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Korean Historical Encyclopaedia: "TonggukMunhonPigo"

Enciclopedia histórica de Corea: "TonggukMunhonPigo"

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ABSTRACT

This article describes the unique masterpiece of Korean literature – "TonggukMunhonPigo" encyclopedia, first published in 1770. There are two sets of this encyclopedia being kept in russian libraries, that were described, but not introduced into scientific usage. Korean encyclopedia was composed and modelled after chinese examples. It represented thematically and chronologically ordered set of texts from different documentary and literary major sources. Digitization of such major books will provide new possibilities and perspectives for studying all aspects of old Korean culture, especially literature. This encyclopedia also makes influence on cultural life and history of Kazakh diaspora.

Keywords: History of Kazakhstan, history of Korea, history of oriental studies, "TonggukMunhonPigo".

RESUMEN

Este artículo describe la obra maestra única de la literatura coreana: la enciclopedia "TonggukMunhonPigo", publicada por primera vez en 1770. Hay dos juegos de esta enciclopedia que se conservan en las bibliotecas rusas, que se describieron, pero no se introdujeron en el uso científico. La enciclopedia coreana fue compuesta y modelada a partir de ejemplos chinos. Ésta representaba un conjunto de textos ordenados temáticamente y cronológicamente de diferentes e importantes fuentes documentales y literarias. La digitalización de estos significativos libros brindará nuevas posibilidades y perspectivas para estudiar todos los aspectos de la antigua cultura coreana, especialmente la literatura. Esta enciclopedia también influye en la vida cultural y la historia de la diáspora kazaja.

Palabras clave: Historia de Corea, historia de los estudios orientales, historia de Kazajstán, "TonggukMunhonPigo".

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INTRODUCTION

The set of "TonggukMunhonPigo" (Encyclopedia of Documents and Institutions of the East Kingdom) was the first officially composed and published encyclopedia in history of Korean culture and literature. The example for composing it was taken from 13th century literary encyclopedia *Wenxiantongkao*; the publication of Korean encyclopedia was such a success, so it was republicated three times: in 1770, 1809 and 1908. In 1994 selected chapters of this encyclopedia and detailed rubricating were translated into modern Korean, and became widely accessible for Korean scientists (Bing Kuen Anthony Law: 2016). However, this set is almost unknown in West, it only begins being using in old Korean tradition studies. In This article we attempting to summarize all known information, which is accessible to Russian scientist, and to outline perspectives for further researching.

METHODOLOGY

Researching of Far-Eastern encyclopedic genre is represented unevenly in historiography. Moreover, the use of the comparative method is very limited due to the cultural conditionality of the encyclopedia as a body of knowledge. The term "encyclopedia" is used for the project of combining all the knowledge of the world, more precisely, what this culture perceives as such and considers universal, in a single set of texts. This knowledge is structured and organized in accordance with the logical categories, adopted in the proper language and culture. Thus, the encyclopedia as a state project orders the world by including or not including certain entities.

Besides it should be noted, that culture is simultaneously an artificial construct, which is both the result and basis of intercultural interaction.

RESULTS

Since the traditional system of genres and preferences inherited from Confucian Chinese culture, narrative prose belonged to the lower genre, was considered "unworthy" of an educated person and was not included in officially published anthologies, the national spirit in court culture could be expressed through the compilation of encyclopedic codes (Yulia et al.: 2017, pp.1335-1339).

The "TonggukMunhonPigo" («Encyclopedia of Documents and Institutions of the East Kingdom») was compiled by Kim Chi-in (1716–1790) and completed by Yi Man-un (died 1797); it includes 100 scrolls – *kwons* (juan in Chinese). Asami Collection (University of California, Berkeley) keeps two copies of that set.

The first edition was printed in movable type in a royal publishing house with a circulation of 100 sets, but the royal preface and some comments on the headings, which were included in the encyclopedia, were made by a calligrapher and imprinted in text from woodcuts, allowing handwritten text to be reproduced (Fang&Asami: 1969).

As an example of rubricating and composition, the famous Chinese set named *Wenxiantongkao* by Ma Duanlin (1245–1325) was taken (1317, first edition in 1336); according to it, the structure was divided into 13 chapters, which are in turn divided into sections. Thus, the encyclopedia, as a cataloged collection of excerpts of various literary and scientific works, arranged in chronological order in accordance with the topic of the headings, did not have its own text. The information was divided into three general parts: Sky - Earth - Man, to which the headings were attached. The order of the headings is as follows: astronomy, geography, ceremonies, music, military affairs, legislation, land taxes, other taxes, population census, trade, state examinations for posts, schools, management organization (Petrova: 1963; Shtyrliina: 2017, pp.88-94).

Asami Collection also keeps the handwritten copy of the second edition, dated 1782. The second edition was published at the behest of King Jeonjo; the editor-in-chief was Yi Man-un again. The volume of the

encyclopedia has been doubled, amounting to 235 kwon (with the table of contents - 246). 7 sections were added to the 13 initial sections of the encyclopedia: the signs of heaven, palaces, the royal dynasty, the genealogy of the nobility, bibliography, posthumous titles and foreign relations. Additions were marked with special marks in the titles: "was before" and "added". This edition was presented to the king only in 1796, it was authorized, but then delayed until 1809. The print edition included 235 kwon in 102 volumes (Sikochi: 2020; Martynov: 2020, pp.63-70). Nevertheless, some high-ranking officials and nobles preferred to order handwritten copies; apparently, the Asami library keeps such a copy. As a result, it is the handwritten copies that are presented in the largest libraries in the world, in particular, in the British Library. (Manuscripts do not burn: 2018).

Several copies of the Korean encyclopedia and its Chinese prototype are stored in Russian collections. In total, Russia keeps four large collections of Korean manuscripts and early printed books, collected by diplomats at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. The large collection, made by the English consul W.J. Aston passed to the Manuscript Department of the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences (IWR RAS, until 2007 the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences).

The largest collection, compiled by Russian diplomats, was made by P.A. Dmitrevsky, charge d'affaires in Korea in 1891 - 1899. The second – by K.I. Weber, Chargé d'Affaires and the Consul General, and finally by S.N. Syromyatnikov, who took part in a military expedition to the north of the country in 1897–1898. These funds turned out to be divided: before 1917, one part of it passed to the Asian Museum of the Academy of Sciences (since 1929 - Institute of Oriental Studies), the other part to the library of the Oriental Department. IWR's modern funds were exemplarily described by O.P. Petrova in 1956–1963 (McKillop: 1988, pp.5–7), (Petrova: 1956). The university collection of Korean books was included in the fund of Chinese manuscripts and xylographs, and in the early 2000s, it was rediscovered by A.F. Trotsevich and A.A. Gurieva (Tikhonov & Kang: 2011; Sewpersadh: 2019).

The copy of the encyclopedia "TonggukMunhonPigo" was acquired by K.A. Weber and now it is being stored in the library of the Oriental faculty of St. Petersburg State University. Weber's collection has an incomplete copy of the 1770's edition (stitched in 35 volumes), and also three books from the 19th century edition (Firanescu: 2018, pp.69-86).

Such attention to the voluminous and expensive composition is totally explainable by the fact, that it contained a lot of specific information about the most diverse aspects of the Korean state and culture; essentially that is Korea's "miniature" assembled (Kudrenko: 2017; Karamova et al.: 2019, pp.91-97).

DISCUSSION

The fate of the copy of the "TonggukMunhonPigo" encyclopedia, which ended up in the city of Kzyl-Orda (Kazakhstan) in the library of the local pedagogical institute, was somewhat different. Despite the mention of its loss in Khan Ding's story "Fear" (Kang: 2010), now there are publications have appeared about the true fate of the Korean collections of Kazakh libraries. After the beginning of repressions against Koreans in the Russian Far East in 1937, the Far Eastern Korean Pedagogical Institute, located in Vladivostok, was disbanded. The equipment and library funds were sent to Kyzyl-Orda, in 1938 the institute lost its national Korean status. Today it is Korkyt Ata Kyzylorda State University (Malyavina: 2016, pp.195-208; Cumming et al.: 2020, pp.95-120).

Indeed, a lot of books in Korean were burned, but some teachers were able to save a lot of it. A part of Korean materials was included into the collection of rare books in the university library, created by a special order of the USSR Ministry of Higher Education (Denisova: 2009). A significant part of Korean funds through the efforts of teachers of the Far Eastern Korean Institute was sent by regular mail and baggage to Alma-Ata,

and stored in the vaults of the National Library of Kazakhstan. Nowadays this theme is very actual and researched by many explores (Trotsevich&Guryeva: 2005, pp.100-104).

CONCLUSION

Korean literature, written in ancient Chinese language, is extremely poorly studied in Western and Russian Korean studies. An appropriate specialist is required to understand several language strata and the corresponding cultural realities at once. Nevertheless, the availability to researchers' opportunities due to the digitization of a huge array of written sources requires a repeated return to the encyclopedic heritage of the Far Eastern culture. Having a thematically and chronologically grouped set of documentary and literary sources concerning almost all aspects of the life and work of Korean - and more than the Far East - society allows to answer a number of important questions, including the self-perception of Koreans and Chinese at the last stage of the development of an autochthonous civilization before a violent "opening" of China and Korea for the outside world.

All things considered, the term "encyclopedia", applied to both the "TonggukMunhonPigo" and its prototype "Wenxiantongkao", is conditional. The original genre in ancient Chinese was called *leishu*, which literally means "books by category". The main feature of the Far Eastern encyclopedia is that it is devoid of its own original text; it is a systematic selection of original texts, both in extensive excerpts and in its entirety. Classification categories are divided into subcategories and headings, which allow to perceive the genre as an anthology or library-series. The usage of the term "encyclopedia" is correct, because the code was intentionally created as the whole amount of available knowledge accumulated during its compilation. Representatives of the genre are of great value, as they contributed to the preservation of traditional texts, individual editions of which - manuscripts or printed - were lost during numerous historical cataclysms.

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