Chapter 3

Border Peoples and Flexible Loyalties in Chosŏn during the Seventeenth Century

The period of peace in Chosŏn after the departure of the Ming armies in 1600 was soon followed by renewed conflict in Liaodong to Chosŏn’s north, as a new power, the Jianzhou Jurchens, under their charismatic leader, Nurhaci, rose to prominence in the borderlands between Ming Liaodong and Chosŏn Korea and became a growing challenge to both Ming authority and the Chosŏn state. Nurhaci consolidated his control over previously disunited Jurchen tribes (increasingly named Manchu during this period) and indeed over Mongol and other groups as well. Politically, he formed the region north of Chosŏn into a centralizing polity under his rule, establishing the Later Jin dynasty in 1616. War erupted in 1618 when Nurhaci countered Ming attempts to block his trade in Liaodong by occupying the Liaodongese trading town of Fushun. The Ming responded in 1619 by sending a massive military force, including troops provided by its allies, such as Mongols, Yehe (a Jurchen group), and indeed Chosŏn, but bad coordination caused by rivalry among Ming officers allowed Nurhaci to destroy the Ming force sent against him in the decisive battle of Sarhu. Following this, both he and his successor, Hong Taiji, as leaders of first the Later Jin and then the Qing empires, were able to pursue the conquest of Liaodong and Liaoxi against a Ming court otherwise weakened by widespread popular unrest. This culminated in 1644 with the Qing occupation of the Ming capital of Beijing after it had already fallen to the rebels under Li Zicheng.

Badly weakened by the Imjin War, Chosŏn’s direct military involvement in the conflict was limited and controversial. After the debacle in Sarhu in 1619, Nurhaci chose to spare the Chosŏn contingent, even while executing the other surviving Ming soldiers. This resulted in the rumor, spreading among both Ming and Chosŏn officials, of a conspiracy between the then-king Kwanghae-gun of Chosŏn and the new Manchu power. This rumor became one of the justifications for the coup d’etat that overthrew Kwanghae-gun and put
Injo on the throne in 1623. The Chosŏn court under Injo, already beholden to the Ming for their military assistance during the Imjin War, had very little room for diplomatic maneuvering after justifying its own takeover of the Chosŏn state in part on Ming loyalist grounds. Injo’s regime had a weak base of support (as revealed by the 1624 revolt of Injo’s supporter Yi Kwal) and so could not devote resources to the defense of its northern border. As a result, it suffered the Chŏngmyo Invasion by the Later Jin under Hong Taiji in 1627, after which Chosŏn was forced to abandon its direct military assistance to the Ming and agree to a younger-brother relationship with the Later Jin. When it failed to maintain the terms of this agreement and also rejected Hong Taiji’s attempts to claim imperial status and a new Qing dynasty in 1636, the Chosŏn court suffered a second Manchu assault, the Pyŏngja Invasion of 1636–1637, at the conclusion of which Injo was forced into a humiliating and public submission to Hong Taiji. By the terms of the surrender, Chosŏn was required to break off all ties to the Ming and accept Qing overlordship. As a surety, Injo had to send the Sohyŏn crown prince (Sohyŏn seja, 1612–1645) and his second son, the Pongnim great prince (Pongnim taegun, 1619–1659, later Hyojong r. 1649–1659), as well as a number of high officials, as hostages to the Qing capital of Mukden. Chosŏn also suffered the capture of large numbers of ordinary Chosŏn subjects as prisoners of war, the execution of a number of anti-Qing officials under Qing auspices, and the forced participation in military activity alongside the Qing armies against the Ming.

Ideologically, these troubles represented a major crisis to Chosŏn’s elite, who felt a deep obligation to the Ming empire and to a civilization centered on Chunghwa, in which category they did not include the new Qing empire. Demographically, however, the Manchu invasions were significantly less disruptive than the Imjin War and resulted in far less loss of life. Chosŏn, in fact, suffered far less than did much of the world during a notoriously troubled seventeenth century, severely affected, as Geoffrey Parker has argued, by a cooling climate. However, like the Imjin War, the wars between the Manchu and Ming in Liaodong generated large numbers of refugees and displaced peoples, notably Chinese-speaking Liaodongese and Chosŏn’s own Jurchen vassals, the Pŏnhos of the Tumen River. As with the Japanese defectors and Ming deserters of the Imjin War, these refugees carried significant political risks, as all were potentially beholden to other regimes. In particular, Liaodongese refugees, who came in huge numbers, placed a heavy economic burden on a Chosŏn state already weakened by the Imjin War. Moreover, Pŏnhos and Liaodongese, like the Ming and Japanese deserters of the Imjin War, were highly mobile culturally, socially,
and politically, and this posed new challenges for the Chosŏn state as it sought to maintain its control in the face of chaos in Northeast Asia.

Chosŏn’s Jurchen Subjects during the Rise of the Qing

Beginning with the late sixteenth century, growing unrest threatened the delicate balance on Chosŏn’s northern border, with its combination of military garrisons and Pŏnho vassals; some of these vassals now cast their lot with the deep-dwelling Jurchen groups against whom they were supposed to form a barrier. The elaborate defensive network of relationships that the Chosŏn court had formed with Pŏnhos on its northern border had already shown signs of collapse with the Nit'anggæe uprising of 1583. The Imjin War further weakened Chosŏn’s control over the region, as Pŏnhos rose up in revolt during and after Katō Kiyomasa’s occupation of Hamgyŏng Province, leading to further unrest in 1594 by the Yŏksu tribe that had formed a fortified town north of the Tumen. Among other problems, the Imjin War drained the Chosŏn court of the finances needed to provide its usual support to its Jurchen allies, including their all-important...
visits to the capital. Then, immediately following the war, between 1598 and 1600, Chosŏn suffered a series of destructive uprisings by Pŏnhos, including the Not’o tribe upstream from Hoeryŏng. These were put down only with great difficulty.\textsuperscript{10}

In 1599, during a discussion of the Not’o uprising, Yi Tŏkhyŏng (1561–1613) expressed concern that if the Not’o were not brought thoroughly under control, “abroad the authority of the kingdom will suffer, and domestically we will lose the support of the multitude. Far and wide there will be none who do not despise us. Then if sundry Jurchens continue to rise in revolt, and someone like Nurhaci hears of it, and if that moves his mind toward aggression, then how will we maintain control? That is the road to destruction.”\textsuperscript{11} By “someone like Nurhaci” Yi Tŏkhyŏng was referring not only to Nurhaci himself, then indeed causing concern to the Chosŏn court, but to a whole class of powerful new leaders of Jurchen confederacies. Although the Ming and Chosŏn together had eliminated powerful Jurchen leaders following the joint attack on Li Manchu of the Jianzhou confederacy in 1467, by the late sixteenth century new Jurchen confederacies had emerged, driven by economic development in the Jurchen lands, with Jurchens selling ginseng and pelts to Ming and Chosŏn in exchange for handcrafted goods from both. This trade brought the Jurchen lands into the Ming’s silver economy and drove both increased social differentiation and the formation of fortified towns. These economic and social developments encouraged the formation of new military confederacies, initially in the region north and east of Tieling among the “Four Hūlūn,” namely the Ula, Hoifa, Yehe, and Hada. In 1548, Wan of the Hada established himself as leader of the Four Hūlūn, while also extending his control over part of the Jianzhou and Wild Jurchens. Generally accumulating power with Ming support, he also claimed the Mongol title “khan.”\textsuperscript{12} However, the dominance of the Hada over the Hūlūn did not survive Wan’s death in 1582. Closer to Chosŏn’s borders, the Jianzhou Jurchen confederacy experienced somewhat slower political development—one leader, Wang Gao (d. 1575), came into conflict with the Ming and was defeated by the combined force of the Ming and Wang Tai in 1575. In 1583, during the conflict that followed Wang Tai’s death, Giocangga and Taksi, two prominent leaders of the Jianzhou, were both killed, partly through the connivance of Nikan Wailan, who attempted to work with the Ming to advance his own position. This resulted in a temporary setback to the Jianzhou Jurchens. Nurhaci, the son of Taksi, gradually consolidated power over the Jianzhou Jurchens. After Nurhaci’s victory over an alliance of the Four Hūlūn and their allies in 1593, he expanded his power more broadly over the Jurchens as a whole.\textsuperscript{13}
The emergence of confederacies to Chosŏn’s north made it increasingly challenging for Chosŏn to maintain control over the Pŏnhos. Even before Nurhaci, the Ula, a branch of the Hulun based on the Sunggari River, had sought to exert their control over the Pŏnhos of northern Hamgyŏng. Bujantai, the younger brother of Mantai of the Ula, was captured after the Hulun defeat in 1593 and taken to Jianzhou by Nurhaci. He was allowed by Nurhaci to return to the Ula, in theory as a vassal of the Jianzhou, in 1596. Despite the fact that the alliance between Bujantai of the Ula and Nurhaci of the Jianzhou was strengthened through marital ties, Bujantai actively conspired with Šurgaci (Nurhaci’s then co-ruler and younger brother) against Nurhaci himself. Bujantai’s rise ended only when he was defeated in battle by Nurhaci in 1613.

In Chosŏn accounts, Bujantai was known initially by an Idu rendering of his nickname Hashū, which is perhaps to be glossed as “left-handed archer.” His group, the Ula, were generally referred to in Chosŏn texts as Hulun (K. Horon or Hollaon), of which the Ula were only one part. Kim Siyang (1581–1643), a Chosŏn official who was exiled to the garrison of Chongsŏng near the Tumen River between 1608 and 1618, claimed that Bujantai was already intervening in the affairs of the Pŏnhos in 1591. This is unlikely, as Bujantai was not then an autonomous power, but it is indeed true that when the Hulun confederacy, including the Ula under Mantai, challenged Nurhaci in 1593, they had allies among the Jurchens from Jušeri, in the region of Mt. Paektu on Chosŏn’s northern border. As an independent force, the Ula under Bujantai first appeared in the area of Hamgyŏng shortly after the Imjin War. Between 1601 and 1605, especially, Bujantai led the Ula in an active military campaign for dominance over the Pŏnhos, launching frequent raids against northern Hamgyŏng and taking prisoners and allies back with him as he prepared for conflict with his father-in-law and erstwhile ally Nurhaci. In 1603, Bujantai deployed a massive army against Tonggwan and Chongsŏng in northern Hamgyŏng, successfully preventing the Chosŏn military from intervening against his dominance over the Pŏnhos from these regions. In order to restore its weakened authority among the Pŏnhos who had only learned to fear “the Hulun while thinking that Chosŏn could not be trusted,” Chosŏn sent a military official named Kim Chongdŭk and a Pŏnho named T’aktu to lead a force against Bujantai’s temporary base of Kontoe north of the Tumen River. The Chosŏn army, however, suffered a humiliating military defeat and a complete loss of authority over those Pŏnhos still in the vicinity of Hamgyŏng Province. With a significant military victory to his credit, the next year Bujantai was able to demand bureaucratic titles and trading privileges from
Chosŏn via the Hamgyŏng governor, significantly improving his position in intra-Jurchen political and military competition.19

Bujantai, however, faced a rival in Nurhaci for the control of the Jurchens. During the 1590s, Nurhaci had expanded his power to the extent that he was able to offer military assistance to Chosŏn during the Imjin War. The offer was refused but did result in a limited exchange of communication between the Chosŏn court and Nurhaci, despite a general policy of avoiding direct contact with the Jianzhou over which the Ming court also exerted its claims.20 Much of the discussion between Nurhaci and Chosŏn concerned disputes over the northern border, especially illegal Chosŏn ginseng diggers. However, as his rivalry with Bujantai grew, Nurhaci increased his efforts to block the expansion of Bujantai’s dominance among the Pŏnhos. He himself clearly had abundant connections to Chosŏn’s Pŏnhos. During his visit to Nurhaci’s capital in 1595, Sin Ch’ungil was told that a recent raid on Chosŏn was the responsibility of a man named Kim Waedu (Ma. Adun), whose father, Jeocangga, had served in Hansŏng for eight years under the name of Kim Kisŏng. The son had abandoned Chosŏn and moved to Komigae in the region of the “four abandoned counties” in the upper Yalu River in the vicinity of Mount Paektu.21 Other evidence, however, suggests that Waedu was not the independent actor described in this passage but in fact was a close associate of Nurhaci.22 He was not the only member of Chosŏn’s Pŏnhos to form such a connection. In 1601, The Chosŏn Veritable Records mentions that associates of such rebellious Pŏnhos as Nit’anggaе and the Not’o tribe had joined with Nurhaci.23

In fact, Nurhaci did not simply wait for Pŏnhos to come to him but actively pressed his claims over those Pŏnhos still under Chosŏn control. In 1595, he sent an unprecedented demand to Hŏ Uk (1548–1618), the magistrate of Kanggye, to repatriate all Jurchens who lived as submitting-foreigners in Chosŏn, a request that Hŏ simply ignored.24 Beyond such minor expansions of Nurhaci’s authority, in 1607 Nurhaci directly challenged Bujantai’s forces at Munam/Ogaram on the opposite bank from the Chosŏn fortified town of Chongsŏng, even leading his armies through northern Hamgyŏng. At the conclusion of this fighting, which brought Nurhaci’s armies south of the Tumen River, he broke Bujantai’s control over the Pŏnhos and gained direct jurisdiction over the Jurchen town of Fio-hoton (K. Hyŏnsŏng) north of the mouth of the Tumen River, within the administrative region of the present-day city of Hunchun.25 Having eliminated Bujantai’s influence in the region, Nurhaci was able to pursue the active removal of Pŏnhos from Chosŏn control into his power base in Jianzhou, taking with
him, according to the *Old Manchu Archive*, two thousand Pŏnho households from Hesihe, Fenehe, and Omho Sure.  

Ultimately, Nurhaci’s assertion of control over the Pŏnho was driven by the same material and ideological logic as his expansion over the Jurchens as a whole. Like Wan of Hada before him, Nurhaci was organizing a confederacy. He was establishing a state centered upon himself by bringing disparate Jurchen political structures into his orbit. In common with earlier steppe confederacies, he pursued not only military means but also administrative and cultural strategies to fuse diverse Jurchen groups into one coherent identity with a putative common ancestry. Thus, in 1599, he had his minister, Erdeni Bakši, design a written language, allowing for the development of a proper bureaucracy. Nurhaci also steadily elevated his political status. He had begun his career as a *beile* (headman) along with his brother Šurgaci, although he often elevated this title to *sure* (“wise” or “felicitous”) beile. As his power grew, he also asserted his rights to the Mongol title khan (*Ma. han*), that had also previously been claimed by Wan of Hada. He further centralized his rule during the early seventeenth century by organizing the hunting parties of disparate village units (*Ma. gašan*) into companies (*Ma. niru*, literally “arrows”). By 1615 he had grouped them into eight banners (*Ma. gušan*), each headed by a Jurchen potentate, but all ultimately under the overall direction of Nurhaci himself. Beginning under his reign, the culturally diverse Jurchen groups, which were at the center of Nurhaci’s khanal project, were renamed Manchu, a designation that under his successor was enforced legally, such that it became a serious offense to use the term “Jurchen.” Indeed, Nurhaci and his successor Hong Taiji even appropriated a myth of origin centered in Changbaishan for their own Aisin Gioro lineage and for the new Manchu nation (*gurun*) as a whole, transforming themselves into an imperial lineage that could claim an antiquity to rival the Ming.  

Such ideological consolidation may also be seen in Nurhaci’s rhetoric concerning the Pŏnho. In Manchu documents concerning the forcible removal of the Pŏnho from Chosŏn, Nurhaci referred to them with the ethnonym “Warka” (the Manchu term for the Uriankhai Jurchen) and described them not as captives, but as his own estranged subjects. In 1607, for instance, *The Old Manchu Archives* has Nurhaci (there referred to by his khanal title “Sure Kundulen Han”) assert that “We are one country, separated by the Ula far away, so you lived submitting to the Ula. But now that I, the Han of our own country, have set out and destroyed the army of the Ula, you should submit to [me], the Han of our one country.”
Chosŏn is notably not mentioned in this passage, although it was almost certainly Chosŏn Pŏnhos who were being removed from their land. However, an explicit reference to the Pŏnhos does appear in a document in *The Old Manchu Archive*, dated to 1609, in which it is claimed that Nurhaci, as “Sure Kundulen Han,” had formally requested that the Wanli emperor, referred to as “the Wan Lii Han of the Great Chinese State” (Ma. Amba Nikan Gurun), arrange for the repatriation of Nurhaci’s subjects living in Chosŏn. This request he based on an interpretation of history, whereby during the time of the Han of the Old Jin—meaning the Jurchen Jin dynasty (1115–1234) that dominated northern China and the steppes until it fell to the Mongols—the Warka had scattered, entering Korea (Ma. Solho) and living on Korea’s frontiers ever since. Nurhaci requested that an investigation be made and that all Warka be returned to him. The document claims that the Wanli emperor did indeed order the “Han of Korea” to repatriate the Warka to Nurhaci. Additionally, it says that the Han of Korea, who at this date would have been Kwanghae-gun, allowed the Sure Kundulen Han, then in his fifty-first year, to bring back a thousand Warka households on the second month of that year.31

The key aspect of both these passages from *The Old Manchu Archive* is Nurhaci’s assertion of a preexisting right to all Jurchens. His historical claims to the former supporters of Bujantai or to Pŏnhos under Chosŏn’s control were, of course, entirely without merit. Certainly, the regular diplomatic exchange referred to in the second passage has no equivalent in any Ming or Chosŏn source that I have been able to check. It is possible that such an exchange occurred not with the central Ming state but with local Ming officials in Liaodong, although it does not, in fact, sound at all like something the Chosŏn court would have supported.32 The document, however, is clearly a genuine product of the early Manchu state and suggests that Nurhaci, at this point, wished to assert both that he had a historically determined right to control all Jurchens, and that his right to rule all Jurchens was supported by both the Ming and Chosŏn monarchies.

With Chosŏn, at least, it is quite clear that this was not the case. Although even after Nurhaci’s victory over Bujantai in 1607, when it had entirely lost its limited means to defend the Pŏnhos against Nurhaci, it did not cease to claim its rights over them. In fact, throughout the troublesome period after the Imjin War, the Chosŏn court was clear that the Pŏnhos were their subjects, even though the Pŏnhos fell on the barbarian side of the civilized-barbarian divide. Even in 1594, as Chosŏn planned reprisals against the Pŏnho rebels among the Yŏksu Jurchens, the Border Defense Command was at pains to distinguish
those Jurchens such as the Yŏksu, “who had forgotten the kindness of [our] kingdom to them” and “who had committed such terrible crimes that they could not but suffer the celestial punishment of military action in response to their crimes” from the other “innocent Pŏnhos,” who maintained their connection to the kingdom, and to whom “greater kindness and care should be granted, to prevent them from holding any doubts or fears [concerning the Chosŏn state].” Such sentiments did not fade as Bujantai and Nurhaci increasingly interfered with Chosŏn’s control over the Pŏnhos. Rather, the Pŏnhos’ identity as subjects of the Chosŏn state, and the vital role that they played in maintaining Chosŏn control, were mentioned in nearly every discussion of the military crisis to Chosŏn’s north. Thus, in 1603, the Border Defense Command argued that the military situation was very dire indeed. Before the Imjin War, the Pŏnhos at the foot of the fortifications could be relied upon to stay loyal, as they themselves benefited from their relationship with the Chosŏn court, but since the Imjin War, the officials at the command worried, Jurchens had noted the military weakness of the Six Garrisons and had started to despise them, thus bringing about the uprising by the Not’o and Adanggae in the region of Hoeryŏng. The most recent violence in the region of Onsŏng and Kyŏngwŏn, they worried, threatened to eliminate entirely the Chosŏn “fence” of Pŏnhos, and with that gone, the Six Garrisons would be in the situation of “teeth without lips.” Yi Sugwang, probably writing in 1614, used a nearly identical expression to describe the problem. He worried that “those Jurchens who live at the foot of the fortifications and are thus called Pŏnhos” had left the region, either voluntarily joining with Nurhaci, or retreating south, or being forcibly removed by Nurhaci to Jianzhou, leaving Chosŏn in the situation whereby “though someone settles right on our borders, or even illegally enters deep into our territory, nobody even dares ask who that person is. When the lips are gone the teeth grow cold—this is an unspeakable worry!”

There are, moreover, frequent references to the Pŏnhos themselves asserting the importance of their connection with Chosŏn by fleeing south. A secret report in 1609 by the Office of the Censor General (Saganwŏn) concerning the security of Kanghwa Island suggested a very large number of Jurchens indeed had retreated into settlements in Chosŏn proper. According to the report, in Hwanghae, Kyŏnggi, Ch’ungch’ŏng, and Chŏlla provinces, so many Jurchen settlements had been established that there was no part of those regions without them, with an especially large number residing in coastal Ch’ungch’ŏng and Chŏlla, where their skill in fishing considerably exceeded that of Koreans. Within those four provinces, Jurchens had built with their own hands more
than two hundred fishing boats—a number that seems rather more impressive considering that they had been in the region for no more than a decade.\textsuperscript{36}

During this period, both Jurchens and Japanese begin to appear in a different form of record—namely household registries. Legally, the Chosŏn court launched a survey of their population once every three years. The process began when the county office collected records of individual households (hogu tanja) from the householder (chubu). The county office would then compose draft registries, usually on the level of ward (li) or district (myŏn), which were then formed into a complete household registry (Hojŏk taejang) for the county as a whole, which in turn was submitted to the provincial office and ultimately to the central court. According to law, all households were to be recorded, but in practice the information was incomplete and became less complete and accurate through each stage of its drafting, with the result that, by some estimates, the population record provided by the household registry was a mere 40 percent of the actual population. The fundamental problem was that the household registry was not a census so much as a record of tax obligations and a tool of governance, and so many people would evade being recorded, although such evasion was illegal and failure to be recorded in the household registry also excluded one from the protection of the state (for instance, in the case of famine). While household registry documents contain immensely valuable information, they are not comprehensive demographic records but rather are limited by the always changing capacity of the state to gather precise information on its subjects and to enforce tax obligations. For instance, following a series of reforms in the mid-seventeenth century, their accuracy likely improved, while they seem to have declined in quality during the period of political turmoil during the nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{37} Read carefully, household registry documents provide insight into how Chosŏn officials saw its population and how Chosŏn people responded to the power of the state. There is also a great deal of demographic information about people too humble to appear consistently in other records.\textsuperscript{38}

Among our surviving household registries from the early seventeenth century are those from the two coastal communities of Ulsan and Haenam. These reveal a significant presence of both Japanese defectors and submitting-foreigners, who from their clan seats would appear to be of Jurchen origin, either Taewŏn (referring to the Mongol Yuan dynasty) or Hŭngnyong-gang (referring to the Heilongjiang or Amur River).\textsuperscript{39} Early seventeenth-century Chosŏn was still recovering from the extreme damage to the state caused by the Imjin War, and so the household registry documents of 1609 would have been of limited accuracy. Nevertheless, \textit{The Ulsan Household Registry of 1609} provides an interesting
snapshot of a small Jurchen community within a county otherwise revealing clear signs of postwar chaos, including the low percentage of slaves (who possibly fled during the chaos), and a large number of displaced persons (yunin). The total recorded population of the surviving portions of The Ulsan Household Registry of 1609 amounted to 4,109 persons within 1,245 households, implying that (considering missing portions of household register) a total recorded population of about 4,500.\(^{10}\) Within Nongso-ri in the Eastern District (Tongmyŏn) of Ulsan, there was a single t'ong of eleven households all of which were headed by submitting-foreigners as well as an additional submitting-foreigner household in the subsequent t'ong, for a total of twenty-seven submitting-foreigner Jurchens (as well as two slaves of seemingly Korean origin).\(^{41}\) Within Yudǔngp’o-ri in the Eastern District, in a t’ong otherwise dominated by slave households, there were five submitting-foreigners, along with two wives of Korean origin, making up three households.\(^{42}\) In the case of the Southern District, there were no recorded concentrated communities of submitting-foreigners. However, in Onyang-ri in the Southern District there were several cases of people of Jurchen ancestry, including a slave woman with a Jurchen father,\(^{43}\) and the Jurchen wife of a commoner.\(^{44}\) There were also five households headed by Jurchen householders. Within these five households, four Jurchen men intermarried with Korean women, either of a slave background or from the Yangyang Ch’oe descent-group of post-station petty officials, and only one Jurchen married to another Jurchen.\(^{45}\) If non-Jurchen spouses are excluded and their children are included, the total recorded population of Jurchens in the surviving portions of The Ulsan Household Registry of 1609 comes to forty-two people. In the summaries (isang) of each li, six physically mature men (changnam) of submitting-foreigner ancestry are recorded for the county center (naebu), eleven for Nongso-ri, two for Yudǔngp’o-ri, and seven for Onyang-ri.\(^{46}\) As the number of physically mature males listed in the summaries for Nongso-ri, Yudǔngp’o-ri, and Onyang-ri amounts to nearly 50 percent of their recorded submitting-foreigner population, it seems likely that there would have been a total of approximately twelve submitting-foreigners recorded for the county center register, which does not now survive. Thus, there would likely have been a total of fifty-four submitting-foreigners of Jurchen origin for Ulsan as a whole, amounting to slightly more than 1 percent of the total recorded population of Ulsan.

The Jurchens in this community were thus only one community of displaced people in a community of refugees, yet in 1609 they had maintained their distinctiveness. The community was largely endogamous—they are generally recorded as intermarrying with other submitting-foreigners, and there are only
a few cases of marriage with non-Jurchen spouses.\textsuperscript{47} Japanese defectors were not recorded as submitting-foreigners in Ulsan, and, not surprisingly, married generally with Korean spouses, reflecting no doubt the very different context of their migration as deserting soldiers who would overwhelmingly have been single men. On the other hand, in the surviving records from Ulsan at least, Japanese defectors maintained their distinctiveness for much longer and continued to be recorded into the late seventeenth century.

Both Japanese and Jurchens were divided by social status, with some being blessed with extensive titles, and some falling to the ranks of slaves and intermarrying with them. We are not given much information about the migration history of either community. In some cases for Onyang-ri, there is evidence that they must have been present for some time, as they had ancestors who are recorded as (presumably Korean) post-station servants (\textit{yŏkcha}) or fishermen (\textit{haech’ŏk}), often of the Yangyang Ch’oe descent-group.\textsuperscript{48} In Nongso-ri or Yudŭng’o-ri, however, there are also two cases of submitting-foreigners described as having “crossed the river.” The first, Yi Munsang, thirty-five years of age, with the clan seat Taewŏn, “crossed the river” at some unspecified date, perhaps in the \textit{kihae} year (1599), a date that is attached to his registration, but which cannot be his birth date, in contrast to nearly all other Jurchens recorded in this registry. It is evident from this that his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, who are listed in the household registry as submitting-foreigners, must have been based north of the Tumen, but already possessed a relationship with the Chosŏn state, as was also the case with his wife, whose ancestors are similarly all listed as submitting-foreigners. Another case is that of Yi Yunsŏk, thirty-two years of age, also with the clan seat Taewŏn but who shares no ancestors with Yi Munsang. In his case, the date attached to him is likely his birth year, which is 1576. He, however, was also listed as “crossing the river.” His ancestors, and the ancestors of his wife, were all listed as submitting-foreigners.\textsuperscript{49}

Other similar communities would have been formed during this period, as Jurchens continued to leave both Nurgan and the Tumen River area throughout the reign of Kwanghae-gun. There was movement in the other direction as well—in 1610, one submitting Jurchen, Pak Yodo, sought to return home (whether to Hamgyŏng or Jianzhou is not specified). He received the help of a deputy commander (\textit{chunggun}) to this end. The account suggests that both Pak and the deputy commander were severely punished. While surely there must have been other such cases (as indeed the report at the time suggested),\textsuperscript{50} Jurchens continued to enter the Chosŏn state. In 1617, two years before the Battle of Sarhu, a Jurchen named Nagada left Jianzhou with eleven others to submit
to the Chosŏn court. According to his discussion with the Jurchen-language interpreter Ha Seguk, he left with the support of Nurhaci, who sent away some Jurchens to Chosŏn to alleviate the hunger caused by recent floods. Yi Siŏn (?–1624), a provincial military commander from P’yŏngan Province, reporting on this matter, expressed concern that the steadily increasing number of Jurchens submitting to Chosŏn, “naked and begging for food” (*chŏksin kŏlsik*), risked exhausting the resources of the already burdened Chosŏn state.51

Even among those Jurchens who could not escape Nurhaci, a number of documents point to the continued feeling among them of a link to Chosŏn. According to the report preserved in the *Journal of King Kwanghae-gun*, two escaped Korean prisoners informed the court of their conversation with a slave of the captured Chosŏn general Kang Hongnip (1560–1627). The slave said that, among the former submitting-Jurchens and Pŏnhos, “there were none who did not call Nurhaci a great bandit who lusted after wealth and loved war.” In fact, according to their account, the Pŏnhos in Nurhaci’s camp actually wished him dead. For that matter, whenever the Pŏnhos of the Six Garrisons spoke about “our country” they meant Chosŏn, and they still had not forgotten the benefits they had received from the officials there, and whenever they spoke with Koreans, they would deeply lament their forcible removal to Nurhaci’s camp.52

Whether or not this was self-justifying propaganda on the part of the Chosŏn court, it remains significant that even after the defeat in the battle of Sarhu it still considered the Pŏnhos their subjects and hoped to reassert its claim over them. In fact, Chosŏn’s claim to the Pŏnhos and the continued presence of submitting-foreigners of Jurchen origin in Chosŏn were the subject of diplomatic protest by the Manchu state under both Nurhaci and Hong Taiji. Former supporters of the Yi Kwal rebellion who fled to the Manchu in 1625 informed the court of Hong Taiji that there were hundreds of Warka households to the south of Hansŏng (Ma. Han i hecen), a matter that greatly concerned the Manchus.53 The Manchu state continued to make complaints with great regularity, until after the submission of the Chosŏn monarch to the Qing empire in 1637, at which point the Qing empire was finally in a position to compel the Chosŏn court to repatriate its Jurchen subjects.54

Ultimately, for the Chosŏn court, the Pŏnhos continued to have a significant military and cultural role in the state well after the rise of the Manchu state. While the court was always clear that the Pŏnhos were distinct from other Chosŏn subjects, it asserted its claim over them as long as it could. As with the Japanese defectors during the Imjin War, Pŏnhos possessed abundant cultural and economic connections to Chosŏn. The ultimate removal of many of Chosŏn’s Pŏnhos and
other Jurchen subjects occurred through the rise of the Manchu khanate and over the opposition of both the Chosŏn court and many Pŏnhos themselves.

**Liaodongese Refugees Following the Battle of Fushun**

Posing other problems for the Chosŏn court were the large numbers of Liaodongese Chinese who had also fled to Chosŏn between 1619 and 1637, escaping the war between the rising Manchu state and the persistent Ming military effort in Liaoxi and the Liaodong peninsula. In part organized by Mao Wenchong (1576–1629), a Ming general with only weak loyalties to the Ming empire, Liaodongese refugees further strained Chosŏn’s already weakened agricultural economy, even as they carried with them considerable political risk. While many of these migrants were later repatriated to Liaodong by either the Ming or Qing armies, a portion also remained in Chosŏn. As with Ming deserters during the Imjin War, the dealings of the Chosŏn state with Liaodongese refugees were driven by concern for the potential disruption that such a large community of nonsubjects could pose, and by the difficulties in providing for them. At the same time, Liaodongese who were useful to the state obtained positions within Chosŏn, while other Liaodongese simply avoided the state as they established themselves in their new home.

For the Ming, Liaodong played a vital role, preventing Jurchens from aligning themselves with Mongols, and both Jurchens and Mongols from aligning with Chosŏn. During the Yuan period, numerous Koreans had settled in the region, and there had been Korean speakers in the region at least up to the late fifteenth century. Its key cities (Fushun, Tieling, Shenyang, and Kaiyuan) became important nodes of political interaction with Chahar Mongol and Jurchen groups, and many of the leading citizens of these commanderies themselves originated from among the Jurchens. It was a zone of encounter between Jurchens, Mongols, Han Chinese, and others, with many “transfrontier” Chinese residing in Jurchen settlements and acting as intermediaries between Sinophone Liaodong and Jurchen Nurgan. To the south, the Liaodong peninsula in particular was linked via the “Bohai maritime sphere” to the Shandong peninsula, with islands, such as those of the Miaodao archipelago between Liaodong and Shandong, becoming refuges for tax dodgers and smugglers from Shandong.

During the two decades following the Ming defeat in 1619, the Manchu state steadily expanded its control of Liaodong and Liaoxi. Unfortunately for Chosŏn, although it did not send a formal army against the Manchu after 1619, the strength of the ties between the Chosŏn and Ming courts, and the fact that
the conflict was taking place right at its northern border, meant that Chosŏn continued to be intimately involved in the struggle. In particular, in 1621, Mao Wenlong was able to reconstitute his army at Zhenjiang at the mouth of the Yalu. Shortly afterward, he was pushed across the Yalu into northern P’yŏngan Province, moving once more in 1622 to Ka Island off the coast of Ch’ŏlsan. Employing Chosŏn as a base, and demanding considerable logistic support from Chosŏn, he organized a large number of Liaodongese refugees. Nearly autonomous in his actions, and receiving his support from a community of refugees from Liaodong and tax-dodgers and pirates of the Bohai maritime sphere, he was largely able to control Ming-Chosŏn interaction until, as doubts grew concerning his military efficacy and rumors spread of his double-dealing, he was executed in 1629 by the Ming general Yuan Chonghuan (1584–1630). The result of this execution, however, was not the elimination of the threat from island dwellers and Liaodongese refugees, but the rebellion of Mao’s subordinates. First Liu Xingzhi (d. 1631), one of two commanders placed in charge of the island in the wake of Mao’s execution, rebelled, killing his fellow commander Chen Yingsheng in 1630 and moving his forces against the islands off Dengzhou in Shandong with the goal of taking control of Dengzhou itself. Unsuccessful in this, he retreated and was killed in a Ming attack in 1631. The very brief restoration of Ming control in 1631 came to an end with the overthrow and mutilation of Huang Long (d. 1633) in the same year. This unrest culminated in the mutiny of two Liaodongese of Shandong origin, Kong Youde (1602–1652) and Geng Zhongming (d. 1649), who overwhelmed Dengzhou in 1632–1633 before defecting to the Manchu Qing and giving the Qing the navy and gunpowder weapons necessary to overcome Chosŏn in 1636–1637 and the Ming in 1644.

While a certain amount has been written on the large number of Korean prisoners of war taken by the Qing armies in 1627 and 1636–1637, relatively little has been said about the Liaodongese who entered Chosŏn in the preceding period. The border between northern P’yŏngan Province and Liaodong had always been somewhat porous and became more so during the Imjin War; after that war, officials complained that subjects on either side of the river had begun to make a habit of crossing the river “under the pretext of engaging in trade,” with some entering deep into each other’s territory. The real increase of Liaodongese migrants in Chosŏn occurred after the 1618 Battle of Fushun and the 1619 Battle of Sarhu, with their numbers steadily increasing as Nurhaci and his Later Jin dynasty strengthened control in the region. While precise numbers are not generally given for Ming deserters in the pre-Sarhu period, post-Sarhu saw extensive discussions between the Ming and Chosŏn courts concerning the Liaodongese refugee community.
In 1621, a military official, Tao Langxian, estimated that no fewer than 200,000 Liaodongese had been forced to take refuge in Chosŏn. In 1622, Sun Chengzong, who was then in command of the anti-Manchu campaign, estimated a population of more than 100,000 Liaodongese migrants in northwestern Chosŏn. He recommended that they be placed under the control of Mao Wenlong. Similarly, in 1626, shortly before the first Manchu invasion, the Chosŏn court reported to the Ming on the growing troubles caused by Liaodongese refugees and claimed that the constantly increasing population of Liaodongese, coupled with the flight of Korean commoners and duty soldiers from the chaos of the northern P'yŏngan region, had resulted in a state of affairs where the guests (the Liaodongese) outnumbered the hosts (Koreans) in the area “south of Ŭiju and Ch'angsŏng and north of Sukch'ŏn and Anju,” making up 60 to 70 percent of the population.

As mentioned in chapter 2, a total of 167,000 Ming soldiers in Chosŏn served during the seven years of the Imjin War. However, when Tao Langxiang mentions 200,000 Liaodongese refugees, his number refers only to those present in Chosŏn in 1621—the total number of Liaodongese who entered Chosŏn throughout the period between 1618 and 1637 may be assumed to have been much higher, especially if those who fled beyond northern P'yŏngan Province are taken into account. If Tao’s number is taken at face value, then in 1621 alone the population of Liaodongese who fled to Chosŏn from the lower Yalu was equal to that of Hansŏng, the capital, at its pre-nineteenth-century peak of 200,000 and was approximately 2 percent of the population of Chosŏn—an astonishingly large number, for only one year.

Merely demographically, such a large number of Liaodongese could not but cause social unrest. Thus, in 1624, reference is made to Liaodongese (yomin) “scattering throughout Kwansŏ [P'yŏngan]” and plundering the goods of the residents of that region. Certainly, the appeal made by the Chosŏn court to the Ming, cited above, suggests that the large-scale entrance of Liaodongese was a source of both violence and of economic hardship. Having recently escaped from the “barbarian lair,” and with the coastal islands controlled by Mao insufficient to support them, they were forced to seize what they could in Chosŏn, with the strong resorting to force and the weak to begging. The people of northern P'yŏngan, however, being seriously burdened by military duties and still recovering from the Imjin War, were ill-equipped to deal with the triple burden of supporting Mao’s establishment on the coastal islands, supporting the Chosŏn army, and dealing with the depredations of numerous starving Liaodongese; in a no doubt considerable overstatement, the Chosŏn court argued that “the land farmed by one person is required to feed a hundred.”
Exaggeration aside, that northern P’yŏngan Province was overburdened by Liaodongese refugees can hardly be doubted. The situation was further worsened by the fact that the Liaodongese were organized militarily by Mao Wenlong. Clashes between the Chosŏn officials and Mao Wenlong were extremely frequent, especially during the reign of Injo (r. 1623–1649). Thus, in 1627, Sin Taldo, in the process of investigating Mao Wenlong’s activities, discussed numerous violent raids against civilians in P’yŏngan Province, describing both the theft of goods and often of people, with the numbers of women taken captive to Ka Island by Chinese ships being, in his words, uncountable. This in turn should not be seen as exclusively an issue of Chosŏn-Ming relations but a general difficulty engulfing both the Ming and the Manchu, as poor harvests and realigning politics meant that large communities were on the move, both spatially and politically. Alongside the increasingly violent atmosphere of Liaodongese in Chosŏn must be set the nearly contemporary Liaodongese uprisings against the Manchu in 1623 and 1625, with its brutal reprisals, as well as the 1622 White Lotus uprising in neighboring Shandong.

In the “Story of Ch’oe Ch’ŏk” (Ch’oe Ch’ŏkchŏn), a Ming soldier of Korean extraction, Ch’oe Ch’ŏk, and his son, a Chosŏn soldier, are described slipping unseen across the border into Chosŏn and through the peninsula into the southern provinces, while Ch’oe Ch’ŏk’s wife, Yi Ogyŏng, crosses from Shandong to Chosŏn by boat. In a poetic attack upon that story, Yi Minsŏng made particular reference to the improbability of people passing into Chosŏn without being noticed by the formal state. Surely, they would be caught by the guards on the Yalu and subjected to elaborate investigations and lengthy interrogations in P’yŏngyang. As many of the preceding references have shown, from the last years of the Imjin War to the fall of Chosŏn to the Qing, The Chosŏn Veritable Records makes considerable reference to attempts by the state to control the movements of Liaodongese. One example is that of Li Chenglong, the descendant of Imjin-era general Li Rumei, who was intercepted in 1630 as he fled by sea to Chosŏn and caused considerable embarrassment to the Chosŏn court when the Ming military establishment on Ka Island demanded his repatriation. His case was surely unusual, as the biographical information we have for Liaodongese and Shandongese migrants suggests that most migrants entered Chosŏn with little regard to formal bureaucratic procedures. Quite a number of Chinese, in fact, are described, like Yi Ogyŏng, as passing over the Yellow Sea into Chosŏn, although, as will be discussed in chapter 6, in some cases these stories seem to be later inventions. One seemingly genuine example is that of Ma Shunshang, reputedly the grandson of Imjin-era Ming general Ma Gui, who was captured
by the Manchu after the Battle of Sarhu, but escaped to Dengzhou in 1625, from where he seems to have continued military activities against the Manchu. While pursuing his duties around Dengzhou in 1627, the same year as Hong Taiji’s first invasion of Chosŏn, he was blown off course near the Miaodao Archipelago, coming ashore at P’ungch’ŏn in Hwanghae Province; from there, as the only member of the twenty-nine-person crew to survive, he set out for Kwangju in Cholla Province, where he established himself as a silk farmer and was discovered by the illustrious official Kim Yuk (1580–1658). Such stories suggest that the narrative of Yi Ogyŏng’s journey over the Yellow Sea is less unusual than Yi Minsŏng thought.

The first-person account of the Liaodongese refugee, Kang Shijue, provides a much more vivid image of the chaos of that period and the lack of direct official involvement. Kang, having been involved in the battle of Sarhu and also in the series of conflicts with the Later Jin in the early 1620s, was eventually captured after serving in a righteous militia (ŭibyŏng), probably one connected with Mao Wenlong, in Mt. Fenghuang near the Chosŏn border at Úiju. He described how he was captured by the Manchu, successfully escaping, however, and passing into Chosŏn via Mamp’o in the eighth or ninth month of 1625. He did not, at this point, join Mao Wenlong’s army but wandered aimlessly around the forty-two administrative districts of P’yŏngan and Hwanghae provinces for about a year, moving to Hamhŭng in southern Hamgyŏng Province only in the seventh month of 1626. Following this, he resided in a series of communities (most of them quite isolated) in Hamgyŏng, spending at least half a year and generally a much longer time in each. He lived out the remainder of his life in that province, coming to the attention of the central court only in the 1660s.

The Chosŏn court, as quoted in The Ming Veritable Records in 1626, was concerned that the large number of Liaodongese in P’yŏngan Province threatened to erase the distinction between “host” and “guest,” and worried that, with the overwhelming power of the guests within northern P’yŏngan Province, the status of the host was badly shaken, while the situation of the guests was by no means secure. Far from treating the arriving Liaodongese as representatives of a superior Chinese civilization, the Chosŏn court itself, in an official document sent to the Ming court, referred to Chinese in Chosŏn as “guests,” and, with full expectations of an understanding Ming court, spoke of the need to maintain the supremacy of the Korean hosts within Korean territory. However, it would also be a mistake to look for some generalized hostility to all foreigners—just as it had done during the Imjin War, the Chosŏn court continued to seek to employ skilled Ming migrants within Chosŏn. Even more would have settled in areas
that were beyond the range of effective surveillance by the central government. Kang Shijue and Ma Shunshang, along with many others, established themselves in various regions of Chosŏn on an informal basis, only coming to the attention of the court much later. Nevertheless, even as the Chosŏn state varied in its approaches to them, the Liaodongese, like Imjin-era Ming deserters, found corners of Chosŏn society in which to establish themselves.

Managing Chaos

In earlier Korean scholarship it was once common to assume a state of conflict between the people of Chosŏn and those outside of the Chosŏn state, to imagine the Chosŏn people as a community in full resistance to the foreign outsider, with this hostility especially prevalent during the violence of the wars of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. However, just as Ming and Japanese deserters had passed with considerable ease across the cultural boundary into Chosŏn during the Imjin War, Jurchens and Liaodongese, with cultural connections to the Chosŏn state going back many generations, were able to cross the barrier with very little difficulty at all, forming links with Chosŏn subjects. Faced with bringing the chaotic population under control while under pressure from the Manchu khanate, the Chosŏn state was relatively uninterested in “civilizational” categories (barbarian versus Confucian Koreans and Chinese), while bureaucratic categories themselves possessed an unstable relationship with cultural practices and geographic origin.

Even more so than Ming soldiers, Liaodongese, with their roots on the frontiers of Jurchen and Mongol worlds, were hard to categorize and control. The Ming court itself distrusted their loyalties and suspected Liaodongese transfrontiersmen of possessing a cultural affinity to the Manchu enemy. Such worries were not without their basis. There are numerous records of Liaodongese willingly submitting to Nurhaci. Both the Ming and Chosŏn were worried about the proliferation of White Lotus cultists in Liaodong, especially one sect led by Jin Deshi based near the Yalu River. From his surname, equivalent to the common Korean surname Kim, Jin may well have been of either Korean or Jurchen origin, and the Ming and Chosŏn courts did, in fact, see him as a potential ally of Nurhaci. More broadly, many Liaodongese commoners considered their loyalties negotiable, submitting willingly to Nurhaci initially but later rejecting Nurhaci and their Manchu overlords through poisonings and outright revolt.

This fluidity was as much a problem for Chosŏn as for the Ming. In the royal response to Nam Isin’s report on Jin Deshi’s sect in Qinghebao, reference was
made particularly to the fact that, since the Ming intervention in the Imjin War, the people of Liaodong had gained extensive knowledge of Chosŏn through frequent trips across the border; moreover, they almost certainly were a mixture of Jurchens (I) and Chinese (Han). After considering a number of worrisome possibilities—that Chosŏn might be forced to participate in the suppression, that the rebels might conspire with Nurhaci to attack Chosŏn, or that they might be forced into Chosŏn by the Ming armies—the monarch suggested an extensive program of military preparation, including espionage by local soldiers with good knowledge of Chinese who could be dressed in Chinese attire and sent to investigate the plans of the cultists.90

If Chosŏn functionaries could be sent wearing Chinese clothes to investigate Liaodongese refugees, they were faced equally with Liaodongese who could return the compliment and dress in Korean clothes. Thus, three years after the Battle of Sarhu, in 1621, the governor of P’yŏngan Province, Yi Sanggil (1556–1637), made particular reference to the large number of fugitives from the Chinese military (Tangjang) in Yongch’ŏn. They had stayed a long time and had started wearing Chosŏn clothes. He suggested thorough patrols to control them.91 The challenge to the Chosŏn court of the Liaodongese refugees was thus not just their military ability but also their participation in multiple cultural spheres, including the Korean, which made it hard to distinguish them from the population properly present in Chosŏn.

The difficulty with Jurchens, who had been intermarrying with Chosŏn subjects in Hamgyŏng Province and visiting Hansŏng for generations, was even greater. Although the Chosŏn court had sought to defend them from Bujantai and Nurhaci when they were on Chosŏn’s northern border, as they passed south of the border they did indeed cause some concerns about security. Yi Sugwang himself, who had earlier expressed his support for the Pŏnhos as a defensive barrier, was nevertheless worried about the large community of submitting-Jurchens in Kyŏnggi Province. These were the very Pŏnhos who had fled south rather than face assimilation in Nurhaci’s new state, but Yi worried about their density in Kyŏnggi Province, where “the fires of different Jurchen villages are visible to each other.” This large concentration of Jurchens, Yi thought, presaged serious unrest.92 He was not alone in this worry. Thus, in 1603, the court debated the case of Kilsang, a submitting-Jurchen residing in Hamhŭng, but originally from Hoeryŏng, who had participated in the suppression of the Not’o uprising. He had illegally left Hamhŭng to move in with his son-in-law in a community called Nuwŏn in Yangju, near Hansŏng.93 The village of Nuwŏn to which he fled was in fact in the process of becoming exclusively Jurchen. The court demanded
that the Jurchens of Nuwŏn be moved to settlements farther from the capital. However, the Jurchens themselves resisted such a move, perhaps because they had a historical relationship to the capital shaped by the state-sponsored visits to Hansŏng during the early Chosŏn. In the end, the court was only able to move them as far as Yongin, south of the Han River across from Hansŏng, to an area of empty settlements vacated by submitting-foreigners who had fled during the Imjin War.

At times, Jurchens were a source of concern even when they were based in the fishing communities in the south. In a 1610 report, concern was expressed about the large number of Jurchens inhabiting fishing communities on the west coast of Chosŏn. The Office of the Censor-General ([Saganwŏn]) had been wrestling with the implications of these settlements for the security of the militarily vital Kanghwa Island to the west of the capital at the mouth of the Han River. “[The Jurchens] have become so used to sea routes, that they use boats as if they were horses, and in fact far exceed the people of our country. Should there be a serious [military] crisis, then they most certainly would be of dual loyalties, perhaps communicating with them [the enemy] and blocking [the escape of the court to Kanghwa Island]. How can this be a minor worry?” Court discussion, however, turned against such xenophobic suspicion. As officials argued, the affairs of the realm were determined by nothing but the force of circumstances (se)—when these are favorable, even Vietnamese and steppe peoples could be friends, and when unfavorable, even people in the same boat could become enemies.

Despite occasional worries, the Chosŏn court was not at all interested in removing either Japanese or Jurchens from its territory and was in fact willing to defend their presence in Chosŏn against diplomatic pressure for their repatriation. In 1609, Chosŏn established a treaty with Edo Japan, in part to negotiate for the return of Korean captives from Japan. In 1634, however, when the lord of Tsushima demanded the return of Japanese defectors, Yi Sŏ (1580–1637) and Sin Kyŏngjin (1575–1643) recommended that Chosŏn refuse, because numbered among the defectors were highly skilled and unusually brave soldiers: “Not only are their technical skills admirable, but when ordered into battle they give no thought to their own survival. If treated well, they act affectionately toward their superiors as they march to the field of death. When placed within the military, the advantages that they provide are not minor.”

To be sure, Japanese in Chosŏn found other ways of making a living, notably farming, trading, and hunting, but they excelled in military matters. At times, the Chosŏn court seemed at pains to deny this very feature—no doubt to avoid excessive demands. Thus, in the wake of the disastrous 1619 defeat of the Ming
and its allies, including Chosŏn, at the hands of the Manchu khanate under Nurhaci, Chosŏn faced renewed demands to send arquebusiers to the Ming, to which the court under Kwanghae-gun responded that use of firearms was not a talent characteristic of Chosŏn subjects. The few thousand Japanese arquebusiers in Chosŏn either had been captured by the Manchu or were too old and weak even to defend Chosŏn.99 Indeed, in 1622, discussion of defense in the Border Defense Command turned to Japanese defectors. It was pointed out that, thirty years having passed, the few remaining Japanese defectors were old and frail, and of little use, although a few could still be used for training others.100 Nevertheless, in 1624, the year after Injo’s own coup d’état, there were evidently enough trained soldiers among the Japanese defectors and their descendants that there were Japanese soldiers among both the government troops and the rebel armies during the Yi Kwal uprising. Surrendered Japanese arquebusiers and their descendants were used several times in key roles by the rebels. For instance, they routed a unit of government forces at Kangt'an near Songdo (Kaesŏng),101 while during the Battle of Hwangju they attacked the Chosŏn army, flourishing swords, and succeeded in forcing the Chosŏn army to retreat.102 In response to the rebellion, many Japanese defectors within military divisions under Yi Kwal’s command or associated with Yi Kwal were executed.103 Indeed, one official, Yi Min’gu (1589–1670), wondered if the fundamental differences between civilized people and barbarians was at the root of Japanese participation in Yi Kwal’s rebellion. He stated: “Those Japanese defectors who followed the rebel were especially murderous. It seems that this is because they are not of our kind, and so their minds must also be different. Because there are so many of them . . . let us first criticize them with the purpose of offering forgiveness and then divide them up and send them north.”104

At the same time, some notable Japanese defectors continued to show considerable loyalty, contradicting Yi Min’gu’s claim of absolute differences. One especially well-known defector, Kim Ch’ungsŏn, also known by his Japanese name Sayaga, showed both loyalty to the court and military success.105 Having served the Chosŏn court against the Japanese during the Imjin War, in 1628, he once more attracted the interest of the Chosŏn monarchy, when he was specifically praised for his bravery during the Yi Kwal uprising. He was especially lauded for the vital role that he played in bringing surrendered Japanese with shaky loyalties back under Chosŏn control and presenting to the court the severed head of one notable Japanese defector ally of Yi Kwal, an action that is also highlighted in the yearly record within Kim Ch’ungsŏn’s collected works.106 More broadly, he was described as playing a vital role in the military activities of Injo’s
army. He displayed the same loyalty during the Chŏngmyo Manchu invasion in 1627, when he spontaneously took twenty men under his command to battle, of whom eighteen were cavalry. In reward for such loyalty, the Capital Guard office (Ŏyŏngch’ŏng) recommended that his sons, among whom some were impoverished and without an official position, be employed for their skill with arquebuses and swords, and that the Japanese defectors under Kim Ch’ungsŏn be formed into a military unit with their own earmarked funding.

Even as Chosŏn placed Japanese arquebusiers under Kim Ch’ungsŏn, it faced growing demands from the emerging Manchu state under Hong Taiji to “repatriate” both Han Chinese and Jurchen refugees to the Manchu state. The Manchu state demanded the repatriation of Han Chinese based on the simple logic of conquest—as Hong Taiji expressed in a diplomatic communication to the Chosŏn court in 1636, “heaven” had granted Liaodong to the Manchu khans, and so also the right to control the Liaodongese themselves. Chosŏn itself had no established relationship with the Liaodongese refugees, who had largely established themselves in Chosŏn territory without the approval of the Chosŏn state. This contrasted markedly with the situation of Jurchen migrants, who often had a relationship with the Chosŏn state and populace that extended over several centuries, and over whom the Manchu claimed the right to rule based on a supposed historical continuity extending to the Jurchen Jin dynasty that fell in the thirteenth century. Thus, a letter sent by the Jacin beile, along with other beile of the “Great Manchu Kingdom” to the Chosŏn court in 1637 had specifically complained that, when “our [Manchu] armies” (Ma. meni cooha) were taking away “our [Manchu’s] Warka” (Ma. meni Warka), the Chosŏn court had, for no good reason, “passed out of the boundaries of the Chosŏn state and attacked our armies.”

Before 1637, the Chosŏn court was better able to stand up to this demand and even write positively of the cross-border identity of its former Jurchen subjects. For instance, in 1628, shortly after the first Manchu invasion of 1627, the Chosŏn court referred to its former Jurchen subjects to resist Later Jin demands for trade at the Hoeryŏng border market. The Chosŏn court declared that such a market was pointless because of the absence of the Jurchens who had formerly resided in the region. As was recorded in the letter of the royal secretariat, “Formerly, a great many Pŏnhos lived in the Six Garrisons, and of the merchants of the country, many gathered together at that place, but now, since the disturbance of the Imjin Year (1592), there is not a single Pŏnho still present, and it has been impossible to engage in trade in the region for a long time. The fact that the barbarians of the eastern bank are requesting such a market suggests that they know of the former
situation, but not of the current one.” This letter, in addition to including obviously insulting language, referring to what had by then become a brother country as “the barbarians on the east bank of the river,” was clearly needling the Later Jin about their forcible repatriation of the Pŏnhos of the Six Garrisons of northern Hamgyŏng, while avoiding direct reference to that act. Moreover, the term “Pŏnho” itself referred specifically to the Chosŏn court’s established relationships with the Jurchens and thus rejected the Manchu state’s claims.

Still, the concern persisted that essential differences among Jurchens and Japanese—a different mindset, the lack of established loyalties to the Chosŏn state—could become the cause of serious unrest. Yet, although a number of Chosŏn officials did worry about the presence of Jurchens in Chosŏn proper, there seems to be no records of actual revolts among Jurchens south of Hamgyŏng. An apparent exception is an isolated entry in the Journal of the Royal Secretariat from the time of the Pyŏngja Invasion that describes unrest among the Jurchen refugees residing in Namyang in Kyŏnggi Province (now part of present-day Hwasŏng). Yun Chip (1606–1637) reported with concern about the situation of his family in Namyang in Kyŏnggi Province, where his brother Yun Kye (1583–1636) was serving as magistrate. Yun Chip had heard disturbing news from Sŏ Hŭnnam (?–1667), a base-born person who had been gathering information for the Chosŏn court. Sŏ had informed Yun Chip that on his return from Suwŏn he had heard that the submitting Jurchens of Namyang had risen in revolt, such that the magistracy and all the private [commoners’] houses had fallen to the enemy.

It isn’t clear that the revolt actually happened. Unknown to Yun Chip and Sŏ Hŭnnam, Yun Kye had already been executed by the Qing in battle as a leader of a loyalist army. It seems quite likely that this Jurchen revolt was no more than a rumor emerging from the fog of war. If Jurchen migrants did revolt, it is not likely that they did so out of loyalty to the Manchu invaders (whom the Jurchens had, after all, fled several decades earlier) but because of feelings of betrayal, when they, like Korean fugitives from the Qing, resisted being repatriated to the Qing by force. More generally, it does not seem that Chosŏn officials were right to suspect Jurchen refugees of disloyalty or collusion with the enemy.

After the defeat of Chosŏn in 1637, the Chosŏn court was no longer able to insist on its control over those in its territory, but was forced, by the terms of their surrender, to hand over the three categories of people (samsaegin): Koreans who had been captured by the Qing and then fled back to Chosŏn (chuhoeja), Liaodongese (Hanin) who had fled Liaodong for Chosŏn, and Chosŏn’s Jurchen subjects. Despite the inability of the Chosŏn court to resist Qing demands, they were nevertheless faced by the difficult challenge of finding people who
had already assimilated into Chosŏn society. Even Liaodongese, despite often limited connections to Chosŏn from before their migration, blended well into Chosŏn. Thus, in *Official Reports from Mukden*, a recently recaptured Liaodongese fugitive reported to the Qing that his two fellows, both Liaodongese who were competent in Korean, were taken as slaves by a landholder, while only he was returned to the Qing. The same passage also reports on a Korean captive who fled back to Korea, with his wife, a Ming (that is, “Chinese”) person, and who had sought to avoid repatriation by sending his wife back while he himself remained in Chosŏn. Another later passage, largely concerned with Jurchens who had fled back to Korea, describes one man named So'ongs'a who had made a “Han woman (Hannyŏ) his wife, and was living with her.” The Qing court demanded that the “Han woman” be repatriated with great haste. Described as “living [in] the Pak family household,” So'ongs'a may possibly have been a slave. His name may be translated as a “little interpreter” and perhaps suggests a facility in spoken Chinese that might indeed have been useful for someone living on the Yalu. It also might explain his marriage to the Han woman. On the one hand, these cases all suggest that Liaodongese migrants were able to vanish into Korean society through personal connections or familiarity with Korean language and customs, especially if one considers the near certainty that many more, in the chaos of post-Imjin Chosŏn, managed to evade detection by the Chosŏn and Qing states altogether. The servile or semiservile positions that many Liaodongese fell into in Chosŏn, on the other hand, reminds us that such border crossings would not necessarily have been entirely to the benefit of the Liaodongese fugitives in question.

In the case of the Jurchens, of course, a long period of residence within Chosŏn made it most difficult indeed to remove them. The *Official Reports from Mukden* records the negotiations for their repatriation in considerable detail. Within this text, the Jurchen subjects being repatriated are, in nearly all cases, referred to simply as “submitting-foreigners” (hyanghwain), “submitting-foreigner descendants” (hyanghwain chason), “submitting-Jurchens” (hyanghwa hoin), or even as “Qing people” (Ch'ŏng'in). With the crown prince himself in captivity in Mukden, the Manchu were able to impose their own particular historical justification for the repatriation of the Jurchen onto the Chosŏn court. Thus, in the third month of 1638, the Qing generals Mafuta and Inggül'dai upbraided the crown prince for failing to repatriate more than a few Chosŏn fugitives or submitting-foreigners, to which the crown prince asserted as his excuse the fact that submitting-foreigners, when risking capture, simply went into hiding and were thus immensely difficult to track down. Later that same year, when Inggül'dai
and Mafuta criticized the crown prince for his failure to repatriate any submitting-foreigners other than a single weak and elderly man, the crown prince defended himself by arguing that, since submitting-foreigners had been in Chosŏn so long and had intermarried with Chosŏn subjects, repatriating not only those who had submitted themselves, but also their descendants, would be impossibly difficult and would cause immense hardship to the population. Moreover, the crown prince pointed out that the original agreement between Qing and Chosŏn had not required the repatriation of submitting-foreigner descendants.

Inggûldai responded with a brief history lesson:

Our country and Chosŏn both have old historical writings. Has the crown prince alone not read them? Of old, the state of Jin was to the left [east] of the Liao river, but after it declined, the subjects of the Jin scattered into Chŏlla and Kyŏngsang Provinces. These are indeed the descendants of submitting-foreigners who we referred to previously as those who do not need to be repatriated. However, in the case of those during the current dynasty who submitted to the Chosŏn court, even if they are not the ones who submitted themselves, as the children and grandchildren of them, they are ultimately the same as those who submitted themselves, so how can they not be repatriated? The recently repatriated Kang Ch’undang may not have submitted himself, but his grandfather was a submitting-foreigner, and so equally the grandson is a submitting-foreigner as well. Of submitting-foreigners here there are many who still have children and siblings in Chosŏn. It is human sentiment to wish that fathers live together with their children, and older brothers with younger brothers. Chosŏn people seek to redeem their younger siblings and children, so why should submitting-foreigners not also follow their desires? . . . We have established a list of more than 690 people, with their area of residence, names and surnames . . . if you do not send them all back, then among the two of us one will have to go and bring them ourselves.¹²⁰

The history provided here by Inggûldai is similar to that found in The Old Manchu Archives for the reign of Nurhaci, although Inggûldai, in contrast to Nurhaci, did not claim all who descended from the diaspora of the Jurchen Jin. Inggûldai’s demands were still quite expansive, in that he sought the repatriation of not only the submitting-foreigners but their descendants as well. Even though he likely referred only to those Jurchens who had migrated to Chosŏn in relatively recent periods, he still made claims to people who had become deeply integrated into Chosŏn society.
Of course, in Chosŏn “submitting-foreigner” had traditionally encompassed all foreigners settling in Chosŏn territory, not just Jurchens. The restriction of the term in *The Official Reports from Mukden* to refer to Jurchens alone should be understood in the context of the negotiation of terminology between Chosŏn and the Qing. Thus, in *The Official Reports from Mukden*, Liaodongese refugees are nearly invariably referred to as Han people (Hanin), which also happens to be the term used to translate Nikan, the preferred Manchu term for Liaodongese. Since, as will be discussed in chapter 4, Chinese were classified as submitting-foreigners in the period following the 1640s, it is unlikely that the Chosŏn court felt any ideological objections to using the term “submitting-foreigner” for Chinese as well. Rather, the Liaodongese refugees, in contrast to the Jurchens, had without exception entered without the permission of the Chosŏn court—they had not submitted formally to royal edification. By contrast, Jurchens from Chosŏn did, at one point, go through the process of submitting to the Chosŏn court, or at least their ancestors had done so. More important for the Qing, Jurchens were recorded in Chosŏn documents as submitting-foreigners and served as an equivalent of the Manchu term “Warka.” Indeed, in a number of texts in *The Veritable Records of Emperor Taizong*, one may find entries that alternate between the two terms, “Warka” and “submitting-foreigners” (Ch. xianghuaren),\(^{121}\) the later a term that was more generally used to describe those who had submitted to the Manchu state. By accepting its use when referring to Jurchens who had submitted to the Chosŏn state, they were accepting, at least in part, an identity for the Warka that was determined by Chosŏn administrative categories.

In fact, although the Qing imposed their own historical narrative in order to demand the repatriation of the Warka, in order to repatriate those who lived south of Hamgyŏng, they needed to make use of Chosŏn records to identify who was Warka and who was not. The Qing officials themselves clearly acknowledged this fact. In one of the first discussions of the repatriation of Jurchens in *Reports from Mukden*, the generals Inggûldai and Mafuta insisted that the Chosŏn court was dishonest when it claimed that it had repatriated all submitting-foreigners that it could possibly find. Rather, the generals declared, it should be able to hunt down submitting-foreigners, because when they submitted to the Chosŏn court the officials in charge would surely have recorded all significant information about them and distributed this information to the regions in which they had been settled. Thus, distinguishing those of Jurchen origin from the surrounding population should be a simple matter of investigating the records of each county. The failure of the Chosŏn court to do so, the two generals insisted, was simply
an example of the duplicity and insincerity of Chosŏn officialdom, quite like its failure to return more than six runaway Korean captives of the at least ten thousand who had fled from their Qing masters and the continued presence of Chinese fugitives in Chosŏn.122

Chosŏn records themselves, of course, were often ambiguous, incomplete, and open to dispute. Inggûldai and Mafuta had insisted, on the model of Kang Ch’ungdan, that descendants of submitting-foreigners also were subject to repatriation. In later discussions, the Qing’s chief Korean-language interpreter Chŏng Myŏngsu made a long demand for the repatriation of the children of submitting-foreigners in Chosŏn recorded in a Korean vernacular text that he seemingly had obtained by interrogating submitting-foreigners who had already been repatriated. In the process, nevertheless, he conceded that deportation should be limited to the descendants of submitting-foreigners on the paternal line, and he excluded Korean spouses of submitting-foreigners from demands for deportation,123 although the fact that debates on this subject reoccurred suggests that these rules were not observed consistently.124 Inevitably, there were many uncertain cases—and the task of identifying submitting-foreigners themselves was complicated by the limited knowledge of the officials in charge. For instance, in 1638, a high civil official Ch’oe Yuyŏn (1587–?) reported from within the Border Defense Command concerning six submitting-foreigners from Kyŏngsang Province who were being prepared for deportation to the Qing. Among them was a “Jurchen child” (Ho’a) who, upon investigation, was from Chongsŏng in Hamgyŏng Province but was probably not a submitting-foreigner. Ch’oe Yuyŏn suggested that an inquiry concerning the child’s ancestry be sent to Chongsŏng county, and that the child’s repatriation be delayed until a proper determination could be made. The court agreed with Ch’oe Yuyŏn and made the general statement that in such cases, people should only be repatriated to the Qing after careful consideration. No doubt, the local functionaries in Kyŏngsang Province who had likely arranged the original deportation would have assumed that any migrant from the alien world of northern Hamgyŏng would have Jurchen origins, quite without regard for the child’s actual ancestry—and would not, in any case, have necessarily had the documentation to make the determination. Even for the central government, it was not easy to distinguish a person of submitting-foreigner status from other residents of Chongsŏng.125

Ultimately, the porous reality of the social worlds of seventeenth-century Chosŏn made it very hard to determine people’s ancestry. Jurchens, especially, frequently married Korean spouses, which complicated their status, and especially the status of their children and their spouses. In general the Chosŏn
and Qing courts had agreed to “repatriate” those Jurchens registered as submitting-foreigners and their descendants, but not the Korean wives of Jurchens. This solution did not please either court, entirely, and inevitably caused considerable dissatisfaction from the mixed Korean-Jurchen families being split up. In one especially interesting case, Kim Kyedŭk, a Korean illegal ginseng digger from Hamgyŏng captured in Qing territory, was identified as a Jurchen “submitting-foreigner” by another “submitting-foreigner” who had already been repatriated. As the Qing sought to have him and his family repatriated, the Chosŏn court first objected that his wife was in fact a Korean slave attached to a post-station in Hamgyŏng Province and so was not the proper object of repatriation. Later they expanded their objections to claim that Kim Kyedŭk was never a registered submitting-foreigner in the first place but had simply been seeking to avoid judgment for his crimes and repayment of his debts that he had accumulated through his criminal life as a ginseng smuggler. The Qing response was informative—although Kim Kyedŭk may not have been registered as a submitting-foreigner, as he originated in the heavily Jurchen worlds of Hamgyŏng Province, he could be assumed to be a Jurchen.

Ultimately, Chosŏn officials, while fully subscribing to the central importance of the Chunghwa tradition then represented by the Ming emperor and court, did not consider individual Chinese, and certainly not ordinary Liaodongese refugees, to be representatives of that tradition. Whether Liaodongese, Japanese, or Jurchens, the court sought in vain to limit their disruptive entry into Chosŏn, especially into areas near the Chosŏn capital. Nor were they eager to hand anybody back to the Qing, least of all their new Japanese arquebusiers or their long-established Jurchen subjects, especially as the task of distinguishing who was Jurchen, who was Liaodongese, and who was Korean was not at all easy.

The Ming-Manchu Wars during the early seventeenth century brought about a second wave of migrants to Chosŏn, in addition to the already substantial number of migrants who had come during the Imjin War. As with that earlier wave of migrants, Chosŏn’s response was not primarily determined by a Confucian desire to distinguish the civilized from the barbarian, although at times this did become part of court debates on the subject. Rather, the Chosŏn court was often more favorably disposed toward the Jurchens and Japanese, with whom it had an established relationship, than toward Liaodongese migrants, whom it could not control and whose loyalties it could not but suspect. Beyond that, Chosŏn’s response to the migrants was driven by such concerns as the desire to maintain social order and protect the fragile postwar Chosŏn economy.
The problem faced by all the rival states competing in Northeast Asia was that the cultural categories that they sought to impose did not map reliably onto the reality of the social and cultural worlds of the populace that they governed. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the distinctions between Jurchens, Koreans, and Liaodongese had been by no means precisely drawn, and the initial result of the chaos of the wars of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries had been to confuse these distinctions still more, as migrants and refugees intermarried with each other and settled in each other’s communities. Chosŏn’s response to migrants in its territory inevitably had to take into account the rival claims of the Ming empire and the Manchu Qing. All the states involved also had to struggle against the resistance and cultural fluidity of the migrants themselves.