

Works in English on the Imjin War and the Challenge of Research*

Nam-lin Hur^{**}

Prologue

In the late sixteenth century, East Asia was plunged into turmoil as Japan's Hideyoshi regime invaded Korea in 1592. It was a massive invasion involving more than 150,000 Japanese forces. Scholars have suggested that Japan's invasion was part of its plan to conquer Ming China, but this issue is still subject to discussion.¹ The invasion soon developed into an international conflict of unprecedented scale in premodern East Asia, embroiling Korea, Japan, and China and finally ending, seven years later, in the eleventh month of 1598. In Korea, this conflict is commonly known as the Imjin War, and, for the sake of simplicity, I follow this convention. The Imjin War is so called because it broke out in the year of Imjin (the twenty-ninth year of the sexagenary cycle in the Chinese calendar system), 1592.

The aftermath of the Imjin War brought about regime collapse and had a long-term impact upon the region's history. For Korea, Japan's invasion was devastating, causing anguish throughout the nation. It took Korea many years to recover its prewar vigor and stability. For Japan, the war

* This work was partially supported by the Academy of Korean Studies of the Republic of Korea in the year of 2013.

** Professor, Department of Asian Studies, The University of British Columbia

resulted in the collapse of the Toyotomi regime, which had just succeeded in unifying the nation's warring states. As for China, its military aid to Korea further worsened its military strength and fiscal condition and contributed to its eventual demise.

Despite the passing of more than four centuries, this international conflict still grips the popular imagination of East Asian peoples. In Korea and Japan, the Imjin War has inspired dozens of documentaries, movies, and TV dramas, and two museums are devoted solely to this historical event -- the Chinju National Museum in Korea and the Nagoyajō Prefectural Museum in Japan. Not surprisingly, this war has also been a popular topic of academic research. To date, hundreds of books and thousands of journal articles and book chapters have been dedicated to this event. The sheer number of publications might indicate that there is no compelling need for further research on this subject. However, it should be noted that Western scholarship has just begun to show some interest in the Imjin War; very few English-language works have been published on this topic.

The many extant works in the Korean, Japanese, and Chinese languages reveal a whole range of problems. First of all, many of them feature a military narration of one kind or another based on a select set of war-related events. In my view, there is no single work that offers a comprehensive, international thesis articulated within a coherent theoretical framework. In their narratives, Korean scholars, who pay a great deal of attention to "righteous armies" (*ūibyōng*) or Admiral Yi Sunsin, often either slip into soul-searching in an attempt to offset Korea's failure of national defence or overemphasize certain bright spots at the cost of obscuring the nature of the war itself. For their part, Japanese scholars tend to be defensive about Japan's invasion and to be very selective about the data upon which they focus, thus providing a thin, not to say skewed, interpretation and analysis. Compared to Korean and Japanese scholars, Chinese scholars, who are very few in number, tend to emphasize Ming China's military aid to Chosŏn Korea and its dominant diplomatic role with Japan.

Second, these works suffer, to one degree or another, from a lack of

cross-border analysis. In other words, they fail to take into consideration the institutions of all three countries and to show how they conditioned the ways in which each country conducted the war. This problem stems from the authors' lack of knowledge about, or linguistic ability to examine, the other countries, and it results in their inability to offer an adequate comparative analysis. There are very few Japanese scholars who are fluent in Korean, and most Korean scholars are not able to explore original late sixteenth-century Japanese documents sufficiently to incorporate them into their works. Japanese scholars are very lackadaisical in their examination of Korea's inner institutions and structures in relation to the Imjin War and often repeat the same stereotypical interpretations that have somehow gained currency. As we see later, none of the books that have been published outside Korea and Japan fulfills even a minimum standard when it comes to the task of dealing with primary and secondary sources available in Korean, Japanese, and Chinese.

Third, many extant works tend to be elitist, by which I mean that their discussion tends to leave out ordinary people, whether Korean, Japanese, or Chinese. Current scholarship rarely examines ordinary people from a comparative perspective, analyzing how they survived, participated in, and saw themselves within wartime society; rather, it spotlights war heroes, individual battles, high-level politics, and diplomacy. The result of this is that, by and large, war victims remain unheard. To be sure, war atrocities, such as those represented by the "Mound of Ears," have been a focus of some publications and conferences, but they, too, tend to be treated as separate, detached episodes of Japanese cruelty rather than explored within the overall context of the Imjin War.

Major English-Language Works on the Imjin War

The following is a list of major English-language books, articles, and PhD dissertations on the Imjin War. Compared to the works published in Korean, Japanese, and/or Chinese, the overall number of works in English

is minuscule.

- Austin, Audrey. "Admiral Yi Sun-sin: National Hero." *Korean Culture* 9, #2 (1988): 4-15.
- Elisonas, Jurgis. "The Inseparable Trinity: Japan's Relations with China and Korea." In *The Cambridge History of Japan*. Vol. 4: *Early Modern Japan*, ed. John Whitney Hall, 235-500. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- Finch, Michael. "Civilian Life in Chosŏn during the Japanese Invasion of 1592: The 'Namhaeng illok' and 'Imjin illok' in *Swaemirok* by Ō Hüimun." *Acta Koreana* 12, #2 (2009): 55-77.
- Hawley, Samuel. *The Imjin War: Japan's Sixteenth-Century Invasion of Korea and Attempt to Conquer China*. Seoul: Royal Asiatic Society, Korea Branch, 2005.
- _____. "Haengju Mountain Fortress on the 'River of Hell.'" *Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society Korea Branch* 85 (2010): 29-35.
- Hasegawa, Masato. "Provisions and Profits in a Wartime Borderland: Supply Lines and Society in the Border Region between China and Korea, 1592-1644." PhD diss., Yale University, 2013.
- Hur, Nam-lin. "Confucianism and Military Service in Early Seventeenth-Century Chosŏn Korea." *Taiwan Journal of East Asian Studies* 8, #1 (2011): 51-84.
- _____. "National Defense in Shambles: Wartime Military Build-up in Chosŏn Korea, 1592-98." *Seoul Journal of Korean Studies* 22, #2 (2009): 113-35.
- Ledyard, Gari. "Confucianism and War: The Korean Security Crisis of 1598." *Journal of Korean Studies* 6 (1988-89): 81-120.
- Lee, Sook-in. "The Imjin War and the Official Discourse of Chastity." *Seoul Journal of Korean Studies* 22, 2 (2009): 137-56.
- Kim, Samuel Dukhae. "The Korean Monk-Soldiers in the Imjin Wars: An Analysis of Buddhist Resistance to the Hideyoshi Invasion, 1592-1598." PhD diss., Columbia University, 1978.
- Niderost, Eric. "Yin Sun Sin and Won Kyun: The Rivalry That Decided

the Fate of a Nation.” *Korean Culture* 22, #4 (2001): 10-19.

Park, Saeyoung. “Sacred Spaces and the Commemoration of War in Chosŏn Korea.” PhD diss., Johns Hopkins University, 2011.

Swope, Kenneth M. *A Dragon’s Head and a Serpent’s Tail: Ming China and the First Great East Asian War, 1592-1598*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2009.

_____. “Crouching Tigers, Secret Weapons: Military Technology Employed during the Sino-Japanese-Korean War, 1592-1598.” *Journal of Military History* 69, #1 (2005): 11-43.

_____. “War and Remembrance: Yang Hao and the Siege of Ulsan of 1598.” *Journal of Asian History* 42, #2 (2008): 165-95.

Turnbull, Stephen. *Samurai Invasion: Japan’s Korean War, 1592-1598*. London: Cassell, 2000.

Comments on Two Monographs on the Imjin War

In an attempt to gauge the quality of Western scholarship on the Imjin War, I review the most representative research to date -- Samuel Hawley’s *The Imjin War: Japan’s Sixteenth-Century Invasion of Korea and Attempt to Conquer China* and Kenneth Swope’s *A Dragon’s Head and a Serpent’s Tail: Ming China and the First Great East Asian War, 1592-1598*. Of all the English-language works, these two are the most comprehensive and, therefore, deserve special attention.

Samuel Hawley. *The Imjin War: Japan’s Sixteenth-Century Invasion of Korea and Attempt to Conquer China*.

In this book, which has over six hundred pages, Hawley attempts to offer a comprehensive analysis of the Imjin War, and he certainly makes a welcome contribution to the field. By 2005, a few scholars had produced English narratives of the war, either highlighting particular episodes or offering a bigger picture, but none of them surpasses Hawley’s book in

terms of coverage and analysis.

The main body of Hawley's book, whose chapters are entitled "Imjin," "Stalemate," and "The Second Invasion," offers many vivid and entertaining descriptions of key events, presenting them as though they are occurring before the reader's very eyes. Without much difficulty, the reader is able to familiarize her/himself with a range of important incidents that unfolded as the war dragged on from its initial confrontations, through the long process of truce negotiations, to its final phase. One area that is conspicuous by its absence, however, is Korean society and politics during the four-year stalemate from the summer of 1593 to the spring of 1597. During this period, Chosŏn Korea not only experienced a respite from the fighting but also gained time to engage in a military build-up. But Hawley's book does not offer any meaningful discussion of wartime Korean society during this lacuna. Thus, it is not clear why Chosŏn Korea remained helpless when Japan resumed its carnage after this four-year respite. Still, Hawley's book does succeed in helping us to understand the progress of the war and to get an inkling of the vagaries of the geopolitics that unfolded in a mixture of warfare and diplomacy.

In spite of its comprehensive, detailed narration, Hawley's book suffers from a fundamental problem: it relies too heavily upon a group of secondary English and Korean sources. *The Imjin War* is not based on primary sources. In the first sentence of his Acknowledgments, Hawley states: "I would like to thank Kim Kyong-mee for the many hours she spent with me, twice a week over the course of two years, translating the various Korean-language sources on the Imjin War that were used in the preparation of this book."² His bibliography also reveals that the range of materials he consulted is not only limited but also heavily skewed towards works in English or English translation. Readers might wonder if the author fully examined the forty-two volumes of the *Sŏnjo sillok* (The Veritable Records of King Sŏnjo) and the four volumes of the *Sŏnjo sujŏng sillok* (The Revised Veritable Records of King Sŏnjo) as he implies in his bibliography.³

For example, as far as primary sources produced in Chosŏn Korea are

concerned, in addition to the *Sōnjo sillok* and *Sōnjo sujōng sillok*, there is a wide range of other basic materials. One of these is the *Imjin Waeran saryo ch'ongsō* -- a select ten-volume edition of primary sources that was compiled and published by the Chinju National Museum in 2002. Hawley examines none of the materials included in this edition. Similarly, he fails to explore any of the documents issued by Toyotomi Hideyoshi -- a group of documents that is considered indispensable to the study of the Imjin War. As Miki Seiichirō shows in his catalogue of the Hideyoshi documents, more than two thousand pieces are related to the war and contain detailed information on how Hideyoshi conducted it.⁴ Clearly, Hawley's work is far from being original research.

Moreover, one might wonder to what extent Hawley's book reflects Korean, Japanese, and Chinese scholarship. Does his research surpass these works in quality? His bibliography does not include any secondary work written in Japanese or Chinese, and his coverage of secondary works in Korean is also very limited. Hawley's lack of fluency in Chinese, Korean, and Japanese not only renders his perspective local and fragmented but also precludes his ability to offer an analysis that might transcend the level of conventional scholarship. One simply cannot expect new research or insightful analysis from an author who relies on secondary materials chosen for their availability in his or her language of choice.

Kenneth M. Swope. *A Dragon's Head and a Serpent's Tail: Ming China and the First Great East Asian War, 1592-1598*.

In this book, Swope offers a broad portrayal of the Imjin War, including background information on what led up to the outbreak of what he refers to as the First Great East Asian War and its aftermath. From early on, Swope details how, in the late sixteenth century, the Ming dynasty tried to secure and protect its borders against hostile forces. Swope makes it clear that, by the time it encountered the Japanese aggressors in 1592, the Ming military had grown strong.

Against the backdrop of the rise of the Ming military, Swope depicts

how the Japanese invasion unfolded in the Korean peninsula. With regard to the arrival of Japanese forces in Pusan (Busan), he cites an eyewitness account: “The sun’s rays dimmed, the air filled with death, waves touched the sky, black clouds covered the water as they approached. Countless thousands of Japanese ships covered the ocean, their three-tiered masts wrapped with blue awnings, the beat of drums and battle cries shaking the waves as they came.”⁵ The problem with this quote is that it is an excerpt from *The Record of the Black Dragon Year* -- an English translation of *Imjin nok*, a novel that features certain events and characters associated with the Imjin War and that boasts forty different versions.⁶ The earliest version of *Imjin nok* appeared four or five decades after the Imjin War had ended.

Swope’s purpose in writing *Dragon’s Head* is to recount the story of the First Great East Asian War as one of the Ming emperor Wanli’s three major campaigns (the other two being the campaign against the Mongols in Ningxia and that against Yang Yinglong’s rebellion in Southwest China). Swope refutes the traditional image of Wanli, which holds that he “ha[d] become synonymous with imperial lassitude and avarice, eunuch abuses, bureaucratic factionalism and infighting, military reverses, and general dynastic decline.”⁷ Instead, he spotlights Wanli, asserting that the effectiveness of the Ming troops in the war in Korea owed much to his excellent leadership: “In light of the deplorable state of the Ming military by the mid-1550s, its revival from 1570 to 1610 is truly remarkable. Over these several decades, in addition to besting a succession of domestic challenges, the Ming managed to defeat one of the most impressive military forces on the planet, the Japanese. Wanli was pivotal in making both policy and strategic decision in these operations.”⁸ What Swope tries to suggest is clear. However, the trouble is that, during the war that spawned a dozen massive battles, China’s victory at P’yŏngyang (Pyeongyang) was unique: in all other battles, the Chinese forces were either defeated or performed miserably.

In trying to address what he considers unjust images of the Chinese ruler, Swope emphasizes Wanli’s generosity and benevolence in salvaging

Ming China's model tributary country, Chosŏn Korea, despite strong opposition and factional infighting. Swope contends that Wanli responded quickly to the Korean king's appeal for help in May 1592 and immediately approved the release of 100,000 *liang* of silver to go towards military aid. Swope maintains that Wanli's dedication to China's responsibility to its tributary never wavered, and he quotes the emperor as follows: "The imperial court will not let losses get in the way and we won't rest until the bandits are extirpated and our vassal state is at peace."⁹

After contextualizing the Ming dynasty's aid to Korea that actually came in the twelfth month of 1592, Swope provides details of the movements of troops and supplies with regard to a number of battles. He examines Japanese documents far less frequently than he does Chinese or Korean ones, and here again we encounter problems. In describing how the Japanese prepared themselves for the upcoming aggression, Swope introduces readers to a dazzling list of statistics (pp. 67-68); however, the reliability of the sources upon which he relies for this list (which includes John A. Lynn, ed., *Tools of War: Instruments, Ideas, and Institutions of Warfare, 1445-1871* [1990]; George Sansom, *A History of Japan, 1334-1615* [1994]; and Clarence Norwood Weems, ed., *Hulbert's History of Korea* [1962]) is suspect.

Swope's account is detailed and lively, but when it comes to certain critical issues, he is ambiguous or, worse, contradictory. For one thing, regarding why Hideyoshi invaded Korea, Swope enumerates a long list of suggestions made by various scholars in the field and discredits each in one way or another. He complains that "modern scholars have tended to emphasize economic and domestic political factors, downplaying Hideyoshi's desire for glory,"¹⁰ and he seems to embrace the suggestion that "the invasion was ... a means by which [Hideyoshi] could keep pressure on the daimyo, removing the dangerous ones to a safe distance and allowing for the strengthening of his own authority at home."¹¹ Here, Swope simply does not realize that the daimyo whom Hideyoshi sent to Korea were those he trusted most. After bouncing back and forth regarding Hideyoshi's motive for invading Korea, Swope concludes: "The desire

to gain control of foreign trade and create a new international order to supplant the Ming was Hideyoshi's main motivation."¹² Later in the war, trade became a key issue in the peace talks between China and Japan. Here, Swope suggests that trade, which was tied up with the East Asian regional order, constituted an essential component of the Chinese tribute system. However, he fails to explain why the Ming dynasty was so resistant to the idea of trade with Japan, even though the latter begged for tribute trade.

Beyond the dubious statistical data, Swope offers little information on what was going on in Japan during the Imjin War. Were there no significant events in Japan at this time? How did its invasion of Korea affect politics and society in Japan? According to Swope: "Where Chinese and Korean records stress obtaining proper intelligence and coordinating operations, Japanese records tend to highlight personal valor and feats of daring."¹³ In his view, this is "an interesting distinction," with Japanese records "focus[ing] more on the exploits of individual commanders and their men."¹⁴ Such a characterization is understandable given that Swope neglects to examine even one of Hideyoshi's documents in its original form. It would be a scandal of suicidal proportions for a Japanese historian to conduct research in such a manner.

All battles took place on Korean soil. Korea was the country in which life-and-death conflicts played themselves out. Among hundreds of primary sources on the various aspects of the Imjin War, the most comprehensive and detailed is the *Sōnjo sillok*. It is not too much to say that a proper study of the war cannot be conducted without a thorough examination of the *Sōnjo sillok*. Indeed, it is more essential than any other material, including the *Ming shilu* and the Hideyoshi documents. The challenge is that the *Sōnjo sillok* is vast, comprising more than ten thousand entries. In my view, one would need at least five to seven years to adequately assess this material. Except for quoting a few entries compiled by Li Guangtao in his *Chaoxian "Renchen Wohuo" shiliao*, there is no indication that Swope has consulted the *Sōnjo sillok*. Instead, he consistently relies upon James Murdock's outdated *A History of Japan* (published in 1925).

Generally, both Hawley's *The Imjin War* and Swope's *A Dragon's Head* provide an indication of the overall flow of the Imjin War. However, with regard to details, in both books far too many descriptions are inaccurate, far too many sources are unreliable, and there is far too much guesswork. Almost every page of each book contains factual errors or information that has not been sufficiently verified and cross-checked.

If we are to understand the multilayered nature of the Imjin War, it is essential to analyze it not only within each country's domestic context but also within the geopolitical context of their cross-border relations with each other. Neither book vigorously pursues a contextual analysis. And when such an analysis is attempted, it is rendered useless because it is not based on reliable empirical data. Presenting such an inferior analysis only succeeds in misleading readers and spawning a chain of misunderstandings. In order to illustrate these problems, I take up some key issues pertaining to truce negotiations in the Imjin War and review how these are treated by Hawley and Swope, respectively.

Issues of Diplomacy Examined in the Two Books

Whether dealing with China or Japan, Hawley and Swope only view their diplomatic strategies against military options. In discussing the peace talks, one might want to ask the following basic questions: Why did the Ming dynasty opt for diplomacy as a means of overcoming a war in what it considered a vassal country? How did Ming China project its political vision onto the geopolitics of the region? What did Japan try to achieve through a diplomatic solution? How did Hideyoshi perceive China's efforts to invest him with the title of "King of Japan"?

What drove China and Japan to attempt a diplomatic solution to the Imjin War? More than anything else, it was food. When we discuss food, we are discussing all government actions and systems related to procuring and delivering military provisions to combatants. Feeding soldiers was a fundamental task, and it had to be accomplished before any other military

action could be contemplated as, without it, no military action was possible. Throughout the war, China, Japan, and Korea all found themselves engaged in a constant struggle to procure and to deliver food. They all found this internal battle to procure enough food much harder to fight than the external battle with the enemy.

Chinese forces, once they had crossed the Yalu (Amnok) River, had to give up on their plan to secure grain from Korea and, instead, rely upon grain that was supplied from their own country. The problem was that the Koreans were unable to supply the Chinese because their major mode of transport was on foot over muddy and rugged trails. Again and again, the Korean court was haunted by the failure of its people to deliver grain to the Chinese in a timely manner. For their part, the Chinese used Korea's failure to deliver grain as an excuse to disengage from combat and to opt for diplomacy.¹⁵

Once diplomacy emerged as an option, it quickly occupied the central stage of this international conflict. Japan's invasion of Korea is often referred to as a seven-year war, but more than half of this period consisted of a stalemate in which there were no serious military skirmishes. During this period, which lasted from mid-1593 to early 1597, Japan and China were engaged in diplomatic efforts to achieve a negotiated solution, despite Korea's vigorous and sustained opposition. Interestingly, the Korean court was excluded from this diplomatic process, even though its purpose was to end a war that was taking place on Korean soil. Ming China asserted suzerainty over Korea, while Japan, for its part, gradually came to regard China as the country with which it should negotiate a settlement to its invasion of Korea.

After having had two major armed clashes -- one at P'yŏngyang and the other at Pyŏkchegwan (Byeongchegwan) -- China and Japan quickly moved towards diplomacy, an option born out of their observation that Korea simply did not have any capacity for military defence. Over time, China became convinced that it did not have to sacrifice too much for its vassal country, given that the battlefronts were gradually being formed along the southern coastal areas of the Korean peninsula. For its part, Ja-

pan saw its initial successes quickly evaporate and wanted a way both to save face and to extricate itself from a situation that was increasingly threatening the stability of its domestic political order.

Thus, China and Japan had many reasons to negotiate; however, because of their different perceptions of geopolitics, particularly regarding what constituted “tribute” and “investiture,” they were unable to compromise. When Ming China’s minister of war, Shi Xing, brought the option of truce negotiations to the fore, the Ming court became embroiled in heated debates regarding its pros and cons. A group consisting of grand secretaries, the minister of war, the Liaodong military commissioner, and field generals clashed with a group consisting of supervising secretaries, censors, and young bureaucrats who relentlessly opposed the strategy of diplomacy.¹⁶

The arguments and counter-arguments that Ming officials put to the Wanli emperor transformed the war in Korea into a vehicle for factional infighting at the Ming court. Despite the ongoing, very confrontational, debates, all participants shared the belief that China should command a Sinocentric regional order. Traditionally, the standard formula for this involved non-Chinese countries offering a tribute to the Chinese emperor and the latter investing the leader of the former with kingship. But, from early on in the negotiations, the Ming government decided not to allow Japan to bring tribute to China. This was mainly because it feared that this might lead to full-blown trade with Japan. As far as Ming China was concerned, Japan remained a powerful commercial country and a trading relationship with it could well result in an array of problems related to coastal defence and social order.

According to the agreement between Shen Weijing and Konishi Yukinaga, in the fifth month of 1593, Song Yingchang, the Chinese commissioner of war, dispatched envoys (Xie Yongzi and Xu Iguan) to Japan. With regard to this, Hawley states: “[Li Rusong] simply pulled two officers from his staff, Xu Yihuan and Xie Yonsu, dressed them up in the robes of high officials, and sent them back to Seoul with Shen.”¹⁷ Hawley’s inaccuracy extends not only to how the Chinese envoys were set up

but also to their names. Before dispatching these envoys, Song tried to dissuade Korea from insisting that China launch a military strike against Japan. In doing so he made three points: (1) Japan had already asked for forgiveness after the defeat at P'yŏngyang, and, given this, it would not be appropriate to attack it; (2) the Ming troops stationed in Korea were depleted and exhausted, and reinforcements from China were not viable; and (3) even though the Japanese were Korea's sworn enemies, to China they were simply outer barbarians pleading for surrender.¹⁸ King Sŏnjo was particularly angry about China's intention to invest Hideyoshi as the king of Japan.¹⁹ With regard to the envoys dispatched to Japan, Song Yingchang hoped this would result in having Hideyoshi surrender to the Ming emperor, accept China's offer of the kingship of Japan, and thus bring an end to the Imjin War.

The Chinese envoys, who led an entourage of about one hundred attendants, arrived in Nagoya, and Hideyoshi treated them well. Negotiations for terms of "peace" between the Chinese envoys and their Japanese counterparts followed. But the discussion did not proceed well, and the envoys eventually had to leave Japan without success. Right after they departed from Nagoya for Pusan, Hideyoshi handed down what is commonly known as the "seven conditions for truce" to his key officials, including Konishi Yukinaga. These were straightforward and included: (1) A daughter of the Great Ming emperor will be greeted and made Japan's consort; (2) both official and commercial ships will come and go between the two countries; and (3) four provinces and the capital city of Chosŏn will be returned to the king of Chosŏn (i.e., the four southern provinces of Korea will be annexed to Japan).²⁰

The first condition deserves particular attention. At the time, the Japanese emperor (Goyōzei), who was married and had a consort, had not indicated that he wanted to have a woman from the Chinese imperial family as a consort. As far as Hideyoshi was concerned, what the first condition meant was this: China was to send him a daughter of the Chinese emperor as a hostage, and, once she arrived in Japan, she would in all likelihood be made a concubine of the Japanese emperor. The point is that

Hideyoshi did not show any interest whatsoever in having the Ming emperor invest him as the king of Japan. So, did Hideyoshi seek to have the Ming emperor invest him as king? Or did he ask for China's forgiveness, as Song Yingchang implied?

Before the Chinese envoys crossed over to Nagaya, Hideyoshi had received a report from his field generals in Korea: "After the previous battle and attack on the fortress, the chief Chinese commander has delivered words of apology or *wabigoto* ... Today on the seventeenth day [of the fourth month], two envoys from China who would cross to Japan have arrived [in Hansŏng (Hanseong), the Korean capital] in order to deliver an apology [to Japan]."²¹ Regarding the report on the Chinese "apologies" that was delivered to Nagoya, according to Ishida Masazumi, who forwarded it to his overlord, "the Taikō-sama [Hideyoshi] was very pleased."²² At this time, despite the fact that all Japanese troops had been evacuated to the south of the Korean peninsula, Hideyoshi decided to presume that China was offering to surrender to Japan and that its emissaries were on their way to Nagoya with the appropriate apologies. In theory, it makes sense that Hideyoshi, as the self-proclaimed victor of the war and according to the martial conventions that he had practiced all his life, would demand that China send an imperial hostage as evidence of its surrender and that Korea, where the "victorious" war had been executed, cede territory.

Upon arriving in Nagoya, the Chinese envoys conducted a series of negotiations with their Japanese counterparts. However, their peace talks, which were premised on Japan's surrender and subjugation to Chinese sovereignty, had nowhere to go. It is highly probable that the Chinese envoys came to learn what was in Hideyoshi's mind, but they were not officially informed of it during their stay in Nagoya. Hideyoshi did not deliver his seven conditions for peace to his officials until the Chinese envoys had left Japan. Nevertheless, according to Hawley: "The two Chinese envoys found these seven demands appallingly presumptuous ... Konishi and his colleagues did their best to soothe the irate envoys, pointing out that these seven conditions were not a list of intractable demands,

but rather terms to be discussed and negotiated upon.”²³

At that time, Konishi, who was not with the Chinese envoys in Nagoya, had already returned to Korea and joined the attack on Chinju (Jinju). So how and where did he “soothe the irate envoys”? And Hawley goes on: “Naito carried with him Hideyoshi’s list of seven demands for delivery to Beijing. This task had been entrusted to him by Konishi Yukinaga in part because he was a trusted member of the latter’s household.”²⁴ This is sheer fantasy. It is highly probable that, upon returning to Liaodong, the Chinese envoys reported what they had learned in Japan to Song Yingchang (and Shi Xing), who, for a long time, kept Hideyoshi’s seven conditions to themselves. Yet, according to Hawley: “Hideyoshi’s seven demands, meanwhile, were heatedly debated on both sides. The Ming envoys, together with every Chinese general and official who learned of the paper, insisted that it be altered before being presented in Beijing.”²⁵ Again, this is fiction.

As to examining how Hideyoshi’s seven conditions came into being, Swope is no better than Hawley, stating: “In the wake of the Japanese evacuation of Seoul, Shen Weijing initially met with Li Rusong, emphasizing Shi Xing’s desire for peace. Shen left a representative with Konishi Yukinaga and returned to Beijing to discuss the terms of a possible peace agreement with Shi. When Shen returned to Korea, he held several conferences with Konishi and Katō Kiyomasa to discuss the terms under which a peace agreement could be reached. According to Konishi, the Japanese had seven conditions for peace.”²⁶ Swope suggests that Hideyoshi’s seven conditions had been passed on to Konishi even before the Chinese envoys visited Japan and met with Hideyoshi’s negotiators, yet another fiction.

Hideyoshi’s seven conditions were leaked to the Chinese court in the second month of 1594 by Kim Su, a Korean envoy whom King Sŏnjo succeeded in dispatching to Beijing.²⁷ Neither Hawley nor Swope offers any information on this. In any case, throughout the Imjin War, Chosŏn Korea was solely focused on bringing a massive number of Chinese troops to Korea and having them fight the Japanese invaders. The Chinese

commanders, who wanted to end the war as expeditiously as possible and at minimum cost, tried to block the Korean king's envoys from delivering to Beijing information on the war situation or a plea for military action.

The information that Kim Su was able to deliver to Beijing soon ignited heated debates at the Ming court with regard to what strategy it should pursue in its diplomatic relations with Japan. The problem was that, due to mounting internal problems that made it harder and harder to muster fresh troops and to deliver military provisions to battlefields in Korea, Ming China's only practical option was to pursue peace with Japan. The negotiations between Shen Weijing and Konishi Yukinaga took place in a minefield strewn with mutual maneuvering, threats, and deceit. By the end of 1594, despite the odds, and clinging to the belief that universal Chinese sovereignty was supreme and inviolable, the Ming court decided to send an imperial envoy of investiture to Japan. For his part, Hideyoshi, too, faced increasing problems stemming, in the final analysis, from his ignorance, inexperience, miscalculations, misperceptions regarding conducting a war on foreign soil, and, above all, the birth of his son, Hideyori. The birth of Hideyori eventually led Hideyoshi to remove his previously appointed successor (his nephew Hidetsugu). Hideyoshi, who was under enormous stress, was anxious to find a way out of the conflict in Korea.

In the fifth month of 1595, Hideyoshi revised his seven conditions for truce, reducing them to three. As his first condition, Hideyoshi demanded that Korea send a prince to Japan to be held hostage. In return for this, Hideyoshi said that he would allow the Korean prince to control the four southern provinces of Korea. As his second condition, Hideyoshi announced that, once the Korean prince was on the way, he would order his generals in Korea to demolish ten of their fifteen fortresses. His final condition concerned the resumption of trade between Japan and China. Hideyoshi dropped the demand for an imperial hostage from China, but he still refused to show any interest in having the Ming emperor invest him with kingship. Such an investiture did not, and could not, have any meaning for Hideyoshi's governance of, and position of power in, Japan. Neither Hawley nor Swope discusses Hideyoshi's situation. All we get is

Hawley's brief, uncontextualized statement that, in an attempt to urge the Chinese envoys to expedite their journey to Pusan, "Konishi ... clos[ed] two more camps, at Kimhae (Gimhae) and Tongnae (Dongnae), drawing the troops stationed there into the garrison at Pusan."²⁸ It should be noted that Konishi had the authority neither to close camps nor to move troops from one place to another.

However, by the summer of 1596, Hideyoshi finally allowed the Chinese investiture envoy to cross the sea to Osaka. Hideyoshi, who was struggling to end the war, was caught in a dilemma and was growing desperate. The services and sacrifices performed by his daimyo remained uncompensated, and he was still not certain how he was going to ensure that his young son would inherit his power. For its part, Ming China, which was still trying to persuade Japan to withdraw all its troops from Korea, had to compromise its position. Both Hawley and Swope bypass these issues and jump into what happened early in the ninth month at Osaka Castle.

On the second day (the third day in the Chinese calendar) of the ninth month of 1596, a ceremony that featured the Chinese envoy's bestowal of the Ming emperor's rescript of investiture, a golden seal, and a wardrobe for Hideyoshi was completed without incident. Kuwano Eiji suggests that there is no evidence that Hideyoshi understood the terms of investiture (as the Ming court assumed that he would) but that he decided to allow the Chinese envoys to conduct a ceremony of investiture at his castle.²⁹ With regard to how Hideyoshi reacted to this ceremony, all reliable primary sources indicate that he followed a set of procedures and offered his respect to the Ming emperor.³⁰ In this ceremony, about forty Japanese generals also received various titles from the Ming emperor.

With this, was the Imjin War finally over? Hideyoshi continued to demand concessions from Korea, but China countered by insisting that all Japanese troops be withdrawn from Korea -- an action that would effectively bring the war to an end. Outraged, Hideyoshi declared that he would resume aggression. In order to end the war, Hideyoshi needed something that would justify the services and sacrifices of the Japanese,

and this something should come from Korea, where all military action had taken place. As far as Hideyoshi was concerned, a piece of “investiture” paper and a wardrobe delivered by China did not mean much -- except perhaps that Ming China was now abandoning the business of war in Korea.

With regard to the ceremony of investiture held at Osaka Castle, Hawley says that, when the Wanli emperor’s rescript was read: “In a towering rage, he tore off his Chinese robes and threw his crown to the floor ... Hideyoshi’s initial reaction was by all accounts so extreme that for a moment the very lives of the Chinese and Korean envoys were in danger.”³¹ This is a story that was fabricated way after the fact. Undeterred, Hawley goes on to say that, when the Ming envoys were waiting in Nagoya for the kind of weather that would allow them to cross back to Pusan: “Hideyoshi ... came to accept that there was little to be gained by sending the envoys away in such a brusque manner and resuming his quarrel with China. A messenger was therefore sent after the retreating delegation bearing presents and a note from Hideyoshi stating that he had no argument with Beijing. While he regarded the offer of investiture as an insult, the document read, ‘I intend to put up with it.’”³² Again, this simply did not happen.

Swope offers a similar account of what occurred when Wanli’s rescript of investiture was delivered: “Finally, Hideyoshi retreated to the mountains and asked the monk Saishō Shotai to read the letter of investiture from Wanli. Konishi Yukinaga secretly told the monk the true contents of the letter and begged him to alter it to avoid Hideyoshi’s fury. Saishō refused to entertain Konishi’s request, and he translated the letter accurately, ending with the fateful words, ‘We hereby invest you king of Japan.’ Hideyoshi was livid when he heard the letter and its demeaning language. He is alleged to have exclaimed: ‘Why would I want to be king of Japan? Yukinaga said the Ming emperor was going to make me ruler of the Ming. I want to mobilize troops immediately.’”³³ Truly entertaining, but, unfortunately, not true.

In the end, Swope concludes: “In hindsight, it is astonishing that

Hideyoshi could really have been unaware of what was transpiring, and if so, this was truly one of the great diplomatic blunders of history.”³⁴ After turning the truce negotiations between Ming China and Japan into an anecdote depicting monumental stupidity, Swope attributes this -- “one of the great diplomatic blunders of history” -- to the chief negotiators of both countries: “The attempt to conceal the truth of Ming terms from Hideyoshi by Konishi and Shen was ill conceived and poorly executed.”³⁵ Also not true.

The two books authored by Hawley and Swope, respectively, contain countless factual errors, fictionalized accounts, and outright fabrications, all stemming from the quality of the sources upon which they relied. Almost every page of these two books contains some form of misinformation. The authors fail to rely upon firm empirical data on the Imjin War. Having failed in this most basic and fundamental task, their analyses could not help but be fatally flawed. It is as though they decided to critique Shakespeare’s *Richard III* (which is believed to have been written in 1592), without actually reading it, by choosing, instead, to rely on second-hand comments, anecdotes, and gossip, to which they cavalierly add their own guesswork.

Epilogue

Research on the Imjin War (or on anything else, for that matter) requires, first and foremost, access to solid empirical data. Without this, any analysis will be flawed. It is, of course, up to the author to what extent she or he chooses to detail empirical data, but in all cases, these data should be winnowed, verified, and cross-referenced through the use of reliable primary sources.

A lot of the data used by Hawley and Swope was collected from secondary works or dubious “primary” sources -- sources that were written long after the war and that were tailored for various purposes.³⁶ The danger of relying on such sources is twofold. First, either consciously or un-

consciously, those who pick up “facts” from these materials tend to choose them for their fit with their arguments while ignoring or concealing data that may be more troubling to their theses. Second, faulty data and analyses based on such sources tend to gain a foothold in the literature and to be endlessly recycled. In many cases, bits of so-called “empirical” data were first located in secondary works and then traced back in primary sources for the purpose of quotation.

Unfortunately, research on the Imjin War has been gravely contaminated by a flood of false data, and this has spawned a myriad of erroneous arguments and guesswork, all of which are continuously recycled. Today, the biggest challenge for research on the Imjin War concerns how to protect one’s work from being contaminated by this recycled data. Of course, by far the best strategy is to stay away from secondary works and dubious primary sources. Once hooked by the siren song of false data, which seems to offer an easy way of gaining information, it is not easy to extricate oneself.

It should be noted that the reliable primary sources for the Imjin War were produced and are located in Korea, Japan, and China, and they include memorials and reports on all kinds of matters forwarded by field generals and officials to their superiors and central governments. Korea’s King Sŏnjo once lamented that, if the number of Japanese soldiers that, in their reports, his generals and officials claimed to have killed were combined, the entire Japanese army would be no more.³⁷ Not only memorials and reports from battlefields but also various other documents were subject to exaggeration, groundless arguments, false claims, and outright fabrication. In particular, Japanese documents should be closely checked due to the time lag (caused by communication difficulties) between when they left the battlefields of Korea and when they arrived at army headquarters in Japan. Japanese field generals often exploited this time lag to protect themselves.

Given that primary sources on the Imjin War are plentiful and that they come in three different languages (consider Korean *idu*), the task of gleaning empirical data from them requires a great deal of time, energy,

and linguistic skill. Among these sources, the most essential are the *Sōnjo sillok* (Korea), the Hideyoshi documents (Japan), and the *Shenzhong shilu* (China). Without a thorough examination of these basic sources, research on the Imjin War cannot be anything but partial and amateurish.

Once one has established a firm empirical base, one can proceed to analyze the Imjin War from various angles. Scholars in the field have already produced a large number of books, articles, and multimedia works, mostly in Korean, Japanese, and Chinese. Familiarizing oneself with these achievements is also crucial. In order to provide an in-depth contextual analysis of the war, it is also important to fully grasp the dynamics of politics, economics, and culture in Chosŏn Korea, Japan, and Ming China. And, in order to adequately assess the geography, battle sites, fortresses, transport routes, and local towns and villages that, in one manner or another, have preserved the legacies of the war, it is necessary to conduct fieldwork. Failing to do this will result in unacceptable errors or wild guesses (both of which are frequently encountered in Hawley's and Swope's respective books). Once, and only once, one has conducted all these basic tasks will it be time to turn one's attention to writing a coherent analysis of the Imjin War.

Works Cited

- Hara Tomitarō monjo* [原富太郎文書, Hara Tomitarō Documents]
- Hawley, Samuel. *The Imjin War: Japan's Sixteenth-Century Invasion of Korea and Attempt to Conquer China*. Seoul: Royal Asiatic Society, Korea Branch, 2005.
- Hwang Sin [黃愼]. *Ilbon wanghwan ilgi* [日本往還日記, The Diary of a Visit to Japan], 1596.
- Kagoshimaken ishin shiryō hansenjo [鹿児島県維新史料編纂所], ed. *Kagoshimaken shiryō kyūki zatsuroku kōhen 2* [鹿児島県史料旧記雑録後編] 2. Kagoshima: Kagoshimaken ishin shiryō hansenjo. [Kagoshima Prefecture Documents: The Latter Part of Old and

Miscellaneous Records], 1982

Keitetsu Genso [景轍玄蘇], *Sensōkō* [仙巢稿] (国立国会圖書館 鶯軒文庫). (Sensō Writings)

Kuwano Eiji [桑野栄治]. “Tong-Asia segye wa Bunroku-Keichō ūi yōk: Chosōn, Yugu, Ilbon e issōsō Tae-Myōng oegyo ūi kanchōm esō” [동아시아 세계와 文祿 慶長の 役: 朝鮮 琉球 日本에 있어서 大明 外交儀禮의 관점에서]. In *Che2gi Han-Il yōksa kongdong yōn’gu pogosō: che3gwōn – che2 punkwa Ilbon-p’yōn* [제2기 한일역사 공동연구보고서: 제3권 (제2분과 일본편)], ed. Han-Il yōksa kongdong yōn’gu wiwōnhoe [한일역사공동연구위원회], pp. 49-106. Seoul: Han-Il yōksa kongdong yōn’gu wiwōnhoe, 2000. [The World of Northeast Asia and the War of Bunroku and Keichō Eras: From a Perspective of Diplomatic Protocols between the Great Ming and Chosōn, Ryūkyū, and Japan]

Lee, Peter H., trans. *The Record of the Black Dragon Year*. Seoul: Institute of Korean Culture, Korea University; and Honolulu: Center for Korean Studies, University of Hawai’i, 2000.

Miki Satoshi [三木聡]. “Banreki hōwa-kō, so no ichi: Banreki nijūni-nen go-gatsu no ‘hōkō’ chūshi o megutte” [万曆封倭考 (その一) : 万曆二十二年五月の「封貢」中止をめぐって.] *Hokkaidō daigaku bungaku kenkyūka kiyō* [北海道大学文学研究科紀要], no. 109 (February 2003): 41-100. [On the Investiture of Japan in the Era of Wanli [1]: With a Focus on the Suspension of ‘Investiture and Tribute’ in the Fifth Month of the Twenty-second Year of Wanli]

_____. “Banreki hōwa-kō, so no ni: Banreki nijūyo-nen go-gatsu no kukyō kadō kaigi o megutte” [万曆封倭考 (その二) : 万曆二十四年五月の九卿・科道會議をめぐって.] *Hokkaidō daigaku bungaku kenkyūka kiyō* [北海道大学文学研究科紀要], no. 113 (July 2004): 1-49. [On the Investiture of Japan in the Era of Wanli [2]: With a Focus on the Meeting of Nine Ministers and Censors in the Fourth Month of the Twenty-fourth Year of Wanli]

- Miki Seiichirō [三鬼清一郎]. *Toyotomi Hideyoshi monjo mokuroku* [豊臣秀吉文書目録.] Nagoya: Nagoya daigaku bungakubu kokushigaku kenkyūshitsu, 1989.[The Catalogue of Toyotomi Hideyoshi Documents]
- Nanzen kyūki* [南禅旧記, The Old Record of Nanzen] Naikaku bunkozō [内閣文庫蔵] in Kokuritsu kōbunshokan [National Archives of Japan], Tokyo.
- Ono Kazuko [小野和子]. *Minki dōsha kō: Tōrintō to fukusha* [明季党社考 : 東林党と復社]. Kyoto: Dōhōsha shuppan, 1996. [On Factions and Associations in Late Ming: Tōrintō and Fukusha]
- Shenzong shilu* [神宗實錄, The Veritable Records of Emperor Shenzong]
- Sōnjo sillok* [宣祖實錄, The Veritable Records of King Sōnjo]
- Swope, Kenneth M. *A Dragon's Head and a Serpent's Tail: Ming China and the First Great East Asian War, 1592-1598*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2009.
- Yi Kyechwang [이계황]. “Hanguk kwa Ilbon hakkye ūi Imjin Waeran wŏn'innon e taehayō” [한국과 일본학계의 임진왜란 원인론에 대하여]. In *Tong-Asia segye wa Imjin Waeran* [동아시아 세계와 임진왜란], ed. Han-Il kwangyesa yŏn'gu nonjip p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe [한일관계사연구논집편찬위원회], pp. 37-88. Seoul: Kyōng'in munhwasa, 2010. [On the Cause of the Imjin War Suggested by Korean and Japanese Historians]

Notes :

- 1 For details, see Yi Kyechwang, “Hanguk kwa Ilbon hakkye ūi Imjin Waeran wŏn'innon e taehayō,” in *Tong Asia segye wa Imjin Waeran*, ed. Han-Il kwangyesa yŏn'gu nonjip p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe (Seoul: Kyōng'in Munhwasa, 2010), 39-79.
- 2 Samuel Hawley, *The Imjin War: Japan's Sixteenth-Century Invasion of Korea and Attempt to Conquer China* (Seoul: Royal Asiatic Society, Korea Branch,

- 2005), viiii.
- 3 Ibid., 642.
 - 4 Miki Seiichirō, *Toyotomi Hideyoshi monjo mokuroku* (Nagoya: Nagoya daigaku bungakubu kokushigaku kenkyūshitsu, 1989), 76-115.
 - 5 Kenneth M. Swope, *A Dragon's Head and a Serpent's Tail: Ming China and the First Great East Asian War, 1592-1598* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2009), 89.
 - 6 For details, see Peter Lee, trans., *The Record of the Black Dragon Year* (Seoul: Institute of Korean Culture, Korea University, and Honolulu: Center for Korean Studies, University of Hawai'i, 2000), 15-18.
 - 7 Swope, 15.
 - 8 Ibid., 22.
 - 9 Ibid., 297.
 - 10 Ibid., 65.
 - 11 Ibid.
 - 12 Ibid., 66.
 - 13 Ibid., 298.
 - 14 Ibid.
 - 15 For example, see *Sōnjo sillok*, 36:667b-668a (1593/3/20).
 - 16 For apt accounts of factional infighting at the Ming court, see Miki Satoshi, “Banreki hōwa-kō, so no ichi: Banreki nijūni-nen go-gatsu no ‘hōkō’ chūshi o megutte,” *Hokkaidō daigaku bungaku kenkyūka kiyō* 109 (February 2003), 50-72; ____, “Banreki hōwa-kō, so no ni: Banreki nijūyo-nen go-gatsu no kikyō kadō kaigi o megutte,” *Hokkaidō daigaku bungaku kenkyūka kiyō* 113 (July 2004), 11-39; Ono Kazuko, *Minki dōsha kō: Tōrintō to fukusha* (Kyoto: Dōhōsha shuppan, 1996), 116-133.
 - 17 Hawley, 341.
 - 18 *Sōnjo sillok*, 37:678a (1593/4/1).
 - 19 *Sōnjo sillok*, 37:681a (1593/4/3).
 - 20 See *Nanzen kyūki* (Naikaku bunkozō).
 - 21 See *Hara Tomitarō monjo*.
 - 22 No. 1112 in Kagoshimaken ishin shiryō hensanjo, ed. *Kagoshimaken shiryō kyūki zatsuroku kōhen 2* (Kagoshima: Kagoshimaken ishin shiryō hensanjo, 1982).
 - 23 Hawley, 365-366.
 - 24 Ibid., 369.

25 Ibid.

26 Swope, 188.

27 *Shenzong shilu*, 270:5022

28 Hawley, p406.

29 Kuwano Eiji “Tong-Asia segye wa Bunroku-Keichō ūi yōk: Chosōn, Yugu, Ilbon e issōsō Tae-Myōng oegyo ūi kanchōm esō,” in *Che 2 ki Han-Il yōksa kongdong yōn’gu pogosō: che 3 kwōn – che 2 pun kwa Ilbon-p’yōn*, ed. Han-Il yōksa kongdong yōn’gu wiwōnhoe (Seoul: Han-Il yōksa kongdong yōn’gu wiwōnhoe, 2000), 92.

30 These primary sources include: Keitetsu Genso, *Sensōkō*; Hwang Sin, *Ilbon wanhwan ilgi* (entries on the third, sixth, and eighth days of the ninth month of 1596); and *Sōnjo sillok*, 83:127a (1596/12/7).

31 Hawley, 419.

32 Ibid., 420.

33 Swope, 221.

34 Ibid., 222.

35 Ibid., 226.

36 In the case of Hawley, it is almost impossible to comment on his examination of primary sources simply because, for empirical data, he relies almost entirely on English secondary works and, occasionally, on English translations of a few documents and popular stories about the war. In the case of Swope, the Japanese materials that he examines as primary sources number only three (*Chōsen no eki*, *Chōsen seibatsuki*, and *Seikan iryaku*), none of which Japanese historians recognize as reliable. See Swope, 313-314.

37 *Sōnjo sillok*, 59:417a (1595/1/8).

〈Abstract〉

Works in English on the Imjin War and the Challenge of Research

Nam-lin Hur

The Imjin War has been a popular topic of research in Korea, Japan and China. To date, hundreds of books and thousands of journal articles and book chapters have been written on this international conflict. In contrast, the overall number of works in English remains miniscule. In this article, Hur introduces a list of major English-language books and articles on the Imjin War and proceeds to offer critical comments on the most representative works to date -- Samuel Hawley's *The Imjin War: Japan's Sixteenth-Century Invasion of Korea and Attempt to Conquer China* and Kenneth Swope's *A Dragon's Head and a Serpent's Tail: Ming China and the First Great East Asian War, 1592-1598*. In order to further illustrate a range of limits and problems found in these two books, Hur takes up some key issues pertaining to truce negotiations in the Imjin War and reviews how these are treated by Hawley and Swope, respectively. Hur points out that the two books contain countless factual errors and a flood of false data, all stemming from the quality of the sources upon which they relied. As a result, their analyses are fatally flawed or skewed. Given that primary sources on the Imjin War are plentiful and that they come in different languages, Hur suggests that it would be a challenge to establish a firm base of empirical data, but that, without accomplishing this fundamental task, it would be impossible to produce a high-quality analysis of the Imjin War.

Key words: monograph, limits and problems, truce negotiation, primary source, cross-referencing

〈국문초록〉

임진왜란에 관한 영어권 저작물의 수준과 향후 연구의 과제

허남린 (University of British Columbia 교수)

임진왜란은 한국, 일본, 중국에서 인기가 있는 연구주제이다. 지금까지 임진왜란에 관해 수 백권의 저서와 수 천편의 논문이 출판되었다. 이에 비해, 영어권의 저술은 아주 미미한 수준에 머무르고 있다. 본 논문에서는 먼저 영어로 저술된 임진왜란에 관한 대표적인 출판물을 간단히 소개한 후, 이 중에서 가장 심도 있는 연구저서로 평가되는 Samuel Hawley의 저서인 *The Imjin War: Japan's Sixteenth-Century Invasion of Korea and Attempt to Conquer China*와 Kenneth Swope의 저서인 *A Dragon's Head and a Serpent's Tail: Ming China and the First Great East Asian War, 1592-1598*에 대해 전체적인 비평을 가한다. 나아가, 이 두 저서의 한계와 문제점을 보다 선명히 하기 위해, 두 저서의 저자인 Samuel Hawley와 Kenneth Swope가 각자 임진왜란 시기의 강화교섭에 대해 어떠한 분석을 가하고 있는지 몇 가지 중요한 이슈들을 중심으로 검토한다. 검토의 결과 발견되는 것은 이 두 저서에는 임진왜란에 대한 기술에 있어 셀 수 없을 정도로 많은 실증되지 않는 사실, 왜곡되거나 후에 만들어진 소설 같은 이야기가 많이 포함되어 있다. 이러한 영터리 같은 사실의 기술은 모두 그들이 의존하고 있는 자료의 빈약한 품질에 기인한다. 그 결과, Samuel Hawley와 Kenneth Swope의 임진왜란에 대한 분석은 심각할 정도로 틀리거나 왜곡되어 있다. 임진왜란에 대한 사료는 아주 풍부하며, 나라에 따라 다른 언어들로 채록되어 있기 때문에 이들을 전부 읽고 분석하여 확고한 기초 데이터를 구축하는 작업은 쉽지 않은 과제이다. 그러나 이러한 가장 근본적인 과제를 달성하지 않고 임진왜란에 대한 수준 높은 분석을 기대한다는 것은 불가능하다.

주제어: 연구저서, 한계와 문제점, 강화교섭, 1차 사료, 교차검증