A RESEARCH REVIEW OF CHINESE BOOKS EXCHANGED BETWEEN ANCIENT CHINA, JAPAN AND KOREA AND ITS INFLUENCE

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ABSTRACT

Book exchange is an important component of cultural communications between China and foreign countries in history. Book exchange between ancient China and Korea was done basically on a grant from the government. However, the book exchange between ancient China and Japan was primarily made between the two common peoples. This paper reveals that the intercommunications of traditional cultural between China, Korea and Japan had a long history. The exchange of Chinese books is an important factor, which can strengthen cultural and educational communication within these three countries.

KEY WORDS

Japan
Korea
Chinese Book Exchange


1.1 China–Japan

During the Ōjin period in Japan (271–310 A.D.), Chinese books were distributed to Japan. In 285 A.D., Mr. Wani, a scholar from Baekje, Korea, was invited to visit and be a teacher in Japan. He brought ten volumes of “Lun Yu (《论语》 The Confucius Analects)”, and “Qian Ziwen (《千字文》Thousand-Word-Essay).” According to the record in a book of “The Chronicle History of the Founding State of Japan for 5,000 Years”, which said that: “during the period of the Ōjin Emperor, the king of Baekje sent Mr. Azhiqi to Japan. Mr. Azhiqi was good at teaching Chinese classical works. He also told others that there was another scholar named Wani in his country, who could do better than he. The Emperor immediately sent a message to invite Mr. Wani to Japan. The next year, Mr. Wani went to Japan to pre-
sent ten volumes of “The Confucius Analects” and one volume of “The Thousand-Word-Essay” to the Emperor. The prince Ujinowakiratume (うじのわきいらつめ) took Mr. Wani as his teacher and became acquainted with Chinese classical works during the Emperor Ōjin Period of 16 years. [1]

At 7th year of the Emperor Keitai (513 A.D.), Mr. Duan Yanger (だんように), a scholar of «Wu Jing (五經 The Five Classics) went from Baekje to Japan to teach “Confucius School of Thought.” In 516 A.D., another scholar of “Wu Jing (五經 The Five Classics)” came to Japan instead of Mr. Duan Yanger. From then on, the “Chinese Five Classics” became well known to the common people of Japan. In the 15th year of the Emperor Kimmei Period (554 A.D.), Mr. Wang Liugui, Mr. Ma Dingan, the scholars of the “Wu Jing (五經 The Five Classics)” from Baekje, and Mr. Wang Daoliang, scholar of the “Yi Jing (易經 The Book of Changes)”, from Baekje, paid a visit to Japan and distributed ancient Chinese classics.

During the period of the Han, Wei, West Jin and East Jin dynasties (206 B.C.-420 A.D.), the transportation route of Chinese books to Japan started from China’s Central Plains Area (around the present site of Henan Province) and took the route of the Korean Peninsula and then passed the Tsushima Strait to Kyushu of Japan by sea. Until the Epoch of the Division between the North and South dynasties (420–589 A.D.), Chinese books took another transportation route from Shandong Peninsula through Baekje to Japan by sea.

During this period (206 B.C.–589 A.D.), there was movement of books only one-way which was from China to Japan.

1.2 China-Korea

The two countries of China and Korea are linked by common mountains and rivers. Transportation and communication are much easier than that for Japan, and also the exchange of Chinese books with Korea started earlier than that of Japan. At that time, the Three Kingdoms in the Korean Peninsula including Goguryeo, Baekje and Silla were usually called “Small China”, and also the most Chinese ancient books in the “Cultural Circle of Chinese Character” were found there. For example, in the 8th year of the Jianyuan Period of the Former Qin Dynasty (372 A.D.), Goguryeo accepted the Buddhist pictures and the Sutras, which were brought by Fu Jian, the envoy of China. At the 27th year of Yuanjia Emperor Period of Songwen of Song Dynasty (450 A.D.), the king of Baekje, Yu Pi, issued a letter and sent his envoy to Mr. Feng Yufu and viceroy Xi He to China to present cultural relics and ask for the book of “Yi Lin (易林 Changing the Forest),” and “Shi Zhan (詩占 Augury),” and waist crossbows. The Chinese Emperor accepted the gifts and in response satisfied all his requirements. During the period of 534 to 541 A.D., the Chinese Emperor Liang Wu of the Liang Dynasty frequently sent classic books to the King of Baekje and also sent scholars of poetry and rites to Baekje to teach the “Shi Jing (詩經 Classics of Poetry)” and “Li Ji (禮記 Books of Rites).” The Emperor Liangwu also frequently sent professionals, experts in medi-
2. **DURING THE PERIOD OF THE SUI AND TANG DYNASTIES**

(589–960 A.D.)

In this historical period, there were two characteristics of the distribution of ancient Chinese books. One was that the Chinese Buddhist classical works were re-translated to promote the prosperity of Buddhist research work, and the other was that the newly translated Buddhist works in China were distributed to neighboring countries. Therefore, this period was the first high tide in history of distributing ancient Chinese books to the east.

2.1 **China–Japan**

The Japanese Emperor Suiko and his Prince Shotoku took the Chinese Confucian School of Thought as their root of founding and governing the state. They sent their “envoys to the Sui Dynasty of China” as many as four times. These envoys’ main tasks were to study the Chinese culture and “purchase and acquire Chinese books.” In the Tang Dynasty, more and more “Envoys to Tang” were sent in an unprecedented number and scale. During the 8th century, the Japanese politician, Mr. Kibim Makibi, and a scholar, Mr. Abe no Nakamaru came to China twice to study and live in China for more than ten years, and wrote a book of “Buddhist Catalogues”. During the Zhenyuan Emperor Period of the Tang Dynasty (785–805 A.D.), a Japanese scholar, Mr. Saicho did research on the Buddhist classical works in China’s Taizhou and Yuezhou and wrote the book of the “Record of Preaching Master in Taizhou”, and a book of “Record of Preaching Master in Yuezhou.” During the Zhenyuan Emperor Period of the Tang Dynasty (785–805 A.D.), a Japanese Monk, Kukai also wrote a book of “Canonical Catalogues.” All these Canonical catalogues can be regarded as the truthful and accurate records of the Japanese intellectuals who brought Chinese books back to Japan at that time.

A Japanese scholar, Mr. Fujiwara Sukeyo, compiled a book, the “Witness Book Catalogues in Present Dynasty” (it was also called “Book Catalogue in Japan”) from 876 to 884 A.D. This book recorded the situation of Chinese book collection in Japan at that time. According to the structure of a Chinese book of the “Chronical of Sui Classical Books”, this catalogue book was divided into forty categories of classics, history, philosophy and collected works, and described 1,568 titles of books (16,725 Juan). According to this statistic, Mr. Yan Shaodang, who was a Chinese scholar, made a comparison with a book of “Ancient Books in Tang Dynasty”, which said that: “During the 9th century, the Chinese books were distributed to Japan, 50% of the Sui Dynasty (589–618 A.D.), and 51.2% of the Tang
One of the significant marks of the prosperous Tang Dynasty (618–906 A.D.) is the influence of Chinese culture upon neighboring countries and the formation of the “Chinese Culture Circle.” During the period of the 264 years from 630 to 894 A.D., the Japanese government sent their ambassadorial groups to the Tang Dynasty sixteen times in groups of from 200–300 people or 500–600 people each time. They brought back a large number of Chinese books each time, when they returned to their country. For example, the first Chinese pharmacopoeia “Xin Xiu Bencao (新修本草 New Rised Book of Medical Herbs)” was compiled and completed in 713 A.D. and there was a manual copy in Japan at the same year. In 718 A.D., the Japanese government formulated “Lu Ling (律令 The Order of Law),” which quoted a lot of Chinese classical analects. Moreover, the Japanese government set up “An Institute of Copying Chinese Classical Books.” Many of the handwritten copies are still well preserved today.

A famous eminent Chinese monk, Mr. Jian Zhen in the Tang Dynasty (688–763 A.D.), was invited by a Japanese monk, Mr. Rongmen Puzhao, who had studied in China. The eminent Chinese monk risked his life to cross the sea to Japan six times. In 753 A.D., he overcame tremendous difficulties, hardships and setbacks, and succeeded in his sixth attempt to arrive at Japan in his 66th year of age, and when he was blind in both of his eyes. When he was in Japan, he was warmly welcomed by the government and all walks of life. He worked hard and diligently to teach Buddhism, to explain Chinese classical works, to help and build the temples for worshipping Buddhism, to identify medical herbs and cure diseases, etc., for about ten years. Not only did he bring the Buddhist Sutras and ancient Chinese books to Japan, but also he distributed academic knowledge, such as the skills and techniques of architecture, sculpture, medicine, and the culture of calligraphy to Japan.

The Tang Poetry was also brought to Japan in the prime Tang Dynasty, such as the poems by Li Bai, Wang Wei and Bai Juyi. According to the record of the Japanese historical book “A Memoir of Emperor Montoku”, which said that: “On May 2nd in the 5th year of Chenghe (正和) Emperor Period, when Fujiwara, a Japanese general officer inspected the goods from the China Tang Dynasty, he occasionally found a book of ‘Yuan Bai Shi Bi (元白诗笔 Poems of Yuan Wei and Bai Juyi),’ and he presented it to the Emperor immediately. The emperor was so happy and accorded him with the 5th degree of the official position.” This fact showed that Mr. Bai Juyi was still alive and he was 67 years old, and his poems had already been introduced to Japan.

During the Tang Dynasty, there appeared to be a two-way communication of Chinese books. During this period a large number of Chinese books were brought to Japan, and some Chinese books from Japan were also introduced to China of the Tang Dynasty by the envoys, scholars and monks, etc. For instance, the book of “San Jing Yi Shu (三经易疏 Notes of the Three Classical Works)” written by
Prince Shotoku of Japan was brought to China by a Japanese monk. China also sent envoys to Japan, and purchased it with a large sum of money.

2.2 China–Korea

In the mid 7th century AD, the Korean ruling class of Silla inherited the tradition of the previous dynasties of attaching great importance to Chinese culture. They sent their envoys to China during the Tang Dynasty to acquire essays and purchase books, or they sent the people to the Tang Dynasty to learn culture or further study Buddhism or practice the ritual system, etc. For example, in 648 A.D., the Emperor Tang Taizong (627–649 A.D.) granted a “Bing Shu (兵书 Book of Military Tactics)” to a visiting Silla of the Korean envoy. In 686 A.D., the Silla of Korea sent envoys to China during the Tang Dynasty, and asked for poems and essays. The Tang Empress Wu Zetian (684–704 A.D.) bestowed on the envoys fifty Juans of books. According to the record in the book of “Xin Tang Shu (新书 New Books of Tang Dynasty),” which said that: “the people of Silla of Korea were out of admiration for Mr. Zhang Zhuo and went to Chang An (Xi An City now) and spent a large sum of money to purchase Mr. Zhang’s essays. The poems and essays by Bai Juyi were also sought by the merchant of Silla of Korea.” “The essays of Bai Juyi were wonderful, brilliant and incisive, but he was excellent in his poems… At that time, the people in Silla vied in having and reading Bai Juyi’s poems, and the merchants were willing to spend a piece of gold for his poem.”

In the course of the Silla people studying Chinese Tang Culture, they tried to import the systems of policy, education and rites of the Tang Dynasty. The Silla people could not do it without Chinese classical works. This was one of the most important features in the history of the Chinese and Korean books exchanges. In the schools of the Tang Dynasty, there were a lot of overseas students from Silla of Korea. For example, in a book of “Tang Huiyao (全朝 A Compilation of the Tang Government Regulation) vol.36,” it was recorded that 217 students from Silla were studying in the schools of the Tang Dynasty in 837 A.D. In a book of “Jiu Tang Shu (旧书 The Old Book of Tang Dynasty) vol.36,” which recorded that as many as 105 students returned to Silla after studying in China during the Tang Dynasty in 840 A.D. After returning to Silla with many Chinese books, these students from Silla put the Chinese ideology, legislation, and education etc., into practice in Silla of Korea. In 682 A.D., Silla of Korea set up Chinese courses and taught the subjects of the “Wu Jing (五经 The Five Classics Works),” “San Shi (三史 Three Historical Books).” In 747 A.D., Silla changed the Taixuejian (The Emperial College) and set up the doctorate tutorship to inculcate the Confucius School of Thought. The compulsory or the selected courses were: “Lun Yu (论语 The Confucius Analects),” “Xiao Jing (孝经 The Filial Book),” “Zhou Yi (周易 A Book of Changes, one of the six confucian classics),” “Shang Shu (尚书 Canons of Yao and Shun- the Book of History),” “Mao Shi (毛诗 The Book of Odes),” “Li Ji (礼记 Record of Rites Book),” “Chun Qiu (春秋 Spring and Autumn),” “Zuo Shi Zhuan (左传 A Commentary Book on the Spring and Autumn Annals),” “Wen
Xuan (文镌 Anthologies),” etc. The Silla government also followed the imperial examination systems of the Chinese Tang Dynasty and took the mastery of the Confucius School of Thought as their standard for selecting qualified personnel.

The Silla of Korea took the worship of Buddhism as its fundamental factor for government affairs. Therefore, they sent a lot of monks to China during the Tang Dynasty to study the Buddhist Sutra. They also brought back many of Buddhist Sutras when they returned to their own country. For instance, a Silla monk Chajang Yulsa brought the “Tri-pitaka Sutras” of more than 400 titles back to Silla, and was warmly welcomed by all the people of his nation. After entering China during the Tang Dynasty, some of the Silla monks blended themselves into Chinese society. Another example, a monk of Silla, Mr.Wonchuk, the monk of Silla came to China during the Tang Dynasty to learn Buddhism from the famous eminent Tang monk Xuan Zhuang in 627 A.D. He took part in the translation work of eighteen titles and 34 Juan Sutras from the Indian to the Chinese language. Later on, he also participated in translating “The Sutra of Universal Rain” from the Indian to the Chinese language. Thus, he became one of the famous monks in China during the Tang Dynasty.

In 1966, a Sutra printed from wood blocks, “Dharani Spotless Pure Light,” was discovered in the Sokka Pagoda in the Pulguk-sa Monastery in Kyongju, Korea. Through textual research, it has been determined that it is probably the earlier printed matter in the world. The Sutra is much earlier then “Jin Gang Jing (金刚经 Diamond Sutra),” which was discovered in the Qianfu Cave of Dunhuang in 1899. According to the detailed study of this Sutra, it was identified as being printed during China’s Sui and Tang Dynasties of the late 6th or early 7th century. The South Korean academic circle published a lot of papers accordingly and deemed that it was engraved and printed in the 10th year of the Jingde King of Silla (751 A.D.), and thus inferring that printing technology first occurred in the Korean Peninsula instead of in China. Since the 1980s, Chinese scholars have successively published many papers to refute this conclusion. According to the authentication by the experts, this printed Sutra was transferred to Korea from China. No matter what is the result of this dispute, there are two points that should not be ignored. Namely, Chinese printing technology was introduced to Silla of Korea in the Tang Dynasty, and the Silla of Korea applied the engraved printing technology rapidly and effectively. It also confirms the far-reaching and extensive influence caused by the distribution of ancient Chinese books.

3. DURING THE PERIOD OF THE SONG AND YUAN DYNASTIES (960–1368 A.D.)

3.1 China–Japan

“Da Zang Jing (大藏经 Mahayana Buddhist Sutras),” the edition of wood blocks for printing is the general collection of Chinese Buddhist classical books, which
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was published in the Kaibao Emperor of North Song Dynasty (968–976 A.D.). It can be regarded as an encyclopedia, which it involved the philosophy, history, linguistics, literature and arts, astronomy and calendar, medicine, architecture, the relationship of China and foreign countries and other fields.

In 983 A.D., the Chinese Emperor Song Taizong of the Song Dynasty received the Japanese monk Diaoran, who came to China and asked for books. The Emperor granted him a whole set of “Mahayana Buddhist Sutras” and other 286 Juan translated Chinese Sutras. The “Mahayana Buddhist Sutras” were from wood blocks for printing, and were published at the beginning of the Song Kaobao Emperor Period (968–976 A.D.). They were the original edition that the monks reproduced and collated, and were the most valuable and treasured books for collecting and study in Japanese Buddhist circles at that time. After the South Song Dynasty, more and more Japanese monks came to China like a continuous stream, and returned to Japan with the different editions of “Mahayana Buddhist Sutras.”

In 1168 A.D., Mr. Chong Tyuan brought back the Song edition of “Mahayana Buddhist Sutras”, “The Sutra of Daban Ruo” and other classical Sutras of the Song edition from China.

In 1218 A.D., Mr. Keisei brought back the Fuzhou edition of “Mahayana Buddhist Sutras.”

In 1228 A.D., Mr. Hounin Jyougyou brought back “Mahayana Buddhist Sutras.”

In 1262 A.D., Mr. Hounin Jyougyou brought back the Song edition of “Mahayana Buddhist Sutras” from China.

In 1275 A.D., Mr. Chuan Xiao brought back the Sixi edition of the “Mahayana Buddhist Sutras” from China.

With the increasing frequency of commercial and trade activities by the sea, large numbers of Chinese books were transferred to Japan.

In 1006 A.D., a Chinese merchant Mr. Zeng Lingwen sent a book of “Wu Chen Zhu Wenxuan Wenj (五臣注文选文集 The Anthology of Five Officers’ Annotations)” to the Japanese government’s high officer, Mr. Fujiwara Michinaga.

In 1151 A.D., a Chinese merchant Mr. Liu Wenchong sent the books of “Pictures of Scholar Su Dongpo,” “Historical Records of the Five Dynasties (907–960 A.D.),” “The Book of the Tang Dynasty” and other Chinese books to the important Japanese official Fujiwara Yorinaga.

In 1178 A.D., a Japanese purchased 300 Juans of handwritten copies of “Tai Ping Yu Lan (太平御览 A Comprehensive Reference Books with 1,690 titles of 1,000 Juan for Emperor Zhao Guanyi to read in Taiping Xingguo Period 976–984 A.D.)” from a merchant of the China Song Dynasty with a huge amount of money, which was the first time that Japan obtained precious Chinese books forbidden to be exported out of the Song Dynasty.

By 1192 A.D., the shuttles of commercial boats between China and Japan became more frequent. Therefore, the cultural exchanges and communications between the two countries became much closer than ever before, and it formed a second high tide of Chinese books distributed to the east since the time of China’s
Sui and Tang Dynasties (589–906 A.D.). It was still the monk, who played an important role on this communication chain.

In 1244 A.D., Mr. Enni Ben’en made an official request of China’s South Song government for “Taiping Yulan (太平御览 A Comprehensive Reference Books with 1,690 titles of 1,000 Juan for Emperor Zhao Guanyi to read in Taiping Xingguo Period 976–984 A.D.)” and brought back 103 volumes of these books. Later on, the other tens of volumes of the Song edition of “Tai Ping Yu Lan” were transferred to Japan through other Japanese monks.

In this time, the Chinese books of the Confucian school of idealist philosophy were also distributed to Japan in large scale. Mr. Enni Ben’en, who had been living in China for six years, brought back thousands Juans of Chinese books and literatures to Japan, such as “Hui An Ji Zhu Mengzi (晦庵集注孟子 The Annotation on Mencius by Hui An),” “Hui An Daxue (晦庵大学 Annotations to the Great Learning by Hui An),” “Hui An Daxue huo wen (晦庵大学或问 Questions to the Great Learning by Hui Yan),” “Hui An Zhongyong Huo Wen (晦庵中庸或问 Questions to the Doctrine of the Mean by Hui Yan)” and other books.

In 1242 A.D., Mr. Song Ci, a Chinese legal medical expert, compiled a book of “Xi Yuan Lu (洗冤录 The Record of Avenge Wrongs),” which is the earliest medical jurisprudence in the world. Afterward it was distributed to Japan, and was used until the 19th century. Another example, Mr. Gachirin Daishi Shunjō who had lived in China for twelve years and brought back 1,200 Juans of Buddhist Sutras and 719 Juans of Chinese books to Japan in 1211 A.D., including “Si Shu Wu Jing (四书五经 The Four Books and Five Classics: The Great Learning, Confucius Analects, Doctrine of the Mean, Mencius; The Book of Changes, The Book of History; The Odes; The Books of Rites, The Spring and Autumn Annals)” and many other of Mr. Cheng Hao’s and Mr. Zhu Xi’s idealist philosophy books.

After China’s Song Dynasty was replaced by the Yuan Dynasty, there were two wars between China and Japan, and then their normal relationship was resumed after the middle period of the Yuan Dynasty. The Japanese continued to search for Mahayana Buddhist Sutras in China. According to the record of “Chronicle Quotations of Datong Eminent Monk”, some of the Japanese temples “dispatched commercial boats to China Yuan Dynasty to ask for Mahayana Buddhist Sutras.” For example, the Mahayana Buddhist Sutras collected in Tofukuji Temple, which is still kept intact now, is the edition of the Kaiyuan Temple in Fuzhou of the North Song Dynasty edition. The most extensively spread of the Yuan Dynasty edition of Mahayana Buddhist Sutras is the edition of Da Pu Ning Temple of Nanshan Hill in Yuhang County, Zhejiang Province. The Japanese monks and merchants also took away other kinds of Buddhist books, biography of monks, collections of poems and essays and “Hundred Schools of Thoughts”, and many other historical Chinese books. The eminent monks of the Yuan Dynasty Yishan Yining and others also brought a lot of Chinese books to Japan, when they paid visits to Japan.
3.2 China–Korea

The period of China’s Song and Yuan dynasties is about equal to the period of the Koryo Dynasty in Korea. The distribution of Chinese books was mainly from China to Korea, but it also went both ways. The Koryo people obtained three sets of Mahayana Buddhist Sutras from China in 989–1022 A.D. In 1011 A.D., they started to engrave the wood blocks for printing the Mahayana Buddhist Sutras, and finished this work in 1082 A.D. In 1091–1011 A.D., they made the wood blocks for printing the “Mahayana Buddhist Sutras: Continued.” In 1236, the Koryo people again engraved the wood blocks for printing the Mahayana Buddhist Sutras, which was the famous “Koryo Sutra”, which is still held intact in the Haeinsa Temple of Buzenda-cho now.

Because the Koryo edition of Sutras were exquisitely printed with wood blocks and were of superior quality, China’s Yuan government frequently sent envoys to Koryo and purchased them for a high price. For example, in 1300 A.D., China’s Yuan government “purchased the Sutra with 7.5 kg. of incenses, 360 feet of satins and 3,600 feet of thin silk for linings and 864 spindles of white gauze” [5]. Later, in 1303 A.D. and 1305 A.D., the Yuan government sent envoys to Koryo to purchase the “Koryo Sutra” and frequently asked for Sutra paper and invited the Koryo monks to China and to copy the Sutras. In 1305 A.D., in answer to the invitation of the Yuan Government, the Koryo government sent 100 monks to China to copy Sutras. [6]

In the early Song Dynasty, Koryo began to imitate the imperial examination system of China. So it needed a large amount of the Chinese books, especially Confucian classical works. From the fourth year of Chunhua (993 A.D.) to the 5th year of Tianxi (1021 A.D.), the Koryo government accepted the Song government’s bestowment and through the commercial trade of the Chinese books, they received books of different fields such as history, calendar, geography, poems and essays, etc. It included: “Shi Ji (史记 History),” “Liang Han Shu (两汉书 History of East and West Han Dynasties 206BC–220 AD),” “San Guo Zhi (三国志 History of Three Kingdoms 220–265 A.D.),” “Jin Shu (晋书 History of Jin Dynasty 265–420 A.D.),” “Shen Hui Fang (圣惠方 Taipin Royal Prescriptions),” “Ce Fu Yuan Gui (册府元龟),” “Wen Yuan Ying Hua (文苑英华),” etc. During the Yuan Dynasty (1271–1368 A.D), the communication between the two countries became much closer in political, economic and cultural exchange. For instance, Dr. Liu Yan of Koryo purchased 10,800 Juan of Chinese classical books in the Jiangnan Area (south of the lower reaches of the Yangtze River). In 1314 A.D., the Emperor Yuanren of China’s Yuan Dynasty granted 4,371 volumes (17,000 Juans) of Chinese books to Koryo, which were the rare books of superior quality of the original Song Edition.

According to the record of “Gao Li Shi (高丽史Koryo History) vol.10” and “Zeng Bu Wen Xian Bei Kao (增补文献备考 A Supplementary Literature Reference) vol.242” in 1091 A.D., a group of Koryo envoys headed by Mr. Yao Ziyi de-
delivered a paper, which was written by the Chinese Song Emperor Zhezong to the Koryo King Xuanzong, when they returned to Koryo. The content of this paper was the list of “Obtain Good Books”, which included 128 titles (more than 4,980 Juan) of Chinese books on Confucian classical works, history, poetry and odes, military works, geography, local customs, medicine, music and others. From this fact, we could easily understand the prosperity of Koryo’s books culture, and made (sic) the Chinese books back to their place of origin. After imitating the use of wood blocks for printing, which was invented in China in 7–8th century, and also referring to the letter board for printing, which was initiated by Bi Sheng in the North Song Dynasty in the 11th century, the Koryo people took advantage of their own production of high quality paper and ink, and started to engrave wood blocks for printing books, and achieved a good result. Therefore, we could understand a Chinese saying of “the pupil surpasses their (sic) masters.”

4. During the Period of the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644 A.D.)

4.1 China–Japan

On the one hand, many Japanese monks came to China to learn Buddhist Sutras and theories and brought back a lot of Buddhist Sutras and other Chinese Confucian classical works. On the other hand, many Chinese monks also went to Japan. “As the envoys of Ming Dynasty’s government, the Chinese monks were the eminent monks in academically and morally (sic). Although they stayed in Japan only a short period of time, they brought much new excitement to the poetry, essays and other academic circles in Japan.” [7]

The contents of the book exchanges between the Ming Dynasty and Japan were even broader in scope than the previous dynasties. In addition to Buddhist classical works and Confucian works, it included almost every aspect of collections of poetry and essay, fiction, political books, reference books, medicine, and art theory, etc. The Chinese book communication between China and Japan mainly occurred among the ordinary people. The Chinese book learners of Japan were mostly monks. The organizations of the Chinese book collections were mainly in five temples in Kamakura and Kyoto. It was called “Five-Mountain Times” in history. In this period, Chinese books were exchanged among the monks of Japan and the Ming Dynasty, which was very frequent. In addition to studying Buddhist Sutras, they also studied Chinese literature and wrote Chinese articles, and tried by difference channels to obtain Chinese books. For example, one of the famous Japanese monks, Shūryō, wrote detailed records in his diary “The Collection of the Ferry First Time”, which said that: “To purchased one set of books ‘Helin Yulu (鹤林玉露) 4 volumes;’ To use a knife and fan to exchange a set of books ‘Xu Du Yu De (续杜愚得) 8 volumes;’ To accept as a gift books ‘Guwen Daquan (An Encyclopedia of Ancient Chinese Writings) 2 volumes’ from a Chinese friend Mr. Ke Yuchang; To spend 0.85 kg. of silver to buy a set of book
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*Ben Cao (本草 Medical Herbs) 10 volumes* etc.” Thus it can be seen that Japanese monks got Chinese books mainly through purchasing and accepting the gifts from friends. Most editions of the books were printed with wood blocks in the Song Dynasty but only a few of them were the editions of the early Ming Dynasty. The contents of these books covered canonical works, biographies and history of monks, collections of poetry and essays, political books, Confucian classical works and medical books, etc.

The “Five Mountain Temples” paid special attention to engraving wood blocks to print Chinese books in Japan. They invited and employed engravers from Fuzhou and Putian in the Fujian Province of China to impart the engraving skills needed to make wood blocks for printing. Therefore, these Chinese books were called “The Editions of Five Mountain”. From 1370 A.D. to 1519 A.D., the Chinese engravers, Mr. Yu Liangfu (俞良甫), Mr. Yan Ming (颜明), Mr. Chen Mengrong (陈孟荣), Mr. Chen Boshou (陈伯寿), Mr. Chen Yao (陈尧), Mr. Sheng Ji (盛继) and others had worked in engraving the wood blocks for printing the books of “Yue Jiang Heshang Yulu (月江和尚语录 Quotations from Yuejiang Monks),” “Zong Jing Lu (宗镜录 Quotations from Zongjing),” “Wen Xuan (文选 The Anthology),” “Bishantang Ji (碧山堂集 Collection of Bishantang),” “Baiyun Shiji (白云诗集 Collection of Baiyun’s Poems),” “北诗文集 (Collection of Bei-jian’s Poetry and Essay),” “Jiqianjia Zhu Fenlei Dugongbu Shi (集千家注分类杜工部诗 Categorized Du Gongbu Poems with Many Annotations),” “Fuhai Heshang yulu (福海和尚语录 Quotations from Fohai Monk),” “Chuanfa Zhengzong Ji (传法正宗记 Buddhism Circulation Record),” “Mingshu Huiyao 冥枢会要,” “Xinkan Wubaijia Zhuyinbian Tangliu Xiansheng Wenji (新刊五百家注音辩唐柳先生文集 Newly-published Anthology of Mr. Tang Liu with Five-Hundred Phonetic Notations),” “Wubaijia Zhuyinbian Changli Xiansheng Wenji (五百家注音 辰柳先生文集 Anthology of Mr. Chang Li with Five-Hundred Phonetic Notations),” “Banruo Xinjing Shu (般若心经疏 Prajna-paramita-hrdaya-sutra),” “Miaofa Lianhua Jing (妙法莲华经 Saddharma Pundarika Sutra),” etc.

The organizations of Chinese book-collecting made a great contribution to book communications between China and Japan. The most famous organizations were the Ashikaga School and Kanazawa-bunko libraries. There were 43 titles of the Song, Yuan and Ming editions of Chinese books (960–1644 A.D.) in Ashikaga School, which included “Zhouyi Benyi (周易本义 Original Meaning of Book of Changes),” “Shangshu Zhengyi (尚书正义 Orthodox Meaning of Book of History),” “Zhouyi Zhushu (周易注疏 Annotations of Book of Changes),” etc. The sources of these books are mainly from the donations of Mr. Uesugi, the Five-Mountain monks, the private book collection of the masters of the past dynasties, and Mr. Dechuan Yongkang (德川永康). Because the Ashikaga School took the principles of Confucian School of Thought as its tenet, they collected the main books of “Su Shu (四书Four Books),” “Liu Jing (六经 Six Classics),” “Lie Zi (列子 Liezi),” “Lao Zi (老子 Laozi),” “Shi Ji (史记 Record of History),” “Wen
Xuan (文选 Anthology),” “Qianziwen Jizhu (千字文集注 Annotations for Adaptation of the Thousand-Character Essay),” “Guzhu Meng Qiu (古注蒙求 Ancient Annotations to Meng Qiu),” “Huzeng Shizhu (胡增诗注 Annotations to the Poems of Hu Zeng),” etc. The Chinese books of Song editions of “Shangshu Zhengyi (尚书正义 Orthodox Meaning of Book of History),” “Zhouyi Zhushu (周易注疏 Annotations of Book of Changes)” were identified as “Japanese National Treasure.”

The Kanazawa-bunko library was established in the first year of the Jiannishi Period of Japan (1275 A.D.). This library mainly collected the Confucian classical works and Buddhist books. However, during the Warring States Period of Japan (1467–1567 A.D.), this library’s collection was gradually lost. Another book-collecting organization Momijiyama Bunko Library was established in 1639 A.D. Mr. Tokugawa Iemitsu was the founder of this library. Once Mr. Iemitsu Shogunate took away most of the rare books (about twenty titles) to enrich the Momijiyama Bunko Library. Mr. Tokugawa Mitsukuni once went to Kanazawa-bunko to take away books for compiling “The History of Great Japan,” but they were stored in the Tokugawa Museum. Later on, this collection were scattered and stored in such places as Sonkeikaku Bunko and Hosa Bunko through some of the Japanese seigniors.

In the Ming Dynasty, Chinese books were demanded by Chinese people in Japan, which was one of the important factors in distributing Chinese books to the east. During the period of the late Ming and early Qing Dynasties, many Chinese people were unwilling to be suppressed by the Qing Dynasty’s ruler, and they escaped to Japan with many Chinese books. After they came to Japan, they took an active part in propagating Chinese culture. One example was Mr. Zhu Shunsui (1600–1682 A.D.), who was from Yutao country of Zhejiang Province, and was proficient in “Chinese Six Classics.” He stayed in Japan for more than twenty years and was engaged in teaching Chinese classics and gained the esteem of the Japanese people. He was respectfully called “Dr. Zhu” or “Mr. Shunsui.” He had a tremendous influence in a Japanese monumental work, “The History of Great Japan,” because the chief-editor of this book was Mr. An Ijue, who was the student of Zhu Shunsui. The compilation of this masterpiece with 397 Juan, and took 50 years. The format of this book completely imitated Chinese orthodox history, which included the biographies of monarchs, the biographies of ordinary people, tables and records, which had everything necessary. The usage of the Chinese language was clear and also easy to understand. In order to satisfy the demands of the overseas Chinese in Japan, Chinese merchants carried many Chinese books to Japan for sale through the commercial boats by sea. More and more Chinese books were brought to Japan by merchants since the Japanese Nagasaki had the trade relationship with China during the Changqing Emperor Period of Japan (1596–1614 A.D.). Some of the Chinese ancient rare books were lost, but they were still well preserved in Japan. So many Chinese scholars of the Ming Dynasty went to Japan and searched for, bought, or copied and brought them back to China by merchant boats. For example, a set of the book “Qunshu Zhiyao (群书治要
Books of Compendium for Governing the Country) 50 Juan,” which was compiled by Wei Zheng of the Tang Dynasty, had already been lost in China, but there was a handwritten edition by the Kamakura monks in Kanazawa-bunko. In 1616 A.D., Tokugawa Ieyasu made an order to publish it. Later on, this book was returned to China and played a significant role in the collation of the classical books in the Qing Dynasty.

4.2 China–Korea

In 1392 A.D., after the establishment of Li’s Dynasty in Korea, the Li’s government accepted and absorbed Chinese culture and was full of enthusiasm for Chinese academic research. In this time, there were two factors that promoted Chinese book distribution in Korea.

The first factor was that Koreans had made great progress with wood blocks for printing in the early 11th century, and there were a lot of wood blocks for printing books of Chinese classics, history, works on Chinese ancient philosophy and collected works, which were damaged and lost in social disturbance during the past century. At the beginning of the 13th century, after Choe Ch’ung-hŏn seized power and made an order to reprint some books in Xijing (Pyongyang), the conditions for developing academic books was seriously stifled and was not improved. After Li’s Dynasty replaced Koryo King, the conflicts for the King position were still very chaotic and fierce. Since the beginning of the 15th century (1401–1471 A.D.) of the Taichong Period, Korea people began respecting the Chinese Confucian School of Thought and pursued academic studies. Therefore, collecting Chinese books became one of the urgent matters at this time. To take different channels, the Korean people continuously imported Chinese books. At the same time they reprinted many valuable Chinese books independently. This work was mainly undertaken by the government, but less by the common people.

The second factor was that Korea’s Li Dynasty followed the previous dynasties and carried out the Chinese imperial examination system. The contents of this examination were still China’s “Si Shu Wu Jing (四书五经 Four Books and Five Classics)” and the like. In the meantime it also imitated the phonetics of the Chinese language and created Korea’s own phonetic characters. The extant “Hunmin Jeongeum” was created according to “Hongwu Zhengyun (洪武正韵 Hongwu Orthodox Phonetics)” of the Ming Dynasty, China. In order to accomplish the above work, it was necessary to have many Chinese books to study, learn and to be used.

The emperors of the Ming Dynasty always paid attention to Korea’s Li Dynasty, and granted many Chinese books to Li’s government. The Emperor Ming Taizu (1369–1398 A.D.) sent his envoys to Korea and promulgated the imperial examination programs. In his order, it said that: “The people in Koryo, Annam and Campapura and other countries, who studied Chinese classics, could participate in the imperial examination at the provincial level in their native place, and the personnel who had passed the provincial examination could participate in the exami-
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According to the statistics by Mr. Wu Han “From the 6th year of the Yongle Emperor Period (1408 A.D.) to the 5th year of Jingtai Emperor Period (1454 A.D.), the Ming Emperors bestowed the following Chinese books on Korea: ‘Renxiao Huanghou Quanshan shu (仁孝皇后 劝善书 Persuasions of Renxiao Empress),’ ‘Xiaoci Huanghou Zhuan (孝慈皇 后传 A Biography of Xiaoci Empress),’ ‘Tongjian Gangmu (通鉴纲目 An Abridged Adaptation of a History Book from Zhou Dynasty Onwards by Zhuxi),’ ‘Daxue Yanyi (大学衍义 Derivation of the Great Learning),’ ‘Xinli Daquan (性理大全 Complete Collection of Nature & Idea),’ ‘Si Shu (四书 The Four Books: The Great Learning; The Confucius Analects; Doctrine of the Means; and Mencius),’ ‘Wu Jing (五经 The Five Classics: The Book of Changes; The Book of History; The Odes, The Book of Rites; The Spring and Autumn Annals),’ ‘Song Shi (宋史 History of Song Dynasty),’ etc.”

The envoys of Korea’s Li Dynasty always wrote a list of good books before they went to the Ming Dynasty. For example, in the tenth year of the Xuande Emperor Period of the Ming Dynasty (1435 A.D.), Korea’s Li Dynasty king Shizong sent the envoy Mr. Nanzhi to Beijing to congratulate the Hesen Festival, and also deliver a book list to ask for Chinese books. This book list included: “Zizhi tongjian (资治通鉴 A Synopsis of History from the Zhou Dynasty Onwards 1027 B.C.) which had phonetically noted by Mr. Hu Sansheng,” “Yuan Wei (源委 Original Cause) by Zhao Wanbi,” “Tongjian Qianbian (通鉴前编 A Previous Chapter of the Comprehensive Mirror) by Jin Lvxiang,” and “Lidai Biji (历代笔记 Notes of Past Dynasties) by Chen Jing,” etc.

The scale of bestowing Chinese books from the Ming Dynasty on Korea exceeded that of the previous dynasties. Also the envoys of Korea spared no effort in collecting Chinese books. They went to China to make friends with Chinese scholars of the Ming Dynasty and purchased and brought back then-popular notes, in addition to classics, history, works of ancient Chinese philosophy, collected works, and fiction, such as “Sanguo Yanyi (三国演义 Romance of Three Kingdoms)” and “Mengyou Lu (梦游录 Record of Sleepwalking).” Besides, the Korean Li’s Dynasty also published the books of “Xing Li Daquan (性理大全 Complete Collection of Nature & Idea),” “Chu Ci (楚辞 Songs of Chu – Hunan Province),” “Xiao Jing (孝经 The Filial Piety Classics),” “Zhuwengong Ji (朱文公集 Collection of Zhwengong),” “Zizhi Tongjian Gangmu (资治通 纲目 An Abridged Adaptation of a History Books from Zhou Dynasty by Mr. Zhuxi),” and more than ten others.

There were many Chinese scholars who went to Korea’s Li Dynasty and associated with the Korean people, and also brought back many Chinese books. Because the editions of books printed in Korea were of high quality, made of excellent paper, good ink and big Chinese characters, fewer errors, and exquisite binding. These books became the treasures of Chinese scholars and government officials. For example, when Mr. Wu Mingji staying in Korea, he collected the works of more than one hundred Korean poets, and compiled a book of “Chaoxian Shixuan
Qian Chengjun

(朝鲜诗选 Anthology of Korean Poems),” which was quite popular at that time. On the other hand, many Korean intellectuals used the Chinese language and wrote literary works, which were brought back to China by the merchants and the scholars. For instance, one of the famous anthologies of Korean poems, “Dong Fang Xuan (东方选 Oriental Anthology),” was spread in China, and many libraries still collect it until now.

5. DURING THE PERIOD OF THE QING DYNASTY (1644–1911 A.D.)

5.1 China – Japan

Chinese books were distributed to Japan mainly through the channel of commercial trade. These Chinese books, not only included the wood blocks for printing the editions of Ming and Qing Dynasties, but also included large quantities and contents in rich, ancient rare books and secret, collected books by famous Chinese book collectors. This was the main reason for the perfection in Chinese book collecting and bibliographic systems, and public and private book professional work in Japan.

Owing to the frequent transportation of the commercial boats, many new Chinese books were distributed to Japan immediately after been published.[10] For example, a huge serial book of “Gujin Tushu Jicheng (古今图书集成 The Integration of Ancient and Present Books)” with 10,000 Juan was compiled in Yongzheng Emperor Period 1723–1735 A.D. and was transferred to Japan within 20–30 years. Soon after the “Kangxi Zidian (康熙字典 Kangxi Dictionary),” which collected 47,035 Chinese characters was published in China, but it was pirated in nearly twenty editions in Japan. According to the statistics book of “A List of the Goods Quantity Imported from China by Chinese Commercial Boats from 1637 to 1833 A.D.,” which was written by Nagazumi Yoko of Japan, there were 742 book-cases with 151,229 volumes of Chinese books transported from Zhapu Port of Zhejiang Province, China to Japan. For example, the fiction of “Jin Ping Mei (金瓶梅 Golden Vase Plum)” was introduced to Japan in the middle Tokugawa Period, and the fiction of “Hong Lou Meng (红楼梦 Dream of Red Chamber)” was also introduced to Japan in this time. According to the records of historical material, on November 23, 1793, the No. 2 Commercial Boat of Wangkaitai of Nanjing sailed from Zhapu Port of Zhejiang Province to Japan, carrying 67 kinds of books, including “Hong Lou Meng (红楼梦 Dream of Red Chamber)” and other dramas, fiction, etc.

5.2 China–Korea

In the early Qing Dynasty, Chinese books were transferred to Korea mainly through the channel of scholars purchased and brought back to Korea personally. For example, Mr. Liu Degong, Mr. Piao Qijia, Mr. Li Demao, Mr. Hong Darong
and other people, who were not only famous men of letters of the Li Dynasty, but also they were the book-inspecting officials sent to the Qing Dynasty on a diplomatic mission. In Beijing, they extensively collected Chinese books to enrich their National Library’s collection.

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