the Manchus, see David M. Farquhar, "The Origins of the Manchus' Mongolian Policy," 199-200, and Peter C. Perdue, *China Marches West: The Qing Conquest of Central Eurasia*, 122-127.

⁸⁹ See Ch'en Chieh-hsien, *Manzhou congkao* (Studies on the early Ch'ing dynasty), 1-9; Zhao Zhiqiang, "Jiu Qing Yu" *yanjiu* (Study on *The Old Manchu Language*), 69-70.

(the country of the Jin), *nikan gurun* (the country of the Han-Chinese, namely the Ming), *daiming gurun* (the country of the Great Ming), *solho gurun* or *coohiyan gurun* (the country of Chosŏn), *korcin gurun* (the country of the Korcin Mongol), and *cahar gurun* (the country of the Cahar Mongol).⁹⁰ In addition, the term can find its Mongolian equivalent *ulus* (country) in the Mongolian records as to the Manchu regime of the day.⁹¹

Such interpretations could be facilitated by the fact that the Manchu rulers drew very clear geographical, social, and cultural lines between the Manchu regime and other “countries.” For example, in 1619, Nurhaci in his letters to the Kalka Mongol stated that “the Ming and Chosŏn have different languages, but share the same styles in clothing and hair dress, so the two countries look like a single country. Our two countries have the same situation and look like a single country too.”⁹² Since the 1620s, such consciousness of being a state had become more transparent in the regime’s political norms, in particular in the Chinese records. For instance, in April 1628, Hongtaiji called the Cahar Mongol a “different country” (Ma. *encu gurun*; Ch. *yiguo*) and termed it as a “far country” (Ch. *yuanguo*).⁹³ In June 1629, Hongtaiji treated the prince of the “country of Korcin” (Ch. *ke’erqin guo*) to music and dances of “four countries” (Ch. *siguo*), including the Jin, the Korcin Mongol, the Ming, and Chosŏn.⁹⁴ In July 1632, in his letter to the Ming’s officials, Hongtaiji juxtaposed his country with the Cahar Mongol as two “countries

⁹⁰ See *MBRT*, vol. 1, 76-78, 159-160, 191-192; *MWLD*, 98-99, 119. For relations between “*gurun*” and the Manchu perception of “nation,” see Mark C. Elliott, “Manchu (Re)Definitions of the Nation in the Early Qing,” and *The Manchu Way*, 63-72.

⁹¹ See Shunjū Imanishi, *Man-wa mō-wa taiyaku Manshū jitsuroku* (Comparative translation of the Manchu–Japanese and the Mongolian–Japanese Manchu records).

⁹² *Manbun rōtō*, vol. 1, 159-160, 191-192; *Manwen laodang*, 98-99, 119.

⁹³ *Manbun rōtō*, vol. 4, 125; *Shin sanchō jitsuroku saiyo* (Excerpts from the first three annals of the Qing dynasty), vol. 1; *Qing taizong shilu*, vol. 2, 190-191.

⁹⁴ *Qing taizong shilu*, vol. 2, 71.

outside of the Ming's border" (Ma. *jasei tulergi gurun*; Ch. *bianwai zhi guo*).⁹⁵

The new political discourse fundamentally transformed the Manchu regime's worldview from within by representing the regime as a state at the center of a multistate community. The strategic goal of this transformation, as Ning Wanwo expressed in 1633 when he suggested that the Jin should compose an institutional code (Ch. *Jindian*) by modifying that of the Ming (Ch. *Daming huidian*), was to break the Ming's conventions and "gradually develop the institutions of Zhongguo" (Ch. *jianjiu Zhongguo zhi zhi*) of the Manchu regime's own. According to Ning, only in this way could the regime manage its great enterprise after it conquered the "barbarian places" of the Ming (Ch. *manzi difang*).⁹⁶ This strategic plan proves that Zhongguo, being a politico-cultural identity of a regime, was available for the Manchu regime to embrace and claim. More importantly, it suggests that taking the "Central Plain" (Ch. *Zhongyuan*) was not necessarily a prerequisite for the Manchu regime to become Zhongguo as it had been widely assumed, in particular in the time when the Ming was "barbarianized" within the Jin's discourse.

Nurhaci once wished the "way" (Ma. *doro*) of his ethnic nation, or the Manchuness, could be well preserved by setting up the Shanhai Pass and the Liao River as the border between "the Chinese and the Jurchen countries" (Ma. *nikan, jušen meni meni gurun*). He tried to avoid "turning into the Chinese Way" (Ma. *nikan i doro de dosimbi*; Ch. *xiao hansu*), or the Sinicization as we term it, which, in his eyes, the Liao, the Jin, and the Yuan dynasties had experienced after their founders left their own places for the "Chinese inner land" (Ma. *nikan i dorgi bade*; Ch. *handi*), where they "changed

⁹⁵ *Manbun rōtō*, vol. 5, 792; *Manwen laodang*, 1299; *Qing taizong shilu*, vol. 2, 165.

⁹⁶ Ning Wanwo's memorial, September 11, 1633, in *Tiancongchao chengong zouyi*, vol. 3-1, 35a-35b. Ning also emphasized that "a new generation of a monarch and his officials must have their own institutional works" (Ch. *you yidai junchen, biyou yidai zhizuo*), indicating that it was time for Hongtaiji and his officials to lay the foundation for a new political enterprise.

way and all became Chinese” (Ma. *doro forgošoro jakade, gemu nikan ohobi*).⁹⁷ Although the Manchu leaders watchfully exhorted their ethnic cohorts to keep the “old way” (Ma. *fe doro*) by practicing Manchu archery, horse-riding, and costume in daily life, their regime was unavoidably following the “Chinese way” (Ma. *nikan i doro*) in its fast transformation in the 1630s, as Ning’s memorials suggested.⁹⁸ In this sense, the regime could have arguably become Zhongguo, even if it remained in Manchuria and never crossed the Great Wall. Meanwhile, the Nurhaci’s above-mentioned words, recorded in both Manchu and Chinese languages, challenge the view that the Sinicization thesis “is a twentieth-century Han nationalist interpretation of China’s past.”⁹⁹

By practicing the newly adopted Chinese political discourse, the Manchu regime gradually absorbed the Chinese political philosophy of the Zongfan order into its understandings of the positions of itself and other polities in the known world. This Manchu–Chinese ideological combination produced a multilevel, hierarchical framework among these countries, in which the Jin replaced the Ming as the center of the world, with other countries, including the Ming itself, on its periphery. Moreover, aside from the Ming, the other countries served as the Jin’s outer *fan per se* by presenting “tribute” to the Chinese-emperor-like khan. This quasi-Zongfan system became so mature that in 1636, in their Chinese letter to Chosŏn, the 49 princes of 16 countries of Mongols under the Jin’s leadership termed themselves “Mongols as outer *fan* of the Jin” (Ch. *Jinguo waifan menggu*), equivalent to the Manchu term *tulergi goloï monggo* (Mongols as the

⁹⁷ *Manbun rōtō*, vol. 4, 29-30; vol. 7, 1439-1441; *Qing taizong shilu*, vol. 2, 404.

⁹⁸ *Manbun rōtō*, vol. 7, 1439-1441.

⁹⁹ Evelyn S. Rawski, “Reenvisioning the Qing: The Significance of the Qing Period in Chinese History,” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 55.4 (1996): 842.

outer *fan*).¹⁰⁰ Furthermore, in the same year, the Jin founded the Mongolian Superintendency or the Ministry of Mongolian Affairs (Ma. *monggo jurgan*; Ch. *Menggu yamen*) based on Chinese civil administrative concepts, which, as a creative institute parallel with the Ministry of Rituals, enabled the regime to transform its relations with the Mongols and to build and govern a vast empire in the following decades.

The construction of this quasi-Zongfan discourse occurred primarily within the Jin's borders. It was true that the regime was trying to sue for peace with the court of the Ming during the period and was short of long-term political strategy, yet the peace suing as a strategy of the war would not become an obstacle in the way of the reconstruction of its self-image within the country. In this process, the Jin found Chosŏn the best resource from outside that could support its discourse revolution. In the framework of bilateral contacts, the Jin progressively served as a supreme power and converted Chosŏn into its subordinate or outer *fan*, rather than a "younger brother" as it publicly claimed. Students of Sino-Korean relations tend to assume the Manchus adopted the Zongfan hierarchy discourse after 1637, when they imposed clear Zongfan terms on Chosŏn. The above analysis, however, proves that the process had veritably begun in an earlier period.

THE PRACTICES OF THE MANCHU-CHOSŎN QUASI-ZONGFAN ORDER

As the quasi-Zongfan discourse was under construction, the Manchu regime implemented it through the rituals in the exchange of emissaries. In Mukden, the Korean emissaries kowtowed five times to Hongtaiji.¹⁰¹ They were well housed in Mukden, and enjoyed an official welcome banquet (K. *hama yŏn*, lit. banquet for getting off a horse) and a

¹⁰⁰ *Yinjo sillok*, vol. 34, 625; *Manbun rŏtŏ*, vol. 6, 981.

¹⁰¹ *Manbun rŏtŏ*, vol. 4, 92, 332.

farewell banquet (K. *sangma yŏn*, lit. banquet for getting on a horse).¹⁰² Hongtaiji “awarded” gifts to the king, emissaries, interpreters, and servants of Chosŏn.¹⁰³ These formalities precisely imitated those practiced in the Ming–Chosŏn Zongfan exchanges, progressively institutionalizing a hierarchical Manchu–Chosŏn Zongfan order that would last for approximately 260 years since the 1630s.

As an exchange, the Jin sent ethnic-Manchu emissaries to Hansŏng in spring and autumn every year. They were housed at Hall of Admiring the Central Civilized Country (K. *Mohwa gwan*; Ch. *Muhua guan*), a place that had accommodated Ming emissaries, and were treated to official welcome and farewell banquets.¹⁰⁴ The emissaries also had an audience with the king in the palace, where they kowtowed three times to the king before they had tea and engaged in a short conversation.¹⁰⁵ Although Chosŏn did not want to treat the Manchu emissaries like those of the Ming, the basic ritual procedures of greeting were practically identical.¹⁰⁶ The Manchu emissaries only lacked their Ming counterparts’ standing as “imperial envoy” (Ch. *qinshi*) or “heavenly envoy” (Ch. *tianshi*).

This *de facto* quasi-Zongfan relationship conflicted with the *de jure* one between the two “brothers,” a contradiction strikingly manifested in different formats of their sovereign letters to each other. In the letters, Chosŏn placed the two sides on a fully equal political position, which was hierarchically lower than the Ming’s. According to the Zongfan convention, whenever the characters regarding the Heaven or the Ming emperor

¹⁰² *Sŭngjŏngwŏn ilgi* (The Daily Records of Royal Secretariat of the Chosŏn Dynasty), vol. 22, the item dated October 23, 1628.

¹⁰³ *Manbun rŏtŏ*, vol. 4, 94-95.

¹⁰⁴ *Sŭngjŏngwŏn ilgi*, vol. 22, the item dated March 17 and 24, 1629.

¹⁰⁵ *Sŭngjŏngwŏn ilgi*, vol. 22, the item dated March 19, 1629.

¹⁰⁶ The sovereign letter of the king to Hongtaiji, June 28, 1633, see *WLGS*, 113-114.

appeared, they should be placed at the top of a new line, and two character-spaces higher than “Chosŏn” and the first characters of other lines. This honorific elevation revered the Chinese emperor as the supreme human agent of the heaven with the highest divine position in the world. Hongtaiji also utilized honorific elevation in his letters, but he adopted a different arrangement of the hierarchy, as his letter to the Ming General Yuan Chonghuan (1584–1630) in 1627 showed. Hongtaiji divided the hierarchy into four levels, among which his position was lower than the Heaven and the Ming emperor, but higher than the Ming officials (Figure 1. 1). He also placed the Heaven higher than the emperor, in contrast to the Ming’s rule that General Yuan used in his letters to Hongtaiji (Figure 1. 2). Hongtaiji was frustrated by Yuan’s format in that he regarded himself as “the monarch or the khan of another country” (Ma. *encu gurun i ejen han*; Ch. *yiguo junzhu*), who was “son of the Heaven and the Buddha” (Ma. *abka fucihi i jui*; Ch. *tian fo zhi zi*). He proclaimed that he would not accept any letters from the Ming as long as he was addressed at a status equal to, or lower than, the Ming officials.¹⁰⁷ Nevertheless, when he communicated with the king of Chosŏn, he followed a pragmatic way by putting the king in a position almost equal to himself in order to avoid offending the king (Figure 1. 3).

The king followed the same format in his response to Hongtaiji, but tried to obscure the imposed brotherhood (Figure 1. 4). Although Hongtaiji called the king “younger brother” in his letters of 1627 and 1628, the king never called Hongtaiji “elder brother.” After Hongtaiji questioned the king about this aspect, the king started to adopt friend-to-friend terms in his letters of 1629, in which he began with “the king of the country of Chosŏn presents the letter to the khan of the country of the Jin” (K. *Chosŏn kugwang pongso Kŭmguk han*; Ma. *coohiyan gurun i wang ni bithe, aisin gurun i han de*

¹⁰⁷ See *Manwen laodang*, 821; *Manbun rŏtŏ*, vol. 4, 28.

unggimbi), which matched Hongtaiji’s usage “the khan of the country of the Jin sends the letter to the king of the country of Chosŏn” (Ma. *aisin gurun i han i bithe, coohiyān gurun i wang de unggimbi*; Ch. *Jinguohan zhishu yu Chaoxian guowang*). Later, the king changed the word “present” (K. *pong*; Ma. *jafambi*) to “send” (K. *ch’i*; Ma. *unggimbi*), which eliminated hierarchical indications of the former term. This subtle change provoked the Jin in 1635, but Chosŏn explained that both terms were utilized between “neighboring countries” (K. *rin’guk*; Ma. *adaki gurun*).¹⁰⁸ Chosŏn’s pro-Ming attitude became more pronounced in this process, which to the Jin meant the brotherhood was unstable. The Jin’s security would not be guaranteed so long as Chosŏn stood as a loyal subject of the Ming. The only way to solve this problem, for the Jin, was another war against Chosŏn.

Figure 1. 1. The Format of Hongtaiji’s Letters to Yuan Chonghuan in 1627

				Emperor	Heaven	1
						2
			Khan			3
		Ming officials				4
X	X	X	X	X	X	5
X	X	X	X	X	X	6
X	X	X	X	X	X	7
f	e	d	c	b	a	

Sources: Hongtaiji’s letter to Yuan Chonghuan, in *Manwen laodang*, 821; *Mambun Rōtō*, vol. 4, 28; see also Hongtaiji’s letter to officials of Jinzhou, *Manwen laodang*, 847; *Mambun Rōtō*, vol. 4, 72.

Notes: Arabic numerals represent horizontal lines from the top down, English letters represent vertical lines, and the direction of the writing was from right to left. “X” represents a Chinese character. The following figures follow the same format.

Figure 1. 2. The Format of Yuan Chonghuan’s Letters to Hongtaiji in 1627

				Emperor	Heaven	1
						2
	Khan	Ming officials				3
X	X	X		X	X	4
X	X	X		X	X	5
X	X	X		X	X	5
e	d	c		b	a	

¹⁰⁸ *WLGS*, 168-169; *Manbun rōtō*, vol. 6, 893-898.

28. Sources: Hongtaiji's letter to Yuan Chonghuan, in *Manwen laodang*, 821; *Mambun Rōtō*, vol. 4,

Figure 1. 3. The Format of Hongtaiji's Letters to the King of Chosŏn, 1627–1636

	Your country	Jin	King	Khan	Heaven	1
	X	X	X	X	X	2
	X	X	X	X	X	3
	X	X	X	X	X	4
	f	e	d	c	b	a

Sources: The king's letter to Hongtaiji, see *Kakyu go bu* (Records of miscellaneous documents), archive catalogue no. Ko-5710-5-4.

Figure 1. 4. The Format of the Letters of the King of Chosŏn to Hongtaiji, 1627–1636

	Your country	Our country	Khan	King	Ming	Heaven	1
	X	X	X	X	X	X	2
	X	X	X	X	X	X	3
	X	X	X	X	X	X	4
	g	f	e	d	c	b	a

Sources: The king's letter to Hongtaiji, see *Chosŏnguk raesŏ bu* (Records of letters from Chosŏn), vol. 1, archive catalogue no. Ko-5710-5-1.

1.4 From Elder Brother of Chosŏn to Father of Chosŏn: The Second Manchu–Chosŏn War in 1636–1637

CONFLICTS ON THE ORTHODOX LEGITIMACY

In the middle of the 1630s, many Han Chinese and Manchu officials tried to persuade Hongtaiji to take a new reign-title as “emperor.” On February 4, 1636, these officials presented memorials to prompt Hongtaiji to follow the Mandate of Heaven (Ch. *tianyi*) to claim to be emperor. Following the Chinese ritual conventions, Hongtaiji ostensibly declined and suggested his officials send emissaries to Chosŏn to discuss the matter with the king, his “younger brother.”¹⁰⁹ Hongtaiji's true motivation, as the Korean official Hong Ik-han (1586–1637) shrewdly recognized, was to utilize Chosŏn's identity as the “Little China” to assert before other countries that “Chosŏn reveres me as the Son of

¹⁰⁹ *Qing taizong shilu*, vol. 2, 341-343.

Heaven,” a position that Chosŏn would on no account endorse.¹¹⁰

On March 30, the Manchu officials Inggūldai (1596–1648) and Mafuta (?–1640) arrived in Hansŏng, along with 47 Mongolian princes, 30 generals, and 98 soldiers. They brought five letters. The first three letters extended Hongtaiji’s condolences for the death of the queen of Chosŏn. The fourth letter, written by eight Manchu princes (Ma. *hošoi beile*) and 17 high-ranking Manchu ministers (Ma. *gūsai amban*), and the fifth letter by 49 princes of the Mongolian polities under the Chinese name of “Jinguo waifan menggu” (Mongols, the outer *fan* of the country of the Jin), aimed to persuade the king to submit a palace memorial supporting Hongtaiji to follow the Mandate of Heaven (Ma. *abkai gūnin*) to take the “great title” (Ma. *amba gebu*), namely emperor. The letters also emphasized that the Jin now owned “virtues” (Ma. *erdemu*) that enabled it to manage the world.¹¹¹ Yet, on March 31, 139 Confucian students of Chosŏn presented a petition against the Manchu emissaries, calling for the king “to kill the barbarian emissaries and burn the barbarian letters.”¹¹² The situation suddenly threw Inggūldai and his followers into such a huge panic that next day they rushed to flee from the city, while people gathered along the road to tease and humiliate them.¹¹³ The mission had totally failed.

Chosŏn’s stance against Hongtaiji’s political ambitions was further strengthened when the king dispatched Na Tŏk-hŏn as the Spring Emissary and Yi Kwak as the Response Emissary (K. *hoetap sa*) to Mukden in late April.¹¹⁴ On May 15, the Jin held a grand ceremony for Hongtaiji to assume the title “Emperor of lenience, kindheartedness,

¹¹⁰ *Yinjo sillok*, vol. 34, 624.

¹¹¹ *Manbun rŏtŏ*, vol. 6, 904-911; *Qing taizong shilu*, vol. 2, 347-349; *Yinjo sillok*, vol. 34, 624-625. For the original text written in Chinese, see Hidetaka Nakamura, *Nissen kankeishi no kenkyū* (Study on history of Japanese–Korean relations), vol. 3, 610-613.

¹¹² *Yinjo sillok*, vol. 34, 625.

¹¹³ *Ibid.* See also *Pyŏngjarok ilgi* (Diary of the Manchu invasion of 1636).

¹¹⁴ *WLGS*, 177-180; *Yinjo sillok*, vol. 34, 626; *Qing taizong shilu*, vol. 2, 358-359.

beneficence, and brilliance” (Ma. *gosin onco huwaliyasun enduringge han*; Ch. *Kuan wen ren sheng huangdi*) and adopt the new reign-title “Chongde” (Ma. *wesihun erdemungge*, lit. worshipping virtues). The Jin also renamed itself the “Country of the Great Qing” (Ma. *daicing gurun*; Ch. *Daqing guo*).¹¹⁵ After gathering before Hongtaiji at his left and right flanks, all Manchu, Mongolian, and Han Chinese officials knelt down three times, each time bowing their heads three times (Ch. *san gui jiu koutou*; Ma. *ilan jergi niyakūrafi uyun jergi hengkilembi*). Although Na and Yi had conducted a ceremony of kowtow before Hongtaiji four times when they first arrived on May 6, they identified the ceremony as the “usurpation of the imperial title” (K. *ch’amho*; Ch. *jianhao*) and refused to perform it, expressing their strong stance against Hongtaiji’s political ambitions.¹¹⁶

The ritual conflict posed a grave identity crisis to the Manchu regime. In terms of geopolitics, Chosŏn was the only Confucian country that was beyond the regime’s political and military control but maintained regular and official diplomatic communications with it.¹¹⁷ Without endorsement from Chosŏn, the Manchu regime’s political transformation would remain primarily within its borders and would not significantly influence regional politics. Furthermore, since Hongtaiji had claimed to be the Son of Heaven by following the Chinese “proper conduct” (Ch. *li*), he desperately needed Chosŏn’s identity as a Confucian country to counteract the designation of the Manchus as the “barbarian” and legitimize his emperorship in the Chinese sense.

The Qing soon sent Na and Yi back to Chosŏn with Hongtaiji’s two

¹¹⁵ *Qing taizong shilu gaoben*, 9.

¹¹⁶ *Manbun rōtō*, vol. 6, 982, 993-994; *Qing taizong shilu*, vol. 2, 360-363; *Qing taizong shilu gaoben*, 17; *Yinjo sillok*, vol. 34, 631.

¹¹⁷ *Qing taizong shilu gaoben*, 8.

Chinese-language letters to the king. In the letters, Hongtaiji called himself “the emperor of the country of the Great Qing” (Ch. *Daqing guo huangdi*), rather than “the khan of the Jin,” and called Chosŏn “Your country” (Ch. *erguo*), instead of “Your honorable country” (Ch. *guiguo*), indicating the end of the bilateral brotherhood relationship.¹¹⁸ Invoking the time-honored classical theory that “the Heaven does not belong to one person, but to all people under the Heaven” (Ma. *abkai fejergi emu niyalmai abkai fejergi waka, abkai fejergi niyalmai abkai fejergi*), Hongtaiji sought to demonstrate that his regime could govern the space “all-under-Heaven” (Ch. *tianxia*; Ma. *abkai fejergi*) by following the precedents set by the Liao that was founded by the “northeastern barbarian” (Ch. *Dongbeiyi*; Ma. *dergi amargi jušen*), the Jin by the “eastern barbarian” (Ch. *Dongyi*; Ma. *dergi jušen*), and the Yuan by the “northern barbarian” (Ch. *Beiyi*; Ma. *amargi monggo*). By chronicling the rise and fall of these dynasties, Hongtaiji indicated that it was time for the Qing—the regime founded by Manchu barbarian—to rule as Son of Heaven because it possessed the “virtue” (Ch. *de*; Ma. *erdemu*) that the Ming had lost.¹¹⁹ This assertion was profoundly based on the Chinese political view that “the Great Heaven has no partial affections and it only helps the virtuous” (Ch. *huangtian wu qin, wei de shi fu*), a theory articulated in *The Classic of History* (Ch. *Shangshu*) that had endowed more than 30 dynasties with legitimacy. This theory was later elaborated by Emperor Yongzheng—Hongtaiji’s great grandson—in 1729 in his book, *Great Righteousness Resolving Confusion* (Ch. *Dayi juemi lu*), in which the Son of Heaven with his Manchu ethnic identity publicly discussed the sensitive issue of the civilized–barbarian distinction

¹¹⁸ *Yinjo sillok*, vol. 34, 631; *Manbun rōtō*, vol. 6, 1005-1006, 1008-1009.

¹¹⁹ *Qing taizong shilu*, vol. 2, 369-372; *Manbun rōtō*, vol. 6, 1005-1006.

with Han Chinese intellectuals in the wake of the case of Zeng Jing (1679–1735).¹²⁰ In short, Hongtaiji hoped Chosŏn to serve as the Great Qing’s outer *fan*, just as it had served previous dynasties of China.

Chosŏn, therefore, became the first external target on which the Qing promulgated its new Qing-centric Zongfan doctrine. Yet Hongtaiji’s oration was unpopular in Chosŏn because it was totally opposite to the orthodox legitimacy, upon which the Confucian country based its political and social principles. Except several high-ranking and sophisticated officials, such as Ch’oi Myŏng-kil (1586–1647), the majority of the officials called for “revering China and expelling the barbarians” (K. *chon Chungguk, yang yi chŏk*; Ch. *zun Zhongguo, rang yidi*) to accord with “the doctrine of revering the Zhou dynasty” (K. *chonju ūiri*).¹²¹ In the face of tremendous moral pressure, the king reaffirmed that Chosŏn would not endorse Hongtaiji’s emperorship.¹²² Due to the impasse, the Qing decided to wage another war against Chosŏn, a war that was for name and legitimacy.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MANCHU–CHOSŎN ZONGFAN RELATIONS

On December 28, 1636, the Qing troops began to attack Chosŏn and captured Hansŏng on January 9, 1637, without encountering strong resistance. The king had barely been able to escape to the Namhan Mountain Fortress (K. *Namhan sansŏng*) with some officials, while the crown prince, the royal family members, and other officials fled to the Kanghwa Island. The Qing forces surrounded the Namhan fortress and, as the precondition for peaceful negotiation, they urged the king to send the crown prince as

¹²⁰ *Dayi juemi lu* (Great righteousness resolving confusion), vol. 1, 1-13. About the case of Zeng Jing, see Jonathan Spence, *Treason by the Book*.

¹²¹ For example, see Cho Bin’s palace memorial to the king, in *Yinjo sillok*, vol. 34, 649.

¹²² *Yinjo sillok*, vol. 34, 635.

hostage. The king refused and mobilized his forces to resist the invasion and protect the “great justice under the heaven” (K. *ch’ŏnha taeŭi*). The king also led his officials to perform ceremonies in the besieged fortress to celebrate the birthday of Emperor Chongzhen (1611–1644, r. 1628–1644) of the Ming on January 19, when Hongtaiji was marching toward the fortress with more troops.¹²³ Yet the king was fully aware that Chosŏn’s fate was now at a crossroads. On January 26, 1637, the New Year’s Day according to the lunar calendar, a solar eclipse occurred, which, in the conventional political context, was an inauspicious sign. On the day, the king performed vested rituals toward the direction where the Ming emperor was supposed to be in order to fulfill Chosŏn’s duty as the Ming’s outer *fan*, while in Beijing the emperor had cancelled the grand ceremony for celebrating the New Year’s Day due to the eclipse.¹²⁴ After the ceremony, the king sent two officials to negotiate with the Qing.

Two days later, the king presented a sovereign letter to Hongtaiji, in which he called Hongtaiji “Emperor of lenience, kindheartedness, beneficence, and brilliance of the country of the Great Qing” (K. *Dae ch’ŏngguk kwan mun in song hwangje*) and termed the Qing as the “big country” (K. *taeguk*) and Chosŏn the “small country” (K. *sobang*). The activity of presenting the letter was defined as “submitting the letter to the higher authority” (K. *songsŏ*).¹²⁵ Hongtaiji insisted that the king should present himself in person, so the two sides negotiated for two more weeks, during which the Qing troops shelled the fortress and defeated several Chosŏn’s reinforcements from provinces.¹²⁶ On February 15, the king presented a letter with the new format to Hongtaiji, in which he

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 657, 659.

¹²⁴ *Chongzhen shilu* (Veritable records of Emperor Chongzhen), vol. 2, 299.

¹²⁵ *Chosŏnguk raesŏ bu*, vol. 2, archive catalogue no. Ko-5710-5-2, 21-22; *WLGS*, 199-200.

¹²⁶ *Qing taizong shilu*, vol. 2, 414, 416-417.

called Hongtaiji “Your Majesty” (K. *p’yeha*) and himself a “subordinate” (K. *sin*; Ch. *chen*) of the emperor (Figure 1. 5). At the end of the letter, he used the Qing’s reign-title “Chongde” to count the date.¹²⁷ This suggested that the king had decided to surrender before the Kanghwa Island was conquered on February 16.¹²⁸ On February 17, the king submitted a sovereign letter to Hongtaiji, declaring that Chosŏn would “present the humble palace memorial (K. *p’yo*; Ch. *biao*) as the subordinate to serve as the Great Qing’s *fan* (K. *pŏnbang*; Ch. *fanbang*) forever.” The king stated that “from now on all rituals about serving the big countries would be performed as the vested formats.”¹²⁹ The country officially took the Qing’s terms.

Figure 1. 5. The Format of the King’s Letters to Hongtaiji in February, 1637

		Great Qing		Qing Emperor	Heaven	1
						2
X	X	Chosŏn	X	King	X	3
X	X	X	X	X	X	4
X	X	X	X	X	X	5
f	e	d	c	b	a	

Sources: The king’s letters to Hongtaiji, see *Chosŏnguk raesŏ bu*, vol. 2, archive catalogue no. Ko-5710-5-2, 26-38.

On February 22, Inggŭldai brought the emperor’s edict to the king. Inggŭldai asked the Korean officials who greeted him outside the fortress to perform the same rituals that they had done to receive imperial edicts from the “southern dynasty” (the Ming).¹³⁰ This marked the first time that the Qing replaced the role of the Ming in ritual exchanges with Chosŏn on Chosŏn’s territory. In the edict, Hongtaiji listed ten terms of submission, among which the following two stood out:

¹²⁷ *Chosŏnguk raesŏ bu*, vol. 2, archive catalogue no. Ko-5710-5-2, 26-29; *WLGS*, 207-209.

¹²⁸ About the fall of the Kanghwa Island, see Yi Kŭng-ik, *Yŏllyŏsil gisul*, vol. 3, 491-498.

¹²⁹ *Chosŏnguk raesŏ bu*, vol. 2, archive catalogue no. Ko-5710-5-2, 29-32; *WLGS*, 210-212.

¹³⁰ *Yinjo sillok*, vol. 34, 671.

First, the king should submit to the Qing the imperial investiture and the seal that he had received from the Ming and stop communicating with the Ming. Chosŏn must stop using the reign-title of the Ming and start to use that of the Qing to indicate the date in all documents. Second, the king must dispatch officials to the Qing every year, bringing humble palace memorials, presenting gifts, and performing rituals to celebrate the birthdays of the emperor, empress, and crown prince, the winter solstice and the New Year's Day, and good news of the Qing, or to extend condolences on the loss of the Qing's royal members, and so forth. The format of the humble palace memorials must precisely follow the established one of those Chosŏn had presented to the Ming. The rituals of receiving imperial decrees, accommodating imperial emissaries in Chosŏn, and paying formal visits to the Qing emperor by Chosŏn's emissaries in the Qing, must exactly follow the established way of the Ming (Ch. *Mingguo jiuli*).¹³¹

Meanwhile, Hongtaiji listed the items and amounts of Chosŏn's tributes to the Qing and permitted the country to start presenting the tributes from 1639 (Table 1. 2).

Table 1. 2. Items and Quantities of Chosŏn's Tributes to the Qing in 1637

Items	Quantities	Items	Quantities
Gold	100 tael	Sapan wood	200 catties
Silver	1,000 tael	Good large-size paper	1,000 rolls
Buffalo horn-made bows	200	Good small-size paper	1,500 rolls
Leopard skins	100 pieces	Mats with dragon pattern	4 pieces
Deer skins	100 pieces	Mats with variegated pattern	40 pieces
Tea	1,000 sacks	White ramie cloth	200 pieces
Otter skins	400 pieces	Silk with different colors	2,000 rolls
Black squirrel skins	300 pieces	Thin ramie cloth with different colors	400 rolls
Pepper	10 pecks (Ch. <i>dou</i>)	Thin cloth with different colors	10,000 rolls
Good girdle knives	26	Cloth	1,400 rolls
Multi-edged knives	20	Rice	10,000 sacks

Sources: *Yinjo sillok*, vol. 34, 671; *Qing taizong shilu*, vol. 2, 430-431; *Tongmun hwiko*, vol. 2, 1488; *WLGS*, 213-215; Chun Hae-Jong, "Sino-Korean Tributary Relations in the Ch'ing Period," 90-111.

The king unconditionally accepted all terms. On February 24, he presented himself before Hongtaiji at Samjŏndo, a place near the Hangang River, where the Qing had built a big altar for Hongtaiji to receive the king's surrender. During the ceremony over which the Ministry of Rituals of the Qing presided, the king knelt down three times, each time bowing his head three times before the emperor, after which he handed in his

¹³¹ *Yinjo sillok*, vol. 34, 671; *Tongmun hwiko* (Collections of Chosŏn's diplomatic materials), vol. 2, 1488.

seal issued by the Ming.¹³² The ceremony marked the official establishment of the Zongfan relationship between the Qing and Chosŏn, as the king stated in his memorial to Hongtaiji on December 16, 1637.¹³³ The Qing's forces soon returned to Mukden, taking the crown prince, Yi Wang (1612–1645), and the king's second son, Yi Ho (1619–1659, r. 1649–1659), as hostages. Beginning on March 24, 1637, Chosŏn used the reign-title of the Qing to count the date.¹³⁴ In all senses, Chosŏn became the Qing's outer *fan*.

1.5 “Cherishing the Small Country” As the “Big Country”: The Qing’s Construction of Its “Zhongguo” Identity, 1637–1643

THE QING’S TRANSFORMING INTO THE “BIG COUNTRY”

According to the new Zongfan relationship, the Qing was the monarch over Chosŏn and father of the big family principally consisting of the Qing, Chosŏn, and Mongolian states. With such authority, the Qing could use the subordination of Chosŏn to its advantages. The first and the most direct effect was the formation of the new military allies between the two countries. By conquering Chosŏn, the Qing reinforced home front by eliminating potential military threat on its east flank in the war with the Ming. It also gained material assistance from Chosŏn, such as war horses, grain, warships, cannons, and soldiers.¹³⁵ Two months after Chosŏn's subordination, the Manchu forces conquered the Ka Island, destroying the most important and the last military base of the Ming in Chosŏn.¹³⁶ In the next few years, some Chosŏn soldiers, particularly the gunners, would follow the Manchus to fight and garrison Jinzhou and other newly conquered cities in Manchuria.¹³⁷

¹³² *Qing taizong shilu*, vol. 2, 432-433; *Yinjo sillok*, vol. 34, 673.

¹³³ *Qing taizong shilu*, vol. 2, 511.

¹³⁴ *Yinjo sillok*, vol. 34, 674, 677.

¹³⁵ *Qing taizong shilu*, vol. 2, 435-437, 807, 831.

¹³⁶ *Qing taizong shilu*, vol. 2, 443; *Yinjo sillok*, vol. 34, 683.

¹³⁷ See *Chosŏnguk raesŏ bu*, vol. 2, 140 (dated May 11, 1639); *Qing taizong shilu*, vol. 2, 633-634 (dated August 14, 1639), 777 (October 3, 1641), 808 (April 27, 1642), 820-821 (May 14, 1642), 876 (January 29,

In hindsight, the subordination of Chosŏn in 1637 contributed greatly to the remarkable transformation of the cultural and political identity as well as its representation of the Manchu regime. By turning its relationship with Chosŏn from the elder brother–younger brother type into the monarch–subordinate or father–son one, the political legitimacy of the Son of Heaven of the Qing was officially endorsed by Chosŏn, a foreign country beyond the Qing’s geographical border and a Confucian country within the Qing’s political and cultural concerns. Given that the Chinese culturally understood all foreign relations as Zongfan relations with “China”—the Central Kingdom—as the center,¹³⁸ the establishment of this sort of relationship between the Qing and Chosŏn defined the Qing as the Central Kingdom. In other words, the identities of both China and the countries on its periphery within the Zongfan framework were “mutually constitutive.”¹³⁹ This rationale behind the Zongfan framework lent the Qing political and cultural foundations to help it legitimize its centrality in the Chinese world.

1643), and 890 (June 26, 1643). The Qing also invoked the military assistance from Chosŏn in the 1650s, see *Qing shizu shilu* (Veritable records of Emperor Shunzhi of the Qing), vol. 3, 898 (March 22, 1658).

¹³⁸ J. K. Fairbank and S. Y. Têng, “On the Ch’ing Tributary System,” 141. Fairbank and Têng’s statement, in accordance with T. F. Tsiang’s similar assertion made in 1936, has been critically challenged by historians since the 1960s. See T. F. Tsiang, “China and European Expansion”; Joseph F. Fletcher, “China and Central Asia, 1368–1884”; James A. Millward, *Beyond the Pass: Economy, Ethnicity, and Empire in Qing Central Asia, 1759–1864*, 48–49; James L. Hevia *Cherishing Men From Afar: Qing Guest Rituals and the Macartney Embassy of 1793*, 7–15. According to the criticism, the practical communications between the Qing and other political entities along the Qing’s frontiers demonstrated that the pervasive notion of the Qing’s exclusive superiority over other countries seemed to be inconsistent with the one reflected in so-called “China proper” (Ch. *neidi*) and on the cultural level. The criticism is primarily based on examination of Qing–Inner Asian relations, particularly concerning trade and tribute. Mark Mancall points out that the tribute presented to the Chinese emperor was “a *sine qua non*” for foreign “barbarians” to conduct trade with China, which corroborates Tsiang’s and Fairbank and Têng’s statements. Yet Mancall’s critical analyses of the “flexibility” of “tribute system” and his case of the Manchu trade with Chosŏn before 1644 have formed a contradictory voice against his own assertion. See Mark Mancall, “The Ch’ing Tribute System: An Interpretive Essay.” Addressing this tribute trade dyad, Iwai Shigeki argues that tribute and trade had been existing as two systems before 1380, when the Ming government abolished the Maritime Trade Superintendency (Ch. *Shibo si*) and integrated the trade system into the tribute system. See Iwai Shigeki, “Chōkō to goshi” (Tribute and Trade). No matter how flexible this “tribute system” presented itself in different ways in different settings and on different levels, Mancall is correct to point out that “the tribute relationship was always bilateral, never multilateral: one partner was always the ruler of China.” (Mancall, *op. cit.*, 65).

¹³⁹ On the conception of “mutually constitutive,” see Alexander Wendt, “Anarchy Is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics,” *International Organization* 46. 2: 391–425.

This transformation did not exist primarily at the linguistic and rhetorical levels or within the Manchu regime, as it had done in the previous brotherhood decade; rather, it became public and was concretely corroborated by the intensive exchanges of missions between the two countries from 1637 to 1643. The exchanges started immediately after the subordination of Chosŏn. On May 13, 1637, Chosŏn sent its first tributary mission to Mukden to present the king's humble memorials and tributes to the Qing emperor.¹⁴⁰ Meanwhile, Chosŏn started calling Mukden “capital” (K. *Kyŏngsa*; Ch. *Jingshi*), a term that previously referred to Beijing, expressing Chosŏn's endorsement of Mukden as the new political center of the world, at least on the surface.¹⁴¹ The mission had three primary members, including an envoy, Yi Sŏng-ku; an associate envoy, Yi Tŏk-in, and a secretary, Ch'ae Yu-hu, totaling 315 members.¹⁴² After traveling 517 miles along the conventional tributary overland route between Hansŏng and Beijing,¹⁴³ Yi Sŏng-ku led his mission to arrive in Mukden on July 8. The next day, the Korean officials made prostrations before Hongtaiji by performing the highest level of kowtow—kneeling down three times, each time bowing their heads three times.

During the imperial audience, the Qing's officials read the king's humble memorials that were written in a hierarchical format as those the king had presented to the Ming emperor before 1637 (Figure 1. 5). By praising the admirable virtues of the “big country” (K. *taebang*; Ch. *dabang*), the Great Qing, that “brought Chosŏn to life again,” the texts of the memorials endowed the Qing with the position of the Central Kingdom by saying “all far countries on the periphery [of the Qing] have willingly subordinated” (K.

¹⁴⁰ *Yinjo sillok*, vol. 34, 684.

¹⁴¹ *Tongmun hwiko*, vol. 2, 1533.

¹⁴² *Qing taizong shilu*, vol. 2, 451.

¹⁴³ See Yi Kyŏng-chik, *Pusin ilgi* (Diary of journey to Shenyang), in Lim Key-zung, ed., *Yŏnhaeng nok jŏnjip* (Comprehensive collection of records of Chosŏn's emissaries to Beijing), vol. 15, 445.

hwangbok hambin; Ch. *huangfu xianbin*) and stating that the Qing held the virtue of “cherishing the small.” This position was consolidated by the Qing itself in the imperial edict to the king, in which the relationship was clearly defined by orthodox Zongfan concepts, such as “serving the big country” and “cherishing the small country.”¹⁴⁴ In this politico-cultural context, the Qing became the Central Kingdom possessing cultural superiority and Chosŏn was defined as a “far country,” a “small country,” and the “remote land” (K. *py’ ōnyang*; Ch. *pianrang*) on the periphery of the new civilized center.¹⁴⁵ In this process of framing the mutually constitutive identities, Chosŏn fell into the category of “barbarians” surrounding Qing China.

At the same time, the frequent visits to Mukden by the “tributary emissaries” of Mongols and political entities of other ethnic minorities whose affairs were under the management of the Mongolian Superintendency highlighted the rise of the Qing-centric Zongfan circle. For the previous two decades, the Manchu regime had gradually eroded the Ming’s Zongfan system from the periphery and used the disconnected parts to construct a similar model with itself as the center. After establishing its Zongfan relationship with Chosŏn, the Qing sought to institutionalize its Zongfan mechanism by imitating the Ming’s policy and improving it to meet the Qing’s needs.

The institutionalization of this system occurred when the Qing greeted Chosŏn’s emissaries with certain formalities through the Ministry of Rituals. Although the Ministry of Revenue (Ch. *Hubu*), the Ministry of War (Ch. *Bingbu*), and the Ministry of Justice (Ch. *Xingbu*) also exchanged official notes (Ch. *ziwen*) with the king for some cases regarding financial and military assistance or illegal border crossing, the Ministry of

¹⁴⁴ *Qing taizong shilu*, vol. 2, 459.

¹⁴⁵ *Chosŏnguk raesŏ bu*, vol. 2, archive catalogue no. Ko-5710-5-2, 36-41.

Rituals acted as the most important channel between the emissaries and the Qing court. It forwarded the king's humble memorials to the emperor, guided the emissaries' visits, treated the emissaries to banquets, accommodated them at their residence in Mukden for 40 days, forwarded imperial edicts to them, and issued official response notes to the king.¹⁴⁶ With the assistance of the ministry, the Korean emissaries performed the highest level of kowtow (Ch. *san gui jiu koutou*) to the emperor, presented tributes, and received imperial edicts.¹⁴⁷ In this process, the highly programmed ritual practices demonstrated, institutionalized, and consolidated the bilateral Zongfan relationship in a concrete way.

The Qing also sent ethnic-Manchu emissaries to Chosŏn to invest the king and other core royal members with certain titles to formalize the Zongfan relationship. On December 11, 1637, the first imperial mission led by Inggūldai, Mafuta, and Daiyun left Mukden for Hansŏng to officially invest the king. After traveling 315 miles along the same overland route, the mission arrived on January 4, 1638. The king greeted the envoys at Hall of Admiring the Central Civilized Country outside the West Gate of the capital.¹⁴⁸ Later, in the palace, the king received the imperial edicts of investiture, gold seal, and imperial gifts by performing established rituals. The edicts stated that with the establishment of “investiture–subordinate” (Ch. *fanfeng*) relations, Chosŏn must serve as a “*fan* and fence” (Ch. *fanping*) of the Great Qing “until the Yellow River becomes as narrow as a belt and the Taishan Mountain becomes as small as a grindstone” (Ch. *daihe lishan*).¹⁴⁹ Following the ceremony, the king visited the envoys at their residence, the South Palace Annex (K. *Nambyŏl gung*), where he treated them to banquets. All ritual

¹⁴⁶ *Yinjo sillok*, vol. 34, 695-696.

¹⁴⁷ *Qing taizong shilu*, vol. 2, 459.

¹⁴⁸ *Yinjo sillok*, vol. 34, 709.

¹⁴⁹ See *Qing shizu shilu*, vol. 3, 586-587, 363. The same words first appeared in Hongtaiji's investiture edict to King Yi Jong in 1637, see *Qing taizong shilu*, vol. 2, 510-511, and *Yinjo sillok*, vol. 34, 709.

procedures were identical to those that had been performed between Chosŏn and the Ming before 1637. The Qing's investiture legitimized the bilateral Zongfan relationship between the two countries, an arrangement that would last for 258 years until 1895.

THE STELE OF THE HONORS AND VIRTUES OF EMPEROR OF THE GREAT QING

In order to formalize the Zongfan relationship, the Qing forced Chosŏn to erect a monument to enshrine Hongtaiji's achievements at Samjŏndo, where the king subordinated himself to Hongtaiji in 1637. The Korean official Yi Kyŏng-sŏk drafted a Chinese-language inscription, which was approved by the Chinese official Fan Wencheng. After that, the Qing sent interpreters to Hansŏng to translate the inscription into Manchu and Mongolian languages, so the inscription was eventually engraved in Manchu, Mongolian, and Chinese characters on the stele. In 1639 the monument was erected with the title *Stele of the Honors and Virtues of Emperor of the Great Qing* (Ma. *daicing gurun i enduringge han i gung erdemui bei*; Ch. *Daqing huangdi gongde bei*; K. *Daechŏng hwangje gongdŏk bi*), known as Samjŏndo Monument (K. *Samjŏndo bi*) (Figure 1. 6).¹⁵⁰

Humbly reviewing the history between the two countries from 1619 to 1637 from Chosŏn's perspective, the inscription exalted the Qing's great virtues of "bringing Chosŏn to life again." It stated that their Zongfan relationship should last for "ten thousand years" under "the emperor's goodness" (Ch. *huangdi zhi xiu*; K. *hwangje chi hyu*; Ma. *enduringge han i sain*).¹⁵¹ The most significant aspect turned out to be the official

¹⁵⁰ *Yinjo sillok*, vol. 35, 7, 63; *Qing taizong shilu*, vol. 2, 653.

¹⁵¹ For studies of the Manchu text of the monument, see W. R. Carles, "A Corea Monument to Manchu Clemency"; M. Forbes A. Fraser, *Tanggu Meyen and other Manchu Reading Lessons*, 174-183; Oshibuchi Hajime, "Shinshoni okeru shinsen kankei to san-den-to no hibun" (The relations between Manchu and Chosŏn in the Early Qing [Manchu] period, and the monument of San-tien-tu); Kim Bang-han, "Samjŏndo bi mongmun e kwanhayŏ" (On Mongolian in Samjŏndo inscription); Seong Baeg-in, "Samjŏndobi manjumun" (On the Manchu part of the Samjŏndo inscription); Choi Hak-kŭn, "Sowui 'Samjŏndobi' ūi

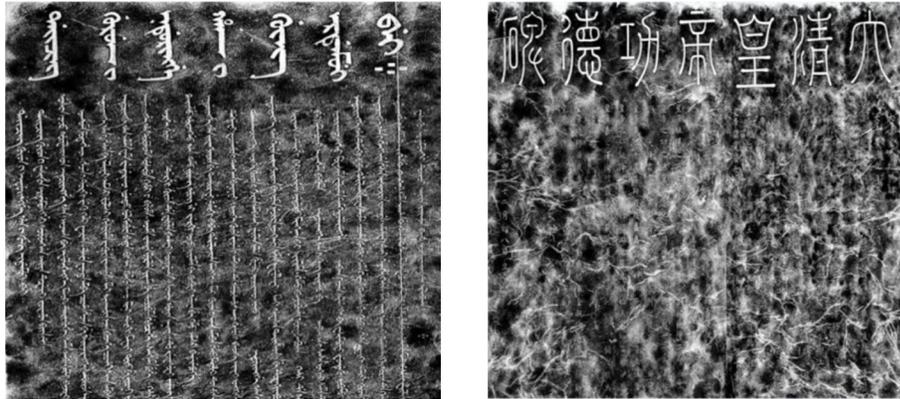
transformation of the identity of the Manchu regime that was manifested in certain terms. The inscription called the Qing the “big country” (Ch. *dabang*, or *dachao*; K. *taeguk*; *taejo*; Ma. *amba gurun*) or “upper country” (Ch. *shangguo*; K. *sangguk*; Ma. *dergi gurun*), while it termed Chosŏn as the “small country” (Ch. *xiaobang*; K. *sobang*; Ma. *ajige gurun*). Among these terms, which had been used between Chosŏn and the Ming but now were grafted onto the Qing–Chosŏn relationship, the Manchu term *amba gurun* (big country) stood out as the most prominent one. As a literal translation of the Chinese term *dabang* or *dachao*, the term had been used by Chosŏn to exclusively refer to the Ming, and in Nurhaci’s time it was even applied to Chosŏn by the Jurchens. Yet the term was now used by Chosŏn to address the Qing. More importantly, after 1644, the Manchu rulers adopted this term as a key equivalent of the Chinese terms *tianchao* (the Heavenly Dynasty) and *Zhongguo* (Ma. *dulimbai gurun*; K. *chungguk*). The inscription probably was the first time that the Qing publicly addressed itself as *amba gurun* in history, and in the following two-and-a-half centuries this term would entirely refer to Qing China.

In addition, the inscription called Chosŏn “a country from afar” (Ch. *yuanguo*), indicating that the Little China now became a country of barbarians who regarded the Qing as the civilized Central Kingdom. The fact that the two countries geographically bordered each other did not prevent the Qing redefining Chosŏn as “a country from afar” in the politico-cultural sense. It also claimed that in 1637 the king surrendered “not to [the Qing’s] might but to [its] virtues” (Ma. *horon de gelere teile waka, erdemu de dahahangge kai*), insomuch that the Qing’s great virtues made “all the far [people] willingly subordinate” (Ch. *wuyuan bufu*; Ma. *goroki ci aname gemu dahambi*). This suggested that Chosŏn, as the representative of the “country from afar” as well as “men

manmun pimun juyŏk” (Annotation to the Manchu inscription of the so-called ‘Samjŏndobi’).

from afar” (Ch. *yuanren*), was barbarianized by the Qing as to its politico-cultural identity in the setting of the civilized–barbarian distinction in the Qing-centric world.

Figure 1. 6. Parts of the Manchu and Chinese Inscriptions on *Stele of the Honors and Virtues of Emperor of the Great Qing*



Sources: *Daishin kōtei kudoku hi (Stele of the Honors and Virtues of Emperor of the Great Qing)*, photographs, file no. VI-1-269, at Tōyō Bunko, Tokyo, Japan.

Notes: The left picture is a part of the rubbing of the Manchu inscription and the right picture is a part of the rubbing of the Chinese inscription. The stele, as the Historic Site No. 101 of the Republic of Korea, is now located at 47 Chamsil-dong, Songp’a-gu, Seoul, around 1.5 miles east of where it was originally erected in 1639.

“CHERISHING MEN FROM AFAR” AS ZHONGGUO PER SE, 1637–1643

If the Manchu–Chosŏn Zongfan relationship was largely a self-imagined order restricted at the level of political discourse and confined within the border of the Manchu regime from 1627 to 1636, it became public and, therefore, legitimate after 1637 as the official monarch–subject and father–son framework between them. The Qing was able to use the powerful Zongfan discourse to gain cultural superiority over Chosŏn and eliminate its previous identity as “barbarians” in the Ming-dominated world. Simultaneously, the Qing started to apply the conventional Chinese policy of “cherishing the small country” and “cherishing men from afar” (Ch. *rouyuan*, *huairou yuanren*) to Chosŏn in order to win the loyalty of the country.¹⁵²

¹⁵² See *Qing taizong shilu*, vol. 2, 649.

In addition to providing Chosŏn's emissaries with better accommodations in Mukden and bestowing more gifts on the king and emissaries, the Qing continuously reduced the amount of Chosŏn's tributes from the early 1640s, a time when the Qing controlled more sources because of its military triumphs over the Ming. For example, in 1640, Hongtaiji reduced the number of sacks of rice from 10,000 to 1,000.¹⁵³ In 1643, Emperor Shunzhi (1638–1661, r. 1644–1661) further reduced the amount of Chosŏn's yearly tribute and reduced the gifts that Chosŏn gave to the Manchu envoys by more than half. The emperor also permanently abolished many conventions, such as providing the imperial envoys with falcons and official prostitutes.¹⁵⁴ According to the emperor, these exemptions aimed to embody the Qing's policy of "cherishing the small country with benevolence."¹⁵⁵ Compared with the late Ming that tried to extract the maximum of economic and military benefits from Chosŏn, the Qing's continuous exemptions represented a very placatory approach to treating its outer *fan*, which substantially facilitated the Qing's historical transformation into Zhongguo by acquiring more Chineseness in the conventional setting. The Qing's great efforts paid off in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when Chosŏn's emissaries and savants eventually identified the Qing as the civilized Zhongguo, as Chapters 2 and 3 will demonstrate.

The Qing was more a down-to-earth doer than a passionate elocutionist, so its policy of appealing to the subordinate country was crystalized in its frequent contacts with Chosŏn. From 1637 to 1643, the Qing sent 12 missions and 28 emissaries to Chosŏn, an average of 1.5 missions per year, while Chosŏn sent 56 missions and 102 emissaries to

¹⁵³ *Tongmun hwiko*, vol. 2, 1497-1498.

¹⁵⁴ *Qing shizu shilu*, vol. 3, 35; *Tongmun hwiko*, vol. 2, 1503, 1510-1511.

¹⁵⁵ *Tongmun hwiko*, vol. 2, 1485.

the Qing, an average of 7 missions per year.¹⁵⁶ All ritual formalities regarding the greetings of the imperial envoy in Hansǒng and the Chosǒn's emissaries in Mukden, along with highly formatted political and cultural discourse embodied in the Qing's imperial edicts and Chosǒn's palace memorials, consolidated the Qing's centrality in the known world. More importantly, the Qing's intensive Zongfan contacts with Chosǒn endowed it with a powerful tool of managing its relations with other countries or political entities in the post-1637 period. In 1638, a year after it converted Chosǒn from a "younger brother" into an outer *fan*, the Qing changed the Chinese name of the Mongolian Superintendency or the Ministry of Mongolian Affairs from *Menggu yamen* to *Lifan yuan* (lit. the ministry of managing affairs of the Qing's *fan*; Ma. *tulergi golo be dasara jurgan*), transforming those Mongolian countries into the Qing's outer *fan* in the Qing-centric big family. It could be argued that this dramatic change of the Manchu–Mongolian relations was deeply based on Zongfan concepts and it was the Qing's first application of its Zongfan model of Chosǒn to other political entities.

In retrospect, the Qing–Chosǒn contacts through the exchanges of emissaries and a series of entrenched rituals within the Zongfan framework over the seven years from 1637 to 1644 helped the Qing progressively transform its identity into the "big country" and the civilized Central Kingdom against the politico-cultural background of the civilized–barbarian distinction. As a result, the Qing made substantial progress toward the strategic goal of "gradually developing the institutions of Zhongguo" that was outlined in the early 1630s. In the long run, this transformation prepared the Qing for the coming imperial rule over massive lands, huge population, and various political entities after the Manchus crossed the Great Wall in 1644.

¹⁵⁶ *Tongmun hwiko*, vol. 2, 1700-1702, 1747-1748.

CHAPTER 2

Barbarianizing Chosŏn: The “Chosŏn Model” and the Qing’s Recasting of the “Chinese Empire,” 1644–1761

After 1644, the Qing started using Chosŏn as a prototypical *fan* to construct the new imperial order within and beyond the Qing’s border by defining itself as Zhongguo and the Heavenly Dynasty. The dissertation terms this prototype the “Chosŏn Model” (Ch. *Chaoxian shili*), a pattern by which a country or a political entity could follow Chosŏn into the Qing-centric Zongfan system primarily by receiving imperial investitures and norms from the Qing, adopting the reign-title of the Qing to count dates and sending tributary emissaries to the Qing. The Chosŏn Model was an institutionalized policy of the Qing for constructing the infrastructure of foreign relations. It was embodied by well-established and highly-programmed formalities in the contacts between the Qing and its *fan* that were materially conducted by their emissaries to one another. Through this model, the Qing rulers initiated a twofold transformation, constructing the Qing as the new Heavenly Dynasty at the center of the known universe and converting Chosŏn and other countries into “countries of barbarians” on its periphery. This construction was fundamentally accomplished in the middle of the eighteenth century, when the Qing published the imperial book, *Illustrations of Subordinate Peoples of the Imperial Qing* (Ch. *Huangqing zhigong tu*).

Scholars have demonstrated how the Qing transformed itself from a local and “barbarian” Manchu regime into a *Chinese* empire, together with the Sinicization of the Manchus.¹ Yet how the Qing accomplished this momentous transformation by utilizing

¹ See, for example, Frederic Wakeman, Jr., *The Great Enterprise: The Manchu Reconstruction of Imperial*

resources from outside itself—that is, the Qing’s outer *fan*, particularly Chosŏn, remains little studied and obscure. This chapter aims to reveal how the Qing constructed its new, dual identity as the Central Kingdom and the Heavenly Dynasty by exploiting the Chosŏn Model in its foreign relations from the 1640s to the 1790s, demonstrating that over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the macro-transformation of the identity of the Manchu regime in the cosmopolitan politico-cultural context was deeply connected with the micro-transformation of that in the Manchus–Chosŏn bilateral framework.

2.1 China, the Heavenly Dynasty, and the Rise of the Chosŏn Model

CHINA/ZHONGGUO AND THE HEAVENLY DYNASTY OF THE QING

On October 30, 1644, Emperor Shunzhi offered a great sacrifice to heaven and earth in the Qing’s new capital, Beijing, during which the six-year-old Son of Heaven claimed to be emperor and asserted that the Qing would “pacify China” (Ch. *sui Zhongguo*) and “set a good example for ten thousand countries” (Ch. *biaozheng wanbang*).² For many people, this event marked the great rise of the Qing as the equivalent of China—Zhongguo—and the new Heavenly Dynasty in history. The historical truth, however, is not self-evident as has been assumed.

Historians of the Qing and modern China tend to treat “China” and the “Heavenly Dynasty” as two homogeneous terms referring to the political unit of Qing China, or the Qing dynasty. Yet it is worth pointing out that these two terms were both used by the Qing to describe itself almost exclusively in the context of foreign relations with the

Order in Seventeenth-Century China; Pei Huang, *Reorienting the Manchus: A Study of Sinicization, 1583–1795*.

² *Qing shizu shilu*, vol. 3, 91-92.

“men from afar” (Ch. *yuanren*) or “foreign barbarians” (Ch. *waiyi*), whereas in the domestic context, these terms were replaced by others, such as the “Great Qing” (Ch. *daqing*), “our dynasty” (Ch. *wochao*, *benchao*, or *guochao*), “our country” (Ch. *woguo*), or the “imperial dynasty” (Ch. *huangchao*, or *shengchao*). In 1767, after finding that a local magistrate in Yunnan province failed to address the Qing as the Heavenly Dynasty or China in an official note to the “foreign barbarians” of Burma, Emperor Qianlong furiously pointed out in his decree that, “The decree to the foreign barbarians should be addressed in a proper way...It is the rule for one to address the court as the Heavenly Dynasty or Zhongguo when he mentions it to the men from afar. Our country has unified the central area and external areas and even the barbarians know the virtue and civilization of the Great Qing.”³ According to the emperor’s pronouncement on the basic spectrum of the Heavenly Dynasty and Zhongguo, the two terms were interchangeable at the time. Yet what the emperor did not mention—or was perhaps not able to realize at all—was the fact that the Qing did not simultaneously take the two titles when it replaced the Ming in the early seventeenth century. The Manchu regime had started to build a Zongfan framework through its relations with Chosŏn after 1627 and made remarkable advancements in the construction of its identity as Zhongguo after 1637. In 1644, the transformation into Zhongguo was assumed to be accomplished, while the transformation into the Heavenly Dynasty had barely started.

In the late 1640s, when the Manchu Eight Banners were marching into South China, Southwest China, and Northwest China, the Qing started using Chosŏn to construct the new image of the Heavenly Dynasty, yet it proved a process difficult and even embarrassing. According to the early Qing archives currently available to scholars,

³ *Qing gaozong shilu* (Veritable records of Emperor Qianlong of the Qing), vol. 18, 643.

the Qing intellectuals termed the Qing the “Heavenly Dynasty” for the first time in a draft of Emperor Shunzhi’s edict to invest Yi Ho as the new king of Chosŏn in 1649. The manuscript of the edict was drafted by Fu Yijian (1609–1645), a Han Chinese intellectual from Shandong province, who had won the championship in the first imperial examination of the Qing in 1645.⁴ By writing that the king should be “an important subordinate serving the Heavenly Dynasty” (Ch. *pinghan tianchao*) and must be loyal to “civilized China” (Ch. *huaxia*), Fu apparently equated the Qing, who had become Zhongguo, with the Heavenly Dynasty and the “civilized China.” The final edition that was sent to Chosŏn, however, deleted the two latter terms,⁵ suggesting that the Qing was not prepared to claim to be the Heavenly Dynasty.

Nevertheless, the growing political enterprise of the Qing required the regime to intellectually construct a new Qing-centric international order in its known world. This occurred precisely at a time when a new post-Westphalia international political order, based on the concept of the sovereign state, was initiated in Europe as a result of the Thirty Years’ War. Europe and China were both under reconstruction, yet they were heading in different directions. Breaking away from the rule of a big empire like the Holy Roman Empire proved no easy task, while building up a new huge Chinese empire was similarly arduous. The Qing spent much more time constructing its new identity as the Heavenly Dynasty through its communications with foreign countries in the post-1644 era, starting in the late 1640s during the Shunzhi period and institutionally completing only in the middle of the eighteenth century during the Qianlong period. The reason the Qing was able to serve as “China” in a comparatively short time but had spent more than

⁴ *Ming Qing shiliao*, series 7, vol. 5, 404b. About Fu Yijian, see *Qingshi gao*, vol. 32, 9496.

⁵ *Qing shizu shilu*, vol. 3, 363.

a century building up the politico-cultural representation of the Heavenly Dynasty lies in the intrinsic natures of the two terms that distinguish them.

“China,” or “Zhongguo,” on the one hand, as a general geographical term, could be clearly defined by the Qing’s borders, no matter how the borders were expanded and reinvented. Viewed from this perspective, the inherent meaning of the “Central Kingdom” could be manifestly achieved so long as the Qing took over the Ming’s territory, at least the Central Plain (Ch. *Zhongyuan*).⁶ Actually, after 1644 when the Qing rulers began writing their pre-1644 history, they deliberately deleted some Manchu terms referring to the Ming as *Zhongguo* (Ma. *dulimbai gurun*).⁷ In 1689, 45 years after the Manchus entered Beijing, the Qing signed the Treaty of Nerchinsk with Russia, the Manchu version of which clearly defined the Qing as the *dulimbai gurun*, which might be the first time that the Qing termed itself “Zhongguo” in Manchu language.⁸ On the surface, the term suggests that the Qing was defined as the center of the world. Since the treaty aimed to draw a clear demarcation between the Qing and Russia, the *dulimbai gurun* was equal to the *daicing gurun* (Ch. *Daqing guo*, the country of the Great Qing), as identified by the inscription on the boundary monument.⁹ The Qing thus presented itself as *Zhongguo* in a very favorable and definitive way.

The “Heavenly Dynasty,” or “Tianchao,” on the other hand, could not be

⁶ James A. Millward, *Beyond the Pass*, 36-38.

⁷ For example, in Hongtaiji’s letter to the Ming on July 29, 1632, he explained that the Jin fought with the Ming because “the Ming officials in Liaodong did not follow the way of China” (Ma. *liyoodung i hafasa dulimbai gurun i doroi tondo beiderakū*), in which “China”—*Zhongguo*—was clearly termed in the Manchu term *dulimbai gurun*. Later, the Chinese edition of *Qing taizong shilu* replaced the phrase of the “way of China” (Ch. *Zhongguo/Zhongyuan zhi dao*; Ma. *dulimbai gurun i doru*) with the “way of rightness” (Ch. *zhengzhi zhi dao*). Hongtaiji called the Ming “You China” (Ma. *suweni dulimbai gurun*), yet later the Chinese edition only stated “You Country” (Ch. *erguo*) by deleting the meaning of “China.” See *Manbun rōtō*, vol. 5, 790-792; *Manwen laodang*, 1297-1299; *Qing taizong shilu*, vol. 2, 165.

⁸ Choi Hyong-won, “Nerchinsk choyak ūi manjumun koch’al” (On the Manchu Text of the Treaty Nerchinsk).

⁹ *Qing shengzu shilu* (Veritable records of Emperor Kangxi of the Qing), vol. 5, 578.

delineated in the same way because it was based on the notion of “all-under-Heaven”—a China-centered politico-cultural term with no connection to the concept of border in the geographical sense. Put another way, *Zhongguo* could be self-defined by the Qing from within, while the “Heavenly Dynasty” would have to be defined with the support of more resources from outside the Qing—that is, in order to make sense of the Qing as the “Heavenly Dynasty,” the new regime would have to build up a new, Qing-centric, and multinational *Zongfan* system in the first place. The then-expectation that the Qing would become a new imperial power required the regime to transform the countries that had served as the Ming’s *fan* into the Qing’s *fan*. The Ming had conducted the same policy when it “became the ruler of China” (Ch. *zhu Zhongguo*) in 1368 and immediately sent imperial envoys to those countries that had served as the Yuan dynasty’s *fan* with the aim of converting them into the Ming’s.¹⁰ Although it had become routine in Chinese history for China’s rulers to handle relations with other countries, for the Manchu rulers in 1644, their status as barbarians during the Ming period comprised a tremendous politico-cultural challenge in the wake of the fierce and long-lived civilized–barbarian distinction. Thus, compared with the mission to identify the Qing as China and the legitimate successor to the Ming within the Qing’s borders, the mission of constructing the Qing as a new Heavenly Dynasty beyond its borders called for extraordinarily prodigious effort.

Besides political considerations, from the perspective of comparative philology, the Chinese term *tianchao* (the Heavenly Dynasty) was awkward in the Manchu language, in which it was literally rendered *abkai gurun* (the heavenly country) or *amba gurun* (the big country). Linguistically speaking, the Manchu rulers once had difficulty identifying

¹⁰ *Daming jili* (Collected rituals of the Great Ming), vol. 32, 7a-8b.

with this term and the Chinese political concepts behind it.¹¹ For example, on July 11, 1637, after reviewing the draft edict of investiture to the king of Chosŏn, Hongtaiji commented that he did not like to equate himself with heaven as the Ming emperor preferred to do, which suggests that his officials must have employed the Chinese word *tian* (heaven) or the Manchu term *abka* (heaven) in the edict.¹² Nevertheless, the great enterprise of the reconstruction of the Qing's new "China" in the seventeenth century left the Manchu rulers no choice but to accept this peculiar term. Similarly, the Great Qing had to serve as the *abkai gurun* or the *amba gurun* on the new historical platform.

A good example of this intellectual transformation of the Qing's ruling house is the visit of the Fifth Dalai Lama (1617–1682) to Beijing in 1653. Emperor Shunzhi had planned to greet the Dalai Lama in Daiga, a place outside of Beijing, yet this schedule provoked a fierce debate between Manchu and Han Chinese officials over whether the emperor should meet the Dalai Lama outside the capital. The Manchu officials supported the emperor's plan, according to which the Ület Mongols, who militarily controlled Tibet, would be pacified by the emperor's gracious behavior. Yet the Han Chinese officials argued that the emperor should not go, for he was "the ruler of all countries under heaven" (Ch. *tianxia guojia zhi zhu*), who should not violate conventions to meet with a lama, even a Dalai Lama, in person outside the capital. The emperor finally followed the Han Chinese officials' advice on account of his identity as Son of Heaven, and as an alternative he welcomed the Dalai Lama in the South Garden of Beijing in early 1653.¹³

¹¹ For this subtle explanation, the author is grateful to the two prestigious Chinese archivists and scholars, Mr. Wu Yuanfeng at the First Historical Archives of China and Mr. Zhao Zhiqiang at Beijing Academy of Social Sciences, whose mother tongue is Manchu.

¹² *Qing taizong shilu*, vol. 2, 455.

¹³ *Qing shizu shilu*, vol. 3, 530-554; Shi Miaozhou, *Meng zang fojiao shi* (The history of Buddhism of Mongolia and Tibet), 78-87; Guo Meilan, "Wushi dalai lama rujin lunshu" (The account of the Fifth Dalai Lama's visit to Beijing).

This case suggests that the Qing was in the transitional period of its new political identity in the first years of the post-1644 era, during which the Manchu emperor had to adjust to fit his role as Son of Heaven in the Confucian sense.

THE RISE OF THE CHOSŎN MODEL UNDER THE QING

The Qing was not alone on the way to the dual construction of its new identity. Chosŏn, the first Confucian outer *fan* of the Qing, played an unparalleled role in providing the Manchu conquerors with resources to construct a new “China” and a new “Heavenly Dynasty.” Chosŏn’s primordial role can be well observed in two historical phases: the seven years from 1637 to 1643, and the 250 years from 1644 to 1895. In the first phase, Chosŏn began serving as the outer *fan* of the Qing by precisely obeying the well formulated and institutionalized discipline of the Sino–Korean Zongfan system, which had functioned between the Ming and Chosŏn for more than two centuries. The Qing could thus make a significant move toward the great transformation of its identity by completely taking the place of the Ming in the framework of Sino–Korean Zongfan relations. When Chosŏn dispatched tributary emissaries to Mukden every year, the Qing was able to act as *Zhongguo* in a general sense. As a result, the barbarian nature of the Manchu regime gradually rubbed off and was obliterated in 1644. In this period, Chosŏn significantly contributed to the rise and nourishment of the Qing’s centrality in the Chinese world.

With its sharp rise as a Ming-style nation-wide regime and the extensive expansion of its border in the post-1644 era, Qing China had to manage relations with neighboring countries, such as Annam, Ryukyu, Lanchang, Siam, Sulu, and Burma. All these countries had served as the outer *fan* or “subordinate countries” (Ch. *shuguo*) of the

Ming in the Ming-centered Zongfan system. Thus, what Qing China needed to do was to inherit these *fan* from the Ming and to resume and reconstruct the Zongfan system according to its own standards. In this regard, the Qing had gained valuable experience from its institutionalized communications with Chosŏn and had developed a comparatively mature model of the Qing-centric Zongfan system after the late 1630s. This could be called the “Chosŏn Model,” a pattern by which a country or a political entity could follow Chosŏn into the Qing-centric Zongfan system primarily by receiving the imperial investitures from the Qing, adopting the reign-title of the Qing to count dates and sending tributary emissaries to the Qing.¹⁴

As has been argued, the Chosŏn Model was primarily a ritual-centric pattern. Although the Qing–Chosŏn Zongfan relationship was established by the Manchu military conquest of 1637, as a result of which the crown prince of Chosŏn, another son of the king, and sons of high-ranking officials of Chosŏn were detained in Mukden as hostages, the situation fundamentally changed as the Qing permanently released the hostages to Chosŏn in 1644.¹⁵ From the late 1630s, the Qing began significantly reducing Chosŏn’s tributes. In the late 1730s the tributes were less than one-tenth of those in the late 1630s and increasingly turned into a symbol of Chosŏn’s political subordination to the Qing.¹⁶ Together with the symbolic tributes were a set of highly programmed formalities that must be performed, in which the hierarchical Zongfan order and the Qing’s new

¹⁴ *Qinding daqing huidian* (1899), vol. 39, 10b. In terms of the case of Ryukyu, see *Qinding libu zeli* (1844), vol. 173, 6b, 10a; for Annam (Vietnam), vol. 174, 8a, 11a, 13b; for Lanchang (Laos), vol. 175, 5b, 6a; for Siam (Thailand), vol. 176, 6b, 8a.

¹⁵ *Simyang janggye* (Reports from Shenyang) and *Sohyŏn simyang ilgi* (Diary of the crown prince of Sohyŏn in Shenyang). These records portray the life of the crown prince, Sohyŏn seja Yi Wang, in Shenyang as hostage from February 24, 1637, to July 21, 1644. Yi Wang also went to Beijing together with the Manchu regent Dorgon (1612–1650) in early June 1644 when the Qing occupied Beijing and stayed in the Forbidden City for 22 days before he returned to Shenyang. Yi Wang died on May 21, 1645, three months after he was released back to Chosŏn.

¹⁶ Chang Tsun-wu, *Qing Han Zongfan maoyi*, 25-27.

normative identity manifested themselves. In the first years after 1644, the Qing found that the Chosŏn Model was the most powerful and practical way of managing its relations with other countries and extending its influence and authority.

The Chosŏn Model was articulated by Emperor Shunzhi in 1647 after the Qing army conquered Zhejiang, Fujian, and Guangdong provinces and prepared to establish relations with Ryukyu, Annam, Siam, and Japan. On March 17 and August 25, the emperor announced that the Qing would “give preferential treatment to these countries as to Chosŏn” (Ch. *yu Chaoxian yiti youdai*) as long as they “subordinated themselves to ‘the civilized’ and paid tributes to the court” (Ch. *qingxin xianghua, chengchen rugong*).¹⁷ In this way, the Manchu rulers publicly converted Chosŏn into a prototypical *fan* and established the Qing–Chosŏn relationship as the yardstick for relations between the Qing and other countries or political entities. Different from the aggressive and colonizing foreign policy of the Yuan, the Qing, as the best student of the Ming’s Zongfan mechanism, erected a very sophisticated Chosŏn Model and replicated this highly Confucian model for Ryukyu, Annam, Lanchang, Siam, Burma, and other countries to maintain peace on the frontier and to construct a new Chinese empire beyond it. The Qing’s establishment of the Zongfan relationship with Ryukyu in the early years after 1644 revealed that the Qing employed the full-fledged model with alacrity to formalize its relations with other countries.¹⁸

As a result of the Qing rulers’ efforts at promulgating the Chosŏn Model after 1644, some political units beyond the Qing’s control also regarded it as an ideal way of

¹⁷ *Qing shizu shilu*, vol. 3, 251, 272; *Lidai bao’an* (Historical archives of the Ryukyu Kingdom), vol. 1, 107.

¹⁸ See, for example, Wu Yuanfeng, “Qingchu cefeng Liuqiu guowang Shang Zhi shimo” (The ins and outs of the Qing’s investiture to Shang Zhi, King of Ryukyu, in the early Qing period).

solving conflicts with the Qing and retaining their own privileges. A typical case was the prolonged negotiations over Taiwan between the Qing and Zheng Jing (1642–1681), the eldest son of Zheng Chenggong (1624–1662), who occupied Taiwan. During about eight years from 1662 to 1669, when the Qing tried persuading him to surrender, Zheng Jing insisted on “following the Chosŏn Model” (Ch. *zhao Chaoxian shili*) into the Qing’s Zongfan system by “proclaiming to be subordinate and paying tribute” (Ch. *chengchen nagong*) but not cutting the hair in the Qing style.¹⁹ For Zheng, the Chosŏn Model was the most favorable and the most likely way to solve the conflicts with the Qing and to preserve what he and his father had cherished under the late Ming. His proposal, however, was refused by Emperor Kangxi and his primary assistants on the case on the grounds that Chosŏn was “always a foreign country” (Ch. *conglai suoyou zhi waiguo*; Ma. *daci bihe encu gurun*), while Zheng and his followers were “people of *Zhongguo*” (Ch. *Zhongguo zhi ren*; Ma. *dulimbai gurun i niyalma*).²⁰ This case demonstrates how the applicability and coverage of the Chosŏn Model had been perceived, when either independence or complete annexation were not an acceptable solution as viewed by the Qing or the Zheng regime in Taiwan.

2.2 The Practice of the Chosŏn Model under the Chinese Empire of the Qing

The Chosŏn Model representing the subtly-programmed Zongfan mechanism can be grasped from the following five aspects.

(1) Frequency and Composition of Missions

The exchange of missions between the Qing and Chosŏn started in 1637 and continued

¹⁹ Jiang Risheng, *Taiwan waiji* (The supplementary history of Taiwan), 175, 176, 187, 194, 205, 207.

²⁰ Emperor Kangxi’s imperial edict persuading Zheng Jing to surrender to the Qing in 1669, archive no. 038209, in Museum of the Institute of History and Philosophy, Academia Sinica, Taipei, Taiwan.

without interruptions until the Sino–Japanese War of 1894–1895, regardless of the opening of the two countries to the West in the nineteenth century. The frequency of Chosŏn’s missions to the Qing was so high that none of the other countries could compete. Compared with those countries that should send a tributary mission to Beijing every other year (Ryukyu), three years (Siam), four years (Annam), five years (Sulu), or ten years (Lanchang and Burma), Chosŏn dispatched several emissaries every year.²¹ Over the 258 years from 1637 to 1894, Chosŏn sent 698 official tributary missions to the Qing, an average of 2.71 missions per year; the purposes of these missions fell into approximately 26 categories.²² In 1784 and 1788, Emperor Qianlong commented jubilantly that Chosŏn was almost the peer of the Qing’s inner *fan* (Ch. *neifan*).²³

According to the imperial regulations, a tributary mission of Chosŏn should have 30 members, including an envoy (holding a vice first rank), an associate envoy (vice second rank), a secretary (fourth rank), three interpreters, and 24 tribute guard officers. The envoy, associate envoy, and secretary were the three key members to visit the emperor on behalf of the king. The numbers of attendants and servants were not limited, which was a privilege granted to Chosŏn,²⁴ but only 30 of them could receive imperial gifts.²⁵ In contrast, members holding lower ranks than the two envoys of missions from

²¹ *Qinding libu zeli* (1844), for Chosŏn, see vol. 172, 1b; for Ryukyu, see vol. 173, 1a; for Annam, see vol. 174, 1b; for Siam, see vol. 176, 1a; for Sulu, see vol. 177, 1a; for Lanchang, see vol. 175, 1a. Please note that Siam sent emissaries once in three years before 1839 but once in four years thereafter.

²² See *Tongmun hwiko*, vol. 2, 1700-1744; *Ch’ŏng sŏn go* (Selected collections regarding Chosŏn institutes), vol. 2, 404-502; Chang Tsun-wu, *Qing Han Zongfan maoyi*, 18-19; Liu Wei, *Qingdai zhongchao shizhe wanglai yanjiu* (Study on China-Korean envoys in the Qing dynasty), 154-251. According to *Tongmun hwiko* and *Ch’ŏng sŏn go*, from 1637 to 1643, Chosŏn sent 56 missions to the Qing, and from 1644 to 1894, it sent 642 missions (76 missions in the Shunzhi period, 168 missions in the Kangxi, 45 in the Yongzheng, 140 in the Qianlong, 60 in the Jiaqing, 66 in the Daoguang, 24 in the Xianfeng, 24 in the Tongzhi, and 39 in the Guangxu period).

²³ *Qing gaozong shilu*, vol. 24, 297; vol. 25, 715.

²⁴ The number of attendants of servants of Sulu’s missions was also open, but Sulu was allowed to send a mission only every five years, and was therefore not comparable. See *Qinding libu zeli* (1844), vol. 177, 1.

²⁵ *Qinding libu zeli* (1844), vol. 172, 1b-2a; *T’ongmun’gwan ji* (Records of the Office of Interpreters), vol.

Ryukyu, Lanchang, Burma, and Holland were not to exceed 20; from other Western countries including Britain 22; from Siam 26, and from Annam 30.²⁶ The said open number created further opportunities for more Korean intellectuals and businessmen visited the Qing as attendants or servants of the missions in order to appreciate the Chinese culture or seek their fortune, so a mission often numbered several hundred people. For example, the annual tribute mission of 1653 totaled 225 members, the Thanks mission of 1777 totaled 310, the Thanks mission of 1803 213, the annual tribute mission of 1863 311, and the Congratulations mission of 1889 also 311.²⁷ Until the late nineteenth century, legions of Chosŏn's missions continued their pilgrimages to Beijing every year bearing various tributes, hundreds of horses, many wraps, colorful flags, wooden boards, and wheelbarrows.²⁸

When the missions entered its territory, the Qing had to provide food, accommodations, and security guards. In addition to housing the visitors at each transfer station (Ch. *gongshi guanshe*; Ma. *alban jafara elcin i tatara guwan i boo*),²⁹ housing them in Beijing was a huge challenge and a heavy burden. In 1829, two missions with more than 600 people arrived in Beijing at the same time, so that the Ministry of Rituals

1, 85-94.

²⁶ *Qinding libu zeli* (1844), for Ryukyu, see vol. 173, 1b; for Annam, see vol. 174, 1b; for Lanchang, see vol. 175, 1b; for Siam, see vol. 176, 1b; for Holland, see vol. 178, 1b; for Burma, see vol. 179, 1b; for other Western countries, see vol. 180, 1a.

²⁷ For the mission of 1653, see *Neige like shishu* (Chronicle of the Ministry of Rituals censorate section of Grand Secretariat, hereafter referred to as *LKSS*), archive no. 2-1, in *FHAC*; for that of 1777, see Yi Kon, *Yŏnhaeng kisa* (Records of the mission to Beijing), in Lim Key-zung, ed., *Yŏnhaeng nok jŏnjip*, vol. 58, 314; for the mission of 1803, see *Junjichu hanwen lufu zouzhe* (The Chinese copies of palace memorials of Grand Council, *LFZZ*), microfilm no. 3-163-7728-8, in *FHAC*; for that of 1863, see *LFZZ*, no. 3-163-7730-25; for that of 1889, see *LFZZ*, no. 3-163-7730-35.

²⁸ The number of horses of a Chosŏn tributary mission to Beijing was over 200. See *T'ongmun'gwan ji*, vol. 1, 94-98. For instance, the mission of 1760 had 198 horses and the one of 1777 had 223 horses, see Yi Sang-bong, *Pugwon rok* (The record of the journey to the Qing), in *Yŏnhaeng nok sŏnjip boyu* (The addenda to selected collection of records of Chosŏn's emissaries to Beijing), vol. 1, 707-709; Yi Kon, *Yŏnhaeng kisa*, in *Yŏnhaeng nok jŏnjip*, vol. 58, 314.

²⁹ *Junjichu manwen lufu zouzhe* (The Manchu copies of palace memorials of Grand Council, hereafter referred to as *MWLF*), microfilm no. 017-00137.

and the Ministry of Works (Ch. *Gongbu*) had to borrow 20 large tents from the Imperial Household Department (Ch. *neiwufu*, Ma. *dorgi baita be uheri kadalara yamun*) to house the additional visitors.³⁰ Nevertheless, the Qing never complained about this to Chosŏn because the significant visits provided opportunities to employ the policy of “cherishing men from afar” (Ch. *huairou yuanren*; Ma. *goroki niyalma be bilume gosimbi*).

On the other hand, the frequency of the Qing’s imperial missions to Chosŏn was quite low, and the size of the missions was not big either. From 1637 to 1895, the Qing dispatched 172 missions to Chosŏn, an average of 0.67 missions per year. The goals of these missions fell into around five categories. In the early Qing, the emperor sent some envoys to Chosŏn to investigate and to negotiate with the king about cases of homicide and smuggling on the border, yet after the middle period of Emperor Kangxi’s reign, such envoys disappeared, and these cases were handled by officials from the two countries in Mukden or Fenghuang City.³¹ The imperial missions to Chosŏn were thus of two primary types: *cefeng* and *fengshi*, both of which concerned power shifts in Chosŏn that required the emperor to dispatch his representatives to endow the shifts with legitimacy.

The size of the imperial missions was not big. In the early period, a mission had around a hundred men, many of whom came from the Eight Banners to trade. In 1658, the size was significantly trimmed by Emperor Shunzhi when he called for the end of Manchu trade in Hansŏng. As a result, a mission comprised an envoy, an associate envoy, four interpreters, and 18 attendants.³² The number of core members was further reduced

³⁰ *Qinding libu zeli* (1844), vol. 184, 4b.

³¹ *Tongmun hwiko*, vo. 1, 903-1044, vol. 2, 1045-1245, 1747-1771; Liu Wei, *Qingdai zhongchao shizhe wanglai yanjiu*, 39-41; Chun Hae-jong, “Sino-Korean Tributary Relations in the Ch’ing Period,” 92-94, 101; Chang Tsun-wu, *Qing Han Zongfan maoyi*, 48-49; Liu Wei, *Qingdai zhongchao shizhe wanglai yanjiu*, 35-41, 154-251.

³² *Qing shizu shilu*, vol. 3, 940; *T’ongmun’gwan ji*, vol. 1, 215-218; see also Chang Tsun-wu, *Qing Han Zongfan maoyi*, 64-68.

to four by Emperor Daoguang in 1845 and 1846.³³ Taking attendants into account, after the early nineteenth century, the members of an imperial mission numbered fewer than 30. For example, the mission in 1876 totaled 20 members and the last mission in 1890 had 28 members.³⁴ Although the size of the missions was small, each mission proved to be a huge financial burden for Chosŏn to assume, in particular for the P'yŏngan Province bordering the Qing.³⁵

All of the imperial envoys to Chosŏn—from the first envoy in 1637, Inggŭldai, to the last in 1890, Xuchang—were high-ranking ethnic Manchu officials, including some from the Mongol Eight Banners, and not Han Chinese or those from the Han Eight Banners, while the envoys to Annam and Ryukyu were mainly Han Chinese rather than Manchus.³⁶ The envoys would fulfill the Qing's role as Chosŏn's father in the bilateral framework by performing various highly formalized ceremonies on behalf of the emperor on Chosŏn's territory. The procedure was purely ritual, yet it should not be conducted by Han Chinese. Even in the late nineteenth century, when certain high-ranking Han Chinese officials, such as Li Hongzhang and Yuan Shikai, were deeply involved in Chosŏn's affairs or served as China's representatives in Chosŏn, the envoys of imperial missions to Chosŏn within the Zongfan framework were still exclusively served by the Manchus. The

³³ *Qingdai gongzhongdang zouzhe ji junjichu zhejian* (The palace memorials of the Forbidden City and the Grand Council, hereafter referred to as *JJCZ*), archive no. 072667; *Qinding libu zeli* (1844), vol. 181, 1b-2a. For the mission in 1845, see Huashana, *Dongshi jicheng* (Diary of the imperial mission to Chosŏn), and *JJCZ*, archive no. 076837.

³⁴ *Ch'iksa ilgi* (Diaries of welcoming the imperial envoys), archive no. M/F 73-101-5, vol. 17 (the year of 1876), 14b; Chongli, *Fengshi Chaoxian riji* (Diary of the journey to Chosŏn as an imperial emissary), 22b-23a; *Shihan jilue* (Notes on the imperial mission to Korea in 1890), in *Zhu Chaoxian shiguan dang, Yuan Shikai* (Archives of Chinese legation to Chosŏn, regarding Yuan Shikai), microfilm no. 01-41-016-08, in the Archives of Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, Taipei, 8.

³⁵ See Kwon Naehyun, "Chosŏn–Qing Relations and the Society of P'yŏngan Province during the Late Chosŏn Period," in Sun Joo Kim, ed., *The Northern Region of Korea: History, Identity, and Culture*, 37-61.

³⁶ See *Qinding libu zeli* (1844), vol. 181, 1b; *Tongmun hwiko*, vol. 2, 1747-1771; Koo Bum-jin, "Ch'ŏng ūi Chosŏn sahaeng insŏn gwa 'dae Ch'ŏng cheguk ch'eje'" (A study on the personnel appointments of Qing imperial envoys to Korea: Reconsidering Korea's position in the world order under Qing hegemony).

door was never opened for Han Chinese because, in the wake of the fierce civilized–barbarian distinction, the Manchu rulers and their regime needed to demonstrate, maintain, and consolidate their legitimacy as the human and institutional agents of the Mandate of Heaven and strengthen their “Chineseness” through the very hierarchical relationship with Chosŏn. For this reason, the Zongfan affairs regarding Chosŏn must be firmly in the hands of the Manchu rulers, rather than their Han Chinese subordinates.

(2) Routine Documents, Tributes, and Gifts

Since 1637, Chosŏn followed the format of official documents that had been used in the Ming period. In 1705, in the wake of some different terms in the king’s memorials, Emperor Kangxi instructed the Ministry of Rituals to standardize the format of Chosŏn’s memorials. The ministry soon set down a set of specific criteria, which was strictly followed for 190 years until 1895.³⁷ In his highly formalized memorials, the king termed himself “subordinate,” Chosŏn the “small country,” and the Qing the “big country,” the “upper country,” the “big dynasty,” or the “middle dynasty” (Ch. *zhongchao*; K. *chungcho*).³⁸ These terms exploited Chosŏn’s subordinate status to contribute to the construction of the Qing’s image of the Central Kingdom and the Heavenly Dynasty.

The most typical phrase proclaimed that the Qing “has pacified the four seas surrounding China under heaven, and ten thousand countries devoutly came to revere the emperor” (Ch. *sihai yi er wanguo laiwang*).³⁹ If it had been a Jin/Qing-centric imagined order in the 1630s, it was certainly not in the early eighteenth century, when Chosŏn,

³⁷ *Tongmun hwiko*, vo. 1, 672; *T’ongmun’gwan ji*, vol. 1, 112-130; *Neige waijiao zhuan’an*, *Chaoxian* (Diplomatic categories of Grand Secretariat about Chosŏn, hereafter referred to as *WJZA*), no. 4, in *FHAC*. For a study of the format of Chosŏn’s memorial to China during the Ming and Qing periods, see Yi Sŏn-hong’s PhD dissertation, “Chosŏn sidae dae Chungguk oegyo munsŏ yŏn’gu” (Study on Chosŏn’s diplomatic documents to China in the Chosŏn period).

³⁸ See, for example, Memorial of the Ministry of Rituals, July 31, 1846, *LFZZ*, archive no. 3-163-7729-42.

³⁹ *T’ongmun’gwan ji*, vol. 1, 113.

Ryukyu, Annam, Burma, Siam, Lanchang, Sulu, Holland, other Western countries, and the Inner Asian political units willingly sent “tributary” missions to Beijing. Rather, the Qing had become a Chinese empire and needed *others* beyond the Qing’s borders to define its centrality in the world. Year after year, Chosŏn, as the representative par excellence of the *others* that served as a “country of barbarians” outside the Qing’s border, helped to consolidate the Qing’s supreme self-identity.

On the Qing side, the imperial decrees granting late kings noble rank or investing the new king with a patent of appointment and an official seal highlighted the Zongfan relationship by consistently defining Chosŏn as the Qing’s *fan*. The special terms used in these decrees also experienced a transformation in the post-1644 era. In January 1638, when the Qing invested Yi Jong around nine months after it conquered the country, the imperial decree of investiture stated only that Chosŏn would serve as the Qing’s *fan* forever.⁴⁰ Yet, after 1644, some terms with special political meanings were added. For example, the decree of investiture in 1649 clearly defined Chosŏn as an outer *fan* in the “very far area” (Ch. *xiahuang*) that “submitted itself to the Qing’s great virtues and civilization” (Ch. *xianghua*).⁴¹ In 1675, the phrase of “cherishing the eastern country” (Ch. *huairou dongtu*) appeared.⁴² These terms substantially broadened the scope of the Qing’s political and cultural ideology by transforming their identities in accordance with the civilized–barbarian distinction.

The tributes of Chosŏn had eight primary categories according to the purpose of its missions: yearly gifts, gifts for the emperor’s birthday, for the Chinese New Year’s Day, for the winter solstice, for imperial celebrations, for thanks, for reports, and for

⁴⁰ *Yinjo sillok*, vol. 34, 709.

⁴¹ *Qing shizu shilu*, vol. 3, 363.

⁴² *Qing shengzu shilu*, vol. 4, 678-679.

imperial visits to Mukden.⁴³ The following five tables list some tributes after 1728 when they were finally settled by Emperor Yongzheng after a continuous reduction.⁴⁴

Table 2. 1. The Yearly Tributes that Chosŏn Presented to the Qing

Items	Quantities	Items	Quantities
White ramie cloth	200 pieces	Deer skins	100 pieces
White cotton silk	200 pieces	Otter skins	300 pieces
Red cotton silk	100 pieces	Black squirrel skins	300 pieces
Green cotton silk	100 pieces	Girdle knives	10
Cotton cloth	3,000 pieces	Good large-size paper	2,000 rolls
Mats with dragon pattern	2 pieces	Good small-size paper	3,500 rolls
Mats with variegated pattern	20 pieces	Sticky rice	40 piculs (Ch. <i>dan</i>)

Sources: *Qinding libu zeli* (1844), vol. 172, 2a.

Table 2. 2. Chosŏn's Tributes for Emperor's Birthday

Items	Emperor	Empress Dowager	Empress
Yellow ramie cloth	10 pieces	/	/
White ramie cloth	20 pieces	20 pieces	20 pieces
Red ramie cloth	/	10 pieces	10 pieces
Yellow cotton silk	30 pieces	/	/
Purple cotton silk	20 pieces	20 pieces	20 pieces
White cotton silk	20 pieces	10 pieces	10 pieces
Mats with dragon pattern	2 pieces	/	/
Mats with yellow flower pattern	20 pieces	10 pieces	10 pieces
Square mates with full pattern	20 pieces	/	/
Mats with full pattern	/	10 pieces	10 pieces
Mats with variegated pattern	20 pieces	10 pieces	10 pieces
Otter skins	20 pieces	/	/
White cotton-paper	1,400 rolls	/	/
Thick oilpaper	10 rolls	/	/

Sources: *Qinding libu zeli* (1844), vol. 172, 2b-3c. The slash mark means the items were not given.

Table 2. 3. Chosŏn's Tributes for the Chinese New Year's Day

Items	Emperor	Empress Dowager	Empress
Yellow ramie cloth	10 pieces	/	/
White ramie cloth	20 pieces	20 pieces	20 pieces
Red ramie cloth	/	10 pieces	10 pieces
Yellow cotton silk	20 pieces	/	/
Purple cotton silk	/	20 pieces	20 pieces
White cotton silk	20 pieces	10 pieces	10 pieces
Mats with dragon pattern	2 pieces	/	/
Mats with yellow flower pattern	15 pieces	10 pieces	10 pieces
Square mates with full pattern	15 pieces	/	/
Mats with full pattern	15 pieces	10 pieces	10 pieces
Mats with variegated pattern	15 pieces	10 pieces	10 pieces

⁴³ *Qinding libu zeli* (1844), vol. 172, 1b-5b.

⁴⁴ *Qinding libu zeli* (1844), vol. 172, 2a.

White cotton-paper	1,300 rolls	/	/
Dressing case with mother-of-pearl inlay	/	1	1

Sources: *Qinding libu zeli* (1844), vol. 172, 3a-3b.

Table 2. 4. Chosŏn's Tributes for the Winter Solstice

Items	Emperor	Empress Dowager	Empress
Yellow ramie cloth	10 pieces	/	/
White ramie cloth	20 pieces	20 pieces	20 pieces
Red ramie cloth	/	10 pieces	10 pieces
Yellow cotton silk	20 pieces	/	/
Purple cotton silk	/	20 pieces	20 pieces
White cotton silk	20 pieces	10 pieces	10 pieces
Mats with dragon pattern	2 pieces	/	/
Mats with yellow flower pattern	20 pieces	10 pieces	10 pieces
Square mates with full pattern	20 pieces	/	/
Mats with full pattern	20 pieces	10 pieces	10 pieces
Mats with variegated pattern	20 pieces	10 pieces	10 pieces
White cotton-paper	1,300 rolls	/	/
Dressing case with mother-of-pearl inlay	/	1	1

Sources: *Qinding libu zeli* (1844), vol. 172, 3b.

Table 2. 5. Chosŏn's Tributes for Imperial Celebrations and for Thanks

Items	Emperor	Empress Dowager	Empress
Yellow ramie cloth	30 pieces	/	/
White ramie cloth	30 pieces	10 pieces	10 pieces
Red ramie cloth	/	10 pieces	10 pieces
Yellow cotton silk	20 pieces	/	/
Purple cotton silk	20 pieces	/	/
White cotton silk	30 pieces	20 pieces	20 pieces
Mats with yellow flower pattern	15 pieces	/	/
Square mates with full pattern	15 pieces	/	/
Mats with full pattern	15 pieces	10 pieces	10 pieces
Mats with variegated pattern	15 pieces	10 pieces	10 pieces
White cotton-paper	2,000 rolls	/	/

Sources: *Qinding libu zeli* (1844), vol. 172, 3b-4b. In 1780, Emperor Qianlong decreed that the king did not need to submit gifts when he presented memorial to thank the emperor's favor. Yet the king still presented gifts in 1783, 1786, 1822, and 1831. See *Qinding libu zeli* 1844, vol. 172, 4a-4b; Memorials of the Ministry of Rituals, dated November 18, 1822, *Junjichu hanwen lufu zouzhe* (The Chinese copies of palace memorials of Grand Council, hereafter referred to as *LFZZ*), archive no. 3-163-7729-18/19.

These tables generalize the tributes and the quantities that Chosŏn had to present from the late 1720s to the early 1890s.⁴⁵ In addition to the yearly tributes submitted to

⁴⁵ See, for example, *Qingdai zhongchao guanxi dang'an shiliao xubian* (Continuing collections of archives on China-Chosŏn relations in the Qing period, hereafter referred to as *ZCSLXB*), 90-100; *Qingdai zhongchao guanxi dang'an shiliao huibian* (Collections of archives on Sino-Korean relations in the Qing

the Qing with a symbolic political meaning, all further tributes were specifically given to the emperors, empresses, and dowager empresses. In practice, all tributes were submitted to the Imperial Household Department, which was in charge of the affairs of the Manchu royal house and had a financial system independent of the one managed by the Ministry of Revenue.⁴⁶ Therefore, the Zongfan relationship between the two countries manifested itself in a hierarchical court-to-court way between the Manchu imperial court and the Chosŏn's royal court.

Compared with Chosŏn's tributes, the Qing's imperial gifts to Chosŏn were simple, but the bulk of them were first-rate silk for official robes. The imperial missions for investing a king or a crown prince would bring the gifts listed in the following tables.

Table 2. 6. The Qing's Gifts to Chosŏn for Investiture of a New King

Items	King	Queen
Black fox fur coat	1 pieces	/
Third-class marten skins	100 pieces	10 pieces
Horse with harness	1	/
Large-size satin with dragon embroidery	2 pieces	2 pieces
Small-size satin with dragon embroidery	1 pieces	/
Satin with flower embroidery	1 pieces	2 pieces
Brocade	1 pieces	2 pieces
Large-size satin	2 pieces	3 pieces
Satin with four groups of dragon embroidery	2 pieces	/
Cyan satin	1 pieces	2 pieces
Japanese satin	/	2 pieces
Bright satin	/	2 pieces
Hat satin	/	2 pieces
Satin without patterns	/	2 pieces
Satin with the rough surface	/	3 pieces
Yarn	/	4 pieces
Silk	/	4 pieces

Sources: *Qinding libu zeli* (1844), vol. 181, 2a-2b.

Table 2. 7. The Qing's Gifts to Chosŏn for Investiture of a New Crown Prince

period, hereafter referred to as *ZCSLHB*), 66-69, 72-73, 250-252, 307-312, 358-363. See also archives in *LFZZ*, Nos. 3-163-7729-21/22 (February 23, 1823), 3-163-7729-26/27/29/31 (February 21, 1831), 3-163-7729-32/33 (March 21, 1835), 3-163-7729-34/35 (July 1, 1835), 3-163-7729-36/37/38/39 (December 15, 1835), 3-163-7729-45/46 (November 9, 1849), and 3-163-7730-32/33 (August 13, 1886).

⁴⁶ *Qinding libu zeli* (1844), vol. 172, 6a-6b; *Ming Qing shiliao*, series. 7, vol. 5, 469b.

Items	Crown Prince
Satin with golden embroidery	4 pieces
Satin	4 pieces
Yarn	4 pieces
Coarse silk	4 pieces
Silk linings for satin with golden embroidery	4 pieces
Silk linings for satin	4 pieces
Silk linings for yarn	4 pieces
Silk linings for coarse silk	4 pieces

Sources: *Qinding libu zeli* (1844), vol. 181, 3b.

If imperial missions were dispatched to extend the emperor's condolences on the loss of core royal members, the gifts would be elements that were to be consumed at the ceremonies. In practice, the calf, sheep, pigs, table mats and wine would be converted into 150 to 300 taels of silver by the Ministry of Revenue.⁴⁷ Over the course of the seventeenth to the eighteenth centuries, the imperial envoys precisely followed this routine to deliver the condolences and gifts for the ceremonies, including the last envoy in 1890 with Emperor Guangxu's condolences on the loss of Senior Queen Dowager Cho (Table 2. 8).

Table 2. 8. The Qing's Gifts to Chosŏn on the Loss of the Senior Queen Dowager in 1890

Items	Quantities
Sandalwood incense	1 unit
Silk	1 piece
White satin silk	6 pieces
White filature	6 pieces
Blue filature	2 pieces
Silver kettle	1 unit (1.0 kilogram)
Silver wine vessel	3 units (0.5 kilograms each)
Calf	1
Sheep	2
Pig	2
Table mat	20 pieces
Wine	2 urns

Sources: Chongli, *Fengshi Chaoxian riji*, 12b-13b. Please note that the imperial mission of 1890 converted the calf, sheep, pigs, table mats, and wine into silver and received 300 taels from the Ministry of Revenue.

⁴⁷ See *Qinding libu zeli* (1844), vol. 168, 1b-2a.

(3) *The Overland Route and Chosŏn's Privileges*

In the post-1644 period, emissaries of the two countries traveled on an overland route, about 950 miles long, linking Hansŏng and Beijing via around 82 stations, including Pyongyang, Ŭiju, the Yalu River, Fenghuang City, Mukden, Shanhai Pass, and Tongzhou (Map 2. 1). From 1644 to 1895, Chosŏn's tributary emissaries were never permitted by the emperor to visit Beijing by sea. All imperial emissaries were also required to follow the overland route to Hansŏng except the last one in 1890, which was permitted to take a maritime route.⁴⁸ After crossing the Yalu River to the Qing territory, the emissaries were to arrive in Beijing under escort of Qing soldiers within 28 days through 39 transfer stations, where they were well accommodated by the Qing.⁴⁹ In general, a mission might need 40 or 50 days to reach Beijing from Hansŏng. For example, in 1777, the emissary Yi Kwang and his mission spent 62 days travelling to Beijing, walking more than 970 miles.⁵⁰ Over a hundred years later, in 1882, the mission led by Kim Yun-sik spent 50 days travelling to Beijing, walking around 930 miles.⁵¹ The imperial emissaries had the same long trudge to Hansŏng. In 1844, the envoy Baijun (?–1859) spent 39 days making the trek to Hansŏng, walking around 900 miles.⁵² The overland route was surrounded by a long chain-link willow palisade from Fenghuang City to Shanhai Pass, where it connected with the Great Wall. Right outside of the palisade was a trench of the same length. The willow palisade was built immediately after the Manchus took over Beijing, with the aim of preserving their economic privileges in their home base in Manchuria and

⁴⁸ Chongli, *Fengshi Chaoxian riji*, 14a.

⁴⁹ *T'ongmun'gwan ji*, vol. 1, 152-154.

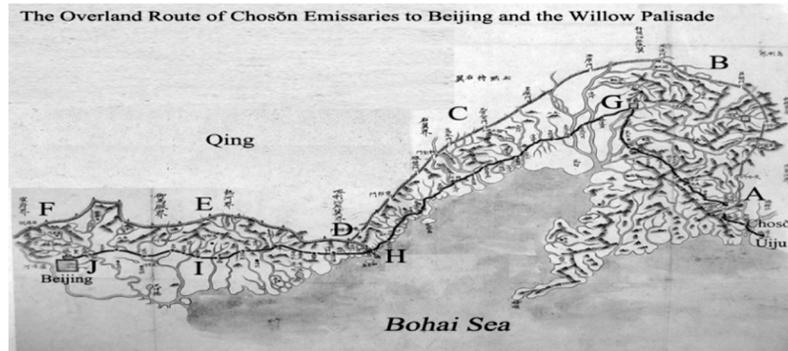
⁵⁰ Yi Kon, *Yŏnhaeng kisa*, in Lim Key-zung, ed., *Yŏnhaeng nok jŏnjip*, vol. 58, 256-388; vol. 59, 12-15.

⁵¹ See Kim Yun-Sik, *Ŭmch'ŏngsa* (Cloudy and sunny diary).

⁵² Baijun, *Fengshi Chaoxian yicheng riji* (Diary of the journey of the imperial mission to Chosŏn), in Yin Mengxia and Yu Hao, eds., *Shi Chaoxian lu* (Records of imperial missions to Chosŏn), vol. 2, 547-661.

demarcating domestic lines between Manchu, Mongolian, and Han Chinese regions.⁵³ In the early period of Kangxi's reign, the palisade was around 560 miles long and had 17 gates.⁵⁴ The activities of Chosŏn's emissaries were strictly confined to the areas between the willow palisade and Bohai Sea.

Map 2. 1. The Overland Route of Chosŏn's Emissaries to Beijing in the Qing (Late Eighteenth Century)



Notes: Based on *Ipyŏn chŏngdo do* (Map of the route of Chosŏn's emissaries to Beijing), in *Han'guk ūi kojido* (Old maps of Korea), 128. The black line connecting points A, B, C, and D on the map was the long chain-link willow palisade. The palisade started from Fenghuang City (A) and ended at Shanhai Pass (D), where it connected with the Great Wall (the line connecting points D, E, and F). The map shows that there were fourteen gates of the willow palisade. The black line connecting points A, G, H, I, and J is the overland route of the Chosŏn's emissaries to Beijing after they entered the Qing domain. The map marks forty-six stations that emissaries stayed in or pass through.

Considering the high frequency of Chosŏn's missions to the Qing, the long overland route was full of Chosŏn's emissaries, so that the country would send a new mission to Beijing before the previous one returned. These endless missions thus produced considerable lucrative commercial opportunities for merchants of the two countries. Many Chinese people in main cities on the route became rich by trading with Koreans. What overwhelmingly flowed into the Qing together with Korean goods was silver. The mission of 1777, for instance, carried more than 93,000 taels of silver to

⁵³ For the establishment and the roles of the willow palisade, see *Qinding daqing huidian shili* (1899), vol. 233, 20a; Yang Bin, *Liubian jilue* (Records of the willow palisade), vol. 1, 1; Yang Shusen, ed., *Qingdai liutiao bian* (The willow palisade in the Qing period); Li Huazi, *Choch'ŏng kukkyŏng munje yŏn'gu* (Study on the border between Chosŏn and the Qing), 59-88; Kim Seon-min, "Ongjŏngje ūi sŏnggyŏng chiyŏk t'ongch'i" (Emperor Yongzheng's rule in northeast area of the Qing).

⁵⁴ *Shengjing tongzhi* (Comprehensive history of Shengjing [Shenyang]), vol. 11, 5a-6a.

purchase Chinese goods.⁵⁵ More importantly, the largest part of the silver was originally from Japan, through the trade between Tsushima and Chosŏn, which bore a close resemblance to that between Chosŏn and the Qing. The Hansŏng–Fenghuang City–Mukden–Beijing overland trade route was an extension of the Kyoto–Osaka–Tsushima–Pusan–Hansŏng overland and maritime trade route *per se*,⁵⁶ on which Hansŏng and Beijing were the two biggest entrepôts. In this sense, it is not an exaggeration to say that the overland route between Beijing and Hansŏng was the busiest, the most prosperous, and the most lucrative long-distance and international trade route in East Asia before Chosŏn opened treaty ports and entered the “family of nations” in the 1880s.

Chosŏn’s emissaries also enjoyed some special privileges in terms of their visits to the Qing. All emissaries of the Qing’s *fan* had specific tributary routes to follow, and they dared not break the rules. Before they went to Beijing, Ryukyu’s emissaries were instructed to arrive at Min’an in Fujian province, Sulu’s at Xiamen also in Fujian, Western countries’ at Macau in Guangdong, Siam’s at Humen also in Guangdong, Annam’s at Taiping in Guangxi, Burma’s at Yongchang in Yunnan, and Lanchang’s at Pu’er also in Yunnan. At those places they would first be greeted by governor-general (Ch. *zongdu*) and governor (Ch. *xunfu*) who would report their arrival to the Ministry of Rituals on their behalf and instruct several subordinate officials to send them on to Beijing.⁵⁷ Chosŏn was the only exception, having no such relations with officials of the provinces through which they passed, particularly the governor-general of Zhili province.

⁵⁵ Yi Kon, *Yŏnhaeng kisa*, in Lim Key-zung, ed., *Yŏnhaeng nok jŏnjip*, vol. 58, 314-315.

⁵⁶ See, for example, Miyake Hidetoshi, *Kinsei ajia no nihon to Chōsen hantō* (Japan and the Korean peninsula in modern times), 157-159.

⁵⁷ *Qinding daqing huidian* (1764), vol. 56, 2b-3a; *Qinding daqing huidian* (1899), vol. 39, 3b. About the changes to their tribute routes, see J. K. Fairbank and S. Y. Têng, “On the Ch’ing Tributary System,” 175-176, Table 3 “Frequency and routes of embassies.”

Rather, it communicated directly with the Ministry of Rituals in Mukden and Beijing. This situation began changing in the 1870s, when Li Hongzhang became Governor-General of Zhili and Superintendent of Trade for the Northern Ports of China (Ch. *Beiyang tongshang dachen*) and became very influential in the Qing's diplomatic policy-making process. Yet, even then, Li was not further endowed by the Manchu rulers with the right to handle conventional affairs regarding Chosŏn. The core elements of the Zongfan affairs were still controlled by the Ministry of Rituals and the Manchu court.

(4) *Emissaries' Activities in the Capitals*

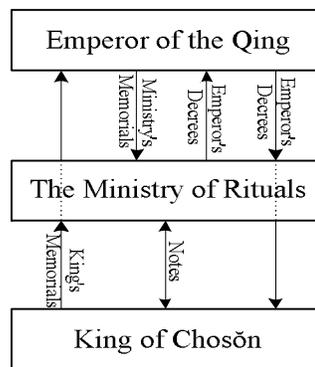
Almost all of the official activities of Chosŏn's emissaries in Beijing and the imperial emissaries in Hansŏng concerned highly programmed rituals. This was in particular true for Chosŏn's emissaries. After arriving in Beijing, the emissaries first visited the Ministry of Rituals to present the king's memorials and the list of tributes. In the main hall of the ministry, the emissaries would pass the king's memorials on to the head officials of the ministry, who would subsequently put the memorials on a desk in the middle of the hall, after which the emissaries would kneel down once to make three prostrations (Ch. *yi gui san koutou*) toward the head officials, who would in return bow toward the emissaries with their hands folded in front (Ch. *zuoyi*) three times. When this had been accomplished, the emissaries would kneel down three times, each time bowing their heads three times (Ch. *san gui jiu koutou*) toward the table.⁵⁸ The documents would be submitted to the emperor next day by the ministry.

The Ministry of Rituals was in complete charge of the communications between the emissaries and the Chinese side, which mainly included transferring Chosŏn's tributes

⁵⁸ See Yi Chae-hak, *Yŏnhaeng ilgi* (Diary of the journey to Beijing), in Lim Key-zung, ed., *Yŏnhaeng nok jŏnjip*, vol. 58, 100-101; *Qinding libu zeli* (1844), vol. 171, 11b-12a.

to the Imperial Household Department and the king's memorials to the emperor, and forwarding the emperor's decrees and largess to the emissaries. No emissaries from Chosŏn or other countries, and the kings they represented, had the right to directly present any memorials to the emperor. They had to submit all documents through the ministry with which they could communicate with each other via official notes (Ch. *ziwen*) (Figure 2. 1).

Figure 2. 1. The Network of Sino–Korean Official Communications before the 1880s



After presenting official documents to the Ministry of Rituals, the emissaries would go back to their residence, the Foreign Emissaries' Common Accommodations, and wait for the imperial audience. Two Manchu generals (Ch. *zhangjing*; M. *janggin*), two Manchu officers (Ch. *xiaoqixiao*; Ma. *funde bošokū*), and 24 soldiers from the Commander General of the Metropolitan Infantry Brigade Yamen (Ch. *Bujun tongling yamen*) guarded the hotel.⁵⁹ Three further institutes were immediately involved to wait upon the guests. The Court of Imperial Entertainments (Ch. *Guanglusi*) was responsible for daily food, the Ministry of Revenue for horses' fodder, and the Ministry of Works for charcoal. The food, fruit, and other daily consumer goods were distributed to each member of the mission according to his rank. For example, the envoy, associate envoy,

⁵⁹ See *Ming Qing shiliao*, series. 7, vol. 5, 449b. The members of the officers and soldiers differed on the basis of the categories of the missions, see *ibid.*, 450b.

and the secretary would be offered 24 items, such as mutton, milk, beef, goose, chicken, fish, flour, yellow wine, bean curd, pickles, soy sauce, vinegar, tea, salt, apples, and pears.⁶⁰ This specific and well-calculated list was the exact embodiment of the Qing's policy of "cherishing men from afar." After 1790, the Imperial Household Department took over the running of receptions for emissaries from all other countries except Chosŏn, and the Ministry of Rituals sent only two officials as assistants.⁶¹

While lingering in the hotel, the emissaries had responsibilities to fulfill. If there were a Great Court Assembly of the officials in the Forbidden City, the emissaries had to attend and pay homage at the end of the wing of the Qing's civil officials. One of their main tasks was to pay a formal visit to the emperor under the guidance of high-ranking officials from the Ministry of Rituals. If the emperor were at the Summer Palace in Beijing or the Rehe Palace in Chengde, the emissaries should apply for an audience at that place. After the audience, they would be invited to attend certain activities, such as banquets in the Forbidden City, the Peking Opera, or the firework shows at the Summer Palace.⁶² The emissaries would also receive gifts bestowed by the emperor in the main hall of the Ministry of Rituals, where they would kneel down three times, each time making three prostrations. This ceremony was followed by two official banquets held at the Ministry of Rituals and their residence.

The receptions were so huge that many institutes were involved. In addition to the Court of Imperial Entertainments, which was in charge of the work with the assistance of the Food Supply Office (Ch. *Jingshan qinglisi*) of the Ministry of Rituals, the Ministry of

⁶⁰ *Guanglusi zeli* (The regulations and cases of the Court of Imperial Entertainments) (Beijing, 1775), vol. 36, 1a-15a; *Qinding libu zeli* (1844), vol. 200, 1b-4a.

⁶¹ *Qinding libu zeli* (1844), vol. 171, 3b.

⁶² *Qinding libu zeli* (1844), vol. 171, 3b-4a, 11b-15a; *Qinding daqing tongli* (The comprehensive rites of the Great Qing, imperially ordained), vol. 43, 1-6.

Revenue, the Ministry of Works, the Ministry of War, the Shuntian prefecture (Ch. *Shuntian fu*), the Revenue Superintendent of the Chongwen Gate (Ch. *Liangyi shuiwu jiandu*), and royal contractors (Ch. *hanghu*) were also assigned specific tasks.⁶³ More often than not, the Court of Imperial Entertainments needed to set up 45 tables at the Ministry of Rituals and 40 tables at the hotel. Each of the three key members of the mission—envoy, associate envoy, and secretary—was treated to a fifth-level Manchu banquet, and the other members were treated to a sixth-level Manchu banquet. This was special treatment because emissaries from other countries were not treated to Manchu banquets.⁶⁴ The high cost of the banquets was fully covered by the Qing.

The banquets were full of ritual performances undergirding the bilateral hierarchical order. Before the banquets, the emissaries, together with the Qing officials, had to perform the same highest-level ceremony of kowtow toward an incense burner table (Ch. *xiang'an*), which was set by an official from the Shuntian prefecture. The emissaries had to kneel down once and make three prostrations toward the head officials from the Ministry of Rituals or the hotel, who would in return bow toward the emissaries with their hands folded in front three times, exactly as the two sides had done on the first day when the emissaries arrived in Beijing.⁶⁵ All ritual procedures were minutely regulated and practiced. In this, Chosŏn again acted as a model. As the imperial code noted, the seating arrangements for the banquets and the ceremonies for emissaries from other countries to perform should follow the Chosŏn's pattern (Ch. *geguo gongshi fangci*).⁶⁶

⁶³ *Guanglusi zeli*, vol. 23, 1a-12b.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. 23, 1b.

⁶⁵ *Guanglusi zeli*, vol. 23, 4b-6a; *Qinding libu zeli* (1844), vol. 299, 7a-7b.

⁶⁶ "Illustration of the banquets for Chosŏn's tributary emissaries" (Ch. *Chaoxian gongshi yantu*), in

These rituals were not new products of the Qing. At least from the Guest Rituals (Ch. *binli*) in *The Rituals of the Great Tang* (Ch. *Datang kaiyuan li*), an imperial codification of the Tang dynasty compiled in 732, such rituals between the Chinese emperor and foreign emissaries or kings had long been regulated and institutionalized.⁶⁷ In the Qing period, they became extremely elaborate and rich and many new cases developed in the Qianlong period. The emissaries were always required to rehearse the complicated ceremonies in advance. The political objective of the rehearsals was far beyond what the specific ceremonials required. Rather, it aimed to exploit the “loyalty of Chosŏn” to “civilize the barbarians on the four quarters under the Heaven” (Ch. *feng siyi*).⁶⁸ This role that Chosŏn played in the Ming became more significant, more typical, and more critical in the Qing for the Manchu ruling house that needed to pursue the Chineseness.

In their sojourn in Beijing, the emissaries, particularly those intellectuals who were without official status and responsibilities, were enthusiastic about socializing with the Qing’s literati who were very interested in communicating with the visitors too. Their principal activities were meeting for drinks, making poems together, and exchanging their own literary works and calligraphy. When they socialized, they made conversation by writing Chinese characters (Ch. *bitan*; K. *p’iltam*), so they could accurately understand each other, precluding misunderstanding caused by mistranslations by the interpreters. Learning the same Confucian classics, cherishing the same neo-Confucianism, and using the same Chinese characters, these intellectuals were easily able to identify one another

Qinding libu zeli (1844).

⁶⁷ *Datang kaiyuan li* (The rituals of the Great Tang), 386-392.

⁶⁸ The memorial of the Ministry of Rituals to Emperor Wanli, February 2, 1603, in *Sadae mungwe*, vol. 42, 14b-15b.

as men of the same caliber. The fact that Chosŏn was known as “Little China” may also have lent this kind of transnational literary social gathering homologous cultural identity. These savants thus formed an informal, perennial, and transnational literati club in which they could exchange ideas of history and literature and to improve their perceptions of the two countries. Many intellectuals became very close friends and continued to correspond. When the Chinese official Yan Cheng (1733–?) died in the Qianlong period, he put a letter from his Korean friend, Hong Tae-yong (1731–1783), on his abdomen to treasure their friendship.⁶⁹

The literary social gathering lasted until the late nineteenth century. In the 1860s, many officials of the Qing, such as Dong Wenhuan (1833–1877) who was serving at the Imperial Academy (Ch. *Hanlin yuan*) and known for calligraphy and epigraphy, were very active in socializing with Korean intellectuals.⁷⁰ Dong’s diary suggested that socializing with his Korean counterparts became an essential part of his daily life.⁷¹ Such social gatherings were fascinating for the Korean visitors too. For example, Pak Kyu-su (1807–1876), the emissary of the mission of 1872, made more than a hundred famous Chinese intellectuals his friends through social gatherings.⁷² Interestingly enough, the majority of the Chinese literati with whom their Korean counterparts were interested in talking were Han Chinese, so the Manchus seemed to be excluded from the literati club of the “central civilized country” (Ch. *Zhonghua*). By the same token, this transnational literati club had its bottom line in that those savants did not discuss statecraft or politics.

⁶⁹ Wu Jiaxuan, *Chaoxian shizhe Jin Yongjue bitanji* (Record of conversation in writing with the Chosŏn’s emissary Kim Yŏng-jak), in Li Yu and Ch’oi Yŏng-hŭi, eds., *Hanke shicun* (The poems of Korean guests), 261-266.

⁷⁰ See Dong Wenhuan, *Xianqiao shanfang riji* (The diary of Dong Wenhuan), in Dong Shouping and Li Yu, eds., *Qingji hongtong dongshi riji liuzhong* (The six diaries of the Dongs of Hongtong in late Qing).

⁷¹ Dong Wenhuan, *Xianqiao shanfang riji*, in *Qingji hongtong dongshi riji liuzhong*, vol. 1, 18-27.

⁷² Pak Kyu-su, *Hwanjae sŏnsaengjip* (The collection of Pak Kyu-su), 6-7.

Rather, they confined their conversations and correspondence to the fields of Chinese literature and personal friendship and never crossed that line until the 1860s and 1870s, when France and the United States came to Chosŏn to pursue the opening of the country.

Compared with their active Korean counterparts in Beijing, the Qing's envoys in Hansŏng were confined to ritual exchanges, and no transnational literati club like the one in Beijing ever formed. A Beijing-style literary social gathering indeed formed in Shuri, the capital of Ryukyu, when the imperial envoys served by the Han Chinese stayed there for investiture,⁷³ but never in Hansŏng. The envoys did not go outside of their hotel to converse with local officials or intellectuals. After 1658, when the Manchu trade in Hansŏng was cancelled by Emperor Shunzhi, the Qing envoys were only temporary visitors who would return as soon as their missions were accomplished, while the Chosŏn's emissaries could stay in Beijing for at least 40 days.

During their sojourn, the envoys and the king performed three primary ceremonies. The first was the welcoming ceremony performed at the Gate of Receiving Imperial Favors (K. *Yŏngŭn mun*), outside the West Gate of the city, by the king or his deputy when the envoys arrived and were housed at Hall of Admiring the Central Civilized Country on the outskirts. The second ceremony was conducted in the palace in the city, where the envoys would transfer the imperial documents and other items to the king. The third ceremony was the visit of the king, crown prince, and other high-ranking officials to the envoys at their residence, the South Palace Annex. All the procedures of these ceremonies were regulated by ritual codes, and were executed until the last decade

⁷³ Ch'en Ta-tuan, "Investiture of Liu-Ch'iu Kings in the Ch'ing Period," in *The Chinese World Order*, 156-159.

of the nineteenth century.⁷⁴ The contacts between the two sides were conducted by the Ministry of Rituals of Chosŏn. The Korean side had no responsibility to report any domestic affairs to the envoys. Neither would the envoys intervene in any such affairs. Even in the 1880s, when Yuan Shikai resided in Chosŏn as “His Imperial Chinese Majesty’s Resident,” the imperial envoys visited Hansŏng still performed their duties according to ritual conventions of the Zongfan mechanism and did not intervene in local political or diplomatic affairs.

(5) *The Qing Emperor’s Role in the Zongfan System*

Once the Zongfan mechanism embodied by a series of intricate ritual norms started, each procedure had to be conducted precisely according to the imperial ritual codes and conventional precedents. The question thus turned on what roles the emperor was able to play in practice. At first sight, it might seem that the role of the emperor was noticeably dwarfed by the entirety of the routine, well-designed structure of the Zongfan mechanism. Yet it would be too much to claim that the whole system had become so rigid that the emperor could fulfill no more than his function as one of the institutional agencies at the highest level of the hierarchy. Rather, he was able to exploit the occasions of imperial audiences to modify and lubricate the mechanism from the top down by freely giving emissaries various extra gifts.

Once again, Chosŏn could easily serve as a model for other *fan*. After Chosŏn’s emissaries presented tributes to the emperor, the sovereign would bestow gifts upon them and the king. The items and quantities were regulated according to the categories of the missions. The following table shows the gifts for annual tributary and winter solstice

⁷⁴ *T’ongmun’gwan ji*, vol. 1, 235-264; *Mangi yoran chaeyong p’yŏn* (The collection of cases of the finances of Chosŏn), 691-695; *Qinding libu zeli* (1844), vol. 181, 5b-7b.

missions (Table 2. 9). The silk and satin among the gifts were taken from the Imperial Household Department, rather than the Ministry of Revenue, in order to show the emperor’s favorable treatment to “king of the *fan*” (Ch. *fanwang*).⁷⁵ Some specialists on the Zongfan trade argue that the routine of the imperial gifts awarded to the emissaries was only an institutionalized part of the entire mechanism and hence might be insufficient to suggest flexibility.⁷⁶ This is true if the Qing, or the court of the Qing, is treated as simply one side of the stereotypical *dramatis personae* in Zongfan contacts, but in fact, the emperor could break this routine by freely awarding the emissaries with extra gifts during audiences (Table 2. 10). In this way, the emperor highlighted his individual role in moderating the system by lending it flexibility, uncertainty, and novelty.

Table 2. 9. The Imperial Gifts to Annual Tributary Missions and Winter Solstice Missions of Chosŏn

Items	King	Envoy	Secretary	Interpreter	Officer	Servant
Biao-satin	5 pieces	/	/	/	/	/
Linings	5 pieces	/	/	/	/	/
Zhuang-satin	4 pieces	/	/	/	/	/
Yun-satin	4 pieces	/	/	/	/	/
Marten skins	100 pieces	/	/	/	/	/
Large-size satin	/	1 piece	1 piece	1 piece	/	/
Mao-satin	/	1 piece	/	/	/	/
Peng-satin	/	1 piece	1 piece	/	1 piece	/
Silk	/	1 piece	/	/	/	/
Filature	/	1 piece	/	/	/	/
Coarse silk	/	2 pieces	1 piece	1 piece	/	/
Cloth	/	/	/	/	2 pieces	/
Silver	/	50 taels	40 taels	20 taels	15 taels	4 taels

Sources: *Qinding libu zeli* (1844), vol. 172, 8b.

Note 1: Each of the two envoys, three interpreters, 24 guard officers, and 30 servants of the mission would get the quantities listed above.

Note 2: The imperial gifts to the imperial birthday celebration missions and the Chinese New Year celebration missions were similar to the items listed above. Yet the king would get a second-class horse with bridles and each of the two envoys would get a third-class horse with bridles. In addition, the quantities of silver were higher—that is, 50 taels for each of the secretary, 30 taels for each interpreter, 20 taels for each officer, and 5 taels for each servant. See *Qinding libu zeli* (1844), vol. 172, 9a-9b. Therefore, for each of these four kinds of mission, the Qing would give 680 (for annual tributary missions and winter solstice missions) or 850 taels (for imperial birthday celebration missions and Chinese New Year

⁷⁵ *Qinding libu zeli* (1844), vol. 172, 9b.

⁷⁶ See, for example, Iwai Shigeki, “Chōkō to goshi,” 137.

celebration missions) of silver in addition to other gifts. For a general examination on the value of imperial gifts, see Chang Tsun-wu, *Qing Han Zongfan maoyi*, Table 9, 36-37.

Table 2. 10. Emperor Qianlong's Extra-Gifts to Chosŏn's Emissaries, September 9–28, 1790

Dates (Sep.)	Items	Envoy	Associate Envoy	Secretary	First-class Interpreter
9, 10	Tea	1 bottle	1 bottle	1 bottle	1 bottle
	Tea cream	1 box	1 box	/	/
	Porcelain plate	1	1	1	1
	Apples	4	4	4	4
12	Zhang-silk	1 piece	1 piece	1 piece	1 piece
	Five-thread satin	1 piece	1 piece	/	/
	Embroidered pouches	2 pairs	2 pairs	1 pair	1 pair
13	Colored satin	1 piece	1 piece	/	/
	Large-size satin	1 piece	1 piece	/	/
	Zhang-silk	/	/	1 piece	1 piece
	Eight-thread satin	2 piece	2 piece	2 piece	1 piece
	Five-thread satin	2 piece	2 piece	2 piece	2 piece
	Writing paper	1 volume	1 volume	1 volume	/
	Chinese brush pens	1 box	1 box	1 box	/
	Chinese Ink	1 box	1 box	1 box	/
	Ink stone	1	1	/	/
	Animal-skin bowl	1	1	1	1
	Porcelain snuff-pots	1	1	1	1
Silver	/	/	/	20 taels	
14	Porcelain plates	1	1	1	1
16	Milk cake	1 box	1 box	/	/
	Tea	2 boxes	2 boxes	/	/
	Milk cream	2 boxes	2 boxes	/	/
18	Porcelain articles	2 pieces	2 pieces	1 piece	1 piece
	Leather articles	3 pieces	3 pieces	3 pieces	3 pieces
	Chayote	4	4	4	4
	porcelain snuff-pots	1	1	1	1
19	Embroidered pouches	2 pairs	2 pairs	/	/
26	First-class incense		50 pieces	/	/
	Second-class incense		400 pieces	/	/
28	Large-size satin	2 pieces	2 pieces	/	/
	Zhang-silk	1 piece	1 piece	/	/
	Jiang-silk	1 piece	1 piece	/	/
	Zou-silk	1 piece	1 piece	/	/

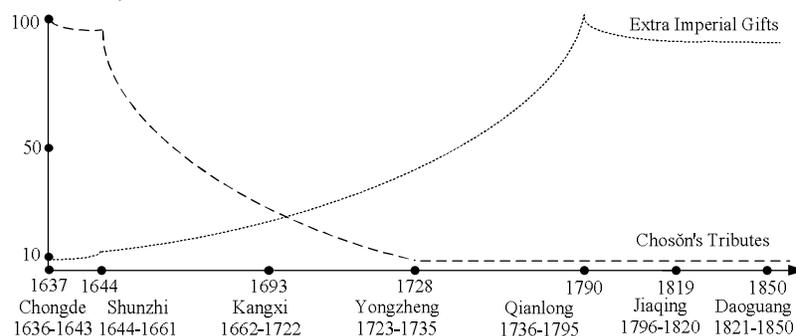
Sources: *Qinding libu zeli* (1844), vol. 172, 11a-12a.

The extra imperial gifts were multifarious. In February 1795, Emperor Qianlong even awarded the king with a hundred copies of the Chinese character of “happiness” (Ch.

fu), which he wrote on small red square papers.⁷⁷ This sort of largesse was seemingly random, but it should in no way be regarded as simply the imperial prerogative. Neither should it be understood as a deviation from the flowcharts of ritual codes as some would argue.⁷⁸ Rather, it highlighted the dynamic roles of the emperor at the highest level of the Zongfan hierarchical system and the policy of “giving more and getting less” (Ch. *houwang bolai*) in Sino–foreign communications. As the leading proponent of this policy, the emperor now had opportunities to put it into practice. More importantly, such largesse proved that the Zongfan mechanism at its top level was not as routine as it seemed to be at its lower levels, nor was it stagnant as has generally been assumed.

In the second half of the eighteenth century, the emperor awarded more extra gifts to Chosŏn’s missions to underline the Qing’s generosity and its policy of “giving more and getting less,” while he constantly reduced Chosŏn’s tributes which in the 1730s became less than one-tenth of what it had been in the 1630s. The trajectories of the two simultaneous policies toward Chosŏn from the 1630s to the 1850s can be well perceived in Figure 2. 2.

Figure 2. 2. The Decrease in Chosŏn’s Tributes and the Increase in the Qing’s Extra Imperial Gifts, 1630s–1850s



⁷⁷ *Qinding libu zeli* (1844), vol. 172, 12b.

⁷⁸ Huang Chih-lien, *Chaoxian de ruhua qingjing gouzao: Chaoxian wangchao yu manqing wangchao de guanxi xingtai lun* (The construction of Confucian context in Chosŏn: Comments on relations between the Manchu Qing dynasty and the Chosŏn dynasty), 479-491. Huang argues that Emperor Qianlong’s free activities of awarding Chosŏn’s emissaries with small gifts distorted “the ritual system of the Heavenly Dynasty” (Ch. *tianchao lizhi tixi*) as he puts it.

Sources: *Tongmun hwiko*, vol. 2, 1474-1475, 1494, 1497-1498, 1503; *Qing shizu shilu*, vol. 3, 35; *Qinding libu zeli* (1844), vol. 172, 9a-19a; Archives with no. 193-198, in *ZCSLXB*, 255-259; *Ming Qing shiliao*, series 7, vol. 5, 461a-461b; Chun Hae-Jong, *Hanjung kwan'gye sa yǒnggu*, 79-82; Chang Tsun-wu, *Qing Han Zongfan maoyi*, 25-27.

Notes: The quantities of tributes and extra gifts from 1637 to 1643 were roughly taken as 100 and 10 respectively as reference quantities.

As the figure shows, the extra imperial gifts reached their peak in the 1790s, a time when Emperor Qianlong, in his eighties, loved extolling the image of the Heavenly Dynasty, to which Chosŏn served as the best foil. At this level, the Qing court did not seriously take the economic concerns—the appropriate balance between the value of the tributes and the imperial gifts—into consideration. In 1793, a Korean emissary acknowledged that the Qing treated Chosŏn in such a favorable way that the spending on accommodations and the value of the various imperial items much outweighed the value of Chosŏn's "local products."⁷⁹

2.3 The Chosŏn Model and the Qing's Expansion into Inner Asia

Along with the military conquest of the Ming's territory and the territorial expansion into Inner Asia in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Qing applied the Chosŏn Model to the political units in the Inner Asian area and gradually incorporated them into the Qing's outer *fan*.⁸⁰ Some scholars have argued that, in that period the Qing's rapid expansion into Inner Asia resulted in its "passive attitude" toward Chosŏn, which "was very much neglected so long as she continued her regular tributes and accepted the investitures from the Chinese Emperor."⁸¹ The truth was that Chosŏn, as a well-established model, was playing a primary role in providing practical concepts for

⁷⁹ Yi Chae-hak, *Yŏnhaeng ilgi*, in Lim Key-zung, ed., *Yŏnhaeng nok jŏnjip*, vol. 58, 193-194. John K. Fairbank also makes the same argument, see "Tributary Trade and China's Relations with the West," 135.

⁸⁰ See Qi Yunshi, *Huangchao fanbu yaolue* (A general survey of the subordinates of the imperial Qing dynasty).

⁸¹ Frederick Foo Chien, *The Opening of Korea: A Study of Chinese Diplomacy, 1876-1885*, 14.

pacifying Inner Asia and helping the Qing to build up its new political status and administrative systems in that area.

The affairs of Inner Asia were under the management of the Mongolian Superintendency. During the Qing, the Mongolian Superintendency and the Ministry of Rituals were two parallel central institutes responsible for the affairs of the outer *fan*, with the former managing mainly those *fan* from Qing China's north and west (Inner Asia), and the latter managing those from the east, the south, and the West. Comparing the imperial codes of the two institutes, it seems that the Mongolian Superintendency borrowed institutional regulations from the Ministry of Rituals to formalize the communications between the Manchu rulers and the Mongolian *fan* in Inner Asia.⁸² The prototypical role of Chosŏn in nourishing the entire Zongfan system might have arguably contributed to the Qing's policies toward Inner Asia. On the surface, the geographical responsibilities of the Ministry of Rituals did not overlap those of the Mongolian Superintendency, as the Qing officials articulated in 1743,⁸³ so ostensibly the Qing–Chosŏn contacts seemed to have no relations with the Qing–Inner Asian contacts. This impression might be further corroborated by the relationship between the Manchu court and such areas like Tibet, which had always been understood from the religious perspective in which the Manchu emperor was Bodhisattva of Manjushree (Ma. *manjusiri dergi han*; Ch. *Wenshushili huangdi*) in the world, as the Dalai Lama always addressed

⁸² See, for example, *Qinding daqing huidian* (The collected statutes of the Great Qing, imperially ordained) (Beijing, 1764), vols. 79-80, *Qinding libu zeli* (1844), vols. 171-187, and *Qinding lifanyuan zeli* (The regulations and cases of the Mongolian Superintendency, imperially ordained), vol. 16. As J. K. Fairbank and S. Y. Têng put, the way that the Qing controlled and managed these Mongol tribes was “all in the traditional forms of the tributary relationship.” See “On the Ch’ing Tributary System,” 158-163.

⁸³ *Qinding daqing huidian shili* (The collected statutes and precedents of the Great Qing, imperially ordained) (Beijing, 1899), vol. 975, 9b-10a.

the Manchu monarch in his memorials to Beijing.⁸⁴ Yet in terms of the political spectrum, as early as the first years following 1644, the Qing rulers had begun applying the Chosŏn Model to Inner Asia, and the Ministry of Rituals was also in charge of the affairs of some lamas in Gansu and Shaanxi provinces until the 1740s when it transferred the right of political management to the Mongolian Superintendency.

In the above-mentioned case of the visit of the Fifth Dalai Lama in 1653, the Qing successfully used the opportunity to invest the Dalai Lama and the Gusi Khan (1582–1655) of the Ūlet Mongols by incorporating them into the Qing-dominated extended family and putting them under the Qing’s jurisdiction. Interestingly enough, in a time when the Mongolian Superintendency still administratively remained in close relations with the Ministry of Rituals, it was a Manchu minister (Ch. *shangshu*; Ma. *aliha amban*) from the Ministry of Rituals, Langkio, and an assistant minister (Ch. *shilang*; Ma. *ashan i amban*) from the Mongolian Superintendency, Sidali, who gave the lama and the khan the investiture books. This was the beginning of the institutionalization of the Qing’s Zongfan system in this area. The words in the investiture book to the khan bore a remarkable resemblance to those in the one to the new king of Chosŏn in 1649. As key terms, it articulated that the receiver must serve as the Qing’s “subordinate” or “fence” (Ch. *pingfu*) “until the Yellow River becomes as narrow as a belt and the Taishan Mountain becomes as small as a grindstone” (Ch. *daili shanhe*).⁸⁵ In addition, the mechanism behind the exchanges of “local products” or “tributes” that the lama and the

⁸⁴ *Qinggong zhencang lishi Dalai Lama dang’an huicui* (The treasure collection of the Dalai Lama from the archives of the Qing dynasty), 15.

⁸⁵ *Qing shizu shilu*, vol. 3, 586-587, 363. The same words first appeared in Hongtaiji’s investiture edict to King of Chosŏn in 1637, see *Qing taizong shilu*, vol. 2, 510-511, and *Yinjo sillok*, vol. 34, 709. For the investiture edict to the Dalai Lama that was written in Mongolian was different from the one to the Gusi Khan, see *Qinggong zhencang lishi Dalai Lama dang’an huicui*, 10-11. The lama’s official title in Manchu language is *Wargi abkai amba sain jigara fucihi i abkai fejergi fucihi tacihyan be aliha eaten be sara wacira dara dalai lama* (Ch. *xitian dashan zizai fo suoling tianxia shijiao putong wachiladala dalai lama*).

khan presented to the emperor and the empress dowager in 1654 and the imperial gifts they received from the emperor was very close to that between the Qing and Chosŏn.⁸⁶ The Chosŏn Model thus became a normative, standard, as well as powerful soft weapon in the repertoire of the Qing court, allowing the Manchu rulers to govern the areas conquered by the formidable Eight Banners in Inner Asia, which arguably smoothed the way for the Qing to insert its civil administrative system into these areas during the Yongzheng and Qianlong periods. Some historians have pointed out that after 1644 the Mongolian Superintendency “used rites and forms of the traditional Confucian Chinese system to conduct relations with the ‘barbarians’,”⁸⁷ but what they have missed is that those formalities were precisely based upon the Chosŏn Model.

In this historical process, besides communication with Chosŏn, Ryukyu, Annam, Burma, Siam, and other countries under the management of the Ministry of Rituals, the Qing efficiently exploited its contacts with Russia and the political units in Inner Asia through the Mongolian Superintendency to define and consolidate its identity as China and the Heavenly Dynasty. In the Qing’s long process of pacifying the Zunghar Mongols who were treated by the Qing rulers as people “beyond virtue and civilization” (Ch. *dehua zhi wai*),⁸⁸ the discourse of “all-under-Heaven” and “people without difference between the outside and the inside” emphasized by the emperor and his agents in the area found the Zunghar Mongols, Tibetan forces, and other political forces to be a good

⁸⁶ See the list of the tributes presented by the Fifth Dalai Lama and Gusi Khan and the imperial gifts bestowed to them, dated November 15, 1654, in *Qinggong zhencang lishi Dalai Lama dang’an huicui*, 18-19.

⁸⁷ Mark Mancall, “The Ch’ing Tribute System: An Interpretive Essay,” 72-73.

⁸⁸ *Qing shizong shilu* (Veritable records of Emperor Yongzheng of the Qing), vol. 8, 388. For the Qing’s penetration into Inner Asia by conquering Zunghar and Turkestan, see Peter C. Perdue, *China Marches West*, 133-299; James A. Millward, *Beyond the Pass*, 25-36, and *Eurasian Crossroads: A History of Xinjiang*, 88-97.

audience.⁸⁹ Although the Zunghar were eventually annihilated by Emperor Qianlong, the leading strategy of the Qing for tackling its relations with the Zunghar and other political forces in Inner Asia was to transform them into the Qing's outer *fan* and integrate them into the Qing's Zongfan mechanism, as the Chosŏn Model suggested.⁹⁰ An extensive treatment of this issue invites more specific research on Qing–Inner Asian relations, which exceeds the current boundaries of this dissertation.

2.4 Institutional Barbarianization of Chosŏn under the Chinese Empire of the Qing

In Zongfan communications with the prototypical *fan*, which occurred several times a year in Beijing, the Qing toward the middle of the eighteenth century was able to confidently and freely demonstrate its identity as the Heavenly Dynasty before Chosŏn, Ryukyu, Annam, and other foreign countries that were naturally considered its subordinates. The Qing accomplished this construction of its new political and cultural identity by institutionally and intellectually barbarianizing Chosŏn—that is, the Qing gradually transformed Chosŏn from a country known as “Little China” into a country of “foreign barbarians” (Ch. *waiyi*) that served as the most typical “people from afar” (Ch. *yuanren*; Ma. *goroki niyalma*) in the Qing's political discourse and imperial documents.⁹¹

As a result, all foreign countries followed the prototypical *fan* into the category of “foreign barbarians” in the Qing's politico-cultural discourse and norms. The remarkable

⁸⁹ See, for example, Yu Bao's memorial to Emperor Qianlong, August 19, 1747, in *Qingdai junjichu manwen aocha dang* (The records preserved at the Grand Council regarding to the emissaries of Zunghar Mongols to Tibetan temples for donations), vol. 1, 1123; Hai Wang's memorial to Emperor Qianlong, May 7, 1748, *ibid.*, vol. 2, 1476.

⁹⁰ *Qinding daqing huidian* (Beijing, 1764), vol. 80, 26a. For the communications between the Qing policy-makers and Zunghar Mongols from 1734 (the 12th Year of Yongzheng) to 1754 (the 19th Year of Qianlong), see *Junjichu manwen zhungaer shizhe dang yibian* (The Chinese translations of the Manchu records preserved at the Grand Council regarding to the emissaries of Zunghar Mongols). The collection was originally entitled by the Qing court *Yishi dang* (The records of the barbarian emissaries).

⁹¹ *Qianlong chao manwen jixindang yibian* (The collection of the Chinese translations of the Manchu record books of imperial edicts), vol. 12, 115-120.

milestone in this dual intellectual transformation as well as reconstruction was the imperial collection *Illustrations of Subordinate Peoples of the Imperial Qing*, first published in 1761, in the Qianlong period.⁹²

THE CONUNDRUM OF “BARBARIANS” FROM YONGZHENG TO QIANLONG

The Qing’s attitude toward the civilized–barbarian distinction underwent a sharp change in the transitional days between the Yongzheng and the Qianlong periods in the 1730s. In the late 1720s, Emperor Yongzheng publicized the issue to all intellectuals of the Qing as a result of the case of Zeng Jing, in which the emperor himself was deeply involved. In June 1733, when Zeng was engaging in his itinerant lectures in the provinces, Yongzheng issued an edict to prohibit changing Chinese characters with the meaning of “barbarian” (Ch. *hu*, *lu*, *yi*, and *di*) in books. He defined “barbarian” from the geographical point of view and confessed that the ancestors of the dynasty could be called “eastern barbarians” (Ch. *dongyi*), like those ancient Chinese saints. This tone, as Chapter 1 describes, had actually been set by Hongtaiji in 1636 in his letter to king of Chosŏn, and Yongzheng repeated the points in his book *Great Righteousness Resolving Confusion* (Ch. *Dayi juemi lu*) in 1729. By proclaiming that “people living both within and outside China are in the same family” (Ch. *zhongwai yijia*), Yongzheng insisted that the issue of the civilized–barbarian distinction should not be understood from the cultural sense, and if it were, only those who were “beyond the civilization” (Ch. *wanghua zhi wai*) like Zunghar, might be called “barbarians.”⁹³ This meant that all the Qing’s *fan* under the Qing’s civilized management must not be regarded as “barbarians” either. Consequently, the

⁹² *Huangqing zhigong tu*; Chuang Chi-fa, *Xie Sui zhigong tu manwen tushuo jiaozhu* (Interpretations and annotations on the Manchu characters in *Zhigong tu* made drawn Xie Sui).

⁹³ *Qing shizong shilu*, vol. 8, 696-697.

yardstick for judging “barbarians” became nebulous in the late years of the Yongzheng period, in that the ruling dynasty identified itself with one of the “barbarians.”

The outright statements of Yongzheng led some students of the Qing to conclude that the Manchu rulers at that time began carrying out a policy of “cultural egalitarianism” in order to redistribute cultural resources within the vast multiethnic empire.⁹⁴ It is safe to state that Yongzheng tried to overcome the prejudice of the stereotypical civilized–barbarian distinction among Han Chinese intellectuals in the background of the Manchus’ Sinicization,⁹⁵ but it would be far-fetched to assert that the emperor and his regime took a position “against the thought of the civilized–barbarian distinction.”⁹⁶ By bringing a sharp termination to Zeng Jing’s own life in 1735, Emperor Qianlong fundamentally changed his father’s policy by clearly differentiating the “civilized” Qing China from all the countries surrounding it. In this way, the emperor brought the civilized–barbarian distinction back to its original point of departure, where cultural factors played a pivotal role, while he efficiently exploited the heritage of his father regarding free and public use of all Chinese characters with the meaning of “barbarian.”

As a result of Qianlong’s passionate restoration of the issue, Yongzheng’s rhetoric in his book was proved to be a distortion of the whole chain of the civilized–barbarian distinction. In the Qianlong period, the use of “foreign barbarians” in Qing official documents reached its zenith in history, through which the Qing identified itself as *Zhongguo* and the Heavenly Dynasty with cultural superiority.⁹⁷ Qianlong achieved his

⁹⁴ Hirano Satoshi, *Shin teikoku to chibetto mondai: taminzoku tōgō no seiritsu to gakai* (The Qing empire and the Tibet issue: the formation and collapse of the multiethnic unification), 71-112.

⁹⁵ Takeo Abe, *Shindaisi no kenkyu* (Historical studies of the Qing dynasty), 33-56.

⁹⁶ Hirano Satoshi, *Shin teikoku to chibetto mondai: taminzoku tōgō no seiritsu to gakai*, 71-133.

⁹⁷ For the changes of relations between *Zhongguo* and “foreign barbarians” (*waiyi*) during the Ming and Qing times, see Kishimoto Mio, “‘Chūgoku’ to ‘gai i’: myōdai kara shin ‘chūki ni okeru kokka koshō no mondai’” (“China” and “foreign barbarians”: The issue of China’s from the Ming period to the middle Qing

goals by institutionally barbarianizing all other countries and the majority of ethnic groups under his emperorship, of which one of the most important targets was Chosŏn.

INSTITUTIONAL BARBARIANIZATION OF CHOSŎN AND OTHERS

On June 26, 1751, Emperor Qianlong made the essential move by instructing his ministers of the Grand Council (Ch. *Junji chu*) to order governor-generals or governors on the Qing's borders to draw pictures of "domestic and foreign barbarians" (Ch. *neiwai miaoyi, waiyi fanzhong*) in order to show the flourishing of the Qing.⁹⁸ As it turned out, the emperor was following a tradition of Emperor Taizong (599–649, r. 627–649) of the Tang dynasty, who was believed to have brought China the most prosperous days of the pre-Qing era. Since Tang Taizong had drawn pictures of those "barbarians" from the Tang's periphery and "countries from afar" (Ch. *yuanguo*) to celebrate the great event when "ten thousand countries devoutly came to revere the emperor" (Ch. *wanguo laichao*),⁹⁹ Emperor Qianlong had every reason to believe that the more prosperous days under his rule in the Great Qing should be enshrined as well.

Beyond the obvious political factors, as a big fan of Chinese opera who contributed greatly to the birth of the Peking Opera, Emperor Qianlong might have been considerably influenced by certain operas popular in society that extolled the virtues of "ten thousand countries [that] devoutly came to revere the emperor." These operas could be dated at least to the Yuan period, but in the Ming and the earlier Qing periods they were still performed in local communities of such Chinese cities as Beijing. The scripts of these operas described the Ming as the "Heavenly Dynasty," the "upper country," or

period), manuscript, cited with the author's permission.

⁹⁸ *Qing gaozong shilu*, vol. 14, 120-121.

⁹⁹ *Jiu tang shu* (Old history of the Tang dynasty), vol. 16, 5274.

the “central civilized country” (Ch. *Zhonghua*), bordered by “barbarians from four directions” (Ch. *siyi*) paying tribute and presenting palace memorials to the emperor. The “four barbarians” in these operas were frequently represented as Chosŏn, Annam, and political units in Inner Asia. This kind of popular culture in Chinese society at the time might have motivated Emperor Qianlong to initiate the project.¹⁰⁰

Ten years later, in 1761, the first edition of the imperial collection, entitled *Illustrations of Subordinate Peoples of the Imperial Qing* (Ch. *Huangqing zhigong tu*), was published in four volumes, containing 600 colorful pictures of people from the Qing’s outer *fan* or “barbarian places” in the Qing’s territory or on its periphery. Once again, Chosŏn became the model for others in the collection, and its prototypical role was made clear by Qing scholars in the *Essentials of Complete Books of the Four Storehouses Catalogue* (Ch. *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao*).¹⁰¹ The first picture in the collection was of a Korean official who wore the Ming-style official robe but was termed the “barbarian official of Country of Chosŏn” (Ch. *Chaoxian guo yiguan*) (Figure 2. 3). Chosŏn, the “Little China,” now was institutionally converted into a country of “barbarians” by the Qing’s political discourse and imperial documentary mechanism.

Along with Chosŏn, other countries, including Ryukyu, Annam, Siam, Sulu, Lanchang, Burma, Britain, France, Japan, Holland, and Russia, were likewise converted into countries of “barbarians,” together with the many ethnic minorities under the Qing’s administrative management.¹⁰² In nearly every case, the narrative constructed an

¹⁰⁰ “Zhu wanshou wanguo laichao” (Ten thousand countries devoutly came to celebrate the emperor’s birthday), in *Guben yuan ming zaju* (The only existing copy of the operas in the Yuan and Ming times), vol. 32.

¹⁰¹ *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* (Essentials of Complete Books of the Four Storehouses Catalogue), vol. 15, 12

¹⁰² *Huangqing zhigong tu*, 40-154, 155-1067.

imperial pedigree by reviewing a long history of Zongfan relations with the said foreign “country” (Ch. *guo*; Ma. *gurun*) or domestic “tribe” (Ch. *buluo*; Ma. *aiman*) from the Zhou to the Ming. Furthermore, the collection culturally emphasized that it was the great merits of the Qing that made the “barbarians” “send emissaries to come to pay tribute” (Ch. *qianshi rugong*; Ma. *elcin takūrafi albabun jafanjimbi*) or “come to kowtow with tribute” (Ch. *chaogong*; Ma. *albabun jafame hengkilenjimbi*).¹⁰³ In this way, the Qing assimilated conventional influences into its own Zongfan relations with these countries or tribes and consolidated its historical legitimacy as *Zhongguo* (Ma. *dulimbai gurun*).¹⁰⁴ In his poem specially made for these pictures, Emperor Qianlong, although he put the Qing on an equal footing with the Tang, highlighted this political motive by stating that “these illustrations are not to show how great we are, but to forever embrace the peaceful order that we have.”¹⁰⁵

Figure 2. 3. The Official of Chosŏn in *Illustrations of Subordinate Peoples of the Imperial Qing*



Sources: *Huangqing zhigong tu*, 33.

Notes: The Chinese characters on the picture read the “barbarian official of Country of Chosŏn”

¹⁰³ See, for example, *Huangqing zhigong tu*, 40-41, 54-55, 58-59, 66-67.

¹⁰⁴ Chuang Chi-fa, *Xie Sui zhigong tu manwen tushuo jiaozhu*, 60-61, 78-79; Laura Hostetler, *Qing Colonial Enterprise*, 47; Richard J. Smith, *Mapping China and Managing the World: Culture, Cartography and Cosmology in Late Imperial Times*, 75-76.

¹⁰⁵ *Huangqing zhigong tu*, 2. Even in the Qing expansion into Central Asia, Emperor Qianlong identified “the efforts of the Han and Tang dynasties to extend Chinese power into Central Asia” as “historical milestones” to measure his own progress. See James A. Millward, *Beyond the Pass*, 25.

(Ch. *Chaoxian guo yiguan*). The Manchu equivalent, which was added later, noted only “the official of Country of Chosŏn” (Ma. *coohiyān gurun i hafan*), by deleting the meaning of the character “barbarian.” See Chuang Chi-fa, *Xie Sui zhigong tu manwen tushuo jiaozhu*, 40-41. The same thing happened to people of other countries whom in Chinese were depicted as “barbarians.”

If there is “documentary institutionalization,”¹⁰⁶ the one for the Qing’s transformation of its self-identity in the Zongfan world achieved in 1761 is *Illustrations of Subordinate Peoples of the Imperial Qing*. In the same year, in order to celebrate the empress dowager’s seventieth birthday, the Qing published another magnificent collection of illustrations, *Illustrations of the Great Celebration* (Ch. *Luhuan huijing tu*). The first illustration had the title “Ten thousand countries devoutly came to revere the emperor” (Ch. *wanguo laichao*), precisely the phrase the Tang dynasty had used. Emperor Qianlong also put the same poem on the illustration.¹⁰⁷ Behind the cheerful façade of the greatness of the empire measured by the former prosperous Tang dynasty was the Qing’s hope of sustaining the ongoing political and cultural order. To a large degree, the two homogeneous collections marked the accomplishment of the Qing’s prolonged construction of its cultural representation as the Heavenly Dynasty since 1644.

As mentioned above, Britain, known as “Country of Ying ji li” by the Qing (Ch. *Yingjili guo*; Ma. *ing gi lii gurun*), was also institutionally barbarianized in the collection of 1761.¹⁰⁸ It is worth noting that, at the end of the same year, the emperor instructed his representatives in Guangzhou (Canton) to notify the “men from afar” and the “foreign barbarians” there—the British merchants—that “the Heavenly Dynasty has everything it needs, so it does not need foreign barbarians to bring trivial goods for trade.”¹⁰⁹ The imperial edict was a result of the petitions of James Flint in 1759 and Captain Nicholas

¹⁰⁶ Pamela Kyle Crossley, “Manzhou Yuanliu Kao and the Formalization of the Manchu Heritage,” in *The Journal of Asian Studies* 46. 4 (Nov., 1987): 761.

¹⁰⁷ *Qingshi tudian* (Illustrated history of the Qing dynasty), vol. 6, 197-198.

¹⁰⁸ *Huangqing zhigong tu*, 102-104.

¹⁰⁹ *Qing gaozong shilu*, vol. 17, 259-260.

Skottowe in 1761. Both men, as representatives of the British merchants in Guangzhou, wanted to change the Canton system of trade, but their efforts proved futile, indeed occasioning stricter regulations on Western traders in China.¹¹⁰ In this sense, what George Macartney would learn from the emperor in 1793 was only a repetition of the institutionalized rhetoric that had been directed at other British representatives in 1761.

NORMALIZING CHOSŌN'S STATUS AS "FOREIGN BARBARIANS"

This prolonged construction of the Qing's new identity and its political discourse toward other countries should not be regarded as the result of the emperor's personal activities or political motivations, imposed upon the whole administration from the top down. Neither should it be understood as purely a process of penetration of the political will of the Manchu court. Rather, the Qing's officials at the local level, from provinces to prefectures to counties, also contributed to this construction from the bottom up. As a result, in the eighteenth century, Chosŏn's status as "foreign barbarians" was normalized in the Qing's Zongfan norms.

A typical case illustrating this point was the Qing's policy towards fishermen or people of other countries who suffered shipwreck and were rescued by local officials on the coast. At least from the early Qianlong period, in the Qing official documents, these victims from Chosŏn, Ryukyu, Annam, and other countries were called "barbarians who suffered from storm" (Ch. *zaofeng nanyi*; Ma. *edun de lasihibufi jobolon de tušaha i niyalma*), who would be sent to Beijing or certain provincial capitals where they could go home together with embassies from their own country. The Qing archives, with a span of one and a half centuries from the 1730s to the 1880s, were full of such reports of local

¹¹⁰ Earl H. Pritchard, *Anglo-Chinese Relations during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, 133-138, and his *The Crucial Years of Early Anglo-Chinese Relations, 1750-1800*, 128-134.

officials, among which those concerning Chosŏn were prominent.¹¹¹ By accommodating these victims on humanitarian grounds, the Qing tried to highlight its policy of “cherishing men from afar” and to “display the deep and outstanding merits of the Heavenly Dynasty” (Ch. *zhao tianchao rouyuan shenren*; Ma. *abkai gurun i goroki urse be gosire šumin gosin be iletulembi*).¹¹² This sort of rhetoric reached its peak during the Qianlong period with the aim of formalizing, consolidating, and justifying the “way of the Heavenly Dynasty” (Ch. *tianchao tizhi*; Ma. *abkai gurun i doro yoso*).

Since Chosŏn had the most frequent contacts with the Qing, the “way of the Heavenly Dynasty” made Chosŏn its best agent in practice and permeated many aspects of Qing–Chosŏn communication. For instance, in 1776, 1,000 taels of silver of a Korean mission were stolen by Chinese thieves in Jinzhou, a city near Mukden. Emperor Qianlong instructed the Manchu General of Mukden, Hūngšang, to compensate the mission for their losses in order to “meet the way of our Heavenly Dynasty” (Ch. *he wo tianchao tizhi*; Ma. *musei amba gurun i doro de acanambi*). More important, the emperor emphasized in his Chinese edict that “Chosŏn was [a country of] foreign barbarians” (Ch. *Chaoxian nai waiyi zhi ren*), which was further explained in his Manchu edict by articulating that “the people of the country of Chosŏn were people of foreign barbarians” (Ma. *coohiyan gurun i niyalma serengge, tulergi aiman i niyalma*).¹¹³ Considering that many similar incidents took place in the history of Qing–Chosŏn Zongfan relations, the case in 1776 was not exceptional.¹¹⁴ Indeed, it is through such a normal case that one can

¹¹¹ Zhongguo diyi lishi dang’anguan, ed., *Qingdai zhongliu guanxi dang’an xubian* (The second collection of archives on Sino–Ryukyu relations under the Qing dynasty, hereafter referred to as *ZLGXXB*); *ZCSLXB*; *ZCSLHB*; *Chouban yiwu shimo·Daoguang chao*

¹¹² See *ZLGXXB*, 723, dated October 8, 1775.

¹¹³ See *Qing gaozong shilu*, vol. 21, 578; *Qianlong chao manwen jixindang yibian*, vol. 12, 117.

¹¹⁴ Kim Seon-min, “Kölllyung nyŏnkan Chosŏn sahaeng ūi ūn bunsil sagŏn.”

perceive that the Qing's political discourse on the entire Zongfan system had become mature and that the momentous institutional transformations of its identity as Zhongguo and the Heavenly Dynasty and of Chosŏn's identity as barbarians were very significant.

THE SYMBIOTIC LEGITIMACY BEHIND THE CHOSŎN MODEL

Toward the end of the eighteenth century, the Qing accomplished the momentous transformation of its identity as the Heavenly Dynasty by extending the Chosŏn Model to other countries in Southeast Asia and Inner Asia in the course of constructing the Qing-centric Zongfan system. It also completed the institutionalization of its new political discourse on the apparatus, according to which other countries served as countries of "barbarians" and the Qing's *fan* on the periphery of Qing China.

As the prototypical *fan*, Chosŏn provided the Qing with sources, several times a year, for reinforcing the infrastructure of the entire system by visiting Beijing, submitting tributes and memorials, and performing concrete ceremonies. That the Qing was the center of the world, with the hallmark of Zhongguo and the "Heavenly Dynasty," could be regularly, materially, and institutionally demonstrated to people inside and outside the ritual relationship and those within and outside of the Qing's borders. Similarly, in the bilateral contacts, Chosŏn, as well as Ryukyu, Annam, and other countries, could gain its own identity as a subordinate of China, and its king, like those of the other *fan*, could obtain legitimacy as monarch to govern his country as an agent of the Son of Heaven of China. This concept was shared by the Qing-centric world and highlighted by Emperor Yongzheng's imperial edict to the king of Annam on June 22, 1727, in which he demarcated a new border line between the Qing and Annam, allowing Annam's line to extend 12.45 miles (40 Chinese *li*) more toward the Qing, based on the idea that all lands

of the Qing's *fan* were under his rule.¹¹⁵ This Chinese ideology of “all-under-Heaven” thus endowed both sides with identity and legitimacy and cemented the entire system in practice through the exchanges of emissaries.

This point goes far to explain a paradox in the Qing period: certain Confucian countries, in particular Chosŏn and Annam, were reluctant in their own mind to identify the Qing as the supreme representative of Chinese culture, while in practice they never challenged the Qing's status as the superior country; quite the contrary, they frequently sent tributary missions to Beijing to display their obedience. The reason behind this paradox was precisely that the missions related fundamentally not only to the legitimacy of the Qing as a *Chinese* empire, but also to that of the monarchs of the *fan*. Therefore, the Zongfan relationship between the Qing and its *fan* was an incarnation of this symbiotic and synergistic legitimacy, namely the orthodox legitimacy that was embodied by highly-programmed ritual performances in the exchanges of emissaries.

The orthodox legitimacy was the reason King Taksin (r. 1767–1782) of the Thonburi regime (1767–1782) of Siam sent tributary missions to Beijing to pursue investiture after the fall of the Ayutthaya regime (1350–1767), which was later exactly emulated by Rama I (r. 1782–1809) of the present Rattanakosin dynasty after the fall of King Taksin, even though the understanding regarding “paying tribute” (Ch. *jingong*) of both King Taksin and Rama was fundamentally different from that of the Qing.¹¹⁶ The legitimacy could also explain why Nguyễn Huệ (1753–1792, r. 1788–1792), the leader of the peasant rebellion against the Lê dynasty (1428–1788) of Annam, defeated the Qing

¹¹⁵ *Qing shizong shilu*, vol. 7, 999-1001.

¹¹⁶ Chuang Chi-fa, “Xianluo guowang Zhengzhao rugong qingting kao” (A study of King Taksin's sending tributary mission to the Qing court); Masuda Erika, “Siam's ‘Chim Kong,’ Sending Tributary Missions to China, A Study of the Diplomatic Aspect of Sino-Siamese Relations during the Thonburi and Early Rattanakosin Periods (1767–1854).”

army in 1789, but accepted the Qing's investiture in 1790.¹¹⁷ It was also in 1790 that Burma accepted the Qing's investiture after winning the Burmese–Qing War in the early 1770s.¹¹⁸ Besides pragmatic concerns of these countries on account of geopolitics and China's military might, pursuing political legitimacy from China proved crucial for their own rule.

In the second half of the eighteenth century, during the reign of Emperor Qianlong, the Qing-centric Zongfan system developed fully with the rise of the new empire and worked in a remarkably stable and systematic way. To a large degree, this was the fruit of the Manchu regime's continuous efforts since the 1610s. Toward the end of the eighteenth century, when all the Qing's *fan* were institutionally barbarianized, the Qing had no difficulty identifying itself as "China" and the "Heavenly Dynasty." This identity and the Qing-centric world order were further materially substantiated by perennial tributary emissaries from Chosŏn, demonstrating their symbiotic legitimacy and mutually constitutive identity in the Chinese world. For Qing China, the known world proved no peer within or outside its borders. Its primary policy toward its outer *fan* turned out to be "cherishing men from afar," which was specifically highlighted by its economic rule of "giving more and getting less." This policy meant to demonstrate the Qing's incomparable generosity and superiority, yet properly conducting it was very challenging for the Qing's bureaucracy. The visits to Beijing of the "barbarian" emissaries of Chosŏn, Annam, and Britain in the 1790s were good examples to illustrate this point.

¹¹⁷ Long Zhang, *Yuenan yu zhongfa zhanzheng* (Vietnam and the Sino–French War), 9.

¹¹⁸ William W. Rockhill, "Korea in Its Relations with China," 2.

CHAPTER 3

“Cherishing Men From Afar”: The Way of the Heavenly Dynasty and the Barbarian Emissaries, 1762–1861

Since the 1760s, the Qing maintained the policy of “cherishing men from afar” toward “countries of barbarians,” which lasted until the Second Opium War of 1856–1860. The Qing recognized this policy as one of the most widely held premises undergirding the “way of the Heavenly Dynasty” (Ch. *tianchao tizhi*; Ma. *abkai gurun i doru yoso*), and it demonstrated that the Chosŏn Model was at its political heart. Assuming that all “countries of barbarians” should follow the imperial codes and the Zongfan discipline as Chosŏn did, the Qing punished any deviation from this policy that caused tensions between the Manchu rulers and local bureaucrats of the Qing and those between the Qing and other countries. This chapter explores the interior aspects and function of the Zongfan order and how the Qing’s rule of “cherishing the men from afar” operated in the ritual protocol and presentations of diplomatic missions between the Qing, Chosŏn, and other countries from 1762 to 1861.

3.1 “Cherishing Men from Afar”: The Chosŏn Missions in 1780 and 1790

RE-PERCEIVING THE “BARBARIAN” QING BY THE “LITTLE CHINA” IN 1780

Although the Qing institutionally portrayed Chosŏn as a “country of barbarian” and Chosŏn’s emissaries as the “men from afar,” Chosŏn, in its own mind, was reluctant to regard the Qing as the civilized center of the world. For intellectuals of Chosŏn who were neo-Confucian followers and embraced the principle of the civilized–barbarian distinction, the Manchu barbarians’ conquest of China proper in 1644 marked the end of Chinese culture on the territory of the civilized Ming China. With the irreversible

downfall of the Ming, Chosŏn unprecedentedly strengthened its identity as the “Little China” by recognizing itself as the exclusive and genuine successor to the “central civilized country” (Ch. *Zhonghua*). This identity was shared by many unlettered Korean civilians, such as Ch’oe Hyo-il, who sacrificed himself in front of the tomb of Emperor Chongzhen of the Ming in 1644 after the Manchus took over Beijing. The self-sacrifice could not be explained by modern nationalism in East Asia, for it illuminated the transnational nature of China-centric cosmopolitanism and the ideology of the civilized–barbarian distinction. It also exposed the difficulties that the Qing was facing in transforming itself into China and the Heavenly Dynasty in the post-Ming period.

After 1644, Chosŏn maintained its political subordination to the Qing on the surface, which was used by the Qing to construct the Qing’s Chineseness. Chosŏn, however, constructed its own Chineseness within the country by depicting the Qing as “barbarians” in particular moments. In 1704, Chosŏn established the “Great Altar for Gratitude” (K. *taebodan*) to commemorate the great favors of the “Imperial Ming” who saved the country from the Japanese invasion in the 1590s. The year in Chosŏn’s official record was termed as “the 77th Year of Chongzhen,” which set the starting year to 1628—the year Chongzhen became the last emperor of the Ming. Recalling the history of the past six decades, the king emphasized that “the barbarians occupied our Central Plain where the rituals and clothes consequently became barbarian.”¹ The “rituals and clothes” were traditional Chinese metaphors for civilization, which in this niche suggested that China was barbarianized by the Manchu conquerors. Along with this approach, in 1715 Chosŏn invested Ch’oe Hyo-il with an honorable rank to praise his spirit for being

¹ *Sukchong sillok* (Veritable records of King Sukchong of Chosŏn), vol. 40, 76, 124.

committed to the Heavenly Dynasty of the Ming.² Chosŏn continued to commemorate the Ming for three centuries, until it became Japan's protectorate in the 1900s.

From the late seventeenth to the middle of eighteenth centuries, the anti-Qing attitude was so popular among Korean intellectuals that a leading scholar Song Si-yŏl (1607–1689) arduously proposed in 1687 a bold plan of “Northern Expedition” against the Qing in order to “recover Central Plain” on behalf of the Ming. Many others in the intelligentsia supported his views.³ The Korean monarch and intellectual stratum, like their ancestors in 1626 and 1636, followed the doctrines of neo-Confucianism out of an obligation to be the filial son and loyal subordinate to the Ming. As a result of this moral kidnapping, on the top level, the king presented himself as the loyal subordinate to the Qing to maintain the orthodox legitimacy between the two courts and the two countries. The monarch also served as the moral leader of the anti-barbarian Qing inside Chosŏn to preserve the orthodox legitimacy between his rulership and his subordinates. On the bottom level, Chosŏn's tributary emissaries to the Qing represented this contradictory, for they were treated as “men from afar” by the Qing, on the one hand, and they recognized the Qing as a “country of barbarians,” on the other.

This intrinsic incongruity of Chosŏn's moral and cultural judgment prompted the country to isolate itself from Qing China in many aspects. Since the second half of the eighteenth century, however, some Korean intellectuals started to reconsider their entrenched perception about the “barbarian” Qing after they witnessed the Qing's prosperity in their journeys to Beijing. As a consequence of their disillusionment with Chosŏn's self-imagined cultural superiority, these pundits recognized the Qing as a

² *Ibid.*, vol. 40, 552.

³ *Ibid.*, vol. 39, 92.

civilized country. They called for Chosŏn to learn practical techniques from Qing China for its own good, beyond its embrace of the doctrine of “revering China and expelling the barbarians.” This approach was known as “practical knowledge” (K. *sirhak*), which generated the so-called “school of learning from the north” (K. *puk’ak p’ae*). A leading figure of this school was Pak Chi-wŏn (1737–1805), who visited Beijing in 1780 as an affiliated member of the tributary mission.

Pak Chi-wŏn was born an aristocrat of the hereditary *Yangban* (lit. two classes). In 1780, his cousin, Pak Myŏng-wŏn (1725–1790), was appointed as the emissary to Beijing to celebrate Emperor Qianlong’s seventieth birthday. This gave Pak Chi-wŏn a good opportunity to visit China. As he was not an official member of the mission, Pak Chi-wŏn later told his Chinese counterparts that his purpose was “tourism in the Upper Country.” Thanks to his special status as the emissary’s cousin, Pak attended the imperial audience and met with the Sixth Panchen Lama at Rehe and had intensive written conversations with some Han Chinese and Manchu intellectuals and officials in Rehe and Beijing. Shocked by the Qing’s prosperity from small towns on border to the metropolitan areas of Beijing, Pak realized that the stereotypical perception about the “barbarian” Qing among the meritocracy of Chosŏn had become a hurdle to correctly understand the Qing and make steady progress on people’s livelihood.

In his *Yŏrha ilgi* (Rehe diary) about his journey to the Qing, Pak struggled with the stereotypical moral correctness of his pro-Ming and anti-Qing principles. He desired to learn from the Qing and “use techniques to benefit people’s livelihood” (K. *iyong husaeng*). This was a virtual admission of the great achievements of the “barbarian” Qing, and its implication was that the Qing was the *civilized* Zhongguo and Chosŏn was a

“country of barbarians.” This logic violently shook the civilized–barbarian distinction in this mind and ignited a self-contradiction that was crystallized by the progressive and substantial changes of his perceptions of the Qing along his trip.

Pak was greatly shocked from the first day, when he saw the Qing’s small town on the border. On July 28, 1780, after crossing the Yalu River, the tributary mission reached the Gate of the Fence (Ch. *Zhamen*) at the entrance to Fenghuang City. Pak noticed that the houses, walls, doors, and streets of the town inside the fence were well-designed and well-managed and the town had no “indication of inferior rural style.” Pak suddenly realized that such scenery on the “eastern end” of the Qing could only suggest a more prosperous world in the inner land. He felt so uncomfortable that he even wanted to return to Hansŏng immediately. According to his prejudiced perception of the Qing, there was no way that the land under the Manchu “barbarian” rulers could be so efficiently managed, especially not in such an impressive way and to such a significant degree. Pak asked his private servant Chang Bok, with great frustration, “how is it if you were born in China?” Chang immediately answered, “China is barbarian (K. *Chungguk ho ya*; Ch. *Zhongguo hu ye*), so I do not want to be born in China.”⁴ The young and illiterate servant was probably only trying to please his master, but his answer was precisely what his master sincerely believed. It was also a reflection of how deep and prevalent the perception of the Qing as “barbarian” was among Korean people. Nevertheless, Pak must have realized that his journey would not be as peaceful as he had wished.

Indeed, it turned out to be an extremely challenging trip for Pak. When he passed by Liaoyang, Mukden, small towns, and villages, Pak was favorably impressed by

⁴ *Yŏlha ilgi*, vol. 1, 10b. I want to show my sincere thanks to Beatrice Bartlett at Yale University who generously gave me the precious volumes of *Yŏlha ilgi* that she had wonderfully preserved for decades.

magnificent buildings, thriving markets, and flourishing urban and rural communities, where he was treated by the local civilians and officials in a very friendly way. He also enjoyed written conversations with Han Chinese and Manchu intellectuals and officials, and appreciated local sceneries and historical sites. At these places and moments, Pak's charge that the Qing was "barbarian" was completely absent from his diary.

Although he could freely discuss classics with his Chinese counterparts, Pak saw a gap between them in a practical sense that resulted from Chosŏn's cultural isolation from the Qing after 1644. When he visited a pawnshop at the Xinmin village, he was invited by the owner to write some Chinese characters. Pak recalled that he saw four big characters of "exceeding frost, surpassing snow" (K. *kisang saesöl*; Ch. *qishuang saixue*) on front doors of some shops in Mukden and Liaoyang, so he put them down by assuming that they must mean that a businessman's heart should be as pure as frost and snow. Yet the four characters actually represented a metaphor for high quality of flour. The shop owner, being totally confused by the characters, shook his head and murmured that they were not related to his business. Pak left angrily.⁵ Next day, when he camped at the Xiaoheishan village, he wrote the same four characters for another shop owner selling women's jewelry. Yet this owner was confused too, asking him that, "I am selling women's jewelry, *not flour*, so why did you write these characters for me?" Pak, suddenly realizing what the characters really meant, felt extremely awkward and upset, but he remained calm and wrote other characters that won him high praise from the owner.⁶

Following the disturbing episode, Pak made a critical self-examination on Chosŏn's popular perception of the "barbarian" Qing. He put forward the idea of "using

⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. 1, 59b-60a.

⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. 1, 65b.

techniques to benefit people's livelihood" by comparing attitudes toward the Qing among Chosŏn's intellectuals. He divided these intellectuals into three categories, including "Upper Savants" (K. *sangsa*), "Middle Savants" (K. *chongsa*), and "Lower Savants" (K. *hasa*). He discussed a scenario first, in which the Korean people who had never visited the Qing would ask those who returned from Beijing about the most impressive thing they had seen in their journey. According to Pak, whereas many visitors would list certain things without hesitation, such as the white pagoda of Liaodong, the Chinese markets, the Shanhai Pass, the Upper Savants would seriously answer that "nothing is impressive" because the people in China, from the Son of Heaven to the common subjects, were "barbarians as long as they shaved their hair." Since "barbarians are dogs and sheep," nothing was worth praising and this point should be "the first-class argumentation." The Middle Savants would argue that "the mountains and lands became barbarian and nothing over there is impressive until we lead 100,000 forces to cross the Shanhai Pass to recover China."⁷

Identifying himself as one of the Lower Savants who supported the attitude of "revering China and expelling the barbarians" of the Upper and Middle Savants, Pak passionately called for his colleagues to "learn the good ways and useful systems as long as they can benefit our people and country, even if these ways and systems were created by barbarians." He argued that, "if we want to expel the barbarians, we should learn all the Chinese good systems to change ours, after which we might be able to say that China has nothing impressive." For him, the impressive things were China's techniques of efficiently using such "waste of the world" as stools and broken tiles to benefit people's daily life. Pak tried to separate practical techniques from the moral charges against the

⁷ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, 1a-2a.

Qing, sharing similarities with the Chinese policy of “learning the superior techniques of the barbarians” (Ch. *shi yi changji*) in the 1840s. Yet this approach would simultaneously mean to blur the boundary of the civilized and the barbarian. In this sense, his argument became a double-edged sword not only for himself, but also for the general moral foundation of his country.

As he saw increasingly prosperous Chinese places, Pak’s understanding of the Qing evolved in complexity. On August 30, by walking 630 miles via 33 transfer stations after they crossed the Yalu River, Pak and the mission arrived in Beijing, where he was greatly shocked again by the grandness of the metropolis. In his diary of the day, he used the Qing’s reign-title to count the date for the first time by writing that “it is the 1st day of the 8th month of the 45th Year of Qianlong,” incorporating himself into the Zongfan trajectory by identifying the Qing’s legitimate status as China.⁸

IDENTIFYING AS THE LOYAL SUBORDINATE OF THE GREAT QING AT REHE IN 1780

When they arrived in Beijing, the emissaries learned that Emperor Qianlong had moved to the imperial summer palace at Rehe, where the Sixth Panchen Lama and Mongolian princes would convene to celebrate the imperial birthday on September 11. On September 2, the emperor instructed the Ministry of Rituals to ask the emissaries to visit Rehe and ordered a minister of the Grand Council to Beijing to welcome them, which was “an extraordinary imperial benevolence.” The envoy immediately organized a special team on an *ad hoc* basis, to which Pak Chi-wŏn was attached. Five days later, they arrived at Rehe and were lodged at the Hall of the Highest Learning (Ch. *Taixue guan*).

Yet the Korean emissaries were soon involved in some subtle conflicts with the

⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, 57b.

Ministry of Rituals. Upon their arrival, Emperor Qianlong instructed that the emissaries would stand at the end of the *right* wing of China's second-rank civil officials during the grand ceremony on the celebration day, which was the emperor's "special and unprecedented grace" because the imperial ritual codes required the emissaries to stand at the end of the *left* wing of the civil officials. The ministers of the ministry promptly asked the envoy to submit a memorial to show Chosŏn's appreciation. The envoy hesitated as it would be inappropriate to do so without the king's authorization, but the ministers insisted that it would be fine and hastily pushed him to draft the memorial. Pak commented that the ministers tried to meet the emperor's desires for his pleasure in the wake of the fact that the aged emperor became more suspicious and strict.⁹

The conflict escalated when the emperor wanted the emissaries to visit the Sixth Panchen Lama from Tibet. On September 8, the emperor sent a minister of the Grand Council to ask if the envoy and associate envoy would like to visit "the saint monk from the western area" (Ch. *xifan shengseng*), namely the Panchen Lama. The envoy replied that, "The emperor cherishes our small country and regards us as an inner subordinate. We never stop communicating with people of China, but we do not dare communicate with people of other country. This is a rule for our small country." Yet the emperor instructed that "it would be fine to pay the visit together with people of the Central Dynasty," forcing the envoys to a tight corner. Some people of the mission insisted that it would be awkward for the envoys to visit the Panchen Lama, while others suggested that the mission should present a petition to the Ministry of Rituals to turn the invitation down. Without any consensus, the two envoys were pushed by the ministers of the ministry to

⁹ *Yŏlha ilgi*, vol. 3, 20b; Min Tu-Ki, "The Jehol Diary and the Character of Ch'ing Rule," in Min Tu-Ki, *National Polity and Local Power: The Transformation of Late Imperial China*, 4.

leave for the imperial residence, but the audience was suddenly shifted by the emperor to another day due to the tight schedule.¹⁰

Next day, the envoys and interpreters were granted an audience with the emperor, during which the two sides made a short conversation:

Emperor Qianlong [in Chinese]: Is the king healthy?

Pak Myŏng-wŏn [the envoy] [in Korean]: The king is healthy.

Emperor Qianlong [in Chinese]: Do any of you speak Manchu?

Yun Kap-chong [the first interpreter] [in Manchu]: I know some Manchu.¹¹

Hearing that Yun answered in Manchu, the emperor happily looked at his assistants on his left and right and smiled. The emperor then ordered the envoys to visit the Panchen Lama at his monastery, which according to Pak Chi-wŏn produced complex feelings among the Koreans. The two envoys felt reluctant to visit the Panchen Lama, the interpreters busied themselves with socials to make sure that the visit would go smoothly, and the servants of the envoys complained about the imperial order. In fact, the two envoys had discussed the issue with a Manchu minister of the Ministry of Rituals, Debao, arguing that they should not kowtow to the Panchen Lama. At the end of the debate, Debao gave up persuading the envoys to kowtow and angrily threw his official hat to the ground, threw himself to the bed, and yelled to the envoy “Get out of here! Get out of here!” Finally, in the emperor-arranged meeting with the Panchen Lama, the envoys did not perform the ritual of kowtow to him.¹²

The way of communications between the envoys and the Panchen Lama during the meeting turned out to be very complicated. The Panchen Lama first spoke to the Mongolian Prince next to him, who forwarded the words to the minister of the Grand

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, vol. 3, 26a-27a.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, vol. 3, 32b.

¹² *Ibid.*, vol. 3, 85a-86b.

Council next to him, then the minister forwarded them to the Qing interpreter, who further forwarded them to the Korean interpreter, and the Korean interpreter eventually translated the words into Korean for the envoys. It was likely that the conversation involved Tibetan, Mongolian, Manchu, Chinese, and Korean. Thus, to what extent the Panchen Lama and the Korean envoys could understand each other and grasp the political meanings behind certain words remained unclear. The envoys, who almost became “earth-made dolls and wood-made puppets” according to Pak, followed the guidance of the minister of the Grand Council to present the Panchen Lama with silk handkerchiefs, while the latter gave the envoys three small bronze figurines of Buddha, some Hada, Pulu, and Tibetan burning incense in return.¹³ When the envoys returned to their residence, they instructed that the figurines of Buddha should not be put in the Hall of the Highest Learning for the sake of the distinction between Buddhism and Confucianism. Later, the envoys sold these figurines in Beijing for some silver distributed among their servants.¹⁴

For the Chosŏn’s envoys, the Panchen Lama was from another country, with whom they believed they should not meet according to the Zongfan principle. What they defended in their conflicts with the Ministry of Rituals over the ritual of kowtow toward the Panchen Lama crystalized Chosŏn’s loyalty as China’s *fan* and subordinate, and it is exactly on this ground level that the envoys blurred the line of pro-Ming and anti-Qing attitudes. Pak made a defense of the envoys’ behavior in his written conversation with a Manchu official later, in which he articulated that, “Our humble country is in the same family with the Big Country and there is no difference between inside and outside between us, yet the lama is a man of the western area, so how our envoys could dare go

¹³ *Ibid.*, vol. 3, 92a.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. 3, 87a-87b, 92a-92b.

to visit him. This is the rule that ‘subordinates have no right to conduct diplomacy’ (K. *insin mu oegyo*; Ch. *renchen wu waijiao*).¹⁵ This principle would be emphasized by the king of Chosŏn again and again to Western powers that tried to directly contact Chosŏn from the 1830s to the 1870s, which confused the powers for decades until 1895.

At this juncture, a tremendous and unsurpassable dilemma emerged for the intellectuals of Chosŏn. They saw the Qing as a barbarianized place and themselves as the civilized descendants of the Ming, but when another political entity approached Chosŏn, they would immediately identify the Qing as *Zhongguo/China* and themselves as the Qing’s loyal subordinates. Thus, while they lived in an imagined Chosŏn-led cultural world, in practice they piously followed the Qing’s *Zongfan* lines to underscore their unique role as the representative of “men from afar” cherished by China. The game rules of the Qing’s bureaucracy also contributed to this phenomenon, and a good example was the memorial of the Ministry of Rituals to the emperor on September 10 describing the envoys’ meeting with the Panchen Lama. By concealing its ritual conflict with the envoys, the ministry made up a scene that after receiving the gifts from the Panchen Lama the envoys immediately “performed kowtow to show their gratitude” (Ch. *kouxie*).¹⁶

On the same day, Emperor Qianlong issued an imperial edict after he treated the representatives of the Qing’s outer *fan* and inner *fan*, including the Panchen Lama, Mongolian Princes from Mongolia, Muslim Princes from Xinjiang, emissaries from Chosŏn, and indigenous chiefs from southwestern China to the grand banquet. The emperor lauded Chosŏn’s fealty to China, declaring to those gathered at the banquet that “Chosŏn has been serving as a *fan* for generations and has always been loyal. It pays

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. 3, 75a.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. 3, 91b.

annual tribute in time and that is really worth praising.” The emperor added that, “We monarch and subordinates trust each other so much and we are in the same family inside and outside China, so we should not bother us by these overelaborate rituals.” He then decided that Chosŏn needed only to present annual tributes, and all other tributes with other humble memorials, should be permanently cancelled in order to demonstrate his policy of “cherishing men from afar with substantial measures rather than rhetoric” (Ch. *rouhui yuanren, yi shi bu yi wen*).¹⁷ The emperor articulated the status of the Chosŏn’s emissaries as “men from afar,” as per Qing China’s Zongfan norms. This corroborated what he had commented four years ago in a Manchu edict that “the people of the country of Chosŏn were people of foreign barbarians.”¹⁸

This status was further consolidated when the ministry modified and forwarded the envoys’ memorial to the emperor. On September 11, the grand ceremony was held in the palace where the envoys performed the ritual of kowtow as scheduled. The emperor bestowed routine and extra gifts upon the envoys and their servants.¹⁹ Next day, the ministry forwarded a memorial of the envoys to the emperor showing their gratitude. When the envoys received the memorial with the emperor’s comments, they found that the ministry had modified some of the original words. In his diary, Pak Chi-wŏn recorded the original words by the envoys and those added or modified by the ministry (as in italics and strikethrough in the following citation):

The Chosŏn’s emissaries submitted a memorial saying that their country was really excited to send emissaries to celebrate the imperial birthday, as all lands under the heaven did. *We were humbly granted an audience with the saint monk and were blessed.* Your Majesty treats our Small Country with special grace and

¹⁷ *Qing gaozong shilu*, vol. 22, 872.

¹⁸ See *Qing gaozong shilu*, vol. 21, 578; *Qianlong chao manwen jixindang yibian*, vol. 12, 117.

¹⁹ *Qinding libu zeli* (1844), vol. 172, 9b.

~~all humble emissaries shared the generosity~~ *generously bestowed additional silk and silvers on the king, the emissaries, and the servants.* The glory we humbly received from Your Majesty is unprecedented. We shall report this to our king when we return *and we will present another humble memorial to express our gratitude.* We are deeply grateful for the imperial grace.²⁰

The envoys were astonished at the revisions and immediately sent an interpreter to question the ministry in vain. The emperor would never know the true story of the memorial, as he never knew that Siam's "tribute" to him actually had a quite different meaning in the Siamese side before the Siamese letter was translated into the "gold humble memorial" by the Zongfan discourse in Canton. Such subtle changes at the lower level of the court-to-court communications between the Qing and its *fan* were entirely beyond the eyes of the emperor atop the whole hierarchy. Rather, what the emperor could only see was the loyalty of Chosŏn, Annam, Siam, and other *fan*. What Pak had seen was that Chosŏn could not change its institutional status as "barbarian" on the top level of the Qing-centric Zongfan arrangement.

After returned to Chosŏn, Pak ardently called for his colleagues to learn useful techniques from the Qing, and on this level he moved beyond the civilized–barbarian distinction more significantly than many of his generation. By the same token, as a pro-Ming intellectual of the highest caliber, Pak had no difficulty in freely returning to his world in Chosŏn. In 1783, in the preface for his Rehe diary, Pak used "the 156th Year of Chongzhen" to count the year, referred to the Qing as "barbarian," and expressed his regret over not being able to "expel the barbarians and recover the Central Plain."²¹ As other Korean savants followed Pak's footsteps and made their own perennial visits to Beijing, their perceptions about the Ming and the Qing kept transforming.

²⁰ *Yŏlha ilgi*, vol. 3, 94a.

²¹ *Ibid.*, vol. 1, 34a.

THE GRAND BANQUET, THE “SYSTEM” OF THE HEAVENLY DYNASTY, AND THE “MEN FROM AFAR” OF CHOSŎN AT REHE IN 1790

As the meritocracy in Chosŏn gradually realized that they could not restore the Ming dynasty in China, this disillusionment served to normalize their service to the Qing under the principle of “serving the great.” Compared with Pak Chi-wŏn’s passionate narratives in 1780, the diary of Sŏ Ho-su (1736–1799), who visited Rehe to celebrate Emperor Qianlong’s eightieth birthday as the associate envoy of the tributary mission in 1790, outlined bilateral Zongfan relations in a very institutionalized and moderate way. From the eyes of Sŏ, one may see how the Qing carried out its premise of “cherishing the men from afar” not only toward emissaries of Chosŏn, but also toward the descendant of Confucius, Mongolian and Muslim princes, the king of Annam, and the emissaries of Lanchang and Burma. In 1790, as the representatives of the outer *fan* and inner *fan* of the Qing convened again at Rehe to celebrate the imperial birthday, the emperor particularly needed its model *fan* and he saw the attendance of Chosŏn’s emissaries as an indispensable part of the “system” or “fundamentals” (Ch. *tizhi*) of his empire.

Under these circumstances, the emperor was concerned about the time it would take for the Korean emissaries to reach the celebration at Rehe. The mission, led by the envoy Hwang In-jŏm (?–1802), associate envoy Sŏ Ho-su, and secretary Yi Paek-hyŏng (1737–?), left Hansŏng for Beijing on July 9 and arrived at Ŭiju two weeks later, where they could not cross the Yalu River in the flood season. On August 1, the mission received an official note from the Ministry of Rituals in Beijing via the Manchu General of Mukden, which was sent at the speed of 500 *li* (ca. 155 miles) per day, one of the highest speeds of the Qing’s mailing system. The ministry instructed them to head to Rehe directly, as they needed to arrive by August 19. This deadline was the one the

emperor had set for the king of Annam and the emissaries of Lanchang and Burma to arrive at the grand banquet.²² When the mission crossed the river the next day, the second note sent by the ministry at the speed of 500 *li* per day had arrived. In the second missive, the ministry expressed its concern over the mission's arrival date, as the previous one in 1780 did not reach Rehe until early September. The ministry asked the mission to accelerate their speed to meet the deadline because otherwise it would "particularly concern the system" (Ch. *shu yu tizhi youguan*).²³

The third note soon arrived, but stated that it would be fine if the mission could not reach Rehe in time. The emissaries, perceiving that this sharp turn of the emperor's attitude was a subtle way of "cherishing the men from afar," immediately organized a special team that would head for Rehe with humble memorials and selected tributes in advance, while the rest of the mission would go to Beijing as scheduled. Trudging for more than 260 miles after they passed by Mukden, the emissaries who led the special team reached Rehe on August 24, where they learned that the emperor had changed the date for the grand banquet to August 25 so that Chosŏn's mission had enough time to arrive. The Mongolian and Muslim princes, emissaries of Burma and Lanchang, indigenous chiefs of Taiwan, and the king of Annam had arrived several days earlier.²⁴

Chosŏn did "particularly concern the system," as the grand banquet on August 25 proved. The following day, a minister from the Ministry of Rituals guided Chosŏn's envoy, associate envoy, and secretary to the palace. Three ministers of the Grand Council, including Hešen (Heshen, 1750–1799), Fucangga (Fuchang'an, 1760–1817), and Wang Jie (1725–1805), guided them further inside to the grand hall for their audience with the

²² Sŏ Ho-su, *Yŏrha kiyu* (Records on the journey to Rehe), vol. 1, 4a-5b.

²³ *Ibid.*, vol. 1, 7a.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. 1, 46b-47a.

emperor. The emperor held a short conversation with the emissaries:

Emperor Qianlong: Is the king healthy?

The envoy: Thanks to Your Majesty's great grace, the king is healthy.

Emperor Qianlong: Does the king have a son now?

The envoy: Your Majesty bestowed the character of "happiness" upon our king on the New Year's Day, which was the unprecedented grace. Our king has been appreciating the imperial grace and had a son on July 29. It was a grand favor by Your Majesty.

Emperor Qianlong [smiling]: Really? That is great. That is great.

After asking the emissaries' names and ranks, the emperor ordered them to attend the grand banquet and watch the Peking Opera. The emissaries were arranged at the first position of the wing of the "emissaries of other countries," while those of Annam were at the second position, Lanchang third, Burma fourth, and indigenous chiefs fifth.²⁵ Chosŏn's prominent status was fully embodied by the order of the arrangement. In addition, Chosŏn's well-written, humble memorials became a model for other countries. Hešen, the emperor's indulged Manchu minister, showed one of the memorials to the king of Annam, Nguyễn Huệ, and commented that, "The characters are beautifully written and the paper is so neat and fine. Chosŏn serves the great in such a good manner that it is the model for other *fan*." The king inspected the memorial several times and highly praised it.²⁶

With the shift of the grand meeting from Rehe to Beijing in early September, the emissaries of Chosŏn continued their prominent role of "men from afar" in all ritual performances in the Yuan-Ming-Yuan and the Forbidden City. The emperor frequently granted the emissaries audiences, invited them to watch Peking Operas, treated them to Manchu banquets, and gave them various gifts (Table 2.10). The emperor's gift-giving

²⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, 3b-4a.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, 6a.

and generous treatment of Chosŏn's emissaries became a model for his successors in the following century. On October 11, the Korean mission left Beijing for their homeland. Unlike the mission of 1780, it left without leaving behind any unpleasant episodes.

3.2 Mercy and Discipline: The Vietnamese Mission in 1790 and the British Embassy in 1793

“THE MEAN BETWEEN ABUNDANCE AND SCARCITY,” THE “SYSTEM” OF THE HEAVENLY DYNASTY, AND THE VIETNAMESE MISSION IN 1790

The Qing expected other tributary emissaries from its *fan* to accept and follow the Zongfan rules as readily as those from Chosŏn did, especially with regards to ritual codes. Any deviation from the Zongfan trajectory would, on the one hand, cause the conflict between the Qing and the *fan*. On the other, it would also result in interior tension between the Qing monarch and his local officials within the empire. This very issue surfaced during the visit to Beijing of the king of Annam, Nguyễn Huệ, who himself met the Chosŏn's emissaries at Rehe in 1790. The importance of this episode was compounded by the arrival of the British mission led by George Macartney in 1793.

Annam was rife with turbulent events toward the end of the eighteenth century and the Qing was drawn into the turmoil. In 1771, Nguyễn Huệ and his two brothers rebelled against the Nguyễn family controlling the south of Vietnam, known as the Tây-sơ'n Rebellion, through which they restored the rule of the king of the Later Lê dynasty (1428–1788). In 1788, worried over the strong influence of Nguyễn Huệ, the young king, Lê Duy Kỳ (1765–1793), fled the capital, Hanoi. Upon the request of Lê, Emperor Qianlong quickly sent troops under the command of Governor-General of Liangguang, Sun Shiyi (1720–1796), to Annam that had been the Qing's “outer *fan* for more than 100 years.” Being committed to its moral obligation to “cherish the small

country,” the Qing the military action as one that “particularly concerned the system” of the Heavenly Dynasty (Ch. *titong youguan*).²⁷ In the 1880s, the Qing would do the same with regards to Vietnam and Chosŏn, with the aim of protecting these countries from French and Japanese predations.

Sun’s army easily occupied Hanoi and restored the governance of Lê Duy Kỳ, but the army was defeated by an unexpected attack of Nguyễn Huệ’s forces in January 1789 and as a result Lê fled from Hanoi again. The emperor immediately appointed his favorite Manchu general, Fuk’anggan (Fukang’an, 1753–1796), who had just suppressed the Taiwan Rebellion, to replace Sun and organize a counterattack. Yet the emperor was not interested in conquering Vietnam through a large-scale war, as he might have been influenced at the time by his frustration with the war in Burma that finally ended with the Burmese tributary mission to Beijing in 1788. In an edict in February 1779, the emperor reviewed China’s frustrating experiences of “converting Vietnam into China’s prefectures and counties” (Ch. *junxian qi di*) in history and articulated that the Qing would not “integrate Annam into China’s map and register” (Ch. *shouru bantu*) by imitating the case of Xinjiang, where Beijing had to dispatch many officials to manage the land after the military conquest. He thus instructed Fuk’anggan and Sun to be receptive to any attempts by Nguyễn to sue for peace, which was a possibility.²⁸ Indeed, Nguyễn was not ready for a battle with China’s outnumbered forces, so in the same month he presented Sun with “a humble memorial” to express his willingness to become a subordinate of the “Heavenly Dynasty,” marking the end of the war on the battle ground.

Recognizing the motivation behind Nguyễn’s act of subordinating himself to the

²⁷ *Qing gaozong shilu*, vol. 25, 817, 973.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. 25, 873-874.

Qing, Emperor Qianlong issued an edict on May 15 declaring that, for the sake of the “barbarian people of Annam,” he would not use force against the country. Furthermore, the emperor, believing that “the Heaven has abandoned the Lê,” had settled the Lê family and their loyal followers in the city of Guilin in Guangxi, a province of China bordering Vietnam.²⁹ This arrangement suggested that the Qing’s ruling house was preparing to support a new regime in Annam. For that purpose, the emperor indicated that he might invest Nguyễn as king if Nguyễn visited Beijing in person. This way, according to the emperor, was precisely how he managed foreign barbarians “with mercy and discipline” (Ch. *enwei bingzhu*).³⁰ In late May, the emperor emphasized again that he would not invest Nguyễn with any title unless Nguyễn visited Beijing. The emperor refused to accept Nguyễn’s tributes, but did not shut the door on Nguyễn’s desire for peace and investiture. Rather, he suggested that Nguyễn seize the opportunity to visit Beijing for the celebration of the emperor’s eightieth birthday in September 1790. The emperor confirmed to Nguyễn’s that Lê Duy Kỳ would not be sent back to Annam for restoration, and to that end he sacrificed the Lê refugees by ordering them to cut hair into the Qing style and wear the Qing’s clothes.³¹ In Guilin, Fuk’anggan and Sun Shiyi told Lê that “you are on the lands of the central civilized country (Ch. *Zhonghua zhi tu*), so you should obey its system (Ch. *Zhongguo zhi zhi*) to change hairstyle and clothes.”³²

As the *de facto* manager of communications on the border, Fuk’anggan perfectly understood the mood of his aged and vainglorious master, insomuch that his memorials impressed on the emperor Nguyễn’s willingness to visit Beijing. The emperor quickly

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 874, 966-967, 972-974.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, vol. 25, 966-967.

³¹ *Ibid.*, vol. 25, 978-981.

³² *Qinding annan jilue* (The brief record of appeasing Annam, imperially ordained), vol. 21, 14a.

invested Nguyễn as the new king in August, so that Nguyễn would have the orthodox legitimacy to govern and stabilize Annam. In the book of investiture, the emperor emphasized the principle of “serving the big country” for an outer *fan* and that of “cherishing the small country” for China, highlighting the reciprocal ideology that also existed between Chosŏn and the Qing. The emperor took four actions to welcome the new king to Beijing. First, he instructed the Grand Secretariat and the Ministry of Rituals to create new “rituals of guest–host” (Ch. *binzhu zhi li*) between the king and the Qing’s governor-generals and governors. He also decided to endow the king with a belt in golden color that was only used by the Qing’s “royal branches” (Ch. *Zongfan*).³³ Second, he moved the dethroned Lê further to Beijing from Guilin and appointed him as a hereditary major of Han Eight Banners. The 376 followers of Lê, however, were registered with the banner household system and many were moved to Jiangnan, Zhejiang, Sichuan, and other provinces.³⁴ Third, the emperor allowed the new regime to pick up the Chinese calendar books every year from the governor of Guangxi in lieu of visiting Beijing from Hanoi. Fourth, he promised to open the border market after Nguyễn visited Beijing, based on the idea that “the barbarian people of that country are all loyal children of the Heavenly Dynasty.”³⁵ All these measures aimed to stimulate Nguyễn’s “sincerity of transforming into a subordinate of the civilized” (Ch. *xianghua zhi cheng*).

On May 26, 1790, the king and his mission comprising 150 members reached the Qing’s border, where he performed the highest level of kowtow to the imperial documents and gifts. Some scholars believe that the king was not Nguyễn Huệ himself,

³³ *Qinding annan jilue*, vol. 23, 24a; vol. 26, 18a.

³⁴ *Qing gaozong shilu*, vol. 25, 1049-1050, 1198, 1201.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. 25, 1219-1220, 1228.

but his double.³⁶ Be that as it may, what really mattered for Beijing was the subordination of Annam's new sovereign to the Qing's supreme authority. Fuk'anggan would accompany him to Beijing and Rehe, and they would reach Rehe by passing through Guangxi, Guangdong, Hunan, Jiangxi, Hubei, Henan, and Zhili provinces. In April, the mission arrived in the port of Guangzhou and the "Western barbarians" of the 13 Cohong gathered to see the significant homage paid by the king of an outer *fan*.³⁷ In June, the emperor invested Nguyễn's son as the crown prince and enthusiastically emphasized the father-son relationship between him and Nguyễn in the same family. Following the precedents of welcoming the king of Chosŏn and the Mongolian khan of Korcin, the emperor also dispatched a minister of the Ministry of Rituals to welcome and treat the king to tea at Liangxiang, a county a few miles to the south of Beijing.³⁸ The practice of the policy of "cherishing the men from afar" went smoothly, until a report from the prefecture of Rehe in late July sharply made the emperor quite uncomfortable.

On July 20, the officials of Rehe reported to the Grand Council that they had received an unofficial note (Ch. *chuandan*) saying the daily expense of entertaining and accommodating the Vietnamese mission in Jiangxi was around 4,000 taels of silver. The officials were worried that it would be inappropriate for them to treat the mission in an inferior way when it reached Rehe, but they could barely add anything more impressive than what were available in Rehe.³⁹ The emperor was also greatly shocked by the cost, for when he treated Mongolian princes and emissaries of other countries with annual banquets the expense was less than 1,000 taels. An expense of 4,000 taels per day meant

³⁶ See Truong Buu Lam, "Intervention versus Tribute in Sino-Vietnamese Relations, 1788-1790," in John King Fairbank, ed., *The Chinese World Order*, 165-179.

³⁷ *Qinding annan jilue*, vol. 28, 21.

³⁸ *Qing gaozong shilu*, vol. 26, 125-126, 134, 136.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, vol. 26, 173.

that the total amount spent receiving the king would reach 0.8 million taels during his 200-day-long sojourn in China. According to the emperor, the amount was so large that it could be turned into a military budget for a war against Vietnam.

Considering that this case “deeply concerned the system of the Heavenly Dynasty” (Ch. *yu tizhi dayou guanxi*), the emperor lectured his officials that “the great Heavenly Dynasty should not welcome one or two subordinates of the *fan* from the remote lands in a luxurious way.”⁴⁰ In addition, said the emperor, if the king were treated too lavishly in the provinces, he would not feel the imperial grace when treated with less opulence in Rehe. Chosŏn’s missions could be the best case to illuminate the emperor’s point. Its emissaries prepared meals at each transfer station by themselves after they crossed the Yalu River to reach China’s territory. Once they arrived in Beijing or Rehe, all the daily logistics were entirely taken over by the Qing’s personnel, and the emissaries were treated in a sumptuous way, as Chapter 2 describes. This substantial difference in hospitality between the provinces and Beijing was exactly what the emperor needed. The danger presented by such luxurious treatment of Annam’s emissaries lay in its potential to undermine the rationale behind the Chosŏn Model. Thus, the emperor instructed that Jiangxi, Hubei, Henan, and Zhili progressively tone down the extravagance of the receptions, as this was the only way that “the mean between abundance and scarcity” (Ch. *fengjian shizhong*) could be realized.⁴¹ It was the first time in the Qianlong period that the emperor instructed his officials to seek “the mean between abundance and scarcity,” which actually only pertained to the level of luxury in entertaining foreign dignitaries.⁴²

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, vol. 26, 174.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, vol. 26, 175.

⁴² By rendering the phrase *fengjian shizhong* into “centering,” James Hevia in his study of the British mission of 1793 has imposed too much meanings upon it. See *Cherishing Men from Afar*, 123.

The event was turning into an opportunity for the emperor to discipline his “local officials of the provinces” (Ch. *waisheng difang guan*). As he advanced in age, the emperor was inclined to show his provincial officials less trust. The surprising expense seemingly proved that his worries were reasonable. He listed two possible reasons for the astonishing expense: either the managers deliberately spent too much for profitable reimbursement from the country in the future, or the escorts extorted too much from the provinces they passed. Either could damage the “system of the Heavenly Dynasty” (Ch. *tianchao tizhi*). The emperor required six governors to investigate when and where the daily expense occurred, including Fuk’anggan, Governor-General of Liangguang, He Yucheng (1726–1790), former Governor of Jiangxi who was on his way to Anhui to govern the province, Yao Fen (?–1801), He Yucheng’s successor in Jiangxi, Bi Yuan (1730–1797), Governor-General of Huguang, Muherin (?–1796), Governor of Henan, and Liang Kentang (1715–1802), Governor-General of Zhili. Yet, in a short time, all officials submitted memorials claiming that the event never happened in their provinces. The emperor, however, insisted that the origin of the note be found.

In an edict to Liang on August 10, the emperor said that since Jiangxi, Hubei, and Henan reported that Fuk’anggan had notified them to treat the mission by the “mean between abundance and scarcity,” the note must have been produced in Zhili as “it could not fly to Rehe by crossing Zhili.” This meant Liang must be responsible for it. Very soon Liang submitted a memorial to report that the note was wrongly printed in his province and the 4,000 taels were, in fact, the entire amount allocated to escort the mission from the border to Beijing. The emperor condemned Liang, but immediately closed the case by

saying that it was not worth more investigations.⁴³ As the scapegoat of the emperor's face-saving inquiry, Liang must have been impressed by the subtle way of "cherishing men from afar" that his monarch wished him and his colleagues to master.

When the mission arrived in Rehe on August 20, the king was granted an audience with the emperor, together with the indigenous chiefs of southwestern China and Taiwan, the khan of Kazak, the princes of Mongolian and the Muslim tributaries, and the emissaries of Burma and Lanchang. The emperor also bestowed the Qing's official robes to the king and his followers. Chosŏn's emissaries were on their way, trudging toward for Rehe as described by the first section of this chapter. On August 25, Chosŏn's bedraggled emissaries arrived, and all "men from afar" convened at the imperial hall for the grand banquet. The banquets at Rehe and later in Beijing turned out to be abundant, during which all "men from afar" from the Qing's periphery performed the ritual of kowtow to their shared Son of Heaven.

"THE MEAN BETWEEN ABUNDANCE AND SCARCITY," RITUALS, AND THE BRITISH MISSION IN 1793

Emperor Qianlong received the prostration of his Annam subordinates in 1790, yet three years later he would not witness the same loyal attitude from a different group of the "men from afar," this time from England. In September 1792, Lord Macartney (1737–1806) departed from Portsmouth in England to China, where his mission was to seek more commercial opportunities from the vast Chinese empire in the name of celebrating Emperor Qianlong's birthday. In July 1793, the mission, which was treated by the Chinese side as a tributary mission led by a tributary envoy (Ch. *gongshi*), reached Dagu harbor of Tianjin and were welcomed by Governor-General of Zhili, Liang Kentang, and

⁴³ *Ibid.*, vol. 26, 196-200.

Changlu Salt Tax Commissioner, Zhengrui. On September 14, Macartney and his assistants were granted an audience with Emperor Qianlong at Rehe, after which the mission was sent back to Canton through overland route. This event has been intensively studied by scholars as a great collision between two different cultural, social, or imperial systems, and as the beginning of the West–East encounter that eventually led to the epic First Opium War of 1839–1842.⁴⁴ This section, without the intention of reviewing the whole case, examines the episode by connecting it to the legacy of Annam’s mission in 1790, against a historical background in which the Qing had institutionally barbarianized all other countries, including Britain.

Since the embassy was treated by the Qing as a tributary mission from an outer *fan*, all bilateral contacts had to be conducted according to *Zongfan* codes. The emperor particularly instructed his local officials to appropriately treat the tributary emissaries on their road to Beijing. On July 24, 1793, the emperor instructed Liang and Zhengrui that they must treat the “foreign barbarians” of the British tributary mission in an appropriate way between abundance and scarcity (Ch. *fengjian shizhong*). This way, said the emperor, should accord with “the system” of the “Upper Country” and not let the “men from afar” disdain China.⁴⁵ Among all the officials involved in the entertaining for the mission, Liang was, perhaps, the only one who thoroughly understood what the emperor meant. The memory of the harsh investigation over Annam’s 4,000 taels expenses per day was still fresh for the governor-general. Similarly, the emperor might have also taken the precedent of 1790 as a standard for testing his provincial officials. He was not certain that they knew how to appropriately treat the “foreign barbarians,” so that the game between

⁴⁴ See, for example, Alain Peyrefitte, *The Immobile Empire*; James Hevia, *Cherishing Men from Afar*.

⁴⁵ *Yingshi majiaerni fanghua dang’an shiliao huibian* (The collection of archives on the Macartney embassy to China, hereafter cited as *YSFHBB*), 32.

the emperor and his officials now returned.

In August, after learning that the officials in Zhejiang, Shandong, and Tianjin had generously treated the British envoys with food, the emperor felt necessary to admonish his officials on the matter because the envoys would be attending the grand banquet with Mongolian princes and emissaries of Burma and other outer *fan* in Rehe. The emperor expected that the British visitors would make a comparison between their treatment in the provinces and the imperial palace in Rehe. Thus, he lectured Zhengrui that “the way of welcoming the men from afar” should be sought in the balance between inadequacy and abundance. The inadequacy, he explained, might “prevent them from transforming into the civilized,” while the abundance might “result in their contempt for the system and dignity of the Heavenly Dynasty.” The point was to show “neither inferiority nor superiority” (Ch. *bubei bukang*) in entertaining to “accord with the system and highlight the cherishment.” He also reminded Governor-General Liang several times that pursuing the “mean between abundance and scarcity” was the “proper way” (Ch. *tuoshan*).⁴⁶

The mission reached Rehe on September 8, but Macartney and his assistants insisted that they would not prostrate themselves in front of the emperor, introducing Rehe to the ritual crisis that had been ongoing since the envoys arrived at Tianjin. The ritual conflict shocked the imperial court, as all tributary emissaries were supposed to kowtow to the emperor. The next day, the emperor issued an edict to Liang and his colleagues, showing his extreme disappointment over the British tributary envoys. The edict attributed the disturbing incident to the lavish treatment of the envoys of the provinces, which must have stimulated the conceited manner of these barbarians and reduced the degree that they could have been impressed in Rehe. As a remedy for this

⁴⁶ *YSFHHB*, 35-36, 38.

abundance, as well as a punishment, the emperor instructed that the mission must return to Guangdong by the overland route and inner rivers, and all accommodations and meals in transfer stations must be strictly provided in conformity with tributary precedents, rather than abundance or shortage for “such rude foreign barbarians.”⁴⁷ The emperor further instructed that the hospitality in Beijing should be reduced in order to “highlight the system” through this punishment.⁴⁸ For the emperor, an essential way of controlling the envoys of outer *fan* lay in the skill of mastering the appropriate method of “cherishing men from afar” through the bureaucratic apparatus.

After compromise was negotiated on the performance of the rituals, Macartney, his deputy George Staunton (1737–1801), Staunton’s 12-year-old son Thomas Staunton (1781–1859), and other members of the mission were granted an audience with the emperor at the grand tent on September 14. Rather than performing the ritual of kowtow, they mission knelt down on one knee and bowed their heads down to the ground nine times. The mission performed the same compromise ritual again on September 17, the imperial birthday, and days after that both at Rehe and Beijing.⁴⁹ Following Zongfan conventions, the emperor endowed the mission with some Korean clothing that had been piling up in a considerable amount in Beijing, an accumulated result of Chosŏn’s annual tributes.⁵⁰ Nevertheless, the emperor could not fundamentally change his perception of the mission. In an edict to his governors on September 23, he lectured them again on how the “outer provinces always fail to moderate the welcome of emissaries of outer *fan* by

⁴⁷ *YSFHBB*, 51.

⁴⁸ *YSFHBB*, 148-149.

⁴⁹ Alain Peyrefitte, *The Immobile Empire*, trans. Jon Rothschild, 223-224; Pierre-Henri Durand, “Jianting zeming: majiaerni shihua zaitan” (“De la confrontation naît la lumière: nouvelles considérations sur l’ambassade Macartney”, The confrontation of light is born: new considerations on the Macartney embassy), trans. Xu Minglong, in *YSFHBB*, 89-148.

⁵⁰ *YSFHBB*, 155.

treating them in an overabundant way that stimulates the emissaries' arrogance, or in an inferior way that undermines the rule of cherishment."⁵¹ This suggested that beyond the political rhetoric, food and supplies for foreign missions was a crucial tool for the emperor to modify the Zongfan and bureaucratic mechanisms from the top down.

On the same day, the emperor received a Chinese Zongfan-style version of a "humble memorial" by Britain, in which the British made such requests as permanently residing a representative in Beijing and opening other places outside Guangzhou for trade. The emperor immediately issued a long edict to King George III (1738–1820, r. 1760–1820), refusing all British requests. He explained that no such precedents beyond the "established rules" existed, so the British were challenging "the way of cherishing the men from afar and the barbarians on the four directions of the Heavenly Dynasty." In other words, the requests could damage the event-driven cosmopolitan fairness among the Qing's *fan* by eroding the foundation of the entire Zongfan system. When he refused to allow the British to preach the gospel in China, the emperor emphasized that "the civilized–barbarian distinction is extremely strict" (Ch. *huayi zhi bian shenyan*). Although the distinction as a contradictory and fierce challenge had been haunting the Manchu dynasty for one and a half centuries since 1644, the emperor in 1793 skillfully used the rationale behind this challenge to identify the Qing as the civilized.⁵² As a result, Macartney failed to fulfill his mission, following the same fate of James Flint in 1759 and Nicholas Skottowe in 1761. Rather, the British envoy's presentation as a "tributary" mission in the Qing's norms successfully strengthened the Qing as the civilized Heavenly Dynasty and reinforced the rules of the Zongfan system outwardly and the bureaucratic

⁵¹ *YSFHBB*, 54-55.

⁵² *YSFHBB*, 57-60, 162-164, 172-175.

system inwardly.

On January 8, 1794, Macartney departed from Canton for England. The next day, three emissaries of Ryukyu were granted an audience with Emperor Qianlong in the Forbidden City in Beijing, where they kowtowed to the emperor as usual.⁵³ On January 22, the Mongolian and Muslim princes, and the chiefs of southwestern China were granted another imperial audience in the Forbidden City, where all these subjects kowtowed to the emperor too.⁵⁴ Three days later, the emissaries of Chosŏn's annual tributary mission prostrated themselves in front of the emperor. On January 31, the Chinese New Year's Day, all princes and emissaries convened in the Forbidden City to attend the grand assembly together with Chinese officials, where they all knelt down three times and each time bowed their heads three times. The Chosŏn's emissaries stood at the end of the west wing of civil officials, followed by their Ryukyu counterparts.⁵⁵ On February 1, all these emissaries convened again for the annual grand banquet and received imperial gifts.⁵⁶ In the time after the unpleasant chapter of the British mission, the Zongfan mechanism between the Qing and its *fan* worked as perfectly as it had been.

3.3 The Heavenly Dynasty in Chosŏn: China's Imperial Envoys to Chosŏn in 1844 and 1845

In 1816, a year after the Congress of Vienna, Lord Amherst (1783–1857) of Britain visited China as the new ambassador. Thomas Staunton, the 12-year-old boy who met with Emperor Qianlong with Lord Macartney in 1793, served as Amherst's deputy. China was now under the rule of Emperor Qianlong's son, Emperor Jiaqing (1760–1820, r.

⁵³ *Qing gaozong shilu*, vol. 27, 257.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. 27, 264.

⁵⁵ Yi Chae-hak, *Yŏnhaeng ilgi* (Diary of the journey to Beijing), in *Yŏnhaeng nok jŏnjip* (Collections of records of Chosŏn's emissaries to Beijing), vol. 58, 105-106, 125-127.

⁵⁶ *Qing gaozong shilu*, vol. 27, 270.

1796–1820), who had been governing the country for 21 years. In July the British mission arrived in Tianjin and contacted the local officials regarding their coming visit to Beijing.⁵⁷ Tuojin, the Deputy Governor-General of Zhili, assured Emperor Jiaqing that he would strictly follow the appropriate precedents and welcome the “tributary” mission “without delicate abundance” in order to prevent the foreigners from disdain China.⁵⁸ This tone precisely reflected that of local officials in 1790 and 1793.

The ritual crisis involving the kowtow to the emperor emerged again between the guest and the host. The mission arrived at their residence near Yuan-Ming-Yuan in Beijing on August 28, but they failed to visit the emperor next morning because of the unsettled ritual dispute.⁵⁹ Being ill-informed by his cunning officials, the emperor even saw this incident as the British contempt that “China as the common leader under the Heaven could not tolerate.” It was not surprising that the emperor refused to receive the emissaries’ “humble memorial,” returned their “tributes,” and ordered them to be sent back to their homeland through Tianjin with some imperial gifts. Meanwhile, the emperor punished four officials who accompanied the mission in Tianjin and Beijing by degrading or removing their ranks. This unpleasant episode suggested that in the highly institutionalized period the Qing’s authority would not abandon routinized principles of the Zongfan framework, in particular those regarding rituals, in order to preserve the “system” or “fundamentals” of the Heavenly Dynasty.

Britain and the Qing were on the edge of war in the late 1830s, a consequence of the conflicts in Canton between British merchants and local government over the opium

⁵⁷ *Qing jiaqingchao waijiao shiliao* (The historical archives on diplomatic affairs in Jiaqing period of the Qing), vol. 5, 11a-11b.

⁵⁸ *Qing jiaqingchao waijiao shiliao*, 11b-12a.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 55a-61b.

trade. In 1840, Thomas Staunton, who became an honorable member of British Parliament for Portsmouth, provoked his colleagues into using force against China. Very soon after, the First Opium War broke out in 1839, which was ended by the Treaty of Nanjing in 1842, the 22nd year of Emperor Daoguang, Emperor Qianlong's grandson. According to the treaty negotiated in Western political and diplomatic norms, Britain gained the right of extraterritoriality, consular jurisdiction, and most-favored-nation, planting the seeds of European imperialism in the Chinese world through the rising treaty port framework.

In 1844, the Qing established the Superintendent of Trade for the Five Ports (Ch. *Wukou tongshang dachen*) to manage contacts between China and Britain, France, America, and other countries in the treaty ports. On the surface, this new post moved these treaty nations out the management of the Ministry of Rituals and the scope of Zongfan framework. Yet it was served by Qiyong (1787–1858), a Manchu representative and a signatory of the Treaty of Nanjing, who became Governor-General of Liangguang soon after, to be in charge of the tributary affairs of Western countries, Annam, Siam, and so forth. In other words, the new post was attached to the established Zongfan system without changing the nature of the system *per se*. In other parts of the Qing's periphery, nothing really changed either as a result of the war and treaty. The Zongfan contacts between the Qing and Chosŏn remained as usual.

After Princess Kim of Chosŏn passed away in late 1843, Emperor Daoguang appointed two Manchu officials, Baijun and Hengxing, as envoys to Hansŏng to deliver his condolences.⁶⁰ On February 26, 1844, the two envoys went to the Ministry of Rituals to pick up the imperial book of condolence, after which they left Beijing for Chosŏn. On

⁶⁰ Baijun, *Fengshi Chaoxian yicheng riji*, vol. 2, 571-661.

March 24, after they crossed the Gate of the Fence and marched around 9.3 miles toward the Yalu River, they found the Chosŏn side had set up several shanties to welcome the imperial book.⁶¹ The envoys soon crossed the river by Korean boats to reach Ŭiju, where the Magistrate, Yun Chŏng-ch'i, the Receiver of the Imperial Mission, Cho Pyŏng-hyŏn (1791–1849), and the Recorder of the Imperial Mission, Yi Hŏn-ku (1784–1858) welcomed them. The king also sent an official to welcome by presenting the king's name card. In the envoys' residence, the envoys met with local officials, gave Korean officers who accompanied them small knives and Chinese purses, and gave 13 soldiers 2,000 *qian* (around two taels of silver).⁶² In the following days, the envoys would distribute more gifts among local officers, soldiers, and servants. On April 7, after travelling more than 942 miles, the imperial mission arrived in Hongjewŏn in the suburb of Hansŏng. A high-ranking official with the king's name card and a minister of the Ŭijŏngbu—the cabinet—Kwŏn Ton-in (1783–1859) welcomed them. When they met with each other, Kwŏn knelt down and bowed his head once toward the envoys, while the envoys stood up and received the performance; when Kwŏn stood up, the envoys bowed toward Kwŏn once. The two sides performed the same ritual again when Kwŏn left.⁶³

The grand ceremony was held on April 8. In the morning, the envoys were escorted from Hongjewŏn to the Hall of Admiring the Central Civilized Country on the outskirts of the West Gate of Hansŏng, where Baijun saw the Gate of Receiving Imperial Favors. The king came out the West Gate to receive the imperial edict and returned to his palace first. The envoys were consequently escorted to the palace through the South Gate and they got off their horses near a gate in the palace. After he was guided by an usher to

⁶¹ Baijun, *Fengshi Chaoxian yicheng riji*, vol. 2, 592-593.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 594-595.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 607-608.

the grand hall, Baijun, the envoy, put the imperial book of condolence and condolence money on a desk at the east side of the hall, after which he stood next to the desk. The king, under the steps of the hall, kowtowed toward the imperial items. When this was finished, the king went to a tent to put on a mourning cloth and went to the mourning hall next to the grand hall, in which the two envoys made offerings to the spirit of the dead in turn, and stood toward south. The king led his royal members into the hall and knelt down in front of the envoys. The envoys read the imperial book to express the emperor's condolences. The usher then requested that the king and the envoys wail. After that, the imperial book was moved into the burning furnace, and all people on the site showed their respect by seeing it was burned as the last step of the ceremony.⁶⁴

The king, changing into a plain robe, invited the two envoys to the former hall for a tea ceremony, where the envoys sit toward west and the king sit facing east. The king tried to perform a ceremony of obeisance to the envoys by bowing his body twice with his hands folded in front (*Ch. zaibai*), but the envoys insisted that there was no need to perform such a high-level etiquette. As an alternative, the two sides bowed once to each other, followed by a short conversation. With the end of the tea banquet, the two sides bowed once to each other again. The envoys went to their residence, the South Palace Annex, and the king sent an official and a eunuch to visit them with more food.⁶⁵ Next day, the king visited the envoys to treat them with a tea banquet, followed by more food. On the same day, many officials visited the envoys to ask for Chinese handwritings, which made the guests overwhelmingly busy. While the envoys received the local visitors, they distributed 300 taels of silver and 490 felt-caps among local servants. On April 12,

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 608-610.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 610-611.

the king came to send off the envoys,⁶⁶ and he gave each envoy 2,500 taels of silver as gifts. After they returned to Beijing in May, the envoys reported their mission to the emperor and suggested that the emperor preserve the 5,000 taels of silver in the Ministry of Rituals that could return the silver to Chosŏn through its next mission to Beijing. This way, said the envoys, could show the imperial kindness of “cherishing the men from afar.”⁶⁷ Finally, the silver was returned to Chosŏn in late 1844.⁶⁸

During their three-day-long sojourn in Hansŏng, the envoys did not talk with the king about any events in China related to the Opium War, the treaties signed with Western countries, or the changes in the China’s foreign policies in South China. Neither did the king ask anything about these aspects or Chinese situation. All of their contacts were about rituals that were minutely conducted by ritual codes, underneath which stood the long-lived mutual dependence of their legitimacy as *Zhongguo* and its outer *fan*. This point would be demonstrated again in spring 1845, when Beijing dispatched another mission to Hansŏng to invest a new princess. On February 27, 1845, Emperor Daoguang appointed Huashana (1806–1859), a Manchu minister of the Ministry of Revenues, and Deshun, an associate general of Mongol Eight Banners, as envoys.⁶⁹ On April 9, the envoys received two imperial books of investiture and gifts at the Ministry of Rituals and left Beijing. A month later, they reached Fenghuang City and saw Korean merchants trading horses with Chinese merchants on the border market. After travelling more than 942 miles as had their predecessors in 1844, they arrived in Hansŏng on May 22.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 613-614.

⁶⁷ Baijun and Hengxing’s memorial on May 18, 1844, *Junjichu hanwen lufu zouzhe* (The Chinese copies of palace memorials of Grand Council, *LFZZ*), catalogue No. 3-163-7729-44.

⁶⁸ Huashana, *Dongshi jicheng* (Diary of the imperial mission to Chosŏn), in *Haeoe han’guk’ak charyo ch’ongsŏ* (Series of overseas materials regarding Korea), vol. 7, 194.

⁶⁹ Huashana, *Dongshi jicheng*, 131-132.

In the morning of May 22, the king went outside the city to welcome the envoys and imperial books of investiture. When this was finished, the envoys were carried out by sedan chairs to the palace, where they got off in front of a door of the grand hall and carried out the imperial books of investiture to the hall. The king entered the hall to receive the imperial books by performing the kowtow. An usher received the books and read it aloud outside the hall to Chosŏn's officials, after which the king led his officials in a cheer, extolling "Long live the emperor" three times.⁷⁰ When this was finished, the king invited the envoys to a tea banquet. The king bowed once to them with his hands folded in front, and the latter performed the same etiquette to the monarch in reciprocity. They watched Korean dances together and had a short conversation, where the king expressed his thanks for returning the 5,000 taels of silver.⁷¹ As usual, the envoys were lodged at the South Palace Annex and the king frequently sent the envoys food, flowers, and other supplies. The next day, the king treated the envoys with another banquet at their residence. Huashana and Deshun also busied themselves with writing Chinese characters for local visitors and distributed some gifts among servants.⁷² On May 25, the envoys left for Beijing after a leave-taking with the king outside the city.

The mission demonstrated that the infrastructure of the Qing–Chosŏn relationship remained unchanged. As envoy and one of the high-ranking ministers of the Qing, Huashana was still living in a Qing-centric world and he enthusiastically extolled the greatness of the Heavenly Dynasty that embraced its outer *fan* with generosity. In a poem made in Hansŏng, he trumpeted that "I brought the magnificent imperial books to the

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 192-193.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 193-194.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 196-199.

eastern *fan*, and the shuguo has been sincere to the rituals for a thousand years.”⁷³

Emperor Daoguang shared the same ideas with his ministers. On July 1, when the envoys reported to the Forbidden City, the emperor asked them the distance they travelled, the king’s clothes, the weather in Chosŏn, and the gifts from the king, but did not ask anything about Chosŏn’s politics or other domestic issues.⁷⁴ For the emperor, the crises and challenges imposed by the war with Britain and the opening of treaty ports in South China were thoroughly outside the purview of Qing–Chosŏn relations. At the top of the Qing administration, the China-centric cosmopolitan order and the Qing’s identity as the Heavenly Dynasty remained untouched. This is likely one of the primary reasons why Beijing did not initiate reforms in the following decade, putting off changes until it was humiliated by the Anglo–French Alliance in the Second Opium War of 1856–1860. In 1858, Huashana became one of the ministers to negotiate with British and French in Tianjin, where he found himself and his magnificent “Heavenly Dynasty” unbelievably vulnerable to the “barbarians” possessing formidable gunboats, treaties, and norms.

3.4 The “Barbarian” Emissaries with Cannon and Tribute: The British Embassy and the Korean Mission in 1860 and 1861

THE CIVILIZED–BARBARIAN DISTINCTION AND THE PERMANENT RESIDENCE OF “BARBARIAN” EMISSARIES IN BEIJING

In 1856, seven months after the Crimean War ended in Europe and four months after the Taiping Warriors defeated the Qing armies near Nanjing, the Second Opium War between Qing China and the Anglo–French Alliance erupted in Canton. In January 1858, the Governor-General and Imperial Commissioner, Ye Mingchen (1807–1859), who was in charge of foreign affairs in Canton, was captured at his office by the Alliance under the

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 240.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 223-224.

leadership of Lord Elgin (1811–1863). Ye had served in Canton for more than a decade before he became a prisoner of war and he was one of the strongest voices against allowing the British representatives and merchants to move into the walled city of Canton due to the civilized–barbarian distinction that he heartily embraced. In his last memorial submitted to Emperor Xianfeng (1831–1861, r. 1851–1861) on December 27, 1857, Ye analyzed his negotiations with the British, French, and American ministers in Canton and underlined his strategy of “secretly preparing for crises and publicly cherishing the barbarians.”⁷⁵ The governor-general never treated his negotiations with his Western counterparts at state-to-state discourse, at least not from a diplomatic perspective.

The expansion of the Western powers to East Asia, such as Britain, France, Russia, and the U.S., remained incomprehensible to Ye and his colleagues. All contacts, including conflicts, skirmishes, and even the ongoing war, were still conceptualized in the Zongfan framework. The emperor, with no better understanding than his governors, also regarded the British and French behavior as “rebellion” and emphasized that China’s first principle was to “cherish” them to “preserve the national polity and refuse their requests” (Ch. *zun guoti er du yaoqiu*).⁷⁶ The rationale behind this policy was the same that of Emperor Qianlong’s instructions regarding the Macartney embassy in 1793. The emperor, his ministers on the court, and his governors on the border did not perceive that they were dealing with several global powers with gunboat diplomacy.

As long as the conflicts with the foreigners remained on the borders—Britain, France, and the U.S. on the southern border and Russia on the northern border—the Qing court could not perceive the necessity of solving the problems in Beijing. The situation

⁷⁵ *Chouban yiwu shimo, Xianfeng chao* (Complete records of management of barbarian affairs during the Xianfeng period), vol. 2, 610-619.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, 627.

continued to escalated, and in April 1858 the ministers of the four countries convened in Tianjin and dispatched an ultimatum to Beijing for negotiations with “plenipotentiaries” (Ch. *quanquan dachen*). The Russian minister, Yevfimy Putyatin (1803–1883), acted as a mediator by taking advantage of Russia’s special relationship with China. Since the early Qing period, Russia had been regarded as an outer *fan* by the Qing court. Its contacts with China were under the management of the Mongolian Superintendency and it always had students and priests residing in Beijing. Among the powers’ requests, such as expanding trade to inner land and opening more ports, the most offensive one for the Qing was to permanently reside representatives in Beijing, precisely as Macartney had asked in 1793.

The court resisted the visit of ministers to Beijing because such a visit would endanger the civilized–barbarian distinction by breaking ritual codes. For more than two centuries, all foreign emissaries visited the capital *only* as China’s subordinates, so the scenario that the British and other Western ministers visited Beijing without performing the ritual of kowtow would violently challenge the divine authority of the emperor and the Qing’s self-identity and dignity as the Central Kingdom. The court instructed the Governor-General of Zhili, Tan Tingxiang (?–1870), who was negotiating with the ministers in Tianjin, to clarify to Putyatin that, “All contacts between China and foreign countries have always been conducted on the borders and only those countries among China’s shuguo can visit Beijing to pay tributes (Ch. *chaogong*). No commissioners of those countries have ever been allowed to permanently reside in Beijing.” The court also refused to appoint any “plenipotentiaries” because “no minister plenipotentiary has ever been appointed according to the rules and system of the Heavenly Dynasty and neither

has been the envoy extraordinary (Ch. *bianyì xingshì*).⁷⁷

Within the event-driven institutional structure, the Qing could not surpass precedents to challenge its own system, one that was informed by a series of established rituals. On May 15, the emperor explained that “China is not afraid of the visit of the barbarians to Beijing—no matter how many people will come; the problem is that such visit does not fit the system.”⁷⁸ Along the same line, he refused to allow the American minister, William Reed (1806–1876), to visit Beijing because “the U.S. is a friendly country (Ch. *yuguo*), but the imperial collection of precedents does not record how we should treat a friendly country, so the practice of entertaining might be inappropriate.”⁷⁹ The emperor asked that the ministers to return to Canton and discuss such issues as tariff with Governor-General of Liangguang, suggesting that the negotiations should be conducted with the Superintendent of Trade for the Five Ports on the border, rather than in Beijing. The locations of negotiations, as an integrated part of the entire Zongfan order, mattered much in the eyes of the Qing rulers.

The emperor’s instructions were followed by the occupation of the Dagu Forts by the Anglo–French Alliance on May 20, after which Putyatin forwarded Governor-General Tan a note listing two requests of the four nations, including their entry into Tianjin for negotiations with the Chinese plenipotentiaries and into Beijing where they would either pay a visit to the emperor or meet with Grand Secretaries (Ch. *da xueshi*). The entry into Beijing touched the bottom line of the emperor. On May 28, the emperor appointed the Manchu Grand Secretary, Guiliang (1785–1862), and the Manchu minister, Huashana, as minister extraordinary and plenipotentiary to Tianjin for negotiations. Huashana, the

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, vol. 3, 748-751.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. 3, 783.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, vol. 3, 793-794.

imperial envoy to Chosŏn in 1845 as the deputy of the Son of Heaven, now became a diplomatic representative of the Chinese sovereign who was equal to monarchs of Britain and France. The emperor specially instructed Tan to articulate to the ministers that there was no need for them to visit Beijing, while his high-ranking officials, such as Prince Yi (1816–1861), firmly refused the ministers' request of residing representatives in Beijing. Meanwhile, the emperor instructed the Mongolian Prince Sengge Rinchen (1811–1865) to lead his Mongolian warriors to reinforce the garrison between Tianjin and Beijing.

The Sino–British negotiation soon resulted in a deadlock due to the issue of permanently residing the British representatives in Beijing. Conceptualizing the issue in the Zongfan setting, the emperor instructed his plenipotentiaries to tell Lord Elgin that Britain could follow the established case of “Russian barbarians” to reside some students in Beijing, rather than commissioners. The students must change their clothes into Chinese style, abide by Chinese rules, concentrate on Chinese techniques learning, and not touch official affairs. According to the emperor, Britain could negotiate with China's governor-generals and governors over trade affairs at treaty ports, which would share the same convenience with residing its representatives in Beijing. On the other hand, if the Britain commissioners insisted on visiting Beijing, the emperor instructed that they must go to Beijing from Shanghai through overland route and must be escorted by Chinese officials. All accommodations and meals must be covered by China. They could visit Beijing once every three or five years, not annually.⁸⁰ This plan precisely originated from the ritual codes of the Zongfan system, into which the emperor was trying to draw Britain. All in all, the emperor wished to prevent British commissioners from permanently

⁸⁰ *Chouban yiwu shimo, Xianfeng chao*, vol. 3, 938.

residing in Beijing, which would be the “proper way,”⁸¹ a tone reflecting that of Emperor Qianlong regarding the Macartney embassy in 1793.

The emperor’s ideal design was soon partly realized in an opaque way in the treaty with the U.S. concluded on June 18 in Tianjin. Article V of the treaty regulated the visit of the American minister to Beijing by following specific Zongfan ritual codes for the Qing’s outer *fan*,⁸² such as the frequency of the visits to Beijing, the overland route from Tianjin to Beijing, the entertaining by local authorities, the written notice to the Ministry of Rituals, and the number of the mission—20 was the maximum number of tributary missions allowed for Ryukyu, Lanchang, Burma, or Holland.⁸³ Although Beijing gave the U.S. the right of the most-favored-nation in the treaty, it only regarded such right as special grace for the foreign barbarians, suggesting that Beijing was still thoroughly saturated in the Zongfan norms that treated the U.S. as a tributary state in the treaty *per se*. For Beijing, the ongoing war was simply a war within the ends of the Chinese world, just like the war in South China between the court and the Taiping rebels.

The court, as Emperor Qianlong pointed out in 1793, believed that “the civilized–barbarian distinction is extremely strict.” On June 23, 30 officials led by Zhou Zupei (1793–1867) submitted memorials against the permanent residence of the “barbarian emissaries” in Beijing. Among the “eight evils” of the residence that Zhou highlighted, preaching the gospel by the foreigners would “barbarianize our race of clothes and rituals into beasts.” He particularly noted that, “If the countries, such as Chosŏn and Ryukyu that have been loyal to China for a long time and sincerely send emissaries and pay tributes to

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, vol. 3, 949.

⁸² *Treaties, Conventions, etc., between China and Foreign States*, vol. 1, 715.

⁸³ *Qinding libu zeli* (1844), for Ryukyu, see vol. 173, 1b; for Lanchang, see vol. 175, 1b; for Holland, see vol. 178, 1b; for Burma, see vol. 179, 1b.

the court, saw the disobedience of these barbarians, they would despise the Heavenly Dynasty too.” This argument was further underscored by Chen Rui, who emphasized “the fundamental divide between China and the others” (Ch. *zhongwai dafang*).⁸⁴ These officials, the majority of whom were Han Chinese, represented the intellectual force behind China’s post-Qianlong institutionalized order. They employed the orthodox ideology in order to nourish the political legitimacy of their civilized homeland in the face of barbarianizing foreigners.

The keen resistance turned out to be a pipe dream, as Guiliang and Huashana accepted the British-drafted treaty on June 26. Partly aiming to change the Chinese way of contacts with the Western countries, the treaty allowed Britain to appoint diplomatic agents to the court of Beijing, where they would not kowtow to the emperor. Article III of the treaty stated that the British ambassador, minister, or other diplomatic agent “shall not be called upon to perform any ceremony derogatory to him as representing the Sovereign of an independent nation, on a footing of equality with that of China. On the other hand, he shall use the same forms of ceremony and respect to His Majesty the Emperor as are employed by the Ambassadors, Ministers, or Diplomatic Agents of Her Majesty towards the Sovereigns of independent and equal European nations.”⁸⁵ This article made the door of Beijing open to the representatives of Britain and other treaty nations and marked the collapse of the several-century-long ritual system managed by the Ministry of Rituals. The elementary ritual rules of the civilized–barbarian distinction of the Zongfan infrastructure partially broke down. Simultaneously, the Qing was circumscribed from a cosmopolitan Chinese empire to a Chinese state equal to Britain by post-Westphalian

⁸⁴ *Chouban yiwu shimo, Xianfeng chao*, vol. 3, 952-961.

⁸⁵ *Treaties, Conventions, etc., between China and Foreign States*, vol. 1, 405.

political and diplomatic norms.

Although this change was sharp and historical, the Chinese might not have perceived the day's importance due to the discrepancies in English and Chinese terms. The Chinese version of the phrase “the Sovereign of an independent nation, on a footing of equality with that of China” in the article was translated into “Britain is a nation of *zizhu* on a footing of equality with China” (Ch. *Yingguo zizhu zhi bang, yu Zhongguo pingdeng*). The term “*zizhu*,” which meant self-rule or autonomy, was usually used in a *Zongfan* context. China regarded its outer *fan* as possessing such a right, so it was very different from the British understanding of the term “independent.” This sharp divergence would become apparent in the following years when China and the Western powers tried to articulate and define the nature of the Sino–Korean *Zongfan* relationship. It would also become a point of contention in the Sino–Japanese rivalry over Chosŏn's status in the 1870s. The seeds of further conflicts between the norms of the Chinese *Zongfan* system and those of the European international law were planted in this inconspicuous manner.

What further shook the foundation of the civilized–barbarian distinction was Article LI of the 1858 treaty, which especially articulates that “henceforward, the character ‘I’ 夷 [barbarian], shall not be applied to the Government or subjects of Her Britannic Majesty in any Chinese official document issued by the Chinese Authorities either in the Capital or in the Provinces.”⁸⁶ Britain and other Western nations that were eligible to invoke the most-favored-nation clause thus institutionally broke away from the category of “barbarian” in the Qing's diplomatic discourse. From then on, the Chinese character “夷” (barbarian) was increasingly replaced by “洋” (Ch. *yang*; overseas,

⁸⁶ *Treaties, Conventions, etc., between China and Foreign States*, vol. 1, 419.

foreign) and the term “barbarians” (Ch. *yiren* 夷人) was replaced by “foreigners” (Ch. *yangren* 洋人) in Chinese official narratives.⁸⁷

By the same token, this amendment, no matter how shocking it was for the Qing’s ruling house, only applied to Western treaty nations that had never really occupied an essential position in the Zongfan system. The Qing’s other outer *fan* after 1858 were still considered as “countries of barbarian” in the hierarchy. In this sense, the treaty port system, although it was rapidly expanding to other Chinese ports at the end of the 1850s, only complicated the Qing’s view of the countries in the “Western Ocean.” Rather than fundamentally transforming the Qing-centric Zongfan system, the episode actually reinforced the core of the Zongfan principles. In other words, the disintegration of the Sinocentrism as a result of the 1858 treaties occurred on the Qing’s intellectual periphery, not in its core represented by the outer *fan*, such as Chosŏn. The ministers of the treaty nations residing in Beijing would soon appreciate the complexity of this issue. The Zongfan relationship led to increasing confusion, and conflict, between the Qing and Chosŏn, Vietnam, and Ryukyu from the 1860s onward.

DISCIPLINE AND WORSHIP IN THE EMPIRE: THE BRITISH AND THE KOREAN MISSIONS TO BEIJING IN 1860 AND 1861

The ministers of the four nations left Tianjin with the treaties for Shanghai, where they signed additional treaties on tariff with Chinese representatives. The war could have been over, had the British and French ministers in summer 1859 followed the Qing’s designed route to enter Beijing after they landed at Beitang, the area near the Dagu Forts, to

⁸⁷ For example, Wei Yuan (1794–1857) wrote a treatise named “Daoguang yisou zhengfu ji” (The suppression and cherishment of *barbarian* ships during the Daoguang period) and first published in 1846 in the second edition of Wei’s *Sheng wu ji* (History of the military achievements of the Saint Dynasty), but the title was changed into “Daoguang yangsou zhengfu ji” (The suppression and cherishment of *foreign* ships during the Daoguang period) in 1878 when *Sheng wu ji* was reprinted in Shanghai.

exchange the ratification of the treaties. Yet the ministers refused to follow Beijing's instructions and their rash entry into the firth of the Beihe River near the Dagu Forts ended in heavy losses under Chinese bombardment. The war resumed. Under the leadership of Lord Elgin, who was determined to resort to gunboat diplomacy against Beijing, the Anglo–French Alliance returned to China in summer 1860 and reoccupied the Dagu Forts. There the alliance almost annihilated the Mongolian cavalry of Prince Sengge Rinchen by using the Armstrong gun, a new weapon created by Britain as a result of the Crimean War, employed in combat for the first time in history. The Qing would submit not only to the joint imperialism of the European powers, but also to modern European military technology in the post-Crimean War period.

The Qing failed to check the Alliance that occupied Tianjin and was marching toward Beijing in late August. The court soon sent representatives to Tongzhou, near Beijing, for the negotiation, where Prince Sengge Rinchen on September 18 captured Harry Parkes (1828–1885), the British Commissioner at Canton, Henry Loch (1827–1900), Lord Elgin's private secretary, and other twenty-four English and thirteen French officers and soldiers, whom were sent to prisons in Beijing as hostages. Only half of these prisoners of war—including Parkes and Loch—eventually survived and were released since October 8, the day the Alliance gained control of Beijing's suburbs and started looting the imperial palace of Yuan-Ming-Yuan outside the city.

The frightened Son of Heaven, Emperor Xianfeng, fled to Rehe on September 22 after he appointed his little brother Prince Gong (a.k.a. Prince Kung, 1833–1898) as the imperial envoy extraordinary and plenipotentiary (Ch. *Qinchai bianyi xingshi quanquan*

dachen) to supervise the uncertain peace negotiation.⁸⁸ On October 13, the Alliance took over the Anding Gate of Beijing after it was surrendered by the city's garrison. The Qing thus encountered its gravest crisis since 1644, for the Western "barbarians" might permanently occupy the capital and overthrow the dynasty. This scenario was a more serious threat to Beijing than the then-ongoing Taiping Rebellion in South China. The court in Rehe and the caretaker administration in Beijing were extremely vulnerable to the Alliance and their powerful cannons positioned on the city's northern walls.

From October 12 to 16, the survivors and corpses of the prisoners of war were continuously brought back to the Alliance, and the cruelties evident in the bodies that were mutilated beyond recognition greatly shocked Lord Elgin and his fellow commanders. Lord Elgin "at once notified to Prince Kung that he was too horrified by what had occurred to hold further communication with a government guilty of such deeds of treachery and bloodshed, until by some great punishment inflicted upon the Emperor and the governing classes."⁸⁹ The "great punishment" turned out to be the destruction of Yuan-Ming-Yuan by fire. On October 18, the second day after the Alliance buried the bodies, volumes of smoke engulfed the imperial garden. According to Henry Loch, "During the whole of Friday the 19th, Yuen-Ming-Yuen was still burning; the clouds of smoke driven by the wind, hung like a vast black pall over Peking."⁹⁰ Numerous buildings where the Qing emperors gave audience to emissaries of outer *fan*—once including Britain—were burnt down to the earth. On October 20, Prince Gong informed Lord Elgin with China's absolute submission to the demands of the allies.

⁸⁸ *Chouban yiwu shimo, Xianfeng chao*, vol. 7, 2234-2235.

⁸⁹ Henry Loch, *Personal Narrative of Occurrences during Lord Elgin's Second Embassy to China in 1860*, 258.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 274.

The whole imperial capital under the Yuan-Ming-Yuan's smoke was open to the Alliance now. On September 21, Parkes and Lock entered the city and satirically selected the grand hall of the Ministry of Rituals as the place where the ceremony of the signature of the convention would be conducted. On October 24, Lord Elgin, accompanied by a large escort of more than 600 men and himself on a sedan chair carried by 16 Chinese—the highest level of the Chinese sedan chair that was exclusively used by emperor—departed for the grand hall of the ministry. Loch said that, “Crowds of Chinese lined both sides of the streets through which we passed; they were exceedingly quiet and well-behaved, and there was an entire absence of any appearance of alarm. There was immense curiosity, however, to see Lord Elgin; the people pressed forward as his chair passed to obtain a glimpse of a man who at that time was more powerful than even their own Emperor.”⁹¹ The scene was not considered a textbook case of Western imperialism until China's rulers used it to cultivate Chinese nationalism more than a century later.

When Lord Elgin reached the hall, Prince Gong “advanced to receive Lord Elgin with an anxious, hesitating salutation.” Lord Elgin “bowed, and at once walked forward to his seat, motioning Prince Kung to take the one on the right.” After they signed the convention, exchanged treaties, and made a short conversation about keeping friendship between the two countries, “Lord Elgin rose to take leave; Prince Kung accompanied him a short distance, and then stopped; but on Lord Elgin doing so likewise, the principal mandarins in attendance urgently beckoned Prince Kung to move forward, and after a few moments of hesitation he walked with Lord Elgin to the edge of the steps.”⁹² Prince Gong was apparently adjusting himself to a new etiquette that he had never performed.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 284.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 286-287.

As a witness of the ceremony, Loch commented that, “Thus was happily concluded an event which was the commencement of a new era, not only in the history of the Empire of China, but of the world, by the introduction of four hundred millions of the human race into the family of civilized nations.”⁹³

Although whether or not the Chinese people were brought into “the family of civilized nations” remains disputable, Loch was correct in asserting that China had entered a new era. In January 1861, the *Zongli geguo shiwu yamen* (hereafter as “the Zongli Yamen”), or the ministry of foreign affairs, was established in Beijing under Prince Gong’s supervision as the institute in charge of China’s foreign affairs with Britain, France, the U.S., Russia, and other treaty nations.⁹⁴ The Zongli Yamen was designed as an expedient political institute by following the model of the Grand Council in order to meet a great challenge at a time of crisis. Its designers considered it as an imitation of Foreign Emissaries’ Common Accommodations (Ch. *Huitong siyi guan*) by categorizing it as a part of the Zongfan system.⁹⁵ According to Prince Gong, when the crisis passed, foreign affairs would revert to management of the Ministry of Rituals as usual for the sake of the point of “cherishing the outer *fan*.”⁹⁶

Never was this to be realized. Rather, like the Grand Council, the Zongli Yamen would become a permanent institute and it surpassed the Ministry of Rituals and other ministries as the most important governmental organ in the following decades. With the foundation of the Yamen, Beijing made a diplomatic network from the top down by creating two Superintendents of Trade (Ch. *Tongshang dachen*) at Tianjin and Shanghai.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 289.

⁹⁴ As for the significance of the establishment of the Zongli Yamen for the Qing’s politics, see Jennifer Rudolph, *Negotiated Power in Late Imperial China: The Zongli Yamen and the Politics of Reform*.

⁹⁵ *Chouban yiwu shimo, Xianfeng chao*, vol. 8, 2715.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. 8, 2708-2709.

The court also instructed officials at Guangdong and Shanghai to dispatch linguists who knew English and French to Beijing to serve as consultants and interpreters.⁹⁷ From March 1861, the French, British, Russian, and American ministers arrived in Beijing. A new era began.

These institutional changes to the Zongfan framework only affected the parts that governed relations with the treaty nations—beyond that, the system stood as firmly as before. After he learned from the annual tributary mission to Beijing of 1860 that the emperor had moved to Rehe in September, the king of Chosŏn immediately sent a special mission to Beijing with the hope of visiting the emperor at Rehe, to show Chosŏn's serious concern as a loyal subordinate of the “imperial dynasty.”⁹⁸ In early 1861, the Korean emissaries reached Beijing with tributes and performed the same rituals as usual at the grand hall of the Ministry of Rituals, where Prince Gong and Lord Elgin signed the convention several months ago. The ministry asked the emperor if the emissaries should visit Rehe by following the precedents of Annam's mission in 1790, Lanchang's and Burma's missions in 1795, and Annam's mission in 1803.⁹⁹ The emperor answered that there was no need for the emissaries to visit Rehe because he was sick, but he ordered the ministry to follow conventions and treat the emissaries with banquets and endow them and the king with gifts to show his “ultimate kindness of cherishing the *fan* and the subordinate in such a favored way.”¹⁰⁰

In May, another tributary mission of Chosŏn arrived in Beijing to pay tributes.¹⁰¹ From November 1858 to May 1861, Chosŏn dispatched five missions and more than

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, vol. 8, 2676-2680.

⁹⁸ The note of the king to the Ministry of Rituals, in *ZCSLXB*, 317; *Ch'ŏng sŏn go*, vol. 2, 490-491.

⁹⁹ The memorial of the Ministry of Rituals, March 31, 1861, in *ZCSLXB*, 315-317.

¹⁰⁰ *Qing wenzong shilu* (Veritable records of Emperor Xianfeng of the Qing), vol. 44, 1093.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, vol. 44, 1154.

fifteen emissaries to Beijing, in spite of the widespread panic in Chosŏn that the war between the Qing and the Alliance caused. In the early 1790s, Chosŏn and British emissaries convened in Rehe and Beijing as representatives of two outer *fan* as well as two nations of “barbarians.” In the early 1860s, the British emissaries entered Beijing by violently changing their status in the Chinese world with cannons, while their Chosŏn counterparts visited the city with tributes and remained in the same position as before.

The loyal emissaries were unable to see Emperor Xianfeng again. The paranoiac emperor did not return to the Forbidden City until his death at Rehe on August 22, 1861. Before he died, he was extremely worried about the likely face-to-face meeting with the “barbarian” ministers in Beijing, where they would not perform the ritual of kowtow to him.¹⁰² This grave scenario frightened him, as he could not cope with the fact that those countries were not outer *fan* from China’s periphery as his great ancestors had assumed for more than a century. He refused to see any “barbarian” ministers and even felt very uneasy about Prince Gong’s meeting with them. Living in the post-Qianlong period with the highly institutionalized ideology of the civilized–barbarian distinction, Emperor Xianfeng died the last emperor who never saw the “barbarian emissaries” stand up before him without kowtowing. He was the last Son of Heaven in Chinese history who lived in the self-built home of the Heavenly Dynasty until the last minute of his life. It was not until twelve years later, in 1873, that his son, Emperor Tongzhi (1856–1875, r. 1862–1875), gave foreign ministers in Beijing the first imperial audience at the Purple Light Pavilion in the Forbidden City. It was the same venue used by the Qing emperor to meet with emissaries of the subordinated outer *fan* starting in 1761, the year when the Qing

¹⁰² See Mao Haijian, *Jindai de chidu: liangci yapian zhanzheng junshi yu waijiao* (A measure of modernity: China’s military and diplomacy during the two Opium Wars), 166-254.

institutionalized all other countries in the known universe. Interestingly enough, from 1949 onward the pavilion has been used as the primary location for Chinese leaders to meet with foreign guests in the context of national revival.

RE-ENVISIONING QING CHINA WITHIN AND BEYOND ITS PERIPHERY

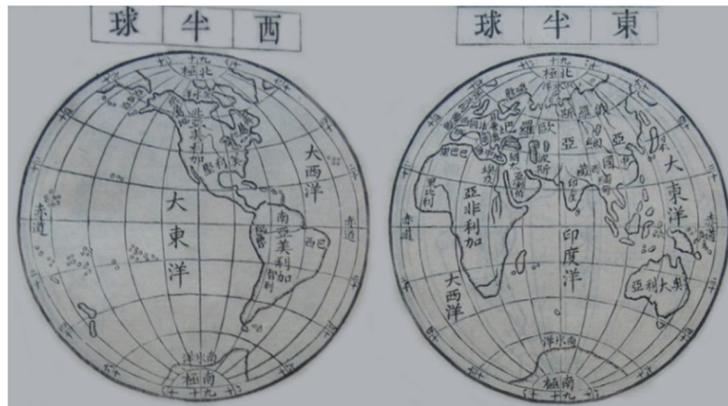
From the very first day that Western “barbarians” entered Beijing as permanent diplomatic representatives, “everyday familiarity” collapsed¹⁰³ for the Qing ruling house and intelligentsia. As the Self-Strengthening Movement unfolded in the 1860s, the option of pursuing the European way to enhance China’s military and technical abilities for the sake of China’s future rose high on Beijing’s agenda. The proposed innovations by some reformers caught the eyes of the Chinese officials, but they also resulted in sharp disputes and conflicts in the bureaucracy. The strategy of “learning the superior techniques of the barbarians” (Ch. *shi yi changji*), which was later termed by historians as China’s *modernization*, gradually became China’s primary concern. The Qing’s elite, such as Prince Gong, Zeng Guofan (1811–1872), Zuo Zongtang (1812–1885), and Li Hongzhang, surveyed the world beyond China’s periphery and acted as the pioneers of reform movements, the entrenched concept of “all-under-Heaven” gradually gave way to the geographical world in the minds of the majority of the literate stratum.

In late 1864, *Wanguo gongfa*, the Chinese edition of Henry Wheaton’s *Elements of International Law* that was published in 1836, was published in Beijing as the first international law guide for China and the Chinese world. Different from its English edition, the Chinese edition added a map of the world to highlight the global geography (Map 3. 1), which further eroded the China-centric conception encapsulated in the

¹⁰³ Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. Joan Stambaugh, 176.

Illustrations of Subordinate Peoples of the Imperial Qing of 1761. The Qing began to transform its political and diplomatic norms by integrating the notions of international law into its own constitutional and institutional systems.

Map 3. 1. Map of the World in *Wanguo gongfa*, 1864



Sources: Ding Weiliang (W. A. P. Martin) trans., *Wanguo gongfa (Elements of International Law)*, 1864, vol. 1, 1.

This irredeemable disintegration of the self-imagined concept of “barbarian” countries, however, did not lead to a similar breakdown in the Zongfan infrastructure between the Manchu court in Beijing and the Korean court in Hansŏng. For more than two centuries, until the 1860s, the Zongfan norms had been nourishing, maintaining, and consolidating the political and cultural identities both of the Qing and its outer *fan*. The symbiotic legitimacy, which could not be redefined or circumscribed by international law, still strongly influenced their internal and external policies and behavior in the middle of the nineteenth century. In this sense, the two opium wars and the treaties from 1840 to 1860 did not simply mark “the dawn of the New” or “the twilight of the Old,” as some historians have argued within the East–West dichotomy.¹⁰⁴ Rather, the treaty port network imposed from outside and the long-living Zongfan arrangement that vibrantly functioned inside the Qing-centric world formed a dual and co-existing system, in which

¹⁰⁴ John King Fairbank, “The Early Treaty System in the Chinese World Order,” 257.

the former did not go toward the direction of replacing or incorporating the latter as scholars have argued, generalized and presumed. This point is vividly demonstrated by the fierce debates that occurred between China and Western powers over Chosŏn's international status in the late nineteenth century.

CHAPTER 4

Defending the Shuguo: The Rise of the Challenge of Chosŏn's Status, 1862–1876

After the 1860s, greater contact between Chosŏn and the West made it more difficult for Qing China to define and articulate its Zongfan relationship with Chosŏn. Relations between Beijing and Hansŏng were difficult to define by the standards of international law, and as a result the Western powers found the Qing–Chosŏn relationship problematic to define.

Chosŏn's legal status, namely whether or not it was a China's *shuguo* or *shubang* (the equivalent of *fan*, that is, a subordinate or dependent country) developed into the key issue between the Qing and the treaty powers. Did Chosŏn have the right of *zizhu*, as Beijing and Hansŏng claimed, or was it a state possessing independent sovereignty? The Qing tried to impose its definition of the Zongfan relationship with Chosŏn in fierce debates with other countries, while preserving conventional Zongfan practices. The Treaty of Kanghwa of 1876 signed between Japan and Chosŏn, did not alter the nature of the Zongfan relationship and Sino–Korean relations remained perplexing to the Western powers.

4.1 Chosŏn as China's Shuguo: The Sino–French Negotiation in 1866 and the Dilemma of Chosŏn's Status

THE FRENCH EXPEDITION TO CHOSŎN AND THE SINO–FRENCH NEGOTIATION IN 1866

In his report to Secretary of State Hamilton Fish on January 13, 1872, the minister of the United States at Beijing, Frederick F. Low, explained why he forwarded a letter to the king of Chosŏn, instead of the principal minister for foreign affairs before his expedition

to the country in 1871. His reason was “such an official as a minister for foreign affairs did not exist.” In order to make his argument clear, he made “a brief description of the organization of the Chinese government of which that of Korea is a counterpart.”¹ He discussed the ambiguous position of the Zongli Yamen in the Qing’s institutional hierarchy, explaining that, “The Tsung-li Yamen, or foreign office, had no existence prior to 1861. It was organized in that year by imperial decree, to meet an emergency forced upon the government by the presence of resident foreign ministers in Peking, who were unwilling to transact their business with either of the boards. But even now it is not a department of the government recognized by law, nor is it mentioned in the published list of officers.” Furthermore, he pointed out that “The Tsung-li Yamen is composed of seven high ministers, all of whom are presidents or vice-presidents of the six boards before referred to, with Prince Kung at the head as chief secretary for foreign affairs. The ministers’ position as members of the foreign office is *ex officio* simply, the business instructed to them being in addition to their legitimate duties as officers of the several boards.”² Throughout the course of his expedition, what confused Low was not the absence of a minister for foreign affairs, but what appeared, to him, ambiguous and perplexing nature of the Sino–Korean relationship. It was the Zongli Yamen that confused the minister when it explained China’s policy toward Chosŏn. Yet, before Low came to China, it was the French minister in Beijing who was baffled by the Yamen’s explanation, when he launched a punitive expedition against Chosŏn in 1866, five years after the Yamen was established.

The French expedition in 1866 was a response to anti-Catholic purges initiated by

¹ Mr. Low to Mr. Fish, No. 77, January 13, 1872, *Foreign Relations of the United States* (hereafter referred to as *FRUS*), 1872–’73, 127.

² Mr. Low to Mr. Fish, No. 77, January 13, 1872, in *FRUS*, 1872–’73, 127.

the Taewŏn'gun, Yi Ha-ŭng (1820–1898), in Chosŏn, which killed several French missionaries. When his 12-year-old son, Yi Hŭi (1852–1919, r. 1863–1907), assumed the kingship in 1863 as the legitimate successor to the late King Ikchong (1809–1830), Yi Ha-ŭng gradually became the *de facto* regent. Yi Ha-ŭng's power was consolidated in early 1866 by the end of the regency of Senior Queen Dowager Cho (1808–1890) as a result of the king's marriage.³ During the decade of Taewŏn'gun's regency, which ended in 1873 when his son assumed personal rule, Chosŏn carried out important domestic reforms. As a follower of Confucianism, Taewŏn'gun regarded Western religions in Chosŏn as heresies or “evil ideas” (K. *sahak*). In early 1866, he started eliminating converts to Christianity and Catholicism in order to purify the Confucian foundation on which he believed the country's morals were built. On March 7, two Korean converts and four French missionaries were beheaded in Hansŏng, marking the beginning of the bloody purge of Catholics.⁴ In the following months, nine French missionaries and hundreds of native converts were executed.

When the news about the purge reached Beijing, the French chargé d'affaires, Henri de Bellonet, decided to launch a punitive expedition against Chosŏn. On July 14, Bellonet sent the Zongli Yamen a note, threatening to invade and temporarily occupy Chosŏn and to appoint a new king. Bellonet noted that the expedition would have no

³ *Kojong sunjong sillok* (Veritable records of King Kojong and King Sunjong), vol. 1, 121. King Ikchong, Yi Yŏng, as the crown prince of King Sunjo (1790–1834, r. 1800–1834), never became king before he died in 1830. His wife, Princess Cho, was powerful when her son Yi Hwan (1827–1849, r. 1834–1849) became the king in 1834 after King Sunjo died. When the young and childless Yi Hwan died in 1849, Yi Pyŏn (1831–1863, r. 1849–1863) became the new king as successor to King Sunjo. After Li Pyŏn died in 1863 when all his sons had died, Senior Queen Dowager Cho selected Taewŏn'gun's second son, Yi Hŭi, as the king being the successor to King Ikchong. Senior Queen Dowager Cho thus became stepmother of Yi Hŭi and the most powerful woman in the country. This complex changes of Chosŏn's royal lineage from 1830 to 1863 deeply concerned the inner political struggles among different cliques in the court. Senior Queen Dowager Cho's story shared striking similarities with Empress Dowager Cixi of the Qing.

⁴ *Ilŏngnok* (Records of daily reflections), vol. 66, 199–201.

relations with China, as he was informed by the Chinese government in 1865 that Chosŏn managed all of its own affairs.⁵ In 1865, Bellonet asked the Yamen to issue a dispatch to Chosŏn to inform the king that some French missionaries wanted to preach the gospel to the kingdom. The Yamen declined and told him that “Chosŏn, as a shuguo of China, only uses the Chinese calendar, uses Chinese reign title, and pays yearly tributes to China.”⁶ For Bellonet, this response indicated that “the Chinese government has no authority or power over Korea.”⁷ From then on, it became extremely difficult for both the treaty powers and the Yamen to pin down Chosŏn’s status as China’s shuguo.

Indeed, the Yamen claimed that Chosŏn was a shuguo of China, on the one hand, and emphasized that Chosŏn managed all its own affairs under the rule of zizhu and China would not intervene, on the other. This statement was clear in the Zongfan world, but equivocal and paradoxical for Western ministers. While Bellonet stated that Chosŏn was “formerly assumed the bonds of vassalage to the Chinese empire,” he asserted that “we do not recognize any authority whatever of the Chinese government over the kingdom of Korea.” This statement was arguing that Chosŏn was an independent nation,⁸ but the Yamen’s Chinese translation missed the political meaning behind the French note. The Yamen could not find a way to clarify the Zongfan relationship. The *Wanguo gongfa*, published in 1864, did not provide the Yamen with a definition of the Shuguo that could be translated into Western terms. In practice, Prince Gong and his colleagues had to draw from Chinese ideology, employing the familiar terms such as “all-under-Heaven.” They

⁵ M. de Bellonet to the Zongli Yamen, July 14, 1866, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 27-28.

⁶ The Zongli Yamen to Mr. Alcock, July 17, 1866, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 29.

⁷ Mr. de Bellonet to Prince Kung, July 13, 1866, Inclosure No. 1 of *Mr. Burlingame to Mr. Seward*, No. 122, December 12, 1866, in *FRUS, 1867-’68*, vol. I, 420.

⁸ M. de Bellonet to Prince Kung, July 13, 1866, Inclosure No. 1 of *Mr. Burlingame to Mr. Seward*, No. 122, December 12, 1866, in *FRUS, 1867-’68*, vol. I, 420.

were informed by the Spring and Autumn Periods in Chinese history, and the prefaces of the *Wanguo gongfa*, by Dong Xun (1807–1892) and Zhang Sigui (1816–1888), demonstrated this worldview.⁹

More importantly, as a temporary institution established on an *ad hoc* basis, the Yamen had no right to communicate with Chosŏn and it did not gain such a right until the end of their Zongfan relationship in 1895. Rather, it was the Ministry of Rituals that was in charge of Chosŏn's affairs. Yet, identifying the Yamen as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the foreign ministers in Beijing never negotiated with the Ministry of Rituals over their contacts with Chosŏn, Vietnam, and the Qing's other *fan*. The Yamen, on its part, had serious bureaucratic and institutional relations with the Ministry of Rituals and it always sent the cases about Chosŏn to the ministry to process. The ministry, however, could not make changes to the established imperial codes, formalities, and precedents regarding Chosŏn, so it often forwarded the cases to the emperor and the Grand Council for further instructions.

This process made the ministry serve as an exclusive and inefficient official channel of communication between the Zongli Yamen and the court of Chosŏn. This convention-driven arrangement persisted until 1882, when Beijing endowed Li Hongzhang, the Superintendent of Trade for the Northern Ports of China (Ch. *Beiyang tongshang dachen*; hereafter referred to as the "Beiyang Superintendent"), with the right to communicate with the king of Chosŏn. In the middle ground between the Zongli Yamen and the Ministry of Rituals, the Qing's policymaking deficiencies were exposed by contacts between Chosŏn and the Western powers. These shortcomings would endure for three more decades, lasting until 1895.

⁹ *Wanguo gongfa (Elements of International Law)*, vol. 1.

The Zongli Yamen formed a policy of “mediation” (Ch. *paijie*) between Chosŏn and the powers. It replied Bellonet that China would mediate between France and Chosŏn, while Beijing investigated the anti-Catholic violence and that the French side should not rush to an attack against Chosŏn. The Yamen did not claim responsibility for the killings of the French missionaries, but it expressed serious concerns over the French hostility to Chosŏn in a memorial to the emperor and in a confidential letter to all governors-general and governors of the coastal provinces and Manchu generals in Manchuria. The Yamen proclaimed that China could “in no way sit it out” (Ch. *duan nan zuoshi*) when Chosŏn was in danger of being attacked by foreigners.¹⁰ It also forwarded a note to Chosŏn via the Ministry of Rituals, informing it that French forces might launch an expedition.¹¹

Bellonet soon instructed Admiral Pierre Gustave Roze, the commander of the French Far Eastern Squadron, to launch the expedition. On September 20, Roze led three warships from Zhifu (Chefoo, nowadays Yantai) on the Shandong peninsula to across the Bohai Sea and arrived at a small island off the coast of Inchon, where they investigated the waters along the coastlines to make navigational charts. Roze refused contact with local officials while conducting these activities.¹² Although the Taewŏn’gun’s government learned of the arrival of the foreign “ships in strange shape” (K. *iyang sŏn*), the anti-Catholic purge continued and more converts were arrested and executed. Ten days before French forces arrived, the king issued a “decree of anti-heresy” (K. *ch’ŏksa yunŭm*) to the whole country to highlight the strong anti-Catholic attitude of its rulers.¹³

On October 1, the three primary members of the tributary mission to Beijing, Yu

¹⁰ The Zongli Yamen to the Commissioner of Trade for Shanghai, July 28, 1866, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 33-34.

¹¹ *Ilŏngnok*, vol. 66, 614.

¹² *Ibid.*, vol. 66, 564-585.

¹³ *Kojong sunjong sillok*, vol. 1, 227-228.

Hu-bok, Sŏ Tang-po, and Hong Sun-hak, returned from Beijing to Hansŏng and were granted an audience with the king. They had been charged with requesting the Qing court to invest the daughter of the late official, Min Ch'i-rok (1799–1858), with the title of princess—and she was, in fact, later known as Princess Min (1851–1895).¹⁴ Yu told the king that the coming of the foreign ships might be the consequence of the destruction of an American ship, the *General Sherman*, in Pyongyang in September. For officials like Yu, all Western ships were the same that represented nothing but threat, and it appeared that the threat was approaching Hansŏng. Yu also informed the king that the foreigners in Beijing were beyond Chinese jurisdiction and were not afraid of the “big country,” so they were doing many things that had never happened before.¹⁵ Yu's stories might have given the court the impression that China had become a victim of Western foreigners, while Chosŏn would be the next one soon. This nightmare scenario reinforced the Taewŏn'gun's anti-Catholic and xenophobic attitude, making him believe that Chosŏn's security would be guaranteed only by resisting the “foreign barbarians” (K. *yang'i*).

Two weeks after the audience, the French squadron hugged the coast of Inchon again and blockaded all entrances to Hansŏng's river. In the following month, the French marines effected landings, occupied and looted the capital of the Kanghwa prefecture and other nearby towns, and started withdrawing to Zhifu on November 11 due to the cold weather.¹⁶ The Western ministers in Beijing had assumed that the expedition would bring Chosŏn to a new world, including the American chargé d'affaires, S. Wells Williams. He reported to Secretary of State, William H. Seward, that “the expedition will result in throwing open to the western world the last country which now forbids intercourse with

¹⁴ *Ilŏngnok*, vol. 66, 309.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. 66, 582.

¹⁶ *Kojong sidaesa* (The chronicle of the period of King Kojong), vol. 1, 248-294.

other lands...It is full time that Korea was introduced into the family of nations.”¹⁷ The expedition, however, finally frustrated Williams and his fellow ministers in Beijing. The French failed to conduct any negotiations with the Chosŏn government, much less introduce any ideas of the family of nations into the country. Rather, it provided the Taewŏn’gun with another good opportunity to promulgate his four principles of “anti-barbarians and protecting the nation” (K. *yang’i poguk*).¹⁸ The event proved that the Qing did not intervene into Chosŏn’s foreign affairs, highlighting the Zongli Yamen’s first assertion of Chosŏn’s right of Zizhu.

THE IMPERIAL ENVOYS IN 1866: CONDUCTING ZONGFAN FORMALITIES AS USUAL

The Zongfan practice between China and Chosŏn in this period manifested Chosŏn’s status as China’s shuguo. On November 1, 1866, while the battle with the French marines was raging in the Kanghwa area, the king held a grand ceremony in Hansŏng to welcome the two imperial envoys from Beijing, Kuiling and Xiyuan, who came to invest Princess Min.¹⁹ The coming of the imperial mission to invest the princess was a positive and routine response by the Qing court to Chosŏn’s request.

That day, the king went to the outskirts of Hansŏng to the Hall of Admiring the Central Civilized Country to welcome the envoys. After that, in the palace in Hansŏng, they performed a series of rituals in accordance to the imperial ritual codes. During this ceremony, the king kowtowed to the imperial decrees, followed by the reading of the decrees by Korean officials in the grand hall.²⁰ According to the decrees, Chosŏn had

¹⁷ *Mr. Williams to Mr. Seward*, No. 44, October 24, 1866, in *FRUS, 1867-’68*, vol. I, 416.

¹⁸ *Kojong sunjong sillok*, vol. 1, 235; *Yongho hanrok* (The idle records of Mr. Yongho), vol. 4, 44-45.

¹⁹ *Ilsongnok*, vol. 66, 643.

²⁰ Kuiling, *Dongshi jishi shilue* (Some poems on the visit to Chosŏn), 735-736.

been a loyal “*fan* and fence” (Ch. *fanping*) of China for generations and the princess should assist the king to make the country prosperous. After the envoys forwarded the imperial gifts to the princess, the king invited them to the grand hall, where they bowed to each other before having a tea ceremony. During a short conversation, the king asked if the emperor and the two empress dowagers were healthy. At the end, the envoys went to their residence in the South Palace Annex, where Taewŏn’gun, the high-ranking official Yi Chae-myŏn (1845–1912), and other officials visited for pen conversations.²¹ The king soon issued a decree to celebrate the investiture, in which he stated that Chosŏn, the “lower country” (K. *haguk*; Ch. *xiaguo*), appreciated the great favor of the “central dynasty” (K. *chungcho*; Ch. *zhongchao*) as well as the “big country.”²² The next day, the king visited the envoys’ residence to treat the envoys to a tea ceremony. On November 3, the king visited the envoys again to send them off in person.²³

All of the investiture’s ritual procedures were performed according to precedents during the three-day-long sojourn of the imperial envoys. The conversations between the Korean side and the envoys did not mention the ongoing war with the French, raging just 25 miles away from the city. The envoys, the agents of the Qing’s imperial court, did not ask anything about Chosŏn’s domestic or foreign affairs beyond the investiture ceremonies. Neither did the king and his officials inform the envoys of such affairs. The boundary between the tributary matters and the diplomatic affairs was very clear.

The dispatch of imperial envoys to Chosŏn raised concern among the French, and Bellonet asked the Zongli Yamen for explanations. Prince Gong answered that the envoys “were [in Chosŏn] on affairs of ceremonial and in accordance with long-established

²¹ Kuiling, *Dongshi jishi shilue*, 737.

²² *Ilŏngnok*, vol. 66, 643-644.

²³ *Ilŏngnok*, vol. 66, 645-648.

usage, having no reference to the quarrel between France and Korea.”²⁴ The correspondence between the two sides comprised the misunderstanding of the Sino–Korean relationship between Beijing and treaty powers.²⁵ This episode caused tensions between China and France after Prince Gong circulated their correspondence among foreign ministers in Beijing. Yet, in this way, Beijing made China’s understanding of the nature of the Sino–Korean Zongfan relationship and China’s attitude toward relations between Chosŏn and treaty powers public and known to all members of the diplomatic corps in Beijing.

While Prince Gong argued with Bellonet in November and December 1866, two Korean tributary missions arrived in Beijing in succession. The first mission, headed by Han Mun-kyu, arrived on November 6 in order to receive the new Chinese calendar for next year. Following the ritual procedures, Han Mun-kyu submitted the king’s memorial to the emperor through the Ministry of Rituals. After reporting that a foreign schooner was burned in Pyongyang, the king articulated that Chosŏn did not want to do businesses with those foreign countries, while Catholicism and other foreign religions were not welcomed, either. The memorial aimed to beg the “big country” for understandings over what the “small country” had done.²⁶

In addition, Han brought a personal letter written by the Korean official, Yi Hŭng-min, to Wan Qingli, a minister of the Ministry of Rituals. Yi tried to legitimize the Taewŏn’gun’s anti-Catholic policy and hoped Wan would take advantage of his position

²⁴ M. de Bellonet to Prince Kung, November 11, 1866, Inclosure No. 5 of *Mr. Burlingame to Mr. Seward*, No. 122, December 12, 1866, in *FRUS, 1867–’68*, vol. I, 422-423; Prince Kung to Mr. de Bellonet, [no date], No. 6 of *Mr. Burlingame to Mr. Seward*, No. 122, December 12, 1866, in *FRUS, 1867–’68*, vol. I, 423-424.

²⁵ M. Frederick Nelson, *Korea and the Old Orders in Eastern Asia*, 117-119.

²⁶ The king to the emperor, in *ZCSLXB*, 344-349.

to discuss the issue with the emperor and the Zongli Yamen, so that they would persuade the foreign powers to not visit Chosŏn.²⁷ Yi got to know Wan when he visited Beijing as a tributary emissary in 1865.²⁸ Although the emissaries continued to communicate with Chinese officials and intellectuals via personal letters after they returned to Chosŏn, these did not concern political matters, as Chapter 2 has depicted. Yi's letter to Wan, however, suddenly put an end to this convention. Realizing that the issues were beyond the jurisdiction of his ministry, Wan forwarded the letter to the emperor for instructions. Wan further explained that Yi sent him the letter because it was inconvenient for the king to discuss the issues in official memorials. Finally, the emperor's decrees to the king, in a similar way, only instructed the latter to make a good plan to secure Chosŏn, without offering any specific strategy. For Wan, this omission also resulted from the inadvisability of discussing these issues in official decrees. In order to compensate for this institutional deficiency, Wan suggested that the court use this opportunity to give Chosŏn detailed suggestions on managing foreign affairs through his personal response to Yi.²⁹ Wan's offer was not endorsed by the court, but in 1875, Li Hongzhang put it into practice.

While the Qing officials were discussing how to handle Yi's letter, Chosŏn's annual tributary mission arrived in Beijing on February 1, 1867, three days before the Chinese Spring Festival. The king described the conflict with the French forces in 1866 in his memorials by firmly stating that it was impossible for Chosŏn to trade with the "foreign barbarians" or to allow them to spread the gospel in the country. He also reported that Yi Hŭng-min had been punished because of his personal letter to "high

²⁷ Wan's memorial, November 21, 1866, in *ZCSLXB*, 355; Yi's letter to Wan, September 21, 1866, in *ZCSLXB*, 355-358.

²⁸ *Ilŏngnok*, vol. 66, 93.

²⁹ Wan's memorial, November 26, 1866, in *ZCSLXB*, 358-359; The draft letter of Wan to Yi, November 26, 1866, in *ZCSLXB*, 359-360.

officials of the imperial dynasty.”³⁰ When the conflict between Chosŏn and France came to an end, it left the Qing an awkward position between Chosŏn and foreign powers.

4.2 The Shuguo between Zizhu and Independence: The Sino–American Negotiation in 1871

The Qing’s relations with the treaty powers quickly deteriorated as a result of the negotiations between the American minister and the Zongli Yamen over the killings of the crew of an American schooner in Pyongyang in 1866. The negotiations pushed the Yamen to deliver more detailed descriptions on Chosŏn’s status and China’s Zongfan relationship with Chosŏn, which also made the subject more complicated and perplexing for the powers.

In July and September 1866, two American schooners, the *Surprise* and the *General Sherman*, were wrecked in Chosŏn. The crew of the *Surprise* was well treated and safely forwarded to Manchuria by Chosŏn, but those of the *General Sherman* were killed in Pyongyang. After learning of the *General Sherman* incident, the American minister at Beijing, Anson Burlingame, immediately brought the issue to the attention of Prince Gong since he argued that “Corea was formerly tributary to China.” Prince Gong “at once disavowed all responsibility for the Coreans, and stated that the only connection between the two countries was one of ceremonial.”³¹ In his letter of December 27 to Rear Admiral Henry H. Bell, Acting Commander of the U.S. Asiatic Squadron, Burlingame summarized that “I find the Chinese government disavows any responsibility for that of Corea, and all jurisdiction over its people. Consequently, the occurrences there

³⁰ The king to the emperor, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 39-47.

³¹ *Mr. Burlingame to Mr. Seward*, No. 124, December 15, 1866, in *FRUS, 1867–’68*, vol. I, 426.

relating to the General Sherman are beyond my jurisdiction.”³² Introducing the term of “jurisdiction” into the matter of Sino–Korean relationship, Burlingame indicated that Chosŏn was an independent country beyond China’s jurisdiction.

The case was passed on to Admiral Bell, who in a confidential dispatch to the Secretary of the Navy, Gideon Welles, suggested that the U.S. launch a punitive action against Chosŏn, which he believed “can be more honorably and efficiently done by the United States single-handed, than by any combined movement made with England or France.”³³ Ten days before Bell made this proposal, William H. Seward had proposed to the French minister in Washington that the U.S. and France should initiate a combined action against Chosŏn, but France declined this offer.³⁴ Bell’s proposed expedition did not occur, either. In early 1867, the navy dispatched the U.S.S. *Wachusett* to Chosŏn, under the command of Robert W. Shufeldt, to investigate the *General Sherman* incident. The action yielded nothing, however, as Shufeldt had to quit from Chosŏn due to the severe weather before Chosŏn’s response to his message could reach him.

In early 1867, American diplomats found themselves once again involved in another shipwreck, this time the schooner *Rover*, in Taiwan (Formosa). In March 1867, the *Rover* was wrecked on the southern coast of Taiwan and the crew who came ashore were ambushed and killed by aborigines known as the Koaluts. Assuming that the incident was within his jurisdiction, Charles William Le Gendre (1830–1899), the U.S. consul at Amoy, immediately brought the incident to the attention of the Governor-General of Fujian and Zhejiang in Fuzhou, the local officials of Taiwan

³² *Mr. Burlingame to Admiral Bell*, December 27, 1866, Inclosure C of *Mr. Burlingame to Mr. Seward*, No. 124, December 15, 1866, in *FRUS, 1867-'68*, vol. I, 428.

³³ Dispatch 65, *Bell to Welles*, December 27, 1866, Roll 251, in Jules Davids, ed., *American Diplomatic and Public Papers: The United States and China, 1861–1893*, vol. 9, 49.

³⁴ Tyler Dennett, *Americans in Eastern Asia*, 418-419.

prefecture, and the Zongli Yamen. The local officials of Fujian and Taiwan informed Le Gendre that the crew met with their death on the “savage lands” (Ch. *shengfan jie*) “beyond the civilization of the sovereign” (Ch. *wanghua buji*), instead of in the “inner sea of China” (Ch. *Zhongguo suoxia neiyang*), and the murders were “savages” (Ch. *shengfan*) rather than “Chinese civilians” (Ch. *huamin*). Therefore, Article 11 and Article 13 of the Sino–American Treaty of Tianjin in 1858 could not be applied to this incident, so that the local government had no responsibility to take action against the Koaluts at the consul’s request. Le Gendre, confirming that the “savages” were indeed within China’s jurisdiction, warned the officials that such disavowal of responsibility could be used by other powers to occupy the “savage lands.”³⁵ In the process, Admiral Bell made a punitive expedition against the aborigines in vain.³⁶ Finally, the Chinese local government dispatched forces to accompany Le Gendre to southern Taiwan in September, but it was Le Gendre himself who entered the area of the Koaluts to make an agreement with their chieftain, Tooke-tok.³⁷ Le Gendre’s experience of negotiating with the Chinese government was not notable at the time and it seemed to have no relations with Chosŏn. Yet, Le Gendre, as it happens, was soon hired by Tokyo in the 1870s as an advisor to the Japanese government, and he played a major role in reframing Japan’s foreign policy toward Taiwan, Ryukyu, Chosŏn, and the Sino–Korean Zongfan relationship.

Before Japan joined with the team of powers in challenging Chosŏn’s status as

³⁵ Le Gendre to the Governor-General of Fujian and Zhejiang, June 21, 1867, in “Rishi shokan” (Mr. Le Gendre’s letters), Japan Center for Asian Historical Resource (hereafter referred to as *JACAR*), Reference number (hereafter referred to as “Ref.”) A03030060500, January 1, 1874–December 31, 1875. In this dissertation, the two English alphabets “A” and “B” at the beginning of the reference number indicate the institutional holding the original archive: “A” means Kokuritsu kōbunsho kan (National Archives of Japan) and “B” means Gaimushō gaikō shiryō kan (Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan). About the Sino–American Treaty of Tianjin of 1858, see *Treaties, Conventions, etc., between China and Foreign States*, vol. 1, 713-728.

³⁶ George Williams Carrington, *Foreigners in Formosa, 1841–1874*, 156-157.

³⁷ See James W. Davidson, *The Island of Formosa, Past and Present*, 117-122.

China's shuguo, Frederick F. Low, the American minister at Beijing, pushed the Qing government to clarify its position on Sino–Korean relations by organizing an expedition to Chosŏn in 1871 with the aim of negotiating a treaty for the protection of shipwrecked mariners. Low started to prepare for the expedition after he arrived in Beijing in 1870, and the top issue on his agenda was to clarify the nature of the Sino–Korean relationship. On July 16, 1870, Low made a report to Hamilton Fish to give his understanding of the relationship. Low argued that “Corea is substantially an independent nation” and the Korean tribute to China “is sent rather as a *quid pro quo* for the privilege of trading with the Chinese than a governmental tribute.” He concluded that “Beyond these arrangements, which have been in existence many years, there seems to be no connection between China and Corea. China claims or exercises no control in any way over Corea, nor do the Coreans regard the Chinese as having any right to interfere or exercise any control over their governmental polity.”³⁸

Low apparently failed to grasp the political meaning behind Chosŏn's tribute to China. In light of his failure to obtain useful information about Chosŏn, Low tried to solicit aid from the Zongli Yamen on his communications with Chosŏn. In February 1871, Low delivered the Yamen a letter that he hoped would be forwarded to the king of Chosŏn. The Yamen replied: “according to the strict and established regulations on the communications between China and its outer *fan*, the Yamen should not intervene in affairs of Chosŏn that are under the management of the Ministry of Rituals.” Low, instead, kept visiting the Yamen for the same purpose. Realizing that the American visit to Chosŏn was unavoidable, the Yamen suggested that the Ministry of Rituals forward

³⁸ *Mr. Low to Mr. Fish*, No. 225, July 16, 1870, in *FRUS, 1870–'71*, 362.

Low's letter to Chosŏn to undergird China's "way of cherishing shuguo."³⁹

The Ministry of Rituals forwarded the letter on March 22, but in a confidential memorial to the emperor, the ministry noted that, "Chosŏn has used China's ruling titles and calendars for many years and proved the most loyal. All affairs regarding its government, religion, prohibitions, and laws are subject to its own management by the rule of zizhu, and none of these affairs had China hitherto interfered." The ministry also pointed out that the act of forwarding Low's letter to Chosŏn was only an expedient that should not be imitated by other countries on any account.⁴⁰ These were the words cited by the Zongli Yamen in its dispatch to Low on March 28.

Low reached two conclusions as a result of the Yamen's response to his inquiries. First, he decided to interpret China's position as affirming Chosŏn's sovereignty, stating that "although Korea is regarded as a country subordinate to China, yet she is wholly independent in everything that related to her government, her religion, her prohibitions, and her laws; in none of these things has China hitherto interfered."⁴¹ He translated the term "zizhu" into "wholly independent" in accordance with what he had claimed in 1870. Second, by repeating China's declaration that "while Korea is considered and treated as a tributary kingdom, entire independence is conceded in all that relates to its government, religion, and intercourse with foreign nations," Low concluded that the declaration aimed to "guard against complications that may possibly grow out of an attempt by foreign nations to open intercourse with Korea, and relieve this Government of all responsibility for the acts of the Koreans, whether hostile or otherwise."⁴² In effect, Low was

³⁹ The memorial of the Zongli Yamen, March 12, 1871, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 159-160.

⁴⁰ The Ministry of Rituals to the Zongli Yamen, March 22, 1871, vol.2, 165-166.

⁴¹ *Mr: Low to Mr: Fish*, No. 29, April 3, 1871, in *FRUS, 1871-'72*, 112.

⁴² *Mr: Low to Mr: Fish*, No. 29, April 3, 1871, in *FRUS, 1871-'72*, 111.

interpreting Beijing's declaration as a disavowal of responsibility for Chosŏn's behavior. It seemed that it was time for him to sail for Chosŏn, a place that was, for him, "more of a sealed book than Japan was before Commodore Perry's visit."⁴³

Low sailed to Chosŏn in May, but failed to open the "sealed book" as a result of its inability to establish any official contacts with its court or xenophobic local officials. The expedition was an updated edition of the French one in 1866 and made Chosŏn's policy toward these countries more hostile. In fact, the basic assumption that Low had made about opening a diplomatic relationship with Chosŏn was unrealistic because Chosŏn identified itself as "a subject of China" (K. *insin*; Ch. *renchen*) that had no right to "communicate with foreign countries" (K. *oegyŏ*; Ch. *waijiao*)—that is, to conduct diplomacy. This point was re-emphasized by the king in his memorial to the emperor in June 1871 in response to Low's letter that Beijing forwarded to the country.⁴⁴

After returning to Beijing, Low paid several visits to the Zongli Yamen in the hope of contacting Chosŏn through Beijing. The conversations with the Yamen provided Low with more opportunities to conceptualize the Sino–Korean relationship and concluded the relationship was nominal and insubstantial (Ch. *youming wushi*). He claimed to the Yamen that, "the relations between that country and yours established during the reign of the Ming Emperors, nominally continued unchanged, although, practically, they have little force."⁴⁵ This assertion encountered a sharp refutation from Prince Gong, but Low never yielded. From 1866 to 1871, the foreign ministers at Beijing gradually replaced their perception that Chosŏn was a "tributary" of China with the new

⁴³ *Mr. Low to Mr. Fish*, No. 31, May 13, 1871, in *FRUS, 1871–'72*, 115.

⁴⁴ The memorial of the king, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 175.

⁴⁵ Enclosure 4 dated November 22, 1871, in Dispatch 102, *Low to Fish*, November 23, 1871, Roll 32, in *American Diplomatic and Public Papers: The United States and China, 1861–1893*, vol. 9, 184.

understanding that it was an independent country beyond the Chinese jurisdiction. Coincidentally, in 1871, the Qing signed its first Western-style treaty with Japan. In the next five years, Japan, in its dramatic Westernizing reforms became the vanguard of the challenge to the Sino–Korean relationship, aided by its position as an insider in the East Asian community.

4.3 The Shuguo between the Chinese Legitimacy and International Law: The First Sino–Japanese Debate in 1873

Following the Meiji Restoration of 1868, Japan established the Gaimushō, its Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in 1869, to manage foreign relations in the newly adopted western terms. While its relationship with treaty powers developed steadily, Japan failed to find a way to do so with Chosŏn. For centuries, communications between the two countries were conducted through the Sō family on the domain of Tsushima of Japan. The Sō family was treated by Chosŏn as a virtual subordinate in a semi-Zongfan framework, in which the leader of the family received a special seal from the king of Chosŏn, just as the king did from the emperor of the Qing. The leader dispatched boats to Chosŏn for trade in accordance with Chosŏn’s regulations, and he presented himself as a subordinate in letters to the king. In return, when necessary, Chosŏn dispatched messengers to Japan to consolidate friendly relations and all messengers visited Kyoto and Edo (Tokyo) via Tsushima. Chosŏn called its policy of communicating with Japan *Kyorin*, which means communication with neighbors.

After the Meiji Restoration, Japan sent Chosŏn sovereign letters with the aim of establishing communications. In the letters, the Japanese monarch referred to himself as “emperor,” putting Chosŏn in an awkward position, as the title had been the exclusive domain of the Chinese emperor and the Son of Heaven in the Zongfan world. This was

the same challenge that Chosŏn had encountered in 1636, when Hongtaiji invoked the title of emperor and sent sovereign letters to Chosŏn to extend his political influence. The nub of the question was nothing other than the concept of the orthodox legitimacy, which Japan itself had also seriously encountered in the late Tokugawa period.⁴⁶ As a result, Chosŏn refused to accept Japan's sovereign letters, even though the letters were sent through the Sō family, leaving the Japanese emissaries outside the country's door.

In the meanwhile, Japan was keenly contacting China to pursue an international status equal to it. After a negotiation, in September 1871, the Japanese minister plenipotentiary, Date Munenari (1818–1892), signed a treaty with the Chinese plenipotentiary, Li Hongzhang, at Tianjin. The first article of the treaty states that, “Relations of amity shall henceforth be maintained in redoubled force between China and Japan, in measure as boundless as the heaven and the earth. In all that regards the territorial possessions of either country the two Governments shall treat each the other with proper courtesy, without the slightest infringement or encroachment on either side, to the end that there may be for evermore peace between them undisturbed.”⁴⁷ The phrase of “territorial possessions” in this article later became a disputable issue between the two countries that related to Chosŏn's status.

The phrase, in the treaty that was signed in Chinese and Japanese languages, is a rough English equivalent of the Chinese phrase of *suoshu bangtu*. *Suoshu* means “belong to,” but *bangtu* is too vague to be exactly defined and interpreted by international law. Literally, *bang* means “country” and *tu* means “land,” but *bangtu* could mean “country,” “land,” or “territorial possessions.” Later, both China and Japan realized that this phrase

⁴⁶ See, for example, J. Victor Koschmann, *The Mito Ideology*, 29-55.

⁴⁷ See *Treaties, Conventions, etc., between China and Foreign States*, vol. 2, 508; *Kyūjōyaku isan*, vol. 1, 394-395.

failed to state whether the countries serving as China's outer *fan*, in particular Chosŏn, were China's "territorial possessions." By the same token, the ambiguity of the phrase enabled both sides to use the term's uncertain definition to their own advantage. This ambiguity resulted in fierce Sino–Japanese disputes on the international legal status of China's outer *fan* when Japan annexed Ryukyu and began implementing an aggressive policy toward Chosŏn starting from 1872.

In December 1871, a boat from Ryukyu was shipwrecked on the southern coast of Taiwan, where the aborigines killed 54 members of its crew. Since Japan was annexing Ryukyu by converting the kingdom into a Japanese domain (*J. han*), it regarded the incident as a perfect opportunity to finalize the Ryukyu issue by cutting off Ryukyu's Zongfan relationship with China. In February 1873, Emperor Meiji appointed minister of foreign affairs, Soejima Taneomi (1828–1905), as ambassador extraordinary to China to ratify the Treaty of Tianjin of 1871. The emperor also instructed him to discuss the killings of the Ryukyu crew in Taiwan with Beijing to determine whether or not the whole of Taiwan Island was under China's jurisdiction.⁴⁸ Soejima's primary mission did not relate to Chosŏn, but as a key proponent of the "expedition against Korea" (*J. Seikan ron*), he availed himself of this opportunity to glean information on China's attitude toward Japanese–Korean contacts.

The Soejima's embassy arrived in Tianjin in April 1873. After ratifying the treaty, he briefly discussed the Japanese–Korean contacts with the Beiyang Superintendent, Li Hongzhang. Li suggested that Japan should be friendly to Chosŏn and any expedition against it would violate the Sino–Japanese treaty.⁴⁹ Among the members of the Japanese

⁴⁸ *JACAR*, Ref. A03023011000、A03023011700.

⁴⁹ Li to the Zongli Yamen, April 3, 1873, in *Li Hongzhang quanji* (Complete collection of Li Hongzhang)

embassy was its adviser on foreign affairs, Charles William Le Gendre. Le Gendre was hired by the Gaimushō as an advisor on foreign policy toward Taiwan. He came at the recommendation of the American minister to Japan, Charles E. De Long. His rich experience on Taiwan after the *Rover* incident became extremely valuable for Tokyo's efforts to formulate and exercise a new policy toward the Chinese Zongfan system.⁵⁰ It was through Western advisers like Le Gendre that Meiji Japan transformed itself into an outsider to the East Asian community in terms of its foreign relations practices.

After the embassy arrived in Beijing, Le Gendre distributed a long memorandum through the Russian minister, A. Vlangaly, the Doyen of the Corps Diplomatique in the capital, to suggest all Western ministers call upon the Japanese ambassador "who was a chief representative of progress in Japan." The British minister, Thomas Francis Wade (1818–1895), commented that Le Gendre was "guiding his Japanese chief in a direction more pretentious than wise."⁵¹ Le Gendre soon changed his mind by withdrawing the memorandum, followed by Soejima's individual visits to the foreign legations. In his conversations with Wade and Low, Soejima expressed his concerns on Chosŏn, which made Wade conclude that "the Japanese are also suspected of a design on Korea."⁵² Wade said that Soejima "is evidently anxious for an assurance from the Chinese that Korea is an independent Kingdom, so independent of China, that is to say, as to make what may befall Korea no concern of the Chinese." Wade further inferred that "it is plain that with Korea Japan is about to deal, much as China and Japan mostly have been dealt

(Haikou, Hainan: Hainan chubanshe, 1997, hereafter referred to as "*LHZQJ* (1997)"), vol. 6, 2933-2934.

⁵⁰ See Sophia Su-fei Yen, *Taiwan in China's Foreign Relations, 1836-1874*, 159-174; Marlene J. Mayo, "The Korean Crisis of 1873 and Early Meiji Foreign Policy," 802-805.

⁵¹ *Mr. Wade to Earl Granville*, No. 118, Confidential, May 15, 1873, Foreign Office record group 17, China Correspondence (FO 17) (Public Record Office, London) /654, 59-60.

⁵² *Mr. Wade to Earl Granville*, No. 131, Confidential, May 25, 1873, FO 17/654, 91.

with by Western nations.”⁵³ The way that Wade suggested here was gunboat diplomacy, which Soejima expressed clearly in his meeting with Low.

According to Low, Soejima had “only two questions of importance which he desires to discuss with the Chinese government.” First, he wanted to know “whether China is responsible for the acts of the aborigines on the island of Formosa.” He emphasized that “If the answer is in the negative, notice will then be given that Japan proposed to send a military force to Formosa to chastise the savage and semi-civilized tribes that practically hold undisputed possession of the large part of the island.” Second, he wanted to “ascertain the precise relations between China and Korea; whether the former claims to exercise such control over her tributary as to render China responsible for the acts of the Koreans, or whether other nations must look to Korea alone for redress for wrongs and outrages which her people may commit.”⁵⁴ The logic behind Soejima’s thinking on the connection between the aborigines and Sino–Korean relations was based on a shared common ground with the Western powers regarding the extent of China’s jurisdiction. When Soejima solicited Low’s opinions on Chosŏn, Low showed him a Zongli Yamen’s dispatch issued in March 1871, arguing that Chosŏn was China’s shuguo with the right of zizhu. Following Low’s assertion that Chosŏn was “wholly independent,” Soejima made the judgment that Chosŏn was “beyond the Qing’s sovereignty.”⁵⁵ In this way, the Japanese policy of challenging Chosŏn’s status as China’s shuguo started to converge with that of the U.S., France, Britain, and other powers in China.

Soejima’s conclusion found support in a meeting at the Zongli Yamen on June 21,

⁵³ *Mr. Wade to Earl Granville*, No. 143, Confidential, June 4, 1873, *FO 17/654*, 193-195.

⁵⁴ *Mr. Low to Mr. Fish*, No. 75, June 13, 1873, in *FRUS, 1873–’74*, vol. I, 188.

⁵⁵ Shima Yoshitaka, ed., *Soejima Taneomi zenshū* (The complete collection of Soejima Taneomi), vol. 2, 165-166, 456.

which took place between the Japanese representatives, Yanagiwara Sakimitsu (1850–1894) and Tei Einei (1829–1897) on one side, and the Chinese ministers, Mao Changxi (1817–1882), Dong Xun, and Sun Shida on the other. In their conversation, Yanagiwara asked how China could prove Chosŏn was a shuguo, since the Yamen claimed that “China never interfered with its interior politics, religion, prohibitions and laws” in its note to the American minister two years ago. Mao replied that “the so-called shuguo only referred to investiture and tribute submission. In addition, he also confirmed that China would not intervene in Chosŏn’s right of war and peace negotiation.”⁵⁶

Mao’s response satisfied Soejima very much because it actually endorsed the argument of the American minister that the Sino–Korean relationship was ceremonial in practice.⁵⁷ Soejima was granted an audience with Emperor Tongzhi (1856–1875, r. 1861–1875) along with his Western counterparts on June 29, which was the first imperial audience in China for Western ministers since the 1840s. He soon had another short discussion with Li Hongzhang in Tianjin. During the conversation, Li warned Soejima that Japan should honor the first article of the treaty of 1871, by not encroaching on China’s *bangtu*.⁵⁸ Li’s position set the tone for bilateral debates on the issue in 1876.

Soejima’s visit to China made him more active in promoting the *Seikan ron* upon his return to Tokyo in the summer of 1873. The homecoming of Iwakura Tomomi’s mission to the United States and Europe, however, led to the halt of the proposed expedition to Korea by the caretaker government. Three key members of the mission, including Iwakura Tomomi (1825–1883), Ōkubo Toshimichi (1830–1878), and Kido

⁵⁶ *JACAR*, Ref. A03023011900; *Shishin nikki* (diary on Mr. Soejima’s embassy to the Qing), in *NHGB*, vol. 6, 177-178.

⁵⁷ *Mr. Soejima to Mr. Sanjō*, June 29, 1873, in *NHGB*, vol. 6, 160.

⁵⁸ Li to the Yamen, July 9, 1873, in *LHZQJ (1997)*, vol. 6, 2936.

Takayoshi (1833–1877), argued that Japan should focus on domestic reforms to “reorganize its national politics and make its people rich.”⁵⁹ As this opinion prevailed, the proponents of the *Seikan ron*, such as Soejima, Saigō Takamori (1827–1877), Itagaki Taisuke (1837–1919), and Etō Shinpei (1834–1874), were pushed out of the cabinet, resulting in Saigō’s rebellion in 1877. In December 1873, the young king of Chosŏn assumed his own rule by ending the regency of his father, Taewŏn’gun, causing severe political conflicts between the two cliques of Princess Min and Taewŏn’gun. Tokyo tried to avail this opportunity to pursue a diplomatic relationship with Hansŏng, but this effort failed in the face of sharp resistance on the part of local officials in Pusan. Tokyo could not make any substantial progress on opening a channel of communication with Hansŏng.

4.4 The Birth of the Sovereignty of the Shuguo: The Second Sino–Japanese Debate and the Japanese–Korean Treaty of 1876

TAIWAN, KANGHWA, AND MORI ARINORI’S VISIT TO BEIJING

In summer 1874, while Tokyo sent troops to Taiwan to deal with “the territory in question beyond the jurisdiction of the Chinese government,”⁶⁰ it sent Yanagiwara Sakimitsu and Ōkubo Toshimichi to Beijing for negotiations. The Zongli Yamen articulated to the Japanese representatives that, “even if the aborigines are ‘barbarians,’ they are still China’s barbarians, and only China owns the right to punish them had they been guilt.”⁶¹ The Yamen used relative rules of International Law and Chinese historical evidence, such as local gazetteers, to demonstrate its points. It turned out that the Japanese representatives, without close advice from Western advisors like Le Gendre, failed to

⁵⁹ Tada Kōmon, *Iwakurakō jikki* (The true records of Iwakura Tomomi), vol. 3, 46-90; Marlene J. Mayo, “The Korean Crisis of 1873 and Early Meiji Foreign Policy,” 793-819.

⁶⁰ Mr. Parkes to Mr. Terashima, April 16, 1874, in *NHGB*, vol. 7, 37.

⁶¹ *Chouban yiwu shimo, Tongzhi chao* (Complete records of management of barbarian affairs during the Tongzhi period), vol. 10, 3868.

prove that the area of the aborigines in Taiwan was beyond China's jurisdiction. The British minister at Tokyo, Harry Parkes, had actually been anticipated this failure in his dispatch to the minister of the Gaimushō, Terashima Munenori (1832–1893), in April, in which Parkes noted that, “during a residence of upwards of twenty years in China, I always heard that the whole of Formosa was claimed by China.”⁶²

Under the mediation of Thomas Wade, the new Doyen of the Corps Diplomatique in Beijing, the Chinese and Japanese governments reached a brief agreement on October 31 after intensive debates.⁶³ The third article of the agreement was intractable, as it stated that, “all correspondence that this question has occasioned between the two Governments shall be cancelled, and the discussions dropped for evermore.”⁶⁴ In this way, Japan invalidated all correspondence that could expose its inferior position in the discussions and enabled its negotiations with China over the reach of China's jurisdiction in the following years to shift back to international law-based arguments. This substantial change was quickly proved by their positions on Chosŏn's status in 1876.

The agreement was followed by a skirmish between Japan and Chosŏn near Kanghwa Island on September 20, 1875, resulting in the resurgence of the *Seikan ron* with vigor in Japan. This time Iwakura and his fellow premiers did not prevent the expedition because Japan's diplomatic situation was very different from that in 1873. In addition to reaching an agreement with China about the Taiwan Incident, Tokyo had resolved the territorial disputes with Russia over Sakhalin Island and the Kuril Islands by

⁶² Mr. Parkes to Mr. Terashima, April 16, 1874, in *NHGB*, vol. 7, 37.

⁶³ *Chouban yiwu shimo, Tongzhi chao*, vol. 10, 3835-3949; Kanai Yukiyasu, ed., “Shishin benri shimatsu” (The ins and outs of the embassy of Ōkubo Toshimichi to the Qing), in *Meiji bunka zenshū* (Collection of the Meiji culture), vol. 7, 77-152.

⁶⁴ “Agreement between the High Commissioner Plenipotentiary of Japan and the Chinese Ministers of Foreign Affairs,” signed at Beijing, October 31, 1874, in *Treaties, Conventions, etc., between China and Foreign States*, vol. 2, 586.

signing a treaty in St. Petersburg in May 1875, pursuing Russian acquiescence to Japan's actions in Chosŏn.⁶⁵ In order to check the southern advance of Russia,⁶⁶ British designs to occupy Port Hamilton, a small island belonging to Chosŏn near the Tsushima Strait, also provided Japan with a good opportunity to initiate an expedition against Korea without causing interventions from these Western powers. In October 1875, Kido Takayoshi suggested to the government that Japan should deal with the Zongfan relationship between China and Chosŏn and after Beijing disavowed responsibility for Chosŏn's foreign affairs, Japan could freely take action against Chosŏn.⁶⁷ This opinion bore a striking resemblance to Le Gendre's suggestion about Taiwan in 1873.

The Japanese government soon appointed then 30-year-old Mori Arinori (1847–1889) as the minister plenipotentiary to Beijing.⁶⁸ Mori was educated in Britain and America, and was familiar with international law relating to such conflicts. He had consulted with E. Peshine Smith (1814–1882) regarding the incident, as Smith had been the American special advisor to the Gaimushō on international law. Sanjō Sanetomi (1837–1891), Chancellor of the Realm, gave Mori's embassy instructions, among which the most important mission was to “identify Chosŏn as an independent country” and persuade China to help with the establishment of Japanese–Korean relations in order to promote the common interests of Japan and China.⁶⁹ Simultaneously, Terashima telegraphed the chargé d'affaires in Beijing, Tei Einei, instructing him to treat the Sino–Korean relationship seriously in the days to come. Terashima noted that, “Although Mr.

⁶⁵ Treaty of the Exchanges of Sakhalin Island and Kuril Islands, in *NHGB*, vol. 8, 215–222.

⁶⁶ Sir H. Parkes to the Earl of Derby, July 20, 1875, Telegraphic, in *British Documents on Foreign Affairs, Reports and Papers from the Foreign Office Confidential Print, Part I, Series E*, vol. 2, 39.

⁶⁷ See Tabohashi Kiyoshi, *Kindai nissen kankei no kenkyū* (Modern Japanese–Korean relations study), vol. 1, 515.

⁶⁸ “Tokumei zenken kōshi ninmeisho” (Letter of Appointment on minister plenipotentiary), in *Mori Arinori bunsho* (Mori Arinori papers), archive No. R. 57-9.

⁶⁹ Ōkubo Toshiaki, ed., *Mori Arinori zenshū* (The complete collections of Mori Arinori), vol. 1, 779–780.

Soejima discussed Sino–Korean relations when he visited the Qing several years ago, it has not been confirmed yet that Chosŏn is not a *fan* of the Qing. You should be aware that all contacts between Japan and Chosŏn have nothing related to the Qing.”⁷⁰ Later, Mori summarized that his mission was “to cut off the Sino–Korean relationship.”⁷¹

Shortly after the Mori embassy sailed from Shinagawa of Tokyo for China on November 24, 1875, Li Hongzhang learned of the coming of Mori’s embassy from his agents at Shanghai and Tianjin and forwarded it to the Zongli Yamen. William N. Pethick, then American vice-consul at Tianjin who was becoming Li’s private secretary and diplomatic advisor, informed Li that “Mori, a capable Japanese diplomat who has served at the United States, is going to negotiate the issue of Chosŏn with China and ask China to mediate between Japan and Chosŏn.” Li replied that “Chosŏn is China’s *shubang*—that is, subordinate country, but China never interferes with her national affairs. According to the first article of the Sino–Japanese Treaty of 1871, what China can do is to persuade Japan not to effect military actions against Chosŏn. It is inconvenient for China to order Chosŏn to negotiate with Japan.”⁷² Li’s statement was an echo of his claim to Soejima in 1873. Neither Li nor the Zongli Yamen would expect a really challenging debate with the young Japanese diplomat.

On January 2, 1876, two days before Mori arrived in Beijing, the Qing court dispatched two Manchu envoys, Jihe (1823–1883) and Wulasiconga (1829–1894), to Chosŏn to invest the king’s son, Yi Ch’ŏk, as the crown prince.⁷³ Interestingly enough, three Han Chinese Grand Secretaries, including Mao Changxi, Li Hongzhang, and Zuo

⁷⁰ Mr. Terashima to Mr. Tei, November 15, 1875, in *NHGB*, vol. 8, 138.

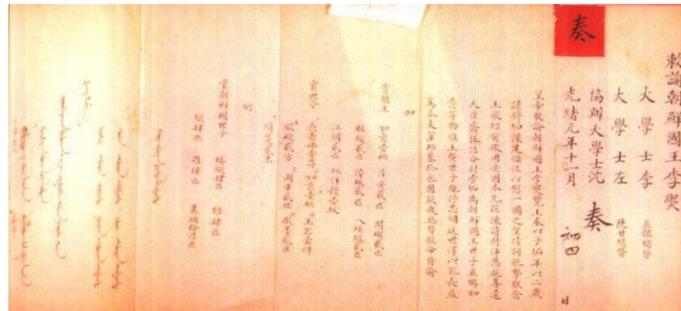
⁷¹ “Shishin fukumei sho” (Report on embassy to the Qing), in *Mori Arinori bunsho*, archive No. R. 2-68.

⁷² Li to the Yamen, November 5, 1875, in *LHZQJ (1997)*, vol. 6, 3013.

⁷³ *Ch’iksa ilgi* (Diaries of welcoming the imperial envoys, 1723–1890), archive No. M/F 73-101-5, vol. 17, 5b.

Zongtang, drafted the imperial edict of investiture on December 1, 1875 (Figure 4. 1). Ironically, Mao and Li would argue with the Japanese minister over Chosŏn's status soon.

Figure 4. 1. Draft Imperial Edict to King of Chosŏn on December 1, 1875



Source: The sixth colorful illustration, in *ZCSLHB*.

In Beijing, Mori paid his first visit to Thomas Wade on January 5, in the hope that the Doyen could mediate between China and Japan. Wade was impressed by the new Japanese minister and he noted that Mori “speaks English remarkably well.”⁷⁴ His situation, however, made it impossible to meet Mori’s expectations. Wade’s relations with the court was not pleasant as a result of the Margary Affairs happening in February 1875 at Yunnan, in which a young British interpreter hand-picked by Wade, Augustus R. Margary, was killed in an expedition to Burma. The changes that Wade proposed to the Zongli Yamen, which were far beyond what could have been extracted from the case, indicated that he tried to convert Chinese foreign policy into what he had envisioned for years. With that purpose in mind, Wade kept telegraphing London to ask for more naval forces to pressure China and in September he even closed his office at Beijing and went to Shanghai.⁷⁵ Although Wade played a key role as mediator between Japan and China in 1874 regarding Taiwan and Ryukyu, he now had no desire to be involved in the Sino–Japanese negotiations on Korea’s affairs.

⁷⁴ *Sir T. Wade to Earl of Derby*, No. 5, January 12, 1876, *FO 17/719*, 35-36.

⁷⁵ For Wade’s policy on the Margary Affairs, see T. S. Wang, *The Margary Affair and the Chefoo Agreement*; James C. Cooley, Jr., *T. F. Wade in China: Pioneer in Global Diplomacy, 1842–1882*.

After meeting with Mori, Wade reported to London that, “the minister’s manner, rather than his language, made me mistrustful. I inferred that an expedition of Korea is determined on and that the object of his confidential communications to me was to ascertain whether objection to the expedition would be taken by English, or any other foreign action.”⁷⁶ Wade could not have been more correct than that. On the same day, the Japanese ambassador plenipotentiary to Chosŏn, Kuroda Kiyotaka (1840–1900), started preparing for his expedition to Chosŏn in Tokyo.⁷⁷ On January 6, Kuroda sailed for Chosŏn by leading a fleet consisting of 2 gunboats, 4 schooners, and 754 members in total. At the same time, in Beijing, Mori visited the Zongli Yamen for a conversation with Prince Gong and other ministers. Mori wished to present two sovereign letters to Emperor Guangxu in an imperial audience, but Prince Gong immediately declined the request on the grounds that the emperor was too young to meet with foreign ministers. Finally, Mori submitted two copies of the sovereign letters to the Yamen.⁷⁸

On January 10, Mori led his interpreter, Tei Einei, and two secretaries, Takezoe Shinichirō (1842–1917) and Iegawa Shigerukan (1831–1891), on a visit to the Yamen to discuss Chosŏn’s status. Five Chinese ministers talked with him, including Shen Guifen (1818–1881), Mao Changxi, Dong Xun, Chonghou (1826–1893) and Guo Songtao (1818–1891). Zhou Jiamei (1835–1886) served as the secretary to the ministers. None of the six Chinese officials knew international law. Shen Guifen and Mao Changxi had worked at the Ministry of Rituals, where they must have gained some experience on Sino–Korean contacts. Mori, the youngest man on site, was the only person who knew

⁷⁶ *Sir T. Wade to Earl of Derby*, No. 6, Confidential, January 12, 1876, *FO 17/719*, 39.

⁷⁷ “Kuroda daishin shisen nikki” (Mr. Kuroda’s diary on his embassy to Chosŏn), in *NHGB*, vol. 9, 3.

⁷⁸ “*Shishin nikki* (Diary of Mori Arinori’s embassy to the Qing),” vol. 2, 37b–39b, in *Mori Arinori bunsho*, archive No. R. 2–67.

international law and had Western educational and diplomatic experience. Shortly after the discussion started, both sides with different worldviews were fully aware that they were on diametrically different tracks.

The conversation mainly occurred between Mori and Shen. Mori asked that why China, identifying Chosŏn as a shuguo, claimed that Chosŏn's "politics, religion, prohibitions, and laws are always zizhu." Shen explained that, "The shuguo is actually not the territory of our country. But it pays tribute in time, receive our investiture, and take our country's calendar, so it becomes our shuguo." Shen further informed Mori that Vietnam, Ryukyu, and Burma were China's shuguo that had different time for paying tribute. When Mori asked if it would fine for a shuguo to negotiate with foreign countries for trade without informing China, Shen replied that the country would manage the affairs on its own feet and China would not get involved. If disputes arose between the shuguo and China's treaty nations, China would respond to them according to certain treaties. Finally, Shen warned Mori that "invading shuguo cannot be morally tolerated," which the first article of the Sino–Japanese Treaty of 1871 clearly stated.⁷⁹

The two sides had different understandings of "shuguo." For Mori, a shuguo could mean a colony, a dependency, or a nation with semi-sovereign right. He used the relationship between the Muhammad Ali dynasty of Egypt and the Ottoman Empire, that between Hungary and Austro–Hungarian Empire, and that between Canada and the British Empire as three examples of shuguo in the western context. The three examples, unfortunately, were missing in Chinese translation due to the huge knowledge gap

⁷⁹ See Mori to Terashima, January 13, 1876, in *NHGB*, vol. 9, 142-162; "*Shishin nikki* (Diary of Mori Arinori's embassy to the Qing)," vol. 2, 48a-65a, in *Mori Arinori bunsho*, archive No. R. 1-55-1.

between the two parties.⁸⁰ Rather, the Chinese ministers gave Mori noticeable and convincing examples in the Chinese context to prove Chosŏn's status as China's shuguo. As a result, their fierce debate ended without an agreement.

Falling short of his expectations at the meeting, Mori was frustrated with Chinese officialdom. In a letter to his father, he complained that "it is really inconvenient to negotiate with the Qing government because it is really dim to see how it will move forward beyond the erstwhile conventions and customs."⁸¹ Indeed, in a time following the so-called "Tongzhi Restoration," the Qing was facing even more serious challenges from within and outside the country. On the same day when Mori argued with the Yamen, Empress Dowagers Cian (1837–1881) and Cixi (1835–1908), in the Forbidden City around two miles west of the Yamen, were beseeching in tears the officials Weng Tonghe (1830–1904) and Xia Tongshan (1830–1880) to serve as teachers for then 5-year-old Emperor Guangxu.⁸² The political heart of the empire was very vulnerable. It was not until 1898 that the emperor was able to launch a reform movement with the strong support of his teacher, Weng Tonghe, three years after his empire was humiliated by Japan in the war breaking out right in Chosŏn. The conflicts resulting in the Sino–Japanese War of 1894–1895 could be traced to the Sino–Japanese debate on Chosŏn's status in 1876.

After the meeting, Mori asked the Yamen to issue a passport to a Japanese assistant whom he wanted to send to Chosŏn via Mukden, in order to inform the Japanese ambassador to Chosŏn about the Sino–Japanese meetings. He also expressed his desire

⁸⁰ Yuanchong Wang, "1876 nian Li Hongzhang yu Mori Arinori Baoding huitan jilu" (Records of the negotiations between Li Hongzhang and Mori Arinori at Baoding in 1876), 125-147.

⁸¹ Mori's letter to his father, January 13, 1876, "Mori Arinori shokan" (Mori Arinori's letters), in *Mori Arinori bunsho*, archive No. R. 1-55-1.

⁸² Chen Yijie, ed. *Weng Tonghe riji* (Weng Tonghe's diary), vol. 3, 1176.

for a visit to Li Hongzhang at Baoding to show his gratitude for Li's greetings.⁸³ The Yamen refused to issue the passport due to lack of precedent. It also tried to prevent Mori visiting Baoding in a note on January 13, in which the restatement of Chosŏn's status as China's *shuguo* ignited a hot verbal jousting with Mori through diplomatic notes.

In his response, Mori argued that "Chosŏn is an independent country (Ch. *duli zhi guo*) and the so-called *shuguo* by your honorable country is only a nominal title (Ch. *kongming*)...All Japanese–Korean contacts have nothing to do with the Sino–Japanese Treaty."⁸⁴ The vehement statement was almost a Japanese edition of what the American minister produced in 1871, marking the completion of the convergence of Japanese and Western policies challenging China's claim that Chosŏn was its *shuguo*. Perceiving this alignment, the Yamen memorialized the throne on January 17 to express severe concern over likely problems caused by Japan, a country that "has recently adopted the Western politics and customs and changed their own costumes and calendars." The Yamen was also not sure if Mori would conform to the bilateral treaty.⁸⁵ Japan now became a troublemaker on the Yamen's list.

In order to inform Chosŏn of the situation, the Yamen in its memorial requested the Ministry of Rituals to immediately dispatch a copy of Mori's note at a speed of 500 *li* per day to Hansŏng, but it noted that "although Chosŏn is China's *shuguo*, China does not intervene in its affairs...Chosŏn would decide by itself if it would reach the rapprochement with Japan."⁸⁶ The note was sent from Beijing on January 19, four days

⁸³ Mori to Terashima, January 13, 1876, in *NHGB*, vol. 9, 162.

⁸⁴ Mori to the Yamen, January 15, 1876, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 270.

⁸⁵ The Yamen's memorial, January 17, 1876, in *Qing guangxu chao zhongri jiaoshe shiliao* (Historical materials on Sino–Japanese negotiations in Guangxu period of the Qing, hereafter referred to as *ZRJSSL*), vol. 1, 1b-2a.

⁸⁶ The Yamen's memorial and its notes to the Ministry of Rituals, January 17 and 24, 1876, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 270-272, 280.

after Japanese naval forces had arrived at Pusan in Chosŏn, where they were making preparations for an expedition to Kanghwa. However, both the Yamen and the Ministry of Rituals had no intention of asking the two imperial envoys en route to Chosŏn to bring to the king any suggestions or instructions on the Korean–Japanese contacts.

The Yamen, without knowing the Japanese proceedings in Chosŏn, busied itself by arguing with Mori, utilizing the first article of the Sino–Japanese Treaty of 1871. Mori, sidestepping the treaty, kept requesting the Yamen to articulate whether or not China would be responsible for what Chosŏn had done to Japan. According to him, China’s disavowal of responsibility for Chosŏn’s activities meant the so-called *shuguo* was nominal.⁸⁷ On January 20, when both sides were at each other’s throats and could not see any positive ending, two officers sent by Li Hongzhang arrived in Beijing and directly made contact with Mori. Both the Yamen and Mori were very happy to forward the case to Li, in hopes of winning a favorable ruling against each other at Baoding. Very soon Mori and his interpreter, Tei Einei, left Beijing to visit Li, the *de facto* foreigner minister of China.

THE MYSTERY OF THE BAODING CONVERSATIONS IN 1876

The shift of the dispute to Li Hongzhang was the beginning of Li’s deep involvement in Chosŏn’s affairs as a provincial official. On January 10, while the Yamen squabbled with Mori and the two Empress Dowagers were crying in the Forbidden City, Li replied to a letter sent to him by Yi Yu-wŏn (1814–1888), a prime minister of Chosŏn, who had visited Beijing in late 1875 as a tributary emissary tasked with asking China’s investiture

⁸⁷ The Zongli Yamen to Mori, January 18, 1876, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 273; Mori to the Yamen, January 19, 1876, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 274.

of Chosŏn's crown prince.⁸⁸ When he returned home, Yi sent Li a letter via You Zhikai, the magistrate of Yongping prefecture of Zhili province, showing his admiration to Li by following the convention of individual contacts between intellectuals of the two countries. Since the issue of Chosŏn was in the forefront of his thoughts, Li availed himself of the opportunity to “briefly explain some ideas about diplomacy” to Yi.⁸⁹ Two weeks later, when his letter was on the way to Hansŏng, Li welcomed Mori and Tei at Baoding.

The Baoding conversations between Li and Mori on January 24 and 25 were very tricky because the host and the guest talked neither in Chinese nor Japanese, but in English. Moreover, both sides later claimed to be prevailing over each other in their final reports to their governments,⁹⁰ so that neither Beijing nor Tokyo knew the truth of the Mori–Li conversations. Examining what happened at Boding helps explain the escalation of the Sino–Japanese conflict over Chosŏn. The first conversation, on January 24, lasted for more than 6 hours over a banquet at Li's office, where Li invited two officials, Huang Pengnian and Huang Huilian, as his assistants. While Huang Pengnian was a senior Confucian scholar, the Cantonese Huang Huilian was educated at an American missionary school in Shanghai, had visited British Guiana, and was drafted by Beijing to serve as an interpreter during the Second Opium War.⁹¹ Mori might have decided to speak in English with Li after he found out about Huang Huilian's English proficiency because English, instead of Chinese or Japanese, could help Mori use the principles of

⁸⁸ *Ch'ŏng sŏn go*, vol. 2, 495.

⁸⁹ Li to the Zongli Yamen, January 19, 1876, in *LHZQJ* (1997), vol. 6, 3014.

⁹⁰ For the Japanese report, see Mori to Terashima, February 3, 1876, in *NHGB*, vol. 9, 170-176. For the Chinese report, see Li to the Zongli Yamen, January 26, 1876, in *LHZQJ* (1997), vol. 6, 3015-3017; Li to the Yamen, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 282-288.

⁹¹ See Banno Masataka, *Kindai chūgoku gaikōshi kenkyū* (Studies of diplomatic history of Modern China), 165-214; Henry B. Loch, *Personal Narrative of Occurrences during Lord Elgin's Second Embassy to China in 1860*, 55.

international law to articulate his points on Chosŏn's status.⁹²

As a response to Mori's argument that Chosŏn was an independent country instead of China's shuguo, Li made a rebuttal similar to those made by the Zongli Yamen. He argued that, "Everyone knows that Chosŏn has been subordinate to China for thousands of years. In the phrase *suoshu bangtu* (the territorial possessions) of the [Sino–Japanese] treaty, the *tu* means Chinese provinces, namely China's inner land (Ch. *neidi*) and inner subordinate (Ch. *neishu*), on which the Chinese government levies taxes and manages their political affairs. The *bang* refers to those countries such as Chosŏn that are China's outer *fan* (Ch. *waifan*) and outer subordinates (Ch. *waishu*), whose issues of taxes and political affairs are always of their own business. This is a convention and it does not start from our dynasty. Chosŏn is indeed China's shuguo."⁹³ Without endorsing Li's argument, Mori concluded that no agreement could be reached between the two sides.⁹⁴

At the end of the conversation, Mori asked Li what China would do if a war broke out between Japan and Chosŏn. Li replied that, "if a war happened, not only Russia but China would send troops to Chosŏn." Li then wrote eight Chinese characters to Mori, which read "Only to hurt harmony, No benefits at all" (Ch. *tushang heqi, haowu liyi*), under the title "Sincere Advice" (Ch. *zhonggao*). In this way, Li made it extremely clear that China would send troops to Chosŏn if necessary, although China generally did not interfere with the affairs of its shuguo. Mori never mentioned Li's warning in his report to Tokyo, so that Tokyo never knew the Chinese warning. Next day, January 25, the Chinese New Year's Eve, Li visited Mori for a short and random conversation that did not really

⁹² Mori's original English report has been missing, but the Japanese translation by the Gaimushō is available. See *JACAR*, Ref. B03030144000; Mori to Terashima, February 3, 1876, in *NHGB*, vol. 9, 170-176.

⁹³ *LHZQJ* (1997), vol. 6, 3016; *NHGB*, vol. 9, 172.

⁹⁴ *NHGB*, vol. 9, 173.

involve the issue of Chosŏn. For some reason, Li did not provide the Zongli Yamen with any details of this conversation, while Mori's English records indicate the gulf between the epistemology and worldviews of the two men.⁹⁵ The Mori–Li Baoding conversations ended without any consensus, but they both claimed to prevail over each other in their final reports to their governments. On the same day, the Japanese fleet dropped anchor at the offing of Kanghwa Island and contacted the local official of Namyangbu, Kang Yun.⁹⁶

The debate between the Zongli Yamen and Mori resumed after Mori returned to Beijing.⁹⁷ Yet a conversation between Zhou Jiamei and Tei Einei on February 7 contributed to the end of the discussion. Zhou said that China had told France and the U.S. that it would not intervene in Chosŏn's domestic affairs, so it must tell Mori the same words in order to make its attitudes toward the issue consistent. Zhou also informed Tei that Beijing had sent a note to Chosŏn by following Li's advice. Based on Zhou's words, Mori inferred that China would persuade Chosŏn to make a treaty with Japan.⁹⁸

Both sides closed the debates after the last round of note exchanges. On February 12, the Yamen sent Mori a note, enunciating again that, "Solving its difficulties (Ch. *shu qi nan*), resolving its disputes (Ch. *jie qi fen*), and expecting its safety and security (Ch. *qi qi anquan*) is China's self-taken responsibility to Chosŏn and the truth how China treats its shuguo. It is the long-lasting policy for China to treat its shuguo by not forcing the latter to do what it feels reluctant and not standing by when it runs into trouble."⁹⁹ Mori, in his response on February 14, concluded that, "Chosŏn is indeed an independent

⁹⁵ Mori, "The Second Interview," in *JACAR*, Ref. B03030144000.

⁹⁶ *Kojong sidae sa* (The chronicle of the period of King Kojong), vol. 1, 826.

⁹⁷ The Yamen to Mori, January 29, 1876, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 292; Mori to Prince Gong, February 1, 1876, in *NHGB*, vol. 9, 182-183.

⁹⁸ Mori to Sanjō, February 10, 1876, in *NHGB*, vol. 9, 180-181.

⁹⁹ The Yamen to Mori, February 12, 1876, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 295.

country, so Japan will not take Chosŏn's relations with China into consideration when it comes to the affairs between Japan and Chosŏn. The so-called shuguo is no more than a nominal title. Nothing should be related to the treaty of 1871.”¹⁰⁰ As a result, neither side prevailed against each other with the end of the 34-day-long intensive debate.

A DEMONSTRATION OF THE SHUGUO STATUS IN 1876

The Zongfan practices at that moment between China and Chosŏn in Hansŏng made Mori's enthusiastic diplomatic rhetoric untenable. On February 16, two days after the end of the Sino–Japanese debate at Beijing, the king of Chosŏn held a grand ceremony in Hansŏng for the two imperial envoys, Jihe and Wulasiconga, to invest the crown prince. All procedures followed the precedents of investiture, while both the host and the guest performed the rituals according to certain codes. After the ceremony, the king held a short conversation with the envoys, in which he showed sincere thanks to the emperor and the Zongli Yamen for informing him the Japanese activities in Beijing. The envoys, praising Chosŏn's firm position against the format of Japan's sovereign letters, said that they heard that Japan's forces had arrived in Kanghwa and wanted to establish a consulate there, so they felt uneasy about the situation.¹⁰¹ Yet both the envoys and the king did not go further to discuss the situation.

Although the king had dispatched two officials to negotiate with the Japanese at Kanghwa before he received the Chinese note, he did not solicit any advice from the envoys on the negotiation. The envoys, until they left the capital on February 19, showed no intention of obtaining any details of the current situation, either. This phenomenon

¹⁰⁰ Mori to the Yamen, February 14, 1876, “*Shishin nikki* (Diary of Mori Arinori's embassy to the Qing),” vol. 4, 18a-19, in *Mori Arinori bunsho*, archive No. R. 2-67.

¹⁰¹ *Ch'iksa ilgi*, archive No. M/F 73-101-5, vol. 17, 28b.

was precisely like the one in November 1866, when the imperial envoys invested Princess Min at Hansǒng and Chosǒn was fighting with the French forces at Kanghwa. Some historians argue that in 1876, Beijing used imperial envoys, among other things, to persuade Chosǒn to make a treaty with Japan,¹⁰² yet the contacts between the king and the envoys run counter to this assertion.

After a negotiation with the Japanese representative at Kanghwa, Chosǒn signed a treaty on February 27 with Japan that drew an end to the eight-year-long dispute that began from 1868. On the same day, the Ministry of Rituals in Beijing sent Chosǒn the second note and a copy of Mori–Li Baoding conversation at a speed of 500 *li* per day.¹⁰³ Handicapped by the conventional channels of communication, the ministry, the Zongli Yamen, and the Beiyang Superintendent, could not follow the proceedings of the Japanese–Korean negotiations. On March 4, when the Treaty of Kanghwa already having been signed a week earlier, the Manchu General at Mukden, Chongshi (1820–1876), asked the Zongli Yamen if it knew Chosǒn’s plans and if the Ministry of Rituals at Beijing had received Chosǒn’s response to the first note. Chongshi confessed that although Mukden bordered Chosǒn, he could not gather information on Chosǒn’s situation except for some rumors spread by some merchants in the area. Chongshi hoped the two envoys could be able to bring him some reliable updates.¹⁰⁴ Needless to say, the general was very disappointed when he met with the envoys in Mukden.

The Zongli Yamen, the Ministry of Rituals, and the Beiyang Superintendent constituted a chain of China–Chosǒn contacts, but no links in this chain seemed to work

¹⁰² See Quan Hexiu, “Jianghua tiaoyue yu qingzhengfu guanxi wenti xinlun” (A new study on relations between the Treaty of Kanghwa and the Qing government), 20-26.

¹⁰³ The Ministry of Rituals to the Yamen, February 27, 1876, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 298-299.

¹⁰⁴ Chong Shi to the Zongli Yamen, March 4, 1876, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 300.

efficiently enough to quench China's thirst for information on the developing situation in Chosŏn. On March 12, the Zongli Yamen learned from Mori that Japan had signed a treaty with Chosŏn, but Mori had not received the contents yet. On April 17, when Mori submitted a copy of the treaty to the Yamen, the Chinese government was able to know the contents.¹⁰⁵ China's passive position in the Zongfan framework with Chosŏn and the treaty system with Japan was thoroughly exposed. By the same token, such passivity was the norm within the Zongfan framework. In the following two decades after 1876, this fact would manifest itself in many events.

Beijing eventually received a note from the king of Chosŏn on April 21, in which the king briefly reviewed the treaty negotiations with Japan. The king summarized that the mistrust between Chosŏn and Japan disappeared because of the long-term friendship between them. In the future, the king said, "As the titles of the sovereign letters might be inappropriate, the bilateral contacts would be conducted by officials of the two countries on an equal footing. As it is not the first time that we have traded with Japan, we have allowed Japanese to trade at our ports, where they should follow our rules."¹⁰⁶ Although the treaty endowed Japan with the right of consular jurisdiction and abolished all former trade conventions as well as "junk trade" (*J. saikensen*), Chosŏn perceived the treaty in its conventional *Kyorin* framework, rather than in any modern or international-law-based sense. For Chosŏn, the treaty was not much different from those trade conventions signed with the Sŏ family in history. Indeed, viewed from this standpoint, it is very difficult to define the treaty as a *modern* treaty.¹⁰⁷ Although the king reported to Beijing that his

¹⁰⁵ Mori to the Zongli Yamen, April 17, 1876, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 313-316.

¹⁰⁶ The king to the Ministry of Rituals, April 21, 1876, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 316-318.

¹⁰⁷ About the doubt about the "modernity" of the Treaty of Kanghwa, see Bruce Cumings, *Korea's Place in the Sun: A Modern History*, 102.

country had contracted a treaty with Japan, he never submitted a copy of the treaty to Beijing. Neither did Beijing ever make a request for the contents of the treaty.

THE BIRTH OF CHOSŎN'S "SOVEREIGNTY" AS A DERIVATIVE

At the same time, the Japanese government made the English translation of the Treaty of Kanghwa, in which it tried to define Chosŏn as an independent sovereign state. On March 22, 1876, the Gaimushō released the contents of the treaty and distributed an English version among the foreign ministers at Tokyo. The English translation of Article I of the treaty reads,

Chosen being an independent state enjoys the same sovereign rights as does Japan. In order to prove the sincerity of the friendship existing between the nations, their intercourse shall henceforward be carried on in terms of equality and courtesy, each avoiding the giving of offence by arrogance or manifestations of suspicion. In the first instance all rules and precedents that are apt to obstruct friendly intercourse shall be totally abrogated and, in their stead, rules, liberal and in general usage fit to secure a firm and perpetual peace, shall be established.¹⁰⁸

Since 1876, many diplomats and scholars have believed that the first article, in particular the first sentence, explicitly defines Chosŏn as “an independent state” with “the sovereign rights” under the terms of international law,¹⁰⁹ although some scholars have realized that the English translation of the first sentence is not precise.¹¹⁰ Given that the

¹⁰⁸ Gaimushō jōyakyoku (Treaty Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan), ed. *Kyūjōyaku isan* (A compilation of old treaties and conventions between Japan and foreign states), vol. 3, 2.

¹⁰⁹ See, for example, *American Diplomatic and Public Papers: The United States and China, 1861–1893*, vol. 10, 66-77; *British Parliamentary Papers* (hereafter referred to as *B. P. P.*), *Japan, No. 1 (1876)*, 9-10; *The Treaties, Regulations, etc., between Corea and Other Powers, 1876–1889*, 1; George N. Curzon, *Problems of the Far East: Japan–Korea–China*, 203; Hosea Ballou Morse, *The International Relations of the Chinese Empire*, vol.1, 9; Tyler Dennett, *Americans in Eastern Asia*, 447; Martina Deuchler, *Confucian Gentlemen and Barbarian Envoys*, 47; Key-hiuk Kim, *The Last Phase of the East Asian World Order*, 252-253; Kirk W. Larsen, *Tradition, Treaties, and Trade*, 63.

¹¹⁰ See Hsü Shuhsi, *China and Her Political Entity: A Study of China's Foreign Relations with Reference to Korea, Manchuria and Mongolia*, 109-110. Hsü translates the first sentence into “Chao-hsien, being an autonomous state, shall enjoy the rights of equality with Japan.” Kim Kyu-Hiuk in his book also replaced the word of “independent” into “autonomous” and deleted “sovereign.” See Kim, *The Last Phase of the East Asian World Order*, 252.

original text of the treaty only used Chinese and Japanese, a specific comparison between the first sentence of Article I of the Chinese and Japanese copies and that of the English version can help us find critical discrepancies in several key terms of the article.

The sentence of the article in the Chinese copy reads, “*Chosŏn kug chaju ji bang, boyu yŏ Ilbon kug p’yŏngdŭng ji kwŏn* (Ch. *Chaoxian guo zizhu zhi bang, baoyou yu Riben guo pingdeng zhi quan*; lit. the country of Chosŏn is a nation with the right of zizhu, possessing the right equal to the country of Japan).” The Japanese version of the same sentence with the same meaning reads, “*Chōsen koku wa jishu no kuni ni shite, Nihon koku to byōdō no ken o hoyū seri.*”¹¹¹ Comparing the Chinese and Japanese words with the English translations, it was clear that the Gaimushō purposely translated the Chinese term *zizhu* (K. *chaju*; J. *jishu*) into “independent” and the phrase *zizhu zhi bang* (K. *chaju ji bang*; J. *jishu no kuni*) into “independent state.” More importantly, it intentionally rendered the Chinese character *quan* (K. *kwŏn*; J. *ken*) into “sovereign right” by inserting the critical term “sovereign” into the context. Consequently, the second half of the sentence, *baoyou yu Riben guo pingdeng zhi quan*, which literally means Chosŏn “possesses the right equal to Japan,” became that Chosŏn “enjoys the same sovereign rights as does Japan.” Following the two primary changes, the Gaimushō further translated the phrase *tongdeng zhi li* (K. *tongdŭng ji ye*; J. *dōtō no reigi*) in Article I, which literally means “equal rituals” or “equal courtesy,” into “equality and courtesy,” by changing the term *tongdeng* from an adjective to a noun, so that it could coherently support the translation of the first sentence.

With these three significant changes, the English translation of Article I misled people into believing that the treaty substantially defines Chosŏn as “an independent state”

¹¹¹ “Yo Chōsen koku shūkō jyōki” (The treaty of amity with Chosŏn), in *NHGB*, vol. 9, 115.

that “enjoys the same sovereign rights as does Japan.” In Tokyo, the American minister, John Bingham, and the British minister, Harry Parkes, were two of the audience members that the Japanese hoped to mislead who in one way or another helped Japan promulgate the English translation of the treaty.¹¹²

Nevertheless, the analyses made here do not suggest that Chosŏn’s sovereign right, or sovereignty, was created by Japan’s subtle English translation of the Treaty of Kanghwa. As interpreted in the previous chapters, Chosŏn always enjoyed its own sovereignty on its own territory. Rather, the comparison proves that the English version made by the Gaimushō was a diplomatic intrigue. It was not until in 1882 when Chosŏn signed a treaty with the United States that its “sovereign right” was clearly defined in Chinese and English for the first time in history.

Both Beijing and Hansŏng, of course, did not foresee the problem behind the English translation of the treaty. Japan believed that it successfully resolved the issue of Chosŏn’s status through the treaty and prevailed over Beijing in the several-year-long debate on the topic. On May 10, 1876, Mori at Tokyo submitted a final report to the Gaimushō about his mission to Beijing, in which he claimed that: “suffice it to say that the Zongli Yamen has been convinced by my argument...The only objective of the a debate [with the Qing] is to cut off the Sino–Korean relationship, which we have finally achieved.”¹¹³ Yet Mori would soon realize that he was too optimistic.

Japan, however, experienced great difficulty in making progress in its relationship with Chosŏn. The Commodore Robert W. Shufeldt of the U.S. would return to East Asia

¹¹² Dispatch 364, *Bingham to Fish*, March 22, 1876, Tokyo, Ministers’ Dispatches, Japan, Roll 32, in *American Diplomatic and Public Papers: The United States and China, 1861–1893*, vol. 10, 66-77; Inclosure in No. 13, *Sir. H. Parks to Earl of Derby*, March 25 and 27, 1876, in *B. P. P., Japan, No. 1 (1876)*, 9-11, 17.

¹¹³ “Shishin fukumei sho” (Report on embassy to the Qing), in *Mori Arinori bunsho*, archive No. R. 2-68.

in March 1880, in hope of making a treaty with Chosŏn. During the intervening four years, Chosŏn only dispatched an emissary as Envoy of Amity (K. *susin sa*) to Japan in 1876 by historical conventions, while it kept sending tributary emissaries to Beijing and practicing formalities as a shuguo of China. Viewed through several lenses, for Chosŏn, as well as for China, nothing regarding the China-centric world order changed *per se*. Rather, Chosŏn believed that it restored the pre-1876 order that was maintained by its policy of “serving the great” in its relations with China and “communicating with the neighbors” in its relations with Japan. In 1882, the coming of Commodore Shufeldt would create a stir for the “hermit nation” and the episode became a test of trilateral relations between Chosŏn, Japan, and China.

CHAPTER 5

Defining the Shuguo: China's Patriarchal Role in Chosŏn's Crises, 1877–1883

Chosŏn launched a self-strengthening reform under China's vigorous encouragement via official and private channels of communication in the late 1870s and early 1880s, but the reform caused an anti-reform petition movement and a mutiny. After it sent troops to Chosŏn in 1882 by exercising its patriarchal role in the Zongfan family, China was deeply involved into Chosŏn's domestic and foreign affairs. The involvement triggered another intense wave of political and diplomatic intrigues of powers on the peninsula. In this process, China saw the necessity of strengthening its Zongfan relationship with Chosŏn, but the latter requested China to modify such relationship in some specific ways. The two countries finally signed several regulations to modify and institutionalize their relationship by defining their statuses in the Zongfan framework and promote overland and maritime trade.

China simultaneously availed itself of the superior position to introduced Chosŏn into the family of nations, while the two countries prudently maintained and adjusted their Zongfan relations from within. As a result, two co-existing dual diplomatic systems appeared between them. The first dual system comprised the long-term and ritual-based Zongfan system between China and its outer *fan*, on the one hand, and the newly imported and international law-based treaty port system among China, its *fan*, and the treaty powers, on the other. This dual system, which we term as “outer dual system,” existed between the East and the West, with which both China and Chosŏn had to respectively deal on their own feet. The second dual system encompassed the conventional court-to-court system between the imperial Manchu court in Beijing and the

royal court in Hansŏng, on the one hand, and the newly founded nation-to-nation system between China as a nation and Chosŏn as another one that was theoretically equal to China under international law, on the other. This dual system, which we term as “inner dual system,” existed only between China and Chosŏn, by which both countries kept modifying their policies toward each other. It was the two co-existing dual diplomatic systems that drew China and Chosŏn into a legal quagmire in the late nineteenth century, in which they could not articulate the nature of their relationship to other nations.

5.1 “Cherishing the Small Country”: China’s Twofold Roles in Chosŏn’s Self-Strengthening Reform and the U.S.–Korean Negotiations in 1882

THE SINO–AMERICAN AGREEMENT ON OPENING CHOSŎN’S DOOR IN 1880

When Robert Shufeldt returned to Chosŏn in 1880, China was persuading Chosŏn to open its door by negotiating treaties with other powers. Since neither the Zongli Yamen nor the Ministry of Rituals could make such a request to the shuguo due to the Zongfan conventions, the work of exhortation was assumed by the Beiyang Superintendent, Li Hongzhang, who pinned his hope on his personal correspondence with Yi Yu-wŏn. Yet in his letter to Li in late 1879, Yi still showed reluctant attitude toward communicating with Western countries, though he noticed that Japan had abolished the Ryukyu *han* and converted it into Okinawa County in April that year.¹

When Li became disappointed by reading Yi’s letter on March 15, 1880, Shufeldt had arrived in Nagasaki by the American flagship U.S.S. *Ticonderoga*. He contacted the American minister at Tokyo, John Bingham, who swiftly approached the Japanese minister of foreign affairs, Inoue Kaoru (1835–1915), for Japan’s good offices in

¹ Yi to Li, December 24, 1879, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 398-401.

introducing Shufeldt to Chosŏn via the Japanese consuls in that country.² Although Inoue was worried that Japan's role of go-between might harm its newly established and fragile relations with Chosŏn, he finally sent the letter to the minister of the Ministry of Rituals of Chosŏn through the Japanese consul at Pusan, Kondō Masuki (1840–1892), and chargé d'affaires at Hansŏng, Hanabusa Yoshimoto (1842–1917). Shufeldt visited Pusan in early May, expecting further contacts with the country, yet Hansŏng soon returned the letter unopened, in that it addressed the country as “Great Koryŏ,” rather than “Great Chosŏn.” The letter was delivered to the Gaimushō in person by Kim Hong-jip (1842–1896), Envoy of Amity to Japan as a response to Hanabusa's visit to Chosŏn.³ This response incurred Bingham's wrath,⁴ but Japan's good offices ended in vain.

While Shufeldt waited at Nagasaki, the Chinese consul in the city, Yu Qiong, inferred that it would be a good opportunity to introduce the U.S. into Chosŏn to check Russia. Russia was right on the edge of a war with China either at eastern coast or in western hinterlands of Xinjiang as a result of the escalation of the Yili Incident. Yu thus sent a copy of Shufeldt's letter to Chosŏn to the Chinese minister at Tokyo, He Ruzhang (1838–1891).⁵ Since one of his responsibilities was to monitor Japanese–Korean relations and other foreign contacts with Chosŏn, He promptly informed the Zongli Yamen with the news. Very soon Li Hongzhang decided to invite Shufeldt to Tianjin, and the latter was more than happy to visit the “Minister of Foreign Affairs for China.”⁶ In August, Shufeldt made an interview with Li in Tianjin, which “partook largely of a

² Bingham to Inoue, March 12, 1880, in *NHGB*, vol. 13, 435.

³ *Kojong sunjong sillok*, vol. 1, 616.

⁴ Bingham to Inoue, September 11, 1880, in *NHGB*, vol. 13, 455; Charles Oscar Paullin, “The Opening of Korea by Commodore Shufeldt,” 479-480; Martina Deuchler, *Confucian Gentlemen and Barbarian Envoys*, 110-113.

⁵ He Ruzhang to the Zongli Yamen, June 7, 1880, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 407.

⁶ Li to Yu, August 21, 1880, in *Li Hongzhang quanji* (hereafter cited as “*LHZQJ* (2008)”), vol. 32, 580.

personal and intimate character and lasted for nearly three hours.” Li promised that “he would use his influence with the Government of Korea to accede to the friendly request” made by Shufeldt “in behalf of the Government of the United States to open negotiations with a view to such a treaty.”⁷ In addition, Li solicited Shufeldt’s opinions on reinforcing Chinese navy forces, asking him to look for a specialist in torpedoes to teach at Tianjin, which would be a payback that China deserved “when peace was assured” between the United States and Chosŏn.⁸ Shufeldt recommended Lieutenant D. P. Mannix, commander of the marines of the *Ticonderoga*, as the candidate.⁹ After reaching the agreement with Li, Shufeldt returned to the U.S. for more support from Department of State, while Li began to act as a mentor for Chosŏn to open its door to the West by making a treaty with the U.S.

BECOMING A CLOAK: CHOSŎN’S TRAINING PROGRAM AT TIANJIN

Chosŏn’s plan of sending some trainees to Tianjin to learn military and industrial skills provided a golden opportunity for Li. In 1879, the tributary emissary Yi Yong-suk discussed “an important issue” with You Zhikai at Yongping, which he learned from Yi Yu-wŏn and asked You to forward it to Li. Yi mentioned that Chosŏn hoped to dispatch trainees to Tianjin for advanced military and industrial skills by following the “precedents that foreign countries sent students to China for learning.” Yi particularly mentioned that Chosŏn wanted the students to learn making steamship, powder, and bullets, and so forth. Li heartily endorsed this self-strengthening plan. In a confidential letter to You, which

⁷ Dispatch 21, *Shufeldt to R. W. Thompson*, August 30, 1880, flagship U.S.S. *Ticonderoga*, Robert Shufeldt Papers, Box 24, Roll 251, in *American Diplomatic and Public Papers: The United States and China, 1861–1893*, vol. 10, 102-103.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 105; Li to Yu, August 28, 1880, in *LHZQJ* (2008), vol. 32, 585.

⁹ Charles Oscar Paullin, “The Opening of Korea by Commodore Shufeldt,” 483.

would be forwarded to Yi Yong-suk then to Yi Yu-wŏn and the king, Li suggested that Chosŏn should inform the Ministry of Rituals with a specific plan.¹⁰ The king was encouraged by Li's and Beijing's support, so he instructed the emissary to Beijing, Pyŏn Wŏn-kyu, to submit the plan to the "upper country."¹¹

After he arrived at Beijing in October, Pyŏn submitted the king's memorial to the court via the Ministry of Rituals, and the court immediately instructed Li Hongzhang to be in charge of the program.¹² Assuming the responsibility, Li informed Beijing that he would encourage Chosŏn "to follow the mainstream of the world" to open its door.¹³ On October 19, Pyŏn arrived at Tianjin and made a conversation with Taotai of the Tianjin Customs, Zheng Zaoru (1824–1894), Taotai of the Yongding River, You Zhikai, and three Taotai Candidates from the Tianjin Arsenal, to discuss and make an outline of the training program. After that, Pyŏn visited Li, in which Li highlighted that the best strategy for Chosŏn was "to trade with the Westerners."¹⁴

Beijing then instructed Pyŏn to return to Chosŏn with the outline of the program.¹⁵ Four items of the outline broke many two-century-long Zongfan conventions. The first item set 87 as the limit of the number of trainees, soldiers, interpreters, and superintendents. China would provide them with living quarters, but they should be responsible for their own meals and other cost. The second item gave the trainees special right to visit Tianjin via maritime route, which had never happened in history and, according to the outline, should not be imitated by other cases in the future. The third

¹⁰ Li to the Zongli Yamen, December 27, 1879, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 395; Yi Yong-suk's letter, in Yi Yu-wŏn, *Kawo koryak* (The collection of Yi Yu-wŏn), vol. 11, 436.

¹¹ *Kojong sunjong sillok*, vol. 1, 617.

¹² *Qing dezong shilu* (Veritable records of Emperor Guangxu of the Qing), vol. 53, 726-727.

¹³ Li's memorial, October 7, 1880, in *LHZQJ* (2008), vol. 9, 170-171.

¹⁴ Li's memorial, October 30, 1880, in *LHZQJ* (2008), vol. 9, 190.

¹⁵ *Qing dezong shilu*, vol. 53, 745.

item stated that all trainees, interpreters, and their personal attendants would receive passes issued by the Yamen of the Beiyang Superintendent, which would be filed both at the Yamen in Tianjin and at the Ministry of Rituals in Beijing. It also prescribed that the trainees should obey the Chinese rules and should devote themselves to training courses. Anyone who broke the Chinese regulations would be sent by the Chinese officials to the Korean superintendents for punishment. It would be the first time for the Korean officials sent by their government to reside in a Chinese city outside Beijing. For the purpose of efficient management, China actually endowed the Korean superintendents with a right similar to the consular jurisdiction effecting between China and Western treaty powers. The fourth item stated that all official communications of Chosŏn regarding the soldier training, military skill learning, weapon purchasing and other military affairs should be sent by the king both to the Ministry of Rituals and the Yamen of the Beiyang Superintendent.¹⁶

The fourth item proved particularly significant in terms of the transformation of Sino–Korean Zongfan relations in the late nineteenth century. By endowing the Beiyang Superintendent with the right of directly receiving the note of the king, it made the Superintendent the Chinese mentor for Chosŏn’s self-strengthening program that would begin with the military training program at Tianjin. The Beiyang Superintendent, as a subordinate official under the Zongli Yamen, was a concurrent post of Governor-General of Zhili, who according to Zongfan conventions should not be involved in the Zongfan affairs with Chosŏn. Since Li’s debate with Mori at Baoding in 1876, this regulation was captive to the steady rise of Li’s power. The increase of Li’s power was also a result of the ambiguity of the Zongli Yamen’s policy swinging between shuguo and zizhu, and the

¹⁶ Li’s memorial, October 30, 1880, in *LHZQJ* (2008), vol. 9, 189-190.

silence of the Ministry of Rituals on affairs beyond the conventional track. Four months later, on February 23, 1881, the Zongli Yamen in a confidential memorial to the throne requested the court to “make changes to old regulations” (Ch. *biantong jiuzhi*) again by endowing the Beiyang Superintendent with more privileges. The Yamen said that, “It is extremely urgent for Chosŏn to conduct diplomacy (Ch. *waijiao*) with other countries. According to the Zongfan regulations, it was the Ministry of Rituals that was responsible for communications with that country, yet it is slow and not safe. In the wake of this inconvenience, when any urgent foreign affair (Ch. *yangwu*) appears in the future, it shall be the Beiyang Superintendent and the minister to Japan who communicate with Chosŏn to give it advice and inform the Zongli Yamen with the results.”¹⁷ With the endorsement of the emperor, the Superintendent gained the right of directly communicating with—rather than only receiving notes from—the king in terms of issues not only regarding the military training program at Tianjin, but also all “foreign affairs.” In this way, the Beiyang Superintendent, a post almost all but occupied by Li before 1894, became the Chinese advisor for Chosŏn since then. Both China and Chosŏn now entered a time of Li Hongzhang, a Han Chinese official.

When Li was informed by the Zongli Yamen about the extension of his power on February 26, 1881, he was busy making a pen conversation at Tianjin with the special commissioner of the king, Yi Yong-suk. Yi brought Li a letter of the king, a proposal of making treaties with other countries that was drafted by the Prime Minister, Yi Ch’oe-ŭng (1815–1882), and a private letter of Yi Yu-wŏn. On the surface, Yi Yong-suk’s mission was to discuss the training program with Li, but his true task was to serve as a liaison between the king and Li by informing Li that the king had strong intention of opening

¹⁷ *Qing dezong shilu*, vol. 53, 819.

Chosŏn's door to Western countries and wanted to commission Li to make the first move in the direction of treaty negotiations.¹⁸ Since then on, the Sino–Korean covert discussions on making treaties between Chosŏn and Western countries, in particular with the United States, were conducted under the cloak of the negotiations over Chosŏn's military training program in China.

CHINA'S PRESCRIPTIONS AND CHOSŎN'S RESISTANCE IN 1880 AND 1881

The king made the decision of opening his country in political turbulence. From late 1880 to early 1881, when the self-strengthening program unfolded, Chosŏn was mired in a series of dramatic and grim political events that had strong ripple effects. The wave was first stirred up by the Chinese diplomats in Japan who forwarded their advice on Chosŏn's policy to the king through the Envoy of Amity to Japan, Kim Hong-jip, in late 1880. In the hierarchical Sino–Korean arrangement, the advice from these Chinese diplomats would be regarded as what China wanted Chosŏn to do.

When Kim visited Tokyo in 1880, the Chinese minister to Japan, He Ruzhang, and the counselor of the Chinese legation, Huang Zunxian (1848–1905), made intensive pen conversations with him.¹⁹ All the conversations occurred in the Zongfan context, in which they both identified each other as members of the “same family” (Ch. *yijia*) and Chosŏn was like “an inner subordinate” (Ch. *neifu*) of China.²⁰ He Ruzhang and Huang tried to convince Kim that Chosŏn should abandon its parochialism and open its door by signing treaties with Western countries, in particular with the United States first, in order to prevent the possible onslaught of Russia, while the country should initiate

¹⁸ Li to the Zongli Yamen, March 2, 1881, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 467-468.

¹⁹ Wu Zhenqing, et al., eds., *Huang Zunxian ji* (Collections of Huang Zunxian), vol. 2, 781-797.

²⁰ *Huang Zunxian ji*, vol. 1, 781-782.

self-strengthening program as early as possible. Kim endorsed the idea of the Chinese officials, which won further support from his Japanese counterparts at the Gaimushō, such as Inoue Kaoru and Itō Hirobumi (1841–1909). By the same token, Kim would have no difficulty in finding a complicated situation that his country was facing: China and Japan were persuading it to open the door and advance the self-strengthening movement to check Russia, on the one hand, and China as the enthusiastic consultant of the country also tried to prevent the Japanese from taking more privileges, on the other.

Before Kim left Tokyo, Huang gave him a treatise entitled “Strategies for Chosŏn” (Ch. *Chaoxian celue*), articulating his and He Ruzhang’s ideas.²¹ The main argument was that Chosŏn should check the Russian threat in three ways, namely “having intimate relations with China, associating with Japan, and allying with the United States” (Ch. *qin Zhongguo, jie Riben, lian Meigu*).²² Prescribing a set of strategies to redeem the situation, the treatise became a blueprint for Chosŏn’s self-strengthening programs in the next years, including requesting China to allow its emissaries to reside in Beijing permanently, dispatching emissaries to reside in Tokyo and Washington, proposing to enlarge the scale of the trade at Fenghuang City in Manchuria, sending trainees and students to China for military industry training and Western languages training, and inviting Westerners to Chosŏn for educational reforms.²³ In a word, according to the treatise, Chosŏn should immediately join the family of nations.

Extremely shocked as well as encouraged by Huang’s passionate words, the young king dispatched a secret commissioner, Yi Tong-in, to Tokyo to visit Huang and He Ruzhang with his private letters. The letters were memorandums of the king’s

²¹ He Ruzhang to the Zongli Yamen, November 18, 1880, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 438.

²² *Huang Zunxian ji*, vol. 2, 394.

²³ *Huang Zunxian ji*, vol. 2, 400.

discussions with his prime ministers and officials over Huang's treatise and Chosŏn's next steps. The king wanted He Ruzhang to invite the American representative to return to Chosŏn for negotiations.²⁴ As Chosŏn's opening was now in sight, He quickly composed a new tripartite treatise, "The proposal for management of Chosŏn's diplomacy" (Ch. *Zhuchi Chaoxian waijiao yi*), for the Zongli Yamen and the Beiyang Superintendent.

In retrospect, He's treatise considerably framed China's policy toward Chosŏn in the coming years, until 1894, by laying out three policies that China should consider toward Chosŏn. The first-class and most ideal policy, which he thought difficult to be immediately carried out, was to follow the cases of Mongolia and Tibet to dispatch an imperial commissioner (Ch. *banshi dachen*) to permanently reside in Chosŏn to manage its domestic and foreign affairs. This policy aimed to convert Chosŏn from an outer *fan* into an inner *fan* of China, which on the surface closely resembled the European colonial concept, but it actually only represented He's own understanding of one of the spectrums of the Zongfan system. Moreover, this idea shared striking similarities with the one that was put forward in 1619 during the Manchu–Ming war by the Ming official Xu Guangqi, who memorialized Emperor Wanli to dispatch a Ming official to Chosŏn to "supervise and protect" (Ch. *jianhu*) the country.²⁵ As history unfolded, the residence of the Chinese official Yuan Shikai in Chosŏn since 1884 would make this policy more or less practiced.

The second-class and most practical policy, according to him, was to dispatch a skilled Chinese official to Chosŏn to assist it with negotiating treaties with other countries. The goal was to confirm and maintain Chosŏn's status as China's *shuguo*, because he inferred that this status would be denied by other countries' endorsement of

²⁴ He Ruzhang to the Zongli Yamen, November 18, 1880, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 437-439, 442-447.

²⁵ *Xu Guangqi ji*, vol.1, 117.

Chosŏn's *zizhu*, if Chosŏn conducted treaty negotiations by itself. Later, Li Hongzhang and the Zongli Yamen chose this option by sending Ma Jianzhong (1845–1900), a French-educated savant and one of Li's primary protégés, to Chosŏn to be in charge of the treaty negotiation with the U.S. The third-class and most comprehensive policy in the treatise, which would be accompanied by a self-strengthening program package as Huang Zunxian stated in his treatise, was that the Chinese imperial court could instruct the king to make treaties with other countries and articulate in the first article of each treaty that "Chosŏn made the treaty by the order of China."²⁶ This proposal was later adopted by Ma in the way of asking the king to dispatch independent notes to the sovereigns of certain treaty countries to claim that Chosŏn was China's *shuguo*. In the early years of the hectic 1880s, He Ruzhang's proposals played a key role in assisting Beijing with forming its general diplomatic policies toward Chosŏn.

The king at his end was very sanguine about the Chinese conscientious proposals. For him, the Chinese enthralling prescription seemed to be the only way to redeem his country from crisis. After Pyŏn returned from China with the outline of training program, the king enthusiastically launched a self-strengthening reform. On January 19, 1881, Chosŏn established the T'ongnigimu Amun (the Yamen for the management of state affairs) by imitating the mechanism of China's Zongli Yamen, laying the institutional cornerstone for the country's modernity. The Amun comprised 12 departments, with the Department of Serving the Great (K. *sadae sa*) as the first and most important one, highlighting the importance of the Korean–Chinese relationship. As the political gambit in the self-strengthening movement, the Amun started to run from the second day of its

²⁶ He Ruzhang to the Zongli Yamen, November 18, 1880, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 441.

establishment.²⁷

Twenty days later, the king appointed 12 officials as Secret Inspectors of Dongnae Prefecture (K. *Dongnaebu amhaeng ōsa*) to visit Japan to observe its politics, society, foreign relations, and trade. An inspection mission, later known as the “Inspection Mission of the Court Officials” (K. *Chosa sich’aldan*) or the “Sighting Group of the Gentlemen” (K. *Sinsa yuramdan*), was organized, totaling 64 members with the 12 officials as its core, who belonged to the Min clan against Taewŏn’gun in the rigorous bureaucratic clique struggles. In Japan, the mission visited Nagasaki, Osaka, Kyoto, Kobe, Yokohama, and Tokyo from May to October, and was granted audiences with senior Japanese officials, such as Sanjō Sanetomi, Terashima Munenori, and Inoue Kaoru. In October, when another mission headed by Cho Pyŏng-ho (1847–1910) and Yi Cho-yŏn (1843–1884) as Envoys of Amity arrived in Japan for negotiations over tariff of duties, the Inspection Mission returned to Hansŏng, submitting to the king 64 official reports and 17 additional memorandums. These officials firmly believed that the self-strengthening program was the best way for Chosŏn to survive from the increasing Japanese threats.²⁸

The domestic situation at the time, however, was not compatible with their strategic goals. Before the mission returned to Hansŏng, the king had arrested several officials headed by An Ki-yŏng (1819–1881) of the Taewŏn’gun clan who were charged with conspiring a coup.²⁹ Simultaneously, a literati protest against the self-strengthening reform became more dramatic and provocative. In late 1880, some officials memorialized

²⁷ *Kojong sunjong sillok*, vol. 1, 629; Hanabusa to Inoue, February 22, 1881, in *NHGB*, vol. 14, 290-291; Chun Hae-Jong, “Tongni kimu amun sŏlchi ui kyŏngwei e taehayŏ” (On the establishment of the T’ongnigimu Amun); Martina Deuchler, *Confucian Gentlemen and Barbarian Envoys*, 93-95.

²⁸ See, for example, Hŏ Donghyŏn, ed., *Chosa sich’aldan kwan’gye charyojip* (The collections of the inspection mission of the Korean officials visiting Japan in 1881).

²⁹ *Ilŏngnok*, vol. 73, 659.

the throne, requesting to rebut Huang Zunxian's ideas and revere Confucianism.³⁰ In March 1881, the Confucian student Yi Man-son from Kyōngsang province submitted a petition cosigned by 10,000 fellow students, requesting the king to burn Huang's treatise and revere great doctrines of Confucianism.³¹ The students' radical words were further supported by two officials, Hwang Chae-hyōn and Hong Si-chung. Hong argued that the king should publicly burn all books and newspapers regarding international law and foreign history and geography, together with Huang's treatise, in order to "reject the heretical thought."³² In order to advance the self-strengthening program by sidestepping moral charge from the literati, the king issued an edict (K. *ch'ōksa yunūm*) to endorse the literati's idea of "learning more from Confucianism to reject the heretical."³³ Different from what the king had expected, his edict encouraged more students to Hansōng from provinces to submit their enthusiastic petitions.

In the turbulence, the king welcomed the two imperial envoys from Beijing on July 22, who brought the imperial edict about the death of Empress Dowager Cian. Following the Zongfan conventions, the king held a grand ceremony at the palace, where he and his officials performed certain rituals, after which he also paid a visit to the envoys at their hotel. On July 23, the king sent off the envoys in person. No discussions regarding Chosŏn's domestic or foreign matters happened between the king and the envoys.³⁴ The Zongfan mechanism functioned so smoothly that no questions about the Zongfan rituals, the right of the sovereign of Chosŏn, or the nature of the Zongfan relationship appeared.

³⁰ *Sūngjōngwŏn ilgi*, vol. 7, 262.

³¹ *Ilšōgnok*, vol. 73, 450-453.

³² *Ibid.*, vol. 73, 478-481.

³³ *Ibid.*, vol. 73, 534-535.

³⁴ *Ilšōgnok*, vol. 73, 578-582.

On August 30, the literati protest reached its zenith with the petitions of two students, Hong Chae-hak and Sin Söp. Besides appealing to the king to abolish the T'ongnigimu Amun and restore old institutes, Hong further charged the king with taking no measures of “defending the right learning and rejecting the heterodoxy” (K. *wijöng ch'öksa*), incurring the king's wrath. Sin Söp depicted Li Hongzhang's letters to Yi Yu-wön and Huang Zunxian's treatise to Kim Hong-jip as the same intrigues against Chosön.³⁵ Yi Yu-wön immediately made a public confession by submitting a memorial to rebut Li's and Huang's ideas,³⁶ which embarrassed the king because Yi had actually followed the king's instructions to contact Li. On September 13, Hong Chae-hak was beheaded due to “offending the sovereign” and his blood resulted in the sharp decline of the protest. The king and the Min clan, along with their self-strengthening program, survived from the turmoil. It was time for the king to send artisans and trainees to Tianjin.

COMMISSIONING CHINA TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE UNITED STATES

On November 18, 1881, Emissary of Superintending the Selected Trainees (K. *yöngsön sa*), Kim Yun-sik (1835–1922), led 28 artisans and trainees to depart from Hansöng for China through the overland tributary route, as the maritime route, which they had planned to take with Beijing's special approval, was unavailable in winter. The mission was a new type in history, but due to the limited channels of communications between the two countries, it mostly acted as a conventional tributary mission to Beijing, insomuch that Kim was treated as a standard tributary emissary as to his travelling expenses.³⁷ Four

³⁵ *Kojong sunjong sillok*, vol. 2, 14-16.

³⁶ Yi Yu-wön, *Kawo koryak*, vol. 7, 271-272.

³⁷ Kim Yun-sik, *Ümch'öngsa* (Cloudy and sunny diary), 1-2; for the travelling expenses for a standard tributary envoy, see Sim Sang-kyu, *Mangi yoran chaeyong p'yön* (The collection of cases of the finances of Chosön), 701.

days before the departure, Kim was in a rush to select the artisans and trainees for the first time. Among more than 30 young men he interviewed, only six volunteered to go to China for the training program.³⁸ It was until in early December when Kim reached Ŭiju that he finally recruited 38 artisans and trainees as China suggested. The members of the mission totaled around 83, including 69 on the official list submitted to Beijing. When they arrived in Beijing on January 6, 1882, Kim submitted the king's notes to the Ministry of Rituals after they were lodged at the Foreign Emissaries' Common Accommodations.³⁹ Up until the day, Kim had spent 50 days from Hansŏng reaching the imperial capital after trudging more than 950 miles along the overland route, as those Korean tributary missions to Beijing in the eighteenth century had done.

Kim soon went to Baoding to visit Li Hongzhang with a confidential memorandum, where he zealously requested Li to be secretly in charge of Chosŏn's treaty negotiation with the U.S. and make the treaty a prototype for treaties with other countries in the future.⁴⁰ Li explained that what he did for Chosŏn, including his private contacts with Yi Yu-wŏn, was "legitimate and reasonable" (Ch. *mingzheng yishun*), a point Kim fully endorsed.⁴¹ In addition to giving Kim a pamphlet of Chosŏn's treaty with Western countries that was drafted by Ma Jianzhong, Li discussed many key issues about Chosŏn's reform with Kim, such as regulating tariff of duties, setting up customs and hire Western staff to manage it, improving Chosŏn's ability of managing foreign trade, designing Chosŏn's national flag for maritime identification, allowing the Japanese minister to enter Hansŏng, and continuing to use the king's invested rank in his contacts

³⁸ Kim Yun-sik, *Ŭmch'ŏngsa*, 3.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 12-21.

⁴⁰ *Kim Yun-sik chŏnjip* (The complete collection of Kim Yun-sik's works), vol. 2, 296-301; Li's memorial, January 21, 1882, in *LHZQJ* (2008), vol. 9, 539-544.

⁴¹ Kim Yun-sik, *Ch'ŏnjin tamch'o* (Records of the pen conversations at Tianjin), 2.

with the Japanese sovereign.⁴² It turned out that the most urgent mission for the two sides was to negotiate and conclude a treaty with the U.S., rather than to train the Korean artisans and trainees at Tianjin.

Li, as a provincial official, was gaining more power from Beijing over the affairs regarding Chosŏn. On January 23, Beijing further endowed him with the right of being in charge of Chosŏn's treaty negotiation with the U.S. in order to "maintain the *fan* and shuguo and consolidate China's border."⁴³ At the same time, Li received a letter from Shufeldt, who had returned to China from the U.S. in June 1881 and waited at Tianjin for news from Chosŏn. During the sojourn, Shufeldt was appointed by Washington as the special envoy to Chosŏn for a treaty of amity aiming to solving issues of the American shipwrecks on Korean coast.⁴⁴ Informing Li with his new position and the mission, Shufeldt hoped to meet with Li before he sailed to Chosŏn on May 1.⁴⁵ Li immediately invited Shufeldt to Baoding for details, but Shufeldt decided to visit the American legation at Beijing first with the purpose of soliciting advice from the American chargé d'affaires, Chester Holcombe.

Holcombe, being fully aware of the sharp devolution of Beijing's negotiation power to Li, doubted if it would be possible for the U.S. and China to persuade Chosŏn to conclude a treaty without the involvement of the Ministry of Rituals in Beijing. For Holcombe, the Ministry of Rituals was "the highest, and most conservative, of the six bureaus or department of the Government and in past years has played the part of a most

⁴² Li's conversation with Kim, in Li's memorial, January 21, 1882, in *LHZQJ* (2008), vol. 9, 542-544.

⁴³ *Qing dezong shilu*, vol. 53, 1002-1003.

⁴⁴ Charles Oscar Paullin, "The Opening of Korea by Commodore Shufeldt," 485-487; Instruction 132, Blain to Shufeldt, November 14, 1881, Diplomatic Instructions, Korea, Roll 40, in *American Diplomatic and Public Papers: The United States and China, 1861-1893*, vol. 10, 142-148.

⁴⁵ Kim Yun-sik, *Ŭmch'ŏngsa*, 47-48.

effective obstruction to any intercourse, by means of the Government of China, between Western Powers and Corea. This was notably manifested in the attempts made here by minister Low to pave the way for his mission to Corea in 1871.” Considering that Li was “only a provincial officer and not a member of the Central Government,” Holcombe felt “it was desirable to learn how far his assurances of support and assistance would be borne out by the Imperial Authorities.”⁴⁶

With this question, Holcombe visited the Zongli Yamen, where the Chinese ministers informed him that Prince Gong had “effected the transfer of the charge of Korean matters from the Board of Rites to the Foreign Office” in 1881 and China had advised Chosŏn to conclude a treaty with the U.S. The ministers told him that Beijing’s action “was mainly influenced by the belief that sooner or later the autonomy of Corea would be threatened by the aggressions of Russia and/or Japan, and that this serious danger could be best met by bringing the peninsular Kingdom into the family of nations.” The Yamen reminded him that Beijing was ready “to aid the United States in any proper way to pen friendly and commercial relations with Corea.” Nevertheless, Holcombe was worried that Beijing might “see fit to assume an entirely different attitude and policy in this business.”⁴⁷ His distrust might affect Shufeldt, as the latter replied to Li saying that he preferred to keep the negotiation secret by not visiting Baoding.⁴⁸

After his meetings with Li at Baoding, Kim visited Tianjin for a week, where he sent five students to the Navy School and Torpedo School for English language training. The meals and other cost of the students were generously covered by the Chinese side

⁴⁶ Dispatch 60, Holcombe to Frelinghuysen, February 4, 1882, Minister’s Dispatches, China, Roll 61, in *American Diplomatic and Public Papers: The United States and China, 1861–1893*, vol. 10, 163-166.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 166-171.

⁴⁸ Kim Yun-sik, *Ŭmch’ōngsa*, 54-55.

under the strong support of Wu Zhongxiang, the director of the Navy School, who told Kim that “the students of your honorable country are also loyal subjects of the Heavenly Dynasty” (Ch. *tianchao zhi chizi*).⁴⁹ Wu’s understanding was not solitary, illustrating that the idea of “all-under-Heaven” was still popular among some Chinese in the 1880s. It was in this conventional politico-cultural context of the Chinese empire that certain Chinese officials enthusiastically engaged in Chosŏn’s self-strengthening program and treaty negotiations. Before he could send more students to schools, Kim received a confidential instruction from the king, further instructing him to consult with Li over treaty negotiations with the U.S. Thus, Kim returned to Baoding, leaving all students idle at Tianjin, when the Chinese New Year was approaching.

Before Shufeldt’s reply reached Baoding, Li had discussed with Kim about initiating the negotiation with Shufeldt by preventing him directly sailing for Chosŏn. This plan required an envoy plenipotentiary of Chosŏn with certain credential and power, whom Hansŏng did not dispatch. Li proposed that Kim could follow the king’s secret instruction of “adapting strategies for situations” to expediently serve as the plenipotentiary, but Kim firmly refused to do so. Finally, they decided to immediately send a messenger back to Hansŏng to ask the king to dispatch a plenipotentiary to Tianjin, while Kim would meet with Shufeldt to inform him with the king’s willingness first. Li particularly noted that the plenipotentiary should come under the name of supervising the Korean students with the aim of keeping his true mission secret.⁵⁰ However, Chosŏn never sent any plenipotentiary to Tianjin for the treaty negotiation. In Tianjin, Kim did not hold any conversations with Shufeldt, nor could he participate in the Sino–American

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 40-41.

⁵⁰ Kim Yun-sik, *Ch’ŏnjin tamch’o*, 12-13.

negotiations about his own country. If he had followed Li's proposal, he would have right started the negotiation with the assistance of Li and Li's protégées. In practice, Kim left the right of treaty negotiation all but to the hands of Chinese who at that time did not hesitate to perform the duty on behalf of China's shuguo.

THE TREATY NEGOTIATIONS AND THE ENTRANCE OF CHOSŎN TO THE FAMILY OF NATIONS

Upon Shufeldt's response, Li discussed with Kim again about making a draft treaty primarily based on a draft made by Huang Zunxian. Two aspects of their discussion stood out as the most critical parts. First, Li proposed that the treaty should define the Sino-Korean Zongfan relationship by stating that, "Chosŏn, being a shuguo of China, owns the right of zizhu as to its diplomatic and domestic affairs, which shall not be challenged by other nations." Kim confirmed that it would be "legitimate and justifiable (Ch. *mingzheng yanshun*)" to articulate this point for other countries.⁵¹ Later, in a confidential report to the king, Kim revealed his true motivation for endorsing Li's proposal by saying that,

It was well known by all nations under the heaven that our country is a *shubang* (subordinate country, shuguo) of China. We are always worried that China has no true intention of assuming its responsibility, for our country is so isolated and weak that it is really difficult for it to stand on its own feet without the assurance from the Big Country. It is fortunate that Li, the prime minister of China who controls the Chinese military forces, has initiatively assumed the responsibility and shoulder the burden of our country. After the bilateral relationship is stated and clarified to all nations in the treaty, China would definitely try its best to save our country when we run into troubles. Otherwise, China would be jeered by all people of the world. Similarly, when the people of the world see China assumes its responsibility on us, any country that wants to depreciate us will be more or less frustrated. Following this statement is our right of zizhu, which does not damage the right of equality in our communications with other countries. Therefore, the term can kill two birds with one stone by ensuring our country not losing our rights and not violating the principle of serving the great. Our country can greatly benefit from Li's proposal. I have showed my sincere appreciation to

⁵¹ Kim Yun-sik, *Ch'ŏnjin tamch'o*, 15-16.

him many times.⁵²

Undoubtedly, Kim found concluding a treaty including the statement on Chosŏn's relationship with China to be a perfect way for Chosŏn to avail itself of such relationship to use China's power for Chosŏn's own good.

The second aspect was about the right of consular jurisdiction of the U.S. in Chosŏn. Endorsing Huang's proposal that Chosŏn could temporarily allow the American consuls to manage the American citizens in Chosŏn, Li explained that, "According to the international conventions, foreigners living in treaty ports and hinterlands of a country are subject to the management of the officials of their own countries who are residing at the places of the said country. The local officials of the host country are not able to manage people of other nations due to the different law, punish rules, customs, and proprieties between the East and the West. That is the reason why Japan has recently failed to revise its treaties with other countries."⁵³ For Li and Huang, the consular jurisdiction was no more than a method of cherishing foreigners, rather than an unequal clause damaging Chosŏn's national sovereignty. Perceiving the case in the same context, Kim agreed that, "Our humble country is not familiar with foreign situations, so there will be many problems even if our country could manage foreigners by itself. If Japan and China change the former treaties, our humble country will follow change the content too. Now we had better accept what Mr. Huang put in his draft treaty."⁵⁴ Finally, the two sides decided to give the U.S. the right of consular jurisdiction, without any requirement or pressure from the American representative. Since the Korean–American Treaty was a prototype for the following treaties between Chosŏn and other nations, China soon gained

⁵² *Ibid.*, 20-21.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 17.

this right too through the Sino–Korean commercial regulations of 1882. In retrospect, this episode called into the question whether the Western powers always gained the right of consular jurisdiction in China or Korea by force or gunboat diplomacy, which further questioned if such right could be regarded as a hallmark of the Western imperialism as the nationalistic historical narratives of these countries have usually charged.

After composing a draft treaty with Li, Kim returned to Tianjin, where the special envoy of the king, Yi Ŭng-chun, was waiting for him with a king’s letter stating that it was impossible to send a plenipotentiary to China and it would be better for the Americans to go to Chosŏn. When Kim asked Taotai of the Tianjin Customs, Zhou Fu (1837–1921), an assistant to Li, to forward the message to Li, Zhou suggested that Kim act as the plenipotentiary,⁵⁵ but Kim refused again. For Kim, China’s negotiation on behalf of his country seemed to be a better choice. In this process, Zhou queried Kim why a phrase of “independence and half-autonomy” (Ch. *duli banzhu*) appeared in Chosŏn’s note to him, a phrase explaining the term “zizhu” in the Treaty of Kanhwa of 1876. Zhou warned that such statement was the “Japanese plot” and it would only damage Chosŏn’s interests in the long run. Kim explained that,

Our humble country has been admiring the Chinese culture and morality since the ancient time, and we have relied on the Upper Country like curtains. Under the current situation when our country is extremely weak and all powers are planning to invade us, how can we declare to be independent and autonomy (K. *chajon t’ŭngnip*)? It is not only because we do not want to do it, but also because we cannot do it [by virtue of the morality]. When we negotiated with the Japanese several years ago, the Japanese warships were right at the port and we had no time to report the thing [to China]. Yet we immediately sent [Beijing] a dispatch after the negotiation. The negotiation with the United States this time is the first time for our humble country to contact Western countries. Although we cannot prevent Americans going to our country, we would not like to send plenipotentiary to initiatively invite them there. Since we have decided to establish the amity with

⁵⁵ Kim Yun-sik, *Ch’ŏnjin tamch’o*, 23-24.

them, we will sincerely and fully follow the management of the Central Dynasty of all things regarding the negotiation, trade, and so forth...The phrase of the so-called ‘independence and half-autonomy’ is surely the Japanese plot by which we have never been agitated in mind.⁵⁶

The difference between the Zongfan and treaty systems manifested itself in Kim’s words. For Kim, the “independence and autonomy” that the Japanese had imposed on Chosŏn could not change the fact that the country was China’s shuguo.

On April 4, 1882, when Li had started to negotiate with Shufeldt, he had a meeting with Kim and Yi Ŭng-chun to brief them on the negotiation. Kim asked Li to dispatch an official who knew diplomacy and foreign language to accompany Shufeldt to Chosŏn to be an assistant. Li agreed, and the official was exactly Ma Jianzhong who was also attending the meeting. With the absence of Korean plenipotentiary, the right of the negotiation with Shufeldt was completely in Li’s hands. Ironically, on the same day, the two Korean officials, Ŏ Yun-chung (1848–1896) and Yi Cho-yŏn, left Hansŏng for Tianjin as Officials of Examination and Selection (K. *Kosŏn kwan*),⁵⁷ instead of the plenipotentiaries as Li and Kim desperately wished.

In the negotiation between Li and Shufeldt, whether the treaty should include a clause defining Chosŏn as China’s shuguo became the most controversial issue. The first article of Li’s draft stated that “Chosŏn is China’s *shubang* and always enjoys the right of *zizhu* as to its domestic and foreign affairs.”⁵⁸ Shufeldt, identifying that such statement would not define Chosŏn as an independent sovereign state, insisted that it should not be included. As a result, the two sides made a draft treaty on April 18, including 15 articles, and decided to put the first article empty. If it eventually could not define Chosŏn’s as

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 25-26.

⁵⁷ *Kojong sunjong sillok*, vol. 2, 40.

⁵⁸ Li to the Zongli Yamen, March 28, 1882, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 552-555.

China's shuguo in the treaty, Chosŏn would send a special note to the U.S. government to articulate its shuguo status.⁵⁹ On April 21, Li gave Kim and Yi Ŭng-chun a copy of the draft treaty and instructed Yi to instantly return to Chosŏn by a Chinese steamer.⁶⁰ Li also instructed Ma, who was "very skilled in international law," to accompany Shufeldt go to Inchon to ensure that all things would go smoothly. During this process, what Kim did was to discuss with Ma about the formalities that Chosŏn should perform to welcome Ma and Shufeldt, as Ma would be treated as a Chinese commissioner, a position requiring Chosŏn to modify certain Zongfan rituals.

Ma, along with Admiral Ding Ruchang (1836–1895), arrived at Inchon on May 8, where he made an English conversation with the Japanese minister, Hanabusa Yoshimoto, who had arrived on May 7. Hanabusa attempted to affect the negotiation, but it was too late for him to do so.⁶¹ Four days later, Shufeldt arrived by the U.S.S. *Swatara* and soon started negotiating with the Korean plenipotentiaries, Sin Hŏn (1810–1884) and Kim Hong-jip. Sin was also one of the plenipotentiaries who had signed the Treaty of Kanghwa in 1876. The negotiation ended on May 22 with a treaty of 14 articles, deleting the first article about Chosŏn's shuguo status that Li proposed.⁶² Considering that Chosŏn needed its own national flag because it could not use China's dragon flag, Ma suggested that Chosŏn take the Chinese Taichi and Eight Diagrams as the basic design.⁶³ After Shufeldt went to Shanghai with a copy of the treaty, Ma remained at Inchon to help Chosŏn negotiate with other powers.⁶⁴ The "Hermit Nation" entered the family of

⁵⁹ Li to the Zongli Yamen, April 21, 1882, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 560.

⁶⁰ Kim Yun-sik, *Ŭmch'ŏngsa*, 103.

⁶¹ Charles Oscar Paullin, "The Opening of Korea by Commodore Shufeldt," 496.

⁶² Zhang to the Zongli Yamen, June 10, 1882, in *QJRZH*, vol. 2, 611-616.

⁶³ The Ma–Sin interviews, May 22 and 27, 1882, in *HKMS*, vol. 10, 12-14.

⁶⁴ Ma to Sin and Kim, May 27, 1882, in *HKMS*, vol. 10, 14-15.

nations, as what China had done four decades ago.

During the negotiation, Ma had drafted a special note for Chosŏn, which would be sent to the U.S. president through the king to proclaim that Chosŏn was China's shuguo.⁶⁵ Following this middle course determined by Li, Ma, and Kim Yun-sik,⁶⁶ the king sent a dispatch to the U.S. President on May 29, informing that "Corea is a tributary of China, but in regard to both internal administration and foreign intercourse it enjoys complete independence."⁶⁷ The king addressed dispatches with the same announcement to the sovereigns of Western countries with which Chosŏn signed treaties, including Britain (June 6, 1882), Germany (November 26, 1883), Italy (June 26, 1884), Russia (July 7, 1884), and France (June 4, 1886). All of the treaty powers treated the sovereign's words seriously. As a result, after 1882 Chosŏn's *de jure* independent sovereignty in terms of international law, and its *de facto* as well as *de jure* dependent status as China's shuguo according to the Zongfan principles, comprised one of the most controversial and perplexing issues for Western powers in East Asia to manage. In this situation, Chosŏn moved first toward the direction of modifying its relations with China.

5.2 Protecting the Shuguo as the Patriarch: The Chinese Military Intervention in 1882

A TURNING POINT: THE KING'S SIX REQUESTS IN 1882

When the treaty with the U.S. was concluded, more than one third of the Korean trainees and artisans at Tianjin had returned to Chosŏn due to various reasons. As a cloak of treaty

⁶⁵ *T'ongsang miguk silgi* (The original record of negotiating with the United States on the treaty in of trade and amity 1882), archive catalogue No. M/F 80-103-319-B, 6a-9b; the Ma-Sin interview, May 14, 1882, in *Kuhan'guk oegyo munsŏ* (The records of foreign affairs of the old Korea, hereafter referred to as *HKMS*), vol. 10, 1-2.

⁶⁶ See Takashi Okamoto, *Zokoku to jishu no aida: kindai Shin Kan kankei to higashi Ajia no meiun* (Between the tributary state and self-rule: the modern Ch'ing-Korean relations and East Asia's fate), 35-69.

⁶⁷ *Despatch from the King of Corea to the President of the United States of America*, May 29, 1882, see *The Treaties, Regulations, etc., between Corea and Other Powers, 1876-1889*, 52.

negotiation with the U.S., the program never really occupied the eyes of Hansǒng and Beijing. Rather, its primary role lied in its existence in China beyond the entrenched channel of communication regulated by the Zongfan system. This point was made clearer by the visit of Ǒ Yun-chung and Yi Cho-yǒn, who, as Officials of Examination and Selection, were to review the trainees and artisans on the surface. Ǒ was one of the 12 gentlemen to Japan in 1881, but he was the only one who visited China from Nagasaki to meet with Li. In his report to the king in February 1882, Ǒ noted that the world was “a bigger period of the Warring States,” quoting the “period of Warring States” in Chinese history, in which the only way for Chosǒn to avoid being subjugated by Western powers and Japan was to make the country wealthy and powerful.⁶⁸

After they arrived in Tianjin in May, Ǒ and Yi submitted the king’s two formal requests to the Chinese side, including allowing people of the two countries to trade at the treaty ports of each other and allowing Chosǒn to send emissaries to permanently reside in Beijing.⁶⁹ In addition, they forwarded the king’s four additional requests to the Acting Beiyang Superintendent, Zhang Shusheng (1824–1884). Zhang, the Governor-General of Liangguang and one of the primary military protégées of Li Hongzhang’s Huai Army, had just assumed Li’s position in the same month, when Li returned to his hometown in Anhui province for a 100-day-long stay for his mother’s funeral. The first request suggested that the two countries negotiate a treaty. The second request aimed to cancel the markets on northeastern border between Hamgyǒng province of Chosǒn and Wula and Ningguta areas of China in order to prevent Russians from intervening, while the new trade way would be decided by the treaty. According to the third request, Chosǒn

⁶⁸ Ǒ Yun-chung, *Chongjǒng nyǒnp’yo* (The chronology of my political career), 120-124.

⁶⁹ The king to the Beiyang Superintendent, June 15, 1882, in *QJRZH*, vol. 2, 685.

would stop sending emissaries to Beijing as before and the emissaries who would permanently reside in Beijing would be receiving and forwarding the imperial edicts, which virtually meant to cancel the exchanges of emissaries. The fourth request proposed that the emissaries residing in Beijing would be responsible for their own travel expenses and meals, so China would not need to offer provisions to them.⁷⁰ Suffice to say that the six requests aimed to substantially change the bilateral relational arrangement by adopting some common Western diplomatic rules practiced between sovereign states. Not surprisingly, they posed a dilemma for Beijing about whether it should continue to keep Chosŏn as an outer *fan* within the Zongfan framework, or it should recognize Chosŏn as a state that was theoretically equal to other treaty powers beyond the said framework.

Ö soon discussed some key issues with Zhou Fu about the likely contents of the bilateral treaty, such as permanently residing Chosŏn's emissaries in Beijing, endowing China with the most-favored-nation right, appropriately treating the Chinese commercial commissioner, and clarifying Chosŏn's status as China's shuguo. Their discussion set the tone for the bilateral treaty that would be signed several months later. In terms of the Chinese institutes involved in the bilateral contacts, they proposed that the foreign affairs regarding Chosŏn would be managed by the Zongli Yamen and the Beiyang Superintendent, on the one hand, and the tributary affairs would still be under the management of the Ministry of Rituals, on the other.⁷¹ On June 8, Ö arrived in Beijing, contacted the Ministry of Rituals, and was lodged in the Foreign Emissaries' Common Accommodations, where the ministry followed the Zongfan conventions to bestow him

⁷⁰ Ö Yun-chung, *Chongjŏng nyŏnp'yo*, 131.

⁷¹ The memorandum of the conversation between Zhou and Chosŏn's emissaries, June 3, 1882, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 589-602.

silvers, sheep, wine, and meals.⁷² When the ministry was shocked by the king's two formal requests, Yi Ũng-chun, another special emissary of the king, arrived in Beijing with a note reporting the treaty negotiation with the U.S., in which the king showed his sincere thanks to the emperor and the "Central Dynasty" for protecting the "small country" and the *fan*. Yi was also lodged in the Foreign Emissaries' Common Accommodations and bestowed with silvers, sheep, wine, and meals.⁷³ Ironically, if the king's requests were granted by the emperor, such Zongfan conventions as Ő and Yi was experiencing in Beijing would be cancelled.

Although granting the king's requests would undoubtedly weaken the role of the Ministry of Rituals as the headquarters of the Zongfan affairs, after witnessing the recent cases of Ryukyu, Burma, and Vietnam, the ministry had been fully aware that many issues were beyond the Zongfan world. On June 14, the ministry memorialized the throne of the king's two requests and suggested the emperor instruct all officials who were familiar with foreign affairs, in particular Li Hongzhang, to do a confidential discussion on the matter. Meanwhile, Baoting (1840–1890), a Manchu associate minister of the ministry, presented a memorial to detail the ministry's preferences. According to Bao, Chosŏn, the first shuguo of "foreign barbarian" that subordinated to the Great Qing, was far more important than those countries of the South Sea (Ch. *Nanyang*), but after the invasions of Japanese on Ryukyu, British on Burma, and French on Vietnam that China failed to prevent, Chosŏn became not as respectful as before and it had not betrayed China because it was weak and still worshiped China's proper conducts and moralities. On the other hand, it would be unfair for the shuguo if China refused to let it trade at

⁷² The memorial of the Ministry of Rituals, June 14, 1882, in *ZRJSSL*, vol. 3, 16a-16b.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, vol. 3, 15a-15b.

treaty ports and share commercial interests with other “barbarians from afar” (Ch. *yuanyi*). Otherwise, it might push Chosŏn to the Japanese side to become a shuguo of Japan. Similarly, if China permitted Chosŏn’s emissaries to permanently reside in Beijing, Chosŏn would be on an equal footing with other countries that had ministers in the city. Once it became rich and powerful, it would be arrogant and aggressive as the “British barbarians” had done.

Upon this scenario, Bao argued that the right of managing affairs regarding Chosŏn should *not* be transferred to the Zongli Yamen in order not to blur Chosŏn’s shuguo status; the right should be possessed by the Ministry of Rituals as before, and the ministry would continue forward relative business to the Yamen. Bao also argued that China should not allow Chosŏn to build a legation in Beijing, even if the emissaries were permitted to permanently reside in the city; rather, they should continue to be lodged at the Foreign Emissaries’ Common Accommodations in order to highlight that the two countries were still in the same family.⁷⁴ Moreover, Bao boldly suggested that Beijing should use Chosŏn’s intention of exploiting China’s power to check other countries’ encroachments as a good opportunity to dispatch thousands of soldiers to Chosŏn to garrison military forts and put the country under China’s control.⁷⁵ This seemingly aggressive suggestion aimed to pinpoint the nature of the Sino–Korean Zongfan relationship, reflecting the similar provocative proposal made by Xu Guangqi in 1619. Bao’s opinions had a strong impact on the final decision of the policy-makers, for the court promptly made a decision and issued an edict to the Ministry of Rituals, the Zongli Yamen, and the Beiyang Superintendent, emphasizing that “Chosŏn has been a *fan* for a

⁷⁴ Bao’s memorial, June 14, 1882, in *ZRJSSL*, vol. 3, 17b-18a.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 18a.

long time and all rituals have regulations” and declining Chosŏn’s request of permanently residing emissaries in Beijing due to “various potential inconveniences.” Yet the court endorsed the king’s proposal of making changes to some conventions and for that purpose it instructed Zhang Shusheng to consult Li Hongzhang about negotiating a commercial treaty with Chosŏn.

In addition, the court instructed the Zongli Yamen to be in charge of certain trade affairs with Chosŏn and the Ministry of Rituals to manage tributary affairs as before.⁷⁶ In this way, the Beiyang Superintendent eventually became the nexus of making China’s foreign policy toward Chosŏn. The Zongli Yamen further devolved the power regarding Chosŏn’s foreign affairs to the superintendent, as a result of which the destination of most Korean emissaries became Tianjin, instead of Beijing. Accordingly, the obligation to accommodate the emissaries was transferred from the Ministry of Rituals to the superintendent. For example, after Ǒ returned to Tianjin, the superintendent gave Ǒ 78.162 taels of silver, including 54 taels as routine imperial gifts and 24.162 taels as converted silver from sheep, wine, and meals that he was supposed to receive from the Ministry of Rituals in Beijing.⁷⁷ Given that the superintendent had gained the right of directly contacting the king about foreign affairs in early 1881, and it was the superintendent who commanded the newly established Beiyang Navy—the exclusive maritime transporter between the two countries of the day, the superintendent became the most powerful institution supervising Sino–Korean contacts. This point was soon proved by the superintendent’s decision to send troops to Chosŏn to help suppress a mutiny.

⁷⁶ The imperial edict to the Ministry of Rituals, etc., June 14, 1882, in *ZRJSSL*, 18b.

⁷⁷ The Ministry of Rituals to the Zongli Yamen, June 22, 1882, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 690; Zhang to the Zongli Yamen, July 31, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 730-732.

PROTECTING THE SHUGUO AS THE PATRIARCH BY SENDING TROOPS IN 1882

When Chosŏn succeeded in persuading China to sign a treaty with it, the country was teetering on the brink of a political upheaval. On July 23, 1882, as a result of the unfair distribution of rations of rice among troops that was suffering from a severe drought, a mutiny broke out at Hansŏng. Hundreds of soldiers of the Muwiyŏng gathered and attacked the Japanese legation to kill several Japanese, including Lieutenant Horimoto Reizō, who had been training the Special Skill Army (K. *pyŏlgi gun*) since May 1881. When the rebels occupied the palace and controlled the king after killing several high-ranking officials on July 24, Taewŏn'gun seized the opportunity to restore his regency and retaliated the Princess Min clan by announcing the death of the princess who had actually survived and escaped to Ch'ungju prefecture.⁷⁸ In chaos, the Japanese charge d'affaires Hanabusa Yoshimoto fled in haste to Inchon and took an English steamer for Nagasaki, where he telegraphed the incident to Tokyo on July 30.⁷⁹

Both the Japanese and Chinese governments quickly responded by sending troops to Chosŏn. On July 31, Tokyo instructed Hanabusa to return to Inchon with navy forces to seek justice and compensation. The new Chinese minister in Tokyo, Li Shuchang (1837–1896), urgently telegraphed Zhang Shusheng, asking China to immediately send troops too.⁸⁰ In Beijing, the German minister, Max August von Brandt (1835–1920), and the Inspector General of the Imperial Customs of China, Robert Hart (1835–1911), also informed the Zongli Yamen about the mutiny respectively on August 2 and 3, when the copies of the German–Chosŏn Treaty and British–Chosŏn Treaty were submitted to the

⁷⁸ *Kojong sunjong sillok*, vol. 2, 51; *Kojong sidae sa*, vol. 2, 331-337.

⁷⁹ Hanabusa to Inoue, July 30, 1882, in *NHGB*, vol. 15, 215-216.

⁸⁰ Inoue to Hanabusa, July 31, 1882, in *NHGB*, vol. 15, 221-223; Li Shuchang to Zhang Shusheng, July 31, 1882, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 735.

court, along with the king's dispatches to German and British sovereigns about Chosŏn's status as China's shuguo.⁸¹ Within several days, Beijing was fully alarmed by the serious situation and it was time for it to demonstrate how Chosŏn's title of China's shuguo was not "nominal" after almost two-decade-long debates with Japan and other treaty powers.

When Zhang Shusheng instructed General Wu Changqing (1829–1884) to prepare for sending troop overseas, Kim Yun-sik and Ŏ Yun-chung at Tianjin considerably influenced China's final decision of sending troops to Chosŏn to quell the mutiny and detain Taewŏn'gun in China. As two fervent proponents of the king's opening-up policy, Kim and Ŏ linked the mutiny with the abolished coup in 1881 and kept requesting China to send warships and soldiers to suppress the mutiny and check the Japanese.⁸² Accusing Taewŏn'gun of plotting the mutiny against the king and the new foreign policy, Kim even secretly proposed to kill Taewŏn'gun in order to "erase the bane for the country" when the Chinese troops occupied Hansŏng.⁸³ Handicapped by the extremely limited channels of communication with Chosŏn, China was not familiar with Chosŏn's domestic political situation, so both Zhang and his colleagues in Tianjin and Beijing had to heavily depend on Kim's and Ŏ's information, which gave them an impression that Taewŏn'gun would be abolishing the king soon if China failed to take action in time.⁸⁴ What China should do, therefore, was to send troops to prevent the king from being dethroned.

On August 7, proclaiming that "Chosŏn has been a *fan* of our country for a long time," Emperor Guangxu instructed the Zongli Yamen and Zhang Shusheng to send Ma Jianzhong and Ding Ruchang to lead forces to Chosŏn to "cherish the small country,"

⁸¹ Zhang to the Zongli Yamen, August 3, 1882, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 737-747.

⁸² Zhou's conversations with Kim and Ŏ, August 1 and 2, 1882, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 749-751; Kim Yun-sik, *Ŭmch'ŏngsa*, 179-185.

⁸³ Kim's conversation with Zhou, August 5, 1882, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 769-772.

⁸⁴ Zhang to the Zongli Yamen, August 8, 1882, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 768-769.

check the “Japanese plot,” and “protect the Japanese people along the same lines.”⁸⁵ The military action thus acquired legitimacy from the rationales of the Zongfan arrangement. Zhang assembled 13 warships and merchantmen under Admiral Ding’s command and summoned 4,000 troopers under General Wu’s command. The superintendent also ordered Kim and Ŏ to return to Chosŏn together with the Chinese officers, for whom they would serve as “guides” (Ch. *xiangdao*). By order of Zhang, Ma Jianzhong accomplished a reconnaissance mission in Inchon on August 10 and 11, during which Ŏ’s personal opinions against Taewŏn’gun in his intensive conversations with Ma deeply influenced the latter’s final judgment on the situation in his report to Zhang on August 14.⁸⁶ On August 15, General Wu left Tianjin for Yantai (Chefoo), where he would head for Chosŏn by commanding his fleet and officers, including the then 24-year-old officer Yuan Shikai, who during his trip to Chosŏn would discuss with Kim about his bold plan of leading hundreds of Chinese warriors to seize Hansŏng and control the situation.⁸⁷

At the same time, Japan also legitimized its action of sending troops to Chosŏn. On August 3, Inoue Kaoru, informed the foreign ministers in Tokyo that Japan’s operation was “completely based upon pacifism” and its warships and troops were to protect the Japanese embassy and citizens.⁸⁸ The deputy foreign minister, Yoshida Kyonari (1845–1891), declined Li Shuchang’s suggestion of China’s “mediation.”⁸⁹ On August 7, when Beijing decided to send troops to Chosŏn, Inoue gave Hanabusa detailed instructions on the military operations and terms of compensation that aimed to deal with

⁸⁵ The imperial edict to the Zongli Yamen, August 7, 1882, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 765.

⁸⁶ Ma to Zhang, sent from Inchon on August 11, in *QJZRH*, vol. 3, 789-792; Zhang to the Zongli Yamen, August 19, in *QJZRH*, vol. 3, 796-805;

⁸⁷ Kim Yun-sik, *Ŭmch’ŏngsa*, 190.

⁸⁸ Inoue to foreign ministers at Tokyo, August 3, 1882, in *NHGB*, vol. 15, 160-162.

⁸⁹ Li Shuchang to the Yoshida and Yoshida’s reply, August 5 and 6, 1882, in *NHGB*, vol. 15, 163-164.

the situation by force and only by Japan itself, rather than through mediation of China or any other country.⁹⁰ The ideological conflict on Chosŏn's status between the two countries after 1873, in particular after 1876, seemed to evolve into military rivalries on the peninsula, but both sides believed that their responses were legal and legitimate.

For China, it was completely reasonable to send troops to Chosŏn by putting into practice what it had been proclaiming to Japan and other powers about its Zongfan relations with the shuguo. As the Zongli Yamen had enunciated to Mori Arinori in 1876, it was China's self-taken responsibility to help Chosŏn "solve its difficulties, resolve its disputes, and expect its safety and security." Reviewing this point to Yoshida Kyonari on August 9 and 12 in his notes, Li Shuchang stated that China's action followed "the rule of cherishing the small country" and aimed to "suppress the rebellion for the *shubang* and the Japanese legation at Hansŏng is exactly under the protection of China." Li Shuchang used a metaphor for the rationale behind China's operation, in which he described China as the "patriarch of the family" (Ch. *jiashang*) who had the obligation to investigate why some stuff of "other people"—which referred to Japan—left at the "houses of his sons or brothers" (Ch. *zidi jia*)—namely, Chosŏn—were stolen.⁹¹ This metaphor crystallized China's understanding of the mutiny and its patriarchal authority vis-à-vis Chosŏn within the Zongfan family. By the same token, it demonstrated that China's point of departure was not based on any rules of international law.

For Japan, the idea of the big Zongfan family that Li Shuchang described was free from its concerns, but the Gaimushō actually did not know how to efficiently rebuff China's statement and it worried that the conflict at Chosŏn might draw Japan into the

⁹⁰ Inoue to Hanabusa, August 7, 1882, in *NHGB*, vol. 15, 226-230.

⁹¹ Li Shuchang to Yoshida, August 9 and 12, 1882, in *NHGB*, vol. 15, 164-165.

abyss of a war with the powerful China. As it had consulted the Taiwan issue with Le Gendre in 1872, the Gaimushō now resorted to its foreign intellectual resources again by soliciting advice from the French jurist and a legal advisor to the Japanese government, Gustave Boissonade (1825–1910). Boissonade suggested that Japan insist that Chosŏn was “an independent country” (*J. dokuritsu koku*) and “only focus on negotiation with Chosŏn.”⁹² He mentioned the relationship between Egypt and the Ottoman Empire again as an analogy of that between Chosŏn and China, as Mori Arinori had done in Beijing in 1876. According to this analogy, since Britain and France had directly intervened in the mutiny of Egypt in January 1882 regardless of Turkey’s attitude, Japan could follow the case by directly intervening in the mutiny of Chosŏn regardless of China’s response.⁹³ The Gaimushō thus quickly made a strategy for dealing with China and other powers, which allowed it to find its military intervention in the mutiny necessary and legitimate.

Being aware that the crisis would not be peacefully solved, Li Shuchang suggested to the Zongli Yamen that, “after suppressing the mutiny, China should manage and supervise all affairs of the country in order to ensure its peaceful domestic and foreign situations.”⁹⁴ Furthermore, he proposed that China should “abolish the king and convert the country into prefectures and counties [of China]” (*Ch. fei qi wang er junxian zhi*) by imitating the case between Britain and India to fundamentally resolve the thorny issue between China and other powers regarding Chosŏn.⁹⁵ Yet, as Li himself realized, China was unable to do so because it would violate the rule of “humanity and virtue” (*Ch.*

⁹² Inoue’s conversations with Boissonade, August 9 and 13, 1882, in *NHGB*, vol. 15, 169-173; *Boissonade tōgi* (Conversations with Boissonade), in *Kindai nihon hōsei shiryōshū* (Collections of historical materials on Japan’s modern law), vol. 8, 140-162.

⁹³ Boissonade conversations with Inoue, in *Kindai nihon hōsei shiryōshū*, vol. 8, *Boissonade tōgi*, 157. For the Anglo-French joint actions against Egyptian revulsion and the British conquest of Egypt in 1882, see Donald Malcolm Reid, “The Urabi Revolution and the British Conquest, 1879–1882.”

⁹⁴ Zhang to the Zongli Yamen, August 9, 1882, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 773.

⁹⁵ Li Shuchang to the Zongli Yamen, in *QJZRH*, vol. 3, 836.

rende). As history unfolded, until the outbreak of the Sino–Japanese War in 1894, China never initiated any plan of colonizing Chosŏn; rather, it tried to protect the country along the Zongfan lines. Its military intervention in 1882 was precisely based on this rationale.

After arriving in Chosŏn on August 20, the Chinese troops under General Wu’s command found occupation of Hansŏng an easy matter. Compared with the Japanese who had entered Hansŏng, the Chinese officials availed themselves of China’s unique favorable position and authority in the Zongfan system to quickly terminate the political turmoil by entrapping Taewŏn’gun and sending him to Tianjin, restoring the king’s rulership, and assisting Chosŏn with signing two conventions with Japan.⁹⁶ Prince Min was found safe and sound and was escorted back to Hansŏng by General Wu’s troops. The king dispatched missions respectively to Beijing and Tokyo to brief the whole incident along conventional lines among the three countries. On September 31, the Zongli Yamen distributed a note to seven foreign ministers at Beijing, briefing them about the Chinese intervention by reemphasizing that, “Chosŏn, being a shuguo of our Great Qing, has maintained its status of *fan* for generations, and the [imperial] court regards it as an inner subordinate (Ch. *neifu*) that shares solidarity with us.” It also announced that the Chinese troops would remain in Chosŏn to ensure its stability and security.⁹⁷

A thornier issue for Beijing was how to deal with the then 63-year-old Taewŏn’gun, who had been sent to Baoding by General Wu. Endorsing Zhang Shusheng’s proposal, Li Hongzhang, reassuming the position of the Beiyang Superintendent in early September, argued that Beijing should detain Taewŏn’gun in China forever and allow the king to regularly send officials to visit him. Li cited a similar

⁹⁶ Zhang’s memorials, September 5, 1882, in *QJZRH*, vol. 3, 863-865; Li to the Zongli Yamen, September 7, 1882, in *QJZRH*, vol. 3, 867-879.

⁹⁷ The Yamen to foreign ministers in Beijing, September 30, 1882, in *QJZRH*, vol. 3, 951.

historical case in the early fourteenth century, when the Mongolian court of the Yuan dynasty exiled the king of Koryŏ Korea, Wang Chŏng (1315–1344, r. 1330–1332, 1339–1343), to Guangdong province of China.⁹⁸ The analogies between the two cases suggested that at least in the early 1880s, such Chinese politicians as Li Hongzhang, Zhang Shusheng, Li Shuchang, Ma Jianzhong, Zhou Fu, Zhang Jian (1853–1926), and Yuan Shikai, who were also Han Chinese officials, understood Qing–Chosŏn relations as an inseparable part of the chain of the entire history of Sino–Korean Zongfan relations. From relative historical precedents, Qing China could thus seize legitimacy and rationale for its contemporary reactions to the political turmoil of its outer *fan*, insomuch that it remained the invisible but fully legal power of punishing any official of the *fan*, or even abolishing the king, if necessary. Qing China’s decision of dethroning the last king of the Lê dynasty of Annam in 1789 was a good case to illuminate this point. After detaining Taewŏn’gun in Baoding for three years, Beijing finally approved the king’s petition of releasing his father and finally sent him back to Chosŏn in October 1885.

In retrospect, China’s military intervention in 1882 was an undoubted turning point of Qing–Chosŏn Zongfan relations,⁹⁹ which resulted in a series of changes in the bilateral relations as well as Chosŏn’s domestic reforms, but in a fundamental sense it was no more than a public presentation of the inconspicuous nature of the Qing’s supreme power over Chosŏn after 1637. When the Qing replaced the Ming in the Sino–Korean Zongfan framework in 1637, it simultaneously assumed all responsibilities that

⁹⁸ Zhang to the Zongli Yamen, September 4, 1882, in *QJZRH*, vol. 3, 843; Li to the Zongli Yamen, September 7, 1882, in *QJZRH*, vol. 3, 867.

⁹⁹ See, for example, Key-hiuk Kim, *The Last Phase of the East Asian World Order*, 326-351; Shen Weibin, “Chaoxian ‘Renwu bingbian’ yu zhonghan guanxi lunshu” (A study of Sino–Korean relations through the 1882 mutiny of Chosŏn), in *Hanguo yanjiu luncong* (Collected papers for Korean studies), 1996 (2): 188-208, 1998 (4): 250-269; Takashi Okamoto, *Zokkoku to jishu no aida: kindai Shin Kan kankei to higashi Ajia no meiu*, 70-134; Kirk W. Larsen, *Tradition, Treaties, and Trade*, 83-88.

the Ming had taken for Chosŏn, including the one sending troops to save the country. The Qing's military intervention in Annam in 1788 was another good example of its supreme power in the Zongfan family. This aspect is precisely what the politico-cultural Chinese empire meant for both China and its *fan*. In this sense, the assertion that China's superiority was "titular" and China's action of detaining Taewŏn'gun was "inconceivable"¹⁰⁰ is a far cry from the truth. So is the argument that through the intervention the Qing became "a colonial power" or "imperialist power" that employed the Western-style "imperialism" on Chosŏn in the late nineteenth century.¹⁰¹

5.3 Defining the Shuguo by Treaties: The Sino–Korean Regulations, 1882–1883

THE BIRTH OF THE FIRST WESTERN-STYLE SINO–KOREAN REGULATION

The inherent nature of the Zongfan arrangement determined that China could not stop moving forward along the way of "cherishing the small" after the turmoil. In order to help Chosŏn meet financial crisis, China made a loan of 0.5 million taels of silver to it upon the request of Cho Yŏng-ha and Kim Hong-jip, who negotiated a loan convention with Tang Tingshu (1832–1892) and Ma Jianzhong. China would loan 0.3 million from China Merchants Steamship Navigation Company (CMSNC, Ch. *Lunchuan zhaoshang ju*) and 0.2 million from the Kaiping Mining Administration (KMA, Ch. *Kaiping kuangwu ju*), for which Chosŏn agreed to have its tariffs and taxes on red ginseng as mortgages and pay off within 12 years by paying a very low 0.8% interest. In return, the two creditors, supervised by Li Hongzhang, reaped economic privileges in Chosŏn: the CMSNC gained the right of renting some lands at Chosŏn's treaty ports to set up factories and offices and

¹⁰⁰ Key-hiuk Kim, *The Last Phase of the East Asian World Order*, 1, 348.

¹⁰¹ See Martina Deuchler, *Confucian Gentlemen and Barbarian Envoys*, 220; Key-hiuk Kim, *The Last Phase of the East Asian World Order*, 348-349; Kirk W. Larsen, *Tradition, Treaties, and Trade*, 11-19.

the KMA was allowed to freely prospect for minerals in its hinterland.¹⁰² In this way, the Chinese commercial power aggressively expanded into Chosŏn.

In addition, China provided Chosŏn with military materials to help it improve the quality of its poorly equipped troops. In October 1882, Li from the Tianjin Arsenal donated 10 equipped 12-pound cannons, 3,000 cannon balls, 4,500 pounds of cannon powder, 1,500 pounds of bullet powder, 1,000 British rifles, 10,000 pounds of rifle powder, and 1 million bullets to the country.¹⁰³ A month later, Chosŏn's program of training its own military and industrial experts at Tianjin ended with a total failure with the return of the rest of the artisans and apprentices at the Tianjin Arsenal as per the king's order.¹⁰⁴ Although both the king and the Chinese officials zealously wished that Chosŏn could modernize its troops, the country never achieved this goal before its tragic fall in 1910. As a result, Chosŏn had to invite foreign advisors to train its forces, leaving itself more vulnerable to foreign influences.

The two countries also resumed the negotiation over a commercial treaty in Tianjin between Ŏ Yun-chung as one side and Zhou Fu and Ma Jianzhong as the other. From the beginning of their negotiation in May, the two sides had clarified that Chosŏn was China's shuguo with the right of zizhu, rather than a nation of "independence" (*Ch. duli*).¹⁰⁵ After reviewing Zhou and Ma's draft entitled "Regulations for Maritime and Overland Trade between Chinese and Chosŏn Subjects" (*RMOTCC*, Ch. *Zhongguo Chaoxian shangmin shuilu maoyi zhangcheng*), Ŏ questioned some discrepancies between the eight articles of the draft and those in the treaties with other countries, such

¹⁰² Li to the Zongli Yamen, October 6, 1882, in *QJZRH*, vol. 3, 967-970.

¹⁰³ Li to the Zongli Yamen, October 8, 1882, in *QJZRH*, vol. 3, 976.

¹⁰⁴ Kim Yun-sik, *Ŭmch'ŏngsa*, 212.

¹⁰⁵ Zhou's conversation with Ŏ and Yi, May 19, 1882, in *QJZRH*, vol. 3, 979-983.

as the unbalance of the right of consular jurisdiction between the two countries in Article 2 and opening Hansǒng as a trade city for Chinese merchants and allowing the Chinese to trade in Chosǒn's hinterlands in Article 4. Zhou and Ma confirmed that this treaty was different from those with "friendly nations" (Ch. *yuguo*), for Chosǒn was a *fan* and *shuguo* of China and the two countries should maintain their "veritable orthodox legitimacy" (Ch. *shizai zhi mingfen*). This explanation could also help explain why they purposely termed the text "regulations" (Ch. *zhangcheng*), rather than "treaty" (Ch. *tiaoyue*). Zhou and Ma agreed to revise certain terms, but suggested that a special term be added to articulate that the treaty was only applied to China's *shubang* (*shuguo*) and it was free from the most-favored-nation rule.¹⁰⁶ Ō, Cho Yǒng-ha, and Kim Hong-jip soon endorsed the revised text with the same title.¹⁰⁷

In a memorial to Emperor Guangxu in October, Li Hongzhang summarized the contents of the *RMOTCC* by saying that,

The preamble articulates that this treaty is only applied to China's *shubang* in order to show China's preferential treatment to the country, so it should not be cited by any other nations by virtue of the most-favored-nation rule. This statement can "clarify and define the orthodox legitimacy" (Ch. *zhengming dingfen*). According to Article 1, the Beiyang Superintendent will appoint Commissioners of Trade (Ch. *Shangwu weiyuan*) of China to reside at the treaty ports of Chosǒn to exercise jurisdiction over Chinese merchants there, while Chosǒn will send their Commissioners of Trade to Tianjin and other treaty ports of China to manage their merchants. These Commissioners of Trade are different from routine imperial envoys and tributary emissaries. According to Article 2, the Chosǒn merchants at Chinese treaty ports are under local Chinese jurisdiction, which complies with the imperial code and slightly differs from rules of treaties with other nations. Article 3 allows fishermen from certain provinces of the two countries to fish in certain areas, but they are forbidden from trading with each other. Article 4 permits merchants of the two countries to purchase local products in hinterlands by paying duties. Article 5 allows people living on borders of the two countries to trade and pay taxes at Ŭiju and Zhamen along the Yalu River on

¹⁰⁶ Ō to Zhou and Ma, and Zhou and Ma to Ō, in *QJZRH*, vol. 3, 983-986.

¹⁰⁷ See *Treaties, Conventions, etc., between China and Foreign States*, vol. 2, 847-853.

the one hand, and at Hunchun and Hoeryŏng along the Tumen River, on the other, while the charges formerly made on account of board and lodging, supply of provisions, reception, and escort are to be entirely abolished in order to cherish the people of the *fan*. Article 6 lists forbidden goods, such as opium and munitions of war, and regulates that the red ginseng will be charged 15% customs duty. Article 7 shifts the post route between the two countries from overland to maritime, for which China will arrange a steamer from the CMSNC to make a trip to Chosŏn at a fixed date once per month. Article 8 states that any points that may have to be enlarged upon or cancelled in the future will be discussed and settled by correspondence between the Beiyang Superintendent and the king, whereupon the final decision will be subject to the emperor.¹⁰⁸

Li's summary covered main points of the regulations, but it did not mention that Article 7 endowed the Chinese men-of-war with the right of cruising about in Chosŏn's waters and anchoring at any of the ports in the interest of the country's safety. Viewed from the point of international law, this term violently damaged Chosŏn's sovereignty, yet Ŏ and his Korean colleagues who argued with Zhou and Ma over the unequal consular jurisdiction did not challenge this term because they regarded it as a part of the favorable protection provided by the Upper Country for its loyal shuguo. In a very practical sense, the *RMOTCC* became a tool for China to strengthen its control of Chosŏn in the post-mutiny period, but first and foremost, the treaty was a result of the king's above-mentioned requests and it indeed fulfilled the majority of the requests by fundamentally changing or even permanently abolishing some conventions that had been lasting for 245 years after 1637 between the two countries.

Beijing endorsed all these changes. Emperor Guangxu stated that, "Chosŏn, being a shuguo of our country, is the Eastern Barbarians (Ch. *dongyi*). It is so poor and weak that Japan and Russia have coveted it for a long time. It is a good way to protect the shuguo by allowing it to trade with such countries as Britain and the U.S., so that Russia

¹⁰⁸ Li's memorial, October 10, 1882, in *Guangxu chao zhupi zouzhe* (The palace memorials with Emperor Guangxu's imperial instructions), vol. 112, 243.

and Japan cannot annex it.”¹⁰⁹ In terms of cherishing the shuguo, the court always went further than local officials did. For instance, on March 14, 1882, when the court learned from the Manchu General of Jilin, Ming’an (1828–1911), and his assistant, Wu Dacheng (1835–1902), that many poor Chosŏn peasants kept crossing the border to cultivate the wilderness in Jilin, Emperor Guangxu instructed that, “Regarding these poor Chosŏn peasants, in the eyes of the local officials, there is certainly a line between them and us (Ch. *bici zhi fen*); yet in the eyes of the court, there is originally no difference between the inside and the outside (Ch. *neiwai zhi bie*). Thus, they should be well managed and not be prevented by additional rules, as long as they have no intention of encroaching on our borders.”¹¹⁰ This policy was very similar to Emperor Yongzheng’s decision in 1727 on demarcating a new border line with Annam based on the idea that all lands of the outer *fan* were under the emperor’s rule. From 1727 to 1882, the ideology of “all-under-Heaven” of the court that was continuously informed by its perennial Zongfan contacts with its outer *fan* did not change much. Although China opened its door to Western nations after the 1840s, which might indicate the beginning of the collapse of the Heavenly Dynasty,¹¹¹ it still firmly acted as the Central Kingdom, the Upper Country, and the Heavenly Dynasty in the Zongfan arrangement with its prototypical outer *fan* in the 1880s. As long as Chosŏn existed as China’s shuguo, China’s politico-cultural self-identity as the Heavenly Dynasty would persist and its West-oriented diplomacy would be accordingly limited.

Since the *RMOTCC* adopted the form of a Western-style treaty, it helped to

¹⁰⁹ Emperor Guangxu’s comments on Li’s memorial, in *Guangxu chao zhupi zouzhe*, vol. 112, 247.

¹¹⁰ Ming’an’s memorial, March 14, 1882, in *Guangxu chao zhupi zouzhe*, vol. 112, 243.

¹¹¹ See, for example, Mao Haijian, *Tianchao de bengkui: yapian zhanzheng zai yanjiu* (The collapse of the Heavenly Dynasty: A restudy of the Opium War).

produce an inner dual system of the contacts between China and Chosŏn. Whereas they kept their court-to-court system between the imperial house at Beijing and the royal house at Hansŏng, they had to adjust to the newly created nation-to-nation system between Qing China as a nation, on the one hand, and Chosŏn as a nation equal to China in terms of international law, on the other. This inner dual system seemed to temporarily solve certain problems, but it in turn brought the two countries to more thorny issues in a new international setting, as the ritual crisis in China in late 1882 illuminated.

THE RITUAL CRISIS AND DEFINING THE SHUGUO BY THE TREATIES IN 1883

The ritual crisis arose from several questions of the Manchu General at Mukden, Chongqi (1830–1900), about the changes of certain *Zongfan* conventions in the *RMOTCC*. In December 1882, Chongqi submitted three memorials to express his concerns. In the first memorial, he anxiously queried Article 2, according to which the Chinese Commissioners of Trade at the treaty ports of Chosŏn “will in their dealings with Chosŏn’s officials be on the footing of perfect equality, and are to be treated with the consideration due to the observance of etiquette,” while the Chosŏn Commissioners at the Chinese ports “are likewise to be treated on a footing of equality in their dealings with the local authorities, namely the Taotai, the Prefect, and the Magistrates of the place.” Reviewing that Chosŏn became “a *fan* and subject” (Ch. *fanchen*) of the Great Qing in 1637 and that all Korean officials were “ministers of ministers” (Ch. *peichen*; K. *paesin*) whose status was different from that of Chinese local officials appointed by the court, Chongqi critically pointed out that the emperor would be on a footing of equality with the king when Chosŏn Commissioners were treated equally by China’s local authorities. It thus “fundamentally concerns the orthodox legitimacy and in no way should such treatment be

given to Chosŏn.” The general claimed that Mukden would treat Chosŏn Commissioners along conventional lines without any changes in order to defend the “decorum” (Ch. *titong*). Although he agreed that the Chosŏn Commissioners at the ports in the area of inner Shanhai Pass might be treated differently, Chongqi strongly suggested that the term “equality” (Ch. *pingxing*) in the article should be deleted for the sake of “moral principles” (Ch. *lunji*) and “national constitution” (Ch. *guoti*) of China.¹¹²

Chongqi’s second memorial questioned Article 5 that cancelled the convention of the official-supervised trade on the frontier (Ch. *hushi*) and allowed local people to freely trade respectively at Zhamen and Ŭiju on the two sides of the Yalu River, and at Hunchun and Hoeryŏng on the two sides of the Tumen River. Chongqi agreed to cancel outdated rules, but emphasized that the overland border security should be strengthened by shifting the trade place from Zhamen to the checkpoint at Zhongjiang near the Yalu River and patrolling along the Chinese side as usual. This perception of unpredictable threats from Chosŏn itself and treaty powers at Chosŏn was corroborated by his third memorial, which underlined uniqueness and importance of Mukden and the province that were the Great Qing’s “fundamental areas” (Ch. *genben zhongdi*). He suggested that the affairs regarding Mukden and the province should be negotiated with the Manchu General and the Prefect at Mukden by the Beiyang Superintendent and the king.¹¹³

Chongqi’s memorials exposed the anxiety of the Manchu officials in Manchuria over the security of the special area for the imperial house of the Great Qing and the ritual-oriented foundation of the Zongfan system, so that they triggered a hot debate among the Ministry of Rituals, the Zongli Yamen, and the Beiyang Superintendent. Since

¹¹² Chongqi’s memorial, in *QJZRH*, vol. 3, 1063-1064.

¹¹³ Chongqi’s memorial, in *QJZRH*, vol. 3, 1065-1069.

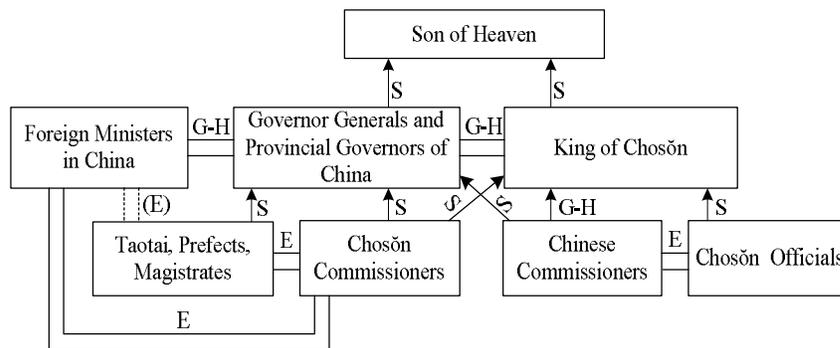
the overland frontier trade regulations would be soon negotiated at Mukden after a joint-investigation of China and Chosŏn, the issue of performing equal rituals became the most disputable topic in the quite intense debate. Li found that the imperial code of the Great Qing did not regulate ritual performances between Chinese local officials and tributary emissaries, but he noted that the local officials treated the emissaries of Annam, Siam, and Ryukyu with “rituals of equality” (Ch. *pingli*), which could be applicable to Chosŏn. Moreover, Li solicited theoretical support from the classics of the Zhou dynasty and drew an analogy between the statuses of the authorities of the two countries. According to this analogy, the king, as an “outer vassal” (Ch. *wai zhuhou*) of the Son of Heaven, was equal to China’s governor-generals and governors who were “inner vassals” (Ch. *nei zhuhou*), on the one hand, and Chosŏn’s officials were equal to Chinese officials who were below governor-generals and governors, on the other. Therefore, in China, the Korean Commissioners should perform the “rituals of subordinate” (Ch. *shuli*) to the Chinese governor-generals, governors, and the officials with higher ranks, and perform the “rituals of equality” to such local officials as Taotai and Prefect. They should also perform the “rituals of equality” to Western ministers at Tianjin, where the commissioners would reside. In Chosŏn, on the other hand, the Chinese Commissioners should perform the “rituals of equality” to the Korean officials who were inferior to those of the cabinet, Ŭijŏngbu.¹¹⁴

Li apparently tried to pursue the mean between the conventional Zongfan rituals embodying the “ancestral system” (Ch. *zuzhi*) and the new Western-style diplomatic etiquette between foreign ministers and the host country. Agreeing that the Korean Commissioners could get favorable treatment in that they were not tributary emissaries,

¹¹⁴ Li to the Zongli Yamen, January 3, 1883, in *QJZRH*, vol. 3, 1072-1075

the Ministry of Rituals proposed that when the Chinese Commissioners with the rank of or below Taotai visited the king, they should perform the “rituals of guest–host” (Ch. *binzhu li*) by slightly changing certain rules of the imperial code.¹¹⁵ In February 1883, the court, via the Zongli Yamen, endorsed Li’s and the ministry’s solutions to the ritual crisis by setting up a new framework of the ritual performances between the two countries (Figure 5. 1). As the Corps Diplomatique formed at Hansŏng, this new ritual arrangement would cause serious conflicts among China, Chosŏn, Japan, and Western powers in the following decade.

Figure 5. 1. The Rule of Ritual Performances between China and Chosŏn after 1883



Notes: “S” refers to the rituals of subordinate (*shuli*), “E” refers to the rituals of equality (*pingli*), and “G–H” refers to the rituals of guest–host (*binzhu li*). The foreign ministers in China sometime used the rituals of equality in their dealings with Chinese Taotai, Prefects, Magistrates, and other local officials.

Chongqi found the new ritual arrangement a good resolution to the potential problems, and he soon fulfilled his expectations of strengthening the frontier security and maintaining the “proper system” by signing a convention with Ŏ Yun-chung in March 1883. The convention, entitled “The Rules for Trade on the Frontier between Mukden and Chosŏn” (*RTFMC*, Ch. *Fengtian yu Chaoxian bianmin jiaoyi zhangcheng*), included 24 articles regulating the trade activities at the Zhongjiang area on the Chinese side of the Yalu River, among which several articles aimed to maintain the Zongfan conventions.

¹¹⁵ The Ministry of Rituals to the Zongli Yamen, January 18, 1883, in *QJZRH*, vol. 3, 1085-1088.

Following the style of the *RMOTCC*, the preamble of the *RTFMC* states that the trade on the frontier at Zhongjiang “is not on the same footing as the trade carried on at the treaty ports, inasmuch as it was originally established by the Heavenly Dynasty as a benefit to its shuguo with the distinct understanding that it should be a convenience to the population...and that other nations are not concerned in these rules.” Article 8 allows Chosŏn’s annual tributes and routine goods carried by emissaries and attendants to be exempt from taxes as usual. Article 19 states that China would send soldiers to escort the Korean tributary missions to Beijing from Fenghuang City as before. Article 23 dictates that the bilateral correspondence should be conducted in accordance with the “system” (Ch. *tizhi*), according to which Chosŏn should call China the “Heavenly Dynasty” or the “Upper Country” and such abbreviated characters as *zhong* (referring to Zhongguo) or *dong* (Ch. *Dongguo*, the eastern country, namely Chosŏn) should not be used. Similarly, the Chinese officials on the frontier would address Chosŏn as the “Country of Chosŏn” (Ch. *Chaoxian guo*) or “Your honorable country” (Ch. *guiguo*) to show China’s preferential treatment.¹¹⁶ Several months later, the two countries signed another convention entitled “The Rules for Trade on the Frontier between Jilin and Chosŏn” (*RTFJC*, Ch. *Jilin Chaoxian shangmin suishi maoyi zhangcheng*) to regulate the frontier trade near the Tumen River. The convention with 16 rules imitated the contents of the *RTFMC*, in particular Article 15 that was a copy of Article 23 of the *RTFMC* dictating specific political discourse of the bilateral correspondence.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ *Fengtian yu Chaoxian bianmin jiaoyi zhangcheng* (The rules for trade on the frontier between Mukden and Chosŏn), in *QJZRH*, vol. 3, 1188-1194; *Chunggang t’ongsang changjŏng chogwan* (Rules on trading at the Chunggang of China), archive catalogue No. M/F 80-103-137-B; for the negotiations on the rules, see *Yŏ chungguk wiwŏn hoesang sangse changjŏng* (Negotiations with Chinese representatives over the details of the treaty), archive catalogue No. M/F 80-103-137-B; *Treaties, Conventions, etc., between China and Foreign States*, vol. 2, 854-863.

¹¹⁷ *Jilin Chaoxian shangmin suishi maoyi zhangcheng* (The rules for trade on the frontier between Jilin and

As a result, from summer 1882 to late 1883, China and Chosŏn signed three regulations in the Zongfan context, which presented as a form of western-style treaty, in order to regulate their maritime and overland trade activities and create a new political and commercial network along borders. The three regulations could be seen as a domino effect of the king's six requests in early 1882, with which the imperial court had to appropriately deal in the Zongfan setting primarily through two institutional agents, namely the Zongli Yamen and the Beiyang Superintendent, not the Ministry of Rituals. In practice, the adjustments to the Zongfan mechanism in the three conventions laid the legal foundation for the nation-to-nation or state-to-state contacts between the two countries in the following years.

5.4 Among the Nations, Above the Nations: The Nub of the Issue of Shuguo for Qing China

When Qing China adjusted to fit the treaty port system from the early 1860s to the early 1880s, it encountered difficulty in articulating and managing its Zongfan relationship with its prototypical *fan* against the new historical background. This issue concerned the transformation Qing China's self-identity at the time, when the traditional ideology of "all-under-Heaven" collapsed *per se*, but such transformation ran into impassible obstacle of its time-honored relationship with Chosŏn, Ryukyu, and Vietnam in that both sides of the Zongfan arrangement within the same family could not challenge their own legitimacy that was deeply bound with and informed by each other. Consequently, despite the dramatic changes of some parts of the entire framework of China's foreign relations, the Zongfan mechanism found itself standing firmly between China and its outer *fan*, in particular Chosŏn, rather than declining or being replaced by the treaty port system.

Chosŏn), in *QJZRH*, vol. 3, 1264-1269;

For Qing China, although the “western barbarians” had rebelled and broken China’s southern gate into pieces and imposed unequal treaties upon the country since the 1840s, the “eastern barbarians”—Chosŏn—remained unchanged and continuously consolidated the foundation of the Central Kingdom by following the time-honored Zongfan conventions crystalized by the perennial tributary emissaries to Beijing and certain hierarchical ritual performances. As long as it embraced the politico-cultural identity as the Central Kingdom, Zhongguo, and the Heavenly Dynasty, the Qing had to assume legal and moral obligations within the said framework to Chosŏn, rather than leaving the outer *fan* alone or forcing it to negotiate with other countries over diplomatic affairs. More importantly, it would also be inappropriate and morally wrong for Qing China to annex the country, inasmuch as such colonial option never appeared on the Qing’s agenda. In this sense, it would not be exaggerated to assert that Qing China was hijacked by its moral obligations by the Zongfan principles.

For Chosŏn, albeit it understood in the late 1870s and early 1880s that Qing China had been drawn into a new Western-style diplomatic system and China’s Western counterparts had resided their ministers at Beijing, it still needed to pursue the orthodox legitimacy from Qing China and regard the Manchu emperor in Beijing as the shared supreme authority in the Chinese world, if not in the entire universe as before. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the military might of the Western powers could defeat China and force the Chinese empire to make changes to certain aspects, such as opening treaty ports that disintegrated a part of the tributary trade system, but it was unable to change China’s supreme and exclusive patriarchal position for Chosŏn. All in all, the legitimacy of the governance of Chosŏn was bound with its Zongfan relations

with the Ming after the 1390s and with the Qing after 1637. As it turned out, the western powers could not fundamentally change the rationale behind the Zongfan system that had been functioning between China and its outer *fan* for centuries.¹¹⁸ Even after the king of Chosŏn proclaimed to be emperor of the “Great Korea” (K. *Taehan*) in 1897, the absence of the orthodox legitimacy from China, the exclusive venue for an emperor to be living, still made some Korean intellectuals worried. Viewed from this point of view, Chosŏn was also a victim of the China-centric Zongfan mechanism.

From the early 1860s to early 1880s, Western powers and international law succeeded in bringing China into the family of nations, whereas the robust Zongfan practices between the imperial court of China and the royal court of Chosŏn sustained the Qing’s self-identity as *Zhongguo*, which in the politico-cultural sense and in the Zongfan context stood above all other members of the family of nations. The above-mentioned Emperor Guangxu’s imperial comments on the frontier affairs of Jilin province in 1882 illuminated this point. In other words, Qing China as the Chinese empire in the territorial sense was included into the family of nations and presented itself as a member of the world, but as the Chinese empire in the politico-cultural sense it did not change so dramatically. A divergence took place between the two dimensions of the Chinese empire under the Great Qing at the time. Qing China suffered from this divergence after the 1860s, when the treaty port system permeated in East Asia on the one hand, and Japan and Western powers started to explore Chosŏn, on the other. China was pushed into a tight corner by those powers’ ardent request of articulating the nature of Chosŏn’s status as China’s *shuguo* and by Chosŏn’s zealous request to conduct diplomacy on its behalf.

¹¹⁸ Chang Chi-hsiung, “Dongxi guoji zhixu yuanli de chayi: ‘zongfan tixi’ dui ‘zhimin tixi’” (A comparison of Eastern and Western principles of international order: suzerainty vs. colonization).

What China was facing was not only two different systems on the surface, namely, the conventional Zongfan system and the newly established treaty port system, but also an intrinsic challenge of reconfiguring the boundary between Zhongguo and its outer *fan* within the ideologically cosmopolitan Chinese empire. Simultaneously, the same challenge occurred to China's policies toward Vietnam of the day, too.

In retrospect, during this hectic period, the Chinese empire was experiencing an inward involution that was moving from its politico-cultural frontier toward its center. China decided to guide Chosŏn into the family of nations, but the two sides determined to maintain their bilateral Zongfan relations and legally defined and defended such relationship through Western-style regulations between themselves. After 1882 and 1883, the Chinese policy toward Chosŏn that was legitimate and informed by precedents within the Zongfan framework turned out to be more provocative for other powers, which, in the context of the rise of Chosŏn's nationalism, gradually yielded more and more conflicts among China, Chosŏn, and the powers in the following decade. As a result, a yawning chasm between the outer dual system and the inner dual system thoroughly exposed itself, which eventually resulted in the sharp termination of the bilateral Zongfan relationship.

CHAPTER 6

Losing Chosŏn: The Last Zongfan Decade of the Chinese Empire, 1884–1895

In the hectic 1880s, Qing China had two primary options for its policy toward Chosŏn, including “provincializing” (Ch. *junxian*) it, which meant to convert Chosŏn into several prefectures and countries of China,¹ and “supervising and protecting” (Ch. *jianhu*) it, which referred to China’s patriarchal role of supervising Chosŏn’s affairs. Being consistent with its policy of proclaiming that Chosŏn was China’s shuguo with the right of zizhu, China finally adopted an in-between policy by assisting Chosŏn with managing its diplomatic and commercial affairs. This policy made Western diplomats believe that Beijing was actually annexing Chosŏn in the name of conventional practices between the two countries. For China and Chosŏn, however, Beijing’s policy indeed had its rationale and fulfilled China’s commitment to its intrinsic responsibilities to protect and help its outer *fan* or shuguo.

China never delivered an intelligible definition of Chosŏn’s status for Western powers, which was an actually impossible mission for Beijing to accomplish because it was unable to overcome the institutional discrepancies between the Zongfan mechanism and international law,² but no treaty powers ever publicly denied the legitimacy of Sino–Korean relations on the world stage. The acquiescence among the powers was that China’s authority over Chosŏn was real and true. On the other hand, in the wake of Japan’s challenges in the 1880s and early 1890s, China made more changes to routine

¹ The term “provincializing” used in this dissertation, therefore, has a different connotation from that in Dipesh Chakrabarty’s book, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*.

² See, for example, Chang Chi-hsiung, “Dongxi guoji zhixu yuanli de chayi: ‘zongfan tixi’ dui ‘zhimin tixi’” (A comparison of Eastern and Western principles of international order: suzerainty vs. colonization), *Zhongyang yanjiuyuan jindaishi yanjiusuo jikan* (Bulletin of the Institute of Modern History Academia Sinica) 79 (March, 2013), 47-86.

contacts with Chosŏn, while it tried to keep the fundamentals of the Zongfan order untouched. This policy contributed to the formation of exclusivism and isolationism of the Chinese diplomatic representatives in Chosŏn. This chapter discusses China's translucent power toward Chosŏn through Yuan Shikai's residence from 1884 to 1894, China's awkward position in the country through China's last imperial mission to Chosŏn in 1890, and the images of Chosŏn in the minds of Chinese intellectuals and officials during the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895.

6.1 Tracing Legitimacy back to the First Days of the Zongfan Relations: The His Imperial Chinese Majesty's Resident in Chosŏn

YUAN SHIKAI IN CHOSŎN AND THE RITUAL CONUNDRUM FOR HIS POWER

After the mutiny of 1882, Chosŏn asked China to send specialists on diplomatic negotiations, commercial supervision, and customs management to assist it with establishing a system of maritime customs. The request was made by the king, endorsed by China's court, and executed by both countries within the Zongfan framework. Chosŏn's maritime customs system, therefore, became a sub-branch of China's imperial customs. In November 1882, Ma Jianchang, Ma Jianzhong's brother, and Paul George von Möllendorff, a German national who worked as an assistant in the Chinese Maritime Customs office and later at the German legation in Beijing after 1874, were appointed by Li Hongzhang as foreign advisers to the king and to found customs house in Hansŏng.³ Ma Jianchang and Möllendorff took their posts in early 1883, followed by the first group of diplomatic representatives of Western treaty powers and China.

³ Li's memorials, November 18 and 23, 1882, in *QJZRH*, vol. 3, 1020, 1029-1030. See also Hart to Campbell, No. 390, Z/100, December 10, 1882, in *The I. G. in Peking: Letters of Robert Hart Chinese Maritime Customs, 1868-1907*, 436; George Alexander Lensen, *Balance of Intrigue: International Rivalry in Korea & Manchuria, 1884-1899*, vol. 1, 31-53.

Among the representatives, the first U.S. Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary, Lucius Foote, and the first Chinese Commissioners of Trade, Chen Shutang, were the two most important figures because of their competing approaches to defining Chosŏn's status. In March 1883, before he departed for Chosŏn, Foote received instructions from Secretary of State Fredrick Frelinghuysen, which emphasized that the treaty negotiations with Chosŏn "were conducted as between two independent and sovereign nations...As far as we are concerned Korea is an independent sovereign power, with all the attendant rights,—privileges, duties and responsibilities: in her relations to China we have no desire to interfere unless action should be taken prejudicial to the rights of the United States." The instructions articulated that "for all purpose of intercourse between the United States and Korea the King is a sovereign, and that with sovereign states only do the United States treat. Further the representatives of the United States in China will treat the Korean representatives there as in the position assigned them by the Chinese government."⁴ This pragmatic policy was imitated by other Western powers, but their acquiescence on China's superiority in Chosŏn did not give Chen Shutang a decent position in the Corps Diplomatique in Hansŏng.

As a second-rank Taotai, Chen held a title of "Commissioner of Commercial Affairs in Chosŏn" (Ch. *Weiban Chaoxian shangwu weiyuan*), which for his diplomatic colleagues in Hansŏng meant he had no right of managing foreign affairs. Thus, the Japanese and Western ministers always directly negotiated diplomatic matters with Chosŏn's Foreign Office, the T'ongni Amun (K. *T'ongni kyosŏp t'ongsang samu amun*), which was developed from the T'ongnigimu Amun after 1882. In September 1884, Chen

⁴ Frelinghuysen to Foote, No. 3, Washington, March 17, 1883, in George McAfee McCune and John A. Harrison eds., *Korean–American Relations: Documents Pertaining to the Far Eastern Diplomacy of the United States*, Volume I (hereafter referred to as *KARD I*), 25-26.

complained to Li Hongzhang that his awkward position even caused him to be jeered by Japanese and British ministers. Chen said he tried to define his authority by citing the *RMOTCC*, but other ministers responded that the treaty was only effective between China and Korea.⁵

Due to this problem, in 1884, when Chen appointed Chinese officials to the three treaty ports, namely Inchon, Wŏnsan, and Pusan, to supervise Sino–Korean commercial activities, he purposely gave them the title of “Commissioner of Chinese Merchants’ Affairs” (Ch. *Banli huashang shiwu lishi*), endowing them with the right of negotiating foreign affairs with other countries. The “commissioner” (Ch. *lishi*), which means “manager” in Chinese context, would function as a consul (Ch. *lingshi*) in practice, but it was not a consul in nature.⁶ After consulting with Foote and Li, Chen himself also adopted a new title of “General Commissioner of Foreign and Commercial Affairs at Chosŏn’s Ports” (Ch. *Zongban Chaoxian gekou jiaoshe tongshang shiwu*) in November 1884.⁷ According to Chen, this title perfectly fit the “system” (Ch. *tizhi*), in which he could discuss affairs of the shuguo with his counterparts as an official of the “Upper Country.” It was not surprising that Chen’s new title aroused fear among some Western ministers. When the British minister at Beijing, Harry Parkes, asked the Zongli Yamen to articulate Chen’s position, the Yamen replied that, “Chosŏn is China’s shuguo, so the commissioner should not be understood as a minister to the country; but since Chen has been appointed to be in charge of diplomatic affairs by the emperor and he holds a second-rank Taotai, his position is equal to Consuls-General of other countries.”⁸

⁵ Li to the Zongli Yamen, September 19, 1884, in *QJZRH*, vol. 3, 1477.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 1477.

⁷ Li to the Zongli Yamen, November 10, 1884, in *QJZRH*, vol. 3, 1490.

⁸ The Zongli Yamen’s letter to Parkes, November 22, 1884, in *QJZRH*, vol. 3, 1494.

Chen could barely enjoy the extension of his power before the breakout of a coup launched by some Korean activists of the *Kaehwadang* (the enlightenment party). On December 4, 1884, under the support of the Japanese minister Takezoe Shinichirō, these activists, such as Hong Yōng-sik (1855–1884), Kim Ok-kyun (1851–1894), and Bak Yōng-hyo (1861–1939), occupied the palace, killed several pro-Chinese officials, and announced a reform aiming to terminate Zongfan relations with China. The coup, known as *Kapsin jōngbyōn*, resulted from the increasing struggles among China, Japan, and Western powers, and from the Korean nationalism cultivated by Japanese. It occurred at the time when China was fighting with France in Vietnam. The coup lasted for only two days before the Chinese general Wu Zhaoyou (1829–?) and his assistant generals Zhang Guangqian and Yuan Shikai led Chinese troops to put the king and royal family members under their protection and to defeat the *Kaehwadang* and the Japanese soldiers.⁹ Although all foreign ministers in the city were deeply involved, the Chinese and the Korean attacks on the Japanese legation and citizens in Hansōng and other places left the resolution of the turmoil to the hands of China and Japan.

The nub of the Sino–Japanese conflict was still Chosōn’s status. In January 1885, Mori Arinori in Tokyo suggested Itō Hirobumi consult with his debates with the Zongli Yamen in 1876, especially the Yamen’s statement on China’s responsibilities of solving Chosōn’s crises.¹⁰ Tokyo soon sent Inoue Kaoru as the plenipotentiary to Chosōn to talk with Chinese envoys, Wu Dacheng and Xuchang. Wu was not a plenipotentiary, so the negotiation was finally transferred to Tianjin between Li Hongzhang and Itō Hirobumi. On April 18, the two countries signed a convention, agreeing to retreat their troops from

⁹ *Kojong sidaesa*, vol. 2, 675-582.

¹⁰ Mori’s private letter to Itō, January 15, 1885, in *Mori Arinori zenshū*, vol. 1, 195.

Chosŏn within four months, to allow the king to hire officers from other countries except China and Japan to train the Korean forces, and to notify each other of their troops sending to Chosŏn in any disturbance with a grave nature.¹¹

Li thus believed that China should strengthen the power of its representative in Hansŏng to check Japan and other powers. The result was the significant expansion of the power of Chen's successor, Yuan Shikai, a then 26-year-old officer who had been serving in Chosŏn for three years since 1882. On November 2, 1885, under Li's strong recommendation, Beijing appointed Yuan as "Imperial Resident in Chosŏn in charge of Diplomatic and Commercial Intercourse" (Ch. *Qinming zhuzha Chaoxian zongli jiaoshe tongshang shiyi*), holding a third-level official rank and the title of backup candidate for Taotai.¹² The English translation of Yuan's title soon became a big issue in Hansŏng because it concerned his real authority and Chosŏn's sovereignty. At first, the American chargé d'affaires, George Foulk, offered a translation of "Charge of Diplomatic and Commercial Intercourse," but it was rejected by a young American-educated assistant of Yuan, who offered the word "Resident" and the translation "His Imperial Chinese Majesty's Resident, Seoul." A following three-party talk among Foulk, the British Consul E. C. Baber, and the Japanese chargé d'affaires Takahira Kogorō rendered no unanimous translation.¹³ Finally, Yuan decided to address himself as "H. I. C. M. Resident." Later, his fellow diplomats in Hansŏng tacitly defined him as "a Consul-General with diplomatic functions."¹⁴ Yuan was not a minister, but he held more powers than a

¹¹ *Treaties, Conventions, etc., between China and Foreign States*, vol. 2, 588-589.

¹² The Zongli Yamen to Yuan, November 2, 1885, in *QJZRH*, vol. 4, 1954.

¹³ Foulk to Bayard, No. 255, *Confidential*, November 25, 1885, in *KARD I*, 1951, 137-139.

¹⁴ Heard to Blaine, No. 29, *confidential*, Seoul, Korea, July 10, 1890, in Spencer J. Palmer ed., *Korean-American Relations Documents Pertaining to the Far Eastern Diplomacy of the United States*, Volume II (hereafter referred to as *KARD II*), 21.

minister did. For instance, he made a several-hour-long and face-to-face conversation with the king on September 30, 1886, when the Port Hamilton event was unsettled yet among Chosŏn, Russia, Britain, and China.¹⁵

Together with the problem of his title emerged a ritual crisis for Yuan in terms of how he should perform ceremonies to the king. In his telegram to Li to solicit the latter's advice in February 1886, Yuan mentioned that in past years, when Chinese officials paid visits to the king, they entered the palace gate in a sedan chair, made a bow to the king with hands folded in front (Ch. *zuoyi*) three times, and then sat down at the side of the king. Yet, in 1884, the Chinese imperial envoys, Wu Dacheng and Xuchang, General Ding Ruchang, and Taotai Ma Jianzhong, sat down opposite to the king by following the host-guest ceremony. Yuan also mentioned that ministers of other countries had to get out of their sedan chairs at the palace gate, and paid visits to the king according to the etiquette that officials outside the capital (Ch. *waichen*) performed to the king.¹⁶ Li suggested that it would be courteous for Yuan to follow the rituals for Chinese provincial-level officials (Ch. *sidao*) to visit first-degree princes (Ch. *qinjunwang*).

The normal procedure for such a visit proceeded according to the following steps: first, Yuan should get out of the sedan chair at the gate of the palace; second, he should bow three times with his hands folded in front to the king, and third, he should sit down by king's side. For grand ceremonies, Yuan should bow three times with his hands folded in front to the king, instead of bowing (Ch. *jugong*) three times as his predecessor had done, in order to show China was "neither haughty nor humble" and to harmonize with

¹⁵ Li to the Zongli Yamen, October 1, 1886, in *LHZQJ* (2008), vol. 22, 116; *QJZRH*, vol. 4, 2145-2159.

¹⁶ Yuan to Li, February 1, 1886, in *LHZQJ* (2008), vol. 21, 654.

other ministers.¹⁷ The newly created rituals endowed Yuan with ritual privileges that the ministers of other treaty powers could not gain, which continuously reminded these ministers that the H. I. C. M. Resident had a higher position than them. By the same token, it was exactly the ritual unbalance engendered many problems in the following years between Yuan and these ministers.¹⁸ The nub of all of their conflicts concerned Chosŏn's status as China's shuguo, an issue as perplexing as before.

PERCEIVING CHOSŎN'S SOVEREIGNTY AND INDEPENDENCE IN THE ZONGFAN FRAMEWORK IN THE LATE 1880S

In the late 1880s, Chosŏn's sovereignty became a hot topic among Chosŏn, China, and Western countries. When Chosŏn signed treaties with the U.S., Britain, Germany, Italy, Russia, and France from 1882 to 1886, the king always sent a note to the sovereign of each of these countries to claim that "Corea is a tributary of China, but in regard to both internal administration and foreign intercourse it enjoys complete independence." In face of international intrigues, Beijing began to exploit conventional sources of the Sino-Korean Zongfan relations to prevent Chosŏn from being invaded or annexed by other countries. China's motivation embodied the conventional Zongfan policy of "cherishing the small country" (Ch. *zixiao*), but the revivification of this policy was misunderstood by other powers as China's aggressive move.

China's actions caused a backlash in Chosŏn when the latter stepped onto the world stage and transformed from China's shuguo into an independent sovereign state. In

¹⁷ Li to Yuan, February 1, 1886, in *LHZQJ* (2008), vol. 21, 655.

¹⁸ Yuan's privilege of being allowed entry to the palace in his sedan chair provoked the displeasure of western ministers, especially on September 10, 1893, when all ministers were invited to the palace. Yuan was ill, so he sent Consul Tang Shaoyi instead. Tang did not get off his sedan chair until he reached the door of the reception room. Other countries' ministers, however, suffered in a heavy rain, which incurred their wrath. See Allen to Gresham, No. 469, Seoul, Korea, October 6, 1893, in *KARD II*, 93-94; Allen to Gresham, No. 479, *Confidential*, Seoul, Korea, November 4, 1893, *KARD II*, 95; Kirk W. Larsen, *Tradition, Treaties, and Trade*, 192; George Alexander Lensen, *Balance of Intrigue*, vol. 1, 92-93.

order to meet various diplomatic challenges, Chosŏn established new institutes and developed a pattern of dual diplomacy in the 1880s, just as what had happened in China in the 1860s. By this pattern, the royal court of Chosŏn maintained its Zongfan relations with China's imperial court, on the one hand; and the newly founded institutes, predominantly the Foreign Office, were in charge of state contacts with other countries, on the other. The problem was that the agencies of China's state diplomacy, in particular the Beiyang Superintendent and the H. I. C. M. Resident, tended to influence Chosŏn's state diplomacy by exploiting China's unique authority that originated in the court-to-court contacts. For the Western advisors appointed by China to Chosŏn, this Chinese approach was impairing Chosŏn's independent sovereignty. Consequently, a centrifugal force from the Zongfan order emerged from Chosŏn that was presented by the establishment of the maritime customs in the country.

As the first Western advisor to the Korean government on affairs of maritime customers under Li's recommendation, Möllendorff arrived in Hansŏng in early 1883, where he also assumed vice-president of the newly founded Foreign Office.¹⁹ Yet Möllendorff's activities deviated from Li's wishes, when he became eager to develop Chosŏn's military force to counterbalance the weakness of the country. In 1884, Möllendorff asked Li to send officers to train Chosŏn's army and, after this request produced no response, he persuaded Chosŏn to negotiate a convention with Russia, whereby Russian officers would train Chosŏn's army in exchange for the use of Chosŏn's Port Lazarev, an ice-free port near the eastern treaty port of Wŏnsan. Under Li's pressure, the king soon dismissed Möllendorff from duty in November 1885.²⁰

¹⁹ Martina Deuchler, *Confucian Gentlemen and Barbarian Envoys*, 153.

²⁰ Hart to Campbell, No.696, Z/387, April 21, 1889, in *The I. G. in Peking*, 743.

In terms of such advisor positions to in Chosŏn, Li did not recommend Chinese officials because the Chinese Maritime Customs, to which the Korean Maritime Customs was subject, was managed by the foreign staff headed by the British citizen, Robert Hart, the Inspector General of Chinese Maritime Customs. Li wanted to exploit the traditional Chinese tactic of “using barbarian to resist one another” (Ch. *yiyi zhiyi*), too. Under Hart’s recommendation, Henry F. Merrill, an American national, replaced Möllendorff as chief commissioner of the Korean Maritime Customs, and Owen Nickerson Denny, a former American consul in Tianjin, assumed Möllendorff’s another post as vice-president of the Foreign Office. However, Denny soon proved to be more aggressive than Möllendorff. In February 1888, Denny published an emotional booklet, *China and Korea*, asserting that Korea was a totally independent state with independent sovereignty and China was destroying Korea “by absorbing the country.”²¹ In June 1888, Li secretly sent Möllendorff back to Hansŏng to “checkmate Denny who is urging the King to assert independence.”²²

Denny’s action was corroborated with other Western diplomats in Chosŏn who desperately hoped to grasp the nature of the Sino–Korean relationship. In summer 1887, an intense dispute occurred between Chosŏn’s Foreign Office and the American legation over the rumor that the American chargé d’affaires *ad interim*, Lieutenant George C. Foulk, tried to persuade the king to be independent from China. Yuan, Li, Foulk, the American chargé d’affaires William W. Rockhill, and the American minister at Hansŏng Hugh A. Dinsmore were deeply involved.²³ Very quickly, in October 1887, another fierce

²¹ O. N. Denny, *China and Korea*, in Robert R. Swartout Jr. ed., *An American Adviser in Late Yi Korea: The Letters of Owen Nickerson Denny*, 142.

²² Hart to Campbell, No.651, Z/342, June 3, 1888, in *The I. G. in Peking*, 705.

²³ Li to the Zongli Yamen, July 16, 1887, in *QJZHR*, vol. 4, 2306-2321; Dinsmore to Frelinghuysen, May

dispute took place between Yuan and the Korean government, when the latter decided to send representatives to the U.S. and other treaty nations.²⁴ This dispute was caused by, and centered on, certain rituals, but it fully exposed to the world that the issue of Chosŏn's independent sovereignty and its international status evolved into an inner clash within the Sino–Korean framework. Denny's pamphlet was precisely published and circulated at that moment. Against the new historical background, all these episodes led to the deterioration of the Sino–Korean relationship.

In the late 1880s, many treaty powers believed that Chosŏn was shifting out of the China-centric system by adopting Western political and diplomatic terms. In this milieu, China's state-to-state contacts with Chosŏn became a catalyst for the centrifugal force of the country. This could explain why Yuan could not positively engage in Chosŏn's affairs and was *de facto* marginalized by the Chosŏn government and foreign ministers in Hansŏng, as we will show in the following pages. Accordingly, the relationship between Yuan and the Chosŏn court and that between Beijing and Hansŏng became increasingly unpleasant and even hostile. As Dinsmore put in 1887, "The Koreans do not impress me as having any affection or strong attachment for the Chinese. On the contrary there is among the common people a well-defined dislike for them, but they fear them and it is under the influence of this fear that they are gradually yielding to Chinese supremacy."²⁵

These perplexing episodes encouraged some Western diplomats to study the history of Sino–Korean relations with the aim of revealing the legitimacy of China's authority in Chosŏn. Interestingly, the Samjŏndo Monument that was erected in 1639

27, 1887, No. 20, in *KARD II*, 11-13.

²⁴ See Kirk W. Larsen, *Tradition, Treaties, and Trade*, 176-189; Chen Hongmin, "Wanqing waijiao de lingyizhong kunjing: yi 1887 nian chaoxian qianshi shijian wei zhongxin de yanjiu" (Another challenge to the diplomacy of the late Qing dynasty: with a focus on Chosŏn's dispatch of envoys in 1887).

²⁵ Dinsmore to Frelinghuysen, May 27, 1887, No. 20, in *KARD II*, 12.

appealed to them. After he saw the monument in 1884, George Foulk claimed that “a thorough examination may develop information on the status of Korea with regard to China of more directly practical use.”²⁶ In 1887, William Rockhill obtained a copy of Foulk’s rubbing of the Chinese inscription of the monument and made a translation in his article, “Korea in Its Relations with China,” published in 1889. Rockhill tried to explore the “nature of Korea’s relations with China” and answer “a puzzle for Western nations” of whether Korea was “an integral part of the Chinese empire” or “a sovereign state enjoying absolute international rights.” After examining Sino–Korean relations since 1392, Rockhill critically pointed out that the conclusion of Chosŏn’s treaties with Japan and the U.S. “has not materially altered the nature of the relations existing for the last four centuries at least between China and its so-called vassal.”²⁷ This conclusion seriously challenged the popular perception among Japan and Western nations that Chosŏn was independent from China. The puzzle, therefore, remained unsolved.

6.2 Between “Supervision and Protection” and “Provincialization”: China’s Translucent Power over Chosŏn in the Late 1880s

China fully realized the complexity of the situation in Chosŏn, especially after it lost Burma to Britain in the 1850s, Ryukyu to Japan in the late 1870s, Vietnam to France in the early 1880s. In the late 1880s, Beijing stood at the historical crossing of whether it should “supervise and protect” or “provincialize” Chosŏn. The option of supervising and protecting the country meant to send high-ranking officials to supervise its affairs, while provincializing it meant to convert it into several prefectures and counties (Ch. *junxian*) of China, integrating it as one of China’s inner provinces. Both options could find

²⁶ *Mr. Foulk to Mr. Frelinghuysen*, No. 229, October 10, 1884, in *FRUS 1885–’86*, 326.

²⁷ William W. Rockhill, “Korea in Its Relations with China,” 1.

precedents in the Han and the Yuan dynasties in history. In the turbulent 1880s, when Beijing reconsidered its border policy in northwestern China by converting Xinjiang into a province, the issues on the China's northeastern frontier posed a huge challenge to Beijing too. Although the option of "supervising and protecting" Chosŏn would be more moderate than that of "provincializing" it, viewed from the modern perspective they both presented a colonial approach that was not different from Japan's territory annexation of the country in 1910. Yet it was on this point that China faced serious challenges from within, which determined its final choice.

Although Qing China always regarded Chosŏn as an "inner subordinate," it never tried to directly control the country or incorporate it into China's territory. The long-lived Chinese appraisal that Chosŏn was "like prefectures and counties" (Ch. *youru junxian*) merely presented the superiority of Chinese culture and Sinocentrism, rather than a real political approach to annexing it. For centuries, China, Chosŏn, and other China's outer *fan* shared the same worldview of "all-under-Heaven," according to which all their lands belonged to the Son of Heaven, thus making the annexation of outer *fan* out of China's mind. That was why Emperor Yongzheng generously gave some border lands to Annam in 1727, an action that would not be understood or tolerated by Chinese in the nation-state framework. Within the Zongfan system, it was a bottom line for China not to annex its outer *fan*, a rule at least was drawn by the first emperor of the Ming in the mid-fourteenth century.²⁸ This principle, however, encountered grave challenges from the Chinese officials in the 1880s, when they found China in a huge quagmire between "supervising and protecting" Chosŏn and "provincializing" Chosŏn.

In November 1880, the Chinese minister to Japan, He Ruzhang, in his report to

²⁸ *Daming huidian* (Collected statutes of the Great Ming), vol. 105, 1b.

the Zongli Yamen, “The proposal for management of Chosŏn’s diplomacy” (Ch. *Zhuchi Chaoxian waijiao yi*), argued that it could be the best policy for China to send an imperial commissioner to Chosŏn to manage its domestic and foreign affairs by following the cases of Mongolia and Tibet.²⁹ This proposal was almost the same as that of the late Ming official Xu Guangqi in 1619.³⁰ Realizing that it was impossible to do so at the time, He argued that Chosŏn should sign treaties with other countries under China’s supervision in order to pursue balance of power. In August 1882, in the wake of Chosŏn’s mutiny and Japan’s provocative response, the Chinese minister to Japan, Li Shuchang, passionately suggested to the Yamen that China should “abolish the king and convert the country into prefectures and counties of China” (Ch. *fei qi wang er junxian zhi*) by imitating the relationship between Britain and India in order to fundamentally resolve all thorny issues regarding Chosŏn.³¹ Li Shuchang was fully aware that such action would challenge China’s moral standard, but he regarded it as the most suitable policy for China to take. This was the first time that Chinese officials clearly argued that China should provincialize Chosŏn in the late nineteenth century, but this idea was strictly confined to a small group of the highest Chinese policy-makers.

In September 1882, Zhang Jian (1853–1926), an assistant to General Wu in Hansŏng, in a treatise called “Six strategies for managing the consequences of Chosŏn’s mutiny” (Ch. *Chaoxian shanhou liuce*), called for China to provincialize Chosŏn.³² This treatise widely spread in Beijing in an informal way and encouraged some officials of the so-called “Pure Stream” (Ch. *Qingliu*) group to pursue a solution to the Chosŏn problem.

²⁹ He Ruzhang to the Zongli Yamen, November 18, 1880, in *QJZRH*, vol. 2, 437-439, 442-447.

³⁰ *Xu Guangqi ji*, vol.1, 117.

³¹ Li Shuchang to the Zongli Yamen, August 31, 1882, in *QJZRH*, vol. 3, 836.

³² *Zhang Jian quanji* (Complete collection of Zhang Jian), vol. 6, 206.

In October 1882, Zhang Peilun (1848–1903), a pillar of the “Pure Stream,” in a memorial expressing his opinions about Chosŏn, fervently suggested Beijing dispatch a commercial commissioner to manage Chosŏn’s foreign and domestic affairs. For Zhang’s proposal, Li emphasized that it was difficult to realize because otherwise China would be drawn into a quagmire and could not efficiently manage the country. On the other hand, Li noted that if Beijing decided to take Zhang’s proposal, he would recommend He Ruzhang for the position.³³

At the same time, Li received a note from the king, inviting Chinese specialists on foreign affairs to be assistants to the country. Li saw this invitation as the best opportunity for China to pursue a good opportunity to steer a middle course between the options of “supervising and protecting” and “provincializing” Chosŏn. According to Li, these specialists would be under the king’s command, rather than equal to the king or even replace the king, which would maintain Chosŏn’s right of *zizhu* and underline its status as China’s *shuguo*. Beijing promptly endorsed Li’s proposal and commissioned him to select the specialists. These specialists turned out to be Ma Jianchang and Möllendorff, who arrived in Hansŏng in early 1883, followed by the commercial commissioner Chen Shutang, triggering the political struggles that have been discussed in the previous pages. It was also in this historical background that Yuan Shikai was appointed as imperial resident in Chosŏn. All these measures seemingly aimed to “supervise and protect” Chosŏn, but they were a far cry from this approach.

In summer 1890, when he heard the rumor that Russia would invade Chosŏn, Kang Youwei (1858–1927) drafted a treatise entitled “Strategies for protecting Chosŏn” (Ch. *Bao Chaoxian ce*), proposing the “middle, upper, and lower strategies.” According

³³ Li to the Zongli Yamen, November 23, 1882, in *QJZRH*, vol. 3, 1030-1033.

to his middle strategy, China should “incorporate Chosŏn into Chinese inner land and manage its administration” (Ch. *shouwei neidi er zhi qizheng*). Kang argued that when China sent troops to Chosŏn in 1882, it should reside officials and officers in the country to manage politics, select talented persons, control taxes, train soldiers, and convert it into China’s inner land. If China could not take the middle strategy, it should follow the upper strategy by converting Chosŏn into an international protectorate like Belgium. By contrast, the lower strategy was to maintain its “nominal title as China’s *fan* and shuguo” (Ch. *fanshu zhi xuming*) inward and allow it to “freely conduct foreign affairs under *zizhu*” (Ch. *tongshang zhi zizhu*) outward, which amounted to “no policy *per se*.”³⁴ Undoubtedly, Kang was castigating China’s on-going policy for being incapable in solving the problems on the peninsula. Eight years later, in 1898, Kang would serve as a mentor for Emperor Guangxu to launch a dramatic reform movement after China’s humiliating fiasco in the war with Japan that broke out right in Chosŏn.

From He Ruzhang in 1880 to Li Shuchang, Zhang Jian, and Zhang Peilun in 1882, then to Kang Youwei in 1890, Beijing had been on the horns of a dilemma caused by the zealous proposals of “supervising and protecting” Chosŏn and “provincializing” Chosŏn. Compared with China’s comparatively low-key approach to maintaining its relations with the outer *fan* principally through exchanges of emissaries before the 1880s, the provoking strategies proposed by the ardent officials and intellectuals after the 1880s made China’s policy look more aggressive. However, annexing Chosŏn was never on the Qing’s political agenda from 1637, or even from 1627. Meanwhile, these leading proponents of the proposals at the time built their understanding of the Qing–Chosŏn relations on the entire lineage of China’s Zongfan relations with Korea and other countries in history. In

³⁴ *Kang Youwei quanji* (Complete collection of Kang Youwei), vol. 1, 394-396.

other words, they brought the point of departure of China's contemporary policy toward Chosŏn back to the early Qing and even earlier times of Chinese history for soliciting the legitimacy of the policy. Therefore, Qing China must take its responsibilities for assisting Chosŏn with solving crises, as its predecessors, like Ming China, had done in the 1590s. In this sense, China's policy in Chosŏn after the 1880s was no more than a resurgence of its intrinsic power as the patriarch of the Zongfan family over its outer *fan*.

The Chinese activities, of course, had new contents and manifestations, such as signing treaties to regulate bilateral commercial activities, opening treaty ports to each other, residing the Chinese resident in Hansŏng, and allowing a Korean representative to reside in Tianjin. In addition, some Korean intellectuals had begun to pursue an independent national status since the early 1880s, encouraging Chosŏn to re-envision its position on the world stage and strengthened its intention to break free from the conventional Zongfan framework. As a result, Chosŏn cautiously maintained its court-to-court communications with China as before, on the one hand, and it started to keep its state diplomacy distant from China and began bargaining with China on some issues, on the other. In 1890, such bargain shocked Beijing as it violently shook the fundamentals of the Zongfan arrangement.

6.3 The Grand Performance of the Zongfan Relationship: China's Last Imperial Mission to Chosŏn in 1890

RITUALS, POWERS, AND YUAN'S ISOLATIONISM IN CHOSŎN

On June 4, 1890, Queen Dowager Cho of Chosŏn passed away. Yuan immediately reported the news by telegram to Li Hongzhang, who forwarded it to the Zongli Yamen

for instructions.³⁵ The event would not constitute a grave matter for other countries, but it was indeed for China, because it entailed a series of contacts and ritual practices between Hansǒng and Beijing to be carried out in accordance with Zongfan tenets. Since the ritual etiquette was managed by the Ministry of Rituals, Yuan did not know what he should do in Hansǒng, in addition to responding with a note to the Foreign Office to express his condolences.³⁶ As a Han Chinese official, Yuan was fully aware that the ritual matters regarding the royal house were under management of the Manchu court in Beijing, which was also beyond the influence of his political backer, Li. Since the first Western ministers arrived in Hansǒng in 1883, China had not dispatched envoys to Chosǒn for tributary affairs, leaving Yuan a situation without recent precedents to consult.

While he was waiting for instructions from China, Yuan made it very clear to his diplomatic colleagues in Hansǒng that China would have different response to the event. When Augustine Heard, the American Minister Resident and Consul-General, invited Yuan to his legation on June 5 to discuss with ministers of other countries over the appropriate expression of their joint condolences to the court,³⁷ Yuan declined and explained that “China and Chosǒn have longtime established regulations on rituals of exchanges that are different from other countries. I have to abide by the rules and cannot attend the meeting.”³⁸ Yuan was actually in a predicament: if he attended the joint meeting, it would not highlight China’s superior position in the shuguo; if he did not show up, the United States and other countries might form an alliance on this matter and

³⁵ Li to the Zongli Yamen, June 4, 1890, in *LHZQJ* (2008), vol. 23, 65.

³⁶ Min to Yuan, June 4, 1890, *Qinshi fengming qianlai ciji chaoxian guowang mufei juan* (The imperial envoys came to Chosǒn to express emperor’s condolence on king’s mother Dowager Cho, hereafter referred to as *QSCJ*), in “Zhu chaoxian shiguan dang, Yuan Shikai” (The section regarding Yuan Shikai of archives of Chinese legation to Chosǒn), Microfilm No. 01-41-016-08; Yuan to Min, and Yuan to Li, June 5, 1890, in *QSCJ*. Min was the President of the Foreign Office of Chosǒn.

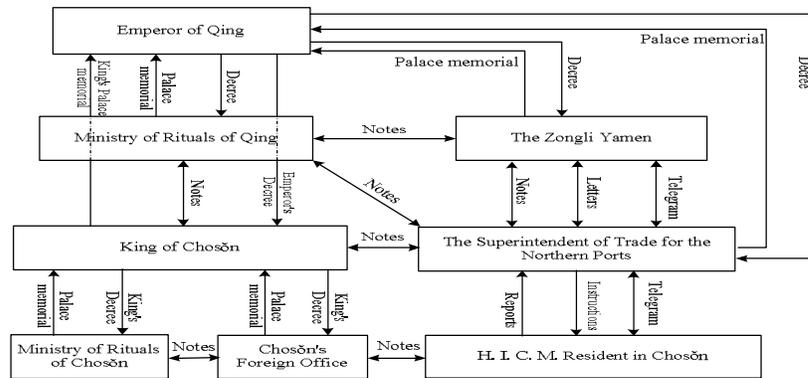
³⁷ Chinese copy of Heard’s note to Yuan, June 5, 1890, in *QSCJ*.

³⁸ Yuan to Heard, June 5, 1890, in *QSCJ*.

develop closer relations with the court of Chosŏn through this opportunity, which would arguably undermine China’s superiority.

From the early 1880s, when various intrigues and rivalries began to occupy the peninsula, the court-to-court communications of rituals and emissary exchanges seemed to be significantly dwarfed by the state-to-state contacts regarding political intrigues, but nothing could be further from the truth. In reality, the court diplomacy was still playing a key role in regulating their bilateral relations. The dual diplomatic systems and multiple channels of communications at the time (Figure 6. 1) suggested that although the legitimacy and the power of the imperial resident were entirely dependent on China’s superiority within the Zongfan kinship, the imperial resident was not a part of China’s court diplomacy. Neither was the Beiyang Superintendency.

Figure 6. 1. The Network of Sino–Korean Official Communications after the 1880s



Notes: This table is based on the author’s own research.

Yuan realized that his dilemma was between “personal” or “individual” and “public” ritual practices at the particular moment. In a report to Li, in which he identified Chosŏn as “a friendly nation” (Ch. *youbang*) of other treaty powers, Yuan said that according to the common diplomatic etiquette, the ministers of other countries would express condolences to the Korean government when Chosŏn had “a national funeral”

(Ch. *guosang*), but they would not send special representatives for the purpose. Yet Chosŏn was China's shuguo and had always received China's special favors, so when it had "a grand mourning" (Ch. *dasang*), China should send an imperial mission in accordance with the established "system" (Ch. *tizhi*). In terms of himself, Yuan proposed to show his condolences based on "personal friendship" (Ch. *siqing*), rather than the "national public condolences" (Ch. *guojia gongdiao*) of China. In the post-1637 era, Yuan was the first Han Chinese official on Chosŏn's territory who struggled to maintain China's superiority through appropriate rituals. Finally, he proposed a new ritual procedure for himself:

The ceremony of western diplomats to express their condolences is to visit and bow to the king, or visit regent official and shake hands with him to show sympathy. In China's *shubang*, Chinese officials should set up a memorial table to show their condolences based on friendship among colleagues (Ch. *liaoyin jiaoqing*), which is different from case to case... After the five days during which Chosŏn puts the body of dowager into the coffin and the Korean people wear appropriate mourning apparel, I will make an appointment with the court to show my condolences based on personal friendship, bringing condolence banner, sacrificial pigs and sheep, and other things... This will also illuminate China's difference from other countries.³⁹

Li endorsed this proposal as he saw it as a decent way to solve the ritual problem.⁴⁰ Yet their efforts to undergird China's superiority through unique ritual practices only led China to diverge from international rules. For instance, in early June, when other countries flew the flag at half-mast for three days to express condolences, Yuan and Li instructed Chinese warships and institutes in Chosŏn's treaty ports to do so for only two days.⁴¹ As a result, what they really reaped was China's isolation from other countries.

Yuan's activities would provide more evidence for this point. On June 5, Yuan

³⁹ Yuan to Li, June 6, 1890, in *QSCJ*.

⁴⁰ Li to the Zongli Yamen, June 13, 1890, in *QJZRH*, vol. 5, 2785.

⁴¹ Li to Yuan, and Yuan to Chinese commercial commissioners in Chosŏn, June 6, 1890, in *QSCJ*.

notified the Foreign Office that he would like to visit the funeral hall in the inner palace to express his condolences during the five days for which the Korean wore their mourning clothes. President of the Office, Min Chong-muk (1835–1916), declined the offer because only royal family members could do so.⁴² Two months later, Yuan received another rejection from the Korean government on this matter. On September 29, Heard wanted to discuss the rituals that foreign ministers should perform when Chosŏn held the funeral procession with Yuan. Heard had consulted the issue with Min Chong-muk and learned that it would be inappropriate for the Korean side to invite ministers to attend the procession, but Min suggested that the government would provide a place near the East Gate of the city for the ministers to perform ceremonies when the hearse passed through the gate.⁴³ Heard preferred Min's offer, but Yuan did not; rather, he emphasized the point to Heard again: other countries could freely do what they preferred, but China had established ritual rules with Chosŏn, so he could not join them.⁴⁴ Again, Yuan automatically isolated himself from the Corps Diplomatique; again, he created new rituals for himself.

As an alternative only to the ceremony he would perform, on October 4, Yuan notified the Home Office and the Foreign Office that when the funeral procession was held, he would accompany the funeral team from the palace gate to the suburbs and hold the cord guiding the hearse.⁴⁵ This proposal was based on traditional Chinese funeral customs and was intended to show his sincere respect for the late person. The Home Office, however, simply suggested Yuan go directly to the East Gate where the foreign

⁴² Min to Yuan, June 10, 1890, in *QSCJ*.

⁴³ Chinese copy of Heard's note to Yuan, September 29, 1890, in *QSCJ*.

⁴⁴ Yuan to Heard, September 30, 1890, in *QSCJ*.

⁴⁵ Yuan to the Home Office and the Foreign Office of Chosŏn, October 4, 1890, in *QSCJ*.

ministers would convene, and when the hearse passed through the gate, the procession would stop for a moment, during which Yuan could perform a farewell ceremony.⁴⁶ The office seemed to suggest that the Chinese imperial resident was not different from other ministers. This response disappointed Yuan, so he decided to take his own way to prepare incense and sacrificial paper, choose a broad and convenient street by himself to set up the incense burner table, and hold a memorial ceremony for the late dowager at the side of the road on the procession day.⁴⁷ The Korean officials stopped arguing with him, acquiescing to his plan to bid farewell on the street.⁴⁸ In this way, Yuan isolated himself from the Korean government, as well.

Meanwhile, another occurrence worried Yuan when he learned on October 11 that seven American officers had led 50 armed marines on a march from Inchon toward Hansŏng. Yuan immediately asked Heard, who replied that the U.S., as a friend of Chosŏn, had sent naval troops to accompany the funeral procession “as a mark of respect and sympathy.”⁴⁹ Yuan did not believe, but Heard stopped arguing with him.⁵⁰ Yuan also learned that the Korean government had summoned three companies of soldiers from Pyŏng’an province to Hansŏng.⁵¹ The situation seemingly became serious overnight and the funeral procession would trigger a Sino–American conflict.

Yuan was cautious because it was the second time that Heard summoned troops to Hansŏng. The first time occurred right after the death of the dowager, when a “gentleman of the family of the Queen” visited Heard on behalf of the king and asked him to send

⁴⁶ President of the Home Office Kim Yŏngsu to Yuan, October 5, 1890, in *QSCJ*.

⁴⁷ Yuan to the Home Office and the Foreign Office of Chosŏn, October 7, 1890, in *QSCJ*.

⁴⁸ Kim Yŏngsu to Yuan, October 11, 1890, in *QSCJ*.

⁴⁹ Heard to Yuan, October 11, 1890, in *QSCJ*.

⁵⁰ Heard to Blaine and Yuan, No. 114, enclosures 1 and 2, Seoul, Korea, January 22, 1891, *KARD II*, 54-55. See also Yuan to Heard, October 11, 1890, in *QSCJ*.

⁵¹ Li to the Zongli Yamen and Yuan, October 11 and 12, 1890, in *LHZQJ* (2008), vol. 23, 102.

American forces to the palace at once to provide protection. Heard hesitated, but considering the potential possibility for disturbance and the jeopardy it might place on the American citizens in Hansŏng, Heard eventually decided to order soldiers from the USS *Swatara* that had arrived in Inchon to march into Hansŏng. Heard emphasized that the mission of the troops was to protect the American legation, but the king “would benefit by the moral effect which their presence would produce.”⁵² When the marines arrived in the legation next day, Heard deployed them around the legation and informed the king of their arrival. The king instantly sent an official to the legation to show his thanks, followed by another visit by a Korean general of the Royal Forces with a larger retinue. The king offered to pay the expenses of the expedition, but Heard declined by clarifying that the troops were to protect the legation, rather than the Korean palace.

The arrival of the American forces touched a nerve in Beijing. On June 10, the Zongli Yamen asked Li to instruct Yuan to secretly investigate the situation. Beijing was particularly interested in knowing whether Chosŏn would rent Port Hamilton to the U.S. as a coaling station.⁵³ The port in southern Chosŏn was occupied by Britain in April 1885 during the Britain–Russian rivalry, triggering intensive disputes among Britain, Russia, Chosŏn, China, and Japan. Under China’s intervention, the British fleet had finally withdrawn in February 1887 on the grounds that in the future no powers would occupy any territory of Chosŏn. Yet the presence of American forces in Hansŏng caused a rumor to circulate that Chosŏn would rent the port to the U.S. in exchange for its protection. The Zongli Yamen also instructed the Chinese counselor to the U.S. to investigate the American motivation, who confirmed that Washington was not interested

⁵² Heard to Blaine, No. 13, Seoul, Corea, June 7, 1890, *KARD II*, 124-126.

⁵³ Li to Yuan, June 10, 1890, in *LHZQJ* (2008), vol. 23, 66.

in renting the port.⁵⁴ Four days later, the American troops returned to Inchon, bringing an end to these rumor-driven disturbances.

Under the circumstances, the reappearance of the American troops in Hansŏng on October 11 made Yuan suspicious again. He quickly changed his original plan and went to the East Gate to monitor the Americans on October 12, when the funeral procession was held. Heard and the American soldiers stood in line on the side of the road within the East Gate, next to Yuan's Chinese incense burner table. The king, the queen, and the crown prince were absent from the procession. The hearse did not stop when it passed Yuan, but Yuan still bowed three times with his hands folded in front. After the procession, Yuan still concerned the American troops in the city, but he did not get any extra information. His doubt attracted Beijing's notice again. The Zongli Yamen instructed the Chinese minister to the U.S., Cui Guoyin, to discuss this matter with the Department of State, but received the same response that the soldiers were there for the funeral ceremony.⁵⁵ On October 15, the soldiers returned to Inchon, defusing the diplomatic tension and allaying Yuan's suspicions.⁵⁶

Yuan might believe that he could manipulate Chosŏn's situation and check his opponents, just as scholars have tended to characterize him as an arrogant, overbearing, peremptory, and even rude person, who acted as a "Chinese proconsul" and aggressively dominated the Chosŏn government for a decade that almost ruined the country.⁵⁷ Yet when the moment requesting him to present the origins of his power came after the death

⁵⁴ Chinese counselor to the U. S. to the Zongli Yamen, June 12, 1890, in *LHZQJ* (2008), vol. 23, 66.

⁵⁵ Li to the Zongli Yamen, October 11, 1890, in *LHZQJ* (2008), vol. 23, 102; Cui to Li, October 12, 1890, in *LHZQJ* (2008), vol. 23, 103; Li to Cui, October 13, 1890, in *LHZQJ* (2008), vol. 23, 105.

⁵⁶ Li to the Zongli Yamen, October 15, 1890, in *LHZQJ* (2008), vol. 23, 107.

⁵⁷ M. Frederick Nelson, *Korea and the Old Orders in Eastern Asia*, 175-180; Lin Mingte, *Yuan Shikai yu chaoxian* (Yuan Shikai and Chosŏn), 137-321; Key-hiuk Kim, *The Last Phase of the East Asian World Order*, 350; Kirk W. Larsen, *Tradition, Treaties, and Trade*, 128-163.

of the dowager, the impossibility for him to surmount his post of the imperial resident to represent the Manchu court thoroughly exposed itself. Consequently, when other ministers offered their condolences on their governments' behalf to the royal family of Chosŏn, Yuan chose to steer a middle course between the state-to-state and the court-to-court systems by creating some new rituals, during which he had to cautiously maintain the dividing line by not presenting himself as a minister. As a result, Yuan found himself stuck in a quite passive situation. So did the Beijing government.

THE KOREAN–CHINESE BARGAIN ON THE IMPERIAL MISSION

When Yuan busied himself with tackling his ritual crises, the court of Chosŏn was negotiating some Zongfan ritual matters with Beijing. Chosŏn contacted China through the Zongfan routine right after the death of the dowager. On June 5, the king instructed Prefect of Ŭiju to inform Garrison Major of the Manchu Bannerman (Ch. *Cheng shouwei*) at the Fenghuang City with the news, and appointed Hong Chong-yŏng as envoy and Cho Pyŏng-sŏng as attendant secretary of a mission to Beijing. Two weeks later, through Li and Yuan, the king asked Beijing not to send an imperial mission to Chosŏn; rather, he asked Beijing to allow the Korean emissaries to bring back the imperial condolence messages. The king explained that if China sent a mission, America, Britain, Germany, France, and Japan would send theirs too, creating a situation that Chosŏn could not afford.⁵⁸

The king's petition could have been approved by Beijing because it was a part of the Zongfan practices, known as "handing over for convenience" (Ch. *shunfu*). Li was not sure if this rule had ever been applied to the imperial condolence mission, so he

⁵⁸ Li to Yuan, June 28, 1890, in *LHZQJ* (2008), vol. 23, 74.

instructed Yuan to secretly examine if any precedents existed in history. Li also warned Yuan not to be rash because he thought that Hansǒng was forcing Beijing to do its bidding, although the petition used a beseeching tone.⁵⁹ Yuan carefully examined all Qing China's imperial missions of condolence to Chosǒn upon queen dowagers' deaths since the Qianlong period. Enumerating six cases in 1757, 1805, 1821, 1844, 1858, and 1878, Yuan concluded that in the case of investiture (Ch. *cefeng*) and conferring noble rank on the late king or royal members (Ch. *fengshi*), Beijing always dispatched imperial envoys and never used "handing over for convenience."

Moreover, Yuan asserted that Queen Min was dominating the king through her fears that the Zongfan ceremonies performed to the Chinese envoys in front of Westerners would damage Chosǒn's image as a country of *zizhu*.⁶⁰ Similarly, Yuan had reported to Li that Owen Denny was also inciting the king to urge Beijing not to send an imperial mission because the Zongfan rituals would damage Chosǒn's "national polity" (Ch. *guoti*).⁶¹ When the king discussed the issue with Yuan, Yuan firmly responded that the procedure should be conducted in conformity with Zongfan precedents.⁶² In many senses, it seemed that the king's request aimed to blur the Zongfan arrangement, so his request evolved into a matter about China's superiority at its *shuguo*. On the other hand, other foreign ministers believed that nothing would prevent Beijing from sending imperial emissaries, as it would be a golden opportunity to strengthen China's control over the country. Yet, according to the Zongfan principles, had any precedent like what the king requested ever occurred in history, Beijing would have not sent a mission.

⁵⁹ Li to Yuan, June 28, 1890, in *LHZQJ* (2008), vol. 23, 74.

⁶⁰ Yuan to Li, June 29, 1890, in *LHZQJ* (2008), vol. 23, 75.

⁶¹ Li to the Zongli Yamen, June 14, 1890, in *LHZQJ* (2008), vol. 23, 69.

⁶² Yuan to Li, June 29, 1890, in *LHZQJ* (2008), vol. 23, 75.

However, such precedent did not exist. This proved that the imperial mission to Chosŏn in 1890 was only a routine mission in the Zongfan world, rather than a political conspiracy as people have widely understood.

The main negotiations soon happened in Beijing between the Korean emissaries and the Ministry of Rituals. On September 21, the Chosŏn mission headed by Hong and Cho arrived in Beijing after trudging about 930 miles over 74 days via the overland tributary route. Next day, Hong and Cho presented the king's memorial to the emperor through the Ministry of Rituals, in which the king stated,

Your servant, Yi Hŭi, King of Chosŏn, respectfully reports the demise of his Mother Queen Chao on the seventeenth day of the fourth moon of the sixteenth year of Guangxu.

He now kneels before Your Majesty in great perturbation and awe. Your servant considers his small country indeed most unfortunate by reason of this calamity, at which he feels very sad at heart. As mourning has now befallen your servant, he respectfully reports the fact to Your Majesty. He, moreover, has no alternative but to ask that Your Majesty be considerate to him. Your servant is now extremely restless. He respectfully submits this report for Your Majesty's information.

This report is submitted by the King of Chosŏn, Yi Hŭi, on the twenty-fourth day of the fifth moon of the sixteenth year of Guangxu.⁶³

In the memorial, the king strictly followed the textual format, such as using China's reign-title to calculate the date and addressing himself as "subordinate" and Chosŏn as "small country." These formalities displayed perfect conformity with the Zongfan tenets, precisely like those manifested in the memorials to Emperor Qianlong in 1790. Now in 1890, the king, who had been treated by Western treaty powers as a sovereign, was still a subordinate of the Son of Heaven of China. The royal court in Hansŏng and the Manchu

⁶³ *Notes on the Imperial Chinese Mission to Corea, 1890*, 2; for the primary Chinese version, see Chongli, *Fengshi chaoxian riji*, 2b-3a; *Shihan jilue*, 2-3. Some names in the English translation were modified by the author of this dissertation.

court in Beijing were still bound together by the Zongfan mechanism as before. As a response, Beijing immediately started to select the Manchu imperial envoys to Hansǒng to confer a notable rank upon the late queen dowager.

In a note to the Ministry of Rituals, Hong emphasized that Chosǒn was facing a difficult situation resulting from political troubles, famine, and financial crisis. Finally, he expressed that he would like to convey the imperial message of condolence back to Chosǒn, so that Beijing did not need to send commissioners there.⁶⁴ Unsurprisingly, neither the ministry nor the emperor granted Hong's request. On October 8, the Grand Council forwarded a long imperial decree to Hong, which articulated that,

The despatch of Commissioners to Chosǒn to offer condolence, when such an occasion as this demands, is prescribed for in our Records of Usage and should always be carried out. It is to show that the Heavenly Dynasty cherish sympathy for its shuguo and *fan* (Ch. *shufan*) on such occasions, and has a special significance as exhibiting the nature of our relations (Ch. *tizhi youguan*). For this reason how can a modification of our usage in the despatch of Commissioners be made with consistency?

Bearing, however, the fact in mind, that Chosǒn during recent years has had to meet heavy financial engagements which have reduced her to financial embarrassment, we are obliged to depart from some of the old established practices in the sending of a Mission of Condolence. This we do to show that we cherish extraordinary compassion for Chosǒn. Hitherto our Missions to Chosǒn have travelled overland by way of the Eastern frontier. After entering Chosǒn, the Mission had to pass more than ten stations before reaching Seoul, which involved trouble and expense. Our Mission to Chosǒn this time should adopt a different route. It should proceed from Tianjin to Inchon by war vessels of the Northern Squadron. When it has discharged its duties in Chosǒn, it shall return to Beijing by the same way. By this route, which is temporarily sanctioned in this instance, the distance between Beijing and Seoul is shortened, and therefore the share of the expenses of the Mission falling on Chosǒn is not much. She is thus saved much of the trouble and expense which she was put to in former years by the Missions travelling overland.

When our Mission shall have reached Chosǒn, such ceremonies as should be

⁶⁴ *Notes on the Imperial Chinese Mission to Corea, 1890*, 3-4. Some terms were modified by the author of this dissertation.

observed on the part of Chosŏn shall be carried out—if, in doing so, it does not incur great expense—in accordance with established usage, and these should not in the least be curtailed. For the Emperor’s ever increasing graciousness and regard for the welfare of our loyal *fan* (Ch. *suifan*) by using virtue, the King of Chosŏn should feel doubly grateful. Let this decree be sent to the Ministry of Rituals and the Beiyang Superintendent, and let it be communicated by the Ministry of Rituals to the King of Chosŏn.⁶⁵

Since the issue concerned the “system,” Beijing demonstrated its reluctance to make rudimentary changes, but it showed flexibility by instructing the imperial mission to visit Chosŏn by the maritime route, which had never happened after 1637. On October 15, the emperor appointed Xuchang (1838–1892) and Chongli (1834–1907), two high-ranking ethnic Manchu officials of the Ministry of Revenue, as envoy and associate envoy of the mission of condolence to Chosŏn.⁶⁶

Following Hong’s request, on October 18, Chosŏn’s commercial resident in Tianjin, Kim Sang-tŏk, presented another petition to Li Hongzhang, asking the imperial mission to land in Masanpu, instead of Inchon. Kim said that although Inchon was 25 miles away from Hansŏng, the road between them was new and the station on this road was not good enough. By contrast, Masanpu, another port around 30 miles away from Hansŏng, where the Chinese army had landed in 1882, had better conditions. Kim also noted that it would be inconvenient for Chosŏn to perform welcoming ceremonies in Inchon because it was now a treaty port.⁶⁷ Li forwarded the petition via the Zongli Yamen to Xuchang and Chongli for a decision. Xuchang and Chongli, being confused by Kim, replied that Masanpu seemed to be more than 60 miles away from Hansŏng. Li immediately instructed Yuan to make the point clear.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ *Notes on the Imperial Chinese Mission to Corea, 1890*, 4-5.

⁶⁶ *Fengshi chaoxian riji*, 8-11; *Shihan jilue*, 6-7.

⁶⁷ Li to the Zongli Yamen, October 18, 1890, in *LHZQJ* (2008), vol. 23, 107.

⁶⁸ Xuchang and Chongli to Li, October 18, 1890, in *LHZQJ* (2008), vol. 23, 108; Li to Yuan, October 19,

As a military officer, Yuan was very familiar with these positions. He quickly replied that Inchon was 25 miles and Masanpu was 50 miles away from Hansǒng. The road between Inchon and Hansǒng was flat and had electric power, while that between Masanpu and Hansǒng was far and narrow. Yuan concluded that the king's petition through Kim resulted from his reluctance to perform ceremonies in Inchon, where Japanese and Western foreigners lived in their settlements, because the king worried that the humble ceremonies performed to the imperial mission would cause Chosǒn to lose face (Ch. *timian*).⁶⁹ Li confirmed that the imperial mission should land in Inchon as scheduled, which was further endorsed by the Zongli Yamen and the Ministry of Rituals.⁷⁰ Chosǒn's second petition was thus rejected by Beijing, as well.

In addition, the dispute between the two countries over Chosǒn's envoys to the U.S. and other countries at that time might have also prompted Beijing to maintain the established Zongfan mechanism. Under these circumstances, the king's request was tantamount to a challenge to China's patriarchal authority embodied in Zongfan rituals. As a result, the king and all foreign ministers were nervously waiting for the arrival of the Chinese imperial commissioners. It would be the first time for these ministers to watch in person the "Oriental" Zongfan rituals performed by the monarch of Chosǒn after the country opened its door and joined the family of nations in 1882.

THE GRAND PERFORMANCE: THE QING IMPERIAL MISSION TO CHOSǒN AND THE RITUAL PRACTICE IN HANSǒNG

The imperial mission was soon organized in Beijing according to prescribed regulations. On October 15, Emperor Guangxu appointed Xuchang and Chongli as envoys of the

1890, *Ibid.*, vol. 23, 109.

⁶⁹ Li to the Zongli Yamen, October 19, 1890, in *LHZQJ* (2008), vol. 23, 110.

⁷⁰ The Zongli Yamen to Li, October 21, 1890, in *LHZQJ* (2008), vol. 23, 111.

mission from the 39 Manchu candidates recommended by the Ministry of Rituals.⁷¹ The ministry also presented a memorial enumerating the items for the mission to bring to Chosŏn (Table 2. 8). The emperor instructed that all members of the mission must not receive any gifts from Chosŏn, aiming to avoid letting other countries gain a negative impression that China's imperial commissioners were corrupt.

Given the situation in Chosŏn, the envoys wanted to get some new information from Yuan via Li.⁷² Yuan reported that the king was still hesitating about whether he should go out of Hansŏng to welcome the envoys and perform ceremonies in person in the suburbs. According to Yuan, Owen Denny was urging the king to receive the envoys in the palace, instead of outside the city. Xuchang and Chongli emphasized that all ceremonies must be performed, as recorded in ritual codes, and they would not meet with Westerners in Hansŏng.⁷³ On October 28, the two envoys picked up imperial items from the Ministry of Rituals and started their journey, with two low-ranking interpreters and several servants. Two days later, they arrived in Tianjin, the headquarters of the Northern Squadron headed by the Beiyang Superintendent, Li Hongzhang, who had summoned three warships—*Jiyuan*, *Laiyuan*, and *Jingyuan*—to Tianjin for the mission. Li sent *Jiyuan* to send a note to Chosŏn first, in which the envoys emphasized that when they arrived in Chosŏn, “such ceremonies as should be observed are to be strictly carried out according to old regulations and must not, in the least, be curtailed. Presents from the King to us or to our interpreters in money or articles, are not to be accepted, so that it may be understood that His Majesty is considerate to his shuguo and *fan* (Ch. *shufan*).”⁷⁴

⁷¹ *Fengshi chaoxian riji*, 8b-11b.

⁷² Li to Yuan, October 25, 1890, in *LHZQJ* (2008), vol. 23, 113; Li to Yuan, October 12, 1890, in *QSCJ*.

⁷³ Li to Yuan, October 26, 1890, in *LHZQJ* (2008), vol. 23, 114.

⁷⁴ *Notes on the Imperial Chinese Mission to Corea, 1890*, 8; *Fengshi chaoxian riji*, 13b-16a; *Shihan jilue*,

Chosŏn, on the other hand, was busy preparing to welcome the mission by virtue of ritual codes and precedents.⁷⁵ On October 29, the king appointed as Receiver of the Imperial Mission Sim I-t'aek, president of the Home Office and judge of Hansŏng; as Accommodation Attendant to the Mission Yi Sŭng-wo, president of the Ministry of Rituals (Yi suddenly died and his position was replaced by president of the Ministry of Punishment Nam Chŏng-ch'ŏl); as Director-General of Reception Min Yŏng-sang, a vice-president of the Home Office and president of the Ministry of Revenue; as Welcoming Attendant Sŏng Ki-wun, a grand chamberlain and Superintendent of Trade of the Inchon District; and as Leader of Ceremonies Yi Sŏk-chong, sub-prefect of Sagnyŏng district. More than 100 officials were sent to Inchon to welcome the mission.⁷⁶ Nam and Sŏng had served as Commercial Commissioners in Tianjin (K. *sangmu wiwŏn*), who arrived in Tianjin in 1884,⁷⁷ where they were Chosŏn's diplomats, rather than tributary emissaries, possessing a status equal to Western minister. Yet, now, in 1890, when they assumed domestic posts in Chosŏn, they were fully integrated into the Zongfan system as two subordinates of both the king and the Chinese emperor.

In Chosŏn, the government was refurbishing a pavilion between Inchon and Hansŏng as the envoys' accommodation and deployed 130 soldiers to the area for protection. In Hansŏng, around 590 soldiers would be deployed to maintain the local order.⁷⁸ Yet the king hesitated for a few days over if he should go out of the city to welcome the envoys in such a time when he claimed to be sick. He was actually worried

3-10. Certain terms in the English translations are modified by the author of the dissertation.

⁷⁵ *Ch'iksa ilgi* (Diaries of welcoming the imperial envoys, 1723–1890), archive catalogue no. M/F 73-101-5, vol. 19, 1a-4a.

⁷⁶ *Notes on the Imperial Chinese Mission to Corea, 1890*, 9-10; *Fengshi chaoxian riji*, 16a-17a.

⁷⁷ Li to the Zongli Yamen, April 28, 1884, in *QJZHR*, vol. 3, 1358-1359.

⁷⁸ *Ch'iksa ilgi*, vol. 19, 6a.

that the Zongfan rituals, in particular kowtowing to the Chinese envoys that would be seen by Japanese and Western diplomats and citizens, might damage his dignity as a supreme sovereign. Yet, after a serious consideration, the king eventually decided to follow the ritual codes to welcome the envoys near the West Gate.⁷⁹ All in all, he was invested by the Chinese emperor and it was this legitimacy that endowed him with the power of managing the country as an agent of the Son of Heaven in China.

The two envoys sailed from Tianjin for Inchon by *Jingyuan* and *Laiyuan* on November 4,⁸⁰ and the cruisers reached the outer harbor of Inchon at 2:00 p.m. on November 6. Two high-ranking Korean officials boarded ships to welcome them. An hour later, the imperial items, including the Silence Board (Ch. *sujing pai*; the “board” here refers to a piece of wood used as certain official symbols), the Keep-out-of-the-way Board (Ch. *hui bi pai*), the Imperial Envoy Titular Board (Ch. *qin chái xian pai*), the Imperial Dragon Flag (Ch. *long qi*), and symbols of authority (Ch. *yizhang*), were dispatched from the ships. The envoys landed by a small steam ship with the imperial decree. All Korean officials, headed by the Receiver of the Mission, in their official dress, bowed to the envoys and items in accordance with relevant rituals.

After the envoys placed the imperial decree in the Dragon Shrine (Ch. *long ting*), the procession headed for the envoys’ accommodation in Inchon. It was a long and magnificent procession. First came the Korean Receiver and the officials in columns, one on each side of the road, with the Hansǒng Magnate and the Metropolitan Governor on the east side and the Prefects and the Magistrates on the west side. Next were the Korean escorts, flags, symbols of authority, yellow umbrellas, drums, gongs, and bands of music.

⁷⁹ *Fengshi chaoxian riji*, 17b-18a.

⁸⁰ *Notes on the Imperial Chinese Mission to Corea, 1890*, 11; *Shihan jilue*, 13-14.

Then were the Incense Shrine (Ch. *xiangting*) and the Dragon Shrine, followed by the Chinese attendants, all of whom were mounted. The two envoys followed in their sedan chairs side by side, and behind them marched the high and low deputies with the supervisors and their attendants.⁸¹ This procession order was quite similar to the imperial condolence mission to Chosŏn headed by Akdun in 1725 (Figure 6. 2).

Figure 6. 2. The Qing's Imperial Condolence Mission to Chosŏn in 1725



Sources: Yin Mengxia and Yu Hao, eds., *Shi Chaoxian lu* (Records of imperial missions to Chosŏn), vol. 2, 508-509.

Notes: No. 1: the Qing envoy; no. 2: the King of Chosŏn; no. 3: the Dragon Shrine; no. 4: the Incense Shrine.

The long procession was full of various banners in different colors and the Chinese and Korean officials in official dress. According to Chongli, when the procession went through the Chinese Settlement and the General Foreign Settlement (Ch. *huayang zujie*), the Chinese merchants jubilantly welcomed the mission by decorating their stores with Chinese lanterns and streamers, and numerous “foreigners from many countries” (Ch. *gegou yangren*) and Korean people gathered to see the extraordinary procession. Chongli was extremely proud of the superiority of the Great Qing.⁸² It was the first time for both the Chinese and non-Chinese merchants and people living in the settlements to appreciate the remarkable ceremony. Undoubtedly, the magnificent scene made the

⁸¹ *Notes on the Imperial Chinese Mission to Corea, 1890*, 11-12; *Fengshi chaoxian riji*, 26b-27a; *Shihan jilue*, 14-15.

⁸² *Fengshi Chaoxian riji*, 27a.

Chinese merchants feel superior to their counterparts.

When the envoys arrived in the residence at the Yamen of the Superintendent of Trade (K. *Kamni amun*), the Korean officials kowtowed toward the imperial decree and the envoys, while the envoys replied by bowing with their hands folded in front. The Korean ritual officials presented four programs of ceremonies that would be performed next day in Hansǒng, including: 1) ceremonies forwarding the imperial decree to the king; 2) ceremonies expressing the imperial condolences upon the late dowager; 3) ceremonies receiving visit of the Korean officials; and 4) ceremonies giving envoys a banquet at their accommodation.⁸³ All programs precisely followed the time-honored ritual codes. The envoys also declined to receive any gifts by strictly following the emperor's instructions.

The most important ceremony was performed in the palace on November 8. The king had promised the Western ministers that he would invite them to attend the ceremony, but he did not deliver on this promise. Without knowing what really occurred inside the palace, these ministers assumed that the envoys might persuade the king act in accordance with Beijing's interests in the name of certain rituals. What these diplomats had learned about the Sino-Korean relationship before 1890 could not help them grasp the long-lived ritual contacts between the courts in Beijing and Hansǒng, so such contacts were unavoidably understood in the modern diplomatic circumstances as a tool for China to influence or even manipulate Chosǒn. This doubt was prevalent before 1892, when Yuan distributed copies of *Shihan jilue*, a Chinese diary of an imperial mission member, and its English translation, *Notes on the Imperial Chinese Mission to Corea, 1890*, to the ministers in Hansǒng.

In fact, all actions that occurred in the palace between the envoys and the king

⁸³ *Shihan jilue*, 17-28.

were ritual matters. The essential part was the ceremonies expressing the emperor's condolences, which, according to the *Shihan jilue*, went as follows:

The Master of Ceremonies of Chosŏn cried out 'Wail.' Then the Senior Usher will request the King to wail and the King will wail. The members of the Royal Household and the civil and military officials at a signal from their prompters, will also wail. With the view of receiving the Imperial Commissioners, the Senior and Junior Ushers shall lead the King out of the Hall by the central entrance. The Senior Usher will then request the King to stop wailing, and the King will cease wailing. The members of the Royal Household and the civil and military officials shall do the same at the signal from their prompters.

The official charged with the reading of the Message of Condolence, is to walk up to the table containing the Message, and in a standing position, with his face towards the west, take up the Message and read it aloud. After reading it, he is to replace it on the table. The Senior Usher shall request the King to wail. The King will then wail. The Ushers of Ceremonies shall request the Commissioners to wail. The Commissioners will wail. The members of the Royal Household and the civil and military officials at the request of their prompters, will also wail. The Ushers of Ceremonies shall request the Commissioners to stop wailing. The Commissioners will stop wailing. The Senior Usher shall request the King to stop wailing, and the King will cease wailing. The members of the Royal Household and the civil and military officials will also stop wailing at the request of their prompters. The King shall then accompany the Commissioners out as far as the central entrance. Thence the Royal Ushers shall conduct the Commissioners back to their original resting place east of the Fasting Hall.

The Senior Usher shall request the King to put on his mourning appendages and to take up his mourning staff and wail. The King shall then put on his mourning staff and wail. The King shall then put on his mourning appendages, take up his mourning staff and wail, while the members of the Royal Household and the civil and military officials, prompted by their own prompters, shall also wail. The Senior and Junior Ushers shall lead the King into the central entrance of the Hall and there the Senior Usher shall request the King to stop wailing. The King shall then stop wailing and at the same time the members of the Royal Household and the civil and military officials, shall also stop wailing.⁸⁴

These elaborate ceremonies had been minutely performed by both sides for nearly 250 years up to 1890. In the procedures, both the envoys and the king had no time for spontaneous face-to-face communications. When they finished the ceremonies and took

⁸⁴ *Notes on the Imperial Chinese Mission to Corea, 1890*, 19-22; *Shihan jilue*, 22-26. Some terms were slightly modified by the author of this dissertation in order to make them consistent with the dissertation.

tea at the king's hall, they still had no freedom to talk. As a matter of fact, the contents of the king's conversations with the envoys had been scheduled by the Korean ministers on October 22, two weeks before the envoys arrived.⁸⁵ When the above ceremonies were accomplished, the king tried to pay a ceremony of obeisance to the envoys by bowing twice with his hands folded in front (Ch. *zaibai*). The envoys immediately said that there was no need for the king to pay such a high-level ceremony. As an alternative, they suggested the king just bow with his hands folded in front once. The king followed the suggestion, and the envoys paid the same rituals back. When this was done, they made a short conversation:

King: Is everything fine with the emperor?

Envoys: His Majesty is fine.

King: Is everything fine with the dowager empress?

Envoys: Her Majesty is fine.

King: It is cold now in fall and you came from the maritime route. Do you feel good?

Envoys: Thanks to the benefaction of the emperor, we are free from illnesses.

King: Our Small Country suffers the loss of the dowager queen. The emperor is so kind to show his deep solicitude by sending Your Superiors to come here for conferring the noble rank upon the late queen. What a great honor it is.

Envoys: Your grief is really conceivable.

King: Your Superiors came here with the emperor's great kindness and virtue and you sympathize with our Small Country's poor situation by cancelling many routines [about the gifts]. But our etiquettes for welcoming you are so simple that they have made me uncomfortable.

Envoys: We had received the imperial instructions before we departed, so we must obey the emperor's will.⁸⁶

After drinking some tea, the host and the guests finished the conversation by bowing toward each other with hand folded in front. The conversation was full of formulas, insomuch that nothing related to practical political or diplomatic issues, just like the conversation between imperial envoys and the king at the same palace in 1876. The

⁸⁵ *Ch'iksa ilgi*, vol. 19, 2b.

⁸⁶ *Ch'iksa ilgi*, vol. 19, 11a-12a.

trivial rituals formalized activities of all participants, who were expected to be highly meticulous and not do anything to threaten the seriousness of the rituals. Rituals, in this reciprocal arrangement between the Korean monarch and the agents of the Chinese emperor, amounted to the manifestation of the dignity of, and the hierarchy between, the two courts and the two countries. Through these rituals, their Zongfan relationship was materially demonstrated and ideologically consolidated.

On November 10, the king visited the envoys at their residence to treat them to a tea ceremony. This was supposed to be the time that the Korean side gave the envoys gifts. Yet, following the imperial instructions, the envoys emphasized again that they “could not even accept a piece of paper as present.”⁸⁷ The next day, the king paid a ceremony of sending off the envoys at the West Gate of the city. After taking a rest in Inchon, the envoys sailed to Tianjin on November 14. Their departure marked the end of Qing China’s imperial missions to Chosŏn within the Zongfan framework in history.

The short sojourn of the envoys in Hansŏng left in question the role that Yuan Shikai played at this time. As the H. I. C. M. Resident, Yuan did not go to Inchon, did not enter the palace when the grand ceremony was held, and did not meet and talk with the envoys in Hansŏng. Under Li’s requests, he only contacted some Korean officials who were in charge of welcoming the mission about whether the mission extorted gifts from Chosŏn.⁸⁸ The envoys did not contact Yuan either, aside from sending him some notes about performances of ceremonies before they left Hansŏng.⁸⁹ Whether or not Yuan had hoped to seize and use the visit of the imperial mission to his advantage, as the conspiracy approach that his Japanese and Western counterparts would have it, the event

⁸⁷ *Notes on the Imperial Chinese Mission to Corea, 1890*, 29; *Shihan jilue*, 24-25.

⁸⁸ Notes between Yuan and Sim, Nam, and Min Yŏng-sang, November 11, 1890, in *QSCJ*.

⁸⁹ Xuchang and Chong Li to Yuan, November 11, 1890, in *QSCJ*.

suggested that Yuan was an outsider to the court-to-court contacts.

China's imperial mission, bringing with it the first grand ritual performance after Western powers opened Chosŏn's door in 1882, demonstrated and subordinated the Zongfan order for the powers that had been taking such relationship as a conundrum for years. As M. Frederick Nelson puts it, this event "imparted, for the Western observers, a *de jure* status to China's *de facto* position in Korea...the Western powers were beginning to attribute more force to the familial relationship which for two decades they had rejected as purely ceremonial."⁹⁰ In other words, the imperial mission proved that the Chinese rituals were not purely formalistic ceremonies, but rather potent symbols of power. This observation can explain why "the Chinese image of world order was stubbornly maintained right up until the 1890s."⁹¹ Existing together with the image of the day was the politico-cultural Chinese empire.

WAS THE IMPERIAL MISSION A CHINESE CONSPIRACY?

Since 1890, a leading interpretation of the imperial mission has regarded it as a Chinese conspiracy conducted under the foil of tributary routines, aiming to strengthen China's control over Chosŏn at the cost of the latter's independent sovereignty.⁹² This approach understands this event in a context of power politics by reading the Sino-Korean Zongfan relationship as a suzerain-vassal relationship.⁹³ Juxtaposing the issue of Chosŏn's vassalage with that of its independent sovereignty, scholars prefer to interpret the mission as an important application of China's new policy to Chosŏn that could be called the "Li-

⁹⁰ M. Frederick Nelson, *Korea and the Old Orders in Eastern Asia*, 202.

⁹¹ Benjamin I. Schwartz, "The Chinese Perception of World Order, Past and Present," 285.

⁹² See Lin Mingte, *Yuan Shikai yu Chaoxian*, 141-143; Takashi Okamoto, *Sekai no naka no nitsu shin kan kankei shi: kōrin to zotsu koku, jishu to dokuritsu*, 15-28; George Alexander Lensen, *Balance of Intrigue*, vol. 1, 90-91; Kirk W. Larsen, *Tradition, Treaties, and Trade*, 190-191.

⁹³ As for a definition on "power politics," see Martin Wight, *Power Politics*, 23.

Yuan policy,” after Li Hongzhang and Yuan Shikai.⁹⁴ This new policy was said to combine China’s supremacy as the suzerain over Korea in the old tributary framework with China’s hegemonic position in the new treaty port system in Chosŏn.

This conspiracy approach was popular among western diplomats in Beijing and Hansŏng since the late 1880s, who believed that China was in the crisis of its suzerainty at Chosŏn and the mission in 1890 was an intrigue at the cost of Chosŏn’s sovereignty. On November 2, 1890, after learning that Beijing dispatched two envoys to Hansŏng, Robert Hart in Beijing wrote to his confidant in London, James Duncan Campbell, that,

China has sent two Imperial Commissioners to Corea...to convey Emperor’s condolences to King on mother’s death. The meeting of these officials and King is looked forward to with interest: the American or want-Corea-independent party urge the King to either not receive the officials or if he does, not to go through the ancient ceremonial which involves kneeling, *ko-towing*, and other forms showing Corea’s tributary and China’s suzerain relations; if the King follows their advice these sympathisers will force China to take stronger action than hitherto—if he doesn’t, his public recognition of tributaryness (for the meeting will be in public) will force sympathisers to withdraw from their attempt to demonstrate that Corea is independent. I hope this event will ease matters for me in the ‘Hermit Kingdom.’⁹⁵

The potential dilemma for both China and Chosŏn that Hart had foreseen was soon corroborated by Augustine Heard in Hansŏng. On November 17, when the envoys had returned to China, Heard reported to Secretary of State, James G. Blaine, that,

No foreigner witnessed any part of what took place in the Palace or at this interview, and two Versions are current. The Chinese and their friends represent that everything was done in accordance with ancient usage, and was to them perfectly Satisfactory;—that is to say, that the King went to the extreme of deference and homage and yielded to every demand. On the other hand, it is asserted that, while showing himself courteous & considerate, he provoked irritation by his reserve, by his firmness in declining to commit himself to accepting the Suggestions of the Envoy with regard to his conduct in policy, without consideration and without deliberation and consultation with his

⁹⁴ Payson J. Treat, “China and Korea, 1885–1894,” 506-543.

⁹⁵ Hart to Campbell, No. 777, Z/466, November 2, 1890, in *The I. G. in Peking*, vol. I. 819.

Ministers. It is too soon yet to know the truth.⁹⁶

Heard and his fellow diplomats in the city did not know what had happened between the king and the envoys, so they took their guesses based on the assumption of China's ambition. In a confidential report, Heard asserted that "China was not willing to forgo this golden opportunity to affirm to the world her Superiority," but he simultaneously noted that "it should not be forgotten that the Act was Oriental between Orientals, and must not be judged by the Western standard."⁹⁷ This twofold statement actually acknowledged the legitimacy and uniqueness of the Sino-Korean relationship.

Indeed, Beijing demonstrated its superiority through the mission, but the mission would have not been dispatched, if any precedents had existed. More importantly, what the king petitioned was understood by Beijing as a strong political desire to challenge Chosŏn's status as China's shuguo. This point could be seen from the envoys' report in Beijing after the mission. In their joint memorial, the two envoys concluded that, "The ceremony was solemn and majestic. All foreigners have seen it and learned that Chosŏn is subordinate to the Heavenly Dynasty. Chosŏn could not deny it. If we can take the advantage to pacify the country in an appropriate way, it would be serving as our fence (Ch. *pingmeng*) and enjoying our great benevolence forever."⁹⁸

Moreover, the envoys suggested that in the future the expenses of imperial envoys to Chosŏn be covered by the outlay for ministers to other countries, in order to prevent Chosŏn imposing exorbitant taxes and levies on its people in the name of welcoming imperial envoys. The proposal was very significant because it showed an intention of blurring the line between the imperial envoys of the Manchu court to China's outer *fan*,

⁹⁶ Heard to Blaine, No. 86, Seoul, Korea, November 17, 1890, in *KARD II*, 32;

⁹⁷ Heard to Blaine, No. 89, *confidential*, Seoul, Korea, November 19, 1890, in *KARD II*, 35.

⁹⁸ Xuchang and Chongli's memorial, November 27, 1890, in *Fengshi Chaoxian riji*, 53b-55a.

who were managed by the Ministry of Rituals for centuries, and the Chinese ministers to other countries, who were under the Zongli Yamen for more than a decade.

For this proposal, the Ministry of Rituals consulted with Emperor Yongzheng's imperial edict in 1735, in which the emperor reduced half of the amount of the silver that the king gave to envoys as gifts for supporting their long trip, and agreed to make changes to this aspect by permanently cancelling the routine, which meant the envoys would never receive any silver from Chosŏn. As an alternative, the ministry and the Zongli Yamen decided that, in the future, each imperial envoy would receive 2,000 taels of silver from the Yamen to support his trip to Chosŏn and each interpreter would receive 500 taels for the same purpose. These sums of money were parts of the outlay for Chinese ministers to other countries. On January 20, 1891, Emperor Guangxu endorsed the proposal. This new rule was forwarded to the Beiyang Superintendent, the Manchu General in Mukden, the Ministry of Rituals in Mukden, and the king.⁹⁹ Yuan was also informed by the Beiyang Superintendent. No imperial envoys, however, would ever gain chance to claim the financial support from the Zongli Yamen.

6.4 “Maintaining the East Fence”: Chosŏn in the Minds of Chinese Intellectuals during the Sino–Japanese War of 1894–1895

In May 1894, the Chinese general Nie Shicheng (1836–1900) returned to Tianjin from his ten-month trip to Northern Manchuria, Russian Far East, and Chosŏn, along with students of the Military College at Tianjin, under Li Hongzhang's support. In Chosŏn, General Nie met with the king and visited treaty ports. In his report to Li about Chosŏn, Nie concluded that: “the king is weak, the officials are addicted to alcohol and women, and no one is considering self-strengthening programs...No talent generals on the top and no able

⁹⁹ *Fengshi Chaoxian riji*, 55b-60b.

worriers on the bottom. When the country encounters troubles, it would need China to send troops to protect it. The situation is really dangerous.” The general analyzed that, “compared with Russia that is powerful but no more than a superficial threat, Japan is a really fatal danger.” Therefore, he argued that China should prepare to resist potential Japanese invasion in order to “consolidate the *fan* and shuguo and protect China’s frontier.”¹⁰⁰ What General Nie predicted was quickly proved by the deterioration of Chosŏn’s situation as a result of the Tonghak Rebellion, and Nie himself was sent to Chosŏn in June to assist the country. In the following months, the general would witness how China lost the shuguo to Japanese on battlegrounds.

Nie’s concerns were also shared by many Chinese officials. In July, when China was fiercely disputing with Japan over the issue of sending troops to Chosŏn, many officials in Beijing presented their memorials or position papers to the emperor to offer their ideal policies of strengthening Chinese forces, protecting Chosŏn, and defeating Japan. For example, on July 20, Zeng Guangjun, an official of the Imperial Academy, presented a paper via the Ministry of Personnel, suggesting that China publicize its rationale for an expedition against Japan. Defining Chosŏn, which he called “Koryŏ” (Ch. *Gaoli*), as the country that “has first subordinated to our dynasty and cautiously paid tributary visits for hundreds of years without interruption,” Zeng proclaimed that “all foreign countries know this, but Japan has fabricated some excuses and tried to make the country subordinate to two countries.”¹⁰¹

Pang Hongshu, an official at the Grand Censorate (Ch. *Ducha yuan*), presented a confidential memorial on July 21, arguing that China should not abandon Chosŏn and

¹⁰⁰ Nie Shicheng, *Dongyou jicheng* (Notes on the journey to the eastern areas), 547-553.

¹⁰¹ Zeng’s petition, July 20, 1894, in Qi Qizhang, ed., *Zhongri zhanzheng* (The Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895), vol. 1, 16.

should attack the Japanese forces on the peninsula. Pang listed four reasons after making a comparison between the case of Ryukyu and the ongoing situation in Chosŏn:

It was a misstep that we abandoned Ryukyu and it damaged our national authority and stimulated the ambitions of the enemy. Yet we should not abandon Chosŏn because it deeply concerns the overall situation. First, Chosŏn has been a *fan* of our dynasty for a long time, insomuch that it is not different from the Mongols and the tribes in the western areas (Ch. *xiyu*). If we allowed others to cast covetous eyes on Chosŏn, would there be anywhere else that we would not allow them to do so? Second, Chosŏn borders the three provinces in Manchuria (Ch. *Dongsansheng*), serving as a fence for that area. If others occupied Chosŏn, we should not only strengthen the defenses in Lüshun [a.k.a. Port Arthur], but also deploy forces to many places in the northeast. Third, Chosŏn is a natural barricade against Russia's vaulting ambition to expand toward the south. Had Japan occupied Chosŏn, Russia would compete with Japan for manipulating the area. Fourth, the ports of Dengzhou and Lüshun are doors to the northern area, forming a line of defense together with the port of Inchon. If we lost Chosŏn, we would face the enemy right outside of our door and the maritime transports would be in grave danger.¹⁰²

By underlining the coherent legitimacy between China and its outer *fan*, Pang emphasized that Chosŏn was as important as Mongolia, Tibet, and other political entities in Western China. He argued that China should protect Chosŏn by defeating Japan, so that it could resolve its ongoing disputes with Russia over the borderline at the Pamir Mountains and those with Britain over the trade negotiations at Tibet.

The approach to reviewing the time-honored Zongfan relationship with the aim of showing China's necessity and righteousness to protect Chosŏn was popular among Chinese officials and intellectuals. In his memorial on July 25, Duanfang (1861–1911), who later died at his post in Sichuan province during the Revolution of 1911, reviewed Hongtaiji's conquest of Chosŏn in 1637 and the erection of the Samjŏndo Monument. As an erudite antiques collector, Duanfang must have reviewed some documents about the inscriptions of the monument, from which he believed he found the reason "Chosŏn

¹⁰² Pang's secret memorial, July 21, 1894, in *Zhongri zhanzheng*, vol. 1, 23-24.

loyally served the Great Qing for more than 200 years without any acts of treachery.”¹⁰³ Duanfang’s analyses revealed that China’s involvement in the war with Japan in 1894 was a result of the inner logic of its Zongfan commitment to Chosŏn since 1637. On the same day when Duanfang submitted his position paper, the Chinese navy was attacked by the Japanese navy at P’ungdo of Chosŏn. The war broke out.

On August 1, Emperor Guangxu issued an edict to declare war on Japan. The emperor legitimated the Chinese actions by stating that,

Chosŏn has been a *fan* and shuguo of our Great Qing and it sends tribute to us every year for more than 200 years, which is known to the world. During the past dozen years or so, the country has been suffering from domestic troubles and our court, in order to cherish the small country (Ch. *zixiao*), have repeatedly sent forces to help stabilize the situations and eventually placed a Resident in her capital to protect it at any time. In the fourth moon of this year, Chosŏn begged our court to help put down a rebellion, upon which we have instructed Li Hongzhang to dispatch forces there. The rebels ran away when our forces arrived at Asan, while the Japanese suddenly sent their troops to Hansŏng without any cause, reinforcing them until they have exceeded more than 10,000 soldiers, and forced the king to change the system of government. The Japanese minatory activities of bullying Chosŏn are totally unreasonable. Our dynasty support and cherish *fan* and subordinate in a way of letting the country manage its own political affairs under the rule of *zizhu*. Japan is a friendly country (Ch. *yuguo*) of Chosŏn since it has signed a treaty with Chosŏn, so it is really unreasonable for Japan to send troops and force it to make reforms...Japan has violated the treaties and the international law and waged the war. Let people under the Heaven know that our court has tried our best to do what by humanity and duty (Ch. *renzhi yijin*) throughout the whole complications, and we could not be tolerant of the Japanese misdeeds anymore. Let Li Hongzhang dispatch formidable troops to swiftly go to Chosŏn to salvage the Korean people from great suffering.¹⁰⁴

The edict justified China’s action by following the rule of “cherishing the small country” within the Zongfan system and that of defending the fairness of international law within the treaty port system. Many officials heartily identified China’s action of protecting its

¹⁰³ Duanfang’s memorial, July 25, 1894, in *Zhongri zhanzheng*, vol. 1, 33-35.

¹⁰⁴ *Qing dezong shilu*, vol. 56, 396.

shuguo as “cherishing men from afar.”¹⁰⁵ This point of view further prompted officials to take all China’s outer and inner *fan* and other frontier areas, including Vietnam, Burma, Ryukyu, Outer Mongolia, Xinjiang, Tibet, Manchuria, and Taiwan, into consideration, strongly arguing that China should not lose Chosŏn.

On August 3, a Manchu official Changlin stated in his memorial that Japan’s goal was to annex Chosŏn and, if it became true, “all the *fan* of our dynasty would be subordinate to foreign barbarians (Ch. *waiyi*), so other countries would encroach on Chinese inner land, as a result of which Xinjiang, Taiwan, Tibet, and Manchuria would be in grave danger too.”¹⁰⁶ Simultaneously, Ding Lijun, an official of the Imperial Academy, emphasized that, “Chosŏn, as a *fan* that subordinated to Emperor Taizong [Hongtaiji], has been loyally serving us for almost 300 years without interruption...If the fence collapsed, Mukden would be in great danger. Chosŏn, different from Vietnam and Burma that are thousands of miles far from China, is closely related and mutually dependent with China like the lips and teeth and like bones and flesh.” Ding argued that Beijing should firmly refused the British and Russian mediation between China and Japan, for he believed if China ceded Chosŏn or Taiwan to Japan as the Western mediators were indicating, Britain would soon encroach upon Tibet and Russia would on Outer Mongolia.¹⁰⁷

Changlin’s and Ding’s concerns on China’s territorial integrity were widely shared by their colleagues, who also ardently presented their memorials or petitions, such as Yu Lianyuan on August 4, Long Zhanlin on August 5, Ye Qingzeng on August 8, An Weijun on August 9, Hong Liangpin on August 10, Zhou Chengguang and Zhong Dexiang on August 17, Zhang Zhongxin on August 18, Fan Gongxu on August 21, Yufu on August 26,

¹⁰⁵ Li Hanzhang’s memorial, August 8, 1894, in *Zhongri zhanzheng*, vol. 1, 61.

¹⁰⁶ Changlin’s memorial, August 3, 1894, in *Zhongri zhanzheng*, vol. 1, 45.

¹⁰⁷ Ding’s petition, August 3, 1894, in *Zhongri zhanzheng*, vol. 1, 46-48.

Kuai Guangdian and Lu Xueyuan on August 29, Yu Zhaofan on August 30, and Yan Youzhang on September 6.¹⁰⁸ These officials regarded Chosŏn as an indispensable part for China to remain China's territorial integrity. In addition, they regarded Chosŏn as the fence to Manchuria, the Great Qing's "fundamental area" (Ch. *genben zhongdi*), on the one hand, and connected the fate of Chosŏn with that of China's other frontier areas that were already in the covetous eyes of Western powers, on the other. As Kuai questioned, "after we abandon Chosŏn, Russia intrudes Mongolia, and Britain does the same to Tibet, shall we let them alone or argue with them? If we opt to argue with them, we had better keep Chosŏn safe now."¹⁰⁹

These officials enthusiastically made their prescriptions for Beijing, among which exploiting China's patriarchal authority stood out as the most significant. Ding Lijun, assuming that the king was controlled by Japan, argued that China should invest the crown prince as new king and keep him in the Chinese army for his safety.¹¹⁰ Hong Liangpin similarly suggested that China should select a royal member of Chosŏn to be the guide for the Chinese forces and invest him as new king when the crisis was resolved.¹¹¹ Yu Lianyuan (1844–1901) also agreed that China should invest a royal member of Chosŏn as new king at Pyongyang.¹¹² This idea of investing a new king was developed by a candidate official, Yan Youzhang, who clearly argued that China should

¹⁰⁸ For Yu's petition, see *Zhongri zhanzheng*, vol. 1, 50-52; for Long's, see *ibid.*, 52-55; for Ye's, see *ibid.*, 65-66; for An's, see *ibid.*, 67-69; for Hong, see his memorial on August 10, 1894, in *Junjichu hanwen lufu zouzhe*, *Zhongri zhanzheng* (The Chinese copies of palace memorials of Grand Council about the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95), archive catalogue No. 3-167-9115-5; for Zhou Chengguang's, see *Zhongri zhanzheng*, vol. 1, 89-90; for Zhong's, see *ibid.*, 97-103; for Zhang Zhongxin's, see *ibid.*, 109-113; for Fan's, see *ibid.*, 114-116; for Yufu's, see *ibid.*, 136-142; for Kuai's, see *ibid.*, 154-177; for Lu, see *ibid.*, 178-180; for Yu's, see *ibid.*, 180-182; for Yan, see *ibid.*, 199-203.

¹⁰⁹ Kuai's petition, August 29, 1894, in *Zhongri zhanzheng*, vol. 1, 155.

¹¹⁰ Ding's petition, August 3, 1894, in *Zhongri zhanzheng*, vol. 1, 46-48.

¹¹¹ Hong's memorial on August 10, 1894, in *Junjichu hanwen lufu zouzhe*, *Zhongri zhanzheng*, archive catalogue No. 3-167-9115-5.

¹¹² The Grand Council's memorial, on August 28, 1894, in *Zhongri zhanzheng*, vol. 1, 152.

convert Chosŏn into a province and appoint officials and officers to govern it.¹¹³ All these officials observed the situation within the conventional Zongfan framework, believing that it was time Beijing exercised its patriarchal authority. While Ding regarded this policy as a way of “publicizing the great justice to all people under Heaven,” Yan saw it “legitimate and justifiable” (Ch. *mingzheng yanshun*), in that Chosŏn was China’s *fan* and its land was once under control of two Chinese counties in history. Their proposals shared the striking similarities with those of Li Shuchang, Zhang Jian, Zhang Peilun, and Kang Youwei in the late 1880s and early 1890s. Beijing, however, would never move toward that direction of annexing Chosŏn, even in such a dramatic war time, a moral and political principle for China to maintain.

This storm of the officials’ opinions resulted from the declaration of war against Japan on August 1, but it was also a result of the political struggles among bureaucratic fractions. The majority of these officials held low ranks as members of the “Pure Stream.” Different from the vanguards of the “Pure Stream” before the Sino–French War in 1883–1885 that centered the minister of the Grand Council, Li Hongzao (1820–1897), the leading figures of the “Pure Stream” in 1894 took Emperor Guangxu’s instructor, Weng Tonghe, as their mentor and backer. Weng took a pro-war approach toward Japan, shared by Li Hongzao, while the two men saw Li Hongzhang as their adversary and charged the latter and his protégés, such as Ma Jianzhong, Liu Mingchuan, and Ding Ruchang, with being fearful with fighting Japanese. With the rise of the political influence of Weng and Li Hongzao in October and November, their protégés became more active and put forward more opinions during the second half of the war from late 1894 to early 1895.

The core point made by these officials was that China could not lose Chosŏn

¹¹³ Yan’s petition, September 6, 1894, in *Zhongri zhanzheng*, vol. 1, 199.

because otherwise it would mean the disintegration of the Great Qing. In such a context, the Great Qing needed to be fighting for its dignity and its legitimacy as the Central Kingdom and the Heaven Dynasty. The ideology of “all-under-Heave” had virtually collapsed at the 1890s, but at this particular moment it still manifested itself in a very strong and splendid way. So did the Chinese empire in the politico-cultural sense.

Almost all these officials had no practical experience on industrial practices, military campaigns, or diplomatic negotiations as Li Hongzhang did. In the eyes of pragmatists fighting the Japanese or dealing with Russian or British on China’s frontier, these officials were no more than armchair strategists with fervent but unpractical and unrealistic plans. The label of the “Pure Stream” in political struggles undermined their credibility too. However, their capacity to assess the situation shall not be ignored. Viewed from the problems of Chosŏn, these officials became quite worried about China’s frontier security. As history unfolded, the nightmare scenario they sketched out in 1894 that China would encounter serious challenges in Xinjiang, Tibet, Taiwan, Manchuria, and Outer Mongolia from such powers as Britain and Russia turned out to be true in the six decades following the war, until the People’s Republic of China firmly claimed its territorial domain in 1949.

When the war was escalating on the eastern frontier of China, people on the western frontier in Tibet were also seriously concerning the situation. On February 22, 1895, the Imperial Commissioner to Tibet, Kuihuan, memorialized to Emperor Guangxu, reporting that the Thirteenth Dalai Lama (1876–1933) had led lamas and followers of Tibetan Buddhism to read Sutras at primary lama temples after the Dalai Lama heard that Japan had baldly broken international law to invade Chosŏn. The Dalai Lama wished

their genuine pray before Buddha Sakyamuni could bring blessing for the “great emperor” (Ch. *da huangdi*) and his “great forces” (Ch. *dabing*), by which China could defeat the Japanese “clowns” in Chosŏn. Not until April 7 could the emperor read Kuihuan’s memorial to learn the Dalai Lama’s activities.¹¹⁴ Ten days later, however, China signed the treaty of peace with Japan at Shimonoseki.

As a result of a series of Chinese fiascos of both maritime battles on Shandong peninsula and overland battles in Manchuria, Beijing started to negotiate with Japan under the American mediation from November 1894. On April 17, 1895, the Chinese representative Li Hongzhang, after a painful negotiation with his Japanese counterparts, Itō Hirobumi and Mutsu Munemitsu (1844–1897), signed the treaty of peace at Shimonoseki. The treaty was written in three languages, including Chinese, Japanese, and English. The first article states that, “China recognizes definitively the full and complete independence and autonomy of Korea, and in consequence, the payment of tribute and the performance of ceremonies and formalities by Korea to China in derogation of such independence and autonomy, shall wholly cease for the future.”¹¹⁵ Compared with the first article of the Treaty of Kanhwa in 1876 that has only Chinese and Japanese versions, the first article of the English version of the Treaty of Shimonoseki explicitly defines Chosŏn as a country of “full and complete independence and autonomy” (Ch. *wanquan wuque zhi duli zizhu*), erasing any ambiguity of Chosŏn’s status in Chinese or Japanese languages.

After they received the first article drafted by Japan on April 1,¹¹⁶ Li and his assistants suggested the article should state that, “China and Japan recognize definitely

¹¹⁴ Kui’s memorial, February 22, 1895, in *Qinggong zhencang lishi Dalai Lama dang’an huicui*, 387-388.

¹¹⁵ *The Treaty of Peace*, April 17, 1894, in *NHGB*, vol. 28 (2), 373.

¹¹⁶ The Treaty of Peace drafted by Japan, April 1, 1894, in *NHGB*, vol. 28 (2), 331.

the full and complete independence and autonomy and guarantee the complete neutrality of Korea, and it is agreed that the interference by either in the internal affairs of Korea in derogation of such autonomy, or the performance of ceremonies and formalities by Korea inconsistent with such independence, shall wholly cease for the future.”¹¹⁷ They tried to draw Japan into these terms in order to make sure that Chosŏn would not be occupied by Japan after China recognized its “full and complete independence and autonomy.” The Japanese representatives firmly refused to accept the modifications, so the final version was exactly what the Japanese proposed, as quoted above. This article terminated the Qing–Chosŏn Zongfan relationship and, different from China’s hope, it did not state that Japan would ensure Chosŏn’s neutrality.

For the purpose of our analyses in this dissertation, it is worth pointing out that, in the Treaty of Shimonoseki, the “Great Qing” was fully equal to “China” or “Zhongguo.” Although the Japanese version of the treaty called the Qing the “Country of the Qing” (*J. shinkoku*), the Chinese version termed it “Zhongguo” and the English version called it “China.” It was thus China, rather than the Great Qing, that recognized Chosŏn’s “full and complete independence and autonomy.” In this sense, what the treaty terminated was not only the Zongfan relationship between the Qing and Chosŏn that was established in 1637, but also the general Zongfan arrangement between China and Korea.

When the news that Li signed the treaty reached Beijing, thousands of Chinese intellectuals, who were attending the triennial imperial civil service examination in the capital, were stirred up by the humiliating terms. They started to submit long and passionate petitions to the emperor via the Grand Censorate. The majority of these petitions were countersigned by many intellectuals from different provinces, such as

¹¹⁷ The Treaty of Peace drafted by China, April 9, 1894, in *NHGB*, vol. 28 (2), 352.

Liang Qichao (1873–1929) from Guangdong, calling for cancelling the treaty and continuously fighting with Japan. These intellectuals expressed their understandings of Chosŏn by emphasizing its important strategic position as China’s “eastern fence” and its historical significance for the rise of the Great Qing. This point could be well observed from the petitions submitted on April 30, respectively by Liang Qichao, Tan Shaotang, Ren Xichun, Gu Dunyi, Lin Chaoqi, and others.¹¹⁸ On May 1, three candidate officials from the Ministry of Personnel, Wang Rongxian, Hong Jiayu, and Bao Xinzeng, submitted a long petition via Weng Tonghe and other high-rank officials, in which they underlined the grave dangers that each article of the treaty would bring to China. In terms of the first article, they analyzed that,

China recognizes the full and complete independence and autonomy of Chosŏn, Japan has made political reforms in Chosŏn and built railways there to extend its business. This situation is just as a thief, who has broken into a civilian’s house, destroyed the properties in the house, and stolen capitals and materials, forces the prosecutor to issue a guaranty that he is innocent. How humiliating it is. The article defines Chosŏn as a country of ‘independence and autonomy,’ but it should simultaneously proclaim that Japan cannot send troops to the country and intervene in its internal affairs. Why are there no words about this point? Chosŏn actually becomes a country equal to China but subordinate to Japan. In addition, the article states that the payment of tribute and the performance of ceremonies by Chosŏn shall wholly cease for the future. According to conventions, if a shuguo fails to pay tribute and perform certain ceremonies, China should not issue an imperial edict allowing it to abolish tribute payment and formalities, even if China cannot punish it. Moreover, Chosŏn has been China’s *fan* for almost 300 years that has embodied the great achievements of Emperor Taizu and Emperor Taizong and has received kindness from other emperors for generations. Now a simple sentence of a treaty abolishes the entire thing, which runs opposite to the rationale of the system.¹¹⁹

All of such petitions suggested that their authors were concerning China’s dignity.

¹¹⁸ For the petition written by Chun Sheng, Liang Qichao, Wen Junduo, and others, see *Zhongri zhanzheng*, vol. 3, 165-166; for that by Tan Shaotang and others, see *ibid.*, 169; for that by Ren Xichun and others, see *ibid.*, 173; for that by Gu Dunyi, see *ibid.*, 173; for that by Lin Chaoqi, see *ibid.*, 181.

¹¹⁹ The petition of Wang, Hong, and Bao, May 1, 1895, in *Zhongri zhanzheng*, vol. 3, 188.

In a petition submitted on May 3, ten low-rank officials bitterly reviewed the recent history of China's losing Burma to Britain, Vietnam to France, northern Manchuria to Russia, and Ryukyu and Chosŏn to Japan, concluding that "we once had many *fan* on the four quarters of the world, but we have lost all of them within the past decades."¹²⁰ More importantly, they argued that the cessions of Taiwan and Liaodong to Japan would be the prologue to more cessions of China's territory to foreign powers, which would be much worse than losing outer *fan* on China's periphery. For them, the Great Qing, as well as the great Chinese empire, was collapsing on its frontier.

When the movement of submitting petitions was still developing in a dramatic scale in Beijing, on May 8, 1895, the exchange of ratifications of the Treaty of Shimonoseki was accomplished at Yantai (Chefoo) in Shandong province. The Great Qing lost its first and prototypical outer *fan* as well as shuguo, forever.

¹²⁰ The petition of Zhu Junying and others, May 3, 1895, in *Zhongri zhanzheng*, vol. 3, 290.

CHAPTER 7

Re-envisioning Chosŏn: An Empire, A Friendly Nation, and A Colony, 1896–1919

The Sino–Japanese War of 1894–1895 terminated Sino–Korean Zongfan relations and offered Chosŏn an opportunity to transform from China’s shuguo into a state enjoying “independence and autonomy,” as claimed in the Treaty of Shimonoseki. The most significant consequence of the war was not that Chosŏn became independent, as some have maintained. Chosŏn had always enjoyed *de facto* independence—*zizhu*—within the Zongfan framework, which lasted from 1637 to 1895. The core level of the inner dual system between China and Chosŏn was terminated, which led to the collapse of the Zongfan framework of the outer dual system. As a result, the other two aspects of the inner and the outer dual systems remained unchanged and were formalized by the Sino–Korean Treaty of 1899. The post-1895 political framework between China and Korea was thus not a new arrangement, but a part of the former one that had been functioning for more than two decades before the outbreak of the war. Japan terminated the conventional political framework between China and Chosŏn, but barely inserted new terms into the post-war order between the two countries.

In the face of the epical change, China had to re-envision Chosŏn and treat the latter as an equal “friendly nation” (Ch. *youbang*). Following this transformation was a mixture of China’s policy toward Korea between the time-honored Zongfan conventions and newly established state-to-state diplomatic norms between the two countries, which presented itself in different ways in South China and Manchuria. On the one hand, in South China, China’s policy toward the Sino–Korean contacts still held the Zongfan momentum of “cherishing the small country” and cherishing the “foreign barbarians.” On

the other hand, along the Sino–Korean border in Manchuria, China’s policy manifested itself in continuous violent conflicts between Chinese communities and Korean immigrants. These conflicts resulted from the collapse of the Zongfan arrangement at the top level of the traditional political framework between China and Chosŏn. Following a decade rife with treaties, transformations, and tragedies, Chosŏn was colonized by Japan in 1910 and the Great Qing was overthrown by a nationalist revolution in 1911. In the hectic 1910s, both China and Korea struggled to survive encroaching colonialism and imperialism in East Asia.

7.1 The New Ritual Crisis for Beijing: Chosŏn’s Proposal of Treaty Negotiation with China

On January 7, 1895, as Japan approached mastery over Chosŏn in the then ongoing Sino–Japanese war, the king performed ceremonies at the royal Chongmyo Shrine and announced 14 items under the title of “Great Laws” (K. *hongbŏm*; Ch. *hongfan*), in which he termed himself “I, the emperor” (K. *chim*; Ch. *zhen*) and decided “to cut off the thought of being dependent upon the Qing country in order to lay the foundation for autonomy and independence.”¹ The items also aimed to initiate a new self-strengthening reform that was designed by Japan and would be conducted under Japanese supervision. Japan’s domination fundamentally damaged the country’s right to “autonomy and independence” and contributed to the political tension between the king and the Japanese representatives in Hansŏng.

Ten months later, the king’s wife and closest adviser for decades, Queen Min, was assassinated by a mob of Japanese rioters at her palace. The king was extremely frightened and escaped to the Russian legation for asylum in February 1896, together

¹ *Ilŏngnok*, vol. 79, 209.

with the Crown Prince, leaving the competition between Russia and Japan in the country more intense. The king took refuge only a month later, after his country began to use solar calendar on January 1, 1896, and the new reign-title of “Kōnyang,” the first reign-title in the history of the Chosŏn dynasty since it was founded in 1392. Yet the monarch knew well that such an unprecedented transformation could not ensure his personal safety. He stayed in the Russian legation for a year until he returned to his palace in February 1897. During these twelve months, he initiated negotiations for a new treaty with China, the former “Upper Country” as well as the “Heavenly Dynasty.”

On June 18, 1896, Tang Shaoyi (1862–1938), the Manager of Chinese Commercial Affairs and the *de facto* Chinese representative in Hansŏng, received a Korean interpreter named Pak T’ae-yŏng, who forwarded the king’s wish to negotiate a new treaty with China. According to Tang’s report to the new Beiyang Superintendent, Wang Wenshao (1830–1908), Pak said that,

Korea was China’s shuguo in history, but it becomes autonomous and independent because of the coercion of a powerful neighbor. We had no other options, and we have believed that China would not blame us for this. Considering that we have abolished the old treaties [with China], it is necessary to negotiate a new one. We have received deep benefits from the Central Dynasty and it is embarrassing for us to mention this. If we do not negotiate the new treaty, other countries might question us. We are more than happy to know the opinions of the Central Dynasty.

Tang did not refuse the proposal, but he suggested the negotiation should be conducted later because Chosŏn could not be regarded as an autonomous and independent country as the king was still in the Russian legation.² After learning about the news, the Zongli Yamen worried that China might appear too passive if Chosŏn sent representatives to Beijing for the treaty negotiation, or forwarded a similar requirement via the Russian

² Tang to Wang, July 12, 1896, in *QJZRH*, vol. 8, 4856-4857.

minister in Beijing. Considering that “Chosŏn, as our dynasty’s *fan* for a long time, should not be equally regarded as those Western countries,” the Yamen concluded that it was necessary to draft a short-range plan.

The Yamen proposed in a memorial to the emperor that, “We agree to negotiate a new trade regulation [with Chosŏn] and to allow it set up consuls [in China], but we will not allow it to sign treaties [with China], send ministers [to China], or present letters of credence [to the emperor]. China will send a consul general to Hansŏng to be in charge of the Chinese affairs that are supposed to be done by a minister. In this way, the system of *shuguo* could be preserved (Ch. *cun shuguo zhi ti*.” Meanwhile, the Yamen telegraphed Li Hongzhang, who was on his post-war global trip to Europe and North America, to solicit his advice. Li endorsed the plan of appointing a consul general at Hansŏng, as Britain, France, and Germany had done so, and he pointed out that the Yamen should send a letter directly to the Foreign Office of Chosŏn. Li also said that the Chinese consul general in Hansŏng did not need to present a letter of credence to the king. In addition, Li recommended Tang Shaoyi himself as the best candidate to fill the post.³ Although China had claimed Chosŏn’s full autonomy and independence in the Treaty of Shimonoseki, both the Zongli Yamen and Li Hongzhang were still trying to preserve the pre-war hierarchical “system” (Ch. *tizhi*) between the two countries. This was Beijing’s new policy toward Chosŏn in the first post-war days.

Chosŏn felt that the first article of the Treaty of Shimonoseki had put the kingdom in an awkward position. Instead of being proud of the “full autonomy and independence”—which Chosŏn had no chance to enjoy under the aggressive policies of the Japanese predator, the policy-makers of Chosŏn still followed the conventional

³ The Zongli Yamen’s memorial, July 27, 1896, in *QJZRH*, vol. 8, 4871-4874.

Zongfan manner of conducting its relations with China. In July 1896, the senior official Cho Pyŏng-chik (1833–1901) visited Tang Shaoyi to discuss the potential treaty negotiations. Several parts of their conversation are worth quoting as follows:

Cho: Our country was the *fan* and shuguo of the Central Dynasty for a long time. The Treaty of Shimonoseki terms our country “autonomous,” but it is not our Sovereign’s original willingness at all. We hope that the Central Dynasty does not blame us for this.

Tang: Our dynasty has no intention of blaming your country for it.

Cho: Our country was coerced by the powerful neighbor into claiming not to be China’s shuguo, but our Sovereign has appreciated the deep favors of the Imperial Dynasty and would like to negotiate a new treaty to resume our concord. Yet how dare our Small Country straightly propose this to the Big Country.

Tang: I have heard that the king has this motivation and he sent the interpreter Pak T’ae-yŏng to come here to discuss the matter.

Cho: Our Sovereign has learned about the conversation between you and Pak, but he is not sure what China thinks about the proposal. He is pretty worried about this...The Treaty of Shimonoseki proclaims Chosŏn’s autonomy. If we do not negotiate a new treaty, wouldn’t the Central Dynasty be displeased with our country?

Tang: The Treaty of Shimonoseki indeed mentions the status of Chosŏn, but it does not state that we should contract a treaty.

Cho: Without negotiating a treaty, wouldn’t it mean that [China] does not recognize Chosŏn’s autonomy?

Tang: I regard negotiating a treaty and recognizing Chosŏn’s autonomy as two different matters. They should not be mentioned in the same breath.

Cho: How so?

Tang: The recognition of autonomy only means not following the old regulations, but the exchange of a treaty would mean the two countries are equal to each other. Thus, the two issues should not be discussed in the same breath.

Cho: Our Sovereign has not yet thought about this point.⁴

This conversation is the key to understanding the post-war Qing–Chosŏn relationship from an inside perspective. The conversation suggests that both countries were still moving along the pre-war Zongfan lines in their contacts. The format of the conversation was not different from that between the king and the imperial envoys in 1890. Such hierarchical terms as the “Small Country,” the “Big Country,” the “Central

⁴ Wang Wenshao to the Zongli Yamen, August 7, 1896, in *QJZRH*, vol. 8, 4899-4900.

Dynasty,” and the “Imperial Dynasty” were still used. Furthermore, the conversation suggested that the king did not regard the “autonomy” as a divide for bilateral relations. More important, according to Cho, the king’s motivation of negotiating a new treaty was to avoid being blamed by China because the king regarded it as his responsibility to make the proposal first to the Big Country since the Treaty of Shimonoseki identified his country’s autonomy. This is precisely the Zongfan logic behind such cases in the pre-war period, as in 1882, when Chosŏn signed the treaty with the U.S. the king felt it was necessary to negotiate a treaty with China. Tang, on the other hand, did not regard Chosŏn as a country equal to China. Although China had lost Chosŏn as a *fan*, the bilateral Zongfan rationale firmly remained *ipso facto*. In terms of the two dual systems as it pertained to the bilateral Zongfan framework, the nature of the state-to-state relationship could be clearly delineated by the Treaty of Shimonoseki. This did not, however, extend to relations between the Qing and Chosŏn’s courts.

In this context, what concerned the Chinese side was ritual procedure. If the emperor of Chosŏn dispatched a representative to Beijing to submit a letter of credence to the emperor of China asking for the treaty negotiation, unlike the pre-war tributary emissaries, the representative would no longer perform the kowtow to the Chinese emperor. This scenario created a huge ritual crisis for the court in Beijing, as in the minds of Chinese officials it concerned the dignity of the Heavenly Dynasty in front of the former shuguo. Thus, China’s policy was to prevent Chosŏn from sending representatives to Beijing, while the Zongli Yamen began putting the short-range plan into practice. The first man who promoted this policy was Tang Shaoyi himself.

On November 5, 1896, Tang informed the Zongli Yamen that the king—it seemed

that Tang never acknowledged the Korean monarch's emperorship—would send representatives to Beijing for treaty negotiations sooner or later. Considering the possible ritual crisis in Beijing, it was prudent to appoint a consul general to Hansǒng to negotiate a treaty with Chosǒn. Tang noted that “although the system is now different, it is inconvenient for us to sign an equal treaty with Chosǒn as it was a *fan* of our dynasty for centuries.” Tang also pointed out that the consul general could protect the Chinese merchants and civilians in Chosǒn's treaty ports, whose affairs were temporarily managed by the British consul general, John N. Jordan, on Beijing's commission.⁵ On November 20, Tang was officially appointed by Emperor Guangxu as “Chinese Consul General Residing in Chosǒn” (Ch. *Zhongguo zhuzha Chaoxian zonglingshi*).⁶ His financial budget would be 30,000 taels of silver per year provided by the Customs at Shanghai, sharing the same amount for his predecessors Chen Shutang and Yuan Shikai.

Tang was one of the young Chinese students sent to the U.S. by Li Hongzhang in the 1870s, where he studied at Columbia University. He was recalled from the U.S. in 1881 after the overseas program was terminated by the Chinese government and eventually was sent to Chosǒn as an assistant to Möllendorff in early 1883, from which point he started his career in Chosǒn until he left the country in 1898. Tang's longtime service in Chosǒn before 1895 deeply influenced his perception of the Sino–Korean relationship and brought him tremendous difficulty in adjusting to the new arrangement after 1895. In the post-war years, Tang was still a man living in the pre-war Zongfan framework in his mind and trying different ways to preserve the hierarchical “system” between the two countries.

⁵ Tang to the Zongli Yamen, November 5, 1896, in *QJZRH*, vol. 8, 4958–4959.

⁶ Tang to the Foreign Office of Chosǒn, November 20, 1896, in *QJZRH*, vol. 8, 4968.

7.2 Preserving the “System”: The Appointment of the First Chinese Minister to Korea

After he returned to Hansŏng from Beijing in January 1897 with the new title, Tang learned that the king had appointed Sŏng Ki-un (1847–1924) as the representative to Beijing for treaty negotiations but cancelled the plan because of Tang’s return. Tang visited Sŏng and clarified that China would not receive him if he directly went to Beijing. In his conversation with Jordan, Tang expressed that he would try his best to prevent the Chosŏn representative from visiting Beijing and in order to concentrate on this mission he commissioned Jordan to be continuously in charge of Chinese commercial affairs for some time.⁷ From then on, the primary task of the Chinese consul general was to hinder Chosŏn’s plan to send representatives to Beijing, rather than to protect Chinese merchants and commercial interests as he was supposed to do.

The dramatic changes in Chosŏn’s political situation in 1897 stimulated the Foreign Office of Chosŏn to be more active in negotiating a treaty with China. After he returned to his palace from the Russian legation in February 1897, the king initiated a plan of claiming to be “emperor” or “Son of Heaven.” During the two years after the war, although it had difficulty in adjusting its relations with China, Chosŏn had made substantial efforts to construct its image as an independent country by gradually removing icons of the Zongfan times, including rebuilding the Gate of Receiving Imperial Favors into the Gate of Independence (K. *Tongnim mun*), burying the Samjŏndo Monument, changing the South Palace Annex into the Temple of Heaven (K. *Ch’ŏndan*), and replacing the Chinese managers in Chosŏn’s customs with Russians. From August 16, 1897, Chosŏn started to use the new reign-title of “Kwangmu,” and on October 12, the king claimed his country the “Great Korea” (K. *Taehan*) after he performed ceremonies

⁷ Tang to the Zongli Yamen, March 13, 1897, in *QJZRH*, vol. 8, 4989.

toward the Heaven and the Earth.⁸ The Country of Great Korea thus came into being, which was later treated as an empire by historians. All of Western diplomats soon formally recognized the new title of the country.⁹ For Tang, however, the change meant the king arrogated to himself an emperorship that that was wholly illegitimate. As a consequence, Tang's attitude toward Chosŏn's motivations for wanting treaty negotiations became more conservative and he almost suspended the negotiation.

The Chosŏn government did not pin its hopes on Tang; rather, they started to forward their requests to Beijing via Russia. In March 1898, the Russian minister at Beijing, Aleksandr Ivanovich Pavlov, forwarded to the Zongli Yamen Chosŏn's willingness to send its representative to Beijing and to receive Chinese representative to Hansŏng.¹⁰ The Yamen immediately instructed Tang to inhibit Chosŏn from sending representatives to Beijing,¹¹ that is, the Yamen decided to move first. Tang suggested that China should send an official with a fourth-level rank, compared to the representatives of other countries holding a third-level rank, in order to show the "difference between the owner and the servant in the past days" and to ensure the "system" would not be violated.¹² The Japanese minister in Beijing, Yano Fumio, also contacted the Yamen as a mediator between China and Chosŏn.¹³ Yano learned from the Yamen that Chosŏn could negotiate with Tang in Hansŏng for a "trade regulation" (Ch. *tongshang zhangcheng*) and China did not want to receive representatives of its former shuguo.¹⁴ Both Tang and the Zongli Yamen were not really worried about negotiating a treaty with Chosŏn; rather,

⁸ *Ilŏngnok*, vol. 80, 161-163.

⁹ George Alexander Lensen, *Balance of Intrigue*, vol. 2, 644-646.

¹⁰ Pavlov to the Zongli Yamen, March 2, 1898, in *QJZRH*, vol. 8, 5083.

¹¹ The Zongli Yamen to Tang, March 23, 1898, in *Qing guangxu chao zhongri jiaoshe shiliao* (ZRJSSL), vol. 51, 21a.

¹² Tang to the Zongli Yamen, June 2, 1898, in *ZRJSSL*, vol. 51, 35b.

¹³ Yano Fumio to the Zongli Yamen, June 12, 1898, in *QJZRH*, vol. 8, 5118.

¹⁴ The Zongli Yamen to Tang, June 12, 1898, in *ZRJSSL*, vol. 51, 36b.

they were trying to avoid reconfiguring their hierarchical relationship with Hansǒng and losing face as the Great Qing.

With this in mind, Tang asked the Foreign Office of Korea to draft a trade regulation, which encountered the latter's firm refusal in that a "regulation" (Ch. *zhangcheng*) was different from a "treaty" (Ch. *tiaoyue*).¹⁵ This response could be regarded as an ironic reflection of the "Regulations for Maritime and Overland Trade between Chinese and Chosǒn Subjects" (*RMOTCC*) of 1882, which was a "regulation" not a "treaty." In July, Tang reported to the Zongli Yamen that the Foreign Office had asked the Jordan to contact the British minister at Beijing, Claude M. MacDonald, to be a broker.¹⁶ Realizing that the situation was slipping out of Beijing's hands, the Zongli Yamen instructed Tang that if Chosǒn insisted on sending a representative to Beijing, the representative should be a fourth-rank minister, whose letter of credence should be forwarded by the Yamen to the Chinese emperor, and he would have no need to be granted an audience with the emperor, while the Yamen would negotiate with him over the trade regulation.¹⁷ These terms suggested that the Yamen's goal was to avoid a face-to-face meeting between the Korean minister and the Chinese emperor in the wake of the former Zongfan arrangement. Compared with Qing China's sore adjustment to the fact that the Western "barbarians" like Britain and France became equal to the Central Kingdom in the 1840s and 1860s, such a change relative to Chosǒn was more painful.

Tang shared the same concern with the Zongli Yamen, but he went further. In his telegrams to the Yamen on July 29 and August 4, Tang argued that allowing Chosǒn to send a minister to Beijing first would "fundamentally concern the system" (Ch. *tizhi*

¹⁵ Tang to the Zongli Yamen, June 16, 1898, in *ZRJSSL*, vol. 51, 37a.

¹⁶ Tang to the Zongli Yamen, July 5, 1898, in *ZRJSSL*, vol. 51, 39a.

¹⁷ The Zongli Yamen to Tang, July 8, 1898, in *ZRJSSL*, vol. 51, 40a-40b.

youguan) because China was “a big country.” Tang gave two examples of how a big country managed such cases, including Britain and Spain who respectively sent their ministers first to the U.S. and those countries in South America after the latter became “autonomous”— *zizhu*. He proposed that Beijing could send a fourth-rank minister to Hansǒng first in order to show China’s ultimate goodness of “cherishing the former *fan*.”¹⁸ It seemed that Tang did not notify the Foreign Office in Hansǒng of Beijing’s plan to allow Chosǒn to send its minister to Beijing first.¹⁹

When Tang discussed the case with the Zongli Yamen, the ambitious Reform Movement of 1898 initiated by Emperor Guangxu on June 11 was reaching its acme. Stimulated by the humiliating fiasco in the war with Japanese, the movement was to make considerable changes to old conventions, some of which concerned the “system.” The young emperor believed that China’s relations with Chosǒn should also change. On August 5, the emperor instructed the Grand Council to telegraph to Tang that “the coming of a minister of Korea to Beijing, presenting the letter of credence, and granting the minister with an audience are all granted.”²⁰ In his edict, the emperor termed Chosǒn as “Han” (Korea), instead of “Chosǒn” as before. This was a sharp turn of Beijing’s attitude. The Zongli Yamen immediately instructed Tang to inform Hansǒng that Korea could send its minister to China first, whom China would treat with ceremonies of “friendly nations,” after which China would dispatch a minister to Korea for reciprocity.²¹ The emperor also instructed the high-rank official Zhang Yinhuan (1837–1900) to draft a letter of credence

¹⁸ Tang to the Zongli Yamen, July 29 and August 4,, 1898, in *ZRJSSL*, vol. 52, 1a-2b.

¹⁹ Haijian Mao, “Wuxu bianfa qijian guangxu di duiwai guannian de tiaoshi” (Changes of Emperor Guangxu’s worldview during the Reform Movement of 1898), 45.

²⁰ The Grand Council to Tang, August 5, 1898, in *ZRJSSL*, vol. 52, 3a.

²¹ The Zongli Yamen to Tang, August 5, 1898, in *ZRJSSL*, vol. 52, 2b.

to Korea.²² The Yamen soon presented the throne a list of 17 candidates for the minister, including Huang Zunxian, Zhirui, and Zeng Guangjun, who had presented their treatises on salvaging Chosŏn from its predicament, among whom Zhang Hengjia (1847–1911) as selected. As Zhang was compelled to stay in China to take care of his mother, Xu Shoupeng (?–1901) was appointed as the minister with a third-level official rank under the title of “Imperial Commissioner Residing in the Country of Chosŏn” (Ch. *Zhuzha Chaoxian guo qinchai dachen*).²³

The title of Xu brought foreign ministers in Hansŏng serious concern because the terms “residing” and “imperial commissioner” strongly suggested the former Zongfan relationship. In a conversation with Tang on August 18, the British Inspector General of Korean Customs, J. M. Brown, doubted that China still regarded Korea as its shuguo because Beijing’s imperial commissioners to Tibet and Mongolia held the similar title of imperial resident. Brown also pointed out that China was applying the conventional policy of “cherishing the small country” to Korea.²⁴ In addition, the Russian minister to Korea, Nikolai Matyunin, regarded Xu’s post as that of a second-rank minister, which was the highest rank among his counterparts in the Corp Diplomatique in Hansŏng. The Japanese, French, and German ministers also expressed trepidation over Xu’s title and the format of the Chinese letter of credence, including the usage of the term “Chosŏn.”²⁵ For these diplomats, the Chinese representative might challenge the new post-war political arrangement in the country.

In Beijing, however, things changed dramatically, in particular the way China

²² *Zhang Yinjuan riji* (The diary of Zhang Yinjuan), 549.

²³ The imperial edict, August 13, 1898, in *QJZRH*, vol. 8, 5135.

²⁴ Tang’s debate with Brown on August 18, 1898, in *QJZRH*, vol. 8, 5146-5147.

²⁵ Tang’s conversation with other ministers on August 19, 1898, in *QJZRH*, vol. 8, 5148.

addressed Korea in its letter of credence. In the original version of the letter drafted by Zhang Yinhuan on August 8, the starting sentence reads: “The Great Emperor of the Country of the Great Qing respectfully gives his greetings to the Great Monarch of the Country of the Great Korea.”²⁶ This version also arranged the honorific elevation of the format of the letter in the manner shown in the following figure (Figure 7. 1).

Figure 7. 1. The Original Format of the Chinese Letter of Credence to Korea, August 8, 1898

	Great Korean Monarch		Great Qing Emperor	Great Qing	1
		Great Korea			2
X	X	X	X	X	3
X	X	X	X	X	4
X	X	X	X	X	5
e	d	c	b	a	

Sources: Archive catalogue no. 207/3-50-3/1922, in *FHAC*, cited from Mao Haijian, “Wuxu bianfa qijian guangxu di duiwai guannian de tiaoshi,” 48.

The term the “Great Monarch” (Ch. *da junzhu*) in the Chinese language context at the time primarily referred to a king, rather than an emperor, so it could indicate the king’s inferior position to the Great Emperor of China (Ch. *da huangdi*). The arrangement of honorific elevation also indicated hierarchy between the two countries. Realizing these problems, Emperor Guangxu on September 2 instructed Tang to investigate which term between the “Great Monarch” and the “Great Emperor” that Britain, Japan, and Russia used in their letters of credence to Korea in order to make the Chinese copy accordant with the common rule.²⁷ Finally, the final version of the Chinese letter drafted on October 6 addressed the Korean monarch as the “Great Emperor,” equal to its Chinese counterpart, and it put the “Great Qing” and the “Great Korea” to the same line. The Korean letter of credence to China adopted the same format in 1902, when the

²⁶ Mao Haijian, “Wuxu bianfa qijian guangxu di duiwai guannian de tiaoshi,” 48.

²⁷ The Grand Council to Tang, September 1, 1898, in *ZRJSSL*, vol. 52, 7a; Mao Haijian, *ibid.*, 49.

first Korean minister reported to Beijing. The honorific elevation of format of their letters presented an epic change in Qing–Chosŏn relations history (Figure 7.2).

Figure 7. 2. The Format of the Chinese and Korean Letters of Credence to Each Other in 1898 and 1902.

	Great Korean Emperor		Great Qing Emperor		
		Great Korea		Great Qing	
X	X	X	X	X	1
X	X	X	X	X	2
X	X	X	X	X	3
e	d	c	b	a	4
					5

Sources: China’s letter of credence to Korea, October 6, 1898, in *Chorok kuksŏko* (Copies of letters of credence), archive catalogue no. M/F 80-103-318-O, in *Kyujanggak han’guk’ak yŏn’guwŏn*, 1a-2a; Korea’s letter of credence to China, September 22, 1902, in *Guangxu chao zhupi zouzhe* (The palace memorials with Emperor Guangxu’s imperial instructions, hereafter cited as *GXZP*), vol. 112, 342-343.

Xu was inauspiciously granted an audience with Emperor Guangxu on September 21, 1898, the same day that the Emperor Dowager placed Emperor Guangxu under house arrest and terminated the ambitious Reform Movement that had surfaced that year.²⁸ Xu’s mission remained unchanged, but on October 15 his official title was changed from “imperial commissioner” into “envoy plenipotentiary” (Ch. *quanquan dachen*), whose mission was to negotiate a “treaty” with the Korean Foreign Office.²⁹ This appointment erased the ambiguity of Xu’s former title and the worry of his Japanese and Western counterparts in Hansŏng.

On October 19, Xu left Beijing for Tianjin, where he drafted a treaty consisting of 14 articles. Writing on the rationale behind the treaty, Xu commented that China had suffered from unequal articles in its former treaties with other countries, in particular the items regarding extraterritoriality and customs duties, so China should change the situation in new treaties. Xu’s words proved that he would pursue an equal treaty with Korea to protect China’s interests, but he simultaneously claimed that, “Korea was

²⁸ See Mao Haijian, *ibid.*, 49.

²⁹ The imperial edict, October 15, 1898, in *QJZRH*, vol. 8, 5160.

China's *fan* and shuguo in the past and it is not Korea's original wish to be equal and autonomous. It is small and surrounded by powerful neighbors. We should do our best to cherish it, rather than gain extra advantages from it." Along this line, Xu's primary goal was to make sure that both countries could enjoy the right of most-favored-nation status in trade.³⁰ It was clear that the Chinese envoy plenipotentiary positioned himself among those Chinese officials who were viewing the post-war Sino–Korean relationship from the pre-war Zongfan perspective.

7.3 From Shuguo to Friendly Nation: The Sino–Korean Treaty of 1899 and thereafter

With the intention of “extending the benevolence of cherishing the small country,”³¹ Xu arrived in Hansŏng on January 25, 1899, and was granted an audience with the Korean emperor on February 1. The procedures of the audience were conducted according to Western-style regulations practiced between the monarch and Western ministers. On the day of the audience, Xu was picked up by a sedan chair to the palace. When he entered the audience hall, he bowed once toward the emperor, and he bowed again when he was approaching the emperor. The emperor, wearing Western-style clothes, stood up to shake hands with Xu and receive Xu's letter of credence. Xu then read some words aloud to extol the virtues of the emperor, who in return showed his sincere thanks to the Chinese minister. After his, they shook hands again and Xu bowed for the third time to the emperor. When this was accomplished, Xu was escorted back to the Chinese legation by the sedan chair.³² The ceremony, conducted along the lines of “Western common rules”

³⁰ Xu to the Zongli Yamen, December 4, 1898, in *QJZRH*, vol. 8, 5179.

³¹ Xu's memorial, August 22, 1898, see Mao Haijian, *ibid.*, 50.

³² Xu's memorial, March 5, 1899, in *QJZRH*, vol. 8, 5200; *Hanch'ŏng ūiyak kongdok* (The official documents regarding Korean–Qing negotiations in 1899), archive catalogue no. M/F 83-16-16-N, in *Kyujanggak han'guk'ak yŏn'guwŏn*, 11-12.

at a state-to-state level, was the first ritual performance between the Korean Chief of State and the Chinese state representative in the post-1895 period and in the entire history of Sino–Korean relations, marking the termination of centuries-long Zongfan rituals between the two countries in a very substantial sense.

From February 15, Xu started the treaty negotiations based on his draft version with Pak Che-sun (1858–1916), the minister of the Foreign Office. After a seven-month-long tug-of-war, the two sides signed a treaty on September 11. The treaty consisted of 15 articles, among which Article 1 states that the Great Qing and the Great Korea should keep perpetual peace and friendship, Article 2 states they should dispatch diplomatic representatives to reside at capital and treaty ports of each other and both countries would enjoy the most-favored-nation treatment, Article 5 endows each other with the right of consular jurisdiction, and Article 12 states the two countries would negotiate new regulations for border demarcation and trade on frontier in Manchuria.³³ The most significant part for Korea was that China would allow a permanent representative of Korea to reside in Beijing. More importantly, compared with the Chinese exclusive consular jurisdiction in Korea regulated by the *RMOTCC* of 1882, Korea now gained the right of consular jurisdiction in China, just as was permitted of the Western powers and Japan.

The treaty seemed to be an equivalent replacement for the *RMOTCC*, but it was not really equal for China. A typical case was the second item of Article 9, which states that China was forbidden to export opium to Korea, but similar restrictions did not apply to Korean exports to China. For items like these, Xu explained to Emperor Guangxu that

³³ *Taehan'guk/ Taech'ōngguk t'ongsang choyak* (The trade treaty between the Great Korean Country and the Great Qing Country, 1899), archive catalogue no. M/F 80-103-137-N, in *Kyujanggak han'guk'ak yŏn'guwŏn*.

the treaty had some unique contents because he found “the monarch and subordinates of Korea still worship China in their minds, which contributed to the success of the negotiation.”³⁴ Indeed, Xu conducted negotiations in this self-assumed setting. After the sign of the treaty, he commented that “Korea was China’s *fan* and shuguo and it now becomes a friendly nation of China. Nothing can change the situation. Recalling the past, what a pity it is.”³⁵ On December 14, the ratification of the treaty was exchanged in Hansŏng and Xu was simultaneously appointed by Beijing as the first Chinese minister to Korea. In contrast to Tang Shaoyi, who struggled with China’s lost glories of the Zongfan system and ritual crises in the post-war years, Xu merely presented as a Western-style Chinese minister and quickly busied himself with reestablishing the Chinese diplomatic system in Hansŏng and other treaty ports to protect Chinese citizens and interests.

According to the treaty, Korea was supposed to send its minister to Beijing as well, yet this plan was postponed by China’s deteriorating situation. The Boxer Uprising was sweeping across northwestern Shandong province and was beginning to spread toward Tianjin and Beijing. As history unfolded, the xenophobic uprising eventually resulted in diplomatic and political disaster for China in August 1900, when the Eight-Nation Alliance occupied Beijing and Emperor Guangxu and Empress Dowager Cixi fled to Xi’an. Starting in October, Li Hongzhang began to negotiate with the powers in Beijing as the Chinese representative plenipotentiary. In view of the changes in China, on October 5, the Korean emperor wrote a letter to the Japanese emperor, asking Japan to protect Korean interests in China during the negotiation.³⁶ In January 1901, Xu

³⁴ Xu’s memorial, July 19, 1899, in *ZRJSSL*, vol. 52, 38a-38b.

³⁵ Xu’s palace memorial, September 12, 1899, in *QJZRH*, vol. 8, 5246-5247.

³⁶ *Giwadan jihen ni kanshi kankoku kōtei yori nihon kōtei heika ni shinsho* (The autographic letter of the Korean Emperor to His Japanese Emperor regarding the Boxer Uprising in China), archive catalogue no.

Shoupeng was recalled from Hansǒng to Beijing to assist Li with the negotiation and he assigned Xu Taishen, one of his counselors, as the acting minister in Korea. On July 24, 1901, the Zongli Yamen changed its Chinese name to *Waiwu bu*—the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, legitimating itself as China’s foreign office, of which Xu Shoupeng was appointed as one of its ministers. On September 7, Li signed the final protocol with the powers which made the Chinese empire totter on the edge of collapse. With the return of Emperor Guangxu and Empress Dowager Cixi to the Forbidden City in early January 1902, Korea was ready to send its minister to Beijing.

On January 30, 1902, Pak Che-sun, Xu’s Korean treaty negotiator and the former commercial commissioner in Tianjin from 1884 to 1887, was appointed as the first minister plenipotentiary of Korea to China.³⁷ On September 30, 1902, Pak presented the Korean letter of credence to Emperor Guangxu in the Forbidden City by following the Chinese tailored Western-style procedures.³⁸ The ceremony of kowtow that had been performed by Korean emissaries in front of the Chinese emperor for centuries disappeared forever. It is probable that the imperial court of China was put in an awkward situation when it participated in ritual practices face-to-face with the representatives of its former and most loyal *fan* and shuguo, for all Chinese official records on the audience were very simple and short, exactly like those on the first meeting between Emperor Tongzhi and foreign ministers in 1873. Behind the rituals were the glorious memories of the great Chinese empire. After the audience, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs instructed Xu to send two interpreters of Korean language to Beijing for further communications

7-3-1-11.

³⁷ Pak Che-sun to Xu, February 1, 1902, in *Kuhan ’guk oegyo munsǒ* (The records of foreign affairs of the old Korea), vol. 9, 534.

³⁸ See *GXZP*, vol. 112, 342-343.

with Pak.³⁹ This was the first time that Chinese foreign ministry recruited Korean language translators. The new relationship between China and Chosŏn thus started, but it only lasted for three years, as Korea became Japan's protectorate in November 1905.

The transformation of the Sino–Korean relationship in China's provinces was not as significant as that in Beijing. In the coastal areas of South China, local officials still followed the pre-war routines to manage affairs with Korea. An example of this continuity can be found in Zhejiang's policy of assisting Korean people who suffered shipwrecks. In December 1895, Liao Shoufeng (1836–1901), Governor of Zhejiang, sent a memorial to Emperor Guangxu, informing that the official in charge of Wenzhou had salvaged 28 Koreans from a shipwreck in early October and cared the victims with clothes and food by “following conventions” (Ch. *xunli*). According to the longtime conventions regulated by the Zongfan codes, these victims should be sent to the capital of Zhejiang first, then to Beijing, where they would be sent back to Chosŏn through the overland route. Considering some of them were too young to go through the long and exhausting trip, the Zhejiang officials decided to send them to Shanghai, where they were sent back to Chosŏn by a ship on October 31. In his memorial, Liao called these Chosŏn victims “barbarians who suffered from troubles” (Ch. *nanfan*),⁴⁰ highlighting the same Zongfan rationale as that in the pre-war period. The governor made some changes to the “system” and “conventions” in Zhejiang, so he felt necessary to clarify to the emperor and the Ministry of Rituals. With the emperor's endorsement on the adjustment, the Wenzhou case became a model for Chinese local officials to deal with similar cases in the next years.

³⁹ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Xu, November 2, 1902, in *QJZRH*, vol. 8, 5556.

⁴⁰ Liao's memorial, December 24, 1895, in *GXZP*, vol. 112, 332-333.

In May 1901, Yu Lianyuan, Governor of Zhejiang, reported in his memorial that 15 Korean fishermen wrecked their ship on China's coast and he had "followed the conventions to take care of them" (Ch. *xunli fuxu*) by sending them to Shanghai, where they could be sent back to Korea. Yu emphasized that he consulted the Wenzhou case in 1895.⁴¹ Yu was once one of the pillars of the Pure Stream in the 1890s, and was among those who desperately hoped that Beijing could protect Chosŏn for the sake of the integrity of the Great Qing, and for that purpose he even proposed to the emperor that Beijing should invest a royal member of Chosŏn in Pyongyang. By this juncture, China had signed a new treaty with Korea and Yu had been promoted to governor, yet in his mind Chosŏn—as he literally used the term, instead of "Han" (Korea)—was still a *fan* of the Great Qing and the Korean fishermen were still "barbarians" according to the politico-cultural arrangement of the Chinese empire. His memorial in the early twentieth century shared striking similarities with those in the Kangxi, Yongzheng, and Qianlong periods in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. More importantly, Yu was not an exception, as his successors from 1902 to 1908 embraced the same approach.⁴² In almost all cases, the Korean victims were termed as "barbarians" that were the human agents of China's policy of "cherishing the small country" or "cherishing the men from afar."⁴³

Compared with the moderate presentation of the post-war transformation of the Sino-Korean relationship in South China, the one at the border areas in Manchuria was full of blood, fire, and death. According to the reports of Chinese officials in Manchuria in 1907, the Koreans started to attack and loot Chinese villages along the border of Jilin

⁴¹ Yuan's memorial, May 14, 1901, in *GXZP*, vol. 112, 339.

⁴² Ren Daorong's memorials, March 23 and September 28, 1902, Cheng Xun's memorial, December 14, 1902, Nie Jigui's memorial, October 10, 1903, Zhang Zengyang's memorials, May 4 and June 2, 1906, Zhang Zengyang's memorial, April 20, 1908, in *GXZP*, vol. 112, 241-242, 344-345, 347, 354-357.

⁴³ Bian Wen to the Zongli Yamen, January 15 and March 9, 1897, in *QJZRH*, vol. 8, 4984-4985.

and Mukden in the late 1890s, and the situation sharply deteriorated after 1901 when Beijing was occupied by the Eight-Nation Alliance, and Manchuria by Russia.⁴⁴ For example, a local official in Yanji, Chen Zuoyan, reported that a Korean attack against a Chinese area in March 1901 caused the death of 11 Chinese people and a loss of 4337.81 taels of silver.⁴⁵ At the same time, some Chinese bandits also crossed the rivers to pillage Korean villages, and on the China's side of the border areas the Chinese pawns always tried to extract money from Korean immigrants.

Many historical and geopolitical factors contributed to such violent conflicts on the border. On the one hand, the absence of demarcation in the convergence zone of the Yalu River and the Tumen River had been a problem between the two countries since in the Kangxi period in the eighteenth century. Under the conventional ideal ideology of “all-under-Heaven” shared by China and Chosŏn within the Zongfan framework, the borderline between the two countries existed, but not as clearly delineated and defined as in modern times between two independent sovereign states. In the first half of the twentieth century, this problem evolved into a most disputed boundary issue known as the “Kando Problem” among China, Korea, and Japan.⁴⁶

Additionally, the intensive border dispute could be directly related to the opening of Manchuria in the 1870s, when Qing China abolished the two-century-long policy of segregating Manchuria from inner China by encouraging people to immigrate there for cultivation. The policy attracted thousands of poor Korean peasants, who crossed the

⁴⁴ Wen Luzhan's report, June 2, 1907, in *Zhao Erxun quanrong dang'an* (The complete archives of Zhao Erxun), archive catalogue no. 125-2, in *FHAC*, Beijing.

⁴⁵ Chen Zuoyan's report, March 1901, in *QJZRH*, vol. 9, 5839-5844.

⁴⁶ For issues regarding demarcation in the Tumen River areas and the state competition in the border areas in Manchuria, see Nianshen Song, “My Land, My People: Discourses and Practices in the Tumen River Demarcation, 1860s to 1910s.”

Tumen River to cultivate the wilderness in the convergence zone, forcing China to consider how to manage the border-crossing farmers when more and more migrants settled down on the Chinese side of the borderline.⁴⁷ In 1882, Emperor Guangxu instructed local officials to manage the Korean immigrants “as long as they have no intention of encroaching on our borders.”⁴⁸ With the coming of impressive numbers of Koreans to the area, China in 1890 ordered them to get Chinese-style haircuts and wear Chinese clothes, which aimed to assimilate these Korean immigrants into the Chinese populace. This policy precipitated a strong remonstrance of Hansǒng.⁴⁹

After 1901, the Chinese local officials believed that Korea was aggressively expanding to Manchuria and the Korean immigrants comprised the vanguard of Korea’s colonization of China’s territory in Manchuria. These migrants significantly outnumbered the Chinese population in this region. In 1907, Wu Luzhen, the Chinese investigator in charge of the Sino–Korean border affairs, reported that the Koreans on the Chinese side of the Tumen River were numbered more than 50,000 people, compared to less than 10,000 Chinese in the same area. According to Wu’s investigation of 39 villages in an area called Helongyu, the Korean settlers had established 5,990 households, an amount that dwarfed the 264 Chinese households in the same region. Wu commented that, “the fundamental area of our dynasty has almost become Chosǒn’s colony (Ch. *zhimin zhi di*).”⁵⁰ Although in time Korea itself would become a victim of Japanese colonial and imperial designs, the Chinese side of the Tumen River faced colonization at the hands of Korean settlers from the 1880s to the 1900s. This, ironically, served as a convenient

⁴⁷ Kim No-kyu, *Pugyǒ yosǒn* (The selections of documents on the northern area), 253; Wu Luzhen, *Yanji bianwu baogao* (The reports on Yanji’s border affairs), chapter 4, 1-2.

⁴⁸ Ming’an’s memorial, March 14, 1882, in *GXZP*, vol. 112, 243.

⁴⁹ Yuan Shikai to Li Hongzhang, August 30, 1890, in *QJZRH*, vol. 9, 5703-5705.

⁵⁰ Wu Luzhen, *Yanji bianwu baogao*, chapter 4, 11.

vehicle for the expansion of Japanese colonization of Manchuria after Korea was annexed by Japan in 1910.

The sharp rise of border conflicts between China and Korea in the early 1900s captures the disorder of the local contacts after the Zongfan political arrangement collapsed. For local and non-official forces on both sides of the border, in particular impoverished peasants, the practical considerations and big pressure from daily life—the fertile land, food, livestock, and energy resources—prevailed over state interests. With the sudden absence of Chinese authority as a result of international political intrigue among China, Japan, Russia, and Britain, the border area in Manchuria became a perfect place for both Chinese and Korean bandits and other non-official armed forces to violently extract sources from the local farmers or settlers. From early 1901 to early 1905, Mukden and Jilin respectively reported 12 and 16 cases of border-crossed crimes committed by Korean soldiers or bandits, including armed robberies, burglaries, shootings, homicides, rapes, kidnappings, arson, and illegal logging. During the same period, at least four cases of illegal logging and kidnappings on Korean side were reported as committed by Chinese bandits.⁵¹

The situation deteriorated rapidly as more Korean immigrants poured into the Chinese side of the border crossing. In July 1903, Chen Zuoyan reported a series of misdeeds by Koreans on the Chinese side of the Tumen River and called for Beijing to take urgent measures to protect the Chinese interests.⁵² According to a Chinese local report, the Korean armed attack against four villages in Yanjin in the fall of 1903 harmed

⁵¹ *Qing Han beijiean biao* (The list of cases regarding the Sino–Korean border monument), in *Zhao Erxun quanrong dang'an*, archive catalogue no. 125.

⁵² The Manchu general of Jilin to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, July 29, 1903, in *QJZRH*, vol. 9, 5680-5682.

211 Chinese and Korean households and caused a loss of more than 19,546.46 taels of silver.⁵³ In August 1903, by emphasizing that “Korea is different from the past,” the Chinese minister in Hansŏng, Xu Taishen, suggested to Beijing that China should implement countermeasures to check the Korean expansion into the Kando area. Britain and Japan, incidentally, had informed Xu that Russian machinations were behind the attempt to settle Koreans in Kando.⁵⁴ In the following two years, the Chinese and Korean foreign ministries busied themselves with settling the border disputes in Manchuria, but yielded nothing practical.

The accumulated conflicts eventually resulted in a skirmish in the spring of 1904, when the Chinese officer Hu Dianjia led his forces to victory against Korean soldiers who crossed the Tumen River with the purpose of occupying more lands and to encourage the local Korean immigrants to break away from the Chinese governance. This was the first time that China used its force to resolve disputes with Korea in the post-1895 period. As a result, China resumed its control over the area and forced Korea to return to peace talks. On June 15, 1904, two Chinese officials, Hu Dianjia and Chen Zuoyan, and three Korean officials, Kim Myŏng-hwan, Ch’oe Nam-nyung, and Ch’oe Byŏng-yak, signed a regulation on border affairs, which included 12 articles aiming to resolve some specific problems arising from the incident in spring.⁵⁵ Nevertheless, as it was negotiated and signed by the local officials of both countries, the regulation was primarily an agreement on managing the unresolved affairs after the skirmish, instead of a state-to-state treaty with a long-term strategic goal of settling the border disputes.

⁵³ Zhang Zhaolin’s report in fall 1903, in *QJZRH*, vol. 9, 5849-5881.

⁵⁴ Xu to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, August 24, 1903, in *QJZRH*, vol. 9, 5690-5692.

⁵⁵ *Zhonghan bianjie shanhou zhangcheng* (The regulation on Sino–Korean border affairs with the purpose of solving problems arising from the incident), in *QJZRH*, vol. 9, 5952-5953.

In this period, both Beijing and Hansǒng had no more time or opportunities to review and transform their several-century-long Zongfan relations. From Zhejiang in South China to Beijing, to Yanji in Manchuria, then to Hansǒng, the Sino–Korean relationship presented itself in several different, disconnected, and dismal facets. The two countries could have established a normal relationship based on the international law in the twentieth century, yet the advent of Japanese colonialism rendered this scenario impossible.

7.4 For the Sake of China: The Chinese Perceptions of the Colonial Korea in the 1910s

When the above-mentioned Sino–Korean regulation was signed in Manchuria, Japan was fighting with Russia for control of the area and finally prevailed in October 1905. Following the end of the war, Japan publicly converted Korea into a protectorate, and as a result the Korean minister to Beijing was recalled to Hansǒng and all foreign contacts between Korea and China were taken over by the Japanese legation in Beijing. In February 1906, with the closing of British, American, and French legations in Hansǒng and the coming of the Japanese Residential General, China recalled its third minister to Korea, Zeng Guangquan. In order to protect the interests of the Chinese merchants in Korea, Beijing appointed Ma Tingliang as the consular general to reside in Hansǒng from 1909, a year after Emperor Guangxu and Empress Dowager Cixi died and the new emperor was inaugurated with the reign-title of Xuantong. At this moment, China was being shaken violently from within by various reforms, rebellions, and revolutions, so that its relationship with the Japanese-controlled Korea was not its priority. In August 1910, after being controlled by Japan for more than five years, Korea was annexed by Japan as a part of the Japanese empire.

For the Beijing government, the Japanese annexation of Korea was not surprising, although for many Chinese officials the Japanese control over Korea after 1905 had been “heartbreaking” due to a sharp contrast to the pre-war Sino–Korean relationship.⁵⁶ In Manchuria, however, the General-Governor of Three Northeastern Provinces (Ch. *Dongsansheng zongdu*), Xiliang (1853–1917), was alarmed by Japan’s likely “policy of colonization” (Ch. *zhimin zhengce*) of Manchuria through the Korean subjects who had been living in the China’s side along the Sino–Korean border areas. In his reports in September and October 1910, Xiliang reported to Beijing that more than 30,000 Korean immigrants were living together with Chinese people on China’s side along the border, which Xiliang identified as “China’s inner land” (Ch. *neidi*), a term primarily referring to the lands south of the Shanhai Pass. According to Xiliang, after these Korean immigrants became Japanese citizens due to the Japanese annexation, they would not be subject to Chinese law and local governments, but to Japanese consular jurisdiction. Xiliang emphasized that this change would “harm our sovereignty” (Ch. *sun wo zhuquan*) and “the thousands of Korean immigrants would play the lead in Japan’s annexation of Manchuria.” Thus, he suggested to Beijing that China should use the newly issued *Nationality Regulations of the Great Qing* (Ch. *Daqing guoji tiaoli*) to convert the Korean immigrants into Chinese citizens in order to make the territorial borderline distinct and secure.⁵⁷

In August 1911, the new General-Governor of Three Northeast Provinces, Zhao

⁵⁶ The Chinese minister to Japan, Yang Shu, to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in December 6, 1905, in *QJZRH*, vol. 9, 6154.

⁵⁷ Xiliang to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, September 8 and September 17, 1910, in *QJZRH*, vol. 10, 7119, 7127. For the full text of the *Daqing guoji tiaoli* issued on March 28, 1909, see Ding Jinjun, ed., “Qingmo yixing guoji guanli tiaoli” (On the late Qing’s discussions and issue of nationality regulations), *Lishi dang’an* (Historical Archives) 1988 (3):53-56.

Erxun (1844–1927), urged the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Beijing to endorse Xinliang’s strategy of converting the thousands of Korean immigrants along the border areas into Chinese citizens. By stressing that “all the more than ten local counties along the Yalu River belong to China’s inner land,” Zhao suggested that China should instruct the Korean migrants to “become civilized” (Ch. *guihua*) by gaining Chinese citizenship.⁵⁸ Zhao, like his predecessors, was fully aware that the issue of the nationality of the Korean immigrants deeply concerned China’s independent “sovereignty” (Ch. *zhuquan*), which reflexed that in the early 1910s the Chinese officials, at least those in Manchuria, perceived Chinese–Korean relations purely from the state-to-state level. Yet before Beijing responded to the proposal of the governor, the nationalist revolution broke out in Wuhan in October 1911, resulting in the quick collapse of the Great Qing.

On February 7, 1912, when the revolution of 1911 had prevailed in China and the new Republic of China (Ch. *Zhonghua minguo*) had been founded in Nanjing on January 1, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Qing in Beijing received Ma Tingliang’s report on the expiration of his three-year-long service in Korea.⁵⁹ Yet Beijing would never have any opportunity to appoint an official to succeed Ma as the consular general in colonized Korea. Five days later, on February 12, 1912, the Manchu court issued the abdication edict, declaring the end of the Qing. The primary part of the edict reads that,

So long as the form of government remains undecided, so long will the disturbed condition of the country continue. It is clear that the minds of majority of the people are favorable to the establishment of a republican form of government, the Southern and Central provinces first holding this view, and the officers in the North lately adopting the same sentiments. The universal desire clearly expresses the will of Heaven (Ch. *tianming*), and it is not for us to oppose the desires and incur the disapproval of the millions of the People merely for the sake of the

⁵⁸ Zhao Erxun to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, August 15, 1911, in *QJZRH*, vol. 10, 7202.

⁵⁹ Ma Tingliang’s report, February 7, 1912, in *QJZRH*, vol. 10, 7253.

privileges and powers of a single House. It is right that this general situation should be considered and due deference given to the opinion of the People. I, the Empress Dowager, therefore, together with the Emperor, hereby hand over the sovereignty (Ch. *tongzhi quan*) to be the possession of the whole people, and declare that the constitution shall henceforth to be Republican, in order to satisfy the demands of those within the confines of the nation, hating disorder and desiring peace, and anxious to follow the teaching of the sages, according to which the country is the possession of the People (Ch. *tianxia weigong*).

The royal family acknowledged that the Great Qing was losing its mandate of heaven, namely, the “will of Heaven,” which the founder of the dynasty, Nurhaci, claimed to possess in 1616. Different from what had occurred in Chinese history, however, the Great Qing decided to hand over the “sovereignty” to the “whole people,” instead of another group of people that would found another dynasty and form a new imperial court. In retrospect, although the last emperor of the Great Qing, Emperor Xuantong (1906–1967, r. 1908–1911), would stay in the Forbidden City for another 12 years until 1924 when he was forced to leave, the history of royal court in China and the ideology of “all-under-Heaven” officially came to an end.

In the abdication edict, the Qing court also envisioned the post-Qing political construction of China by emphasizing the unification of the multiethnic and multicultural country. It articulates that,

Yuan Shikai, having been elected some time ago president of the National Assembly at Peking, is therefore able at this time of change to unite the North and the South, let him then, with full powers so to do, organize a provisional Republican Government, conferring thereon with the representatives of the Army of the People, that peace may be assured to the People whilst the complete integrity of the territories of the five races, Chinese, Manchus, Mongols, Muhammadans, and Tibetans, is at the same time maintained, making together a great state under the title the Republic of China.⁶⁰

According to this blueprint, new China would integrate the outer subordinates or

⁶⁰ See *The China Mission Year Book, 1912*, Appendix C, 17; the citation has been slightly modified by the author of this dissertation.

outer *fan* that were under the management of the Mongolian Superintendency during the Qing dynasty into its territory, but it would not encompass the outer *fan* under the Ministry of Rituals, most of which were actually under colonial rule of powers at the time, including the prototypical *fan* Chosŏn.

From then on, China, or Zhongguo, has been principally defining itself by its state sovereignty and borderline, making the connotations of the Chinese empire considerably shrink. As a consequence, the Chinese historical narratives in the post-Qing era indiscriminately treat all outer *fan* that were under the Ministry of Rituals as figures outside of the Chinese empire. Therefore, both China's and these countries' history have been individually conducted in a nation-state historical framework by blurring the shared Zongfan memory in late imperial and modern times.

The edict made Yuan Shikai the heart of the Beijing government after the end of Qing China's governance. Yuan, who started his political career in Chosŏn in the 1880s and served as the Chinese Imperial Resident in Hansŏng for a decade, now became the most powerful man in China and would soon become the first president of Republic of China following the provisional president Sun Yat-sen (1866–1925). His short governance from 1912 to 1916 proved essential for the new Chinese state to maintain unity in the hectic times after the Manchu dynasty fell to pieces, which in the long run laid the foundation for a multiethnic and multicultural People's Republic of China that arose in 1949.

In 1912, Yuan's Korean friends also witnessed the fall of the Great Qing in the colonial Korea. On February 17, 1912, five days after the Qing court declared to terminate its own rule, China celebrated its first Chinese New Year's Eve in the post-Qing

period. In Kyōngsōng—the new name of Hansōng under the Japanese colonial rule, the 78-year-old official Kim Yun-sik heard that the Chinese merchants and residents in the south village of the city played firecrackers for the whole night and they played much more than before. In his diary, Kim commented that,

They are celebrating the abolishment of the country of the Qing and the establishment of the new Republic of China with its new national flag. In retrospect, the royal court of the Qing lasted for more than 260 years and had able and virtuous monarchs for generations. The Qing had deep benevolence and profound kindness. Now it is gone, and the [Chinese] people are celebrating for that. The reason lies in the fact that they belong to different races. This makes me feel really sad.⁶¹

Exactly 30 years before, on February 16, 1882, the Chinese New Year's Eve, Kim was on his way from Baoding to Tianjin in China after his second conversation with Li Hongzhang over Chosŏn's plan to negotiate a treaty with the United States. During the three preceding decades, Kim witnessed violent coups, Yuan's residence in Hansōng, the termination of Sino-Korean Zongfan relations, the rise of the Great Korean Empire, Korea's new treaty with China and the coming of new Chinese ministers, the bloody border conflicts in Manchuria, the Japanese annexation of Korea, and the fall of the Great Qing. Since he was knighted by the Japanese colonial rulers after Japan annexed Korea, Kim primarily stayed at home without participating in public activities until he presented a fervent petition to the Japanese government for his country's independence in the March First Independence Movement in 1919, two months before the May Fourth Movement broke out in China.

In retrospect, Chosŏn Korea was colonized by Meiji Japan in 1910, followed by the fall of the Great Qing in 1911. From 1912, Japan entered the period of Daishō, China

⁶¹ Kim Yun-sik, *Sok ūmch'ōngsa* (The continuous cloudy and sunny diary), vol. 2, 361.

entered the period of the Republic, while Chosŏn became a victim of Japanese colonialism. The dramatic changes in the political framework between China and Korea, and the rapid proliferation of the ideas of national independence in the Chinese world in the 1910s, changed Chinese perception of Korea. In the 1910s, official visitors from the Republic of China to Korea treated the colonized country either as a positive example of Japanese modernization or a negative example of Japanese colonialism, and a warning to China about the dangers of being subjugated under colonial rule.

In October 1915, when President Yuan Shikai was considering restoring a dynastic system with himself as the first emperor of the Chinese Empire (Ch. *Zhonghua diguo*), two officials from the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce of the Beijing government, Wang Yangbin and Wan Baoyuan, were invited by the Japanese government to participate in the Competitive Exhibition of Korean Agricultural and Industrial Goods (J. *chōsen kyōshinkai*). In their records, Wang and Wan depicted the outstanding achievements of Korea under the Japanese colonial rule and the efficiency of the local administrative apparatuses, leaving the centuries long Zongfan relations between China and Korea unconsidered. Ironically, during their sojourn Wang and Wan lived in the Korean Hotel, the place of the former South Palace Annex that accommodated the Ming and Qing imperial envoys for centuries, yet for them this place seemed to hold no historical significance.⁶² After all, the Qing was a late and unredeemable dynasty in the minds of two citizens of the first modern Chinese republic, although the last emperor of the Qing was still living in the Forbidden City. On October 23, they took rickshaws to visit the Gate of Independence, where they saw the debris of the former Gate of Receiving Imperial Favors that originally built in the Ming period and existed until 1895.

⁶² Wang Yangbin and Wan Baoyuan, ed., “Chaoxian diaocha ji” (Investigation on Chosŏn), 506.

Again, for them, the location was only presented only as a tourist site that did not reflect the history of Sino–Korean relations.⁶³ Their visit, however, could very well have been historically meaningful, as their president, who had been the H. I. C. M. Resident of Qing China, was preparing to restore the emperorship in Beijing.

In December 1917, when China was roiling in civil wars among warlords in the post-Yuan Shikai period, the Chinese official Chen Linzhi, dean of the Department of Industry of Zhili Province, visited Korea to learn ways of stimulating industry. During his trip, Chen lamented the sharp and dramatic decline of the Chinese business in Korea, reflecting overseas influences of the demise of the Qing empire. Yet Chen gave much credit to Japanese colonial rule after he investigated their local agriculture, industry, irrigation, finance, education, and so forth. Viewing Korea as a successful case, Chen suggested that China learn the Japanese model of combining several methods in order to promote Chinese national industry and economic growth.⁶⁴

By contrast, an anonymous Chinese visitor who visited Korea in 1918 on his way to Japan revealed the Korean tragedies under the Japanese colonial rule. The visitor ascribed such impressive developments in Korea, such as those Chen Linzhi praised in 1917, to draconian colonialism. The anonymous author claimed that it was the blood of the Korean people that nourished the remarkable achievements, which forced him to assert that in several decades the whole country and the ethnic Korean peoples would become extinct.⁶⁵ By underscoring the danger of colonialism, the author tried to mobilize his Chinese countrymen to save China from being subjugated by foreign powers like

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 519-520.

⁶⁴ Chen Linzhi, “Diaocha Chaoxian shiye baogao” (Report on the investigation of Korean industry), 525-786.

⁶⁵ “Chaoxian wenjian lu” (Journals about Chosŏn Korea), 788-839.

Japan. The passionate and patriotic author might have been more or less relieved when the May Fourth Movement erupted in Beijing next year, when the March First Independence Movement coincidentally took place in Seoul. Both movements opened a new chapter in history of the two countries. More importantly, the Korean nationalists who survived the Japanese suppression of the March First Independence Movement escaped to China and swiftly established a government in exile—the Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea—in Shanghai, making China a safe harbor for the overseas Korean nationalist movement, and thus triggering another transformation of the Sino–Korean relationship in the twentieth century.

In the late 1910s, with the establishment of the Korean government in exile in Shanghai, the pre-1895 inner dual system between China and Korea was resuscitated. It linked the Korean nationalist party with the Chinese nationalist party, on the one hand, and it linked the Korean state—which only existed as an imagined state as a consequence of Japan’s annexation of Korea—with the Chinese state, on the other. The dual system remained the basic political arrangement for China and Korea. This was also true of the Korean nationalist party in its relations with the Kuomintang and the Communists of China, and it remained so throughout the era of the Republic in mainland China, from 1912 to 1949, and since the establishment of the People’s Republic in 1949, and through the division of Korea between north and south since 1948. Once this inner order resumed, both countries followed their own agendas in order to manage their relations and other issues and barely play the game within the family of nations.

This phenomenon shares common characteristics with the trajectory of Sino–Vietnamese relations in the twentieth century, which is not a historical coincidence. The

conundrum of Sino–Korean relations and Sino–Vietnamese relations in the China-centric Zongfan system in the late nineteenth century is that the system found itself reincarnations in the new historical setting in the twentieth century with the rise of nationalist revolutions in these countries. The current fact that many people outside the sphere of the Chinese world have difficulty in understanding Chinese–North Korean, Chinese–Vietnamese relations, or the territorial disputes between China, Korea, Vietnam, the Philippines, and Japan illustrates this point. In a sense, what inner changes Western-style treaties, wars, colonialism, and imperialism had brought into the Chinese world still remains a critical question. A key to this question and understanding of relations between China and those countries that had served as its *fan* in the Qing period is to investigate what happened between Qing China and Chosŏn Korea—the prototypical *fan* of the Chinese empire under the Qing—over the span of the three centuries from the 1610s to the 1910s.

CONCLUSION

Embracing Zongfan Legacies: The Persistence of the Chinese Empire in Post-Qing China

In the span of four centuries, from the early seventeenth to the present, China has considerably remade itself, just as the rest of the world has fundamentally altered China. There is irony in that in the early seventeenth century China was *the* world to emperor and his tributaries or subordinate countries. In the early twenty-first century, China is now a part of the world, yet in the imperial consciousness and the presentation of the Chinese empire, China still remains at the center. The “Westernization” of China has been a historical process of “modernization” that vibrantly began in the early nineteenth century and presented itself as “globalization” in the late twentieth century. The modernization of Chinese society on Western lines has proved an essential tool for its survival against fierce competitors in the last two centuries. This was accomplished without homogenizing Chinese society, both within and in its China-centric periphery. The late twentieth century saw China’s global standing surge, a phenomenon labeled the “rise of China.” This supposedly new development is actually a combination of the observable changes in modern Chinese society, on the surface, and some misleading myths about late imperial China underneath the acclaim. Taking this observation into account, we will find that China remains an influential insider, as well as a powerful outsider to the family of nations, an international system that is regulated by Western political and diplomatic norms. For observers both inside and outside the Chinese state today, China’s relations with the countries on its periphery are the most perplexing and even inflammatory challenges to China itself.

It is a basic tenet of China's self-image that "China," or *Zhongguo*, a dynamic and abstract politico-cultural concept of a regime dominating certain territory as the Central Kingdom, has always been mutually defined by its relations with other countries on its periphery—that is, by a combination of the country's own perception and the devotion of its neighbors to Chinese civilization. In its time-honored history, China has been constituted by different dynasties or regimes that were invested with a pedigree of orthodox legitimacy. Yet these rulers had to cope with the divide between themselves and the country's China-centric cosmopolitanism, leading to frequent challenges from both inside and outside China's borders.

This nebulous twofold nature of China's identification helps explain why some Chinese intellectuals in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, such as Huang Zunxian in 1894 and Liang Qichao in 1900, in the context of exploring China's future by comparing China with European states, were struggling with the definition of China, or *Zhongguo*, for they could not find a consistent name for the Central Kingdom in Chinese history.¹ It can also explain why, as Liang Qichao critically pointed out in his treatise exploring the reasons for China's weakness, the Chinese for a long time could not tell the difference between "state" (Ch. *guojia*) and "all-under-Heaven" (Ch. *tianxia*) and that between "state" and "court" (Ch. *chaoting*).²

China has fundamentally transformed since its late imperial times, which has bequeathed rich historical legacies to the country that are playing a crucial and powerful role in defining, nourishing, and maintaining its identity, unity, historical memories, and

¹ See Huang Zunxian, *Riben guozhi* (History of Japan), vol. 4, 1; Liang Qichao, *Zhongguo jiruo suyuan lun* (A treatise on reasons for China's weakness), in *Yinbingshi heji* (Comprehensive collection of Liang Qichao), vol. 5, 15. Reviewing the conventional ideology of the civilized–barbarian distinction, Huang preferred to call the country "civilized China" (*Huaxia*).

² Liang Qichao, *Zhongguo jiruo suyuan lun*, in *Yinbingshi heji*, vol. 5, 15.

worldview. A brief review of Chinese history in the past four centuries illuminates China's transformation during the prolonged duet between itself and its cosmopolitanism, a process that allow us to grasp the significance of the historical legacy of late imperial China.

In the early seventeenth century, the Qing launched the transformation of China, and this would deeply affect China's territory, ethnicity, politics, society, culture, economy, diplomacy, and so forth. By the 1790s, the Qing had replaced the Ming as the Central Kingdom. The dynasty expanded China's territory into today's Southwestern China and Central Asia, in the process building a vast Eurasian Chinese empire under the China-centric Zongfan world order. Under the Zongfan framework, the Qing, identifying itself as the Central Kingdom and the Heavenly Dynasty, continued to provide legitimacy to political entities on China's periphery, such as Chosŏn, Ryukyu, Vietnam, and Burma. Qing China in the eighteenth century turned out to be the flowering of the Chinese empire. From 1839 to 1912, Qing China experienced a turbulent chapter, in which it became a victim of great power rivalry. Yet, as a single state with clear territory and sovereignty in the European sense, China also survived as a multicultural and multiethnic empire, manifested in the new picture of the Chinese state that was drawn by the imperial edict of abdication in 1912.

Following the fall of the Qing dynasty, the political and social turmoil continued for another four decades until the early 1950s, when the newly founded People's Republic of China recovered the general domain of Qing China from the hands of Chinese nationalist and other non-communist forces, and started to govern the vast territory with a new form of regime and a set of new political, cultural, and social norms

imported from the West. Since the 1950s, the People's Republic has witnessed the rise of the revolutionary cosmopolitanism during the Cold War, which reached Korean peninsula and Indochina, the two venues of China's outer *fan*, and seen the irredeemable fall of this order in the post-Cold War period. China under the People's Republic has become a interests-driven Chinese state. It continues to exploit historical sources from late imperial China to ensure and maintain its unity and running as a sovereign state. It also tries to reinforce and enhance its legitimacy both in China's inner land and on China's borders.

In the wake of national independence and decolonization after WWII, almost all countries that were subordinate to Qing China as its outer *fan* under the management of the Ministry of Rituals became independent from the China-centric Zongfan family. As the People's Republic of China identified itself as a state clearly defined by international law, it made sedulous efforts to integrate certain areas, from Manchuria to Inner Asia to Indochina, and then to Taiwan and the small islands of South China Sea, into the inseparable territory of the Chinese state. Tibet, which was under the management of the Mongolian Superintendency of the Great Qing and treated as a nation equal to China by the first international law published in China in 1864,³ became territory of the People's Republic in the early 1950s, which is one of the best cases illuminating this point.⁴ In this sense, the People's Republic has fulfilled what the Republic of China wanted but failed to realize during the latter's continental period from 1912 to 1949. This was, of course, because China was in deep national crises and *de facto* disunion as a result of the collapse of the Qing and the comprehensive penetration and intrusion of imperialist and

³ Ding Weiliang (W. A. P. Martin) trans., *Wanguo gongfa (Elements of International Law)*, vol. 1, 1.

⁴ See, for example, Melvyn C. Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet, 1913–1951*, 638-813; Sam van Schaik, *Tibet: A History*, 207-269; Pingti Ho, "In Defense of Sinicization: A Rebuttal of Evelyn Rawski's 'Reenvisioning the Qing'," 149.

colonial forces. It was also during this hectic period before the triumph of the communist revolution that China eventually failed to reclaim Outer Mongolia as its territory, although in 1916 the Republican government under President Yuan Shikai successfully restored the Zongfan order with Outer Mongolia by following the convention of imperial investiture during the Qing period.⁵

China has remade its borders (Ch. *bianjiang*), just as it has been reinvented at its core. Since 1949, almost all border areas that had been either tightly or loosely governed by the Qing dynasty have become China's territory, as Beijing installed a centralized hierarchical political system between the central government and the local political organs in these areas. Viewed from the perspective of statecraft, this extensive policy of provincializing these areas has completely erased any ambiguity that could otherwise have been caused by patriarchal relationships or kinship between central political forces and their local agents, such as those practiced in the Zongfan era. What has been facilitating this policy is a series of political movements from the top down, such as the Great Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976. Aside from their specific political motivations and diverse manifestations in local milieus, these movements have converted the people of these areas into Chinese citizens. It has introduced them to concepts such as the sovereignty of the Chinese state and the integrity of the Chinese nation and its territory. Throughout the last few decades, these movements have successfully conveyed the consciousness of being "Chinese" (Ch. *Zhongguo ren*) to almost every ethnic community at every corner of the lands of "China" (Ch. *Zhongguo*) under the red flag.

By the same token, a united China that has been created, regulated, informed, and

⁵ See, for example, Chang Chi-hsiung, *Waimeng zhuquan guishu jiaoshe, 1911–1916* (Disputes and negotiations over Outer Mongolia's national identity, unification, or independence, and sovereignty, 1911–1916), 269-303.

maintained in this manner forces the highly centralized Beijing regime to face serious challenges from its border areas, most of which were once under the management of the Mongolian Superintendency during the Qing period. The oversimplification of late imperial Chinese history, as dictated by the Chinese state since 1949, has failed to appropriately grasp the legacy of the cosmopolitan Chinese empire under the Qing. In the post-revolutionary context, the historical narratives of China's borders after the 1600s, especially those narratives concerning certain political forces' autonomous positions within Qing China's Zongfan framework, have challenged the Chinese official historical narratives in a way that echoes the voice of multiethnic Qing China.⁶ In this sense, what the authoritarian regime in Beijing has been really facing since 1949 is the post-Qing problems that have been unleashed by China's transformations in its late imperial period.

Nevertheless, it would be too much to claim that China has abandoned its self-image as the center of the world. Rather, China's role as the center of the communist revolution in Asia and its ambition of becoming the revolutionary center of the world during the Cold War reflected its deep belief that it was the Central Kingdom. In the post-Cold War period, this illustrious identification has been substantiated by China's delicate policies toward North Korea, Vietnam, and those countries that have been identified by Beijing as members of the "Third World." This phenomenon could explain why China's diplomacy toward the countries that had been *powers* in nineteenth-century-China is clear and tangible, but its diplomacy toward the countries that had prostrated themselves to Qing China is vague and equivocal. In many senses, the

⁶ See, for example, R. Bin Wong, "China's Agrarian Empire: A Different Kind of Empire, A Different Kind of Lesson," 195-198; Magnus Fiskesjö, "Rescuing the Empire: Chinese Nation-Building in the Twentieth Century," 15-44; Allen Carlson, "Reimagining the Frontier: Patterns of Sinicization and the emergence of new thinking about China's territorial periphery," 41-64; Sam van Schaik, *Tibet: A History*, 238-269.

former policy distinguishes China as a member of the international community, whereas the latter suggests that China plays the role as a civilizational center beyond the norms regulated by the family of nations. The thorniest question for China as it grows in power in the early twenty-first century, therefore, is not its possible clashes with Western countries, but with those neighboring countries that have a shared historical memory of the Chinese empire inherited through the Zongfan system.

The Periphery and the Center of the Chinese Empire: Korea and China in Late Imperial and Modern Times

The story of China's transformation in this dissertation starts on the periphery of the Chinese empire under the Ming in the 1610s. From the late 1610s to the early 1640s, the Manchu regime progressively changed its relations with Chosŏn and finally established a Zongfan relationship with it. By further subordinating Mongolian political entities and converting them into its outer *fan*, as it had done with Chosŏn, the Manchu regime established a multilevel hierarchical Zongfan framework, within which the regime served as the exclusive center. In this process, it appropriated the vested institutional norms of Zongfan mechanism to transform its identity from a country of "northeastern barbarians" into the Central Kingdom and expressed a strategic goal of transforming into Zhongguo in the 1630s. These Zongfan norms that culminated in the intensive Qing–Chosŏn contacts from 1637 to 1643 were manifested through highly-programmed and reciprocal exchanges of emissaries, strict and hierarchical formats for sovereign letters, and elaborate and minute rituals performed to one another. In addition to its internal institutional construction,⁷ the prolonged Sinicization of the Manchus and the Manchu

⁷ See Zhang Jinfan and Guo Chengkang, *Qing ruguan qian guojia falü zhidu shi* (The law and institutional

regime was significantly advanced by the resources outside the regime's borders.

More importantly, this process of Sinicization was concurrent with the Barbarianization of other political entities, a process that was initiated by the Manchu regime. After the Qing established its self-identity as China/Zhongguo in 1644, the Manchu ruling house deliberately transformed Chosŏn into a prototypical *fan* of the Qing and maximized its ritual role to an unprecedented degree during the construction of the Qing's Chinese imperial order. After 1644, Chosŏn's role was essential for demonstrating the Qing's new political identity as the center of the world. To a large degree, Chosŏn was also the only country that was able to perennially serve as the *other* to lend the Chinese empire under the Qing political and cultural resources to highlight its new politico-cultural identity.

Students of Sino–Korean relations have shown that Chosŏn continued to keep its cultural identity as “Little China” after 1644 and the intellectuals of the country firmly held their pro-Ming and anti-Manchu attitude in their minds by labeling the Qing “barbarians.” This observation is true, as discussed in Chapter 3. The very pronounced and sharp contradiction between this inward perception of the Qing and Chosŏn's outward submissive actions toward the Qing, however, is so attractive to people that it has caused them to neglect the other side of the coin, namely what occurred to Chosŏn within Qing China. Moreover, acceptance the fact that the Qing was founded by Manchu “barbarians,” which would require Emperor Yongzheng's confession in the eighteenth century and the pressure of Han Chinese racialism in the nineteenth century (such as the racial rhetoric of the Taiping Rebellion and Sun Yat-sen's revolution) as its perfect

history of the Qing before 1644); Liu Xiaomeng, *Manzu cong buluo dao guojia de fazhan* (The development of the Manchus from tribe to country).

corroboration, has also contributed to this neglect among modern scholars.

The Qing was constructing its Chineseness within China's borders, which occurred concurrently with Chosŏn's own attempts to do the same within Korea. The two processes were actually competing with each other for the right to call themselves the exclusive "civilized" China, although such competition was not public. In their shared Chinese world, the Qing's rhetoric quickly triumphed over that of Chosŏn, as the imperial discourse at the institutional level identified Chosŏn as a country of "barbarians" on the periphery of the Central Kingdom.

In practice, the highly-programmed, elaborate, and reciprocal Zongfan rituals perennially practiced between the Qing and Chosŏn after 1637 represented, and helped consolidate their bilateral Zongfan order. These rituals constantly informed the two countries with their mutually constitutive legitimacy, since then to 1895. When segments of China's cosmopolitanism broke down after the 1840s, the ritual-based inner parts of the Zongfan system remained unchanged because they concerned the fundamentals and political legitimacy of both China and its outer *fan*, or shuguo. Starting in the late 1870s and early 1880s, Chosŏn was defined by Japan and Western treaty powers as an independent sovereign state enjoying sovereignty on a par with them, thus being theoretically equal to Qing China under international law. Yet this change to its international status was unable to change its politico-cultural position under the Chinese empire. As a consequence, two dual systems appeared and functioned between China and Chosŏn, in which the ritual-based conventional Zongfan mechanism was still efficiently maintaining their bilateral relations within the same Zongfan family, as discussed in Chapter 5.

By the same token, the conflicts between China and Chosŏn and between China and other powers over Chosŏn, in one way or another, resulted from an inability to recognize the inconspicuous nature of the Zongfan system in the late nineteenth century. For example, the period between the early 1860s to the late 1870s was the first time since the Qing established its Zongfan relationship with Chosŏn in 1637 that the Western powers and Japan were able to understand the significance of the Zongfan relationship. The Sino–Korean Zongfan relations were largely different from that between Qing China and its other *fan*, such as Ryukyu, Annam, Siam, and Burma. In other words, the crisis brought about by foreign encroachment in the middle to late nineteenth century was the first time since 1637 that the Qing was required to perform its duty as patriarch as well as monarch of its cosmopolitan system and ensure Chosŏn’s security through the conventional policy of “cherishing the small country.” Just as the Ming had devoted itself to Chosŏn against the Japanese invasion in the 1590s, the Qing, as the sole legitimate heirs to the Ming and thus the Central Kingdom, had to fulfill its duty toward Chosŏn in the 1880s and 1890s.

From this point of view, the macro-history of the Chinese empire from the 1390s, when the Ming officially established the Zongfan relationship with Chosŏn, to the 1890s, when the Qing was forced to terminate its Zongfan relationship with Chosŏn, can thus be traced through the micro-history of constant Sino–Korean Zongfan relations. All of the historical events that happened between Qing China and Chosŏn in the late nineteenth century were not contingent on events of the day. Behind them was the Zongfan rationale that crystalized in the period between the 1390s and the 1630s. This historical continuity can be seen clearly in China’s diplomacy toward Chosŏn in the late nineteenth century.

The Chinese officials, such as Li Hongzhang and Yuan Shikai, who steered the course of China's diplomacy during those years, preferred to use such terms as *hua* (i.e. *Zhonghua*, China) to refer to Qing China and to frame the Qing–Chosŏn Zongfan relationship within the entire lineage of the time-honored Sino–Korean Zongfan relations since the Western Zhou period. By drawing from this intellectual background, these Chinese policy-makers could use very traditional Zongfan tenets to pursue, strengthen, and demonstrate the legitimacy of their contemporary policies toward Chosŏn.

Although I have put substantial emphasis on Chosŏn Korea's important role in nourishing the contours of the Qing-centric Zongfan world, my ultimate goal is to discuss the center of this world, China/Zhongguo, from a perspective that takes measure of both its politico-cultural and geographical composition. China borders many countries and political entities, but almost every fundamental change during the last four centuries arose from its eastern border, predominantly from Korea. Far more than a historical coincidence, China's fate has been closely bound with that of Korea. From the 1590s to the 1950s, China was deeply involved in, and heavily suffered from, three great wars in Korea, in which Chinese leaders tried to preserve certain regimes in Korea. The first war between China and Japan in the 1590s, in defense of China's Korean ally, Chosŏn, left the Ming in a serious financial quagmire, which in turn led to the fall of the dynasty. The second war between China and Japan over Korea three centuries later in the 1890s, again over Chosŏn Korea, contributed significantly to the demise of yet another Chinese dynasty. Although not against Japan, China found a third war in defense of a Korean ally in the 1950s, this time against the United Nations, and this action isolated China from the mainstream of the international community for four decades until 1992, when China itself

seriously challenged the legacies of the Korean War of the 1950s by establishing foreign relations with South Korea.

Despite the long periods separating them, these three wars have striking similarities. In all three cases, the Chinese governing regimes—Ming China in the 1590s, Qing China in the 1890s, and communist China in the 1950s—were thoroughly saturated in the cosmopolitan ideology of the China-centric world—that is, that of “all-under-Heaven,” or, as this ideology manifested itself in the case of the communists, that of communist international revolution. Furthermore, Chosŏn Korea in the 1590s and the 1890s, and North Korea in the 1950s, shared ideologies with their contemporary Chinese counterparts. The point lies in the fact that the interdependence nature of Sino–Korean relations in the construction and consolidation of their political legitimacy, then as now, undergirds the historical continuities in these conflicts. The history of the transformation of China’s relationship with Korea in the Qing period provides the best passage for grasping this point, as this dissertation has demonstrated. This long-term observation can help to explain why the Qing–Chosŏn relationship stood out among the Zongfan parallels between Qing China and other countries, and why it played a pivotal role in prompting China’s transformation after the early seventeenth century.

Tributary Trade and the Diversity of the Zongfan System: The Chinese Empire beyond Qing–Chosŏn Relations

The Qing–Chosŏn Zongfan relationship did possess some particularities, insomuch that it did not manifest all aspects of the multidimensional Zongfan system. Although the Chosŏn Model was efficiently applied by Qing China to other countries in the process of reinventing the Chinese empire, no *ceteris paribus* running between China and its outer

fan existed in this system. Vietnam, for example, embraced a very practical path, and attempted to establish itself as the Central Kingdom in Indochina. While Vietnam constantly sent tributary missions to Beijing for political legitimacy, it had no difficulty in declaring its king “emperor,” naming the main gate of the royal palace the “Meridian Gate,” like the one in the Forbidden City in Beijing, and addressing its royal annuals as “veritable imperial records” (Ch. *shilu*). None of these ever happened in Chosŏn from 1392 to 1895, as it would have meant a challenge to “proper conduct” (Ch. *li*) and delegitimized the very regime.

It is true that, as Takeshi Hamashita has pointed out, the tributary system was not as unitary a system as it might have seemed from China’s perspective. It was a diverse in its operation, at least in the eyes of the countries in its periphery that had a motivation to cultivate different notions of their relations with China within their own social and cultural niche.⁸ Studies on Sino–Siamese relations in the Qianlong period, in particular those on the terminology of the “tribute” or “Chim Kong” (Ch. *jingong*, paying tribute) made by Chuang Chi-fa and Masuda Erika, have corroborated the diverse and multilayered characters of the Zongfan system and challenged the term “tribute system” in a fundamental way.⁹ Framing the issue in a Chinese–Western context, the research of John E. Wills, Jr., on Dutch and Portuguese envoys to China in the Kangxi period has also depicted “the clash between the basic values and world-views of the tribute system and those of Western formal diplomacy.”¹⁰ These scholars have embodied a common

⁸ Takeshi Hamashita, *Chōkō shisutemu to kindai ajia* (The tributary system and modern Asia), 3-21.

⁹ Chuang Chi-fa, “Xianluo guowang Zhengzhao rugong qingting kao”; Masuda Erika, “Siam’s ‘Chim Kong,’ Sending Tributary Missions to China, A Study of the Diplomatic Aspect of Sino–Siamese Relations during the Thonburi and Early Rattanakosin Periods (1767–1854)”, and “The Fall of Ayutthaya and Siam’s Disrupted Order of Tribute to China (1767–1782).”

¹⁰ John E. Wills, Jr., *Embassies and Illusions*, 172.

approach to observing the Chinese “tribute system” or the Sinocentric order through tribute trade, from which they have tried to pursue pluralism in this system.¹¹

As the trade activities varied from one place to another in late imperial times, this system presented itself in diverse ways. Hamashita’s research on the tribute system illustrates an intensively connected inter-regional network in East Asia, in which he focuses on economic relations between the countries involved in the system that showed strong interests in promoting commercial activities on their borders and beyond, in particular the East Asian maritime commercial networks. By further linking Chinese trade with the European maritime business in the Ming and Qing periods, John E. Wills, Jr., has asserted that: “the years from about 1425 to 1550 were the *only* time in all of Chinese history when a unified tribute system embodying these tendencies was the matrix for policy decisions concerning all foreigners.” Wills made this conclusion based on his observations on the process in which the regime in China started to strengthen the bureaucratic control over its relations and commercial contacts with foreigners in order to enhance China’s supreme position through certain hierarchal and elaborate ceremonies.¹²

Wills’ conclusions are supported by Shigeki Iwai, who has argued that the activity of paying homage to China by foreigners (*J. chōkō*; Ch. *chaogong*) began to be incorporated into the Sino–foreign trade system (*J. goshi*; Ch. *hushi*) after 1380, when the Ming government abolished the Maritime Trade Superintendency (Ch. *Shibo si*), a long-living institute of managing maritime trade, and this policy endured until 1684, when Emperor Kangxi of the Qing resumed maritime trade.¹³ Beyond specific trade

¹¹ Shangsheng Chen, “Zhongguo chuantong duiwai guanxi yanjiu chuyi” (A general discussion on China’s traditional foreign relations), 16.

¹² John E. Wills, Jr., *China and Maritime Europe, 1500–1800*, 3.

¹³ Shigeki Iwai, “Chōkō to goshi” (Tribute and trade), 142.

issues, this argument underlines the process of centralizing China during the Ming and Qing periods by suggesting that the Chinese tribute trade system reached a new stage of homogenization, losing the vibrancy it possessed before 1380.

Examining the Chinese Zongfan system in late imperial times from a maritime trade perspective, however, raises issues of bias, for both the Ming and the Qing did not fundamentally rely on their maritime counterparts to define their political identities and worldviews. Rather, the overland tribute trade and Zongfan regulations were more significant and never lacked vitality and variability in practice. This issue is more closely related to China's policy of "giving more to the visitors and benefiting less from them" (Ch. *houwang bolai*) in contacts with its tributary guests. Among many similar cases, a close comparison between the value of Chosŏn's tributes and that of China's imperial gifts and extra gifts in 1790, and an intensive discussion on China's policy toward the Zunghar Mongols' philanthropic and political activity of "boiling tea" (Ch. *aocha*) in Tibet in the Qianlong period have shown that China did not economically benefit from its contacts with Chosŏn and the Zunghar Mongols at different levels of the Zongfan system.¹⁴ As the Korean historian Hae-Jong Chun has pointed out, "the nature of the Sino-Korean tributary system can best be explained from the point of view of politics."¹⁵ This was also true in other cases related to China's contacts with other nations that participated in the Zongfan system under the Chinese empire.

The diversity and vibrancy of tributary trade activity in the Zongfan system also

¹⁴ See, Yuanhong Wang, "Rouhui yuanbang, yi shi bu yi wen: qingchao dui Chaoxian fuqing shituan de huici yu jiashang" (Cherishing country from afar: The rewards granted by the Qing court to the Korean envoys for their tributes to the Qing Dynasty); Wenli Lü, "Cong qianlong nianjian zhungaer ruzang aocha kan qingzhengfu, zhugaer ji xizang de guanxi" (Research on relations among the Qing government, Zunghar, and Xizang [Tibet] through Zunghar's "boiling tea" in Xizang in the Qianlong period). About a general examination on the Sino-Korean tributary trade in the Qing period, see Chang Tsun-wu, *Qing Han zongfan maoyi, 1637-1894* (Sino-Korean Tributary Trade, 1637-1894).

¹⁵ Hae-jong Chun, "Sino-Korean Tributary Relations in the Ch'ing Period," 110.

proves that Qing China, Chosŏn Korea, and other members in the Sinocentric family were not secluded or immobile before Western powers clashed with East Asia in the early nineteenth century. The mainstream of modern Chinese historical narrative, both inside and outside China, has been overwhelmingly focused on the disintegration of the Canton trade system, or the Cohong system—the intermediaries between Beijing and Western countries in Canton, which is believed to have triggered conflicts between China and Britain, and resulted in the forcible opening of China’s door to Western powers. By identifying westernization or modernization as the unavoidable and necessary road for China to take, this paradigm epitomizes the oft-criticized West-centric approach to analyzing modern China that regard Chinese institutions as stagnant systems. Yet, at least since the Han dynasty, China has been consistently saturated with the global currents and it never lacked communication with the rest of the world.¹⁶ In the Qing period, the institutional flexibility manifested by the creation of the Mongolian Superintendency in 1638, the Grand Council in 1729, and the Zongli Yamen in 1861 strongly highlighted the malleability of Qing China.¹⁷ Therefore, an approach that fails to give appropriate considerations to co-existing trade systems on China’s borders and in its capital has trimmed the entire multilayered Zongfan trade framework down to Sino–Western part of Southern China. It has led some historians to conclude that the period from 1860 to 1882 was “the last phase of the East Asian world order.”¹⁸ In the previous chapters, I have demonstrated why this is not true.

What has prevented people from grasping this dynamic picture is modern Chinese

¹⁶ Joanna Waley-Cohen, *The Sextants of Beijing: Global Currents in Chinese History*.

¹⁷ See, for example, Beatrice S. Bartlett, *Monarchs and Ministers: The Grand Council in Mid-Ch’ing China, 1723–1820*; Jennifer Rudolph, *Negotiated Power in Late Imperial China: The Zongli Yamen and the Politics of Reform*.

¹⁸ Key-hiuk Kim, *The Last Phase of the East Asian World Order*, 1-38, 328-351.

nationalism. It makes use of the late Qing period as a reservoir of cultural resources, and from this it nourishes a strong victim mentality among the Chinese in order to maintain and enhance the historical and political legitimacy of the post-Qing Chinese nationalist and communist revolutions and regimes. Therefore, restoring a vivacious Qing to the historical narration of China, including the dismal chapter after the 1840s, poses a tremendous challenge to Chinese nationalism and even the process of modern Chinese state building. Among all the questions that could be raised by this scenario, whether or not the China-centric order indeed disintegrated in the late nineteenth century stands out.

The Persistence of the Chinese Empire: Dimensions of the Disintegration of the China-Centric Order in the Late Nineteenth Century

Against the new historical background of the “rise of China” narrative in the current wave of globalization in the twenty-first century, some observers in the West have correctly noted that China under authoritarian rule is not, and will not become, a member of the “club,” although it has become the largest economic power in the world.¹⁹ These Westerners have tried to understand contemporary China through Chinese civilization and its conventional foreign relations framework.²⁰ A critical question behind this approach asks in what dimensions that the China-centric order really disintegrated in the late nineteenth century, a time when China seemed to be subjugated to the Western technologies, ideas, and institutions. This question is related to our understanding of the transformations of post-Qing China, the Chinese state, and China’s foreign relations with its neighbors and the West. The legacy of the reluctant transformation of the Chinese

¹⁹ See, for example, Stefan Halper, *The Beijing Consensus: Legitimizing Authoritarianism in Our Times*; David Kang, *China Rising: Peace, Power, and Order in East Asia*.

²⁰ See, for example, Martin Jacques, *When China Rules the World: The End of the Western World and the Birth of A New Global Order*.

Zongfan order as a result of the penetration of the European international law-based political and diplomatic order in the late nineteenth century provides a good path for pursuing the answer by conducting more systematic research on the China-centric order.²¹

In his analysis of the relationship between the Western “barbarians” and Qing China in the late nineteenth century, John King Fairbank describes a framework he terms as the Chinese “power structure,” which was “synarchic,” and “culture,” which was “Sinocentric.” For Fairbank, the Chinese world order embodied by the Sinocentric tributary system was incompatible with the Western world order represented by the treaty system, and it was only at this level of the synarchic power structure that China used the Western elements to move toward “incipient modernization.” “The ‘Western conquest’ proved abortive,” says Fairbank, “Instead of being taken over by the new invaders, the Chinese world order finally disintegrated.”²² The unfolding of Chinese history since the late nineteenth century seems to support Fairbank’s assertion, inasmuch that China has been pursuing Western-oriented modernization and integrated itself into the successive waves of globalization. In addition to large-scale imports and applications of Western political ideas and systems by Chinese intellectuals and revolutionaries, the transformation of the Chinese consumer culture in modern times can provide more cases concerning the localization of the homogenizing impact of westernization and globalization in China.²³

Viewed from this perspective, Fairbank’s observation that China’s “incipient modernization” at the power structural level, rather than the Sinocentric cultural level, is

²¹ Chi-hsiung Chang, “Dongxi guoji zhixu yuanli de chayi: ‘zongfan tixi’ dui ‘zhimin tixi’” (A comparison of Eastern and Western principles of international order: suzerainty vs. colonization).

²² John K. Fairbank, “The Early Treaty System in the Chinese World Order,” 273-275.

²³ See, for example, Sherman Cochran, *Chinese Medicine Men: Consumer Culture in China and Southwest Asia*.

not different from Zhang Zhidong's theory of "using Chinese learning for fundamentals and Western learning as tools" (Ch. *zhongxue wei ti, xixue wei yong*) in the 1890s, nor is it from Wei Yuan's policy of "learning the superior techniques of the barbarians in order to control the barbarians" (Ch. *shi yi changji yi zhiyi*) in the 1840s. Whereas Wei and Zhang refused to change the basic structure of China and Fairbank saw it was impossible for the Western factors to fundamentally change or to be integrated into Chinese culture, they all dealt with the same question: how should Qing China meet the huge challenges posed by Western powers? All of them framed their answers within a China–West duality, rather than in the plurality of the Chinese world. For Wei, the duality equated to the notion that China was civilized and that the Western countries were "barbarians." For Zhang, it meant that Qing China had to become equivalent to the Western powers. And finally, for Fairbank, the Sinocentric order was a parallel system to the Western world order. The difference among the three manifestations of the duality lay in China's path to modernity from the late imperial period to the present.

This duality, however, neglects the rich dimensions of the China-centric order by treating the order as a monolithic, rather than multileveled, system. Building upon this monolithic view of China, some scholars have argued that China's perception of the world in the revolutionary context after 1949 actually amounted to the resurgence of its conventional ideology of "all-under-Heaven," which endowed China with the identity as the Central Kingdom again, providing broader Chinese historical and cultural backgrounds in which the Mao-style cosmopolitan revolutionary ideology found its legitimacy.²⁴ Yet by the same token, taking an institutionally well-established People's

²⁴ Benjamin I. Schwartz, "The Chinese Perception of World Order, Past and Present," in *The Chinese World Order*, 284; Chen Jian, *China's Road to the Korean War: The Making of the Sino–American*

Republic as a requisite for the argument, this observation falls short in explaining how Sinocentrism in post-1949 China was restored, if such an order had disintegrated in the first place, as some have claimed. It is thus necessary for one to examine the Sinocentric order from a multileveled perspective, in particular the inner dual system within the dynamic Zongfan framework, as demonstrated by the history of Qing–Chosŏn relations examined in this dissertation.

In 1872, Li Hongzhang suggested to the Qing’s meritocracy that China should not cancel a new project that sought to manufacture modern warships, as the country was continually in “an unprecedentedly great transformation during thousands of years.”²⁵ In the early twenty-first century, China has taken on an aura of “national revival” (Ch. *minzu fuxing*), yet it is still struggling toward modernity, employing its statecraft to strive for efficient management of its vast territory, multiethnic nations, and diverse foreign relations. The Central Kingdom, *Zhongguo*, is still on the path of a great transformation that began in the early seventeenth century.

Confrontation, 214; Chen Jian, *Mao’s China and the Cold War*, 8, 122.

²⁵ See *LHZQJ (2008)*, vol. 5, 107.

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CHINESE CHARACTER GLOSSARY

aocha	熬茶
Banli huashang shiwu lishi	辦理華商事務理事
banshi dachen	辦事大臣
Bao Chaoxian ce	保朝鮮策
Beiyang tongshang dachen	北洋通商大臣
beiyi	北夷
beizhi	卑職
benchao	本朝
beng	崩
bianjiang	邊疆
bianjing maoyi	邊境貿易
biantong jiuzhi	變通舊制
bianwai zhi guo	邊外之國
biao	表
biaozheng wanbang	表正萬邦
bi Chaoxian shili, qing feng wangwei, cong zhengshuo	比朝鮮事例，請封王位，從正朔
bici zhi fen	彼此之分
Bingbu	兵部
binli	賓禮
binzhu li	賓主禮
binzhu zhi li	賓主之禮
bitan	筆談
bubei bukang	不卑不亢
Bujun tongling yamen	步軍統領衙門
buluo	部落
caifu	采服
cefeng	冊封
chaejo	再造
chajon t`ügnip	自尊特立
chakan chishi	查勘敕使
ch'amho / jianhao	僭號
chaogong	朝貢
Chaogong tongli	朝貢通例
Chaoxian celue	朝鮮策略
Chaoxian gongshi yantu	朝鮮貢使燕圖
Chaoxian guo yiguan	朝鮮國夷官
Chaoxian guo zizhu zhi bang, baoyou yu Riben guo pingdeng zhi quan	朝鮮國自主之邦，保有與日本國平

Chaoxian nai waiyi zhi ren	等之權 朝鮮乃外夷之人
Chaoxian shanhou liuce	朝鮮善後六策
Chaoxian shili	朝鮮事例
chaso	字小
chehu	諸侯
chen / sin	臣
chengchen rugong	稱臣入貢
Cheng shouwei	城守尉
ch'i	致
chikbun	職分
chim / zhen	朕
ch'ōksa yunūm	斥邪綸音
ch'ōnbyōng ch'ōnjang	天兵天將
ch'ōncho	天朝
Ch'ōndan	天壇
ch'ōnha taeūi	天下大義
ch'ōp	貼
chōkō	朝貢
Chōsen kyōshinkai	朝鮮共進會
chōkch'u	賊酋
chōngmyo horan	丁卯胡亂
chōngmyo roran	丁卯虜亂
chon Chungguk, yang yi chōk	尊中國, 攘夷狄
chongsa	中士
chonju ūiri	尊周義理
Chosa sich'aldan	朝士視察團
Chosōn kugwang pongsō Kūmguk han	朝鮮國王奉書金國汗
ch'u sinsa	秋信使
ch'un sinsa	春信使
chuandan	傳單
Chungcho / Zhongchao	中朝
Chungguk / Zhongguo	中國
Chungguk ho ya / Zhongguo hu ye	中國胡也
ci	賜
cun shuguo zhi ti	存屬國之體
dabang	大邦
dabing	大兵
Dae ch'ōngguk kwan mun in song hwangje	大清國寬溫仁聖皇帝
Daechōng hwangje gongdōk bi	大清皇帝功德碑
daguo	大國

da huangdi	大皇帝
daihe lishan	帶河礪山
daili shanhe	帶礪山河
Dai nippon teikoku	大日本帝國
da junzhu	大君主
Daming guo	大明國
Daming huidian	大明會典
dan	石
Daqing diguo	大清帝國
Daqing guo	大清國
Daqing guo huangdi	大清國皇帝
Daqing guoji tiaoli	大清國籍條例
Daqing huangdi gongde bei	大清皇帝功德碑
dasang	大喪
Datang kaiyuan li	大唐開元禮
Dayi juemi lu	大義覺迷錄
de	德
dehua zhi wai	德化之外
di	弟
dianfu	甸服
diaoji	弔祭
didu	帝都
diguo zhuyi	帝國主義
dokuritsu koku	獨立國
dongbei yi	東北夷
Dongguo	東國
Dongnaebu amhaeng ǒsa	東萊府暗行御史
Dongsansheng	東三省
dongyi	東夷
dou	斗
duannan zuoshi	斷難坐視
Ducha yuan	都察院
duli	獨立
duli banzhu	獨立半主
duli zhi guo	獨立之國
enwei bingzhu	恩威并著
er'pin xian	二品銜
erguo	爾國
fan	藩
fanchen wu waijiao	藩臣無外交
fanfeng	藩封

fanfu	藩服
fanguo	藩國
fangwu	方物
fanping	藩屏
fanshu zhi xuming	藩屬之虛名
fanwang	藩王
fanzhong	番眾
fei qi wang er junxian zhi	廢其王而郡縣之
fengjian shizhong	豐儉適中
fengshi	封諡
feng siyi	風四夷
Fengtian yu Chaoxian bianmin jiaoyi zhangcheng	奉天與朝鮮邊民交易章程
fu	福
gaitu guiliu	改土歸流
Gaoli	高麗
gech'ōp	揭帖
geguo gongshi fangci	各國貢使仿此
geguo yangren	各國洋人
genben zhongdi	根本重地
Gongbu	工部
gongdan	貢單
gongshi	貢使
gongwu	貢物
goshi	互市
gu	孤
Guanglusi	光祿寺
guanshe	館舍
guiguo	貴國
guihua	歸化
guochao	國朝
guojia	國家
guojia gongdiao	國家公弔
guosang	國喪
guoshu	國書
guoti	國體
haguk / xiaguo	下國
Haiguan jiandu	海關監督
hama yǎn	下馬宴
Han	韓
hanghu	行戶

hanhua	漢化
Hanlin yuan	翰林院
hanyi	漢夷
hasa	下士
he wo tianchao tizhi	合我天朝體制
hoetap sa	回答使
hong	薨
hongbǎo / hongfan	洪範
hosǒ	胡書
houbu dao	候補道
houfu	侯服
Houjin	後金
houwang bolai	厚往薄來
hu	胡
hua	化; 華
huahua	華化
huamin	華民
huangdi zhi xiu	皇帝之休
huangfu xian bin	荒服咸賓
Huangqing zhigong tu	皇清職貢圖
huangshang	皇上
huangtian wu qin, wei de shi fu	皇天無親, 惟德是輔
Huaxia	華夏
huayang zujie	華洋租界
huayi zhi bian	華夷之辨
huayi zhi bian shenyan	華夷之辨甚嚴
Hubu	戶部
huairou dongtu	懷柔東土
huairou yuanren	懷柔遠人
huayang zujie	華洋租界
Hugǔm ch'ǒnmyǒng hwangje	後金天命皇帝
Hugǔmguk kahan	後金國可汗
huibi pai	迴避牌
huidian	會典
Huitong siyi guan	會同四譯館
hushi	互市
hwa-i ũi chai	華夷差異
hwangbok hambin / huangfu xianbin	荒服咸賓
hwangcho	皇朝
hwangje	皇帝
hwangje chi hyu	皇帝之休

hwangmyǒng / huangming	皇明
ich`u	夷酋
insin mu oegyo / renchen wu waijiao	人臣無外交
iyang sǒn	異樣船
iyong husaeng	利用厚生
jimi	羈縻
jianhu	監護
jianjiu Zhongguo zhi zhi	漸就中國之制
Jianzhouwei	建州衛
jiaoshe	交涉
jiazhang	家長
jietie	揭帖
Jilin Chaoxian shangmin suishi maoyi zhangcheng	吉林朝鮮商民隨時貿易章程
Jindian	金典
jingong	進貢
Jingshan qinglisi	精膳清吏司
jingshi	京師
Jinguohan zhishu yu Chaoxian guowang	金國汗致書于朝鮮國王
Jinguo waifan menggu	金國外藩蒙古
jisi lubian	己巳虜變
jisi zhi yi	己巳之役
jiufu	九服
jugong	鞠躬
Junji chu	軍機處
junji dachen	軍機大臣
junxian qi di	郡縣其地
junxian zhi	郡縣之
junzi	君子
Kado	椴島
Kaiping kuangwu ju	開平礦務局
Kamni amun	監理衙門
kapsin jǒngbyǒn	甲申政變
ke'erqin guo	科爾沁國
ki`mi	羈縻
Kǒnjuwi	建州衛
Kǒnjuwi buha mabǒp gaet`ak	建州衛部下馬法開拆
kongdan	貢單
kongming	空名
kongmul	貢物
kongsa	貢使

Kōnyang	建陽
Koryō / gaoli	高麗
Kosōn kwan	考選官
kouxie	叩謝
Kūmguk han	金國汗
Kuan wen ren sheng huangdi	寬溫仁聖皇帝
kuksō	國書
Kwangmu	光武
kwiguk	貴國
kwōn / ken	權
Kyōngsa / Jingshi	京師
laichao	來朝
laigui	來歸
laihua	來化
liaoyin jiaoqing	僚寅交情
li	禮
li	里
Liangyi shuiwu jiandu	兩翼稅務監督
Libu	禮部
lidan	禮單
Lifan yuan	理藩院
lingshi	領事
lishi	理事
liubu	六部
liwu	禮物
longting	龍亭
Luhuan huijing tu	臚歡薈景圖
Lunchuan zhaoshang ju	輪船招商局
lunji	倫紀
Lunyu	論語
mabōp / mafa	馬法
manfu	蠻服
manpo ch'ōmsa	滿浦僉使
manzi	蠻子
maoyi	貿易
Menggu yamen	蒙古衙門
Mingchao	明朝
mingfen	名分
Mingguo jiuli	明國舊例
mingzheng yishun	名正義順
Mohwa gwan / Muhua guan	慕華館

muwǒn pulbok / wuyuan bufu	無遠不服
Nambyǒl gung	南別宮
Namhan sansǒng	南漢山城
Nanchao	南朝
nanfan	難番
nanfu	男服
nanyang	南洋
neidi	內地
neifan	內藩
neifu	內服
neishu	內屬
neiwai miaoyi	內外苗夷
neiwai zhi bie	內外之別
neiwufu	內務府
nei zhuhou	內諸侯
nianhao	年號
noch'u	奴酋
nucai	奴才
oguk	我國
paijie	排解
peichen / paesin / baishin	陪臣
pianrang	偏壤
pibyǒng sa	備邊司
píjik	卑職
p'iltam	筆談
pingfan	屏藩
pingfu	屏輔
pinghan tianchao	屏翰天朝
pingli	平禮
pingmeng	帡幪
pingxing	平行
pǒnbang	藩邦
pong	封
puk'ak p'ae	北學派
pulgok	不穀
p'yeguk	別國
p'yeha	陛下
p'yo	表
p'yǒnbi	褊裨
py'ǒnyang	偏壤
pyǒlgi gun	別技軍

qian	錢
qianshi rugong	遣使入貢
qi dahan	七大恨
Qinchai bianyi xingshi quanquan dachen	欽差便宜行事全權大臣
qinchai xian pai	欽差憲牌
Qinding daqing huidian	欽定大清會典
Qinding libu zeli	欽定禮部則例
Qingliu	清流
Qing shilu	清實錄
Qiming zhuzha Chaoxian zongli jiaoshe tongshang shiyi	欽命駐紮朝鮮總理交涉通商事宜
qinjunwang	親郡王
qinshi	欽使
qinwang / ch'inwang	親王
qin Zhongguo, jie Riben, lian Meiguo	親中國, 結日本, 聯美國
quanquan dachen	全權大臣
rende	仁德
renzhi yijin	仁至義盡
rin'guk	鄰國
roch'u	老酋
rouhui yuanren, yi shi bu yi wen	柔惠遠人, 以實不以文
rouyuan	柔遠
sadae	事大
sahak	邪學
saikensen	歲遣船
Samjōndo bi	三田渡碑
sangmu wiwōn	商務委員
san gui jiu koutou	三跪九叩頭
sangguk / shangguo	上國
sangma yōn	上馬宴
sangsa	上士
se'pye	歲幣
Seikan ron	征韓論
shang	賞
Shangshu	尚書
Shangwu weiyuan	商務委員
shaoshu minzu	少數民族
sheng/ xingsheng	省/ 行省
shengchao	聖朝
shengfan jie	生蕃界
shenyuan	申冤

Shibo si	市舶司
shida zixiao	事大字小
Shihan jilue	使韓紀略
shilu	實錄
shin koku	清國
shi yi changji yi zhiyi	師夷長技以制夷
shizai zhi mingfen	實在之名分
shouru bantu	收入版圖
shouwei neidi er zhi qizheng	收為內地而執其政
shubang (shu-pang)	屬邦
shufan	屬藩
shuguo	屬國
shuli	屬禮
shunfu	順付
Shuntian fu	順天府
shuoli	朔曆
shu qi nan, jie qi fen, qi qi anquan	紓其難, 解其紛, 期其安全
shu yu tizhi youguan	殊與體制有關
Shuiwu si	稅務司
sidao	司道
siguo	四國
sihai yi er wanguo laiwang	四海一而萬國來王
Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao	四庫全書總目提要
sin	臣
sinsa	信使
Sinsa yuramdan	紳士遊覽團
siqing	私情
sirhak	實學
sisim	洗心
siyi	四夷/ 四裔
siyi xianfu	四夷咸服
sobang	小邦
so Junghwa / xiao Zhonghua	小中華
songsō	上書
suifan	綏藩
sui Zhongguo	綏中國
sujing pai	肅靜牌
sun wo zhuquan	損我主權
susin sa	修信使
taebang	大邦
taebodan	大報壇

taeguk	大國
Taehan	大韓
taejo	大朝
Taixue guan	太學館
tal	鞮
tianchao	天朝
tianchao tizhi	天朝體制
tianchao zhi chizi	天朝之赤子
tianfo zhi zi	天佛之子
tianming	天命
Tianren fuyu lieguo yingming han	天任覆育列國英明汗
tianshi	天使
tianxia	天下
tianxia guan	天下觀
tianxia guojia zhi zhu	天下國家之主
tianxia weigong	天下為公
tianyi	天意
tianzi	天子
tiaoyue	條約
timian	體面
titong youguan	體統攸關
tizhi	體制
tizhi youguan	體制攸關
tongdǔng ji ye / dōtō no reigi	同等之禮
T'ongni kyosǒp t'ongsang samu amun	統理交涉通商事務衙門
Tongnim mun	獨立門
tongshang zhi zizhu	通商之自主
tongzhi quan	統治權
tuguan	土官
tuoshan	妥善
tushang heqi, haowu liyi	徒傷和氣，毫無利益
tusi	土司
ǔibun	義分
waichen	外臣
waifan	外藩
waijiao	外交
waisheng difang guan	外省地方官
waishu	外屬
waiyi	外夷
wai zhuhou	外諸侯
wanghua buji	王化不及

wangji	王畿
wangsil	王室
wanguo gongfa	萬國公法
wanguo laichao	萬國來朝
wanguo zhi shang	萬國之上
wanguo zhi zhong	萬國之中
wanquan wuque zhi duli zizhu	完全無缺之獨立自主
Weiban Chaoxian shangwu weiyuan	委辦朝鮮商務委員
weifu	衛服
Wenshushili huangdi	文殊師利皇帝
wijǒng ch'ōksa	衛正斥邪
wochao	我朝
wo guojia	我國家
wufu	五服
Wukou tongshang dachen	五口通商大臣
Wumen	午門
wuyuan bufu	無遠不服
xiahuang	遐荒
xiang'an	香案
xiangdao	嚮導
xianghua zhi cheng	向化之誠
xiangting	香亭
xianru bantu	咸入版圖
xiaobang	小邦
xiao hansu	效漢俗
xiaoqixiao	驍騎校
xifan shengseng	西蕃聖僧
Xingbu	刑部
xingshi	星使
xinshi	信使
xiong	兄
xiyang	西洋
xiyu	西域
xunfu	巡撫
xunli fuxu	循例撫恤
yangban	兩班
yang'i poguk	攘夷保國
yangwu	洋務
yao fu	要服
ye	禮
yecho	禮曹

yedan	禮單
yemul	禮物
yi	夷
yida zixiao	以大字小
yifu	夷服
yi gui san koutou	一跪三叩頭
yiguo	異國
yiguo junzhu	異國君主
yihua	夷化
yijia	一家
yimu	夷目
Yingguo zizhu zhi bang, yu Zhongguo pingdeng	英國自主之邦, 與中國平等
Yingjili guo	英吉利國
yiyi zhiyi	以夷制夷
yǒjin soch'u	女真小丑
yǒngsǒn sa	領選使
Yǒngūn mun	迎恩門
youbang	友邦
youming wushi	有名無實
youru junxian	有如郡縣
you yidai junchen, biyou yidai zhizuo	有一代君臣, 必有一代制作
yuanguo	遠國
yuanren	遠人
yuanren laigui	遠人來歸
yuanyi	遠夷
yu Chaoxian yiti youdai	與朝鮮一體優待
yuguo	與國
yu tizhi dayou guanxi	於體制大有關係
zaibai	再拜
zaizao	再造
zaju	雜劇
zaofeng nanyi	遭風難夷
Zhamen	柵門
zhangjing	章京
zhao tianchao rouyuan shenren	昭天朝柔遠深仁
zhenfu	鎮服
Zhengdong xingzhongshusheng	征東行中書省
zhengming dingfen	正名定分
zhengshi	正史
zhengtong	正統

Zhengtong lun	正統論
zhengzhi zhi dao	正直之道
zhimin zhi di	殖民之地
zhimin zhuyi	殖民主義
zhimin zhengce	殖民政策
Zhongchao	中朝
zhonggao	忠告
Zhongguo / Zhongyuan zhi dao	中國 / 中原之道
Zhongguo Chaoxian shangmin shuilu maoyi zhangcheng	中國朝鮮商民水陸貿易章程
Zhongguo diyi lishi dang'anguan	中國第一歷史檔案館
Zhongguo lun	中國論
Zhongguo suoxia neiyang	中國所轄內洋
Zhongguo zhuzha Chaoxian zonglingshi	中國駐紮朝鮮總領事
Zhonghua	中華
Zhonghua diguo	中華帝國
Zhonghua minguo	中華民國
Zhonghua zhi tu	中華之土
Zhonghua zhi zhi	中華之制
Zhongtu	中土
Zhongxia	中夏
Zhongxue wei ti, xixue wei yong	中學為體，西學為用
Zhongyong	中庸
Zhongyuan	中原
zhongzu	種族
Zhuchi Chaoxian waijiao yi	主持朝鮮外交議
Zhuke qinglisi	主客清吏司
Zhuzha Chaoxian guo qinchai dachen	駐紮朝鮮國欽差大臣
zhu Zhongguo	主中國
ziben zhuyi	資本主義
zidi jia	子弟家
ziwen	咨文
zizhu / chaju / jishu	自主
zizhu zhi guo	自主之國
zizhu zhi quan	自主之權
Zongban Chaoxian gekou jiaoshe tongshang shiwu	總辦朝鮮各口交涉通商事務
zongdu	總督
zongfa fengjian	宗法封建
zoushi	奏事
zuzhi	祖制
zun Zhongguo, rang yidi	尊中國,攘夷狄

zunzhou rangyi

zunzhou yili

zuoyi

zuzhong

尊周攘夷

尊周義理

作揖

族眾