

Essay

“Don’t be an idiot! Fight!” with the apparent title of ‘you must write it in your words as historical records by your own hand’: Translation of the poem on Tcheonzamun (the book of ‘The Thousand Character Essay’) from 673rd to 688th using Chinese characters and Korean pronunciation

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It has been found that one poem consists of 16 letters in Tcheonzamun (the book of ‘The Thousand Character Essay’). The poem consists of 16 letters from 673rd to 688th characters from the Tcheonzamun. The poem was translated both through Chinese character and Korean pronunciation. The author of Tcheonzamun wrote the poem to remain to their descendants as record for their difficulties. The meaning of the 4 characters and the whole 16 letters are possibly usable as a spoken Korean language. Tcheonzamun was written by the people of Maeg country, the ancestor of Koreans. This result is contrary to the general opinion of Korean and Chinese peoples. In other words, this precious book, Tcheonzamun was written not by Chinese but by Korean, and the book was delivered to Chinese by Koreans. The time Tcheonzamun spread into China might be before the era of Confucius (500 BC).

Key words: Tcheonzamun (the book of ‘The Thousand Character Essay’), 673rd to 688th characters from the Tcheonzamun, poem, Korean pronunciation, the people of Maeg country.

INTRODUCTION

Why got similarly between Korean, Chinese and Japanese in literature? The reason is that the three Asian countries have used common foundation; for example, Chinese characters, Tcheonzamun, etc. But there is a big difference between Chinese culture and Korean culture. A character expresses its individual meaning in the Chinese language, while several characters together

express their meaning in most of the Korean words.

In Republic of Korea, Tcheonzamun (book of ‘The Thousand Character Essay’) is sold in each book store and in street store; therefore, nearly everybody has a Tcheonzamun at home. The Koreans used to read Tcheonzamun in order to study fundamental Chinese characters and in the translation of each 4 characters,

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there are many names of Chinese men and that of the Chinese places. So the book is not interesting and we, the Koreans, cannot understand the meaning of it. It was seen that it is just same in English translation (Sturman; 2009, source: www.oocities.org/npsturman/tce.html).

When Augustin, one of the authors, has been operated of colon cancer in the year of 2011, from that time both authors, Hyeonhi and Augustin, have used the book *Tcheonzamun* at home to study Chinese. And the researchers found that *Tcheonzamun* is the collection of 63 poems, each of which is composed of 16 letters (except 63rd poem) and it was really interesting for us; therefore, we started to write our daily story in a form of essay (it is not the Essay as shown in 'The Thousand Character Essay' but that of our family life) until now (Park and Kim, 2012; Kim and Park, 2016).

In a French book written by Dallet (1874) named 'Histoire de l'Eglise de Coree (History of Korean Catholic Church)', it is written that "it is difficult or nearly impossible to know Korean history because of no document. Different Korean histories, written in Chinese characters, were only compiled of undigested facts and almost imaginary and they were emphatic. This view is the opinion of persons who could read through the Korean historic books. The Korean learned men, themselves, do not join any trust for their history and they do not have any passion for the study of their history: the learned men only restrained themselves to read Chinese books." It is written in the same book for the Korean language (Dallet, 1874) as the following

The first missionaries and travelers into China have believed that Korean language is only a dialect of Chinese language, and they have concluded that the two peoples (Korean and Chinese peoples) are absolutely the same, but now we know that the two languages and the two peoples are different. It is certain that Koreans are not Chinese in its origin but Tartar (central Asia). But the history of Korea before the 1st century (AD) is absolutely unknown. It is only known that the distinct traces of three kingdoms, who have divided the Korean peninsula, remained.

It was also written by Dallet (1874) that "The question is very difficult to solve, because the ancient Korean books fall into the complete forgetfulness and have disappeared." In China, there were several books for child who started to study the characters. The most common book for the children in China to study Chinese character is the *Tcheonzamun* (The Thousand Character Essay, Tchouen-ly in Cantonese pronunciation in the 19th century and Qian Zi Wen in Mandarin), and this is dated from Ch'in and Han (Tsin and Ha'n in Cantonese pronunciation in the 19th century) (Dallet, 1874).

Fairbank and Reischauer (1978) drew in a figure that Ch'in had existed on the sixth century BC and they wrote the following things: (1) The unification of China was accomplished by a Ch'in (Tsin in Cantonese pronunciation

in the 19th century) king who ascended the throne as a boy in 246BC (2); By 221BC the King of Ch'in (Shih Huang-ti, this name means "First Emperor") had created what he believed was a universal and everlasting empire; (3) After the First Emperor's death, Liu Pang set himself up as emperor in 202BC, and he took for his dynastic name, Han, derived from a major tributary of the Yangtze River.

Song et al. (2008) wrote the countries Maeg and Yeo had lived before the 10th century BC in Liaoning and Jilin districts. And they were able to use copper mixed with nickel, zinc, or plumb in order to make the material stronger than the copper itself.

This study focused principally on Maeg (鎡 in Chinese character) country at present report.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

HanSeogBong *Tcheonzamun* (the book of 'The Thousand Character Essay') (Kim, 2002) was used. HanSeogBong is the name of a famous calligrapher in 16th or 17th century AD in Choseon country, and he wrote the *Tcheonzamun* in his own calligraphy. Kangxizidian (1716) written in Chinese character was used and the explanation in English was also utilized (Sturman, Source: www.oocities.org/npsturman/tce.html).

The poem was translated through Chinese character. And we tried to pronounce each 4 characters and observe that the meaning of the 4 characters and the whole 16 letters are possibly usable as a spoken Korean language.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

My closest Chinese friend strictly told me the following, 'Augustin, you described the pronunciations of the poems and their meanings. As a Chinese native, I found all the meanings were distorted and 1000 miles beyond the original meanings of the Chinese poems which were written in characters. It is not appropriate to interpret or infer the original of the poem in this way'.

It is natural for my Chinese friend to say so, because all of Koreans except, the present researchers think that it is strange to translate *Tcheonzamun* using this method (Kim and Park, 2016). "However, my dearest Chinese friend, there is one thing which I want to say to you. The people usually translate only 4 Chinese characters on *Tcheonzamun* (the book of 'The Thousand Character Essay'), but the researchers have tried to translate the poem into the form of 16 characters (Park and Kim, 2012). The translation was of course done through Chinese character meaning (Kim and Park, 2015; Park and Kim, 2016a, b). The meaning of the *Tcheonzamun* poem through Chinese characters translation, was so nice that the researchers, my wife Hyeonhi and myself Augustin, have praised the author of *Tcheonzamun* so many times (Kim and Park, 2013). By the way, the researchers recently happened to find translation through Korean pronunciation method. It was such a real surprise for the

researchers, Hyeonhi and Augustin, and the researchers have thought that it is not possible to be translated on the method, the Tcheonzamun poem translation through Korean pronunciation (Kim and Park, 2016). But it was true. The researchers have succeeded to translate several poems on the very method of 10 September, 16 September, 3 October, and 22 October (Park and Kim, 2016).

Therefore, my closest Chinese friend, the researchers are at present starting again the translation. The poem consists of 16 letters from 673rd to 688th characters from the Tcheonzamun. Now we start to translate the poem through Chinese character.

Order of Korean alphabets (Korean pronunciation);
Chinese characters (Chinese pronunciation)

673-676 망가퇴소(MangGaToiSo) 孟軻敦素(meng ke dun su).

We usually give food (皿) at first to our child (子) because he (she) has no tolerance (孟). If somebody wants his horse-ridden wagon (軻) to go first (孟), the man in the wagon can go directly and fast(敦). But he cannot see in detail the thing which he must see and he must make it into record; therefore his observation results in vain (素).

677-680 사어병직(SaEoByeongZig) 史魚秉直(shi yu bing zhi)

If you want to write (史) your persecution, injury, and bad treatments (魚) by them, you must hold those facts firmly(直) in your mind and you must write it in your words as historical records by your own hand(秉).

681-684 서기중용(SeoGiZungYong) 庶幾中庸(shu ji zhong yong)

If you want to make a sentence full of little-value meaning (庶) such as quarrel (幾) between you and your neighbors, please write those trivial things(庸) and set them in the middle(中) of your sentence.

685-688 노겸근칙(NoGyeomGeunTchig) 勞謙謹勅(lao qian jin chi)

If you want to make a sentence which can be very easily known to his own country's man (勞) while it is very hard for other people to know its meaning(謙), you can mix(謹) some unknown marks(勅) to express the words secretly.

The author of Tcheonzamun wrote these poems to

remain with their descendants as record for their difficulties.

During this work of translation, we happened to try their Korean pronunciations and to repeat the sounds of the a poem composed of 16 letters from 673rd to 688th. The number is the order for the four letters from the book of The Thousand Character Essay (Tcheonzamun in Korean pronunciation). And we are going to pronounce each 4 character. The left side is Korean pronunciation of the 4 Chinese characters, and the Korean language on the right side the modern Korean and their meaning and grammar explanations.

Order of Korean alphabets (Korean pronunciation) and
Chinese characters Korean alphabets changed into the
modern Korean(and its pronunciation).

673-676 망가퇴소(MangGaToiSo) 孟軻敦素
망가졌소(MangGaZeosSo) – We were defeated!
(‘MangGaZeosSo’ is the passive form of ‘ManGaZida’ –
to be deeply damaged, and is the only polite form of this
two poems).

677-680 사어병직(SaEoByeongZig) 史魚秉直
싸워 버리지(Ssawo Beoreozi, changed into the modern
Korean) –Don't be an idiot! Fight! (‘Ssaweo’ is the
imperative form of ‘Ssauda’ – fight, and ‘Beoreozi’ is a
noun expressing a small and pitiful one.)

681-684 서기중용(SeoGiZungYong) 庶幾中庸
새끼 죽여(SaeGgi ZugYeo, changed into the modern
Korean) – Beat the bastard (‘SaeGgi’ expresses a new
born of the man or the animal, but it usually shows the
strong hatefulness or insulting expression. ‘ZugYeo’ is
the imperative form of ‘Zugida’ whose meaning is to kill.

685-688 노겸근칙(NoGyeomGeunTchig) 勞謙謹勅
오금을 쳐(OGeumEul Tcheo, changed into the modern
Korean) – Beat the back part of knee of the enemy!
(‘OGeum’ means the back part of knee, ‘OGeumEul’ is
the objective form of ‘OGeum’. ‘Tcheo’ is the imperative
form of ‘Tchida’ which means to beat something).

It was written in Kangxizidian (1716) that Maeg is a country's name and Mo-tzu said that Maeg country has a good way of living. Fairbank and Reischauer (1978) wrote that Confucianism's chief early competitor was the school of Mo-tsu, who was born around or soon after the death of Confucius (551-479BC). From the fact that the words in this poem were very similar to modern Koreans, Tcheonzamun was written by Maeg country's people. Tcheonzamun (the book of ‘The Thousand Character Essay’) has been written by the people of Maeg country, the ancestor of the Koreans.

Fairbank and Reischauer (1978) drew in a figure that Ch'in had existed on the sixth century BC, and the most

common book for the children in China to study Chinese character is the Tcheonzamun (The Thousand Character Essay, Tchouen-ly in Cantonese pronunciation in the 19th century and Qian Zi Wen in Mandarin), and this is dated from Ch'in and Han (Tsin and Ha'n in Cantonese pronunciation in the 19th century) (Dallet, 1874). Therefore, it is considered that the time of spread of Tcheonzamun into China might be before the era of Confucius (500 BC).

Conclusion

It was concluded that the Tcheonzamun (the book of 'The Thousand Character Essay') has been written by the people of Maeg country, the ancestor of the Koreans. The time of spread of Tcheonzamun into China might be before the era of Confucius (500 BC). The meaning of the 4 characters and the whole 16 letters are possibly usable as a spoken Korean language. The Tcheozamun poems express the complete hatred of the Maeg Koreans, the defeated race.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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