

**Gift Exchange among States in East Asia
During the Eleventh Century**

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ABSTRACT

Gift Exchange among States in East Asia
During the Eleventh Century

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In the year of 1005 the Liao and the Song concluded the Shanyuan treaty and it initiated the peace between these two states, which was conditioned to exchange biannual envoy missions: on New Year's day and imperial birthdays. After the Shanyuan Treaty was formalized, diplomatic relations between the Song and Liao courts brought them to an equal status, and the stage for their competition and diplomacy moved to issues regarding tributary protocol and diplomatic gifts. Song and Liao rivalry required not only Song and Liao but also Goryeo and Xi Xia to make some adjustments on their diplomatic politics and gradually all four courts had a certain level of flexibility in managing their relationship. Diplomatic gifts of these states provide a good way to examine dynamics among these four states in East Asia during eleventh century.

To secure their political position and economic benefits, all four states actively managed the guest ritual and diplomatic gifts. Song and Liao devised several ways to maintain mutual respect and coined a neutral name for their "tribute" to each other as "ritual gifts." The Goryeo, caught between the Liao and the Song, tried to prepare similar but appealing diplomatic gifts to both courts, and the Xi Xia utilized its strategic position as a strongman in the trade to Central Asia to receive commercial benefit under the name of Song "return gifts." Through these dynamics, whether an item was named "ritual gift"

or “tribute,” the common element of diplomatic gifts was self-interest through reciprocity.

Throughout frequent diplomatic contacts, Song agencies responsible for diplomacy were institutionalized and operated efficiently with various specialized departments. When they prepared and exchanged diplomatic gifts, the kinds and quantity of material objects were carefully managed. Although basic principle of gift exchange was reciprocity, diplomatic gifts displayed multifaceted characteristics. Items holding commercial value were highly welcomed by all four courts – horses were a major representative of such kinds - but the objects without direct commercial benefit were also exchanged. Musical instruments and the Buddhist canon were more important for the messages they conveyed about Song culture than their financial cost, and active exchanges of these cultural items contributed to form a shared culture in East Asia.

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MAP 1: The Liao and Northern Song, 1100

(source: F.W.Mote, *Imperial China, 900-1800* [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999], 58)

CHAPTER 1: Introduction

The eleventh century saw dynamic interactions among states in East Asia. After the dominant Tang dynasty fell apart in the late tenth century, various competing political regimes communicated with each other by exchanging envoy missions. These envoy exchanges constructed peace among states but also lots of war, and each state – regardless of whether it was the host or the guest– managed the exchange of materials under the name of diplomatic gifts. Traditional terms used for these diplomatic gifts, based on the *Rites of Zhou*, were “tribute” (*gong* 貢) and “imperial favor” (*enci* 恩賜). This tributary relationship had long been the nominal framework for interpreting state-to-state relationships among the states of East Asia. In this dissertation, I examine how states in East Asia –mainly the Song, the Liao, the Xi Xia and the Goryeo – managed diplomatic gifts as an element in their political, economic, and cultural politics.

Before examine interactions among states in East Asia, I must clarify my understanding of the notion of “tributary relationship” during this period. The subject has been studied by many scholars since John K. Fairbank labeled it a uniquely Chinese system of foreign relations. Foreign rulers presented tribute to Chinese courts as a representation of their loyalty and in return they received valuable imperial gifts bestowed by Chinese courts, as well as the opportunity to trade for other kinds of Chinese goods. These reciprocal benefits, according to Fairbank, provided the grounding rhetoric that sustained the tributary system.¹

However, due to the particular situation of the tenth to twelfth centuries, in which no one state stood out as an unmatched “center,” the “Chinese World Order” that Fairbank proposed

¹ John K. Fairbank, *The United States and China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979), 158-161.

has to be applied in a revised way.² In *China among Equals*, Morris Rossabi and his co-authors pay attention to the practical aspects of the tribute system from the tenth to thirteenth centuries when there was a vibrant competition between each state inside and outside of China proper. Different from the conventional understanding of the tribute system as a sino-centric international order based on political and cultural supremacy, they argue, “During the Song period, the tributary system was a practice of international relationships among equal states.”³

Another question I confront is: which state was the “China” positioning itself in the center of the “Chinese World Order” during the tenth to twelfth centuries. Naomi Standen, in her *Unbounded Loyalty*, criticizes earlier studies that regarded the Liao as just a military enemy, political rival, and cultural partner of the Song.⁴ The Liao emerged crucially from the wreckage of the Tang as early as 907, fifty years before the Song was established, so its standing was more than enough to claim itself as “China.”⁵ A similar question is faced by scholars of the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms’ period (907-960).⁶ Multiple rulers claimed to be emperors, and were able to interact with each other while maintaining their own titles. Recently, scholars agree

² Fairbank developed “tributary system” as a framework to explain the Chinese anti-egalitarian and hierarchical foreign relations. He formulated “Chinese World Order” based on the events of exchanging missions and granting ranks of the tributary states by the Chinese emperor. (John K. Fairbank, *The Chinese World Order: Traditional China’s Foreign Relations* [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968], 1)

³ Morris Rossabi ed., *China among Equals: The Middle Kingdom and its Neighbors, 10th -14th Centuries* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 3-10.

⁴ Naomi Standen, *Unbounded Loyalty: Frontier Crossing in Liao China* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2007), 6-7. In her study, the actual reason for criticizing the tendency of treating the Liao as a rival of the Song was for drawing attention to the first century of Liao rule which, she complained, was unnoticed or naively regarded as conquest dynasty against the Chinese regimes during the Five Dynasties, as prefiguring Song-Liao.

⁵ Even though I admitted that there could be a biased view on the character of the Liao due to limitations of primary sources written by “Chinese,” it seems clear to me that the Liao also actively adopted the “Chinese” structure of governing and claimed itself as a legitimate successor of the Tang China.

⁶ Edmund H. Worth, Jr., “Diplomacy for Survival: Domestic and Foreign Relations of Wu Yue, 907-978,” in *China Among Equals*, 17-46; Naomi Standen, “Raiding and Frontier Society in the Five Dynasties,” in *Political Frontiers, Ethnic Boundaries, and Human Geographies in Chinese History*, edited by Nicola Di Cosmo and Don J. Wyatt (New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), 160-191; Naomi Standen, “The Five Dynasties,” in *The Cambridge History of China, vol 5, part 1: The Sung Dynasty and Its Precursors, 907-1279*, edited by Denis Crispin Twitchett and Paul Jakov Smith (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 38-132; Peter Lorge ed., *Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms* (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 2011).

that a multiplicity of imperial ideologies based on the same intellectual tradition needs a different discourse.

In this complex context, it is noticeable that the states that emerged out of the collapse of the Tang, including the Liao, tried to claim to be the proper successor of the Tang, which was regarded as the “center” of the world. What those states shared as a “system” of interaction was the “Tang World Order,” that is, a tributary relationship they experienced and remembered that was in practice throughout the Tang period. The Goryeo also sent tributary missions to the Later Tang, Later Jin, Later Han and Later Zhou successively, which Goryeo officials recognized as proper successors of the Tang, the new “centers” of China. By the tenth to twelfth centuries, this gift-exchanging practice with increasingly elaborate ceremonies had already become an integral part of state-interaction. Series of guest ritual practices were established during the Tang dynasty formalizing international relations.⁷ As all states in East Asia by then had learned these principles and the practice of tributary relations, they were able to more astutely manage diplomatic gifts which conveyed the relative status of their diplomatic partners.

In this dissertation, I concentrate on the material objects exchanged during tribute missions and I refer to these diplomatic objects by the comprehensive term, “diplomatic gifts.” Even though the “tributary system” has been regarded as an important framework for understanding Chinese international relationships, the contents of the “tribute” involved is not well-documented; usually the “real” context and the “real” intent were hidden behind the events recorded, so the episodes surrounding diplomatic gifts have to be reconstructed. According to

⁷ Denis Twitchett, “Sui and T’ang China and the Wider World,” in *The Cambridge History of China, vol 3, part 1: Sui and T’ang China, 589-906*, edited by John K. Fairbank and Denis C. Twitchett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 32-8; Jonathan W. Best, “Diplomatic and Cultural Contacts between Paekche and China,” *HJAS*, 42, no.2 (1982): 443-501; Iwami Kiyohiro 石見清裕. *Tō no hoppō mondai to kokusai chitsujo 唐の北方問題と国際秩序* (Tokyo: Kyūko Shoin, 1998); Zhenping Wang, *Ambassadors from the Islands of Immortals* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2005)

the classic study on the exchange of gifts by Marcel Mauss, gift giving is an important mode of social exchange in human society. The obligatory give-and-take maintains various social bonds, so it reveals the structure of social relations.⁸ The practice of gift-giving was analyzed further by later scholars such as Marshall Sahlin, who argued gift-giving is a mechanism of reciprocity, and Fortes, who showed the political function of gift exchange and reciprocity in maintaining social equilibrium between potentially conflicting actors.⁹ Of course, these theories do not always apply universally and therefore their relevance to Chinese court culture in the tenth to twelfth centuries must be investigated. However, it is true that “gift exchange” was an integral part of the social fabric in East Asia, especially as a means of formalizing alliances, as a signifier of power, and an expression of political aspirations. During an era when many political regimes were competing with each other for their own survival and safety, gifts, as the practical part of their diplomatic relations, functioned as political mediator. Diplomatic gifts revealed the relative status of states as well as their political, economic, and cultural intentions. Therefore, I focus on the practical management of diplomatic gifts by the courts of East Asia to compete, ally, and negotiate with each other.

The term, “diplomatic gifts,” in this dissertation, mainly refers to the material objects exchanged in tributary exchange, whether they are termed “tribute” (*gong* 貢), “local products” (*fangwu* 方物), “annual payment” (*suibi* 歲幣), or “imperial favor” (*enci* 恩賜). These terms were originally associated with the hierarchical rhetoric based on the traditional tribute world order which was first formulated in the *Zhou li*, but during the tenth to twelfth centuries, in a multi-centered international environment, these terms should be understood in a more practical

⁸ Mauss, Marcel (trans. by W.D. Halls and by Mary Douglas), *The Gift: the Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*. (New York: W.W. Norton, 1925[Essai sur le don], 1990 trans.)

⁹ Yan, Yunxiang, *Flow of Gifts: Reciprocity and Social Networks in a Chinese Village* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 6-8.

context. Each state especially the Song and the Liao, manipulated these terms in dealing with diplomatic gifts as a way to situate its political and cultural position in their world order. Therefore, in Chapter Five, I divided diplomatic gifts into three categories, considering the particular political conditions of the time: ritual gifts 禮物, regional objects 方物 or “tribute,” and return gifts. Due to their standing as equals, the Song court and the Liao court used the term, “ritual gifts,” to avoid the term “tribute” in which the traditional hierarchical rhetoric was embedded, so I distinguish those gifts between the Song and the Liao from the “tribute.”

Many studies of diplomatic gifts look on “tribute” as a commodity. Focusing on its commercial aspect, the tribute system often paralleled international trade relations.¹⁰ However, these approaches overlook the political and cultural characteristics of these diplomatic objects, which were, in other words, political and cultural policies exposed through diplomatic gifts. Especially in the cases of the states of East Asia, particularly the Goryeo, the commercial importance of “tribute” was not as apparent and dominant as those of the states in Southeast Asia. In order to focus on the tangible aspect of tribute, and to shift the emphasis from the ideological frame to the realistic and practical motivation of the courts, the political and cultural undertones of “tribute” has been somewhat downplayed. However, in my study, I want to revisit the political and cultural value of “tribute” beyond the commercial aspect, to understand the cultural exchanges among states in East Asia.

My original interest in “diplomatic gifts” as a topic of study started from my desire to study “tangible” interactions of “culture” among states in East Asia. Though this was a somewhat naïve understanding in the beginning, my examination of “cultural exchange” was

¹⁰ Fairbank, *The Chinese World Order*, 1968; Shiba Yoshinobu, “Sung Foreign Trade,” in *China among Equals*, 1983; Hans Bielenstein, *Diplomacy and Trade in the Chinese World, 589-1276* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2005); Takeshi Hamashita, *China, East Asia and the Global Economy: Regional and Historical Perspectives* (New York: Routledge, 2008); Derek Heng, *Sino-Malay Trade and Diplomacy from the Tenth through the Fourteenth Century* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2009).

gradually refined, influenced by new studies on the Qing court's practical management of "ritual" and "diplomatic gifts," which gave me a way to examine the political and cultural aspects of diplomatic gifts from a revised perspective.

James Hevia provides a fascinating study of Sino-foreign negotiations, treating "guest ritual" and "diplomatic gifts" as a material method through which the Qing court managed foreign relations. His approach confirms a "ritual" as a form of encountering which is subject to negotiation, contestation, and redeployment in context, and not a fixed ahistorical framework essentializing the Chinese world order.¹¹ He also viewed the protocol negotiations of the Qing court and the Macartney embassy as an encounter between Qing and British imperial formations. He wanted to avoid looking at this international meeting as an encounter between the civilizations or cultures as a whole; rather he recognized the tangible agency. By defining the character of actors, he could successfully explain the specific purpose and mechanism behind the actual event.¹² Inspired by his careful setting of the subjective actor, in my study I clarify the boundary of the actors of tributary relations at the level of the court of each state (the Song, Liao, Xi Xia, and Goryeo), which was an institution of political decision-making and the source of state power. By defining the agency clearly, I can escape from the danger of viewing the Khitans or the Tanguts with the superficial vision of "barbarian," thus ignoring cultural dynamics by simply concluding cultural exchange as "sinicization" or "assimilation."

Nicola Di Cosmo examined the meaning of "tribute" in the relationship between the Qing and the nomadic Kirghiz tribes. He focuses on the issue of the "tributary system" on the frontier level and shows different discourses that the center and the periphery made to

¹¹ James Hevia, *Cherishing Men from Afar: Qing Guest Ritual and the Macartney Embassy of 1793* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995).

¹² Hevia, *Cherishing Men from Afar*, 25-7.

accommodate their actual situation into the “tributary relationship.”¹³ He articulated that this relationship was constructed by mutual recognition of each other and both the “center” and the “periphery” participated in this “system” to achieve practical benefits. Therefore, the characteristic of “tribute” was multifaceted. Qing’s “tributary languages” was practically defined, so it created a political space that, on the one hand allowed the nomads economic privileges without apparently compromising their integrity of political structure, and on the other hand, created the nomad’s subordination to the Qing court. The importance of “tribute” in the case of northern Kirghiz tribes, different from those of the southeastern neighbors of the Qing, had relevance to a political and ideological value rather than predominantly economic appeal. He concludes, “The central function of the gift exchange resides in that it filters the relationship of subordination through one of equality implicitly expressed in the exchange of gifts, so that the independence of the nomadic political process could be restructured into a relationship of dependency without apparent dislocation of the authority.”¹⁴ This study suggests an important perspective for my dissertation: the tributary system was an institutional mechanism mutually constructed by both the “center” and the “periphery,” therefore, the characteristic of diplomatic gifts was multifaceted according to the interest and the interpretation of the agents.

To make my examination more focused, I particularly deal with four states in East Asia: the Song, the Liao, the Xi Xia, and the Goryeo. These four states interacted with each other actively, and managed their relationships through relatively regular exchanges of envoy missions from the tenth to twelfth centuries. Various material objects were exchanged in the form of diplomatic gifts, and those settings of exchanges became the main place for political

¹³ Nicola di Cosmo, “Kirghiz Nomads on the Qing Frontier: Tribute, Trade, or Gift Exchange?” in *Political Frontiers, Ethnic Boundaries, and Human Geographies in Chinese History* (New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003)

¹⁴ di Cosmo, “Kirghiz Nomads on the Qing Frontier,” 366.

and cultural encounters. The Liao and the Song courts competed for recognition as the “center” in managing relationships with neighboring states, and the Xi Xia and the Goryeo courts actively dealt with diplomacy with the Liao and the Song in the position of “important” neighbors, geographically and politically. The concept of diplomatic gift was interpreted differently by all these courts in a strategic fashion. Eventually, these four states’ interactions resulted in cultural exchanges through the movement of diplomatic gifts, which the courts managed carefully.

The starting point of my investigation is the year 1005, an important moment in understanding the relationship between the Song and the Liao.¹⁵ In this year the Shanyuan Treaty, which initiated peace between the Song and the Liao, was concluded.¹⁶ Even though reciprocal envoy missions had been exchanged between the Song and the Liao already from 974, relations between the two states were marked by incessant warfare especially after the Song defeated the Northern Han in 979. As the Liao had positioned itself as the mediator between the Northern Han and the Song, and as Song Taizong even marched into the Hebei area against the Khitans, the Liao thereafter rejected envoy missions from the Song suing for peace. Wars between the two states were in progress favorably for the Liao by the year of 1004 when the Liao penetrated Hebei and seized a few cities. Song Zhenzong sent Cao Liyong as a diplomat to a Khitan military camp to negotiate for peace, which ultimately resulted in the Shanyuan Treaty.

This treaty stipulated (1) the establishment of friendly relations between the two states; (2) annual payments (*suibi*, 歲幣) to the Liao of two hundred thousand bolts of silk and one hundred thousand ounces of silver; (3) the demarcation of borders that would be mutually

¹⁵ Some sources say 1004, as it happened prior to the New Year on the Chinese lunar calendar.

¹⁶ The process of negotiations between the Song and Liao courts is introduced in detail in the second chapter “The Sung-Liao War of 1004-1005 and the Covenant of Shan-Yüan” in David Curtis Wright, *From War to Diplomatic Parity in Eleventh-century China Sung’s Foreign Relations with Khitan Liao* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2005), 39-99.

respected; (4) the agreement that both sides would repatriate fugitives from justice; (5) the agreement that neither side should disturb the farmland and crops of the other; (6) the agreement that neither side should construct fortifications and canals in addition to those already in existence along the border; and (7) the pledge of a solemn oath with a religious sanction in case of contravention.¹⁷ After the Shanyuan Treaty was formalized, diplomatic relations between the Song and Liao courts brought them to an equal status, and the stage for their competition and diplomacy moved to issues regarding tributary protocol and diplomatic gifts.

With the peace treaty between the Song and the Liao, the political environment of the Xi Xia and the Goryeo changed. The Xi Xia ruler, Li Deming, who had just succeeded his father, was enfeoffed by the Liao as the King of Xiping in 1004. The Xi Xia maintained a political alliance with the Liao from 982, it negotiated a peace treaty with the Song in 1006, which initiated regular envoy missions to the Song, in addition to those to the Liao. A major clash occurred between the Song and the Xi Xia in 1038 when the Xi Xia ruler, Li Yuanhao, a successor of Li Deming, claimed that as requested by his neighbors, the Uighurs, Tibetans and Tatars, he would solemnly adopt the title of Emperor. This resulted in a four-year war (1040-44) between the Song and the Xi Xia. This war ended with protracted peace talks, which resulted in a treaty with the following terms: Yuanhao would refrain from styling himself as emperor in his relations with the Song court, in compensation for which the Song court would pay annually to the Tangut 255,000 items. These items would include 152,000 bolts of silk, 72,000 ounces of silver, and 30,000 catties of tea, and 1000 bolts of cloth.¹⁸

The Goryeo, in contrast to the Xi Xia, established friendly relations with the Song from

¹⁷ Jing-shen Tao, *Two Sons of Heaven: Studies in Sung-Liao Relations* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1988), 15.

¹⁸ Ruth Dunnell, "Tanguts and the Tangut state of Ta Hsia," PhD diss. (Princeton University, 1983); Yang Huan 杨浣, "Liao Xia guanxishi yanjiu 辽夏关系史研究," PhD diss. (Fudan University, 2006), 39-54.

the tenth century, based on their mutual hostility toward the Khitan state of the Liao. The Goryeo's initial relations with the Song were inaugurated by an envoy mission with "tribute" sent in 962 and came to a halt in 1022, when Goryeo Hyojong reluctantly accepted investiture from the Liao emperor. After the Shanyuan Treaty in 1005, which laid the foundations for lasting peace between the Song and the Liao, the Khitans launched a series of destructive incursions into the Goryeo, culminating in the settlement of 1022. This settlement suspended diplomatic relations between the Goryeo and the Song. In 1071 Song restarted the exchange of official envoys with the Goryeo and a new phase of diplomatic relations was opened. The Goryeo court sent official envoy missions to both of the Song and the Liao courts for many years from 994 to 1022, and from 1071 to almost the last year of the Liao and the Northern Song court. While the Goryeo sent envoy missions and diplomatic gifts to both courts, it paid special attention to keeping the balance between the two courts. At the same time, Goryeo's strategic position made the Song and the Liao regard it as an "important" neighbor to ally with and diplomatic gifts were one of the major methods it need to manage their complex relationship.¹⁹

In the second chapter, I examine the rhetorical context of diplomatic gifts. How the Song, Liao, Xi Xia, and Goryeo understood the notion of "tribute," and how they adopted its rhetoric in actual gift-exchange are the main questions that I explore. I argue that they all shared the rhetoric of "tribute" inherited from the Tang practice, and they admitted its hierarchical connotations, but manipulated it for their own practical purposes.

The third chapter is devoted to a comparison of guest rituals of the Song and the Liao.

¹⁹ Michael C. Rogers, "Notes on Koryŏ's Relations with Sung and Liao," *Jindan hakbo* 震檀學報, vol.71.72 (1991.12): 310-35; Huang Kuanzhong 黃寬重, "Songli maoyi yu Wenwu Jiaoliu 宋麗貿易與文物交流," *Jindan hakbo* 震檀學報, vol.71.72 (1991.12): 335-47; Jiang Jizhong 姜吉仲, *Gaoli yu Snog Jin waijiao jingmao guanxishilun* 高麗與宋金外交經貿關係史論 (wenjin chubanshe, 2004).

As an actual setting for the exchange of diplomatic gifts, guest rituals revealed the relative political position of each state, and so both the Song and the Liao carefully performed them in order to display their standing.

In the fourth chapter, I investigate the institutional side of gift exchanges and ask such questions as who produced and managed gifts; how often did they exchange gifts and who decided this; what conditions influenced the contents and the quantity of gifts.

In Chapter Five, more attention is put on the material objects themselves. I illustrate the material objects presented as diplomatic gifts among the Liao, Song, Xi Xia, and Goryeo along with official envoy missions. A large share of the textual evidence about diplomatic gifts is in the format of long lists. The commercial aspect of diplomatic gifts has been often emphasized in recent studies, and in them several goods stand out: silk, silver, tea, and horses. In addition to these objects as commodities, further attention is paid to the other material objects, such as imperial garments, belts, golden vessels, and even dogs, which did not hold commercial value, but displayed political and cultural value. What particular objects were selected as gifts? What specific objects were associated with important occasions? How did each court manage the contents and number of diplomatic gifts? Pursuing these questions, I argue that diplomatic gifts reflect their purpose: representing political relationships, conveying wealth, and presenting their own cultural values. These characteristics of gifts were a representation of the active policies of the Liao, Song, Xi Xia, and Goryeo court competing, allying, and negotiating with each other through the exchange of envoy missions.

In the next three chapters I delve more deeply into the cultural domain of the exchange of gifts. I focus on three special objects as representative examples of diplomatic gifts – horses, musical instruments, and the Buddhist canon. What kind of value was associated with giving or

receiving these particular gifts? Were certain materials received with the same significant manner and worth? If these gifts conveyed different worth to different states, then what comprised divergent views on the Chinese culture associated with certain materials? These questions will guide my reflection on cultural exchange through the exchange of gifts.

Horses were the most valued item exchanged in the tributary relations, so they were influential materials in managing diplomacy with each other. Musical instruments and the Buddhist Canon were not the most frequently presented gifts; rather these are special presents which were also carried by envoy missions, but limited to exceptional requests. Unlike the long lists of diplomatic gifts which lack specific historical context, discussed in Chapter Five, these specially requested items are better documented. Therefore I can infer the motivation of the sender and appreciate the receiver's view of these objects. Did the initial motivation of the giver and the response of receiver correspond? An investigation on the flow of these gifts provides evidence that the struggle to maintain political position in their world order resulted in cultural exchanges among the four states through the flow of material in the form of diplomatic gifts.

CHAPTER 2: Rhetoric of Interstate Relations

In relations with foreign states, the Northern Song dynasty (960-1125) employed highly formal ceremonies and rhetoric. Mostly in its contacts with the Liao court, the Song struggled to be either of equal or relatively higher status. Of course, this desire to increase and maintain status was the goal of the Liao as well. Wang Gungwu, in his article, “The Rhetoric of a Lesser Empire,” argues that both the Liao and Song courts fully understood the Tang imperial rhetoric and used it to manage their relations with each other and their neighbors. He summarized Tang imperial rhetoric in five broad groups: moral and cosmological language that expressed inclusiveness; rhetoric dealing specifically with tribute; derogatory language justifying the use of force; routine communications stressing realism and flexibility; and the rhetoric of contractual relations.²⁰ In this chapter, I focus on the rhetoric of “tribute” during the tenth to eleventh centuries. How did the Song, the Liao, the Xi Xia, and the Goryeo courts manage the idea of “tribute” when they contacted and competed with each other? Did they all share the same ideas about “tribute” being used to designate a hierarchical order – either China centered or powerful northern state dominated? If each state assigned different contexts to the various gifts they exchanged, what kind of value did each state place on these gifts?

I start to examine how officials in the Song court viewed and documented the exchange of diplomatic gifts in the “world order,” including the relationship with the Liao. Then, I will observe the responses and arguments of the Liao court, as well as those of Xi Xia and Goryeo. Finally, I will examine the dynamic “world order” constructed through the multiple and

²⁰ Wang Gungwu, “The Rhetoric of a Lesser Empire: Early Sung Relations with Its Neighbors,” *China Among Equals: The Middle Kingdom and its Neighbors, 10th -14th Centuries* (Berkeley: University of California, 1983), 48.

practical purposes of each state.

Song Views on Diplomatic Gifts in *Cefu yuangui* 冊府元龜 and *Yuhai* 玉海

Song perspectives on the exchange of diplomatic gifts are relatively well documented. Two encyclopedic books, *Cefu yuangui* and *Yuhai*, organized as they are by topic, are great sources for the views of Song literati on the issues of diplomatic relations. Both books contain chapters dealing with the history of foreign relations: “Outer Subjects 外臣” and “Tributary Relations 朝貢,” respectively. Despite the fact that a ruler of a foreign state, like the Liao, would never be considered a minister or subject of the Song, in *Cefu yuangui* the title of “Outer Subjects” was given to the section covering the issues of relations with foreign states.²¹ *Cefu Yuangui* was compiled by Wang Qinruo (960-1025) and other Song officials after a request from the emperor. They started to compile the book in 1005, shortly after the signing of the first peace treaty with the Khitans, and completed it eight years later. This book represents the political objectives of the Song court of the time because the author, Wang Qinruo, was an official who actively participated in the decision-making surrounding the relationship with the Liao court.

Yuhai was compiled by Wang Yinglin 王應麟 (1223-1296) almost three centuries later in the late thirteenth century. Wang Yinglin completed the book when he returned to his hometown, Mingzhou 明州, after his long official career with the Song government.

Considering the time period this book was produced and considering Wang Yinglin’s career in government, the section titled “Tribute 朝貢” of *Yuhai* is a good source to represent the Song

²¹ *Cefu yuangui* 冊府元龜, by Wang Qinruo 王欽若 (Nanjing: Fenghuang chubanshe, 2006), ch. 956-1000.

officials' view of the "world order" near the end of the Song. This section, "Tribute," is divided into two sub-sections: Foreign States ("Outer Barbarian") Seeking Audience 外夷來朝; and Presenting Regional Products 獻方物 and Offering Return Gifts and Banquet for Foreign States ("Outer Barbarian") 錫予外夷 宴饗.²² The first sub-section is a historical review of foreign states coming to China to pay audience. The composition of the review itself is revealing. The Song court regarded its relationships with foreign states within a pattern of traditional imperial rhetoric dating back to the initial relationship between the Han and the Xiongnu.

The essential elements of the relationship is described in the second sub-section. It states that foreign states offered regional products to the Song court and in return the Song court provided them with imperial largess and a banquet for visiting emissaries. The short preface to this part reads: "According to the *Tongdian*, the sages did not value rare goods and did not treasure materials from remote countries. When barbarians sought an audience, [they] just arranged them to stay outside of the court gate, let them squat and eat their meals [according to their habit]. When they receive their music, we should not use it at the court or the ancestral shrine. When we received tribute from them, it should not be more valuable than wooden bows and arrows, or animal skin."²³ By quoting the remark of the sage from the *Tongdian*, Wang Yinglin asserted that what the Song court valued about the materials from foreign states was not economic benefit or cultural contact. Cultural differences were admitted but the Song court was not expected to incorporate foreign cultures or materials into Song culture. Regional products

²² *Yuhai*, by Wang Yinglin 王應麟 (*SKQS* ed.), ch.152-154.

²³ *Yuhai*, 154. 1a. For reference, this quote is a part of the longer text in *Tongdian* 通典 ch.200.

班固之論，頗究其情；而曰「其來慕義，接以禮讓，使曲在彼」，是未盡也。何者？禮讓以交君子，不以接小人，況於禽獸夷狄乎！夫奇貨內來，則華夏之情蕩；織麗外散，則戎羯之心生。華夏情蕩，出兵之源也；戎羯心生，侵盜之本也。聖人唯此之慎，不貴奇貨，不寶遠物，禽獸非其土性不育，器服非其所產不御，豈唯贄幣不通哉！至於飲食聲樂，不與共之，故夷狄來朝，坐之門外，使舌人體委以食之，若禽獸然，不使知馨香嘉味也。獲其聲，不列於庭廟。受其貢，不過楛矢獸皮，不為贄幣，不為財貨。

from foreign states were only important as a symbolic expression of the tribute framework which located foreign states at the political positions of tribute bearers.

The pattern of the subtitles of each example of diplomatic gifts from foreign states is as follows:

- In the Jianlong reign period, Champa offered regional products as tribute 建隆占城貢方物
- In the Jianlong reign period, Goryeo came to offer tribute 建隆高麗來貢
- In the Jianlong reign period, Guasha offered horses as tribute 建隆瓜沙貢馬
- In the Kaibao reign period, Khitan offered a jade belt 開寶契丹獻玉帶

Except for the case of the Khitans, diplomatic gifts from all other states were portrayed as “tribute.” The reported year was basically the time when, Song officials thought, the official envoy missions were initiated, and the material objects named were the most impressive gifts associated with the particular foreign state. The verbs that *Yuhai* used to describe the action of offering regional products to the Song court were *gong* 貢 (to offer as tribute) and *xian* 獻 (to offer to a superior). *Gong* clearly indicated tribute from the foreign states via the envoy mission, while *xian* was used with wider reference to both the regular payment and occasional gifts to the Song court. Both terms allude to the superior political position of the Song court in relation to other states coming to pay audience to the Song, affirming the Song as the center of the tribute relationship. The one exception was the Khitan state. *Yuhai* did not use the term *gong* 貢, which indicates tribute, for the case of the Liao diplomatic gifts. Wang Yinglin might have recognized that the Khitan state was different from other states such as Champa, Goryeo, and Guasha. However, the term, *xian*, still revealed the desire of the Song officials to place the Liao lower than the Song in the “world order.”

The subsequent section of the *Yuhai* concerns the return gifts and the banquet hosted by

the Song court for foreign envoys. (錫予外夷 宴饗). Wang also included a short preface citing from the biography of the Xiongnu found in *Qian Hanshu* 前漢書, saying, “concerning the way the Sage kings controlled the barbarians: when they invaded [China], then [the Sage king] attacked them to punish them; when they retreated, then [the Sage king] defended [China] against barbarians to protect [China]; when they came to [China] to pay tribute out of admiration of [Chinese culture], then [the Sage king] admitted their tribute with the virtue of modesty, therefore [the peaceful relationship] of *loose rein* control was maintained.” (聖王制御蠻夷: 來則懲而御之, 去則備而守之, 其慕義貢獻, 則接之以義讓, 羈縻不絕)²⁴ By quoting this remark from the account of the northern tribe Xiongnu, Wang Yinglin reaffirmed the diplomatic strategy of *loose rein* in dealing with foreign states.²⁵ Return gifts from the Song to neighbor states were the compensation for those who came to China out of admiration of Chinese culture, so the nature of those gifts were different from that of foreign gifts received by Song court.

The subtitles of each instance of Song return gifts are worth noting:

- In the jianlong reign, [the Song court] conferred a jade belt on Li Yixing
建隆賜李彝興玉帶
- In the Chunhua reign period, [the Song court] conferred horses on the Champa
淳化賜占城馬
- In the Chunhua reign period, [the Song court] gave Goryeo the Nine Classics; in Xiangfu reign period, classical writing; in the Zhenghe year, Chinese court music and a ritual wine-

²⁴ *Yuhai*, 154. 43b.

²⁵ The diplomatic strategy of *loose rein (jimi)* control was initiated in the Han dynasty. It was a policy to gradually acculturate the nomadic northern peoples to Chinese customs and ways of life. When Chinese control throughout the region was not strong enough to overwhelm their power, China adopted this loose rein policy seeking relatively stable and effective way to retain the peace. This policy accommodated the regional custom and local leadership.

vessel. 淳化賜高麗九經·祥符賜經文·政和賜雅樂寶尊

Wang Yinglin fit his material into the traditional framework of receiving tribute from neighboring states and conferring imperial gifts in return. The verb *ci* (confer 賜), matched with the verb *gong* and *xian*, expresses the hierarchical relationship between the Song and others. The Song, as a center of the world order, bestowed the return gifts as a reward for the regional materials which each foreign state presented as tribute, at least in rhetoric.

The imperial gifts varied: the jade belt, horse, Nine Classics, and Imperial music or so. The Song return gifts listed above were not particularly different from the diplomatic gifts from other states. The horse is a representative example. It was one of the main items of “tribute,” and was also often mentioned as a return gift from the Song. I examine the contents of the diplomatic gifts exchanged among states more deeply in the chapter Five. However, rhetorically, the Song sources distinguished between the diplomatic gifts presented to the Song court and those bestowed by the Song, and so used them as indicators of the traditional tributary world order regardless of whether they were dealing with similar objects or not.

Liao Views on Diplomatic Gifts

By the mid tenth century, the Liao had already achieved a considerable degree of stability both administratively and economically through continuous contacts with states in China after the Tang collapsed. Early Khitan rulers had adopted Tang court ceremonies and rules of etiquette through the Later Jin, Later Zhou, and Northern Han courts. Yelü Deguang (Liao Taizong), for example, began to use the imperial carriage, traditional Chinese regalia, and

employed imperial seals and tallies to transmit orders to his underlings.²⁶ By the time of the Song, Liao and other neighboring states were in contact with each other through the exchange of envoy missions. It seems that the states in the northeast part of China, including various small tribes near the Liao dynasty such as Yuelitu, Pou'ali, Aolimi, Punuli, and Tieli, understood the imperial rhetoric of the Tang which the Liao had adopted. The Khitan themselves were one of the tribes who sent “tribute” to the Tang court, and like the Song, they were able to later utilize the custom of a tributary diplomatic system when dealing with foreign states.

If the Song government worked to maintain a rhetorical understanding of diplomatic gift exchange, then was there a similar perspective shared by other states that participated in exchanging such gifts? How did the Liao court look on diplomatic gifts exchanged among the states of East Asia? What the *Yuhai* left out about the exchange of gifts between the Song and the Liao court was the fact that the Song court also sent envoy missions annually to the Liao court with goods of many sorts. We do not have comparable Liao sources similar to the *Yuhai*, which would have revealed Liao perspectives on the ideology surrounding gift-exchanges. But some episodes contained in the *Liaoshi* and several state-letters exchanged between the Song and Liao courts enable us to deduce that the Liao also regarded gifts from the Song court as “tribute.”

In 1005, the Song and the Liao agreed to the Shanyuan Treaty, which initiated the peace and formal envoy exchanges between the two states. As a result of this treaty, the Song had to present annual payments (*suibi*, 歲幣) to the Liao of two hundred thousand bolts of silk and one hundred thousand ounces of silver.²⁷ However, the oath letters by Song Zhenzong show that the

²⁶ Jing-shen Tao, *Two Sons of Heaven*, 27.

²⁷ The process of negotiations between the Song and Liao courts are introduced in detail in Wright, *From War to Diplomatic Parity*, 39-99.

Song court tried to avoid using any mention of “tribute,” which would convey a meaning of inferiority vis-à-vis Liao.

On 12/7/1004 the Emperor of the Great Song respectfully transmits (this) oath deposition to His Majesty the Emperor of the Khitan: To abide together in sincere good faith and reverently uphold a joyous oath, of the resources had in natural abundance [in the Song realm], two hundred thousand bolts of silk and one hundred thousand taels of silver [shall be forwarded] annually to assist with [Khitan] military expenditures. Moreover, envoys shall not be dispatched with the special duty of proceeding to the Northern Court [with these items]; the State Finance Commission shall simply be directed to dispatch personnel to transport [them] to Xiongzhou for delivery and dispensation.²⁸

In this letter the Song payment to the Liao court was described as gifts to the Khitan to assist with their military expenses, therefore proclaiming the generosity of the Song court rather than the humiliated status of offering handsome annual tribute to the Khitans.

In Liao Shengzong’s letter of response to the oath letter of Song Zhenzong, no particular change was applied to the terms about the annual support. He reproduced it in his own oath deposition and then added his own oath to agree on what was expressed in the letter from the Song.²⁹ By reproducing what is expressed by the Song court, the Liao refrained from imposing a clear definition, such as “tribute,” to the yearly payment from the Song court.

However, a different approach is observed in *Liaoshi*:

²⁸ Jing-shen Tao, *Two Sons of Heaven*, 15. The text of the treaty is recorded in *Xu Zizhi tongjian changbian*, the *xinzhou* day of the twelfth month, first year of Jingde (1004), (CB 58.1299-1300); and the texts of the state letters of Song Zhenzong and Liao Shengzong are in *Qidanguo zhi* 契丹國志 by Ye Longli 葉隆禮 (Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1985), hereafter *QDGZ*, 20. 189-90; (the translation of the Shan-yuan oath-letter of Song Zhenzong from Wright, *From War to Diplomatic Parity*, 74-7)

²⁹ Wright, *From War to Diplomatic Parity*, 76.

On the day *Guiwei* in the intercalary [10th] month (1042), Yelü Renxian sent officials to report [to the Liao court] that the Song decided to increase the annual payment of one hundred thousand taels and bolts [more than the previous amount of] the silver and silk. It is documented as “tribute,” and would be delivered to Baiqiu. The [Liao] emperor was delighted, and held a banquet with his officials at the Zhaoqing Hall.³⁰

When the Liao and Song reconfirmed the peace treaty in 1042, the Liao envoy who successfully concluded the new peace treaty with the Song pompously reported to the emperor that they finally ratified the use of the term, “tribute,” when referring to payment received from the Song. By referring to it as “tribute,” the Liao officials and emperor celebrated their superior position over the Song. However, as observed in *Yuhai*, this kind of story was never found in the sources of the Song side.

Officially, diplomatic gifts between the Liao and Song courts were regarded as a sign of a peaceful relationship. When the Liao suggested diplomatic relations with the Song, the Khitan prefect Yelü Cong 邪律琮 wrote “Why not promote a friendly alliance and regular gifts?”³¹ Regular gifts were the essential condition for a peaceful relationship. As mentioned above, after the Liao agreed to the peace treaty in 1005, they exchanged annual envoy missions twice a year – on New Year’s day and on the respective birthdays of each emperor. Materials that the Liao envoys brought to the Song on their official visits were apparently regarded as gifts. They were by no means viewed as tribute.

³⁰ *LS* 19. 227-8.

閏月癸未，耶律仁先遣人報，宋歲增銀、絹十萬兩、匹，文書稱「貢」，送至白溝；帝喜，宴群臣于昭慶殿。

³¹ *Song huiyao jigao*. 宋會要輯稿, edited by Xu Song 徐松 (1781-1848) et al. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1957). Hereafter *SHY fanyi* 1.1b-2a.

In the *Qidanguo zhi* 契丹國志, a history of the Khitan state written by the Southern Song scholar, Ye Longli 葉隆禮 (*jinshi* 1247), materials exchanged between the Liao and the Song courts on the occasion of annual envoy missions were referred to as “ritual gifts” (*liwu* 禮物), whereas materials from the Xi Xia and the Goryeo to the Liao court were recorded as “tribute” (*gongwu* 貢物).³² This history book is the work of a Southern Song scholar, so it is still biased towards the Song idea of “world order.” The Song understood that the diplomatic gifts signified political power and alluded to the hierarchical tension among states. Why did the Song court designate diplomatic gifts to the Liao Emperor as “ritual gifts”? One clue from the Song domestic usage is that gifts given to imperial clansmen on their birthdays were referred to as “ritual gifts (*liwu*).”³³ Therefore, after the peace treaty, when each court decided to define their relationship with kinship terms such as “elder brother,” and “aunt,” the Song government apparently decided to refer to birthday presents for Liao emperors and empress dowagers as ritual gifts (*liwu*).

We can observe that the Song – Liao relation was different from that of the Song – Xi Xia and Song-Goryeo, and the Liao – Xi Xia and Liao-Goryeo relations. Another example to show this difference is the designations of the envoy missions from the Liao and the other states. The Song and Liao courts called each other’s envoy missions “State Letter Envoys 國信使” to convey equality, but called Xi Xia and Goryeo’s envoy missions as “Tribute-Offering Envoys 進奉使.”³⁴ Diplomatic letters exchanged among these states thus reveal the dynamic “world order” in the eleventh century.

³² *QDGZ* 21. 200-5.

³³ *SHY diji* 4. 22b.

十一月十九日，大宗正司言：「宗樸生日，合賜禮物，乞依例者。舊制，宗室使相生日禮賜，客省請降宣，差官押賜。」詔令本司諭宗室，自今不須自陳。

³⁴ *SS* 119. 2804-9.

Diplomatic gifts from the Xi Xia and the Goryeo

Song and Liao state letters to each other and to the Xi Xia and the Goryeo courts are good sources that can reveal the diplomatic position of each state in the relative “world order.” Unfortunately, these sources are mostly from the Song or the Liao, which make the observation of Xi Xia’s perspective on the rhetoric of diplomatic gifts quite limited. The state letters to Xi Xia and the Goryeo courts, however, were actually received and accepted by those courts, so we can infer that the Xi Xia and Goryeo courts at least agreed to the rhetoric of the tribute system.

Let me first examine the state letters to the Xi Xia and the Goryeo in comparison to those between the Liao and the Song. The first apparent distinction among these letters is the form of the document. The letters between Song and Liao were mostly titled as “State Letters 國書,” whereas the letters issued to the Xi Xia and the Goryeo courts were titled as either edicts 詔, laws 制, or decrees 勅. Song Zhenzong set the “brother relationship” with Liao Shengzong in the year of 1005, so in the letters between the Song and the Liao courts they used these fraternal terms showing their parity. The Song-Xi Xia and the Song-Goryeo cases were different from that of the Song-Liao. As mentioned in the introduction, Xi Xia and Goryeo rulers accepted the “vassal-lord” relationship with the Song and the Liao. Under the political relationship of the Song emperor and the invested foreign king, letters from the Song to the Xi Xia and the Goryeo rulers were titled as follows:

- An edict conferring Zhao Baoji the royal last name and the investiture of Yinzhou

Surveillance Commissioner 趙保吉賜姓名除銀州觀察使詔³⁵

- An edict to confer on Zhao Deming 賜趙德明詔³⁶
- A law to install Zhao Deming as a West Pacification King 趙德明拜官封西平王制³⁷
- A law to increase the honors to a Goryeo King Wang Chi 高麗國王王治加恩制³⁸
- A decree to reward medicine [to the Goryeo King] for the tribute that the Goryeo court offered 謝醫藥進奉勅書³⁹

Different from a “State Letter,” the forms of an edict, law, and decree clearly display that the Song applied the language of the Song bureaucratic order to both the Xi Xia and the Goryeo. This imperial language included the rhetoric of “tribute.” Diplomatic gifts from Xi Xia and Goryeo were “tribute,” and those from the Song were “imperial rewards.” Song’s perspective is clearly shown in the following letter: an edict given to the Xi Xia king in return for the gifts of horses and camels that he offered as New Year’s gifts 賜夏國主進奉賀正馬駝詔.

[Song emperor] issues an edict to the ruler of Xia. Your ritual mission to present one hundred horses and camels for celebration of the New Year has been completed. On the first day of the year every state receives an upright command from the emperor, and fulfills the responsibility of the foreign ruler successfully by offering timely tribute. Looking at the material that filled up the courtyard, [I can] deeply contemplate [your] diligence to protect your country. As [you] delivered [tribute] from a distant place, [I]

³⁵ *Song dazhaoling ji* 宋大詔令集 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1962), hereafter *SDZLJ* 233. 905.

³⁶ *SDZLJ* 233. 906.

³⁷ *SDZLJ* 233. 906.

³⁸ *SDZLJ* 237. 924.

³⁹ *SDZLJ* 237. 927.

cannot help exalting you. Today I present as return gifts [to your court] silver, silk, tea leaves, etc. on the attached list. Arriving at the border you can receive them. For those who carried out this mission, I offer gifts, and these are also listed in the document.⁴⁰

The Song court clearly declared that the materials from Xi Xia are “tribute” and those from the Song are the “return gifts.” The year of this letter is not recorded, but based on the arrangement of this letter in *Song dazhaoling ji*, which recorded letters in chronological order, it can be dated sometime between 1048 and 1058. The Xi Xia concluded a peace treaty with the Song in 1044 with an agreement to receive a large annual payment from the Song on condition of accepting the investiture by the Song emperor.⁴¹ Song officials had long debates on the issue of how to treat the Xi Xia, and eventually they managed to retain the imperial rhetoric in relation with the Xi Xia. However, the Xi Xia oath statement that was submitted to the Song court in 1044, shows the reality of the Song rewards to the Xi Xia envoy missions. In the early tenth month [Xi Xia ruler Zhao Yuanhao] offered an oath letter as below:

It has been already seven years after two states (the Song and the Xi Xia) lost a peaceful relationship. After we constructed the oath now, [I] hope that it has to be kept in the place for the covenant. As for the materials plundered from the military officials, and commoners in former days, let’s agree to forego them. From now on, if there are any people in the borderland who escaped [from the Xi Xia], you should not attack and expel [them], but return them [to the Xi Xia]. Recently I (literally it means “this vassal” 臣) made several fortresses in my country including the old regions of Kaolao 栲栳, Liandao 鎌刀, Nan’an 南安, Chengping 承平 and other border areas where the foreign and Chinese live [together] and pay tribute to [your] court. [I] am requiring to draw a border [between our states], therefore [I] can construct the walls inside of border. [The

⁴⁰ *SDZLJ* 234. 911.

⁴¹ *CB* 153. 2723-4.

Song] court presents (賜) [to the Xi Xia] annually 130,000 bolts of silk, 50,000 ounces of silver, 20,000 catties of tea leaves. Return gifts to [our] offering for the Qianyuan festival 乾元節 are 10,000 ounces of silver, 10,000 bolts of silk, and 5,000 catties of tea leaves. Return gifts to [our] offering for the New Year's celebration are 5,000 ounces of silver, 5,000 bolts of silk, and 5,000 catties of tea leaves. On every Mid-winter, the [Song court] presents winter clothing, 5,000 ounces of silver, 5,000 bolts of silk, and for my birthday, you present "ritual gifts 禮物" such as 2,000 ounce of silver vessels, 1,000 bolts of cloths 細衣著, and 1,000 bolts of color silk 雜帛. [I] request that you set these amounts [of diplomatic gifts] as a regular rule, and not change it. Then I will not offend against your court with other problems. Today I alone submit this oath statement, but I request you to confirm this oath and issue an edict [on this settlement], and hope it is followed generation to generation to keep peace forever. If [I] lose the respect owed to an offense against lord and father and change this vassal and son's goodwill, then my family line will be cut off and my descendants will suffer misfortune.⁴²

In this oath letter, the king of Xi Xia listed the contents and the amount of Song's payments for each occasion: annual payments, return gifts for Xi Xia's offering on the New Year's day, the birthday of the Song emperor, mid-winter presents, and the Song's gifts for the Xi Xia ruler's birthday are stated in detail with a request for the Song court to confirm it. Except for the designation of "Vassal 臣" that Li Yuanhao used to refer to himself and the implied political order of the vassals-lord relationship, the series of diplomatic gifts that the Song promised to send to Xi Xia can be easily interpreted as "tribute" by the Xi Xia court. In 1044 the peace treaty between the Song and the Xi Xia had just been settled after a series of battles in which the Xi Xia triumphed. This war between the Song and the Xi Xia was initiated when the Xi Xia ruler, Li Yuanhao, adopted the title of "emperor" and declared the establishment of the

⁴² *CB* 152. 3706-7.

Great Xia in 1038 and refused to receive the position of vassal of the Song. When Li Yuanhao concluded the peace treaty with the Song in 1044, the Song agreed to bypass the delicate problem of whether to address the Xi Xia ruler as “king” or as “emperor” by referring to him in interstate documents simply as the “ruler 主” of Xia.⁴³ However, this oath statement of the Xi Xia king shows that the attitude of Li Yuanhao was far from submissive. Instead he was rather assertive in requesting diplomatic gifts from the Song. Considering that the Xi Xia ruler had declared independence and sought equality with the Song and even with the Liao, it is clear that the diplomatic gifts among the states were a major subject of negotiation, even though each court had different approaches to it. For the Song, to maintain the imperial rhetoric of “tribute” was important, whereas, for the Xi Xia, they decided to abandon the rhetorical equality for material advantage.

Similar to the Xi Xia, the Goryeo court also maintained strategic relationships with both the Song and the Liao. Before the Song was established, the Goryeo had chosen to be an ally of the Later Tang in 933. Goryeo Taizu received the investiture from the Later Tang and sent an envoy mission to pay tribute. It was one of the ways to get recognition as a legitimate king of the Korean peninsula as well as a possible military ally. Goryeo did not have a friendly relationship with the Khitan at first, so Wang Geon, the founder of Goryeo, refused to pay tribute to the Khitan in 942. By banishing the Khitan envoys to an island, and by staving the fifty camels given by the Liao as diplomatic gifts to death, the Goryeo court showed its antagonism toward the Khitan.⁴⁴ However, as the power of the Liao grew stronger, Goryeo was compelled to submit to the Liao and accepted investiture as a Khitan vassal and pay “tribute” to

⁴³ Jing-shen Tao, *Two Sons of Heaven*, 57-66; Ruth Dunnell, “The His Hsia,” in *Cambridge History of China, Vol. 6, Alien Regimes and Border States, 907-1368*, edited by Herbert Franke and Denis Twitchett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 180-9.

⁴⁴ *Goryeosa*, by Jeong Inji 鄭麟趾 (Seoul: Beomjosa Press, 1963), 2. 43.

the Liao court. After receiving this “tribute,” the Liao court responded with “an edict to respond to the Goryeo’s tribute of gratitude 答高麗謝恩貢物詔”:

[Your] letter to show gratitude, paying audience, and offering of “tribute” - such as golden vessels, silver vessels, hoods, ramie fabric 貢平布, *naoyuan* tea leaves 腦原茶, big papers, fine ink stones, mats 龍鬚葦席 etc. - were all well completed. [When] you(卿) govern your state, you respect my rule. Recently you sent envoy mission to show your loyalty from the remote area, to affirm [your] integrity to pay tribute for generations, and to explain the reason for the recent suspension [of tribute missions to my court]. You begged to reinstate the envoy mission, and wish to be a foreign state protecting the rule of the Liao forever. You showed a submissive attitude seeking for my royal permission. You sent a memorial of gratitude, and displayed boxes of tribute. When I saw all these, I was deeply pleased.⁴⁵

Based on this letter, sending an envoy mission and offering tribute was the major way to proclaim the political intention of a foreign state. Liao Xingzong 興宗 (1031-55) regarded lined-up boxes of Goryeo tribute as a proof of Goryeo’s goodwill. The economic gain from Goryeo’s tribute could also be a reason for greeting Goryeo’s envoy mission. But the most important role of the “tribute” from the Goryeo in the year of 1038, when the Goryeo resumed its diplomatic relationship with the Liao, was to provide a tangible proof of loyalty to the Liao, so Xingzong in his letter to the Goryeo enumerated the items of Goryeo tribute.

The same pattern is shown in a Song letter to the Goryeo court:

[The Song emperor] issued an edict referring to what [the Goryeo court] offered such as:

⁴⁵ *Goryeosa*, 6. 157-8.

Five gold vessels, weighing altogether one hundred and sixty five ounces:

Two bowls, one with two red net-fabricated medicine pouches which were double-inner layered with golden-printed red silk, one with two of red net-fabricated waist-sacks which were double-inner layered with golden-printed red silk. Both items were clinched and wrapped with red-flowery printed gauze;

Two wine-cups which were clinched and wrapped with red-flowery printed gauze;

One wine pitcher which was clinched and wrapped with red-flowery printed gauze. Ten red backrests (倚背) and two red cotton-padded mattresses both of which were sealed with red-flowery printed gauze, stored in two silvery decorated lacquer boxes and sealed with silver locks and were wrapped with red-flowery printed gauze,

Twenty silver decorated long swords and silvery crafted lacquer sheaths covered with silk bands, stored in ten red-gauze-pouches and ten crimson-gauze pouches, and finally wrapped with double layered yellow gauze,

Two thousand bolts of raw middle-quality-linen,

Two thousand bolts of raw lower-quality linen,

One thousand catties of ginseng,

Two thousand two hundred catties of pine seeds,

One hundred and twenty catties of sesame oil,

Two sets of saddles decorated with golden gilded silver,

Two fine horses.

All these items were delivered. The envoy entourage arrived at the Song by horse and [envoys] communicated with [Chinese officials] by writing. [They] also traveled by ship to pay tribute. Considering their hardships [the Song court] treated them politely and presented generous gifts to show its appreciation. Now, as return gifts, we are providing them with silver vessels and so on, listed in a separate document. Here I issue the edict, and I hope you may understand [my] goodwill. As the spring weather gets warmer, I hope you are feeling more comfortable. They specially carry [this] missive to manifest my felicitations. I say no more.⁴⁶

In this letter the diplomatic gifts that the Goryeo offered to the Song are listed in detail. As it mentions very few Song return gifts, it reads like a receipt of what Song received. Similar to the Liao's letter above, the Song court might want to confirm Goryeo's political position as a "tribute-bearing" state. In both examples, Goryeo's diplomatic gifts, regardless of how those gifts were viewed by the Song and the Liao, were very sophisticated cultural objects. Their major purpose was more cultural or rhetorical than economic.

As shown in the letters between Song, Xi Xia, and Goryeo, each court shared understanding of the rhetoric of "tribute," and managed their relations accordingly. They knew the importance of managing diplomatic gifts as an element in representing their relative status in a shared political order. The Song and the Liao regarded receiving "tribute" from the Xi Xia and

⁴⁶ *SDZLJ* 237. 924-5.

所進奉金器五事。共重一百六十五兩。合二副一副盛紅罽藥袋二枚。紅羅銷金畫複裏。一副盛紅罽繫腰二副。紅羅銷金畫複裏。共用紅紋羅袂複封全。。紅紋羅袂外複二條。盤瓊二副。紅紋羅袂複封全。共用紅紋羅外複二條。注子一副。紅紋羅袂複封全。紅紋羅袂外複一條。紅罽倚背一十隻。紅紋羅袂複封全。紅罽褥二隻。紅紋羅袂複封全。共用銀鈿裝烏漆箱二副。盛銀鎖鑰封全。紅紋羅袂外複二條。銀裝長刀二十隻。銀鈿鍍裝烏漆鞘綵條全。紅羅纈袋十箇。封全。緋羅纈袋十箇。封全。共用黃羅袂外複二條。生中布二千疋。生平布二千疋。人參一千斤。松子二千二百斤。香油一百二十斤。鞍二副。金鍍銀橋瓦錢具罽大小紅羅鞍褥等全。紅羅繡袂鞍複二條。細馬二疋事。具悉。卿夙馳國使。來造王朝。累牘摘詞。喜書文之道被。方舟底貢。顧庭寔之旅陳。載想恪恭。良增褒尚。特加寵錫。姑示至懷。今回賜卿衣著銀器等。具如別錄。至可領也。故茲示諭。想宜知悉。春暄。卿比平安好。遣書指不多及。

the Goryeo as a marker of higher political position in the traditional tributary framework. However, Xi Xia and Goryeo's perspectives on the tributary relationship was by no means a rigid "system," but was rather an evolving practice that had room for negotiation.

How then, did the Song and other states manipulate the diplomatic gifts in practice? The official setting for the exchange of diplomatic gifts was the envoy missions. In the next chapter I turn to the regular envoy missions which delivered diplomatic gifts and see how the Song and the Liao managed gift exchanges in the visual and practical setting, of the Guest Ritual.

CHAPTER 3: Rituals of Envoy Missions

The rhetoric of interstate relations worked side-by-side with the rituals of diplomatic relations, which in the Chinese case was classed as an example of host-guest ritual. The guest ritual of each court was the stage on which diplomatic gifts performed their role. In diplomatic contacts, mainly the exchanges of regular envoy missions, the guest ritual became the most important issue to Song, Liao, and all other participating courts, as it provided the framework for encounters. Therefore, both the hosting courts and the guests were attentive to displays and performances of their relative political position. Here I first review the character of guest ritual of the Song and the Liao, then explain how diplomatic gifts were exchanged in the guest ritual. I draw attention to the visual and practical implementation of guest rituals at the Song and Liao courts, rather than classicists' interpretations of how they ought to be performed.

Images of diplomatic contacts: *Painting of the Khitan Envoy Mission* 契丹使朝聘

As mentioned several times already, the Shanyuan Treaty in 1005 became the touchstone of the diplomatic relationship between the Song and the Liao. As a result of this Treaty, two basic types of regular embassies were exchanged between Song and Liao: New

Year Felicitation embassies and Birthday Felicitation embassies.⁴⁷ The new diplomatic order after the Shanyuan Treaty led to many debates and discussions concerning diplomatic issues. Therefore, diplomatic exchanges between the Song and the Liao after the Shanyuan Treaty are well documented. I start my discussion with the handscroll, *Painting of the Khitan Envoy Mission*. It depicts the scene of a Khitan envoy mission in audience at the Song court. It is one leaf out of a set of *Four Events of the Jingde Reign* 景德四圖, which records four important events during Zhenzong's reign: Liao envoys at a court audience, an archery contest, river management, and viewing books at Taiqing Hall.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ During the Song, each emperor's birthday-festival had its own name, and the materials refer to the various imperial birthdays by these names. According to the *Huizhu lu* 揮塵錄, the birthday of Taizu is 2/16, and calls Changchun festival (長春節); Taizong was born on 10/7, Qianming Festival (乾明節) then changed to Shouning Festival (壽寧節); Zhenzong's birthday is 12/2, Chengtian Festival (承天節); Renzong's birthday is 4/14, Qianyuan (乾元節); Yingzong's birthday is 1/3, Shousheng Festival (壽聖節); Shenzong's birthday is 4/10, Dongtrian Festival (同天節); Zhezong's birthday is 12/7, Xinglong Festival (興龍節); Huizong's birthday is 10/10, Tianning Festival (天寧節); and the birthday of Qinzong is 4/13, Qianlong Festival (乾龍節). *Huizhu lu* by Wang Mingqing 王明清 (Taipei: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1966), 1.25.

⁴⁸ This handscroll is recorded in the eighteenth century *Shiqu Baoji* 石渠寶笈 imperial painting catalog, and is presently in the collection of the National Palace Museum, Taipei. The scroll is comprised of four segments of silk. Each segment has a painted scene to the right with an accompanying inscription on the left. Executed by an unknown artist. (National Palace Museum, *Qianxi nian Songdai wenwu dazhan* 千禧年宋代文物大展: *China at the Inception of the Second Millennium: Art and Culture of the Sung dynasty, 960-1279* [Taipei: National Palace Museum, 2000], 266-7)



fig. 1. *Painting of the Khitan Envoy Mission* 契丹使朝聘 in Four Events of the Jingde Reign. Anonymous, Song dynasty (906-1279)

Based on the inscription of the *Painting of the Khitan Envoy Mission*, the event depicted is the Liao's first Birthday Felicitation Envoys to Song Zhenzong's court on the 28th day of the twelfth month during Chengtian festival 承天節⁴⁹ in 1005. The last part of the inscription also mentions that the handscroll was painted after approximately forty to fifty years of peace and stability that resulted from the Shanyuan Treaty. That is why the year of the production of this handscroll is estimated as circa 1045, the year after the conclusion of Renzong's peace treaty

⁴⁹ Cheng-tian Festival 承天節 is the name of Song Zhenzong's birthday and it was the second of the twelfth month.

with the Liao.⁵⁰

The format of a painted scene accompanied by a calligraphic record was a well-established painting style in the Northern Song court. *Auspicious Cranes*, attributed to the emperor Huizong, was also in this format: the image is in right panel, and the inscription is attached to the left side. Regardless of whether or not this scroll, *Painting of the Khitan Envoy Mission*, which shares the same format with *Auspicious Cranes*, is an authentic Song painting or a later copy after the Song model, it was certainly believed to be a Song painting during the Qing period as it was collected in the Qing imperial collection and recorded as a Song copy in the Qing imperial painting catalogue, *Shiqu baoji* 石渠寶笈.⁵¹ Since this painting was produced by Song court painters with the purpose of commemorating the achievements of Zhenzong, it can be used to analyze how the Song court viewed the envoys who came from the Liao.

When the court painters were asked “to record” court events, they had to depict several important aspects of the event to represent the moment most effectively, regardless of whether the painter had witnessed the real event. This painting poses questions on the issues of guest ritual and diplomatic gifts: Why did the Song painters choose this particular scene to commemorate Zhenzong’s achievements? How did they choose to depict the Khitan envoy mission?

Before observing the image itself, I will analyze the inscription attached to the painting. It basically articulates an image of Song Zhenzong as a successful ruler who concluded peaceful relations with the Khitan through skillful negotiation and military tactics. When the Khitan envoy, Han Qi 韓杞, visited Zhenzong’s traveling lodge 行宮 in 1004/12, in order to petition

⁵⁰ Cary Liu, “Sung Dynasty Painting of the T’ai-ch’ing-lou Library Hall: From Historical Commemoration to Architectural Renewal,” in *Arts of the Sung and Yüan: Ritual, Ethnicity, and Style in Painting* (Princeton: The Art Museum, Princeton University 1999), 102.

⁵¹ Liu, “Sung Dynasty Painting of the T’ai-ch’ing-lou Library Hall,” 99.

for the suspension of arms and peace and request the Guannan 關南 territory [in return],

Zhenzong replied:

For the security of my people, there is nothing I will not do. However, as for the territory of Guannan, [the Liao] is not eligible [to request it from us]. I(朕) should protect the patrimony of my ancestors, and never destroy it. If [the Liao] keep stubbornly requesting it, I will fight to the bitter end rather than give up this territory.⁵²

The apparent reason for inscribing these particular words on the painting was to show the benevolence of Song Zhenzong. In this short inscription, of course, you cannot record all the steps in concluding the peace treaty and starting the exchange of regular envoy missions. However, the question which arises is: what was dropped off from the original context when court painters selected to emphasize the positive image of Zhenzong? The inscription simply recorded that the Song envoy, Cao Liyong 曹利用, was sent to the Liao court to negotiate for peace and he was able to achieve a successful peace treaty with the help of Han Qi who was frightened by the military capacity of the Song. The next passage in the inscription concerns the Khitan envoy missions sent by the empress dowager and emperor of the Liao to celebrate the Chengtian festival.

Between the lines of this short inscription, I would like to include a fuller version of this episode in *Xu Zizhi Tongjian Changbian*.

Zhenzong asked, “For the security of my people, there is nothing I will not do. However, as for the territory of Guan-nan, [the Liao] does not have eligibility, what do you think about it?” Officials responded, “We may respond to the Liao envoy’s letter that the

⁵² Inscription on the *Painting of the Khitan Envoy Mission*, which is published in National Palace Museum, *Qianxian Songdai wenwu dazhan*, 266.

territory of Guan-nan was inherited from [Zhou]. We do not even need to discuss this issue. Nevertheless, we can offer them money and silk to help them with military expenses, and to settle the peace treaty.⁵³

If we compare this original version to the inscription on the painting, we can see that the issue of annual payments was purposely excluded from the inscription. Not only that, Zhenzong asked Cao Liyong to explain this proposal for annual payments to the Liao envoy Han Qi orally and to not make any written records on this matter.⁵⁴ As planned, Cao Liyong went to the Liao court again to negotiate and repeatedly rejected all demands for territorial cession and announced that he could only negotiate for an annual “bestowal” of money and silk to help the Khitans with “military expenses.” At length, seeing that Cao would not waver, Liao Shengzong and his mother set aside their territorial demand and settled for an agreement that Song would make annual payments of 200,000 bolts of silk and 100,000 ounces of silver.⁵⁵

As noted above, this painting is thought to have been created during Renzong’s Qingli 慶歷 reign when the Song struggled to maintain peace with the Liao to confront the military crisis of the Xi Xia and ended up making more annual payments to the Liao. In the state letter from the Liao in 1042, which I cited in the last chapter, the Liao envoy declared that the increased annual payment from the Song court would be called “tribute” from then on. The Song court painter was assigned to the task of depicting the scene of a Khitan envoy mission attending audience and paying “tribute” to the Song court and the particular moment of Khitan envoys performing the guest ritual to represent dutiful respect toward the Song court. Could this work of art be an attempt to justify the humiliating situation of the unequal treaty concessions in

⁵³ *CB* 58.1288.

⁵⁴ *CB* 58.1288.

⁵⁵ *SHY fanyi* 1.32b-33a.

1042 made by Emperor Renzong by placing it in a context similar to Emperor Zhenzong's Shanyuan Treaty which was recognized as an successful effort to sustain peace with the North? In order to accomplish this, the artist chose to depict the guest ritual and handsome material that the Khitan brought into the Song court.

What did Song painters actually depict in this handscroll? It is composed of two spaces - the *Chongde Hall* 崇德殿 where the envoy and the deputy envoy are attending an audience and the front court where the other Khitan retinue of this envoy mission and Song officials are assembled. The activities in these two different locations represent the way Song court painters viewed the Khitan envoy mission: the guest ritual and diplomatic gifts. Envoys inside the *Chongde Hall* submitting the state letter to the Song Emperor appear respectful and the diplomatic gifts displayed at the court yard – eight saddled horses, ten carts with many bolts of various silk, vessels with wine, and so on – seem so numerous that they occupy more than half of the courtyard. Following the guest ritual set by the Song by performing guided movements and obeisance were the ways that the Liao showed its respect for the Song court and its desire to maintain peaceful relations. In addition to performing respectful gestures which were required for the guest ritual, diplomatic gifts carried all the way from the remote “foreign” country were a clear sign of the good intentions of the Khitan, which the Song court painter included in the painting.

The inscription attached to the painting describes this scene this way: in the *guiyo* 癸酉 of the eleventh month of the second year of *Jingde* (1005), the empress dowager and the emperor of Liao separately sent envoys to celebrate the Chengtian festival and presented twelve imperial garments decorated with pearl and silver, a sable robe, thin *kesi* colored silk, thin silk brocaded on both-sides, grain stored in the golden and silver decorated boxes, eight horses

saddled with gold, jade, crystal trappings, four hundred ordinary horses, bows and arrows, iron swords, falcons, dried meat, Khitan Shilla wine, green-white salt, and hundreds of kinds of fruit in wooden lattice containers. The envoy in a Khitan-style felt cap, fitted robe, and golden saddle-flap, received the imperial gift in the Khitan manner. [Whereas] the deputy envoy wearing a Chinese-style *fu-tou* cap, official robe and golden belt, received imperial gifts of a suit of clothing, vessels, silk, and saddled horses in the Chinese manner.

This scene highlights the elements of the diplomatic contacts visually to display the honor of the Song in particular. By enumerating all the items of diplomatic gifts from the Liao, the Song could present itself as occupying the central position in the tributary world order.

Guest Ritual as a way to display political hierarchy

In response to previous studies on ritual, which mainly understand Chinese ritual as a symbolic and rigid legitimating instrument, Catherine Bell argues that ritual activities are the production and negotiation of power relations. She argues that “ritualization produces nuanced relations of power, relationships characterized by acceptance and resistance, negotiated appropriation, and redemptive reinterpretation of the hegemonic order.” This insightful analysis provided me with a perspective to study the guest rituals of the Song and Liao.⁵⁶ As a source that reveals the nuanced relations of power between the states participating in this system, the set of guest rituals offers a way to determine their relationship. Especially, as shown in *Painting of the Khitan Envoy Mission*, mutual performance of each other’s rituals was visual evidence of their amicable relationship. How did the Song and the Liao courts manage this visual side of

⁵⁶ Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 196.

diplomatic competition?

Song officials regarded Tang ritual, especially as codified in the *Datang Kaiyuan li* during Tang Xuanzong's reign, as the standard. Hence, they used Tang rituals, including the guest ritual in *Datang Kaiyuan li* [shortened as *Kaiyuan li*, hereafter,] as their basic model.⁵⁷ However, the rituals were adjusted to become more elaborated in line with the complicated nature of contemporary diplomatic reality. The Liao and Goryeo courts also developed their guest rituals by accommodating changing relations with foreign states. Tang guest rituals in the *Kaiyuan li* classified foreign states into one category, “four barbarian 四夷,”⁵⁸ and treated them with the same etiquette. A distinction was drawn between rituals for a foreign king and those for foreign envoys, but no distinction was made for the different foreign states. However, Song guest rituals have separate sections for separate states and stipulated different order and seating position depending on their relative political standing. Realistically, it was unlikely that a foreign king would visit the Song in person, but foreign envoys from various states did pay audience at the Song court annually. Therefore, it was practical to revise the guest rituals and elaborate the section on guest rituals for foreign envoys without making further changes on the section of “Foreign Ruler Paying Audience.”

Consequently, the guest ceremonies on both New Year's Day and the imperial birthday festival revealed the relative hierarchy of the guest states. In the chapter on guest ritual for

⁵⁷ *SS* 116.2743.

⁵⁸ *Xin Tang shu* 16. 381-4. Guest rituals recorded in *Xin Tangshu* are same with those protocols of *Datang Kaiyuan li*. Tang imperial guest rituals consisted of six sections: The Lord of the Outer Dependency Comes to Court and Imperial Greetings of Appreciation 蕃主來朝遣使迎勞; The Emperor Dispatches an Emissary to Advise the Lord of the Outer Dependency of the Day of the Audience 皇帝遣使戒蕃主見日; The Lord of the Outer Dependency Received an Imperial Audience 蕃主奉見; The Emperor Receives the Envoy of the Lord of the Outer Dependency Bearing Petitions and Gifts 皇帝受蕃使表及幣; The Emperor Has a Feast for the Lord of the Outer Dependency 皇帝宴蕃國主; and The Emperor Has a Feast for the Envoy of the Lord of the Outer Dependency 皇帝宴蕃國使. (The translations draw on Hevia's dissertation, “Tang Guest Ritual: A Translation, Description, and Analysis of the Guest Ritual Section of the Ta T'ang K'ai Yuan li.” [University of Chicago, 1980])

foreign envoys 賓禮志 in *Songshi*, the first part is titled “Ritual of Imperial Audience and the Withdrawal from the Court for Khitan Envoy,” and then ritual regulations for the Xi Xia, Goryeo, Jin, and other states follow.⁵⁹ The order of the descriptions of guest ritual of each state at the Song court reveals its political importance as recognized by the Song court.⁶⁰ At the Song court, the Liao was considered to be the highest among the states which sent envoy missions to the Song court, and the Xi Xia and Goryeo were ranked next. Not only was the sequence in the record important, but the order to pay audience was also set according to their political positions. If the date for the audience by several foreign envoys overlapped, the Xi Xia was first, followed by the Goryeo, the Jiaozhi 交趾, various kingdoms overseas 海外蕃客, and finally barbarian kingdoms 諸蠻.⁶¹ The guest ritual for the Xi Xia and Goryeo envoy missions were almost identical in their procedures and etiquette; however, this sequence shows their nuanced power struggle within the Song tributary world.

Throughout the Song period, however, the application of the guest ritual was flexible and practical, so it was modified when the Song implemented reform policies or when the political importance of a certain foreign state changed. Guest ritual for the foreign rulers and envoys was instituted in the Kaibao 開寶 reign period (968-975), and was published in *Kaibao tongli* 開寶通禮. After the Shanyuan Treaty, Khitan State Letter envoy missions on New Year’s Day and the imperial birthdays were initiated, which resulted in the addition of more specific regulations in 1016.⁶² It seems that detailed regulations on how to receive envoy missions of different states were included at this time. During the Zhenghe 政和 reign period, five specific

⁵⁹ SS 119. 2804-14.

⁶⁰ Regulations for Jin envoy mission comes after the Xi Xia and Goryeo, but it was according to the time period of Jin, not the political importance.

⁶¹ SS 119. 2809.

⁶² SS 119. 2804.

guest rituals for the Khitan envoy mission – paying audience on New Year’s Day and on the imperial birthday, banquet, having a parting audience on New Year’s Day and on the imperial birthday – were revised.⁶³ In this revision some changes on the seating position of the Goryeo envoy were included, which shows that the guest ritual was flexible enough to accommodate for changes in international relations.⁶⁴

Among the guest rituals, the protocol of the Liao envoy mission at the Song court was particularly well laid out in detail.⁶⁵ It started on the eve of the imperial audience. On the eve, the Liao envoys were supposed to rehearse the ritual performance at the hostel. The envoys’ attitudes and activities were automatically interpreted as reflecting the political intent of their state, so the appropriate performance in the guest ritual was very important to both the host-the Song court- and the guest-the Liao envoys. On the day of imperial audience, the Liao envoys had an audience with the Song emperor at Chongde Palace 崇德殿, which was the main hall for the imperial audience.⁶⁶ After the Song emperor was seated at Chongde Hall, Chinese officials entered the courtyard of the Chongde Hall first and made obeisance to the emperor, followed by the entrance of Liao envoys and their entourage into the courtyard of the Hall in the sequence below:

- 1) the Song Secretarial Receptionist 舍人 leads Liao envoys with the State Letter to take place in front of the Chongde Hall;
- 2) the Heaven-Endowed Militancy 天武官⁶⁷ carry ritual presents 禮物 and place them in front of the Hall – the east side [of the display] ranking higher-; the Secretarial

⁶³ *SS* 119. 2808.

⁶⁴ *SS* 119. 2810.

⁶⁵ *SS* 119. 2804.

⁶⁶ *Yuhai* 160. 38b-41a.

⁶⁷ *Tianwuguan* (the Heaven-endowed Militancy) is one of the major military units of the Imperial Armies in the Palace Command stationed at the capital. (*SS* 143.3370)

Receptionist instructs the Heaven-Endowed Militancy to pay obedience to the Song emperor, and they pay two respectful bows, then chant, “*wan-sui* (Ten thousand years!) and recite, “*wan-sui*” as guided; the Secretarial Receptionist shout, “wait 祇候”

- 3) the Audience Attendant steps down the east stairs and stays north of the Liao envoys' place; the Secretarial Receptionist bows to the Liao envoys, kneels and receives the container of the State Letter from the Liao envoy and passes it to the Audience Attendant; the Audience Attendant, holding the official tablet, kneels to receive it to bring it up to the throne, and passes it to the Office Manager 內侍都知, while the Liao envoys stand at their waiting place; The Office Manager opens the State Letter and hands it to the State Councilor 宰臣 and Military Affairs Commissioner 樞密;
- 4) [the Heaven-Endowed Militancy] take diplomatic gifts out [of the courtyard];
- 5) the Secretarial Receptionist and the Hostel Receptionist Deputy guide the Liao envoy and envoy deputy to the foot of the east stairs [to the Hall]; the Audience Attendant comes down from the throne and bows to [the Liao envoys] and leads them to the Hall together and stand in front of the throne; the Liao envoy with the state letter conveys the Liao emperor's inquiry about the health of the Song emperor, and the Translator translates it and the Secretarial Receptionist approaches the Song emperor and conveys it with the salute 鞠躬, and then let the Liao envoys stand; the Song emperor responds by letting the Attendant inquire about the health of the Liao emperor; the Liao envoys kneel and respond to the Song emperor, then the Secretarial Receptionist relays it to the emperor. When this communication was complete, the Liao envoy bows and steps down from the throne platform to return to the waiting area, then salutes facing west;
- 6) the Secretarial Receptionist informs to Song emperor, “the envoy of so and so of the Northern State wishes to pay audience;” when the Song emperor says, “allow [him to enter]”, then the Liao envoy is led to meet the Song emperor face-to-face and is asked to pay obeisance based on his native-style bow and steps (Liao style); the Liao envoy steps out of the row and expresses his gratitude for allowing him to meet the emperor and then returns to his row. After bowing and dancing, [the Liao envoy] steps out

again and thanks [the Song emperor] for providing greeting facilities, tea, and medicine on his way to the Song court, then goes back to his place and bows and performs obeisance gesticulations;

7) the Secretarial Receptionist proclaims the imperial order to present the Liao envoy with a pair of fitted clothes, a golden belt, a gilt-silver cap, a pair of leather boots, 300 rolls of cloth, 200 ounces of silver, and a saddled horse. On each item the Liao envoy responds, “obeying,” and receives them in knelt position and stands up to perform a bow and obeisance gesticulations at the end;

8) when [the Secretarial Receptionist] shouts, “wait,” the Liao envoy responds, “obeying,” and exits to the west [stairs].⁶⁸

The envoy deputy and his entourage, in turn, also received imperial presents in order based on their rank, then exited to the west. As opposed to the ritual for the foreign ruler who was directly invited to come up to the throne and was seated near the Song emperor, the Liao envoy and envoy deputy remained in the courtyard during most of the performance, then were led to the throne for a brief period of time to face the Song emperor for the purpose of paying respect and receiving imperial return gifts as shown in step 6)-8) of the passage above. Even during this short contact, the Secretarial Receptionist was always working as a mediator. He

⁶⁸ SS 119. 2804-5.

前一日，習儀于驛。見日，皇帝御崇德殿。宰臣、樞密使以下大班起居訖，至員僚起居後，館伴使副一班入就位，東面立。次接書匣閣門使升殿立。次通事入，不通，喝拜，兩拜，奏聖躬萬福，又喝兩拜，隨呼萬歲，喝祇候，赴東西接引使副位。舍人引契丹使副自外捧書匣入，當殿前立。天武官擡禮物分東西面入，列於殿下，以東為上。舍人喝天武官起居，兩拜，隨呼萬歲，奏聖躬萬福，喝各祇候。閣門從東階降，至契丹使位北。舍人揖使跪進書匣，閣門側身搯笏、跪接，舍人受之。契丹使立，閣門執笏捧書匣升殿，當御前進呈訖，授內侍都知，都知拆書以授宰臣，宰臣、樞密進呈訖，遂擡禮物出。

舍人與館伴使副引契丹使副至東階下，閣門使下殿揖引同升，立御前。至國信大使傳國主問聖體，通事傳譯，舍人當御前鞠躬傳奏訖，揖起北使。皇帝宣閣門迴問國主，北使跪奏，舍人當御前鞠躬傳奏訖，遂揖北使起，却引階降至辭見位，面西揖躬。舍人當殿通北朝國信使某官某祇候見，應喏絕，引當殿，喝拜，大起居，其拜舞並依本國禮。出班謝面天顏，歸位，喝拜舞蹈訖，又出班謝沿路驛館御筵茶藥及傳宣撫問，復歸位，喝拜舞蹈訖，舍人宣有敕賜窄衣一對、金蹠躡子一、金塗銀冠一、鞞一兩、衣著三百匹、銀二百兩、鞍轡馬一，每句應喏，跪受，起，拜舞蹈訖，喝祇候，應喏西出。凡傳語并奏聖躬萬福、致辭，並通事傳譯，舍人當殿鞠躬傳聞，後同。

guided the Liao envoys to enter, take up his station, and come up to the throne, and conveyed words between the Liao envoys and the Song emperor. This arrangement reveals clearly the dignity of the Song emperor.

The translator kept translating their words, except for the word of command such as “*wan-sui*.” A State Letter was delivered to the Song emperor through several hands and was read by the Military Affairs Commissioner who mainly took care of diplomatic affairs. The procedure of salutation and inquiry of health were verbally displaying the equal status in relations between the Song and the Liao, and the repeated chanting of “*wan-sui*” also reaffirmed the peaceful relationship vocally. To make Liao envoys respond, “obeying,” repeatedly after receiving each return gift might be a setting used to highlight the generosity of imperial favor. As a whole, this moment of an imperial audience was designed to proclaim the political relationship vociferously. Diplomatic gifts were carried by the Heaven-Endowed Militancy, the Song imperial guard. These gifts were handed over to the Song officials at the border and were brought into the courtyard to be displayed in front of the people who participated in the ritual performance. This scene was well captured in *Painting of the Khitan Envoy Mission*. Visually, this site of “encountering” was embellished with diplomatic gifts lined up at the courtyard. As a crucial part of a well-managed guest ritual, diplomatic gifts displayed the pride of both states.

Similar sets of guest rituals were performed at the Liao court when the Song envoys visited the Liao court on New Year’s Day and imperial birthdays. Guest ritual in the *Kaiyuan li*, just as the Song, provided the main framework for the Liao guest ritual. Liao guest ritual also applied different versions of protocol for different foreign states: the Song, the Goryeo, and Xi Xia.⁶⁹ The first ritual recorded in the guest ritual for foreign envoys chapter 賓禮志 in the

⁶⁹ *LS* 51. 846-56.

Liaoshi is “Ritual for a Song Envoy Attending an Audience with the Empress Dowager 宋使見皇太后儀.” (the numbering matches with the order numbering of the Song guest ritual: same performances in the section of the same number)

Khitan officials enter the Liao court at dawn and take up their designated positions, while the Song envoys approach the waiting area. When the empress dowager has taken up her place on the throne, Khitan officials make ritual inquiries about her health, withdraw, and stand at attention, facing east. Liao’s ethnic Chinese officials then enter, make obeisance, the Secretarial Receptionist also makes obeisance, then translates, “officials below certain position pay obeisance.” After the seven salutations are completed, each one is asked to wait in their respective position. The Secretariat Director 中書令 and the Grand Prince 大王 take the west stairs to go up to the throne,

- 1) then present a list of names of the Song envoys and their deputies. Other officials who are not seated inside the Hall retreat and stand facing west. After this, the Song envoy, and envoy deputies enter from the east and stand in formation facing the Liao throne platform.
- 3) The Memorial Reception Commissioner 閣使 steps down from the east stairs to receives the missive from the main Song envoy, who kneels and presents it to him. The Memorial Reception Commissioner brings the missive up to the throne through the east stairs, bows to [the Liao empress dowager], then pronounces the seal of the missive intact and presents it to a Palace Secretary, who opens it. A Grand Councilor then reads the contents of the missive aloud to the empress dowager, then Song envoys are led to come up to the throne.
- 5) The Memorial Reception Commissioner greets the Song envoys for the imperial birthday mission, and the envoys bow down and pay obeisance, then stand in their position. Next is the Song envoy for New Year’s Day mission and he follows the same procedure. Liao empress dowager inquires, “Does the emperor of the Southern Country receive great fortune?”(lit. ten thousand fortune 萬福) (=Is the Song emperor

healthy?), and the Secretarial Receptionist 舍人 conveys this inquiry to both of the envoys of imperial birthday and New Year's Day, who kneel [at the platform], and only the envoy of imperial birthday responds, “[Song emperor] was with Ten thousand fortune when we left [the Song].” Both envoys bow and stand up. They are guided to retreat from the throne platform through the east stairs to be placed at the waiting area.

- 2) The Commissioner of the Office of Presentations 引進使 leads ritual presents 禮物 on stretchers to be carried through the west gate and to be placed in front of the Hall. The Groom 控鶴官 pay obedience and salute four times [to the empress dowager].⁷⁰
- 4) After these stretchers [of diplomatic gifts] are taken out to the east gate, the Song envoys withdraw to the east, face west, and bow.
- 6) The Secretarial Receptionist pays obeisance and translate to inform [to the Song envoys], “the State Letter envoys of the Southern Country, certain officials below a certain position wait with respect to pay an audience, perform the obeisance gesticulations, then complete five bows.” [The Song envoys] do not step out from their position, just chant, “may Your Highness receive ten thousand fortunes,” bow again and only the leader of the envoy mission steps out from the row to express his gratitude for allowing him to face the empress dowager then goes back to his row, performs the obeisance gesticulations and completes five polite bows. When the envoys are invited to come up to the throne, they are guided to the throne through the west stairs and positioned at the throne platform. Other followers enter through east and west Tongmen, and pay obeisance in front of the Hall. [The Secretarial Receptionist] informs their names and make them bow. They perform ritual gestures and complete four bows, then are guided to retreat through two Tongmen. When the Khitan Secretarial Receptionist and the ethnic Chinese Memorial Reception Commissioner call “bow,” all the officials including the Song envoy and envoy deputy bow and chant, “Ten thousand years.” All are seated at their position, and are served soup and tea.

⁷⁰ *Yinjinshi* 引進使 is a Commissioner of the Office of Presentations (*Yinjinsi* 引進司), which was a central government agency that managed the presentation to the throne of tribute gifts offered by foreign envoys. *Gongheguan* 控鶴官 is a Groom who is authorized for the Court Ceremonial Institute.

8) After chanting several times, “Ten thousand years!” the Song envoy and envoy deputy retreat down the west stairs of the throne platform and leave [the court] through the west Tongmen. Then Liao formalities conclude soon after the Song envoys’ departure.⁷¹

The unique political situation of the powerful Liao Empress Dowager was reflected in the Liao ritual. The Song not only had to send separate envoy missions but also a separate audience for both the Liao Empress Dowager and the Liao Emperor. Even though the guest ritual to Empress Dowager was recorded first before that to the Liao Emperor, details of ritual for the audience of the Emperor exposed a higher political status than that of the Empress Dowager. The basic formalities of guest ritual performed by the Song envoys toward the Liao Emperor were almost the same except for some details - the direction of the approach, the number of bows, and the scale of the feast. Song envoys pass through the east gate and stood facing east in the audience with the empress dowager whereas they pass through the north gate and stood facing north in front of the Liao emperor. Envoys bowed five times for the empress dowager, and seven times for the emperor, and they were served with alcohol and side dishes

⁷¹ LS 51. 848-9. (宋使見皇太后儀：宋使賀生辰、正旦。至日，臣僚味爽入朝，使者至幕次。臣僚班齊，皇太后御殿坐。宣徽使押殿前班起居畢，捲班。次契丹臣僚班起居畢，引應坐臣僚上殿，就位立；其餘臣僚不應坐者，退於東面侍立。漢人臣僚東洞門入，面西鞠躬。舍人鞠躬，通某以下起居，凡七拜畢；贊各祇候。引應坐臣僚上殿，就位立。中書令、大王西階上殿，奏宋使并從人膀子訖，就位立。其餘臣僚不應坐者，退於西面侍立。次引宋使副六人於東洞門入，丹墀內面殿齊立。閣使自東階下，受書匣，使人捧書匣者皆跪，閣使搢笏立，受書匣。自東階上殿，欄內鞠躬，奏「封全」訖，授樞密開封。宰臣對皇太后讀訖，引使副六人東階上殿，欄內立。使者揖生辰節大使少前，使者俛伏跪，附起居訖，起，復位立。次引賀皇太后正旦大使，附起居，如前儀。皇太后宣問「南朝皇帝聖躬萬福」，舍人揖生辰大使并皇太后正旦大使少前，皆跪，唯生辰大使奏「來時聖躬萬福」，皆俛伏，興。引東階下殿，丹墀內面殿齊立。引進使引禮物於西洞門入，殿前置擔牀。控鶴官起居，四拜，擔牀於東便門出畢，揖使副退於東方，西面，皆鞠躬。舍人鞠躬，通南朝國信使某官某以下祇候見，舞蹈，五拜畢；不出班，奏「聖躬萬福」，再拜；揖班首出班，謝面天顏訖，復位，舞蹈，五拜畢，贊各上殿祇候，引各使副西階上殿就位。勾從人兩洞門入，面殿鞠躬，通名，贊拜，起居，四拜畢，贊各祇候，分班引兩洞門出。若宣問使副「跋涉不易」，引西階下殿，丹墀內舞蹈，五拜畢，贊各上殿祇候，引西階上殿，就位立。契丹舍人、漢人閣使齊贊拜，應坐臣僚并使副皆拜，稱「萬歲」。贊各就坐，行湯、行茶。供過人出殿門，揖臣僚并使副起，鞠躬。契丹舍人、漢人閣使齊贊，皆拜，稱「萬歲」。贊各祇候。先引宋使副西階下殿，西洞門出，次揖臣僚出畢，報閣門無事。皇太后起。

accompanied by musical celebration at the imperial audience in addition to the soup and tea which were served at the audience with the empress dowager.

Basic procedure of the protocol of the Song and the Liao imperial audiences shows a great similarity. As I marked in matching numbers, 1) entrance of envoy and envoy deputy, 3) submission of the State Letter, 5) inquiry of health (fortune) of the emperor, 6) meeting face-to-face with the emperor, and 8) retreating from the imperial audience, were almost identical except that the order of 2) bring in and displaying diplomatic gifts, and 4) carrying out diplomatic gifts were different. The bowing, advancing, paying obeisance, setting diplomatic gifts, calling “*wan-sui*”, and retreating were highly formalized in both court rituals in similar ways.⁷²

This similarity should not be interpreted as the Liao adoption of the “Chinese” ritual in one direction. Both the Liao and the Song adopted Tang *Kaiyuan li* as a model of their court ritual. The Liao was faster in terms of adopting and institutionalizing court ritual, because the Liao dynasty was established earlier than the Song. Originating from their relationship with the Later Jin, the Liao instituted its ritual and “Escort Commissioner 接伴” system in 938.⁷³ It is true that the Liao court received advice to institute their governing system, including court ritual, from “Chinese” states such as the Later Tang, Later Jin and Later Han and officials of Han origin in Liao court. However, in the relationship with the Song court, at least, there were rather reciprocal interactions, which was the result of both courts competing with one another to display their equal political position after the Shanyuan Treaty. After the Song and Liao

⁷² What is noticeable in Liao guest ritual is that diplomatic gifts from the Song were displayed only in the “Ritual for a Song Envoy Attending an Audience with the Empress Dowager,” while the Liao return gifts were received in the “Ritual for a Song Envoy Attending an Audience with the Emperor.” This complexity of ritual procedure according to the Liao’s dual lines of authorities needs further examination. (*LS* 51. 848-851)

⁷³ Cao Xianzheng 曹显征, “Liao Song Jiaopin Zhidu Yanjiu” 辽宋交聘制度研究, PhD diss. (Zhongyang minzu University, 2006), 44.

exchanged regular envoy missions, both courts established more elaborate agencies to manage their treaty relationship, and the State Letter Agency 國信司⁷⁴ became the major agency handling this matter. Both the Song and the Liao courts established State Letter agencies and named the annual envoy missions as the State Letter Envoy mission and the exchange of the State Letter which only existed between the two courts and played a main role in the protocol of the guest ritual.

Rituals for Presentation of State letters between the Song and the Liao

Song diplomatic missives to the Liao were presented by Song envoys to the Liao empress dowager (or emperor) through a highly formal and carefully designed ritual. Diplomatic gifts were also displayed in front of the empress dowager following the procedure of the ritual performance. What were the contents of the letters? How did politics enter in?

Over 100 state letters which were brought by Song envoys and submitted to the Liao court are preserved in *Song dazhaoling ji* 宋大詔令集.⁷⁵ A New Year's letter from the Song emperor to the Liao emperor shows the most typical format of state letters to the Liao court. These letters illustrate how the Song treated the Liao court differently from other states such as the Goryeo and Xi Xia, as well as how the Song court handled the issues of diplomatic gifts.

⁷⁴ State Letter Agency was set up in the early year of Jingde reign to deal with the relationship with the Liao. Originally it was 機宜局 which took care of military issues such as gathering intelligence, but after the Shanyuan Treaty when the peace-relationship was settled, it renamed itself as State Letter Institution, and then handled specific issues regarding the envoy missions. (Lin Xiaoyi 林小異, "Zhuguan Wanglai Guoxin?" 主管往來國信? – 淺探宋代的國信所, *Shanyuanzhimeng Xinlun* 澶淵之盟新論 [Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 2007], 413-4.)

⁷⁵ *SDZLJ* 228.882 – 232.904.

Wright examined the structure and the contents of them closely and outlined their basic form.⁷⁶

- I. Date
- II. Terms of address: a salutation in which the Song emperor addressed the Liao emperor by his epistolary title.
- III. Body of missive: comments about the incipient arrival of the spring season, followed by statements to the effect that the arrival of a New Year Felicitation embassy would bolster the already secure peace and amicability between the two states.
- IV. Information on the envoy and the deputy envoy: a declaration that a certain official was [along with his deputy] being sent to take up the office as envoy.
- V. Gifts: “they have a few gifts, which are listed on another length [of document]”
- VI. Closure: “they specially carry [this] missive to manifest my felicitations. I say no more.”

In these contents, Parts IV and V caught my attention. The envoys are often introduced with a long list of titles and positions held by the official. Not only the long elaborated official title but also a land-grant noble title 食邑 was given for some envoy descriptions. Wright conjectured that the purpose of applying these elaborate official positions of the Song envoys was to impress Liao court by providing the information that the New Year Felicitation envoy was sufficiently eminent and dignified.⁷⁷ Therefore, when the Song court dispatched envoys to foreign states, they added an additional official position to the envoy for the purpose of political balance. Envoys dispatched to the Liao court were assigned a higher rank than those to either

⁷⁶ Wright, *From War to Diplomatic Parity*, 161-3.

⁷⁷ Wright, *From War to Diplomatic Parity*, 161-3.

the Xi Xia or Goryeo courts.⁷⁸ Imperial return gifts from the host emperor to emissaries were conferred to the envoy and envoy deputy according to their rank. Higher officials were qualified for a higher value of return gift, in theory. Considering the entire situation, elevating the political position of Song envoys was a shrewd scheme contrived to acquire a relative political position in the state-to-state relationship.

Part V of the imperial missive says “[the Song court] sends a few gifts, which are listed on another length [of document].” Sample lists of gifts presented from the Song to the Liao and the Liao to the Song are recorded in *Qidanguo zhi* 契丹國志. As noted above, these lengthy lists of material objects were titled as “Gifts politely exchanged between the South and North Dynasties 南北朝饋獻禮物,”⁷⁹ which implied equal political status in their relations. I analyze the contents and the number of diplomatic gifts more closely in a later chapter, but what is clear in this state letter is that the diplomatic gifts were the main component of the envoy mission and their diplomatic relationship.

Another element clearly displayed in the state letters was the appellation that each emperor called each other. In the Shanyuan Treaty, the Song and the Liao set up their relationship as a brotherly relationship. Based on this quasi-familial relationship, in addition to referring each other court as Southern State and Northern State, the Song emperor was called as “older brother 兄” and the Liao emperor was called as “younger brother 弟.” Does this mean that the Song took a higher position than the Liao? Many Chinese studies have used this as proof that the Song was satisfied with this nominal superior position in relations with the Liao. However, the states assigned the appellation subject to the real ages of the emperors themselves,

⁷⁸ Wu Xiaoping, *Songdai waijiao zhidu yanjiu* 宋代外交制度研究 (Hefei: Anhui renmin chubanshe, 2006), 124-5.

⁷⁹ *QDGZ* 21.200-3.

not to the position of the states themselves. In the year of Shanyuan Treaty, Song Zhenzong was older than Liao Shengzong, and so, the Song took the title of “older brother.” In other letters, Song Renzong was older than Liao Xingzong, so the letter sent from the Liao to the Song in 1041 was titled as “younger brother, the Great Khitan emperor celebrating with respect for older brother, the Great Song emperor”⁸⁰ Based on that rule Song Renzong became an “uncle” of Liao Daozong and Song Yingzong became an “older brother” to Liao Daozong. Then, Song Shenzong became a “nephew” to Liao Daozong, and Song Zhezong became a “great nephew” to Liao Daozong.⁸¹ This rule of appellation might work well for both courts. When called as “older brother,” they could enjoy the superior position even though this sense of superiority was only shared domestically. At the same time, when called as “younger brother,” they had a theory regarding this position not as a humiliating condition because it was based solely on the actual age of their emperor. It was a shrewd rule that allowed both the Song and the Liao to be exempt from deciding the meticulous issue of which was in superior position in their relationship.

Guest ritual as a way to display relative position and cultural difference

Imperial audiences on New Year’s Day and imperial birthdays provided the occasion for all other guest states to witness and display their relative diplomatic position and cultural identity. Song guest rituals for the Xi Xia and Goryeo were much simpler than that for the Liao envoy mission. There was no procedure in which the Song emperor inquired about the health of the Xi Xia or Goryeo rulers. As observed earlier, the Liao envoy mission and state letters, which

⁸⁰ QDGZ 20.191.

⁸¹ *Liaohuiyao* 遼會要 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2009), 5. 161-2.

represented the Liao emperor, were treated with reciprocal respect in the Song guest ritual. On the other hand, the Song guest ritual for the Xi Xia and Goryeo envoy missions showed the characteristics that they were considered as tribute-bearing states, as there was no exchanging of state letters.

Seating position in the rite was one of the means to display each state's relative importance to the Song court. When the envoys from the Liao, Xi Xia, and Goryeo, and other small regimes from the Northwest and Southeast Asia attended an audience, envoys from the Liao, Xi Xia, and Goryeo were seated at the inner court 殿內, whereas other deputies from various small states were assigned to be seated at the corridors 兩廊.⁸² Another setting of differential treatment during a ritual was the rank of the hosting official. Since the Song regarded the Liao as a diplomatic equal, the Song emperor himself hosted banquets for Liao envoys, whereas for other emissaries, the Reception Escort Commissioner arranged and hosted banquets after the audience.⁸³

When Song envoys attended the audience of the Liao court, they also did not want to be portrayed as tribute-bearers who were recognized as politically inferior. Therefore, the Liao and the Jin, after they took over the Liao, adopted a careful strategy in conducting their guest rituals. They treated the Song envoy in an exceptional manner: either as their equal or at least as a relatively powerful neighbor compared to the Xi Xia and Goryeo.

Xu Kangzong 許亢宗, a Song envoy who visited the Jin court in the year of 1125, recorded the Jin ceremonies of audience and reception for foreign envoys. He commented that both were elaborate processions and followed the format set by the Song. Guest ritual provided an official chance to observe another state's culture. The audiences with the emperor were

⁸² SS 119.2808.

⁸³ Wu, *Songdai waijiao zhidu yanjiu*, 171.

regulated meticulously. The bowing, advancing, retreating, and greeting were prescribed in the record *Xuanhe yisi fengshi xingchenglu* 宣和乙巳奉使行程錄 in detail.⁸⁴

Lou Yue, who wrote another detailed envoy report, *Beixing rilu* 北行日錄, also described some of the ritual behavior at the banquet and commented that it might have been influenced by Jing Cihui 敬詞暉, who was one of the Jin envoys to the Song court in 1156 and contributed to the introduction of the Song ceremonies to the Jin.⁸⁵ The Song officials judged the observation of these rituals based on how close they mirrored Song culture. As an example, one reason that the Song valued the Goryeo court was because they saw a lot of similarities between Goryeo court culture and that of the Song. Therefore, Xu Jing 徐兢 (1091-1153), who wrote the envoy report to the Goryeo, happily wrote the last chapter, “Shared Culture 同文” in his travel report, *Gaoli tujing* 高麗圖經.⁸⁶ In the end, what Song officials paid attention to when looked at another state’s culture was actually how similar it was to their own culture.

Song officials also discussed how to display their culture to other foreign guests. The field of court banquets provided the chance for foreign envoys to experience Song court culture - popular banquet music. Therefore, Hanlin Academician 翰林學仕 Qian Weiyan 錢惟演 complained that “the lyrics of the court music which musicians perform at the banquet for Liao and Goryeo envoys are too shallow and vulgar. I suggest that lyrics which are used for court

⁸⁴ Franke, “Sung Embassies,” in *China Among Equals*, 129.

⁸⁵ Linda Walton, “Diary of a Journey to the North,” *Journal of Song Yuan Studies* 32, (2002): 14.

⁸⁶ *Gaoli tujing* 高麗圖經, by Xu Jing (徐兢 1091-1153), translated by Cho Dongwon [Seoul: Hwangso Jari Press, 2005], 464-88; Xu Jing, as an Assistant Central Secretary in charge of Personnel, Vessels, and Ceremonial Gifts 提轄人船禮物官, joined a diplomatic mission to Goryeo in 1123. He was responsible for management of Song ceremonial gifts to Goryeo, and for recording this diplomatic mission in order to report to the emperor. Xu Jing was responsible for offering a detailed report about the general situation of Goryeo as well as the particular 1123 emissary mission. The embassy stayed in the Goryeo capital, Gaegyeong, for about a month, and Xu Jing spent almost a year completing his report after he returned from the mission. He compiled a comprehensive description of Goryeo culture and titled it *Xuanhe Fongshi Gaoli Tujing* 宣和奉使高麗圖經 (*The Illustrated Description of the Song Embassy to Goryeo during the Reign of Xuanhe*).

banquets – especially during encounters with foreign envoys – should be composed by scholars from the Document Drafting Office 舍人院.”⁸⁷ Song officials were attentive to their expressions to show their cultural refinement when communicating with Liao and Goryeo envoys, and vice versa. They particularly chose erudite envoys who could parade their learning to impress foreign officials.

On the day of New Year’s Day audience, members of the court could observe a variety of foreign fashions. All the envoys visiting from the foreign lands wore their own official suits. The Liao envoy wore a big lotus-leaf shaped golden hat with a long narrow brim on the head, purple fitted robe, and *diexie* 蹀躞 belt.⁸⁸ The envoy deputy wore Chinese style robe with golden belt extended from the inside. The grand envoy bowed with left leg standing and right leg knelt and both of his hands on his right shoulder and the envoy deputy bowed in Chinese style.⁸⁹ The Xi Xia envoy and envoy deputy both wore a short, small gold hat, dark red fitted robe, a golden *diexie* belt, and leather *diaodun* shoes, and bowed with both hands interlaced. Goryeo and Jiaozhou 交州 envoys were both in Chinese-style dress. In *Dongjing menghua lu*, all the different costumes of foreign envoys were elaborated and it is clear that the Song

⁸⁷ CB 93. 2174.

⁸⁸ Based on *Mengxi bitan* 夢溪筆談 (*Written Talk on the Stream of Dream*) written by Shen Kuo 沈括 (1031-1095), the *diexie* belt was used for the carrying of the arrows, sword, pouch, and etc. From the excavated material, suspended from this kind of leather belt, which was usually lost, are always decorative plaques made of gold, silver, gold-plated bronze, jade, amber and other precious stones. According to historical documents the emperor used a belt with jade, horn and gold, whilst officials used one with other precious stones. (*Mengxi bitan* 夢溪筆談, by Shen Kuo 沈括 (1031-1095) in *Quan Song biji* 全宋筆記 2, vol. 3 [Zhengzhou: Daxiang chubanshe, 2006], 10.)

⁸⁹ Based on the *Qidanguo ji*, during the reign of Taizong (927-947) they formed a dual dress system, one for the north one for the south. The empress dowager and the ethnic Khitan officials wore Khitan costume, but the emperor and Han originated officials wore Han style clothing. In Khitan envoy mission, the grand envoy 大使 was always a native Khitan official who wore Khitan style costume, and the envoy deputy was Han originated official who wore Chinese style official robe. (*QDGZ* 23.224-5)

emperor and officials viewed this cultural variety through the lens of their own culture.⁹⁰

Lou Yue, in his report from the envoy mission to Jin 1125, also introduced certain observations about another state's culture through their clothing and gifts. He even described the Goryeo and Xi Xia envoys who were standing in front of the waiting area. Lou remarked that the Goryeo envoys' apparel was similar to that of the Song: all wore purple robes and distinctive sashes indicating their rank. The Goryeo envoys offered sheep and wine as gifts. He was also very observant of the Xi Xia envoys and their gifts. He noted that the Xi Xia envoys all came from the princely family and that they were appropriately attired with golden caps and red robes, but the retinue was, in contrast, clad in the "barbarian" way: Their hair tied up in a knot with a small kerchief 椎髻 and covered with small pointed caps. Then Lou described the Xi Xia's gifts to the Jin court.

Xi Xia envoys presented twelve loads of presents, twenty horses, seven hunting falcons (海東青), and five small dogs, but [when these gifts are lined up in the courtyard] the horses neighed and the dogs barked, causing quite a disturbance in the court ceremony.⁹¹

In his record, Lou mentioned that he participated in the preparation for the mission, so he practiced ceremonial procedures in advance, checked the appropriate garments, and examined gifts to be presented to the Jin host. He also recorded a rehearsal of the ceremonies for their audience at the Jin court.⁹² Compared to his own sophisticated preparation for the ceremony, he thought the gifts that the Xi Xia envoy brought were boorish and that the

⁹⁰ *Dongjing menghua lu jianzhu* 東京夢華錄箋注, attrib. to Meng Yuanlao 孟元老 (fl.1126-1147), annotated by Yi Yongwen 伊永文 (*Zhonghua shuju*, 2006), 516-34.

⁹¹ *Beixing rilu* 北行日錄, by Lou Yue 樓鑰 (1137-1213), (Taipei: Yi Wen, 1966), *shang* 35b; Franke, "Sung Embassies," 130; Walton, "Diary of a Journey to the North," 13-4.

⁹² *Beixing rilu*, *shang* 6a-b; 32b.

ceremony was disrupted by noise. Horses were the common diplomatic gifts for its military and economic usefulness but dogs were unique as diplomatic gifts. There was no dog presented by the Xi Xia to the Song court. Therefore dogs in the space of ceremony must be recognized as unpleasant and inappropriate objects from the Song envoy's point of view.

Unfortunately surviving records do not reveal envoy's opinions regarding other state's diplomatic gifts. It would be very interesting if we could compare what the Jin court thought of the dogs from the Xi Xia. I can only assume that the standard for the comparison and observation of cultural judgment must be based on their own culture, just as it was for the Song officials. However, it is clear that diplomatic gifts, as a major part of the guest ritual, provided a chance to display their own culture and to observe other's culture. Guest ritual was a visual backdrop for peaceful diplomatic contact and diplomatic gifts were main players. In the next chapter, I focus more specifically on how these diplomatic gifts were prepared, transferred, managed, and received.

CHAPTER 4: Song Government Agencies Responsible for Diplomatic Relations

In this chapter, I shift my focus to practical aspects of gift-exchange between the Song and its neighbor states. As discussed in earlier chapters, official exchanges of diplomatic gifts took place at imperial audiences and banquets, the diplomatic language and ceremony carefully managed. In this chapter, I focus specifically on the management of gifts-exchanges. Which institutions were engaged in the major decisions concerning diplomatic gifts? Through what procedures did they implement the gift exchange? What problems did they encounter and what conditions influenced the choice and quantity of gifts?

Decision Making Bureaus

In the Song central government the institutions that made decisions on diplomatic issues was the Bureau of Military Affairs 樞密院.⁹³ During the Song dynasty, it was the paramount central government agency in control of the state's military forces, headed by one or more Military Affairs Commissioners. Although it was not exclusively in charge of foreign policy, as the top executive agency for the most important military matters the Bureau of Military Affairs – or more specifically its Section on Rites 禮房 – was particularly responsible for foreign

⁹³ Charles O. Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985), 436. no.5451. Hucker translated it as Palace Secretariat, because it was an agency in which eunuch Palace Secretaries (*shu-mi-shi*) coordinated and supervised the Emperor's paperwork during Tang dynasty. From 870s it became a regular official post with chief military responsibility which gained dictatorial power over the palace and the central government. So Hucker translated it the Bureau of Military Affairs when it was reconstituted after the fall of Tang.

affairs decisions, even for quite specific issues such as those regarding envoy missions and the exchange of diplomatic gifts. For example, when the Song court dispatched and received the formal and occasional envoys, the Bureau of Military Affairs handled most details:

- When the Song court dispatched envoy missions to foreign states, the Bureau of Military Affairs needed to compose state letters indicating the purpose of the envoy mission and the list of the diplomatic gifts, select the individuals to serve as envoys, and arrange board and lodging and other expenses for the envoy mission.
- When foreign envoy missions arrived at the Song court, the Bureau of Military Affairs had to dispatch escorting officials 接伴使 promptly to guide foreign envoys to the capital and the court, to arrange an imperial audience and banquets for the foreign envoys, and decide the value of the return gifts for the foreign envoy mission.⁹⁴

The Bureau of Military Affairs also made specific decisions regarding diplomatic gifts to and from foreign states. In 1086, the Bureau of Military Affairs reported to [Zhezong, or in reality Empress Dowager Gao]: “we assigned the Commissioner of the Imperial Larder 供備庫使 Zhang Mao 張楙 to handle the gifts for the Xi Xia ruler’s birthday.”⁹⁵ Why was the Bureau of Military Affairs rather than the Grand Councilors the main decision maker in diplomatic matters?

During the Song period, the Bureau of Military Affairs was one of the three most powerful executive organs, along with the Grand Councilors 宰相 and the State Finance

⁹⁴ *SHY zhiguan* 6.15.

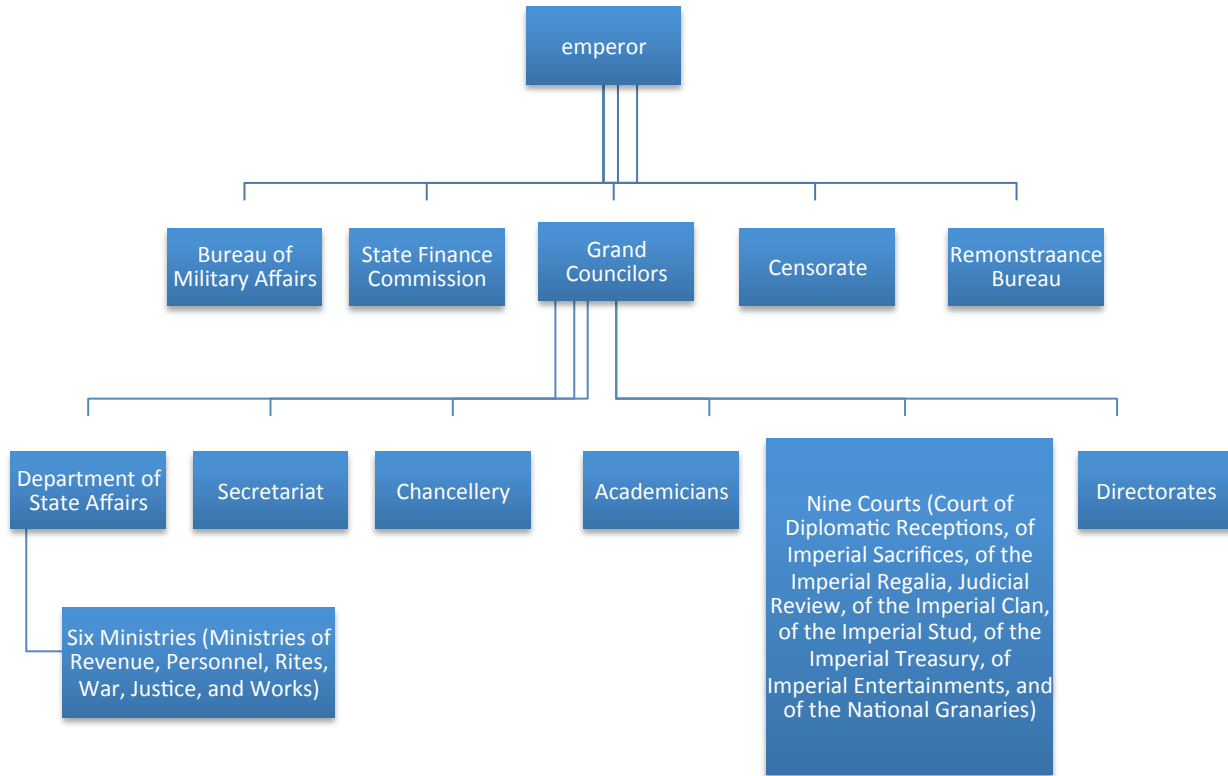
⁹⁵ *CB* 390.9492.

Commission 三司, which were in charge of general administrative issues and financial issues, respectively. The chart below shows the basic framework for the bureaucratic organization of the Song central government. Together with the emperor, the Grand Councilors, the State Finance Commission, and the Bureau of Military Affairs functioned as the core group of decision makers and coordinated the administration of all aspects of state affairs. By separating the Bureau of Military Affairs from the paramount source of civil authority held by the Grand Councilors and strengthening it, the Song emperors, who were in the position to balance the power of the civil and military administrations, gained absolute control over the military and its highest officials, while excluding interference in military affairs on the part of the chief councilors. In addition to the Bureau of Military Affairs, the Finance Commission also contributed to increasing imperial control over financial policies at the expense of the grand councilors because it functioned as the main fiscal administration under the direct control of the emperor. It was autonomous in making and implementing policies in its own field and answered only to the emperor.⁹⁶

In the political situation brought about by the Song's confrontations with the Liao and the Xi Xia, the Bureau of Military Affairs was able to enhance its leverage as the central agency responsible for military matters. In consultation with the emperor, this bureau was the principal agent that made important decision regarding the relations with foreign neighbors, including diplomatic exchanges.

⁹⁶ Lau Nap-yin, Huang K'uan-chung, "Founding and Consolidation of the Sung Dynasty under T'ai-tsu (960-976), T'ai-tsung (976-997), and Chen-tsung (997-1022)," edited by Denis Twitchett & Paul Jakov Smith, *The Cambridge History of China*, vol 5, part 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 229-41.

Chart 1. Bureaucratic System of the Song⁹⁷



Besides the Bureau of Military Affairs, two other bureaus specializing in diplomatic affairs were the Bureau of Receptions 主客司 under the Ministry of Rites 禮部 in the Department of State Affairs 尚書省 and the Court of Diplomatic Reception 鴻臚寺, which was at first separate from the Ministry of Rites.⁹⁸ The official rank of the former was higher than that of the latter, but each bureau was separate and handled different tasks. The affiliation of

⁹⁷ Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles*, 40.

⁹⁸ Hucker's dictionary translates *Honglusi* as the Court of State Ceremonial since it was engaged in not only tasks regarding diplomatic receptions but also those of main state ceremonies such as state funerals and other important court rituals. During the Tang period, when eunuchs participated in court administration more actively, it was a bigger and busier bureau handling most of the important court ceremonies. However, during the Song, it became a relatively smaller institution whose tasks were limited to the ceremonies of diplomatic contacts. Therefore, David Wright translated it as the Court of Diplomatic Reception to clarify its function as a bureau set up to handle tasks regarding diplomatic contacts. I have adopted Wright's translation here.

these bureaus reveal the different jobs assigned to them: The Bureau of Receptions worked to set up fundamental rules for diplomatic contacts and the Court of Diplomatic Receptions, as a part of the Palace Administration, supervised actual enforcement of these rules.

The Bureau of Receptions was one of four sub-bureaus⁹⁹ headed by a Director 郎中 within the Ministry of Rites.¹⁰⁰ According to the *Songshi*, one of the important tasks of this bureau was producing works of reference about foreign states. When foreign envoys reached the Song court, the Bureau of Receptions made illustrations of official attire of the foreign envoys and notes on the geography and culture of their state. These records provided the grounds for establishing rules and regulations for the overall process of guest rituals at court. Another main task of this bureau was delivering and promulgating the edicts that the Song emperor issued on an appointment of a foreign ruler.¹⁰¹ As a subordinate unit of the Ministry of Rites, the tasks of the Bureau of Receptions were basically limited to the management of guest rituals. At first a separate sub-bureau of the Ministry of Rites, the Bureau of Catering 膳部 operated separately to take charge of food supply and catering at the court banquets for foreign envoys. In 1086 it was integrated into the Bureau of Receptions due to their overlapping tasks.¹⁰²

Even though the Court of Diplomatic Receptions 鴻臚寺 was headed by a chief minister 卿 (rank 4b), whose rank was lower than the director 郎中 (rank 6b) of the Bureau of

⁹⁹ Three other bureaus were the Bureau of Ritual 禮部, the Bureau of Sacrifices 祠部, and the Bureau of Catering 膳部. (SS 163.3852)

¹⁰⁰ *SHY zhiguan* 13. 46a-47a.

¹⁰¹ *SS* 163.3854.

¹⁰² *SHY zhiguan* 13. 46b.

Receptions, as a part of the Nine Courts,¹⁰³ it existed separately from the Bureau of Receptions and performed relatively independent tasks during the early Song until it was moved to the Ministry of Rites during the Southern Song period.¹⁰⁴ Records reveal that sometimes the Bureau of Receptions and the Court of Diplomatic Receptions performed overlapping jobs: particularly both were engaged in gathering information on foreign states coming to the Song court as tribute bearers and compiling a diplomatic handbook. *A Handbook of Foreign States surrounding the Great Song* 大宋四夷述職圖 was compiled in 1015 on the suggestion of the Supervisor of the Court of Diplomatic Reception, Zhang Fu 張復.¹⁰⁵ The Supervisor of the Court of Diplomatic Reception, Song Jiao 宋郊, also proposed the compilation of a book on the geography and culture of foreign states with images of their official costume.¹⁰⁶ These two agencies followed different lines of command – one by civil officials, the other by eunuchs- and it is unclear how well these two institutions co-operated with each other when undertaking related tasks. Scattered records suggest that the distribution of the tasks among the bureaucratic agencies was not at all effective in early Song. Similar redundancy was found elsewhere in the Song government. Because the problem of bureaucratic redundancy was widespread in the Song bureaucratic system, Shenzong pursued administrative reforms in 1080. The Court of Diplomatic Receptions, in particular, was often described as having no responsibilities, and was

¹⁰³ The Nine Courts of the Song were the Courts of Imperial Sacrifices 太常寺, of the Imperial Regalia 衛尉寺, of Judicial Review 大理寺, of Diplomatic Receptions (or of State Ceremonial) 鴻臚寺, of the Imperial Clan 宗正寺, of the Imperial Stud 太僕寺, of the Imperial Treasury 太府寺, of Imperial Entertainments 光祿寺, and of the National Granaries 司農寺. Each Court was headed by a Chief Minister 卿 and one or more Vice Ministers 少卿. (Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles*, 44)

¹⁰⁴ SS 165. 3903.

¹⁰⁵ SHY zhiguan 25.1.

¹⁰⁶ SHY fanyi 7.25.

placed under the Ministry of Rites so that it could function more effectively.¹⁰⁷

No matter what its place within the structure of the Song bureaucratic system, the Court of Diplomatic Receptions was the major institution responsible for practical tasks such as arranging imperial audiences for foreign envoys, preparing official banquets, greeting and sending off foreign guests, and accompanying foreigners while they traveled within Song boundaries.¹⁰⁸ The Court of Diplomatic Receptions (= the Court of State Ceremonial) had been the main institution for handling foreign affairs since early times in China, and the title of Chamberlain for State Ceremonial (*Da Honglu* 大鴻臚) had been employed starting with the Han dynasty.¹⁰⁹ It was responsible for receiving princes and marquises visiting the imperial capital, keeping the genealogical records of nobility outside of royal lineage, and maintaining diplomatic ties with non-Han political leaders. From the Sui dynasty, this office actually functioned as a central government agency responsible for managing the reception of envoy missions, and an office called the Hostel for Tributary Envoys (*Sifang guan* 四方館) was also opened on occasion under the aegis of the Court for Diplomatic Receptions.¹¹⁰

During the Song period, the Court of Diplomatic Reception was still the main bureau handling the practical affairs concerning the procedure of envoy contacts. Even though the major regulations for diplomatic ritual were decided by high government officials in the Bureau of Military Affairs, the Court of Diplomatic Reception also had say on practical matters occurring during diplomatic encounters. According to the *Song Classified Documents* 宋會要,

¹⁰⁷ Paul Jakov Smith, "Shen-tsung's Reign and the New Policies of Wang An-shih, 1067-1085," in *The Cambridge History of China*, vol 5, part 1, 457-61.

¹⁰⁸ *SHY zhiguan* 25. 1a-5b.

¹⁰⁹ As for the meaning of the title of '*Honglu* (鴻臚)' was interpreted as two possible ways: ♂ *Hong* means 'the sound,' and *Lu* means 'to deliver or hand down.' *Honglu* means 'to deliver the sound of the Emperor to foreign rulers [paying audience to the Chinese court]' ♂ *Hong* means 'huge,' and *Lu* means 'to display,' *Honglu* means 'to display the order of foreign rulers at the Grand ritual'

¹¹⁰ Anderson, "Frontier Management and Tribute Relations along the Empire's Southern Border," 54-55.

when foreign envoys arrived at the Song court, the Court of Diplomatic Reception was immediately responsible for:

- Arranging the guest hostel and welcoming banquets for the guests in accordance to the political status of the foreign state
- Informing the envoys of the appropriate regulations and procedures for the guest rituals, banquets, and return gifts to the agencies in charge
- Reporting information about diplomatic gifts from the foreign state to the Hostel for Tributary Envoys (*Sifang Guan* 四方館), preparing them for transport, and setting up the proper places for the foreign envoys at the court audience.¹¹¹

The tasks of the Court of Diplomatic Reception listed above reveal that it directed several sub-agencies, discussed in following sections.

Guesthouses for Foreign Diplomatic Personnel

Among the many subordinate agencies under the jurisdiction of the Court of Diplomatic Reception, the five main hostels in the capital were the most active units when foreign guests arrived at the Song capital, Kaifeng. The most opulent guesthouse was the Metropolitan Postal

¹¹¹ *SHY zhiguan* 25. 2.

Station 都亭驛 which was located in Guanghua ward inside of the old city wall.¹¹² It had been the central postal station of Bian prefecture 汴州 from the Tang period, and then became a metropolitan postal station, and so was named as such during the Later Jin 晉 dynasty from 940. It hosted the Liao envoy Kemiaogushensi 克妙骨慎思 during his stay in 975. After the Shanyuan treaty, as the largest postal station, it was technically restricted to Khitan envoys and their retinue on the biannual occasions of their envoy missions.¹¹³ In 1102, after this postal station/hostel was renovated, it had 525 rooms equipped with gates, halls, stables, and guestrooms.¹¹⁴ Understanding the reputation of the Metropolitan Postal Station as a hostel for the most important of foreign guests, Jin 金 envoys (when they won political standing as diplomatic equals with the Song after the fall of the Liao), demanded to stay at this postal station during their diplomatic visits from the year of 1123 on.¹¹⁵

In addition to the Metropolitan Postal Station, there were several other guesthouses in Kaifeng which hosted envoy missions from foreign states. These included the Directorate of the Western Postal Stations 都亭西驛, the Hall of Welcoming Guests 禮賓院, the Postal Stations Cherishing the Distant Ones 懷遠驛, and the Hostel for Shared Culture 同文館. Each unit took care of diplomatic correspondence with a set of foreign states. The table below shows the

¹¹² During the Tang dynasty, the main city consisted of many *fang* 坊(ward), an organizational unit term meaning a physical residential block. In Song Kaifeng, this term, *fang* 坊(ward), was still used, but its meaning was changed to fit the characteristics of the city. It was a neighborhood administrative unit sometimes used interchangeably with street names or sometimes it designated a certain “street-centered neighborhood.” For further discussion, see Heng Chye Kiang, *Cities of Aristocrats and Bureaucrats: The Development of Medieval Chinese Cityscapes* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii press, 1999), 105-7.

¹¹³ *Yuhai* 172.30b; 33a-b.

¹¹⁴ *SHY fangyu* 10.15b.

¹¹⁵ Wang, Jing 王靜, “Songdai zhongyang keguan zhidu 宋代中央客馆制度,” *Shixue yuekan* 史学月刊 (2003. 4), 2.

foreign states assigned to each guesthouse.¹¹⁶

Table 2. Guest Houses in Kaifeng

Guest houses	foreign states	location
Metropolitan Postal Station 都亭驛	Liao (before 1122), Jin (after 1122)	In Guanghua ward 光化坊
Directorate of the Western Postal Station 都亭西驛	“barbarian tribes west of the River,” principally the Xi Xia	In Huining West ward 惠寧西坊
Hall of Welcoming Guests 禮賓院	Uighurs, Tibetans, Tang-Xiang, Jurchens (before 1122 and the founding of the Jin)	In Guide ward 歸德坊
Postal Station Cherishing the Distant Ones 懷遠驛	“Southern Barbarians,” Annam, “Western Barbarians,” Kucha, Ta-Shi(Arabs or Persians), Khotan, the Kan-chou, Sha-chou Uighurs, the Tsung-ko	Northern part of the Bian river inside of the old capital city, Xingdao ward 興道坊
Hostel for Shared Culture 同文館	Goryeo	In Anzhou ward 安州巷 northwestern of the Changhe gate 闔闔門

The names of these accommodations for foreign envoys, variously called – “postal station 驛,” “hostel 館,” and “hall (public building) 院” – show that several different official units cooperated with the Court of Diplomatic Reception in hosting foreign guests. Postal stations were the major facilities of lodging for foreign visitors in the capital as well as in the prefectures along the way to the capital. The Song reorganized old postal stations and some old

¹¹⁶ I made this table based on information in Herbert Franke’s “Sung Embassies,” 120; *Yuhai* 172.30-5; *SS* 118.3903.

administrative buildings into guesthouses to accommodate the increase in diplomatic personnel. For example, in 1008 they reorganized and renamed the Shangyuan Western Postal Station 上源西驛, which used to provide residence for tribute-bearing foreigners from the west, into the Directorate of the Western Postal Stations, and this particular postal station was expected to accommodate only the Xi Xia envoy missions due to their frequent visits. Other western neighbors were sent to the Post Station of Coming from a Distance 來遠驛, which was a renovated unit of the old office of the Inspector-in-chief of Metropolitan Cavalry Command 馬軍都虞侯官廳.¹¹⁷ Most of guesthouses listed in Table 2 dated to Song Zhenzong's reign, after the Song established relatively regular foreign relationships with the Liao and other states. The Postal Station of Cherishing the Distant Ones 懷遠驛 was established in 1006 by converting the old office of the Inspector-in-chief of the Metropolitan Command 侍衛都虞侯署 in Xingdao ward 興道坊, north of the Bian river and inside of the old city wall.

Inside these postal stations used as guesthouses in Kaifeng, there were the Offices 管勾所¹¹⁸ which dealt with various matters regarding particular ambassadors staying in each guesthouse. Two clerks - mostly ranked from 7a to 9b – from the Palace Domestic Service were assigned to the posts, but no detailed tasks are described in Song primary sources. Based on the records of the Tang, it is likely that they responded to the needs of the foreign guests and managed foreign guests' behavior by restricting their movements. Providing foreign visitors with daily necessities and provisions according to detailed court regulations was their main

¹¹⁷ *Yuhai* 172.35b.

¹¹⁸ The term, “*guangou* 管勾,” had several meanings and applications in the title of Song official position. 1) it means “currently serving as” or “currently managing” and was used when an official's nominal post was of lower rank and status than the post held concurrently; 2) it means “clerk,” a title sometimes held by eunuchs of the Palace Domestic Service or held by lower clerks in many agencies, rank from 7a to 9b. (Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles*, 286)

daily task. At the Metropolitan Postal Station, the Khitan envoy mission personnel were provided with gilt silver wash-basins, silk bedding, and good food. These foodstuffs consisted mainly of grain, fruits, meat and wine and the exact amount and type of the ingredients varied according to the rank of the envoy. A senior envoy was provided with ten *dan* of rice and millet, twenty *dan* of flour, fifty of mutton, ten jars of ceremonial wine and glutinous rice wine; an envoy deputy received seven *dan* of rice and millet, fifteen *dan* of flour, thirty of mutton, and ten jars of ceremonial wine and glutinous rice wine.¹¹⁹ These hostels also held several banquets for foreign envoys and prepared various fruits and side dishes with wine for these occasions. Sima Guang recorded that almost one hundred different kinds of fruit were offered for the wine party at the Metropolitan Postal Station, and eight different types of side dishes were accompanied with each round of drinking.¹²⁰

The name of the Hall of Welcoming Guests 禮賓院 was reminiscent of a Tang guest house. The Hall of Welcoming Guests was one of three subordinate units of the Tang Court of Diplomatic Receptions, which was a guesthouse that accommodated foreign guests, mostly from the Northwestern part of Tang territory. During the Song dynasty, this Hall accommodated foreign envoys of the Uighurs, the Tibetans, the Tang-Xiang, and the Jurchens (before 1122 and the founding of the Jin), which gave an impression of continuity from the Tang to the foreign states who had sent their envoy missions since the Tang period. One of the reasons that this particular guesthouse had the name of Hall 院, which was different from other cases such as “postal station” or “hostel” that are typical places for lodging, could be that it also functioned as an office responsible for official trade 互市. The missions of the Uighurs, Tibetans, and Tang-

¹¹⁹ *CB* 60.1342-3.

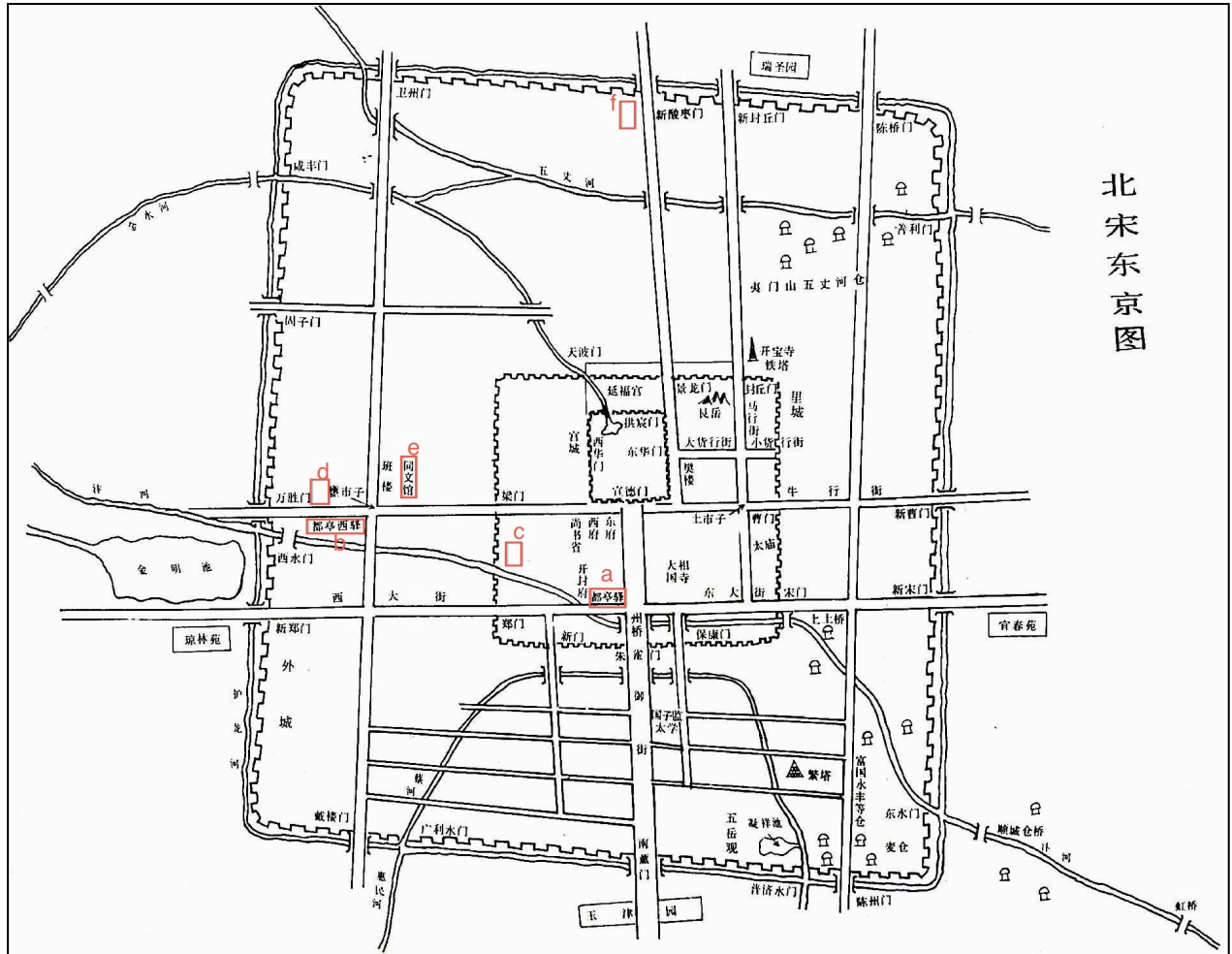
¹²⁰ *Sushui jiwén* 涑水記聞, by Sima Guang 司馬光 (1019-1086) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1989), 8.153-4.

Xiang (Tanguts) to the Song were entirely for trade, the chief commodity being horses. This had been true in Tang times as well.

As the Song court was in need of foreign horses, commercial activities with these foreign representatives staying in the Hall of Welcoming Guests were active and officially approved. Song Zhenzong approved the establishment of a storehouse specializing in the purchase of foreign horses in the Hall. Foreign merchants wanted to trade their horses for silk and tea and they suggested an exchange rate: a general horse was worth two catties (of silk and tea) and a weak and old horse or a mare one catty (of silk and tea). To facilitate the trade, Zhenzong issued an edict to allot two thousand catties in the treasury of the storehouse in the Hall of Welcoming Guests for the purchase of horses at a generous rate. He even disbursed funds for wines and food from the Storehouse of Gifts 祗候庫 to cover the costs of the Hall of Welcoming Guests when they entertained the envoy personnel of the Uighurs, the Tibetans, and the Tang-Xiang.¹²¹ However, during Song Shenzong's reign, along with the growing Xi Xia dominance over the northwestern region, the number of visits by foreign merchants interested in trading horses to the Song court dwindled, thus the importance of this Hall diminished and it eventually was closed in 1076.¹²²

¹²¹ *SHY zhiguan* 25.6b; Storehouse of Gifts was one of agencies of the Court of the Imperial Treasury 太伏寺 that stored precious silks, fancy clothing, etc. More details follows in later part of this chapter.

¹²² *SHY zhiguan* 25.7b; Paul Smith, *Taxing Heaven's Storehouse: Horses, Bureaucrats, and the Destruction of the Sichuan Tea Industry, 1074-1224*, (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1991), 36-47.



Map 1. map of Song capital Kaifeng & location of guesthouses¹²³

- a. The Metropolitan Postal Station
- b. The Directorate of the Western Postal Station
- c. The Postal Station Cherishing the Distant
- d. The Hall of Welcoming Guests
- e. The Hostel of Shared Culture
- f. The Postal Station of Coming from a Distance

When Goryeo envoy missions arrived at Kaifeng, the Court of Diplomatic Receptions

¹²³ Zhou Baozhu 周宝珠, *Songdai dongjing yanjiu* 宋代东京研究 (Kaifeng: Henan daxue chubanshe, 1992)

arranged for them to stay at the Hostel for Shared Culture. Similar to the case of the Directorate of the Western Postal Station which was assigned only to the Xi Xia, this hostel hosted only Goryeo diplomatic staff. The name of this hostel clearly represented Song's view of the Goryeo: the "shared culture." A Song official who joined a Song envoy mission to Goryeo as an Assistant Central Secretary in charge of Personnel, Vessels, and Ceremonial Gifts 提轄人船禮物官 in 1123, Xu Jing (徐兢 1091-1153), also concluded his travel report to Goryeo with the chapter titled "Shared Culture," which represented his impression of Goryeo culture. As the Hostel of Shared Culture was established during the Xining 熙寧 (1068-1077) period, Xu Jing might have taken the phrase "shared culture" from the name of this particular hostel for Goryeo envoys, which could well have been a popular representation of Goryeo culture at that time. This hostel had 278 room-units and was located in Anzhou ward 安州巷, to the northwestern of the Changhe gate 闕闔門 which was in one of the famous commercial sections of Kaifeng.¹²⁴ As shown in Map 1, several guesthouses for foreign envoys were located around this commercial sector. The Song restricted Goryeo envoys' engagement in commercial activities during their stay, so Goryeo envoys could purchase things only from the merchants who had official permission to visit the hostel. Similar restrictions were placed on the Xi Xia envoys, but their hostel was in a commercial district, which seems to have facilitated these trades.

The scale and the location of the guesthouses assigned to particular foreign states demonstrate the way that the Song court treated official visitors. The choices were both functional and ideological. These assignments by the Court of Diplomatic Receptions revealed

¹²⁴ Liu Shun'an 刘顺安, "Bei Song Dongjing luguan de zuoyong ji tedian" 北宋东京旅馆的作用及特点, *Shixue yuekan* 史学月刊 (1996. 2), 111; Heng, *Cities of Aristocrats and Bureaucrats*, 152.

the hierarchy of Song esteem for foreign states. Without question, the Khitan envoys were assigned the most luxurious hostel in the capital located inside of the old city near the Song palace. It was situated on the main street of the city (Imperial Avenue) which directly entered the main gate of the Song palace and many official buildings were also located around this main street. The next highest foreign states in the ladder of esteem were the Xi Xia and the Goryeo, whose envoy personnel occupied the Directorate of the Western Postal Station and the Hostel of Shared Culture respectively. The Song applied the same criteria in treating these two states by regarding them as similar in status in the “world order.” These criteria were made by officials in the Bureau of Receptions and the Court of Diplomatic Receptions, which applied not only to the allocation of the guesthouses but also to making arrangements on occasions such as reserving the proper seats at imperial audiences and banquets, providing daily meals, deciding the number of diplomatic personnel for foreign envoy missions, and preparing the type and quantity of the gifts. Based on these criteria, Song Shenzong ordered Zhang Dun to establish protocols for the Directorate of the Western Postal Station in 1072¹²⁵ and five years later, he mandated that the regulations for the Hostel of Shared Culture should be in line with those of the Western Postal Station.¹²⁶

Bureaus Responsible for Practical Management of Diplomatic Missions

Managers at each hostel – that is, the working clerks dispatched from the Palace Domestic Service – handled matters that dealt with foreign envoys in the hostels. The term “managers- 管勾” shows that their positions were created for carrying out practical, functional

¹²⁵ *CB* 232.5638.

¹²⁶ *CB* 280.6865.

tasks. There were separate offices at the same level which were in charge of general practical issues for every aspect of foreign envoy missions. They were also under the Court of Diplomatic Receptions in the bureaucratic structure, but operated somewhat independently from the Court. While the Court of Diplomatic Receptions focused on managing the activities of foreign envoys by fitting them into the Song ideology and manifesting the “world-order” in interstate relations, thereby limiting its tasks almost solely to the handling of imperial ceremonies, these sets of departments dealt with concrete issues regarding diplomatic contacts: the Department for Ingoing and Outgoing State Letters 管勾往來國信所¹²⁷ (shortened as the Department of the State Letters 國信所 hereafter), the Visitors Bureau 客省, the Hostel for Tributary Envoys 四方館, and the Office for Audience Ceremonies 閣門司.

The Department of State Letters was established to take care of the visits of the most powerful foreign visitors, Khitan envoy missions.

In 1007/8, [Zhenzong] said to the court officials, “In the event of receiving Khitan envoys and sending Song envoys [to the Liao court], there is a need for set protocols and regulations for court audiences, as well as for escorting and presenting return gifts at the hostel. After two years of exchanging envoy missions, sets of regulations have been formalized. Therefore, [I am issuing an order to] establish an institution to exclusively manage the exchanges of the State Letters [between the Song and Liao].¹²⁸

In this passage, “the exchanges of the State Letters” refers to overall diplomatic exchanges rather than just the exchange of actual letters. At first, there were no detailed rules for dealing with the Khitan envoys. When the Khitan envoy Kemiao Gushensi 克妙骨慎思

¹²⁷ In Hucker’s official title dictionary, he translated the name of this institution as “Concurrent Manager of the Office of Diplomatic Correspondence.” (Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles*, 286.)

¹²⁸ *SHY zhiguan* 36.33a-b.

visited Song Taizu in 975, he stayed in the Metropolitan Postal Station, attended an imperial audience and banquet, and received diplomatic gifts from the Song court. Due to a lack of information on the Liao bureaucratic culture at that time, a Song official had trouble in deciding whether the “Ke” was the part of envoy’s last name or the official title when he drafted the return State Letter to the Khitan envoy.¹²⁹ This kind of problem called for an office specializing in diplomacy with the Khitan envoys, especially after the Shanyuan treaty. The Bureau of Receptions compiled records needed for setting up regulations for the diplomatic contacts and the Department of the State Letters was then established based on this information, with two or three staff-members dispatched from the Palace Domestic Service 內侍省.

In addition to its permanent staff, this Department recruited temporary staff from various institutions on occasion, such as when Liao envoy missions visited the Song court. Chief among these was a powerful figure among Song court officials who could perform as a veteran diplomat for the Song in contacting the Liao envoys. These officials received temporary titles such as Escort Commissioner 接伴使 and Hostel Commissioner 館伴使 and were responsible for greeting and hosting the Liao envoy missions either at the border or at the hostel in the capital. This department was also engaged in employing the personnel for Song envoy missions to the Liao as the Department of State Letters eventually became a special agency in charge of most diplomatic affairs with the Liao. Diplomacy with the Liao, a competing rival state, required shrewd individuals as Escort Commissioner and Hostel Commissioners, so the Bureau of Military Affairs, with the consent of the emperor, appointed highly qualified officials as ad hoc members of the Department State Letters. Therefore, often the Military Affairs Commissioner 樞密院使 or even the Grand Councilor of the time occupied these positions. In

¹²⁹ *CB* 16.337.

theory, the Department of State Letters was under the control of the Court of Diplomatic Receptions, but because it often operated rather independently, it could gain access to material and labor resources through the Bureau of Military Affairs, thus bypassing the Court of Diplomatic Receptions. Shenzong even rejected a proposal to move the Department of the State Letters to the Bureau of Receptions and reaffirmed that it should cooperate closely with the Bureau of Military Affairs, thereby acknowledging the importance of the Department of State Letters.¹³⁰

Due to the particular situation of the Song in relations with the Liao, this Department performed two different types of tasks with different types of personnel: practical management responding to the basic needs of the members of the Liao mission and more sophisticated political handling of the Liao envoys.

The practical tasks of this department can be summarized as follows:

- Instructing the Khitan envoys on the proper etiquette for the guest ritual at imperial audiences and banquets (at the Metropolitan Postal Station)
- Arranging simultaneous interpreters for the convenience of both the Khitan envoys and the Song Escort Commissioners
- Handling diplomatic gifts by arranging transportation, receiving gifts, planning a display of these gifts at court, and providing return gifts
- Preserving official documents related to the Khitan (at the Metropolitan Postal Station)

As the office of this Department was located at the Metropolitan Postal Station, most of

¹³⁰ *CB* 326.7840.

its practical tasks took place there, which gives us an impression that these two institutions performed similar tasks. Some of these tasks also seem to have overlapped with those of the Court of Diplomatic Receptions. The Court supervised the Department to work on these practical tasks. So at times, the positions of the Court of Diplomatic Receptions were regarded as a job with little work.¹³¹ After most of the regulations for treating foreign envoys became routine, officials of the Court were relatively free, especially when the Department performed its role under the direct command of the Bureau of Military Affairs.

The Visitors Bureau and the Hostel for Tributary Envoys (*Sifang Guan* 四方館) seem to have had almost identical responsibilities. This was because Song Zhenzong set up a special agency, the Department of State Letters, out of the Visitors Bureau for the sole purpose of dealing with the Liao envoy missions, whereas the Visitors Bureau remained in charge of all other foreign envoy missions other than Liao's.

The Visitors Bureau had a longer history than the Department of State Letters. During the Tang period, the Visitors Bureau belonged to the Secretariat 中書省, a top-echelon agency of the central government, nominally responsible for promulgating the ruler's orders but usually having broader policy-formulating responsibilities.¹³² In the Song central government structure too it belonged to the Secretariat, however, its unique role in managing diverse practical tasks in the realm of foreign relations on the spot allowed this bureau to work relatively independently and to communicate directly to the emperor at some level.¹³³ The Visitors Bureau, along with the Hostel for Tributary Envoys, was located inside the imperial court and categorized under the

¹³¹ *Jiashi jiuwen* 家世舊聞, by Lu You 陸游 (1125-1210), Xia 下 “先君言鴻臚卿爲睡卿” (Zhonghua Shuju, 1993), 204.

¹³² *SS* 161.3776-7.

¹³³ Wu, *Songdai waijiao zhidu yanjiu*, 60.

Various Palace Bureaus 內諸司,¹³⁴ which explains their character as a close agency of the Emperor. It is interesting to see that offices of diplomatic affairs were directly connected to the Emperor, rather than to the Great Councilor, a representative of the Song government. Therefore the bureaus responsible for diplomatic issues - from the political to the practical level - were mostly supervised by the palace domestic line.

The only difference between the Visitors Bureau and the Department of the State Letters is that the bureau dealt with other foreign states besides Liao. It provided transportation assistance for the foreign envoy mission after they entered the Song, arranged their accommodation, planned imperial audiences and banquets, delivered imperial edicts, and handled diplomatic gifts.¹³⁵

Among its subordinate offices, the Hostel for Tributary Envoys (四方館) and the Office for Audience Ceremonies 閣門司 worked closely together. These two offices collaborated with the Visitors Bureau to ensure that foreign envoys behaved in a proper manner at the imperial audience. The Hostel for Tributary Envoys was especially responsible for receiving and handling diplomatic gifts, and the Office for Audience Ceremonies provided translation and guide services for foreign envoys when they attended Song imperial audiences and banquets.¹³⁶

¹³⁴ The Various Palace Bureaus 內諸司 refer to the various bureaus located inside of the court which were responsible for assisting emperor's state affairs and daily life. It includes Institute of Academicians 學士院, Capital Security Office 皇城司, Hostel for Tributary Envoys 四方館, Visitors Bureau 客省, East and West Palace Audience Gate 東西上閣門, Memorial-Forwarding Office 通進司, Office of Fruit and Tea 翰林司, Palace Domestic Service 內侍省, Palace Storehouse 內藏庫, Jewelry Storehouse 奉宸庫, Storehouse of the Hall of Abundant Happiness 景福殿庫, Six Palace Services 六尚局, Inner Musk Storehouse 內香藥庫, Rear Garden 後苑作, Calligrapher Service 書藝局, Physician Service 醫官局, Hall of Heavenly Manifestations 天章閣. (*Dongjing menghua lu jianzhu* 東京夢華錄箋注, shang 上, 60-3)

¹³⁵ *SS* 119. 3935; *SHY zhiguan* 35. 1b-21b.

¹³⁶ Wu, *Songdai waijiao zhidu yanjiu*, 58-62.

Institutions Responsible for Handling Diplomatic Gifts

In the *Song huiyao*, it is recorded that “the Visitors Bureau handles diplomatic gifts.” What specific institutions and workers were engaged in this handling of diplomatic gifts? When the envoy missions with ‘tribute’ arrived at the Song, which agencies checked and assessed these gifts? When the Song accepted the gifts from foreign states, who transported them to the court and where were they stored? From the Song’s side, who produced and prepared diplomatic gifts with what funds? In this section, I examine the institutions responsible for the handling of diplomatic gifts.

At the border, the first governmental agencies that foreign envoy missions encountered were the border offices. With regard to the Liao and the Xi Xia envoy missions, there are no records of detailed examination of their diplomatic gifts. The number of ordinary horses, the major item of the Liao gifts, was 100 for New Year’s day audience, and 200 for a Song imperial birthday. Xi Xia also brought around 200 horses and 100 camels to the Song every year. There are no specific records of how these tribute horses were handled. It is hard to imagine that the envoy missions brought all these horses into the Song capital on their envoy trip, as it would have been too costly and impractical. My best guess for the place where Liao and Xi Xia horses were checked and received is the border markets (權場 *quechang*). After the Shanyuan treaty, the Song opened three border markets at Xiongzhou 雄州, Baizhou 霸州, Anshujun 安肅軍, and then added one more at Guangxinjun 廣信軍 for trade with the Khitans.¹³⁷ Liao envoy missions entered Song territory through Xiongzhou and stayed at a Xiongzhou hostel until the officials who would lead the mission into the capital arrived. We can assume that the horse

¹³⁷ SS 186.4562.

merchants at the Xiongzhou border market took the role of checking the condition and the value of the horses that the Liao envoy mission brought.

In the case of the Xi Xia, the Song opened a border market for them at Bao'anjun 保安軍 (currently Zhidan 志丹 in Shaanxi 陝西) in 1007.¹³⁸ This border market was closed during the war between the Song and the Xi Xia, but reopened in 1046 when the Song re-established peaceful relationships with them. Many merchants accompanying the envoy missions had official permission to trade, so this border market was certainly one of the places that envoy missions stopped at.

These border markets were co-managed by provincial officials – the Prefect, the Fiscal Commissioner 轉運使 and the Superintendent Official 提點官 who was an eunuch official dispatched from the court. The central institution that was engaged in this co-management was the Bureau of the State Military Affairs because it was responsible for matters relating to diplomacy. These three major officials set the price for the horses traded at the border market.¹³⁹

Also involved in assessing the value of the diplomatic gifts received were the State Finance Commissions 三司 and the Ministry of Revenue 戶部. The roles of these two financial organs were not clearly divided during the early Song, so in some ways their work overlapped, or they cooperated together. The Finance Commission was the most active fiscal agency in the central government until the 1070s when it was discontinued. Its functions were taken over primarily by the Ministry of Revenue beginning in 1080. Therefore many edicts indicated that the State Finance Commission was responsible for calculating the value of diplomatic gifts

¹³⁸ SS 186.4563; CB 123.2896.

¹³⁹ There was a Fiscal Commissioner (*zhuanyunshi*) in each Circuit with general responsibility for tax assessments and collections and all other fiscal matters. In Song, it was a duty assignment for a nominal court official. A Superintendent (*tidianguan*) was a title for the position of functional agency normally outside the regular hierarchy of routine administration; Wu, *Songdai waijiao zhidu yanjiu*, 198-202.

before the year of 1080. To give an example, in 1022 the State Finance Commission asked Kaifeng guild merchants to appraise the inventory of Annamese tribute.¹⁴⁰ After 1080, the price of the horses traded in Kaifeng was set by the Ministry of Revenue, the Song government set up a return policy for Tu-fan and Khotan's tribute horses in 1091, referring to the value of the tribute horses set by the Ministry of Revenue.¹⁴¹

There was a special institution for appraising the value of foreign horses in Kaifeng: the Horse Pricing Agency 估馬司. It was established in 998 to evaluate and set the price of foreign horses and to distribute the animals in Kaifeng to appropriate pastoral inspectorates. The management of horses was a central task of the Ministry of War 兵部, so this Agency functioned as a part of the horse procurement, linking it to a more centralized Directorate of Herds and Pastures in 1007. Again, there is no record of calculating the value of the tribute horses from the Liao or the Xi Xia, however, the East Tibetan horses brought by the Tibetan merchants who stayed at the Hall of Welcoming Guests 禮賓院 were often assessed by the Horse Pricing Agency. When it evaluated the value of horses, the cost for transportation was added to the actual price of horses, as well as tax exemptions.¹⁴²

Another important 'border office' managing the inflow of the material objects from foreign states was the Maritime Trade Supervisorate 市舶提舉司, an agency subordinate to the Ministry of Revenue. It was established along the southeast and south seacoasts to regulate overseas commerce and collect customs duties.¹⁴³ It was established at the trade port of Guangzhou at first, then in Quanzhou, Mingzhou, and Hangzhou, and a Prefect of the local

¹⁴⁰ *SHY fanyi* 4.31b-32a.

¹⁴¹ *SHY fanyi* 6.24a.

¹⁴² *SHY bing* 22.5a

¹⁴³ *SHY zhiguan* 44.1a; Heng translated *shibosi* as mercantile shipping superintendency. For further survey on Northern Song's management of foreign trade through these superintendencies, see Heng, *Sino-Malay Trade and Diplomacy*, 38-54.

prefecture, a Fiscal Commissioner, and eunuch officials dispatched from the court co-managed these Maritime Trade Supervisorates. This practice of co-administration by both local officials and a court official was identical with that of the border markets 榷場. The Song emperor took part in the management of the income from foreign trade by dispatching court officials to these posts. These Supervisorates had the task of inspecting cargo to prevent the import and export of forbidden products and levying taxes in kind, the amount of which fluctuated depending on the products and the period. They also purchased products that were subject to government monopoly, that is, medicines, perfumes, ivory, rhinoceros horn, etc.¹⁴⁴ The Song court greatly stimulated foreign trade, as well as tribute missions from Southeastern neighbors, which permitted it to increase revenues through both customs duties and the sale of imported monopoly articles. These Supervisorates thus played a major role in receiving these foreign envoys, merchants, and products.

As the importance of maritime trade increased, the Song government instituted laws and regulations for maritime trade management. The regulations state that envoy missions and merchants from the Goryeo and Japan enter the Song through Liangzhe 兩浙 (Hangzhou), and other countries through either Quanzhou or Mingzhou. They could pass the border only with official certificates. The Supervisorate kept detailed information on the particular envoy missions – such as the names, official titles, and the number of personnel and diplomatic gifts – and their countries.¹⁴⁵ The information collected was reported to the court immediately in order for them to make plans for receiving the envoy mission at Kaifeng and preparing return gifts. When foreign envoys from Southeast Asian countries arrived at Guangzhou, the local

¹⁴⁴ Charlotte von Verschuer, (trans. by Kristen Lee Hunter), *Across the Perilous Sea: Japanese Trade with China and Korea from the Seventh to the Sixteenth Centuries*, (Ithaca: Cornell University East Asia Program, 2006), 28-9.

¹⁴⁵ *SHY zhiguan* 44.10.

authorities held a banquet to welcome them and the local troops provided protection for the foreign boats. The Maritime Trade Supervisorates sent clerks to inspect the material objects in the boat and managed them according to their purpose: 1) for “tribute” goods, while not imposing a tax, they appraised their value which would decide the amount of return gifts; 2) for goods monopolized by the state, they purchased all these products and sent them to the Inner Treasury in Kaifeng; 3) for goods for regular trade, they levied a customs duty on them.

Storing and Managing Diplomatic Gifts at the Song Court

Diplomatic gifts received by the Song court contributed to court income. Among the several agencies responsible for state finance, the agency mainly managing diplomatic gifts from foreign states was the Inner Palace Treasury 內藏庫, which evolved from the imperial privy purse and was established in 978.¹⁴⁶ At the beginning of the Song, there was no clear distinction between the income and expenditures of the state and those of the emperor. Members of the fiscal bureaucracy managed the Left Treasury 左藏庫, which housed all revenues reaching Kaifeng. Then, in 965, Taizu established an Emergency Reserve Treasury under his direct control, and tried to set aside some sources of income separate from routine state income. In 978, Taizong took a huge step to secure “imperial” pockets of money by issuing a

¹⁴⁶ Robert Hartwell, in “The Imperial Treasuries: Finance and Power in Song China,” *Bulletin of Sung and Yuan Studies*, (1988) examines the origin the Inner Palace Treasury and its income sources closely. Mainly it gained funds from domestic and foreign tribute, and surpluses of the material sources of state finance were transferred into the Inner Palace Treasures under the name of reserve for the emergency expenditure. For further details, refer to Hartwell, “The Imperial Treasuries,” 21-40.

pronouncement to set up the Inner Palace Treasury, separate from the Left Treasury,¹⁴⁷ which housed all revenues reaching Kaifeng, in preparation for unanticipated expenses and the defense of Hedong against the Khitan. It then grew larger to encompass various buildings, under eunuch management, holding specific commodities for imperial use.

Several storehouses under the control of the Inner Palace Treasury were actively engaged in the management of tribute goods. The Imperial Palace Requisition Bureau 內庫門取索司 was responsible for the storage of tribute goods used at inner palace banquets¹⁴⁸ and a Tea Warehouse 茶庫 kept tea sent to the capital and this tea was also used as diplomatic gifts for foreign states such as the Xi Xia or the Northwestern Tribes.¹⁴⁹ The Gift Warehouse 祇候庫 housed the silk cloth, robes and expensive vessels used as periodic grants to foreign rulers, envoys, imperial princes, and high officials.¹⁵⁰ The Inner Palace Tea and Paper Warehouse 內茶紙庫 supplied a regular stock of fine tea, paper, and ink for court consumption.¹⁵¹ The Ritual Wine Cellar 法酒庫 supplied the liquor used in imperial ceremonies, including on the occasions of foreign envoys' visits.¹⁵²

The Must Storehouse 香藥庫¹⁵³ specialized in handling of the spices, aromatics, medicine and ivory presented by tribute missions or obtained through the imperial monopoly

¹⁴⁷ Left Treasuries was responsible for the receipt, storage, and disbursement of valuables used in the palace, but after the Inner Palace Treasury became active, its responsibility was limited to the handling of general state revenues. It belonged to the central government and was managed by members of the fiscal bureaucracy, whereas the Inner Palace Treasury was managed by eunuchs. (Hartwell, "The Imperial Treasuries," 21-40.)

¹⁴⁸ *Shiwu jiyuan* 事物紀原, by Gao Cheng 高承 (11th century) (SKQS ed.), 6.237.

¹⁴⁹ *SHY shihuo* 52.3b-4a.

¹⁵⁰ *SHY shihuo* 52.35a; *YH* 183.22b.

¹⁵¹ *SHY shihuo* 52.4a.

¹⁵² *SHY shihuo* 52.1a-1b; *SHY zhiguan* 27.45b.

¹⁵³ Hucker's dictionary used the translation of Musk Storehouse, which is a direct translation of the name of this storehouse. Whereas Hartwell, in "The Imperial Treasuries," translated this into the Import Warehouse which put more focus on its function. I will use Hucker's name in order to avoid confusion.

over maritime trade with the Southeastern states.¹⁵⁴ During Zhenzong's reign, this particular storehouse was renamed the Inner Palace Musk Storehouse and relocated within the inner palace, which reveals Zhenzong's interests in maintaining control over the wealth acquired through diplomatic contacts with the states in the Southeast – including through maritime trade. It was about the time that the foreign envoy missions with tribute were received by the Song court more often and so the Song court became more active in managing trade with these foreign states. In 1005, Zhenzong issued an edict to rename the Inner Palace Requisition Bureau, which was the major agency in charge of managing the various materials acquired through domestic and foreign tribute, as the Inner Palace East Gate Bureau 內東門司 and reorganize the procedures governing the procurement of goods for the palace, the distribution of domestic and foreign tribute, and the sale of surpluses. During his reign he added several more buildings to the Inner Palace Treasury and provided a new table of organization and new regulations for its operation. Among the new warehouses added were the New Imperial Wardrobe 新衣庫, the Southern Suburban Sacrifice Warehouse 南郊家事庫, and the Rein and Saddle Warehouse 鞍轡庫.¹⁵⁵ New Imperial Wardrobe and the Rein and Saddle Warehouse seem to have been actively engaged in the preparation and the reception of diplomatic gifts.

All these storehouses under Inner Palace Treasury were under the supervision of eunuchs.¹⁵⁶ Not much is known about the specific role of the eunuchs during Song times, as their political power was relatively limited compared to that of the Tang period, but at least the

¹⁵⁴ *SHY shihuo* 55.22a.

¹⁵⁵ Hartwell, “The Imperial Treasuries,” 24-5; Primary sources for the New Imperial Wardrobe *SHY shihuo* 52.24b-25a; the Southern Suburban Sacrifice Warehouse 南郊家事庫, *SHY shihuo* 52.17a; and the Rein and Saddle Warehouse 鞍轡庫, *SHY shihuo* 52.37b-41b.

¹⁵⁶ *SHY shihuo* 52.5b; 55.22a.

nature of the eunuchs as direct subordinates of the emperor had not changed.¹⁵⁷ Zhenzong employed eunuchs instead of finance officials to supervise the Inner Palace Treasury in order to keep it under his personal control. Foreign tribute and diplomatic gifts were one of the primary sources of the Inner Palace Treasury' income. Such an effort was started as early as Song Taizong's reign. He actively encouraged states in Southeast Asia to send envoy missions with diplomatic gifts to the Song court in 987, and eunuchs were dispatched for this task.¹⁵⁸

Eunuchs were the prime players in managing the material and financial resources of the Inner Palace Treasury. In terms of diplomatic gifts, most of the commodities brought by foreign missions were stored in the Imperial Stables, palace parks, or Inner Court warehouses. The finest items were reserved for palace use, and lower grade goods were sent to the Inner Palace Musk Storehouse for eventual use, including return gifts for foreign diplomatic personnel or resale.¹⁵⁹ Surpluses were sold, and the Office of Miscellanies Purchase 雜買務 took the important task of overseeing these trading activities at the various palace warehouses.¹⁶⁰ This office was in the Court of the Imperial Treasury 太府寺, which was responsible for managing the central government's non-grain receipts and disbursements. It managed an array of storehouses and vaults and supervised trade in the capital city's marketplaces. It was supervised by the State Finance Commission, which means that the Office of Miscellaneous Purchase was not a eunuch-supervised organ. The civil service officials continuously checked the income and the expenditure of the Inner Palace Treasury, and Zhenzong had to manage the tension between the eunuch-bureaus and civil service official-bureaus, such as the Department of Finance or the

¹⁵⁷ Du Wanyan 杜婉言, *Zhongguo huanguanshi* 中國宦官史 (wenjin chubanshe, 1996), 191-3.

¹⁵⁸ *SHY zhiguan* 44.2b; *SHY fanyi* 7.26b-27a.

¹⁵⁹ Hartwell, "The Imperial Treasuries," 30; *SHY zhiguan* 44.4a; *SHY fanyi* 4.68b-69a; *SHY shihuo* 52.5b, 6b-7a, 55.22a.

¹⁶⁰ Hartwell, "The Imperial Treasuries," 32.

State Finance Commission. Song emperors cooperated with the civil officials, who asked to reform the operation of eunuch-bureaus. The eunuchs, however, never lost the right to increase the “private” income assigned to the Inner Palace Treasury, and diplomatic gifts were clearly a good source for that purpose.

In addition to the State Purchasing Agency, Song Taizong established an organ to make a profit out of the material stored in Inner Palace Treasury. On 2/4/977, Taizong approved the proposal of the commissioner in charge of the Musk Storehouse, Zhang Xun 張遜, to create a (Musk) Monopoly Exchange Bureau 香藥易院 to sell the stores of rhinoceros horn, ivory, spices, perfumes, medicines and other exotic commodities presented as diplomatic gifts by envoys from Sri Vijaya, Borneo and Champa at enhanced prices. Soon after Zhang Xun was put in charge of these commercial activities, the emperor prohibited private merchants from storing or selling spices, medicinal ingredients, perfumes, rhinoceros horn and ivory from Annam, Champa, Sumatra, and Persia in order to guarantee an imperial monopoly.¹⁶¹ Taizong’s naval convoy led by eunuch admirals to Southeast Asia in 987 also seems to be related to the management of this Monopoly Exchange Bureau, as the eunuchs in charge of purchased spices, perfumes, medicines, rhinoceros horn, ivory, and pearls for the Musk Storehouse throughout this mission. The commercial activities of the Monopoly Exchange Bureau allow us to see how the material objects received as diplomatic gifts - including the commodities obtained through maritime trade - were managed. During Zhenzong’s reign, the Monopoly Tax Commission 權貨務 took over the tasks of the Monopoly Exchange Bureau, and performed as the chief institution in charge of rendering a larger scale of trade for enriching the emperor. It was originally in charge of the collection of taxes on state-monopolized commodities such as

¹⁶¹ Hartwell, “The Imperial Treasuries,” 34 (*SHY shihuo* 55.22a; *CB* 18.9a; *SHY shihuo* 36.1b-2b)

tea, salt, and liquor, and then it extended its operations into the sale of foreign goods.¹⁶²

The wealth and items which were accumulated in the Inner Palace Storehouse from several sources, including diplomatic gifts and official foreign trade, covered the basic expenditures and needs of the imperial family. For example, the Musk Storehouse provided the spices and condiments for the royal kitchen, perfumes and incense for the Inner Court's use, and the medicines for the Imperial Medical Services. The Storehouse for Gifts offered ceremonial robes and garments for the Song emperor and at the same time, for foreign rulers and envoys. There is no doubt that the Rein and Saddle Storehouse stored the horse saddles and trappings received as gifts from foreign states and simultaneously, it supplied these objects for diplomatic gifts to foreign rulers and envoys.

The Court of Inner Treasuries funded the costs incurred in transporting foreign tribute and hosting foreign envoy missions.¹⁶³ Song's payment of two hundred thousand bolts of silk and one hundred thousand ounces of silver to the Liao in 1005, and one hundred and fifty-two thousand bolts of silk, seventy-two thousand ounces of silver and thirty thousand catties of tea to the Xi Xia court in 1044 were regularly budgeted expenditures of the Inner Palace Treasury, too.¹⁶⁴ Since the original purpose for establishing the Inner Palace Treasury out of the Left Treasuries was to set aside money for unanticipated expenses, defense against the Khitans, and emergencies, it seems natural that the Inner Palace Treasury was responsible for disbursing expenses of diplomacy. However, it also shows the relatively independent authority of the Song emperor over diplomatic matters, made possible by his efforts to secure independent management of the fiscal side of diplomatic relations.

¹⁶² Hartwell, "The Imperial Treasuries," 35 (*SHY zhiguan* 27.50a, 27.5b-6a; *SHY shihuo* 52. 5b-7a, 55.23a-24a.)

¹⁶³ Harwell, "The Imperial Treasuries," 42

¹⁶⁴ *CB* 58.22b;152.10a.

As observed briefly in the previous section, several diplomatic gifts received from foreign states such as luxury cloths, clothes, horse saddles and trappings, were stored in relevant storehouses and were used at court. These goods were also recycled as diplomatic gifts for foreign rulers and envoys. Fine silk and luxury cloths, silver vessels, and various belts received and stored at the Special Gifts Storehouse were often used as gifts for princes, imperial clansmen, high officials, and Liao and other foreign envoys.¹⁶⁵ Other famous gifts, decorated saddles and trappings, were stored at the Saddlery Storehouse, and then were also used as gifts for princes, officials, and foreign envoys.¹⁶⁶

Some materials needed to go through a process of crafting before they were presented as gifts. Rhinoceros horn is a good example. The Song court received it as “tribute” from the states in Southeast Asia, stored it in the Musk Storehouse, and then used it as diplomatic gifts for foreign rulers. Regular merchants were not allowed to purchase or use domestically belts made of rhinoceros horn, an object displaying social status in Song. This rhinoceros horn, when received as a raw material, was sent to the Crafts Institute 文思院 to be crafted and used as gifts.¹⁶⁷ The Crafts Institute was a eunuch-staffed workshop for the production of jewelry, fine brocades, etc., for imperial use. It was under the Directorate for Imperial Manufactories 少府監, which had been subordinated to the Ministry of Works 工部. The Directorate for Imperial Manufactories directed subsidiary agencies such as a Silk Brocade Office 綾錦院, Embroidery Office 文繡院, Ornaments Office 裁造院, and a Dyeing Service 染院, in addition to the Crafts Institute.¹⁶⁸ These offices manufactured fine robes, clothes, belts, and shoes, which were often

¹⁶⁵ SS 164.3882.

¹⁶⁶ SS 164.3895.

¹⁶⁷ SS 163.3864.

¹⁶⁸ SS 165.3917-8.

used as diplomatic gifts. To give an example, when the Champa envoy mission paid tribute to the Song court the Visitors Bureau decided the kinds and quantity of diplomatic gifts for the Champa mission according to the “*Regulations of the Bureau of Receptions* 主客條例”:

In addition to the return gifts for the Champa mission, [the Song court] presents special gifts such as one silk-fitted robe decorated with blue feather, golden belts weighing twenty ounces, silver vessels weighing two hundred ounces, three hundred bolts of silk, one white horse, and one set of eighty ounces silver-decorated saddles. [The Bureau of Receptions] ordered the sub-agencies of the Ministry of Revenue and the Ministry of Works to weigh the material needed for [these gifts] and send it to the Visitors Bureau to prepare appropriate gifts according to precedent. As for horses, [the Bureau of Receptions] ordered the Mounts Service 騏驎院 [which is a unit in the Court of the Imperial Stud 太僕寺¹⁶⁹] to supply them.¹⁷⁰

In summary, the Visitors Bureau, which dealt with practical issues regarding foreign envoy missions, decided the kinds and quantity of the return gifts based on their calculation of the gifts received, and reported it to the Bureau of Receptions, which in turn ordered the Ministry of Works to arrange material for making return gifts. The Visitors Bureau received these return gifts from the Ministry of Works and other relevant institutions, then delivered them to the foreign envoys at the farewell banquet.

¹⁶⁹ The Court of Imperial Stud is a central government principally responsible for managing state horse pasturages throughout the empire and maintaining related vehicles and gear. Subordinate agencies included a Carriage Livery 車輅院, a Mounts Service 騏驎院, a Left and a Right Directorate of Fine Steeds Office 天駟監, a Saddlery Storehouse 鞍轡庫, and Office for Elephant Care 養象所, a Camel Corral 駝坊, and a Wagon Camp 車營.

¹⁷⁰ *SHY fanyi* 4.77.

CHAPTER 5: Diplomatic Gifts as Material Objects

This chapter is chiefly a survey of the types of diplomatic gifts exchanged by envoy missions, and the main players in the argument are material objects. The aim of this chapter is to observe how the complicated political dynamics among the states interacted in the framework of gift exchange. Shiba Yoshinobu, in his article, “Sung Foreign Trade,” viewed this gift exchange as a form of tributary trade, which articulated China’s mercantile policy to maintain the rhetorical framework of the tributary relationship in a practical way. In addition to this commercial balance, I examine the cultural aspect of gift exchange. By looking at the material objects which had lower commercial value, I draw attention to the role gifts played as conveyers of cultural meanings.

Sources on diplomatic gifts are limited, and consist mostly of enumerations of material objects without concrete context. However, this limitation has given me space to read the historical context regarding “tribute” from a material culture approach. In the field of material culture, there are basically two methodological models: reading objects to understand context, or reading context to understand objects. In this chapter I am adopting the first model to understand eleventh century diplomatic relations as I assume that material objects reflect the value system of the culture. In previous chapters, I argue that the rhetoric and the ritual were not rigid but were subject to competition and negotiation. In this chapter, diplomatic gifts, the most visual and tangible part of these diplomatic contacts, serve to represent each state and reveal its value system. Cultural politics was a part of the international relations in East Asia.

Contents of diplomatic gifts exchanged by the Song, Liao, Xi Xia and Goryeo

The contents of gifts of Song, Liao, Xi Xia, and Goryeo can be divided into three large categories: ritual gifts, regional objects or “tribute,” and return gifts. “Tribute” refers to the diplomatic gifts in which the traditional hierarchical rhetoric was embedded. Therefore, diplomatic gifts from Goryeo and Xi Xia offered to the Liao and the Song courts by envoy missions rhetorically fall into this category. Diplomatic gifts exchanged between the Liao and the Song court were termed “ritual gifts 禮物” in Song sources such as *Xu zizhi tongjian changbian* 續資治通鑑長編 and *Qidanguo zhi* 契丹國志. Return gifts can be also called imperial grants or endowments. Ingrained ideas of political superiority were associated with these return gifts. The imperial court which hosted the foreign envoy’s visit gave return gifts both to the foreign court and to the personnel of the mission. I focus on the contents of these diplomatic gifts, and examine the cultural policy of each court as it managed its identity and prestige.

1) Ritual Gifts between the Song and Liao

The Shanyuan peace treaty (1005) was not the starting point of the exchange of envoy missions bringing diplomatic gifts; however, it shaped the new diplomatic environment. As political hierarchy was embedded in the structure of tribute contacts, the Liao as well as the Song court developed new sets of regulations with regard to diplomatic gifts which had to be distinguished from “tribute” and hence were characterized as “ritual gifts.” Diplomatic gifts carried by annual envoy missions, such as The New Year Felicitation Envoys and Birthday

Felicitation Envoys, were recorded as “ritual gifts.”¹⁷¹

On 977/10/4 the Khitan court sent an envoy, Yelü Amali 耶律阿摩里, to celebrate Song Taizong’s imperial birthday (乾明節), and presented two imperial garments, a gold belt and a jade belt, and one hundred ordinary horses.¹⁷² The Grand Coachman and other Khitan envoys at the Song court who came to congratulate Song Taizong on his birthday were received again the next year, and the gifts they presented did not differ much from those of the previous year: two imperial garments, a gold belt, a bow and arrows, gold and iron saddles and bridles, four imperial horses, and one hundred ordinary horses. The Song court also sent Birthday Felicitation envoys to the Liao to congratulate Qingzong on his birthday, but the specific gifts were not recorded.¹⁷³ Sporadic records on diplomatic gifts by the Khitan and Song envoys do not show any hint of clear regulations or specific discussions of gift-items until the Shanyuan treaty.

On 2/25 in the year the treaty was signed, the Song emperor assigned Companion of the Heir Apparent and Auxiliary in the Academy of Scholarly Worthies 太子中允直集賢院 Sun Jin 孫僅 to be the envoy for the Khitan Empress Dowager’s Birthday Celebration mission, and ordered the authorities to provide necessary luggage, staff, and miscellaneous goods for the mission. As for the draft of the state letter, the emperor ordered Bureau of Military Affairs 樞密院, Institute of Academicians 學士院 to collect drafts from both the Liao and Song courts and then establish a standard form. In the process, they also regulated the contents of the diplomatic gifts by adding or subtracting from the previous practice.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷¹ *QDGZ* 21. 200-1.

¹⁷² *SHY fanyi* 1.4a.

¹⁷³ *SHY fanyi* 1.4b.

¹⁷⁴ *CB* 59. 1319.

This Song envoy mission was received by the Liao court warmly and courteously presented generous return gifts of clothes, gold vessels, and around 500 horses. State letters were exchanged in the guest ritual. Song state letters to Liao emperors contained the long formal flattering greetings and introduction of the envoys, and the section referring to the gifts, “[Imperial Birthday Felicitation envoys] brought a few ritual gifts, which are listed separately

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We can get a glimpse of these materials from records made by Song. In the tenth month of 1005, the Song government prepared lists of ritual gifts to the Liao emperor on his birthday that included:¹⁷⁶

- 37 gold vessels: for wine, food, and tea
- 5 garments
- 1 gold belt
- 1 jade belt
- 1 pair of black leather boots
- 1 pair of white leather boots
- 1 set of musical instruments: a red sandalwood mouth organ, a horizontal flute, a *pili*, and a castanet
- 2 horses which bridles, saddles, and tasseled whips
- 30 silver vessels with gold flowers

¹⁷⁵ *SDZLJ* 229.887-8; 230. 892-4; 231.896-8.

¹⁷⁶ *CB* 61.1370; *QDGZ* 21.201; also *SHY fanyi* 1. 37b.

契丹帝生日，南宋遺金酒食茶器三十七件，衣五襲，金玉帶二條，烏皮、白皮二量，紅牙笙笛，鬻栗，拍板，鞍勒馬二匹，纓複鞭副之，金花銀器三十件，銀器二十件，錦綺透背、雜色羅紗綾縠絹二千匹，雜綵二千匹，法酒三十壺，的乳茶十斤，岳麓茶五斤，鹽蜜三十罐，乾三十籠。其國母生日，約此數焉。

- 20 silver vessels
- 2000 bolts of high quality silk of several varieties
- 2000 bolts of colored silk
- 30 jugs of ritual wine
- 10 catties of *Deru* tea¹⁷⁷ 的乳茶
- 5 catties of *Yuelu* tea 岳麓茶
- 30 jars of preserved fruit
- 30 baskets of dried fruit

The same gifts were prepared for the birthday of Empress Dowagers serving as regents.

Much like the Song court, the Liao court after the Shanyuan treaty also established the ritual gifts to be sent on Song imperial birthdays. In the eleventh month of 1005, the Khitan dispatched two separate envoy missions to celebrate Song Zhenzong's birthday: One from the Empress Dowager and the other from Liao Shengzong. They were the first official Khitan envoy missions received by the Song court after the peace treaty was concluded.

On 12/5 [1005], the Supreme General of the Guards of the Golden Mace of the Left 左金吾衛上將軍 Yelü Liuning 耶律留寧, an envoy from the [Khitan] Empress Dowager, and an envoy deputy Chongluqing 崇祿卿 Liu Jing 劉經 arrived at [the Song court] to offer congratulations on the birthday of [Song] Zhenzong (Shengtian jie). In

¹⁷⁷ Based on *Jianan zhi* 建安志, there is a tea tree that grows at cliffs and its leaves are abundant, which was ordered to be offered as tribute. The name of this tea was *Shiru*, and there was another one called as *Deru*. These were kind of *Nao*-tea, and famous items of tribute. Yang Yi 楊億 commented in *Tanyuan* 談苑 about the gifting of tea, “*Long* tea was for the use of the emperor, and also was presented to the grand councilor, princes, and princesses, with the remainder presented to imperial clansmen, academicians, and generals. They can also receive *Feng* tea. Secretary and close officials can receive *Deru* tea as gift. *Bairu* tea was given to officials in Academies and Institutes.” So there was a ranking in the kinds of tea and *Deru* tea was labeled as a gift item for the secretaries and the councilors.

addition to the state letter, they presented seven imperial robes, four horses with gold and jade decorated saddles, two hundred ordinary horses, colored silk and damask, mutton, deer tongue, wine, and fruits; the [Khitan] emperor sent an envoy, Supreme General of the Left Military Guard 左武衛上將軍 Yelü Weiyan 耶律委演, and an envoy deputy, Chief Minister of the Court of the Imperial Regalia 衛尉卿 Zhang Su 張肅, who presented five imperial robes, four horses with trappings of gold and jade, two hundred ordinary horses, colored silk and damask, bows and arrows, falcons, et cetera.¹⁷⁸

The overall number of gifts of each item, especially in the case of horses, was larger than the gifts exchanged before the 1005 treaty. What is noticeable is that envoys of the Empress Dowager and those of the Khitan Emperor prepared different sets of rich materials. Fortunately, Ye Longli, in *Qidanguo zhi*, recorded the details of the Khitan ritual gifts, listing the specific materials which were dismissed as “et cetera” in the above quote including¹⁷⁹:

- 7 or 5 imperial robes with imperial flower-patterned two sided *kesi* twill
- 7 fur coats with black sable or white squirrel, goose feather, and duck feather
- 1 gilded box with silver decoration
- 1 crystal belt with golden dragon pattern, and silver caskets
- 1 pair of leather boots trimmed with colored silk

¹⁷⁸ SHY fanyi 1.35a-b.

¹⁷⁹ CB 61.1375; QDZ 21.200

契丹賀宋朝生日禮物: 宋朝皇帝生日, 北朝所獻: 刻絲花羅御樣透背御衣七襲或五襲, 七件紫青貂鼠翻披或銀鼠鵝項鴨頭納子, 塗金銀裝箱, 金龍水晶帶, 銀匣副之, 錦緣帛鞞皮鞞, 金玦束皂白熟皮鞞鞵, 細錦透背清平內製御樣、合線搜機綾共三百匹, 塗金銀龍鳳鞍勒、紅羅匣金線方鞞二具, 白楮皮黑銀鞍勒、氈鞞二具, 綠褐楮皮鞍勒、海豹皮鞞二具, 白楮皮裹筋鞭一條, 紅羅金銀線綉雲龍紅錦器仗一副, 黃樺皮纏楮皮弓一, 紅錦袋皂雕翎獬角髀頭箭十, 青黃鵬翎箭十八, 法漬法麵麪酒二十壺, 蜜晒山菓十束檣椀, 蜜漬山菓十束檣, 疋列山梨柿四束檣, 榛栗、松子、郁李子、黑郁李子、麪棗、楞梨、堂梨二十箱, 麪杭糜梨炒十椀, 蕪莫白鹽十椀, 青鹽十椀, 牛、羊、野猪、魚、鹿腊二十二箱, 御馬六匹, 散馬二百匹。

- 1 pair of processed fur boots decorated with golden cube and silk
- 300 bolts of fine damask embroidered with imperial pattern
- 2 golden gilded saddles with silvery dragon and phoenix pattern and red silk saddle blankets
- 2 saddles decorated with silver and white mulberry bark, with woolen saddle blankets
- 2 light brown mulberry bark saddles, with sealskin horse blankets
- 1 white mulberry bark whip
- 1 red gauze banner with golden and silver dragon patterns
- 1 bow made of yellow birch and white mulberry bark
- 10 ibex horn arrowheads in a red silk sack
- 18 arrows with black condor and yellow condor feathers
- 20 jugs of ritual wine
- 10 baskets of *Mishai* mountain fruits
- 10 baskets of *Mizi* mountain fruits
- 4 baskets of *Bili* mountain pear and persimmon
- 20 boxes of chestnuts, pine seeds, prunes, dates, pears, birch-leaf pears
- 10 containers of salted turnips
- 10 containers of green salt¹⁸⁰
- 22 boxes of cured meat, dried mutton, bacon, cured fish and dried venison
- 6 imperial horses
- 200 ordinary horses

¹⁸⁰ Edward Schafer in his book, *The Golden Peaches of Samarkand: A Study of T'ang Exotics* (Berkeley: University of California, 1963), 194, called it as “blue vitriol.” It was produced in the Central Asia, and was similar to the natural blue copper carbonate azurite, and like it was used in the treatment of eye diseases.

These two sets of birthday gifts by the Song and the Liao show interesting parity. They managed to present similar numbers of items which both courts provided. For example, both Song and Liao emperors presented five imperial garments and one or two belts, and two pairs of boots to each other. The Song emperor presented thirty jugs of wine, thirty jars of preserved fruits and thirty baskets of dried fruits. The Liao emperor sent twenty jugs of wine, forty-four baskets of fruits and nuts, ten containers of grain and twenty-two boxes of dried meat. It was not exactly the same amount, but I can assume that those were of similar value. The contents often matched, for instance, in imperial robes, belts, boots, decorated vessels, wines, and fruits. However, those putting together these gifts also took the regional specialties of each state into consideration. Imperial garments that the Liao sent the Song emperor were *kesi* tapestry which was typical Liao-style silk, and sable fur garments.¹⁸¹ Various different types of dried meat also represented the nomadic Liao culture.

As for the major items, both courts paid attention to variety and quantity. When the Song court presented 2000 bolts of silk, it consisted of various kinds of silk: colored silk, damask (figured woven silk), samite (a compound twill weft-faced on both sides), various colored gauze, and tabby silk. Craig Clunas argues that a sense of plenitude and complexity of things represents the richness and diversity of the made material world, and it pervades much of the Song writing style. He also reads China's central role as a maker of meaning through its ability to multiply and to put forth categories of things.¹⁸² The Song court provided 2000 bolts of various silks; not all the same kind but more than five different types of sophisticated categories

¹⁸¹ Shelagh Vainker, *Chinese Silk: A Cultural History* (London: British Museum Press; New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2004), 116-8

¹⁸² Craig Clunas, "Commodities, Collectables, and Trade Goods: Song Modes of Categorizing Material Culture in Sung-Yuan Texts," *Arts of the Sung and Yüan* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1996), 50.

which were distinguished from 2000 bolts of colored silk. By providing various silks of different quality, the Song could boast of its specialization in silk culture and also convey the “rank” of these silk products to the Liao. As diplomatic gifts, those objects gained popularity and were valued as luxury goods in Liao society. The same pattern could be observed in the case of the Liao’s horse saddles, trappings, and saddle blankets: golden gilded saddles, silvery adorned white mulberry bark saddles and light brown mulberry bark saddles; red silk saddle blankets, woolen saddle blankets, and sealskin saddle blankets. The Liao also managed to display its refined handicrafts by presenting different kinds of horse saddles. Diplomatic gifts, in this way, functioned more for ritual and cultural meaning, a means of contest and self-display rather than commercial profit.

On 12/5[1005] Song Zhenzong invited the Grand Councilor to the Dragon Diagram Pavilion 龍圖閣 to admire the [recent] gifts from the Khitans together. They also viewed the Liao gifts which were sent to the Song court during Taizu’s and Taizong’s reigns. Afterwards when they received gifts from foreign envoys, silk and cotton were distributed to the Imperial Secretariat, Bureau of Military Affairs, and fruits and dried meat were presented to the councilors (近臣) and officials of the Three Institutes.¹⁸³

Dragon Diagram Pavilion was built by Zhenzong, its purpose to celebrate his father's cultural accomplishments. The cultural objects connected to Taizong, such as imperial writings and auspicious objects, formed the heart of the collection.¹⁸⁴ Harkening back to the reign of Taizong, Zhenzong often visited this hall with officials to view the memorable cultural remains of Taizong. Then, he and his officials viewed newly received diplomatic gifts from the Liao in

¹⁸³ CB 61.1375.

¹⁸⁴ Patricia Buckley Ebrey, *Accumulating Culture: The Collections of Emperor Huizong*, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008), 28.

the Dragon Diagram Pavilion. Useful items were distributed to officials and institutions for real use, and other objects – presumably the imperial robes decorated with pearl and silver, bow and arrows, and iron sword kinds – might be stored in this pavilion with the gifts received in earlier generations.

What kind of cultural meaning did the Liao apply to these gifts, and how were they received and interpreted by the Song court? Bows and arrows and horse trappings, central to the culture of nomads, were used as imperial gifts in nomadic society. When the Khitan general Wang Jizhong 王繼忠 secretly contacted the Song envoy to negotiate peace, he brought a bow and arrows as a symbol of imperial authority.¹⁸⁵ In the funerary ceremony for a Liao emperor, a bow and arrows were burnt as a symbol of the late emperor.¹⁸⁶ Saddle and bridle were also major items of diplomatic gifts as those were status markers in Khitan culture. Therefore, when Military Commissioner Song Yao 宋瑤 surrendered to the Liao, the emperor granted him a bow and arrows, a saddled horse, a banner and a drum. These materials were all military objects signifying Liao's power and authority.¹⁸⁷

The Liao emperor sent these especially crafted symbolic objects to the Song court, and the Song court in return treated these gifts with decorum. The gifts worked as symbols of the peaceful relationship between the Liao and the Song, but there was still room for manipulating the meanings attached to them. Song Zhenzong viewed these gifts from the Liao with several high officials at Dragon Diagram Pavilion. They even took out the Khitan gifts which Taizong received during his reign. Commemorating the achievement of the late emperor, Zhenzong and his officials might appreciate gifts from the Liao as a mark of Liao's amicable attitude honoring

¹⁸⁵ *LS* 14. 160.

¹⁸⁶ *LS* 18. 212.

¹⁸⁷ *LS* 2.16.

the Song court.

Another interesting type of gift was regional food. The Song envoys brought ten catties of *Deru* tea (的乳茶), and five catties of *Yuelu* tea (岳麓茶), thirty jars of preserved fruits, and thirty baskets of dried fruits. In Song society, high quality tea was a famous gift among members of the elite. Common birthday presents for a Song educated man were a birthday scroll depicting the God of longevity, wine, and tea. For example, on Su Shi's birthday, his cousin sent him twenty-one *pian* of tea and a poem as gifts.¹⁸⁸ Therefore these special teas from the Song court, particularly given on one's birthday, were not commercial products; they were rather gifts representing Song elite culture. The Liao court also prepared various regional food items. The Liao emperor even sent a chef to the Song court with the envoy mission and ordered him to prepare exotic Khitan cuisine for the Song emperor.¹⁸⁹ Ritual gifts by both courts were carefully selected and prepared. Those items were not selected in response to the host state's request, but on the contrary, each court prepared particular materials as it saw fit. The Liao as well as the Song recognized differences in their culture and utilized these ritual gifts as a showcase of their unique and distinct culture.

Turning to ritual gifts presented at New Year, the first such official envoy mission took place in the first month of 1006.¹⁹⁰ Based on *Qidanguo zhi*, New Year's gifts were fewer in number and simpler than the Imperial Birthday ritual gifts on both the Song and the Liao side.

¹⁸⁸ *Su Shi shiji* 蘇軾詩集 22 (cited from Xu Jijun 徐吉軍, *Zhongguo Fengsu Tongshi: Songdai* 中國風俗通史: 宋代 [Shanghai: Shanghai wenyi chubanshe, 2001], 833.)

¹⁸⁹ *CB* 61.1376.

¹⁹⁰ *SHY fanyi* 1. 35a-b.

Table 1. Song and Liao ritual gifts on New Year's Felicitatio n Envoys in 1006¹⁹¹

	Song → Liao court	Liao → Song court	
		Emperor	Empress dowager
Garments		3 imperial robes	sable imperial garments adorned with pearl, and colored <i>kesi</i> garment
Vessels	30 silver vessels with gold flowers/ 30 silver vessels		
Textile	2000 bolts of high quality silk of different varieties/ 2000 bolts of colored silk		
imperial horse/ general horse		2 saddled horses/ 100 ordinary horses	
horse trappings			crystal horse trappings
ritual wine			Shilla wine
Food			100 kinds of fruits and dried meat, cereal stored in golden and silver decorated containers
special feature		weapon	white salt

As the Song and the Liao prepared relatively simple items of diplomatic gifts, the idea of “parity” between the ritual gifts of the Song and the Liao was more clearly displayed. The most symbolically important commercial item from the Song was silk; from Liao it was horses. When we compare the gifts of the Song emperor and the Liao emperor, it looks clear that the main idea of the New Year gifts was to benefit both courts financially. Can we assume the

¹⁹¹ QDGZ 21.200

rough exchange rate for the silk and horse was 2000 bolts of high quality silk and 2000 bolts of colored silk is of equal value to two saddled horses and one hundred ordinary horses? Song and Liao courts, of course, prepared return gifts for every envoy trip and the main principle behind this practice was reciprocity. However, in the case of the Song and Liao, who were seriously competing with each other at the same time, the aim was not only to seek a balance of power through the practice of return gifts but also to manage the contents and quantity of ritual gifts so that they balanced out.

Secondly, the Liao emperor and empress dowager each sent ritual gifts to the Song court using separate envoy missions. In other words, the Liao emperor and empress dowager took charge of presenting different sets of diplomatic gifts to the Song court. The political power of Liao empress dowagers was noticed by the Song in the course of negotiating the peace treaty, so the Song court sent an official missive to both the empress dowager and the Liao emperor in order to involve the influential empress dowager in the peace negotiations.¹⁹² On 12/29 in 1009, when the empress dowager of Liao, mother of Liao Shengzong died, Song Zhenzong suspended the court for seven days, and prohibited border towns from playing music for three days.¹⁹³ The role of ritual gifts from the Liao empress dowager was to display and to confirm her authority within Liao society. In addition to its political role, the contents of her gifts, such as sable imperial garments, *kesi* garments, and local food, especially represented the Liao culture.

2) Regional Objects from the Goryeo and the Xi Xia Courts

In previous chapters, we saw that the Song used different sets of guest rituals for welcoming the Liao envoys than it used for Goryeo and Xi Xia envoys. This pattern was also

¹⁹² Wright, *From War to Diplomatic Parity*, 75.

¹⁹³ Bielenstein, *Diplomacy and Trade*, 566.

observed when tributary missions were hosted by the Liao court. Therefore, *Liaoshi* recorded the Goryeo and the Xi Xia tribute as a pair based on their similar tributary status, hence similar treatment for envoys from both states. Rather than use the term “ritual gift,” used for the diplomatic gifts between the Song and the Liao, in most cases diplomatic gifts from the Goryeo and the Xi Xia were recorded as “tribute,” or “regional objects 方物.”

For the Song and Liao, the political importance of the Goryeo and the Xi Xia might be similar, thus both were treated with the same degree of dignity. However, when we try to see their relationship through the cultural lens, it is noteworthy that Goryeo and Xi Xia’s approach to diplomatic objects were different. Of course, geography played a part, but I think it is also due to the different cultural orientations pursued by each state. In this section, I examine the contents of Goryeo and Xi Xia diplomatic gifts and how they were managed: Did Goryeo send the same diplomatic gifts to the Song and the Liao? What does this fact show about the agency of gift exchange? Was it based on the request of the “host” state, or the “guest” state’s voluntary selection of the diplomatic gifts? Goryeo and Xi Xia were regarded as on the same level in the diplomatic hierarchy. What different kinds of diplomatic gifts did they bring to the “host” court? Can we see any sign of competition between them?

The Goryeo kingdom (918-1392) started as a descendant of Goguryeo which occupied Manchuria, from BC 37 to 668. In the tenth century the Liao dynasty successfully claimed the former Goguryeo territory as its own. Goryeo court entered into diplomatic relations with most of the Five Dynasties and continued to do so with the Song court. Goryeo’s early contact with the Khitan state, therefore, started with a military confrontation over territory. Goryeo rebuffed thirty Khitan envoys and left the Khitan gifts of fifty camels to starve to death under a bridge in

the capital city of Gae-seong.¹⁹⁴ This act was a clear political reaction to show its hostility toward the Khitan state. Earlier studies on the relationships among the Goryeo, the Song, and the Liao simply interpreted Goryeo's hospitality toward the Song and hostility toward the Liao as reflecting Goryeo's preference for "Chinese" culture. However, those studies do not clearly define the notion of "Chinese" culture. This assumption might be an over extension of Joseon's approach towards the Ming dynasty because there are fewer records on Goryeo as compared to the later Korean dynasty. However, I do not think that the shortage of records should hinder us from understanding Goryeo's initial diplomatic action, which seems to be connected to its policy for maintaining border security. For the Goryeo kingdom, the Khitan state posed a more dangerous threat, as it was immediately to its north. Goryeo had to ally with the Five Dynasties and the Song for the purpose of the balance of the power. This balance broke down when the Khitan army attacked Goryeo, who was forced to accept the status of a Liao tributary in 994.¹⁹⁵ Even though the Goryeo court agreed to set up tribute exchanges with the Liao court, that same year it also sent an envoy to the Song court to appeal, but in vain, for military assistance against the Khitan. Tributary ties with either the Song or the Liao was decided mainly according to political and military considerations. How did the Goryeo court manage this international situation to its interest? What was the role of diplomatic gifts in Goryeo's foreign policy?

Specific diplomatic gifts which the Goryeo court sent to foreign states are well-documented in all of the standard histories: *Wudai huiyao*, *Qidanguo zhi*, *Xu zizhitongjian changbian*, *Song huiyao*, and *Goryeosa*. There are some discrepancies among the sources on the dates of a mission or omission of details on certain individual materials which were recorded in

¹⁹⁴ *Goryeosa* 2.14a-b.

¹⁹⁵ Peter I. Yun, "Rethinking the Tribute System: Korean States and northeast Asian Interstate Relations, 600-1600," PhD diss. (University of California, Los Angeles, 1998), 63-5.

general as either “regional objects 方物” or “et cetera 等.” However, omissions do not seem to be intentional. According to the records, the Goryeo prepared similar numbers and kinds of diplomatic gifts consistently, so the omission was done for the sake of brevity. Below is a chart of Goryeo diplomatic gifts.

Table 2. Goryeo tribute to the Liao and the Song courts

	Five Dynasties	Liao court ¹⁹⁶	Song court ¹⁹⁷
gold vessels (liang) in value		gold vessels 200 gold belly-cover 50 gold gong(金鈔羅) 50	five sets of gold vessels weighing 165 ounces (2 bowls, 2 wine cups, and 1 bottle)
other metals (catties in value)	yellow copper 50,000	bronze articles 1000	
Textile (bolts in value)	textiles (blue-Later Tang) several 1000 bolts of silk (red-Later Zhou)	soft flowered silk (紫花錦紬) 100 soft white silk (白綿紬) 500 fine cloth 1000 plain cloth 5000	woolen mats
Horses	fine horses	horse 1	fine horse 2 ordinary horses 22
horse trappings		50 <i>liang</i> of gold saddle	saddles and saddle cover

¹⁹⁶ The Goryeo agreed to set up peaceful relations with the Liao and sent the first official envoy mission – interpreted as tribute mission by the Liao court – in 994. However, the specific items of the diplomatic gifts were not recorded on this first mission. Contents of this chart were from the *Qidanguo zhi*, 21. 204, “Items of the Silla tribute (新羅國貢進物件).” Silla is the name of ancient Korean state which existed from 57 BCE to 935. Even though there were several years that overlapped with the early Goryeo and the Liao, Silla never had any diplomatic relations with the Liao. However, as Silla had contacts with Chinese states for a long time from the Han throughout to the Tang, Chinese sources often use the name “Silla” to refer to the states in the Korean peninsula. Here it refers to the Goryeo.

¹⁹⁷ Items here are all the objects documented in *SHY fanyi* 7. 1a-58a.

		on a horse	ornamented with dragons and phoenixes
Other animal or animal skin		a falcon	Korean squirrel skin
Weapons	gilded lances swords bows, swords, armor	sandalwood sword 10	bows and arrows, sword ornamented with silver and gold lacquer armor lacquer bows
Books	four different editions of the <i>Classic of Filial Piety</i>	geographical map of Goryeo (1002) Tripitaka (1063)	<i>Huangdi xian jing</i>
garments, belts	woven robes	embroidered imperial robes	brocade garments
Belts			belts
Treasure	purple and white rock crystals 2000 pieces	rattan baskets 50 pieces	
fragrant oil (香藥)			fragrant oil
Tea		<i>Naoyuan</i> tea 10 catties	
Wine		wine and vinegar 100 jars	
Extra (special)	Ginseng sesame oil silver engraved scissor human hair	fine ginseng (amount uncertain) fine paper and ink (amount uncertain) female musicians	Turtle shaped wine vessel. ginseng

		(妓樂: not accepted) ¹⁹⁸	
		(994)	

(Sources: *Qidanguo zhi*, 21. 204; *SHY fanyi* 7. 1a-58a.)

This chart does not show the frequencies of the envoy missions and what particular occasion they brought these materials to the “host” state, however it shows the variety of objects that the Goryeo court prepared for the Song and the Liao.

When Goryeo established diplomatic contact with the Later Tang and the Later Zhou, they did not set up regulations for gifts. Goryeo gifts to the Later Tang were unspecified quantities of textiles, gilded lances and swords, silver engraved scissors, human hair,¹⁹⁹ fragrant oils, and ginseng. These objects were the main gifts which the Shilla had in earlier centuries sent to the Tang as regional products.²⁰⁰ They have value for their rarity rather than their commercial value. To the Later Tang, what was important was the fact that the Goryeo sent diplomatic missions, acknowledging the Later Tang as a successor of the Tang; what the Goryeo sent them as diplomatic gifts was not a major concern. Therefore, the content of courtesy gifts was more symbolic and cultural: it mimicked the set of regional objects that Shilla used to send to the Tang.

Compared to the clear symbolic meaning of the gifts to the Later Tang, gifts to the Later Zhou show more formality: 1000 bolts of silk, fine horses, woven robes, 2000 pieces of crystal, and some weapons. By the time that Goryeo allied with the Later Zhou around 950, the Goryeo

¹⁹⁸ In 994 (12/戊子) the Goryeo court sent the female musicians to the Liao court, but it was not accepted by the Liao court. (*LS* 13.145; *Goryeosa* 3.28a) Particular reason was unknown. I am going to revisit this case again in chapter 7.

¹⁹⁹ Schafer explained in his book, *The Golden Peaches of Samarkand*, that the uses of human hair from Manchuria and Korea had magico-medical properties. (193-4)

²⁰⁰ Bielenstein, *Diplomacy and Trade*, 124-44.

imperial government was more institutionalized and more systematic in dealing with foreign affairs, especially since the Silla-origin officials who were put in charge of the tributary relations based themselves on Silla's relationship with the Tang.²⁰¹ Hence, it seems that the Goryeo court offered quite standardized sets of diplomatic gifts, which were often just referred to as "regional objects" without further detail, to the Song court in 962, after the Song replaced the Five Dynasties in China proper.

Until 1004, when Goryeo shifted to sending tribute to the Liao instead of to the Song, diplomatic gifts to the Song court had consisted of gold vessels, woolen mats, swords, lacquered armor, weapons and a bow adorned with horn, arrows, a turtle-shaped pitcher 神龜壽樽. Nothing was exceptional when compared with earlier examples of gifts given to the Later Tang or Later Zhou, except for the horses. Throughout the diplomatic contacts between the Goryeo and the Song, the Song requested more and more horses. Other than horses, the Goryeo court was the one to select the gifts to the Song. Rhetorically, Goryeo diplomatic gifts to the Song were "tribute," but from the Goryeo side, they were regarded as expressions of courtesy which the Goryeo court prepared without any pressure from the Song.

Gifts to the Liao court are not documented in detail in the "tribute chart 交聘表" of the *Liaoshi*, but they were recorded in detail in *Qidanguo zhi*. According to the *Qidanguo zhi* records,²⁰² which I showed in Table 1, Goryeo's tribute to the Liao court was not particularly large compared to those from the Later Jin or the Song. Among the Five Dynasties in China,

²⁰¹ At the Goryeo court, a group of Silla-originated aristocrats who tried to restore the Silla style state dominated the central government with the support of the Gwang-jong in 950. See Michael C. Roger, "National Consciousness in Medieval Korea: The Impact of Liao and Chin on Koryō," in *China among Equals*, 152-4.

²⁰² *QDGZ* 21. 204.

新羅國貢進物件：金器二百兩，金抱肚一條五十兩，金鈔羅五十兩，金鞍轡馬一匹五十兩，紫花錦紬一百疋，白綿紬五百匹，細布一千疋，籠布五千疋，銅器一千斤，法清酒醋共一百瓶，腦元茶十斤，藤造器物五十事，成形人參不定數，無灰木刀擺十箇，細紙墨不定數目。本國不論年歲，惟以八節貢獻，人使各帶正官，惟稱陪臣。

Later Jin kept the closest relations with the Liao, seeing its survival at stake. In 936, Later Jin Gaozu agreed to pay an annual tribute of gold and 130,000 bolts of silk to the Liao.²⁰³ Even though the Song court never agreed to call it “tribute,” the Song court sent an annual payment of 100,000 ounces of silver and 200,000 bolts of silk to the Liao after the Shanyuan treaty. From 1042 the amount of the payment was raised to 200,000 ounces of silver and 300,000 bolts of silk.²⁰⁴ Compared to these objects with clear monetary significance, the Goryeo court’s gifts to the Liao were of less value but more diverse.

The Goryeo’s gifts of gold consisted of 200 ounces of gold vessels, 50 ounces of gold belly-covers (金抱肚), and 50 ounces of gold wash basins (金鈔鑊). For textiles, the Goryeo prepared a variety of different types: Purple flowery patterned woven silk (brocaded silk), white woven silk, fine and plain cloth. Animals were not a major part of Goryeo tribute, even though they sent a horse with 50 ounces of golden saddles and a falcon. Other local products were added to this formal tribute: tea, wine, ginseng, wooden swords, rattan baskets(藤造器物), fine paper, and ink stones. The Goryeo court put more emphasis on the variety and the quality of diplomatic gifts than the quantity. Similar to the diplomatic gifts sent to the Song court, those sent to the Liao were chosen to display Goryeo’s specialities with the intention of preserving good relations with Liao.

There are more records of Goryeo diplomatic gifts to the Song court than to the Liao. Among the scattered enumerations of Goryeo gifts, a Song state letter to the Goryeo court contains a well-organized description of the details of Goryeo diplomatic gifts.

Letter for Returning Gifts for [Goryeo] Tribute: [the Song emperor] issued an edict

²⁰³ Bielenstein, *Diplomacy and Trade*, 603.

²⁰⁴ Bielenstein, *Diplomacy and Trade*, 605.

referring to what [the Goryeo court] offered such as:

5 items of gold vessels, weighing altogether weighing 165 ounces:

Two bowls, one with two red net-fabricated medicine pouches which were double-inner layered with golden-printed red silk, one with two of red net-fabricated waist-sacks which were double-inner layered with golden-printed red silk. Both items were clinched and wrapped with red-flowery printed gauze

Two wine-cups which were clinched and wrapped with red-flowery printed gauze

One wine pitcher which was clinched and wrapped with red-flowery printed gauze

10 red backrests (倚背) and 2 red cotton-padded mattresses both of which were sealed with red-flowery printed gauze, stored in two silvery decorated lacquer boxes and sealed with silver locks and were wrapped with red-flowery printed gauze

20 silver decorated long swords and silvery crafted lacquer sheaths covered with silk bands, stored in 10 red-gauze-pouches and 10 crimson-gauze pouches, and finally wrapped with double layered yellow gauze

2000 bolts of raw middle-quality-linen(中布)

2000 bolts of raw lower-quality linen(平布)

1000 *dan* of ginseng

2200 *dan* of pine seeds

120 *dan* of sesame oil

2 sets of saddles decorated with golden gilded silver

2 fine horses

All these items were delivered. The envoy entourage arrived at the Song by horse and [envoys] communicated with [Chinese officials] by writing. [They] also traveled by ship to pay tribute. Considering their hardships [the Song court] extend them courtesy and presented generous gifts to show their appreciation. Now, as return gifts, we are providing them with silver vessels and so on, listed in a separate document. Here I issued the edict, and I hope you may understand [my] goodwill. As the spring weather gets warmer, I hope you are feeling more comfortable. They specially carry [this] missive to manifest my felicitations. I say no more.²⁰⁵

Even though the year when this tribute mission took place is not marked in the letter, the listed objects are comparable to those of 1080 recorded in the *Goryeosa*.²⁰⁶ The Goryeo diplomatic gifts to the Song were not always the same in quantity and kind, but major items were gold vessels, mats, swords, cloths, and famous Goryeo local products such as *ginseng*, pine seeds, and sesame oil. Horses were included, but only two with luxuriously decorated saddles. The Goryeo diplomatic gifts to the Song were the same as those to the Liao. What was emphasized was luxury goods which marked the social status and local products revealing the identity of

²⁰⁵ *SDZLJ* 237. 924-5.

所進奉金器五事。共重一百六十五兩。合二副一副盛紅罽藥袋二枚。紅羅銷金畫複裏。一副盛紅罽繫腰二副。紅羅銷金畫複裏。共用紅紋羅袂複封全。。紅紋羅袂外複二條。盤盞二副。紅紋羅袂複封全。共用紅紋羅外複二條。注子一副。紅紋羅袂複封全。紅紋羅袂外複一條。紅罽倚背一十隻。紅紋羅袂複封全。紅罽褥二隻。紅紋羅袂複封全。共用銀鈹裝烏漆箱二副。盛銀鎖鑰封全。紅紋羅袂外複二條。銀裝長刀二十隻。銀鈹鏤裝烏漆鞘綵條全。紅羅纈袋十箇。封全。緋羅纈袋十箇。封全。共用黃羅袂外複二條。生中布二千疋。生平布二千疋。人參一千斤。松子二千二百斤。香油一百二十斤。鞍二副。金鍍銀橋瓦鈸具罽大小紅羅鞍褥等全。紅羅繡袂鞍複二條。細馬二疋事。具悉。卿夙馳國使。來造王朝。累牘摘詞。喜書文之道被。方舟底貢。顧庭寔之旅陳。載想恪恭。良增褒尚。特加寵錫。姑示至懷。今回賜卿衣著銀器等。具如別錄。至可領也。故茲示諭。想宜知悉。春暄。卿比平安好。遣書指不多及。

²⁰⁶ *Goryeosa* 9.28b-29a.

Goryeo.

In the letter, the Song emperor choose the term “tribute” to refer to the gifts from the Goryeo kingdom, but there was nothing in the contents of the Goryeo gifts to mark them as “tribute.” All the items were elegantly sealed and wrapped with luxurious red-colored silk. Wrapping gifts or books with valuable silk was an element in refined Song literati culture. This elaborate wrapping could possibly be a sign from Goryeo that these items should be regarded as “gifts” rather than “tribute.” Or it could also possibly be Goryeo’s cultural policy alluding to its political and cultural refinement.

Seeing the similarity in the Goryeo gifts to the Liao and the Song allows us to infer that the diplomatic gifts were selected by Goryeo officials, not demanded by the Liao and the Song courts. Some items were sent to the Liao, but not to the Song: a falcon, fine paper and ink, wine, rattan furniture. In terms of the quantity, there were marginal differences, but I can see that the Goryeo court took the different taste and needs of the hosting court into consideration. Therefore I infer that the Goryeo court took the initiative in its dealings with the different foreign regimes.

In the *Qidanguo zhi*, the tribute from the Xi Xia was paired with that from the Goryeo. The Xi Xia court took measures to protect itself especially after they called themselves kings of Xia from not later than 967 when referring to itself with nearby states such as the Khitan state, the Later Tang, the Later Zhou, and eventually the Song as well. Xi Xia was perceived to be of similar status with Goryeo by Liao and Song authorities. However, the Xi Xia, unlike the Goryeo, initiated and maintained a relatively closer relationship with the Liao rather than with the Song. Xi Xia reached an official peace agreement with the Liao in 986 when the Xi Xia

leader, Li Jiqian 李繼遷, launched a war against the Song.²⁰⁷ The Liao court started to recognize Li as the Xi Xia king in 988, when the Xi Xia started sending regular envoy missions with “tribute” to the Liao court. Xi Xia’s relation with the Song was much more hostile. In other words, the Xi Xia was more ready for military conflict and its geographical location allowed them to retain a powerful political voice. The Song and the Liao did not want to risk having enemies on both sides of their border, so they consciously tried to remain an ally to the Xi Xia. Even though the Song and the Liao never recognized the king of Xi Xia as emperor, both courts could never neglect the strategic importance of the Xi Xia.

Although Xi Xia’s main motivation behind the establishment of diplomatic relations with both the Liao and the Song was self-defense, trade, particularly with the Song, was also a contributing factor. Therefore, once the Xi Xia opened diplomatic relationships with the Liao and the Song, they requested the opening of official border markets. Xi Xia’s commercial-oriented policy was evident in their desire for trading opportunities during their envoy missions. On the request of the Xi Xia, the Song court permitted their envoys to engage in trade while in Kaifeng during their mission in 1007.

Based on the political and economic context mentioned above, I assume that the Xi Xia court was relatively flexible with regards to the ritual aspect of tributary relations. As long as their main purpose - governmental trade and envoys’ private commerce – was fulfilled, it seems that the Xi Xia did not pay special attention to the degree of ritual procedures. The lack of attention was documented by the Song envoy, Lou Yue, who blamed the Xi Xia envoys for presenting an inappropriate gift to the Jin court—a dog—since it caused distraction during the

²⁰⁷ *LS* 11.119.

ceremony.²⁰⁸ Because the major interest of the Xi Xia was commercial profit, Xi Xia envoys might have paid relatively less attention to “proper” rituals or cultural settings.

The main items prepared by Xi Xia as diplomatic gifts were horses and camels. Horses were common diplomatic gifts due to their military and economic value. Because it was a good place to raise horses, the Xi Xia presented large numbers of horses to both the Liao and Song courts. In 1006, the Xi Xia court offered 725 horses and 300 camels to the Song court. As the Xi Xia also received return gifts of the same value from the Song, this Xi Xia - Song case fits the form of “tributary trade.” However, we can see that Xi Xia court prepared different types of gifts to the Liao and the Song.

Table 3. Xi Xia tribute to the Liao and the Song courts

	Liao court ²⁰⁹	Song court ²¹⁰
Horses and camels	20 Horses of high quality, 20 horses of lower quality, 100 Camels	10 Imperial horses, 200 far-reaching horses 長進馬, 100 camels
clothes	300 bolts of colored damask, 5 sets of colorfully woven bedclothes (織成錦被褥五合)	
Other animals or animal skin	5 falcons, 10 dogs, 1000 pieces of steppe fox fur	
salt	1000 <i>dan</i> of well salt	
Extra	1000 <i>dan</i> of Congrong herbal	silver-line decorated golden saddle

²⁰⁸ As for the details of this episode, refer to the ritual context section in Chapter Three.

²⁰⁹ QDGZ 21.204-5.

西夏國貢進物件：細馬二十匹 籠馬二百匹 馳一百頭 錦綺三百匹 織成錦被褥五合 菴容、甜石、井鹽各一千斤 沙狐皮一千張 兔鶻五隻 犬子十隻

²¹⁰ I collected scattered information on the Xi Xia gifts to the Song court from *SHY fanyi* 7. 1a-58a. and *SDZLJ* 234.911; 236.921. *SHY* does not give the specific number of horses and camels; the number recorded in *SDZLJ* is 100 head of both horses and camels.

	plant, and <i>tianshi</i> 甜石	and bridle and incense burner(s)
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Horses, camels, and other animals such as falcons and dogs were the most important of the tribute goods Xi Xia presented to the Liao court. The Xi Xia became famous not only for their livestock and hunting falcons, but also for the products of their local industries, including camel-hair carpets, herbal plants, and high quality salt.²¹¹ These products were also presented to the Liao: 300 bolts of colored damask, colorfully woven bedclothes, 1000 *dan* of the *Congrong* herbal plant, *tianshi* 甜石, salt, and 1000 pieces of steppe fox fur. Xi Xia diplomatic gifts to the Liao, if compared with those from the Goryeo, were relatively simple in kinds, which reflects the fact that Xi Xia culture was based on stock-raising.

According to the *Qidanguo zhi*, return gifts prepared for both Goryeo and Xi Xia envoy missions were exactly the same except for 200 sheep which were provided only to the Goryeo.²¹² Although it is hard to compare the direct value of Goryeo golden vessels with that of Xi Xia horses, this practice of Liao return gift indicates that diplomatic gifts from the Goryeo and the Xi Xia were regarded as similar in their overall value. Chronological records do not provide us with clear information on the frequency of Goryeo and Xi Xia tribute missions, but rules about the diplomatic gifts seem to be more systemized after 1005. During this period, the Liao and the Song started to exchange regular envoy missions as a biannual occurrence and this practice resulted in the adoption of more systemized rules on envoy missions and diplomatic gifts by both the Goryeo and the Xi Xia as well.

In summary, Xi Xia gifts to the Song court were simple in kinds. Based on records scattered in the *Song huiyao* and Song imperial letters to the Xi Xia, the major items were

²¹¹ Ruth Dunnell, “The His Hsia,” in *Cambridge History of China*, vol 6, 196.

²¹² *QDGZ* 21.205; for more detailed study on return gifts, consult the next section on “return gifts.”

horses and camels. Other than these animals as main “tribute” items, silver-line decorated golden saddles and bridles and incense burners were also offered to the Song at times.²¹³ Unlike Liao, Xi Xia never presented either falcons or dogs to the Song. The presence of dogs at the ceremony might have been viewed as inappropriate by the Song, as Lou Yue demonstrated a sense of discomfort when those animals were presented to the Jin court. To the Liao court, falcons and hunting dogs were major gifts from the Xi Xia. Goryeo envoys also brought famous local falcons to the Liao court as gifts, but like the Xi Xia they did not present them to the Song. The difference in selection of diplomatic gifts might serve as evidence of Xi Xia’s attention to the receiver’s cultural interests. I would also like to argue that both the Goryeo and the Xi Xia, whether they were regarded as “tribute bearers” in diplomatic contacts, were independent and active agents who participated in a multistate order in selecting and controlling contents as well as number of the diplomatic gifts. The main factor which affected the selection of items as diplomatic gifts was the culture of the host state.

Return Gifts

The basis for diplomatic contacts and gift exchange was reciprocity. Therefore, hosting courts such as the Song and the Liao sent return gifts to the guest court. More accurately, they sent a series of gifts to the foreign ruler who had sent an envoy mission with diplomatic gifts, and awarded the diplomatic personnel calibrated sets of gifts. Official gift-giving mainly took place at the imperial audience and various banquets prepared for the foreign embassies. Hosting courts named this procedure “return rewards 回賜,” as it represented their superior political

²¹³ *SHY fanyi* 7.26b.

position within the reciprocal exchange structure.

1) Managing the quantity of the return gifts to guest courts

The pretext for the gifts to the embassy personnel who participated in the envoy missions was to thank them for their service as members of the diplomatic missions. However, the gifts were astutely prepared given that they were an element in the political communication between these states. The first main idea underlying this exchange is the logic of reciprocity. The Bureau of Military Affairs made the final decision on the numbers and the contents of return gifts based on the value of diplomatic gifts received, as assessed by the State Finance Commission. Therefore, a detailed list of diplomatic gifts attached to the state letter was needed for the assessment of return gifts. The value of diplomatic gifts brought by foreign missions to the Song court was immediately assessed at the border in units of cash (copper coins) or silver objects (銀器). Appropriate return offerings are then determined based on the current Song exchange rate.

The case of Yutianguo's 于闐國 tribute mission reveals in a general way how the Song court managed return gifts. The reply letter by the Song to the King of Yutianguo not only recorded “tribute” brought by the envoys – one fine horse, fifty *don* of gold, one set of jade bridle 鞞轡, eighteen bolts of foreign (*hu*) silk – but also return gifts given by the Song.

On this tribute mission, [the whole amount of] return gifts to you [calculated based on what you had offered] is assessed as 200 strings of copper coins. The horse [you brought] was assessed at 10 strings of cash and would be repaid with Zhejiang silk. In addition to that, [I] will confer on you state letter objects, which are clothes, gold belts, silver objects, and several pieces of cloth. An extra list [of state letter objects] is going to be issued, and you will receive it when it is ready. The list would be translated into [your]

foreign language.²¹⁴

The letter also provided us with details on how the tributary gifts were evaluated in terms of money including the rate applied to value the horses. Based on this letter, we found out that silk from the Zhejiang region which was sent by the Song as return gifts was valued to be equal to that of 200 strings of copper coins.

The next item which captured my attention in this letter was the “state letter objects 國信物” which were sent in addition to the regular return gifts. As shown in earlier chapters, the Song and the Liao courts set up the “State Letter Bureau 國信所” as the institution responsible for work related to diplomatic contacts and relations. In the same context, I assumed that “state letter objects” are diplomatic objects sent to foreign states and the state letter serves to explain these items in the process of their diplomatic contacts. However, it was not just limited to the Song -Liao relationship, rather it was often used to refer to the special sets of return gifts in addition to the regular return gifts calculated against the value of the tribute. This term was also used in Tang sources to refer to the diplomatic gifts sent to foreign courts. It seems that this term was used to distinguish the gifts to the court from those for the individuals such as envoys. The Japanese monk Ennin 圓仁, in his travel diary, distinguished “state letter objects 國信物,” from “official and private objects 官私之物,”²¹⁵ and other Tang sources which recorded the diplomatic objects to the Turfan 吐蕃 also distinguished “state letter objects 國信物,” from

²¹⁴ *SDZLJ* 240.945.

今回賜卿錢二百貫文。其馬一疋十貫文。以浙絹充。兼別賜卿國信物。對衣金腰帶銀器衣著等。具如別錄。並交付差來首領尹納祝等。至可領也。所將到蕃書文字。譯得。乞差人般赴本圖。

²¹⁵ Katsutoshi Ono 小野勝年, *Nittō Guhō Junrei Gyōki no Kenkyū* 入唐求法巡禮行記の研究 (Tokyo: Suzuki Gakujutsu Zaidan, 1964), 119.

“personal gifts from the emperor 私覲物。”²¹⁶

The contents of “state letter objects” were standardized: robe, belt, and saddled horses or various cloths. The material used for the robe and belt as well as number of horses or cloth given differs according to the recipient’s rank. As for the king of Yutian, robes, golden belts, silver objects, and several cloths were conferred with the accompanying list. These sets of items – robe, belt, and saddled horse – were also normalized as imperial gifts for Song officials during imperial ceremonies.²¹⁷ They were also standardized reward gifts set in the Song court and were later on given to the rulers of foreign states. This is clearly shown in the case of gifts to the envoy mission personnel.

As mentioned above, the basic concept of calculating return gifts was reciprocity. However, it is common for the Song to provide more generous return gifts to guests of the court.

In the seventh month [of 1022], the State Finance Commission informed the Bureau of Military Affairs that Jiaozhou 交州(Vietnam) envoy Li Kuantai 李寬泰 and his embassy offered [the Song] tribute of their regional objects such as pewter, tortoise-shell, purple ore, aromatic oil, and [Song] merchants calculated its value at 1,680 strings of cash. [The Song Emperor] issued an edict ordering, “confer return gifts worth 2,000 strings of cash on [the Jiaozhou envoys]. By presenting back more than the exact worth of their tribute, I proclaim my fond intention toward a remote neighbor.”²¹⁸

Although the basic concept for gift-exchange was reciprocity, or in other words professionally calculated exchange, the Song court alluded to its warm feelings toward the foreign courts by

²¹⁶ *Tang huiyao* 唐會要, by Wang Pu 王溥 (922-982) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1991), 6.76.

²¹⁷ *SS* 1.5; *CB* 1.7.

²¹⁸ *SHY fanyi* 4.12b.

七月，三司言：「交州進奉使李寬泰等各進貢方物白鑞、紫礦、玳瑁、瓶香等，賈人計價錢千六百八十二貫。」詔回賜錢二千貫，以優其直，示懷遠也。

offering generous return gifts.

Another return gift policy of host courts was to prepare a fixed number of return gifts for certain states. After Song Shenzong issued a decree of approval to present fixed sets of return gifts in 1080, the Goryeo started to receive 10,000 bolts of silk from the Zhe region regardless how much tribute they had offered.

On 1/17 in 1080, [Shenzong] issued a decree saying, “as for the annual tribute of the Goryeo king, confer 10,000 bolts of silk from Zhe region 浙絹 in return. We have conferred return gifts up to the direct assessment of the worth of its diplomatic gifts, which I think damages the dignity of the Goryeo. Therefore, from now on, for the tribute of the Goryeo, do not assess its value, but instead present the fixed sets of return gifts.”²¹⁹

The Song in 1080 acknowledged that diplomatic relations with the Goryeo were urgent due to the competition between the Song and the Liao. By providing the fixed amount of return gifts, the Song exhibited special treatment of Goryeo. The Song court had previously applied this fixed return gift to the Liao and the Xi Xia out of deference to them as it represents the dignity of the guest courts.

The Song and the Xi Xia concluded peaceful relations in the year of 1044 and the Song court agreed to send “payment” to the Xi Xia court from then on; this was recorded as either “endowment” or “return gifts.” As for the return gifts to the Xi Xia, the Song court did not calculate the value of the ‘tribute’ from the Xi Xia, instead it had fixed the amount of return gifts which was probably part of the ‘payment’ contract between the Song and the Xi Xia.

²¹⁹ *CB* 302.7346; *SHY fanyi* 7.36a.

三年正月十七日，詔，高麗國王每朝貢，回賜浙絹萬疋，須下有司估准貢物乃給，有傷事體。宜自今國王貢物，不估直回賜，永為定數。

Table 4. Song gifts to the Xi Xia court²²⁰

	Silk	Silver	tea
annual payments	130,000	50,000	20,000
return gifts for the “tribute” on the Song Imperial Birthday	10,000	10,000	5,000
return gifts for the “tribute” on the New Year’s Felicitations	5,000	5,000	5,000
gifts for the winter (仲冬)	5,000	5,000	
Song ritual gifts for the Xi Xia Imperial Birthday	fine clothes 1,000/ various cloths 2,000	silver vessels 2,000	

Based on the table above, we can conclude that the three main items of Song return gifts to Xi Xia are silk, silver, and tea. These are the major monetary items which the Song endowed, traded, and paid for a considerable period of time. While silk and silver were common return gifts to almost all states that sent envoys, tea was a particularly famous item which was given only to the Xi Xia and states in Central Asia, which were the main horse suppliers for the Song. Initially, the value of these horses was calculated and paid with coins but these states converted them into weapons due to lack of metals from their land. This became a source of concern for the Song court. After the Taiping Xingguo reign period (976-983), the value of horses were paid in silk and tea as advised by the State Finance Commission 三司.²²¹ This scheme of payment benefited Xi Xia as well since tea was one of the Chinese products in high consumption demand

²²⁰ CB 152. 3706; SDZLJ 233.908.

朝廷歲賜絹十三萬匹，銀五萬兩，茶二萬斤，進奉乾元節回賜銀一萬兩，絹一萬匹，茶五千斤，賀正貢獻回賜銀五千兩，絹五千匹，茶五千斤，仲冬賜時服銀五千兩，絹五千匹，及賜臣生日禮物銀器二千兩，細衣著一千匹，雜帛二千匹，乞如常數，無致改更。

²²¹ Liao Longsheng 廖隆盛, *Guoce maoyi zhanzheng: Bei Song yu Liao Xia guanxi yanjiu* 國策貿易戰爭: 北宋與遼夏關係研究 (Wanquanlou 萬卷樓, 2002), 52.

and trade value in Xi Xia. If we review the list of Song diplomatic gifts to other states, tea was also presented to both Liao and Goryeo, but in smaller quantities. Tea sent to Goryeo and Liao demonstrated the value of Song tea culture and were examples of luxury goods. Therefore, tea of higher quality and premium brand was provided to these states. On the other hand, tea sent to the Xi Xia was a general type of tea which was widely circulated in Northwestern foreign tribes. This tea acquired its particular value as an exchange commodity for the horses, so quantity rather than the quality was more important to Xi Xia. In this particular case, tea functioned as a monetary object.

Were there any differences between Liao's and Song's policies on return gifts? Relatively little is known about the Liao management of return gifts beyond that it was based on the principle of reciprocity. In the earlier discussion of ritual gifts of the Song and the Liao, I explained that both the Song and the Liao carefully selected the type and number of ritual gifts for each other, taking into account the gifts that they received. On top of that, similar to the Song, Liao also had set a fixed number of return gifts to be presented to both Goryeo and Xi Xia. The *Qidanguo zhi* records, "Khitan return gifts [to the Xi Xia envoy missions], except for the ram, were the same as those to the Goryeo missions. The only difference is the gold belts [granted to the Xi Xia], rather than the jade belts [to the Goryeo]."²²² This treatment shows that the Liao regarded the Goryeo and the Xi Xia as neighbor states of similar rank. Liao officials who arranged return gifts seem to have assigned the same sets of gifts to the Goryeo and the Xi Xia in order to maintain the balance of power. The same return gifts to both states could also be analyzed as a visual message from Liao to proclaim that the Liao is the one who decides the nature of the "world order."

²²² QDGZ 21.205. 契丹回賜除羊外，餘並與新羅國同，惟玉帶改為金帶，勞賜人使亦同使

Interesting variations between gifts to the Xi Xia were (1) Liao did not give sheep to Xi Xia; and (2) it gave gold belts instead of jade belts. This reveals that the Liao officials understood Xi Xia and Goryeo's local culture and applied this knowledge when choosing which gifts were appropriate for the respective foreign states. Diplomatic gifts consist of things which are of value for the other state. Therefore, there are variations between the gifts sent to Xi Xia and Goryeo. Based on this principle, the abundance of sheep and lesser value of jade compared to gold in the Xi Xia court influenced Liao to make appropriate amendments to their set of fixed return gifts.

The return gifts to the Goryeo and the Xi Xia courts were divided into two different sets: First, return gifts for the envoy mission responding to the ruler and second, return gifts conferred on the envoy, envoy deputy, and their entourage. The second type of return gifts will be examined in the later part of this section but below is a chart which compares both sets of return gifts.

Table 5. Liao return gifts to Goryeo envoy missions²²³

Items	To Goryeo court	To the envoy and the entourage		
	To Goryeo king	To envoy	To upper class followers	To lower class followers
Belt	1 rhinoceros belt 1 jade belt	2 gilt silver belts	1 white silver belt	
Fine clothes	2 fine clothes	2 clothes	1 clothes	1 clothes

²²³ QDGZ 21.205

契丹每次回賜物件：犀玉腰帶二條，細衣二襲，金塗鞍轡馬二匹，素鞍轡馬五匹，散馬二十匹，弓箭器仗二副，細錦綺羅綾二百疋，衣著絹一千疋，羊二百口，酒、果子不定數。並令刺史以上官充使，一行六十人，直送入本國。契丹賜奉使物件：金塗銀帶二條，衣二襲，錦綺三十疋，色絹一百疋，鞍轡馬二匹，散馬五匹，弓箭器一副，酒、果不定數。上節從人：白銀帶一條，衣一襲，絹二十疋，馬一匹；下節從人：衣一襲，絹十匹，紫綾大衫一領。

Decorated horses	2 gilt saddled horses 5 white silk saddled horses	2 saddled horses		
Horses	20 general horses	5 general horses	1 general horses	
Bow and arrow sets	2 sets of bows, arrows, vessels, and flags	1 set of bow, arrow, and vessel		
Silk and cloths	200 bolts various high quality silk, 1000 bolts of thin silk for clothing	30 various high quality silk, 100 colored silks	20 thin silk	10 thin silk 1 purple silk jacket
Wine and fruits	Flexible amount	Flexible amount		
Extra	200 rams			

It is interesting that basically the same sets of material objects were conferred on both the Goryeo king and the envoy. Observing that they prepared the same sets of gifts to the king and the official, although the material and amount recorded signified the difference in ranks between the king and the official, I assume that the Liao court treated the Goryeo king and the Goryeo officials in a comparable manner: both were regarded as officials of the Liao with only their ranks to differentiate one another.

Officials holding different ranks received different official robes and belts of different material. Based on the Liao gift-chart, we can rank the value of the material as rhinoceros or jade, gilt silver, and white silver in their respective descending order. Most of the high officials of the Liao possessed either gold or gilt silver belts. Jade belts, due to their value, were inappropriate to be worn by officials, and rhinoceros belts were a very rare gift which is given

only to close relatives of the Liao imperial family. In the *Songshi* it shows more implicit grading of belts in the Song court based on the materials they are made of: Jade ranks the first, gold, silver, and rhinoceros follows, then below them comes copper, iron, horn, stone, and black jade; each in its respective order. It also clarifies that the jade belt was not allowed for standard official attire and the rhinoceros belt was not for the officials in rank, as it was conferred only in the special cases by imperial edict.²²⁴ In both cases, a rhinoceros belt given to the Goryeo king possesses an exceptional value compared to other materials such as gold or gilt silver, which were part of the standard official costume system.

The example of Liao return gifts to the Goryeo and the Xi Xia shows that sets of items such as a robe, a belt, a saddled horse, various silk and cloths were also standard gifts as practiced by the Song. Can we conclude that these items were already regarded as a customary gift-set around China, and regarded as part of a shared culture?

2) Return Gifts to the Diplomatic Personnel

On the way to the Song court for regular envoy missions for the imperial birthdays and New Year's celebration, a Khitan envoy plus envoy deputy and the entourage received gifts at several occasions: reaching the border, the hostel, the imperial interview, the banquet, and finally at the farewell ceremony. In addition to being escorted and treated politely by Song officials, members of the mission were also served good food and supplied with luxury goods such as golden gilt silver wash-basin and silk blankets. The Song court spent lavishly to entertain the Liao envoys. I made a list of gift items that the Khitan envoy mission personnel

²²⁴ SS 153.3564.

received on different occasions, based on the *Qidanguo zhi*:²²⁵

* On the occasion of the first interview with the emperor, the Song hosts prepared the following gifts.

1) To each of the two envoys - one sent by the emperor, the other by the empress

dowager:

1 gilt silver hat (金塗銀冠)

1 silk trimmed felt hat

8 suits of clothing

1 golden *diexie* 蹀躞 belt²²⁶

1 pair of black leather boots

200 ounces of silver objects

200 bolts of colored silks

²²⁵ QDGZ 21.201.

宋朝勞契丹人使物件：契丹每歲國使入南宋境，宋遣常參官、內職各一人，假少卿、監、諸司使以上接伴。內諸司供帳，分為三番，內臣主之。至白溝驛賜設，至貝州賜茶、藥各一銀合，至大名府又賜設，至大名府又賜設，及畿境，遣開封府判官勞之，又命臺省官、諸司使館伴迓於班荊館，至都亭驛各賜金花、銀灌器、錦衾褥。朝見日，賜大使金塗銀冠、皂羅氈冠、衣八件、金鞵帶、烏皮、銀器二百兩、綵帛二百匹；副使皂紗折上巾、衣七件、金帶、象笏、烏皮、銀器一百兩、綵帛二百匹、鞍勒馬各一匹。其從人，上節十八人，各練鵲錦襖及衣四件、銀器二十兩、綵帛三十匹；中節二十人，各寶照錦襖及衣三件、銀器十兩、綵帛二十匹；下節八十五人，各紫綺襖及衣四件、銀器十兩、綵帛二十匹，並加金塗銀帶。上節、中節又加綵。就館，賜生餼，大使、粟各十石，麵二十石、羊五十、法酒、糯米酒各十壺，副使、粟各七石，麵十五石、羊三十、法酒、糯米酒各十壺。承天節各別賜衣一襲。遇立春，各賜金塗銀鏤幡勝、春盤。又命節帥就玉津園伴射弓，賜來使銀飾箭筒、弓一、箭二十；其中的，又賜窄袍、衣五件，金束帶、鞍勒馬。在館遇節序，則遣臣賜設。辭日，長春殿賜酒五行，賜大使盤裘量錦窄袍及衣六件、銀器二百兩、綵帛一百匹。副使紫花羅窄袍及衣六件、銀器一百兩、綵帛一百匹，並加金束帶、雜色羅、錦、綾、絹百匹。從人各加紫綾花緇錦袍及銀器、綵帛。將發，又賜銀瓶、合盆、紗羅、注等。又令近臣餞于班荊館，開封府推官餞于郊外，接伴大使、副使復為送伴，緣路累賜設。

²²⁶ *diexie* 蹀躞 belt was main item for the Liao officials. It is originated from the Tang costume for the military official of 5 and higher rank. This belt has several rings to hang various objects such as knife, handkerchief, and pouches. Shen Gua 沈括 in his book, *Mengxi Bitan* 夢溪筆談, recorded that *diexie* belt originated in the *hu* culture. It was included into Chinese official costume during the Norther Qi 北齊. (*Zhongguo Yiguan Fushi Dacidian* 中國衣冠服飾大辭典, [Shanghai Cishu Chubanshe, 1996], 450)

1 saddled horse

2) To each of the two vice envoys – one sent by the emperor, the other by the empress dowager:

1 silk hood

7 suits of clothing

1 gold belt

1 ivory tablet

1 pair of black leather boots

100 ounces of silver objects

200 bolts of colored silk

1 saddled horse

3) To the entourage:

(a) Officials of the first class (18 men) each received:

4 silk-lined coats with peacock decoration

1 gilt silver belt

1 pair of silk shoes

20 ounces of silver objects

30 bolts of colored silk

(b) Officials of the second class (20 men) each received:

3 silk-lined coats with flower decoration

1 gilt silver belt

1 pair of silk shoes

10 ounces of silver objects

20 bolts of colored silk

(c) Officials of the third class (85 men) each received:

- 4 purple silk-lined coats
- 1 gilt silver belt
- 10 ounces of silver objects
- 20 bolts of colored silk

* During their sojourn in the Song capital

1) The envoys each received:

- 10 bushels of rice and millet
- 20 bushels of flour
- 50 sheep
- 20 jars of wine of various kinds

2) The vice-envoys each received:

- 7 bushels of rice and millet
- 15 bushels of flour
- 30 sheep
- 20 jars of wine of various kinds

* When they departed the Song court, the Song again presented gifts as follows:

1) To each of the envoys:

- 7 suits of (Liao official) silk fitted robes
- 200 ounces of silver objects
- 200 bolts of colored silks

- 1 golden belt
- 100 bolts of various kinds of silk

2) To each of the vice-envoys:

- 6 suits of purple flower patterned silk fitted robes
- 200 ounces of silver objects
- 200 bolts of colored silks
- 1 golden belt
- 100 bolts of various kinds of silk

3) To each of the other members of the entourage: different articles according to their rank

As seen in this list, Khitan officials who visited the Song court received several official robes, belts, shoes, and saddled horses in accordance with their rank. These items were standard sets of gifts that were also conferred on the Song officials on various imperial ceremonies or as rewards for meritorious service. These standard sets of items displayed the generosity of the donor, and was an honor to the official who received them. Those sets, therefore, reveal the way that the Song expressed their political position, emphasizing their hospitality. Besides these luxury goods, various gifts with economic value such as silver objects and silk were also granted to the envoys. For example, the Khitan envoy received overall 400 ounces of silver objects and 400 bolts of colored silk. Leading an envoy missions from the Liao to the Song was taxing, but luxury Chinese goods and wealth served as an incentive. Therefore, it is not surprising that many relatives of the Liao empress dowager went to the Song court as envoys.

Initially, I assumed that the official robes and belts that the Song gave the Liao officials were for “Chinese style” official robes. So, I planned to assess the “status” of the official robe that the Liao envoy received by comparing them to that of Song official costume. However, the luxury clothes, hats, belts, and shoes that Liao envoys received were all in the Khitan style. Items which the Khitan envoys received during the imperial interview were gilt silver hat (金塗銀冠), silk trimmed felt hat, golden *diexie* 蹠蹠 belt, and black leather boots which were actually the Khitan official court dress 朝服.

[On the ceremony] (Khitan) officials wear felt hats decorated with golden flower or jade beads with golden flowers hanging behind the hat. On top of the head binding is a tuft of hair with two strings on (the side of) the hat. Sometimes it is made of silk such as black silk hat without any decoration and not covering the ears. Sometimes it has golden flowers in front of the forehead with purple straps for tying on top without any beads. [Khitan officials] wear purple fitted robe and luxurious *diexie* belts which are lined with yellow or red leather and decorated with gold, jade, crystal, and lapis lazuli stones. This costume is called “panzi 盤紫.” [Liao] Taizong wears [one more layer of] silk coat, with a gold belt. In the first year of Huitong reign period, several elder officials with noble titles received a suit of these clothes.²²⁷

In addition to these “panzi” clothing, the Liao envoy also received suits of “panqiu” silk fitted robes 盤裘暈錦窄袍, and a gold belt on their farewell ceremony at the Song court.

Although I had difficulties trying to figure out what “panqiu 盤裘” means, but through the

²²⁷ LS 56.906.

朝服…臣僚戴氈冠，金花為飾，或加珠玉翠毛，額後垂金花，織成夾帶，中貯髮一總。或紗冠，如烏紗帽，無簷，不擗雙耳。額前綴金花，上結紫帶，末綴珠。服紫窄袍，繫鞞帶，以黃紅色條裏革為之，用金玉、水晶、靛石綴飾，謂之「盤紫」。太宗更以錦袍、金帶。會同元年，羣臣高年有爵秩者，皆賜之。

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description provided on Liao official costume worn during general occasions, I managed to get a general idea on how it looked.

Official robe for ordinary days 常服: On the ritual to receive the Goryeo envoy missions, [Khitan] officials wear regular garment which is called “panli 盤裏.” It is a green flowery fitted robe, with an inner skirt which is mostly in red-green color. Those of high rank also wear sable robes. Purple and black colors were the noblest color followed by blue-black. It was also made with fur of silver-color squirrel; the whiter the shade of the fur, the higher the quality. Officials of lower rank wear robes made of fur of sable, lamb, mouse, and desert fox furs.²²⁸

It seems that the name of the Liao official costume often used the word “pan 盤”: *panzi* was official costume with a purple fitted robe, and *panli* was official clothing with a green flowery fitted robe with an inner skirt. In both cases, the main robe featured long and fitted style which was the traditional clothing fashion for northern people whose culture was strongly related to riding horses. An interesting point regarding the general official robe is underlined in the quote above: Those of high rank also wore sable robes. The best sketch of “panqiu 盤裘” is Liao style embroidered official sable robe with an inner layer of fitted silk robe. The above quote provides us with information that clothing provided for the Liao envoy personnel were not fashioned according to Song style but was those of Khitan.

After the Shanyuan treaty, when the first regular Khitan envoys arrived at the Song court,

²²⁸ LS 56.907.

常服：宰相中謝儀，帝常服。高麗使入見儀，臣僚便衣，謂之「盤裏」。綠花窄袍，中單多紅綠色。貴者披貂裘，以紫黑色為貴，青次之。又有銀鼠，尤潔白。賤者貂毛、羊、鼠、沙狐裘。

Song officials discuss the types of return gifts which they should provide to the Liao envoys. Most officials agreed to offer Chinese style costumes to the Khitan envoys, but Yan Chenghan 閻承翰 proposed to provide them with Khitan style clothing due to difference in the culture of “the north and the south” The Song emperor accepted Yan’s suggestion and ordered him to prepare Khitan style clothing for the Khitan envoys as return gifts.²²⁹

However, this kind of careful arrangement which includes consideration of guest envoy’s culture was only applied to the Liao envoys. There was no particular mention of this kind of consideration during preparation of return gifts to the Goryeo or the Xi Xia except for the repetitive accounts such as “gave a robe, belt, shoes in accord with their rank.” Since there were no detailed records about clothing given to the Goryeo and the Xi Xia, I assume that the Song gave them clothes of Chinese style. I also presume that the Song court intentionally distributed Song style official costumes to the Xi Xia and the Goryeo in order to influence their court culture. Official robes and belts were the most tangible part of the bureaucratic culture. From Table. 5 we can learn that the Liao court provided similar sets of official garments, belts, and shoes to both the Goryeo king and the envoys. As the Liao recognized the Goryeo king as an official in the Liao structure – even though it was a nominal title – they might have presented a Liao style official robe to the Goryeo king as well as to the envoys; and so did the Song to the Goryeo.

There is a record that the Xi Xia king Liangzuo 諒祚 requested Chinese style gowns and caps from the Song court in 1062. He announced that he would wear Chinese style official clothes the following year and followed the Chinese protocol when receiving envoys. The Song agreed to fulfill his request. Liangzuo particularly promoted Song style institutions and rituals,

²²⁹ CB 60.1343.

so he requested many Chinese classics and history books, too.²³⁰ In this particular case, the Xi Xia wanted to have enough Chinese official clothes to replace their own. During regular times, the Song court presented Xi Xia envoys with several Chinese robes based on their standard rules.

Official regulations for grants to mission personnel were applied at the guest ritual and banquet but the possibility of corruption and bribery existed. There was even a public discussion of bribery:

On 12/26 in the year of 1008, Khitan envoys, the Left Militant Guard 左武衛上將軍 Xiao Zhike 蕭知可 and Xingguo Military Commissioner 興國節度使 Xiao Liuning 蕭留甯, Khitan envoy deputies 崇祿卿 Cheng Yong 成永, and 少府監 Xu Bei 徐備 came to celebrate the New Year's day of the coming year. High-Ranked Eunuch 入內高品 Wang Chengxun 王承勛 suggested [to the emperor] saying, "as for the Liao envoys for the New Year's celebration mission this time, one is a younger brother of the Liao empress dowager, and the other is a close relative of the empress dowager, and both of them have the empress dowager's confidence. Why don't we give them more return gifts than the usual envoys?" The emperor, citing the fixed amount based on the ritual guide, did not permit this idea.²³¹

The main principle of the return gifts for the envoy mission was reciprocity but there was always room for negotiation. However, the only rule applicable with regards to return gifts for the personnel was "according to rank." Because of this rule, even though it seems that there was a set limit for the envoy personnel, there was relatively more flexibility in preparing these gifts.

²³⁰ *SS* 485.14001.

²³¹ *CB* 70.1582-3.

Problems, however, could occur when officials faced each other during presentation of gifts due to misunderstanding of one another's culture. On 12/1/1004 when the negotiation for the peace treaty between the Song and the Liao was actively going on, the Liao envoy Han Qi 韓杞 delivered the letter from the Liao Empress Dowager to Song Zhenzong and received an official robe in return. On the day of his departure, he went to meet the Song emperor to receive the response letter to the Liao Empress Dowager. The Song escorting official, Zhao Anren, was shocked to see that Han did not wear the robe given him by the Song emperor and advised, "you are going to enter the imperial hall to receive the return letter from His Majesty, then you are going to get close to his majesty face to face. Now you aren't wearing the clothes given by His Majesty. Do you think this is a problem?" Upon hearing this, Han changed his clothes right away before meeting the Song emperor.²³²

After the Shanyuan treaty (1005), the Liao and the Song quickly settled the protocols for the exchange of regular envoy missions. When the Liao envoy and envoy deputy received a robe, a belt, and shoes on the day of imperial audience at the Song court, the Liao envoys were expected to wear the clothing at the banquet which was held the following day to show their appreciation.²³³

Another incident is a complaint from the Song envoy, Chang Shunmin, about the unexpected return gifts from the Liao court. He reported with some displeasure that the Liao envoys that came to the New Year and imperial birthday audiences were given 1,500 ounces of silver, but the Song envoys received only ten sheep and ten steppe-marmots as return gifts. He did not know what to do with them and set them free. The Khitan Hostel Attendant [Hospitality Escort Commissioner] was dismayed and told Chang that the marmots were valuable presents.

²³² *CB* 58.1288.

²³³ *SS* 119.2806.

The attendant feared a reprimand if the court learned that the Song envoy had not received his present.²³⁴

²³⁴ Franke, "Sung Embassies," 136.

CHAPTER 6: Horses

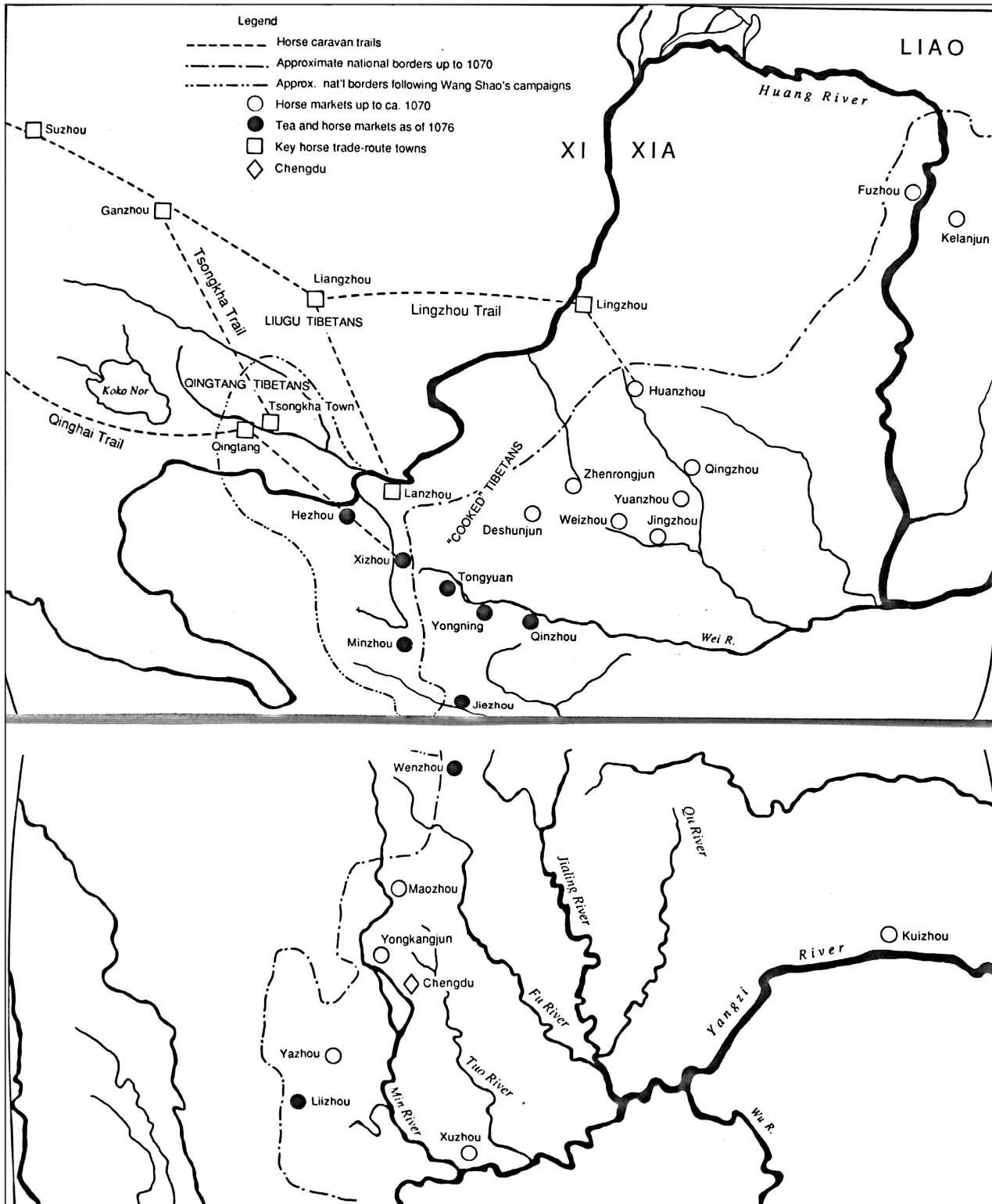
Among the many diplomatic gifts exchanged in East Asia, horses played a key role. The Song always welcomed horses as “tribute,” and was actively engaged in horse trade. The Liao and the Xi Xia, in relations with the Song, used horses as an important diplomatic weapon to advance their political and economic interests. Shiba Yoshinobu argues that Song’s continuing need for cavalry horses from the north made the Song continue to show interest in foreign trade in spite of its ample resources.²³⁵ In this chapter, I examine the value horses held, and how each court managed the presentation of horses as diplomatic gifts.

Commodity Value of Horses

During the eleventh century the Liao, the Xi Xia, and the Qingtang Tibetans were the main sources of horse supply for the Song. Their supply of horses became a central element in Song’s diplomacy with them. The Xi Xia clashed seriously with the Song over the issue of horses. Lingzhou 靈州, a small independent regime in Central Asia, used to offer horses as their tribute to the Song until they were conquered by the Xi Xia in 1006; hence, the principal Central Asian trade route fell under Xi Xia’s control.²³⁶

²³⁵ Shiba, “Sung Foreign Trade,” 95.

²³⁶ SS 485.13985, 13987-8.



Map. 1 Expansion of the Xi Xia and Horse Markets in the Northern Song²³⁷

²³⁷ Smith, *Taxing Heaven's Storehouse*, 32-3.

When the Xi Xia captured the Lingzhou, the Song horse supply was negatively impacted, which then became one of the major reasons for negotiating a peace agreement with the Xi Xia ruler Li Deming in 1006.²³⁸ After the Xi Xia took over Lingzhou, Song horse markets lying in the horse caravan trail passing Lingzhou were dominated by the Xi Xia. Horses came to hold a value beyond their exchange value when the Song lost access to trade in them. The Xi Xia, which was located in the middle of the trading route to Central Asia, managed horse trade actively, giving them a powerful leverage over the Song. (see Map. 1)

The Liao took the same attitude toward the issue of horse supply. The Liao sent around 300 ordinary horses to the Song every year with their regular envoy missions. Therefore, the Liao paid particular attention to obtaining a continuous supply of horses not only through annual tribute from Inner Asia but also as a form of tax. According to fragmented records about the tribute of horses to the Liao court, in 1018, five northeastern tribes of Yuelidu 越里篤, Pou'ali 剖阿里, Aolimi 奧里米, Punuli 蒲奴里, and Tieli 鐵驪 were ordered to render an annual tribute of sixty five thousand ermine furs and three hundred horses in total.²³⁹ Bohai paid a thousand head annually, and the Tangxiang tribes, and the Xi Xia state were also major providers of horses.²⁴⁰ Because records of tribute horses are sporadic, it is hard to calculate how many horses were supplied to the Liao court, but it seems that they did not have difficulty acquiring horses except during their collapse after losing most of their tributary resources to the Jin. Not only that, the tax levy on rich herd-owners was also in the form of horses. To the Liao, these actions were necessary because horses were not a mere commodity for trade but also a monetary commodity which had a crucial role in sustaining their economy.

²³⁸ SS 485. 13989-90

²³⁹ Karl A. Wittfogel, *History of Chinese Society Liao (907-1125)* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1949), 357; LS 16.183.

²⁴⁰ Wittfogel, *History of Chinese Society Liao*, 331.

The supply of horses of small political entities in Central Asia and Tibet made them important neighbors of the Song. The Liangzhou 涼州 and the Qingtang 青唐 Tibetan tribes are good examples. Song's horse trade with Liangzhou was particularly lively between 990 and 995, before it suffered a series of attacks by the Xi Xia. During the eleventh century the Qingtang under Gusiluo 唃廝囉 emerged as a new trade partner. After the Xi Xia conquered Liangzhou in 1032, the normal route to China via Liangzhou was barred by the Tanguts again and the Central Asian traders and tribute-bearing missions had to choose a new route through the Qingtang region to the Song.²⁴¹ The Song, recognizing the importance of the Qingtang as a source of horses and a possible opening to the Western Region, maintained a good relationship with the Qingtang by granting Gusiluo an official appointment in 1014, then gave him the title of General Military Commissioner of Hexi 河西節度使 in 1041. At the center of all these political maneuvers were horses. The Song court was forced to do something because of the embargo on the export of the horses of the Liao and the Xi Xia.²⁴²

How did the Song government deal with these foreign horses crossing the Song border? The Song court was responsible for the transit of diplomatic gifts when they crossed the Song border and the Ministry of War took charge of this task. The Ministry dispatched its soldiers to protect and convey materials, and extra laborers were provided by the locals. The problem of transportation was exceptionally hard for gifts like horses. Song officials kept searching for new ways to reduce the cost of transporting them. The cost of horse transportation was a problem not only for tribute horses but also for horses purchased at the frontier markets. Unlike inanimate objects, horses could die during transportation, so the Song needed people with special skills

²⁴¹ Luciano Retch, "Tibetan Relations with Sung China and with the Mongols," in *China among Equals*, 176-78; Dannel, "The His Hsia," in the *Cambridge History of China*, vol 6, 172-80; Smith, *Taxing Heaven's Storehouse*, 30-4; Liao Longsheng. 廖隆盛, *Guoce maoyi zh anzheng*, 62-5.

²⁴² Shiba, "Sung Foreign Trade," 101-2.

and knowledge of horses to see that they arrived at the capital healthy.

In the early Song, horses were transported to the capital through a system of permanent prefectural horse markets, supplemented by a network of “horse gathering centers,” from which local military personal were sent to trade with local Tibetan, Uighur, and Tangut tribes. Native horse traders were encouraged to drive their herds to the capital and these “Horse Summoning Centers” were a convenience for them. (The location of these centers are marked as “horse markets” with “o” in Map.1) The Song issued travel vouchers that facilitated traders’ passage by providing them food, lodging, and provision for the horses along the way. Then, this horse summoning system, which called for the individual horse traders to bring their horses to the capital, was transformed into the “traders’ caravan (*quanma* 券馬)” policy. Under it, horse traders organized horse caravans of ten to one hundred head, called *quan* 券, and transported horses more systematically in a group. A memorial of 1060 reported that:

Each Tibetan or Han merchant assembles in the frontier prefectural markets 50, 70, or 100 horses, which are called a *quan* 券. For each horse driven to the market 1,000 cash is given. Thereafter, at each staging point hay and grain is provided, as is food for those who lead the horses to the capital. There the Hall of Welcoming Guests (禮賓院) also provides funds for fifteen days of entertainment and the provision of wine and food. Only then do the conveyers go to the Horse Pricing Agency, which appraises the horses and pays the price in money and silk. Then on departing from the court there are also such gifts as brocade robes and silver girdles to consider. The horse sellers are given a receipt for the value of the goods and money obtained, exempting them from paying taxes en route to the border. When the total cost is considered, each horse costs not less than 50,000 or 60,000 cash.²⁴³

²⁴³ *SHY bing* 22.4b-5a.

Based on the above passage, the transport of horses was supported by the prefectural governments, as well as diplomatic offices such as the Hall of Welcoming Guests, which hosted envoy missions from the Uighurs, Tibetans, Tang-Xiang, and Jurchens. The Song court, which was in constant need of horses, utilized the horse traders – both Han and foreign merchants – who were skillful in handling horses. Even though the Song court sponsored the transport of horses in various ways, the mortality rate was still very high. Especially during the Southern Song period, the route from Sichuan to Lin'an placed severe limitations on possible convoy routes. Many caravans lost more than half of their horses on the way from the border market to the capital.²⁴⁴

The horses brought into Sichuan Danchang are sent east in convoys of fifty head. At first, Sichuan soldiers were assigned to drive them, but large numbers of animals kept dying in transit. Thereupon a terminal was opened at Hanyang, where the convoys rested for five days and waited to be picked up by crews from the Capital Guards and the Yangzi River Armies. First, the convoys are driven to the yamen of the Huguang Supply Master General (in Ezhou, just across the river from Hanyang), to check that the markings and age match the advance roster sent by the Sichuan Horse Agency. Thereafter, they are sent by road.²⁴⁵

When the horses held commercial value, it can be assumed that the materials exchanged for horses also possessed the same commercial value. Similar to the case of horses, Chinese silk was highly prized by foreigners and was a coveted commodity, making it a valuable tool for diplomacy. Regardless of the political appraisal of the Shanyuan treaty, silk from the Song court

²⁴⁴ Smith, *Taxing Heaven's Storehouse*, 284-304

²⁴⁵ Hong Mai, "Ezhou gangma," *Yijian zhi jing ji* 7. 1a-b. (Smith, *Taxing Heaven's Storehouse*, 290)

was also a contributing element in the peace settlement due to the commodity value attached to it. The Liao and the Xi Xia requested as much silk as they could because silk was not only appreciated by the royal family, but also a desirable item for further trade with other tribes in Central Asia who could not get direct access to the Song. Since the Tang period, commerce in silk expanded rapidly and increasing quantities of Chinese silk was taken to Central and West Asia.²⁴⁶ Knowing of this high demand for silk, the Liao and the Xi Xia successfully took up the role of performing intermediate trade by strategically blocking the trade route to the Song. Its high commodity value gave Chinese silk a crucial role in negotiating peace and hence, it became one of the main components in Song diplomatic gifts.²⁴⁷

Another good exchanged for tribute horses was Chinese tea. As the chart of Song return gifts to the Xi Xia (in Chapter Five) shows, the Song court had to send 20,000 catties of tea as annual gifts and 10,000 catties of tea under the guise of annual presents in return for diplomatic gifts from the Xi Xia, along with a total of 72,000 ounces of silver and 153,000 bolts of silk. Considering the basic rule of diplomatic gift-exchange based on the calculation of the actual value, all these Song materials acquired the properties of commodities. But why was tea particularly used for the gifts to the Xi Xia? What kind of commercial matrix existed between the Song tea and the Xi Xia horses?

After the Song herd-building plan to become self-sufficient in horses failed, Song's horse supply depended almost entirely on foreign horses bought as tribute to the court and for

²⁴⁶ Morris Rossabi, "The Silk Trade in China and Central Asia," *When Silk Was Gold: Central Asian and Chinese Textiles* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), 7-8.

²⁴⁷ Shiba Yoshinobu, in "Song Foreign Trade," explained this trade between the Song and the Liao, and the Song and the Xi Xia succinctly. (in *China Among Equals*, 97- 101.)

trade at the frontiers markets.²⁴⁸ However, the Liao intercepted tribute horses from states in Inner Asia by making them pay tribute to the Liao instead.²⁴⁹ As discussed above, Liao and Xi Xia's dominion over the Ordos Desert and the Inner Mogolian plateau effectively blocked Song's access to Mongolian horses. Thus, for Northern Song, the only reliable source of cavalry horses was the Qingtang Tibetan tribes, and the desperate Song court had to find a way to secure this Sino-Tibetan trade alliance. As horses were Tibetans' major trade item, Song officials sought to bind Tibetans to the Song by paying them a much more generous price for their horses. However, the Song had to limit exportation of their currency in order to protect the domestic economy; payments for horses needed to be done in the form of commodities instead of copper currency. Hence, they faced a series of financial challenges: 1) how to pay for the Tibetan horses; 2) what kind of commodities would be accepted by the Tibetan as trades; 3) if possible, to relieve the financial burden of the central government for the cost of transportation, finding a regional industry to link with horse purchase²⁵⁰

The solution that Song reformers found was Sichuanese tea. Up through the 1050s the central government had paid Tibetan horse merchants with either silver or silk directly through the Office of Funds in Kaifeng or the Inner Treasury. However, this direct payment resulted in a financial burden on the court due to the high cost of transportation. The reformer officials tried to find a new marketing system to relieve this financial burden and the first experiment was to establish trading posts at the Sino-Tibetan frontier in Shaanxi and allow regional institutions to

²⁴⁸ Song officials at first tried to imitate the Tang herding system. But most of the lands appropriate for pasturing of horses were lost to the Tanguts, Uighurs, and Tibetans. A herd-building policy was started with great optimism in 979, but encountered serious problems such as limited land adequate for pasturage, little knowledge, and a huge cost. The pasturage system succumbed to the reforming zeal of the New Policies in 1070s. For more background on Song herd-building policy and the problems it encountered, refer to Paul Smith, *Taxing Heaven's Storehouse*, 17-24.

²⁴⁹ *CB* 51.1121-2.

²⁵⁰ Smith, *Taxing Heaven's Storehouse*, 27-31.

control this trade. As for the payments to the Tibetan horse sellers, they used salt certificates which could be used to redeem government salt in Shaanxi. From the early Song, the central government monopolized the salt trade. To reduce the transaction of silver and silk from the court inventory, Song officials made the payment to the Tibetan merchants with salt certificates and let them complete their trade in the border area, and also pay with commodities available in the border region, rather than with Song currency.²⁵¹

Tibetan merchants could exchange these salt certificates for either the Shaanxi salt or goods produced in Sichuan. The Tibetan merchants could take their certificates to the commercial center of Qinzhou and trade them with Sichuanese merchants for Sichuanese commodities.²⁵² Initially, among Sichuanese products, silk constituted the main trade item, but as the demand for tea grew, markets for Sichuanese tea expanded to accommodate the commercial interests of the Tibetan tribes. The Song reformer, Wang Shao, who observed the increasing demand for tea, proposed to construct a horse-tea trade and the bridge between Sichuanese tea and Tibetan horses had been built in 1074.²⁵³

Even though this Sichuanese tea and Tibetan horse trade does not respond directly to the question which I initiated regarding the relationship between Song tea and Xi Xia horses, it provides me with two points central to tea-horse relations: 1) the demand for tea as a popular commodity by the northwestern and western neighbors; 2) active management of commodity currency including tea that the Song government collected through the state monopoly system. Unlike the Sichuanese tea traded for Tibetan horses at Shaanxi border markets, the tea that Song court provided to the Xi Xia as return gifts and annual payments was probably southeastern tea

²⁵¹ Smith, *Taxing Heaven's Storehouse*, 40-1.

²⁵² Sichuanese merchants could redeem those salt certificates into silver and invest that profit into next supply of Sichuanese commodities for trading with Tibetan merchants. (Smith, *Taxing Heaven's Storehouse*, 38-41.)

²⁵³ Smith, *Taxing Heaven's Storehouse*, 46-47; For the further deployment of Tea-Horse Trade, refer to the chapter 7 "The Limits of Bueaucratic Power in the Tea and Horse Trade."

whose possession was monopolized by the Song government.²⁵⁴ What I want to stress here is that tea was an item holding commodity value especially for Song's Northwestern neighbors. The Song, recognizing this value, included tea as part of the diplomatic gifts system.

Even though I have limited the scope of my study to the material objects exchanged as diplomatic gifts— horses, silk, and tea-, they are a small part of a larger phenomenon. Much the way the Xi Xia agreed to pay tribute to the Song in 1044 in order to obtain a fixed annual payment and open access to border markets, I am certain that the diplomatic gifts such as horses, silk, and tea held a commodity value and they themselves were good diplomats to represent the interest of the states in East Asia in the eleventh to the twelfth centuries.

Gift Value of Horses

Although many “tribute” items clearly possessed commodity value just like horses and silk, not all material objects exchanged between courts through tributary system fall into this category. Above, I regarded horses as the most appropriate material object to be labeled a commodity among all the items exchanged through tribute missions. If we refer to the list of Liao imperial gifts to the Song for New Year's Day celebration envoy mission (in Chapter Five), we can see that there were two types of horses presented: two saddled horses and one hundred ordinary horses. The “two saddled horses” were generally decorated with elegant horse trappings. In the case of these two saddled horses, the issue was not the quantity, which is important when something is a “commodity,” but the “gift” value of it.

What makes something a “gift” rather than a “commodity”? Anthropologists have often

²⁵⁴ The Song government imposed strict controls over the southeastern tea from the beginning, and by 965 Song administrators had established a state monopoly over all the tea produced in Huainan; Seo Eunmi 徐銀美, *Buk Song cha jeonmae yeongu* 北宋茶專賣研究, (Seoul: Gukhak jaryowon, 1999), 101-83.

distinguished the “gift” in opposition to “commodity” and came to the conclusion that gifts focus on the social relationship behind the actual material objects rather than their economic value.²⁵⁵ Therefore, commodities were exchanged based on the “needs” of both the donors and the recipients, whereas gift exchange was not necessarily based on the actors’ needs.²⁵⁶ In fact, recent anthropological studies on material exchange question the clear division between both categories because the “qualitative” value and the “quantitative” value (the value as a measure of relative price in a transaction) may underlie significant dynamics within structures of social action.²⁵⁷ The reason I draw a distinction between a “commodity” and a “gift” in this chapter is not to argue against current studies on material exchange but to draw more attention to the character of diplomatic gifts which could not be understood just as items of trade. I want to delve into the complex context behind the diplomatic gifts so that I can see the social and cultural goals beyond the economic gain.

Returning to the issue of saddled horses, Liao provided two saddled horses as part of the New Year’s Day ritual gifts and six saddled horses for imperial birthday gifts. Gifts prepared for the Song emperor’s birthday, similar to those prepared by the Song for the Liao emperor’s birthday, were exceptionally opulent:

Six imperial horses decorated with

- golden gilded saddles with silvery dragon and phoenix patterns and red silk saddle blankets;
- silvery adorned white mulberry bark saddles and woolen saddle blankets;

²⁵⁵ C. A. Gregory, *Gifts and Commodities* (London: Academic Press, 1982), 47-8.

²⁵⁶ Marilyn Strathern, “Qualified Value: the Perspective of Gift Exchange,” *Barter, Exchange and Value: An Anthropological Approach* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 169-70.

²⁵⁷ Fred R. Myers ed., *The Empire of Things: Regimes of Value and Material Culture* (School of American Research Press, 2001), 6.

- light brown mulberry bark saddles and sealskin horse blankets²⁵⁸

These materials must have caught the eyes of people who gathered at the Song court. As observed in Chapter Four, most of the two hundred ordinary horses were received at the border office and were not taken to the capital. On the other hand, these glistening imperial horses were paraded into the capital and the palace, displaying their splendor to the Song court as well as foreign envoys who were in attendance for the celebration of the imperial birthday. What was the message which the Liao was trying to convey behind the glamour?

Saddled horses were traditionally symbolic marks of social status which were different from ordinary horses 散馬 for transportation and military use. A horse was a symbol of respect as it was often given to favored officials in both the Liao and the Song courts. In addition to official robes, belt, and shoes, which were common rewards, saddled horses revealed the respect toward the recipient and the value of these items was meant as a social transaction rather than an economic transaction. The highly decorated Liao imperial horses are actually political gestures from the Liao emperor toward the Song that they were rivals in terms of power and status. Exchange of presents between the two competing courts in the setting of envoy visits was, in fact, visual moments of clashes of powers. Avinoam Shalem, in her essay on the diplomatic gifts exchanged in Islamic courts pointed out that “dazzling the eyes of the audience and overwhelming and astonishing the recipient were well-planned methods of transmitting power and accentuating one’s own dominance.”²⁵⁹

Xi Xia also sent two different types of horses to the Song as diplomatic gifts. In 1006

²⁵⁸ QDGZ 21.200-1.

²⁵⁹ Avinoam Shalem, “Performance of the Object,” in *Gifts of the Sultan: The Arts of Giving at the Islamic Courts*, edited by Linda Komaroff and Sheila Blair (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 111.

Song Zhenzong granted the Xi Xia ruler the title of the Prince of Xiping 西平王 in addition to appointing him Military Governor of Xia, Acting Inspector of Xia, Supreme Pillar of State, and Military Commissioner of the Army Which Fixes Difficulties. The diplomatic gifts that accompanied this title were official garments, gold belts, saddled horse with silver horse trappings, 10,000 ounces of silver, 10,000 bolts of pongee, 30,000 strings of cash, and 20,000 catties of tea. In response to these presents from the Song court, Li Deming, the Xi Xia ruler, also sent twenty-five imperial horses, 700 ordinary horses, and 300 camels in return.²⁶⁰ A saddled horse with silver trappings given to the Xi Xia was a special “gift” matched with the appointment of Li as a Prince of Xiping, and the twenty-five imperial horses that the Xi Xia sent to the Song were special “gifts,” more highly valued than the 700 ordinary horses; they thus held special value as “gifts” conveying Xi Xia’s goodwill directly to Song Zhenzong.

The image below is a handscroll painted by Ren Boren (ca. mid-14th century), which illustrates a procession of foreign dignitaries, attendants, guardsmen and horse grooms rendering tribute at the Tang court. The main items representing foreign tribute is horses. These horses are all covered in brocade silk blankets showing that they are special horses of high quality.

²⁶⁰ SS 485.13989-90.



fig.2 Ren Boren, *Handscroll Depicting Tribute Bearers*, part, Yuan dynasty.²⁶¹

Goryeo also made gifts of horses. Goryeo sent a horse with a golden saddle to the Liao and a horse with a saddle ornamented with dragon and phoenix images and saddle cover embroidered with dragon and phoenix patterns(線織成龍鳳鞍, 繡龍鳳鞍幪) to the Song. Compared to the “ritual gift” that I referred to the diplomatic gifts between the Song and the Liao, “tribute” (often recorded as “regional objects”) from tribute-bearing states were mostly regarded as commodities. As I briefly mentioned in the previous section on Goryeo diplomatic gifts (see Chapter Five), Goryeo “tribute” included some items whose value could not be measured simply in terms of economic value. Saddled horses were one of these. It seems that the Goryeo court tried to manifest their political position as an independent regime to the Liao and the Song by presenting diplomatic gifts to reveal their political status. At the same time, through gifts of saddles of different material – the golden saddle to the Liao and the embroidered saddle to the Song – the Goryeo court showed to the principles behind its diplomatic gifts: In order to construct and maintain amicable relationships, show that you respect the interest of the recipient.

²⁶¹ Ralph Kauz, “Gift Exchange between Iran, Central Asia, and China under the Ming Dynasty, 1368-1644,” in *Gifts of the Sultan*, 116-7.

Diplomatic gifts, regardless of how they were labeled in the host courts' records, suggested that political message by the donor was motivated by the political standing of respective courts.

The framework of the tributary system, which was often regarded as tributary trade, however, was revised during eleventh century to avoid revealing the commodity value of diplomatic gifts especially among the states of "equal" status. The Song offered a fixed number of return gifts for the Liao and the Xi Xia, so the value of horses from the Liao and the Xi Xia was not explicitly assessed. This return policy of the Song court was to treat the 500 ordinary horses from the Liao and the Xi Xia as clearly holding commodity values as "gifts" whose meaning was interpreted in political and social context. Moreover, it is often difficult to distinguish between "genuine," that is, politically motivated, embassies and commercial enterprises that had to be disguised as official embassies in order to exchange their products for Chinese goods. The fact that these two types of embassies were often intermingled further complicates the distinction between "gifts" and "commodities."

CHAPTER 7: Musical Instruments

The histories record several occasions when musical instruments were used as diplomatic gifts: Later Tang's response to a request by Liao, Song's ritual gifts for the Liao imperial birthdays, and sets of ritual instruments including musicians that Song Huizong sent to the Goryeo court. I examine these three cases and probe what cultural politics were embedded in these musical instruments, why musical instruments became important objects to exchange among states, and what value music had in the tenth to eleventh centuries.

Ritual gifts for the Liao Imperial Birthday

In an earlier chapter, I argued that “ritual gifts 禮物” exchanged between the Song and the Liao courts on occasions like imperial birthdays and New Years Day's showed parity. Each court managed the number and the contents of ritual gifts to display their equal status. They dealt with the issue of reciprocity by calculating the value of the gifts, and tried to display their cultural characteristics through the contents of the items. In the long list of Song's ritual gifts for Liao emperor's and empress dowager's birthdays, several musical instrument were included: a red sandalwood *sheng* mouth-organ 紅牙笙, a *di* flute(a horizontal flute)笛, a *pilü* (pipe)簫 and *paiban* (castanets)拍板²⁶² What were these particular instruments and why did the Song court prepare them for the birthday gifts? Was it Song officials' arbitrary decision, or the response to a request of the Liao court? Was this kind of musical exchange popular at this time

²⁶² CB 61.1370; QDGZ 21.201.

among states?

1) Court banquet music: *jiaofang* 教坊

In order to figure out the cultural context of these gifts of musical instruments, we have to know what these four instruments were. A note attached to these four musical instruments gives a hint: “instruments of the *jiaofang*.” The *jiaofang* was the Entertainment Music Office, which was initially set up by Tang Taizong to train entertainment professionals for the court. Tang Xuanzong in 714 expanded its size and role to develop court entertainment music by incorporating popular and foreign music.²⁶³ During the Tang period, musicians and dancers recruited and trained in the *jiaofang* were female entertainers, so the scenes of court music were mostly depicted as female performance. (see. fig.3, fig.4) This institution was continued by the courts of the Five Dynasties such as the Later Tang and the Later Jin. Even though the size of the *jiaofang* was smaller than that of the Tang court, they managed to revive the glory of the Tang musical tradition.²⁶⁴

Court music in the Song period was made up of three different types: ritual music, banquet music, and military music. The musical agencies managing Song ritual and military music were the Imperial Music Service 太樂局, and the Drum and Fife Service 鼓吹局, and both were under the Court of State Sacrifices 太常寺, the main bureau supervising court ritual. At the Song court, the *jiaofang*, responsible for banquet music, was not included in the Court of State Sacrifices; rather it was under the Court of Palace Attendants 宣徽院, an agency

²⁶³ Yang Minwei 楊旻璋, *Tangdai yinyue wenhuazhi yanjiu* 唐代音樂文化之研究 (Taipei: Wenshizhe chubanshe, 1993), 9-11.

²⁶⁴ Kang Ruijun 康瑞軍, *Songdai gongding yinyue ditu yanjiu* 宋代宮廷音樂制度研究 (Shanghai Yinyue Xueyuan Chubanshe, 2009), 31-4.

supervising functional tasks of state sacrifices, imperial audiences, and banquet feasts.²⁶⁵ This institutional setting reveals the characteristic of *jiaofang* music clearly as entertainment music to accompany court banquets. Among the items of Song gifts for imperial birthdays of the Liao, high quality food such as ritual wine, *Deru* tea 的乳茶, *Yuelu* tea 岳麓茶, and various fruit were included, and it was expected these would be used at the feast of the imperial birthday banquet. Along with these food stuffs, the *jiaofang* musical instruments might have also been sent to be used during the imperial birthday banquets at the Liao court.

2) Court banquet music: *sanyue* 散樂

Then, what kind of music did these instruments produce? Mural paintings of the Liao offer interesting hints about these musical instruments. fig.5, fig. 6, and fig.7 are mural paintings of *sanyue* musicians with musical instrument in Liao tombs.²⁶⁶ Musical scenes depicted in tomb 7 (fig.5) and in tomb 6 (fig.6) show similar settings of musical instruments and a dancer: a drum, a castanet, a *pilü*, a horizontal *di* flute, and a *sheng* mouth organ in the back row (from the left to right), then a waist drum and a dancer in the front row. In the mural of Hebei tomb (see fig.7), the position of the *sheng* mouth organ and a horizontal *di* flute is changed, and pipa was added at the right end. In both Liao mural paintings, it is clear that a castanet, a *pilü*, a horizontal *di* flute, and a *sheng* mouth were the main instruments for the performance. Based on decorated costumes of the performers and the movement of the dancer, it is easy to tell that the purpose of this musical performance was entertainment. These musical

²⁶⁵ *Wenxian tongkao* 文獻通考, by Ma Duanlin 馬端臨 (ca. 1250- 1325) (Zhonghua shuju, 1986), 525.

²⁶⁶ These mural images do not have any caption of clarification attached to specify that these are *sanyue* musicians. However, scholars who examined the composition of musical instruments and dancing figures concluded these are *sanyue* performances. I scanned images from Jenny F. So ed., *Noble Riders from Pines and Deserts: The Artistic Legacy of the Qidan* (Hong Kong: Art Museum, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2004), and Wu Zhao, *Retracing the Lost Footprints of Music: A Diagrammatic History of Chinese Music* 追尋逝去的音樂踪迹 (Beijing: Dongfang chubanshe, 1999).

performance scenes were, as a major theme of mural paintings in Liao tombs, often accompanied by feasting scenes,²⁶⁷ which proved again that these settings were typical banquet occasions in Liao culture. The mural of tomb 1 at Xuanhua fig.7 shows similar sets of instruments, but expanded in size. Performers are also all male, but they look a little bit different from the previous mural scenes. They appear to be professional court musicians based on their headgear. Would a banquet held at the Liao court with complete sets of *sanyue* musical instruments be similar to this mural scene?

Sanyue was one branch of court entertainment music which traced its well-organized style back to the Sui and the Tang period. It consisted of entertaining music, dance, and theatrical performance (or acrobatics) 百戲. Until the Sui history, it was labeled *Baixi* 百戲, but from the Tang, the musical element was better equipped and this performance was called *sanyue*. Tang court musicians and entertainers of the Entertainment Music Office performed *sanyue* music at court banquets, and a set of musical instruments was prescribed for this performance: one horizontal flute, one castanet, and three waist drums.²⁶⁸ In the Song court music tradition, although there was no particular category known as *sanyue*, similar popular music and acrobatics were performed at court banquets. At a Great Banquet 大宴, such as an imperial birthday, court musicians of the Entertainment Music Office played instruments such as a mouth-organ 笙, a *di* flute 笛, a *pilü* 箎, a *zheng* 箏 zither, and a *pipa* 琵琶. These performances were called by the broader term of *yanyue* 宴樂 (banquet music) at the Song court, and they included solo performances on each musical instrument, ensembles, singing,

²⁶⁷ So ed., *Noble Riders from Pines and Deserts*, 24-5.

²⁶⁸ *Jiu Tangshu* 29.1072-4.

acrobatics 百戲, and even theatrical performances 雜劇.²⁶⁹ Therefore, the four musical gifts that the Song emperor sent to the Liao court were major instruments of banquet music, and at the same time, they were also the main items used by the Liao for entertainment.

The “Music Treatise 樂志” in the *Liaoshi* recorded the six categories of Liao court music: *guoyue* 國樂, *yayue* 雅樂, *dayue* 大樂, *sanyue* 散樂, *naoge* 饒歌, and *hengchuiyue* 橫吹樂.²⁷⁰ Among these different types of music, *sanyue*, as in Tang times, was entertainment music combined with theatrical performance, singing, and dancing. Musical instruments for *sanyue* included a *pilü* pipe, a panpipe, a horizontal flute, a mouth organ, a pipa, a five-stringed zither, a *konghou* (plucked stringed instrument), a *zheng* zither, a *fangxiang* (slabs, percussion instrument), several drums (waist-hanging drum, big drum, etc.) and a pair of castanets. (散樂器：鬻篳、簫、笛、笙、琵琶、五絃、箜篌、箏、方響、杖鼓、第二鼓、第三鼓、腰鼓、大鼓、鞀、拍板) Compared to orchestras of the Tang period, many more musical instruments were included in a *sanyue* orchestra.

How was a Liao *sanyue* organized? What was its origin? *Liaoshi* records that the Liao had requested musical instruments from the Later Tang in 928, so the Later Tang sent jade flutes 玉笛 in 928²⁷¹, and red sandalwood mouth-organs 紅牙笙 in 932.²⁷² More complete sets of musical instruments, as well as musicians, were imported into the Liao in 938 from the Later Jin. It is unclear what kind of musical instruments were presented, as the *Jiu Wudaishi* only records that Jin court sent sixty seven musicians 樂官 to the Liao.²⁷³ The “Music Treatise 樂志” of

²⁶⁹ SS 142.3348.

²⁷⁰ LS 54.881.

²⁷¹ LS 3.29.

²⁷² LS 3.34.

²⁷³ *Jiu Wudaishi* 24.1018.

Liaoshi recorded that *yayue*, *yanyue*, and *sanyue* were introduced and equipped with the help of Jin musical texts and professionals.²⁷⁴ Therefore, Liao court music followed the tradition of the Later Jin, which was derived from Tang music. During the early Liao period, the Liao court tried to construct an institutional base of the state, and Later Jin was the main contributor to the music field.²⁷⁵

It is clear that the musical instruments that the Song court sent to the Liao as gifts for imperial birthdays, a red sandalwood mouth-organ 紅牙笙, a horizontal flute 笛, a *pilü* 鼙栗, and a *paiban* 拍板, were for banquet music, more specifically for the *sanyue* music. There is no particular record that the Liao requested musical instruments from the Song, so it may be that the Song court voluntarily prepared these musical items as birthday gifts. Combined with high-quality *Deru* and *Yuelu* tea, these musical instruments could be gifts expected to be used at the imperial banquet. At the banquet for Song imperial birthdays, musicians and dancers performed court entertainment programs, and the same musical instruments were actively used. Even though *sanyue* did not take a particularly important role at Song banquet music, those four items still were the center of entertainment melodies.

Musical instruments for banquet music, seemed to be popular objects that circulated and were exchanged among states during the tenth to eleventh centuries. Qian Shu 錢俶, the ruler of Wu Yue, in 978 presented lavish tribute to the Song, which included musical instruments such as two drums decorated with silver, four *hu* zithers ornamented with jewels, four five-string *zheng* zithers, four silvery decorated *konghou* (plucked stringed instrument), four *fangxiang*

²⁷⁴ *LS* 54.883: 大同元年，太宗自汴將還，得晉太常樂譜、宮懸、樂架，委所司先赴中京；*LS* 54.891: 今之散樂，俳優、歌舞雜進，往往漢樂府之遺聲。晉天福三年，遣劉昫以伶官來歸，遼有散樂，蓋由此矣。

²⁷⁵ Song Dejin 宋德金, Shi Jinpo 史金波, *Zhongguo Fengsu Tongshi: Liao, Jin, Xi Xia* 中国风俗通史：辽金西夏 (Shanghai: Shanghai Yishu Chubanshe, 2001), 214.

(percussion instrument), and four *jie* drums. These were musical instruments for *sanyue*, or at least for entertainment music.²⁷⁶ Highly decorated musical instruments for banquet music were important diplomatic gifts among states, and throughout these exchanges of musical items, the musical culture of the Song, Liao, and neighbor states were also introduced to each other.

3) Court banquet music: *jiyue* 妓樂

However, one interesting question remains about the forms of court banquet music of the Song and the Liao. Often times, *sanyue* was closely related to the *jiyue* 妓樂 (female entertainment music).²⁷⁷ At the Song court, *jiyue* emerged as an issue of contention among officials as it was often regarded as too vulgar and extravagant. Therefore, Song officials limited the use of these types of popular music at court or banquets for officials.²⁷⁸ Unlike the Liao *sanyue* performances performed by all male musicians that can be observed in the Liao mural paintings, Song banquet music was performed by both male and female musicians or by all female musicians as shown in fig.8 and fig.9. Interestingly, the dancers and musicians were also all female in the marble relief of *sanyue* musical performance in Wang Chuzhi's tomb

²⁷⁶ *SHY fanyi* 7.9b-10a

四月二日，俶進銀五萬兩，錢五萬貫，絹十萬疋，綾二萬疋，綿十萬兩，牙茶十萬斤，建茶萬斤，乾姜萬斤，瓷器五萬事，錦綵席千，金銀飾畫舫三，銀飾龍舟四，金飾烏櫛木、御食案御牀各一，金樽壘、蓋罍各一，金飾玳瑁器三十事，金釧藤盤二，金釧雕象俎十，銀假果十株，翠花真珠花三叢，七寶飾食案十，銀樽壘十，蓋十，蓋罍副焉，金釧瓷器百五十事，雕銀俎五十，密假果、翦羅花各二十株，銀釧大盤十，銀裝鼓二，七寶飾胡琴、五絃箏各四，銀飾箜篌、方響、羯鼓各四，紅牙樂器二十二事，乳香萬斤，犀、象各百株，香藥萬斤，蘇木萬斤。); *SS* 255.13902

²⁷⁷ Beverly Bossler, in her article, "Shifting Identities: Courtesans and Literati in Song China," (*Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, vol.62, no.1 [June, 2002]: 6) discussed problems in translation of the term, "ji 妓." She decided to call it as "courtesan" in Song culture, however she also introduced Edward Schafer's argument that courtesan (which has possibility to be rendered as "prostitute") is "hardly adequate." to refer to the rigorously trained and highly cultivated women who entertained at elegant banquets in the Tang and Song. Here, I follow Schafer's suggestion to translate *ji* to "female entertainers" or "female musicians," especially referring to the musical professionals at the Tang and the Song courts.

²⁷⁸ Joseph S.C. Lam, "The Presence and Absence of Female Musicians and Music in China," in *Women and Confucian Cultures in Pre-modern China, Korea, and Japan*, edited by Dorothy Ko, Jahyun Kim Haboush, and Joan R. Piggott (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 107.

dated to the Five Dynasties period. In fig.10 that mural painting in Wang Chuzhi's tomb, musical instruments were matched with the list of Liao *sanyue* instruments. This shows that Later Liang entertainment music continued the tradition of Tang *jiaofang* music, and so the musicians were all female professionals.

It is unclear what female entertainment music was like in the Liao court, or even if there was any, as the only mention of female entertainment music in the *Liaoshi* was made in a 994 Liao court rebuff of Goryeo's *jiyue* that were offered as a diplomatic gift.²⁷⁹ As no context was given for this rejection of the Goryeo *jiyue*, it is hard to know the reason for this rejection. Was it a set of musical instruments, or a group of female performers? The brief mention in the source did not clarify the type of musical gift from the Goryeo. According to the records on diplomatic gift exchange between the Liao and the Goryeo, this was the only case that music was involved. No other musical instruments were attempted to be given, nor were any requests submitted. One possibility, in connection with the Liao mural images with all male musicians, could be that the Confucian officials in the Liao court rebuffed the female entertainers in order to be cautious about the possibility of indulgence, influence by the Confucian discourses on female music.

Based on the *Analects*, Confucius detested vernacular music because its excessive sounds and wanton performers disrupted the harmony of proper music and the ideal sociopolitical order it engendered. He was not directly against females performing music, but female music and musicians were easily associated with licentious and distracting activities.²⁸⁰ Female entertainment was depicted as a major piece of evidence of the Minister Han's

²⁷⁹ *LS* 115.1519-1520

聖宗統和三年秋七月，詔諸道各完戎器，以備東征高麗。八月，以遼澤沮洳，罷師。十年，以東京留守蕭恒德伐高麗。十一年，王治遣朴良柔奉表請罪，詔取女直國鴨綠江東數百里地賜之。十二年，入貢。三月，王治遣使請所俘生口，詔續還之，仍遣使撫諭。十二月，王治進妓樂，詔却之。

²⁸⁰ Joseph S.C. Lam, "The Presence and Absence of Female Musicians and Music in China," 99-100.

indulgence into a luxurious and licentious life in the Song painting, “The Night Revels of the Minister Han Xizai.” (see fig. 11a, fig. 11b) Despite the fact that arguments over the female musician issue at court are easily found, the boundaries between what officials would have considered proper and improper were extremely vague. As observed above, most of the *jiaofang* professionals were female musicians, and their performances characterized an important part of the court banquet music in the Song, not to mention the Tang. In the Song, therefore, the government regulated these occasions or at least their scale, rather than ignoring them. Numerous regulations attest to the court’s concern about the potential misuse of female entertainment. The *Qingyuan tiaofa shilei* 慶元條法事類, a collection of administrative regulations compiled in the late twelfth century, stipulated that banquets with female musicians be limited to approved occasions like the emperor’s birthday and other public festivals, and forbade certain kinds of officials from participating at all. For example, several Supply Commissioners and Circuit Supervisors (*fayun jiansi* 發運監司), who were caught attending female entertaining banquets were subject to exile for two years.²⁸¹

The female entertainment music, *jiyue*, was popular at the celebration ritual for imperial birthdays, and banquets for foreign envoys in the Song, however the discourse over female music and female musicians could not be free from its association with “improper” music. Han officials at the Liao court, who were well-trained in these Confucian discourses, might have protested receiving *jiyue* from the Goryeo. Not many records refer to female musicians and entertainers in Liao court. *Jiaofang* was not established in the Liao music bureau, and the main performers of the *sanyue* were apparently all male as depicted in Xuanhe mural paintings. It is interesting to see that the Liao court accepted the musical instruments associated with banquet

²⁸¹ *Qingyuan tiaofa shilei* (Beijing: Zhongguo shudian, 1948), 9.6a (cited in Bevely Bossler, 14)

music from the Song court, but did not receive Goryeo *jiyue*. Could it be because it was the music of the Goryeo, not the proper state that they expected to receive musical culture from or because it was musicians rather than instruments?

Song *Dashengyue* 大盛樂 to the Goryeo

In 1114, Song Huizong 徽宗(r. 1100-1125) presented an extravagant and huge musical gift to Goryeo king Yejong 睿宗(r. 1105-1122). The gift consisted of 167 finely decorated instruments, five sets of metal chimes and five sets of stone chime stones (*fangxiang*), four *pipa*, two five-stringed zithers, four two-stringed zithers, four *zheng* zithers, four *konghous*, twenty *pilü*, twenty *di* transverse flutes, twenty *chi* transverse flutes, ten sets of panpipes (*tongxiao*), ten mouth-organs, forty globular flutes or ocarinas (*xun*), one large drum, twenty stick drums (*zhanggu*), and two sets of clappers.²⁸² King Yejong immediately sent envoys, Wang Cha-ji and Mun Gong-mi, to express his thanks to Song Huizong and three performances of the new music took place at Goryeo court before the end of the year.²⁸³

Two years later, when Wang and Mun returned to the Goryeo on 7/14/1116, they were bestowed even more magnificent musical offerings from the Song and the message from Huizong read as follows:

Since the Three Dynasties, ritual has been scattered and music destroyed. If we search out ancient [sources], explain and elucidate them, [we see that rites and music] reach their greatest splendor after developing for a hundred years. A thousand year later we, reflecting upon the pitches and tunes of the Former Kings, have arrived at notes with such style and refinement as to fill the whole country, making visitors feel

²⁸² *Goryeosa* 70.28b-29b

²⁸³ *Goryeosa* 13.35a-b.

settled and giving pleasure to strangers. From far away in your country, expressing compassion from the Eastern Sea, you have asked permission to send officials and these are now at court. In olden days when the teachings of feudal lords were honorable and their virtue outstanding they were rewarded with music, having instruments bestowed on them for the performance of sacrificial music. Nothing surpasses music when it comes to transforming [men's] manners and their way of life. Now we answer your request, and our lands separated, fundamentally there is great harmony [between us]. Is this not good? We are now presenting you with *Dashengyayue* 大晟樂.²⁸⁴

Goryesa reveals that the Goryeo king requested to receive the “new” music and its instruments from the Song when the Goryeo learned about a creation of *Dashengyue* in Huizong’s court. But when Song Huizong launched a music reform, he already had a plan to “proclaim the new music so that its fine sounds should spread to the four seas.”²⁸⁵ Moreover, in his letter to the Goryeo ruler, Song Huizong clearly expressed his political standing relative to Goryeo king by using the term “bestowing (*ci* 賜),” and also citing historical precedent: in ancient times, feudal lords who excelled in honor and virtue were rewarded with music. To understand the context of this special gift of music, several questions need to be examined in advance: What kind of music was *Dashengyue*? What kind of musical instruments were presented to the Goryeo and what political connotation did those music and instruments deliver?

1) Song Huizong’s *Dashengyue* 大晟樂

²⁸⁴ *Goryeo-sa* 70.5a-b. (translation from Keith L. Pratt, “Music as a Factor in Sung-Koryo Diplomatic Relations, 1069-1126” [*T’oung Pao* 62, nos. 4-5, 1976]: 209)

²⁸⁵ SS 129.3002.

What was *Dashengyue* or as Lam put it, the *Dashengyue* campaign?²⁸⁶ In short, *Dashengyue* was the name of court music which Song Huizong reformed. As his reform was conducted by the *Dashengfu* 大晟府 (Office of the Music of Great Brilliance), its musical theory and instruments were called *Dashengyue*. Huizong's launch of a music reform was not just his unique attempt; Song emperors had been actively engaged in theoretical, institutional, and practical reform of court music for years because it was regarded as an integral part of court activities in combination with court rituals.²⁸⁷ At Song court, state rituals were performed with *yayue* 雅樂, which was ideally conceived not only as musical expressions that emulated ancient and exemplary compositions such as the Shao 韶 and Wu 武 of the Zhou dynasty, but also as a means of governance that cultivated people's hearts and minds. So, technical discussions of *yayue* were not separable from debates about political, social, and moral issues.²⁸⁸

However, Huizong's reform was unique in several regards: it differed from the music reforms of Renzong, Shenzong, and Zhezong, in which the emperors failed to control officials and stop infighting, Huizong was successful in completing the reform with active support from his officials. Huizong's officials even created a theoretical base, and manipulated music as an orthodox expression of emperorship and officialdom in a personalized way. For example, Wei Hanjin, the music theorist for Huizong's court, suggested a way to measure the lengths of the

²⁸⁶ Joseph S.C.Lam "Huizong's Dashengyue, a Musical Performance of Emperorship and Officialdom," in *Emperor Huizong and Late Northern Song China: The Politics of Culture and the Culture of Politics*, edited by Patricia Buckley Ebrey and Maggie Bickford (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 397n8

²⁸⁷ Music reforms of Northern Song emperors were well summarized in the section of 'Grounding the Dashengyue in the Tradition of Northern Song Court Music.' (Lam "Huizong's Dashengyue," 418-27); Keith Pratt, "Sung Hui Tsung's Musical Diplomacy and the Korean Response," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London*, vol. 44, no. 3 (1981): 510-11.

²⁸⁸ Lam, "Huizong's Dashengyue," 404.

huangzhong pitch pipes based on the length of Huizong's fingers.²⁸⁹ The way of measuring an "accurate" *huangzhong* pitch pipe was closely connected to its length because the length of pipe largely determines the pitch of the sound it produces. However, to my knowledge, no other theorist in Chinese music history directly connected the physical measurements of pitch pipes with the physical part of an emperor, even though the correlation between rulers and the *huangzhong/gong* tones is a fundamental concept in classical Chinese music theory.²⁹⁰

It is obvious that the music theory for the *Dashengyue* incorporated a political agenda, a desire to create a legacy for prosperity, that responded to a demand of Huizong and thus Joseph Lam argued that Huizong and his officials manipulated music as an orthodox expression of emperorship and officialdom.²⁹¹ Huizong went on to order the *Dashengfu* to produce sets of musical instruments exceptionally for the newly composed *Dashengyue* and to compile musical treatises such as *Dasheng yueshu* 大晟樂書 and *Dasheng yanyue* 大晟燕樂. Musical instruments for *Dashengyue* and musical treatises vitalized Huizong's "new" music and his ideas embedded within it, so that it could be "spread to the four seas." Therefore, it is not surprising to see Huizong present sets of *Dashengyue* instruments to the Goryeo court in 1114 and 1116. This musical gift delivered the clear diplomatic voice of Song Huizong proclaiming the prosperity of his reign, as well as Song cultural supremacy.

²⁸⁹ In Chinese music theory *the twelve standard pitches* 十二律 constitute a set of twelve absolute pitches. Among these twelve standard pitches, which represent all musical sounds available for music-making, the *huangzhong* 黃鐘 was regarded as a standard pitch during Song period, thus it was often associated with the sovereign as a pitch providing a standard for all other pitches in many musical theories. (For the further discussion on the Song musical theories on the *huangzhong* pitch, consult Li's study. Li Youping 李幼平, *Dashengzhong yu Songdai huangzhong biao zhun yingao yanjiu* 大晟乐与宋代黄钟标准音高研究 [shanghai yinyue xueyuan chubanshe, 2004], 119-39)

²⁹⁰ Lam, "Huizong's *Dashengyue*," 441-9.

²⁹¹ Lam, "Huizong's *Dashengyue*," 439.

2) *Dasheng* Instruments and Goryeo *a-ak* 雅樂

Huizong's musical gift consisted of *yayue* 雅樂 instruments, that is, ritual music including civil and military dances, and the huge total of 428 items:²⁹²

- a) For the terrace orchestra: two sets of bells, two sets of stone chimes, two one-stringed zithers, two three-stringed zithers, two five-stringed zithers, two seven-stringed zithers, two nine-stringed zithers, four *ci* flutes, four *zhu* flutes, four *xiao* panpipes, four large mouth-organs, four small mouth-organs, four globular flutes, one *zhu* box, one *yu* tiger
- b) For the courtyard orchestra: eighteen sets of bells, eighteen sets of stone chimes, five one-stringed zithers, thirteen three-stringed zithers, thirteen five-stringed zithers, sixteen seven-stringed zithers, sixteen nine-stringed zithers, forty-two se zithers (a twenty-five-stringed zither), forty-eight *zhu* flutes, forty-four *xiao* panpipes, forty-two large mouth-organs, thirty medium size mouth-organs, twenty-right globular flutes, one *zhu* box, one *yu* tiger, five drum including one very large jingo, and two *ligu*.

Song *yayue* 雅樂 (ritual music) was performed by two musical orchestras in alternation: a terrace orchestra 登歌 positioned on the stone porch of a shrine (or a court)building, and a courtyard orchestra 軒架 at the far end of the courtyard fronting the shrine (or the court) building. Depending on the ritual stages it accompanied, state sacrificial music was performed by either the courtyard or the terrace orchestras, both of which were grand displays of power and resources. These *yayue* instruments, for both terrace and courtyard orchestras included many large, heavy, and finely decorated sets of tuned bronze bells and stone chimes. The

²⁹² *Goryeosa* 70.5a-b.

musical gifts that Song Huizong sent to Goryeo Yejong were full sets of this grand *yayue* instruments with musical instructions which were designed to be performed at Goryeo court in practice.

The Goryeo court music by this time consisted of two categories: music of the right, native music, and music of the left, music of Chinese origin. It was a continuation of the music of earlier dynasty, the United Shilla (668-935), which actively had exchanged musical culture with the Tang. Song Huizong's gifts for the "new" *yayue* music, *Dashengyue*, added one more category onto Goryeo music culture, called *a'ak* 雅樂. Thus, from 1116 the Goryeo court music was in three types: *a'ak*, the court ritual music received from the Song in 1116, *tang'ak* 唐樂, music of Chinese origin which originally called as music of the left, and *hyang'ak* 鄉樂 native music which was originally called as music of the right. Therefore, Korean *a'ak* tradition has its origin from the *yayue* of Huizong period, *Dashengyue*, and the musical gifts from Song court.

What caused the Goryeo court's active adoption of *Dashengyue*? Goryeo Yejong not only imported these musical instruments into the Goryeo court, he but also promoted to use it even by creating a new category of court music. It seems to be connected with his reform policy. He promoted Confucian political idea and institutions during his reign, so the ritual music of the Song court, especially the *Dashengyue* which was regarded as well-refined music based on the musical theory proclaiming the authority of an emperor, was apparently an attractive object.²⁹³ It is probable that Yejong who was committed to a reform of the political culture of Goryeo court wanted to borrow the authority of Song emperor by adopting this ritual music, an integral part of Confucian governing.

²⁹³ Shin Daechul 申大澈, "Goryeo ui woerae umak suyong 高麗의 外來音樂 受容," *Hanguk gongyeon yesul yeongu nonmun seonjib*, vol.4, (2001): 480-2.

What would be the message that this set of musical instruments transferred from the Song? When the Goryeo court reopened diplomatic relations with the Song in 1071, the Song court treated the Goryeo as a more important neighbor than before.²⁹⁴ It was partly due to the political situation that the Song faced at that time. Song Shenzong tried to reformulate an alliance with the Goryeo Munjong against the Liao, and the Goryeo had to keep a good balance between the Song and the Liao for survival. An exchange of diplomatic gifts between these courts were exceptionally lavish in scale at that time, which included several musical instruments from Shenzong to Munjong, ten sets of clappers, ten *di* transverse flutes and ten *pilus*, all beautifully decorated and wrapped.²⁹⁵ These musical instruments were not for ritual music. These were main instruments for the *sanyue* music discussed above. Interestingly, Shenzong's special gifts also include ten boxes of *longfeng* tea, which recalls the items of Song gifts to the Liao. *Sanyue* musical instruments and high-quality tea were major "ritual gifts" of the Song for celebrating the Liao imperial birthday. It is apparent that the musical gifts from Song Shenzong delivers Song's welcoming message, his appreciation of the return diplomatic ties.

Huizong's gifts, by contrast, were instruments for court rituals and these items inevitably carried strong political overtones. Song Huizong reformed ritual music and made a whole new set of musical instruments to perform it. Soon after their creation, he proudly presented this set of instruments to the Goryeo court. The *Dasheng* courtyard orchestra sent to Goryeo was nevertheless a much smaller one than that prescribed for use by the Song Huizong himself. If

²⁹⁴ Due to a pressure from the Liao, the Goryeo court shifted its diplomatic relationship from the Song to the Liao: The Goryeo king accept a investiture from the Liao and sent its regular diplomatic missions to the Liao court, instead of the Song from 1030 to 1071. Jiang Jizhong 姜吉仲, *Gaoli yu Song Jin waijiao jingmao guanxishilun* 高麗與宋金外交經貿關係史論 (Taipei: wenjin chubanshe, 2004), 113-4.

²⁹⁵ *Goryeosa* 9.21a-b.

we compare the seating plans of the Song courtyard orchestra (fig.12a) and that of the Goryeo (fig.12b), we can see several crucial differences: the Song orchestra seating is framed on all four sides by sets of bells and chimes, plus a number of single bells and chimes, whereas the Goryeo courtyard orchestra had only three enclosing sides with no single bells or chimes. Goryeo orchestra was equipped with much reduced numbers of each type of instruments. This point reveals Song Huizong's intention of presenting *Dasheng* musical instruments to the Goryeo court. According to rules stipulated in the *Zhou li* 周禮, only the emperor was entitled to the four enclosing sides of bells and chimes; a "duke" of the empire such as a provincial governor or the king of a neighboring states owing ritual allegiance to China, should have an orchestra of three sides.²⁹⁶ It seems that Huizong tried to reconfirm Song's political status in relations with the Goryeo by "bestowing" a set of musical instrument for a "duke" upon Goryeo king Yejong.

In sum, Song emperors presented musical instruments to neighboring states on several occasions. The instruments of banquet music conveyed a friendly message as a main gift for the Liao imperial birthday. Instruments for ritual music conveyed the message that the Song court was the source of correct ritual. These musical instruments were presented with instructions and sometimes with musicians to perform using them, which consequently facilitated the exchange of musical culture. Music had been exchanged across East Asia for many centuries, particularly in the Tang, so a shared musical culture crossed borders. Moreover, new musical trends became known at other courts quickly, leading at times to requests for musical instruments as diplomatic gifts.

²⁹⁶ Robert C. Provine, "The Korean Courtyard Ensemble for Ritual Music (AAK)," *Yearbook for Traditional Music*, vol.24 (1992): 93-6.



fig.3 rubbing from the tomb of Tang Li Shou 李壽 (Wu Zhao, *Retracing the Lost Footprints of Music: A Diagrammatic History of Chinese Music* 追尋逝去的音樂蹤迹, [Beijing: Dongfang chubanshe, 1999], 244)



fig.4 clay figures from the tomb of Tang Yang Zhu 楊 at Anyang, Henan (Wu Zhao, *Retracing the Lost Footprints of Music*, 245)



fig.5 Wall painting in tomb 7 at Xuanhua 宣化 Hebei 河北, "sanyue"



fig.6 Wall painting in tomb 6 at Xuanhua 宣化 Hebei 河北. "sanyue"



fig.7 Wall painting in tomb 1 at Xuanhua 宣化 Hebei 河北. "musical performance"



fig.8 Wall Painting in the tomb of Song Yuanfu 2, Zhao Dayong 趙大翁 at Baisha 白沙, Henan (Wu Zhao, *Retracing the Lost Footprints of Music*, 268)



fig.9 Wall Painting in the Song tomb at Pingding 平定, Shanxi (Wu Zhao, *Retracing the Lost Footprints of Music*, 271)



fig.10 Painted marble relief of musicians, Later Liang Dynasty (A.D. 924) (Hebei Provincial Cultural Relics Institute, Shijiazhuang)

Back row (from the left to right): two di flutes, two *pilu* pipes, *gong*, *fanxiang*, *sheng* mouth organ, a male attendant (maybe a director of these musicians)

Front row (from the left to right): a drum, a paipan castanet, a *pipa*, a *zheng* zither, *konghou*, two small dancing figures



fig.11a “Night Revels of the Minister Han Xizai” (part) (*Zhongguo lidai huihua: Gugong bowuyuan canghua ji*, vol. 1 (Beijing: Renmin meishu chubanshe, 1978), 91.



fig.11b “Night Revels of the Minister Han Xizai” (part) in *Zhongguo lidai huihua*, 91.

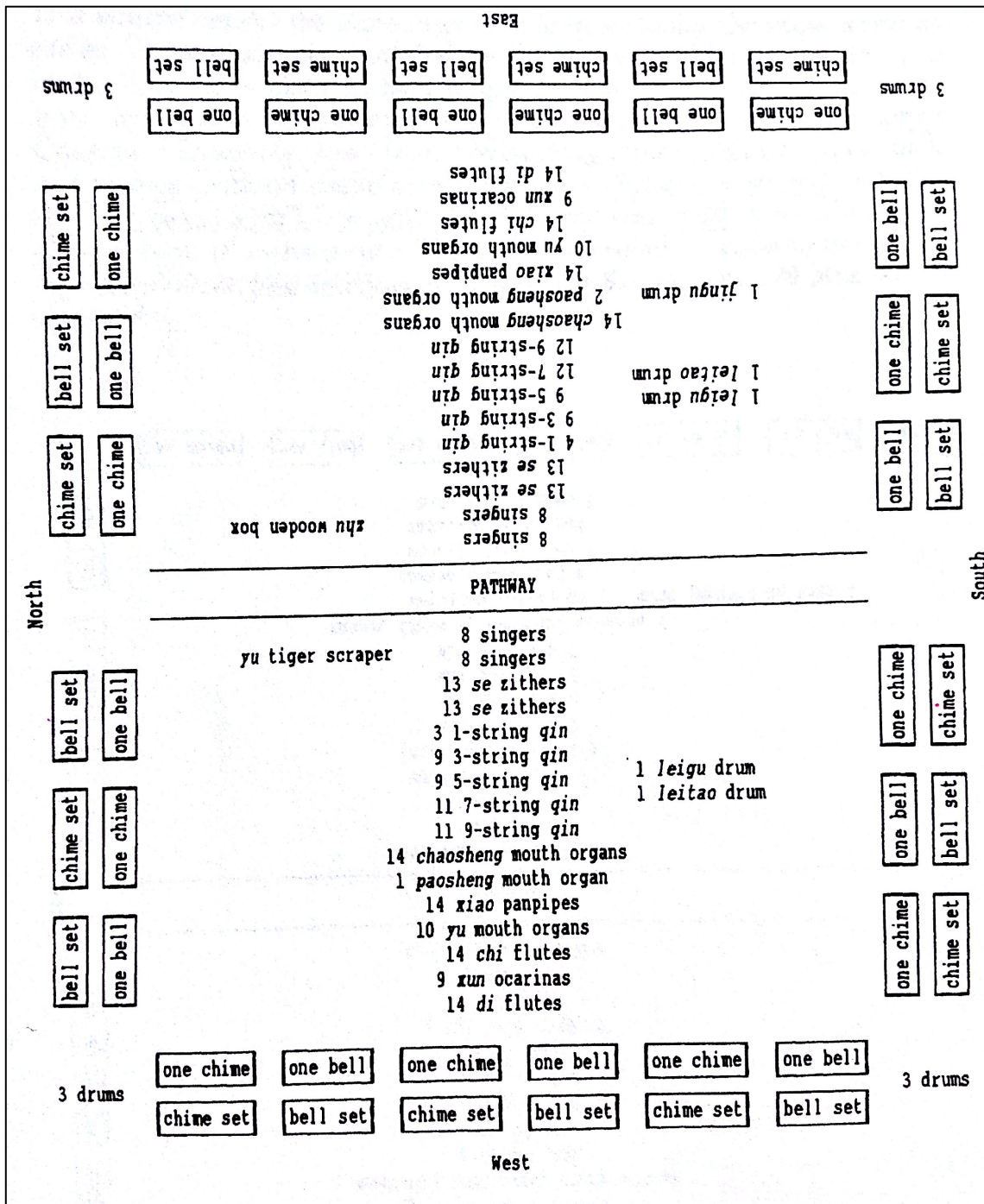


fig.12a Layout of Song courtyard orchestra in 1011 (Robert C. Provine, "The Korean Courtyard Ensemble for Ritual Music (AAK)," *Yearbook for Tradisional Music*, vol.24 [1992], 94.)

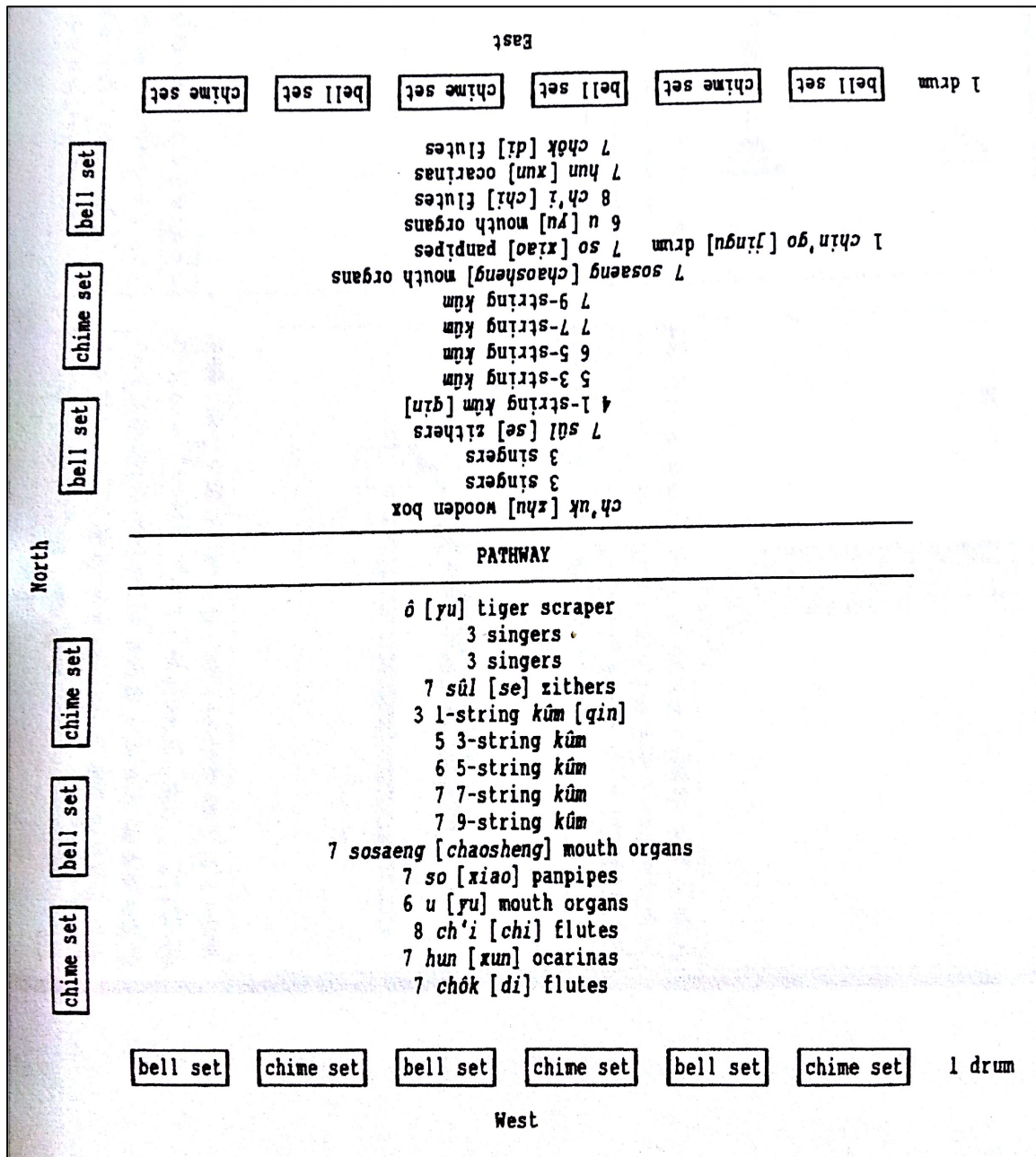


fig. 12b Layout of Goryeo courtyard orchestra in twelfth century (Robert C. Provine, "The Korean Courtyard Ensemble for Ritual Music (AAK)," 96)

CHAPTER 8: The Buddhist canon

During the eleventh century the Song, the Goryeo, the Liao, and the Xi Xia all produced and made gifts of at least one set of the Buddhist canon. The vigor of Buddhism in each of these countries made possible the compilation of new canons. Equally important was the generous patronage of the courts of these states. In this chapter, I examine the context of the creation and circulation of the Buddhist canon in view of the political and cultural policies of the Song, the Goryeo, and the Xi Xia courts. What kind of political and cultural meanings did Buddhist canon convey when presented as a diplomatic gift?

The Buddhist canon as a Diplomatic Gift

According to *Fozu tongji* 佛祖統紀 (*The Complete Record of the Buddhas and Patriarchs*), Song Taizu asked to carve printing blocks for the Buddhist canon in the fourth year of Kaibao 開寶 era (971).²⁹⁷ The text records, “It was decreed that the Eunuch of High Rank Zhang Congxin 張從信 should proceed to Yizhou 益州 to carve printing blocks for the Buddhist canon.”²⁹⁸ These first printing blocks were completed in 983 during the reign of Song Taizong and were transported to the Song capital and housed in the newly built the Sutra Printing Bureau 印經院, next to the Bureau of Translations of Buddhist Sutra 譯經院 (The

²⁹⁷ *Fozu tongji* is a text authored by the Southern Song monk Zhipan 志磐 (1220-1275) that chronicles events within or affecting the sangha.

²⁹⁸ Yizhou used to be a place in the Later Shu 後蜀 which was conquered by the Song in 965. The royal court of Later Shu was an eager patron of Buddhist clergy and texts, so the Buddhist materials such as an unprinted canon of the Later Shu is thought to have provided the base for the first Song printed canon. (Li Jining 李际宁, *Fojing banben* 佛经版本 [Nanjing: Jiangsu guji chubanshe, 2002], 62)

Bureau of Printing Sutras and the Bureau of Translations of Buddhist Sutra were collectively titled the Bureau for Propagation of the Dharma (傳法院) and were located in Taopingxingguo Temple 太平興國寺.²⁹⁹ The Bureau of Printing Sutras printed these new texts onto paper and the copies of the printed Buddhist canon, commonly known as the Kaibao Tripitaka 開寶藏, were granted to major temples within the Song by imperial order.³⁰⁰ This was the first printed Buddhist canon that neighboring states requested.

Which states came to request Buddhist canon from the Song, and how soon did they know about the production of this Buddhist canon? The news of the production of the Kaibao canon seems to have spread to neighboring states very quickly, and the Japanese monk Chōnen was the first one who requested and was granted this printed set in 984, a year after its completion. Then the Goryeo requested and received this set officially through an envoy mission in 991.³⁰¹ Buddhism was flourishing in these two states and had close connections to their courts. So, their courts immediately asked for the new copy of the Buddhist canon as soon as they were informed of its completion. Traveling monks of these two states were popular from the Tang period, so the active exchanges between Buddhist communities in China and these two states enabled the news of the Kaibao canon to spread very quickly.

Note that it was the courts of the Goryeo and Heian, not Korean or Japanese Buddhist communities that requested the Buddhist canon from the Song court. Of course, Buddhist monks played an important role in mediating between these courts and oftentimes worked as official envoys themselves. According to the *Songshi*, Goryeo king Seongjong 成宗 sent a

²⁹⁹ The establishment of the Bureau of Printing Sutras and the Academy of Translations of Buddhist Sutra is described in *CB* 23.523 and *SHY daoshi* 2.5.

³⁰⁰ Li Jining, *Fojing banben*, 58.

³⁰¹ Lewis R. Lancaster, *The Korean Buddhist Canon: A Descriptive Catalogue*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), x.

monk Yeoga to request the Tripitaka in 989, and this request seems to have been granted in 991 when Seongjong's official envoy Han Eongong 韓彦恭 visited the Song court.³⁰² He received a complete printing of the Song imperially compiled Buddhist canon, along with some writings and commentaries on Buddhism that Song Taizong had composed himself: *Yuzhi bicangzhuan* 御製秘藏傳 (*Imperially Composed Explanation of the Secret Treasure*), in particular.

In the cases of Chōnen and Yeoga, Song court presented newly completed Buddhist canon in response to requests from the Heian and Goryeo courts. The Heian and the Goryeo courts sent their monks as representatives of their king, rather than of Buddhist sects or communities, and the Kaibao canon was, therefore, officially presented to the Heian and Goryeo courts with a decree by Song Taizong. The Goryeo court received this special diplomatic gift in the fourth month of the year 991, and then sent another official envoy mission headed by Baek Sayu 白思柔 to the Song court to express its gratitude in the tenth month of the same year.³⁰³

Then how did the Goryeo pay for this special gift from the Song? The Goryeo envoy, Baek, brought regional objects which could be understood as “return gifts,” worth the price of Kaibao canon. Even though it took the form of diplomatic gift exchange following that of the envoy missions, technically it represented the Goryeo court's purchase of the Kaibao canon from the Song court. The Buddhist canon, however, was not regarded as an object for profit. When a Goryeo envoy mission in 1018 sought to have a newly updated Buddhist canon, the

³⁰² There are still no specific records about the monk Yeoga's 989 request in Goryeo sources. The fact that the Goryeo envoy Han Eongong received a complete set of printed Buddhist canon in 991 is confirmed only in the *Goryeosa*. However, several Song sources mention Yeoga's request on behalf of King Seongjong, so it is natural to think that King Seongjong sent the monk Yeoga to ask for the printed Buddhist canon, and the official envoy of the King Seongjong in the following year actually received the completed work on the way to the Song court. (SS 487.14040; *Goryeosa* 3.23a-b)

³⁰³ SS 487. 14040-1.

Song court allowed the remission of the “price” of the Buddhist canon. In this particular situation the Goryeo envoy’s boat had been struck by a typhoon and lost many of the tributary objects that they were supposed to offer to the Song court. When the Goryeo envoy Choe Wonshin 崔元信 requested the new Buddhist canon at an imperial audience and offered various diplomatic gifts and 2,000 bolts of middle-rank linen, Song Zhenzong just accepted the diplomatic gifts and returned the 2,000 bolts of linen, intended as payment for the Buddhist canon.³⁰⁴

In the same way, but a little bit later, the Tanguts also sought to obtain Buddhist scriptures from the Song. Among the six requests for the Song Tripitaka recorded in historical texts, the first one was made by the Xi Xia king, Li Deming 李德名, in 1031. He sent an envoy with seventy gift horses and a petition to request one set of canonical texts.³⁰⁵ Compared to the Heian and Goryeo courts’ requests, which were made right after the completion of the Kaibao canon, Xi Xia’s request came relatively late, such that we can assume this request was born out of a particular need. The year of 1031 was the last year of Li Deming’s reign and by this time Li had already annexed several political entities which had strong Buddhist tradition – Ganzhou in 1028, Liangzhou in 1031 - into the Xi Xia kingdom. This political change might have prompted the Xi Xia ruler to see promoting Buddhism as a practical way to amalgamate these new people into his kingdom.³⁰⁶ Unlike the Goryeo, whose Buddhist institutions had been established for a long time, the Xi Xia promoted Buddhist ideas and symbols for the sake of rulership, and the Buddhist canon was the first material object that the Xi Xia sought to obtain from the Song.

³⁰⁴ SS 487.14044.

³⁰⁵ CB 109. 2549.

³⁰⁶ Ruth W. Dunnell, *The Great State of White and High: Buddhism and State Formation in Eleventh-Century Xia*, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1996), 36-7.

Li Deming's request was not immediately fulfilled, so the next ruler who proclaimed himself emperor, Li Yuanhao, renewed the request in 1035. It is unclear if the Song emperor promptly granted this request and presented a full set of the printed Buddhist canon because the official Xi Xia envoy for expressing gratitude for the Buddhist sutras was not sent by Li Yuanhao until 1045. As there was a war between the Song and the Xi Xia from 1039 to 1044, it is understandable that the Xi Xia court did not dispatch envoy missions to the Song court until 1045. As soon as the two courts reopened official diplomatic contacts, Li Yuanhao sent a monk, Jiwaiji Fazheng 吉外吉法正, to thank the Song court for its gift, the Buddhist canon, a sign of the political importance of the Buddhist canon as a project sponsored by the court.³⁰⁷

After the first attempt to acquire the newly compiled Buddhist canon, the Xi Xia asked for updated versions several times. Interesting sources revealing these requests are available in the *Song dazhaoling ji*: three state letters by Song emperors granting the Xi Xia court's requests for the Buddhist canon. One dated 1058 informed the Xi Xia court that its request for a copy of the Buddhist canon would be fulfilled at the next New Year celebration.³⁰⁸ The Tangut court sought this copy of the canon, the edict reveals, on behalf of a newly built monastery. A previous Xi Xia request of the Buddhist canon made in 1055, presumably by Xi Xia empress dowager Maocang, was related to the Chengtian monastery, which the empress dowager sponsored. As a powerful figure at the Xi Xia court at that time, she tried to intensify the connection with the Buddhist community and thus showed her support to the Chengtian monastery by endowing it with the Song Buddhist canon from. Demand for access to the Buddhist canon intensified, as Buddhist institutions expanded within Xi Xia, and thus the Xi

³⁰⁷ CB 156.3779.

³⁰⁸ SDZLJ 234. 911. In this letter, the year for presentation of this Buddhist canon was marked as *Jiayou* 7. Dunnell commented about this year misdated of *Jiayou* 4. (Dunnell, *The Great State of White and High*, note 31, 200)

Xia court sought to obtain copies of Buddhist canon several times from the Song court, which was still their sole source of such texts.³⁰⁹

Two more Song emperor's edicts to the Xi Xia courts granting the request of a Buddhist canon show some interesting context of how the Buddhist canon was handled as a diplomatic gift. One is a response to the Xi Xia emperor Yizong in 1062 (a) and the other is to the Xi Xia court, under the empress dowager Liang, in 1072 (b).

- a) An edict to the Xi Xia ruler: [It] has been reported that you requested a set of the Buddhist canon, along with markers, and wrappers, and asked me to issue an special edict to print Buddhist script and confer it on you when the printing is complete. I have heard that you already paid seventy head of horses as a price for the paper, ink stone, and the labor following precedent. ····· [I] already ordered the Bureau of Printing Sutras to print it and will present it when your envoy arrives at [the Song court] for the celebration of the New Year of 1063³¹⁰
- b) An edict to the Xia ruler: [I] have perused your memorandum requesting to receive at exchange value one set of the Buddhist canon, along with marked wrappers, wrapping clothes, and comprising both the new and old translated sacred texts. [You hoped] that I would be compassionate and specially issue a decree ordering the responsible officials to verify that no listed volumes have been omitted. As for the price for the paper, ink stone, and labor for printing it, you already offered seventy horses according to the precedent. In order to present it to you early in the coming

³⁰⁹ Dunnell, *The Great State of White and High*, 58

³¹⁰ *SDZLJ* 234. 912.

year, [I] already ordered [this printing] to be done. …… As for the Buddhist sutras you requested, [I] already sent the order to the Bureau of Printing Sutras. [When] the Buddhist sutras and Buddhist objects are ready to present, [I] will command the Baoan jun 保安軍 to inform Youzhou 宥州 and order the porters to transfer it to the border. The seventy horses also need not to be transported [to Kaifeng].³¹¹

Both edicts reveal that the order to print the Buddhist canon for the Xi Xia was handed down to the Bureau of Printing Sutras directly from the Song emperor. As an important diplomatic gift, the Song emperor himself was actively engaged in this cultural diplomacy. When it was ready to be presented to the Xi Xia, it was either presented to the Xi Xia envoy at the New Year's celebration audience, or delivered to the border market in Baoan jun. This part reaffirms that the Buddhist canon was a project that the court was tightly associated with, so the whole process of requesting and offering this set of religious scriptures passed through the rulers of both courts officially.

Why was the Buddhist canon delivered to the border in 1072, instead of being given to the Xi Xia envoys on their diplomatic missions as before? It reflects the changed situation of the court sponsorship of printing Buddhist canon. Based on the decree in 1071, the Bureau of Printing Sutras in the capital had already been dissolved, but the edict in 1072 to the Xi Xia (b) still referred to the Bureau of Printing Sutras as a place to fulfill the Xi Xia's request. A possible scenario suggested by Jesse Sloane is that the requests for texts from the Kaibao canon received after 1071 were handled by nominally private institution acting in the court's interests and under a degree of governmental oversight. The new center for the printing of Buddhist sutras was

³¹¹ *SDZLJ* 234. 917.

Xiansheng Monastery 顯聖寺 near the capital, where all the woodprint blocks of Kaibao canon were transferred. Therefore, when the Japanese monk Jōjin 成尋 requested permission to purchase newly translated texts in 1072, he was allowed to go to Xiansheng Monastery to purchase it, and Song officials who continued to handle the former functions of the Bureau even gave him a notice that their permission would not be needed for the clergy of Xiansheng Monastery to make any future such sales.³¹² The Xi Xia request for a copy of the Buddhist canon in 1072 was probably fulfilled by the co-operating administrators of Xiansheng monastery and the finished work was delivered to the border area directly, rather than transported to the Song court.

The price of the set of printed Buddhist canon for the Xi Xia was seventy head of horses. It was two thousand bolts of linen for the Goryeo. This included the cost for the paper, inkstone, and labor of printing. The price of the Buddhist canon was set from the first request by Li Deming, and it was kept as a standard price for the Buddhist canon. It seems that this price included the cost for markers, covers, and wrappings for the scriptures. All these material objects in addition to the printing technology, a cutting edge technology of the day, were transferred to the Xi Xia from the Song in the form of a diplomatic gift. It was this cultural achievement that the Xi Xia requested or purchased from the Song court. The Xi Xia continuously requested updated versions of Buddhist canon from the Song court, thus the “diplomatic gift” was the official route for this sort of cultural exchange.

Besides the Kaibao canon, several other editions of the Buddhist canon were produced during Song period. After the Song court discontinued its support of the Bureau of Printing Sutras on 3/17/1071, private donors began to sponsor the production of Buddhist canons.

³¹² Jesse D. Sloane, “Contending States and Religious Orders in North China and in East Asian Context, 906-1260,” PhD diss. (Princeton University, 2010), 192-3.

Dongchan temple 東禪寺, a monastery in Fuzhou 福州 Prefecture (in modern Fujian province), was the first to undertake a new edition of the Buddhist canon. The earliest surviving colophon commemorating the sponsorship and carving of a text for this Buddhist canon is dated to the year 1080. Another monastery in Fuzhou, Kaiyuan temple 開元寺, began to create their own Buddhist canon from the time when Dongchansi completed its Buddhist canon. Max Loehr pointed out that it was the result of the rivalry between the Dongchan temple and Kaiyuan temple which followed different Chan sects.³¹³ After the Song court retreated from its claim on Buddhist textual authority, local monasteries in connection with local elite patronage competed for this religious authority, such was the power of the Buddhist canon.

Buddhist canons from the private monasteries were circulated and exported domestically and internationally, but they were more commercial products than political object to which political authority of the Song court was attached. Such a change was even clearer for the Buddhist sutras produced in private workshops in the Southeastern region – the Qian family 錢家 and the Yan family 晏家 publishing houses in Hangzhou were the most famous such non-government publishers.³¹⁴ It seems that the Buddhist canon gradually lost its exceptional value as a diplomatic gift from then on.

Thus the Goryeo court's attitude toward the updated Buddhist canon when they received it in 1083 was totally different from the previous case. The Goryeo king himself did not participate in any ceremony on the text's arrival for this second imported Buddhist canon. Instead, the crown prince was delegated to welcome them and bring them directly to a

³¹³ Max Loehr, *Chinese Landscape Woodcuts: From an Imperial Commentary to the Tenth-Century Printed Edition of the Buddhist Canon* (The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1968), 23-5

³¹⁴ Li Jining, 74-6; Shih-shan Susan Huang, "Early Buddhist Illustrated Prints in Hangzhou," in *Knowledge and Text Production in an Age of Print: China, 900-1400*, edited by Lucille Chia and Hilde De Weerd (Brill, 2011), 147-8.

monastery in the capital, Gaeguksa 開國寺, without any particular court ritual.³¹⁵ The Song court's changed way of handling the Buddhist canon given to the Xi Xia in 1072, which was delivered to the border directly without engaging in any ritual at the Song court, also reflected the changed political status of the Buddhist canon, although it did not necessarily represent a change in its religious status.

Political and Cultural Context of the Buddhist Canon in the Song, Xi Xia, and Goryeo

Production of the Buddhist canon was an imperially-sponsored project, which in a way had little impact on the Buddhist community and lay Buddhist culture. Before I examine the context of presenting the Buddhist canon among states, I am going to review the political and religious context of the production of the first printed Buddhist canon of the Song Dynasty.

In the ninth month of the first year of the Kaibao era (968), an imperial edict [was issued] to the authorities of Chengdu to produce two sets of the Buddhist scriptures written in gold and silver characters under the supervision of the Executive of the Ministry of War, Liu Xigu. In the fourth year of Kaibao (971), [Song Taizu], having succeeded in pacifying the various states by his use of military might, had several Canons written in gold and silver characters. In the fifth year of Kaibao (972), an imperial edict [commanded that] the set of Buddhist sutras be cut in woodblocks and the entire Canon be printed. The blocks numbered 130,000.³¹⁶

The account above shows that there were several orders issued to produce “hand-written” Buddhist scriptures before the carving of the woodblocks for the Buddhist canon. Hand-copying

³¹⁵ Sem Vermeersch, *The Power of the Buddhas: The Politics of Buddhism During the Koryo Dynasty (918-1392)* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), 357-9.

³¹⁶ Loehr, *Chinese Landscape Woodcuts*, 13.

of Buddhist texts was regarded as one of the most important meritorious deeds and religious practices.³¹⁷ Written copies were even more luxuriously elaborated when the sponsors were royal family members who could mobilize the labor and funds. Often they used gold and silver pigments on blue or purple-dyed papers, which they believed add to their merits. That is to say, their piety would be valued more when the copies of Buddhist scripture were of high quality or in large quantity.³¹⁸ Carving wood blocks which enable mass production of Buddhist sutras, in this way, was regarded as an effective way to accumulate merit on a large scale.

The purpose for producing both the illuminated written Buddhist sutras and the printed ones in the above passage was related to the military achievement of Song Taizu: whether celebrating his triumph or praying for it. So, the order to make a sutra was given to the Executive of the Ministry of War and it had to subsidize the expense. Production of an illuminated written sutra was a costly task, moreover the project of carving the woodblocks for the whole set of a Buddhist canon was a lot more ambitious mission requiring both funds and time – it took almost 12 years for the Kaibao canon. Therefore, more complicated political considerations were necessary to bring it about.

The rulers of the states arising from the collapse of the Tang tried to demonstrate their fitness as a successor to the Tang in various way. The Song court, as one of them, continued to sponsor, import, and translate Buddhist scriptures, and the establishment of the Bureau of Sutra Translation, which continued a Tang practice, was the center of those projects.³¹⁹ Was the production of Buddhist canon a project in line with the succession of Tang Buddhist authority?

The early Song emperors embarked on a project of “establishing” the first printed

³¹⁷ John Kieschnick, *The Impact of Buddhism on Chinese Material Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 182.

³¹⁸ Willa Tanabe, *Paintings of the Lotus Sutra* (New York: Weatherhill, 1988), 52.

³¹⁹ Loehr, *Chinese Landscape Woodcuts*, 15.

Buddhist canon not only to claim its legitimate succession to the Tang but also to encourage more active involvement on part of the Buddhist community of the “new” Song. By taking on the creation, maintenance, and printing of a Buddhist canon, the Song emperors declared their roles as custodians of the Buddhist canon. The court’s publication of the Buddhist canon inevitably caused a contest for imperial recognition among disparate Buddhist schools seeking for their scriptures’ addition into the canon.³²⁰ Thus, Song emperors could exert authority over Buddhist communities.³²¹

The production of the first Buddhist canon was also understood to be one of Song Taizong’s bigger projects of textual compilation. Song Taizong sponsored the production of several encyclopedic compilations such as the *Taiping yulan* 太平御覽 (Imperial Survey Compiled in the Taiping Xingguo Era, compiled between 977-983), the *Taiping guangji* 太平廣記 (Extensive Records of the Taiping Xingguo Era, compiled between 977-983), and the *Wenyuan yinghua* 文苑英華 (*Finest Blossoms from the Garden of Refinement*, compiled between 982-987).³²² Johannes Kurz argued that Taizong had political purposes for these grand compilation projects. The first consisted of linking the Song with the Tang culturally by imitating Tang’s endeavors in the literary field and the second aim was the incorporation of southern scholarship into the imperial agencies that were charged with producing the various works.³²³ Song Taizong, when issuing a decree to compile a Buddhist canon, had a similar intention, only the field of interest was shifted to Buddhist communities. However, one point

³²⁰ Sloane, “Contending States and Religious Orders,” 97-9.

³²¹ Vermeersch, *The Power of the Buddhas*, 355

³²² *Taiping yulan*, *Taiping guangji*, *Wenyuan yinghu*, these three together with the *Cefu Yuanguai* 冊府元龜 (Primary Tablets from the Bureau of Records) which was compiled under Taizong’s successor Zhenzong (completed in 1013) are known as the “Four Great Books of the Song 宋四大書.”

³²³ Kurz, “The Politics of Collecting Knowledge,” 301-13.

differentiating the compilation of Buddhist canon from the grand compilation of “the Four Great Books of the Song” is that it was the production of printing blocks, rather than just a compiling a book in manuscript form.

Sem Vermeersch argues that the Song emperor had an idea of competing with the contemporary Wuyue state 吳越國 which had enjoyed a good reputation for its wealth and its active promotion of Buddhism.³²⁴ In order to propagate his legitimacy and to gain recognition, the king Qian Shu 錢俶 utilized the Asokan feats, which was already shared knowledge among the contemporary states of East Asia, by distributing 84,000 relic sutras across his territory and abroad.³²⁵ The Song had to legitimize its annexation of this “Buddhist” state, and needed to integrate Buddhist communities of Wuyue and those who were sympathetic to Wuyue into the Song. Carving woodblocks of the Buddhist canon could be regarded as a political project to appeal to these Buddhist communities. Jesse Sloane, in his dissertation, “Contending States and Religious Orders in North China and in East Asian Context, 906-1260,” regarded this unprecedented creation of a Buddhist canon capable of mass replication and distribution as the strongest instance of imperial activism on the part of the Song emperors.³²⁶ Even though Song Taizong’s edict on distributing the set of printed Buddhist canons from the newly completed woodblocks only referred to Song territory, he might have already assumed the future possibility of its distribution to neighboring states.

The completion of the woodblocks for the Buddhist canon was promptly made known to neighboring states and foreign courts whose regimes had close connections to Buddhist institutions. The Song emperor used it as a diplomatic gift to spread an idea of Song’s position

³²⁴ Vermeersch, *The Power of the Buddhas*, 355.

³²⁵ Sloane, “Contending States and Religious Orders,” 82.

³²⁶ Sloane, “Contending States and Religious Orders,” 109.

as a legitimate successor of religious authority from the Tang, which could be understood as an extension of Song Taizong's political aim for printing the Buddhist canon. At the same time the Buddhist canon provided a chance to introduce Song's recent religious accomplishment as well as its printing technology. It was not only the Buddhist canon but also the Confucian Classics that the Song court eagerly presented to the foreign courts through the envoy missions in the form of diplomatic gifts. De Weerd, who studied the circulation of books and knowledge of Song China, argues that the Song court promoted the circulation of the Confucian classical texts among both the literate elite in Song territory and foreign courts because it considered the classics of antiquity as the embodiment of legitimate politics, thus it wanted it to constitute a shared political language.³²⁷ To bestow newly compiled Buddhist canon to foreign states could be interpreted as a part of that political program.

In addition to the political plans of the Song court to present a set of the Buddhist canon as a diplomatic gift, there were the political contexts of neighboring states which wanted a Buddhist canon from the Song. The Heian court wanted to revitalize Japanese Buddhism by borrowing authority from the Song, which was crystallized in this newly completed Buddhist canon.³²⁸ The Goryeo court was granted a set of the Kaibao canon as a special diplomatic gift through an official envoy mission in 991. Considering the way in which this Kaibao canon was received, through official diplomatic process between the Song court and Goryeo, the expected role and the value of the Song Buddhist canon to the Goryeo seems to have been political as well as religious. The Kaibao canon, as a complete set of Buddhist sutras selected and endorsed by the Song court, possessed a special importance, among those who respected the authority of

³²⁷ Hilde de Weerd, "What Did Su Che See in the North? Publishing Regulations, State Security, and Political Culture in Song China," *T'oung Pao* 92 (2006): 471-2.

³²⁸ Wang Zhenping, "Chonen's Pilgrimage to China, 983-986," *Asia Major*, 3rd ser. 7.2 (1994): 83-4; Charlotte von Verschuer, *Across the Perilous Sea* (Cornell University Press, 2006), 61.

the Song court both in the political and religious realms. Importing this set of Buddhist sutras meant recognizing both the authority and the standard of Buddhist ideas supported by the Song court. Goryeo king Munjong, when this Kaibao canon arrived at Gaeseong (the Goryeo capital), rode out personally to the western suburbs in his royal carriage to welcome it.³²⁹ The ritual that the Goryeo court performed when it received the Kaibao canon and the order to royal command to study the sutras reveal Goryeo king's political gesture to utilize the political value attached to the Kaibao canon as a diplomatic gift.³³⁰

Moreover, it is also noticeable that most of the neighboring courts that imported the Kaibao canon launched a project of producing their own Buddhist canon, which suggests that the political meaning of these Buddhist canons was more complicated. The Goryeo king Hyeonjong 顯宗(r.1009-1031) was the first among them to sponsor the carving of blocks for a Buddhist canon. He issued an edict to carve a set of blocks in 1011 based on the Song Kaibao canon. The explicit reason for this carving was to pray for the protection of state against the Liao invasion in 1010.³³¹

Considering the domestic situation that the Goryeo king Hyeonjong faced, it seems that there was a more urgent need for him to demonstrate his legitimacy domestically. In 1009 the previous king, Mokjong 穆宗 (r.997-1009), had been murdered by the forces of the general Gang Cho 康兆. The assassination of the “legitimate” ruler of Goryeo allowed the Liao to take military action against the Goryeo court with the excuse of executing Gang Cho and then try to

³²⁹ Sloane, “Contending States and Religious Orders,” 208-10.

³³⁰ Vermeersch, *The Power of the Buddhas*, 357-9.

³³¹ The earliest articulation that explained the reason for carving the Buddhist canon as a supernatural protection of the state was from the writing of the late Goryeo Yi Gyubo 李奎報 (1168-1241) who compiled a second printed Buddhist canon during Mongol invasion. And this articulation was commonly adopted for the case of the first Buddhist canon by scholars. (Lewis Lancaster, “Buddhist Canon in the Koryŏ Canon in the Koryŏ period,” in *Buddhism in Koryŏ: A Royal Religion* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996], 174-5.)

intervene in Goryeo's succession process.³³² Therefore, King Hyeonjong, who ascended the throne under Liao pressure, sought a way to enhance his legitimacy as a new king. It is probable that he planned to demonstrate his and Goryeo court's capabilities as a holder of religious authority as powerful as that of the Song court by producing Goryeo's own Buddhist canon. Considering the political leverage of Buddhism both domestically and internationally at that time, especially in Goryeo where Buddhist institutions were very powerful and intertwined with those of the court, his attempt to carve woodblocks of a Goryeo Buddhist canon must have been viewed positively as he was performing one of a king's most important duties – preserving the Buddha's words.³³³

In the Xi Xia's case, the state letters of the Song emperors granting the Xi Xia's requests exposed formal reasons for its need for a Buddhist canon from the Song. The Xi Xia court asked for a copy of the Buddhist canon on behalf of a newly built monastery, which shows the strong connection between Buddhist authorities and the court as well as the expansion of Buddhist institutions in the Xi Xia. Looking at a more specific political situation, the first request for a Buddhist canon by Li Deming, the Xi Xia court seems to have solved the problem of consolidating multi-ethnic subjects with the help of Buddhist ideas. Buddhism was tightly related with the Xi Xia's kingship. Dunnell clearly articulated the role of the Buddhist canon in state building by stating, "Translating the Buddhist canon consecrated the new state, announced its patronage of and protection by the Dharma, enhanced its authority in the eyes of the Buddhist population within and without its borders, and served as a vehicle for importing up-to-date technology."³³⁴ Beginning with Li Yuanhao, Xi Xia rulers portrayed themselves as patrons

³³² Goryeosa 4.4b-7b.

³³³ Vermeersch, *The Power of the Buddhas*, 357-62.

³³⁴ Dunnell, *The Great State of White and High*, 38.

and defenders of the dharma and the continuing requests for newly translated scriptures from the Song prove their constant sponsorship of Buddhism.³³⁵

The Xi Xia court, like the Goryeo, sponsored the creation of its own Buddhist canon. What led to the carving of the printing blocks for the new Xi Xia Buddhist canon was the translation of the Buddhist canon received from the Song using the newly created Tangut script. The script was invented by order of Emperor Yuanhao and made its appearance in 1036.³³⁶ The Xi Xia emperor Yuanhao, after receiving a set of the Buddhist canon from the Song in 1035, built the *Gaotao* Temple 高台寺 to house this set and this temple played the role of being a center for the official Buddhist establishment. Then the Xi Xia ruler ordered a Uighur monk Bai Zhiguang 白智光, a State Preceptor, to lead the translation project there beginning as early as 1038. It is noteworthy that the Buddhist canon was to be translated into the newly created Tangut script right after its creation. Considering its timing, this translated version must have been rendered for a political aim. It was the symbol of the Tangut identity. Li Yuanhao, who had just declared himself emperor and was debating with the Song court on his standing, might have wanted to possess the Buddhist canon in Tangut as a symbol of his authority to proclaim a his status comparable to that of a Song emperor.

The Song Buddhist canon, which was imported as a form of diplomatic gift, delivered the religious and political prestige of the “Central State” to neighboring states. It functioned as a “material diplomat” which concluded mutual recognition between the giver and the receiver: it allowed the giver to recognize the Song as a legitimate successor of the Tang religious tradition,

³³⁵ For further details on the Xi Xia patronage of the Buddhism, consult Anne Saliceti-Collins’s MA thesis, “Xi Xia Buddhist Woodblock Prints Excavated in Khara Khoto: A Case Study of Transculturation in East Asia, Eleventh-Thirteenth Centuries,” chapter 4 ‘Imperial Patronage,’ 149-79.

³³⁶ The Tangut script was created during the Emperor Yuanhao’s period, but was probably started under Li Deming. 1036 was the exact year its completion was declared. (Dunnell, *The Great State of White and High*, 182)

and it provided the receiver with a chance to utilize the transferred authority for domestic purposes. Furthermore, the Goryeo, and the Xi Xia courts sponsored the creation of their own Buddhist canon soon after the import of the Song Kaibao canon. They were also concerned with the prestige of their courts abroad, but their ambition lay in consolidating their own power at home.

There have been cases of printing certain Buddhist sutra and distributing it to neighbor states even earlier than the Kaibao canon.³³⁷ But what made the Kaibao canon so special is the massive number of woodblocks produced for the completion of the Buddhist canon. It was different from a million copies of one short dharani sutra. Several cultural points about the production and the presenting of the Kaibao canon in Song period are worth exploring.

First of all, the production of these huge woodblocks undoubtedly proves the development of xylography technology in the Song. By the tenth century, Chang'an, Chengdu and Hangzhou had become centers of printing culture due to the commercial needs for producing books, consequently Song Taizu ordered the Yizhou (near Chengdu) printing workshop to carve woodblocks for the first Buddhist canon. Printing technology was not an exclusive property of the Song at that time. However, the Kaibao canon was the first trial of carving massive numbers of wood blocks. This huge production of up to 130,000 blocks inspired foreign states to understand the possibility of using xylography for bigger projects. The inception of the Kaibao canon actually triggered neighboring courts such as the Goryeo and the Xi Xia to start similar projects to create their own Buddhist canon. Buddhist canons worked as

³³⁷ Timothy Barrett provided a probable argument that Empress Wu fulfilled her vow to disseminate over eight million short sutras and these copies were block printed. There is a copy of the *Vimala Mirbhasa Sutra* discovered from Gyeongju, Korea dated 740-751, which was printed on thick mulberry paper and mounted on a piece of bamboo. Another famous example was a large number of printed Buddhist scripture sponsored by Qian Shu, the king of Wuyue. In all these cases, the printed sutras were a short dharani sutra. (Timothy Barrett, "Stupa, Sutra and Sarira in China, c.656-706 CE," *Buddhist Studies Review* 18, no.1 (2001): 55-8)

vehicles for the transfer of this advanced technology.

Other than the printing technology, several other materials accompanied this Buddhist canon to the neighbor states. As seen above, Song edicts to the Xi Xia reveal that the Xi Xia court requested the Buddhist canon along with accessory objects such as markers, covers, and wrappers. Markers were used to mark the volume number and the title of the Buddhist sutra. Forty-three carved wooden markers from the Goryeo period are housed in *Songgwang* temple in Korea. (see fig. 13) In this temple, there is one extant sutra wrapper from the Goryeo period. This sutra wrapper was made of bamboo strips woven with colorful threads forming flowery decoration. It was covered with silk and lined with paper. (see fig.14) Japanese wrapper from the Heian period shows similar style also made of bamboo strips bound with thread forming brocade. (see fig.15) It is probable that Song wrappers for the scrolls of the Kaibao canon were similar to these two surviving ones. The Xi Xia court politely requested a set of the Buddhist canon well organized with markers and wrappers, which seem to be formed as standard materials for a complete set of official Buddhist canon – marked with the order of the Thousand-Character Classic. The Kaibao canon was presented as a diplomatic gift from one court to another, thus the materials must have been carefully handled as well as the contents of it. Unfortunately no extant volume of the Kaibao canon remains, so it is hard to know what exact materials were used and in what format it was made. However, it is worth noting the great similarity between the sutra wrappers from the Goryeo and the Heian, where the Kaibao canon was presented.

Note also the format of the Buddhist scriptures. The Kaibao canon, when it was first carved and printed, seems to have been mounted as a set of handscrolls. The sutra wrappers from Korea and Japan allow us to guess the style of how those wrappers wrap and organize

sutra scrolls. Bundles of old manuscript rolls in original hemp-cloth wrappers from the temple library in cave 17 at Dunhuang demonstrate the way the wrappers for scrolls were used. (see fig.16) However, many extant prints out of Buddhist sutras of slightly later time – around early eleventh century – were in folded book style. A printed copy of *Yuzhi bicangzhuan* 御製秘藏傳 (*Imperially Composed Explanation of the Secret Treasure*) from the first set of the Goryeo Buddhist canon (approx. 1011) is also in a folded book style which is believed to follow the format of the Kaibao canon. (see fig.17)

It seems that the early prints from the wood blocks of the Kaibao canon were in handscroll format, but there is a high possibility that later prints from the updated version of Song Buddhist canon were in folded book format, which proved to be more practical and handy than the long, rolled handscrolls. To make a folded book, each sheet of paper would be folded into an accordion-pleated handscroll. Song Shenzong's 1072 edict responding to the Xi Xia court's request for a Buddhist canon – quoted above - differed from other edicts from earlier years (1058 and 1062) in that it refers to the format of the Buddhist canon that was sent. Comparing the phrase referring to the set of Buddhist canon, “a set of Buddhist canon along with marker and wrapper (佛經大藏簽牌經帙等),” from earlier letters, the 1072 edict bears a phrase stating “a set of Buddhist canon, along with marked cover (wrapper), wrapping cloths, and comprising the new and old translated sacred texts (釋典一大藏并簽帙複帕前後新舊翻譯經文).” What I read from this slight change is a change of the format of the sutra and wrapping style. If it was a marking tablet attached to the wrapper for the scroll sutra, then it was a sutra cover on which the title and the volume number marked for the sutra in booklet style. It would be something similar to the wooden sutra cover of the Song Lotus Sutra tentatively dated to the first half of the twelfth century. (see fig.18)

These materials – sutra marker, sutra wrapper, and the style of formatting sutra prints - around the Buddhist canon were regarded as the norm of the materiality of the Buddhist canon, and foreign courts which were presented Song Buddhist canon adopted these stylistic standards when they created their own sets of Buddhist canons later. Thus, the Buddhist canon contributed to the circulation of a certain cultural practices among states in East Asia.

What about the contents of the Buddhist canon? Was there also a standardization noticed in the contents of Buddhist canon? Can we attribute any sort of religious authority to the Song Buddhist canon? I found interesting similarities in visual images in the Buddhist scriptures exchanged among states in East Asia. Several fragments of *Yuzhi bicangzhuan* (*Bicangzhuan* in hereafter) in the Fogg Art Museum are extremely rare remains of the copies of the Song Kaibao canon.³³⁸ And the equivalent copies from the first Goryeo Buddhist canon were extant in Nanzen temple in Japan and Seong-Am Archives in Korea. These pieces from Nanzen temple and Seong-am archives are almost identical, so they are believed to be from the same Goryeo canon blocks.³³⁹ All these extant prints of *Bicangzhuan* provide us with a good opportunity to compare the visual images from the Song Kaibao edition and those from the Goryeo first Buddhist canon, which was created after the introduction of the Kaibao canon to Goryeo.

This *Bicangzhuan* was presented to the Goryeo court along with the Kaibao canon in

³³⁸ Max Loehr, based on his observation of the cartouche at the end of the text, argues that the fragments of *Bicangzhuan* from Fogg Art Museum are from the set of Kaibao canon printed in the second year of Dagan reign (1108) from the blocks carved around the year of 984. (Loehr, *Chinese Landscape Woodcuts*, 18)

³³⁹ The prints of Nanzen temple and Seong-am archives are believed to be from the same woodblocks. However, there are also scholars who doubt this idea as there are still one or two small variations in detail such as the number of ducks depicted or the shape of wave. Yi Sungmi argued that there is a possibility of existence of more than two major Goryeo versions of Buddhist canon with those variations and suggested that at least there were more than one carving with the same original of first Goryeo version. (Sungmi Yi 李成美, “Goryeo chojo daejanggyeon <Eojebijanggyeong> panhwa 高麗初雕大藏經 <御製秘藏經>版畫,” *Gogo misul* 考古美術 no.169/170 [June, 1986]: 21) Despite this disagreement, it is true that those two prints which housed in Nanzen temple and Seong-am archives are impressions from the wood blocks of the first Goryeo Buddhist canon dated as coming from the eleven century some time earlier than 1086.

991. As *Bicangzhuan* bears a marking of the Thousand Character case number, it is a part of the set of the Kaibao canon. However, in the *Songshi* and *Goryeosa*, as it was written by the Song emperor, it was mentioned separately along with the Kaibao canon in the list of books that the Song presented to the Goryeo court. It is hard to guess when the Goryeo version of *Bicangzhuan* was carved and printed. The Buddhist canon received from the Song court was regarded as a symbol of religious authority. When the Goryeo court implemented a project to carve the first Goryeo canon, this “imperialy composed” text probably was carved during the early stages of the project with special care.

The frontispiece of *Bicangzhuan* uniquely depicts a grand landscape in which monks reside. Several figures are hidden in the various landscape settings such as mountains, streams, and simple buildings of the landscape setting. The main theme of this frontispiece is seeking the law from the hermit or secluded monk in nature. This theme and the formation of this picture plan in the Kaibao print and Goryeo print are almost identical except for some variations in details. For example, the places of the priest vary: In the Kaibao prints, meditating priests were seated in a hut, on a mat and on the chair, whereas the figures in the Goryeo canon they were in a straw hut, tiled-roof complex, and in a grotto.³⁴⁰ Max Loehr, after comparing these two versions, concluded that the Goryeo *Bicangzhuan* was just a faithful imitation of the original Song Kaibao canon.³⁴¹ Admitting the religious authority that the commentary composed by Song Taizong retained, the Goryeo court might have ordered its carvers to follow the visual images of the Song, regarding it as a standard. Even though it was arranged in a different chapter (*juan*) of the text, the frontispieces of Goryeo (fig.19a) and Song (fig.19b) and Goryeo (fig. 20a) and Song (fig. 20b) reveal great similarities.

³⁴⁰ For further detailed comparison, consult Max Loehr’s *Chinese Landscape Woodcuts*, 34-69.

³⁴¹ Loehr, *Chinese Landscape Woodcuts*, 57.

A Xi Xia frontispiece found in Khara Khoto³⁴² also displays interesting similarities with visual images of the Song and even the Goryeo Buddhist sutras. While the *Lotus Sutra* offers an almost infinite number of metaphors and parables to exemplify its teaching, the same few motifs recurred in locations at great distances from each other. For example, the frontispieces for Chapter Four of the *Lotus Sutra* from a Northern Song copy produced by the Qian workshop (see fig.21) and that of the Xi Xia print (see fig. 22) shared highly standardized motifs. On the upper left, the depiction of an individual lying on a bed refers to Chapter Eight of the sutra, “Receipt of Prophecy by Five Hundred Disciples.” The figure emerging out of the water alludes to the episode of the Manjusri coming back from the Dragon King’s kingdom located in the bottom of the ocean. And the pagoda is connected to Chapter Eleven titled, “Apparition of the Jeweled Stupa.” Anne Saliceti-Collins, in her dissertation, “Xi Xia Buddhist Woodblock Prints Excavated in Khara Khoto,” after examining these motifs, argued that the fact that the carvers from the Song and the Xi Xia used these same motifs, among hundreds of other parables to illustrate the *Lotus Sutra*, proves that their designs were based on similar pictorial prototypes that circulated among them.³⁴³

These same motifs are shared with the Goryeo manuscripts dated from the late Goryeo period. (see fig.23) Despite an important difference in material – this Goryeo manuscript is an illuminated painted sutra painted with gold pigment on a blue-dyed paper – the images chosen

³⁴² Khara Khoto is an oasis city discovered by Pyotry Kuzmich Kozlov and his Russian team in 1907-1909. It is located in the desert, 25 kilometers southeast of Dalain Kob, which is today the seat of the government of the Edzina Banner in the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region. The city formed a large rectangle surrounded by walls and inside the city walls were remains of building foundations. On site, Kozlov gathered fragments of earthen and porcelain vessels, scraps of cast-iron objects, silver, coins and paper money. He also found a few examples of Buddhist images and some manuscripts written in Persian and Xi Xia scripts. In 1909, Kozlov found a ten-meter high pagoda west of the city walls and this pagoda contained a large number of manuscript and books written in Chinese, Tibetan, and Tangut scripts, as well as some paintings, statues and miniature pagodas. These objects have revealed rich context of Xi Xia material culture. (Mikhail Piotrovsky ed., *Lost Empire of the Silk Road: Buddhist Art from Khara Khoto (X-XIIIth century)*, [Electa, 1993], 31-46.)

³⁴³ Saliceti-Collins, “Xi Xia Buddhist Woodblock Prints Excavated in Khara Khoto,” 60-61.

to illustrate each chapter are the same and they occupy a relatively similar place in the overall composition of the three frontispieces. The great similarity found among these scriptures of the Song, Xi Xia, and Goryeo suggests that there was an agreement to understand certain motifs as standard and those pictorial motifs traveled across borders during the eleventh century. This could have been aided by the development of printing, and the distribution of Song Buddhist sutras as diplomatic gifts. The Buddhist canon, imported as a form of diplomatic gift which retained the religious and political authority of the Song court, contributed to the standardization of Buddhist images in scriptures.

However, there are also unique characteristics of the Goryeo and the Xi Xia prints that added to the Song “standard.” As for the landscape background of the Goryeo *Bichangzhuan*, on the original setting of the Kaibao edition, it added more details such as mountains, clouds, and small plants and compact lines which filled the screen without leaving any blank space. Also it shows more pictorial components than the Kaibao version. The outline of the mountain and the edge of each clump of rocks are depicted as being smoothly related to each other. Trees in the Goryeo block are more detailed and varied in shape. The waves of the stream in the Kaibao edition are naively expressed with dense paralleled lines, while in the Goryeo version they are shown with some gradation in some part. Even though the distinctions between them are not huge, it seems true that Goryeo version added its own characteristics while maintaining the same motifs.

The Xi Xia Buddhist prints also show unique characteristics on top of the Song influence. As soon as the Song Buddhist canon was received, Xi Xia emperor Yuanhao constructed the Gaotao temple to house it, then assigned a Uighur monk to translate the sutras and commissioned the printing of Xi Xia scriptures. These new Xi Xia scriptures were in newly

invented Xi Xia scripts, and some in Tibetan scripts as well. Xi Xia's multi-ethnic and multilingual character was reflected to Xi Xia's Buddhist sutras which were fundamentally based on the Song Kaibao canon, however. Anne Saliceti found that Xi Xia emperors often commissioned the printing of one scripture in Chinese, Tangut and Tibetan and subsequently distributed them to the Xi Xia population. These multilingual Buddhist sutras discovered in Khara Khoto were the most noticeably Xi Xia in character.

In addition to the sutras in various languages, Anne Saliceti introduced a unique Xi Xia Buddhist image, a frontispiece of the *Sutra on the Meditation of Maitreya Being Reborn in the Tushita Heaven* 觀彌勒菩薩上生兜率大經, which revealed Chinese, Tibetan, and Central Asian styles within a single work.³⁴⁴ (see fig.24a) The first part of the print representing Sakyamuni's assembly displays elements typical of the Tibetan style. The Buddha is represented with an elongated nimbus, square shoulders and thin waist and his sensuous body is wrapped in a transparent drapery that shows his navel. The Bodhisattvas to the right and left of the Buddha are also rendered in Tibetan style. Their bodies form an S-shape typical of Indian, Nepalese and Tibetan representations and their bodies are only partly covered. The second part of the print depicting Maitreya's Tushita heaven shows a different style. (see fig.24b) The figures, namely the monks, musicians, bodhisattvas, and Buddhist guardians, are presented in a more Chinese style. They wear long flowing robes that cover their entire bodies. And the depiction of the architecture is also a Chinese feature, the *jiehua* 界畫 painting style. The mixture of styles found in this Xi Xia print represents its own modification of the Song

³⁴⁴ Saliceti-Collins, "Xi Xia Buddhist Woodblock Prints Excavated in Khara Khoto," 142-8. The *Sutra on the Meditation of Maitreya Being Reborn in the Tushita Heaven* was commissioned and printed by Xi Xia emperor Renzong who was known as an active promoter of Tantric and Mahayana Buddhism in Xi Xia court, for a large ceremony organized for his fifty-year anniversary of accession to the throne. This ceremony was led by Buddhist monks from various Buddhist schools, and aimed at a multi-ethnic audience.

prototype.

The Song Buddhist canon was transferred from the Song court to the Goryeo and Xi Xia courts with a certain level of cultural authority. When the foreign courts received it, they housed it in the temples which were newly constructed particularly for housing the Song Buddhist canon. The royal support for this Buddhist canon in foreign states contributed the spread of material culture regarding Buddhist canon, which was even more possible because Buddhist canon was imported in the form of a diplomatic gift.



fig.13 Goryeo volume marker housed in the museum of *Songgwang* temple

http://www.cha.go.kr/korea/heritage/search/Culresult_Db_View.jsp?mc=NS_04_03_01&VdkVgwKey=12,01750000,36

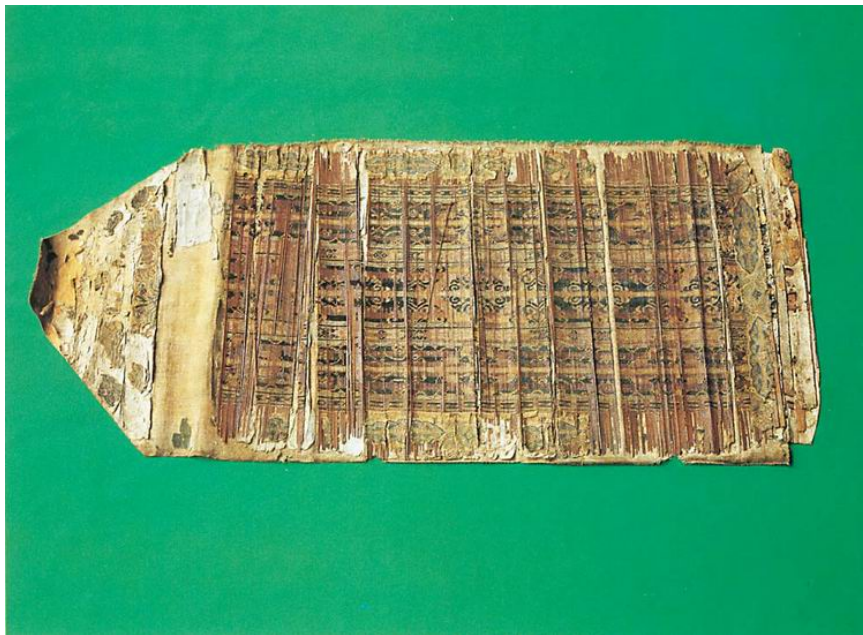


fig. 14 sutra wrapper housed in the museum in *Songgwang* temple

http://www.cha.go.kr/korea/heritage/search/Culresult_Db_View.jsp?mc=NS_04_03_02&VdkVgwKey=12,01340000,36



fig.15 Sutra wrapper. Japan Heian period, c. 1149. Bamboo strips with silk brocade binding, remnants of mica brass ornaments. The Mary and Jackson Burke Collection, New York. (Pratapaditya Pal and Julia Meech., *Buddhist Book Illuminations*, 298)



fig.16 Bundles of old manuscript rolls from the walled-up temple library in cave 17 at Dunhuangm Gansu province. (From *Buddhist Book Illuminations*, fig.83, 227)

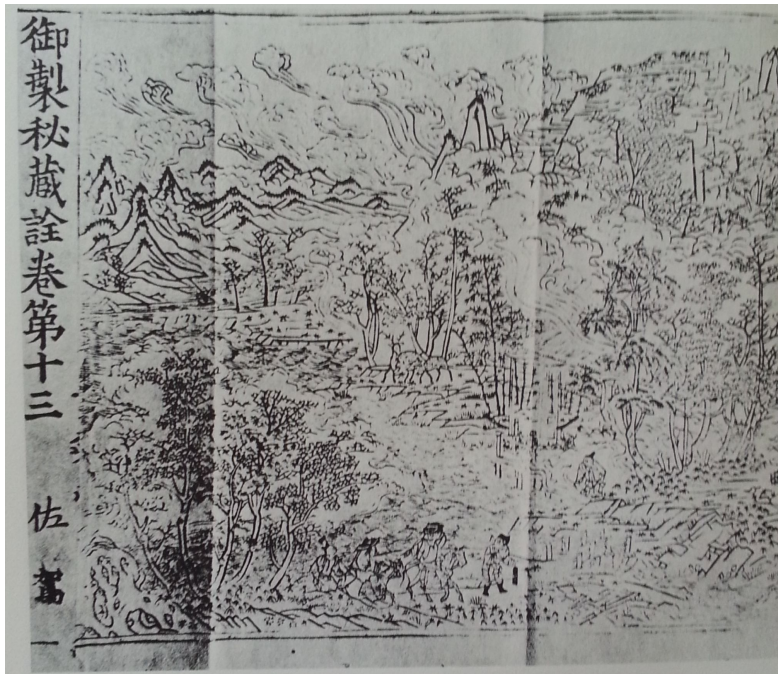


fig.17 a page from chapter Thirteen of *Yuzhi bicangzhuan* 御製秘藏詮. (*Imperially Composed Explanation of the Secret Treasure*) from the first set of Goryeo Buddhist canon (approx. 1011)



fig.18 Cover of a Lotus Sutra; Song dynasty, 1100-1150. (from *Buddhist Book Illuminations*, fig.95, 251)

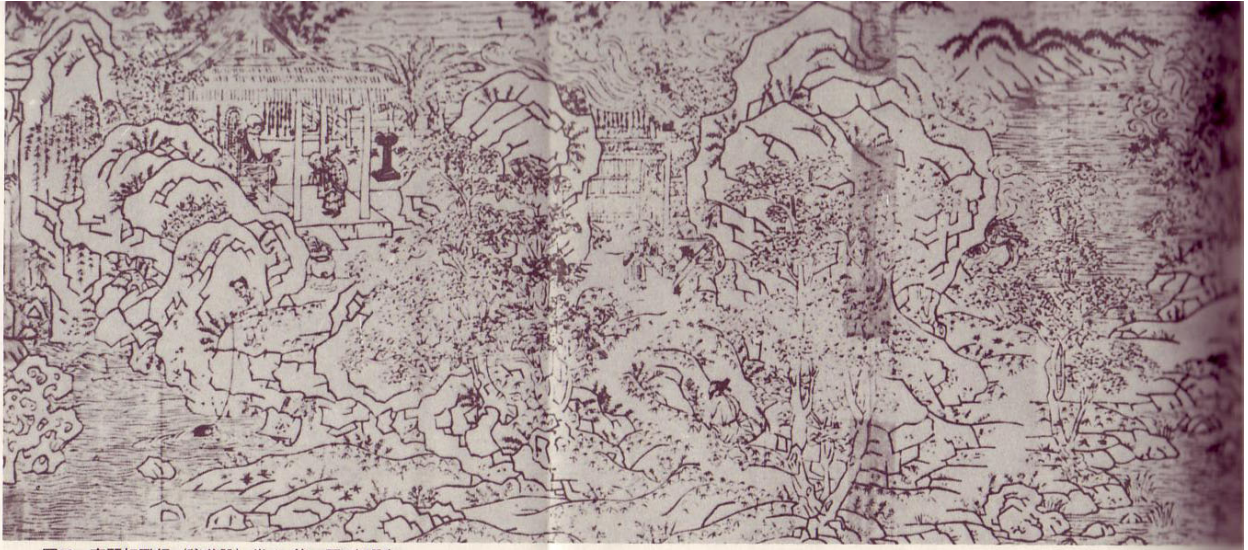


fig. 19a a page from sixth *juan* of *Yuzhi bicangzhuan* 御製秘藏詮. (*Imperially Composed Explanation of the Secret Treasure*) from the first set of Goryeo Buddhist canon (approx. 1011) housed in Nazenji 南禪寺, Kyoto, Japan



fig. 19b a page from chapter Thirteen of *Yuzhi bicangzhuan* 御製秘藏詮. (*Imperially Composed Explanation of the Secret Treasure*) from the first set of Northern Song Kaibao Buddhist canon housed in the Fogg Art Museum in Harvard University.

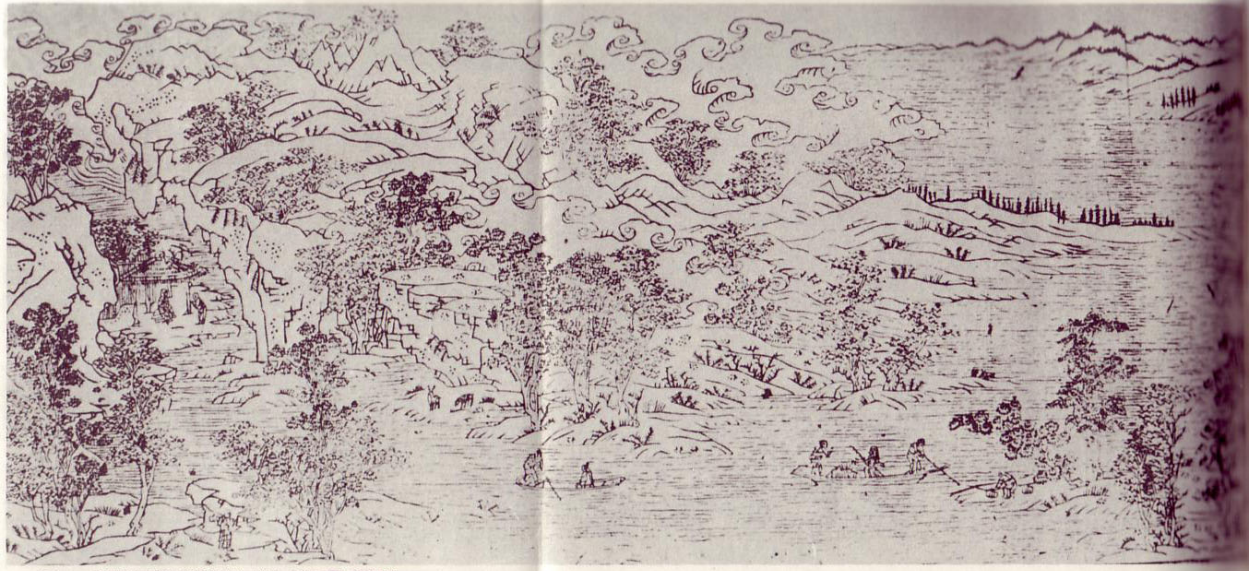


fig. 20a a page from chapter Seven of *Yuzhi bicangzhuan* 御製秘藏詮. (*Imperially Composed Explanation of the Secret Treasure*) from the first set of Goryeo Buddhist canon (approx. 1011) housed in Nazenji 南禪寺, Kyoto, Japan



fig. 20b a page from thirteenth *juan* of *Yuzhi bicangzhuan* 御製秘藏詮. (*Imperially Composed Explanation of the Secret Treasure*) from the first set of Northern Song Kaibao Buddhist canon housed in the Fogg Art Museum in Harvard University



fig. 21 the frontispieces for chapter Four of the *Lotus Sutra* from a Northern Song produced by the Qian workshop



fig. 22 the frontispieces for chapter Four of the *Lotus Sutra* from the Xi Xia print



fig.23 the frontispieces for chapter Four of the *Lotus Sutra* from the Goryeo



fig.24a Detail of the frontispiece for the *Sutra on the Mediation of Maitreya Being Reborn in the Tushia Heaven*, KharaKhoto, Inner Mongolia, Xia dynasty, 1189. Institute of Oriental Studies, Saint Petersburg (TK81) (Saliceti-Colins, "Xi Xia Buddhist Woodblock Prints Excavated in Khara Khoto," 272)

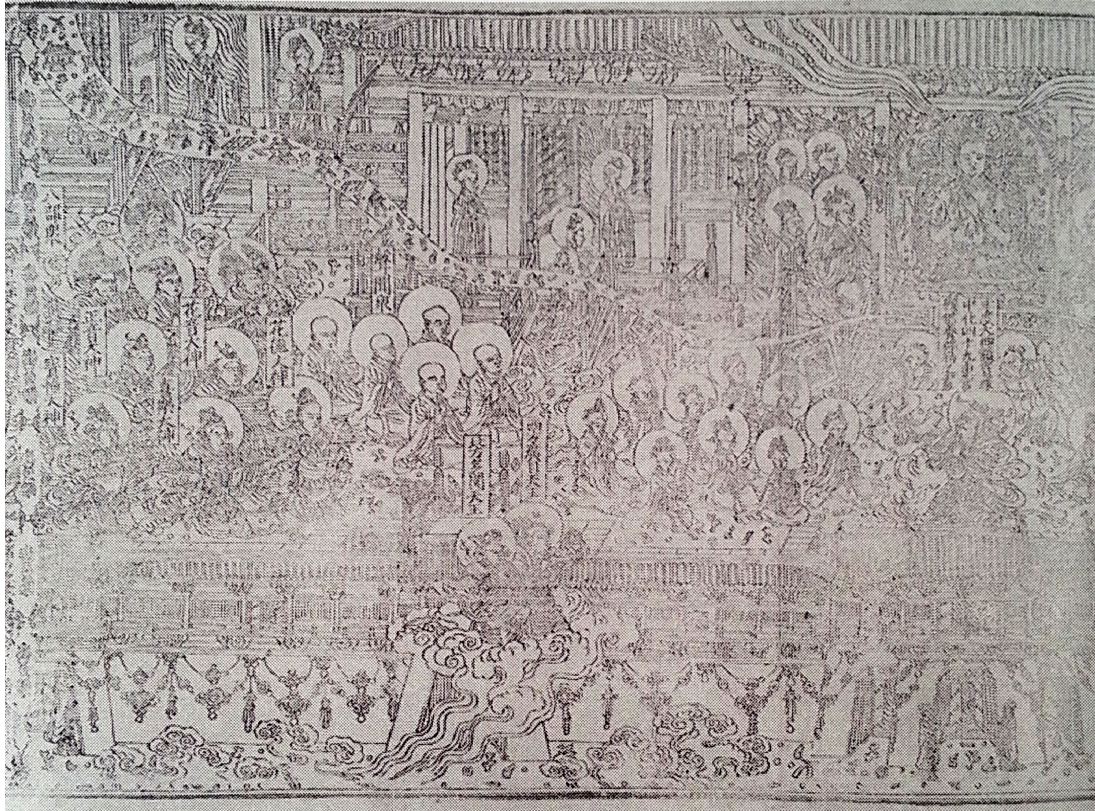


fig. 24b Detail of the frontispiece for the Sutra on the Mediation of Maitreya Being Reborn in the Tushita Heaven, KharaKhoto, Inner Mongolia, Xia dynasty, 1189. Woodblock print on paper. Institute of Oriental Studies, Saint Petersburg (TK81) (Saliceti-Colins, "Xi Xia Buddhist Woodblock Prints Excavated in Khara Khoto," 273)

CHAPTER 9: Conclusion

Performance of guest rituals, exchanges of state letters, and presentation of diplomatic gifts were routine aspects of interstate relations among states in East Asia during the eleventh century. This is not surprising as these procedures had become common during the cosmopolitan Tang period. The Khitans, before they had formed the Liao state, paid tribute to the Tang, and the Silla, a precursor of the Goryeo, also sent tributary missions to the Tang court. On top of that, the Tangut tribes, if not a major state, were still tribute-bearers to the Tang. Jonathan Skaff, in *Sui-Tang China and Its Turko-Mongol Neighbors*, shows that all these practices were part of Tang international relations. He also emphasizes that gifts exchanges of correspondence and paying obeisance to the monarch were a shared aspect of Confucian and Turko-Mongol court rituals.³⁴⁵ A robe, a belt, a saddled horse, various clothes were customary gift-sets exchanged among courts even before the Tang across Asia, including the Islamic and Byzantine courts.³⁴⁶ Therefore, among the Song, the Liao, the Xi Xia, and the Goryeo, gift-giving was taken for granted as a part of diplomatic protocol. The courts just had to decide what, to whom, and how much to send.

Song government agencies responsible for diplomatic relations were institutionalized and the tasks were distributed to specialized departments. The Bureau of Military Affairs was the main decision maker for the diplomatic issues, and various specialized agencies such as the Court of Diplomatic Reception, the Department of States Letters, and the Visitor's Bureau

³⁴⁵ Jonathan Karam Skaff, *Sui-Tang China and Its Turko-Mongol Neighbors: Culture, Power, and Connections, 580-800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 148-55.

³⁴⁶ Jonathan Bloom, "Fatimid Gifts," in *Gifts of the Sultan*, 96-8.

handled practical tasks efficiently. It seems that the frequency of international contacts contributed to the institutional development of Song diplomatic bureaus. As for diplomatic gifts, in addition to Song bureaus responsible for state finance such as the Ministry of Revenue and the State Finance Commissions, it is noteworthy that the Court of the Imperial Treasury was actively involved. This reveals that Song emperors were also attentive to the economic, political, and cultural importance of diplomatic gifts and tried to keep its management under their direct control.

Song and Liao rivalry required not only Song and Liao but also Goryeo and Xi Xia to make some adjustments and gradually all four courts had a certain level of flexibility in managing diplomatic gifts. Most of all, Song and Liao devised several ways to maintain mutual respect and coined a neutral name for their “tribute” to each other as “ritual gifts.” But between the Liao and the Song, great care was needed to manage their rivalry which also includes the provision of fixed gifts. The Goryeo, caught between the Liao and the Song, tried to prepare similar but appealing diplomatic gifts to both courts, and the Xi Xia utilized its strategic position as a strongman in the trade to Central Asia to receive commercial benefit under the name of Song “return gifts.” Through these dynamics, whether an item was named “ritual gift” or “tribute,” the common element of diplomatic gifts was self-interest through reciprocity.

It is not difficult to observe growing interest in the commodity items exchanged between states. By the eleventh century, all courts looked for ways to enhance their financial resources for the stability of their authority. Diplomatic gifts exchanged for “commodity” value were, therefore, noted in previous studies of tributary trade. As the Song prepared return gifts according to the assessment of the actual value of tribute from the foreign states, in their exchanges commercial value of the diplomatic gifts provided a relatively clear exchange value.

However, as shown in Chapter Five, diplomatic gifts included items which did not provided any direct material benefits. Diplomatic gifts of those kinds carried political and cultural value, which was also carefully managed by each court. The Song presented Khitan style robes to Liao envoys and the Goryeo offered horse-saddles made of different materials - the golden saddle to the Liao and the embroidered saddle to the Song - to the Liao and the Song courts. I argue that this careful management of the cultural side of diplomatic gifts was based on the cultural policies of the Song, Liao, Xi Xia, and Goryeo.

Diplomatic gifts, even though exchanged in a ritualized way, display multifaceted characteristics. Although the conventional understanding of the Song Liao transfers is that the Northern states had the advantage in economic terms, in the case of horses, the exchange was equally advantageous to the Song. The Song tried to set up a procurement system for a large number of horses from the Qingtang by constructing a political tie. The real purpose of the Song was to secure the acquisition of horses, rather than impose a “tributary framework” onto the Qingtang.

In contrast, musical instruments and the Buddhist canon were more important for the messages they conveyed about Song culture than their financial cost. I would like to bring out an account, which can serve as a sort of foil for my conclusion. It is a passage from Xu Jing’s (徐兢 1091-1153) report, *Gaoli tujing*, of his mission to the Goryeo in 1123. He recorded his impression of the Goryeo culture in comparison to that of the Song in this way:

Although the territory of Goguryeo (Goryeo) is an island in the sea, and it is bounded by whale-waves; and although it is not within the nine *fu* (服),³⁴⁷ nevertheless, they have accepted the true calendar, they have reverently embraced Confucianism, their musical

³⁴⁷ From the *Ritual of Zhou*, nine concentric regions centered on the royal domain, each 500 *li* beyond the other. *Fu* means subordination here.

scale has the same harmonies [with the Song], and their weights and measures are on the same principles [with the Song]……Now I can see [here in Goryeo] what men of old referred to as “identical writing in books and identical axle lengths in vehicles.”³⁴⁸

He praised the closeness of Goryeo culture to that of the Song, and titled his final chapter “Shared Culture 同文” It served as a conclusion of his report, and it seems that this statement was intended to gratify Song Huizong who was particularly active in pursuing cultural policies.

Diplomatic gifts exchanged between states did contribute to “Shared Culture” in East Asia, as the examples of Goryeo’s adoption of Song Dashengyue and Xi Xia and Goryeo’s import of Song Buddhist canon show so well. However, it is also true that those cultural objects, when situated in foreign courts, served domestic interests, and did not necessarily fulfill the Song’s original intent.

³⁴⁸ *Goryeo dogyeong: Jungguk sashin ui nun’e bichin Goryeo punggyeong*, 高麗圖經: 중국 사신 눈에 비친 고려 풍경, by Xu Jing 徐兢 (1091-1153), 464-6.

APPENDIX: A Case Study of the Champa Mission of 1155

The most detailed of the scattered records about foreign envoy mission trips concerns Champa's mission in 1155. It provides extensive treatment of diplomatic gifts. The annotations in the record of this envoy mission in *Song Classified Documents (Songhuiyao)* also reveal the process of assessing Champa diplomatic gifts.³⁴⁹

All of the steps involved in this exchange of diplomatic gifts are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1 1155 Champa's envoy mission schedule³⁵⁰

Date	Activities
8/21/1155	Supervisor of the Fujian Maritime Trade Supervisorate, Zheng Zhen 鄭震, reported [to the Department of State Affairs] the news of Champa's envoy mission, which was bringing a state letter and tribute
9/25	[The Department of State Affairs] sent [to the relevant offices] a list of [diplomatic gifts such as] clothes and silver for the Champa envoys as return gifts.
10/2	The Ministry of Rites and the Ministry of War received the order of the Department of State Affairs and started to prepare needed materials for the coming Champa mission. The Ministry of Rites decided [the quantity and the contents of] return gifts and [the level of] reception ceremonies, with the

³⁴⁹ This annotation is attached to the article of “on 28th day [of 11th month (1155)], the Ministry of Rites ordered that when they treated the Champa envoy missions, they had to follow the style of diplomatic protocols which Institute of Academicians had based and had used to receive the *Jiaozhi* 交趾 tribute mission.” The source of this lengthy annotation is *Zhongxing lishu* 中興禮書.

³⁵⁰ This chart is based on the description of the 1155 Champa mission recorded in *SHY fanyi* 4.76b-80b; Yuko Dohi, “Nansōki no senjō no chōkō - *chūkō taisho* ni miru chōkōhin to kaishi” 南宋期の占城の朝貢-『中興禮書』にみる朝貢品と回賜 (“Tribute of Champa in Souther Song: Tribute and the Return Gifts in *Zhongxing lishu*”), *Shisō* 史艸, 44. (2003.11): 10-15.

	reference to those of the Jiaozhi case. [The Guest Bureau under] the Ministry of Rites arranged the Champa mission's stay to the Postal Stations Cherishing the Distant Ones 懷遠驛
10/8	At the Postal Stations Cherishing the Distant Ones, they (the relevant officials and clerks) practiced the ceremonies [of reception, banquets, and departure] and prepared the daily necessities for the Champa mission.
10/14	[The Guest Bureau] perused the list of diplomatic gifts of the Champa mission.
10/28	[The Court of State Ceremonial] set 11/19 as a date of the imperial audience for this Champa envoys.
11/1	[The Song court] received a report [from the Supervisor of Postal Relay Stations of Chaozhou and Meizhou, Han Quan 韓全] giving the name, official position, and the number of envoy mission personnel (twenty people), and estimating that Champa mission would arrive at the capital from Jianzhou on 11/6.
11/3	[The Guest Bureau] set up a temporary office in the Postal Station Cherishing the Distant Ones to manage specific tasks for this Champa mission.
11/5	[The Guest Bureau] arranged twenty-four horses for twenty envoy personnel, two Song escorting officials, and two translators.
11/6	The Champa envoys and their entourage arrived at the capital, and [The Guest Bureau] arranged for Chen Weian 陳惟安 (a broker) to stay with them at the hostel.
11/9	[The Song court] set the date for Champa envoys' imperial audience as the 13th, and informed the Champa envoys.
11/11	The translator who would help Champa envoys at the imperial audience came to the hostel.
11/13	Imperial Audience
11/15	The Institute of Academicians 學士院 prepared a draft of the imperial edict
11/16	Banquet for the envoys at Postal Stations Cherishing the Distant Ones
11/21	The Court of Imperial Treasury 太府寺 prepared return gifts [for Champa mission] equivalent to the worth of the Champa tribute

11/22	[The Song court] presented extra silk and silver in addition to the return gifts
11/26	One day before the departure [Song officials] provided a banquet for the Champa envoys at their hostel with nine rounds of drinking and an imperial musical performance.
11/27	[The Song court] paid a salary to the Escort Commissioner. The Champa envoys left Kaifeng.

With this Champa mission as a concrete example, I examine each step of a foreign mission's trip to the capital: crossing the border, having the diplomatic gifts assessed, and traveling to Kaifeng. I also examine which personnel not in the main agencies were engaged in the process of envoy contacts and gift-exchange.

Crossing the Border

When a foreign envoy mission reached the border of Song territory, regional officials reported its arrival to the Bureau of Military Affairs. As for the 1155 Champa case, it took around a month to the news arrived at the Bureau of Military Affairs. Local officials were responsible for responding to inquiries on the condition of the foreign mission. They had to make a prompt report to the Bureau of Military Affairs and the Court of State Ceremonial on 1) the name, official position, and age of the envoy and the envoy deputy, 2) the number of people who accompanied the envoy mission and their assignment, and 3) the list of diplomatic gifts.³⁵¹

The Champa envoy mission reached the Song border by boat. As shown in the chart above, they entered the Song territory through the assigned Maritime Trade Supervisorate. The *Regulations for the Maritime Trade Supervisorate of the Yuanfeng Period* 元豐市博條

³⁵¹ Wu, *Songdai waijiao zhidu yanjiu*, 71, note 2.

stipulated that the envoy missions from the Goryeo and Japan must use the *Liangzhe* 兩浙 (Hangzhou) Supervisorate, and other states had to use either Quanzhou or Mingzhou. For reporting the arrival of the foreign missions to the Bureau of Military Affairs and answering questions about the condition of the foreign mission, officials in Supervisorates assumed responsibilities similar to those of the local officials at the overland border offices. For example, when the Champa envoy mission arrived at the coast by ship, the Supervisor of Postal Relay Stations of Chaozhou 潮州 and Meizhou 梅州, Han Quan 韓全 submitted a report:

On 10/20 those who are going to escort the Champa mission arrived at Jianzhou, and they will arrive at the capital on around 11/6. I was able to investigate the official position, name, designation, and so on of the envoy personnel including the envoy and the envoy deputy [of the Champa mission]. These are as follows: 1) last name of the envoy-“Buling 部領” is Sha 薩, and his first name is Dama 達麻, his designation “Buling 部領” is his official position. 2) the last name of envoy deputy- “Fang 滂” is Mo 摩, first name is Jiatio 加奪, and Fang 滂 is his official position. 3) the last name of the Administrative Assistant 判官 is Pu 蒲, first name is Dougang 都綱, and his official title is Dapan 大盤. 4) Eight people including Puweng 蒲翁, Tuanweng 團翁, Danweng 但翁, Jiayanweng 加豔翁, Miaoweng 邈翁, Liaoya 僚亞, Xinsha 辛沙, Henilei 喝尼累 are Office Managers. 5) Nine people including Wengru 翁儒, Wengji 翁雞, Wengliao 翁廖, Yichong 蟻蟲, Yana 亞哪, Budui 不隊, Baner 班兒, Maling 麻菱, Rihan 日罕 are all Guards who are handling diplomatic gifts.³⁵²

This kind of report from the border was crucial because it provided the basis for the Bureau of Military Affairs to establish rules such as the number of people in an envoy mission who can actually cross the border and enter the court in order to attend the imperial audience

³⁵² *SHY fanyi* 4. 78. 7752.

and the number of diplomatic gifts which the Song court will accept and carry to the court.³⁵³

Diplomatic gifts brought by the foreign envoy mission, when the Song court accepted them, were to be reciprocated with return gifts. Hence, these numbers from the border office directly determined the actual expenses that the Song court incurred for this diplomatic contact. The Bureau of Military Affairs carefully assessed both financial and political gains and losses, and gave permission for the entry of the foreign envoy mission and the diplomatic gifts.

When a tribute mission from a previously unknown foreign state arrived at the Song border for the first time, the border officials of the circuit such as the Military Commissioner 安撫使, the Military Administrator 鈐轄使, and the Fiscal Commissioner 轉運使 were responsible for reporting their investigation of this new state to the court.³⁵⁴ Major information that they had to determine was 1) where this state was located, 2) how big this state was, 3) what particular situation impelled this state to send an envoy mission to the Song, 4) which existing tributary state is comparable to this new state.³⁵⁵ According to this report delivered from the local government office, the Court of State Ceremonial decided the level of the ritual to use to greet this new state's mission. For example, when the first 閩婆國 Shepo guo (Java) envoy arrived at Mingzhou in 992, Zhang Su 張肅, the manager of the Office of Maritime Affairs at Dinghai District 定海縣, had to report his observation of this new state, Shepo Guo, in advance before he let this envoy mission pass the border. Zhang's judgment on this unfamiliar state's incoming envoy was "similar to the Bo Si (Persia) which had visited the Song before," and the

³⁵³ Wu, *Songdai waijiao zhidu yanjiu*, 73, note 4, 5.

³⁵⁴ Military Commissioner 安撫使 was in charge of all military activities, and often many other activities in a Circuit (lu); Military Administrator of a Circuit(lu) 鈐轄司 was an army on campaign, but not a combat commander, but an administrative aide to a commander; Fiscal Commissioner 轉運司 was one in each Circuit with general responsibility for tax assessments and collections and all other fiscal matters.

³⁵⁵ SS 119.2813.

evidence was “the similarity in the style of their clothes.” Only after the court issued permission for the Shepo Guo envoy mission to enter could the envoy and his retinue enter Song territory.³⁵⁶ The Song court had their own ranking system for foreign states, which decided the level of guest ceremony and the magnitude of diplomatic gifts in practice.

When the news that a foreign envoy mission had arrived at the Song border reached Song court, the Bureau of Military Affairs in the capital promptly arranged escort personnel and travel expenses³⁵⁷ and dispatched an Escort Commissioner 接伴使³⁵⁸ and Escort Vice Commissioners 接伴副使 to guide the foreign envoys to the capital and the court. It also ordered the Court of State Ceremonial to prepare the appropriate guest ritual and paraphernalia for this envoy mission.³⁵⁹ When the Liao envoy missions arrived at the Song border, the Department of State Letters in particular supervised most of the practical tasks. As soon as the Bureau of Military Affairs appointed an Escort Commissioner 接伴使, the Department of the State Letters arranged accommodations for the Liao envoy mission. It sent escort personnel and expense funds to the border while starting to prepare the daily necessities and materials for banquets for the envoys and their entourage at the capital.³⁶⁰ At the border, Khitan envoys were required to wait in Xiongzhou prefecture until an Escort Commissioner arrived to lead them across the border. The role of the Escort Commissioner was very important and politically sensitive; therefore, a powerful court official and a trusted official of the Inner Posts were

³⁵⁶ *SHY fanyi* 4.97.

³⁵⁷ Wu, *Songdai waijiao zhidu yanjiu*, 32.

³⁵⁸ Escort Commissioner an ad hoc assignment for officials regularly holding other appointments when they were charged to welcome and accompany foreign dignitaries during visits to China, often assisted by Escort Vice Commissioners

³⁵⁹ *SHY zhiguan* 6. 15.

³⁶⁰ Wu, *Songdai waijiao zhidu yanjiu*, 48; *SHY zhiguan* 36. 32-7.

assigned to the task.³⁶¹

The Handling of Diplomatic Gifts from the Border to the Court

After sending detailed information of both the mission personnel and materials, the border officials closely calculated the actual value of the material objects to be presented as “tribute.”

On 11/21 the Ministry of Revenue reported that the Court of Imperial Treasuries informed them that a Champa envoy and his entourage arrived at the court. We prepared the return gifts after we closely compared the actual material with the reference of the value of their tribute which had been reported on 10/2. Even though the Champa mission already arrived at their hostel [in Kaifeng], their tribute was still in Quanzhou and has not even been sent yet. Following the order of the sixth year of Xining 熙寧 (1073) which had requested an appraisal of the value of the tribute from foreign states by dispatching one of our officials to handle it, we sent someone to assess the actual value of Champa's tribute, and it amounted to around 107,000 strings of cash in all.³⁶²

On arrival at Quanzhou 泉州 in 8/21/1155, the Champa envoy and envoy deputy

³⁶¹ CB 60, 1342-3.

³⁶² SHY fanyi 4. 79-80.

二十一日，戶部言：「太府寺申：占城人使到闕，所有回賜錢物，准紹興二十五年十月二日指揮，候見得所進物色價直，剗刷參酌應副。其人使雖到行在，緣所進物色尚在泉州，並未起發，依熙寧六年指揮：『今後諸番進奉如有進貢物色，令本寺看估計價，下所屬回賜下：原作「不」，據《中興禮書》卷二二七改。』今將所進香貨名色下所屬看估，紐計得香貨等錢十萬七千餘貫。本寺剗刷回賜物帛數目，乞下所屬支給，關報客省回賜。今具下項：一、占城進奉到物：沉香九百五十六斤，附子沉香一百五十斤，箋香四千五百二十八斤，速香四千八百九十斤，象牙一百六十八株、三千五百二十六斤，澳香三百斤，犀角二十株，玳瑁六十斤，暫香一百二十斤，細割香一百八十斤，翠毛三百六十隻，香油一十埕，烏里香五萬五千二十斤。一、回答數目：錦三百五十匹，生川綾二百匹、生川壓羅四十匹，生樗蒲綾四十匹，生川剗絲一百匹，雜色綾一千匹，雜色羅一千匹，熟樗蒲綾五百匹，江南絹三千匹，銀一萬兩。」詔依。

traveled to the Song capital with an Escort Commissioner, but they did not bring all their diplomatic gifts with them. Instead, the Champa tribute was left at the Maritime Trade Supervisorate in Quanzhou to be assessed. The above quotation provides some idea about how diplomatic gifts were handled. At first the official in the Maritime Trade Supervisorate checked the list of diplomatic gifts and sent the list to the court, meanwhile the Court of Imperial Treasury 太府寺 dispatched an official to Quanzhou to closely appraise the value of Champa's tribute by checking the real material and matching it with the list. The Ministry of Revenue was mainly responsible for general financial issues, but the Court of Imperial Treasuries was actually in charge of dealing with foreign tribute and return gifts. It seems that Song Shenzong ordered the Court of Imperial Treasuries to take full charge of foreign tribute in connection with his administrative reform program in order to strengthen the resources in the imperial treasury.

The Court of the Imperial Treasury reported a full list of items of both Champa tribute and Song return gifts, which is summarized in the table below:

Table 2 Champa tribute in 1155 and the matching return gifts

Champa Tribute	Song Return Gifts
956 catties of Chenxiang (Ghuru-wood),	350 bolts of embroidered silk,
150 catties of aconite,	200 bolts of Sichuan damask silk,
4528 catties of Qianxiang,	40 bolts of Sichuan gauze silk,
4890 catties of Suxiang,	40 bolts of high-quality chupu gauze 生樗蒲綾,
168 elephant tusks (3526 catties),	100 bolts of high-quality Sichuan silk,
300 catties of Ouxiang,	1000 bolts of various damask silk,
20 rhinoceros horns,	1000 bolts of various gauze silk,
60 catties of tortoise shell,	500 bolts low quality chupu gauze 熟樗蒲綾,
120 catties of Zanxiang,	3000 bolts of Jiangnan thick silk,
180 catties of Xigexiang,	10,000 ouncea of silver.
360 kingfisher's feathers,	

10 oil lamps, 55020 catties of Wulixiang.	
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The Court assessed the value of all the Champa tribute as 107,000 strings of cash. How much did these calculations by the Court correspond to the actual value of these materials? The main items of Champa tribute were fragrances. Ghuru-wood (Chenxiang 沉香) was a very expensive fragrant wood and a specialty of Champa. Qianxiang, Suxiang, Zanxiang were all made of the same tree, but of differing quality and all these fragrances were again divided into three ranks based on their quality (high, middle, and low). The value of Champa tribute was carefully calculated with these ranks taken into consideration. Dohi Yuko 土肥祐子, in her article, “Tribute of Champa in Southern Song: Tribute and Return Gifts in [*Zhongxing Lishu* 中興禮書],” tried to calculate the actual price of these objects based on the price of general fragrance (香藥) recorded in the *Song huiyao*.³⁶³ The price of fragrance of the top quality during the Zhenzong reign was 4 strings of cash per catty, and it was a little bit lower during the Renzong reign, but became higher during the Southern Song period. One of the highest-priced fragrances such as frankincense 乳香 was even as expensive as 13 strings of cash per catty during the Southern Song. Dohi used the rate of 5 strings of cash per catty to calculate the value of Champa fragrances considering the various qualities of Champa tribute objects ranging from an expensive Ghuru-wood to the relatively cheap Zanxiang and Wulixiang. Altogether the fragrances came to 66,144 catties, so the value of the fragrances can be calculated as 330,720 strings of cash. Even though this number did not include elephant tusks (3,526 *jin*), rhinoceros horns, tortoise shell, and kingfisher’s feathers, it already is a lot higher than the value that the

³⁶³ Dohi, “Nansōki no senjō no chōkō - *chūkō taisho* ni miru chōkōhin to kaishi”: 10-15.

Court calculated, 107,000 strings of cash.

Dohi also estimated the value of Song return gifts: various silk and 10,000 ounces of silver. Silk items consisted of 340 bolts of Sichuan silk, 540 bolts of Liangjie silk, 3000 bolts of Jiangnan silk, and 2000 more bolts of silk from other regions. The price of silk and silver in the year of 1155 was calculated as 66,150 strings of cash with the rate of 5 string of cash per bolt, and 3.5 string of cash per ounce accordingly.³⁶⁴ She argued that the assessment by the Court of Imperial Treasuries was to the Song court's advantage. The Song gained material valued at more than 330,720 string of cash as tribute and then bestowed silk and silver of the value of 66,150 strings of cash in return. Even if we include the extra gifts that the Song court presented to the Champa envoys in addition to the regular return gifts into this calculation, we can infer that such "tributary trade" with Champa brought a profit to the Song court. Therefore Song emperors, especially Song Shenzong, encouraged the Southeast Asian states to participate in a tribute trade with the Song.

In this "trade" in the form of diplomatic gift-exchange, Song merchants in the Southeast played an important role as mediators. On this Champa mission in 1155, Chen Weian 陳惟安, who brokered the tribute mission of Champa to the Song, was a Fujian merchant. He accompanied this mission and shipped Champa diplomatic gifts with his own goods in his own boats. The relationship between the Champa envoy and Chen was so close that the Champa envoy, Sha Dama 薩達麻, asked for permission to let Chen stay with him at the Cherishing the Distant Ones Postal Station. Sha Dama explained the need of Chen as a trusty mediator and a translator. Sha told the Song Guest Bureau that he wanted to have Chen as their translator because he understood the Champa situation better through their long friendship even though

³⁶⁴ Dohi consulting the study of Quan Hangsheng, *Collected Papers on History of Chinese Economy*, she adopted (Dohi, "Nansōki no senjō no chōkō - *chūkō taisho* ni miru chōkōhin to kaishi," 16-8)

the Song Guest Bureau had already arranged for a different translator. The Guest Bureau also thought that it was a good idea to allow Chen to stay with Champa mission because Chen would teach Champa personnel appropriate etiquette for the imperial audience and banquets.³⁶⁵ Chen Weian's role in the relations between the Champa and the Song was largely hidden. Based on the records of arrangements for the Champa mission, Chen did not travel together with the mission, but he rejoined them at the hostel in capital. This may be because the Guest Bureau only covered expenses for the Champa envoys and their entourage. It arranged for 24 horses for 20 envoy personnel, Song escorting officials, and two translators. Chen and his group might have traveled separately without the support of the Song court. If so, what did he gain from this relationship? The Song court granted him the official title of Gentleman of Trust (Cheng Xin Lang 承信郎) after this 1155 Champa mission was concluded in order to give him credit for securing this diplomatic achievement.³⁶⁶ This official title was not meant as a real post, but as of prestige title, which allowed him to gain fame in his community.

Champa's diplomatic gifts were eventually delivered to the Song court. The Court of State Ceremonial sent out soldiers to protect and carry diplomatic gifts to the capital. The soldiers were assigned from the Metropolitan Infantry Command 步軍司.³⁶⁷ When the Champa envoy mission arrived at the Quanzhou border crossing in 1155, the Song court sent 30 soldiers from the Metropolitan Infantry Command. When they reached the next post, new soldiers were assigned to escort the Champa mission. Local posts in the path of the Champa mission were informed in advance, so that they could be ready to supply porters and soldiers to accompany

³⁶⁵ *SHY fanyi* 4. 79.

³⁶⁶ Dohi, "Nansōki no senjō no chōkō - *chūkō taisho* ni miru chōkōhin to kaishi," 7.

³⁶⁷ Metropolitan Infantry Command 步軍司, a Metropolitan Cavalry Command, and a Palace Command 殿前侍衛司 controlled military forces at the capital and were known collectively as the Three Capital Guards 三衛.

this mission once it arrived.³⁶⁸ The Court of State Ceremonial, in close contact with the Guest Bureau, took care of food and transportation supplies for the foreign envoy mission traveling to the capital.

For practical reasons, the Song court restricted the number of personnel and the quantity of diplomatic gifts coming into the capital. For example, on 1/19/1080, Emperor Shenzong ordered that missions from Khotan were not to exceed 50 men, and that the Song court would only accept regional objects, horses, and donkeys. Frankincense was to be rejected because of its uselessness. The Court of State Ceremonial tried to keep expenses under control by allowing only a certain number of foreigners to enter. As for the gifts, the price of frankincense was extremely high throughout the Song period. It must have been a burden on the Song court to receive too much frankincense as they had to return gifts of a similar value in return. When the king of Khotan presented a lion with other animals and regional objects later in 1085, the Song refused to receive a lion this time and paid Khotan 1,000,000 string of cash, presumably the return price for the other animals and goods not including the lion.³⁶⁹ In both cases of Khotan gifts, the main principle of managing diplomatic gifts was making a reasonable profit, so the step of selecting appropriate objects as acceptable tribute by calculating the value of foreign gifts was crucial. In this calculation, the cost of transportation was included, too.

The Song court was responsible for the transit of diplomatic gifts when these crossed the Song border and the Ministry of War took charge of this task. It dispatched its soldiers to protect and convey materials and extra laborers were purveyed by the locals. Another important group who contributed its networks and skills in transporting materials including horses was merchants. They were engaged in tributary trade in various ways, searching for their own profit

³⁶⁸ *SHY fanyi* 4.77.

³⁶⁹ Bielenstein, *Diplomacy and Trade*, 311.

inside of the system.

Bibliography

ABBREVIATIONS

CB Xu Zizhi tongjian changbian. 續資治通鑒長編, by Li Tao 李濤 (1115-1184). Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1985.

LS Liaoshi 遼史, edited by Tuo Tuo 脫脫 (1313-1355) et al. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1977.

SS Songshi 宋史, edited by Tuo Tuo 脫脫 (1313-1355) et al. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1977.

QDGZ Qidanguo zhi 契丹國志, by Ye Longli 葉隆禮 (*jinshi* 1247). Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1985.

SDZLJ Song dazhaoling ji 宋大詔令集, anon. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1962.

SHY Song huiyao jigao. 宋會要輯稿, edited by Xu Song 徐松 (1781-1848) et al. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1957.

SKQS Siku quanshu 四庫全書. Published by Shanghai, Guji chubanshe, 1987.

YH Yuhai 玉海, by Wang Yinglin 王應麟 (1223-1296). Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1987

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