The Impact of Korean Ambassadors' Encounters with Qing Entertainments, Focusing on Lantern Festivals, Fireworks, Plays, and Theater Facilities

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The Impact of Korean Ambassadors' Encounters with Qing Entertainments, Focusing on Lantern Festivals, Fireworks, Plays, and Theater Facilities

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This study examines how Chosŏn Korean ambassadors' encounters with Qing entertainment impacted their views of the Qing dynasty in China based on their travel accounts written during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. During diplomatic trips as ambassadors, select Chosŏn literati were able to experience new and exotic forms of foreign culture. This article focuses on Qing entertainments, including fireworks, lantern festivals, and plays, and related aspects such as theater facilities, that captured the attention of the traveling ambassadors. Through direct experience with Qing entertainments, traveling Chosŏn dignitaries gained first hand experience of Qing commercial and technological development. Some of these witnesses came to the realization that the Qing had become a successful ruling dynasty, which dismantled previously held assumptions by most Chosŏn literati that the Manchus were barbaric and uncultivated.

Keywords: *Yŏnhaengnok*, *A Travel Record to Yanjing*, Korean travel accounts, Qing Chinese entertainments, premodern Korean literature

KOREAN AMBASSADORS' VISIT TO CHINA

This study analyzes Chosŏn ambassadors' accounts of travel to the Qing dynasty written in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries that focus in particular on Qing entertainments. Due to their geographic proximity, Chosŏn Korea (1392–1897) and Ming (1368–1644) and Qing China (1644–1912) maintained a continuous relationship through their ambassadors. Considering that private foreign

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travel was strictly prohibited by the laws of both countries, ambassadors' travel to China was both a rare and valuable experience as well as a way of fulfilling the literati's intellectual curiosity about a foreign culture. The Korean ambassadors to the Yuan (1271–1368), the Ming (1368–1644), and the Qing (1644–1911) wrote accounts entitled *Accounts of Ambassadorial Missions* (*Sahaengnok* [使行錄]).[1] Most ambassadorial visits occurred during the Chosŏn dynasty (1392–1910), reaching 1,738 total visits.[2] The purpose of the official visits varied from presenting annual tributes and celebrating events such as an emperor's birthday to consulting about political issues in Chosŏn. During the Qing period, envoys' regular visits[3] fell into four categories: *tongjisa* (冬至使) was dispatched around the winter solstice, *chŏngjosa* (正朝使) was sent to celebrate a new lunar year, *sŏngjŏlsa* (聖節使) was sent to celebrate birthdays of the emperor and empress, and *ch'ŏnch'usa* (千秋使) was dispatched to celebrate the birthday of a crown prince. In addition to these regular visits, ambassadors were sent to China for special occasions, such as the birth of the crown prince or for state funerals. Visits to China varied based on political circumstances. For example, when relations between the Chosŏn and Ming dynasties were politically stable, Chosŏn ambassadors visited the Ming on an average of once a year. On the other hand, during the turbulent period of transition from Ming to Qing rule, taking place from around 1637 to 1648, records show that out of political necessity, Chosŏn ambassadors visited China three to five times a year to investigate the situation in China and its possible influence on Chosŏn.[4] During the turbulent early Qing period, the Qing court demanded that the Chosŏn court send ambassadors more frequently, in addition to regular visits, to report on Chosŏn's domestic circumstances. After 1650, when the Qing dynasty was more politically stable, the frequency of visits decreased to only one to three times a year. The Qing court used Chosŏn ambassadors to legitimize their rule and also allowed Chosŏn ambassadors to have more travel opportunities to witness first hand the Qing's political stability and economic prosperity.

Approximately four hundred ambassadors' travel accounts still exist, and most were written during the Chosŏn period. Due to the development of printing technology during the late Chosŏn period, many travel accounts remain available to scholars today. These records are valuable sources to help us understand Korea's political and cultural relationships with the Ming and Qing dynasties and the inspiration of Chosŏn literati encounters with Chinese culture and society.[5] Although ambassadors were dispatched to perform official state duties, they had diverse cultural experiences outside these duties, including enjoying various forms of entertainment. The Qing court welcomed ambassadors with lavish forms of entertainment not only to provide leisure for traveling foreign officials but also to stabilize foreign relations and showcase Qing prosperity.[6] Chosŏn envoys' travel records describe a wide range of observations on theater facilities, audiences, and various types of entertainments in both formal and informal settings, including magic shows (*hwanhŭi*, 幻戱), acrobats (*ch'anguhŭi*, 倡優戱), lantern festivals (*tŭnghŭi*, 燈戱), fireworks (*chip'ohŭi*, 紙砲戱), animal shows (*suhŭi*, 獸戱), and plays (*changhŭi*, 場戱). Chosŏn envoys used the words *chaphŭi* (雜戱) or

yŏnhŭi (演戱) to indicate various kinds of amusements they enjoyed in the Ming and Qing courts, markets, theaters, and streets. In premodern Chinese records, these amusements are often referred to as *bai hu* (Ch. 百戱).[7] The terms commonly include the word *hŭi* (戱), which indicates a fun activity. Based on its function of giving pleasure to viewers, this study finds that the term *entertainment* can be adopted as a rough translation of *hŭi.*[8]

This research is based on an analysis of the descriptions of Qing Chinese entertainments in unofficial travel accounts,[9] including *The Records of a Journey to Yanjing* (을병연행록) in 1765 by Hong Taeyong (洪大容, 1731–1783),[10] *A Diary Written at Rehe* (熱河日記) by Pak Chiwŏn (朴趾源, 1737–1805), *A Record of Travel to Yanjing* (燕行記) by Sŏ Hosu (徐浩修, 1736–99), and *A Record of Travel to Yanjing* (燕行錄) by Kim Chŏngjung (金正中, ca. 1791). I will examine nineteenth-century accounts from *A Record of My Mind* (心田稿) by Pak Saho (朴思浩, 1784–1854), *A Diary of a Journey to Yanjing* (赴燕日記) by an anonymous writer (ca. 1828), and *A Guide to Yanjing* (燕轅直指) by Kim Kyŏngsŏn (金景善, ca. 1788–1832). This study examines how the Chosŏn ambassadors' experience of Qing entertainments modified the prevailing view of the Qing held by most Chosŏn literati that the Qing were a barbaric people (*ho*, 胡) who had usurped power from the Ming by force and that Qing barbaric culture would not be worthy of recording.

The Chosŏn literati placed foreign countries in a hierarchical order and treated them accordingly.[11] From the early period of the Chosŏn dynasty, Chosŏn kings maintained a favorable relationship with Ming China. The Ming dynasty was placed at the top of the world order as "cultivated" and respected as the center of civilization.[12] When the Manchus, led by Nurhaci (1559–1626), established the Later Jin dynasty in 1616, Chosŏn kings and literati placed the Later Jin dynasty below the Ming dynasty and Chosŏn dynasty, regarding it as one made up of "barbarians." The idea of regarding the Manchus as usurpers and barbarians did not entirely disappear after the establishment of the Qing dynasty in 1636.[13] Chosŏn envoys' records convey their ways of understanding Ming and Qing Chinese cultures, and these documents are useful sources for examining Chosŏn political views of the Ming and Qing dynasties. Thus, the ambassadors' written observations of Qing entertainment culture must be viewed with an understanding of their geopolitical outlook. The following section will briefly review the political relationship among the Chosŏn, the Ming, and the Qing courts in order to shed light on how Chosŏn ambassadors' encounters with Qing entertainment affected their understanding of the Qing dynasty.

THE POLITICAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHOSŎN AND CHINA

During the Late Ming and Qing Period

Although diplomatic affairs were the main purpose of envoys' travel, and their records inevitably reflected envoys' political stances,[14] Chosŏn envoys who went

to the Ming in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries showed enthusiasm for seeing and learning about the culture of a great foreign country. During the Ming–Qing transition period in the seventeenth century, envoys' records on events and people in Qing China were largely overshadowed by the hostile Chosŏn-Qing relations. Envoys who expressed anger and sadness that the Manchus ruined the Ming dynasty were eager to find signals of the inherent cultural inferiority of the new Qing dynasty.

In particular, Chosŏn scholars' initially negative views of the Qing were shaped by two foreign invasions. During the sixteenth-century Japanese invasion of Korea (壬辰倭亂, 1592–98), Ming troops allied with Koreans in their defense and ultimate victory. The Ming dynasty's dispatch of relief forces to Chosŏn strengthened Chosŏn's respect of the Ming. The second foreign invasion, led by Manchu forces in the seventeenth century, culminated in a humiliating Chosŏn defeat. Thus, while the Ming were perceived as Chosŏn's benefactors, the Manchus were perceived as invading barbarians. When the Manchus succeeded the Ming and established the Qing dynasty, many Chosŏn scholars regarded the Qing as a country of barbarians who usurped power from their Ming benefactors.

In the wake of providing vital Ming military assistance to Chosŏn to defend against the sixteenth-century Japanese invasion successfully, respecting the Ming became the prevailing notion in the early seventeenth century. A primary example of how strong this pro-Ming support grew is the case of Prince Kwanghae (Kwanghaegun, 光海君, r: 1608–23)[15] of Chosŏn, who was overthrown by revolutionaries supporting the Ming. During his rule, Prince Kwanghae officially supported the Ming court, yet historical records show he did not actively support Ming forces in the midst of their war with the Manchu forces.[16] Moreover, official and scholarly opponents of the Chosŏn ruler criticized his lack of support for the Ming and stressed the necessity of honoring his allegiance to the Ming, particularly due to their military aid during the sixteenth-century Japanese invasion of Chosŏn. Prince Kwanghae was overthrown in 1623 by pro-Ming revolutionaries. The success of these pro-Ming revolutionaries in the overthrow strengthened Chosŏn's ties with the Ming court, and Chosŏn continued to honor its allegiance to the Ming even after its defeat by the Manchus.

Whereas Chosŏn officials and scholars had respect for the Ming, Chosŏn hostility toward the Qing was widespread after the second Manchu invasion of Chosŏn (丙子胡亂, 1636–37).[17] After Chosŏn surrendered to the Manchus, King Injo (仁祖, r: 1623–49) was forced to sever all relationships with the Ming, serve the Manchus by dispatching troops to fight against Ming forces, and offer the Manchus annual tributes. In addition, a royal prince and heirs of high officials in Chosŏn were sent to the Manchu territory as hostages. Houses and buildings in Seoul were burnt and destroyed. More than one hundred thousand Chosŏn hostages were forced to work as slaves to the Qing.[18] After the war, the Chosŏn court had to pay the Qing heavy tributes every year, including gold, silver, horses, soldiers,

and unmarried girls in accordance with the terms of surrender. Chosŏn officials and scholars were debating how to get revenge on the Qing. The ambassadors' records of the time provide information about the complex and conflicting political situation Chosŏn faced, both internally and externally, when the Manchus rose to power and the Ming lost authority over Chosŏn's territories.

Experiencing the Ming–Qing transitional period and the establishment of the Qing dynasty, Chosŏn Korea came to reshape its identity in East Asia. Jahyun Kim Haboush, in the *Culture and the State in Late Chosŏn Korea*, explains the reshaping identity of Chosŏn:

> Koreans saw the Manchu conquest of Ming China as nothing less than a "barbarian" usurpation of the center of civilization. . . . Korea no longer conceived of itself as a part of a larger civilized order, but as a lone entity whose survival as a culture required a separation from the larger, "corrupt" order that prevailed externally. . . . Cultural accommodation to Manchu ways was never an option. There was an overwhelming sense that Korea was the last bastion of Confucian civilization and that it should fulfill this mission in the best way possible.[19]

As the Qing barbarians conquered the center of the civilized world, the Chosŏn government regarded Chosŏn as the "last bastion of Confucian civilization,"[20] and King Hyojong (r: 1649–59) hoped to implement a policy of a northern expedition (*pukpŏl*, 北伐) to restore the old world order by subjugating the Qing. The Chosŏn government, however, needed to show a dual attitude during the transitional period, offering tribute and respect to the Qing when they visited the Qing court while planning to attack the Qing.[21] Following the Manchu invasion and the subsequent Qing-Chosŏn Treaty of 1637, Chosŏn ambassadors were dispatched to the Qing more frequently. Even after the Qing dynasty was firmly established, Chosŏn writers revealed their disrespect for the Qing dynasty in the titles of their travel records and their disregard for aspects of Qing culture. For example, Chosŏn ambassadors had usually titled their Ming travel accounts *A Record of Visiting the Celestial Court* (*Choch'ŏnnok*, 朝天錄), indicating the Chosŏn court's respect for the Ming and their emperors by demonstrating that the Ming court was a legitimate dynasty to which the Chosŏn court paid tribute. Yet Chosŏn literati were suspicious of the legitimacy of the Qing dynasty. The Qing travel records are largely called *The Record of Visiting Yanjing* (*Yŏnhaengnok*, 燕行錄), which only indicates the name of the Qing capital city and excludes terms of reverence toward the Qing dynasty and its emperors.[22]

Until the late seventeenth century, Chosŏn ambassadors often revealed their continuing allegiance to the Ming by proudly continuing to dress in Ming clothing and fashioning their hair in Ming styles during their travels throughout the new Qing territories. Some visiting dignitaries made Chinese literati feel embarrassed in unofficial meetings by asking their hosts' opinions on Chosŏn people's clothing,

thereby suggesting the Chosŏn envoys' denunciation of Chinese literati's Qing-style clothes.[23] The Chinese hosts who had to follow Manchu-style clothing and hairstyles under the Qing's rule often hesitated to answer such questions. Although several ambassadors maintained the prevailing derisive opinions of the Qing, some writers began to realize the Qing dynasty's dominance in East Asia after witnessing its national prosperity and strong defense during their travels throughout Qing territory. The first official who recognized the military power of the Qing dynasty and foresaw its dominance in China was Kim Chongil (金宗一, 1597–1675), who stayed in Shenguan (Ch. 瀋官) in Shenyang (Ch. 瀋陽) from October 1637 to April 1639 as a teacher of the Chosŏn royal prince being held hostage in Shenyang. Kim compiled *A Shenyang Travel Diary* (*Simyang ilsŭng*, 瀋陽日乘), which revealed his political perspective that the Qing dynasty had enough political and military power to rule China. He reported:

> Mr. Cho asked me after hearing my words, "I am confused. Are you saying that the Qing will overrun China?" I replied, "I don't know yet whether the Qing will rule the world, but it will be the barbarians who will ruin the Ming and disrupt the world. The governing of Qing territory is simple and has order. They strictly rule their army but are generous to the people. Once they hire someone, they fully believe in what he does. It is different than in Chosŏn, where orders are confusing and complicated. The Qing's current situation is what you might call 'No enemy under heaven.' How can one really be sure that they cannot rule the world?"[24]

Many older Chosŏn literati with vivid memories of the humiliating seventeenth-century Manchu invasion and defeat were less inclined to view the Qing in a positive light. Meanwhile, some younger officials tended to express more curiosity about Qing culture compared to their older counterparts and typically underwent a greater change of opinion after visiting the Qing territories. As the Qing dynasty's political power strengthened and more Chosŏn ambassadors visited the Qing in the eighteenth century, opinions among some Chosŏn scholars about the Qing began to change, although they did not lose their respect for the Ming.[25] Recent studies have shown that Chosŏn literati's hostile view of the Qing gradually weakened despite the fact that their respect for the Ming persisted. This weakening can be found from the records of Chosŏn envoys' meetings with Qing officials, who refused to take bribes and carried out the emperor' order properly; they were different from the greedy Ming officials who asked for bribes without shame and looked down on Chosŏn officials.[26]

The Chosŏn scholars were interested in the developed culture of the Qing and looked for ways to emulate and maintain it within Chosŏn. They also looked for a chance to experience Qing culture by traveling to Qing territory personally as Chosŏn ambassadors. Hong Taeyong, for example, expressed his desires to learn outside Korea:

> Generally, people are satisfied with doing only small jobs without knowing big ones are trivial. People who have narrow minds are satisfied with living in a small place without traveling to broader areas. Thus, Zhuangzi said that you cannot talk about ice with summer insects. You cannot debate the big Way with people from small countries. Even though our country is regarded as a small China because of its refined culture, the fields of our country do not exceed one hundred li and the rivers of our country do not run more than thousand li. Thus, our country cannot be the same as the one area of China.[27]

After some of these scholars were selected to travel to Qing China as ambassadors, their travel records were delivered to Chosŏn. The knowledge of Qing culture within these records influenced scholars within Chosŏn who sought a realistic and progressive way to increase national strength by emulating Qing methods, particularly by improving commerce and industry. The records contributed greatly to the establishment of the Northern Learning School (*pukhakp'a*, 北學派), which argued in favor of learning from the North (Qing). The scholars of that school valued industry and commerce as keys to establishing national prosperity. Influenced by Confucian tradition, commerce and industry had generally been looked down upon by Chosŏn scholars. Thus, the Northern Learning School broke with this tradition and emphasized the need to improve these fields in line with Qing policies.[28] Representative scholars of the Northern Learning School included Pak Chiwŏn (朴趾源, 1737–1805), who visited the Qing in 1780; Hong Taeyong (洪大容, 1731–83), who visited the Qing in 1765; Pak Chega (朴齊家, 1750–1805), who visited the Qing in 1778; and Chŏng Yagyong (丁若鏞, 1762–1836), who encouraged Chosŏn agricultural development in line with Qing practical knowledge. For example, Pak Chiwŏn argued that Chosŏn scholars were duty bound to enable the common people to flourish by further developing agriculture, sericulture, pottery making, and metallurgy. Pak also emphasized the need to develop commerce, which had been treated with disdain.[29] The accounts were circulated among Chosŏn literati and contributed to the call for the political reformation of Chosŏn, with the Qing serving as the model for its development.[30] In addition to describing Qing technological and economic advancements, Chosŏn envoys wrote extensively on entertainments as well. The Chosŏn scholars' interests in commerce and industry and their rich records on the Qing's economic and technological development reflected in Qing entertainments are related. More than merely leisurely acts, the entertainments performed as a mirror for seeing what the Chosŏn literati desired to see among the Qing, which may explain why some Chosŏn envoys visited luxurious theaters and saw plays during their busy schedules despite being bored during the plays. The following examination of envoys' accounts of Qing entertainment culture reveals how encountering entertainments affected their preconceptions about the Qing dynasty during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Chosŏn ambassadors' travel records recounted their broadening knowledge of and experience with various forms of Qing entertainment. The ambassadors determined that their experiences at the Qing court and public entertainments were worth recording and circulating amongst Chosŏn readers. Considering that Chosŏn public entertainment was not recognized as an orthodox art form,[31] this is an interesting phenomenon. As Chosŏn officials, the ambassadors may have felt responsible for investigating and recording their cultural encounters. Thus, the ambassadors may have felt less constrained in writing about Qing entertainments than in discussing Chosŏn entertainments. Furthermore, ambassadors may have been further compelled to record their experiences because of the sense of freedom during foreign travel and the exotic nature of the entertainments. The following section examines the aspects of Qing entertainment that impressed the Chosŏn envoys and how those impressions affected their prevailing notion that the Qing were barbarians.

AMBASSADORS' ACCOUNTS OF QING ENTERTAINMENTS

Although previous studies on ambassadors' travel accounts have tended to focus on the itinerary of the envoys' official missions and interests in commerce and technology, the sections on entertainment have largely been understood as mere personal accounts and observations on the Chosŏn scholars' exotic experiences. In this regard, recent studies on the Chosŏn literati's experience of Qing entertainments are noticeable. These new studies have largely examined the types and features of entertainments and Chosŏn scholars' understanding of the entertainments based on their individual and political interests.[32] Although previous studies have largely demonstrated that the records on entertainments were merely reflections of envoys' views of Ming and Qing China shaped by diplomatic situations, the current study reveals that the envoys' experience of Qing Chinese entertainment was in fact an active catalyst in modifying their previously hostile views of Qing cultures during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Ambassadors dispatched in the mid-seventeenth century rarely described entertainment while focusing on political events of the Ming-Qing transition.[33] In the midst of the turbulent political transition, ambassadors were probably treated to entertainments less frequently; they also may have found it difficult to have a peaceful mindset while enjoying entertainments.[34] Crown Prince Inp'yŏng (1622–58), for example, wrote a travel account while he was a Qing hostage, *A Travel Account to Qing China* (*Yŏndo kihaeng*, 燕途紀行), based on his experience in Beijing in 1656 during the period of political contention. Most of the prince's records were of political events. The records from this period often reveal writers' regret, sadness, and anger at seemingly unrelated events, such as encountering a beautiful landscape.[35] Records on leisure activities such as entertainment were few.

As Chosŏn envoys' visits to Qing China became safe and regular events in the eighteenth century, previous acute political tension between the two countries relaxed a little, and the mood enticed Chosŏn literati to visit Qing China to satisfy their curiosity about Qing China as a foreign country. By the eighteenth century, when the Qing dynasty was firmly established, the number of records and descriptions of entertainments in the ambassadors' records increased significantly. The reason behind the increase was first attributed to Korean ambassadors' more frequent visits to the Qing dynasty and the popularity of entertainments in Qing China, which gave ambassadors more opportunities to see them.[36] Consequently, this paper considers Chosŏn envoys' views on the entertainment itself—considering Qing entertainments a subject worth recording—as the primary factor in the marked increase in the quantity of observations on entertainment culture.[37] When the Chosŏn ambassadors regarded the entertainments as merely a low cultural form, they either did not record the entertainments or made brief notes regardless of whether they personally enjoyed the entertainments or not.

Throughout the Chosŏn period, entertainments, especially public entertainments, were not considered an orthodox art form by aristocrats. The aristocrats hid their names on their written observations of the public entertainment witnessed throughout Chosŏn territories because enjoying them, which often involved observing expressions of antiestablishment ideas in a "vulgar" manner by lower-class performers, was regarded as indecent and even unethical for scholars.[38] Examples of the Chosŏn literati's overall ignorance on entertainments can be found in their Ming travel accounts. For example, Hŏ Pong (1551–88), who viewed Ming Chinese mask plays in 1574, only described their observations briefly and pejoratively: "Actors played with music while wines were served for us. . . . A type of play that was called miscellaneous plays (*chaphŭi*) were extremely strange and merely odd. Strange creatures were uncountable. I felt uncomfortable to see actors playing with swords and pikes during the play."[39] The focus of his records on the plays was to reveal his lack of interest, not to describe the play's features. Hŏ also expressed his contempt for magic shows, noting that the "[magic show] was trickery but we were deluded and could not figure out its deceptive tricks with our eyes. Thus we felt much shame when we are reminded of Fu Yi [Fu Yi's brightness to discern truth from false]."[40] Hŏ Pong's observations of his experience with Ming entertainment culture reflect negative opinions held against a low and unfamiliar cultural form. In this comment, Hŏ reaffirmed his identity as a Neo-Confucian scholar who did not seek pleasure from miscellaneous and vulgar things. He did not describe the shape and color of clothing, types of props, or their tricks as the eighteenth-century envoys did. Yet from the eighteenth century on, entertainments became popular subjects of writing, with longer and detailed descriptions, thus indicating that authors identified value in Qing entertainments that was worth writing about.[41] The entertainment enabled envoys to witness the Qing's economic, technological, and cultural developments, which offered them a fresh look at the place of the Qing in relation to Chosŏn.

THE QING DYNASTY'S ECONOMIC PROSPERITY AND TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

During their travels, the ambassadors had many opportunities to enjoy Qing culture in both formal and informal settings. They enjoyed many forms of entertainment, including magic shows, acrobatics, lantern festivals, fireworks, animal shows, and plays. At official welcoming receptions, ambassadors viewed various forms of court entertainment. The Qing court welcomed ambassadors with lavish entertainment not only to provide leisure for them but also to stabilize foreign relations and to showcase Qing national strength.[42] Performers in markets and on the streets also provided relief to road-weary travelers. Visiting dignitaries were exposed to more informal public forms of entertainment at their lodgings, on the streets, and in markets.

Theater Facilities

When Chosŏn ambassadors to Qing China enjoyed entertainment at both official and public venues, the level of sophistication of Qing theater facilities and well-behaved Qing audiences convinced many Chosŏn ambassadors of the Qing's economic prosperity and cultural development. Except for official Chosŏn amusements performed in pavilions, Korean popular entertainment was usually performed on a temporary and simple stage on the level ground with only a small dressing room for performers.[43] Visitors to Qing territories observed theaters of various sizes, individual professional performers, and acting troupes in cities and rural areas. Compared to the simple and relatively unorganized popular Korean theaters, Qing theaters were numerous and large, complete with capable professional managers present to maintain order.

The ambassadors visited many official Qing venues, or performance pavilions, in cities and rural areas[44] while attending various reception parties held in their honor. The records discussed herein demonstrate that the Qing court had many imperial gardens and pavilions in Beijing sizable enough for performances of large-scale entertainments. These gardens included the Yuan Ming Yuan (Ch. 圓明園) and Yihe Yuan (Ch. 頤和園). For example, Sŏ Hosu (徐浩修, 1736–99), who visited the Qing court in 1790 to celebrate the Qianlong (Ch. 乾隆) emperor's eightieth birthday, described the lavish decoration of the Yuan Ming Yuan and some customs of the court entertainments. In the case of Qing court receptions, envoys wrote how impressed they were to see that seats were assigned according to patrons' social status. When Sŏ Hosu enjoyed the play *Journey to the West* (西遊記) on August 1, 1790, at the Yuan Ming Yuan, Sŏ described the way seats were ordered according to patrons' rank in addition to describing the decorations of the theater, food offerings, and the emperor's gifts to spectators and performers.

> Ambassadors from Chosŏn, Annam [Vietnam], Namjang [Laos], Myŏnjŏn [Myanmar], and Taeman [Taiwan] sat in two rows. They faced east. The royal seat was on the north side of the file of rooms on the west. The emperor, who wore his ordinary dress and rode a sedan chair, came from an inner court. He passed a small northern gate in a file of rooms on the west and entered a pavilion for performances. Officials who participated at the court party went outside of the small southern gate at the file of rooms on the west and knelt down to greet the emperor. A three-story theater was located at the southern side of the pavilion. The third floor was called "The Pavilion of Clear Sound," the second floor was "Several Gates with Music," the first floor was "The Enjoyment at a Spring Platform." Music came from the theater. A performance started from five o'clock in the morning and lasted until one o'clock in the afternoon. The performance was *Journey to the West*, a drama about the Tang Buddhist monk Tripitaka.[45]

For Sŏ, the emperor's presence in the royal seat, the ordered seating of envoys from Asian tributary countries, the sophisticated theater buildings, and the delicate furniture and props were impressive demonstrations of the Qing dynasty's dominance in East Asia. Chosŏn envoys' witnessing the polite and decent Qing audiences drove some Korean envoys to expand their initial recognition, which had been limited to the economy and technology of the Qing, to the Qing people and their customs.[46] Not only at the theaters, but also at the imperial gardens, envoys were impressed by public theater facilities, as Hong Taeyong's description of the flourishing Qing theaters in Beijing demonstrates:

> The theater is comprised of fifteen rooms and the stage was built against the east wall. There were three dressing rooms that were closed off by silk curtains, and this was for performers to put on makeup. On both sides of the rooms, a silk screen was hung where performers go in and out. On the other side of the screens, two high steps were set and five or six musicians would sit on the platform. There were various musical instruments such as bamboo flutes, lutes, and big and small drums. Below the stairs, there were six or seven rooms surrounded by a delicate rail on three sides. Inside the rooms, silk carpets and various pieces of furniture were decorated for the performers' acts. There were two hanging boards. On the boards, there were two aphorisms: "Their appearance is like jade and voices are like gold" and "Embellishment is great." Around the stages, colorful lanterns were hanging. Some glass lanterns were round, and some are long. The lanterns had different colors.[47]

The writers first marveled at the Qing's wealth and ability to build and maintain so many sophisticated theaters. They then recognized the Qing as culturally advanced because the well-maintained theaters reflected the audiences' proper etiquette during performances. For instance, Pak Saho (朴思浩), who visited the Qing in 1828, enjoyed performances at Liulichang (Ch. 琉璃廠), the Yu he guan (Ch. 玉河館), and the Yuan Ming Yuan (Ch. 圓明園). He focused on the

well-behaved audiences as well as the large three-story theater building in Liulichang:

> The theater was a three-story building. The third floor was surrounded by a rail and the first floor was supported by long crossbars. The crossbars crossed one another like fish scales. The stage was set in the second floor. A dressing room was set behind the stage. In the dressing room, there were various stage properties. Performers went in and out from the dressing room during each play. When one performance concluded, another one followed. There was a small gate outside where a cashier collected money from entering patrons. A patron who paid a lot for his seat sits upstairs and one who paid less sits downstairs. There were no disturbances among patrons while being seated. Even when a person went in and out and left his seat, he still had his own seat when he returned. When all seats both upstairs and downstairs were occupied, the theater manager did not let more people enter the theater. The theater had its regulations and patrons observed them. While audience members enjoyed performances all day long, they ate fruits, candies, and other appetizers, along with wine. Chinese people had their own discipline even in a theater. This is worth learning.[48]

Pak Saho paid special attention to the audiences, thereby implying that Chosŏn audiences lacked order and discipline in comparison. Some ambassadors showed a bolder attitude by comparing the audiences of Qing China to those of Chosŏn Korea to reveal the inferiority of the latter. For instance, when Kim Kyŏngsŏn observed the well-behaved Qing audiences in 1832, he acknowledged the attitudes of Chosŏn audiences as unruly and indecent and felt shame for Chosŏn audiences' vulgar manner:

> When a play began, the manager offered tea, wine, fruits, food and a spittoon[49] to each patron. At an interesting scene, spectators all laughed and stopped at the same time and did not make other noises. They were disciplined like the military, even when watching lewd scenes. This was one characteristic of this large country. In our country, patrons wearing big hats and long clothes stand in several rows and make noise continuously. In addition, merchants who sell rice cakes, wine, and vegetables add to the noise. Therefore, spectators who arrive late cannot see or hear the performances. They push, pull, or even throw stones and fight one another [to have a better view]. Compared to the Chinese, isn't it shameful?[50]

Kim and Sŏ both expressed that the audiences had military-like discipline. For Kim Kyŏngsŏn, observations about his amazement related to the size and extravagant theater facilities led to his recognition that audiences' good attitude was essential to keep order. Hong Taeyong was also especially impressed by audiences' order in a packed theater. Hong found that their silence and order stemmed not only from the pleasure of the play but also from the Qing people's nature of preferring calmness and orderliness.[51] Kim's and Hong's writings about Chosŏn people's lack of order suggest that they perceived the play as a demonstration of the refined culture of the Qing in general, not as an exceptional case among barbarians.

Lantern Festivals and Fireworks

The dazzling and amazing visual effects of the lantern festivals and fireworks captured the attention of ambassadors who, as foreign travelers, were especially inclined to remember visually stimulating scenes. Unlike magic shows or acrobatic feats, which could be performed on a relatively small scale and relied on performers' own physical skills, the lantern festivals and fireworks clearly demonstrated to ambassadors the high degree of the Qing's military and economic development, which had enabled them to demolish the Ming. These forms of entertainment—which used gunpowder that was precious in Chosŏn[52]—required complex equipment and incurred heavy costs. For example, Kim Chŏngjung's observations of lantern festivals during his travels to Qing China in 1791–92 forced him to realize the relatively lower economic and technical development in Chosŏn Korea. He described the lantern festival scenes as follows:

> When darkness fell, a lantern festival began. Fifty or sixty people bound their hair with blue silk and wore green silk shirts and yellow pants. Each of them held a lantern shaped like a fan. On the lantern, words such as "The world was at peace" or "All countries are at peace" were written. They reached the front of the imperial throne and all bowed together. Then, they turned around, went out to a courtyard and went up to a table. They held the lanterns high and spoke out something slowly. I did not know what they said, but I thought they were praying for the emperor's longevity. In the courtyard, a wooden structure stood on a long wooden support. A colorful stage was set on the structure. Four red strings that were four *ja* long[53] were hung under the structure. The strings were for raising one lantern. The huge lantern was covered with a yellow curtain like a big drum. Fire started from a half-*ja*-long wick under the lantern. When the fire reached the bottom of the lantern, it exploded and smoke filled the air. Colorful papers flew and things from inside the huge lantern fell out. They were large and small lanterns! They were lit at the same time and glittered and shone like beads or stars in rows. What an extraordinary scene! The number of lanterns was really countless. I thought it some wonder of nature the way lanterns were simultaneously lit. It was not something that people could do. The glittering and shining scenes fascinated people. After a while, all the lanterns went dark at the same time. . . . The scenes were truly extraordinary. I realized that when a local person said, "The lantern festival is the peak of the New Year festival," it was really true. I asked about the technique of a particular lantern. He said that "the name of the lantern is *wan zhan deng*. Fine iron strings made the teeth of a machine pull and move. Due to the strings' movement, lanterns went on and off at the same time." The great techniques of China were not things that people from outlying areas could achieve.[54]

Kim was so overwhelmed by scenes of the lantern festivals during his travels that he described them as a "wonder of nature" and "something that an outlying people [Koreans] cannot achieve." Kim Chŏngjung not only recognized the extraordinary beauty of the lantern festivals but further showed his respect for the Qing

as a Central Plain (*chungt'o*, 中土) while Chosŏn people were from an outlying area (*p'yŏnin*, 偏人). Kim Kyŏngsŏn, who visited Qing China in 1832–33, was also amazed by the scenes of fireworks and recorded scenic descriptions that included a moderate criticism of the performance's extravagant waste of gunpowder. Although Kim criticized fireworks for their scale and cost, he equated this extravagance with the extent of the Qing wealth, for even the commoners of Qing China could afford to enjoy the costly fireworks.

> Usually, it took four or five silver tales to do one roll of fireworks. One household spent almost one hundred firecrackers a night. I could assume that households of high officials showed off their wealth with fireworks, and one can imagine the court's extravagant fireworks. I thought such fireworks should be prohibited. I wondered why such fireworks were not prohibited. Also, gunpowder was important to the military, but people used it recklessly. This was a grave situation. I did not know if such a practice was right.[55]

Kim Kyŏngsŏn estimated the total cost of a great firework display and described his amazement at its refined techniques, saying that "[a firework] is indeed artful, splendid, and magnificent, so the scene is hard to describe. The cost of the fireworks was a thousand or ten-thousand *liang*. Even if [Chosŏn people have] money, the extraordinary skills and techniques would be hard to achieve."[56] Since the brilliant scenes of fireworks and lantern festivals greatly impressed Chosŏn ambassadors, envoys such as Kim Kyŏngsŏn came to admire the Qing's high technology. Some writers still felt conflicted by their admiration for the Qing's economic and technological development and their preexisting disdain for the Manchus. Although many traveling dignitaries maintained their critical views of the Manchus by pejoratively describing the magic shows they witnessed as mere tricks, their critiques of fireworks and lantern festivals were more moderately expressed, such as "the scene is amazing, though I am wondering if such extravagancy is appropriate." The moderate expressions show envoys' conflicts in value judgment.[57]

Increased Desire to Understand Qing China

Many Chosŏn ambassadors who visited during the early period of the Qing dynasty paid attention to the remnants of the Ming dynasty's customs during their travels throughout Qing territory. As An Chŏngbok wrote, "I have heard of China transforming barbarians, but I have never heard of barbarians transforming China."[58] Thus, it is not surprising that they were looking for examples of the unyielding and enduring Ming culture even after the country's collapse. The Ming people's cultural superiority would be truly significant if the Qing people chose to willingly follow the Ming culture while rejecting their own Manchu culture. Until

the early eighteenth century, Chosŏn envoys' perceptions of Ming dress in plays brought about a sense of pride for the Chosŏn literati. The actors' dress generated a nostalgic feeling about the ideal past. Ch'ŏe Tŏkchung (ca. 1712) and Kim Ch'angŏp (1658–1721), who travelled to the Qing in 1712, both made the same observation about the plays they witnessed: "The dress of the previous dynasty (Ming) still existed in plays. So, I will not feel sad, though I am sad inside. If actors did not wear Han and Sung Chinese-style dresses, how could I possibly see the past?"[59] Pak Chiwŏn also wrote, "Alas! There is a saying that 'when ritual propriety is lost in the Central Plain, its traces can be found in the wilderness.' If you would like to see the remaining custom of official dress of the Central Plain (Ming), you should find it from actors."[60] The writers' expressions can be understood as a reflection of their unchanging loyalty to the Ming and their sincerity toward contemporary Chosŏn's foreign policy. However, the officials' sadness can alternatively be understood as their bitter recognition that Ming culture had been pushed aside and remained as only a trace of the past.

However, in the eighteenth century, most Chosŏn ambassadors failed to witness evidence of Ming culture adopted wholesale into the daily lives of the Qing people. Instead, envoys observed how the Qing perceived the Ming as a past dynasty as they watched the Ming culture crystallize in a play, detached from reality. They found that Chosŏn's attachment to Ming clothes failed to bring Qing literati's admiration or respect, and some Chosŏn literati including Hong Taeyong regarded their keeping Ming-style clothes to be almost meaningless and an obstacle to Chosŏn's development. In the nineteenth century, many Chosŏn writers expressed little or no sadness about the change of clothing styles in Qing China. Hong Sunhak (洪淳學, b. 1842), who visited the Qing in 1866, wrote that Ming-style clothes were the costumes for the spear dance *ch'angsi* (槍矢).

> At the opposite theater, *ch'angsi* is performed.
> Patrons gather and their voices are high.
> The music is loud and it shakes heaven and earth.
> Some actors paint their faces with black.
> He wears a black hat, yellow official clothes, and a loose belt.
> He raises his sleeve high and dances.
> Patrons say that these are Ming-style clothes.
> It is similar to *Sandae togam* in Chosŏn.
> Chinese people enjoy it and laugh loudly.
> However, how can we enjoy it without knowing what is happening on the stage?[61]

Hong Sunhak showed neither his regret that Chinese people no longer wore Ming-style clothes nor his pride that he as a Chosŏn scholar maintained the old style. Hong even expressed his concerns that Chinse people might laugh at his Ming-style dress. Hong Taeyong's record also shows that the only people who found a use for Ming-style clothes were Qing street performers, who used them as their

stage costumes. These observations show that the remnants of Ming customs were gradually losing their charm for Chosŏn envoys and they felt less compelled to compare Ming and Qing cultures. Although Ming cultural aspects became less attractive subjects in Chosŏn envoys' writings, their desires to understand Qing culture increased, as is shown in the records of Qing dramas.

The writers' analyses of Qing dramas are relatively less in depth than their records of other forms of performances, in part because the plays were dialogue-based entertainments that required the knowledge of Chinese language and customs to enjoy fully. Ambassadors from the *yangban* class were highly proficient in classical literary language (*Hanmun*, 漢文). However, they did not learn to speak colloquial Chinese (*bai hua*, Ch. 白話).[62] Chosŏn ambassadors' inability to understand spoken Chinese caused frequent inconveniences and sometimes caused delays and mistakes in political matters.[63] A few envoys argued the importance of learning spoken Chinese, but official verbal communication was the job of translators, who were typically in the "middle people" social status group.[64]

In addition, a play, which usually lasted much longer than other forms of entertainment—sometimes several days—would be difficult for ambassadors with a fixed and full travel schedule to enjoy. Despite this sense of isolation due to the lack of verbal comprehension, some writers stayed in the theaters all night to watch the plays. Unable to verbally communicate with fellow patrons, writers needed to ask about the plot of the play by writing notes to their companions in literary Chinese. This method of communicating limited their full enjoyment of the performances because writing and reading the notes distracted them from that moment's dialogue and performance.[65] Pak Saho described how he enjoyed Chinese plays:

> Generally, the joy of the play exists in actors' diverse movements and their dialogues. The audience often exclaimed and laughed loudly, but Chosŏn people only sit like clay statues because our language is different from Chinese. We did not know what happened in the play. I thought of an idea. I invited Zhang Qingyun (張青雲), a neighbor who I had grown close to, to go with me and asked him to explain the dialogue of the play, line by line, to an interpreter. Then, I asked the interpreter to translate it into Korean, and I listened to it. Also, I referred to the program, which included the titles of the plays, and so I could imagine its plot. Then, I could grasp its meaning. I also always omitted the story points in the story that I was uncertain about from my descriptions of the plays. The play lasted all evening long.[66]

As Pak indicated, his enjoyment could not be complete because he could not understand the plays' dialogues. Although the incomprehensibility of colloquial Chinese hindered visiting dignitaries from enjoying the content of the plays on the one hand, on the other hand, the language barrier caused the writers to examine and enjoy the visual elements closely, including costumes and actions.[67]

Despite these prevailing cultural norms, in the records from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Chosŏn ambassadors' desire to understand the content of Qing plays is quite notable. Writers who heard about plays from other envoys also recorded what they heard about the plays. For example, Kim Kyŏngsŏn depicted five types of plays, including Di li tu (Ch. 地理圖), Jin qiao (Ch. 金橋), Shao quan (Ch. 殺犬), Gui lü (Ch. 跪驢), and Ying xiong yi (Ch. 英雄義). Kim described scenes from *Shao quan* by focusing on the actor's costumes and actions:

> An old woman appeared who had entirely white hair and wore Chinese clothes. She walked with a cane and spoke some Chinese to the audience in an angry tone. Then, a young woman about eighteen or nineteen years old appeared. She wore Tang-style clothes, leather shoes, four or five blue jade hairpins, coral-shaped hairpins, and flowers on her head. The young woman had willow-shaped eyebrows and cherry-like lips. Her figure was really beautiful. The young lady murmured something to the old woman in an angry tone. It looked like a conflict between daughter-in-law and mother-in-law. The old woman talked about the wrongdoings of her daughter-in-law. The daughter-in-law told her mother-in-law about her innocence. She did not have energy in her face and her voice was low. She entered into a dressing room and brought rice cakes and served them to her mother-in-law. The mother-in-law threw the cakes to the ground. Then, suddenly, a big dog appeared from the dressing room, held the cake in its mouth and went away. When the daughter-in-law served tea to her mother-in-law, she threw the tea to the ground. Again, the dog appeared and held the tea cup in its mouth and ran away. Then, the daughter-in-law became angry, pushed and threw her mother-in-law to the ground, and yelled something loudly to her mother-in-law. Then, the mother-in-law also abused her daughter-in-law loudly in an angry tone.[68]

Kim Kyŏngsŏn's long and detailed descriptions of plays revealed that he regarded the information on the costumes and actions of the plays as having significance for the record of the Qing culture. Similar to Hong's records, Kim's records show no sign of disrespect of Qing culture. Hong Taeyong also described his weariness and sense of isolation while watching a play:

> A group of performers held flags and a set of musical instruments, and each performer stood in front of another group of performers acting as government officials. However, I felt bored because I did not understand its plot, their words, or the lyrics. I felt very tired. Various forms of entertainment were acted out; however, I did not know what was going on in the play. So, I did not have any interest in it.[69]

Despite Hong's lack of interest, he wrote about plays' scenes and actors. Hong's lack of interest in the plays derived from his lack of understanding of the contents, not from his dislike of an entertainment as a Confucian scholar, as seen in Hŏ Pong's record. This shows that the Chosŏn ambassadors' purpose in watching plays related not only to entertainment but also to their desire to understand the Qing culture at large.

CONCLUSION

By examining Korean envoys' records of their diplomatic travels to China from the eighteenth to the early nineteenth centuries, this study shows that Korean elites consumed Chinese entertainments. I argue that Korean elites, even as they decried entertainments, especially popular entertainments, as the domain of deviations from Neo-Confucian norms, strategically approached Chinese popular culture as a catalyst for forcing self-awareness. For many Chosŏn envoys, Qing travels were eye-opening experiences that dismantled previously held assumptions held by most Chosŏn literati that the Manchu were barbaric and uncultivated.

Based on the timing of diplomatic travels, the records show the Chosŏn envoys' changing approaches to Qing culture. The pejorative and deprecating tone of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century records depicting Qing people and their cultural aspects show that Chosŏn envoys, with vivid memories of Chosŏn's defeat in the Manchu invasions, were unable to see Qing culture with fair and open minds. They sometimes deprecated Qing people and their customs without a close examination of them. As Chosŏn envoys' diplomatic travel experiences accumulated, however, many envoys gradually paid more and closer attention to Qing culture and tried to find reasonable explanations for the Qing dynasty's successful governing. This study reveals that Qing Chinese entertainments were vivid demonstrations of its economic and technological developments as well as the stable settlement of the Qing dynasty in East Asia.

The travel records also show the struggle between the Chosŏn envoys' on-sight positive impressions of the Qing's prosperity and a moral and political imperative to support the existing political views of the Qing as barbarians. The struggle can be seen in Pak Chiwŏn's comments about the Ming-style clothing Qing actors wore onstage. Pak distinguished the Ming as the Central Plain and the Qing as wilderness when he discussed the issue of ritual propriety in general. When Pak dealt with the issue of advancing the national strength of the Chosŏn dynasty, however, he found that the Chosŏn literati's wearing of uncomfortable Ming-style attire was an empty, vain formality that was not helpful in achieving the Chosŏn's developmental goals. We can see this in the "Story of Master Hŏ," included in Pak's travelogue. Master Hŏ, a Chosŏn literatus, proposed that Chosŏn literati should not feel shamed into changing their attire to that of the Qing's style. While Pak's political view on distinguishing the cultivated from the uncultivated did not show fundamental changes, he recognized that the Qing society possessed advanced technology and enjoyed economic prosperity. Some envoys also expressed their mixed feelings between their amazement at the Qing's development and the existing political view that the Qing were backward barbarians, though the degrees varied. This ambivalence illustrates why the envoys' on-sight experiences were a powerful motivation that forced them to reconsider their preconceptions about Qing China and Chosŏn's identity. The eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century records show that Chosŏn envoys were attracted to recording diverse cultural

aspects of the Qing with vivid and detailed expressions. Although Chosŏn envoys' respect for the Ming did not undergo fundamental changes in the eighteenth century, the entertainments were a catalyst for modifying their previously hostile views about Qing culture.

This study examines the role of Qing Chinese entertainments in Chosŏn envoys' views of the Qing dynasty, focusing on lantern festivals, fireworks, plays, and theater facilities. The rich descriptions of the entertainments reveal that Chosŏn envoys attempted to maximize their experiences of new cultures to fulfill their official mission and make private inquiries into foreign cultures. Considering that the records contain descriptions of other types of entertainments, including magic shows, acrobats, and animal performances, I expect my future study on these entertainments can shed light on the Chosŏn-Qing relations as well as offer broader knowledge on premodern East Asian entertainments in general.

NOTES

1. The references to *Accounts of Ambassadorial Missions* in this paper are from the Han'guk kojŏn chonghap DB (DB of Korean Classics), an online database service made available by the Institute for the Translation of Korean Classics. All English translations from the Han'guk kojŏn chonghap DB and Chosŏn writers' works in this paper are mine unless otherwise specified.

2. Im Kijung, *Yŏnhaengnok yŏn'gu ch'ŭngwi* [Tiers of research on Korean ambassadors' travel records to China], 17–30, 722–26; Im Kijung, *Yŏnhaengnok yŏn'gu* [A study on Chosŏn ambassadors' travel to China], 11–29, 31–45. In addition to Chosŏn envoys' diplomatic travels, studies show that Koryŏ officials visited the Yuan and Ming dynasties as well. Im Kijung's studies, for example, show that the earliest existing records on Koryŏ's diplomatic travels to China began in 1273, when Koryŏ was under the rule of the Yuan dynasty (1271–1368), and ended in 1389. Over these 116 years, records show that the number of Koryŏ envoys' official visits to China totaled fifty-nine: twenty-one to the Yuan dynasty and thirty-eight to the Ming dynasty. The studies found no record of the Koryŏ dynasty's diplomatic visits to other Chinese dynasties during the 116 years.

3. Treaties between the Ming and Chosŏn laid out four types of visits throughout every lunar year. I refer to these visits as *regular visits* (*chŏrhaeng*, 節行).

4. Im Kijung, *Yŏnhaengnok yŏn'gu* [A study on Chosŏn ambassadors' travel to China], 14.

5. Chosŏn ambassadors' diplomatic travels have received attention, as the records indicate Chosŏn's international exchanges with neighboring countries. Recent notable studies on eighteenth-century records include Im Kijung ed., *Yŏnhaengnok chŏnjip* [Complete collection of Chosŏn ambassadors' travel to China]; Cho Kyuik et al. eds., *Yŏnhaengnok yŏn'gu ch'ongsŏ* [Comprehensive collection of research on *Yŏnhaengnok*]; Kim Hyŏnmi, *18–segi yŏnhaengnok ŭi chŏn'gae wa tŭksŏng* [Features and trajectory of eighteenth-century *Yŏnhaengnok*].

6. Im Kijung, *Yŏnhaengnok yŏn'gu* [A study on Chosŏn ambassadors' travel to China], 220. James R. Brandon et al. explain the role of court performances as demonstrations of

the culture's literary artistic values: "We can identify three quite different social milieux that have nourished theatre forms within the countries that lie in and adjacent to the western Pacific Ocean. First, elite forms of theatre were created with the support of the ruling classes, propounding the ideology of rulers and serving audiences drawn from the elite at the centres of political and economic power. In the past, these were court forms, performed by court functionaries—actors, dancers, musicians, storytellers—for court occasions. Performance was a civic-political ritual demonstrating and confirming royal prerogatives and it reflected the culture's highest literary and artistic values." James R. Brandon ed., *The Cambridge Guide to Asian Theatre*, 2. It can be assumed that the Qing government provided court performances for the Chosŏn envoys as a demonstration of the Qing's prosperity and good governing.

7. Chinese cities and people are spelled according to the Chinese pronunciation, with *Ch*. in parentheses with the Chinese characters.

8. According to Stephen Bates and Anthony J. Ferri, "Entertainment, in our view, involves communication featuring external stimuli; it provides pleasure to some people, though not of course to everyone; and it reaches a generally passive audience." They further conclude that "the principal goal of entertainment is to provide pleasure" and "most definitions talk of entertainment principally from the perspective of one being entertained." Stephen Bates and Anthony J. Ferri, "What's Entertainment? Notes Toward a Definition." The term *performance* can be an alternative term, but this paper does not use the term in its examination of lantern festivals and fireworks, which do not necessarily "[require] the physical presences of trained or skilled human beings whose demonstration of their skills is the performance" as Marvin Carlson's definition of performance indicates. Marvin Carson, "What Is Performance?" 68–73. The use of the term *performance* can be considered with more in-depth and broader studies on various types of entertainments, including magic shows and acrobats that heavily rely on performers' physical skills.

9. The records on Chosŏn envoys' diplomatic travels can largely be divided into official records by secretaries (*sŏjanggwan*, 書狀官) and unofficial records by individual envoys, which were usually published later as the literary collections of the individual writer (*munjip*, 文集). In 1784, King Chŏngjo ordered the collection of official diplomatic documents, and the collection, *Tongmun hwigo* (同文彙考), includes the official records with other diplomatic documents.

10. Hong Taeyong's *Ulbyŏng yŏnhaengnok* [The records of a journey to Yanjing] was written in the Korean vernacular (*han'gŭl*). Two primary sources in this paper are written in the vernacular: Hong Sunhak's "Yŏnhaengga" [A song of travel to Qing] and Hong Taeyong's *Ulbyŏng yŏnhaengnok*. Thus I indicate the original Korean in the text quotations and notes.

11. Michael J. Seth, *A Concise History of Korea*, 137.

12. Throughout the Chosŏn dynasty, the official foreign policy was "respecting the cultivated and rejecting barbarians" (*chonhwa yangi*, 尊華攘夷). In an analysis of this policy, Im Hyŏngt'aek explains, "Historically, in this region at least, the cultural tradition that began with Shang and Zhou and continued through Han, Tang, and Song has been commonly conceived as universal. This tradition is referred to as *Huaxia wen ming* (Ch. 華夏文明). Meanwhile, the surrounding regions consisted of different races with China as their cultural center. They were regarded as barbarians, just as the Persians were called 'barbar' with distain by the ancient Greeks. The term *Hua yi* (Ch. 華夷, Chinese and barbarians) was

the standard for distinguishing peoples, for distinguishing between civilization and barbarity. The spread of civilization from center to the margins was considered to be as natural as the flow of water from top to bottom. This is suggested in the term *Yong xia bian yi* (Ch. 用夏變夷) which speaks of the need to enlighten the primitive races of the frontier by disseminating the high culture of China." Im Hyŏngt'aek, "The Logic of Historical Understanding of Korean Culture (2): In Relation to the Tradition of East Asia and the Modern World." Also see Han Young-woo, "The Establishment and Development."

13. Nurhaci established the Later Jin dynasty (後金) in 1616. Hong Taiji, Nurhaci's son, renamed the dynasty Qing (淸) in 1636.

14. Ulrike Brisson and Bernard Schweizer's book, *Not So Innocent Abroad*, argues that traveling always occurs within political systems and travel accounts either reflect the traveler's political stance or directly or indirectly influence political decisions.

15. Although Kwanghae was king during the coup d'état, after Kwanghae was overthrown by revolutionaries, his title was reduced to prince. Thus, his official posthumous title is prince (*kun*, 君) rather than king (*cho*, 祖).

16. *Kwanghaegun ilgi* 128:2a (Kwanghae 10/May 1). The references to the *Annals of the Chosŏn Dynasty* [*Chosŏn wangjo sillok*] in this paper are from the National Institute of Korean History's online database. After providing the *kwŏn* number and page number of the citation, I note the date of the entry in the format of reign year/month/day in parentheses. Also, Queen Dowager Inmok's (1584–1632) royal edict is another source that cites Prince Kwanghae's lack of respect for the Ming as a valid reason for legitimizing his overthrow. "While Chosŏn has served Ming China for two hundred years, the relation between the two is like ruler-subject and father-son. The Ming's favor in saving this country in the year of Imjin (1592) was especially unforgettable. . . . However, Kwanghae was not afraid of Heaven's decree and favored the barbarians [Manchu] . . . he did not dispatch relief forces to Ming China despite the Ming emperor's frequent royal letters [during the Manchus' attack of Ming]. This turned Samhan [Chosŏn], a land of propriety and righteousness into a barbarian and beast. . . . When his evils are like these, how can he possibly rule this country, maintain a heavenly position in the court, and serve spirits in royal ancestor shrines and Altar of Earth and Grain? Thus, I decide that he must abdicate and to leave him to live in an appropriate place." *Injo sillok* 1:5a11–6a2 (Injo 1/March 14).

17. There were two main Manchu invasions of Chosŏn Korea in the seventeenth century. The first invasion occurred in 1627, and the second one was from 1636 to 1637. The second invasion occurred when the Manchu declared a new dynasty of Qing in 1636 under the Manchu emperor Hong Taiji (r. 1636–43). The emperor sent an emissary to the Chosŏn court to ask for their loyalty to the new Qing dynasty. However, the emissary received cold treatment from the Chosŏn government and fled back to the Qing. Then, Hong Taiji led the army to invade Chosŏn. The second invasion brought a humiliating defeat to Korea. Chosŏn King Injo (r. 1623–49) had to agree to the terms of surrender. In accordance with the terms of surrender, Korea offered the first and second sons of King Injo as well as the sons or brothers of ministers as hostages to be raised in the Qing territories. Considering that the Manchus were regarded as uncultivated barbarians, Chosŏn's surrender and sending of the crown prince to the enemy were deeply humiliating experiences. Carter J. Eckert et al., *Korea Old and New*, 150.

18. A significant portion of the slave population of the Shenyang (Ch. 瀋陽) slave market in China was comprised of Chosŏn hostages. Yi Chŏngch'ŏl, *Taedongpŏp: Chosŏn ch'oego ŭi kaehyŏk* [Tax unification law: Chosŏn's best reform], 185.

19. The studies include Jahyun Kim Haboush, "Constructing the Center: The Ritual Controversy and the Search for a New Identity in Seventeenth-Century Korea," 46–90.

20. Michael J. Seth, *A Concise History of Korea*, 181.

21. Kim Kyŏngnok's and Jung Jae-Hoon's studies show the Chosŏn government's dual attitude. Kim Kyŏngnok, "Chosŏn sidae kukche chilsŏ wa Han-Chung kwan'gye ŭi chŏn'gae yangsang" [International world order during the Chosŏn period and features of the Korea-China relationship]; Kim Kyŏngnok, "Chosŏn sidae sahaeng kwa sahaeng kirok" [Chosŏn envoys' diplomatic travels to China and their travel records]; Jae-Hoon Jung, "Meeting the World through Eighteenth-Century Yŏnhaeng," 55.

22. Yanjing is the Beijing of today. The majority of Chosŏn ambassadors' records of travel to China follow this practice with only some exceptions. For example, Kwŏn Hyŏp's (1553–1618) travel record to Ming China in 1597 is entitled *Sŏktang kong yŏnhaengnok* (Records of Visiting Beijing of Kwŏn Hyŏp). Sŏktang is Kwŏn's pen name. Kwŏn was sent to Ming China to ask for a relief force against the Japanese invasions of Korea in 1597. He expressed his disappointment with the corrupt Ming court and officials in his record. This might have affected how he titled his records.

23. Chosŏn writers often revealed their pride in maintaining Ming clothing and hairstyles and criticized the Chinese who followed Manchu-style clothes and hair. For example, Kim Ch'angŏp, who visited Qing China in 1712, asked a Han Chinese person whether Chosŏn envoys' clothing looked strange to him and what type of clothing the Chinese people wore at the time. Considering that Kim chose to ask this of a Han Chinese person, whose personhood was "unsophisticated and good," Kim was probably trying to reveal what the Chinese person had on his mind. Kim Ch'angŏp [金昌業], *Yŏnhaeng ilgi* [燕行日記] [A diary of a visit to Yanjing] 3:53b3–5. Also, see Im Kijung, *Yŏnhaengnok yŏn'gu ch'ŭngwi* [Tiers of research on Korean ambassadors' travel records to China], 422–24.

24. Kim Chongil, "Yasŏng mundap" [Dialogues at the Ye city], 3:26a8–28a5.

25. During the Chosŏn period, Chosŏn literati did not lose their respect for the Ming dynasty. Official records including *Chosŏn wangjo sillok* show that King Yŏngjo (r. 1724–76) in the eighteenth century also expressed his regret that the northern expedition (*pukpŏl*) was not continued. *Yŏngjo sillok* 100:10a11–13 (Yŏngjo 38/October 14). Also, Chosŏn court rituals at the Altar of Great Gratitude (Taebodan) to commemorate the Ming's benevolence to Chosŏn during the sixteenth-century Japanese invasion in Korea continued into the nineteenth century. "The Taebodan was a ritual institution that embodied Chosŏn's consciousness of itself as a smaller incarnation of Sinitic civilization." Kuwano Eiji, "Chosŏn Korea and Ming China," 294–322; Kye Sŭngbŏm, *Chŏngjidoen sigan: Chosŏn ŭi Taebodan kwa kŭndae ŭi munt'ŏk* [Time at a standstill: Chosŏn's Taebodan and the threshold of the modern].

26. Studies show that, although the Ming government put strict limitations on Chosŏn envoys' travel schedules, the Qing government allowed more freedom for Chosŏn envoys. Chosŏn envoys to Ming often expressed their gratitude for the fact that they did not need to undergo bothersome procedures to get permission to visit places. The envoys' records in the early Qing period often had positive views of Qing Chinese officials in terms of their incorruptibility, sincerity in carrying out emperors' orders, and kindness and generosity

toward the Chosŏn envoys. The studies on Chosŏn envoys' weakening negative view toward the Qing include Kim Kyŏngnok, "Chosŏn sidae sahaeng kwa sahaeng kirok" [Chosŏn envoys' diplomatic travels to China and their travel records]. Following Kim's studies, the nineteenth-century period shows different attitudes in seeing Qing China. Facing Western countries' interruption in Qing China and Chosŏn Korea, the Chosŏn government regarded the Qing as protectors of the East Asian world order. Also, see Kim Sŏnggŭn, "Yŏnhaengnok kwa Chosŏn sahaengwŏn ŭi taech'ŏng insik sogo" [Examination of Chosŏn envoys' Qing travel records and their views on Qing China].

27. Hong Taeyong, *Ulbyŏng yŏnhaengnok* [을병연행록] [The records of a journey to Yanjing in 1765], 4.

28. Ibid., 839.

29. Pak Chiwŏn, *Yŏnamchip* [燕巖集] [Collected works of Pak Chiwŏn], 12:3b1–2.

30. King Chŏngjo (1776–1800) accepted Sirhak scholars' ideas that Chosŏn should adopt the technological skills of Qing China. The example is the Hwasŏng fortress, which was built from 1794 to 1796 in modern-day Suwŏn. Sirhak School scholars, including Chŏng Yagyong, participated in the construction of the fortress wall by developing the *kŏjunggi* (crane, 擧重機). Studies argue that the *kŏjunggi* was made based on *Kigi tosŏl* (奇器圖說) [Illustrated book on Western machines], a Chinese book on construction techniques of the West. Chosŏn envoys acquired this book from their diplomatic travels to Qing China. O Chuhwan et al., *Han'guk ŭi segye munhwa yusan yŏhaeng* [Voyage to Korea's world heritage], 150.

31. Regarding the Chosŏn literati's general dislike of public performances, see Chŏn Kyŏnguk, *Han'guk ŭi chŏnt'ong yŏnhŭi* [Traditional Korean entertainments]; Yun Kwangbong, *Han'guk yŏnhŭi yesulsa* [The history of Korean entertainment art]; Sim Sanggyo, *Han'guk chŏnt'ong yŏnhŭiron* [Study on premodern Korean entertainments].

32. Regarding the types and features of entertainments, An Sangbok, "Yŏnhaengnok ŭi chapki kwallyŏn kisa yŏn'gu" [Research on the records on miscellaneous plays in Chosŏn envoys' travel records to China]. Regarding Chosŏn scholars' understanding of the entertainment, Im Chunch'ŏl's studies provide a thorough examination of the records of Qing Chinese magic shows and Chosŏn scholars' understanding of the shows. Im Chunch'ŏl, "Yŏnhaengnok hwansul kisa rŭl kusŏng hanŭn se kaji ch'ŭngwi wa hwansa" [Three tiers embedded in the records of magic shows in Korean envoys' travel records to Qing China]; Im Chunch'ŏl, "Pak Chiwŏn 'Hwanhŭigi' ŭi hwansul kojŭng kwa punsŏk" [Empirical examination on magic in the records of magic shows]; Im Chunch'ŏl, "18–segi ihu yŏnhaengnok hwansul kirok ŭi hyŏngsŏng paegyŏng kwa tŭksŏng" [Features and background of the records on magic shows in Chosŏn envoys' travel records written after the eighteenth century]; Im Chunch'ŏl, "Yŏnhaengnok e nat'anan hwansul insik ŭi pyŏnhwa wa Pak Chiwŏn ŭi 'Hwanhŭigi'" [The change of perception of magic shows in Chosŏn envoys' travel records and Pak Chiwŏn's records on magic shows]. Also, see Kang Hyejong, "Hwanhŭigi chaeron" [Reconsideration of the records of magic shows]. Regarding individual ambassadors, Pak Chiwŏn's records on performances are the most widely researched among contemporary Korean writers for their detailed description and social criticism. Pak Sumil, "Pak Chiwŏn ŭi 'Hwanhŭigi' e nat'anan kŭl ssŭgi yoryŏng" [Writing strategies in Pak Chiwŏn's record on magic shows]; Pak Sumil, "'Hwanhŭigi' e nat'anan Yŏnam ŭi saenggak ilki" [Reading Pak Chiwŏn's ideas reflected in his record on magic shows]; Hong Sŏngnam, "Yŏnhaengnok e nat'anan 'hwansul' kwa 'yŏn'gŭk' yŏn'gu" [Research on magic shows and plays in Chosŏn envoys' travel records to China].

33. Studies show that the records written in the Ming-Qing transitional period and after the Manchu invasions rarely contain records on entertainments. Im Kijung, *Yŏnhaengnok yŏn'gu ch'ŭngwi* [Tiers of research on Korean ambassadors' travel records to China], 165.

34. Im Kijung, *Yŏnhaengnok yŏn'gu* [A study on Chosŏn ambassadors' travel to China], 842.

35. The prince and envoys of the period often expressed their sadness that a beautiful landscape was tainted by barbarians.

36. Chosŏn envoys were expected to travel following predetermined routes in both Ming and Qing China. However, studies show that Qing Chinese travels were relatively less strict and Chosŏn envoys were able to visit more places and people as well as invite performances to their lodgings. Min Kirhong et al., *Chungguk sahaeng ŭl tanyŏon hwagadŭl* [Painters who officially visited China], 16, 24.

37. Travel writers do not and cannot write everything they witness. Writing is a process of selection. "Recent work in cognitive-perceptual theory has demonstrated that personality—and the social construction of personhood in which it is often implicated—fundamentally shapes which experiences, events, and memories we chose [*sic*] to remember or recognize." Marguerite Helmers and Tilar Mazzeo, eds., *The Traveling and Writing Self*, 7.

38. For example, Chŏng Yagyong criticized petty officials for neglecting their duties and women for violating modesty by attending public performances. "Petty officials and military officials in rural areas were accustomed to an extravagant lifestyle and they spent the days and nights of spring and summer with actors' comedies and performances. A magistrate did not prohibit the entertainment and sometimes even invited them to the courtyard of a government office to watch performances. Even the women of the magistrate hung a bamboo curtain and enjoyed such indecent shows. This was extremely contrary to propriety." Chŏng Yagyong, *Yŏyudang chŏnsŏ* [與猶堂全書] [A complete collection of Chŏng Yagyong].

39. Hŏ Pong, *Choch'ŏn'gi* [Records of visiting the Ming court].

40. Ibid. Fu Yi (傅奕) (554–639) was a Sui dynasty official who argued that Buddhism should be abolished. Hŏ Pong's record shows that Hŏ, as a Confucian scholar, regarded the tricks of magic shows as being similar to the deceptive teachings of Buddhism. Im Chunch'ŏl, "Pak Chiwŏn 'Hwanhŭigi' ŭi hwansul kojŭng kwa punsŏk" [Empirical examination on magic in the records of magic shows], 572.

41. For example, Pak Chiwŏn developed a separate chapter, "Hwanhŭigi" [Records of magic shows] to describe magic shows, acrobats, and court performances as he witnessed them during his Qing travels in 1780. Kim Kyŏngsŏn, who visited Qing China in 1831, also recorded details about various entertainments.

42. Im Kijung, *Yŏnhaengnok yŏn'gu* [A study on ambassadors' travel to the Qing], 220.

43. Unlike most public entertainments, court entertainments were often performed on stages, such as *The Mountain of Rich Fragrance* [*Ch'imhyangsan*, 沉香山] constructed under the order of Prince Kwanghae (r. 1608–23). However, during King Injo's reign, he ordered the burning of *The Mountain of Rich Fragrance* in public following the advice of his royal council. *Injo sillok* 1:32a4–7 (Injo 1/March 25). For more on the public entertainments of Chosŏn, see Yun Kwangbong, *Chosŏn hugi ŭi yŏnhŭi* [Performances in the late Chosŏn dynasty], 27.

44. The terms indicating types of theaters include *hŭiru* (戲樓), *hŭigak* (戲閣), *hŭijang* (戲場), *yŏnhŭijŏn* (演戲殿), *yŏnhŭigak* (演戲閣), *yŏnhŭich'ŏng* (演戲廳), *kwanhŭijŏn*

(觀戲殿), *kwanhŭi chŏn'gak* (觀戲殿閣), *hŭidae* (戲臺), *hŭidan* (戲壇), and *pangdan* (方壇).

45. Sŏ Hosu, *Yŏnhaenggi* [演行記] [A record of a journey to Yanjing], 3:100a8–101a4.

46. Hong Taeyong and Kim Ch'angŏp expanded their recognition to the Qing Chinese people and their clothes. For details on Hong Taeyong, see Chŏng Hunsik, "'*Ŭlbyŏng yŏnhaengnok*' kwa 18–segi Chosŏn ŭi Chungguk ilki" [*Ŭlbyŏng yŏnhaengnok* and the eighteenth-century Chosŏn's understanding of China], 171.

47. Hong Taeyong, *Ulbyŏng yŏnhaengnok* [을병연행록] [The records of a journey to Yanjing in 1765], 225–26.

48. Pak Saho, "Yŏnhŭigi" [演戲記] [The record of performances].

49. Kim Kyŏngsŏn's manuscript includes "chamber pot" (溺器). Still, I have not found records that Qing Chinese theaters prepared chamber pots for audiences. Instead, Haiping Yan's book shows that spittoons were provided for audiences. Because of the similar shapes of a chamber pot and a spittoon, I assume that "chamber pot" is based on the writer's misunderstanding. Haiping Yan, *Chinese Women Writers*, 162.

50. Kim Kyŏngsŏn, "Changhŭigi" [場戲記] [The records of plays].

51. Hong Taeyong, "Changhŭi" [場戲] [Plays].

52. Im Kijung, *Yŏnhaengnok yŏn'gu* [A study on Chosŏn ambassadors' travel to China], 87.

53. One *ja* is about 12 inches.

54. Kim Chŏngjung, *Yŏnhaengnok* [A record of a visit to Yanjing], 182a1–183a3.

55. Kim Kyŏngsŏn, "Chip'ogi" [紙砲記] [The record of fireworks].

56. Ibid., "San'go sujanggak tŭnghŭigi" [山高水長閣燈戲記] [The record of fireworks at the Shangao shuichang pavilion].

57. Im Kijung, *Yŏnhaengnok yŏn'gu ch'ŭngwi* [Tiers of research on Korean ambassadors' travel records to China], 293; Im Kijung, *Yŏnhaengnok yŏn'gu* [A study on Chosŏn ambassadors' travel to China], 87.

58. An Chŏngbok (1712–91), a Practical Learning scholar, wrote the saying in his letter to his disciple. Don Baker, "A Different Thread: Orthodoxy, Heterodoxy, and Catholicism in a Confucian World," 203.

59. Ch'ŏe Tŏkchung, *Yŏnhaengnok* [燕行錄] [A travel record to Qing]; Kim Ch'angŏp, *Yŏnhaeng ilgi* 7:141b10–145b2. Also, see Yi Ch'angsuk, "Yŏnhaengnok e sillin Chungguk yŏnhŭi wa kŭ e taehan Chosŏnin ŭi insik" [Chinese entertainments in envoys' records and Chosŏn people's understanding of them], 169.

60. Pak Chiwon, "Chasojip sŏ" [自笑集序] [Foreword for Yi Hongjae's writing collection]; Yi Hongsik, "Pukkyŏng yurich'ang ŭi kongyŏn yesul" [The performing arts at Liulichang], 605.

61. Hong Sunhak, "Yŏnhaengga" [연행가] [Song of Qing travel], 56. Also, see Yun Kwangbong, *Chosŏn hugi ŭi yŏnhŭi* [Performances in the Late Chosŏn dynasty], 143. The work is written in *han'gŭl*.

62. Chosŏn literati used literary Chinese in their writings even after the Korean alphabet, *han'gŭl*, was created in 1443. Although Chosŏn scholars devoted their time to the study of literary Chinese, they learned that the Chosŏn pronunciation for the characters and the grammar also differed to some degree. Many differences also existed between the formal written language and spoken colloquialisms in Chinese. Also, in premodern China, spoken

Chinese and literary Chinese were two different languages although they were both Chinese languages.

63. In the accounts before the eighteenth century, ambassadors wrote about the significance of language learning in terms of political matters. Understanding of plays mattered little. Still, Chosŏn literati's acquisition of literary Chinese was an important basis of cultural and political interchanges between the two countries. "Linguistic aspects also have to be considered since cultural and political exchange are only possible if the parties involved are familiar enough within the language/s spoken by the other side." Albrecht Classen, *East Meets West*, 5.

64. During the Chosŏn period, *chungin* (middle people), a social status between aristocrats and commoners, became technical specialists such as government interpreters, physicians, astronomers, local functionaries, accountants, painters, and musicians. Interpretations during Qing travels were the task of *chungin* interpreters. Although some literati showed interest in learning colloquial Chinese, *bai hua*, while traveling in China, most of them lost interest in learning the colloquial Chinese once they left Qing China.

65. The difficulty of understanding Qing plays based on their ignorance of speaking Chinese enabled them to realize the difficulty of understanding Qing culture without knowing the spoken language of the country.

66. Pak Saho, "Yŏnhŭigi" [演戲記] [The records of performances], 2:6a2–7.

67. It is not uncommon for contemporary travelers to enjoy performances based on their visual elements. Although the travelers do not understand the contents, they can be interested in the performance. Unlike political and cultural exchanges, as stated in Albrecht Classen's argument, the enjoyment of entertainment is one directional and can be derived from various elements. Albrecht Classen, *East Meets West*, 5.

68. Kim Kyŏngsŏn, "Changhŭigi" [場戲記] [The records of plays], 4:132b4–133a7.

69. Hong Taeyong, *Ulbyŏng yŏnhaengnok* [을병연행록] [The records of a journey to Yanjing in 1765], 229.

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