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Views of the Neighbor: Japanese and Korean Intellectuals in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries
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ABSTRACT
This paper explores the views held by Japanese and Korean intellectuals towards each other’s countries in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Focusing primarily on Korean scholars, it discusses various perspectives of the neighboring society gained through direct interaction and written texts, and sheds light on how Japanese and Koreans perceived their neighbor’s state, culture, and people. These intellectuals offered affirming visions of the other which progressed beyond the complicated historical background following the Imjin War of 1592-1598. As seen in the writings of such scholars as Yi Ik, Yi T’ongmu, An Ch’ôngbok, Fujiwara Seika, and Yamazaki Ansai, mutual perceptions of Tokugawa Japan and Chosŏn Korea changed significantly throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Keywords: Views of Tokugawa Japan and Chosŏn Korea, Korean embassy, Neo-Confucian scholars, scholastic and cultural exchange, Sirhak, Practical Learning scholars

Introduction
The admiration among Japanese elites for Korean scholars in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries contributed to the further development of Neo-Confucian studies in Edo Japan. These Japanese regarded Chosŏn Korea as a country where scholars exhibited sophisticated Neo-Confucian principles and they considered Korean interpretations of Neo-Confucianism as more distinguished than those of contemporary Chinese scholars. Amidst the social and political stability established by the Tokugawa shogunate in 1603, an increasing number of Japanese Neo-Confucian scholars became active in scholarship and education. When the embassies of the King of Chosŏn (K. Chosŏn t’ongsinsa, J. Chosen tsushinshi) came to Japan, a broad range of scholars and commoners enthusiastically sought samples of calligraphy, paintings, autographs, and comments on their own writings from members of the delegations. Through these visits Japanese experienced an infrequent but enticing opportunity—encounters with foreigners, foreign culture, and foreign scholarship. Japanese scholars were strongly attracted to Chosŏn culture during the first half of the Edo period in particular. Conversely, as seen in the fact that the Korean embassy of 1764 was the last to travel to Edo, with the final embassy of 1811 failing to proceed beyond Tsushima, both the Chosŏn court and the Tokugawa shogunate seem to have regarded neighborly relations as of diminishing importance.
Although the Korean government restored diplomatic relations with the Tokugawa shogunate in 1607, Korean scholars of that time typically perceived Japan as an inferior country with an inferior culture. Many Korean elites believed that the Japanese did not pose a challenge as far as culture, including scholarship, was concerned, and each embassy to Japan only reconfirmed their sense of supremacy. Such Chosŏn views likely stemmed in part from earlier encounters with the Japanese, and certainly from the Imjin War of 1592-1598. Given this environment, many Korean intellectuals expressed derogatory attitudes toward their Japanese counterparts, though they typically concealed such views while engaging in diplomatic and cultural exchanges. However, some Korean scholars began to focus on Japanese culture and history in the eighteenth century, much as participants in earlier embassies had concentrated on understanding Japanese politics and military matters in the decades after the Japanese invasion. Later in the Chosŏn period, Korean intellectuals also took a more positive approach toward Japan. Some who learned about Japanese politics, society, and culture treated the country as an equal of their own.

Previous English-language scholarship on Japanese-Korean/Korean-Japanese relations after the Japanese invasion has focused on the Korean embassies and the Waegwan (J. Wakan). This institution, referred to in English as the Japan House, was an enclosed area in Pusan, Tongnae County, designated by the Chosŏn court for Japanese residence and sanctioned trade. Ronald P. Toby, James B. Lewis, and Nam-lin Hur, examining movement in the other direction, have discussed visits to Japan by Korean embassies. They treat images of Japan derived from a small number of select Korean elites who were able to visit Japan. In Japan and South Korea, too, there are numerous publications focusing primarily on the Korean embassies and interactions with the Japanese. The lives of the Japanese residents at the Japan House are another topic treated by many historians. Miyake Hidetoshi, Ikeuchi Satoshi, Nakao Hiroshi, Ueda Masaaki, Yi Chinhŭi, Yi Wŏnsik, and Son Sûngch'ŏl, among others, have explored the interactions between Japanese and the Korean embassies. Tashiro Kazui has examined the Japan House, site of the Korea-
Attitudes among Korean elites toward Japan, especially in the wake of Toyotomi Hideyoshi's invasion, were typically negative. Scholars and members of Korean embassies often treated Japanese as objects of criticism. In Chosŏn, officials and scholars such as Yi Sugwang (1563-1628), who had experienced the Japanese invasion, wrote of Japanese history, geography, and other topics, but avoided examining contemporary society.

In contrast to previous research, this study focuses on the perspectives of Korean scholars who did not share the negative attitude common among elites toward Japan and Japanese people. These scholars, termed Practical Learning (Sirhak) scholars, attempted to see Chosŏn's neighbor as an equal state in accordance with the concept and diplomatic practice of kyorin, or neighborly relations, and expressed fresh views of Japan. In the eighteenth century scholars and officials associated with Practical Learning began exploring Japanese society through more recent information about the island country brought back by the members of the various embassies who had traveled there. Among such scholars were Yi Ik (1681-1763), An Chŏngbok (1712-1791), and Yi Tŏngmu (1741-1793). Their detailed investigations of Japan opened new perspectives. Less research has been devoted to elites such as these, who did not have an opportunity to visit Japan, or in the case of Japanese scholars, to visit Chosŏn. The writings of these Practical Learning scholars were second-hand observations of Japan combined with personal views. Exploration of their writings will deepen our understanding of these two countries during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Views of Edo-period Japanese Scholars toward Korean Confucian Scholars

Scholarly exchange between Japanese and Korean scholars accelerated in the final years of the Japanese invasion of Chosŏn. Kang Hang (1567-1618) became an important figure in the development of Neo-Confucianism in Japan through his interactions with Japanese scholars, especially Fujiwara Seika (1561-1619). Seika had studied the writings of Yi Hwang (pen name T'oegye, 1501-1570), one of the most celebrated Neo-Confucian scholars in Chosŏn, and deepened his study under Kang, who was brought to Japan as a war captive in 1597 (Sin and Murakami 1991). Seika met frequently with Kang, who resided in Fushimi, Kyoto. Unable to speak a common language, they discussed Neo-Confucianism through written Chinese
until Kang's return to Chosön in the early summer of 1600.

These interactions with Kang provided Seika with a significant opportunity to expand his understanding of Neo-Confucianism. Kang highly praised Seika's enthusiastic study and extensive knowledge in his writings, which were later printed as *Kanyangnok*, or “The Record of a Shepherd.” He wrote that Seika was a very intelligent person, with a very good knowledge of Chinese. Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543-1616), the first shogun of the Edo government, must have thought likewise, for having learned of Seika's sagacity, the shogun created an office for him that carried a stipend of 2,000 koku, though Seika did not accept the post (Kang 1989, 28).

Seika's role in transmitting Neo-Confucian theory in Japan was significant. He analyzed how Confucian ideals should be incorporated into society and how they could apply to the political setting of the late 1590s and early 1600s. Upon Ieyasu's request in 1600, Seika went to Nijō Castle in Kyoto to lecture on Neo-Confucian doctrine, which subsequently became the underlying philosophical principle of the Edo polity. Seika appeared wearing Confucian-style attire, showing his determination to devote himself to Neo-Confucian scholarship. Neo-Confucian principles became Seika's code of behavior and as a Neo-Confucian scholar he served as an important influence upon Ieyasu and the early political system of the Tokugawa regime.

Hayashi Razan (1583-1657), Seika's student who later served as a Confucian advisor of Ieyasu, also had opportunities to exchange writings with Korean officials serving in the 1607 embassy to Japan. In a text on T'oegye that he presented to Korean officials, Razan wrote, “Toegye is a stupendous jewel; everyone knows his illustrious name in my country.” He also wrote, “[Toegye's] elaboration on Neo-Confucianism has reached everywhere [in Japan], but further transmission of his study [throughout the country] is needed. The [theory of] understanding of truth has no bounds within the knowledge of Toegye” (Abe 1965, 453). Razan highly valued Toegye's achievements and contributions to Neo-Confucian learning. Japanese Neo-Confucian scholars continued to acknowledge Toegye throughout the Edo period. They also respected other Korean scholars who developed Confucianism in new theoretical directions and added more profound explanations to the earlier Chinese texts.

Yamazaki Ansai (1618-1682) also displayed respect for Toegye in his scholarship. Ansai's view of Toegye as an intermediary between Zhu Xi (1130-1200) and himself informed his own interpretations of Neo-Confucianism. Ansai wrote, “Having understood the writings of Zhu Xi, [I feel that] if he is incorrect, I will be wrong together with Zhu Xi; [even if I am wrong,] I will never regret it” (Yamazaki 1978, 411-12). He greatly admired these two Neo-Confucians. Zhu Xi deepened Confucian thought, making it more sophisticated, and Toegye subsequently developed Neo-Confucianism as an unparalleled philosophy (Abe 251).

Toegye's writings inspired Ansai's interest in pursuing Neo-Confucian studies. His evaluation of Toegye showed his appreciation: “Toegye was indeed of the same crucial level as Zhu Xi, his other leading disciples, and the Chinese scholars in the same period ... He interpreted Neo-Confucian doctrine in ways
that other scholars could not find … It is the most distinguished manifestation of Neo-Confucianism” (Abe 251). Ansai’s contribution to Neo-Confucian learning stemmed from his admiration of T’oegye and his writings on Neo-Confucian doctrine circulated throughout Japan (Abe 454).

Disciples of Ansai also played important roles in the further spread of Neo-Confucianism in Japanese society. Satō Naokata (1650-1719), Naokata’s student Inaba Usai (1684-1760), and Usai’s son Inaba Mokusai (1732-1799) also studied T’oegye’s writings. Naokata took the Korean scholar’s theory as the moral foundation for his students and encouraged them to continue reading his texts throughout their lives. Usai later opened a terakoya, or private school, and described T’oegye to his students as “a great scholar, next to Zhu Xi” (Abe 458-59). Mokusai, in following Naokata’s instructions, familiarized himself with T’oegye’s work. Each year at the winter solstice, he held an early-morning discussion on T’oegye to deepen his students’ understanding of his writings. Before reading, the students were to wash, clean their rooms, and sit properly in formal clothing. After that, they began to read the preface to his writings (Abe 459).

Nishikawa Joken (1648-1724) also supported the view that T’oegye had advanced Neo-Confucian studies in Japan. An eminent scholar in Nagasaki, his hometown, Joken acknowledged that Chosŏn had surpassed China in the study of Neo-Confucian doctrine. He wrote, “The [development of the Confucian] discipline has already terminated on the continent [Qing China], but continues to grow in the country [Chosŏn] where humble and modest people reside” (Nishikawa 252). He saw Chosŏn as the new center of Neo-Confucian learning. Ōtsuka Taino (1677-1750), a Neo-Confucian in Kumamoto, realized the depth of Neo-Confucian theory by reading T’oegye’s texts when he was twenty-eight years old. T’oegye’s dominance in Japanese Neo-Confucian scholarship seemed uncontested at the time.

Sin Yuhan, the chief diarist (chesulgwan) of the 1719 embassy to Japan, was impressed by the wide distribution of T’oegye’s texts in Osaka and the great popularity of his writings in Japan. He wrote:

[The number of] published texts in Osaka is truly one of the world’s spectacular views.

Among the numerous monographs by our [Korean] scholars, the high regard of the Japanese populace concentrated on the Collected Writings of T’oegye (T’oegjeip). According to rumor each family has a copy [of T’oegjeip] and enjoys reading his works … Members of the earlier embassies always mentioned that T’oegye’s fame was known everywhere [in Japan]. Indeed, the Japanese people often asked me the location of his shrine. Another frequent inquiry was if there was any news of offspring of the Neo-Confucian master and his favorites, and his hobbies, as well. Their endless appreciation [of T’oegye] was so enthusiastic that I never

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6 Nishikawa Joken was the author of the two-volume Kai tsushokô, which was regarded as the first book on topography and foreign trade in the Edo period. He was invited by the shogun Tokugawa Yoshimune (1684-1751, r. 1716-1745) to lecture on astronomy and geography, and donated his written works to Yoshimune in 1719.

7 Called Tosan Sŏwŏn, the academy that houses his shrine was established in 1574 in Andong, in today’s North Kyŏngsang Province.
T’oege was one of the central themes of conversation between Japanese people and members of the Korean embassies. Some Japanese scholars even asked the Koreans if the original texts of T’oege’s works had been preserved somewhere in Choson (Abe 467). In fact, some of his works had been lost in the Imjin War, but copies of his writings were available both inside and outside of the Korean Peninsula. A number of printings of Korean scholarly writings were carried to Japan during and after the Imjin War by Japanese soldiers and Korean embassies, and those texts contributed to the wider spread of T’oege’s writings among Japanese scholars and commoners (Abe 453). Sin Yuhan also mentioned in his diary an encounter with a local scholar in Osaka who had presented him with faultless recitations on historical Korean sages from the Silla, Koryo, and Choson periods. With amazement, Sin questioned him on how many ancient Japanese scholars he knew, but the man responded that he knew little about them (Sin 244). Sin responded by expressing cynicism towards Japanese comprehension of Neo-Confucianism. “They are ignorant of the ancestral masters of their own country” (Sin 244).

In addition to Kang Hang, who escaped from Japan and returned to Choson in 1600, other Korean captives from the war living in Japan contributed to the development of Neo-Confucianism in the early Edo period, too. Some Korean scholars in local domains gained prominence, became role models, and earned the respect of people in those communities. They included Hong Hoyon (1582-1657), Yi Chinyong (1571-1633), and Chinyong’s son Yi Maegye (1617-1682). These men served the domain where they lived, married Japanese women, raised children, and never returned to Choson. They became noteworthy Neo-Confucian scholars and displayed long-lasting loyalty to their daimyo. They seem not to have experienced prejudice in those domains, but instead were welcomed and respected as distinguished scholars (Yazawa 1969, 17).

Among these men, Hong Hoyon was well known in the Saga domain, in northern Kyushu. He had been captured and brought to Japan by the Japanese army when he was twelve years old. Nabeshima Katsushige (1580-1657), the first daimyo of the domain, treated Hong as a younger brother. While studying with Katsushige, Hong’s abilities became readily apparent. After further study in Kyoto, Hong returned to the domain to serve the Nabeshima family as a Neo-Confucian advisor. Katsushige once permitted Hong to return to his home country. However, Katsushige’s messenger reached the port before Hong departed and persuaded him not to leave his lord. Impressed, Hong went back to Katsushige and decided to stay in Saga for the rest of his life. When Katsushige died in Edo at the age of 78, Hong followed his master in death through seppuku in accordance with the practice of junshi, in which the truly loyal vassal followed his master to the next world. Hong’s behavior deeply impressed other retainers of the Nabeshima family, and his act served as a model of proper behavior for a retainer (Matsuda 1976, 24).

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The Korean embassies provided opportunities for common people as well as scholars to seek a memento or a conversation from the visitors. As noted above, crowds of people gathered at the Korean embassy’s lodgings to request writings. Sin Yuhan described this Japanese habit:

"The Japanese people were enthusiastic about seeking our writings, without distinction of social rank or position. Those people respect [Korean] items as if they belonged to gods or wizards and treasure them like jewels. The Japanese even sought handshakes and writings from our palanquin carriers and the servants, who know little about writing … The local scholars who came a long distance to visit us looked delighted when they received our comments... In my view, they admire Chosón because they do not usually experience seeing our formal clothing and accessories [such as caps], on account of [Japan's] remoteness from the central civilization."

Sin must have found some satisfaction in the behavior of the Japanese who admired “civilized and refined” Korean culture. In a sense, the Koreans seemed relieved that the Japanese were not a true competitor in the cultural field.

The chance to meet Koreans could be significant for Japanese scholars. The exchange of written texts with members of the Korean embassy was an extraordinary opportunity to display their erudition and so establish themselves as scholars (Suzuki 1996, 4-6). Some even traveled great distances to seek evaluations of their writings. Meeting with the Koreans could become a stepping stone for one’s future promotion, and the Koreans were well aware that their words of praise could provide Japanese scholars high honor. Knowing this, the Koreans tried to offer opportunities for literary exchange as often as possible. If a local scholar received praise from a Korean, his newly-enhanced reputation attracted more students to learn Chinese and he was able to make a living more easily. The most fortunate might be called to serve a domain or even the Edo government, as happened to Arai Hakuseki (1657-1725), a Confucian advisor of two shoguns, Tokugawa Ienobu (1662-1712, r. 1709-1712) and Tokugawa Ietsugu (1709-1716, r. 1713-1716). Ienobu in particular relied on Hakuseki. In 1693, Ienobu, at that time the daimyo of the Kofu domain, appointed Hakuseki as his advisor. From that time on, Hakuseki worked for Ienobu, who later became shogun. Before serving the Kofu domain, Hakuseki, at the age of 26, had presented the 1682 embassy with Tōjō shishū, a collection of his poetry. The assistant officer to the vice ambassador (chaje kungwan), Hong Set’ae (1653-1725) wrote, “He indeed has an authentic talent ... But his personality is far more distinguished than his poems” (Miyazaki 76).

The case of Maeda Yōan (1677-1752) was not an exception. He received high...
praise from Yi Hyŏn (pen name Tonggwak, 1654-1718), the chief diarist of the 1711 embassy, and was later called to serve the Fukui domain as a medical doctor (Suzuki 1996, 6). Yi remarked on Maeda's writing, “Your mind is very clear ... Do not lament the hardships caused by undertaking your studies far from your hometown. You will soon receive honors” (Senoo, vol. 6).

Yi Hyŏn also showed his thoughtfulness in this reply to a young scholar who presented a poem in which he made a mistake.

When you speak
The language is refreshing
When I read your writings
They are excellently composed
Though you made a mistake with [one of your] rhymes
It is harmless
Enjoy this moment and raise a glass

The interest among Japanese in Korean texts and in the embassies reflected their enthusiasm for absorbing new knowledge and represented a desire for scholastic stimulation that Japanese society did not readily offer. Japanese enjoyed learning about new topics and scholarship from Koreans, and likewise also expressed positive attitudes and friendliness toward Korean culture.

Perspectives of Practical Learning Scholars towards Japan

“Sirhak” literally means “learning for practical use,” or “scholarship for living up to one's faith.” The term has been generally accepted as the name for a variety of scholars who showed an interest in social and political reform and were particularly active during the reign of King Yongjo (1694-1776, r. 1724-1776). This monarch sought to reduce factional strife in the government, promoting a policy to maintain a political balance called t'angpyŏngch'aeck, or the policy of impartiality. He also sought to consolidate royal prerogatives and stabilize state administration by selecting high-ranking officials fairly and thereby lessen political in-fighting. Sirhak studies grew amid such efforts to ease political problems, and the scholars who are counted as followers of this trend offered new visions for Chosŏn. They criticized the Chosŏn government for their country's political and economic stagnation and praised Japanese policies not followed in their own country. Gaining knowledge from Japanese texts brought back by embassy members, these Practical Learning scholars brought new perspectives and approaches to Chosŏn's neighborly relations with Japan. Ha Ubong argues that these scholars have been inappropriately identified as Sirhak, and that they are better understood as “scholars who held impartial knowledge and conducted objective examinations of foreign countries.”

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13 For more detail concerning Ha Ubong's views, see his Chosŏn hagi sirhakcha ū ilbon'gwan yŏn'gu, 10-13.
In this sense, Practical Learning scholars can be also described as more open-minded than traditional Chosŏn scholars.

A critical difference between Practical Learning scholars and traditional Neo-Confucian scholars was whether or not their interests leaned toward the outside world and external affairs. The former considered it important to regard Japan and the Japanese without bias and not treat them as an “odd country and a strange people.” Less constrained by the near-universal conservatism in Chosŏn society, Practical Learning scholars fostered their own perspectives. As Son Sŭngch’ŏl argues, “The small China view clearly became separated from historical reality in the late seventeenth century, and an ideological change that sought to overcome this was envisioned by Practical Learning scholars” (Son 1987, 124).

In another contrast between Practical Learning scholars and traditional scholars in Chosŏn, the Practical Learning scholars acknowledged Japan’s distinctiveness in having a samurai military class. They also emphasized that the Korean military did not function effectively in the early stages of the Imjin War. These Practical Learning scholars desperately wanted to reform and strengthen their country’s military security. Traditional Chosŏn scholars, however, did not recognize the imperative of military reform. Preparing a strong military defense against invasion was not among their reform priorities.

In South Korea, many scholars have questioned the historical significance of the Practical Learning scholars in Chosŏn society as their studies were not accepted by the majority of their contemporaries. The ideas and policies that Practical Learning scholars advanced were mainly discussed within their small circles, among like-minded people. In other words, their views had little influence upon the policies of the Chosŏn government. Nevertheless, this change in how the outside world was viewed was an important phenomenon in eighteenth-century Chosŏn society. In the history of the late Chosŏn period, their efforts to move beyond a prejudiced image of Japan and to provide different perspectives on Chosŏn society ought to be given more emphasis. While the views of Practical Learning scholars were regarded as inconsequential and did not influence Chosŏn policies, from the first sprouts of this new approach grew the dynamics that eventually changed traditional perceptions.

Another important issue regarding Practical Learning scholars is the limited extent of their detailed research on Japan, given the lack of opportunities to visit, see, and experience that country first-hand. The main sources of their research and analysis were texts that embassy members brought back to Chosŏn and the travelogues written by members of the embassies. Nevertheless, Practical Learning scholars differed from more traditional scholars in their writings on Japan. They attempted to understand the country as accurately as possible from documents.

14 This definition is quoted from a lecture given on April 24, 2002, in the course “Nihonshi tokushu” taught by Tashiro Kazui at Keio University, Tokyo.

15 “Small China” is a translation of sojunghwa, or the view of Chosŏn Korea as a little China, that is, as a major participant in the Chinese cultural sphere, and the main protector of Chinese culture while the Manchus ruled China during the Qing period.
published there. As a result, they were well-acquainted with Japan's history and culture. Their distance from central academic currents also made it possible for them to construct their visions more freely and made their open-minded observations on Japan more objective. Possessing a less discriminatory view of that foreign society, Practical Learning scholars were less constrained by a “superior-inferior” perspective.

Yi Ik showed a deep understanding of Japan. In his Sŏngho sasŏl, which his student An Chŏngbok compiled around 1760, various sources of information about Japan and candid opinions on that country can be found. Yi had long been out of central government and resided far from Hansŏng, the capital, though several recent generations of his family had held important civil administration posts in the government. He concentrated on scholarship, focusing first on Neo-Confucian texts, and later extending his research to astronomy, regional geography, medicine, and foreign countries. His writings on Japan treated geography, history, customs, culture, and politics. With such a broad understanding, he seems to have been able to research this neighboring state in detail from a relatively objective perspective (Son, 138).

In Sŏngho sasŏl Yi succinctly described Japanese history and geography, a discussion which seems to have drawn its format from the Haedong chegukki compiled by Sin Sukch'u (1417-1475) and Kang Hang's Kanyangnok (Ha 2001, 78). The attention to geography came from his emphasis on Japan's strategic importance for Chosŏn, which had become manifest since the Imjin War. His greatest interest was in the Japanese political situation, both recent and present. He wrote in detail on the rise of the three military leaders, Oda Nobunaga (1534-1582), Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1536-1598), and Tokugawa Ieyasu, and described each of their roles in the process that resulted in Japan's unification. Yi also noted that the military government in Edo represented the political authority as a whole, but his concerns focused on another authority, the imperial court in Kyoto, which was absent from decision-making in politics (Yi 1989, 8).

Apart from being a potential threat, Japan also provided terms of comparison to Chosŏn. Yi's suggestions for improvements in his own country included further development of military defense.

[Building up] the armed forces should be further emphasized [in Chosŏn] though the soldiers may not be necessary for a long period of time [if peace is maintained]. Possessing force means being firmly prepared for offensive acts from enemy invasions. If armed soldiers were not used for one thousand and one hundred years, it would indeed be the attainment of my wish. My concern is that the barbarians may not share my wish [for peace].

16 Yi Ik's great-grandfather served in the State Council (Ŭijŏngbu) as Fourth State Councilor (chwach'ansŏng, junior 1st grade), his grandfather as Fourth Inspector (chip'yŏng, senior 5th grade) in the Office of the Inspector-General (K. Sahŏnbu), and his father as Inspector-General (taesahŏn, junior second grade) in the same office. His brothers and other relatives also served in the government.

Yi emphasized the significance of the military, as circumstances might not mirror his hope for long-lasting peace in Chosŏn. Although Chosŏn's diplomatic principles aimed at peaceful relations with neighboring states, he suggested consolidation of a sufficient defensive force and greater discipline among soldiers. His warning was a caution against further conflict by remembering the difficult experiences of the past wars, including the Manchu invasions in 1627 and 1636-1637, which had severely damaged his country. Chosŏn should draw a lesson from the wars, though learning from those experiences would be a painful process.

Yi believed that peace could be maintained only on the solid foundation of the military. His criticism of Chosŏn's inadequate defense continued.

Our country is not wide and, surrounded by three seas, comprises five thousand li [of coastline]. Therefore, coastal defense is an urgent matter in the light of the past experiences from the end of Koryŏ to immediately before the Imjin War. Chosŏn today fortunately is thriving and at peace, [but] the soldiers are not well disciplined and the facilities [for military defense] are not ready ... The deficiencies [in domestic society] at the time of the Imjin War remain unimproved today.18

He urged further strengthening of military forces for defense against maritime threats. Through his analysis of Chosŏn's inability to establish a strong defense, he discovered that soldiers lacked the most up-to-date firearms. In contrast to the less effective Korean weapons, Japanese had demonstrated military strength during the Imjin War through their use of the hinawa-ju˝, or matchlock rifles, weapons gained through commercial trade with the West (Ha 2001, 81). Yi believed that because of the Chosŏn court's failure to adopt these new weapons Korean arms were inferior to Japanese ones, leading to his critique of the stagnation of technological advancement in Chosŏn. This warning arose from his country's need to adopt new skills and weapons that would create a more powerful army so that it would not become militarily weaker than its neighbors.

Yi Ik also sought to discover Chosŏn's military weakness through a comparison with the strong points of Japanese armies. He particularly noted Japanese techniques for fortifying castles and constructing moats.

Japan excels at defending their castles. When built, the lower skirt [of the castle wall] was widely extended, but the upper part was constructed at a steep angle. This made it impossible for soldiers to approach the castle easily. Even though the fighting occurred within the castle walls, a collapse never happened. In contrast to the sturdiness of Japanese castles, Korean castles were fragile and weak. Attacking a Japanese castle was undeniably hard. Few [Japanese] soldiers were lost [in the strong structures].19

Yi noted that the Japanese army had dug effective moats, which hampered the

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retreat of the Chinese and Korean forces when their soldiers were unable to overcome the Japanese positions. He also highlighted the lesser skills of Korean builders resulting in inadequate Korean forts at the time of the Japanese invasion.

Yi furthermore argued that insufficient military strength likely originated in the inveterate conflict between two elite groups in Chosón society.

I believe that the achievements of the munban [the literary class] were too overrated, and [excessive praise of them] may have undermined politics. Defense by the muban [the martial class] would definitely assist the country at any time. But the country’s ability to defend itself against an outside threat is insufficient, as the literary class undervalues the military class. How can we obtain such a force in a time of upheaval?20

At the Chosón court, officials were separated into two divisions, the munban and the muban. The munban were the policy-making civil officials who had passed the higher civil service examination (munkwa). The muban, or the military officers who had passed the military examination (mukwa), were denigrated by munban officials. Faced with this situation, Yi emphasized that scholarship and the martial arts should be of equal value. However, the continuation of this division prevented Chosón from strengthening its military power (Yi, 3: 55).

Unsatisfactory armaments, untrained troops, poor fortifications, and discord within the government between civil officials and military officials led Yi to reflect upon what had occurred during the Japanese invasion.

Introducing the chaotic conditions at the beginning of the invasion, Yi emphasized the court’s ignorance of the real situation. There had been a final opportunity to understand the hidden intentions of the Japanese before the invasion when Korean envoys traveled to Japan to meet Toyotomi Hideyoshi in 1591, but the Chosón court had failed to grasp his intention to conquer the Korean peninsula. Yi also noted that the court had long been unable to understand international conditions, leading Chosón to suffer an invasion that caused social disruption and devastation throughout the country.

Tokugawa Ieyasu exhibited a different stance toward Korea than Hideyoshi, and in 1607 Chosón entered into diplomatic relations with the new military government in Edo. Nonetheless, there still was strong resentment of the Japanese in Yi Ik’s time. Yi sought to calm the anger caused by the Japanese invasions and suggested opening up a new phase in the relationship between the two countries.

During the Imjin War, the desecration of the royal tombs [by the Japanese troops] indeed caused resentment and a desire for revenge. The dispatch of Ming reinforcements [to the Korean peninsula] in the Wanli period [1573-1620] was an act of virtuous benevolence that can never be disregarded. However, the devastations [of the Japanese invasion] left nothing and no methods to recompense Ming China [for its munificence] were found … There is much to say about the invasion; however, the ringleader [Toyotomi Hideyoshi] is dead and other people already regret the past misconceptions. Time has passed; it is time to think of letting our people disarm and rest … Overall, neighborly relations enable us to enhance mutual friendship, control feelings, and show sincerity [toward each other]. In so doing, the existence of the royal court, the society and the people will be perpetuated and maintained in peace and in comfort.22

The perception of Japan as a “never-to-be-forgiven enemy” was reasonable, but Chosôn had already re-established diplomatic relations with the Edo government more than a century before Yi wrote. Despite the reality of friendly relations, the Chosôn state continued to harbor resentment because of the invasion. Yi also considered the sentiments of scholars active in his time, and criticized them for continuing to consider Japan as barbarian, as an uncivilized country. Seeing Japan that way did not contribute to the strengthening of a neighborly friendship; true relations could only be accomplished without prejudice. He attempted to see Japan clearly and to gain a more realistic perspective on the outside world near the Korean peninsula.

Yi Ik’s knowledge of Japan extended to social issues, too. He seemed astounded by the extensive distribution of printed texts in Japan. As noted, this had also amazed Sin Yuhan in 1719. In Edo, Osaka, and other populous cities, numerous printed publications circulated widely. Though the literacy rate in the Edo period is uncertain, people, especially those residing in urban areas, enjoyed reading. For example, at least 60 per cent of the Edo population could read, and seventy to eighty percent of children in the city studied at terakoya (“temple schools”), where they learned reading and writing, skills necessary for the development of a merchant class in urban areas.23

Extant writings on Japan by members of the Korean embassies did not describe the high rate of school attendance, but the breadth of literacy surely impressed the Koreans. Sin Yuhan wrote regarding the readers in the cities: “The people appreciate study like bookworms eat printed pages. They learn deeply and gain skill [in reading the texts], and develop a discerning eye for what to read” (Sin


23 Even prior to the Edo period, private educational schools were dedicated to teaching the children of the samurai and other elites. After the rise of the merchant class in the middle of the Edo period, the popularity of the terakoya as well as shijuku, or private academies, in large cities such as Edo, Kyoto, and Osaka increased greatly, and those schools spread to rural and coastal areas. For more information, see Ishikawa Matsutarô, Hanî to terakoya (Tokyo: Kyôikuisha, 1978), 143-45. Isoda Michifumi also discusses the diffusion of terakoya as schools where children learned to write, read, and calculate. Isoda Michifumi, “Mukashi mo ima mo,” Asahi Shimbun, Be, June 18, 2005, 5.
He also saw that Chinese and Korean texts were published more extensively than books written by Japanese. As noted, among Japanese scholars, Toegye's works were the most popular. Embassy members opined that the Japanese diligence for learning was a result of the wide circulation of books among the public.

Yi Ik also paid considerable attention to the complexity of the Japanese imperial institution by discussing the emperor system and providing a chronology of the emperors. He also touched on the idea that diplomatic relations between the emperor of Japan and the king of Chosŏn should be carried out on a basis of equality. His comments on this matter may have been taken from Sin Yuhan and other writings by earlier Korean officials. Through such information, he accurately foresaw that the relations between the imperial court and the shogun had the potential to become an important issue in the neighborly relationship between the two countries.

Indeed, the relationship of the military leader and the imperial institution was one of Yi's central concerns. An underlying tension in the political situation in Japan perplexed him. He wondered how a political transformation there would affect neighborly relations.

It has been six to seven hundred years since the Japanese emperor lost his political power. This was not the wish of the people [of Japan]. Among the population loyal to the imperial court, the name of the emperor is still revered and those people will obey what he says. Something [relating to the imperial court] may possibly happen later on. If a new generation was to assemble, and [they] were to succeed in persuading the emperor to reign over the polity, they would call on others [to overthrow the bakufu] and their righteous desire [for the emperor to rule the country] could bear fruit. It is possible that the daimyos of the domains might join [to support the emperor]. If this occurs, [the representative of the shogun might claim], ‘He is the emperor, and I represent the king [meaning the shogun].’ How would we deal with this?24

Japan's dual authority, divided between the emperor and the shogun, might cause tension in relations between the two states. The Korean king conducted diplomatic correspondence with the shogun. When the emperor would be reinstated as the paramount political figure, who would the King of Chosŏn exchange state letters with, the emperor or the shogun? Yi Ik predicted that such an issue might have serious consequences for neighborly relations. This worrisome issue became reality one century later, when, after the Meiji Restoration in 1868, the diplomatic protocol in use since 1607 became meaningless due to the re-emergence of the emperor in the political arena.25

25 The Meiji government utilized the characters chōhu and kō to refer to the Meiji emperor in a state letter to the Chosŏn court in which the new Japanese government sought to engage in a new diplomatic relationship. Those characters had previously been used to signify the Chinese emperor. Regarding this as impertinent, the Chosŏn court refused to engage in diplomatic relations with Japan's new government.
Yi also spoke of the dispatch of the Korean embassies by the Chosŏn court, which he believed should be undertaken more frequently.

The interaction [between the two countries] is unremitting in accordance with the excellent teaching of a late king.\(^{26}\) Nevertheless, Japanese envoys stay at the edge\(^ {27}\) [of our country] and we wait for a request for the dispatch [of an embassy from the bakufu]. [After all arrangements are made], our embassy will then leave [for Japan]. This [arrangement] lacks sincerity. The [present] system ought to be changed by agreement and [diplomatic] exchange take place every three years. We should depart [for Japan] and they come [to Korea], and both of us should visit the capitals [of each other].\(^ {28}\)

In Yi’s opinion, the dispatch of Korean embassies to Japan was not properly coordinated. As the Korean embassy traveled to Japan only after a request from the Edo government had been delivered via Tsushima, dispatches took place irregularly. Yi proposed regular visits of envoys between Japan and Chosŏn. He believed that the Chosŏn court should voluntarily send an embassy periodically, and therefore that dispatching the embassy every three years was more appropriate than the system then in use. He also criticized the court’s unwillingness, due to the Imjin War, to permit Japanese to travel to the capital Hansŏng. He felt that in order for the two governments to interact more effectively, the Chosŏn court should permit the Japanese envoys access to the capital city.

Yi Ik’s views of Japanese society transcended the rigid hua-yi division of the civilized and the uncivilized. Traditional Korean scholars in this period would not have considered Japan as Chosŏn’s peer. Even though those scholars knew of the strengths of Japan, their views of the Japanese as cultural barbarians did not change. Yi’s critical view of his own country emerges in distinct contrast to this narrow-minded approach towards Japan. He persistently denounced the Chosŏn court’s incompetence in handling diplomatic issues, and insisted that this deficiency stemmed from ignorance of the international environment around the Korean peninsula (Ha 2001, 111). He saw a neighborly relationship with Japan as necessary for sustaining peace, but his suggestion of “maintaining a neighborly relationship and building a firm military to prepare for an invasion” remained realistic.

An Chŏngbok, who studied under Yi Ik, continued this new approach to the study of Japan. His compilations of detailed information on Japan significantly influenced Practical Learning scholars of the eighteenth century. He emphasized practical matters, such as strengthening commercial trade and the military, as well as developing technology. Japan’s commercial relationships with the Dutch and Chinese particularly interested him.

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\(^{26}\) Yi Ik’s phrase “a late king” referred to King Sonjo, who had died in 1608.

\(^{27}\) Here Yi Ik is referring to their staying at the Waegwan.

As far as I understand [conditions in Japan], the Japanese are strongly pursuing military arts that are skillful and advanced. To absorb new equipment and technology they actively trade with the Dutch to obtain highly-developed technical items ... The Japanese sustain their life through commercial trade. [As a result of their interaction with Holland and other countries, their country is] full of riches and trading ships regularly anchor there. Due to Japan’s direct trade with China, commercial dealings between Chosŏn and China are decreasing.

From An’s point of view, the extensive commercial trade between China and Japan seemed an obstacle to increasing Korean trade with China. He contrasted Japan’s economic prosperity through profit-making activities with the inactive Korean commercial situation. He also pointed to the port of Nagasaki, which was open to Dutch ships representing the Dutch East India Company and to Chinese merchant ships (Ha 2001, 152) as a symbol of the economic wealth of Japan. Nagasaki’s affluence and the diverse commodities available in its markets, as well as the number of trading ships, often drew the attention of Koreans, and Sin Yuhan expressed disappointment that the route traveled by the embassies in Japan could not pass through that prosperous city (Sin, 66-67).

Breaking with traditional Confucian attitudes, An criticized the lack of Korean trade with other countries. Examining statistics of the trade between Japan and other foreign countries, he pointed out the aptitude of the Japanese for expanding commercial markets by trading with Chinese merchants via Nagasaki (An, 2: 60). He may have envied the Japanese trading activities, for the Chinese items traded there were not available in Chosŏn. The Korean markets at the Waegwan were open only in the mornings and evenings, and dealt only in vegetables after Chinese trade in Nagasaki commenced in 1695 (An, 2: 60). His stressing of the affluence of Nagasaki seemed to reflect An’s wish that Korean ports could also be as prosperous as this Japanese port.

Another Practical Learning scholar, Yi Tongmu, possessed extensive knowledge of both Qing China and Edo Japan. His visit to Qing China as a member of a tribute embassy in 1778 may have inspired him to gain a more thorough understanding of the conditions and the culture of neighboring countries. After returning from a one-month stay in Beijing with the tribute embassy, he was appointed to a position in the Royal Library (Kyujanggak) in 1779. His position in the Chosŏn government was relatively high even though he was the illegitimate son (sŏl) of a yangban father, having been born to a non-yangban concubine.

While working at the Royal Library, his scholastic activities extended to association with scholars such as Pak Chiwŏn (1737-1805) and Hong Taeyong (1731-1783), who are known as pukhak sirhakcha, or Practical Learning scholars of the Northern Learning School. Those Practical Learning scholars saw Qing China and the Manchus as a respectable and advanced state and people, not as a barbarian

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30 The Practical Learning scholars Pak Chega (1750-1815) and Yu Tükkong (1748-1807) were also sŏl who served in the Royal Library. Pak went to Qing China as a member of a tributary embassy in 1778.
state and barbarians. Yi Tôngmu shared their opinions, and his own experience of visiting Qing China may have informed his willingness to appreciate different perspectives while engaged in discussions with other scholars.

Yi Tôngmu was also acquainted with officials who had served in embassies to Japan. Won Chunggô and Song Taejung, the first and second document officers (sangbang sögi, pubang sögi) in the 1764 embassy, became his close companions and were supportive of his activities. Along with understanding conditions in Qing China, in this way he accumulated knowledge about Japan and Japanese culture and customs as well. His governmental position allowed him access to documents from past embassies to Japan, and this privileged environment may have accelerated a growing thirst for knowledge.

Yi benefited from his government position, which allowed him to meet various officials and learn from them about Japan. After he heard of the literary exchange between Won and the Japanese scholar and physician Taki Kakudai (pen name Yahachi, 1709-1773), Yi wrote, “My acquaintance Won Hyôngch’ôn had a written exchange with Taki Yahachi, a Japanese local scholar. [According to Won’s impression of Taki], he was knowledgeable and gentle-mannered ... He was bright and a talented writer. Indeed, he is an overseas Tang Zhongyan” (Yi, 7: 5). Among Practical Learning scholars, Yi seemed particularly interested in Japanese intellectuals. Other Practical Learning scholars did not further investigate this aspect of Japanese society, though. Influenced by the Chosôn-period tradition of considering Japanese scholarship to be inferior, most Korean scholars paid little attention to the writings of Japanese scholars. Yi, however, accepted that some of their works were worth noting. He also introduced the lives and achievements of the Japanese scholars who promoted the development of Neo-Confucian studies, including Fujiwara Seika, Kinoshita Jun’an (1621-1699), and Jun’an’s students Arai Hakuseki and Amenomori Hôshû (1668-1755). He evaluated them as “eminent scholars overseas” (Yi, 10: 18-19).

Above all, Yi Tôngmu highly praised Fujiwara Seika and Yamazaki Ansai. He wrote that Seika was loyal to Neo-Confucian studies and that both Kang Hang and Tokugawa Ieyasu had complimented Seika for his humble personality as a scholar (Yi, 11: 38-39; 10: 19). Yi also introduced Ansai as a great master of Neo-Confucian doctrine and as the Zhu Xi of Japan (Yi, 10: 19). Ansai revered Toegye, and concentrated his research on him. In a text discussing Japanese scholars of Confucianism, Yi wrote “sônsaeng” (J. sensei), an honorific expression for elders.

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31 The literal meaning of pukhak is “study of the north.” “North” here refers to Qing China, part of which was located north of the Korean peninsula.

32 Yi Tôngmu’s various descriptions of Japan were apparently based upon information from and conversations with his acquaintances Won and Song, as his records mainly cited texts from the 1764 embassy.

33 Hyôngch’ôn was the pen name of Won Chunggô.

34 Tang Ruxun (dates unknown) was a poet active in Qing China and an editor of Tang shi jie, a collection of poetry. His pen name was Zhongyuan. Because of Taki Kakudai’s outstanding ability in literature, Won referred to him as another Tang Zhongyan.
and superiors, after each scholar’s name. His impartial attitude toward these foreign scholars may be inferred from this term of respect. By exploring texts written by Japanese scholars, Yi sought to fairly analyze their works, and in his evaluations of them he frequently made insightful observations.

Yi also obtained Japanese items from Wŏn Chunggŏ and Sŏng Taejung, such as a folding fan, Japanese paper (J. washi), and ink paintings. The high quality of the paper surprised Yi, and the refined black-ink paintings impressed him with their skill. Yi remarked that “both the drawings and the calligraphic works are exquisite masterpieces, like embroidery.” “The writings and paintings [by the Japanese] are like gems” (Yi, 10: 18-19).

Yi grew more enthusiastic about his research into “things Japanese.” He sought to update his knowledge on Japan not only from the travelogues and the records of the conversations between the Korean embassy members and the Japanese, but also from interviews with Korean castaways who had been rescued by the Japanese and sent to Nagasaki where they rested and recovered their health before being repatriated to Chosŏn (Yi, 10: 11). His questions to castaways extended to all aspects of Nagasaki and also to the appearance of the westerners (that is, the Dutch) there. One of the Korean castaways asked Yi if he had visited Nagasaki. Yi answered, “Although I have not been there yet, I can obviously understand the situation [through our conversation]” (Yi, 10: 11). He eventually compiled his writings on Japan as Ch'ŏngnyŏnggukchi (1778), or “A Collection of Information on Japan,” in which he recorded various details of Japanese culture, history, scholarship, customs, and religion.

Access to Japanese texts became easier in Chosŏn in the late eighteenth century in response to increasing interest in Japan, enabling Practical Learning scholars to obtain writings more readily (Ha 2001, 216-17). In the twelve visits to Japan by Korean embassies during the Edo period, typically two or three travelogues emerged from each delegation. In the 1764 embassy, though, nine officials wrote accounts of their time in Japan. These nine texts varied in style and noted diverse features of Japanese culture and geography. The interest in Japanese politics and military affairs gradually shifted to culture and customs. In this respect, perspectives toward Japan seem to have changed from unrealistic stereotypes to a broader and sharper image of the country.

Yi Tŏngmu criticized Chosŏn’s disregard of Japanese culture, in the following manner.

Alas, Chosŏn’s customs tend to be narrow-minded and irritate others. The cause originates in our arrogant attitude, as Chosŏn has been called a place of civilization [by scholars]. Open-minded Japanese can also possess elegance and gracefulness, for Chosŏn does not have a monopoly on culture, though it vilifies other countries [as barbarians]. This was my greatest grief … Most Japanese are by nature diligent and intelligent, and possess great powers of concentration; they are honest, and respect literature and scholarship; and they never abandon learning. Our people despise them as barbarians. Without careful observation of their behavior, Koreans are predisposed to malign the Japanese. I once agreed with what our people thought. However, as I deepen my knowledge about them, despite not being in
Yi undoubtedly saw positive aspects in Japan, and he urged Koreans to learn from the Japanese, who possessed things that the Koreans did not.

The nineteenth-century Practical Learning scholar Chông Yagyong (1762-1836) also wrote on Japanese Confucian scholars. He singled out for praise Japanese Confucian scholars such as Itô Jinsai (1627-1705), Ogyū Sorai (1666-1728), and Dazai Shundai (1680-1747), and commended their writings. Though Chông seemed overly focused on their academic achievements, when introducing the texts of these three Japanese scholars he evaluated their scholarship as equivalent to that of Chosŏn (Ha 2001, 268).

The perspectives of Practical Learning scholars toward Japan were not always positive, however. Yi Tôngmu remarked:

> Japan is a guileful and fearfully powerful neighbor of our country. By gaining possession of Ezo island and confining the redheads [to Dejima, in Nagasaki], the Japanese command [the situation] as they want. They seem like a frightening winged tiger.

For Yi, exchange with the neighboring country was imperative, however, though the military power of the Japanese required the Chosŏn government to remain wary of another invasion. His concern about Japanese military power was reasonable due to the Imjin War, the lingering memories of invasions, and the critical evaluations of military readiness and the effectiveness of the army. At the same time, he remained cautious regarding the political situation in Japan.

In a broader historical context, Japan and Japanese culture might still be objects of disrespect. In other writings on Japanese politics, Yi Tôngmu called the emperor the “false sovereign” and the era name of Japan a “false era name” (Yi, 11: 27). For Korean elites, China and Chinese culture could not simply be ignored due to the history of cultural and political interaction, in addition to the continued existence of tributary relations. From this standpoint, the “emperor” was present in China, not in Japan. The Japanese era name was “false” because the true era name derived from Qing China. This was the customary paradigm of the Chosŏn scholars’ view that chunghwa, the central civilization, was to be found in China (or in Korea). This sinocentric conception was not easy to cast off even for the open-minded Practical Learning scholars.

Thus, Practical Learning scholars held various attitudes towards the Japanese. Yi Ik persistently mentioned the possibility of another Japanese invasion

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36 Ezo refers to the modern-day island of Hokkaido, in northern Japan.
37 “Redheads” refers to the Dutch.
and saw tributary relations with Qing China as essential to preventing potential threats from Japan. An Ch'o˘ngbok used derogatory terms such as “Waeguk” to refer to Japan and the Japanese. In contrast, Yi T'oongmu, his contemporary, preferred to call Japan “Ch'ongnyøngguk,” or the Country of the Dragonfly.39 Though Yi T'oongmu displayed a fair view of Choson's neighbor, like Yi Ik, he too worried about the potential military strength of the Japanese should it be directed again at Choson. These scholars did not forget the need for the consolidation of military power against a possible invasion from Japan, a view shared by Practical Learning scholars. They urged Koreans to maintain “vigilance at a time of peace” and reminded readers that Choson needed to respond to any changes in the surrounding countries.

Conclusion
Many Korean scholars active in the late Choson period believed that being a highly-civilized country according to the sinocentric tradition was all important, and influence from the outside “barbarian” world should be prevented. However, there seem to have been two currents among Korean scholars in the late Choson period. The first sought to maintain Choson as an unchanging, highly civilized Confucian society, which should be preserved until an ethnic Chinese government replaced the Qing state of the Manchus. The second current, that of some of the more open-minded Practical Learning scholars, attempted to seek new approaches for further improvements within their society, and developed new perspectives on Choson's neighboring states as well.

The Practical Learning scholars Yi Ik, An Ch'oongbok, and Yi T'oongmu shared a new vision in considering Japan as a peer of Choson and did not regard the Japanese as barbarians. This was in contrast to the traditional Choson scholars who saw Japan and the Japanese as culturally inferior. By deepening research into texts written by members of Korean embassies to Japan and discussions with the personnel who were selected to participate in the embassies, these Practical Learning scholars brought positive features of the Japanese, such as their diligence and their respect for Korean scholars such as T'oegye. More significantly, they treated Japan and the Japanese as the equals of Choson and the Koreans and emphasized the significance of maintaining neighborly relations, though they did not fail to underline the importance of prudently watching Japan even during times of peace.

In contrast to those Practical Learning scholars who showed a genuine interest in Japan and seriously studied it, most other Choson scholars possessed a strong sense of cultural superiority over Qing China and Edo Japan. They expressed this confidence in the form of the concept of sojunghwa, or the view of Choson as culturally a small China. They firmly believed that after the foundation of the Manchu Qing dynasty Korean culture was the central civilization, and

39 The dragonfly signifies prosperity and a fertile land in the Manyo-hu, the oldest Japanese poetry collection.
showed indifference to the outside world (Son 1987, 123-24). The sense of superiority of such Korean scholars to the Japanese was firmly fixed and remained unchanged even after the dispatch of several embassies to Japan.

The sending of Korean embassies to Japan had mixed results. On the one hand, they played an important role in transmitting culture and scholarship. The Japanese welcomed the foreign delegations, and people who resided along the travel route for the embassies waited for the Koreans, to receive their writings and even to engage in written exchanges. In addition, some of the Koreans taken to Japan as captives during the Imjin War spent the rest of their lives there. Receiving high admiration from the daimyo and local elites, some of them became deeply rooted in the domains and became role models as renowned intellectuals and trusted retainers. On the other hand, the embassies also contributed to a fixed vision of the Japanese. Regarding the Japanese in a critical, contemptuous manner, some Korean officials in the embassies refused to see their hosts as true peers. However, the enthusiasm of those Japanese who sought their writings was an important factor in the decline of distrust among Korean officials and scholars, and some among them discarded their mistrust of Japan, as the writings of several Practical Learning scholars indicate. Yet, Korean elites continued to believe that the Japanese did not pose a challenge in the cultural sphere. A strong sense of cultural superiority informed this confidence in their own sophistication as compared with the Japanese.

Thus Korean officials and scholars maintained their views within a traditional Neo-Confucian framework, although men with different perspectives, such as Practical Learning scholars, emerged in the eighteenth century. Practical Learning scholars highlighted the positive dimensions of Japanese society, but their views were limited to a few men active in a narrow critical space.

**GLOSSARY**

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Tang Ruxun (Zhongyan) 唐汝詢 (仲言)  Wanli 万曆
* t'angp'yonghaek 蕃平策
* Tang shi jie 唐詩解  Won Chunggŏ (Hyŏnch'ŏn) 元重掁 (玄川)
* terakoya 寺子屋
* Toegyejip 退溪集  Yamazaki Ansa 山崎閑斎
* T'oegshi 賈詩集  yangban 両班
* Tokugawa Ienobu 徳川家宣  Yi Chinyŏng 李貞栄
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* waka 和歌  Zhu Xi 朱熹

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