

Dissemination and Development of Sino-japanese Literary Communication by Korean Envoys in Edo Period

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ABSTRACT. Edo era is a special period of time in the history. It is between the end of Ming Dynasty and the beginning of Qing Dynasty. At that time, non-government trade is the main method of Chi-Japan communication because of the Seclusion Policy. However, Chinese government had little contact with Japan. On the contrary, Korea, who was the vassal state of Qing, began to send envoys to China as well as Japan. In this way, Korean envoys played a very important role in the literary communication between China and Japan. Korea, who was called "The Little China" at that time, had a deep relationship with China. As a result, Korea had much more knowledge about Sinology than Japan. Therefore, Korean scholars looked down on Japanese Sinology scholars. Nevertheless, in 1764, Korean envoys began to pay attention to Sorai's literature and appreciate Japanese Sinology because of the great development of Sorai's literature in Japan. This article will begin with the historical relationship among China, Korea and Japan, and research the reason why Korean scholars changed its attitude towards Japanese Sinology.

KEYWORDS: Edo era; Korean envoys; Sinology; Sorai Ogyu; literary communication.

1. Introduction

Korea, Japan and China had a deep relationship for a long time as the represent countries of East Asia. And there are many scholars studying Korean envoys or Sino-Japanese communication in all these three countries. Besides, there are really precious historical materials of Korean envoys' handwriting notes when communicate with Japanese at that time.

There are several valuable researches in China. Firstly, In the article called<The Research of Relations Among Qing Dynasty, Japan and Korean>, Yuewu Liu analyzed the establishment of subordinate relations between Qing Dynasty and

Korea, as well as Korea's policy of taking subordinate relations as a protection for Korea. Furthermore, in the article called <Year 1764 of Sinology History>, Bowei Zhang demonstrated that the communication activities between Korean envoys and Japanese scholars in 1764 is a turning points in the Sinological history. It is said that the attitude of Korean envoys were extremely different before and after 1764. Finally, in the article <The Communication of Poetics Between Sinological Poet and Korean Envoys in Edo Period - Focused On the Communication Between Sorai Ogyu's Factions and Korean Envoys>, Jianming Fan analyzed the communication notes between disciples of Sorai Ogyu and Korean envoys, and found out that the development of Sinology in Japan had a huge influence on both Japan and Korea.

The researches by Japanese scholars can not be ignored too. Susumu Fuma, in his <Korean Beijing envoys and Korean Japan envoys >, found out the relations between Korean Beijing envoys and Korean Japan envoys. He also stated that Korean Japan envoys paid much attention on Japanese Sorai literary since 1764, and they even collected the works of Sorai Ogyu. Additionally, He believed that Korean Japan envoys also had a influence on Korean Beijing envoys, because Qing also began to pay attention to Sinology since then.

This article will firstly analyze the historical relationship among Korea, Japan and Qing Dynasty, and the role of Korea in the Sino-Japanese communication. Secondly, It will be demonstrated that Korean envoys played an important role in the dissemination of Sinology in Japan. After analyzing the historical materials, there would be an evidence to show that Japanese literary scholars was really enthusiastic when communicating Sinology with Korean envoys. Finally, it will be found out how Korean envoys admitted the development of Sinology in Japan.

2. The Historical Relationship among Korea, Japan and China in Edo Period

In the period of Ming Dynasty, the relationship between Ming and Korea was closed, and Korea presented tribute to Ming regularly. As Qing Dynasty developed dramatically, in order to prove its central position, Qing asked Korea to be its subordinate country but was refused. As a result, Qing began a war with Korea, and occupied its capital Seoul. The king of Korea had no choice but to accepted all the requirements of Qing. One of them was to stop the relation with Ming and to be the subordinate country of Qing. Therefore, Korea presented tribute to Qing regularly, and began to send envoys to Qing every year.

Meanwhile, Korea not only sent envoys to Qing, but also Japan as a protection for itself. In this way, Qing asked Korea to negotiate with Japan, and required Japan to be its subordinate country too. However, Korea ignored Qing's requirement and gave Qing a fake message that Japan was an ambitious and horrible country. At that time, Japan didn't get on well with Qing and maintained a good relationship with Nanming and Taiwan instead. As a result, Qing gave up its policies of peace towards Japan and turned to pre-cautious attitude. Korea, as the intermediary between Qing and Japan, had advantages in the defensive, economic and literary fields.

3. The Effect of Korean Envoys

Korean envoys was one of the most remarkable features of Edo period. In 1592, Hideyoshi Toyotomi invaded Korea and the relation between Japan and Korea was broken. After the death of Hideyoshi Toyotomi, Ieyasu Tokugawa thought there was no good for Japan to lose the relationship with Korea, so he took a new policy of peace. Korea sent envoys to Japan for twelve times during Edo period.

Table 1 Data of Korean Envoys

Time	Aim	Envoy	Sub-envoy	Officer	Number/people
Keicho 12th	Communication	Youji Lyu	Xian Qing	Rukuan Ding	504
Genna 3rd	Congratulate for the unify of Japan	Yuqian Wu	Zi Piao	Jingji Li	428
Kan-ei 1st	Congratulate for the hereditary of general	Li Zhen	Hongzhong Jiang	Qirong Xin	About 300
Kan-ei 13th	Congratulate for the peace	Kuang Ren	Shilian Jin	Qian Huang	About 360
Kan-ei 20th	Congratulate for the born of prince	Shunzhi Yi	Jiong Zhao	Ru shen	About 400
Meireki 1st	Congratulate for the hereditary of general	Heng Zhao	Xi Yu	Longyi Nan	485
Tenna 2nd	Congratulate for the hereditary of general	Zhiwan Yi	Yanwang Li	Qinghou Piao	473
Shotoku 1st	Congratulate for the hereditary of general	Taiyi Zhao	Shougan Ren	Bangyan Li	494
Kyoho 4th	Congratulate for the hereditary of general	Zhizhong Hong	Rui Huang	Mingyan Li	475
Kan-en 1st	Congratulate for the hereditary of general	Qixi Hong	Taishe Nan	Mingcai Cao	487
Meiwa 1st	Congratulate for the hereditary of general	Yan Qiao	Renpei Li	Xiangyu Jin	477
Bunka 8th	Congratulate for the hereditary of general	Lyuqiao Jin	Mianqiu Li	Mingwu Li	Unknown

As it is revealed, Korea sent many envoys to Japan for twelve times in Edo period. As Japan had long periods of isolation, large amounts of Chinese poetry, Chinese music, clothes and medicine was diffused to Japan by Korean envoys. The book <History between Japan and Korea> has documented as follows:

“The relationship between these two countries was enhanced and commercial trade became frequent. Especially, As Japanese people wanted to know variety of knowledge from other countries, from the first time when Korean envoys came to Japan to the twelfth time, many Japanese scholars visited envoys trying to discuss something about Confucian classics. Scholars who were living far away went to the capital of Japan to greet Korean envoys and consult not only literature, but also Agrostography.”

4. Japanese Literary Scholars' Enthusiasm for Communicating with Korean Envoys about Sinology

Korean envoys was attached importance by both Korea and Japan. The task would only be given to the excellent literary talents. In order to compete with Korea, Japan would also choose the most talented literary scholars to be the reception. This was the battleground for literature, and the opportunity for Korea and Japan to compete their literary abilities. Besides, the representatives would communicate literature through handwriting.

In the early Edo period, Korea, who was called "the little China", contacted with China more often than Japan. And its Sinology was also better than Japan. So they looked down on Japanese scholars. The book <Documents of Words in Shuihu Huangmen> revealed as follows:

"The letters from Korea was always impolite, but no one pointed out their impoliteness because the literature in our country had not been developed yet. However, this is not the disgrace for personal, but the shame for the whole nation. We should point out their impoliteness and protect our country's dignity."

Additionally, in the book <History between Japan and Korea>, there are documents as follows:

"Taking a look at the ancient manuscripts, we can find that Japan was called illiteracy and was laughed at by Korea at that time. However, the communication documents was published on the public periodicals with respects in Japan. There was a big difference between Korea and Japan."

Analyzing from those documents, we can find out that Korean letters was impolite and Korea looked down on Japan at that time. Instead, Japanese scholars pursued Korean literature and published their communication documents. They were passionate at Korean Sinology and believed that Korean was a developed country in literature.

5. The Admission and Appreciation of Korean Envoys

During the period of Sorai Ogyu, the Sinology in Japan developed rapidly. Hakuseki Arai, Kyuso Muro and Kanran Miyake who were Jyun-an Kinoshita's disciples, and Nankai Gion who was Razan Hayashi's disciple, were in the same period with Sorai Ogyu. When Korean envoy Taiyi Zhao communicated with those scholars, he was surprised by their knowledge. And when he went back to Korea, he recommended a policy to forbid selling books to Japan because he was afraid that Japanese Sinology would surpass Korean.

In Kyoho 4th, Korean envoys visited Japan for the 9th time. Ranko Kinoshita, who was Sorai Ogyu's disciple, visited the Korean envoys. He introduced them something about Sorai Ogyu, and the Korean envoys said, "We have never heard about Sorai Ogyu, but we are very impressed by his Sinological classical literature." Korean envoys was very proud of their Sinology and seldom appreciate any

Japanese scholar at that time. When Korean envoys visited Japan for the 11th time, Dazhong Chen evaluated Sorai Ogyu that Sorai Ogyu's literary ability could not be denied. At this time, Korean envoys admitted and appreciated the Sinology in Japan.

6. Summary

After Qing Dynasty was established, the old subordinate policy was broken. But Korea and Japan resisted the new subordinate policy. Therefore, Qing rebuilt the subordinate relationship with Korea through wars. Meanwhile, Qing intended to make a use of the relation between Korea and Japan to persuade Japan to be its subordinate country as well. However, Japan ignored Qing's requirement and because of Korea's fake information, Qing's plan was failed. During this period of time, Korea sent envoys to both China and Japan, and became the main intermediary of Sino-Japanese communication.

During the Edo period, Korea sent envoys to Japan for twelve times. Furthermore, Korea diffused Confucian classics, Chinese poetry, music, clothes and medicine to Japan. Both Korea and Japan attached importance to Korean envoys. They chose the best literary talents, to compete the literary ability with each other by handwriting communication. Additionally, Korea, who was called "the little China" at that time, had a higher position in Sinology than Japan. On the one hand, Japanese scholars was passionate for Sinology. When Korean envoys arrived, Japanese scholars would visited them and tried to communicate with them. Their communication documents would even be published. On the other hand, Korean envoys looked down on Japanese scholars and called them illiteracy.

In the mid -Edo, Sorai Ogyu's Sinological classical literature was popular in Japan, and the Sinology in Japan developed rapidly. Therefore, Korean envoys was astonished by the progress of Japanese Sinology and admitted Japanese Sinology. Korean envoys, as an important intermediary of Sino-Japanese communication, had a enormous influence on Japanese Sinological field.

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