

JAPAN'S RELATIONS WITH THE ASIAN CONTINENT  
AND THE KOREAN PENINSULA  
(Before 950 A. D.)\*

I. *Communications with Lao-lang and Tai-fang*

THE Japanese people did not emerge into the history of East Asia until the continental culture reached the islands of Japan and helped develop its civilization.

Since the Japanese were isolated for a very long time after their settlement in the Islands, the development of their culture was extremely slow. However, because of this prolonged isolation, their native culture may be said to have developed almost to its uttermost. This is evidenced in the oldest archaeological relics in Japan—Jōmon style relics, and especially in its earthenware. The transition from the period of Jōmon style culture to that of Yayoi style marks the first epoch-making event in the history of Japan. Although there is no definite theory as to the origin of Yayoi style culture nor of the date of its introduction to Japan, it is almost certain that it began at the same time as the cultivation of paddy-fields and the use of metal ware. This culture is supposed to have come either from the South Seas or from the west, i.e. the Korean peninsula. The oldest period to which we can point as indicating the migration of the culture and its owners to Japan over these routes, is the age of Civil Wars in China (c. 400-200 B.C.), the last period of the Chou dynasty. This period of political disturbances was also the age when the Chinese race and their culture expanded

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and migrated to foreign lands. Their northward development had an especially close connection with the culture of Japan. It resulted in the establishment of the Yen country which exerted an influence as far as South Manchuria.

When, subsequent to the age of Civil Wars, the Ch'in dynasty unified the whole land, both the eastern and western areas of the Liao River were brought under the political control of the Ch'in dynasty. During the period of the Han dynasty that succeeded the Ch'in, the Chinese made further advances, and the greater part of the Korean peninsula was annexed to the territory of Han, resulting in the establishment in 108 B.C. of four prefectures in Korea, Lao-lang, Hsüan-tú, Lin-t'un, Chên-fan, of which the first lasted until 313 A.D. After establishing a small independent nation in his occupied area east of the Liao River about 200 A.D., Kung-sun-k'ang brought Lao-lang under his control, partitioned the southern part of it, and thus founded Tai-fang prefecture. Thereafter, the two prefectures opposed each other until their last days. Thus Lao-lang prospered for 400 years (108 B.C.-313 A.D.) as the north-eastern outpost of China and a colony of Chinese culture. It also carried out its rôle as a lighthouse of culture illuminating the various native tribes in and around the peninsula.

North of Lao-lang lived the Ko-ku-ryō tribe, which had organized itself into a powerful nation in the first century, with Wu-chü to the north-east of the prefecture, Wei to the south-east, and Han to the south of Tai-fang, each forming a tribal community. In the middle of the third century, Han, comparatively prosperous among these tribes, consisted of Ma-han (56 districts), Ch'ên-han (12 districts), and Pien-ch'ên (12 districts), maintaining a tributary relationship chiefly with Tai-fang. Another tribe that communicated with Lao-lang and later with Tai-fang was the Japanese, then called Wei-jen or Wei-Kuo. It is thought that Wei-jen began to communicate with Lao-lang in the first century, soon after the establishment of the prefecture; and as early as 57 A.D. they offered a tribute at the capital of the Later Han dynasty. The positive activities of Wei-jen included the fact that except for Ko-ku-ryō who sent envoys to the capital of the Later Han in 32 A.D., no tribe in the peninsula had ever communicated with China. It is recorded that fifty years later (in 107 A.D.) envoys of Wei-jen offered a tribute at the capital of the Later Han for the second time. Judging from the fact that envoys were sent twice within an interval of fifty years, we may suppose that they visited Lao-lang to offer a tribute every year at a certain season. After the establishment of Tai-fang, they became more active, especially communicating with this prefecture. The line of communication with Lao-lang and Tai-fang extended from Iki and Tsushima to the east-western extremity of the Korean peninsula, went westward along the coast, and turning to the

north entered a port in the central part of Korea. Taking this route they sailed along the coast of Pien-ch'ên and Ma-han, and much importance was attached to Kou-yeh in Pien-ch'ên as a relay station. There is evidence that Wei-jen gained some control over Kou-yeh in the course of communications that continued for 200 years. Kou-yeh was situated on the delta of the lower part of the Rak-tong River which is the locality of Pu-san. It seems that Wei-jen gradually went up the river and established some kind of economic relations with the commanders along the river.

In 238 A.D. there came a sudden change in Wei-jen's communications with Tai-fang, which had continued relations with the various commanders of Han. In this year, Wei conquered Kung-sun-Yüan and

	JAPAN (Wei-jen)	TAI-FANG	CHINA (Wei Dynasty)
239 A.D.	The Queen of Wei-jen sends an envoy to Tai-fang.	June: The envoy sent by the Queen proposes to offer a tribute at the capital of Wei. The governor sends the envoy to the capital.	Dec.: The envoy comes to the capital accompanied by an official from Tai-fang. As an answer to the Queen, a message and a golden seal are handed to the official.
240 A.D.	The official brings from Tai-fang a message and a golden seal.	The governor sends an official to Wei-jen to present the message and the golden seal.	
	The Queen expresses her gratitude through the Tai-fang official going back to his country.	Dec.: The official returns with the Queen's message of thanks.	The message arrives.
243 A.D.	The Queen sends eight envoys to Wei.	The envoys arrive and are sent to the capital.	Dec.: The envoys arrive at the capital.
	The Queen sends an envoy to Tai-fang to inform it of the disparity between Kou-nu and her country.	The envoy arrives and explains the war between the two countries.	
247 A.D.	The official comes with the message.	The governor of Tai-fang sends an official to Wei-jen with a message.	

then took Lao-lang and Tai-fang. From that year to 247 A.D. it also conquered Ko-ku-ryō, and finally controlled the vast area extending from South Manchuria to the Korean Peninsula. At that time Wei-jen was ruled by the famous queen Himiko who sent envoys to Tai-fang in 239 A.D. The adjoining table shows the exchange of envoys between Wei, Tai-fang, and Wei-jen.

The exchange of envoys listed in the table is not so remarkable in frequency and complexity, but it may be said to have been an extremely rapid development in two ways. First, Wei-jen's activities became more diplomatic and political in nature; second, no other tribe or country had ever established a similar relationship with the prefectures in the peninsula and with Wei. On the whole, Wei-jen's policy, epoch-making in itself for the emergence of Japan in East Asia, definitely secured Japan's international position.

This remarkable advance of Wei-jen is, however, relative, because their activities occurred in the period marked by the advance of the eastern races as a whole. It is evidenced by the establishment of the "Sphere of the Eastern Races" by Wei, which discovered, invaded, and unified extensive areas of South Manchuria and northern Korea, from 238 A.D. to 247 A.D. *A Treatise on the Eastern Races in Wei History* describes not only the invasion by Wei but the "Sphere of the Eastern Races". Since Wei-jen occupied an important place in this sphere, chapters on Wei-jen in the treatise, usually called Wei-chih-wei-jen-chuan, deal not only with their geography, government, and customs but with their diplomatic relationship with Tai-fang and Wei.

313 A.D. saw the fall of Lao-lang and Tai-fang, causing another change in Wei-jen's activities. There seem to be two reasons for the collapse of the prefectures. First, we must consider the political changes that took place in the homeland of China. After the unification of the Eastern races and their countries, Wei collapsed in 265 A.D. and was succeeded by the Chin dynasty, but its unity began to dissolve from about 300 A.D., resulting in the period of civil wars. In 317 A.D. Chin removed the capital to Chien-k'ang south of the Yang-tzu River and surrendered the northern part of its territory along the Huang River to the northern tribes that formed different minor countries. In such a situation China's pressure upon Manchuria and Korea suddenly decreased, bringing about the total detachment and isolation of Lao-lang and Tai-fang from the homeland of China. This necessarily weakened the political power of the two prefectures. The second reason is the growth of the so-called "Eastern Races". Among these Ko-ku-ryō advanced not only westward to the Liao-tung and Liao-hsi areas, but southward to Lao-lang in the Korean peninsula. Wei and Han tribes invaded Tai-fang from east and west, bringing about the simultaneous collapse of the two. After annexing Lao-lang, Ko-ku-ryō moved south-

ward with the aim of occupying the whole peninsula. This was a difficult thing to do, because Han had already established a new independent power after the fall of Tai-fang. Han, however, could not replace the political control of Tai-fang without changing its established system and about forty years after the fall of Tai-fang the north-western part of Han was unified into the country of Paik-chyōi (Kudara), while the eastern part of Han was unified into the country of Silla (Shiragi). The south-western and south-eastern parts were left as theatres of the struggle between Paik-chyōi and Silla. In such a situation, Paik-chyōi turned against Silla protecting itself against Ko-ku-ryō that threatened its northern borderline. Taking advantage of this situation, Japan sought an opportunity to advance, and finally obtained it.

Japan took a tremendous step forward by the middle of the fourth century. Having succeeded in unifying at least the western half of the islands, it founded the capital in Yamato. Yet owing to the fall of Lao-lang and Tai-fang Japan lost its object of communication that had been continued for three hundred years. Moreover, the establishment of Paik-chyōi and Silla even threatened rejection of the activities of the Japanese in Han areas. Japan was by then powerful enough not to lose its chance. It was Paik-chyōi that urged Japan to take a new step. Paik-chyōi tried to conclude an alliance with Japan to make use of its potentialities for the purpose of checking the southward advance of Ko-ku-ryō, and thus to continue the struggle against Silla. The reason why Paik-chyōi welcomed the influence of Japan, may have been their recognition of Japan's power which had already been established in the Han area and was directly verging on the land of Paik-chyōi. Generally speaking, it was Japan's power implanted by its communications with Lao-lang and Tai-fang since the first century; and the same power made Japan respond readily to the allurements and requests from Paik-chyōi.

## II. Government of Mimana

The Japanese envoys despatched to Han in 366 A.D. were informed that Paik-chyōi, a country newly founded to the north-west of Han, intended to open communications with Japan. An attendant of the envoys, who were able to visit Paik-chyōi, confirmed this intention. Next year (367 A.D.), the first envoys of Paik-chyōi came over to Japan with the probable mission of requesting the despatch of Japanese troops, which were duly sent to the peninsula in 369 A.D. In the eastern area this army checked Silla's advance and occupied the valley of the Rak-tong River, especially its western side, still unannexed to Silla. In the western area they occupied a larger area, from the Syōm-chin River

valley to the Kum River valley, thus reaching the southern boundary of Paik-chyöi. Welcoming the Japanese army the king pledged allegiance and submission to Japan. In 371 A.D. Paik-chyöi, as might have been expected, launched a large-scale attack northward on Ko-ku-ryö.

Thus between 366 A.D. and 371 A.D., the Japanese control over South Korea was increased, and the "Mimana Government", as referred to in the old records of Japan, was started. Originally, the name of "Mimana" came from the name of a place or country Mimana-kara; its locality is supposed to have been the same as that of the above-mentioned Kou-yeh, and it was the oldest Japanese strong-hold. With the sudden extension and strengthening of Japanese influence, the term Mimana was used to devote the whole area. The government of Mimana meant the direct control of almost all the communities of Han still unannexed to the territories of Paik-chyöi and Silla. Moreover, the Japanese regarded these two countries as included in their political control, and treated them in that way. This group stood against the northern power, Ko-ku-ryö.

In organizing the government of Mimana, the Japanese government stationed a Japanese official in each country (or tribal community). He was called "Mikotomochi" and he cooperated with the governor of each country, called "Kan-ki". Japanese troops were garrisoned at strategic points, though their strength and organization are not clear. Since the name "Government of Mimana" is on record, it is usually regarded as a comprehensive organization for the government of Mimana, something like the Government-General of Korea in modern times, but the present writer questions the existence of such an organization.

The government of Mimana was most successful during the latter half of the fourth century, gradually declined in the next two hundred years, and came to an end in 562 A.D. As we have already seen, the government of Mimana's prime objective was to stand against Ko-ku-ryö and check its southward advance. Although Ko-ku-ryö was invaded by Paik-chyöi in 371 A.D., it took its revenge during the reign of Ho-t'ai-oang who ascended the throne in 391 A.D. In 396 A.D. the king attacked Paik-chyöi in command of his own navy, and captured about fifty castles including the capital, eventually forcing the king of Paik-chyöi and his retinue to pledge allegiance. The event immediately led to Silla and Ko-ku-ryö joining forces. Ko-ku-ryö's army drove the Japanese troops stationed in the capital of Silla into their bases in Mimana (i.e. Mimana-kara) and, in the west, its naval forces fought with the Japanese navy advancing northward from Paik-chyöi. Chyang-syu-oang, the next king of Ko-ku-ryö, removed the capital in 427 A.D. to Pyöng-yang (where the government office of Lao-lang was located) and again attacked the capital of Paik-chyöi in 475 A.D. As a result, Paik-chyöi collapsed, the king was killed in action and the capital cap-

tured. Japan, however, ceded the north-western part of Mimana and the Kum River area to the prince of Paik-chyöi, enthroned him, and thus reconstructed the country. This was the first step in the decline of Mimana.

Paik-chyöi, with its capital reconstructed in Kuma-nare (now Kong-chü) located halfway up the Kum River, apparently favoured Japan, but planned the independence and expansion of the country. In 512 A.D. Paik-chyöi obtained the four prefectures of the south-western part of Mimana from Japan and the two prefectures east of them in the next year. These six prefectures occupy the greater part of Chyön-ra-nam-to of today. Consequently, the western half of Mimana became completely independent of Japanese control. In 538 A.D. Paik-chyöi removed the capital to So-pu-ri (now Pu-yö) and began to establish a large-scale city. This meant the second step toward the decline of Mimana, because what was left to it was merely the area east of the Syo-paik mountains and the west of the Rak-tong River, together with the area covering both sides of it. The rest of its territory became the target of the struggle between Paik-chyöi and Silla. Although Paik-chyöi still expected a beneficial cession of land from Japan, it did not occur. As a preliminary to a military invasion, Silla introduced Ko-ku-ryö's power from about the time of Ho-t'ai-oang's southern expedition, and approving of the stationing of Ko-ku-ryö's army within its territory, attempted to develop its own power.

In the early sixth century, however, Silla rejected Ko-ku-ryö's influence, and independently began an invasion of Mimana when Paik-chyöi obtained the six prefectures. About 520 A.D. it advanced westward, occupying Toku-ko-ton and Toku-shyu east of the mid Rak-tong River; and in 532 A.D. advanced southward, occupying the area at the mouth of the river. Thus Japan lost its largest stronghold in Korea, and it may be said that Mimana's destiny had been decided by this time. This was the third step towards the decline of Mimana. For thirty years after that, struggles continued between Paik-chyöi and Silla for occupation of the land left to Mimana, ranging from the western valley of the Rak-tong River to the Syo-paik mountains. Silla's victory became decisive in 562 A.D., resulting in annexation of the land and the total collapse of Mimana. Thus Japanese control came to an end when the western half of Mimana was ceded to Paik-chyöi and the eastern half invaded by Silla.

There were three essential elements in the history of Korea from 562 A.D. on: Ko-ku-ryö, Paik-chyöi and Silla, bordering on each other. For one hundred years, struggles, either offensive or defensive, continued among the three countries, and, although Japan had lost all its lands in Mimana, it was in a position to interfere in these struggles. For Japan had not given up all its claims to the government of Mimana,

and complied with Paik-chyöi's request for military aid in exchange for the continuation of religious relations with that country. Meanwhile, there was hostility between Japan and Silla, because the latter had invaded the eastern half of Mimana and Japan had aided Paik-chyöi. Aware, however, of the disadvantage of opening outright all hostilities with Japan as long as the conflict with Paik-chyöi continued, Silla approved of what remained of Japan's claims to Mimana and on behalf of Mimana paid tribute to Japan until 646 A.D. Under these circumstances, although Mimana practically collapsed in 562 A.D., Japan retained its claim on Korea in the name of Mimana until 646 A.D. However, in fact of the new development of the situation the relationship between Japan and Silla was revised that year. Japan exempted Silla from offering tributes on behalf of Mimana, and officially sanctioned Silla's annexation of Mimana. Silla for its part undertook to send a prince to Japan as hostage, and probably to offer its own tribute. Fifteen years later (i.e. in 660 A.D.) Silla conquered Paik-chyöi in alliance with the T'ang Empire, and overthrowing Ko-ku-ryö eight years after that accomplished the unification of the Korean peninsula.

The collapse of Paik-chyöi and Ko-ku-ryö was of tremendous significance. Although caused by the alliance of Silla with T'ang, basically it meant the extension of T'ang's influence to the Korean peninsula. In other words, the whole peninsula was going to be placed under the political control of T'ang and the Japanese authorities foresaw the danger that this influence might even extend to Japan. It was partly for this reason that they sent a large army to the rescue of Paik-chyöi, and aided materially in reconstructing the country immediately after its fall. Silla stood in a similar situation as Japan's: in effecting the conquest of Ko-ku-ryö and Paik-chyöi, Silla joined with T'ang not to help the latter but to realize the unification of the peninsula. Consequently, Silla was at war with T'ang from the fall of the two nations until 675 A.D., although the conflict was ended by the change (or deterioration) of T'ang's foreign policy.

Such was the cause of the rise and fall of Japanese power in the Korean peninsula. Yet the overseas activities of Japan were not confined to the peninsula but reached the continent in connection with those in the peninsula. They were in the communications established with the four Southern Dynasties of China—Tung-chin, Sung, Nan-ch'i and Liang.

Although the communications of Japan with China had been suspended for about 150 years since it had established relations with Wei in the middle of the third century, they were resumed in 413 A.D. According to Chinese records, Japanese envoys were despatched to China at the following intervals between that year and 478 A.D.

413 A.D.	.....	to Tung-chin	
421 A.D.	}		
425 A.D.			
430 A.D.			
438 A.D.			
443 A.D.		.....	to Sung
451 A.D.			
460 A.D.			
462 A.D.			
477 A.D.			
478 A.D.			

As the table shows, envoys to Sung were sent ten times in 58 years, an average of once every five years and for the following reasons: first, as part of a military and diplomatic policy against Ko-ku-ryö; second, as a reinforcement of the government of Mimana; and third, to demonstrate the subordination of Paik-chyöi and Silla to Japan. Although the introduction of the Southern Dynasties culture might have been one of the objects, primary importance was not attached to it. Furthermore, this communication with Sung ended in almost total failure; because Japan lost its stronghold against Ko-ku-ryö when Paik-chyöi's capital fell, and Sung did not approve of the subordination of Paik-chyöi to Japan. Sung approved of the subordination of Silla and the government of Mimana, but the former finally revolted against Japan and the latter collapsed. In short, the Japanese government of Mimana ended in political and military failure, but from that experience Japan learned how to develop its cultural activities both on the continent and in the peninsula.

### III. Relations with Silla and P'o-hai

Silla's unification of the peninsula marked an epoch in the history of Korea. The relation between Silla and Japan, however, developed along the lines of the agreement concluded in 646 A.D., whereby Silla was to send a prince, make an annual report of political affairs, and pay tribute to Japan. Since both countries were chiefly concerned with establishing their constitutional organizations, the relationship became more and more diplomatic, and Silla attempted to lift itself to equal

terms with Japan. Such a tendency, together with the great political change in 780 A.D., cut off the official relationship between the two countries. Consequently, it was not by mere chance that Silla sent its last envoys to Japan in 779 A.D. For more than a hundred years, from 668 A.D. up to that year, Silla sent envoys thirty-eight times, while Japan continued the despatch even after Silla ceased. According to Japanese records, envoys were sent to Silla twenty-five times prior to 779 A.D. and twice (804 A.D., 836 A.D.) after that; the Korean record testifies to the despatch after 779 A.D. on six occasions, i.e. 803, 804, 806, 808, 864, 878 A.D. On the whole, the despatch of envoys to Silla was based upon something besides mere formality. As we shall see in the next chapter, Japan's final objective was direct communication with the mainland of China (Sui, T'ang), and that with Silla continued only as a contribution to this. If Japan desired to maintain communications with China, it could not discontinue its relations with Silla even after envoys were no longer sent from there.

Subsequent to the great change in 780 A.D. the political situation of Silla became more confused. Some people from Silla privately sailed the East China Sea and actively traded with Japan and China. Such a trader is exemplified in Chyang-po-ko who was active about 830 A.D. The situation brought about a three-fold influence on the relationship between Japan and Silla: first, traders came from Silla to Japan; second, pirates from Silla raided the Kyushu areas; third, wrecked Silla ships drifted to Japan, and some of their crews became naturalized there. Meanwhile Japan was suffering a severe decline in overseas activities which resulted in 894 A.D. in a decision to cease sending envoys to T'ang. By that time the political influence of Silla had become confined to the area of its capital, and again a tripartite system developed when Sin-huon founded the Later Paik-chyōi in the west and Kung-yōi founded the Later Ko-ryō in the north. Among these the Later Paik-chyōi first attempted to establish relations with Japan, sending envoys in 922 A.D. and again in 929. The Later Ko-ryō also attempted to communicate with Japan, sending envoys in 937 A.D., but no wholesome diplomatic relationships were established, because the political situation in Japan was then on the decline and the instructions from its central government did not reach distant districts.

If the primary factor that decided Japanese policy toward the continent after 668 A.D. was the unification of the peninsula, the secondary factor was the emergence of P'o-hai founded by the remnants of the Ko-ku-ryō people in East Manchuria. The relationship between Japan and P'o-hai began as early as 727 A.D. with the dispatch of envoys from the latter. They expressed a desire to regard Japan as their superior, making it clear that P'o-hai was obviously an extension of Ko-ku-ryō; and they entered the ports on the coast of the Sea of Japan,

making use of the route along the Sea of Japan current which Ko-ku-ryō had already cultivated. Superficially, it is supposed that P'o-hai was impelled to make contact with Japan because of the discord within its court and the need for military precautions against T'ang, but it also certainly looked forward to the supply of goods from Japan. Therefore, after the termination of hostilities with T'ang in 734 A.D. it attempted to develop trade with Japan. Unable to meet P'o-hai's demands, Japan in 798 A.D. decided to allow the traders to come once every six years and in 823 once every twelve years. P'o-hai, however, never cut off communications with Japan until its collapse. It despatched envoys thirty-three times between 727 and 919.

Communications were maintained not only for the benefit of P'o-hai but for that of Japan. Since it started as a tribute to Japan, it gratified the pride of the Japanese Imperial Court, then full of national consciousness. Meanwhile Japan perceived a new advantage in continuing communications. For when a line of communication was opened between T'ang and P'o-hai, Japan was able to make use of it as a secondary, if roundabout, route to T'ang. From the beginning it was a convention that every time envoys came from P'o-hai the Japanese government despatched its own in order to escort them back home. These Japanese envoys were also commissioned to meet the envoys sent to T'ang, or sometimes to send funds to the Japanese students staying in T'ang, through the envoys of P'o-hai. Thus the Japanese government had sent envoys thirteen times by 810.

#### IV. *Envoys to Sui and T'ang*

Japan's relationship with Silla and P'o-hai, as we have seen in the previous chapter, had a long historical development, yet it was already of secondary importance in the diplomatic relations of the time. After 600 the importance shifted to communications with the mainland of China, i.e. Sui and T'ang. Sui unified China in 589 A.D. and maintained this unification until 618. After Sui, T'ang established a nation, which survived until 907. Japan communicated with these countries for about three hundred years, from 600 A.D. until 894 A.D. and this was the most prosperous and important period in the history of Japan's activities on the continent. For convenience of discussion we give a table covering the despatch of Japanese envoys.

1. 600 A.D.	despatched to Sui	1	Pre-Nara Period	1
2. 607 A.D.	7 years	2		2
3. 608 A.D.	1	3		3
4. 614 A.D.	6	4		4
5. 630 A.D.	16 despatched to T'ang	1		5
6. 653 A.D.	23	2		6
7. 654 A.D.	1	3		7
8. 659 A.D.	5	4		8
9. 669 A.D.	10	5		9
10. 701 A.D.	32	6		10
11. 716 A.D.	15	7	Nara Period	1
12. 733 A.D.	12	8		2
13. 752 A.D.	19	9		3
14. 775 A.D.	23	10		4
15. 804 A.D.	29	11	Heian Period	1
16. 838 A.D.	74	12		2
17. (894 A.D.)	56	(13)		(3)

From an historical point of view, Japan's communications with Sui and T'ang, based on the despatch of envoys as listed above, is characterized: first, by being systematically conducted on a national scale; second, by aiming chiefly at the introduction of Chinese culture. Needless to say, the large scale was due to the rapid growth of the national organization of Japan in those days. Emphasis should also be placed on the introduction of culture, because it marks a great difference from the political and military purposes that dominated in the preceding age.

Strictly speaking, Japan's communications with the mainland of China had been suspended since 478 A.D., but Japan sent envoys to Sui immediately after the unification of South and North China. The remarkable fact that Japan resumed such a policy after an interval of 120 years naturally makes us re-examine the movements in Japan during this lapse of time. Although Japan made no direct contact with China, it could not be indifferent to the situation in that country. Probably it collected full information through Paik-chyöi. Thus, the despatch of envoys in 600 A.D., though it seems to be too sudden, must be regarded as a commencement of fresh activities in response to the emergence of a new empire unified by Sui after 300 years dissension between

South and North. This idea seems correct because we are able to point to the remarkable spiritual and cultural growth that Japan achieved in these 120 years.

After Japan's political and military situation in the Korean peninsula deteriorated, more importance was given to the introduction of culture. In the year that saw the cession of the vast western area of Mimana to Paik-chyöi, the latter sent to Japan Tan Yang-i, Doctor of the Five Canonical Books. Three years later, Ko-an-mu, a scholar in the same field, replaced Tan Yang-i. The arrival of scholars is supposed to have been continued and encouraged in later periods. In 553 A.D. the programme included the following five branches:

- 1) General affairs : 1 person
- 2) Confucianism : (Doctor of the Five Canonical Books) 1
- 3) Buddhism : (monks) 9
- 4) Science : (Doctor of divination) 1  
(Doctor of astronomy) 1  
(Doctor of medicine) 1
- 5) Arts : (herbalists) 2  
(musicians) 3

Under this programme, cultures were introduced from Paik-chyöi. The scholars and artists in branches 1) and 5) were Paik-chyöi people and those in 2) and 4) were all Chinese-Paik-chyöi people who might have formed a part of the nine members belonging to 3). By that time (553 A.D.) Buddhism had already formed a major part of the newly introduced cultures, and thereafter maintained such a position. Almost all the efforts to introduce new culture were centered in Buddhism. Dissatisfied with such a programme, the Japanese government attempted to enlarge it into a more active system. The first step was the despatch of three nuns to Paik-chyöi in 588 A.D. for the study of Buddhism. They subsequently went as far as the mainland of China beyond Paik-chyöi. In 600 A.D. the first Japanese envoys were sent to Sui, which had completed the unification of China, while Onono Imoko and others were sent in 607 A.D. The Chinese record of the latter envoys is significant in two ways. First, they were commissioned to pay their respects to "the Emperor of the Bodhi-sattva" in the west who patronized Buddhism; and for that purpose they were accompanied by more than ten monks who intended to study Buddhism. In the second place, the credentials brought by the envoys began with the words: "The Emperor of a country where the sun rises shall send a message to the Emperor of a country where the sun sets". If the Chinese record is sufficiently authentic, we must regard the despatch of these envoys as an extension

of the despatch of the three nuns in 588 A.D., and at the same time, as an indication that Japan's diplomatic policy toward China was on an equal footing. In other words, from that time on, Japan's attitude toward China was represented by the establishment of equal diplomatic relations and by the despatch of students.

The attempt to establish such relations with China was an epoch-making step for Japan, for before that time it had either treated other nations (Paik-chyöi, Silla, etc.) as subordinates or (as with various nations in China) as superior. Japan had never communicated with other nations on equal terms, and no such communication had been recorded in the history of China. The fact that Japan expressed in the message to Sui the intention of establishing such relations betokens the remarkable spiritual and cultural progress achieved by Japan. How did Japan do this? It must have been due to the influence of Buddhist ideas, particularly the idea of equality. Although this earnest desire for equal diplomatic relations was not accepted by China, Japan made every effort toward the realization of it. For example, in presenting credentials, which played a most important part in diplomacy, instead of taking a written message the Japanese envoys made it a rule to offer oral greetings, since the credentials of 607 A.D. had been rejected by the Emperor of Sui. Meanwhile, Chinese envoys addressed credentials to the Emperor of a subordinate nation. Such behaviour on both sides naturally caused trouble and the envoys who came from T'ang in 632 A.D. returned without discharging their mission. It is evident that the recorders at the Japanese court avoided mentioning the credentials received from T'ang.

Although Japanese foreign policy was admirable in intent, the inevitable superiority of Chinese power and culture obliged Japan to accept being treated as a subordinate nation when envoys visited the Chinese court. On the other hand, Japan spared no effort in introducing Chinese culture—the secondary objective of the envoys, and these efforts were amply rewarded.

Although Japan's foreign policy contained such contradictory elements in its projects, they were compensated for by the efforts made in the introduction of continental culture. Culture was introduced either by sending students abroad or by importing foreign properties. As we have already seen, students were sent for the first time to Paik-chyöi in 588 A.D. and the envoys despatched to Sui for the first time in 600 A.D. took with them a number of students of Buddhism. In 608 A.D. eight students were sent to Sui with the third despatch of envoys. Four out of the eight were students of general culture and the others of Buddhism. We should remember that all of them came of naturalized families and that, so far as we are able to make out, they stayed abroad for a long period, between fifteen and thirty-two years. The

Sui Empire collapsed nine years after they arrived there, and the T'ang Empire was established. The fact that they saw this great revolution while they were staying in the capital Chang-an was profitable not only to themselves but also to Japan in later times. When, after their return, the great reformation of Taika started in their own country from 646 A.D., Takamuko-no-kuromasa, a student of general culture, and So-min, a student of Buddhism, participated in the plan of reformation as Doctors of Civics. Probably these doctors gave advice on the theoretical or legislative aspects of the reformation.

The system of sending students in later periods does not seem to have been as methodical as in 608 A.D., but the basic system was to divide them into two groups—one for the study of general culture and the other for the study of Buddhism. According to the convention, the students in the former group were called Ryu-gaku-sei (or students sent abroad) and those in the latter, Gaku-mon-so (or monk students). Whereas they were expected to study abroad for a long period, groups of students who were expected to study for a brief period were sent in later times; they were called Shō-eki-sei and Kwan-gaku-so respectively.

Although no students were sent especially for the introduction of technology, doctors, painters, jewellers, smiths, craftsmen were, according to the regulations, included in the crew of the ships that transported envoys. Of course, they met occasional demands during the voyage, but their chief object might have been to study their special arts while the ship was at some port in China.

While sending these students and technicians to the continent, the Japanese government re-considered the plan of inviting Chinese scholars and technicians to Japan. Although the number of such visitors was small, they sometimes left remarkable impressions. Very often they arrived as escorts of the Japanese envoys, and were naturalized in Japan. The names of about twenty of these settlers are on record, and besides these not a few Chinese monks took ships transporting Japanese envoys back to Japan. Monk Gan-jin, who reached Japan in 753 A.D., is the most famous of them.

Of the cultural properties imported from China, books formed the major item. Needless to say, they were chiefly brought back by the students. The most remarkable both in quality and quantity were the Buddhist canons. Fortunately, it is possible to a certain extent today to make a comprehensive list of the imported books. Furthermore, even the lists of books brought back as personal properties by some of the well-known students of Buddhism are existent. It is supposed that other Chinese books on general culture were imported on an extensive and well-organized scale. Nearly all the books described in "Nihonkoku genzaisho mokuroku" (The Catalogue of Books existent in Japan) edited in about 897 A.D. are Chinese. It lists 1579 titles classified into forty sections,



the number of volumes amounting to 15516. Undoubtedly most of these volumes had been brought from Sui and T'ang.

Among other imported properties, we should first mention the commodities exchanged between the Japanese and Chinese courts as gifts. Although there remains a record by which we can conjecture as to the Japanese commodities given to China, it is quite impossible to make out what kind of commodities came from the Chinese court. Apart from these gifts, Japanese officials in China were allowed to purchase properties to be used at the Japanese court. Special grants of money to ambassadors and to vice-ambassadors are on record, and the money is supposed to have been spent in purchasing these properties. Furthermore, the envoys received from the government two kinds of grants on their departure. One was made to all members from the ambassador down to the sailors according to their rank; the other, called a "special grant" was limited to the higher ranks and to the students. The former was spent chiefly on expenses incurred during the trip, and often in purchasing personal properties; the latter might have been spent for running expenses and in purchasing commodities during the stay in China. If we are to estimate the value and quantities of imported properties merely from records, it is extremely difficult to obtain exact figures, but fortunately the Shōsōin is existent; and since the majority of commodities preserved in it represent the Chinese commodities imported before 758 A.D., we can realise their high cultural value.

In short, the efforts made in the diplomatic and cultural relationship with Sui and T'ang were effective because the Japanese had a strong national consciousness, an aspiration for Chinese culture, and made adequate financial preparation for the despatch of envoys. Each of these factors gradually weakened in the course of 238 years beginning 600 A.D., during which time the envoys were sent sixteen times. Although the envoys for the seventeenth despatch were appointed in 894 A.D., the programme was cancelled, not only because the preparations were inadequate, but because a student in China reported internal disturbances in that country. Thus Japan's activities in China, which had lasted for 300 years, came to an end. However, it did not mean an overall suspension of the continental activities of the Japanese. Many people, especially monks, went over there on personal funds either for study or other purposes, but instead of Japanese ships they made use of the Chinese freighters visiting the Kyūshū area.

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