

Special Feature

Foreign Merchants' Visits
to the Korean Peninsula, and Koryŏ People's
Responses, in the 13-14th centuries*

LEE Kang Hahn

Foreword

As a market and a trade base, one might say the Korean peninsula is relatively “small” compared to other larger countries in the world. And its natural resources are more limited than other luckier terrains. In short, it has never been a distinctively attractive place that could tractor the interests of foreign traders, or even encourage them to come. But geographically it has been a peninsula nonetheless, which allows its residents to reach the outer world not only on foot but also on the sea. The Koreans took advantage of this especially in the 9th century. However in the 10th century, for some reasons Koryŏ people made a choice that effectively nullified such merit. They literally gave up their own capability to communicate with China on sea and intermediate trade traffics between northeast Asian regions, in favor of a more central leadership that would allow the government to rule the country more effectively. Such leadership could only be established when all local forces were sufficiently subdued, and as they were also the factions which had facilitated maritime trades for a long time, with them gone the Korean peninsula entered a sort of a blackout period, from which we can hardly witness any visible outward activities or visits from foreign parties.

Then in the 11th century, and quite surprisingly, Sung 宋 merchants started to come to Koryŏ several times a year, aboard many, many ships (Yi 2011). Trail of merchants from today's Ningbo 寧波 to the Korean peninsula continued for over one and a half century. Their visits were triggered by two reasons: their general interest in Koryŏ items such as calligraphic utensils, *insam* or ramie products, and the prospect of doing business through Koryŏ with other nearby regions such as the northern parts of China as well as the Liaodung 遼東 region. Their visits only decreased in the mid-12th century, when the Chinese merchants began to move their business to West Asia more and more.¹

And this is when the Mongol Yüan Empire came. The time Koryŏ shared with this empire is usually considered as a dark period for the Koryŏ people, because of all the political intervention and extraction of economic resources. But at the same time, many foreign merchants who were doing business with the empire decided to come to Koryŏ as well, bringing incredible amount of resources and information with them. Quite naturally, all the Koryŏ people and not to mention members of the government who were inspired and encouraged by such visits began to devise their own aggressive foreign trade policies.

Of course, there are not that many sources of historical information that remain today, at least enough to verify the effects and results produced by all these policies, and there were indeed some “backlashes,” as peasants were forced to change their cultivation patterns to support the foreign export system.² But in general, it is highly possible that continuous interactions with the outside would have contributed to at least partial boosting of the civilian economy as well as the government's revenue. And in the meantime, permanent trails of merchants would have provided other Koryŏ people too with the means to communicate with their Yüan imperial counterparts. That sure seems to have contributed to the government's own efforts, to modify their previous domestic policies while accepting Yüan institutional influences, as would later be discussed.

So, this article intends to examine a century worth of coexistence, as well as all the interactions that continued between Koryŏ and the Yüan Empire, in a perspective that is somewhat different from before. It does not plan to view this period simply as a period which witnessed Koryŏ being subordinated or

display acute West Asian influences, according to Sato Keishiro 佐藤圭四郎's work, *Historical Study of Islamic Commerce and Trades* イスラーム商業史の研究 (1981). In Korea, Dr. Koh Pyŏng-ik ([1969] 1980) once suggested the possibility in his work, *Tong'a Kyoŏbsa ūi yŏn'gu* (*Historical Study of East Asian Exchanges*) that the Sung Chinese merchants might have decreased their visits to the Korean peninsula because of their new found interest in the West Asian Islamic market, and later Lee Kang-hahn (2013, 70-98) argued that such circumstances must have been the reason the number of Chinese merchants visiting Koryŏ suddenly dropped in the mid-12th century.

2. The Koryŏ peasants who originally grew rice or other plants in their lands were forced to give up their original crops and newly cultivate ramie or hemp which would be used in producing clothes and other pricy textile items that could be exported to foreign markets, at the urge of domestic merchants and even governmental officials (who stepped in as investors) pursuing profits through outside ventures. For this, please see Wi 1993.

* This article is based upon previous studies the author has published for the past decade. Several points have already been raised in those works, yet all gathered here in a single article, they are discussed from different angles too. This would also be the first time to publish them in English for readers abroad.

1. At the time, China was experiencing some changes that were caused by the ever increasing exchanges between East and West Asian realms. The exiting silver reserves led to changes in the gold-silver exchange rate, and the “Kangsu” 綱首 figures' serving as professional navigators in charge of long-range maritime commercial expeditions became very popular. These two phenomena evidently

dominated. Instead, it attempts to view this as a period in which the range of the Koryŏ people's interaction with the outer world was greatly expanded. Such increase in the Koryŏ people's encounters may have first been enabled by an exterior stimuli (the Empire), but was later even accelerated by Koryŏ people's own choices. We should be able to learn why and how that happened.

The primary focus of this study will be placed on understanding how medieval Koreans' commercial interactions with the outer world evolved, and in order to do so, I will examine what kind of foreign merchants came to the Korean peninsula and how the Koryŏ people responded to them. I plan to discuss what kind of foreign environment the Koryŏ merchants were facing, why all those foreign merchants visited the Korean peninsula, what kind of responses were devised by Koryŏ leaders, and what kind of items were exported from Koryŏ. Studies in this area have only begun recently in Korea, and results of those studies would be worth sharing with non-Korean speaking foreign colleagues, engaged in academic studies of not only medieval Korean, but also Northeast Asian history of that period.

Visits from the Outer World

In this chapter, the foreign merchants' visits to the Korean peninsula will be discussed. As has already been mentioned in previous studies, they were not Chinese. Descendants of the *Songsang* 宋商 figures chose not to visit Koryŏ anymore, at least as frequently as they had in the past. The foreign merchants who were newly visiting Koryŏ at this time were from regions that were beyond China, and it seems like they were coming in a rather sporadic fashion, showing up on Koryŏ shores in "particular" time periods.

In historical records their nature was described as either "Uhgur" or "Muslim," as the places they originated from were specified in those records as either "Hwehwe" 回回 or "Sŏyŏk" 西域 or "Saekmok" 色目. Although their names and occupations were not clarified, considering what they did inside the empire as well as in the Korean peninsula, we can be sure they were merchants engaged in commercial businesses. On the other hand, the question of why they came to Koryŏ in such a peculiar fashion deserves an answer, and the foreign trade policy of the Mongol Yüan empire seems to have been the culprit, so it will be examined first in part one. Next, in order to examine the

interesting possibility that their visits (to the Korean peninsula) may "not" have been coinciding with periods the Mongol empire actually favored foreign trades, several cases will be examined in part two.

Yüan Imperial Government's Foreign Trade Policy

With the advent of the Mongol Yüan Empire, global trades between the East and West dramatically increased. It has been steadily growing already during the second half of the 12th century, but with the formation of the empire, which engulfed most parts of Asia and even some of Europe, travels on land and sea became much less dangerous and even less costly. The term "Ortaq" trade, coined with the name "ortaq" which is now believed to have been referring to small bands of merchants operating in Central Asian regions (Chŏng 2001), began to be used in calling merchants who were operating on the sea as well, as we can see from many Yüan governmental offices in charge of oversea trade supervision established during the 1270s and '80s with the word "Ortaq" 斡脫 in their names.³ We can see the empire was witnessing a steep increase in both on-land traders' and maritime merchants' activities.

But the imperial government's general stance concerning foreign trades actually varied from time to time. When it believed it could benefit from all the profits generated by those trades (by levying taxes), it remained in favor of vibrant foreign trades.⁴ But whenever a balance between incoming and outgoing assets (and values) was disrupted (and especially when the latter would outgrow the former), the government stepped in and put restrictions upon the civilian trade traffic.⁵ Sometimes the government even restricted

3. Yüan governmental offices named "Ortaq Services" 斡脫總管府 (1267), 斡脫所 (1272) or "Quánfǔ-sī" 泉府司 (1280) were opened to oversee trade administrations.

4. Primary examples would be the policy supporting "Government-sponsored commercial expeditions" 官本船 which were conceived by Roh Se-yŏng 盧世榮 in 1284 and 1285, and the imperial government's decision of 1314 to double the tariff rate that was to be imposed upon cargos aboard incoming foreign ships (*Grand Yüan Law* 通制條格 12, Penal ruling 斷例, Trades 市舶) probably advised by Temuder 鐵木迭兒, one of the most powerful aids to emperor Ayurbarwada 仁宗 and dowager empress Dagi 答箕.

5. Since the 13th century, the Yüan imperial government designated certain items that were not to exit China in any case. Such items included a variety of assets which were usually gold, silver, coins, iron, horses, and textile materials which covered not only threads but high quality silk 絲綿, 布帛, 段匹,

them from continuing their business with merchants from particular foreign regions, with the intention to exploit those regions itself.⁶

These restrictions do not necessarily indicate that the government at the time enforcing such bans was really hoping to squeeze civilian trade activities. The imperial government, while acknowledging their potentials would just want to supervise them before they got out of hand. However, there were times when the concept of trades itself was questioned, more significantly than in any other periods. In those times, the government would show an outright negative view toward the idea of entertaining merchants and supporting their activities. Sustained governmental sponsorship of foreign trades was considered just to be plain wrong. Concerns about uncontrolled commercial operations resorting to immoral and illegal behaviors, and in the process either intentionally or unintentionally hurting others, were passionately raised from time to time.⁷

When it was open to civilian trades

Emperor Qubilai 元世祖 (r. 1260-1294) recruited a lot of Muslim 回回 and Uighur 回鶻 figures, as financial consultants or monetary ministers.⁸ He had them devise an imperial tax system, as a platform upon which the imperial

economy would be constructed.⁹ Although their methods were ruthless and their approaches were aggressive, these recruited ministers made significant contributions to the early establishment of the Yüan imperial economy.¹⁰ And to the Mongol dignitaries they introduced the world of “foreign investments,” as they were eager to channel assets newly extracted from civilian households all across China into foreign trades.

At first, Mongol dignitaries did not know anything about such risky yet profitable, long-range commercial expeditions. But after witnessing the foreign ministers and their policies as well, they were strongly encouraged and motivated to engage such foreign activities themselves. Development of governmental policies ensued.¹¹ Emperor Qubilai even had to open a new “Quánfǔ-sī” office to oversee all those royal investments, so that the dignitaries would not suffer too much loss in the process.¹²

He also hired foreign ministers such as Lú shì-róng (1284-1285) and Sanggha (1287-1291), who developed the government-sponsored business programs 官本船¹³ and enlarged the transportation infrastructure so that foreign trades would be connected with domestic commercial resources more efficiently.¹⁴ This shows us that Qubilai was very much open to the idea of

銷金綾羅。Banning orders can be spotted in 1294, 1296, 1303, 1309, and 1313. Please consult *Yüanshi* 94 (志 43, Economy 食貨 2, Trades 市舶, 1294 [至元 30]); *Yüanshi* 19 (Temur 成宗, August 1296 [元貞 2], Chōng'yu day); *Yüanshi* 21 (Temur 成宗, February 1303 [大德 7], Imo day); *Yüanshi* 23 (Kaishan 武宗, September 1309 [至大 2], Kyōngjin day); *Grand Yüan Law* 通制條格 12 (Penal ruling 斷例, Trades 市舶).

6. That was what they did with Mabaar in 1296. Mabaar was one of the most important regions for the Yüan imperial government, as it was one of the most prominent producers of pearls as well as related items and also many other exotic, invaluable items (silk, gold, etc.) in the world at the time. We can see such fact and also the Yüan government's acknowledgement of it from many records including *Yüanshi*, *Toi Chiryak* (*Abbreviated Memorandum of Island Aborigines* 島夷誌略), and records of Marco Polo. For more details, please see Lee 2013a, 213-16.

7. The most definite examples of this kind of attitude would be Emperor Temur 成宗 (1295-1307) and Ayurbarwada 仁宗 (1311-1320). For how Temur denounced maritime trades and disapproved merchants' activities please see Lee 2013a, 217-18, and for how Ayurbadawa despised the idea of encouraging commercial drives throughout the society, please see Lee 2009c, 171-75; 190-92.

8. Ahmad 阿合馬 served from 1262 through 1282. After he was politically attacked and assassinated by an opposing faction to his policy, his successor Lú shì-róng 盧世榮 took his place, increased taxes, and even created a new tax to be imposed upon merchants and commercial brokers, in an effort to increase imperial revenue. And when he was gone too (as his stay in power was rather short, from 1284 to 1285), his successor named Sangga 桑哥, whose policy was based upon acute personal instincts developed through West Asian experiences, continued to do the same. He designed a foreign trade policy which was closely affiliated with domestic transportation enhanced with the operation of “sea stations.” For all this, please see Lee 2013b, 423-27.

9. For this, please consult renowned Japanese studies such as Tamura Sanzeou's 田村實造 “Qubilai and the Three Financial Ministers” 世祖と三人の財政家 in *Conquering Dynasties in China* 中國征服王朝史の研究 published in 1974 (qtd. in Lee 2013a, 158n12) or Atagi 1969.

10. The process is meticulously described in Uematz 1995.

11. For details of the “Ortaq trade,” and also the Yüan imperial government's policy concerning it, please consult classic Chinese and Japanese studies such as Murakami 1942; Atagi 1973; Sato 1981; Chen 2003; Yokkaichi 2000.

12. Quánfǔ-sī 泉府司 was instructed to oversee all outgoing gold and silver reserves that previously belonged to Mongol dignitaries including the Emperor, Crown prince, the Queen, and the Mongol lords 御位下, 皇太子, 皇太后, 諸王. The government also provided the merchants operating under the authority of the Ch'ōn-bu-sa office with food, supplies, and even military protection, so that they could conduct their business unharmed and uninterrupted, and eventually return profits to the Mongol investors. Please see *Yüanshi* 11 (Qubilai 世祖, November 1280 [至元 17], ūlsa day); *Yüanshi* 13 (Qubilai 世祖, August 1285 [至元 22], Kimi day).

13. Roh Se-yōng designed this institution so that the government would be able to raise more money from not only domestic merchants but also the ones engaged in foreign activities. The government would provide a previously selected commercial envoy with an investment, and expect it to embark upon its journey, do business overseas, and return safely to Chinese harbors, where the expedition would have to submit roughly 70% of the profits achieved from its business. For this, please consult Miyake 1981.

14. Under Sangga's leadership, the Ch'ōn-bu-sa office came to take charge of all maritime transportation throughout China, while the operations of the Shibak-sa 市舶司, 市舶提舉司 office, which had been in charge of harbor control and tariff collection, was firmly placed under Ch'ōn-bu-sa's control.

Mongol people actively engaging themselves in foreign trades, and making considerable investments in their deals with foreign merchants. We can see that he was very much agreeable to the idea of fostering civilian trade activities as much as he could.

However, such imperial stance was dramatically reversed when the last foreign minister Sanggha was convicted and executed for misconducts and breach of integrity. As will be discussed later, Qubilai had to listen to his new advisors who suggested a more conservative approach to all economic issues including foreign trades.¹⁵ In 1294, all governmental bodies that had been engaged in foreign trade oversight were either shut down, dismantled, or reduced in terms of their jurisdiction.

The emperor who wanted to revive the atmosphere of the days of Qubilai was Emperor Kaishan 武宗 (r. 1308-1331), who promoted the Quánfǔ-sī 泉府司 office to Quánfǔ-yuàn 泉府院, and reinforced its authority by enlarging the staff. He was quite famous for opening trades with regions on the far West reaches of the empire.¹⁶ And he also diverted assets accumulated in the Ŭngbang 鷹坊 falcon ranges to commercial purposes with the intention of generating more profits (Lee 2009a, 104-05). But he died only four years later in 1311, and the “officially negative” stance came back.

Only in 1324, when Emperor Yesun Temur 泰定帝 (r. 1324-1327) was enthroned, things started to turn again. He was famous for initiating the Zhōngmài Bohuò 中賣寶貨 institution of purchasing high-priced West Asian products, and arranging additional trades with Chinese items. Conceived by his West Asian aide Draut Sha 倒刺沙, it was a trade initiative that served as a commercial link between China and the Middle East, and especially the Iranian sector today, which was occupied at the time by the Il Khanate, also named as “Hulegu Ulus.”

Such institution was briefly abandoned by the new emperor Tok Temur 文宗 (r. 1328-1332) in 1328, but later resumed in the early 1330s, and lasted until 1334, when the last Sultan of Il Khanate (Abū Sa'id [Abū Sa'id]) died

and the Khanate itself was dismantled (Lee 2013a, 250). During this time, powerful Yüan officials such as Yen Temur 燕帖(鐵)木兒 or Bayan 伯顏 were heavily engaged in foreign trades, to the extent of significantly depleting governmental resources, throughout the 1330s and early 1340s, until minister Tokto 脫脫 put an end to it (Lee 2008a, 186-87; 2009b, 81-82). According to the City Records of Simíng (Ningbo 明四) published in the early 1340s, which was entitled *Zhizhèng Simíng Xùzhì* 至正四明續志, foreign trades were continuing strongly along the Chinese south-east coastlines, around the beginning of the 1340s.¹⁷

In short, maritime traffics prospered particularly in the 1280s and early 1290s, late 1300s and early 1310s, the mid-1320s and early 1330s, and then nearing the second half of the 1330s and even during the early 1340s. And it was probably and quite possibly because of certain emperors' most supportive stance toward foreign trades. Yet as mentioned before, other periods witnessed emperors and policies which were quite different. And traders were heavily affected by that.

When they were not that friendly to traders

The aggressive tax policy devised by foreign ministers with extensive knowledge in asset collecting and resource extraction turned out to be very instrumental in increasing revenue for the authorities. It led to a wealthier government as well as an imperial economy which were more business-friendly than ever. Yet decades of such policy took a toll on the public's welfare. It severely drained civilian resources and caused social turmoil here and there throughout the society.

Several Chinese officials inside the Mongol imperial government had been raising questions, and began to blame the foreign ministers.¹⁸ And when

17. On the contrary, the one from the 1320s (*Yányòu Simíng-zhì* 延祐四明志), which shows no records of foreign trade activities, visiting foreign merchants, or even administrative bodies that should have overseen the issue, reflects a negative environment that surrounded traders in the 1310s and early 1320s. For this, please see Lee 2008b, 185-86.

18. They blamed the foreign ministers for disintegrating the official appointment/assignment process which was essential to maintaining the government's image and integrity. They also argued that the foreign ministers were ballooning the government by newly opening all kinds of tax offices all around the empire, and that they were severely breaching the code of conduct for the officials by encouraging them to go out more and make money through foreign trades. For more details, please see Lee 2007a, 106-10.

For this, please see *Yüanshi* 93 (志 42, Economy 食貨 1, Transportation 海運, 1287 [至元 24], 行泉府司專掌海運); *Yüanshi* 14 (Qubilai 世祖, August 1286 [至元 23], Kihae day); *Yüanshi* 15 (Qubilai 世祖, April 1288 [至元 25], Shin'yu day, 行泉府司請...置...海船千戶所).

15. For all their political agendas, and what kind of attacks and discussions were flying around inside the Yüan imperial government at the time, please see Lee 2007a, 107-10.

16. For the trade initiatives of Emperor Kaishan, please see Lee 2008c, 140-41.

they gained power after Sangga's death in 1291 a whole new kind of economic policy was formed. Commercial trades were no longer a virtue: it was even branded as a "cancer" that was poisoning the people's mind. In the wake of all this, the government established new Shibó Chōufēn Zájìn 市舶抽分雜禁 rules (23 to be exact) to punish local officials' commercial malpractices and their illegal engagements in foreign trades in 1293.¹⁹

In 1297, Emperor Temur 成宗 (r. 1294-1307) ordered the confiscation of all passage rights and transportation permits which had earlier been issued to merchants engaged in foreign activities. In 1299 he banned maritime traders from embarking upon commercial expeditions, and in 1304 he decided not to allow members of the Mongol royal family to engage in such operations any more.²⁰

His such stern attitude toward foreign trades was later reversed by his successor Kaishan as said before, but came back when Kaishan died early and was succeeded by his own brother Emperor Ayurbarwada 仁宗 (r. 1311-1320). He and his son Shidibala 英宗 (r. 1321-1323) were even more adamant in putting down foreign trades. For example, Ayurbarwada shut down the Quánfǔ-sī office in 1311, recalled royal permits, and proclaimed the

23 General orders once again, in a much stronger fashion in 1314.²¹

And as mentioned earlier, another hard time for traders came at the end of the 1320s, when Emperor Tok Temur was pretty adamant in putting a stop to its predecessor (Yesun Temur)'s trade initiative. In 1328, he used all kinds of words to denounce it, and even after Tok Temur lifted his own bans on East-West trades in the early 1330s,²² in 1332 the government issued total of 11 new orders, designed to prevent merchants (either Chinese, Mongol, or foreign) from resorting to illegal actions.²³ Although the punishments were weaker than before, it is highly possible that they would have put some additional burdens upon maritime operators nonetheless.

We can see, in the second half of the 1290s and most of the 1300s (except its last couple of years), during pretty much most of the 1310s and early 1320s, and briefly at the end of 1320s and early 1330s, maritime trades between China and foreign regions would have been a bit troublesome and less fluidic, and also less desirable to all outgoing and incoming foreign trade traffics. It would have definitely been so compared to other periods, such as the 1280s, early 1290s, late 1300s, mid-1320s, plus the late 1330s and early 1340s, in which the government and most importantly the Emperors were not that much critical of the concept of trade itself, and eager to launch official convoys and be supportive of civilian activities as well.

The reason the ever changing nature of the Yüan government's imperial trade policy is discussed here is because it may have been a defining factor which would have had direct influence upon the traffic between China and the Korean peninsula as well. One might assume that either Chinese merchants or figures from other regions would have come to Koryŏ more often when the imperial trade policy was open to civilian trades, and would have visited the peninsula less when it was not. Interestingly enough, the reality was rather the opposite exactly.

19. But there was another kind of effort going on at the time as well. With the aggressive trade initiative—which had intended to send more merchants abroad and for the government to collect more from their profits—temporarily rescinded, the government also finalized its efforts designed to protect incoming foreign merchants, who had been exploited, harassed, and manipulated by both harbor control officials and other entities operating in the area since the Southern Sung days of the late 12th century. In order to do so, the government issued 23 General Orders 市舶抽分雜禁 as mentioned above, which also dictated certain punishments for illegal treatment of foreign merchants as well as misconducts committed by local officials who were blindly pursuing commercial profits by tapping into businesses of the visiting foreign merchants. One of the things established by these 23 General orders is the "secondary tariff rate," which had been up to almost "1/3" of the entire cargo aboard respective foreign ships in the 12th century, and then suggested to be lowered to "1/15" by a Southern Sung official (as described in a local record of today's Ningbo city from the early 13th century named *Bǎoqìng Sìmíng-zhì* 寶慶四明志), and was finally established as "1/30" under Yüan imperial supervision. As a result of this decision, the overall number of incoming ships would have undoubtedly jumped, as they would have found now the reduced secondary tariff rate significantly contributive and conducive to more profitable businesses in China, and as more ships came to Chinese shores, the trades between Chinese merchants and their foreign counterparts would have continued too, which would have helped the Chinese to maintain their profit level, even with their own foreign activities and encounters with foreign entities were shrinking due to the government's conservative stance.

20. For more details, and other orders Temur issued, please see Lee 2013b, 427.

21. For what these father and son did, please see Lee 2013b, 431.

22. For what were Munjong's words, and why he uttered them in the first place, please see Lee 2013a, 248-49.

23. For details concerning the contents of these eleven new orders, intentions behind them, and the implications from their issuing, please see Lee 2009b, 61-63.

Foreign Merchants' Visit to the Korean Peninsula

In periods when the Yüan trade policy favored vibrant civilian activities and supported the idea of Mongol, Chinese and foreign merchants interacting with each other, those merchants apparently did so with each other, but not with the Koryŏ merchants. One would first guess that foreign merchants who were benefitting from the imperial government's supportive trade policy would occasionally extend their businesses to East Asian regions other than China as they indeed did in the Southeast Asian region, but for some reasons they did not do so with the Korean peninsula. In these periods, foreign merchants' visits to Koryŏ are nowhere to be found. On the other hand, when the Yüan imperial government set bans on civilian activities and intervened in natural commercial flows between China and Central or Western Asian regions, suddenly all kinds of merchants began to appear on Koryŏ shores, and displayed a number of interesting interactions with the Koryŏ people.

Central or West Asian figures in Koryŏ: How their visits occurred "between" the Empire's open-trade policy periods

As mentioned earlier, a lot of Sung 宋 merchants visited Koryŏ in the 11th and 12th centuries. Mainly from the Ningbo 寧波 harbor of Jiangnan region today, these Chinese merchants traded things with the Koryŏ people, and they also wanted to visit other regions throughout Northeast Asia through the Korean peninsula. Their visits were annual, they brought in huge amount of commodities, and most importantly their visits continued for one and a half century. Yet their visits eventually diminished as the East-West global trade fired up. The mid-12th century marked the coming of new changes in China, which were either directly or indirectly caused by the Chinese people's increasing business with Central and West Asian worlds. Gold-Silver exchange rate was modified and long-range commercial voyages supervised by "Kangsu" 綱首 figures became quite popular. More and more Chinese merchants, and even the ones who had been primarily engaged in businesses only with Koryŏ and Japan started to move their business to regions beyond East Asia. They found the peninsula less and less appealing in terms of business prospects.²⁴

24. For in what fashion the Sung merchants reduced their visits, and what was the situation of the Chinese market as it was increasing its interactions with the West Asian regions, please see Lee 2013a,

Then, coming into the second half of the 13th century, an unexpected wave of foreigners started to appear. Instead of the Sung merchants who decided not to visit the Korean peninsula any more, at least as frequently as they had done in the past, these new visitors must have felt inclined to visit Koryŏ shores apparently for a variety of reasons. These people were no other than Central and West Asian figures, who had never visited the Korean peninsula before, except the brief introduction they made to Koryŏ in the early 11th century.

These Central Asian commercial operatives, nicknamed as "Ortaq 斡脫 traders," had already been playing instrumental roles in exploding on-land as well as maritime Silk Road trades since the early 13th century. As mentioned earlier, they were recruited by Mongol dignitaries who had too many valuable assets (extracted from Chinese households) at their disposal but were not quite sure what to do with them. They became aware of the fact that investing all those assets in foreign trades was a pretty good way to make money, and that was exactly what they did. The hired Ortaq merchants received silver and expensive goods from high-ranking members of the Yüan court and government, invested them in their trades in West Asian regions, and upon their return to China repaid their Yüan sponsors with not only the original investment but also additional interests. This particular form of trade was extremely risky and expensive, but also highly profitable and popular.

Considering their such nature, there would have been no reason for them to extend their activities to the Korean peninsula, with Koryŏ's deteriorated economic condition and its seeming lack of experience of trading things with regions beyond China. Yet some Muslims were in fact already inside Koryŏ, with many others of a similar nature. We can confirm that from the famous Koryŏ song named *Ssang'hwa-jŏm*, which portrayed a Muslim merchant who opened a shop in Koryŏ and interacted with Koryŏ consumers.²⁵

And records also show that these Ortaq figures, Central Asian figures and Muslim personnel came to Koryŏ in various capacities. They came to acquire

70-98.

25. There is no way for us to be sure how large the West Asian population block was in Koryŏ, or what kind of percentage it would have occupied within the in-Koryŏ foreigners community. Yet one thing is certain: West Asian visitors constituted a new wave of foreigners who were soon to be Koryŏ merchants' partners. They were essential to the revival of Koryŏ people's outward activities.

materials that were usually traded in the Indian oceans (1270s), and they came when they were not able to pay their debts to their Mongol investors (1290s). And they also came when they had to secure supplies, ahead of their long journeys from China to West Asia on a ship full of enslaved Mongol souls to be sold as potential soldiers upon their arrival there (1310s).

In the second half of the 1270s, they came to the Korean peninsula to collect silver materials and also, of all items, pearls.²⁶ No other Chinese governments or their representatives had ever demanded pearls to be submitted by the Koryŏ government, as pearls were never known to have been harvested near the peninsula in massive proportions. And they never willfully extracted gold or silver from Koryŏ either. Then, why were all these Central Asian figures (and probably the Muslims as well) searching for pearls and silver from Koryŏ at this time? Pearls and pearl-based secondary commodities were actually being mass-produced in vital traffic centers located along the maritime Silk Road route,²⁷ and silver (as well as gold) was the driving force behind the infamous Ortaq trade itself. The Ortaq-involved (Muslim) agents or factions must have been trying to secure additional pearl/silver providers in Northeast Asia, and were assessing the potentials of Koryŏ, as a supplementary market that could provide profitable materials.

Then in the 1290s, there were Ortaq traders who did not (or would not) pay debts to their Mongol investors inside the Yüan court and government, and eventually fled to regions other than China. Their choices of regions where they would take refuge amusingly included the Korean peninsula, and there they successfully evaded the Yüan government which had earlier announced its intentions to forcibly collect its own debts.²⁸ The Ortaq traders who were seeking refuge in Koryŏ in order to avoid being apprehended by the Mongol authorities must have perceived not only the Koryŏ realm as a safe haven but also its market as a springboard for a possible recovery, as their reduced but

consistent activities—such as loan sharking—in Koryŏ would have allowed them to rebuild their capital and someday resume their businesses in China and the West.²⁹

And in the 1310s, Muslims and Chinese merchants, who had been continuously provoking the Yüan authorities by their deliberate acts of enslaving Mongol people and selling them away to other countries, apparently came to Koryŏ shores from time to time, in order to purchase shortages for their long voyages ahead, or even sell some of them off to the Koryŏ population.³⁰ Regions like Egypt and Syria of today were brimming with massive traffic of slave trades, as it was both demanded and facilitated by the Mamluk dynasties and the Mongol Khanates there.³¹ Several Mongol emperors, initially Qubilai and in later days Ayurbarwada 仁宗, were extremely concerned about the fact that the Mongol people, the master race of the Empire, were being hopelessly stripped of their status and shipped out of China to fall in foreigners' hands, by all these slave traders of Muslim and Indian origin who were supposedly “business partners” of the empire. Apparently the Korean peninsula was inducted as some sort of a pathway for Chinese and Mongol slaves who were headed for West Asia, or even as another source of human workforce to be exploited. Muslim merchants who were involved in such human trafficking were sporadically visiting Koryŏ at the time, according to descriptions that can be found from Yüan legal codes.

26. For this, please see *Koryŏsa* 28 (Ch'ung'ryŏl-wang 2, Lunar March, 1276, Chŏng'yu day; June 1276, Imshin day).

27. For details of pearl collecting and production of related materials in the Indian region, please see Lee 2013a, 141. Also, Tansen Sen's works including *Buddhism, Diplomacy and Trade: The Realignment of Sino-Indian Relations (600-1400)* are very enlightening in that area.

28. We can see this from the royal edict of Emperor Temur, grandson of Qubilai, urging the Koryŏ government to report any such fugitives or rogue Ortaq traders in their midst, so that they could be brought to justice and resolve their debt to the Mongol government (*Koryŏsa* 31, Ch'ung'ryŏl-wang 21, Lunar April, 1295, Kimi day).

29. There could have been many ways, such as loan-sharking, or even collecting Koryŏ silver reserves, just like they did with the “Üngbang” 鷹坊 falcon ranges. For the overall picture, please see Lee 2013a, 142-44.

30. We can see that from the legal orders issued in 1291 and 1316. In 1291, Qubilai expressed his concerns about the fact that Mongol souls were being enslaved and sold to the markets of Muslims and India. And in 1316, during the reign of Emperor Ayurbarwada 仁宗 Yüan officials discussed the fact that one of the regions the enslaved Mongol people were being sold to was Koryŏ, the Korean peninsula. Translation of relevant Yüan legal codes is provided in Lee 2013a, 146.

31. The Hulegu Ulus (the “Il Khanate”) employed a Christian-friendly policy and therefore clashed with not only the surrounding Muslim states (including the Mamluk Slave dynasties) but also the nearby Mongol Khanates like the Kipchak Khanate. As a result, the Mamluks and the Mongol Khanates in the area were in constant need of military personnel replenishment, hence the slave trades which would have provided them with ample supply of soldiers most of the time. The works of Reuven Amitai can be consulted on this subject (*The Mongols in the Islamic Lands* [Variorum, 2007]; *Mongols and Mamluks: The Mamluk-Ilkhanid War, 1260-1281* [Cambridge, 1995]). Details of his study, and more comments upon global variables that brought about such slave trade trails that unexpectedly originated in China, and ended up involving the Korean peninsula too, can be seen in Lee 2013a, 147-49.

Although there are not that many examples of these sorts of visits to examine in the first place, we can detect an interesting trend, that the time periods that feature such visits, the mid-1270s, mid-1290s, and early 1320s, are not overlapping with all the periods in which the imperial government was actually supportive of China-based merchants' activities abroad, or foreign merchants' interaction with imperial personnel. The three periods mentioned above in fact belong to periods when the imperial government was not so thrilled with the idea of supporting trades.

It seems like foreign merchants' visits to the Korean peninsula tended to occur when Chinese and foreign merchants were not allowed to do business with each other as freely as they had been. When they were free to do so, the Western merchants were busy trading with China, and had no reason to drop by Koryŏ. But whenever they (the foreign merchants) experienced troubles continuing their operations with China, because of the Yüan imperial government's new laws or banning, they would sometimes put their dealings with their Chinese counterparts on hold, and then seek out to form new partnerships throughout East Asia, which would have undoubtedly included the Korean peninsula.³² The Koryŏ market apparently had some potential in their eyes, as the foreign merchants who visited the peninsula at the time obviously considered Koryŏ as an economic outpost that could probably and quite possibly provide them with assets, shelter and human resources. So, whenever the global east-west trades between the Mongol Yüan Empire and Central/Western Asian regions were interrupted, the Korean peninsula would suddenly surface upon the map and receive foreign visitors who had to maintain their businesses with East Asia anyway. To them, Koryŏ was an emergency option that they considered to be at their disposal.

But does this mean that the Koryŏ people received visits from the outside and witness foreigners only from time to time? That would not have been the case, because people from the West Asian regions were not the only ones that had been doing business with China. What should be discussed is another trail of merchants who occasionally visited Koryŏ, and not necessarily when the maritime trade in Northeast Asia was slowing down by Yüan imperial policies. The most primary example of such visitors would be the Japanese, who had

been involved in Yüan-Japan trades since the end of the 13th century.

Periods between those visits: Yüan/Japan trade ships visiting Koryŏ

Japan, which was invaded by the allied Mongol/Chinese/Koryŏ forces in the 1270s and '80s, had trouble resuming its trade relationship with China for nearly a decade due to both diplomatic and economic reasons. But when they were asked to reopen trades with China by the Mongol emperor Temur, they did. Periodic exchanges over sea between China and Japan was reinitiated,³³ and more importantly to the Koryŏ people, these ships seemed to have been visiting the Korean peninsula as well, albeit not always intentionally. Sometimes they would have wanted to stop by because they needed shortages or had to replenish their reserves, and sometimes they might have even wanted to do business with the people of Koryŏ too. But sometimes their visits were not premeditated, as the precarious condition upon the sea pushed them off course many times, and force them to wreck on the peninsula's south and west coastlines.

The most primary example is the so-called "Shinan wreck" (Shinansŏn 新安船), which sunk in the West sea of the Korean peninsula in the 1320s. It was a Chinese ship, hired by the Japanese, to ship items and assets and construction materials which were to be used in renovating Japanese Buddhist monasteries in the Kyushu area. It was launched from today's Ningbo 寧波 in 1323, but sunk in the vicinity of the peninsula that year, probably due to bad weather accompanied by a precarious storm. Huge amount of items have been continuously excavated from the remains of the ship found under water since the 1970s.

There had been a general notion that ships traveling between the Yüan empire and Japan—such as Shinansŏn—would have definitely visited Koryŏ "all the time." But quite frankly there was no reason for them to do so. They have been fully capable of coming and going, and they did not need to always stop at regions in the middle, such as the Korean peninsula.³⁴ And according

33. For details that show us what kind of political and military interactions between Yüan and Japan took place in the 1270s, '80s, and '90s, and how Japanese merchants and other personnel continued sporadic visits to China, mostly in the 1300s, '20s, and '40s, please see Lee 2008b, 188-92.

34. Considering the fact that the Japanese merchants and the Sung merchants had been strongly engaged in trades directly with each other since the 12th century, and thanks to a permanent presence of Sung merchants and Buddhist priests established in the Hakada area of Kyushu in the form of a large

32. The irony has been pointed out earlier in Lee 2015, 131-35.

to Koryŏ and Japanese records, we can see that Japanese figures, either pirates or merchants or even Buddhist priests, visited Koryŏ shores in particular time periods such as the 1300s, 1320s, and 1340s,³⁵ which coincided with periods when the imperial policy favored opened trades, and when Central/Western Asian merchants' visit to the Korean peninsula were conspicuously absent. Japanese merchants would have felt more safe and convenient to launch their businesses when the Mongol imperial government was not that adamant in restraining both domestic and foreign merchants' operations. As a result, they visited Koryŏ when others were not coming, which makes all these visits from China-Japan trade ships an extra wave of merchants who happened to visit the peninsula, when other Chinese and foreign merchants were busy doing business with each other.

The Koryŏ People's Response

All these visits from the outside world would have been incredibly inspirational and also motivational for the Koryŏ people in their attempts to engage similar activities abroad. Of course it was not easy in the beginning, as the country was still coping with damages that had been inflicted upon the peninsula by the thirty-year-plus war with the Mongols, and later the Mongol authorities demanded all kinds of items which further worsened the already crippled Koryŏ economy.³⁶ However, we can see the Koryŏ people were already going

residence area, it is highly unlikely that either Sung or Japanese merchants would have made "regular" visits to the Korean peninsula. Simply speaking, they did not need to do so. But for other reasons, it is surely not out of the realm of possibility that they visited Koryŏ from time to time. For more details, please see Lee 2008b, 164-68.

35. The Korean peninsula at this point was visited sometimes by Japanese merchants stranded on the Koryŏ coastline by storms, sometimes by Japanese pirates, and sometimes by Japanese Buddhist priests who were intending to visit either Koryŏ or China, especially in the 1300s, '20s, and '40s, which were not only when Yüan-Japan trades were blossoming, and but also especially when the Yüan imperial government was maintaining a supportive foreign trade policy that benefitted foreign merchants who were wishing to do business with China. For this, see Lee 2016c.
36. Various items that were demanded by the Mongols included gold, silver, paper, *insam* (jinseng), fur, leather, ramie cloth, and of course, porcelain. For details of Mongol extraction of Korŏ resources, please see Lee 2007b, 17-43. Among these items, "ramie cloth-based" products, specifically processed (dyed and weaved) to feature colored patterns, were particularly favored by the Mongols. In the meantime, silver too was extracted in huge amounts, as it was an asset that could be diverted to the Mongol figures' foreign "Ortaq" investments. As a result, Koryŏ silver reserve continued to drain,

over to China and other regions on foot at the end of the 13th century,³⁷ and we also know they embarked upon maritime journeys, as the tariff rate of the Yüan harbors was significantly lowered around mid-1290s.³⁸ And through a text named *Lao Qida* (*Nogŏldae* 老乞大), we can have an indirect glimpse into the reality the Koryŏ merchants would have been facing in their dealings

through several mechanisms which included the Mongol falcon ranges 鷹坊 installed in Koryŏ. For that, please see Lee 2009a, 77-81.

37. The situation began to change at the end of the 13th century. The Mongols seized control of the South Sung 南宋 capital in 1276, and defeated the dynasty once and for all (*Yüanshi* 9 [Qubilai 世祖, May 1276 (至元 13), ūlmi day]), effectively annexing the entire Southern China along with all its resources. As a result, extraction of "Koryŏ" resources became less and less required, and the general amount of materials collected from the Korean peninsula was immediately reduced (Lee 2007a, 90-101). In 1296, it was reported to the Koryŏ government that peasants were taking their horses and cows—which were diverted from agricultural production—as well as commercial items on them to China, so that they could conduct relatively minor trades with Chinese merchants.
38. What triggered a debate among Korean historians was a record from a tomb epitaph that documented the life of a deceased harbor control official Shī Yào 史燿 (1256-1305), who had served at Ningbo (which was called in those days as either Qīngyuán 慶元 or Sīmíng 四明) harbor during the mid-1290s. According to an episode described in this epitaph, the Koryŏ vessel, dispatched by King Ch'ung'ryŏl-wang in the mid-1290s, was served a "dramatically cheap" tariff rate on its cargo upon its arrival. The question was whether the Yüan harbor authorities considered incoming Koryŏ assets as "foreign products" or not. The Yüan harbor control did "reduce" the rate that was "originally" going to be applied to Koryŏ cargos (from "3/10" to "1/30"), so some scholars argued that such reduction insinuates that the imperial authorities did consider Koryŏ products as "domestic commodities," as apparently they decided against forcing the Koryŏ envoy to submit a rather high tax which was usually required of foreign ships to do. But such argument does not actually reflect the reality of the time. As mentioned earlier, since the early days of the 13th century, Chinese harbors, regulated first by Southern Sung 南宋 and later the Yüan authorities, tried to not only stick to the primary tariff rate (ranging from 1/15 to 1/10), but also "lower" illegal "secondary taxes" that had been making foreign vessels' voyages to China too expensive to afford. According to old practices, foreign merchants, who had already paid 1/10 or 1/15 of their products to the harbor control, would lose another "1/3" of their entire cargo to other entities in the region which were seeking for profits. In response to such problem, in the early 13th century a Sung local official 胡榘 had proposed that such figure should be dropped to "1/15," in order to invite more foreign merchants. Then in the early 1290s, by the Yüan central government, that rate was even more lowered to "1/30" and labelled as the "New secondary tax" 舶稅錢, which should be levied on cargos of "all" foreign vessels, in a display of the government's "strong resolve" to bring in more foreign merchants. In the early days, however, such new principle was not that well observed, and that was the reason why the Koryŏ cargo (which arrived in Yüan in the mid-1290s) was initially served [customarily] an "illegal" secondary tax ("3/10"). But the head of the harbor 史燿, who considered Koryŏ as a close ally of the empire, argued that the newly established official tax ("1/30") should be applied instead, as a "gesture of good will." And that was why the Koryŏ cargo was spared from a preposterous taxation, not because it was considered as the same with "domestic imperial goods," but as "foreign assets" from a "foreign country," toward whose cargos the Yüan authorities would be better off if they demonstrated its determination to enforce new principles, which were designed to attract more outside merchants. For the entire picture, please consult Lee 2010a, 42-43; 49-54; 56-57; 58; 59-60.

with foreign merchants and also the Chinese market. Created as a linguistic manual, this book presents detailed description of Koryŏ civilian merchants who usually departed Koryŏ, journeyed to Beijing on foot, sold their items to Chinese consumers and then moved south to purchase Chinese items before returning to Koryŏ via commercial ships. From this book we can see all the goods that were traded, the routes the Koryŏ merchants took, the profit rate they encountered, and the outcomes of their ventures.³⁹ The book itself serves as a testament to the Koryŏ people's most aggressive approaches to foreign trades, and therefore is an invaluable source of historical information.

And quite fortunately enough, another aspect that we have enough references to analyze is the foreign trade policies of the Koryŏ government, which were mainly devised by the kings. The fact that a king helmed a foreign trade policy was never heard of before in Koryŏ, but the kings' determination was exceptionally strong while their approach to the matter was equally aggressive. Of course, their interest in the issue was developed under exceptional circumstances, as the Koryŏ kings in this period were either the son-in-law of a Mongol Emperor or Koryŏ–Mongol “hybrids” raised inside the Empire. Their objectives were diverse, as some were primarily interested in preventing Koryŏ assets from leaving the dynasty, while some were more determined to increase revenue for the government or even make money for oneself. But all their efforts shared one ultimate similarity, as their activities all went beyond the traditional confines of a Korean trade initiative that conventionally only targeted the market inside China. They recruited and employed “Hwehwe” merchants in their policies, and had contacts with important trade posts positioned along the East-West global trades (for example, the Maritime Silk Road trades). Ultimately their efforts proceeded on two fronts: securing human resources who could also be ultimately organized to form a trade network for the Koryŏ government, and creating infrastructures that would help bigger and more efficient production of finer export products.⁴⁰

Efforts to Create a Human Network

The 1280s: King Ch'ung'ryŏl, recruiting Central/West Asian figures to have them helm the Ŭngbang installations

King Ch'ung'ryŏl (Ch'ung'ryŏl-wang 忠烈王) (r. 1274-1307) was the first Koryŏ king to marry a Mongol princess, and once he was married, he got the reputation as the first Koryŏ king ever to become a son-in-law of a foreign emperor. His immediate mission as the new Koryŏ king was very different from that of his father King Wŏnjong 元宗 (r. 1260-1274), who commenced his reign at the very end of the Mongol invasion and stalled the Koryŏ government's return to the old capital Kae'gyŏng 開京 for a decade, while reluctantly joining the crushing of the Sambyŏlch'o 三別抄 army. Compared to that, Ch'ung'ryŏl was facing another daunting task of forming a diplomatic and “official” relationship with the Mongol Yüan Empire. Although exchanges of hostility discontinued, a rather unfavorable future with a dominant neighbor, which had the power and intention to freely intervene in Koryŏ affairs, was literally on the horizon.

In 1278, apparently in response to the situation he preemptively ordered the change of all Koryŏ clothing and hairstyle to match those of the Mongols.⁴¹ Qubilai later argued that it was not what he wanted or even had in mind, and it is not clear whether or not the Yüan authorities explicitly ordered such change or even insinuated similar wishes. The only thing we know is that it was one of the early decisions Ch'ung'ryŏl ever made after he was enthroned, and although his reasons remain unclear, we could suspect that his action was a prelude to his upcoming “negotiations” with the imperial government. Koryŏ was disputing several issues with the Mongol imperial government at the time, so he visited Qubilai in 1278 to settle several issues, and had all Mongol forces as well as Darugachi representatives retreat from the peninsula, while having the Mongol government drop its own years-old demand of Koryŏ household registers too.⁴² It seems Ch'ung'ryŏl wanted to trade an issue of “inconvenience” (lifestyle changes) with an option that might secure military safety and economic independence for the Koryŏ people. We would never know, and his

39. For this subject, please see Wi 1997.

40. Interestingly enough, efforts in the former vein were displayed by Ch'ung'ryŏl and his grandson (Ch'ung'suk), while trials of the latter kind were featured by Ch'ung'ryŏl's son, Ch'ungsŏn, and Ch'ungsŏn's own grandson, Ch'ung'hye. We cannot be sure why grandfathers and grandsons ended up pairing up for such similar efforts, and it might just happened that way because of circumstantial variables, but the picture looks rather peculiar nonetheless.

41. For this, please see *Koryŏsa* 28 (Ch'ung'ryŏl-wang 4, February 1278, Pyŏngja day).

42. For this, please see *Koryŏsa* 28 (Ch'ung'ryŏl-wang 4, June 1278, Musul day).

stance was criticized by many of his subjects. But one might label his choice as a practical one nonetheless.

Such practical approach to issues must have been present in his foreign trade policies too, as we could see from his attitude toward the Ŭngbang 鷹坊 facilities which were installed throughout the Korean peninsula. It was primarily a breeding facility for hawks and falcons, and was part of a grand Asian hunting tradition. It was first introduced to China around the 10th century, prospered in the Khitan Liao 遼 and Jurchen Chin 金 dynasties, and reached its peak of popularity during the Mongol Yüan period. However, this facility did not remain merely as an “animal farm,” and evolved to become an economic unit where financial resources and commercial assets converged. Later they began to serve as official channels through which silver reserves would be collected and then processed, and resources accumulated in the Ŭngbang facilities were even diverted to foreign trades. Emperor Kaishan was the most glaring example of an emperor who used such assets to fund his foreign trades.⁴³

And in the 1270s, these Ŭngbang units also began to be installed in Koryŏ. Positioned all over the country, they intervened in local administration and tampered with the government's official taxation process.⁴⁴ They also stole invaluable items (including silver) from nearby Koryŏ households.⁴⁵ Yet Ch'ung'ryŏl, as the Koryŏ king who should have tried to dismantle them or at least place them under check, did not do so. Instead, he tried to use them to his own advantages.

Around the year 1280, he suddenly decided to recruit a Central Asian figure, who supposedly “had the ears of the Emperor,” in order to have him

“supervise” the Ŭngbang facilities in Koryŏ.⁴⁶ At the time, either Central or Western Asians who had “close relationships” with powerful Mongol figures were without exception either financial officials or “Ortaq” traders. He would not have been able to assign an imperial official under his command, so it seems like Ch'ung'ryŏl was trying to designate a renowned Ortaq trader among all else as an overseer of all Ŭngbang units in Koryŏ, which were full of silver and other invaluable Koryŏ materials that former Ŭngbang managers literally stole from the Koryŏ people. It was a rather odd choice, rendering all those stolen Koryŏ assets vulnerably exposed to an Ortaq trader whose desires most surely would have been to bring all those assets out of Koryŏ and invest them as its own private property in its trades with the West Asian market. One might say it was a risky gamble on Ch'ung'ryŏl's part, as he had no mechanism to stop them from doing so.

However, the timing itself was rather peculiar. The time he chose to attempt this was actually right after the aforementioned Quánfǔ-sī 泉府司 office was newly opened inside the Mongol government. As mentioned earlier, this office was put in charge of overseeing all Ortaq trades in which Mongol dignitaries (governmental officials, members of the imperial family, and even the Emperors) were involved as investors. A lot of times their business did not go so well, and dignitaries went bankrupt or suffered severe economic loss. So to protect the Mongol dignitaries' interest and monitor high-level foreign trades this Ch'ŏnbu-sa office was sorely needed, and with the establishment of this office it became much safer for Mongol dignitaries to indulge in foreign businesses.

As a member of the imperial family, Ch'ung'ryŏl-wang was entitled to engage in such foreign trades, and could have sought for the support from this office too. But he was severely ill-prepared, even compared to the Mongol dignitaries who at least had been accumulating albeit limited experiences for years. This seems to have been the reason behind the above-mentioned “recruit” attempt. He must have wanted to hire some experienced foreign figures and have them dispose the assets already acquired, but not in the name of the Ortaq traders themselves but instead in his own name, or the name of the Koryŏ royal family, or even that of the Koryŏ government.

43. For his genuine efforts to promote Ŭngbang units' operations, as well as his aggressive approaches to the assets accumulated there, please see Lee 2009a, 83-86; 104-08.

44. For how many of them were installed inside Koryŏ, how they were protected by Mongol servants who had earlier come to Koryŏ accompanying the Mongol princess who married the Koryŏ king, and most importantly how they damaged the Koryŏ taxation system in the process, please see Lee 2009a, 77-78; 84-96.

45. There was even a report that the hawks and falcons at the range were not eating meat but silver and textile materials (*Koryŏsa* 28 [Ch'ung'ryŏl-wang 3, July 1277, Pyŏngshin day]), obviously insinuating that the managers of the ranges were stealing those items from nearby households under the name of securing resources that would allow them to purchase meat to feed the animals. It is highly possible that they were hoarding such assets for themselves.

46. For this, please see *Koryŏsa* 29 (Ch'ung'ryŏl-wang 6, March 1280, Imin day).

As a vassal to the Mongol government and a son-in-law of the Emperor, there was no way for Ch'ung'ryŏl-wang to publicly scorn and dismantle all the Ŭngbang facilities which were installed on the Korean peninsula by the very order of the emperor in the first place. So instead, he wanted to invest all those formerly "civilian" properties piled up there in his (or Koryŏ's) name, so that all those assets would not blindly fall in Mongols' hands and exit the Koryŏ realm for good, but instead return to the Koryŏ government with all the profits they generated (Lee 2013a, 154-66). The Koryŏ kings were in dire need of such human assets, so Ch'ung'ryŏl-wang tried to find some personnel whom he could use in his affairs concerning foreign trades.⁴⁷ And his efforts were duplicated by his own grandson King Ch'ungsuk.

The 1320s & '30s: King Ch'ungsuk befriending foreign merchants, and integrating them into his government

King Ch'ungsuk (Ch'ungsuk-wang 忠肅王) (r. 1314-1330; 1332-1339) was in reign for a very long time, rivaling his own grandfather in terms of the years he stayed in throne (which was 32). He was apparently not that popular among his vassals as many of them conspired with their friends in Yüan and tried to relieve him from the throne by replacing him with another Koryŏ royal figure, who was actually Ch'ungsuk's own cousin. His name was Wang Go 王髡, the nephew of king Ch'ungŏn. He rose to power after he inherited the seat of the Shim Regional Lord 藩王 from his uncle, and some Koryŏ officials figured that having a king who had stronger ties with Yüan dignitaries would be more favorable to the fate of the Koryŏ dynasty (Kim 1994). Their attempts, which bordered upon a coup, continued in the 1320s and 1330s. Chunguk was

forced to spend much of his own political capital to battle this supposedly sacrilegious act perpetrated by his own vassals, as he endured all kinds of defamation and slanders thrown at him. To make matters worse, when he visited Yüan in order to exonerate himself from some of those charges, he was held captive and detained in the Yüan capital for five consecutive years (1321-1325), which for him must have been a difficult time filled with frustration and despair.

But in the end, such experience did open some new possibilities for Ch'ungsuk, as he was able to witness the aforementioned foreign trade policy of Emperor Yesun Temur 泰定帝 (r. 1324-1327) and his Zhōngmài Bǎohuò 中賣寶貨 institution,⁴⁸ which employed Chinese and foreign merchants as crucial operatives with the intention of having them serve as suppliers of exotic foreign commodities as well as generating huge profits by introducing such items to the Chinese market.⁴⁹ Needless to say, the opportunity itself ended up heavily affecting Ch'ungsuk's ideas concerning economic issues.

Originally Ch'ungsuk was very much against the policy stance of his own father Ch'ungŏn, who was notorious for his aggressive methods designed to increase revenue for the government. He was famous for revising the Koryŏ tax register and establishing the "Kabin Chuan" 甲寅柱案 in 1314, which hugely contributed to securing new households as future taxpayers. But in the process he did not try at all to address certain injustices, by attempting to separate and thus release certain civilian households from adjacent farms and ranches which had been illegally seizing them as private property and workforce. In Ch'ungŏn's eyes, trying to do so would only slow down his efforts, so he simply turned a blind eye to that. His employment of the salt monopoly system displayed the same attitude, which forced all the salt farms in the country to be unilaterally registered by the government, instead of trying to alleviate the pain of the salt producing households. Ch'ungsuk resented such attitude, and after he became the king, one of the first things he did was to ban all Buddhist priests from entering the capital for commercial reasons.

47. There was also a person named Chang Sun-ryong 張舜龍. He was a keshig 怯薛, who accompanied the Mongol princess 齊國大長公主 when she came to Koryŏ with her husband Ch'ung'ryŏl-wang. He was a Central Asian figure, and was notorious for his efforts to secure silver whenever he could (as we can see from his theft of a silver pagoda from a Koryŏ monastery only to dismantle it and secure a huge amount of silver from it, probably to use in his own foreign trades). He had contacts with suppliers of exotic foreign items which included pearls (as we can see from the fact that he was ordered to locate them and purchase them for the Mongol princess), and he was very protective of the falcon ranges (as we can see from how he personally defended them). But at the same time he was also very loyal to Ch'ung'ryŏl-wang, and until he died in 1290 he continued to serve him faithfully. One might say he was more than qualified to advise the king in this matter, but he was also the close associate of the Mongol princess herself, who by the way opposed her husband's attempt in the first place. It seems Ch'ung'ryŏl-wang wanted to secure "his own" consultants.

48. This was another form of China-West Asian trade, with Chinese and Mongol dignitaries connected with the West Asian merchants, as buyers purchasing exotic foreign commodities. For this, please see Yokkachi 2002.

49. For what kind of perspective Ch'ungsuk-wang originally had, how that perspective changed over the years, and what kind of new taxation policy and foreign trade-related efforts came out of that, please see Lee 2009c, 161-70.

Considering the prominent stature the Buddhist society held at the time as one of the society's most important economic pillars, this order alone clearly shows us how he felt about professional profiteering.

But when he was detained and left without means to sustain himself in China, the first thing he did was to hire a Koryŏ merchant named Son Ki 孫琦 to oversee and supervise necessary items' transportation to him in China.⁵⁰ And next, after he returned to Koryŏ, he decided to summon a son of a Koryŏ merchant, and make him one of his top aides.⁵¹ Also during his stay in China, he was able to befriend Chinese and foreign merchants. Those friendships did not end with his return to Koryŏ, as he brought them back with him, assigned them to governmental posts where they could effectively aid the king,⁵² and even bestowed honorary titles to West Asian merchants, in an effort to enlist the assistance of Muslim merchants too.⁵³ Later these hired-guns even plotted to have more of their kind to enter the Koryŏ government through the dynastic examination system.

All these newcomers must have been instrumental in creating a broad network of foreign merchants who should have been immensely helpful in the government's (or King Chung Suk's) future endeavors concerning foreign trade investments. And they should also have been helpful to exports of not only *insam* and ramie products but also celadon and porcelain, considering the emergence of a rather newborn group of financial figures in Koryŏ who had been engaged in rather high-profile activities: the Ong'in 饗人 figures of the 1320s and '30s.

By name they were simple "Servants in the Palace kitchen,"⁵⁴ but what they did was much more than that. They had the obligation to prepare royal kitchen tools and dining utensils, and as most of them were made of high-quality porcelain they should have had regular suppliers of those items. Their relationship with porcelain suppliers would have grown, and could have turned into bigger business contracts. And as such repeated deals would have begun

to feature more institutional details,⁵⁵ their authority and influence would have immensely grown as well.

All the Ong'in figures which appear in historical records during the first half of the 14th century seem to have been equipped with significant political power as well as a huge amount of resources at their disposal. There are several examples, and although there are no direct evidence to suggest that they were directly involved in oversea porcelain trades (of either exporting Koryŏ porcelain or importing Chinese ones), some of them did serve the Mongol princesses, and there were also Koryŏ people assigned to Mongol "Paochi" 波吾赤⁵⁶ duties which had the same obligation with Koryŏ Ong'in figures. In other words, in most cases these Ong'in figures had ties with the Mongol Yüan Empire, and that would have given them access to foreign suppliers and oversea markets. The possibility that these figures were also involved in foreign porcelain trades should be examined more in the future, and the fact that these figures started to be featured heavily in records during the Ch'ungsuk period suggests the possibility that his efforts to create a human network was continuing in the field of porcelain production as well.

Probably through them, many Koryŏ porcelain products seem to have gone over to China. During the 13th and 14th centuries, porcelain production in Koryŏ never stopped even in the wake of a devastating war. Porcelain items with "the name of an office" (they were submitted to) or some "meaningful letters" or even the "production year" (marked in Kanji 干支 figures) inscribed on the outer body or the base's inside center continued to be produced.⁵⁷ All kinds of Koryŏ porcelains have been found in Chinese vestiges from the Yüan period⁵⁸ and show us they were exported to China rather frequently. Although Koryŏ porcelain in this period received heavy influence from Yüan porcelain producers,⁵⁹ all porcelain relics found in Chinese vestiges from this period

50. For this, please see *Koryŏsa* 124 (Biographies 37, "Kings' shady associates" 嬖幸, Son Ki 孫琦).

51. For this, please see *Koryŏsa* 35 (Ch'ungsuk-wang 15, August 1328, Kabin day 李奴介).

52. For this, please see *Koryŏsa* 124 (Biographies 37, "Kings' shady associates" 嬖幸, Wang Sam-sok 王三錫; Yang Jae 梁載).

53. For this, please see *Koryŏsa* 124 (Biographies 37, "Kings' shady associates" 嬖幸). West Asian 色目 wealthy man named 党黑厮 was given a new name 崔老星.

54. For a detailed analysis of the Ong'in figures of the 14th centuries, please see Lee 2016b, 50-63.

55. We can see that from the Sa'ong-wŏn 司饗院 office, which was in charge of securing porcelain product supplies that would either be used by the government or transacted in the market. It seems like the Ong'in figures were agents of this office. See Lee 2016b, 47-50.

56. This is a Mongol-original title which was held by both Mongol and Koryŏ people at the time.

57. For previous opinions regarding the nature of these "Kanji" porcelain items, and a recent hypothesis considering them to have been manufactured as a commercial collection every year with distinctive characteristics, please see Lee 2016b, 73-81.

58. For all the Koryŏ porcelain found inside China at Yüan period vestiges, please see Chang 2007.

59. For all kinds of influences imposed upon the traditional Koryŏ porcelain pieces, and what kind of new characteristics they came to feature as a result of that, please see Kim 2006.

feature the most traditional Koryŏ traits based on conventional Sanggam 象嵌 technique.⁶⁰ The ones that we found from regions above the Yellow river might have gone over to China on land, while the ones excavated in the Jiangnan region could have been transported upon sea,⁶¹ but both cases represent the Koryŏ people's active export of porcelain pieces to China, and the exports of these items would have undoubtedly been facilitated by the vast network of domestic and foreign merchants Koryŏ kings helped organize.

Efforts to Create Finer Export Items

The 1300s: King Ch'ungsŏn's receiving a visit from India, and creating the Chig'yŏm office

King Ch'ungsŏn (Ch'ungsŏn-wang 忠宣王) (r. 1298; 1308-1313), who we all know as the first "hybrid" Koryŏ dignitary, was born between the Koryŏ king and a Mongol princess. He was the maternal grandson of Emperor Qubilai who was literally the "emperor of all emperors" in Mongol history, and Ch'ungsŏn's such background earned him a unique status not only in Koryŏ, but also throughout the entire empire.

After spending a lot of years of his youth in Yüan, he was enthroned as the Koryŏ king in 1298, despite the fact that his father Ch'ung'ryŏl was still alive. This caused some animosity between himself and his father, and after he was recalled to Yüan only after eight months, he spent another ten years in Yüan, sharing the same house with two Mongol princes, Kaishan 武宗 (r. 1308-1311) and Ayurbadawa 仁宗 (r. 1311-1320), who would later become emperors themselves. When his father finally died in 1307, Ch'ungsŏn was re-

60. It is all the more interesting that the new-age Koryŏ porcelain, which came to feature distinctively different looks compared to those of the early period, as a result of intensive influences they received from foreign (Mongol Yüan) porcelain, are mostly not found from those Yüan vestiges. This shows us that new Koryŏ porcelain created in the image of existing Yüan porcelain were deemed unfit or risky to be exported to Yüan because the consumers there would have considered them to be mimicking their own. So it seems that the Koryŏ porcelain artists and furnace managers decided to export porcelain commodities that were created in all-Koryŏ figures, believing such "local flavor" would be attractive and appealing to consumers in the Chinese market.

61. For various routes that would have been taken in either transporting or exporting Koryŏ porcelain to China, please see C. Lee 2012.

enthroned as Koryŏ king in 1308, and until he abdicated his throne to his son Ch'ungsuk in 1313, he served as the Koryŏ king for five more years. But even during that time, he spent most of it in Yüan as well.

Many scholars have denounced him as a figure which was completely indifferent to the task of serving as the Koryŏ king, and concluded that the only thing he wanted was to enjoy a cozy life as a Mongol dignitary. Such conclusion was primarily based upon his apparent Mongol heritage, but it also lacked proper consideration for the "Koryŏ" side of his character. Recent studies indicated that during his reign many areas of Koryŏ governance were changed, and such changes did not always meant Koryŏ traditions being abolished or replaced by newly embraced Chinese or Mongol conventions. In fact, we can see Koryŏ traditional elements (inside governmental institutions or law) rather well preserved, and foreign elements only "grafted" upon original Koryŏ practices. And interestingly enough, in more than a couple of cases such modifications contributed to the resolution of many age-old Koryŏ social problems.⁶²

Ch'ungsŏn was mainly interested in creating solutions for the government, and whenever he was sure that he could make some difference he would not be picky about options at his disposal. Sometimes an option would allow him to stick to the original Koryŏ form of law or institution, while sometimes other options would present a necessity of importing new institutions from the outside. Most importantly, in many cases he did not only use just one option. He would "mix" them and create a new combination of traditional and foreign elements in law, institution, or policy. And it should only be fair to assume that he would have maintained such an open mind when it came to the issue of foreign trades as well, as he indeed monitored foreign situations and then assessed how Koryŏ strengths could be figured into the equation.⁶³

In June of 1298, a representative from a country named "Mabaar" sent an emissary to Ch'ungsŏn and presented to him several invaluable items that included Indian-style textile goods (probably silk) and other exotic items. They seem to have been given to him not only as respectful presents but also

62. For his efforts and solutions in the areas of ritual protocols, military mobilization and local administration system, please see Lee 2010b; 2011; 2012.

63. For this, see Lee 2016d.

as attractive commodities that would entice him to purchase them in the future even more. This person, whose name was recorded as Beihaili 孛哈里 or Buali 不阿里 in Koryŏ and Chinese historical sources,⁶⁴ is believed to have represented a faction inside the Indian Mabaar government, and also supported the establishment of close commercial ties with the Mongol Yüan Empire. Mabaar was located on the Indian peninsula's east coastline "Coromandel,"⁶⁵ and served as a major producing center of pearls and high-rate commodities which the Ortaq traders quite liked. Acknowledging the region's value and importance, the Yüan government never invaded or harassed Mabaar in the 1270s while conquering other regions mercilessly, and subsequently initiated a close trade relationship, which lasted for over 15 years since the beginning of the 1280s (Lee 2013a, 213-15).

Yet in 1296, the Yüan government suddenly issued a banning order and restricted all China-based ships from continuing their trades with Mabaar merchants. It also declared that from then on only the government would be conducting trades with the Indian region.⁶⁶ Without a doubt, this new policy significantly damaged the relationship between Chinese merchants and their Indian counterparts, and hurt their mutual interests. Then, only a few years later in 1298, the aforementioned emissary was dispatched to visit the leader of the Korean peninsula for the very first time. The Indian merchants must have begun searching for additional trade partners in East Asia in order to compensate for the void created by the empire's such abrupt banning on civilian trades, and two years later a former minister in their mist visited Ch'ungsŏn, apparently to assess future prospects of conducting trades with the Korean peninsula.⁶⁷

64. Renowned Chinese scholar Chen Kao-hwo 陳高華 studied the background of this person and identified him as 不阿里, son of a formidable Indian minister who, against his own Sultan's wishes, supported the notion of establishing a diplomatic relationship with the Mongol Yüan empire. Indian scholar Tansen Sen also described him as an "Indian official" in his studies.

65. There are countless records of Mabaar in many Yüan sources, including *Yüan-shi* 元史 (Foreign countries 列傳 97 外夷 3, "Mabaar and others" 馬八兒等國), and the *Abbreviated Memorandum of Island Aborigines* 島夷誌略 (1349).

66. For this, please see *Yüanshi* 23 (Temur 威宗, July 1296 [元貞 2], Kyŏngjin day); *Yüanshi* 94 (志 43, Economy 食貨 2, Trades 市舶, 1296 [元貞 2]).

67. Unfortunately, there are no further historical accounts that would verify the continuation of such deals between India and the Korean peninsula. It is entirely possible that the Mabaar-Koryŏ encounter was a one-time thing. Yet there could have been other interactions—such as civilian activities—which did not make it to records. So, this confirmed initial encounter between the two

Unfortunately, Ch'ungsŏn was not able to reciprocate such offer immediately, as only two months later he was asked to step down from the throne and forced to spend another decade in China with no title. He started to make some changes only after he was finally reinstated as the Koryŏ king in 1308, and the most noticeable thing he did was to merge governmental offices in charge of textile production and dyeing respectively thus creating a new office called Chik'yŏm-guk 織染局, which was essentially an office under orders to supervise various production projects of highly decorated textile goods.⁶⁸ His intention was to make the process of producing textile goods more efficient, and produce more high-quality fabric products. And more importantly, he elevated this office to a status considerably higher than the old ones, while putting the new office under his own direct control.

At the time, relationship between the Mongol government and the Indian market would have been continuing to deteriorate, as the order of 1296 was never officially rescinded. Indian merchants must have been continuing to experience troubles in maintaining business with their Chinese counterparts. The effects from disruptions that have been accumulating for over a decade would have taken its toll. And one of the most problematic issues for the Chinese merchants would have been the securing of proper amount of Indian silk product imports.

Continued decrease in Indian silk products entering the Chinese market might have opened certain windows for possible contenders. And those contenders apparently included Koryŏ, as Ch'ungsŏn designed his foreign trade policy specifically around textile and cloth-based commodities (Lee 2016a, 45-50). He might have figured that he would have a chance of winning over some portions of the Chinese consumer block. The large envoy he sent to Yüan in 1309 (composed of 50 ships)⁶⁹ may have been harboring all the textile export items he ordered to be produced, with the anticipation of a new successful trade initiative he seemingly believed that he could seize at the moment.⁷⁰

realms should be further examined in the future.

68. For this, please see Koryŏsa (志 31, Structure of the Government 百官 2): To'yŏm-sŏ 都染署, Chab'chik-sŏ 雜織署, Aek'chŏng-guk 掖庭局.

69. For this, please see *Koryŏsa Chŏlyŏ* 32 (忠宣王's Enthronement year, April 1309).

70. At this point, however, the exact conditions inside foreign textile markets, as well as the nature of the Koryŏ kings' strategies to take advantage of the situation, are all yet to be sufficiently explored. I plan to engage myself in such studies for the next couple of years.

The 1340s: King Ch'ung'hye meeting an emissary from Iran, and building a palace factory

As mentioned earlier, in 1331 the leader of the Il Khanate, a man named Abū Sa'id,⁷¹ sent an emissary to Koryŏ King Ch'ung'hye (Ch'ung'hye-wang 忠惠王) (r. 1330-1332; 1339-1343). Abū Sa'id, whose name is also written as "Abū Sa'id," was a famous figure for dealing with high-price commodities and consecutively conducting trades with the Yüan Emperors. He did so with Yesun Temur 泰政帝 (r. 1324-1327) from 1324 to 1327, and with Tok Temur 文宗 (r. 1328-1332) and Togon Temur 順帝 (r. 1333-1368) from 1330 through 1334. He was the first and only Hulegu Ulus leader who had engaged in fierce trades with the imperial Taitu (Peijing 大都) government. In the process, he made considerable contributions to the on-going East-West trades.

But his business with China was not without interruptions. Actually, right in the middle of a decade-worth of business streak, there was a bump. With the death of Emperor Yesun Temur in 1327, and a temporary ban on "Trades with the West" issued by Tok Temur in 1328, begun was a 3 year black-out period in which all official trade traffics between the Mongol government and Abū Sa'id were halted. Then, very interestingly, coinciding with this situation was Abū Sa'id's sudden decision to dispatch an emissary to Ch'ung'hye in 1331.⁷² Even though it was right after the trade relationship between Il Khanate and Yüan court "resumed" after the said trade ban was lifted, we can see Abū Sa'id was indeed having second thoughts, concerning the business future he saw (or did not see) with China. He might have come to the conclusion that doing business exclusively with China could be dangerous, and potentially hurt his fortune.

Ch'ung'hye was already a renowned figure for his friendly relationship with the Muslims, since the old days when he was studying in Yüan as the Koryŏ prince. Even back then he was well sponsored, not only politically but also economically, by a powerful and rich Mongol official named Yen Temur 燕帖(鐵)木兒, who was deeply engaged in Western trades himself.⁷³ We can

see that the Iranian sector, which must have been wishing to establish many more trade partners in regions adjacent to China, widened its search and made contact with the Koryŏ king, who in their eyes was the perfect candidate for the job, as he had knowledge and experience of dealing with Western traders.

But in a sudden turn of events, which very much echoed what Ch'ungsŏn had gone through in the late 1290s, Ch'ung'hye was also forced to relinquish his throne the very next year, to his own father whom he had relieved from the throne only two years ago. Then began was a period of eight more years in Yüan, during which he waited for his father to die. Only in the early 1340s he was able to return to the throne and establish a major textile-manufacturing facility in Koryŏ, which was originally constructed as a palace.⁷⁴ He also began exporting commercial items produced there through Muslim merchants, which earned him huge amount of interests.⁷⁵

It should also be noted that during the reign of King Ch'ung'hye there was no attempt launched by Yüan to extract specifically dyed, "ramie cloth-based" Koryŏ commodities. Since the 1320s, Yüan government had been demanding high-quality Koryŏ ramie cloth-based items, decorated with patterns and dyed in certain colors, to be submitted to the Yüan court. The Koryŏ government had to comply, and such instances can be spotted from the 1320s, '30s, late '40s, and '50s (Lee 2016a, 52-53). Yet there was a period in which such submissions were apparently halted, and that was the early 1340s, which overlapped exactly with the period Ch'ung'hye was back in throne. We can see that Ch'ung'hye refused to submit them for free, and instead sold them not only to the Yüan market but also regions beyond China.

What would have enabled his aggressive trade policy? He would probably have been aware of certain crises inside the Chinese silk market, which was being caused by a series of natural disasters that have been harming mulberry trees and damaging civilian silkworm breeders. Associated with Yüan's already fluctuating relationship with the textile consumer base in Iran, decreased production of threads needed for silk production would have hit the Chinese

71. In Koryŏ records, he was described as "Bo'sai-in 普賽因 from the Northwest." It is clear that this person was the same person who was recorded in Mongol sources as 不賽因, the last leader of the Il Khanate which was founded by Hulegu, brother of Emperor Qubilai.

72. For this, please see *Koryŏsa* 36 (Ch'ung'hye-wang 1, September 1331).

73. For this, please see *Koryŏsa* 36 (Ch'ung'hye-wang 2, February 1332); *Koryŏsa* 109 (Biographies 列傳 22, Yi Jo-nyŏn 李兆年).

74. For this, please see *Koryŏsa* 88 (Queens' Biographies 后妃 2, ünch'ŏn Princess Im 銀川翁主林氏). This place was constructed as a palace, but the inside was operated in a completely different way.

75. For this, please see *Koryŏsa* 36 (Ch'ung'hye-wang B3, March 1342, Pyŏngshin day; September 1343, Pyŏngsul day; January 1344). He invested a huge amount of gold, silver, textile material [silk], and Yüan paper currency directly in the business of West Asian figures, or foreign traders who were slated to go there.

domestic market first (as silk price would have jumped) but then would have struck the Chinese merchants' silk exporters even harder, as it would have become increasingly costly for them to secure items that could be exported to foreign regions including the Iranian sector.

Deteriorating quality and not to mention decreasing quantity of outgoing Chinese silk would have forced traditional oversea buyers of such Chinese silk to widen their search for potential providers of similar or alternative items that they could track down and purchase. And that would have probably led Ch'ung'hye to figure that he had a fighting chance in opening up possible avenues that would bring him (not only old Chinese customers but also) new foreign consumers of Koryŏ ramie items,⁷⁶ which had been extremely popular for centuries, in the eyes of both Chinese and Mongol consumers. Hence the palace factory and his driving of female servants to produce textile materials day and night, to the extent of even beating two of them to death, for complaining about workplace conditions.

Closing Remarks

As examined above, in the 13th and 14th centuries the people of Koryŏ maintained frequent commercial exchanges with the outer world. The peninsula was frequently visited by Central and West Asian people. Such encounters would have brought irrevocable changes to Koryŏ's relationship with the outer world, as those visitors must have let other foreign people know the existence of Koryŏ on their voyage home, and encouraged others to visit the peninsula themselves. Such visits would have been economically beneficial to the Koryŏ people, and also changed the Koryŏ people's view of the entire world outside.

It should be noted that all these contacts and interactions were made possible at least partially because of the existence of the Mongol Yüan Empire. These foreign visitors who were new to the Korean peninsula were the ones who had already been trading things with the empire and conducting business

with imperial partners. And at least some of their visits to the Korean peninsula seem to have been direct results or extension of their China-based activities. Even the Koryŏ people's outward activities were (on some level) either triggered or encouraged by all these visits too, as their trade operations abroad continued along trails that one way or another involved imperial-sponsored foreign commercial operatives.

And most interestingly, all these trades seem to have been ironically "helpful" to the Koryŏ people, who were trying to create a new living model for themselves in a time when they were being asked to settle in a Yüan-centric world order. It would be an understatement that the empire itself was an overwhelming presence as well as a "disruptive" element to the original Koryŏ way of life, but political intervention and economic extractions aside, the real challenge was the reality of the 14th century itself, during which new "hybrid kings" occupied the Koryŏ throne while all kinds of institutional, philosophical, and academic influences of the Mongol-occupied China saturated the Korean peninsula. The Koryŏ people had to figure out what they should do with these foreign influences which could potentially wipe out original Koryŏ customs. In other words, the Koryŏ people had to find a way to protect the past while accepting the present.

Fortunately the hybrid kings were up to the task, and came up with institutional models which merged either Mongol or Chinese elements with traditional Koryŏ institutions. We can see such examples from nearly all areas of Koryŏ governing: political reforms, revenue enhancements, local administration, military mobilization, and ritual protocols. Old Koryŏ codes were not abandoned, as foreign initiatives were simply grafted upon them. It was an interesting mixture of two different sets of rules, a result of utilizing the best of both worlds (Lee 2016d).

In order to come up with all these combinations of foreign and traditional institutions, Koryŏ scholars and politicians needed new ideas, and to foster such ideas they needed discussions with imperial figures either Mongol or Chinese. And to continue such exchanges of thoughts, they needed access to certain transportation methods that would grant them frequent communication with intellectuals of the empire. What ultimately enabled such traffic were of course the merchants, who were endlessly traveling between the empire and the peninsula. Either being Koryŏ, Chinese, Mongol, or foreign in nature they not only provided politicians, diplomats, scholars, and priests

76. For the situation of silk-worm breeders in China, how they are described in Yüan legal codes, how Ch'ung'hye-wang might have tried to devise his own foreign export program, and what kind of initiatives would have been inside his mind, please see Lee 2016a, 54-59.

with means to traverse the empire, but also disseminated information while delivering new trends and new ideas to all parties involved. The Koryŏ people's development of an appreciation of the new, and devising ways to preserve their own at the same time, was ultimately enabled by the messengers, who happened to be merchants operating throughout Asia.

References

- Atagi, Matzuo 愛宕松男. 1969. "Kanno Chukoku shihai toe kan minjoku shakai" 元の中國支配と漢民族社會 [Yüan's Ruling of China and the Mandarin Society]. In Vol. 9 of Iwanami *Go'uja Sekai Rekishi* 岩波講座世界歴史 [Iwanami World History], edited by Aramazu Takeshi 荒松雄 et al., 267-308. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten 岩波書店.
- _____. 1973. "Ortoq-zen toe sono haikai—Jiusan seiki Kanjo'u ni okeru gin no to'uko'u" 斡脫錢とその背景—13世紀元朝における銀の動向 [Ortaq Capital and its Meaning—Silver Circulation in Yüan and in the 13th century]. *Tō'yō'u'shi Kjenkyū* 東洋史研究 31 (1/2): 133-200.
- Chang, Nam-wŏn. 2007. "Chungguk Wŏndae Yujŏk Ch'ulto Koryŏ Ch'ŏngja ũi Chejakshigi Kŏmto" [Examination of the Possible Production Date of Koryŏ Celadon Porcelain Found from Yüan Period Vestiges inside China]. *Hosŏ Sahak* 48: 309-39.
- Chen, Kao hua 陳高華. 2003. "Yuándàide Hǎiwài màoyì" 元代的海外貿易 [Foreign Trades during the Yüan Period]. In *Yuánsǐ yánjiū lùnkǎo* 元史研究論考 [Assembly of Yüan Studies], edited by Chen, Kao hua, 99-112. Taiwan: Zhōnghuá shūjú 中華書局.
- Chŏng, Su-il. 2001. *Silk Road-hak* [Silk Road Studies]. Seoul: Ch'angbi.
- Kim, Hye-wŏn. 1994. "Yüan-kansŏbgi ibsŏng'ron kwa kŭ sŏnggyŏk" [Arguments Demanding for Erection of a New Provincial Government during the Yüan Intervention Period, and the Nature of Those Arguments]. In *Koryŏ Politics and Society in the 14th century*, edited by 14th Century Nature Study Group, 39-93. Seoul: Minŭm-sa.
- Kim, Yun-jŏng. 2006. "Koryŏ hugi Sanggam Ch'ŏngja e poinŭn Wŏndae Chagi ũi yŏng'hyang" [Influences from Yüan Porcelain that We can Spot on Sanggam Celadon Porcelain Items Produced in the Latter Half Period of Koryŏ]. *Misul Sahak Yŏn'gu* 249: 163-205.
- Koh, Pyŏng-ik. (1969) 1980. *Tong'a Kyosŏbsa ũi yŏn'gu* [Historical Study of East Asian Exchanges]. Seoul: Seoul National University Press.
- Lee, Chong-min. 2012. "Koryŏ Hugi Taewŏn Toja kyoryu ũi Yuhyŏng kwa Sŏnggyok [Types and Nature of Koryŏ-Yüan Porcelain Exchanges]. *Chindan Hakbo* 114: 307-36.
- Lee, Kang-hahn. 2001. "Koryŏ hugi Yüan-pocho 元寶鈔 ũi yuip mit yutong shiltae" [Influx and Circulation of Yüan Imperial Paper Currency in Koryŏ]. *Han'guk saron* 46: 111-78.
- _____. 2007a. "Chŏngdong Haengsŏng'gwan hwaligilsa ũi Koryŏ chedo kaebŏn shido" [Gorgis' Attempt of Changing the Official and Customary Practices of the Koryŏ Dynasty]. *Han'guksa yŏn'gu* 139: 83-128.
- _____. 2007b. "Trades between the Koryŏ Dynasty and the Mongol Yüan Empire, and the Nature of Those Trades, in the 13-14th centuries." PhD diss., Seoul National University.
- _____. 2008a. "Chŏngchi togam un'yŏng ũi cheyangsang e taehan chegŏmto" [Reviewing Several Aspects of the Chŏngchi togam's Reform Efforts]. *Yŏksawa hyŏnshil* 66: 171-213.
- _____. 2008b. "Yüan-Ilbon kan Kyoyŏksŏn ũi Koryŏ Pangmun Yangsang Kŏmto" [Examination of the Trade Ships Coming and Going between the Mongol Yüan Empire and Japan, which might have been Visiting Koryŏ as well]. *Hae'yang Munhwajae* 1: 159-200.
- _____. 2008c. "Koryŏ Ch'ungsŏn-wang, Yüan Mujong ũi chejŏng unyŏng mit chŏngch'aek kong'yu" [Koryŏ King Ch'ungsŏn-wang and Yüan Emperor Wu-tsung (Kaishan), "Sharing" Many Policy Details in Handling Monetary Difficulties]. *Tongbang hakchi* 143: 113-166.
- _____. 2009a. "1270-80 nyŏndae Koryŏ ne ũngbang un'yŏng mit taewe muyŏk" [King Ch'ung'ryŏl-wang's Attempts in Foreign Trades in the 1270-80s, and the "Ŭngbang" Units Installed in Koryŏ]. *Han'guksa Yŏn'gu* 146: 75-117.
- _____. 2009b. "Koryŏ Ch'ung'hye-wangdae Muyŏk Chŏngch'aek ũi naeyong mit ũimi" [Foreign Trade Policy of King Ch'ung'hye-wang, Contents and its Nature]. *Han'guk chungsesa yŏn'gu* 27: 45-93.
- _____. 2009c. "Koryŏ Ch'ungsuk-wang ui Chŏnmin Pyŏnjong mit Sang'in Dŭng'yong" [Ch'ungsuk-wang's Efforts to Release Illegally Detained Households and Lands, and His Later Attempts to Bring More

- Merchants into the Government]. *Yŏksawa hyŏnshil* 72: 159-206.
- _____. 2010a. "Shibsam[13]-segimal Koryŏ Taewe Muyŏksŏn ūi Hwaldong kwa Yüan-dae Kwanse ūi munche" [General Rate of Mongol Yüan Tariff Set upon Cargos aboard a Koryŏ Vessel which Visited Ningbo at the End of the 13th century]. *Tosŏ Mun'hwawa* 36: 37-66.
- _____. 2010b. "Shipsa[14] segi Koryŏ t'aemyo ūi hyŏkshin kwa pyŏnchŏn" [Koryŏ Dynasty's Renovation of Its National Ancestral Shrine in the 14th century]. *Chindan hakpo* 109: 85-113.
- _____. 2011. "1307 nyŏn "üisanggukchije Chŏnggunmin" chochi ūi naeyong kwa üimi" [Koryŏ King Ch'ungsŏn's 1307 Attempt to "Define the Relationship between Military Households and Civilian Supporters, Using Yüan Institutions"—A Preliminary Discussion of the New Koryŏ Military Mobilization System Devised by Him]. *Han'guksa hakpo* 45: 83-135.
- _____. 2012. "1308-1313 nyŏn Koryŏ-ne Mok/Pu sinsŏl ūi naeyong kwa üimi" [Installation of New Mok and Pu Units in 1308 & 1310—A Study of the Direction King Ch'ungsŏn Took in his Efforts to Restructure the Local Kye'su-gwan Administration]. *Han'guk-sa yŏn'gu* 158: 67-119.
- _____. 2013a. *Koryŏ wa Yüan-cheguk ūi kyoyŏgüi yŏksa* [History of Trades between Koryŏ and Yüan]. Seoul: Ch'angbi.
- _____. 2013b. "Wŏnchegugüi muyŏk chŏngch'aek" [Foreign Trade Policy of the Mongol Yüan Empire]. In *Korea Maritime History 3: Koryŏ Period*, edited by Han'guk Haeyang Chaedan, 423-90. Seoul: Han'guk Haeyang Chaedan [Korea Maritime Foundation].
- _____. 2015. "Yüan-chegukin düllüi pangmun yangsang kwa Koryŏin düllüi inshik pyŏnhwa" [Visits from the Mongol Yüan Empire, and Changes in the Koryŏ People's Perception of Them]. *Han'guk chungsesa yŏn'gu* 43: 129-68.
- _____. 2016a. "Textile Trades between Koryŏ and Yüan-Silk and Ramie Products Traded over Sea and Land during the Reigns of Ch'ungsŏn-wang and Ch'ung'hye-wang." Paper presented at the conference on "Yüan Empire's Literature and History" hosted by Institute of Korean Studies, Yonsei University, Seoul, April 15.
- _____. 2016b. *Koryŏ ui Chagi, Yüan-jegug gwa mannada* [Koryŏ Porcelain Meets the Mongol Yüan Empire]. Seongnam: Academy of Korean Studies Press.
- _____. 2016c. "Koryŏ shidae Kyoyŏk gwa Chagiüi Yŏksa, küriigo Shinansŏn" [History of Koryŏ Trades and Porcelain, and the Shinan Wreck]. In *Things that have been Found from the Shinan Wreck Deep under the Sea—40th Anniversary of the Shinansŏn Discovery and Excavation*, edited by National Museum of Korea, 46-48. Seoul: National Museum of Korea.
- _____. 2016d. "Koryŏ-Yüanchegug kan 'Chedo' ūi Chöbch'ok mit 'Kyöng'gye' ūi Munche" [Institutional Encounters between Koryŏ and the Mongol Yüan Empire, and the Issue of Borders between Them]. Paper presented at the Chömpiljae Institute Colloquium, Busan University, Busan, February.
- Miyake, Tomoyuki 宮澤知之. 1981. "Kanjo'u no shogyo seisaku – Kajin seido toe shojei seido" 元朝の商業政策—牙人制度と商税制度 [Yüan Government's Commercial Policy]. *Shirin* 史林 64 (2): 37-65.
- Murakami, Shoji 村上正二. 1942. "Kanjo'u ni okeru senbushi toe ortok" 元朝に於ける泉府司と幹脱 [Yüan Empire's Ch'önbu-sa Office and its Ortaq Operations]. *Touhou Kakubo* 東方學報 13 (1): 143-96.
- Reuben, Amitai-Preiss. 1995. *Mongols and Mamluks: The Mamluk-Ilkhanid War, 1260-1281*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- _____. 2007. *The Mongols in the Islamic Lands*. Variorum. London: Routledge.
- Sato, Keishiro 佐藤圭四郎. 1981. *Historical Study of Islamic Commerce and Trades* イスラーム商業史の研究. Tokyo: Touhoushi 同朋社.
- Tansen, Sen. 2003. *Buddhism, Diplomacy and Trade: The Realignment of Sino-Indian Relations (600-1400)*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
- Uematz, Shiyo 植松正. 1995. "Kanjo'u shihaika no konan jiki shakai" 元朝支配下の江南地域社會 [The Jiangnan Regional Community under Yüan Dominance]. In *So'u kan jidaishi no kihon mondai* 宋元時代史の基本問題 [Primary Issues from the History of Sung and Yüan], edited by Sadake Yasuhiko et al., 333-58. Tokyo: Kyuko Shoin 汲古書院.
- Wi, ün-suk. 1993. "Koryŏ hugi Chikmul Sugong'öb ūi Kujo Pyŏn'gyöng gwa kü Sönggyŏk [Systemic Changes that Occurred in Textile Production & Manufacturing, during the Latter Half Period of Koryŏ, and a New Nature which Emerged]. *Han'guk Mun'hwawa Yŏn'gu* 6: 189-243.
- _____. 1997. "Yüan-kansöpgi Taewŏn kyoyŏk—Nogöldae 老乞大 rül chungshimüro" [Koryŏ's Trade with Yüan—An Examination of Nogöldae]. *Chiyŏk kwa yŏksa* 4: 53-94.

- Yi, Chin-han. 2011. *Koryŏ Shidae Songsang Wang're Yŏngu* [Study of Chinese Sung Merchants who Came to Koryŏ]. Seoul: Kyŏngin Munhwa-sa.
- Yokkaichi, Yasuhiro 四日市康博. 2000. "Kanjo'u kyusho ni okeru ko'ueki toe teishin shudan" 元朝宮政における交易と廷臣集團 [Trades that Involved the Yüan Court and Government]. *Waseda Taikaku Taikakuin Bunkyo Kyenkyu-ka kiyo* 早稲田大學大學院文學研究科紀要 46 (4): 3-15.
- _____. 2002. "Kanjo'u no Nakauri Boka— Sono igi oyobi nankai ko'ueki, ortok toe no kanni tzuite" 元朝の中賣寶貨—その意義および南海交易・オルトクとの關にずいて [Yüan Empire's Trade Policy: Its Meaning in the Southern Sea Trades and its Relationship with the Ortaq Business]. *Nairiku Aziashi keynkyu* 内陸アジア史研究 [Historical Studies of Central Asia] 17: 41-59.

LEE Kang-hahn (sisko104@aks.ac.kr) is an Associate Professor at the Academy of Korean studies, Seongnam, Korea. He is primarily interested in the nature of the relationship that existed between Koryŏ and the Mongol Yüan Empire, not only in terms of economic trades, but also in terms of institutional exchanges and cultural clashes that went on in multiple areas: political reforms, revenue enhancement plans, local administration, and military and ritual protocols. He has published various articles both in Korea and some as well abroad, while publishing two books concerning the Koryŏ and Yüan governments' trade policies and their exchanges of porcelain, in 2013 and 2016 respectively.

Abstract

In the 13th and 14th centuries, the Koryŏ people witnessed numerous "new" visits to the Korean peninsula. Central or West Asian traders, who were experiencing troubles in their business with their Chinese and Mongol counterparts, began to come to Koryŏ for a variety of reasons. They came to secure commodities that could be sellable to various Asian regions, to bide time to evade imperial debt collections and horde assets required for foreign expeditions in the future, or even acquire necessary items ahead of their long-range journeys on a ship full of Mongol slaves headed for West Asian markets. In the process, Koryŏ inadvertently became part of the global trade network, and even representatives from India and Iran knocked upon doors of the Koryŏ court. Witnessing all these new visits, the Koryŏ government became interested in devising a foreign trade policy of its own, and those efforts proceeded on two fronts: Creating a human network that would facilitate the kings' and the government's future endeavors to generate profits in their upcoming foreign investments, and Establishing a production mechanism to create export items with finer qualities and competitiveness. Kings like Ch'ung'ryŏl, Ch'ungsŏn, Ch'ungsuk, and Ch'ung'hye all promoted the Koryŏ people's dealing with the outer world.

Keywords: Yüan Empire's foreign trade policy, Central or West Asian traders' visit to the Korean peninsula, Ch'ung'ryŏl-wang, Ch'ungsŏn-wang, Ch'ungsuk-wang, Ch'ung'hye-wang

