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Introduction

In 1368, the Ming dynasty drove the forces of the Yuan dynasty north and seized the Central Plain (中原). The Yuan and Goryeo, however, retained extensive influence in the Liaodong region. Following the relocation of the Yuan administrative center to the north, Naghachu – a descendant of Muqali of the Jalair Family – gained control of, as well as expanded his influence in, the Liaoyang Branch Secretariat (遼陽行省). After the ceding of the Shenyang Route (瀋陽路) to King Chungseon of Goryeo upon his investiture as Prince of Shen (瀋王), many people from Goryeo came to settle in the Shenyang area. Goryeo, therefore, believed that its ruling power extended to Shenyang, and it was this belief that led to its attempt to conquer the Liaodong region in 1370.

Although conflicts occasionally took place between Goryeo and Naghachu, the order established under Yuan rule was generally maintained in Liaodong between 1368 and 1371. This order, however, started to disintegrate when Liu Yi (劉益) – Manager of Governmental Affairs (平章政事) of the Liaoyang Branch Secretariat – surrendered to the Ming dynasty in 1371. The Ming forces were thus able to advance into Liaodong, prompting Goryeo and Naghachu to explore various means of holding them back.

For example, Goryeo sent Han Bang-eon (韓邦彥) on a mission from Goryeo through Liaodong to the Ming dynasty in 1371. For this mission, the Goryeo court ordered Han to travel overland through Liaodong on the way to Jinling (金陵; modern Nanjing), instead of taking the agreed sea route. This incensed the Ming emperor Zhu Yuanzhang as he believed the mission's deviation was to gather intelligence in Liaoyang and Niujiashuang (牛家莊). Zhu's suspicion was based on the fact that the Ming dynasty had been building military bases along the route the Goryeo mission took through Liaodong. Niujiashuang in particular was an important defensive point for the Ming dynasty because of the logistics base there. Traveling through Niujiashuang strongly suggested that the Goryeo mission intended to spy on Ming military activities in southern Liaodong.

In the context of the fierce rivalry between the Northern Yuan and the Ming, Liu Yi's surrender and Han Bang-eon's mission through Liaodong led to far-reaching consequences in East Asia. The former prompted Goryeo to form an alliance with Naghachu. When Ayushiridara – the Great Khan of the Northern Yuan (r. 1370-78) after the death of Toghon Temür – defeated the Ming forces in the battle of Qaraqorum in 1372, King Gongmin felt the need to reinforce Goryeo's ties with those in power in Liaodong including Naghachu. Han's detour through Liaodong may have contributed to Naghachu's attack on Niujiashuang in 1372 since it was unlikely Naghachu was well informed about a place far from his own base of operations, suggesting that the attack was an outcome of collaboration between Goryeo and Naghachu.

Previous studies on King Gongmin's diplomacy toward the Ming dynasty have mainly focused on investiture and tribute.¹ While King Gong-

¹ Important Chinese studies include Jiang Longfan (姜龍范) and Liu Zimin (劉子敏), *Mingdai Zhongchao guanxishi* [A History of Sino-Korean Relations during the Ming Dynasty] (Harbin: Heilongjiang Chaoxian Minzu Chubanshe, 1999); Xue Huang (薛篁), "Ming Hongwu nianjian Mingchao yu Gaoli wangchao guanxi lüelun" [A Brief Survey on Ming-Goryeo Relations during the Hongwu Emperor's Reign], *Shehui kexue zhanxian* 4 (1997); Yang Yang (楊陽), *Mingdai Liaodong dusti* [The Liaodong Regional Military Commission in the Ming Dynasty] (Zhengzhou: Zhengzhou Guji Chubanshe, 1988); Li Jiancai (李健才), *Dongbei shidi kaolüe* [A Brief Examination of the History and Geography of Northeast China] (Changchun: Jilin

min certainly tried to maintain friendly relations with the Ming, he remained in close communication with the Yuan as well. Thus, King Gongmin's diplomacy was clearly driven by practical concerns. This paper thus focuses on Liu Yi's surrender – especially its role in allowing the Ming to

Wenshi Chubanshe, 1986); and Zhang Shizun (張士尊), “Gaoli yu Beiyuan guanxi dui Ming yu Gaoli guanxi de yingxiang” [The Impact of Goryeo's Relations with the Northern Yuan on the Relationship between the Ming and Goryeo], *Suihua shizhuan xuebao* 1 (1997). These studies emphasize that the Yuan dynasty's northward retreat placed East Asia under the firm control of the Ming dynasty. However, they fail to note that the power of Goryeo and the Northern Yuan still extended to Liaodong before Liu Yi's surrender to the Ming. A study by Li Xinfeng (李新峰) in 1998 suggested that given the conditions at the time, Goryeo's claim of failed missions via sea routes was an invalid reason for King Gongmin to order his envoys to take a land route through Liaodong. For details, see Li Xinfeng, “Gongminwang houqi Ming Gaoli guanxi yu Ming Meng zhanju” [Goryeo-Ming Relations in the Later Years of King Gongmin's Reign and the Progress of Ming-Mongol War], *Hanguoxue lunwenji* 7 (1998). Korean studies on this topic include Kim Kyeong-nok, “Gongminwangdae gukje jeongse wa daeoc gwangye ui jeongae yangsang” [Developments of International Situation and Foreign Relations during the Period of King Gongmin], *Yeoksa wa hyeonsil* 64 (2007); “Joseon sidae dae Jungguk oegyo munseo wa oegyo jeongbo ui sujip bojon chegye” [The System of Gathering and Preserving Diplomatic Documents to China and Diplomatic Information during the Joseon Period], *Dongbuga yeoksa nonchong* 25 (2009); “Yeomal Seoncho Hongmuje ui Goryeo Joseon insik gwa oegyo gwangye” [The Hongwu Emperor's Understanding of Goryeo and Joseon and the Ming Dynasty's Relations with Goryeo and Joseon], *Myeongcheongsa yeongu* 35 (2011); Kim Sun-ja, *Hanguk jungse Hanjung gwangyesa* [A History of Medieval Korea-China Relations] (Seoul: Hyeon, 2007); Park Seong-ju, “Goryeomal Ryeo Myeong gan jogong chaekbong gwangye ui jeongae wa geu seonggyeok” [The Development and Character of Tributary and Investiture Relationships between Goryeo and the Ming at the End of the Goryeo Period], *Gyeongju sahak* 23 (2004); Min Hyeon-gu, “Goryeo Gongminwangdae banwonjeok gachyeok jeongchi ui jeongae gwajeong” [The Developments of King Gongmin's Anti-Yuan Reform Politics], in *Heo Seon-do seonsaeng jeongnyeon ginyeom Hanguk sahak nonchong* [A Collection of Articles on Korean History: Festschrift for Professor Heo Seon-Do in Celebration of his Retirement] (Seoul: Ilchogak, 1992); Park Won-ho, “Goryeo wa Juwonjang ui cheot gyoseop e gwanhan sogo” [A Brief Survey on the First Contact between Goryeo and Zhu Yuanzhang], *Bukbangsa nonchong* 3 (2005); Lee Kang-han, “Gongminwang 5 nyeon (1356) ‘banwon gachyeok’ ui jaegeomto” [A Reexamination of the So-called ‘Anti-Yuan Reforms’ conducted by King Gongmin in 1356], *Daedong munhwa yeongu* 65 (2009); Lee Ik-joo, “Gongminwangdae gachyeok ui chui wa sinheung yusin ui seongjang” [The Progress of King Gongmin's Reform and the Emergence of Confucian Officials], *Yeoksa wa hyeonsil* 15 (1995); and Hong Young-ui, “Gongminwang chogi gachyeok jeongchi wa jeongchi seryeok ui chui: Sang” [Political Reform in the Early Years of King Gongmin's Reign and Changes in Political Powers: Part 1], *Sahak yeongu* 42 (1990); “Gongminwang chogi gachyeok jeongchi wa jeongchi seryeok ui chui: Ha” [Political Reform in the Early Years of King Gongmin's Reign and Changes in Political Powers: Part 2], *Sahak yeongu* 43/44 (1992). These studies primarily focus on King Gongmin's policies or Goryeo's tributary relations with the Ming dynasty.

advance into Liaodong – and the resultant Goryeo mission through Liaodong in 1371.

The Establishment of Goryeo's Relations with the Ming Dynasty

Jinling – the capital of the early Ming dynasty – was located much further southeast than the capitals of preceding Chinese dynasties. When Zhu Yuanzhang proclaimed the establishment of the Ming Dynasty in early 1368, Dadu (大都; today's Beijing) was still under the Yuan dynasty's control. For this reason, the Ming dynasty had to choose its capital in southeastern China far away from the Yuan court in Dadu and Mongolia. The fact that the Ming capital was in southeast China suggests the possibility that the Ming dynasty would have placed more weight on its relations with Goryeo (and later Joseon) and Japan compared to other Chinese dynasties with their capitals in north or west China. Because the Goryeo royal family had blood ties through marriage with the Yuan imperial family, the nascent Ming dynasty needed to prevent Goryeo from acting in solidarity with the Yuan. As such, the Ming was eager to establish diplomatic relations with Goryeo.

Once Zhu Yuanzhang established the Ming dynasty in January 1368, he sent troops to Dadu to prepare for a showdown with the Yuan. When the Yuan emperor Toghon Temür heard that the Ming troops had entered Tongzhou (通州), he left Dadu under cover of darkness on July 28 and headed north toward Shangdu (上都), leaving barely any Mongol troops in Dadu except for a few commanders such as the Prince of Huai (淮王) Temür Buqa, the Grand Councilor (丞相) Qing Tong (慶童), and the Dadu Route Commander (大都路總管) Kuo Yunzhong (廓允中).² On August 3, the few remaining Yuan troops engaged the Ming troops led by Xu Da (徐達) and Chang Yuchun (常遇春), but the city eventually fell. The Ming immediately

² Liu Ji, "Beixun siji" [A Personal Account of the Northern Patrol], in *Mingdai Menggu hanji shiliao huibian* [A Compilation of Chinese Historical Materials on the Mongols in the Ming Period] (Huhehaote: Neimenggu Daxue Chubanshe, 1993).

changed the city's name from Dadu to Beiping (北平), a clear signal that they had overthrown the Yuan.³ Soon afterward, Zhu Yuanzhang sent Xie Si (偰斯), who was then Seals Secretary in the Chancellery (符寶郎), to Goryeo to announce the foundation of the Ming dynasty and to urge Goryeo to abandon the Yuan and establish diplomatic relations with the Ming.⁴ However, Goryeo was reluctant to break its ties with the Yuan. As such, Zhu sent gifts to Goryeo through his eunuch Kim Yeo-yeon (金麗淵) and repatriated 156 people.⁵ These gestures show how eager Zhu was to establish diplomatic relations with Goryeo.⁶

The motive behind Zhu's policy of appeasement was directly related to the Ming's confrontation with the Yuan. After it retreated to the north, Toghon Temür's court soon formed a plan to recapture Dadu and began to assemble the Mongol forces. In October 1368, Toghon Temür bestowed the royal titles Prince of Qi (齊王) on Köke Temür and Prince of Liang (梁王) on Esen Buqa and placed them in charge of recapturing Dadu. Köke Temür was one of the greatest Yuan warlords, and he had previously assisted Ayushiridara in his fight for hegemony against Bolor Temür in the mid-1360s. When Toghon Temür decided to leave Dadu in 1368, Köke Temür had a considerable number of armed forces at his disposal, albeit far away from Dadu.

In December 1368, the Mongol forces laid siege to Dadu, but to no avail. At that time, the Yuan forces were still mighty and impressive, including one hundred thousand troops led by Köke Temür, one hundred thousand troops under Bazalawarmi – Prince of Liang in Yunnan, two hundred thousand troops led by Naghachu, the Mongol troops that moved

³ Gao Dai, "Hongyoulu" [Extensive Plans], in *Mingdai Menggu hanji shiliao huibian* (Huhehaote: Neimenggu Daxue Chubanshe, 1993).

⁴ *Ming Taizu shilu* [Veritable Records of the Ming Dynasty, the Taizu Reign], vol. 37, section for lunar December 1368 (Taipei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan Lishi yuyan yanjiusuo, 1962).

⁵ *Goryeosa* [History of Goryeo], vol. 41, entry for lunar June 4, 1369 (Seoul: Asea Munhwasa, 1972).

⁶ Xue, "Ming Hongwu nianjian Mingchao yu Gaoli wangchao guanxi lüelun," 166.

north following Toghon Temür, and others.⁷ In response, Zhu Yuanzhang sought to isolate the Yuan by establishing diplomatic ties with Goryeo as quickly as possible.

At the same time as Zhu Yuanzhang was sending emissaries to Goryeo, Toghon Temür was attempting to stop Goryeo from abandoning its ties with the Yuan. Having been forced to flee Dadu due to approaching Ming troops on July 28, Toghon Temür slipped through the Juyong Pass (居庸關) and made his way to the old summer capital of Shangdu. However, the rain slowed his progress, and he was unable to reach Shangdu until August 15. Shangdu had ceased to function as a summer capital about a decade earlier when the Red Turbans destroyed its palace and government buildings. The Yuan court's financial circumstances in Shangdu deteriorated to the point that it had to rely on the 20,000 rolls of silk and 880 tons of grain that Esen Buqa – Assistant Director of the Left (左丞) of the Liaoyang Branch Secretariat – provided when building tent palaces upon arrival.

Meanwhile, Köke Temür, Naghachu, Naimandai – Vice Commissioner of the Branch Bureau of Military Affairs of Shangdu (上都行樞密副使), and Prince Tulai all gathered at Shangdu upon hearing of the Yuan court's retreat. After the Yuan court became somewhat settled in Shangdu, Toghon Temür assembled military officers and from September 11 began to devise a plan to recapture Dadu. In the same month, Hong Baobao (洪寶寶) sent an envoy to Goryeo, as did Manzi Qan (蠻子罕) in November, to ask for Goryeo's military support in recapturing Dadu. However, they received no immediate response from Goryeo. Although Goryeo did send a customary annual tribute in January 1369, it made no move to support the Yuan. Despite this, Toghon Temür still hoped that Goryeo would agree to send troops to his aid. In February, he sent Durqai – Vice Director of the Ministry of Works (工部侍郎) – with gifts of clothes and liquor to King Gongmin. In March, he appointed King Gongmin Grand Councilor of the Right (右丞相) in an attempt to pressure Goryeo into providing military support and to

⁷ Ider, *Yuan'ulsyn ikh tūshimel Khökhötömör* [Khökhötömör, A Great Official of the Yuan Ulus] (Ulaanbaatar: Soyombo Printing, 2012), 145.

prevent it from abandoning the Yuan. Given Liu Ji (劉佶)'s statement that he was then suspicious of Goryeo but did not report this to his superiors,⁸ the Yuan court in Shangdu was concerned over Goryeo's possible defection.

In Goryeo, King Gongmin continued to send annual tribute missions to the Yuan court but found it difficult to comply with the request for military support. Circumstances in East Asia were constantly changing, and coming to the aid of the declining Yuan dynasty would brand Goryeo an enemy in the eyes of the Ming. Thus, he chose to monitor developments between the two dynasties for the time being. When Xie Si arrived in Goryeo in April 1369, King Gongmin responded by presenting a diplomatic memorial (表文) to Zhu Yuanzhang.⁹ In this memorial, he acknowledged the Ming as a legitimate Chinese dynasty. After Xie Si left for home on May 4, King Gongmin discontinued the use of the Yuan reign title Zhizheng (至正) and began officially referring to the Yuan dynasty as the "Northern Yuan (北元)" from August 1369.¹⁰

These events resulted in the establishment of diplomatic relations between Goryeo and the Ming, and from April 1369, vibrant exchanges ensued for about a year. In May 1369, Goryeo dispatched Hong Sang-jae – Minister of the Ministry of Rites (禮部尚書) – and Yi Ha-saeng – Superior Military Protector of the Palace Gate Guard (監門衛上護軍) – to Jinling to congratulate the Ming emperor on his enthronement. On August 14, the Ming dynasty invested King Gongmin as King of Goryeo and again sent Xie Si to Goryeo to deliver a message along with a golden seal, an edict, and a piece of the Imperial Calendar of Datong (大統曆). That same month, Goryeo sent Seong Jun-deuk (成准得) – Minister of the Ministry of Military Affairs (摠部尚書) – as an envoy to congratulate Zhu Yuanzhang on his birthday, Kim Gap-wu (金甲雨) – General-in-chief (大將軍) – to celebrate the crown prince's birthday, and Jang Ja-on (張子溫) – Minister of the Min-

⁸ Liu Ji, "Beixun siji."

⁹ *Goryeosa*, vol. 41, entry for lunar April 28, 1369.

¹⁰ *Goryeosa*, vol. 41, entry for lunar August and September, 1369.

istry of Works (工部尙書) – to deliver New Year’s greetings. As a friendly response, the Ming repatriated approximately 160 people to Goryeo.

The Ming dynasty had emerged as the new ruler of the Central Plain following the Yuan dynasty’s northward retreat. Goryeo thus sought political stability by entering into a tributary relationship with the Ming in 1369 and at the same time cutting off the official relationship with the Yuan. Nevertheless, Goryeo continued to communicate closely with the Northern Yuan.¹¹ In fact, Goryeo envoys made their way between Goryeo and the Northern Yuan nineteen times between May 1369 and 1374 when Goryeo severed its relationship with the Ming dynasty. Five of these missions occurred between May and December 1369, suggesting that King Gongmin’s foreign policy was not necessarily exclusively pro-Ming.¹² In other words, the Yuan’s northward retreat changed the international circumstance in East Asia, creating a situation where Goryeo, Yuan, and Ming interests intersected in the developments that unfolded thereafter.

Liu Yi’s Surrender and Goryeo’s Request to Switch the Travel Route for Its Missions

After Xie Si’s visit to Goryeo in 1369, envoys traveling between Goryeo and the Ming mostly used the sea route. In May 1369, Goryeo sent a mission led by Hong Sang-jae to the Ming, and they arrived in Jinling on August 2. This indicates that it would take approximately three months to reach Jinling from Goryeo by the sea route. Jeong Mong-ju’s case suggests that this sea-route journey could be reduced to two months if they could sail before the wind.¹³ In contrast, Xie Si left Jinling in November 1368,

¹¹ *Goryeosa*, vol. 41, entry for lunar November, 1369.

¹² Yoon Eun-sook, “Goryeo ui Bukwon chingho sayong gwa Dong Asia insik: Goryeo ui yangmyeon oegyo reul jungsimeuro” [Goryeo’s Use of the Name Northern Yuan and Its Perception of East Asia: With a Focus on Goryeo’s Two-pronged Diplomacy], *Jungang Asia yeongu* 15 (2010): 201-02.

¹³ *Goryeosa*, vol. 41, entry for lunar May, 1369; *Ming Taizu shilu*, vol. 44, section for lunar August, 1369.

but due to difficulties in finding a suitable sea route on the Yellow Sea, he only reached Goryeo in April of the following year. Xie again set out for Goryeo in August 1369 to deliver Zhu Yuanzhang's edict of investiture, but difficulties on the Yellow Sea again delayed his arrival until April 1370. The principal route that Ming envoys took at that time involved traveling by land from Jinling to Shandong and then by sea from Dengzhou (登州) or Laizhou (萊州) to Goryeo.¹⁴ Goryeo envoys took a similar route to reach Jinling from Gaegyeong (開京). Compared to the journeys of Goryeo envoys, however, Ming envoys appear to have suffered considerable inconveniences due to their inexperience in traveling through the Yellow Sea. Despite these difficulties, Ming envoys had to use the sea route as the Yuan forces under Naghachu and other Yuan generals still maintained control over Liaodong. Moreover, some remnants of the Yuan forces were still present in some areas of the Central Plain even after the ascendancy of the Ming dynasty. The Ming feared that if the Yuan forces in the north collaborated with Goryeo to regain Dadu, it would be extremely difficult for the Ming to gain complete control over the Central Plain. The Ming, therefore, made great efforts to convince Goryeo to sever its relations with the Northern Yuan and join the new East Asian order centered on the Ming.

Goryeo, on the other hand, wanted its envoys to travel by land instead of by sea. In November 1371, King Gongmin sent a diplomatic document to the Central Secretariat of the Ming (中書省), asking that his envoys be allowed travel by the land route. It reads:

When Jeong Sa-do (鄭思道) was dispatched this August to your capital to deliver our greetings for the coming New Year, his ship was unable to move beyond Gyodong Island as a result of running into shallow rapids that made the ship stranded. Also, when Han Bang-eon was dispatched this September for the same purpose, his ship ran into a sudden storm and sank. The sea route between our kingdom and your capital is exten-

¹⁴ Zhang Shizun, "Gaoli yu Beiyuan guanxi dui Ming yu Gaoli guanxi de yingxiang," 13.

sive, and once the weather grows cold and freezes the waters, it will be difficult for ships to set sail, and envoys may not make it on time to convey our felicitations. On the other hand, they would be able to arrive in time by traveling through the Liaodong Regional Military Commission (遼東都司) since places like Jinzhou (金州) and Fuzhou (復州) are relatively close to the sea route and have courier stations. We now hope to have Han Bang-eon travel through the Liaodong Military Commission on his way to the capital to convey our felicitations. Please present the emperor with this plan so that it may be carried out accordingly.¹⁵

In this letter, Goryeo inquires whether its envoys may travel overland across the Liaodong Peninsula and then take a ship from Jinzhou or Fuzhou to approach Dengzhou of the Shandong Peninsula. The shipwrecks Jeong Sa-do and Han Bang-eon had experienced in August and September were brought up to support Goryeo's claim that sailing all the way to the Ming would pose considerable risks to envoys. Previously, when the Kitans were in power, Goryeo and the Northern Song dynasty had their envoys travel back and forth between Dengzhou and Goryeo.¹⁶ The envoys, however, did not travel by land through the Liaodong Peninsula at that time. Thus, the route King Gongmin requested to use was not necessarily what Goryeo envoys would have been familiar with, although it may have been the shortest route to the Ming capital.

Compared to the Ming, Goryeo (and later Joseon) had more experience traveling through sea routes because Goryeo (or Joseon) envoys utilized different routes according to changing geopolitical situations of East Asia. When northern states grew dominant in and around Liaodong, Goryeo envoys would no longer be able to pass through the area and had to take the sea routes leading to Dengzhou of Shandong or Mingzhou (明州) of Zhejiang to reach the Central Plain. Compared to traveling by land, Go-

¹⁵ *Goryeosa*, vol. 43, entry for lunar November 26, 1371.

¹⁶ Yoon Myeong-cheol, "Seo Hee ui Songnara sahaeng hangno tamgu" [An Exploration of Seo Hee's Maritime Itinerary on His Mission to the Song Dynasty], *Goguryeo yeonguhoe haksul chongseo 2* (1999): 210.

ryeo envoys encountered more difficulties while traveling by sea. Sea routes, however, would allow them to reach their destination faster if they could take advantage of favorable winds. Sea travel would also allow them to transport larger quantities of trade items on the journey.¹⁷ The volume of such goods transported by sea was such that the Central Secretariat presented a memorial to Zhu Yuanzhang, saying “Since Goryeo envoys bring so many personal items, they should be taxed. They also take too many Chinese items and then cross the border back to their country. This should be banned.”¹⁸ This memorial implies that Goryeo made substantial profits from trading goods via the sea routes. Furthermore, Goryeo was experienced in building ships, having constructed nearly nine hundred for the Yuan expedition to Japan.¹⁹ Bongnae no. 3 and no. 4 – ships from the late Goryeo period recently discovered in Shandong Province – indicate that Goryeo had acquired considerable skills in shipbuilding by the latter half of the 14th century. Such ships used a mixture of iron and wooden nails in their construction and had bulkheads and ribs to avoid sinking. They were thus well equipped to withstand long-distance voyages.²⁰

Based on the experience Goryeo envoys had sailing to China, traveling through the Yellow Sea wasn't as risky as King Gongmin made it seem in his letter. In fact, before King Gongmin sent his diplomatic document to the Central Secretariat, Goryeo had already dispatched envoys to the Ming via sea routes multiple times since 1368. The following table presents a summary of these missions based on records in *Goryeosa* (高麗史).

¹⁷ Kim Young-je, “Gyoyeok e daehan Songjo ui taedo wa Goryeo haesang ui hwaldong: Goryeo Munjong ui daesong ipgong baegyeong gwado gwanryeonhayeo” [The Song Dynasty's Attitude toward Trade and the Activities of Goryeo Marine Traders: In Relation to the Background of the Goryeo King Munjong's Tribute Missions to the Song], *Yeoksa hakbo* 213 (2012): 299-329.

¹⁸ *Mingshi* (明史) [History of the Ming Dynasty], vol. 320, “Chaoxian zhuan” (朝鮮傳) [A Treatise on Joseon].

¹⁹ *Goryeosa*, vol. 26, entry for lunar June 16, 1274.

²⁰ Kim Seong-beom, “Jungguk Bongnaesuseong chulto Goryeoseon” [Two Goryeo Wrecks unearthed in Penglai Shuicheng in China], *Hanguk jungsesa yeongu* 27 (2009): 250-53; Kim Seong-jun, “Bongnae Goryeo goseon ui Hanguk seongbak sasang ui uiui” [The Significance of Penglai Koryo Ancient Ships in the History of Korean Shipbuilding], *Haem mullyu yeongu* 52 (2007): 63-82.

Table 1. Goryeo Envoys sent to the Ming by King Gongmin between 1368 and 1371

Time	Name of Goryeo Envoys	Mission's Purpose	Travel Route	Success/Failure
May 1369	Hong Sang-jae and Yi Ha-saeng	Congratulate the emperor on his enthronement	Sea	Succeeded
August 1369	Seong Jun-deuk, Kim Gap-wu, and Jang Ja-on	Congratulate the emperor on his birthday, celebrate the crown prince's birthday, and present New Year's greetings	Sea	Succeeded
July 1370	Gang Sa-chan	Express gratitude for the investiture and imperial edict, hand the golden seal Goryeo had received from the Yuan over to the Ming, report on the situation in Tamna (i.e., Jeju Island), and request for court musicians	Sea	Succeeded
August 1370	Yun Gong	Congratulate the emperor on his birthday and the investiture of a prince	Sea	Succeeded
August 1370	Gwon Gyun	Send Goryeo scholars including Park Shil and Kim Do to take the Ming imperial examination and congratulate the emperor on the investiture of a prince	Sea	Succeeded
July 1371	Gang Jung-sang, Jeong Sa-do, and Hong Jung-won	Congratulate the emperor on his birthday, celebrate the crown prince's birthday, and offer New Year's greetings	Sea	Failed
September 1371	Gwon Gyun	Offer New Year's greetings	Sea	Succeeded
September 1371	Han Bang-eon	Offer New Year's greetings	Sea	Failed

The table shows that of the eight missions, six were successful. Only the two missions in July and September 1371 failed. It is interesting to note that the shipwreck, which made the Goryeo missions fail in 1371, actually occurred shortly after the envoys started their voyages, resulting in only minor damage. King Gongmin, however, highlighted these two incidents as grave failures in his letter and then ordered Han Bang-eon to travel by land to the Ming territory in November 1371. It is suspicious that both shipwrecked missions occurred in 1371 and that both accidents happened

close to the Goryeo coasts. Furthermore, Han Bang-eon started his mission in November 1371 when the waters in the Yellow Sea didn't usually freeze. This rather undermines the credibility of Gongmin's claim that Goryeo envoys were unable to set sail due to the freezing of the Yellow Sea.²¹

In November 1371, King Gongmin ordered Han Bang-eon to pass through Liaodong on his way to the Ming without Ming's permission to use the land route, and this decision of King Gongmin led to a diplomatic conflict with the Ming. In general, the Ming dynasty imposed strict restrictions on foreign envoys. It had specific rules on the size of missions, the route they traveled, and the items they were to offer as tribute,²² and violations of these rules were penalized without fail. For instance, during the early years of the Jiajing Emperor's reign, a Joseon mission was banned from entering the Hostel for Foreign Envoys (會同館) because a Joseon interpreter named Kim I-seok had purchased a volume of the Ming imperial geography entitled *Records of the Unity of the Great Ming* (大明一統志). On a different occasion, Jin Zhi (金智) – a Ming official responsible for escorting a Joseon mission – was arrested by the Embroidered Uniform Guard (錦衣衛) for helping a Joseon envoy purchase a bull's horn for use in making bows.²³ Although 1371 was too early for the Ming to have established specific policies regarding foreign relations, Goryeo's arbitrary decision to switch the travel route of its envoys without Ming permission represented a serious diplomatic challenge. Believing that Han Bang-eon had gathered intelligence on his way through Liaodong and passed it on to Naghachu for the attack on Niujiazhuang, the Ming dynasty demanded an explanation from Goryeo.²⁴

²¹ Li Xinfeng, "Gongminwang houqi Ming Gaoli guanxi yu Ming Meng zhanju," 308.

²² *Daming huidian* (大明會典) [The Collection of Official Statutes of the Ming Dynasty], vols. 105-106, section for Libu (禮部) [The Ministry of Rites], vols. 63-64, entry for Chaogong (朝貢) [Tribute], vols. 1-2.

²³ Kim Kyeong-nok, "Joseon sidae dae Jungguk oegyo munseo wa oegyo jeongbo ui sujip bojon chegye," 303-06.

²⁴ Hasumi Moriyoshi, "Sōkan to sōhan-Minjin Hua Zhongqing sōkan wo megutte" [Repatriation and Suzerain-vassal: Focusing on the Repatriation Case of a Ming Person named Hua Zhongqing], in *Katiki kōryū to seiji kenryoku no taiō* [Political Powers' Responses to Maritime

Despite an anticipated backlash from the Ming, Goryeo had good reasons for instructing its envoys to travel through Liaodong. Even after the Yuan retreated to the north in 1368, Liaodong remained under Yuan control. In this region, therefore, the old order between the Yuan and Goryeo was maintained. The dynamics of the region, however, began to change when Liu Yi surrendered to the Ming in 1371, fueling the Ming's desire to advance into Liaodong. Liu Yi was originally Manager of Governmental Affairs (平章政事) in charge of southern Liaoyang. After the Yuan retreated to the north, he stationed his troops at the Deliyang Fortress (得利羸城) in Gaizhou (蓋州) – currently the Deli Temple (得利寺) in Fu County (復縣), Liaoning Province – and took charge of the defense against maritime intrusions by Ming forces. Upon learning that the Ming intended to carry out a resettlement policy, he decided to surrender and hand over maps of the prefectures and counties in Liaodong, including the areas of Jinzhou, Fuzhou, Gaizhou, and Haizhou (海州), along with a register of food, money, and war horses available from each area. After his surrender, Liu Yi established a district office at the Deliyang Fortress and prepared a record of the troops and horses under his command to assist the Ming's advance into Liaodong.²⁵ Having secured a bridgehead in Liaodong, the Ming dispatched Ma Yun (馬雲) and Ye Wang (葉旺) to the region and established the Dingliao Guard (定遼衛) at the Deliyang Fortress, thereby creating a strategic military base in southern Liaoyang.²⁶ Zhu Yuanzhang appointed Liu Yi Vice Commander (指揮使同知) to encourage the remaining Yuan forces in Liaodong to surrender and also informed Goryeo of these developments to discourage it from maintaining ties with the Northern Yuan.²⁷

The prospect of a Ming advance into Liaodong unnerved Goryeo and Naghachu because it would destroy the existing order between Goryeo and the Yuan. Goryeo considered Liaoyang and Shenyang to be under its con-

Exchange] (Tokyo: Kyūko Shoin, 2011), 71.

²⁵ Koo Beom-jin (trans.), *Imun yeokju* [Annotated Translation of *Liwen*], vol. 1 (Seoul: Sechang Chulpansa, 2012), 30–46.

²⁶ *Ming Taizu shilu*, vol. 61, section for lunar February and July, 1371.

²⁷ Kim Kyeong-nok, “Yeomal Seoncho Hongmuje ui Goryeo Joseon insik gwa oegyo gwangye,” 9.

trol not only because many of its people lived there but also because Shenyang Route had been enfeoffed to King Chungseon when the Yuan invested him as Prince of Shen.²⁸ Goryeo's view is clear from the following excerpts from *Goryeosa*.

The people of Liaoyang and Shenyang were told: "Since Liaoyang and Shenyang constitute the border of our kingdom (i.e., Goryeo), as well as those people belong to us, we are pacifying the regions and people by using our righteous army." ... "After the Yuan dynasty unified China, it married princesses and enfeoffed Liaoyang and Shenyang [to Goryeo kings]. When the emperor lost his virtue near the end of his reign and fled north, the leaders in Liaoyang and Shenyang no longer followed him nor did they fulfill their duties to the empire. ... Various leaders and people within the border of our kingdom, east of the Liao River, should present themselves to the Goryeo court of their own accord to receive titles and allowances, and if they don't want to submit [to Goryeo], they will face the consequences of Liaoyang."²⁹

The Manager of Governmental Affairs Liu Yi and an Assistant Director of the Right surnamed Wang (王右丞) of the Liaoyang Branch Secretariat of the Northern Yuan planned to submit [to Goryeo]. Also, out of concern that the Ming dynasty would resettle residents [in Liaodong], they sent envoys [to Goryeo], hoping to avoid Ming resettlement by asking us to appeal to the Ming on their behalf since the lands originally belonged to our kingdom (i.e., Goryeo).³⁰

These quotations confirm that around 1370, Goryeo deemed that it

²⁸ Kim Hye-won, "Goryeo hugi Sim(yang)wang ui jeongchi gyeongjejeok giban" [Prince of Shen's Political and Economic Foundation in Late Goryeo], *Guksagwan nonchong* 49 (1993): 39-53; Morihira Masahiko, "Kōraiōi no kisoteki kōsatsu: Daigen Urusu no ichi bunken seiryoku toshi no Kōraiōke" [A Preliminary Examination of the Goryeo Kingship: The Goryeo Royal Family as a Stakeholder of the Great Yuan Ulus], *Chōsenshi kenkyūkai ronbunshū* 36 (1998): 55-87.

²⁹ *Goryeosa*, vol. 114, "Ji Yong-su jeon" (池龍壽傳) [Biography of Ji Yong-su].

³⁰ *Goryeosa*, vol. 43, entry for leap lunar March 6, 1371.

could exert sovereignty over Liaoyang and Shenyang. They suggest that the origin of this control dates back to when Liaoyang and Shenyang were enfeoffed to King Chungseon after his marriage to a Yuan princess. This claim appears plausible, given that King Chungseon was invested as Prince of Shen and received appanages in Shenyang and Liaoyang from the Yuan.³¹ The references to Liaoyang and Shenyang as lands that “originally belonged to our kingdom” and Liu Yi turning to Goryeo for support before surrendering to the Ming dynasty indicate that Liu Yi recognized that Goryeo had a legitimate claim to these areas.³²

Considering that Goryeo regarded Liaoyang and Shenyang as within its sphere of influence, it would not have welcomed the Ming dynasty’s advance into Liaodong. Thus, Goryeo tried to check the Ming influence in Liaodong, reminding the Ming that Goryeo’s sovereignty was valid in Liaoyang Route (遼陽路) and Dongnyeong Prefecture (東寧府) in its diplomatic letter to the Dingliao Guard in 1372. In this letter, Goryeo offered an explanation about its three attempts to conquer Liaodong in 1370. According to this, these military actions had been triggered by the hostility of Ki Sain Temür and other officials of Liaoyang Route and Dongnyeong Prefecture, both of which did not submit to the Ming yet.³³ In 1372, Goryeo explained its military actions of 1370 in Liaodong to avoid outright friction with the Ming at a time when Ming forces successfully advanced into Lia-

³¹ The 1998 study by Morihira Masahiko (森平雅彦) concluded that just like other princes of the Mongol-Yuan Empire, King Chungseon, as an imperial son-in-law, appointed his officials in his own Princely Establishment (王府) and possessed courier stations in both Goryeo and Liaodong, as well as a private workforce that he could mobilize for a variety of tasks. Morihira also argued that Shenyang Route was granted to King Chungseon as his appanage, placing the area under his direct control. For details, see Morihira, “Kōraiōi no kisoteki kōsatsu,” 55-87.

³² According to Song Yong-deok’s research, as Goryeo expanded its perception of territory to the north, many Goryeo people went north across the Amnok (i.e., Yalu) River and settled in Liaodong, reinforcing Goryeo’s claim over the region. Therefore, Goryeo’s connections to Dongnyeong Prefecture (東寧府) and Ssangseong Route Command (雙城總管府) remained. See Song Yong-deok, “Goryeo hugi byeongyeong jiyek byeondong gwa Amnokgang yeonbyeon insik ui hyeongseong” [The Change of Borderlands and the Recognition of the Yalu River as a Frontier Region in the Latter Half of the Goryeo Period], *Yeoksa hakbo* 201 (2009): 1-33.

³³ *Goryeosa*, vol. 43, entry for lunar March 3, 1372.

odong.³⁴ Moreover, in the 1372 letter, Goryeo emphasized that both Liaoyang Route and Dongnyeong Prefecture did not belong to the Ming yet, thereby claiming its legitimate right over these regions.

Naghachu also took the movement of Ming forces into Liaodong seriously. He was a descendant of Muqali and resided in the Jinshan (金山) area after the Yuan's retreat to the north, serving as the de facto ruler of Liaodong with the area around the Yitong River in Nong'an County (農安) north of Kaiyuan (開元) as his power base.³⁵ After having an audience with Naghachu on the Jiji Mountain (鷄鷄山), Toghon Temür appointed him Grand Councilor of the Left (左丞相) of the Liaoyang Branch Secretariat and, a few days later, added the title Defender-in-chief (太尉). By conferring these titles, Toghon Temür acknowledged Naghachu's dominant status in Liaodong.³⁶ Liu Yi's surrender in 1371, however, deprived the Northern Yuan of control over southern Liaodong and left Naghachu under tremendous pressure, as he was now faced with the Ming forces. The following excerpts reveal how much Liu Yi's surrender enraged the Northern Yuan forces in Liaodong at that time.

The Prince of the State (國王), Grand Councilor (丞相), Defender-in-chief (太尉), and Manager of Governmental Affairs (平章) met the Administrator of the Bureau of Military Affairs (知院) Qara and Hong Baobao and agreed to requisition forty thousand soldiers and horses to advance south and take over many vessels and goods under Liu Yi's control in coming July. The troops and horses of an Administrator surnamed Gao (高平章) were not necessary for this campaign, so he was ordered to remain on the defensive and monitor the troops and horses of Goryeo to the east.³⁷

³⁴ Kim Sun-ja, *Hanguk jungse Hanjung gwangyesa*, 62.

³⁵ Yoon Eun-sook, "Nagachu ui hwaldong gwa 14 segi mal Dong Asia jeongse" [Naghachu's Activities and the Political Situation of East Asia at the End of the 14th Century], *Myeongcheongsa yeongu* 28 (2007): 10-11.

³⁶ Liu Ji, "Beixun siji."

³⁷ Koo Beom-jin (trans.), *Imun yeokju*, vol. 1, 47-58.

When the official (i.e., Liu Yi) arrived at a cottage north of an Administrator surnamed Hong (洪平章)'s house and stayed there, more than twenty men that Hong had kept hidden – such as Hong's son-in-law Jing Jianu (京家奴), his nephew Dalan Temür, a chieftain named Kim Öljei Temür, Wang Bo (汪伯), and others – rushed out from behind the cottage, seized the official (i.e., Liu Yi), wielded their swords, and then injured and murdered him. They also killed the official (i.e., Liu Yi)'s aides and servants – A Li (阿禮), Huang Zhong (黃忠), and others.³⁸

The titles – Prince of the State, Grand Councilor, Defender-in-chief, and Manager of Governmental Affairs – all refer to Naghachu, indicating the weight of his authority. Upon hearing of Liu Yi's surrender, Naghachu headed south to join forces with Qara and Hong Baobao to plan an attack on Liu Yi and seize Ming vessels, troops, and other goods. Although their plan to attack in July failed, Naghachu did succeed in attacking Niujiazhuang in November 1372. Moreover, only a month after his surrender, Liu Yi was murdered by a band of people under Hong Baobao, Administrator of the Liaoyang Branch Secretariat. This shows how much his surrender exasperated the Northern Yuan forces in Liaodong. Liu Yi's surrender thoroughly changed the circumstances in Liaodong. As the Ming advanced into Liaodong, the Northern Yuan began to assemble their forces in Liaoyang under the command of Naghachu. Liu Yi's surrender had thus forced the Northern Yuan into a direct confrontation with the Ming dynasty.

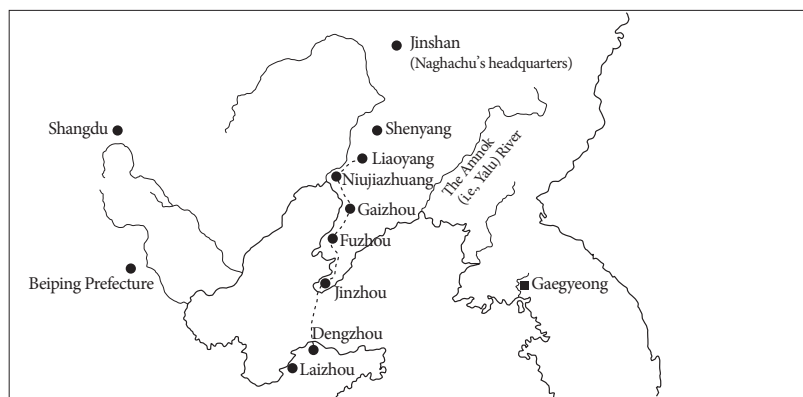
The Ming's advance into Liaodong went against the interests of both King Gongmin and Naghachu, prompting the two sides to cooperate. Although he had severed diplomatic ties with the Northern Yuan, King Gongmin had maintained connections with the Mongols in Liaodong including Naghachu. Once the Ming advanced into Liaodong, King Gongmin officially notified the Ming that a Goryeo mission would pass through Liaodong, but he did not wait for permission before dispatching his envoy, Han Bang-eon, through Liaodong in November 1371. A year later, in No-

³⁸ Koo Beom-jin (trans.), *Imun yeokju*, vol. 1, 30-46.

vember 1372, Naghachu attacked the logistics base at Niujiazhuang, the Ming's largest military supply depot in Liaodong. In this attack, Naghachu destroyed warehouses, burned nearly 100,000 *shi* (石) of grain, and killed 5,000 Ming soldiers.³⁹ The purpose of this attack was to cut off the Ming supply route to Liaodong. Thus, Naghachu's success struck a fatal blow to the Ming's ambition to make its presence and influence permanent in Liaodong.⁴⁰

The geopolitical situation of Liaodong became unstable as a result of a chain of events. King Gongmin dispatched his envoy to the Ming and ordered him to travel overland through Liaodong in November 1371. Naghachu attacked and destroyed the Ming's major supply base at Niujiazhuang in November 1372. Between these two incidents, Ayushiridara – the Great Khan of the Northern Yuan – devastated the Ming army in the battle of Qaraqorum in January 1372. All these events suggest the likelihood that Goryeo and the Northern Yuan somehow cooperated with each other in 1371 and 1372, undermining the Ming's influence in Liaodong.⁴¹

Figure 1. The route Han Bang-eon took through Liaodong



³⁹ *Ming Taizu shilu*, vol. 76, section for lunar November, 1372.

⁴⁰ Yoon Eun-sook, "Naghachu ui hwaldong gwa 14 segi mal Dong Asia jeongse," 12.

⁴¹ Yoon Eun-sook, "Bukwon gwa Myeong ui daerip" [Conflict between the Northern Yuan and the Ming], *Dongyang sahak yeongu* 105 (2008): 89-93.

The Goryeo Mission's Land Travel and the Shutdown of Tributary Route

Throughout his reign, King Gongmin gathered a considerable amount of intelligence on Liaodong. In 1362, he dispatched an envoy to the region under the pretext of monitoring the movements of the Red Turbans. In July and September 1368, Northern Yuan envoys sent by Esen Temür and Hong Baobao visited Goryeo and shared news about the Yuan's internal affairs and the movement of Ming troops into the north.⁴² Although the Yuan had retreated to the north, many Goryeo people remained in Liaodong to engage in trade, allowing King Gongmin to continue to gather intelligence on the region.⁴³ He was, therefore, aware of the Yuan's retreat to Shangdu and the Ming's seizure of Dadu in 1368. He was also well aware of almost every move of the Ming troops around Dadu. For example, when 10,000 Ming naval vessels anchored at Tongzhou in September 1368, he assembled his court officials in the very same month to discuss establishing diplomatic relations with the Ming dynasty.⁴⁴

When the Liaoyang area fell to the Ming due to Liu Yi's surrender in 1371, King Gongmin, who had considered the area as Goryeo's sphere of influence, immediately needed to ascertain the impact this would have on the region. To devise a response, he needed intelligence on the disposition of Ming forces in Liaoyang. As such, he tried to gather information from Ming envoys that included those dispatched by the Manager of Governmental Affairs surnamed Liu and the Assistant Director of the Right surnamed Wang (王右丞), who arrived in May 1371 to congratulate King Gongmin on his birthday, and those sent by Gao Jianu (高家奴) and the As-

⁴² *Goryeosa*, vol. 40, entry for 1362; and *Goryeosa*, vol. 41, entry for 1368.

⁴³ Lee Kang-han, "Goryeo Gongminwangdae jeongbu judo gyoyeok ui yeogeon mit teukjing" [The Environment and Characteristics of Goryeo's State-sponsored Trade during King Gongmin's Reign], *Jeongsin munhwa yeongu* 34, no. 4 (2011): 235.

⁴⁴ *Goryeosa*, vol. 41, entry for lunar September 20, 1368; *Yuanshi* [History of the Yuan Dynasty], vol. 47, "Annals of the Zhizheng era," entry for August, 1366.

sistant Director of the Right surnamed Wang, who arrived in July.⁴⁵

Following the assassination of Liu Yi, his subordinates Zhang Liangzuo (張良佐) and Fang Gao (房高) sought retribution. In response, the remaining Northern Yuan forces immediately sought protection from Naghachu, and Liu Yi's sudden death thus did not lead to further violence. However, the Ming continued to tighten its control over southern Liaodong, preventing King Gongmin from gathering detailed intelligence on the region and making him dependent on the brief information Gao Jianu occasionally provided. Naghachu was also more or less in the dark as regards intelligence on southern Liaodong.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, Gongmin persisted in trying to gather intelligence on Ming forces in Liaodong, as indicated in a letter from Zhu Yuanzhang to King Gongmin in July 1373.⁴⁷

- A. A [Goryeo] person named Yi Hwaja (李火者) came with Mongols (達達) and Muslims (回回), pretending to engage in trade, but what he did was to spy [on the Ming]. Yi Hwaja came two to three times and conversed in Mongolian with Mongols, in Korean with Goryeo people, and in Chinese with Chinese people. That's how he spied! Our China is thriving now. What difference would it make even if you came to spy and cost us 40,000 to 50,000 troops in a couple of different areas?
- B. Your true intention for interacting with the commander surnamed Xu (徐摠兵) is to spy on the movements of our troops in Beiping Prefecture. How could you act so imprudently? Is it the traditional way that a small state serves a great state? How could you be so insincere?
- C. You offered Naghachu the intelligence you gathered from spying on our military camps, thereby allowing Naghachu to plunder 100,000 *shi* of horse feed and destroy 3,000 military horses in Niujiazhuang.

⁴⁵ *Goryeosa*, vol. 43, entry for 1371.

⁴⁶ *Ming Taizu shilu*, vol. 66, section for lunar June 1371.

⁴⁷ *Goryeosa*, vol. 44, entry for lunar July 13, 1373.

These excerpts from *Goryeosa* show Zhu Yuanzhang rebuking Goryeo for spying and the Ming suspicions against Goryeo. According to excerpt A, the Ming suspected a Goryeo polyglot of spying under the pretext of engaging in trade. Although the polyglot's exact identity and rank remain unknown, the descriptions of his activities offer some clues about him. During a mission, interpreters were less restricted than envoys in terms of their range of activities. Thus, on behalf of envoys, they delivered and received diplomatic letters, reports, and rescripts, managed expenditure, and set up markets. Because such interpreters were particularly familiar with local languages and circumstances, they were also involved in espionage, the collection of military intelligence, and activities related to the development of weaponry. These roles are quite similar to the acts that Zhu Yuanzhang accused Yi Hwaja of committing.⁴⁸ Considering the description of Yi as proficient in several languages, he was most likely an interpreter caught by Ming officials while gathering intelligence. At this time, Goryeo was collecting a large amount of information on Liaodong, the Ming, and the Northern Yuan. In this unstable time of the Yuan-Ming transition, gathering intelligence was imperative for Goryeo to sustain its power and status as an independent state.

Excerpt B confirms that Goryeo also kept an eye on affairs in Beiping Prefecture. The Ming's conflict with the Northern Yuan meant Goryeo could expect a negative reaction for monitoring Ming military activities in Beiping under the pretext of interaction with Xu Da (徐達; 徐摠兵 in the excerpt). Soon after he retreated to the north in July 1368, Toghon Temür began formulating a plan to recapture Dadu (i.e., Beiping Prefecture) and set it into motion in October. Although the plan failed due to Köke Temür's early return, the Northern Yuan continued to contend with the Ming over Dadu, attempting to recapture the city in April and November 1373. Beiping Prefecture was a symbol of the Ming's success in driving out the Yuan forces and a strategic point on the Central Plain in terms of defense

⁴⁸ Kim Kyeong-nok, "Joseon chogi tongsa ui hwaldong gwa wisang ui byeonhwa" [Interpreters' Activities and the Change of their Status in the Early Joseon Period], *Hanguk hakbo* 26, no. 4 (2000): 60-66.

against Mongol attacks. This is why the Ming accused a Joseon mission of spying after it had a private meeting with the Prince of Yan (燕王) in Beiping Prefecture, resulting in the exile of the Joseon interpreter Song Hui-jeong (宋希靖) and the horse keeper Gwon Eul-song (權乙松).⁴⁹ Regardless of whether Goryeo envoys were actually spying on Beiping Prefecture, the fact that the Ming accused them of doing so shows how sensitive the Ming was when it came to the Beiping area.

Excerpt C reveals that Zhu Yuanzhang suspected that Goryeo had shared intelligence with Naghachu prior to his attack on Niujiazhuang. Zhu's accusation of "spying on our military camps" refers to Han Bang-eon traveling by land to the Ming in November 1371. The unprecedented route Han took under King Gongmin's order involved passing through the Liaodong Military Commission in Liaoyang, Haizhou, Jinzhou, and Fuzhou.⁵⁰ These were the areas where the Ming had established new military bases following Liu Yi's surrender. Specifically, the Ming installed the Liaodong Military Commission, the Dingliao Guard (with its left, right, and front branches), and battalions (千戶所) in Liaodong in July 1371.⁵¹ Goryeo was extremely interested in such military facilities in southern Liaodong, and Han Bang-eon thus received the order to pass through Liaoyang, Haizhou, Jinzhou, and Fuzhou.

King Gongmin had suggested that his envoys "would be able to arrive in time by traveling through the Liaodong Military Commission since places like Jinzhou and Fuzhou are relatively close to the sea route and have courier stations." However, the route actually took Han Bang-eon four months to arrive in Jinling in February 1372. Thus, the Ming accused Han of arriving late as a result of gathering intelligence in Liaoyang and Niujiazhuang. Zhu Yuanzhang further claimed that Han was seeking to monitor the activities of Ming troops, horses, and military vessels in Shan-

⁴⁹ *Joseon wangjo sillok* [Veritable Records of the Joseon Dynasty], vol. 8, section for November 1404.

⁵⁰ *Goryeosa*, vol. 43, entry for 1371.

⁵¹ *Liaodongzhi* 遼東志 [A Gazetteer of Liaodong], vol. 1, "dili, yange, Liaoyang" 地理·沿革·遼陽 [geography and history of Liaoyang].

dong by taking a sea route back to Goryeo, suggesting that Zhu regarded most of Goryeo's actions as intelligence gathering.⁵² Although the size of the mission Han led cannot be confirmed, it must have been substantial considering Zhu Yuanzhang's claim that the Goryeo mission had sold one thousand horses.⁵³ Before Han's mission, Goryeo had offered a total of fifty-six horses as tributes to the Ming dynasty, six in April and fifty in November 1372.⁵⁴ Bringing a thousand horses to Liaoyang across Liaodong must have been no easy feat for Han Bang-eon. Given that the Liaoyang region remained heavily under the influence of the Northern Yuan forces led by Naghachu, Han's mission that conveyed one thousand horses and other merchandise couldn't have passed through Liaodong safely without Naghachu's approval or acquiescence at least.

The Goryeo mission also made the unusual choice of heading to Niujiashuang after passing through Liaoyang. Situated twenty kilometers west of Haizhou, Niujiashuang was, according to Joseon travelogues to Beijing (燕行錄), unsuitable for travel and had no suitable lodgings. Choe Rip (崔豈) mentioned that there was a well in the area, but the water was so muddy that he instead used snow to quench his thirst. The official residence for envoys was full of horse and pig excrement, and the winds were so gusty that people could barely keep their eyes open.⁵⁵ However, Han Bang-eon ignored all these problems, suggesting he had a definite purpose for visiting the area. At the time, Niujiashuang was a military entrepôt of the Ming in Liaodong in that provisions from Shandong were carried through Lushun (旅順) and finally reached Niujiashuang. This prompted Naghachu to target Niujiashuang even though it was much further south than other possible targets. Naghachu's daring raid on Niujiashuang stunned Zhu Yuan-

⁵² *Goryeosa*, vol. 44, entry for lunar July 13, 1373; *Ming Taizu shilu*, vol. 72, section for lunar February 1372.

⁵³ *Goryeosa*, vol. 44, entry for lunar July 13, 1373.

⁵⁴ Kim Sun-ja, *Hanguk jungse Hanjung gwangyesa*, 78.

⁵⁵ Lee Seung-su, "Yeonhaengno jung 'Yoyang-Ansan-Gwangnyeong gugan' e daehan inmun jirihakjeok geomto" [Anthropogeographical Study on the Section 'Liaoyang (遼陽)-Anshan (鞍山)-Guangning (廣寧)' on the Route of Joseon Diplomatic Envoys to Beijing], *Hanguk hanmunhak yeongu* 47 (2011): 575-76.

zhang. As a result, Zhu demoted Qiu Cheng (仇成) from Assistant Commissioner-in-chief (都督僉事) to Commander of the Yongping Guard (永平衛指揮使) and placed Xu Da and Li Wenzhong (李文忠) in charge of overseeing the military organization of Liaodong.⁵⁶

It is worth noting that Zhu Yuanzhang believed Goryeo had collaborated with Naghachu in his attack on Niujiazhuang. This had potentially major implications for future relations between the Ming and Goryeo. Fearing the possible deterioration of its relationship with the Ming, Goryeo sent Ju Yeong-chan (周英贊) to the Ming court to resolve the matter. The usual Goryeo tactic was to try to explain its innocence or to offer a vague explanation asking for lenience. For instance, when Zhu Yuanzhang suspected that a Ming eunuch surnamed Sun (孫內侍) had been poisoned in Goryeo, Goryeo claimed that it had nothing to do with the tragedy, which had been caused by enmity among eunuchs according to Goryeo's explanation. In the case of Goryeo's alleged collaboration with Naghachu, however, Goryeo provided a much more vague response, stating that "Goryeo is incompatible with the remnants of the old dynasty (i.e., the Northern Yuan) and Naghachu just like spears and shields."⁵⁷ This claim, however, was far from the truth because Goryeo indeed exchanged envoys with the Northern Yuan frequently as indicated in Table 2. Thus, Zhu Yuanzhang's suspicion and accusation would probably have embodied some truth. After all, Naghachu's power base was at Jinshan in northern Liaodong, which made it unlikely that he was aware of affairs in southern Liaodong where the Ming logistics base was located. The frequent exchange of envoys between the Northern Yuan (Naghachu) and Goryeo around the time Naghachu attacked Niujiazhuang adds weight to the suspicion that Goryeo was somehow involved in the attack.

⁵⁶ *Ming Taizu shilu*, vol. 76, section for lunar November 1372.

⁵⁷ *Goryeosa*, vol. 44, entry for lunar October 17, 1373.

Table 2. Goryeo's interactions with the Northern Yuan between 1370 and 1373

Time	Yuan Officials	Note
February 1370	Naghachu	Sent local specialties and requested the bestowal of a title
March 1370	Qara Batu, Esen Buqa, Prince of Wu (吳王), Prince of Huai (淮王)	Sent envoys to Goryeo
September 1370	Köke Temür	Sent envoys to Goryeo
December 1370	Naghachu	Sent envoys to Goryeo
May 1371	Prince of Wu	Sent envoys to Goryeo
July 1371	Gao Jianu, Assistant Director of the Right surnamed Wang	Sent envoys to Goryeo
September 1371	Prince of Dongping (東平王)	Sent envoys to Goryeo
October 1371-February 1372	Qarajang	Goryeo held a banquet for Qarajang in January 1372 and appointed him General-in-chief (大將軍)
January 1372	Esen Buqa, Naghachu, Gao Jianu	invaded Yiseong (泥城) and Ganggye (江界)
February 1372	Hu Batu (胡拔都), Zhang Qayimar (張海馬)	invaded Yiseong (泥城) and Ganggye (江界)
February 1372	Naghachu	Sent Wen Qara Buqa (文哈刺不花) to Goryeo
April 1372	Naghachu	Sent envoys and presented local products
May 1372	Damadai	Congratulated King Gongmin on his birthday
February 1373	Batu Temür, Esen Buqa	Sent an edict to inform Goryeo of the Yuan's revival; Goryeo appointed Wen Qara Buqa as Head of the Office of Receptions (判典客寺事) in March

Although diplomatic relations had been formally severed from 1369, Northern Yuan envoys continued to visit Goryeo. King Gongmin also continued to receive them with great hospitality, even bestowing the title of General-in-chief upon Qarajang during his four-month stay in Goryeo. In addition, he gave Naghachu the honorific title of Minister of Education of the First Rank (三重大匡司徒) in February 1370, as the Northern Yuan commander had requested, and then appointed Naghachu's son Wen Qara Buqa

as Head of the Office of Receptions (判典客寺事) in March 1373, alluding to his intention to maintain close ties with the Northern Yuan.⁵⁸ These technically unofficial exchanges appear to have been just as vibrant as those Goryeo officially engaged in with the Ming.

When Goryeo handed over intelligence on Niujiashuang to Naghachu remains a matter of speculation, but it most likely happened sometime after February 1372 when the Northern Yuan achieved a decisive victory in the battle of Qaraqorum. In January 1372, Zhu Yuanzhang had appointed Xu Da the commander-in-chief of 150,000 troops and ordered him to destroy the Northern Yuan forces in Qaraqorum. A fierce battle entailed with Köke Temür at the Tuul River, and Xu allowed himself to be lured deep into the Mongolian steppe where his forces were decimated by Mongol guerrilla warfare. At the same time, the Eastern Route Army (東路軍) led by Li Wenzhong (李文忠) swept up to the Kerülen River with provisions for a campaign of twenty days. However, the army became hopelessly lost and was forced to retreat in the face of hunger and extremely low temperatures.⁵⁹ This military fiasco of the Ming forces meant that the Northern Yuan remained a powerful opponent.

By the time the Northern Yuan army crushed the Ming forces in the battle of Qaraqorum, Naghachu stopped skirmishes with Goryeo and sent his son Wen Qara Buqa as an envoy to Goryeo in February 1372. He sent another envoy two months later to offer Goryeo gifts as tokens of friendship. These gestures took place at a time when it seemed victory over the Ming was within the Northern Yuan's grasp, a victory that would have led to Yuan hegemony in East Asia. Although Goryeo had severed its official relationship with the Yuan following the Yuan's retreat to the north, King Gongmin could not ignore the possibility of the Northern Yuan regaining power and recovering its rule over the Central Plain. In addition, the Ming's advance into southern Liaodong threatened Goryeo's influence

⁵⁸ *Goryeosa*, vol. 42, entry for lunar February 23, 1370; *Goryeosa*, vol. 44, entry for lunar March 11, 1373.

⁵⁹ Luwsandanzan, *Altan towch*, Mongol bichgees khörwüülj, orshil bichij, kharguulan taiibar khiiw (Ulaanbaatar, 2006); *Ming Taizu shilu*, vol. 74, section for lunar June 1372.

over Liaoyang and Shenyang, and Goryeo may have seen the conflict between the Northern Yuan and the Ming as an opportunity to strengthen its influence in Liaodong. As a result, King Gongmin chose not to abandon his ties with the Northern Yuan and cooperated with Naghachu when the Northern Yuan was about to win the battle of Qaraqorum. King Gongmin and Naghachu both wished to keep the Ming forces out of Liaodong, again suggesting that King Gongmin did share intelligence on the Ming military facilities with Naghachu.

The Goryeo diplomacy at the time was trilateral, involving Goryeo, the Ming, and the Northern Yuan. King Gongmin received Northern Yuan envoys – Batu Temür and Esen Buqa – at night in February 1373 under the pretext of having eye disease, no doubt to keep this meeting secret from the Ming. As soon as the two Northern Yuan envoys departed, King Gongmin sent Jang Ja-on to the Dingliao Guard to ask why Jeong Bi (鄭庇) – a Goryeo envoy to the Ming to present horses as tributes – was not allowed to pass the Dingliao Guard and returned to Goryeo. When and why Jeong Bi turned back from the Dingliao Guard is uncertain, but it seems that King Gongmin was trying to examine through Jang Ja-on whether the Ming's attitude toward Goryeo had ever changed as a result of receiving the Northern Yuan envoys. When the Northern Yuan emissaries left Goryeo, King Gongmin gave the envoys ramie fabric as a token of friendship with the Northern Yuan. Later that month, Naghachu sent his son Wen Qara Buqa to Goryeo. During the journey, Gang Yeong (康永) – Brigade Commander stationed at Ganggye (江界萬戶) – killed ten of Wen Qara Buqa's attendants. To deal with this mishap, King Gongmin immediately arrested and imprisoned Gang Yeong in Police Patrol Guard Command (巡衛府) as punishment.⁶⁰ Then in March, King Gongmin appointed Wen Qara Buqa as Head of the Office of Receptions to strengthen his ties with Naghachu.

On the Ming side, after the defeat at Qaraqorum, Zhu Yuanzhang had to accept that Ayushiridara was still a powerful political and military lead-

⁶⁰ *Goryeosa jeoryo* [Essentials of Goryeo History], vol. 29, entry for lunar February 1373 (Seoul: Asea Munhwasa, 1973).

er. As a result, he gave up on directly attacking the Northern Yuan and, instead, focused on reinforcing the Ming defense of Liaodong. Due to the Ming's advance into and then reinforcement in Liaodong, Goryeo and Naghachu highly likely cooperated with one another to keep the Ming in check in Liaodong. For example, King Gongmin ordered Han Bang-eon to travel through the Liaodong region without the Ming's permission, alluding to the likelihood that Han would have contributed to Naghachu's successful attack on Niujiashuang by sharing military intelligence he gathered from southern Liaodong during his travel. This cooperation between Goryeo and the Northern Yuan put the Ming in a difficult situation, intensifying the threat that the Ming felt in Liaodong. Thus, the Ming took the drastic measure of forbidding Goryeo missions to enter Liaodong in 1372 to fundamentally prevent them from spying on the region. Specifically, Zhu Yuanzhang rejected King Gongmin's offer to present annual tributes and instructed Goryeo missions to the Ming to travel only by sea and to visit only once every three years.⁶¹ Zhu treated Goryeo strictly, saying "I will not send envoys [to you (i.e., Goryeo)] ever again because I suspect you would beat my envoys to death. If you are willing to come, come [to us]! If not, do not come!"⁶² These actions were undoubtedly aimed at separating Goryeo from Naghachu and solidifying the Ming foothold in Liaodong.

Despite Zhu Yuanzhang forbidding it, Goryeo kept sending missions through Liaodong. In January 1373, Jang Ja-on traveled to the Dingliao Guard in Liaodong to investigate why Jeong Bi – a Goryeo envoy to the Ming – had turned back from there while on his way to the Ming capital. In November of the same year, Jang attempted to go to the Ming by land once

⁶¹ *Goryeosa*, vol. 44, entry for lunar June 18, 1374; *Ming Taizu shilu*, vol. 72, section for lunar May 1372.

⁶² According to Nam Ui-hyeon's research, the Ming dynasty shut down the travel route for Goryeo missions, requested that Goryeo provide tens of thousands of horses, and frequently quibbled with Goryeo, all to weaken the military capability of Goryeo (and later Joseon) and prevent them from advancing into Liaodong. See Nam Ui-hyeon, "Wonmal Myeongcho Joseon Myeong ui Yodong jaengtaljeon gwa gukgyeong bunjaeng gochal" [Analysis of the Territorial Dispute between Joseon and the Ming over the Liaodong Region during the Late Yuan and Early Ming Periods], *Hanil gwangyesa yeongu* 42 (2012): 81-114.

again but returned halfway. In February 1374, Jeong Bi made another attempt to travel by land to the Ming capital, but the Dingliao Guard stopped him from going further. The Dingliao Guard also stopped Ju Yeong-chan – a Goryeo envoy to the Ming to present horses from Jeju Island as tributes – from proceeding to the Ming court.⁶³ King Gongmin attempted to justify these missions:

We cannot allow our mission to be delayed even if it entails traveling across mountains and sea, for it is important to pay our respects to you (i.e., the Ming emperor) ... If only my small but sincere gift could reach you, I thought going against what you strictly forbade would not matter.⁶⁴

Despite King Gongmin's professed desire to pay tribute to the Ming, it is unlikely Zhu Yuanzhang took his words at face value given the fierce military rivalry between the Ming and the Northern Yuan at the time. After the victory in the battle of Qaraqorum in January and the successful attack on Niujiashuang in November 1372, the Northern Yuan continued their efforts to regain the Central Plain. In April 1373, Köke Temür attacked the Yingmen Pass (應門關) and in November Datong (大同).⁶⁵ Naghachu also launched several large-scale attacks on Ming military bases in Liaoyang, Haizhou, Gaizhou, and Jinzhou in November 1374 as well as in October and November 1375. There is no direct evidence to prove that Goryeo actually cooperated with the Northern Yuan in these attacks. However, King Gongmin had to keep up with the rapid changes that were taking place in Liaodong. Therefore, the Goryeo missions that attempted to travel through Liaodong to the Ming capital were likely part of a strategy to keep up with the swiftly changing circumstances in Liaodong at the time.

⁶³ Koo Beom-jin (trans.), *Imun yeokju*, vol. 1, 104-119.

⁶⁴ *Goryeosa*, vol. 44, entry for lunar February 28, 1374.

⁶⁵ *Ming Taizu shilu*, vol. 99, section for lunar November 1374.

Conclusion

After examining the impact Liu Yi's surrender had on Goryeo and Naghachu and exploring the reason why King Gongmin had his envoys travel through Liaodong to reach the Ming, the following conclusions can be drawn. First of all, King Gongmin walked a diplomatic tightrope between the Ming and the Northern Yuan. After the capture of Dadu in 1368, the Ming dynasty immediately attempted to establish diplomatic ties with Goryeo and tried to cut Goryeo's relationship with the Northern Yuan. Ming-Goryeo relations began with Goryeo responding to the Ming's request that they establish diplomatic relations. However, even after Goryeo had officially severed its relationship with the Northern Yuan, the two states were in contact no less than nineteen times between May 1369 and 1374, when Goryeo severed its relations with the Ming. This shows that King Gongmin took a pragmatic two-track approach to diplomatic relations with the two dynasties: opening friendly relations with the Ming dynasty while maintaining a certain degree of intimacy with the Northern Yuan.

Second, the destabilization of the situation in Liaodong pushed Goryeo closer to the Northern Yuan. In November 1371, King Gongmin took the risk of ordering his mission to travel through Liaodong because Goryeo's claim over Liaoyang and Shenyang was at risk due to Liu Yi's surrender to the Ming which allowed the Ming forces to advance into Liaodong. This threatened the status quo King Gongmin and Naghachu had established in Liaodong. As a result, the two strengthened their alliance to prevent the Ming from further advancing into the region.

Third, Goryeo sent Han Bang-eon through Niujiazhuang and other areas in Liaodong highly likely to spy on Ming military activities in the region. The route Han Bang-eon took passed directly through areas where the Ming dynasty had just recently established military facilities. Niujiazhuang in particular was a major logistics base in southern Liaodong and a crucial defensive point for Ming troops. By drawing upon the intelligence Han Bang-eon and his colleagues gained in southern Liaodong, Goryeo decided to strengthen its relationship with the Northern Yuan especially after the Northern Yuan army won the battle of Qaraqorum in early

1372. Moreover, by sharing the intelligence with Naghachu, Goryeo probably supported Naghachu's attack on Niujiashuang, aiming to maintain a triangular balance between Goryeo, Naghachu, and the Ming in Liaodong. Therefore, Naghachu's successful attack on the Ming army's key logistics base was very much an outcome of cooperation between Goryeo and Naghachu.

After Han Bang-eon's mission, the Ming dynasty shut down the Liaodong route that the Goryeo mission had utilized. However, this failed to stop Goryeo from attempting to send missions through Liaodong. Although most of these missions failed to reach the Ming capital, they still served as an important means of gathering intelligence and thus maintaining Goryeo's trilateral diplomacy with both the Ming and Northern Yuan at the time of geopolitical uncertainty.

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