

## **Appendix F: Imperial Edict: 'Ceremonies to Be Observed at the Audience of Leave'**

This is a British translation of one of two imperial edicts handed to the British on 11 September 1816 of the ceremonies to be observed at the public audience of Amherst, quoted in Ellis (1817, pp. 499–500, Note No. 5).

On the day that the English Ambassador takes leave, music and cushions shall be placed in the Hall of Light and Splendour (as on the two proceeding occasions).

About five o'clock in the morning his Majesty shall be most respectfully requested to put on the Imperial dragon-robcs, and to ascend the Hall of Light and Splendour. The Princes, the Royal Personages, the Dukes, &c. shall be arranged in two wings withinside the hall, in the same manner as at the presentation. Whilst the band plays 'a glorious subjugation', his Majesty shall ascend the throne.

Soo [Sulenge] and Kwang [Guanghai] shall conduct the Ambassador and suite, as on the first occasion, to the west side of the passage by the altar of the Moon, where, at this word given, they shall arrange themselves in order, It shall then be proclaimed 'Kneel!' the Ambassador and his suite shall kneel, and wish his Majesty repose. Soo and the others shall then lead the Ambassador through the western folding partition door to the level area within the hall, where he shall kneel down and wait till his Majesty himself confers upon the King of his country court beads and a purse. Meen-gan shall receive them, and deliver them to the Ambassador, and also communicate, authoritatively, such orders as his Majesty may be pleased to direct on dismissing the Ambassador.

This being ended, Soo, &c. shall conduct the Ambassador out of the western folding door to withoutside the hall, where Soo shall take in charge for the Ambassador the beads and purse, and then conduct him as before to the west side of the altar of the Moon. On the word 'Be arranged' being proclaimed, the Ambassador and suite shall arrange themselves standing; the crier shall proclaim, 'Advance and kneel!' the Ambassador and suite shall advance and kneel. It shall be proclaimed, 'Bow the head to the ground and arise!' The Ambassador and suite shall then, toward the upper part of the hall, perform the ceremony of san-kwei-kew-kow (thrice kneeling and nine times bowing the head to the ground), and the music shall stop. The Princes, &c. shall next conduct the Ambassador and suite to behind the western row of persons, where they shall perform the ceremony once and sit down.

Whilst his Majesty takes tea, the Princes, &c. with the Ambassador and suite, shall arise from their seats, kneel and perform the ceremony once. After his Majesty has drank tea, they shall again approach their places and sit down. The attendants shall then confer tea upon the Princes, the Ambassador, and the rest, for which, before and after drinking, they shall perform an act of reverence. They shall then stand up, and the music shall play 'subjugation manifested'. Whilst his Majesty retires to the interior of the palace the music shall stop, and the Princes, Ambassador, and suite shall go out.

This text is taken from *Britain's Second Embassy to China: Lord Amherst's 'Special Mission' to the Jiaqing Emperor in 1816*, by Caroline Stevenson, published 2021 by ANU Press, The Australian National University, Canberra, Australia.