

Chengde and the Barbarians: Reading Ethnicity and Difference in Pak Chiwŏn's *Yŏrha ilgi**

Min Eun Kyung

The aim of this essay is to situate the travelogue of Pak Chiwŏn in the context of the new Qing history and the recent interest in Chengde studies. Most studies of Pak Chiwŏn situate him in the Korean tradition of *yŏnhaeng* 燕行—literally, “journey to Beijing.” This essay begins by noting, quite simply, that the specific achievement and significance of *Yŏrha ilgi* needs to be framed in terms of its necessary departure from the generic expectations and constraints of *yŏnhaengnok*. Pak intended to go to Beijing, and he did, but Beijing turned out to be a stopover rather than the end destination; unexpectedly, and dramatically, he ended up in Chengde or Yŏrha 熱河. It would therefore seem logical to query in what ways his travelogue diverges from, rather than conforms to, the *yŏnhaengnok* tradition. In Chengde, Pak met not only Manchus and Han Chinese, but also Mongols, Uyghur Muslims, and Tibetans. Confronted with this great ethnic and cultural mix in a city never before traveled to by a Chosŏn embassy, Pak resorts, on the one hand, to the traditional language of the “barbarian,” a hierarchical language of ethnic difference. On the other hand, he also shows a sensitive awareness of the transactional and relative nature of ethnicity. By closely examining the different terms—*ho* 胡, *ro* 虜, *chŏk* 狄, *orangk'ae* 兀良哈, and combinations thereof, such as *horo* 胡虜 and *hojŏk* 胡狄—Pak used to describe the unfamiliar peoples he met in Chengde, this essay analyzes his reading of the difference and variety at the heart of the Qing empire.

Keywords: Pak Chiwŏn, *Yŏrha ilgi*, *yŏnhaeng*, Chengde, new Qing history, barbarian

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Min Eun Kyung (eunmin@snu.ac.kr) is a professor in the Department of English at Seoul National University

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