



# The Imjin War: Japan's Sixteenth-Century Invasion of Korea and Attempt to Conquer China

By Samuel Hawley

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In May of 1592, Japanese dictator Toyotomi Hideyoshi sent a 158,800-man army of invasion from Kyushu to Pusan on Korea’s southern tip. His objective: to conquer Korea, then China, and then the whole of Asia. The resulting seven years of fighting, known in Korea as *imjin waeran*, the “Imjin invasion,” after the year of the water dragon in which it began, dwarfed contemporary conflicts in Europe and was one of the most devastating wars to grip East Asia in the past thousand years.

*The Imjin War* is the most comprehensive account ever published in English of this cataclysmic event, so little known in the West. It begins with the political and cultural background of Korea, Japan and China, explores the diplomatic impasse that led to the war, describes every major incident and battle from 1592 to 1598 and introduces a fascinating cast of characters along the way. There is Hideyoshi, hosting garden parties as his armies march toward Beijing; Korean admiral Yi Sun-sin, emerging from a prison cell to take on the Japanese navy with just thirteen ships; Chinese commander Zhao Chengxun, suffering defeat after promising to “scatter the Japanese to the four winds”; the courtesan Chu Non-gae, luring a samurai into her arms and then jumping into the Nam River with him locked in her embrace.

One nation fighting to expand, another to survive. Shockwaves extending across China and beyond. *The Imjin War* is an epic tale of grand perspective and

intimate detail of an upheaval that would shape East Asia for centuries to come.

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#### About the Author

Samuel Hawley taught English in East Asia for many years. His books include *Speed Duel*, about the land speed rivalry in the 1960s between Craig Breedlove and Art Arfons; *I Just Ran: Percy Williams, World's Fastest Human*, about one of Canada's greatest yet least known sports heroes; the companion volumes *America's Man in Korea* and *Inside the Hermit Kingdom* on George Foulk, America's representative in Korea in the mid 1880s; and the novels *Homeowner With a Gun* and *Bad Elephant Far Stream*. He lives in Kingston, Ontario.

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