NATIONAL DISGRACE: KOREA, JAPAN, AND THE IMJIN WAR

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The Imjin War began in 1592 when a well-trained and experienced Japanese army landed in the port city of Pusan on the southern tip of Korea and quickly conquered most of the peninsula. Although the Japanese were repulsed after several years of brutal fighting that culminated in an intervention by Ming China, the Imjin War represented a devastating humiliation for Korea. The Japanese, whom Koreans had long viewed with condescension, had easily and brutally defeated Korea’s own armies, and Korea had required outside help to protect the integrity of its own kingdom. This paper examines the writings of two of the most important Korean figures from the Imjin War: Yi Sun-Shin, the commander of the Korean navy, and Yu Song-nyong, the Prime Minister. I show how Yi and Yu focus more closely on Korean failures and not on the extensive incidents of Japanese cruelty and violence during the war. Indeed, they almost seem to blame the weakness of the Korean state, rather than Japanese aggression, for much of their country’s suffering. The reason for this, I argue, is that Yi and Yu wanted to recapture a Korean worldview defined by a close relationship with China and condescension towards Japan. The initial success of the Japanese invasion would seem to have shattered these biases; but by blaming the invasion on temporary Korean failings, which could be fixed, rather than acknowledging Japanese progress, Yi and Yu were able to preserve the belief in Korean superiority to Japan.

In 1592, a well-trained and experienced Japanese army, led by the ambitious warlord Toyotami Hideyoshi, landed in the port city of Pusan on the southern tip of Korea. The Japanese took the Korean capital of Seoul, some 400 kilometers to the north, just twenty days later. For Korea, this was an enormous humiliation. The Japanese, whom Koreans had long viewed as uncivilized and inferior, had rather easily and brutally conquered the Korean Peninsula. Even when Hideyoshi was eventually forced back to Japan the Koreans could not claim much of a victory: the Chinese army had done most of the fighting and effectively dictated the terms of the peace, which only further emphasized the fact that the Koreans could not defend their peninsula themselves.

Modern scholars of the Imjin War have been more interested in the interna-

2 The Imjin War is known by many other names, including Hideyoshi’s Invasion of Korea. Since I am working primarily with Korean sources and my work is centered on the Korean perspective, I’ve chosen to use the name that the Koreans use to describe the war.
tional nature of the conflict than in the Korean emotional reactions to the war. The Imjin War was, after all, the first time that China, Korea, and Japan had all met each other on the same battlefield. But this geopolitical orientation obscures the way Koreans experienced the war—as a local or national tragedy, of which the international aspects only reinforced the scale of Korea’s domestic weaknesses and failures. With that in mind, this paper will analyze two of the most important Korean sources on the Imjin War: the writings of Admiral Yi Sun-Shin, the commander of the Korean navy, and Yu Songnyong, the Prime Minister of Korea at the time.

Until his death in 1598, Yi kept a detailed diary during the war known as the Namjung Ilgī, while Yu wrote a history of the war, The Book of Corrections, after the war had ended. In both works, any fury the authors may have felt toward the Japanese is rarely expressed explicitly. Instead, the Japanese soldiers are depicted with an almost dismissive disdain and condescension, while the Korean government and armies receive a far harsher treatment: both Yu and Yi castigate them for incompetence, poor judgment, and lack of foresight. This rather unexpected choice of emphasis was, I argue, principally a product of how Korea understood its relationships with China and Japan.

KOREA, JAPAN, AND CHINA

Korea’s sense of where it belonged in the world was defined in the late sixteenth century both by the country’s close bond with China, and by its contempt for Japan. The primary system of belief for both the state and the aristocracy of the Korean Choson Dynasty was Confucianism, which placed China at the natural center of the universe. Although politically autonomous, Korea existed very much within China’s cultural orbit. Since the peninsula was first unified during the Silla Dynasty (681-935 CE), Korea had been sending tributary envoys to China regularly. On these missions, the Koreans would present their tribute, swear loyalty and devotion to China, and make other required ceremonial gestures of submission to the Chinese emperor. In return, the Chinese treated the envoys as honored guests, emphasized the importance of Chinese-Korean relationships, promised to help protect Korea against foreign invasions, and sent gifts for the Korean king. The Chinese therefore had no reason to conquer the already unaggressive Korean state for themselves. In short, this arrangement allowed the Koreans to effectively rent their independence and security from China.

This Sino-centric worldview also encouraged the Koreans to look down on the Japanese, because Japan was both further away from China geographically and did not follow Confucian traditions as devoutly as Korea did. This view was reinforced by the fact that when the Japanese did admire Chinese culture and religion or incorporate Chinese characters into their language, they had learned to do so from

or through Korea—a fact of which Koreans were certainly aware.\(^5\) In addition, the constant civil war and loss of central authority in Japan during the sixteenth century further convinced the already prejudiced Korean government of Japan’s inferiority. Both the Korean and Chinese sources frequently referred to the Japanese as “dwarfs” or “pygmies,”\(^6\) and Korean envoys to the Japanese court were often offended by what they saw to be inappropriate behavior and general ignorance of Chinese-style protocol.

Although there were several other factors for the Korean negligence of its defenses, including growing infighting among different factions in the government, this bias against the Japanese further encouraged Korean complacency. After all, Korean officials reasoned, the culturally and politically inferior Japanese could never threaten Korea—especially not with China’s backing. As Park Yun-Hee, a Korean historian of the Imjin War, writes:

> Except for a brief period ... marauding pirates from Japan seldom presented a serious menace to the national security of Korea. Korea was used to regarding Japan as a less civilized and less powerful country than herself. Moreover, the court government in Seoul was completely ignorant of the new developments in Japan. This must have been one of the reasons why the Koreans did not give serious consideration to Hideyoshi’s threat to invade Korea and China.\(^7\)

Indeed, these views are clearly expressed in a comment made by King Seonjo, the ruler of Choson Korea during the Imjin War, made in 1592, illustrating how he understood Korea’s security relationship with China: “a small Japan that attacks the Great Ming Empire resembles a little snail that climbs a big rock. It is like a bee that stings the back of a turtle.”\(^8\)

**TWO BRUTAL INVASIONS**

But Hideyoshi, hoping to eventually conquer all of Asia, did invade. Initially, his forces met with remarkable success, shattering the poorly led and unprepared Korean army as he marched north towards China. Unfortunately for Hideyoshi, however, this soon prompted the Chinese, who were nervous about the security of their border with Korea, to intervene in 1593. The combined Chinese and Korean armies dealt the Japanese a series of decisive defeats, eventually driving them back to Japan. Four years later, Hideyoshi tried again, but this time the Koreans and Chinese were better prepared, and the Japanese were repulsed relatively quickly.

The two wars—and particularly the second one—were brutal. Samuel Hawley,

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6 Samuel Hawley, *The Imjin War: Japan’s Sixteenth-century Invasion of Korea and Attempt to Conquer China* (Seoul: Royal Asiatic Society, Korea Branch, 2005), 55.
7 Park, 66.
8 Ibid., 73.
an Imjin War historian, calculates the total number of casualties of the Imjin War, including those who died of subsequent starvation or disease, to be roughly two million, or twenty percent of the population. Much of the suffering was deliberately inflicted, especially by the Japanese army, in part out of the frustration of their defeat by the Koreans and Chinese.

One of the most infamous atrocities, for instance, was the collection of Korean noses. According to the Japanese captured by the Koreans, their commanders ordered them to rampage through southern Korea and kill everyone in their path. To keep track of the body counts, the Japanese troops hacked off the noses of the dead (and, in some cases, the living) to be counted, recorded, salted, packed, and sent to Japan where they were piled seven hundred kilometers east of Kyoto. Hideyoshi would later order a shrine to be built for the noses and set Buddhist priests to pray for the repose of souls—an act that was hailed in Japan as a sign of great mercy and compassion.9

The Japanese invaders also began to kidnap Koreans during the second invasion. Some of these captives were forced to labor for the Japanese and built fortifications and roads in anticipation of the Ming advances. As many as 50,000 Koreans were taken back to Japan, many of them craftsmen who were taken to work in the fiefdom of their daimyo owners, where they were left in relative freedom.10 Others were sold as slaves, not just to the Japanese lords, but also to Portuguese and Italian traders.11 Francesco Carletti, a Florentine merchant who traveled the world during the early seventeenth century, described seeing in a slave market in Nagasaki, “an infinite number of [Korean] men and women, boys and girls, of every age, and they were sold at the lowest prices.”12

Finally, and perhaps most devastatingly, the scorched-earth policy of the Japanese invaders, coupled with the flight of farmers from their fields, destroyed the Korean agricultural economy. In a Korean government survey of 1601, the first since the end of war, it was found that there were only 300,000 kyŏl13 of land under cultivation and paying taxes, down from the 1.5-1.7 million kyŏl assessed in 1592 just before the war.14 As a result, hundreds of thousands of people starved. Given the brutality of the conflict, one might have expected Korean sources on the war to be scathing toward the Japanese. But, as we shall see, at least with Yu Seong Ryong and Yi Sun-Shin’s accounts, this is not the case.

YU SEONG-RYONG

Yu Seong-Ryong (1542-1607) was born into a yangban, or gentry, family, and received a classical Chinese education before successfully passing the civil service examinations and serving in a series of official posts in the Choson Dynasty. As a result,
he would have been steeped in Chinese culture and supportive of Korea’s close relationship to China.

At the beginning of the Imjin War in 1592, Yu became prime minister and oversaw military units in this capacity. After the war, he wrote the Chinbirok, which translates best to the Book of Corrections, in which he chronicles the war from his own experiences as a state official. The Book of Corrections is a particularly valuable account of the Imjin War, since Yu was at the center of almost every important decision Korea made during the war. He had personally interacted with the figures he wrote about and, as a witness to the crowds of displaced and starving Koreans, saw firsthand much of the grief that he described.

But Yu is surprisingly restrained in his descriptions of the Japanese. For instance, he describes how the Japanese, frustrated by their initial failure to capture the city of Chinju, later took revenge on the city when it finally fell in summer of 1593. “More than sixty thousand people, including soldiers and civilians, were killed, and even chickens and dogs were not spared. The enemy completely destroyed the town. They filled up the lakes and wells with dirt and cut down all the trees,” Yu writes. “They relished the taste of revenge to their heart’s content.” Given the magnitude of the slaughter in Chinju, Yu could certainly have said much more about the Japanese cruelty. Indeed, in this context, writing “they relished the taste of revenge to their heart’s content” seems an almost resigned understatement.

In another passage, Yu describes the scene he saw after Seoul was recaptured by the Sino-Korean forces. The proud capital of Korea was in ruins. Yu writes:

The corpses of both men and horses, scattered here and there, gave out such a strong stench that people passed by hurriedly, covering their noses. All the houses and buildings, private or public, were completely gone. Only a few that were used as the quarters of the enemy soldiers were still standing at the bottom of Mt. Namsam in the east side of Sungnyemun Gate. The buildings including the Ancestral Shrine of the Royal Lineage, the three palaces, the belfry, and all the government offices and schools, which used to be in the north above the main street, were burned to ashes. The Residence of the Little Princess was able to survive because it was occupied by Ukita Hideie, the commander of the Japanese army.

Again, despite the gruesome destruction of Korea’s political and cultural center, Yu gives a rather matter-of-fact description, almost as if he were making a list of unfortunate losses, rather than describing the brutality of Japanese actions. In most cases, while noting the destruction he sees, Yu does not explicitly condemn the Japanese for their barbarity or cruelty. Rarely does he write that the Japanese had done something; he only notes that it happened.

15 Byongyon Choi, translator’s preface to The Book of Corrections: Reflections on the National Crisis during the Japanese Invasion of Korea, 1592-1598, by Yu Song-Nyong (Berkeley: Institute of East Asia Studies, 2002), ix-xii.
17 Yu, 181.
However, Yu does consistently, and at times furiously, offer explicit criticism of the Korean government and military forces for their unimpressive response to the Japanese invasion. In *The Book of Corrections*, he explains that the Japanese easily defeated Korean fortresses because they were not properly built and often placed in strategically poor locations. He even titles one of his chapters “Generals Unable to Foresee the Imminent War,” in which he describes how the general incompetence of Korean generals led to a weakened state of Korea. “What is important in the administration of the military is building an effective system as well as training soldiers and securing the right people as commanders,” he writes. “But we failed to employ any of these military arts and eventually lost the war.”18

For example, when describing the fall of Chinju, a city on the southern coast of the Korean peninsula west of Pusan, Yu blames the events on bad planning and strikingly poor leadership. The Chinju fortress was moved from its original location on rugged ground to a flat location that offered no protection. “To make matters worse,” he writes, “the soldiers under the command of Kim Chonil were disorderly rabble recruited from the streets of Seoul, and Kim Chonil himself was ignorant of warfare. Furthermore, being exceedingly stubborn, Kim disliked So Yewon [the magistrate of Chinju]… As a result, the military orders they issued created confusion, and finally, our army suffered greater defeat than they had to.”19

Yu was especially dissatisfied with the top levels of Korean government. Sin Ip, the Vice Minister of War during the outset of the Japanese invasion, is described as a vain fool whose poor judgment was directly responsible for the Korean army’s catastrophic defeat at Tangeumdae.20 In the conclusion of the chapter that describes the defeat of Sin Ip’s army, Yu writes, “Generally speaking, Sin Ip was a shrewd man of shallow character. Although he once succeeded in distinguishing himself, he was not good at devising and planning strategies of war. There is an old saying: ‘If the commanding general is ignorant of warfare, he will hand over the country to his enemy.’ It is too late to deplore what has already happened, but I want to write this down for the sake of avoiding the same mistake in the future.”21

Yu was not happy with the state of Sino-Korean relations during the war either. His depictions of Chinese intervention, while explicitly grateful, also reveal a strong underlying sense of frustration and embarrassment that such assistance was necessary. Yu recounts how he argued constantly with Chinese general Li Rusong, who wanted to pursue a peace agreement with the Japanese that Yu considered premature.22 Worse, the terms were fairly generous to the Japanese and were negotiated without Korean representatives present, something that Yu justifiably saw as evidence

18 Yu, 36.
19 Ibid., 187–188.
20 Sin’s original intention was to make a stand at Choryong Pass, where the rocky terrain and narrow passageways would have helped his troops against the Japanese below. Instead, despite protests from his men, he decided to fight the Japanese in an open field by the Tanggumdae hill. As almost all historians point out, this site was a deathtrap, as the Korean soldiers had no where to run as they were trapped by the hills and the Han River behind them. As a result, 8,000 Koreans were slaughtered by the Japanese. (Hawley, 154–157).
21 Yu, 70.
22 Ibid., 177.
of Chinese bad faith.\textsuperscript{23} Luckily for Korea, the Japanese had been so roundly beaten by the Chinese and Korean armies that they withdrew on their own. Regardless, the entire incident was still deeply humiliating for Korea and illustrated clearly just how ineffective the Korean military and political leadership was—and how strong the Japanese army was, in comparison.

More broadly, in \textit{The Book of Collections}, Yu often faults the Chinese for not being aggressive enough toward the Japanese. In his description of the Chinese siege of Japanese forces at Ulsan, he observes with frustration that, “the Chinese stopped short of pursuing the Japanese all the way; they were more preoccupied with grabbing things abandoned by the enemy. In the meantime, the enemy tightly closed the gates of their fortress, and therefore, it was too late for the Chinese soldiers to finish them off.”\textsuperscript{24}

While we cannot know precisely what Yu was thinking, it seems fair to conclude that given the history of Korean bias against the Japanese, these descriptions are perhaps best understood as an attempt to salvage Korea’s previous view of the world order. If the Koreans focused on their own mistakes and flaws, they could ignore the reality of their defeat by the Japanese, whom they had been contemptuous of for so long. They could also ignore their embarrassing reliance on the Chinese—and China’s cold-blooded self-interested politicking—which drove home just how weak the Korean army and state had become.

After all, if the lesson of the Imjin War was that Korea had allowed itself to become weak, the Koreans did not have to admit the validity of Japanese power or Chinese betrayal. Indeed, Yu writes explicitly in the \textit{Book of Corrections} about how he wants to draw lessons from what happened for future generations. And as his title suggests, he was principally interested in focusing on the failures of the Korean government—as opposed to the cruelty of the Japanese invaders—because he believed that these flaws could be corrected, and Korea could regain her dignity.

\textbf{YI SUN-SHIN}

These same themes come out more subtly but just as clearly in Yi Sun-Shin’s writing. Born in Seoul in 1545, Yi Sun-Shin was the son of a poor Confucian scholar. As a child growing up in Seoul, he too studied Confucianism in school, and was childhood friends with Yu.\textsuperscript{25} Despite receiving a classical Chinese education and therefore being eligible to take the prestigious civil service examination, he chose to take the military examinations instead and passed them in 1576. His first assignment was to fight Jurchen raiders on Korea’s northern borders, an experience that would likely have reinforced an appreciation of Chinese civilization. Several years later, Yi was made a naval officer and appointed to command a garrison in Jeollanam-do, a province on the southwestern tip of Korea.\textsuperscript{26}

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\item \textsuperscript{23} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{24} Ibid., 218.
\item \textsuperscript{25} Park, 125-126.
\item \textsuperscript{26} Ibid., 125-140.
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After the Japanese invaded, Yi quickly became a leading force in the Korean resistance. A remarkable commander, he fought in twenty-three sea battles—and won them all, effectively giving the Koreans control of the seas and making it difficult for Japan to reinforce its army.27 One key reason for this success was superior Korean naval technology, including the famed *Geobukseons*, or turtle ships, which Yi helped to design. This warship was shaped like a turtle and outfitted with at least five different kinds of cannons and a fully covered deck that could deflect cannon fire.28

Despite Yi’s extensive role in the eventual Korean success against the Japanese, he was nearly undone by internal Korean rivalries. In 1597, Yi was relieved of his position, arrested, tortured, and then demoted to the rank of an ordinary soldier on charges that he had failed to obey the King by refusing to attack a Japanese fleet when ordered. Yi had indeed refused to attack, but not out of disloyalty: he rightly believed the situation to be a trap set up by a double agent that could lead to the possible destruction of the entire Korean navy.29 Japanese double agents notwithstanding, the King was initially persuaded by several members of the court (including Admiral Won Gyun who would replace Yi as the leading naval officer) to punish Yi by death, but the admiral’s life was saved when a few of the far-sighted officials of court, including Yu, protested in Yi’s defense.30 But Won Gyun quickly proved to be incompetent, and Yi was soon reinstated and led the Korean navy until his death at the Battle of Noryang Straits, off the southern coast of Korea.31

In his diary, Yi frequently mentions interactions or battles with Japanese sailors or ships at sea with a touch of condescension, but little obvious anger. In a typically restrained passage, he describes a sea battle that took place in the summer of 1593: “A few of the enemy vessels were crossing over the sea near Kyonnaeryang and sailing freely to their land bases. What an indignity! Our boats sailed out and started to chase them on the open sea. They escaped at full speed. We returned to our base to rest.”32 That Yi chose to describe the Japanese sailing freely as an “indignity” rather than an “outrage” is significant. Indignity implies embarrassment—that it was humiliating, rather than simply irritating or even infuriating, for Korea to be unable to stop the Japanese ships. There is none of the rage one might expect in a war as cruel and violent as the Imjin War.

Another entry, this time describing Japanese prisoners, shows a similar condescension: “after dark the surrendered Japanese played a drama with the make-up of actors and actresses. As Commanding Admiral, I could not attend, but since the submissive captives wished to entertain themselves with their native farce for enjoyment of the day, I did not forbid it.”33 That Yi would describe the Japanese drama as a

27 Ibid., 29-30.
29 Park, 192.
30 Won Gyun, who had been a senior to Admiral Yi in both age and rank before being placed under his leadership in 1593, was probably motivated by both ambition and jealousy. Park, 191.
31 Park, 244-245.
33 Ibid., 233.
“native farce” is illustrative of Korean contempt for Japanese culture and society.

In fact, there are only a few specific instances in which Yi writes of his own anger at the Japanese. On the eighth month of 1593, Yi commented, “From questioning Che Man-chun [one of Yi’s subordinates] and through his statement [about a Korean naval defeat], I felt a deep resentment against the Japanese. We discussed and debated all day long… Che Man-chun’s story was filled with indignant words and phrases.”

Despite the length of Yi’s diary, this entry is one of the few entries in which Yi explicitly articulates his anger towards the Japanese. Furthermore, in most entries in which Yi writes of having heard of Japanese atrocities, his responses are usually concise and devoid of emotions; it is only in this entry that the reader is given the image of Yi and his colleague passionately talking into the night of their hatred for the enemy. Similarly, only once does Yi refer to the Japanese as *wae*, or pygmies—a common insult the Chinese and Koreans gave to the Japanese. When discussing a dream he had, he writes, “Magnificent sight [a lonely island in the sea]! It is an augury that the *wae* fellows are begging for peace and marching toward self-destruction.”

But Yi writes often of his anger towards the corrupt army and navy officials, especially his rival Won Gyun, who led the Korean navy during the Battle of Chilchonnyang while Yi was fighting off accusations of disloyalty. Chilchonnyang was the worst naval catastrophe in the war, and 122 Korean vessels were captured or sunk. Yi describes others commenting that, “Commanding Admiral Won Gyun hardly saw the enemy before he ran away to land first, followed by other Commanders and chief officers, deserting their ships and crews. Hence the tragedy … the grave fault of the Commanding Admiral is beyond human description. They wished to crush up his bones and slice flesh.”

Although Yi and Won’s rivalry certainly accounts for the bias and some of the charged language in Yi’s story, given Won’s abysmal record as commander of naval forces it seems difficult to argue with Yi’s position that Won was indeed an inadequate commander. When describing the catastrophic defeat of the Korean navy led by Won at the Battle of Chilchon Straits near Koje Island, Park, the historian, repeatedly stresses Won’s incompetence: “Although the strait was so narrow that it was not suitable for a large fleet to maneuver, Won Kyun did not move his fleet to a safer place. Instead he stayed on until July 15, when his fleet was annihilated by the combined forces of the Japanese navy and ground troops. Meanwhile, a large number of Japanese ships sailed from Pusan to… only ten nautical miles away from where Won Kyun’s fleets stayed. Nevertheless, Won was kept ignorant about the enemy movement because of his negligence of intelligence activities.” Yu, too, shared this low opinion of Won. One of his chapters was simply titled “The Collapse of the Navy Led by Won Kyung.”

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34 Ibid., 56.
35 Yi’s diary kept from 1592 to 1598 consists of 205 folio pages bound into seven separate volumes. Sohn Pow-Key, editor’s note to *Nanjung Ilgi: War Diary of Admiral Yi Sun Shin*, trans. Ha Tae-hung (Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 1977), xi.
36 Ibid., 121.
37 Ibid., 293.
38 Park, 198.
Yi's criticism was by no means limited to Won. He also complained generally about favoritism, poor planning, lack of discipline, corruption, and ineffective leadership, though usually in slightly more restrained language. “Made an inquiry into the scandal on the warships at each naval port under the jurisdiction of the Cholla Right Naval,” he noted in one entry. “As a result, twelve prostitutes were arrested and the commanding officers of related naval units punished.” In another instance, he writes, “I had Kim Tuhon of Kwang-yang flogged seventy times.” Kim had apparently “taken double salary from the two Magistrates of Sunchon and Kwangyang while he served on the blockade, when he was transferred to the navy as punishment, he did not wear a sword or bow and arrow and behaved in a haughty manner.” When he thought someone deserving, however, Yi could be scathing too. Writing about one particularly cowardly commander, Yi fumed, “Had he had a bit of conscience he would disembowel himself to apologize for his guilt.” It is striking, though, that he almost never uses this sort of language to describe the Japanese.

Perhaps the clearest indication of the way in which Yi understood the Imjin War, however, lies in what is perhaps one of the most touching entries of his diary. Yi describes a conversation he has with his dying mother, who tells him, “Fight gallantly and wipe out the national disgrace.” Notably, instead of telling Yi to defeat the brutal Japanese invaders, she asks that he end the national disgrace of the invasion. This entry, when read in light of Yi’s clear emotional focus on internal Korean problems rather than Japanese aggression suggests that Yi, like Yu, seems to have seen the conflict principally in terms of Korean dishonor, incompetence, and embarrassment.

CONCLUSION

Like Yu, we cannot know exactly what Yi was thinking. Nevertheless, Japanese success must have challenged both Yi and Yu’s previously held views about Korean superiority. Given both the ways that Koreans understood their relationships with Japan and China and the patters apparent in Yu’s writing, it seems appropriate to conclude that Yu and Yi were engaged in more than simply recording history. Their writings represent an attempt to recover some sense of Korea’s pre-invasion worldview—in other words, to explain how Japan, a country they still regarded as inferior, could have so easily defeated them without having to acknowledge the Japanese as equals. For Yu and Yi, at least, and probably most of the upper levels of Korean society, the answer was to explain away the Imjin War as a tragedy and, more importantly, as a self-inflicted “national disgrace.”

39 Yi, 154.
40 Ibid., 165.
41 Ibid., 62.
WORKS CITED


