Korea in Global History:
The Long Nineteenth Century and the Foreign Powers

May 19 - 21, 2017
Voßstraße 2, Bld. 4400, Karl Jaspers Centre
69115 Heidelberg

Programme / Schedule of Heidelberg History Conference

The "Korea in Global History" Conference is funded by:
DAY ZERO (18 May)

Arrival of conference participants

Optional participation at the “Cluster of Excellence”/ Heidelberg Center for Transcultural Studies event:

16:15 to 17:45 Karl Jaspers Centre, 212

“How Green was my Night Soil: Thinking with Excrement about Nineteenth-Century Japan”

David Howell, Harvard

Excrement was a hot commodity in the cities of nineteenth-century Japan. The widespread use of night soil as an organic fertilizer meant that residents of cities such as Tokyo and Osaka could sell their waste rather than simply dispose of it. Thanks to this trade, pre–twentieth-century cities Japanese cities enjoy a reputation as having been remarkably green spaces in which residents lived in salubrious harmony with nature. In this presentation, I will argue that the night-soil economy offers a novel way to situate late Tokugawa and early Meiji Japan into the broader history of the nineteenth-century world, while at the same time challenging the tendency to essentialize the “greenness” of early modern Japanese cities

19:00 Preconference Dinner (Only Invited Conference Speakers) ‘Kulturbrauerei’ (Leyergasse 6, 69117 Heidelberg)

Directions: Come out of the Karl Jaspers Centre and walk straight onto the Bergheimer Strasse, turn left and walk straight across Bismarckplatz and onto the Hauptstrasse. Follow the Hauptstrasse for approx. 1.5km, continue passed the Marktplatz and Karlsplatz then turn left onto Leyergasse. You should see a restaurant as in the picture (right). Enjoy!
DAY ONE (19 May) Friday: Re-Interpreting History?

9:00-9:30 Welcome and Introduction

Greetings from the Center of East Asian Studies
Melanie Trede, Heidelberg

“Korea and Global History?”
Harald Fuess, Heidelberg

9:30-12:00 Early Modern Korea
Chair: Steven Ivings, Heidelberg Commentator: You Jae Lee, Tübingen

Flooding, Famine and Finance: Korea’s Long and Arduous Nineteenth Century
Anders Karlsson, SOAS
Late Chosŏn was a period of significant socio-economic and demographic change. Due to these changes, together with certain political and intellectual developments, a number of scholars have defined this period as early modern and described it as being characterised by a (relatively) dynamic economy and centralising state. However, at the end of the nineteenth century both foreign observers and domestic reformers generally tended to regard Chosŏn Korea as hopelessly backward both economically and politically. Even if not subscribing to the notion of “backwardness,” also many scholarly works on Korea’s attempts to deal with the imperialistic challenges of the late nineteenth century have referred to the inherent weakness of the Chosŏn state and its economy.

The aim of this paper is to discuss, through an analysis of tax records and records of famine and disaster relief, the manner in which certain aspects of late Chosŏn agricultural and demographic developments had a negative impact on the economy of agricultural communities. In the nineteenth century flooding and famines not only impoverished or devastated local communities but also put a strain on the finances of both local and central government. Changes in taxation practices to address this situation caused conflict between the state and agricultural communities already under economic strain, occasionally leading to the outburst of uprisings and large-scale organised rebellion. The paper argues that this difficult domestic situation needs to be taken into consideration when discussing state performance and the manner in which the Chosŏn state was able to deal with the challenges it faced in the late nineteenth century.

Study on the Private Exchange between Joseon envoys and Qing officials
Kim Changsu, University of Seoul
From the diplomatic point of view, when comparing the premodern international relations that centered around the Ming and Qing Dynasties with Europe, first, the international relations were of a hierarchy with China on the top, and, second, independent negotiation by envoy was
not allowed. This study aimed to critically analyze the second point.

Regarding bargaining rights of an envoy, a sentence in the Book of Rites (禮記), ‘Vassals not allowed to conduct diplomacy on their own (為人臣者 無外交)’ is frequently quoted. Specifically, the sentence is not to completely deny the bargaining rights of an envoy but, rather, to forbid negotiation without command of the king, in other words, private exchange by the envoy. However, this principle began to be strictly applied since foundation of the Ming Dynasty. The Hongwu Emperor (r. 1368-1398) forbade all exchange between China and foreign nations except via official envoys. Furthermore, private exchange by envoys (especially within China) was not allowed. This continued throughout the Ming Dynasty and was continued by the Qing Dynasty.

In 1636, through war, the Qing Dynasty defeated and began to receive tribute from Joseon. From then on, Joseon sent envoys at least three times each year, but there was no private exchange with Qing officials. The reasons were that, until 1700, Qing continuously put diplomatic pressure on Joseon, and that Joseon intellectuals saw Qing as highly primitive and did not regard it as China. This tendency began to change in the late 18th century, promoting a new change in the exchange activities of Joseon envoys.

While the diplomatic cooperation was getting stronger, Joseon envoys started to join the literators’ network. As time passed, the individual interaction has developed to the sequence of interaction with literator groups, and interaction with Manchu and government officials appeared as well. However, these kinds of relationship did not have any connection with political issues. But, before and after the Foreign Disturbance of 1866 (丙寅洋擾) and Foreign Disturbance of 1871 (辛未洋擾), when the attack of the West to Joseon effectively became a fait accompli, a part of envoys of Joseon utilized their networks to deliver diplomatic requests of Joseon which broke up the principle of ‘Vassals not allowed to conduct diplomacy on their own’.

Chosŏn Korea in the Age of High Imperialism
Kirk W. Larsen, Brigham Young University
In many ways, Korea was not excepted from the waves of imperialism that washed over the globe in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the era of so-called high imperialism. Unequal treaties, the use of military force by powerful outsiders, imperial competition, and the use of a variety of techniques and tools—gunboats, agreements, telegraph lines, loans, etc.—were evident both on the Korean peninsula and in many other places in the world. However, the imperialism that threatened and ultimately overwhelmed the Chosŏn Kingdom did demonstrate some interesting unique aspects, not least of which was the fact that two of the chief imperial competitors in Korea were not Western but rather Asian: the Qing Empire and Meiji Japan.

Both Asian powers used ideas and techniques both old and new to project their power and promote their interests in Korea. The primary question was less whether there would be imperial encroachment upon the peninsula and more what kind of imperialism would it be. A
Japanese desire for informal but unilateral (monopolistic) imperialism was stanchly and, for more than two decades, successfully resisted by the Qing Empire which helped facilitate the creation and maintenance of a system of multilateral informal imperialism in Korea.

The annexation of Korea by Japan in 1910 signaled the final end of this system of multilateral imperialism and the end of Korea (for the next 35 years). However, the trauma of the period of direct Japanese colonial rule should not necessarily detract from the fact that the Chosŏn Kingdom/Great Han Empire was one of the last independent nations to succumb to the rising tide of high imperialism, a sign of perhaps heretofore unrecognized durability and strength.

**Intellectual Changes in the 19th Century before the ‘Opening’**
Marion Eggert, Bochum,
In the historiography of Korea, the earlier part of the 19th century has long been regarded as a time of stagnation or even retrogression, a period of lost opportunities due to the power struggles following King Chŏngjo’s death in 1800 and the ensuing corruption and inflexibility of the ruling elite. Adding to this a decline of productivity in agriculture, especially economic historians have postulated a “crisis of the 19th century”. Too often these political and economic developments have been projected unto the intellectual and social realm as well, presupposing that, e.g., the suppression of “heterodoxies” that certainly was in place was in fact efficacious. However, in terms of intellectual history, the earlier part of the 19th century (1800-1860s) was not at all as bleak as the proponents of the crisis theory would have it. This presentation will attempt a stocktaking of major intellectual figures and their contributions, demonstrating the liveliness of the intellectual scene and trying to identify the most important intellectual trends of the period.

**13:00-15:00 Impact of Imperialism**
Chair: Judit Arokay, Heidelberg   Commentator: Michael Shin, Cambridge

**Materiality and Sentiment in Late 19th Century Korean-U.S. Intellectual Exchange**
Robert Oppenheim, University of Texas at Austin
This paper aims to tell a history of concretized sentiments concerning Korea at the end of the 19th century. The eclipse of support for Korean independence over the course of several decades, even within intellectual spheres of the imperialist powers in which independence garnered some early advocacy, was one element that abetted the transformation of the country into a protectorate of Japan in 1905 and its full colonization in 1910. Conventionally, this story is told in histories of diplomacy, policy, and military affairs. The aim of the present paper is to suggest the possibility of imbedding such accounts within a broader trajectory of foreign perceptions and elite and popular sentiments concerning Korea, as materialized in the things that “spoke for” its actuality and potential in the period.

Stemming from a larger project on the history of American anthropology of Korea from the late 19th century onwards, my focus is on the assembly of anthropological museum collections and the broader circulation of objects that bore ethnological significance between Korea and the United States. Anthropological collecting was one early locus of intervention by those who wished to emphasize Korea’s degree of civilization within the ruling evolutionary
paradigm of the era, with cognizance of the political consequences that this entailed. However, shifts in support and imagined prospects for Korea were also concretized in changes in the perceived significance of individual things and collections as a whole. In the vocalization of anthropological objects, one is able to register the turn toward international pessimism that marked one of the constitutive conditions of Korea’s ultimate loss of independence.

**Breaking Walls, Dis-membering City: Mixed Residence, Extraterritoriality, and New Subjects of Empire in Seoul, 1882-1914**
Sinwoo Lee, California State University, Chico

The city walls in Seoul, just as elsewhere in the premodern world, played a crucial role in the city’s definition and function. Not only did they delimit the spatial boundaries of the city from outside, the walls also defined the legal boundaries of membership and guaranteed the political, commercial, and social privileges of its inhabitants from outsiders. Hence, to demolish the walls meant much more than the destruction of a physical object; it was tantamount to dis-membering the city and dismantling the political, economic, and social structure the walls once belonged to.

This paper explores how the Seoul city walls, both as the spatial and legal boundaries of urban community, were challenged, demolished, and replaced by new city limits from the late Chosŏn to the early colonial period (1882-1914). Since its inception, the city walls had stood as a physical barrier to forbid foreigners, seen as “outsiders,” from residing inside the city. Such a role of the walls as ethnic separation was challenged when Seoul was opened as a city of mixed residence and foreigners with extraterritorial privileges began to live together with Koreans inside the city in 1882. This paper examines how mixed residence and extraterritoriality posed a challenge to the Korean state that was in urgent need to exercise sovereignty over its territory and subjects by making the spatial and legal boundaries of urban community more porous than ever before. Here, I will pay particular attention to the rise of a vast array of Koreans operating on the margins of extraterritoriality in the pursuit of their livelihoods. This paper then demonstrates how the spatial and legal boundaries of the city were reorganized by the colonial government’s two-folds efforts. The colonial government first demolished the walls as one of the most apparent visual representation of the dis-membering of the city, and then abolished the city’s extraterritorial enclaves under a unified administrative system in 1914. In doing so, the colonial rule placed Koreans, Japanese, and foreigners under the same authority of the colonial government and incorporated them into new subjects of Imperial Japan.

**Global Trade in Local Markets: Reconciling Knowledge, Practice, and Risk within the Nineteenth Century Rural Economy**
Holly Stephens, University of Pennsylvania

The opening of Korean ports to international trade in 1876 brought Korean agriculture into fresh contact with global markets. Throughout the late nineteenth century, a burgeoning trade with Japan saw huge growth in the export of beans and rice in exchange for imported textiles and other manufactured products, with Korea’s exposure to international agricultural markets only increasing under colonial rule (1910-1945). This paper examines the impact of such
changes upon ordinary farmers. Using the diary of Sim Wŏn’gwŏn (1850—1933), a farmer from the Ulsan region, this paper will consider the myriad ways in which the growing export market for rice came to influence the everyday practices that structured Sim’s agricultural production.

Where previous studies on the growth of international trade in late nineteenth-century Korea have focused on material and political questions, this paper takes advantage of the unique perspective presented in Sim Wŏn’gwŏn’s diary to examine some of the intangible effects of new trade patterns. How did farmers experience and understand the growth of the rice trade outside of the immediate open port regions? And, how did farmers reconcile the new trade with their existing knowledge and practices? Based on the in-depth case study of Sim Wŏn’gwŏn, this paper will introduce Sim’s view of the rural economy before tracing the ways that it informed his patterns of production, understanding of the international rice trade, and responses to risk in the new economy. In so doing, it will attempt to move away from historical frameworks based on assumptions of nationalism or a uniform course of modernization to offer instead an example of nineteenth century answers for nineteenth century problems.

15:30-17:30 Sovereignty, Culture and Identity
Chair: Joachim Kurtz, Heidelberg   Commentator: Hans Martin Krämer, Heidelberg

Korean Understanding of “Civilization” and “Sovereignty” in the Late 19th Century: An Analysis on Three International Law Books
Jong-Chol An, University of Tübingen
This paper deals with a question; how Koreans understood international law, particularly “civilization” and “sovereignty” concepts in the late 19th century. Those concepts has been widely accepted as threshold to be accepted to western society or “International Society.” As several historians of international law argue that “civilization” and “sovereignty” were contested concepts before the 1880s, Korean situation was also subject to fluid international settings. Against this backdrop, it is meaningful to ask how Koreans understood its own standing in international society, by looking up Korean perceptions of these vague concepts in the late 19th century. Thus, this presentation analyzes three most popular books on international law among Korean intellectuals at that time. Those are as follows: Henry Wheaton’s Elements of International Law (Wangup gongfa in Chinese; Man’guk kongpǒp in Korean), Theodore D. Woolsey’s Introduction to the Study of International Law (Gongfa bianlan in Ch; Kongpǒp p’yǒnram in K), and Johann C. Bluntschli’s Das modern Völkerrecht der civilisierten Staaten als Rechtbuch dargestellt (Gongfa huitong in Ch; Kongpǒp hoet’ong in K). All three books were translated into classical Chinese by William A. P. Martin with a project of Chinese Tongwenguan (同文館) in 1864, 1877, and 1880 respectively. All were imported to Korea, right after translated. Korean Government republished and widely circulated Bluntschli’s book in 1896. Although existing literature shows that those books are circulated among Korean readers since the Korean-Japanese Treaty (1876), scholars did not pay a close attention to the contents and context of the book production. I will argue that the concept of “civilization” and “sovereignty” was not firmly fixed at least up to 1880s so that
Korean society appropriated those concepts to their purpose. This experience illuminates the character of Korean understanding of the world not only in the late 19th century but also in contemporary society.

Confucianism and Cultural Interactions in East Asia
Lee Hyojin, Heidelberg
Fujitsuka Chikashi (1879-1948), who was a professor of Chinese philosophy in Keijō Imperial University started his research on the interaction between Korean, Chinese and Japanese scholars in 18-19th centuries. He graduated faculty of Chinese philosophy at Tokyo imperial university in 1908. He visited China between 1921-1922. In China he conducted research on bibliographical studies of the Qing dynasty, and he also met influential Chinese scholars such as Luxun (1881-1936). During his journey in China he became interested in the vestiges of the cultural exchanges between Chinese scholars and Korean scholars who visited China in the late Joseon dynasty. Through this experience he was able to thoroughly examine the phenomenon of cultural movement from China eastwards.

Fujitsuka was a pioneer in research not only in the field of Chinese philosophy, but also in the research of Korean Confucianism from the perspective of cultural interaction. He collected an immense amount of books and letters of Joseon-period Confucian scholars, some of which are now housed in the Harvard Yenching Library, and they are very important and rare materials which provide insights into 18-19th century academic interaction in East Asia. Looking into his life and works we can also examine academic exchanges in East Asia in both the 18 and 19th centuries, and the early 20th century.

“Conform to the Spirit of the Times”: Imperial Korea in the Twilight of Sovereignty*
Christine Kim, Georgetown University
One of the remarkable and confounding aspects of Chosŏn Korea during its final years is the establishment of the Empire of the Great Han (Taehan cheguk) (1897-1910). Korea’s short-lived pre-annexation polity poses an historiographical challenge on several fronts: Should it be regarded as a break from or continuation of the dynastic past? Was it Japan or Russia that served as inspiration for Korea’s imperial turn? What accounts for the falling out between the throne and progressive reformers, who had joined forces to proclaim Korean sovereignty? Why was imperial Japan so invested in promoting the image of a modern Korean monarchy? This paper engages with Anderson’s notion of “official nationalism”—the willed merger of nation and dynastic empire—to elucidate the variety of political agendas and actors, as well as cultural representations and social responses—that gave shape to Korea’s own imperial project. It examines how the Korean royal throne studied, or mimicked, the cultural practices of “Western” nationalisms in an attempt to recreate the success of the Meiji Restoration and the splendor of czarist Russia, and offers insight into the ways in which the Chosŏn dynastic past was refashioned and tradition invented to place the throne at the center of Korea’s political and symbolic significance. It further highlights the continuing efforts undertaken by Resident-General Itō Hirobumi of the protectorate administration not only to modernize the throne, but popularize it as well, while analyzing the disparate social, cultural, and regional responses among Koreans seeking to make sense of their newly imperial monarchy. Taking a transnational and comparative framework, the paper aims to understand how Korea’s
engagement with modern empires at the turn of the twentieth century reflected its anxieties about its place in the world.

*The phrase is from King Kojong’s Fourteen-Article Oath, proclaimed in 1895.

18:00-19:00  Keynote

“Global and East Asian Statecraft in Korea at the Close of the Long 19th Century, 1880-1910”

Kyung Moon Hwang, USC Dornsife

Statecraft and state institutions had lain at the heart of Joseon dynastic rule for nearly five centuries before a stormy but fruitful mix of ideas and models accompanied the onset of high imperialism in Korea in the late 19th century. How did Koreans’ responses to imperialism get expressed in changes to the state? One potentially effective approach to dealing with this expansive theme is to consider how the specific statecraft rationalities pushing in from neighboring and global sources interacted with the longstanding rationalities of Joseon administration to produce a series of major reforms. Furthermore, these developments in statecraft were tied closely to the political, economic, and cultural changes of this era of Joseon’s end and helped determine Korea’s modernity.

Followed by Reception at the Karl Jaspers Centre
DAY TWO (20 May) Saturday: The Demise of the Korean State, Re-Constitution of Korean Culture

9:30-12:00   Economy, Commerce and the Nation
Chair: Stefan Knoob, Duisburg-Essen   Commentator: Steven Ivings, Heidelberg

Cost Accounting from Kaesŏng Korea in the Nineteenth Century: Analysing Cost Statements of Ginseng Farming, Balance Sheets and Income Statements
Seong Ho Jun (Chŏn Sŏng-ho), The Academy of Korean Studies
From when, how, why, rational behaviours of business emerge in Korea. For searching them, this paper focuses on the ginseng business enterprise that carried out these processes in the nineteenth century. This paper approaches in some reflections on the originality of the modern order for administrative data before meeting with Western managerial cost accounting. Max Weber’s thesis represents the explanation of relation between the rise of Protestantism and the development of Capitalism helped create an aspect of modernity. For the comparison with Western rationality, this paper select Account books ranging over the period 1887 to 1910 preserved in North and South Korea, in which the cost records and double-entry method(DEB) were coordinated. Samples are examined to show a birth of Korean capitalistic activities recorded in a Day Book-Journal, a Liabilities Ledger, an Assets Ledger, a ginseng farming cost statement, a Financial Statement, and an Income and Expense Account.

Korean Merchants in Treaty Ports in the Late Nineteenth Century
Ryota Ishikawa, Ritsumeikan
This paper will focus on the trade practices of Korean merchants in the late nineteenth century, comparing with cases in Japan and China. Foreign trade in Korea at the time was conducted by foreign merchants who stayed in their settlements of treaty ports. They had the legal right to travel into inland area for commerce, but actually, most of they didn’t go outside of settlements and traded with Korean merchants who lived around there. For foreign merchants who didn’t have enough information of indigenous market, it was too risky and costly to trade directly with inland merchants.

Behavior of foreign merchants like this was similar to that in Japan and China under the system of treaty ports trade. For these merchants’ commercial success, it was crucial to keep the relationship with indigenous merchants in treaty ports smooth. However historical researches about this problem in Korea are not enough, comparing with Japan and China. It’s not only because Korean merchants remained little historical materials, but also because researchers have seen merchants’ activity as the reflection of state interests and unequal inter-state relationships.

This paper will review the relationship between Korean merchants and foreign ones in treaty ports, focusing on their internal managerial logics and trade practice which were based not only on legal constraints but also on independent negotiation among merchants. With this aim, Korean government materials which had been seen through the nationalistic point of view will be revised and used to reconstruct the actual market situation, besides documents of foreign merchants from China and Japan.
Modernity in Currency: The Rise of National Currencies in the Japanese Empire and Late Nineteenth Century Korea
Howard Kahm, Yonsei University
As a store of value, money has taken various forms in East Asia ranging from precious metal ingots to bolts of cloth. With the advent of the modern age in East Asia, money was standardized in both coin and paper form as national currencies, which served as a signpost of multiple, interwoven economic and political developments. First, national currencies wove disparate local economies together into national economies. Even as national currencies lowered financial transaction costs, it also enabled the concurrent rise of modern transportation and communication networks to facilitate the physical transportation of people, goods, and information. Second, national currencies became tangible symbols of the nation with the purposeful application of emblems, pictures, and texts, which created a monetary narrative of national development, albeit primarily for domestic consumption. Third, national currencies became international symbols of the nation, but primarily as measures of the economic strength of the nation vis-à-vis other nations and their currencies. In the late nineteenth century, the economic strength of a nation within the global economy was ultimately judged according to the gold standard. Finally, national currencies became important tools in the imperialist drive for territory and influence, particularly through its penetration of less developed economies. In the late nineteenth century, Imperial Japan and Late Chosŏn Korea exhibited all of these characteristics as they transitioned to modernity. However, the unique characteristics of their respective drives to achieve modernity highlight the contingent nature of development as nations negotiated multiple paths to modernity, particularly within the geopolitical context of East Asia. Even as Imperial Japan sought greater political and economic influence within Late Chosŏn Korea, the Japanese and Koreans were negotiating their respective positions not only between themselves but also against Western notions of economic modernity. In this respect, a close examination of their historical trajectories will highlight features applicable to many other contexts as nations made the transition from premodern to modern economies.

13:00-15:00  Erosion of the Korean State
Chair: Jaok Kwon-Hein, Heidelberg  Commentator: Alain Delissen, EHESS Paris

Fire and Fury: The Cheju Rebellion of 1901
Kyoim Yun, University of Kansas
On Cheju Island in May 1901, furious rebels slaughtered several hundred Catholics, far more casualties than in any other Korean religious conflict. Looking at multiple perspectives and interpretations recounting the rebellion, this study adds a more nuanced and complex understanding of power dynamics at play in the locale at the turn of the century. The national and local patriotic interpretations of the uprising, based primarily on circumstantial assumptions, tend to blame French imperialism and emphasize the courageous actions of the rebels. However, among Catholic missionaries appointed to Cheju, a Korean priest was more responsible for incensing the non-Catholics than the French priests; the rebels killed not a single French missionary, but murdered their fellow islanders. In studies challenging the
nationalistic take on the uprising, the French Catholic priests remain nearly free of any responsibility for the traumatic event, and criticism is diverted to Japan’s imperial interests, which played a rather insignificant role in sparking the rebellion.

“Fire and Fury” demonstrates that the main cause of the Cheju Rebellion was the economic and political plight of the islanders enmeshed with Catholics’ intrusion into the values, habits, and class relations of the insular rural society. The priests’ prejudice against the islanders influenced by Korean mainland intellectuals and the confrontational evangelical approach of a Korean priest earned a fierce backlash from the islanders, who had long maintained a strong sense of regional identity and a resentment of outsiders. Although the priests were not necessarily in lockstep with French imperial policy, they worked under the system of foreign privilege, institutionalized through the 1886 French-Chosŏn treaty and supported by the Anglo-Saxon racism prevalent at the time. As the Cheju native novelist Hyŏn Kiyŏng shows in his Birds Crying on the Periphery, the voices from one small corner of the world, often silenced in national narratives of Korean culture and history, deserve more attention for a better understanding of the region and, indeed, of the nation.

**King Kojong and his international diplomatic efforts**
Katharina Schmölders, Bonn

For many decades during the 19th century and the beginnings of the 20th century, Korea had been a pawn for the interests of mainly China, Japan and Russia in Asia. After opening to foreign nations and signing their first unequal treaty with another country in the form of the Treaty of Kanghwa with Japan in 1876, different parties in Korea tried to avert the seemingly unavoidable further degradation of Korea as an independent country.

Beside efforts of advocates of orthodox or enlightenment ideals - who had partly success but shattered also due to their inability to unite their strengths - the monarch at that time, King Kojong, tried another course to get help for Korean matters. He was long convinced that international powers would help his nation, if only they knew more about its case. Driven by this goal, he encouraged various engagements to gain public and political attention overseas and to persuade foreign powers to act as supporters for the Korean nation against Japanese or other influences.

Mostly known among these endeavors are a letter for the American president Roosevelt in 1905 and the Korean dispatch of diplomats to the Second Peace Conference in The Hague in 1907. Both undertakings were bound to be interjected by Japanese interference, but nevertheless were significant efforts in a long row of smaller struggles to gain any last available way out of Japanese oppression.

I would therefore like to deal with the historical and political background as well as the later effects of these examples of Kojongs diplomatic actions, while also exploring the motifs for turning to this kind of means to regain national independence.
The Belgium-Korea relations (1900-1905): Focusing on the nomination of a Belgian counsellor to the Chosǒn Court
Adrien Carbonnet, University of Leuven (KU Leuven)
Whereas abundant literature has been published regarding the role played by foreign powers in Korea during the Late Chosǒn period, little attention has been paid to the relations between the Kingdom of Belgium and the Empire of Korea, despite Belgium was one of the few countries that had a permanent mission in Seoul at that time.

This presentation examines the nomination of the Belgian diplomat Adhémar Delcoigne to the Korean Court as private counsellor to Emperor Kojong. The present study is mainly based on the diplomatic archives hosted in the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Brussels).

Delcoigne arrived in Chemulp’o in June 1903, but his contract was not executed until February 1904. In fact, disclosed documents show that Delcoigne’s appointment drew harsh criticism from the Japanese authorities, who could not tolerate that a Belgian councillor enjoyed higher status than their own counsellor, Katō Masuo. During his stay in Seoul, Delcoigne was secretly commissioned by Emperor Kojong to provide him with accurate information concerning the Russo-Japanese War. Accused of fuelling anti-Japanese sentiment in Korea, the Belgian counsellor was eventually dismissed and left the country in January 1905, a few months after the conclusion of the Japan-Korea Agreement of August 1904.

An analysis of the discourse of 'The Fall of Chosôn Dynasty': For rethinking the late 19th century Chosôn in global context
Miji Kim, Seoul National University

This study examines and criticizes the discourse of 'Fall of Chosôn' from past to present and analyzes the structures and blind points of view on it. “Why did Chosôn dynasty fall?” “How did Chosôn lose its independent identity? There were many questions and answers for it for several decades in diverse point of view. The old and common belief about the question is that internal contradiction and external aggression combined and caused the decline and fall of Chosôn. And there are diverse and competing analysis on which factor they put an emphasis. And some stress on the dynamics of political and economic zeal for the expansion of the old continent, America and neighboring countries in the fin de siècle of 19th century and others trace back for the reasons to 17, 18th century or earlier period. As a whole it can be said that they have premise in common that Chosôn had not taken proper measures for a long time on that kind of global movements and result in the collapse of the country. Though containing a ray of truth in them, those analysis and assumptions of the many studies have the retroactive point of view from the present and modern perspective.

It is certain that there were no dynasties or empires even civilizations which could avoid its decline and fall generally. Therefore in the long historical scope it is natural to assume that the fall was predetermined fate to Chosôn which had lasted for 500 years. It can be said that a country cannot avoid its aging process as a human body, though not passing away, and it is also doubtful that any good policies indeed could let a country avoid its decline. When after accepting these aspects, new and fair approaches to the complex history of Chosôn is to begin.
On the above point of view, this study focuses on the efforts for ‘national salvation’ not for the dynasty, especially ‘the struggling to communicate with the foreign countries’, ‘the will to learn advanced civilization’ in the 19th century, and suggests that the period was not a ‘waste of time’ which resulted in the loss of independence. Ultimately this study aims to unfold the dynamic and complicated aspects of Korean modernization in the global context.

15:30-17:30 Law and Power
Chair: Hyojin Lee, Heidelberg Commentator: Harald Fuess, Heidelberg

Rethinking Sovereign Violence and Imperialism: the Gunboat as Metaphor and Reality
Saeyoung Park, Leiden
The idea that the 19th century in East Asia was a time of violent, imperial change is rarely questioned. This claim is the point of origin for numerous historical trajectories, including the emergence of nationalism, and the rise of nation-states in this region. And while the field has distanced itself from the “opening” narratives that comprised early “Western impact, Eastern response” scholarship, the paradigms of violence and transformation that undergirded such arguments continue to linger. Although this paper does not contest the characterization of this period as one of great turmoil, it seeks to disambiguate what we think of as the sovereign violence that constitutes imperialism. I argue that analytically privileging legal regimes over traditional conflict measures (e.g. gunboats) better reflects the historical workings of imperialism in East Asia. Recognizing imperialism as a form of state violence that proceeds primarily through legal means reveals different research parameters. Not only can we resituate the arena of conflict away from comparative studies of military might or relative technological prowess, we can better understand the historical consequences and political capacities of “rule-making.”

Elsewhere, I have offered a revisionist history that situates the birth of the our “Westphalian” system of international relations—the world that we live in today—in the death of its last challenger, the tributary system. The praxis of contemporary international relations was refined in imperial encounters with 19th century Others; there is a under-appreciated historicity to the international system and the models of power that we deploy in our research. Ultimately, what is at stake in this paper is a reconfiguration of how we problematize imperialism, sovereign violence and its purported efficacy, as well as our preconceived notions of how state violence can be used to change others. To this end, this paper re-examines and disentangles the earliest histories of treaties and gunboats in 19th century Korea.

A Study on the Formation of Semi-sovereign or Dependent State Joseon’s Legal Status in the 19th century’s Western European International Law: Focusing on the Comparison with Wallachia, Moldavia and Egypt under the Ottoman Empire’s Suzerainty or the States of the German Confederation
Yoo Bada, Korea University
The international legal order was horizontal and based on equal sovereignty, while the Chinese world order was vertical and centre on China. However, it is important to notice that the international legal order did not mean that all countries were equal. By the 19th century
where the international legal order swept over the Chinese world, there were some countries which maintained their feudal relation with suzerains called empires in the West.

According to Elements of International Law which was widely used in the East Asia in the late 19th century, they were called either tributary states (進貢國) or vassal states (藩屬, 封臣國) and had the status of semi-sovereign or dependent states (半主・屬國). They were also differentiated from sovereign and independent states (自主・獨立國). On the other hand, the international legal order was very unstable order that sovereign and independent states coexist with semi-sovereign or dependent states in same system.

Even though the international legal order was based on the order between countries, it included the vertical order like the suzerain-dependant state. This made Qing translate Wan-guo-gong-fa (『萬國公法』) and reinterpret the Chinese world order into the international legal order. And Qing exactly defined Joseon as a semi-sovereign or dependent state based on Wan-guo-gong-fa. This semi-sovereign or dependent state was corresponded to Wallachia, Moldavia and Egypt under the Ottoman Empire’s suzerainty or the States of the German Confederation. At this point, We can find significance in world history of semi-sovereign or dependent state Joseon’s international regal status.

Diplomacy for Korean Neutrality and Buffer Zone in Modern History
Seung-young Kim, University of Sheffield

Because of its geopolitical location surrounded by major powers, the Korean peninsula became centre stage for rivalries that have ignited conflicts since the late 19th century: the first Sino-Japanese War, the Russo-Japanese War. Prior to these conflicts, there were diplomatic probing and negotiations to find compromise over Korea by guaranteeing its neutrality or the establishment of buffer zones. But those efforts failed to produce any lasting compromise, thus eventually leading Japanese control of Korea from 1905. This paper examines how and why such course of development took place while examining major powers’ considerations as well as debates and suggestions from Korean side.

The paper first examines Ching China’s efforts to strengthen its control over Korea by turning it into a dependent state based on modern international law, along with the Korean reformers’ wishes and suggestions for neutrality. Then, it will examine how and why Japan changed its strategies toward Korea and China from the early 1880s until 1894, from supporting a neutral Korea to securing an exclusive control of Korea by starting war with China. The second half of the paper will show how and why Japan and Russia could not reach compromise over Korea before the Russo-Japanese War, despite various diplomatic suggestions to guarantee Korean neutrality or establish buffer zones in northern Korea. After examining the major diplomatic agreements, such as Yamagata–Lobanov and Nishi-Rosen agreements, it will examine why two countries could not find any compromise over buffer zones in northern Korea, before the outbreak of the war despite several months of negotiations in the latter half of 1903.
While placing main locus of analyses on China, Japan, Russia, and Korea, this paper will pay attention to the stances taken by other great powers including the United States. The conclusion will discuss the lessons and implications of these cases on subsequent history and international relations of Northeast Asia, where similar competitions among major powers have continued.


Han Sung-min, Daejeon University

Until now, research on the Japanese ‘annexation’ of Korea has largely been conducted with two main foci, the first focusing on conflict within the Japanese government between the “military faction” calling for the prompt ‘annexation’ of Korea and the “civilian faction” opposing it, and the other investigating the (il)legality of the ‘annexation’ treaty between Korea and Japan in accordance with the norms of international law. These approaches have considerable limitations, such as reducing the problem of historical responsibility for the Japanese ‘annexation’ of Korea to small groups of policy makers, highlighting political decision making and competition among the small power elite, and justifying aggression by referring to international law which itself was based on the interests of imperial powers.

This study illustrates that the Japanese ‘annexation’ of Korea was not a product of intragovernmental confrontation or non-compliance of international law, but that it was the result of a policy of aggression that was broadly supported by Japanese society under the consistent policy of the Japanese empire, and was strenuously executed by the working-level bureaucrats within the government. This study divides the process of the Japanese ‘annexation’ of Korea into specific stages after the conclusion of the Protectorate Treaty of 1905: enforcement of the protectorate treaty, international accreditation and maintenance of the protectorate system, and final implementation of the ‘annexation’ Korea.

**18:00-19:00 Evening Roundtable: “Politics of History and Memory in East Asia”**

Lauren Richardson, Edinburgh

Takuma Melber, Heidelberg

Michael Shin, Cambridge
19:30 Dinner (For conference participants)

‘Restaurant Korea’ (Heiliggeiststrasse 3, 69117 Heidelberg)

Directions: Come out of the Karl Jaspers Centre and walk straight onto the Bergheimer Strasse, turn left and walk straight across Bismarckplatz and onto the Hauptstrasse. Follow the Hauptstrasse for approx. 1.3km, until you come to the Marktplatz, next enter the Heiliggeiststrasse at the left of the Town Hall (Rathaus.) You should see a restaurant as in the picture (left).

Enjoy!

DAY THREE (21 May) Sunday: Practical Issues

9:30-11:30 Discussing Publishing Plans

End of Conference
## Confirmed Conference Participants

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