



Ruling Ideology and Marginal Subjects: Ming Loyalism and Foreign Lineages in Late Chosŏn Korea

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Abstract

Numerous Ming Chinese took refuge in Chosŏn Korea during the early seventeenth century. Despite the supposed sinocentrism of Chosŏ's elites, refugees from China were treated as belonging to the category of submitting-foreigner (*byanghwain*), a protected but distinctly humble social status that had been used primarily as a tool for settling Japanese and Jurchen from Chosŏn's frontiers. Beginning in the mid-eighteenth century, however, the Chosŏn court considered it incongruous to include Ming Chinese descendants in that category. Chinese lineages were thus distinguished from other submitting-foreigners and reclassified according to the considerably more prestigious category of imperial subjects. This paper explores this change, seeing it as part of a trend in the Qing Empire and indeed in Eurasia as a whole in which identity and subjecthood became increasingly bureaucratized, and loyalties treated as absolute.

Keywords

Chosŏn, Korea, Qing Empire, submitting-foreigner, subjecthood, Neo-Confucianism, vernacularization, Ming-Qing transition, ideology, ethnicity, migration, Ming Loyalism

Introduction

The elites of Chosŏn Korea (1392-1910) are widely, and with some justice, described as sinocentric, orienting themselves culturally and politically

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towards the Ming Dynasty during the early Chosŏn, and continuing to associate themselves deeply with the fallen Ming Empire, as well as to a broader dynastic “Chinese” dynastic tradition, during the late Chosŏn.¹ Yet Sino-Korean relations varied considerably over the 500 years of the Chosŏn dynasty, and if the lens is moved to Korean and Chinese non-elites, new complications are added to our image of a sinocentric Chosŏn. During the turbulent century between the Imjin War (1592-8) and the wars of the Ming Qing transition (1618-1683), numerous Chinese, Jurchen, and Japanese settled in Chosŏn. Yet despite this supposed sinocentrism of Chosŏn’s elites, all three groups were treated as belonging to the identical category of submitting-foreigner (*hyanghwain*), a protected, hereditary, but distinctly humble, social status that had been used during the Koryŏ (918-1392) and early Chosŏn periods primarily as a tool for settling Chosŏn’s unruly and disorganized frontiers. Beginning in the 1750s, however, the Chosŏn court considered it incongruous to group Jurchen, Japanese, and Chinese descendants all in that category; Ming Chinese lineages were distinguished from other submitting-foreigners and reclassified according to the likewise protected but considerably more prestigious category of imperial subjects (*hwangjoin*). With this new category came limited participation in the military bureaucracy, a formal role in court-sponsored rituals to the Ming, and new biographies of their ancestors, whose migration was re-imagined as motivated by the same loyalty to the Ming that was used to assert the legitimacy of the Chosŏn monarchy itself.

This absorption of several marginal lineages into the very heart of the ruling ideology of the Chosŏn dynasty throws considerable light on late Chosŏn state ideology and approach to the control of subject populations. Although Chosŏn courts and elites were, in a sense, identically Ming-centric during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, only during the

¹ Korean words are romanized according to the McCune-Reischauer system. Pinyin is used for Chinese and Hepburn is used for Japanese. The term “sinocentric” is subject to the same objections as sinicization or sinification. See Pamela Kyle Crossley, “Thinking About Ethnicity in Early Modern China,” *Late Imperial China* 11, no. 1 (June 1990): 1-35 and Evelyn S. Rawski, “Presidential Address: Reenvisioning the Qing: The Significance of the Qing Period in Chinese History,” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 55, no. 4 (Nov., 1996): 829-850. It is hard to avoid in the case of Chosŏn, as Chosŏn elites were frequently oriented politically towards the Ming and culturally to an association with certain key Chinese dynasties, including especially the Zhou and the Song. Nevertheless, the term will be used sparingly, for, as the following paper will make clear, it is frequently misleading.

mid-eighteenth century was the admiration of Chosŏn's elites for the Ming Empire expanded to encompass those whose lineages established them as subject of the Ming. That is to say, in a process parallel to events in Qing China and indeed in Eurasia as a whole, identity and subjecthood became increasingly bureaucratized, as people whose descent linked them with the Ming were treated as representing an essential and immutable category of Ming subjects organized and controlled by the Chosŏn court itself. This bureaucratization of submitting-foreigner lineages also involved an ideology of absolute loyalty that paralleled similar ideological and bureaucratic developments in the neighboring Qing Empire, yet it occurred in a state which was not an empire, but a monarchy whose legitimacy was asserted by virtue of its unfailing loyalty to a fallen Ming Empire. Whereas previously submitting-foreigners had played a vital ideological role by establishing the Chosŏn monarchy as a Confucian state capable of receiving the submission of peoples from beyond its borders, the transformation of Chinese lineages into imperial subjects implied a very different narrative, with the Chosŏn monarchy now becoming the refuge for people who had refused to submit to new loyalties but instead chose to preserve their immutable loyalty to the Ming by fleeing to the supposed last remnant of the Ming state in Chosŏn.

From Submitting-Foreigner to Imperial Subject Status

Chosŏn's elites, it is frequently argued, internalized a sinocentric view of the world by the sixteenth century. The case of submitting-foreigners of Ming Chinese origin complicates this picture. During the early Chosŏn, submitting-foreigner status, much like the system of frontier contact with which it was associated, had been primarily used to control Chosŏn's borders by settling Jurchen and Japanese who might otherwise have raided Chosŏn territory, but it also possessed a role in asserting the legitimacy of the Chosŏn monarch. It is notable, then, that before the 1750s, the Chosŏn court categorized all foreign lineages—whether Chinese, Jurchen, or Japanese—according to the same status of submitting-foreigners; only after the 1750s were Ming Chinese descendants given their own, exalted status, as other groups largely disappeared from the record. During the eighteenth century, the changing ideological orientation of the Chosŏn court resulted in the reworking of the status of some remaining lineages to accord with the reconfiguration of Chosŏn's loyalty to the Ming. Submitting-foreigner

status was thus transformed from primarily an aspect of Chosŏn's foreign relations to a ritual tool by which the power of the weak Chosŏn monarchy could be strengthened and the social hierarchy itself could be justified.

Ming-Chosŏn Relations

Chosŏn Korea was once frequently described as the model tributary state within the Chinese World Order, with elites supposedly willingly submitting to first Ming and then Qing hegemony. This claim, much like the Harvard School's Chinese World Order itself, has been questioned and qualified on so many levels that it no longer carries much weight, not least because the specifically Chinese nature of the Qing is now much questioned.² However, it cannot be denied that, for both domestic and external reasons, the Chosŏn monarchy gained an extremely close association with the Ming monarchy that survived the fall of the Ming in the mid-seventeenth century. Partly for defensive reasons, the most important, and most fraught, of Chosŏn Korea's international relations were those with the enormous empires dominating the North Chinese plain to its west, including the Ming Empire before 1637 and the Qing Empire from 1637 until the late nineteenth century. Broadly speaking, Chosŏn's relationship with both the Ming and the Qing was a combination of subservience with nearly complete Chosŏn autonomy, with the subservience being manifested ritually in at least three tribute missions a year sent by Chosŏn to the Chinese capital, in exchange for which the emperor invested the Chosŏn monarch by providing him with his royal seal.³ Within those broad parameters,

² Chun Hae-jong, "Sino-Korean Tributary Relations in the Ch'ing Period," in the *Chinese World Order: Traditional China's Foreign Relations*, ed. John K. Fairbanks (Cambridge, 1968), 90-111. An influential critique of the Fairbank model of the Chinese World Order may be found in James Louis Hevia, *Cherishing Men from Afar: Qing Guest Ritual and the Macartney Embassy of 1793* (Durham, NC, 1995). Kye Sŭng-bŏm, "Chosŏn sidae tong asia chilsŏ wa hanjung kwan'gye" in *Hanjungil hakkye ūi hanjung kwan'gyesa yŏn'gu wa chaengjŏm*, ed. Tongbuga yŏksa chaedan (Seoul, 2009), 125-186, surveys scholarship in English and Korean on Sino-Korean relations. The perspective on the Chinese nature of the Qing is associated especially with the New Qing History. See Kent R. Guy, "Who Were the Manchus? A Review Essay," *Journal of Asian Studies* 61, no. 1 (Feb., 2002): 151-64 and Joanna Waley-Cohen "The New Qing History," *Radical History Review* 88 (Winter, 2004): 193-206.

³ Early explorations of this subject include Melvin Frederick Nelson, *Korea and the Old Orders in Eastern Asia* (Baton Rouge, 1946), especially pages 86-163; Key-hiuk Kim, *The Last Phase of the East Asian World Order: Korea, Japan and the Chinese Empire, 1860-1882* (Berkeley, 1980).

however, the precise form of the relationship changed, both in response to the external environment and within the context of rivalry between high officials and the Chosŏn court. During the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries the Chosŏn and Ming relationship was a difficult one, with Chosŏn generally sending more tribute missions than was required, or indeed desired, by the Ming, and the Ming demanding levels of tribute that were, to the Chosŏn court, excessive; during the early part of this period, especially, the Ming attempted to interfere directly in Chosŏn's domestic politics, while Chosŏn officials themselves were by no means certain to treat submission to the Ming as anything more meaningful than a political necessity.⁴ By the late fifteenth century, however, the relationship had become more settled, with the Ming court resigning itself to the excessive frequency of Chosŏn tribute missions, moderating its demands for tribute, and largely ceasing to interfere in Chosŏn's domestic affairs.⁵ At the same time, domestically, the rise of Neo-Confucian orthodoxy in Chosŏn during the sixteenth century led to an increasingly pro-Ming orientation among Chosŏn's elites, with the Chosŏn monarchy, and the social status system arrayed below the monarchy, increasingly basing its legitimacy on its position within a hierarchy subordinate to the Ming emperor.⁶ A Chosŏn monarchy that was generally weak compared to the powerful aristocratic *sajok* lineages that dominated the bureaucracy could only gain by emphasizing its exclusive privilege of maintaining a formal, if subservient, relationship to the Ming court, and this connection between the Chosŏn king and the Ming emperor was strengthened in 1593 when the Ming intervention against the Japanese invaders saved the Chosŏn monarchy from complete destruction.⁷

⁴ Donald Clark, "Sino-Korean Tributary Relations under the Ming," in Vol. 8, *The Cambridge History of China*, ed. Denis Twitchet and Frederick W. Mote (Cambridge, 1998), 272-300. Peter Yun, "Rethinking the Tribute System: Korean States and Northeast Asian Interstate Relations, 600-1600" (Ph.D. diss., UCLA, 1998), 204-224.

⁵ Kye, "Chosŏn sidae tong asia chilsŏ was hanjung kwan'gye," 135-139, counters that the Ming did interfere with Chosŏn's internal affairs to a rather considerable extent. Notably, however, the examples which he provides are nearly all closely related to the mechanics of the tribute and investiture (such as refusal to invest the new monarch, or conflict about the nature of the tribute goods) with the exception of Ming actions during the early fifteenth century and those in the extraordinary context of the Ming dispatch of troops during the Imjin War.

⁶ For Neo Confucianism, see Peter Yun, "Confucian Ideology and the Tribute System in Chosŏn-Ming Relations," *Sach'ong* 55 (2002): 67-88.

⁷ Seung B. Kye [Kye Sŭng-bŏm], "Huddling under the Imperial Umbrella: A Korean

Late Chosŏn Ming Loyalism

Indeed, so strong was Chosŏn elite association with the Ming that this association survived long after the Ming's fall, as the Chosŏn monarchy's loyalty to the Ming became a tool by which the Chosŏn court and elites asserted their own exclusive legitimacy. As such, the strength of Chosŏn elite association with the Ming actually provides, during the late Chosŏn, another significant complication to the supposed sinocentrism of the Chosŏn court. During the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, Nurhaci, a Jurchen from the Jianzhou region between Chosŏn and Ming Liaodong, consolidated power over other Jurchen polities and the Ming Commandery of Liaodong. By 1636-7, Nurhaci's successor, Hong Taiji, by then in control of the Ming Liaodong, the Jurchen, and a portion of the Mongols, successfully forced Chosŏn's submission to the new Qing dynasty; with the Korean flank neutralized, the Qing was able to take the Ming capital in Beijing by 1644 and eliminate the last Ming holdouts in China proper by 1683.⁸ However, Chosŏn monarchs and elites, having by then situated their legitimacy so clearly within the context of submission to the Ming, could not treat submission to the Manchu as a mere shift in political allegiances, but instead had to deal with it as a crisis of legitimacy which they sought to overcome by claiming that the Chosŏn monarchy was the last true heir to the Ming. If before 1637 the Sino-Korean relationship had played a domestic role in Chosŏn Korea that dwarfed its role abroad, after 1637 the ritual Sino-Korean relationship upon which the Chosŏn social hierarchy depended became separate from the actual relationship that the Chosŏn court maintained with the Qing Empire. Thus, Chosŏn elites privately despised the Qing emperors as barbarians, and the Chosŏn court, although participating punctiliously in the same tribute system with the Qing that it had with the Ming, domestically continued to use loyalty to the Ming as a key plank of its legitimacy.⁹ This loyalty was expressed, under Hyojong (r. 1649-1659) and Sukchong (r. 1674-1720), in actual, if probably deliberately ineffectual, military preparations for a

Approach to Ming China in the Early 1500s," *Journal of Korean Studies* 15, no. 1 (Fall 2010): 41-66; Han Myŏng-gi, *Imjin Waeran kwa hanjung kwan'gye* (Seoul, 1999), 67-88.

⁸ Narrative accounts of the rise of the Qing and of the Late Ming include Frederick E. Wakeman, Jr., *The Great Enterprise* (Berkeley, 1985) and Lynn Struve, *The Southern Ming, 1644-1662* (New Haven, 1984).

⁹ The basic structures of Chosŏn-Qing diplomacy is discussed by Chun Hae-jong, "Sino-Korean Tributary Relations."

war against the Qing.¹⁰ After the complete fall, in 1683, of all Ming hold-outs in China proper, the Chosŏn court reworked its loyalty to the Ming as a ritual process. Thus, in 1704, King Sukchong established a shrine to the Ming, the Taebodan, ostensibly to thank the Ming's Wanli emperor (r. 1572-1620) for his intervention during the Imjin War, but notably describing the Chosŏn monarch as heir and successor to the Wanli emperor.¹¹ Later kings, including Yŏngjo (r. 1724-1776) and Chŏngjo (r. 1776-1800), also emphasized and expanded these rituals in a process which Yu Pong-hak relates to the general process by which both monarchs sought to expand royal power.¹² Thus, under Yŏngjo, the Hongwu (r. 1368-1402) and Chongzhen (r. 1627-1644) emperors, the first and last Ming emperors respectively, were also honored in the Taebodan, while both Yŏngjo and Chŏngjo were dutiful in their participation in Ming Loyalist ritual and in their support for Ming Loyalist publications. Through this they expressed unswerving loyalty to a Ming monarchy at the same time as they asserted that Chosŏn was the last remnant of a tradition originating with the Zhou Dynasty.¹³

Relations with Jurchen and Japanese in Early Chosŏn

Vital though the relationship with the Ming and Qing was, it was not the only form taken by Chosŏn's foreign policy. Especially during the early Chosŏn, the Chosŏn monarchy, in its interaction with the Japanese to Chosŏn's south and the Jurchen to Chosŏn's north, maintained a network of foreign relations centered on the Chosŏn court and well beyond the purview of the Ming. To be sure, with both the Japanese shogun and the Ryukyu king, the Chosŏn court maintained *kyorin* (neighborly) relations

¹⁰ Kye Sŭng-bŏm, *Chosŏn sidae haeoe p'abyŏng kwa Hanjung kwan'gye: Chosŏn chibaech'ŭng ūi Chung'guk insik* (Seoul, 2009), 241-279.

¹¹ Chŏng Ok-cha, *Chosŏn hugi Chosŏn Chunghwa sasang yŏn'gu* (Seoul, 1998), 67-99.

¹² *Yŏngnam ilp'a ūi pukhak sasang yŏn'gu* (Seoul, 1995), 65.

¹³ Works in English and Korean on the subject of Late Chosŏn Ming Loyalism include Jahyun Kim Haboush, "Constructing the Center: The Ritual Controversy and the Search for a New Identity in Seventeenth-Century Korea," in *Culture and State in Late Chosŏn Korea*, ed. Jahyun Kim Haboush and Martina Deuchler (Cambridge, MA, 1997), 46-90; Haboush, "Contesting Chinese Time, Nationalizing Temporal Space: Temporal Inscription in Late Chosŏn Korea," in *Time, Temporality and Imperial Transition*, ed. Lynn A. Struve (Honolulu, 2005), 115-141; and Chŏng Ok-cha, *Chosŏn hugi chosŏn Chunghwa sasang*. A recent reconsideration of this topic may be found in Hŏ T'ae-yong, *Chosŏn hugi chung-hwaron kwa yŏksa insik* (Seoul, 2009).

which were structured within the Ming-centric diplomatic system, and which were based on the assumption that both the Ashikaga shogun and the Ryukyu king were peer monarchs of the Chosŏn king who identically participated in the Ming-centric ritual order. However, during the early Chosŏn, *kyorin* relations were far from sufficient, as the Jurchen to Chosŏn's north had no monarch with which the Chosŏn court could maintain *kyorin* relations and the Ashikaga shogun had only a weak hold on the Japanese *daimyo*. Chosŏn, instead, wishing to avoid the attacks by Japanese raiders (*wakō*) and Jurchen which has so bedeviled the Koryŏ, maintained separate contact with the influential *daimyo* and other officials in Kyushu and Western Honshu and among the Jurchen tribes to Chosŏn's north. With them, the Chosŏn court pursued an active system of diplomacy in which the Chosŏn court was placed in a superior position in exchange for granting trade privileges in a series of licensed ports, bureaucratic positions in the Chosŏn court, and travel permits providing the right to pay tribute in the Chosŏn capital.¹⁴ With the Jurchen of the Tumen River region, especially, the Chosŏn court had deep historical connections, as Yi Sŏng-gye (1335-1408, r. 1392-1398) himself, the founder of the Chosŏn monarchy, was descended of a family of Yuan officials from Ssangŏng Commandary in present day North and South Hamgyŏng Province; growing up in this region inhabited by Jurchen, Mongols, Chinese, and Koreans, he had close associates of Jurchen origin, and, after he ascended to the throne, received tribute from prominent Jurchen.¹⁵ This connection was continued by his successors, although partly in rivalry with the Ming Commandery of Liaodong.¹⁶ Indeed, by the late fifteenth

¹⁴ See Kenneth R. Robinson, "Centering the King of Chosŏn: Aspects of Korean Maritime Diplomacy, 1392-1592," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 59, no. 1 (Feb., 2000): 109-125; idem, "The Tsushima Governor and Regulation of Japanese Access to Chosŏn in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries," *Korean Studies* 20 (1996): 23-50; Chong Da-ham, "Making Chosŏn's own Tributaries: Dynamics between the Ming-centered World Order and a Chosŏn-centered Regional Order in the East Asian Periphery," *International Journal of Korean History* 15, no. 1 (Feb., 2010): 29-63.

¹⁵ Regarding the Ssangŏng Commandary, this subject has recently been discussed in depth by Yun Ŭn-suk, *Monggol cheguk ūi Manju chibaesa-otch'igin wangga ūi manju kyŏngyŏng kwa Yi Sŏnggye ūi Chosŏn kŏn'guk* (Seoul, 2010). On relationships between these groups, see Kenneth R. Robinson, "From Raiders to Traders: Border Security and Border Control in Early Chosŏn, 1392-1450," *Korean Studies* 16 (1992): 94-115.

¹⁶ See Han Sŏng-ju, "Chosŏn ch'ŏgi Cho.Myŏng ichung sujik yŏjin ūi yangsok munje," *Chosŏn sidae sahak po* 40 (2007): 5-43, for a recent discussion of Ming-Chosŏn rivalry concerning the Jurchen.

century, the Chosŏn court's establishment of six garrisons on the Tumen River and its settlement of North Hamgyŏng with Korean settlers from the south meant that Chosŏn had substantial Jurchen communities within its borders and significant connection with Jurchen communities north of the Tumen who acted as intermediaries in the exchange.¹⁷

Submitting-Foreigner Status

Much of these Chosŏn-centric relations ceased to function during the early seventeenth century, after the unification of Japan under the Edo shogunate largely eliminated the semi-independent Japanese *daimyo* with whom Chosŏn had maintained relations, and the Manchu Qing Empire absorbed Chosŏn's Jurchen vassals to Chosŏn's north. However, one feature of Chosŏn's relations with the Japanese and the Jurchen, submitting-foreigner status, survived into the late Chosŏn. During the early Chosŏn, submitting-foreigner status had involved the settlement on Chosŏn soil of Jurchen or Japanese under submitting-foreigner or *hyanghwain* status; this involved granting land, clothing and protection from most taxes for a fixed number of generations, although frequently a tribute was provided to the Board of Rites.¹⁸ Often, as in the case of the Jurchen who were settled in villages on the coast near Ulsan, this tribute was paid in fish.¹⁹ Following the large scale entrance of Ming Chinese in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, submitting-foreigner status became the obvious tool by which such potentially troublesome subjects could be settled into the Chosŏn

¹⁷ Kenneth R. Robinson, "Residence and Foreign Relations in the Peninsular Northeast during the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries," in the *Northern Region of Korea: History, Identity and Culture*, ed. Sun joo Kim (Seattle, 2010), 18-36; Adam Bohnet, "On Either Side the River: The Rise of the Manchu State and Chosŏn's Jurchen Subjects," *Toronto Studies in Central and Inner Asia* 9 (2008): 111-125.

¹⁸ For recent work on Japanese submitting-foreigners see Han Mun-jong, *Chosŏn chŏn'gi hyanghwa.sujik waein yŏn'gu* (Seoul, 2001), 65-90, and Han Mun-jong, "Chosŏn ch'ogi ūi hyanghwa waein kwa Yi Ye," *Hanil kwan'gyesa yŏn'gu* 28 (2007): 89-116. Most work on Jurchen submitting-foreigners concerns the very early Chosŏn. See Yi Hŏn-hŭi, "Chosŏn wangjo ūi hyanghwa yain kyosŏp ko," *Yŏn'gu nonmun jip (Sŏngsin yŏja taehakkyo)* 10 (1977): 105-132; Wŏn Ch'an-gae, "Hwanghwain ūi Chosŏn chŏngch'ak sarye yŏn'gu-yŏjin hyanghwain ūl chungsim ūro," *Tongyang kojŏn yŏn'gu* 37 (2009): 33-62; Han Sŏng-ju, "Chosŏn ch'ogi sujik yŏjinin yŏjinin yŏn'gu-Sejongdae rŭl chungsim ūro," *Chosŏn sidae sahakpo* 36 (2006): 67-108.

¹⁹ Im Hak-sŏng, "17 segi chŏnban hojŏk charyo rŭl t'onghae bon kwihwa yain ūi Chosŏn esŏ ūi saenghwal yangsang-ulsan hojŏk (1609) kwa haenam hojŏk (1639) ūi sarye punsŏk," *Komunsŏ yŏn'gu* 33 (2008.8): 95-128.

state.²⁰ Originally granted for only for three years it became hereditary by the late Chosŏn; thus one could speak, in 1700, of the descendants of Chinese migrants enjoying submitting-foreigner status for “who knows how many years,” and have the Board of Rites reject as disruptive a suggestion that those whose ancestors had migrated before 1591 should have their status reformed.²¹ More concretely, in the 1750s, Hong Pong-han could speak of the submitting-foreigners of Hamgyŏng Province as including a series of migrants from the tumultuous previous century, including the Jurchen of the Six Garrisons, Japanese who came during the Imjin War but did not return to Japan, and finally Liaodongese who fled after the *kapsin* year (1644).²² To be sure, this status involved protection from all tax and corvée except for a tribute to the Board of Rites. Because the status was by no means a prestigious one, however, records for the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries were filled with reference to submitting-foreigners suffering from the extra-legal exactions of petty officials.²³

Notably, submitting-foreigner status had important ritual functions that established the Chosŏn monarchy as a civilizing center to surrounding peoples. Through submitting-foreigner status, the Chosŏn monarchy was

²⁰ Han Myŏng-gi, *Imjin Waeran kwa hanjung kwan'gye*, 152-156 and 280-286; Adam Clarence Immanuel Bohnet, “Migrant and Border Subjects in Late Chosŏn Korea,” (Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 2009), 157-182.

²¹ See Yun Kug-il, trans., *Sinpyŏn Kyŏngguk taejŏn* (Seoul, 2005), 174. This change is reflected in the 1744 law code, the *Soktaejŏn* 3:34b, which is available via the *Chosŏn wangjo pŏpchŏnjip* (Seoul, 1985), 255. Here it is also stated that, in the case of intermarriage between slaves and submitting-foreigners, the descendants would follow the status of the mother; *Sukchong sillok* 34:15b (entry for 1700/10/12). The edition used is the Kuksa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe ed., *Chosŏn wangjo sillok* (Seoul, 1972).

²² Although in this particular instance “Liaodongese” translates “Yosimin” or “people of Liaoyang and Shenyang,” as a general rule in this paper the term “Liaodongese” is used, as by Pamela Kyle Crossley in *A Translucent Mirror: History and Identity in Qing Imperial Ideology* (Berkeley, 1999), 55-128, to represent the border-crossing communities of various origins living in Ming Liaodong. *Sŏngŏngwŏn ilgi* 1076 (entry for 1751/11/26). The version consulted is provided on-line by the Kuksa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe at <http://sjw.history.go.kr>. 1644 is the date of the suicide of the Ming's Chongzhen emperor and of the entrance of the Qing army into Beijing. Here it refers to the Ming-Qing transition in general, not to that year in particular. Indeed, very few Ming migrants would have been able to enter Chosŏn even after the 1637 surrender of the Chosŏn king to the Qing emperor.

²³ For example see *Chŏn'gaeksa ilgi* 03 (entry for 1645/yun06/24), in the Kuksa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe, ed., *Kaksa tŭngnok* (henceforward *KSTR*, Seoul, 1981) 92:281; Kuksa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe ed., *Kugyŏk Pibyŏnsa tŭngnok* (Seoul, 1987) 10:399 (entry for 1677/08/01) and 12:156 (entry for 1683/07/22).

positioned as a source of moral transformation, and this feature survived well into the late Chosŏn when the actual meaning of submitting-foreigner status for interaction with peoples on Chosŏn's frontiers had largely disappeared. The status had, in other words, an important ideological meaning, with ideology here understood, following Poulantzas, as comprising both systems of ideas/representations and material practices (such as customs and manners) which were inherent in the social and economic hierarchies, the division of labor, and indeed in the repressive state violence which they also justified and legitimized.²⁴ Of course, no aspect of state power can be separated from its ideology, so defined. According to Sutton's analysis of Ming and Qing approaches to the Miao, the term "*xianghua*" (the Chinese pronunciation of the Korean "*hyanghwa*") is best translated as "turning towards civilization," and should be seen as rhetorically describing as voluntary the frequently violent process by which people outside of Chinese direct rule were brought politically and culturally into the category "*min*" or subject.²⁵ By also receiving "submitting-foreigners," the Chosŏn court—although not quite pluralist in the manner of the Koryŏ Dynasty elites—was asserting its status as a valid center of political authority and of moral edification to rival the Chinese empire to the west.²⁶ Thus, in 1649, Sŏ Pong-nyong, the leader of a community of submitting-foreigners of Jurchen origin, spoke of his ancestors submitting to Chosŏn because they heard of the beauty of Chosŏn's custom. The purpose for the tax privileges received by his ancestors was described in the same text as driven by the need of the Chosŏn court to provide succor to otherwise helpless and rootless people.²⁷

Ha U-bong, among others, has described submitting-foreigner status within the framework of a sinocentrism in which Chosŏn elites considered themselves inferior to the Ming and superior to surrounding non-Chinese peoples, including the Japanese and Jurchen on Chosŏn's frontiers.²⁸ This, however, ignores the presence of Ming Chinese lineages that were

²⁴ Nicos Poulantzas, *l'État le pouvoir le socialisme* (Paris, 1978), 31.

²⁵ Donald S. Sutton, "Ethnicity and the Miao Frontier in the Eighteenth Century," in *Empire at the Margins: Culture, Ethnicity and Frontier in Early Modern China*, ed. Pamela Kyle Crossley, Helen F. Siu, and Donald S. Sutton (Berkeley, 2006), 190-228.

²⁶ For Koryŏ Dynasty elites, see Remco Breuker, "Korea as an Independent Realm: the Emperor's Clothes?" *Korean Studies* 27 (2003): 48-84.

²⁷ *Chŏn'gaeksa ilgi* 4 (entry for 1649/11/10), in *KSTR* 92:281.

²⁸ Ha U-bong, "Chosŏn chŏn'gi ūi taeoe kwan'gye e nat'an an chaa ūisik kwa t'aja ūisik," *Han'guksa yŏn'gu* 123 (December 2003): 247-270.

categorized as submitting-foreigners during the seventeenth and the early eighteenth centuries. Despite the ostensible Ming Loyalism of the seventeenth-century court following Injo, with a few exceptions Ming-Chinese lineages were classified as submitting-foreigners and enjoyed no special status except in so far as they, like a number of Japanese deserters, had military skills.²⁹ Indeed, Ming migrants with military skills had a status that might well be compared to that of the small number Dutch castaways in Chosŏn, including the famous examples of Jan Janse Weltevree and also the company of Hendrick Hamel who, before they attempted to escape by appealing to the Qing envoy, were drilled under the command of the Ming Chinese in the capital.³⁰ In fact, during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries much the same language of moral edification through submission to the Chosŏn court was used for Ming Chinese submitting-foreigner lineages as for Jurchen and Japanese lineages. Thus, nearly a century after Sŏ Pong-nyong, Han Kwang-hoe, a secret inspector in Chŏlla Province, described submitting-foreigners as being comprised of Ming Chinese and the “dispersed population of other regions.” To be sure, Han Kwang-hoe distinguished the descendants of Ming as “remnant subjects of the Superior Country,” but saw them as identical to the dispersed population of other regions in their need to receive the grace of a sage Chosŏn monarch and a benevolent Chosŏn court. Whether remnant subjects of the Ming or dispersed populations from other regions, to Han it was equally “inappropriate to impose the same corvée duties upon them as upon Chosŏn subjects”; moreover, “it is right and proper to distinguish

²⁹ The exceptions include Kang Shijue who came to court attention already during the seventeenth century, Bohnet, “Migrant and Border Subjects,” 303-346. The topic of surrendered Japanese is surveyed by Han Mun-jong, *Chosŏn chŏn’gi hyanghwain*, 133-192. A significant number of Japanese surrendered during the Imjin War. They were valued for their skill as musketeers, and their descendents, who were categorized as submitting-foreigners, continued to live in Chosŏn after the war.

³⁰ Hendrick Hamel, Brother Jean-Paul Buys, trans., *Hamel’s Journal and a Description of the Kingdom of Korea, 1653-1666* (Seoul, 1998), 15, in which we are told of the presence of many “Chinese” guards in Seoul at this time. Hamel’s famous account of his time in Korea from 1653-1666 was for a long time the chief source of information that Europeans had for Korea. The journal is discussed in considerable detail in Gari Ledyard, *The Dutch Come to Korea* (Seoul, 1984); Vibeke Roeper and Boudewijn Walraven, eds., *Hamel’s World: a Dutch Encounter in the Seventeenth Century* (Amsterdam, 2003); and Boudewijn Walraven, “Reluctant Travelers: Shifting Interpretation of the Observations of Hendrik Hamel and his Companions,” *Sungkyun Journal of East Asian Studies* 7, no. 1 (April, 2007) 19-32.

them as submitting-foreigners, exempting them from corvée. This truly reveals the desire of earlier sage monarchs to care for people from abroad.”³¹ The Chosŏn court, in other words, was positioned through its reception of submitting-foreigners as a provider of civilization and proper submission even to people from China, its ostensible superior country.

Han Kwang-hoe’s report was made at the point of a general reorganization of this status, whereby Ming lineages were distinguished from Jurchen and Japanese. As the Chosŏn monarchy began to assert its exclusive role as ritual heir to the Ming during the eighteenth century, it reorganized the Ming migrants into the separate and exalted status of imperial subject (*hwangjoin*). During the reign of Yŏngjo, however, submitting-foreigner status underwent an extensive reorganization at the behest of the court. Following the establishment of the Taebodan in 1704, Chosŏn monarchs increasingly sought out people of Ming migrant ancestry to participate in Ming Loyalist rituals.³² A more general reorganization of the status did not begin until the 1750s. In 1751, for instance, Yŏngjo was informed that, within Yŏngnam Province, Ming descendants were given the same status as Jurchen and Japanese descendants.³³ In response, Yŏngjo, lamenting his lack of sincerity towards the Ming, and recalling the necessity of rectifying names, called upon the Board of Rites to inquire within all regions as to who was recorded as submitting-foreigners. It was simply inconceivable that the heirs of Ming subjects who had refused to remain, as he imagined, under the Qing, should be treated as outsiders in need of submission or civilizing. This began the process whereby submitting-foreigners of Ming-Chinese origin were removed from their previous category and formally reclassified as “imperial subject” (*hwangjoin*), a category which, as the alternate terms “remnant subjects of the imperial dynasty” (*hwangjo yumin*) and “remnant subjects of the imperial Ming” (*hwangmyŏng yumin*), make clear, described Ming descendants as continuing to be subject to the fallen Ming dynasty.³⁴ Henceforward, members of this category were encouraged

³¹ *Chŏn’gaeksa ilgi* 9 (1754/09/10), KSTR 93:96.

³² For instance, see *Yŏngjo sillok* 8:27b-28a (entry for 1725/12/13).

³³ *Sŏngjŏngwŏn ilgi* 1075 (entry for 1751/10/08).

³⁴ *Hwangjoin* is used in the title of Wang Tŏk-ku’s *Record of Remnant Subjects of the Imperial Dynasty* (*Hwangjo yumin rok*, National Library # ko 25669), an anthology of nine Ming migrants who settled in the Öüidong neighborhood of Seoul. *Hwangmyŏng yumin* is used in Sŏng Hae-ŭng (1760-1839)’s “Biographies of the Remnant Subjects of the Imperial Ming (*Hwangmyŏng yumin chŏn*),” an anthology of Ming loyalists including not only those

to participate in Ming rituals in the presence of the monarch, and to take military exams through royal sponsorship.³⁵ During the following reign of Chǒngjo, about thirty members of Ming migrant lineages were enrolled in a separate military division known as the Han Brigade (*hallyǒ*), and three were enrolled as Taebodan guards (*Taebodan sujikkwan*).³⁶ This, in turn, resulted in a significantly higher status for the lineages in question, bringing them into direct contact with the court, and indeed the monarch himself, which for some opened positions in the military bureaucracy, and gave specific ritual status to many others.³⁷ In the genealogies of one group of capital-based Ming migrant lineages the only positions listed are those of the Han Brigade or the Taebodan guards.³⁸

There are many instances where contemporary sources referred to the incongruity of imposing newcomer status on people whose ancestry could be placed in the very Ming Empire in which the Chosŏn royal family saw its own origin. Officials increasingly questioned how Ming Chinese could be treated as if they were outsiders who had come to adopt Confucian values and swear loyalty to the sovereign of their new country. Thus, in 1798, Chǒngjo criticized the continued use, beyond the capital, of the term “submitting-foreigner” to describe the descendants of Ming migrants. The terms with which he expressed this criticism referred especially to the Great Meaning of the *Spring and Autumn Annals* and the division between barbarian and Chinese found within. Echoing Yǒngjo’s call for the rectification of names, Chǒngjo argued that it was utterly nonsensical to use “submitting-foreigner” to refer to those “imperial subjects who had entered Chosŏn,” and he ordered a general correction of all records that referred to “submitting-foreigners villages (*hyanghwain ch’on*).”³⁹ Indeed, in a Chosŏn society which increasingly made a virtue of its subordination to a long-fallen Ming, it made very little sense to define people whose lineages located them within the Ming with a status describing their willingness to submit to Chosŏn and Confucian culture.

who fled to Chosŏn, but also those who remained in China, those who fled to Southeast Asia, and those who were martyred in the struggle against the Qing. *Yŏngyŏngjae chŏnsŏ* 37, *Han’guk Munjip Chŏnggan* (Seoul, 1991) 274: 303-4.

³⁵ For the former, see *Yŏngjo sillok* 87:2b (entry for 1756/01/14), for the latter, the *Hwangjojin sajŏk* (Kyujanggak # 2542), fr. 1.

³⁶ *Chǒngjo sillok* 29:49a-b (entry for 1790/03/19).

³⁷ For instance, *Chǒngjo sillok* 11:79b (entry for 1781/yun5/12).

³⁸ *Hwangjo yumin segye wŏllyu ko* (National Library of Korea # ko 2-1817).

³⁹ *Chǒngjo sillok* 49:29a-b (entry for 1798/09/01).

Note that the Ming-centrism of Chosŏn elites, while constant, in a sense, from the early Chosŏn, underwent significant changes over time and was expressed very differently according to context. Many scholars have already explored these changes at the level of court ritual and the formal Sino-Korean relationship. The above discussion reveals, however, even greater complexity when one looks away from the level of elite ritual and formal foreign affairs to the level of ordinary migrants. Well into the eighteenth century the high regard of the Chosŏn monarch for the Ming emperor did not extend to ordinary migrants; indeed, it was not considered incongruous to place Ming migrants in the same submitting-foreigner status as Jurchen and Japanese migrants. By categorizing Ming migrants as submitting-foreigners, the Chosŏn court represented Ming migrants as submitting to their rule and moral edification. With the rise of Ming Loyalist ritualism in the eighteenth century this symbolism, which had been uncontroversial during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, was treated as problematic by the Chosŏn court. As a result, the Chosŏn court actively restructured the status of Ming migrants to accord better with the Ming Loyalist ideology of the Chosŏn court.

Royal Power and the Integration of Marginal Subjects

How should this change in bureaucratic status be understood? Among the few scholars to attempt a discussion there has been a tendency to see it as from the point of view of contemporary multiculturalism or nationalism. This approach misses the mark. The submitting-foreigners whose status was reorganized under Yŏngjo were not, in any useful sense, to be referred to as either foreigners or Chinese, having been settled in Chosŏn for more than a century. The reorganization of their status during the late Chosŏn was a process by which formerly marginal subjects were integrated as constituent elements of the ruling ideology of the Chosŏn court; in this sense, it is best seen within a Northeast Asia undergoing the vernacularization of elite consciousness, where increasingly bureaucratic definitions of identity and the development of absolute standards of loyalty according to which the subject peoples of early modern empires were categorized.⁴⁰ Indeed,

⁴⁰ For vernacular, see Alexander Woodside, "Territorial Order and Collective-identity Tensions in Confucian Asia: China, Vietnam, Korea," *Daedalus* 127 (Summer 1998): 191-221. For standards of loyalty, see Pamela Kyle Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror*.

imperial subject status provides a tool by which one may explore the assimilation of the values of the center from the perspective of the marginal lineages being assimilated. It also shows both how absolute standards of loyalty, more characteristic of empires, could be used in a small monarchy like Chosŏn, and how ordinary Chosŏn subjects responded to this new concept of loyalty.

The limited research on this subject to date has largely explored this transformation from submitting-foreigner to imperial subject as providing information of the particular ethnic affiliation and consciousness of the Chosŏn court. In addition to much useful work primarily concerned with collecting the records on these migrants and their descendants as found within the *Chosŏn Annals* or genealogical sources,⁴¹ two scholars, John Duncan and Han Kyung-koo, have attempted to analyze submitting-foreigner status primarily within the context of contemporary Korean nationalism and multiculturalism. Duncan, for instance, analyzes submitting-foreigner status as a window through which to observe the growth or lack of growth of protonationalism in the late Chosŏn. Seeing submitting-foreigner status as primarily a tool of assimilation, he argues that the widespread presence of this status during the early Chosŏn was a sign of a lack of a clear idea of nation or pure bloodlines. He thus understands the disappearance of submitting-foreigner status in the late eighteenth century as evidence of an increasingly racially exclusive society; he sees the same process in the creation of a new status, imperial subject status. In his own words, by the mid-eighteenth century “the Chosŏn court abandoned its centuries old policy of assimilation of *hyanghwain* and began to treat the Han Chinese living in Chosŏn as a permanent foreign element.”⁴² Han Kyung-koo, in a critical response to the apolitical multiculturalism now fashionable in South Korea, asserts that Chosŏn was without an ethnic or racial consciousness, but that this did not result in it being free of oppressive categories. The key basis for respect was participation in civilized Confucian rites and manners, such that “A Jurchen chief or a Japanese pirate could become a civilized Korean by discarding his old ways to adopt a

⁴¹ Li Guangtao, *Zhonghan minzu yu wenhua* (Taipei: Zhonghua congshu bian shen wei yuan hui, 1968), 34-114; Liu Chunlan, “Shilun Mingqing zhiji chaoxian shehui de munhua chongming sixiang—Daming yimin de yingxiang,” in *Disan hanguo zhuantong wenhua guoji xueshu taolunhui lunwenji* (Jinan: Shandong daxue chubanshe), 936-960; Sun Weiguo, “Chaoxian wangchao zunzhou siming wenti zhi yanjiu—1637-1800” (Ph.D. diss., Hong Kong School of Science and Technology, 2001).

⁴² Duncan, “Hyanghwain” *Acta Koreana* 3 (2000): 99-113.

Korean way of life and cultivate himself.” However, he compares the positive response of the Chosŏn court to Chinese descendents during the reign of Yŏngjo (r. 1724-1776) with the hostile response to submitting-foreigners of Jurchen descent during the reign of Yŏnsan’gun (r. 1494-1506), and concludes from this that, despite a self-evident lack of interest within Chosŏn to maintain racial homogeneity, there was a general feeling of superiority on the part of the Chosŏn people to non-Koreans other than Chinese. From this he argues that eliminating the concept of a homogenous state will not, in itself, eliminate racial and cultural discrimination.⁴³

Both Duncan and Han assume that the Jurchen and Chinese were already coherent ethnic or racial groups before their arrival to Chosŏn, and that the Chosŏn state’s response to them was driven primarily by their ethnic status. Duncan, rightly, notices temporal development in submitting-foreigner status, but imagines falsely that the bureaucratic category of submitting-foreigner was primarily concerned with assimilation or naturalization. Han assumes it to be a given that “sinocentrism” implies admiration for Chinese people as an ethnic group transcending class. Although rightly critical of the apolitical multiculturalism advocated in some corners of contemporary South Korea, he also errs in seeing submitting-foreigner status as implying assimilation or naturalization in something approaching the modern sense. Moreover, he is ahistorical when he compares the response of the Chosŏn state to Chinese lineages in the mid-eighteenth century to the response to Jurchen in the late-fifteenth to early-sixteenth-century reign of Yŏnsan-gun, despite what even this brief survey has shown to be enormous changes in the response of the Chosŏn state to Ming migrants. Both fall into what Pamela Crossley, in her discussion of the misuse of the term ethnicity in studies of Qing history, has described as the “garbling of perspectives by failure to distinguish between the concept of race (or ethnicity) and the purported phenomenon of race (or ethnicity).”⁴⁴

⁴³ Han Kyung-koo, “The Archaeology of the Ethnically Homogenous Nation-State and Multiculturalism in Korea,” *Korea Journal* 47, no. 4 (Winter 2007): 8-31. For scholars who similarly approach the change through the perspective of assimilation and sinocentrism, see Sŏ Kŭn-sik, “Chosŏn sidae hyanghwa kaenyŏm e taehan yŏn’gu-Chosŏn wangjo sillok ūl chungsim ūro,” *Tongyang kojŏn yŏn’gu* no. 37 (2009): 7-31 and No Hye-gyŏng, “Yŏngjodae hwangjoin e taehan insik,” *Tongyang kojŏn yŏn’gu* 37 (2009): 127-160.

⁴⁴ Pamela Kyle Crossley, “Thinking About Ethnicity in Early Modern China,” *Late Imperial China* 11, no. 1 (June 1990): 1-35.

It is an error to assume that submitting-foreigner status was a process with aims more or less identical to the contemporary assimilation of foreign ethnicities. The fact that, by the 1750s, Ming Chinese, Jurchen, and Japanese groups had lived more than a century in Chosŏn as submitting-foreigners suggests that this category was hardly a tool of assimilation. Although their hereditary tax status distinguished these migrant lineages from the rest of the population, they are hardly likely to have used different languages, worn different clothes or practiced particularly unusual customs in any other significant respect except, perhaps, in the peculiar family traditions which they may have preserved. These traditions, in a society organized according to lineages each with its own historical justification, would barely have distinguished them from their neighbors. Scattered as they were about the country, they were in no way a multicultural or diasporic community in the manner of the Philippine community in South Korea today, or the Korean community in Canada. Yet before the 1750s, the Chosŏn state had considered it necessary to maintain their foreign bureaucratic status and even vocabulary that described them as rootless. After the 1750s, their foreignness was transformed when the court had them participate in ritual categories constructed in accord with court ideology. Ming migrants were changed, in other words, from people permanently engaged in submission to the Chosŏn court to loyal subjects of the Ming permanently in refuge from the Qing, and this process occurred without regard for the symbols—such as language, food, or participation in a diasporic community—usually associated with ethnicity, and among people who had been in Chosŏn for many generations.

Rather than view this process through the lens of assimilation and ethnicity, the Northeast Asian context of vernacularization and bureaucratization are useful frameworks that allow us to view the development of imperial subject status as part of broader regional and indeed Eurasian trends in which Chosŏn Korea was also participating. Alexander Woodside, for instance, in a comparison of the bureaucratic societies of China, Korea, and Vietnam during the early modern period, has explored the process by which the civil religion of Confucianism spread far beyond the elites in all three countries, becoming, in diluted form, part of the vocabulary of non-elites as well—thus, in China, ritual practices formerly associated with high officials during the twelfth century were practiced by ordinary commoners during the eighteenth, while widow chastity, once hardly expected of non-elites, was celebrated for non-elite women through

numerous shrines to women who committed suicide to preserve their chastity.⁴⁵ Lieberman, comparing general trends in political consolidation in South East Asia and Europe, describes the process whereby countries as diverse as France, Russia, and Burma underwent both lateral, elite standardization and vertical, demotic standardization as the language, religion, customs, and manners of the court and capital were spread both to the regions (lateral standardization) and to non-elites (vertical standardization).⁴⁶ Notably, this process, though not necessarily contradictory to the assimilationist policies of the nation-states of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, was not identical to it. Thus, as Rawski points out, the Qing Empire experienced cultural convergence, much as one would expect with the Lieberman model, within both China proper and within the Qing's Inner Asian domains, but this convergence occurred in tandem with a heightened emphasis on Tibetan, Mongolian, and Manchu languages which were, in a sense, unified through the active effort of the political center which sought to participate in both Chinese and Inner Asian spheres. Chinese novels and philosophical works became widely read by Mongols, but in translation. The Qing emperors, in origin Manchu but claiming the mantle of both the Chinggisid khans and the Ming emperors, pursued cultural integration of their subjects which accommodated both categories.⁴⁷

Accompanying these changes was a new understanding of loyalty within early modern empires, whereby the status of the diverse peoples under imperial control were redefined in terms which essentialized them according to categories controlled by the imperial court itself. As Crossley has shown, the Qing Empire during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, similarly to the Ottoman, French, and Russian empires during the same period, sought to place the identities of the peoples under its control into bureaucratic categories administered from the center. Under the Qianlong

⁴⁵ Alexander Woodside, "Territorial order and collective-identity tensions"; also see idem, *Lost Modernities: China, Vietnam, Korea and the Hazards of World History* (Cambridge, 2006).

⁴⁶ Victor Lieberman, "Transcending East-West Dichotomies: State and Culture Formation in Six Ostensibly Separate Areas," *Modern Asian Studies* 31, no. 3 (1997): 463-546; also see idem, *Strange Parallels: Southeast Asia in Global Context, c. 800-1830* (Cambridge, 2009).

⁴⁷ Evelyn S. Rawski, "The Qing Formation and the Early Modern Period," in *The Qing Formation in World-Historical Time*, ed. Lynn A. Struve (Cambridge, 2004), 226-232.

emperor (r. 1735-1796), especially, these categories were predicated on the assumption of the absolute nature of loyalties. Thus Manchu banners were required to conform to a set of court-determined categories, including skill in mounted archery and use of the Manchu language, while the Mongols were defined by their worship of Chinggis Khan (whose mantle the Qing emperors claimed as their own), their participation in Tibetan Buddhism, their use of the Mongolian language, and their institutional affiliation with the Mongol banner armies. Han Chinese were clearly distinguished from both, with the Hanjun bannermen who had served with the Qing army increasingly having their status degraded, and with the historically indispensable category of Han Chinese who abandoned the Ming for the Qing being reviled as “twice-serving subjects.”⁴⁸ In short, these diverse peoples were defined according to immutable categories, while their loyalty, to the Ming or to Chinggis, was declared absolute by a Qianlong emperor who claimed to have received the mantle of both.⁴⁹

Notably, developments occurring in the Qing had a direct influence on the Chosŏn court, which was engaged in extensive and intensive cultural exchange with the Qing hegemon—as a result, Chosŏn’s Ming Loyalist, anti-Qing pretensions were closely connected with Qing intellectual and political changes. Despite the show of resistance to the Qing present in much late Chosŏn Ming Loyalist ritual, Chosŏn’s Ming Loyalism was in fact no secret to the Qing, and even much praised by Qing monarchs beginning with the Kangxi emperor (r. 1661-1722), who referred to Chosŏn’s stubborn Ming Loyalism as an example to his own disloyal subjects.⁵⁰ The clarification of the Chosŏn-Qing border in 1712 occurred in the context of a Qing Empire that was placing new ideological importance on the

⁴⁸ *Hanjun*—also translated as “Chinese-Martial” by Crossley—were incorporated into the Later Jin/Qing’s banner-armies between 1621 and 1642. See Mark C. Elliott, “Ethnicity in the Qing Eight Banners” in *Ethnicity on the Margins: Culture, Ethnicity and Frontier in Early Modern China*, ed. Pamela Kyle Crossley, Helen F. Siu and Donald S. Sutton (Berkeley, 2006), 42-45; Pamela Kyle Crossley, “The Qianlong Retrospective on the Chinese-Martial (*hanjun*) Banners,” *Late Imperial China* 10.1 (June 1989): 63-107.

⁴⁹ Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror*. Also see Laura Hostetler, “Qing Connections to the Early Modern World: Ethnography and Cartography in Eighteenth-Century China,” *Modern Asian Studies* 34, no. 3 (2000): 623-662. For a somewhat different discussion of the convergence in the demand for loyalty by two rival polities, see Andrey V. Ivanov, “Conflicting Loyalties: Fugitives and Traitors in the Russo-Manchurian Frontier, 1651-1689,” *Journal of Early Modern History* 13, no. 5 (2009): 333-358.

⁵⁰ Han Myŏng-gi, *Chŏngmyŏ.pyŏngja horan kwa tong Asia* (Seoul: P’urŭn yŏksa, 2009), 538.

Manchu homeland, and was increasingly concerned both to prevent Chinese settlement in Manchuria and to distinguish banner communities, Chinese settler communities and bondservant communities within southern Manchuria.⁵¹ As a result, Chosŏn relations with the Qing were deeply bound up with concerns within the Qing Empire to distinguish and define Manchu and Han. The connection between Qing and Chosŏn practices can be seen more clearly in the realm of scholarship. By the late eighteenth century Ming Loyalist scholars based in the Kyujanggak Library, including Yi Tŏng-mu (1741-1793) and Sŏng Hae-ŭng (1760-1839), participated actively in the state-sponsored scholarship of the Qianlong era. The *Collected Texts on Honoring the Zhou* (*Chonju hwip'yŏn*), Ming Loyalist history par excellence, made extensive use of Qing scholarship.⁵² Indeed, both Sŏng and Yi produced biographies of Ming migrants to Chosŏn that involved extensive reference to Qing scholarship.⁵³

It is in this broader, Northeast Asian context that one should understand the Chosŏn state's creation of imperial subject status. Fortunately, a wealth of available data—including a series of hagiographic biographies of Ming migrants—make it possible to observe the process by which the state formed the categories of the foreign subjects under its control. For one, these sources reveal that the lineages which were re-categorized during the mid-eighteenth century were diverse not only in their origins but also in their previous interaction with the state, and were united ultimately only by the state-produced category of submitting-foreigner in which they were placed. Thus, the T'ongju Kang, descendants of Liaodongese refugee Kang Shijue, came to the attention of the Chosŏn administration in the late seventeenth century, and made their mark on written culture via biographies and poems produced by high officials.⁵⁴ The Chŏlgang Si, by contrast,

⁵¹ The implications of the Chosŏn-Qing border negotiations are discussed in detail by Seonmin Kim, "Ginseng and Border Trespassing Between Qing China and Chosŏn Korea *Late Imperial China* 28.1 (2007): 33-61. Mark C. Elliott, "The Limits of Tartary: Manchuria in Imperial and National Geographies," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 59, no. 3 (2000): 603-646. Christopher M. Isett, *State, Peasant, and Merchant in Qing Manchuria, 1644-1862* (Stanford, 2007).

⁵² For instance, see *Chonju hwip'yŏn* (Seoul, 1985) 1:22, which quotes the *Qing Record of the Dynastic Foundation* (*Kaiguo fanglue*), if only to contradict it.

⁵³ For Sŏng and Yi's scholarship in general, see Kim Munsik, *Chosŏn hugi kyŏnghak sasang yŏn'gu* (Seoul, 1996). For biographies of Ming migrants in particular see Bohnet, "Migrant and Border Subjects," 287-303.

⁵⁴ Bohnet, "Migrant and Border Subjects," 306-326.

were descendants of Shi Wenyung, purged supporter of King Kwanghae, but made a reappearance in the eighteenth century as Ming Loyalists.⁵⁵ Others, such as the Chenam Wang or the Imgu P'ung and other members of the Ming military families of Ōuidong, were barely mentioned during the seventeenth century but had records produced for them during the late-eighteenth-century re-categorization.⁵⁶

The Nongsō Yi, a prominent lineage of Liaodongese migrants, were an especially interesting case because they revealed clearly the role of the state in bringing together three different groups with foreign origins into a unified group. Further interest was provided by the fact that the Nongsō Yi claimed origin among prominent *Nikan* of Liaodong and thus provide a vivid parallel with Qing practice.⁵⁷ The Nongsō Li were descendants of Li Chengliang (1526-1615), an official of presumably Korean-Jurchen origin whose ancestors maintained hereditary bureaucratic positions in Liaodong, and who fought successfully in numerous military campaigns for the Ming, notably against the Jurchen.⁵⁸ His son, Li Rusong (1549-1598), was one of the key generals to lead the Ming intervention against the Japanese invaders of Chosŏn during the Imjin War. Members of the lineage continued to be employed against Nurhaci in the early seventeenth century, although, as with the Tong family of Fushun, they were suspected of conspiring with the Jianzhou Jurchen. Indeed, most of the descendants of Li Chengliang who remained in Manchuria became members of the Qing banner armies, either as Manchu or as Hanjun bannermen, and thus they experienced a similar re-categorizing of their identity as experienced by other Hanjun.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ For a discussion of Shi Wenyung, see Kim Tu-gyu, *Chosŏn p'ungsu hagin ūi saengae wa nonjaeng* (Seoul, 2000), 318-343. For Shi Wenyung's redefinition as a Ming loyalist see the *Hwangjoin sajŏk*, fr. 104-5. Also see Yi Kung-ik, "Chung'guk in" in *Kugyŏk Yollyosil kisul* (Seoul, 1976) 11:765-766.

⁵⁶ Bohnet, "Migrant and Border Subjects," 206-209.

⁵⁷ The Manchu term for the sinophone inhabitants of Liaodong. For the implications of the term see Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror*, 91-99.

⁵⁸ "Yi" and "Li" are the same surname, with "Yi" being the McCune-Reischauer Romanization of the modern South Korean pronunciation, and "Li" the pinyin Romanization of the Chinese pronunciation. Pinyin Romanization is used for those members of Ming Chinese lineages who were born in China, while McCune-Reischauer Romanization is used for the names of their Korean descendents. The military activities of the Li family are discussed by Kenneth Swope, "A Few Good Men: The Li Family and China's Northern Frontier in the Late Ming," *Ming Studies* 49 (2004): 34-81.

⁵⁹ Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror*, 87.

The Chosŏn context of this lineage provides an interesting parallel. Three families in Chosŏn claimed descent from Li Chengliang. The first to enter Chosŏn was Li Chenglong, supposed to be the descendent of Li Rumei, Li Rusong's brother.⁶⁰ The *Injo Annals* described Li Chenglong's original flight to Chosŏn (although, no reference is then made to descent from Li Rumei),⁷⁸ while his descendants Yi Pŏn-dŭk, Yi Tong-bae and Yi Myŏn all achieved status by means of the military exams.⁶¹ Yi Myŏn was described as having fallen on hard times and was rescued by Yŏngjo's Ming Loyalist court already in the 1730s, while, later in the eighteenth century, younger members of this branch rose in the military hierarchy in connection with these same ideological shifts.⁶² While this particular branch was prominent already in the seventeenth century, the other two were largely unknown, coming to the view of the court as part of the process of the development of imperial subject status. Thus there was a second branch belonging to Li Yingren, whose family claimed descent from Li Rusong's second son Li Xingzhong; according to family tradition, after Li Xingzhong fell in battle in 1644, Li Yingren fled to Chosŏn, eventually establishing himself in Hwiyang deep in the Kŭmgang Mountains.⁶³ Yet, although eighteenth-century texts referred to Li Yingren's arrival under Injo, no official record of this arrival during the reign of Injo survives, and Li Yingren's lineage appeared in no official source until his descendant Yi Hwŏn came to the attention of the court. The third branch, not coming into official records until the reign of Chŏngjo, involved the supposed descendants of Li Rusong's liaison with a Korean woman, whose child established himself on Kŏje Island.⁶⁴ The Nongsŏ Yi lineage continues to exist in South Korea to this day, where its members now claim to be one part of a broader Sŏngju Yi lineage which, like most Korean *yangban* lineages, traces descent from a Silla strongman via a prominent Koryŏ official.

⁶⁰ An interesting side-note is that Li Chenglong is also remembered as the protagonist of the "Tale of General Yi," a martial-arts story in which he is described as defeating a lascivious monk, only to be ignored by the jealous governor of P'yŏngan Province. This story may be found in a number of versions, and can be most easily accessed via Pak Hŭi-byŏng, *Han'guk hanmun sosŏl kyohap kuhae* (Seoul, 2005), 793-8.

⁶¹ For Li Chenglong see *Injo sillok* 23:25a (entry for 1630/10/22), for his descendants, see *Yŏngjo sillok* 47: 49b-50a (entry for 1738/12/13).

⁶² *Hwangjoin sajŏk*, fr. 86-96.

⁶³ *Hwangjoin sajŏk*, fr. 58.

⁶⁴ *Ōjŏng muye dobo tŏngji* (National Library of Korea # ko 0236-7) 3:1a-2a. This passage is quoted in the *Hwangjoin sajŏk*, fr. 59-60.

However, such distinguished Korean antecedents are not part of the eighteenth-century historiography of the lineage.⁶⁵

With Li Yingren's descendants, especially, one may observe the process by which the Ming migrant lineages actively sought to participate in the bureaucratic categories that the Chosŏn court had established for them. Yi Hwŏn, for instance, was revealed in the records as lobbying the Chosŏn court for enrolment as an imperial subject. Thus, in 1754, several Ming migrants "fearing that they might be included in the *Compendium of Submitting-foreigners* (*Hyanghwain sŏngch'aek*)," checked the record, upon which they discovered that Yi Hwŏn, the fifth descendant of the Ningyuan Marquis—Li Chengliang—was included within. Overwhelmed with horror, they had his name removed, along with the names of Ch'o Hae-ch'ang, Chŏn Si-dong and Pŏn Cha-gŏn, each the descendants of Ming soldiers who had made a name for themselves in the Imjin War. The response of the court was to renew the rules whereby the descendants of these Ming soldiers would be guaranteed freedom from tax, corvée, and military service in perpetuity, and to declare more formally that all records of such Ming migrants should be struck from the *Compilation of Submitting-foreigners*. The court also demanded that the capital administration should be sure to define all such migrants not as submitting-foreigners but as Chinese (*Hwain*); in the case of Ch'o Hae-ch'ang, he was also freed from base status which he had presumably gained on account of his ancestor marrying a woman of servile origin.⁶⁶

Of course, the result of this process from the perspective of these formerly submitting-foreigners themselves was to have their own status raised—in the case of Ch'o Hae-ch'ang, to even escape base status. Material benefits may have been key for obtaining the assent of these groups to

⁶⁵ Indeed, it would seem that the precise relationship between the supposed descendants of Li Chengliang and other Korean lineages was in the process of redefinition until quite recently. YI Ki-sil, in the 1974 *Lineage of the Nongsŏ Yi* (*Nongsŏ Yissi sebo*, National Library of Korea # ko 2518-62-442), 25, still finds the need to assert the absolute certainty of the identity between the Nongsŏ Yi and the Sŏngju Yi. Although their Korean origins were well known during the late Chosŏn, no reference is made to any connection to a prominent Korean lineage in the quotations from the Nongsŏ Yi Genealogy found Chŏngjo-era *Traces of the Acts of Imperial Subjects*, where they are rather defined as a lineage of Chinese officials unjustly discriminated against within a Chosŏn society dominated by prominent Silla lineages. See *Hwangjojin sajŏk*, fr. 69.

⁶⁶ *Chungjojin suyong chŏn'gyo* (Kyujanggak # 7899), fr. 1-2 (entry for 1754/06/04); *Yŏngjo sillok* 81:40b (entry for 1754/06/12).

the dominant narrative of the Chosŏn monarchy. The cost, however, was to accept court-determined categories for their identity. Indeed, the Chosŏn court was designated as even forming the Nongsŏ Yi lineage itself. Thus, the Nongsŏ Yi genealogy depicted both Yi Hun, by then a prominent military official, and Yi Hwŏn, at that point a commoner, being brought into the presence of Yŏngjo. Describing Yi Hwŏn's family as peasants from a remote mountain valley (*hyŏmmaeng*), Yŏngjo had Hwŏn take the military examination, in which, the genealogy claims, Yi Hwŏn did so well, despite having no experience with shooting the bow, as to cause Yŏngjo to express amazement, and to suggest that Yi Hwŏn's descent from Li Rusong itself was responsible for his inborn military skill.⁶⁷ Moreover, according to the same genealogy, Yŏngjo particularly requested that the lineage establish Li Rusong as their ancestor, in order to strengthen the connection.⁶⁸ Chŏngjo himself intervened directly to maintain shrines and rituals to Li Rusong and Li Rumei.⁶⁹ The connection with the Imjin War, in other words, allowed the mountain peasants and island dwellers that made up two of the disparate lines that were the Nongsŏ Yi lineage to form one unified military *yangban* lineage. The formation of the Nongsŏ Yi lineage in Chosŏn was a reassertion of the Chosŏn court's connection with the Ming, even as it was enormously beneficial for members of that lineage.

This pose, although beneficial for the Ming migrant families, was by no means automatic for them; it was ultimately a court-created category. For instance, in 1800, near the end of his reign, Chŏngjo oversaw the successful passing of the military examination by Yi Hŭi-jang from Kŏje Island in the far south. To celebrate this revival of a long abandoned lineage, Chŏngjo ordered that the "relevant officer" cause Yi Hŭi-jang to prostrate himself both in the war memorial to the fallen Ming soldiers, the Sŏnmusa, and in the shrine of Li Rusong, his ancestor. Yi Hŭi-jang acted as requested, and Chŏngjo's order, to this extent, was followed. However, Chŏngjo was not pleased, for Yi, when presenting himself before the ancestral shrine, failed to remove his household tally (*hop'ae*) bearing the Qing era name. As Chŏngjo said:

⁶⁷ *Hwangjoin sajŏk*, fr. 60-63.

⁶⁸ *Hwangjoin sajŏk*, fr. 63-64.

⁶⁹ For instance, see *Chŏngjo sillok* 26: 28a-29b (entry for 1788/11/13).

That Hŭi-jang should bring such a tally into the shrine! He is really such an ignorant person. I do not know whether there was sweat on Hŭi-jang's brow, but how could the commander, whose spirit flows like water, be pleased seeing his descendant? Make one household tally and engrave the Ming era name on it... Make sure that the petty officials in the Sŏnmusa bring him over once more today to engage in sacrifice, and also make him take part in the ceremony in the family shrine right away. In the future let us make sure that people of his sort have household tallies as I have specified.⁷⁰

For Chŏngjo, the household tally, containing as it did the Qing era name, violated the supposed Ming Loyalism of the rituals and indeed of the Ming migrant lineages themselves. However, this was not obvious to Yi Hŭi-jang. As this example suggests, even in 1800, long after the establishment of the Taebodan, and long after the ritual innovations of Yŏngjo and Chŏngjo, the descendants of Ming migrants, no doubt as proud of their ancestors as any Korean lineage, could nevertheless be ignorant as to the precise ritual language to be employed. The Chosŏn court was not integrating or rejecting a foreign group from Korean society, but was assimilating a member of a marginal lineage, Yi Hŭi-jang, into court ritual and a court-determined identity that was at least in part alien to him.

When viewed from this perspective of vernacularization, it becomes apparent that the process experienced by Ming migrant lineages in Chosŏn was not exclusive to them. During the same period, minor families descended of domestic martyrs to the Ming cause such as the T'amjin Ch'oe, were able, as Kim Hyŏnyŏng describes, to use the state to raise their social status by emphasizing their glorious ancestor.⁷¹ Kenneth Robinson also explores the T'ae'an Yi's invention of Chinese ancestors (notably linked with key Song Dynasty figures important to Chosŏn Confucianism) in their eighteenth-century genealogies—this, he shows, was part of a process by which they, though a minor family, were able to gain slightly higher social status.⁷² By contrast, in Cheju, patrilineal elites abandoned such inappropriate household seats for more conventional ones during the eighteenth century.⁷³ Although most Ming migrants, in contrast to the T'ae'an Yi, had

⁷⁰ *Chŏngjo sillok* 54: 3a (entry for 1800/04/10).

⁷¹ Kim Hyŏn-yŏng, "Chosŏn hugi e issosŏ chŏnt'ong ūi ch'angch'ul-T'amjin ch'oe ssi ch'ŏn'gok p'a ūi *Song'gye yugo Ch'unghunbu tŭng'gŭp* ūi punsŏk ūl chungsim ūro" in *Chosŏn sidae sahoe ūi mosŭp*, ed. Kim Hyŏn-yŏng and Yi Yŏng-ch'un (Seoul, 2003), 15-42.

⁷² Kenneth R. Robinson, "The Chinese Ancestors in a Korean Descent Group's Genealogies," *Journal of Korean Studies* 13 (2008): 89-114.

⁷³ Kim I-ru, "Koryŏ hugi Cheju Mongol ūi mannam kwa Cheju sahoe ūi pyŏnhwa," *Han'guk sabak* 15 (2003): 45-75.

a patriline originating from a genuinely foreign ancestor, the basic process—non-elites transforming their own stories to conform to court ritual and the ruling ideology—was identical.

Moreover, from the perspective of the Chosŏn state and elites, this shift involved the reorientation of a group of people to assert both the absolute natures of the proper loyalties to the state and the exclusive legitimacy of the Chosŏn monarchy as established through the court ideology of Ming Loyalism. To be sure, the concept of imperial subject was formed in reaction to what had become, for the Chosŏn court, the incongruous treatment of Ming Chinese lineages who were now seen as submitting to proper loyalties and conforming to proper Confucian principles. Yet, in some respects the symbolic function of submitting-foreigner status did not change. If submitting-foreigners had served to raise the status of the Chosŏn monarchy by placing it at the center of tribute-bearing foreigners, imperial subject status, in many ways, did so as well. Such texts as the *Traces of the Acts of Imperial Subjects* (*Hwangjoin sajök*) reveal case after case of the monarch himself being in attendance at the moment at which imperial subjects presented themselves for military exams or participated in Ming Loyalist ritual in the Taebodan.⁷⁴ Though no longer seen as submitting to proper loyalties in the manner in which even some Chinese migrants had once been described, imperial subjects were equally crucial to confirming the legitimacy of the Chosŏn court's claim that it had inherited the Ming mantel. As Yŏngjo is quoted as saying in the *Traces of the Acts of Imperial Subjects* at Yi Hwŏn's successful passing of a military exam: "The descendent of the Ningyuan Marquis [Li Chengliang] has passed an exam in Chosŏn! This is very good indeed!"⁷⁵ Indeed, the close association between the new imperial subjects and the Chosŏn monarchy constituted a reconstruction of the earlier relationship between the Chosŏn court and the submitting-foreigners. Ming migrants were envisioned not as submitting to proper loyalties and accepting Confucian rites and manners, but as preserving absolute loyalties to the Ming and refusing to abandon Confucian rites and manners.

Although imperial subjects confirmed the centrality of the Chosŏn monarchy and bureaucracy, the significant improvement in status that they experienced was not enough, of course, to raise them into the ranks of the central bureaucracy. Pak Chi-wŏn, in "The Story of Master Hŏ" (*Hŏsaeng-jŏn*), has Yi Wan reject the acceptance of Ming migrants into

⁷⁴ *Hwangjoin sajök*, fr. 1-4.

⁷⁵ *Hwangjoin sajök*, fr. 63.

elite Chosŏn ranks.⁷⁶ Indeed, in the genealogies of the nine righteous official lineages one group of capital-based imperial subjects reveals considerable intermarriage with fellow Ming migrant lineages whose titles never rise beyond Han Brigades (*Hallyŏ*) and Taebodan Guards (*Taebodan sujik-kwan*), but all intermarriage with other lineages reveals the thoroughly unexceptional social status of the Korean lineages, who generally have such titles as “student” (*yuhak*).⁷⁷ Further research is needed to explore marriage patterns with military lineages in particular, but currently it would seem that intermarriage between members of imperial subject lineages and bureaucratic elites remained rare well into the nineteenth century. That is to say, as Eugene Park has argued for the military exams, the late Chosŏn court allowed for significant award of symbols of social status to non-elites without significantly infringing on the privileges of the bureaucratic lineages of the capital.⁷⁸ Ming migrant lineages were raised, through their participation in key aspects of the narrative of the center, into a higher class than they had enjoyed previously. Nevertheless, although participation in this narrative improved their overall social status, it did not infringe upon the rights of either the central bureaucratic elites or of the Chosŏn monarch. On the contrary, as this narrative implied the absolute nature of their loyalties to the Ming system that was controlled, discursively, by the Chosŏn court and high officials themselves, the now formally inscribed foreignness of their social status assimilated them as permanent supplicants to the Chosŏn monarchy.

Submitting-foreigner lineages, in other words, were not a minority ethnic group that the Chosŏn court was either accepting or rejecting, but were a series of lineages of foreign origin whose relationship to the Chosŏn state was being defined substantially to serve the interests of the state. In the case of Yi Hŭi-jang above, a representative of this newly anointed minority was unaware of the particular motivations that were supposed to have determined his presence in Chosŏn. Imperial subject status did not involve the acceptance or rejection of multiculturalism or the assimilation of foreign ethnicities. Rather, it was a category established specifically to serve the ritual and ideological needs of the Chosŏn court.

⁷⁶ *Yŏrha ilgi, Yŏnamjip* 14:95a-b (Seoul, 1981), 298. For an English translation see Peter H. Lee, “The Story of Master Hŏ” in *Anthology of Korean Literature from Early Times to the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Peter H. Lee (Honolulu, 1981), 213-221.

⁷⁷ *Hwangjo yumin segye wŏllyu ko* (National Library of Korea # ko 2-1817).

⁷⁸ Eugene Y. Park, *Between Dreams and Reality: The Military Examination in Late Chosŏn Korea, 1600-1894* (Cambridge, 2007), 158-162.

Conclusion

Sino-Korean relations during the Chosŏn Dynasty are often described as the model of the tributary system within the Chinese World Order—as an example of a genuine submission to the Chinese model. Yet, during the seventeenth century, this supposed sinocentrism was not extended to Ming migrant lineages, who were most certainly not treated as peers of Korean elites. When they did gain a more desirable social status following the mid-eighteenth century this new status developed simultaneously with the restructuring of the symbolic aspects of the Sino-Korean relationship to focus on Chosŏn. This change was driven, not by increase or decrease in tolerance for the foreign other, but on the assertion of Chosŏn's inheritance of what was believed to be an otherwise defunct Confucian monarchical tradition. Rather, imperial subject families such as the Nongsŏ Yi were assimilated into the dominant ideology of the Chosŏn state by having the foreignness of their main patriline emphasized. The creation of imperial subject status out of submitting-foreigner status was part of a process of vernacularization, whereby the traditions of these groups were assimilated into official ideology and ritual practices even as their identities were reshaped to establish the Chosŏn court as the central and exclusively legitimate recipient of loyalty.

