

The Impact of Korean Ambassadors' Encounters with Qing Entertainments Focusing on Lantern Festivals, Fireworks, Plays, and Theater Facilities

Youme Kim

This study examines how Chosŏn Korean ambassadors' encounters with Qing entertainment impacted their views of the Qing dynasty in China based on their travel accounts written during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. During diplomatic trips as ambassadors, select Chosŏn literati were able to experience new and exotic forms of foreign culture. This article focuses on Qing entertainments, including fireworks, lantern festivals, and plays, and related aspects such as theater facilities, that captured the attention of the traveling ambassadors. Through direct experience with Qing entertainments, traveling Chosŏn dignitaries gained first-hand experience of Qing commercial and technological development. Some of these witnesses came to the realization that the Qing had become a successful ruling dynasty, which dismantled previously held assumptions by most Chosŏn literati that the Manchus were barbaric and uncultivated.