

The background of the image is a dark, textured map of the world. The map is rendered in a light, brownish-tan color against a dark, almost black background. The texture of the map is rough and uneven, resembling aged parchment or a weathered surface. The title text is overlaid on the map, centered in the upper half of the image.

Emory Endeavors:
Transnational Encounters
in Asia

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Introduction
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I'm proud to introduce volume four of *Emory Endeavors in History*, with a special theme of transnational encounters in Asia. The articles here treat a wide range of topics, from early modern Korean musketeers to twentieth-century American journalists, but all of them touch on the ways that human beings have interacted across cultural boundaries, the fascinating dance of mutual suspicion and admiration that shaped and continues to shape world history. The authors agree that to understand our world today, we must be cognizant of our deep shared history of connection.

The volume opens with Ethan Carlson's article "Power, Presents, and Persuasion: Early English Diplomacy with Mughal India." In recent decades, historians have revised conceptions of European power in Asia, showing that the British, the French, the Dutch, etc., were less influential than had long been believed. Carlson, influenced by this historiography, asks how Europeans, who were relatively poor and weak compared to the Asian states they encountered, attempted to overcome their deficiencies and achieve their interests. Drawing on published accounts of British embassies to the powerful Mughal Empire, he describes three main strategies: power, presents, and theatrics. The last, he argues, turned out to be the most effective, although much depended on the ambassador himself.

Whereas Carlson focuses on diplomacy, Hyeokhweon Kang discusses war. His article "Big Heads and Buddhist Demons" makes a signal contribution to global military history. His starting point is the famous Military Revolution model made famous by historian Geoffrey Parker, who argues that Europe underwent a series of revolutionary developments in warfare in the 1500s and that these developments conferred a clear advantage on European forces vis-à-vis non-European forces. One of the most important of these developments was the invention and effective deployment of powerful muskets. Hyeok's article shows that, contrary to expectations, Korean armies also fielded powerful muskets and deployed them with tactics quite similar (although not identical) to Europeans. As a result, a Korean musketry force was able to help achieve decisive victories over Russian contingents in two important but little-studied battles in 1654 and 1658. By using Korean sources, he provides new perspectives on these battles, and his work suggests that our understanding of

global military history will be revolutionized by a deeper understanding of Asian military history.

While Koreans were shooting at Russians, European Jesuits were struggling to adapt to changing circumstances in China, and Hui Li's article examines the strategies they adopted and the challenges they faced. The challenges were many. China's traditional culture was deep and powerful, wielded by literati who were deeply inculcated in Confucian classics and understandably unimpressed by odd doctrines from the other side of the world. Yet the Jesuits arrived in China at a time of tumult, and Hui shows how the Jesuits took advantage of a favorable situation. "The fortuitous arrival of the Europeans at a time of political and social instability in China," she writes, "... led the Chinese scholar-officials to seek answers in other available religions." Jesuits did not succeed as much as they had hoped, failing to convert a Chinese emperor or even large numbers of gentry, but by adapting themselves to China's culture, they did have a significant impact by introducing western scientific, mathematical, and artistic culture to China. Yet Hui shows that this focus on Jesuit achievements might itself be an answer to the wrong question. The better question, she suggests, is what did the Chinese want from western culture? Her answer is straightforward and compelling: the Chinese wanted useful knowledge. In times of trouble Chinese felt they had much to learn. But as China settled into a Manchu Pax in the eighteenth century and its Manchu leaders sought to stabilize China via a reassertion of the traditional Confucian orthodoxy, interest in western knowledge waned.

It wasn't until the nineteenth century that Chinese literati once again became attentive to western knowledge on a significant scale, and Daniel Cone's intriguing essay examines the event that catalyzed this new interest: the Opium War. Cone's argument is straightforwardly revisionistic. Whereas most scholarship suggests that Britain won the war because of superior technology, Cone sees things differently. "I contend," he writes, that "it was the incompetency of Qing officials, not the superiority of European warfare, that caused the Qing Dynasty to capitulate." Qing armies had atrophied by the middle of the nineteenth century, after generations without significant foreign wars. Moreover, the Qing underestimated the power of the British, failing to make proper preparations. Cone makes a compelling case that with a better strategy the Qing could have won the war.

Just as Cone adopts a revisionistic perspective on Qing warfare, Ruchir Patel introduces us to a revisionistic interpretation of 19th-century China's foreign

relations, showing that the Qing Dynasty was much more adaptable and effective in mediating foreign threats and gathering diplomatic information than had long been believed. The Qing adapted rapidly to geopolitical changes, gathering information about western imperial powers, mimicking European indirect imperialism, especially in Korea, and, of course, creating the famous Zongli Yamen, or Foreign Affairs Office. Scholars have increasingly recognized the flexibility of the late Qing state, and Patel's article explores some of the exciting new discoveries that up-and-coming young scholars have made in their recent Ph.D. dissertations.

Of course, the Qing did end up falling, and one of the men who did his best to hasten its demise was the revolutionary nationalist leader Sun Yat Sen. Sophie Chia's intriguing article compares Sun to another transitional figure, the famous writer Liang Qiqiao. Why, she asks, did Sun's nationalism succeed in attracting so many adherents whereas Liang's ideologies retained only a niche market, as it were? On the surface, one might expect Liang to leave a more lasting legacy. He certainly seemed more favored from the outset, adorned with degrees and honors. Yet it was perhaps Sun's own feelings of exclusion from China's powerful and educated elite that led him to adopt a revolutionary ideology that was clear, biting, and popular. Whereas Liang sought nuance, thought in terms of evolution, believed that China's traditional culture and institutions should be brought gently and slowly into the modern world, Sun argued for immediate revolution. This message resonated, whereas Liang's work, although read and respected by China's educated classes, didn't have the broader impact of Sun's work. Jia's persuasive article gives us an entrée into the minds and lives of these two fascinating men.

Sun Yat Sen's revolution led to the establishment of the Republic of China, which, after a tumultuous beginning, eventually settled into a brief period of stability starting in the late 1920s. Sun's successor, Chiang Kai Shek, presided over a decade of remarkable growth and cultural change from his capital in Nanjing, yet Chiang's policies were not all successful or popular. His infamous New Life Movement is the subject of Jeffrey Shiau's article. The New Life Movement was meant to develop a new Chinese national consciousness in order to combat a host of perceived ills, including citizen's disaffection from the regime, licentiousness, official corruption, and extravagant opulence among the wealthy. The movement failed to take root, however, and Shiau asks why. His answer is that the New Life Movement, which was ostensibly a populist movement, was in actuality neither populist nor a movement. It was a series of top-down propaganda efforts, which failed because they didn't resonate among

the populace. It's a conclusion that in a way mirrors Sophie Jia's argument about Liang Qichao's lack of popular resonance.

While Chiang was trying to mold people's behavior, his rival for the soul of China – Mao Zedong – was bivouacked in dry and remote Shaanxi Province. In those days – the 1930s – Mao and his comrades seemed unlikely unifiers of China. They were diplomatically isolated, short of funds, arms, and resources. Rui Zhong's clever and persuasive article takes into account this context to examine how western journalists were received in the communist base. Her nuanced reading of sources from both sides – Chinese and western – show two different perceptions of the visits. The communists received the journalists almost as foreign envoys, an odd refraction of China's traditional tribute mission. The journalists, for their part, saw themselves as either fellow travelers, seeking to portray the communists favorably in the west, or as ethnographers, helping to explain China to western readers. It's a wonderful article, sensitive to the complexities of intercultural history.

Today's China is deeply engaged and integrated with the wider world, but so many of today's relationships have deep historical roots. The articles in this volume will provide insight to anyone wishing to understand China today.

Power, Presents, and Persuasion: Early English Diplomacy with Mughal India

ETHAN CARLSON

It was the first of September in 1617 in the Mughal Empire. The Mughal Empire, consisting roughly of modern day India, Bengal, Pakistan, and much of Afghanistan, was ruled by the Mughal Dynasty, a powerful Muslim dynasty that ruled India for centuries. The first of September in 1617 was the celebration of the birthday of the Mughal Emperor Jahangir. Sir Thomas Roe, English Ambassador to the Mughal Court at the time, was in attendance. He entered a beautiful garden filled with flowers and trees with a pond in the center, a part of the palace where the ceremony was being held. All around the garden were beams, scales, and massive chains of gold, as well as countless rubies, turquoise, and other valuable stones. Into this scene entered Jahangir, covered from head to toe in diamonds, rubies, pearls, and other precious things. Sir Thomas Roe could only stand and marvel.¹

After entering, Jahangir climbed onto one side of a giant set of scales. This was the ceremonial “weighing” of the Emperor. It occurred on every birthday and displayed the wealth of the Mughal Empire. On the other side of the scales various bags were heaped. First gold and jewels, then cloth of gold and silks, then spices, and so on in that fashion, until the bags had been changed a total of six times. As Jahangir, with garments, weighed roughly 250 lbs., the amount of wealth weighed at this time was immense. In fact, the amount of wealth displayed was so immense that even Roe doubted what he saw, and wondered if all the containers of the wares were truly filled with those items only and not augmented with rocks.²

This story serves to illustrate the complexity early European ambassadors faced in Asia. Like the Chinese Empire at the time, Mughal India saw itself as the supreme power in the world. And as this story revealed only a glimmer of the wealth and power at the command of the Mughal Emperor, it is not hard to see why. Furthermore, the Mughals did not take to the seas, and knew little, if anything, about peoples not in their realm or along their borders. Marguerite Eyer Wilbur, in *The East India Company and the British Empire in the Far*

¹ Sir Thomas Roe, *The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to the Court of the Great Mogul: 1615-1619*, Ed. William Foster, 2 vols. (London: Hakluyt Society, 1899), 411-412.

² *Ibid.*, 412.

East, notes that to Jahangir “India. . . was the entire universe.”³ Everything outside of it was inferior, and as such owed deference and submission to the Mughal Empire. The Empire was vast, the Court’s coffers filled with riches, and the army was massive. The English, the later colonial masters of what at this time was the Mughal Empire, would not even attempt to use outright force against the Mughal Dynasty until the end of the 17th Century, and would not succeed in doing so until the mid-18th Century. So how were early European ambassadors supposed to engage in diplomacy and advance the interests of their respective nations with an Empire that not only saw itself as the center of the world, but had never even heard of Europe, oceans away?

While the Portuguese were the first European power to establish itself at the Mughal Court, it was not long before they were challenged by the English. From the early 1600s on, England expanded its presence and influence in the Mughal Empire, quickly overshadowing its European rivals. Based on this success, this paper will examine the early English Ambassadors to the Mughal Court to see how the English were able to get concessions from an Empire that considered all others insignificant. This in turn will shed light on the early interactions between Europeans and the great Asian empires, as well as their views of and reactions to one another.

While this is not necessarily a new question, scholars have failed to balance the various strategies taken by the English at the Mughal Court, opting instead to promote one strategy over the others. Further, scholars have focused too much on the opinions given by ambassadors in the heat of the moment rather than on the wider context of the entirety of each embassy and its successes and failures. In fact, while one strategy, ironically the one least emphasized in scholarship on the topic, was the most critical in prevailing at the Mughal Court, it was a balance of the various strategies (three in total) that was necessary to establish the English presence. This can be seen by examining the various early English embassies to the Mughal Court holistically, especially that of the most successful English ambassador of the time, Sir Thomas Roe.

As noted above, there are three main strategies used by early English ambassadors to the Mughal Court: maritime power, bribes/presents, and diplomatic theatrics. The first of these strategies is argued most strongly by I. Bruce Watson in a number of articles. Watson subscribes to the idea, originally put forward by K.N. Chaudhuri, that force was a key factor in European-Asian

³ Marguerite Eyer Wilbur, *The East India Company and the British Empire in the Far East* (New York: Richard R. Smith, 1945), 72.

trade.⁴ He further proposes that it was the key factor used by early English ambassadors in diplomacy with Mughal India based on naval victories over the Portuguese near India as well as statements made by Roe himself regarding the effects of sea power.⁵ Adam Clulow also argues for this strategy and uses similar evidence.⁶ Nevertheless, both Watson and Clulow fail to see that naval power and naval victories only affected Mughal India on the provincial level at best and had no bearing on the Emperor, the only one with whom diplomacy really mattered. In fact, despite the demonstrations of naval power over the Portuguese, by the time Roe was at the Mughal Court, the English were, far from being granted trade, under threat of expulsion.⁷

Bribes are a bit trickier in terms of diplomacy. As Ian Woodfield points out, “The giving of gifts or ‘bribes’ in return for official favours was an immutable fact...[in the] East,”⁸ and the importance of gifts or bribes in early diplomacy with Mughal India has been assumed by many authors, though it has been explicitly argued by few. Ambassadors realized that Jahangir had a love of presents (the English seemed to be fixated on this point),⁹ but when looking at the embassies holistically, the nature of gifts in diplomatic exchanges between the English and the Mughal Court is not as clear cut as it seems.¹⁰ While all embassies saw presents as significant, when looking at the successes of the various English embassies comparatively it seems that presents actually had little to do with concluding successful negotiations.

The last main strategy is diplomatic theatrics. This strategy is often ignored, though it is implicit in most admirers/biographers of Sir Thomas Roe and argued explicitly by Richmond Barbour. Barbour claims that maritime

4I. Bruce Watson, “Fortifications and the ‘Idea’ of Force in Early English East India Company Relations with India,” *Past & Present*, no 88 (1980), 70.

5 *Ibid.*, 74-75, 76.

6 Adam Clulow, “European Maritime Violence and Territorial States in Early Modern Asia, 1600-1650,” *Itinerario* 33, no 3 (2009), 72-75.

7 Michael Brown, *Itinerant Ambassador: The Life of Sir Thomas Roe*, (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1970), 57.

8 Ian Woodfield, “The Keyboard Recital in Oriental Diplomacy, 1520-1620,” *Journal of the Royal Music Association* 115, no 1 (1990), 33.

9 See, for example, Ania Loomba, “Of Gifts, Ambassadors, and Copy-cats: Diplomacy, Exchange, and Difference in Early Modern India,” in Brinda Charry and Gitanjali Shahani, eds., *Emissaries in Early Modern Literature and Culture: Mediation, Transmission, Traffic, 1550-1700* (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2009), 43-45; Wilbur, *The East India Company*, 69-70; Woodfield, “The Keyboard,” 50.

10 Ania Loomba, “Of Gifts, Ambassadors, and Copy-cats,” 73-4.

power was useless to impress the Court, which resided far from the coast.¹¹ Further, Barbour notes the English obsession with giving gifts at court, but argues that gifts to such powerful and wealthy leaders in Asia amounted to little.¹² Instead, Barbour criticizes the first few ambassadors to the Mughal Court and contrasts them with Roe, who was the only ambassador with “noble demeanor.”¹³

The Mughal Dynasty in India, with which the ambassadors dealt, was founded in the year 1526 A.D., after Babur, the founder of the dynasty, conquered Delhi.¹⁴ The Empire was then expanded and firmly “consummated” by his descendent Akbar, the father of Jahangir.¹⁵ Jahangir, though not favored by his father, was the only son of Akbar to survive. He faced a rebellion by one of his own sons shortly after ascending, though this was put down without too much difficulty.¹⁶ Jahangir launched other military campaigns in his career, though these were most often led by his sons rather than by himself personally. It is difficult to ascertain Jahangir’s true nature, however, especially in regards to diplomacy. At times he clearly showed signs of greed and pomp, epitomized in the “weighing” of the Emperor ceremony described above,¹⁷ while at others times he seemed indifferent to these things but enlightened about true honor and dignity, such as when he contrasts Roe with previous ambassadors and pledges to greatly honor Roe for his upstanding character.¹⁸ Nevertheless, it was with Jahangir that the early English ambassadors had to learn to deal with if they wanted to achieve their aims.

While the Mughal Court frequently sent and received embassies, it had no specified officers, let alone whole departments (*diwan*), to deal with foreign affairs.¹⁹ Jahangir did appoint an officer in 1616 to deal with “external affairs,” but this officer made no real decisions, all power in regards to diplomacy still being held by Jahangir himself. This frequently caused problems, as Jahangir,

11 Richmond Barbour, “Power and Distant Display: Early English ‘Ambassadors’ in Moghul India,” *Huntington Library Quarterly* 61, no. 3/4 (1998), 345.

12 *Ibid.*, 362.

13 *Ibid.*, 361.

14 Pringle Kennedy, *History of the Great Moghuls* (New Delhi: Anmol Publications PVT LTD, 1987), 158.

15 Wilbur, *The East India Company*, 54; Kennedy, *History of the Great Moghuls*, 230-232.

16 Kennedy, *History of the Great Moghuls*, 319, 324-326.

17 Roe, *The Embassy*, 411-413.

18 *Ibid.*, 390.

19 N.R. Farooqi, “Diplomacy and Diplomatic Procedure under the Mughals,” *The Medieval History Journal* 7, no 1 (2004), 71.

like other Mughal Emperors, would often make calls on whims and had no qualms sacrificing state interests for his own personal reasons.²⁰ Further, diplomacy was made difficult for Europeans by the fact that they were unknown at the Mughal Court. The primary diplomacy carried out by the Mughal Court was with the Ottoman Turks, the Persians, and the Uzbeks, all neighboring or near neighboring states. Each of these states was militarily powerful, and the Mughal Empire often fought wars and/or sought alliances with these nations. As the Uzbeks were seen more as nomadic barbarians, only the Persians and Turks were seen by the Mughals as being close to the level of the great Mughal Empire.²¹ Those seeking to gain anything close to equal status with Mughals had their jobs cut out for them.

Into this world stepped the English. English merchants had begun to conduct trade with the near east under the auspices of the Crown as early as 1505.²² The English were lured to the idea of trade with India by the capture of Portuguese Carracks in the late 16th Century, one by Sir Francis Drake and another by Sir John Burroughs. The English found the Carracks filled with riches such as spices, silks, pearls, gold, porcelain, and more. Around the same time the Levant Company, a merchant outfit that traded with the Ottoman Empire, had made a side expedition to India, which set alight the imagination of English merchants.²³

All of this coincided with changes in England. London's population broke the one-hundred thousand mark, and the middle and upper classes were on the rise and becoming more distinct. As England increased in wealth, its taste for luxury goods also rose. Perhaps more important than these facts, however, was the English defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 which gave the English a sense of pride and power upon the seas. An empowerment on the seas combined with the growing desire for riches and luxury to create an increased desire to expand trade.²⁴ This desire for riches and luxury became more than just that as England began to fear the power other European nations were gaining through trade. For example, when the Portuguese and Dutch decided to dramatically increase the price of pepper, as the two nations had a monopoly on

20 Ibid., 72-74.

21 Ibid., 60, 65-66; Brown, *Itinerant*, 66; Michael Strachan, *Sir Thomas Roe: 1581-1644: A Life* (Great Britain: Michael Russell Ltd, 1989), 80.

22 Wilbur, *The East India Company*, 5.

23 James Mill, *The History of British India*, vol. 1 (London: Routledge/Thoemmes Press, 1858), 13-14.

24 Wilbur, *The East India Company*, 9-11.

the spice, England realized how vulnerable their markets were and would continue to be if they did not branch out in global trade themselves.²⁵

Sir Stephan Soane, a London merchant, used these arguments in 1599 to rally other merchants to help him lay the groundwork for the English East India Company.²⁶ The East India Company was based largely off of the Levant Company, and many of its investors had been part of the Levant Company as well. In September of 1600 Queen Elizabeth granted a charter to establish a joint-stock company with a monopoly on Asian trade, which became known as the East India Company.²⁷

The Company financed voyages to India to buy and sell goods and return to England. The voyages were extremely profitable, steadily increasing interest in trade with India. As the voyages became regular, men were left in India by one fleet to buy and sell and collect commodities and other trade goods in preparation for the next fleet. These men were called “factors” or “agents,” and the places where they lived and stored goods were called “factories.” Along with cutting down the time fleets needed to stay at ports, this system also allowed the English to buy goods at cheaper prices, as agents would be there year round, avoiding the inevitable spike in prices when the ships came into port.²⁸ However, in order to carry out this trade, permission from the Indian government was required. Precarious local agreements were reached, but these were subject to constant change and thus caused great difficulty for the merchants of the East India Company. It was in light of this that the East India Company, with various amounts of endorsement from the English Crown, began to send ambassadors to the Mughal Court in hopes of gaining a more permanent trade agreement.

The first English embassy to be sent to the Mughal Court actually predated the establishment of the East India Company, though it was sent at the behest of the boards of the Levant Company and the Muscovite Company and carried letters from Queen Elizabeth to the Emperors of India and China (though no one from the embassy wound up even trying to go to China). The embassy consisted of two merchants, John Eldred Leeds and John Newberry, as well as a man named Ralph Fitch, of whom little is known before this embassy.

25 Ibid., 13-16.

26 Ibid., 18-19.

27 P.J. Marshall, “The English in Asia to 1700,” in William Roger Louis and Nicholas Canny, ed., *The Oxford History of the British Empire* vol. 1 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 266-268.

28 Brown, *Itinerant*, 28.

Ralph Fitch was the only man to return from this overland trip, and was the first man to provide a useful account of India and its possibilities to the merchants in London.²⁹

The embassy departed London on 12 February 1583 on the ship *Tyger* to Tripoli, from where they proceeded by land to Agra, the capital of the Mughal Emperor Akbar³⁰ (the first two embassies, Fitch and Mildenhall, met with Akbar; subsequent embassies met with Jahangir). They arrived in India on the fifth of November, though they wandered the Empire for some time before arriving at the Mughal Court. At this time the Court itself was at Fatehpur Sikri, located about 23 miles from Agra.³¹ Based on the account of Ralph Fitch, Akbar's court seemed to take up both cities. He notes that each city was "much greater then London and very populous," and describes the distance between the towns as a large market, "as though a man were still in a towne."³² The group stayed there until 28 September 1585, after which Newberry returned overland to the Ottoman Empire, Leeds stayed in service to the Mughal, and Fitch continued exploring India and its surrounding territories.³³ Fitch eventually returned to London on 29 April 1591.³⁴

It is uncertain if Fitch and his companions actually met with Akbar. They arrived just before Akbar left his capital on a military expedition against the Uzbeks,³⁵ so it is possible. Because Fitch was able to describe Akbar's appearance and Leeds was taken into Akbar's service, some speculate that the embassy must have met with Akbar.³⁶ Fitch, in his account, does not say explicitly, nor do any surviving letters from any members of the embassy. Regardless, this embassy did not achieve any agreements with Akbar and seems to have been more for exploring possibilities than for explicitly seeking trade rights. Still, his account views India and its trade prospects favorably, and it greatly influenced the merchants to establish the East India Company.

The next embassy, and the only one known to definitely have conversed with Akbar, was that of John Mildenhall. Now, Mildenhall was not a true ambassador. He had no ties to either Queen Elizabeth or to the East India

29 R.C. Prasad, *Early English Travellers in India* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsi Dass, 1965), 25-26.

30 *Ibid.*, 26; Wilbur, *The East India Company*, 7.

31 *Early Travels in India*, ed. William Foster (London: Humphrey Milford, 1921), 12-18.

32 *Ibid.*, 18.

33 *Ibid.*, 12-18.

34 Prasad, *Early English*, 32.

35 *Ibid.*, 31.

36 *Ibid.*, 52.

Company, and seems to have decided to travel to India on a whim. Sir William Foster, editor of various travel accounts and early authority on early relations with Mughal India, suggests that Mildenhall, who had heard of the establishment of the East India Company while in Constantinople, decided to go to India and try to establish relations and gain trade rights in the hopes of trading them for compensation from the East India Company.³⁷ Some believe he may have visited India twice, the first time officially designated by Queen Elizabeth,³⁸ but evidence for the first journey is scarce and inconsistent with his later activities, putting its existence in question. Ram Chandra Prasad, like many other commentators, is highly critical of Mildenhall. Mildenhall was already on a trade mission when he decided to go to India. Upon making this decision, Mildenhall ran off with the goods from the trade mission, possibly poisoned two or three other Englishmen, and, rather than being a stern Protestant, changed his allegiance to Catholicism when it became convenient. In Prasad's words, Mildenhall "was not an estimable character."³⁹

Mildenhall arrived in India in 1603, immediately stating his business. He was taken quickly to Agra, where after just a short time he gained an audience with Akbar. From the start he sought to ingratiate himself with Akbar, noting how Akbar was renowned even "into the furthestmost parts of the western ocean" for his greatness and kindness to Christians. Mildenhall presented great gifts to Akbar, such as twenty-nine excellent horses, jewels, and jewelry,⁴⁰ at his own expense, though part or all of this expense may have come from the trade goods he commandeered from his trade mission.

Nevertheless Mildenhall encountered trouble when the Portuguese Jesuits at the Court began to berate him severely to the Emperor. Because of this he spent six months learning Persian, known to Akbar, so that he could defend himself without relying on suspect translators. He successfully defended himself, mainly by discrediting the Jesuits, and claims to have gained concessions from both Akbar and his son, the future Emperor Jahangir. It is worth noting that Jahangir sided with Mildenhall in his accusations against the Jesuits. Mildenhall also promised a future ambassador to be sent from England to the Court.⁴¹

37 *Early Travels*, 48.

38 Prasad, *Early English*, 71-72.

39 *Ibid.*, 70-71.

40 *Early Travels*, 54-55.

41 *Ibid.*, 58-59.

Mildenhall is important to the discussion about strategies for a few key reasons. First of all, Mildenhall gave Akbar splendid gifts and, when arguing against the Jesuits, claimed, and Jahangir supported, that the Jesuits had given no gifts or profit of any kind to the Court the whole eleven or twelve years they had resided there.⁴² Also, Mildenhall seems to have been liked by Akbar and his court. They treated Hawkins, the next ambassador, royally because of Mildenhall's promise of a future ambassador. However, if he was granted trade rights the English never heard about it. Further, based on the trouble Hawkins and Roe would have in obtaining concessions from Jahangir, if Mildenhall did receive concessions they were either only local or not taken seriously, the Court perhaps believing the English and Portuguese to both be negligible. At any rate, it played out that the East India Company decided they needed to send an official ambassador, and on 24 August 1608 William Hawkins arrived in India.⁴³

Hawkins had been to both the West Indies and the Ottoman Empire and knew Turkish, and was probably a merchant. It is likely for his fluency in Turkish for which he was chosen from among other merchants to be the ambassador, as Jahangir and many others at the Court spoke Turkish as well.⁴⁴ Upon his arrival he visited the governor of Surat, the main port of call for the English in their early dealings with India, who treated him well. He also dealt with plots against him and his mission by the Portuguese,⁴⁵ who perhaps remembered Mildenhall's defeat of their intrigue at the Mughal Court. Hawkins arrived safely at Agra and the Mughal Court on 16 April 1609.⁴⁶

Mukarrab Khan, a powerful official in the Empire, put himself against Hawkins, siding with the Portuguese who had provided him with so many novel things with which he impressed the Emperor.⁴⁷ Hawkins believed that Mukarrab Khan was working with the Portuguese in the various attempts on his life, and many of his goods reserved for Jahangir were seized by Mukarrab Khan.⁴⁸ This caused Hawkins to, embarrassingly, present a meager gift of cloth to Jahangir when he finally met him. Despite this, Jahangir treated him royally, likely thinking him the ambassador promised by Mildenhall as mentioned earlier, and, speaking with him in Turkish, promised to remedy all with Mukarrab Khan.

42 Ibid., 58.

43 Ibid., 70.

44 Ibid., 63; *Beyond the Three Seas: Travellers' Tales of Mughal India*, ed. Michael H. Fisher (India: Random House India, 2007), 59.

45 *Early Travels*, 71-8.

46 *Beyond the Three Seas*, 62.

47 *Early Travels*, 63.

48 Prasad, *Early English*, 94.

Jahangir took a great liking to Hawkins, constantly asking him to stay at the Court indefinitely.⁴⁹ In fact, Jahangir even provided Hawkins with an Armenian-Christian wife and seemed to raise him above Mukarrab Khan.⁵⁰

Hawkins's success, however, did not last. Mukarrab Khan gained favor once again and, with the Portuguese, sought to deride the English at Court. Hawkins managed to convince Jahangir otherwise, but he could not withstand it for long. While Jahangir kept honoring him, many of Jahangir's promises inevitably fell through. Eventually Hawkins demanded to be given his due demands or leave to depart, and he was told to go, receiving no concessions or response to his letter from King James. One Mughal official said that the Mughal did not write to "pettie prince[s] or governour[s]," to which Hawkins claimed that the Mughal knew the King of England was mighty.⁵¹ Thus Hawkins departed the Mughal Court and India without achieving his aims. He died on the return voyage, just a few days before reaching England.⁵²

In his despair, Hawkins accused Jahangir of "esteeming a few toys... more than his honour."⁵³ Contrary to this statement, however, Hawkins had received great honors even though he often had no gifts to give.⁵⁴ Hawkins blamed much of his failure on the machinations of the Portuguese, who had influence with the powerful Mukarrab Khan. It is instances such as this that have led many scholars to believe that maritime power was a necessity in early diplomacy, as the only threat the Portuguese could make against the Mughal Empire was to burn their shipping and kill their pilgrims heading to Mecca.⁵⁵ However, as noted above, Mukarrab Khan took sides with the Portuguese because they supplied him with novelties for the Emperor, and Foster argues that part of his opposition to the English was his fear of the English disrupting the system of privileges-for-rarities he had set up with the Portuguese.⁵⁶ The naval power of the Portuguese may have been part of this as well, but there is no explicit evidence for it. But perhaps the real reason for Hawkins's failure was his character. Foster called him "arrogant and tactless," and even Sir Thomas Roe,

⁴⁹*Early Travels*, 64-65.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, 67-68.

⁵¹*Ibid.*, 69-72.

⁵²*Ibid.*, 75.

⁵³*Ibid.*, 71.

⁵⁴Prasad, *Early English*, 102.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, 103.

⁵⁶*Early Travels*, 63-64.

the later English ambassador to the Mughal Court, called Hawkins “‘a wayne fool.’”⁵⁷

There were three more ambassadors after Hawkins and before Roe, but they are hardly worth mentioning. The three, Canning, Kerridge, and Edwards, had unoriginal gifts (with the exception of Canning’s cornet and its player, which caught Jahangir’s fancy) and made so many mistakes in presentation that the Jesuits easily discredited them. For example, Canning admitted that most of the gifts were from the East India Company and not the English Crown, discrediting the name of King James at the Mughal Court. Kerridge, for his part, acted slavishly at the Mughal Court, making England appear no different from other submissive states. Edwards, lastly, was an illegitimate ambassador like Mildenhall, who acted similar to Canning and Kerridge combined. He was so bad, in fact, that he was “forced back to England for defrauding the company.”⁵⁸ All three were short embassies and Nicholas Withington, a member of the East India Company in India, noted their inadequacy, singling out Edwards, with whom he was directly acquainted. Withington hoped that Roe, whom he knew to be the next ambassador, would “by his worthye carriage... redeeme the great dishonour” caused by these previous embassies.⁵⁹

So what can be gleamed from these embassies in regards to how diplomacy was conducted by early English ambassadors to the Mughal Court? Ralph Fitch proves of little use in this regard, but that is understandable based on the nature of his embassy, which was purely exploratory. The last three, also, provide little insight. Mildenhall and Hawkins, however, provide excellent sources for examination, as they at least made headway at the Mughal Court, even if they failed to achieve their prime objectives.

In regards to the theory of maritime power, their embassies seem to prove that this played a part, to an extent. When Mildenhall was at the Court, he had to take great pains to battle the Jesuit influence. More significantly, according to Hawkins, the Portuguese were able to bring Mukarrab Khan to make bold attempts to get rid of the English. Mukarrab Khan, besides his personal arrangements with the Portuguese, was in charge of coastal provinces, and likely knew something of the power of the Portuguese at sea, even if he might not have taken it into serious consideration. Still, the Mughal Emperors, and especially Jahangir, did not understand the importance of the sea and the

57 Both quoted in Prasad, *Early English*, 105.

58 Barbour, “Power and Distant Display,” 357-360.

59 *Early Travels*, 231.

sea trade,⁶⁰ and “were largely indifferent to what happened on the high seas,” including naval warfare.⁶¹ Thus, based on these two embassies, maritime power seems to be an avenue the English could explore to curb Portuguese influence, but little more.

In terms of gifts, the ambassadors’ words and deeds seem to contradict one another. Mildenhall gave grand gifts, which may have helped, or even been a primary factor, in his rapidly gaining the favor of Akbar; it is hard to make a conclusive judgment based on the surviving records. Hawkins believed gifts to be key to diplomacy, saying that “no man that cometh to make a petition... cometh eptie-handed.”⁶² However, as noted above, when Hawkins was given great honor he hardly had any gifts to give. He started giving more worthy gifts around the time he began to fall out of favor with Jahangir. Admittedly, the two may be unrelated. Hawkins may have only received initial honor due to Mildenhall’s promise before him, in which gifts may have been a significant part, and his giving of worthy gifts later most likely has no relation to his losing favor with Jahangir.

In terms of diplomatic theatrics, the ambassadors faced a formidable task. Abraham Early, in his book *The Mughal World: India’s Tainted Paradise*, notes that in early Mughal India Europeans were appreciated only for their professional skills, but were otherwise seen as barbarous and treated as curiosities.⁶³ Barbour says that the “severe protocols of Asiatic courts intimidated Englishmen,”⁶⁴ which is not surprising, considering the size, power, and wealth of these courts which had never heard of Europe until the Portuguese, and even after only had an extremely limited understanding of it. Barbour claims that Mildenhall, by giving such deference to Akbar and downplaying the importance of his own nation in his initial meetings with the Mughal, as well as his numerous other attempts to flatter Akbar, resulted in making England look “irrelevant.”⁶⁵ As noted above, Roe was extremely critical of Hawkins, and with some justification. Hawkins immersed himself in the Mughal Court and culture, even to the point of taking a wife provided by the Mughal. As Barbour argues, “Hawkins was forgetting his origins.”⁶⁶ Of course,

60 Prasad, *Early English*, 141.

61 Mughal world, 296-7

62 *Beyond the Three Seas*, 70.

63 Abraham Early, *The Mughal World: India’s Tainted Paradise* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2007). 36-37, 110, 294-295.

64 Barbour, “Power and Distant Display,” 349.

65 *Ibid.*, 353.

66 *Ibid.*, 356.

as also noted above, Hawkins successors were no better, prompting Withington's hope that Roe would show what a true Englishman was like. By these critiques it is easy to draw the conclusion that the behavior of Mildenhall and Hawkins and the Mughal Court worked to the detriment of the English. However, without a comparison case this is mere speculation. Luckily, Sir Thomas Roe, the next ambassador, fills this role perfectly.

Sir Henry Middleton and Thomas Best, two naval commanders, had achieved local agreements with Surat. Middleton had been denied an agreement in 1611 and in retaliation attacked Surat traders in the Red Sea. Best, in turn, was awarded a local agreement when he defeated a Portuguese fleet in 1612, off the coast of Surat and in full view of the coastal authorities.⁶⁷ Also as a result of Best's victory, an impressed Mughal Court declared that a new English ambassador would be welcome at the Court. This was good news for the East India Company, which had been having difficulties. Factories and their agents in India were not cooperating, were conducting illegal trade, and were generally behaving in a way the board of the East India Company saw as unacceptable. Sir Thomas Smythe, then governor of the East India Company, saw this as an opportunity to straighten out the operations in India as well as form a lasting, favorable relationship with the Mughal Court.⁶⁸

This time, however, the Company wanted to send “an ambassador of extraordinary countenance and respect.”⁶⁹ Sir Thomas Roe had disputed with the Dutch in Latin America and had even sat in the “Addled Parliament.”⁷⁰ He was seen as a man who “combined the qualities of the great explorer with the urbanity of the courtier,”⁷¹ and when it came to understanding British foreign affairs and commerce “he probably had no living equal.”⁷² And so on 2

67 Prasad, *Early English*, 133-4; Wilbur, *The East India Company*, 58-59.

68 Brown, *Itinerant*, 29-30.

69 Quoted in Brown, *Itinerant*, 31.

70 The “Addled Parliament” was the second Parliament under King James I. It was rumored that many members were in league with the King to possibly rid England of the Parliament altogether. It wound up lasting a mere two months before it was dissolved, passing no legislation. Roger Lockyer. “Addled Parliament.” *The Oxford Companion to British History*, ed. John Cannon, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009). *Oxford Reference Online*. Oxford University Press. Emory University. 17 November 2011
<<http://www.oxfordreference.com/views/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=t110.e22>>

71 Prasad, *Early English*, 136.

72 Quoted in *Ibid.*, 136.

February 1615 Roe set off for India and arrived off the coast of Surat in September.⁷³

Upon his arrival, the people of Surat laughed at him, because “so many hauing assumed that title [Ambassador], and not performed the offices.”⁷⁴ Indeed, right from the start Roe encountered issues with the local government. Upon his landing, Roe was informed that he, his attendants, and their belongings were to be searched. Roe was furious. He went on a tirade, saying that as an ambassador from a free and powerful nation he was “not to be subject to Common and barbarous vsage,” and would not “subject...[himself] to so much slauery.”⁷⁵ A compromise was reached, in where only a few would be nominally but not actually searched, with the a few not being searched at all, and the belongings would be taken account of after they had been delivered to a private residence. However, when the time came, the officials insisted on a search, threatening the use of force. Roe rode up to the men, laid his hand on his sword, and demanded they cease. When they tried to defend their actions, Roe would not listen, but took some pistols in his hands, saying that “those were my Frenedes, and in them I would trust.”⁷⁶ Then, when the governor gave him further trouble by arguing about the protocol for relations, the governor mentioned how previous ambassadors had submitted to the search and sought out the governor to form a good relationship. In response, Roe said that the Mughal Empire “neuer did receiue any [ambassador] at this Port, nor euer from a Christian King.”⁷⁷ In other words, Roe denied the legitimacy of all the former embassies sent to the Mughal Court. From the beginning, Roe made it clear that he was not like the previous “ambassadors.”

When Roe departed for the Court he came across the entourage of Prince Parwiz. When he was admitted to see the Prince he again asserted himself, demanding the same treatment that was given to ambassadors from Persia or the Ottoman Empire, which he was granted. He attained local trade rights from the Prince,⁷⁸ but as the Prince soon fell out of favor with his father, these became essentially useless.

73 Strachan, *Sir Thomas Roe*, 59, 73; Brown, *Itinerant*, 35, 38.

74 Roe, *The Embassy*, 45.

75 *Ibid.*, 48.

76 *Ibid.*, 48-50.

77 *Ibid.*, 54.

78 *Ibid.*, 91-93.

Finally, on 10 January 1616, Roe, who had made it to the Court, was admitted to see the Mughal Emperor, Jahangir. The meeting went rather well. Roe was allowed to pay respects using his own customs and he gave gifts. The gifts, however, are hardly mentioned, other than the fact that they “were well received.” Jahangir seemed much more interested in Roe’s health, as Roe had been ill, and even offered his own physicians to Roe. After the evening concluded, Roe stated that he was shown “more fauor and outward grace...then euer was showed to any Ambassador, eyther to the Turke of Persian, or other whatsoeur.”⁷⁹

As mentioned before, upon Roe’s arrival the English were under the threat of expulsion. Roe met with Prince Khurram, the later Emperor Shah Jahan, who claimed that the governor had done this on his own volition and promised to rectify the situation. The result was the sacking of the governor of Surat.⁸⁰ During his meeting Roe had given the Prince a present from himself, claiming it was not good enough to be from his King. Interestingly, in a meeting two days later with a Mughal official, Roe commented in regards to gift giving that it was “the Custome that when any body hath business to giue somewhat.”⁸¹ In another instance with the Prince, Roe says he gave him “a few toyes after the Custome.”⁸² This can be interpreted in two ways: one is that bribes were necessary to conduct business and the other is that it was a formality and a nice gesture but nothing more than that.

There were two major incidents during Roe’s embassy involving presents. The first happened in early 1617, when a batch of new gifts and other supplies was being sent to Roe. The shipment was intercepted and sent to Jahangir, who had looked through everything and taken it all for himself. Roe was outraged. When confronted, Jahangir tried to assuage Roe, pledging to make restitution for that which had not been meant for him and offering to loan some items to Roe should he need them; Jahangir was adamant, however, on keeping them. He also said that Roe “at all times...should be welcome emptie handed, for that was not my [Roe’s] fault, and I [Roe] should receiue right from him.”⁸³

79 Ibid., 106-109.

80 Ibid., 114-115; Brown, *Itinerant*, 43-44.

81 Roe, *The Embassy*, 114-115.

82 Ibid., 136.

83 Ibid., 382-391.

The second incident occurred in January of 1618. Another shipment of presents had been intercepted, this time by Prince Khurram, who had put seals on the gifts and said that they should not be opened until he allowed. After twenty days of waiting, however, Roe had decided to open them anyway. He had obtained consent from Asaph Khan, a powerful official and relative by marriage to Jahangir, though Asaph Khan denied it when brought before Jahangir. Jahangir was angry with Roe, but Roe stood his case, arguing that they were his gifts to give and, besides, he did not know the customs of the seals. In the end the Prince forgave Roe, the presents were viewed, and again some of Roe's things were taken that were not meant to be presents, though again he was paid for this seizure.⁸⁴

Despite all these and many more interesting events at Court, after about three years at the Court Roe had managed only to get some local and specific agreements, but had failed to obtain any sort of empire-wide, lasting agreement. He had been in negotiations with both Asaph Khan and Prince Khurram about the agreements, but they could never seem to agree on the details, especially regarding the nature of the English-Portuguese relationship. In despair, Roe made one last attempt, planning to leave the Court regardless. In August of 1618 Roe submitted a final proposal to resolve the issues. After one final exchange and some compromises, with Prince Khurram finally either giving in to or meeting Roe halfway on points he had hitherto objected to, the agreement was made. It gave the English rights to trade throughout the Empire, solidified what the English could and could not do in the Empire, and gave the English some ability to counter the Portuguese if they were threatened.⁸⁵ Thus Roe obtained what none of the other previous ambassadors had been able to before.

So how does the embassy of Sir Thomas Roe sit with the three strategies for gaining concessions from the Mughal Court? In regards to maritime power, it seems to relate to the experience of the former ambassadors. At first the talks to reach an agreement are held up in large part because of issues over the English-Portuguese relationship. However, after both Best's and later Downtown's victories over the Portuguese, the grip of the Portuguese on the Mughal Court seems to have waned. Jahangir even mentions Downtown's defeat of the Portuguese in 1614 in his memoirs, the only mention of Europeans in the whole text.⁸⁶ Clulow, writing about maritime force in Asia during this time period, notes how Roe mentioned the necessity of force in

84 *Ibid.*, 456-458.

85 *Ibid.*, 507-514.

negotiations with the Mughals.⁸⁷ However, he makes these comments at the end of his embassy, after he has been exasperated in his dealings. Also, in other instances, he explicitly is against war with, or even building forts in, India.⁸⁸ So in the end it seems that maritime force was best used to weaken the Portuguese, and perhaps to gain local concessions (as Best was able to get a local agreement after his victory over the Portuguese), and was of little use in dealing with the Mughal Court directly.

In regards to presents or bribes, the conclusion is mixed. Roe, by his own account, seemed to have understood the role of presents, even if he does not make it entirely clear to the readers of his journal what that role is. It has been shown by scholars, such as Barbour, Woodfield, and Loomba, that the Mughal Court cared more about the novelty of the English presents than about their actual worth, which may show why the Court could not contain themselves when Roe's new shipments came. Still, Jahangir claimed to grow tired of English presents at times,⁸⁹ and seems to have had a fickle attitude, as in other instances he was unable to contain himself at the thought of new presents. However, at still other times he seemed to treat gifts with little or no regard.

In terms of diplomatic theatrics, Roe certainly set himself apart from his predecessors. Roe's story at the Mughal Court is a constant struggle to stand up for himself and his country, demanding the treatment of a true ambassador of one of the world's greatest powers. And in this Roe was successful. Jahangir bestowed greater honors on Roe, such as making him a royal disciple of his, that were bestowed on none before him.⁹⁰ Jahangir himself asked Roe why petty merchants had been sent before with five times as many gifts which were all more novel, and Roe, so gentlemanly and of great character, was sent by the English with so little.⁹¹ And despite being so honored, Roe acted as the professional he was. Where others such as Mildenhall and Hawkins had emulated Mughal ways and ingratiated themselves to the Emperor, Roe had kept English ways and English dignity, letting nothing demean him or his nation.⁹²

86 Jahangir, *The Jahangirnama: Memoirs of Jahangir, Emperor of India*, trans. and ed. Wheeler M. Thackston (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1999), 165.

87 Clulow, "European Maritime," 75.

88 Mill, *History of British India*, 23-24; Strachan, *Sir Thomas Roe*, 98.

89 Roe, *The Embassy*, 203.

90 Barbour, "Power and Distant Display," 361.

91 Roe, *The Embassy*, 390.

92 Strachan, *Sir Thomas Roe*, 87.

Now that all the early English embassies have been laid out as well as their implications regarding the three strategies, what is the final conclusion? It seems that maritime force and gifts were indeed an important aspect of early diplomacy with the Mughal Court, but diplomatic theatrics was the clincher. Maritime force was useful in gaining the respect of coastal governors as well as relegating other European competitors, particularly the Portuguese, at Court. This latter point was more important, as the Portuguese had been a thorn in the side of the English, capitalizing on every mistake made by an ambassador to degrade the English. This may have played a part in the Mughals granting some leeway for the English to take action against the Portuguese should a conflict between the two break out, a major point of contention in discussions between Roe and the Court. However, the fact that Best's and Downtown's victories happened six and four years, respectively, before an agreement was reached shows that they were likely not as significant in obtaining this concession as the proponents of maritime force believe. Further, that Roe seems to have had less issues with the Portuguese at Court is due more to Roe's ability to handle himself at Court compared to previous ambassadors than any threat of force. Gifts, again, are a bit tricky. The main problem seems to have been the fickleness of Jahangir. At times he seemed like a greedy child, only interested in new presents. At other times, however, Jahangir brushed presents aside and weighed a supplicant or an issue on its merits. Also, the fact that ambassadors before Roe had given grand and novel presents yet obtained nothing while Roe gave less as well as less interesting gifts but eventually walked away with an agreement with the future Emperor and endorsed by the current Emperor shows that gifts were not as important as most scholars have either argued or simply assumed. And while Mildenhall, Hawkins, and Roe all garnered favor with the Mughal Emperor (Akbar for Mildenhall, Jahangir for Hawkins and Roe) initially, Roe was the only one who was able to sustain it, and based on the above analysis it can only be for the same reason that Roe succeeded in obtaining an agreement where the others failed. In the end it was diplomatic theatrics, the personality, bearing, and persistence of the ambassador, that made a real impression at the Mughal Court. It was the qualities for which Roe had been chosen as ambassador that allowed him to prevail at the Mughal Court and succeeded where his predecessors had failed.

While Roe was successful, however, he was not successful in the way that the East India Company would have liked him to be. This was not the fault of Roe, however, but rather of the fundamental differences in the way diplomacy was looked at by the English and the Mughal Court. The goal of a treaty, which the English sought, was impossible to obtain from the start. The

Mughals did not sign treaties, and no real agreement was lasting that did not have to do with war. Instead, the Mughal Emperors and Princes gave *firmans*. Firmans were royal favors and as such were neither binding nor lasting.⁹³ Firmans could be changed on a whim, causing problems when the Emperor was very fickle, as Jahangir was.⁹⁴ Also, as the firman was a royal favor from one Emperor or Prince, if that Emperor or Prince died or the Prince fell from favor, the firman's authority became mute. So while Roe obtained the best that could be obtained at the time, the English, in the long run, would not be satisfied with these temporary and nonbinding firmans. And future Englishmen dealing with the Mughal Court would not be as patient and dignified as Roe was.

93 Loomba, "Of Gifts, Ambassadors and Copy-cats," 49.

94 I. Bruce Watson, "The Establishment of English Commerce in North-western India in the Early Seventeenth Century," *The Indian Economic Review* 13, no 3 (1976), 378.

Big Heads and Buddhist Demons: *The Korean Military Revolution and Northern Expeditions of 1654 and 1658*

HYEOKHWEON KANG

Throughout the latter half of the seventeenth century, the Russians and the Manchu Qing quarreled over the fertile Amur River valley of Manchuria. In pursuit of fur and tribute, the Cossacks, Russian frontiersmen, expanded eastward over the Ural Mountains and into the Amur region of Siberia, grinding against Qing borders by the early seventeenth century. They were ruthless colonizers, plundering and ravaging through tributary tribes of the Qing along the river. Inhabitants of the Amur feared them and named them Buddhist Demons (*luocha* 羅刹), evoking the man-eating monsters in Buddhist mythology.¹ The Manchus mobilized troops to deter the Russians but repeatedly proved unsuccessful against their robust ships and deadly firearms. In the battles of 1654 and 1658, a few hundred disciplined musketeers, dubbed Big Heads (*daeduyin* 大頭人)² for their distinctive headgear, turned the tide in favor of the Qing and thwarted Russian intrusion into the inner reaches of the Amur for decades. The Big Heads were Korean musketeers sent to aid the Qing. They played a decisive role in both battles, breaking through Russian ranks with systematic musketry volley fire.

The Chosŏn dynasty of Korea underwent a military revolution in the seventeenth century. Through the experience of repeated foreign invasions and the resulting spread of military technology, Korea evolved into an active gunpowder nation, powered by reforms in military tactics and the adoption of musketeers into the mainstay of its army. Despite the Big Heads' participation in the Amur frontiers under Qing commands, Korea's Northern Expeditions need to be contextualized in the crescendo of military strengthening in Chosŏn, which reached its pinnacle during the reign of Hyojong (1649-1659). The

1 Guo Wenshen 郭文深, "eluosi guojia mingcheng bianqian kao – cong 'luocha' dao 'eluosi'" 俄罗斯国家名称变迁考—从“罗刹”到“俄罗斯,” *Jianghuai Tribune 江淮论坛* 20, No. 3 (2010): 105–108.

2 The title Big Heads (*daeduyin* 大頭人) was given to the Koreans by the Nanais who served both the Qing and the Cossacks. The Nanais, also known as Goldi or Olcha by the Russians, Heijin (黑斤) by the Qing and Gyeon Burak (犬部落) by Koreans, were semi-nomadic people living in the lower Amur who subsisted mainly on fishing. Sin Yu 申瀏, trans. by Park Taegun 朴泰根, *Kugyok Pukchong ilgi 國譯北征日記* (Kyŏnggi-do, Sŏngnam-si: Han'guk Chŏngsin Munhwa Yŏn'guwŏn, 1980), 71.

Korean military revolution of the seventeenth century and its manifestation in the Northern Expeditions of 1654 and 1658 attest to Korean capabilities to successfully adapt to the challenges of the Eurasian-wide, transcultural gunpowder revolution.

Traditional historiography has viewed the Korean army as incompetent and incapable of reform. It was woefully unprepared for the Imjin war of 1592, when the Japanese ripped through Korean defenses and reached the Chosŏn court within twenty days. The Korean court fled once again in 1624, struggling to quell the rebellion of a disgruntled general, Yi Gwal. Hong Taiji's Manchu cavalry trampled over Chosŏn's northern defenses twice in 1627 and 1636, culminating in the Korean king shamefully kneeling before those whom Koreans considered "barbarians." Did Koreans not innovate militarily after having undergone such international shame?

Records of Korean military failures overshadow the deep military reforms that shook Korea to the core during the seventeenth century. The Chosŏn dynasty was transformed through the experience of the Imjin War (1592-1596). In 1593, a year after the outbreak of the war, King Injo issued emergency decrees to institute *Hunryeon Dogam* (訓練都監), a new central army designed specifically to raise musketeers as its mainstay.³ Supported by governmental fiscal support, this army served as a testing ground for new military formations and tactics, including the musketry volley technique. Military manuals containing diagrams for volley techniques were proliferated throughout the 17th century⁴ and state-sponsored military experiments begot innovations in battle formations and tactics.⁵

3 Kim Jongsu 金鍾洙, *Chosŏn hugi chungang kunje yŏn'gu: Hullyŏn Togam ūi sŏllip kwa sahoe pyŏndong* 朝鮮後期中央軍制研究 : 訓練都監 設立의社會變動 [A Study on the Central Military System in the Late Joseon Dynasty] (Seoul: Haeam, 2003), 76-77.

4 The *Orientation to the Military Arts* (*Byunghak Jjinam* 兵學指南) is one of the few surviving military manuals from seventeenth century Chosŏn Korea. The earliest known copy is dated 1684 but is allegedly an edition of the original, which some scholars trace back to the mid-seventeenth century. This manual includes a diagram labeled the "Continuous Fire Musket Shot" (*Jochong yunbangdo* 鳥銃輪放圖), which shows the sequence of musketry volley technique used by the Korean musketry squads. *Byunghak Jjinam* 兵學指南, the National Library of Korea, Seoul, Korea.

5 Roh Youngkoo, "Chosŏn hugi pyŏngsŏ wa chŏnpŏp ūi yŏn'gu" [Military Tactical Manuals and Military Strategies Written and Devised in the Late Chosŏn Dynasty] (Ph.D. Dissertation, Seoul National University, 2002), 130-134. Also see Roh Youngkoo, "Gihock nonmun: jeonjaeng ui sidaejeok yangsang; 'Gunsu hyeokmyeongron (Military Revolution)' gua 17~18 saegi chosŏn ui gunsajeok byeonhwa" [Featured Articles : The Historical Aspects of Warfare; "Military

This unsettles the historical foundations of the Military Revolution Model.⁶ Coined by Michael Roberts and further expounded by Geoffrey Parker, the much-debated theory posits that adoption of firearms into European armies required a new way of warfare, a distinctly Western warfare with professional soldiers, broadside ships, robust fortresses, and mobile artillery. These military demands were expensive and taxing, but incessant warfare and interstate competition in early modern Europe made them indispensable. Over time, these pressures expedited state formation and triggered wide-ranging financial and institutional reforms. This revolution allegedly provided Europeans leverage over other peoples of the world. Parker, thus, proposes the Military Revolution Model as “a new paradigm for the ‘rise of the West.’”⁷

A new wave of Asian military historians has contested this paradigm. Historian Sun Laichen argues compellingly that Zhu Yuanzhang, founder of the Ming dynasty, used gunpowder technology to subdue his enemies and established “the first ‘gunpowder’ empire in the early modern world.”⁸ Stephen Morillo posits that the Warring States Period of Japan (戦国時代),⁹ which lasted from the mid-1400s to the early 1600s witnessed an infantry revolution and a rapid adoption of muskets, including the possibility of the development of musketry volley technique.¹⁰ Roh Young-Koo has argued that there are strikingly similar parallels between European and Korean military changes throughout

Revolution" and Joseon Dynasty's Military Reforms in the 17th and 18th Centuries], *Seoyangsa yeongu* 西洋史研究 5, No. 5 (2007): 39-43; and Roh Youngkoo, "Injocho ~ byungja horan sigi jeonsul jeongae [Joseon's Military Tactics from the Early Years of King Injo through the Second Manchu Invasion of 1636]," *Hanguk sahakbo* 韓國史學報 41, No.0 (2010): 175-207.

⁶ See Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Clifford J. Rogers, Ed., *The Military Revolution Debate* (Colorado: Westview Press, 1995); Donald A. Yerxa, Ed., *Recent Themes in Military History: Historians in Conversation* (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 2008), 11-48.

⁷ Geoffrey Parker, "Artillery Fortress as an Engine of European Overseas Expansion, 1480-1750," in James Tracy, Ed., *City Walls: The Urban Enceinte in Global Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 387.

⁸ Sun Laichen, "Ming-Southeast Asian Overland Interactions, 1368-1644," Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Michigan Department of History, 2000, p. 75.

⁹ During the Warring States Period (*sengoku jidai* 戦国時代), an epoch of fierce interstate competition from the mid-1400s to the early 1600s, Japan fragmented into numerous states each led by a daimyo, a regional samurai landlord, whose survival depended on effective mobilization of military resources to maintain and expand his domain. The harquebus was introduced to Japan during this time and was quickly adopted.

¹⁰ Stephen Morillo, "Guns and Government: A Comparative Study of Europe and Japan," *Journal of World History* 6, No. 1 (1995), 95-100.

seventeenth and eighteenth century. These military changes also had socio-political consequences such as state centralization, increase in the size of the standing army, and growth of market economy.¹¹

Both sides make a compelling case for their arguments. Europeans certainly took gunpowder technology to another level, enhancing its power and accuracy through the finesse of their scientific culture, whereas the Chinese provided the epoch-making innovation of gunpowder and guns themselves. But, as Tonio Andrade writes, one cannot “directly judge the relative efficacy of European versus Chinese arms” without comparing them directly in battles fought between Europeans and Asians.¹² Andrade studies the Sino-Dutch War (1661-1668), offering an insightful comparison of military tactics, technology and discipline between the Dutch and the Chinese general Zheng Chenggong.¹³ As the “deepest lesson” of Andrade’s book, he proposes that “modernization was a process of interadoption,” and redefines the history of modernity as “a history less of European dominance than of increasingly rapid diffusion.”¹⁴ The military revolution was indeed a polycentric, Eurasian-wide web of challenge-response adaptations, the transnational and universal characteristics of which were truly revolutionary and modern. Rather than having a fixed core-periphery, military revolution took place in different parts of the world and expanded as it drew different military traditions across Eurasia into conversation with one another.

The 1654 and 1658 battles in the Black Dragon River are such precious moments of connected military history. The current scholarship on the Russian-Manchu conflicts in the Amur treats these conflicts as mere prologues to later crises and diplomatic interactions. Scholars such as Ravenstein, Mancall, and Weale produced comprehensive studies on the early Russian interactions with the Qing and their leading up to the Treaty of Nerchinsk (1689), but their works failed to recognize Korean participation or to take Korean sources into account.¹⁵ In Korean scholarship, Pak Tae-gun is the leading academic on the

¹¹ Roh, “Kihock nonmun,” 39-43.

¹² Tonio Andrade, *Lost Colony: The Untold Story of China’s First Great Victory over the West* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2011), 12.

¹³ Zheng Chenggong (鄭成功), also known as Koxinga, was a Ming loyalist military leader in the late 17th century who offered a formidable opposition against the invading Manchus. See Tonio Andrade, *How Taiwan Became Chinese: Dutch, Spanish, and Han Colonization in the Seventeenth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008).

¹⁴ Andrade, *Lost Colony*, 342-343.

¹⁵ Ernst G. Ravenstein, *The Russians on the Amur; its discovery, conquest, and colonisation, with a description of the country, its inhabitants, productions, and commercial capabilities* (London: Trübner and Co, 1861); Mark Mancall, *Russia and China; their diplomatic relations to 1728* (Cambridge:

Northern Expeditions of 1654 and 1658. He translated into Korean vernacular the *Diaries of the Northern Expedition* (北征日記), a chronicle by Korean general Sin Yu, the commander of the Korean aid troops in 1658.¹⁶ Nevertheless, despite the wealth of sources, the Qing-Russian border conflicts have not been examined with reference to the military revolution debate.

The stories of Big Heads, Buddhist Demons, and Qing Bannermen are also worth being retold. The accounts are overflowing with rich details about peculiar heroes and individuals and extraordinary meetings between different ethnic groups. Korean general Sin Yu was a keen, judicious general who comes across as someone of upright morality. His Confucian moral values conflicted with the uncouth, cunning individuals of the Manchu army such as the Qing commander Sarhuda, whose avarice for war booty led to the death of many soldiers. Sarhuda's army was multi-ethnic, including the agrarian Daur, ¹⁷ whose fertile soil and well-fed crops made the Cossacks salivate, and the Juchers, ¹⁸ who disliked boiled rice and soy sauce¹⁹ and threw themselves to the ground at the sound of gunfire.²⁰ Messengers between the Cossacks and the Qing were the quick-tempered and duplicitous Nanais, or Fishskin Tartars (魚皮鞑子), who served both parties in self-interest. It was they who named the Koreans "Big Heads" and walked around butchering Cossack corpses after the battle of 1658.²¹ Lastly, there was the Cossacks, who were intrepid, free-spirited explorers, experienced in numerous battles and volatile in their allegiance to the Muscovite state. These intractable men were unified under their charismatic leaders, tough and astute officials sent from Muscovy, who

Harvard University Press, 1971); and Putnam B.L. Weale, *Manchu and Muscovite* (London: Macmillan, 1907).

16 Sin Yu, see above.

17 Daur (or Dahurs), a group of "Mongolized Tungus," were agrarian settlers in the upper Amur and Zeya who spoke a Mongolian language. James Forsyth, *A history of the peoples of Siberia: Russia's North Asian colony, 1581-1990* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 104-105.

18 Juchers, also known as Ducher by the Russians, *Waerka* (瓦爾喀) or *Huerha* (虎爾哈) by the Qing and *Walga* (日可) by the Koreans were Tungusic people who lived in the middle and lower Amur, including the lower reaches of the Sungari river. Sin Yu, 55.

19 *Ibid.*, 129.

20 *Chosŏn wangjo sillok* 朝鮮王朝實錄 (hereafter *CWS*), Kyŏnggi-do Kwach'ŏn-si: Kuksa P'yŏnch'an Wiwŏnhoe [*National Institute of Korean History*], <http://sillok.history.go.kr> (accessed November 15, 2011), *Hyojong sillok*, j. 14 (Hyojong 孝宗 6:4:jeongchuk 丁丑 [1655:4:23])

21 Sin Yu, 98.

brought a team of clerks and assistants to facilitate their duties of leading military expeditions, building fortresses, and managing civil affairs.²²

Russian Intrusion into Amuria

By 1643, when Vasily Poyarkov and his fellow Cossacks were voyaging southward to the Amur, extravagant tales of riches and wonders about the land of the Daurs had been circulating amongst the Siberian Cossacks.²³ These tales portrayed the Amur valley as an agricultural paradise, inhabited by the Daurs who cultivated the soil, herded cattle, and engaged in active trade with Chinese merchants.²⁴ The appeal of these stories was magnified by the conditions the Cossacks were living in, surrounded by permafrost and running short on food and resources.

Poyarkov was an audacious adventurer, a newly appointed Muscovite official in Yakutsk, the vibrant Russian town northeast of Lake Baikal. He was erudite and militarily experienced, eager to pioneer unexplored lands and exploit their riches. Sponsored by the equally enthusiastic voevoda, Peter Golovin, Poyarkov took 132 Cossacks armed with muskets and ammunition, along with a half-pounder iron gun and bountiful other provisions.²⁵

After departing on the 15 June, Poyarkov made slow progress navigating the Aldan River and its tributaries, hampered by the shallows and rapids. After eleven weeks, he still had not reached the Amur and was compelled to establish winter quarters. When spring came and the river thawed, he continued his journey southward, eventually reaching a small Daur village on the Zeya River.²⁶ The Daurs were initially welcoming towards the Cossacks, but their relationship quickly disintegrated as provisions ran out. Poyarkov coerced resources out of another nearby fortified Daur village, which led to a violent backlash from the natives.²⁷ Avoiding further conflicts, Poyarkov and his men sailed south to the intersection of the Zeya and the Amur, from where he voyaged in different directions before returning to Yakutsk in 1646.²⁸

22 Mancall, 14.

23 Weale, 14-15.

24 James Forsyth, *A History of the Peoples of Siberia: Russia's North Asian Colony, 1581-1990* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 104-105.

25 Mancall, 21.

26 Raventstein, 10.

27 *Ibid.*, 10-11.

28 Weale, 18.

Poyarkov's expedition provided the first Russian account of the Amur and its resources, sparking interest in provincial governors in Yakutsk and the central Muscovite government. His voyage, however, spread alarm and fear throughout tribesmen along the Amur and made subsequent Cossack expeditions more bloody and violent. In 1649, with the new appointment of D. Frantsbekov in Yakutsk, Muscovites reasserted their interest in the Amur. During the summer of 1650, Khabarov and his men sailed from Yakutsk and found that many native villages had been deserted to avoid contact with the Cossacks. Further down the Amur, Khabarov conquered the fortified Daur village of Yakesa, establishing the first Russian settlement on the Amur River. This village, renamed Albazin, became a focal point of Russo-Qing relations later in the century.²⁹

The next year, using Albazin as the new base for expansion, Khabarov sailed down the Amur with over two hundred men and three large cannons.³⁰ On 8 October, Khabarov's ships reached the Guigudar village, which was fortified by a triple line of defensive structures and garrisoned by a Nanai-Jucher army of more than eight hundred, in addition to fifty Manchu cavalymen.³¹ The Russian advantage in firearms was salient in this first skirmish between Khabarov and the Qing. One volley killed twenty Amurian tribesmen, causing the Manchu to flee inland, while the rest of the natives retreated within their fortresses.³² Khabarov's men penetrated the defenses and killed mercilessly, leaving 661 natives dead in their wake and took 243 women and 118 children as prisoners. The war booty included 350 horses and cattle and rich stores of grain. Only fifty-five Russians were killed or wounded.³³

After the battle at Guigudar, Khabarov sailed further down, continuing his brutal conquests against other tribes until reaching a large settlement of Nanai in Achansk (烏扎拉).³⁴ The Nanai, as described in Sin Yu's account, were "quick-tempered savages who didn't even know the calendar and aimed their arrows easily against anybody, even slashing at their family members."³⁵ The

29 Mancall, 24.

30 Ibid.

31 Weale, 20.

32 Ibid.

33 Ibid.

34 Ibid., 21-22.

35 Sin Yu, 72.

Russians suppressed these unruly people and built a formidable fort at Achansk.³⁶

The Manchus were aware of Russian encroachments in the Amur region as early as 1643, when Poyarkov wreaked havoc scrambling for resources in the winter. This time, however, the natives pleaded the Manchus in the Ninggu Tower, a wealthy Qing garrison town in the Mudan River valley, for protection. Commander-in-chief of the Ninggu Tower, General Haise mustered a large force of approximately 2,000 armed with bows and muskets. At dawn on 3 April of 1652, Haise attacked Fort Achansk, breaching its walls with siege guns and storming the fortress. The Russians retaliated fiercely with their cannons and rebuffed the Chinese charge.³⁷ Then, a Russian sortie delivered a fatal blow to the bannermen, supposedly killing seven hundred at a cost of ten according to Khabarov's report.³⁸ While the Qing army greatly outnumbered the Cossacks, Manchus suffered a shameful defeat. The capability of Russians to employ their firearms efficiently and systematically proved decisive against the Manchu. The Manchus, on the other hand, were over-confident in their numbers, attempting to capture the Russians alive.

These Manchu defeats were a wakeup call. Haise was executed for his incompetence. Sarhuda, a formidable general with abundant battle experience and cunning acumen, took his place. Sarhuda was a prized general in the Qing army, having served Nurhaci, Hong Taiji, and Shunzi Emperor in battles against the Ming forces and during the Manchu invasion of Korea in 1636.³⁹ Sarhuda's appointment to Ninggu Tower started an aggressive projection of Manchu power against the Russians. Over the Amur River, shadows of war were looming large as Sarhuda reinforced his troops in Ninggu Tower and sent word to request Korean musketeer troops.

Korean Military Revolution

During the Manchu invasion of Korea in 1636, Hong Taiji regarded the Korean infantry with high esteem, saying:

³⁶ Weale, 21-22.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Mancall, 25.

³⁹ Arthur W. Hummel, *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period (1644- 1912)* (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943), 632.

Although the Koreans are incapable on horseback, they do not transgress the principles of the military arts. They excel in infantry fighting, especially in musketeer tactics, and would be of great use when storming a fortress.⁴⁰

Although the Manchu juggernaut crushed Korean resistance in 1636, Hong Taiji had healthy respect for the capabilities of the Korean infantry and especially the Korean musketeers. But when did Korea become such an effective gunpowder nation?

The Imjin War of 1592-1596 was the first catalyst for Korean military reforms. It was one of the bloodiest wars in the history of East Asia and engaged massive standing armies. According to Kenneth Swope, “more than two hundred thousand regular troupes fought for both the Chinese and Japanese sides, in addition to hundreds of thousands of Korean regulars, volunteer militiamen and monk soldiers.”⁴¹ More important than the sheer magnitude of these clashes were, as Swope emphasizes, the role that firearms played in determining the outcome of the conflict and the resulting technological transfers amongst the belligerents. The Japanese brought with them a formidable way of war, characterized by the efficient use of the harquebus in tandem with different types of close combat units. Having accumulated a plethora of military experiences during their Warring States Period, the Japanese had absorbed the latest musketry technology into the core of their army, which provided a clear edge against the Koreans. The Chinese army was known for its employment of large cannons, which dwarfed Japanese firepower in large set-piece battles, and its Southern troops, an infantry army drilled with the revolutionary tactics of the legendary Chinese general Qi Jiguang.⁴²

The experience of the Imjin War echoed powerfully in the seventeenth century military reforms of Chosŏn dynasty. Introduction of late Ming general Qi Jiguang’s military tactics to Korea was the most significant legacy of the war. In 1593, King Injo issued emergency decrees to establish a new central army known as the *Hunnyeon Dogam* (訓鍊都監). *Hunnyeon Dogam* borrowed

40 *Qingshilu* 清實錄, *Qingtaizong shilu* 清太宗實錄, j. 37, p. 27 (崇德 2:7:renchen 壬辰 [1638:2]) as cited in Liu Jia-Ju 劉家駒, “Qingchu zhengbing chaoxian shimo” 清初徵兵朝鮮始末, *Shi huo yue kan: Zhongguo li shi she hui ke xue za zhi* 食貨月刊: 中國歷史社會科學雜誌 1, No. 2 (1971): 382. All translations are mine.

41 Kenneth Swope, “Crouching Tigers, Secret Weapons: Military Technology Employed during the Sino-Japanese-Korean War, 1592-1598,” *The Journal of Military History*, 69 (1) [2005]: 13-14. See also Kenneth Swope, *A Dragon’s Head and a Serpent’s Tail: Ming China and the First Great East Asian War, 1592-1598* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2009).

42 Swope, “Crouching Tigers, Secret Weapons,” 16-18, 38.

profusely from the infantry techniques of Qi Jiguang, especially from his manual *Ji iiao xin shu* 紀效新書 (*The new book of effective techniques*). Orchestrated by the military specialist Han Kyo and Prime Minister Yu Seong-ryong, reforms started in *Hunnyeon Dogam* and spread to other standing armies and regional armies in Korea. During the war, Han Kyo learned Qi Jiguang's tactics by observing the drills of the Southern Troops and their generals and used this foundation as a springboard for further reforms.⁴³

What made Qi's tactics so revolutionary? Qi Jiguang invented his tactics in response to the Wokou Crisis of the mid-sixteenth century, when Japanese mariners raided the coastlines of Southern China. Qi developed the "Control-the-Ranks Method" (*Sok Oh beop* 束伍法) to organize an infantry army based around commoners, and placed great emphasis on drill to discipline them to fight in tight, mutually supportive formations. Qi also incorporated musketeers into his army, although the extent of their role in his army has yet to be clarified. Qi's methods emphasized infantry tactics and the ability to organize and discipline commoners.⁴⁴

Recruiting commoners and drilling them efficiently to meet the urgent demands of the war was exactly what the Koreans needed. Following the "Control-the-Ranks Method," *Hunnyeon Dogam* recruited from all social classes and organized new conscripts with Qi's stratified troop divisions.⁴⁵ In 1593, the first 500 soldiers were recruited into the *Hunnyeon Dogam*, which increased to 2,000 by the end of the war and was augmented to 4,000 by 1616 and 6,350 by 1658.⁴⁶ Qi's infantry revolution was also imported, as most cavalry units were supplanted with the *SamSuByeong* (三手兵) system, literally "three-unit-soldiers," consisting of a musketeer (*chongsu* 砲手), an archer (*sasu* 射手), and a swordsman or spearman (*salsu* 殺手 [literally, the "killing unit"]).⁴⁷

Koreans, however, did not blindly follow Chinese examples. The Imjin War brought far more pressure for increased firepower and disciplined infantry units than the Wokou crisis. The number of musketeers in proportion to the rest of the army in *Hunnyeon Dogam* was substantially larger than that in Qi's

43 Roh, "Chosŏn hugi pyŏngsŏ," 12-51.

44 Ibid., 36-41.

45 Kim, 114-137.

46 Ibid., 105.

47 Ibid., 78-79.

standard army. The Korean line of command and tactical organization was also more stratified and specialized.⁴⁸

During and after the Imjin War, Korean military reforms were obsessively focused on increasing firepower and introducing musketeers into the Korean army. Koreans believed Japanese technological superiority in muskets was the most significant factor in their defeats. Praising muskets as a divine weapon, King Seonjo was a zealous proponent of muskets. In 1593 and 1594, Seonjo repeatedly ordered Japanese captives to be kept alive so that Korean blacksmiths could learn the Japanese methods of making gunpowder and muskets.⁴⁹ In 1594, Seonjo himself attempted to design a new musket that could supposedly fire rounds in quick succession.⁵⁰ Seonjo was also openly embracive of excellent musketeers and did not hesitate to reward them generously with promotions and gifts that made other types of soldiers envious. For example, while observing drill practices of the *Hunnyeon Dogam* in 1595, Seonjo declared that the musketeers outperformed archers and bestowed thirty horses to the former, enraging the archers, some of whom left the *Hunnyeon Dogam* out of humiliation.⁵¹

Changes in tactical organization were followed by innovations in military formations. As early as 1594, *Hunnyeon Dogam* was experimenting with formations that organized the army into layers of musketeers, archers, and swordsmen/spearmen that advanced and receded, firing and engaging in combat in an orderly fashion.⁵² In 1636, scholar Jeong On (鄭蘊 1569–1641) proposed to King Injo a new military formation called the “Three Layer Formation” (*samcheopjin* 三疊陣), which involved archers and musketeers shooting in volleys.⁵³ By the end of the seventeenth century, military manuals such as the *Orientation to the Military Arts* (*Byunghak Jjinam* 兵學指南), which included drill instructions for musketry volley technique, were widespread.

These new military tactics were soon put to test against the mighty Manchu cavalry. During the Sarhu battle of 1619, Nurhaci and his horsemen crushed Ming forces equipped with matchlocks and cannons. Dispatched to aid

48 Roh, “Chosŏn hugi pyŏngsŏ,” 50.

49 CWS, *Seonjo sillok*, j. 36 (Seonjo 宣組 26:3:byeongin 丙寅 [1593:3:11]).

50 Ibid., j. 44 (Seonjo 宣組 26:11:yimsul 壬戌 [1593:11:12]).

51 Kim, 85.

52 CWS, *Seonjo sillok*, j. 49 (Seonjo 宣組 27:3:gaemyo 癸卯 [1594:3:25]).

53 *Zeungbo munheon bigo* 增補文獻備考, j. 115 as cited in Roh, “Chosŏn hugi pyŏngsŏ,” 123-124.

the Ming, Korean musketeers under the leadership of General Kang Honglip were also slaughtered by cavalry charges after firing only one salvo. However, during the same battle, 500 Korean musketeers serving the Ming officer Du Song on the eastern front were successfully shooting in volleys and taking down many Manchus before their Chinese allies surrendered and obstructed the Koreans' chain of fire. During the Manchu invasion of 1636, although Korean forces succumbed to Hong Taiji in the end, the military revolution that had been gaining ground in Korea did render some decisive leverage against the Manchus. On 4 January, 5000 Qing troops attacked Korean encampments near Namhan Castle, a large mountain fortress to the southeast of Seoul. The Korean army defeated the Qing by dividing into a three layer formation and delivering a constant hail of fire against their enemies. In other decisive battles, Koreans were defeated due to lack of soldiers and insufficient supply of gunpowder more so than the ineffectiveness of their tactics.⁵⁴

The shame of the Korean defeat in 1636 fueled further military expansion, especially under the reign of King Hyojong. Taken captive by Hong Taiji during the Manchu invasion of 1636, Hyojong was determined to take revenge of the Qing when he was crowned in 1649 upon his return. He conceived of grand schemes for *pukbol* ("northern conquest") to reclaim the Manchurian territories that had belonged to Korean ancestors.⁵⁵

The prospects of the barbarian are undeniably headed towards destruction... many subjects suggest I not deal with military matters, but I will persevere because there is no telling when heaven-sent opportunities might present themselves. I will raise 100,000 gunners, whom I will cherish and care for as if they were my children, to make them fearless before death. If, after waiting for a breach in their defenses, we attack swiftly and march through the Manchurian plains, how could righteous heroes in the central plains not rise up and join our ranks?⁵⁶

Hyojong was a martial king. He championed the military over the civil and deplored the derogatory attitudes the Confucian literati exhibited towards militiamen. He himself had a knack for martial arts, frequently riding horses and practicing the sword and the bow.⁵⁷ Hyojong took extensive measures to reinforce *Eo Young Cheong* (御營廳), another central army equipped with firearms that was founded by his father, King Injo, in 1624. He designated *Eo Young Cheong* as the main army division for *pukbol* and increased its numbers to

54 Roh, "Injocho ~ byungja horan," 179-180, 201-203.

55 Yi Gyungchan 李京滌, "Chosŏn hyojongchoui pukbol undong," *Ch'onggye sahak* 清溪史學, No. 5 (1988): 177-259.

56 *Songseo seupyu* 宋書拾遺, j. 7, p. 574 as cited in Yi, 195.

57 Yi, 177-259.

21,000.⁵⁸ Created with emphasis on having superior firepower, *EoYoung Cheong* consisted mostly, if not entirely, of musketeer units since its inception.⁵⁹ In 1655, he boasted the prowess of *EoYoung Cheong* by publicly drilling its new recruits and other regional armies on the beach of the Han River. In attendance were his crowned prince and other *pukbol*-supportive officials, as well as a large multitude of spectators.⁶⁰ Hyojong also aimed to increase soldier numbers in the *Hunnyeon Dogam* to 10,000.⁶¹ Although finances didn't allow him to meet this objective, *Hunnyeon Dogam* did reach its pinnacle in 1658 with 6,350 soldiers, most of whom were musketeers.

During his reign, Korean firearms development continued with the unexpected aid of shipwrecked Dutch sailors. Jan Jansz Weltevree, who was captured in 1626, served as military advisor to Hyojong and transmitted methods of manufacturing cannons. Hendrick Hamel and his fellow Dutchmen who arrived in Chosŏn in 1653 also served in *Hunnyeon Dogam* and imparted their knowledge of musketry tactics and firearms manufacture to the Koreans.⁶² In 1656, with Hyojong's encouragement, blacksmiths in the *Hunnyeon Dogam* reproduced the muskets that the shipwrecked Dutchmen brought.⁶³ Although the records do not elaborate on the details of this enhanced musket, it was most likely a flintlock, an upgrade from the matchlock, which was then widespread in East Asia.⁶⁴

In this buildup of military expansion in Korea, the Qing sent their first request for aid in their fight on the Amur frontiers in 1654. Although the Korean Court was initially reluctant, Hyojong was probably aware that sending troops to aid the Qing on the Amur frontiers would benefit his *pukbol* campaign in the long-term. Because the Qing frowned upon Korean efforts to strengthen the military, Hyojong's *pukbol* plans were often hampered by Qing intervention. When Qing envoys visited Seoul, foreigners such as Hamel Hendrick who were highly regarded for their military expertise had to be hidden lest the Qing demand they be sent to Beijing. A number of officials in the court who had harbored anti-Qing sentiments and argued for military expansion were also

58 CWS, *Hyojong sillok*, j. 8 (Hyojong 孝宗 3:6:kisa 己巳 [1652:6:29]).

59 Roh, "Kihock nonmun," 42-43.

60 CWS, *Hyojong sillok*, j. 15 (Hyojong 孝宗 6:9:mushin 戊申 [1655:9:27]).

61 Kim, 108-111.

62 Roh, "Chosŏn hugi pyŏngsŏ," 156, 168.

63 CWS, *Hyojong sillok*, j. 17 (Hyojong 孝宗 7:7:gapja 甲子 [1656:7:18]).

64 Roh, "Chosŏn hugi pyŏngsŏ," 147.

forced to resign.⁶⁵ Fought under the Qing flag, these expeditions thus provided justification for Koreans to continue their self-strengthening. The Northern Expeditions of 1654 and 1658 should be revisited as an extension of Hyojong's grand schemes of *pukbol*.

The Northern Expedition of 1654

King Hyojong assigned Byeon Geup, the second-in-command of the Hamgyeongdo province, as the leader of the expedition.⁶⁶ One hundred musketeers along with fifty logistics personnel departed from Hoeryeong towards Ninggu Tower. They had crossed the Duman River by 26 March and boarded Qing ships on 21 April.

After the catastrophic Qing defeat under General Haise in 1652, the Qing dynasty flexed its muscles and reinforced defenses in the Ninggu Tower with new forces and appointments. The Manchus also ordered Daur villagers to move to the valley of the Sungari River, away from the Cossacks, which deprived the Russians of food and fur tribute from the natives.⁶⁷

The Manchus' active policy in the Amur pressured the Russians to adapt to a different level of challenges thus far unprecedented in their Siberian expansion. The Cossacks had expanded with an incredible speed eastward due to their overpowering superiority in firearms, which easily defeated Siberian tribesmen. The pattern of their conquest was based on raiding and tribute collection, relying on a few scattered fortresses. However, Manchu military presence in the region required an adaptation of the Muscovite strategy from plundering to a more permanent settlement.⁶⁸ By 1653, Khabarov had returned to Moscow where he presented gifts as evidence of the Amur's riches and showed the Daur and other natives to the Czar, re-affirming Muscovite authorities of the worth in conquering the Amur.⁶⁹ As Khabarov's replacement, another Cossack conqueror, Onifrey Stepanov, was appointed as voevoda. Cognizant of the increased Manchu resistance and the futility of mindless raiding, Stepanov realized he needed to establish permanent settlements to supply and sustain his people.⁷⁰

65 Yi, 177-259.

66 CWS, *Hyojong sillok*, j. 12 (Hyojong 孝宗 5:2:gaehae 癸亥 [1654:2:2])

67 Perdue, 88.

68 Mancall, 26.

69 Weale, 25.

70 Mancall, 26.

The Manchu strategy of removing natives from the Amur River basin was a critical strike against the Russians. Driven by pangs of hunger, Stepanov and his men sailed southward, down the Amur to the mouth of Sungari, where the natives had migrated to.⁷¹ On 28 April 1654, Stepanov and 370 Russians entered the Sungari River and after sailing upstream for three days, encountered a Sino-Korean fleet of about 1,000 men. The Sino-Korean fleet consisted of twenty large ships that could carry seventeen people and of one hundred and forty small boats that could carry five. The Russians brought thirty-nine ships, thirteen of which were substantially larger and more robust than any Chinese ship.⁷² Although Stepanov was greatly outnumbered, the Cossacks were used to this numerical disadvantage, for they had suppressed the vast Qing forces with their firearms. The records of this battle are not very clear, but the Russian fleet, owing to their large size and superior firepower, initially overwhelmed the Sino-Korean allies on the water. However, with Byeon Geup's astute leadership, the musketeers under his command secured a victory for the allies. Byeon Geup had suggested to Sarhuda that he set up trenches on the riverbanks to fire at the Russians from higher grounds. Agreeing to Byeon Geup's suggestion, Sarhuda gave him 300 Daurs and 300 Qing soldiers for support.

Pouring volley after volley into Cossacks who attempted to besiege the trenches, Byeon Geup's forces inflicted heavy losses on the Russians, who eventually retreated. Qing ships pursued Stepanov for the next three days, driving them past the Zeya River, where Stepanov had initially planned to establish a permanent fortress. The Korean troops then helped the Qing build an earthen fortress and returned to Chosŏn via the Ninggu Tower, completing an expedition of eighty-four days.⁷³ This first clash between the Russians and the Sino-Korean allies was not a conclusive victory for the latter. Stepanov's forces were still alive and threatening, and they continued to exert their influences in the Amur for the next few years. However, the Cossacks were certainly taken aback by the unexpected firepower of the Korean musketeers. We learn from

71 *Ibid.*, 27.

72 Park Taegun, "Han-reo in ui cheot mannam gua Chosŏngun ui heokryonggang chulbyeong," 韓露人の 첫만남과 朝鮮軍의 黑龍江出兵, *Chayu* 自由 17-7, No. 137 (1984): 27. Also see Park Taegun, "Heokryonggang sang ui daecheop 'naseon jungbul'" 黑龍江上의 大捷羅禪征伐, *Chayu* 自由 4, No. 102 (1981): 62.

73 Park, "Han-reo in ui cheot mannam," 28.

Sin Yu's account that the Russians were intimidated by the Big Heads, a nickname the Nanais gave the Koreans.⁷⁴

Byeon Geup brought a sample of Russian gunpowder back to Chosŏn and presented it as gift to Hyojong, who rewarded Byeon Geup and his fellow men generously.⁷⁵ Upon Byeon Geup's return, Hyojong inquired enthusiastically after his travels and seemed to be particularly interested in the geography of Amur and the military capabilities of the Russians and the Qing.⁷⁶ The success of Korean musketeers against the Russians in the Amur further sparked Hyojong's *pukbol* campaign.

Sin Yu and the Northern Expedition of 1658

The decisive moment in the early Sino-Russian conflicts was the battle of 1658. In 1655, a large contingent of Qing forces led by Mingan Dali besieged Stepanov's fortress at Kumarsk without much success.⁷⁷ Sarhuda realized that fighting Russians behind their fortified walls was futile and decided to meet them again on the river, similar to the battle of 1654. To reinforce his flotilla, Sarhuda established shipyards in the upper Sungari River in 1657 and embarked on a massive shipbuilding project. Request for musketeers were sent to Korea once more, this time asking for two hundred musketeers and self-sufficient provisions.⁷⁸

General Sin Yu was appointed the leader of this second expedition. An erudite man from a family of elite military status, Sin Yu was a keen, judicious general whose temperament drew a stark contrast with the cunning, avaricious Sarhuda. Sin Yu's diary entries bespeak of his observant, meticulous personality and his consideration for his men and his country.

Sin Yu arrived at Ninggu Tower on May 9th. Having received the news that the Russians were drawing near, the Manchus and the Amurian allies were already busy making preparations. The next day, Sarhuda set sail with the help of the Juchers who provided the Manchus with large, well-crafted ships. The Juchers were also familiar with the currents of the river and helped the

74 Sin Yu, 71.

75 CWS, *Hyojong sillok*, j. 13 (Hyojong 孝宗 5:7: *gyeongin* 庚寅 [1654:7:3]).

76 Ibid., j. 14 (Hyojong 孝宗 6:4: *jeongchuk* 丁丑 [1655:4:23]).

77 Mancall, 27. Also see Ravenstein, 29-30.

78 Sin Yu, 14-15.

Manchus navigate the ships.⁷⁹ After five days of voyage, the Sino-Korean allies ran into another group of Juchers who informed them that the Russians had arrived at the mouth of the Amur. The next day, the allies arrived at the mouth of the Sungari River, where villages covered the landscape. Here Sarhuda waited for fifty warships with reinforcements from Beijing and Shenyang.⁸⁰

These newly constructed warships were part of Sarhuda's grand scheme of naval strengthening to face the Russian flotilla. Shipyards were established in the upper Sungari, where the current city of Jilin stands, an area known to be bountiful in lumber resources. The Manchus employed Han Chinese shipbuilding experts to construct large warships that could stand in combat against Russian vessels. Through the experience of the 1654 battle, Sarhuda had witnessed Russian naval prowess. According to Sin Yu's investigation of captured Russian ships, they had enormous bodies with a deck made out of thick planks and enclosed by layers of dense logwood, which was so robust Sin Yu doubted they could be penetrated with *Hongyipao* ("Red Barbarian Cannon" 紅夷炮), the most powerful type of cannon based on English and Dutch models.⁸¹ Although Sin Yu seemed convinced of Russian naval superiority until the end, Sarhuda's undertaking was quite fruitful. Employing six hundred Han Chinese craftsmen and carpenters, his shipbuilding initiative continued for eight months, producing a flotilla of fifty-two ships, forty of which were large and made of thick planks and twelve of which were smaller but of the same design. After completing the construction, the shipbuilders served as mariners in the fleet. The Qing fleet also mounted fifty cannons of various sizes, which were operated by a hundred artillerymen.⁸² Having departed on May 6th, the flotilla made slow progress down the Sungari due to the desiccation of the river.

The Sino-Korean allies waited for fifteen more days at the mouth of the Sungari. While the waiting time before an imminent battle can be anxious and perturbing, this idle time generated an abundance of information in Sin Yu's diaries about the military practices of the allies. Sin Yu's diary provides valuable data about three musketry shot drills that were implemented during this time. A board 1.6 m tall and 10 cm wide was used as target and placed sixty steps from where the shot was fired. Out of the two hundred musketeers, forty hit the mark during the first drill and sixty-five during the second. The Koreans shot

79 Ibid., 67.

80 Ibid., 70.

81 Ibid., 94.

82 Ibid., 82.

three rounds during the third practice, 123 hits in total with two musketeers scoring all three times and thirteen scoring twice. Calculating an average with results from these three drills and two other ones that took place during the expedition, the Koreans scored an average of 25% accuracy, with the highest rate being 32.5% and the lowest 20%.⁸³ During the second drill, the Korean musketeers practiced alongside hundred other Qing musketeers from Ninggu tower. According to Sin Yu's observations, more than half of the Qing musketeers were not proficient in the technique and only a few of them hit the target.⁸⁴

Five days before the arrival of the warships, forty Nanais aboard three ships approached the encampment. Having heard the news of the arrival of a large Qing army, the Nanais, many of whom had served the Russians at Fort Achansk, came to re-align their allegiance with the Qing. Through the migration of these people back and forth from Russian and Qing territories, important military information from both sides seems to have leaked out. Sin Yu thought it was likely that the Cossacks knew the Big Heads were dispatched once again, for many Nanais were gossiping about this. The Nanais also told the Manchus that the Russians were about to surrender, because they had suffered significant losses due to repeated clashes with the Qing and were running short of provisions. Suspecting these informers for their duplicity, the Manchus did not believe this.⁸⁵

The long-awaited reinforcements arrived on 2 June. The combined Sino-Korean forces amounted to 1,400 soldiers, a thousand of whom were infantry units such as swordsmen, spearmen, and archers and four hundred of whom employed cannons or matchlocks.⁸⁶ After two days of re-organization and allocation of soldiers on the ships, the flotilla set sail at daybreak on 5 June. Propelled by an auspicious wind, the allies advanced swiftly towards the junction between the Amur and the Sungari.⁸⁷ On 10 June, the allies sighted Stepanov and his fleet after passing the mouth of the Amur and descending approximately 10 km further down the Amur.⁸⁸

83 *Ibid.*, 73-75.

84 *Ibid.*, 73.

85 *Ibid.*, 77-78.

86 *Ibid.*, 83.

87 *Ibid.*, 84-85.

88 *Ibid.*, 87.

The allies pursued the Russians as soon as they came into sight. Stepanov's fleet raised the sail and swiftly retreated 5 km to line up in defensive formation on the riverbank. The Cossacks were roused to action, attentively watching the Qing fleet's movement. When the allies approached within 500 meters of the Russians, both sides exchanged fierce cannon fire. At this moment, the Qing-Korean allies launched a three-pronged attack on Stepanov, pouring volley after volley of musket balls and arrows upon the Russian fleet as they closed in. The Cossacks, who would also have been firing their flintlocks in volleys, were soon overpowered and broke formation, some hiding in the ships and others abandoning the ships and fleeing inland. When Sin Yu's ship and the rest of the vanguard fleet surrounded the Russian vessels, the musketeers threw their hooks on the enemy ships and jumped over to set fire to them. However, this was halted at once, as Sarhuda wanted the Russian ships captured as booty.⁸⁹

The musketeers who had boarded the enemy ships came under immediate peril as the Cossacks who had been hiding took advantage of the allies' hesitation and retaliated. The rapid succession of Russian musketry fire caused a number of casualties in the Qing forces, killing seven Korean musketeers and many Qing infantrymen and mariners. As the Russians recoiled furiously, Sarhuda had no choice but to use fire-arrows on the Russian fleet, burning seven vessels to ashes. Meanwhile, forty Cossacks who had abandoned the ship and fled inland reclaimed one of the Qing ships that had been deserted and escaped the encirclement. As the Russians were fleeing, the Qing fleet pursued, Sin Yu's ship being the first. The allies caught up with the Cossacks and slaughtered them all. Before long, darkness fell and the allies camped on the opposite bank of the river opposite of the Russians, leaving three ships to guard what remained of the Russian fleet. Later in the night, some Russians managed to escape with a ship.⁹⁰ The battle of 1658 left two hundred and twenty Cossacks, including Stepanov, their commander-in-chief, dead. Qing casualties numbered one hundred and ten deaths and two hundred wounded. Eight Korean musketeers were killed and twenty-five wounded.⁹¹

Conclusion

Despite their small numbers, Korean musketeers undeniably played a decisive role in leading the allies to victory. During the expedition of 1654, Byun Geup's astute placement of musketeers on the riverbank devastated

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 87-90.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 95, 100

Stepanov's flotilla and earned the Korean musketeers the redoubtable reputation of Big Heads. Further, deconstructing the allies' artillery composition in the battle of 1658 shows that the success of their musketry volley tactics against the Russians can be attributed mostly to the excellence of Korean musketeers. Out of the four hundred men employing firearms, excluding one hundred Beijing gunners who were firing cannons, Koreans had twice as many musketeers as the vast Qing army. In addition, Manchu musketeers lacked proficiency in musketry techniques and paled in comparison to the highly disciplined Korean musketeers.⁹²

Chosŏn emerges as an active, militarily expanding state in the Amur frontiers. Licking its wounds after repeated foreign invasions, Chosŏn adopted new battle tactics, reformed the core of its military system, and projected its expanding military power northwards. Beneath the veil of acting in deference to Qing orders, the dispatchment of Korean musketeers to the Black Dragon River was a manifestation of the *pukbol* movement of Hyojong. Contrary to the traditionalist view of Chosŏn as a militarily passive state, Koreans had been looking for opportunities to step into Manchuria for decades before and after the Amur conflicts. When Nurhaci was temporarily debilitated following his defeat in 1626 against Ming forces, there was agitation in the Korean court around the issue of raising an army of 10,000 to conquer the Liaodong region.⁹³ Witnessing the horror of the Manchu invasions and held captive in Beijing as a Korean prince, Hyojong harbored particular animosity towards the Qing and launched an unprecedented military expansion in anticipation of *pukbol*. New army divisions were created, the size of the standing army was vastly increased, and financial reforms bolstered these expensive undertakings.

Hyojong once said to an official who was concerned about the implausibility of his *pukbol* movement:

Once a grand scheme has been drawn, the devotion to implement it becomes naturally more sincere. If your devotion becomes more sincere, your capabilities will accordingly improve. This is why I have steadfastly advocated for *pukbol*. . . if heaven allows me to live ten more years, I will, success or failure, certainly stage an uprising.⁹⁴

Hyojong didn't live long enough implement his plans. When he died unexpectedly of unknown cause in 1659, *pukbol* lost its momentum. Nonetheless, it re-surfaced in 1674 when the Qing state faltered under the

92 Ibid., 82-83.

93 Roh, "Injocho ~ byungja horan," 186.

94 *Songseo seupyu* 宋書拾遺, j. 7, p. 574 as cited in Yi, 194.

Revolt of the Three Feudatories. Hyojong's grandson, King Sukjong, assigned a special government ministry for *pukbol*, fortified northern defense lines, and increased the size of the standing army. Although the Qing's successful suppression of the revolt also thwarted Chosŏn's plans, Chosŏn was clearly an active military force, a crouching tiger ready to plunge into Northeast China when opportunities emerged.

Korea was an expanding gunpowder nation, a proto-empire striving to find its niche in Northeast Asia. Although Hyojong's *pukbol* movement was hindered by Qing intervention in Korean military affairs, it regained its strength through the experience of the two Northern Expeditions. For one, the expeditions reassured the Koreans of the excellence of their musketeers. Big Heads commanded fear and respect amongst not only the Manchus but also the Juchers and the Russians. Secondly, through these expeditions, Hyojong was also able to send Korean troops to survey Manchuria, which would otherwise have been construed as challenging to Qing hegemony. This brought in valuable information about international relations at the Amur frontiers, the conditions of the belligerents' military power, and the habits and martial capabilities of other ethnic peoples living in the Amur River valley. Finally, clashing with the Muscovite empire – which had superior firearms, siege tactics, and fortress designs – brought stimulus to the Qing-Korean allies. Adapting to the challenges on the frontier, Sarhuda launched a large shipbuilding project, deported Daur natives from areas of contact with Cossacks, and mustered a large multi-ethnic army from the Qing's neighbors. More importantly, technological transfers also emerged from these interactions. Byeon Geup brought back the gunpowder of the Russians and Sin Yu, after weeks of pleading with Sarhuda, was able to return with a European flintlock.⁹⁵

Taking a step back and tracing the technological transfers that shaped this conflict reveals a complex web of military adaptations. The first spark of military revolution emanated in Ming China and spread like fire to its neighboring states. When Europeans took up the baton, fierce inter-state competition relayed gunpowder technology rapidly across the European continent with enhancements and modifications. Military revolution soon bounced back to East Asia. European maritime expansion carried Portuguese cannons and matchlocks to Japan and Dutch sailors to Korea. Through extensive royal support, gunpowder technology fueled the engine of Korean military

95 Yi Kang-chil 李康七, "Chosŏn hyojongcho naseonjungbulgwa pi'a jochong'e daehan sogo" 朝鮮孝宗朝羅禪征伐斗被我鳥銃에 한小考, *Komunhwa* 古文化 20, No. 20 (1982): 15-28.

innovations throughout the seventeenth century and engendered wide-ranging reforms across the Korean army and, even broader, Chosŏn society.

Within Korea alone, the international character of this revolution was conspicuous. In the *Hunnyeon dogam*, Jan Jansz Weltevrete, a Dutch sailor who served as military advisor to Hyojong, commanded other Dutch musketeers, Chinese castaways, and surrendered Japanese soldiers. Weltevrete transmitted sophisticated cannon manufacturing skills to Koreans and Korean blacksmiths enhanced the efficiency of Korean muskets by copying European models brought over by the Dutchmen.⁹⁶ Within half a century of the introduction of muskets into Chosŏn, the Koreans had probably the most professionally drilled musketeers in East Asia.

Military revolution was transnational and contagious. Nothing spread as rapidly as gunpowder technology in the early modern period because nothing was more life threatening and demanding than being held at gunpoint. Because of this infectious nature, military revolution, fueled by challenge-response adaptations, was able to travel back and forth across the Eurasian continent. Through these cross-cultural, multi-national interactions, military revolution rendered different parts of the world increasingly closer and familiar with one another. If we were to argue that military revolution was the catalyst of modernity, it should be the polycentric and universal characteristics of this phenomenon, rather than its culture- or region-specific distinctiveness, that should be considered truly revolutionary and remarkable in global history.

96 Yun Haeng-im 尹行恇, *Seokjaego* 碩齋稿, j. 9 *Haedong waesa* 海東外史, the National Library of Korea, Seoul, Korea, p. 23-24.

Jesuit Missionaries and the Transmission of Christianity and European Knowledge in China

HUI LI

“It is necessary to be barbarous with the barbarians, polite with peoples of intelligence, of the most ordinary life in Europe, austere to excess among the penitents of the Indies, decently dressed in China and half-nude in the forests of Madurai.”¹ –Louis Le Comte, French Jesuit missionary in China (1688-1691)

The image of the Jesuit as a shape-shifter, has been argued to be instrumental in the transmission of European knowledge and Christianity to late imperial China, especially the period from late Ming to early Qing. However, when studying the impact of the Jesuits on China, it is important to consider four questions. How successful were the Jesuits at passing on scientific knowledge from Europe to China? How successful were they at converting the population in China? What factors led to their successes? And if they only achieved limited success, what obstacles blocked the path to accomplishing their goals?

Jesuit missionaries in late imperial China took great effort toward achieving their goals in the foreign country. A focus on the accommodation policy of the Jesuits does not provide a full picture of late imperial missionary work. By the early Qing period, accommodation no longer produced the effect it once had under the late Ming. The political and social circumstances at the time of the missionary works were unlike those of the earlier Ming times or those of previous dynasties. The Chinese were deeply untrusting of foreigners, and the activities of the Portuguese and Spanish merchants in south China exacerbated the xenophobic attitude of the natives. This coupled with the fact that the Chinese viewed all foreigners as the same, made life for the Jesuits, especially in the beginning, extremely difficult. The late Ming was more open to the different philosophies and religions because of political fragmentation within the empire. While the early Qing was also heavily fragmented, the ethnic differences between the rulers and the subjects made the emperors look increasingly toward traditional Confucianism to gain legitimacy and support. In the middle of the seventeenth century was the break and transition from Ming to Qing, from Han Chinese to Manchurian rule. Jesuit missionaries remained in

¹ Louis Le Comte, cited in Florench C. Hsia, *Sojourners in a Strange Land: Jesuits and Their Scientific Missions in Late Imperial China*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 1.

China and continued to be appreciated for their scientific and technological contribution. However, the impact of the political and social fragmentation on the two dynasties determined how the emperors treated the Jesuits, which, in turn, affected Jesuit impact on Chinese society. In addition, underlying differences between European and Chinese philosophies were obstacles that the Jesuits had difficulty overcoming. While the Jesuit China missionaries are most remembered for their accomplishments in science and religion at the imperial court, their actual successes are in fact minimal, due to a combination of political and social circumstances as well as the underlying differences between European and Chinese philosophies that made it difficult for many Chinese to accept European knowledge. The relatively limited successes that were accomplished could be attributed not only to the Jesuit ability to adapt to Chinese culture and environment, but also to the fortuitous arrival of the Europeans at a time of political and social instability in China that led the Chinese scholar-officials to seek answers in other available religions.

Ignatius of Loyola founded the Society of Jesus, the institution to which the Jesuits belonged, in 1540 with the aim of spreading the Catholic faith through the Gospels. As a result of the Protestant Reformation of the early 1500s, the Catholic Church lost many followers to the Protestant Church. In response, the Catholic Church launched the Counter-Reformation, sending missionaries out into the world to convert people. Among the primary targets for Catholic Church was China. The Jesuit China mission was founded by Francis Xavier, who, like Ignatius of Loyola, was from the Basque region of Spain. Although Francis Xavier's wish to enter China was never fulfilled, his efforts inspired fellow Jesuits. The first Jesuit missionaries in late imperial China arrived in the southern provinces of the empire in the mid-sixteenth century. For nearly 100 years, the Jesuits would hold a monopoly in Christian missionary services in China. Of the missionaries who arrived in China before the eighteenth century, the most famous were Matteo Ricci (1552-1610), known to the Chinese as Li Madou, (利玛竇) and Johann Adam Schall von Bell (1592-1666), called Tang Ruowang (汤若望). These Europeans in China undertook the arduous task of converting a native population that was suspicious of foreigners. China, unlike other places to which the Jesuits were sent, had a long history and was proud of its culture. Even during the late Ming era, China was still a strong country, and the most populous in the world. The society of Jesus had a policy of accommodation, but in China, this was complicated by the problem of choosing which elements of the Chinese culture were necessary to adapt to and which

ones could be rejected, for rejection of the essential elements of the Chinese culture would risk dismissal of the Christian faith by the natives.²

When Ricci and his fellow Jesuits arrived in China in 1582, the Ming dynasty was in decline. Culturally, the late Ming period had a looser sense of Confucian orthodoxy than it did in the beginning of the dynasty or during the previous dynasties. As the publication of the novel *Journey to the West (Xi You Ji)* by Wu Chengen demonstrated, this period was willing to combine various philosophical teachings and religions. For example, the *literati* identified with Confucianism, which became associated with status and power. At the same time, these Confucian scholars did not find it contradictory to also participate in Buddhist or Daoist rituals.³ With respect to science, late Ming was lagging behind contemporary Europeans. The astronomical advances of the Yuan dynasty's astronomy system contributed to the relative stability of the Ming calendar for almost 200 years. However, after three hundred years of use from the Yuan dynasty onward, the discrepancies between the Yuan calendar and the solar year was politically significant enough for the topic to appear on the civil service exam. In 1580, the Henan provincial examiner proposed a policy question to discuss astrology, mathematical astronomy, and the calendar on the provincial civil service exam.⁴ Chinese science had peaked during the Song dynasty in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. However, by the time of the arrival of the Jesuits, the early advances in science had been forgotten.

Benjamin Elman pointed out that, as the sixteenth century drew to a close, Ming China was not waiting for the Jesuits' arrival. It had already closed its doors on the world over a century earlier. The Jesuits were not the first Europeans to arrive in China. The Portuguese merchants who settled in the southern city of Macao preceded them. Macao had since then become the gateway into a closed China, and it was in this Portuguese colony that the Jesuits first settled in China. Relations between the Chinese and the Portuguese did not run smoothly, however, as evidenced by the wall built to separate the mainland from the Portuguese colonial area. Although the Portuguese merchants were allowed to sail to the southern economic center of Canton, the imperial government discouraged other forms of contact between the Chinese

² D. E. Mungello, *The Great Encounter of China and the West, 1500-1800*, (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2009), 19.

³ *Ibid.*, 20-22.

⁴ Benjamin A. Elman, *On Their Own Terms: Science in China, 1550-1900*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 23, 64.

and the Europeans.⁵ The Portuguese “vulgar habits” raised the suspicions of the Chinese and made the environment considerably more difficult for the Jesuit missionaries to accomplish their goal. In fact, Francis Xavier had unsuccessfully tried to enter China several times. The Jesuits who came after Francis Xavier were admitted into China three times, but had failed to establish a church due to suspicions against them.⁶

Matteo Ricci wrote of the Chinese attitude toward foreigners: “The Chinese are very anti-foreigners, especially afraid of Christians, because they found that they were surrounded by the Portuguese and Castilian (whom the Chinese think are militaristic).”⁷ The reason for this treatment toward the Jesuits was that, as Jonathan Spence put it, late imperial China had a “serene indifference to foreigners.”⁸ The Chinese did not see the differences between foreigners but rather had grouped them together simply as people who were not native to China. This was attested by the attitude of the Wanli emperor toward the Jesuits. The emperor bracketed them into the category of *huihui*, a term used most frequently to describe the Muslims of the northwestern region of China, but had also been used for the communities of Jews in China and the descendants of the Nestorian Christians who still lived in that region.⁹ For the Jesuits and foreigners as a whole in China, the most difficult lesson was to learn to be hated.¹⁰

Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Society of Jesus, addressed his followers in 1553: “We should become all things to all, so that we may gain all for Christ.”¹¹ The Jesuits in China did not forget these words. A recent biography of Matteo Ricci by Michela Fontana noted that Matteo Ricci became Chinese in China so that he could appeal to the population.¹² Ricci himself felt

5 Michela Fontana, *Matteo Ricci, A Jesuit in the Ming Court*, (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2011), 28.

6 Louis J. Gallagher, J., trans., *China in the sixteenth Century: The Journals of Matthew Ricci: 1583-1610*, (New York: Random House, 1953), 139, 275.

7 [法] 安田朴, 谢和耐等著, 耿昇译, 《明清间入华耶稣会士和中西文化交流》, 巴蜀书社 1993 年 7 月版, 96. Translated from French. Etiemble & Jacque Gernet, *East and West Cultural Exchange and Missionaries*.

8 Jonathan D. Spence, *The Memory Palace of Matteo Ricci*, (New York: Elisabeth Sifton Books, 1984), 122.

9 *Ibid.*, 122, 95.

10 *Ibid.*, 50.

11 Hsia, *Sojourners in a Strange Land* 1.

12 Fontana, *Matteo Ricci* 34-36.

that he and his companions were able to successfully convert some Chinese scholars because they were able to adapt to the Chinese environment by studying the Chinese language, writing and the customs of the people. When Matteo Ricci went to meet the magistrates in the city of Nanchang, the capital of Jiangxi province, he did so while wearing the silk robe customary for official visits and a hat that was distinctive of the *literati*.¹³ Mungello in his book *Great Encounter of China and the West* placed great emphasis on the role Jesuit accommodation played in the conversion of the Chinese. He argued that subsequent Jesuit missionaries followed Ricci's method of reaching the Chinese people. According to Mungello, if Christianity were to thrive in China, it could not be seen as an "exotic, foreign religion" but instead would have to become something not only familiar to the Chinese but also "a force that transformed Chinese culture." Through their accommodation method, the Jesuits achieved remarkable success in converting prominent scholar-officials, the most famous of whom were Xu Guangqi (徐光启), Yang Tingyun (杨廷筠), and Li Zhizao (李之藻).¹⁴ Florence Hsia also agreed with Mungello and painted a picture of the Jesuit as someone who put on different faces in different environments, describing the multiple roles of the Jesuits in late Ming China, including those of a mathematician, alchemist, and Mandarin.

Jesuits in China played the unique role of introducing the West to the East. They learned to speak Chinese fluently and to write classical Chinese, the language used by the scholarly class. Although they had arrived in China with the purpose of bringing the Christian message to the vast empire, the Jesuits were remembered, especially by the Chinese, more for their role in transmitting contemporary European science to the foreign land than for their religious messages. Science was, as the foreigners realized, the best way through which they could impress the Chinese *literati*. In doing this, the Jesuits hoped that the Chinese would become interested in the religion that they had brought with them as well. Science was the bait that the missionaries used to guide the natives to the Christian faith. The most important goal for the Jesuits was the conversion of the people. Florence Hsia had remarked that if the Chinese scholars were more interested in French or Italian cuisines than in astronomy or mathematics, the primary focus in modern scholarship on the role of the Jesuits would have been the missionaries as chefs.¹⁵ Thus the subjects that the Chinese

¹³Gallagher, *China in the sixteenth Century* 154.

¹⁴Mungello, *The Great Encounter* 19-21.

¹⁵Hsia, *Sojourners in a Strange Land* 5.

were most interested in determined general areas on which the European missionaries tried to build up their expertise.

While it is undisputed that the Jesuits had a remarkable ability to adapt, a mere focus on accommodation leaves out other influential factors that contributed to Jesuit success and failure in China. The political situation in late Ming and early Qing China, the treatment of the Jesuits by the emperors, and the social problems China was facing played important roles. During the late Ming period, the Jesuits were able to befriend scholar-officials who supported and protected them. After 1670, however, the Jesuits depended on the patronage of the emperor instead of the Chinese *literati*.¹⁶ They had a difficult time separating themselves from the Portuguese and Spanish merchants who had left a bad impression of Europeans on the Chinese. As Ricci wrote to his former teacher Fabio de Fabii, “The Chinese place absolutely no trust in any foreign country, and thus they allow no one at all to enter and reside here unless they undertake never again to return home, as is the case with us.”¹⁷ In addition, it is important to realize that the converted Confucian scholars in the late Ming period were mostly those scholar-officials who were not against Confucianism, but rather ones who believed that Christianity could be used to supplement Confucianism. These scholars also believed that the science the Europeans brought was originally from China, but had been lost by the 1600s. These scholars argued that they were now, with the help of the West, rediscovering and recovering what was originally theirs.

The Chinese author Yu Sanle placed greater emphasis on the Jesuits’ role in scientific transmission than on the history of the Catholic Church in China. Yu remarked that the establishment of the Catholic Church in China led to the introduction of science. In other words, the establishment of the Church was the precedent and the cause that directly led to the transmission of scientific knowledge.¹⁸ Certainly the Jesuits themselves never saw their mission that way. Matteo Ricci had made it clear in his journals that his ultimate goal in undertaking such a difficult journey to China was to convert the Chinese, and in the words of fellow Jesuit China missionary Nicola Trigault, “to garner into the

¹⁶ Elman, *On Their Own Terms* 148.

¹⁷ Spence, *The Memory Palace* 54.

¹⁸ Yu Sanle 余三乐, [Zhong xi wen hua jiao liu de li shi jian zheng : Ming mo Qing chu Beijing Tian zhu jiao tang 中西文化交流的历史见证 : 明末清初北京天主教堂](#), ([Guangzhou 广州 : Guangdong ren min chu ban she 广东人民出版社, 2006](#)), 3.

granaries of the Catholic Church a rich harvest from this initial sowing of the gospel seed.”¹⁹ Jonathan Spence’s book on Ricci’s memory palace also demonstrated that the images and Chinese characters that Ricci put into his memory palace were for teaching the Chinese about Christian principles. However, Yu’s view shows that the areas in which the Jesuits’ contribution was greatest, science and mathematics, were the ones that the were most valued by the Chinese. In fact, when the Kangxi emperor allowed the missionaries to return from exile in Canton in 1671, he refused their request to spread Christianity, but continued to use their Western methods in areas of science and mathematics.²⁰ In 1692, Kangxi issued the Edict of Tolerance of Christianity in 1692 for the Jesuits’ contributions to cartography, astronomy, and military developments. Because they had not done anything suspicious, they were allowed to stay in China and Christianity was to be tolerated in China, just as the Buddhist monks or Daoist priests were tolerated in China.²¹ This edict indicated that the Chinese valued the Jesuits’ knowledge of science over their religion, and that this tolerance of Christianity was issued as a reward for their introduction of useful Western science to the empire.

The accommodation policy of the Jesuits was an important factor in their success of transferring scientific and technological knowledge. Through science, preaching of the Christian religion could also be accomplished. In order to maximize their success, the Jesuits followed Matteo Ricci’s three-step procedure to winning over the Chinese. Ricci suggested focusing on the *literati* elite, accommodating to the Chinese lifestyle, and combining the religious message with elements of Western science and technology.²² The decision to focus on the elite was made because communication was convenient with the literate class once the Jesuits mastered written classical Chinese. It would have been much more difficult for them to begin their missionary work among the poor, because many were illiterate and there was a vast number of different dialects. Moreover, the influence of the elite stretched further than that of the ordinary peasant in China. The missionaries had realized that with their small number, it was impossible to convert the entire population without the help of influential people.²³

19 Gallagher, *China in the sixteenth Century* 4.

20 Elman, *On Their Own Terms* 144.

21 Yu Sanle 余三乐, 253-254.

22 Harriet T. Zurndorfer, “Science Without Modernization: China’s First Encounter With Useful And Reliable Knowledge From Europe,” Paper for Fourth Global Economic History Network Workshop, www2.lse.ac.uk/economicHistory/Research/.

Of course, a key to their winning over the elite was cultural accommodation, which allowed Christianity to fit into the Chinese culture. The Jesuit missionaries who first arrived in China mistakenly believed that identifying themselves with the Buddhist monks was the best way to appeal to the Chinese. However, they quickly realized that this was not true, as Buddhism by the late Ming period had lost the elevated status that it had once held in the previous dynasties. In fact, Buddhism was one religion that the imperial officials tried to condemn. The Europeans realized that in order to appeal to the Chinese scholar-officials, they had to become Confucian scholars as well.²⁴ They accommodated the Chinese culture with regard to traditional Chinese rites. In the eighteenth century, they stood by the Chinese in the Rites Controversy, the debate on whether traditional Chinese practices, such as rites dedicated to Confucius and the cult of ancestors, were in conflict with the Christian religion. Two centuries before the Rites Controversy, the Christian attitude in China, dominated by the Jesuits, toward traditional Chinese rites was that they were civil practices rather than religious rites. Furthermore, Confucianism was described as the “sect of literati” and was therefore considered compatible with the Christian doctrine.²⁵ While the Jesuits refused to accept the blending of the three teachings of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism as was typical of late Ming, they did use the synthetic method of the Ming. Instead of combining the three teachings, they sought to tie Christianity to Confucianism.²⁶ Because of this, the Jesuits tried to reconcile Confucianism with Christianity. This is best shown by the Matteo Ricci’s *The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven* (天主實義), a book he had written in Classical Chinese, where he equated the Chinese term “Lord of Heaven” with the Christian term “God.” Ricci established that there was not a conflict between Confucianism and Christianity, since Confucianism was a philosophy rather than religion. For example, he reconciled between the Confucian perspective that man is by nature good with the Christian view of the man’s wickedness by explaining that human beings, when created by the Lord of Heaven, were by nature good. If they had let reason be the master of them and not be led astray by evil, they were essentially good and not evil.²⁷ In

23 Ashley E. Millar, “The Jesuits as Knowledge Brokers Between Europe and China (1582-1773): Shaping European Views of the Middle Kingdom,” Working Paper N. 105/07,

<http://www2.lse.ac.uk/economicHistory/workingpapers/economicHistory/2007.aspx>.

24 Mungello, *The Great Encounter* 20.

25 Fontana, *Matteo Ricci* 61.

26 Mungello, *The Great Encounter* 23.

27 Matteo Ricci, S.J., transl. by Douglas Lancashire and Peter Hu Kuo-chen, S.J., *The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven*, (St. Louis, MI: The Institute of Jesuit Sources and the Ricci Institute

choosing the Greek Septuagint Bible as chronology, the Jesuits again demonstrated the need to accommodate Chinese history. The Latin Vulgate was problematic for Chinese chronology, thus the Jesuits received papal permission to use the Septuagint instead to fit China into universal history.²⁸

It was in the sciences that the Jesuits were most able to find followers, although the Europeans hoped that their advanced knowledge would attract the native Chinese to Christianity. When the Jesuits found that the Chinese Confucian scholars were interested in mathematics, astronomy, alchemy, and cartography, they sought to present themselves as experts on such matters so that the Chinese would realize the backwardness of their own science and be astonished by the Western way. This was the third of Matteo Ricci's guidelines. What Yu Sanle regarded as Matteo Ricci's greatest accomplishment was his translation with Xu Guangqi of the first six books of Euclid's *Elements* into Chinese in 1610 in Beijing.²⁹ According to Ricci himself, the translation of Euclid formed a good occasion to bring the "Chinese arrogance" in that the most important *literati* were not able to understand a work written in their own language.³⁰ In translating the work, Ricci and his helpers chose the title especially as a reflection of Chinese perception of math. *Jihe Yuanben* (幾何原本) literally did not mean geometry elements at the time. Rather, math was the "study of magnitudes and numbers" to the Chinese, and the word *jihe* 幾何 referred to discrete quantities or magnitudes.³¹

The missionaries recognized the areas of science that most fascinated the imperial officials, and in those areas, as always, accommodation benefited the Jesuits. Map-making was one of the areas in which the Jesuits had a greater impact. Ming cartographers were knowledgeable about Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, and the Arabian peninsula after the early Ming voyages headed by Zheng He from 1405 to 1433. In Ricci's *mappa mundi* printed in 1584, the Jesuit improved the existing Ming geographical knowledge. Ricci's description of the Earth forced Ming cartographers to revise their understanding of the geography of the world. Through Ricci's world map, Chinese elite realized for the first time the position of China with respect to the rest of the world. Ricci introduced the method of latitudes and longitudes in map-making as well as the fact that the Earth is a sphere. Ricci's map and its

for Chinese Studies, 1985), 351.

28 Elman, *On Their Own Terms* 140.

29 Yu Sanle 余三乐, 9.

30 Peter M. Engelfriet, *Euclid in China*, (Boston: Brill, 1998), 289.

31 *Ibid.*, 1401-141.

later editions were included in geographical works of late Ming scholars, and the first Chinese map of the world printed in 1593 showed the influence of *mappa mundi*. Despite Ricci's introduction of innovative concepts in cartography, traditional Chinese techniques remained the most influential throughout late imperial China. Chinese maps still employed the grid system of Luo Hongxian rather than the European latitudinal and longitudinal system. And despite showing influence of European maps, world maps in the Chinese empire continued to represent China in the center, as was traditionally done. This was the case even when the Jesuits participated in the process of making the maps, because the missionaries understood the importance of accommodation.³² In the 1593 Chinese edition of the world map, for instance, China was placed in the center with European lands drawn along the edges of the map.³³

In addition to cartography, Jesuits were recognized for their revision of the Chinese calendar. Having an accurate calendar to organize specific economic, political and religious rituals was important to the Mandate of Heaven of the Chinese emperors, as it could affirm the cosmic order and demonstrate the authority of the ruler over his subject. By the 1580s, the Chinese calendar was already a matter of concern, although its problems were not as bad as the Jesuits had claimed they were. European calendars, especially after the Gregorian reforms that produced the Gregorian calendar in 1582, were more accurate. The Ming emperor realized that the missionaries could help Chinese with correcting the calendar.³⁴ But even with regard to calendars, the Europeans were becoming more adapting. Johann Adam Schall von Bell was in charge of the Astro-calendric Bureau that was responsible for choosing the days for rituals as well as for reading astrological signs to aid with imperial decisions. Schall had adapted the Chinese way of reading for cosmic signs during the reign of the Shunzhi emperor. When the Dalai Lama planned to visit Beijing in 1652, Schall's bureau was responsible for reading the astrological signs in order to determine whether the young Shunzhi emperor should meet the Dalai Lama in person at the border of the capital and escort him to Beijing. Dorgon, the emperor's uncle, wanted the emperor to escort the Dalai Lama to Beijing. However, Han officials at court opposed this arrangement. Schall's reservations about such meeting made him send a memorial to the emperor that "sunspots had appeared as an alert to the court that the Dalai Lama was

32 Elman, *On Their Own Terms* 129.

33 *Ibid.*, 127-130.

34 *Ibid.*, 64-65.

obscuring the emperor's radiance."³⁵ This report was based on the reading that the "planet Venus rivaled the brightness of the sun" on the day before and that a "threatening meteor" was seen in the region of the polestar that was equated with the imperial court.³⁶ A refusal to meet the Dalai Lama at the border of the capital meant that the emperor did not hold Buddhism in such high favor. Thus, Schall's goals were likely to have been to lower public esteem for Buddhism so that Christianity could be promoted.³⁷ The science and mathematics knowledge that the Jesuits introduced to late Ming and Early Qing China did impress the Chinese, certainly more so than the religion of Christianity, but through this focus on science, Ricci and his fellow Jesuits were able to achieve limited success in converting some of the scholarly class.

The successes of the Jesuit missionaries in passing on scientific and religious knowledge, however, depended not only on their own accommodation policies, but also on the political and social situation of China at the time of their arrival. China in late Ming was politically and religiously fragmented, although it was more likely to combine the teachings from multiple religions. The Jesuits arrived at a time of political and social instability in China, during which the learned class had difficulty keeping the orthodox Confucianism that scholars of the past had done for centuries. Due to this instability, the *literati* found solace in other religions, including Buddhism, Daoism, and also Christianity.³⁸ Officially, there was a tendency to condemn Buddhism and, to a certain degree, Daoism. Both religions by the late 1500s no longer occupied the strong position that they had held in the previous centuries. Interestingly, because the first decades of the Jesuit mission in China coincided with a Buddhist revival that attracted the *literati's* sympathy but official condemnation, the Ming authorities did not try to stop the Jesuit efforts to negate Buddhism.³⁹ The Jesuits benefited from the political condemnation against Buddhism. Since they stood on the official side, they avoided the official condemnation of Christianity and even received tacit support from the government on their criticism of Buddhism.

The instability in China ironically helped to spread the knowledge of the Jesuits. During the last years of the Ming dynasty, constant strife led the imperial government to employ those Jesuits who had much more advanced

35 *Ibid.*, 139.

36 *Ibid.*, 139.

37 *Ibid.*, Terms 138-139.

38 Etienne & Gernet, 145.

39 Zurndorfer, "Science Without Modernization".

knowledge on military technology. The missionaries thus found another way through which they could engage in the transfer of scientific knowledge and, through that, hopefully religion.⁴⁰ During the Qing, the Jesuits, having already won recognition in the previous dynasty for their scientific knowledge, won approval and patronage from the Qing emperors as well. Benjamin Elman noted that the two dynasties of Ming and Qing treated Jesuits differently.⁴¹ During the late Ming, the emperor did not take a personal interest to the Jesuits, so that the foreigners were able to go into the *literati* circle and befriend prominent scholar-officials. Through this, some officials were converted to Christianity. However, during the early Qing period, Jesuits had a much more personal relationship with the Shunzhi and Kangxi emperors. The Shunzhi emperor was so comfortable with Schall that the scholar Chen Mingxia wrote a poem dedicated the Shunzhi and Schall.⁴² Kangxi had a close relationship with Ferdinand Verbiest, who translated many Western works into Manchu. Both the emperor and the Jesuit shared an interest in science and Verbiest would give the young emperor daily mathematics lessons.⁴³ Such close relationships also meant that the emperors had a closer watch on the Jesuits, and because they were now part of the imperial circle, they could no longer reach out to the *literati* and were dependent exclusively on the patronage of the Manchu emperor. Under the first two Qing emperors, Jesuits such as Schall and Verbiest held high government posts. The Ming and the Qing differed in how they viewed the Jesuits. Both dynasties appreciated the knowledge of the Jesuits, but because the missionaries were farther away from the emperor during the late Ming period, they were free to form bonds and friendships with the government officials. This did not mean that the Ming felt the Jesuits were unimportant however, for when Ricci passed away in 1610, the Wanli emperor allowed for the 58-year-old priest to be buried in Beijing, a high honor for a foreigner.⁴⁴ During the Qing, the Westerners were less free to move through the *literati* circle because the emperor tended to be closer to the Jesuits. Losing favor with the emperor meant they had no supporters to save them.

Despite their efforts, the Jesuits in China had minimal success. They had managed to convert very few of the scholarly class to Christianity. The Jesuit effect on scientific development was much greater, yet even here, there were few long-lasting changes. First of all, the science that the Jesuits introduced was

40 Yu Sanle 余三乐, 89.

41 Elman, *On Their Own Terms* 148-149.

42 Yu Sanle 余三乐, 148.

43 Fontana, *Matteo Ricci* 288-289.

44 Fontana, *Matteo Ricci* 273.

more sophisticated than the contemporary Chinese science knowledge. However, the Jesuits stayed for a long time in China without going back to Europe. As Europe was advancing its sciences in their absence, the Jesuits could not have brought the most up-to-date scientific and technological discoveries. Secondly, other than the areas of science that the Chinese found most useful in administering the empire, China did not accept most of the European knowledge brought to them by the Jesuits.⁴⁵ In mathematics, cartography, and official calendar, the Chinese found European techniques and concepts helpful because this knowledge eased the taxation and census process, aided in the defense of the empire, and made sure that the empire was in harmony with Heaven. The combination of the two factors determined that modern European science would not enter China until centuries later. The Western calendar on which the new revised Chinese calendar was based was gradually replaced by the Muslim version. The members of the bureaucracy began to fear that Catholicism would undermine the foundation of the Chinese state should the Jesuits continue to be influential. In the later years of Kangxi's reign, the Jesuits were exiled, then pardoned and allowed to come back to Beijing, before finally being banned by Kangxi's successor, Yongzheng.⁴⁶

Even when the Jesuit missionaries did succeed in transmitting knowledge, this knowledge was often considered by the Chinese to be of Chinese origin. The term *li shi qiu ye* 礼失求野 literally translates into "retrieving lost rites from barbarians." The supporters of Jesuits often used this term to defend their decision to follow the Westerners. For Xu Guangqi and his fellow converts, Christianity provided a chance to supplement Confucianism and to rid of the incorrect ways of Buddhism.⁴⁷ Western learning, then, was a way to help the Chinese rediscover what they had lost, but what was rightfully theirs. In his preface to the 1611 edition of *Jihe Yuanben*, Xu lamented of the knowledge relevant to making an accurate calendar, that of measurement and numbers, which had existed in the earlier dynasties but which had by the late Ming period disappeared.⁴⁸ Xu's preface did not simply result from ethnocentricity. Historical evidence demonstrated that there has been old

45 Etienne & Gernet, 72-73.

46 Fontana, *Matteo Ricci* 287-293.

47 Liu Yunhua 刘耘华, [Quan shi de yuan huan : Ming mo Qing chu chuan jiao shi dui ru jia jing dian de jie shi ji qi ben tu hui ying](#) 诠释的圆环 : 明末清初传教士对儒家经典的解释及其本土回应, (Beijing 北京 : Beijing Da Xue Chu Ban She 北京大学出版社, 2005), 322-323.

48 Engelfriet, *Euclid in China*, 291-292.

scientific knowledge in China that had disappeared by the end of the Ming Dynasty. One was the algebra of the Song period, the *tian yuan shu*, which by the time of Jesuit arrival still existed but was no longer understood by the Chinese *literati*.⁴⁹ Thus, from the Chinese perspective, the science and technology that the Jesuit brought with them were not new, but were rather old Chinese knowledge that had been lost or left incomprehensible by the Ming and Qing times due to instability.

One cause for the hostile Chinese reception of scientific knowledge from the West and Christianity was the fundamental difference between the Chinese and European learning and philosophies. Ricci and the Jesuits tried to accommodate Christianity to fit Chinese culture. However, by the time of Kangxi, the Chinese scholars were beginning to realize that underneath the carefully constructed bridge between Christianity and Confucianism laid extremely different perspectives. European concept about the order of the cosmos was one of linear chronology with divine providence. The cosmos was made up of four elements: air, fire, earth, and water. The Chinese, on the other hand, thought the cosmos was designed around an “eternally evolving Way”. The interaction of yin and yang sets the motion of cosmic change. Instead of four elements, the Chinese believed in five phases: earth, metal, fire, water, and wood.⁵⁰ The Chinese concept of *qi* as encompassing all matter worried the Jesuits, because such concept did not leave any room for the unlimited spiritual power of God.⁵¹ When Ferdinand Verbiest tried to obtain Kangxi’s permission to print his *Studies to Fathom Principles*, he was refused because the European learning through the method of inference, as taught by Aristotle, championed in the book was viewed as inappropriate for Chinese learning. Furthermore, Verbiest stressed the importance of the brain as the storage of knowledge and memory. This concept contradicted the classical Chinese belief that the heart is connected to the mind and is the determinant in intelligence.⁵² Therefore, Chinese scholars believed that should the Jesuits and Christianity be allowed to remain in China, their Western perspective could shake the foundations of the Chinese empire.⁵³ The missionaries had taken great effort to try to explain to the *literati* the scientific findings in Europe, but because the Chinese had experienced a different culture and philosophy, they could not understand this knowledge.

49 *Ibid.*, 99.

50 Elman, *On Their Own Terms* 118.

51 *Ibid.*, 121.

52 *Ibid.*, 145-147.

53 *Ibid.*, 146. Also see Etiemble & Gernet, 77.

The commonly held view after Lord McCartney's visit to China in the eighteenth century was that China was an arrogant nation. While this was true and the Chinese were very ethnocentric, especially since they believed that China was in the middle of the world, the Chinese refusal to accept Western knowledge, despite knowing that it is more advanced in many ways than the native Chinese knowledge, could have also stemmed from political situations. The very factors that had given the Jesuits a boost in their efforts to convert the Chinese also at the same time limited Jesuit success. In the eighteenth century, the Qianlong emperor faced the difficult task of maintaining harmony among the people while simultaneously promoting the military culture of the Manchus. He sought to present himself to his Chinese subjects as "thoroughly Confucian and ethnically even-handed."⁵⁴ His grandfather, Kangxi, may have met similar problems, and his response to these difficulties may have explained the fate of the Catholic Church in the 17th century. As a young emperor, Kangxi was close to the Jesuit priest Verbiest because he realized that Verbiest's knowledge of mathematics and astronomy was essential to the calendar's accuracy and therefore, the cultural legitimacy of the new dynasty.⁵⁵ However, the emperor was also feeling pressures from his officials to exile the Westerners, who could disturb the natural order of things in the empire. Kangxi, despite his strong interest in science, had to emphasize that the young Manchu dynasty did have the Mandate of Heaven, and that despite the ethnicity of the ruling family, the empire itself was thoroughly Confucian. The best way to do this was to distance himself from the Jesuits, whom the Han Chinese officials were suspicious of.

Studies on Jesuits in China have often focused on their ability and willingness to accommodate to Chinese culture and philosophy. Jesuits were known for their adaptation skills when in foreign lands. This reached an even higher level when they arrived in China, because China, as a nation with a long history, was unwelcoming toward foreigners. In order to be accepted by the Chinese, the Jesuits found that they must adapt to the Chinese way of life. The Jesuits themselves were confident of their successes in both impressing the Chinese with their knowledge in science and technology and in their efforts of converting the people. Historians have often attributed the accomplishments to the accommodation method.

⁵⁴ Joanna Waley-Cohen, "China and Western Technology in the Late Eighteenth Century," *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 98, No. 5 (Dec., 1993), 1527.

⁵⁵ Elman, *On Their Own Terms* 143.

While the contribution of accommodation is undisputed, what truly determined the success of the Jesuits in China was in fact up to the Chinese themselves. The Chinese accepted from the missionaries the knowledge that they felt was most useful to them and were unreceptive toward those European concepts that they perceived as of no use to them. The political and social dilemma of the last years of the Ming and early years of the Qing determined how the Chinese were to act toward the Europeans. The period in which Jesuit activity was most flourishing in China was unique in that it included the end of an ethnic Han Chinese dynasty and the beginning of nearly 300 years of Manchu rule. Although still recognized for their learning, Jesuits under the Qing had a diminished influence on Chinese society and the scholarly class. As an ethnic minority ruling an empire that was mostly ethnic Han, the Qing realized that need to appeal to the Han officials in order to survive. Manchu emperors, such as Kangxi, therefore have often listened to his Han officials in matters concerning the Jesuits. In their desire to receive and maintain legitimacy in China, the Manchus moved the empire back to classical and more traditional Confucianism. Whereas late Ming was willing to synthesize by combining elements of Christianity with other religions, the Qing refused to let Confucianism be combined with any non-Confucian religions or philosophies.⁵⁶ Because Jesuits were foreigners in a country that was deeply suspicious of all who were not of Chinese background, the missionaries experienced decline in importance. Unfortunately for the Jesuits, the events of the sixteenth and seventeenth century ensured that Jesuit impact on the science and the Christian religion in China in those two centuries would not last as long as it should have.

56 Mungello, *The Great Encounter* 34.

An Indefensible Defense: The Incompetence of Qing Dynasty Officials in the Opium Wars, and the Consequences of Defeat

DANIEL CONE

The Opium Wars were small scale wars fought with global implications. With fewer than five thousand troops and twenty naval vessels the British were able to win the First Opium War, allowing them to rewrite trade laws that were demonstrably unfair to the Chinese. After losing the First Opium War, the Qing Dynasty then had to deal with the Taiping Rebellion (caused in part by anti-foreign sentiment sprung from the Opium War) and a subsequent Second Opium War, which created more unequal trade stipulations. The Manchus and the British had very different militaries, as “Britain experienced an industrial revolution that produced military technology far beyond that of the Qing forces,” writes Peter Worthing.¹ While the Manchus would almost certainly be defeated by the British in an open, “fair fight,” there are many other ways of engaging an enemy while maintaining a tactical advantage. This is especially true when fighting an invading force, as the Manchus could utilize defensive structures to their advantage. According to the traditionalist view, the Manchus could not have competed with such a superior force,² but I contend it was the incompetency of Qing officials, not the superiority of European warfare, that caused the Qing Dynasty to capitulate.

Qing officials anticipated an armed conflict would be necessary to halt the importation of British opium, but the Manchus vastly underestimated the foe they were to face. The preparations made before the invasion were underfunded, underutilized, and most importantly undermanned; often leaving local provinces to fight without any assistance. In James Polachek’s *The Inner Opium War*, Polachek writes “such informal methods of militia organization... simply were not sufficient to service the more ambitious needs Qing leaders... perceived and were intent on meeting.”³ “To man these fortifications and patrol the barriers... [the Manchus] would need some kind of permanent standing army... Then, too, funds would have to be raised to fund these new riverine

1 Peter Worthing, *A Military History of Modern China* (Praeger Security International, 2007) 44-45.

2 John Rawlinson, *China’s Struggle for Naval Development, 1839-1895*. (Harvard University Press, 1967).

3 James Polachek, *The Inner Opium War* (Harvard University Press, 1992), 171.

defenses- funds that could scarcely be squeezed out of villages already well protected by their own guard.”⁴ There are many instances during the two Opium Wars in which the Manchus constructed reasonably adequate defensive structure, and even supplied them with cannons that could be effective against the British. On repeated occasions, however, the Manchus simply abandoned the structures at the sight of the British, because the fortifications were severely undermanned and the militia was not motivated to fight the British. In assessing the failures of the Manchus in the First Opium War, Qing scholar Wei Yuan believed, “as long as the Qing could conduct an effective defense- a requirement that... could be met without any naval or weaponry modernization- there was no reason... for it to abandon its original goal of forcing the termination of the opium-import traffic.”⁵ I agree with both Polachek and Wei Yuan that the ultimate factors contributing to the Manchu failures were the lack of an effective trained army and the inability to conduct a proper defensive war. However, I disagree with Wei Yuan; I do not believe the Qing could have done enough at this time to end the opium trade in China. Money is the driving factor in all the conflicts the British had with the Manchus. If it were not profitable to go to war, the British would not have fought. With demand for opium soaring, the British were making enormous profits and, through a system of bribery and smuggling, British merchants were capable of moving opium into China regardless of what Qing officials decried.

When Qing officials debated the prospects of war with the British, the foreigners were continually misperceived as a local threat and were expected to be dealt with by local militias and garrisons, when in fact they were a threat to the national integrity of China. “Qing officials did not perceive the British as a serious threat, believing that the empire’s military forces could make relatively short work of these Western ‘pirates.’ Yet the Qing military... had deteriorated over the centuries.”⁶ Harold Rauch reaches to the heart of this issue, stating “China was in a period of turmoil in the nineteenth century when its semi-medieval government struggle against modernization failed to respond flexibly to Western encroachment, resulting in the demise of the Chinese dynastic system.”⁷ I agree with Rauch that it was the failure of the Qing to respond to threats that caused the fall of Chinese autonomy, it was incompetence rather than inability. If Qing officials had realized the far-reaching and devastating effects of the Opium Wars, they surely would have tried to avoid war. Instead,

4 Polachek, *Inner Opium War*, 171.

5 *Ibid.*, 200.

6 Worthing, *Military History of Modern China*, 44.

7 Harold Rauch, *The Victorians at War* (Santa Barbara, 2004), 97.

Qing officials would antagonize a foe they were woefully unprepared to face, and would suffer through severe turmoil. Beginning in 1839, China would endure sweeping changes over the next twenty-five year period stemming from both external pressures from Europeans, and domestic issues that led to widespread rebellion.

The First Opium War was the result of a longstanding misperception between the Qing dynasty and the British (and to a larger extent, all foreigners). The Manchus had allowed European merchants to establish marinas for centuries, but they always viewed the merchants as inferior, and believed they could be expelled from China at any time. This was an openly held belief that the British were aware of. British Lieutenant John Ouchterlony remarked “The mercantile profession is not held in high estimation among the Chinese... the subdued tone which we had maintained towards them should have brought them to regard us in the light of an inferior people.”⁸ The Manchus also believed they were morally and even militarily superior. Jonathan Spence writes “[Qing officials] seem to have believed that the citizens of Canton and the foreign traders there had simple, childlike natures that would respond to firm guidance and statements of moral principles set out in simple, clear terms.”⁹ As a result, Qing officials continually underestimated the abilities of their foes, and repeatedly challenged the British unprepared.

The rise of opium addiction in Southern China and the trade imbalance caused by the drug forced the Qing into action. In 1820, an Imperial Proclamation ordered a halt to all importation and use of opium, but the Proclamation did little to slow the flow of opium into China. Opium was funneled in with regular bribes paid out to local merchants and officials; British Lieutenant John Ouchterlony wrote “the governor of Canton... was himself well known to be extensively interested in the opium trade.”¹⁰ This led the Imperial Court to send Lin Zexu to be governor over Canton charged with the responsibility of ending the Opium trade once and for all. In 1838, Lin Zexu began the systematic seizure of Chinese opium storehouses and imprisoned local merchants. Lin Zexu was determined to rid opium from Canton, and knew he could never fully expel the drug while the British remained in the harbor. Lin Zexu must have understood his future actions against the British

⁸ Lieutenant John Ouchterlony, *The Chinese War: An Account of All the Operations of the British Forces from the Commencement to the Treaty of Nanking* (Praeger Publishers, 1844, edit. 1970), 4.

⁹ Jonathan D. Spence, *The Search for Modern China* (Norton & Co. 1999), 154.

¹⁰ Ouchterlony, *Chinese War*, 6-7.

would probably incite violence, because he immediately set to fortifying the waterways into Canton, bought additional cannon, and set to training and drilling his forces. A critical oversight, as Spence notes, was that “if the Chinese crossed the [British merchants], they would be insulting the British nation rather than a business corporation, a distinction they did not fully see.”¹¹ This would turn out to be a major factor in the dynamics of the war, as professional Royal troops were used instead of British “pirates.”

The very prospect of war in China was not a popular idea in England, as British merchants only wanted to get as rich as possible through trade with the Chinese, and the most lucrative good was opium. If given a choice, the British preferred to remain at peace, as they had no aspirations of conquering China. Qing officials, however, outraged by the spread of opium and judging merchants to be inferior men, were aggressive in deterring the British from importing opium. Once this aggressiveness turned into overt military actions, the Qing blundered into a war with a power they didn’t fully understand or respect, and were woefully unprepared to face.

Armed conflicts ensued after Lin Zexu issued repeated proclamations forcing the British to give up their opium and ultimately flee from Canton altogether. The first battle of the Opium Wars began rather suddenly on the morning of October 29th, 1839. The British blockade of Canton, which Lin Zexu requested to be moved downriver the day before, was attacked by a group of twenty-nine Chinese war junks. The British, with their superior weaponry and vessels, quickly routed the Chinese force, destroying six ships. The British defeated their foes so soundly that “Captain Elliot (commander of the British blockade)... ordered it to cease, to spare the lives of the Chinese after their defeat had been accomplished.”¹² This account is disputed by Harold Raugh, who claims it was the British frigates that attacked the Chinese junks.¹³ However, if the British had attempted to engage the Chinese junks, they should have come within range of the new fortifications along the coast. Moreover, there is evidence the battle took place in the Bogue outside Canton. It’s clear the Chinese Admiral Kwan went charging after an enemy he underestimated and fundamentally did not understand. This small skirmish had very long reaching effects, because once England heard of the assault on its subjects they set to assembling “a small but efficient force for service on the coast of China.”¹⁴

11 Spence, *Search for Modern China*, 155.

12 Ouchterlony, *Chinese War*, 31.

13 Raugh, *Victorians at War*, 99.

14 Ouchterlony, *Chinese War*, 35.

The force, consisting of twenty war ships (five of which were steam ships) and about 4,000 British and Indian troops, sailed from India and arrived in Singapore in June of 1840. "Singapore was the rendezvous of the combined force (British from Canton and the new fleet from India), forming what was now called the 'Eastern Expedition'."¹⁵

If Admiral Kwan had not attacked the British blockade, there is little chance of the British mustering up a force to assault the Chinese coast. Tensions were high at the time, but the British blockade was more interested in trade than conflict, yet Lin Zexu refused to negotiate with the British. Instead, through the misguided notion that the British were inferior, Admiral Kwan attacked an enemy he stood little chance against in a setting that favored his opponent. This unnecessary attack set off a war that might have been averted altogether, and would set the stage for a series of humiliating defeats for the Qing dynasty resulting in a series of "unequal treaties."

Under the command of British Admiral Elliot, the fleet blockaded then subsequently assaulted the Zhoushan islands on the 24th of June, where "they found the Chinese utterly unprepared for the hostile visit."¹⁶ Despite being in open hostilities with the British for nearly 9 months, Qing officials governing Zhoushan had either not realized the strategic importance of the islands or believed their feeble garrisons would defeat a fleet of warships (most likely the former). Zhoushan was so easily overrun that "No fire was... opened upon the steamer as she advanced, and even her boats were allowed to row about among the junks... without any molestation."¹⁷ A week later, on the 5th of July, British troops landed in and occupied the fortifications on the largest Zhoushan island. As Lieutenant Ouchterlony notes, they were "the first European troops who had ever landed on the shores of China as conquering invaders."¹⁸ To be fair, the British had not landed on mainland China, but they soon would. The resistance organized by officials in Zhoushan was meager at best, and though they knew the British had a far superior force, "their duty and allegiance to the Emperor forbade their surrendering the island without offering all the resistance in their power."¹⁹ This was a fundamentally different way of fighting a war than what the British were doing. Qing officials were expected to fight and respond to the British fleet on a local level, the British were never seen as a national threat.

15 Ibid., 37.

16 Ouchterlony, *Chinese War*, 41.

17 Ibid., 42.

18 Ibid., 45.

19 Ouchterlony, *Chinese War*, 43.

Instead of concentrating forces and moving them as a coherent fighting force, like the British, the Manchus remained entrenched in vulnerable local positions and did not move to put together a single force that could compete against the invaders. The Manchus did not concentrate their forces on a well defended position, and no central army or fighting force was assembled to combat the invaders. This was a fundamentally different approach to fighting a war, and it left the Manchus at a significant disadvantage. Qing expectations dictated local officials should be able to handle the barbarous foreigners, and when the British repeatedly proved to be a serious threat too powerful for a local force to defeat, the Manchus failed to realize it would take a concerted effort to rid China of the invaders.

The British were able to move northward up the coast virtually uncontested, reaching the mouth of the Bai He river and the Dagou forts guarding the waterways to Peking by the beginning of August. The Manchus were caught off guard by this fleet setting up a blockade because, according to Lieutenant Ouchterlony, the “appearance of the position and works at the entrance of the river showed that the visit of the hostile squadron was totally unexpected.”²⁰ Yet again we see Qing officials, even officials charged with protecting the Emperor and capital city, were totally oblivious to the dangers of the invading fleet. Only now that they can see the size of the British warships and the advanced new steamships do Qing officials realize the severity of their problem. The Emperor wisely instructed Qishan, a governor-general of Guangdong, to negotiate with the invaders. The agreement, reached in January 1841, saw the British return to the Canton region, but it was the beginning of a series of treaties that were highly favorable to the British. Qishan ceded the British Hong Kong, along with 6 million Mexican silver dollars in indemnities. Emperor Daoguang, enraged by the terms of the treaty, fired Qishan and ordered his execution (though that sentence was later commuted). Meanwhile, current foreign secretary and future Prime Minister Lord Palmerston was equally outraged that Admiral Elliot had not negotiated better terms. Lord Palmerston insisted the treaty be made with the emperor himself, so he sent Sir Henry Pottinger in August 1841 to renew the military campaign and exact better terms from the Qing.

Between January and August of 1841, British subjects had almost continuous clashes with the local population in Canton, and these conflicts often turned bloody. Once Sir Henry Pottinger arrived in August, the conflict turned markedly more heated. The British quickly captured the fortifications

²⁰ Ibid, 57.

surrounding Canton and, upon sufficiently blockading the river, sailed north toward Xiamen. Officials in Xiamen had seen the British fleet the previous year as it sailed toward Peking, and had heard of the attacks in Canton. In preparation for an impending invasion, officials ordered the construction of new fortifications and bought additional cannon. The British, however, easily overpowered the smaller and undermanned fortifications, storming the battlements. Lieutenant Ouchterlony was so impressed by the new fortifications that he remarked “the scene afforded no point of worthy comment, save that it furnished strong evidence of the excellence of Chinese batteries, upon which the fire of the seventy-fours... produced no effect whatever”²¹ and “it was calculated that not fewer than 500 had been mounted in the batteries, forts, and junks.”²² The fortifications at Xiamen were very effectively constructed, as they were “impervious to the effects of horizontal fire.”²³ Credit must be given where credit is due; the Qing officials overseeing the construction of the Xiamen fortifications did an excellent job in improving and updating their defensive position. If an effective fighting force had occupied the fortifications, the Manchus probably would have created a lot of problems for the British. At the very least the well protected batteries may have damaged or sunk a few British ships, and that loss would be quite costly for the British. Although the Chinese lost this battle, they were not overwhelmed by the superior technology of the British. The fortifications were taken within hours because the Chinese troops defending the city were mostly locals, not trained soldiers. Many troops fled at the sight (and sound) of the British cannon, while those who remained were outmaneuvered easily by British officers, who had painstakingly scouted the topography of the islands to determine every weakness in the battlements. Soon after the British advanced to the Zhoushan islands where, upon capturing them, they held defensive positions for the winter in anticipation of the next fighting season.

In June of 1842, the British fleet sailed northward to the Woosung river, where they planned to overrun the defenses around Shanghai. Their arrival in Shanghai was unexpected, and the defenses guarding the entrance to the city’s harbor were dated. An account from the British steamship *Nemesis* recounts their remarkable journey upriver, as the ship made “a close reconnaissance of the whole line of defenses extending along both sides of the Woosung River.”²⁴ Unlike the fortifications at Xiamen, the battlements at Shanghai had not been upgraded; but similarly to Xiamen the troops in Shanghai

21 Ouchterlony, *Chinese War*, 174.

22 *Ibid.*, 177.

23 *Ibid.*, 174.

were untrained local militia who fled moments after the British invaded. The entire invasion of Shanghai saw the British lose three men total, none of whom had stormed the beaches because “the troops were in fact never engaged at all.”²⁵ This battle, though short and insignificant in the scope of the war, must be considered one of the most embarrassing defeats in all of Chinese history. Not only had the British fleet sailed past Shanghai two years previous, the fleet had been camped just south of Shanghai for months prior to the invasion. The fort and ramparts already had an estimated 200-250 artillery pieces, yet with such extensive warning and resources at their disposal Qing officials did nearly nothing to improve the defense of the city. The failure of the Qing leadership to competently manage a war, more than any technological disadvantage, was what lost the Opium War for the Chinese. Shanghai did not have to defeat the British fleet in order to be victorious; causing significant casualties or costing the British important resources could turn the tide of the war in favor of the Chinese, as the British would have no way to resupply or reinforce their units.

By July, the British fleet was anchored off the coast of the Golden Island, near Zhenjiang, the anticipated last hurdle before reaching Nanjing. As in Shanghai, the fortifications around the city were dated and virtually useless against the British fleet. The Chinese forces even chose not to use the defensive positions on Golden Island, instead retreating to an open field where “their flight would be comparatively easy.”²⁶ The abandonment of the island’s fortifications allowed British forces, which numbered roughly 12,000 men, to disembark on the coast without any harassment. Further, the British were afforded time to organize their units for a coordinated assault on the enemy. If the Manchus had mustered a competent fighting force, and had they put up even a reasonable defense, they may have scored a major victory over the invaders. The British had major difficulties in their landing, Lieutenant Ouchterlony went as far as claiming “owing to the difficult nature of the ground upon which the disembarkation... took place, had [the Manchu forces] been properly employed, [they could] have inflicted severe loss on our force.” Yet “the Chinese general omit[ed] to take advantage of the powerful means to oppose our landing which were at his disposal.”²⁷ The Golden Island fiasco serves as a further example illustrating the Manchus’ defeat was largely their own doing, and it did not extend solely from the superiority of the British fighting force.

24 William H. Hall, *The Nemesis in China: Comprising a History of the Late War in that Country* (Praeger Publishers- London, 1846 edit. 1969), 324.

25 Ouchterlony, *Chinese War*, 298.

26 *Ibid.*, 348.

27 *Ibid.*, 350.

Once the British attempted to engage the Chinese garrison on the island, the Chinese broke ranks and fled before the two sides could fight one another.

The decisive battle of the war took place in the city of Zhenjiang. The Chinese, numbering in the thousands, attempted to make a final stand behind the ancient walls of the city, out of reach of the guns of the British navy. It was not long, however, before the British land forces, with their mobile artillery and well-trained musketeers, overran the scalable walls of Zhenjiang. “The formidable array of [British] assailants at this juncture was more than the imperial troops could behold.”²⁸ In fact the most menacing enemy facing the British was the sun, as it was a very hot day and the British were weighed down by heavy clothing and equipment. While the Manchus weren’t able to slay many of the invaders, the sun claimed at least thirteen British soldiers. Once the gates of Zhenjiang were breached, the British poured into the city, leaving the “streets encumbered with the corpses of the slain, and the bodies of the wounded and dying.”²⁹ The massacre at Zhenjiang sent a strong message to Emperor Daoguang; surrender or suffer the same fate as the ruined city. Soon after, with the British navy anchored near Nanjing and soldiers encamped around the city, the Emperor was forced to request a ceasefire and would later sign the Treaty of Nanjing, officially ending the First Opium War.

The Treaty of Nanjing was a major cessation of power from the Qing government to British merchants, and it was not long before other foreign powers began using similar treaty systems to establish favorable trade patterns. Aside from paying millions to the British in indemnities, the Qing were also forced to allow the British to establish five additional trading ports, while ceding the island of Hong Kong altogether. The long term effects of the treaty were, however, far more important than the short term ones. Once foreign powers like the United States and France read copies of the Treaty of Nanjing, they immediately set to negotiating similar treaties, and by 1844 both countries had signed treaties. As Jonathan Spence observes, “within six years of Lin Zexu’s appointment as imperial commissioner, the Qing, instead of defending their integrity against all comers, had lost control of vital elements of China’s commercial, social, and foreign policies.”³⁰

28 Ibid, 384.

29 Ouchterlony, *Chinese War*, 394.

30 Spence, *Search for Modern China*, 163.

The Chinese people were shocked and humiliated by such a swift and painful defeat, and in the quickly turned Qishan into a scapegoat. According to Polachek, the Chinese believed “the Qing bureaucracy had allowed too many spineless officials, such as Qishan, to clamber into high office... it was but one small additional step to the conclusion that perhaps the whole war... had been deliberately sabotaged by mediocre bureaucrats.”³¹ One official even described the situation as “premeditated treachery.”³² I think the Chinese who felt this way were correct in a general sense, that the majority of the blame for losing the war rested on Qing officials, but Qishan was one of the few officials who made a positive impact on the war for China. Qishan attempted to use diplomacy to end the war, and only when the Qing had no choice but to capitulate or be sacked. The officials to blame were those in charge of funding the military and coordinating campaigns. More broadly, Manchus in elite society are all to blame for believing the British were an inferior force to contend with, that the troops didn’t require funding or a concerted Qing effort to rid the coasts of the foreign invaders. Most Qing officials had significantly reduced their fighting forces, and more importantly the forces they did maintain were poorly trained and underfunded. When a professional military was finally needed, and though advanced warning was given, Qing officials did little to prepare themselves for an upcoming invasion.

The grievance against Qing officials isn’t that they should have scored a major military victory against the British, but there is a significant difference between resisting the enemy and retreating unconditionally. Britain’s reasons for fighting the war were purely economic, thus it stands to reason that the Qing only needed to make the war cost more than it netted for the British, and the British would have halted their campaign. Polachek contends that the British were “extraordinarily vulnerable to attrition tactics,” and if the Qing had exploited this weakness they could “have been geared to extending the war until there was no more trade, and no more easy booty, for the enemy to batten upon.”³³ The need for a suitable defense is critical in war, without which there is no deterrent against your enemy from attacking you with regularity, as the Chinese would discover less than fifteen years later.

Emperor Daoguang was humiliated and enraged by the stipulations of the treaty, and his people felt the Emperor’s dissatisfaction. A growing

31 Polachek, *Inner Opium War*, 185.

32 Ibid, 185.

33 Polachek, *Inner Opium War*, 199-200.

resentment towards Western powers in China led Qing officials to delay British merchants from obtaining the “full rights” of the agreement. The British were prevented from using docks and harbors which were conceded in the treaty, and it wasn’t uncommon for angry Manchus to harm or seize the property of British merchants. In assessing the situation of the British, J.S. Gregory writes that “the primary concern of British policy [was] not so much the winning of further concessions as the full implementation and enjoyment of those now gained.”³⁴ Additionally, the British were anxious to open up Peking as a trading center for merchants and diplomats, and that “access to Peking... had been the chief objective of British policy in China since at least 1850.”³⁵ In order to press their advantage against the Qing Dynasty, the British helped support elements of the Taiping Rebellion, as long as it was in the interest of the British to have the Manchus in that area removed from power. In 1853, British leaders thought that “the solution to the dilemma facing British policy in China... [could come] as a result of the success of the rebels,” but by 1855 it was apparent it would require “direct force of arms” to ratify the treaty revisions.³⁶ Later, after the conclusion of the Second Opium War in 1860, the British abandoned the rebels and “the attitude of the foreigners ‘suddenly took a pro-Manchu tendency’; after the Manchus had satisfied their demands.”³⁷ By 1856, the British were searching for an opportunity to push treaty revisions on the Manchus, and a minor, seemingly insignificant naval search and seizure catapulted the fragile dynasty into another war with Britain; but this time France would join as well.

The Second Opium War was, in many respects, an extension of the First Opium War. Qing officials and local Chinese resented the terms of the Treaty of Nanjing, and many officials and merchants sought to harass and delay British trade as much as possible. As frequent delays and tensions were mounting, the British began to search for a military resolution to their problem, and the answer came in 1856 with the illegal search of the British ship *Arrow*. The British used the *Arrow* incident to declare war on China, and by late 1857, they had assembled another fighting force to assault the Chinese coast. The parallels between the military tactics used by the British in the First and Second Opium Wars are striking, and the results are nearly identical. In parentheses are the corresponding events and timeline from the First Opium War.

34 James S. Gregory, *Great Britain and the Taipings* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1969), 67.

35 Gregory, *Great Britain and the Taipings*, 67.

36 *Ibid.*, 67.

37 *Ibid.*, 68.

The British took Canton on December 1857 (British took Canton- June 1840), and moved northward up the coast until they reached the Dagu forts near Tianjin by May 1858 (reached Dagu forts, August 1840). The Qing capitulated in June under threat of occupation, resulting in the Treaty of Tianjin (Qing capitulated, Qishan compromise, September 1840). Qing officials, however, had no intention of following the ludicrous stipulations of the treaty, leaving the British to recommence hostilities in June 1859 (British recommenced hostilities, August 1841). This time at the Second Battle of the Dagu forts, however, the Manchus were prepared for the assault, resulting in the most significant defeat the Europeans had suffered in either Opium War. After being set back nearly a year by their defeat at the Dagu forts, the British and French returned in August 1860 to capture Peking (British surrounded Zhenjiang, August 1842). After a brief campaign meant to “teach the Qing a lesson they couldn’t ignore” and, upon burning the imperial palace outside Peking, the terms of the Treaty of Tianjin were reaffirmed and the Opium Wars finally came to an end.³⁸

The most interesting battle from the Second Opium War and the one most worthy of study is the Second Battle of the Dagu forts, where the Manchus were able to defeat a combined force of about 1200 British and French troops and delay the invaders’ campaign over a year. British and French troops planned to seize the Dagu forts on the afternoon of June 25th, 1859. American Commodore Josiah Tattnall was present for the engagements at the Dagu forts, at one point joining the fray himself, and left an account of the proceedings. Expecting no resistance, as false intelligence led them to believe the fort was sparsely occupied, the invaders landed “ten gun-boats, including one French, and three larger steamers... carrying in all about fifty guns.”³⁹ “On the Admiral’s reaching the first barrier the forts suddenly swarmed with men, and a terrible fire from very heavy guns was opened... from all the forts.”⁴⁰ The attack caught the foreigners off guard, and the barrage caused two vessels to run aground while still more were being shot with Qing cannon. Unable to retreat, “the British and French fought with the most determined valor,” but losses were mounting.⁴¹ Commodore Tattnall, observing from his American steamship, felt compelled to help the wounded fleet, he then “towed the boats through the

38 Spence, *Search for Modern China*, 182.

39 Charles C. Jones Jr., *The Life and Services of Commodore Josiah Tattnall* (Morning News Steam Printing House, Savannah, Georgia, 1878), 99.

40 Ibid., 99-100.

41 Ibid., 100.

British line to within a short distance of the Admiral.”⁴² British losses were significant, six vessels sunk (three were later recovered), 81 dead including 8 officers, 345 wounded including 23 officers, while the French also lost 12 men. The fleet was forced to retreat, causing over a year of delays in the war from defeat at one battle.

The Second Battle of the Dagu Forts is significant because it considerably extended the length and scope of the Opium War. The British loss not only caused a costly 13 month delay, but the fighting force went from 3,000-4,000 troops to a fleet of over 18,000 strong. Even if the Manchus could not defeat such a vast fleet, as was assembled in 1860, the cost to assemble the force alone is a loss for the invaders. The Qing didn't need sophisticated machinery or professional soldiers to win the battle, instead it was a basic tactic that had been around and perfected since the times of Sun Tzu: deception. The Manchus used the invaders' misperceptions against them, as the British had seen Manchu soldiers flee fortresses countless times before invasions, and the British and French did not expect to be challenged at the Dagu Forts. The Manchu soldiers sprung their trap, defeated the British, and this one false move by the invaders cost them dearly.

Incompetent Qing dynasty officials failed to provide an adequate defense of China in a war that, though difficult, should not have overwhelmed the Manchus. Qing officials pushed China into war, failed to respond to the imminent threat of invasion, and then again failed to properly respond when the same invaders returned for a second campaign. The incompetency of Qing officials was of greater help to the British than the superiority of their weaponry and navy. Had the Manchus provided a suitable defense, the cost of war could have easily repelled the British and saved China from the crushing trade stipulations instituted by the “unequal treaties.” Instead, an undersized corps of invaders was able to route the Chinese in a way that surprised the Europeans, who had once held reverence for the Chinese military tradition. Defeat in the Opium Wars was an avoidable catastrophe, and the effects of the loss persisted and haunted China well into the next century.

42 Ibid., 100.

A Review of Dissertations: The revisionist debate of foreign policy in late Qing China

RUCHIR PATEL

China's resurgence as an economic powerhouse in recent years has engendered a flurry of research and journalism, which tries to pinpoint the elusive cause for such a steady and methodical growth of their GDP.¹ China's consistent yearly growth has stunned and awed the world. Westernized nations, who continually struggle with the cyclical – boom and bust - nature of modern economics, have found a contemporary miracle in the rapid growth and development of China. Furthermore, Westernized nations have recently turned to China for financing as their own economies teeter on the verge of global meltdown.² It is evident, through historical analysis, that this is not the first time China has been an economic powerhouse; history certainly has a tendency to repeat itself.

At the height of the Qing Dynasty, 250 years ago, China had its first formal contact with European nations. The Qing ruled over the most economically prosperous empire of that time. Through sheer size, the Qing was able to expand its sphere of influence throughout Eastern Asia.³ The Qing, an established military and ruling dynasty, were the purveyors of fine silks and spices, coveted by Europeans. However, these initial economic transactions set into motion a domino effect of change, that no Qing magistrate or political figure could have anticipated – the permanent end of the dynastic cycle.

A recent influx of research into the developments of information and attitudes towards foreign policy, towards the end of the Qing dynasty, questions the traditional assumptions that the Qing were delayed in responding to the foreign threat of Western nations, as previously believed. In fact, these new revisionists' arguments posit that the Qing adapted creatively, considering the

¹ Derek Scissors, "China's GDP Growth of 10 Percent: Should We Believe It?" *The Heritage Foundation*, 20 Jan. 2011 <<http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2011/01/china-grows-10-percent-again-is-this-believable>>.

² Fareed Zakaria, "How China Can Help Europe Get out of Debt." *Washington Post*, 14 Sept. 2011 <http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/how-china-can-help-europe-get-out-of-debt/2011/09/14/gIQA1WlxSK_story.html>.

³ Peter C. Perdue, *China Marches West: the Qing Conquest of Central Eurasia* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2010), 11.

confines of an age-old system. Through the use of four primary dissertations that highlight cutting edge research in this new revisionist camp, this paper will analyze Qing relations with India and Korea, and the ground breaking establishment of the Zongli Yamen – the first foray in establishing effective methods of foreign policy.

The four primary dissertations addressed in this paper all touch upon the new school of thought that analyzes the late Qing through a revisionist lens. Each paper focuses not on the inevitable collapse of the Qing, but instead on the success within the last period of their reign. Traditionalist views of history seem to be constrained around a winner-loser system, and furthermore are meant to be a linear progression of events. Though it is impossible to say that history is not without winners and losers, or that basic historical events seem to follow a linear progression; I believe that it is presumptuous to disregard the advancements that took place in the late Qing period. Arguably, if it were not for these improvements and additions perhaps the Qing dynasty would have ceased to exist fifty years earlier. All four dissertations generate new discussion, as well as shed positive light upon late Qing China's foreign policy efforts.

Historiographical Concerns and Debate

Historians, such as John K. Fairbank, have credited the demise of the Qing to its inability to adapt to an ever changing global environment, and a heavy reliance on the traditional Chinese tributary system.⁴ Fairbank, along with other traditionalist Chinese historians, addressed several factors that played a role in the Qing's inability and ineptitude in addressing the growing threat posed by encroaching European powers. The Qing have been described as uninformed and uninterested in the dealings of nations outside the immediate scope and influence of their own empire.⁵ This general attitude can be described as Sinocentrism – a model that attributes the demise of the Qing dynasty based on the cultural perception that China views itself as the center of the universe.⁶ Traditionalists have relied on the Sinocentric model to express the various reasons for the overall demise of the great Qing Dynasty for years, however, new revisionist historians are championing the claim that the Qing's overall

⁴ John K. Fairbank, "Tributary Trade and China's Relations with the West." *The Far Eastern Quarterly* 1, No. 2 (1942): 129-49. 145.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 148.

⁶ Michael Bentley, *Companion to Historiography*, (London: Routledge, 1997) 647.

demise was not caused by Sinocentrism, but instead was able to survive despite it.

Analysis of the Qing's perspectives on India helps shed light on how China interacted with nations prior to European contact, while also establishing precedence for their foreign policy methods. Matthew Mosca, analyzes the various informational channels through which the Qing learned and processed information in their relationship with both Ottomans and Indians. Mosca's research, highlights the bureaucratic bottlenecks that led to misinformation in the higher ups of the Qing government.⁷ Whereas traditionalists view these inefficiencies as a foreshadowing of the Qing's inability to properly transfer information up through the political system, Mosca instead emphasizes the ability in which these path ways adapted to meet their respective shortcomings. As the Qing began to internally address problems of information dissemination, they also began to restructure their ongoing relationship with Korea.

While Mosca's work emphasizes the internal changes, contrastingly Kirk Larsen's research of the Sino-Korean relationship, during the late Qing period, highlights an adaptation to the traditional Sinocentric model. Larsen's study focuses on the developments of the time, which helped to transition the Sino-Korean relationship, towards the direction of an autonomous nature.⁸ Stressing the importance of the development of the Zongli Yamen, as well as emphasizing the cultural differences in economic practices between the Chinese and Japanese, within Korea, establishes the underlying patterns that created a shift in the overall foreign policy relationship. Pinpointing the influences of key individuals and underlying economic reasoning, Larsen challenges age old views that the Sino-Korean relationship was merely a model of the tributary system. The implications of this argument in context with the other works help in establishing a new model of internal change prior to the demise of the Qing dynasty.

Perhaps no change was more dramatic or influential than the establishment of the Zongli Yamen. The formation of the Zongli Yamen, the formalized political department in charge of foreign relationships, signifies an amazing shift in cultural views – beyond the scope the Qing – of the Chinese culture. The Zongli Yamen was originally intended to be a temporary

⁷ Matthew William Mosca, "Qing China's Perspectives on India, 1750--1847." Diss. Harvard University, 2008. 508.

⁸ Kirk Wayne Larsen, "From Suzerainty to Commerce: Sino-Korean Economic and Business Relations during the Open Port Period (1876--1910)." Diss. Harvard University, 2000. 26.

organization, created to address the growing domestic and foreign issues that plagued the empire.⁹ However, through careful diplomacy, the Zongli Yamen was able to generate an astounding sphere of influence, that truly exemplified the remarkable adaptive nature of the Qing. Both, Richard Horowitz and Jennifer Rudolph, express in their dissertations, the truly remarkable nature of the Zongli Yamen. Horowitz, approaches the Zongli Yamen through the perspective of Western analysis, relating the milestone developments and acts carried out by the Zongli Yamen through the lens of European political models. Rudolph, takes a more revisionist stance, arguing that the analysis of the Yamen, through Western viewpoints, is ineffective in truly understanding the momentous nature of the establishment and growth of the Yamen.¹⁰ Rudolph's examination addresses the success of the Yamen, not the inevitable failure in rescuing the Qing.

These three revisionist viewpoints express the overarching idea that the Qing were able to adapt – both internally and externally – to spearhead the changing world landscape. Neo-traditionalist historians have addressed the shortcomings which hindered the Qing to accurately and effectively relay information. Ultimately, they believe the Qing succumbed to the influence of European power due to their persistent clinging to past foreign policy models, such as the tributary system, and the ineffectiveness of the Zongli Yamen. However, the works of Mosca, Larsen, and Rudolph depict a contrasting image, in which the Qing were in fact able to address these shortcomings and adapted in a remarkable fashion.

Qing and India

To establish a stage for the transformative period in Chinese history, and most notably under the Qing reign, an examination of the practices and methods in place, prior to the intervention of European powers is necessary. The Qing's interactions and information gathering of India from 1750 to 1847 provides a unique glimpse into the bureaucratic establishments that helped to collect, translate, validate, and disseminate information to higher authorities. The term India is used loosely as the Indian subcontinent at the time was a conglomeration of rival states. The focus, however, is not on the states, but instead on the growing power and influence the British East India trade

⁹ Jonathan D. Spence, *The Search for Modern China* (London: Routledge, 1997) 199.

¹⁰ Jennifer Marie Rudolph, "Negotiating Power and Navigating Change in the Qing: the Zongli Yamen, 1861-1901." Diss. University of Washington, 1999. 4.

company had over the entire subcontinent. Though the term India is being used, it would be fair to substitute British India.

Research of Qing relationships with India is fairly scarce, in fact Fairbank's seminal work on the topic, from his opening section titled, "Aims and Means in China's Foreign Relations," has no mention of India or India's various kingdoms.¹¹ Furthermore, the traditionalist perspective tends to group the cultures of India and China together as societies that had reached a level of military and political consolidation – the sheer size of these societies had eliminated opposing or rivaling factions, which so predominantly influenced European history.¹² Due to China's large scale and scope, they had become accustomed to influencing and dictating the terms of their environment, not through military means, as the Europeans had so heavily relied on, but instead through a political system – the tributary system. The tributary system gave birth to the larger principle of the Sinocentrism – a China centered world order. Traditionalists also view the failure of addressing the encroaching influence of the British as a telltale sign of Sinocentrism.¹³

Mosca's research on the Qing's perspective of India helps establish precedence for how foreign policy was developed. Once again, the term foreign policy is used loosely as the Qing had no formal stance towards India for a substantial period of time.¹⁴ Mosca's dissertation is not a judgment on the failure of the Qing to recognize the changing landscape of India, but instead it focuses on the advantages and disadvantages of the Qing system in understanding and addressing the growing reach of British power. Organic changes that were occurring within the system are also highlighted to show both preemptive and reactionary steps taken to cope with the growing threat. Communication and perception of India, as well as the Ottomans, hinged on two main points: geographical knowledge and inherent frontier bureaucracy.

The largest disadvantages to developing an accurate and actionable plan for the Qing came from inefficiencies in geographical knowledge and frontier politics. Geographic information at the time was extremely abundant, yet often

¹¹ Tansen Sen, "In Search of Longevity and Good Karma: Chinese Diplomatic Missions to Middle India in the Seventh Century," *Journal of World History* 12, No. 1 (2001): 1-28.

¹² Benjamin I Schwartz, *The Chinese World Order: Traditional China's Foreign Relations*, Ed. John K. Fairbank (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1974) 277.

¹³ Mosca, 483.

¹⁴ Mosca, 88.

was contradictory or inaccurate. Similar to other information of the time, geographical information was slanted by the views of the author, which further added to the difficulty in compiling a true set of data. Geographic scholars of the time were not opposed to examining and incorporating information from Western sources. However, Qing scholars were hesitant to accept any information without being able to fully analyze the entirety of the information available. After thorough analysis, scholars were able to resolve issues of contradictory information, misinformation, and false information – in order to arrive at the most accurate set of information possible.¹⁵

The confusion and inaccuracy of geographical information was only worsened by the governmental structure in place. The Qing government had established frontiers with officials responsible for respective areas. As a representative structure, officials would only communicate actionable, short term concerns to superiors as in-actionable, long term concerns were beyond the scope of the officials' tenure.¹⁶ Historically, the frontier system was useful in maintaining borders, however, was ill suited for larger change.

Put another way, the British conquest of India *per se* was not a 'problem' that could be articulated and debated within the institutional framework designed to handle the outside world.¹⁷

Though the disadvantages may seem daunting, the increased information from the expanded empire had given birth to a new grassroots scholarly group. A sudden increase in popularity of statehood scholarly research is responsible for spawning individuals such as Wei Yuan and Gong Zizhen. It is important to note that these scholars were generally independent, outside the confines of politics; their unofficial status allowed them the opportunity to pursue larger scale work that fell outside the scope of local regents and officials. Their analysis of all information available allowed them to be the first to suggest a shift from the old frontier policy system to a more comprehensive system of analyzing facts as a whole.¹⁸

Mosca's work into the frontier structure and the influences it had on the informational channels provides insight into why large scale problems were ineffectively communicated up the political chain, yet also addresses how non-governmental scholars were meeting this problem. A primary source of

¹⁵ Mosca, 484-487.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 492.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 492.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 498-500.

misinformation listed by Mosca was the lack of accurate and reliable geographic maps, however, I argue that perhaps the quality of information available at the time was the best possible, given the technological disadvantages of the time. Furthermore, better geographic understanding, would have helped the Qing to realize the reach of British power and influence; however, knowing the scope of British power would not have been sufficient in leading to change of Qing policy. Mosca clearly states that the Qing rarely referenced geographic maps; "...Qing bureaucrats saw the outside world through the lens of their local frontier, generally in isolation from either scholarly geography or official reports from elsewhere."¹⁹

Overall, Mosca's argument asserts the revisionist perspective, that the Qing were not unwilling or uninterested in appreciating the daunting risk the British posed by expanding throughout India, but due to inherent factors, they were unable to identify the problem as a result of extraneous circumstances. The ineptitude of geographic information was not caused by a Sinocentric view the Qing held, but instead due to unreliable information. The Qing were not unwilling to act on potential threats, but their governmental hierarchy did not provide a window of opportunity for these concerns to be heard. Luckily, the Qing were able to change rapidly and react differently when approaching Korea.

Qing and Korea:

As Fairbank has noted, Korea was a key example of the tributary system. From the traditionalist perspective, Chinese foreign policy is based around Sinocentrism, which manifests itself through the tributary system. The traditionalists are not incorrect in their assumptions of the long standing tributary nature between Korea and China, however, as Larsen's research shows, the Qing were able to reverse long standing traditions for a new blend of foreign policy. From the 1860s, onward until 1894, the Qing took a drastically different approach towards foreign policy in Korea and, though ultimately unsuccessful, the significance of their shift in views is noteworthy.

Qing policy, towards Korea, under the stewardship of Li Hongzhang and the Zongli Yamen was a far cry from the former isolationist view. Through a new policy of informal imperialism, the Qing tried to block out rival groups from securing and imperializing Korea.²⁰ The plan consisted of a multifaceted

¹⁹ Ibid., 491-492.

approach and employed economic stimulus, trade agreements, and military support – all contradictory to traditional policies. This sharp contrast to traditional Qing views helps to strengthen the argument that, prior to the collapse of the Qing, there was an actual paradigm shift in views.

Through dealings with European powers and modernizing Japan, the Qing understood that a drastic shift in foreign policy would be required. Traditionally, Korea has always operated within China's sphere of influence and was considered part of the informal Qing Empire. However, this informal practice of, 'suzerainty' would no longer prove to be adequate as Japan and European powers contested for control of Korea.²¹ The Qing's primary reassertion of a modernized suzerainty was through the treaty port system, which allowed the Qing to strengthen trade relations with Korea. Learning from past foes and mistakes, the Qing partnered with the British to expand trade to Korea and even adopted several trade policies from Europeans, which had previously been used against them – such as the most-favored nation privileges.²² Though Japanese traders would eventually overcome Chinese traders, the financial practices and systems established by the Qing remained in place for years to come.

Qing "planners [once] considered any one state potentially as dangerous or docile as any other" but after shifting from their traditional view point of military support they then hoped "a stable relationship with all of them" could be achieved.²³ This traditional perspective had changed in favor of a more adaptable system. This would allow the Qing to send military troops in support of Korea, and to address problems of internal strife. Eventually, the Qing would be driven out of Korea by the Japanese, prior to suffering a defeat in the Sino-Japan War; yet the commitment of military soldiers was another strategic move in an attempt to build alliances with Korea.

Larsen's analysis of the development of Sino-Korean relationship focused around the age old practice of the tributary system to that of a modernized indirect imperialism focus, which helped in establishing slight inroads, but overall proved to be ineffective against Japanese imperialistic claims. Larsen highlights this significant change to address the shift in foreign policy and

²⁰ Larsen, 345.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 3.

²² *Ibid.*, 103.

²³ Mosca, 496.

perspective, from the traditional, to a more agile hybrid system. The new structure still carried the traditional name, 'suzerainty' yet for all intensive purposes mirrored Western imperial practices. Larsen's classifying of the Qing's new policy in Western terms or even by addressing it as a 'foreign policy' seems to place inapplicable labels to a society that is foreign to these terms. Mark Mancall's opening passage of, "The Ch'ing Tribute System: An Interpretive Essay" highlights my concerns.

Any attempt to describe the tribute system immediately encounters certain intellectual problems. First, the system cannot be explained in terms of Western usage and practice....Rather, the tribute system must be understood, in all its ramifications, in terms of the vocabulary and institutions of traditional China. Second, the analyst must constantly bear in mind that the concept of "tribute system" is a Western invention for descriptive purposes.²⁴

The analysis of Sino-Korean relations should be done with a focus on the evolution of the 'suzerainty,' or any political concept that is inherently Eastern Asian concept.

Overall, Larsen is quick to note that the adaptive changes made by the Qing to claim influence in Korea were met with failure. However, the influential nature of the Qing, in Korea, has left an indelible mark. Furthermore, these changes were a drastic modification from the tributary system, in which nations would send embassies to present gifts to the emperor. This was drastically different from traditional practices. The Qing were now sending soldiers, resources, and establishing trade ports to secure their sphere influence. Coupled with this, the Qing were also establishing preliminary trade agreements and mimicking European financial practices of loans and tariffs. One of the driving factors for these drastic changes of the Qing government was the newly established Zongli Yamen.

The Establishment of the Zongli Yamen

The establishment of the Zongli Yamen is often criticized by historians as a change that was too late in the game to create a meaningful impact in rescuing the Qing from inevitable demise. However, the Zongli Yamen is truly a remarkable and forward-thinking achievement. The formation of the Zongli Yamen in 1861 signifies the only significant change to the institutionalized Six Board bureaucracy in over a hundred years. Despite beginning as a temporary

²⁴ Mark Mancall, *The Chinese World Order: Traditional China's Foreign Relations*, Ed. John K. Fairbank (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1974) 63.

institution, the Zongli Yamen lasted until 1901 and established the precedent for a formalized foreign policy of China.²⁵

The creation of the Zongli Yamen, in and of itself, was a revolutionary action on the part of the Qing; yet most traditional historical research has placed a heavy blame on the organization as a cause for the Yamen's inability to effectively change. As Rudolph is quick to point out, many of these historians see failure in the Zongli Yamen due to comparisons with European counterparts, which is simply unfair and incorrect. The Zongli Yamen must be analyzed within the contexts of the Qing, and cannot be expected to follow the steady progression of, "linear development consistent with Western experience and expectations."²⁶ Horowitz and Rudolph both take stances in defining the expressive benefits and triumphs of the Zongli Yamen. Horowitz's analysis is still fairly traditional, and expresses the progression and success of the Zongli Yamen in terms of the European state building models. Rudolph, however, establishes a more revisionist argument and claims the focus on the Zongli Yamen should not be placed on their failure (as some see it) but instead on the success of establishing itself as a legitimate and powerful branch of government.

Paralleling the Zongli Yamen with the European states model proposed by Charles Tilly, Horowitz's research was able to examine multiple similarities in the two organizations. Tilly examines the growth of states in perpetual military competition or battle, and hence requires an elaborate funding operation to continue this perpetual state. The model suggests that for this to be feasible an established bureaucracy must develop, to drive the military and manage the taxation.²⁷ The Zongli Yamen's three significant early contributions were military modernization, financial administration, and bureaucratic development.²⁸

In terms of bureaucratic development, the Zongli Yamen was the first of its kind. The truly innovative nature about the diplomacy of the Yamen was in the manner with which they handled communications with provincial officials. Traditionally, the boards had relied on memorials, but the Yamen chose instead

²⁵ Spence, 199.

²⁶ Rudolph, 3-18.

²⁷ Horowitz, Richard Steven. "Central Power and State Making: the Zongli Yamen and Self-strengthening in China, 1860-1880." Diss. Harvard University, 1998. 340-343.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 3.

to use letters and address officials as equals. This created an open dialogue of information, which allowed the Yamen to get accurate field information.²⁹ The military improvements were carried out in similar groundbreaking fashion. The Zongli Yamen quickly assessed that the true culprit in their military weakness was that China's armies were spread too thin- between fighting foreigners and domestic rebels. As a result, they choose to strengthen relations with foreigners through trade, to acquire modern weapons in return for goods, which they then used to squash domestic rebellions.³⁰ Finally, to fund these military expansions a new source of revenue needed to be found. The current practice of agriculture taxes was already burdensome enough for individuals. Instead, the Zongli Yamen decided to profit by establishing the Imperial Maritime Customs service – by charging customs and duties on all maritime trade goods.³¹

The remarkable nature of the Zongli Yamen is undeniable. Their ability to placate British and American interests by providing lenient trade policies, in exchange for military technology, was just the thing the Qing needed to stay in control of an empire on the verge of collapse. However, Horowitz's examination of these factors is in an effort to build an argument for a parallel to the European state building model proposed by Tilly. The conflict with this proposition, as Rudolph points out, is that China, and specifically the Qing's empire, does not fall into the parameters prescribed by such a model. China was immense geographically, culturally diverse, and had a very decentralized system of control – all contrary to European counterparts.³²

Rudolph's examination of the Zongli Yamen provides no Western model in which she tries to neatly package the Zongli Yamen into; instead the focus is on the natural power struggles that plagued the establishment and growth period of the Zongli Yamen. Rudolph notes the political organizational chart of the time, and the Zongli Yamen's place within the hierarchy. The new found organization was able to react effectively to changes, due to their ability to make actionable decisions (unlike the six boards) and their possession of direct and complete information from the sources.³³ Furthermore, the Zongli Yamen

²⁹ Ibid., 84-87.

³⁰ Horowitz, 138-142.

³¹ Ibid., 188-190.

³² Ibid., 3-11.

³³ Rudolph, 90-92.

took advantage of their ambiguous chartering to gather more political power over time.³⁴

Horowitz and Rudolph provide amazing details into how the Zongli Yamen established itself from infancy, and went on to provide programs that truly helped sustain and restore the Qing from chaos on numerous occasions. The details provided in Horowitz dissertation is amazing, yet it seems Horowitz's application of Tilly's model of European state formation is incorrectly applied to the late Qing dynasty. The accomplishments of the Zongli Yamen are astonishing, especially when the overall deteriorating state of the Qing is taken into account, but I do not believe that this warrants the labeling of a European state building model. Also, if the model were to be extended and the Qing did succeed in creating the ground work for a future unified state through the establishment of the Zongli Yamen, then why does China fall into a period of continual turmoil with rival factions? I believe an interesting approach to future research for the Zongli Yamen and their influential nature in the Qing dynasty would be tracing the extent of their power throughout China. Initially established with little to no direct power, the Zongli Yamen was able to acquire power through working with the established political framework, eventually becoming one of the highest organizations. How influential did their power become, and what actionable choices did they make? Perhaps great success or failures of the late Qing can be traced back to decisions or viewpoints of the Zongli Yamen.

Overall, Horowitz and Rudolph, provided insight into the one of the most meaningful change plans enacted by the late Qing – the establishment of the Zongli Yamen. Regardless of their slightly differing perspectives, both agree that the Zongli Yamen played a significant role in rescuing the Qing from an early demise. Contrary to the traditionalist argument, the Zongli Yamen was extremely effective, within the confines of the system created long before their own establishment. After their creation they were able to garnish enough power and influence to sustain a positive change plan.

Conclusion

The four dissertations analyzed in this essay clearly show the growing, albeit small, group of historians who believe that analysis of the late Qing should be taken into consideration through a revisionist perspective.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 208-211

Traditionalist, such as Fairbank, focus on the Qing's inability to assess the growing threats of European power primarily due to the stagnated views of a traditionalist society. A society in which the Sinocentric model is supreme and opposing viewpoints are unwelcome and 'barbaric'. The Sinocentric model which establish supremacy through the age old practice of the tributary system.

This walled off, inflexible portrayal of the Qing dynasty, however, is fairly inaccurate as these historians have shown. It is true that the expansive nature of the Qing dynasty created inefficiencies in their bureaucratic system; however, the Qing response rate to a changing geopolitical landscape is fairly commendable. As Mosca has shown, independent scholars were already fitting themselves into niche markets of nation based scholarly work – work that was not possible within the confines of the established system. Similarly, the Qing as a whole were swift to act in changing political attitudes and approaches in relation to Korea. Historically relying on minimal interaction, the Qing learned and adapted from indirect European imperialism, and attempted to mimic a similar informal imperialistic approach in Korea through an economically driven approach. Furthermore, the Qing created the Zongli Yamen, an additional branch of government. There had been relatively no changes in political organizational chart since the initial foundation of the original six boards. And as Horowitz and Rudolph have shown, the Zongli Yamen was not ineffective in creating and sustaining a nationwide change in addressing foreign and domestic conflicts.

Though the Qing adapted fairly well, given the circumstances, they still were unable to sustain the dynasty. Perhaps, though, this was not a fault of these remarkable change initiatives but instead an inevitable result. The highlighting factor in each of these revisionists debates is not a focus on the overall outcome, but instead the success of each of these programs. An unbiased study of events in isolation provides a greater understanding when they are not made to fit into a predetermined model.

China has once again skyrocketed, and is quickly approaching the largest economy in the world.³⁵ Regardless of its ability or inability to adapt to change during the Qing, it has unlocked the knowhow to strive in the current world stage. Ironically enough, it seems that Western nations are now under the

³⁵ Lin, Justin Yifu. "China, the 'leading Dragon' of the World Economy." *BBC Business News*. 23 Nov. 2011 <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-15861161>>.

gun in-terms of innovation. Hopefully, Westernized countries will be able to adapt as successfully as the Qing did, but with a more optimistic outcome.

Sun Yatsen, Liang Qichao: Friends, Foes and Nationalism

SOPHIE SITE JIA

The founding father of the Republic of China, Sun Yatsen was born in 1866 in Xiangshan, a county in Guangdong province. In neighboring Xinhui County, Liang Qichao, another important Chinese intellectual, who inspired Chinese reform movement in the late 1800s, was born seven years later. No one would have expected that those two men would maintain a very intricate relationship in ending China's last feudal empire, regarding each other as both friend and foe at different points in their lifetimes. Unlike Liang, who was a member of the literati class, Sun had very few literati credentials and stressed his connections with the southern anti-Manchuism of both the Taipings and the secret societies of the Triads in the late 1800s. On the other hand, after the failure of the Hundred Days' Reform with his mentor Kang Youwei in 1898, Liang was forced to flee the country, seeking refuge in Japan in the first few years of the 1900s. It was during this time that Liang was first introduced to the idea of nationalism, which greatly influenced Sun's idea of nationalism as one of the core concepts of his "Three Principles of the People."

In Liang's mind, China should embrace *daminzuzhuyi* (broad nationalism), holding various ethnic groups in the arms of a unified China. In order to achieve that end, Liang, for most of career, believed that a gradual transition within the Manchu government would be most effective. Sun certainly could not agree. To him, it was the first priority to get rid of the Manchu rule for a Han-centered Chinese nationalism. To that end, Sun argued, a violent revolution was unavoidable and essential.

As both Liang's and Sun's ideas interweaved and clashed, it is important for historians to question the similarities and differences between Liang's and Sun's ideas about modern Chinese nationalism in order to derive the implications behind such comparisons. This essay shows that both Liang Qichao and Sun Yatsen worked to develop modern Chinese nationalism and to integrate it into the Chinese identity at the turn of the century; however their visions differed within nationalism's scope and implementation. As an important implication of such comparisons, this essay further points to Sun's eventual success in bringing down the Manchu government due to his personal charisma and pragmatism compared to Liang's often unpredictable and vulnerable characteristics.

Nationalism: Liang and Sun's Acquaintances

Nationalism appeared with the rise of the nation-state system in Europe in the late 18th century and it was an alien concept to China in its relations with the rest of the world, as its major approach to foreign powers was culturalism. Certainly, this concept will be explored later in the paper. As a brief definition, culturalism puts ancient China in the center of the world order, and Chinese emperors believed that as long as foreign countries adopted Chinese culture and values, they could be a part of China. However, this long-held view was quickly destroyed with western intrusion into China in the 19th century, when nationalism found its voice and entered into the minds of Chinese intellectuals.

The emergence of Chinese nationalism was unique and it had to deal with two aspects, both internally and externally. China in the 19th century was fighting against an alien government that was too weak to resist outside forces and those very outside forces, the imperialist powers, at the same time. As Louis L. Snyder states, nationalism arose in Asia because of a psychological need.¹ Chinese people were shocked to see “foreign barbarians” using advanced weapons that they had never seen before, ripping their country apart and demanding from the weak Qing government compensation for their aggression. They were also outraged by Qing’s submissiveness in signing unequal treaties, making land concessions, and forcefully opening additional native ports. With humiliation and fear, the people under such circumstances urgently needed a cohesive force to restore their confidence in their country. Nationalism thus became a solution.

As a result, Sun Yatsen and Liang Qichao began to converge on their ultimate goal to rid China of the old oppressive system. According to Sun, nationalism was ‘the treasure for a state to prosper and for a nation to survive.’² This echoed Liang’s belief that China’s lack of nationalism served to hold back its progress and that comprehensive reforms were necessary to change China’s fundamental values in national cohesiveness. Therefore, in the first few years of his exile in Japan, complicated by the Empress Dowager’s demand to arrest him, Liang was persuaded by Sun to join his force against the Manchu through a

¹ Louis L. Snyder, *Macro-Nationalisms: A History of the Pan-Movements*, Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1984, p. 202.

² Sun Yatsen 孙中山, “Minzu zhuyi liu jiang zhi disan jiang” 《民族主义六讲之第三讲》, in *Sun Yatsen Yatsen wenji* 《孙中山文集》, Vol. I, 第一卷, Beijing: tuanjiechubanshe 团结出版社, 1997, p. 86.

violent revolution. While in Japan between 1899 and 1903, Liang was exposed to western philosophies on state, rights, and people. He was extremely impressed with the success of Japanese Meiji Reform and persuaded Sun to introduce his networks in America to him. During this period, Sun's and Liang's nationalist ideologies converged when they both envisioned a Republic of China by redefining statehood through revolutions. It was at this time that their relationship entered a honeymoon stage. However, this was quickly destroyed after Liang's visit to North America in 1903.

Liang's trip to the United States, a country that embodies a democratic republic, became another turning point of his nationalist philosophy. While visiting Chinatown in San Francisco, Liang saw corruption and chaos that were no different from the situation in China. Embarrassed and disappointed, Liang the eloquent nationalist felt ashamed of what he saw of his people, people whom he regarded as poorly prepared for the modern world. He began to feel that the fundamental weaknesses of the Chinese, as a people, made them unfit for a republic. He arrived at a drastic conclusion that order and unity, instead of republicanism or freedom, would best serve his motherland. Therefore, Liang switched from a pro-revolutionary and pro-republic stance to a pro-Manchu one, advocating an enlightened absolutism within China. This is one of the most important points in Liang's development of Chinese nationalism – he realized that a government free from foreign rule did not entail effective governance. This also meant a complete reversal of his original position, a repudiation of the cause to which he had been devoted to in the past.³

Such rhetoric severely worsened Sun Yatsen's relationship with Liang Qichao, as Sun had been determined to create a republic by overthrowing the Manchu government. From 1903 to the dawn of the revolution, Liang and Sun began a series of intense polemics that eventually drove many of Liang's supporters to Sun's revolutionary cause. As a revolutionary organizer, Sun was perseverant, spreading his popularity and gaining recognition and respect from both foreign organizations and domestic secret societies. This was particularly demonstrated through the financial support Sun received from Chinese overseas, who felt connected to Sun's American upbringing and were inspired

³ Xiaobing Tang, *Global space and the nationalist discourse of modernity – the historical thinking of Liang Qichao*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1996. p140.

by his revolutionary speeches. In contrast, Liang was an outspoken literatus who grappled with a range of stances. Though converging to some extent on their approach to modern Chinese nationalism, drastic differences remained. These diverging interests led to Sun's success in bringing down the Manchu government, whereas Liang's vision of a liberal monarchy did not come into existence.

Recognizing Liang Qichao's significance in first introducing modern Chinese nationalism, his inability to carry a coherent definition of it through the reform indeed made him "one early story of the futility of the efforts of individual liberal reformers in twentieth-century China."⁴ As Peter Harris argues, Liang was "vacillating and uncertain" about his ideas at several points of his life, which raised skepticism among his followers.⁵ Joseph Levenson echoes this view by pointing out that "the mutual incompatibility of the aims which Liang set for historians was but a single symptom of the one great over-all inconsistency...he remained caught in his dilemma."⁶ It was exactly Liang's capricious personality that hindered his political advancement, making his ideology on nationalism unreliable to public eyes.

On the other hand, William Rowe emphasizes Sun's "oft-attested personal good looks and charisma," his strengths as a public speaker, and "his flair for the dramatic,"⁷ suggesting Sun to be a more suitable revolutionary to bring about actual changes than Liang. This also reflects what Chuyuan Cheng terms Sun's "strategy and priority."⁸ Even though Rowe defines Sun as a "propagandist, [and] a broker among other revolutionary elements,"⁹ he points to the success of Sun's pragmatism in winning support over Liang, who had gained the upper hand at the very early stage of the reform.

Despite divided views on Sun's and Liang's success in utilizing

⁴Tang, *Global space and the nationalist discourse of modernity – the historical thinking of Liang Qichao*, p161.

⁵Peter Harris, "Review: Chinese Nationalism: The State of the Nation", *The China Journal*, Jul., 1997, No. 38 (1997), p127.

⁶Joseph R. Levenson, *Liang Chi-Chao and the mind of modern China*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1953, p139.

⁷William T. Rowe, *China's last empire – The Great Qing*, Cambridge, MA: The Belknap press of Harvard University Press, 2009, p270.

⁸Cheng Chuyuan, *Sun Yatsen's Doctrine in the Modern World*, Boulder & London: Westview Press Inc, 1989, p143.

⁹Rowe, p271.

nationalism to achieve their respective objectives, Liang's close friend Yang Du, who was also very gifted in political talents, articulated that if Liang wanted to defeat Sun, he should be consistent and hold on to one principle of nationalism that "the simpleminded" could follow and thus concentrate on one cause.¹⁰ This clearly explains the popularity of Sun's approach to nationalism, since not every Chinese was able to comprehend the complexities of the nationalist philosophy: the slogan of Anti-Manchusim and Revolution won mass appeal.¹¹ With hindsight, Yang Du's persuasion points right at Liang's weakness in materializing his goal of nationalism, namely inconsistency and intellectualism. This in turn explains Sun's success as a pragmatic political leader.

Whose version of nationalism was more appealing to the people? Why was that? Recognizing the similarities and differences between Sun's and Liang's visions of nationalism, I agree with Yang Du's comments that Liang's nationalist idea had a huge impact on Sun, but what made Sun's ideas more appealing to the public was to a large extent his charisma and pragmatism. Thus, this essay will first analyze the similarities between Liang's and Sun's nationalist ideologies, exploring their converging roots and goals. Then, it will examine the differences in their visions of nationalism, looking specifically at the scope of nationalism and the implementation of nationalism. As a final note, this essay attempts to explain Sun's leadership and strategies in utilizing nationalism to dismantle the Manchu government, against which Liang failed to compete.

The Convergence: Waking up from Culturalism

Liang and Sun converged on their recognition of the importance of modern Chinese nationalism and they shared the ultimate goal to rid China of the ancient system. Both Sun Yatsen and Liang Qichao defined modern Chinese nationalism as a rejection of ancient Chinese culturalism, which was based more on a cultural standard than a racial dissimilarity. This was elaborated by the 20th century Chinese philosopher Feng Youlan, that before the 1900s the Chinese were concerned about the "continuation and integrity of the Chinese culture and civilization" in making a distinction between "China" and the "Barbarians," but this was made according to a "cultural criteria rather than a racial difference."¹² Therefore, it is important to know what Chinese culturalism was

¹⁰ Ibid., p271.

¹¹ Tang, p161

¹² Feng Youlan 冯友兰, *Zhongguo zhexue jianshi* 《中国哲学简史》, Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe 北京大学出版社, 1985, p 211–222

and how Sun and Liang replaced it with modern Chinese nationalism based on ethnicity and state.

Before modern Chinese nationalism came into being, from a culturalist point of view, the word “Chinese” meant a general acceptance of traditional Chinese culture, especially Confucianism. Consequently, the distinction between being Chinese and being barbarian depended on the acceptance of Confucianism. This meant that there was a lack of strict boundaries between being Chinese and non-Chinese ethnically. Once the barbarians were assimilated into Chinese culture, they became Chinese. The difference between culturalism and nationalism was essentially the following: culturalism suspends foreign ideas, but it may not obviously oppose foreign material force, while nationalism reverses these relations; it may accept foreign ideas, but it absolutely fights against foreign material incursions. Indeed, given a deteriorating condition within China, the Chinese at that time were desperately fighting foreigners on a physical level rather than on a conceptual one.

In defining China’s relationship with the barbarians, culturalism adopted the view of *Tianxizhuyi* (China-centric universalism). This view envisioned a hierarchical world order with China at the center, and the Chinese emperor, who was the Son of Heaven, had the mandate of Heaven to rule *Tianxia* (everything under the Heaven). Zhimin Chen added to this characteristic that within this world order, “China did not see herself as one state among others, but as the only civilized entity that had to live with uncivilized ‘barbarians.’”¹³ Such a view clearly showed the isolation of the entire East Asian political order from the rest of the world before the mid-nineteenth century. Feng Youlan, a prominent Chinese scholar, further wrote that “the reason underlying the lack of Chinese nationalism was that the Chinese were used to seeing things from a universal perspective.”¹⁴ Echoing this view, writing in the 19th century, Kunikida Doppo, a Japanese literary figure, wrote that the Chinese were “totally devoid of national consciousness.”¹⁵ Certainly, he was commenting on Chinese culturalism through a modern perspective; Chinese before the 19th century had never perceived Chinese identity through a racial or ethnic perspective other than a Confucian one. This explains precisely the reason why the concepts of modern nation state and nationalism did not play

¹³ Zhimin Chen, “Nationalism, Internationalism and Chinese Foreign Policy”, Routledge: *Journal of Contemporary China*, 14: 42, p37

¹⁴ Feng, p222.

¹⁵ Akira Iriye, *China and Japan in the Global Setting*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992, p32.

any important roles prior to the 19th century.

Yet the barbarians' invasion and conquest in the 19th century showcased their military superiority and formidable culture and religion. The western powers had shaken the foundation of a China-dominated world order. Indeed, the competition between traditional culturalism and modern nationalism among the Chinese intellectuals at the turn of the century saw the time when "nationalism [invaded] the Chinese scene as culturalism [gave] way."¹⁶ This was a huge step and an inevitable development; in Levenson's words, nationalism in the late 19th century was enlisted as "a non-Chinese remedy to the problem of Chinese survival."¹⁷

It was under such historical context that Liang Qichao and Sun Yatsen began to form their ideas on modern Chinese nationalism. Both of them witnessed endless Manchu failures in combating the imperialists, were influenced by Western thoughts of state building and nationalism, and attempted to define modern Chinese nationalism through a state and ethnic point of view. When Liang was hiding in Japan in early 1900, Sun used his Japanese connections to protect Liang and introduced him to his secret societies in America. It was at that point in history that Liang and Sun both agreed to a violent revolutionary plan; it was also at that point in history that they formed an alliance to enhance Chinese nationalism in order to overthrow the Manchu-rulers. Even though this period did not last long, it was significant in laying the foundation of modern Chinese nationalism.

Despite the subsequent divergences, it was interesting to see an eventual convergence after the 1911 Revolution when Sun began to promote a broad nationalism and ethnic tolerance. It could be said that Sun's and Liang's relationship in developing Chinese nationalism went through peaks and troughs. While both of them were competing for support, the path Sun took to achieve Chinese nationalism appealed to the mass population and eventually drew the intellectuals into supporting him. This certainly revealed Sun's unique charisma and pragmatism by not only winning support for his version of nationalism, but also in overthrowing the Manchu government. Before exploring this implication from such comparisons, which will be discussed in the final section of the paper, I will examine two most significant divergences on Sun's and Liang's versions of modern Chinese nationalism.

¹⁶ Joseph Levenson, *Confucian China and its Modern Fate: A Trilogy*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968, Vol. 1, p98–104.

¹⁷ Levenson, *Liang Chi-Chao and the mid of modern China*, p. 110.

The Divergences: Scope of Nationalism

At the turn of the twentieth century, Liang Qichao and Sun Yatsen both turned to nationalism to rescue a faltering China, but their different approaches to the concept determined their diverging political agendas. One major difference between Liang's and Sun's interpretation of modern Chinese nationalism is the scope of nationalism – *guojiazhuayi* (state nationalism) and *minzuzhuayi* (ethnic nationalism), respectively.

Liang saw nationalism as the sum of a nation's cultural character, ranging from ethics to literature. He proposed to have special characteristics within China that could bind the people together. Liang commented that, China was not in any way similar to the Austrian Empire, which had its war of Germans against Slavs, instead saying that the people of China were essentially one but with two dominant races, Chinese and Manchus.¹⁸ His experiences in Western countries convinced him that what China needed the most was an organic integration and forceful order.¹⁹ He felt that all the ethnic groups in China should unify, and “together as a third of the world's population, they would occupy a prominent position in the world.”²⁰ Therefore, nationalism was essential to unite Chinese, as Western countries had done, to survive under a Darwinist order. State nationalism, as Liang endorsed, was a belief in the state not only as an instrument of national construction, but as the center of political thought where the primacy of the state was emphasized.²¹ This meant that that state should first be a unified entity before it engaged itself in political and social development. In other words, a state should act as a political tool, utilizing its authority to promote its peoples' consciousness of nationalism.

Moreover, Liang believed that state nationalism implied the development of a multi-ethnic state, meaning a state made up of several smaller entities and not where one dominant group ruled over the rest. By arguing this, Liang subjugated Han Chinese to a coalition of rulers from various ethnic groups, thus denying a potential Han-ruled modern China. Commenting in 1903 on the work of the German philosopher Johann Bluntschli, who had a major influence in shaping his state nationalism, Liang wrote, “what is small nationalism (ethnic nationalism)? It is the Han nation as opposed to the other

¹⁸ Levenson, *Liang Chi-Chao and the mid of modern China*, p161

¹⁹ Chen, p38-39

²⁰ Ibid., p38-39

²¹ Harris, p125

nations in the state. What is great nationalism? It is the various nations of the state, core and peripheral, as opposed to the various nations abroad.”²² Great nationalism was another name Liang gave to state nationalism.

In 1903, when Liang was in Japan after the failure of the reform, he was disappointed by Qing’s inability to resist foreign aggression, the administrative negligence that caused disastrous famines, and the severe epidemics that ensued. He came to believe, not without justice, that the Chinese could not blame the Manchus alone for their own wrongdoings, which was merely self-delusion. Liang argued that the expulsion of a foreign government – the Manchus – would not mean the end of a bad government.

More importantly, Liang believed that the Manchus, whom the ethnic nationalists attempted to disapprove, were well assimilated into the Chinese nation. In other words, the Manchus had become completely “Sinified,” and if the Chinese could see themselves as citizens, the Manchus could do the same.²³ To counter Sun’s argument that the Manchu was the evil foreign intruder who inflicted pains on Chinese society, Liang insisted that the transfer of power in the 17th century could not be seen as a transfer from Chinese to Manchus; rather it was a spontaneous development when the Manchu government succeeded power. In other words, Liang thought the historical spontaneity could be viewed as “the Qing eclipsed Ming, that the rule of the [Zhu] family ended and the rule of the Aisin Gioro began”²⁴ instead of seeing Manchu as the foreign aggressor. To Liang, the imperialist aggressors from the outside were the threat, not the Manchus, as Sun and the other radical nationalists emphasized. As a result, China had to strengthen its state nationalism to unite a heterogeneous population, following what the United States had done to consolidate its sovereignty over various groups of people, to fight the outside forces.

Liang’s appeasement with the Manchu and his adoption of state-nationalism, which embraced all ethnic groups of China were deeply disturbing and humiliating in the eyes of Sun and his revolutionary supporters. Sun advocated that the principle of nationalism was “to seek equality with the

²² Liang Qichao 梁启超, “Zhengzhixue dajia Bolunzhili zhi xueshuo” 《政治学大家伯伦知理之学说》, in Liang Qichao, Yingbinshiwenji, vol.2, 收录于梁启超《饮冰室文集》, 第二卷, Shanghai: Shanghai Wenhua Jinbu She, 上海文化进步社, 1935, p.18

²³ Levenson, Liang Chi-Chao and the mind of modern China, p162

²⁴ *Ibid*, p161

foreigners and not be their slaves.”²⁵ Only when China rid itself of Manchus could it become strong, and only when that happened would China be able to talk with foreign aggressors about equality. According to Sun’s version of nationalism, the Chinese should not be satisfied with the fact that the minority was small and the nation was strong in terms of its immunity from racial struggle, but should feel ashamed that a minority of Manchus so small could rule the majority Han. The answer to Chinese unification was straightforward to Sun – ethnic nationalism. Before the revolution of 1911, Sun advocated Han Chinese nationalism to beat the Manchus, which was a product of racial difference. He called on the Han Chinese to save the country by overthrowing the Manchu rulers, and to build a Chinese state governed by Han majority. However, it was noteworthy that Sun was only against Manchu-rule – the Manchu elites who took control over the dynasty – not the entire Manchu ethnic group.

Sun Yatsen contributed China’s absence of nationalism to the lack of distinction between itself and the outside, which had subordinated China to one hundred thousand Manchus in the early seventeenth century, and the Manchus, once in power, made every effort to brainwash the Chinese of their barbarian origin. He in turn compared this with what Japan had done to Korea—the Manchus were destroying the national consciousness of the Chinese.²⁶ He was also worried that under “foreign” domination, the Chinese people might give in to foreign culture. Looking at the historical progression, Sun rejected Manchu-rule, claiming the rulers as traitors of Chinese sovereignty. He emphasized Liang’s naivety, arguing that state nationalism would only be slavery and subordination without establishing ethnic nationalism first. It was a foreign dynasty and its conspirators who betrayed China, not its tradition and culture. One day, it would retake the mission as protector of weaker Asian countries. Taking these concerns into account, Sun’s ideas on nationalism emphasized Chinese consciousness, ethics, social structure, and intellect as the foundation for a modern polity.²⁷

Clearly, the political consequences of granting the nation a Han-

²⁵ Sidney H. Chang & Leonard H.D. Gordon, *All under heaven - Sun Yatsen and his revolutionary thought*, Stanford University, California: Hoover Institution Press, 1991, p103

²⁶ Paul Myron Anthony Linebarger, *The Political Doctrines of Sun Yatsen – an exposition of the San Min Chu I*, Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political science, 1937, p59

²⁷ Robert E. Bedeski, “The Concept of the State: Sun Yatsen and Mao Tse-tung”, *The China Quarterly*, Jun., 1977, No. 70, UK: Cambridge University Press, p342

dominated nationalism would be the dissolution of the Qing Empire. This further led to another deeper divergence between Liang's and Sun's take on Chinese nationalism in view of reforms and revolution.

The Divergences: Paths towards Nationalism

Another major difference between Liang's and Sun's visions of modern Chinese nationalism is the paths Sun and Liang took towards nationalism. Liang, as mentioned before, switched his stance on Chinese reforms on a few occasions, and after 1903 to the dawn of the revolution, Liang wanted a gradual reform of the Manchu rule, which he believed would evolve into a constitutional monarchy. He thought the situation in China was different from that in Russia or France, and he encouraged China to follow the path of the Meiji Reform. Only in this way could Chinese be truly unified under the broad banner of state nationalism. To this end, Liang strongly opposed a violent revolution that would bring much more chaos if Manchu-rule was overthrown.

In contrast, from the very beginning of his political career, Sun worked to enhance Chinese nationalism through an immediate and forceful revolution to overthrow the Manchu government. Sun's vision of post-revolutionary China was a republican form of government whereas Liang still supported a government with the emperor holding limited power at the top.

Liang was hostile to the thought of a republican China. One important reason was that he knew it was inevitable to use violence to achieve that end. He was repulsed by the thought of violence after 1903 because it would not lead to an end of trouble and the impact of using nationalism to initiate a revolution would come back to haunt the revolutionaries one day. As a further analysis, Liang believed that imperialistic powers would unavoidably intervene amidst the chaos of a revolution, which would resemble what had happened in 19th century China. He demonstrated that Chinese rebellions, which generally covered a longer period of time than European ones did and wrought more havoc, showed a very strong correlation with foreign intervention and exploitation. In attacking Sun's violent path to achieve Chinese nationalism through a revolution, Liang inaccurately claimed that Sun said that half of the four hundred million people of China would be sacrificed to accomplish the goals of the revolution; he further exaggerated that Sun was only trying to use bloodshed as a way to achieve his revolutionary objectives.²⁸ This would lead to China's collapse. Therefore, Liang foresaw a detrimental chain of events if an

²⁸ Sidney H. Chang & Leonard H.D. Gordon, p102

attempt should be made to establish a republic in China. In other words, a violent revolution would have deadly impact on China, causing internal conflicts and external chaos.

Compared to Liang Qichao, Sun Yatsen believed that the origin of China's political troubles laid in the monarchy system and that too many Chinese aspired to become the emperor themselves. Therefore, China had to become a republic to rid itself of imperial institutions and the dynastic lineages. Sun anticipated the revolution to fulfill his vision of Chinese nationalism. To counter Liang's argument of chaotic rebellions in the past, Sun clearly focused on the need to have a plan to develop genuine changes, even before taking actions to bring down the old regime.²⁹ He argued that a revolution was the only way to inspire Chinese nationalism, and Liang was holding unrealistic dreams of a non-violent gradualist approach.³⁰ As a result, Sun remarked that Liang's attack on his violent approach to achieve Chinese nationalism was highly "opinionated," stating Liang "accused me [Sun] with illusion."³¹ In Sun's perspective, Liang's adoption of a constitutional monarchy went against revolutionary's fundamental principle of anti-Manchu rule, which entailed Han subordination to an alien government. This was unacceptable to Sun.

After Liang Qichao failed in the One Hundred Days of Reform movement in 1898, intellectuals in favor of more radical solutions to China's problems began to gain further influence. As James P. Harrison pointed out, the difference between earlier Chinese culturalism and Chinese nationalism of the twentieth century lay mainly in the Chinese peoples' "increased knowledge about what modernization implied and in their willingness to action this knowledge regardless of consequences."³² In the early 1900s, with Sun's emerging popularity, Chinese under that historical context gained appetite for radical changes as an embodiment of their newfound nationalism. It is important to note that Sun's solid stance to utilize nationalism to start a revolution that would overthrow the Qing gained momentum when his passionate speeches aroused an atmosphere of crisis and urgency in China. Sun effectively fought Liang's gradualist and constitutional monarchy movement, giving an alternative to the Chinese intellectuals who formerly favored Liang's

²⁹ Ibid., p97

³⁰ Shi Yunyan 石云艳, *Liang Qichao yu Riben* 《梁启超与日本》, Tianjing: Tianjinrenminchubanshe 天津人民出版社, 2005, p421

³¹ Sidney H. Chang & Leonard H.D. Gordon, p102

³² Cheng, p141

approach but later became confused themselves. Consequently, more Chinese began to equate Liang's wish to use persuasion on the emperor to achieve his nationalist goals as another form of slavery, which would never end the feudal system.

Apart from domestic popularity, Sun's rising influence in overseas Chinese communities also weakened the reformist faction. During the process, Sun's revolutionary force was strengthened day by day. On the contrary, Liang, who originally thought to use his argument against Sun to win supporters to his side, drove many of the reformers to the revolutionary side. He maintained a disadvantaged position as revolution approached.

Pragmatic Politician vs. Unpredictable Literatus

Whose version of nationalism was more convincing to the people? Despite their ideological similarities and differences, Sun's charisma and pragmatism allowed him to more effectively achieve his nationalist objectives than Liang, who was sensitive and often inconsistent with his stance. This was particularly demonstrated through Sun's clear anti-Manchu objective as the one force that pulled people together. Liang, on the other hand, switched to an anti-Manchu stance between 1898 and 1903, then to a pro-Manchu approach from 1903 to 1919, and finally to complete conservatism for an authoritarian rule after 1919. His arguments were seen as frequently contradictory to the ones he made before. In a time of extreme chaos in China, Liang's volatility placed him second to Sun. Against the wave of hysterical revolutionary zeal, Liang abandoned his initial agreement to use nationalism for a republican cause and decided that China needed to have an authoritarian government. This certainly put him into direct confrontation not only with Sun, but with many student activists who originally supported him. Thus, Liang's popularity plunged. Joseph Levenson gave a very interesting account on Liang's inconsistent approach to nationalism: "the only arguments available for Liang's rationalization of his new positions [were] irreconcilable," meaning he often contradicted himself, and "he may be permitted some [wildness] without our questioning the coherence of his collected thoughts."³³ Xiaobing Tang further commented on Liang's inconsistency and as he saw it, Liang had in one hand a "modern, homogenizing concept" and a "symbol of resistance to modernity" in the other.³⁴

Indeed, Liang was caught in his personal dilemma, the conflict between "the

³³ Levenson, *Liang Chi-Chao and the mind of modern China*, p128

³⁴ Harris, p129

abstract, logical necessity to choose between two alternatives, history and value, and the practical, historical necessity to cling to them both.”³⁵ Even Liang claimed himself to be on the middle ground.³⁶ For this fact, it might be said that Liang was a literatus – he had an intricate thought system – but he could not put ideas into actions.

Upon Sun’s death in 1925, reporters from the *Chenbao* (Morning Newspaper) asked Liang how he thought of Sun. Liang responded, “Mr. Sun Yatsen’s entire life was devoted to unscrupulous means to achieve his goals, so [I] couldn’t know his real worth.”³⁷ Though with a negative connotation, Liang’s response reflected Sun’s success as a pragmatic politician, who knew how to maneuver and prioritize issues to his own advantage. Interestingly enough, at one point, when attacked by Liang’s fiery article on Sun’s nationalist approach, Sun, in obvious frustration with Liang, responded, “my proposal has been consistent, but Liang’s is not. He changes his positions all the time. How could he make such a false accusation [against me]?”³⁸

Sun Yatsen knew from the very beginning the advantage of using anti-Manchism as a political slogan to arouse Chinese nationalism and mass support. The effect of it was twofold, as it motivated “the upper levels of society with the nationalist cause”, and “the lower levels with a vengeful spirit.”³⁹ It was also at this point in Chinese history that nationalism became an emotional, simple, and unifying force which enabled large masses of people to comprehend the most immediate national priority. In this sense, Sun simplified the complicated doctrine of nationalism to one clear idea – overthrow the Manchus.

It was also noteworthy that even though Sun was against both the Manchus and the imperialists, he placed less criticism towards the latter. One reason was his concern to simplify an ethnic nationalism and another was his need for foreign support and funding in carrying out the revolution. Sun had too many competitors. Most of the time he had to compete for funding with

35 Levenson, *Liang Chi-Chao and the mind of modern China*, p136

36 *Ibid.*, p145

37 Zhang Yaojie 张耀杰, “Sun Yatsen de shuangchong guoji yu liangtao huayu” 《孙中山的双重国籍与两套话语》, *The Economic Observer* 《经济观察报》, 2011-6-27. <<http://www.chinaelections.org/newsinfo.asp?newsid=209730>>

38 Sidney H. Chang & Leonard H.D. Gordon, p102

39 Tang, p145

non-revolutionary groups, namely the Society to Protect the Emperor, which was established in exile by Liang's teacher Kang Youwei and headed by Liang himself in 1898 after their failed reform the same year. With the young reform-minded Guangxu emperor, who represented the constitutional monarchy visions that many conservative intellectuals held at home and abroad, under house arrest, Sun was facing severe challenges for his support domestically. As an alternative strategy, Sun tried to solicit support of foreign powers, particularly Japan, the United States, Britain, and France to fund his revolutionary activities against the Manchu government.⁴⁰ Again, he knew his priorities and that was why he regarded imperialistic powers as less evil to the Manchu government before the revolution and attacked the western powers after 1911. Therefore, formulating his nationalist argument in terms designed to appeal to western supporters was one of the tactics he frequently used when necessary.

Another important tactic Sun used to win support through his pragmatism was to prioritize an anti-Manchu nationalism before supporting Liang's broad nationalist idea. As mentioned before, the first major difference between Liang's and Sun's take on nationalism was the scope of it. From the late 1800s up to the revolution, Sun was consistent with his idea of an ethnic-nationalism, overthrowing the Manchus. It was during that time that Sun's Han nationalism was distinct from Liang's state nationalism. Shortly after the 1911 Revolution, Sun and other nationalist leaders began to reject ethnic nationalism, embracing all ethnic groups into the Han community. Sun proclaimed to establish a "united Chinese Republic in order that all the peoples – Manchus, Mongols, Tibetans, Tartars, and Chinese – should constitute a single powerful nation."⁴¹ The Provisional Law of the Republic in 1912 particularly identified Mongolia, Tibet, and Qinghai as integral parts of the country, even if these territories were additions to the Qing created by the Manchus.⁴² Successive Chinese constitutions therefore defined China as a multi-ethnic state. Eventually, Sun called for a creation of a "melting-pot nationalism" that resembled the one in North America.⁴³

Looking back, the nationalism Sun Yatsen promoted right after the

⁴⁰ Cheng, p143

⁴¹ Cheng, p55

⁴² Suisheng Zhao, "Chinese Nationalism and its international orientations", *Political Science Quarterly*, 115.1 (2000), p25

⁴³ Harris, p134

revolution was not after all very different from Liang's "broad nationalism." The ultimate difference lies in how history defines Liang and Sun – on one hand a sensitive intellectual, on the other a pragmatic politician. Perhaps Sun's political tactics echoed to Liang's calling him "unscrupulous." Upon learning Sun's last words on his deathbed in 1925 were "peace," "struggle," and "save China," Liang was shaken and deeply grieved, and commented, "this [his life] was worth a masterpiece."⁴⁴ No matter how intense their debates used to be and no matter how harshly they each criticized the other, they both contributed to each other's thought on the development of modern Chinese nationalism and neither of their efforts can be overlooked.

Thoughts make Philosophy, Thinkers make History

Undoubtedly, both Sun and Liang created Chinese awareness of nationalism in a modern world. Sun's nationalism did not fade away after the Republic of China was founded. The works of Liang reflected the intellectuals of his generation who were suddenly exposed to the world beyond the Middle Kingdom. Sun and Liang were among many others who travelled widely outside China. In Peter Harris' words, "they were caught in a melee of conflicting perspectives."⁴⁵

When commenting on Sun's and Liang's interpretations of nationalism, Xizhang Xie, a contemporary Chinese scholar, provided an insightful view: their approach to nationalism could be seen as answers to a broad political question, and in fact, their goals could be one and the same, but their sacrifices and options at each stage of China's modernization produced vast differences.⁴⁶ Liang abandoned culturalism for modern nationalism in the first place, transforming the idea of *tianxia* to state nationalism. Sun on the other hand, linked an anti-Manchu sentiment to a republican revolution, combining an ethnic revolution with his political objectives.

44 Huang Weizong 黄伟宗, "Jindai Zhujiang wenhua wensheng" 《近代珠江文化文圣 – 梁启超》, 2005- 5-30. China Review Academic Publishers Ltd. 中国评论学术出版社 <<http://www.zhgp.com/crnwebapp/cbspub/secDetail.jsp?bookid=2500&secid=2527>>, 25.

45 Harris, p128

46 Xie Xizhang 解玺璋, "Sun Yatsen he xin hai renwu" 《孙中山和辛亥人物》, Fenghuang Television Program, 凤凰视频 – 2011-01-04 – 《凤凰大视野》 <<http://v.ifeng.com/his/201101/8744ad02-666f-4213-8901-0853d26f15e4.shtml>>

Despite their differences on the scope of nationalism and the interpretation of the paths to achieve that nationalism, Sun and Liang shared many similarities in borrowing Western philosophy to legitimize modern Chinese nationalism, and as a result of these characteristics, Sun's personal charisma and pragmatism in defining political priorities led to the downfall of the Manchu government. Liang's vulnerable and susceptible personality disappointed many of his supporters, who gradually switched sides for Sun's revolutionary cause prior to 1911. Apart from Liang's weaknesses, we still need to recognize his contribution in shaping the initial idea of Chinese nationalism and realize that his vision of nationalism could have been better applied under a different historical context and time.

As forerunners of the modern Chinese identity, both Liang Qichao and Sun Yatsen achieved successes in ending China's last dynasty with thousands of failures intertwined in the process. However, their visions were limited by history, not by their carelessness. They were, after all, trapped in a limited historical dimension that should not be called shortsightedness. I would end with Levenson's quote, which inspired the creation of this essay in the first place: "philosophy deals with thought, but history deals with thinkers. We may expect pragmatic and romantic ideas both to emerge in a single society" and "sometimes history demands what philosophy will not permit, the attempted compromise of two mutually exclusive premises. That was China's dilemma [at the dawn of the revolution]."⁴⁷ Nationalism, thus, became both the cause of and the solution to the dilemma.

47 Levenson, *Liang Chi-Chao and the mind of modern China*, p151

Uniting China Under A New Life

JEFFREY SHIAU

Introduction

“The reason why China suffers bitterly from endless wars is because of the existence of feudal lords and kings.” -Qin Shi Huang

History often works in cycles. Cities rise, cities fall. Empires rise, empires fall. These cycles often follow the ebb and flow of natural phenomenon. In the case of Chinese civilization, a unique dynastic cycle characterized its millennia of existence. In 221 BC, the Middle Kingdom, consisting of various fiefs in the “Warring States Period (475-221 BC),” was united under the iron fist of the first Huangdi (emperor), Qin Shi Huang. The Qin Dynasty became the first imperial dynasty of what would be the longest continuous civilization in the world. Now, Qin Shi Huang is a legendary figure, often cast as a ruthless and brutal tyrant, who is renowned for his economic and political reforms that set the foundation for two thousand years of Chinese rule. The first emperor's strongman methods are seen as a necessity for the greater good and the persisting stability of the civilization. Several notable remnants of his reign are the Great Wall of China, the terracotta soldiers, and the standardization of units, which have become symbols of the Middle Kingdom's might.

During the early twentieth century, the great civilization found itself in a similar precarious situation; the fall of the Qing Dynasty in 1911 witnessed the fragmentation of China, with power falling in the hands of regional warlords, while the Kuomintang (KMT) party struggled to restore order to the once-great dynastic state in the succeeding decades. At the time of Dr. Sun Yat-sen's death in 1925, the KMT was still attempting to consolidate power against the various regional warlords who ruled the northern territories of the country. China was in dire need of modernization in order to restore her formal glory. Who was going to take on the task of welding the broken links of China into a chain, strong enough to pull the country into the modern world? Chiang Kai-Shek, known in the West as the Generalissimo, possessed a genuine desire and the initiative to breath “new life” into his nation. After Dr. Sun's death, Chiang Kai-Shek won a power struggle to take over the helm as leader of the Nationalists and in that position he attempted to do what Qin Shi Huang had

done two millennia ago. Like the first emperor, Chiang possessed the dual qualities of being a national hero to many while being seen as ruthless and authoritarian by others. It was his belief that he himself would be the person to lead China back to prominence. The New Life Movement (NLM) was an instance of a project Chiang introduced in an attempt to identify and fix the country's problems. Through a study of the NLM, we can understand Chiang's personal philosophy and approach to creating a China for the modern world. This paper argues that Chiang Kai-Shek united China and attempted to develop China through methods such as the NLM, which contained fascist and Confucian undertones, that worked to rejuvenate the citizens. Ultimately, his endeavors ended in failure, due to their inorganic natures, which did not allow for any truly popular movements to foster.

The NLM was introduced on February 19, 1934 as a way to remedy some of the problems that plagued China at the time. One of those was the “unpreparedness of the people for the responsibilities of public life.”¹ Chiang believed the people of China had become distanced from governmental and national affairs, becoming focused solely on the welfare of their families. Additionally, he believed the people were “spiritless,” and consequently, “officials tend to be dishonest and avaricious; the masses are undisciplined and calloused; the adults are ignorant and corrupt; the youth become degraded and intemperate; the rich become extravagant and luxurious; and the poor become mean and disorderly.”² The NLM sought to create and develop a “new national consciousness and mass psychology” and serve as the “social regeneration” of China.³ As a whole, the movement was designed as a part of Chiang's interpretation of Dr. Sun's Three Stages of Rule, which laid out the steps towards a constitutional democracy.

The nature of the NLM shows that Chiang was a man who deeply cared for the improvement of the nation. However, the NLM also reveals Chiang's overwhelming belief that he himself (as the leader of the KMT) has to be the one who will help China rise out of the depths of its troubles. The movement was implemented as a way to prepare the people to become citizens for the regime. The movement's explicit top-down approach suggests a rigid and inorganic organization, impervious to real democratic change. Of course, the KMT maintains that the people must obtain this “new life” as a pit stop towards

1 Chiang Kai-Shek, *Outline of the New Life Movement* (China: The Association for the Promotion of the New Life Movement), 1.

2 *Ibid.*, 4.

3 *Ibid.*, 2.

a democracy. However, Chiang ideology, as exemplified by the NLM movement, suggests an inclination towards a more fascist and authoritarian state of rule.

Historiography

There is a paucity of scholarship for something that characterizes a significant part of Chiang's ideology and plan for Nationalist rule in the 1930s. It is fascinating that the NLM only gets a passing mention in several books written about the Republican period of China. As it stands, the scholarship that exists on the topic is not pluralistic; there isn't a huge debate on the effects of the NLM itself. Instead, scholars have chosen to examine differing aspects of the NLM to study. Some scholars, including Arif Dirlik, examine the ideological characteristics of the movement. Others, such as Jennifer Oldstone-Moore, go further and examine a singular element, in Oldstone-Moore's case, Confucianism and the NLM. Some scholars look into the movement's effect on specific groups of people. For example, Yen-Hsiao Pei investigates how the NLM contributed to the image of the modern Chinese woman. Federica Ferlanti hones in on the diverse aspects of the movement in Jiangxi province. While Maria Hsia Chang's work, "Fascism' and Modern China," is not about the NLM, it is valuable to my insight on Chiang's plan for China at the time the NLM was implemented. Personally, I will be examining the ideological basis of the movement and the role it played as a function of Chiang Kai-Shek's motives.

Arif Dirlik's work, "The Ideological Foundations of the New Life Movement: A Study in Counterrevolution," stood as a revisionist view of history in the 1970s. Until then, the movement had been dismissed of any standing importance. The movement was seen as an attempt to revive the same Chinese traditions that had already failed in the modern world. Dirlik, however, honed in on the ideological foundations of the movement, believing it was essentially revolutionary through it's re-purposing of tradition. He said, "the stress on the revival of native morality was the most striking aspect of the movement with its historical context, and endowed it with an aura of conservatism that overshadowed its revolutionary claims and has dominated its image since then."⁴ The New Life was "conservative in a specific sense" and "fashioned by and in response to the twentieth-century Chinese revolution."⁵ In regards to its

4 Arif Dirlik, "The Ideological Foundations of the New Life Movement: A Study in Counterrevolution," *Journal of Asian Studies* 34, no. 4 (Aug. 1975): 954.

5 *Ibid.*, 953

perception, Dirlik thought the inability for the New Life to evolve contributed to its feeble image. He also notes that the “New Life Movement was intended not to challenge but to enhance the existing structure of authority.”⁶ Dirlik further describes the goal of the KMT in instituting this policy:

Its basic intention was to substitute 'political mobilization' for social mobilization, thus replacing revolutionary change from the bottom (which threatened the social structure) with closely supervised change orchestrated from the top (which would serve the goals of the state). The Kuomintang hoped to simultaneously eliminate social radicalism and convert the masses into instruments of its will.⁷

This view that the NLM was a top-down organization contributes to the authoritarian image of Chiang. This paper takes Dirlik's ideas about the “repackaging” of Chinese tradition and applies it to the NLM and its place in Chiang's plan for mobilizing the nation.

A more contemporary scholar, Federica Ferlanti, wrote “The New Life Movement in Jiangxi Province, 1934-1938,” in which he argues that the movement made an impact and a lasting impression in Chinese society. Although the New Life achieved little in the way of what the Nationalist government planned, it still played a prominent role in KMT policy as well as war preparation. Ferlanti saw the practicality of using the New Life ideology to uphold the Nationalist government. Concepts like “filial loyalty” were used to remodel traditions like Confucianism in order to secure the citizens loyalty to the regime. Ultimately, Ferlanti thought the ideology of the NLM did not pan out but the structures created to implement its policies were useful in a practical sense, such as using the networks to shape mobilization and support for the war effort.⁸ My research also holds parallels to Ferlanti's ideas, specifically the idea of using New Life ideology to gain loyalty from the people.

Additionally, my paper focuses a lot on the fascist undercurrents of the NLM, especially in Chiang's own ideas. Maria Hsia Chang's “Fascism” and Modern China’ studies the appearance of fascism in Republican China and deals with the intricacies of fascist ideologies in China. The fascism of the Blue Shirts is often the point of analysis for scholars as the group was the most explicitly fascist entity of China at the time. One intriguing point about the Blue Shirts' intrigue in fascism is in its “mobilizing and control capabilities” rather than its

6 Ibid., 953.

7 Ibid., 947.

8 Federica Ferlanti, “The New Life Movement in Jiangxi Province, 1934-1938,” *Modern Asian Studies* 44, no. 5 (2010): 961-1000.

ideology.⁹ This sentiment is something that I elaborate on in Chiang's NLM language, which links his Confucian values with fascist organizational properties.

Chiang intended to promote inherently “Chinese” values in the movement as a means to an end. The choice for touting “Chinese” values follows as a reaction to the intellectual movements of the 1920s in China. Chiang genuinely believed in those values, as shown by his actions, but was also using them as a political tool. I would venture to say that the NLM, which contained a clear fascist tone in its intent, is an embodiment of the KMT party and its failure. The reason it failed was because it exercised a rigid top-down system, which restricted any organic mobilization to occur. Having little impact on people's lives, the citizens of China ultimately turned to the Communists instead.

A Shift in Ideas: From Sun to Chiang

The fall of the Qing Dynasty in 1911 saw the fragmentation of China. The subsequent decades were characterized by the struggles of the KMT party, led by Dr. Sun Yat-sen, to restore order to the once-great dynastic state. China was divided into rule by separate regional warlords as the KMT struggled to consolidate their power. Dr. Sun Yat-sen did not live to see his party reunite China. The KMT dealt with an internal power struggle during the years after Dr. Sun's death. At one point there were even separate KMT governments, one led by Chiang Kai-Shek in Nanking and the other in Hankow.

The period from 1927 to 1937 is known as the Nanking decade. It started when the Chiang-led Northern Expedition was underway. At this point, the status of the KMT still lay on shaky foundations. Chiang was challenged for Dr. Sun's old position by rivals such as Wang Ching-wei, Hu Han-min, and Liao Chung-k'ai, some of whom had been closer to Sun and possess a considerably more extensive revolutionary background. Scholars of the Nanking decade, however, cite three advantages that Chiang had which put him in a position to succeed Sun: (1) he was a soldier at a time when power in the military was an important political currency, (2) he had a superior financial base through the resources of Shanghai, and (3) his knowledge of factional and warlord politics.¹⁰

9 Maria Hsia Chang, “Fascism' and Modern China,” *The China Quarterly*, no. 79 (Sep. 1979): 553-567.

10 Lloyd E. Eastman, “Nationalist China during the Nanking decade 1927-1937,” in Denis Twitchett and John K. Fairbank, eds., *The Cambridge History of China, Volume 13 Republican China 1912-1949 Part 2* (Cambridge University Press, 1986), 130-134.

Chiang gained much of his military power through his command of the military academy at Whampoa, a position he was appointed to by Sun Yat-sen. In that capacity, he was able to secure the loyalty of many cadets through a teacher-to-student relationship. These connections were pivotal in his grab for power and these advantages made a significant difference during his stint in forced retirement in August 1927, when he still commanded the loyalty of the army.¹¹ Chiang's recognition of the importance of Shanghai, a financial hub, provided him the resources to fund the monumental expenditures of maintaining an army. Having spent time in the city in the 1910s, Chiang had maintained ties with the financial community there. Ultimately, Chiang took advantage of his and the Shanghai capitalists' mutual hatred of the communists and made a deal exchanging money for their purging.¹² His last advantage is one that is indicative of his political prowess altogether. He was skilled at playing factions off of each other and against the warlords he “isolated his opponents and eliminated them one by one.”

At the time, Chiang's main objective was to gain power, but scholars believe his intent was not only to satisfy a hunger for power. Chiang genuinely believed that China's success and future was dependent on his own success at consolidating power.¹³ The nature of his approach to governance can be seen more clearly in this speech he delivered in 1933:

The most important point of fascism is absolute trust in a sagely, able leader. Aside from complete trust in one person, there is no other leader or ism. Therefore, within the organization, although there are cadre, council members, and executives, there is no conflict among them; there is only the trust in the one leader. The leader has final decision in all matters... I believe that unless everyone has absolute trust in one man, we cannot reconstruct the nation and we cannot complete the revolution.¹⁴

This quote explicitly states a desire towards a more authoritarian order and his tendencies toward fascism. Of course, the “one leader” is referring to Chiang himself. It is widely accepted by most scholars that Chiang had fascist leanings such as his affiliation with the Blue Shirts Society, a group of military leaders, many from the Whampoa Academy, whom exerted considerable influence in the KMT. It is debatable whether or not Chiang was power hungry, but what truly matters is if he had good intentions, which I believe was the case.

There was a clear shift in the ideology of the KMT under the leadership

11 Ibid., 130.

12 Ibid., 131.

13 Ibid., 133

14 James E. Sheridan, *China in Disintegration* (New York: The Free Press, 1975), 217.

of Chiang Kai-Shek. Dr. Sun Yat-sen's Three Principles of the People was still promoted as the reigning political philosophy of China. The Three Principles of the People consists of three axioms: nationalism, democracy, and people's livelihood. It served to unite the Chinese people, institute western democracy, and introduce social welfare.¹⁵ However, the philosophy was reshaped in Chiang's own thought, which was strongly influenced by traditional Chinese values such as Confucianism. In Sun's vision of China, there would be three stages of rule: (1) military rule, in order to consolidate power, (2) political tutelage, to rule on behalf of the people while simultaneously fostering local government to prepare them for the next stage, and finally (3) democratic rule. The conclusion of the Northern Expedition was the end of the first stage of rule. The beginning of the 1930s would see the implementation of political tutelage. This is where the NLM comes into play. The NLM was organized as a way to prepare the citizens, cleanse society, and uphold the current regime. However, this is where Chiang's ideology diverges from Dr. Sun's vision. If the NLM is any indication, democratic rule was most likely never the goal given Chiang's preference for a more authoritarian type of rule.

Ideology of the New Life Movement

Introduced on February 19, 1934 by Chiang Kai-Shek in Nanchang, Jiangxi, the NLM was a way of invigorating the Chinese. The movement was to lay the groundwork for the rebuilding of China, starting with the most minute aspects of life, such as hygiene. China was remarked to be sluggish, "filthy," "hedonistic," "lazy," "decrepit," "barbaric," and "devoid of reason."¹⁶ The movement sought to remedy the situation by addressing social problems such as opium use and gambling, and improving life by reducing expenditures on weddings and funerals, and promoting the use of native commodities.¹⁷ At the beginning of the movement, the NLM targeted the most basic aspects of civilization for reform, such as "clothing, food, residence, and behavior."¹⁸ The purpose of these initiatives was to reform the basic habits of the people, which would create ideal citizens and a better society.

What is most striking about the ideology of the NLM is its attempt to repackage tradition for modernity. The goal was not to choose a single tradition

15 Sun yat-sen, *San Min Chu I* (Shanghai: China Committee, Institute of Pacific Relations, 1927), 1, 151, 363.

16 Dirlik, "The Ideological Foundations of the New Life Movement," 954.

17 Ibid., 950.

18 Ibid., 955.

such as Confucianism, but to look at history and find a sense of “Chineseness.”¹⁹ With that said, the NLM is mostly based on Confucian values. There is a humanistic sense that people are improvable, that their actions will lead to better lives: “...if we want to change men's hearts, we must stress external training to mold good personalities; to reform their everyday lives and nourish good habits. For example, a soldier, after receiving a long training, cannot but manifest the spirit of a soldier in his actions.”²⁰ A person's way of life was held to be a representation and standard for Chinese civilization. The object of the New Life was to improve the lives of people. However, using a philosophical program to change the quality of people's lives seems misguided in this context. Philosophy rarely has a direct impact on the common people. A more realistic way of raising a nation's standard of living would be economic development, which was outside the NLM's focus.

Confucianism undoubtedly influenced Chiang Kai-Shek and there are well documented cases of efforts to educate individuals about the Confucian classics. For instance, “army officers were urged to study the Four Books, the central Confucian classics, and in the early 1930s a 'Read the Classics' movement launched for all Chinese.”²¹ The language of the NLM is rife with Confucian ideals. On the eve of the fifth anniversary of the movement, Chiang gave a speech urging people to keep in mind the purpose of the NLM; “our aim was to revive the old virtues in our national heritage and to make modern citizens out of our people. All our people should understand the meaning of Li, I, Lien, and Chi'ih (Propriety, Justice, Integrity, and Conscientiousness).”²² Having these familiar virtues would improve and rejuvenate Chinese society and lead to their support for the government. This support is based on the belief that the people are not capable of leading themselves. Instead, they should make themselves the best citizens possible for the good of China and the KMT. This strategy put the ball in the people's court, deliberately dumping responsibility on their shoulders for the success of the nation: “whether the policies of a government can be successfully carried out depends greatly upon the customs and habits of the people at the time.”²³ In the end, the movement never progressed to a point where it could effectively engage the people in national and governmental affairs.

19 Ibid., 957.

20 Ibid., 957.

21 Sheridan, *China in Disintegration*, 217.

22 Chiang Kai-Shek, “The New Life Movement in Wartime,” *The Collected Wartime Messages of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek 1937-1945* (New York: The John Day Company, 1946), 188.

23 Chiang, *Outline of the New Life Movement*, 3.

Chiang strived to be the unquestioned leader of this new China. This is strongly suggested by his personal tendencies towards fascism and a more authoritarian government, which can be gathered from New Life texts. Perhaps the most well known of the fascist movements in Europe, Italian fascism, led by Benito Mussolini, set the standard for fascist ideology. A basic idea of his political philosophy is shown in the following passage:

Fascism sees in the world not only those superficial, material aspects in which man appears as an individual, standing by himself, self-centered, subject to natural law, which instinctively urges him toward a life of selfish momentary pleasure; it sees not only the individual but the nation and the country, individuals and generations bound together by a moral law, with common traditions and a mission which suppressing the instinct for life closed in a brief circle of pleasure, builds up a higher life, founded on duty, a life free from the limitations of time and space, in which the individual, by self-sacrifice, the renunciation of self-interest, by death itself, can achieve that purely spiritual existence in which his value as a man consists.²⁴

Fascism, as prescribed by Mussolini, is a symbiotic relationship formed between the state and the individual. The individual, through this bond, will find itself working for the good of the nation, renouncing “selfish momentary pleasure,” which also leads to his own transcendence. There is a prevalence of “fascist” language in the NLM, mostly in the form of an emphasis on the collective over the individual. In schools, lessons of Confucian ideals such as “virtues of propriety, rectitude, uprightness, integrity, and sense of shame were emphasized in combination with the teaching of filial piety (zhongxiao) and benevolence (ren'ai). This filial respect was further extended to the concept of sacrificing oneself for the sake of the nation.”²⁵ This is an example of re-branding traditional Chinese ideals for a new purpose.

A further examination of NLM language shows stark parallels with the fascism of Mussolini. During the war, Chiang requested all citizens to “demonstrate their ability to unite against a common enemy to help each other in time of peril, to defend the country against alien aggression, and to struggle together for the existence of the State.”²⁶ Chiang's *Outline of the New Life Movement* contains a call, which incorporates a riveting resemblance to Italian fascism, for the people to step up: “Obviously, in order to make the law or the machine work, it does not depend so much upon the law or the machinery

24 Benito Mussolini, “The Doctrine of Fascism,” *Fascism Doctrine and Institutions* (Rome: Ardita Publishers, 1935), 7-42.

25 Ferlanti, “The New Life Movement in Jiangxi Province,” 979.

26 Chiang, “The New Life Movement in Wartime,” 188.

themselves as it does upon the personnel.”²⁷ This is an outright pronouncement of the state over the individual. However, the language also expresses Chiang's desire to make the nation great, sacrificing individuality for the good of the collective whole.

Other excerpts strongly emphasize the importance of adhering to the hierarchy established by the NLM, perhaps due to a hybrid Confucian/fascist ideology. In the fifth anniversary speech, Chiang tells the people “to obey and carry on all the laws and orders of the State without thought of personal gain or loss” and he continues to elaborate on what economy is: “the control of selfish desires and the disciplining of body and mind so that nothing is done that is detrimental to the State or harmful to the national life.”²⁸ The call for limiting selfish desires for a higher cause resembles the language of the fascist doctrine of Mussolini. We can see a combination of the Confucian ideology of the movement with the good of the nation in the speech as well:

To sum up, everyone should understand the demands made upon him by our national resistance and reconstruction and should discharge his duties to the State loyally, bravely, and whole-heartedly, regardless of hardship and sacrifice / Above all, we must not be afraid of sacrifices for the national cause. This is to apply 'propriety, justice, integrity, and conscientiousness' to our mode of living in wartime. / We must understand that the life and conduct of individuals cannot be separated from the welfare of the nation and the good of society.²⁹

The language of the NLM rarely contains the expression of individuality. Instead, people should live to support the state. Consideration should be made that the NLM is technically part of the political tutelage stage, which requires the people to trust the state, as they are incapable of ruling themselves yet. But, in order to move to the next stage, democracy, the people must be allowed to grow and learn, which the NLM fails to consider.

The New Life Movement in Practice

The first couple of months after the implementation of the NLM were rife with action. There were promotional exercises being held constantly, with the bulk of the action taking place in Jiangxi province with the intention that it would serve as a model for the rest of the country. Chiang Kai-Shek delivered many speeches, calling for a renewed China through the NLM. Various local associations were created within the first two years of the movement's

27 Chiang, *Outline of the New Life Movement*, 5.

28 Chiang, “The New Life Movement in Wartime,” 189, 190.

29 *Ibid.*, 191.

initiation.

Through March and April, New Life Promotional Associations were established in nine provinces as well as three municipal centers. By the first anniversary of the movement in February 1935, fifteen provinces, three municipalities, and nine railway centers had New Life organizations. As of the end of 1935, organization had reached nineteen provinces, five municipalities, twelve railway centers, and ten overseas Chinese communities. At the lower administrative level, the organization had been extended to 1132 districts (hsien) by 1935.³⁰

The NLM clearly started out as a high profile and high priority item on the KMT agenda. An extensive top-down organizational structure was created for the promotion of the NLM. Given the moves made early on in the movement, there was a facade of enthusiasm. However, after the first year, progress slowed quite a bit. Even Chiang Kai-Shek resigned to acknowledge the lack of accomplishments on the two-year anniversary of the movement.³¹ Most of the promotional events were organized through associations rather than the general public. It is safe to say that these events did not come to fruition through the spirit of the public. The question is whether the public would be more engaged if it were more involved from the start.

The movement began after the purging of the Communists and the KMT, at the time, was still acting to secure their power. To do this, they tried “fighting the Communists with their own weapons – mobilizing the rural population on the government's side, rather than relying exclusively on military force.”³² The KMT held the belief that “in order to permanently eliminate the system of government organized by the Communists, they needed to take hold of the formal administrative agencies together with the loci of informal power (such as schools and peasant associations).”³³ Even though their goal was to reach out to individuals, the movement's organization was from the top-down. What appeared to be a spontaneous burst of NLM activity was mostly artificial. Mass demonstrations were often organized through local organizations such as schools and the Boy Scouts.³⁴ The action that took place at the start of the movement was mostly from organized promotional associations rather than an organic uprising. Chiang and militaristic elements dominated the movement until 1936 when it became Mme. Chiang's pet project.

30 Dirlik, “The Ideological Foundations of the New Life Movement,” 949.

31 *Ibid.*, 952.

32 *Ibid.*, 953.

33 Ferlanti, “The NLM in Jiangxi Province,” 967.

34 Dirlik, “The Ideological Foundations of the New Life Movement,” 950.

With the outbreak of war, more pressing issues came into the fray pushing the NLM out of the picture. For instance, “the tension between the territory's administration and the military control over it stemmed from the necessity of preparing civilians to the war against Japan rather than being an aimless restoration of order.”³⁵ The reality of war shifted the priorities of the KMT, as Chiang tried to use the NLM to intensify the wartime effort. During his fifth anniversary address, he listed four things that embodied the New Life in wartime: (1) all able-bodied male citizens should enlist in the military and receive training; (2) give full cooperation to local governments; (3) develop handicraft industries and utilizing all economic resources; (4) contribute capital, technical skill, and labor to various economic and communication projects in the southwestern and northwestern provinces.³⁶ At this point in time, the KMT was more inclined towards worrying about the war rather than instilling a “new life” into civilians. The NLM, having failed to rejuvenate the citizens, was used instead to encourage citizens to support the war effort. The same NLM language is still used to serve as an argument for national fervor during the war. This shift is also present in the local associations. The relocation of the Jiangxi NLM Association, due to battles, led to their work with supporting the war effort, although they did not discontinue the emphasis on public hygiene.³⁷

By the fifth anniversary of the NLM, the failure of the movement to take off was clear. Even Chiang acknowledges the failures and notes that the “people have not been thoroughly aroused in spirit, nor have they exerted themselves to the utmost.”³⁸ A year later on the sixth anniversary, Chiang's language sounds even more dispiriting. He recalls his message from the year before and his call for action. Chiang then goes on to voice his disappointment in the people, who “have really not done their best to meet wartime responsibilities.”³⁹ Eventually, the NLM faded away. As the citizens became disillusioned with the Nationalists, the Communists eventually gained the upper hand, forcing the Nationalists to relocate across the strait to the island of Taiwan.

Conclusion

35 Ferlanti, “The NLM in Jiangxi Province,” 986.

36 Chiang, “The New Life Movement in Wartime,” 191.

37 Ferlanti, “The NLM in Jiangxi Province,” 997.

38 Chiang Kai-Shek, “New Life in Wartime,” *The Collected Wartime Messages of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek 1937-1945* (New York: The John Day Company, 1946), 187.

39 *Ibid.*, 187.

So why was the movement ineffective in reshaping Chinese society? The inorganic nature of the movement contributed to its demise. The KMT was too careful in controlling civilian mobilization and grassroots organization. This contributed to a detachment between the citizens and the regime. In order to move towards a democratic order, people need to have freedom to express themselves. But was democracy really the end goal for Chiang and the Nationalists? Through the examination of the NLM, all indications point the other way. There is no doubt that Chiang preferred a more authoritarian type of rule making it debatable whether he desired democracy as an end for China. But that is irrelevant since nothing was done throughout the years to move towards democratization. Any intention for citizens to think freely is rendered moot by the condition that ultimately, they could not undermine the regime. The individual came second to the collective good of the country. Moreover, the citizens were never inspired to fight for their country. Without organic inspiration, even a fascist regime could not survive since it feeds off the individual. From a fascist standpoint, Chiang failed as well. Even though he possessed a genuine desire to make China relevant once again, his regime essentially worked as an unsuccessful autocracy rather than one that inspired selfless contribution for its citizens.

The NLM was a compilation of values that were inherently “Chinese.” Its goal was to create a “new life” and a new citizen that would ultimately serve the collective good of the nation. It would fit into the second phase, political tutelage, of Sun Yat-sen's ambitious plan for China, which Chiang and the KMT vowed to continue. Dirlik's idea that the movement was a counterrevolution against the intellectual movements of the 20s and that its attempt to revive something familiar with China's history in order to build on it is a novel idea. Had the NLM been implemented with genuine interest in that goal, from grassroots movements, it might have worked. However, its failure was due to the ineffectiveness of the movement where the ends, supporting the regime, were more important than its means. This was due to Chiang's belief that he must be the person to lead China through its troubles, which made any movements such as the NLM a campaign an effort to support the regime.

The Qin Dynasty was short-lived. However, Qin Shi Huang united China under one name and his rule laid the foundations for two thousand years of Chinese civilization. The fall of the Qin can be attributed to the loss of the “Mandate of Heaven” and its loss of popularity. While Chiang Kai-Shek's role in history is precarious, he did successfully consolidate power under the KMT and

had a genuine interest in getting China back on its feet. He had a vision for revitalizing the country with the NLM. Much of what Chiang and the NLM worked towards was contingent on the participation of the citizens. However, the movement derived from Confucianism, containing fascist undertones, did not succeed. Chiang's authoritarian rule eventually lost public support and his tenure in China was as short-lived as that of the first emperor. Only history will tell what his lasting legacy will be.

Red Star, Blue Eyes: Reexamining American Journalists in Yan'an

RUI ZHONG

“We can’t have a foreign devil telling people in the outer world that us [sic] Reds don’t know etiquette.”¹ Traveler Edgar Snow overhears this from an old peasant woman in 1936, while traveling within the Communist Chinese countryside. She butchers one of her six chickens and prepares a feast for this rare guest, who stays the night on the way to other peasant holdings in the mountainous, difficult terrain. Although Snow mainly worked as a journalist and correspondent throughout his career, this statement attributes and suggests more significance to his accomplishments. Travelers in early China have influenced the reading of Eastern and Western history. Distinct communities of historians in both hemispheres hold a twofold, diverging view of the same travels. The American historiography concentrates in uncovering biases and ideological influences of these writings. In contrast, new Chinese scholarship of American journalism in Yan’an integrates travel writings directly into the fabric of Red China’s history. In utilizing Western journalists as records of the Party’s earliest days, contemporary historians use American records to bolster the legitimacy of Communist Chinese history and ideology.

Braving harsh conditions of mountainous China and acting against rumors of Communist “bandits”, writers such as Snow and Agnes Smedley, among others, wrote compelling accounts from the early Yan’an years. Snow’s *Red Star over China*, written in 1936, compiled in 1937, and published in 1938, paves this frontier of American accounts. Smedley’s writings followed soon after Snow’s, most notably *China Fights Back*, a 1938 account that detailed her experiences with the Eighth Route Communist army. She also wrote a 1943 memoir, entitled *Battle Hymn of China*, an autobiographical account of her experiences from 1936 to 1941. *Battle Hymn of China*, encompasses life in Yan’an and her own perspectives of Red Chinese leaders. Generations after their departures from Yan’an, Chinese historians are beginning to reflect and find use for American travel writings. Snow’s journey was among the first of American journalists. Even then, many members of Red Chinese society already understood the significance of their new visitor and what he would chronicle. From his experiences and interviews with Communists from leaders to rank-and-file members, Snow published a 1938 account titled *Red Star over China*.

1 Edgar Snow, *Red Star Over China* (New York, 1938) 241.

Both Western and Communist historians read this book, which is considered one of many first perspectives inside Red China. But while Western historiography seeks to criticize the ideologies of American travelers, Communist Chinese historiography adapts it to encompass Communist Chinese ideology.

Upon examining the historical annals of Communist China, some Chinese historians consistently painted the Yan'an years with a rose-tinted brush. Ideologically, they strived to uphold the concrete goals of opposing a Japanese foe, with little internal complications and relative ideological solidarity. This patriotic, jingoistic portrayal certainly coincides with the underdog image of the party at the time. Within this time period, the compound was small and struggling, yet solid in its foundation. Within the introduction to *Red Star*, John K. Fairbank writes:

In 1936 the Chinese Communists had just completed their escape...They were ready to tell their story to the outside world. Snow had the capacity to report it. Readers of the book today...should be aware of this combination of factors.²

Red China's story, one of a struggling underdog fleeing the monolithic Guomindang government, was not received in America, save for a small group of communist-sympathetic journalists. In modern readings, these journalists are depicted and analyzed differently in American and Chinese sources due to their controversial ideologies. Their experiences not only included vivid descriptions of life within Communist China, but also provided insight into the thought processes of early leaders. Interviews with figures such as Zhou Enlai, Mao Zedong, and Zhu De provide insights into early party strategy and goals. American travel accounts provided some of the Western World's first foundations into understanding Red China.

While their stories remain, the nature of the legacy of these leftist journalists is a subject of contention even within the ebbing environment of a Post-Cold War world. Examining the impact of American Journalists in early Communist China, I will discuss these travelers' and journalists' views of Yan'an, focusing on the writings of Edgar Snow and Agnes Smedley. I will also address the context of their writings from American and Chinese perspectives. While the education and influences of Snow and Smedley are mostly Western, their careers have earned them both places in Chinese and American history. Because of this dual presence, two distinct historiographical images of America and China emerge. Each tells its own story about the same events. While the

2 John K. Fairbank, Introduction, *Red Star Over China* (Random House, New York, 1938) 11.

American historiography seeks to unravel partially romanticized views of Red China that Snow and Smedley write about, the opposite happens in Chinese readings. Within contemporary Chinese criticism of Western journalists, travelers are almost canonized and lauded for their long-standing friendships and loyalty to the fledgling Red China. Because the Yan'an base was small and struggling to garner recognition, its leaders found a channel for their perspective through Western travelers. Red Chinese had a story to tell. American journalists searched for that story within Yan'an mountains. The resulting writings emerge from the union of Chinese perspectives and American journalism. This somewhat idealized, sympathetic setting of Red China would prompt criticism from contemporary American scholars and acclaim from their Chinese colleagues.

The Landscape of Early Red China

Americans such as Snow and Smedley were the first Western eyes inside the Yan'an Camp, which was the culmination of a long, bitter march across the Chinese countryside. Although much had been written on China, Red China was mostly shrouded in mystery. Yan'an, a pariah in both geography and policy, was largely unexplored territory for the Western World, save for the Soviet Comintern bureau. During the Yan'an period defined by the Communists, the rest of China was centered on Nanjing, where the Guomindang (KMT), made its base. Striving to rebound from the previous decade of "humiliation", Chiang Kai-Shek, leader of KMT, and the nationalist leaders wanted a clean-faced China to step onto the global stage.³ While the KMT gained Western concessions in Shandong and along the Yangzi and managed a weak relationship with isolationist America, Communist China was more isolated in its relations. Its leaders' relations with governmental organizations were virtually limited to the Russian Comintern, and even then, Red China's development only served as an example to potential communist countries. From the perspective of military leader Zhu De in 1937, there were no radio communications, supplies, or political direction, with only mail correspondence with the Soviet Union.⁴ Despite this subdued influence from Communist Russia, Red China was beginning to operate on a philosophy of its own. As Leader Liu Shaoqi said to reporter Anna Louise Strong, Mao Zedong "has not only applied Marxism to new conditions, but has given it new development. He has created a Chinese or Asiatic form of Marxism."⁵ Indeed, Mao's interpretation of Marxism deviated from its Russian incarnation. These

³ Diana Lary, *China's Republic*, (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2007) 85.

⁴ Philip J. Jaffe Papers Box 13, folder 2, 24 (Interviews with Communists).

grandiose ideals placed Red China, an emerging state with a new ideology, at the heart of world matters in the minds of Communist Chinese leaders, despite what other political and geographical limitations may have been attributed to the Yan'an commune. Although early thinkers had large plans for the future, there were many limitations before the plans could start to hatch.

Yan'an and Mao's chief concern in the beginnings of Red China was the looming threat of the Japanese empire. Throughout the Yan'an period, the Communist Party leadership assessed the impact of revolutionary "anti-imperialism" to areas inside and outside of China.⁶ Because they had much at stake in gaining momentum throughout China, Chinese Communists found that Western journalists were a key platform to spreading ideology overseas. Based on efforts of Party leaders, there was a sense of openness towards clarifying main points of ideology. Western journalists were warmly received, and encouraged to report on news of the Eighth Route Communist Army.⁷ With limitations from domestic and international sources, writers and journalists were an invaluable medium of communication for the party facilitating the circulation of information. Through these accounts of travel and meetings with military, peasants, and leaders, these journalists pieced together images of both China and America in a dynamic, changing era. As Scholar John K. Fairbank phrased in the introduction to *Red Star*, "the remarkable thing about Red Star was that it not only gave the first connected history of Mao and his colleagues, but it also gave a prospect of the future of this little-known movement which was to prove disastrously prophetic."⁸ Indeed, the communist movements of China became notable, in time. Yet, Snow was able to get the stories when no one was paying attention, a fact that made his work notable decades later. While Western scholars scrutinize Snow's background and the influences of his writing, contemporary Chinese historians focus on his contributions to general Chinese history. "Snow was the first to bravely test the waters," writes historian Zhao Aiping. "An almost magnetic force drew others after him into Yan'an." Indeed, by 1944 a 21-journalist group had formed specifically for the purpose of reporting Red China's anti-Japan efforts⁹. As an explorer of this new ground

5 Stephen M. Goldstein, "The Chinese Revolution and the Colonial Areas: The View from Yanan, 1937-41," *The China Quarterly*, no. 75 (1978) 597.

6 *Ibid.*, 594.

7 Wang Xiaolan, "抗战时期中国共产党人与外国记者的交往" kangzhan shiqi Zhongguogongchandang ren yu wai guo jizhe de jiaowang, *党史文汇 dangshi wenhui* 25, vol. 8 (2005) 26.

8 Fairbank, *Red Star Over China* 13.

9 Zhao Aiping, "外国记者眼中的延安" zhongguo jizhe yanzhong de Yan'an, *文史精华 wenshijinghua* (1999) 43.

in China, Snow was able to break ground from the perspective of all viewers of his personal history. To the Communist Chinese, his exploration the Red frontier would prove beneficial to their public relations to the rest of the world.

New Hands of China

Within the years of Snow and Smedley's travels, not only China itself but also the face of the westerner in China was changing. Historian Jerry Israel observes: "The days of the 'old China hand'—of big investments, missionary business ties, and gunboat diplomacy—were coming to an end. Gradually, a set of "new China hands", many of them born in the twentieth century, were emerging."¹⁰ It is important to note that aside from their attributes, the new China hands also had a key difference in the audience of their writings. These new hands would bring sympathetic perspectives on China that would be reflected in the ideas of their Chinese and American readers.

Certainly Edgar Snow can be characterized as a 'new hand' at the time of *Red Star's* publication. Thirty two years old and still a green correspondent, Snow viewed China and the communist presence with a fresh outlook and a distinctive personal style in writing. Unlike many old China hands, he "spoke Chinese—to speak it at all was surprising in a day when most foreign newsmen in China were based in Treaty Ports and got their news from English-speaking representatives of the National Government and warlords, and from the foreign diplomats."¹¹ The lessened language barrier enabled Snow to write concisely, interview, and translate with greater efficiency than his predecessors. In addition to greater linguistic experiences, his approach to chronicling his travels distanced him from the role of a missionary, religious or secular, which sought to explicitly push an agenda on Red policymakers. True to the archetype of the "new China hand," Snow set out into communist territories despite rumors and stereotypes of communists simmering below the surface of Isolationist America. Although it is tempting to simply categorize Snow as just another cog within a system of new westerners in China, it is important to note that his work broke ground into Red China, showing its people to America for the first time.

During the same years of *Red Star over China's* publication, writers such as Carl Crow and his portrait of port-city Shanghai, *400 Million Customers Served*

10 Jerry Israel, "Mao's Mr. America: Edgar Snow's Images of China," *Pacific Historical Review* 47, no. 1 (1978) 110.

11 John S. Service, "Edgar Snow: Some Personal Reminiscences" *The China Quarterly* 50 (1972) 210.

equaled if not surpassed Snow's account in notoriety.¹² Interviews conducted in *Red Star* still impact the Chinese Communist Party. Of particularly considerable value are the early interviews he conducted with Mao Zedong, who spent his early years living as a leader of many Yan'an fugitives. The meticulously-recorded dialogue serves as a key chronicle of the Party's earliest days.¹³ Snow's writings encompass a collection of first encounters with Red China for many Americans and international readers.

Snow had never identified himself as communist, but fellow reporter and traveler Smedley was adamant to declare herself one. Described in a review by Helen Foster Snow as "a tortured psyche" whose work in China "transformed sickness into valuable productivity," in China her books are considered invaluable primary sources to readers of feminist and Chinese studies¹⁴. Notable amongst her experiences are her years spent with the Red Army. Where Snow specialized in gathering information about Red China's political operation, Smedley saw firsthand how its military worked. Snow and Smedley differed in politics, but they did associate and communicate with one another throughout their lifetimes. Although her views were more radical than Snow, Smedley defended the former's writing and acknowledged his work in her own publications. Both wrote on subjects unpopular to an America that was growing wary and afraid of Communists. And yet, they kept writing. To understand Snow and Smedley's writings, one must ask and investigate their writing influences. To view their publications from the desks of American and Chinese historians is to investigate two aspects of American travelers' influences.

What motivated these journalists to write? The answer to this deceptively simple question drives a line between American and Chinese historical approaches, weaving a sociopolitical background upon which the primary sources can be examined. While writing their place in the histories of America and China, Snow, Smedley, and other leftist travelers were affected by a Western approach and grew as Eastern thinkers. In parallel to the dualistic nature of their writings, two schools of historians study their legacies, separated by the barriers of information and political ideology. In considering the backgrounds of Snow and Smedley, American scholarship considers far more

12 Israel, "Mao's Mr. America: Edgar Snow's Images of China," 107.

13 Nicolas R. Clifford, "White China, Red China: Lighting out for the Territory with Edgar Snow," *New England Review* 18, no. 2 (1997) 103.

14 Helen Foster Snow, "Review: *China Correspondent* by Agnes Smedley" *The China Quarterly* 103 (1985), 523.

nuances and biases of these travelers. Chinese historiography proves more selective, picking and choosing aspects of American journalists to integrate.

Rereading Edgar Snow: Two Histories

In this divided, complex landscape of China, different journalists represented and took with them a diverse picture of America. Snow was one of the first to break ground in the region. He “represented middle America,” wrote Helen Foster Snow, his first wife and fellow American correspondent. She assured officials that they were non-communists, at least by official association. Therefore the initial free, easy, secular viewpoint ultimately characterizes his forays into China. He writes from a distinct perspective from missionary eyes of years past, representative of a progressive America before isolationist policy.¹⁵ And yet Snow was seasoned in other ways, and became disillusioned by his experiences within the KMT-controlled Republic of China. In 1936, he found student activists disenchanted and disillusioned, frustrated with the lack of resistance potential within the Chinese people.¹⁶ He found that China faced the coming storm of Japan-Chinese conflict, and gained interest in the formation of a resistance movement in Yan’an. Attempting to involve himself by gaining Red Chinese perspectives, Snow set his course for Red China. “In doing so,” writes Thomas S. Bernard in a biography, “Snow would find himself even more caught up in the events he recorded.”¹⁷ In translating not only language but also culture and politics for readers abroad, his writings would later be pulled into historical prominence, partially at the doing of Red Chinese he observes.

Red Star is largely a young man’s book. Although Snow authored it at thirty-two, he had built considerable experiences in China, despite his biases against KMT politics. “It is very much to the credit of Edgar Snow that this book has stood the test of time on [two] counts—as a historical record and as an indicator of a trend,” writes renowned sinologist John K. Fairbank in the introduction to *Red Star*.¹⁸ Snow’s language skills, honed by years of working within China, aided him immensely as he traveled in Yan’an. He spoke Chinese fluently and was able to translate his interviews, in a manner that was more “effective than elegant,” giving his writing an easy, relatable style. This practical mindset led him to acquaint himself with various communists within and

15 Israel, “Mao’s Mr. America: Edgar Snow’s Images of China” 111.

16 Thomas S. Bernard, *Season of High Adventure: Edgar Snow in China* (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1996) 125.

17 *Ibid.*, 126.

18 Fairbank, *Red Star Over China* 13.

outside of Yan'An when other newsmen of his time worked with translators out of treaty port offices.¹⁹ Snow's lifestyle of active journalism and effective language characterized him as an active player in Chinese travel writing. And yet, he expressed a relatable anxiety to readers about entering the Communist compound. "Against a torrent of horror stories about Red atrocities that had for many years filled the vernacular and foreign press," Snow wrote, "I had little to cheer me on my way." It is with this tentative sense that he introduced the readers to his accounts, taking them into the sense of unease he found.²⁰ Later in his narrative, Snow would be surprised and emboldened by his discoveries and would introduce the world to the earliest days of Mao Zedong.

In order to understand the lens through which Snow views Mao, it is important to reconsider his role up to the point of entry into Yan'an. Biographer Thomas Bernard describes it as a model medium to convey Mao's past and present:

As a trustworthy but non-communist Western journalist, Snow appeared ideally suited to bring out the Reds' story. He had broad access to the bourgeois media in China and the West as well as extraterritorial protection for what he wrote. Not only would his reports carry more weight than those by an avowed communist, but the very fact of his independence from Communist ties made him more likely to grasp the broader implications of the message Mao wished to convey. Thus Snow... would now become the 'medium,' in his later words, 'through whom [Mao] had his first chance, after years of blockade, to speak to the cities of China, from which the Reds had long been isolated.'²¹

Snow's stance as a non-communist only served to benefit his authenticity as a historical source for Red Chinese scholars. Much to their benefit, there was a sense of frankness to Snow's descriptions of the 'Soviet Strong Man,' as he deemed Mao. He saw the opportunity in describing and interviewing the chairman, who he admired personally and had befriended in their meetings. "The Role of his personality in the movement was clearly intense," he finds on first impressions.²² He emphasized Mao's likeability, geniality and work ethic in early days before beginning to chronicle one of the first Western-penned biographies of the leader. To Mao and the Chinese then and in contemporary days, Snow was an integral part of making Chinese history, and his distance as an American was a trait that would make him all the more trustworthy to readers abroad.

19 Service, "Edgar Snow: Some personal reminiscences" 210.

20 Snow, *Red Star Over China* 39.

21 Bernard, *Season of High Adventure* 131.

22 Snow, *Red Star Over China*, 93.

Because he fit the bill for an ideal communist medium of news so well, Communist historians today use Snow as a basis for western “friendship” in the Yan’an era. This friendship is called into question from some western biographies of snow. Although Communists today praise him as an icon of western “friendship”, Red Chinese did not necessarily always consider Snow a close friend. Within most years in the Mao era, Red Star was circulated only in within the inner circles of the Party (内部).²³ In this secretive circulation, Snow never received royalties for the book’s sales. It is important to consider the revisionism of biographical details in Chinese readings of Snow, for the praise he is given is relatively recent. The distancing of Mao and Snow within their later lives is omitted in the Chinese history of Snow in China. In considering Chinese readings alongside Western scholarship, sociopolitical factors begin to arise. Although the primary texts examined are identical, both communities observe are one and the same, the ideas they gleaned differ as much as White and Red China.

Rereading Smedley: Rejection and Revision

Agnes Smedley’s life, career, and legacy are intricately linked to her support of communist movements and philosophy. Her early career encompassed activism within India and Europe, and she became notorious in America’s government based on her sympathies. It was in 1928 that her illustrious career in China began. As she crossed the Soviet-Manchurian border, she found profoundness in the poverty that she began to observe.²⁴ The work that she would do in year to come would be beyond her own expectations. Her peculiar history with the Red Chinese also factored significantly into the unique historiography of American travelers by Red scholars. Not only are Smedley’s writings read with revisionism in mind, but so too is her oscillating life and experiences within the Chinese Communist Party.

Battle Hymn of China was published in 1943. Its contents spanned the years 1936 to 1941. Within the enclosed map, the reader is able to glimpse one China, the sun emblem of the United Front at the corners, and recall that this is an account written before the dividing Civil War. And yet, Smedley strived to find the cracks in this united China, the seams in which it would eventually be pulled apart. “Chinese law read well on paper,” she observed, “but it was worth no more than its weight in bribes. For a penniless Chinese there was no justice

23 Bernard, *Season of High Adventure* 185-186.

24 Janice R. McKinnon & Stephen R. McKinnon, *Agnes Smedley: The Life and Times of An American Radical* (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1988) 134.

at all.”²⁵ Compared to Snow, Smedley was ill-equipped to write on the Chinese, her speech broken and rough. However, what Smedley lacked in technical skill in Chinese, she made up in personality and appeal. Expats and Chinese alike were drawn to her characteristic boldness even in her earlier days working in China. Eventually she amassed the title of “White Empress,” tracing a path throughout China, Hong Kong, and beyond in her years in Asia.²⁶ How Smedley gained accountability in her personal relationships, which also played part in her compelling accounts, is through her dynamic personality. She embroiled herself within her story and shows a sense of bravado, with experiences at the fronts of the Red Army. In working as a member of the unit that was the Chinese Army, Smedley had Chinese military influences in her correspondence back to the West.

Smedley’s first impressions of Zhu De, a key figure in her own stories, described the man as the “father and mother” to the fighters under his command, his “generous mouth spread in a broad grin of welcome.” Humanization is a key goal of hers stylistically, working against American perceptions of communists as bandits and guerillas.²⁷ Within weeks, though, she was acquainted with the general and conceived the idea of writing the biography of the military commander, echoing Snow’s actions of biographically chronicling lives of leaders. Her friendships with early Communist leaders were lasting, remembering Zhu De and Zhou Enlai in her writings, which are used by the Party as a historical chronicle.

Smedley’s views of Mao Zedong were distinct from Snow’s biographical approach. In contrast to Snow’s partiality towards the charisma that the young leader had, Smedley feels unease when she first meets the future Chairman. As she approaches him within the cave complex of Yan’an, “an instinctive hostility sprang up inside me and I became so occupied with trying to master it that I heard hardly a word of what followed.”²⁸ This uneasy impression of Mao continues with her discussion of his philosophical leanings:

Every other Communist leader might be compared with someone of another nationality or time, but not Mao Zedong. People said this was because he was purely Chinese and had never traveled or studied abroad. . . . But his theories were rooted in Chinese history and in experience on the battlefield. Most Chinese Communists

25 Agnes Smedley, *Battle Hymn of China* (Alfred Knopf, New York, 1943) 98.

26 Gao Cui, “史沫特莱的中国情愫”, *shimodelai de zhongguo qingsu 中国共产党新闻 zhongguo gongchandang xingwen*, (2007)

<<http://cpc.people.com.cn/GB/68742/70423/70424/5825815.html>> 1.

27 Smedley, *Battle Hymn of China*, 164.

28 *Ibid.*, 169.

could think in terms of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. Mao could do this too, but seldom attempted it.²⁹

Perhaps Smedley's directness, in contrast to Snow's more distanced observations, characterized Mao differently. In reading his expressions and behavior, she seems to find a sinister side to the future chairman where Snow does not. Her perspective as a writer focuses on military campaign over philosophical and political dealings. Given this context, it is natural that Smedley personally favors the commander Zhu De over the future Chairman Mao. Yet, if Snow's writing is somewhat prophetic in nature, then Smedley's passage above also can be said to hold some water. Mao indeed deviates in philosophy from Stalin, and does so more noticeably in the coming years of Chinese Communist history.

Smedley's directness did not permeate all aspects of her life in Yan'an. Biographers Janice and Stephen McKinnon wrote that she was "playing with dynamite, and she didn't seem to know it", blinded partially by her Westernized, feminist views on marriage and relationships.³⁰ Smedley was very socially active, and, due to her restless personality, worked several jobs within the Yan'an compound. She soon drew negative attention from many of the wives of the commanders and leaders she interviewed. In remarking on several square dance lessons that she had been attempting to teach, Smedley wrote: "I acquired a very bad reputation among the women of Yen-an [sic], who thought I was corrupting the army; so bad did it become that I once refused to give another dancing lesson to Zhu De."³¹ While there were exceptions, Smedley was not an accepted or popular figure within Yan'an. In fact, her biography presents some details to suggest otherwise, including her ultimate rejection by the Communist party. After her departure from Yan'an, she settled in Hankou, and described her difficulties and others' perceptions of her circumstances.

In the following passage from *Battle Hymn*, Smedley recounts her difficult early days after following the Army at its frontlines. "Because I had always fought the terror and advocated civil rights for the people," muses Smedley, "I was a paid Communist Agent. On the other hand the Communists believed that all foreigners automatically had means of earning not only a living but a luxurious living."³² This melancholy tone was brought on not only from her days without finding employment, but also ideological distance from the

29 Ibid., 169.

30 McKinnon & McKinnon, *Agnes Smedley: The Life and Times of An American Radical* 187.

31 Smedley, *Battle Hymn Of China* 171.

32 Ibid., 206.

Chinese Communist Party. She was relatively isolated from the central action, that her passion for reporting war and revolution was subdued and limited by city life.³³ Even within the pages of *Battle Hymn*, she is reluctant to reveal aspects of her personal life; aspects that scholars like Clifford are able to glean from her selectivity of subjects. A rift between her and Mme. Sun Yat-Sen was a central aspect to Smedley's social conflicts, stemming from her support of a KMT-leaning doctor.³⁴ Smedley was sent packing across other cities, distanced from social circles and individuals that were once her allies. This was seldom revealed in correspondence or publications, and the difficulties neglected by Chinese historiography.

Like Snow, Smedley had a public persona to retain, and it is this persona that Chinese scholars have memorialized. After the events of Hankou, she recovered her prolific pace of work and continued to write throughout her career. When she departed China for good, she felt a sense of melancholy and was deeply sobered by her experiences. Ultimately, she was rejected by the Chinese Communist Party, and unable to report on the front lines that she once loved.³⁵ China's impact on Smedley reflected the work that she had placed within its borders, and the mutual exchange of influence can definitely be seen within her writings on China. Through American readings, China had left its legacy on Smedley. Through Chinese readings, she had left her mark on China, but only posthumously. In later life she became a nuisance to officials. . However, contemporary articles written by party sources cite her as a "soldier of China," and that to her death she "never forgot the feelings of the Chinese Revolution."³⁶ From these attributes, it can certainly be said that her life and work are remembered all too warmly by contemporary Chinese Communists.

Keepers of Records: Journalists from Chinese Eyes

In rereading Snow and Smedley's accounts, it is important to consider how the subjects of their writings reflect on and use the legacies of these journalists. In these travelers' case, the Chinese historiography is one that integrates their sympathetic findings and correspondence into the fabric of Red Chinese history. Within his time, Snow's Chinese hosts "regarded him as a 'historian'" rather than a war correspondent throughout visits. His story, which places the struggle of White and Red China as a struggle of "haves" against "have

33 McKinnon and McKinnon, *Agnes Smedley* 211.

34 *Ibid.*, 217.

35 *Ibid.*, 229.

36 Gao, "史沫特莱的中国情愫," 2.

nots” humanizes the pieces and components of the Chinese Communist Party.³⁷ Smedley’s story is a fight, evidenced by her fascination with military figures and leaders. Their normalization of life as a Red Chinese appealed to Chinese Communist leaders immensely. On the basis of China’s isolation, there were few venues for information to be transmitted outside, let alone to Western World powers. What makes Snow and Smedley important to the Communists is their pioneering efforts. Despite gaps in communication and tensions present throughout the travelers’ lives, modern-day historiography is generous with praise. In evaluating the lives of American journalists in Red History, a story of friendship and diplomacy emerges.

Contemporary Chinese historians marvel at the records that western travelers were able to obtain from communist China. “Zhou Enlai and many other leaders would often receive western journalists to dine and converse at length with about Party-related news. In December of 1940, he discussed the history of the Eighth route campaigns and army to [Anna Louise Strong] over the course of several evenings.”³⁸ These traveling journalists, often a good channel for information outside of the compound and into international print, provided an invaluable political platform for early leaders. Party members were open to dedicate hours or days to carefully explaining components of strategy and ideology to sympathetic ears. With the relative diplomatic isolation of Yan’an, to have interest shown in the Party’s cause was a welcome relief to its leaders. Agnes Smedley is remembered fondly by party historians who recalled her charged speeches and camaraderie with Zhu De, who shared difficult childhood experiences for an extensive biography she authored.³⁹ Smedley and Snow, throughout their stay in Yan’an, also took many photographs that captured life in the Yan’An compound, totaling an archive of over 60 photographs, including Mao and Zhu in their earlier days.⁴⁰ Citing Snow’s claim of Mao as a “prophet in the caves,” the Chinese school of analysis focuses on the precedents of Yan’an as integral to Chinese history, and found the archiving work done by American travelers invaluable. Snow learned that Mao predicted the Chinese would emerge triumphant in the Sino-Japanese War (give dates). Citing Snow’s observations, contemporary historians extrapolate a landscape of Yan’an that fits with the rhetoric of the modern day communist ideology. The four character slogan of “Japan must lose, China must win” (日本必败·中国

37 Stanley K. Hornbeck, “Book Reviews: The Other Side of the River” *World Affairs* 126, no. 2 (1963) 120.

38 Wang, “抗战时期中国共产党人与外国记者的交往,” 27.

39 Gao, “史沫特莱的中国情愫”, 1.

40 Zhao, “外国记者眼中的延安,” 44.

必胜) snappily characterizes the drive and motivation of the Yan'an government. This comes as a surprise to Snow, who "couldn't believe his ears" in hearing this statement from Mao.⁴¹ This neat interpretation of the Snow-Mao interviews is conveniently consistent with contemporary Chinese Communist rhetoric. It universally confirms Yan'an ideology as legitimate and, taking strong control of China where the KMT failed. Using these positive interpretations, Chinese historians heap praise on Americans telling their story to sustain political equilibrium and consistency.

From Snow's accounts, Chinese historians derive a different picture of Yan'an than American counterparts. From one passage, communist slogans extol the egalitarian aspects of Yan'an, ostensibly contrasting Red life to life in White China: "There the sexes are equal, the education is free. The Red Army and civilians alike sing daily... The People's government love the people! The Communist Party's love can be spoken of endlessly!"⁴² To label this description as absolutely uninfluenced by party ideology is difficult. Yet, this landscape that historians glean from travelers' records suggests what the Red Chinese wanted out of the journalists—to present their struggles and livelihood in a positive context. How the Chinese received journalists' writings are to be observed as partially political. Yet, it is consistent with the intentions of the journalists as well. In considering Snow's intent in telling their story to the Western World, contemporary Chinese readings of his records fulfill this goal, albeit decades later. "Snow's reports brought hope, trust, and strength to the suffering people Chinese people,"⁴³ writes historian Sun Guowei. In writing correspondence and compiling notes for a book to be published back in America, he was also impacting the lives of leaders and peasants back in Yan'an, as well.

It is difficult to separate political ambitions and ideology from Chinese historians, who work within a communist framework where their western counterparts do not. But despite the limitations of information, there is a lot to be said about the legacy of American journalists from the observations of Chinese historians. Focusing on the lives of men and women that wrote on their earliest days, they integrate these historical figures, foreign in origin, into the vast landscape of Chinese history. What they seek in re-interpreting these travels and the writings from them is a sense of appropriation. In taking these journeys that were once neglected by leaders in the Mao era, contemporary historians

41 Ibid., 43.

42 Sun Guowei, "sinuo jiang maozedong tuixiang shijie", 斯诺将毛泽东推向世界, *jizhe guancha* 记者观察 13 no. 6 (2010), 68.

43 Ibid., 69..

can re-appropriate the bravado of Red China in Snow and Smedley's Yan'an. Their writings affirm a rose-tinted view of a positive, struggling Red underdog in a White sea of corruption. Because of this purposeful interpretation of Americans in Yan'an, the contemporary Chinese historiography is an important political move. Although these journeys are conducted by American actors, no longer are their findings entirely American in nature and purpose.

Distance and Proximity: Western Historiography of Travel and Journalism

The Red China that American journalists wrote about during the Yan'an period faces criticism by American scholars and acclaim by many of their Chinese counterparts. From a superficial overview, it is simple to attribute this dichotomy to the politics of the two states. However, there are many dimensions to account for in these schools of thought, which paint very different portraits of the journalists. Within American and Western biographies of these travelers, the aim of the historiography is to illuminate what influences their writing.

For historian Nicholas R. Clifford, who has written specifically on British and American travelers in the Chinese countryside, ideology and writer are difficult to separate. Clifford in particular focuses on journalism and correspondence of the Yan'an period. He questions the accuracy of the Yan'an portrayed by Snow and Smedley, the selfsame Yan'an that Chinese historians use as a record. Within the Yan'an Era, there was the old ways of White China and the new philosophy of Red China.

This new way is, of course, Communism. Or at least what is called "Communism" by its Chinese practitioners, for it is apparently taking a form rather different from that visible in the Soviet Union. Edgar Snow first encounters this development in 1936, when he makes his way in secret from Xi'an to Baoan, Mao Zedong's temporary northwestern headquarters, and for Snow and those who follow him, the line dividing White from Red China is no mere geographer's expression, but a rhetorical or discursive frontier as well.⁴⁴

Clifford illustrates this image of a China divided by an ideological wall in addition to the mountains that carved apart the space between Yan'an and Nanjing. In transitioning from White, KMT China to Red, Communist China, travelers such as Snow view the new environment with a sense of exoticism, an Eden away from the corruption of the outside world.⁴⁵ In readings of these accounts, the sense of the "Other" is downplayed, but still present. Snow uses

44 Clifford, "White China, Red China," 136.

45 Ibid., 106.

his practical, middle-American style to normalize himself when possible. As he establishes his journey, he builds it up to a trip of grand proportions with deliberate motivations, and is able to depict two distinct Chinas. Certainly, there were two states within Republican China. But how Snow chooses to write them, argues Clifford, makes all the difference of ideology and politics that colored the texts. It is argument that Chinese historiography deliberately overlooks. To concede that their 'western friends' had flaws detracts significantly from their trustworthiness as a channel of information. Snow's intent to divide China, a sentiment that helps the public image of Communists immensely, is what popularizes him with Red Chinese historians. In examining his and Smedley's highly politicized biographies and writings, Western scholars attempt to present a more integrated story of the American traveler.

White China and Red China are different entities when the travelers arrived in Yan'an. Although Communist Chinese lauded Snow and Smedley on clear, concise portrayal of the countryside, Clifford finds his and other writers' images of China biased by their proximity to the leaders. Quoting accounts of Snow and Smedley, Clifford finds both radical, yet representative examples echoing orientalism of the past. This identification of Chinese by predecessor "capitalist vanguards" reduces China's people to incomplete beings within the context of a western model of success.⁴⁶ Clifford's readings of Snow's accounts and writings were clouded to a certain degree, based partially on the nature of travel writing. To a certain degree, he finds these travelers' eyes clouded by the same limitations and urges them to Orientalize as their fellow westerners have. What makes Snow and Smedley's accounts so compelling is their directness, the physicality and close proximity to all subjects when traveling.⁴⁷ The reader gains trust in Snow based on immediacy, telling detail, and the concrete visuals that he is able to present within medium of travel writing. Clifford discounts Snow's views that separate "scoundrels" and "crooks" of White China from the "intense eyes" and "bravado" of the Reds that Snow finds early in his journey.⁴⁸ Once again the divide between the "Two Chinas" is made apparent. White is antagonized and Red is romanticized in Snow's view. The language he uses to separate the two is emotionally charged, and compels the reader to see the Reds as intense, courageous freedom fighters. To a historian examining Snow's political influences, these factors affect his writing significantly. The orientalism that Clifford finds is echoed by other historians when discussing general trends

46 Nicholas R. Clifford, "The Long March of "Orientalism: Western Travelers in Modern China," *New England Review* 22 no. 2 (2001) 128.

47 *Ibid.*, 129.

48 Clifford, "White China, Red China," 108.

of early Communist China. This romanticism in writing was certainly a prevailing trend within the period that Snow observed China. Fairbank also writes on the context of Westerners in China, which he finds ingrained in American jingoism and established actions.

During these decades of warlordism, revolution, and invasion, foreigners had special opportunities to participate and be helpful or acquisitive in Chinese life. It was a golden age, the great American experience of semicolonialism. It is a fine thing if you can get it, as we would, without a sense of guilt for having set it up.⁴⁹

Even though to a certain degree, these sympathetic journalists contribute to this process, it is superfluous to lump them in with the old China hands in corner offices, working off secondhand news. To simply view the flaws in their works without context neglects the components of their stories. What they brought to China, argues other scholars, is as notable as what they took out of it. In understanding backgrounds and influences of Snow and Smedley's writings, their intents in publication gradually surface. Although Snow was only thirty upon entry to Yan'An, he had worked for seven years within China, and had gained the connections needed to do so. His friendship with Mme. Sun Yat-Sen allowed him to gain entry into the Communists' mountainous citadel.⁵⁰ Just as Snow's influences prior to China have received some scholarship, relationships he formed throughout his travels are also important to consider. The figures that Snow wrote about were not merely historical characters written in reflection, but men and women that he ate with, conversed with, walked with, and befriended. This sense of sympathetic "authenticity" legitimized his writing style to the Red Chinese and supplemented Communist readings of *Red Star*.

Based on Snow's experiences, Clifford finds *Red Star* difficult to regard as an objective primary view into Red China. Other historians view Snow's later career and its factors in his reporting. Jerry Israel finds the characterization of Edgar Snow solely on the basis of *Red Star* to be inaccurate—although it is among Snow's most read work, it cannot define his life's work as a whole. He evaluates the labels of "propagandist" and "romantic rhetoric" and expands beyond these easy stereotypes of the journalists. Such simplification, argues Israel, characterize Snow, and by extension, Smedley, into blank slates. These archetypal journalists sleep restlessly in Red China, only awakened from a Van Winkle-like dream by the philosophies and practices of Chinese Communism.⁵¹ Indeed, his experiences in 1938 Yan'an were only one of many components of

49 John K. Fairbank, *China Watch* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1987) 29.

50 *Ibid.*, 11.

51 Jerry Israel, "'Mao's Mr. America': Edgar Snow's Images of China" *Pacific Historical Review* 47, No. 1 (1978): 108.

Snow's writing and professional experience. The makeup of Snow's extensive bibliography on Asian affairs, offers a great deal of context for Snow's writings. His goals in publishing *Red Star* and other articles on Red China would become renowned. Yet the legacy of Snow is inconsistent throughout differing decades. Bernard, in a biography of Snow, found that in later years his ties to the Communist party would wane. Mao would forget details about his close friend's life, and the circulation of *Red Star* within China would be highly limited.⁵² Although Snow carries a significant legacy within China today, he would not live to see his writings' effects on Chinese history.

It is important to consider Agnes Smedley's bibliography differently from Snow's writings. While the two corresponded, collaborated, and were close friends, Smedley's personality permeated her many accounts within China. Again, Israel's warnings must be taken into consideration. Her background before China, which included work with Indian communists and separatists from British rule, established her reputation long before her days in Shanghai. Analysis of Smedley incorporates these contexts into readings of her work, and criticism of it highlights her attention to the details of the makeup of the Chinese people. In one early review of *Battle Hymn of China*, Harley F. MacNair writes that "In no other account of contemporary China known to this reviewer are there contained so many facets of life and the character of people and country. Scores of details—tragic, comic, drab, heroic" intrigue the reader. Certainly, embellishments are present, as Smedley's account retains the characteristics of a travel narrative.⁵³ Indeed, there are a great many telling details within both *China Fights Back* and *Battle Hymn*. Its contents encompass "deep tragedy, high comedy, [and] gray drabness of revolutionary life," according to reviewer Harley Macnair.⁵⁴ Within these accounts of colorful rhetoric, Smedley simultaneously immerses herself and draws information from her personal discovery of Red China.

Smedley, politics aside, is able to pull anecdotes together well, using one scene of socialist doctors grave-digging for Japanese bone specimens. This somewhat macabre action is reported brightly by Smedley with a comedic tone.⁵⁵ Clifford finds that she "participates wholeheartedly in the conventional planting of Western history's signposts in a country with a quite different past:

52 Bernard, *Season of High Adventure* 186.

53 Harley Farnsworth MacNair, "The Battle Hymn of China: Review," *The Journal of Modern History* 16, no. 1 (1944); 68.

54 *Ibid.*, 68.

55 Smedley, *Battle Hymn of China* 270.

the European placing herself “in command, almost at will, of Oriental history, time, and geography.”⁵⁶ To categorize Smedley’s actions as such is confusing, however. To discern which attributes are aspects of her domineering and direct personality and which are characteristic of the European orientalist is more ambiguous, given the context of her works and actions within China. What Clifford characterizes as Smedley’s and Snow’s usage of orientalism is its presence as a political tool.⁵⁷ As travelers describe contrasting images of White and Red China, they utilize the good and bad imagery latent in travel writing to associate potential and hope with the Reds and the squalid filth they find with the KMTs at the helm. The bold rhetoric of Smedley and likeability of Snow are qualities that appeal to contemporary Chinese historians, and are emphasized through their interpretations.

Legacies of Red Stars and Battle Hymns

Until 1979, the People’s Republic of China was not recognized as China’s national government by the American government. At that point the Communists had journeyed far from their self-identified humble roots, and had controlled China since 1949 at the close of a bitter civil war. For most of the duration of the Cold War, the definition of legitimacy and identity of the Chinese State was a large question on the minds of American diplomats and foreign policy analysts. America perceived mainland China as a problematic component of the communist bloc, and their relations from then on were tenuous until the advent of the Nixon Administration. Still, the connections and communication established by journalists into Yan’an remain key accounts from American Perspectives in China. In America, they served as a sympathetic vehicle into the territory of a potential adversary. American scholars and politicians can pare out the extraneous opinions and ideological leanings of the authors. Chinese scholars choose not to, using a broader reading of travel records and memoirs to propagate a rosier view of early Red China. This revisionism takes the best qualities of Snow and Smedley and integrates them into a relationship of lasting friendship that may or may not have existed.

Despite difficulties and declining relationships, American travelers did not absolutely forget their friends. Photos of Edgar Snow standing side-by-side in Mao’s last days remain. Smedley, still loyal to her dear friend and comrade Zhu De, had a biography of him published posthumously, a work that she had been writing for a great deal of her life in China. While it can certainly be said

56 Clifford, “The Long March of Orientalism,” 134.

57 Ibid., 135.

that these writers made a great impact on modern China, the same can be said that China left a great impact on them.

Edgar Snow's ashes are partially buried beside a lake in prestigious Peking University. English and Chinese inscriptions on his grave marker read "An American friend of the Chinese people." The other half was scattered along the banks of New York's Hudson River. These ashes were scattered at his requests, in deference to his wish to become part of China. Many readings of Snow focus on aspects of his Chinese life. Smedley was buried in Babaoshan cemetery, and her ashes sent to General Zhu De, her life-long friend and subject of a posthumous biography⁵⁸. However, in order to truly understand the breadth of any journalist that spent time within Yan'an, their writings must be read as part of American history as well. Despite their allegiances and sympathies, the background and experiences of these travelers are inescapable, by the writers and readers alike.

58 Snow, "Review: China Correspondent," 523.

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