Jiali Zhou
Guobin Zhang *Editors*

A Study of Diplomatic Protocol and Etiquette

From Theory to Practice

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FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND RESEARCH PRESS

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Foreword by Zhaoxing Li

China is a country of etiquette, with a five-thousand-year civilization, and Chinese people have a particular emotional connection with *li* (propriety). The inexhaustible quintessence of *li* has been distilled from a sea of ancient Chinese classics. However, *li* has the most progressive political quality only in the People's Republic of China. It reflects equality among people and countries and serves the sacred mission of the great solidarity of people around the world and the joint maintenance of peaceful development.

The study of diplomatic protocol and etiquette, which has the characteristics of internationality and nationality, is beneficial to enhancing understanding among different cultures and facilitating the harmonious coexistence of people across the world.

This collection of articles featuring inclusiveness and diversity contains not only theoretical and practical studies but also the academic achievements of specialists from nearly 10 countries. It is gratifying that this collection, which embodies the response to President Xi's call for conveying China's voices and offering its corresponding wisdom for the cause of human progress, is initiated by Chinese scholars.

Therefore, we need to further implement President Xi's state-of-the-art ideas on domestic and foreign affairs. This rare collection is worthy of perusal and discussion by people from all walks of life at home and abroad.

Beijing, China
August 2018

Zhaoxing Li
Former Minister of Foreign Affairs

Foreword by Yaqing Qin

Directly affiliated to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, China Foreign Affairs University (CFAU) is a specialized college that prides itself in cultivating all-around talents related to foreign affairs. Under the aegis of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, CFAU is one of China's earliest universities to set up Diplomatic Protocol and Etiquette (P&E) courses, earning itself rich experience in the teaching and research of this subject.

Diplomatic P&E is an important manifestation of diplomatic relations among countries and the code of conduct observed at diplomatic events. Its main bodies involve heads of state, deputy heads of state, and chiefs of government, among other dignitaries and diplomatic representatives. It goes without saying that Diplomatic P&E is highly politicized and serious, as it is sacred and authoritative. The Diplomatic P&E is closely linked with practice, with precious academic values. As China is playing an important role in the international arena, it is highly relevant to improve the research on this field.

This collection of articles comes with the following features:

First, it places equal emphasis on theory and practice. Most of the current academic achievements on Diplomatic P&E focus on practice, short of academic researches. This is why we say this collection is relatively comprehensive: it contains both theoretical and practical types of researches, complete with country-specific studies in the last chapter.

Second, it boasts great academic values. P&E is a very important aspect of diplomacy. It tests the professionalism of a country in diplomacy, reflects the relationship between a country's domestic affairs and diplomacy, manifests the closeness among countries, and unveils the cultural differences of different countries. The study of Diplomatic P&E is conducive to strengthening relations among countries and improving the theoretical research of diplomacy.

Third, it embodies a global perspective. The compilation of this collection has proudly witnessed the participation of a cohort of senior P&E experts from nearly ten countries, including the United States, Britain, France, Russia, Japan, Canada, the Netherlands, and India. In other words, it is finished as a result of in-depth international academic cooperation.

Diplomacy advocates peaceful approaches to state-to-state relations. Diplomatic P&E is the best aspect of diplomacy that demonstrates peace and friendship. Propriety is the core of P&E, as well as a fundamental concept in Chinese culture. The quintessence of etiquette is equality and sincerity. Guided by this, we need to interact with people with such propriety, in the expression of respect from the depth of the heart; we need to deal with affairs with such propriety in order to show goodwill and sincerity. In a word, this collection is remarkably helpful for promoting the research of diplomatic P&E, exploring the true connotation of P&E, and improving its practicality in realities.

Beijing, China
August 2018

Yaqing Qin
President of China Foreign Affairs University

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Theoretical Research

From Etiquette to Diplomatic Protocol and Etiquette: Concept Discussion and Differentiation

Jiali Zhou

Etiquette holds considerable significance. Despite numerous monographs, the emphasis laid on etiquette training by government departments, and the enormous enthusiasm of researchers, most research has focused on practices rather than theoretical studies. At present, there are diverging opinions over the definition of etiquette. For instance, concepts such as etiquette, protocol, diplomatic etiquette, foreign affairs etiquette, and international etiquette are often used interchangeably in practices and theoretical studies. What are the differences among these concepts? Concept, akin to the base of a skyscraper, is the basis for theoretical research. Likewise, concept clarification of etiquette, as the initial stage for theoretical studies, is seemingly simple yet considerably necessary to discuss. This paper endeavors to analyze and differentiate these interwoven but distinct concepts.

1 Etiquette & Protocol

What is etiquette (*li yi* in Chinese)? To answer this question, it is necessary to explore the definition of *li* (propriety) in Chinese literature. *Li* is a character in classical Chinese. Wang Guowei explained: "*Li* is generally perceived as the worship of the divine spirits."[1] *Shuo Wen Jie Zi* (*Explaining Graphs and Analyzing Characters*) suggested: "Conducting *li* is to worship the divine spirits, which contributes to

[1] Wang (1959), p. 290.

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J. Zhou and G. Zhang (eds.), *A Study of Diplomatic Protocol and Etiquette*,
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people's wellbeing."[2] *Li Ji* (*The Book of Rites*) wrote: "The most important component of *li* is *ji li* (memorial rites)."[3] It can be deduced from these sayings that *li* originally referred to the worship of the divine spirits, but was later extended to the respect for people and the grand ceremony held to demonstrate such respect.[4] The Chinese ancestors believed that *li* is "the wholehearted respect for each other"[5] and should be accomplished by observing the three cardinal guides [ruler guides subject, father guides son, and husband guides wife] and five constant virtues [benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and fidelity].[6] Besides, the Chinese ancestors also classified *li* into five categories according to its function, namely "military rites, reception rites, festival rites, funeral rites, and memorial rites."[7] In ancient China, *li* was adopted to govern the country as well as manage interpersonal relations. Compared with etiquette in the West, Chinese *li yi* contains a broader meaning and holds greater significance. It is believed that "*li* is at the core of traditional Chinese culture."[8]

Li yi denotes "etiquette" in English, which is derived from the French word *étiquette*. In early times, the European aristocracy put up notice boards containing their family rules and etiquette outside their castle courtyard for visitors to observe. The notice boards were called "etiquette." Etiquette is defined in *American Heritage Dictionary* as the practices and forms prescribed by social convention or by authority. Humans… are subject to etiquette (Frederick W. Robertson). Etiquette symbolizes the proper conduct in a civilized society. In *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary,* it means the conduct and procedure required by good breeding or prescribed by authority to be observed in social and official life. In *The Macquarie Dictionary*, it refers to conventional requirements as to social behavior; properties of conduct as established in any class or community or for any occasion.[9]

Another interpretation perceives etiquette as a compound of "propriety" and "rites," which contain both similarities and differences. *Zuo Zhuan* (*The Zuo Commentary*) recorded: "Zhao Yang, posthumously known as Zhao Jianzi, summoned You Ji, posthumously known as Zitaishu, to ask about how to receive diplomatic envoys. Zitaishu answered, "These are rites rather than propriety." Zhao Jianzi continued to ask, "Could you tell me what propriety is?"' You Ji replied, "I once heard former Grand Master Zichan say: 'Propriety is the code of heaven, the norm of earth, and the basis of people's action. …If people acted without restraints, the state would fall into chaos and people would lose their natural kindness. Therefore, propriety serves as the restraint of people's action.'"[10] This paragraph elaborates

[2] Xu (1963), p. 7.
[3] Yangu (2004), p. 631.
[4] Lu and Huang (2004), p. 248.
[5] Deng (2008), p. 358.
[6] Wei (2003), pp. 156–159.
[7] Peng (2006), pp. 25–32.
[8] Ibid., p. I.
[9] Macquarie (1987), p. 1364.
[10] Zuo (1999), p. 2107.

on the differences between propriety and rites. They are interdependent because propriety denotes the code of the heaven and thereby serves as the mental guideline for rites; while rites are the carrier of propriety. Therefore, in the modern sense, etiquette can be perceived as the combination of propriety and rites: propriety is an individual's respect for other people, other matters, or other things; while rites are the external manifestation of such respect. Propriety emphasizes consciousness while rites stress action, and therefore, none of them is dispensable. Such definition attaches equal importance to the internal and external aspects of etiquette.

As a large category, etiquette constitutes a wide range of branches, such as government etiquette, business etiquette, service etiquette, international etiquette, and foreign affairs etiquette. These branches constitute different main bodies: government etiquette is performed by government functionaries, business etiquette by businessmen, and service etiquette by personnel in the service sector. Moreover, international etiquette is performed by any individual who has dealings with foreigners, while foreign affairs etiquette merely by officials of governments or government-sponsored institutions who have contacts with foreigners. All of these branches are inseparable from the basic life necessities, namely food, clothing, shelter, transportation, and social contacts. Though with different main bodies, they are not essentially distinct in terms of the core principles and purposes, i.e., respect, empathy, harmony, and win-win outcomes in interpersonal relations.

The protocol comes from two Greek words meaning "first glue" and originally indicates the first leaf glued on to a manuscript.[11] Later, it was extended to gluing things together in an orderly manner. There were multiple definitions of protocol: an original outline or report whereby a treaty is prepared; an agreement between states; a set of standard procedures for the regulation of data transmission in computer science; the first copy of an agreement or of a similar document before it is ratified.[12] This paper chooses another important definition of the protocol, whose full name is Diplomatic Protocol and Etiquette, Diplomatic Protocol, or Protocol and Etiquette (hereafter referred to as P&E). Protocol is defined in *Collins Dictionary of the English Language* as the formal etiquette and code of behavior, precedence, and procedure for state and diplomatic ceremonies.[13] In *American Heritage Dictionary*, protocol means "the forms of ceremony and etiquette observed by diplomats and heads of state." *Protocol, The Complete Handbook of Diplomatic, Official and Social Usage* jointly written by Mary Jane Maccaffree and Pauline Innis explained: "The person experienced in official life knows that protocol serves as a useful guide on how to behave in official relations with people of different countries and national origins no matter how diverse their own national customs may be. Any organization or society must, if it is to thrive, operate under certain rules if for no other reason than to prevent chaos. It is necessary that contacts between nations be made according to universally accepted rules or customs and some form of planned organization. That

[11] Busk (1967), p. 23.

[12] de Froideville and Verheul (2016), p. 21.

[13] Hanks and Gerald Alfred Wilkes (1986), p. 1229.

is protocol."[14] Louis Dussault, a well-known Canadian protocol expert, wrote in his book *Le Protocole: Instrument de Communication*: «Le protocole a pour objet le formalisme des rapports entre les États et leurs représentants». [Protocol is a method of managing the relationship between people in power].[15] In *A Dictionary of Diplomacy*, protocol is defined as "rules of diplomatic procedure, notably those designed to accord to the representatives of sovereign states and others, as well as different classes of officers within them, the treatment in all official dealings to which their recognized status entitles them. Public occasions present the most testing times for such rules, and it is for this reason that a state's chief of protocol has in the past sometimes been known as its 'master of ceremonies.'"[16]

It can be deduced from these definitions that the main body of protocol is strictly restricted to government dignitaries and diplomats, particularly heads of state, deputy heads of state, chiefs of government, and foreign ministers. These people should observe protocol when participating in official diplomatic events on behalf of their government.

It has been found that protocol is given more emphasis whenever protocol and etiquette are used together. Protocol and Etiquette (P&E) can be generally replaced by protocol rather than etiquette because the two concepts have different connotations. The differences can be summarized into four aspects: (1) As a concept in diplomacy, protocol is observed by state representatives who enjoy diplomatic privileges and immunities and thereby constitutes political considerations and influence. In stark contrast, etiquette is performed by individuals without entitlement to diplomatic privileges and immunities in their social contacts; (2) Protocol is official and formal while etiquette is private; (3) The main body of protocol is government dignitaries and diplomats while that of etiquette can be any individual; (4) A breach of protocol can provoke great controversy and even conflicts while violation of etiquette will simply spark discussion and criticism about personal attitude and refinement.

The protocol is a special branch of etiquette. The main bodies of protocol, namely "government dignitaries and diplomats who participate in diplomatic events," are incorporated in that of etiquette, which can be "anyone." Any ordinary people shall perform etiquette while merely national representatives engaged in diplomatic events, particularly government dignitaries and diplomats, shall observe protocol. This distinction indicates that protocol and etiquette cannot be used interchangeably. Among the departments responsible for foreign affairs within the State Council, there is only one "Protocol Department" (in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The departments dealing with foreign affairs in other ministries can only be called "Department of Foreign Affairs" or "Department of Foreign Intercourse." The distinctive significance of the "Protocol Department" is determined by the specialness of the protocol.

It's noteworthy that protocol has been given equal importance in business, academic, and service sectors thanks to its authority and efficiency in cross-cultural

[14] McCaffree and Innis (1985), p. xviii.

[15] Dussault (2005), p. 1.

[16] Berridge and James (2003), p. 217.

communications. As a result, multiple sub-categories have been engendered, such as international protocol, business protocol, military protocol, corporate protocol, and hotel protocol. Some advanced hotels and large multinational enterprises have also established the Protocol Department. Besides, the protocol is no longer restricted to government dignitaries since informal diplomacy has gradually become a norm with the progress of the times. However, the most legitimate and classical protocol still falls within official diplomacy.

2 Diplomatic Etiquette and Protocol and Etiquette (P&E)

"Diplomatic Etiquette" is another important concept. "P&E" and "Diplomatic Etiquette" are often used interchangeably in monographs of diplomacy.[17] For instance, Professor Gao Fei translated one meaning of protocol into "Diplomatic Etiquette" in his translated version of *A Dictionary of Diplomacy*.[18] Counselor Ma Baofeng used Diplomatic Protocol (which is the same as P&E in this paper) and Diplomatic Etiquette interchangeably in his book *On Protocol*.[19]

Some scholars believe that there are refinements between Diplomatic Etiquette and P&E, which thereby cannot be used interchangeably. Professor Jin Zhengkun pointed out in his book *Diplomacy*: "Diplomatic Etiquette usually refers to the code of conduct for interpersonal communication on diplomatic occasions to show respect and friendship for other parties and maintain one's image. In brief, Diplomatic Etiquette is a customary and standardized way of handling interpersonal relations on diplomatic occasions."[20] His definition shows that Diplomatic Etiquette is only applicable to diplomatic personnel.[21] Moreover, Professor Li Bo defined Diplomatic Etiquette in his book *Diplomacy* as "rules, precedence, procedures, and forms for official intercourse between states."[22] Likewise, he also mentioned that Diplomatic Etiquette is only applicable to diplomatic events participated by diplomatic personnel.[23] Fan Jian, the former Counselor of the Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, entertained a similar idea that "Diplomatic Etiquette" is largely applied in diplomacy. Professor Yang Ye also interpreted Diplomatic Etiquette as the code of conduct observed by diplomatic personnel for interpersonal communication at diplomatic events in his book *Diplomatic Theories and Practices*.[24] However, the aforementioned definitions precisely demonstrate the refinements between Diplomatic Etiquette and Diplomatic Protocol. If Diplomatic Etiquette is only applicable

[17] Hu (2010), p. 169.
[18] Berridge and James (2008), p. 231.
[19] Ma (2007), pp. 1–2.
[20] Jin (2004), p. 197.
[21] Ibid., p. 201.
[22] Li (2014), p. 241.
[23] Ibid., p. 244.
[24] Yang (2008), p. 143.

to diplomatic personnel, then what should those who play the most active part in the diplomatic stage (heads of state, deputy heads of state, chiefs of government, and other high-level officials) observe in their foreign contacts? State leaders are not professional diplomats. However, their direct participation in diplomatic affairs has become possible thanks to the invention and popularization of planes, trains, cars, and other means of transportation. They have to some extent replaced professional diplomats to participate in and make decisions on major issues of interstate relations. Therefore, the ceremonial events they undertake on diplomatic occasions should also fall within the protocol.

There are minor differences in the definitions presented by Professor Jin Zhengkun and Li Bo, although they both believed that Diplomatic Etiquette is only applicable to diplomatic personnel. Professor Jin Zhengkun emphasized that Diplomatic Etiquette is the code of conduct for diplomatic personnel on diplomatic occasions; while Professor Li Bo underscored its function as an institutional arrangement for interstate official intercourse, including rules, precedence, procedures, and forms. Counselor Ma Baofeng defined Diplomatic Etiquette as "the etiquette performed at official diplomatic events by heads of state, deputy heads of state, chiefs of government, government functional departments such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Diplomatic Missions, and diplomatic personnel working in these departments." According to his definition, the main body of Diplomatic Etiquette includes both government functional departments (the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Diplomatic Missions) and people engaged in diplomatic events (heads of state, deputy heads of state, chiefs of government, and diplomatic personnel).

From the aforementioned definitions, Diplomatic Etiquette encompasses both P&E and Diplomatic Protocol. It includes not only the institutional arrangement of diplomatic events but also the etiquette standards observed by people participating in these events. However, P&E focuses on the latter one, that is, etiquette standards observed by people who engage in diplomatic events on behalf of their country, which is consistent with former Counselor Fan Jian's definition of protocol. He stated: "Protocol is the etiquette performed by high-level national and government officials. As shown by the practices of the Protocol Department in various countries, the most important part of protocol is to arrange the diplomatic events for heads of state, chiefs of government, and foreign ministers."[25] His definition incorporates slightly broader subjects than that of the *American Heritage Dictionary* (Protocol is a series of ceremonies and forms of etiquette performed by diplomats and heads of state). In other words, the etiquette standards observed by national and government dignitaries can be all incorporated into the protocol. However, the most typical main body of protocol is doubtlessly heads of state and chiefs of government.

In summary, P&E contains broad and narrow meanings. As discussed above, in a narrow sense, P&E refers to a series of ceremonies and forms of etiquette performed and observed by heads of state, deputy heads of state, chiefs of government, other

[25] Fan Jian, former Counselor of the Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, presented his view on the "definition of protocol and diplomatic etiquette" when receiving an interview on January 5, 2016.

dignitaries, and diplomats at diplomatic events. This narrow definition pays more attention to the main body of P&E. In a broad sense, P&E is a series of ceremonies and forms of etiquette performed and observed by the paramount leader, diplomatic representatives, and diplomatic organs at diplomatic events. The main body includes heads of state, deputy heads of state, chiefs of government, other dignitaries, and diplomatic representatives (by and large foreign ministers and ambassadors). The diplomatic organs mainly encompass the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Diplomatic Missions. P&E in the broad sense is similar to Diplomatic Etiquette, and therefore, the two concepts can be used interchangeably.

3 Foreign Affairs Etiquette and International Etiquette

Foreign Affairs Etiquette (外事礼仪 [*waishi liyi*]) and International Etiquette (涉外礼仪 [*shewai liyi*]) are also the basic concepts universally adopted in practices. Some working units use Foreign Affairs Etiquette, while others International Etiquette. What are the differences? In what circumstances will they be adopted? Professor Jin Zhengkun stated in his book *An Introduction to Foreign Affairs Etiquette*: "Foreign Affairs Etiquette refers to the communication techniques for external contacts."[26] He also defined foreign affairs and foreign affairs personnel: "Foreign affairs are usually external affairs which must be officially dealt with by countries, regions, or working units. Foreign affairs personnel are people who deal with external affairs on behalf of their country, region, or working unit. Therefore, Foreign Affairs Etiquette can only be adopted in external contacts… In other words, Foreign Affairs Etiquette cannot be universally adopted at all events and on all occasions."[27] Here, Professor Jin made clear that foreign affairs personnel must be affiliated to a working unit and engage in external affairs. However, International Etiquette is different. In his book *International Etiquette*, Professor Jin explained: "International Etiquette refers to the etiquette performed by any individual who has dealings with foreigners in international contacts."[28] International Etiquette should be performed by anybody who has contacts with foreigners, such as scholars, businessmen, civil servants, employees in government-sponsored institutions, workers, peasants, or students in the case of China. In stark contrast, Foreign Affairs Etiquette is restricted to a specific main body. Professor Jin only defined foreign affairs personnel as "people engaged in external affairs on behalf of their countries, regions, or working units," but failed to identify the specific working units. The main body of Foreign Affairs Etiquette does not include people who deal with external affairs in private companies, transnational enterprises, and social organizations. Research has shown that the working units involved in Foreign Affairs Etiquette are usually non-diplomatic state organs, local governments, government-sponsored institutions, and various government-backed

[26] Jin (2007), p. 2.
[27] Jin (2007), p. 2.
[28] Jin (1999), p. 5.

organizations. They should follow Foreign Affairs Etiquette in their external contacts. Such explanation is also consistent with what Professor Jin emphasized: "Foreign Affairs Etiquette cannot be universally adopted at all events and on all occasions."

It can be summarized that Foreign Affairs Etiquette is performed by government functionaries other than diplomatic personnel or government dignitaries engaged in high-level intercourse. It is the code of conduct and standards of etiquette that should be followed by functionaries working in state organs, local governments, and government-sponsored institutions. In comparison, International Etiquette should be performed as long as external contacts occur. Therefore, it constitutes a broader meaning than foreign affairs etiquette.

Nevertheless, Foreign Affairs Etiquette can be confused with P&E and Diplomatic Etiquette. As discussed above, the etiquette performed by heads of state, deputy heads of state, chiefs of government, other dignitaries, and diplomatic representatives on diplomatic occasions is called P&E or Diplomatic Etiquette. However, when they communicate with foreigners other than state leaders or diplomatic personnel, what etiquette shall their communications belong to? For instance, when a state leader visits a university, an enterprise, or a local government in a foreign country, should he or she observe protocol? The answer is yes since the engagement will be upgraded to P&E (or Diplomatic Etiquette) whenever there are P&E subjects involved. Other foreign-related contacts, therefore, fall into Foreign Affairs Etiquette.

As the academic research on P&E remains insufficient, there are diverging views on even the most basic concepts, which creates difficulties for further study. However, concepts are the basis for public discussion and in-depth research. This paper, which takes the most basic concepts as the research objects, analyzes and distinguishes several easily confused concepts to lay a foundation for in-depth research of P&E.

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The Kowtow in Feudal Chinese Protocol and Its Demise

Baofeng Ma

1 From Squatting to Kowtow

In ancient China, when chairs were not yet invented before the Han Dynasty, people generally squatted on a mat woven by reed or thin bamboo strips when resting, eating, discussing official businesses, or receiving visitors. They sit with their knees bent on the mat with their calves and heels touching their buttocks, kept the upper part of the body straight, and put their hands on their knees. This sitting posture, considered the most elegant and formal, is called *ji zuo* (squat) in Chinese. It is not comfortable at the beginning and requires repeated training and self-discipline to achieve harmony between the body and mind.

Another sitting posture was *ji ju*, where people sit with their buttocks on the ground and their legs stretched out. It was considered intemperate and impolite because the legs were outstretched like a pictographic character in Chinese: 八 (*ba*). *Han Shi Wai Zhuan* (*The Outer Commentary to the Book of Songs by Master Han*) recorded: "The wife of Mencius sat with her legs spread before her when she was alone in the room. Mencius entered the room and saw her posture. Then he told his mother, 'I want to divorce her because of her impoliteness.' 'Why did you consider her impolite?' asked his mother. He replied, 'Because she sat with her legs outstretched.'"

When squatting, people always lifted their buttocks to form a right angle between the upper part of the body and the calves to show solemnity. The sitting posture was, therefore, changed into kneeling (*gui*). As a token of reverence, kneeling was always accompanied by bowing (*bai*) where people lowered their heads with both hands crossed. Kneeling and bowing were collectively called the kowtow (*gui bai*).

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"The Strategy of Qin" in *Zhan Guo Ce* (*Strategies of the Warring States*) wrote: "The King of Qin ordered all his attendants to retire but only asked Prime Minister Fan Ju to stay. He kneeled and requested, 'Prime Minister, are you willing to give me some advice?' 'Yes. Yes.' answered Fan Ju. After a while, the King requested again, but Fan Ju made the same reply. As for the third time, the King changed his posture to squat and asked, 'Aren't you willing to give me advice?'" At the beginning, when eagerly seeking advice from Fan Ju, the King kneeled to show reverence. Later, he was disappointed about Fan Ju's reply and thereby could not help changing his sitting posture to squat, i.e., making his calves touch the buttock. This narrative demonstrates that the King could also kowtow to his officials during the Warring States period. According to the customs at that time, this kind of kowtow should fall into *kong shou*, where people kneeled with their hands crossing before the chest and lowered their heads to the same level as their heart and close to their hands. The sitting posture of the etiquette-receiving party, which is Fan Ju in this case, can be detected from his reverent manner of speaking "Yes. Yes." As the guest, he must and should have kneeled, or at least squat, rather than just standing here and feeling contented to receive kowtow from the King.

During the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods, there were officially nine categories of kowtow, namely *ji shou*, *dun shou*, *kong shou*, *zhen tong*, *ji bai*, *xiong bai*, *ji bai*, *bao bai*, and *su bai*. In *ji shou* (bend one's head to the ground, *ji* means *stay*), people prostrated themselves with their right hand on the ground and then the left hand on it, lowered their head to the left hand, and stayed in that position for a while. As the most reverent etiquette in kowtow, it was commonly adopted by officials who came into the presence of the emperor. In *dun shou* (bow one's heads, *dun* means *pause*), people kneeled, knocked their heads to the ground, and raised their heads after a brief pause. It was less reverent than *ji shou* and thereby was applied to the contacts between people of equal status. In future generations, *dun shou* was often used at the beginning or the end of a letter or both to show respect. *Kong shou* (bow to the hands instead of going down to the floor, *kong* means *suspend*), also called *bai shou*, was an etiquette performed by an emperor repaying visits to his officials. The emperor should kneel, cup his hand in the other before the chest, and lower his head to suspend in the air without touching the ground. It was the least reverent etiquette of kowtow. *Zhen tong* (kowtow repeatedly in deep sorrow), *ji bai* (kowtow for memorial events after the mourning period, *ji* means *auspicious*), and *xiong bai* (kowtow for memorial events within the mourning period, *xiong* means *inauspicious*) were all rites for memorial events. *Ji bai* (*ji* means *odd*) was to kowtow for once while *bao bai* (*bao* means complimentary) was to make repeated bow. *Su bai*, like curtsy, was uniquely performed by women who stood and lowered their heads with two arms hanging down.

The middle of the Tang Dynasty witnessed the invention of chairs, and the Song Dynasty saw the wide application of tables and chairs. As a result, squatting gradually disappeared from the stage of history. However, the kowtow still enjoyed extensive adoption, and the hierarchy behind it was further consolidated. When it came to the Qing Dynasty, *Da Qing Hui Dian* (*The Administrative Law of the Qing Dynasty*)

regulated: "When going to court, the nobility and officials shall all perform three kneelings and nine prostrations."

Since filial piety is the most important moral tenet in China, the kowtow to the heaven and earth, ancestors, and parents is above reproach. However, when the emperor sat on the dragon throne in a commanding position while his officials and subjects kowtowed on the ground, the striking contrast would be extremely compelling and create a sense of inequality between superiors and inferiors, and masters and servants in people's minds. Generally speaking, from the Zhou Dynasty, the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods, to the Qin and Han Dynasties, the performance of the kowtow in the foreign contacts requested by the central imperial court did not trigger any resentment or resistance.

During the Tang Dynasty, the scope of China's foreign contacts was further extended to South Asia, Central Asia, and even distant Europe. Numerous diplomatic envoys from these regions came to Chang'an, capital of the Tang Dynasty, one after another. These foreigners who were not affiliated with China's imperial court found it unacceptable to perform the kowtow before the Chinese emperor. Particularly, during the Qing Dynasty, a succession of foreign envoys felt humiliated by and, therefore, resisted the performance of three kneelings and nine prostrations. Despite the reluctant acceptance by a few envoys from the Western countries, those from such countries as Britain and Russia still refused to kowtow. In the nineteenth century, as the Western great powers compelled China to open its door with the bombardment of cannons, their envoys could no longer tolerate this disgraceful protocol.

2 Kowtow of Duke Huan of Qi to Envoys of King Xiang of Zhou

During the Spring and Autumn period, the contacts between the Zhou Dynasty and its vassal states were slightly different from those in modern diplomacy. However, the diplomatic skills they possessed were similarly complex. At that time, the State of Qi quickly rose up against other feudal states by gaining advantage from the trade in salt. By launching the campaign of "honoring the King and driving off barbarians," Duke Huan expanded power and obtained hegemony with the authority to give orders to all feudal states in the name of the Zhou court. With declined central authority, the Kings of Zhou lost control over their vassal states, especially the State of Qi, and had to maintain the superficial monarch–vassal relationship by ingratiating themselves. As *Zuo Zhuan* (*The Zuo Commentary*) recorded, King Xiang of Zhou (succeeded the throne in 676 BC) took the opportunity of monarch–vassal gathering in Kuiqiu (Lankao County in Henan Province) to designate Grand Minister Zai Kong to reward Duke Huan with sacrifice meat for his achievements in "honoring the King." At that time, receiving sacrifice meat from the King was considered a great honor. Grand Minister Zai Kong said, the King was offering sacrifices to his ancestors King Wen and King Wu and specially dispatched him to award Duke Huan sacrifice meat.

When Duke Huan was ready to kowtow, Zai Kong said, "Wait a minute. Please hear me out. The King asked me to inform you, 'Since you are an elderly man who has made great contributions to the court, the King hereby conferred the highest title of nobility on you and you don't have to kowtow anymore.'" Duke Huan did not take kowtow seriously at all and would have exempted himself from the insincere courtesy. Besides, it is by no means an indecent thing to perform the kowtow to Grand Minister Zai Kong. However, he took advice from his advisor Guan Zhong to make a pretense of the kowtow for the great tactics of "honoring the King."

Zuo Zhuan (*The Zuo Commentary*) continued to record: "Duke Huan replied, 'The King's dignity was within a stone's throw to me. How dare Xiaobai (Duke Huan's personal name) not kowtow when receiving instructions from the King? If so, I would overstep and humiliate the King's authority. How dare I neither walk down the steps nor kowtow to extend my gratitude!' Eventually, Duke Huan walked down the steps, kowtowed to express gratitude, ascended the court, and received the sacrifice meat."

Though with reluctance, Duke Huan still left a presentable performance of the kowtow for future generations.

3 The Protocol of Meeting with Emperors of the Han Dynasty

The magnificent scene where diplomatic envoys and high-level officials of the Han Dynasty kowtowed to the Emperor was vividly depicted in *Er Jing Fu* (*The Two Metropolises*) by Zhang Heng, a scientist and literary scholar in the Han Dynasty: "The envoys sent by the vassal states and hostages dispatched by distant aboriginal tribes all submitted and presented treasures and gifts to the Emperor. There were tens of thousands of people waiting to meet with the Emperor in the imperial court. The Emperor held Jiu-bin Ceremony. The Chamberlain for Dependencies arranged the order of precedence for each guest." Jiu-bin means nine officials of different gradations: the prince, the marquis, the duke, the chief minister, the prefect, the sub-prefect, the court gentleman, the government clerk, and the hostages from the vassal states. Emperor Wu of the Han Dynasty set up the Chamberlain for Dependencies for the first time to receive guests from the vassal states. His duties included making seating arrangements and leading them to pay respects to the Emperor.

Generally speaking, the emperors in ancient China seldom showed respect for heads of state or envoys of foreign countries, but they could also abandon their bureaucratic airs for political requirements. "Traditions of the Xiongnu" in *Han Shu* (*The Book of Han*) recorded: Emperor Xuan of the Han Dynasty was informed in AD 52 (the second year in his reign) that Huhanye Chanyu, the supreme ruler of Xiongnu, had decided to enter into tributary relations with the Han Dynasty to contend with his brother Zhizhi Chanyu for control over the Xiongnu Empire. Therefore, he conveyed that he would like to pay homage to the Emperor at the Spring Festival. Emperor Xuan was determined to take this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to divide the Xiongnu

Empire. He led his officials to hold a red-carpet welcoming ceremony along the Weishui River in suburban Chang'an. When receiving Huhanye Chanyu, Emperor Xuan broke the convention by exempting him from the kowtow and ordering the ceremonial assistant to call him by his official position rather than his name.

4 Attendance of Lords of Vassal States at the Spring Festival Ceremony of the Western Jin Dynasty

The ceremony of paying homage and extending wishes at the Spring Festival was an important event for diplomatic guests and envoys. *Song Shu* (*The Book of Song*) quoted from *Xian Ning Zhu* (*Etiquette Canon of Western Jin Dynasty*) that "Chanyu of the Southern Xiongnu" and "barbarians and tribesmen" all attended this momentous event. The beginning was as such: "When the Emperor entered the court, the musical performance began and all government officials kneeled and bowed. After the Emperor took seat on the dragon throne under the guidance of the Chamberlain for Ceremonials, the music stopped and all government officials stood up. The Chamberlain for Dependencies then kneeled and proposed to commence the ceremony; the Court Gentleman in charge of ceremonials informed: 'The Emperor invites the lords to the court'; the Chamberlain for Dependencies then kneeled and notified: 'Vassal state XX presents a pair of white jade to pay homage to the Emperor'; the Chamberlain for Ceremonials then said: 'The Emperor invites him to the court.' The guests who had been invited to the court would sit on royal chairs. They should kowtow whenever the emperor stood up, sat down, or when they kneeled and put the jade in front of the royal chair. When the ceremony was over, they would withdraw from the court and return to their original seat. The Court Gentleman in charge of ceremonials informed: 'Now the Emperor invites the Defender-in-chief.' Therefore, Dukes, Lords Specially Advanced, Chanyu of the Southern Xiongnu, and the generals all came to the west of the Chamberlain for Dependencies; Chief Ministers, Prefects, Governors of Provinces, and the sub-prefects all came to the west of the Custodian of Foreign Visitors. They all faced the north and kowtowed."

5 Refusal to Kowtow by Envoys from the Umayyad Caliphate

Thanks to the extensive territory, enormous national strength, and highly developed economy of the Tang Dynasty, Emperor Taizong was addressed as the "Khan of Heaven," and tribal rulers and envoys all came to pay homage in an endless stream. Wang Wei, a famous poet of the Tang Dynasty, wrote in his poem "Morning Audience in the Daming Palace With Official Secretary Jia Zhi": "The gates that led to the Emperor's reception hall at the Great Brightness Court opened methodically one

after another when the audience was about to begin. The rulers and envoys from foreign states following a strict dress code waited to kowtow and pay homage to the Emperor." The kowtow in the poem is like *ji shou*, where people kneeled and bowed with their hands and knees on the ground.

However, the envoys who represented their country were disobedient because of their reluctance to kowtow before the Chinese emperors. *The Old Book of Tang* recorded: The envoy sent by the Umayyad Caliphate (Syria) who paid homage to Emperor Xuanzong in 713 (the first year in his reign) refused to kowtow. The Tang government officials intended to punish him for his impoliteness. Zhang Yue, head of the Legislative Bureau, advised Emperor Xuanzong not to impose punishment because the Umayyad Caliphate possessed different protocols and customs. Emperor Xuanzong approved his remonstrance and agreed to create a precedent. However, the disputes over the protocol arose again when the envoy came to the court. He said that people in his country kowtowed to nobody but the God of Heaven. They even never kowtowed to their King. Eventually, at the request of the Tang officials, the envoy kowtowed to Emperor Xuanzong in conformity with the rules of the Tang Dynasty.

6 The Kowtow During the Song Dynasty

The History of Song recorded, in September 1015 (the 18th year in the reign of Emperor Zhenzong), "Rajaraja I, ruler of the Chola Kingdom (located in the Coromandel Coast), dispatched a tribute mission to meet with the Emperor. The interpreter introduced, 'To show our admiration for your customs and tradition ….'" In 1033 (the 11th year in the reign of Emperor Renzong), the Chola Dynasty sent a tribute mission to the Northern Song Dynasty again with metal-made credentials and pearl caps. The head of the mission Abu Adil kneeled and scattered pearls from a silver container in front of the emperor's couch to express admiration. He returned to his country the next year after the titles of Grand Master for Splendid Happiness and Huaihua General were conferred on him by Emperor Zhenzong.

At the beginning, the Northern Song Dynasty agreed with the Liao Dynasty on the performance of the kowtow when the envoys from both countries met with the emperors. "Annals of Rituals" in the *History of Liao* recorded, when the Song mission visited the Liao Dynasty to celebrate the emperors' birthday or a new year, all civil officials and military officers all went to court at dawn. At first, the envoy and deputy envoy from the Song Dynasty were arranged in a temporary tent. Under the guidance of the official secretaries of the Liao Dynasty, they ascended the red steps leading up to an imperial palace and stood in front of the palace. A cabinet minister of the Liao Dynasty descended from the northern steps and bowed to the envoys. Then the minister presented to the palace secretary the casket containing the letter from the Emperor of the Song Dynasty, which was then read out by the prime minister. Afterward, the official secretaries led the envoys to walk up the northern steps to ascend the palace and perform the kowtow to the Emperor.