BOW AND OBEY: A CULTURAL HISTORY OF KOREA, FRANCE, AND UNRELENTING RESISTANCE (1866-1910)

By

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Dedicated in loving memory to my paternal grandparents:
Michael “Pop Pops” and Frances “Grams” Arvidson.

“Oh, boy!”

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Dear Sweet, Gentle Reader:

I thank you in advance for continuing to read past this acknowledgments section, should that be a feat that you manage. Given that I really did give this dissertation the old college try (*pun intended)* by restricting whimsy in the pages which follow, I am granting myself the liberty to write whatever I want here, without citing a single darn thing.

First off, let's not beat around the bush: the amount of gratitude that lives in my heart far outstrips my powers of acknowledgment, and if I were to thank every single person and entity to whom I feel some measure of gratitude, it would be longer than the dissertation. Let's begin with the money. I am grateful to the College of Arts & Sciences at Vanderbilt University for the generous fellowship that I received for the duration of my studies. I am also grateful to the Department of French & Italian for granting me a Pichois Summer Award for Travel and Research in 2018, which I used to go to France, and a second one in 2019, which I used to go to Korea. I also received three separate awards with a financial benefit that somehow seemed always to arrive when I found myself in need.

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Alright, enough about money. Let's talk about the COVID-19 pandemic. My entire dissertation was written during the pandemic. Living in McTyeire, I was suddenly displaced because community living had become unsavory and ill-advised. I packed my things and ended up at Meryl Stark's house on the very weekend that I needed to take my PhD exam. Meryl, thank you for the use of your extra bedroom and the workspace that you set up for me. I do not know what I would have done without you. After leaving Meryl's house, Dr. Kim Lucy, my good friend, and the only person I have ever survived rolling downhill in a Jeep with, took me in. I intended to stay with her just a couple of weeks, but I ended up moving in, and we had such grand adventures. I worked from home while she darted around the country saving animals' lives, and when it was time for me to defend my dissertation proposal, I did it from her house and she gave me champagne about it. The pandemic made life more stressful for all of us humans, and we have no shortage of new problems that we create for ourselves every single day. I am grateful to my friends and family, who encouraged me every day to read, to write, to learn, to grow, and to do all the things that were necessary for me to continue in this endeavor- even when it felt like the whole world was coming apart at its seams.

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Finally, it is time to thank those who are closest to me. For that reason, I would like to say thank you to Sir Magnus Longsnout of the House of Obedience. Magnus is my twelve-year-old dog, and he cannot read (as far as I know) but I would like to include him here anyway. This is my dissertation, and this is my series of acknowledgements, so I have chosen to do with it what I see fit. Mom and Dad, thank you for raising me to be fierce and capable, and for teaching me to reflect rather than wallow when faced with failure. I confess that there were many such moments in the course of writing this thing. Parth Patel, you know what you did. Thank you especially for taking care of the little things so I could go after the big things.

That's all, folks!

Sarah Arvidson

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[1] "Boof" is a whitewater kayaking term, which designates a paddler's stylish and fancy execution of a movement in which they launch themselves through the air off of a promontory made of rock, water, or wood, and land on the surface of the water in such a way that the sound of the boat's hull making contact is onomatopoeic: "*boof.*"

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Introduction: Northeast Asia in Francophone Studies

In its broadest sense, this book identifies and analyzes the origin, development, and proliferation of a dominant and counter-discourse that together formed a problematic, unstable binary opposition through which Korea was represented by the global francophone community during the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Until recently, the field of French and Francophone Studies has concerned itself primarily with regions of the French-speaking world which are constrained to continental France, the Caribbean, the Maghreb, and on much rarer occasion, to Southeast Asia and India. However, certain academics, such as Mathilde Kang, Aimée Boutin, and Elizabeth Emery have called for an expansion of the geographical limitations to which French and Francophone studies have continuously adhered[2]. This book responds to that call and uses a multidisciplinary approach inspired by a number of different scholars and disciplines.

The cultural-historical focus of this work aligns with current research in French and Francophone Studies, such as that of Raisa Rexer, Maurice Samuels, Rachel Mesch, Jann Matlock, and Vanessa Schwartz, combining the interdisciplinary study of visual culture with analyses of literary texts. As it takes up the nineteenth-century French Studies cultural-historical approach to reading documents, it is particularly attuned to issues of power and discourse that are formulated by Richard Terdiman in his seminal text *Discourse/Counter-Discourse*. "Power," in Terdiman's book, is viewed along Foucauldian lines finding that it is

[2] In *Francophonie and the Orient*: *French-Asian Transcultural Crossings (1840-19400),* Mathilde Kang writes that studies demonstrating the existence of a surviving francophonie in Korea and Japan, among other countires, are highly desirable (109). In their introduction to a special issue of *l'Esprit Créateur,* Boutin and Emery explain that it "seeks to draw attention to rich and fascinating cultural and creative exchanges between France and East Asia that have been overshadowed by emphasis on Orientalism and colonial politics" (1) and that the "articles in this volume reveal that the cultural collaboration among figures in France, Iran, China, and Japan was much more dynamic and specific than has previously been proposed" (2-3).

an action that is exercised rather than a static object that can be possessed[3]. As the word "power" is used here throughout, it refers to an exercise that is diffused throughout social institutions and which names actions and crimes in order to increase its opportunities for intervention.

As with "power," "discourse" is herein considered a particular kind of action that is carried out by an agent. For the purposes of the current study, discourse is one of the productive means by which power is actively exercised and which is used to draw divisive lines between members of particular communities. These ideas are drawn from those of Richard Terdiman in his aforementioned book, when he cites Michel Foucault in writing that "Discourse is not simply that which expresses struggles or systems of domination, but that for which, and by which, one struggles; it is the power which one is striving to seize" (55). Terdiman himself finds that:

> Discourses are the complexes of signs and practices which organize social existence and social reproduction. In their structured, material persistence, discourses are what give differential substance to membership in a social group or class formation, which mediate an internal sense of belonging, an outward sense of otherness" (54)[4].

This project is particularly attentive to discourse functioning in precisely this manner in the primary texts and objects of material culture that it analyzes, seeking to examine the way in

[3] In discussing that "the world of discourse" plays itself out in a hierarchized struggle, Terdiman echoes Foucault's "What then is at stake, unless it be desire and power" when he writes that what at stake in language is power (40)..

[4] Terdiman also adds: "But we need to be careful about *defining* a concept like the discourse. Such a notion must be referred to the problematic from which it emerges, for this determines its operational sense," (54) and indeed, much of the book does the work of examining how dominant and counter-discourses function as power struggles from within their specific contexts. Moreover, on pages 55 and 56, he acknowledges Foucault's shift from an "early conception of discourse as a static object to a notion of *discursive practice or production*."

which forms of the counter-discourse are constantly lurking within the dominant social, artistic, and ideological discourse.

Ideology, according to Louis Althusser, is "the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence" (23). In "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," Althusser draws an important distinction between ideologies and ideology, noting that the former always express class positions and that the latter is eternal, is without history, and is generalized. In a general sense this project regards ideology as defined in the latter sense, but in a more specific sense this project is concerned with individual ideologies that do have a history. In part, this book aims to trace the history of particular ideologies that are expressed in the nineteenth century Franco-Korean context. To aid in defining more specific, individual ideologies, I turn to Terry Eagleton's conceptualization of a dominant ideology. He writes that it is "constituted by relatively coherent sets of 'discourses' of values, representations, and beliefs" and that it contributes to the reproduction of certain social relations (54). As "ideology" is used in this project, it refers to Althusser's general definition. When a specific, individual ideology that has a history of its own and expresses class distinctions is being discussed, it will be qualified as such.

By performing analyses of both textual and visual materials, such as novels, newspaper articles, photographs, public spectacles, *etc.*, while being attentive to the specific historical and political natures of their production, I will argue that when all of them are woven together, they constitute an ideological discourse that is specific to Korea. The dominant discourse is one of submission, in which the Korean people were represented as being weak and "incapable of resistance[5]." The counter-discourse opposes this idea, representing Korea and its people as being resistant. Some of the materials analyzed in the

[5] This is a direct quote from Gustave Pradier (323), whose travel account is discussed in detail in Chapter 1, section 5.

pages that follow, such as Gustave Pradier's *La Corée il y a quarante ans,* are helpful for seeing both dominant and counter-discourse expressed within a single text. Other materials, like Pierre Loti's *La Troisième jeunesse de Madame Prune*, are additionally useful for observing how this discourse was influenced by visual materials even when the resulting product was textual.

Methodology

In 2016, Aimée Boutin and Elizabeth Emery wrote in "France-Asia: Cultural Identity and Creative Exchange" that Edward Said's book *Orientalism*, published in 1978, has "cast a very long shadow over the relationship between Europe and East Asia" (1). When they wrote this, they referred not only to the significance that Said's book had in laying the foundation for Postcolonial Studies partially because it revealed the Orient as both a spatial and an ontological fabrication constructed by the West about the East, but they also referred to the limitations of using Orientalism as a framework for studying France-East Asia relations.

This dissertation was begun in 2020 and is a product of the time and the space in which it was written. Indeed, it was crafted under the very shadow that Said's book has cast, which has demanded a much more careful academic treatment of the East. Evidence of this is found in the sheer fact that this project, which concerns itself with Western representations of an Eastern nation, simply cannot be undertaken without first acknowledging *Orientalism*. Indeed, one of this book's great hurdles lies in approaching the topic in such a way that the Orientalist project is not again repeated. As a cis-gendered, heterosexual, white American woman, I recognize that I bring a particular perspective to the representations I seek to analyze in these pages. This perspective is determined by a different century, geography, ethnicity, culture, society, and most often a different gender than those whose works I analyze. Although I discuss Orientalizing practices, I do not

condone them. As I examine these different materials, I do not seek to speak for the people and cultures I discuss. Instead, I seek to shed light on their historical representation in the West.

When Edward Said wrote *Orientalism*, first published in 1978, he stated in the introduction that by using the term he meant several things, all of them interdependent upon each other (2). He considered it "a created body of theory and practice in which, for many generations, there has been a considerable material investment" (6) and he stated that it also represented an incredibly powerful discourse of domination. One of the positive results of the book has been an awareness of the need for a much more careful treatment of the East. However, as Elizabeth Emery and Aimée Boutin have noted in referencing its "long shadow," the result of Said's narrow middle eastern and Arab focus has been "less systematic scholarly treatment of France-East Asia relations" (3). They also write that following *Orientalism*'s publication, the French *Voyage en Orient* genre has "largely been associated with the colonial project in the Maghreb" (2-3). Mathilde Kang corroborates this in *Francophonie and the Orient*: "As it stands, research on Francophone phenomena in Asia still refers to Indochina as proof of the French presence. Substantive studies likely to demonstrate the existence of a surviving Francophonie in China, Japan, India, and Korea are highly desirable…" (109). Said himself had both personal (his own history) and global (contemporary events) reasons for the somewhat rigid geographical demarcations to which he adhered, but in spite of having acknowledged the importance of non-Arab, non-Islamic regions of the East (2, 17, 322, *etc.*), the "long shadow" that his work has cast has at least partially been this relative paucity of scholarly attention accorded to the relationships between the West and large swaths of the world that lie east of it. Given that Said's work admittedly was focused on the application of Orientalizing structures to entirely different cultures and peoples than are to be found in Northeast Asia, the question of how applicable

Orientalism can be as a theoretical framework for studying the relationships between it and the "West" bears thoughtful consideration. Throughout this dissertation, both "truthful" (per Said, these are histories, philological analyses, political treatises, *etc.*) and "avowedly artistic" texts are analyzed with an eye toward the style, figures of speech, *etc.* that Said counsels scholars to examine (21). However, by using a mixed approach that takes up these strategies of the orientalist critical framework in conjunction with other emerging theories, such as transnationalism, the present work endeavors to fill in the gaps created by Said's geographically localized approach.

At first glance, the juxtaposition of submission and resistance as dominant and counter-discourses might seem to be a continuation of Orientalism, modified to fit the Northeast Asian context *vis-à-vis* France due to its reliance on binary distinctions. Literary scholars who have tried to understand the region's relationship to France in the wake of Said's groundbreaking publication have already tangled with this question:

> The framework that establishes a set of oppositions between East and West such as rational/irrational, masculine/feminine, active/passive, and progressive/conservative, often attributed to Edward Said, and roundly condemned for ignoring diverse forms of Orientalism by his critics, is too blunt an analytical tool to catch the specific sense of otherness given to Korea within the overall picture of Asia held by Westerners. (Yoon 31-32)

However, the focus here on the power of the counter-discourse of resistance ultimately reveals the ways that Orientalism as a critical framework is inadequate to parsing the particular historical realities that defined the relationship between France and Korea—in both reality and in the French cultural imagination—during the nineteenth century. This book, while identifying the binary opposition, problematizes and undermines it, demonstrating its fragility.

The transnationalist framework can be used as a supplement rather than a replacement to Orientalism for thinking about the East. For some, the term "transnationalism" refers to a process in which immigrants bring aspects of their cultures of origin with them into their host country's culture, but as with "orientalism," the term is polysemic[6]. Some have decided that transnationalism takes place primarily in this context but only when the exchange is somehow unequal, meaning that the host country must exert some kind of superiority over the country of origin, be it greater financial strength or a hegemonic appraisal that renders the migrant's home culture inferior (Blanc *et al* 684-685). For others, transnationalism involves creating opportunities for scholarly inquiry in areas that have thus far been overlooked[7].

For example, Mathilde Kang's *Francophonie and the Orient* focuses on French writing from areas that were never colonized and subsequently never produced colonial, anti-colonial, or post-colonial literatures. These three types of literature constitute the trilogic paradigm against which Kang centers her work and her methodology departs from traditional approaches in French Studies to highlight the startling profusion of French literature produced by Asian writers. This shift in attention casts a much wider net than the one which was cast by Edward Said's Orientalism while it simultaneously promotes scholarly inquiry of heretofore unacknowledged or inadequately examined literary texts.

However, akin to Said's theory, Kang's scope can also be widened. For example, her focus on Asian authors can be expanded to also consider texts produced by their French counterparts writing from within Asia even though they might not necessarily have Asian

[6] See Sharon Marcus, "Same Difference? Transnationalism, Comparative Literature, and Victorian Studies" for her discussion about "the recent tendency of the term to mean all things to all people" (681). Due to the difficulty inherent in the task, a conference of anthropologists whose purpose was in part to define the term decided instead to abandon it, choosing references to "transnational processes and their theoretical implications" as a replacement (Blanc *et al*. 683).

[7] Other notable discussions of transnationalism include: Patricia Clavin's "Defining Transnationalism," Gert Oostindie's "Transnationalism: A Turning Tide?," Steven Vertovec's "Migration and Other Modes of Transnationalism: Towards Conceptual Cross-Fertilization."

origins, such as that of Pierre Loti, Paul Claudel[8], and their nomadic contemporaries. Indeed, approaching the body of texts available from this widened perspective will provide a more comprehensive picture of the literary and imaginative landscape of nineteenth century Northeast Asia. Moreover, by considering objects of material culture such as photographs, architecture, and public spectacles as texts, this book seizes the opportunity to further widen Kang's scope by including analysis of Korean pavilion at the World's Fair of 1900 as well as the literary production of Korean writers and translators who lived in France. These texts, as the francophone texts produced solely by French individuals have done, simultaneously manifest and contest the dominant and counter discourses, further demonstrating the fragility of the unstable binary opposition that they constitute.

The mixed approach taken by this book is also influenced by the geo-poetic approach of Frédéric Boulesteix, who wrote a dissertation specifically centered on identifying and understanding French views on Korea. This dissertation does not repeat his project and instead seeks to expand on it by considering aspects of the Franco-Korean relationship that Boulesteix's work did not address. Specific limitations in his approach can in fact be addressed through the application of certain aspects of the theoretical frameworks introduced above. For instance, transnationalism encourages scholars to consider identity formation as a co-emergent, co-constructive process. Whereas Boulesteix focuses primarily on French views on Korea, a simultaneous consideration of Korean responses to such views is needed. Said's guidance to look at style, narrative devices, *etc.* can be helpful to this end. Moreover, Boulesteix's geo-poetic approach endeavors to circumvent the inclusion of ideological structures in his analysis. Throughout this dissertation project, it is argued that conflicting ideologies existed as a central component in the dynamic representations of Korea in the

[8] Pamela Genova's "Knowledge of the East? Paul Claudel and the Equivocal Nature of Intercultural Exchange" is a good starting point for considering this idea in terms of how it might apply to Paul Claudel in particular.

nineteenth century.

Thus far, it has been claimed that the present work identifies and problematizes a specific set of discourses using a mixed approach that is influenced but not limited by Edward Said's critical Orientalist framework, and that these discourses are related to nineteenth- and early twentieth-century francophone representations of Korea. It has not yet been explained what exactly "Korea" means in the context of this book. While it is considered appropriate within the field of Korean Studies to refer to Korea during the nineteenth century as "Chosŏn," using the McCune-Reischauer transcription system, as "조선" in Hangeul, and as "Joseon" in the Revised Romanization of Korean transcription system, it is most appropriate for this project to refer to the entire Korean peninsula as "Korea.[9]" The reasons for this are three-fold and they merit inclusion in this introduction.

First, this project concerns itself with a period of time which extends beyond the temporal end of the Joseon Kingdom (대조선국), 1392-1897[10]. Second, because this project

[9] Although many academics prefer to use the McCune-Reischauer Romanization system of transcription, it is my preference to use the Revised Romanization of Korean (국어의 로마자 표기법). My reasons for this are as follows: first, the Revised Romanization of Korean is the newest and most modern of the two systems; second, it was developed by the National Academy of the Korean Language whereas two American men developed the McCune-Reischauer system. I find it preferable to use a transcription system developed by individuals for whom the language is tied to their cultural identity; and third, it is the transcription with which I am personally most familiar due to having been introduced to it when I lived in Korea. Moreover, it is also the transcription system which is most commonly seen in Korea today and it is the transcription system that is currently supported by the government of South Korea.

Out of respect for authors' choices, references to works whose titles and/or whose authors' names use the McCune-Reischauer Romanization will not be converted to the Revised Romanization of Korean system. In addition, although Korean naming conventions hold that the surname precede an individual's first name, in the case of a Korean author having chosen to reverse that order, the author's choice will be respected throughout this book, including the reference section.

Works, historical events, and geographical locations whose names have been translated into English or French or converted to either system of transcription will be accompanied by their respective titles in the Korean alphabet, Hangeul (한글), in parentheses, except in cases where the work is cited in a figure or in the bibliography.

[10] Korea's long history includes this roughly five-hundred-year long kingdom, which succeeded the Goryeo Dynasty (918-1392) and preceded the Korean Empire (1897-1910). The Joseon Kingdom figures into a large part of the time frame that is discussed in this dissertation, but not the entirety of it.

deals with Korea as envisioned, imagined, and conceptualized by contemporary French individuals rather than with the specific Korean government at that time, this term is more apt and functions diachronically. “Korea” can be used as a catch-all for the essential, ontological formulation of that nation by those who were representing it. Third, though “Joseon” is defensibly more accurate since it served as the official name of the ruling dynasty for a very long period of time, and was used by the inhabitants themselves, variations of the name “Korea” remained -and still remain- in consistent use throughout French primary sources. Nineteenth-century references to the Korean “nation,” (see my definition below) its cities, and its landmarks from Western sources are remarkable for their inconsistency. Primary sources in the French language from the time period analyzed in this book refer to Korea as *Corée, Korée, Coréa, Joseon, Chosen, Tchösen,* and as other variants of those appellations. At various points, Korea was referred to as empire, as kingdom, and even as vassal state. Today, distinctions are made in French and in English between North and South Korea, but “Korea” can also still be used to refer to the peninsula as a whole. With these points in mind, the term “Korea” and “Korean” will be used to refer to the entire peninsula and its population throughout this book. Each time that “Korea” begins to be used in a given chapter or section, its exact, synchronic significance will be detailed in advance whenever necessary. Otherwise, the usage of “Korea” is diachronic and should be seen as referencing an essential, imaginary, monolithic, atemporal embodiment of the “nation.”

By “nation,” this book references synchronically the geographical and political entities into which individuals are inscribed as members at a given moment in history. Some may argue that Joseon was not a “nation” and that its “citizens” were nothing more or less than “subjects.” Nevertheless, for clarity of communication, there will be moments at which it will be most advantageous to reference a “nation” even though that reference might specifically be to (Joseon (조선), the Kingdom of Korea from 1392 to 1897) or to the French

Second or Third Republics, for example. Wherever this may be the case, it will at first be specified within the chapter under which form of government each "nation" is at that time operating. Diachronically, the word "nation" is taken as Benedict Anderson describes it in *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism:* "an imagined political community- and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign" (5-6). The notion of "Korea," henceforth to be written without quotation marks, during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as being a sovereign nation is complicated due to the shifting nature of its relationship with China, which Mary C. Wright skillfully illuminates throughout her article, "The Adaptability of Ch'ing Diplomacy: The Case of Korea." She also demonstrates this idea in terms of Korea's relationships with Russia, Japan, and other "nations" (in the synchronic sense) whose governments sought to control it[11].

Existing studies which seek to define the literary relationship between France and Korea are scant. While a number of major studies, including but not limited to Boulesteix's expansive dissertation and subsequent book, have done the crucial work of compiling primary sources, contextualizing them politically, culturally, and historically, and in the case of yet another dissertation written by a scholar by the name of Yun Nam-gun, even sometimes correcting misinformation, none of these studies have focused specifically on discursive analysis in terms of how it relates to the construction and reinforcement of specific ideologies. Rather, these works have all focused on the encyclopedic accumulation of historical and cultural events and documents without much attention given to the diverse ways in which notions of power affected the literary and artistic production of the time. In fact, Yun Nam-gun's dissertation, *Image de la Corée en France au XIXe siècle*, reiterates the

[11] Her article contains six sub-headings: 1) Traditional Sino-Korean Relations, 2) New Problems of the 1860's, 3) The Prohibition of Maritime Trade, 4) The Sealed Northern Frontier, 5) The Prohibition against Christianity, and 6) The Japanese Threat to Tributary Korea. Each of these sections traces important, nuanced changes to China's relationship with Korea, which together are helpful in understanding particular limitations to Korean national sovereignty during the nineteenth century.

dominant discourse of submission in multiple instances. At one point, he even writes that his ancestors during the nineteenth century were "incapable of defending their homeland[12]" (72).

Studies regarding the relationship between France and Korea during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in fields other than French and Francophone Studies are much more numerous[13]. Those originating from political scientists, geographers, and historians are valuable for the insights their own fields provide but fail to perform significant literary analysis. Studies in Art and Art History tend to neglect the short-lived period of the Korean Empire (대한제국), which had noteworthy effects on state-created monuments and works of art that were commented upon by French visitors to the peninsula and the Korean Pavilion at the 1900 World's Fair in Paris[14].

In addition to deviating from these previous studies by focusing on the textual imprints of Korea in the French imaginary[15], this dissertation further breaks from previous works on the topic by abandoning organization via chronology, genre, or notable figures. Instead, each of its chapters examine what I have termed "discursive events." These events

[12] See Chapter 1, section 5 for more about how this statement is discursively charged.

[13] *France- Corée: 130 ans de relations (1886-2016)*, published under the direction of Jin-Mieung Li and Saangkyun Yi, as the result of a symposium held in France to celebrate the 130th anniversary of official diplomatic relations between France and Korea, contains a variety of articles from a wide range of scholarly disciplines. Some of them were extraordinarily helpful to me in doing the research for this book, but others were not at all relevant, belonging to completely different fields of study. *E.g.*: Francoise Guelle's "Les relations économiques entre la France et la Corée" (191-205); Saangkyun Yi's "La reconnaissance d'Ulleungdo et Dokdo par le Japon au XIXe siècle, vue à travers la production de cartes du monde," (123-135); and Laurent Quisefit's "La fin de la guerre de Corée et la France : craintes et espoirs pour l'Indochine," (223-244). Perhaps the most thorough French-language history of the relationship between France and Korea is Pierre-Emmanuel Roux's *La Croix, la baleine, et le canon : La France face à la Corée au milieu du XIXe siècle*. Pure history, it traces the relationship between the two countries in terms of its religious, commercial, and military interactions. Although from time to time the author does perform a close reading of private correspondence here and there, it is decidedly not a work of literary analysis, and the author does not pain himself to consider works of literature.

[14] Examples of such individuals include but are not limited to: Maurice Courant (see Chapter Three), Joseph de la Nézière (See Chapters Three and Four), Paul Gers (see Chapter Three), Pierre Loti (See Chapter Four), Charles Varat (See Chapter Four), and Claire Vautier and Hippolyte Frandin (See Chapters Three and Four).

[15] The use of the word "imaginary" here is intentional and is referential to Jean-Paul Sartre's *L'Imaginaire : Psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination,"* in which imagination and perception are distinguished from each other, and in which intention and emotion are tied to the object being imagined.

are rooted in a historical reality, but I focus on the ways in which they inspired a particularly marked cultural reaction, offering a series of case studies in nineteenth-century attitudes about Korea as evidenced in first-person travel accounts, in newspapers, and in Korea's official participation in the 1900's World's Fair in Paris. A chapter which centers specifically on fictional accounts of Korea supplements these more historically rooted chapters, expanding on the picture of Korea in the French imaginary as it was begun in the more historically rooted chapters. The terminal chapter considers the Korean Independence Movement, using it as a case study for considering how Korean resistance fighters worked to reclaim existing narratives about Korea in service of their goals for independence.

The first chapter considers an attempted French colonization of Korea in 1866, called the *Byeong-in yangyo* (병인양요), or "Year of Western Disturbance," as a major discursive event for Franco-Korean relations. The incident consisted of a French naval force landing on Ganghwa Island (strategically located near the mouth of the Han River, which leads to Seoul) in 1866, destroying several government buildings, absconding with nearly three hundred volumes of rare and precious archival manuscripts (which have still not been fully returned to Korea today), the burning of the government archive in which these manuscripts were stored, and ensuing diplomatic disaster, all in response to the executions of several French Catholic missionaries and Korean converts on Korean soil. Numerous and diverse francophone primary sources reference and examine this event, including texts produced by Catholic missionaries (private accounts and correspondence), letters written by the diplomatic and military leaders of the French expedition (Henri de Bellonnet and Pierre-Gustave Roze respectively), articles in the French press, and official correspondence directed to Pierre-Gustave Roze from the Korean court. The analysis focuses on an illustrated account of the events by the French sailor and artist Henri Zuber, which was written during the time of the expedition. It also examines a second personal account of the event that was written as a

reflective piece around forty years later by another expedition participant, Gustave Pradier. In addition, because this project uses a mixed approach that considers a transnationalist, co-constructive means of identity formation, the second chapter also analyzes a letter written by Heungseon Daewongun (흥선대원군), the regent to the Korean king who was then too young to rule on his own.

In terms of structure, the chapter is divided into two parts. In the first, the historical circumstances under which these accounts and this letter were penned is explained and examined. Conflicting worldviews under which different stakeholders were operating are discussed at length; indeed, even the word "worldview" can be problematic in an academic context, so that choice will also be justified within the text. Christianity's supposed and accepted roles in contemporary French and Korean society will also be discussed in this section dealing with the historical circumstances for reasons that will doubtlessly become clear to the reader. In the second part of the chapter, literary analysis will include a discussion regarding the usefulness and importance of the travel account as genre for exploring the expression of our dominant and counter discourses during this time period. The chapter ends with an argument that the time period was marked by ideological confusion and discord as these discourses chaotically emerged in response to the historical moment. Expressing the cognitive dissonance that is a hallmark feature of the dominant discourse of submission, the texts that argued that the Korean people were an uncommonly submissive people group nevertheless depicted the very same people engaging in acts of willful resistance. This unbridled instability was most pronounced during this time period, when the dominant discourse was nascent.

The discursive event around which the second chapter revolves in the successful assassination of Kim Ok-gyun by his political rival and novelist, Hong Jong-u. First, I begin the chapter with a historical overview, explaining how French diplomatic efforts had partially

recovered from the negative consequences of the *Byeong-in yangyo* (병인양요) and had finally managed to achieve the signing of a treaty with Korea on June 4th, 1886. I consider the historical circumstances that allowed for the signing and ratification of this treaty and, in line with the goals laid out in this book, I examine the impact of it on the generation and development of French-language discourse about Korea. At the time of the treaty, the French press was full of articles that first celebrated and later denigrated a Korean national who lived in Paris for two years near the end of the nineteenth century. His name was Hong Jong-u and he was the assassin in this chapter's discursive event. He is also responsible for producing the first works of Korean literature ever rendered into French[16]. The signing of the France-Korea Treaty of 1886 led to a veritable explosion in the number of French and otherwise Western travelers to Korea, and it was under this context of increased franco-Korean interaction that Hong relocated to France. He arguably traveled to France in order to appeal for French aid against Russian and Japanese bids for power in Korea[17]. After failing at this and leaving France, he traveled to Shanghai, where he assassinated a pro-Japanese rival named Kim Ok-gyun, either in a hotel or on a boat *en route* to the port city—the exact location of the assassination has been reported in both[18]. Following that assassination, both the reviews of his person and of the literary work he produced underwent a drastic change for the worse. This clear shift in representation is directly linked to his political actions. Discursively, this chapter finds that as Korean individuals like Hong Jong-u made more substantial efforts to safeguard their own nation's autonomy through resistance against outside forces, more

[16] See Chapter Four, Section Two, for more about this.

[17] Hong explicitly writes in his preface to *Le Bois sec refleuri* that he hopes the use of literature can help to unite to the two countries, an action that he undertakes at a moment in Korean history when it had become increasingly common to request foreign help in attempting to retain its autonomy (or to shake off one enemy by granting concessions to another). See Chapter Four for more.

[18] Dae-yeong Youn writes that Hong carried out the assassination on a ship in "Between Korea and Vietnam: Kim Yung-kun's 'Ever-Changing and Impermanent' Life" (247). Hilary Conroy writes that Kim was shot to death while he lay resting at a Japanese hotel in the International Settlement (223).

evidence of blatant pushback against them can be identified in the ways they were subsequently represented by others across a wide variety of print and visual media.

Chapter Three uses the Proclamation of the Korean Empire (대한제국) as a historical springboard. Although it is one of the least-studied periods in Korean History across a wide range of scholarly disciplines, the Korean Empire (대한제국), which lasted from its declaration in 1897 until its abrupt end when it forcibly became a colony of Imperial Japan in 1910, contained some of the most overt, sustained expressions of Korean resistance against external attempts to take control of it[19]. After the Korean Empire (대한제국) was proclaimed, and because it endeavored to join the ranks of other nineteenth-century emerging nation states, the Korean Emperor and members of his imperial court engaged in the kind of semiotic behaviors that were seen in Imperial Japan during the Meiji Restoration and broadly across the West as new forms of nationalism spread across the global in the process described by Benedict Anderson in *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism.* The chapter contextualizes the declaration of the Empire before focusing on Korean efforts to assert control over its own national self-image through the use of photography, architecture, and its participation in the 1900 World's Fair in Paris, which is the chapter's discursive event. These forms of material culture in particular offer a rich opportunity for analyzing Korean auto-representation and co-constructive Franco-Korean representation for domestic and international audiences. Ultimately, documents from the period reveal symbolic actions of imperial independence on the part of Korea intended for a global audience. When they were not being wholeheartedly, overtly countered in favor of adhering to the dominant discourse of submission, these actions were often ignored and misunderstood by citizens of Western and European nations.

[19] This is to say: attempts to make it a protectorate of other nations, to limit its ability to represent itself in international courts through claims that it was a vassal of China, to colonize it outright, or to insist that it open itself further to travel, exploration, and exploitation by non-Korean entities.

In the fourth chapter of this book, special attention is devoted to the interplay between the dominant discourse of submission and the counter-discourses of resistance as they are manifest within works of literature belonging to the novel genre. Because it deals with representations of Korea as fiction, it stands apart from the historical moment in such a way that it will not be considered in relation to a specific discursive event, although this does not mean to say that the works are free from discourse and ideology. Rather, they are yet more open for expression of these ideas than works that are more temporally grounded.

The chapter begins with Pierre Loti's semi-autobiographical novel, *La Troisième jeunesse de Madame Prune.* In it, I argue that Loti's writing about Korea was influenced by an explicit desire to *see* and render his written impressions as visually rich as possible, while (subconsciously or otherwise) adhering to the dominant discourse of submission. The focus on the visual in his writing process inscribes the produced work in the practice of spectacular representation that Maurice Samuels has shown in his book, *The Spectacular Past: Popular History and the Novel in Nineteenth Century France,* to have been nascent and increasingly more widespread from the mid-nineteenth century onward into the twentieth.

The second portion of this chapter takes great care to analyze Hong Jong-u's translations and adaptations of classic Korean folk tales into novels destined to be read by a French public. These, as pieces of Korean auto-representation, stand apart from Loti's works in part because of the national identity underpinning their authorship. Although Chapter Two focuses almost entirely on Hong Jong-u, it does so only in terms of how he was represented in the French press. In contrast, the attention accorded to him in Chapter Four centers on the specific ways that he represented Korea (and also himself in one of his prefaces) for the French public. Chapter Four, for example, considers the fact that Hong Jong-u's novels give free and direct discourse not only to Korean characters, but even to *female* Korean characters, marking a stark contrast with other contemporary representations of Korean individuals in

narrative. Working around the themes of love, redemption, and filial piety, Hong's narratives generate a markedly more positive representation of life in Korea than Loti's novel does.

The conclusion to this dissertation looks forward from the nineteenth century into the twentieth, showing that one of the ways in which Korean people resisted the Japanese Occupation of Korea (1910-1945) was through working to reclaim the already extant narratives about it, which are the same narratives analyzed in this book. I argue that this endeavor to resist the extant narratives was successful in modifying the dominant and counter-discourses then at work about Korea. More specifically, I argue that this success is made evident by analyzing French representations of Korea during the Occupation of Korea by Imperial Japan (1910-1945). These French and francophone representations began exhibiting wholesale sympathy to the Korean cause while refuting the idea that Korea's natural course was to be handed off to another, more powerful nation for forced modernization (*i.e.,* the dominant discourse).

Structurally, the conclusion first posits that the dominant discourse of submission had begun disintegrating. Next, it provides an overview of the history of the Korean Resistance movement, taking special care to acknowledge the activities of the resistance fighters in the French concession of Shanghai and in Paris. Following this, the chapter briefly analyzes newspaper articles from *Excelsior,* France's first newspaper article, tracing the change in the dominant discourse. After that, Seo-Yeong hae's *Une vie coréenne,* which tells the story of a resistance fighter, is analyzed for its expression of the counter-discourse of resistance.

Finally, I conclude with a reflection on the efficacy of using this multi-disciplinary approach to build a cultural history of the complicated relationship between two countries. This conclusion-to-the-conclusion seeks to ask and answer the question of whether this methodology might be applicable to other situations, and if so, in what ways it can be most effectively adapted. It seeks also to respond to the question of how this approach might

enlighten and inform nineteenth century-focused analyses of primary sources that represent Korea from perspectives that are not expressly francophone. I move beyond simple analysis of a past situation by identifying this path forward for continued research in this and in adjacent topics. In so doing, I work to demonstrate how the identification and analysis of hitherto unacknowledged discourses of resistance can help us to rethink matters of literary, cultural, and art history so as to do justice to the diverse array of voices that have been suppressed and relegated to the shadows of academic inquiry.

CHAPTER 1

Byeong-in yangyo (병인양요)

In 1866, the Second French Empire (1851-1870), led by the self-proclaimed Emperor Napoléon III, was actively increasing its territories around the world[20] and its colonizing gaze fixed for a moment on Korea[21]. Although scholarly treatment of the relationships between France and Korea in this time period tends to focus primarily on the religious ties between them, they were often intertwined with commercial and military interests[22]. In this chapter, I focus on the *Byeong-in yangyo* (병인양요), an attempt by French forces to colonize Korea, carried out under the guise of retaliation for religious persecution against French Catholic missionaries and Korean Catholic converts[23]. Not only does the event therefore represent the intertwined religious and military interests, but French missionaries' continual insistence on the economic gains to be made by the expansion of the

[20] See Yongkoo Kim's *The Five Years' Crisis, 1866-1871: Korea in the Maelstrom of Western Imperialism* (25-30) "The Background of French Expansionism in the Far East" for more information about Napoleon III's policy of expansionism, his motivations, and the actions of clergymen and military officials in the attempted colonization of Korea in 1866.

[21] In spite of the fact that 1866 witnessed a clear and undeniable attempt at colonizing Korea by a French naval force, support for such endeavors was not always given unanimously by those in power in the French government. A colony in Korea was considered desirable for its strategic geographical location for military purposes, its potential for commercial interests in trading and exploiting natural resources, and for its millions of as-yet-unconverted potential Korean converts to Christianity, but it was not always considered worthwhile in comparison to other active and potential conquests in the East Asia. See Pierre Emmanuel Roux's *La Croix, la baleine, et le canon* (252-256) and Yongkoo Kim's *The Five Years' Crisis, 1866-1871 : Korea in the Maelstrom of Western Imperialism* (25-30) for detailed examinations of French government support for intervention in Korea, which was granted intermittently when not expressly revoked. In contrast, support from priests and government officials stationed in Asia for the same interventions was enthusiastic.

[22]See: Franklin Rausch's "The Late Chosŏn Korean Catholic Archives: Documenting This World and the Next;" Pierre-Emmanuel Roux's "The Great Ming Code and the Repression of Catholics in Chosŏn Korea," which begins with an echo of my claim that scholarly focus on the Korean Catholic church has not been lacking: "Many works have been written on the early Korean Catholic Church…" (1); Roux's book, *La Croix, la baleine, et le canon,* which balances these three axes of interest; and Sujin's Lee's "L'Impact de la France sur le patrimoine coréen" in *France-Corée : 130 ans de relations*.

[23] The *Byeong-in yangyo* (병인양요) was a crucial moment in Franco-Korean history, but outside of Korea one seldom hears of it: *"Que reste-t-il de nos jours des premières ambitions françaises sur la péninsule: une page dans l'histoire de la Corée et une simple anecdote dans celle de la France. L'incident de Kanghwa est actuellement regardé en Corée comme un événement majeur de la fin de la dynastie Chosŏn*" (Roux 370).

reach of Christendom as well as the French military's own economic justifications for the spread of the French Empire into new colonies and concessions reveal the intersectionality of what would otherwise be seen as divergent interests. It is therefore important to revisit existing scholarship on the *Byeong-in yangyo* (병인양요) in such a way that the event is more fully inscribed in all three avenues rather than being examined from one alone. In spite of the fact that historians like Pierre Emmanuel-Roux, whose aptly named history of the relationship between France and Korea in the middle of the 20th century, *La Croix, La baleine et le canon*[24], do indeed consider the event from all three angles, his and most others are not literary studies. Certainly, none of them aspire to determine what Korea might have embodied in a general sense for the contemporary French public, for whom knowledge of Korea at the beginning of the nineteenth century was scant. Moreover, it is quite rare for these historians to examine pieces of French literature and other forms of cultural media to examine how the country was then being represented. In this chapter, and in this dissertation as a whole, I turn to French primary sources to address this lack of scholarship.

This chapter will open with three primary sources. First, I analyze two travel accounts written by men who took part in the *Byeong-in yangyo* (병인양요) and I use them as examples to argue that French representations of Korea surrounding this event are discordant in terms of the ways that they manifest a dominant Western worldview at odds with a Korean one. I give special attention to the ways in which the Western worldview can be identified in the texts, being mindful of the specific literary tools used, revealing how they were embedded in a discourse of submission on the part of their Korean counterparts. I then demonstrate how a counter-discourse of resistance ceaselessly interrupts these and other francophone portrayals of the country. I question the implications of this discord, and

[24] I write that it is aptly named because the cross, whale, and cannon are representative of French interests in Korea for religious, commercial (through the whaling industry), and military reasons.

for my third primary source, I analyze a letter presumably written by the King's Regent and directed to the commander of the French force that attacked Korea. The letter is remarkable for many reasons, but paramount among them is the manner by which it stands as evidence both of a Korean worldview in praxis and as a declaration of resistance against a foreign power.

This chapter has two main parts. In the first, I will explain in greater detail what I mean when I say that French and Korean people operated under conflicting worldviews. In so doing, I will also provide an overview of how each of these worldviews considered Christianity's role in society. In addition, I will provide a brief but necessary historical overview of the event. In the second part of this chapter, I perform literary analysis on the aforementioned texts. In the conclusion, I discuss the utility and importance of the travel account as genre for exploring the manifestation and/or refutation of dominant discourses during this time period, and I reaffirm that this moment in the history of Franco-Korean relations was marked by ideological confusion and discord, which carried with it a particular discursive legacy still visible across a variety of primary sources until the next major discursive event, the France-Korea Treaty, signed in 1886.

1.1 Western and Korean Attitudes about the World

The primary sources in this and later chapters cannot be properly understood without a nuanced and precise understanding of the workings of Korean and Western attitudes about the world at large, which YongKoo Kim deftly illuminates in *The Five Years' Crisis, 1866-1871: Korea in the Maelstrom of Western Imperialism.* I would like to begin this section by making a note about his conclusion. He writes that in his work, he attempted to:

> …maintain a balanced view on this unfortunate period in history by guarding against chauvinistic interpretations of Korean diplomatic history that impute

> all the mishaps to foreign powers, as well as against so-called colonial versions which deny the autonomous capabilities of the Korean people. (125)

I endeavor to do the same. Each of the texts and other forms of representation with which I deal throughout this dissertation are to be considered in terms of how they reflect conflicting attitudes, ideologies, and discourses, and not for the ways in which they might impugn or excuse the agents responsible for their existence. Again, I would like to repeat that in discussing Orientalizing practices, I neither wish to condone nor engage in them.

Regarding Korean and Western worldviews, YongKoo Kim first explains the *Sadae* (사대) order, an international system that is generally agreed to have been operational in certain areas of East Asia. He adds that because it was sinocentric, or focused on China, it has also been called the "Chinese World Order" and the "Confucian World Order." Kim adds that the order was ideologically based on a very broad concept called *li,* meaning ceremony, and which "basically refers to an individual's moral standards, the harmony between rulers and the ruled, or the proper conduct between China and her vassals" (7). In a moment, I will describe in greater detail how this concept clashed with Catholicism in Korea, but for now, I will add that the *Sadae* (사대) order was hierarchical and anti-egalitarian in nature and that China was placed firmly at the top of this hierarchy. Korea (Joseon for much of this time period) was included in this system[25].

Although Korea subscribed to the *Sadae* (사대) order, it does not mean that China was wholly in control of all of Korea's affairs or that Koreans accepted without question Chinese ideas and laws. In fact, I argue that those French individuals who came into conflict

[25] Because the different forms of government that subscribed to the *Sadae* (사대) order merely include Joseon and are not constrained to the Joseon time period (1392-1897), I will continue to use "Korea" as a term of reference in this section rather than "Joseon," as it is markedly more comprehensive. Please see my notes in the introduction for a more detailed explanation of this choice in terminology.

with Korea in 1866 and later often did so under the false pretenses that the country wholly subscribed to and was subservient to China to a much greater degree than can justifiably considered to be true. Don Baker, in "A Different Thread: Orthodoxy, Heterdoxy, and Catholicism in a Confucian World," attests that Koreans who wanted to distinguish acceptable behaviors from unacceptable behaviors within Korean society "did not limit themselves to pious repetitions of Chinese judgments" and that "they had enough confidence in their own command of Confucian principles to decide for themselves if doctrines that even the Chinese tolerated fit Korean Neo-Confucian criteria of orthodoxy (acceptable behavior) (207)."

Therefore, the version of Korea that most Westerners encountered in the latter half of the 19th century was one in which China had been seen from an East Asian perspective as the center of the civilized world but whose status as such had begun to decline, and whose governmental and ideological power and control over Korea was likely not as potent as they had imagined. What about Western attitudes about the East? YongKoo Kim turns to European public law to provide a sense of how Westerners viewed themselves *vis-à-vis* those who lived in the rest of the world. He writes that that European public law was positivist, Eurocentrist, expansionist, and formalist, but what interests us most here is what he writes regarding European public law's method of dividing the nations of the world into three categories, which are:

> 1) Full subjects of international law who enjoyed all the rights and duties under that law- a status that applied only to European states; 2) the semi-civilized states with whom European nations concluded unequal treaties that economically and politically exploited European nations concluded unequal treaties that economically and politically exploited the colonies; and 3) the so-called barbarian peoples, who were considered suitable objects for

invasion and occupation. (9)

As I will reveal in my primary source analyses, French discourse about Korea surrounding the *Byeong-in yangyo* (병인양요) demonstrates a lack of uniformity in determining whether to represent Korea as belonging to the second or the third categories shown above. However, both categories allow for the expression of violent resistance due to behavioral expectations on the part of "semi-civilized" individuals and "barbarians." Neither of the categories insinuates an expectation of successful resistance, however, which therefore implies that countries in both categories should be expected to submit to the exertions of other nations against them. It is this impossible juxtaposition that relies on a pure binary opposition, impossible to maintain, that can be seen clearly in the written texts of the time.

A noteworthy parallel should be pointed out: the way in which the *Sadae* (사대) order placed China at the center of the civilized world from an East Asian perspective was mirrored from a certain Western viewpoint. By 1866, China, due to decades of internal strife, governmental corruption, funds spent to quell peasant uprisings, and having neglected its coastal defenses, was weakened to the point that it was progressively less and less able to push back against foreign attacks on its soil. This led to the Opium Wars (1839-1842; 1856-1860), waged by European coalitions (including France) against China in order to secure better trade conditions, to seize territory, and to ensure that Western trade in opium could continue. Similar to the way that China's reputation had diminished amongst Northeast Asian peoples through a process that has been called "decentering the Middle Kingdom," the high esteem in which China had been held by Europeans during the eighteenth century faltered irretrievably in the nineteenth. The Opium Wars were both cause and effect of this

process[26].

1.2 Religious Attitudes

Before moving on to discuss how these attitudes on China affected Western actions and perceptions of Korea by resulting in the historical event that motivated the texts I have chosen to analyze in this chapter, it is necessary to note Korean attitudes toward religion in society. The role of popular religion during the Joseon Kingdom (대조선국) cannot be properly studied without considering the importance of Confucianism in its government and society at large:

> The Confucian transformation of Korea that started in the late fourteenth century was not simply a change in state ideology. Confucianism modified many areas of life, including the relationship between elite and popular culture, and continued to transform ever wider areas of society, even after it had altered major state institutions and *yangban* society during the first two centuries of the dynasty. (Walraven 161)

Religion, of course, was not exempt from these "areas of life" that were modified by

[26] See Steven R. Platt's *Imperial Twilight: The Opium War and the End of China's Last Golden Age,* which gracefully tracks this change in public opinion and demonstrates how it was used to fuel and accelerate Western military and political intervention in China in novel ways (e.g., the first European concessions in China). See Heather McKenzie's *Madame Chrysanthème as an Item of Nineteenth-Century French Japonaiserie*, (141-146) for more about how this decline in Chinese prestige within Western culture affected Western perceptions of Chinese art and the Chinoiserie movement, especially page 144: "Chinoiserie began to lose popularity in the nineteenth century due to increased travel to and knowledge of China, as well as political developments such as the Opium Wars (1839-42 and 1856-60). Combined, such factors saw the Chinese culture lose the allure it may have had due to mystery, and popular favour cooled towards China as it was seen as a potential political or military threat." For more about Chinoiserie, Japonisme, and France, see Elizabeth Emery's "La Maison Langweil and Women's Exchange of Asian Art in Fin-de-siècle Paris." For Korean efforts to present themselves to a European audience while distinguishing themselves from the two art movements, see Yaying Bai's *Inchoate Unitary Visions: Tracing Nationalism in the Visual Culture of Korea's International Expositions, 1893-1929*, especially pp. 19 and 33. For more about how Chinoiserie and Japonisme were mirrored by the importation of *euroiseries* by China and Japan, see Jonathan Hay's foreward to *Qing Encounters: Artistic Exchanges Between China and the West*, and Aimée Boutin and Elizabeth Emery's "France-Asia: Cultural Identity and Creative Exchange." For a scathing condemnation of the destruction of Chinese art during the sacking of the Summer Palace during the second Opium War, which makes for scintillating reading, see Victor Hugo's "Lettre au capitaine Butler." This letter is evidence that although China was often considered to be in a state of decline, it did not necessarily mean that those who felt that way wanted its art and culture to be eradicated.

Confucianism's increasing importance, and it is the interplay and the conflicts between the Confucianism and the Christian religion that led to the *Byeong-in yangyo* (병인양요). This will become clearer to my readers when I analyze the letter sent by the Korean court to the French naval force that carried out the 1866 attack[27].

For now, it will suffice to say that Catholic social norms were incompatible with Confucian ideas about how a person ought to behave in society. Religion in Neo-Confucian Korea "often represented belief in a multitude of gods, who, if they cared about morality at all, merely enforced moral codes that society already accepted as emanating from *i*, the cosmic normative pattern" while for Catholics, there was a single God who generated moral commands and enforced them (Baker 222). The concept *li*, mentioned above, is essentially the same concept as this (*li* being the Chinese term and *i* the Korean term).

The pattern by which the world was thought to be constructed was therefore seen as being reversed by those who believed in Catholicism. As Buddhism had been attacked in the 18th century by Neo-Confucians for its "hope of illusory future rewards or fear of imaginary future punishments [that] turned people's attention away from the real world" and "encouraged selfish withdrawal from society" (Baker 207), Catholicism fell under the same kind of attack, and the kinds of behaviors that led to persecution were the kinds of behaviors that directly challenged the cosmic normative pattern. By rejecting ancestor worship, for example, Catholics in Korea effectively turned this order on its head and were consequently seen as behaving immorally to the point that it threatened the public good. As Catholic missionaries proselytized, they could be seen as pushing an agenda that directly refuted accepted norms.

[27] See Section 4 of this chapter.

1.3 Historical Circumstances

The continued misinterpretation of the relationship between Korea and China during the middle of the nineteenth century contributed to the problems that France and Korea had with one another, especially since Korea in the nineteenth century had begun to "decenter" China as explained above. Mistakenly believing that because Korea was vassal to China, French individuals sometimes believed they could apply Chinese permissions to conduct trade or proselytize to the Korean context, and they were disappointed by continued refusals to remove the ban on Christianity (Roux 77-81). They also had failed to understand that some of the "permissions" accorded to French missionaries in China had in fact placed them in more danger by making it easier for the Chinese government to monitor their whereabouts and activities (*ibid.,* 87-88). Knowing that foreign missionaries were not permitted to espouse their faith in Korea, the missionaries took to wearing Korean mourning clothes, which hid their faces and prevented anyone from speaking to them unless they were a direct member of their family[28]. They then snuck around the country anyway, perhaps assuming that since Christianity was better tolerated in China, the same would be true in Korea. After some of the missionaries were gathered up and executed, the French response[29]

[28] Charles Dallet's *Histoire de l'Église de Corée,* volume 2 mentions this multiple times (pages 111, 300, 302, 205, 223, 405, and 412); Frédéric Boulesteix discusses the practice on page 98 of his article "*La Corée : Un orient autrement extrême"* and in his dissertation on pages 242 and 175. On page 175, he quotes the missionary E. Vauthier: "*Quand le missionnaire veut sortir il y ajoute une longue robe de couleur sombre qui ressemble à notre toile d'emballage et un vaste chapeau conique, semblable à un toit de pigeonnier, haut d'un demi-mètre au moins et mesurant un mètre et demi de diamètre ; les bords de cette étrange coiffure descendent jusqu'aux coudes. C'est le costume de deuil des Coréens, les missionnaires l'ont adopté parce qu'il oblige celui qui a perdu ses parents à cacher son visage ; excellente précaution pour dissimuler aux regards indiscrets les traits exotiques et surout le grand nez des figures européennes."*The Korean government wholeheartedly disapproved of this practice, condemning it in a letter sent from the royal court of Korea to Admiral Roze during his 1866 attack on Korea. Leverrier quotes the letter in his "L'Incident de Kanghwa:" "*Mais, s'il se trouve des hommes qui viennent séduire nos sujets, pénètrent chez nous clandestinement, changent leurs vêtements, étudient notre langue, corrompent notre peuple, bouleversent nos coutumes, l'antique loi du monde veut qu'ils soient mis à mort…" /* "But if we find that there are men who come to seduce our subjects, who penetrate our home clandestinely, who change their clothes, who study our language, who corrupt our people, who overturn our customs, the antique law of the world wants that they be put to the death ;" Pierre-Emmanuel Roux's *La Croix, la baleine, et le canon* contains a portrait of Mgr. Berneux in his Korean mourning clothes, painted by 19th century French missionary Félix Ridel (Figure 6) and a description of the practice on page 49.

[29] "French response" refers to the events that took place having been undertaken by certain French individuals

was one of self-righteous indignation, which led to the disastrous attack on the peninsular nation (Kim, Yongkoo 30-40; Roux, 231-232; 246; 250-251).

The historical events themselves have already been analyzed by historians and I do not write under the pretext that I am revealing them for the first time. Rather, my interest here is in analyzing contemporary texts to elucidate the nature of French discourse about it. In short, the events are as follows: three French Catholic priests escaped anti-Catholic persecution[30] in July of 1866 in Korea. They eventually arrived in Tientsin, China, where they requested aid from Henri de Bellonnet, the *chargé d'affaires* in Beijing, suggesting that only "the sound of the canon" was then capable of forcing the regent to hear reason (Roux 190). Henri de Bellonnet then wrote a letter to Gustave Roze, the Commander of the French Empire's Far Eastern Squadron, informing Roze that he intended for France to take over the Korean throne and therefore instructing him to do his part in making that goal a reality:

> I have officially declared the opening of hostilities, the definitive separation of Korea [from its Chinese suzerain], the forfeiture of its king, and the exclusive right of our noble emperor to dispose of Korea and of its vacant throne in accordance with his wishes. You will therefore, *Monsieur le contre amiral*, not have any dealings with anyone, you will not recognize any authority whatsoever in Korea until such that the capital, the deposed king and the Regent, mother of the late King, have been placed in our hands. There is no longer any power in Korea other than that which is represented

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and it does not seek to claim a consensus among all French individuals. Pierre Emmanuel-Roux and Yongkoo Kim each take special care to explain the differing levels of investment in the expedition among members of the French government and military. Roux writes, for example, that it was a personal undertaking on the part of Bellonnet and Roze: "*Prétextée pendant vingt ans pour punir un gouvernement de ses prétendus méfaits, l'expédition coréenne fut finalement une initiative personnelle et spatialement localisée de Bellonnet et de Roze, et non pas une mesure de Paris"* (232).

[30] "*L'année 1866 revêt un statut très particulier, étant perçue comme celle de l'apogée de la politique d'éradication du catholicisme, suite à l'exécution de neuf missionaires français et de plusieurs dizaines de fidèles,"*(Roux, *La Croix, la baleine et le canon,* 14).

by His Majesty the Emperor of the French (cited in Roux 190).

After being waylaid by trouble in Cochinchina, it was not until September of 1866 that Roze was able to go to Korea for the first time. From the 18th of September until the 3rd of October, he performed reconnaissance. He returned on the 11th of October with a very small fleet and remained there until departing on the 21st of November (Roux 190-191). Whilst there, Roze and his men purportedly "began the destruction of all the state's property straightaway," sunk more than five hundred junks, blew up warehouses and gunpowder stores, seized hundreds of rare books and a great many pieces of art (Roze cited in Leverrier)[31]. The number of casualties on each side has been reported inconsistently in the scholarly literature about the conflict, but there is a clear consensus that the casualties and over-arching failure on the French side was a source of embarrassment for the French side[32]. The *Byeong-in yangyo* (병인양요) is remarkably one of the few times that European soldiers were defeated in non-European territory during its colonial history (Yongkoo Kim 24). Indeed, France was the last of Western nations to sign a diplomatic treaty with Korea in the

[31] "*On commença aussitôt la destruction de toutes les propriétés de l'Etat ; plus de cinq cents jonques furent coulées ; on fit sauter les poudrières, et d'innombrables magasins avec tout ce qu'ils contenaient furent mis à feu. Bientôt, il ne resta plus debout que la résidence royale et le yamoun du mandarin, qui servaient de logement à une partie de nos hommes et qui, pour cette dernière raison, ne devaient être détruits qu'au dernier moment…"*

[32] Li Jin-Mieung reports 3 casualties and "*une trentaine de blesses chez l'assaillant*" (19-20); In his article "L'Incident de Kanghwa," published on the website of the journal *Keulmadang* (글마당) without page numbers, Leverrier reports 3 casualties, 2 wounded while crossing a river, and then 29 more wounded at a later battle; Roux addresses the question at two points in *La Croix, la baleine, et le canon.* First, he cites a "docteur Martin" who was a member of the expedition: "*Les blesses étaient au nombre de 32, quelques-uns semblaient gravement atteints,"* (258). Second, while discussing the negative consequences of the French failure during the escapade, he provides an overview of some of the different figures making the rounds at that time: "*Se fondant sur des télégrammes britanniques envoyés de Chine en métropole, le* Times *du 31 décembre 1866 dénonça l'expédition comme un échec total de la France, laquelle avait dû évacuer Kanghwa après avoir perdu quarante-cinq hommes, laissant ainsi les Coréens dans un état d'allégresse et le prestige européen largement compromis. Un mois plus tard, le* Times *montait encore les pertes françaises à soixante hommes, tandis que Roze ne reconnaissait le décès que de trois d'entre eux dans son rapport officiel. La relation médicale d'Élisée-Julien Cheval, présentée quelque temps plus tard sous la forme d'une thèse de médecine, confirme l'affirmation de Roze, mais rappelle qu'une bonne trentaine de Français furent blessés plus ou moins gravement*" (272); Mary C. Wright reports three casualties and thirty-two wounded, citing one Korean report and two Western accounts (377); YongKoo Kim writes that the French force counted 32 casualties (24).

nineteenth century and the repercussions of the French failure during this conflict have frequently been cited[33].

Of all of the varied forms of media that were at this time being used to represent Korea for a Western audience, which includes but are not limited to memoirs written by missionaries, personal letters, government surveys, *etc*., the two travel accounts I have chosen to analyze here were penned by men who took part in the attack. They are representative of pieces of writing that directly reflect a historical event that forever changed the discourse about Korea. The first of the two travel accounts was published seven years after the end of the expedition while the other was written forty years after the expedition in very different historical and political circumstances. The two works interact with and against the civilizing mission[34] in different ways, sometimes contradicting even themselves, and when analyzed in parallel, they show how Western discourse about Korea shifted over time.

1.4 Henri Zuber and "Une Expédition en Corée"

I begin with "Une Expédition en Corée" by Henri Zuber. It was published in *Le Tour du monde : Nouveau journal des voyages* in 1873 and an unstable, binary opposition between submission and resistance pervades it. This same opposition is perhaps the most common shared representational practice by French writers about Korea during the nineteenth century, and it is even more evident in the second travel account that I will analyze in this chapter. Alongside the text, the images relate to but do not entirely mirror the

[33] For example: "The basic conclusions of those various studies [dealing with this conflict] more or less agree that the French expedition was ill-conceived and unclear in its objectives, that French influence in the region suffered greatly from its failure, and that Korea was further confirmed in its policy of isolation" (Kane, "A Forgotten Firsthand Account" 51-52); "Following the dismally conceived 1866 French attack on Korea, and the severe check it administered to French prestige in the region, France remained relatively aloof from affairs on the Korean peninsula," (Kane, "Display at Empire's End" 44).

[34] I find these works to be precursors to Jules Ferry's notorious *mission civilisatrice,* which he proclaimed in his speech in the *Chambre des députés* on July 28, 1885, stating notably that "superior races" had a right -nay, a duty- to civilize "inferior races."

verbal. First, I will analyze the text, showing how this unstable binary relationship is evoked in Zuber's writing. Second, I will analyze the images, contextualizing them within standard nineteenth-century Orientalizing visual practices. Zuber breaks away from some of those standards, furnishing his readers with an unusually dignified francophone representation of the Korean people. I will argue that this manner of representation is reflective of his opinions regarding how Western belligerents should be interacting with Korean people.

The article is fifteen pages long and contains ten illustrations and one map of the Korean peninsula. Each of them, including the map, were either drawn by Henri Zuber or were inspired by his sketches, and it is worth remembering that Zuber was present in Korea not as a merchant, missionary, or simple thrill-seeker, but as a soldier taking part in an active attack against Korea. His text opens with a "general overview" of the country, comparing its "state of civilization" with that of China and Japan:

> *Ainsi la Corée, grâce à sa position géographique, a joué le rôle d'intermédiaire entre le Céleste-Empire et celui du Soleil levant ; elle ne semble pas en avoir suffisamment profité, car son état actuel de civilisation ne peut être mis au même rang que celui de ses voisins*[35]*"* (8).

Here we have a tacit criticism of the country's development, but the use of the word "*actuel*" would indicate that Zuber is optimistic that Korea's *"état de civilisation"* can improve, but he does not immediately provide a path forward for making such a thing happen. We can, however, look through the rest of the text for clues as to where Zuber might believe a solution can be found. His writing spans an incredibly wide variety of topics ranging from the state of women's private quarters, the motivations behind going to Korea

[35] My translation: "And so Korea, thanks to its geographical location, played an intermediary role between the Celestial Empire and that of the Rising Sun; it does not seem to have sufficiently profited from that, because its current state of civilization cannot be put at the same rank as that of its neighbors."

in the first place, the quality of Korean art, religious practices, Korean physiognomy[36], and city planning. At times, he lauds certain aspects of Korean life. At other times, he denigrates it. This inconsistency is revelatory of the unstable binary opposition linking the dominant and counter-discourses.

Zuber's account makes two significant claims about Korea. The first is that Korea must open itself up to Western trade or that it will be forced to do so:

> *Quoi qu'il en soit, dans l'état de choses actuel, la Corée ne peut tarder à s'ouvrir volontairement, ou sous l'empire de la contrainte, au commerce occidental. Sa position entre deux pays dont les relations s'étendent chaque jour d'avantage et qui semblent avoir définitivement renoncé au système d'exclusion lui en fait presque une nécessité*[37]. (41)

The second claim is that although he believes in France's civilizing mission (without naming it), he finds the way that Europeans act upon it problematic and laments the resulting erasure of cultural individuality. He writes:

> *Trop souvent l'Europe se montre pour la première fois aux peuples étrangers avec le caractère de la violence et des prétentions despotiques. Du moment qu'un pays n'a pas le bonheur de posséder des télégraphes électriques et que les principes de sa civilisation diffèrent des nôtres, nous nous croyons permis*

[36] See Brian Street, "Reading Faces: Physiognomy Then and Now" for more about physiognomy. Street writes: "The belief that the variety of human types could be interpreted in terms of their physical differentiation took a number of forms and a major strand was the theory of 'physiognomy'- that the structure of the face was a guide to the inner characteristics of the person. At its broadest this theory related to Baconian natural science and the assumption that structure was a key to function. More precisely, in relation to interpretation of the human face, it assumed that the physical structure and outward appearance of the face was an indicator of internal moral and cultural features (11). See also Chapter 2, section 3 and Chapter 3, section 2 for other mentions of physiognomy.

[37] My translation: "Anyway, in the current state of affairs, Korea cannot delay in opening itself up to Western commerce, either voluntarily or under coercion. Its position between two countries whose relations are expanding more every day, and who seem to have definitively renounced the system of exclusion makes it almost seem a necessity."

> *de violer à son détriment toutes les règles des gens. Il est surtout pénible d'être amenés à verser le sang au nom de doctrines pures et élevées qui, par leur nature même, ne devraient jamais obliger de recourir à ce triste et douteux moyen de persuasion que l'on nomme "la force*[38]*."* (41)

Because he criticizes the perversion of a pure doctrine that should never allow recourse to the use of force, Zuber makes an oblique reference to the civilizing mission. It seems that he agrees with it in principle but not in practice, a sentiment which is made stronger through the sarcasm in this passage. However, Zuber's portrayal of Korea as such is not without complication, and it is certainly not presented as an ideal situation.

Since the means do not justify the end, the civilizing mission is not defensible from the point of view his writing and illustrations portray. In fact, he ends his account with a lamentation about the noxious effects of western civilization's spread worldwide, and specifically into Japan:

> *Il est difficile à ceux qui ont le sentiment délicat et le goût de l'art et de la variété de ne pas éprouver d'abord et avant toute réflexion un certain regret en voyant les influences européennes de tout espèce pénétrer partout. Assurément la civilisation et la science ont tout à y gagner, mais aussi les caractères des peuples s'effacent et leur originalité se perd. Les nobles Japonais ne s'affublent-ils pas déjà de nos pantalons et de nos redingotes !*[39]

[38] My translation: "Too often, Europe reveals itself for the first time to foreign populations with a character of violence and despotic pretentions. From the moment that a country does not have the good fortune of possession electric telegraphs and that their principles of civilization differ from our own, we believe ourselves permitted to violate all the rules of men, to their detriment. It is especially hard to be called to spill blood in the name of pure and elevated doctrines, which, by their very nature, should never oblige one to resort to this sad, dubious manner of persuasion which one names "force."

[39] My translation: "It is hard for those who have a fine sense of taste for art and variety not to experience first and foremost a certain regret in seeing European influence of all kinds penetrating everywhere. Surely, civilization and science have everything to gain in this, but the character and originality of different peoples is

(41)

A version of Korea that would satisfy Zuber's requirements for an ideal situation, in which the country profits from the technological and social advances that the civilizing mission purports to provide, while it simultaneously maintains its unique "character" and "originality" hardly seems possible. The country and its people would by necessity be simultaneously submissive to the "*doctrine pure"* and be resistant to its effects. These character traits, at odds with each other, ceaselessly collide in French primary sources representing Korea.

To give an example of this collision within a textual narrative, let us consider Zuber's depiction of the first interaction between the French military force and the Korean people on land. This interaction follows a previous interaction on board the French fleet, during which time Korean officials requested that the French turn around and leave. Having asked why the French persisted in sitting in Korean waters, Zuber admits that they lied to the Korean envoy, telling them that they were there to observe a lunar eclipse. In that passage, Zuber refers to the Koreans as "*nos futurs ennemis*," reminding his reader that the French force knew very well for what purposes they had gone to Korea. In the passage in question, the French soldiers had just made land and had set up a camp for themselves.

> *Un mandarin essaya en vain par ses gestes suppliants de conjurer le débarquement, qui s'opéra sans résistance de la part des Coréens. Ils prirent la fuite, abandonnant leurs habitations, leur bétail et la plus grande partie de leurs richesses. Peu après l'installation des marins dans le village de Kak-Kodji, un palanquin entouré d'une douzaine d'hommes se présenta aux avant-postes. On conduisit tout le cortège auprès de l'amiral. Un vieux chef*

lost. Are the Japanese nobles not already decked out in our trousers and fitted coats?"

sortit alors du palanquin et se répandit en recriminations ; il fallut le renvoyer presque de force[40].

On one hand, Zuber begins this passage by writing that the official tried *in vain* with pleading or begging gestures for the French to ward off the French disembarkation, which then occurred *without resistance*. However, the appearance of an angry official with an entourage of a dozen men that they then had difficulty sending away suggests that Zuber's previous claim of no resistance is untrue. Zuber's apparent sadness as he realizes the nefarious effects that the civilizing mission and increased interactions with other countries could have upon them is akin to what Slavoj Žižek is referencing when, in *The Pervert's Guide to Ideology*, his 2012 documentary, he analyzes the 1988 film "They Live." The film provides what Žižek sees a metaphor for stepping outside of one's dominant ideology: putting on a pair of sunglasses that help a person to see the world around them free from the ideology to which they were previously blinded. Žižek explains that this process can be traumatic for the individual as they are then forced to be confronted with a certain reality about the world that their ideology had hidden from them. For Zuber, his ideology promised a brightly shining future for countries considered needing Western, civilizing processes…but the civilizing mission is only conceptually justifiable in the minds of its adherents if the civilizing agent is able to convince him or herself that the person or society in need of civilizing is unable to enact this change on his/her own. In other words, the subject must be viewed as weak, subordinate, and ultimately as submissive. These adjectives are applicable to Korea as portrayed by Zuber in some of his passages, but ultimately, his representation is one that suggests that that Korean people are best left alone

[40] My translation: "A mandarin tried in vain with pleading gestures to prevent the landing, which took place without resistance from the Koreans. They took flight, abandoning their homes, livestock and the majority of their riches. Shortly after the sailors settled in the village of Kak-Kodji, a palanquin surrounded by a dozen men appeared at the outposts. We led the entire procession to the admiral. An old chief then came out of the palanquin and burst into recriminations; it was necessary to send him away- nearly by force."

and worthy of respect. Having put on his anti-ideological sunglasses, he cannot possibly unsee what had already been revealed to him through his own first-hand encounters with Korean people.

Zuber's respect for the Korean people is even more evident in his portrayal of them in his illustrations. In "The Orientalist Photograph," Ali Behdad explains that the titles in Orientalist photographs have a "pedantically ideological function," directing the reader "to exclude his or her own interpretation" by fixing the photograph's meaning in advance. In consequence, Behdad finds that "the Orientalist photograph freezes the Oriental other twice: once through an exotic staging of his or her reality, and a second time through an ideological labeling of his appearance in the image" (26). Here, of course, we are not dealing with photographs but with illustrations. Again, as was explained in Chapter 1, the consideration of representations of Korea as inscribed in an Orientalist framework carries with it is own theoretical and conceptual difficulties, but we are indeed nevertheless dealing with images of the "Other" that are textually anchored, and we are therefore compelled to ask ourselves how Zuber's textual anchors function in the text.

Orientalism aside, illustrations can pose all kinds of problems with chronology and meaning. They can have meaning both within and independently from the text in which they are embedded (in this case, Zuber's expository text). Maurice Samuels, in his chapter on spectacular histories in *The Spectacular Past: Popular History and the Novel in Nineteenth-Century France* uses an example of an illustrated close-up view of a wedding ring being placed on a finger during a wedding ceremony to explore the relationship between narrative text and visual inserts that accompany them. In this example, Samuels explains that the moment represented by the image is not recounted in the text and that therefore, it "goes beyond the narrative." He adds:

> The function of this image as a decorative *cul-de-lampe*, moreover, allows it to disrupt the forward progression of the narrative, providing a space outside the strict chronology in which the history unfolds for contemplation of this sentimental and symbolic movement. The illustration thus allows for multiple and simultaneous levels of discourse, in which the visual relates to but does not entirely mirror the verbal. (73-74)

With these ideas in mind, we might ask ourselves if the titles and captions on Zuber's illustrations preclude viewers/readers from ascribing their own meanings to them, independent from the pedantically ideological function that they might have. A second question we might ask ourselves is whether the illustrations operate outside of the narrative chronology, and what the significance of such an operation might be.

In answering these questions about chronology and the potential for atemporality in Zuber's images, another of Behdad's ideas: static monumentalism. This is a reference to "dead magnificence," expressed through photographs of "fallen stones" and "crumbling remains," which depopulate the Orient and are "thus productive of a colonizing gaze that positions the European viewer as the potentially legitimate occupier through a visual erasure of the indigenous population" (24). This begets a third question regarding what the absence or presence of indigenous people in Zuber's illustrations might indicate. Given what we already know about Zuber having worn his anti-ideological sunglasses, we can expect that his illustrations are representative of the version of Korea he ended up *seeing*.

Figure 1.1: *Le palanquin : Costume de pluie des Coréens*, by A. Marie, after a drawing by Henri Zuber. Hachette, Paris, 1873.

The first image in Zuber's article precedes the text entirely. In it, there are four Korean men carrying a palanquin (presumably, a member of the *yangban* (양반), the Korean noble class, rides inside). There is heavy rain, there are puddles on the ground, a small and simple Korean home is visible in the background, and the four men are dressed almost entirely in white clothing. They wear conical, pleated hats. Three of the figures are looking away from the viewer, but the figure furthest afield in the foreground has a face tilted upward so that the viewer can see his face underneath the wide brim of his hat. His eyes are directed toward the viewer but off to the side, as though he sees someone or something to the viewer's right. The caption reads: "*Le palanquin : costume de pluie des Coréens.*"

Whether this caption precludes the viewer from forming his or her own meaning about it is a tricky question to answer. In a sense, the caption says, “this is how Korean people dress when it rains,” and therefore reduces all Koreans in the rain to one archetype, but whether such a reduction is problematic is not immediately clear. The chronological component is easier to identify. Yes, this image does operate outside of the narrative chronology of the text. Indeed, it occurs before nary a word has been read. The first encounter the reader has with the idea of a Korean person in this text is one in which he has a certain way of dressing when the weather is poor, one in which class division is immediately foregrounded against the background of family life as represented by the home in the distance, and one in which the textual anchorage suggests that this is simply the way things are done, simultaneously in the contemporary present, past, and presumably in the near future. His textual anchorage can indeed be seen as an outright attempt at fixing a rigid meaning to the people and things he encountered, but I should note that the possibility remains that his newspaper editor might have requested such textual anchorage.

Multiple indigenous people are prominently foregrounded, the faces of whom we can see either fully or partially. There is also a suggestion of the presence of other individuals: first, there is the presumed presence of the person in the palanquin, second, there is the presumed presence of the inhabitants of the home in the background, and third, we can reasonably assume that the person in the palanquin is either returning home from seeing someone or is on the way from home to go and visit someone. Last, we can also conclude that if at least five individuals are on the road in bad weather, a great many more could be expected in the same scene when the weather is fair. Therefore, this illustration is decidedly not representative of any kind of expressly fabricated depopulation of a Korean scene. Zuber explicitly refuses static monumentalism and refuses to depopulate the Orient, not only in this scene, but in all of them, without exception. In his most blatant refusal of the

pull of static monumentalism, the illustration on page 408 depicts a Korean official's tomb, an edifice that is symbolic of death, and yet Zuber includes a live, human figure standing just to the left of the tomb in the middle ground of the image. Given a seemingly perfect opportunity to "depopulate the Orient," Zuber chose not to, preferring instead to balance death with the presence of life.

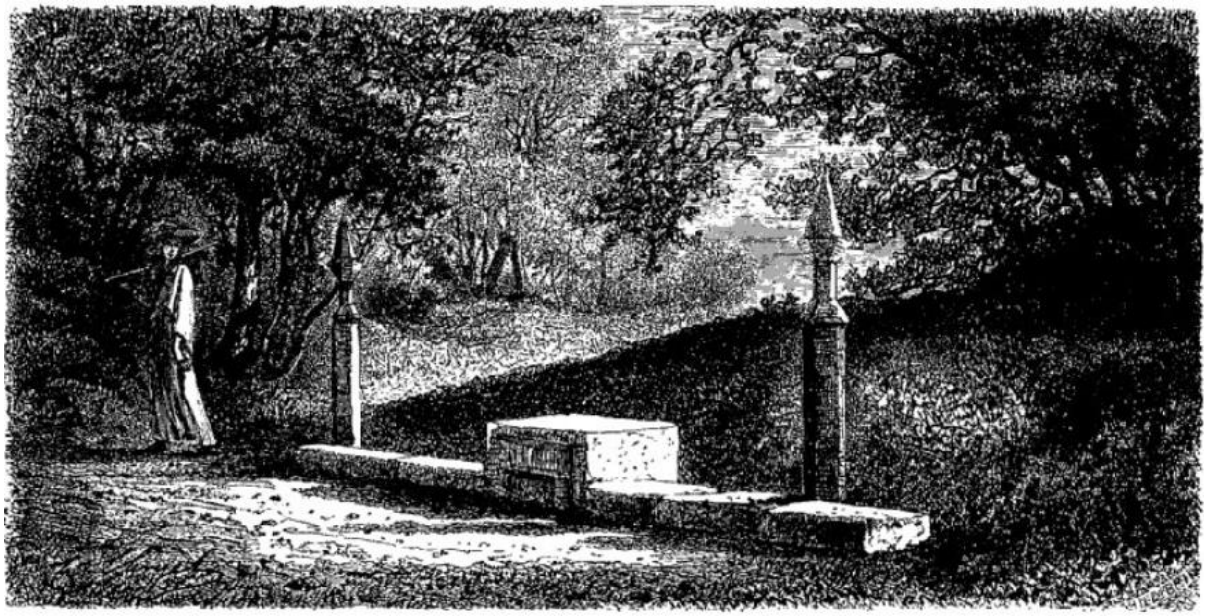

Figure 1.2: *Tombeau d'un mandarin*, by H. Clerget, after a drawing by Henri Zuber. Hachette, Paris, 1873

The rest of the images in the published article are inserted with a relationship similar to the one that Samuels describes above in that the visual relates to but not do not entirely mirror the verbal. Perhaps the images are meant to pick up the slack, to say what cannot otherwise be said, to satiate the reader's desire to *see* Korea. First, we have the map, which is inserted in an opening passage about the country's geography. Next, a "type" or "genre[41]"

[41] The use of this word is intentional and refers to the visual practice wherein nineteenth- and early twentieth-century illustrators and photographers engaged in representational practices that sought to present individuals as members of a "type" or "genre," in a sense, these photographers and illustrators were working double-time as ethnographers. Photographers would sometimes submit their work to ethnographic and/or anthropological associations. Luke Gartlan's book, *A Career of Japan: Baron Raimund von Stillfried and Early Yokohama Photography* is written about a photographer/studio owner whose work was crafted and submitted in this way,

illustration of a "*mandarin*[42]" appears embedded in a text about the geopolitical situation in which Korea finds itself. Another type illustration of an archer appears aside discussion of the military. The aforementioned image of a tomb appears after a short passage about religion. An illustration of the interior courtyard of a farmhouse appears after a slightly longer passage about class differences. Next, the reader's eyes are confronted with a view of the city of Ganghwa from a distance. This would have been another prime opportunity to "depopulate the Orient," but a city thoroughfare appears to contain several miniscule human figures working their way along its straight and orderly path. These figures, and the scene itself, are representative of a rather generic landscape view that is reminiscent of panorama-style photography. It stands outside of the narrative chronology of Zuber's account because it is impossible to ascribe a singular narrative moment to it. The final four images are of the governor's "*yamoun*[43]," a group of Korean men lounging on a hillside, a member of the Korean literati in his office, and a Korean junk docked on a beach (two human figures are perched on a rock in the foreground while a third and fourth human figure can be identified on the boat and on the dock).

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and whose work in Japan resulted in the standardization of type photography: "Each portrait adheres to a set of practices that vary little from photograph to photograph, as if, like a laboratory experiment, the studio conditions had been calibrated in order to record empirical data. The half-length sitters are depicted before a monochrome background, head turned to one side with a light source emanating from an upper corner to accentuate the contours of their faces. Closely adhering to this set visual formula, Stillfried produced an exquisite series of studies that sought to categorize Japanese subjects according to their age, sex, profession, and social position," (206). Some of the photographs that were published by his studio were taken of Korean people in Korea by Félice Beato, his predecessor and the previous owner of his studio. These images in particular are striking because they were taken before Stillfried began sitting his subjects so that they could conform to his ethnographic standards, and therefore feature subjects whose gazes boldly match the viewer's. For this, see Figures 4.6 and 4.7. There are many works about Korea produced by francophone writers other than Zuber who have included "type" images. Some of these were genre illustrations in which, for example, a "typical farmer" might be represented, *e.g.* Chaillé-Long-bey (6-7, 9, 15, 19-21, 24-25, 30-32, 52, 54, 67) and Varat, *Voyage en Corée* (306-307). These images in particular are reminiscent of the *petits métiers* genre, which Anne Higonnet discusses in "Real Fashion: Clothes Unmake the Working Woman," (142-148). She relates the *petits métiers* genre to a widespread "urge to investigate, classify, and quantify social conditions" (147) and discusses how the conventions of this print genre were duplicated in photography.

[42] This word was used frequently in nineteenth- and early-twentieth century texts about Korea to refer to any kind of government official.

[43] Term used to designate the governor's residence.

It is worthwhile to note that at a time when Korea was consistently and increasingly being depicted as a more backward, poorer, and more corrupt puppet of its Northeast Asian neighbors, the illustrations in Zuber's travel account are neat, orderly, and clean. Indeed, when one considers the illustration of the learned man at work in his office, it is difficult not to view the ensemble as rather dignified. Another aspect of Henri Zuber's account that differentiates it from the second travel account I will analyze in this chapter is that the former features free and direct discourse on the part of a Korean national through its inclusion of a letter that Zuber writes came from the King himself. Most likely, the letter was written by a representative of the King at court, or it was written by Heungseon Daewongun[44] (흥선대원군), the regent of Gojong, future King and Emperor, who was only 14 years of age in 1866. Regardless, the letter is a remarkable representation of resistance against foreign influence in Korean affairs and, because it is embedded within a French text, it is obliquely a French representation of Korea and Koreans. In addition, the letter is a display of Korean attitudes towards religion at odds with French attitudes toward the same. It begins, "*Quiconque renie la loi divine doit mourir. Quiconque renie la loi de son pays mérite d'être décapité. Le Ciel a créé les peoples pour qu'ils obéissent à la raison"* (cited in Zuber 36)[45]. Notice that the statement does not support a theocratic conceptualization of the world as Catholicism does but instead places "heavens" at the apex of the world order.

Next, he doubles down on his defense of punishment and his right to carry it out: "*L'homme qui la* [*la justice*] *viole ne mérite point de pardon. J'en conclus qu'on doit*

[44] Yongkoo Kim explains how the regency was applied to Gojong: "When a king dies without leaving descendants, as did King Ch'ŏljong, and a new king is selected from the royal families, as was King Kojong, the new king's father carries the title of Tae Wŏn Kun. Kojong ascended the throne during the dark period. As he was only twelve years of age at the time of his coronation, his biological father, Tae Wŏn Kun, became Regent from 1864-1873, the same turbulent years in which Korea began its encounters with Western powers." (6)

[45] My translation: "Anyone who breaks divine law must die, anyone who breaks the law of his country deserves to be decapitated. The Heavens created people so that they would obey to reason."

supprimer celui qui la renie, décapiter celui qui la viole" (36)[46]. The French belligerents in the *Byeong-in yangyo* (병인양요) supported the idea that the decapitation of their compatriots and of Korean converts to Catholicism was an act of barbarism, but here the regent defends the practice as logical, and in fact, necessary. He adds: "*Aussi la Corée, aux yeux de tout le monde, est-elle le royaume de la justice et de la civilisation*[47]*,"* (36) suggesting that the idea that Korea was just and fair should be taken as a given. It can be seen therefore as an attempt at regulating foreign perceptions of Korea, which is a topic that will be discussed in greater detail later in this book.

The letter's author next contrasts this representation of Korea with deplorable French behaviors that transgress the cosmic normative pattern described earlier in this chapter:

> *Mais, s'il se trouve des hommes qui viennent pour séduire nos sujets, s'introduisent secrètement, changent leurs vêtements et étudient notre langue, des hommes qui démoralisent notre peuple et renversent nos mœurs, alors la vieille loi du monde veut qu'on les mette à mort*[48]. (36)

Asking next why the French forces then blame him for observing this ancient law, he goes on to state that they odiously violate reason, he affirms that if the Korean forces had wanted to destroy the French forces, they very well could have, and he details the kindness that the French were shown by the Koreans. He criticizes the way the French responded to this kindness:

[46] My translation: "The man who violates it [justice] is unworthy of pardon. From this, I conclude that it is necessary to put to death he who breaks it, and that it is necessary to decapitate he who violates it."

[47] My translation: "And for the entire world, Korea is the kingdom of justice and civilization."

[48] My translation: "But, if it so happens that there are men who come to seduce our subjects, who penetrate our home clandestinely, who change their clothes, who study our language, who corrupt our people, who turn our customs upside-down, the ancient law of the world wants that they be put to death…"

> *Par conséquent, vous vous montrez ingrats envers nous, tandis que je ne le suis pas envers vous. Ceci ne vous suffit pas ; il vous était nécessaire de vous éloigner ; votre retour est malséant. Cette fois, vous pillez mes villes, vous tuez mon peuple, vous détruisez mes biens et mes troupeaux. Jamais on ne vit le Ciel et les lois violés d'une manière plus grave*[49]. (37)

Continuing this trajectory, he concludes his criticism of their behavior with another remark about their religious activities:

> *De plus, on a dit que vous voulez répandre votre religion dans mon royaume. Ceci est une faute. Les livres différents ont leurs sentences particulières qui présentent le vrai et le faux. En quoi nuit-il que je suive ma religion, vous la vôtre ? S'il est blâmable de renier ses ancêtres, pourquoi venez-vous nous enseigner d'abandonner les nôtres et d'en prendre d'étrangers*[50] *?* (37)

Note that in asking why religious differences matter, he reaffirms the idea that what was most condemnable was not Catholic or non-Confucian beliefs, but rather the behaviors in which those beliefs led people to engage. It would seem, based on their behaviors, that French missionaries were either unwilling or unable to avoid violating the cosmic normative pattern to which Korean Neo-Confucianism strictly adhered. Whether or not their presumed ignorance about it might grant them some impunity is a question for a different book altogether. What continues to motivate the present study is the representation of Korea and

[49] My translation: "In response, you show yourselves to be ungrateful toward us, even though I am not showing myself to be the same towards you. This time, you pillage my towns, you kill my people, you destroy my food and my herds. Never before has one seen a graver violation of Heaven and Law."

[50] My translation: "They even told me that you wanted to spread your religion in my kingdom. This is a mistake. There are different books that present their own sentences about what is true and what is false. What does it matter if I follow my religion and you yours? If it is condemnable to renounce one's ancestors, why do you come to teach us to abandon ours in order to adopt some foreign ones?"

Koreans in diverse forms of French media, and how notions of submission and resistance collide with one another in them.

This letter to the French court addresses the idea that Koreans were submissive and weak by re-interpreting early Korean responses to the invasion and attack as dignified and respectable acts of kindness and hospitality rather than of submission and fear. As a form of resistance, it reaffirms Korean sovereignty and Korean attitudes about the role of religion in its society. Most powerfully, the letter's writer concludes with an invitation to the Korean court, giving the French attackers the opportunity to recognize Korean sovereignty or to suffer the consequences of their continued insolence:

> *Tu te montres maintenant ici avec une armée nombreuse, comme si tu étais l'instrument de la justice céleste. Viens à la cour ; ayons une entrevue, et nous déciderons s'il sera nécessaire de réunir des troupes ou de les renvoyer, d'essayer de la victoire ou de la défaite. Ne fuis pas : incline-toi et obéis !*[51] (38)

Although some of the belligerents would later claim that Admiral Roze did indeed go to court and have an audience with the King, this was untrue. After their clear defeat, the French forces left Korea and both Roze and Bellonnet were criticized by the French government for their actions. However, when the *Byeong-in yangyo* (병인양요) became a source of criticism for the government as a whole on the part of the French public after details of the attack landed in the French press, many accounts thereafter attempted to downplay the intended effect of the events by stating that the goal was simply to frighten the

[51] My translation: "Now you are showing yourselves here with a vast army, as if you were the instrument of heavenly justice. Come to court; let us have an interview, and we will decide if it is necessary to call up our troops or to send them away, to try for victory or for defeat. Do not run away: bow and obey."

Korean people as punishment for the "massacres" (the number of executions of Catholics was increasingly inflated) that had taken place. Roze and Bellonnet were spared further criticism from the government because it behooved the government to defend them and to thereby avoid tarnishing the reputation of the government any further.

1.5 Gustave Pradier and "La Corée il y a quarante ans"

The second travel account that I will now analyze in this chapter is also couched in the nineteenth century's collective conversation about the civilizing mission. Like Henri Zuber, the author of this account was also a member of the expedition[52], but the conclusion he draws from the same experience are rather different. It bears noting that another major difference between the two is that Henri Zuber's account was published less than a decade after the *Byeong-in yangyo* (병인양요) but Gustave Pradier, in contrast, waited nearly forty years to publish his own account. Although it is not known when Zuber began writing his draft, it is possible that he started to prepare it during the attack on Korea. Given the commonplace practice of sailors producing sketches of the places to which they sailed whilst there, it seems likely that a large part of his account was produced *in situ*.

Daniel C. Kane, who published Gustave Pradier's account as an English translation, duly made a point to analyze it while making it clear that in contrast to an account that would have been published soon after the attack, as Zuber's account was, it was penned[53]

[52] Daniel C. Kane writes in a footnote to "A Forgotten Firsthand Account of the Pyong yangyo (1866): An Annotated Translation of the Narrative of G. Pradier" that there are three known French participants who penned accounts of their experiences. These include Gustave Pradier and Henri Zuber, discussed here, and also Jeanne Frey's "l'Expédition de Corée (Extrait de Cahier de Jeanne Frey)" in *19-segi yŏlyang kwa Hanbando* [The great powers and the Korean peninsula in the 19th century], U Ch'ŏlgu, 1999, p. 216.

[53] The foreword in *La Revue hebdomadaire*, in which the account was originally published in January of 1905, states that the account came from "*le journal d'un marin*" but Kane's article asks the question: "Is his account, penned after the passage of four decades, a truly original account of events or merely the refashioning of accounts by earlier writers with some minor additions?" ("A Forgotten Firsthand Account" 53). He finds: "Ultimately, the account of Pradier should be approached and appreciated with caution. Though in all likelihood genuine, in that it is a firsthand account by a participant, it is written from the distance of forty years and without the aid of personal records" (*ibid.,* 61).

while France found itself in the midst of an altogether different geopolitical situation[54]:

> Even as it went to print, Russian and Japanese armies were locked in a prolonged and merciless struggle for control of Port Arthur, with the final outcome still from certain. Pradier, with the armchair strategizing of a retired naval officer, uses his account of the Korean expedition to make a plea for more thorough defensive preparations in French Indochina against a growing Japanese belligerence. (53)

This quote shows that Pradier's account functioned as a sort of call to arms directly opposing Zuber's marked demonstration of respect for Korean independence from Western aspersions. Whereas Zuber condemns the deleterious effects of increased Western influence in Asia, Pradier urges that it be promoted[55].

In spite of the fact that Zuber was clearly sympathetic to the Korean people and undeniably dismayed by the ramifications of his own country's bellicose engagements with the Korean people during the expedition, he nevertheless expressed elements of both dominant and counter-discourses of submission and resistance in his account. Ideologically caged in by France's civilizing mission and his individual role as sailor in the ideological state apparatus that was the French navy[56], Zuber could not have broken free of it without

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[54] Kane writes: "Pradier's personal account of the Korean expedition first appeared in two consecutive installments of *La Revue hebdomadaire* (Paris) in January 1905, nearly forty years after the events they described. As the author's concluding remarks make clear, the timing of the publication was deliberate [...] Pradier, with the armchair strategizing of a retired naval officer, uses his account of the Korean expedition to make a plea for more thorough defensive preparations in French Indochina against a growing Japanese belligerence" (*ibid.,* 53).

[55] See Su Young Park's *Western Perception on Korea 1890-1930: Comparative Study on the Relationship between Reciprocity and Colonial Discourse* for more about how the genre of the travel account is "relatively free from authority," enabling the writers to produce "new text," which is "equal to refusing preceding textual authority or a dominant cultural discourse" (11). In our case here, Pradier and Zuber each have the opportunity to "write new text," but only Zuber truly seizes that opportunity.

[56] I am referring to an ideological state apparatus in the way that Louis Althusser refers to it in *On the Reproduction of Capitalism: Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses,* specifically: "…the school (but also other State institutions like the Church, or other apparatuses like the Army) teaches 'know-how', but in forms

first experiencing the struggle we witness unfolding in his personal account. Pradier's account displays the same discordant forms of representation, depicting Korea as both poles in an impossible binary construct for what might be considered essentially and ontologically "Korean." While Zuber's solution as depicted in his account is to use the civilizing mission in a more peaceful way (though such an endeavor is surely not possible), Pradier writes firmly in support of increased military intervention in Asia. Regardless of how they might think the civilizing mission should function, each of them represents Korea in this highly problematic way.

A clear instance of this cognitive dissonance is found near the end of his account but serves well as a point of entry for my analysis. In this excerpt, Pradier recounts a night when he and some fellow midshipmen, having noticed some modest pieces of furniture in some abandoned homes about half a league from their camp, resolved to go and retrieve them (Pradier, 318, Kane 81). He writes:

> *Absorbés par notre besogne, nous nous demandions comment nous pourrions transporter le mobilier cependant bien restreint lorsque, subitement, nous fûmes entourés par une cinquantaine de Coréens. Ces grands et solides gaillards, bien charpentés, avaient surgi sans aucun bruit comme des ombres ; ils avaient l'air de fantômes au milieu de la nuit, avec leurs longs habits blancs. Revenant de notre étonnement, payant d'audace, les menaçant de nos revolvers et de nos bambous, nous les obligeâmes à charger les fardeaux sur leurs épaules et à nous les porter chez nous* (Pradier 318-319)[57].

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which ensure *subjection to the ruling ideology* or the mastery of its 'practice.' All the agents of production, exploitation and repression, not to speak of the 'professional of ideology' (Marx) must in one way or another be 'steeped' in this ideology in order to perform their tasks 'conscientiously'- the tasks of the exploited (the proletarians), of the exploiters (the capitalists), of the exploiters' auxiliaries (the managers), or of the high priests of the ruling ideology (its 'functionaries'), *etc.* (5).

[57] Daniel C. Kane's translation: "Our strategy was clear. Absorbed in our task, we were pondering how we

Pradier's depiction of the Koreans as "night phantoms" inscribes his narrative in what had by then become a trope: Koreans as being like ghosts because of their white clothing. In many contemporary accounts and descriptions of Koreans, the simile is extended all the way to pure metaphor. In most, if not all such instances, Korean inertia and/or submission were also evoked alongside it[58]. Pradier reflects again on the very same event later in his text, using the opportunity describe the Korean character as so innately submissive that their actions run counter to their best interests:

> *Les Coréens sont grands, robustes, agiles comme des chamois, mais poltrons comme des lièvres ; ils n'ont aucun ressort. Ils nous avaient surprise alors que nous étions occupés à notre déménagement, ils pouvaient nous massacrer avant que nous eussions eu le temps de sortir nos revolvers et de nous défendre. Nous leurs en imposâmes par notre contenance, leur montrant que nous n'avions aucune crainte ; que leur nombre, loin de nous embarrasser, favorisait au contraire notre projet, puisque, chose incroyable, mais vraie, nous obligeâmes eux, les cambriolés, à secourir leurs propres cambrioleurs* (Pradier 319-320)[59].

By depicting the Koreans as timid animals without initiative, who aided their attackers in their own demise, Pradier portrays them as the epitome of submissive creatures.

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might carry off the remnant furniture when we suddenly found ourselves surrounded by some fifty Koreans. These tall and sturdy fellows, well put together, had descended upon as silent as shadows. Their long white costumes gave them the aspect of night phantoms. Recovering from our initial shock, we responded with audacity in turn. Threatening them with our bamboo poles and revolvers, we forced them to carry our load back to our camp on their shoulders," (81).

[58] This is discussed at length in Chapter 4, Section 1, with an abundance of other examples provided.

[59] Kane's translation: "The Koreans are tall, robust, agile as mountain goats, and timid as rabbits; they all lack initiative. Having taken us by surprise while were moving out the furniture, they might easily have massacred us before we had the chance to draw our revolvers in defense. But we overcame them by our countenance, by showing them we feared nothing and that their superior numbers, rather than being a hindrance to our plans actually helped them. For, as incredible as it may seem, we forced them, the burgled, to aid their own burglars" (82).

For example, in one scene, he writes: "*ces deux créatures* […] *n'avaient rien d'humain*" (313). However, in direct contradiction to himself, he also writes that his victims regularly rebelled against him and his cohort:

> *Lorsque dans nos expeditions nous trouvions des vivres, nous réquisitionnions des Coréens dans les villages pour porter nos provisions. Ces gens n'étaient pas contents qu'on leur prît leurs bestiaux, même contre remboursement, et surtout d'être obligés de nous les porter au camp. Ils montraient généralement beaucoup de mollesse, je dirai même de mauvaise volonté, et il fallait souvent faire parler le bambou pour se faire obéir*[60].

Daniel C. Kane's translation of this passage replaces "*mauvaise volonté"* with "resistance" in English. Another way that "*mauvaise volonté*" could be translated is as "reluctance" or "unwillingness." In any case, resistance was taking place in this moment. In his focus on a possible political solution for Korea's problems, Pradier writes that the only viable one is a "*l'indépendance de la Corée sous la garantie de l'Europe*[61]*"* (324) because "*incapables d'une résistance, d'un effort, de prendre fait et cause pour l'un ou l'autre des belligérants, ils subiront, impassibles, les volontés du vainqueur*[62]*"* (Pradier, 323). If a European nation guaranteed Korea's independence, would it truly count as independence? If Koreans were submissive and impassive, would they be able to maintain such independence? Pradier does not provide answers to these questions, and in recounting ways in which Koreans were

[60] Kane's translation: "When in the course of our expeditions we came upon provisions we requisitioned Koreans from the villages to serve as porters. These people were not happy at all about our taking their animals, even with reimbursement, and even less with being forced to carry the loads to our camp. In general, they demonstrated much indolence, I might even say resistance, so that it was often necessary to resort to the bamboo to make them obey" (74).

[61] Daniel C. Kane's translation in "A Forgotten Firsthand Account: "European guarantee of Korea's independence and neutrality" (85).

[62] Daniel C. Kane's translation in "A Forgotten Firsthand Account: "*incapable of resistance*, of any effort to take the side of either of the belligerents, they will submit, impassive, to the will of the victor" (84).

actively resisting against the French attackers, he undermines his own claims that they were not capable of fighting back.

1.6 Conclusion

Overall, as can be seen through Zuber's fear of an over-extension of French power[63] in the Far East and Pradier's blustery, self-assured convictions that France should have been able to successfully carry out their mission in 1866, this era is at first marked by a sense of self-assurance on the part of French nationals. The idea that a French naval force might be able to subjugate Korea and make it a colony was not outlandish from a general French perspective in early 1866[64]. This perspective was likely aided by the fact that Korea was viewed rather typically from within a more traditional Orientalist framework before this more direct contact was made with it. However, this point of view undergoes a dramatic shift after the *Byeong-in yangyo* (병인양요). For example, when an American force wanted to carry out their own punitive expedition to Korea with French help the following year, the Americans involved were unable to enlist French help (Yongkoo Kim 67-70). For the French government and military, Korea was no longer assumed to be an easily conquered space; the markers of its national independence had begun to emerge.

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[63] An interesting counterpoint to be found for Zuber (aside from Pradier) is Charles Varat. In his "Voyage en Corée" he draws the opposite conclusion as Zuber and counsels French mothers to excite their sons' male energy by allowing them to travel all around the world, to return just as heroically as their fathers had done after having *"fait partout connaître, admirer, aimer la France, augmentant ainsi son influence, sa richesse et sa grandeur"* (368).

[64] In *La Croix, la baleine, et le canon : La France face à la Corée au milieu du XIXe siècle*, Pierre-Emmanuel Roux contextualizes the surprise and disappointment expressed in the Western press following the failed French attack by providing evidence that success was expected: "*Juste après le retour d'Oppert de sa deuxième exploration de la péninsule, le* North China Herald *du 21 juillet 1866 rapporta, en effet, que la Corée était 'dans un état miserable' et complètement sans défense'. À l'instar des consuls et amiraux français dans les années 1850, l'article exposait qu''un navire de guerre pourrait se frayer un chemin jusqu'à la capitale sans avoir à craindre de résistance. L'armée coréenne est une populace sans artillerie et même sans mousquet, et une très légère démonstration suffirait à provoquer la soumission du pays.' Comment la station navale des mers de Chine, avec ses sept bâtiments, avait-elle donc pu échouer dans une opération censée être aussi facile ?"* (272). See also: YongKoo Kim's *The Five Years' Crisis, 1866-1871: Korea in the Maelstrom of Western Imperialism,* pp. 35-40, "The Attitude of the French Government" for an overview of the expectations of different French stakeholders in the attack.

As these and other primary sources from this time period reveal, the intensification in Franco-Korean exchanges was accompanied by an intensification in semiotic behavior as authors, illustrators, and photographers grappled with how to digest and represent this novel information, resulting in a marked cultural reaction to the contemporary event: one of confusion and of ideological discord. In her book, *Francophone and the Orient*, Mathilde Kang writes that:

> It should be noted that ship owners, officers, diplomats, merchants, or sailors, all promoters of French civilization outside of France, published innumerable writings, to the best of their ability. This was a time when the challenges facing Asia were changing and the French corpus of France-Asia crossings was expressed first, we believe, in the form of the literature of the intimate," (p. 151).

Therefore, the importance of the travel genre is placed in part in the fact that it was integral in giving rise to the ideas and statements that would later become fixed components of the Western discourse about Korea. Henri Zuber and Gustave Pradier figured into this tradition. Henri Zuber, in particular, was perhaps the first French traveler to directly oppose the nascent dominant discourse of submission by questioning France's civilizing mission and depicting Korean individuals as being steadfastly resistant.

In "L'Extrême-Orient en Question dans les Récits des Voyageurs Français durant la Seconde Moitié du XIXe Siècle[65]," Muriel Détrie discusses the ways that travel writers navigated the tumultuous space between the Real and the Imaginary, showing that travel writers, each in their own way and to differing degrees, were able to exercise their freedom and participate in the construction and evolution of imaginary representations (12). This

[65] Ordinarily, the rules regarding capitalization in the French language would result in many fewer words in this title being capitalized, but Routledge published it in this manner, and I have seen fit to reference it without correction.

concept is clearly exercised in both Henri Zuber's and Gustave Pradier's personal accounts, thus affirming Détrie's claim. It is another way in which the travel narrative is a particularly useful genre for parsing out discursive norms and ideas about alterity in a given social group.

This interaction, the *Byeong-in yangyo* (병인양요), is one marked by ideological discord and confusion, expressed in this nascent discourse about Korea from a French perspective. When considering that discourses are complexes of signs and symbols which organize social existence and are used in competition to organize social structures, it is evident that these private accounts, though they reached divergent conclusions, engaged equally in this practice. On one hand, Zuber's account and his illustrations inscribe it in a rather typical Orientalist discourse about Korea, but the fact that his illustrations have not conformed to ethnographic "type" standards is a reflection of either a) his unwillingness to conform to those representational standards, or b) those standards not having yet been so fixed in French representational practices that he was not yet constrained by them. Zuber's textual anchorage can indeed be seen as an outright attempt at fixing a rigid meaning to the people and things he encountered, however. I should note that the possibility remains that his newspaper editor might have requested such textual anchorage. If so, it might be that Zuber hoped to allow the images to speak for themselves. It also bears acknowledging that, as with other components of discourse, captions were not always uncontested[66].

Pradier's more overtly political stance, taken many decades later, is reflective of the more fixed discourse, yet it also reveals the persistent problem that plagued it: it depended

[66] For example, Luke Gartlan writes about customers of Raimund von Stillfried's contemporary photo studio in Yokohoma removing captions: "…at least one customer apparently objected to the black-and-white captions of the first portfolio. In an album of ninety albumen prints, the anonymous compiler systematically clipped the lower edge of the photographs, cut out the captions, and pasted them on the verso side of the album's leaves to the mounted photograph" and continues to discuss the changing ways in which captions were used (66-67).

on the idea that Korean people would not resist attempts at controlling them. Literature, as a sandbox for creativity and imagination, allows for tracing out possibilities for new and alternative realities, but nevertheless pieces of literature remain products of the cultural and social moments during which they are written. The cultural and social moment during which Pradier penned his call to arms was one in which resistance on the part of Korean nationalist had become progressively more ardent, while the perceived threat posed by Japan had grown greater in the West. Thus, Pradier's narrative acknowledges and represents resistance and rebellion in spite of his professed goals and claims to the contrary.

CHAPTER 2

Hong Jong-u and the Assassination of Kim Ok-gyun

France was the last of Western nations to sign a treaty with Korea during the nineteenth century. The United States, China, and Russia also preceded France in signing their treaties with Korea. The France-Korea Treaty of 1886, also known as the Treaty of Friendship, Commerce, and Navigation, or *Le traité d'amitié et de commerce entre la France et la Corée/조불 수호 통상 조약*, was not ratified until 1887, a full twenty-one years after the *Byeong-in yangyo* (병인양요), a French attempt at colonizing Korea around which the first chapter of this dissertation revolved. It has been argued that this near quarter-of-a-century delay is directly rooted in the political fallout that ensued as a result of France's failed invasion. Despite its relative tardiness, one result of this treaty was the opening of communication channels to a degree unprecedented in Franco-Korean relations. French individuals were quite suddenly granted access to and within Korea to a degree that had never before been seen, which resulted in a veritable explosion of new francophone representations of the nation and its people.

One event in particular that colored the representations of Korea in the French press after this treaty opened communication channels was the assassination of a Korean revolutionary named Kim Ok-gyun by a Korean political rival named Hong Jong-u, one of the first Korean people ever to visit France. This chapter focuses on the starkly divergent representations of Hong Jong-u in the French press before and after the assassination, with particular attention given to the way that these representations both contributed to and undermined the developing discourse about Korea. I will begin the chapter with a brief biography of Hong Jong-u with details about the assassination. Next, I will explain how the historical circumstances created by the France-Korea Treaty of 1866 changed the way in which Korea was being represented by Francophone writers, effectively building the

discursive environment that led to Hong Jong-u's assassination of Kim Ok-gyun becoming a discursive event. Last, I will analyze the representation of Hong Jong-u in newspapers dating from before and after the assassination, demonstrating that it shifts dramatically from laudatory admiration and curiosity to outright disgust and condemnation.

2.1 Hong Jong-u (*b.* 1850, *d.* 1913)

Very little scholarship has been conducted about Hong Jong-u in either English or French[67]. The most comprehensive sources of information currently available about him are Jo Jae-gon's (조재곤) *So I Shot Kim Ok-gyun* (그래서 나는 김옥균을 쏘았다) and An Sonjae's "Hong Jong-u," a biography published on his website. An Sonjae's biography is roughly 6500 words in length and is compiled from information drawn from contemporary news articles that will be discussed in this chapter and elsewhere in this dissertation as well as with information drawn from Jo Jae-gon's biography. According to An, Hong Jong-u was born on November 17th, 1850, probably in the city of Ansan. Almost nothing is known about his father, but Hong was born into the Namyang Hong clan, and although some of his family members had held significant posts in Joseon government, Hong Jong-u's father did not profit from that prestige, did not hold a significant post himself, and was impoverished.

Although he grew up in poverty, Hong nevertheless received an education that later made it possible for him to effectuate the translation of the first Korean works of literature into a European language, making him the first Korean person "having had cultural activity

[67] Snippets of information can be read about him in the following: Frédéric Boulesteix's *D'Un Orient autrement extrême* (120, 130, 149, 224-228); Elena Buja's "Caught between Two Worlds" (36); Chinoh Chu's "Korean Perceptions of Japan during the Great Han Empire and the Japanese Annexation of Korea"(103); Hilary Conroy's "V. Various Unexpected Happenings" in *Japanese Seizure of Korea, 1868-1910* (4); Patricia A. Helfenbein's *A Reexamination of Kim Ok-kyun* (5, 126, 128); Eun-jin Jeong's "Quelques grands écrivains coréens publiés en France" in *Culture Coréenne* (7); Jin-Mieung Li's "Études coréennes en France: les origines, le passé et le présent" (4, 36); Isabelle Sancho's "Pre-Modern Korean Studies in France: history, objectives, and projects" (4-5); Han Yumi and Hervé Péjaudier's "L'« autre » texte" (2,7).

in the West which allowed for better knowledge of his country" (Boulesteix 225)[68]. Leaning on information from contemporary news articles, An writes that Hong believed Korea should be completely independent of China, Japan, and Russia, but that it should not maintain a policy of isolation from the outside world. He adds that Hong wanted to visit France in hopes of receiving the same inspiration for democratic reform that Meiji Japan had received, and that this hope led him to go to Japan, where he worked as a typesetter to raise money for his trip to France. While there, he studied French and Japanese.

Hong arrived in Paris on December 24th, 1890, and remained there until July 23rd, 1893, at which point he headed to Marseille and then boarded a steamship which carried him back to Japan. While in Paris, he lived first in the home of a Catholic family[69], then with the renowned painter, Félix Régamey, and then likely stayed in a hotel[70]. He worked at the Musée Guimet des arts asiatiques, using his new French language skills to catalogue objects in the Korean collection, and he also worked on the aforementioned pieces of literature. After returning to Japan, Hong was charged with the task of luring a political rival named Kim Ok-gyun to Shanghai and killing him there, where he would be less protected by Japanese authorities. Hong was told that king himself had assigned the task, and he "enthusiastically agreed, it seems," to carry out the mission (An, "Hong Jong-u").

[68] Hong Jong-u is frequently credited with being the first Korean person either to set foot in Europe or to set foot in France (Li, 4, Sancho 4, Youn Dae-yeong 248). Neither claim can be confirmed, and both are unlikely. Hong Jong-u was certainly preceded in Europe by Antoine Corrêa, a Korean prisoner of war who was purchased along with several others in 1597 by a Florentine merchant. This merchant sold or lost his other slaves over the next few years during his travels, but he did take Corrêa with him to Rome in 1606. By that point, Corrêa had somehow freed himself, become a merchant in his own right, and his affairs may very well have taken him to France (See Stéphane Bois 21). The surname Corrêa exists today in Italy as lasting evidence of Corrêa's presence there (See Boulesteix 154). As a result, it is reasonable to conclude that Hong Jong-u was *not* the first Korean person to arrive in Europe and that he was quite possibly *not* the first Korean person to arrive in France either.

[69] Most likely, this was the family of Hyacinth Loyson, with whom correspondence is published before the preface of his *Le Bois sec refleuri.*

[70] Peers of Hong Jong-u who mention him staying in a hotel include: Jules Hoche, in "Un assassinat politique" (1); Édouard Chavannes, in "La Guerre de Corée," cited in Joinau (28); Félix Régamey in his own "Un assassinat politique" (268); Ernest Tissot, in "Au pays des chapeaux de porcelaine," cited in Joinau (28).

Hong was more than a literary scholar. He was also a statesman with strong opinions about Korea's future, and his family ties gave him access to Kim. I will now explain how it was that Kim Ok-gyun became a government target for assassination. He was born on February 23rd, 1851, to the Andong Kim clan, which had previously enjoyed considerable influence in Joseon's royal court until losing political ground to the Yeoheung Min clan. In 1884, Kim Ok-Gyun's political party, called the Enlightenment Party, attempted to overthrow the king's government in an event called the Gapsin Coup[71]. Kim and other leaders of the coup were motivated by their desire to open Korea up to the world in a way similar to that of the Meiji Restoration in Japan. This is not unlike Hong Jong-u's own aspirations, but their thinking diverged in that the perpetrators of the Gapsin Coup believed that this kind of sweeping change would be impossible under the "oppressive climate" created by the Min clan's government influence. Members of the Enlightenment Party, having grossly overestimated the degree of public support they expected to receive during the coup while simultaneously underestimating the strength of the forces that would oppose them, failed to successfully overthrow the government. They did manage to kidnap the king and assassinate a considerable number of high-level officials, but the result of this was that they earned notoriety as pro-Japanese villains, and each of them became targets for assassination in their own right.

2.2 Historical Circumstances

As has been attested by a number of scholars, a probable explanation for the delay in signing the France-Korea Treaty of 1886 can be found in the *Byeong-in yangyo* (병인양요). This delay had significant repercussions for communication between the two countries and

[71] Patricia A. Helfenbein's master's thesis, "A Reexamination of Kim Ok-kyun: A Study of a Korean Intellectual and the Possibilities for a Regional History of Modernity" provides a thorough and riveting account of the event, including its planning and its aftermath. Her repeated mentions of alcohol abuse having played a heavy hand in the intensification of the perpetrators' resolve also makes for amusing reading.

the perception of Korea in France. Mary C. Wright, for instance, describes the events and the political fallout that ensued in her oft cited "The Adaptability of Ch'ing Diplomacy," noting that Korea reported to China that they had defeated France, and in alignment with the scholarly consensus, Wright finds that Bellonnet's[72] embarrassing diplomatic failure intensified Korean exclusiveness. She writes:

> New heights of anti-foreignism found expression in the so-called anti-heretic tablets set up in stone throughout the country: "The barbarians from beyond the seas have violated our borders and invaded our land. If we do not fight, we must make treaties with them. Those who favor making a treaty sell their country." (380)

Although this xenophobia extended to all foreigners, it would appear to be much more heavily pitched against French and Catholic foreigners than against most others. For the next twenty years, most new information about Korea that made its way to France did so via intermediaries who retained more access to the country. Thus, nearly everything known about Korea was either outdated or was filtered through the lens of those who had presumably little or no relation to France and di not share its troubled history with Korea.

This temporal/informational lacuna closed for a time after the signing of the treaty. It allowed French citizens the right to travel throughout all of Korea with a visa. This new freedom of movement contributed to a rapid proliferation of both textual and visual representations of Korea for the global francophone audience. Prior to the treaty's signing, the focus in such representations remained fixed upon the deaths of French and Korean Catholics leading up to the *Byeong-in yangyo* (병인양요). After its signing, new information and experiences were to be gathered and had, and they resulted in a more positive tonal shift

[72] Henri de Bellonnet, *chargé d'affaires* in Beijing and major belligerent in the attack. See Chapter One, sections Three and Four for more about this.

regarding the ways that Korea was represented in Francophone materials. While some of the texts, photographs, and drawings produced were meant for research purposes[73] and therefore had small, niche target audiences, many others were destined for the public at large and were produced and reproduced in newspapers and on postcards[74]. On occasion, the former "truthful texts" and latter "avowedly artistic texts," to use Said's terms as described in the introduction to this dissertation, were adapted for either audience.

One of the major events that appeared in French newspapers after the 1886 treaty was finally signed was Hong Jong-u's successful assassination of Kim Ok-gyun. Whereas once there might have been very little (or no) attention given to such an event in France, it was widely covered in the French press as a result of these newly opened lines of communication and greater public interest in Korea. I argue that the assassination became a major discursive event through which French newspaper authors (and by extension, their readers), worked through their conflicted, collective anxieties about Korea and its status relative to France, supposedly legally enshrined by the 1886 treaty but still tenuous and evolving in the public mind. In particular, I examine the newspaper representations of Hong Jong-u before and after the assassination to demonstrate that these representations shift dramatically from laudatory admiration and curiosity to outright disgust and condemnation. Within this shift, a more subtle change occurs in which fears about Korean autonomy and power bubble to the surface of the dominant discourse, undermining it from within and showing that these fears cannot be contained by the explicit language and subjugation evoked in even the most damning

[73] For instance, as part of ethnographers' now questionable attempts to identify a supposed source for "the Korean race," as evident in works such as *Esquisse anthropologique des coréens* by Ernest Chantre and Émile Bourdaret.

[74] See Hyung Il Pai's "Staging 'Koreana' for the Tourist Gaze: Imperialist Nostalgia and the Circulation of Picture Postcards" for an analysis of the production and distribution of the first generation of picture postcard views of historical monuments in the Korean peninsula. This analysis argues that "the aesthetic, historical and ethnographic knowledges contained in this body of colonial-era visual materials were pivotal in the creation of a 'timeless' image of Korea and its peoples as the most picturesque and ancient land in the Japanese empire."

representations of his person.

2.3 Hong Jong-u in the French Press

Newspapers can be considered the first "authentic *mass* medium;" they experienced enormous growth during the nineteenth century with their circulation increasing by four thousand percent from 1830 to 1900 (Terdiman 47). Parisian dailies in particular had an overall increase in their circulation of two hundred and fifty percent from 1880 to 1914 (Schwartz 275). Not only were newspapers wildly popular amongst a francophone readership, but they were also widely read globally, with many newspapers translating or "borrowing" image and word from one another so long as they coincided with the paper's style and journalistic aims- or if they could modify them to make it so. French language newspapers in particular during the latter half of the nineteenth century "profited from increases in the influence of their political or parliamentary tendency (Terdiman 128)," which led to many of them being politically motivated and consequently heavily embedded with political meaning. Vanessa Schwartz, in "The Morgue and the Musée Grévin: Understanding the Public Taste for Reality in Fin-de-Siècle Paris" discusses how Realism operated in the press (and in other cultural forms and practices), writing that "newspapers replaced opinion with so-called truth as the world entered 'the age of information,'" (274) and that the newspaper and the serial novel were both "complexly perched on the border between reality and representation" (275). In what follows, I support the idea that the political motivations and political meanings that Terdiman references can be teased out in these news articles that operate in precisely this finicky zone straddling reality and representation identified by Schwartz.

Commentary about Asia and/or Asians was frequently inscribed in a larger discourse about that person and/or that person's "nation" rather than having been an apolitical endeavor to report unbiased and factual events. In fact, newspapers were used during the

Joseon Kingdom (대조선국) and the period of the Korean Empire (대한제국) as a tool for building the "nation" as Benedict Anderson has described it in his *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism.* For Anderson, a nation is "an imagined political community- and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign" (5-6). Anderson also finds the generic forms of the novel and the newspaper "provided the technical means for 're-representing' the *kind* of imagined community that is the nation" (24)[75]. In *Korea Between Empires, 1895-1919,* André Schmid discusses how newspapers in turn-of-the-twentieth-century Korea "were the preeminent medium of the nation" and served as the "primary producers of knowledge about it" (47). This usage of the press for nation building and identity formation was also a transgressive means of countering un-sanctioned and unwanted Western representations of Korea[76].

According to Richard Terdiman, newspapers are "…the earliest significant, broadly circulated and recognized representation of the sorts of pervasive dissonances and contradictions in modern existence about which it appears *nothing can or will be done*" (125). This attitude about the future is expressed in the press when the content references Korea's expected fate in the face of growing Japanese aggression. As was made evident through my analysis of Henri Zuber's *"Une Expédition en Corée"* and Gustave Pradier's

[75] Anderson expands on this from pages 24-36. On page 36, he writes: "…the search was on, so to speak, for a new way of linking fraternity, power and time meaningfully together. Nothing perhaps more precipitated this search, nor made it more fruitful, than print-capitalism, which made it possible for rapidly growing numbers of people to think about themselves, and to relate to others, in profoundly new ways."

[76] This is discussed further in Chapter 3 of this dissertation, but here are some examples: 1) In "Sanitizing Empire: Japanese Articulations of Korean Otherness and the Construction of Early Colonial Seoul, 1905-1919," Todd A. Henry details how occupation-era newspapers were used to "discourage native resistance to annexation and to build sympathy for the policies of the Japanese government among the Korean people and foreigners living on the peninsula" (644); 2) In "Korean Perceptions of Japan during the Great Han Empire and the Japanese Annexation of Korea," Chinoh Chu writes that "the government [of Joseon, in 1895, two years before the foundation of the Great Han Empire] funded and supported the Independence Club's newspaper, the *Dongnip sinmun* (The Independent), which served as the state mouthpiece and carried articles critical of Japan" (93). The Independent was published in Korean as well as English, intended to be read by a global audience; 3) Throughout "King Gojong's Portrait and the Advent of Photography in Korea," Heangga Kwon writes about how carefully and intentionally portraits and photographs of the Korean monarch were disseminated in newspapers.

"*La Corée il y a quarante ans"* in Chapter One, there was a degree of certainty expressed in French works that Korea would inevitably fall into another sovereign nation's figurative hands.

When Hong Jong-u is represented in the French press, he is at first depicted as somehow being both extremely ignorant but also highly educated, reaching his full potential only after he has spent some time in contact with French people. Overall, these depictions of him are quite positive ones. Later depictions however, more closely tied to Hong's political actions and the political moment, depict him as untrustworthy and maleficent due to his actions and *by nature of his being Asian.* In addition to being Asian, he was Asian of a sort that was not easily understood or codified by the French public, more accustomed to Chinese and Japanese commerce and art. When depictions of Hong Jong-u transform him into a character to be reviled, it is as though this version of him was inevitable and the works he produced could never have held any literary or social value. For the French public at large, Korea still represented a mysterious black hole of unknowability located roughly in the center of Northeast Asia and its people were easy to judge.

A parallel effect is discernible in the way that Hong Jong-u's literary production received positive reviews in the time period prior to his assassination of Kim Ok-gyun, yet that the same works received drastically different, negative reviews after the fact. He receives varying degrees of credit for his role in the publication of *Printemps parfumé*[77], *Le Bois sec refleuri,* and *Guide pour rendre propice l'étoile qui garde chaque homme et pour*

[77] It has been claimed that this is the first translation of an East Asian work of literature into French (Li, 4; Sancho 4), but making this claim necessitates ignoring Voltaire's *L'Orphelin de la Chine,* published in 1753 and Joseph Prémare's *L'Orphelin des Zhou*. About *L'Orphelin de la Chine,* Mathilde Kang writes: "The famous *L'Orphélin de la Chine* by Voltaire, whose genesis had sparked exciting debates between Voltairians and Sinologists, without doubt owes its origins to *L'Orphelin des Zhou*, translated by Joseph Prémare (Halde & Ji). Edited by Jean-Baptiste du Halde in 1736, this translation is the first milestone of Chinese literature's encounter with French readership" (149).

connaître les destinées de l'année, sometimes referred to as author, as translator, or not receiving any credit whatsoever[78]. The former two will be analyzed as works of literature in Chapter Four of this dissertation, but I will discuss their reception in the press in this chapter in order to reveal how Hong's *oeuvre* and image became and remain indelibly intertwined with the assassination.

French-language articles about Hong Jong-u (and illustrations of him) can be found in *Le Figaro, le Journal des voyages, la Revue de Paris, la Semaine littéraire, La Plume, Au fils des jours, and le Mercure de France.* Due to the limitations of time and space, I will focus only on a few of these articles, though I believe that a future book which focuses wholly on Hong Jong-u's presence in France and his subsequent representation by French writers and painters would be its own highly worthwhile scholarly endeavor. Of the articles I have chosen to analyze in this dissertation, I will begin with one article from *Le Figaro* and one from the *Journal des voyages.* Although the other papers published articles about Hong Jong-u either before or after the assassination, *Le Figaro*'s reporting was not limited to one side of the event in this way. It therefore gives us a narrower view of the way his representation changed within a single publication as a direct result of the event.

The first article from *Le Figaro* is entitled "LA CORÉE À PARIS" and is featured on the first page of the Friday, March 6th, 1891, issue. Founded in 1826, *Le Figaro* began as a satirical weekly paper with frequent interruptions in publication. However, by the time of this article's writing, *Le Figaro* had become "a leading political and literary journal," as a

[78] *Printemps parfumé,* published in 1892 by E. Dentu, credits J.H. Rosny as its translator, yet the preface states that "*Le traducteur de ce récit fait remonter son origine, avec la plus entière certitude, à l'établissement en Corée de* Hong le Savant, *lettré Chinois"* (4), making it clear that it is Hong, not Rosny who is translator of the work. *Le Bois sec refleuri,* published in 1895 by Ernest Leroux, lists Hong-Tjyong-Ou as its author. *Guide pour rendre propice l'étoile qui garde chaque homme* credits both Hong-Tyong-Ou and Henri Chevalier for their translation from the Korean, published in 1897 by Ernest Leroux. Critics who claim that Hong Jong-u should be credited for being the first to translate an East Asian work of Literature into French clearly credit him with the work (Li, 4; Sancho 4).

result of its journalistic innovations, political dynamism, and talented writers (Bernard 203). Founded in 1826, now nearly two-hundred years old, its "*étonnante longévité*[79]*"* has made it into a subject of intellectual inquiry in its own right (Bernard 203). Although right-of-center and conservative, *Le Figaro* has at times been at odds with much of its readership by expressing views that did not necessarily align with their own (Feyel 208). From 1875-1894, this situation was largely due to chief editor Francis Magnard's "*bon sens*[80]*"* and "*modération,"* attributed to him by virtue of his no-nonsense, non-partisan method of reporting the contemporary political moment while continuing to publish articles written by other *Le Figaro* journalists whose opinions surely differed from his own. When presented with articles whose content differed from his own political views, he is purported to have said "*Puisque c'est sa pensée, il faut la respecter*[81]*"* (Feyel 210). Therefore, articles which discuss Hong Jong-u or Korea which made it through Magnard's editorial process do not necessarily align with his opinions on either the man or the nation. However, in the way that the articles he published inscribe Korea and Koreans as mysterious, antiquated, and strange, they do still subscribe to the politically and ideologically motivated dominant discourse about Korea at that time.

"LA CORÉE À PARIS," credited to a certain Musotte[82], begins with a literary reference: "*L'arrivée d'un Persan ne nous émeut plus ; mais celle d'un Coréen nous étonne encore…*[83]*"* (1). From the first sentence, Hong is associated with the baffled, bedazzled, and

[79] My translation: "stunning longevity."

[80] My translation: "good sense."

[81] My translaton: "Since this is his thinking, it's necessary to respect it."

[82] Few things in my life have been more frustrating than my failed attempts to find any information whatsoever about this "Musotte the Journalist." It is particularly unhelpful that Guy de Maupassant and Jacques Normand used this name as the title for a play that he published around the same time that Musotte was active as a writer.

[83] My translation: "The arrival of a Persian no longer moves us ; but that of a Korean still stuns us…"

backward fictional characters invented in *Lettres persanes* by Montesquieu. *Lettres persanes* was used as a tool for providing the French public access to critique about their own culture from the viewpoints of persons whose shared culture was decidedly foreign to it. It should be considered an Orientalist text in the sense that it relies on stereotypical ideas about the East as a mirror for how Montesquieu depicted the West. After this introduction, which obliquely connotes that Hong Jong-u was not a real person at all but rather a fictitious embodiment of Eastern alterity in itself, Musotte informs his readers that Hong Jong-u was absurdly ignorant and ill-prepared for his voyage. Musotte writes that Hong Jong-u undertakes the voyage without any companion, without any help, without a single friend in Paris and with the complete inability to utter a single French word.

The author continues his appraisal of Hong's situation, including the full text of his "incomprehensible passport" translated very comprehensibly to French and which states that Hong's intention was to study law. However, Musotte questions whether such study was ever undertaken and after a concise yet thorough physiognomic account of Hong's countenance, argues that one thing is certain: Hong nearly starved to death "*dans ce vaste Paris qu'il admirait jusque dans sa misère*[84]*"* (1). I contend that it remains uncertain whether Hong truly experienced a state of duress whilst in Paris. Musotte continues his reportage by explaining that Hong Jong-u had nowhere to turn since Korea had no representative in Paris and because China, "*son ennemie"* had forbidden it legation. He writes that Hong eventually found himself in a workhouse and there met a famous painter[85] who wanted not to be named but who was willing to take him in at his studio the very next day.

[84] My translation "in this vast Paris that he admired even in his misery."

[85] Given that Hong Jong-u lived for a time in Félix Régamey's house, that Régamey produced a portrait of Hong, and that Régamey wrote about their relationship at length, Régamey is likely the famous painter mentioned here.

After meeting the French painter and receiving help from French nationals, Hong is redescribed: "*très intelligent, très énergique, Hong-Jong-Ou montre de telle facilités dans l'etude de français que, dans un mois, il saura certainement parler couramment notre langue*[86]." Musotte adds that aside from Hong's study of Chinese, Korean, and Japanese, he has learned nearly everything except for music, which is forbidden to members of his caste. He acknowledges that Hong is of noble background, writing that his father is a "*noble-lettré*." Musotte finishes his account of Hong Jong-u by questioning what purpose Hong might have in coming to France, and he answers his own question immediately thereafter by stating that no one knows. He wonders if Hong Jong-u might illuminate writers who study "*ce mystérieux pays de Corée*" or if he might work find work at the Musée Guimet.

This account of Hong Jong-u's person, his intentions, and his likelihood to survive rough-and-tumble Parisian life hinges on the idea that without French intervention, he would have had nary a chance at success. This is in line with the civilizing mission, which held that "inferior" peoples from Africa, the East, and "less advanced" locales were in need of Western intervention. In spite of this and the other inaccuracies in the text (*i.e.* China was not Korea's "enemy" and Hong Jong-u's father was indeed a member of a noble class but the name given for his class is a misnomer), the account is overall a positive one. Therefore, it functions a counterpoint for later articles, which were much more insulting and critical. By juxtaposing these earlier, positive accounts with the later, negative accounts, we are able to recognize the discursive shift that occurs with immediacy after Hong Jong-u assassinates Kim Ok-gyun.

This article was not the only positive one to appear in the French press prior to the assassination. To show that there was a positive consensus, I will discuss one more article

[86] My translation: "Very intelligent, very energetic, Hong-Jong-Ou displays such aptitude in studying French that, in a month, he will certainly know how to fluently speak our language."

dating from before the assassination before moving on to more negative portrayals that appeared afterward. “Les Étrangers en France: le Coréen Hong-Jong-Ou,” by F. Morans, was published in the *Journal des voyages* nine months after the article in *Le Figaro* first appeared. Like *Le Figaro*, the *Journal des voyages* (founded in 1877) was very widely read; it “dominated the market for adventure journals in the beginning of the Third Republic” and was available by subscription within and without France, in train stations, at kiosks, and in bookstores (Hahn 54-55). The journal demonstrated a preference for European encounters with “savages,” “bathed in sensationalism,” and “promoted an ideological perspective on the world where the French in particular and Europeans in general could propel themselves to the summit of social hierarchies in societies considered primitive” (Hahn 58). H. Hazel Hahn’s “Voyages extrêmes : les récits d’aventures en France à la fin du XIXe siècle” details how fact and fiction were seamlessly intertwined within the journal, making it unclear whether the information presented from page to page was based upon real events or was completely imaginary. As a result, readers may have doubted whether what they read about Hong Jong-u could be considered fact or fiction and his representation was inscribed in a perhaps fantastic, perhaps false narrative.

“Les Étrangers en France: le Coréen Hong-Jong-Ou” largely repeats what was said in the article in *Le Figaro.* Major differences lie in the way that Morans amalgamates Hong into the “race of true civilizers,” which was how the journal consistently depicted White European travelers, and in that while he expands on the positive points presented in the previous article, he also projects a shining picture of the future he expected Hong Jong-u to enjoy:

> *De tels hommes méritent l’estime de tous : ils sont de la race des vrais civilisateurs et de grands patriotes, et ils sont de taille à accomplir une oeuvre considérable, pour peu que les événements les favorisent. Nous*

> *ignorons ce que l'avenir réservé à Hong-Jong-u ; mais ce que nous savons bien, c'est que ce Coréen – aux moustaches pendantes, aux cheveux noirs logés dans la haute coiffure tressée de crins, au torse droit et mince enfermé dans une longue robe grise, aux yeux demi clos qui semblent vouloir contempler longuement toutes choses pour en garder l'image ineffaçable – ce Coréen pourra reporter [*sic*] dans sa patrie une riche moisson d'idées plus larges, de réformes, de progresses de toute sorte, et devenir l'un des champions les plus intrépides du parti liberal, le kaï-haïto* [Gaehwado], *cet adversaire intraitable du parti retrograde, le kaï-saïto,* [Gojedo] *qui combat l'introduction des coutumes européennes*[87]. (Morans 415)

Note that in this passage, even though Hong Jong-u's description still conforms to the practice of othering Koreans by remarking upon their "odd" clothing and hair, Morans also relates that as a "true civilizer" he is deserving of "everyone's esteem." Note also that Hong's eyes are specifically referenced as being in relation to his contemplative skills which are to be used to bring progress and reform to Korea; a later description of Hong's eyes moves in the opposite direction. Another additional point to be made about this estimation of Hong Jong-u's character and political alliances is that although the article states he would become a "champion" of the Gaehwado (개화도) Party, he does not do so, although his ideas are similar to theirs. One of the actual leaders of that party was Kim Ok-gyun- the very man that Hong Jong-u would later assassinate.

[87] My translation: "Such men deserve everyone's esteem: they are of the race of true civilizers and great patriots, and they are capable of accomplishing considerable work, provided that events are favorable for them. We do not know what the future holds for Hong-Jong-u; but what we do know is that this Korean - with hanging mustaches, black hair tucked into a high hairstyle braided with horsehair, a straight, slender torso enclosed in a long gray robe, with half-closed eyes that seem like they want to contemplate things for a long time in order to render them indelible- this Korean will be able to bring back a rich harvest of broader ideas, reforms, and progress of all kinds to his homeland. He will be able to become one of the most intrepid champions of the liberal party, the kaï-haïto [Gaehwado], the intractable adversary of the retrograde party, the kaï-saïto, [Gojedo], which is fighting against the introduction of European customs."

Since Kim Ok-gyun was reviled in Korea for these actions, his assassination was there received with jubilation while Hong Jong-u was celebrated as a hero. However, as I stated above, French newspapers tended to be politically charged and that which was written about Asia and/or Asians was often inscribed in larger discourses about Asia as a whole. I argue that by the time Hong Jong-u arrived in France with his noble self-professed goals of building a deeper friendship between it and his own country[88], a Western preference for Japan had already developed and intensified by the time that Hong assassinated Kim. Due to this preference, French and Western newspapers as a whole denigrated Hong Jong-u and considered his actions a form of antiquated barbarism which should have been expected from a weak and savage nation like Korea. It was not until Japan defeated Russia in the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905) that Japan became more heavily criticized with the formation of the new discourse about "The Yellow Peril," in which Japan was considered a threat to the West for the first time[89].

"UN ASSASSINAT POLITIQUE" jumps out at the reader from just right of center on the front page of the May 19th, 1894 issue of *Le Figaro.* Written by Jules Hoche and published nearly two full months after the assassination took place (March 28th, 1894), the article is a mesmerizing mélange of dramatic intrigue, fatalistic condemnation, and willful vindication for all those who aided Hong Jong-u while he was in France. Roughly equal in length as the first article about Hong Jong-u in *Le Figaro*, it would seem at first glance that equal measures of importance were ascribed to each article by the editorial staff. However,

[88] See Chapter Four for details about Hong's "self-professed" goals.

[89] About the "yellow peril," Muriel Détrie writes: "*…l'expression du fameux mythe du Péril jaune, ce scénario d'une alliance de tous les peuples jaunes contre les Occidentaux qui a envahi la presse et la littérature populaire de l'époque fin-de-siècle mais que rien dans la réalité des faits ne justifiait. Son émergence dans nos récits de voyage apparaît bien comme une réaction fantasmatique à la menace de délitement de la notion d'Extrême-Orient que l'observation de la modernisation du Japon avait fait naître*" (12). Many of the Francophone texts and illustrations that represent Korea make explicit reference to the "yellow peril" and would be very interesting to write about in that context alone.

in contrast to the dearth of information available to researchers about "Musotte," the named author of "LA CORÉE À PARIS," Jules Hoche is and already was well-known by the time he penned "UN ASSASSINAT POLITIQUE." This fact may reasonably lead one to conclude that the journal's editorial staff felt that the assassination merited reportage by a more well-known literary figure. Another explanation might simply be that the subject interested Hoche, who had written about "the East" prior to this article (although "the East" in question was limited to Egypt, Jordan, Syria, and other areas contained within the boundaries of what many modern geographers refer to as the "Near" or "Middle" East). His interest generally in that which lay outside the boundaries of Europe likely influenced his decision to write this article about Hong Jong-u.

Rather than reporting that Hong Jong-u had undertaken a commonplace political maneuver by assassinating Kim Ok-Gyun, Hoche begins his article by immediately invoking the idea of a fairy tale. "*Ceci semble un conte oriental"* constitutes his opening phrase. A "*récit, en général assez court, de faits imaginaires,"* with "*fable"* and "*fiction"* as its synonyms according to the LaRousse dictionary, the use of the word "*conte"* signals to the reader that that which they are about to read originates from the imagination. Moreover, because the noun is followed by the adjective "*oriental*," the "*tale"* is associated with all of the hallmark notions of nineteenth century Orientalism: strangeness, mystery, decay, infantilism, *etc.*

Next, (we are not even done with the first sentence since the clauses are separated by a semicolon), Hoche writes that "*dans la réalité, c'est un drame mystérieux qui a eu Paris pour génèse et Shanghaï pour dénouement*[90]*."* Signaling to his readers that what actually happened was a mysterious drama stretching from West to East across the globe, Hoche

[90] My translation: "In reality, this is a mysterious drama which had Paris for its genesis and Shanghai for its conclusion."

circumvents the more reasonable idea that the events were not in fact mysterious at all. This is not unlike claiming that Napoléon's defeat at Waterloo was mysterious; the event is well known to us, as the event of Kim Ok-Gyun's assassination was to Hoche. However, claiming that the event was mysterious allows for it to become a tidy addition to orientalism as "a created body of theory and practice, in which, for many generations, there has been a considerable material investment" (Said 6). Additionally, the article as a whole contributes to the dominant discourse about Korea that this dissertation does the work of identifying. I have argued that representations of Korea and of Koreans orbit around the idea that this nation and its people were weak, submissive, dirty, and were destined to fall in the face of some greater, more "civilized" nation, while a more honest and dignified retelling of the history would reveal that Koreans were actively undertaking the work of resistance against those who would undermine their autonomy.

Hoche continues his tale by writing that the details come to him via one of this "*confrères,"* who happened to find himself "mixed up" in it due to "one of those illogical collisions with random chance." This constitutes the first of Hoche's many explanations for how his compatriots became involved in Hong's life while he was in France. It seems likely that the compatriot here in question was Félix Régamey, undoubtedly the "famous painter" mentioned in Musotte's article above. In fact, Régamey himself wrote a similarly condemning account of Hong Jong-u after news of the assassination reached him. Published in *T'oung Pao* in 1894, Régamey does not miss his opportunity to compare Hong Jong-u with a vicious, captive tiger.

Next, Hoche writes of Hong Jong-u "withering" at the Paris Foreign Missions Society until Régamey helps him make professional and personal connections, "*caressant*

même l'idée d'en faire son suisse d'antichambre[91]*." "Mélancholique, jaune, et solennel, il eût facilement éconduit les gêneurs*[92]*,"* Hoche takes the liberty of adding. Notice that the color of Hong's skin is evoked and that his supposed solemnity and melancholy mark a large departure from the adjectives and nouns used to describe Hong in the earlier news articles that described him. Sad and unflattering descriptions of Hong abound throughout Hoche's narrative. Five of them even describe Hong as being Chinese rather than Korean, which as I explained in Chapter 1 was becoming synonymous with notions of decline, futility, and submission. Here are some examples: *"... le Chinois avait la nostalgie de l'Orient;" "Il ne tarda pas à se retrouver sur le pavé de Paris, très dur aux pauvres Chinois de son espèce;" "Il alla cacher sa détresse;" "Quelquefois, aux heures de tristesse;" "Ce malheureux;" and "Cet étranger païen*[93]*."* Each of these descriptions together paint a rather dreadful portrait of the time that Hong Jong-u spent in Paris in spite of the fact that Hoche also quotes a terse, colonial dispatch as having said that Hong Jong-u had recently spent two years in Paris, where he knew how to maintain good relations with others, and was found with very warm letters from a certain Father Hyacinth as well as letters of introduction for various consular authorities.

Essentially, the "*conte"* that Hoche spins for his readers while attempting to disguise it as "oriental drama" based entirely in factual information, is really more of an opinion piece in which Hong Jong-u is depicted as a helpless (yet somehow conniving), melancholic murderer, and in which Hoche's compatriots are absolved of their involvement with him.

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[91] My translation: "Even toying with the idea of making him into his concierge."

[92] My translation: "Melancholy, yellow, and solemn, he would have easily dismissed those who would be a nuisance."

[93] My translations: "The Chinese had nostalgia for the Orient; he did not hesitate to find himself once again on the hard pavement of Paris, very hard for poor Chinese of his kind; he went to hide his distress; Sometimes, in his moments of sadness; this poor soul; this strange pagan."

Previously in this chapter, I asked my readers to take note of Moran's description of Hong Jong-u's eyes being contemplative and indicative of the positive reforms and modern progress that Hong was expected to bring about in Korea. Hoche also finishes his article with a mention of "slanted eyes," but much like the rest of his article, the comments are not generous or kind.

Jules Hoche believed in the legitimacy of both "domestic physiology," the belief that the objects and belongings in a person's home were directly related to that person's personality and morals, and in physiognomy, roughly the belief that a person's physical appearance was directly related to his or her personality and capacity for moral good. This belief in physiognomy is echoed by the final paragraph of his article about Hong Jong-u and his assassination of Kim Ok-Gyun. He attests dramatically: "*Cette histoire évidemment comporte deux morales : l'une à l'usage du meurtrier : 'Tout vient à point à qui sait attendre.' L'autre, à l'usage de notre trop charitable confrère : 'se défier des âmes frustes, aux yeux obliques, et à la peau jaunâtre*[94]*."* Later in his career, Hoche would go on to write in reference to Japanese people that the face was "the preface of the soul" and that small, slanted eyes represented a "fetal," embryonic," "unfinished soul" (cited in Beillevaire 72). It is difficult to know for how long Hoche believed that Asian eyes were indicative of infantilism, but there is no question that the shape and appearance of not only Hong Jong-u's eyes, but the eyes of Northeast Asian peoples in general were repeatedly used as evidence either to respect them or to denigrate them, depending on the goals of the person making the connection.

W.G. Aston's criticism of this novel, "Le Bois sec Refleuri. Roman Coréen, traduit sur le texte original par Hong Tjong-ou," was published in 1895 in T'oung Pao, the world's

[94] My translation: "This story obviously contains two morals: one used by the murderer: 'Good things come to those who wait.' The other, used by our overly charitable compatriot: 'do not trust unsophisticated souls with slanted eyes and yellowed skin."

oldest international journal of sinology (founded in 1890). Its first issue was published in a mixture of French and English. Aston's article was written in English, but since the work he reviews was published in French, it is presumed that he was also francophone. Whatever his nationality or whatever languages he may have spoken, it is abundantly clear that he was no admirer of Hong Jong-u. He begins his article with a revelatory word choice in the first sentence, declaring that that *Le Bois sec refleuri* was "executed" by a "Corean who had spent some time in Paris" (526). He also writes that even though Kim Ok-gyun was "an unscrupulous conspirator on whose head was the blood of many men," "it was a treacherous assassination nevertheless" (526).

Writing that his article is concerned with Hong as writer and not as criminal, he states that in general, Eastern peoples are not very good interpreters of their own literatures for Western readers. This is an interesting statement to make when one considers the claim that Hong's works were indeed the first translations of Asian works of literature into a European language. They were likely preceded only by Voltaire's *l'Orphelin de la Chine,* based on Joseph Prémare's *L'Orphelin des Zhou* (Kang 149), so this general rule that Aston references seems rather contrived indeed. Aston does state that Hong may be an exception to his general rule, but only with the caveat that there are "things in his translation which are apt to excite suspicion" (526). As evidence, he cites moments in the narrative when kisses are shared, which he has "always looked upon as a European institution" (526). Although he posits that kissing is not "wholly unknown in the Far East," he does find that "it is not considered quite a decent subject to talk about, and is almost completely ignored in literature" and he is sure that references to kissing are not to be found in Hong's original. Hong, for his part, wrote in the preface that he is not ignorant of the fact that he was writing for French readers (30). Therefore, his recourse to "European institutions" could have been every bit as intentional as his choice to adapt *Printemps parfumé* and *Le Bois sec refleuri* as novels rather than trying to

introduce the French public to the *pansori* genre.

Aston is also very critical of what he notes as an absence of local color but finds that "the general outlines of the story are doubtless faithfully retained, and many of the incidents are genuinely and unmistakeably Corean" (527). He does not take pains to inform us as to what incidents are to be considered "Corean," so readers are obliged to make guesses at what he might mean. Perhaps he refers to the idea of self-sacrifice due to filial piety, or perhaps he refers to the pursuit of justice or the granting of clemency. Perhaps he refers instead to government corruption and wonton piracy; one simply cannot know.

The remainder of his critical article is spent in questioning the accuracy of the preface, which he writes "is a very poor performance" (527). It is quite possible that the history provided in the first half of the preface was written by J.H. Rosny rather than Hong Jong-u, and that Hong Jong-u wrote only the second portion, in which he appealed to his French readership for a better friendship between the two nations. It also remains possible, of course, that Hong wrote neither piece. Nevertheless, readers were made to believe that Hong was responsible for the entirety of the work, since his signature was placed at the end of it.

Aston questions Hong's methods and his knowledge of his own country's history, ending his article with the following:

> Judging from the spelling and other indications, it would appear to have been compiled, in part as least, from Japanese sources, and is in several particulars grossly inaccurate. It is not true that Genghis Khan did not molest Corea, and it is, to say the least, misleading to assert that China acknowledged the independence of Corea. The Treaty with the United States was signed in 1882, and not in 1886. Germany, France, England and Russia have not sent Ministers Plenipotentiary or Chargés d'affaires to Séoul, but only Consuls-General. M. Hong might have verified these points with very little trouble and

> his carelessness in such matters inclines us to suspect equal inaccuracy in places where we have no means of testing his statements. (527)

As a piece of literary analysis, it is a poor showing indeed given that aside from his vague comments about kissing and "European institutions," it does not do much more than seek to discern whether or not it was accurate or truthful to its original. Aston could have analyzed the work in terms of its structure, literary devices, stylistic choices, *etc.*, but he did not. Of course, we must grant him some leniency due to his place in history given that these analytical tools were not readily employed in the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, his review could have been kinder.

Benjamin Joinau's collection of news articles, included as a supplement to his publication *Printemps parfumé suivi du Bois sec refleuri*, features a review of *Le Bois sec refleuri* written by Felix Régamey with the following footnote:

> *Il est intéressant de noter le ton très critique, même agressif, de ce texte, qui contraste avec celui que Régamey avait publié en juin 1894 sous le titre « Un assassin politique » (que nous reproduisons dans « Le Printemps parfumé » publié à l'Atelier des Cahiers en 2016). Est-ce son amertume et sa déception à l'égard de l'attitude de Hong qui influencent ici son jugement ? Les critiques que Régamey a pu recevoir pour avoir soutenu Hong quand il était à Paris ? Il est étonnant de voir que le nom de Kim Ok-gyun, presque bien retranscrit dans le précédent article, est ici très fantaisiste…*[95] *(47)*

The article published in the collection we are here dealing with spells Kim's name as "Kim O Kim." I argue that it was not resentment and disappointment, but that Joinau's second guess

[95] My translation: "It is interesting to note the very critical, even aggressive tone, in this text, which contrasts with the one that Régamey published in June 1894 under the title, 'A Political Assassin,' (which we reproduce in '*Le Printemps parfumé*' published by l'Atelier des Cahiers in 2016). Is his bitterness and disappointment concerning Hong's attitude influencing his judgment here? Or is it the criticism that he could have received for supporting Hong while he was in Paris? It is shocking to see that Kim Ok-gyun's name, nearly well transcribed in the preceding article, is very fanciful in this one…"

was more correct: Régamey likely hoped to defend himself through publishing this review following the criticism that Hong continued to receive after the assassination. Likely, Régamey had also been the subject of criticism for having associated with Hong Jong-u and having helped him to network while in France.

The first article, the one that Joinau mentions in the footnote and which he had reproduced in his publication of *Le Printemps parfumé,* was first published in T'oung Pao, the year before Aston's review of *Le Bois sec refleuri* was published in the same journal. Régamey explains at the beginning of his article in *T'oung Pao* (which was also published in *Le Monde Illustré,* 23 June 1894) that he had originally collected the information present within it with the goal of attracting the interest of certain highly-ranked people in government interested in Hong's fate (in order to help him) but that, publishing it now, it would serve as justification for the relationship that he had maintained with Hong Jong-u.

Over the course of a dozen pages (five columns spread across two pages in the version printed in *Le Monde Illustré*), Régamey spares little detail and begins the text by describing Hong the first time he met him as being akin to a tiger captured in a cage[96], spreading fear around him. Régamey also writes that a Japanese person served as interpreter, with Hong not knowing a word of French—this would seem to corroborate the claim that Hong's literary works were produced with a Japanese-speaking intermediary. Régamey also acknowledges that the same roof had even sheltered Régamey and Hong (260) and that he had often been reproached for his naïveté in believing for even a second that Hong could have one day been useful to France.

It is therefore fair to say that the *T'oung Pao* article was not wholly free of criticism

[96] See Judith L. Goldstein's "Realism without a Human Face" for more about nineteenth-century representations of people as animals. She writes: "Unflattering animal imagery was used persistently over the course of the nineteenth century. Animality meant political illegitimacy; to picture individuals as animals was to judge them unfit to rule," which I find to mean as well that when members of an entire nation are consistently zoomorphized, they are judged unfit to rule over themselves as a nation (73).

or negativity regarding the way that Régamey used it to criticize Hong, but, at the end of the article, he includes the latest news regarding what had become of Hong after the assassination:

> *Une autre dépêche dit que le jour de l'exécution posthume, le roi a donné un grand banquet aux ministres étrangers, comme pour célébrer d'une façon détournée l'évènement du jour. On ne sait pas encore en quoi consistera la récompense qui sera accordée au meurtrier de Kim-ok-kuin !! Il va bien, mon ami Hong Tjyong-ou !*[97] (271)

Note, of course, that Régamey there refers to Hong as his friend. Contrast the ending of this article to the ending of the review that he published in December of the following year in *La Plume*:

> *Et que dire de la préface, consacrée à l'histoire de la Corée, depuis les temps les plus reculés jusqu'à nos jours ? Galimatias triple, où les noms propres de gens et de lieux, s'entrechoquent fastidieusement, et qui se termine par cette outrecuidante pensée :*
> *« Pour ma part, je m'estimerais le plus heureux des hommes, si j'avais pu contribuer en quelque mesure au rapprochement de deux pays (France-Corée) qui ne pourraient que gagner à se connaître réciproquement.* »
> *Ce « réciproquement » quand on sait quel répugnant cloaque est la Corée, c'est une perle*[98]. (50 cited in Joinau)

[97] My translation: "Another dispatch says that on the day of the posthumous execution, the king gave a great banquet to the foreign ministers, as if to celebrate the day's event in a roundabout way. It is not yet known what the reward that will be given to the murderer of Kim-ok-kuin will consist of!! He is well, my friend Hong Tjyong-ou!"

[98] My translation: "And what about the preface, devoted to the history of Korea from the earliest times to the present day? Total gibberish in which the proper names of people and places tediously collide, and which ends with this presumptuous thought:
"As for me, I will consider myself among the happiest of men if I am able to contribute in some way to the union of two countries which can do nothing but gain from getting to know each other [reciprocally]."

Depicting Hong Jong-u as being self-interested, using a word which can be used to equate Korea to a literal orifice from which urine and excrement spring, and describing the novel as hare-brained and idiotic, this second article does indeed mark a sharp contrast from the first.

I posit that given the dominant discourse's power at this point and ensuing social pressure to conform, Régamey likely saw no other option than to concede to his peers. The idea that Korea was submissive, weak, and destined to fall to the hands of a more powerful nation was so deeply entrenched in French views on the country that when Hong Jong-u assassinated his compatriot in a bid to save it from Japanese aspersions, Hong acted in a contrarian way and therefore could not have avoided being depicted as a violent, blood-thirsty traitor to his own people. Régamey, who at first published an explanation for Hong's actions, and who at first was glad that Hong seemed poised to avoid negative repercussions, later turned face and produced what is quite possibly the single most scathingly critical review of his work ever to have been written.

Indeed, Régamey writes an interesting passage in the article in *T'oung Pao* in which we can witness how Régamey was then living with one foot in the dominant discourse and the other in the counter-discourse. As has been attested previously in this dissertation, the dominant and counter-discourses of submission and resistance formed an unstable binary opposition that was frequently expressed simultaneously within a single work as its author wrestled with them. Observe, *chez* Régamey:

> *Il y a dans l'esprit de Hong Tjyong-ou un mélange bizarre d'indépendance – qu'attestent ses paroles – et de servilité enfantine. C'est ainsi qu'un prenant maintes précautions, il me communique deux photographies, l'une du roi son maître, l'autre du grand-père du roi. L'usage, qu'il se garde bien d'enfreindre, défend absolument de prononcer les noms de ces hauts*

This "reciprocally" when you know what a repugnant cloaca [or cesspool] Korea is, it's a pearl."

> *personnages, de sorte qu'il m'est impossible d'en mettre un sous ces images. Il me recommande de n'en faire part à personne ; je ne les lui rends pas, cependant, sans en avoir fait des croquis assez exacts. Ce sont ces croquis qui sont reproduits ici*[99]. (267).

Where Régamey identifies infantile servility, he could have seen Hong's respect for the social hierarchy that Confucianism and neo-Confucianism advocated for within Korean society at that time. Meanwhile, he does at least acknowledge Hong's independence, although he does not seem to have considered the idea that independence for Hong could have included subscription to a social hierarchy within Korean culture.

2.4 Conclusion

The representational shift that Hong Jong-u experienced after his assassination of Kim Ok-Gyun is related to the unstable binary of submission/resistance in that it was seen as perfectly fine for Hong Jong-u to seek French inspiration for bringing democratic ideas and practices home to Korea but that it was unacceptable for him to resist Japanese influence and/or to take down his political rivals by force. Suddenly, after Hong Jong-u commits actions considered unsavory by those who had already begun to develop a preference for Japanese modernization and "progress," he is considered barbaric, conniving, and melancholic.

Effective and violent resistance to outside forces attempting to subvert and undermine Korean autonomy and independence was nearly always silenced or condemned by those outside of Korea while adherence to the civilizing mission was nearly always

[99] My translation: "In Hong Tjyong-ou's spirit, there is a bizarre mixture of independence- as evidenced by his words- and childish servility. Thus, taking many precautions, he sent me two photographs, one of the king his master, the other of the king's grandfather. Custom, which he is careful not to infringe, absolutely forbids pronouncing the names of these high personages, to such a degree that it is impossible for me to put one of their names under these images. He advises me not to tell anyone about it; nevertheless, I am not returning them to whim without having first made fairly exact sketches of them. These sketches are reproduced here."

celebrated, a practice that we see repeated in the press through its representation of Hong Jong-u. An interesting counterpart to Hong Jong-u is to be found in Chen Jitong, a Chinese national who lived in Paris around the same time as Hong Jong-u and who also produced works of literature but who, in contrast to Hong, was never involved in political turmoil with Korea. He was beloved by those who wrote about and painted him, and he experienced no sudden negative changes to his public image.

Hong Jong-u was recently included as a fairly important character in *The Court Dancer: A Novel*. Published in 2018 by Kyung-Sook Shin, the novel tells the story of Yi-Jin, royal consort to the Korean king (later emperor), who marries a French diplomat and is taken by him to Paris, where she experiences remarkable difficulties in adjusting to European life. It is there that she encounters Hong Jong-u, who appears to be every bit as difficult and melancholic as Jules Hoche portrayed him. In the fourth chapter of this dissertation, I will cast a net forward into the future, by asking how nineteenth century representations of the contemporary present have influenced the current moment and by analyzing the ways that nineteenth century novels envisioned the future, including the works produced by Hong Jong-u.

In my next chapter, I posit that members of the Korean government had become acutely aware of the diverse ways that nations were being built as imagined communities in the West in the way that Benedict Anderson describes it. As such, the importance of the press, photography, monuments, and World's Fairs as iconography for an independent nation became an essential focus of the Korean government and allowed it to engage in resistant behaviors in a less tumultuous way than the behaviors of Hong Jong-u had been

CHAPTER 3

The Korean Pavilion at the Paris *Exposition universelle* (1900)

The years 1897-1910 are representative of the some of the most overt, sustained expressions of Korean resistance against external attempts to take control of it. This chapter will begin with a brief discussion of the Treaty of Shimonoseki, noteworthy for the purposes of this dissertation project because it forced China to renounce any claims it had to Korea, thereby making the latter a fully independent nation. Because of this treaty, it was possible for the Korean Empire (대한제국) to be proclaimed in 1897, and because the Korean Empire (대한제국) endeavored to join the ranks of other nineteenth-century emerging nation states, it too engaged in certain semiotic behaviors that were seen in Japan during the Meiji Restoration and broadly across the West as new forms of nationalism spread across the globe in the process described by Benedict Anderson in *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*[100].

In advancing the idea that the Korean Empire (대한제국) shifted in its semiotic practices by engaging in new behaviors specifically intended to place it on equal footing with other independent nations, I will discuss the ways that imperial photography and architecture in particular were utilized to fit that agenda. Following this, I will move on to the main focus of this chapter: Korea's participation in the 1900 World's Fair (or *Exposition universelle)* in Paris and its function as discursive event. I will then scrutinize the planning, architecture, transnational politics, and representation of the Korean pavilion in French accounts. In doing so, I will demonstrate how the pavilion itself and the objects displayed within it stood as a

[100] See Chapter Two, section Three of this dissertation for a discussion of how this process was deployed in newspapers; this chapter expands on the concept by focusing on the process' deployment in additional forms of media.

physically symbolic, material representation of a co-constructive process of identity formation laden with clear markers of Korean resistance against outside attempts at abrogating its autonomy- markers of resistance that are concurrently manifest in photography and architecture. By way of conclusion, I will reconsider how these overt expressions of resistance work against the unstable binary construction of the submissive/resistant discourse/counter-discourse that constitutes the central focus of this dissertation.

3.1 The Treaty of Shimonoseki

There are some who might argue that the severing of Korea's complicated tributary relationship with China, described in Chapter Two, came about with the signing of the Ganghwa Treaty in 1876 because it ostensibly made Korea independent. However, at that point in time, "China showed itself to be much less willing to tolerate Korean sovereignty in fact" (Kane 44) and it was not until China's defeat in the First Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895) and the subsequent signing of the Treaty of Shimonoseki that Korea experienced "a new, if short-lived, era of recognized independence unencumbered by Chinese aspersions or meddling" (*ibid.,* 44). Indeed, the very first clause of this treaty ended China's tributary ties with Korea, which can be considered "the objective pursued by Japan for many years" (Schmid 27) because it was a necessary step in annexing and colonizing Korea later on. Another, more immediate result of the Treaty of Shimonoseki was that Korea was able to declare itself an empire in 1897, "with all the symbolic independence such an act connoted in Asia" (Kane 42).

Thus, with the end of Korea's tributary ties and the decentering[101] of the Middle Kingdom came a renewed desire for the creation of a national identity replete with the signs and

[101] See Chapter 1 for more about "decentering the Middle Kingdom."

symbols that were to represent it not only for its citizens but also for those outside of the Empire who were to come into contact with or have any sort of knowledge of it. I argue that the Korean Empire's means of creating a national identity was tripartite in that it 1) immediately began to shed its semiotic ties to China, 2) considered and selectively modeled itself after the Meiji Restoration's model of Westernization, and 3) allowed Western nations to help it to represent itself more effectively for a global audience. In *Korea Between Empires, 1895-1919,* André Schmid relates how, in contrast with the usual development of hybrid cultures, Korean nationalists sought to disentangle the already extant hybridization with Chinese culture, calling into question "the full range of practices, texts, and customs that for centuries had been shared by Koreans as part of their participation in the transnational Confucian realm" (11). He adds that following the signing of the Treaty of Shimonoseki, the seepage of Chinese culture into Korea was viewed as "a major cause for national weakness and inimical to their [the nationalists'] desires for an independent nation (11).

It was in this context of shedding its semiotic ties with China while simultaneously attempting to stave off Japan's and other foreign nations' efforts to usurp it that the Korean Empire engaged in spectacular representation through photography and architecture. Both of these mediums are integral to my analysis of the Korean Empire's pavilion at the 1900 *Exposition universelle*, so I will take a moment to discuss each in turn. Ultimately, we will find that this period was strongly marked by symbolic actions of imperial independence that were largely ignored by a francophone audience when they were not otherwise being wholeheartedly countered.

3.2 Imperial Korean Photography

King Gojong (Emperor Gojong after the declaration of the Korean Empire, 대한제국)

reigned from 1863 until his forced abdication in 1907. In “King Gojong’s Portrait and the Advent of Photography in Korea,” Kwon Heangga writes photographs of him “frequently appeared in various Western and Japanese print media, travel brochures, and geographical texts” (59). Sources in French which feature his photograph and/or royal portrait include but are not limited to the news publications *Le Tour du Monde* and *La Vie Illustrée* (*ibid.,* 66), and the travel memoir, *En Corée,* written by Claire Vautier and Hippolyte Frandin. Of all of his photographs, the earliest surviving photograph of King Gojong was taken by Percival Lowell, an American diplomat, in 1884 (*ibid., 60*). Heangga also writes that “Lowell’s photos mark the first time that a Joseon monarch attempted to cultivate an image specifically for diplomatic purposes, rather than traditional ritualistic purposes” (61). At this point in time, King Gojong was certainly aware that portraits of heads of state in other nations were commonly being distributed and exchanged “as symbols of national sovereignty and power” (*ibid.,* 60). By engaging in this particular form of visual discourse, we can ascertain that King Gojong hoped to use his image as a means of putting himself on equal footing with other heads of state and reaffirming his claim to his country’s sovereignty in a tacitly modern way.

Figure 3.1: Percival Lowell, "His Majesty the King of Korea." 1884, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. "King Gojong's Portrait and the Advent of Photography in Korea," *Portraits of the Joseon Dynasty, Journal of Korean Art & Archaeology*, vol. 5, 2011, p. 58.

Not only did Gojong allow himself to be photographed by foreigners, but he did so "enthusiastically" and saw it as "part of his diplomatic duties to have his photograph taken by foreigners," (Isabella Bird, cited in Kwon 61). However, Kwon suggests that Gojong failed in having himself portrayed in an adequately positive nature, also writing that he "was typically shown in traditional gowns, symbolizing an unsophisticated, backward nation that needed to be civilized" (59). I argue that this interpretation was unintended, especially given that:

> …they were not simply random snapshots; in fact, they were taken under strict conditions with the king's permission. Therefore, before these pictures were ever seen by outsiders, the images were carefully composed, with the king's

> background, attire, and pose all painstakingly selected for foreign consumption. (*ibid.,* 59)

These strict parameters were a heritage of conventions for royal portraiture throughout the centuries-old Joseon Kingdom (대조선국), where the portraits themselves "symbolically projected the legitimacy of the crown" and "served as objects of worship in state rituals" (*ibid.,* 59). The images were not half-hearted, happenstance clichés of a monarch stuck in the past, but rather they were carefully crafted, spectacular representations of a dignified ruler. Although these images may have inadvertently reinforced the idea that Korea was antiquated and stagnant, new royal portraiture and photography was *intended* to portray Korea as a modern nation.

In spite of Percival Lowell's photograph being reproduced at least once to appear in more than one Western publication, the photograph of Gojong that was most frequently disseminated abroad was a strikingly different image, entitled *The King and Crown Prince of Korea* (Kwon 64).

Figure 3.2: *The King and the Crown Prince of Korea* (postcard), Karl Lewis, Yokohama, Japan. Estimated 1900. "King Gojong's Portrait and the Advent of Photography in Korea," *Portraits of the Joseon Dynasty, Journal of Korean Art & Archaeology,* vol. 5, 2011, p.64.

It was published by an American photographer named Karl Lewis. The photograph shows the monarch standing tall in full Western-style military dress with the crown prince at his side. Through this choice in attire, Gojong's representation resists Chinese hegemony over Korea by

"decentering it" with a symbolic use of the color gold[102]. It also directly resists the idea that the Korean Empire (대한제국) was antiquated; while it was common for western heads of state to be photographed standing upright in full military dress, it had not previously been common for Korean heads of state to do so. This is an entirely novel, groundbreaking means of depicting Korea's royalty. For instance, the first time that a Korean ruler was ever depicted standing at all was in Hubert Vos' 1899 oil painting of Emperor Gojong. It was shown at the 1900 *Exposition universelle* in the "types of races" exhibit for ethnographic purposes. The generic lines between painting and photography were amorphous; photography was picking up on and disseminating a new and radical way of representing power in the context of imperial Korean imagery[103].

[102] Typically, Gojong was depicted in his imperial robes (Kwon 59). He was the first Korean monarch in history to wear the color gold, which had previously been reserved for the Chinese emperor alone (Geum 160, cited in Kim Seok-hee 27).

[103] It is difficult and inadvisable to separate photography from painting in a study such as the present dissertation. Paintings were often produced from photographic reference materials, and photographs of paintings were sometimes printed and reproduced as a pure photograph might have been. An example of this inextricability can be found in Joseph de la Nézière's "Le Souverain du pays du 'matin calme'(Portait officiel)," which appeared first as an illustration in *L'Extrême-orient en images : Sibérie, Chine, Corée, Japon*" with an accompanying account of his meeting Emperor Gojong. The same image later appeared as *a photograph of the painting* in *La Vie Illustrée*. Whereas the painting was an impressive mosaic of deep and silky meaningful shades of gold, the resulting photograph lacks some of the piece's original muster and naturally loses the symbolism tied to the use of the color gold. In "Real Fashion: Clothes Unmake the Working Woman," Anne Higonnet discusses the need for visual histories of this kind: "Painting, sculpture, and architecture have histories, albeit histories that are limited by unquestioning acceptance of those media's boundaries. Some other media, notably photographs and prints with artistic intentions, have received the same treatment in subordinate versions. Historians of painting have long been engaged in studying popular imagery as a function of issues pertinent to painting. We have, however, very few historical studies of reciprocal relationships among image types. Which is to say that we have no clear or comprehensive histories of visual culture, let alone histories which mesh visual culture with social and literary history" (140). Two other ways in which photography and painting were blurred during the nineteenth century lie in the twin facts that before the Lumière brothers patented the autochrome technique in 1903, there was an assumption that photography would eventually be colored, and by 1841, photographers had begun coloring photographs by hand (Lehmann 81), turning them into objects that can be considered part-photograph, part-painting. Taking hand-coloring to the extreme, by the late nineteenth-century, the celebrated photographer and studio owner Raimund Von Stillfried began producing something called "photocrayons," or "overpainted albumen prints," in which "photographic traits percolate through the painted surfaces to form a visual dialectic between the two media" (Gartlan 265) producing art that is neither photograph nor painting or watercolor, but something in between or beyond both. Finally, Ali Behdad notes in "The Orientalist Photograph" that "The relation between Orientalist painting and photography is not that of a linear influence but of a circular reciprocity" and "The complicity between Orientalist painting and photography at once complicates notions of artistic influence, originality, and origin, compelling us to consider Orientalist representation as a network of artistic and discursive relations," (16-17).

Figure 3.3: Hubert Vos. “Portrait of Emperor Gojong.” 1899, permanently consigned to National Museum of Contemporary Art, Korea. “King Gojong’s Portrait and the Advent of Photography in Korea,” *Portraits of the Joseon Dynasty, Journal of Korean Art & Archaeology*, vol. 5, 2011, p. 66.

Regarding the idea that Gojong did not attempt to strengthen his dominion by producing or distributing any "official" portraits of himself, I refer to Kwon's own recognition of certain limiting factors: "…some basic conditions limited the production and distribution of royal portraits in Korea, such as the lack of technical expertise, the substandard photographic technology, and the underdeveloped mass media" (64). In contrast, Kwon also states earlier in the same article that "photography was being actively sponsored by the Joseon government as part of their efforts to welcome modern Western technology[104]" (60). There is a distinction to be made between not making any attempt at producing his own photographic portraits and being limited in the endeavor. We can be sure that the emperor and his government were deeply invested in the way that Gojong's image was circulated. Rather than having his image on the country's currency, they were "instead decorated with other symbols of the Great Han Empire [대한제국], such as the eagle, pear blossom, and Namdaemun Gate [남대문]" because "the Joseon people thought it disrespectful to use the monarch's image on everyday items like money and stamps, which were easily dirtied from being passed back and forth" (*ibid.,* 65).

Akin to the way that the absence of the queen in imperial photographic portraiture can be interpreted positively not as proof of an unwillingness or inability to engage in Western practices of nation-building but rather as an indication that the Empire was perfectly willing to take part in those practices *on its own terms*, the absence of official photographic portraits produced and disseminated by the Korean Empire (대한제국) itself may very well reflect a conscious choice. This is even more clear when juxtaposed with the aforementioned events specifically organized to produce official painted portraits of the emperor in celebration of his

[104] Here she cites Yun Chiho, a contemporary of the emperor, a controversial figure, and one of Vanderbilt's first international students.

fortieth year of reign. It is possible that Gojong and his government simply had better access to and means for producing painted images given the limitations present in contemporary Korea for producing official photographs. Moreover, the Empire was clearly invested in controlling the way Gojong's image circulated within Korea's national boundaries: in 1901, printing the emperor's image was officially prohibited so that it could not be "recklessly merchandized by the public" (Kwon 67).

I will now offer my own analysis of the image, revealing the nuanced manner by which it expresses the counter-discourse of resistance. A crucial similarity to be found between dominant and counter-discourses is in their manner of expression: "for every level at which the discourse of power determines dominant forms of speech and thinking, counter-dominant strains challenge and subvert the appearance of inevitability which is ideology's primary mechanism for sustaining its own self-reproduction," (Terdiman 39), which means that often, the counter-discourse is obliged to employ the language of the dominant discourse in order to express itself (*ibid.,* 62)[105]. In this case, the language of the dominant discourse is imperial photography, and we must take care to notice exactly how the imperial government is expressing itself in that language.

Two facts are now abundantly clear: 1) Gojong and his court were aware that Western and "modern" heads of state were exchanging their photographs with each other, thereby creating a singular form of dialogue in which both the kingdom and the empire were eager to take part, and 2) the limitations in Korean photography would have been significant barriers to

[105] Terdiman acknowledges other scholars whose work has dealt with this same idea, referencing Pierre Bourdieu's "establishment language," Michel de Certeau's "*langue obligatoire*," and Julia Kristeva's "*langue normalisé*," thereby indicating a scholarly consensus (62-63).

producing their own photographic portraits. It was in part because of the second fact that foreign photographers were permitted to capture the image of Gojong and his son. Moreover, I would like to raise the possibility that this representative process was *preferred* because foreigners would have been considered adept at producing the sort of photographic representation that would be most befitting the head of state of a modern nation, one which would have best represented Joseon and the Korean Empire (대한제국) in a positive manner for an international audience. Therefore, I argue that it is quite possible that this choice in representation is one of voluntary delegation and not one of lazy or wonton submission to the process of portraiture.

Karl Lewis' famous photograph was published in Yokohama, Japan. There appears to be a dearth of information readily available about Karl Lewis, but this paucity is juxtaposed by an impressive expanse of information about Yokohama photography. At the time that Lewis captured this image, which was estimated to be 1900, Yokohama was already globally renowned for its photographic industry. In a way, Yokohama was to photographers as Paris has been to poets and playwrights or as Hollywood has been to aspiring actors. Gojong and his son were extremely likely to have known that having their photograph either taken in Yokohama or taken by a photographer who was based out of Yokohama was a means of guaranteeing that the image would be high-quality and likely to be disseminated.

In particular, hand-colored photographs "which had first seen the light in Yokohama at the beginning of the Meiji period (1868-1912) and were initially manufactured by European photographers in collaboration with Japanese colorists" were "extremely popular among tourists and sojourners" (Lehmann). Although Kwon does not provide much information about Lewis' image, I believe it to be one of these popular images hand-colored by Japanese colorists.

In “The Transparency of Color: Aesthetics, Materials, and Practices of Hand Coloring Photographs between Rochester and Yokohama,” Lehmann explains that Western approaches to photo-coloring differed from Japanese coloring craft in one particular aspect: “Western photo-coloring manuals would advise the equal coloring of all picture elements, giving directions on how to color the face, hands, and hair and then moving on to clothing, landscape, and other requisites” but in contrast, “the subtle, pleasing aesthetic of Japanese hand-colored photographs is due to a selective form of coloring that highlights some picture elements and leaves out others” (90).

Notice that in the Lewis photograph of Gojong and his son, the colors red, yellow, and blue make a strong appearance but the faces of the central figures and the stairs in front of which they stand remain in black and white, giving sufficient evidence to conclude that the image was most likely hand-colored by a Japanese colorist. Further driving this conclusion home, Japanese photo colorists tended to leave uncolored objects whose colors could be guessed or assumed through “memory color” (*e.g.* we can reasonably assume that viewers will know that the sky in a photographic scene is blue) untouched (*ibid.,* 91*)*. In Lewis’ photograph, the faces of both figures are untouched, but the color yellow (in place of gold) is prominent. Due to Korea’s long-standing relationships with Japan and China, which fly directly in the face of some popular nineteenth-century assertions that the country was completely closed-off to all outside nations, using yellow in this context would have been novel for Korean and other Northeast Asian audiences.

Rarely were photographs from this time period ever staged, shot, developed, printed, captioned, bound, and sold by the same individual. The photographic industry- especially in Yokohoma during the Meiji Period- was a transnational endeavor involving individuals from a

wide array of nationalities and social backgrounds, so allowing foreigners to take over for the entirety of the process was not an outlandish concept for the Korean government at that time[106]. An important aspect of this photograph in particular is that it breaks with conventions for "type" photography and illustration, which were then ubiquitous. Voracious nineteenth-century desires for exoticism, coupled with ardent beliefs in physiognomy resulted in photographers and ethnographers working to create comprehensive catalogues of what they considered to be emblematic of distinct differences between diverse human races[107]. This lead to an incredible abundance of photographs of the peoples of Northeast Asia being produced in that century. Many of these photographs were used as evidence to support ideas about "the Korean race," such as those maintaining that Koreans constituted the lost tribe of Israel, that they were descended from Japanese peoples and were inferior to them, that they were descended from Chinese peoples, pre-dated them, or that they were even descended from or pre-dated Indian peoples[108]. Regardless of the theory the ethnographer in question hoped to defend with this

[106] Ann-Sophie Lehmann acknowledges collaboration between Japanese and European photographers and colorists in "The Transparency of Color: Aesthetics, Materials, and Practices of Hand Coloring Photographs between Rochester and Yokohama" (88); Luke Gartlan, in *A Career of Japan*, recognizes the roles played by Japanese assistants and hand-colorists, some of whom would go on to build their own photo studios, (6, 56, 110); Gartlan also records in the same book that "Contrary to conventional histories that privilege the individual photographer, several personnel contributed to the studio process in the production of a photograph for sale. The painting of backdrops, the arrangement of props, the preparation of the negative, and the hand coloring of the print involved numerous individuals beyond the photographer responsible for exposing the glass plate," all tasks that could have belonged to individuals whose nationalities were diverse, (71). See also: Eleanor M. Hight's "The Many Lives of Beato's Beauties," in which she writes about Félice Beato, who I posit produced the first photographs of Korean individuals for a Western audience: "Through his successful photography business, his training of Japanese apprentices, and the publication of his photographs, Beato in effect influenced a whole school of photography in Yokohama. By the 1870s Beato had a staff of eight Japanese assistants – four photographers and four to hand-color the prints- as well as an American assistant, H. Woolett" (138).

[107] See Ali Behdad and Luke Gartlan's introduction to *Photography's Orientalism*, (2-3); Ayshe Erdogdu's "Picturing Alterity," (107, 110-11); Eleanor M. Hight and Gary D. Samson's introduction to *Colonialist Photography: Imag(in)ing Race and Place*, (2-3).

[108] For Koreans as members of the "lost tribe," see Frédéric Boulesteix, *D'un Orient autrement extrême*, who cites a passage from George Ducrocq's *Pauvre et douce Corée*, in which it is said that the clothing that Korean people were wearing dated to the "exodus of the Hebrews after the destruction of Salomon," that like "les Hébreux," the Korean

"evidence," standards for type illustrations and photography developed and were widely shared. This imperial photograph does not conform to those standards.

In Yokohama, one of the most distinguished photographers who used his work for ethnographic purposes and whose photographs were used for the same reason by European contemporaries was Baron Raimund von Stillfried. A signature aspect of his work was his sitters' averted gazes. In directing his subjects to look away from the lens, he broke away from the standards taught to him by his predecessor, Félice Beato. The averted gaze became a hallmark of Yokohama photography, Western travel photography, and ethnographic photography and illustrations around the world throughout the course of the nineteenth century.

Consider these images, which must figure among the earliest images ever taken of Korean individuals by Westerners. These images all come from a photo album published by Baron Raimund von Stillfried and purchased by Prince Roland Bonaparte, a French ethnographer who likely selected each image himself[109]. Due to the fact that these images were

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people were also nomads and farmers, that there was no other way to explain why Korean women were pretending to wear veils that were actually "Jewish coats," further adding that ethnographers and orientalists believe this "probable and logical" hypothesis that after their slow emigration across the high plains and steppes of Central Asia, they surely had to stop somewhere. Boulesteix writes that this idea was commonly shared (327-328). The idea was repeated as late as 1928 in Robert Chauvelot's *Visions d'Extrême-orient : Corée, Chine, Indochine, Siam, Birmanie* (cited in Boulesteix 328). Other discussions about the supposed origin of the "Korean race" and its manipulation can be found in (but are not limited to): Sunglim Kim's "Is Seeing Believing? A Critical Analysis of Japanese Colonial Photographs of Korea" (725-731); Claude de Rarécourt de la Vallée de Pimodan's *Promenades en Extrême-Orient* (333); Léopold de Saussure's "Notes sur la Corée" (41-50); Claire Vautier and Hyppolite Frandin's *En Corée* (67-69); Henri Zuber's "Une Expédition en Corée" (20-23).

[109] About the studio which published these photographs: "A potential customer of the studio could either purchase a ready prepared album or select photographs for inclusion in their own compilation according to their individual preferences. As a result of this flexible sales policy, each album reflects the customer's personal interests and experiences in Japan. Far from coincidentally, several albums begin with a general view of Yokohama- the main port of entry for Westerners to Japan- but thereafter the selection, sequence, and number of photographs vary according to the customer's personal experiences and budget," (Gartlan 56). Gartlan's book makes no mention of Japanese photo albums containing images of Koreans, so it would appear likely that the buyer in this case made a point to request those images. This buyer in particular appeared to have an interest in Korea given that he was later given the gift of an album of photographs from the Korean pavilion at the World's Fair (https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b53194870k/f3).

captured in 1871 during a military attack by the United States of America, at which Félice Beato was present, I believe they were taken by him rather than by Stillfried[110]. Many of the images that Stillfried published and sold from his studios in Yokohama came from negatives that he purchased from Beato when he took over Beato's existing business[111], so this conclusion is highly probable. Of the fifteen men photographed in this album, only two have their heads turned to the side, and they happen to be seated in a group with four other men who look directly at the camera. These qualities place the photographs in direct opposition with the qualities that had become standardized by Stillfried in his photographic production, as I will explain below.

[110] Evidence to support the idea that Beato, rather than Stillfried is responsible for these particular images: Luke Gartlan, in *A Career of Japan*, details aesthetic differences between the two photographers' production, namely in that Beato allows his subjects to meet the viewers'gaze while Stillfried restricts it when not removing them from the scene, pp. 45-46 and 176. It is also clear that Beato had an interest in documenting war and that he had gone to Korea, whereas neither attestation appears to be true about Stillfried: Gartlan writes that Beato went to Korea with a United States punitive expedition in 1871 (49), citing Stephen White, "Felix Beato and the First Korean War, 1871." After the Second Opium War in 1860, Beato became the first known photographer to document a military campaign (Hight, 137, citing David Harris, *Of Battle and Beauty*).

[111] Stillfried acquired Beato's studio and negatives on January 23, 1877 (Gartlan 49, citing Stephen White, "Felix Beato and the First Korean War, 1871").

Figure 3.4: Untitled, likely by Beato, Felice. Photograph in *Japonais*. Stillfried & Andersen, 1877-1878.

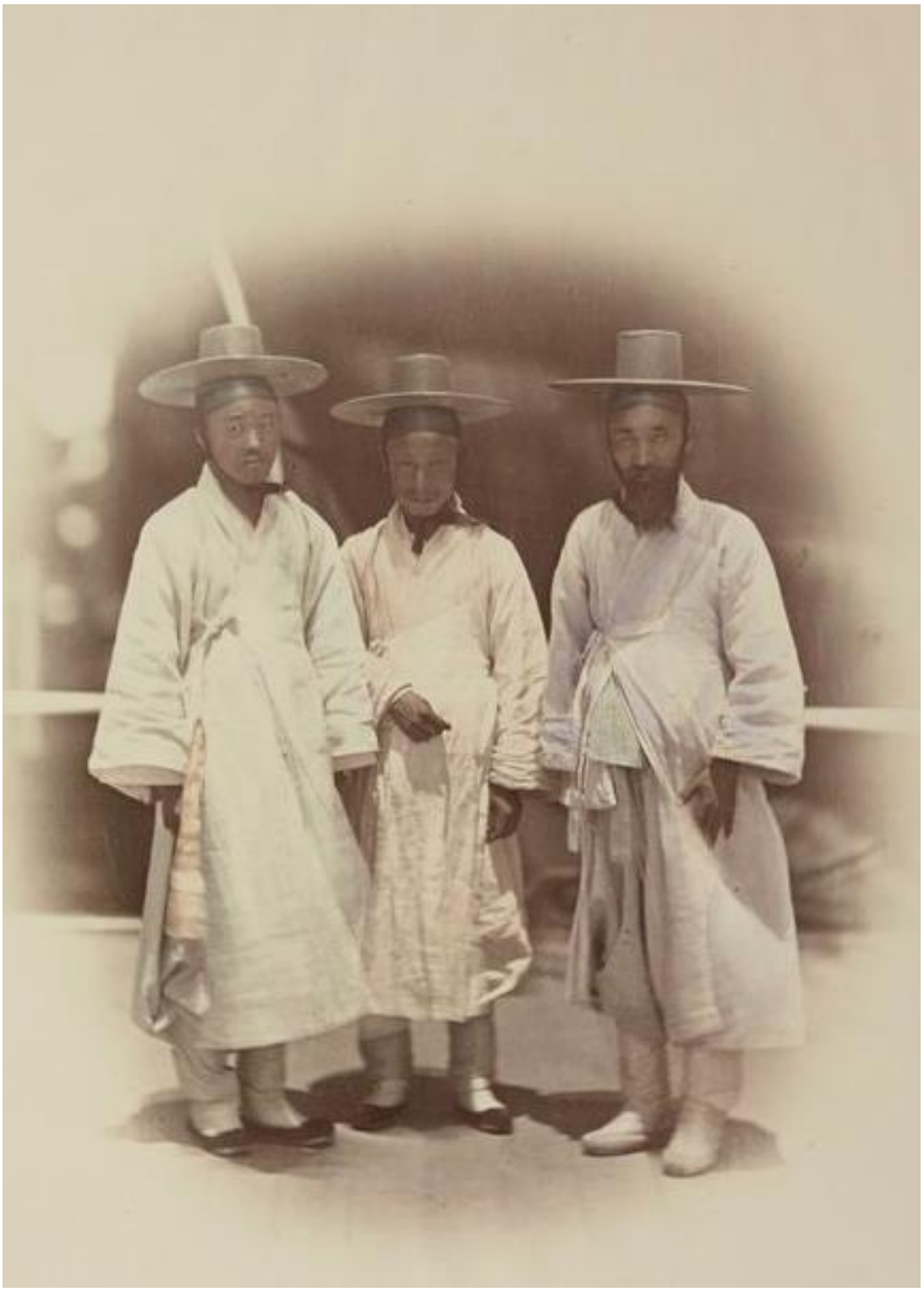

Figure 3.5: Untitled, likely by Beato, Felice. Photograph in *Japonais*. Stillfried & Andersen, 1877-1878.

In direct contrast, consider the gazes one is faced with when viewing a photograph produced by Stillfried:

Figure 3.6: Raimund Von Stillfried, "Two Officers." *Views and Costumes of Japan*, La Trobe Picture Collection, c. 1876. *A Career of Japan: Baron Raimund von Stillfried and Early Yokohoma Photography*, Luke Gartlan, p. 212.

Next, consider these peculiar images of Westerners dressed in Japanese clothing for their *mise en scène* of *La Marchande de sourires,* a play written by Judith Gauthier, the daughter of renowned journalist, novelist, art critic, and orientalist Théophile Gauthier[112]:

Figure 3.7: Nadar. "Mounet. Odéon. La marchande de sourires," 1888. *Album de référence de l'Atélier Nadar,* vol. 31, p. 6159.

[112] Actors in plays inspired by the Far East were not the only francophone individuals playing dress-up during the nineteenth century. See Rachel Mesch, *Having it all in the Belle Époque*, for her discussion of Myriam Harry, a female French writer and traveler of whom many photographs in "oriental costume" were taken (86-95). "In these photo spreads, West dramatically confronts East, in service, I propose, of the woman writer's power and authority," writes Mesch (94). Nadar's images of Westerners-as-Japanese-people serve a similar function, obliquely helping to make a statement of the actors' authority over their roles.

Figure 3.8: Nadar. "Sanlaville. Odéon. La marchande de sourires," 1888. *Album de référence de l'Atélier Nadar,* vol. 31, p. 6150.

Figure 3.9: "Laroche, Sanlaville. Odéon. La marchande de sourires," 1888. *Album de référence de l'Atélier Nadar,* vol. 31, p. 6161.

Figure 3.10: "M. Laroche. Odéon. La marchande de sourires," 1888. *Album de référence de l'Atélier Nadar,* vol. 31, p. 6149.

Not only do each of these images feature what has become the classic Orientalist averted gaze, but they also feature many of the other standards then being employed by Yokohama photographers, despite being produced in Paris at the studio of Nadar. Nadar was one of the most revolutionary photographers of his time, and most assuredly an innovator in his own right. Consider, for instance, that by 1858, Nadar had produced the first aerial photographs ever taken (Gervais 4). Nevertheless, all of these images of the actors in *La Marchande de sourires* make use of painted backdrops of park scenes, local props, and Western body language. The only "standard" employed by Stillfried's studio missing from these images is frequent hand-coloring- which we *do* see employed in Karl Lewis' *The King and Crown Prince of Korea*, in spite of the other standards being absent from it.

It is difficult – and perhaps impossible – to state to what degree Gojong and his son were aware of these standards for type photography, but regardless of the fact that the crown prince's "gaze and posture are both somewhat askew," both emperor and heir face the camera directly. In addition, they are not staged in front of a painted backdrop and are not surrounded by props. The fact that the subjects in the photograph do not conform to Yokohoma standards for photographing non-European individuals may in fact be representative of resisting to adhere to those standards. Moreover, another standard in Yokohama type photography involved sitting with "head turned to one side with a light source emanating from an upper corner to accentuate the contours of their faces" (Gartlan 206)[113]. Whether the non-conformity present in this image

[113] These standards are the ones created and maintained by the renowned Yokohama-based photographer, Raimund Von Stillfried. Luke Gartlan, in his *A Career of Japan* discusses these standards at length, providing example photographs, and places his practices in the context of the market environment in which he sold his photographs (206-220). Notably, Gartlan shares how the standard of averted gazes was likely born of his own anxieties: "As I have argued, the insistence on the models' averted gaze espoused an authenticity symptomatic of the photographer's own professional anxiety in the local milieu. Contrary to his models' averted gaze, Stillfried's Japanese competitors undermined his visual primacy on a daily basis" (220).

was intentional or not, I would like to argue that the full military dress, the use of the color yellow, the clear patrilineal succession, and the forward gaze in the absence of a profile are all qualities that lend an air of strength and sovereignty to the image.

It should not be ignored that the printing of the image that Heangga Kwon includes in her article is part of a post card upon which "A contemporary Western hand, signed with the initials N. N. V. has added in ink: 'These are the rulers whose powers are, reading from left to right, zero and √zero. The Japanese take care of their country (Korea) for them.'" (65). It would appear that regardless of whatever message the Korean Empire (대한제국) may have hoped to spread through the use of imperial photography, textual anchorage (as I described it in Chapter Two) was still readily employed and was able to reinforce the dominant discourse of submission even in cases when the counter-discourse of resistance was clearly being expressed by the subjects being represented.

3.3 Imperial Korean Architecture

Imperial Korean portraiture, architecture, and the Korean pavilion at the 1900 *Exposition universelle* in Paris are similar to one another in that 1) each is imbued with Western signs and symbols to some degree and 2) the resulting material form of expression can be interpreted as a transnational negotiation of meaning between that which is being represented and those who are intended to receive that representation. Earlier in this chapter, I revealed how the courts of Joseon and the Korean Empire (대한제국) engaged in imperial portraiture as a means of presenting themselves positively to both their domestic and international public. For the peoples of Northeast Asia, Gojong and his son were represented through the contortion of traditional symbols as rulers of a Korea independent from China. For an international audience, Gojong and his son were represented as heads of state who enthusiastically engaged in a

modern, Western-style mode of representation that was heavily implemented by emerging nation-states around the world.

Another specific example of a way in which Korean imperial architecture turned traditional sinocentric symbolism on its head in order to grant a greater sense of legitimacy to the Korean Empire (대한제국) for the Northeast Asian public includes the Wongudan (원구단) Altar (1897). It was built to facilitate the Rite of Heaven, which had previously been restricted only to Chinese emperors. Examples of the ways that Korean imperial architecture made use of Western-style motifs and involved Western architects in building design include but are not limited to Seokjojeon (석조전), a stone hall constructed in the neoclassical style (1900-1910). Under the constraints of space and time, I will limit myself here to discussing a monument called the Independence Gate (독립문), which contorted traditional sinocentric symbolism while making use of Western architectural design.

The Independence Gate (독립문) was built from 1896 to 1897 and was funded by public donations collected by the Independence Association (독립협회), founded by Seo Jae-pil (also known as Philip Jaisohn). Seo Jae-pil was born in Korea as a fully Korean citizen but later became the first Korean naturalized citizen of the United States of America. He was also the first Korean American to earn a medical degree, which he received in exile from Korea after his involvement in the failed Gapsin Coup (the same coup with which Kim Ok-gyun had taken part, discussed in Chapter Three).

Directly modeled after the *Arc de Triomphe* in Paris, the Independence Gate was constructed on the site of the newly razed Imperial Grace Gate (영은문), where Chinese imperial envoys to Seoul had been greeted for tributary purposes for almost half a millennium. Similarly, the Parisian *Arc de Triomphe* was used as the gate of entry for visits by foreign sovereigns

following Napoleon III's declaration of the Second Empire in December of 1852 (Ben-Amos 72). Similar in style and use, the two arches are also similar in regard to the fact that they each were the subject of debate about what they signified.

In "Monuments and Memory in French Nationalism," Avner Ben-Amos discusses the tumultuous history of the *Arc de Triomphe*. That monument's erection was propelled and inhibited in turns by the members of the ruling classes who either invested or divested in it according to their desires. Its symbolic significance was also contested. Ben-Amos writes:

> Since "the nation" is a cultural and political construct, its symbolic representation in ceremonies, monuments and images makes it a palpable object, comprehensible to a population that has to imagine itself as a unified community. Symbolic representations of the nation, such as monuments, have, therefore, a creative power as well: they give substance to abstract concepts and enable the spectators to identify themselves with this large and remote entity. Moreover, each particular representation is also a statement about the nature of the nation. Hence quarrels about symbolic representations are actually quarrels about the "correct" identity of the nation, and the winner is in a position to impose his views concerning this identity. (53-54)

For the members of the Independence Club, for Gojong and his supporters at court, and likely for the majority of the eight thousand seoulites who had gathered to witness the placing of the monument's first stone, the identity that the Independence Gate (독립문) expressed was one that wholly negated Chinese influence while it united the Korean people under the new symbolism of the Korean Empire (대한제국). Specific examples of new imperial symbolism that can be found in the Independence Gate are: 1) the use of the Hangeul alphabet, 2) the presence of a

taegeuk (태극), and 3) the presence of *ehwa* (이화), Korean plum flowers. I will briefly explain each of these.

First, at the top of the arch, one can read the Korean words for "Independence Gate," 독립문, in Hangeul. In addition to founding the Independence Club, Seo Jae-pil (working with Yun Chi-ho) also published *The Independent* (독립신문), the first Korean newspaper published entirely in Hangeul. Hangeul was invented and introduced to the Korean people by King Sejong during the middle of the fifteenth century as an easier and more logical alphabet for the Korean language than using Chinese characters. Until the nineteenth century, however, Hangeul was only widely used by women and children, with the intelligentsia preferring to continue using Chinese characters. After the end of the tributary relationship with China, the twin desires to break free of sinocentrism and to reach a wider audience led many newspapers and the government to begin publishing in Hangeul and the use of it became intertwined with Korean national identity. It is therefore of no coincidence whatsoever that the Korean words for "Independence Gate" (독립문) figure boldly in Hangeul on the monument, although the same is written in Chinese characters on the opposing side. Second, on both sides of each sign, a *taegeuk*[114] (태극), symbolic of balance in the universe, is found. The Korean national flag, designed in 1882, features a large *taegeuk* (태극) in its center and the symbol would later become emblematic of Korean resistance against the Japanese Occupation of Korea from 1910-1945. Third, Plum flowers, a reference to the Yi clan, one of the ruling clans of Joseon and a popular and frequent symbol of the Korean Empire (대한제국), figure at the center of the keystones on each side of the archway.

[114] For more about this symbol, see Chapter 3, section 4, and the conclusion to this dissertation.

As Ben-Amos stated in the quote above, quarrels about symbolic representation are actually quarrels about the "correct" identity of the nation. It is surprising that a strong criticism of the Independence Arch can be found in the writing of Maurice Courant[115], who can easily be considered the preeminent French scholar on Korea during the nineteenth century and whose fondness for the Korean people and its culture is clear in his treatment of his subject. In short, Maurice Courant simply did not like the Independence Gate. He wrote that the former gate had been slaughtered by an unintelligent patriotism that replaced it with a heavy monument in pretentious European style. He equates it with barbarism and vandalism because "it would have been so easy to remove the regrettable signage and to put in its place another that was more appropriate for the new political climate [116] (11).

Regardless of whether an individual agreed with the symbolism of the new gate, it was constructed for the Empire as an entanglement of Western and Northeast Asian elements specifically to exist as a physical testament of Korean independence. These elements and the discursive practices employed in imperial Korean photography were incorporated into the Korean pavilion at the World's Fair of 1900 in Paris.

3.4 Paris Exposition universelle (1900)

In this section, I first sketch out a brief history of world's fairs, with a focus on Korea's involvement in them. Next, I discuss the planning and architecture of the Korean pavilion at the

[115] For more about Maurice Courant, see Jong-pil Yoon's "Contextualizing Maurice Courant, Pioneer of Korean Studies in Europe."

[116] "…témoin [la variété architecturale en Corée] enfin cette gracieuse porte de Chine, *yeng eun moun*, la porte où l'on va recevoir le bienfait impérial, signe de vassalité, a-t-on dit, et comme telle, abattue par un patriotisme inintelligent qui l'a remplacée par un lourd monument de style prétendu européen, mais que j'appellerais bien plutôt barbare, alors qu'il était si facile d'enlever l'écriteau malencontreux et d'y en substituer un qui fut approprié à la politique nouvelle. Mais le vandalisme est de tous pays." (11)

1900 World's Fair in Paris, focusing on how elements of its architectural design were expressions of our counter-discourse of resistance that were either ignored or countered by visitors. I follow this with a consideration of the use of photography in the Korean pavilion and on how it was interpreted by visitors. *Expositions universelles*, or world's fairs, are among the most impressive examples of public spectacles to occur during the nineteenth century in terms of novelty, scope, and scale. These costly, sprawling events lasted several months and attracted millions of domestic and international visitors. They were pre-dated in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by smaller, more modest industrial and agricultural fairs in Paris, which, unlike world's fairs, did not include any involvement by or representation of foreign nations.

In 1851, London hosted the first true world's fair, which was referred to under the expansive and descriptive title, *The Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations*. The novelty of this exposition can be gleaned by its name: rather than presenting to England's domestic public all the agricultural products and industrial advancements originating solely from their own home country, the World's Fair of 1851 also displayed products and technologies of interest that hailed from other nations, and which were intended to be viewed by an international audience. France was invited as a guest of honor and occupied the largest space in the section reserved for foreign countries. The effect that the exposition is said to have had on the French emperor, Napoléon III, is well documented: awe-struck by the fair and its Crystal Palace, he immediately called for a similar event to be held in Paris a mere four years later, in 1855. Measuring 135 feet tall, with a square footage of almost 800,000 square feet, and constructed with nearly 1,000,000 square feet of glass, the Crystal Palace inaugurated one of the key attributes of world's fairs to come: breathtaking feats of architectural design that stretched the boundaries of the human imagination. The construction of elaborate buildings and

complexes in which to display objects, technologies, and even cultural practices such as music and dance became a requisite feature of all world's fairs to come.

As Yaying Bai illustrates in "Inchoate Unitary Visions: Tracing Nationalism in the Visual Culture of Korea's International Expositions, 1893-1929," Gojong's court considered world's fairs a desirable setting for showcasing and educating Western nations on Korean culture. The first world's fair in which a Korean government participated was the 1893 Chicago World Columbian exhibition, where the Korean pavilion provided its visitors with signs to inform them that Korea was *not* a part of China and that Koreans spoke neither Chinese nor Japanese (Bai 11). This detail reaffirms the claim that "In the two events, Korea experimented with the practice of the exposition to vocalize its imperial presence and sovereignty on the international stage" (*ibid.,* 7-8). In a similar response to the way that the Korean government(s) at this time attempted to vocalize the same concepts through the mediums of photography and architecture, critics of Korea's representation at the 1893 world's fair were sometimes harsh.

Bai writes that "the perceptions of the Korean booth at the 1893 exposition were divided into either curious fascination or cold-shoulders among non-Korean audiences" and explains that this failure can be explained by a misunderstanding about what the concept of "exposition" really meant[117] (11). The end result of that misunderstanding was that "the Korean booth embodied a great resemblance to curio shops which fed into Chinoiserie and Japonisme craze in

[117] "Sparked interests or unimpressed indifference, either perception highlighted the lack of technological sophistication in Korea's presentations in the exposition. Pak proposed that the confusingly eclectic and ordinary exhibits that the Joseon reformists selected were due to the intermingled epistemology between the concepts of "exposition" and "museum" in the Korean language. Both terms were introduced by the Korean delegates from the 1881 mission. Because exposition and museum contributed to the promotion of industrialization in Japan, the two concepts were absorbed in Gojong's modernization agenda without deliberate differentiation. This led to the eclectic curation for Korea's first participation in the World's Exposition." (11)

Europe and America" and that "this reminiscence implied cheapness, far from being progressive" (11). From this, we are able to draw the conclusion that the way that Korea was perceived by audiences at the exhibition in Chicago ran directly counter to the Korean government's objectives.

The exposition universelle of 1900 proved the perfect opportunity for the Korean government to rectify the failings of the 1893 exhibition by using some of the more successful representational tactics that were being employed in imperial photography and architecture. Namely, these tactics consist of 1) allowing Westerners to use their own tools and standards to help Korea represent itself in a trans-national form of co-constructive identity formation, such as in encouraging Westerners to take photographs of the monarch rather than making a more concerted effort to develop the Korean government's photographic means, and 2) selectively choosing to incorporate non-Korean motifs into objects of material culture alongside certain motifs which nevertheless insisted upon Korean sovereignty and independence.

The decision to participate in the 1900 Paris World's Fair is said to have first been made while the Columbian exhibition was still in progress. According to historian Daniel C. Kane, the French consul to Korea stated that "King Kojong had personally assured him that Korea would participate, he would send a fine exhibit of art and artifacts, and even dispatch a member of the royal family as commissioner (50)." Rather than relying upon a team of solely Korean commissioners to design, build, and import every object in the exhibit, the Korean government allowed French nationals to help, and in some cases, direct and plan their country's exhibit.

Despite Korean willingness to participate in the world's fair being established as early as May of 1893, official invitations for the event did not appear until January of 1896. By the end of that same month, Korea had responded officially that it would attend. However, not

much happened to advance their exhibit's planning until Min Yong-Hwan, a cousin of the Korean queen, was named as Minister Plenipotentiary to Six European Nations (Russia, Great Britain, France, Germany, Austria, and Italy). It was at that point that he was named commissioner for Korea to the world's fair, joined by five other Korean nationals and three Frenchmen, one of whom had a wealth of knowledge about Korea (Maurice Courant)[118].

On April 1, 1897, Min Yong-Hwan departed Korea for his diplomatic trip to Europe. The trip was supposed to culminate in Paris, where he was meant to be the commissioner in charge of the Korean exhibit at the *Exposition universelle de Paris.* However, he never did make it to that country. Kane explains that "Kojong was wracked by not unfounded fears of Russian and Japanese designs to divide the peninsula" and that these fears likely motivated his decision to send a Korean ambassador to France more so than the need to prepare the Korean exhibit at the world's fair (52).

Following Min's departure to Europe, Gojong met with Victor Collin de Plancy several times to personally solicit "the commitment of French troops to Korea, and for a Korean-French alliance to ensure Korean independence" (*ibid.*, 52). The sentiments that Gojong shared with de Plancy in those meetings echoed the ideas he shared in a letter composed for the French president, Felix Faure. Gojong entrusted Min Yong-Hwan to deliver that letter. Among other things, Gojong had written:

> Several years now have passed since our two countries signed a treaty of amity; a reaffirmation of the ties that bind us is now called for. I know of France's

[118] The other two were a diamond cutter and a medical doctor. The latter of these, Edouard Mene, "interested himself in Asian topics, but was best known in certain circles as a collector and connoisseur of Japanese art" (Kane 51).

> renown, and of the value she places on the ties of friendship between us. From the bottom of my heart I wish her to realize my hope that she support me with all her force, and, if necessity so demands, to come to my aid. (Cited in Kane 52).

Although Min Yong-Hwan was meant only to deliver the letter and not to read it, he behaved as humans sometimes do, by doing something his boss had not expected: he opened the letter, he read the letter, he disagreed with the contents of the letter, and he decided that he was no longer going to do the job that had been given him. Somewhat ironically, Min considered this attempt by Gojong to call for French aid in order to ensure its continued independence as an attempt to give up the country to French forces rather than to protect it. After abandoning his diplomatic mission, Min scampered off to the United States, where he lived in difficult conditions until Gojong allowed him to return home to Korea in 1898.

After Min's unceremonious and abrupt departure from the project, Count Delort de Gléon was chosen as organizer of and benefactor responsible for funding the Korean exhibit. He was somewhat famous for his organization of "Cairo Street" at the 1889 Paris world's fair, and he likely viewed the opportunity to organize the Korean exhibit as a lucrative financial investment as well as a chance to increase his renown. Delort de Gléon's plans called for a 320 square foot national pavilion which would "enclose the government collections, modern and traditional arts, the products of mining, agriculture, industry, commerce, etc." (de Gléon cited in Kane 55). The plans also called for the construction of a Korean street scene similar to the one that he had had built to represent Egypt and which had earned him so much prestige. The Korean street was intended to be comprised of:

> …houses and buildings occupied by numerous authentic families selling (and in some cases making) their wares, altogether a most animated street with a

> teahouse, open air performers and acrobats, etc… etc… with the inhabitants being in type, and dressed in manner most diverse and unusual. (de Gléon cited in Kane 55)

Thus, before nary a nail was hammered into place, the expectation had already been set that Korea would be represented as unusual. Moreover, the Korean people who were expected to be on display were to be displayed as "types," running in parallel with the representations of all sorts of individuals that had become popular in the nineteenth century in illustrations and photography, as was explained earlier in this chapter.

In June of 1899, a new list of commissioners for the exhibit was issued by the Korean government, with construction begun soon after. The new list of commissioners was divided into Korean and European groups, with each having its own president. The Korean contingent was lead by Min Byeong-seok, a member of the Council of State, and Baron Delort de Gléon was naturally chosen as commissioner general and president of the European group. A situation that finally seemed as though it was progressing smoothly was suddenly complicated by the fact that "the Baron Delort de Gléon dropped dead in Paris on November 9, 1899, his plans for the Korean section only partially complete" (Kane 56). In exchange for returning all festival grounds then occupied by Korea to their original state and relinquishing all claims to a refund for funds already disbursed for the rental of those properties, de Gléon's heirs promptly had themselves removed from his contract. A replacement for de Gléon, Count August Mimerel IV, was swiftly appointed.

Whereas Daniel C. Kane finds that "As an attempt by Korea to represent itself – rather than have itself represented – the Korean display in Paris fell far short of Korean efforts at the Chicago World's Fair of 1893," (61) Yaying Bai's description of the event highlights an

awareness of a transnational means of co-constructive identity formation, writing that "it took Gojong's court the first experience in the *pangnamghoe* [*sic*] to grasp the concept that pavilions were microcosmic representations of people and cultures" and that "handing over the directorship for the 1900 Korean pavilion was a rational act because the perception of the final presentation among Euro-American audiences outweighed the agency-held process" (18-19). As we have seen in the case of Korean imperial portraiture and photography, it may very well have been a conscious choice on the part of Korea's government officials to allow Westerners to aid them in representing themselves in a way that appealed to Westerners while also appealing to a domestic audience.

Certain aspects in the construction of the Korean pavilion at the 1900 World's Fair in Paris are emblematic of the Korean imperial government's endeavors to visually express its new imperial identity, undermining at least slightly the suggestion that the Koreans involved in the pavilion's planning removed themselves completely from the design process. After de Gléon's elaborate plans were largely scrapped in favor of a smaller, more economically feasible design, the choice was made to build a replica of *Geunjeongjon*, the throne room at the *Gyeongbokgung* palace complex. Knowing the history of this building and what it signified for Korean and Japanese individuals nearing the turn of the twentieth century can help to shed light on how and why this choice is indicative of a bid for sovereignty and a rejection of Japanese aspersions on the peninsula. *Gyeongbokgung* was first built in 1394 and remained an important site during the early period of the Joseon Kingdom (대조선국) until it was razed by invading Japanese forces during the late 16th century. It was rebuilt in 1867, the royal family moved in, and again became an iconic symbol of Korean government and culture. In 1895, Japanese forces attacked again, this time appearing in the night and assassinating Queen Min

(posthumously, Empress Myeongseong). After Japan's annexation and subsequent colonization of Korea from 1905-1945, the Japanese government of that time would go on to systematically destroy numerous buildings in the palace complex, building their own extremely imposing government building on the site, and using it as a site to host industrial fairs similar to those that pre-dated the World's Fairs, but whose content was specifically curated to present to its visitors a picture of Japan and of colonial Korea that justified the Japanese colonization of that country and which propped up the idea of Japanese supremacy.

Since the building chosen for the pavilion was the throne room of the Korean imperial government, it was replete with all of the signs and symbols that supported Korean independence and sovereignty. It mixed traditional motifs with the new symbolism of independence in the same way that Korean imperial photography and other architectural monuments did. Later, the Japanese colonial government of Korea contorted the palace complex into a site for industrial and culture fairs to support Japanese colonialism during the occupation, which can be considered confirmation by the Japanese imperial government that the palace complex signified Korean sovereignty that they felt a need to subvert.

For visitors to the pavilion, the literal seat of imperial power chosen was representational locus; a glance at the ceiling of the throne room rewarded visitors with a vision of golden dragons flying overhead. Since the color gold had previously been reserved for Chinese imperial powers, its usage here marks the aforementioned break with sinocentrism. Other royal palace complexes (there are many) that existed at that time used phoenix rather than dragon motifs to express royal power, with the dragon being reserved for Chinese use, again indicative of an explicit break with sinocentrism.

Figure 3.11: "*Ceiling Decoration with Twin Dragons*," Joseon Dynasty, National Palace Museum of Korea.

In addition to golden dragons, the exterior of the *Geunjeongjeon* (근정전) featured ehwa (이화), the plum flower mentioned previously for its significance as marker of Korean imperial sovereignty, also featured on the Independence Gate. They are clearly visible in the photograph below. However, notice that some representational sources reproduced the plum flowers (cf. fig. 3.13) while others neglected to reproduce them (cf. fig. 3.14). Whether this is means that each illustrator thought their presence mattered is unclear, but as a symbol of imperial power, its absence is noteworthy.

Figure 3.12: Korean Pavilion, 1900 Paris Exposition, 1900, photograph, Choengju Early Printing Museum.

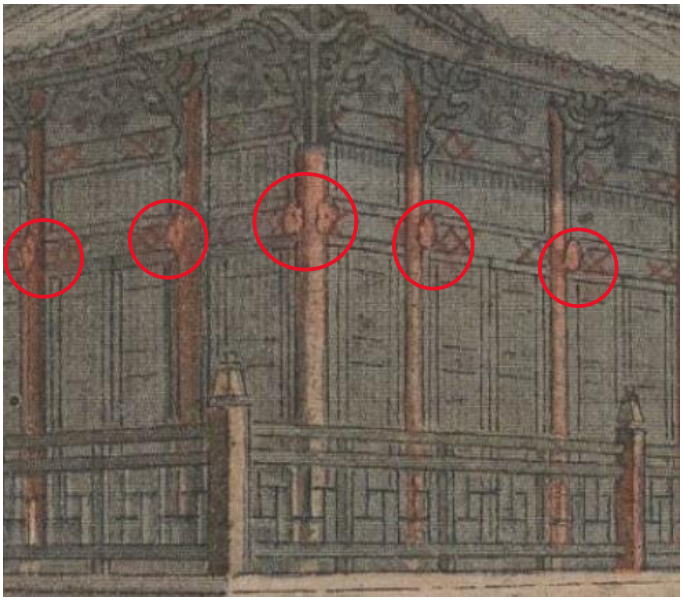

Figure 3.13: Close-up from “Exposition de 1900 : Pavillon de la Corée.” *Le Petit Journal : Supplément du dimanche*, 16 December 1900.

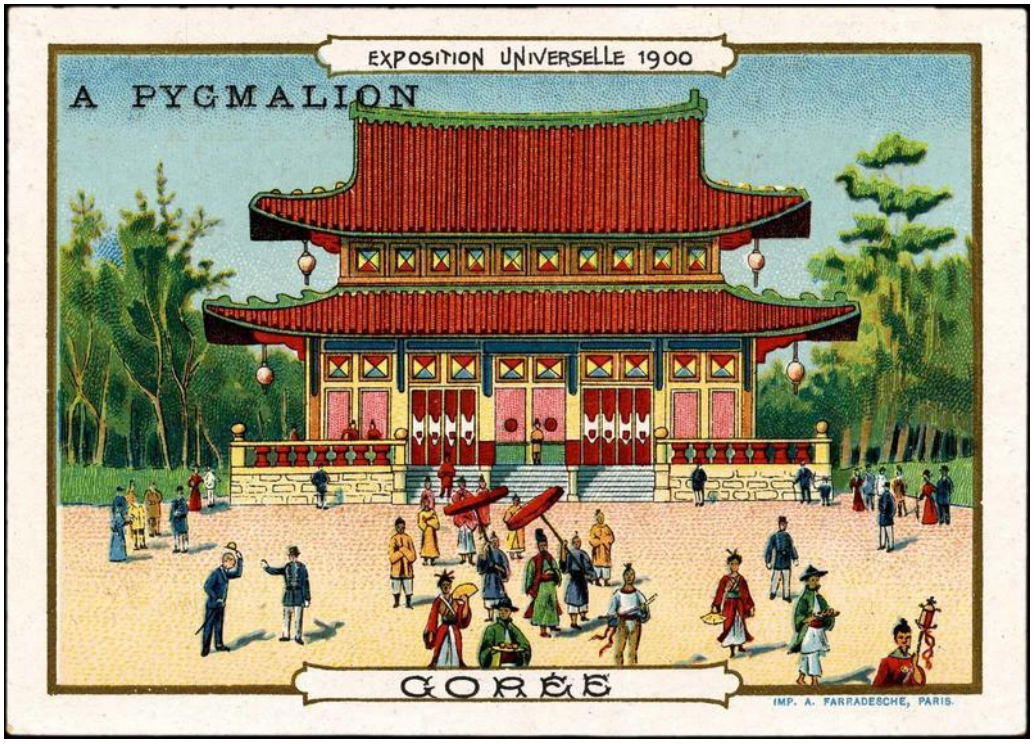

Figure 3.14: "EXPOSITION UNIVERSELLE 1900 / CORÉE." Farradesche, 1900. Collections des musées de France (joconde).

In *Souvenir de Séoul : Corée*, Courant records a lengthy impression of the Korean pavilion at the 1900 World's Fair in Paris, which he begins with an evocation of the pavilion being lost and tucked away in perfect parallel with the Korean Empire (대한제국) itself. As explained previously in this dissertation, the idea that Korea was simply too isolated and exclusionary to remain sovereign was an idea that was evoked repeatedly as a justification for allowing and enabling a "greater power" or some combination of other more powerful nations to partition and/or colonize it.

In his account, Courant uses the words "curious," "strange," and "interesting" at multiple junctures, but overall, his account is a very positive one in which he bestows lovely

accolades upon the art, architecture, and books that visitors are able to appreciate when visiting the pavilion.

The expectation was that the Korean pavilion would be hidden, mysterious, curious, strange, and isolated – all words that were indeed used by Courant in his account even though history would have it that he was one of the most steadfast supporters and most productive promoters of Korean culture and society. Indeed, even Courant notes that his only regret at the Korean pavilion was the absence of a complete collection of Korean hats, which "*eût été curieuse, car le people coréen a inventé et porte encore quelques-unes des coiffures les moins pratiques et les plus étranges qu'on puisse imaginer*[119]*"* (8).

Accompanying the full-page illustration of the Korean pavilion on the front page of the December 16, 1900, issue of *Le Petit journal, Supplément du dimanche*, is a short article which reads:

> *Le pays le plus fermé de l'Extrême-Orient et l'un de ceux qui excitent le plus la convoitise de ses voisins est assurément la Corée.*
>
> *Tout y est caché, ses mœurs sont spéciales, et ce que souhaitent le plus ses habitants, c'est de n'entrer en relation avec aucun étranger.*
>
> *Aussi, sa participation à l'Exposition fut-elle une surprise agréable.*
>
> *Le gouvernement coréen a fait bâtir un pavillon d'une curieuse architecture et qui s'inspire des salles de justice impériales d'autrefois ; il y avait installé des*

[119] My translation: "would have been curious, because the Korean people invented and still wear some of the least practical and the strangest headdresses one can imagine."

échantillons de sa production et de son industrie qui donnent fortement à désirer que des relations suivies s'établissent avec la région mystérieuse[120]. (398)

Each paragraph of this article features at least one word that references Korean isolation and/or the desire of other nations to seize its riches as their own. *Fermé, caché,* and *mystérieuse* align with the idea that Korea willingly hid itself from "the rest of the world," of course ignoring their voluntary relationships with China and Japan for millennia. Moreover, in the context of describing Korea's collaborative participation in a global fair of nations, it appears especially inaccurate.

The use of the phrase "*d'autrefois*" orientalizes Korea by depicting it as a locus of the past, a place that necessitated rejuvenation via Western interaction and "help" in achieving "modernity" and "progress." It is also asynchronous in that the author uses "*d'autrefois"* to explain that the pavilion was inspired by courthouses of old, when in fact it was a model of a very real government building *of the present*. Key words present in this article that have also been used elsewhere in order to justify Western meddling are "*spéciales,"* "*surprise," "curieuse,"* and "*mystérieuse."* By depicting the Empire as a special, surprising place full of hidden mysteries, the producer of the representation grows the audience's interest in discovering and solving those mysteries. Last, by including the words "*convoitise"* and

[120] My translation: "The most closed up country in the Far East and the one which excites the most covetousness of its neighbors is undoubtedly Korea.

Everything is hidden there, its customs are unusual, and what its inhabitants wish most is to not enter into relations with any stranger.

Also, its participation in the Exhibition was a pleasant surprise.

The Korean government has built a pavilion of curious architecture inspired by the imperial justice halls of the past; it displayed samples of its production and industry which give us strong reason to wish that continued relations be established with this mysterious region."

"*désirer,"* the author overtly recognizes the incontestable fact that Korea was then being greedily considered as potential colony or at the bare minimum, as a highly lucrative place to secure foreign concessions.

Figure 3.15: "Exposition de 1900 : Pavillon de la Corée." *Le Petit journal : Supplément du dimanche,* 16 December 1900, p. 397.

The full-page illustration that accompanied the article is not unflattering in the sense that the scene depicted is lively, the building is beautifully and delicately illustrated and includes the plum flowers that represented the Korean Empire (대한제국). The fish banner gently alight in the breeze in the mid-ground is referential to the actual object on display inside the pavilion, and the artist took care to include multiple copies of the Korean Empire's (대한제국) flag and a kind of shield with a *taegeuk* (태극) in the center. The *taegeuk*[121] (태극), a circle of red and blue segments swirling together in harmony, represented balance in the universe and became an extremely important – if not the singular most important – symbolic representation of resistance against the Japanese imperial occupying forces during the time that Korea was colonized by them[122].

When viewed together as an ensemble, the article and the illustration are representative of the same kind of contradictory, simultaneous evocations of the dominant and counter-discourses that we have seen elsewhere in francophone representations of Korea and its people[123]. There is no escaping the fact that the article and the illustration are riddled with the sort of orientalizing practices that helped to build and justify the dominant discourse of submission (*e.g.* amalgamation and depicting it as strange). Daniel C. Kane writes in "Display at Empire's End: Korea's Participation in the 1900 Paris Universal Exhibition" that the illustration and description "may have served to represent western confusion- even in 1900-

[121] "The term taegeuk literally means 'the state of chaos that existed before the creation of sky and earth.' In this regard, while the red portion of the taegeuk symbol signifies yang, the blue section is meant to denote yin. This yin and yang can in turn be expressed as the moon and sun, or earth and heaven. Taegeuk thus has been taken to mean a complete circle in which yin and yang encounter one another, or an unlimited universe. Taegeuk is therefore a different term for the universe." (Yoo Myeong-jong and Lee Ji-hye 8).

[122] See Fig. 5.1 for another instance of the *taegeuk* in a francophone illustration in the press.

[123] See Zuber and Pradier's accounts in Chapter 1 and the contradictory claims made about Hong Jong-u in Chapter 2.

over just who the Koreans were. That they should be represented as an amalgamation of Chinese, Manchu, Japanese, and Korean did not augur well" (62). I argue that efforts made by the committee to represent the Korean Empire (대한제국) in a way that would help differentiate it from its East Asian neighbors and encourage Western individuals to support the Korean cause for independence and autonomy were most often ignored if not countered.

To my knowledge, there is no extant record of the photographic images that were on display at the Korean pavilion at the 1900 World's Fair in Paris. However, there are many surviving photographs and illustrations of the objects that were shown, and there are two accounts that discuss photographs of Korean people in the context of the exhibition. The first of these appears in "L'Exposition du siècle," by Albert Quantin. In the preface, he writes that the book "attempts to summarize" how the grandeur of ideas dominated the grandeur of things at the World's Fair by describing the pavilions and the effects they left on visitors, as well as the organization of the fairgrounds (vii). In line with what we have seen to be a rising trend in the nineteenth century, Quantin enmeshes both text and image throughout the volume, including a small illustration of the Korean pavilion (160). The illustration is completely lacking in all of the imperial iconography that the Korean Empire (대한제국) was using to overtly declare its autonomy.

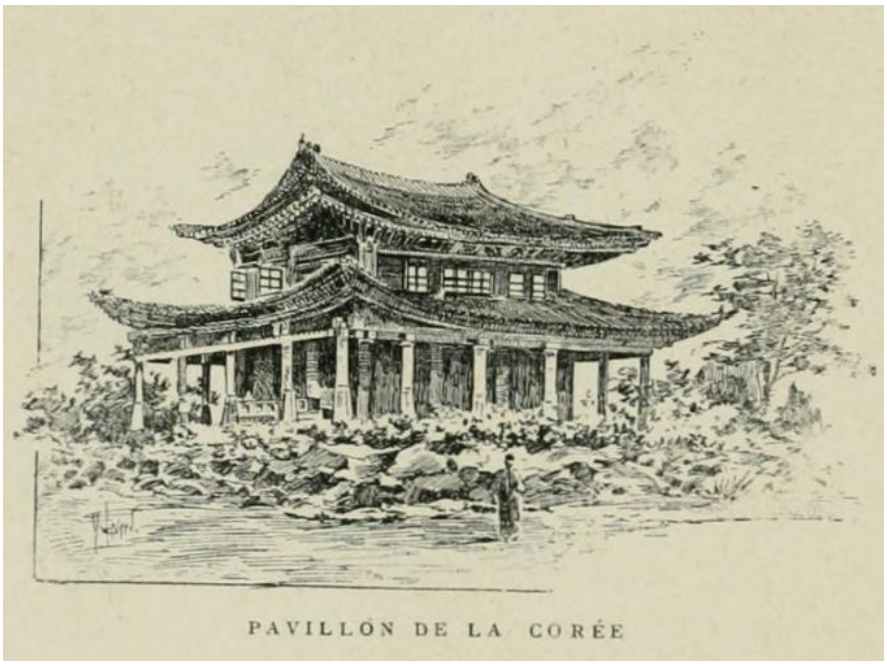

Figure 3.16: "Pavillon de la Corée." *L'Exposition du siècle,* Albert Quantin, 1900, p. 160.

In addition, Quantin uses the photographs on display in order to draw a line divorcing Korea's people from China and amalgamating them with Japan. This, in the context of Korea's breaking with sinocentrism, the West's declining respect for China, and its growing respect for Japan, indicates that Quantin's account of the pavilion is in line with the dominant discourse of submission. He writes: "*La Chine non plus ne semblait pas avoir malgré son voisinage, d'influence prépondérante en Corée, dont le pavillon s'élevait plus loin, en bordure de l'avenue de Suffren. Des photographies de Coréens trahissaient une visible parenté avec le Japon*[124]" (161). For Quantin, the physical appearance of the Korean people indicates that they are directly related to Japanese people, and China no longer held such a strong influence over

[124] My translation: "In spite of its proximity, China also no longer seems to have a preponderant influence in Korea, whose pavilion was erected further away on the edge of Suffren Avenue. Photographs of Koreans betrayed a visible Japanese kinship."

Korea. He also writes that this country that was closed to Europeans just a few years ago has suddenly opened up to civilization and that it will need to walk there as quickly as Japan (161).

The other account that mentions the photographs diverges from Quantin in that it focuses not on what the images might tell the viewer in terms of identifying whether the Korean people were more closely related to Chinese people, Japanese people, or had come from somewhere else completely, but in that it focuses on how the photographs serve as a marker of modernity in progress. Written by Paul Gers, in his "En 1900," it is a much longer text, spread across several pages with a dozen photographs interspersed throughout. It absolutely must be acknowledged that certain passages from Gers in "En 1900" and from Courant (mentioned above)[125] in *Souvenir de Séoul* are nearly identical- but this similarity makes the differences appear all the more profound. Given that Courant was considered an expert in all things Korean and was a commissioner for the Korean pavilion, it is probable that he supplied Gers with some of the information in his account. Gers' account is meant to be more of an expository text than a personal re-telling of his experience at the pavilion.

Like Courant, Gers begins with some background information about Korea for his readers. First, he writes that whether it be by timidity or modesty, the Korean pavilion was rather far away on the edge of things, as though it wanted to re-immerse itself in self-image of isolation, but he also writes that after the Sino-Japanese War and the declaration of independence, everything had changed in Korea ("*tout à changé"*) (205). Courant, in slight but meaningful contrast, does not use past tense, but rather present tense, writing that "*everything is*

[125] Footnote all mentions of Courant

changing" (tout change). Both men declare that in Korea, one more or less copies "modern Japan," with the following results:

> *...on réorganise l'armée et les finances, on donne des concessions de mines, on met en circulation des tramways électriques, des trains de chemin de fer, les étrangers sont partout comme conseillers, professeurs, ingénieurs, la religion chrétienne est ouvertement pratiquée*[126]. (Courant 5, Gers 205)

Each of the men then discuss the various objects on display at length, including mannequins wearing traditional clothes, metalwork, jewels, and books (Courant 5-7, Gers 206-208). Both men despair over the absence of a collection of Korean hats, which they both declare to be strange (Courant 7, Gers 208)[127]. In Courant's account, he writes that he regrets not having seen them there and he counsels curious readers to go and see them at the nearby Musée Guimet des arts asiatiques if they wish to learn more about them (7-8). Gers simply writes that one can deplore their absence and more quickly moves on to a different topic (208). The most significant difference between the two accounts lies in the way they each terminate their accounts. Gers leans into the quote above, using the photographs on display at the exposition as proof of this perceived modernization:

[126] My translation: "They reorganize the army and finances, they give mining concessions, they are putting electric tramways and trains on iron rails in circulation, and foreigners are everywhere working as consultants, professors, and engineers, and the Christian religion is openly practiced."

[127] It was extraordinarily common for francophone writers to discuss the "strangeness" of Korean hats. See also: Charles Dallet, *Histoire de l'église de Corée,* (CLXXII); de la Nézière, "En Corée," (this text is not paginated; the author discusses the strangeness of Korean hats throughout); R. Nivelle, "Chez l'Empereur de Corée" (529); Charles Varat, "Voyage en Corée," (308); Raoul-Charles Villetard de Laguérie, *La Corée, indépendante, russe, ou japonaise* (129-132).

> *Devant toutes ces collections, on sentait combien le pays coréen se transforme et on s'en apercevait mieux encore quand on regardait les très jolies photographies exposées qui nous révélaient, dans les rues où marchaient des Coréens habillés de soieries – des fils électriques de téléphone, des tramways à vapeur, - hier et aujourd'hui étrangement mélangés*[128]. (208)

Courant, instead of focusing on how much Korea had changed and on how those changes created a strange mix of past and present, as Gers has done, presages Edward Said's much later attestation that representations of other cultures serve to tell us more about ourselves than about the cultures or the peoples being represented by ending his account with a lengthy message for his French counterparts.

First, he celebrates Korea's victories against its many adversaries and questions European claims to superiority: "*S'il est une leçon à tirer de l'exposition coréenne, n'est-ce pas une leçon de modestie ? Voilà un peuple peu nombreux, peu fortuné, dont l'histoire extérieure depuis plusieurs siècles ne compte guère que des invasions subies et repoussées avec peine*[129]." Although he does state that the Korean people are not very fortunate, which could be a reference to monetary poverty as much as it could be a reference to sheer luck, and although in using the word "*subies"* he invokes the idea that Korea submitted to invasions, Courant also writes that the invasions were repelled. This statement is less a declaration of Korean weakness

[128] My translation: "Faced with all of these collections, we felt how much the Korean country is transforming. One discerns it better still when looking at the very pretty photographs on display, which revealed to us Koreans dressed in silks walking down the street- electric telephone wires, steam tramways- yesterday and today curiously mixed together."

[129] My translation: "If there is a lesson to be taken from the Korean exposition, is it not a lesson in modesty? Here we have a people whose numbers are small, who have little fortune, and whose history with the outside has for many centuries counted nothing more than invasions they were subjected to and repelled with difficulty."

and inferiority and more an accolade for their tenacity and persistence. In this way, he diverges starkly from Gers and his peers.

He continues:

> *...à travers toutes ces difficultés, il est resté lui-même, il a conservé les arts et la civilisation reçus jadis de la Chine et enseignés par lui au Japon. Il y a peu d'années, l'Europe l'ignorait et, avec son orgueil habituel, l'aurait volontiers traité de barbare ; et la première fois qu'il se manifeste parmi nous, c'est en mettant sous nos yeux les monuments d'une civilisation complexe et délicate qui a précédé la nôtre sur bien des points, même pour ce qui est une des gloires du monde moderne, pour l'imprimerie*[130]. (12-13)

In this passage, Courant amalgamates Korea with China in the sense that he ties Korean art and civilisation to a Chinese origin, and he also draws a line of succession in which Japan is said to have learned its own "art and civilization" from Korea as intermediary. Even though he begins his account by stating that the Korean Empire (대한제국) was following in Japan's footsteps in modernizing, he does not support the idea that Korea was taught everything via a relationship with that country. This is noteworthy because, as the nineteenth century progressed into the twentieth, one of the ways in which the Japanese imperial government sought to undermine Korean claims to its own sovereignty and independent cultural identity was by claiming that Korea had long ago been part of Japan, with Japanese people teaching Korean people *their art*

[130] My translation: "Throughout all these difficulties, it has stayed true to itself, it has hung onto the arts and civilization received long ago from China and taught by it to Japan. Not many years ago, Europe knew nothing about it, and in its habitual ignorance, would gladly have treated it as barbaric; and the first time it has appeared among us, it is in putting monuments beneath our gaze of a complex and delicate civilization that preceded our own in many regards, even that which is one of the glories of the modern world, printing.

and *their customs*[131]. However, Maurice Courant knew the difference, and he sought to share it with his compatriots in texts like this one[132].

Finally, using the imperative form of the verb "to cease," Courant implores the people of the West to rethink their self-imposed hierarchical relationship with the Korean people: "*Cessons de nous croire d'une essence supérieur au reste de l'humanité : nous en vaudrons mieux moralement, et nos affaires n'en iront pas plus mal*[133]*"* (12-13). Perhaps anticipating Western fears that sacrificing their attempts at achieving full hegemony in the East would hinder their commercial success, he assuages that fear by negating it. By preceding that negation with the claim that Westerners would be better off morally if they ceased in their claims to superiority, he implies that achieving moral goodness is more important than obtaining commercial success. Last, he follows all of this with a statement that the Korean Empire (대한제국) had given them [the French] a friendly lesson in pride and that they could thank them [the Koreans] for it (13).

[131] This claim worked to silence the historical fact that during the Imjin War (1592-1598), the same conflict in which *Gyeongbokgung* had been razed, tens of thousands of Korean farmers and artisans were taken as slaves and brought to Japan, where they were forced to continue producing high-quality pieces of porcelain and celadon. European celebrations of Japanese pottery were often ignorant that much of it originated from distinctly Korean cultural practices. For more about the Imjin War, also referred to as "The Japanese Invasion of 1592," or the "Hideyoshi Invasion," and its deleterious effects on Korean art, see: Cho, Insoo. "Royal Portraits in the Late Joseon Period" (10-11, 21); Houchins, Chang-su Cho, *An Ethnography of the Hermit Kingdom: The J.B. Bernadou Collection (1884-1885)* (83, 124); Kang, Kwanshik, "Literati Portraiture of the Joseon Dynasty" (300); Pai, Hyung Il, "Staging 'Koreana' for the Tourist Gaze: Imperialist Nostalgia and the Circulation of Picture Postcards" (305-306).

[132] The quote above contains a reference to the last surviving volume of the *Jikji*, a text printed using moveable metal type during the 14th century. It pre-dated the famed Gutenburg Bible by nearly 80 years, and Courant's mention of it indicates to what degree he was aware of Korean advancements made independently of those of European nations.

[133] My translation: "Let us cease in our thinking that we are superior in essence to the rest of humanity; we will be better off morally and our businesses will not do any worse."

One can never know or assume to know the author's intention, and although it does seem that Courant intended to make Korea better and more positively known to people of the West, it is possible that the ideas he recorded in this text ran contrary to his actual beliefs. Regardless, what the text represents is a largely positive representation of a new Empire that sought to place itself firmly among equals on the global stage, jockeying not for enough power to snatch up new territories or to wrangle resources from its neighbors, but rather for the opportunity to safeguard its autonomy and achieve progress in a way that aligned with its specific cultural values. There appears to be no other account of the Korean pavilion penned by a French individual that manages to recognize and support the counter-discourse of resistance.

3.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I detailed specific ways that the Joseon Kingdom (대조선국) and the Korean Empire (대한제국) made selective use of three forms of material culture (photography, architecture, and world's fair exhibition) to engage in global discourse regarding Korea's identity. In order to do so, I explained how the signing of the Treaty of Shimonoseki led to the declaration of the Korean Empire (대한제국) and made possible its particular, novel means of engaging in that discourse. Specifically, I demonstrated ways in which those engagements countered the dominant discourse of submission by seeking to reaffirm the Empire's independence, sovereignty, and autonomy.

I traced connections between Western photographic representations of non-Western individuals, revealing that some of the photography that represented Korea at that time worked in direct opposition to certain orientalizing standards then extant in photographs of Middle Eastern, African, and Asian peoples being produced in Western-owned photographic studios. I argued that the Korean Empire (대한제국) made this happen by controlling the way the emperor

and his son were photographed. I compared the selective use of and rejection of those photographic standards to the architecture of the Korean Empire (대한제국), drawing a parallel between the two by revealing how Korean architecture was also being used in very specific ways to reinforce an image of the country as independent and autonomous.

Last, in discussing the Korean pavilion at the 1900 World's Fair in Paris, I detailed ways in which most French accounts failed to seize the opportunity it offered to Westerners to recognize the efforts in which Korea was engaging to alter the dominant discourse. As a whole, the period of the Korean Empire (대한제국) can be considered a remarkable moment in human history when a small nation that had been considered by most others as a pitiful, backward amalgamation of Chinese and Japanese peoples destined for a complete takeover by a more powerful, more "advanced" nation engaged in a startling quantity of resistant semiotic behaviors. Although Korea would later come to be colonized by Japan, there is no arguing that Gojong's government attempted to engage in global discourse in specific ways that would prevent that colonization. The actions of Gojong's government took discursive action to prevent that colonization. Those actions imply a desire not only be understood by Westerners, but to soften their hearts and speak to their minds in such a way that they would feel compelled to help the Korean Empire (대한제국) in its indefatigable efforts. If the Korean pavilion at the 1900 World's Fair in Paris is to be considered a failure in its objectives both to enlist Western aid in safeguarding their autonomy and in updating their global image, then that failure is rooted in the Western audience's inability to identify the new markers of Korean imperial sovereignty and in its inability to break away from its long-established preconceived notions.

CHAPTER 4

Korea in Novels: Pierre Loti and Hong Jong-u

Previous chapters in this dissertation began with the identification of discursive events. Those events were then linked to specific objects of material culture representing Korea. In this chapter, I break away from this format, investigating the representation of Korea in the form of the novel, a means of artistic and creative production that was considered during the nineteenth century to be a much more serious literary genre than the newspaper (Terdiman 144-146). The newspaper, the supposed standard-bearer of fact, the wily critic and exposer of political schemes and plots, the eventual photographic record of any and every individual thing which piqued its editors' interests, the newspaper, especially the *quotidien*, was chronologically, temporally anchored in the comings, goings, and musings of daily life. As such, the newspaper was also the arena *par excellence* in which discourse and counter-discourse, those bitter, indefatigable adversaries, contested one another without end. Indeed, the newspaper, along with televised news, and the information, disinformation, and misinformation inundating all forms of social media today, remains the same embattled arena even as this dissertation is being written. The novel, in contrast, was read "sitting down[134]," not upright, carelessly rifled through as with a floppy, pliable newspaper might be, only to later be discarded or forgotten on a subway bench or re-purposed as wrappings for a fresh cut of trout from the local fishmonger.

[134] Terdiman references this mode of reading while quoting contemporary contemptuous commentary about it: "In the case of the newspaper, the distinction typically drawn was between the mode of reading which it induced and the mode appropriate to 'serious' literary texts. For practitioners of the latter, it was all too clear that the former seemed to be swamping them. Roger Bellet resumes the perception at the time: 'People read newspapers in the street and along the boulevards. They read standing up, and Barbey d'Aurevilly called the newspaper 'standing-up reading'[*la lecture debout*] as opposed to the 'sitting-down reading' [*la lecture assise*] of books. People read in all sorts of meeting places. They even read in Notre-Dame" (144-145). Terdiman continues: "The traditionalists were not slow to draw the most pessimistic conclusions. Thus, despairingly, the Goncourts: 'Our age marks the beginning of the destruction of the book by the newspaper, of the man of letters by the journalism of the literati'" (145).

I use this chapter as an opportunity to analyze novels which represent Korea not as being completely divorced from the moment of their production, but also not as being irretrievably ensconced within them. Each of the novels in this chapter portrays Korea at a different point in world history, but of course each of them was produced during the nineteenth century and each of them bears signs of an imaginary future. Although I take care, as necessary, to discuss how the historical moment in which each novel was written had an effect on the final product, I do not relate each of them to a single, uniting discursive event. Working within the central focus of this dissertation, which is the identification and analysis of the simultaneous dominant discourse of submission and counter-discourse of resistance, I analyze the work of two novelists, revealing how their work affirms and rejects these discourses. I begin with the work of Pierre Loti, whose writing was influenced by his own photography, sketches, and private journals. In that section, I analyze his semi-autobiographical novel, *La Troisième jeunessee de Madame Prune,* focusing specifically on color symbolism and evocations of death. Next, I juxtapose this representation with the Hong Jong-u's depiction of Korea in his writing. The representation of Hong Jong-u in the French press was discussed in Chapter Two, but his writing was not analyzed. I use this chapter to demonstrate how Hong's novels, *Le Bois sec refleuri (Sim Cheong)* and *Printemps parfumé* (*Chunhyang)* are built upon the foundational themes of love and redemption, striking a sharp contrast with Loti's writings. In addition, I analyze Hong's preface to *Le Bois sec refleuri,* which can be considered an overt rejection of the dominant discourse of submission.

This perspective gleaned from the work of Hong Jong-u, as a Korean person responding to the ways that his country and his people were represented by others, carries important weight when one considers transnationalism as a co-emergent, co-constructive process of identity formation. Although this dissertation aims specifically to avoid re-affirming and recycling the

errors identified by Edward Said in his theoretical framework of Orientalism, it also seeks to respond to his call that those who are represented ought to be permitted to represent themselves. Therefore, allowing time and space in this project for attention to and an analysis of Hong Jong-u's own words and work is an essential endeavor, and is therefore a fitting addition to a dissertation about his people, his culture, and his time period.

4.1 Pierre Loti and La Troisième jeunesse de Madame Prune

Pierre Loti (pen name of Julien Marie Viaud) was born in Rochefort, France in 1850 and died in 1923. He was a sailor in the navy and traveled far and wide; he visited such locations as Istanbul, Tahiti, Japan, Korea, and a great many other places besides. During those travels, he produced a veritable wealth of sketches, photographs, and journals, which he used as reference materials for the semi-autobiographical novels which made him famous during his lifetime[135]. As an author, he befriended other authors, including Juliette Adam, François Coppée, Alphonse Daudet, and Ernest Renan[136] and he was elected to the *Académie française* at what can be considered a young age for such an election (Reed 1).

Once one of the pre-eminent exotic travel writers known worldwide, Loti's work today seems to fade into the background in comparison to that of his contemporaries, which has been

[135] By the time Loti published *La Troisième jeunesse de Madame Chrysanthème* in 1905, the book contained a list of other works by the same author: *Au Maroc, Aziyadé, Les Derniers jours de Pékin, Le Désert, L'Exilée, Fantôme d'Orient, Figures et choses qui passaient, Fleurs d'ennui, La Galilée, L'Inde, Japoneries d'autômne, Jérusalem, Le Livre de la pitié et de la mort, Madame Chrysanthème, Le Mariage de Loti, Matelot, Mon Frère Yves, Pêcheur d'Islande, Propos d'exil, Ramuntcho, Reflets sur la sombre route, Le Roman d'un enfant, le Roman d'un Spahi, and Vers Ispahan.* Three illustrated editions (*Pêcheur d'Islande, Les Trois dames de la Kasbah, Le Mariage de Loti)* and a set of complete works are also listed.

[136] Marcel Proust reported that Pierre Loti was his favorite author (Lafont, cited Ambrecht 81). Short lists of some of his friends can be found in Helene-Cecilia de Burgh-Woodman's "Homogeneity, 'glocalism' or somewhere in between?: A literary interpretation of identity in the era of globalization," p. 295 and Heather McKenzie's *Madame Chrysanthème as an Item of Nineteenth-Century French Japonaiserie*, p. 43.

more continuously celebrated within the French canon[137], but his diverse forms of self-expression have long been and continue to be the subject of serious academic inquiry in spite of his books falling in and out of popular and critical favor (Ambrecht 81). Figuring into a group of nineteenth and early twentieth century French travelers who produced a variety of texts and images in and about China, Japan, and elsewhere in Asia, Loti was similar to them in that their work about Korea has a history of being comparatively less studied and acknowledged. For instance, many of the articles and books which discuss Pierre Loti's *oeuvre* in Northeast Asia and/or *La Troisième jeunesse de Madame Prune* make no mention whatsoever of Loti's time spent in Korea, so this dissertation fills in that scholarly gap[138].

La Troisième jeunesse de Madame Prune is a sequel to Loti's more famous *Madame Chrysanthème*. Referred to as a semi-autobiographical novel, and written with his private journal, photographs, and sketches as reference materials, *Madame Chrysanthème* had a simple plot and quickly became incredibly famous not only in France, but also in other Western countries[139]. In *Madame Chrysanthème*, Pierre Loti is sent to Japan in course of his work as a

[137] In "The Nostalgia of Nowhere: Pierre Loti's Utopian Spaces," Thomas J.D. Ambrecht reports that "Loti has been taken to task by many critics (Barthes, Said, and Lafont, among others) for being a consummate orientalist, whose descriptions of the places he visited are a mixture of cliché and fantasy. In his time, however, Loti was not only wildly popular but also highly respected" (81).

[138] See: Henri Copin's "Loti et/à Angkor *avoir été celui qui vivra*," which *does* mention Korea but only in passing to explain that Loti arrived in Cambodia after first traveling in Korea and China (163); Yvan Daniel's "*Les Derniers jours de Pékin* (1902) de Pierre Loti : Lecture à rebours;" Vladimir Kapor's "Pour un exotisme antécolonial – l'œuvre de Pierre Loti dans la réflexion théorique de Marius-Ary Leblond;" Anna Madoeuf's "À Stamboul et à Nagasaki : Loti chez lui ici et là;" Heather McKenzie's Madame Chrysanthème *as an Item of Nineteenth-Century French Japonaiserie*, which bests its peers in the sense that it acknowledges that Loti visited Korea and that he commented on its geopolitical situation, but which says nothing more; Eiji Shimazaki's "Le Japon de Loti, ou l'attrait de l'étrangeté" and "Figuration de l'Orient à travers les romans de Pierre Loti et le discours colonial de son époque – Turquie, Inde, Japon;" Bruno Vercier's "À propos du *Mariage de Loti*;" and Irene L. Szyliowicz' *Pierre Loti and the Oriental Woman*; An exception to this general rule of writing-about-Loti-in-Japan-but-about-his-time-in-Korea can be found in "Pierre Loti et le Royaume ermite" by Frédéric Boulesteix.

[139] Here are some examples: first, Vincent Van Gogh painted a portrait of a "*mousmé*," which was a term used in the novel to describe a pretty Japanese woman, and which became popular in French slang after the work was published

sailor in the French navy. Once in Japan, he resolves to marry a Japanese woman and live the most authentically Japanese life that he can. He essentially purchases a woman and does not view the marriage as real and binding. He has an enjoyable summer with that "wife," his friends, *etc.*, and the near entirety of the novel is spent *describing* what he sees and does. Once he learns that he is about leave Japan for his next post in China, he begins to feel morose and more attached to the country and his life there, but when he happens to find his wife counting her riches when she thinks he has already left, he realizes that she only married him for the money. He labels this disappointment "*encore plus japonais que je n'aurais jamais su l'imaginer*" (314) and decides to forget all of his memories about Japan, throwing his collection of flowers picked "*ça et là, au moment des départs, dans différents lieux du monde*" (324) overboard, apologizing to the Japanese flowers for giving them such a vast, sad grave (328).

Pierre Loti returned to the same port in Nagasaki, Japan, fifteen years later (December 1900). Throughout his narrative, he complains incessantly of the cold and compares Japanese men and women to monkeys and cats. He learns that his former false wife, Madame Chrysanthème, has married someone else, he develops a fascination with visiting a twelve-year old entertainer, makes brief comments about Japanese preparations for war, and laments his youth now being behind him. Not much happens to move the plot, with no major events taking place except that Loti and crew learn that instead of a six-month long journey to Japan, they will instead be staying "in Chinese waters" for two years. When the ice in the bay melts enough for them to depart, they abruptly go back to sea and Loti arrives in Seoul for the first and the last time in his life.

(Reed 4), and second, the novel inspired a theater production that is today very well known world-wide: *Madame Butterfly* (Reed 1). By his death, his publisher, Calmann-Lévy had released 221 editions of the book (Shimazaki 187).

Loti writes one chapter about his time in Korea, divided into two parts. The first part, "À Séoul," begins with a description of the changing of the guard at the emperor's palace, describes the people he sees in the city, describes the city itself, makes a commentary on Korea's history and customs, discusses Korean metalwork and pottery, describes the city and its people again as if viewing a panorama, from the ramparts, then describes the countryside past the city gates. He uses this is a segue to discuss the peaceful scenery in opposition to anti-Christian persecution and a description of the Catholic Cathedral, and finally ends his description of the city and its people with a description of "*deux ou trois rues où l'on aurait pu se croire à Nagasaki ou à Yeddo*" (217), an opportunity for him to discuss the increasingly noticeable Japanese influence on Seoul (217). He continues this first part of the chapter with a new description of Seoul and its people on a rainy day. Everything is somber, gray, and filthy. A bird spends the night in his room to hide from the rain and leaves by the window to go and perch on the imperial gate.

In the second part of the chapter, "À la cour," Loti discusses the funeral of Empress Myeongseong at length. He describes the old palace, the empress' assassination, describes portions of the funeral rites, describes the new palace, which he says was built because the emperor found himself unable to continue living where his wife had been assassinated, and also discusses a third palace "*encore plus ancien que celui du crime*" (224). He then gives the reader nine pages detailing a banquet held for them by the emperor, at which they are served excellent food, entertained by musicians and dancers, and given elaborate gifts. Finally, he ends his narrative about Korea with a paragraph about its geopolitical situation, mentioning China, Japan, and Russia in relation to the emperor's reactions to their movements.

I focus my analysis of Pierre Loti's treatment of Korea in his novel on three distinct aspects, showing how each of them place Loti's narrative firmly in line with the dominant

discourse of submission. First, I will discuss his obsession with color symbolism. In the twenty-seven pages across which his narrative is spread, Loti makes sixty-nine individual, explicit mentions of color. See the table below for a detailed record of when those mentions occur in the text. Loti also makes several implicit references to color (*e.g. "bloody," "pale," "the color of ash"*) that do not feature in the table. The reader is absolutely assailed with color imagery throughout the text. These mentions of color are used frequently in association with death and decline. I begin with a focus on the color white, but then I expand on Loti's use of color, showing how he paints a picture of death and violence in everything that he sees. Second, I will discuss Loti's zoomorphism; he has a frequent tendency to reduce Asian peoples to the status of insects and animals. This tendency, and his highly problematic representation of women in texts about Japan have both been discussed in the scholarly literature, but neither have been addressed in terms of how he treats Korea in his writing, so I also end this section with a discussion of his depictions of women and gender.

Color	Frequency	Page numbers
White	16	208, 211, 212, 215, 219, 221, 222, 226, 230, 233
Yellow	12	208, 216, 218, 219, 222, 226, 227, 229
Gray	11	208, 209, 213, 214, 217, 227
Red	11	208, 209, 212, 213, 222, 223, 224, 226, 227
Black	7	210, 218, 222, 223, 224, 229, 232
Gold	4	212, 218, 223, 226
Green	3	212, 226, 233
Silver	2	213, 233
Bronze	2	217, 226
Copper	1	213

Table 4.1 Color Frequency in Chapter 40 of Pierre Loti's *La Troisième jeunesse de MP*

As in *Madame Chrysanthème* and in the first portion of *La Troisième jeunesse de Madame Prune*, Loti's authorial gaze remains fixed wholeheartedly on crafting vivid descriptions through to the end of the book. It has been said that Loti's "genius for evocative word imagery outweighed his lack of literary form," which suggests that what can be *seen* in his texts might be more valuable than that which can be read in them (James, 1893, and Gosse, 1905, cited by de Burgh-Woodman 295). It has also been said that Loti does not even think, he sees (Bon, cited in Quella-Villéger and Vercier 5). Known to sketch, draw, and photograph the places he visited so that he could render his written descriptions of what he experienced more realistic, he strived for the kind of ekphrasis that Samuels describes in *The Spectacular Past: Popular History and the Novel in Nineteenth-Century France* when he asks how a novel can envision the past:

> …a rhetorical device that has come to refer to the description of a plastic form- usually a work of visual art- in a literary work, but that had a much broader definition in its earliest use. For the Greeks, ekphrasis referred to any attempt to conjure up an image in words through description. (165)

Samuels furthers this point about intentionally blurred lines between the textual and the visual when he writes that "even an unillustrated text becomes spectacular through the use of verbal images that materialize an object before the mind's eye" (*ibid.*, 15). This process by which a spectacular text is born can also give rise to spectacular discourse- through the use of discursive verbal images. As complexes of signs and practices, discourses can be expressed not only verbally and textually, but also in the visual field. I argue that Loti's use of color is discursive.

In Chapter Three of this dissertation, I discussed the discursive importance of the color

gold during the short-lived Korean Empire (대한제국), demonstrating how its usage was a means by which that Empire symbolically broke away from sinocentrism and declared its sovereignty[140] but I did not discuss other colors. For French travelers to Korea, the color that most represented the nation was white[141]. I will begin here with a discussion of how Loti used the color white in particular to conjure up images of death. Multiaccentual, ubiquitous, relative, contingent, and transcendable[142], it is a prime example of a means of visually expressing a given discourse whose usage was bound up in the notions of power and competition, readily able to be used to express social differences. By the time that writers like Pierre Loti and his ilk had begun to produce pieces of literature and art that represented Korea, it had already long been associated within Chinese culture with a variety of abstract nouns. Some of these were virtues: righteousness and strength, for example… but others were less desirable: mourning, purity, and death. Of these potential meanings, mourning and death became inextricably and ceaselessly linked to the color white in Western representations of China. The more positive potential meanings were rejected

[140] See Chapter 1 for more about this.

[141] Joseph de la Nézière, in *L'Extrême-Orient en images : Sibérie, Chine, Corée, Japon* : "*…la couleur corénne est le blanc : blanc vif de craie, blanc mat de la boue, toutes les variétés du blanc se retrouvent dans les vêtements indigènes, et partout, en Corée, ce sera la même symphonie en blanc majeur. Il n'est besoin d'aucune allusion à la future mainmise par le Czar pour appeler ce pays l'Empire Blanc*" (pages are not numbered in this work);

Nivelle writes in *Chez L'Empereur de Corée,* "*Alors que, dans une ville chinoise, la couleur dominante est le bleu, ici, c'est le blanc. Tous les hommes sont uniformément vêtus de blanc ; les classes pauvres portent une veste blanche et un large pantalon blanc serré au-dessus de la cheville, et, sur la tête, un foulard blanc noué ; les classes aisées portent, au lieu de vestes, des robes blanches de coton ou de satin,"* (529) and *"Uniformément, de temps immémorial, toutes les femmes sont vêtues de blanc, avec un manteau de soie verte qui, au lieu de poser sur les épaules, est remonté sur la tête,"* (530).

[142] These attributes come to me by way of Richard Terdiman in *Discourse/Counter-Discourse*. To understand "multiaccentuality" it is necessary to agree that discourses belong to the semiotic realm and that this realm is a site of social conflict, wherein "a sign is invested with the competing meanings of social groups and refuses to remain static as an immediate consequence of such conflict inscribed in its use" (36). Regarding ubiquity, and concerning the dominant discourse specifically, its "presence is defined by the social impossibility of its absence" (*ibid.*, 61). Terdiman finds that it is the problem of the analyst of a dominant discourse to achieve the necessary distance for reconfiguring hegemonic discourse "as relative, as contingent, and thus as potentially transcendable" (56).

in favor of the macabre. This preference was extended to representations of Korea as Western writers and illustrators who produced work about Korea continued to evoke the color white in order to differentiate it from other nations, frequently associating it with death, decay, and the spirit world[143].

When Loti describes Seoul, he does it in such a way that the houses and streets resemble a cemetery. The inhabitants themselves resemble a teeming mass of phantoms dressed in "diaphanous" white clothing:

> *Ces milliers de petites carapaces, longues et étroites, servant de toitures aux maisons de Séoul, je me rappelle comme elles jouaient singulièrement les pierres tombales lorsqu'on les apercevait à vol d'oiseau. La ville, regardée du haut des grands miradors couronnant les portes, produisait un étonnant effet de cimetière ; on eût dit une infinie jonchée de tombes dans une enceinte crénelée, - avec de longues avenues où s'agitait une peuplade de fantômes, toujours en diaphanes vêtements blancs*[144]. (214-215)

The author's conceptualization of Korea is one in which the inhabitants deceased and the entirety of the city of Seoul is symbolic of death[145], the supernatural, and of the animalistic (consider his

[143] Villetard de Lagéurie, in *La Corée, indépendante, russe ou japonaise*, refers to the "*spectacle de ce fourmillement de fantômes,"* (133) in reference to crowds of people clothed in the color white. Varat uses the color white to evoke "antique mystery " writing, "de là-haut, dans leurs blancs vêtements, ils évoquent à mon esprit le souvenir de quelque mystère antique" (303)

[144] Translated from the French by S.R.C. Plimsoll, 1919: "I remember these thousands of little carapaces, long and narrow, which serve for roofing on the houses of Seoul, looked most oddly like tombstones when one had a bird's-eye view of them. The city, seen from the great watch-towers crowning the gates, looked astonishingly like a cemetery; I should have called it an infinite scatter of graves within a crenellated boundary- with long avenues on which moved a race of phantoms, all in diaphanous white raiment." (157)

[145] See also: Charles Varat's *Voyage en Corée.* In his description of Seoul, he interrupts himself to first discuss death

use of the word "carapace" at the very beginning of his description; I will discuss this further in the pages that follow). In contrast to the significance that the color white held for French observers of Korea, "In Joseon, the color white symbolized integrity, innocence and principle. In ancient religions of the Korean peninsula, white was adored and worshipped as the color of the sun, and was believed to symbolize cleanliness, purity, and light" (Kim 19). This color sign is therefore polysemic and multiaccentual since its meanings are in competition with each other in this shared social context.

Kim Seok-hee, in the article cited above, "Joseon in Color: 'Colored Clothes Campaign' and the 'White Clothes Discourse'," explains that because symbols themselves represent the "desires of the society" that imposed the symbols, they are always political in nature (27). This political meaning tied to use of the color white in Korean national dress would later result in "The Colored Clothes Campaign," which Kim writes "may have been the most controversial event related to color that ever occurred in Korean history," (8). Kim expands on this, writing:

> The most representative color of Korea – none other than the color white- was stigmatized and derided as a "symbol of weakness" through this campaign was attacked by the Office of the Japanese Governor-General of Joseon, which argued that white clothing should be abolished and modernization should be pursued" (8)

I argue that this stigmatization and derision of the color white has roots in Western accounts of Korea, which failed to recognize and acknowledge the symbolism the color had in Korean culture. Pierre Loti's use of the color white in the Korean context fits into this collective body of

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and executions: "*Avant de parler du Séoul monumental, disons quelques mots de ses environs. Vers la porte du Sud se trouve l'emplacement du lieu des exécutions. On y voit épars les ossements des criminels, et quelquefois leur corps décapités, non loin desquels se trouve la tête"* (299).

work that the Office of the Japanese Governor-General of Joseon later seized as a target for change.

Another instance in which the color white is used in Loti's text in such a way that it is related to death can be found in a scene in which Loti, the other officers of his ship, and the admiral were invited to an audience with the emperor in the new palace. Loti writes that their meeting place was chosen by *nécromanciens* in order to avoid *funeste* consequences, and the color white serves as a backdrop for the scene:

> *Les nécromanciens, consultés sur l'appartement où il convenait de nous recevoir pour que notre visite n'eût point de conséquences funestes, avaient obstinément indiqué une sorte de hangar, aux boiseries* ***vert bronze*** *avec quelques peinturlures* ***vermillon*** *; on y avait jeté des tapis en hâte et apporté un grand paravent admirable, en soie* ***blanche****, seul luxe de cette salle ouverte. C'est devant ce fond d'un* ***blanc d'ivoire****, brodé et rebrodé de fleurs, d'oiseaux et de papillons…* (226)

Notice that every sentence has at least one mention of color and that when the emperor and his son are introduced, they too are associated with colors: "*le père vêtu de* ***jaune*** *imperial, le fils de* ***rouge*** *cerise,"* (226). Although the focus here is primarily on the color white, it should be mentioned that Loti also uses the colors black and gray to conjure up images of death (perhaps being more in line with Western portrayals of death being associated with the color black, as in funeral garb and in the Black Death). In fact, as can be seen above, colors are often mixed together to create a more vivid tableau, even if that tableau is a mélange of somber grays, whites, and blacks. Notable scenes in which this is easily viewed are 1) a scene in which Loti describes the palace at which Empress Myeongseong was assassinated, and 2) a scene at the very end of

the text when Loti describes dancers dressed as tigers, performing for the French admiral and other officers (including Loti).

From the first scene:

> *La petite chambre du crime,* ***sombre*** *aussi et les stores baissés, étalait un* ***funèbre*** *désordre : boiseries brisées,* ***noircies****, comme léchées par le feu. La grande salle d'apparat avait une voûte à caissons, d'un* ***rouge de sang****, et partout des peintures représentant les divinités et les bêtes qui* ***hantent*** *le rêve des hommes d'ici ; le trône de Corée, du même* ***rouge sinistre****, s'élevait au milieu ; il se détachait, monumental, sur une étrange peinture crépusculaire, déployée comme la toile de fond d'un décor au théâtre, où, dans des nuages d'****or livide****, une planète se levait, large et* ***sanglante****, au-dessus de montagnes chaotiques.*
> *L'Empereur donc, ne pouvant plus se sentir dans ce palais, où il voyait des* ***mains sans corps et trempées dans du sang*** *remuer autour de lui dès qu'il* ***faisait noir****…*
> (223)

The lexical field (or "lexical graveyard," one might say in this instance) continuously uses color, shadow, and tone to conjure up images of death and haunting. In a sense, it is as though Loti himself is haunted by these ideas, because even in the second scene, which was meant to be lighthearted entertainment for visitors, Loti continues to see and hear death all around him: "*L'air s'emplit de beuglements* ***sinistres*** *poussés par des trompes au timbre* ***grave*** *[…] si* ***lugubre*** *à entendre que l'on frissonnait plutôt d'avoir envie de sourire […] des* ***monstres*** *artificels en peluche* ***noir*** *et jaune…"* (229). Not only do we witness death, decay, and decline scattered throughout his text, it is positively perforated with references to blood and violence.

Perhaps the most noteworthy instance of this can be found in his depiction of the Korean throne, starkly at odds with other nineteenth-century francophone descriptions of it.

For example, Jean de Pange describes the artwork behind the throne as *"représentant un paysage fantastique"* in the context of "*merveilleux décor oriental"* in his *En Corée : ouvrage illustré des photographies de l'auteur et accompagné d'un itinéraire* (14) and Joseph de la Nézière, who was invited to a paint an official portrait of the emperor, writes in his *L'extrême-Orient en Images : Sibérie, Chine, Corée, Japon:*

> *Enfin l'esquisse du portrait est terminée : l'Empereur, en grand costume, est assis sur un trône doré, derrière lequel se déploient les panneaux sculptés et fouillés à jour d'un paravent en laque rouge. Sur une toile de fond, due au pinceau d'un artiste indigène et d'un aspect fort décoratif, un soleil jaune collabore avec une lune également jaune pour éclairer un paysage où s'entassent, en une confusion pittoresque, les montagnes, les forêts, les fleuves, les rochers, la mer*[146].

[146] Pages are unnumbered in this work.

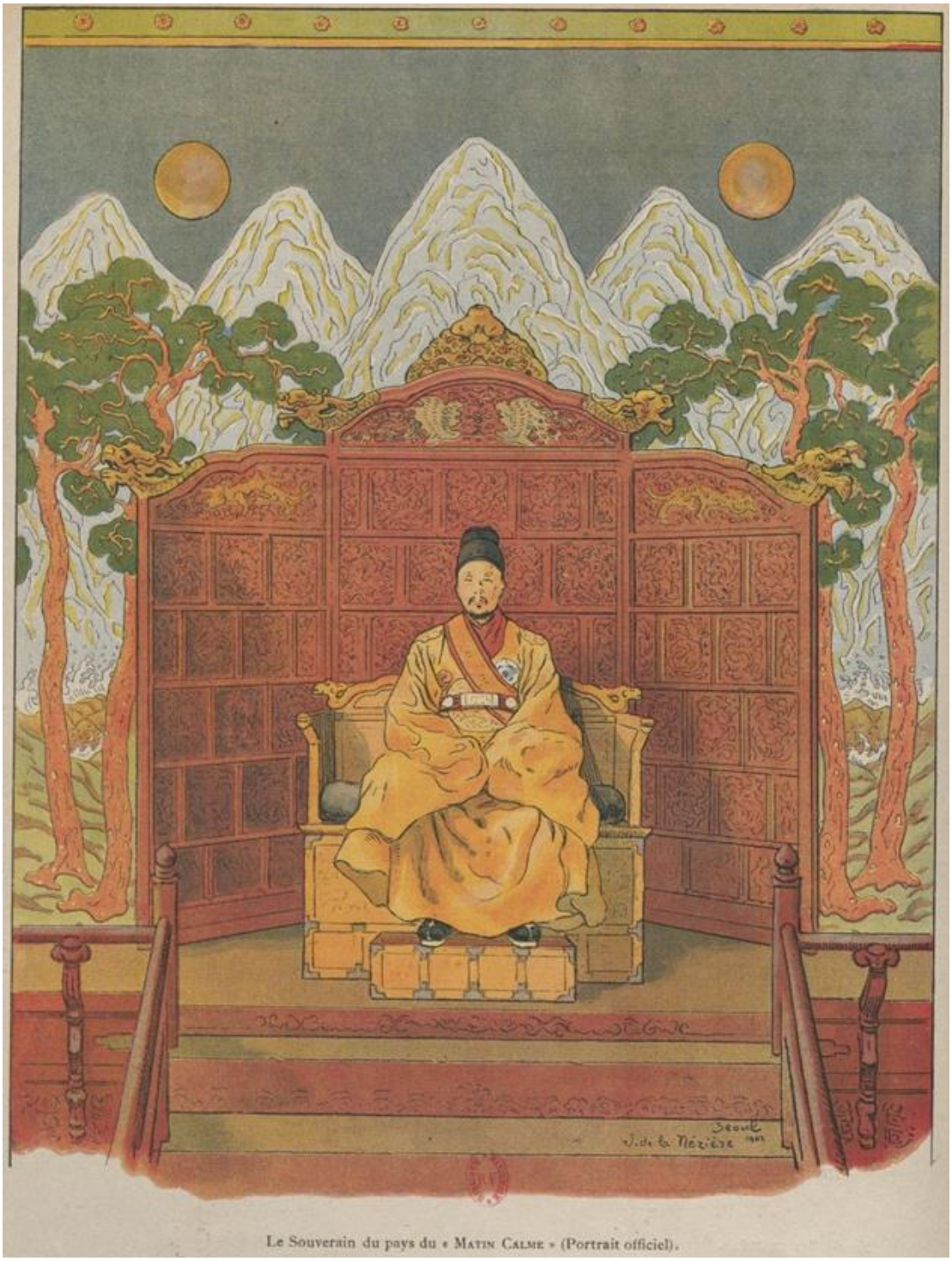

Figure 4.1: de la Nézière, Joseph. “The Land of the Morning Calm, Official Portrait of the King.” *L'extrême-Orient en Images : Sibérie, Chine, Corée, Japon*, Félix Julien, 1903, Paris.

Pierre Loti finds instead that the scene was "*un paysage de cauchemar, avec des forêts, des cimes escarpées, et le lever d'une lune géante, ou de je ne sais quel fantôme d'astre sans rayons*," (224), with his use of the word "phantom" or "ghost" firmly keeping it within the bounds of his lexical graveyard.

I will preface my analysis of Loti's zoomorphism with the acknowledgement of an academic dispute in which there are two camps: one which finds that Loti's work is colonialist, and another which finds that it is decidedly not. I will introduce Loti's zoomorphism in terms of how it fits into this debate. The debate boils down to whether one recognizes Loti's work as colonialist or not, and whether it is possible for him, operating within the framework of Western travel writer describing the other to avoid being colonialist. Vladimir Kapor, in "Pour un exotisme antécolonial – l'œuvre de Pierre Loti dans la réflexion théorique de Marius-Ary Leblond" vociferously defends Loti, taking to task those who whose "lazy historiography" leads them to ignore his clear concerns for Indigenous peoples and to negate any global aesthetic appreciation of his work [147](71). For Kapor, Loti is an anti-colonialist writer victimized by colonialist and post-colonialist political movements (70).

Others find that Loti is a colonialist writer *par excellence*[148]. Peter Turberfield takes a more nuanced stance, writing in "The Anti-colonialism of an Orientalist Writer" that labeling

[147] *"Lire Loti à l'aune de son expérience coloniale fournit indéniablement des aperçus précieux de mentalité métropolitaine à l'égard des colonies et des cultures non-occidentales plus généralement à l'aube de la Troisième république. En faire de Loti le représentant typique afin d'intenter un procès à cette même mentalité et l'idéologie qui la sous-tend fait preuve, en revanche, d'abus exégétique et de paresse historiographique à la fois. Car amputer Loti de quelques-unes de ses plus belles pages pour des raisons d'ordre géographique et idéologique, ne peut que nuire à l'appréciation esthétique globale de son œuvre ; le réduire à un occidental dominateur et condescendant, ou à un impressionniste narcissique incapable d'empathie, c'est ignorer son souci non dissimulé pour la condition des marins et mêmes des indigènes, obscurci par un appareil discursif et stylistique périmé.* (71)

[148] See Vladimir Kapor's article for his arguments against those individuals, *e.g.,* Alec Hargreaves, Chris Bongie, Marius-Ary Leblond, Tzvetan Todorov, and Lesley Blanch.

Loti as "nothing more than a successful representative of the nineteenth-century exotic travel writing genre" at best and as "a representative of that genre's most abhorrent excesses" at worst is "too simplistic and ignores or lightly dismisses the very real anti-colonial sentiment that Loti created" (138). After tracing Loti's political engagements in tandem with his writing, Turberfield ultimately finds that Loti's works are "undeniably exotic/Orientalist" but maintains that they should be considered with the knowledge that Loti believed "other cultures should be left with their own ways and traditions" and that he "never ceased to rail against the spread of a Westernization which he saw as rendering everywhere the same" (147). I argue that Loti was indeed a colonialist writer, but that he was a colonialist writer of a specific kind: an aestheticentrist colonialist writer.

In "Uses of Aesthetics: After Orientalism," the authors, Kojin Karatani and Sabu Kohso spend a good portion of the article defining what they mean by "aestheticentrism." To be very brief, aestheticentrism involves confusing the aesthetic representation of the other with the reality of the other. By extension, it is easy to mistake the aestheticentrist's clear respect for beauty in the other as clear respect for the other[149]. Karatani and Kohso explore the relationship between colonialism and aestheticentrism, finding that "for aestheticentrists, colonialism is conveniently obscured" in their vision of reality (153) but that "Aestheticentrists always appear as anticolonialists," (153) which is the dynamic at play in Loti's work. It is exactly this contradictory relationship between his aesthetics and his colonialism that has befuddled Lotian scholars and caused division among them.

[149] Karatani and Kohso provide an example: "It is like the distinction between a movie and reality: In the movie theater, we can admire gangsters as heroes, while outside we have to beware them. However, the characteristic of aestheticentrists is that they forget to remove the brackets. They confuse the reality of the other with what is achieved by bracketing. Or they confuse their respect for beauty with respect for the other" (152-153).

I argue that Loti employed this aestheticentrist form of colonialist writing in service of the dominant discourse of submission, to which he clearly subscribed and helped to endure. In "*Les Damnés de la Terre,*" Franz Fanon writes that the colonizer dehumanizes the colonized and that by animalizing him through allusions of crawling, hordes, and filth, among other things (45). Fanon adds that the colonizer "constantly refers to the bestiary" when he wants to find the right word to describe something [or someone] well (45). This manner of dehumanization through zoomorphism is incessant in Loti's writing about Korea. In his first paragraph, he mentions "*un milier d'hommes,"* (208), followed by "*des figures plates et jaunes,"* (208) in the second paragraph, and by the third, the reader already encounters: "*une foule uniformément habillé de mousseline blanche*" (208). Therefore, we see the Korean people represented as a teeming horde.

When it rains, Loti writes, people hike up their robes, but they become damp, wrinkled, and filled with droppings (*crotte,* p. 219), making them filthy like animals[150]. The use of the word "*crotte"* can serve to make the reader envision "dog droppings," which is "*crotte de chien*" in French. He continues to mention these crowds, which he often describes as being composed of white, ghostlike figures (pp. 211-212, 214-216, 218-219) and frequently relates Korean people and their environment to the animal world. He writes that the roofs of Korean houses are made of insect carapaces[151] and adds that the millions of tiny houses with these roofs look like *"un peuple de cloportes*," or a population of woodlice (p. 216).

[150] Loti was neither the first nor the last to depict Korea as "dirty," *e.g.*; R. Nivelle in "Chez l'Empereur de Corée," (527-529); Félix Régamey in "Le Bois sec refleuri," (564); Claire Vautier and Hippolyte Frandin in *En Corée,* (42, 51) (both Régamey and Vautier/Frandin refer to Korea as a "cloaca"). Charles Varat, in "Voyage en Corée," (321 and 260); Raoul-Charles Villetard de Laguérie, in *La Corée, indépendante, russe ou japonaise,* (134).

[151] In *En Corée,* Claire Vautier and Hippolyte Frandin also refer to these roofs as "carapaces" (53).

Mentions of animals[152] inhabiting the environment in Loti's narrative abound, accompanied by ten different instances in which Loti either states outright that they are animals or associates some part of their face or clothing with an animal[153]. In Loti's description of court officials arriving for audience with the king, we are able to see Fanon's "constant reference to the bestiary" at work:

> *La parade finie, c'était l'heure des audiences et des Conseils. Alors, dans d'élégantes chaises de laque, on apportait* ***quantité de cérémonieux personnages*** *en robe de soie à fleurs, coiffés de ce haut bonnet, - avec deux espèces de pavillons comme des oreilles écartée,* ***comme des antennes*** *– qui s'est démodé en Chine depuis environ trois siècles. Et, tandis que les abords du portique rouge s'encombraient de toutes ces belles chaises au repos et de leurs longs brancards flexibles gisant par terre, je regardais* ***ces gens de Cour gravir l'un après l'autre*** *les marches du seuil impérial, puis disparaître dans le palais : dignitaires antédiluviens qui venaient régler les choses du vieil empire croulant ; sous leur d'apparat, ils avaient l'air de* ***grands insectes, aux têtes compliquées, aux élytres chatoyants[154]***. (209)

[152] Horses which fight and bite each other, pp. 208, 214; cicadas, p. 215; sheep, p. 218; a sparrow, p. 219; birds, p. 223; hundreds of pigeons, p. 224; herons, pheasants, bucks, does, tigers; p. 225; birds, butterflies, p. 226; bears, p. 230.

[153] Insects, p. 209; seals, p. 211; cats, p. 217; wings of insects, p. 226; scarabs, p. 226; tigers, p. 229 and 233; bulls, p. 230; birds, p. 230; cicadas, p. 230.

[154] Translated from the French by S.R.C. Plimsoll, 1919: "Parade over, there came the hour for audiences and councils. Then in elegant lacquer chairs were brought a number of ceremonious personages in flowered silk robes, hatted in that high bonnet- with two flag-like wings with protruding ears or antennae- which went out of fashion in China some three centuries ago. And whilst the approaches to the red door become encumbered with the fine chairs at rest with their long flexible poles leaning to the ground, I watched these courtiers climb one after another up the steps of the Imperial threshold and then disappear into the palace; antediluvian dignitaries, who were come to set in order the affairs of the crumbling old empire; under their robes of pomp they looked like great insects, with

Loti's "*quantité de personnages*" gives rise to the idea of the horde, which is reinforced when he writes that they climb "one after another" up the stairs. He writes that their hats are like antennae, and he summarizes his description by stating that the men seemed like big insects with wings that were "*chatoyants."* The root of the word, "*chat,"* means "cat" in English. "*Chatoyant"* is an adjective for something shiny and reflective, and according to the Larousse dictionary online, it comes from the changing eyes of that animal. Loti could have chosen "*brillant," "étincelant,"* or any other word or phrase that conveyed the idea of reflectivity, but by choosing a word that has its roots in another animal, he further intensifies the effect of his zoomorphism. Lexical decisions like this one abound in the text, but due to the limitations of space and time, I will leave them to my readers to examine individually, should they so desire (footnotes in this section contain an exhaustive list of all such instances).

Often, when Pierre Loti is not transforming the very real individuals he encounters into animal figures, ghosts, or corpses, he is dealing with their gender representation in a problematic way. Outside of the context of his writing about Korea, Lotian scholars have discussed his misogyny and sexuality at length[155]. I argue here that Loti's treatment of women and gender aligns with his contemporaries, who, with very few exceptions, promoted the idea that Korean women were by nature unattractive, and that Korean men and boys were indistinguishable from

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complicated heads and wing shields of shot colours" (153).

[155] See: Alec Hargreaves', *The Colonial Experience in French Fiction*; Kyoko Koma's "La Représentation de la femme japonaise dans *Madame Chrysanthème* de Pierre Loti;" Anna Madoeuf's "À Stamboul et à Nagasaki : Loti chez lui ici et là;" Heather McKenzie's *Madame Chrysanthème as an Item of Nineteenth-Century French Japonaiserie*; Paulette Alice and Lorrain Mould's *L'Exotisme oriental dans l'œuvre de Pierre* Loti; Marzieh Rouhani's "Pour une étude de *Vers Ispahan* : La représentation de la femme et de l'espace;" Eiji Shimazaki's *Figuration de l'Orient à travers les romans de Pierre Loti et le discours colonial de son époque – Turquie, Inde, Japon;"* Irene L. Szyliowicz' *Pierre Loti's Attitudes Toward the Oriental Woman* and *Pierre Loti and the Oriental Woman*; Tzvetan Todorov's *Nous et les autres : la réflexion française sur la diversité humaine*.

women and girls if not for their hats and hairstyles[156]. Charles Varat provides a clear example of all of these aspects tidily put together in a single passage when he writes the following in his "Voyage en Corée," published in *Le Tour du Monde* nearly a decade before Loti's arrival there:

> *Elles [les femmes coréennes] sont fort laides et disgracieuses, se rasent les sourcils en ligne étroite afin de décrire un arc parfaitement net. Leurs cheveux huilés, épais, noirs et à reflet roux, forment, par je ne sais quel artifice, une énorme coiffure qui charge lourdement leur tête. […] Plus loin, jouent, en poussant de grands cris, quelques jeunes gens ; si je n'avais vu leurs mères, je les prendrais pour des femmes, tant mon regard est trompé par la grâce de leurs traits, leurs longues tresses flottants et leur singulier pantalon bouffant qui ressemble à une jupe*[157]. (292)

[156] *E.g.,* Varat writes on page 306 of the same text that "*les femmes du people*" are "*rarement belles.*" His negative appraisals of Korean women's beauty does not appear to prevent him from engaging in sexual activities with them, however: *"Mes deux petites mousmés étendent alors à terre les ftons, légers matelas entre lesquels on se glisse, et je forme bientôt avec eux un véritable sandwich humain. Quelques instances après je goûte dans l'obscurité toute la douceur, la quiétude, le charme qu'on éprouve en se sentant renaître à la vie après de longues privations de toute sortes," (359).* Gustave Pradier, in "La Corée il y a quarante ans" reports: "*Les femmes sont habillées à peu près comme les hommes. On ne les distingue qu'à la coiffure,"* (188) and later recounts a scene in which his inability to distinguish between Korean men and women plays out. In that scene, which we can assume to be a true event, he comes across some of his subordinates having trapped and beaten a couple of women. When his men describe the women's injuries (that they caused), they use "*elles"* and feminine adjectives. Pradier asks with incredulity, "*Mais alors, ces deux Coréens, ce sont des femmes ?" (312)* to which his men respond that they are indeed women and that knowing the difference comes from looking at their hair. Pradier has trouble believing this, writing that they looked inhuman, and like creatures: *"J'avoue que j'étais très incertain; ces deux creatures étendues à terre, dans des costumes blancs, tout salis, tout déchirés, au pied de la grande statute si calme de Bouddah, éclairées par les lueurs blafardes des bouts de bougies tenus par quatre ou cinq de nos hommes, n'avaient rien d'humain,"* (313). Claire Vautier and Hippolyte Frandin go so far in their *En Corée* as to tell the story of a Korean dancer brought to Europe by her French lover, who once in France, becomes aware of her physical inferiority in comparison to more beautiful European women to such a point that she becomes horribly depressed, wasting away to the point that she resembled "*un petit singe que, pour plaisanter, on aurait costumé en femme*," (139) eventually killing herself after returning to Korea (141).

[157] My translation: "They [Korean women] are very ugly and unsightly, they shave their eyebrows in a narrow line in order to draw a perfectly clean arc. Their oiled hair, thick, black and reddish, forms, by I don't know what artifice, an enormous hairstyle that weighs heavily on their heads. […] Further away, a few young people are playing, shouting loudly; if I hadn't seen their mothers, I would take them for women, with my gaze being so deceived by the grace of their features, their long flowing braids, and their odd, puffy pants that look like skirts."

A few pages later, Varat expands on this portrait of women and children by writing of the former that *"les femmes du people, rarement belles, circulent non seulement le visage découvert, mais leur poitrine apparaît souvent à nu, entre leur petite camisole et le large lacet de leur jupon surélevé* (306-308). I would like to be clear that when Loti writes about Korean women and children, he is joining a discursive trend rather than inventing one.

Depicting Korean people as dirty, as animals, and as children serves to justify the notion that these people were simply destined to submit to a greater power and that losing authority over themselves was logical[158]. Irene L. Szyliowicz even finds that Loti depicts Japanese men in positions of authority as being "particularly physically unattractive" (252). For Loti, and I argue for his contemporaries by extension, painting Korean women as ugly was an exercise in gaining control over them and what they represented in society. Consider Loti's depiction of female court dancers:

> *Une douzaine de* ***petites*** *personnes si* ***drôles, mièvre, pâlottes****, avec des airs si* ***pudiques*** *dans leurs robes longues ! De minuscules figures plates, des* ***yeux bridés à ne plus pouvoir s'ouvrir****,* ***d'invraisemblables édifices de cheveux*** *en torsade, représentant pour chacune la toison d'une douzaine de femmes normales ; et* ***des petit chapeaux bergère*** *posés là-dessus ! Quelque chose de notre XVIIIe siècle français se retrouvait dans ces atours, d'une mode infiniment*

[158] What may very well be the most disturbing appraisal of Koreans as animals is tied to Korean sexuality and is applied to men and women alike. Charles Dallet's *Histoire de l'Église de Corée*, which is a history both of the Korean Catholic Church and of Korea, contrived moral justification for the French civilizing mission, attests: "*Les Coréens des deux sexes sont naturellement très-passionnés ; mais l'amour véritable ne se trouve guère en ce pays, car la passion chezu eux est purement physique, le cœur n'y est pour rien. Ils ne connaissent que l'appétit animal, l'instinct de la brute qui, pour se satisfaire, se rue à l'aveugle sur le premier objet à sa portée ; aussi la corruption des mœurs dépasse tout ce qu'on peut imaginer. Elle est telle, que l'on peut affirmer hardiment que plus de la moitié des individus ne connaissent pas leurs véritables parents." (CLIV-CLV).*

*plus **ancienne** ; elles avaient un faux air de **poupées** Louis XVI*[159]. (231)

In this paragraph, Loti begins by saying that the dancers are small, silly, insipid, pale, and modest. This description is a typical one for him to describe Asian women[160]. In describing their faces, he says they are flat, with eyes so slanted they would not open anymore. Mentions of slanted eyes in French texts about Korea are rarely divorced from racism and I remind my reader that I discussed descriptions of Korean eyes in Chapter Two of this dissertation. The one that Loti gives us here is neither positive nor kind. Moreover, by describing Korean women's hairstyles in this passage as being antiquated, he makes use of one of the dominant discourse's most popular mechanisms: claiming that Korea was behind the times and needed outside help to modernize.

A final note about the representation of Korean women in Loti's *La Troisième jeunesse de Madame Prune*: although the author grants himself the freedom to depict women as being part of a massive crowd of ghosts, to relate them to animals, and to depict them as being filthy, at no point does he elect to give them a voice. There is no mention of Korean women's opinions about anything whatsoever, and he never allows them to speak for themselves. I counsel my readers to consider Hong Jong-u's novels as a Korean response to francophone representations of Korea like Pierre Loti's- especially in terms of how Hong represents women in his texts, starkly differentiating from his authorial peers.

[159] S.R.C. Plimsoll's translation: "A dozen of such odd roguish little people, rather pale of face, with such modest features in their long robes! Flat miniature faces, eyes so bridled that it looked impossible to open them, unnatural erections of corded hair, each one representing the heads of a dozen normal women; and little shepherdess hats perched a-top! There was something of our French eighteenth century to be found in these fashions, but in an infinitely more ancient mode; they had a deceitful appearance of Louis XVI dolls. Never would we have imagined Asiatic dancing girls under such an aspect; but in Korea everything is absurd and impossible to foresee."

[160] In Madame Chrysanthème *as an Item of Nineteenth-Century French Japonaiserie*, Heather McKenzie remarked on the (over)use of these words in Loti's writing, noting in particular that Loti himself acknowledged that he abused the word "little" in *Madame Chrysanthème* (219).

4.2 Hong Jong-u and *Printemps parfumé*

Hong Jong-u's *Printemps parfumé* was published in 1892 and is mistakenly considered to be the first translation of an East Asian work of literature into French (Sancho, p. 4; Li, 4). It is doubtlessly the first Korean work of literature translated into French. The novel is an adaptation and translation of a classic Korean folk opera, or *pansori*[161], called *Chunhyang*. Jinhee Shin writes in "Hyun Jaemyeong's Opera Chunhyang-jeon: Ancient Traditions and Western Perspectives" that "the younger Korean generation and the general population of Korea are not familiar with the story" (7) Nevertheless, it is a piece of cultural heritage of some consequence. The choice to adapt a tale from the *pansori* genre, a form of cultural heritage unique to Korea[162], for the French audience denotes a conscious choice to share aspects of Korean culture that could not be amalgamated with Japanese or Korean cultural practices[163].

The translation of *Printemps parfumé* was attributed to J.H. Rosny, a pen name shared by two brothers, Joseph Honoré Boex (1856-1940) and Séraphin Justin Boex (1859-1948), but in this case, only the elder of the two brothers worked with Hong Jong-u to collaborate on the translation and adaptation (Sancho 4). Because Hong Jong-u did not complete the work on his own, the analyst of the work is obliged to question which aspects of the novel come from Rosny,

[161] "Pansori presents an epic folk tale in song, speech, and gesture which are the three main elements of Pansori. It is sung by a solo singer accompanied by a Buk (a double- headed barrel drum) played by a Gosu (musician/percussionist). Pansori is remarkable in its vocal demands. To perform the musical and dramatic aspects of these songs, Pansori singers have to produce a very rough timbre, husky sounds, and other special vocal effects. Since voice production varies with the different scenes in the story, vocal training requires many difficult techniques and years of preparation." (Shin 13).

[162] UNESCO proclaimed the Pansori tradition a "Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity" on November 7, 2003," (*ibid.,* 13).

[163] The process of amalgamating Korean culture into Chinese and Japanese cultures involved the active erasure of Korean individuality and difference, thereby making it easier to reject Korean claims for independence and autonomy. This was discussed at length in Chapter Three of this dissertation.

which come from Hong, and which represent a choice made in tandem by the two. One cannot claim that the work is solely representative of a Korean perspective, nor can one claim that the work is solely representative of a French perspective. The matter is further complicated by the fact that in spite of Hong's supposed miraculous fluency in French as was claimed in the French press prior to his assassination of Kim Ok-gyun (detailed in Chapter 3 of this dissertation), Hong made use of a Japanese to French interpreter while he worked at the Musée Guimet, where he was employed when he and Rosny produced *Printemps parfumé* (Régamey, "Un Assassin politique," 260). That which Hong wanted or intended to write in the novel may not have been completely understood and correctly repeated by his interpreter. Likewise, the translator and/or Rosny may not have recorded what was reported to them with complete accuracy.

In this dissertation, which allows us to question matters of representation and identity formation in depth, we are less concerned with whether the information being analyzed can be said to be factually correct or "accurate." Therefore, what concerns us in both of Hong's novels is not what may or may not be considered veridic, but rather, the relationship between the way that Korea and its people are represented in the works and the dominant and counter discourses of submission and resistance. In this sense, it is remarkably interesting and productive that the novel contains both Western and Korean voices, working together in tension.

Printemps parfumé is a love story about a noble scholar named I-Toreng and a lower-class beauty named Tchoun-Hyang[164]. The two marry in secret because their difference in social class would prevent their union, but are separated when I-Toreng's father, who was minister of the town in which they lived, is reappointed to work in Seoul. Tchoun-Hyang resolves to remain

[164] Tchoun-Hyang, "*Chunhyang*" according to the Revised Romanization of Korean transcription system, is close in meaning to "*printemps parfumé*," or "the smell of spring," and is the name of the *pansori*¸*Chunhyangjeon,* and of the novel.

faithful to her young husband, and when the new minister arrives and attempts to marry her, she refuses. The minister, enraged and clearly evil, has her thrown in prison, where she languishes and is sentenced to be executed. Meanwhile, I-Toreng passes his civil service examination and becomes a royal emissary, giving him the right to judge and punish ministers. He promptly returns to Tchoun-Hyang's town, imprisons the evil minister, frees Tchoun-Hyang from prison, and takes her with him back to Seoul. Once there, he sends a report to the king with details about everything that had happened. The king, surprised and charmed by Tchoun-Hyang's unwavering fidelity, names her *"Tchong-Yoll-Pouin,"* which the book states is the equivalent of a duchess (140). This change in social status enables the two to be properly wed, and they live happily ever after.

Printemps parfumé differs from Pierre Loti's *La Troisième jeunesse de Madame Prune*, Octave Mirbeau's *Le Jardin des supplices*, Henri Zuber's *Une Expédition en Corée*, Gustave Pradier's *La Corée il y a quarante ans*, Claire Vautier and Hippolyte Frandin's *En Corée*, and every other contemporary work representing Korea – except for Hong Jong-u's second novel, *Le Bois sec refleuri* – in that it is positively rife with free and direct discourse on the part of Korean individuals. I-Toreng, his servant, both of his parents, Tchoun-Hyang, an elderly woman who accompanies Tchoun-Hyang, Tchoun-Hyang's mother (her father is deceased), various ministers, and even school children who I-Toreng encounters on the street are all given opportunities to express themselves in free and direct discourse.

When Tchoun-Hyang and her mother speak in the novel, they represent themselves rather than being represented through the perspective of I-Toreng, other characters, or the omniscient narrator. They make decisions, talk about them, and act on them. For example, when Tchoun-Hyang refuses to marry the evil minister, she first keeps her silence as a means of transgression.

Then, she breaks it so that she can scold him about his behavior:

- *J'ai beaucoup entendu parler de vous à Séoul dans la capitale, et je le comprends aujourd'hui en vous voyant si belle. Voulez-vous m'épouser ?*

  Elle ne répondait pas. Le mandarin insista :

  « Pourquoi ne me répondez-vous pas ? » dit-il.

  Il répéta deux ou trois fois cette interrogation, sans que Tchoun-Hyang répondit davantage. Plein de colère, alors, il reprit :

  « Pourquoi ne répondez-vous pas ? »

- *Je suis mariée avec I-Toreng.- dit-elle enfin ; - c'est pourquoi je ne vous répondais pas. D'ailleurs, - continua-t-elle, s'exaspérant, - si le roi de Corée vous a envoyé à Nam-Hyong* [their town], *c'est pour vous occuper des besoins du peuple. Le travail ne vous manquera pas. Certes au cas où le roi vous aurait envoyé ici uniquement pour m'épouser, j'obéirais à cet ordre, sinon, vous ferez mieux de remplir les devoirs de votre charge et d'appliquer en justice les lois du pays*[165]*. »* (99-100)

In this scene, Tchoun-Hyang has weaponized both her silence and her voice. It is also noteworthy that here and elsewhere the novel, a number of characters celebrate her renowned

[165] My translation:

- I have heard a lot of talk about you in Seoul, the capital, and seeing you so beautiful today, now I understand it. Would you like to marry me?

She does not respond. The mandarin insists:

- "Why do you not respond to me," he says.

He repeats his question two or three more times and Tchoun-Hyang still does not reply. Full of anger, he repeats it again:

- "Why do you not respond?"
- "I married I-Toreng," she finally replies. "This is why I did not respond to you. Anyway," she continues, exasperated, "if the king of Korea has sent you here to Nam-Hyong, it's so that you occupy yourself with the needs of the people. There is no lack of work for you. Of course, in the case of the king having sent you here expressly for the purpose of marrying me, I will obey the order. Otherwise, you would do better to fulfill the duties of your post and being enforcing the laws of our country."

beauty, thereby striking another contrast with the majority of francophone representations of Korean women, which were unflattering, and which were discussed in detail earlier in this chapter.

Tchoun-Hyang drives the plot to a remarkable degree, showing clear evidence of a degree of agency that simply is not present in other Francophone works representing Korean people during the nineteenth century. For example, when I-Toreng reveals that he must move to Seoul with his parents, he is bereft and does not know what to do, but Tchoun-Hyang has a plan. She commands him to study hard and commit himself to the task that would one enable them to marry openly rather than in secret: "*Ne vous tourmentez pas trop pour moi, ami; mais étudiez bien afin qu'un jour vous deveniez mandarin à Nam-Hyong et que vous puissiez m'épouser*[166]*"* (95).

Later on, when Tchoun-Hyang is prison and I-Toreng returns to the town after having followed her instructions, he does not immediately use his powers to throw the evil minister in prison. First, he disguises himself as a beggar so that he can collect evidence surreptitiously to build his case against the man (and to be sure that Tchoun-Hyang has remained faithful to him). When he reveals himself as a begger to his mother-in-law, she is disdainful of him but nevertheless takes him to see Tchoun-Hyang in jail. In contrast to her mother, Tchoun-Hyang is sad that I-Toreng has lost his fortune but immediately puts together a plan to help him rather than thinking about herself and her impending execution:

- *Oh ! maman, - dit Tchoun-Hyang, - pourquoi dire ces paroles peu polies à un homme comme I-Toreng ? Oubliez-vous que, souvent, les héros d'autrefois*

[166] My translation: "Do not torment yourself too much for me, friend. Instead, study well so that one day you become mandarin in Nam-Hyong and that you may marry me."

> *traversaient de dures épreuves et tombaient dans le malheur ? Irais-je renier mon doux, mon seul I-Toreng parce qu'il est humilié ? Mais soyez-en sûre, si nous sommes misérables aujourd'hui, nous retrouverons la félicité !... Non, non, mère, oh ! je vous prie, écoutez-moi: retournez à la maison, voici les clefs de ma malle, prenez tous mes bijoux, toutes mes choses précieuses qui s'y trouvent et vendez-les ; vous achèterez avec l'argent tout ce qu'il faut à I-Toreng et vous arrangerez bien ma chambre, afin de l'y loger*[167]. (122)

The fact that Tchoun-Hyang and I-Toreng never would have been able to have their initial meeting without the acquiescence and help in planning they were given by an unnamed elderly woman provides us with a third example of women driving the plot in *Printemps parfumé*. Because it was not appropriate for young men and women to meet without good reason, I-Toreng's servant found a woman willing to take part in I-Toreng's ruse by accompanying Tchoun-Hyang and taking her to a place where she could meet I-Toreng without her knowledge that the event had been planned by I-Toreng, his servant, and the old woman. The old woman therefore convinces Tchoun-Hyang to go on a walk with her, during which they encounter I-Toreng dressed as a young lady. The old woman puts herself at a distance so that the two young people can talk freely amongst themselves. This first meeting turns into a friendship, and it was not until after I-Toreng is confident that he has earned her friendship that he reveals his true identity as a young man. Therefore, without this unnamed old woman's help, the friendship and

[167] My translation: "Oh, mother!" says Tchoun-Hyang. "Why would you say such impolite things to a man like I-Toreng? Have you forgotten that the heroes of old often experienced hardships and fell into misfortune? Would I deny my one and only, sweet I-Toreng just because he is humiliated? Of course not; rest assured that though we are miserable today, we will find bliss again! No, no mother, oh! I beg of you, listen to me: return to the house, these are the keys to my trunk, take all of my jewels and precious things that you find there, and sell them. With the money, buy everything for I-Toreng that he might need and arrange my bedroom nicely for him so that he can be lodged there."

love between the two young people would never have been able to grow. Without her active role in the plot, there would not have been a plot.

This novel also contains a preface (attributed to J.H. Rosny) which actively contradicts the dominant discourse of submission. As early as the second line on the second page of *Printemps parfumé*, the reader is confronted with the declaration that "*La Corée est restée indépendante*[168]*,*"(2) Challenging the *idée reçue* that Korean people were stupid, uneducated, and their government corrupt, the author explains: "*Les fonctions publiques sont conférées aux jeunes nobles, après un examen portant sur le linguistique, la philosophie, la littérature, et l'histoire*[169] (2)." This explains the exam that I-Toreng had to take in order to seize government power and save Tchoun-Hyang. The novel also ensures that no one is left thinking that only men seek knowledge and wisdom: Tchoun-Hyang reads "*le livre du philosophe Confucius*[170]." The old woman who helps to arrange the first meeting between the two young people reaches the conclusion that Tchoun-Hyang must be virtuous if she is reading this book in particular: "*La vieille femme réfléchissait que cette jeune fille, qui aimait tant la philosophie de Confucius, devait être très vertueuse, donc difficile à détourner, car la philosophie enseigne la crainte de tout plaisir*[171]*"* (39). The dominant discourse of submission functions on the assumption that Korean people are uneducated and stupid, and that it is in part because of this that they would and should submit to a nation that was perceived to be smart and stronger, such as Russia or

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[168] My translation: "Korea has remained independent."

[169] My translation: "Public functions are conferred to young nobles after an examination in Linguistics, Philosophy, Literature, and History."

[170] My translation: "The philosopher Confucius' book."

[171] My translation: "The old woman thought about how this young woman, who liked Confucius' philosophy so much, must be very virtuous, and therefore difficult to turn, because the philosophy teaches fearing all pleasure."

Japan.

In addition to illustrating how invested Korean culture was in the pursuit and celebration of knowledge, Rosny writes that nearly every Korean novel was written anonymously because they criticized the government. Therefore, the form of the novel itself can be considered an act of resistance. Hong's novel is an act of resistance against the power and authority that the dominant discourse attempts to seize and maintain. Rosny expands on his claim that the majority of novels were written anonymously by writing that many of them were written by illegitimate children, whose works were "*plus ou moins bien inspirées, mais toujours amères contre l'état social*[172]" (4). These statements can hardly be said to align with the idea that Korean people during and leading up to the nineteenth century were "incapable of resistance," to use Gustave Pradier's phrasing[173].

Rosny strengthens his argument that *"Tchoun-Hyang est à plusieurs égards une œuvre d'opposition*[174]," by giving three examples. The first of these are the songs that farmers and school children chant, which are critical of their oppressive new evil minister (103; 107-108). The second is a poem that I-Toreng writes in condemnation of the abuse of power and the ensuing suffering of the people (127), and the third is in the marriage that is at the very heart of the plot: *"le marriage même d'un fils de mandarin avec une pauvre fille du peuple est un acte de haut courage en lutte contre les coutume*[175]*s"* (6).

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[172] My translation: "More or less well-inspired, but always bitter toward the social state."

[173] See Chapter 1, section 5 for more about this quote.

[174] My translation: "In many regards, *Tchoun-Hyang* is a work of opposition."

[175] My translation: "Even the marriage of a mandarin's son with a poor woman of the people is a great act of courage in fighting against custom."

Printemps parfumé is an act of resistance in that it actively opposes contemporary francophone representations of Korean people throughout the text. Its preface clarifies and celebrates aspects of Korean society and culture for an audience accustomed to denigrating them. The next novel we will discuss in this chapter was also produced as a result of Hong Jong-u's labors and is also a work of resistance against contemporary representations of Korean people.

4.3 Hong Jong-u and Le Bois sec refleuri

A short paragraph found even before the dedication page of Hong Jong-u's *Le Bois sec refleuri* (first published in 1895) functions as an explanation for why the *Musée Guimet* decided to have Hong Jong-u's translation of this work published in its *Bibliothèque de vulgarization* even though he had by then acquired a rather unsavory reputation[176]. It claims that *Le Bois sec refleuri* is one of Korea's most ancient and highly esteemed works. Like *Printemps parfumé,* or *Chunhyangjeon*, the story belongs to the collection of acclaimed and well-known *pansori* tales that are an integral part of the collective whole of Korea's cultural heritage. The next part of the paragraph in question here is more controversial than the first in that it aligns the work with the dominant discourse of submission:

> *L'auteur de cette traduction, M. Hong-Tjyong-Ou, qui fut attaché pendant deux ans au Musée Guimet, s'est appliquée à en rendre, scrupuleusement, presque mot à mot, le style et la naïveté, et les éditeurs n'ont eu garde de corriger son œuvre afin de lui laisser toute sa saveur exotique et primitive*[177]. (9)

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[176] See Chapter Three for details about Hong's notoriety.

[177] My translation: "The author of this translation, Mr. Hong-Tjyong-Ou, who was attached to the Musée Guimet for two years, applied himself in scrupulously rendering, almost word-for-word, the work's style and naiveté, and the publishers have taken care not to correct his work in order to leave it all of its exotic and primitive flavor."

Although the author of this passage does not claim outright that Korean people are submissive, by stating that the work as Hong Jong-u here recorded it for his francophone readers retains all of its "primitive and exotic flavor," the author or authors promote the idea that Korea (or at the very least, its literature) can be considered bizarre and antiquated. The conclusion that many might draw from this is that Korea and its people were in need of modernization—an assumption that served to justify the French civilizing mission, which helped the dominant discourse to emerge and endure[178]. However, in the following analysis, I will argue that *Le Bois sec refleuri* expresses the themes of love and friendship and is otherwise differentiated from most other contemporary works about Korea. Like *Printemps parfumé,* it makes a strong argument for Korean agency and culture, especially through its heroic female characters.

For the discourse analyst whose goal is to comb the text for evidence of the dominant discourse of submission and the counter discourse of resistance, it may easily be justifiable to claim that in the case of this particular book, the most fruitful place to look is in the preface, which came after the justificatory paragraph discussed above[179]. It can be divided into two parts. In the first part, Hong writes that he "tried to summarize [his] country's history, totally unknown

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[178] In 1919, Charles Mundy Taylor translated Hong Jong-u's version of the Simcheong *pansori,* which Hong called *Le Bois sec refleuri,* from the French into English. He wrote in his own foreword to the English edition that

"The translator is indebted to a French version of the original text, made by the Korean scholar, Hong-Jong-Ou, which was published under the auspices of the Musée Guimet. He has attempted to preserve the simple, child-like form of the narrative and has made few alterations in it, and these only when clearness and the English idiom required them (14)." In writing that simplistic and infantile components of the narrative were by necessity supplanted by the English language in his version of the book, Taylor follows in Rosny's footsteps, recycling the dominant discourse of submission in the manner described above and establishing a hierarchization in which the English language is to be considered incapable of stooping to the level of the franco-Korean narrative. Taylor does not deign to translate Hong's preface.

[179] The Charles Mundy Taylor translation of Hong Jong-u's *Printemps parfumé* into English notably skips right over the preface. As part of the work done to prepare this dissertation, I translated it myself. My version can be found in its entirety in the annex.

to strangers, in broad strokes." One can easily detect another sign of the preface's importance as a part of the work itself and personally for Hong Jong-u in the sentence which follows: "*J'espère que ces quelques pages exciteront la curiosité d'un certain nombre de lecteurs et la Corée deviendra à son tour l'objet des études des savants européens*[180]*,"* (29). Hong repeats his desire that the book might help grab the attention of Europeans when he writes near the end of the preface, "*J'espère que la lecture de ce roman, attirera vers nous les regards de mes lecteurs*[181]*,"* (31).

The second part of the preface is comparatively shorter but is an incredibly powerful assertion of Korean sovereignty and a message of hope for collaboration with the French people, finding that the relationship would benefit both entities. Invoking the notion of romantic love, Hong Jong-u's closing sentences to his preface read:

> *Les distances n'existent pas pour les amoureux. Je souhaiterais qu'il en fût de même entre les pays. Quand les Français auront appris à aimer la Corée, notre pays ne leur paraîtra plus situé aux confins du monde. Pour ma part, je m'estimerais le plus heureux des hommes, si j'avais pu contribuer en quelque mesure au rapprochement de deux pays qui ne pourraient que gagner à se connaître réciproquement*[182]. (31-32)

This closing statement, the content of the narrative itself, and the veracity or falseness of the

[180] My translation: "I hope that these few pages excited the curiosity of a certain number of readers and that Korea will one day have her turn as the object of study by European savants."

[181] My translation: "I hope that reading this book will draw the eyes of my readers toward us."

[182] My translation: "Distances do not exist for those in love. I wish that it could be the same between countries. When the French will have learned to love Korea, our country will no longer appear to them to be situated at the ends of the Earth. As for me, I will consider myself among the happiest of men if I am able to contribute in some way to the union of two countries which can gain from getting to know each other.

history that Hong provides, were all subjected to fierce criticism in direct relation to Hong's assassination of Kim Ok-Gyun, as discussed in Chapter Three of this dissertation[183].

Let us now begin the analysis of Hong Jong-u's *Le Bois sec refleuri* with a short plot summary. *Le Bois sec refleuri* is a celebration of righteousness vanquishing evil through tenacity and collaboration. It is built around multiple intersecting plot lines, and if there is meant to be a central or main character, it is difficult to identify one. The story begins at the king's court, where a dignified and noble minister named Sùn-Hyen counsels the king to cut back on having so many lavish banquets because they were dragging his people into starvation. Not wanting to cease his revelry, the wily and cunning prime minister, named Ja-Jyo-Mi, successfully hatches a plot to have Sùn-Hyen and his best friend, San-Houni, likewise a virtuous man, framed for attempting to overthrow the king.

Both men and their wives are exiled to separate places. Sùn-Hyen and his wife live happily in isolation until their daughter, Tcheng-Y, is born- the birth kills the mother and Sùn-Hyen cries himself into blindness. Many years later, Sùn-Hyen meets a monk who arranges for a prophecy to be fulfilled in which he will regain his sight and become prime minister, but only if he pays the monk three hundred bags of rice. Tcheng-Y sells herself as a sacrificial offering to sea merchants in exchange for the requisite grain, but miraculously survives.

Meanwhile, San-Houni and his wife, named Tjeng-Si, are exiled to an island and hire a pair of brothers take them there. The older brother, named Sù-Roung, is malevolent and lecherous. He robs them, murders San-Houni, and takes Tjeng-Si (who at this time is in a late stage of pregnancy) captive. Sù-Roung's younger brother, Sù-Young, is virtuous and appalled by

[183] Jules Hoche's "Un assassinat politique" and W.G. Aston's "Le Bois sec Refleuri : Roman Coréen, traduit sur le texte original par Hong Tjong-ou" were analyzed in detail in Chapter Two, Section Three.

what his brother has done, so he sets Tjeng-Si and an old woman who had suffered the same fate free. The old woman sacrifices herself to throw Sù-Roung off their trail, giving Tjeng-Si a better chance at survival. Tjeng-Si, while still in the course of fleeing, gives birth to a son. She tattoos his name, San-Syeng, on his arm, and abandons him at the edge of a town. She does this because she has no means by which to raise him, hopes someone will adopt him who can care for him, and is also hopeful that one day she will be able to find him again.

By chance, it is the evil brother Sù-Roung who finds San-Syeng. He raises San-Syeng as though he is his own son. At the age of seventeen, San-Syeng embarks on a journey to see the world and discover his past. He meets a young woman named Tjyang-So-Tjei and they marry in secret. One day, Tjyang-So-Tjei dreams that the couple are in danger and that San-Syeng must flee. He does this, learns that Ja-Jyo-Mi has stolen the throne after the king's death and exiled the prince, Ki-Shi. The narration shifts again, and the reader learns that Tcheng-Y, having miraculously survived being sacrificed to the sea, arrives on the island where Prince Ki-Shi is being held. The two fall in love, marry, and after Ki-Shi has a disturbing dream of his own, they resolve to fake his death and escape. San-Syeng, having had another prophetic dream telling him everything that he needs to know, arrives right on time, and saves them. The three young people immediately begin a campaign, raise a powerful army, storm the capital, take back the throne, and imprison the nefarious Ja-Jyo-Mi.

While all of this is happening, Tjyang-So-Tjei's house is burnt to a crisp during a popular uprising against the nobility, so she resolves to go off in search of San-Syeng. While looking for him, she happens to make the acquaintance of Tjeng-Si, San-Syeng's mother. At this point, the two decide to continue the search together, and San-Syeng, having finished helping to place Ki-Shi on his rightful throne, is also off in search of them. While the women are searching, they

meet an evil minister who wishes to marry Tjyang-So-Tjei, but already being married, she declines. The minister throws both women into prison. San-Syeng rescues them. Next, the three of them find the brothers Sù-Roung and Sù-Young, send them to the capital to be judged by Ki-Shi, and return to the capital themselves after touring many provinces to reestablish peace throughout the kingdom.

Everyone is happy except for Tcheng-Y, who still has not found her poor, blind father. Ki-Shi throws a banquet with gifts for every blind subject in his kingdom. San-Houni, learning his daughter is alive, regains his sight, and becomes a wise and virtuous prime minister who counsels Ki-Shi not to embark on a war of vengeance. Everyone lives happily ever after.

Women in *Le Bois sec refleuri,* as in *Le Printemps parfumé,* display a remarkably degree of agency, helping to drive the plot, and speaking in free and direct discourse throughout the novel. Examples abound. In the very beginning of the tale, after Sùn-Hyen tells his wife that he has informed the king that his parties are the root cause of the sadness and suffering of his subjects, she tells him that there will surely be negative consequences for having done this. Upon learning later on that they will be exiled, his wife comes as close as a character in a nineteenth-century French text can come to declaring, "I told you so!" when she questions him with, "*Que t'avais-je dit, l'autre jour?*[184]*"*(44). After San-Houni is killed in front of Tjeng-Si, she leaps into the sea, declaring "I will follow behind my husband, no matter what!"—but Sù-Roung's crew members pull her out of the sea safe and sound (72). Later, she plays an integral role in bringing Sù-Roung to judgment before the king by taking part in the long journey to find him (172-176). When Tjeng-Si and the old woman flee from Sù-Roung, the old woman decides of her own volition to sacrifice herself in order to save Tjeng-Si (75-78). When Tjyang-So-Tyjei's house is

[184] My translation: "What was it that I told you, the other day?"

set ablaze, she resolves on her own to disguise herself as a man and set off to find her husband: "

> *Le peuple, révolté contre la noblesse, porta partout l'incendie et le pillage. Tjyang-So-Tyjei eut à peine le temps de s'enfuir par une porte sécrète. En peu de mois la jeune fille avait perdu sa mère et sa fortune. Elle ne désespéra cependant pas. « Il me reste San-Syeng, se disait-elle. J'irai le retrouver dans la capitale ». Afin de pouvoir plus facilement exécuter son projet, elle se mit en route*[185]. (154)

In contrast to the contemporary francophone accounts we have examined thus far in this dissertation, which depict Korea and its people as being incapable of defending themselves or resisting against those who would attack them, Hong Jong-u's *Le Bois sec refleuri* confronts its readers with a stream of tenaciously resistant moments which feels endless and inspirational. In the discursive context within which he produced it, the novel and its preface are truly exemplary of the counter-discourse of resistance in action.

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter has compared one of Pierre Loti's most popular works, *La Troisième jeunesse de Madame Prune,* with two works that resulted from collaboration with Hong Jong-ou, *Printemps parfumé* and *Le Bois sec refleuri.* When put in dialogue with one another, they reveal vastly different conceptualizations of what Korea signified in each author's mind- or, at the very least, they provide vastly different representations of Korea for their readers. In Pierre Loti's *La Troisième jeunesse de Madame Prune,* Korea was a place that the author had come to know more of after already having spent a considerable amount of time in Japan. Consequently, he

[185] Charles Mundy Taylor's translation: "The populace, rising in revolt against the nobility and tax collectors, were burning and pillaging throughout the village and Yeng-So-Yei just had time enough to dash through a secret gate in the city wall and make her escape into the open country. In a short space of time, she had lost her mother, her fortune and her home. She did not, however, feel entirely cast down. "At least San-Syeng is left to me," was her thought. "I shall go to the Capital and hunt for him." In order to carry out her project more easily, she assumed masculine attire and, thus disguised, set out on her journey" (117-118).

wrote of Korea in terms of how it compared to – and fell short of – Japan.

Hong Jong-u, on the other hand, made a point to be clear that Korea was not part of China, nor was it part of Japan, and that its people were uniquely Korean, having their own proud and lengthy history that should not be subsumed into the histories of its neighbors. It is certain that Hong chose to write these novels in direct response to extant Francophone representations of Korea. For example, Hong Jong-u was certainly aware of and chose to respond to Voltaire's eighteenth-century depiction of Korea, given his reference to it in his preface to *Le Bois sec refleuri*: *"Quand Voltaire, ce grand railleur, voulait parler de quelque chose lointain et ténébreux, il ne manquait pas de mettre en avant la Corée*[186]." (30-31). Hong uses this point as a segue into discussing how much closer Korea was to France in his own century, given advancements in worldwide travel:

> *C'est qu'à l'époque où vivait le célèbre écrivain, notre pays était en effet bien loin de la France. Il n'eut pas fallu moins de dix-huit mois à un navire à voiles pour se rendre d'un port français jusqu'en Corée. Aujourd'hui, il n'en est plus de même*[187] (31).

The persistent, ubiquitous portrayal of Korea as being far-off, mysterious, and deeply unknowable made it easier for such portrayals to claim that Koreans were violent, barbaric, animalistic, and ignorant; without having any reason to believe the opposite, it was hard to refute. Hong Jong-u was aware of the ignorance that peoples outside of Korea had of his

[186] My translation: "When Voltaire, that great heckler, wanted to talk about something far away and tenebrous, he never failed to push Korea to the forefront."

[187] My translation: "At the time the famous writer lived, our country was, in effect, quite far from France. It took no less than eighteen months on a sailing ship to deliver oneself from a French port to Korea. Today, it is no longer the same."

country's history and culture. He was aware that the Korean people were being depicted as barbaric, insolent, incapable, weak, and uninformed. He wrote his books *in response* and *in counter argument* to those ideas, and ultimately, based on the claims in his preface to *Le Bois sec refleuri*, he hoped to use literature as a tool for bringing the peoples of both France and Korea closer together, in a better, more fruitful harmony.

CONCLUSION

The March First Independence Movement and the Demise of the Dominant Discourse

The title of this dissertation, "Bow and Obey: A Cultural History of France, Korea, and Unrelenting Resistance (1866-1910)" may falsely suggest to some that this resistance relented after 1910. Earlier in this dissertation, I wrote that the period of the Korean Empire (대한제국), 1897-1910, contained some of the most overt, sustained expressions of Korean resistance against external attempts to take control of it. This remains true, but the period from 1910-1945 contained even more overt, sustained expressions of Korean resistance. A key difference was that in the latter period, it was no longer a struggle to maintain Korean sovereignty. Instead, it was a battle – frequently to the death – to take back the country that had been taken from them.

In this chapter, I demonstrate how the ever-shifting dominant discourse of submission that was so firmly anchored in francophone texts and visual representations of Korea through the nineteenth century began to crumble, finally giving way to the counter-discourse of resistance. Expressions of sympathy for the Korean people, more and more frequent as the twentieth century progressed, moving in tandem with news of atrocities committed against independence fighters, chipped away at the dominant discourse, stripping it of its power and ubiquity.

An undeniably crucial date in Korean history, March 1st, 1919, marked the beginning of a series of non-violent protests and demonstrations in favor of ending the occupation. It was around midday on the 1st that the Korean Declaration of Independence, signed by 33 representatives, was read aloud to a crowd of 4 to 5,000 students at Topgol Park in Seoul. Copies of the document and Korean flags were distributed to those assembled in the park, and because many people had come to Seoul for the former emperor Gojong's funeral, the number of

protestors soon grew to tens of thousands (John 11).

The movement was begun simultaneously in seven cities and protests took place on a near daily basis for more than three months, covering the entire territory of Korea. Pro-independence demonstrations and accompanying journal articles proliferated in China, France, and the United States, fueled and inspired by international independence fighters frequently became members of the first Korean diaspora. Statistics vary regarding the number of participants, arrests, and deaths that resulted in the colonizer's efforts to stamp out all resistance lest it continue to spread across the country like wildfire. One estimate by the National Institute of Korean History claims that 1,300,000 people participated in nearly 1,700 protests in Korea, with more than 900 deaths (cited in *ibid.*, 16). Other sources claim higher death tolls, such as this one from Lee Ki-baik, cited in Frédéric Boulesteix's *D'un Orient autrement extrême*: 7,509 deaths, 15,961 wounded, 46,948 arrested, and 715 houses, 47 churches, and 2 schools destroyed (372).

In previous chapters of this disseration, I used concrete examples from news articles and novels to demonstrate how the discourse about Korea shifted over time in relation to contemporary historical events. I will do the same here by comparing two news articles from 1907 with each other and by performing a brief analysis of a novel by Seo Yeong-hae, a Korean independence fighter who was remarkably similar to Hong Jong-u. Like Hong, Seo went to France and produced works of literature in French that were meant to inform French people about Korea and encourage them to aid in the Korean cause.

A news column entitled "Les Troubles de Corée : La garde japonaise aux prises avec les émeutiers à Seoul" begins with the statement: *"Il vient de se produire, en Corée, une manière de*

coup d'Etat au profit de l'influence japonaise[188]*"* (Unknown 242). The article describes rioting in response to the forced abdication of the emperor in preparation for the eventual colonization of Korea. It appeared in *Le Petit journal, Supplément Illustré du dimanche*, on the 4th of August, 1907, and was accompanied by a separate, three-column article in the same issue, entited "Le Pays du Matin Calme : Les émeutes de Séoul." The two articles placed side-by-side in a single issue of a single newspaper are a perfect example of the dominant and counter-discourses colliding in contest with one another. The first article depicts the Korean people as individuals fighting for their freedom and independence, depicting them as a formidable foe for the Japanese forces and correctly predicting that more fighting was to come. The author writes "*Les troupes coréennes se sont mutinées. Une véritable bataille eut lieu dans les rues de la ville entre Coréens et Japonais," "il a fallu, pour les disperser, l'intervention de la police japonaise appuyée par de l'artillerie*[189]*,"* and :

> *On comprend, dans ces conditions, que les coréens, qui prévoient, dans un avenir peu éloigné, l'absorption définitive de leur pays par leurs turbulents voisins, se soulèvent et usent leurs dernières forces pour tenter de conserver sinon leur indépendance, au moins leur existence nationale*[190]. (242)

This laudatory article contains a criticism of Japan as being "a turbulent neighbor." It is even more striking when read alongside the second article. Although it begins with a critical note

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[188] My translation: "A kind of *coup d'état* in favor of Japanese influence has just taken place in Korea."

[189] My translations: "A veritable battle took place in the city streets between the Koreans and the Japanese;" "in order to disperse them, it was necessary for Japanese police supported by artillery to intervene."

[190] My translation: "We understand, in these conditions, that the Koreans, who predict the definitive absorption of their country by turbulent neighbors in the near future, are rising up and using their remaining strength to try to conserve their independence, or at the very least, their national existence."

about Japan as well and acknowledges the Korean protests, writing that Korea "*entrait en révolte ouverte contre l'influence tyrannique du Japon*[191]," it does not hesitate to contradict itself by stating repeatedly that the Korean people were apathetic, lazy, *etc.*, subscribing wholesale to the dominant discourse of submission[192]. Rather than proposing the idea that violence against occupying forces would have come from a natural source of righteous anger and a desire to remain independent and sovereign, the author, Ernest Laut, suggests that violence on the part of Korean people is a capricious sort of violence that breaks through their supposedly natural mildness.

Being published in the *Supplément Illustré du dimanche*, both articles naturally precede a stunningly colorful and detailed illustration of the event in question (see Fig 5.1 below). One of the first features of the image to catch this writer's eye was the Korean flag featured prominently in the background, just left of center. It catches the wind, allowing the viewer to easily observe an uncrumpled, vibrant *taegeuk* (태극), a circular symbol which represents balance in the

[191] My translation: "entered into open revolt against the tyrannical influence of Japan."

[192] In a single paragraph, the author, Ernest Laut, manages to paint a picture of the Korean people as being lazy, dirty, decrepit, indifferent, apathetic: *Ce calme, cette sérénité de l'atmosphère ont-ils influé sur la race qui peuple ce pays ? … Est-ce au climat que les Coréens doivent le caractère apathique et indifférent qui les distingue des peoples voisins ? Ils sont cependant, en général, solidement charpentés, de haute taille et semblent bâtis pour les rudes besognes. Mais le travail n'est pas leur fait. D'un naturel indolent et paresseux, ils partagent leur existence entre le sommeil et la satisfaction de leurs instincts : manger, boire, fumer. Ils s'alcoolisent très volontiers avec une boisson fermentée appelée sakké ; aussi sont-ils décrépits avant l'âge. Un médecin des colonies qui habita ce pays remarque l'hygiène y est tout à fait inconnue.* Shockingly, manages to include at least one insulting thing in more than two-thirds of the thirty paragraphs which follow (some of which are only a single sentence in length). Among those insults, one can read phrases such as: *"le peuple le plus docile de la terre, » « se soumettre… Depuis trent ans environ que l'influence japonaise a commencé à s'imposer à la Corée, les Coréens n'avaient pas fait autre chose, » «l'empire de l'indolence et de la routine, » « naturellement apathiques, n'ayant rient qui les obligeât à secouer leur torpeur instinctive, ont vécu de tout temps confinés dans leur pitoyable routine, » « le peuple végète au milieu des ordures et de la vermine, » « Quant à l'armée corénne, c'est un ramassis de soldats d'opéra-bouffe, dont la tenue et l'aspect martial sont de plus hilares. »* One can imagine that Laut would find it a difficult endeavor indeed, were he to attempt painting an even more degrading picture of the Korean people in an article of this length.

universe[193]. Prominent in the center of the flag used by the Korean Empire (대한제국), it became the most important visual representation of resistance against the occupying forces during the Independence Movement. Here, it is unsullied by the fires behind it.

In the foreground of the image, a Korean protestor is splayed across the bottom of the frame, dead from injuries, with an arm across a weapon he can no longer use to defend himself from his aggressors. Immediately behind him, a compatriot attempts to fight sword-against-bayonet and it is clear that the Japanese forces are taking the upper hand. That the Korean protestors will lose this battle is taken as a given. Since the forefront of the image is dominated by the fallen rebel, the figure behind him clearly shrinks in terror, every Japanese soldier is shown advancing, and the weaponry used by the protestors is clearly inferior to those wielded by the soldiers, there is no conceivable reason to believe that the Korean force would rally to a success. In any case, the image does not provide visual evidence to support the idea that the Korean people were lazy, as Laut promoted in his article.

[193] This was discussed previously. See Chapter 3, sections 3 and 4.

Figure 5.1: Unknown, "Les Troubles de Corée : La garde japonaise aux prises avec les émeutiers à Séoul," *Le Petit journal, Supplément du dimanche*. 4 August 1907, p. 248.

The word "Corée" appears in *Excelsior,* France's first photographic daily newspaper (Mesch 29), in more than three hundred separate issues of the newspaper from 1911 to 1939. Many of those mentions relate minor details about natural disasters, advertisements for Korean furs, stop overs on international flights as aviators continuously broke new flight records, or were simply crossword puzzle clues (*e.g.,* "*Une ville en Corée*"). The frequency with which Korea and Seoul were mentioned contradict the progressively less frequent claims that Korea was little known to peoples of the West.

Among the articles in *Excelsior* which mention Korea that can focus on its autonomy and its embittered relationship with Japan, eleven of them in particular are of interest regarding the dominant discourse of submission and the counter-discourse of resistance. Moreover, they are noteworthy in that, when viewed chronologically, they make the changing nature of discourse about Korea – and about Japan- easily detectible[194]. Every one of these articles acknowledges Korean protests and/or anti-Japanese behaviors, and together they create a discourse that is progressively more critical of those behaviors. As we have seen repeatedly in articles of the

[194] Regarding the other nine articles: The issue from July 30, 1912, dedicates its front page and another half page to an obituary for the emperor of Japan, who the article calls "the renovator of Japan" and credits with putting Japan on equal footing with the most advanced nations in the world. The article writes that he knew how to modernize and that after making Korea its protectorate in 1905, it "finally incorporated" it into the Empire of the Rising Sun as a new province in 1910 (Meneval 2). There is no condemnation of what Imperial Japan had done to Korea in this article. The article from April 2, 1922, and another from October 28, 1938, no longer justify or support Japan's colonization of Korea. The former writes that Japan (personified) carried Korea and Manchuria away like fruits in its basket, red with blood. It adds that not only did it take the fruits, but the trees, meaning that Japan had exploited Korea and Manchuria so intensely that it took not only its products but its means of production (2). The latter depicts Imperial Japan in similarly disparaging terms. The articles from August 18, 1919, and November 6, 1921, are both brief and both relate the news of protests against Japanese authorities. The articles from July 27, 1926, December 30, 1926, and January 9, 1932, are of differing lengths but all mention "anti-Japanese" activities. The first of these three reports that individuals being pursued by Japanese authorities are considered extremists and that around three hundred of them are targeted. The second relates the events of two coordinated attacks on Japanese banks, which it credits to "*members d'une organization secrete dont l'activité est dirigée contre les autorités japonaises*," (3) and the last is a captivating, front-page article with photographs, entitled "Un Attentat à Tokio contre l'empereur du Japon." The article details how a Korean person threw a bomb into the emperor's carriage, and states "*Il* [the would-be assassin] *n'a pas fait connaître le mobile de son acte, mais il est probable qu'il faut en chercher la raison dans la campagne d'excitation antijaponaise qui s'est produite en Corée… » (1).*

francophone press from the nineteenth century, Korean resistance was then depicted as unusual behavior for a submissive, lazy group of people who were fundamentally considered a hodge-podge, outdated amalgamation of Japanese and Chinese cultures. The change in representation is made ever clearer by a lengthy, third page article in the August 11, 1937 issue of *Excelsior*, entitled "Quel danger la 'japonisation' de la Chine présente-t-elle pour l'Indochine ?" Suddenly, the modernization and progress that Imperial Japan was celebrated for, that Henri Zuber's and Gustave Pradier's contemporaries thought would be beneficial to Korea and, by extension, to the rest of the world by opening Korea up to Western commerce and exploitation, had become a potential *danger*. The author, Pierre Mille, also took care to point out that Korean people were decidedly not Chinese people.

In a subsection of a longer article, the issue from July 2, 1919, contains a succinct but clear recognition of the Republic of Korea when it informs the reader that: "*On apprend de Washington que la République de Corée a notifié à la Conférence de la paix que la Corée ne se considérera comme liée par aucun acte ou signature du gouvernement japonais*[195]" (3). Five months later, the authorities at *Excelsior* saw fit to publish a much longer article about Korean delegates to the 1919 Paris Peace Conference. Published on the second page of the December 18, 1919 issue, it featured a photograph with a lengthy caption, and was produced in the form of an interview that gave free and direct discourse to Korean individuals, which has been shown elsewhere in this dissertation to have been extremely rare in francophone representations of Korean persons, excepting those moments when a Korean person was the author of the work written in French.

In the photograph below, one can make note of two facts 1) the delegates dressed

[195] My translation: "From Washington, we learn that the Republic of Korea has notified the Peace Conference that Korea does not considered itself connected via any act or signature to the Japanese government."

themselves in Western-style clothing, and 2) they brought the flag of the Republic of Korea with them to Paris or otherwise requested that one be provided to them for the photograph. The image portrays them as clean, modern, fashionable, and, given the presence of the Korean flag behind them, as Korean nationals rather than as Japanese subjects.

PARTIS LE 5 FÉVRIER, DES CORÉENS VIENNENT D'ARRIVER A PARIS

DE GAUCHE A DROITE : M. K. WHANG, SECRETAIRE DE LA MISSION, YOUN ET GO TCHANIR

Chargés par leurs compatriotes sibériens d'exposer à la Conférence de la paix les doléances de la Corée, MM. Youn et Go Tchanir sont enfin arrivés à Paris le 15 décembre. Ils avaient quitté leur pays le 5 février dernier, mais des incidents multiples les contraignirent à faire une partie de la route à pied. Ayant appris que la Conférence avait terminé ses travaux, ils se proposent d'attendre la constitution de la Ligue des nations.

Figure 5.2: "Partis le 5 février, des Coréens viennent d'arriver à Paris."

Excelsior, 18 December, 1919.

The article details their ten-month long voyage, which was undertaken sporadically by train, on foot, by car, and by boat. They had to navigate around fields of battle because World War I was in progress. Hungry, tired, discouraged, they persisted until they reached Arkhangelsk, where they were given passports by French and English authorities, which together with what

had been given to them by the Korean National Assembly of Siberia, made them feel confident in reaching their goal of exposing their struggle to the Peace Conference. Unfortunately for the group, they soon learned that the conference had just reached its end and they were terribly disappointed by that information but decided to continue anyway, seeing Paris as their supreme goal[196].

One of the many remarkable linkages between Korean history and French history is that the Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea (PGRK; its government-in-exile) was founded in the French concession at Shanghai[197] and enjoyed fairly peaceful asylum there for thirteen years (John 21). The PGRK is the foundation of Korea's government today, and many of the activities of the resistance movement took place in continental France. Kim Gyu-sik, the Minister of Foreign Affairs for the PGRK, arrived in Paris on March 13th, 1919, accompanied by three men named Jo So-ang, Kim Tang, and Yeo Un-hong. By mid-April, they had formed the Korean Republic Information Bureau[198] (*le Bureau d' information de la République de la Corée)*

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[196] The end of the article reads:

- *Nous effectuâmes le reste du trajet par la Norvège et l'Angleterre sans encombre, et c'est en arrivant chez vous que nous apprîmes que le cas de la Corée, le problème de son indépendance, n'avait pas été examiné par la Conférence. Ce fut un nouveau désappointement. Nous voulions faire entendre la voix de plusieurs millions de Coréens, en comptant les émigrés, mais il était trop tard.*

- *Vous n'étiez pas les seuls délégués coréens à la Conférence ?*

- *Non, quatre autres étaient partis d'Amérique et de Chine, mais un seul a pu venir jusqu'ici : M. Kimm. Il est reparti après avoir présénté à la Conférence un dossier qui n'a pu être ouvert. Nous ne désésperons pas, nous ne sommes même pas découragés : nous savons que la France, qui a toujours été éprise de liberté, ne peut que soutenir notre cause. – R. V.* (2)

[197] For more about the PGRK in Shanghai, see: *Mémoire de 1919 : histoire de la résistance coréenne*, edited by John Hae-oung. See also: Li Jin-Mieung's "La France et les mouvements d'indépendance du Gouvernement provisoire de Corée (1919-1945)."

[198] This bureau published and distributed a variety of documents in the French language about the Korean Independence Movement so that the European press would be able to use them. Among those documents were two

in the 9th arrondissement of Paris. Among its publications was a work entitled *L'Indépendance et la paix de la Corée,* which aimed to gather international public support. The Bureau's efforts were fruitful at least in making people aware of the Resistance Movement; it also published a report which showed that the number of articles dealing with the "Korean question" had reached 517 in 181 newspapers in Europe- 423 of these articles were published in 133 different French newspapers (*ibid.*, 28).

A similar informational bureau, Agence Korea, was founded in Paris in 1929 by Seo Yeong-hae. He was an ambassador for the PGRK in France, and the organization that he formed was intended to relay information to the PGRK, so he frequently made reports to his government about European political issues. However, writing under the name Seu Ring-hai, he also used Agence Korea to publish a work of literature[199]. That work, *Autour d'une vie coréenne,* was published in the same year that Agence Korea was founded. It is a historical novel that recounts the life story of a Korean independence fighter named Bac Sontcho[200],

There are many similarities between Hong Jong-u and Seo Yeong-hae. Both were Korean men who went to France and worked there in an effort to appeal for French friendship and aid in either maintaining or restoring their independence and autonomy. Each spent time in Shanghai,

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newspapers, one called "Circulaire" which had 23 issues printed at 2,000 copies each, and another called *La Corée libre,* whose intention was to "sensitize public opinion" and which was published monthly for 13 months, with 1,000 copies each distributed in strategic cities in Europe and the United States (John 28).

[199] He also wrote a second work and published it in 1934 through Éditions Eugène Figuière. Entitled *Miroir, cause de malheur ! et autres contes coréens,* it is an anthology of Korean folk tales.

[200] Part of the research for this dissertation involved trying to identify who exactly the protagonist, Bac Sontcho, was. Other accounts of the events which take place in Seo's narrative never make any mention of a Bac Sontcho, Park Sontcho, Pak Sontcho, or a Bac Soncho, *etc.* This suggests that Seo's Bac Sontcho is a metaphorical representation of what he refers to as "the Korean soul" and its intrinsic thirst for freedom and independence. Since Seo also wrote that the same Kim Ok-gyun who has been discussed in the present study, assassinated in 1894 by Hong Jong-u, was present and important in the Korean resistance as late as November of 1905, readers can be sure that Seo took liberties with his portrayals of myriad individuals, and that it is quite possible that his central figure did not exist outside of Seo's book.

each fled from Japanese authorities who wanted that they be punished for their deeds, and each published works in French that contained prefaces intended to illuminate their readership on Korea's history. Each of them wrote warmly and optimistically of France in their works as they sought to deepen the connections between the two countries[201].

Invoking the suffering of his compatriots under Japanese rule, Seo explains that his works are born of the following idea[202]:

> *C'était pour moi un devoir, un acte de conscience que de présenter la Corée sans plus tarder au public européen. En faisant connaître au monde le passé glorieux de ce pays et le douloureux présent de ses vingt-trois millions d'habitants, actuellement victimes d'une inqualifiable force brutale, je tenais à apporter ma part de bonne volonté à la compréhension mutuelle entre l'Occident et l'Orient, qui s'impose désormais*[203]. (7).

Although Seo does make a point to expose the misdeeds and atrocities committed by Korea's colonizers, the work is arguably much more focused on informing its readers about the resistance

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[201] In addition, one of the tales that Seo included in his anthology was the same *pansori* upon which Hong Jong-u based his novel, *Le Bois sec refleuri*, discussed in Chapter Four.

[202] "*Le present volume est né de la même idée qui fut à l'origine de mon premier livre :* Autour d'une vie coréenne*" Miroir, cause de malheur !* (7).

[203] My translation: "For me, it was a duty, an act of conscience, to present Korea to the European public without any more delay. In making the country's glorious past and the painful present of its twenty-three million inhabitants- currently the victims of unspeakable brutal force- known to the world, I wanted to bring my own share of goodwill to the mutual comprehension between East and West, which is now necessary."

As we see here on the first page of text, the author does not hesitate to condemn Korea's colonizers in *Autour d'une vie coréenne.* He also writes that "*les japonais laissaient sur tout leur chemin un carnage indescriptible,* » (62) and that there were « *gestes trop cruels de Japon continuellement répétés »* (169). Seo provides many passages that provide more detail about those *gestes,* such as: "*La terreur y régnait en maîtresse absolue. Les soldats japonais présents partout commettaient les crimes les plus atroces et les plus immoraux que leurs chefs encourageaient cyniquement. Les habitations perquisitionnées, les greniers vidés, les gens expulsés ou massacrés, les femmes maltraitées, en un mot, une situation intolérable. Quelques résistances désespérées de la part des Coréens furent cruellement réprimées partout. Bref, le sang coulait continuellement dans tous les coins du pays."* (165-166).

movement and on Korean culture than it is on simply pointing fingers at its aggressors. Different forms of the word "*résistance"* appear a half dozen times in the text, while "*indépendance"* is evoked a full dozen times, as is "*revolution."* Meanwhile, the idea of "liberation" makes its presence known no fewer than nine times, and the fight for liberation expressed through non-violent resistance is at the center of this work.

Using the story of Bac Sontcho as a means to expose and condemn the atrocities committed by the Japanese imperialist colonizers, Seo Yeong-hae makes clear references to the dominant discourse of submission, contextualizing it and countering it so that even moments of defeat are turned into opportunities to germinate future vengeance:

> *Ce que j'admire chez les Coréens, c'est leur caractère qui est à la fois dur, mais d'une dureté têtue et souple, mais d'une souplesse élastique. On dira peut-être que c'est un défaut. Si oui, alors c'est ce défaut qui a sauvé plusieurs fois le pays et le peuple coréens. Voyez l'histoire, combien de fois ce pays, l'objet de tant d'avides convoitises de la part de ses voisins redoutables, s'est vu obligé de se soumettre sous leurs sabres sanglants ! On a toujours vu que cette soumission n'était faite que pour mieux consolider l'avenir, pour se mieux venger*[204]. (155)

Not forgetting that he was writing for a European audience, Seo made sure to include them in this novel. The quote above does not come from the mouth of Bac Sontcho, but rather comes from an American missionary. Earlier in the novel, Seo describes a moment when the revolutionaries are trapped in a hideout from Japanese authorities who are attempting to find and

[204] My translation: "What I admire in the Koreans is their character, which is strong, but of a stubborn and supple strength, which is an elastic suppleness at the same time. One might say that it's a negative character trait. If it is, then it is this negative character trait that has saved both the country and the Korean people multiple times. Look at the history, at how many times this country, being the object of avid greed on the part of its formidable neighbors, has seen itself obligated to submit beneath their bloody sabers! We have always seen this submission as being done in order to better consolidate the future, to better avenge oneself."

kill them, writing "*aucun représentant étranger ne leur avait offert aide ou conseil. Ils ne voyaient en face d'eux que soumission ou destruction*[205]*"* (66).

In both instances, individuals outside of Korea are said to view Koreans as being submissive. By writing that the submission that these spectators were identifying was actually a moment of preparation for resistance later on, Seo effectively delegitimizes that representation, stripping it of its longevity and undermining it from its own beginning. With the second mention of the dominant discourse, by writing that no foreign aid was given because of the submission or destruction that was, from a foreign perspective, sure to come, Seo places some burden of responsibility on those foreigners who engendered and maintained the dominant discourse of submission.

By ending his book with Bac Sontcho as Justice and Humanity personified, Seo makes "the Korean problem" a universal problem, and therefore a problem to be shared by the West as well as the East. From start to finish, *Autour d'une vie coréenne* insists upon Korean resistance, condemns the injustice and inhumanity of the occupation, and compels its francophone readership to see Korea not as prey to Japan but as a nation both worthy and capable of overthrowing its oppressors and of being respected on its own terms.

The field of Korean Studies is popular today, with evidence of that popularity present in many universities, organizations, and journals. There is a robust and growing community of francophone scholars who have dedicated their professional lives to asking and answering questions about the growth of Korean language education in France, about Korea's contested geography with Japan, about Korean dramas and K-pop, about Korean folk tales, the Korean

[205] My translation: "Not a single foreigner offered their help or counsel. They saw nothing in front of themselves except for submission or destruction."

presence at the world's fairs, the Korean War, and the *Byeong-in yangyo* (병인양요). Many of these scholars were cited and referenced throughout this dissertation and their contributions have together created a mosaic of information that was fundamental to my developing my own understanding of Korean history, culture, and art[206].

From the outset, I sought to understand exactly what "Korea" and "Korean" signified for French speaking individuals during the nineteenth century. While I scoured every primary source I could find, I was gobsmacked[207] by the seemingly endless declarations that Korean people were weak, submissive, dirty, and unintelligent. Likened to mindless beasts, Korean people were frequently the victims of what I immediately felt to be rampant and disgusting racist judgments made without any real supporting evidence. I also noticed that Korean people in these sources inhabited a geopolitical space that was coveted by Western imperialists, who, spurred on by their successes in other parts of the world, were quite clearly hoping to colonize Korea— if they could use their "civilizing mission" as justification for this. I also read an exhaustive number of secondary sources and it became clear to me that, on the whole, no one truly disagreed with my assessment. I identified something more profound, however, than the mere idea that some people wanted to exploit Korea for its manpower and natural resources. As these diverse stakeholders continued their material investment in the construction of their own version of Korea, one in which it was not just in need of civilization, but one in which its people were "incapable of

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[206] One of the positive effects of this popularity was that in the course of my graduate studies at Vanderbilt University, a Korean language program was born. I was able to audit Korean classes taught by Jang Seok-bae and Choi Ha-eun. I was also able to audit Heeryoon Shin's "Arts of Korea." The large enrollment sizes of these professors' courses are an anecdotal indication that interest in Korean Studies is robust enough to garner the necessary enrollment sizes to hold these courses, even in the southern state of Tennessee here in the United States.

[207] In a discussion with Lynn Z. Barlow in July of 2022, I expressed that I was unsure whether "flabbergasted" or "gobsmacked" was the most appropriate word to use here. In the end, Lynn insisted that I use the former of the two and that I credit her for the decision in a footnote.

resistance," it became clear that they had together created a discourse unique to Korea, one that was multiaccentual, ubiquitous, relative, contingent, and transcendable, aligning with the concept of discourse as it has been described by Richard Terdiman in his book *Discourse/Counter-Discourse.*

Because this dissertation's conceptualization was rooted in the belief that the way in which one people group represents another informs us more about the person doing the representing rather than the person being represented, and because this dissertation is the product of scholarship in the field of French and Francophone Studies, I have dealt a great deal more with French sources and the kinds of information they divulged about their "subjects" than I have with Korean efforts to counter that information. However, because this dissertation has also been inspired by transnationalist ideas of identity formation, Korean sources have not been entirely omitted. This is why special care was taken to analyze Hong Jong-u's literary production as well as the work of Seo Yeong-hae, though technically the latter's work comes after the chosen time period for the present study. By including Seo Yeong-hae's voice, one is able to ascertain how a Korean person adept in the French language, writing after Korea has lost its sovereignty, is writing in response to those events. He takes great care in *Une Vie coréenne* to explain certain social practices, like the fact that some parts of a Korean house were reserved only for the nuclear family unit and that that space was considered a domain under the control of the women in the family. French visitors to Korea in the nineteenth century made frequent remarks about how uncommon it was to see Korean women in public and not even in the parts of Korean homes that they were permitted to visit. Like his predecessor, Hong Jong-u, Seo endeavored to clarify things and illuminate the peoples of the West about Korea's rich and respectable culture.

Aside from this dissertation, extant scholarship about Korea during the nineteenth century tends to focus on one genre at a time. This project was greatly inspired by the work of other scholars in French Studies, such as Rachel Mesch, Raisa Rexer, Maurice Samuels and others[208], whose work has been dynamic and innovative in the way that it blends study of the textual with the visual, showing that erasing one in favor of another simply for the sake of analysis deadens the work by "missing the forest for the trees," in a sense. Results of recognizing this effect have been that this dissertation a) focuses on newspapers that contain illustrations and photographs, b) blends analysis of photography and sketches with works of pure literature, and c) has analyzed objects of material culture like architecture and public spectacles, seeking to be more comprehensive and all-encompassing than even Frédéric Boulesteix's nevertheless thorough dissertation, which also sought to understand exactly how French individuals were envisioning Korean individuals and their culture.

This dissertation is the result of a mixed approach, cognizant of and sensitive to the idea of transnationalist identity formation, aware of both the contributions and shortfalls provided by Edward Said in *Orientalism*, and eager to investigate primary sources from the time period and place in question using a methodology that has never before been applied to them. Ultimately, it has shown that throughout the nineteenth century, a dominant and counter-discourse struggled to coexist in an unstable binary formation that shifted and cemented over time until, finally, Western disdain for and anxieties about imperial Japan, coupled with growing sympathy for Korea, whittled the dominant discourse away into its demise.

By showing that the dominant discourse of submission existed and by detailing how it was contested, even inadvertently by those who sought not to subscribe to it, I have worked to

[208] See my introduction for a more comprehensive list.

provide myself and others with a roadmap for identifying similar insidious discursive tendencies not just in European Northeast Asian contexts, but in other contexts as well. They would need only to take a look at one piece of material culture, make a note of what might suggest the existence of a dominant discourse, and then begin to look at other forms of material culture to verify its ubiquity, multiaccentuality, *etc.* until they are certain that they have examined every single thing that they possibly can. It is a lengthy, laborious process, but well worth the time and effort.

By completing this project, I hope to have returned a modicum of justice to the Korean people and to the Korean independence fighters whose fates were sealed by the inaction of those who chose not to help them because they subscribed to the dominant discourse of submission and therefore considered the effort futile and purposeless. I feel not unlike Hong Jong-u and Seo Yeong-hae when I write that I have an even greater hope that my dissertation will encourage others to consider more deeply the ways we represent people who are different from ourselves, to ask ourselves what larger picture those representations fit into, and to consider how damaging those representations may be so that we can someday learn to live in more profound peace and harmony with one another.

ANNEX

Preface to *Le Bois sec refleuri*[209]

"Though situated between two trafficked seas, and seen every year by thousands of sailors, Korea is one of the least explored countries." Nothing rings truer than these lines by Elisée Reclus[210]. Excepting the name Korea, which -today at least- is not totally incorrect, he is not inaccurate. This name of Korea was, in all likelihood, introduced in Europe by Marco Polo211. At the time when the famous traveler was at Kublai Khan212's court, the term "Korea" referenced only a portion of the peninsula for which the Europeans still use the same name. In the 14th century, following events that would be too long to recount here, Korea took the name Chosŏn[213] "Morning Calm," which is the only name used today by the habitants of the country.

I am not overly stunned by the little progress that we have made in Europe concerning the knowledge of my country. Until the 17th century, Korea was represented as an island on maps. This ignorance is due to many causes, and principle among them, I humbly avow, is the little eagerness we have displayed until recently to enter into contact with Western civilization. "It is of constant tradition," Elisée Reclus adds, "among the Koreans to keep the foreigner in complete ignorance about their country." Today, following the example of our neighbors to the East, the

[209] Originally, I had intended to publish this in a journal that required the use of the McCune-Reischauer transcription system for the romanization of Korean. My preference is to use the Revised Romanization of Korean system, for reasons outlined in the introduction to this dissertation, which has been written using that system instead.

[210] Renowned French geographer who, among other accomplishments, compiled a 19-volume geography of the world.

[211] Hypenated in the original text: "Marco-Polo."

[212] In the original text: "Koubilaï Khan."

[213] In the original text, this was "Tcio-shen," which is "Joseon" in the Revised Romanization of Korean transcription system and "조선" in Hangeul.

Japanese, we begin to leave this system. It is true that we are not moving as quickly as they, since I am until now the first Korean to come to Europe[214].

Chosŏn is of great interest not only from a geographical point of view, but also from a political point of view. Regarding the former, it is usual to compare our country to Italy. There are in fact many similarities between the two lands. Politically speaking, I would readily compare the situation in Korea with that of the Balkans. Korea is surrounded by powerful neighbors, two of which, China and Japan, have on many occasions fought to dominate our country. The third, Russia, could one day take her turn in the dispute. A kingdom which arouses such covetousness merits being known and it is for this reason that I have decided to publish the present study.

A few months ago, I collaborated with a French writer, Mr. Rosny, for the translation of a Korean novel entitled Printemps parfumé[215]. After the book's publication, which had fairly large success, a few well-educated Frenchmen asked me if there was no novel worthy of translation among the classics of our old literature. In order to respond to their wishes, today I give you one of our oldest novels, entitled Le Bois sec refleuri[216].

We know neither the author of this work, nor the time at which it was composed. According to the literati, this novel was known as a theatrical piece before the current dynasty's

[214] This claim is inaccurate; see Stéphane Bois' "Premiers de Corée ou comment peut-on être parisien" for information about Koreans who preceded him, as well as page 65 of this dissertation.

[215] *Printemps parfumé,* which means "fragrant spring," in French is a re-telling of the classic p'ansori Ch'unhyang in novel form.

[216] « Le bois sec refleuri » refers in French to dried wood which blossoms once again. This novel is essentially a retelling of the Shim Chŏ'ng p'ansori.

ascension to the throne (1392). But at the time when Chosŏn was formed, there was a quarrel between the Buddhists and the philosophers.

The advantage remained with the latter. Reacting, they did away with nearly every Korean theater classic, in general filled with Buddhist ideas. It could be that this novel escaped from this sort of literary destruction.

In the preface that introduces Printemps parfumé, Mr. Rosny gives some pieces of information about Korea's contemporary customs and social practices almost without speaking of the peninsula's history. It is in order to complete these notes and to satisfy a certain number of researchers that I will roughly summarize the history of our country.

This history is divided into a certain number of very clearly delineated periods generally coinciding with changes in dynasty.

The first of these periods is completely legendary. We start it with the year 2358 BC. Here is what the tradition says regarding this subject: "Six years after the arrival of Yao, the emperor of China, a saint established himself on the summit of Taihakou[217] mountain. He did not hesitate to become surrounded by a great number of indigenous people who worshipped him as their sovereign and called him Tan'gun[218]. This monarchical saint lived 1668 years and disappeared to climb to heaven."

[217] I am unsure of the modern spelling for this name, but I suspect that it might be related to the T'aebaek mountains in present-day North Korea, since that is where legend holds that the Tan'gun first appeared. Could Hong have adapted Japanese nomenclature for this mountain into French? This was not at all uncommon in French primary sources that referenced Korea throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth. Often, a source would simultaneously use both Japanese and Korean names for people and places.

[218] In the original text : "Tankoun." Also known as "Tan'gun Wanggŏm" (단군왕검).

What amount of truth is there in this legend? One can read in the Shu Jing219, one of the sacred books, the following passage: “Emperor Yao ordered Ghi-Tciou[220], one of the great court dignitaries to establish himself on a mountain situated to the East of the capital. It was there that the sun seemed to rise, and at dawn and in the name of his master, Ghi-Tciou had to respectfully salute the star.” The same book tells us that three other dignitaries were sent to three other cardinal points. The mountain where Ghi-Tciou was established could very well be the Taihakou at which the legend held that Tan’gun lived. The situation is the same and the date of the two events appears identical. One can therefore conclude with sufficient probability that Tan’goun and Ghi-Tciou were but one and the same person. The extraordinary length of Tankoun’s life is a fairly common act in legends of the Far East. Our reconciliation between the two is but a hypothesis, let us say in all sincerity, because there exists neither text nor monument which comes to confirm it.

The truly historical era of Korea opens with the second period. It was during this epoch that the peninsula began to form a special kingdom. The last king of the Chinese Shang221 dynasty saw himself deposed by a revolting prince named Wu of Zhou[222] and he died soon after. He had carried out a life of debauchery despite the counsel of his uncle Gija[223]. Gija did not want

[219] In the original text: “Chou-King.” This is likely Shu Jing (or Shu Ching), one of the Five Confucian Classics. It is the “Book of History or Documents.”

[220] This name appears as it was in the original. The spelling is unconventional for both the McCune-Reischauer and Revised Romanization of Korean systems of transcription, and I, the translator, confess that I do not know who this person is. It is possible that Hong Chongu is rendering a Chinese name or the Japanese pronunciation of a Korean name in French, which makes it more difficult to pin down the correct name.

[221] “Chang” in the original text.

[222] “Wou-Wang” in the original text. This is likely referring to King Wu of Zhou (周武王), the first of the Zhou Dynasty, though his father would later be posthumously considered the founder of the dynasty.

[223] “Ghi-si” in the original text. This might be a reference to a certain Gija (箕子), whose existence in Korean

to serve under the new Chinese master, who for his part did not want to keep close to him a man whose reputation would have eclipsed royal omnipotence. In order to get rid of Gija, King Wu gave him all the territory that would later form Korea (1122 BC). Gija, followed by a certain number of savants, went to establish himself in the country that had been attributed him. He was the veritable sovereign, while carrying naught but the title of viscount. The Chinese civilization was introduced to the peninsula, which soon became prosperous under Gija's beneficent administration. "No more thieves," said a Chinese historian. "Such was the security that reigned in the country that one no longer closed the doors of their houses at night. Gija's protection spread across the entire land." Gija is therefore the true founder of the Kingdom of Korea.

Among the eight savants that Gija had brought with him, there was a man whose surname was Hong. He is the veritable ancestor of the family to which I belong. The other savants also have descendants today. These eight families live in the closest intimacy, as if they are linked together by the closest parentage.

The dynasty that Gija founded lasted ten centuries. To tell the truth, its domination spread only over the northern half of Korea. The southern half, known as Shim, was still savage and nearly ignored. Gija's forty-first descendant, Ghi-Joun, proclaimed himself king of the entire peninsula but a Chinese prince declared war against Ghi-Joun and drove him out of his forefathers' territory. Ghi-Joun had to take refuge in the precise part of Korea over which he had so recently before given himself sovereignty. His position was not disadvantageous because the number of his subjects grew each day due to Chinese emigration. This was due to the fact that at

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history is sometimes discounted as legendary.

the time, the Emperor of China, Qin Shi Huang[224], had decreed that unpaid labor be done for the construction of the Great Wall.

As for Ghi-Joun's victor, prince Yei-man, he had been proclaimed sovereign of the northern part of Korea. His son succeeded him to the throne but his grandson, You-Kio, did not reign for very long. He was attacked and robbed by the fourth emperor of the Chinese Han dynasty. This emperor, a man of extraordinary bravery, also fought against the Huns and pushed them back to the West. His empire spread out to the Caspian Sea. The old Kingdom of Gija then formed nothing more than a province of the Celestial Empire225 (109 BC) and his name disappeared for some time.

Seventy-two years later, a stranger named Go Ch'umo, having arrived in the northern part of Korea, seized it, and proclaimed himself King.

It is with Go Ch'umo[226], founder of a dynasty that reigned for eight centuries, that we arrive at the third period of Korean history. Where did this conqueror come from? From the Kingdom of Puyŏ[227] that one must in all likelihood place in Siberia. See, in fact, what one reads about this topic from an old geographer: "The Kingdom of Puyŏ was located a thousand ri (a ri equals more or less 400 meters) to the north of Chosŏn. It was a barbaric country. The birth of Go Ch'umo is surrounded by legends. Here are some examples.

[224] In the original text: "Tsin-Chi-Hoang-Ti."

[225] Hong is referencing China with this epithet.

[226] In the original text: "Co-Shou-mô."

[227] In the original text: "Pou-Yo."

One day, the King of Puyŏ encountered a young virgin, daughter of "the god of the river." He took her to his palace, from which he did not allow her to leave again. Well, when returning from a long voyage, the king found the young girl on the cusp of becoming a mother. He wanted to kill her, but first he asked for an explanation. Here is what the young girl said. "The sun shone brilliant rays of light upon me in my room. I wanted to get away and I retracted from the light with backward steps, but it still followed me. It has been since then that I have felt pregnant." This mysterious response saved the young girl. The King allowed her to live. Soon, she brought a boy into the world. Because of his competence in archery, he was called Ch'umo, which means "dexterous archer."

With Ch'umo's skill growing from year to year, so grew the number of envious persons who resolved to assassinate him. He escaped toward the south. Having arrived in a region called Koryŏ[228], he established himself there and took the title of King. His family name being "Go[229]," he first called his kingdom Go-Koryŏ[230]. By abbreviation, we quickly contented ourselves with saying Corée. This here is the true origin of the appellation by which our country is still known today in Europe.

Ch'umo had married before fleeing the Kingdom of Puyŏ. After his departure, a son who was called Yuri[231] was born to him. When the child reached adolescence and learned of his father's high status, he went in the company of his mother to rejoin his father. Did polygamy exist at this time in Korea or did Ch'umo not lose any time in forgetting his spouse after she had

[228] In the original text: "Kouré."

[229] In the original text: "Cô."

[230] In the original text: "Cô-Kouré."

[231] In the original text: "Roui-ri."

rejoined him? We are not at all sure on this point. History teaches us only that Ch'umo remarried with the King of Puyŏ's daughter. Two sons were born from this second marriage. The eldest received the name Foutsou-Rieou[232] in memory of a tribe of the same name that Ch'umo had defeated. The second was named Ousho. The kingdom should have gone to Yuri, Ch'umo's first son. The two other young princes, fearing that Yuri might mistreat them one day, fled. Foutsou-Rieou sought asylum in the southern part of Korea, which was then divided into three small states forming a sort of confederation. To understand this part of Korean history, we are obliged to retrace our steps and say a bit more about the largest of these three states. It was called Kam and we already spoke about it regarding Ghi-Joun.

The State of Kam corresponded to the part of Korea that we earlier referred to as Shim. When Ghi-Joun arrived in this country, he first lived on a small island situated in the south, then proclaimed himself king of the entire country. Ba-kam, Ben-kam, and Shin-kam[233] were the name of the three regions forming Shim. The greatest was Ba-kam, which contained no fewer than fifty-three tribes. Ghi-Joun was the first king of this country. His sons succeeded him to the throne for two centuries. When Foutsou-Rieou and his brother arrived in the land, the king welcome them with benevolence. He even gave Foutsou-Rieou a vast domain.

This prince did not enjoy it for very long because he died quite young. Upon his death, the inhabitants of the country who were under his authority gave their district the name Koutara. As for Foutsou-Rieou's brother Ousho, he lived for some time in obscurity. Then having become popular, he took advantage of the fact to attack Ba-kam's sovereign, took him by surprise, and

[232] This name is as it appears in the original text. I am unsure of the correct title in Hangeul or in any of today's transcription systems.

[233] Might these be Mahan, Byeonhan, and Jinhan?

made himself master of the entire country. Thus, Ghi-Joun's dynasty was extinguished. Ousho also gave the name Koutara to the territory he defeated, and it has always been called by this name since that time.

The two other small states of southern Korea, Ben-Kam and Shin-Kam, each counted twelve tribes. We do not know the exact time that they were founded as distinct states. They already existed as such when Ghi-Joun came to establish himself in the country. We noted above that at the same time, the Chinese emigrated en masse in order to escape from laboring on the construction of the Great Wall. The Celestial Empire's subjects wasted no time in mixed and melting with the indigenous peoples. Ben-kam and Shin-kam, though they enjoyed a certain independence, were nevertheless linked to Ba-Kam in numerous ways. The three small states, as previously stated, formed a sort of confederation.

Among the twelve tribes of Shin-kam, the most important was Silla[234]. This tribe produced a famous hero named Kokou-Kyo-Shei, who after becoming known as master of his entire tribe, received the name Shei-Kyo-Khan. The word Khan, as in Tartare, means leader of leaders in Korean. He is perhaps the oldest of these fierce Khans, some of whom attacked the Celestial Empire while others ravaged western Asia. Having become master of all of Shin-kam, Shei-Kyo-Khan seized Ben-kam next. From that point on, the names Shin-Kam and Ben-Kam disappeared from Korean history, and we knew only Silla, Korea, and Koutara.

During the reign of Shei-Kyo-Khan's ninth successor, the western part of Japan revolted at the request of Silla's inhabitants. The emperor of Japan went to combat against the rebels, accompanied by the empress. The sovereign being dead in his camp, his wife nonetheless

[234] In the original text: "Shinra."

continued the campaign. She wanted to chastise the inhabitants of Silla, always ready to encourage the Japanese to rebel. To this end, she equipped herself with a very large fleet that she herself commanded. She disembarked on the Silla coast and did not hesitate to meet with the country's king. He was struck by the empress' resplendent beauty, believed he had a goddess before his eyes, and threw himself to his feet. The kings of Korea and Koutara also came to give respectful homage to the beautiful empress. She left after signing a treaty (200 AD).

The relationship between the Korean peninsula and Japan date to this period. The latter country, which still knew nearly nothing of Chinese civilization, was introduced to it through the mediation of the Koreans. Science, art, industry, even religion, the Japanese borrowed everything from their neighbors. Thus, a French author rightly said: "China and Korea have done to Japan what the Greeks and Romans have done to us." Nothing is more accurate, and it was during the 3rd century of the Christian Era that the Japanese were our students.

From the sixth to the seventh century AD, the history of the Korean peninsula provides us with no remarkable events. In the middle of the seventh century, the kingdom of Koutara attacked that of Silla. The latter was also obliged to fight against the state of Korea, with which it had never had a good relationship. In order to fight advantageously against its enemies, Koutara called out to China. Korea and Silla asked for help from Japan. The victory lay with the allies of the Celestial Empire. As a result of this war, the largest part of Korea and Silla were annexed to China. Even the name Korea disappeared for a moment. As for Silla, it grew by a couple of districts and by two crushed kingdoms (662-668).

Dating back to this time, the southern half of our peninsula was a dependent of China. Only the kingdom of Silla continued to be an autonomous state. At the beginning of the tenth century, it was prey to frequent problems. Revolt sprung up from every side and we saw many

rebel chiefs take the title of king. One of them, named O-Ken, acquired so much influence that he founded a new kingdom of Korea, and made himself master of all the territory that Silla had seized thanks to the Chinese alliance (935 AD).

The Oh dynasty, founded by O-Ken, with which we begin the fourth period of our history, reigned peacefully for three centuries. To tell the truth, it possessed only the southern half of the peninsula. At the beginning of the thirteenth century, Ghengis-Khan unsettled the Chinese empire's authority. This famous hero that certain Japanese historians consider as native to their country undertook massive conquests. He did not lead his attacks against the Korean coast, but his successor gave all of the territories that China had annexed during the seventh century to the Oh dynasty. It is from this time on that O-Ken's descendants reigned over nearly the entire peninsula.

Koubilaï-Khan, Genghis-Kan [sic]'s grandson, wanted to make his authority known to Japan itself. To this end, he sent multiple Korean messengers to the Japanese emperor's court. The latter made no response. Koubilaï-Khan began threats. Those who carried his threatening letters were put to death by order of the Japanese government. But when Koubilaï-Khan, having become master of China in totality, founded the Youen dynasty, the face of things changed. The conqueror, calling out to the Koreans, built a great fleet and sailed toward Japan. He seized ten or so islands, then approached the southern coasts of the Japanese empire. A long wall, ten meters tall, had been raised by the Japanese, who could therefore easily overwhelm the attackers with arrows. The attackers tied all of their ships together with iron chains so that they would not be taken by surprise. They waited for an opportune moment to begin the attack when a terrible tempest as often appears during monsoon season arrived and it stopped them in their plans. Attached to one another, the ships loudly collided with one another and were all shattered. It was

a disaster without parallel. We find an echo of it, perhaps exaggerated, in the words of Chinese historians: “For many days,” says one of them, “the waves threw up cadavers into the gulfs, which became clogged up with them. Out of a hundred thousand Mongol soldiers, only three survived. Out of ten thousand Koreans, seven thousand perished.” There is certainly some exaggeration in this account; Chinese historians generally give too much freedom to their poetic imagination. Nevertheless, it was an extraordinary defeat for Koubilaï-Khan, and to which Japan owes its salvation (1281 AD).

The dynasty that Koubilaï-Khan founded did not remain on the Chinese throne for a very long time. Less than a century had passed by before it had to cede its place to the Ming dynasty. In Korea, the power of O-Ken’s descendants also weakened day by day. The family’s last representative abandoned the throne on his own and went to live obscurely in some province. A general, Li-Shei-Kei took the title of king. It was he who founded the dynasty that is still in power today (1392 AD).

Here begins the fifth period of our history. King Li, master of the entire peninsula, changed Korea’s name to Tciô-Shen (1398). He signed a treaty with China and the friendliest relations existed between the two countries. At first, this fact seems strange and begs explaining.

Before ascending to the throne, Li-Shei-Kei was living withdrawn in a monastery built upon the slopes of the Tcio-Hakou mountains. At its northern end, this mountain chain serves as the limit between Korea and China. In this same monastery, there was a young man named Tchou-Youan-Tchang who later became the founder of the Ming dynasty in China. Though neighbors, the two men who were called to such brilliant fates did not exchange a single word between them during their ten year stay at the monastery. But, by manner of intuition, they recognized each other’s reciprocal capabilities. It was Tchou-Youan-Tchang who left the

monastery first. At the moment of his departure, he said to his companion: “You will one day reign over the country which spreads across the southern part of these mountains; I will share with you the Middle Kingdom.” He went away upon speaking these words. His prophecy was realized and the two sovereigns who had lived silently side by side together for so long, conserved on the throne the tacit friendship that had previously united them.

It is no less interesting to know by what terms the governments of China and Tcio-Shen lived with Japan. In that country, one saw the establishment of feudal militarism under the authority of the Mikado (1086). The true leader of the government was the Shiogoun, who held executive power by his status of supreme general. Soon, the Shiogoun’s power became quasi-hereditary. At this time in Korean history, it was Oshikaga who was governing. This person’s power paled in reflection to that which was exercised by his predecessors. Revolts had broken out across every part of the empire. The small provinces fell prey to the large ones. Anarchy ruled everywhere. It was then that a man of great valor, Hidéyoshi, who had started out as a prince’s valet, overthrew the shiogoun and took his place. He reestablished order in the country and soon no one dared to challenge his authority. Very ambitious, he dreamed early on of subjugating China to Japan. The loss of a child he adored filled his heart with sadness. To escape from his grief, he resolved to undertake a grand expedition against the Celestial Empire. He ordered all of the feudal princes to gather the troops and therefore found himself at the head of an army of fifty thousand men. Many thousands of ships were equipped to transport these troops. The fleet sailed for Korea. The army disembarked without obstacle. Not trusting their own forces to push back the invasion, the Koreans called to China for aid. The emperor sent a large army under the orders of general Li-Jio-Shiô. The army was defeated, and its leader returned to China, where he asked to be relieved of his duty under pretext of illness. The Chinese sovereign

dispatched the most eloquent of his subjects, Shin-i-Kei to the battleground with a mission to make peace with Japan. Shin-i-Kei marvelously accomplished his task. He got along with the Japanese general, in whom the shiogoun had absolute confidence. A treaty with four articles was proposed. According to the last of these, Hidéyoshi was to be "crowned." Informed of this fact, the shiogoun gave his approval for the projected treaty, and peace was concluded. Chinese and Korean ambassadors came to give a gold seal, a set of red garments, and a letter of investiture to the shiogoun. Being dressed in these insignia, Hidéyoshi ordered that one read him the Chinese emperor's letter. The letter read simply: "I name you King of Japan." At these words, Hidéyoshi entered into a furious anger. Tearing off the clothes that he had put on, as well as tearing up the imperial letter, he cried out: "I believed that I was promised to be recognized as emperor of China. It was for that that I stopped my troops in the midst of their success. If I wanted to take the title of Japanese sovereign, I would not have had need of anyone's help." The shiogoun immediately ordered a new expedition against China. Korea became the war theater. The battle went on for many years. Hidéyoshi, having fallen ill, ordered his troops to return to Japan. Not long after, he died. In truth, he did not carry the title of shiogoun, but rather that of kouan-bakou, or grand imperial counselor. After the monarch, he had been the most important person in the empire and enjoyed nearly absolute authority.

Six years after Hidéyoshi's death, the emperor named Tokougava shiogoun. He was a highly capable man completely free of the adventurous spirit that had characterized Hidéyoshi. Tokougava wanted to pacify Japan more than anything. He asked Korea to sign a peace treaty with the Japanese government, and this was accepted. Tchioshen profited from this to ask China to pull back its garrisons, which had been established in the peninsula in order to defend it against the Japanese. This treaty between Korea and Japan was concluded in 1604.

Since that time, the Korean peninsula has lived in calm and without noise. In China, we saw a new dynasty come to power after a long civil war (1661), while Japan shook off the yoke of feudalism by way of overthrowing the shiogoun (1868). The two empires which neighbor us at the East and West have come into contact with Europe. China opened its ports to European commerce in 1842; Japan followed her example in 1849. We have ourselves been the object of solicitation from foreign governments but, be it that we are under Chinese dependency, it has been impossible for us to conclude the treaties. The court of Pékin having authorized Korea to trade, then finally having recognized its independence, the government first signed a convention with Japan (1876). Next, it was the turn of the United States (1886), Germany, France, England, Russia, etc. All of these countries sent plenipotentiary ministers or chargés d'affaires to Séoul but since the government has been preoccupied with interior reforms, it has not until now been able to send any ambassador to Europe. It will be a done deed in some time.

I have tried to summarize my country's history, totally unknown to strangers, in broad strokes. I hope that these few pages excited the curiosity of a certain number of readers and that Korea will one day have her turn as the object of study by European savants.

It has only been five hundred years that the current dynasty has occupied the throne in Korea. We wish the family of our sovereigns an eternal existence since our kings have always been the benefactors of our country. I am not ignorant of the fact that I write for the French, accustomed to living in a republic. But I am certain that they will not blame us for our attachment to the form of government that was instituted by our forefathers. It is a matter of temperament. The influence of the climate on the people's customs was demonstrated long ago. No one would reproach the Indians for not dressing themselves the same as the Eskimos. The constitutions of different countries are the same. While preserving our form of government, we

also want a chance to profit from European civilization. All those who will aid us in this work are assured in advance of our esteem and of our affection.

When Voltaire, that great heckler, wanted to talk about something far away and tenebrous, he never failed to push Korea to the forefront. At the time the famous writer lived, our country was, in effect, quite far from France. It took no less than eighteen months on a sailing ship to deliver oneself from a French port to Korea. Today, it is no longer the same. For that matter, when a reciprocal sympathy exists between two men or two countries, they are never too far away from one another. I hope that reading this book will draw the eyes of my readers toward us. In the same vein, I am reminded of the verses that the Chinese poet has written to his hero, obliged to live far from that which he loves:

"Who says then that the Yellow River is wide?

A reed is able to cross it.

Who says then that Soug Province is far?

I need only to stand on my heels to see it."

Distances do not exist for those in love. I wish that it could be the same between countries. When the French will have learned to love Korea, our country will no longer appear to them to be situated at the ends of the Earth. As for me, I will consider myself among the happiest of men if I am able to contribute in some way to the union of two countries which can do nothing but gain from getting to know each other.

15 January 1893.

Hong Tjyong-ou

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