Prologue: Tsushima’s Sō family prior to the Tokugawa period

This paper focuses on diplomacy and trade between Japan and Korea during the Tokugawa period (1603–1867). The Tsushima domain and its daimyo, the Sō family, played a leading role in maintaining diplomatic relations between the two states.

Situated between Japan and Korea, from the island of Tsushima we can see the fifty-kilometre distant southern tip of the Korean Peninsula with our own eyes. Tsushima is closer to the Korea Peninsula than Hakata, Kyushu. Covered ninety percent with a steep mountainous area, and lacking a farming area, the island’s inhabitants relied on trade. It is believed that the Sō family came to Tsushima near the end of the twelfth century, a descendant of a government official dispatched from the Dazaifu, the government headquarters of Kyushu, who settled as a samurai in the island. Initially the family called itself as the Koremune family, and while the family proceeded to dominate the area, they began to call themselves the Sō, recognizing by that time the mutual interests and monopolizing the trade engagement with the Korean government.

In the Muromachi period (1336–1573) when the Ashikaga family seized the power, Kyushu was where the shogun’s order did not reach. During this time, the Sō attempted to oppress the raids of pirates called wakō. While Korea controlled the travellers who were only limited to the envoy from Japan, Tsushima was able to obtain a travelling permit (bun’in) from Korea. Sharing the same interests, Tsushima became the biggest trader for Korea. In 1443, the Sō made an agreement and received the right to dispatch fifty trade ships a year to Korea. The family built the solid foundation of power by providing its retainers with ship management rights in lieu of land. By assuming the names of the Ashikaga shogun or the Ōuchi family of the shogunate’s daimyo, the Sō tried to lead advantageous negotiations for its own sake, such as increasing the amount of trade. In the mid-sixteenth century, the Sō of Tsushima and its related parties were only people who were able to trade with Korea.
However, when Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537–1598) unified Japan, the Sō family had to face grave difficulties. In 1587, Sō Yoshishige (1532–1588), head of the daimyo family and Yoshitoshi (1568–1615), his successor, went to meet Hideyoshi who arrived in Hakata to dominate the Kyushu region. In exchange for guaranteeing the Sō the land of Tsushima, Hideyoshi ordered the father and son to dispatch an envoy to Korea to persuade Korea to lead an invasion into China to conquer the Ming. This “enter China” (karairi) plan was part of Hideyoshi’s East Asian unification project. The Sō family initially attempted to avoid the war; however, the Sō had to serve the first division to the Korean Peninsula during the Bunroku and Keichō Wars. The war was ended by the death of Hideyoshi, yet the Japanese-Korean relations in the Tokugawa period needed to be restored after the devastating breakdown.

1. The Japanese-Korean relations in the early Tokugawa period

Throughout the Tokugawa period, the Korean embassy, a diplomatic mission to Japan from Joseon Korea, came to Japan twelve times in total. Their first visitation was held in 1607, four years after Tokugawa Ieyasu’s establishment of the shogunate in Edo. With 504 members in all, this embassy restored the relations of both countries which had been severed by the two wars; they were an envoy in peace, representing Ieyasu’s “good-neighbourly diplomacy” towards Korea.

It was not the shogunate but the Sō who, having dominated trade with Korea since the medieval period, proceeded with a number of negotiations with Korea, beginning from discussions for reconciliation and the invitation of the Korean embassy. Restoration of the diplomatic relations from the breakdown of the two countries was significant for people in Tsushima to maintain their livelihood. Discussions for the diplomatic re-engagement were held chiefly by Lord Yoshitoshi and his senior statesmen Yanagawa Shigenobu (?–1605), his son Toshinaga (?–1613) and the diplomat-monk Genso (1537–1611). The discussions began as early as 1599, right after the end of Hideyoshi’s war. In other words, it was a year prior to the Battle of Sekigahara and the establishment of the Tokugawa regime.

The envoys were dispatched from Tsushima to seek the diplomatic re-engagement with Korea, but they were killed at the initial attempts. However, after Tsushima began to send back Koreans detained since the two wars, the Korean side also showed signs of gradually softening their stance to the negotiations with Tsushima. The Ming Army,
stationed as reinforcement in Korea, withdrew in 1600 and no longer directly interfered with any negotiations with Japan. Two years after the withdrawal of the Ming force, Korea also sent envoys to examine Tsushima’s intention and the possibility of the diplomatic restoration with Japan. In 1604, Yoshitoshi, who had waited for the best timing for the negotiation with Korea, succeeded in convincing the Korean envoys in Tsushima to visit Kyoto, to meet the father and son, Tokugawa Ieyasu and his son Hidetada (1579–1632) at Fushimi Castle. At this time, Ieyasu was appointed to his long-awaited title as seii tai-shōgun, which is the proper name for shogun, the highest position in the military government. With this appointment, his position was firmly established in the country. By persuading the Koreans that Ieyasu did not participate in the war in the Korean Peninsula, Sō Yoshitoshi successfully arranged for the Korean envoy to meet him for the first time and sought understanding for the diplomatic restoration. Ieyasu was satisfied with Tsushima’s endeavour, and gave Yoshitoshi the title of Chōsen goyōyaku (secretary of state for Korean issues and trade), and ordered him to continue his work for the diplomatic re-engagement with Korea. Ieyasu also awarded him with an increase of 2,800 koku in Hizen of Kyushu and allowed Tsushima to attend Edo once in three rather than two years. Shortly after Yanagawa Shigenobu died, Ieyasu also provided his inheriting son Toshinaga with 1,000 koku out of the 2,800 Hizen award. It was unusual for a shogun to give such a commendation directly to a daimyo’s retainer.

In the final step for the diplomatic restoration, the Korean side informed Japan that Ieyasu had to send a letter first, expressing an apology for the war. Sending a formal letter first implied subservience to the other party in accordance with the diplomatic protocol at that time. Assuming that sending such a letter was what Ieyasu, the Tokugawa shogun, would not want to do, Yoshitoshi attempted to forge a letter with Ieyasu’s seal to overcome this critical moment. In 1606, the letter was delivered to Korea, and dispatch of the embassy was confirmed in the following year. Since the letter brought from the embassy was written in a “reply” style, this letter had also to be forged as an “opening” letter, with a number of minor changes in the contents. By replacing the original with the forged one, the diplomatic re-engagement was accomplished as if nothing had happened. In 1609, a new agreement between Korea and the Sō was restored with the long-cherished trade finally reopened, by guaranteeing the Sō’s special interests in charge of the Korean trade.
2. The Yanagawa affair and changed relations between Japan and Korea

Wrongful and dishonourable as committing forgery may sound, Tsushima had sent envoys many times in the name of the Ashikaga shogun, and forged letters with the shogun’s “virtue by side” seal. The official envoys with the state’s letter not only yielded a higher amount of trade returns, but the letters were a secret weapon to resolve difficult problems. Forging such letters was the long-standing method that brought a satisfactory solution for Tsushima. Also in 1590, a letter that Hideyoshi received was a forged one with an inscribed seal “virtue forms politics” of the Korean king. After Hideyoshi’s unification, Tsushima forged a series of Korean letters. Forgery of the state’s letters under Tokugawa rule began in 1606, with three visitations of the Korean embassies in 1607, 1617 and 1624. Altogether more than ten forged letters were produced and delivered to the Tokugawa shoguns and Korean kings. Korea’s Japanese interpreters of the court were also involved in the forgery. Given their help, it was not insurmountably difficult for Tsushima’s trio, i.e. the lord, his senior retainers and the diplomat monk, to keep the forgery unnoticed.

In the reign of Tokugawa Iemitsu (1603–1684), however, this complicity collapsed due to a generational change. An Edo-born retainer of Tsushima, Yanagawa Shigeoki (1603–1684) had powerful ties with the cabinet officials of the shogunate, as he had spent time in close circles of chamberlains to the first three shoguns, Ieyasu, Hidetada and Iemitsu, since his childhood. Moreover, he had strong self-esteem as a direct vassal of the shogun (hatamoto) as his father received land from Ieyasu. Between Shigeoki and the new lord of Tsushima, Yoshinari (1604–1657), a feud developed. Shigeoki made an accusation to the senior councillors (rōjū) of the shogunate, claiming that the Korean embassy’s formal letter to the shogun was forged by Tsushima. This Yanagawa affair took place at the time when a new move was taken by the shogunate: more foreign trade was to be conducted in Nagasaki so that the shogunate could keep an eye on the management of trade while samurai’s involvement in trade was banned and Japanese people’s travelling overseas prohibited. All this was at odd with the Sō’s long-term enterprise of Korean trade. Shigeoki’s accusation was levelled only at the 1624 case in which the Yanagawa family was not involved. This strongly suggests that Shigeoki’s attempt was in the interests of the hatamoto family of Yanagawa, in other words to seize control of shogunate-supervised Japanese-Korean businesses from daimyo Sō’s hand.
In 1635, with attendance of shogun Iemitsu, his three branch families, daimyos and hatamotos, judgement of the shogunate was given after Yoshinari’s as well as Shigeoki’s testimonies. Shigeoki lost the case, and the diplomat-monk Genpō (1588‒1661) was also found guilty, although the punishment was lenient: the two were sent into exile to remote areas. Sō Yoshinari was not guilty and was told that he could continue serving the Korean issues as before. Apparently the shogunate recognised that it was impossible to exclude the Sō from the complex structure of Japanese-Korean relations, maintained from medieval times. The Sō’s traditional diplomatic skills were indispensable. The Sō as the daimyo family was kept intact, implying that a unique style of the Japanese-Korean relationship would continue in the future despite the shogunate’s increased effort to control over international relations. By announcing that forgery was committed only in 1624, to which Shigeoki brought an accusation, the shogunate put an end to the case without further investigation.

After the Yanagawa affair, the shogunate appointed a new diplomat-monk and altered the international title of the shogun. First of all, in order to prevent forgeries of the state documents, the monks of Kyoto’s Gozan (Five Mountains) with permission from the shogunate were in charge of this. They stayed by turns in a Zen temple (called Iteian) of the Rinzai sect in Tsushima. In addition to drafting diplomatic documents, they were obliged to make the round-trip to Edo upon the visitation of the Korean embassy to participate in the reception ceremony. As for the title of the shogun, the shogunate had circumvented the use of the “King of Japan” since it implied that Japan were part of the tributary relations under the Chinese emperor. After the incident, the title of Nihon-koku taikun (Great Prince of Japan) was newly created. Moreover, the use of Japanese era name was adopted on the all Japanese state documents, and the shogunate ordered the Sō to negotiate with Korea for the Korean embassy to visit Japan with the newly-formatted formal letter as early as possible.

At that time, Korea faced a threat from the Later Jin (1616‒1636, predecessor of the Qing dynasty, 1644‒1912) in northern China. Korea was defeated by the Qing who grew into a strong power and was forced to enter the tributary relations by breaking the relationship with the Ming (1368‒1644). With the political intention to stabilize diplomatic relations with Japan under unpredictable situations in Northeast Asia, Korea dispatched the Korean embassy with 475 people to shogun Iemitsu. The embassy brought the first authentic state letter without any forgeries or revisions to the shogun, with the title of taikun approved internationally for the first time in the Tokugawa period.
3. Dually-structured Japanese-Korean diplomacy

During the 1630s and 1640s, the Tokugawa shogunate re-examined the relations with foreign countries and limited the countries for exchange to China (the Ming and the Qing), The Netherlands, Korea, and the Ryukyu kingdom. Only the king of Korea was allowed to exchange the formal letter with the shogun on an equal basis. With China, Japan avoided having diplomatic ties, rejecting the framework of tributary relations. Similar to the Dutch East India Company, Japan confined China only to private trade relations in Nagasaki. The Ryukyu, while the shogunate treated it as a foreign country, was under the de facto control of the Shimazu of Satsuma, as a result of which no diplomatic documents were exchanged with the shogun. In other words, the concept of shogun’s diplomacy applied only to Korea. When Japan was opened up in the late 1850s, relations with the western countries were therefore established under the name of “Tycoon”, i.e. taikun, the title born in the process of handling the Yanagawa affair.

In the period after the Yanagawa affair, the Korean embassy’s visitation to Japan, a symbol of the shogun’s diplomacy, was turned into a scene of ceremony celebrating the newly inaugurated Tokugawa shogun. Unlike Japan’s enthusiastic attitude to the Korean embassy, Korea sent 400–500 members of the large-scale diplomatic envoy with passive and vigilant manners. The main members of the embassy were selected from civil servants who were senior officials of the Korean court. Also, military officers, interpreters, painters, physicians, circus horse riders, and young boys wearing beautiful costumes were included in the embassy. The officials of the embassy wrote the travelogue to Japan which was submitted to the king of Korea as a report after returning home.

On the other hand, this “envoy from abroad”, similar to the Ryukyu embassy’s trip to Edo beginning in 1610, was a great opportunity to show off the shogun’s powerful authority in relation to the outside world, while the pageantry had a tremendous effect on people of the inside world, thus increasing the recognition of the shogun among the ruled. When the Korean embassy’s visitation to Japan was scheduled, the shogunate immediately ordered the daimyo governments along the trip route to set up the boarding and resting houses, while all other domainal governments were required to provide manpower and resources for banquets, transport and escorting according to the size of their territory. Not only on the round-trip journey, the shogunate also offered the supreme level of hospitality to the Korean embassy while staying in Edo. It took about half a year
to travel back and forth between Korea’s capital city of Hansŏng and Edo, during which this state event became widely known in all ranks from daimyo to peasants throughout Japan.

The Sō’s diplomacy supported the shogun’s diplomacy behind the scenes. The shogunate left diplomatic negotiations, which the shogunate should have had to organise, to the Sō and the Tsushima domainal government, without dispatching any embassy to Korea comparable to any Korean embassy in scale throughout the Tokugawa period. The envoys of more than 500 members were dispatched from Tsushima to the wakan, the Japanese residential area located in Pusan, Korea. Every year such envoys went to the wakan on some pretext or other: for example, New Year’s and other seasonal greetings, various diplomatic negotiations with the Korean counterparts, communications of Japanese domestic news to Korea, various businesses concerning the Korean embassy’s visitation, and business talks concerning shipwrecks and rescuers or drifters. Importantly, all these envoys from Tsushima performed ritual ceremonies for the king of Korea following under the tributary ceremony which the Sō had exercised since medieval times. This ritual salute was proceeded as if Tsushima were a vassal of the Korean king and Korea as a suzerain state. The Tsushima officials bowed four times by crouching and bending their bodies over the denpai, the symbol of the king of Korea. This meant that the Sō family of Tsushima was placed in a lower position than the king of Korea. By exercising such ritual ceremonies, the Sō played a crucial role in establishing equal diplomacy by linking the two different political systems, the Tokugawa’s samurai government with the dynastic regime, while avoiding any clashes of self-centredness, ethnocentrism, or national ideology that both countries held.

The Sō family’s diplomacy was not unilateral. From Korea the envoy of interpreters led by a high-ranking interpreter in Japanese was also sent to Tsushima. The frequent visits of the interpreter-envoys to Tsushima became customary after the Yanagawa affair, when they came to Tsushima to console Sō Yoshitoshi upon his return home from Edo to Tsushima. These interpreters also came to the island as the envoys on auspicious or inauspicious occasions for the shogun and the lord of Tsushima, and their visit numbered more than fifty throughout the Tokugawa period. The interpreters, besides their principal tasks, carried out crucial issues that the wakan could not manage, for instance, they were sent to discuss territorial and economic issues with the Tsushima authorities. These were de facto diplomatic negotiators as well. The embassy was sent to congratulate the newly inaugurated shogun without negotiating diplomatic discussions or intense debates,
which was enabled by the frequent traffic the Korean interpreters and the Tsushima envoys made in order to keep bilateral communication smooth. The dual structure of Japanese-Korean diplomacy was a product of the shogunate’s dual orientation: one is their determination that Japan would never enter into China’s tributary relations, and the other that they wanted to establish equal diplomatic engagement with Korea. In this structure, the Tsushima domain was assigned to a unique role and in return guaranteed an exclusive privilege for the Japanese-Korean trade.

4. Facts about the wakan trade

Practical exercise for diplomacy and trade between Japan and Korea took place at the wakan at Pusanpo on the southern tip of the Korean Peninsula. The wakan was originally operated as a guesthouse. After the new wakan of about 330,000 square metres was set up in Pusan in 1678, it also functioned as a diplomatic office and a commercial factory. Ships to Korea were restricted to twenty vessels a year as of the agreement in 1609; however, a scheme of increasing ship numbers was implemented by Tsushima using supplementary and temporary vessels, and also small ships. The annual average of eighty ships were mobilised during the period of substantial expansion in the 1710s. After the Yanagawa affair, the Sō took away a ship owners’ right from the samurai retainers which had been distributed from the medieval past. Since the navigation of ships and the transport of envoys and that of trade commodities became separately carried out, the former system of trade based on the agreed number of envoy ships was completely altered. With the domanial government being a pivotal player, Korean trade via the wakan became efficient and effective with closer links to the domestic market.

The Japanese-Korean trade was divided into three categories: ōfushin, tributary trade to the king of Korea, kōbōeki (official trade), trade with the Korean government, and shibōeki (private trade), trade with Korean merchants. Among the three, tributary and public trade, which dealt with only fixed items of merchandise under a fixed amount of trade, settled the yearly payment by kōboku, Korea-made good-quality cotton. Moreover, some proportion of the cotton payment was substituted by Korean rice, totalling about 1,200 tons a year, which meant a prized food import for Tsushima, a rice-deficit economy. Private trade was freer. Korean merchants brought commodities to a trading hall of the wakan six times a month. Unlike tributary or official trade, there were no restrictions on the items and quantity of commodities, and the transactions were made on
the basis of profitability. In earlier days anyone who had a trade license was able to join the market. As private trade prospered, however, the market became so congested that unlicensed illegal trade emerged eventually. After the completion of a new wakan building, upon the Korean initiative twenty government-approved merchants were selected as qualified participants, and the number of the qualified increased to thirty eventually. In response to this, Tsushima also picked up ten motokata-yaku (private trade officials) from merchants. As a result, the Tsushima domain was able to bring private trade under domanial control, which the focus of Japanese-Korean trade shifted to more profitable private trade.

For 27 years from 1684 to 1710, the bookkeeping records of private trade by the private trade officials survived and are now housed in the National Diet Library. According to this source, transactions amounted to 6,000 kan in silver (one kan = 3.75kg) for the peak year of export and import. This was comparable to the total amount of Chinese trade controlled by the shogunate around the same time. If averaged out over the entire period, the amount was 3,000 kan, comparable to that of Dutch trade. Part of the peak-year estimate is accounted for by 1,000 kan for the tributary and official sector made under the fixed system. What is certain, however, is that the volume of Japanese-Korean trade was substantially large. The merchandise dealt by the private sector was mostly high-quality silver coins of 80 per cent purity, accounting for more than 60 per cent of the total. Others included mineral resources such as copper and tin (difficult to obtain in Korea), and goods of South-east Asian origin such as buffalo horns (for arms, craft and medicine), pepper (for seasonings and medicinal use), alum and logwood (both for dyeing). Also included are cigarettes and tobacco pipes (smoking was introduced from Korea). Since the South-east Asian goods were designated items under tributary and official trade, the Tsushima domain owned a building near the Dutch trading house in Deshima, Nagasaki, from which those commodities were forwarded to the wakan. 80 per cent of imports were Chinese raw silk (high-quality one) and silk textiles. The remaining 20 per cent was medicinal ginseng. The former was sold in Kyoto and the latter in Edo, and the selling prices of these two were several times higher than the import prices.

Export silver was boxed and brought to the wakan by small carrier boats. The managing director of the wakan left official diaries; and the diary data (now in the National Diet Library) allow us to total up the arrivals and loadings of silver carrier ships by month, according to which the carrying-in was concentrated in July-August and October-November. In Tsushima, the delivery in the former period was named as kōrekigin
(silver of the imperial calendar) and the latter tōjIGIN (silver of the winter solstice). We know that this seasonal pattern was the reflection of a calculated decision as the Tsushima domain directed its Kyoto office responsible for the purchase of silver to keep shipment in these two periods. The “imperial calendar” meant the almanac made in China while the “winter solstice” referred to the period between the winter solstice and the New Year’s Day, both corresponding to the two departures of enkōshi, the Korean tributary embassy to China dispatched twice a year by the Korean government. In other words, Japanese silver was exported to the wakan in the same period as the Korean embassy set off to China: there was a “silver route” which connected Tsushima to the wakan in Pusan, Hansŏng, and then to Beijing, with the starting point in Kyoto.

The opposite route of this silver route was the Silk Road. The Korean interpreters and merchants who followed the tributary embassy to China purchased Chinese raw silk and textiles, sent to the private-trade market at the wakan; then, Tsushima’s domanial government sold these silk goods in Kyoto, the largest silk weaving centre in Japan. Although Japan became known for an exporter of raw silk later in the Tokugawa-Meiji transition period, Japanese-made raw silk had been inferior to that of China until the mid-eighteenth century. In the period when an precipitous decline in silver export led to a steady decrease in the import of raw silk from Nagasaki, most of raw silk supplied via Korea was white, glossy and unknotted. It was cheaper than in Nagasaki and available in large quantities. According to Tsushima’s lending books, both silk yarn shops on Kyoto’s Ōmiya Street (called wakeitoya, suppliers of raw silk to the Nishijin weaving district) and the Mitsui House’s Echigoya Kyoto Office made large loans to the Tsushima domain, suggesting that they were financial supporters of the Japanese-Korean trade.

One salient feature of this Japanese-Korean trade until the mid-Tokugawa period was that silver coins were exported in a large amount through bilateral private transactions with Korean merchants. Within 67 years between 1684 and 1750, for which quantitative information about annual silver exports is available, silver coins sent to the Korean Peninsula via Tsushima amounted at least to a little over 80,000 kan (about 300 tons). During this period, the shogunate debased silver coins six times, the worst of which was Hōei yotsuhōgin issued in 1711 that included only 20 per cent of silver. In fear of an adverse effect of the decline in silver value on Korean-Chinese trade, the Tsushima domain appealed to the shogunate by pointing out the fact that Tsushima’s silver was used exclusively to import ginseng which was indispensable for domestic medicine. The shogunate permitted Tsushima to mint and export high-quality coins of 80 per cent of silver.
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to be used exclusively for the Japanese-Korean trade. The special coins totalled more than 1,400 kan (equivalent roughly to 5 tons every year). The reason why a large amount of silver export became possible for such a long term was that the wakan trade was conducted in a foreign country. Under this environment, the shogunate was unable to supervise export transactions. Given such numerous supportive measures for Tsushima, it is likely that the support was a compensation by the shogunate for the part played by Tsushima in Japanese-Korean diplomacy, especially at the time of the Korean embassy’s official visit.

Epilogue

In the latter half of the eighteenth century, a set of policies aiming at import substitution and the promotion of domestic production was implemented. Imports such as medicinal ginseng and raw silk yarn no longer bore profits, as they had had in the past. Commodities imported and exported by the government sector, both tributary and official trade, did not change; however, the goods of private trade shifted to copper which was indispensable for minting copper coins in Korea. In the nineteenth century, the Korean tributary embassy to China began exporting processed red ginseng in place of silver. Silver, that had represented the majority of export to Korea, was no longer exported in the 1750s, and with a secret agreement made with the interpreters on the Korean side, approximately 400-1,000 kilograms of silver per year began to be imported in the nineteenth century. Other imported items of private trade included cowhide (for armour and footwear such as sandals), dried sea slug (food ingredients exported from Nagasaki to China), Baikal Skullcap (medicine), cow horn and nail (substitutes for tortoise shell and ivory). The scale of this private trade did not exceed that of the government sector, and profit levels of earlier days could not be hoped for.

What the Tsushima domain did whenever budget crisis occurred was borrowing from merchants. But more important for Tsushima was to ask for further financial support almost from the shogunate. A temporary grant called kashikin and haishakukin or loan money began in 1701 with 3,000 ryō for ninjindai shikomikin (preparatory deposit for ginseng). At an increasing pace those provisions were offered to Tsushima, more than forty times in all by the end of the Tokugawa era with 710,000 ryō in total. Moreover, a long-term financial aid called teatekin started after 1746, on top of the temporary provisions. The initial aid was 10,000 ryō, but 30 years later it increased to 12,000 ryō.
1863, the Tsushima domain appealed to the Chōshū domain (with whom they allied), senior councillors (rōjū) of the shogunate, and Katsu Kaishū (1823–1899), the shogunate’s naval magistrate, for further assistance on the ground that Tsushima could play a role in defence for Japan. Tsushima did obtain an increased aid of 3,000 koku, equivalent to 67,000 ryō. In 1811 the last Korean embassy came to Japan; unlike the previous cases, the ceremony was held in Tsushima, not in Edo. The shogunate commended Tsushima for this arrangement (called ekichi heirei) that led to an enormous cost saving. With this, 2,500 ryō was added to the aid to Tsushima for five years from 1812. In 1817, Tsushima was given an extra territory of 20,000 koku in Shimotsuke of the Kanto region. In the nineteenth century until the very end of the Tokugawa era, no other domains received such a large amount of financial assistance from the shogunate. Clearly all this was an economic compensation for the Sō’s diplomatic achievement.

(Translated by Jeong Mi Lee)

Bibliography


