

**War, Diaspora, and Border Crossers:
Chosŏn Korea and Its Neighbors in the Sixteenth to Seventeenth Centuries**

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A Korean Spectacle in Sixteenth-Century Fujian: The Story of No In (1566–1622)

This paper examines the life and accounts of No In, a minor official of Chosŏn who fought against the invading Japanese forces during the Imjin War, was captured and taken to Japan, escaped to Fujian, China, with the help of a Chinese spy, travelled to Beijing and met with the Chinese emperor, and eventually returned to Korea after a three-year absence. The stories of his dramatic adventures in Japan and China have mainly been studied as part of war history and war literature, and significant attention has been given to the military significance of the information about Japan he collected while in captivity and later presented to the Ming Emperor Shenzong and the Chosŏn King Sŏnjo. Focusing on the cross-cultural dimension of No's experience, this paper explores No as a spectacle of Korean Neo-Confucian orthodoxy in the foreign countries. Believing that his parents had perished in war, while in Japan and China, No subjected himself to strict observance of mourning rituals as instructed by Zhu Xi. His abstinence from meat and his insistence on wearing white funerary robes made him a spectacle, which not only visually distinguished him from other Korean captives but more importantly allowed him to gain attention, sympathy, and respect from both his captors and rescuers. He became a sensation among the literati in Fujian, the home of Neo-Confucian orthodoxy, and earned the honor of becoming the only Korean to study and teach at Wuyi Academy founded by Zhu Xi. On the whole, the paper investigates Neo-Confucian orthodoxy as cultural capital that had the power to cut across the political boundaries in the war-plagued East Asia of the sixteenth century.

Nam-lin Hur (University of British Columbia)

The Imjin War (1592–1598), War Captives, and the Slave Trade

During the war of Japan's invasion of Korea in 1592–1598, it is estimated that tens of thousands of Koreans were taken to Japan as prisoners of war, slaves, or laborers, and that additional thousands of Koreans sought refuge in China. It is also known that hundreds of Korean women who had liaisons with Chinese soldiers during the war moved to China when the soldiers withdrew to their own country. Many Korean captives taken to Japan were later sold as slaves to Portuguese merchants who operated a far-reaching slave trade network connecting East Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, and Europe. Japan's invasion of Korea marked the first major Korean diaspora in Korean history, the legacies of which are still felt, particularly in Japan. In this paper, I first briefly discuss why and how many Koreans were forced to leave their home country, what happened to them afterwards, and what legacies of the Korean diaspora still continue today. The paper then traces some examples of those who fell victim to the fate of slavery—a fate suddenly imposed from without and associated with illicit international trade, pirates, Europeans, and Catholicism. For this purpose, I examine Japanese and Korean sources, Catholic missionary reports, and Portuguese archival sources. The Korean diaspora in late sixteenth-century East Asia went beyond the realms of wartime trade, piracy, and state control. It also involved issues of ethnocentrism, collective memories, and acculturation. My overall aim is to identify some key forces and factors at work behind the operation of slave trade networks that connected East Asia to Europe along with Catholicism.

Adam Bohnet (King's University College, University of Western Ontario)

Deserters and the Righteous Militias: The Zhejiang Deserters in Kyongsang Province during the Imjin War

During the Imjin War (1592–1598), numerous Ming soldiers entered Chosŏn along with the Ming armies. A number of these soldiers deserted their proper military units and pursued living in Chosŏn through a variety of means, notably as geomancers, fortune-tellers, and apothecaries, in which fields southern Chinese were considered especially expert. Others with particular military expertise were assimilated into Chosŏn military units. This paper explores the cultural logic through which Ming deserters were integrated into Chosŏn society and, through this phenomenon, the complexities of the Chosŏn-Ming relationship. In particular, one prominent leader of a Chosŏn righteous militia, Chŏng Inhong, was from descent group that ultimately traced its origin to Chinese migrants from Zhejiang; as a result, he gave particular support to Ming soldiers who were, or claimed to be, from Zhejiang. Indeed, several Ming migrant descent groups in Kyŏngsang Province still claim Zhejiang as their place of origin. An imagined shared origin, in other words, linked Chŏng Inhong with Zhejiang deserters. At the same time, Chŏng Inhong's patronage of Zhejiang soldiers attracted hostile attention from his political rivals, who accused him of encouraging disloyalty by supporting deserters who had broken faith with the Ming.

Seonmin Kim (Korea University)

The Life of a Transfrontiersman: Manchu-Korean Translator Gŭlmahŭn Chŏng Myŏngsu

This paper analyzes the power politics and economic conditions of the Qing state and its foreign relationship with Chosŏn Korea by exploring the life of Chŏng Myŏngsu (also known as Gŭlmahŭn), a Korean translator who served the Manchu court in the early seventeenth century. Born into a humble family in the Pyŏng'an Province of Chosŏn, Chŏng was taken captive by Manchu soldiers when he was a young boy. Later he received a Manchu name, Gŭlmahŭn, and began to work for Nurhaci as a Manchu and Korean translator. Throughout the 1630s and 1640s, Gŭlmahŭn took part in almost every communication between the Manchus and the Koreans, playing a major role in making negotiations favorable for the Qing court at the expense of the Chosŏn side. Gŭlmahŭn's life story provides us with an interesting case of a transfrontiersman who crossed the boundaries of ethnicity, territory, and language in early seventeenth-century Manchuria. It shows that Qing rule was consolidated through endless efforts to bring a variety of groups of people living in the Manchurian frontiers under Manchu power, often in very violent ways. This paper explains how transfrontiersmen like Gŭlmahŭn contributed to the early Manchu state building by requesting forcible repatriation of Korean captives back to their Manchu masters in an effort to secure manpower for the Qing armies as well as land cultivation. In addition, the paper addresses the ways in which these transfrontiersmen, most notably interpreters, were actively involved in commercial networks connecting Shenyang and Ŭiju, an important channel that the early Qing state depended on for its economic viability.