

Na Man'gap, *The Diary of 1636: The Second Manchu Invasion of Korea*.

Trans. George Kallander. New York: Columbia University Press, 2020. 360 pages. ISBN-13: 9780231197564 (hardcover). US\$120.00/£100.00.

A major impediment in teaching and conducting research about topics that cross the boundaries of national histories is language in the broadest sense. Translation of vocabulary and grammar in one language to another is inherently complex, but more difficult and sometimes insurmountable is the challenge of conveying all the social and cultural nuances embodied in a historical record. As international academia stresses greater intellectual synergy rather than specialization, particularly in the humanities and social sciences, expanding our access to sources of knowledge, as achieved through translation, will become ever more important. George Kallander's translation of this source for premodern Korean and Northeast Asian studies is an important contribution in this vein.

This book is a valuable work in two ways, both as an English-language translation of *Pyôngjarok* 丙子錄, a Chosŏn era *yasa* (unofficial history) by Na Man'gap 羅萬甲 (1592–1642), of the Pyôngja (Ch. Bingzi 丙子) year referring to the sexagenary cycle (stems and branches) denotation of time, and as a collection of materials that enhance the study of the source text as interpreted by Kallander through translation. The components of this mini-archive include several maps (x, xlviii, xlix), a lengthy introduction (xi–lxxiv), a list of dramatis personae with brief descriptions of significant persons divided into three categories by their identities as Korean (royal family members or officials of Chosŏn Korea), Manchu, or Chinese (lxxv–lxxxii), a translator's note separate from the introduction (lxxxiii–lxxxv), and in the back matter, a glossary of names, terms, and places (197–204), extensive endnotes (205–37), and a bibliography (239–45).

The introduction is an important scholarly work of its own, complementing the translation but also standing apart as a substantive and comprehensive analysis of the source text. Kallander explains why 1636 CE was a transformative year for Korea, China, and Northeast Asia, and why Na Man'gap produced the original source text on the basis of his experience as a witness and critic of the events that occurred in that time period (xi–lxxiv). Kallander contextualizes Na's text with descriptions of other texts recording the same events such as the *Veritable Records of the Chosŏn Dynasty* (Chosŏn wangjo sillok) (xiii), *The Diary of Namhan* (Namhan ilgi 南漢日記) by Sök Chihyöng 石之珩 (1610–?), and *The Diary of Nalli* (Nalli ilgi 亂離日記) by Nam Küp 南礪 (1592–1671) (both cited on xiv), and synopses of all eight sections of the source text (xxiii–xxx). For readers who are entirely unfamiliar with the backdrop of late sixteenth-century Northeast Asia, Kallander interweaves the political and military concerns of the Chosŏn kingdom with the shifts of power from the Ming dynasty to the conglomerate of Jurchen and other peoples that would form the Manchu regime of the Later Jin state (Ch. *Hou*

*Jin guo* 後進國, *Ma. Amaga Aisin gurun*) and then the Qing dynasty in China. He emphasizes that the military conflict in 1636 was momentous as a rupture of relative peace between the Jurchen and Chosŏn governments but also as the second such incident, the first occurring in 1627 (xxxviii–xlvii), and that Na's account of 1636 offers unique insights into what would become long-term complications in Qing-Chosŏn relations following both events (lxiii–lxxi).

The translated text is likewise important both as the subject of analysis in Kallander's introduction and as a source that is now accessible to a broad audience that can appreciate the vivid details of this historical period and also interpret its meaning independently of the translator's assessment. Kallander supports these two functions of his translation by preserving Na's original division of *Pyŏngja-rok* into eight sections that can be read separately and by providing the original Korean-language terms for official titles, proper nouns, and key vocabulary when they are first mentioned in parenthetical citations. Kallander's lucid conversion of Na's voice and perspective into modern English-language prose retains the formal tone to be expected of an official and literatus and immerses the reader in the complex military and diplomatic engagement between a Manchu regime pursuing expansion and a Korean government resisting the change of its status to subordinate rather than equal or superior in relations with the Manchus. The text also reflects the purposefully subjective memory of the ensuing conflicts through the lens of Na as an observer who was loyal to his king and other officials who refused to submit to Manchu authority. The prose is so clear that it does not reveal the difficulties that Kallander cites about the translation process, not only because Na wrote and edited parts of the text at different times but also because of the individuality of these sections, which Kallander attempted to maintain in translating each part's "own rhythm, style, and complexity" (xxii). Although a reader who has not read the source text may not be able to appreciate the full challenge of reproducing these attributes in translation, each section captures its own themes fluently.

All parts of this book are sensitive to the main subject as one that involved actors with different political and cultural backgrounds, but the translation remains faithful to the source text's perspective as a work by a Chosŏn official. The introduction treats the principal events as interstate disputes rather than just as the Chosŏn kingdom's defense against foreign incursion. Kallander, a historian of modern Korea, also demonstrates exceptional respect for the non-Korean characters in Na's account with the inclusion of details such as Manchu names in their original forms rather than as Romanized from the versions transcribed into Chinese characters, which remains the common practice for many historians of late imperial China who are not specialists in Manjuristics. However, he sets the priority of defining this text as a Korean history through the use of vocabulary indicating his positionality such as "1627 Manchu attack" (xxxviii) and "Manchu Wars" (lxiii) rather than more neutral terms, and all three maps are centered on the Korean peninsula while also situating the military movements in the landscape of the Northeast Asian region. The translator's main concern of representing the Chosŏn point of view also seems to affect other aspects of the book, although less justifiably, such as why the Chinese-character names for some persons in the

dramatis personae section are not listed in the glossary. It is not evident whether the omission of some Manchu, Chinese, and Korean persons' names follows a certain logic, but given that Kallander designed the dramatis personae section to include "a select few" of the hundred Korean officials cited in the source text (lxxxiv), it may be expected that including all the Chinese-character names for these people would obviate additional searching by readers and therefore enhance this otherwise complete resource.

Kallander's translation will be a critical source for teaching and research in Korean and Northeast Asian history. It stays close to the topic as intended by Na Man'gap, as a "sourcebook for Chosŏn and Manchu military tactics" (lvi), and also makes up for what Kallander identifies as a historical oversight, which was that Na may have "underestimated the extent to which the diary could serve as a source for Manchu and Chinese history" (xv). Kallander extends a precious invitation to specialists in these areas to understand how the Later Jin to Qing transition, which occurred in 1636, was far from just being a matter of projecting power in the regime's home region but was spurred and buttressed by the state's outlook on its status vis-à-vis Korean and, more indirectly, Japanese neighbors. He has also paved the way for future collaboration between scholars in Korean, Manchu, and Chinese studies through the reading and contemplation of accounts in multiple languages of this pivotal milestone in Northeast Asia's early modern political development.

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