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**RELATIONS BETWEEN JAPAN AND KOREA**

A DIACHRONIC SURVEY IN SEARCH OF A PATTERN

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## ABSTRACT

Ever since Korea and Japan established kingdoms in the 6<sup>th</sup> century, both countries greatly influenced each other politically, militarily, socially, culturally, and economically through international exchange. Korea and Japan kept their close relationship throughout history because of geographic proximity. It is also notable that 54 per cent of Japanese males and 66 per cent of Japanese females carry Sino-Korean genes in present-days and there are records that Japan carried a close relationship with Paekche, a kingdom of the Korean peninsula which introduced script, Confucianism, and Buddhism to Japan at an early stage.

In the Medieval Period, Korea and Japan maintained a friendly trade policy but there were incidents such as Mongol invasions, *wakō* (Japanese pirates) raids and two invasions by Toyotomi Hideyoshi, which worsened the relations between the two countries. And yet, during Japan's period of isolation (from 1639 to 1854), Korea was the only nation with which full and free trade was permitted.

The 20<sup>th</sup> century is based on invasion and colonisation of Japan over Korea. For 35 years from 1910 to 1945, under the control of Japan, the Japan-Korea relationship was nothing but misfortune: forced labour, suppression of Korean culture and language, press-gangs, sex slaves, and so forth.

The aim in this thesis is to go into greater detail about each significant event and its effect on the relationship between Japan and Korea to uncover some rationale or pattern such as *gekokujō* (the master being outdone by the pupil, and being treated thereafter with contempt).

## CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Korea and Japan are not just close distance-wise but ethnically and culturally close nations. Nevertheless, people often describe each country as ‘so close yet far’ neighbours. On the face of the relationship, they are closely collaborating but still there is a lot of unsettled bitterness and conflict remaining inside. On-going issues such as the unsolved problem of ‘*ianfu*’ (literally ‘comfort women’) during the period up to and including war time in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Japanese government denied any involvement of sex-slaves during the war time but has recently been blatantly caught out by Japanese researchers who have obtained documents making it clear that the government not only knew about this sexual service, they actually promoted it and even proposed it in the first place. Apologies have been sparse and unconvincing. Other continuing issues include Dokdo’ (Takeshima), a territorial dispute of the Liancourt Rocks between Korea and Japan which are currently administered by Korea, and controversies surrounding Yasukuni Shrine, and the return of Korean national treasures.

Ever since Korea and Japan established kingdoms in the 6<sup>th</sup> century, both countries greatly influenced each other politically, militarily, socially, culturally, and economically through international exchange. Korea and Japan kept their close relationship throughout history because of geographic proximity, as may be indicated by ‘*kofun*’ (distinctive burial mounds) which shared the same structure as in Korea. It is also notable that 54 per cent of Japanese males and 66 per cent of Japanese females carry Sino-Korean genes in present-days and there are records that Japan carried a close relationship with Paekche, a kingdom of the Korean peninsula which introduced script, Confucianism, and Buddhism to Japan at an early stage. One of the major noble families in Japan, the Soga, is said to be from Paekche, and their blood flowed through imperial veins in Japan.

Not all kingdoms of Korea at that stage had good relationships with Japan. For example, the kingdom Silla, in alliance with T'ang China, invaded Gogurye and Paekche to rule over them and Paekche, in alliance with Japan, fought together in the naval battle of Baekgang (663) but were heavily defeated by Silla and China. Thereafter, Paekche disappeared from history. Later on Japan reopened the gate of trade with Silla and accepted advanced Chinese civilisation through Silla.

Until the 13<sup>th</sup> century, Korea maintained a friendly trade policy with Japan but from 13<sup>th</sup> century, there were repeated raids by Japanese pirates which annoyed Korea so much that in 1419, Korea conquered Tsushima Island which was the headquarter of the Japanese pirates. After the defeat of the pirates, Korea and Japan reopened official trade between the two countries in limited areas. Later on the warlord Toyotomi Hideyoshi attempted two invasions in 1592 and 1597 to Korea to secure a gateway to the continent but it failed due to the help from Ming China. And yet, on the other hand, during Japan's period of isolation (from 1639 to 1854), Korea was the only nation with which full and free trade was permitted (the other two nations with which Japan traded, the Dutch and the Chinese, had restrictions placed upon them). The 20<sup>th</sup> century is based on invasion and colonisation of Japan over Korea. After the rapid industrialisation in the Meiji Restoration, Japan made Korea a subordinate nation through the unequal Kanghwa Treaty in 1876. Japan defeated Qing China which saw itself as having a 'guardian' role over Korea in 1894-5. Russia also had interests in Korea, but after the defeat of Russia by Japan in 1904-5 Japan quickly made Korea a Japanese protectorate and in 1910 formally annexed Korea. For 35 years after that, under the control of Japan, the Japan-Korea relationship was nothing but misfortune: forced labour, suppression of Korean culture and language, press-gangs, sex slaves, and so forth.



Koreans who moved to Japan endured harsher treatment and discrimination. In 1923, there was an earthquake in Tokyo which took away hundreds of thousands lives but among them, as many as 6,000 Koreans were killed by Japanese. The reason was that the 'impurity' of Koreans in Japan had angered the Japanese gods, who caused the earthquake as punishment for allowing this.

Many Koreans were forced to join World War Two and fight for Japan but none of them had their spirits enshrined in the Yasukuni Shrine, yet Koreans coercively had to worship the Japanese spirits. This kind of discrimination continued and even Koreans who were born in Japan had to record their fingerprints until this ceased in 1992 under international pressure. (This was stopped not just for Koreans but all foreign residents.)

The Japan-Korea relationship and related international affairs always have been important aspects in the development of Asian history. Once there was a peaceful diplomatic intercourse between the two countries as introduction of script, religion and Confucianism indicated but there were times of most undesirable events. Nowadays, the majority of Koreans hate Japan and its people without actually seeing them, and surprisingly even Japanese hold a negative impression of Korea. It is impossible to understand for outsiders unless they realise what has happened in the past.

My aim in this thesis is to go into greater detail about each significant event and its effect on the relationship between Japan and Korea. I believe the current international affairs between Korea and Japan are the product of all past events. I hope thereby to uncover some rationale or pattern which made 'so close but yet far' neighbours. *Gekokujō* (the master being outdone by the pupil, and being treated thereafter with contempt) is one such possibility.

## CHAPTER 2. JAPAN-KOREA RELATIONS: Ancient Times

Japan and Korea had a fairly close interrelationship, whether positive or negative, since prehistoric ages due to their geographical closeness. Recently, the relationship between the two countries has been under continuous strain because of the distortion in the history of ancient Japan-Korea relations in Japanese history textbooks. After World War Two, there were many remarkable research achievements in the field of ancient Japan-Korea relations but many of them are still either ignored or not well-known to the public, and hence not having much effect on the preconception of Japan-Korea relations. Another possible reason as to why these research achievements are not considered enough may be that scholars of the two countries have yet to research objectively towards the topic.

Ancient Japan-Korea relations are defined as the interrelationship between the two countries from the Jōmon Period till the end of the Kofun Period (see below). There are various topics that are researched such as the Mimana problem, Kaya<sup>1</sup>-Wa<sup>2</sup> relations, cultural exchange between the Korean Peninsula and Japan, issues concerning ethnic groups in Japan and so forth. Among these matters, the most significant issue so far is the Mimana *Nihon-fu*<sup>3</sup> which Koreans have coercively educated during the colonial age (1910-1945). Japanese promoted and aggravated inferiority of Koreans during the time and it was one of the colonial views of history. The word 'Mimana (*Imna* in Korean)' was the name of a location where the ancient Kaya Kingdom was in the southern part of the Korean Peninsula.

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<sup>1</sup> Ancient Korean kingdom from 100 BC to AD 562.

<sup>2</sup> Ancient Japanese kingdom existing from 50 BC.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'Mimana Government Building of Japan' (but also means 'base', implying territory) existed in southern Korea. Japanese believe southern Korea was a colony of ancient Japan.

The main stream of research about ancient Japan-Korea relations has been led by Japanese scholars since the Edo Period (1603-1867). They actively researched the roots of their ancestors and the foundation of the Japanese nation. From the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Japanese government and scholars put much effort in searching the Korean Peninsula for archaeological evidence and relevance of their roots. In contrast to this, Korea started significant historical and archaeological research on ancient Japan-Korea relations since only as recent as 1970 but since then research has successfully put forth counterarguments to Japan-Korea relations. From the 1980's, many archaeological discoveries were found in the southern part of the Korean Peninsula and more objective views were brought up. Nonetheless, there are still unsolved matters with opposed opinions in Japan-Korea relations because scholars in each country have different views and hypotheses even about the same excavated materials. This chapter examines overall ancient Japan-Korea relations that are accepted objectively in both countries focusing on the core 'Mimana *Nihon-fu*' and 'Horse-rider' theories.

## 2.1 Ancient Japan-Korea Relations

The early stages of ancient Japan-Korea relations can be divided into three Japanese Periods: Jōmon<sup>4</sup>, Yayoi<sup>5</sup> and Kofun<sup>6</sup> Periods. Widespread written script had not yet been developed during these periods until the Kofun Period.<sup>7</sup> Therefore for knowledge earlier than the advent of script in regard to ancient Japan-Korea relations one has to thoroughly examine archaeological facts. This sub-chapter will discuss theories and opinions referring to ancient Japan-Korea relations based on archaeological excavations.

Before the Jōmon Period, a generally accepted view surmises that the existence of land bridges between the Japanese islands and the Asian continent making the Japanese islands accessible to immigrants.<sup>8</sup> The excavations in Korea and Japan show that relics from pre-Neolithic times in these two places have similarities in forms and techniques<sup>9</sup> but it is too early to discuss Japan-Korea relations assuming the two regions were connected with the land bridges.

In the early Jōmon Period, there was no archaeological excavation that might disclose ancient Japan-Korea relations but recently in Jeju Island in Korea, there was an excavation of

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<sup>4</sup> ca 13,000 BC~ ca 400 BC

<sup>5</sup> ca 400 BC~ ca AD 250

<sup>6</sup> ca AD 250~ ca AD 710

<sup>7</sup> Script was developed around the 13<sup>th</sup> century BC in China but had not been adopted (or found to date) in Korea till considerably later, probably during the early Period of the Three Kingdoms (57 BC – AD 668) as Chinese script was used in the three Kingdoms by the 4<sup>th</sup> century, and in the case of Japan the 5<sup>th</sup> century, when it was introduced to Japan by Korean scholars (from Paekche).

<sup>8</sup> Hall, 1993. pp. 50

<sup>9</sup> Lee, 2001.

ancient chipped stone tools and potteries.<sup>10</sup> Lying across the Korea Strait, Jeju Island is close to both countries and it was one of the important ports in the sea route to Japan from Korea. These excavated tools and potteries are similar to the earliest chipped stone tools and potteries found in the Kyūshū region and they are considered to be older than 8,000 BC. Although we cannot be certain whether these relics found in both countries prove that there was an exchange between the two regions, it may be good evidence of ancient Japan-Korea relations since they are the early Jōmon Period relics.

From the mid-Jōmon Period, there is conjecture regarding exchange between Japan and the southern part of Korea. There are many excavations in southern Korea<sup>11</sup> from which it is possible to discover traces of exchange with Japan during the time. Quite a few mid-Jōmon-type of potteries and stone tools were found in southern Korea and ancient boats which are assumed to be used during the Period were excavated in both countries.<sup>12</sup> Likewise, in Tsushima Island (between Japan and Korea), ancestral rites tools and potteries with comb patterns of the south coast of Korea were excavated.<sup>13</sup> Obsidian excavated in southern Korea shows exchange between Japan and Korea during the mid-Jōmon Period and it seems obsidian from Japan was traded with clam bracelets from Korea.<sup>14</sup> Along with archaeological discoveries, Japanese scholars<sup>15</sup> tried to prove relations between the two

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<sup>10</sup> Kang, 2002.

<sup>11</sup> Busan nowadays.

<sup>12</sup> Ha, 2001, Hiroshi, 2005

<sup>13</sup> Nakayama, 1992.

<sup>14</sup> Jung and Ha, 1998.

<sup>15</sup> Teruya Esaka, Kitaro Kimura, Makoto Watanabe, Nakayama Kiyotaka

countries with how the comb pattern pottery culture in Korea had influenced the pottery in the Kyūshū region which later came to be an element in the *sobata*-style potteries.<sup>16</sup>

These exchanges between the two regions seem to be a natural interaction resulting from sharing the same lifestyle on the sea or near it. The exchanges continued throughout the Jōmon Period.

There was increasing exchange between the two regions, particularly one way transfer of culture from Korea to Japan, from the late Jōmon Period to the early Yayoi Period. During this period, Korea was in the middle of the Bronze Age and the Bronze Age culture has spread to Japan, seemingly by Koreans. This involved not only sophisticated goods but also the overall cultural aspects ranging from housing, burial system and lifestyle based on farming. The main reason for considering this as one-way transfer of culture from Korea to Japan is because Korea's adoption of Bronze Age culture including farming lifestyle, from China, predated its emergence in Japan.<sup>17</sup> Some scholars assume that people from southern Korea moved to Japan with bronze wares and formed a new farming culture.<sup>18</sup> This is a theory that argues these Korean inhabitants with new technology and culture were adopted as a ruling hierarchy in the Kyūshū region. This theory is supported by relics found in the southern part of Korea, especially swords, mirrors and jade which are considered as symbols of royal authority in Japan and also by the fact that excavations related to Korea are mainly found in the Kyūshū region.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, recent genetic research indicates that Sino-Korean

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<sup>16</sup> Esaka, 1976.

<sup>17</sup> Hall, 1993. pp. 273

<sup>18</sup> Lee, 2001.

<sup>19</sup> Shim, 1999.

genes are found overall in 66 per cent of Japanese females and 54 per cent of Japanese males, most of these being in the south.

Iron wares appear in Japan from the mid-Yayoi Period. Iron weapons during this time were mainly imported from Korea. Later on, by the late Yayoi Period, Japan started to produce their own iron wares<sup>20</sup> and also imported some from China as well.<sup>21</sup> It is possible to find shell mounds along with their homogeneous products in important sea route bases from China to the west coast and the south coast of Korea and then to Japan. It proves that there were trade routes by sea connecting China to Japan through southern Korea.<sup>22</sup> There must have been active exchanges between these regions during the mid Yayoi Period.<sup>23</sup>

The iron culture that appears from the mid Yayoi Period was first introduced from Korea but the iron culture in China also influenced both Korea and Japan, and gradually increased cultural exchanges between these regions.<sup>24</sup>

Japan-Korea relations became more active entering the Kofun Period. The Southern Korean Peninsula formed centralised kingdoms such as Paekche, Silla and Kaya (Japanese: Mimana). On the other hand, Japan has, seemingly without hesitation, adopted advanced technologies and culture from southern Korea, mainly Paekche and Kaya (Mimana) kingdoms. These exchanges between the two regions are supported by excavations such as relics and potteries of Kaya, Silla and Paekche kingdoms found in the Kyūshū region.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Shiomi, 1991.

<sup>21</sup> Shim, 1997.

<sup>22</sup> Choi, 1993.

<sup>23</sup> There were ancient Chinese coins and bones estimated as from the iron era found in the shell mounds excavated in both Korea and Japan.

<sup>24</sup> Hall, 1993. pp. 50

<sup>25</sup> Lee, 2001.

However, in the Chunnam region of Korea, an ancient Japanese style tomb which is related to Japan during the 5<sup>th</sup>~6<sup>th</sup> centuries was found.<sup>26</sup> Based on these discoveries, it is possible to draw an assumption that there was a unilateral transfer of culture from Korea to Japan until the early 5<sup>th</sup> century and then bilateral exchange from the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> century till the 6<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>27</sup>

As mentioned above, in ancient times in the two countries lacked widespread written script and therefore all theories and assumptions are based on what scholars in both countries have found archeologically. There are many opposing arguments and discussions regarding the same excavations and the following are some of the main discussions at present.

- Connection between the comb patterned pottery and the *sobata*-style pottery. It seems that the comb patterned pottery has influenced the *sobata* pottery but its level of influence is unclear.
- Interaction between the bronze culture of Korea and the Yayoi culture. The Yayoi culture sprang up from the northern part of Kyūshū and it is a well-known fact that this culture was not naturally developed but was imported. The majority of Japanese researchers agree with the fact that the bronze culture with a farming base was adopted from Korea but the migration theory of inhabitants is still under discussion. On the other hand, Korean researchers believe that people moved from Korea to the Kyūshū region to form a new culture. Given the genetic make-up mentioned earlier (p11), showing that Sino-Korean genes are found in the majority of modern Japanese, it would seem the latter – the migration theory – should prevail.
- Influence of trade with China in the late Yayoi Period is still unknown.

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<sup>26</sup> Ancient Japanese kingdom Wa.

<sup>27</sup> Seo, 2004.



- The most opposed arguments and opinions relate to exchange in the Kofun Period. Korean researchers believe that there were influential inflows from Korea after the fact that the majority of Korean relics were excavated in the Kyūshū region. In contrast, Japanese researchers set out with an assumption that Japanese culture had influenced southern Korea. For example, because the Kofun Period is dated earlier in Japan than Korea and the ancient burial mounds<sup>28</sup> that are found in Japan have more varied types so researchers claim that Japanese ‘burial mound culture’ has influenced Korea.

The most interesting and critical discussion point among these is the migration of people. Korean researchers claim that there were frequent migrations to Japan since the Jōmon Period, whereas Japanese researchers claim that there was Japanese migration to Korea or that Japan governed the southern part of Korea during the Kofun Period. Many researchers outside the two countries recognise the fact that Japanese Yayoi culture was not evolved from Japan itself but new culture from outside such as farming, iron goods and textiles was adopted to replace the Jōmon culture.<sup>29</sup> Interesting research was done by Rouse in 1986. He was interested in migration and made an assumption that Ainu people in Hokkaido were related with Jōmon people and current Japanese are directly related to people from the Yayoi Period who consistently migrated from Korea.<sup>30</sup> Henshall argues that present-day Ainu are effectively one and the same as Jōmon people, and again provides genetic

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<sup>28</sup> Square at the head and rounded at the foot.

<sup>29</sup> Aikens and Higuchi, 1982.

<sup>30</sup> Rouse, 1986. pp. 67-105

statistics: 43 per cent of Japanese males carry a Y chromosome related to Jōmon genes, ranging from 25 per cent in the south to 60 per cent in the north.<sup>31</sup>

Moreover, in 1991, there was a Japan-Korea joint research<sup>32</sup> about ancient Japan-Korea relations and they raised a progressive opinion, that Yayoi culture was formed by a combination of both Jōmon people who already were in Japan and those who moved over bringing new culture. Looking at these discussions, it would seem that the Yayoi culture certainly came from the bronze culture in Korea. Since the Jōmon Period, people from southern Korea continuously migrated to Japan and these people cultivated a new combined culture with ancient Jōmon people. This kind of cultural transformation from the Jōmon to the Yayoi Periods is not possible with just a small number of people moving to a new place. However, because it was not a one-off migration but continuous migration, it was possible for the Jōmon culture to be succeeded by the Yayoi culture. Not only archaeological research but also physical anthropology and genetics research indicate that the greater percentage of present day Japanese were descended from Yayoi people, especially in the south, and their anthropological characteristics are similar to those of Koreans. Adding all these points together makes a large-scale and enduring migration during the transformation of the Yayoi culture almost certain.

On the other hand, however, there is an opinion on migration to Korea from Japan as well.<sup>33</sup> This theory suggests that there were intermittent migrations to Korea from Japan since the Jōmon Period as there were exchanges between the two regions. It seems there were migrants from Japan in southern Korea as there are Japanese-style relics and potteries

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<sup>31</sup> Henshall, 2012. p12

<sup>32</sup> Oda, 1991.

<sup>33</sup> Ahn, 1993, Park, 2002.

excavated. Indeed, these relics are mainly from the AD 4<sup>th</sup> century, but it is difficult to imagine that there was a large-scale migration from Japan to Korea which would have the capacity to transform Korean culture on any massive scale.

The facts that there was a massive cultural transformation in Japan during the Yayoi Period and the majority of ancient Korean relics were found in the Kyūshū region indicate that there were continuous migrations (or exchanges) to Japan from the southern part of Korea. In the Jōmon Period, there was mutual interchange between the two regions, whereas in the Yayoi and the Kofun Periods, there were cultural interactions mainly instigated from Korea to Japan through continuous migrations. Likewise, there appears to have been migration to Korea from Japan to the end of the Yayoi Period and throughout the entire Kofun Period, but on a small-scale, as a result of active cultural exchange.

## 2.2 Mimana issue (including the Horse Rider Theory)

Two issues that always come up without exception in ancient Japan-Korea relations are Mimana *Nihon-fu* and the Horse-rider theory. This sub-chapter examines both theories: how they have been researched so far and how far these theories are accepted.

Mimana itself is a name generally referring to the region in the southern part of the Nakdong River area, where the ancient Kaya kingdom was located. This was between the kingdoms of Silla and Paekche, and Mimana and Kaya were to all intents and purposes the same territory. Mimana is seen by many Japanese as having been a base for Japanese. It is interesting that the name Mimana (Imna in Korean) rarely appears in ancient Korean historical sources (no records for Mimana *Nihon-fu* and Japanese ruling this area) but frequently appears in the records of the Japanese *Nihon Shoki* (AD 720, Chronicle of Japan) describing the chronicles regarding the early 6<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>34</sup> In Korea, due to a lack of absolute proof of Mimana *Nihon-fu* as a base controlled by Japan, this theory is treated lightly and its very existence has been questioned. However, it cannot be ignored easily just because there is no record remaining in Korea regarding Mimana *Nihon-fu*. Assuming it existed, it would most likely mean that it was a more important base to Japanese than to Koreans. Nevertheless, its function may be contested. Some recognise Mimana *Nihon-fu* as a military base, while others see it as a trade centre or a diplomatic office.

Japan insisted on a military base which ruled the southern part of Korea in the 5<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>35</sup> This theory has long been believed as a fact for Japanese as they literally believed what was written in the *Nihon Shoki*, the ancient Japanese historical source. This theory was

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<sup>34</sup> Hall, 1993. pp 123

<sup>35</sup> Suematsu, 1956.

developed as Seikanron<sup>36</sup> which basically means advocacy of a punitive expedition to Korea in response to the threats of Western powers in the late 19th century, and was used to justify the annexation of Korea during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

In Japanese academia, the Mimana *Nihon-fu* theory has developed three representative arguments.

The first argument is *desaikikan* theory. *Desaikikan* is a Japanese expression meaning a sub government agency to enhance government in a rural area. The term is unfamiliar but it expresses the characteristic of the theory which has been accepted generally until lately in Japan. The theory is that ancient Japan annexed the southern part of Korea from the 4<sup>th</sup> century to the 6<sup>th</sup> century based in the Mimana *Nihon-fu*. This was at the core of the Mimana *Nihon-fu* theory. This interpretation was generally accepted as a fact by the public until the end of the 1960s. There was a boom in research fields of East Asia: the history of Korea has been reconsidered, criticisms on the *Nihon Shoki* have been raised, and further research was done on the stele of Gwanggaeto the Great and *shichishito* (see later) from the 1960s on. From then, the *desaikikan* theory has failed to remain standing as it was and nowadays, scholars in ancient Japan-Korea Relations field rarely insist upon the theory.

The second argument is the Horse-rider theory. After World War Two, Japan reflected on Japanese history in the midst of a rising sense of self-questioning of their conduct and one revolutionary theory was hypothesised by Egami Namio in 1948, the Horse-rider theory. A summary of the theory follows. In the time of the Jin Dynasty in China, Horse-rider culture was formed by Horse-riders in northern China combined with Korean culture. It was spread

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<sup>36</sup> Literally means advocacy of a punitive expedition to Korea which will be discussed further in a later chapter.

in the Korean Peninsula by the people of Goguryeo and Puyo.<sup>37</sup> Some of these horse-riders moved further to southern Korea where people from Japan used to live among Koreans (Mimana). They ruled southern Korea for a while and moved to the Kyūshū region to rule the people of Wa, establishing the Yamato kingdom around the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century or the early 5<sup>th</sup> century. Horse-riders fabricated history of Japan in order to make it appear as they existed in Japan from long ago and the *Nihon Shoki* and the *Kojiki*<sup>38</sup> were the result of these fabrications. Therefore, the emperor's blood is actually originated from horse-riders of Goguryeo and Puyo. The theory also mentions the Mimana *Nihon-fu* as a horse-riders' government in an associated state (Mimana) in southern Korea. There were Japanese people living in this area from long ago and that is how horse-riders could come to Japan and created the united kingdoms of Japan and Korea during the 4<sup>th</sup> century to the 6<sup>th</sup> century.

The third and last argument is an 'associated state'<sup>39</sup> by the ancient Japanese kingdom. After having counterargument by Sok-hyong Kim<sup>40</sup> and reflection on the *desakikikan* theory, Japanese scholars revised the history and insisted that the kingdom Kaya was an associated state of Japan.<sup>41</sup> The theory admits there were active exchanges between Japan and Korea from ancient times. Similar to those who migrated to Japan in cultural exchanges from Korea in the Yayoi Period, Japanese migrated to Korea and established a state to control Japanese and mix bloods. The state was the kingdom Kaya and the

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<sup>37</sup> A kingdom located in today's North Korea and southern Manchuria from around the 2nd century BC to AD 494.

<sup>38</sup> *Kojiki* (Literally, 'Record of Ancient Matters') is the oldest extant chronicle in Japan, dating from the early 8th century (711–712) and composed by Ō no Yasumaro at the request of Empress Gemmei. It is a collection of myths concerning the origin of the four home islands of Japan, and the kami (gods).

<sup>39</sup> Defined as a state or territory partly controlled by (but not a possession of) a stronger state but autonomous in internal affairs.

<sup>40</sup> North Korean researcher who raised the first counterargument of Mimana *Nihon-fu*.

<sup>41</sup> Uketa, 1974.

government there was the Mimana *Nihon-fu* which governed Japanese as a self-government body.

Until the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, there was not much research done on Mimana *Nihon-fu* in Korea but since the 1960s, South and North Koreans have actively researched about Mimana theories and brought up four different counterarguments.

The first counterargument was given by a North Korean researcher Sok-hyong Kim in 1963. It was a theory of an 'associated state'. This theory was revolutionary and overturned the former research on ancient Japan-Korea Relations done by Japanese scholars,<sup>42</sup> as well as Mimana *Nihon-fu* theory. Kim hypothesised that there were people who migrated to Japan from the Yayoi Periods on (from 300 BC) and founded a nation that was the same as their mother country which worked as an associated state. He believed there was a nation named Mimana in current Okayama which included eastern Hiroshima and was built by the people from the Kaya kingdom. Kim claimed all historical references about Mimana *Nihon-fu* are based on the heated competition that the Mimana nation had with other associated states from the three kingdoms of ancient Korea; Paekche, Silla and Goguryeo. Kim believed the Mimana *Nihon-fu* was a historical fact that occurred in Japan, not in Korea, and therefore overturning the previous studies on the Mimana *Nihon-fu* theories. This theory naturally explains the very reason why the titles that were bestowed on the king of Wa in *the Book of Song* included the Chinhan and Mahan which had disappeared from history.<sup>43</sup> It also explains why *shichishito*<sup>44</sup> was given to the ruler of Wa which was an associated state of Paekche.

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<sup>42</sup> Tadanao Yokoi, Ken Nishikawa, Masatomo Suga, Michiyo Naka, Arikiyo Saeki and many more.

<sup>43</sup> Ancient kingdoms before Paekche, Silla, and Goguryeo. Hall, 1993. pp 143

<sup>44</sup> Seven-Branched Sword.

This associated state theory not only denies the Japanese ruling over southern Korea but also insists upon Korea ruling over Japan during the Yayoi Period to the Kofun Period.

The second counterargument is about an alteration of the inscriptions written on a monument.<sup>45</sup> On the monument there is an inscription which Japanese insist upon for the existence of Mimana *Nihon-fu*, saying about a Japanese invasion and how Goguryeo defeated them in southern Korea.<sup>46</sup> This theory was first raised by Jin-hee Lee, who is a Korean historian living in Japan since 1972. The theory asserted that, when Japan invaded Korea and China in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the General Staff Office of Japan altered the inscriptions so that it proved the existence of Japanese in southern Korea in ancient times as well as the Mimana *Nihon-fu*. After publication of the theory, it became a great argument between scholars. One of the controversial opinions was by Chinese scholar Wang Jianqun. He criticised both alteration of the monument and existence of Mimana *Nihon-fu*. Wang said that a Chinese copy-maker who lived near the monument earned money from making copies of the inscription. The man might have limewashed the monument to get better copies but there was no intentional alteration by Japanese. Wang also mentioned that the monument cannot prove the existence of Mimana *Nihon-fu* but it is rather an obvious proof that the Mimana *Nihon-fu* did not exist as there is no record inscribed in the monument (whereas Mimana as a location appears).<sup>47</sup>

The third counterargument is that the Mimana *Nihon-fu* in fact was not Japanese administration but a Paekche military office. The first counterargument introduced above is a North Korean scholar's representative counterargument and this theory is a South Korean

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<sup>45</sup> The stele of Gwanggaeto the Great of Goguryeo.

<sup>46</sup> Lee, 1982.

<sup>47</sup> Wang, 1984.



scholar's representative theory proposed by Gwan-wu Chun. He hypothesised that many of the mysteries in the *Nihon Shoki* referring to Mimana make sense if the subject is changed from Japan to Paekche. After the fall of the kingdom of Paekche (AD 660), its descendants, who sorted foundational historic written sources for the *Nihon Shoki* (720), migrated to Japan, and changed the subject of the written references from Paekche to Wa, the ancient Japanese kingdom. Chun insisted on the factuality that Mimana *Nihon-fu* was a military administration by Paekche to rule the area where the Kaya kingdom (Mimana) existed and there is no relation to ancient Japan ruling over southern Korea.

The last counterargument is a theory of Mimana *Nihon-fu* as a diplomatic department. The above arguments bring up different explanations but they are based on the same functionality of Mimana *Nihon-fu* as the military base. However, recent studies have focused on the reference of Mimana *Nihon-fu* to search for the role and the function of Mimana *Nihon-fu* without subjectivity. This argument brought up a different interpretation of 'fu' (administration), as a diplomatic office where Japanese diplomats stayed in the Mimana region.

It is essential to find out reasons why there are so many opinions for the Mimana *Nihon-fu* theory. Following are historical sources referring to the Mimana *Nihon-fu*.

The *Nihon Shoki* was the most researched regarding the Mimana *Nihon-fu* theory. Compilation of it was ordered by Emperor Temmu and its editing finished in AD 720 under the editorial supervision of Prince Toneri. It is said to be the most reliable historical source for ancient Japan as it includes the most complete extant historical record of ancient times. It contains the genealogy of emperors, and chronicles of ancient Japan referring to foreign historical sources such as *Paekche-gi* (The Chronicles of Paekche), *Weishu* (The Book of Wei) and *Jinshu* (The Book of Jin). For this reason scholars consider it to be relatively objective.

According to the *Nihon Shoki*, in AD 369, Japanese troops sent by Empress Jingu invaded southern Korea and in the same year the Japanese government (destroyed by Silla in AD 562) was established in Mimana. Therefore the *Nihon Shoki* suggests that for 200 years, Japan ruled southern Korea and the Mimana *Nihon-fu* was at the centre of its rule. During Japan's reign, Paekche also paid a tribute to Japan through Mimana *Nihon-fu*.

Another source is the stele of Gwanggaeto the Great. This stele was erected by his son Jangsu, as a memorial to his father in 414. There are 1802 classical Chinese characters written on a 7 metres tall monument which is considered to be one of the earliest Korean historical records remaining. It is assumed to be 700 years earlier than *samguksagi*,<sup>48</sup> the three kingdoms' chronicles. Japanese historians used the contents as a proof of the existence of the Mimana *Nihon-fu* functioning as an ancient Japanese ruling office in Korea. The monument was forgotten for ages after the fall of Goguryeo in AD 668 and rediscovered in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. It once was misconceived as the stele of Chinese emperor but later it was corrected as the stele of Gwanggaeto the Great. There are some differences in the dates on the monument from those of *samguksagi* but historians generally take dates in the stele as a fact. There are stories on the foundation of Goguryeo and the chronology of Gwanggaeto wars. The portion which became controversial is the following:

"And in the sinmyo (zodian) year the Wa (Japanese) came and crossed the sea and defeated Paekche, [unknown], and [Sil]la and made them subjects."<sup>49</sup>

Japanese scholars insisted on the existence of Mimana *Nihon-fu* referring to this interpretation.

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<sup>48</sup> Literally means history of the three Kingdoms: Goguryeo, Paekche and Silla. It is written in Classical Chinese and well-known as the oldest extant Korean history.

<sup>49</sup> The following is the original script. 倭以辛卯年 渡破百殘 新羅以爲臣民 Gwanggaeto Stele.

There is a controversial portion in *shichishito*, one of the national treasures in Japan, as well. It is a sword with six branch-like protrusions along the thick main blade. There are 61 classical Chinese characters engraved on the surface of the sword. Since the inscription was found in 1874, interpretation of it has been controversial and many different interpretations came about.

The inscription states:

"At noon on the sixteenth day of the eleventh month [May], fourth year of □ (illegible characters), the sword was made of 100 times hardened steel. Using the sword repels 100 enemy soldiers [Appropriate for the polite duke king] It is sent [bestowed] to the king. (Manufactured by or good fortune to...) [ ]"<sup>50</sup>

"Never before has there been such a blade. The crown prince of Paekche's king, who lives under august sounds [sic], had this sword made for King of Wa in the hope that it might be passed on to later generations."

Japanese scholars insisted on the hierarchical order between Japan and Korea that the king of Paekche gave the sword to the king of Wa as a tribute.

Not only are there Japanese and Korean historical sources but also historical sources from China, the cultural parent of both countries. In the *Songshu* (The Book of Song, 488 AD) which is a historical text of the Southern Dynasties of China, there appears a king from ancient Japan paying a tribute to the Southern Song. The King of Japan requested the Emperor of the Southern Song to bestow on him the title of a great general of six kingdoms: Wa, Silla, Mimana, Gara, Chinhan and Mahan, and the Emperor bestowed him the title.<sup>51</sup> If

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<sup>50</sup> The following is the original script. 「泰(和?)四年五月十六日丙午正陽造百練鋼七支刀 □酸百兵宜供侯王□□□(祥?)」 「先世以來未有此刀百濟□世□奇生聖音故爲倭王旨造. 傳示□世」Shichishito.

<sup>51</sup> Hall, 1993. pp 143

this text in the *Songshu* is true, then this king of ancient Japan governed not only Japan but also the southern part of Korea.

The Mimana *Nihon-fu* theory is certainly an important part in Japan-Korea relations but also a major controversial issue for both countries. This theory is not limited to ancient history but includes current issues too. For Korea, this theory is connected to the kingdom Kaya which has been neglected. It prompts Korea to revisit and redefine the history of the Kaya kingdom. For Japan, the theory acts as a key to solve the mystery of the foundation of the Yamato kingdom. Up until recently, Japanese insisted on annexation of ancient Korea by ancient Japan referring to the Mimana *Nihon-fu*. In the same way, Koreans simply ignored and denied the Mimana *Nihon-fu* theory and hypothesised there was no such administration or there was only one way transfer of cultures from Korea to Japan.

Taking all of the above historical sources and previous studies mentioned into account, I have developed the following theories on Mimana *Nihon-fu*.

First of all, by looking at all the sources<sup>52</sup> from the both countries, it is possible to acknowledge that a place called Mimana existed in Korea.<sup>53</sup> It is an undeniable fact and the former studies assume that Mimana was located in the present Gimhae area.<sup>54</sup> However, there are many arguments about the name *Nihon-fu*. The country name ‘Japan’ appears after the 7<sup>th</sup> century and there is a record<sup>55</sup> saying it has been named because it is the closest

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<sup>52</sup> The name Mimana *Nihon-fu* only appears in the *Nihon Shoki*. The name Mimana appears 215 times and Mimana *Nihon-fu* 35 times. The place name Mimana also appears in Korean historical sources. In the *samguksagi*, one of the generals of Paekche was from Mimana, a castle of Mimana appears in the stele of Gwanggaeto, and a royal family of Mimana is mentioned on the stele of Jingyung, the great monk.

<sup>53</sup> Lee, 2004.

<sup>54</sup> Seo, 1997.

<sup>55</sup> It has been named as Japan(日本) from Wa as it is the nation closest to sunrise. ‘倭國更號日本 自言近日所出以爲名’ (*Samguksagi*)

country to sunrise. Before the 7<sup>th</sup> century, Japan was called Wa or Yamato. It is certain that the place name Mimana existed during the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries but since there was no nation named Japan during that time, the name Mimana *Nihon-fu* did not exist. The name might have been added in the *Nihon Shoki* when it was edited in the 8<sup>th</sup> century.

Having the name Mimana *Nihon-fu* nullified does not mean that Japan had no influence in Korea in ancient times as the majority of Koreans assume. Ancient Japanese during the Kofun Period were considered savage or uncivilised in culture but they were strong militarily and politically. Historical sources of the three countries, China, Japan and Korea proved that there were interferences in ancient Japan both politically and militarily.

In the *Nihon Shoki*, the chapter of Emperor Ōjin mentions about making a pond. It says that people of Goguryeo, Paekche, Mimana and Silla made a pond and named it 'Pond of Koreans'.<sup>56</sup> From the contents of the *Nihon Shoki*, it is possible to see that the writer recognises Mimana as an independent nation. If Mimana was annexed during the 4<sup>th</sup> and the 5<sup>th</sup> centuries, the writer would have recognised them as Japanese. There are also many parts in the *Nihon Shoki* recognising that the diplomats of Mimana came to the court and it also proves Mimana was an independent nation. The theory of Mimana *Nihon-fu* that Japanese insisted upon during the 19<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries seems lacking evidence. Though it is understood Japan and Mimana are two separate independent nations, the political and military influence of Japan on southern Korea cannot be denied. At the very least there were close relations between Japan and southern Korea from ancient times, and Japanese troops went to Korea as allies of Paekche and Mimana to fight against Goguryeo and Silla. It seems

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<sup>56</sup> Hall, 1993. pp 311

that southern Korea and Japan had a symbiotic relationship that Japan supported militarily and Korea supported culturally and technologically.

### 2.3 Paekche and Japan Relationship

The relationship between Paekche and Japan from the late 4<sup>th</sup> to the 7<sup>th</sup> centuries is one of the most important relationships during ancient times in the history of Japan-Korea relations. A resource that is referenced the most amongst historical resources regarding Japan-Korea relations is the *Nihon Shoki* (AD 720). In the *Nihon Shoki*, friendly exchanges between Paekche and Japan are often found from the 4<sup>th</sup> century. These exchanges not only include goods but also cultural aspects and dispatching of Japanese troops. From the late 4<sup>th</sup> century on, Paekche sent royal family members and aristocrats to Japan to enhance the relationship. The records of the *Nihon Shoki* show that Japanese troops were dispatched to southern Korea to help Paekche several times, and in return Paekche sent scholars, priests and artists to Japan.

This section will discuss how advanced Paekche culture spread in Japan and the latter part will be on the Battle of Baekgang during the mid-7<sup>th</sup> century referring to the *Nihon Shoki* and the *Samguksagi* (1145).<sup>57</sup>

A population movement from Paekche to Japan is a significant element in the relationship between Paekche and Japan. Factors that made the population movement possible between the two nations would be first a friendly relationship, and the second mutual benefits. The first thing to look at for population movement from Paekche to Japan is to search for causes for movement. It is abnormal for settlers specialised in farming to leave their hometown and move to another place unless there is a special occasion such as an infectious disease or a war. If it was not a movement to a neighbouring (connected) area but

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<sup>57</sup> Literally means 'history of the three Kingdoms: Goguryeo, Paekche and Silla'. It is written in Classical Chinese and well-known as the oldest extant Korean history.

far away across the sea then one may suspect that people may have to flee from the ravages of war.

Paekche suffered the ravages of war from the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century when Goguryeo invaded southern Korea. According to *Samguksagi*<sup>58</sup> and the stele of Gwanggeto the great,<sup>59</sup> it proves that Paekche suffered from AD 392 and surrendered to Goguryeo (AD 396). When Paekche surrendered, Goguryeo took back hostages including the king's brother and a great deal of booty from the war. It is seemingly possible for Paekche to look for reinforcements from a neighbouring nation through opening amicable relations to fight back against Goguryeo.

Both the *Samguksagi*<sup>60</sup> and the *Nihon Shoki*<sup>61</sup> write about the prince of Paekche, Jeonji (Tenshio),<sup>62</sup> who was sent as a hostage to Japan in AD 397 to enter into friendly relations between Paekche and Japan. Increased tension with Goguryeo from the late 4<sup>th</sup> century was a factor that increased active exchanges including dispatch of scholars in various

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<sup>58</sup> 8<sup>th</sup> year summer fifth month. There was an eclipse of the sun. Autumn seventh month King of Goguryeo Damduk invaded northern Paekche and conquered ten some castles. The king avoided to fight against Damduk as he was excellent in battle tactics. Many villages were taken. Winter tenth month, Goguryeo captured castle of Guanmi. (Paekchebongi Chapter of King Jinsa) Translation from The Nihon Shoki Home (<http://nihonshoki.wikidot.com/>)

<sup>59</sup> Article of year 396: At this year, the King led troops and conquered many Paekche castles. As the troops reached the capital, the Paekche king surrendered and swore to be a subject of Goguryeo. Gwanggaetto returned home with kidnapped Paekche prince and nobles. (Inscription of the stele) Translation from The Nihon Shoki Home (<http://nihonshoki.wikidot.com/>)

<sup>60</sup> 6<sup>th</sup> year summer fifth month. King sent crown prince Jeonji as a hostage to Japan to establish friendly relationship with Japan. Autumn seventh month there was a major mobilisation of troops in the southern Hansu. (Paekchebongi Chapter of King Asin) Translation from The Nihon Shoki Home (<http://nihonshoki.wikidot.com/>)

<sup>61</sup> 8<sup>th</sup> year, spring, third month. Men of Paekche attended the court. According to the Record of Kudara, "King Ahwa was established, and did not pay respects to the rich country, therefore our lands of Tomutare, Kennamu, Shishimu, Kokuna and Toukan were stolen. Then the prince Jikji was sent to the imperial court to restore the friendship of earlier kings." (Chapter of Emperor Ōjin) Translation from The Nihon Shoki Home (<http://nihonshoki.wikidot.com/>)

<sup>62</sup> Jeonji (ca-AD 420) was the 18<sup>th</sup> king of Paekche. He spent much of his childhood in Japan as hostage. Upon his father's death, he returned to Paekche and became king until his death in AD 420.



fields to Japan. People from Paekche moved to Japan to flee from the ravages of war, and scholars and members of the royal family were dispatched to meet the needs of the Court of Japan. This is how cultural aspects of Paekche started to spread in Japan.

The next possible population movement caused by war was in the 5<sup>th</sup> century. Goguryeo had consistently threatened Paekche militarily since the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century. In AD 475, Goguryeo invaded the capital city of Paekche and again chaos in the kingdom may have caused a population movement to Japan.

The last possible population movement may have been caused by the invasion of Silla allied with T'ang China in AD 660. People of Paekche may have moved to Japan as it was safe from the war and for higher classes, it would be better than being captives. The commoners of Paekche chose Japan because it was relatively far away from the Korean peninsula and the two nations had fairly friendly relations throughout the years. For Japan, they accepted the people of Paekche largely because of their advanced skills, technology and superior spiritual culture (Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism).

There are many references in the *Kojiki* (AD 712) and the *Nihon Shoki* about people of Paekche settling in Japan. These people came to Japan in the reign of Emperor Ōjin (reigned ca AD 270 – AD 310). The reference in the *Kojiki* shows people with talents in building, literature, blacksmithery and wine-making came to Japan. It proves that advanced skills, technology and culture were from the Korean peninsula during the reign of Emperor Ōjin. Ancient Koreans made a pond named Paekche, scholars from Paekche preached the *Analects* and the *Thousand Character Classic* (also known as the *Thousand Character Text*)<sup>63</sup>, and many other skills and technology were brought into Japan.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> It is made up of exactly one thousand Chinese characters and it is a poem. It is similar to an “alphabet song” in English.

In the *Nihon Shoki*, the chapter on Emperor Ōjin mentions introduction of a silk-thread, dispatch of scholars, Wangin (Wani) and Ajikgi (Achiki), from Paekche, and migration of royal families and nobles of Paekche. These people who crossed the sea and arrived in Japan spread various cultural aspects of Paekche and other kingdoms in the Korean peninsula.<sup>65</sup>

The spread of advanced technology and cultural aspects would have improved and developed production of goods and these improvements resulted in an increase in population. Improvement in production may have developed circulation of goods produced, which

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<sup>64</sup> Therefore His Augustness the Noble Take-uchi, having taken them with him and set them to labour on pools and embankments, made the Pool of Kudara. Again King Shō-ko, the Chieftain of the land of Kudara, sent as tribute by Achi-kishi one stallion and one mare. (This Achi-kishi was the ancestor of the Achiki Scribes.) Again he sent as tribute a cross-sword, and likewise a large mirror. Again he was graciously bidden to send as tribute a wise man, if there were any such in the land of Kudara. Therefore receiving the [Imperial] commands, he sent as tribute a man named Wani-kishi, and likewise by this man he sent as tribute the Confucian Analects in ten volumes and the Thousand Character Essay in one volume,—altogether eleven volumes. Again he sent as tribute two artisans,—a smith from Kara named Taku-so and a weaver from Go named Sai-so. (Chapter of Emperor Ōjin) Translation from The Nihon Shoki Home (<http://nihonshoki.wikidot.com/>)

<sup>65</sup> 15th year, autumn, eighth month. On the sixth day, the King of Paekche dispatched Achiki, and with him tribute of two excellent horses. The horses were stabled in Karu, atop the hill of Umayya. Therefore Achiki was ordered to take charge of their upbringing, therefore the place these horses were raised was called Umayasaka. Achiki could also read the classics, so he became the teacher of the heir apparent Ujinowakiiratsuko. Then the Emperor asked Achiki, saying, “Are there other men more learned than you?” He replied, “There is one called Wani, and he is superior to me.” Then they dispatched the ancestors of the Kimi of Kamitsukeno, Aratawake, and Kamunakiwake, to Paekche, to summon Wani. Achiki was the first descendent of the Achiki no Fubito. 16th year, spring, second month. Wani came. Then he became the teacher of the heir apparent Ujinowakiiratsuko, and taught him many documents, and there was nothing in which he was not thoroughly accomplished. Wani became the first descendant of Fumi no Obito. The same year, King Ahwa of Paekche died. The Emperor called up Jikji and said to him, “You must return to your country and succeed to the kingship.” Then he gave him the districts of Eastern Han and dispatched him. The areas of Eastern Han were Kamura no Sashi, Konan no Sashi, and Nirimu no Sashi. (Chapter of Emperor Ōjin) Translation from The Nihon Shoki Home (<http://nihonshoki.wikidot.com/>)

Summer, fourth month. Kasuri no Kishi of Bakeje (King Gaero) heard that Princess Iketsu had been burned to death (Nyorang Chiyaku-kei). Then he took conference, saying, “Of old we have offered up women as ladies in waiting. However this is not proper, and degrades our countries. From now on, we will not send any women.” Then to (his younger brother) Kokishi (koniki) he said, “You go to Japan and do works for the Emperor.” Kokishi replied, “I cannot go against my lord’s orders. I wish to be given one of your women to follow after me.” Kasuri no Kishi accordingly took one of his pregnant consorts and set her up with Kasuri no Kishi, saying, “My consort is already in the birthing month. If she should give birth along the way, put them in the same ship according to wherever you are quickly send them back here.” Then he said words of farewell and went to the imperial court. (Chapter of Emperor Yūryaku) Translation from The Nihon Shoki Home (<http://nihonshoki.wikidot.com/>)

consequentially influenced social structure to be more active and lively. Japanese scholars of ancient Japan-Korea relations generally accept that those people who migrated to Japan from the Korean peninsula undertook production, which was a vital role in the Japanese kingdom. The new technologies that came from the Korean peninsula were potteries, silk production, blacksmithery, iron products and many more. There were even professional tailors, cooks, shoe makers and interpreters migrating to Japan from the Korean peninsula.

People from the Korean peninsula (mainly from Paekche) developed technology and society rapidly and also influenced the Japanese spiritually. Ajikgi and Wangin<sup>66</sup> were teachers of the Crown Prince, teaching him Confucianism, and Wangin became the originator of the Kawachi no Fumi clan who were in charge of secretaries for administration. It is important to note that the historical reference *Nihon Shoki* states that the reign of Emperor Ōjin to be AD 270 – AD 310 but some scholars claim that there is a gap of 120 years in the *Nihon Shoki* and the actual incidents so the population movement from the Korean peninsula may be reconsidered to be a historical incident in the 5<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>67</sup>

There are different trends in spreading cultural aspects of the Korean peninsula from the 5<sup>th</sup> century to the 7<sup>th</sup> century. In the 5<sup>th</sup> century, advanced technology, philosophy and belief systems were mainly spread but in the 6<sup>th</sup> century to the early 7<sup>th</sup> century, exchanges became more officialised between Paekche and Japan.

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<sup>66</sup> Ajikgi and Wangin were scholars of Confucianism dispatched from Paekche.

<sup>67</sup> In the *Samguksagi*, the dispatching of prince Jeonji was in AD397 but in the *Nihon Shoki*, it is given as AD 277. Also death of King Asin of Paekche was in AD 405 in the *Samguksagi* but in the *Nihon Shoki*, it records in AD 285.

There are few records in the *Nihon Shoki* regarding exchanges between Paekche and Japan during the 6<sup>th</sup> and the 7<sup>th</sup> centuries. In AD 553, Japan sent war materials such as horses, bows and warships to Paekche, and Paekche in return, sent scholars in oriental medicine, calendar and other fields, books related to divination and the calendar, and oriental medicines. In the following year, Paekche dispatched scholars skilled in the calendar, oriental medicine, Buddhism, and music in return for reinforcements to Paekche.<sup>68</sup> In AD 588, professionals of temple builders built temples in Japan<sup>69</sup> and in AD 602, Paekche sent a priest along with books about astronomy, geography, the calendar and Taoist magic.<sup>70</sup>

It seems that behind the friendly relationship between Paekche and Japan, there was mutual understanding. Paekche was desperate for a strong ally as it was inferior in its military compared to other kingdoms, Silla and Goguryeo, in the Korean peninsula, and Japan was desperate for advanced technology and cultural aspects in establishing a centralised kingdom.

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<sup>68</sup> Sixth month. The Emperor dispatched Uchi no Omi (name not recorded) to Paekche. He received two good horses, two boats of moroki [sic], 50 bows, and 50 sets of arrows. He read the proclamation, "The army you requested will be according to the King's wish." In a separate edict, "A doctor, a sorcerer, and a calendar man should be sent in exchange. The afore mentioned people are just at the year and month of exchange, and should be sent when the messenger returns. Also, divining books, a calendars, and various medicines should also be sent." (Chapter of Emperor Kinmei) Translation from The Nihon Shoki Home (<http://nihonshoki.wikidot.com/>)

<sup>69</sup> That year, Paekche dispatched as messengers the monks Hyechong, Ryeonggeun, Hyesik, and others, and they presented Buddhist relics to the court. Paekche also sent Onsotsu Susin, Tokusotsu Gaemun, Nasosu Bokbumisin, and others to present tribute and Buddhist relics, and the monks Ryeongjo, the risshi Ryeongwi, Hyejung, Hyesuk, Doeom, Ryeonggae, and others, and the temple-builders Taeryangmitae and Mungagoja, the fireplace artisan Shotoku Baek Maesun, the potters Nama Buno, Yang Gwimun, Reung Gwimun, Seokmajemi, and the artist Baekga. Soga no Umako no Sukune asked the monks from Paekche to enquire about receiving the doctrine of Vinaya. Then the nun Zenshin and the other nuns were attached to the messenger from Paekche Onsotsu Susinand the others and were sent to learn it. Then the house of the ancestor of the Asuka no Kinunui no Miyatsuko, Konoha, was destroyed, and they first raised Hoko Temple. This name of this land was the Asukahara Makami, also called Asuka Tomata. The year was 588. (Chapter of Emperor Sushun) Translation from The Nihon Shoki Home (<http://nihonshoki.wikidot.com/>)

<sup>70</sup> Winter, tenth month. The monk Gwalleuk came from Paekche to the court. He presented works on calendar making, astronomy, astrology, and divination. At that time the Empress selected three or four people to be taught by Gwalleuk. Tamafura, ancestor of the Yako no Fubito, learned calendar-making, and Otomo no Suguri Koso learned astronomy and astrology, and Yamashiro no Omi Hitate learned divination, and all were accomplished in their fields. (Chapter of Empress Suiko) Translation from The Nihon Shoki Home (<http://nihonshoki.wikidot.com/>)

There is a different trend in people migrating to Japan from the Korean peninsula from the late 7<sup>th</sup> century on. Primarily their migrations were for similar reasons, namely changes in the political situation in the Korean peninsula but there is another factor which is the fall of kingdoms.<sup>71</sup> In the 5<sup>th</sup> century, the majority of people voluntarily moved to Japan and in the 6<sup>th</sup> century, there were mutual understanding in exchanges but in the 7<sup>th</sup> century, people had no choice but leave their homeland due to the fall of the kingdoms. The reference shows there were people not only from southern Korea but from further north in the Korean peninsula.<sup>72</sup>

The main cause of migration in the late 7<sup>th</sup> century would be the fall of Paekche and Goguryeo by Silla and T'ang China. It is not clearly written in the references but there would have been royal families, noble classes and those with higher ranking in the courts exiled from the Korean peninsula mainly from the two kingdoms, Paekche and Goguryeo.

The references are above in the *Nihon Shoki* and the *Kojiki*, describing how people moved from the Korean peninsula and influenced Japan. Skills and technology would have brought major changes to the society, and philosophy, arts and religions/belief systems became the foundation of the ancient Japanese kingdom. Three religions/belief systems, Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism, became a significant part of the moral culture of Japan and they are discussed further here on.

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<sup>71</sup> Paekche and Goguryeo were fallen by Silla in alliance of T'ang China in AD 660 and AD 668 accordingly.

<sup>72</sup> Third year, autumn, seventh month. On the third day, two men and four women from the country of Tokara drifted ashore in Tsukushi, saying, "We first drifted to the island of Amami." They were summoned by messenger horses. (Chapter of Emperor Saimei) Translation from The Nihon Shoki Home (<http://nihonshoki.wikidot.com/>)

As advanced ancient Chinese culture spread from China through Korea to Japan, similarly, Buddhism also spread from China to Japan through Korea. According to the *Samguksagi*, Buddhism was spread in the Korean peninsula in AD 372. Buddhism was introduced for the first time in Paekche in AD 384. Silla was the latest kingdom to accept Buddhism in the Korean Peninsula in around AD 528.<sup>73</sup>

There is no record remaining in the *Samguksagi* regarding preaching Buddhism to Japan from the Korean peninsula but there are several references such as the *Nihon Shoki* and *The Book of Sui* (AD 636)<sup>74</sup> prove that Buddhism was preached to Japan through Paekche. However, these references have varied dates as to when Buddhism arrived in Japan but generally the date is accepted as AD 552.

If Buddhism was spread through Paekche, there is also a possibility that when people of the Korean peninsula migrated to Japan from the 5<sup>th</sup> century, they may have brought in Buddhism earlier than the officially recorded and accepted date.

It was not easy for Buddhism to settle in Japan when it was transferred from Paekche. When Emperor Kinmei (AD 509 – AD 571) asked about acceptance of Buddhism, only the Soga clan gave a positive response while other clans disagreed. The Soga clan wanted to accept Buddhism as it was the generally accepted religion in China and Korea but others insisted upon Shintō. There are articles in the *Nihon Shoki* showing that when there were epidemics, some clans lodged an appeal to the emperor that the epidemic was due to

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<sup>73</sup> Though Buddhism was accepted officially in Silla in AD 528, there is a record saying that Buddhism was preached since AD 417.

<sup>74</sup> *The Book of Sui* is the official history of the Sui Dynasty of China.

accepting Buddhism. The emperor agreed with the appeal and prohibited Buddhism by burning temples and statues of the Buddha.<sup>75</sup>

This kind of conflict between Buddhism and Shintō continued until the reign of Empress Suiko (AD 554 – AD 628) when Prince Shōtoku (AD 718 – AD 770) supported Buddhism. When Empress Suiko officially supported Buddhism, all clans competitively started to build temples and replaced the traditional religious ancestral rites with Buddhist ancestral rites.<sup>76</sup> These changes indirectly indicate that Buddhism became the representative religion in Japan.

It is interesting to see that Buddhism developed along with Shintō, repeating conflict and reconciliation. Passing through all this process, Buddhism became the foundational morality in ancient Japan through support from the ruling classes, and for the benefits of the Court, and Buddhist priests were assigned there. It seems Japanese Buddhism was influenced by Chinese and Korean Buddhism in such a way that Buddhist laws were subordinate to the monarchy.

Confucianism is often described as an ethical and philosophical system or even a religion from the teachings of Confucius. It is the Four Books and Five Classics that are the authoritative books of Confucianism. This Confucianism was a minor study and a religion

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<sup>75</sup> After this, there was a plague in the country, and the people arrived at disaster. For a long time it grew more and more, and could not be cured. Senior General Mononobe no Okoshi and Nakatomi no Muraji no Kamako both said, “That time before you didn’t go with our plan, so now the people are dying of disease. Now it’s not too late, and if you return to the way things were before, certainly it will get better. You should quickly throw away the statues, in order to seek good fortune in the future.” The Emperor said, “As you say.” Then by order the statue was taken and thrown into the reservoir of Naniwa, and the temple was set on fire and completely burned up. Then, there was no wind or rain in the skies, but suddenly fire broke out in the grand palace. (Chapter of Emperor Kinmei) Translation from The Nihon Shoki Home (<http://nihonshoki.wikidot.com/>)

<sup>76</sup> Second year, spring, second month. On the first day, the Empress proclaimed to the Senior Minister and Crown Prince an order to the spread of the three treasures of Buddhism. At that time all the ministers and generals each, for their gratitude to their ruler and parents, built Buddhist facilities. These were called temples. (Chapter of Empress Suiko) Translation from The Nihon Shoki Home (<http://nihonshoki.wikidot.com/>)

before the Han Dynasty (206 BC – AD 220) but as Confucianism became more closely related with politics from the Han Dynasty, it was positioned as a mandatory set of ethics and philosophy in China. China was one of the ‘superpowers’ in ancient times and Confucianism influenced neighbouring countries such as Korea and Japan. Later Confucianism became the state religion in China and Confucius’ teachings became the foundational ideology of China. Confucianism is more related to politics and ethics than religious teachings so sometimes it is understood as a field of study rather than a religion.

In a similar way to how Buddhism was accepted in Japan, Confucianism was accepted through Korea as an advanced set of knowledge and refinement, applying largely to the ruling class of Japan. Unlike Buddhism, there is no exact extant record of when it was first introduced to Japan but there are records mentioning that the *Analects of Confucius* were received from Paekche and there were scholars such as Ajikgi and Wangin, who taught Confucianism to the Crown Prince. These records may be evidence that Confucianism in Japan was accepted as ethics and philosophy but not as a religion. This may be understood as meaning that the *Analects* and the *Thousand-Character Classic* were used to teach Chinese characters in Japan.

It would be appropriate to accept the transfer of Confucianism from Korea was largely in the reign of Emperor Kinmei when scholars of the *Four Books and Five Classics* were sent to Japan.<sup>77</sup> There may have been a transfer of Confucianism from China directly as there

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<sup>77</sup> Seventh year, summer, sixth month. Paekche dispatched general Jeomimungwi and general Jurijeoki to come along with Hozumi no Omi Oshiyama (According to the Kudara Honki, he was called Yamato no Oshiyamakimi). They presented as tribute a scholar of the Five Classics, Dan Yangi. Separately it was reported to the Emperor, “The country of Hahe [a country of Gaya] plundered Komon in our own country. We humbly ask the Emperor to make a judgment, and return this country to its original jurisdiction.” (Chapter of Emperor Keitai) Translation from The Nihon Shoki Home (<http://nihonshoki.wikidot.com/>)



were exchanges between China and Japan from the 5<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>78</sup> From the early 7<sup>th</sup> century, Japan sent students and priests of Confucianism to China who studied Chinese political systems and cultural aspects. A possible incident regarding transfer of Confucianism from Paekche during (or even before) the 5<sup>th</sup> century is that there would have been Confucianists who migrated to Japan from the Korean peninsula and had basic ethics and philosophy of Confucianism making exchanges between the Court of Japan and the Court of China possible during the 5<sup>th</sup> century.

There is not sufficient reference to explain the spread of Confucianism, but through the wordings in the *Nihon Shoki*<sup>79</sup> it is possible to see partial evidence that Confucianism was common at least in the Court of Japan. In the regulations for aristocrats and Court officials<sup>80</sup> in the reign of Empress Suiko, there are rules that are based on Confucius' teachings. They talk about obeying a monarch and father, and the relationship between the emperor and vassals, courtesy shown by the ruling class and hierarchical social orders.

In the late 7<sup>th</sup> century, an educational unit (*Fumi-no-Tsukasa*) was established in the Court and the head of the unit normally was appointed from exiled Paekche intellectuals who were experts in Confucianism.<sup>81</sup> Educating bureaucrats with Confucius' teachings made it possible that after a long conflict with other philosophies like Buddhism and Shintō,

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<sup>78</sup> There is no extant record for transferring Confucianism from China during the 5<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>79</sup> 周孔之教 and 儒道 are terms used in Confucianism.

<sup>80</sup> Seventeen Article Constitution (604) is known as one of the world's earliest constitutions.

<sup>81</sup> That month, Lower Daikin rank was bestowed on Sahe Yeo Jasin and Sataku Joumyou (the assistant at the Nori no Tsukasa). The rank of Lower Shokin was bestowed on Gwisil Jipsa (head of the Fumi no Tsukasa). Lower Daisen was bestowed on Tatsusotsu Kokuna Shinshu, Mokusu Kishi, Eokye Bokyu, Dalbon Chuncho, the four of whom were trained in military strategy, and also Honnichi Hishi Sanhara Konra Konsu and Gwisil Jipsin who were both experts in medicines. Upper Shosen was bestowed on Tatsusotsu Tokuchoujou and Kichidajjou, experts in medicine, Kosotsumo, who could explain the five classics, and Rokufukumu, who was trained in the ways of yin and yang. Lower Shosen was bestowed on over 50 other Tatsusotsu. (Chapter of Emperor Tenji) Translation from The Nihon Shoki Home (<http://nihonshoki.wikidot.com/>)

Confucianism became the foundational ideology for establishing a *ritsuryō* (based on Chinese law codes) state.

Confucianism is developed from ethics and philosophy based on different social hierarchical orders, teaching of humane affection in ruling a nation, moral training and home management, which are more closely related with ethics and disciplines. Thus, it was accepted as an ethical guideline and political study rather than a religion, as well as lacking deities.

Taoism is one of the major religions in ancient China and it was derived from China pursuing life in harmony with the Tao which represents the source and the driving force behind everything that exists. Taoist hermits seek to achieve miraculous powers including an eternal life, combining and reorganising folk religions in China. The ideology of Taoism was established by Laozi<sup>82</sup> and Zhuangzi<sup>83</sup> around the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC but as a religion it was settled during the Sui (AD 581- AD 618) and the T'ang (AD 618-AD 907) dynasties.

Taoism is an eclectic Chinese ancient folk religion so it became the peoples' religion in China but there was a limit in spreading to neighbouring nations. Regarding the spread of Taoism in Japan, it is important to consider the situation in Korea. Officially Taoism was accepted in Korea in AD 624 when Taoist ascetics visited Goguryeo to preach Taoism with a statue of Tianzun<sup>84</sup> and teachings of Taoism. It is important to note here that unlike Buddhism and Confucianism, Taoism was not as popular as other religions transferred from China to the Korean peninsula, and thus had less effect on kingdoms' philosophy and state

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<sup>82</sup> Laozi is a legendary figure known to be Chinese philosopher and poet in ancient China. He is also known as the founder of philosophical Taoism.

<sup>83</sup> Zhuangzi is an influential Chinese philosopher known as another founder of Taoism. He is credited with his writing after his name *Zhuangzi*.

<sup>84</sup> The Celestial Venerable of the Primordial Beginning or the Primeval Lord of Heaven.

religion in the Korean peninsula. Though Taoism as a religion could not spread commonly in the Korean peninsula, its teachings and philosophy had been transferred to Korea from an early stage of the Kofun Period. There are ancient tomb murals in Goguryeo found to be during the 5<sup>th</sup> century showing Taoist hermits and there were teachings and philosophy of Taoism in Paekche. Moreover, in Paekche, a pond next to a palace was designed after a place where a Taoist hermit dwells.<sup>85</sup>

These teachings and philosophy were also transferred to Japan through Paekche. In the *Nihon Shoki*, it shows a priest in Paekche officially giving books related to Taoism such as astronomy, geography, the calendar and Taoist magic in AD 602.<sup>86</sup> This shows a possibility that the teachings and philosophy of Taoism could have transferred to Japan before the 7<sup>th</sup> century. Many excavated materials from burial mounds show portraits of Taoist hermits, evidence that the teachings and philosophy of Taoism were accepted generally by people and perhaps by the ruling classes to some degree.

There are Taoist terms used in the *Nihon Shoki*<sup>87</sup> but it is doubtful that Taoism as a religion was officially accepted by the Court of Japan. In terms of philosophy, teachings and ideas of Taoism were transferred but not at a significant level like Buddhism and Confucianism. It seems that ancient religions have similarities in many ways and there was already Shintō so there were not many benefits from Taoism in Japan. Moreover, Taoism was lacking both the religious factors of Buddhism and the realistic political needs of

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<sup>85</sup> 方丈仙山 was the name which is the Taoist term given to the pond.

<sup>86</sup> Winter, tenth month. The monk Gwalleuk came from Paekche to the court. He tributed works on calendar making, astronomy, astrology, and divination. At that time the Empress selected three or four people to be taught by Gwalleuk. Tamafura, ancestor of the Yako no Fubito, learned calendar-making, and Otomo no Suguri Koso learned astronomy and astrology, and Yamashiro no Omi Hitate learned divination, and all were accomplished in their fields. (Chapter of Empress Suiko) Translation from The Nihon Shoki Home (<http://nihonshoki.wikidot.com/>)

<sup>87</sup> 藥獵, 式占 and 道師 are Taoism terms used in the *Nihon Shoki*.

Confucianism, so as a result, it was not accepted as a state religion during ancient times in Japan.

Summing up the exchanges in cultural aspects between Paekche and Japan, these cultural exchanges were closely related to Paekche's political situation. People of Paekche migrated to Japan when there were threats from outside and in the 7<sup>th</sup> century when Paekche was toppled by Silla and T'ang China. There were mutual needs and benefits for both kingdoms so exchanges took place at a national level. Paekche transferred advanced skills and technology to upgrade Japanese society, and transferred advanced moral culture to establish a system and regulations for a nation. Buddhism as a high religion, Confucianism as an academic study, and Taoism as a philosophy and ideology were all advanced moral culture transferred from China to Japan through Korea. Both advanced skills and technology with advanced moral culture became the foundation in establishing a *ritsuryō* state in the 8<sup>th</sup> century.

Generally when there is an exchange of culture between two nations, it should be bilateral and not one-way transfer, so there is always a possibility that Japanese culture has transferred some elements to Paekche. However, this section has focused on advanced Chinese culture which was transferred to Japan through Paekche, and in fact, Japan was in a recipient position in cultural aspects so less focus has been put on the Japanese culture.

### 2.3.1 The Battle of Baekgang (663)

The Battle of Baekgang was a huge scale battle in ancient times in East Asia. In ancient Japanese history, the battle was one of the worst defeats as Japan dispatched their largest army to southern Korea to restore Paekche. (For example, the Japanese had a fleet of

no fewer than 800 vessels.) After the battle, Silla finally unified the Korean peninsula destroying Goguryeo and Paekche, and Japan had to deal with Silla internationally after all. After losing their closest ally Paekche, Japan pursued a centralised *ritsuryō* state to cope with changing East Asia's political situation. It actively reacted in a new hierarchical order established in East Asia after the Battle of Baekgang to establish a centralised monarchy.

In AD 660, the Court of Japan received news from a diplomat of Paekche saying that Silla had invaded Paekche along with T'ang China, and the Paekche sovereign and subjects were all captured. In the same year, the highest official of Paekche brought a hundred T'ang prisoners of war to request reinforcement. The Court of Japan accepted the offer and completed preparations for dispatching Paekche revival forces to southern Korea. However, Empress Saimei died a sudden death in AD 661 and Crown Prince Naka no Ōe seized control of the army. When Buyeo Pung (Fuyo Hōshō)<sup>88</sup> returned to southern Korea from Japan as a commander of the revival forces Japan sent 5,000 guards to protect him and in the following year, the Japanese Court sent war materials, including 100,000 arrows and 170 warships. Finally in AD 663, Japan dispatched 27,000 revival forces to restore Paekche from Silla and T'ang China.

Japan recruited soldiers and war materials and dispatched reinforcements from northern Kyūshū to southern Korea. Compared to other reinforcements which did not exceed 1,000 soldiers, the reinforcements in AD 663 were remarkable. There were several reasons why Japan dispatched such a huge scale of Paekche revival forces to southern Korea, as follows.

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<sup>88</sup> He was a Paekche prince who stayed in Japan as a hostage.

Previous studies proposed three reasons for dispatching large numbers of troops to southern Korea. The first reason was that because Paekche was a tributary state of Japan, Japan dispatched numerous troops as a duty of a suzerain kingdom. The second reason was to avoid an external threat, namely an invasion of T'ang China by taking control over southern Korea. The third reason was to retain the friendly alliance which was a bridge to advanced continental technology and culture. It is difficult to understand the dispatching of Paekche revival forces with one simple reason, for it was rather a complex situation. Internal and external factors have to be considered to understand the cause of dispatching Paekche revival forces.

It is important to see movements of the Japanese army when T'ang China started the Korean peninsula invasion to find out reasons for dispatching of Paekche revival forces. According to the *Samguksagi*, Silla requested T'ang China to send reinforcements to attack Paekche in AD 659 and the Court of T'ang decided to join the Paekche expedition in the same year. From AD 658, T'ang China attacked Goguryeo every year and finally T'ang China decided on the Paekche expedition to make the whole Korean peninsula a tributary. The news of the Paekche expedition by T'ang China was passed to Japan in early AD 660 by diplomats from Goguryeo who arrived in Tsukushi<sup>89</sup> and in March the same year, T'ang China dispatched 130,000 soldiers in the Paekche expedition. In May, 660, there were many diplomats from Goguryeo going to Japan urging it to take action against T'ang China and Silla. So, soon the Court of Japan started Buddhist worship for protection of the nation, not only for protection of Paekche and Goguryeo but also protection of Japan itself. This was because the threat that Paekche was confronting was considered as a threat to Japan as well.

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<sup>89</sup> Tsukushi was an ancient province of Japan. It was located within present Fukuoka Prefecture.

This is evidenced by the fact that as soon as Japan heard the news of the fall of Paekche, they deployed troops to the northwest of Kyūshū and built fortresses and palisades according to the *Nihon Shoki*.<sup>90 91</sup> Though Kinai was the centre of ancient Japan, northwest Kyūshū is the ‘front line’ when foreign troops invade Japan. Deployment of troops to northwest Kyūshū partially explains why Japan considered the fall of Paekche as a threat to Japan itself from outside.

A possible reason that Japan considered the fall of Paekche as a threat to the Japanese kingdom was because of the internal influence of the people of Paekche in Japan. Aristocrats and higher classes in the court exclusively enjoyed benefits from exchanges with Paekche. The transfer of advanced technology and cultural aspects from Paekche derived and sustained both monetary and physical power of aristocrats. Up until the 7<sup>th</sup> century, Paekche was the major trading partner of the Court of Japan. Japan increased trading partners in the region of East Asia from the 7<sup>th</sup> century but still the foundation of production were human resources and imported materials, supplied from Paekche. In the organisational system of the Court of Japan, people of Paekche and their culture played a significant role and consistent supplies (such as iron) from Paekche were important in maintaining the monarchy and the Court. Especially, *beminsei*,<sup>92</sup> the supportive production system to assist the Court of Japan, was

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<sup>90</sup> 12<sup>th</sup> month. On the 24<sup>th</sup> day, the Empress went to Naniwa Palace. The Empress, according to the request heard from Baksin, and thought to go to Tsukushi and dispatch a rescue force, and so first went here to prepare various army goods. That year, the Empress wanted Paekche to attack Silla, and ordered the country of Suruga to make a ship. When they finished they went to Omino, and this ship at night had its fore and aft, for no reason at all, reversed. (Chapter of Emperor Saimei) Translation from The Nihon Shoki Home (<http://nihonshoki.wikidot.com/>)

<sup>91</sup> This was the Dazaifu.

<sup>92</sup> This was a system which existed in ancient Japan, basically regulations in delegating administrative jobs and services for the Court.

founded by people of Paekche who moved to Japan with specialised skills such as interpretation and taking care of horses.

The new government established through the Isshi Incident<sup>93</sup> faced a political task to overcome the clan system. Ancient Japanese government was established from a federation of many clans who were ruling territories and the task for the new government was to enhance monarchy and establish centralised government, overcoming the previous social structure. The forfeit of private land owned by powerful clans in the Taika Reforms<sup>94</sup> was to enhance the monarchy by taking control of land, the most important resource during ancient times. The new government gradually increased the number of officials in both central and local governments to reform the kingdom into a bureaucracy rather than the clan system. However, the process of the reformation by the new government was not smooth. There were a number of attempted assassinations of Crown Prince Naka no Ōe who was the leader of the new government and there was a rebellion by Furuhito no Ōe who was recommended as an heir by Sogano Iruka and was killed in the Isshi Incident. This happened soon after establishing the new government. There were quite a few clans who served the Soga clan involved in the rebellion and this shows resistance against the new government was organized and systematic. This kind of rebellion continued and there was a case that bureaucrats from the new government were involved in a rebellion. This also shows that the political situation in Japan was not settled with the new government. In AD 653, the new government was split into two parties, one party with Emperor Kōtoku (AD 596 – AD 654) and the other party with Crown Prince Naka no Ōe. While there was a conflict, Emperor Kōtoku died suddenly and a

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<sup>93</sup> Isshi is the zodiacological name for the year 645 and this event was a transformative event in the history of the Japanese imperial history. It was the event that eliminated the main branch of the powerful Soga clan.

<sup>94</sup> The Taika Reforms literally means Great Reforms and they were a set of doctrines established by Emperor Kōtoku in AD 645.



rebellion was planned by the emperor's son Arima after the emperor's death. This rebellion was settled before it was put into effect but it shocked the new government. AD 658 was a time when T'ang China had the Goguryeo expedition and the Korean peninsula was going through war between kingdoms. Therefore, Japan had to deal with a complex political situation as well as threats from outside in the mid-7<sup>th</sup> century. It seems Japan used external threat as an opportunity to settle both internal factors as well as outer threat by unifying Japan. The new government used its international relationship with Paekche to settle internal disturbances and it centralised political power by ordering troop mobilisation. This was an internal factor for dispatching of a large body of troops to southern Korea but it would not be possible if there was no diplomatic effort from Paekche. If there was no request for reinforcement from Paekche, the dispatching of troops would end in discussion without sending actual troops as it was a war against T'ang China, the superpower in ancient times.

From this perspective, as another factor of dispatching large numbers of troops, consistent diplomacy through Paekche by members of the royal family as diplomats may be considered. This was one of the characteristics of diplomacy between Paekche and Japan. Paekche sent members of the royal family as diplomats whenever there was a politically difficult situation and they stayed in Japan for a while to enhance the friendly relationship between Paekche and Japan. It began with dispatching Prince Jeonji (Tensho) in AD 397 and continued until the fall of Paekche in AD 660. In 660, there were at least three members of the royal family of Paekche including another prince, Buyeo Pung, according to the *Nihon Shoki*. If family members and bureaucrats supporting the prince were considered then there would have been many more staying in Japan. They attended ceremonies and events and would have led a Paekche-friendly environment in the Court of Japan. Paekche chose Japan as a military ally or supporter to survive in a harsh political situation in the Korean peninsula.

This relationship was not a one-off relationship but rather a long consistent friendly relationship formed in the ancient history of Japan-Korea relations.

As there were many who moved from Paekche, from the highest class to the middle class in Japan, they may have created a positive move towards revival of Paekche.

In AD 663, Paekche restoration forces led by Buyeo Pung was under siege by Silla forces in Churyu which was the capital of the Paekche restoration forces, and the Japanese reinforcements with a large fleet of some 800 ships under the command of Abe no Hirafu.<sup>95</sup> They were intended to relieve Churyu. The Japanese navy was to carry ground troops of 27,000 soldiers to Churyu via Baekgang and lift the siege. There is still ongoing discussion about the location of Baekgang but it is generally accepted as the Geum River, as it is most similar to what is described in the *Nihon Shoki* and the *Samguksagi*. However, T'ang China also dispatched reinforcements to stop the Japanese navy with 7,000 soldiers and 170 ships under the command of Liu Jenkuei. On August 27, 663, the Japanese navy encountered the T'ang China navy at the mouth of Baekgang (the Guem River). The Japanese fleet greatly outnumbered the T'ang China fleet and the Japanese were confident in their power, which led to poor strategies in the battle. The Japanese fleet attacked the T'ang fleet several times but could not break through T'ang lines and towards the end of the day the T'ang counterattacked the Japanese fleet, burning several hundred ships and drowning thousands of soldiers. The *Nihon Shoki* records that fire and smoke from the Japanese fleet filled the sky and blood shed by Japanese soldiers covered the surface of the sea on the day. Consequently, Japanese could not come to lift the siege and the Paekche restoration forces in Churyu surrendered to Silla

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<sup>95</sup> He was a general of the Yamato court. In 658 he was sent to subdue the indigenous "barbarian" Emishi (almost certainly ancestors of the Ainu), waging three campaigns against them. Henshall, 2013.

and T'ang forces on September 7, 663. Buyeo Pung, the leader of the Paekche restoration forces, fled to Goguryeo and Paekche never recovered.

The Battle of Baekgang was the greatest defeat in Japanese pre-modern history. After the defeat, Japan increased its fortifications against possible invasion from T'ang China in northwest Kyūshū. Some scholars mention that Japan was fortunate that T'ang China did not attack Japan when Japan was extremely vulnerable. As a result of the battle, Japan lost a key ally, Paekche, in the Korean peninsula as well as a direct link to continental technology and culture. Later, Silla finally unified the Korean peninsula by expelling T'ang China from the Korean peninsula and took over a role of a major international partner of Japan.

The Battle of Baekgang is indeed a significant incident in the history of ancient Japan-Korea relations. It shows that there were strong ties between Paekche and Japan that might have been beyond the obvious friendship between states during ancient times.

## CHAPTER 3. JAPAN-KOREA RELATIONS: Medieval Period

### 3.1 Mongol Invasions and *wakō*

Silla maintained a peaceful relationship with Japan for some time after the unification of the Korean peninsula in 668. Soon after unifying the Korean peninsula, the relationship between Silla and T'ang China worsened as Silla drove away T'ang forces, yet it had to keep its friendly ally Japan, mindful of T'ang China. However, the relationship between Japan and Silla was overturned in the 8th century, as Japan became a *ritsuryō* state and treated Silla as a tributary. However, Silla retained trade between the two kingdoms until 779 when the formal relationship was stopped due to diplomatic conflicts. After the formal relationship was discontinued between the two kingdoms, there were a series of political fluctuations that led to new medieval kingdoms. For Korea, the Goryeo Dynasty (918-1392) succeeded Silla and as for Japan, the Heian (794-1185) was established which was followed by the Kamakura (1185-1333) and Muromachi (1333-1568) Periods. The relationship between Goryeo and Japan was at its worst from the mid-13th century towards to the end of the 14th century. There were attempted Mongol invasions of Japan in 1274 and 1281, which was a factor in a growing hostile relationship, and further on from the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century, for 40 years there were frequent *wakō* (Japanese pirates) invasions of Goryeo which became a factor in the fall of Goryeo and on the other hand, the rise of the Chōsen (Joseon) Dynasty.<sup>96</sup> The *wakō* invasions were significant incidents, and were the major cause for the fall of Goryeo in the medieval Japan-Korea relationship. In this section, two significant incidents, the Mongol

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<sup>96</sup> Shim, 2008. pp. 53

invasions and the *wakō* invasions, will be discussed in detail, showing how these incidents affected the Japan-Korea relationship.

### 3.1.1 Mongol Invasions

There were two series of significant incidents in the Japan-Korea relationship during the 13<sup>th</sup> and the 14<sup>th</sup> centuries, namely two Mongol invasions in the 13<sup>th</sup> century and a series of *wakō* raids during the 14<sup>th</sup> century. These two series of incidents greatly influenced the history of both Goryeo and Japan as well as the relationship between Chōsen and Japan.

Regarding the Mongol invasions, the Goryeo army was forcibly mobilised because Goryeo was a tributary state of the Yuan Dynasty. As a result, Goryeo and Japan became hostile towards each other. Research on the Mongol invasions is mainly focused on Mongolia, Japan and China and its relations but less focused on the relationship between Goryeo and Japan. This incident however, affected the relationship between Goryeo and Japan even more than the relationship between China and Japan, hence it should not be neglected.

The Mongols had two strategies against Japan during the 13th century. One was diplomatic negotiation to make Japan a tributary state and the other strategy was use of armed forces. Before the Mongols invaded Japan, Goryeo described Japan as a haughty kingdom not knowing courtesy to a superior kingdom seemingly due to the fact that Japan was an island country far away from the continent. The main reason that Goryeo described Japan as an inferior kingdom was because first, Goryeo's national power was declining and Goryeo knew that if an invasion of Japan took place then the Goryeo army would be mobilised. Goryeo knew that by participating in a war it would further weaken Goryeo's national power. Second, it shows how Goryeo despised Japan during this time when Goryeo used descriptions such as

‘little barbarians’, ‘island barbarians’ and ‘a nation without courtesy’.<sup>97</sup> The Mongols were not happy with such a tepid response by Goryeo and sent a diplomat to Japan directly to recommend surrender.<sup>98</sup> Meanwhile, Goryeo consistently advised Japan to accept a tributary relationship with the Yuan Dynasty. However, as the Mongols directly gave a choice of either being a tributary state or a war, Japan ignored the message from the Mongols saying that it on was lacking courtesy.

As opposed to attempts of friendly diplomacy (from Goryeo’s point of view), there was a military movement against the Mongols from Goryeo by having military solidarity with Japan. This movement was led by the *Sambyeolcho*<sup>99</sup> which was the elite of Goryeo’s military forces. When the *Sambyeolcho* were fleeing to Jeju Island, away from the Mongol forces, they sent a message to Japan notifying a Mongol invasion and requesting reinforcement and food.<sup>100</sup> The *Sambyeolcho* made friendly acts towards Japan in many ways such as conveying Japanese castaways and sending gifts to Japan, and these actions were a political groundwork to form an alliance with Japan against the common enemy, namely the Mongol forces. However, there was no response towards these diplomatic attempts. The main reason is likely to be that the Japanese Court and shōgunate did not pay attention to it, presumably because they felt there would not be any invasion of their islands.

If there was any reaction from Japan either accepting the advice from the Goryeo Court to become a tributary state or accepting the alliance with *Sambyeolcho*, then there

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<sup>97</sup> Nam, 2003. pp. 83-85

<sup>98</sup> Hall, 1990. pp. 135-137

<sup>99</sup> *Sambyeolcho* was a special military unit of the Goryeo Dynasty. Literally, it means three types specially selected troops and as the name shows, it consisted of three units, *Jwabyeolcho*, Special Unit of the Left, *Ubyeolcho*, Special Unit of the Right, and *Shin-euigun* (literally New Righteous Army). The *Sambyeolcho* performed as police and military during the Goryeo Dynasty.

<sup>100</sup> Nam, 2003. pp. 87

would have been an enhanced friendly relationship between Korea and Japan. However, Japan did not respond to either of the recommendations from Goryeo.

Initially in 1274, the combined forces of the Mongols and Goryeo invaded Japan as an armed protest because Japan was in a friendly relationship with Southern Song and the Mongols wanted to stop the connection between the two kingdoms. The ‘protest’ element partially demonstrated by the fact that the Mongol forces did not press on after defeating the Japanese force in the battle of Hakata on the first day although they had enough power to spare. There were about 40,000 soldiers and over 900 vessels altogether in the Mongol and Goryeo combined forces. On the way to Hakata, the Mongol forces invaded Tsushima and Iki islands resulting in thousands of Japanese civilian casualties. The Japanese were inexperienced in managing a large scale army because there had been no major battle in Japan for up to 50 years since 1221 involving Go-Toba’s supporters.<sup>101</sup> As opposed to the Japanese troops, the Mongol forces were equipped with superior weapons such as firearms<sup>102</sup> and were experienced soldiers through continuing battles with China. There was nothing that the Japanese force in Hakata could do but to wait for reinforcement. However, the Mongol forces did not press on and returned to their ships. That night a violent storm blew up and brought extensive damage to the Mongol forces. The Mongol forces were reduced by a third and they were forced to withdraw to Goryeo. Despite the fact that the Mongol forces withdrew, the purpose, which was to cut the connection between Southern Song and Japan, was successful through the invasion of Japan in 1274.

From 1274 on, the friendly relationship between Japan and Korea became hostile as Goryeo had taken part in the Mongol invasion. It was not Goryeo’s voluntary mobilisation of

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<sup>101</sup> Go-Toba’s adherent is also known as the Jōkyū War which will be dealt again in the *wakō* section

<sup>102</sup> Henshall, pp. 231

their army but through Japanese eyes, Goryeo was an enemy who tried to invade their country. When Mongol diplomats came to Japan, Goryeo diplomats always accompanied them. Another illustration that Japan saw Goryeo as an enemy after the first invasion of Japan is that Kublai sent his envoys twice in 1275 and 1279 but on both occasions, Japan beheaded them.<sup>103</sup>

In June 1281, Mongol sent an even greater force of 140,000 soldiers and over 4,000 vessels to invade Japan once again. They took over Tsushima and Iki islands and moved on to Kyūshū. However, the Mongol forces met with staunch resistance by the Japanese force in Hakata Bay and were unable to secure a real foothold. The battle is known as the Second Battle of Hakata. Soon after, the famous *kamikaze*, namely a typhoon (known as the ‘divine wind’), struck the Mongol forces, and devastated them. The remaining Mongol forces were forced to withdraw to Goryeo again.

After the Mongol invasions, Japan realised if an enemy occupied the Korean peninsula, it would become a potential threat to Japan. Owing to this hostility Japan had planned to invade Goryeo in 1275 and 1281 right after the invasions but also to avoid any further external threats. Goryeo knew the situation of Japan and their hatred towards Goryeo so they requested the Mongol forces to make a base in Goryeo so that it could prevent a battle with Japan. This tension between Goryeo and Japan continued until the mid-14th century.

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<sup>103</sup> Henshall, pp. 38



### 3.1.2 *Wakō*

According to historical references<sup>104</sup>, *wakō* actually appeared in ancient times fighting the Goguryeo troops in the Korean peninsula from the 4<sup>th</sup> century, and these are not to be confused with the ‘*wakō*’ of the 13<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, who were basically pirates. It seems that the purpose of *wakō* who appeared in ancient times was political. Paekche had a close relationship with the ancient kingdom of Japan and as Paekche was in conflict with Goguryeo, Paekche may have asked *wakō* to harass Goguryeo. From the 13<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup> centuries pirates were plunderers without political cause. An appropriate definition of the later *wakō* should be a group of armed forces whose purpose was to plunder an area or kidnap people for human trafficking or slavery without any political or diplomatic reasons.

Piratical *wakō* started to appear from the 13<sup>th</sup> century (to the 16<sup>th</sup> century), after the failure of the Mongol invasions of Japan. The appearance of these latter-day *wakō* can be divided into two periods. The first period was from the 13<sup>th</sup> century to the 15<sup>th</sup> century, where the Korean peninsula, the northern Kyūshū islands and Seto Inland Sea were the main spheres of piracy. The second period was in the 16<sup>th</sup> century where Southeast Asia, including China, was the main sphere of piracy. The first period is more related with the Japan-Korea relationship and the second with the relationship of China and Japan. The aims of *wakō* were mainly to extort rice from granaries and cargo vessels and kidnapping people for human trafficking or slavery. The bases of *Wakō* are known to be areas in northern Kyūshū centred on Tsushima Island including Seto Inland Sea.

In Japan, *wakō* is largely accepted as the name that is given to such a group of pirates in East Asia from the 13<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, not only including ethnic Japanese but also

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<sup>104</sup> The stele of Gwangaeto the Great and *Samguksagi*.

Koreans and Chinese. They were scattered around in areas of northern Kyūshū and the Seto Inland Sea, wore Japanese clothes and spoke Japanese language, but their nationality and ethnic origins were varied. They were in between borders, virtually stateless, and consisted of multicultural people created from East Asia's chaotic political situation. *Wakō* are described in the history text books of Japan as Japanese forces in Northern Kyūshū and Seto Inland Sea who were excluded from central control in the Nanboku-chō Period (1333-1392) including some Chinese and Koreans. There was Japanese recent research<sup>105</sup> about fake *wakō* who disguised themselves as *wakō* and plundered the Korean peninsula and it seems this research was reflected in the text books. This recent research was focused on the fact that on a few occasions Koreans and Chinese disguised as *wakō* plundered their own people. However, Tanaka's research seems to focus too much on the fake *wakō*, seemingly failing to notice that it is only a few occasions in hundreds of records.<sup>106</sup> It is indeed possible that some people from the lowest classes in China and Goryeo were disguised as *wakō* but it is hard to hypothesise that *wakō* in general consisted of multicultural people or combined pirates of Goryeo and Japan.

Applying the definition of *wakō* as a group of armed men aiming to plunder an area or kidnap people for human trafficking or slavery without any political or diplomatic reasons, it is important to see how *wakō* developed and why they were a significant element in the history of Japan-Korea relations.

Regarding the trade and cultural exchanges in East Asia, there were consistent trade and cultural exchanges with China as the main centre before the Mongol invasions. The

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<sup>105</sup> Ota, 1987 and Tanaka, 1987.

<sup>106</sup> Fake *wakō* appears in *Goryeosa (The History of Goryeo)* only a few times.

merchant ships of Goryeo mainly traded with China but occasionally traded with northern Kyūshū. Meanwhile, Japanese merchants mainly traded with Goryeo from the Geumju area (current name Gimhae). There was a trade restriction in Goryeo limiting official trade with Japan to a maximum of two ships once a year. These exchanges continued until the Mongol invasion in 1274. In these trading exchanges, the major problem was the *wakō*. They started to appear in Goryeo from around 1223 and gradually became more frequent in the historical records of Goryeo.<sup>107</sup> It seems that *wakō* in the 13th century were a consequence of the Jōkyū War<sup>108</sup> which rendered the domestic condition of Japan insecure.<sup>109</sup>

As the damage from *wakō* invasions became more severe, the Goryeo Court officially claimed against the Japanese Court for *wakō* damage and the Vice Governor Muto Sukeyori took responsibility and beheaded 90 pirates.<sup>110</sup> This reaction seems as if Sukeyori wanted to continue trade with Goryeo as it was beneficial for Japan. The persecution by the Japanese Court did decrease piracy by *wakō* temporarily but it did not stop completely and *wakō* continued to attack Goryeo, kidnapping and stealing.

In contrast to the increased tension with Goryeo, Japan increased trade and cultural exchanges with China as the Yuan Dynasty opened trade with other kingdoms which fulfilled the desire of Japan for advanced technology and culture. Consequently the increased trade between China and Japan also caused the number of *wakō* attacks to increase.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> It appears in the *Goryeosa*, The History of Goryeo.

<sup>108</sup> The Jōkyū War was between the forces of retired emperor Go-Toba and the Hōjō clan, regents of the Kamakura shōgunate. The war took place in Uji near Kyoto in 1221.

<sup>109</sup> Nam, 2003. pp. 88

<sup>110</sup> Kim, 2010. pp. 11-12

<sup>111</sup> Nakamura, 1963. pp. 43-44, Mori, 1975, pp. 366-370

From 1232 to 1350, there were only about 10 attacks involving no more than 100 pirates and who were suppressed by Goryeo soldiers. The *wakō* that appeared from 1350 on were certainly different from these earlier *wakō* attacks in the past in terms of scale, purpose and frequency.

The occurrence of *wakō* especially from around 1350 onward was closely related with the political situations in East Asia. The mid-14<sup>th</sup> century was when all three kingdoms, China, Goryeo and Japan were in political chaos. Japan was suffering from war between the Northern and Southern Courts, Goryeo was in decline, and the Yuan Dynasty was about to fall. The Ming Dynasty was established in 1368, the Chōsen Dynasty was established in 1392, and in the same year, the Muromachi shōgunate unified Japan. It was a time when all three kingdoms were in transition to new political and social systems and *wakō* took advantage of the upheavals. Therefore, it is important to bear in mind *wakō* activities along with the political situation of East Asia.

The people comprising the *wakō* were largely seen as villains<sup>112</sup> and pirates from Kyūshū, Shikoku and other south-western regions of Japan where their bases were in three islands, Tsushima, Iki and Matsuura islands. The 14<sup>th</sup> century was when villains and pirates were most active in their history. The villains during this period were defined as those who rebelled against the Court system and habitually plundered and committed incendiarism. Some pirates in this period had a close relationship with political powers. For example, the Southern court had Yoshino, Seto Inland Sea and Kyūshū pirates as their naval forces, and against the Southern court, the Ashikaga formed a naval force with pirates in Eastern Seto Inland Sea. In Kyūshū, where conflict between the Southern and Northern courts was severe,

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<sup>112</sup> In the law of the Kamakura shōgunate, villains included robbers, bandits, muggers, pirates and looters. The villains flourished more at the end of the Kamakura Period (1185 – 1333) in Shikoku. Nam, 2003. pp. 102

the situation was similar. Under the warlords Sō, pirates in Tsushima Island were also mobilised as a naval force as well as members of the Matsuura clan. Generally, Japanese pirates in islands and ports had close ties with naval forces but other than in war time, the pirates maintained their independency. In times of war, they were mobilised as naval forces under a warlord of a region and this is how they came to be exceptionally armed and well-trained as an army.

According to Nam's study,<sup>113</sup> there were about 400 *wakō* attacks from 1350 until the fall of Goryeo Dynasty in 1391. In terms of scale, the smallest one was 20 vessels and the biggest one was as many as 500 vessels, consisting of infantryman and cavalry, similar to an army organisation. Each unit of pirates had their roles and plundered strategically. Looking at all these references, some scholars<sup>114</sup> hypothesise that piracy was a part of military operations of the dual courts, especially the Southern court which mobilised pirates in the region and formed a naval force. It may be possible to hypothesise that the main purpose of piracy was to procure food for the Northern and Southern courts in Japan. However, it is important to note that although *wakō* had well-trained organisation and excellent weapons, like an army, and they were basically independent forces. Piracy from the 13th to the 16th centuries was in a broad area centred on three islands, Tsushima, Iki and Matsuura islands, and grain plundered by *wakō* reached more than a thousand tonnes. These grains would have been sold expensively to the dual courts when demand for food was at its peak in wartime.

Goryeo at this time was in its decline and could not suppress this large scale piracy and this allowed *wakō* to broaden their boundaries further north, as well as attacking the capital city of Goryeo through rivers. The main purpose of piracy was to plunder cargo

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<sup>113</sup> Nam, 2003. pp. 98

<sup>114</sup> Korean scholars Young Lee and Ki-hak Nam.

vessels, granaries and to kidnap people for slavery and human trafficking. These severe *wakō* piracies became a significant cause that constantly weakened the national power that eventually resulted in the end of Goryeo in 1391. Similarly, there were pirate attacks by Japanese after 1350 in China as well. As in Goryeo, grains and people were taken by *wakō*.

A noticeable change that *wakō* brought about in terms of the relationship between Japan and Korea is through the severe damage Goryeo caused by *wakō*, which later on, in 1366, saw the court of Goryeo reopening diplomacy with Japan and requesting the suppression of *wakō*. Official diplomacy had been stopped since the Mongol invasion in 1274 but it resumed once again due to severe pirate attacks by *wakō*. Even though there was a good sign in the Japan-Korea relationship in 1366, the fundamental solution for *wakō* came about in the 16th century when Toyotomi Hideyoshi seized political power.

The diplomatic relationship between Chōsen and Japan commenced from the resolution of the on-going *wakō* problem. They were one of the main causes of the fall of Goryeo and solving this problem was the first priority of the Chōsen court. To do so the Chōsen court enhanced the defence of towns near coastal areas and reinforced naval forces. Along with the reinforcement of the armed forces, the court also implemented conciliatory policies towards *wakō* who surrendered, and Japanese who moved to Chōsen by supplying them with land, food, housing, and even allowing marriage with Chōsen women. There were cases of the court appointing officials amongst former *wakō* and naturalised Japanese if they had skills in blacksmithery, medical techniques, shipbuilding and could contribute in suppressing *wakō*.

In 1404, both Chōsen and Japan were in a tributary status under China and established an official friendly relationship as neighbouring nations. After establishing this friendly

relationship between the two countries, there were 17 times that groups of Chōsen diplomats visited Japan, and 71 times when imperial missions from Japan visited Chōsen until 1592. In fact, there were continuous Chōsen diplomatic visits to Japan to request suppression of *wakō* from the beginning of the Chōsen Dynasty in 1392.

*Wakō* invasions dramatically decreased from 1408 as a result of Chōsen's measures against them. Some naturalised *wakō* became officials in charge of trade between Chōsen and Japan. There were also more people involved in private and public trade from all around Japan. Due to the increased numbers of Japanese coming to Chōsen, the court realized the needs for restrictions of ports of trade to a few selected towns. However, in Tsushima, the warlord Sō Sadashige, who was cooperative in controlling *wakō* died in 1418 and young Sō Sadamori took Sadashige's place. Unfortunately, he was too young to suppress the *wakō*. There were also continuing famines due to bad harvests in Tsushima and people starved. These two factors increased *wakō* appearances which led to the Tsushima conquest in 1418 when King Taejong in Chōsen carried out an attack on Tsushima after Japanese ships attacked Yeonpyeongot and Doduumgot in Chungcheongdo.

In the early 15<sup>th</sup> century, *wakō* activity was dramatically reduced as a result of Chōsen's measures against them and diplomatic negotiation with Japan but there were no proper regulations for permitted Japanese traders. For this reason Japanese traders anchored at any port they wanted to trade and there were cases that Japanese traders spied on military secrets. Another problem Chōsen had was that authorised Japanese traders were effectively treated at the same level as a diplomat and their stays in Chōsen were paid by the Chōsen court. There were cases where the Japanese traders remained much longer than initially planned as they could not completely sell all of the goods they carried. On a number of occasions the Chōsen court sometimes purchased remaining goods they failed to sell in order

to reduce the hospitality cost. This grew to an immense amount and indeed was a financial burden to the Chōsen court.

The two main focuses for the Chōsen court in the early 15<sup>th</sup> century was the prevention of the reoccurrence of *wakō* and control of the authorised Japanese traders. The first thing that the Chōsen court did was to limit the ports where Japanese ships could anchor and trade. After conquering Tsushima in 1419, the Chōsen court approved a control plan for authorised Japanese traders and specified pay-outs to those staying in Chōsen by limiting the period of stay, number of crews, cargoes, banquet venues and frequency of banquets. Compared to the control imposed on the authorised Japanese traders, the Chōsen court continued rewarding those who contributed in suppressing *wakō*, bringing castaways back to Chōsen or helping diplomacy with Japan by appointing them as officials.

These measures against *wakō* and authorised Japanese traders were possible because first, there was a noticeable decrease in *wakō* invasions in the early 15<sup>th</sup> century and that there was a great victory against *wakō* on Tsushima Island in 1419. There was increased understanding of the political situation of Japan. From the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, Chōsen sent envoys to Japan and gathered detailed political information such as the relationship between the shōgunate and warlords and distribution of *wakō* in Japan. Based on this information, the Chōsen court was able to find a partial solution to the problems, by invading Tsushima Island.

However, the relationship between the two nations seriously changed at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century when Toyotomi Hideyoshi invaded the Korean peninsula.



## 3.2 Medieval Japan-Korea Relationship

There were several external incursions that almost erased Korea from history. The first was by Mongol forces when Kublai Khan annexed Goryeo. The second was by Toyotomi Hideyoshi when Japanese troops twice invaded Chōsen in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The third and last one was in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, in the form of annexation by Meiji Japan.

This section will primarily focus on how Japan-Korea relations changed during the 16<sup>th</sup> century with two invasions by Toyotomi Hideyoshi. The two invasions of Japan by Hideyoshi were different from the annexations in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries respectively. Annexations in the 13<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries were ‘natural flows’ of world history, which can be easily understood. Annexation by the Mongols can be explained through their exceptional power and strategies which many Eurasian nations experienced. As for the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, it was an era when colonisation prevailed and Japan was the first Asian nation to accept advanced western technology and use its power to colonise Korea. However the Japanese invasion of Korea in the 16<sup>th</sup> century was in a sense a ‘local’ event. However, it is important to be aware of the background of the two invasions in the 16<sup>th</sup> century to understand in depth how these invasions changed the Japan-Korea relationship further on.

### 3.2.1 Hideyoshi's invasions

Japanese invasions in 1592 and 1597 by Toyotomi Hideyoshi formed one of the biggest wars in East Asia in its scale and aftermath. The number of soldiers involved in the invasion of Korea was over two hundred thousand and many powerful warlords also participated in the war. Not only Chōsen and Japan but Ming China, under the request of Chōsen, also participated in the war. The cost of the war was severe enough to shake Ming

China's finances and this became a factor of the fall of the Ming Dynasty. Japanese invasions were one of the biggest external threats to Chōsen in its history. If Chōsen could not stop Japanese invaders then the Chōsen Dynasty might have disappeared from history or Chōsen might have become a tributary state of Japan. Fortunately, Chōsen managed the crisis well, driving Japanese forces away from Korea with the help of Ming China. Although there are no official documents remaining the Chōsen Dynasty received an apology from Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543-1616), the next ruler of Japan.

In Korea, the Japanese invasions in 1592 and 1597 were accepted as a lost war. Books written by Koreans such as *Jingbirok*<sup>115</sup> and *Ganyangrok*<sup>116</sup> criticised Chōsen's military conditions. This negative perception of Chōsen by the Japanese was to continue for centuries, even to the annexation by Japan in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and aggravated by Japanese educating all Koreans with a distorted history of Chōsen and Japan. It is only very recently that perceptions have changed as research was carried out by Korean scholars in many different fields regarding the invasion. Some Koreans now insist that this war was won by Koreans.

In Japan, by contrast, the Japanese invasions of the 1590s were highly re-evaluated as the prototype of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere<sup>117</sup> which came to the fore in the 1930s. In the Edo Period (1600 – 1867), Japanese invasions were perceived as a failure when

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<sup>115</sup> Literally, it means a record in prevention of further crisis. The author Sung-yong Ryu wrote this book to reflect the Toyotomi Hideyoshi's invasion. He described reasons why Chōsen allowed invasions.

<sup>116</sup> This book was written by the famous Korean Neo-Confucianism scholar Hang Gang (Kyōkō) who was a prisoner of war during Hideyoshi's invasion. He wrote about the Japanese political situation including the geography of Japan.

<sup>117</sup> Kim, 1999. pp. 313

Tokugawa Ieyasu seized power in Japan.<sup>118</sup> This perception was due to applause for Ieyasu in criticising the former leader Toyotomi Hideyoshi.<sup>119</sup> From the end of the Edo Period through to the Meiji Period, Meiji Restoration patriots started to see these invasions from a nationalist's point of view in which Japan had already conquered the Korean peninsula once in the 1590s. The Meiji government saw the Japanese invasions as a conquest of Chōsen not as an invasion per se, but rather as a holy war and/or righteous. During the Japanese occupancy from 1910, the Japanese government recognised Koreans as Japanese citizens. Nowadays there is much research on the invasions of Korea in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century available in Japan as it was a significant period in Japanese history, changing from the Azuchi-Momoyama Period to the Edo Period.

According to Han, there are six leading opinions regarding the cause of the Japanese invasions other than the generally accepted cause, which was to weaken the power of Japanese warlords.<sup>120</sup>

The first opinion about the cause of the Japanese invasions is the revival of trade with Ming China. This opinion is based on the second clause of the peace negotiations which were offered by Toyotomi Hideyoshi to reopen the trade with Ming China.

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<sup>118</sup> For the criticisms of the invasions by Toyotomi Hideyoshi, there are *Taikōki* by Oze Hoan and 七武余論 by Hayashi Razan in the early Edo Period, *Tokushi Yoron* by Arai Hakuseki and *Hagakure* by Yamamoto Tsunetomo in the mid Edo Period and many more. Choi, 2003. pp. 20

<sup>119</sup> There are *Daikōsama gunki no uchi* by Ota Gyuichi, *Toyokagami* by Takenaka Shigekado, *Chōsenseibatsuki* by Horii Seii, *Yume no shiro* by Yamagata Bando, *Keiseihisaku* by Honda Toshiaki, *Seikaneiryaku* by Kawaguchi Choju, *Seikanyūshi* by Aoyama Nobumitsu, *Taishokkanbanashi* by Aizawa Seishisai, *Kōdōkanjyutsugi* by Fujita Toko and etc. Choi, 2003. pp. 20

<sup>120</sup> These are opinions by Woo-geun Han that are generally accepted causes for the invasion in 1592. Han, 2005. pp. 6

The second opinion is Toyotomi Hideyoshi's eagerness for fame. This opinion is supported by many Japanese scholars and also it is generally accepted in Korea.

The third opinion is to obtain further land that as Toyotomi Hideyoshi unified Japan, there was no land that could be obtained from Japan and as result he turned his eye on the Korean peninsula.

The fourth opinion is that Toyotomi Hideyoshi was a warmonger. There is an opinion that Toyotomi Hideyoshi lost his mind when his infant son Tsurumatsu died but this opinion is less persuasive because it is too personal and limited.

The fifth opinion is the conquest of the Chinese continent.

The sixth opinion is his wish to expand Japanese territory.

Korean scholar Gu-bok Jung comments that the plan to conquer Ming China was ordered by Toyotomi Hideyoshi after conquering most of the Korean peninsula without strong resistance. He says it may not be right to understand Japanese invasions as a process to conquer China during this time.<sup>121</sup> Another scholar, Woo-geun Han, criticises the first opinion about reopening trade with Ming China as the peace negotiation clauses were suggested in the negotiation process not the foundational cause. He insisted on the opinion that the true reason for the Japanese invasions was from an insatiable lust of conquest by Toyotomi Hideyoshi.<sup>122</sup>

Scholars in this field generally agree with either Toyotomi Hideyoshi's eagerness for fame, or his intent to weaken the power of Japanese warlords.<sup>123</sup> Recent research seeks a reason for the invasion as eagerness by Japan to expand its trade with China by analysing

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<sup>121</sup> Jung, 2009.

<sup>122</sup> Han, 2005.

<sup>123</sup> Choi, 1997. pp. 1-2

three countries, China, Chōsen and Japan. In 1523 at a Chinese trade port, Ningbo, there was a clash between Japanese merchants from Sakai,<sup>124</sup> led by the Hosokawa clan and Japanese merchants from Hakada, led by the Ōuchi clan. The Ōuchi clan won the battle but Japanese trading ships were restricted as a result. In 1551, the Ōuchi clan, who monopolised trade with China, collapsed and the trade with China ceased. A disconnected trade relationship with China caused the Japanese economy to decline and Toyotomi Hideyoshi thought of reopening trade with China by solving the *wakō* problem in 1589 but it soon ended without noticeable changes. Recent research analysing the three countries' economies to seek a cause for the invasions, is strongly of the opinion that Toyotomi Hideyoshi wanted to reopen trade with China and this was the cause of the invasions.

This opinion provides a clue to the cause of the invasions along with opinions on expansion of Japanese territory to obtain more land but it is difficult to assume that it is the fundamental cause of the invasions. The fundamental reason may be found in the Japanese political situation and the Japanese view of the world – or more exactly, Hideyoshi's view of the world.

Throughout the Sengoku Period (1467 – 1568), Japan was divided into many regions under local warlords. Japan was not a unified nation but comprised many small nations. Toyotomi Hideyoshi successfully unified Japan from Honshū to Kyūshū but still there were a few *kuni* (provinces) that did not belong to Japan. For example, a missionary who fled to Matsumae heard from its lord saying “Do not worry, Matsumae is not Japan”.<sup>125</sup> Furthermore, it has only been about a hundred and fifty years that the Ryūkyū Islands became

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<sup>124</sup> The Ningbo Incident was a battle between trade representatives of two clans – the Ōuchi and Hosokawa clans – in the Ming Chinese city of Ningbo in 1523. This resulted in the end of the China-Japan trade.

<sup>125</sup> Choi, 2003. pp. 259-261

a part of Japan. The Ryūkyūs were semi-independent nation until then. To establish Toyotomi Hideyoshi's view of the world,<sup>126</sup> he had to accomplish not only unification of Japan but also had to prove that Japan was not inferior to other neighbouring nations under the broad influence of Chinese civilisation.

Toyotomi Hideyoshi showed his desire for conquest after the effective unification of Japan. He said that he was going to conquer not only the Korean peninsula but as far as India. It was reckless and bold. Regarding Toyotomi Hideyoshi, Luís Fróis (1532–1597)<sup>127</sup> commented that when Toyotomi Hideyoshi raised the idea of a conquest of China, this shocked the whole of Japan with surprise and, like people obsessed, it clouded people's judgement and made them focus on only one purpose, the conquest of China.<sup>128</sup> In fact, during this time, the conquest of China was almost impossible.

According to what Luís Fróis said, there were four major problems in Japan in carrying out the conquest.

The first problem was that if there is a rebellion by a warlord during the conquest then it will cause a greater problem than at any other time. As mentioned above, though Japan was unified as one nation, there were some *kuni*, including the Ryūkyūs in the Japanese

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<sup>126</sup> Kim, 1981. pp. 208-209, Kim's view is as below.

There was a fundamental reason that Japan suffered from a relative inferiority in culture and economics due to the fact that Japan was not a part of Chinese influence in East Asia from the past, and because of this inferiority, Japan wanted to invade the Korean peninsula. This sense of inferiority and competitiveness also appeared as aggression against neighbouring countries. Japan always put effort to accept external cultural inflows and internalised these despite having inferior culture to sustain their social hierarchical order and uniqueness. Japanese uniqueness and superiority in culture and technology (from Western countries in the 19<sup>th</sup> century) led to an expansion of overseas expeditions.

<sup>127</sup> He was a Portuguese missionary. He arrived in Japan in 1563 and became a friend of Oda Nobunaga in 1569. He stayed in Gifu for a while to write books on Japan.

<sup>128</sup> Jang, 2003. pp. 173

archipelago, that thought they did not belong to Japan, and if any *kuni*/state rebelled during the expedition then it may result in the overthrow the shōgunate, the main power of Japan.<sup>129</sup>

The second problem was that Japanese forces were ineffective against a foreign army. Japan is an island nation that China did not pay much attention to in the past. Kingdoms in the Korean peninsula were attentive to Japan as neighbouring nations and the Yuan/Mongol Dynasty was the only Chinese kingdom which was attentive to Japan but only limited to the Kyūshū region where there were active exchanges with China. As described earlier, there were two invasions of Japan by the Yuan/Mongol forces but which failed both times because of storms and it was from this time on that Japanese believed Japan was a nation protected by gods. Japanese named the storm '*kamikaze*' (divine wind) based on the belief that Japan was a divine nation. Other than this occasion, there were no significant battles in Japan with other nations. Therefore, the Japanese were relatively inexperienced in warfare with other nations.

The third problem was that the Japanese warlords in inland areas did not possess any naval force.

The fourth problem was that the preparation period was insufficient, no time being allowed to purchase war materials such as weapons, food, ships and firearms no matter how desperately Japanese wanted to.

Despite the problems, none opposed the invasion of the Korean peninsula because there was no trust between warlords. If one was to rebel and the others inform the shōgunate about the rebellion then the one who tried to rebel against the shōgunate would be punished and all his land would be confiscated. Therefore, Japanese warlords did not have much choice in this matter except to agree. However, there were some warlords who tried to stop the

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<sup>129</sup> Cho, 1996. pp. 230

invasion. They were Gonishi Yukinaga and Sō Yoshitoshi. According to the research by Minho Han, Sō Yoshitoshi warned the Chōsen court several times about the invasion and Gonishi Yukinaga also wanted to stop the invasion and tried to prevent the war by inviting friendly Chōsen diplomats to Japan.<sup>130</sup> This opinion is partially accepted in academia as Gonishi Yukinaga and Sō Yoshitoshi were the ones who actively insisted on peace negotiations during the invasions.

Sō Yoshitoshi was the warlord of Tsushima Island, which relied on trade with the Korean peninsula from ancient times. It is obvious that the warlord did not want to invade the Korean peninsula but when the time came, soldiers from Tsushima Island became the vanguard of the Japanese force.

Toyotomi Hideyoshi mobilised all armies to the port of Nagoya. However, many Japanese wanted to avoid the expedition and there was an occasion when there was a rumour that Tokugawa was rebelling against the shōgunate. People gathered to join the supposed rebellion but when they found it was just a rumour they were disappointed. This shows how desperately Japanese wanted to avoid this reckless war before the invasion in 1592.<sup>131</sup>

Soon after, the official ship that visited Chōsen every year failed to show up on the Korean shores and all Japanese returned to Japan by early 1592.<sup>132</sup>

After the evacuation of the Japanese in the Korean peninsula, the invasion commenced with the battle in Busan on 13<sup>th</sup> of April, 1592. Two generals of Chōsen, Bal Jeong and Sang-hyun Song, stood against the vanguard of the Japanese forces but it did not last long. Many warlords who anticipated the expedition took three routes to attack the capital

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<sup>130</sup> Han, 1994.

<sup>131</sup> Jang, 2003. pp. 173-174

<sup>132</sup> *Seonjo sujungsillok* Volume 25. pp. 58



and it took only twenty-six days for the Japanese forces to take it. The king of Chōsen had to escape the capital and took refuge in Euiju (currently, a county in Pyeonganbukdo of North Korea). This escape by the court members shows how the noble classes of Chōsen were weak and failing to do their duties. The people of Chōsen were enraged about the fact that noble classes fled from the capital without a proper fight against the Japanese forces and the rage of the people resulted in the burning of government buildings such as *Jangyewon*, the Ministry of Slavery, and *Hyeongjo*, the Ministry of Justice. The Chōsen commoners expressed their discontent towards the cowardly ruling classes of Chōsen by capturing Chōsen soldiers who came for conscription as royal guards in Gangwondo and Hamgyongdo, and handed them over to the Japanese forces. The Japanese forces occupied Pyeongyang and captured the governor of Hamgyong. It seems that Chōsen was conquered by the Japanese forces and Toyotomi Hideyoshi submitted a protocol regarding a plan for ruling China, Chōsen and Japan to the regent Hidetsugu to confirm it. Amongst ten clauses, there are five clauses that are related to Chōsen and as follows:

1. The capital of Chōsen was conquered on the second day so you will cross the sea and rule the continent of China. The position of regent will be kept.
2. There must be a proper preparation for transit of the Emperor to a new capital in China. The move may be in the following year or a year after and ten provinces around the capital will be presented to the Emperor.
3. The position of regent of China will be abdicated to Hidetsugu as well as surrounding provinces around the capital. The position of regent of Japan then will be abdicated to either Hideyasu or Hideie.<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Ukita Hideie (1573–1655) was the warlord of Bizen and Mimasaka provinces (modern Okayama Prefecture), and one of the council of Five Elders appointed by Toyotomi Hideyoshi.

4. Hidekatsu or Hideie will rule the Korean peninsula.

5. There should be a ceremony prepared for the Emperor arriving in China. Stopovers will be set in conquered areas so far and attendants and post horses should be ready accordingly.

(Clauses that include the reign of three nations)<sup>134</sup>

All these plans and ambitions about ruling China were restrained by guerrillas arising in the cause of justice and the famous naval force led by Admiral Sun-shin Yi. From June on there were uprisings of guerrillas comprised of farmers, Confucian scholars and monks. In July 1592, there was a great defeat of the Japanese naval forces by admiral Sun-shin Yi in Hansando and all these battles became chaotic in the Korean peninsula. Later, the reinforcements from Ming China came to save Chōsen and the Japanese forces were obliged to retreat further to the south.

As the situation became ever more chaotic, the Japanese forces grew weary of war. From the beginning of the expedition, it was from Toyotomi Hideyoshi's desire for what seems a reckless conquest of the Korean peninsula. When they came to the Korean peninsula, amongst warlords of Japan, some perceived the overseas expedition in the same light as death.<sup>135</sup> In Japan, Toyotomi Hideyoshi imposed a high tax to supply war materials for the expedition and Japanese commoners were allegedly starved to death as they sent all of their food to the expedition.<sup>136</sup> Moreover, other than the first two months, the war situation was, as mentioned, chaotic, and the Japanese forces grew weary of it.

Though there were a hundred years of small and large scale battles throughout the Sengoku Period, warlords did not fight against commoners. Japanese commoners also knew

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<sup>134</sup> Choi, 2003. pp.196-197

<sup>135</sup> Kim, Mun-gil 1995. pp. 28

<sup>136</sup> Kim, 1995. pp. 28

that whoever became the lord they would not harm them so they did not cause a revolt. The situation in the Korean peninsula was totally different from the ones in Japan in that it was guerrilla warfare waged by commoners that attacked the Japanese forces after all the victories against the Chōsen soldiers. Guerrillas attacked the Japanese forces repeatedly and blocked the supply routes. The Japanese forces suffered from starvation and thirst as the guerrilla forces used strategies such as burning facilities that may be used by the Japanese forces and reaping grains in early autumn so it would not be taken by the Japanese forces. When the Japanese forces became even wearier of war, there was a peace negotiation between Ming China and Japan but it failed and the second invasion occurred in 1597.

The second invasion was aimed to gain four provinces of the Korean peninsula that were mentioned in the peace negotiation. When all clauses that Toyotomi Hideyoshi offered in the peace negotiation were denied, he ordered the second invasion. The Korean peninsula was vulnerable from the continuous attacks from Japan. Not only was there damage by the war, but there had also been a rebellion by Mong-hak Lee in 1596.<sup>137</sup> As Chōsen was vulnerable, the court requested reinforcement from Ming China and once again the Korean peninsula became a battlefield.

The province of Jeollado became the first target and damage was severe. It was in this invasion that the Japanese soldiers cut noses or ears of people for military merit. Toyotomi

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<sup>137</sup> Kim, 2004. pp. 186-191. The summary is as follow.

When the war extended over a long period of time, the Chōsen court collected grains by force from areas of Jeollado and Chunchongdo where damages were minor. Commoners were starving from the war and they rebelled against the court who tried to collect food by force from the commoners. Mong-hak Lee was a soldier under a general Hyun Han and both of them knew the public sentiment was on their side so they rebelled against the court. The rebellion started on 6<sup>th</sup> of July, 1596 with several thousands of people. They took over Cheongyang prefecture on 8<sup>th</sup> of July and as commoners joined the troops their number increased and this fact tells us there were many people who were unsatisfied with the Chōsen court during this time. In the process of oppressing the rebels, many generals of the 'righteous armies' got into trouble as there were rumours that they had joined the rebels and a general Deok-ryung Kim died under a false accusation. If Chōsen could not suppress the rebellion then there could have been a new Dynasty.

Hideyoshi buried cut noses and ears in a temple in Kyōto (*Todaiji*) and made an offering to Buddha.<sup>138</sup>

Ming China and Chōsen allied forces launched an offensive attack against the Japanese forces and the Japanese forces retreated to the southern part of the peninsula. The Japanese forces built a wall in Ulsan for defence and Ming China and Chōsen allied forces besieged the wall. Until the Japanese forces were saved by reinforcements from Japan on 4<sup>th</sup> of January the following year, they suffered from starvation and thirst.

In contrast to the war in the Korean peninsula, Toyotomi Hideyoshi was enjoying amusement in imitating a merchant and holding a noh performance in Ōsaka Castle. He also enjoyed the cherry blossom festival in the mountains of Yoshinoya. However, he died from a disease on 18<sup>th</sup> of August, 1598. Tokunaga Toshimasa and Miyamoto Toyomori were sent to the Korean peninsula to order the retreat of the Japanese troops back to Japan. From September, Ming China and Chōsen allied forces attacked the base of the Japanese forces and the Japanese started to fall back from the Korean peninsula from late October, 1598 and the war finally ended.

The expedition ended with the death of Toyotomi Hideyoshi but there was a problem remaining between the three nations, China, Chōsen and Japan. The Manchu Dynasty (the Qing Dynasty) was rising in Manchuria and for Chōsen, there were not many choices but to reconcile with the worst enemy during this time, Japan, to prepare for an invasion by the Manchu Dynasty. In Japan, after the death of Toyotomi Hideyoshi, Tokugawa Ieyasu took political power but there was a conflict with Toyotomi Hideyori, the son of Hideyoshi.

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<sup>138</sup> Kim, 1995. pp. 20-26

Tokugawa Ieyasu wanted to resolve relationships with Ming China and Chōsen so he sent diplomats in 1599 but both of them were arrested. Then Tokugawa Ieyasu ordered the warlord of Tsushima Island, Sō Yoshitoshi, to negotiate regarding friendly relationships with Chōsen. The conflict between Tokugawa Ieyasu and Toyotomi Hideyori's supporters deepened and finally Tokugawa Ieyasu defeated Toyotomi Hideyori's supporters in the battle of Sekigahara and took power in 1600. However, though Tokugawa Ieyasu defeated his enemies, he desperately needed political authority that could prove his power and recognition by neighbouring nations. Reconciliation with Ming China and Chōsen was greatly supported by the shōgunate and intensified effort was poured into reconciliation with Chōsen led by Tsushima Island. There were some 21 diplomatic visits to Chōsen from 1599 until 1607 when there was the first formal envoy for repatriation.

Ming China ceased diplomacy with Japan. After the war prisoners were repatriated, Chōsen took the leading role for diplomacy with Japan. There were three occasions when Chōsen diplomats visited Japan before the formal envoy for repatriation.

The first visit was in 1600 and their purpose was to spy out Japanese movements and the second visit was in 1602 to inform the position of Ming China and request repatriation of prisoners-of-war. From the second time onward, the lord of Tsushima Island requested *tongsinsa*, a goodwill mission. The third visit was led by Jung Yu and he actually was able to have a meeting with the Tokugawa Shōgunate, which became the first official post war conference between the two nations.<sup>139</sup> Tokugawa Ieyasu insisted upon the fact that he did not participate in the expedition and he sent back 3,000 prisoners of war with a message hoping for a peaceful relationship between the two nations. There was no formal reply from

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<sup>139</sup> Choi, 2003. pp. 124-125

Chōsen after the third diplomat and the lord of Tsushima Island requested a diplomat for peaceful relations and the Chōsen court requested a credential from Tokugawa Ieyasu and war criminals of the invasions in 1592 and 1597.<sup>140</sup> In November 1606, the lord of Tsushima Island brought a fake credential and fake war criminals, which the Chōsen court did not fully believe, but they agreed to the will of the Japanese court. After all these processes, the first formal envoy for repatriation was finally sent to Japan in January 1607 and the friendly relationship commenced.

The Japanese invasions in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century took away so many things from Chōsen. Amongst many losses, damage of cultural assets was severe. Temples and palaces were burnt and books and art works were stolen by Japanese. Pottery, technology and other professional skills were degraded compared to the period before the invasions. During the invasions many Chōsen people were kidnapped and mobilised as slaves.<sup>141</sup> Some people with skills and technology stayed in Japan with a certain social status such as potters and scholars of Neo Confucianism. Later, potters who remained in Japan became world famous masters of pottery such as Satsuma pottery and Arima pottery. Some people came back to Chōsen with experiences of Japan and Hang Gang<sup>142</sup> was a representative person who was the author of *Ganyangrok*.

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<sup>140</sup> Thirty-ninth year fourth month and fifth month of *Seonjo sillok*.

<sup>141</sup> Prisoners of war taken to Japan were sold as slaves to Dutch merchants who were the only Western trade partners of Japan. Slaves were sold in many places but amongst them there is one famous Korean named Antonio Corea. There are still descendants of this Korean remain in Italia but other than Antonio Corea, there is no extant record.

<sup>142</sup> He was an officer of the Chōsen court who was captured as a war prisoner during the invasions. During his stays in Japan he taught neo-Confucianism and recorded the situation of Japan in his book *Ganyangrok*.

The Chōsen court sent two more official envoys for repatriation and then officially sent *tongsinsa*, goodwill missions to Japan. These goodwill missions became a bridge to spread Chinese and Chōsen cultures to Japan as well as spying out the situation of Japan.

The invasions into the Korean peninsula brought many changes to Japan. After regaining a peaceful relationship with Chōsen, the Tokugawa Shōgunate seized power in Japan after the invasions, and neo-Confucianism that spread during the invasions, through Chōsen scholars captured by Japanese, influenced Japanese society considerably. The Tokugawa Shōgunate ruled Japan with the teachings and values of neo-Confucianism and this was a political strategy to control Japan in peace as well as to be a part of an international order in East Asia sharing the same culture.

However, although the Tokugawa Shōgunate was making Japan into a neo-Confucianist society, there was a nationalistic philosophy remaining in the foundational thoughts. There were ideas that the Korean peninsula was a tributary state of ancient Japan and also describing the invasions to the Korean peninsula as a rightful war to recover the land that used to be theirs. Not only praising the invasions but also despising Chōsen people was to become a widespread disposition of the Meiji Restoration patriots.

## CHAPTER 4. JAPAN-KOREA RELATIONS: Isolation Period

Koreans often talk about their superior culture that was inherited by Japan in the ancient times, and then talk about a bitter experience during the colonial age (1910-1945). They lodge vehement protests against discrimination and contempt towards Korea, sometimes represented by attitudes towards Korean-Japanese people in Japan. Once Korea and Japan were like a teacher-student relationship and it is important in the Japan-Korea relationship to search for the turning point of the relationship when it turned upside down similar to the *gekokujō* of earlier years.

The 250 plus years of the Edo Period (1603-1868) was arguably the most peaceful and friendly period in the relationship between Korea and Japan. This period was also a time when Japan developed much of its distinctive culture and there were also certain advances in science and technology, as well as ideology. This period would be considered as a significant period in the Japan-Korea relations because unlike in the past when Korea took an active part in exporting culture, there were friendly exchanges between the two countries. Many scholars describe the growth in this period as an ‘intellectual outburst’ and it was influenced by a ‘Chinese Cultural Wave’.<sup>143</sup> Japan during the Edo Period was carrying out a policy of seclusion that excluded almost all countries.

This chapter is focused on how Japan could have achieved development based on the relationship between Korea and Japan when there was no external injection, as well as how the relationship between the two countries developed in the Edo Period.

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<sup>143</sup> Sugimoto & Swain, 1978. pp. 225-290



## 4.1 Isolation period

An uncountable number of people were taken as captives by Japanese soldiers during the invasions from 1592 to 1598. Unlike national treasures that were taken by the Japanese troops or treasures that were burnt, the life style and culture of Chōsen of the captives were exploited by Japanese forces. There were as many as 100,000 Chōsen prisoners of war taken to Japan throughout the invasions and less than a tenth returned after the invasions.<sup>144</sup> It is estimated that 30,000 taken as prisoners of war from Chōsen to Satsuma Domain alone. However, as there were many warlords of *han* (domains) involved in the invasion, the actual number would have been greater.<sup>145</sup> A Japanese scholar, Naitō Shunpo, reveals that Toyotomi Hideyoshi and other warlords intentionally took as many Chōsen prisoners of war as possible during the invasions.<sup>146</sup>

There is not much research regarding the Chōsen prisoners of war during the invasions so it is not difficult to hypothesise that those Chōsen people who were taken to Japan influenced the country carrying out the seclusion policy. For example, the Satsuma Domain along with the Chōshū Domain, were two main domains that took the lead during the later Meiji Restoration period. A plausible reason could be found from a unique educational system in the Satsuma Domain named *gojū*<sup>147</sup>.<sup>148</sup> This *gojū* was established by Shimazu Yoshihoro who was a warlord of the Satsuma Domain. There were about 22 *gojū* towards the

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<sup>144</sup> Kim, 1977

<sup>145</sup> Miyake, 1996. pp. 72

<sup>146</sup> Naito, 1976. pp. 11

<sup>147</sup> *Gojū* (郷中ごじゅう) was a unique educational system of multiple institutes in the Satsuma Domain for samurai class children, neo-Confucianism being prominent in the tuition.

<sup>148</sup> Kanbashi, 1984. pp. 120-127

end of the Edo Period and institutions were mainly to educate noble families. It is noticeable that this *gojū* was established after the invasion of Korea by the warlord Shimazu who was a general in the war in the Korean peninsula. It would seem that it was possible only because there were Chōsen prisoners of war from the Korean peninsula. As mentioned above, there were around 30,000 prisoners of war from Chōsen and assuming there was a mere 5 per cent literacy rate amongst Chōsen people that equates to 1,500 people who can read and write. In the *gojū*, martial arts were a major subject but there were Chinese classics and neo-Confucianism as foundational courses. The Satsuma Domain tried to control diverse public sentiment by providing a systematic educational system and teachers of Chinese classics and neo-Confucianism were essential factors.<sup>149</sup> It would seem that teachers of Chinese classics and neo-Confucianism were supplied from the prisoners of war from Chōsen. There is no historical reference remaining to prove this hypothesis but there are also similar examples in other domains. In the Kishū Domain there was a classical scholar, Jin-young Lee, who came from Chōsen, establishing an educational institution. He became the progenitor of neo-Confucianism in the area of Wakayama. His son, Mae-gae Lee, became a tutor to the family of the lord of the Domain and presented many books on neo-Confucianism and Chinese classics.<sup>150</sup> As another example, Ho-yeon Hong was a Chōsen classical scholar who settled in Shiga Prefecture and became the progenitor of neo-Confucianism, and his descendants are still carrying the surname Hong until now as a noble family.<sup>151</sup>

An important fact to note here is that in Japan there were ceaseless battles and wars from 1467 to 1568 for around 100 years and it was a dark age for culture. Knowledge was

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<sup>149</sup> Kanbashi, 1984. pp. 120-127

<sup>150</sup> Matsuda, 1937. pp. 14-15

<sup>151</sup> Donga Ilbo, 30<sup>th</sup> of April, 1992

passed on through a few select Buddhist priests and monks. It was from the fourth shogun Ietsuna Tokugawa that literature and studies fully flourished with improving education as he amended the shōgunate's policy to *bunchi seiji* (civilian government) from *budan seiji* (military government). This policy was developed from the policy on literature that was taken from Chōsen during the invasions.

The Japanese forces during the invasions intentionally took with them trained priests to bring literature, printing-types and national treasures. During the invasion of Chōsen the Japanese troops invaded the entire Korean peninsula and took national treasures and an uncountable number of books. For example, all Korean books regarding medicine that were published before the invasions are now in Japan<sup>152</sup> and the book list<sup>153</sup> that Hayashi Razan (1583-1657)<sup>154</sup> published in 1604 consisted of plundered booty from the invasions.<sup>155</sup> There was no printing technology in Japan prior to the Edo Period and the only possible reason that makes sense with *bunchi seiji* (civilian government) in the Edo Period would be the flow of plenty of books from Chōsen. These books provided significant knowledge on Chinese classics and neo-Confucianism and the spread of libraries and educational institutions of generalised studies were not only for the noble classes but also for commoners. The *Suruga Bunko* (*Suruga* library), which became the origin of library in the Edo Period, was established by Tokugawa Ieyasu in 1602 with the books from Chōsen.<sup>156</sup> Educational institutions such as

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<sup>152</sup> Kim, 1977. pp. 142

<sup>153</sup> There are about more than 440 books he read when Hayashi Razan was a student of Fujiwara Seika and he published a book list of the books he read.

<sup>154</sup> Hayashi Razan was the founder of the Hayashi clan of Confucian scholars.

<sup>155</sup> Kim, 1977. pp. 197

<sup>156</sup> Oda, 1976. pp. 103

*hankō*<sup>157</sup> and *terakoya*<sup>158</sup>, which were for both the elite and the commoners in the domains, were established in relation to spreading libraries in domains. If anyone tries to find a book that existed in Korea before 1592, it is extremely difficult to find it in Korea but rather easier to find it in Japan nowadays. After the invasion of Chōsen, all that remained in Chōsen was the shell of its culture whereas Japan was full of its valuables, which later became the foundation of flourishing culture and studies.

In modern Japan, Confucianism is seen as the foundational ideology in Japanese society. Confucianism spread in Japan in the early Kamakura period (1192-1333) but it was a relatively insignificant study or ideology during this period. However, Confucianism was chosen as the fittest ideology to maintain the centralised government of the Tokugawa Shōgunate after Toyotomi Hideyoshi unified most of Japan. Completion of the *bakuhān* system (the feudal system characteristic of the shōgunate) signified a distinctive Japanese feudal system. In order to maintain the nature of the feudal system, the Tokugawa Shōgunate needed a new paradigm in ethics and a new world view. There were existing ideologies such as Buddhism and Shintōism but it was not enough to maintain the *bakuhān* system. The Tokugawa Shōgunate accepted a Confucian ideology of ethics and hierarchy that are based on ‘*shi-nō-kō-shō*’<sup>159</sup> to maximise the centralised power of the shōgunate as it was based on strong hierarchical order of society. Confucian ethics provided values of devotional morality based on benevolence and filial piety, denying a tendency toward *gekokujiō* that was common in the Sengoku Period. The philosophy of Confucianism contained answers for political

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<sup>157</sup> It is known as the *han* school (藩校 *hankō*) and it was an educational institution in the Edo Period, to educate children of warlords in the domains.

<sup>158</sup> Literally, it means a temple school. It was an educational institution in the Edo Period of Japan, to educate commoners.

<sup>159</sup> The four main social hierarchical classes: samurai, farmers, artisans and merchants.

requests from feudalistic leaders so the Tokugawa Shōgunate valued Confucian ideology, especially loyalty towards superiors amongst many other values.

It was Confucian ideology that suppressed rival ideologies such as Christianity and Buddhism in the early Edo Period. It is a well-known fact that the main reason Tokugawa Ieyasu ordered a policy of seclusion in 1635 was to avoid an ideological crisis in Japan by the introduction of Christianity. As a part of the seclusion, there was suppression of Christians and martyrs arose one after another.<sup>160</sup>

The spread of Confucianism during this time was closely related to Chōsen. A famous progenitor of modern Japanese Confucianism was Fujiwara Seika who was also famous for a relationship with Hang Gang (KyōKō), who was a classical scholar from Chōsen who was forced to move to Japan as a prisoner of war during the invasion. Hang Gang was a famous Confucius scholar in Chōsen and he returned to Chōsen in 1600. While he was in Japan he taught Confucianism to Fujiwara and he also taught ceremonies and etiquette that were related to Confucianism. Later, Fujiwara spent his life educating young scholars and amongst his students there was Hayashi Razan as well.<sup>161</sup> Fujiwara later established a Confucian temple in Edo and formalised the services in honour of Confucius. Hayashi provided a foundation for Confucianism in Edo.<sup>162</sup>

Japanese Confucianism evolved differently from how it had developed in Chōsen. In the later Chōsen period, the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Confucianism stubbornly hampered Chōsen society in its modernisation, but as opposed to this, Confucianism in Japan became a foundational ideology to establish a modernised Japan. Confucian values maintained the *bakuhau* system

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<sup>160</sup> Henshall, 2012.

<sup>161</sup> In later years, the Hayashi clan became one of the top level samurai in the Tokugawa Shōgunate.

<sup>162</sup> Naramoto, 1970. pp. 51

as well as providing foundational ideology, *sonnō jōi* (support the Emperor and expel barbarians), in the Meiji Period (1868 – 1912). *The Imperial Rescript on Education* in the Meiji Period was a policy based on Confucian values and ethics such as humanity, justice, loyalty and filial piety.

Many *nihonjinron* (literally theories/discussions about the Japanese) writers described Japanese as being Confucian, comparing it to the case of Western civilisation being based on Christianity. If this is true, it would be possible to say that today's Japanese ideology was formed only since the Edo Period and the greatest contribution was done by Chōsen people who spread Confucianism to Japan. Confucianism significantly influenced modern Japanese ideology and was transplanted from Korea from its roots. This ideology in fact ruled over modern Japan. The patriots of the Meiji Restoration were Confucian scholars and they were also the first people who accepted advanced Western technology, knowledge and culture.

During Hideyoshi's invasion there were people who were taken to Japan as prisoners of war yet had obtained higher samurai status with their knowledge, technologies and skills such as potteries, printing technology, medicine and paper manufacturing technology. In the case of potters, they were the first people that the Japanese soldiers took back to Japan as prisoners of war. A popular example would be that the warlord of the Satsuma Domain took potters and let them live in Naeshirokawa to make their potteries. This pottery later became Satsuma pottery which brought great wealth to the domain. Chōsen potters later became world famous as their potteries were exhibited in the international exhibition in Paris in 1867 and in the international exhibition in Australia in 1873. The domain actively developed a pottery industry by protecting and encouraging potters and it resulted in the economic prosperity of the Domain. This economic superiority continued through the Edo Period and

the Satsuma Domain was economically superior to other domains in the Meiji Restoration. In addition to this example, other famous potteries nowadays are descendants of potters who were transplanted from Chōsen during the Hideyoshi's invasion. A flourishing pottery industry brought economic and cultural prosperity. On the other hand, in Chōsen, there were very few potters remaining so there were no proper potteries for a while after the invasions.

Other than pottery, Chōsen had superb technology in letterpress plate printing before the invasions. Both Toyotomi Hideyoshi and Tokugawa Ieyasu were interested in the printing technology of Chōsen, and thus they sent envoys to import the technology.<sup>163</sup> During the invasion, Japanese soldiers plundered almost everything regarding printing technology and books, and in Japan, as a characteristic of the Edo Period, the printing industry based on letterpress plate flourished. Along with the pottery, printing technology became a factor in a prosperous culture and what might be called a mini industrial revolution in the Edo Period.

Chōsen was the only country that Japan had official diplomatic relations with in the Edo Period. Trade was possible in the port of Nagasaki for Dutch, Qing China, and Chōsen but Chōsen was the only country that was allowed to send official envoys to the Tokugawa Shōgunate. Throughout more than 250 years in the Edo Period, several times Chōsen sent their *tongsinsa* (goodwill missions) to Japan and it greatly influenced Japanese culture during this period. There were 12 Chōsen *tongsinsa* in the Edo Period with an average of 450 envoys staying for about 10 months. Japan tried to prepare an infrastructure to import many things from Chōsen – including kidnapping people – but it was not possible for Japan to digest everything in such a short period of time. After the invasions, the Tokugawa Shōgunate

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<sup>163</sup> Shoji, 1973. pp. 67

requested the dispatch of a grand-scale *tongsinsa* using many different methods – requests, threats and conciliations.<sup>164</sup> It was to accept advanced Chinese culture through Chōsen. There was a political factor in that the newly formed shōgunate wanted to show off the power and prestige of the central government to the local warlords. Chōsen *tongsinsa* were also useful for the shōgunate to show off their superior authority. It would seem that Chōsen had a superior culture of their own which was beneficial to Japan. Chōsen *tongsinsa* comprised classical scholars, medical doctors, scientists and many other professionals of different fields according to the request of the shōgunate. Scholars and professionals of both countries interacted through questioning and answering and interactions proceeded, such as sharing Chinese poetry. Through the interaction with Chōsen scholars, Japanese scholars were stimulated and Chinese Classics in Japan grew rapidly.

However, Japan was the first East Asian country to accept advanced technology and knowledge from Westerners from the late 16<sup>th</sup> century amongst East Asian countries. All three countries maintained a seclusion policy but unlike China and Chōsen, Japan allowed trade in Nagasaki and Westerners were keen to trade with Japan. Western missionaries built schools and hospitals as active evangelistic activities and it is noticeable how Japan accepted and internalised Western technologies and knowledge. As opposed to Japan, Chōsen was extremely passive<sup>165</sup> in accepting cutting-edge Western technologies and knowledge – only through China did they accept some Western technology – and this passive approach caused the era under the colonial annexation by Japan.

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<sup>164</sup> Miyake, 1996. pp. 17-38

<sup>165</sup> Looking at the close relationship between Chōsen and Japan from the 17<sup>th</sup> century to the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Chōsen may have had opportunities to acquire Western technologies from Japan but Chōsen did not accept much from Japan. From this fact, it is maybe possible to assume that Chōsen was passive in accepting Western technologies in the isolation period.



A reason that Chōsen was so passive in accepting Western technologies and Japanese technology during this time was because the Chōsen court had a perception of Westerners and Japanese to be barbarians and there was contempt towards Japanese. Though Koreans were defeated militarily in the past, Koreans had too much pride as cultural teachers so they evaluated Japanese as people without Chinese literacy, etiquette and honorifics. This perception was true in the past but from the mid-Edo Period, Japanese literature, etiquette and honorifics surpassed those of Koreans. It could be that culture that was transplanted to Japan during the Edo Period was internalised and developed further in Japanese culture. In the beginning of the *tongsinsa* in the Edo Period, Chōsen scholars described Japanese as barbarians but in the later period, the perception changed to a country with wealth and a strong army based on superior knowledge and skills with advanced Western technology. As opposed to this, it is possible to see how perceptions towards Chōsen by Japanese changed in the Edo Period as their attitude changed towards *tongsinsa*. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Tokugawa Shōgunate was keen to accept Chōsen *tongsinsa* so they requested these from time to time but from the 18<sup>th</sup> century on, the frequency of visits gradually decreased and in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there were no diplomatic interactions between the two countries. It would seem that Japan had caught up with Chōsen culturally in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and surpassed it culturally in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Japanese often say that Japan is the only country in East Asia to achieve ideal '*wakōn-yōsai*' – Japanese spirit with Western talent – regarding modernisation. It is Western technology and knowledge that are often emphasised when people talk about the exceptional modernisation of Japan but it should not be neglected that there was *wakōn*, Japanese spirit, which was largely transplanted from Chōsen culture. Japan successfully established *wakōn* with a foundational ideology of Confucianism that was from Chōsen and acquired *yōsai*,

Western talent, by accepting and internalising Western technology. It would be possible to hypothesise that Japan exceeded Chōsen in every way possible – militarily, economically and culturally – from the 18<sup>th</sup> century onward.

## **CHAPTER 5. JAPAN-KOREA RELATIONS: Modern Period**

### **5.1 Meiji Restoration to Russo-Japanese War**

American Commodore Matthew C. Perry came to Japan in 1853 to obtain a trade treaty that would open up Japanese ports. This consequently opened Japan to the outer world, after long seclusion in the Edo Period, in 1854, in the treaty of the Convention of Kanagawa with America. Four years later America and Japan signed an unequal Treaty of Amity and Commerce which became a political conflict between the shōgunate and those who were against the shōgunate. Presently, on 9<sup>th</sup> November 1867, the shōgunate came to its end and the new Meiji government was officially launched in 1868 through Meiji Restoration patriots. The Meiji government pushed ahead with the political, administration, military and infrastructural restoration and established a constitutional monarchy under imperial rule. Along with the successful restoration, Japan implemented a series of reformation policies and aimed to catch up with Western superpowers.

Japan was the first country to achieve modernisation amongst Asian countries without being colonised by a western power. The Meiji Restoration was a major turning point in Japanese history along with the Taika Reforms in 645. There were two external factors in Japanese history that influenced Japan greatly. One was in the 7<sup>th</sup> century when Japan accepted Chinese civilisation (through Paekche) and the other was in the 19<sup>th</sup> century when Japan accepted Western civilisation through the Meiji Restoration. The Meiji Restoration resulted in a cultural mix of oriental and western. This reformation changed Japan's hitherto narrow world view that was limited to Japan itself into an imperialistic country. The change of view influenced greatly neighbouring countries, namely Korea and China, in many fields.

This chapter will review the Meiji Restoration in three fields: its development, internal conflicts and modern systems; the idea of *seikanron* (a punitive expedition) which resulted in the unequal Japan-Korea treaty of 1876 and the Japan-Korea annexation treaty in 1910; and the two significant wars, the Sino-Japanese War and Russo-Japanese War with regard to the Japan-Korea relationship.

### 5.1.1 The Meiji Restoration

Japan started to become open to the outside world when Commodore Matthew C. Perry of the United States Navy arrived in Uraga, Kanagawa in 1853 with his four warships and the following year nine ships. He passed an official sealed letter from President Millard Fillmore (written in 1852) to the bureaucrats of the Tokugawa Shōgunate and threatened the Tokugawa Shōgunate with armed force if necessary. The Tokugawa Shōgunate knew to some extent that the arrival of the westerners to the Japanese shores was foreseeable. However, it adhered to its seclusion policy. There was an increasing awareness of western military forces after the Opium War (1839-42) in China and the Tokugawa Shōgunate considered the request of Commodore Matthew C. Perry seriously. The shōgunate was prepared to accept the request despite the fact that the court and some warlords were against it.

As a result, Japan concluded the convention of Kanagawa (Treaty of Peace and Amity) with the United States in 1854. The treaty included limited opening of ports and trade and the presence of a United States consular representative in Japan. Townsend Harris (1804-78), the first United States Consul General to Japan, was unhappy about limited opening and negotiated the Treaty of Amity and Commerce in 1858 with the Tokugawa Shōgunate. This treaty was well-known as an unequal treaty, allowing free trade in Japan, opening up of more

ports and extraterritoriality. Concluding the treaties with the Western powers allowed Japan to be included in an international order led by the Western powers.

However, the royal imprimatur of the treaty caused a political conflict in Japan. The Tokugawa Shōgunate enforced conclusion of the treaty despite the opposition of Emperor Kōmei and this stirred up conflict between the Tokugawa Shōgunate and the court with some warlords, who were against westerners.

Those who were against criticised the Tokugawa Shōgunate based on *sonnō jōi* (Revere the emperor, expel the barbarians). The theory of *sonnō jōi* was a Japanese political philosophy and a social movement derived from Neo-Confucianism. The supporters of *sonnō jōi* philosophy gathered in Kyōto where the emperor resided and pursued political activities against the Tokugawa Shōgunate. The Tokugawa Shōgunate also tried to improve relationships with the court<sup>166</sup> to suppress the supporters of *sonnō jōi* philosophy.

In this political complexity, the Tokugawa Shōgunate punished the supporters of *sonnō jōi* philosophy by attacking the Chōshū Domain in 1864. In 1866, the Satsuma-Chōshū Alliance was established to fight against the Tokugawa Shōgunate and in 1868, the Boshin War, so-called the beginning of the Meiji Restoration, occurred between the Tokugawa Shōgunate and those seeking to return political power to the imperial court. Finally, in 1868, the Tokugawa Shōgunate was defeated and Emperor Meiji took control of Japan. It was the end of the Edo Period that had continued over 260 years ruled by the Tokugawa Shōgunate.

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<sup>166</sup> There was a movement to combine the Japanese imperial court and the shōgunate known as *kōbugattai*. This movement was developed as the imperial court gained power through *sonnō jōi* philosophy within Japan and it supported an equal merger between the imperial court and the shōgunate.

### 5.1.2 Conflicts of the Meiji Restoration

The restoration of the Meiji government went relatively smoothly. However, there were many problems and conflicts internally. The modernisation policies which destroyed the privileges of samurai caused resistance and there was also an extreme faction requesting more radical reformation. All domains and citizens were under the control of the emperor in 1869 and the government stopped paying pensions to samurai in 1876. There were unceasing rebellions by samurai until 1877 when the Satsuma Rebellion was suppressed by the Imperial Forces.

There was an extreme movement of radical reformation actively seeking a democratic system. The supporters of democracy requested a constitutional regime. This democratic movement was different from the resistance by samurai and other classes as this movement was influenced by western philosophies such as liberalism. The movement started from Itagaki Taisuke (1837-1919) and Gotō Shinpei (1857-1929) and it grew larger with the increasing success of the movement. Political parties started to develop in preparation for a Constitution from 1881 and the first draft of the Constitution was put forward.

However, the Meiji government was ambivalent about the democratic movement. It saw that a constitution was needed to achieve modernisation modelled after western superpowers, but it also wanted to suppress the democratic movement to prevent any perceived extremes. As a result the democratic movement was somewhat weakened.

### 5.1.3 Establishment of modern system

In 1881, the Meiji government proceeded to promote the Constitution by announcing the establishment of the national assembly. Ito Hirobumi, who was the foremost leader in the Meiji government, visited Europe with his associates to research constitutions of other

countries and chose the constitutional model of Germany. He invited a professional adviser, Karl Friedrich Hermann Roesler, from Germany, and the Meiji Constitution was announced by the emperor in 1889.

The Constitution was not without its inconsistencies, such as in Article One, which states the Emperor reigns, yet in Article Four and Five gives him only authority to rule with the consent of the Diet. The Constitution also stated that the emperor was a god and also sovereign at the same time, who was a transcendental being, and to be the commander in chief of the Japanese forces, responsible for the conclusion of treaties, declarations of war and so on.

The first election for the members of the House of Representatives took place in July 1890 but unlike the government's intention, the majority of parliamentary seats were taken by people not necessarily supportive. However, the national assembly was established in November 1890 and the framework for the constitutional system which proved Japan's preparation for the institutional foundation as a modern nation, was complete.

## 5.2 *Seikanron* (Advocacy of a punitive expedition to Korea)

The *seikanron* was a major political event led by Saigō Takamori and his supporters to conquer Korea with armed forces. This debate started from the late Edo Period, insisting that ancient Japan ruled the Korean peninsula in ancient times. This claim was used in ‘Japanese national studies’ (*kokugaku*) and *mitogaku*, the latter referring to a school of Japanese historical and Shintō study. Japan attempted to open up a good relationship with Korea by sending an envoy to Korea with the new seal of the Meiji government referring to the emperor as *kō* (皇) rather than *taikun* (勅). *Kō* was used only to refer the Chinese emperor and therefore Koreans refused to see the envoy, as a diplomatic letter was in a format which would make the Korean monarch a subject of the Japanese emperor. As a result, *seikanron* in Japan became an issue. Saigō Takamori and his supporters kept insisting on *seikanron* as Koreans treated insultingly Japanese envoys that came to establish trade and diplomatic relations. In 1873, the Meiji government made a decision to focus on domestic matters rather than an overseas expedition and Saigō Takamori and his supporters resigned from the government and led the anti-government movement from 1874 to 1877.

The debate on *seikanron* came to the fore because there were conflicts and problems arising in Japan during the Meiji Restoration. Some politicians saw an expedition to Korea as the key to overcome these matters. It was also a starting point of foreign expansion for Japanese imperialism. Although the Meiji government did not take the side of *seikanron*, it was not against it but it was a matter of priority and this is proved as the Meiji government later sent the *Un'yō*, a small Japanese warship under the command of Inoue Yoshika, and concluded the Japan-Korea Treaty of Amity in 1876. There were some people who stood against the *seikanron* during the Meiji Period but others considered invading the Korean



peninsula as well as China to establish the Empire of Japan and this proves that regardless of sides, the Meiji government as a whole was involved in imperialistic expeditions.

### 5.2.1 Background

The 35 years of colonisation by Japan is remembered as a tragedy in the modern history of Korea. There are still discussions about the benefits and losses in this matter between the two nations. However, it is also true that Japan had an intention to conquer the Korean peninsula as well as China even before the 20<sup>th</sup> century during the Bakumatsu Period (1853-1868) through the *seikanron*.

Japan emphasised its unique independent culture as there was no extant record of Japan being a tributary state of China. Based on this, the Japanese thought of themselves as being on an equal level with China, and there was no change of the royal line of Japanese emperors from ancient times, hence Japan considered itself as a centre of civilisation. This perceived superiority over other Asian countries made the attacks on the Korean peninsula and China possible in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. This section is focused on the development of *seikanron* from the mid Edo Period to the Meiji Restoration.

From the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Japan broke the traditional worldview that was centred in China and started to develop pride and self-esteem. Japanese Confucian scholars such as Yamazaki Ansai (1619-1682) insisted on the superiority of Japan against Chōsen and China by simply comparing the continuation of the royal line of Japanese emperors. Along with increasing superiority, Japanese started to look down on Chōsen and contempt became a trend in academia in Japan in the mid Edo Period. This trend was also heavily influenced by the development of national studies and the spread of education during the Edo Period. At the beginning of the Edo Period, scholars of Japan, such as Fujiwara Seika (1561-1619) and

Hayashi Razan (1583-1657), respected Chōsen's Confucianism, however later this view changed to contempt of Chōsen as their pride and self-esteem were restored through developing a strong Japanese national identity.

Scholars of national studies in Japan produced a new worldview based on the restored pride of Japan from the 18<sup>th</sup> century. A national studies scholar, Motoori Norinaga (1730-1801), insisted on the purity of the Japanese imperial line, criticising the legitimacy of Chinese emperors. Later, Hirata Atsutane (1776-1843) built Shintōism upon former national studies, treating emperors as sons of the gods and therefore Japan is superior to all other nations and other people. It was from this time on that Japanese national studies scholars began to research the birth of Japan through extant classics to prove its superiority and to create an image of a divine nation. As a result, a theory of ancient Korea being a subordinate state of ancient Japan, which became the foundational theory of *seikanron*, was created to justify the colonisation of Korea in later years.

The development of national studies and contempt towards Chōsen came to the fore in the mid Edo Period and these ideas influenced the Meiji government's political philosophy, *sonnō jōi* and *nissendōsorōn*, the latter a theory that Chōsen and Japan may have the same ancestors. However, it was a change of worldview and philosophy by Japanese scholars in the mid Edo Period which changed views and started a debate about conquering the Korean peninsula.

### 5.2.2 Appearance and development of *seikanron*

Towards the end of the Edo Period, Russia moved southward closer to Japan and the external pressure was felt by Japan. This threat from Russia changed contempt of Chōsen to a debate to conquer the Korean peninsula to secure the safety of Japan. The Tokugawa

Shōgunate suppressed the idea of conquests as it disturbed people's minds but it became more popular as the external threats continued. The debate on conquest became more specific when Satō Nobuhiro (1769–1850) brought up the “Greater East Asia” concept. He justified the conquest of Korea based on the Empress Jingu's conquest of the Korean peninsula written in the *Nihon shoki*. His purpose was to resist against expansion of Great Britain and China, hence it was not limited to the conquest of the Korean peninsula but China, Mongolia and Manchuria.

The Opium War (1839-42) accelerated the demolition of the traditional worldview that saw China as a superpower and it also increased external threats by Western barbarians. As a solution to these increasing threats, Yoshida Shōin (1830–1859) actively insisted on *sonnō jōi* and *seikanron*. Later in the Bakumatsu Period, the *seikanron* was discussed in earnest, and some sought an invasion.

In 1863, Katsu Kaishū (1823–1899) suggested forming an alliance between Asian countries to avoid Westerners' invasion but this plan was not carried out as Katsu failed to remain in his position. However, it is remarkable that the *seikanron* was actually put to practice politically. This mood of implementing *seikanron* was continued in the Meiji Restoration by Japanese political activists of the late Edo Period.

During the Meiji Restoration, there were two different groups in the Meiji government concerning *seikanron*. One group was with politicians who insisted on conquering the Korean peninsula and the other group was with politicians who were more wary about conquest and therefore focused on internal matters such as modernisation of Japan.

The ‘war-party’ was led by Saigō Takamori and his supporters insisted on an expedition to the Korean peninsula to seek meaningful employment for unemployed samurai, who had lost their position and income during the Meiji Restoration. It might be agreed that

Saigō Takamori used the *seikanron* to maintain his political power by embracing the unemployed samurai during this time.

Soejima Taneomi (1828 – 1905) had the same opinion regarding *seikanron* but with a different reason for the expedition. He was a diplomat in the Meiji Period and he found out the reason that Chōsen was stubborn about opening up the country was because China was at the back of Chōsen. Japan concluded the Sino-Japanese Friendship and Trade Treaty in 1871 and Soejima thought if Japan concludes an unequal treaty with Chōsen, then it may be possible to revise unequal treaties with western countries. Saigō Takamori and Soejima Taneomi supported *seikanron* but Saigō's opinion was more concerned with internal matters and Soejima's opinion was more concerned with external matters.

There were many other opinions on *seikanron* but the ultimate goal of *seikanron* was to expand Japanese territory to overcome many external and internal problems within Japan and it was not much different from what was described at the end of the Edo Period.

Ōkubo Toshimichi (1830–1878) was a representative politician who took a stand against the *seikanron*. He was the home minister who was responsible for matters internal and he brought up seven reasons against *seikanron*. These reasons include establishing political power, enhancement of armies, revival of exports, industrialisation, revision of the unequal treaties and so on. It was possible to see that all these reasons were to focus more on internal issues that were more urgent. Along with Ōkubo Toshimichi, Iwakura Tomomi (1825–1883) also agreed with Ōkubo Toshimichi but it was only to keep the *seikanron* 'on hold' as there were more urgent priorities. He thought there were desperate needs for increased national power and internationalisation after his visit to the United States.

It is possible to see that both political parties had the same worldview, therefore it was not the debate on *seikanron* but rather political conflict between two parties within the Meiji government regarding the right time to invade the Korean peninsula.

### 5.2.3. Response of Chōsen against *seikanron*

When King Gojong and his supporters came to power after Heungseon Daewongun (1820–1898) diplomacy with Japan began to change. During the reign of Heungseon Daewongun, the Chōsen Dynasty was against opening the country but as Heungseon Daewongun and supporters were purged, Chōsen took an opening foreign policy with Japan.

In 1874, there was contact from China which the Chōsen court did not fully trust, as China had concluded unequal treaties with westerners after the Opium War and the court ordered all provinces to be prepared for possible threats. At the same time the court sought an alliance with Japan but it was a time when there was conflict in the Meiji government about *seikanron* and Japan was passive about diplomacy with Chōsen.

In May, 1874, the Meiji government sent diplomats to spy on Chōsen and the Chōsen court sent officers to *Wakan* (Japanese consular office in Korea) to greet them. It was the first official conference between the two nations after the Meiji Restoration. However, when Chōsen found out about the Japanese invasion of Taiwan, it changed its attitude towards Japan and stopped diplomacy.

In the following year, in April 1875, Japan decided to send warships to Chōsen and sent *Un'yō*, a small Japanese warship under the command of Inoue Yoshika to survey coastal waters. As *Un'yō* was surveying coastal waters without permission, the Chōsen garrison shot at the foreign ship and the *Un'yō* attacked Ganghwa Island with superior firearms and

withdrew back to Japan. After the *Un'yō* incident, the *seikanron* came to the fore once again and Japan finally decided to open Chōsen with an armed protest.

Li Hongzhang (1823–1901), who was a diplomat from China, recommended the Chōsen court to open the country and the Chōsen court also was positive, but it was too late to negotiate an equal treaty. In 1876, Japan dispatched warships to push Chōsen to sign an unequal treaty and this treaty became the first modern Japan-Korea Treaty of Amity.

When the Chōsen court concluded the unequal treaty with Japan, citizens of Chōsen were outraged about an incompetent court. Many Chōsen patriots such as Byung-guk Kim, Ik-hyun Choi and Sun-mok Hong stood against the treaty but the court finally agreed to the treaty of amity with Japan.

As mentioned earlier, the root of *seikanron* started from the 18<sup>th</sup> century when national studies scholars and Japanese politicians began to despise Chōsen as barbarians. This view evolved into a debate on the expedition to Korea and in the early Meiji Period, to *seikanron* and to an unequal treaty in 1876. The *seikanron* was not the policy established in the Meiji Period, but rather it was the policy that was already established at the end of Edo Period. Though it is written as *seikanron*, which includes the Korean peninsula only, it is more correct to understand *seikanron* as advocacy of an expedition to form a Greater East Asia centred on Japan.

### 5.3 Sino-Japanese War

The first Sino-Japanese War between China and Japan took place in 1894. The main purpose was to remove Chinese political interference in Chōsen. This war was significant in that it was the first battle for Japan in its imperialist aims. Japan had concluded the treaty of amity in 1876 with Chōsen being recognised as an independent state and expanded its influence to Busan in the following year. In 1882, there was the first anti-Japan movement and Japan requested permission for Japanese armed forces to be present at the Japanese consular office. In 1884, Japan supported Ok-gyun Kim and Young-hyo Park to plot a coup but it failed and in return, the suzerainty of China was enhanced.

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, Japan suffered an economic depression caused by an impractical expansion of textile industries and a poor economic infrastructure. A poor harvest in 1889 also deepened depression. In 1890, Japan suffered a great trade deficit and to solve this problem, Japan plotted an invasion to expand into foreign markets. Internal matters in Japan such as political conflicts, economic crisis and boosting discontent by citizens also promoted the idea of an overseas expedition.

Great Britain saw Russia as a possible dangerous rival in East Asia in expanding territory and was looking for an ally to fight against Russia. It saw Japan as a future ally and revised its unequal treaty on 16<sup>th</sup> of July, 1894, two weeks before the Sino-Japanese War. The revision of the treaty meant permission from Western powers to attack China. The United States also saw Russia as a possible threat and hence allowed Japan to stand against Russia in East Asia as an ally. In contrast to Great Britain and the United States, Russia was not active in countervailing such movements in China.

On 1<sup>st</sup> of June 1894, the Donghak Rebel Army<sup>167</sup> took over Jeonju and moved toward the capital Seoul and the Chōsen court requested help from China to suppress the revolt. Around 2,400 Chinese soldiers arrived in Chōsen on 6<sup>th</sup> of June. Japan asserted that China violated the Convention of Tientsin and sent 4,000 Japanese soldiers and marines to Korea. Their reason was to protect Japanese citizens and consular offices, and they seized strategic points in Incheon and Seoul.

The Chōsen court was flustered with Japanese troops and requested withdrawal of troops for both Chinese and Japanese troops as the revolt was successfully suppressed. However, Ōtori Keisuke, the commander of the Japanese troops, rejected the request and stayed in Chōsen to take control over any further revolts. Their intention was to set up a strategic military base to stand against Russia in the future and to enhance an unequal treaty which would effectively help annexation of Korea sooner or later. Ōtori presented a set of reform proposals to the Chōsen court but the Chōsen court rejected this and stood against Japan. Japanese sent further reinforcements to Chōsen and seized King Gojong on 23<sup>rd</sup> of July. Japan established a new pro-Japanese government led by Heungseon Daewongun and terminated all Sino-Korean treaties to grant the Japanese armies the right to expel the Chinese forces from Chōsen. On 25<sup>th</sup> of July, the Japanese troops attacked the Chinese forces without any notice and provoked the Sino-Japanese War.

By 1894, Japan established great naval forces preparing for war with advanced weapons whereas Chinese naval forces were not able to equip with advanced firearms, and Japanese naval forces outweighed Chinese naval forces in technology and power when the Sino-Japanese War broke out.

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<sup>167</sup> An armed rebellion in Korea led by peasants and followers of the Donghak (literally Eastern Learning), an academic movement in Korean Neo-Confucianism founded in 1860 by Choe Je-u.



On 25<sup>th</sup> of July, the Japanese forces defeated the Chinese forces in Pungdo and on the 30<sup>th</sup>, they seized the Bay of Asan to blockade the Chinese troops in Chōsen. On 1<sup>st</sup> of August, the Sino-Japanese War was officially declared and on 15<sup>th</sup> of September, the Japanese forces attacked Pyongyang which over 13,000 Chinese soldiers were defending. The Japanese defeated the Chinese and the Chinese soldiers fled across the Yalu River. After expelling the Chinese soldiers, Japanese actively intruded in internal matters in Chōsen and according to the unequal treaty on 27<sup>th</sup> of August, food and labour were supplied from Chōsen. As the Korean peninsula became a battleground, Chōsen citizens were suffering from war damage and their independency was infringed. As a result, Chōsen commoners rebelled against the Japanese in November in Gongju but soon the combined Japanese forces (with the Chōsen forces) defeated them with superior weapons. Also, the Japanese naval forces defeated the Beiyang fleet on 17<sup>th</sup> of September and assured Japan's command of the Yellow Sea. On 24<sup>th</sup> of October, the Japanese forces advanced to Manchuria seizing major cities without major damage. On 21<sup>st</sup> of November, the Japanese forces took the city of Lüshunkou and massacred several thousands of captured soldiers and civilians as vengeance for Chinese torture and mutilation of captured Japanese soldiers. This incident was called the Port Arthur Massacre, of which the scale and nature of the massacre is still debated.

After a series of defeats, China decided to send envoys to conclude a peace treaty with Japan. However, Japan continued to have the upper hand China until the peace treaty was concluded on 17<sup>th</sup> of April, 1895. On the 20<sup>th</sup> of January, 1895, the Japanese forces had besieged Weihaiwei for 23 days and on 12<sup>th</sup> of February, the Japanese forces had taken Weihaiwei and it was the first time China sent their first envoys to conclude a peace treaty with Japan. The first envoys were sent back to China as Japan thought that they were lacking the authority to conclude a treaty and this was done intentionally by the Japanese so that they

would be more advantaged in the peace treaty by conquering more of China. Finally, China sent Li Hongzhang, general and diplomat of China, to sign the Treaty of Shimonoseki which included the independence of Korea, ceding of the Liaodong Peninsula, Taiwan and the Penghu Islands, paying reparation to Japan and concluding a treaty of trade and amity such as those with Western nations.

Through the Sino-Japanese War, Japan secured what they had signed on the treaty but three Western nations, Russia, Germany and France interfered with ceding the Liaodong Peninsula and it was returned to China. Taiwanese fought against the Japanese in Taiwan but the Japanese suppressed them effectively on 21<sup>st</sup> of October, 1895.

The Sino-Japanese War became a significant incident for the two nations, Korea and Japan. For Japan, all benefits after the war became a foundation to develop further as a capitalistic country and for Korea, after the failure of the Donghak Rebellion, the independent reformation was frustrated and became a colony of Japan. This war was the commencement of Japanese imperialism in East Asia.

## 5.4 Russo-Japanese War

Japan became one of the superpowers from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and international conflict took place in China through competition in dividing China into territories. Russia, together with France and Germany, quickly drove Japan out from the Liaodong Peninsula (in the Tripartite Intervention of 1895) and took over charge of the Liaodong Peninsula and concluded a treaty with China to provide mutual aid if there were an expedition by Japan to either China, Korea or far-east Russian territory.

In China, Russia, Germany, Great Britain, France and the United States were competing with each other in dividing China up into their territories and formed rivalries between Russia, Germany and France as an alliance, and Great Britain and the United States as another alliance.

Japan was generally isolated amongst western superpowers but finally took part alongside the superpowers in China when Japan happened to participate in suppressing the Boxer Rebellion in 1900. However, Japan failed to gain benefits from China through the incident. Concerning the international affairs of Japan, there was a conflict between a pro-Russia policy, which was to negotiate a better solution in East Asia, and a pro-Great Britain policy which was to stand against Russia. In January 1902, Japan formed an alliance with Great Britain and inevitably became antagonistic in its relationship with Russia. Russia left their troops in Manchuria to maintain monopolistic control in Manchuria and also advanced to the Yalu River to show their ambition toward advancing farther south.

There was a debate in Japan about war against Russia as Russia took a drastic attitude against Japan and the general trend was a pro-war argument. In the council in the royal

presence on 23<sup>rd</sup> of June, 1903, Japan decided to give Russia control over Manchuria in exchange for Japanese control of the Korean peninsula.

Both Russia and Japan presented proposals for negotiation but did not come to a solution. During this time, Japan prepared for a war against Russia by organising the army.

Japan decided on a severance of diplomatic relations with Russia and dispatched the army to Korea on 4<sup>th</sup> of February 1904, issuing a declaration of war on 8<sup>th</sup> of February. However, before the declaration of war was received by Russia, the Japanese navy attacked the Russian Far East Fleet at Port Arthur. The Japanese troops seized Korea and forcibly requested to sign a protocol between Japan and Korea to establish a favourable strategic system.

Japan took control of Seoul and the rest of Korea and by the end of April, the Japanese forces were ready to cross the Yalu River. In early May, the Japanese forces defeated the Russians in the bay of the Yalu River and in the same month the Japanese troops seized Nanshan in Manchuria, and effectively sieged Port Arthur. In June, Japan mobilised 15 divisions, establishing Japanese headquarters for a Manchuria expedition. Japan often struggled with battles against the Russian forces but they took victories in major battles such as the Battle of the Yellow Sea in August, the Battle of Shaho and the Battle of Sandepu.

The Battle of Mukden commenced in February 1905, involving about a half million men in the battle. The Japanese forces defeated the Russian forces, killing 90,000 men in the battle, but the loss of the Japanese forces was also severe, with as many as 70,000 men lost in the battle. To mend a deteriorating situation, the Russian forces mobilised the Baltic Fleet, under the command of Admiral Zinovy Rozhdestvensky and fought against the Japanese navy under the command of Tōgō Heihachirō in the Tsushima Straits on 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of May, but the Russian forces were annihilated by the Japanese naval forces.

Both Russia and Japan were at their limits after the Battle of Mukden and Russia particularly in dealing with Bloody Sunday,<sup>168</sup> which happened in January, and other revolts around this time. Two Western countries, Great Britain and the United States, which supported the Japanese forces, were cautious about Japan becoming stronger by monopolising the whole of Manchuria. As a result, the United States and France recommended concluding a peace treaty between Japan and Russia and both countries accepted the recommendation. In August 1905, there were meetings mediated by the United States President Theodore Roosevelt. Japan acquired the southern half of Sakhalin Island, recognition of Korea as part of the Japanese sphere of influence through the meetings and both Japan and Russia signed the treaty of Portsmouth on 5<sup>th</sup> of September, 1905. After the Russo-Japanese War, Japan advanced into southern Manchuria and this provoked the United States, challenging the United States' rights and interests in China.

The Korean government announced neutrality when the Russo-Japanese War broke out but the Japanese forces landed and seized Korea with their armies. In 1904, Japan forcibly concluded a treaty<sup>169</sup> that contained permission for Japan to freely occupy Korea and a clause that restricts concluding a treaty with other countries without agreement of Japan. When the situation was more favourable to Japan, Japan decided to annex Korea and concluded the Japan-Korea Agreement of August 1904 as a first step. The agreement required Korea to accept financial and diplomatic advisers designated by Japan.

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<sup>168</sup> This was an event on Sunday, 22 January, 1905, in St Petersburg, Russia, where unarmed demonstrators were fired upon by soldiers of the Imperial Guard as they marched towards the Winter Palace to present a petition to Tsar Nicholas II of Russia.

<sup>169</sup> It was the treaty concluded on 23<sup>rd</sup> of February 1904. Japan enforced this treaty to take control over Korea before the Russo-Japanese War. The treaty included contents such as guarantee of the independence of Korea and exclusion of a third power involvement in foreign affairs of Korea without permission of both countries. Korea was indirectly used in the Russo-Japanese War because of this treaty. Kang, 1994. pp. 125.

When Japan defeated Russia in the Tsushima Strait, Western countries recognised Korea as part of the Japanese sphere of influence and Japan was obliged to sign a protectorate treaty. Japan threatened the Korean government and King Gojong to sign the treaty and proclaimed conclusion of the protectorate treaty in 1905. After conclusion of the treaty, Japan established the Japanese Residency-General and conducted foreign diplomacy for Korea. However, King Gojong sent personal letters to heads of Western countries to appeal the illegal signing, explaining that the treaty was not signed by King Gojong, and sent secret envoys to the second international Hague Peace Convention to appeal against the treaty in 1907, but was rejected as Korea had been deprived of foreign diplomacy according to the Protectorate treaty.

Japan forced King Gojong to abdicate the throne as a punishment for sending secret envoys to the second international Hague Peace Convention and coerced him to sign the treaty of 1907. The treaty required assigning of a Japanese vice-minister in every government department for supervision. The Japanese forces suppressed the Korean armies that stood against the command to disperse the armies and other revolts occurred in Korea with the armed forces of Japan. On 10<sup>th</sup> of August 1910, Japan took away national sovereignty of Korea by annexing Korea.

Japan established the post of Governor-General of Korea as the chief administrator of Korea after the annexation and exploited Korea economically through political oppression. The post of Governor-General consisted mainly of Japanese with few Koreans, who had no influence to participate in politics, but which was to conciliate Koreans during this time.

## 5.5 Japanese Occupation

There are two well-known Japanese nationalists, Ishihara Shintarō, a Japanese politician who was Governor of Tokyo from 1999 to 2012 and Nishio Kanji, a leading figure in the Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform (abbreviated as *Tsukuru Kai*). These two are representative of Japanese who consistently make reckless remarks about history that is related to sensitive issues such as justification of the Japanese occupation of Korea. In 2003, Ishihara mentioned that the annexation by Japan back in those days was humane and it was done through the request of Korean political leaders who aimed at modernisation with support from Japan. He also mentioned that to distinguish between right and wrong, greater responsibility should be placed on the Korean side. Nishio persisted in his view that until the early 20th century Korea was in an inhumane situation where there was no fairness in the judicial system and no rational distribution of wealth. Therefore *Iljinhoe*,<sup>170</sup> the pro-Japan organisation in Korea, started a movement to request annexation by Japan as it was better to be recognised as Japanese than Korean. These kinds of thoughtless remarks consistently came out from the 1940s. Unlike the case of Germany, Japan has still made no proper apology but comes up with excuses and clever replies. Recently, these kinds of extreme nationalistic activities became potential threats to the peace of East Asia, breaking peaceful political philosophy maintained after World War Two.

One can never have too much discussion in terms of correcting distorted history, including the distorted Japan-Korea relationship over the Japanese occupation period. There have been ceaseless disputes over the history of the two countries during the Japanese

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<sup>170</sup> The *Iljinhoe* was a pro-Japan organisation in Korea formed on 8<sup>th</sup> August, 1904. The organisation was disbanded on 26<sup>th</sup> September, 1910, after the Annexation.

occupation but still many issues are unsolved, and without solving these historical issues, it is difficult to establish proper relationship between the two countries.

In this section, the process and reasons for annexation will be discussed first and the Japan-Korea relationship during the Japanese occupation along with the significance of the Japanese occupation in the history of Korean diplomacy. The Japan-Korea relationship during the Japanese occupation is defined by Japanese colonial policies and development of the Korean independence movement against Japanese colonisation.

#### 5.5.1 Movement for protecting national sovereignty from 1905 to 1910

After announcing the treaty of 1905, protests that condemned the treaty occurred in Korean society. High officials led these movements and some of them, such as Yeong-hwan Min and Byeong-se Jo, killed themselves as resistance. Ji-yeon Jang, a press journalist, wrote anti-Japanese journals to condemn the treaty and promoted protests against the Japanese forces. The movements of saving-the-nation developed into a war between the Japanese forces and the Korean army raised in the cause of justice when Japan dethroned king Gojong and dismissed the Korean army.<sup>171</sup> Dismissed soldiers joined the protest and the Korean army was organised and expanded their sphere of activity. On 26<sup>th</sup> October 1909, Jung-geun An, a Korean independence activist, assassinated Itō Hirobumi, a four-time prime minister of Japan and former Resident-General of Korea, at the Harbin Railway Station. Even though the saving-the-nation movement was reduced through cruel suppression by the Japanese forces, Koreans continued the movement in China. Some of them remained in Korea and continued

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<sup>171</sup> The major movements were in 1895 when Empress Myeongseong was assassinated, in 1905 when the treaty was concluded after the Russo-Japanese War and in 1907 when King Gojong was dethroned and the Korean army was dismissed. The movements were led by Confucianist scholars in the beginning but later the movements became more aggressive and became the foundation of the establishment of the army of independence.



guerrilla warfare. However, all these efforts to bring independence for Korea failed as the strength of the Japanese army was overwhelming.

The patriotic enlightenment movement had actively developed from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Independence Association was the main organisation that led the movement in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and after the dismissal of the association, other associations such as the Security Association<sup>172</sup> arose that aimed to stop the reclamation right by Japanese and the Constitution Research Association, which was to establish the foundation for the Korean constitution.

The Great Korea Self-enrichment Association<sup>173</sup> was established to upgrade education and industries, and it started a movement to spread education, develop industries, and people's rights, but these faded as Japan enhanced its control over Korea through the treaty of 1905. The new people's association succeeded the enlightenment movement after the treaty of 1905 and took action on education, industrialisation, publications and military matters but it was dissolved in 1911, through the 105-Man Incident<sup>174</sup>.

There was a limit to the enlightenment movement under the control of the Japanese forces but it provided the spirit of independence and strategies to resist under the Japanese rule. There is an even a greater significance in that it established the foundation for a long-term independence movement until Korea officially acquired independence in 1945.

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<sup>172</sup> This was the anti-Japanese movement association led by Se-sung Won. When Japan forced the Korean government to give favour to Japanese, Won established the association and commenced the anti-Japanese movement through public speeches and appeals. Later, the association was dismissed when there was suppression by a pro-Japanese association led by Byung-jun Song. Kang, 1994. pp. 48.

<sup>173</sup> This was the political association led by Ho-jung Yun and Ji-yeon Jang in 1906. The association insisted on compulsory education to enlighten people and proposed breaking down evil customs from the past to the Korean government. The association was dismissed in 1907 when it stood against a pro-Japanese cabinet. Kang, 1994. pp. 29.

<sup>174</sup> The government-general of Korea arrested over 700 Koreans found guilty of plotting the assassination of Masatake Terauchi and the Governor-General of Korea, and imprisoned 105 of them.

### 5.5.2 Japanese annexation of Korea in 1910

There are several complicated factors that influenced the annexation in 1910, both internal and external factors. For the external factors, in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, almost all East Asian countries were confronted by the threat of Western powers. Japan was the only country that successfully achieved modernisation without being colonised by Westerners and modernisation succeeded with establishing modern national systems including independence. This independence was a result of invading other Asian countries, namely Korea and China with the support of Great Britain and the United States. Many Western superpowers had their extraterritorial areas in Asia, especially China, and they wanted those areas to be secured as their territory, which Japan admitted and got recognition of a protectorate of the Korean peninsula. There were treaties in 1905 such as the Taft-Katsura secret agreement, the Anglo-Japanese Alliance and the Treaty of Portsmouth, when Japan defeated the Russian forces and got recognition of Japan being one of them.

Domestic factors in Japan were firstly financial difficulties in an economic recession, and secondly, colonising other countries was the only solution for Japan to be a superpower during this time. Japan sacrificed much in the Russo-Japanese War, causing more than half a million casualties and spending more than a billion yen in the war. To recoup this, people in both Japan and Korea were subjected to a very high rate of taxes.<sup>175</sup> As stated earlier, Japan started off with the *seikanron*, advocacy for a punitive expedition to Korea and attacked China and Russia to acquire Korea as a colony of Japan. Japan used foreign expeditions not only to be one of the superpowers but also to deal with internal conflicts. The foreign

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<sup>175</sup> During the wartime, real-estate tax increased about 70-120 per cent, enterprise tax increased about 50 per cent, income tax increased about 70-80 per cent and many other tax rates were raised. Lee, 2001. pp. 337.

expeditions allowed Japan to focus on the unifying of Japan against foreign enemies, and established centralised government power by promoting nationalism.<sup>176</sup>

There is continuing discussion on Korean domestic factors. There is an opinion that Wan-yong Yi sold his country to Japan by signing the treaties with Japan, and other opinions such as Heungseon Daewongun adhering to the seclusion policy during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Korea was under Chinese influence and relied on China militarily. It was not possible for Korea to expand its territory by attacking China, hence Korea acted passively in foreign affairs and there were ceaseless conflicts within the court. Korea relied so much on China that Korea did not enhance the army but instead focused more on scholarship, which later resulted in weakening national power to the point that it could not defend the country itself.

The annexation was not because of a single factor but more complicated factors affected the outcome. Externally, there was an ambition by Japan to be one of the superpowers and compete with Western countries. Internally, Korea suffered under the influence of China, and political conflicts within the court. Therefore, Korea had not been equipped with autonomous power to protect its country from outside and all these factors eventually resulted in the annexation of Korea by Japan in 1910, until Japan surrendered to the United States in 1945.

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<sup>176</sup> The Massacre of 6,000 Koreans in post-earthquake chaos was one of the representative incidents. There was a great earthquake in the Kantō region centred in Tokyo on 1<sup>st</sup> of September 1923. Japan had no power to spare in dealing with the post-earthquake chaos as it was focusing on overseas expeditions. The Japanese government feared riots and felt the need for turning people's attention to something else. The government spread rumours such as that Koreans are rebelling using the post-earthquake chaos, Koreans poisoned water springs to kill Japanese, and Japanese gods punished Japan because of the impurity of Koreans, and as a result of rumours, Koreans in Tokyo became victims of a massacre.

### 5.5.3 Japanese colonial policies during the Japanese occupation

Japan propagated its colonisation policies in the form of establishing a Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, which was to enhance the security and welfare of East Asian countries against Western countries, instead of describing it as exploitation. However, many people, especially Koreans and Chinese, recognised Japanese colonial policies as one of the worst policies amongst many others. The annexation of Korea ignored basic human rights of Koreans. Koreans were suppressed under Japanese harsh treatment, starvation, forced labour and violence. Under the rule of the Japanese, national discrimination against Koreans was applied in laws, systems, production and trade.

Japan started its plan to accomplish assimilation between Korea and Japan by suppressing it politically, economically and culturally. Korea was under the rule of the Japanese from 1910 to 1945, for 36 years. The plan of Japan was to merge Korea with a dual structure, Japan as a ruler and Korea as a subject. According to the plan Japan structured the society, politics, economy and industry of Korea under the needs of Japan and as a subject of Japan. As a subject state, Korea was used to provide food, natural resources, military bases and industry, especially munitions.

The Japanese Governor General in Korea held absolute power over Koreans and three different policies were enforced to assimilate Korea into Japan. The first one was the military government policy enforced from 1910 to 1919. The second one was cultural politics enforced from 1919 to 1930. The third one was an assimilation policy enforced from 1930 to 1945.

During the military government period, Japan consolidated its foundation in Korea through the army and the police force. In the cultural politics period, Japan exploited Koreans through defusing tension in Korea, and in the assimilation policy period, Japan attempted to

assimilate Korea into Japan. During the annexation period, Japan attempted to annihilate the identity of Koreans, especially its language and customs. Japan also changed family names to be like Japanese and banned education of the language, history and culture of Korea from all schools. These policies deprived freedom in politics, education, religion, press and even gatherings as well as basic human rights. Economic policies were to exploit cheap labour resources and raw materials from Korea. It seems that the essence of policies that were enforced on Korea was to exploit resources, labour and physical resources.

The budget spent on the police force exceeded more than on education and administration throughout the period of the annexation and this shows that the Japanese in Korea emphasised oppression more than other policies.<sup>177</sup> This also is an obvious fact that policies were to increase suppression against Koreans, not to enlighten Koreans with superior technology and knowledge.

The Japanese government-general of Korea did not care about education in Korea. Only about 3 per cent of the national budget was spent on education. More than 75 per cent of children were not able to go to school and only one out of sixty Koreans was able to continue study higher than middle school. The main purpose of education was to assimilate Koreans to Japanese and to make Koreans slaves to support Japan. The Japanese government-general of Korea tried to close all educational institutions such as *seodang* (private village school), to annihilate Korean spirits and creativity.

In September 1911, the Japanese government-general of Korea announced regulations on schools and the Korean Educational Law to control educational systems in Korea. In March 1915 they announced revised private school administration regulations and coercively

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<sup>177</sup> Sohn, Kim and Hong, 1970. pp. 280.

closed many private schools and took control over education in Korea. This was to annihilate self-awareness of Koreans so that Korea could be under the control of Japan. As a result, education in Korea declined dramatically.

Regarding the economy of Korea, it was an important source for the Japanese economy. Japan fully controlled the economy of Korea and exploited it efficiently. Korea was a supplier of natural resources, such as food, and it was a monopolised market for developing Japanese industries. Japan owned more than half of national properties including land, mines, industries, housing, railways, banks and capital investment.<sup>178</sup>

In the case of capital investment, there was only 6 per cent of total capital investment by Koreans and the rest was invested by Japanese.<sup>179</sup> It is important to note that there was no investment in foundational industries such as electricity and chemical related industries by Koreans.

Japan transformed the Korean economy to concentrate on primary industries to provide food so Japan could focus on intensive industrialisation. Every year, Koreans produced more rice but consumption by Koreans decreased. As rice was exploited by Japanese, Koreans were lacking food and the Japanese government-general of Korea imported cheap millet from Manchuria and sold it to Koreans for even a higher price than rice was sold in Japan.<sup>180</sup>

The land system in Korea took away the ownership of land and forced Korean farmers to become tenant farmers. The Japanese government-general of Korea charged high rent that

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<sup>178</sup> Hee-jin Jeon, 2000.

<sup>179</sup> Jung, 2002.

<sup>180</sup> Sohn, Kim, and Hong, pp.275

reached around 50-80 per cent of total revenue of farms and it caused farmers to suffer under increasing debts. There were more than a million households suffering starvation in 1930 and many left their hometown and moved to Manchuria, Siberia and Japan to survive.<sup>181</sup>

The relationship between Korea and Japan during this time could have been compared to a dominator and a subject. It seemed that if there was economic development during this time, then it was because there were needs for Japan such as to supply war materials, which was not for the benefit of Korea.

This shows that the main purpose of the annexation was exploitation. The Japanese government-general of Korea fully controlled land to provide food for Japan, and not for the welfare of Korea. Japanese also charged higher interest for Koreans compared to Japanese during this time as they monopolised finance and capital assets.<sup>182</sup> Japan exploited cheap labour and natural resources in Korea under a wartime economy, and technology and skills were all monopolised by Japanese. Although there was growth in foundational industries, Koreans did not have a chance to accumulate advanced technology.

The Japanese educational policies annihilated Korea's self-awareness, as well as the traditional identity of Korea. These policies were enforced to assimilate Koreans to Japanese and to create a modern slavery system under the justification of 'enlightenment'.

This 'justified' exploitation by Japan lasted for 36 years for the benefit of Japan, and during wartime Japan effectively took away all benefits from Korea.

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<sup>181</sup> Yu, 2001. pp. 275

<sup>182</sup> Hee-jin Jeon, 2000. pp. 34

#### 5.5.4 Awareness of Korean ethnicity and the independence movement

Korea survived from 1876 to 1905 as an independent nation by enforcing a policy of containment using other superpowers such as China and Russia. However, when Japan defeated both China and Russia, the policy became useless and ineffective. After defeating competitors, Japan forced the leaders of Korea to accept the treaties, and Japan justified colonisation of Korea by mobilising international opinion. The only way for Korean traditional spirit to survive was to keep national competence domestically and resistance in Korea.

After the conclusion of the treaty of 1905, Koreans tenaciously resisted the Japanese intervention and true nationalism commenced from 1905 onward. There were anti-foreign power movements previous to 1905 such as rebellions in 1882, 1884 and 1894 but these movements were to criticise reckless government and to reject foreign influence by force. These movements awakened self-awareness but they failed to secure national sovereignty. Rather, they instigated conflict between two different parties and made Korea more chaotic. One party supported traditional values and therefore they rejected foreign influence by closing the country. The other party supported modernisation by accepting foreign influence and they fought against the other party. The conservative party saw the progressive party as a potential threat and a challenge and thus they tried to maintain their power by relying on China and ignored the urgent need for modernisation. The progressive party also relied on foreign powers such as Japan to reform Korea from inside out. For the progressive party, recognising the need for reformation was highly valued but there was a fault in relying on the foreign military power to achieve reformation.

Paradoxically, the conflict between two parties failed to secure the independence of Korea and also these two parties failed to nurture strong nationalism in Korea. The policy of



containment using competitive foreign powers came to an end and Korea became a Japanese protectorate. Although there was independence in Korea from 1876 to 1905, Korea in practice was under the influence of Japan, China and Russia respectively. The ways of foreign affairs were ineffective in acquiring independence. In other words, modernisation and strong nationalism were only viable when Korea had accepted advanced Western technology based on strong conservative ideology, like Japan during the Meiji Restoration.<sup>183</sup>

There are two significant elements in the Korean nationalism movement from 1905 onward. The first is national reformation to recreate society, and the second is acquiring independence against Japan. The main purpose was to acquire independence from Japan but it was also to reform politics and society. Namely, the Korean nationalist movement is the history of the struggle of Koreans for freedom and the history of Koreans reforming the country to consolidate national capability by attaining democracy.

In 1919, there was a major uprising after some 10 years of annexation, namely the March 1<sup>st</sup> Movement. It was resistance of Koreans against the Japanese exploitation and oppression. Until 1919, independence movements looked as if there was no hope for success but from 1918, the international trend had changed. On 8<sup>th</sup> of January 1918, the president of the United States, Woodrow Wilson, announced the Fourteen Points of the right of nations to self-determination, and Koreans believed the right to self-determination would apply to Korea.

Some Korean scholars saw an anti-imperialism movement after the Great October socialist Revolution in Russia on 25<sup>th</sup> of October 1917, and they strongly believed that Russia would support an independence movement against Japanese imperialism. The news of the

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<sup>183</sup> Choi, 1972. pp. 191-220

Paris Peace Conference after the end of World War Two also encouraged Korean leaders, who became refugees in China and the United States. They worked for Korea's independence and decided to send two envoys, Syngman Rhee and Han-gyung Jung, from the United States to the Paris Peace Conference to appeal for Korea's independence. However, the United States government refused to provide a passport for the envoys so Lee submitted a petition to the President of the United States to put Korea under the trusteeship of the United Nations.<sup>184</sup>

On the one hand, Korea's independence movement leaders in Shanghai decided to send Gyu-sik Kim to Paris. Kim arrived in Paris but when he tried to submit the petition to appeal for the independence of Korea, Japan disapproved the Korean delegate and threatened that Japan would withdraw from the conference if the Korea issue was raised. Consequently, other nations in the conference ignored the petition and the Korean envoy was not accepted. The hope to acquire independence through international diplomacy failed due to balancing the powers between superpowers and keeping peace between them.

On 8<sup>th</sup> February 1919, Koreans in Tokyo proclaimed the independence of Korea and their purpose was to appeal to the international press and to encourage the independence movement in Korea. On 1<sup>st</sup> March 1919, thirty-three Korean leaders from different fields gathered and proclaimed the independence of Korea. This became the commencement of the nationwide non-violent independence movement that included all Koreans regardless of their social status. Almost all regions with over two million people participated in the movement and casualties reached over twenty thousand.

The March 1<sup>st</sup> Movement renewed Korea's nationalistic spirit and also it proved that Korea had enough capability to establish self-government. Although the movement failed, the

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<sup>184</sup> Syngman Rhee was criticised by the provisional government of Korea because the petition violated the independence of Korea. He was reprimanded by the provisional government and dismissed from his position.

cruelty of the Japanese in Korea was exposed publicly and brought about condemnation of the Japanese colonisation in Korea. There is great significance in this movement in that it became the trigger of the full-scale independence movement.

From 1919, the Korean independence movement spread and developed in many fields, in politics, economy, society and culture.

Politically, Koreans promoted the movement in a more organised way and put much effort into establishing self-government in preparation for a democratic nation after independence. There were three different interim governments in Korea, the Russian Maritime Province and Shanghai respectively but later these were unified into one provisional government in Shanghai. The provisional government of Korea prepared the constitution based on democracy and decided to have a presidential system. This provisional government was the first Korean democratic republic government with a provisional assembly, court, state council and constitutional system.

In the early stages, the provisional government of Korea took a role in organising the independence movement more efficiently both internally and externally. The government secretly established organisations that connected the government with the Korea independence movement organisation within Korea and supported finance and information.

Internationally, the government tried to inform other countries about the independence of Korea by establishing a Korea independence movement branch in the United States. The government also published independence newspapers and sourcebooks to encourage independence internally and to inform independence and Korean culture externally. From the late 1920s, the government suffered from a lack of money and people, and harsh oppression by the Japanese army. During this suffering, Gu Kim, the former president of the government, established a nationalist group, the Korean Patriotic Corps, and this group assassinated the

Japanese military leadership in Shanghai and attempted an assassination of the Japanese emperor in Tokyo, which failed, in 1932. These incidents brought attention from outside and the government obtained official support from China.

Economically, Korean farm tenants began farm tenancy disputes against landlords, requesting lowering rents, and against deprivation of farm tenancy. This movement started from farmers for their survival but it developed into a resistance movement from the 1920s.

In manufacturing, large-scale factories such as fabric industries, underwear industries and shoe industries in major cities were established with Korean capital. Korean entrepreneurs started an economic independence movement to support the independence of Korea but the Japanese government-general of Korea enforced free trade with Japan to suppress Korean enterprises. This movement faded as the Japanese government-general of Korea controlled supply of materials and regulated enterprises which resulted in many Korean enterprises merging with Japanese enterprises.

There were labour unions established in Korea, fighting for the survival of Korean labourers under discriminative treatment of enterprises. Labourers suffered from discriminative wages, working hours and environment. This fight for survival of labourers changed to a resistance movement by labourers against oppression of the Japanese.

Many patriots who fought for the independence of Korea went into exile to China, the Maritime Province, Japan and the United States. They continued the independence movement from places of exile and established bases to support the independence movement. Established bases were claimed to be educational institutions and economic institutions and these bases focused on economic activities to support refugees from Korea.

Socialistic ideology was spread by Korean patriots from Russia and China, first spreading amongst young adults and college students. This ideology of the socialism

movement arose during the early 1920s, fighting for equal rights, but it only lasted for a short period as the Japanese suppressed it.

The socialist movement began with a feminist movement that enlightened people about equal human rights for women in Korea who were discriminated under an extreme patriarchal system. The feminist movement developed into liberation of social strata and liberation of country. Student movements developed into unified student strikes to exclude Japanese teachers and to improve the educational environment. Later the student strikes grew to demand more such as abolition of colonisation, promotion of education of the Korean language and history, self-governing student unions and freedom of the press and gatherings. The student movement had its peak as the independence movement in October and November in 1929, when there was a resistance movement against the Japanese occupation in Gwangju.

During the Japanese occupation, Japan banned education of the Korean language and history to make Koreans unlettered masses and to eliminate Korean culture and tradition. Some Korean political leaders submitted to Japan and became pro-Japanese politicians, banning the Korean language and supporting an assimilation policy. During the Japanese occupation, Japanese distorted Korean history to weaken and eliminate national pride and identity. In Korean history, political heteronomy and partiality were emphasised and autonomy and originality were ignored. The Korean History Compilation Committee that was established by Japanese was a vanguard for distorting Korean history by publishing distorted texts about Chōsen history.

Against this assimilation policy, Korean patriots continued a movement for conservation of Korean culture. This movement was based on the teaching of Korean national studies including language and history to conserve proper history and spirit. Korean scholars

Yun-jae Lee and Hyun-bae Choi established a Korean language research organisation and Eun-sik Park, Chae-ho Shin and many more fought against distortion of Korean history emphasising the independent development of Korean history.

Due to the policy, it was not possible to teach Korean national studies in regular schools but instead, Korean national studies were taught in private schools and night schools. Some scholars such as Gyu-seol Han and Sang-jae Lee established a Korean educational association and requested the establishment of higher educational institutions to the Japanese government-general of Korea, but it was ignored. The Korean Education Association began a movement to establish a higher educational institution but it failed due to disturbance by the Japanese government-general of Korea. Patriots began the enlightenment of unlettered Koreans by teaching Korean language and began a rural enlightenment movement through the press. From the 1920s, a nationwide enlightenment movement started with students, intellectual youths and cultural organisations and around 1930, the movement continued with the press and students.

Religious groups also strived for independence in many fields. Cheondoism<sup>185</sup> and Protestants actively took the lead in the movement and Buddhists and Catholics also took part in the enlightenment movement. However, some religious leaders submitted to the Japanese and became pro-Japanese.

Literature and arts were suppressed due to the colonisation system but literature that encouraged enlightenment and independence ideology was actively developed. Gwang-soo Lee and Nam-sun Choi were pioneers in modern literature and many artists and writers

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<sup>185</sup> Literally means Religion of the Heavenly Way. It was a Korean religious movement based on Donghak (Eastern studies) or Neo-Confucianism founded by Choe Je-u. Its philosophy is based on Confucianism but incorporates elements of Korean shamanism.

contributed to the growth of literature by writing pieces that described the emotions and ethics of Korea. In the later years of the Japanese occupation, a dark age in literature was threatened as oppression by Japanese became more severe, but still a few writers such as Dong-joo Yun and Yuk-sa Lee wrote pieces that contained Korean resistance and emotions during the Japanese occupation.

In music, Ik-tae An, Geuk-young Yun actively worked on developing Korean music and Jung-sik An developed Korean traditional drawings, while Hee-dong Ko and Jung-sub Lee represented Western painting. Traditional plays were developed through the Play Research Association and Un-gyu Na contributed to Korean film-making by producing folk songs such as *Arirang* that described feelings and emotions of Koreans.

#### 5.5.5 Korean Diplomacy during the Japanese occupation

Korean diplomacy during the Japanese occupation, seems to be somewhat neglected. There are two linked reasons for treating this as a period of virtual diplomatic blank.

The first reason is that during the Japanese occupation, there was no country named Korea officially recognised internationally, and as Japan took away diplomatic rights, there was no place for Korea to stand in international society. The second reason is that because of the first reason, Korea was lacking diplomatic activities both internationally and domestically.

However, it is difficult to simply conclude that there was no diplomacy or to say it was a period of total diplomatic blank because there was no proper country. In the case of Korea, although the country was annexed by Japan, there were patriots who resisted against Japan throughout the Japanese occupation period and they also established a provisional government in Shanghai. Many Korean patriots went into exile in China, Russia, Japan and the United States, continuing with the independence movement. The independence movement

in foreign countries was to inform other countries about Korea and to support the movement in Korea in various ways. All these movements that affected the establishing of a country after independence may be regarded as ethnic diplomacy, which is not proper diplomacy between two or more nations but between an independent ethnic group and other nations.

In 1905, Korea lost diplomatic rights under the treaty of 1905 and an internationally recognised government was neglected when Japan officially annexed Korea in 1910. However, there were ceaseless diplomatic activities and attempts to communicate with other countries until 1945. The Korean provisional government in Shanghai took the role of government of Korea although it was not internationally recognised due to interference by Japan. Even though it was not a proper government, still there was a great significance in the establishment of the Korean provisional government in Shanghai in that represented independent legitimacy of Korea.

The main purpose of ethnic diplomacy was focused on the restoration of sovereignty of Korea. There was no other purpose than acquiring the independence of Korea against Japan as Koreans lost their sovereignty.

There were tacit agreements between superpowers during this time regarding colonisation and imperialism so the provisional government of Korea accepted the fact that Korea was colonised by Japan. The Korean government strategically put effort in the formation of anti-Japanese movement amongst superpowers by appealing against unequal treatment and cruel oppression. The Korean government tried to find allies who were against colonisation and imperialism amongst international society to overcome the crisis.

The Korean government took two different methods to restore sovereignty of Korea. The first method was to lodge appeals to other Western countries via independence movement organisations and the second was to assassinate Japanese leaders and carry out



acts of terrorism against the Japanese to prove the will for independence, expecting effective diplomacy.

These two different methods sometimes incurred conflicts and sometimes substituted one another until the day of independence. Especially the March 1<sup>st</sup> Movement in 1919 and the independence movements afterward, despite failure to restore the independence of Korea, nonetheless contributed in appealing the position of Korea and created international understanding in the community of nations, which later affected agreement on guarantees of restoring Korean sovereignty in international conferences during World War Two.

#### 5.5.6 The Korean provisional government from 1919 to 1932

After the treaty of 1905, many patriots went into exile in Shanghai and this became the main base for the independence movement. Many Koreans became refugees in a French concession in China as there was more political freedom in France's concession. When Korean patriot Gyu-sik Shin arrived in Shanghai in 1911, the independence movement became more active. He established an independence movement organisation, *Dongjesa*, and many Korean overseas students in Japan participated in the organisation. Members of *Dongjesa* participated in the 1917 Stockholm Peace Conference and appealed for the independence of Korea. When there was news about the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, the Korean government sent representative envoy Gyu-sik Kim to lodge an appeal to the conference regarding the independence of Korea. Kim submitted a petition on behalf of Korean citizens of all countries for the independence of Korea and this petition gained great sympathy from the conference. However, the Paris Peace Conference was held to discuss rights and interests between major powers such as the "Big Four" and Japan, not for 'minor' issues. Even though there was no direct solution from the conference, there were indirect

outcomes. Kim was able to meet with many representatives of nations and highlighted the independence of Korea as an international matter. It was the first official diplomacy of the Korean provisional government appealing against Japanese cruelty and the will for the independence of Korea.

Korean diplomacy in the United States was led by Gyu-sik Kim and Syngman Rhee from August 1919. This worked as a provisional Korean embassy in the United States consistently requesting recognition of the legitimacy of the Korean provisional government in Shanghai, but the United States took no notice of the request as it may provoke the Japanese government. The provisional Korean embassy in the United States followed a method of creating awareness by Americans by printing pamphlets on Korea and having public lectures on Korean issues to put pressure on the United States government.

Once again, the Korean provisional government decided to submit a petition to the Washington conference in November 1921. The petition carried signatures of Korean representatives and direct requests from the Korean government.<sup>186</sup> As it was in the Paris Peace Conference, nations did not pay attention to the Korean matter and it damaged hopes for potential support from other countries. Syngman Lee continued diplomacy with the United States to recognise the legitimacy of Korea but there was no further effect from it.

When the Korean provisional government in Shanghai was established, China was in chaos from the prolonged fighting between north and south governments. The Korean government could not decide where to actively go as diplomacy with China was rather passive. The Korean government chose the government in southern China as it had a similar

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<sup>186</sup> The petition requested participation of representatives of the Korean government in international society, complete independence of Korea, nullification of annexation by Japan and compensation for any damage, restoration of Chinese land and rights and withdrawal of Japanese forces from the Korean peninsula.

political ideology and began to find ways to enhance the diplomatic relationship. The government in northern China was very important as there were many Korean independence movement organisations in Manchuria but the northern government was heavily relying on Japan economically so they were negative about the Korean independence movement. The northern government also feared invasion by the Japanese army in Manchuria so they were unhelpful towards the Korean independence movement. The diplomacy with China entered new conditions as the southern government of China unified China. The Korean government actively carried forward the diplomacy with China to release suppression of Koreans in Manchuria and to support the Korean independence movement. The Korea-China relationship dramatically improved after the assassination of Japanese leaders in Shanghai by Bong-gil Yun but the Korean government had to suffer extreme oppression by the Japanese forces afterwards.

There was also diplomacy with Russia when the Korean government was established in 1919. In the early stages of the Korean government, there was a communist leader Dong-hui Lee, as a communist prime minister of the Korean government, and diplomacy with Russia was easier than other nations. The Korean government had little hope for support from Western countries but alternatively diplomacy with Russia rapidly progressed. It was possible because Russia took a minority friendly policy to support an independence movement as Russia failed to communise European nations.

The Korean government attended the second congress of the Communist International held in Petrograd and Moscow from 19<sup>th</sup> of July to 7<sup>th</sup> of August 1920, and concluded a secret

treaty<sup>187</sup> between Russia and Korea. However, being a communist Korean government with the support of Russia caused conflict within the Korean government between the democratic party and the communist party. The communist system soon failed in the Korean government and as a result, support from Russia also ceased. Russia tried to restore Communism later on but it failed and diplomacy with Russia was stopped.

#### 5.5.7 The Korean provisional government from 1940 to 1945

Korean armed patriots in Manchuria lost their base as Japan established a puppet government in Manchuria. They were integrated into the Korean government in Shanghai and later they became the Korean independence army. After the terror in Shanghai by Yun, the Korean government received support from China and unified different factions into one unified independence movement. As almost all diplomacy with other nations destroyed hopes of external support the Korean government adopted an armed struggle strategy to acquire independence. The Korean government took part in the war against Japan in Chongqing and settled the Korean provisional government in Chongqing making the relationship between Korean and China more intense.

In the early 1940s the United States was in the middle of war with Japan during this time but the request of recognising legitimacy of the Korean provisional government was rejected as there were possibilities that Japan would take revenge against American prisoners of war if they accepted the request. The State Department of the United States reviewed the situation of Korea, the Korean provisional government and independence organisations, and

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<sup>187</sup> The secret treaty included becoming a communist government, support for a Korean independence movement, permission to establish a Korean independence army with a supply of war materials and an alliance in attacking the Japanese forces.

finalised denial of legitimacy of the Korean provisional government in 1942. Moreover, The United States carried forward a specific plan to occupy Korea after the World War Two.

Diplomatic activities by the Korean provisional government during this time split up into different factions and dispersed independence movements. It was not only failure of diplomacy that caused failure of restoring the sovereignty of Korea but also dispersed factions in politics and the independence movement. These dispersed actions by the Korean provisional government paid a great price which was harsher oppression by the Japanese and the deaths of many Koreans.

#### 5.5.8 Continuing controversies over the Japanese occupation

There is continuous research and controversy about the Japanese occupation from 1945, the year of independence of Korea. There were different arguments raised each period with slightly different issues but mainly it was about how the Japanese occupation affected Korea and how would this be evaluated in the present. The evaluation varies in two mainstreams: a theory of colonialism and a theory of colonial modernisation.

From 1945 until the 1960s, Korean scholars led the research on the Japanese occupation in Korea and this research was focused on overcoming the colonial view of history that was taught during the Japanese occupation. The trend of research during this period can be summarised as a theory of primitive exploitation which was to recognise all problems in Korean society as by-products of the Japanese occupation and find evidence how Japan violently exploited Korea. This theory contributed in regard to showing the brutality of Japanese and how this is related to current problems in Korea, but paradoxically it over-emphasised the negative dimension of Japanese imperialism and failed to provide a

persuasive analysis on how the Japanese occupation affected the forming of modernisation in Korea.

From the 1970s, a theory of intrinsic development or colonialism appeared in academia and this became a trend in the 1970s. This theory is based on linear theory of historical stages focusing on the capability of Korea in developing capitalism before the Japanese occupation and how this tendency of development was hindered and distorted under Japanese colonisation. This research contributed to overcoming the colonial view of history and also the emerging development of Korean history as a general intrinsic development in world history. There is a notable outcome in research on Chōsen in various fields in the process of proving the theory of intrinsic development. However, this trend of research created a sense that the economic growth during the Japanese occupation has no relation to rapid economic development after the independence of Korea and it failed to give persuasive reasoning how the Japanese occupation had influenced the long term trend of modernisation in Korea from 1945.

The colonial modernisation theory appeared in academia throughout the 1970s and the 1980s when Korea and East Asian countries ‘kicked off’ with rapid economic development. This theory oversees economic development in Korea during the Japanese occupation and insists on development of Korean economic activities during this time. The theory finds the origin of Korea’s development of capitalism after the independence from Japanese occupation. The colonial modernisation theory positively evaluated rapid development of Korean capitalism as a natural phenomenon of modernisation whereas the intrinsic development theory criticised development of capitalism in Korea by which the process of development was crippled as it was developed from what it was before the independence of Korea.

#### 5.5.8.1 Controversies

There are ongoing disputes about land ownership investigation during the Japanese occupation. The intrinsic development theory makes the criticism that there was exploitation of land under the land ownership investigation and even though it was not exploitation, uncountable wealth had outflowed to Japanese. The colonial modernisation makes the criticism that the business was not the purpose of exploitation but provided an opportunity to adopt modernised land ownership systems which became the trigger of capitalistic development.

Regarding economic activities in various fields, the intrinsic development theory defines the Japanese occupation period. It was the time that Japanese imperialism exploited and oppressed the intrinsic development of Korea whereas the colonial modernisation theory defines this period as the time when the origins of modernisation and industrialisation of Korea as we see at the present.

Regarding the Japanese government-general of Korea, there are various opinions even in the intrinsic development theory such as it was nothing but to assist efficient exploitation, old-fashioned colonial organisation and to recognise its modernity. The colonial modernisation theory defines the Japanese government-general of Korea as a modern government system which became the foundational model of Korean government that provided modernised systems and capitalistic relations within the country.

Regarding the relevance in Chōsen society and the Korean society during the Japanese occupation, the intrinsic theory persists with the view that Chōsen already had potential to develop as a capitalistic country by itself but the Japanese colonisation distorted and thwarted its development. In contrast to this, the colonial modernisation theory persists with the view that Chōsen was not able to achieve modernisation itself and colonisation was the only way

to achieve modernisation in Korea. This part is the most extreme controversy between the two theories but both of them accept that there is discontinuity between before the Japanese occupation and after.

Regarding the relevance between Korean society after the independence and the Japanese occupation, the intrinsic development theory emphasises discontinuity between two societies as almost all Japanese capitalised industries were destroyed after the independence of Korea and there was expansion in investment in Korea after the Japanese occupation. The colonial modernisation theory refutes that although industries were destroyed, industrial infrastructure, human resources and organisations of state remained to lead development of industries.

The last dispute is the historical significance of the Japanese occupation. The intrinsic development theory is hesitant in forming a clear conclusion on this issue. It seems the theory is avoiding the conclusion by emphasising intrinsic development from the Chōsen period that was hindered during the Japanese occupation and stipulating the modern period from the independence of Korea. The colonial modernisation theory has logical completion that modernisation of Korea started from the Japanese occupation and thus the origin of the modern period of Korea starts in the Japanese colonisation.

#### 5.5.9 Conclusion

There are many issues to solve between Korea and Japan after the Japanese annexation. In the past, Korea and Japan generally had close relations in politics, economy and society. There are still many Koreans living in Japan and economic dependency between the two deepened, which made maintenance of friendly relationships more important than ever before. In this friendly relationship, emotions and stereotypes against each other make



for delicate situations. It is hard to resolve historical issues while maintaining a friendly relationship. Yet without solving historical matters during the Japanese occupation, it is not easy for both countries to enhance their relationship further as neighbouring countries. It is important to understand that there is common ground that both the countries share and cooperative research on controversies would help in building a healthy relationship between the two countries.

## 5.6 From 1945 to the Present

Many East Asian countries including Korea and China are familiar with Japanese invasions in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and the early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Thus, Japanese policies in modern history have had a great effect on the diplomacy of Korea, China and other East Asian countries. To deal with this issue, there should be a two-fold approach: what were the policies of Japan in modern history and why these policies were enforced, including its impact on Korea.

It is important to understand the Japanese conservative impulse that drives the modern history of Japan, and the main actors of this conservative impulse are the Japanese right-wing organisations. Tendo Tadashi (1940-), a Japanese specialist on the right-wing, defined the Japanese right-wing organisations as characterised by loyalty to the nation, with the emphasis on a number of matters, including ethnic traditions and cultures, traditional hierarchy, patriarchal view of state, anti-intellectual class, exclusion of other countries and people, centralised action, belief in power, anti-liberalism, anti-individualism and so on. Simply this may be defined as an authoritative and conservative nationalism. These types of organisations are different from ordinary conservative organisations as they are extreme nationalists emphasising absolute obedience to the Japanese emperor, anti-liberalism, collectivism and closed ethnicity. Many well-known nationalistic organisations in Korea are not all extreme nationalists but rather they are considered as conservative organisations. For example, the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan is known as an extreme nationalistic party in Korea for their deeds such as worshipping in Yasukuni Shrine. However the party is a conservative party and within the party there are different groups such as the radicals and the moderates. It is difficult to see the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan as extremely nationalistic because of

some radical deeds. The phenomenon of the Japanese conservative impulse is becoming an increasing trend of conservative organisations nowadays.

Recently, the Japanese conservative impulse is more noticeable in the field of politics. Continuation of worship in Yasukuni Shrine by politicians and the election of extreme nationalists, such as Ishihara Shintarō as a governor of Tokyo, are just superficial indications of the conservative impulse. In addition to this, the Japanese Ministry of Foreign affairs made it clear that the post-war compensation by Japan is over and this shows the nationalistic political direction.

If it is so, then there is a question to answer as to why the Japanese conservative organisations, especially political parties, have set the direction in this way despite opposition from public opinion and the ruling of the district court that worship in Yasukuni Shrine is unconstitutional. One reason may be that there is lack of power in rival parties to quieten down the conservative parties. It is not a matter of the number of the organisations but a matter of practical influence. A Korean scholar, Eun-bong Choi of Ewha Women's University, said that the reasons for the weak role of the progressive organisations are because of a tendency towards closed nationalism, Neo-de-Asianisation theory, and vulnerability of ethnic pluralism.<sup>188</sup> Other reasons may be instability of Japanese political status. It could be a strategy of the Liberal Democratic Party to hold a dominant position in instable Japanese politics. This is explained through the activity of the Liberal Democratic Party in foreign policies which greatly affected the conservative impulse, and it was directly related to raising self-confidence of the Japanese. The party also promotes the policies actively to the public. The continuation of worshipping in Yasukuni Shrine is also a part of its intention. Another

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<sup>188</sup> Choi, 2008. pp. 39-70

reason may be the recession in the Japanese economy. A depressed Japanese economy and society provided an opportunity for the conservative impulse to prevail. Another reason may be the dissolution of the Cold War. When the Cold War was dissolved, the common enemy of national security was gone and as a new purpose for the national security, nationalism was chosen as an ideology of national security. This phenomenon is similarly happening in China as well. These changes of domestic and international issues provided causes for Japan to be focused on the conservative impulse. The conservative impulse did not occur as if the conservative organisations were watching for an opportunity but it seems that it naturally occurred according to internal and external factors. If this hypothesis is true, then it might be possible to negotiate to dissolve the conservative impulse that is prevailing in Japan.

The above nationalistic attitudes also applied in modern history issues. Reckless speeches by some politicians and worshipping in Yasukuni Shrine are in the same trend of the Japanese conservative impulse.

This trend of lacking introspection of past war crimes by Japan could be a temporal or a transitional mistake. Until recently, Japan was hardly accused for such reckless speeches by politicians. This was because China and Russia were in a hostile relationship with Korea and the United States and was not interested in these issues, and Korea had international recognition in raising its voice in international society. In other words, unlike the case of Germany where France and Great Britain were able to stand against Germany, there were no countries to stand against Japan regarding such reckless actions until recently. Moreover, domestically in Japan, the Liberal Democratic Party was the ruling party from 1955 for 55 years and throughout this period, Japan was able to achieve high economic growth and all radical speeches or anti-nationalistic opinions could have been ignored. Under these international and domestic conditions, Japanese nationalistic politicians were able to speak

freely regarding the modern history of Japan and Korea. Even after this period, ironically a solution to overcome economic recession and dissolution of the Cold War in Japan was to return to nationalism, and it appeared in the form of distortion of history and thoughtless policies.

#### 5.6.1 Japan-Korea relationship regarding the Treaty on Basic Relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea

In 1965, both countries, Japan and the Republic of Korea, signed the Treaty on Basic Relations. However this treaty became a controversy since its conclusion and controversies regarding the treaty are still ongoing. It took some 14 years to conclude and such a long period of negotiation represents the complexity of two countries having experienced such complicated relations throughout history. Most of all, the main problem is that the two countries hold different views on the treaty. Issues of the treaty are problems in Korean jurisdiction, nullifying the effectiveness of previous treaties concluded between the two countries, compensations, social status of Koreans in Japan and many more. Although the treaty was concluded, these issues are still in contention. From the beginning, the treaty left room for controversies behind by drafting the treaty in three languages, English, Korean and Japanese, and agreeing on the English version to be authoritative if there is divergence of interpretation.

In international law, when two countries establish diplomatic relations, one country does not call upon the other country's jurisdiction except when there is a territorial dispute between the two countries. However, when Korea and Japan were concluding the treaty, Korea's jurisdiction became a controversy because South Korea was fighting against North Korea for the legitimacy of Korea. Even though there was a dispute about the Dokdo problem

(Takeshima), the two countries did not make a decision on this matter because Korea's problem of jurisdiction was even more urgent to solve.

This problem is stated in the article 3 of the treaty.

*It is confirmed that the Government of the Republic of Korea is the only lawful Government in Korea as specified in the Resolution 195 (III) of the United Nations General Assembly.*

The South Korean government interpreted this as an article that demonstrates its sovereignty over the Korean peninsula, including North Korea, according to South Korea's constitution on jurisdiction and South Korea's intention was to be recognised as the legitimate government over the Korean peninsula. In contrast to this, Japan claimed, with the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly, to limit South Korea's jurisdiction to only the southern part of the Korean peninsula.

Korea interpreted this as the government of the Republic of Korea being the only legitimate government in the Korean peninsula so this article regulates possibilities to establish diplomatic relations with North Korea and Japan. However, as the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly does not mention anything about North Korea, Japan interpreted the treaty as limited to South Korea. This divergence of interpretation is in a fluid situation for some 50 years and still it is ambiguous.

The article of effectiveness of the nullification of previous treaties was the most heated controversy in the treaty between the two countries. This problem is mentioned in Article Two of the treaty.

*It is confirmed that all treaties or agreements concluded between the Empire of Japan and the Empire of Korea on or before August 22, 1910 are already null and void.*

This problem is closely related to how Japan recognises the Japanese occupation and problems in modern history. Korea persisted with the view that the Japanese occupation was

an invasion and as the annexation was concluded coercively, it is null and void from the beginning. Against this, Japan insisted that the annexation was legally concluded and so rejected the claim by Korea but at the end, negotiated on concluding it by addition of the word 'already' in the article. In other words, the treaty was an effective treaty but it was nullified.

The Korea national assembly recognised and interpreted this article as all treaties on and before 1910 were nullified but Japan officially stated that all treaties on and before 1910 were legal and effective but these treaties were nullified from 1948 when the Republic of Korea was officially established.

A direct cost of normalisation of diplomatic relations between Korea and Japan were property claims against Japan. This problem was solved based on the Treaty of San Francisco in 1951. During 1951, the government of Korea requested participation in the related conference but an opportunity was not given and Korea lost a chance to raise its voice to request compensation from Japan. Compensation for economic damage during the Japanese occupation was only possible to obtain through the normalisation of diplomatic relations. In 1965, Korea was suffering an economic crisis hence the Korean government politically negotiated to receive economic cooperation from Japan instead of receiving compensation for the Japanese occupation.

This agreement was concluded when the treaty was signed and Japan paid 300 million US dollars and provided loans up to 200 million US dollars. The agreement included in Article Two that compensation concerning property and claims and what it is regulated in the treaty of San Francisco in 1951 were all completely settled.

The national assembly of Korea interpreted funds provided by Japan as compensation for the Japanese occupation whereas Japan interpreted the funds provided for economic cooperation between the two countries.

This issue brought about ceaseless controversy from Koreans who suffered under the Japanese occupation, both Japan and Korea insisting that the government cannot provide for individual compensation. Especially regarding the problem of sex slaves during the Japanese occupation, Japan rejected the request of national indemnities but showed a positive attitude towards paying compensation privately. However, there are still conflicts between private organisations and the governments of the two countries regarding the settlement of problems concerning property and claims.

#### 5.6.2 Japan-Korea relationship regarding the Agreement on the settlement of problems concerning property and claims and the economic cooperation between the Republic of Korea and Japan

In 2005, the Korean government revealed all documents related to the treaty and several issues arose, especially regarding agreement on the settlement of the problem concerning property and claims and economic cooperation between the Republic of Korea and Japan.

There are three major issues regarding the agreement. The first issue is that funds that Japan provided to Korea were for economic cooperation not compensation or payment for claims. The second issue is that by concluding the agreement, the final responsibility on payment for claims is now transferred to the Korean government. Article Two of the agreement clearly stated that Japan had completely settled problems concerning property and claims and the Korean government confirmed the agreement, so individual victims from the



Japanese occupation lost their rights to claim against Japan. The last issue is about the nature of the agreement that the Korean government failed to state that funds provided to Korea were compensation for the Japanese occupation. This matter justified the legitimacy of annexation and it greatly influenced awareness of modern history in Japan that caused Japanese to continue with reckless speeches about the Japanese occupation.

The argument is that there is no reason for an apology to Korea as all property and claims were settled according to the agreement by paying 800 million US dollars as funds for economic cooperation. Distorted awareness of modern history and reckless speeches by Japanese nationalistic politicians from the 1960s onward also began from this.

Through revealing the agreement, it is possible to see the governments of both countries are two-faced. Japan justified settling claims on damages of the Japanese occupation by paying funds for the economic cooperation that would have been an act of humanity, and Korea used 90 per cent of the funds in economic development and only used 10 per cent to cover damages during the Japanese occupation. The Korean government concealed its historical error using the argument that funds provided from Japan were for economic cooperation. There were more positive effects through utilising funds in the economy but by revealing the agreement in 2005, the Korean government is now carrying a greater burden in being responsible for individual damages received during the Japanese occupation as well as taking care of victims of sex slaves during the Japanese occupation.

The revelation of the documents related to the treaty also greatly influenced the Japan-Korea relationship. The biggest influence in the relationship is going to be a request for revision or renegotiation of the treaty and agreement. In Korea there are active movements requesting revision of the treaty and agreement by private and public organisations, as Korea focused too much on economic development during the 1960s and failed to settle all claims

and obtain an official state apology from Japan. However, revision of the treaty and agreement would hardly be possible as Japan has to accept the request which it believed to be settled. It is certain that revision of the treaty would be a major controversy in the Japan-Korea relationship.

On the one hand, there is increasing tension between the two countries because of the Dokdo (Takeshima) dominion problem nowadays. The problem arose as a diplomatic issue in 1952 when the president Syngman Rhee declared a "Peace Line" including Dokdo in Korean territory. Until recently, both countries managed this issue so that it would not influence the Japan-Korea relationship.

In 1905, when Japan enforced the treaty of 1905 with Korea, Shimane Province issued an official announcement to incorporate Dokdo as its administrative district. One hundred years later, in 2005, Shimane Province passed an ordinance setting 22<sup>nd</sup> February as the 'Day of Takeshima' and the central government did not restrain the ordinance saying that it is a matter for local government.

One reason for Shimane Province to pass the ordinance was to expand Shimane Province's fishing area. However, at the core of the ordinance, there was an intention to change it from a matter for Shimane Province to a matter of central government so that Shimane Province would acquire support from all Japan. The Japanese central government knew its plot and agreed in helping Shimane Province.

From 2005, the Korean government lost its stand in sustaining friendly diplomacy with Japan and changed to a more aggressive diplomacy. The Korean government expected Japan to clear all historical errors but a long wait of expectation came to nothing. The Shimane Province incident declared the Japanese intention that Japan has no willingness to

solve such problems and therefore the Korean government changed its attitude towards the Japanese diplomacy to react aggressively.

To enhance dominance over Dokdo, the Korean government loosened regulations on entry to Dokdo and allowed visits by travellers. This kind of strategy declared the stand of the Korean government on the Dokdo issue against the ordinance of Shimane Province and it is also a declaration of strong will to request sincere resolution on this matter by the Japanese government. Japan approached the Dokdo problem as a simple territorial problem but for Korea it is a territorial problem as well as a starting point of resolution of problems in the past including the Japanese occupation. Japanese diplomats do not see this issue as seriously as Koreans because they see it as a simple territorial problem and there should be more effort made to raise awareness of the significance of problems between the two countries.

### 5.6.3 Japan-Korea relationship regarding Japan-South Korea joint Declaration: A New Japan-Korea Partnership towards the Twenty-first Century

On 8<sup>th</sup> of October, 1998, Korea and Japan made a joint declaration for a new Japan-Korea partnership for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This joint declaration was one of the most inspiring diplomatic achievements after the treaty on basic relations between Japan and Korea. From this declaration, Japan officially apologised for damage to Koreans during the Japanese occupation and Korea accepted this apology by the prime minister of Japan sincerely. This apology was based on the apology that the former Prime Minister Murayama made on 15<sup>th</sup> of August, 1995. Although the former Prime Minister Murayama did not state specific countries, but as he mentioned Asian countries, Korea is part of it. However, Murayama damaged his reputation of self-reflection by saying that the annexation of Korea was legally concluded.

It is difficult to see that there is change in the Japanese view of Article Two – nullification of treaties on and before 1910 – from the speech that Murayama made but domestically in Japan, there are some minor opinions amongst scholars that the joint declaration shows a transitional view on the treaties on and before 1910. However, there is no official statement about this issue from Japan and Korea also does not request an interpretation. The problem of treaties concluded on and before 1910 is still ambiguous and it would be best to wait and see what happens in 2015, when the present Prime Minister Abe Shinzo makes his official speech.

#### 5.6.4 Conclusion

It has been almost 50 years after the normalisation of diplomatic relations between Japan and Korea. Recently sensitive issues arose such as a territorial problem, problems in modern history and claims for an official apology to Korean sex slaves. However, the relationship between the two countries is stabilising and improving from a long-term perspective.

After the independence of Korea, Japan was a target to settle damages for suffering. Japan became an obstacle to surmount in the 1970s and the 1980s, and then Japan became a partner from 1990s onward to the present. Despite the partnership, if any issues of modern history or territorial disputes occur, inevitably Japan would become pressured to settle such issues.

This phenomenon is as result of wrong perspectives on modern history in Japan primarily but also it is because both countries are still limited to traditional nationalistic values. If the two countries could share the same value of being a ‘global village’ then it may

be possible to clear all historical errors and establish an enhanced future-oriented relationship based on a firm foundation.

## CHAPTER 6. OVERALL CONCLUSION

Through the diachronic surveys, significant events in the relationship between Korea and Japan from ancient times to the present were researched.

Before centralized kingdoms were established in both areas, the people of those areas developed a Bronze Age farming culture through friendly exchanges and trades. Through this relationship, advanced Chinese culture during this time flowed into both Korea and Japan and they were able to establish ancient kingdoms. There are many continuing controversies in the forming of the ancient kingdom of Japan but the relationship between Paekche and Japan is noticeable. After establishing an ancient Japanese kingdom, Japan received the benefits of advanced culture through Paekche in language, religion and many other technologies by providing military assistance to Paekche. The transfer of culture from Paekche continued until the fall of Paekche in 663. The kingdom of Silla unified the Korean peninsula in an alliance with T'ang China and soon after, Japan established diplomatic relations with Silla, which stopped when Japan established the *ritsuryō* state and acted in a high-handed manner towards Silla. From the 8th century onward, Japan and Korea both experienced fluctuation in building medieval kingdoms through the Heian, Kamakura and Muromachi periods for Japan and establishing the kingdom of Goryeo for Korea.

There were two major incidents that happened between the two countries in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. These incidents were two Mongol invasions in the 13<sup>th</sup> century and a series of *wakō* raids especially during the 14<sup>th</sup> century. These incidents were certainly a commencement of tragedy in the relationship between Korea and Japan. Goryeo was a tributary state of Yuan (Mongol) China and in alliance with Mongol forces, they invaded Japan. There were two attempted invasions of Japan in 1274 and 1281 but both times these

were defeated by the famous *kamikaze*, namely a typhoon (known as the ‘divine wind’) which struck the Mongol forces. However, through this incident, Goryeo became an enemy of Japan.

In the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the Ming Dynasty became the ruler of China and both Korea and Japan were subject to its influence. When the two countries came under this Chinese influence, they re-established diplomatic relations.

Another event, a series of *wakō* raids during the 14<sup>th</sup> century, has a great significance in the relationship between Korea and Japan. As a result of the series of these attacks, Goryeo fell and a new kingdom, Chōsen, was established. Through the series of *wakō* attacks, both countries restored a friendly relationship to resolve the problem together. *Wakō* were pirates who prevailed in northern Kyūshū and the Seto inland sea from the 13<sup>th</sup> century to the 16<sup>th</sup> century. There are ongoing discussions about their composition but it is generally accepted as mainly Japanese pirates in the northern Kyūshū and Seto Inland Sea area appeared during the transitional period of East Asia. The damage from these attacks was so severe in East Asia that Goryeo fell as result. After Chōsen was established its forces attacked the *wakō* headquarters in Tsushima Island in the early 15<sup>th</sup> century and the *wakō* problem in Korea was settled for the time being.

The friendly relationship between the two countries continued through to the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Chōsen sent goodwill missions to transfer culture to Japan, and commercial trade was also important. Unfortunately, this relationship ceased due to Toyotomi Hideyoshi’s invasions in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century.

Hideyoshi’s invasions began in 1592 and ended in 1598 through his death but they left scars and complications in the relationship between Korea and Japan. These reckless invasions prompted by Hideyoshi’s lust for fame almost erased Chōsen from the map.

Dramatically, Chōsen received military reinforcement from Ming China and drove the Japanese forces out from the Korean peninsula but from these invasions, Japan took away many things from Korea. Korea lost a countless amount of books, printing technology, pottery and human resources, so much so what remained was a shell of a country.

Tokugawa Ieyasu seized power after the death of Hideyoshi and Ieyasu once again reopened diplomatic relations with Chōsen. The two countries maintained a seclusion policy for over two hundred years but there was a friendly diplomacy between Korea and Japan open only to each other. In the case of Japan, it was a time to internalise all that was taken from Korea through the invasions and develop it further, so much so that it surpassed Korea itself. For Japan, this was a time to establish a later foothold for modernisation from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.

Japan successfully achieved modernisation through the Meiji Restoration in 1867/8 after opening Japan in 1854. Like sponge absorbing water, Japan adopted Western technologies and knowledge, and achieved '*wakōn-yōsai*' (Japanese Spirit, Western Learning) regarding modernisation. Japan defeated China and Russia in 1895 and 1905 respectively and became one of the superpowers as the first Asian country in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The friendly relationship between Korea and Japan ended when Japan forced Korea to open up by concluding the unequal treaty of 1876. Korea and Japan concluded the treaty of 1905 to make Korea Japan's protectorate right after Japan became one of the superpowers by defeating Russia in 1905. Under the slogan of enlightening Asia, Japan colonised Korea and finally annexed it formally in 1910. This greatly worsened the relationship between Korea and Japan. Japanese imperialism in Asia expanded further in the Pacific War in the early 1940s. In the process, there was much damage to countries including Korea and people were



forcibly mobilised as sex slaves, soldiers and labourers and endured great suffering under forced labour and discrimination.

Korea was able to acquire independence when Japan finally surrendered to the United States and established an independent government from 1948. Later, in 1965, Korea normalised diplomacy with Japan by signing the Treaty on Basic Relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea and officially became a partner in 1998 by proclaiming a Japan-South Korea joint declaration for a partnership towards the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

It is possible to find two patterns in the relationship between Korea and Japan from ancient times to the present. The first pattern is *gekokuujō* (the master being outdone by the pupil, and being treated thereafter with contempt). Kingdoms in the Korean peninsula were connected to China geographically and it was fairly easy for Korea to adopt advanced culture and technologies from China. When culture and technologies were adopted, these were internalised and developed into their culture in the Korean peninsula. These advanced cultures and technologies were transplanted to Japan through the ancient kingdom of Paekche and its people became teachers of Japan. This teacher-student relationship continued until the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century but this started to change when Japan invaded Korea and took away knowledge, technologies and people. During the Edo Period, the period following the Hideyoshi's invasions, Japan surpassed Korea in most fields and their positions were reversed. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Japan quickly adopted advanced knowledge and technologies from Western countries, and Japan was able to move ahead over Korea. Japan committed *gekokuujō* by forcibly transplanting advanced Japanese knowledge and technologies through violent annexation in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Another pattern that can be found through the surveys is sibling rivalry, namely a type of competition or animosity among siblings. A reason that Korea could take on a role as a

teacher of Japan in past years was that Korea was the first one to be influenced by a parent-like superpower, China. As explained, Korea borders China and partly because of geographical reasons, Korea quickly adopted culture and technologies that were later transferred to Japan. In other words, under a parent, China, Korea learned from the parent and taught its younger brother, Japan, subsequently. Sibling rivalry is a type of competition among siblings so Korea and Japan grew competitively under the Chinese influence until the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. From the 19<sup>th</sup> century, other 'parents', namely the Western superpowers, appeared on the scene and this time Japan was the first to be influenced, and thence taught Korea. Just as what the term sibling rivalry explains, both countries, Korea and Japan, showed competitiveness towards each other and especially for Korea it was the presence of Japan that stimulated rapid growth and development in modern times.

Korea and Japan are neighbouring countries sharing more than 2000 years of history. There were periods of friendly relationships as well as periods of tragic invasion such as the Mongol invasions, Hideyoshi's invasions, and the Japanese occupation. There are still ongoing matters and conflicts between the two countries such as distortion of history, territorial dispute, the treatment of sex slaves and worship in Yasukuni Shrine.

Although it is around half a century since Korea and Japan normalised diplomatic relations, it is difficult to say that either country opened up a positive future-oriented partnership. The biggest reason for this is because there are still matters of modern history that have not been fully resolved.

There are needs for effort to share history from a globalised point of view, deviating from nationalistic views, and also to interpret past events with an understanding of the situation during that time in order to resolve the problems between the two countries. Without

resolving past matters, the next hundred years would likely be a repetition of the past hundred years in the relationship between Korea and Japan.

Despite past matters that arose again recently, such as the ‘comfort women’/sex slaves, the relationship between the two countries is hopefully stabilising and developing towards a long-term perspective.

Japan was a target to settle damages and suffering after the independence of Korea. It became an object to surmount in the 1970s and 1980s, and became a partner from the 1990s onward to the present. Though the Japan-Korea relationship is a partnership nowadays, if a problem of modern history or matters related to the territory occurs, inevitably Japan will be again the target to settle such problems and to claim damages. (Korean claiming damages against Japan)

In 2015, it will be 70 years on from the start of the independence of Korea and 50 years on from the normalisation of diplomacy between Korea and Japan. It is time to be more mature and responsible regarding reflection of the past, and to step forward towards a future-oriented partnership between Korea and Japan.

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