

Mongol Princess Brides and their Political Power in the Koryŏ Court during the 13th to 14th
Centuries

by

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Abstract

Marriage alliance, or *heqin* 和親, was used as a diplomatic policy as early as in the Western Han dynasty (206 BCE-9 CE). Except for a few who possessed a great personality, princess brides showed little political authority and influence in their marital home, a foreign court. In appearance, the marriage relationship between the Yuan (1271-1368) and the Koryŏ (918-1392) courts was just another *heqin* policy executed by the dominating party, the Yuan dynasty. On the contrary, all the Mongol princess brides held great power in Korean politics. At times, their political power could rival that of the Koryŏ kings. In this thesis, I argue that the source of the Mongol princess brides' political power and authority came externally from their natal family, the Yuan court, and from the retainers they brought with them to Korea. In Chapter 1, I examine the Mongol princesses and their political power and authority in Koryŏ. Chapter 2 explores the political backing from their natal families as I examine the Mongol princess brides' family background and well-maintained ties to the Yuan court. The last chapter analyzes the Mongol princesses' retainers and demonstrates how they served as the extension of their political influence in Koryŏ politics.

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Table of Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Introduction: The “<i>Heqin</i>” between the Mongol Yuan and Korean Koryŏ during the 13th and 14th Centuries..... | 1 |
| Chapter 1: The Political Power of Mongol Princess Brides in Koryŏ..... | 12 |
| 1.1 Lineage of the Mongol Princesses..... | 14 |
| 1.1.1 Princess Qiguo Khudulugh Kelmish..... | 14 |
| 1.1.2 Princess Jiguo Botashirin..... | 15 |
| 1.1.3 Princess Puguo Irinjinbala..... | 16 |
| 1.1.4 Princess Caoguo Jintong..... | 17 |
| 1.1.5 Princess Qinghua Bayan Khudu..... | 17 |
| 1.1.6 Princess Dening Irinjinbal..... | 19 |
| 1.1.7 Princess Luguo Botashiri..... | 21 |
| 1.2 Political Power of the Mongol Princesses..... | 24 |
| Chapter 2: The Link between the Mongol Princesses and the Yuan Court..... | 31 |
| 2.1 Princes of the Yuan Dynasty..... | 31 |
| 2.1.1 Kammala (Prince of Jin)..... | 32 |
| 2.1.2 Esen Temür (Prince of Ying)..... | 36 |
| 2.1.3 Amuga (Prince of Wei)..... | 39 |
| 2.1.4 Čosbal (Prince Wujing of Suppressing West)..... | 42 |
| 2.1.5 Bolod Temür (Prince of Wei)..... | 45 |
| 2.2 Status and Political Power of the Imperial Princes..... | 46 |
| 2.3 Mongol Princesses’ Ties with the Yuan Empire..... | 52 |
| Chapter 3: The Mongol Princesses and their Retainers in the Koryŏ Court..... | 56 |
| 3.1 Servant Retainers of the Mongol Princesses..... | 56 |
| 3.2 Retainers as Officials of the Koryŏ Government..... | 61 |
| 3.2.1 Huladai – In Hu..... | 61 |
| 3.2.2 Sange – Chang Sunnyong..... | 65 |
| 3.2.3 Ch’a Sin..... | 67 |
| 3.2.4 Shiduer - No Yŏng..... | 69 |
| 3.3 Political Roles of the Retainers and the Mongol Princess..... | 70 |
| Concluding Remarks: The Foreignness of the Mongol Princesses in the Koryŏ Court...76 | 76 |
| Bibliography..... | 79 |

List of Tables

| | | |
|------------------|--|----|
| Table 1.1 | Yuan-Koryŏ Marriages during the 13 th and 14 th Centuries..... | 13 |
| Table 1.2 | Genealogy of Khudulugh Kelmish and King Ch'ungnyŏl..... | 15 |
| Table 1.3 | Genealogy of Botashirin and King Ch'ungsŏn..... | 16 |
| Table 1.4 | Genealogies of King Ch'ungsuk and his Mongol Princess-Brides..... | 18 |
| Table 1.5 | Genealogy of Irinijinbal, King Ch'unghye and King Ch'ungmok..... | 20 |
| Table 1.6 | Genealogy of Botashiri and King Kongmin..... | 22 |

List of Figures

| | | |
|--------------|--|---|
| Map 1 | The Yuan Empire and the Koryŏ Kingdom in 1294..... | 2 |
|--------------|--|---|

Introduction

The “*Heghin*” between the Mongol Yuan and Korean Koryŏ during the 13th and 14th Centuries

Formal diplomatic relations between the Mongols and the Koryŏ 高麗 courts (918-1392) were established in 1219 when the Mongols, with Koryŏ’s assistance, suppressed the Kitan rebels occupying the city of Kangdong 江東城 in Korea. After this incident, the Mongol khanate and the Koryŏ kingdom became “brotherly states” and the Koryŏ king, Kojong 高宗 (r. 1213-59), agreed to provide yearly tribute to the Mongols. This began the 150 years of Mongol-Koryŏ relations, which lasted until the fall of the Yuan 元 dynasty (1271-1368). The highlight of the bilateral relationship between the Mongols (the Yuan dynasty after 1271) and the Koryŏ kingdom was the marriage alliance between the Mongol princesses and the Koryŏ kings. In 1271, Wŏnjong 元宗 of Koryŏ (r. 1259-74) had requested a marriage between his heir and a daughter of the Yuan emperor, Khubilai Khan 忽必烈汗 (r. 1260-94). The latter agreed but the marriage between the Koryŏ crown prince, Wang Sim 王諶 (later King Ch’ungnyŏl 忠烈王, r. 1274-98, 1298-1308), and the Mongol princess, Khudulugh Kelmish 忽都魯揭里迷失 (1257-1297), was not concluded until 1274 when the political turbulence inside the Koryŏ court was all settled. This marriage turned a new page in Yuan-Koryŏ relations as the next one hundred years saw the climax of the interstate relations between Yuan and Koryŏ. From King Ch’ungnyŏl to King Kongmin 恭愍王 (r. 1351-74), five out of seven kings on the Koryŏ throne before the Yuan dynasty ended in 1368 married Mongol princesses. The two exceptions, King Ch’ungmok 忠穆王 (r. 1344-48) and King Ch’ungjŏng 忠定王 (r. 1349-51), either died prematurely or were

deposed before they were suitable for marriage. As a result, the Koryŏ kings became the Yuan emperors' imperial sons-in-law and thus part of the imperial clan; at the same time, Koryŏ became the son-in-law state of the Yuan empire. Because the marriage ties between the two courts created a new age in Koryŏ history, my study focuses on this important marriage relationship during the thirteenth to fourteenth centuries.



Map 1 The Yuan Empire and the Koryŏ Kingdom in 1294 (modified from:

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Yuan_Dynasty_Administrative_division.jpg)

Importance and Uniqueness of the Yuan-Koryŏ Marriage Alliance

Seemingly, the marriage relationship between the Mongol and the Korean courts was a kind of *heqin*, or marriage alliance. *Heqin* marriage policy was officially adopted in the Western Han 西漢 (206 BCE-9 CE). To deal with the Xiongnu 匈奴 threat, Emperor Gaozu 高祖 (r. 202-195 BCE) married a “princess” to the Xiongnu ruler as a minister suggested.¹ By doing so, the Chinese empire and the nomadic confederacy became brotherly states and negotiated peace. The other side of the coin shows that the Xiongnu and the other nomadic societies in Inner Asia also used marriage alliance in a similar trajectory. Inter-marriage between nomadic powers was common, and it can be said that the marriage alliance with the Chinese empire was an extension of their tribal organisation. Although the Chinese had a long tradition of using marriage to seek political advantage, they adopted nomadic practice when contracting marriage alliances with nomadic people.² Therefore, as both a Chinese dynasty and an Inner Asian khanate, it is not surprising that the Yuan dynasty’s marriage relations with the Koryŏ dynasty embodied the practice of both sedentary and nomadic cultures of Inner Asia.

As a result, the marital relationship between the Yuan and Koryŏ courts was not simply a kind of *heqin* marriage. In his comprehensive study of Chinese *heqin* policy from pre-Qin 秦 through Qing 清 periods, Cui Mingde summarizes seven categories of *heqin*.³ First, it pacified the borders. Second, it served as a military alliance. Third, it was used to dissolve foreign powers. Fourth, it was a reward for foreign military aid. Fifth, it helped to develop diplomatic relations. Sixth, it consolidated diplomatic alliance. Seventh, it created political alliance within an empire. However, the marital relationships between the Yuan and Koryŏ courts did not

¹ This princess was a daughter of a distant relative in the imperial clan, not the biological daughter of Gaozu.

² Pan, “Marriage Alliances and Chinese Princesses,” 122.

³ Cui, *Zhongguo gudai heqin*, 4-12.

conform to these seven categories. When contrasted with other *heqin* marriages, the most distinctive nature of the Yuan-Koryŏ marital relationship is that the Koryŏ royal house was well incorporated into the Yuan court. Although the *heqin* policy defined the status of the two states as brothers (as between Han and Xiongnu), uncle and nephew (as between Tang 唐 and Tibet), and father and son-in-law (as between Tang and Uighur), such rhetoric were more nominal than reality. In essence, the two states were still two separate entities, and the relationship of the two was never as intimate as in an actual family. While the *heqin* policy set the two states apart, the marriage alliance adopted by the Mongol khans attempted to integrate different states to their world order. In this case, by marrying Mongol princesses into the Korean royal house, the Korean kings became, in a real sense, the sons-in-law of the Mongol Yuan emperors, who were able to assert much control over Koryŏ's politics through the princess brides.

Moreover, the agency of the Mongol princess brides in the Koryŏ was unparalleled in previous *heqin* marriages. Discussing Sui 隋 and Tang princess brides from the perspective of the history of woman, Jennifer Jay demonstrates that the agency of the princesses varied and was contingent on forces beyond their control.⁴ There were princess brides who at a time wielded considerable power in the foreign courts, such as Princess Qianjin 千金公主 with the Turks and Princess Taihe 太和公主 with the Uighurs.⁵ But there were also princess brides murdered by their husbands because of a change in politics.⁶ Contrary to Jay's observation, the Mongol princesses present a different model of princess brides in the foreign court. The Mongol princesses enjoyed high authority in the Koryŏ court. They were designated as the principal

⁴ Jay, "Sui and Tang Princess Brides," 18.

⁵ A letter from a Tang minister to Princess Taihe reveals her great influence in the Uighur court. See Pan, "Marriage Alliances and Chinese Princesses," 121.

⁶ They were Princess Yifang 宜芳公主 and Princess Jingle 靜樂公主 to the Xi 奚 and the Kitans respectively. For an account of their murders, see Pan, "Marriage Alliances and Chinese Princesses," 116-7.

consorts regardless of any wives the kings had before their marriage. They widely participated in court assemblies, banquets, hunting, inspection tours and receptions of diplomatic envoys. At one point, one of the Mongol princess brides, in her capacity as queen dowager, even held court assembly during the reigns of King Ch'unghye 忠惠王 (r. 1330-32, 1339-44), King Ch'ungmok and King Ch'ungjōng. The political power the princess brides wielded was not merely an instance of personal influence and determination but also a result of the political backing from the Yuan dynasty. In this study, I argue that the source of the Mongol princesses' immense political power came externally from their natal family – the Yuan court.

State of the Field

The Mongol princess brides played a critical and unique role in the Koryŏ court, but this topic has received little attention from the academe. Much of the scholarship contains a sporadic discussion and offers only a narrative history of these princesses and their marriages. Yuan scholars have not engaged in in-depth discussions and they look at the marriage practice as merely an episode of Yuan-Koryŏ relations. Wang Xiaofu and Jiang Feifei's general history of Sino-Korean relations contains a chapter on Yuan-Koryŏ relations and omits a separate discussion on the marriage alliance.⁷ Since their work is a general history, it is understandable that they offer only a narrative approach on this marital relationship. The situation is similar in Cui Mingde's general discussion on *heqin* marriage, where the Yuan dynasty's marriage policy is covered in an appendix.⁸ Although he provides a narrative, his points are rather simplistic due to the grand scope of his research. Hsiao Ch'i-ch'ing's 1983 article remains the main Chinese

⁷ Wang and Jiang, *Zhonghan guanxi shi*, 217-58.

⁸ Cui, *Zhongguo gudai heqin*, 375-395.

writing on the marital relationship between the Yuan and the Koryŏ courts.⁹ He discusses briefly the political status of the Mongol princesses in the Korean court and its implication to the Koryŏ status in the Mongol world order. Wuyungaowa devotes a chapter on the imperial marriage between the Mongols and Koreans in her monograph of Yuan-Koryŏ relations.¹⁰ While she scrutinizes historical sources to repudiate and correct Hsiao Ch'i-ch'ing's earlier works, her discussion mostly follows his and does not bring up new insight.

In western scholarship, there is not a single work focusing on this political marriage. The closest one is George Qingzhi Zhao's *Marriage as Political Strategy and Cultural Expression: Mongolian Royal Marriages from World Empire to Yuan Dynasty*. Arguing that Chinggisid clan applied imperial marriages as a political strategy to achieve effective control over its massive realm, Zhao uses the marriage between the Yuan and the Koryŏ courts as one of his case studies. His discussion, nevertheless, coincides with Hsiao's observation.

A common limitation runs through the above works – none provides a systematic investigation of the Mongol princess brides' role in Koryŏ politics, nor do they trace the source of the Mongol princesses' political power. My study puts the Mongol princesses at the focal point of this Yuan-Koryŏ marriage as I examine the source of their political power.

Sources and Methodology

The lack of current writings on Yuan-Koryŏ marriages also speaks of the scarcity of primary sources on the topic. Source materials on the Mongol princesses are recorded sporadically in *Yuanshi* 元史 (the Official History of the Yuan Dynasty). Mongol princesses

⁹ Hsiao, "Yuan li guanxi zhong de wangshi hunyin," 766-89.

¹⁰ Wuyungaowa, *Yuanchao yu gaoli*, 136-69.

appear in the basic annals of Khubilai Khan, or Shizu 世祖,¹¹ Wuzong 武宗 and Renzong 仁宗,¹² the Table of Princesses¹³ and the Biography of Koryŏ.¹⁴ But *Yuanshi* does not record all the princesses who were married to the Koryŏ court. On the other hand, *Koryŏsa* 高麗史 (the Official History of the Koryŏ Dynasty), records all the Mongol princess brides in the Koryŏ court, and as such, it is the most comprehensive source on them. All the Mongol princess brides are given individual entries in *Koryŏsa*'s Biographies of Royal Consorts.¹⁵

Although *Koryŏsa* provides a separate biography for each of the seven princess brides, the seven biographies are not enough for a systematic analysis. As the princesses appear in the dynastic record of the Koryŏ kingdom as the royal consorts, they were not only princesses of the Yuan empire but also queens of the Koryŏ dynasty. It is unquestionable that after they married the Koryŏ kings, they were designated as the principal consorts regardless of any wives the kings had before their marriage.¹⁶ One can find such a case in the marriage between Khudulugh Kelmish and King Ch'ungnyŏl. Before Khudulugh Kelmish married him, King Ch'ungnyŏl had already married Chŏngsin buju 貞信府主, and the two had a close relationship. Nevertheless, Khudulugh Kelmish became the queen while King Ch'ungnyŏl severed ties with Chŏngsin buju. Since the Mongol princesses were the queens of the Koryŏ court, it would be beneficial for us to borrow some feminist theoretical framework from Medieval studies, namely Theresa

¹¹ Chapters 8, 13, 16, 18 and 19 of *Yuanshi* contains the information on Khudulugh Kelmish (Princess Qiguo 齊國大長公主), who married King Ch'ungnyŏl.

¹² Chapter 23 and 24 of *Yuanshi* contains the information on Botashirin 寶塔實憐 (Princess Jiguo 薊國大長公主), who married King Ch'ungsŏn 忠宣王 (r. 1298, 1308-13).

¹³ Khudulugh Kelmish, Botashirin, Irinjinbala 亦憐真八剌 (Princess Puguo 濮國長公主) and Jintong 金童 (Princess Caoguo 曹國長公主), who both married King Ch'ungsuk 忠肅王 (r. 1313-30), are recorded in the table under the title Koryŏ princess.

¹⁴ Khudulugh Kelmish and Botashirin are recorded in it.

¹⁵ Besides the four princesses recorded in *Yuanshi*, Bayan Khudu 伯顏忽都 (Princess Qinghua 慶華公主, married to King Ch'ungsuk), Irinjinbal 亦憐真班 (Princess Dening 德寧公主 married to King Ch'unghye), and Botashiri 寶塔失里 (Princess Lugu 魯國大長公主, married to King Kongmin) also have biographies in *Koryŏsa*.

¹⁶ Hsiao, "Yuan li guanxi zhong de wangshi hunyin," 778.

Earenfight's concept of queenship, to analyze the political role of the Mongol princesses as Medievalists have advanced the study of the European queens since the late 1980s while the study of the East Asian counterparts is still lacking.¹⁷

A queen held many overlapping roles. As Earenfight explains, a queen was not only a wife of the king, but also the mother of the future king, regent after the childless king died, dowager when her young child enthroned, and even ruler in her own right.¹⁸ Most of these roles were based on her relationship with the king, her husbands or her sons, suggesting that her power was based on the royal family. Indeed, the queen held undisputed power and authority in the royal family.¹⁹ Many examples show that the Mongol princess brides had authority even higher than that of the Korean king in the inner palace, the place dominated by the royal consorts. My analysis of Mongol princess brides utilizes their biographies and many miscellaneous accounts contained in *Koryŏsa* and *Yuanshi* to examine their roles as the wife, mother, regent, dowager of the Korean kings and as a ruler of their own right.

Theresa Earenfight also suggests that original sources on European queens can be found everywhere, in artworks, literature, government documents, legal records and financial records.²⁰ A queen could draw her political power from a range of sources and her power could take many forms.²¹ The application of queenship in my analysis, however, is not without limitation. One cannot blindly apply this methodology to locate more sources for the study of Mongol princesses as not all of the sources have equivalents in Korea. However, the ideology that queens might appear in anything can extend our search for additional sources on the Mongol princesses.

¹⁷ Earenfight, *Queenship in Medieval Europe*, 2.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 24.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 25.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 20-1.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 27.

Therefore, my application of queenship in analyzing the Mongol princesses in the Koryŏ court will need adjustment to the sources available in the Yuan and the Koryŏ periods. In my search for additional source materials, I have identified the primary source of Mongol princess brides' political power to have derived from their "foreignness."

According to Earenfight, the foreignness of a queen, whether from her birthplace or from her status, made her the other in the court. It did not make her weaker; instead, it made her stronger.²² Her theory, indeed, resonates with Hsiao's findings of the Mongol princess brides in Koryŏ. Hsiao discovers that the Mongol princesses played an important role in the Koryŏ palace and court, enjoyed high authority, and participated extensively in court activities.²³ The foreignness of the Mongolian Koryŏ queens, in this case, came from their natal family, the Yuan imperial clan, and from their status as Mongol princesses.

Indeed, of the seven Mongol princesses who married Koryŏ kings, only one – Khudulugh Kelmish – was a daughter of the Mongol Yuan emperor, while the others were daughters of princes from the imperial clan. According to Mongol tradition, however, all daughters of the imperial clan, whether from the reigning family or other princely families, were considered princesses.²⁴ The genealogies of the Mongol princess brides show that all seven were descendants of Khubilai Khan. Their fathers were fathers and brothers of the Yuan emperors, and one was even a contender for the Yuan imperial throne. Therefore, their family background became an important political backing for the princess brides' considerable authority and political activities in the Koryŏ court.

²² Earenfight, *Queenship in Medieval Europe*, 27.

²³ Hsiao, "Yuan li guanxi zhong de wangshi hunyin," 779-81.

²⁴ Song Lian, *Yuanshi* 109.2757.

Besides, the Mongol princesses, as brides from abroad, brought with them to the Koryŏ court private retainers, who came from humble backgrounds. Gradually, they became the backbone of the influential Mongol and Western Asian families in the Korean court while maintaining political support to the Mongol princess brides in order to further Yuan's interest in Korea. Khudulugh Kelmish's servants, Huladai 忽剌歹 (1249-1311) and Sange 三哥 (1253-1297), who later adopted Sino-Korean names – In Hu 印侯 and Chang Sunnyong 張舜龍 respectively, are the best examples demonstrating this foreign influence in the Koryŏ court. Both began as Khudulugh Kelmish's servants and were later promoted to prominent positions in the military and civil administration of the Koryŏ government by King Ch'ungnyŏl. Their influence was such that the compilers of *Koryŏsa* assigned them separate biographies. These private attendants and later Inner Asian officials in the Koryŏ court protected the Mongol princess brides during political intrigue and thus can be viewed as the extension of the power of the Mongol princess brides. As such, they need to be studied for their collaborative role with their masters.

Structure of Thesis

Based on the above theoretical framework, my thesis argues that the Mongol princesses' natal family in the Yuan empire enabled them to enjoy great political power in the Koryŏ court. The structure of the presentation will facilitate this discussion. In the first chapter, I examine the Mongol princess brides to analyze their familial and political roles in the Koryŏ court. In Chapter 2, I analyze their family background and argue how it helped them to influence Korean politics. Finally, in Chapter 3, my discussion of the retainers that the Mongol princess brides brought to Korea argues that despite having their own identity in the Koryŏ government, these personal servants served as an extension of the political power of the Mongol princess brides. The foreign

origin, their family background and retainers together symbolized the Mongol princesses' foreignness and external power in the Koryŏ court.

Chapter 1

The Political Power of the Mongol Princess Brides in Koryŏ

The seven Mongol princess brides left the Yuan capital of Dadu 大都 (modern Beijing) and travelled a journey of over 1000 km. to arrive at the Koryŏ court in Kaesŏng 開城 (at the North Korean border 60 km. northwest of modern Seoul). Their processions lasted around two months as the example of Khudulugh Kelmish shows that she set off from Dadu in the early ninth month of 1274 and arrived at Kaesŏng in the early eleventh month of the same year.²⁵ Except for the occasional visits home and pilgrimages to Buddhist temples, they spent the rest of their lives in Koryŏ. My primary sources on their activities in the Korean court are the official records for the Yuan dynasty, *Yuanshi*, and for the Koryŏ Kingdom, *Koryŏsa*. *Koryŏsa* compiled information on them, not only due to their status as the principal consorts of the Korean kings but also because of their active involvement in Koryŏ politics. Their activities in Korea are recorded in *Koryŏsa*'s Biographies of Royal Consorts. Additionally, in the section of basic annals, they appear together with their husbands, the Koryŏ kings, as they visited Buddhist temples, engaged in the royal hunt, practiced horsemanship, and received foreign diplomats. I put these Mongol princess brides at the focal point, and scrutinize their activities in the Korean court at Kaesŏng to illustrate their political power in the Koryŏ court.

²⁵ Chŏng In-ji, *Koryŏsa* 28.565-6.

| Princess's Name | Title | Year of Birth and Death | Father | Husband | Year of Marriage | Reigning Yuan Emperor | Reigning Koryŏ King |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------------------|--|-----------------|------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Khudulugh Kelmish | Princess Qiguo | 1257-1297 | Khubilai Khan | King Ch'ungnyŏl | 1274 | Khubilai Khan | King Wŏnjong |
| Botashirin | Princess Jiguo | ?-1315 | Kammala, Prince of Jin | King Ch'ungsŏn | 1296 | Emperor Chengzong | King Ch'ungnyŏl |
| Irinjinbala | Princess Puguo | ?-1319 | Esen Temür, Prince of Ying | King Ch'ungsuk | 1316 | Emperor Renzong | King Ch'ungsuk |
| Jintong | Princess Caoguo | 1307-1325 | Amuga, Prince of Wei | King Ch'ungsuk | 1324 | Emperor Taiding | King Ch'ungsuk |
| Bayan Khudu | Princess Qinghua | ?-1344 | Amuga, Prince of Wei | King Ch'ungsuk | 1333 | Emperor Shundi | King Ch'ungsuk |
| Irinjinbal | Princess Dening | ?-1375 | Čosbal, Prince Wujiang of Suppressing West | King Ch'ungnye | 1330 | Emperor Wenzong | King Ch'ungsuk |
| Botashiri | Princess Luguo | ?-1365 | Bolod Temür, Prince of Wei | King Kongmin | 1349 | Emperor Shundi | King Ch'ungjŏng |

Table 1.1 Yuan-Koryŏ marriages during the 13th and 14th Centuries

1.1 Lineage of the Mongol Princesses

Genealogical tables provide vital sources of the lineage and legitimacy of the Medieval queens, but modern scholarship tends to put emphasis on the males in the family and neglect female position.²⁶ Current research on the Mongol princesses has not been interested in the lineage of the Mongol princess brides, and none of the works discussed in the introduction has reconstructed a genealogical table. Hsiao Ch'i-ch'ing's genealogical tree of the Yuan-Koryŏ imperial marriage emphasizes the lineage of the Koryŏ kings.²⁷ It does not show the lineage of the Mongol princesses nor the Mongol side of the marriage. To remedy this situation and present both the female and male sides of the marriage, I have reconstructed the genealogical tables of each of the Mongol princesses and incorporated them into the Koryŏ lineage.

1.1.1 Princess Qiguo Khudulugh Kelmish

In 1274, the first marriage alliance between the Yuan and Koryŏ courts was between Yuan's Khudulugh Kelmish (Princess Qiguo, 1257-1297) and King Ch'ungnyŏl of Koryŏ.²⁸ Although it is certain that she was a daughter of Khubilai Khan, her mother's identity is vague. According to *Koryŏsa*, her mother was Asujin Khadun 阿速真可敦.²⁹ This name, however, cannot be found in *Yuanshi*'s Biographies of Imperial Consorts. Hsiao suggests that she might have been one of Khubilai's secondary concubines and a woman of Asud (*Asu ren* 阿速人) as her name indicates.³⁰

²⁶ Earenfight, *Queenship in Medieval Europe*, 179.

²⁷ Hsiao, "Yuan li guanxi zhong de wangshi hunyin," 774.

²⁸ Chŏng In-ji, *Koryŏsa* 28.564.

²⁹ Ibid. 89.20.

³⁰ Hsiao, "Yuan li guanxi zhong de wangshi hunyin," 776n5.

Table 1.2 Genealogy of Khudulugh Kelmish and King Ch'ungnyöl

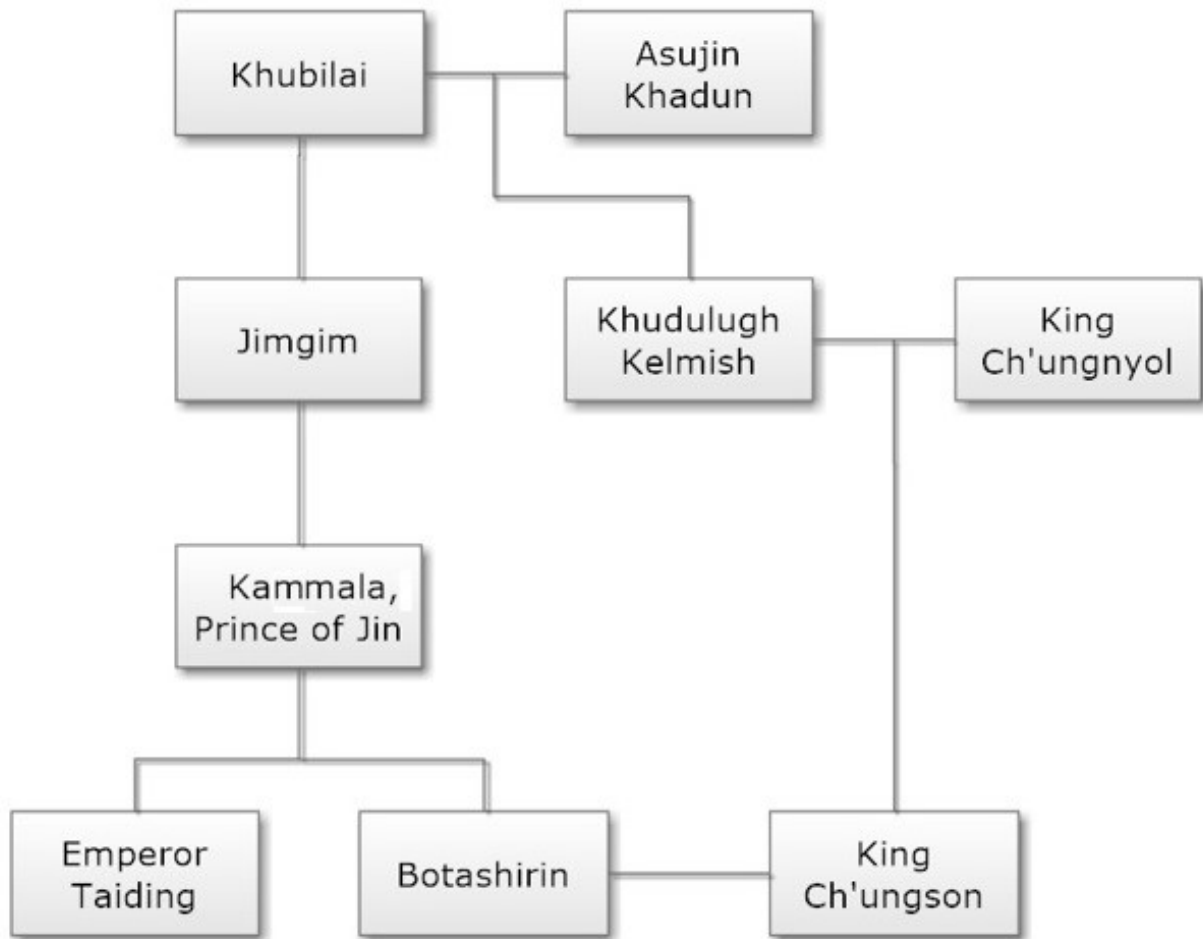


1.1.2 Princess Jiguo Botashirin

In the second Yuan-Koryŏ marriage alliance at the Koryŏ court, Botashirin 寶塔實憐 (Princess Jiguo 薊國大長公主, d. 1315) married King Ch'ungsŏn 忠宣王 (r. 1298, 1308-1313) in 1296, when the half-Mongol and half-Korean son of Khudulugh Kelmish and Ch'ungnyöl was still the crown prince and visited the Yuan capital of Dadu.³¹ She was the eldest daughter of Kammala 甘麻剌 (Prince of Jin 晉王), the eldest son of Khubilai's crown prince, Jimgim 真金. So Botashirin was Khubilai's great-granddaughter and a sister of Yesün Temür 也孫帖木兒, Emperor Taiding 泰定帝 (r. 1324-1328). King Ch'ungsŏn married another Mongol woman called Yesüjin 也速真. But she did not hold the title of princess; *Koryŏsa* records her as a mere "Mongol woman," so she was not considered to be part of the Yuan imperial clan and is not included in this discussion.

³¹ Chŏng In-ji, *Koryŏsa* 89.26.

Table 1.3 Genealogy of Botashirin and King Ch'ungsŏn



1.1.3 Princess Pugu Irinjinbala

The marriage of Yesüjin and Ch'ungsŏn produced another Mongol-Korean king, King Ch'ungsuk 忠肅王 (r. 1313-1330). He married a total of three Mongol princesses: Irinjinbala 亦憐真八剌 (Princess Pugu 濮國長公主, d. 1319), Jintong 金童 (Princess Caoguo 曹國長公主, 1307-1325) and Bayan Khudu 伯顏忽都 (Princess Qinghua 慶華公主, d. 1344). This is a significant departure from the norm as all the other Korean kings married only one Mongol princess bride. Irinjinbala was a daughter of Esen Temür 也先帖木兒 (Prince of Ying 營王),

who was a son of Khubilai's fifth son, Hügeči 忽哥赤 (Prince of Yunnan 雲南王).³² She was thus another great-granddaughter of Khubilai.

1.1.4 Princess Caoguo Jintong

After Irinjinbala, Ch'ungsuk married Jintong in 1324.³³ Jintong was a daughter of Amuga 阿木哥 (Prince of Wei 魏王), who was a son of Jimgim's second son.³⁴ Amuga was the elder brother of two Yuan emperors, Wuzong (r. 1308-1311) and Renzong (r. 1312-1320), so Jintong was not only a great-granddaughter of Khubilai but also a niece of two emperors.

1.1.5 Princess Qinghua Bayan Khudu

Bayan Khudu was King Ch'ungsuk's third and last Mongol wife from the Yuan imperial clan, whom he married in 1333.³⁵ This marriage lasted longer than his previous two. Bayan Khudu had an uncertain lineage. According to *Koryŏsa*, she is only referred to as a "Mongol woman," receiving a similar treatment to that of Yesüjin. But Hsiao Ch'i-ch'ing found evidence in a Korean work to show that she might have been another daughter of the Prince of Wei and a sister of Jintong. He argues that since she was conferred a title of princess vis-à-vis Yesüjin whose title was only a royal concubine, it was very likely that she had an imperial lineage. Therefore, I follow Hsiao's judgement in my discussion and recognize Bayan Khudu as a Mongol princess.

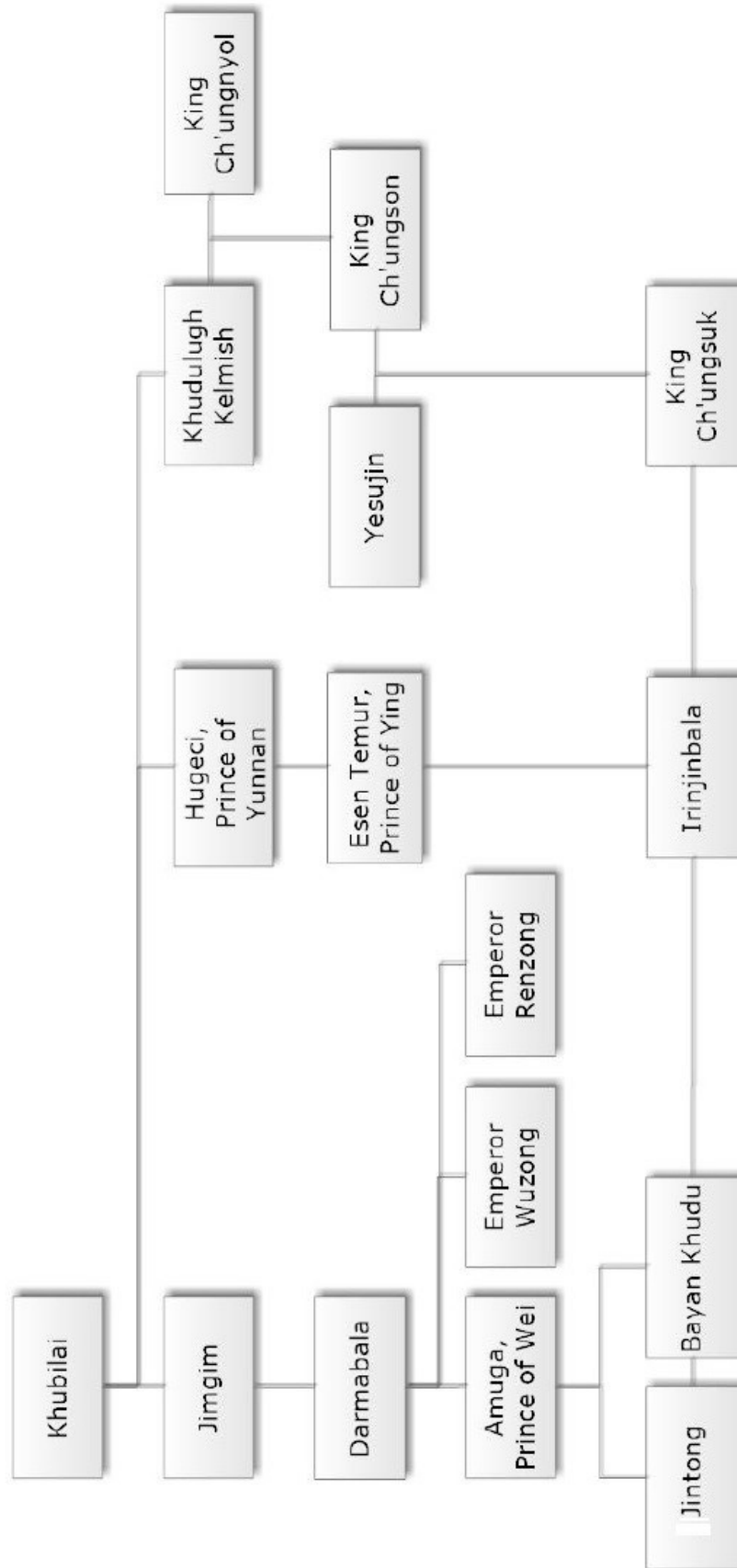
³² Song Lian, *Yuanshi* 107.2724-5.

³³ Chŏng In-ji, *Koryŏsa* 35.712.

³⁴ Song Lian, *Yuanshi* 107.2728.

³⁵ Chŏng In-ji, *Koryŏsa* 35.719.

Table 1.4 Genealogies of King Ch'ungsuk and his Mongol Princess-Brides



1.1.6 Princess Dening Irinjinbal

Despite marrying three Mongol princesses as his consorts, King Ch'ungsuk did not produce another Mongol-Korean king in his line. In 1325, he and Jintong had a son named Yongsan wŏnja 龍山元子, meaning the firstborn son of the Dragon Mountain.³⁶ But the firstborn died early at the age of seventeen before he was enthroned, leaving the line of succession to King Ch'unghye, who was Ch'ungsuk's second son with a Korean concubine.³⁷ In 1330, Ch'unghye married the next Mongol princess bride, Irinjinbal 亦憐真班 (Princess Dening 德寧公主, d. 1375). This marriage produced a son, who later became King Ch'ungmok. According to *Koryŏsa*, Irinjinbal was a daughter of Jiaoba 焦八 (Prince Wujing of Suppressing West 鎮西武靖王).³⁸ The name Jiaoba appears a second time in the basic annals of Ch'unghye as Prince Guanxi 關西王.³⁹ But this title does not appear in the Table of Princes in *Yuanshi*, while Prince Wujing of Suppressing West does, so Prince Guanxi is probably an error. Moreover, the name Jiaoba is nowhere to be found in *Yuanshi*. Of the two names under the title Prince Wujing of Suppressing West, Temür Buqa 鐵木兒不花 and his son Čosbal 搠思班, neither was named Jiaoba.⁴⁰ Temür Buqa should have died between 1297 and 1306 because 1297 was the last time he appears in the dynastic record, and 1306 was the earliest record of Čosbal being the Prince Wujing of Suppressing West, a title he presumably inherited after his father died.⁴¹ As there was a 30-year gap between the death of Temür Buqa and the marriage between Irinjinbal and Ch'unghye, it seems unlikely that Temür Buqa was the father of the Mongol princess. Wedded at

³⁶ Ibid. 89.28.

³⁷ Ibid. 91.60.

³⁸ Ibid. 89.31.

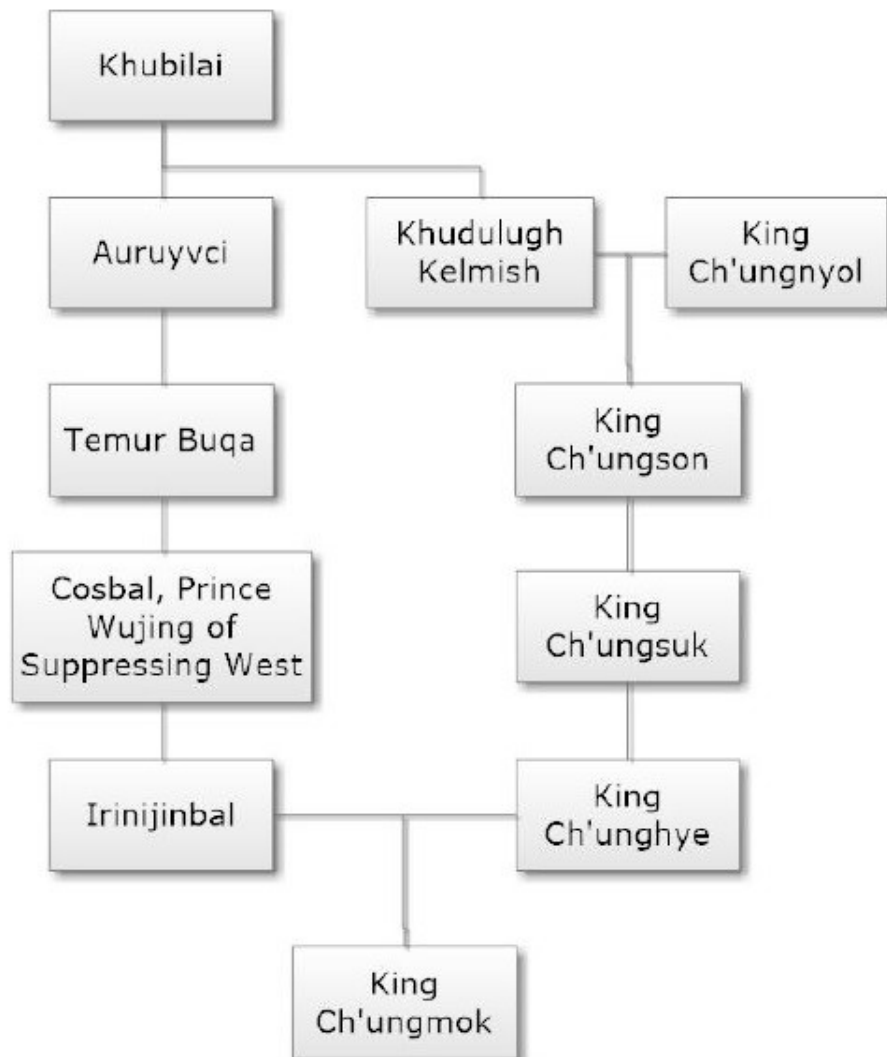
³⁹ Ibid. 36.724.

⁴⁰ Song Lian, *Yuanshi* 108.2746.

⁴¹ Ibid. 19.410; 23.512.

the age of fifteen, Ch'unghye's spouse should not have been aged over thirty years old. So, we may rule out Temür Buqa as the father of Irinijinbal. Čosbal, who inherited his father's princely role in the early 1300s, would have been over thirty years old and he might have a daughter at a marriageable age when Ch'unghye married Irinijinbal. Therefore, I contend that the Jiaoba in *Koryŏsa* is the Čosbal in *Yuanshi*, and Irinijinbal was another granddaughter of Khubilai as Čosbal was a grandson of Auruyvci 奧魯赤, the seventh son of Khubilai.

Table 1.5 Genealogy of Irinijinbal, King Ch'unghye and King Ch'ungmok



1.1.7 Princess Luguó Botashiri

The last of the Mongol princesses who married into the Koryŏ royal house was Botashiri 寶塔失里 (Princess Luguó 魯國大長公主, d. 1365). In 1349, she married the Koryŏ prince (King Kongmin) when he was serving in the Yuan empire as the imperial bodyguard.⁴² In 1365, she died in childbirth and left no child to inherit this line. *Koryŏsa* indicates that her father was a Prince of Wei of the Yuan imperial clan, but it does not provide his name.⁴³ According to the Table of Princes of *Yuanshi*, two men were conferred the title Prince of Wei: Amuga and Bolod Temür 孛羅帖木兒.⁴⁴ The Table of Imperial Genealogy in *Yuanshi* indicates that Bolod Temür was Amuga's son, who inherited his father's title.⁴⁵ So, which Princes of Wei was the father of Botashiri? *Koryŏsa*'s basic annals of King Kongmin records him receiving the news of his father-in-law's death in 1370.⁴⁶ *Yuanshi* does not record the death of Bolod Temür, but it records that Amuga died in 1324.⁴⁷ Therefore, King Kongmin's father-in-law must have been Bolod Temür. Since Bolod Temür's father, Amuga, was a great-grandson of Khubilai from the line of Jimgim, Botashiri was a descendant of Khubilai.

⁴² Chŏng In-ji, *Koryŏsa* 38.754.

⁴³ Ibid. 89.32.

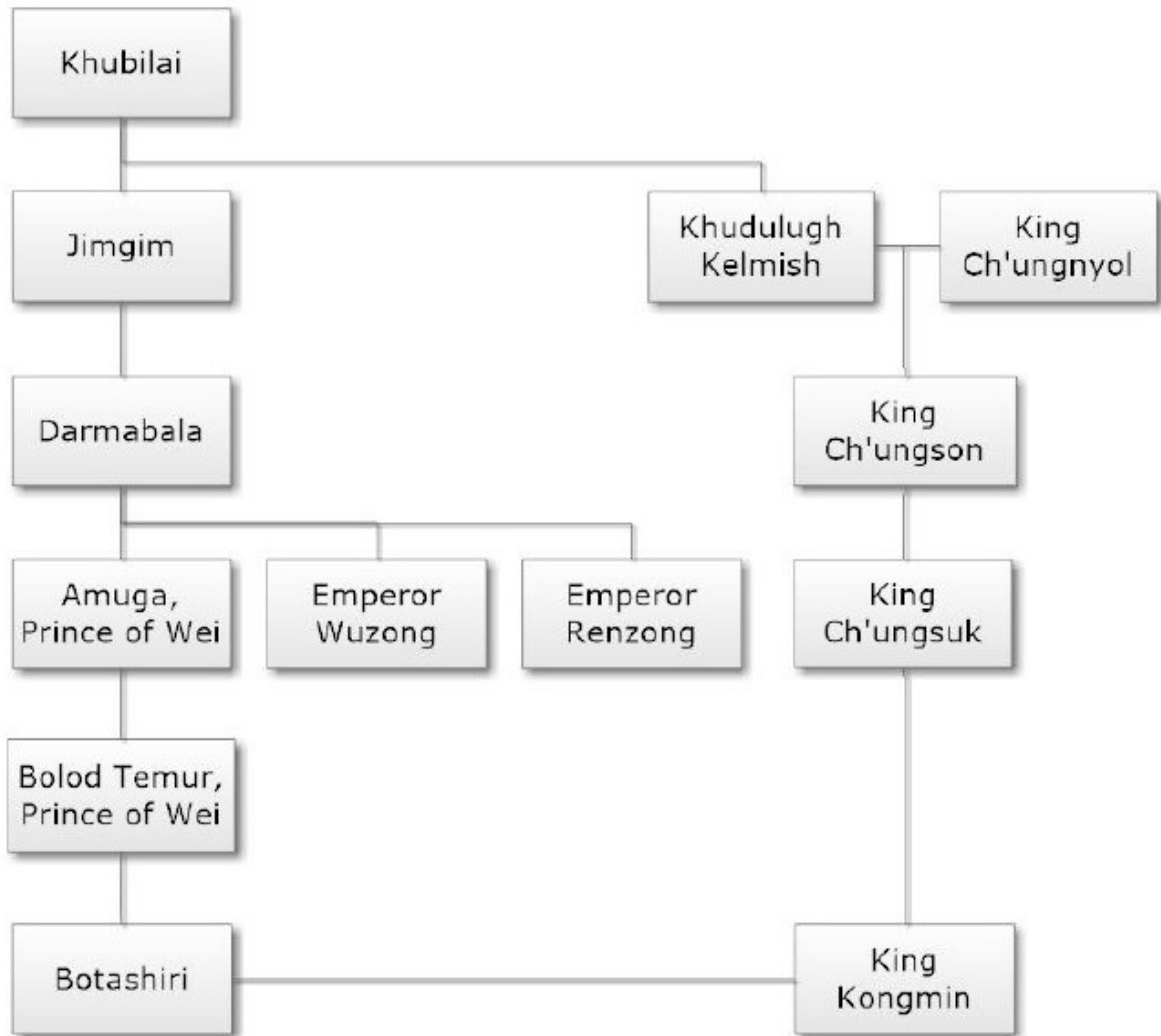
⁴⁴ Song Lian, *Yuanshi* 108.2739.

⁴⁵ Ibid. 107.2728.

⁴⁶ Chŏng In-ji, *Koryŏsa* 42.828.

⁴⁷ Song Lian, *Yuanshi* 29.648.

Table 1.6 Genealogy of Botashiri and King Kongmin



In the first of the Yuan-Koryŏ marriage alliances, Khudulugh Kelmish was a daughter of Khubilai, albeit she came from a secondary concubine. In the second, Botashirin was not only a great-granddaughter of Khubilai but also a sister of Emperor Taiding. After that, Jintong and Bayan Khudu were the nieces of Emperors Wuzong and Renzong. Besides them, the others were all great-granddaughters of Khubilai but much farther removed from the reigning clan. The reconstruction of the Mongol princesses' genealogy confirms David Robinson's observation that the lineage of Botashiri was more distant from the throne than her counterparts in the earlier

Yuan-Koryŏ marriage alliances.⁴⁸ The further proximity of the Mongol princesses' relationship to the Yuan imperial throne was a gradual process. Nonetheless, all the Mongol princess brides traced their lineage ultimately back to Khubilai.

As Robinson suggests, the choice of a marriage partner was shaped by the past marriage ties between the Koryŏ and Yuan courts.⁴⁹ In other words, all the marriage partners of the Koryŏ kings were chosen from a preferred clan – the clan of Khubilai. This marriage preferential system confirms the general trend of Mongol marriage strategy in the thirteenth to fourteenth centuries. In his monograph examining the Mongols' marriage strategy, George Qingzhi Zhao observes that the Mongols had a marriage preferential system with six tribal groups and states, and the nature of the marriage can be divided into two categories: “two-way” and “one-way” marriages. In the two-way marriage, the Mongols and its allies intermarried, meaning that the Mongols not only married princesses to their allies but also accepted marriage partners from their allies into the Mongol imperial clan. On the other hand, the Mongols only married their princesses to their allies and never took brides or grooms from their allies into the Mongol imperial clan.⁵⁰ The Yuan-Koryŏ marriage thus belongs to the “one-way” marriage strategy of the Mongols. The marriage practice of the Chinggisid clan was highly political. Chinggis Khan's experience on the steppe had forced him to recruit trusted allies through marriage because the other Mongol clans were unreliable, deserting him and his clan when they were weak and helpless. Chinggis and his successors used marriage strategy to maintain and enhance their power. Marriage with allies strengthened their ties and at the same time it was also a tool for the Chinggisid clan to control their allies. The clan instructed all princess brides to become political

⁴⁸ Robinson, *Empire's Twilight*, 99.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 102.

⁵⁰ Zhao, *Marriage as Political Strategy*, 24.

representatives of the Mongols when they were sent to marry the heads of their allies. Therefore, the Mongol princesses were effectively undertaking political missions for the Yuan imperial clan.⁵¹

1.2 Political Power of the Mongol Princesses

There is no doubt that the Mongol princesses were sent to the Koryŏ court because of political and diplomatic reasons. One instance in 1278 illustrates the Yuan emperor's purpose of sending Mongol princesses to Koryŏ. Before the marriage between the Yuan and the Koryŏ courts in 1274, the Koreans were under strict military and political control of the Mongols. The Yuan government set up military colonies and dispatched Yuan officials, *daruhachi* 達魯花赤, throughout the Korean kingdom. But after only four years of marriage, King Ch'ungnyŏl went to the Yuan capital of Dadu with Khudulugh Kelmish and their son on a regular tributary visit and requested the abolishment of military colonies and *daruhachi* on Korean soil, based his argument that these military and political establishments harassed the livelihood of the Korean people. Surprisingly, Khubilai Khan granted the request.⁵² The abolishment of the two Mongols institutions means that the Yuan emperor gave up military control and political leverage in Koryŏ. It seems to be a diplomatic triumph for the Korean people as they were all joyful and cheerful when Ch'ungnyŏl and Khudulugh Kelmish returned to Koryŏ. As it turns out, however, Khudulugh Kelmish took up the political roles and filled the vacuum created by the withdrawal of Mongol institutions. Numerous examples show that Khudulugh Kelmish was responsible for overseeing the fulfilment of Koryŏ's tributary obligations, which was originally a duty of the *daruhachi*. This suggests that her political power in the Korean court was great enough to allow

⁵¹ Ibid., 35-7.

⁵² Chŏng In-ji, *Koryŏsa* 28.580-3, 585.

her to safeguard Yuan's interest on Korean soil without the support of Mongol institutions. It was not Khubilai's kindness but was his trust on his daughter to fulfil the political role of Mongol agencies that he withdrew Mongol agencies in Koryŏ.

The political power of Khudulugh Kelmish can be seen in her supervision of tributary obligations and maintenance of the tributary status of Koryŏ to the Yuan empire. As a tributary state, the Koryŏ kingdom had to offer valuables and various indigenous products to the Yuan regularly. Tributes included silver and copper, bolts of silk and cloth, different kinds of paper, pelts, falcons, and virgins.⁵³ Furthermore, the tributary obligations of Koryŏ required her to provide aid for the Mongols' military campaigns. As early as in the 1260s, Khubilai Khan had already demanded Koryŏ to offer troops, warships and army provisions to his campaign against the Southern Song 南宋 (1127-1276), albeit the Koryŏ government could hardly meet his demand because of the wars between them in the past 30 years.⁵⁴ Then as a base of operation, the khan ordered the Korean kingdom to prepare for the campaigns against Japan in the 1270s by building warships for the Mongols and providing sailors and soldiers.⁵⁵ These tribute obligations imposed a heavy financial burden on the Koryŏ court and brought disturbance to the Korean populace.⁵⁶

After the *daruhachi* were disbanded in 1278, Khudulugh Kelmish took up their role of overseeing the offering of virgins as the Koryŏ court's tributary obligations. Between 1281 and 1293, Khudulugh Kelmish selected virgins for the Yuan court every six years. In 1281, upon receiving the death notice of the Mongol empress Chabi 察必, she set off to attend the funeral in

⁵³ Fan, *Shi da yu bao guo*, 71-5.

⁵⁴ Wuyungaowa, *Yuanchao yu gaoli*, 104.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 109.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 116; Fan, *Shi da yu bao guo*, 71-5.

Dadu and levied silver and cloth as well as virgins of decent Korean families to offer to the Yuan court.⁵⁷ Six years later in 1287, she again selected virgins from decent households as she prepared another journey to attend the Yuan imperial assembly.⁵⁸ Again in 1293, both Ch'ungnyöl and Khudulugh Kelmish chose three virgins from good family backgrounds as offerings before leaving for Dadu.⁵⁹

Another example comes from Irinjinbala. In 1317, her father, Esen Temür, requested King Ch'ungsuk to offer virgins to him, presumably to become his concubine or attendants. Because of his status as Esen Temür's son-in-law and a tributary of the Yuan empire, King Ch'ungsuk had to fulfil the request and handpicked several virgins for him.⁶⁰ The fact that the Mongol princesses were personally responsible for selecting virgins for the Yuan court, a tributary obligation of the Koryŏ court, demonstrates that they had enough political power and authority to replace the role of Yuan institutions and to safeguard Yuan's interest in Koryŏ.

Aside from the role in maintaining Koryŏ's tributary status, the political authority of the Mongol princesses can be seen in the seating plan when receiving foreign envoys at feasts. Traditionally, the seating position at a feast symbolizes the participants' status. The seat of the north was reserved for royalty and ruler. But during the period of Mongol domination, this position shifted from the Korean kings to the Mongol princesses. Two examples indicate the prestige Mongol princesses enjoyed in the Koryŏ court. In 1291, a Yuan envoy paid homage to Khudulugh Kelmish and offered her fifty male and female slaves and five fine horses. She and King Ch'ungnyöl, in return, hosted a feast for the guests. At the feast, Khudulugh Kelmish sat at

⁵⁷ Chŏng In-ji, *Koryŏsa* 89.23.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid. 30.632.

⁶⁰ Ibid. 34.701.

the centre while King Ch'ungnyöl and the Mongol guests sat at her left and right respectively.⁶¹ In another example in 1344, King Ch'ungmok received a Yuan envoy with a feast. His mother, Irinjinbal, sat at the north facing south and he sat after his mother at the west facing east.⁶² Both Khudulugh Kelmish and Irinjinbal took the most prestigious seat at the feast while the Koryŏ kings sat below them. This signifies that the Koryŏ kings had an inferior status and were subservient to the Mongol princess brides at the Koryŏ court.

The political value of Mongol princess brides to the Yuan and Koryŏ courts was gaining access to the throne of the Korean kingdom. All the Koryŏ kings, with the exception of two, were required to marry Mongol princesses before they were enthroned.⁶³ The two exceptions were King Ch'ungmok and King Ch'ungjŏng, who were too young to marry at the time of enthronement. But their enthronements came with a Mongol princess serving as regent as in the case of Irinjinbal, the queen dowager. In other words, the marriage with Mongol princesses or the strong influence of a Mongol princess in the Koryŏ court was the Korean kings' guarantee to succeeding to the throne.

Indeed, the marriage with the Mongol princess was such a strong political symbolism that there were attempts to remarry a Mongol princess to give legitimacy to a contender for the Koryŏ throne. In 1298, King Ch'ungnyöl was disappointed by his son King Ch'ungsŏn's mismanagement of the royal household and thus removed him and resumed his rule. His disappointment originated in Ch'ungsŏn's poor handling of his relationship with Botashirin, which caused political turmoil in Koryŏ government. Ch'ungsŏn had distanced Botashirin and favoured a royal concubine, a daughter of an eminent Koryŏ official. Botashirin reported this

⁶¹ Ibid. 89.24.

⁶² Ibid. 37.742.

⁶³ The fact that all Koryŏ kings married their Mongol princesses when they were at the Yuan court is also striking and may be a lead for further research.

household issue to the Yuan empress dowager Kökejin 闊闊真, who sent Yuan officials to Kaesŏng to investigate. The investigation involved over a hundred people and created upheaval in the Koryŏ government. Contemporaries commented that Ch'ungsŏn failed to uphold his duty as a husband in his marriage with Botashirin and thus caused disharmony in his household. As a result, King Ch'ungnyŏl reinstated himself as the king and sent his son Ch'ungsŏn and Botashirin to the Yuan court in Dadu.⁶⁴ King Ch'ungnyŏl considered a potential successor from the royal clan and wanted him to marry Botashirin to confer him legitimacy as the new Koryŏ king. So in 1301, King Ch'ungnyŏl sent an envoy to the Yuan court to request the remarriage of Botashirin. The envoy, however, dared not to submit this request to the Yuan court and returned.⁶⁵ Although this attempt was unsuccessful, King Ch'ungnyŏl's thought of getting Botashirin to remarry a new heir persisted. Two years later, he went to Dadu for two purposes: to prevent his son from returning to Koryŏ and to request permission from the Yuan court to remarry Botashirin to his favourite successor.⁶⁶ But his request was not granted. Then in 1306, several ministers put into motion another attempt to remarry Botashirin but a chief minister of the Yuan court thought the remarriage was inappropriate and thwarted the attempt.⁶⁷ The several unsuccessful attempts to remarry Botashirin mean that the Koryŏ court valued the marriage of Mongol princesses as it gave legitimacy to the Koryŏ successors. We may thus see that the Mongol princesses symbolized the Yuan court's approval and the key to the throne.

Furthermore, the Mongol princesses also had the political power to assume the king's position as the head of the state when the Koryŏ king was unable to rule due to his absence from the kingdom or due to his young age. The ruler of the state must have the ability to appoint and

⁶⁴ Chŏng In-ji, *Koryŏsa* 89.26-7.

⁶⁵ Ibid. 32.654-5.

⁶⁶ Ibid. 32.660.

⁶⁷ Ibid. 32.665; 125.712-3.

dismiss government officials, and we observe this authority being exercised by Khudulugh Kelmish and Irinjinbal during the reigns of Ch'ungnyöl, Ch'ungmok and Ch'ungjōng. In 1287, King Ch'ungnyöl was away from his kingdom in the battlefield because of tributary obligations to provide military aid to the Yuan empire. He assembled an expeditionary force to aid the Yuan army to suppress a rebellion in the northeastern borders. Khudulugh Kelmish fully supported this endeavour as it safeguarded the Mongol Yuan's interest. She offered a farewell meal to King Ch'ungnyöl and calmed the souls of commanders and soldiers, who joined the expedition.⁶⁸ In his absence, Khudulugh Kelmish became the head of the state. In the same month that the Koryō army set off to the battlefield, a Korean interpreter of the Koryō army, acting as messenger, carried news back to the Koryō court in Kaesōng that Khubilai Khan had successfully razed the rebel headquarters to the ground. As if she were the ruler herself, Khudulugh Kelmish was delighted with this news and awarded the messenger gifts and a military post.⁶⁹

In the case of Irinjinbal, she became the regent of King Ch'ungmok and King Ch'ungjōng as they were unfit to rule due to their minor age, seven and twelve respectively. So she became the de facto ruler, owing to her status as the queen dowager. In 1344, she demoted and exiled a noble lord and a minister, who helped the deceased King Ch'unghye to carry out several exploits in the past.⁷⁰ The young King Ch'ungmok, however, died prematurely four years later in 1348. To maintain the operation of the realm, Irinjinbal appointed a minister to temporarily take up the king's administrative position in the Branch Secretariat for the Eastern Campaign.⁷¹ Again in 1350, she and the young King Ch'ungjōng, who succeeded Ch'ungmok,

⁶⁸ Ibid. 30.617.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid. 37.743.

⁷¹ Ibid. 37.748.

made a joint decision to replace a local official because of his bad governance.⁷² The examples of Khudulugh Kelmish and Irinjinbal clearly show that the Mongol princess brides exercised the political power as the head of the state to appoint and dismiss Koryŏ ministers.

As the primary consort and mother of the Koryŏ kings, the Mongol princesses held significant political power in the Korean court. Like Khudulugh Kelmish, they became the temporary head of the state in the king's absence from the Koryŏ kingdom, or like Irinjinbal, they became the regent and de facto ruler of the state as his mother during his minority. They were revered in the Koryŏ court, sitting at the centre and north of the feasts while the kings sat below them. But much of this political power came externally. As noted from above, because the Yuan emperors had rightly evaluated that the Mongol princesses wielded enough influence on Korean politics and entrusted them on this matter, the Mongol princesses replaced the Yuan officials, who had been stationed in the Koryŏ kingdom to enforce Koryŏ's tributary obligations. In addition, the Mongol princesses were important to the Koryŏ court as the king's marriage with them legitimized the new reigns. Every Koryŏ king was required to marry Mongol princess before his enthronement. The source of the Mongol princesses' political power, therefore, was their natal family and the Yuan court. This foreign influence came in two forms: the Mongol princesses' family background and ties with the imperial court, and the retainers they brought to Koryŏ. In the following chapters, I examine these two factors and analyze how they contributed to the immense political power wielded by the Mongol princess brides in Koryŏ.

⁷² Ibid. 37.751.

Chapter 2

The Link between the Mongol Princesses and the Yuan Court

My thesis is to investigate the “foreignness” of the Mongol princess brides. Theresa Earenfight claims that the foreignness of a queen made her different from all the other subjects of the king. It would appear that this difference made her politically weak in a court abroad. But instead, this foreign nature made her stronger in politics.⁷³ Without previous ties to the Korean court, the Mongol princesses had to rely on their natal family – the Yuan imperial clan – for political backing in the Koryŏ court. Of the seven Mongol princesses, only one was a daughter of the Yuan emperor while the others were daughters of the imperial princes, but Mongol traditions considered them all princesses.⁷⁴ So, the Mongol princesses had an intimate tie with the Yuan imperial clan and could draw support from the Yuan court at will. In this chapter, I discuss the origin of the Mongol princesses’ foreign influence in the Koryŏ kingdom. As established in the previous chapter, the genealogies of the Koryŏ Mongol princesses reveal that all of them were descendants of Khubilai Khan. Being a descendant of the most influential khagan of the Mongol khanate and the founding emperor of the Yuan dynasty was the key of the Mongol princesses to influential status and political power in the Koryŏ kingdom.

2.1 Princes of the Yuan Dynasty

The general marriage trend between the Mongol and Koryŏ courts shows that the Mongol princesses were farther removed from the throne in the later period. David Robinson quotes a senior Korean scholar and argues that this general trend reflects the decline of the Yuan dynasty because the princesses’ proximity to the throne was no longer imperative to negotiating the

⁷³ Earenfight, *Queenship in Medieval Europe*, 27.

⁷⁴ Song Lian, *Yuanshi* 109.2757.

marriage on the Koryŏ side.⁷⁵ Indeed, the Mongol princesses of the later period might appear to be distant from the throne but I have earlier established that the Mongol princesses were all Khubilai's daughter and great-granddaughters. An examination of the Mongol princesses' fathers reveals that they were powerful princes who defended the realm, crushed rebellions, and in one case emerged as a contender for the Yuan throne. The princely families were far from declining in the Mongol world order. The prestige of their family thus became the foundation of the Mongol princess brides' political backing from the Yuan empire.

2.1.1 Kammala (Prince of Jin)

Kammala was the father of Botashirin, the second Mongol princess brides to marry a Koryŏ king. His biography in *Yuanshi* indicates that he was the eldest son of Jimгим, who was Khubilai's eldest son.⁷⁶ He received a temple name, Xianzong 顯宗, posthumously in 1324 when his son was enthroned as Emperor Taiding.⁷⁷ Kammala had a close tie with the Yuan throne, being the eldest son of crown prince Jimгим and father of an emperor. This put him in a prestigious position in the Mongol Yuan imperial line as all later Yuan emperors came from Jimгим's branch. For this reason, he was also the brother of Emperor Chengzong 成宗 (r. 1295-1307) and uncle of Emperors Wuzong and Renzong. Therefore, when Wuzong conferred a princess title to Kammala's eldest daughter Botashirin in 1310, he was referred to as "imperial uncle" (*huang bo* 皇伯).⁷⁸

⁷⁵ Robinson, *Empire's Twilight*, 102.

⁷⁶ Song Lian, *Yuanshi* 115.2893.

⁷⁷ Ibid. 29.641.

⁷⁸ Ibid. 23.525.

Kammala started his career in the Zhiyuan 至元 period (1264-1294) when Khubilai dispatched him as a military general to guard the northern borders of the empire.⁷⁹ *Yuanshi* does not provide an exact date of this assignment, but I concur with Li Zhi'an's date of 1286 for Kammala's assignment.⁸⁰ Between 1286 and 1289, Kammala waged a successful military campaign in the north to pacify a rebellion before he was recalled by Khubilai. The rebel leaders surrendered as soon as they knew that Kammala was marching to the north.⁸¹ But the basic annals of Khubilai in *Yuanshi* record a conflicting account that in the second month of 1289, Kammala's army lacked provision and the Yuan emperor needed to send foodstuff from another Circuit to come to his aid.⁸² Later in the year of 1289, Kaidu 海都, a contender for the Mongol khanate, mounted an offensive against Khubilai, and Kammala was ordered to defend the realm. The battle between Kammala and Kaidu was dire as Kammala's army suffered heavy losses. In one account, the imperial army had to retreat because the battle was unfavourable to them due to the enemy's advantage position in the terrain.⁸³ And another account tells us that Kaidu was victorious, and the Yuan army was forced to regroup.⁸⁴

After three years of campaigning in the borders, in 1289, Kammala was recalled and granted the permission to hunt in the imperial forest near Dadu as a reward by Khubilai.⁸⁵ This record, however, was a cover for his failure to crush Kaidu.⁸⁶ In the next year, he was appointed the Prince of Liang 梁王 to station at Yunnan.⁸⁷ Before sending Kammala to Yunnan, the Yuan

⁷⁹ Ibid. 115.2893.

⁸⁰ Li, *Hubilie zhuan*, 459.

⁸¹ Song Lian, *Yuanshi* 115.2893.

⁸² Ibid. 15.320.

⁸³ Ibid. 128.3134.

⁸⁴ Ibid. 131.3185.

⁸⁵ Ibid. 115.2894.

⁸⁶ Li, *Hubilie zhuan*, 698.

⁸⁷ Song Lian, *Yuanshi* 115.2894.

dynasty had already appointed Hügeči and his son, Esen Temür, the Prince of Yunnan. This means that the Yuan government simultaneously stationed two princes in Yunnan, due to the unstable situation in the region (see below). The administration of Kammala's fief in Yunnan was aided by the appointment of a Princely Mentor in 1291.⁸⁸

Kammala's stay in Yunnan lasted only two years when he was appointed as the Prince of Jin and moved to garrison the northern borders again in 1292. This appointment put him in charge of the armies of Chinggis Khan's Four Ordos and the land of the Tartars.⁸⁹ The northern borders of the Yuan empire was the heartland of Mongolia and the ancestral land of the Mongols. Kammala was a descendant from the line of Tolui, the youngest son of Chinggis, so his enfeoffment in the land of Mongolia confirmed the Mongol tradition of ultimogeniture, where the youngest son inherited his father's title and domain.⁹⁰ Since Kammala received the leadership of the Four Ordos, which was founded by Chinggis, and the ancestral land of the Mongols, his enfeoffment as the Prince of Jin signified that the Mongol custom still prevailed in the Yuan dynasty.

On the other hand, it was a strategical decision of Khubilai to counter Kaidu's offensive. In the later reign of Khubilai, Kaidu became a menace in the northern borders of the Yuan empire.⁹¹ Moving Kammala again to the north was thus part of Khubilai's defensive strategy in which he also dispatched Kammala's younger brother Temür (later Emperor Chengzong) against Kaidu in 1293.⁹² These two grandsons of Khubilai had different roles in the defence of the northern borders. While Kammala guarded the east of the northern borders, Temür defended the

⁸⁸ Ibid. 16.348.

⁸⁹ Ibid. 115.2894; 17.368.

⁹⁰ Holmgren, "Observations on Marriage," 148-9.

⁹¹ Li, *Hubilie zhuan*, 458.

⁹² Song Lian, *Yuanshi* 18.381.

western frontline and was responsible for direct confrontation. As Kammala was relatively far from the frontline, he was responsible for guarding and pacifying the Four Ordos and the peoples in Mongolia. As Li explains, the western and eastern wings of the defence line supported each other, so that when one wing collapsed, Kaidu would not be able to overrun the whole territories.⁹³

Kammala's enfeoffment in Mongolia was also an indication of his prestige in the Yuan court. Appointed the Prince of Jin and guarding the ancestral land of Chinggis, Kammala's administration was higher than the other princely establishments as Khubilai promoted his administration from Princely Mentor to Princely Administrator in 1292.⁹⁴ The promotion of the princely administration shows that the Prince of Jin was a favourable candidate in the contest for the Yuan throne. In Mongol custom, the youngest son inherited the largest and ancestral land and the title of his father. This, in turn, implies that whoever held the ancestral land was a strong candidate for the throne. Being the eldest son of the crown prince also put him in a favourable position in the contest for the throne as the Yuan succession law was in the process of adopting elements from the Chinese model and mixing the Mongol custom of ultimogeniture with Chinese primogeniture. As the guardian of the ancestral land and the eldest son of the crown prince, Kammala enjoyed a prestigious status in the Yuan court.

Notwithstanding, the prestige of Kammala in the Yuan empire did not give him the imperial throne. In 1294, Kammala rushed to Shangdu 上都 to join the *quriltai* assembly after receiving the news that Khubilai had died. Albeit being a strong candidate for the throne, Kammala gave up his claim to the throne and let his younger brother Temür be enthroned as

⁹³ Li, *Hubilie zhuan*, 460.

⁹⁴ Song Lian, *Yuanshi* 115.2894.

Emperor Chengzong, then returned to his appanage in Mongolia.⁹⁵ The succession, however, was not as smooth as it appears. According to Li, Kammala tried to contest the succession of Temür in the *quriltai*, and indeed at the meeting, Kammala and Temür were two powerful candidates seeking to succeed Khubilai. Both guarded the ancestral land of Mongolia, and as the sons of crown prince Jimgim, they came from the primary branch of Khubilai's line. However, Khubilai's dying wish was to designate Temür as his successor, and it was upheld by the empress and Khubilai's confidants. As a result, Kammala was forced to give up his opposition to Temür. So, Temür was enthroned despite Kammala's challenge.⁹⁶ The enthronement of Temür, Jimgim's younger son, also demonstrates that the adoption of Chinese succession law into the Mongols' was not complete, and the Mongol tradition prevailed in this case. Or it can be said that the Mongols had the agency to choose which kind of succession was favourable to them during this transitional period.

2.1.2 Esen Temür (Prince of Ying)

The third Mongol princess bride to Koryŏ was Irinjinbala, and her father was Esen Temür, the Prince of Ying. Esen Temür was the only son of Hügeči, the Prince of Yunnan, who was Khubilai's fifth son. Li Zhi'an shows that Khubilai valued Yunnan as the region was subjugated by him personally before he was enthroned as the Yuan emperor. He regarded the rulership of Yunnan as an honour amongst the descendants of Chinggis.⁹⁷ In 1267, Hügeči was enfeoffed as the Prince of Yunnan, and his princely establishment was set up and staffed to administer and garrison the western half of Yunnan.⁹⁸ He contributed to stabilizing Yunnan and conquered part

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Li, *Hubilie zhuan*, 713-5.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 318.

⁹⁸ Song Lian, *Yuanshi* 6.115-6.

of the region in the next year 1268.⁹⁹ Being entrusted with the region, Hügeči had a respectable status amongst Khubilai's sons but in 1271 he was poisoned to death in a plot by a rebellious military general.¹⁰⁰

The office of Yunnan was vacant for nine years until Hügeči's son Esen Temür inherited it in 1280.¹⁰¹ *Yuanshi* is in error stating that the seal of the office was conferred to Hügeči in that year when he had already died. It should have been his son who received the seal as he was the next Prince of Yunnan.¹⁰² Esen Temür also played an instrumental role in Yunnan. In 1285, Khubilai received intelligence of a potential rebellion in Yunnan and entrusted Esen Temür to deal with this matter.¹⁰³ In the same year, Khubilai also demanded hostage sons from the tribal leaders of Yunnan. While the son of a major leader was sent to the capital, the minor ones stayed with Esen Temür.¹⁰⁴ In 1288, Esen Temür suppressed a rebellion in the region.¹⁰⁵ These examples show that he was entrusted by Khubilai Khan to represent him and that he had a leadership role in the region.

Esen Temür was also a leader of the Mongols' southern invasions and participated as early as 1281 when he entered Burma.¹⁰⁶ In 1286, he provided around 1000 to 3000 troops to the invasion of Annam.¹⁰⁷ He campaigned in Annam from 1286 to 1287 and reached as far as Hanoi but the expedition was forced to retreat without subjugating Annam because of the unfavourable weather and environment.¹⁰⁸ With Esen Temür as the leader, the Mongols advanced and

⁹⁹ Ibid. 122.3012; 122.3027.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid. 167.3915-6.

¹⁰¹ Ibid. 11.226.

¹⁰² Ibid. 108.2741.

¹⁰³ Ibid. 13.280.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid. 13.282.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid. 61.1478.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid. 133.3236.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid. 14.286.

¹⁰⁸ Rossabi, "The Reign of Khubilai Khan," 485.

conquered Burma in 1287 but the army suffered heavy losses with around 7000 deaths.¹⁰⁹ In 1288, Khubilai put Esen Temür in charge of Burma.¹¹⁰ The failure in Annam and the costly Burma invasion demonstrated Esen Temür's weakness in martial prowess. It might have been for this reason that Khubilai enfeoffed Kammala as the Prince of Liang in the eastern half of Yunnan in 1290 to strengthen the control of the region. With two princes in the region of Yunnan, Esen Temür had to share his authority over the region with Kammala.

The Yuan emperor Chengzong gave lavish grants to Mongol nobles, especially imperial relatives, to raise support for the throne.¹¹¹ As a cousin of Chengzong, Esen Temür too received from him a large sum of grants, including money, food and other gifts in 1294, 1298, 1299 and 1306.¹¹² Chengzong's successors followed his enticement policy. In 1308, Wuzong conferred a higher ranking princely title to Esen Temür – the Prince of Ying.¹¹³ Then in 1312, Renzong granted a fief to him in Fujian.¹¹⁴ From the reigns of Renzong to Taiding, he received several grants from the emperors in 1314, 1321 and 1327.¹¹⁵

The lavish grants created a close tie between Esen Temür and the Yuan emperors, especially Taiding. Besides the monetary grant in 1327, Taiding also ordered Esen Temür to garrison the northern borders and granted him a small sum of gold, silver and cash.¹¹⁶ Therefore, when the coup d'état broke out in 1328 after the death of Taiding, Esen Temür joined the camp in Shangdu, supporting the late Yuan emperor's heir Tianshun 天順 against the restorationists of

¹⁰⁹ Song Lian, *Yuanshi* 210.4659.

¹¹⁰ Ibid. 15.311.

¹¹¹ Hsiao, "Mid-Yuan Politics," 500.

¹¹² Song Lian, *Yuanshi* 18.384; 19.418; 20.429; 21.467.

¹¹³ Ibid. 22.495.

¹¹⁴ Ibid. 24.550.

¹¹⁵ Ibid. 25.565; 27.611; 30.681.

¹¹⁶ Ibid. 30.677.

Wuzong's imperial line in Dadu.¹¹⁷ Esen Temür harassed the land controlled by the restorationists with his troops.¹¹⁸ After the camp of Shangdu failed in this power struggle, Esen Temür's seal of his princely establishment and his title must have been confiscated as *Yuanshi* records that Emperor Wenzong 文宗 (r. 1328-1329, 1329-1332) returned the seal to him in 1330.¹¹⁹ The act of Wenzong reconciled and pacified the opposition in the previous coup d'état, and not long after that, Esen Temür died in 1332.¹²⁰

2.1.3 Amuga (Prince of Wei)

Amuga was the father of two Mongol princess brides – Jintong and Bayan Khudu. He was the eldest son of Darmabala 答剌麻八剌, who was the father of the Yuan emperors Wuzong and Renzong and thus conferred a temple name Shunzong 順宗 posthumously after Wuzong enthroned in 1307.¹²¹ There is a discrepancy about the seniority of Darmabala's sons: the biography of Darmabala in *Yuanshi* puts that Amuga was the eldest while the basic annals of Wuzong state that he was the eldest.¹²² Both records are accurate in a sense that both Amuga and Wuzong can be considered as the eldest son of Darmabala. Darmabala's biography indicates that Amuga's mother was a Han Chinese with a family name of Guo 郭, who had been given by Khubilai to serve as his maid. Later, Darmabala married an Onggirat woman who became his primary wife. Because of his mother's secondary status as the concubine, even though Amuga was born before Wuzong, he was not considered in the line of succession. As a result, Wuzong's basic annals emphasize the legitimacy of the throne by recording Wuzong as the eldest son

¹¹⁷ For a narrative of the coup and eventually the restoration of the imperial line to Wuzong's sons, see Dardess, *Conquerors and Confucians*, 31-52.

¹¹⁸ Song Lian, *Yuanshi* 32.708.

¹¹⁹ Ibid. 34.772.

¹²⁰ Ibid. 36.800.

¹²¹ Ibid. 22.480.

¹²² Ibid. 115.2895; 22.477.

because he was born from the primary consort. So, Amuga was senior in terms of birth, while Wuzong was senior in terms of succession.

Yuanshi does not record when Amuga was conferred the title of the Prince of Wei but he must have received it no later than 1311 as it was the first time he was referred to as a prince.¹²³ In 1302, Amuga received the command of an army of archers stationed in Ningxia 寧夏.¹²⁴ In 1312, Renzong conferred 65,000 households in the northern coast of Zhejiang 浙江 under his administration.¹²⁵ Amuga might also have had a fief in Datong 大同 as he was summoned from there to the capital of Dadu by Emperor Taiding in 1324.¹²⁶ These places were likely Amuga's enfeoffment.

As an imperial relative and later a prince of the Yuan dynasty, Amuga received a lot of grants, especially from his younger brother Renzong. Chengzong granted a money gift to Amuga in 1306.¹²⁷ However, there is no record of Wuzong granting him any gifts. The grant was exceptionally lavish under the reign of Renzong as he explained that since Amuga was his half-brother, he had the obligation to take good care of him.¹²⁸ Since his enthronement, Renzong annually from 1312 to 1316 conferred large sums of monetary grants to Amuga.¹²⁹

Nevertheless, Amuga's fortune ended in 1316 when he was exiled to T'amna 耽羅 in Koryŏ.¹³⁰ The exile of Amuga was caused by the power struggle of the Yuan throne. In 1316, Renzong had designated the future Yingzong 英宗 (r. 1320-1323) as the crown prince but this

¹²³ Ibid. 24.544.

¹²⁴ Ibid. 20.443.

¹²⁵ Ibid. 24.549.

¹²⁶ Ibid. 29.643.

¹²⁷ Ibid. 20.471.

¹²⁸ Ibid. 24.544.

¹²⁹ Ibid. 24.552; 24.557; 25.566; 25.570; 25.573.

¹³⁰ Chŏng In-ji, *Koryŏsa* 34.701.

decision violated his agreement with his late brother, that one of Wuzong's sons would succeed him. A year before, Renzong had enfeoffed the eldest son of Wuzong and sent him to Yunnan, far from the capital of Dadu, to remove him from power.¹³¹ After the pronouncement of the new crown prince in 1316, a rebellion led by Wuzong's heir and his supporters broke out.¹³² Since Amuga's army in Ningxia was near the rebel region, he might have been suspected to be a member of the rebellion and was thus exiled to Korea. During his exile in Korea, a shaman prophesied that Amuga would become the next emperor and planned to retrieve Amuga from Korea and escort him to Dadu. Nonetheless, the plot was discovered and the plotters were killed in 1318.¹³³ Renzong then dispatched an envoy to Koryŏ to interrogate Amuga about this plot.¹³⁴ As a son from a secondary concubine, Amuga's right to the succession of the throne was extremely low, therefore Renzong did not consider him as a threat. Based on his previous close relationship with Amuga, Renzong decided to seize the seal of his princely establishment from him as punishment.¹³⁵ This means that the princely establishment of Amuga was abolished.

Amuga spent the next six years Koryŏ. In 1323, he was pardoned and returned to the Yuan empire after Emperor Taiding was enthroned.¹³⁶ His return to the Yuan, however, was not uneventful because the trip was delayed until a Yuan envoy arrived in Korea.¹³⁷ In 1324, Taiding summoned Amuga from Datong, probably to discuss the marriage between his daughter Jintong and the Koryŏ king, Ch'ungsuk.¹³⁸

¹³¹ Hsiao, "Mid-Yuan Politics," 527.

¹³² Song Lian, *Yuanshi* 31.694.

¹³³ Ibid. 26.584.

¹³⁴ Chŏng In-ji, *Koryŏsa* 34.703.

¹³⁵ Song Lian, *Yuanshi* 26.585.

¹³⁶ Chŏng In-ji, *Koryŏsa* 35.710.

¹³⁷ Ibid. 105.330.

¹³⁸ Song Lian, *Yuanshi* 29.643.

It seems Amuga had fostered a close relationship with Koryŏ during his exile. He had first gone to Korea as early as in 1298 when he escorted Botashirin on her journey to Korea under Chengzong's order. The two were received by King Ch'ungnyŏl, who welcomed them at a banquet in the royal palace.¹³⁹ He then was sent back to the Yuan empire in the next month.¹⁴⁰ The marriage between his daughter, Jintong, and King Ch'ungsuk was probably a product of the friendship between Amuga and the Koryŏ court during his six years of exile. The detail of his exile is not certain but before Amuga headed back to the Yuan empire, he was invited to a banquet in the royal palace.¹⁴¹ In 1324, the marriage was concluded between the two courts.¹⁴² But Amuga died shortly after in the same year.¹⁴³

2.1.4 Čosbal (Prince Wujing of Suppressing West)

Irinjinbal's father was Čosbal, Prince Wujing of Suppressing West, who emerged as an influential prince guarding the western borders of the Yuan dynasty in the reigns of Renzong and Wenzong. Before his rising career in the Yuan court, his father Temür Buqa, the first Prince Wujing of Suppressing West, also safeguarded the western borders for the empire in the last two decades of the thirteenth century. Temür Buqa was ordered to station at Chongqing 重慶 in 1286 and was dispatched to southern Gansu to suppress a rebellion in 1296.¹⁴⁴ Then he was enfeoffed as Prince Wujing of Suppressing West and granted a seal in the next year by Emperor Chengzong.¹⁴⁵ This is the limited information *Yuanshi* provides us regarding the first Prince

¹³⁹ Chŏng In-ji, *Koryŏsa* 31.643. *Koryŏsa* records the escort as Amuhan 阿木罕, which is a variant of Amuga.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid. 33.673.

¹⁴¹ Ibid. 35.710.

¹⁴² Ibid. 35.712.

¹⁴³ Song Lian, *Yuanshi* 29.648.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid. 14.290; 19.404.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid. 19.410.

Wujing of Suppressing West. Čosbal's career largely followed that of his father as he campaigned in Tibet, Sichuan and Yunnan, along the western borders of the empire.

The appanage of Čosbal was between Sichuan and Gansu. There are three pieces of evidence from *Yuanshi* that support this claim. First, Temür Buqa was previously stationed at Chongqing. Second, in 1306 the emperor dispatched foodstuff from Gansu to relieve the famine in Čosbal's appanage.¹⁴⁶ Usually, when a disaster happened, the government would send relief from the nearest region. Sending aid to the prince's fief from Gansu means that the princely establishment was near the region. Lastly, all the activities of Čosbal took place in Tibet, Sichuan and Yunnan, and the borderland between Gansu and Sichuan was the centre of these regions. It seems logical that the imperial government dispatched a prince stationed at the centre of these regions to deal with their rebellions.

That Čosbal had high authority in the military and actively participated in the defence of the western borders is frequently mentioned in the basic annals of the Yuan emperors. In 1309, he recommended to Wuzong a method of pacifying and ruling the people in Sichuan. Since the region was still unstable, he suggested moving the administration to the north, which was closer to imperial control, and sending 1000 troops to garrison the administration. The Yuan emperor followed his advice.¹⁴⁷ In 1319, he was dispatched to Khotan to suppress a rebellion.¹⁴⁸ Then in 1323, he was ordered to crush the rebellions of several Tibetan tribes. Čosbal and his soldiers were successful in this campaign, and as a result, Yingzong awarded each of them a bounty.¹⁴⁹ In 1326, some local tribes in southern Gansu waylaid the region, and Čosbal dispatched a general to

¹⁴⁶ Ibid. 21.468.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid. 23.512.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid. 26.588.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid. 28.629; 29.655.

order them to surrender.¹⁵⁰ Three years later a major rebellion broke out in Sichuan and Yunnan, and the rebels marched on to attack Čosbal, who defended the region at a pass. In the next month, he led the Mongols on an offensive.¹⁵¹ By the middle of next year, the rebellion in Sichuan was pacified, and Čosbal pursued the fleeing rebels from Sichuan to Yunnan.¹⁵² At the end of 1330, the Mongol army had exhausted its military supplies for the Yunnan campaign, and Čosbal requested supplies from the government. The request was supported by officials and was thus granted by the emperor.¹⁵³ The campaign involved around one hundred thousand troops on the Yuan side, and Čosbal defeated the rebels in several skirmishes. Within a month, he moved into Kunming 昆明, the capital of Yunnan, and restored the administration of the Branch Secretariat.¹⁵⁴ In the third month, Čosbal captured and killed the rebel leaders, and thus suppressed the rebellion.¹⁵⁵ Nonetheless, Čosbal suggested stationing several princes in the region for one to two years to intimidate the rebel remnants, and Wenzong followed his suggestion.¹⁵⁶

The Yunnan campaign was the last reference to Čosbal. From the above, we can see that he was influential in the defence of the realm as he actively participated in several military campaigns against rebellions, and the Yuan emperors also respected and listened to his advice in governing the border regions of the west. He emerged as a powerful prince of the Yuan court with his military service. 1330, the year that he pacified the Yunnan rebellion, was also the height of his power when he married his eldest daughter Irinjinbal to King Ch'unghye of Koryŏ when the Koryŏ king visited the Yuan capital of Dadu. Čosbal also had a banquet with the

¹⁵⁰ Ibid. 30.675.

¹⁵¹ Ibid. 33.728-30.

¹⁵² Ibid. 34.759.

¹⁵³ Ibid. 34.768.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid. 35.775-6.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid. 35.780.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid. 35.783.

Korean king shortly after the marriage, presumably to foster a closer relationship with his son-in-law before the royal couple set off to Koryŏ.¹⁵⁷

2.1.5 Bolod Temür (Prince of Wei)

Bolod Temür was the father of Botashiri, the queen consort of the Koryŏ King Kongmin. *Yuanshi* does not record when Bolod Temür was granted the title of Prince of Wei but it states that in 1330 Wenzong enfeoffed his half-brother from a secondary concubine.¹⁵⁸ Since Bolod Temür inherited the title from his father, he must have been a son of the principal wife and should have received his princely title before his stepbrother. Thus, Bolod Temür probably received his title between the death of his father in 1324 and 1330.

Yuanshi is not generous in recording the deeds of Bolod Temür, who seemed to have fought the Red Turbans in 1353 as he was with the Yuan army.¹⁵⁹ An anecdote in *Yuanshi* reveals that he was a lousy military commander during his campaign against the Red Turbans. He indulged in alcoholism and was careless preparing for battle. As a result, he was captured by bandits and begged the bandit leader to spare his life.¹⁶⁰ What happened after is not known, but it is certain that the prince succeeded in begging the bandits to keep him alive as he did not die until around 1370.

Indeed, *Koryŏsa* indicates that Bolod Temür died before 1370, probably killed in a battle with the advancing Ming army. His legacy was the marriage between his daughter Botashiri and King Kongmin, who enjoyed a very intimate relationship. When King Kongmin received the

¹⁵⁷ Chŏng In-ji, *Koryŏsa* 36.725.

¹⁵⁸ Song Lian, *Yuanshi* 34.766.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid. 43.909.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid. 194.4398.

news of his father-in-law's death, he ceased to have court assembly and began to have simple and plain meals, even though his wife had died five years earlier.¹⁶¹

2.2 Status and Political Power of the Imperial Princes

The source materials on the Mongol princesses' father are more scanty for the later period of the Yuan-Koryo marriage alliances. This shows that the Koryŏ kings' in-laws in the later period of the Yuan dynasty were no longer as powerful as their counterparts in the earlier period, thus confirming Robinson's claim. Still, all the princes I examined in this chapter were crucial in the defence of the realm, participating in many battles for the Yuan dynasty. Most particular was Čosbal, who had proven himself in numerous campaigns to be an excellent military commander of the Yuan empire at the western borders. His military action matched his title as the Prince of Suppressing West. In the case of Kammala, he was undoubtedly an influential prince of the Yuan court, being a direct descendant of Khubilai and considered a viable candidate for the imperial throne. At the time of Khubilai's death, he had amassed enough power to become a contender for the imperial throne and challenge the claim of his younger brother, who was designated as the successor on the deathbed of Khubilai, albeit his attempt failed.

Although the fathers of the later Mongol princess brides received less attention in the dynastic histories, it does not mean that their status declined in the Yuan court. According to the Table of Princes in *Yuanshi*, there were six ranks of princes based on the seal conferred to them. The first rank was Gold Seal with Beast Knob; the second rank was Gold Seal with Serpent Knob; then the third was Gold Seal with Camel Knob; the next rank was Gilded Silver Seal with

¹⁶¹ Chŏng In-ji, *Koryŏsa* 42.828.

Camel Knob; after that was Gilded Silver Seal with Turtle Knob; and the last rank was Silver Seal with Turtle Knob. Of the five princely families of the Mongol princesses, four belonged to the first rank; they were the Prince of Jin, the Prince of Ying and the two Princes of Wei. The last Mongol princess came from the Prince of Wei, meaning that she too had a prestigious status in the dynasty. The remaining one was Prince Wujing of Suppressing West, who belonged to the fourth rank. The family background of all the Mongol princesses was esteemed as they had high princely ranking in the court. Since the rank was retained and inherited by successors, if a prince was from the first rank, his successors would remain in the same rank. When the prince had a close tie with the imperial family, the princely family would keep this close tie from generation to generation, meaning that the status of the princely family remained prestigious. As seen from above, they were often the brothers, uncles and cousins of the emperors. Even though the status of Prince Wujing of Suppressing West was mediocre in the princely order, Čosbal was able to cultivate influence through his military service to the dynasty. As a result, his counsel on the borders and military was respected and followed by government officials and emperors. Therefore, the family background of the Mongol princesses was distinguished in the Yuan court.

The political power of the imperial princes was also embodied in their special status in the government. The imperial princes were outside of normal government administration, and all matters related to them were managed through the Eight Palace Offices (*nei bafu* 內八府). The office originally governed the court audience and assembly of the imperial princes.¹⁶² But by the time of Renzong, this office had evolved to govern all matters related to the imperial princes, in-laws and relatives, and the Yuan emperor decreed that its administration was separated from the

¹⁶² Song Lian, *Yuanshi* 87.2191.

Central Secretariat.¹⁶³ In examining the role of the Eight Palace Office, Zhou Liangxiao suggests that the Central Secretariat did not have authority over it and manage its administration.¹⁶⁴ As the paramount agency of the central government in the Yuan dynasty, the Central Secretariat had no right to manage the businesses of the imperial princes. This suggests the independent status of the princes and special treatment they received in central administration.

Moreover, at the top level of government administration, the imperial princes also enjoyed special authority in terms of personnel appointment. The princes were able to nominate candidates to take office in three top echelon government institutions responsible for the administrative, judicial and military matters; they were the Central Secretariat, the High Court for Mongols (*da zongzheng fu* 大宗正府) and the Bureau of Military Affairs (*shumiyuan* 樞密院) respectively. The princes' candidates acted as their representatives in the central government and influenced policy-making.¹⁶⁵ In the Central Secretariat and High Court for Mongols, the imperial princes could recommend candidates for the office of judges (*duanshiguan* 斷事官), or called *jarghuchi* (*zhaluhuchi* 扎魯忽赤) in Mongolian. The judges in the Central Secretariat were highly respectable. They were rank 3a in the government, and the offices were once occupied by prime ministers in the earlier period of the dynasty.¹⁶⁶ As for the High Court for Mongols, the rank of the judges was 1b, and they governed all the judicial matters under the realm. In the military, the princes could also recommend their own choice to the *keshig* 怯薛, the imperial bodyguard. As a military institution, the *keshig* could send representatives to the Bureau of Military Affairs to decide military affairs. This gave an opportunity to the imperial princes to

¹⁶³ Ibid. 26.588.

¹⁶⁴ Zhou, "Yuandai touxia," 68.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 72.

¹⁶⁶ Song Lian, *Yuanshi* 85.2124.

influence the grand military strategy of the empire. Since the princes had the right to nominate their favourites to these positions, the candidates were able to protect the princes' political benefits in the central administration.¹⁶⁷

The special status and treatment of the imperial princes can also be seen in the administration of their appanages. The enfeoffment of imperial relatives was not a unique feature of the Mongols as it had been common amongst nomadic civilizations – it had been practiced by the Xiongnu and the Turks in the past.¹⁶⁸ The appanages of imperial princes during the Yuan period were called *touxia* 投下 in Chinese sources. The system of *touxia* had been developed since the age of Chinggis, and its development was roughly completed by the time of Khubilai. At first, the enfeoffment had an intimate link with the Mongol inheritance custom and the practice of grants to imperial relatives.¹⁶⁹ During the reign of Khubilai, the enfeoffment of *touxia* was fused with the princely order, which was created in Chinese fashion. The Yuan emperor enfeoffed his sons as princes and sent them to the four corners of his realm to guard and garrison different places. According to Zhou, Khubilai's son and later princes had great regional authority. They were not only the head of the military of their respective regions but they could also participate in the affairs of the Branch Secretariats of the regions.¹⁷⁰

The imperial princes were the ultimate authority within their appanages, and it could be seen in the following aspects. First, the princes had the power to appoint their own choice of personnel in their appanages. The personnel within princely appanages were nominated by the prince, and then they were ratified and appointed by the central government.¹⁷¹ The term was

¹⁶⁷ Zhou, "Yuandai touxia," 73.

¹⁶⁸ Bailadougeqi and Bo, "Menggu hanguo fuquan fengjian zhi," 182.

¹⁶⁹ Zhou, "Yuandai touxia," 54-6.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 67.

¹⁷¹ Song Lian, *Yuanshi* 82.2051; Farquhar, "Structure and Function," 46.

usually permanent. Because of the independent nature of the appanage personnel, the promotion and appointment of the appanage officials were separated from the central administration, meaning that they were not able to take office in local and central government positions.¹⁷² This separation means that the imperial princes had much control over the appointment of the officials in their establishment and used their favourites as the central government did not have authority over appanage officialdom.

Secondly, the princes had total control over the people living inside their appanages. The imperial princes could do everything to the people in their appanages. There were three categories of people in the appanages. The first category was the bondservants of the princes; the second category was the households the princes obtained through illegal means; the third category was the taxable households under government registry.¹⁷³ No matter under which category, people living in the appanage were under the control of the princes as they were able to obtain anything they wanted from their subjects and treated them whatever they wished. The subjects had to pay taxes and render services such as *corvée* labour and military service to the princes. Furthermore, there was no freedom of movement amongst the subjects in the princely appanages as their mobility was strictly controlled by the princes. Numerous instances demonstrate the heavy punishment upon the people who escaped the appanages, and they were forced to return.¹⁷⁴ This shows that once people were permanently assigned as a household of the princely appanage, the imperial princes had total control over their subjects.

Thirdly, the princes also enjoyed all the economic benefits of their appanages. The taxes that the subjects of the appanages paid to the princes were collected by the central government,

¹⁷² Zhou, “Yuandai touxia,” 69.

¹⁷³ Ibid., 69-70.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 58-9.

which then disbursed the amount to the princes according to their allotment. On paper, the law states clearly that the imperial princes had no right to collect taxes within their appanages.¹⁷⁵ The appanage taxes collected by the central government constituted the yearly grants conferred by the Yuan emperor to the imperial princes.¹⁷⁶ Since the taxation policy of the central government greatly restricted the benefits of the princes, it faced fierce opposition from them. As a result, the taxation policy was not enforced in the appanages.¹⁷⁷ As the princes had total control of their subjects, they enjoyed the wealth of their people as they wished. There are several examples where the princes acted arbitrarily to collect taxes and corvée labour, receive bribes from their people, and confiscate private businesses.¹⁷⁸ This shows the imperial princes' dominating economic rights within their appanages.

The imperial princes of the Yuan dynasty had powerful political influence in the central government and total control of their own appanages. Although they did not have direct influence in central government, they could recommend their choices of personnel to the top echelon of agencies in administrative, judicial and military matters. Through these favourite candidates, the princes indirectly shaped government decision and policy. At the local level, the princes enjoyed total control of their appanages in the administrative and economic aspects. They dominated the administration by appointing their own personnel in the princely establishment, which the central government did not have authority. The princes also enjoyed massive economic benefits in their appanages as they could do whatever they wanted within its confine. It can be concluded that the princely appanages acted like independent kingdoms inside the Yuan empire.

¹⁷⁵ Song Lian, *Yuanshi* 95.2411.

¹⁷⁶ Zhou, "Yuandai touxia," 71.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 63-4.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., 71-2.

2.3 Mongol Princesses' Ties with the Yuan Empire

As demonstrated earlier, the fathers of the Mongol princess brides were imperial princes directly descended from Khubilai's line of Yuan emperors. As such, they had distinguished status in the Yuan court. At the beginning of the Yuan-Koryŏ imperial marriages, they were close descendants of the Yuan emperors, and even when the influence of their fathers in the Yuan court declined in the later period, their status as respected members of the Yuan imperial clan remained. Therefore, the overwhelming power of the imperial princes in the Yuan court and their prestigious status in the princely order formed the bases for the high political involvement of the Mongol princess brides in the Koryŏ kingdom. Notwithstanding, it seems farfetched that the Mongol princesses could utilize their family ties in Korean politics. As earlier examples of princess brides in the Sui and Tang period suggest, once in the foreign land, they were helpless and could rarely get support from their natal home, not to mention mobilizing political action.¹⁷⁹ But the examples of Mongol princesses were different. Their ties and communication with their natal home were well-maintained by the use of diplomatic envoys and tributary visits.

The Yuan dynasty regularly sent envoys to Koryŏ. During King Ch'ungnyŏl's reign, the Yuan court sent diplomatic envoys in 1276, 1283 and 1286, one in each year.¹⁸⁰ During Botashirin's marriage in Koryŏ, three Yuan envoys were sent, twice in 1298 and once in 1314.¹⁸¹ Since Irinjinbala and Jintong did not stay in Koryŏ long, there is no record of diplomatic visits in their presence during their five years of living in Korea. Bayan Khudu received one Yuan envoy in 1332, and Irinjinbal held audiences with one in 1344 and another one in 1349.¹⁸² Botashiri

¹⁷⁹ Jay, "Sui and Tang Princess Brides," 18.

¹⁸⁰ Chŏng In-ji, *Koryŏsa* 28.572; 29.609; 30.615.

¹⁸¹ Ibid. 33.676, 677; 34.699.

¹⁸² Ibid. 36.731; 37.742.; 37.750.

had a total of four visits, two in 1353 and one in 1354 and 1356 respectively.¹⁸³ Although there is no detail on what the envoys did in Korea, it is certain that they were received by both the Koryŏ kings and Mongol princesses.

The Mongol princesses also had their own agency to dispatch their own envoys, usually their servant retainers to the Yuan court in Dadu. Besides, they often went to the Yuan court either with their husbands, with their children, or alone during their regular tributary visits. In her twenty-three years of marriage, Khudulugh Kelmish dispatched her servant to the Yuan in 1275 and returned to her natal home five times for court assemblies in 1278, 1287, 1289, 1293 and 1296.¹⁸⁴ Botashirin also sent her servant to the imperial court in 1298 and herself made a tributary visit to Dadu in 1313.¹⁸⁵ Because of the brevity of their stay in Korea, three years and two years respectively, neither Irinjinbala nor Jintong made contact or returned to their natal home. However, it is surprising that Bayan Khudu, Irinjinbal, and Botashiri did not return to their natal home during their extensive stay in Korea, which were eleven, forty-five and sixteen years respectively.

Through the diplomatic envoys and their own tributary trips to their Yuan home, the Mongol princesses in Koryŏ could relay news to their natal family and arouse attention from the Yuan government. In this way, they were in a position to manipulate politics in the Koryŏ kingdom. Although there are not many examples in the period after Irinjinbala, the examples of Khudulugh Kelmish and Botashirin, show how the Mongol princess brides used family ties to obtain their objectives in Koryŏ politics.

¹⁸³ Ibid. 38.761, 762; 38.763; 3.774.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid. 28.568; 28.579; 30.618; 30.622; 30.632; 31.639.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid. 33.675; 34.693.

By enlisting help from a Yuan official stationed in Koryŏ, Khudulugh Kelmish secured her position in the Koryŏ royal court. Fourteen years before she married King Ch'ungnyŏl, the latter already had a royal concubine named Chŏngsin buju, a daughter of a member of the Koryŏ royal clan, whom he favoured.¹⁸⁶ Perhaps out of jealousy, Khudulugh Kelmish plotted against this royal concubine. In 1276, someone anonymously reported to a *daruhachi* stationed in Koryŏ that Chŏngsin buju had imprecated Khudulugh Kelmish so that she lost the royal favour. With the Yuan official as her witness, Khudulugh Kelmish ordered her retainers to imprison the royal concubine and confiscated her property. It was after a Korean minister spoke for her that the royal concubine was released but from that point on, she lived in the secondary palace, severed ties with King Ch'ungnyŏl and never saw him again.¹⁸⁷ Khudulugh Kelmish's plot would not have been possible without the help from the *daruhachi*, who was stationed in Korea to safeguard the Yuan empire's interest.

Another example comes from Botashirin, who faced a situation similar to that of Khudulugh Kelmish's and appealed to the Yuan court for help. King Ch'ungsŏn was favouring a royal concubine, a daughter of a prominent Koryŏ minister, who had been married to him four years before Botashirin did. In 1298, the year that Botashirin arrived at the Koryŏ kingdom, she wrote a letter in Uighur script and ordered two of her retainers to carry it back to the Yuan empress dowager Kŏkejin. In the letter, she accused the royal concubine for cursing her to the extent that she had lost the favour of King Ch'ungsŏn. As the matter was reported to the Yuan government, the Koryŏ court feared repercussion from the Yuan empire and attempted to pacify Botashirin. This incident was not resolved but worsened as the Mongol princess sent her retainers to the Yuan court again. Just as this happened, someone posted an anonymous letter at

¹⁸⁶ Hsiao, "Yuan li guanxi zhong de wangshi hunyin," 778.

¹⁸⁷ Chŏng In-ji, *Koryŏsa* 89.25.

the gate of the royal palace accusing the mother of the royal concubine of applying witchcraft to curse Botashirin to distance her from the king. Immediately, Botashirin imprisoned both the father and the mother of the royal concubine as well as their sons and in-laws. She also sent another retainer to the Yuan to report this incident, a move opposed by the Korean officials but despite their supplication, she did not budge. Eventually, the Yuan government and the empress dowager sent an envoy to imprison all related individuals and interrogated the royal concubine's father and mother. Under ruthless interrogation, the mother was forced to confess and as a result, the royal concubine was sent to the Yuan court in Dadu for further trial.¹⁸⁸

The above two examples show that the Mongol princesses had the agency to mobilize the political power of their natal court as they saw fit. As the daughters of imperial princes and descendants of Khubilai Khan, they enjoyed high prestige in the Yuan court. This distinguished family background and the diplomatic significance of their marriage with the Korean kings formed the bases for external support and allowed the Mongol princesses to seek aid from the Yuan government when their situations became unfavourable. They enlisted external help from Yuan officials and from their natal home to settle undesirable circumstances. Aside from their family, the Mongol princesses also had their personal agents, their retainers, at their disposal. The above cases show that the Mongol princesses dispatched their retainers to advance their political plot. Yet, as it turns out, these retainers were not only the Mongol princesses' political pawns. They later established a foothold in the Koryŏ officialdom and acted as a political extension for the Mongol princesses. In the following chapter, I examine these retainers and explain how they became part of the princesses' external power.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid. 89.26-7.

Chapter 3

The Mongol Princesses and their Retainers in the Koryŏ Court

The previous chapter indicates that the Mongol princess brides drew their political power from their natal family background. But aside from their immediate blood family ties, the princesses also spread their influence in the Koryŏ court through another avenue – their private retainers. These retainers of the Mongol princesses were called *ger-in k'e'ü* (*qieliankou* 怯憐口) in Mongolian, which literally means “sons of the yurt,” a category of slaves usually employed as artisans or family servants of the imperial or noble families.¹⁸⁹ All the princesses brought their own private retainers to Koryŏ, and they settled in Korea and later adopted Sinicized names and attained high government positions in the Koryŏ bureaucracy.¹⁹⁰ In this chapter, I examine these private retainers and explain how they became entrenched in the Korean ruling stratum and a political force on which the Mongol princesses relied to advance their agenda.

3.1 Servant Retainers of the Mongol Princesses

The Mongol princesses' retainers, who acted as pawns in their political plots, appear more than once in the biographies of their masters in *Koryŏsa*. The three most well-known retainers were those associated with Khudulugh Kelmish: Shiduer 式篤兒, Huladai and Sange. As her retainers, they performed services for the Mongol princess in the early years of her arrival in Koryŏ. After that, they were bestowed positions by King Ch'ungnyŏl in the Koryŏ officialdom.

¹⁸⁹ Hsiao, *Military Establishment*, 199n312.

¹⁹⁰ Yun, “Mongols and Western Asian,” 65n8.

Shiduer appears the earliest amongst the three retainers. In 1275, he helped to defend Khudulugh Kelmish's higher status vis-à-vis other royal consorts through the reference to appropriate rites. A royal concubine of King Ch'ungnyōl hosted a feast for the Mongol princess as she had given birth to a boy, who would later become King Ch'ungsōn. The feast, prepared by a young palace attendant at the East chamber, set a seat for the princess at the same height as the concubine's. Shiduer rightly pointed out that assigning a seat at a height as to that of the concubine's amounted to undermining the heightened status of Khudulugh Kelmish as a Mongol princess bride. Thus the latter was furious and ordered the feast to be moved to the West chamber, where a higher couch was available for her. The story, however, does not end here. Later, King Ch'ungnyōl sent Shiduer as ambassador to the Yuan court, and before he left, he sought In Kongsu 印公秀, a grand general (*tae changgun* 大將軍), for advice on whether to report this incident to the Yuan court as his master, Khudulugh Kelmish, requested. Shiduer thought that if he reported this incident to the Yuan court, it would cause turmoil in Koryō. The grand general asked him not to report it on the reasoning that it was merely a trivial matter, a quarrel between husband and wife caused by jealousy. Shiduer agreed with the grand general and did not report the incident.¹⁹¹ Despite being a servant, Shiduer showed that he was well-versed in the rhetoric of Confucian rites and he cautioned Khudulugh Kelmish about the implication of sitting at the same height as that of a concubine. Not only did he protect her status as princess bride, by not reporting the incident to the Yuan court he also showed sensitivity to the interest of the Koryō court.

Huladai and Sange were more involved than Shiduer in Khudulugh Kelmish's exploits in the Koryō kingdom. In 1276, Khudulugh Kelmish had confiscated a golden pagoda from a

¹⁹¹ Chōng In-ji, *Koryōsa* 89.20.

Buddhist temple for her palace, while her retainers Huladai and Sange stole many valuables from the temple. She also ordered Huladai to confiscate silver from yet another Buddhist temple.¹⁹² In the next year, King Ch'ungnyōl decided to move his residence to a Buddhist temple. He arrived earlier at the foothill of the temple, and Khudulugh Kelmish followed later and found fewer attendants than she had expected. Infuriated, she returned to her palace and forced the king to return as well. While he arrived, she hit him with a staff. Then Huladai condemned King Ch'ungnyōl for causing Khudulugh Kelmish's ire with his mismanagement and threatened to punish him. According to the biography, a contemporary minister commented that King Ch'ungnyōl suffered no greater humiliation than this.¹⁹³

On a number of occasions, the servants had close ties with the Koryŏ royal family and acted as the messengers between the Mongol princess brides and the other royal family members. In 1277, Sange was a messenger of the princess, requesting a carpenter from the Yuan court.¹⁹⁴ Another example comes from 1287 when the servant retainers helped solve a problem for the family of Khudulugh Kelmish. During her procession to the Yuan court, Huladai sensed that her son, the Koryŏ crown prince, was not pleased, and asked him the reason for his displeasure. The crown prince answered that it was about his proposed marriage – his fiancée, a daughter of a Korean noble, was selected amongst the others to be offered to the Yuan court. After knowing the crown prince's concern, Huladai informed Khudulugh Kelmish, and she immediately sent the crown prince's fiancée back to Koryŏ.¹⁹⁵ On these occasions, the servant retainers of the princess fervently protected the interest of their master as well as the interest of

¹⁹² Ibid. 89.21.

¹⁹³ Ibid. 89.21-2.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid. 89.22.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid. 89.23-4.

her household. By doing so, they also benefited from their master's exploits in the Koryŏ kingdom.

Botashirin was the second Mongol princess married into the Koryŏ court. Like Khudulugh Kelmish, she also brought retainers to Korea when she went to Koryŏ. According to *Koryŏsa*, she brought at least two retainers, and there is uncertainty regarding a third one. It is clearly stated in her biography that Kuokuobuhua 闊闊不花 and Kuokuodai 闊闊歹 were her retainers. They helped the Mongol princess in her plot against King Ch'ungsŏn's concubine. In 1298, she was jealous of a concubine who had become a favourite of King Ch'ungsŏn and ordered Kuokuobuhua and Kuokuodai to carry her letter to the Yuan empress dowager. Faithful to Botashirin, despite being interrogated by King Ch'ungsŏn about the content of the letter, the retainers did not disclose it. To comfort her because of his son's ill-treatment of her servants, King Ch'ungsŏn's father, the former King Ch'ungnyŏl, granted lavish gifts to her retainers, Kuokuobuhua and Kuokuodai, as well as to another person named Zhangjicheli 章吉徹里, presumably another retainer. He also granted a wife to Kuokuobuhua, hoping to soothe Botashirin's anger. Still, she again dispatched the two retainers to the Yuan court to report this incident. The retainers returned with an envoy from the Yuan empress dowager, who by the decree of the Yuan emperor, imprisoned the concubine and several related persons. It was largely because of this incident that King Ch'ungsŏn's father, Ch'ungnyŏl, was reinstated as the king of Koryŏ, while Ch'ungsŏn and Botashirin were sent to the Yuan court in Dadu.¹⁹⁶

The aforementioned Zhangjicheli, thereafter named Cheli 徹里 in *Koryŏsa*, might have been another servant retainer Botashirin brought to Koryŏ, although unlike Kuokuobuhua and

¹⁹⁶ Ibid. 89.26-7.

Kuokuodai, he was not named as a retainer. The foreignness of his name, however, clearly states that he was not a Korean but a Mongol or Inner Asian. Moreover, his activities indicate that he was Botashirin's retainer. Zhangjicheli was a beneficiary of Botashirin's plot against the concubine. Aside from receiving grants from the king's father, he was also sent to the Yuan court after Kuokuobuhua and Kuokuodai's second trip to report on the new development in the incident – that the mother of the royal concubine had applied witchcraft to curse Botashirin, who then imprisoned the concubine's father, a prominent minister of Koryŏ, the mother, and their sons and in-laws. She also sent another envoy, led by Cheli, to the Yuan court to request judgement.¹⁹⁷ Apart from protecting the interest of their master, Botashirin's retainers also served as her envoys to the Yuan court. She sent all three retainers to the court of her natal home a couple of times during her marriage in Koryŏ. The servants thus acted as a bridge of communication between the princess bride and her natal home.

After Botashirin, there is no record of Mongol retainers in the Koryŏ court. It seems neither Irinjinbala, Jintong, Bayan Khudu, Irinjinbal, nor Botashiri brought their servants to Koryŏ. While the servant retainers had a stronger presence in the early period of the Yuan-Koryŏ marriage alliance, the influence of the retainers diminished as if they had followed the trend of the declining power of their masters. Perhaps the lack of presence of the Mongol retainers is just evidence showing that the Mongol princesses were less inclined or did not feel it necessary to mobilize the foreign power based on their power-relations with the Koryŏ kings. Also, the political climate in the Koryŏ court and the Yuan-Koryŏ interstate relationship had largely stabilized. Although the records of the retainers as the servants of the Mongol princesses ceased to exist after 1315, it does not mean that their influence totally disappeared. The pioneers of the

¹⁹⁷ Ibid. 89.26.

servant retainers, namely those of Khudulugh Kelmish, left a strong presence in the earlier stage of the Yuan-Koryŏ relations. They were promoted by King Ch'ungnyŏl and became officials of the Koryŏ. They grew in such prominence in Koryŏ government that they were deemed worthy to have their own biographies in *Koryŏsa*. In the new capacity as officials of the Korean government, they became a force to be reckoned with by their Korean colleagues but they continued to defend the political interest of their princess bride masters and home state, the Yuan empire. On the other hand, Botashirin's retainers – Kuokuobuhua, Kuokuodai and Zhangjicheli – were not assigned individual biographies. Perhaps, unlike Khudulugh Kelmish's retainers, they did not receive royal favour and get promoted into Koryŏ officialdom.

3.2 Retainers as Officials of the Koryŏ Government

Khudulugh Kelmish's retainers were promoted by King Ch'ungnyŏl to various military and civil posts in the officialdom and became prominent ministers in the Korean government. The most influential servant retainers were Huladai and Sange. They were required by the king to adopt Sino-Korean names before they were promoted to the post of general in the military hierarchy. Thereafter, they were known as In Hu and Chang Sunnyong respectively. They have biographies in *Koryŏsa* and left numerous traces in the basic annals of the Koryŏ kings.

3.2.1 Huladai – In Hu

According to the biography of In Hu, he was a Mongol whose original name was Huladai. He was a *ger-in k'e'ü* of Khudulugh Kelmish and followed her to Koryŏ with the other *ger-in k'e'ü* such as Sange and Chegudai 車古歹.¹⁹⁸ He filled the position of senior colonel (*chungnangjang* 中郎將) in the military. Later, King Ch'ungnyŏl ordered him to change his

¹⁹⁸ This is the only instance where Chegudai appears. He is not mentioned in the biography of Princess Qiguo or in other parts of *Koryŏsa*.

name in order to appoint him as a general (*changgun* 將軍).¹⁹⁹ This act was most probably done out of legitimacy so that the Koryŏ king could appoint non-Koreans to prominent official posts. As a result, Huladai sought the grand general In Kongsu, whom he befriended, and asked if he could adopt his family name as they had a friendly relationship. Therefore, he adopted In's family name and changed his name to In Hu.

The name of In Hu first appears in 1277 in the basic annals of King Ch'ungnyŏl, and it is most probably around this year that he started his military and government career. That year, King Ch'ungnyŏl sent In Hu to the Yuan court to report on a plot against him and Khudulugh Kelmish. He returned a month later bringing the ruling of the Yuan government. The culprits were either demoted to the status commoner or exiled.²⁰⁰ In the next year, he was again sent to the Yuan by King Ch'ungnyŏl to seek ratification to exile a plot culprit and obtained the Yuan decree to do so.²⁰¹ He was also dispatched to the southeastern province to defend the borders and later to rectify the problem of refugees and displaced people.²⁰² In 1279, he was sent by King Ch'ungnyŏl to request the permission of building the warships for the second invasion of Japan.²⁰³ Then in 1280, he went to the Yuan court again but as a grand general.²⁰⁴ This is the first time he is referred to in this second highest military rank. Within three years of his service in the officialdom, he had risen rapidly in the hierarchy. That year also saw piracy menacing the Koryŏ kingdom. King Ch'ungnyŏl thus sent In Hu to the imperial court six months later to request imperial military aid against the Japanese pirates.²⁰⁵ In the following two years, he was promoted twice in the military hierarchy. In 1281, King Ch'ungnyŏl bestowed on him an honorary title and

¹⁹⁹ Chŏng In-ji, *Koryŏsa* 123.684.

²⁰⁰ Ibid. 28.577.

²⁰¹ Ibid. 28.578.

²⁰² Ibid. 28.586.

²⁰³ Ibid. 29.590.

²⁰⁴ Ibid. 29.591.

²⁰⁵ Ibid. 29.593.

actual military power by appointing him as a myriarch responsible for guarding the borders and giving him the authority to mobilize the army.²⁰⁶ In 1282, he attained the highest military post – supreme general (*sang changgun* 上將軍) and maintained regular errands as an envoy to the Yuan empire.²⁰⁷ In 1284, he was again appointed as a border myriarch.²⁰⁸

In Hu reached the pinnacle of his military service in 1286 as he was appointed the commander of one of the eight capital armies. The same year also saw the death of the Yuan crown prince Jimgin, at which point King Ch'ungnyōl sent In Hu to the Yuan court to convey his condolences.²⁰⁹ By the end of the year, In Hu was appointed to the Security Council as a senior administrator.²¹⁰ Although he was moved out of the military structure, he maintained his position as a myriarch and was responsible for the security of King Ch'ungnyōl when the latter moved his residence out of the capital of Kaesōng in 1287.²¹¹ In Hu continued to rise in the bureaucracy. He was first promoted in rank within the Security Council in 1287, and then he was appointed to fill a vacancy in the Royal Secretariat-Chancellery as a senior member in the next year.²¹²

The ten years between 1289 and 1299 saw the height of In Hu's power in the Koryō court. He continued to serve on various occasions as a military leader as well as a civil official of the bureaucracy. In 1289, he reviewed the army to prepare for the defence against a rebellion in the Yuan empire and accompanied King Ch'ungnyōl, Khudulugh Kelmish and their crown prince to

²⁰⁶ Ibid. 29.605.

²⁰⁷ Ibid. 29.606.

²⁰⁸ Ibid. 29.612.

²⁰⁹ Ibid. 30.615.

²¹⁰ Ibid. 30.616.

²¹¹ Ibid. 30.617.

²¹² Ibid. 30.618; 30.619.

the Yuan court.²¹³ Then in the next year, he defended Koryŏ against the invading Mongol rebels as a myriarch and successfully suppressed the rebellion by mid-1291.²¹⁴ To thank the Koryŏ court for its effort in suppressing the rebels, Khubilai Khan granted King Ch'ungnyŏl a leading official post in the Branch Secretariat for the Eastern Campaign and In Hu the post of *daruhachi* in a border myriarchy.²¹⁵ In 1293, he was sent to the Yuan to felicitate the birthday of Khubilai Khan and later escorted King Ch'ungnyŏl and Khudulugh Kelmish to the Yuan court in Dadu.²¹⁶ In the first month of 1295, he was granted the honorary title of the Second Preceptor of the Heir Apparent and was later sent by the Koryŏ king to the Yuan court in the fifth month to request a marriage alliance for the crown prince.²¹⁷ In 1297, he was promoted to his highest rank in the Royal Secretariat-Chancellery as the vice-director and was also sent to the Yuan court to felicitate the birth of Emperor Chengzong's son.²¹⁸ The year 1298 saw a change of reign. As the new king on the throne, King Ch'ungsŏn appointed In Hu back to the Security Council in the fifth month but then reappointed him back to the Royal Secretariat-Chancellery two months later.²¹⁹

The year 1299 marked the fall of grace of In Hu. He had plotted against a supreme general by falsely accusing him of treason. In spite of interrogation, the general refused to be convicted. Therefore, In Hu went to the Yuan to report this crime to Emperor Chengzong and insisted on doing so even when King Ch'ungnyŏl requested him to stay in Korea. As a counter-measure, an official supporting the general went to the Yuan court to defend him and reported that the general was framed by In Hu. No more details are given in the basic annals, but it seems

²¹³ Ibid. 30.621; 30.622.

²¹⁴ Ibid. 30.624-5.

²¹⁵ Ibid. 30.626-7.

²¹⁶ Ibid. 30.631; 30.632.

²¹⁷ Ibid. 31.635; 31.636.

²¹⁸ Ibid. 31.640; 31.642.

²¹⁹ Ibid. 33.674; 33.676.

the plot failed as In Hu was dismissed from the office a month later.²²⁰ And then after a year, he was pardoned by the Yuan emperor on the occasion of the imperial crown prince's birthday.²²¹ It was a major blow to him because in the following seven years, there is not a single record of him in *Koryŏsa*. It seems that he was no longer responsible for important matters of the realm. Eventually, he reappears in the basic annals of 1307. The records show that he remained working in the Royal Secretariat-Chancellery, albeit in a minor role, and also had a noble title, the Lord of P'yŏngyang 平陽君, presumably conferred to him during the blank years.²²² He was promoted back to the post of vice-director in the Royal Secretariat-Chancellery in 1309 but he was already approaching the end of his life.²²³ He drowned in an accident two years later in the ninth month of 1311 at the age of 62.²²⁴

3.2.2 Sange – Chang Sunnyong

Chang Sunnyong's biography states clearly that he was originally a Uighur whose name was Sange. His father served Khubilai Khan, and he followed his father's footsteps to serve the khan's family by becoming its *ger-in k'e'ü*. He came to Koryŏ with Khudulugh Kelmish and was first conferred the post of junior colonel (*nangjang* 郎將) in the military and then to the post of general. He thus changed his name to Chang Sunnyong.²²⁵

Chang Sunnyong probably attained the post of general before 1277 as this was his title when he first appears in the basic annals of King Ch'ungnyŏl. He was sent to the Yuan by the Koryŏ king twice in that year. The first trip was about the invasion of Japan and the second was

²²⁰ Ibid. 31.645-6.

²²¹ Ibid. 31.647.

²²² Ibid. 32.666.

²²³ Ibid. 33.683.

²²⁴ Ibid. 34.691; 123.684; 123.686.

²²⁵ Ibid. 123.687.

to offer military aid to the Yuan court in its northern campaign.²²⁶ After a month, Chang Sunnyong returned from Dadu, relaying the news that the north of the empire had been pacified and the Yuan no longer required military aid.²²⁷ In 1278, he was dispatched to a northwest province to defend the borders.²²⁸ Then in 1279 alone, King Ch'ungnyōl moved his royal residence to Chang Sunnyong's mansion two times and dispatched him as an envoy to the Yuan.²²⁹ Two years later in 1281, King Ch'ungnyōl promoted Chang Sunnyong's general rank and appointed him as a commander-in-chief of the border.²³⁰ In 1284, Chang Sunnyong was sent to Dadu to felicitate the addition of Khubilai Khan's regnal name.²³¹ The next entry was in 1287 when he was sent by King Ch'ungnyōl to offer a noble or official's daughter to the Yuan court and to buy a garment made of pearls for Khudulugh Kelmish.²³² In the next year, he and the other officials were granted lavish gifts by Khubilai Khan to thank them for their military aid against a rebellion in the Yuan empire.²³³ The pearl garment that Chang Sunnyong bought in the Yuan empire was delivered to Khudulugh Kelmish by a Mongol in 1289, and then she and King Ch'ungnyōl held a feast for the envoy.²³⁴ It seems that Chang Sunnyong was promoted to the post of grand general between 1287 and 1289 as he is first recorded in this title in 1289 when he was sent by the king to offer a daughter of a high official to the Yuan court.²³⁵

²²⁶ Ibid. 28.573; 28.575.

²²⁷ Ibid. 28.576.

²²⁸ Ibid. 28.579; 28.584.

²²⁹ Ibid. 29.590, 591; 29.590.

²³⁰ Ibid. 29.605.

²³¹ Ibid. 29.611.

²³² Ibid. 30.616. It is uncertain of the identity of this daughter as this is the only entry where this person appears. Since it is a common practice that the Koryŏ kings offered noble or high officials' daughter to the Yuan court, it is believed that she was of the same background.

²³³ Chŏng In-ji, *Koryŏsa* 30.618-9.

²³⁴ Ibid. 30.621.

²³⁵ Ibid.

Chang Sunnyong was moved from the military hierarchy to the civil service between 1289 and 1292 as he appears as a senior administrator of the Security Council in 1292.²³⁶ He kept serving in the Security Council for two years until 1294 as he is mentioned holding a higher post in the same institution.²³⁷ The last entry of Chang Sunnyong in *Koryŏsa* is in 1297 when the king moved the royal residence to Chang's mansion three months prior to his death.²³⁸ He died in the twelfth month of 1297 at the age of 44.²³⁹

3.2.3 Ch'a Sin

Although he is not mentioned in Khudulugh Kelmish's biography, the biography of Chang Sunnyong states that Ch'a Sin 車信 was also her *ger-in k'e'ü*. According to the entry, he was a Korean, who immigrated and settled in the Yuan capital of Dadu. His mother served as the wet nurse of Khudulugh Kelmish. When the latter became King Ch'ungnyŏl's bride, he accompanied and served her. The highest military post he attained was supreme general and the highest civil post was vice-director of the Royal Secretariat-Chancellery.²⁴⁰

It is not clear about his activities as a servant of Khudulugh Kelmish as *Koryŏsa* only records his activities after he took up official roles. Ch'a Sin first appears in the basic annals of King Ch'ungnyŏl as a general returning from the Yuan empire bringing him 70 bolts of brocade as gifts from Khubilai Khan in 1276.²⁴¹ Ch'a Sin engaged in similar errands as the other retainer-turned officials for the Koryŏ king, who sent him to present tiger pelts to the Yuan court in

²³⁶ Ibid. 30.628.

²³⁷ Ibid. 31.635.

²³⁸ Ibid. 31.641.

²³⁹ Ibid. 31.642; 123.687.

²⁴⁰ Ibid. 123.687.

²⁴¹ Ibid. 28.571.

1277.²⁴² Then one year later, he was ordered by the king to guard the pregnant Khudulugh Kelmish in Andong 安東.²⁴³

There was a 9-year blank in *Koryŏsa* before Ch'a Sin's name reappears again in 1287. It seems that the status of Ch'a Sin was greatly enhanced as Khudulugh Kelmish and the crown prince moved their residence to Ch'a's mansion temporarily before they made their trip to the Yuan court in the tenth month.²⁴⁴ Again in 1288, King Ch'ungnyŏl honoured Ch'a Sin by moving the royal residence to his mansion in the eighth month.²⁴⁵ The enhancement to his prestige can also be seen in his official title. By 1288, he had already attained the highest post of supreme general.²⁴⁶ It seems he was promoted from general to supreme general during the 9-year gap. In this new capacity, he was responsible for overseeing the offering of Korean virgins to the Yuan court as he was sent by King Ch'ungnyŏl to escort them to the Yuan empire in 1288 and then a second time two years later.²⁴⁷ From 1294 to 1302, he rose rapidly within the official structure. First, he was promoted from the military to the civil post as a senior administrator of the Security Council. Then in the next year, he was appointed as the honourable First Advisor to the Heir Apparent.²⁴⁸ Two years later, he was appointed to the Royal Secretariat-Chancellery as a junior member and held a concurrent title as the Second Preceptor of the Heir Apparent.²⁴⁹ Finally, in 1302, he attained his highest rank as the vice-director of the Royal Secretariat-Chancellery.²⁵⁰

²⁴² Ibid. 28.576.

²⁴³ Ibid. 28.587.

²⁴⁴ Ibid. 30.618.

²⁴⁵ Ibid. 30.620.

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

²⁴⁷ Ibid. 30.624.

²⁴⁸ Ibid. 31.635.

²⁴⁹ Ibid. 31.641.

²⁵⁰ Ibid. 32.657.

3.2.4 Shiduer - No Yǒng

The first servant retainer of Khudulugh Kelmish, Shiduer, can be found in the biography of No Yǒng 盧英. Although the account does not record the reason, Shiduer probably changed his name to a Sinicized “No Yǒng” to legitimize his promotion, as in the cases of In Hu and Chang Sunnyong. His biography shows that he was also Khudulugh Kelmish’s *ger-in k’e’ü*.²⁵¹ His brief biography states that No Yǒng’s original name was Shiduer and was originally a man from the state of Hexi (*hexiguo ren* 河西國人).²⁵² The highest post he served was general but he died before he completed his diplomatic mission to the Yuan empire.²⁵³ It is uncertain when he died as his last entry was in 1281, recording his return from the Yuan, and there is no entry of No Yǒng after that.

His biography is short but the basic annals of King Ch’ungnyōl offer more details on his role in the Koryō government. No Yǒng was still named Shiduer in 1275 and was sent to the Yuan in two instances by Khudulugh Kelmish and King Ch’ungnyōl respectively.²⁵⁴ He became No Yǒng after 1277. This time, when he returned from a trip to the Yuan, he carried an officer title, senior colonel.²⁵⁵ As *Koryōsa* shows, Shiduer operated as a retainer of Khudulugh Kelmish without an official status from 1275 to 1277, but sometime in between he was promoted to the military service and adopted his Sino-Korean name. In 1277, No Yǒng was sent by King Ch’ungnyōl to the Yuan to speak for a Korean general in a trial. The general was accused of plotting a rebellion against the Mongols by a rival at the Korean government and was summoned

²⁵¹ Ibid. 123.688.

²⁵² During the Yuan dynasty, people referred Xixia as Hexi. It seems likely that Shiduer was a Tangut or Han from the former Xixia region and adopted a Mongolian name.

²⁵³ Chōng In-ji, *Koryōsa* 123.688.

²⁵⁴ Ibid. 28.568; 28.569.

²⁵⁵ Ibid. 28.574.

to the Yuan to be questioned by Khubilai Khan. Eventually, the general was cleared of the accusation.²⁵⁶ He was promoted again between 1277 and 1278 to the rank of general. That year he was sent by King Ch'ungnyöl to the Yuan court to deliver his gratitude letter to Khubilai Khan.²⁵⁷ It seems that 1279 was a busy year for him as his presence was split between the Yuan empire and the Koryŏ kingdom.²⁵⁸ Two years later in 1281, he returned to Koryŏ with the seal of the Branch Secretariat for the Eastern Campaign, which was bestowed by the Yuan emperor to King Ch'ungnyöl for granting his request of adding the words “imperial son-in-law” to the king’s title. The addition to the title was based on the premise that the Koryŏ king had married Khudulugh Kelmish. Khubilai Khan granted his permission, and thus No Yŏng carried the seal back to King Ch'ungnyöl.²⁵⁹ This is the last instance where No Yŏng appears in the basic annals of *Koryŏsa*.

3.3 Political Roles of the Retainers and the Mongol Princesses

Khudulugh Kelmish’s servant retainers, In Hu, Chang Sunnyong, Ch’a Sin and No Yŏng, shared a similar trajectory in political careers. All of them started out as Khudulugh Kelmish’s *ger-in k’e’ü* and accompanied her to Koryŏ because of her marriage with King Ch'ungnyöl. Their initial role was running errands for the Mongol princess in her political plot. Later, they were all promoted to the bureaucracy by King Ch'ungnyöl, first as military officers then as civil servants at the highest civil institutions. Therefore, they held great political power in the Korean court but their promotion to the Koryŏ hierarchy was not an easy one and might not have been warmly received by native Koryŏ officials. Ch’a Sin was Korean, but In Hu, Chang Sunnyong and No Yŏng were either Mongol, Uighur or Tangut and were required to change their names to Sino-

²⁵⁶ Ibid. 104.289.

²⁵⁷ Ibid. 28.586.

²⁵⁸ Ibid. 29.588; 29.589; 29.590.

²⁵⁹ Ibid. 29.604.

Korean ones to give them legitimacy before they could be promoted to higher posts in the Koryŏ officialdom. In Hu's biography indicates that this was mandated by King Ch'ungnyŏl before he was appointed to the post of general.²⁶⁰ Although the reason for the change of name is not clear in Chang Sunnyong's biography and is absent from No Yŏng's, it is possible that they changed their name for the same reason. King Ch'ungnyŏl must have felt the opposition from his Korean officials should he appoint a non-Korean to a leading military post, and this, therefore, compelled him to order the servant retainers to change their name before their appointment to curb Korean officials' opinions.

As the example of No Yŏng shows, although all of the retainers were serving under the official hierarchy at the latter half of their career, they continued to serve as the bridge of communication between Khudulugh Kelmish and her natal family in the Yuan court. Because of their official status between the Yuan and the Koryŏ courts, their main role in the Korean government was thus to serve as diplomatic envoys to the Yuan. In Hu, Chang Sunnyong, Ch'a Sin and No Yŏng were all sent to the Yuan by King Ch'ungnyŏl numerous times throughout their official career. In Hu went to the Yuan as envoy fourteen times in his thirty-four years of service and Chang Sunnyong was sent by the king seven times during his two decades in the bureaucracy. Ch'a Sin and No Yŏng were envoys to the Yuan for three and four times respectively.

In the capacity as the envoys between the Koryŏ and the Yuan courts, these retainers performed tributary missions for the Korean kingdom. They engaged in regular diplomatic exchanges between the two courts in the cases of the adoption of emperor's regal name, the emperor's birthdays, as well as deaths and births in the imperial household. For examples, Chang

²⁶⁰ Ibid. 123.684.

Sunnyong was sent by King Ch'ungnyŏl to congratulate the adoption of Khubilai Khan's regnal name in 1284, and In Hu was tasked with missions to the Yuan to pay homage to the death of crown prince Jimgim in 1286, to felicitate Khubilai Khan's birthday in 1293, and to congratulate Emperor Chengzong on the birth of his son in 1297.

Besides formal diplomatic missions in the capacity of diplomats, this role also allowed the servant retainers to safeguard Yuan's interest in the Korean peninsula by helping Khudulugh Kelmish to enforce Koryŏ's tributary obligations after 1278. One of the obligations was to regularly attend the imperial assembly. The Koryŏ king, at times with the Mongol princess and their crown prince, had to travel to the Yuan empire to appear in the court audience and present tribute. Because of the tributary status, the Koryŏ kingdom also had to offer valuables and various indigenous products to the Yuan court regularly. There are several instances in *Koryŏsa* where the retainers escorted the delivery of tributes. Ch'a Sin went to the Yuan court to present tiger pelts in 1277, and virgins in 1288 and 1290. And on two occasions Chang Sunnyong was ordered by King Ch'ungnyŏl to offer the daughters of Korean nobles and officials to the Yuan court in the year of 1287 and 1289.

In addition, there was one instance that Khudulugh Kelmish ordered In Hu and another official to select virgins of decent background for her to present to the Yuan court because she was about to depart for the imperial assembly. Following her order, the duo raided homes at night and violently kidnapped slaves as tributes. These acts caused great disturbance at every corner of the capital of Kaesŏng, and even the families without daughters were afraid of them.²⁶¹

²⁶¹ Ibid. 123.675.

Undoubtedly, these tributary obligations met with opposition amongst native Korean officials at court as well as from King Ch'ungnyŏl himself, albeit he was a staunch ally of the Yuan court. The Koryŏ king found that the duty of building warships for the campaign of Japan incurred a heavy burden to his kingdom and considered pleading with the Yuan court. One official, using Emperor Taizong 太宗's military campaign of Koguryŏ 高句麗 during the Tang dynasty as an analogy to Khubilai Khan's campaign against Japan, stated that there was little gain in this campaign and argued it would exhaust the empire's resources. His speech met with a supporter in the Koryŏ government, who suggested halting the construction of warships. This, however, faced backlash from Khudulugh Kelmish's retainers. Both In Hu and Chang Sunnyong rebuked this suggestion and the supporter. The supporter thus resigned.²⁶² On another occasion, King Ch'ungnyŏl also considered abolishing falconry to relieve the poverty of his people and drought of his land. Again this faced opposition from the Khudulugh Kelmish's retainer. In Hu reasoned that it was not appropriate to abolish falconry as it was an order from the Yuan emperor Khubilai to maintain it.²⁶³ From the above examples, whenever the tributary obligations were challenged, the retainers of Khudulugh Kelmish stood up to defend them in Koryŏ, practically helping her to enforce them and representing the Yuan's interest in the Korean court, despite their status as Koryŏ officials.

Clearly, the retainers worked as a group to safeguard the Mongol princess brides' and Yuan's interest in Koryŏ, and this was viewed unfavourably by contemporaries as well as by the compilers of *Koryŏsa*. The end of the biographies of In Hu, Chang Sunnyong and Ch'a Sin is filled with negative comments. In In Hu's biography, the compilers comment that because of his political influence, he received bribes and seized people's land and slaves with no limit. People

²⁶² Ibid. 107.366.

²⁶³ Ibid. 123.684.

resented him and celebrated when he died.²⁶⁴ In Chang Sunnyong's case, *Koryŏsa* records that he competed in power and extravagance with In Hu and Ch'a Sin, and their mansions represented their wasteful nature.²⁶⁵ As for Ch'a Sin, his biography ends with his imprisonment by King Ch'ungnyŏl. Ch'a Sin was reported for violating the law by an official, which infuriated King Ch'ungnyŏl, who scolded Ch'a Sin for betraying his trust and disappointing him.²⁶⁶ Almost all the retainers were depicted as bad ministers of the kingdom but there is an exception. No Yŏng is put by the compilers of *Koryŏsa* as the opposite paradigm of his colleagues. According to his biography, he is described as being good-natured, intelligent, and well-versed in decorum. He was incomparable by the standard of In Hu and Chang Sunnyong.²⁶⁷ Although the compilers did not regard highly the retainers of Khudulugh Kelmish, they noted some of their contribution to the kingdom and their good characters. In Hu, for instance, was noted for his generalship and loyalty to the royal couple. Whenever they went to the Yuan, In Hu followed. And he once helped a fellow Koryŏ general to clear a false accusation and restored the northern regions to the Koryŏ from the Yuan.²⁶⁸

Notwithstanding, the reputation of these servant retainers was mixed. They were both the servant of the Mongol princess and official of the Koryŏ court. Their dual identity caused them to make decisions largely unfavourable to native Koreans because they put their loyalty first to their master, the Mongol princess, and her natal family. Their closeness to the royal household as the servants of the Mongol princess gave them access to the core of political power – royal favour. They became the favourites of not only the Mongol princess but also the Koryŏ king. Therefore, they were bestowed with posts at the Koryŏ officialdom and rose rapidly within the

²⁶⁴ Ibid. 123.686.

²⁶⁵ Ibid. 123.687.

²⁶⁶ Ibid. 123.688.

²⁶⁷ Ibid.

²⁶⁸ Ibid. 123.686; 104.289.

bureaucratic hierarchy. The retainers held great political power as they had both the official positions and the unofficial royal favour. The fact that they were perceived negatively by their contemporaries only speaks to the extent of their political influence. Using their official power, they safeguarded the interest of the Mongol princess and the Yuan empire. As loyal servants, they became a bastion and manifestation of the Mongol princess's political authority at the Koryŏ court.

Concluding Remarks

The Foreignness of the Mongol Princesses in the Koryŏ Court

In this study, I have explored the Yuan-Koryŏ marriage alliance and the Mongol princess brides in the Koryŏ Court during the 13th and 14th centuries. The marital relationship between the Yuan and Koryŏ courts was different from previous *heqin* marriage. If *heqin* was a Chinese construct for the Chinese dynasties to pacify its borders with foreign states, then the marriage alliance between the Yuan and the Koryŏ was a mixed product of sedentary and nomadic civilizations. The Yuan's approach to marriage alliance put Koryŏ into its orbit and incorporated the Korean royal house into the Mongol imperial clan. The Mongol princess brides to Koryŏ enjoyed unprecedented political influence in Korean politics, while princess brides of the previous dynasties, with the exception of several extraordinary princess brides, had little to none. The scarcity of sources on the Mongol princesses in the Yuan and Koryŏ dynastic histories impedes further research. By borrowing the conceptual framework from Medieval studies of queenship, I have tried to expand the search for the voice of Mongol princesses. Earenfight's theory in queenship suggests that the foreignness of the queen was instrumental to her political influence in foreign court. In this case, the Mongol princesses' foreignness came from their family background, their ties with the Yuan imperial court, and the retainers they brought to Koryŏ. Therefore, I argue that these three factors formed the bases of their political power in Koryŏ.

In Chapter 1, I examined the activities of the Mongol princess brides and demonstrated their powerful influence in Koryŏ politics through their access to the Koryŏ throne. The political power and authority were symbolic and actual, as they maintained Koryŏ's tributary obligations,

retained their higher status in the Koryŏ court relative to that of the Korean kings, and acted as regent and the head of the state in the king's absence or minority. Such power and authority rested in the Mongol princesses' position as the members of the Mongol imperial clan in the Yuan empire.

In the next chapter, I traced the power of the Mongol princesses through their family background and their ties with the Yuan imperial clan. Their fathers were prestigious princes of the imperial clan and wielded considerable influence and independence in the Yuan empire. This blood relationship gave rise to the high status of the Mongol princess brides in the Koryŏ court. I also showed that the communication between the Mongol princesses and their natal home, the Yuan court, was never severed. While princess brides of the Chinese dynasties seldom communicated with their natal home after marriage, the Mongol princesses made good use of the opportunities to inform the Yuan court about their well-being through regular diplomatic envoys between the two courts and through their retainers who took their personal messages to the Yuan homeland. The well-maintained communication between the Mongol princesses and their home enabled them to mobilize support from the Yuan throne to influence Koryŏ politics.

The last chapter turned to the Mongol princesses' own agency in the Koryŏ court. Aside from relaying messages for the Mongol princesses, the retainers were promoted by the Korean kings and attained high-ranking posts in the Koryŏ officialdom. As such, they served as an extension of the political influence that the Mongol princess brides wielded in the Koryŏ court. Through support from the Koryŏ king and the high ranking positions, they were able to shape Korean policies that safeguarded the interest of the Yuan empire. They repeatedly dissuaded the Korean kings from abolishing Mongol Yuan policies and institutions on Korean soil. Together,

the Mongol princesses and their retainers were the bastions of the Mongols' interest in the Koryŏ kingdom.

In conclusion, the political strength that foreignness gave to the Mongol princess brides rested on maintaining ties to the natal family in the Yuan court and ensuring the personal loyalty of the retainers who became the Mongol officials in the Koryŏ government. This is merely one of the angles of Yuan-Koryŏ relations in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. My research has come across related topics that await further examination, for example, the relationship between the Mongol princess brides and the Koryŏ kings and the political implication of the marriage alliance. As aforementioned, all Koryŏ kings after 1274 were required to marry Mongol princesses before they were enthroned. Thus the Yuan court systematically incorporated the Korean royal house into the Mongol Yuan imperial clan. Another interesting topic is related to the fact that the Koryŏ kings and Mongol princess brides visited Buddhist temples together regularly. Since Korean Buddhism had been central to Koryŏ politics, an examination of the role of Buddhism in Mongol and Koryŏ relations may yield additional insight that presents a fuller picture of the complex relationship and complicated period of East Asia in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

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