A Study on the Origin Issue of Jangar, a Mongolian Heroic Epic*

Lee An-na**

Abstract

The epic poem Jangar is called one of the three great epic poems of Central Asia along with Geser and Manas, being a grand series epic poem on the origin of Mongolia containing about 200,000 verses. In Jangar, the tales of heroism of Jangar and his warriors make up their own independent narrative, which is why it is classified as an anthology-type epic. It is a Medieval epic poem reflecting the tales of heroism and actions of heroes that tried to protect their tribes in the middle of complex confrontations with and invasion of the surrounding tribes, as well as the hopes and wishes of the people.

The issue of its origin has not been solved yet; discussions have continued on about when and where the epic was created and where it was spread and had influences. Geographically speaking, it is considered that the epic was created by the people of Oirad in the west of Altai. However, there are different views on the exact location. There are theories arguing that it was originated in the Kalmuks of the Volga River north of the Caspian Sea or in the Xinjiang Oirad before their move. Of the theories, the most predominant one sees Hoboksair as its origin because the region has many Jangarchs and also many chapters and different versions of Jangar. It holds some persuasive power, given the history and geopolitical location of Hoboksair and the circumstances of the epic.
The predominant theory maintains that the epic was created between the 13th century and the 18th century, but some trace back to the very early ancient times including before the 13th century, the 9th century, and the era of primitive community. A theory argues that the individual legends or small-sized legends about Djangar evolved into a full-fledged epic poem between the former half of the 15th century and the former half of the 17th century, holding back the assumption about its creation. Another theory argues that the decisive parts of the epic were created before the 17th century. Those theories reflect the attributes of oral literature.

In addition, The diversity of research on the origin of Jangar has been expanded based on the study of its different versions of different regions, but the scope of the investigator was not broad. Moreover, there is a trend of conducting research or project according to the national cultural policies in China, which presents some kind of obstacle in the pure academic aspect.

Key Words: 서사시(epic poem), 장가르(Jangar), 기원(origin), 칼묵(Kalmuk), 오이라드(Oirad), 호복사이르(Hoboksair)

1. 서론
2. <장가르> 서사시의 공간적 기원에 대한 논의
3. <장가르> 서사시의 시간적 기원에 대한 논의
4. 맺는말

1. 서론

몽골 영웅서사시 <장가르>는 몽골 영웅서사시의 압권이라 할 수 있는 작품으로, 세계적으로도 널리 알려진 서사시 가운데 하나이다. <게세르>는 티베트(혹은 홍기자에 따라 몽골) 기원의 서사시라고 하는데 반해 <장가르>는 몽골 서사시