


REFLECTION OF SUFISM IN KOREAN ISLAMIC STUDIES - THE STATUS OF SUFISM RESEARCH TRENDS IN KOREAN ISLAMIC STUDY*

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Abstract

In this study, to overcome the challenges Islamic studies face, it is necessary to promote actively research. In other words, if a stable research foundation is laid and future human resources are nurtured in the interest of society, the research on Islam in Korea will enter a new phase. Accordingly, to raise public awareness of Islam in Korea and to nurture future human resources for Islamic study, it is necessary to find a way to use Sufism research more realistically. In this paper, to promote Islamic studies in Korea, firstly, the current status of researches on Sufism in Korea will be reviewed, and then suggestions for overcoming its challenges will be made. This study classifies articles on Sufism by year, academic field, author and publisher, and region. The reasons for setting the four criteria in this study are as follows. The Korea Citation Index (KCI) is a system with public confidence operated by the National Research Foundation (NRF). Articles on Sufism published in Korea, the research subject, were selected through the KCI. The KCI is a specialized information service that provides bibliographical information, citation information, and statistical data on journals and articles for registration and candidates for registration selected through journal evaluation by the National Research Foundation of Korea. The National Research Foundation of Korea is the nation's leading research and management organization. For this paper, among the articles on Sufism, 50 articles registered in the KCI were the subjects of the research.

Key Words: Islam, Sufism, Mission, South Korea



KORE'DE İSLAM ARAŞTIRMALARININ SUFİZM YANSIMALARI – KORE İSLAM ARAŞTIRMALARINDA SUFİZM ARAŞTIRMA EĞİLİMLERİNİN DURUMU

Özet

Bu çalışmada, Kore'de İslam araştırmalarının karşılaştığı bir takım sorunların üstesinden gelmek için İslam araştırmalarını destekleyip arttırmak gerektiğini ortaya koyacağız. Başka bir deyişle, uygun bazı araştırma vakıf ve dernekler İslam ile ilgili araştırmalara destek verirse, gelecekte toplumun gelişmesi için katkı sağlamış

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olacaktır. Kore'de toplumun İslam hakkında farkındalığını arttırmak için İslam Sufizmini daha gerçekçi bir biçimde anlamak için yeni yollar bulmak gereklidir. Bu makalede Kore'de İslam arařtırmalarını geliřtirmek için öncelikle, Kore'de halihazırda yapılmıř olan mevcut çalıřmalar ele alınacak ve sonra da karřılařılan sorunlarla ilgili tavsiyeler sunulacaktır. İslam sufizmi hakkında yapılan çalıřmalar yıllara, akademik alanlara, yazarlara, yayıncılara ve bölgelerine göre sınıflandırılacaktır. Bunu dört ölçüte gere ele almanın nedeni řöyle açıklanabilir: KCI, Ulusal Arařtırma Vakfı tarafından yürütölen toplum güvenlięi sistemidir. Kore'de Sufizm ile ilgili basılan makaleler, arařtırma konusu, Kore Alıntı Dizinleri (KCI) tarafından seçilmektedir. KCI, ölkedeki bütün yayınları takip ederek alanla ilgili uzman bilgi hizmeti veren bir kurumdur. Kore Ulusal Arařtırma Vakfı, ölkenin arařtırma ve yönetim kurumudur. Bu makalede kullanılan sufizm ile ilgili 50 makale KCI'de arařtırma konularına göre kaydedilmiřtir.

Keywords: İslam, Sufizm, Misyon, Güney Kore



Introduction

Although Islamic studies in Korea have taken place over 60 years since its inception, it still faces many challenges (Chang, 2010). However, Islamic studies in Korea still suffer from a chronic lack of research resources, including the number of researchers and limited financial support. In addition, the lack of public interest in Islamic studies has not been resolved (Park, 2017).

In this study, to overcome the challenges Islamic studies face, it is necessary to promote research actively. In other words, if a stable research foundation is laid and future human resources are nurtured in the interest of society, the research on Islam in Korea will enter a new phase. Accordingly, to raise public awareness of Islam in Korea and to nurture future human resources for Islamic study, it is necessary to find a way to use Sufism research more realistically.

In this paper, to promote Islamic studies in Korea, firstly, the current status of research on Sufism in Korea will be reviewed, and then suggestions for overcoming its challenges will be made.

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A. The Status of Sufism Research Trends in Korean Islamic Study

In this study, research achievements were classified through the four classifications mentioned earlier, and a list of Sufism research articles is attached accordingly.

1. Year

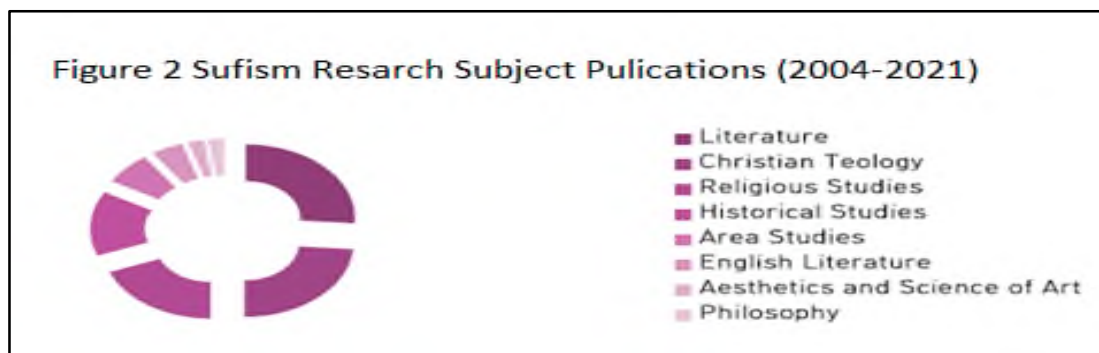


As shown in the list, there are 50 articles directly related to Sufism published in Korea from 2004 to 2021, and the number of published articles by year is as follows. 2004 (2), 2005 (2), 2006 (2), 2007 (1), 2008 (1), 2009 (6), 2010 (4), 2011 (3), 2012 (4), 2013 (4), 2014 (1), 2015 (1), 2016 (2), 2017 (3), 2018 (6), 2019 (2), 2020 (3), 2021 (3)

As shown in Figure 1, the number of published articles in 2009 increased compared to the previous period. There were 19 articles published between 2009 and 2013, accounting for 38% of the total. In 2018, the number also increased. Because the study of Sufism in Korea depends on the competence of a small number of individual researchers, the number of published articles on Sufism in Korea has also increased since 2009, when a scholar named Shin, Eun-hee was newly listed in Islamic academia.

Also, after the Arab Spring, the Korean government's interest in the Middle East increased (Um, 2012). In particular, in 2018, the Korea-UAE relationship improved to a strategic partnership, leading to cooperation in various fields such as defence, science, and technology (MOFA, 2018). At the same time, in December of the same year, the Prime Minister of Korea visited the three Maghreb countries (Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco) to promote cooperation with the Middle East (OPM, 2018).

2. Academic Divisions (by Subject)

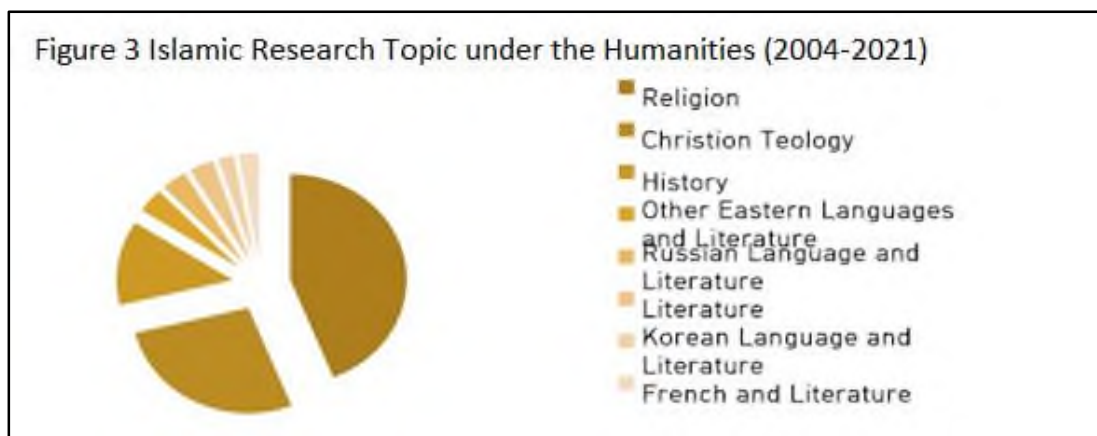


The Korean academic divisions that study Sufism include literature, religious studies, the humanities, history, regional studies, English and American literature, arts/aesthetics and were published in numbers as follows. Literature (11), Christian Theology (10), Religious Studies (8),

Humanities (8), Historical Studies (6), Area studies (3), English literature (2), Aesthetics and Science of Art (1), Philosophy (1).

The academic divisions are further divided into Persian literature, Arab literature, Indian literature, Islamic religious history, Islamic religious philosophy, and missiology.

In the case of Islamic studies research articles registered in the KCI during the same period (2004-2021), 2,489 cases were classified. Classification by academic division is as follows. Humanities (1,216), Social Sciences (985), Arts and Physical Education (61), Engineering (43), Natural Sciences (16), Agriculture, Fisheries and Oceans (9), Medicine (4) and Multidisciplinary Studies (153)



In addition, the number of the most published articles by sub-subject in the humanities field were as follows: Religion (447), Christian Theology (277), History (132), Other Humanities (106), Philosophy (40), Other Eastern Languages and Literature (38), Russian Language and Literature (36), Literature (35), Korean Language and Literature (23), French Language and Literature (19)

The sub-fields that published the most on Islamic studies in the humanities were religious studies, Christian theology, and history.

On the other hand, the second largest number of published articles on Islamic studies, by sub-subject in the social sciences after the humanities, were as follows: Regional Studies (501), Law (108), Social Sciences (72), Political Science and Diplomacy (72), Public Administration (47), Sociology (26) Education, (25), Other Social Sciences (22), Business Administration (20), Geography (20)

In other words, Korea's approach to Islamic studies under the humanities and social sciences, was made from a 'religious perspective' and a 'view of local understanding.' In Korea, Islam is being studied in various fields, and it is understood as a category of 'culture' across politics and society in the Middle East(Kim, 2004). However, the preceding data implies that Sufism is still interpreted only in the religious category due to limited research resources.

The recent development of science and technology alone cannot eliminate growing uncertainty, and as unpredictable phenomena continue to occur, the perception that understanding humans and natural phenomena should be the basis has begun to spread. As a result, convergence research from a

holistic perspective in which science and technology fields and all academic fields such as the humanities, social sciences, arts and sports fields have gradually spread. In particular, as global environmental changes have accelerated, complex socioeconomic problems have emerged, the need for convergence research in humanities and sociology also emerged. In other words, it has become an era in which problem-solving methods are needed from an integrated perspective through the grafting of various disciplines in solving increasingly diverse and complex social problems with the 4th Industrial Revolution. In particular, the need to solve problems through a humanities approach is increasing (Jeong, vd., 2018). Accordingly, in Korea also, interdisciplinary research should be pursued. In addition, various research attempts must be made, and it is necessary to study Sufism from the point of view of regional understanding.

3. Area

Islam is global. It is widely spread in the Middle East, Asia, and Europe (Jeong, 2002). However, since Korean Islamic studies have been conducted based on Middle East regional studies, the research of Sufism in Korea mirrors the regions studied in Middle East studies such as Iran, Turkey, Central Asia, and North Africa.

Despite the achievements and contributions of previous studies, application and comparative studies in various countries will be needed to increase interest in Sufism research. For example, a study on the homogeneity between Korean philosophy, religion, music, dance, and Sufism philosophy would be a good example. The aforementioned comparative study may be conducted as a joint study or a group study.

4. Researchers and Organization

The number of Sufism studies conducted in Korea include six by Shin, Eun Hee, a theology scholar, four by Shin, Gyu Seob, an Iranian literary major, and four by Jung, Se Jin.

Shin, Eun Hee published a book titled 『Sufi, All About Sufism』 in 2016 (Kyoboo, 2016). She is a professor at the Humanitas College, Kyung Hee University, and received her Ph.D. in Philosophy from Toronto University, Canada, majoring in theology and religious culture. In addition, Sufism: The Temptation of God, and many other books and translations (KHU, 2019).

A pioneer in the field of Sufism literature is Shin, Gyu Seob. He was a research professor at the Institute of Foreign Literature at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies and majored in Persian literature. He received his Ph.D. in 'The Influence of the Thoughts and Techniques of the Poems of Mohammad Iqbal on Persian Poets' (Yes24, 2011).

Jeong, Se Jin, HK professor at Hanyang University's Asia-Pacific Research Center, is researching Russia and Eurasia and the history of religion and culture. He graduated from the Department of Russian Language at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies. He received his Ph.D. in History from Moscow State University in 2005 with 'Study of Caucasus Wars and Islamic Elements in the North Caucasus in the First Half of the 19th Century'(APRC, 2020).

Sufism research has mainly appeared in the Institute of Islamic Studies, the Institute of World Literature, the Institute of Comparative Literature, and the Institute of Mission Theology.

Conclusion: Issues and Suggestions

In this paper, the Sufism thesis is divided into four criteria and the challenges that Sufism research must overcome are mentioned. Finally, we would like to present the challenges facing Sufism research and suggestions for overcoming them.

The first issue is that support for Sufism research is very insignificant or limited. Economic support for Islamic Sufism studies research is one of the common problems faced in the Korean humanities. It is expected that the support for Islamic Sufism studies research can be overcome if it can derive social implications. Here, the social implication means that the public is interested in it and can respond to the demands of modern times.

Second, it is urgent to foster future human resources for Sufism research.

In order to overcome this, Sufism scholars collaborate to hold seminars or academic conferences. College students (Arabic, Turkish, Central Asian, Russian, or regional studies) should actively participate in these activities. Moreover, by promoting these academic activities, we need to help college students to broaden their thinking on Islamic studies.

In addition, by providing opportunities to meet with various scholars related to Sufism in Korea and abroad, it is necessary to provide students with an opportunity to access information and knowledge about Sufism.

Finally, the third issue is the lack of public interest in Islamology-Sufism. In order to overcome this, it is necessary to understand the needs of the times of modern Korean society and respond to them. Information and knowledge related to Sufism should not be conveyed solely in text. Instead, information and knowledge related to Sufism should be delivered more familiarly to the public through various visual and auditory delivery methods.

The three issues mentioned above are organically interconnected. From a practical point of view, it is not easy to increase research support for Sufism in a short period. Therefore, two-step macroscopic approach is needed to expand support for Sufism research. Firstly, it is necessary to expand and accumulate research results, and secondly, it is necessary to find ways to utilize them.

In addition, to increase social interest in Sufism research, we think various activities conducted at the research institute would be helpful.

From this point of view, IMS Research Institute is expected to play various roles to draw the attention of Sufism research to the public. For example, Islamo-Mediterranean Studies was recently established in our institute, and online lectures on Islamic studies for the public and calligraphic photography exhibitions were held (Kookje, 2021).

In addition, the 'Mediterranean Electronic knowledge Atlas' (IMS, 2019) that IMS(Institute for Mediterranean Studies, Busan University of Foreign Studies, S. Korea) is attempting can be combined with Sufism research. If existing research results are provided as audio-visual materials, secondary creations related to the cultural contents business could also be produced.

So far, we have looked at the challenges of Islamic studies in Korea and the current status of Sufism research. To this end, the present status of Sufism research in Korea was divided into four criteria including: by academic division (subjects) by year, by regions, by researcher, and by institution, and the data yielded from these classifications were examined.

As previously mentioned, for the vitalization of Islamic Sufism studies research, it is essential to provide stable financial support and increase interest in nurturing future human resources. Furthermore, the study of Sufism in Korea needs to be developed flexibly by reflecting the trends and requirements of the times.

Ethics Committee Permission

This article is not part of a working group that requires ethical committee approval.



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