

On Hong Chu's *Updated Version of the Encyclopedia of Incense*: Correcting Texts and Finding Lost Contents

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Abstract

Hong Chu (1066-1127?), a scholar-official in the Northern Song Dynasty, compiled an encyclopedia of incense during the final years of the dynasty. His encyclopedia revised and expanded the entities of the previous *Encyclopedia of Incense* compiled by Shen Li in the middle period of the dynasty. Hong thus titled his book as the "Updated Version". It can be estimated that Hong, in his middle years, had already finished the major part of the Encyclopedia by 1104. Unfortunately, as a nephew of Huang Tingjian, Hong had been entangled in the Factional Conflict at court for more than two decades. He had never had his work printed because his uncle suffered from political persecution. Hong reportedly engaged in "improper conduct" when the Jurchens were invading capital Bianliang. As a result, the court banned Hong's works and destroyed the manuscripts. Only a few texts have survived but are in disorder and plagued with mistakes. Some contents of the Encyclopedia can be found in Zeng Zao's book digest *Leishuo* and Zuo Gui's collection of books *Baichuan xuehai*. The study by the present author demonstrates that these two must have excerpted from different versions of the original manuscripts. While the former was published in the first half of the 12th century, the latter appeared about 100 years later when the Song Dynasty was about to collapse. According to *Baichuan xuehai*, the two fascicles of the Encyclopedia fall into four categories: "Species" (pin 品), "Miracles" (yi 異), "Anecdotes" (shi 事), and "Formulas" (fa 法). However, the entries excerpted in *Baichuan xuehai* were incomplete and the contents in disorder. The present study shows that there should be five, rather than four, categories in Hong's Encyclopedia, and the fifth should be the "Verses" (wen 文). Thus, the Encyclopedia should have five fascicles and the number of its entries be much higher than the 147 included in *Baichuan xuehai*. The present study has also gleaned an additional 22 entries quoted by *Leishuo* and *Junzhai dushu zhi* (*Abstracts and a Brief Introduction to the Collections of the Library Junzhai*). Moreover, Hong Chu was found to compose a short epilogue for the Encyclopedia.

Keywords: Northern Song Dynasty, Hong Chu, Updated Version of the Encyclopedia of Incense, New Version of the Encyclopedia of Incense, edition, finding lost contents

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