

Review Article

Five Historiographical Trends in the Postwar Japanese Study of Joseon History

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Introduction

Japanese-language scholarship has long played a vital role in developing historical scholarship in Korea. Despite its nonpareil role, most non-Japanese scholars struggle to trace the direction of specific debates and developments in historiography, sometimes resulting in partial misunderstandings of scholarly debates in Japan. This review article is a collaborative effort by five Japanese scholars and one American scholar of Korean history of the Joseon period to showcase five specific examples of such historiographical debates and developments to an international audience.

This work follows the format of each scholar discussing one senior scholar's major work on Korean history and evaluating it in its scholarly context and debates. The five senior scholars from Japan discussed here are the following: Professors Kawachi Yoshihiro (b. 1928), Takahashi Kimiaki (b. 1949), Fuma Susumu (b. 1948), Kitajima Manji (1934–2018), and Terauchi Itarō (b. 1948).

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Their works on Korean/East Asian history and the academic debates they spurred through their work constitute indispensable aspects of the Japanese academe's work on Korean history in the postwar period. By following the historiographical debates and developments discussed here, one could gain invaluable insights into the Japanese research on the history of Joseon Korea, which could benefit any student of Korean history.

Historiography is a product of a particular time and place. Modern Korean historiography in Korea has been a collective effort at intellectual decolonization, with many scholars openly attacking what they deemed to be aspects of colonialist historiography in positioning their work. As many Japanese scholars before 1945 often accentuated Japan's outsized historical role in narrating the history of Korea, many Korean scholars did the opposite after 1945 by underscoring how Korea independently charted its historical path. Since the 1990s, the rise of China as a potential hegemon and the growth of economic ties between China and South Korea also spurred historical research that sought to reconcile the said emphasis on autonomy vis-à-vis Korean submission to late imperial China, often depicting the Sinocentric political and cultural order as universal and at times even benevolent towards Korea.

The Japanese scholarship developed in a different milieu. As the research works and debates collected here show, scholars from Japan explored aspects of Korean history away from the abovementioned metanarratives that depicted Joseon Korea as somehow fully autonomous while increasingly tied to Beijing at the hip. Instead, many explored the tensions between the ramifications of Korea's political or ideological submission to China vis-à-vis Korea's own interests and agendas concerning its relationships with the neighboring Jurchens and the Japanese. The debates reviewed here by Yagi Takeshi and Kimura Taku precisely explore this tension between Joseon Korea as a country with its own national identity, history, and geopolitical interests separate from China vis-à-vis the perception of Joseon Korea as China's obedient vassal, inseparably tied to the Chinese Empire through ideology and learning. Contrary to the recent trend in Korean-language scholarship, Japanese scholars show that the Joseon submission to China was not total and continued to generate disputes and tensions in shaping Korea's foreign policy.

Kimura Kanako's review approaches the problem of tension between universalism and particularism from a different angle. Focusing on Fuma Susumu's work, she first shows how Fuma's work revealed the practical limitations of late imperial China in its dealings with maritime nations such as Ryukyu and Japan, effectively exposing the pretensions of the Ming and even the far larger Qing as almighty universal empires. The Chinese Empire and Joseon Korea could only

maintain the fiction of Beijing's absolute regional dominance by "conspiring" together and maintaining a façade of universal order.

Nishijima Sadao's (1919–1998) thesis on the "Sinocentric world order" has transformed the field by showing how a "Sinocentric world order" based on the system of investiture and tribute was formed in ancient times (Nishijima 1983). But scholars have questioned the applicability of this thesis vis-à-vis the later periods, and Fuma's work is a definitive refutation of the older thesis that argued for a "system" of China-centered regional order. Yi Hyowon's criticisms and characterization of Fuma's view as "Japanocentric" may be valid. Still, Yi's (2017) perspective also reflects a Sinocentric bias that sees China-centered civilization as inherently peaceful and mutually beneficial for its participants. Not only is there a prolonged and repeated history of the Chinese Empire going to war when it felt it needed to (Perdue 2015), but one could also say that the "Japanocentric world order," however defined, also contributed to creating over two centuries of uninterrupted peace and facilitated trade between its participants.

Another critical facet of Japanese scholarship is the extensive attention to detail. Kawanishi Yuya's review, centered on the work of Kitajima Manji, shows how one scholar single-handedly transformed the study of one of the most important and complex events in East Asian history, the Imjin War (1592–1598), through his meticulous collection and annotation of source materials from all participants of the war. In addition to shedding the older colonialist tendency to view the Imjin War as a precursor to modern-day Japanese expansion, he meticulously produced a massive three-thousand-page sourcebook that irreversibly transformed the source base for all historians working on this topic and period. Much of the Japanese scholarship is rooted in this tradition of thorough treatment of source materials, which remains one of the many strengths of Japanese scholarship.

Lastly, Tsuji Yamato's review delves into the hitherto little-known connectivity between the continent, the peninsula, and the archipelago through the prism of trade. Most studies of international relations, particularly those dealing with Korea, tend to be bilateral in focus and do not deal much with international trade. Tsuji's review shows how Terauchi Itarō's pioneering work reveals a hitherto unknown aspect of international relations of this period by delving into the details of trade between the Qing Empire, Joseon Korea, and Japan, with Korea functioning as a sort of conduit of trade through the seventeenth century. Most scholars have focused on politics as the driving force behind the formation of peace between the three countries. This review shows that trade may have been essential to that peace.

(Ilsoo Cho)

Joseon Korea and the Jurchens in the Sinocentric World Order

Kawachi Yoshihiro, born in 1928, studied at Kyoto University and was a professor at Tenri University and Kyoto University. He is best known for his book *The study of Jurchen history in the Ming period* (Mindai Joshin shi no kenkyū) (Kawachi 1992). He also compiled a critically acclaimed Manchu dictionary in Japanese, for which he was awarded the biennial Japan Academy Prize in 2016. Furthermore, the Japanese government awarded him the prestigious Order of the Sacred Treasure in 2017 for his lifelong scholarly contributions. In the context of Korean-Jurchen relations, Kawachi published his influential article “The Joseon King Sejo’s ideology of ‘caring for the small’ and its setback” (Chōsen Seiso no jishō shugi to sono zasetsu), which forms the tenth chapter of his abovementioned book. The Confucian concept of “caring for the small” (K. *jaso*) refers to the acts of generosity a large country displays towards a small country, which King Sejo (r. 1455–1468) reportedly showed vis-à-vis the Jurchen tribes to Korea’s north. This policy is a reformulation of the widely known concept of “serving the great” (K. *sadae*) from the large country’s standpoint.

The article starts with the rebellion and eventual death of Yi Jingok (1399–1453) in contextualizing Sejo’s policy towards the Jurchens. Sejo, widely known as Prince Suyang before his ascension to the throne, took control of the government in 1453 before becoming a king. According to Kawachi, Yi Jingok’s rebellion against Sejo, which ended with Yi’s death, caused an unraveling of the previously close relationship between the Korean and Jurchen peoples. In this context, Kawachi argues that Sejo developed a rather crude policy towards the Jurchens based on his “nationalistic” beliefs. Sejo started implementing what he portrayed as a benevolent policy towards the Jurchens. Regardless of the increasing financial burden, Sejo willingly showered several Jurchen chiefs with gifts and official positions to display his generosity towards the Jurchens in the form of “caring for the small.”

At that time, Sejo allowed some Jurchen leaders to come to the Korean capital using a shorter route via Pyeongan Province, to reduce the burdens of extended travel. Since the Ming envoys also traveled through some of the same roads to get to the Korean capital, Sejo ordered that information about the Jurchens traveling through Pyeongan Province be kept secret vis-à-vis the Chinese. Sejo was aware that his efforts to patronize the Jurchens would cause the Ming to be suspicious, and Beijing soon found out what the Korean king was doing. The Chinese emperor reprimanded Sejo for his “private interaction”

(K. *sagyo*), which threatened the basis of the Sinocentric world order. Sejo immediately stopped his policy towards the Jurchen tribes and cut off communication.

Kawachi Yoshihiro's work laid the foundation for further research in this field and had a remarkable impact on the subsequent generation of researchers. Kawachi's emphasis on the central role of Korea's submission to China in reading the history of Korean-Jurchen relations influenced many subsequent studies on the history of Korea's foreign policy. For instance, Kawachi's work influenced Kimura Taku's recent study, which revisits early-to-mid Joseon-period Korea's foreign policy vis-à-vis the Japanese from the vantage point of Korea's role as a vassal of the Ming (Kimura T. 2021). Kawachi's work also influenced Kawanishi Yuya's overview of the system of early Joseon state documents and seals, which inevitably reflected Korea's position as China's vassal (Kawanishi 2014).

Nevertheless, Kawachi's interpretation of Sejo's foreign policy is not without problems. Kawachi argues that Sejo instigated a crude policy towards the Jurchens based on his nationalistic sentiments. However, Kawachi also adds that Sejo's policy was rooted in the Confucian notion of benevolence and "caring for the small." In the eleventh chapter of his book, Kawachi notes that Sejo's Jurchen policy merely expressed Sejo's desire to show his country's superiority over the Jurchen tribes. In this sense, Sejo's Jurchen policy may have had little to do with Confucianism. Moreover, Sejo's Buddhist beliefs and sponsorship also influenced his foreign policy. For example, the so-called "Korea envoy boom" in Japan was a response to King Sejo's Buddhist beliefs (Takahashi 1987).

Historical evaluations of Sejo have been conflicting. Many have hailed Sejo as the dynasty's second founder, someone who solidified the dynasty's foundation for its success. At the same time, many have also condemned him as an unforgivable traitor and usurper. The latter moralist and Confucian perspective took root in the late Joseon period. This perspective centers on the growth of Confucian literati (K. *sarim*) in Korea, who gradually emerged in conflict against regimes run by usurpers, such as Sejo, and the merit subjects who participated in such coups and purges in early Joseon. The narrative centered on the growth of Confucian literati is also understood in parallel vis-à-vis the growth of democratic forces in modern-day South Korea, which decisively marks Sejo as a villain and reads the moralist and Confucian view of history in a positive light.

However, such a narrative may distort how we continue to understand the era of King Sejo. The typical image of Joseon Korea is that of the most loyal

vassal of China. The reign of Sejo indeed constitutes an anomaly from this point of view. However, such emphasis on the deviation is only valid according to the perspective of the said Confucian literati. However, the development of a sense of national self-importance under the guise of Confucian moralism or Buddhist beliefs was consistent in premodern Korean history (Yagi 2007). The scholarly debate over the historical significance of Sejo's foreign policy is not over and must continue.

(Yagi Takeshi)

Joseon Korea and Japan in the Sinocentric World Order

Takahashi Kimiaki, born in 1949, studied at Nagoya University and worked at the same university as a professor until his retirement. His scholarly contributions pertain to medieval and early modern Japan-Korea relations and maritime history. One of his key works is "Japan-Korea relations in the Muromachi period from the perspective of diplomatic ritual" (*Gaikō girei yori mita Muromachi jidai no Nitchō kankei*) (Takahashi 1982b). This article centers on the formation of a Joseon-centered regional order between Korea and Japan, spanning from the 1390s to the 1470s.

The article starts with a discussion of the *Records of lands in the Eastern Sea* (K. *Haedong jegukgi*), a widely referenced book compiled by the Korean official Sin Sukju (1417–1475) in 1471. Takahashi emphasized that the text conceptualized early Joseon Korea-Japan relations per the acculturated Sinocentric worldview, in which the Koreans were the "central" and/or "civilized" (K. *hwa*) and the Japanese the "barbarian" (K. *yi*). The text also categorized Japanese actors into three groups. The first category consisted of the Muromachi Shogunate, with the shogun referred to as the "king of Japan." The Shogunate and local officials comprised the second category, and powerful non-official families of Western Japan formed the third category.

Examining the diplomatic documents and correspondences exchanged between the Koreans and the Japanese, Takahashi noted that the first category corresponded with the king of Joseon Korea, the second category corresponded with either the Korean *panseo* (senior second rank of the Board of Rites), the *champan* (junior second rank of the Board of Rites), or the *chamui* (senior third rank of the Board of Rites). The third category corresponded with the *juwang* (senior sixth rank of the Board of Rites). The Koreans established this classification scheme during the first half of the reign of King Sejong (r. 1418–1450).

Takahashi then focused on the Japanese who received official positions from Korea, the *sujigin*, and those who received the seals, called *doseo*, with engraved names that permitted them to dispatch envoys to Korea, the *sudoseoin*. According to Takahashi, the *sujigin* were obliged to pay tribute in person every year and were nothing more than foreign vassals. As for the *sudoseoin*, Takahashi also noted that receiving the seal from Korea constituted a form of political submission. Furthermore, Takahashi also pointed out that other Japanese who were not the *sujigin* and the *sudoseoin* were permitted to personally send missions to Korea without any relationship to the Muromachi Shogunate, if they kept their obligation to suppress pirates. Based on such arrangements, Takahashi argued that the ties between the Koreans and the Japanese were unequal, and that the Japanese were part of a regional order centered on Joseon Korea. Takahashi also concluded that the tributary relationship between Ming China and surrounding countries, apart from the ideological influence of the former upon the latter, had almost no power over the regional order centered on Joseon, except that the Joseon king and the Muromachi shogun exchanged diplomatic documents on an equal footing.

Until this article was published, most of the specific scholarly discussions of Japan-Korea relations of this era were concerned with trade relations and the various arrangements associated with trade, such as the abovementioned *sujigin*, *sudoseoin*, and trading ships, without any serious discussions of the overall structure of the regional order (Tanaka 1959; Nakamura 1965, 1969). Takahashi's work, in contrast, revealed the existence of a structural framework that shaped medieval Japan-Korea relations, which had sufficient form and content to be defined as a regional order centered on Joseon Korea. This work thereby distinguished the history of Korea's diplomacy towards Japan from the perspective of Japanese foreign relations.

In a separate article, Takahashi focused on the stylistic characteristics of diplomatic documents exchanged between the Japanese and the Koreans of that era (Takahashi 1982a). He also analyzed the diplomatic documents exchanged between late Joseon-period Korea and the Tokugawa Shogunate (Takahashi 1992, 1993). Takahashi's work also influenced the direction of subsequent research for many researchers. For instance, his concept of a Joseon-centered regional order greatly influenced the now commonly held understanding of the history of early Joseon-period Korea's diplomacy toward Japan (Son 1994).

Scholars have also built upon Takahashi's work on diplomatic documents by engaging in morphological analyses of the original diplomatic documents, such as paper materials (Yonetani 2002; Itō 2002; Tashiro 2007; Araki 2021). Moreover, others have physically discovered the seals the *sudoseoin* received

(Tashiro and Yonetani 1995) and examined their size and other morphological characteristics (Osa 2002). Another scholar examined the actual operation of the seal distribution system (Yonetani 1997). Lastly, Kimura Taku (2021) has examined the significance of the fact that the seals awarded to *sudoseoin* were not official, but ones with engraved names called *doseo*, within the context of Sino-Korean relations and Joseon Korea's status as China's vassal.

Some have interpreted Takahashi's work as a criticism of the conventional "Chinese world order." Takahashi's model of a Korea-centered regional order, alongside the one centered on China, of course effectively questions the "Chinese world order" and its supposition that all non-Chinese polities were essentially equal vis-à-vis one another. However, the emphasis on Joseon Korea's superiority vis-à-vis minor actors in Western Japan fails to account for the fact that Joseon continued to function as China's vassal throughout this era. Joseon Korea's diplomacy cannot be separated from the fact that it was China's vassal (Kimura T. 2021).

(Kimura Taku)

Joseon Korea and the Ryukyu Kingdom Under the Qing Aegis

Fuma Susumu, born in 1948, studied at Kyoto University and taught at Toyama University and Kyoto University before retiring in 2013. Fuma started his career studying the social history of Ming and Qing China. He received the prestigious Imperial Prize of the Japan Academy and the Japan Academy Prize for his *Study of the benevolent societies and halls of late imperial China* (Fuma 1997). He then expanded his research focus to include Korean history and the history of international relations in East Asia. Another of his books, *Korean embassies to Beijing and Korean embassies to Japan* (Fuma 2015), won the Paju Book Prize and the Tokugawa Prize. In this book, he presents a new research perspective comparing Korean embassies to China and Japan and makes important arguments about international relations in East Asia. My discussion of Fuma's work will focus on the third chapter of his second book, titled "Chinese and Korean diplomacy toward Ryukyu after Japan's annexation of Ryukyu in 1609: Investiture, interactions, and suspension of relations among the four countries of East Asia" (Fuma 2015, 81–117).

Scholars have long understood the structure of East Asian international relations following John King Fairbank's concept of the "Chinese world order" based on the tributary system and Nishijima Sadao's work on the Sinocentric investiture system. In Japan, scholars also often use the "tribute-investiture

system” as a fusion of the two concepts. Fairbank and Nishijima supposed the existence of a *system* of international relations centered on China as the dominant force in the history of East Asia. Fuma critically tested this supposition by examining the international structure involving China, Korea, Ryukyu, and Japan and argued that at least since the Japanese annexation of the Ryukyu Kingdom in 1609, East Asia did not have any system of international relations.

Fuma first examined the Ming policy towards Ryukyu in the wake of Japan’s invasion of Ryukyu in 1609. While Ryukyuan envoys immediately reported to Beijing that the Shimazu clan of Satsuma invaded Ryukyu, the Ming chose not to deal with the situation. Chinese officials unanimously agreed that the Ming forces could not cross the sea to help. After the Japanese conquest, envoys from Ryukyu came to pay tribute to the Ming in 1612, and the tribute even included Japanese products. The governor of Fujian Province proposed that they detain the envoys and send back the Japanese goods they brought. The Ministry of Rites agreed with the proposal in theory, but the Ming authorities realized that there were consequences for making policy and ideology consistent.

If Beijing refused to accept tribute from Ryukyu, it would break relations. China would then have to consider the possibility that the Japanese might depose the now-useless Ryukyuan king and fully annex the country. The Chinese speculated that once Ryukyu disappeared, the Japanese might target Taiwan’s Tamsui and Keelung next, and there would be nothing between the Ming and Japan. The Wanli emperor ordered the Ryukyuan king to pay tribute after a decade to prevent further Japanese aggression. This move would allow the Ming to maintain the façade of a tributary relationship with Ryukyu and buy time.

But the Ryukyuan started to protest that they could not wait that long. They sent envoys to argue that they be allowed to come at the same intervals as before the Japanese conquest. They also blamed the Ming for not rescuing them back in 1609, as the Ming did for the Koreans in the 1590s. The Ryukyuan even uttered veiled threats, saying they could no longer remain loyal to the Ming if Ming China did not allow them to pay tribute (and thereby give them opportunities to trade) at the same interval as before. The Ming eventually gave in to the pressure and restored the frequency of tribute to twice every three years, the same frequency as before 1609. But the Japanese now controlled the Ryukyuan. The Ming investiture of the new Ryukyuan king Shō Hō in 1633 did little but sustain the fiction of Ryukyu as a Ming tributary state. The Ming had already formally recognized the “King of Annam,” even though the Ming

knew of the separate “Emperor of Dai Viet” in Vietnam.

Things appeared to be the same as before. But Ryukyu could only function as a tributary state of the Ming because the Japanese allowed it. In other words, this fictitious structure remained in place because the Japanese chose to remain silently in the background and enabled it to function. From Beijing’s point of view, they had to continue ignoring the reality to maintain this international structure. Starting in 1609, the Ming created another fictitious tributary state by bending actuality to support its ideology as the universal empire.

Before 1609, Joseon Korea and Ryukyu had occasionally exchanged letters and gifts in Beijing. As the Ming chose to ignore the fact that the Japanese had conquered Ryukyu, the Koreans did the same, and some communication between the Koreans and the Ryukyans continued at least until 1634. But after the Qing subdued Joseon in 1637, communication between the two sides almost wholly ceased. Fuma focuses on an incident in 1717 to illuminate the reasons behind the cessation of contact. The Ryukyans had sent back Korean drifters in 1717, and the Joseon court contemplated sending an official letter to thank them. However, the Joseon Ministry of Rites opposed the move, claiming it could arouse Qing suspicion, and the Joseon king Sukjong (r. 1674–1720) ultimately decided not to send the letter. As Fuma points out, the actual reason why the Koreans decided not to contact the Ryukyans was that the Koreans knew that the Japanese had already subdued them.

The Qing did not have formal diplomatic contacts with Tokugawa Japan. However, the Koreans continued diplomatic interactions with Japan. The Korean officials sent to Japan learned from their Japanese counterparts that Japan had subjugated Ryukyu. Joseon Korea’s direct contact with the Ryukyans could expose Ryukyu’s actual position; the Koreans had no choice but to sever the connection. Fuma argues that the concept of a “system” of investiture or tribute is ineffective and misleading in understanding the history of international relations in early modern East Asia. Diplomacy is not a “system” that, once created, always functions the same way. Things change, and the actors constantly respond to such changes. Sometimes, they saw things and pretended they were not there.

Scholars often perceive the Sinocentric international order and “system” as encompassing the entire region. By moving away from a China-centered perspective and examining how Joseon and Ryukyu dealt with each other and the great powers around them, Fuma revealed the existence of an international structure created by the suspension of formal relations between China and Japan.

Fuma (2015, 118–142) also wrote about how Joseon intellectuals of the

“northern learning school” (K. *bukhakpa*) interpreted the Ryukyu Kingdom. They knew that the Japanese ruled over the Ryukyans and that the Ryukyans continued to hide the truth by pretending to be a Chinese tributary state and sending missions to Beijing. However, the intellectuals of the “northern learning school,” some of the most internationally minded and knowledgeable people of that time, could not explain why there were no diplomatic relations between Joseon Korea and Ryukyu. Fuma argued that the four countries had implicitly “conspired” to stabilize the region’s international relations by concealing Ryukyu’s actual status as a Japanese vassal.

The Korean scholar Yi Hyowon (2018, 2019) has launched a detailed critique of this article as a part of his larger critique of Fuma’s book in both English and Korean, with the 2019 review in Korean being more extensive. Yi first praised Fuma for pointing out that the tribute and investiture systems were, in fact, fictional. However, Yi problematized Fuma’s argument primarily because Fuma supposedly portrayed Joseon Korea as politically and culturally subordinate to China and mired in obstinacy, which reportedly became an obstacle to recognizing reality. Yi saw Fuma as part of a long lineage of Japanese East Asianists who supposedly overemphasized Japan’s role and position in East Asia and criticized Fuma for allegedly trying to argue that Japan was equal to China. Yi also claimed that Arano Yasunori’s (1988, 2005) thesis of a “Japanocentric world order,” which argues for a Japan-centered international order on an equal footing with China, became the mainstream theory in Japan and that Fuma has uncritically accepted this thesis despite its faults. In sum, Yi Hyowon has argued that Fuma has merely replaced the Sinocentric perspective with a Japanocentric one.

Yi’s criticisms are not without problems and show misunderstandings of the academic debate in Japan and differing views on the history of East Asian international relations. First, Yi misunderstands the Japanese academic community’s understanding of the “Japanocentric world order.” One of Yi’s criticisms centers on how the “Japanocentric world order” implies mutual recognition between participants. While the usage of the word “order” has invited criticism, Arano (2019, 98) himself argued that the “Japanocentric world order” does not imply international recognition and merely denotes domestically staged and ritually expressed order. Many Japanese scholars also acknowledge that this order was accepted only in Japan and to a limited extent.¹

1. For example, Watanabe and Sugiyama (2008, 121), introducing the work of American historian Ronald Toby, stated that compared to the widely recognized Chinese international order, the

While Yi insists that Fuma attempted to argue that Japan was equal to China, Fuma primarily understood international relations as a structure among the four countries without a center or hierarchy. The Qing, in part, shaped this structure. It did not regard tributary relations as universal and essential, recognized the dangers of coercion, and developed the trading system (Iwai 2020). Some Japanese studies (Haneda 2013, 228; Haneda and Oka 2019, 269) described the establishment and management of relations in the four countries as “compartmentalization”.

Yi also criticized Fuma’s argument regarding the conversation between the Chinese official Li Dingyuan (1750–1805), who once served as a member of the Qing investiture delegation to Ryukyu, and the Korean official Yu Deukgong (1748–1807). Fuma argued that Li knew Japan had subjugated Ryukyu but could not publicly state this fact in China and, therefore, did not communicate it to Yu. Yi Hyowon argued that a manuscript version of Yu Deukgong’s book contains a scene in which Li and Yu openly talk about Ryukyu’s surrender to Japan in front of several people. Yi also bases his criticism on the abstract of my 2017 Ph.D. dissertation (Yi 2019, 407). Although I had previously published this part of my dissertation, Yi appears not to have read it, misunderstood my views, and used it to criticize Fuma. Having examined Yu Deukgong’s manuscript, I found that Li and Yu wrote statements about Ryukyu’s submission to Japan (Kimura K. 2016a, 105–106). This part was most likely deliberately deleted when the Chinese historian Jin Yufu compiled the *Liaohai congshu* (Collected works on Northeast China), which Fuma used for his research (Kimura K. 2016b). That is why Fuma overlooked this dialogue between them.

Despite this discovery, I still agree with Fuma’s view that Li Dingyuan could not publicly discuss Ryukyu’s submission to Japan. Although Li Dingyuan had that conversation about Ryukyu’s actual status with Yu Deukgong, Li still did not mention it in his public account of his travels to Ryukyu, *Shi Riuqiu ji* (Records of the embassy to Ryukyu). While Li was aware of the relationship between Japan and Ryukyu, he could not make it public. This honest, private conversation about Ryukyu was only possible because Yu Deukgong was a foreigner and a longtime friend (Kimura K. 2016a, 106–109).

This article, which delves into the larger historical context around the suspension of relations between Korea and Ryukyu in illuminating the

Japanese order was primarily a domestic concept circulated within Japan. Questioning the validity of the idea of the “Japanocentric world order,” Matsukata described it as “a mere ethnocentrism” (2016, 49).

international structure of East Asia, is a stimulating work that offers a fresh perspective on the history of East Asian international relations. By weaving in the views from the peripheries, Fuma's work also avoids the traditional overemphasis on China in analyzing the international relations of the region. The emergence of this new perspective has been possible because, while Fuma began his career as a historian of China, he steadily expanded the scope of his research to incorporate Korea and Ryukyu.

While I largely agree with Fuma's view, I also have some questions. First, Fuma did not explain the exact scope of "East Asia," so it is unclear how one could position this four-country structure within the region. Another point is whether Japan was concerned about the Qing discovering the Japanese domination over Ryukyu through Joseon Korea. While Ryukyu and the Satsuma Domain desperately concealed the fact of Japanese overlordship (Watanabe 2012, 2017), the Tokugawa Shogunate and those outside of Ryukyu and Satsuma were unconcerned about keeping it a secret and freely communicated it to the Koreans. Scholars must carefully examine this issue from the viewpoints of the Tokugawa Shogunate, the Satsuma Domain, and other Japanese, as well as the changes in thinking that occurred over time. With that said, Fuma's contribution to the field is undeniable, and his thought-provoking thesis on the international history of early modern East Asia will continue to shape scholarly debates for years to come.

(Kimura Kanako)

The Imjin War

Kitajima Manji (1934–2018) studied at Waseda University and Tokyo Metropolitan University and worked as a professor at Takasaki City University of Economics and Kyoritsu Women's University. Internationally recognized as a leading authority in the study of the Imjin War, the Japanese invasions of Korea (1592–1598), Kitajima published several books on the subject (Kitajima 1982, 1990, 1995, 2000–2001, 2002a, 2002b, 2007, 2012). His study of the Imjin War is characterized first and foremost by a thorough critique of the once widely held prewar historical view that the Imjin War constituted a just "conquest" (*seibatsu*). Kitajima strongly argued that the war was an unjustifiable "invasion" (*shinryaku*). He also actively revealed the atrocities committed by the Japanese military in Korea, which were once rarely discussed, including massacres, lootings, kidnappings, and "nose cuttings" (*hanakiri*).

While a scholar of Japanese history, Kitajima conducted his research using

not only Japanese sources but also historical materials from Korea. Until recently, most studies of the Imjin War have been based on historical sources from just Japan, Korea, or China, but Kitajima's study encompassed materials from all three countries. Not only did he use essential historical sources, such as the *Veritable records of King Seonjo* and the *Book of corrections* by Ryu Seongryong (1542–1607), Kitajima also utilized more complex sources, such as the *Nanjung ilgi* by the Korean admiral Yi Sunsin (1545–1598), which was mixed with the *idu* script to express Korean words using Chinese characters.

Kitajima was pathbreaking in using such a wide variety of historical sources to study the Imjin War. His diligence in his research is almost unparalleled and appreciated by scholars working on the Imjin War everywhere. In 2017, he published his magnum opus: a three-thousand-page sourcebook on the war, *Toyotomi Hideyoshi's invasion of Korea and the collection of relevant historical sources* (Toyotomi Hideyoshi Chōsen shinryaku kankei shiryō shūsei) (Kitajima 2017). To make available the best possible sourcebook on the war and perfect his masterpiece, he continued to publish corrigenda to the sourcebook until two months before his death.² After his passing, a collection of his papers was published in Korea to commemorate him (Kim and Son 2019). He became the first Japanese historian to receive such posthumous recognition in Korea.

As for *Toyotomi Hideyoshi's invasion of Korea and the collection of relevant historical sources*, there have only been brief introductions and content critiques by Japanese scholars (Nakano 2018). No book review of it has been published. The sourcebook is essentially a collection of Japanese, Korean, and Chinese historical documents on the Imjin War, dating from 1585 to 1598. It is published in three volumes with a total of 3,080 pages. In addition to explanations of the situations related to politics and war, related historical documents are chronologically arranged. Each document is accompanied by a brief explanation and explanatory notes to facilitate the reader's understanding of the material. Historical documents written in Chinese and the *idu* script are translated into Japanese, allowing easy understanding of the course of the war and the relevant source materials.

Several scholars have published their collections of historical documents on the Imjin War (Tokutomi 1921–1922; Sanbō honbu 1924; Chōsenshi henshūkai 1937; Yi G. 1967). But this book differs from previous publications in that it is far more extensive and varied in its collection. Furthermore, it juxtaposed commentaries on the conditions of politics and war with the historical

2. A list of errata and corrigenda is available on the official website: <http://toyotomiken.seesaa.net/article/457651488.html>.

documents, making it easy for the reader to check the sources and conveniently use the book as a reference tool. Scholars will use this book as an essential collection of historical documents on the Imjin War for a long time to come.

The book is not without shortcomings. First, it contains a considerable number of typographical errors and omissions, making it necessary to check the errors against the corrigenda that Kitajima worked on. In addition, the lack of an index makes it extremely difficult to look up a specific person or topic. Further, the selection criteria used to select historical documents are questionable. As the book states, “Among the endless number of historical documents on this research topic, I selected documents on the basis of which documents were indispensable to grasp the whole picture of Hideyoshi’s invasion of Korea” (Kitajima 2017, vol. 1, iii).

The book includes highly reliable historical documents, such as letters and diaries from the period, as well as somewhat less reliable records from later periods, including military records and history books from Japan and Korea. For example, “Petition for admission to the rank of samurai,” a document in the possession of Chin Jukan (Kitajima 2017, vol. 3, 629–631), describes how the Satsuma lord Shimazu Yoshihiro brought Korean potters to Kagoshima. While relevant, the document itself was written in the nineteenth century. While the document is a valuable record of how the descendants of Korean potters in Kagoshima passed on their history, it cannot be considered to contain historical facts from the time of the Imjin War. It is imperative that readers be alerted to the reliability of the descriptions that are found in the source materials.

Another problem is that Kitajima quoted numerous articles from a Korean historical book called the *Imjinrok*, or *Seonmyo jungbeungji*. While Kitajima states that the compilation of this book began in 1618, more recent studies have estimated that its compilation started in the eighteenth century (Pak 2012; Qin 2019).³ If such estimates are correct, the *Imjinrok* would have been compiled more than a century after the Imjin War, which would raise questions regarding its reliability as historical source material. The sourcebook also includes works such as Kim Chungseon’s *Mohadang munjip* (Kitajima 2017, vol. 1, 230–231), Kim Wan’s *Yongsa illok* (Kitajima 2017, vol. 1, 365), and Hong Yangho’s *Haedong myeongjangjeon* (Kitajima 2017, vol. 2, 17), all of which were published in later periods and contain errors and exaggerations in their descriptions. One must carefully examine their historical value before using

3. In an attempt to identify the compiler of the *Imjinrok*, Pak Inho estimated that it was Sin Seokgyeom (1754–1836). Qin Li argued that Min Baeksun (1711–1774) was the compiler, but Qin did not refer to Pak Inho’s research.

them as source materials.

Another issue is that the sourcebook only includes two European documents, *The Japan Annual Report of the Jesuit* (2017, vol. 1, 6) and *The History of Japan* by Luís Fróis (Kitajima 2017, vol. 1, 457–458). Europeans who lived in Japan at the time often reveal unique perspectives of the times, including the missionaries' reports on the coronation ritual of Toyotomi Hideyoshi as the “king” of Japan, which scholars have recently examined as extremely valuable (Yonetani 2014, 2016). This sourcebook would have benefitted from the inclusion of more European historical documents.

While the sourcebook contains explanatory notes and glossaries of historical documents in the margins, they appear insufficient for the purpose of properly studying the document. In many places, the notes do not mention the date of publication or describe the contents of the documents.⁴ Some of the notes even contain inaccuracies.⁵ As the explanatory notes and annotations provide basic information for readers to understand historical documents, it is imperative that the errors be corrected as soon as possible.

Another problem involves the period in question. Kitajima writes, “Toyotomi Hideyoshi’s invasion of Korea began with his ambition to conquer the Ming Dynasty and rule over East Asia. As the first step, he tried to make Korea, which he thought would be subservient to him, take the lead in conquering the Ming. This war lasted for seven years and ended in 1598, when the Japanese forces withdrew from Korea following Hideyoshi’s death” (2017, vol. 1, i). The sourcebook begins with Hideyoshi’s installation as the *kampaku* in 1585 and ends with the withdrawal of Japanese forces from Korea in November 1598. While the book provides substantial information about the events that preceded the war, there is nothing on postwar events, resulting in an imbalance of coverage.

The Ming and the Korean armies continued to maintain a sort of quasi-combat posture even after the Japanese withdrawal, and rumors of a Japanese invasion circulated in Korea for decades after the war. It was not until around November 1600, two years after the withdrawal of Japanese forces, that Chinese forces completely withdrew from Korea. As some recent publications on the Imjin War end with the dispatch of envoys from Korea to Japan in 1607 (Nakano 2008), the book would have benefitted from a reference to the

4. For example, see the captions of the *Fumonshu* (Kitajima 2017, vol. 1, 354), *Gwanbuk gimun* (Kitajima 2017, vol. 1, 680), and *Haedong myeongjangjeon* (Kitajima 2017, vol. 2, 17).

5. For example, see the interpretations of “Gapsa” (Kitajima 2017, vol. 1, 822), “Chabu” (Kitajima 2017, vol. 1, 915), and “Cheopjeong” (Kitajima 2017, vol. 2, 540).

postwar period.

What Kitajima accomplished by himself is unquestionably monumental. In the future, however, a collaborative work by scholars of Korean, Chinese, Japanese, and European history could result in a more thorough sourcebook on the war. Lastly, postwar research on the Imjin War has been largely carried out by scholars who studied the histories of a particular nation. As a result, only a few joint studies have been conducted in Japan to examine the Imjin War from the perspectives of Japanese, Korean, and Chinese history. As a critical turning point in the history of East Asia, it is imperative that we compare historical documents from all involved parties to clarify the war's history.

The Chinese, the Koreans, the Japanese, the Ryukyans, and the Europeans lived through and wrote about the war. There is a limit to the number of historical materials any one scholar can study across multiple regions and languages. To expand the scope of study of the Imjin War in future, the only way to proceed is to conduct joint research projects with experts from different countries. To this end, it is necessary to establish close ties among scholars, not only in the field of history but also in the fields of literature, art history, folklore, and bibliography. Wherever the direction of future research heads, Kitajima's monumental contribution will undoubtedly function as a cornerstone of the field.

(Kawanishi Yuya)

The Economic Relationship between Joseon Korea and the Qing

Terauchi Itarō, born in 1948, studied at Meiji University under the famous Manchu studies scholar Kanda Nobuo (1921–2003). He specialized in Korean history from the seventeenth century and the history of Sino-Korean relations and taught at the same university as a professor until his retirement. One of his works deals with the issue of Sino-Korean trade at the Junggang border market of Uiju (Terauchi 1986). After providing an overview of the Junggang border market and its history dating back to its founding in 1593, the article focuses on its regularization in 1646. From 1646, the market opened twice a year, and there were two types of trading: official and private. Private trade, or *Junggang busi*, was not officially sanctioned but constituted a significant facet of the business.

According to the early nineteenth-century Korean text *Mangi yoram*, traded goods at the Junggang border market from the Korean side included cattle, salt, cotton, cloth, and paper. But records from other periods show some items were

not from Korea, such as pepper and sappan. From 1700, the Qing started to collect tax from the trade. The Junggang *husi* was eventually merged with the Chaengmun *husi*, which was largely run by merchants who accompanied the Korean envoys and located thirty *ri* southeast of Fenghuang Fortress. The Qing Dynasty officially recognized the Chaengmun *husi* in 1795. In contrast, it is said that the Junggang *husi* was a limited official trade for most of its existence and targeted Manchu bannermen stationed around Fenghuang Fortress.

Terauchi then examined the Korean government's response to the market. The Joseon government specified that only merchants and goods from Hwanghae, Pyeongan, and Gyeonggi Provinces could participate in the market. In Gyeonggi Province, the government specified that only Songdo (today's Gaeseong) could participate in the market, while no restriction applied to the other two provinces. Each participating town appointed a merchant to procure and transport the goods to Uiju. The provincial governor's officials paid for the price of the traded goods. However, if the expenses could not be readily provided, the people of the towns had to bear the missing costs. After arriving at Uiju, the military officers supervised the merchants.

The goods Joseon sent to the Qing included salt and cattle. The difference was that while Korea's exports were converted at a fixed price that did not reflect the market value, the Qing's exports of small blue cloths, for example, were converted at a higher price. Fenghuang Fortress was a Qing stronghold. The area was largely deserted until the middle of the Kangxi era and had to depend on Korea to supply the Eight Banners stationed there. From the second half of the Kangxi period, however, the Shenyang area rapidly developed and became known as a major rice-producing area. Nevertheless, Terauchi cites the need for Korean cattle as a possible reason for the city's continued development.

To sum up, the Qing was able to obtain various goods at favorable prices; the Koreans, on the other hand, had little to gain. However, this does not mean that the trade was entirely without benefit for the Koreans, as the goods from the market were involved in the trade with Tsushima and the tributary trade with the Qing. The overall conclusion of the article is that the Junggang border market must be placed within the overall trade relationships between Japan, Korea, and the Qing Empire.

The significance of Terauchi's study is that it shows the dynamic changes in the Junggang border market. Korean trade with the Japanese (via Tsushima) resumed after the Imjin War, and trade between Joseon Korea and the Qing was carried out through three channels: tribute trade, markets, and imperial envoys. The tribute trade was carried out by Korean envoys travelling to Beijing, and records of the envoys show that they carried silver (silver was banned in the

Ming Dynasty and ginseng was carried instead) and purchased goods. The Koreans imported relatively high-quality goods from China, including carpets, medical supplies, and books.

The second channel of trade went through the markets at border cities, primarily Junggang in Pyeongan Province and Hoeryeong and Gyeongwon in Hamgyeong Province. The Junggang border market was first opened between the Ming Empire and Joseon Korea in the late sixteenth century. And it reopened after a hiatus between the Jurchens of the Later Jin and Korea in 1628. While markets were closed after the 1637 Manchu invasion, the Junggang and Hoeryeong markets were reopened in 1646 and another market opened in Gyeongwon. The main purpose of these three markets was for the Qing side to import agricultural tools and cattle to meet the local demand in northeastern China.

The third channel of trade was through imperial envoys. Until the 1640s, imperial envoys sent to Korea by the Qing often made requests to Joseon for the exchange of goods in the name of liberation of slaves. After 1658, the economic exchange ceased, and fewer requests were made. In the second half of the seventeenth century, Korea exported ginseng to Japan to obtain silver, which was then brought to Beijing by the Korean envoys to obtain items such as silk threads and carpets. The trade was most likely conducted in a manner similar to the transit trade. The intermediaries between the two are still unclear, but the Japanese silver was mainly used in the trade with the Qing. While there were silver mines in Korea, their production was small, and their existence was concealed during the Ming Dynasty. In the eighteenth century, Japan began to restrict silver exports, and imports of silk threads and ginseng were substituted, which led to a reduction of trade.

Terauchi's article clarifies the dynamic changes surrounding the Junggang border market, such as the abolition of the Junggang *husi* in the Kangxi era, the official recognition of the Chaengmun *husi*, and the transition of trading goods. Previous studies, for example, Zhang Cunwu (1978), only introduced a brief history of the market as one of the border markets, while Yu Wansang (1977) dealt only with the Injo period. While there are studies that examine the market over a substantial period (Tsuji 2018), few of them focus on the market over the course of centuries.

As for source materials, Terauchi makes full use of Chinese and Korean sources, including the archives at Gyujeongguk, which were photocopied in the 1980s. Terauchi examined records at the town level, which led to many new discoveries, such as the delivery of the Korean paper in the *Fengcheng suolu*. While seemingly modest, the trade was of great importance to both Korea and

the Northeast Qing.

The author had previously published an article on the Chaengmun *husi* in 1992. Subsequent research on the Junggang border market from the late sixteenth century to the 1600s includes a study on the transition of trade (Yi Hyeonsuk 1996), a study on the documents of the National Museum of China (Sim 2014), and a study on diplomatic negotiations between China and Korea and their traded goods (Tsuji 2018). Sakai (2008) conducted a study on Junggang tax collection in the 1850s. However, there are not many studies on the eighteenth century, and it can be said that the scholarly literature on the Junggang border market from 1646 to the nineteenth century remains rudimentary.

As for historical sources, although some of the documents used are from the *Tongmun hwigo*, a collection of diplomatic documents compiled by the Korean government, many of them have not been examined in this article. It is believed that Kangxi's authorization of the Junggang *husi* could be explored in more depth through such documents and copies of the Korean envoy records. Demands specific to Northeast China, such as pepper and paper, have been identified in this article and can be verified from the sections of the *Da Qing huidian* related to Northeast China, as well as the local gazettes. Pepper in Korea in the fifteenth century has been further studied by Murai (2013) and others. Scholars believe that pepper came from southern China during the Song and Ming Dynasties (Yamada 1964). But one wonders whether Northeast China obtained pepper from Korea.

In addition, there is evidence that Korean paper was consumed in large quantities by the Qing government offices in Shenyang. I realize that the paper was obtained from Korea through tribute, but trade is also relevant here. In Korea, the degree of paper shortage relative to the amount of paper produced is clear (Kawanishi 2016) and may provide a clue regarding the external factors that led to paper shortages.

(Tsuji Yamato)

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