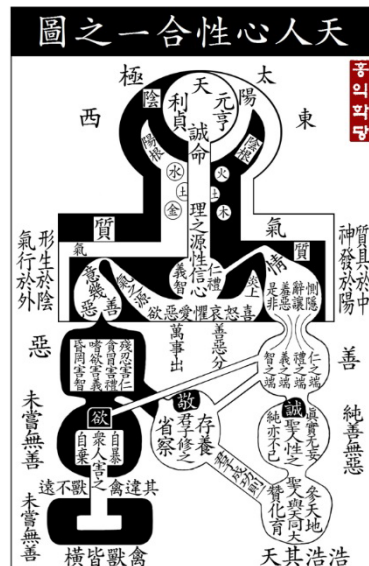


Neo-Confucianism in Korea

Gwon Geun's "Diagrams and Explanations upon Entering Learning"



Irina Sotirova

PhD, Assoc. Prof., University of Sofia, Bulgaria

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The Korean scholar Gwon Geun (1352–1409), a contemporary of the dynastic change in Korea, played a pivotal role in the distribution of Zhu Xi's teachings in Korea and for laying the foundations of Korean Neo-Confucian ideology. He created the *Iphak doseol* ("Diagrams and Explanations upon Entering Learning") for students who had approached him with questions in 1390 while he was in exile. The aim of the book was to provide easier, i.e., visual explanations of the complex Neo-Confucian doctrines. Later, Gwon Geun's book became the basis of other works of prominent Korean literati and served as a model for the creation of further diagrammatic explanations. The book systematizes and illustrates religious, philosophical and cosmological concepts that came to dominate the minds of Koreans throughout the Joseon period, the imprint of which still can be felt in mainstream Korean thinking of today.

Irina Sotirova graduated from Sofia University, Department of Korean Studies and holds a PhD from the same Department. She teaches religious beliefs in Korea, Korean language, and Sino-Korean characters.

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