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What Tang Taizong Could Not Do: The Korean Surrender of 1259 and the Imperial Tradition

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In 1259, Wang Chŏn 王倎 (1219-1274), the heir apparent of Koryŏ 高麗 (918-1392), traveled thousands of miles across northern China to offer his surrender to Khubilai 忽必烈 (1215-1294). Anticipating a bitter struggle for the now empty Mongol throne, Khubilai abandoned a campaign against the Southern Song, and was traveling back north when he encountered Wang Chŏn on the "frontier of Liang and Chu." According to the *Koryŏ History* (*Koryŏ sa* 高麗史), he was overjoyed and said:

> Koryŏ is a country of a myriad miles. Since the time of Emperor Taizong of the Tang, who personally led an expedition against it, it could not be subjugated. Now that its Heir Apparent has come to submit to me, it must be the will of heaven!
> 高麗萬里之國，自唐太宗親征，而不能服。今其世子自來歸我，此天意也。[1]

According to the logic of historical analogy in this passage, the surrender augured Khubilai's eventual accession as Great Khan and reign as Emperor Shizu of the Yuan dynasty 元世祖 (r. 1260-1294). When ruled by the kingdom of Koguryŏ 高句麗 (trad. 37 BCE–668 CE), Korea had once repelled the armies of even the paragon Tang emperor Taizong 唐太宗 (r. 626-649).[2] Now that it had submitted to *him,* Khubilai was convinced

[1] Chŏng Inji 鄭麟趾 et al., *Koryŏ sa* 高麗史, ed. Sahoe Kwahagwŏn (North Korea: Kojŏn yŏn'guso; rpt. Seoul: Yŏgang ch'ulp'ansa, 1991), 25.7b-8a. See appendix for full text and translation.

[2] For significance of Koguryŏ wars in Tang Taizong's reign, see Jack Wei Chen, *The Poetics of Sovereignty: On Emperor Taizong of the Tang Dynasty* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard Univ. Asia Center, 2010), 42–48; see Remco E. Breuker, *Establishing a Pluralist Society in Medieval Korea, 918-1170: History, Ideology and Identity in the Koryŏ Dynasty* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 46–53,

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that he would not only be the Tang emperor's sucessor, but also destined for even greater glory.

As is the case for many such quotations in dynastic histories, it remains an open question whether such words were ever actually uttered.[3] But Khubilai's statement should not be dismissed as the mere fancy of Korean chroniclers, for it is a pithy recapitulation of a subtle but no less consequential dynamic of this period in Mongol-Koryŏ relations: the intertwining of Koryŏ diplomatic strategy, the political objectives of Khubilai and his court, and efforts by Khubilai's officials to cast the Mongols as heirs to a long-standing imperial tradition. The passage is also a key node in a whole complex of writings and rewritings about how Korea's relationship to this tradition should be understood.

By the time of Wang Chŏn's surrender, Koryŏ had been at war with the Mongol-Yuan empire 蒙元 (1206-1389) for decades.[4] The first outbreak of hostilities was in 1211, when Mongol forces killed the Koryŏ emissaries to the Jurchen Jin 金 (1115-1234).[5] Koryŏ, then controlled by the Ch'oe family and its military clique (*Ch'oe ssi musin chŏnggwŏn* 崔氏武臣政權, 1189-1258), negotiated various pacts in the ensuing years, but could not secure a lasting peace with the Mongols.[6] Only after the assassination of the last Ch'oe dictator in 1259, did the Koryŏ court comply with Mongol demands to send Wang Chŏn, the authentic heir apparent, the future king Wŏnjong 元宗 (r. 1259-1274), as a hostage.

His surrender was a watershed moment in Korean history. The ensuing epoch, usually described in Korean historiography as the "period of

209–19 for Koryŏ being Koguryŏ's legitimate successor in the former's state ideology; 34, 44, 84 for supra-dynastic notions of Korea.

3) Morris Rossabi, *Khubilai Khan: His Life and Times* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1988), 49–50.

4) I use the Mongol-Yuan to refer to the Mongol empire in East Asia, which covers the pre-Yuan Mongol empire, the period between the adoption of the name "Yuan" in 1271 and the establishment of the Ming, and the Northern Yuan regime (1368–1389); for overviews of the Koryŏ-Mongol conflict see William E. Henthorn, *Korea: The Mongol Invasions* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1963), esp. 4–7; Yun Yonghyŏk 尹龍爀, *Yŏ-Mong chŏnjaeng kwa Kanghwa tosŏng yŏn'gu* 여몽전쟁과 강화도성 연구 (Study on the Koryŏ-Mongol Wars and Capital City of Kanghwa) (Seoul: Hyean, 2011); Wuyungaowa 烏雲高娃, *Yuan chao yu Gaoli guanxi yanjiu* 元朝與高麗關係研究 (Lanzhou: Lanzhou daxue chubanshe, 2012).

5) *Koryŏ sa*, 21.25b, "Hŭijong" 7.1211.5.

6) For the Ch'oe military dictatorship, see Edward J. Shultz, *Generals and Scholars: Military Rule in Medieval Korea* (Honolulu: Univ. of Hawai'i Press, 2000), esp. 183–86.

Yuan intervention" (*Wŏn kansŏpki* 元干涉期),[7] witnessed Koryŏ's integration into the Mongol empire, a process with broad social, cultural, and political consequences.[8] Koryŏ elites who traveled to Yuan China exposed Korea to the now ascendant Zhu Xi Neo-Confucianism,[9] while wide circuits of trade[10] brought cultural influences from Central Asia, Tibet, and beyond.[11] The period also saw shifts in the power dynamics among the Koryŏ elite. Under Ch'oe control, the kingship had become a figurehead position, but Wŏnjong, supported by his Mongol overlords, restored it as a locus of political power. His son, the future King Ch'ungnyŏl 忠烈王 (1236-1308; r. 1274-1308), married Khubilai's daughter, the Princess of Qi 齊國長公主 (1259-1297). With these imperial connections, Ch'ungnyŏl sidelined the traditional Koryŏ elite to concentrate power in his own hands.[12] After King Ch'ungnyŏl, Koryŏ rulers not only were descendants of Khubilai through the Princess of Qi, but also married Chinggisid women to maintain their dual status as imperial consort *and* Koryŏ's king (*Fuma Gaoli wang/ Puma Koryŏ wang* 駙馬高麗王).[13] Dependence on their Mongol kin also meant, however, the Koryŏ royal family was often embroiled in Yuan dynastic intrigues, with Korean political fortunes swaying with developments at the Yuan court in Dadu.[14]

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7) See Kim Tangt'aek 金塘澤, *Wŏn kansŏp ha ŭi Koryŏ chŏngch'isa* 元涉干下의 高麗 政治史 (The Political History of Koryŏ under Mongol Domination), (Seoul: Ilchogak, 1998).

8) David M. Robinson, *Empire's Twilight: Northeast Asia under the Mongols* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Asia Center, 2009), 98–129.

9) John B. Duncan, *The Origins of the Chosŏn Dynasty* (Seattle: Univ. of Washington Press, 2000), 237–65.

10) Yi Kanghan 이강한, *Koryŏ wa Wŏn cheguk ŭi kyoyŏk ŭi yŏksa* 고려와 원제국의 교역의 역사 (A History of Trade and Exchange Between the Koryŏ and the Yuan Empire) (P'aju: Ch'angbi, 2013).

11) Remco Breuker, "Colonial Modernities in the 14th Century: Empire as the Harbinger of Modernity," in *Korea in the Middle: Korean Studies and Area Studies: Essays in Honour of Boudewjin Walraven* (Leiden: CNWS Publications, 2007), 45–66.

12) See Martina Deuchler, *Under the Ancestors' Eyes: Kinship, Status, and Locality in Premodern Korea* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Asia Center, 2015), 32–38, 43–45, 63.

13) Yi Ikchu 이익주, "Koryŏ Ch'ungnyŏl wangdae ŭi chŏngch'i sanghwang kwa chŏngch'i seryŏk ŭi sŏnggyŏk" 高麗 忠烈王代의 政治狀況의 性格 (Characteristics of Political Dispositions and Power Groups in Koryŏ During the Reign of King Ch'ungnyŏl), *Han'guk saron* 18 (1988): 155–222.

14) Yi Myŏngmi 李命美, "Koryŏ-Mongol kwan'gye wa Koryŏ kugwang wisang ŭi pyŏnhwa" 고려–몽굴 관계와 고려국왕 위상의 변화 (Koryŏ-Mongol Relations and the Transformation of the Koryŏ King's Status) (Ph.D. diss., Seoul National Univ., 2012), 61–86.

Royal pageantry made explicit the kingship's reliance on imperial approval. In a departure from pre-Mongol period practices, new court rituals emphasized the Yuan emperor's superiority over the Koryŏ king and codified Korea's integration into its universal imperial order. Korean rulers relinquished many symbols of Koryŏ political autonomy.[15] As widely noted in existing scholarship, Koryŏ's rulers now represented themselves as vassals of a universal emperor, a shift with consequences for Korean relations with the Ming and Qing empires during the Chosŏn dynasty (1392-1910).[16]

The ritual transformation of Korean kingship, however, had ramifications beyond Korean royal politics or Koryŏ-Mongol relations *per se.* It also had lasting effects for China's imperial tradition as a whole. Here, the imperial tradition refers to two distinct notions, that are often intertwined in practice. The first is the concept of *zhengtong* (*chŏngt'ong* 正統), which tied political authority to a diachronic transmission through a line of previous imperial dynasties.[17] The second, broader view of the imperial tradition points to the repertoire of political technologies tied to this genealogical notion of legitimacy.[18] These political technologies could take the form of institutions such as civil service examinations, court rituals, and a Confucian-style bureaucracy, or articulations of political ideals in the image of a Sage King and the civilizing

15) No Myŏngho 노명호, *Koryŏ kukka wa chiptan ŭisik: chawi kongdongch'e, Samguk yumin, Samhan ilt'ong, Haedong ch'ŏnja ŭi ch'ŏnha* 고려 국가와 접단 의식: 자위 공동체, 삼국 유민, 삼한 일통, 해동 천자의 천하 (The National and Community Consciousness of the Koryŏ: Autonomous Community, Leftover Subjects of the Samhan, Unified Samhan, and the Realm of the Son-of-heaven of Haedong) (Seoul: Sŏul taehakkyo ch'ulp'an munhwawŏn, 2009), 133–54.

16) For some examples, see Peter Yun, "Rethinking the Tribute System, Korean States and Northeast Asian Interstate Relations, 600-1600" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of California, Los Angeles, 1998), 6–33, 115–20, 146–49. See also Chŏng Tonghun 鄭東勳, "Myŏngdae ŭi yeje chilsŏ esŏ Chosŏn kugwang ŭi wisang" 명대의 예제 질서에서 조선국왕의 위상 (The Chosŏn King's Position Within the Ritual Order of the Ming Period), *Yŏksa wa hyŏnsil* 84 (2012): 251–92. Kuwano Eiji 桑野栄治, "Kōrai makki no girei to kokusai kankyō - tai Min yōhai girei no sōshutsu" 高麗末期の儀礼と國際環境 - 対明遥拝儀礼の創出, *Bulletin of the Faculty of Literature, Kurume University, Intercultural Studies* 21 (2004): 61–105.

17) See Sixiang Wang, "Co-Constructing Empire in Early Chosŏn Korea: Knowledge Production and the Culture of Diplomacy, 1392–1592" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia Univ., 2015), 12–14; Hok-lam Chan, *Legitimation in Imperial China: Discussions under the Jurchen-Chin Dynasty (1115-1234)* (Seattle: Univ. of Washington Press, 1984), 19–48.

18) For "imperial repertoires," see Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, *Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 2010), 3–11.

mission of universal rulership. As part of repertoires, rather than fixed models, they could be enormously malleable. How they intertwined with protracted debates over the genealogies of imperial legitimation lends to a sense of enduring, if not timeless, continuity in the discourse of this tradition. In practice, however, the specific implementation of any of these technologies required creative reinvention and adaptation to the circumstances at hand.[19]

Recognizing the potential malleability and open-ended nature of the imperial tradition is key for understanding how Korea related to it. This essay makes several arguments concerning this relationship. The first is that Koryŏ diplomatic strategy during this period involved interpolating Korea into the repertoire of imperial legitimation, which rested on the idea that Korea's submission confirmed imperial legitimacy and that a proper empire ought to preserve Korea's political integrity. The second argument concerns the context of this interpolation. During the first six decades of Mongol rule in East Asia, the status of this imperial tradition was an open question. Only after Khubilai's accession did the Mongol court seek to explicitly link its political authority to this tradition and its repertoires.[20] But even before the Mongols claimed this tradition, Koryŏ already appealed to a notion of a moral empire rooted in a common cultural inheritance. These appeals did not target Khubilai or his predecessors *per se*, but rather made common cause with the agenda of their Confucian-minded officials by portraying Korea as a repository of its cultural and political legacies of the imperial past. For these officials, Korean submission and cooperation was likely welcome as a tangible demonstration to Khubilai of the value of the imperial tradition they hoped he would adopt. Finally, the essay works against the grain of conventional understandings of Koryŏ's surrender. It argues that the survival of the Koryŏ royal house and Korea as a political entity was the logical consequence of neither Mongol cooptation strategies nor a preexisting model of tributary relations. Instead, it depended on how Koryŏ diplomacy interfaced with China's imperial tradition, manipulating and shaping its operation.

19) See the Jin debate over drawing their legitimacy from the Khitan Liao or the Northern Song, both states they had defeated. Hok-lam Chan, *Legitimation in Imperial China*, 73–116.
20) Herbert Franke, *From Tribal Chieftain to Universal Emperor and God: The Legitimation of the Yüan Dynasty* (Munich: Verlag der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1978).

The *Koryŏ History* Account and Its Rhetorical Function

There are many reasons to question the veracity of the *Koryŏ History*'s account of the 1259 surrender. Nearly two centuries separate the account from the events it describes. The Chosŏn dynasty, which had overthrown the Koryŏ in 1392, compiled it as a dynastic history in the Chinese style over several decades before finally promulgating it in 1451, suggesting the text may reflect better the perspectives of its fifteenth-century compilers than serve as a reliable telling of thirteenth-century events.[21] The paucity of intervening source material elsewhere compounds the problem.[22] Both the official *Yuan History,* finished in 1381 by the Ming court, and the *Yuan Gaoli jishi* 元高麗紀事, an early fourteenth-century chronicle of Yuan-Koryŏ relations, are frustratingly laconic regarding the incident.[23] Nonetheless, the *Koryŏ History*'s episode resonates with narratives of Wŏnjong's surrender in surviving diplomatic missives to the Yuan, suggesting it reflected, at the very least, late Koryŏ understandings of the incident. Its logic and rhetoric therefore warrant closer examination.

Later Koryŏ officials and diplomats treated Wŏnjong's surrender to Khubilai, not in terms of defeat, but as a political restoration. Yi Kok 李穀 (1289-1351), a Koryŏ literatus who passed both the Korean and imperial civil service examinations, praised the "Glorious Imperial Yuan" for ending the long period of disunion following the Tang collapse. This tract, a eulogy to the Koryŏ minister and diplomat Cho Ingyu 趙仁規 (1237-1308), also called it a "pivotal moment for the state's survival," a chance for "the Three Han [Korea] to begin anew."[24] The Chosŏn period

21) For background of the *Koryŏ sa*'s compilation see Han Yŏngu 韓永愚, *Chosŏn chŏn'gi sahaksa yŏn'gu* 朝鮮前期史學史研究 (Seoul: Sŏul taehakkyo ch'ulp'anbu, 1981), 45–48, 83–110.

22) This problem of sources extends to any study of Koryŏ-Yuan relations. Narrative records such as the *Koryŏ History* and other early Chosŏn compilations need to be supplemented by literary anthologies, epigraphy, sūtras, and a smattering of Chinese sources. For compilations of Chinese sources see Chang Tong'ik 張東翼, *Wŏndae yŏsa charyo chimnok* 元代麗史資料集錄 (Seoul: Sŏul taehakkyo ch'ulp'anbu, 1997).

23) *Yuan shi* 元史 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1976), 208.4607-12: "At the end of Emperor Xianzong's reign, Ho (King Kojong of Koryŏ) sent their Heir Apparent Chŏn to stay (as hostage) at the imperial court" 憲宗末, 暠遣其世子倎入朝; *Yuan Gaoli jishi* 元高麗紀事 (Taipei: Guangwen shuju, 1972), 15.

24) Yi Kok 稼亭, "Cho Chŏngsuk kong sadang ki" 趙貞肅公祠堂記 (Record for the Ancestral Hall of Cho, Lord Chŏngsuk), in *Kajŏng sŏnsaeng munjip* 稼亭先生文集 (Collected Works of

compilers of the *Koryŏ History* also follow this interpretation, crediting Wŏnjong with rescuing Koryŏ from the "domineering ambitions of power-hungry officials," and ensuring "the people of Korea could enjoy a century of peace" after suffering from repeated invasions. The pivotal moment was when he, "recognizing heaven's mandate and the inclination of the people's will," chose to surrender to Khubilai Khan, thereby receiving his favor.[25]

From the perspective of the Koryŏ kingship, it makes sense to see the Mongol conquest as a royal restoration. In 1260, Khubilai's armies escorted Wŏnjong to Koryŏ to inherit the throne, but the Koryŏ kingship, long relegated to a symbolic existence by the Koryŏ military, was a vulnerable institution.[26] In 1269, the Koryŏ military, dissatisfied with both the new peace and their diminished power, orchestrated a *coup d'état*, deposing Wŏnjong and installing another Koryŏ prince as its puppet. At this critical juncture, Wŏnjong's own heir apparent, the future King Ch'ungnyŏl, who was in the Mongol capital as a hostage, appeared before Khubilai Khan in supplication. According to the *Koryŏ History,* to prepare for this audience, the Korean prince discarded his Koryŏ-style robes and coiffure, and instead "knotted his hair into braids and dressed in Mongol attire" as his attendants looked on tearfully. Thus, demonstrating his loyalty to the Mongols, he convinced Khubilai to send troops to support his father.[27] By 1273, Mongol forces destroyed the last remnants of the Koryŏ military who resisted the uneasy peace.[28]

Whether these events point to a successful Mongol conquest, achieved by coopting the Koryŏ kingship, or a genuine royal restoration

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Yi Kok), 3, *Han'guk munjip ch'onggan* 韓國文集叢刊 (hereafter HMC) (Seoul: Minjok munhwa ch'ujinhoe, 1991–), 118b–120b, esp. 118c–118d.

25) *Koryŏ sa*, 27.29b–30a, 1274 "Wŏnjong" 15: 元宗之爲世子也，權臣專權，恣行不義，畏上國討罪，不樂內附；蒙古之兵連年壓境，中外騷然。王承父王之命，親朝上國，摧伏權臣跋扈之志，遂使疽背而死。又，阿里孛哥以憲宗嫡子阻兵，上都世皇以藩王，在梁楚之郊，而乃能識天命，民心之去就，舍近之遠，世皇嘉之至，以公主歸于王子。自是世結舅甥之好，使東方之民，享百年昇平之樂，亦可尙也。

26) Kingship remained weak even after the Ch'oe house's demise, for power passed to other military leaders. Shultz, *Generals and Scholars*, 104–6.

27) *Koryŏ sa*, 27.26b–27a, "Wŏnjong" 13.1272.2.

28) For views of these developments as a Korean war of anti-Mongol resistance, see Yun Yonghyŏk 尹龍爀, *Koryŏ Sambyŏlch'o ŭi taemong hangjaeng* 고려 삼별초의 대몽항쟁 (The Anti-Mongol Wars of the Koryŏ's Three Special Units) (Seoul: Ilchisa, 2000), and as an internecine conflict among the Koryŏ elite, see Yi Myŏngmi, "Koryŏ-Mongol kwan'gye," 18–59.

depends on what political narrative they are employed to serve. Elsewhere, Yi Kok and other Koryŏ statesmen, especially in diplomatic missives challenging Yuan policies that were unfavorable to Koryŏ, portrayed Mongol support as reciprocating Wŏnjong's surrender. In 1323, the Koryŏ official Yi Chehyŏn 李齊賢 (1287-1367), in a letter protesting the Yuan court's plans of annexing Koryŏ,[29] recalled that in 1259, King Wŏnjong "traveled six thousand leagues to meet Khubilai" because Wŏnjong "[already] knew that Heaven's Mandate had a proper place."[30] When the Koryŏ king Ch'ungsŏn 忠宣王, Wang Wŏn 王謜, later Wang Chang 王璋 (1275-1325; r. 1298, 1308-1313) was punished with exile by the Yuan emperor Yingzong 元英宗 (1302-1323; r. 1320-1323), Koryŏ petitions for his release highlighted the same events. They claimed, "with the felicitous submission of a distant man [i.e., King Wŏnjong], all-under-heaven recognized that Heaven's Mandate belonged [to Khubilai]," and submitted to his rule.[31] In a letter demanding an end to the presentation of young Korean women as tribute to the Mongols, Yi Kok employed similar rhetorical moves, claiming the Yuan owed Koryŏ special treatment because it was their "first vassal." Anticipating the *Koryŏ History*'s account, Yi Kok stated that the Koryŏ submitted voluntarily to the Mongols, even though its predecessors, the kingdom of Koguryŏ, had successfully resisted Tang Taizong, in spite of "all his virtue and power."[32]

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29) The measures included "reinstatement of provincial administration and withdrawal of the dynastic title." A Gaoli (Koryŏ) Branch Secretariat 高麗行省 would have ruled Korea in the manner of the Yuan's interior Chinese provinces: *Koryŏ sa*, 110.23a–25b, 125.24b–26a; *Yuan shi*, 208.4623. See also Ko Pyŏngik 高柄翊, *Tonga kyosŏpsa ŭi yŏn'gu* 東亞交涉史의 硏究 (A Study of the History of Communication in East Asia) (Seoul: Sŏul taehakkyo ch'ulp'an bu, 1970), 200–8 for a detailed discussion of this matter.

30) Yi Chehyŏn 李齊賢, "Chae Taedo sang Chungsŏ todang sŏ" 在大都上中書都堂書 (Letter Presented to the Central Secretariat in Dadu), from *Ikchae nan'go* 益齋亂稿, 6, in HMC, vol. 2, 544b–544c: 又於己未年，世祖皇帝班師江南，忠敬王知天命之有歸，人心之攸服，跋涉六千餘里，迎拜于汴梁之地。自本國至釣魚山，又回至汴梁，蓋六千餘里。

31) Yi Chehyŏn, "Tong Ch'oe Songp'a chŭng Wŏn nangchung sŏ" 同崔松坡贈元郎中書 (Letter Presented with Ch'oe Songp'a to Director Yuan), from *Ikchae nan'go* 3 in HMC, vol. 2, 546c–d: 我忠敬王以世子，率群臣拜迎于梁楚之郊。天下於是，覩遠人之悅服，知天命之有歸，是則弊邑盡忠於世祖皇帝者也. For similar cases, see Yi Chehyŏn, "Sang Paekchu sŭngsang sŏ" 上伯住丞相書 (Letter to Minister Bozhu), from *Ikchae nan'go* 3 in HMC, vol. 2, 545b–546a; and memorial by Koryŏ official Min Chi 閔漬 (1248–1326) in *Koryŏ sa*, 107.29a–31a. They failed to rescue King Ch'ungsŏn, who returned from exile only in 1323 after Yingzong's assassination and the Taiding Emperor's 泰定 (r. 1323–1328) proclamation of general amnesty.

32) John Duncan and JaHyun Kim Haboush, "Memorials to the Throne," in *Epistolary Korea:*

For these Koryŏ officials, the surrender was a source of political capital. Central to the rhetorical strategy of these later Koryŏ diplomats was casting Wŏnjong's act of "coming to submit before all others" (*shuaixian guifu* / *sŏlsŏn kwipu* 率先歸附) as a "meritorious deed" (*gong*/ *kong* 功). All subsequent favors Khubilai disbursed: royal marriage with his daughter, the Koryŏ king's elevation as a prince-consort, and Korean freedom to retain their "old customs" and "ancestral temples," were all in recognition of this deed. With the "edicts of Emperor Shizu [i.e., Khubilai] as a basis," Koryŏ's status as an exceptional space was guaranteed by past imperial sanction. To rescind this status would be to undermine ancestral authority.[33] As Korean historian Yi Ikchu has argued, invoking the "legacies of Emperor Shizu" (*Sejo kuje* 世祖舊制), provided the institutional basis for Koryŏ's political autonomy within the Mongol-Yuan empire.[34] Through them, later Mongol policies could thus be contested, the Koryŏ royal family protected, and Koryŏ's autonomy defended.

But what sort of accomplishment is an act of surrender? An argument from a position of weakness, the rhetorical effectiveness of this cornerstone of Koryŏ diplomacy derived from a familiar political trope in the construction of imperial legitimacy. According to the *Book of Documents*, the sage ruler Shun brought his enemies to submission, not through the force of arms, but by "propagating civil virtue," and attending to the rites of state.[35] The voluntary submission of foreigners and barbarians therefore demonstrated a ruler's resemblance to sage rulers of yore. The *Koryŏ History*'s account follows the contours of this narra-

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Letters from the Communicative Space of the Chosŏn, 1392-1910 (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 2009), 47–49; for the original see "Tae ŏn'gwan ch'ŏng p'a chwi tongnyŏ sŏ" 代言官請罷取童女書 (Letter Written for a Censor to Demand an End to Procuring Young Virgins), from *Kajŏng sŏnsaeng munjip* 8 in HMC, vol. 3, 148c–150a.

33) Yi Chehyŏn, "Chae Taedo sang Chungsŏ todang sŏ," 544c: 忠烈王亦躬修朝覲，未嘗少懈。故得釐降公主，世爲附馬，而不更舊俗，以保其宗社。繄世祖皇帝詔旨是賴，當其立天下各處行省，獨於小邦不置。"Dayu mo" 大禹謨, in *Shangshu zhushu* 尚書註疏, ed. Ruan Yuan 阮元 and Lu Xuanxun 盧宣旬, *Chongkan Songben Shisanjing zhushu fu jiaokan ji* 重刊宋本十三經注疏附校勘記 (1815), 4.52b: 班師振旅，帝乃誕敷文德，舞干羽于兩階，七旬有苗格。祖皇帝詔旨是賴，當其立天下各處行省，獨於小邦不置。

34) Yi Ikchu 이익주, "Koryŏ, Wŏn kwan'gye ŭi kujo e taehan yŏn'gu: sowi '*Sejo kuje*' ŭi punsŏk ŭl chungsim ŭro" 고려, 원관계의 구조에 대한 연구: 소위 '세조구제' 의 분석을 중심으로 - (A Study of the Structure of Koryŏ-Yuan Relations, Focusing on the Analysis of What is Termed "The Legacies of Emperor Shizu"), *Han'guk saron* 36 (1996): 1–51, esp. 22–48.

35) "Dayu mo," in *Shangshu zhushu*, 4.52b: 班師振旅，帝乃誕敷文德，舞干羽于兩階，七旬有苗格。

tive, but it is not content to let the Koryŏ heir apparent only reenact classical tropes. Rather than play a secondary role, merely confirming Khubilai's imperial destiny, Wŏnjong takes center stage by deliberately *choosing* Khubilai. Originally *en route* to submit to Möngke Khan 蒙哥 (1209-1259; r. 1251-1259), Wŏnjong learned the Great Khan had died while on campaign in Sichuan. A succession dispute ensued. His youngest brother, Arigh Böke 阿里不哥 (or 阿里孛哥, 1219-1266) remained in Mongolia to challenge Khubilai for the throne. At the time Wŏnjong was in the Liupan mountains region of modern Ningxia and Gansu, but instead of proceeding to Arigh Böke, who was closer, he traveled south to Khubilai. Though "all the feudal lords were confused, unsure of where to go and whom to follow," Wŏnjong, by being the "first" to submit to Khubilai, demonstrated to the world through his example the identity of the rightful heir. The Koryŏ prince, by purposely turning to, not Arigh Böke, but Khubilai, had, in effect, chosen the new son-of-heaven.

The *Koryŏ History* insisted Wŏnjong's surrender to Khubilai was by choice, rather than coerced. Although it was unlikely Wŏnjong had much independence in the matter, underscoring his agency here does more than demonstrate Khubilai's legitimacy.[36] It inverted both the usual sense of ruler-vassal relations and the trope of a sage emperor civilizing benighted subjects and distant barbarians. Elsewhere in the same account, the submitting vassal shines as a beacon of civilization and propriety. While *en route* to meeting Khubilai, Wŏnjong was invited by his Mongol handlers to bathe in the springs of Huaqing Palace. His refusal to do so earned acclaim for his "understanding of propriety." His reasoning, because it "was where Emperor Xuanzong of the Tang 唐玄宗 (685-762; r. 712-756) had bathed" and he though "a man from a different time," was still a "vassal" and "dared not sully its waters," seemed only to reinforce the terms of a ruler-vassal relationship. But something

36) Kim Hodong holds that this narrative of Wŏnjong's surrender was either a propaganda ploy for Khubilai to buttress his legitimacy or a later fabrication to exaggerate Korea's importance. Since Wŏnjong traveled in territory controlled by Khubilai's forces and under their escort, he could not have had the luxury to choose to whom to surrender. See Kim Hodong 김호동, *Monggol cheguk kwa Koryŏ: K'ubillai chŏngkwŏn ŭi t'ansaeng kwa Koryŏ ŭi chŏngch'ijŏk wisang* 몽골 제국과 고려: 쿠빌라이 정권의 탄생과 고려의 정치적 위상 (The Mongol Empire and Koryŏ: The Birth of Khubilai's Regime and Koryŏ's Political Position) (Seoul: Sŏul taehakkyo ch'ulp'anbu, 2007), 84–85; 91–92. See also Laurent Quisefit, "Les invasions mongoles en Corée" (M.A. thesis, Univ. Paris-Diderot, 1999), 80–81.

subtler is at play. Evoking the Tang tied his submission to a longer tradition, suggesting actions of the present day were to be judged in light of past models, thereby establishing the norms and precedents that would govern his relationship with Khubilai. The surrendering Koryŏ prince also anticipated Khubilai's reaction to his surrender by preemptively identifying Khubilai as a successor to the Tang. But even before Khubilai could make the same comparison, Wŏnjong

> ... adorned himself in a black-gauze headdress with soft-horned tassels, wide-sleeved robes of violet silk, shoes of rhinoceros horn, and an ivory tablet. He came to see [Khubilai] on the left side of the road, bringing his gifts of tribute. His visage was beautiful like a painting and his behavior was a model for others. His retainers lined up behind him, all wearing their official robes and arrayed according to their rank.
> 王服軟角烏紗幞頭、廣袖紫羅袍、犀鞓、象笏，奉幣迎謁道左。眉目如畫，周旋可則。群僚皆以品服排班于後。[37]

The Koryŏ prince and his entourage stand as exemplars of propriety. The finery in which they were clothed were not simply beautiful; carefully calibrated in color, material, and style, each item was legible only within a ritual discourse of "caps, gowns, ceremony, and institutions" (*yiguan lizhi*/ *ŭigwan yeje* 衣冠禮制), manifest in the sartorial regime of a civilized state.[38] These ritual adornments also hearkened back to a bygone past, a poignant display of the political traditions Koryŏ and the now destroyed Jin once shared.[39] The Koryŏ prince and his retinue, in a triumph, not of arms and strength, but civilization, overshadowed the conqueror Khubilai. It was witnessing *their* ritual display that inspired Khubilai to recognize himself as Tang Taizong's successor. Koryŏ's submission, far from passive surrender, became a self-conscious act to remind the future emperor of the path he ought to take. Rather than

37) *Koryŏ sa*, 25.7b-8a.
38) Remco E. Breuker, "Koryŏ as an Independent Realm: The Emperor's Clothes," *Korean Studies* 27 (2003): 55–58.
39) For significance of ceremonial garb see Evelyn Rawski, *Early Modern China and Northeast Asia: Cross-Border Perspectives* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2015), 194; Cui Guishun (Ch'oe Kyusun) 崔圭順, *Zhongguo lidai mianfu yanjiu* 中國歷代冕服研究 (Shanghai: Donghua daxue chubanshe, 2007), 57–58; Korean ritual garb at the time was likely based on Jin designs, see p. 104. The Mongols had adopted these institutions only to a limited extent by this period, see p. 105.

simply recognize Khubilai's imperial destiny, the surrendering Koryŏ prince, as a vessel of this tradition, cognizant of its propriety and embodying its ceremony, induced Khubilai to recognize it for himself.

Peaceful Conquest: Strategies of Cooptation and the Khan's Advisers

The significance of the *Koryŏ History* account extends beyond Korean and Mongol dynastic politics and into how Mongol rule should square with a preexisting imperial tradition. It is still of course possible that the account was retrofitted to cohere with the narratives used in Koryŏ diplomacy. A limited source base precludes a firm assessment of how the *Koryŏ History*'s narrative relate to the events of 1259, but situating the Koryŏ surrender in the political and intellectual context of Khubilai's rise, especially the rhetorical and symbolic transformation of the Mongol empire in East Asia into the Great Yuan, leads to a plausible interpretation.[40] For decades, Khubilai's Chinese advisers sought to recast their Mongol overlords as emperors within a native imperial tradition, complete with the rhetorical, ritual, and bureaucratic trappings of Confucian government. Wŏnjong's arrival could have been useful for demonstrating the validity of their ideas and programs, serving as much the political and ideological needs of these Confucian-minded officials as it did Khubilai himself.

Although defeated by Khubilai on the battlefield, his younger brother Arigh Böke was arguably the more legitimate contender. Like all preceding Great Khans, Arigh Böke was selected through a *khuriltai*, the congress of princes.[41] Khubilai, denied traditional Mongol modes of political sanction, was motivated to construct his authority in alternative ways. With his power base in northern China, Khubilai's regime turned to techniques of legitimation which had been defunct in the region since the Jin dynasty's demise in 1234. In 1260, Khubilai proclaimed the reign

40) John Dardess, "From Mongol Empire to Yuan Dynasty: Changing Forms of Imperial Rule in Mongolia and Central Asia," *Monumenta Serica* 30 (1972): 117–65.

41) Rossabi, *Khubilai Khan*, 46–62; without election through a general *khuriltai*, Khubilai and his descendants were seen as usurpers by other Mongol khans, with the exception of the Il-Khanate rulers. See Thomas T. Allsen, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2001), 24–58.

era of Zhongtong 中統 (lit. Central Rule) in the Chinese style, the first that any Mongol ruler ever used. In 1271, he adopted a dynastic title, the Great Yuan, and granted posthumous imperial titles to his deceased predecessors.[42]

Relations with Koryŏ reflect these shifts in Mongol political orientation. When the Mongols vanquished the Jin, they paid little heed to the diplomatic protocols governing interstate relations in the region.[43] Mongol envoys during this early period repeatedly offended the Koryŏ court through their (whether actual or feigned) ignorance of protocol.[44] There were noticeable shifts after Khubilai's accession in 1260. Whereas Mongol dispatches to Koryŏ had been written in a slipshod vernacular,[45] now Khubilai's envoys came to deliver an imperial proclamation written in literary Chinese by a former Jin high official named Wang E 王鶚 (1191-1274).[46] Some of them were well-versed in Chinese composition, pleasing Koryŏ courtiers by exchanging poetry in literary Chinese during the reception banquet, much as ambassadors from the Jin would have done in the past.[47]

Earlier Mongol rulers took little interest in adopting Chinese-style institutions, but Khubilai's advisers sought to frame Mongol rule, both in rhetoric and in practice, in terms of Han, Tang, and even Jin models. The Tang, in particular, provided a template for the grand goal of total unification (*hunyi* 混一), which eluded the lesser rulers of continental East

42) Herbert Franke, *From Tribal Chieftain to Universal Emperor and God*, 25-51.

43) Peter Yun, "Rethinking the Tribute System," 76–103.

44) For examples, see *Koryŏ sa*, 22.16b, "Kojong" 6.1219.1; *Koryŏ sa*, 23.3b-4a, "Kojong" 18.1231.12.

45) Gari Ledyard, "Two Mongol Documents from the Koryŏ Sa," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 83 (1963): 225–39.

46) For the edict delivered to Koryŏ, see *Koryŏ sa*, 25.10a–12a, "Wŏnjong" 1.1260.4. No example of Mongol dispatches in the latter style predates 1260. Notable is the sudden appearance of the language of tributary relations, which was absent in Mongol correspondences before Khubilai's accession.

47) *Koryŏ sa*, 25.12a, "Wŏnjong" 1.1260.4. Poems of Jin-Koryŏ diplomacy are collected in the *Hanyuan Yinghua Zhongzhou ji* 翰苑英華中州集, compiled by Yuan Haowen 元好問 (1190–1257). Among them are pieces by the Jin writer Wang Ji 王寂 (1128–1194), likely selected from the travelogue of his envoy mission to Koryŏ. The notes to Wang Ji's poems in the *Zhongzhou ji* mention a lost travelogue titled *Record of a Journey to the Yalu River* (*Yajiang xingji* 鴨江行記) attributed to Yan Zixiu 閻子秀 (dates unknown). Fragments of Wang's *Yajiang xingbu zhi* 鴨江行部志 survive in the *Yongle Encyclopedia*. See Chang Tong'ik, *Wŏndae Yŏsa charyo chimnok*, 347–60, esp. 348; Jin Yufu 金毓紱, *Liaohai congshu* 遼海叢書 (Shenyang: Liaoshen shushe, 1985), 2540.

Asia since the tenth century.[48] In 1260, Khubilai also dispatched his most famous envoy Hao Jing 郝經 (1223-1275) to proclaim his new reign era and to demand tribute payments from the Southern Song.[49] Having met with refusal, he was detained for fifteen years before Khubilai's envoys recovered him from captivity.[50] During this extended embassy, Hao Jing attempted to convince the Song that Khubilai possessed not only "heroic brilliance," "the hearts of [those] in the central plains," and "the support of many kings," but also sufficient "virtue and destiny" to be ranked among the great emperors of yore, notably Han Gaozu 漢高祖 (256-195 BCE; r. 202-195 BCE) and Tang Taizong. These comparisons obeyed the same logic of historical analogy as the *Koryŏ History*'s account of Koryŏ's surrender. The Han once ruled the lands of Korea. Later, Tang Taizong had tried, in vain, to reclaim them. Now, by succeeding where his predecessors had failed, he was destined to glories even the Tang could not enjoy. Since the Han and Tang possessed empires spanning the whole of the Sinitic cultural space, such comparisons implied Khubilai would not only emerge victorious over his younger brother Arigh Böke, but also achieve a "grand unification" by conquering the Southern Song and other lands beyond. Hao also underscored Khubilai's commitment to Confucian rule, demonstrated by "delight in gowns and caps" and "reverence of ritual and music." Such paeans embedded a less flattering assessment of Khubilai's predecessors. It was Khubilai, not earlier Mongol khans, who "founded a new dynasty in response to the times." Without Khubilai's appreciation for Confucian governance, they had fallen short of Hao's imperial ideal. Assuring the Song elite that Khubilai was fundamentally different from his predecessors and that they would retain their social station and cultural institutions might not have compelled surrender, but likely mitigated resistance to the new regime when the Song was finally conquered.[51]

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48) Morris Rossabi, ed., *China among Equals: The Middle Kingdom and Its Neighbors, 10th-14th Centuries* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1983), 5, 9–12; Timothy Brook, "Great States," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 75 (2016): 957–72.

49) *Yuan shi*, 157.3698–3708, esp. 3708.

50) *Yuan shi*, 157.3709.

51) Hao Jing 郝經, "Zai yu Songguo Lianghuai zhizhishi shu" 再與宋國兩淮制置使書 (Another letter to the military commissioner of Lianghuai), in *Lingchuan ji* 陵川集 (SKQS), 37.19a: 今主上應期開運，資賦英明，喜衣冠、崇禮樂、樂賢下士，甚得中土之心，久為諸王推戴。稽諸氣數，觀其德度，漢高帝、唐太宗、魏孝文之流也。 See discus-

Rooting conquerors in a local political tradition could make them more acceptable to those they hoped to rule. But invoking imperial pasts did more than legitimize Khubilai in the eyes of his would-be subjects. When Hao Jing mentioned the Xianbei Turkic emperor Xiaowen of the Northern Wei 北魏 (386-535), or compared Khubilai to the Jurchen Jin emperor Shizong 金世宗 (1123-1189; r. 1161-1189), both non-Chinese rulers who patronized Confucian learning and statecraft, he was suggesting this imperial tradition was not intrinsic to any one ethnic group or regime, but consisted of universal standards ready to be employed by any good ruler. As Christian Soffel and Hoyt Tillman have argued, this inclusive culturalism allowing for so-called "alien" rulers to inherit the Mandate of Heaven helped reconcile the exclusion of "barbarians" in Confucian political thought with Khubilai's ambitions. This reconciliation was a precondition, not only for Khubilai to be seen by Chinese literati as a potential sage ruler in the Confucian mode, but also for Khubilai's own acceptance of this political tradition.[52]

Khubilai's Chinese advisers, especially those, who in Herbert Franke's words, were of "vaguely Confucian" inclination, achieved only limited success when implementing "traditional Chinese ideas of statecraft into the nascent Sino-Mongol state in Northern China."[53] As only one contingent of purveyors seeking imperial sponsorship, they competed with other protégés in Khubilai's service representing a variety of political traditions, cultures, and regions. When one influential Chinese official, Wang Wentong 王文統 (1190-1262), was implicated in a rebellious conspiracy, Khubilai withdrew support for the initiatives he advocated, such as the revival of the civil service examinations and the compilation

sion in Christian Soffel and Hoyt Cleveland Tillman, *Cultural Authority and Political Culture in China: Exploring Issues with the* Zhongyong *and the* Daotong *during the Song, Jin and Yuan Dynasties* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2012), 143. For Hao's views on the Mongols vis-a-vis the Southern Song, see 146–51. For Southern Song subjects in service of the Mongols, see Paul J. Smith, "Family, Landsmann, and Status-Group Affinity in Refugee Mobility Strategies: The Mongol Invasions and The Diaspora of Sichuanese Elites, 1230-1330," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 52 (1992): 665–708; for office holding during the Yuan, see 699–707 and Jennifer W. Jay, *A Change in Dynasties: Loyalism in Thirteenth-Century China* (Bellingham: Western Washington Univ., 1991), 76–81.

52) Soffel and Tillman, *Cultural Authority*, 139–40, 143–44, 149–51, 153–58.

53) See Herbert Franke, "Wang Yün (1227–1304). A Transmitter of Chinese Values," in *Yüan Thought: Chinese Thought and Religion under the Mongols*, ed. Hok-lam Chan and William Theodore De Bary (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1982), 177–78, 157–58, 163.

of the official dynastic histories of the Liao, Jin, and Song dynasties. Imperial support only resumed decades after Khubilai's death.[54] During the rest of his reign, Khubilai handed the task of government to his *semu* physiocratic administrators.[55] Mongol adoption of what scholars have often called "Chinese" imperial forms, then, pointed less to a turn towards any cultural identity than the adoption of a set of political technologies. Seen in this respect, the imperial tradition was but one instrument for rule, even if its advocates invested it with intrinsic moral and cultural importance.[56]

It was here, in this dynamic of patron and purveyor, that associating Koryŏ and the Tang past would have been useful. While Hao Jing sought to alter his patron's self-perception by inducing him to identify as a successor to "enlightened" Confucian paragons, more relevant to Khubilai was their success as *conquerors*. Prompting Khubilai to identify with the likes of Tang Taizong, Hao Jing implied that he could achieve similar, if not greater, success as a ruler of a vast territory. As Hao Jing reasoned for Khubilai, since the Mongol empire had already surpassed the Han and Tang in size, it was only logical that Khubilai should exceed them in these arenas as well.[57] Inverting the usual causal logic implied by a process of legitimation, Hao did not so much provide a means to rationalize

54) Hok-lam Chan, "Chinese Official Historiography at the Yüan Court: The Composition of the Liao, Chin, and Sung Histories," in *China under Mongol Rule*, ed. John D. Langlois (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1981), 56–106, esp. 65–66.

55) Rossabi, *Khubilai Khan*, 179–84, 192–99.

56) Rossabi, *Khubilai Khan*, 136–41. The dynamic of patron and purveyor avoids the misleading view of interpreting Mongol adoption of Chinese imperial practices as evidence of "sinicization" (*hanhua* 漢化). Adoption of particular institutions and practices should not be conflated with cultural and ethnic transformation. This cultural essentialism misrepresents how political regimes in East Asia, whose elites hailed from a variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds, drew from the Chinese imperial repertoire in flexible ways. In fact, divesting the Chinese political and intellectual tradition of its ethnocentric elements was key for its adaptation by the Jurchens, Mongols, and Koreans, among others. For critique of Sinocentric readings of Hao Jing, see Soffel and Tillman, *Cultural Authority*, 147–58. For critique of Mongol "sinicization," see Ko Myŏngsu 고명수, "Chŏmjŏ sigi K'ubirai ŭi Hanchi kyŏngyŏong kwa seryŏk hyŏngsŏng – kŭ ŭi Hanwa munje e taehan chaegŏm t'o" 潛邸시기 쿠빌라이의 漢地경영과 세력형성 – 그의 漢化문제에 대한 재검토 (Khubilai's Management of Chinese Regions and Power-base Formation Prior to Imperial Accession: A Reexamination of the Sinicization Question), *Monggol hak* 31 (2011), 92–112 and Rawski, *Early Modern China and Northeast Asia*, 3, 7–9. For divestment of ethnocentricity in the Korean adaptation of Confucian statecraft, see Joohang Javier Cha, "The Civilizing Project in Medieval Korea: Neo-Classicism, Nativism, and Figurations of Power" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard Univ., 2014), 7–8, 46–55.

57) Soffel and Tillman, *Cultural Authority*, 139–40.

a conqueror's power than insist that following the models of imperial exemplars was what led to power in the first place. The catch was that these models provided not only templates for military glory, but also a whole cultural and political program.[58] By linking territorial ambition with the political traditions they espoused, Hao Jing and his colleagues slipped in their own priorities through a rhetorical Trojan Horse.

The Mongol ruler's realization of his imperial destiny through the comparison to Tang Taizong in the *Koryŏ History* converges with this rhetorical strategy. Since Khubilai's willingness to identify with his Confucian advisers' political tradition was key, the Korean surrender, as evidence of Khubilai's supercession of Tang Taizong, potentially showcased the efficacy of the political program they offered their patron. Although no surviving texts from Chinese writers at the time indicate that the Koryŏ surrender was employed explicitly in this manner, traces of how it suited the ideological program of Khubilai's Confucian officials do appear in the *Yuan History*. Shortly after Wŏnjong's surrender, his father King Kojong 高宗 (r. 1213-1259) died. Khubilai repatriated Wŏnjong with an armed escort, supporting his claims to the throne of Koryŏ. According to the *Yuan History*, these policies followed the proposal of one of his advisers, Zhao Liangbi 趙良弼 (1217-1286):

> Koryŏ is said to be a small country by the sea's edge and cut off by mountains, but Our Country has warred with it for twenty-odd years and it still has not submitted as vassals. A few years ago, their Crown Prince Chŏn [i.e., Wŏnjong] came to court when the Imperial Entourage was campaigning west. He has lingered in our country for two years now. We have provisioned him meagerly. There is nothing that would bind his heart [to us]. Once he leaves for home [to Koryŏ], he will not return to us again. It would be better to increase the provisions for his residence and treat him according to the rites befitting a vassal ruler. Now, when he hears that his father has died, we can surely establish Chŏn as king and escort him back to his country. He will certainly be moved by our beneficence, filled with appreciation, and be willing to accept the position of a subject. In this manner, we can acquire a country without expending a single soldier.
>
> 高麗雖名小國，依阻山海，國家用兵二十餘年，尚未臣附。前歲太子倎來朝，適鑾輿西征，留滯者二年矣。供張薾薄，無以懷輯其心，一旦得歸將不復來，宜厚其館穀，待以藩王之禮。今聞其父已死，誠能立倎爲王，遣送還國，必感恩戴德，願修臣職，是不勞一卒而得一國也。[59]

58) Franke, "Wang Yün," 177–81.

59) *Koryŏ sa*, 25.8a-9a, "Wŏnjong" 1.1260.3.

Though a minor concern, the subjugation of Koryŏ had long proved difficult.[60] Zhao's suggestion, which promised to secure cooperation from the Koryŏ ruler at minimal expense, was attractive, especially since Khubilai had other military priorities at the time. This strategy, seconded by the influential Uyghur Confucian official Lian Xixian 廉希憲 (1231-1280), also aligned with long-standing Mongol practices of cooptation by exploiting the opportunity to accommodate indigenous forms of authority for the empire's benefit.[61]

The Mongols sought to reorient the loyalties and aspirations of local elites, because they recognized military prowess did not always readily convert into political control.[62] Khubilai's predecessors, for instance, effectively decapitated the Jurchen Jin by eliminating the imperial family, but retained the service of regional military leaders.[63] At the outset of

60) The *Secret History of the Mongols* only mentions the Korean wars in passing. See Gari Ledyard, "The Mongol Campaigns in Korea and the Dating of the 'Secret History of the Mongols,'" *Central Asiatic Journal* 9 (1964): 1–22. Koryŏ's conquest was delegated to the Khan's underlings, whilst the Mongols focused primarily on the Jurchen Jin and Central Asia during this period. See Thomas T. Allsen, "The Rise of the Mongolian Empire and Mongolian Rule in North China," in *The Cambridge History of China, Volume 6: Alien Regimes and Border States, 907–1368*, ed. Herbert Franke and Denis C. Twitchett (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1994), 390–410.

61) *Koryŏ sa*, 25.9a, "Wŏnjong" 1.1260.3. Zhao Liangbi and Lian Xixian were steadfast political allies. *Yuan shi*, 126.3089, 159.3743–48. For Uyghur Confucians, see Michael C. Brose, *Subjects and Masters: Uyghurs in the Mongol Empire* (Bellingham, Wash.: Center for East Asian Studies, Western Washington Univ., 2007), esp. 122–25 for Lian Xixian.

62) D. O. Morgan, "Who Ran the Mongol Empire?" *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* (1982): 124–36. For territorial administration of northern China under surrendered Jin military officers, see Igor de Rachewiltz, "Personnel and Personalities in North China in the Early Mongol Period," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 9 (1966): 88-144 and Allsen, "The Rise of the Mongolian Empire," 360–62.

63) Cooptation altered gradually the composition of the Mongols, both as a military force and a political community. As Igor de Rachewiltz and others have argued, earlier conquests depended on the piecemeal surrender and collaboration of former foes. By the mid-thirteenth century, Mongol forces were no longer strictly speaking a band of nomadic cavalry, but a coalition of different groups, each providing distinct contributions to the conquest. They included the mangonel engineers of Central Asia who helped take Xiangyang, civil administrators of the old Jurchen Jin, and practitioners of esoteric ritual among the Lamas of Tangut Xi-Xia and Tibet. See, for instance, the case of 'Phags-pa in Elliot Sperling, "Rtsa-Mi Lo-Tsā-Ba Sangs-Rgyas Grags-Pa and the Tangut Background to Early Mongol-Tibetan Relations," in *Tibetan Studies*, ed. Per Kvaerne, Proceedings of the 6th Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies (Oslo, 1994), 801–24; Igor de Rachewiltz, "'Phags-pa," *In the Service of the Khan: Eminent Personalities of the Early Mongol-Yüan Period (1200-1300)*, ed. Chan Hok-lam, Hsiao Ch'i-ch'ing, and Peter Geier (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1993), 646–54.

their wars with Koryŏ, the Mongols demanded that scions of the Korean elite, including the heir apparent, be sent as hostages. Their incorporation into the *kesig,* the khan's bodyguard, was one way to integrate conquered elites into the Mongol ruling strata.[64] The Koryŏ court, however, viewed the arrangements to be demeaning, complying only in moments of duress. When the Mongols besieged their capital of Kaesŏng in 1231, Koryŏ agreed to send the heir apparent as hostage, but it reneged once Mongol armies withdrew.[65] To stall for time, Koryŏ later resorted to sending a lesser royal, Prince Yŏngnyŏng 永寧公 (Wang Chun 王綧; 1222-1283), as an impostor for the heir apparent in 1241.[66] The Koryŏ dispatch of the actual heir in 1259, and his later accession as King Wŏnjong, could therefore be seen as a successful denouement of this Mongol strategy.

Viewing these events as an example of the Mongol strategy of accommodation, while valid, does not adequately account for how Koryŏ's relationship with Khubilai's empire would unfold. The Koryŏ king was not the only candidate for cooptation. The impostor heir apparent, Prince Yŏngnyŏng, who had become a *bona fide* member of the Mongol nobility, was a viable alternative.[67] Indeed, the Mongols need not have turned to the Koryŏ royal family at all; neither was the continued existence of Koryŏ as a political entity inevitable. There were also prominent Koryŏ defectors such as Hong Pogwŏn 洪福源 (1206-1258) and, later, his son Hong Chagu 洪茶丘 (1244-1291).[68] Even as Khubilai supported Wŏnjong's claim to the throne, first in 1260 and again when he restored him to power after the *coup d'état* of 1269, Koryŏ's annexation remained a possibility. In 1271, Khubilai's advisers proposed using the invasion of Japan as a smokescreen to annex Koryŏ and place its territory under direct imperial administration as "prefectures and counties."[69] Others questioned

64) Rossabi, *Khubilai Khan*, 26; for the *kesig*, see Thomas Allsen, "The Rise of the Mongolian Empire," 343–45; for the hostage system as applied to Koryŏ, see David M. Robinson, *Empire's Twilight: Northeast Asia under the Mongols,* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Asia Center, 2009), 104–5.

65) Henthorn, *Korea: The Mongol Invasions*, 70; *Koryŏ sa*, 23.3b–9a, "Kojong" 18.1231.12.

66) *Koryŏ sa*, 23.35a–b, "Kojong" 1241.4; Henthorn, *Korea: the Mongol Invasions*, 104–5.

67) *Koryŏ sa*, 23.35a-b, "Kojong" 28.1241.04; *Koryŏ sa*, 24.25b "Kojong" 43.1256.04. See also Wang Chun's biography in *Yuan shi*, 166.3891-92.

68) *Yuan shi*, 154.3627–34.

69) *Yuan shi*, 208.4616: 莫若嚴兵假道，以取日本為名，乘勢可襲其國，定為郡縣。

the wisdom of the move, considering that Khubilai's forces were still fighting the Song. One official, Zhao Bi 趙壁 (1220-1276), reiterated Zhao Liangbi's position that protecting the Koryŏ ruler against his own subjects was the best way to ensure Koryŏ compliance.[70] In the end, Khubilai pursued a middle-of-the-road approach, annexing Koryŏ's northern territories but letting the Koryŏ king retain control over the capital Kaesŏng and the southern regions.[71] Mongol support for the kingship, then, reflected temporary expedients rather than steadfast commitment to his client.

The uncertainty of Koryŏ's future lends greater significance to Zhao Liangbi and Zhao Bi's counsel. Supporting Wŏnjong in order to "acquire a country without expending a single soldier" may have been an instance of *realpolitik*. Indeed, their counsel would appear bereft of ideological content, had it not resonated with other advice Khubilai received over the years, especially the kind tinged with irenic overtones offered by his Confucian retainers during military campaigns. The *Yuan History* credits Yao Shu 姚樞 (1201-1278) and Zhang Wenqian 張文謙 (1216-1283) for restraining Khubilai during the 1253 conquest of the kingdom of Dali 大理 (937-1253) in modern Yunnan.[72] Yao did so by relating to Khubilai the example of the Northern Song (960-1127) general Cao Bin 曹彬 (931-999) who conquered the Southern Tang 南唐 (937-975) "without killing a single person." Khubilai, swearing he could achieve the same results, was "congratulated" by Yao as follows: "The benevolence and wisdom of your Sagely heart truly are the fortune of the common people and the state!"[73] Zhang's biography relates a rather different episode. Khubilai,

70) *Yuan shi*, 159.3747-49.

71) *Yuan shi*, 208.4616: 前樞密院經歷馬希驥亦言：「今之高麗，乃古新羅、百濟、高句麗三國併而為一。大抵藩鎮權分則易制，諸侯強盛則難臣，驗彼州城軍民多寡，離而為二，分治其國，使權侔勢等，自相維制，則徐議良圖，亦易為區處耳。」 See also Ko Pyŏngik, *Tonga kyosŏpsa*, 208–16; *Koryŏ sa*, 31.28b.

72) For the Mongol conquest of Dali, see Rossabi, *Khubilai Khan*, 22–30; James A. Anderson, "Man and Mongols: The Dali and Đại Việt Kingdoms in the Face of the Northern Invasions," in *China's Encounters on the South and Southwest: Reforging the Fiery Frontier over Two Millennia*, ed. James A. Anderson and John K. Whitmore (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 115–19; Pae Sukhŭi 배숙희, "Mongwŏn cheguk ŭi Unnam t'ongch'i wa che chongjok kan ŭi sot'ong" 蒙元제국의 雲南統治와 諸 종족간의 소통 (Mongol-Yuan Imperial Rule Over Yunnan and Interactions Between the Various Ethnic Groups), *Tongyangsa yŏn'gu* 114 (2011): 115–54, esp. 118–26.

73) *Yuan shi*, 158.3713; 明日世祖據鞍呼曰：「汝昨夕言曹彬不殺者，吾能為之，吾能為之。」樞馬上賀曰：「聖人之心，仁明如此，生民之幸，有國之福也。」

enraged that the Dali ruler had executed his envoys, vowed vengeance by massacring the entire population of Dali. Zhang and Yao then remonstrated in unison to spare the people retribution better reserved for a single person. Following their advice, the Dali ruler was coaxed to surrender. He nominally remained Dali's ruler, though his domain was placed under Mongol administration.[74]

The two accounts of the Dali conquest are contradictory in their portrayal of Khubilai's temperament but are consistent in their service of a historiographical trope, where a virtuous official, through moral suasion, could influence the behavior of his ruler. Pared of its moral valence, this advice for Dali essentially anticipates the strategy Zhao Liangbi and Zhao Bi advocated for managing Koryŏ. Although the two Zhaos emphasized resource efficiency rather than the minimization of bloodshed, as was the case with Zhang and Yao, they all sought a negotiated surrender, a diplomatic conclusion to the war. Of course, the promise of leniency and the cooptation of local elites were long part of the Mongol repertoire of conquest. The hackneyed opposition between wise official and wayward ruler in these accounts, which Morris Rossabi sees to be a product of "Chinese myth-making," habitually overestimate the influence of these advisers.[75] But even if Khubilai did not necessarily prosecute these wars in light of received advice, their successes were nonetheless presented, both to posterity and to contemporaries in terms of the ideological rationales of his advisers.

As was the case for the *Koryŏ History*'s version of events, key to the *Yuan History* accounts was Khubilai's thinking that his conquests followed the footsteps of past imperial exemplars. At least rhetorically, the voluntary surrender of the Koryŏ royal house, along with the conquest of Dali, was used to burnish his image as a sage ruler. In 1266, Khubilai dispatched envoys bearing a state letter that hoped to use the pacification of Koryŏ to impress Japan:

> When I first acceded to the throne, I commanded my troops to withdraw from Koryŏ, because its innocent people had long suffered the ravages of war. I restored to them their territory and repatriated captives, both aged and young. The rulers and officials of Koryŏ were moved by [my magnanimity] and came to court [i.e.,

74) *Yuan shi*, 157.3696.
75) Rossabi, *Khubilai Khan*, 25–26.

> submitted to me]. Though our bonds are now of ruler and subject, we share between us the feelings of father and son.
> 朕即位之初，以高麗無辜之民久瘁鋒鏑，即令罷兵，還其疆域，反其旄倪。高麗君臣感戴來朝，義雖君臣，歡若父子。[76]

Promising that Japan would receive the same treatment, Khubilai and his envoys hoped to convince Japan's rulers to submit to Mongol suzerainty.[77] The Mongols also followed Koryŏ precedents in negotiations with the Trần rulers 陳朝 of Vietnam (1225-1400).[78]

In these cases, diplomatic overtures appear to have done little more than provide a *casus belli* for invasion. Some of these embassies, having failed to convince rival rulers to submit, were received as provocations. Zhao Liangbi, the same official who called Khubilai to support King Wŏnjong, traveled to Japan twice as an envoy, but was denied access to its Hōjō rulers.[79] After a failed invasion in 1274, another group of envoys fared even worse, and were executed by the Japanese. Khubilai retaliated with another failed invasion in 1281.[80] Overtures to Vietnam were initially promising, but diplomacy eventually broke down with Trần court, leading to several Mongol invasions, all of which the Vietnamese repelled.[81] In the Song, the force of arms triumphed where diplomacy had failed. Even so, during the final campaign against the Song in 1273, Khubilai supposedly instructed his commander, Bayan of the Baarin 伯顏 (1236-1295) to "become [his] Cao Bin," and conquer the Song without "killing a single person."[82] This rhetorical reenactment of Cao Bin's "peaceful" conquest of the Southern Tang certainly occluded a great

76) *Yuan shi*, 208.4625–26.
77) Fan Yongcong 范永聰, *Shida yu baoguo: Yuan Ming zhi ji de Zhong Han guanxi* 事大與保國: 元明之際的中韓關係 (Hong Kong: Xianggang jiaoyu tushu gongsi, 2009), 45–54.
78) Yi Ikchu, "Koryŏ, Wŏn kwan'gye ŭi kujo," 7–21, esp. 11. See also Laichen Sun, "Imperial Ideal Compromised: Northern and Southern Courts Across the New Frontier in the Early Yuan Era," in *China's Encounters on the South and Southwest*, 206–27, esp. 208–11.
79) *Yuan shi*, 159.3743-46.
80) According to the *Yuan History*, most of the ships were destroyed in a storm. The commanding officers abandoned the surviving men. Those who did not die fighting were massacred or enslaved. Allegedly "only three men" out of an expedition force of "one hundred thousand" returned to tell the story. See *Yuan shi*, 208.4625–30, esp. 4629.
81) Anderson, "Man and Mongols," 120–30.
82) For examples of this rhetoric, see *Yuan shi*, 8.156; 128.3127; 158.3713; 160.3759. Khubilai is reported to have made a similar request before the invasion of Champa in 1284. See *Yuan shi*, 210.4661.

deal of brutality.[83] For Khubilai's advisers and eulogizers, however, the fixation on conquest "without expending a single soldier" or "killing a single person" emerged not from a naive faith in the power of rhetoric, but from a desire to construct a particular kind of moral authority for Khubilai.

Hao Jing and his contemporaries presented Khubilai as a ruler whose actions could be interpreted within the framework of a preexisting imperial tradition. Common to their rhetorical strategy is an insistence that adherence to past imperial models could affect voluntary submission of other rulers and peoples. Situating Mongol rule within a local imperial idiom also transformed Khubilai from a foreign interloper into a dynastic founder, a veritable heir to the sage kings of yore. The usefulness of the Koryŏ's submission for Hao and his colleagues would have been less to legitimize Khubilai's rule or rationalize his conquest of the south, than to demonstrate in tangible terms the effectiveness of the political program they had advocated. It was to convince Khubilai of the merits of an imperial tradition and a form of government where men like them, masters of Confucian learning and Chinese letters, would sit near the apex. Ironically, it was the same tradition that Khubilai's predecessors had effectively cut off when they destroyed the Jin. As will be discussed in the next section, the Koryŏ court hinged its diplomatic rhetoric on making common cause with this project of imperial revival.

Koryŏ Diplomatic Letters: Recovering the Empire and Making Emperors

The appeal to the imperial past was never simply about the legitimation of rulership. Guiding Khubilai in the memory of past exemplars also opened a path for exhortation according to the moral and political standards this tradition represented. When Hao Jing portrayed Khubilai as having "already attained the lofty Confucian standard for a model emperor of China," he did so to remonstrate against indiscriminate slaughter.[84] Irenic overtones tinge Hao's writing, prevalent not only in his many lamentations of war, but also in these letters of counsel. Evoking

83) Chen Bangzhan 陳邦瞻, *Songshi jishi benmo* 宋史紀事本末 (1605 edition), 27.32–33.
84) Soffel and Tillman, *Cultural Authority*, 150–51.

the heavenly mandate to mitigate the violence of conquest, he wrote to Khubilai: "If Heaven bestows on us [the empire], there would be no need to kill people; if Heaven does not bestow it, what benefit could killing people bring?"[85] In this rhetorical strategy for constraining monarchical power, rulers are raised on a pedestal of imperial majesty only to make them unable to descend from the heights of its lofty ideals. In theory, if Khubilai could be made to identify with a particular imperial tradition, then his actions and desires could likewise be restrained through appeals to it.[86]

But it was not only his Chinese advisers who tried to lead their conquerors captive. Korean diplomats, in their efforts to mitigate the devastation of the Mongol invasions, had long attempted to do the same. A similar rhetorical strategy could be gleaned from Koryŏ diplomatic missives from the era. Resonances between Koryŏ narratives of surrender and the policies advanced by Khubilai's Confucian officials, then, were far from coincidental. They both were part of an unfolding of a decades-long project of co-construction, where subjugated groups attempted to impose their own notions of political order upon their erstwhile overlords.

Koryŏ had in fact cast Mongol rulers as Confucian emperors long before Khubilai's accession. In the wake of renewed Mongol aggression after 1235, the Koryŏ court dispatched envoys bearing missives to the Mongols in 1238 and 1239. The Koryŏ envoy from 1238 bore a diplomatic memorial (*biaojian / p'yojŏn* 表箋) recognizing Ögödei Khan as an emperor in the Confucian mode. Written on behalf of the Koryŏ ruler by his renowned minister Yi Kyubo 李奎報 (1168-1241), this document followed the rhetorical conventions and stylistic format of earlier memorials written to the Jin court. As such, it signaled to the Mongols that Koryŏ was ready to accord to them whatever prerogatives their predecessors once enjoyed, with the expectation that the Mongols too inhabit the imperial roles modeled for them by the sages of yore.[87] This message,

85) Hao Jing, "Ban shi yi" 班師議, *Lingchuan ji*, 32.41a: 若天與我，不必殺人，若天弗與，殺人何益？Translation based on Soffel and Tillman, *Cultural Authority*, 142–43.

86) Wang, "Co-constructing empire in early Chosŏn Korea," 49–52.

87) Yi Kyubo 李奎報, *Tongguk Yi Sangguk chŏnjip* 東國李相國全集 (Complete Works of Minister Yi of the Eastern Kingdom), 28, in HMC, vol.1, 583a-c, 584b, and esp. 588b, 594b. For further discussion, see Sixiang Wang, "Co-constructing empire in early Chosŏn Korea," 88–96.

however, would have been literally lost in translation without a mediator who was steeped in the same literary and political tradition.

The true audience for the memorial was not the illiterate Ögödei.[88] Instead, it was his minister, Yelü Chucai 耶律楚材 (1189-1243), a former Jin official who had administered northern China for the Mongols.[89] Only with the mediation of someone like Yelü could these concepts of rulership have been meaningful to Ögödei, for whom the traditions and symbols of a regime he just destroyed would have meant little. As part of its strategy of negotiation, the Korean court exploited political fractures within the Mongol empire's ruling echelons. It pursued multiple channels of communication, appealing to the Mongol general in charge of the Koryŏ campaign to restrain his armies on the one hand, while trying to entice the Chinese and Jurchen military officers in his army to defect to Koryŏ on the other.[90] In this case, the same envoys bearing memorials to the "Great Mongol emperor" 大蒙古皇帝, also delivered the Korean ruler's personal letters to Yelü Chucai.[91]

One of the king's letter to Yelü portrays imperial virtue, not as springing from the Mongol ruler himself, but generated from the efforts of Yelü Chucai. It was he the Prime Minister who "beautified the civilizing power of the emperor"[92] and took "the management of the four seas to be [his] duty."[93] Another letter to Yelü deployed similar tropes, claiming the minister "was pregnant with the [teachings] of the Duke of Zhou and Confucius." By "exalting the beauty of writing, literature, morality, and virtue," he "ornamented the civilizing power of the emperor," and had

88) Herbert Franke, "Could the Mongols Read and Write Chinese?" *Asia Major* 3rd ser. 1 (1952): 28–41.

89) Allsen, "The Rise of the Mongolian Empire," 372–81; Igor de Rachewiltz, "Yeh-Lü Ch'u-Ts'ai (1189–1243): Buddhist Idealist and Confucian Statesman," in *Confucian Personalities*, ed. Arthur F. Wright and Denis Crispin Twitchett (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 1962), 189-216.

90) Yi Kyubo, *Tongguk Yi Sangguk chŏnjip* 28, in HMC, vol. 1, 585a–586a; 586d–588a; 593c–594b.

91) Wuyungaowa, *Yuan chao yu Gaoli guanxi yanjiu*, 48–55.

92) 黼黻帝化, lit. "to ornately weave imperial transformation."

93) Yi Kyubo, "Song Chin'gyŏng sŭngsang sŏ" 送晉卿丞相書 (Letter to Minister Jinqing [Yelü Chucai]), from *Tongguk Yi Sangguk chŏnjip* 28 in HMC, vol. 1, 595a–b: 經濟四海爲己任。

"for a long time brought waves of pure winds and clear rhymes all across the four seas."[94]

Better treatment of Koryŏ became a natural extension of his efforts to civilize the world on the Mongol emperor's behalf. Hoping to acquire Yelü Chucai's support in lightening Koryŏ's tribute burden, the second letter apologized for missing the annual tribute, which it described as a "great violation of ritual duty." Underneath the veneer of deference, however, lurked a forceful critique, a message that Yelü could not have missed. It explained that Koryŏ's "people are diminished, goods drained" and its "fields lay fallow and uncultivated," because it was "the great armies of the Higher Country [i.e. the Mongols], arriving in quick succession," that devastated Koryŏ in the first place. Though the wording of the letter insisted the Koryŏ king now, having "committed a crime punishable by myriad deaths," expected "pity from no one," the juxtaposition of facts lodged a clear protest against Mongol aggression to Yelü Chucai.[95] In the following lines, the Koryŏ king returns to Yelü's erudition and commitment to cultural revival:

> But, Your Excellency the Prime Minister has mastered the classics of *Song*s and *Documents*, examined the *Rituals* and *Music*, loves literature and calligraphy, and has the rank of Chancellor; and so, how could the meaning of what the ancients have called "cultivating *wen* in order to bring over those from afar" not be nurtured within your heart?
> 但丞相閣下通詩書、閱禮樂、好文墨、位宰相，則其古人所謂「修文來遠」之意，豈不蓄之於胸次耶？

This appeal echoed a familiar theme in classical texts, elucidated in the *Documents* and discoursed upon in the *Analects*: the notion of "cherishing men from afar" (*rouyuan* 柔遠).[96] As stated in the *Analects,* if "men

[94] Ibid., 590c: 恭惟承相閣下，以磊落奇偉命世之才，際風雲之慶會，孕育周孔，吹噓堯［高］舜，擅文章道德之美，潤色帝化，發揮廟謨，使清風爽韻橫被四海者久矣。

[95] Ibid., 595a: 近因上國大軍連年踵至，故人物凋殘，田疇曠廢。由是阻修歲貢，大失禮常，進退俱難，以俟萬死之罪，孰爲之哀哉？

[96] The *Book of Documents* exhorted rulers to "cherish those from afar, cultivate those who are near" 柔遠能邇 as the first step to have "barbarian tribes submit in succession" 蠻夷率服. For these tropes in Korean diplomatic rhetoric, see Wang, "Co-Constructing Empire in Early Chosŏn Korea," 47, 110–11. See also James Louis Hevia, *Cherishing Men from Afar: Qing Guest Ritual and the Macartney Embassy of 1793* (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 1995), xi. See *Shangshu zhushu*, 3.43a.

from afar do not submit, then one [should] cultivate *wen* 修文德 (civil and literary virtue) to bring them over."[97] Again, the language of praise barely concealed a pointed critique. Implied here is that anyone with even a rudimentary classical education, let alone one with the erudition of Yelü Chucai, would understand that the submission of foreigners depended on the virtue of the emperor. Koryŏ could not be blamed for missing timely tribute; its intransigence only reflected the Mongol failure to "cultivate *wen*." Indeed, for the Mongols in 1238, whose empire was founded on martial prowess, the cultivation of "civil and literary virtue" as championed in the Koryŏ letter was at best an afterthought.[98] But even if the Mongols neglected "cultivating *wen*," Yelü Chucai, privy to the lessons of the classics, could not. It was incumbent upon him, the emperor's minister, to bring Mongol rule in line with classical injunctions. As the letter spelled out, the way to do so was to "explain well the pitiable situation" of Koryŏ to the emperor and convince him to protect Koryŏ by "allowing the remnants of its broken people, who survived by gasping with fading breaths, to become whole again."[99]

Yelü Chucai did not see eye to eye with his Korean interlocutors. The minister, in poems written to the Koryŏ envoys, posited a different relationship between military force and imperial virtue. For him, the Mongols possessed a "divine martial force," but delight in killing they did not, for martial prowess was meant only to "awe." Instead, with "broad compassion," they too "regretted raising troops over and over." Here, violence and benevolence were complementary forces, not antithetical. Their "soothing compassion" and "thundering martial power" rendered the Mongols "without rival," so it was only natural that envoys arrive "from the four seas to offer submission all the same."[100] Koryŏ's submission was foreordained by Mongol political destiny. When other polities, such as the Tangut Xia and Jurchen Jin, resisted, the Mongols annihilated

97) *Analects* 16.1: 故遠人不服，則修文德以來之。

98) Allsen, "The Rise of the Mongolian Empire," 375–78; D. O. Morgan, "Who Ran the Mongol Empire?," 133–35.

99) Yi Kyubo, "Song Chin'gyŏng sŭngsang sŏ," from *Tongguk Yi Sangguk chŏnjip* 28 in HMC, vol. 1, 595a–b: 以下國小臣可矜之狀，善爲敷奏，導流帝澤，更不遣軍興，保護小邦，俾孑遺殘民得全餘喘。

100) Yelü Chucai, "He Gaoli shi san shou" 和高麗使三首, in *Zhanran jushi ji* 湛然居士集 (SKQS), 7.14a-b: 神武有威元不殺，寬仁常愧數興戎；仁綏武震誠無敵，重譯來王四海同。

them. In Yelü's words, the Mongols "brandished their arms in Qinghai and extinguished the Western Liang," where the Tanguts once ruled. They also "forded their horses across the Yellow River and emptied the Southern Bian," the Jin's last stronghold. Yelü Chucai offered the Koryŏ an alternative path. If the Koreans were to submit to the Mongols, "envoy carriages," rather than armies, could one day travel between the two courts.[101]

A political apology for Mongol aggression, Yelü's rebuff to the Koryŏ emissary attempted to reconcile the tensions between his Confucian ideals and the ambitions of his masters. Though he promised war would cease and Koryŏ could be preserved, it is unclear from surviving sources whether Yelü Chucai interceded on Koryŏ's behalf. After Möngke Khan's death and Khubilai's opportunistic accession, Koryŏ nonetheless continued to seek useful allies at the Mongol court. The Koryŏ tried to acquire the support of Wang E, the same official responsible for drafting Khubilai's first proclamation to Koryŏ. The cause of cultural recovery again provided a convenient point of entry for Koryŏ diplomats. Penned by the Koryŏ official Kim Ku 金坵 (1211-1278), it left an impression on Wang, who lamented that he could not meet its drafter in person.[102] Kim Ku, writing in the voice of the Koryŏ king, praised Wang E's "paramount and incomparable talents." It recalled Wang's meteoric rise in youth as the very last *optimus* (*zhuangyuan* 狀元) of the Jin, and his abortive career, truncated by the Jin's demise.[103]

When the Jin capital-in-exile Kaifeng was captured by Mongol forces in 1232, Hao Jing's teacher, the famous Jin literatus Yuan Haowen 元好問 (1190-1257) presented a letter to Yelü Chucai. In it, he implored Yelü to rescue the men of talent in the city from imminent slaughter after the city's fall.[104] Whereas Yuan's writing elsewhere demonstrates what Stephen West describes as "a certain resignation to the dispersal of Chinese civilization," in his letter to Yelü, Yuan placed his hopes for a future

101) Ibid., 7.14a-b: 揚兵青海西涼滅，渡馬黃河南汴空；百濟稱藩新內附，馳軺來自海門東。

102) Kim Ku drafted many of the official dispatches to the Mongol court during this period. *Koryŏ sa*, 106.12a–14a.

103) For the letter, see Kim Ku 金坵, *Chip'o chip* 止浦集 (Collected Works of Kim Ku), 3, in HMC, vol. 2, 362b: 閣下以傑出瑞朝之才，首登黃甲之科，遭世中否，韜光待時。

104) Yuan is, in particular, famous for compiling the *Zhongzhou ji* 中州集, a literary anthology celebrating the cultural accomplishments of the Jin dynasty.

revival of Confucian governance on these individuals. While subtly chastising Yelü Chucai for shamefully "doing others' bidding," Yuan counted on the minister's commitment to civic restoration and cultural revival to rescue these men from certain death. In Yuan's words, when it came to restoring "ceremonial vestments and caps, ritual and music, hawser and rope [i.e., great principles] of government, [and] literary splendor," these men were Yelü Chucai's best hope.[105] Wang E was among the fifty-four Jin literati on the list.

Koryŏ diplomats were therefore not alone to invest Wang E's life with lofty purpose. And Wang proved deserving of both Yuan Haowen's assurances and Koryŏ's praise, for his role was instrumental in reviving imperial institutions at Khubilai's court. It was, however, not Yelü Chucai who brought him to the Mongols' service. Wang refused to serve the Mongols for decades out of loyalty to the defunct Jin,[106] changing his mind only in old age when Zhao Bi recommended him to Khubilai's service.[107] As a precondition, Wang demanded Khubilai allow him to perform belated final libations for the last Jin emperor, Aizong 金哀宗 (r. 1224-1234), who had hanged himself after his last refuge fell into Mongol hands. By performing these rites, Wang absolved himself of lingering loyalty to the dynasty he had once served.[108] As Koryŏ officials described it, Wang finally "encountered a Brilliant Sage [Ruler]" in Khubilai, and after a long hiatus from government service, "stirred to action at once for the sake of living beings," finally putting his extraordinary abilities to use.[109] After Khubilai became emperor, Wang became the architect of the rituals, ceremonies, and institutional organization of his new impe-

105) Yuan Haowen 元好問, *Yishan xiansheng wenji* 遺山先生文集 (SKQS), 29.1a–3b. Translation based on Stephen H. West, "Chilly Seas and East Flowing Rivers: Yüan Hao-Wen's Poems of Lament," in *China under Jurchen Rule: Essays on Chin Intellectual and Cultural History*, ed. Hoyt Cleveland Tillman and Stephen H. West (Albany: State Univ. of New York Press, 1995), 298, 282.

106) Wang E was also the author of the *Runan yishi* 汝南遺事, a chronicle of the Jin court's last days, which documents the dynasty's final destruction. Hok-lam Chan, *The Fall of the Jurchen Chin: Wang E's Memoir on Ts'ai-Chou under the Mongol Siege* (*1233-1234*) (Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 1993).

107) In addition to recruiting Wang E, examples of Zhao Bi's desire to promote Confucian learning abound in the *Yuan shi*. He tutored ten Mongol scholars in Confucian scholarship and translated the Song Neo-Confucian Zhen Dexiu's 真德秀 (1178–1235) *Daxue yanyi* 大學衍義 (*Elucidation of the Great Learning*) into Mongolian. See *Yuan shi*, 159.3747–48.

108) *Yuan shi*, 160.3756–57.

109) Kim Ku, *Chip'o chip* 3 in HMC, vol. 2, 362b: 今遇聖明，爲蒼生而一起。

rial court. In addition to personally drafting important edicts during Khubilai's reign, including those promulgated to Koryŏ,[110] Wang also brought many Confucian scholars under court patronage by reestablishing the Hanlin Academy. There, he delved into historiographical projects. In addition to editing the *Veritable Records* for the reigns of previous Mongol rulers, he also compiled what he hoped would become the official histories of the Liao and Jin dynasties to ensure that the Yuan be seen as their legitimate successors.[111] In the words of the Koryŏ king's letter, Wang E civilized the world with the "the inch-long tip" of his brush, "turning all upon which the sun and moon shines into patterns and words."[112]

Reminiscent of Yi Kyubo's letters to Yelü Chucai, the agent of the civilizing project described in this document was not the Mongol emperor, but Wang E the scholar-official. A different Koryŏ letter, addressed to a "Scholar Zhang," most likely Zhang Wenqian, also invested civilizing agency to the minister:[113]

> Long ago, Emperor Gaozu of the Han obtained the world on horseback. With martial gallantry, he subdued the various kingdoms of China, but rites and civilization were completely lacking. It was only when Shusun Tong 叔孫通 (?–194 BCE) created the court rituals and inaugurated Confucian learning did all-under-heaven realize the glory of the Great Han. How could the merits of your work, noble sir, be spoken of in the same terms as those of Shusun Tong?
> 昔漢高祖得天下於馬上，雖威讐伏諸夏，而禮文作之闕如也。及乎叔孫通制朝儀興儒教，然後天下咸知大漢之貴也。閣下之功業與叔孫通，豈可同年語哉？[114]

110) *Guochao wenlei* 國朝文類, ed. Su Tianjue 蘇天爵 (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian, 1989), 9.1a–4a; Chang Tong'ik, *Wŏndae Yŏsa charyo*, 71.

111) For the abortive historiographical projects and the writing of imperial documents in literary Chinese, see Hok-lam Chan, "Wang O (1190-1273)," *Papers on Far Eastern History* 12 (1975), 49–57.

112) Kim Ku, *Chip'o chip* 3 in HMC, vol. 2, 362b: 筆端膚寸，潤及萬邦，使日月所照，皆成文字。 For significance of *wenzi/munja* 文字 as "patterning" see James J. Y. Liu, *Chinese Theories of Literature* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1975), 21–27, 99–100.

113) Another possible candidate for "Scholar Zhang" was Zhang Daben 張大本, a functionary who was assigned to the Koryŏ entourage. Kim's effusive praises, however, would be disproportionate to Zhang's obscurity. See Wang Yun 王惲, *Zhongtang shiji* 中堂事記, in *Qiujian ji* 秋澗集 (SKQS), 82.3b.

114) Kim Ku, *Chip'o chip* 3 in HMC, vol. 2, 361d–362a.

Elsewhere early Han rulers were upheld as models for emulation by his advisers, but here, in the Koryŏ letter, the correspondence between Khubilai and Emperor Gaozu, implied by the comparison between Zhang and Shusun Tong, was clearly unfavorable to the Mongols. Their military success, like Han Gaozu's conquests "on horseback," amounted to little without the intervention of learned men like Zhang Wenqian and Shusun Tong. If Zhang's accomplishments in this regard surpassed even those of Shusun, then the Mongols were proportionally deficient in cultivation. By fashioning courtly rites, shouldering the burden of Confucian learning, and creating a proper state with legitimate institutions, Zhang Wenqian and others like him draped the most uncouth rulers in the robes of refined majesty.

These Korean letters, by shifting imperial agency from the Mongol ruler to the minister, tapped into the motivations of their recipients. One letter described Zhang as having "amalgamated broad erudition" and "elaborated the Canons and Counsels,"[115] so that when he "sounded the drum of civilization," its reverberations resounded and "all those with deaf ears in the world had suddenly been cleansed of their earwax and could hear the rumbling of thunder." Telling Zhang that now was a "once in a millennium chance to set aside the martial and cultivate the civil," it reminded him that Koryŏ's admiration owed entirely to his ability to convince the Mongols to renounce their warring ways and behave like proper emperors.[116]

These letters also aligned Koryŏ's preservation to the project of imperial restoration. Wang E's "natural disposition rooted in benevolence and justice" explained not only his commitment to restoring Confucian government. It also explained his "empathy with those in difficult circumstances," which motivated him to give aid to Koryŏ's tribute envoys by "compelling imperial graces to be bestowed" on them whenever "a baggage train of this small country arrives."[117] Recalling that Wang once

115) *Dianmo* 典謨 contains sections from the *Book of Documents* concerning the duties of a ruler. See Michael Nylan, *The Five "Confucian" Classics* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 2001), 123, 142–47, 149–50.

116) Kim Ku, *Chip'o chip* 3 in HMC, vol. 2, 361d–362a: 閣下以瑞世之才，遭遇聖明，陶鎔品彙、粉澤典謨，聲文章之鼓，使天下聾聵，如去耵聹、忽聞雷霆，此千載一時，偃武修文之際也。海外之引頸於閣下者，豈啻若鳳凰景星之一出耶？

117) Kim Ku, *Chip'o chip* 3 in HMC, vol. 2, 362b: 天稟根乎仁義，常以哀窮濟急爲己任。每小邦行李之往來也，款曲敷奏，導降宸慈。

said Koryŏ had "long received imperial transformation and roughly upheld Confucian airs," the letter contextualized Koryŏ's submission within a Confucian civilizing project. While thanking Wang for his gift of a copy of his *Zutang guangji* 祖庭廣記 (*General Records of the Ancestral Hall*),[118] it "relished that the [Confucian] Way shall spread to the East." With Koryŏ as both a recipient of "imperial transformation" and an example of its success, the letter suggested its preservation was integral to Wang's mission of cultural recovery and imperial restoration.

Koryŏ and the Project of Revival

Together with the Confucian-minded advisers of Mongol rulers, Koryŏ's diplomats and letter writers envisioned a political order that hearkened to the Han, Tang, and Jin past, one in which classical learning would be cultivated and the government of the sage kings be renewed. As part of this rhetorical strategy, they also cast their Mongol overlords as putative heirs of that same imperial tradition. These epistles also served Koryŏ's immediate interests, opening up a space of negotiation with officials who could intercede on Koryŏ's behalf, when its fate was still uncertain.[119]

What few sources survive prevent assessing the effectiveness of Koryŏ diplomacy relative to other factors. Certainly, Mongol strategic calculations and other contingencies (many of which are unknowable) played important roles. Nonetheless, Korean appeals still resonated with the notions of cultural recovery and imperial restoration, which feature prominently in the writings of Chinese literati of this period. While Koryŏ itself is mentioned only occasionally in their texts, when it does, it appears in specific terms: as a civilized country where the very institutions they hoped to revive still lived on. These convergences point at least to the *potential* effectiveness of Koryŏ's strategy.

118) The *Zuting guangji* was a Jin-compiled hagiography of Confucius and his descendants.

119) The Koryŏ letters credited Zhang Wenqian for "representing the reality of our situation in petitions" to the throne and protecting the Korean king from "slanderous words." See Kim Ku, *Chip'o chip* 3 in HMC, vol. 2, 362a: 前次親朝，伏蒙閣下多般庇護，以吾情實，委悉敷奏。由是皇帝特示恩慈，館我以華邸，慰我以雅樂，至於讒說，一皆禁沮. Another letter called on Wang E to help lighten Koryŏ's tribute burden. See *Chip'o chip* 3 in HMC, vol. 2, 362d–363b.

When King Ch'ungnyŏl arrived as a hostage to the Mongol court in 1261, he and his entourage were received by Khubilai's officials. Wang E, Zhang Wenqian, and Yao Shu were among those present, along with Wang Yun 王惲 (1227-1304), a younger associate of Yao Shu, who later became one of Khubilai's most important Chinese administrators.[120] At the time, he served as a scribe, documenting this conversation between Khubilai's representatives and the Koryŏ entourage.[121] According to Wang's account, the two groups struggled to communicate with oral interpreters, especially when the haze of wine took over. They soon dispensed with interpreters altogether and turned to brush-talk, which allowed them to delve into more exact matters of political legitimacy and Korea's history. Khubilai's officials were reassured that Koryŏ no longer used the Song imperial calendar. They learned the Wang rulers of Koryŏ were descendants of a Tang imperial prince who sought refuge in Korea (an apocryphal founding myth, undoubtedly embellished by the king's attendants).[122] Yao Shu also hoped that the Koreans were in possession of classical texts long lost in China. Though disappointed that Korean books were really "no different from that of the Central Plains," he did learn of Koryŏ's official examination system, which recruited civil officials through tests in composition and classical exegesis.[123]

These examinations must have piqued Yao's interest partly because their reinstitution had been a major policy priority for him and his colleagues. Since the Mongol conquest of the Jin in 1234, no such examinations had taken place in northern China for decades, and they would be discontinued after the fall of the Song in the south. During this time, however, the Koryŏ continued to hold examinations. Zhao Liangbi, for instance, once discussed the merits of the civil service examination with Khubilai. The emperor lauded the Koryŏ for "mastering the Classics and the Books, and the way of Confucius and Mencius" and derided the northern Chinese for only attending to *belles-lettres*. Zhao retorted that this deficiency was because there was no examination system in China, implying that if the emperor wanted to cultivate men of learning,

120) Franke, "Wang Yün," 153–93.
121) Wang Yun, *Zhongtang shiji*, in *Qiujian ji*, 82.3b–4a.
122) For myth, see Breuker, *Establishing a Pluralist Society in Medieval Korea*, 120–21.
123) Wang Yun, *Zhongtang shiji*, in *Qiujian ji*, 82.4a–b.

he should promote the knowledge he desired, as Koryŏ had done.[124] Such entreaties were unsuccessful; the Mongols only restored the examinations in 1313, after Yao Shu's nephew Yao Sui 姚燧 (1239-1314) managed to convince the Yuan emperor Ayurbarwada Buyantu Khan, Renzong 元仁宗 (1285-1320; r. 1311-1320), of their merits.[125]

Khubilai's officials, many former servants of the Jin, saw in Koryŏ a version of a Confucian political and cultural order they were fighting to restore. A hint of this identification can be gleaned from Wang Yun's writings during his first encounter with Koryŏ's diplomats. Wang was particularly impressed with the Koryŏ minister Yi Changyong 李藏用 (1201-1272). He noted Yi had passed the Koryŏ examinations as *optimus* at the age of eighteen. The Koryŏ minister, now sixty-eight years old, had a "face like a full moon, with hair and whiskers completely white and pristine," and could count knowledge of Chan Buddhism and poetry among his areas of competence.[126] Although Yi Changyong's writings do not survive, Wang's literary collection preserves one poem written to Yi, likely on this very occasion

恩波如海際天隅，	Waves of imperial grace, boundless like the sea by the horizon's edge—
一日京師識老蘇，	One day in the capital, I meet for the first time Old Man Su.
喜向巖廊瞻漢相，	In joy, in the cliff-stone halls, he [I?] gaze[s?] upon the Han Minister[s],
疑隨仙仗聽嵩呼。	As if in the company of a divine procession, hearing hallowed calls.
衣冠自是乘槎客，	The robes and caps belong to the raft-riding traveler,
文采還驚照乘珠，	Literary adornments only bring awe to shining carriage pearls.
共羨朝天蒙寵渥，	Together, in paying obeisance to Heaven, we receive the dew of imperial favor.
三韓秋色滿歸塗。	May the autumn color of the Three Hans [i.e., Korea] fill your journey home.[127]

124) *Yuan shi*, 159.3743–46.
125) John W. Dardess, *Conquerors and Confucians: Aspects of Political Change in Late Yüan China* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1973), 35–37.
126) Wang Yun, *Zhongtang shiji,* in *Qiujian ji*, 82.4b–6b.
127) Wang Yun, "He Gaoli canzheng Li Xianpu" 和高麗參政李顯甫 (Matching the Verses of the Koryŏ Counselor Yi Hyŏnbo), in *Qiujian ji*, 15.4a–4b.

Who is the true heir of the imperial tradition's cultural legacies in this poem: the Koryŏ envoy or the dynasty Wang Yun serves? This ambiguity emerges because the poem wavers between the two objects of its panegyrics, Yi Changyong who is compared to the Song scholar-official Su Xun 蘇洵 (1009-1066) and the imperial court where he is granted an audience as a "raft-riding traveler," that is a, tributary envoy. Turns of phrase such as "divine entourage" 仙仗 and "cliff-stone hall" 巖廊, as standard clichés of Tang court poetry,[128] appear utterly conventional in this description of a courtly procession, but formal imperial ritual had been implemented only very recently. The poem's invocation of the Han and Tang past thus binds ritual pageantry to timeless tradition, but conspicuously evades the subject of its novelty. The Koryŏ emissary's return with the "dew of imperial favor" authenticates the civilizing influence of an empire restored, but his "robes and caps" and impressive "literary adornments" were his own to begin with. What results is a tension regarding how the tributary envoy fits into a narrative of imperial restoration, compounded by the uncertain identity of the "Han Minister" in line 4. Wang's praise of Yi's erudition and literary prowess leave unclear whether it refers to the company of imperial officials or to Yi Changyong himself, another ambiguity which exists because of what Koryŏ *meant* to the project of imperial restoration.

Wang Yun, like many of the officials in Khubilai's service discussed so far, were all prominent members of a group of officials who hoped, in short to "perpetuate Chinese cultural values," complete with court rituals, bureaucratic organization, and rhetorical trappings of imperial rule.[129] Only some of them, such as Wang E or Hao Jing, could be considered *bona fide* Confucians, but they all lived and matured in the tumultuous years following the Mongol conquest of northern China and the

128) For example, Cen Shen's 岑參 "Feng he zhongshu sheren Jia zhi zao chao Daming gong" 奉和中書舍人賈至早朝大明宮, in *Quan Tang shi* 全唐詩 (hereafter QTS), 201: 玉階仙仗擁千官; Li Shimin 李世民 (Tang Taizong)'s "Zhengri linchao" 正日臨朝, in QTS, 1: 羽旄飛馳道，鐘鼓震岩廊.

129) Franke, "Wang Yün," 157–58, 163. This sense of restoration was later described in Neo-Confucian terms, but someone like Wang Yun better represents the dominant intellectual trends of the period. Theodore De Bary describes Wang as having bespoke a "Confucian statecraft largely unaffected by new developments in Neo-Confucianism," and "represented the political culture surviving from the Jin." See Peter Ditmanson, "Contesting Authority: Intellectual Lineages and the Chinese Imperial Court from the Twelfth to the Fifteenth Centuries," (Ph.D. diss., Harvard Univ., 1999), 92–108; Chan and De Bary, eds., *Yüan Thought,* 6–7.

collapse of the Jin.[130] Hao Jing was only nine years old when he witnessed the death of his parents and many of their neighbors when marauding soldiers set fire to their village.[131] Zhao Liangbi hailed from a Jurchen noble family, decimated during the Mongol siege of Taiyuan in 1218.[132] Yao Shu too had tasted the violence of these wars. He was attached to a Mongol army as an adjutant during its foray into Southern Song territory. After one battle, his commander had ordered the captured Confucian scholars and all other men of learning (including Daoist and Buddhist clergy, and doctors) to be buried alive. Yao tried to save the few he could, leading them to escape through a bamboo forest.[133] One grateful survivor gave him copies of the Cheng-Zhu Neo-Confucian commentaries.[134] The experience prompted Yao to leave office and devote his energies to these texts. When he finally returned to officialdom, this time to serve Khubilai, he expounded the importance of formalizing government through "secretariats and ministries" (省部) and ruling according to the "principles of sage rulers."[135] As former subjects and officials of the long-vanquished Jin, the ghost of the destroyed dynasty haunted their minds and hearts.[136] Against experiences of violence, personal tragedy, and a total breakdown of order, they sought to resuscitate what the Mongol invasions had destroyed.[137] The task at hand was to recreate a new imperial government that could continue to support the

130) Xiao Qiqing 蕭啟慶, *Nei Beiguo er wai Zhongguo: Meng-Yuanshi yanjiu* 內北國而外中國: 蒙元史研究 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2007), 125–31.

131) Hao's parents perished from inhaling the smoke. *Yuan shi*, 157.3698.

132) His father, older brother, nephew, and a cousin perished in defense of the city. *Yuan shi*, 159.3743–3746.

133) *Yuan shi*, 158.3711.

134) For this, Yao Shu is occasionally credited with transmitting Neo-Confucianism to northern China. Another figure credited with this accomplishment is Xu Heng 許衡 (1209–1281), also a member of Khubilai's entourage. See *Yuan shi*, 158.3719, 158.3726. For Neo-Confucianism, see Ditmanson, "Contesting Authority: Intellectual Lineages and the Chinese Imperial Court," 91–94.

135) Yao was recommended to Khubilai's service by the scholar Dou Mo 竇默 (1196–1280), whose life and career bear a resemblance to Yao's. Along with thirty others, Dou had been captured by the Mongols. His fellow captives were massacred but he managed to escape, only to find that most of his family too had been killed, with only his mother surviving; *Yuan shi*, 158.3730.

136) Hao did not serve in official capacity under the Jin, but he was a disciple of the Jin loyalist Yuan Haowen. See West, "Chilly Seas and East Flowing Rivers," 299–300.

137) This was especially true for the coterie of officials represented by Zhang Wenqian. Xiao Qiqing, *Nei Beiguo er wai Zhongguo,* 125–26.

Confucian learning they took to be foundational to a stable and moral social order.[138]

Through these figures, Koryŏ's political survival was connected to their discourses. Some, such as Yao Shu or Wang Yun, had only cursory contact with Koryŏ envoys, but others such as Wang E, Zhao Liangbi, or Zhao Bi shaped Khubilai's policies toward Korea, especially the preservation of the royal house. Hao Jing stands as an exception, for no extant source suggests he was directly involved in diplomacy with Koryŏ. But it is his poem, the "The Koryŏ Lament" (*Gaoli tan* 高麗歎) that provides the closest Chinese parallel to the account of Wŏnjong's surrender in the *Koryŏ History*. It captures the link between Koryŏ and the recovery of the imperial tradition by identifying Korea as the repository of its cultural legacies on the one hand and empathizing with it as a victim to a common tragedy at the hands of the Mongols on the other:

高麗立國千餘年，	Koryŏ, a kingdom established for over a thousand years,
跨山連海東北偏，	Extends over mountains and reaches the sea, covering the northeast.
文物制度慕漢唐，	Its civilization and institutions all aspire to the Han and Tang,
衣冠禮樂如中原。	Its gowns and caps, rituals and music are just like those of the Central Plains.
曾蹶煬帝困太宗，	They once stopped Sui Yangdi and entrapped Tang Taizong,
拒險守要尤精雄，	Holding the passes and guarding strategic points, especially valorous.
瞰臨遼碣飲鴨綠，	Overlooking the Liao River and Jie Rock, they drank from the Yalu River,
風颶轉出東海東。	But strong winds swirled forth from east of the Eastern Sea;
自被天兵都破碎，	And since then they have been shattered by the Celestial Troops.
稱臣納質兵弗退，	They submitted as vassals and sent hostages, but the soldiers did not retreat;
殘滅虜掠五十年，	Destroyed, extinguished, pillaged, and plundered for fifty years,
窮蹙無聊竟何罪。	Put to such dire straits, with no way to live—what was their crime?

138) John D. Langlois, "Law, Statecraft, and the Spring and Autumn Annals in Yüan Political Thought," in *Yüan Thought*, 102–9.

盡將生口賣幽燕，	The whole of their people was sold to slavery in the lands of You and Yan [i.e., modern Hebei],
年年探借高麗錢，	And every year Koryŏ was exploited of its wealth.
肌膚玉雪髮雲霧，	Their skin [pale] as snow or jade, their hair of cloud tresses,
羅列人肆真可憐。	Put out on display as human-chattel, truly a pity!
前年令公輔太子，	The year before last, when their Prime Minister came with the Crown Prince,
釣魚山前見天子，	And saw the Son-of-heaven [i.e., Khubilai] at the foot of Angling Mountain,
掩面過市眾皆哭，	They covered their faces, moving through the markets, all in tears,
哭聲痛入燕人耳。	The sounds of weeping brought pain to all the people of Yan [i.e., Khubilai's capital, Dadu],
幾回事宋事遼金，	All those times they had served the Song, and served the Liao and Jin,
不似今番冤苦深，	There was no bitterness as deep as this!
甘心曲股渾不信，	I would with all my heart, bend my thighs, in total disbelief,
要把高麗都殺盡。	That we really are going to kill off everyone in Koryŏ,
嗚呼哀哉，	Alas, oh how terrible!
何時免此殺戮運。	When will they be able to avoid this murderous fate.[139]

The juxtaposition of Koryŏ's cultural attainments with the devastation of war recalls familiar irenic and revivalist themes, so pronounced in Hao's life and work. Here, his sympathies turn to Koryŏ as he laments the suffering of its people. Though originally blameless, their country had been plundered by faithless Mongols, the "Celestial Troops," even after it had offered submission. Now, survivors were sold as chattel, their pitiable wails stirring all those who witnessed their plight. Augmenting their tragedy was that Koryŏ shared the culture of the "Central Plains" and the tradition of the Han and Tang. Though they preserved their independence for a millennium, they and the civilization they enjoyed now faced annihilation.

This meditation on history, like the *Koryŏ History*'s account of Wŏnjong's surrender, connects the Korean surrender with the imperial past. It does so not to glorify Khubilai, but to condemn Mongol depredations and their violation of precedents established in Koryŏ's dealings

139) Hao Jing, *Lingchuan ji*, 10.60b–61a; see notes in Chang Tong'ik, *Wŏndae yŏsa charyo chimnok*, 45–46.

with the Song, Liao, and Jin. Hao Jing, who in his other writings depicted Khubilai as a Sage Emperor surpassing his predecessors, now saw him as falling short of those ideals. It would appear that Hao Jing, a loyal servant of Khubilai's court, was complicit in the very actions he condemned, but he would have seen his position differently. Hao, like his colleagues, hoped that by appealing to the examples of paragon rulers of the past, Khubilai could be enjoined to rule in their mold.

Conclusion

Koryŏ survived not only absorption into the Mongol-Yuan empire but also its subsequent collapse. The same could not be said for other polities in East Asia who laid claim to a shared imperial tradition. The Jin, Western Liao 西遼 (Kara Khitai, 1124-1218), Xia 夏 (1038-1227), Dali, and Song effectively disappeared as political entities in the wake of the Mongol conquests. The successful cooptation of its royal house into the Mongol dynastic line was certainly one factor for Koryŏ's resilience. Its rulers such as King Ch'ungnyŏl, Ch'ungsŏn, and Ch'ungsuk 忠肅王 (1294-1339; r. 1313-1330 and 1332-1339) employed the trappings and the substance of Mongol elite identity to seek power and prestige within the imperial system, but ultimately their political strategy also depended on the institution of kingship.[140] By no means inevitable, its survival had as much to do with Mongol conquest strategy as it did with how Korean diplomats aligned Koryŏ *dynastic* interests with the political program of Khubilai's Confucian advisers.

The *Koryŏ History*'s account of Wŏnjong's first encounter with Khubilai Khan may very well have been a later Korean apology for his surrender, but it also encapsulated the rhetorical mechanisms that enabled this alignment. Surviving records from the decades around Khubilai's accession (roughly 1250s to 1270s) exhibit a strong resonance between Koryŏ diplomatic strategy and the political rhetoric of Khubilai's Chinese and Confucian advisers. It therefore matters relatively little

140) Yi Myŏngmi, "Koryŏ–Mongol kwan'gye wa Koryŏ kugwang," 119–88. Arguably, even King Kongmin 恭愍王 (r. 1351–1374), widely credited for his so-called "anti-Mongol" policies, implemented them out of concern for the growing power of other Koryŏ elites with imperial connections. As such, he was still eager to maintain links to the Mongol empire after he purged his rivals. See Robinson, *Empire's Twilight*, 220–52.

whether Khubilai had indeed found the Koryŏ heir apparent's surrender as an occasion to compare himself to Tang Taizong and a sign of his imperial destiny, because even if the khan did not, some of his advisers likely would have. The account of King Wŏnjong's surrender to Khubilai in the *Koryŏ History* presents a plausible retrospective, grounded in political discourses surrounding the project of civilizational and imperial revival unfolding in the mid-thirteenth century.

How Wŏnjong's surrender, which could have culminated in Koryŏ's total elimination, was transformed into a political resource also speaks to the skills of Koryŏ diplomats. Their maneuvering reframed how Koryŏ related to the project of imperial unification, a reframing which Khubilai's evocation of Tang Taizong also helped encapsulate. When the Tang emperors invaded Koryŏ in the seventh century, they, like the Sui 隋 (581-618) emperors before them, were motivated in part by irredentism. Koguryŏ, by occupying the former Han prefectures of Lelang and Xuantu, was a break-away local regime who had carved away the last corner of all-under-heaven, whose conquest was required to complete a "grand unification," a restoration of imperial rule to its former glory.[141] Koryŏ's connections to Koguryŏ and the imperial past may have evoked feelings of nostalgia among Khubilai's officials, but they were also liabilities, identifying it as a target for permanent annexation.[142]

It is against this predicament that the *Koryŏ History*'s narrative's significance should be understood. The narrative presented an alternative understanding of Korea's relationship to this imperial tradition and its legitimation. It converted the view that the Korean peninsula was the last piece of a unified empire to be reclaimed into the notion that Korea's peaceful and voluntary submission and its continued political existence augmented imperial authority. In short, the emphasis shifted from

141) Sixiang Wang, "Co-Constructing Empire in Early Chosŏn Korea," 379; For "grand unification" see Timothy Brook, "Great States," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 75 (2016): 959–63; 964–66.

142) Understanding Koguryŏ as a "break-away" regime remains a common view among some historians in China. The Chinese Northeast Regional Project elicited protests from the academic community and the public at large in South Korea when it advanced this view in their publications in the 2000s. Rawski, *Early Modern China and Northeast Asia*, 245–56; Mark Byington, "A Matter of Territorial Security: China's Historiographical Treatment of Koguryŏ in the Twentieth Century," in *Nationalism and History Textbooks in Asia and Europe: Diverse Views on Conflicts Surrounding History* (Seoul: The Center for Information on Korean Culture, Academy of Korean Studies, 2005), 147–75.

Korea as an object of irredentist ambition to Korea as a "legitimizer" of empire.[143] This shift had lasting reverberations. After the fall of the Yuan, the Chosŏn dynasty, Koryŏ's successors, extrapolated on these foundations in dealing with the Ming. Though they recognized the Ming rulers as universal emperors, they also claimed to be coeval heirs to a shared cultural tradition. These claims echoed the discursive strategies of Koryŏ's diplomats in their missives to Khubilai's officials, but also reflected broader Koryŏ-period innovations, namely the adoption of a state Confucianism that hearkened to a common classical well-spring.[144]

A narrative of common descent could ward off, but not banish, the specter of irredentism. Shortly after the establishment of the Chosŏn dynasty, tensions ran high between the new regime and the Ming. The first Ming emperor Zhu Yuanzhang 朱元璋 (1328-1398; r. 1368-1398) warned Chosŏn envoys that during the "Han, Sui, Tang, Liao, Jin, and Yuan periods, former emperors eagerly raised armies to invade whenever the rulers of the Three Han [i.e., Korea] committed even the slightest offense."[145] During the fifteenth century, when relations between Chosŏn and Ming were stable, Korean statesmen remained sensitive to the possibility of renewed imperial ambitions. The Chosŏn official Yang Sŏngji 梁誠之 (1415-1482), for instance, worried, even in times of stable and friendly relations, that one day, perhaps some "five hundred years from hence" another emperor of China "who loves vainglory and delights in triumph" might "abuse the force of arms" and seek to conquer Korea.[146]

Despite these concerns, the conversion of an irredentist narrative into one in which Korea's preservation became a mechanism for verify-

143) Even after Wŏnjong's surrender, Yuan officials proposed to annex Koryŏ, using the irredentist legacy as justification. *Yuan shi*, 208.4616: 高麗者，本箕子所封之地，漢，晉皆為郡縣。

144) Cha, "The Civilizing Project in Medieval Korea," 68–89.

145) *T'aejo sillok* 太祖實錄 (Veritable Records of King T'aejo), 14.2b (1398.05.14#2) (Kuksa p'yŏncch'an wiwŏn hoe 國史編纂委員會: http://sillok.history.go.kr, accessed June 8, 2018): 以此觀之，漢，隋，唐，遼，金，元，此數代，其主宰三韓者，纔有微釁，其前諸帝，奮然興師 ... 事雖往古，靜思兵禍，孰不寒心。

146) *Sŏngjong sillok* 成宗實錄 (Veritable Records of King Sŏngjong), 134.13b (1481.10.17#3) (Kuksa p'yŏncch'an wiwŏn hoe 國史編纂委員會: http://sillok.history.go.kr, accessed June 8, 2018): 在當今則或無事， 後五百年，則安知無窮兵黷武者乎？好大喜功者乎？ For Chosŏn *realpolitik* towards the Ming, see also Peter Yun, "Confucian Ideology and the Tribute System in Chosŏn-Ming Relations," *Sach'ong* 55 (2002).

ing imperial legitimacy provided a useful counterpoint. In 1476, Qi Shun 祁順 (1434-1497), the Ming envoy dispatched to Korea, wrote a historical meditation (*yongshi shi* 詠史詩) on the city of P'yŏngyang 平壤 in a poetry exchange with his Korean counterparts.[147] In recounting Korea's relations with past imperial dynasties, it decried the "barbaric" and "immoral" Yuan for having "swallowed" Korea's territories and infecting it with the "stench of barbarity,"[148] even as it celebrated the Tang's military triumph over the Korean states of Koguryŏ and Silla.[149] In contrast, the Ming surpassed both the Tang and the Mongols, because it brought Korea under the imperial fold, not with the force of arms, but through its civilizing power. Its magnanimity was so great that the Ming restored to Korea territories once lost to the Mongols.[150] In his responses, Sŏ Kŏjŏng 徐居正 (1420-1488), Qi's Korean counterpart, reiterated the superiority of the Ming for its "eastward flowing" civilization, but scoffed at the mention of the Sui and Tang invasions.[151] Their "abuse of arms" was the stuff of "laughing trifles," unworthy of comparison to the Ming.[152] Suppressing narratives of imperial irredentism then was at once also a disavowal of the Mongol imperial legacy and a refiguring of what the Tang had represented. Of course, despite their rejection of the Mongol past, it was during this period that the ideological and institutional foundations of Chosŏn-Ming relations were in fact forged.[153]

When the Qing emperor Hong Taiji 皇太極, or Qing Taizong 清太宗 (1592-1643; r. 1626-1643) invaded Chosŏn in 1636, he did not seek to annex Korea to his own territories. Instead, he followed Yuan and Ming precedent, using Korea's political submission to demonstrate both the legitimacy and inevitability of his imperial claims as a prelude to the

147) Qi Shun, "Pingrang huaigu" 平壤懷古, in *Huanghuaji* 皇華集 (1476 edition in *Siku quanshu cunmu congshu* 四庫全書存目叢書), 1.38a–39b.

148) Lines 25–28: 胡元不道圖吞併，分疆直抵慈悲嶺；西京內屬將百年，贏得腥風汙邊境。

149) Lines 13–16: 隋兵三舉空擾攘，可堪秘記符唐皇；金山得捷薛仁貴，浿水成功蘇定方。

150) Lines 29–32: 聖明德化覃八區，樂天字小古所無；鴨江東畔平安道，還入朝鮮舊版圖。 P'yŏngan Province was not restored to the Koreans by the Ming, as Qi's poem implied. It was in fact restored to Koryŏ rule by the Yuan.

151) Sŏ Kŏjŏng, "Ch'a P'yŏngyang hoego un" 次平壤懷古韻 in *Huanghuaji*, 1.39a–41a; line 1: 大明文化東漸海。

152) Lines 29–30: 隋唐黷武笑區區；聖代包荒今古無。

153) Yun, "Rethinking the Tribute System," 11–17.

Qing conquest and supersession of the Ming.[154] By the end of the Qing, Korea's relationship with imperial China had taken another turn. Amid decades of unprecedented Qing intervention under Yuan Shikai's governorship, alongside the resurgence of the specters of imperial irredentism,[155] many members of the Chosŏn elite were ready to extract Korea from the Qing's political orbit. After the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895, they celebrated Chosŏn's newfound independence from Qing domination,[156] sentiments which were ultimately co-opted by Japanese imperialism, resulting in Korea's annexation in 1910.[157] For Chinese intellectuals writing on the cusp of revolution, Korea's annexation symbolized the ills of imperialism, but at the same time, the Qing's loss of Korea's allegiance to Japan, its last remaining "tributary state," had become a synecdoche for the empire's dismemberment and the collapse of its traditional order.[158] The irony, of course, was that this narrative of Korea as the empire's legitimizer was originally a Korean production, used not to justify imperial dominion, but to guard against it.

Retrospective views of Korea's tributary relations with China's imperial past tend to conceive it not only as a product of Chinese imperial ideology, but also as its ideal manifestation.[159] What the Koryŏ surrender of 1259 and the narratives it inspired demonstrates, however, is something rather different. This formative moment in the history of Korean-Imperial relations emerged from a convergence of Mongol political needs, Korean diplomatic strategy, and Chinese Confucian agendas. In the process, the Koryŏ court, an erstwhile vassal, appropriated tributary discourse to negotiate its own political position. Most remark-

154) Yuanchong Wang, "Claiming Centrality in the Chinese World: Manchu-Chosŏn Relations and the Making of the Qing's Zhongguo Identity, 1616–1643," *Chinese Historical Review* 22 (2015): 95–119.

155) Kirk W. Larsen, *Tradition, Treaties, and Trade: Qing Imperialism and Chosŏn Korea, 1850-1910* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Asia Center, 2008), 15, 128–63, 164–73.

156) Andre Schmid, *Korea Between Empires, 1895-1919* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 2002), 55–100.

157) Yumi Moon, *Populist Collaborators: the Ilchinhoe and the Japanese Colonization of Korea, 1896-1910* (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 2013), 69, 139–41, 267–73, 283–88.

158) Rebecca E. Karl, *Staging the World: Chinese Nationalism at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 2002), 173–74; Larsen, *Traditions, Treaties, and Trade*, 272, 284, 291–93.

159) John King Fairbank, "A Preliminary Framework," in *The Chinese World Order: Traditional China's Foreign Relations,* ed. John King Fairbank (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1968), 1–20; see critique in Ji-Young Lee, *China's Hegemony: Four Hundred Years of East Asian Domination* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 2016), 6–8; 28–39.

ably, it intervened into techniques of imperial legitimation by casting for itself a pivotal role in the construction of imperial order.

Appendix: The *Koryŏ History* Account[160]

At first, Emperor Xianzong (i.e. Möngke Khan) was on campaign in the south and was encamped by Angling Mountain. The king (Wŏnjong, then Prince Chŏn) was traveling from Yanjing to attend to the [emperor]. On the way, he passed through Jingzhao, by the Tong Pass. There, the guards invited him to bathe in the hot springs of Huaqing Palace. The king refused and said: "This was where Tang Minghuang (Tang Xuanzong) had once bathed, although I live in another time, how dare I, a vassal, sully it?" All who heard this were impressed by his understanding of propriety.
初憲宗皇帝南征，駐蹕釣魚山。王自燕京赴行，在道過京兆潼關，守土者迎至華清宮，請浴溫泉。王謝曰：「此唐明皇所嘗御者，雖異世人臣安敢褻乎？」聞者嘆其知禮。

When he reached Liupan Mountain, he heard that Xianzong had died suddenly, whereupon Arigh Böke raised an army in the northern wilderness (i.e. Mongolia). All the feudal lords were confused, unsure of where to go and whom to follow. At that time, the Imperial Brother Khubilai was leading the troops south of the Yangzi River. The king subsequently turned his carriage south, and after many twists and turns, reached the frontier of Liang and Chu. [There he met] the Imperial Brother who was retreating north from Xiangyang. The king adorned himself in black-gauze headdress with soft-horned tassels, wide-sleeved robes of violet silk, shoes of rhinoceros horn, and an ivory tablet. He paid his respects to the Imperial Brother on the left side of the road, bringing his gifts of tribute. His visage was beautiful like a painting and his behavior was a model for others. His retainers lined up behind him, all wearing their official robes and arrayed according to their rank. The Imperial Brother exclaimed with surprised joy: "Koryŏ is a country of a myriad miles [in size]. Since the time of Emperor Taizong of the Tang, who personally led an expedition against it, it could not be subjugated. Now that its Heir Apparent has come to submit to me, it must be the will of heaven!" He then rewarded the king greatly.
至六槃山，憲宗皇帝晏駕，而阿里孛哥阻兵朔野。諸侯虞疑，罔知所從。時皇弟忽必烈，觀兵江南。王遂南轅閒關，至梁楚之郊。皇弟適在襄陽，班師北上。王服軟角烏紗幞頭、廣袖紫羅袍、犀鞓、象笏，奉幣迎謁道左。眉目如畫，周旋可則。群僚皆以品服排班于後。皇弟驚喜曰：「高麗萬里之國，自唐太宗親征，而不能服。今其世子自來歸我，此天意也！」大加褒奬。

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160) *Koryŏ sa*, 25.7b–8a.

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Abstract

The surrender of the Koryŏ crown prince to Khubilai Khan in 1259 heralded a century of Mongol domination in Korea. According to the *Koryŏ sa*, the official Korean dynastic history, Khubilai saw the timely Korean capitulation as demonstrating his superiority over the Tang emperor Taizong, who had failed to subjugate Korea by force. Although the account certainly embellished certain details, notably the voluntary nature of the surrender, this paper argues that it nonetheless captures an important dynamic between Korean diplomatic strategy and the political and ideological goals of Khubilai and his advisers. The Koryŏ court, hoping to ensure the kingship's institutional survival, portrayed Korea as representing the cultural and political legacies of the imperial past to make common cause with Khubilai's officials who sought to recast the Mongol empire in the image of China's past imperial dynasties. The convergence of Korean diplomatic missives, accounts in Chinese and Korean historiography, and writings by Khubilai's closest Chinese advisers on the themes of imperial restoration and cultural revival result in part from these interactions. Moreover, these interactions helped interpolate Korea into the repertoire of political legitimation, in which Korea's role was redefined from an object of irredentist desire, to a component in the construction of imperial authority

Résumé

La soumission du prince héritier de Koryŏ à Khubilai Khan en 1259 inaugura un siècle de domination mongole en Corée. Selon le *Koryŏ sa*, l'histoire dynastique officielle de Corée, Khubilai appréhenda la capitulation comme une preuve de sa propre supériorité sur l'empereur Taizong des Tang, qui jadis avait échoué à subjuguer la Corée par la force. Bien que ce récit embellisse sans aucun doute certains détails, notamment la nature volontaire de la capitulation, l'article montre qu'il éclaire néanmoins l'articulation entre la stratégie diplomatique coréenne et les objectifs politiques et idéologiques de Khubilai et ses conseillers. La cour de Koryŏ, dans le but d'assurer la survie institutionnelle de la royauté, représenta la Corée comme héritière des traditions culturelles et politiques d'un passé impérial, et partageant une cause commune avec les fonctionnaires de Khubilai qui cherchaient à

réinventer l'empire mongol à l'image des dynasties chinoises précédentes. Cette convergence idéologique se reflète dans les lettres diplomatiques coréennes, dans l'historiographie chinoise et coréenne, ainsi que dans les écrits des proches conseillers chinois de Khubilai sur le thème de la restauration impériale et du renouveau culturel. De plus, ces interactions ont contribué à insérer la Corée dans le répertoire discursif de la légitimité politique : son rôle s'y est trouvé redéfini non comme un pays irrédentiste objet de désir impérial mais comme un élément de la construction de l'autorité impériale.

提要

高麗世子於1259年向忽必烈的投降宣告了蒙古帝國對朝鮮半島長達一個世紀的統治。根據高麗正史《高麗史》的記載，忽必烈將高麗王朝的適時順服視為自己超越唐太宗的表現，因為唐太宗沒有能夠成功地武力征服朝鮮半島。本文認為,雖然該記載細節處顯有渲染之嫌，尤其是對於投降的自願性的描述，但它還是準確捕捉到了存在于當時高麗外交策略與忽必烈及其謀士的政治意識形態意圖之間的重要動態關係。為了保證王權的制度性延續，高麗朝廷將朝鮮半島描述為中原帝統的文化和政治遺績，以迎合忽必烈臣下將蒙古帝國重塑為中原帝王的正統繼承者。高麗的外交信函，中國與高麗的歷史記載，以及忽必烈的漢人親信在關於帝統復辟和文化中興問題上的趨同一定程度上正是這種互動的結果。此外，這種互動也促成了朝鮮半島被納入政治合法性的話語體系，使得朝鮮的角色從統一天下的征服對象轉變成塑造帝國正統性以及權威的一個構成部分。

Keywords

Koryŏ History, Hao Jing, tributary relations, Yelü Chucai, Mongol empire, Yuan dynasty, Koryŏ dynasty