



A Korean War Captive in Japan, 1597–1600: The Writings of Kang Hang

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Kang Hang was a Korean scholar-official taken prisoner in 1597 by an invading Japanese army during the Imjin War of 1592–1598. While in captivity in Japan, Kang recorded his thoughts on human civilization, war, and the enemy's culture and society, acting in effect as a spy for his king. Arranged and printed in the seventeenth century as *Kanyangnok*, or *The Record of a Shepherd*, Kang's writings were extremely valuable to his government, offering new perspective on a society few Koreans had encountered in 150 years and new information on Japanese politics, culture, and military organization.

In this complete, annotated translation of *Kanyangnok*, Kang ruminates on human behavior and the nature of loyalty during a time of war. A neo-Confucianist with a deep knowledge of Chinese philosophy and history, Kang drew a distinct line between the Confucian values of his world, which distinguished self, family, king, and country, and a foreign culture that practiced invasion and capture, and, in his view, was largely incapable of civilization. Relating the experiences of a former official who played an exceptional role in wartime and the rare voice of a Korean speaking plainly and insightfully on war and captivity, this volume enables a deeper appreciation of the phenomenon of war at home and abroad.

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