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Čínsky znak na obálke znamenajúci ‘východ’, pochádzajúci od Liu Xie 劉解 (1781–1840), bol vyrytý do nefritu podľa vzoru zo začiatku nášho letopočtu. · The Chinese character with the meaning ‘east’ employed on the cover is cut as a seal by Liu Xie, on the basis of models from the beginning of our era.

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Katedra východoázijských štúdií

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Adaption of the Padagogy Wheel for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language

Mateja PETROVČIČ

Abstract Based on the Anderson and Kathwohl's adaption of Bloom's taxonomy, and inspired by Schrok's Bloomin' Apps project, Allan Carrington created the Padagogy Wheel, which visually merges Bloom's Taxonomy, learning outcomes, classroom activities, and mobile apps into a single disc. Since the Chinese version of this wheel is not strictly a translation but rather an adaption, the Chinese poster may serve as a valuable resource for teachers of Chinese as a foreign language. However, due to regional restrictions in app stores across the globe, not all of the apps listed there can be used if located outside of China. This paper therefore aims to adapt the Padagogy wheel for the needs of foreign language acquisition and presents some alternative infographics that can be combined with the Padagogy Wheel to further enhance awareness of all its features.

Keywords Padagogy wheel, Bloom's taxonomy, revised taxonomy, educational apps

Introduction

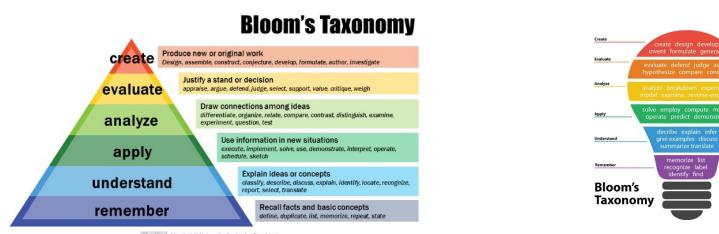
The original Bloom's Taxonomy (1956), designed by Benjamin S. Bloom and colleagues, provides a framework for classifying statements about what we expect or intend students to learn as a result of instruction. The framework was conceived as a means of facilitating the exchange of test items among educators at different universities in order to create item banks that each measured the same educational objective (Krathwohl 2002). In a time of globalization and student exchange, these ideas are relevant from the international perspective as well. This framework is also worth considering in connection to testing language proficiency of students.

Bloom saw the original Taxonomy to be more than just a measurement tool. He believed that it could serve as a common language of learning goals that would

facilitate communication across persons, subject matter, and grade levels; as a basis for determining the specific relevance of broad educational goals to a particular course or curriculum; as a means for determining the congruence of educational objectives, activities, and assessments within an educational unit, course, or curriculum; and as a spectrum of the range of educational options against which the limited scope and depth of a particular educational course or curriculum could be compared (Krathwohl 2002).

The original Taxonomy was revised forty-five years later by Anderson and Krathwohl (2001) and is referred to as the revised Taxonomy. One of the most well-known changes was the replacement of nouns with verbs to rename the six levels of cognitive learning. Terms “knowledge”, “comprehension”, “application”, “analysis”, “synthesis” and “evaluation” were updated to “remember”, “understand”, “apply”, “analyze”, “evaluate” and “create” (rather than “synthesize”), with the last two levels swapping places.

The original and revised taxonomies are often depicted as a pyramid or ladder, composed of six levels. Each ascending level of the taxonomy addresses a higher level of thinking than the previous level (Smith 2013). To turn this theoretical model into meaningful classroom learning experiences, several educators have translated each definition into a set of actionable Bloom’s Taxonomy verbs that can be used to traverse a wide range of thinking skills and provide practical ideas and inspiration for hands-on classroom activities (Mueting 2017). Figure 1 shows some infographics of Bloom’s taxonomy.



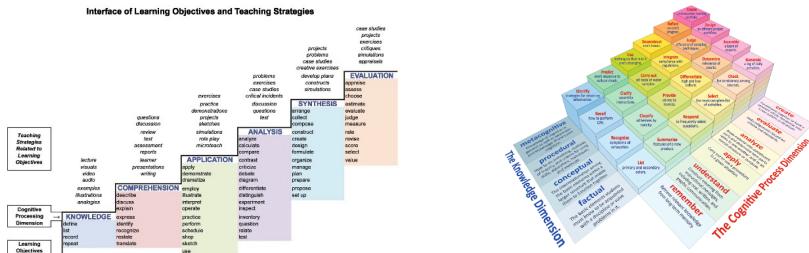


Figure 1

Different visualizations of Bloom's Taxonomy: pyramid (Armstrong 2010), bulb (Trapeze Education 2020), staircase (from Astier 2021), 3D representation (Heer 2012).

1 Bloom's Digital Taxonomy

Advances in technology have led to the creation of Bloom's Digital Taxonomy, which is a technology-friendly update of the classical framework. Its purpose is to inform instructors on how to use technology and digital tools to facilitate student learning experiences and outcomes. It is often emphasized that the focus should not be placed on the tools themselves, but rather on how these tools can be used at different levels (Sneed 2016). Figure 2 below provides some examples of activities with digital tools that relate to the six levels of the Revised Taxonomy.

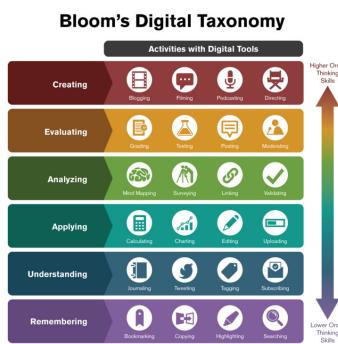


Figure 2

Example of Bloom's digital taxonomy (by Ron Carranza in Sneed 2016).

Similarly, just as each category of the Revised Taxonomy has certain key verbs associated with it, so does the digital upgrade contain sets of Bloom's Digital Taxonomy Verbs. Figure 3 shows Churches' demonstration of this upgrade.

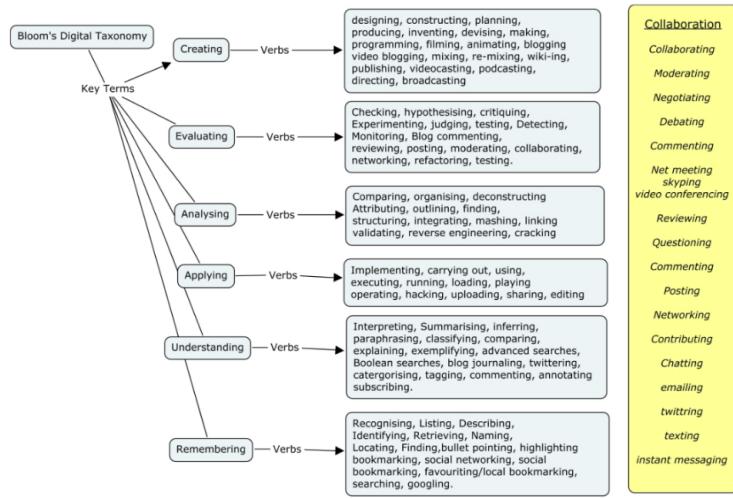


Figure 3
Mind map of Bloom's Revised Digital Taxonomy (Churches 2008).

Churches also notes that while both the original and revised taxonomies focus on the cognitive domain, the Digital Taxonomy is not limited to the cognitive domain, but includes cognitive elements as well as methods and tools. However, as in the previous taxonomies, the cognitive level is defined by the quality of the activity or process, rather than the activity or process itself (Churches 2008, 2).

Various infographics have been created to visualize these verbs. Frequently borrowed and cited is the version created by Global Digital Citizen's Foundation¹ or TeachThought Staff. This version was also translated into Chinese by *Yiming jiaoyu* 易明教育 (Easy Education).

¹ Their webpage is no longer active, but you can follow them on Facebook.



Figure 4

Bloom's Digital Taxonomy Verbs (TeachThought Staff 2016; Yiming jiaoyu [易明教育] 2019).

Consequently, various authors have proposed their choice of digital tools that could be used at different levels of Bloom's Revised Taxonomy. Consider, for example, Teachthought,² Educatorstechnology,³ or Bloomin' apps by Kathy Schrock⁴ and her selection of iPad/Android/Online tools/G Suite Apps that connect to this taxonomy framework.

One of the visualizations that have already been translated into several foreign languages, is Carrington's Padagogy Wheel. The following chapter will first briefly introduce the development of the Padagogy Wheel, and then narrow down to its Chinese part.

2 The Pedagogy Wheel

The seemingly misspelled “Padagogy Wheel” (henceforth abbreviated as PW) was created by Allan Carrington in 2012; it was designed to link Bloom’s Taxonomy to learning outcomes, activities, and Apple iPad apps, hence the name “padagogy” instead of “pedagogy”.⁵

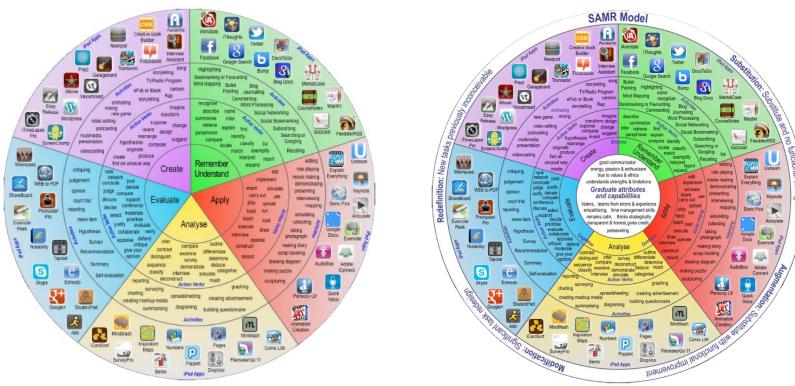
² Available at <https://www.teachthought.com/>

³ Available at <https://www.educatorstechnology.com/>

⁴ Available at <https://www.schrockguide.net/>

⁵ Carrington notes that credits must be given to other scholars as well. In particular, the basic taxonomy wheel leads back to Sharon Artley, who created it based on the adaption of Kathwohl and

Version 1.0 (published June 8, 2012) integrated Web 2.0 features such as social media, blogs, wikis, image or video sharing sites, Web applications, etc., and introduced a selection of 62 iPad apps that were organized by how they could be used by activities. Version 2.0 (published May 28, 2013) added a core wheel and a SAMR technology integration model. The core focused on the questions of what does an excellent graduate look like, what are their attributes, and what are their employable capabilities. Version 3.0 that followed a few weeks later (published 09-06-2013) expanded the emphasis on the innermost part of the wheel and added a motivation model. The next Version 4.0 (published March 1, 2015) linked to 122 most popular educational iPad apps and added app selection criteria to help educators make better app decisions. Version 4.1, released in January 2016, linked 126 updated apps to the Apple iTunes store and added additional activities in Bloom's taxonomy (Carrington 2016). Figure 5 below provides a visual view of what the first four versions of Padagogy wheel looked like.



Anderson's (2001) adaption of Bloom (1956). Further acknowledgements go to Kathy Schrock (2011) and her Bloomin' Apps, where the App selection criteria is based on Diane Darrow's work. The list of action verbs in V5.0 is reportedly taken from "Bloom's Digital Taxonomy Verbs" published by GlobalDigitalCitizen.org (TeachThought Staff 2016) (Carrington 2016).

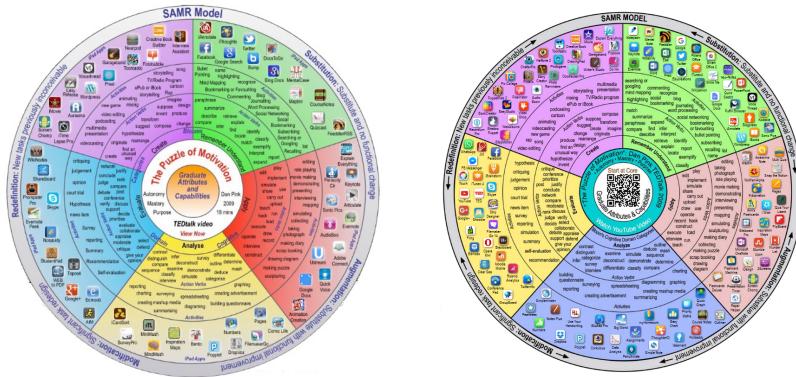


Figure 5

Previous versions of Padagogy Wheel (V1.0 top left; V2.0 top right;

V3.0 bottom left; V4.1 bottom right) (Carrington 2016).

Carrington also encouraged scholars from non-English speaking regions to translate the Padagogy wheel into languages other than English. Version 4 (and later Version 5) was translated into various languages, namely Arabic, Chinese, Czech, Estonian, French, German, Gujarati, Hebrew, Hindi, Italian, Norwegian, Russian, Slovenian, Spanish, Swedish and Tamil (in alphabetical order).⁶ As the author has announced, more translations are planned to be released in the future.

The latest Version 5.0 was released in September 2016. In its present form, it is available for both Apple iOS and Android users and includes more than 180 apps for each platform. All apps are linked to the iTunes App Store or Google Play. Compared to previous versions, V5.0 is a bit more similar to Bloom's taxonomy, at least in terms of sections. The original five-part chart has become a six-part chart, as the "Remember Understand" section has been split into two parts, namely "Remember" and "Understand" (see Figure 6 below).

6 For more information, see the Padagogy Wheel First Language Poster Versions (<https://designingoutcomes.com/translations/>).

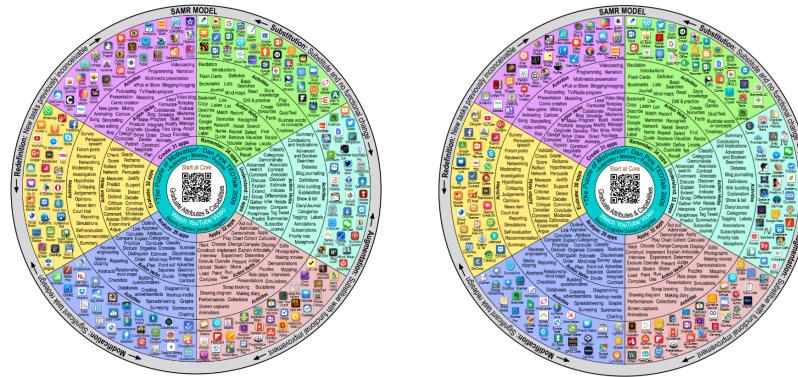


Figure 6
The Padagogy Wheel ENG V5.0 for Apple iOS (L) and Android (R) (Carrington 2016).

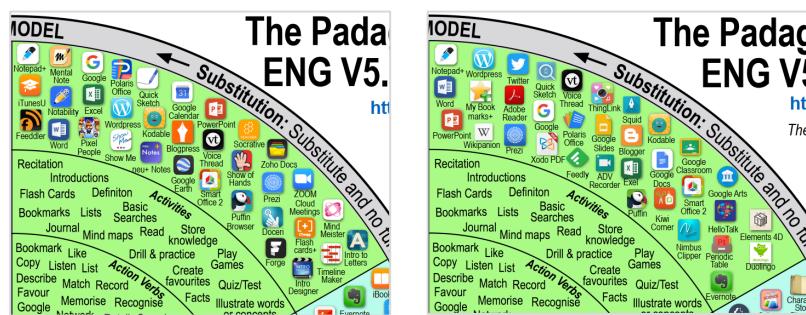
In short, the present Padagogy Wheel is divided into six segments that are directly related to the cognitive domains of Bloom's Taxonomy. Within the six segments of the wheel, each domain is further equipped with related action verbs, activities, and iPad/Android apps. The goal of the Padagogy Wheel is for students to access the higher order thinking of Bloom's Taxonomy through mobile technology. The wheel allows teachers to develop outcome-oriented lessons by choosing an outcome, activity, and form of analysis or creativity. The Padagogy Wheel was designed to target engagement through immersive learning.

The concept of the Padagogy wheel or similar infographics is very useful and visually reminds teachers of the different aspects they should keep in mind, however, to make it even more applicable for teaching Chinese as a foreign language, we suggest modification of the app selection to better fit to our specific needs.

Although the famous slogan “it is not about the apps, it is about the pedagogy” holds back educators from feeling too excited about the apps, which are in fact a very attractive part of the wheel. One click takes the user to the relevant preview page in the App Store or Google Play. The suggested apps offer a very wide variety of usage, regardless of one’s specialization. Given that the Padagogy Wheel is designed for general use, this is also expected.

Smith (2013) advises educators to start with exploring the apps on the Padagogy Wheel, considering the scope of the apps, their common uses, purchase price, etc. After exploring these apps, teachers may choose to customize the Padagogy Wheel with additional apps that are relevant to their specialty.

This job was done in part with the Chinese translation of the Padagogy Wheel. While, for example, the app gear is almost identical in the English, Slovene and Czech versions, it is very different in the corresponding Chinese version (see Figure 7 below).⁷ For teachers of Chinese as a foreign language, the translated version is of great interest, not only from the perspective that these digital tools connect with the taxonomy framework, but also from the perspective that our graduate students will eventually be required to become familiar with them in their professional work. By incorporating Chinese digital tools in the pedagogical process, we would therefore accomplish two different things at the same time.



7 Recent versions of the Padagogy Wheel, Version 5.0:

- https://designingoutcomes.com/assets/PadWheelV5/PW_ENG_V5.0_Android_PRINT.pdf
- https://designingoutcomes.com/assets/PadWheelV5/PW_ENG_V5.0_Apple_iOS_PRINT.pdf
- https://designingoutcomes.com/assets/PadWheelV5/PW_SLV_V5.0_Android_PRINT.pdf
- https://designingoutcomes.com/assets/PadWheelV5/PW_SLV_V5.0_Apple_PRINT.pdf
- https://designingoutcomes.com/assets/PadWheelV5/PW_CZE_V5.0_Android_PRINT.pdf
- https://designingoutcomes.com/assets/PadWheelV5/PW_CZE_V5.0_Apple_iOS_PRINT.pdf
- https://designingoutcomes.com/assets/PadWheelV5/PW_CHI_V5.0_Android_PRINT.pdf
- https://designingoutcomes.com/assets/PadWheelV5/PW_CHI_V5.0_Apple_PRINT.pdf

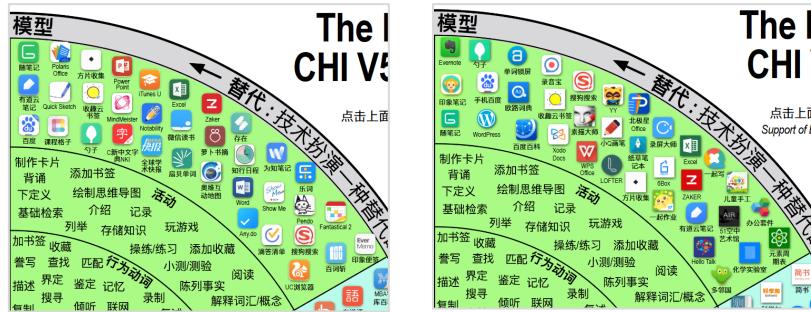


Figure 7

Apps of the “Remember” section in Apple iOS version (L) and Android version (R) for English and Chinese.

A technical detail is also worth mentioning. In the iOS versions, users get to the App Store. The English PW mostly connects to the App Store Australia.⁸ The same can be observed, for example, with the PW poster in Slovenian or other languages. The Chinese PW for iOS redirects the user to the App Store China.⁹ There are some regional differences, but they are still within the scope of the App Store.

On the other hand, the Android versions are different. While the English PW (and all other languages if available) redirects the user to the Google Play Store,¹⁰ the Chinese PW connects the user to the Tengxun Yingyongbao 腾讯应用宝.¹¹ In this respect, the Chinese PW is notably different from the other equivalents.

8 Link on the poster: <https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/>, redirected to: <https://apps.apple.com/au/app/>

9 Link on the poster: <https://itunes.apple.com/cn/app/>, redirected to: <https://apps.apple.com/cn/app/>

10 Link on the poster: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/>

11 Link on the poster: <https://sj.qq.com/myapp/>, redirected to: <https://cftweb.3g.qq.com/qqappstore/index>

3 Modification of the Padagogy Wheel

The initial analysis of the 35 Apps from the “Remember” section of the poster “The Padagogy 轮 CHI V5.0 Android” showed that 19 apps are no longer available. They are either outdated or at least not accessible from the European region.

In terms of timeline, this is not very surprising since the Chinese version was released back in January 2018. Mobile apps are never final products, they are driven by changes in needs and market trends, and thus need to be updated frequently. According to Shatz (2020), more than half of the 100 most successful apps on the App Store are updated every nine days or less, and users are advised to update their apps at least once a month.

On the other hand, there is also a socio-political dimension to this issue. For example, Duolingo, which is listed in the English version of PW V5.0 and was also listed as *Duolinguo* 多邻国 in the Chinese version of PW V5.0, disappeared from the app store as a result of China’s crackdown on off-campus tutoring and education, which has extended to overseas language-learning apps such as Duolingo, Memrise and Beelinguapp (Borak 2021). For a time, the Duolingo app continued to be available on the Chinese Apple App Store, but at the time of writing this paper, it is no longer available.¹²

Nevertheless, the app gear is still worth considering. For example, *Oulu cidian* 欧路词典 (European dictionary)¹³ is available as an online tool or mobile app for different platforms. Primarily aimed at learning English, it is also useful for learning Chinese. As a dictionary, it can be used at different cognitive levels, depending on the lesson design.

The Chinese version of Padagogy Wheel has several applications that are designed to improve the user’s English, for example *Heziyu Yingyu* 盒子鱼英语 (Boxfish English), *Liuli shuo® Yingyu* 流利说®英语 (Fluent®English), *Keke Yingyu* 可可英语 (Keke English), etc.

There is another group of apps designed to support children’s education, such as *Xiaohe xuexi* 小盒学习 (Learn with Xiaohe), *Zuoyebang* 作业帮 (Homework help), *Qimiao shuxue nongchang* 奇妙数学农场 (Wonderful math farm; Baby Panda’s

¹² A similar app *Linguo shuo—Yingyu kouyu tingli danci xunlian* 邻国说—英语口语听力单词训练 (Linguo Says—English speaking and listening vocabulary training) is reminiscent of Duolingo.

¹³ The Web version available at <https://dict.eudic.net/>

Math Farm), etc. Although these apps are not designed for learning Chinese as a foreign language, they still provide several opportunities to experience authentic, real-life use of Chinese. For example, while Chinese children improve their math skills in the above-mentioned game, students of Chinese may learn new vocabulary by listening to the accompanying stories or by executing the instructions they hear. Since this app is designed as a game, users receive real-time feedback on their activities and progress.

While the Baby Panda's Math Farm is aimed at preschool kids, the Homework help focuses on school-age children and their parents. The content of this app is very useful not only for language learning, but also for getting an overview of Chinese literature, graded essays, etc.

Figure 8 shows an example of a Li Bai's poem *Gu lang yue xing* 古朗月行 (Gulang Month Trip) from the “must-know-poems” section. The poems feature recordings in Classical and Standard Chinese, cultural background, and further additional information. Since the content is aimed at the primary school children in China, this resource can serve as an excellent supplementary source of reading materials in Chinese. Easy to understand, yet not simplified for the needs of foreign language acquisition is one of the very appreciated features of these reading materials.

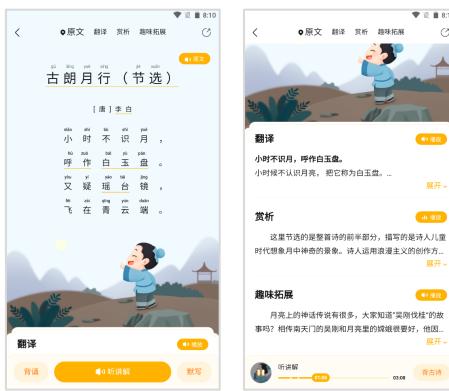


Figure 8
Li Bai's poem *Gu lang yue xing* 古朗月行 (Gulang Month Trip) and its further options (Homework help app).

Another section of the Homework help app is a collection of selected written assignments from students. Each text is labeled with the grade, word count etc. As such, it can be used not only as authentic reading material, but also as a writing assignment for foreign students, opening up several possibilities for advanced level of thinking and language use.

In order to access all the content, users are required to register using their local phone number, which constitutes an obstacle for non-local users. However, despite the limited accessibility, the proposed tool is worth exploring.

As noted above, the concept of Padagogy Wheel allows and even encourages educators to make some adjustments if needed. Taking advantage of the Chinese version of PW V5.0 is one way to enhance its value. The other way is to add a custom selection of apps.

Carrington notes that there are many readily available educational applications, but as professionals we are expected to critically examine the application and determine if and how it is appropriate to meet the needs of students (Carrington 2016). Drawing on Diane Darrow and her Eduopia (Darrow 2002), Carrington presets the following App Selection Criteria:

1. Remembering Criteria: Apps that fall into the “remembering” stage improve the user’s ability to define terms, identify facts, and recall and locate information. They ask users to select an answer from multiple options, find a match, sequence the content, or fill in the gaps.
2. Understanding Criteria: Apps that fall into this “understanding” stage provide opportunities for students to explain ideas or concepts. These apps step away from selecting of the “correct” answer and introduce a more open-ended format that allows students to summarize the content and translate the meaning.
3. Applying Criteria: Apps that fall into the “applying” stage provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their ability to implement the procedures and methods they have learned. They also highlight the ability to apply concepts in unfamiliar settings.
4. Analyzing Criteria: Apps that fall into the “analyzing” stage improve the user’s ability to differentiate between relevant and irrelevant, determine relationships, and recognize the organization of content.
5. Evaluating Criteria: Apps that fall into the “evaluating” stage improve the user’s ability to judge material or methods based on criteria that they have set

themselves or from external sources. They help students assess the reliability, accuracy, quality, and effectiveness of content and make informed decisions.

6. Creating Criteria: Apps that fall into the “creating” stage provide opportunities for students to generate ideas, design plans, and produce products.

Since the G Suite tools and other similar applications offer a wide range of possibilities for implementing higher order thinking (HOT) skills¹⁴ and are already included in existing versions of the Padagogy Wheel, we consider them sufficiently versatile for our educational needs and there is no need to replace them with more specific apps. However, in terms of lower order thinking (LOT) skills, the proposed apps are not specific enough. Several other existing tools are aimed specifically at teachers/learners of Chinese as a foreign language. We therefore propose to re-equip especially the “Remember” and “Understand” sections of the App toolkit.

3.1 “Remember” section

Many digital tools for learning Chinese or other foreign languages are very suitable for the “remembering” phase of learning. The first to mention here are flashcards, a digital version of the traditional paper cards, which are used for improving memory by practicing information retrieval. Compared to their paper counterparts, the apps are superior due to their integrated spaced repetition system, which ensures that the learnt content recurs just before the learner would forget it. Ideally, the information stays fresh in one’s mind at all times.

There are several websites and apps that can be used to create or share flashcards, such as *Anki*, *Brainscape*, *Cram* and *Quizlet*. The icons in Table 1 (and all further tables) link to Google Play, the App Store or a website.

¹⁴ Higher order thinking (HOT) includes Analyzing, Evaluating, and Creating; on the other hand, Lower order thinking (LOW) includes Remembering, Understanding, and Applying.

Table 1
Android, iOS and Web flashcard apps (sample)

App	Android	iOS	Web
Anki			
TOFU Learn			
Brainscape			
Cram			
Quizlet			

Anki is the most flexible and complex tool, suitable for both basic and advanced users. Learners can create their own flashcards or download a number of shared decks. It runs on various platforms and is free to use, except for the iOS app, which is available for a one-time payment. *TOFU Learn* is another brilliant flashcard app that includes several special features for Chinese learners, such as three difficulty levels of character writing in traditional and simplified sets (stroke-by-stroke demonstration, character outline, blank space), pronunciation, customizable tone coloring, a full set of HSK 1-6 word lists, including the new HSK 1-9 word list. There is also a built-in dictionary with character decomposition and examples.

Brainscape is so easy to use that it does not require any special tutorial or user manual. Educators can share their decks with students for free, however, upgrade to the Pro version is required to unlock several useful features. *Cram* is also fairly user-friendly. Flashcards can be created in a few clicks and automatically transform into either a quiz or two types of games. The last of the apps mentioned above, *Quizlet*, is also well-known among teachers of Chinese as a foreign language, as evidenced by several existing decks on their website.¹⁵

¹⁵ This list is by no means exhaustive and serves merely as an example of how to refine the Padagogy Wheel to better suit our specific needs.

These apps function as general memorization tools and are not restricted to Chinese. Besides, flashcards are optimally effective when used regularly and on daily basis. However, since not all learners are highly disciplined, some learning apps have included elements of extrinsic motivation, for example, XPs, virtual money, stars, crowns, etc. To make learning more appealing, different products have provided a variety of learning activities, such as interactive lessons, games, short stories, news, podcasts, music videos, movie trailers, sketches, and more. Learning progress is recorded through close-ended quizzes and is not based on self-evaluation.

Among language learning apps that offer a variety of languages, including Chinese, are *Duolingo*, *FluentU*, *Mango Languages*, *Memrise*, *Mondly*, *Rosetta Stone*, *LingoDeer* and many others (see Table 2 for some sample apps). They can be used as complementary practice materials, which may provide a different insight into the target language, but as these apps are learning systems on their own, educators cannot tailor the content to the specific needs of their classes.¹⁶

Table 2
Android, iOS and Web general language learning apps (sample)

App	Android	iOS	Web
Duolingo			duolingo
FluentU			FluentU
Memrise			MEM RISE
Mondly			mondly

Apps that are designed specifically for Chinese and function as closed learning systems include *HelloChinese*, *ChineseSkill*, *Ninchanese*, *Hanyu Plus*, *Skritter* (see Table 3), and others. These apps are often subscription-based, with certain trial

¹⁶ *Duolingo* and *HelloTalk* are already listed in the PW V5.0.

versions available for free, so it is worth exploring them before incorporating them into an organized pedagogical process.

Table 3
Android, iOS and Web gamified apps (sample)

App	Android	iOS	Web
HelloChinese			
ChineseSkill			
Ninchanese		/	 Ninchanese
M Mandarin			 M Mandarin
ChinesePod			 ChinesePod
Skritter			

Since a yearly subscription to Skritter costs more than a hundred Euros, Table 4 presents some alternative tools that could be added to a customized Padagogy Wheel for the purpose of learning the stroke order of characters.

Table 4
Online tools for character writing (sample)

App	Web	URL
Hanziwu		https://www.hanzi5.com/
Arch Chinese		https://www.archchinese.com/
Yellowbridge		https://www.yellowbridge.com/chinese/character-dictionary.php
StrokeOrder.info		http://www.strokeorder.info/
Stroke Order (MOE)		https://stroke-order.learningweb.moe.edu.tw/

From the “Remember” stage onwards, good dictionaries are always an indispensable tool. That is why we suggest including links to some of the best Chinese dictionary apps and add-ons in the Padagogy Wheel. Table 5 provides several options. As shown in Table 5, not all dictionaries are available for all platforms, so it is effective to use more of them.

Table 5
Android, iOS and browser add-on dictionaries (sample)

App	Android	iOS	Web
Pleco			/
Zhongwen	/	/	
MDBG	/	/	
LineDict			

3.2 “Understand” section

For the “Understand” section app gear, we suggest some grammar apps and reading tools, as shown in Table 6. The first three grammar apps are free and available offline, whereas the last one in this list is subscription-based.

The *Chairman’s Bao* is a graded news-based reader for students of Chinese language, and *Du Chinese* covers topics such as daily life in China, funny stories, business, and the latest trends in China. One part of these apps is free, but most of the content is limited to premium users.

Table 6
Selected grammar and reading tools (sample)

App	Android	iOS
Chinese Grammar		
Chinese Grammar – Improve your skill		
Chinese Grammar 2022		
Learn Chinese Grammar		
The Chairman's Bao		
Du Chinese		

3.3 “Apply” section

In the “Apply” section, teachers might suggest students to find language partners; in the virtual environment, language exchange can be performed through apps such as *Tandem* or *HiNative*, where native speakers of different languages help each other. By conversing with other members of this community, students can improve their language skills and develop intercultural competences. At the same time, they should be able to evaluate and assess whether the answers obtained are reliable and accurate, which already falls into the domain of higher order thinking.

Table 7
Language learning community apps (sample)

App	Android	iOS	Web
Tandem			
HiNative			

The above-mentioned tools are only a few of the many that are on the market. Readers are encouraged to consider Sheena Dizon, Tilday and Michaelcristiano’s

blog “The 23 Must-Try Apps for Learning Mandarin Chinese Effectively in 2022”¹⁷ for more detailed information, or compare these apps with other selections, such as *All Language Resources*, *Hacking Chinese*, *Dig Mandarin*, etc.

3.4 Higher order thinking levels

As noted above, many apps of the Padagogy Wheel can be used in a variety of ways, and the complexity of the activities depends mainly on the participants’ engagement, not the apps. However, we believe that some additional tools should be added to the second half of the PW’s app gear. Specifically, as language proficiency advances, learners should make use of language corpora, AI-based translation services, and critically evaluate the retrieved information to improve their language proficiency.

The following corpora in Table 8 are only available via the web interface and do not have corresponding Android or iOS apps, however, they are very valuable resources. The *Hanku corpus* is a monolingual, synchronous corpus of Chinese that can be used free of charge, with free registration required to access the linguistic data (Gajdoš, Garabík, and Benická 2016). As stated on the website, this corpus can be used in linguistic research and language teaching. However, based on our experience and in line with Ištvanova’s observations, specialized training for teachers and students in corpus analysis is necessary to ensure successful application of corpora in classroom instruction (Ištvanová 2021). Steps towards simplification and user-friendly visualization have been made in *SketchEngine*, which is therefore more suitable for less experienced users, but is limited to subscribers with different pricing plans. Visualization of linguistic data was recently addressed by Gajdošová and Gajdoš (2022).

¹⁷ Available at https://www.fluentu.com/blog/chinese/best-apps-to-learn-mandarin-chinese/#toc_23

Table 8
Corpora and AI-based translation services (sample)

App	Android	iOS	Web
Hanku	/	/	
SketchEngine	/	/	
Baidu Translate; 百度翻译			
Reverso			
Linguee			
DeepL Translate			

The last four items in Table 8 are AI-based translation services. Comparing translations across different apps, including *Google Translate* or *Baidu Translate*, can offer endless opportunities for analysis, evaluation or creativity in the educational process.

4 Adaption of the Padagogy Wheel

A customized Padagogy Wheel, tailored to meet specifics of Chinese language teaching and learning, would therefore first remove some apps that no longer exist (e.g., *Quick Sketch*, *Kodable*, *Kiwi Corner*) or are not relevant for teaching Chinese as a foreign language (e.g., *Periodic Table*, *Sky Map*, *Elements 4D*), and replace them with more language-oriented apps.

One source of apps could be the Chinese version of the PW, followed by flashcard apps with the spaced repetition system (SRS) that already offer Chinese decks but are also flexible enough to allow educators and students to create their own decks of flashcards. At this point, some closed-question quiz apps can be added to the list. Since learning characters is typically related to Asian languages, a few apps designed for that would also be welcome. Chinese oriented Padagogy Wheel would also include information about useful dictionaries, grammar apps,

reading materials, podcasts, corpora, etc. Products that are designed as closed learning systems can only serve as supplementary tools because they do not offer much flexibility to educators. Table 9 lists some suggested tools.

Table 9
App gear of the customized PW (Android & Web version)

App Chinese PW	Android					
Fleshcards	 作业帮	 欧路词典	 Little Panda	 百度	 知乎	
Characters, stroke order	 Anki	 TOFU	 Cram	 YellowBridge	 Quizlet	 Stroke Order Info
Dictionaries	 Hanziwu	 ArchChinese	 Zhongwen	 MDBG	 LineDict	 Skitter
Grammar	 Pleco	 Zhongwen	 Zhongwen	 MDBG	 GrammarWili	
Corpora and translators	 by Nincha	 by FlyHigh	 Phrasebook	 DeelP	 BaiduFanyi	
Supplementary Chinese learning apps	 Hanku	 SkE	 Linguee	 HelloChinese	 ChineseSkill	 Ninchanese
Reading, watching, listening	 Duolingo	 Memrise	 FluentU	 HelloTalk	 Little Fox	 ChinesePod
Speakers' community	 TCN	 DuChinese	 EasyNews	 儿童故事		
Teacher's community	 Tandem	 HiNative	 HelloTalk			
	 Twinkl	 LiveWorksheets				

Even if teachers are equipped with the app gear, they should not forget the core of the Padagogy Wheel and all its compositional parts. After all, the common thread of this and similar infographics is the revised taxonomy. Therefore, it is suggested to remind ourselves of this system as a whole. To recap the main ideas, we might also recall *Bloom's Taxonomy Teacher Planning Kit*¹⁸ or Heer's (2012) *3D representation of the revised taxonomy* of the cognitive domain.¹⁹ As an accessory, teachers could also have a look at the “periodic table of Bloom's Digital Taxonomy Activities”²⁰ to create various activities.

5 Conclusion

The Padagogy Wheel was designed to serve as a model that could be applied to everything from curriculum planning, development, writing learning objectives and designing student-centered activities. The added applications allow teachers to further enhance their activities. Ultimately, instructors can use the Padagogy Wheel to increase student engagement, improve student outcomes, and scaffold learning of higher order concepts (Smith 2013). Students in higher education are already fairly familiar with mobile devices and feel comfortable using their phones. With this new learner in mind, digital technologies have been implemented as learning tools in classrooms. Since the Padagogy Wheel was designed for a broader use, not all apps are equally useful. Therefore, in this paper, we have customized the app gear to better suit our needs, i.e., teaching Chinese as a foreign language.

Work has only just begun with the proposed list of applications. To our knowledge, no unbiased, comprehensive and detailed comparison of tools is as yet available. Several bloggers have already proposed their *top selections*, but often without in-depth analysis. Moreover, information about the accessibility is often well hidden in these products. Although the phrase “Free, Offers In-App Purchases” indicates that a given app is partly free and partly available for a

¹⁸ Available at <https://lccfestivaloflearning2012.wordpress.com/olta-2012-13/> or <https://www.cebm.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Blooms-Taxonomy-Teacher-Planning-Kit.pdf>.

¹⁹ Available at <https://www.teachthought.com/storage/2016/05/3d-blooms-c.png>.

²⁰ Available at https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZpG7j-nyCGOTxEdjmLg9p_anU2doHRcg/view.

payment, it is not obvious what this actually means. Choosing the optimal apps for your needs is often akin to buying a pig in a poke. Under the influence of different marketing approaches and strategies, customers are often attracted to an app and it may take a while for the pricing plans to emerge. Or conversely, some apps get locked out after a few minutes or finger swipes. Teachers or learners cannot afford to test all options or subscribe to all apps on their own. However, not using digital tools would be a greater pity.

Last but not least, it is worth using Bloom's theoretical framework and its further adaptions at different levels, such as from designing student-centered activities and writing learning objectives to curriculum planning and defining standards in the international student and staff exchange.

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Manifestations of the Japanese View on Nature in the Middle Ages: A Study of a Chinese-language Poem *Minzanka* by Sesson Yūbai and its Comparison to Contemporary Poems Written in Japanese

Vít ULMAN

Abstract This paper describes Japanese Zen monk Sesson Yūbai's (1290–1347) long poem *Minzanka* written in Chinese, especially focusing on the way its formal properties influence the way in which natural phenomena are described in it. Afterwards, these stylistic features are contrasted with Japanese language poetry of the period, including *waka*, *renga*, and *wakan renku* forms, and also with *Tsurezuregusa*, a prosaic Medieval Japanese text. The full working translation of *Minzanka* is included in the paper.

Keywords Japanese literature, Chinese literature, Asian poetry, Zen monk poetry · *Minzanka* 岷山歌, Sesson Yūbai 雪村友梅 (1290–1347)

Introduction

This paper aims to describe and analyze Japanese Zen monk Sesson Yūbai's 雪村友梅 (1290–1347) long poem *Minzanka* (Chin. *Minshange*) 岷山歌¹ written in Chinese and compare it to Japanese language texts written broadly during the Japanese Middle Ages—from the 12th to the 15th century. The paper will deal mostly with longer compositions, although comparison to *waka* poetry will be also drawn. The paper focuses thematically on the description of nature in the

¹ This analysis is made on the basis of the Genroku version printed by Hayashi Gitan in Kyōto.

aforementioned texts and aims to explain why description of natural phenomena varies broadly between these texts and in what way is this related to the formal constraints of poetic forms.

1 *Minzanka and Natural Phenomena*

First it is necessary to elucidate the situation in which this poem *Minzanka* was written. The life story of its author is available to us through his hagiography, and with its twists it reads almost like a script of a Hollywood movie. Sesson Yūbai was a student of Issan Ichinei 一山一寧 (Chin. Yishan Yining, 1247–28 November 1317), a Chinese Zen monk crucial for establishing the Rinzai Zen sect in Japan. He learned Chinese, among other things, very early, and he left for China at the age of just 18 years.

His aim was to study in one of the prestigious Chinese monasteries as was customary for promising Japanese Zen monks of the time. His journey to China started quite auspiciously, and he quickly established himself at one of the Zen (or Chan in Chinese) monasteries situated not far from the city of Ningbo, called Mingzhou at the time, in the modern province of Jiangxi. However, probably because of a *wakō* pirate² attack on Mingzhou that happened soon after, he was suspected to be a spy. He was arrested, imprisoned, tortured and even scheduled for execution. Luckily, his execution was cancelled, and he was sent first to Chang'an to be interned in a monastery there; after three years spent near Chang'an, he was moved again for an unknown reason to the city of Chengdu in Sichuan, almost 2000 km from the seashore (Imatani 1994, 64–76).

Sichuan, known by its ancient name Shu 蜀, was at the time quite a remote area separated from the Central Plains by steep mountain ranges and deep ravines. Connecting them was the famous (and famously difficult) Shu Road which will be important for the analysis of *Minzanka*.

² So called Japanese pirates, even though they were actually a group people of mixed origin, mainly Chinese and Japanese.

Sesson Yūbai spent almost ten years in Sichuan, thus becoming possibly the first known Japanese to enter the Sichuan area. For most of the time he was interned in a monastery outside Chengdu, where he focused most of his energy on studying. Apparently, he became well-versed in Taoist classics during the time. After those ten years he was finally pardoned. By then he was 36 years old. He decided to use his newfound freedom to roam the area's famously beautiful mountains and mountain ranges, among them the Minshan range. This is probably when he composed his eponymous long poem.

Minshan range³ is quite a monumental geologic formation, its tallest mountain rising to 5588m above sea level. Even nowadays it is known for its beauty. There are two natural UNESCO World heritage sites located in the mountains, and we can only guess how impressive the mountain range must have looked to the Japanese monk in the first half of the 14th century. What we know for sure is that Sesson Yūbai was in general fascinated by the mountains in Sichuan, and that he had a very strong personal experience with the Shu road, if not a pleasant one. He got quite ill when he was forced to walk the 500 km from Chang'an, to which he alludes in another of his poems. Even though he had such bad first experience of the Sichuan mountains, one would not guess it by the tone of *Minzanka*, which is full of wonder. To enable a more detailed analysis, the poem is translated here in full:

雪村友梅	Sesson Yūbai
岷山歌	The Song of the Min Mountains
岷山岌岌天尺咫	The Min mountains are towering, just a foot from the sky.
岷水湯湯濤萬里	The Min waters are flowing, waves in ten thousand miles.
險隘攢聳鎧鋸鋒	Steep and narrow are the tips of the Moye ⁴ sword soaring together.
煙塵隔斷咸陽市	Smoke and dust separates the city of Xianyang. ⁵
寒暄異候自仙都	Talking of strange weather from the capital of the immortals.
冰雪嵌空從太始	Ice and snow have been exquisite since the Beginning.

³ Shan (Jap. san) is often translated as mountain, but in Chinese context it more closely corresponds to the English expression mountain range. Minshan range itself is 500 km long, it could not be possibly considered a single mountain.

⁴ Moye was a sword of legendary sharpness mentioned first in *Zhuangzi*.

⁵ The former capital of the Qin state situated in the Central plains.

崖前鹵井湛星芸	Before the cliff, the salty wells are brimming with starry rue.
谷底甘泉流石髓	On the bottoms of valleys sweet springs flow through stalactites.
琪玕錯落雜礫砾	Gems are strewn among pebbles.
芝草芬芳生蘭芷	The fragrance of the <i>lingzhi</i> mushrooms ⁶ spawns orchids and angelica.
鸞鷟飛鳴蟠赤龍	Phoenixes fly crying, a red dragon is coiled.
麒麟蹂躪伏青兜	Unicorns trample, the gray rhinoceros ⁷ lies.
形勝自可暫游觀	This beautiful nature is worth to be briefly visited.
幽奇未許窮躋攀	The mysterious wonders have not yet allowed anyone to climb the steep places.
橋梁架壑虹蜺背	Bridges are suspended on backs of rainbows over ravines.
城郭麗錦烟霞間	City walls, beautiful brocade in between the mists.
安憶蠶叢未開國	How can I remember the uncivilized land of Can Cong ⁷⁸ ?
水豈不水山不山	How could the waters not be waters, the mountains not mountains?
汪洋磅礴徂元氣	Mighty waters are boundless, filled with primal energy.
天府雄深神物慳	The rich land is powerful and deep, the supernatural forces are parsimonious.
五丁力開戰爭路	The five strongmen ⁹ opened the way of war.
八陣圖啓兵機關	Zhuge Liang's ¹⁰ tactics started the military maneuvers.

6 Mushrooms used in the traditional Chinese medicine.

7 A legendary beast of great size first mentioned in *Chuci* 楚辭. *Qing* 青 in this case probably does not mean green.

8 The first legendary ruler of Shu, nowadays Sichuan.

9 A legend of the creation of the road from Qin to Shu. The five strongmen reputedly wrestled a huge serpent and were crushed under a mountain with it, thus creating an opening in the mountain range.

10 Zhuge Liang. A famous tactician from the Three Kingdoms period serving Liu Bei, the ruler of Han Shu.

七竅謀報混沌氏

Like when they wanted to “help” the primordial chaos by opening up seven holes.¹¹

三分割據蜩觸蠻
誰向南柯夢炊粟

Divided into three parts like Shu and Man on a snail.¹²
Who will face the southern branches roasting millet in his dream?¹³

思齊北斗堆金玉
今朝荒塚盡蒿萊
昔日蒼生憂杼軸
明月隨人墮遠汀

Wanting to imitate the Big Dipper,¹⁴ piling gold and jade.
Nowadays the forgotten mounds are overgrown with weeds.
In the days past, simple people used to toil with a shuttle.
The bright Moon is following people, falling towards the distant shores.

暮雲牽恨平秋麓

The twilight clouds pull the regret appeasing it at autumn mountain foot.

苔封石鏡照無光
草沒琴臺絃莫續

Moss sealed the stone mirror, if you look in it, there is no light.
Grass covered the zither platform, the strings no longer play.¹⁵

曠古長壞巢許流

Since the time immemorial, nests long destroyed are floating.¹⁶

¹¹ A story from Zhuangzi: Emperors Shu and Hu wanted to repay the kindness of Huntun, the primordial chaos, so they decided to bore 7 holes in his body because he didn't have eyes, ears, mouth or nose. However, when they did that, he died.

¹² China was divided into three parts during the Three Kingdoms. Shu and Man were said to be tiny people living on the horns of a snail, they often fought each other—an allegory of the Warring states (*Zhanguo 戰國*).

¹³ This rather cryptic line is in fact a poignant expression of impermanence. Sesson alludes here to two different stories by two Tang dynasty writers, *The Governor of the Southern Branch Commandery* by Li Gongzuo, and *The World Inside a Pillow* by Shen Jiji. Both contain dreams as a literary device and caution readers about impermanence of life and glory.

¹⁴ A constellation—a part of Ursa Major. See also Benická 2022, 36.

¹⁵ These two lines apparently refer to a concrete place—Wudan mountain—a famous historical place in Chengdu.

¹⁶ This might be a wordplay based on an older poem by Shi Wenxiang. Chao 巢 and Xu 許 are not only “a nest” and “to allow”, but they are also names of two exemplary hermits Chao Fu and Xu

高風獨振箕穎曲

Only the high winds shake the winnowing basket.¹⁷

岷山岌岌水湯湯

The Min mountains are towering, the waters are billowing.

胡不早皈駕鴻鵠

Why won't you come back and ride the swans?¹⁸

Minzanka is a relatively long poem, it consists of 36 verses, each 7 syllables long, containing 252 syllables in total. Even though it contains the Chinese word *ge* (“song”) in its title, it partially maintains the shape and form of *shi* poetry, poems that are usually only four or eight verses long. Because of its length it could be considered to belong to the so-called *pailü* 排律 (long regulated) form. That means it maintains rhyme on the last syllable of each even verse. Normally, *shi* poems keep the same rhyme throughout the whole poem, but that would be nearly impossible in case of a poem of this length. Rhyme is thus maintained in single 8 or 6 verse parts and then it changes. What is interesting from the point of view of history of the Chinese rhymes, is the fact that individual sections of *Minzanka* do not rhyme perfectly according to the classical patterns from the Tang dynasty, there are clearly some irregularities especially in the section with the *ru* tone rhyme, but they do rhyme almost perfectly when we judge them according to the Yuan dynasty rime book *Zhongyuan Yinyun*.

This is not to say that Sesson used *Zhongyuan Yinyun* for the creation of *Minzanka*. *Zhongyuan Yinyun* was compiled in 1324, and Sesson was interred in Sichuan till around 1326, and left China approximately in 1328. This leaves a very short window for the rime book to get into Sesson's hands. It is much more probable that Sesson either used a different but similar rime book, or simply

You. With a slightly different characters it could be read as: “Since time immemorial I have long thought about Chao Fu and Xu You.”

¹⁷ A continuation of the wordplay from the preceding verse, 箕穎 could be a winnowing basket, but with a slightly different second character it could be two places the Jishan mountain and the Yingchuan river.

¹⁸ Riding swans was said to be one of the ways the Taoist immortals could fly. Therefore, here it probably means to act like an immortal, and as the character used here for “return” can mean also to turn to Buddhism, the hidden meaning could be: Why don't you turn to Buddhism and join the ranks of enlightened.

constructed the rhymes on his own based on the spoken Chinese variety he was using during his time in China. Either way, Sesson clearly did not base his poetry only on the old Tang tradition, praised so highly to this day, but also on the living culture of poetry making of his own time.

Minzanka mostly also conforms to other rules of the Chinese seven-syllable verse: there is a caesura after the fourth syllable/character, and the last three syllables often create another logical, grammatical, and semantical unit. Because of the structure of the seven-syllable verse, each verse tends to start with a two-syllable phrase, be it really a disyllabic word, an expression consisting of an attribute and a head word, or two monosyllabic words connected parallelly. E. g. gems, unicorns, or bridges; city walls, bright moon, twilight clouds; or in the third case hot and cold, ice and snow, or smoke and dust. Numbers with counter words can be considered a special case of the second group.

The regularity of *Minzanka* is one of the main things that distinguish it from the poem that served as its inspiration—Li Bai's *Shudaonan* 蜀道難. *Shudaonan* (The difficult road to Shu) is also a long poem on the subject of mountains in Sichuan, and Sesson draws heavily from it both topically and semantically. In certain parts, *Minzanka* works as a poetic answer of sorts to *Shudaonan*, Sesson clearly paying homage to Li Bai's work. However, its form is completely different. *Shudaonan* is a poem in the old style, more precisely “old *yuefu*”, it doesn't have to adhere to the strict rules of *jintishi* 近体詩 (Jap. *kintaishi*), the recent-style poem. It does not have a set length of lines, and it does not follow the tonal pattern form gradually developed during the Northern and Southern dynasties and early Tang period. Its author, Li Bai 李白 (701–762), considered one of the three greatest Tang poets, often referred to older poetic traditions, one could say he was even deliberately archaic at times. Be it as it may, he preferred the ancient style poetry, and he was considered to be adept at it. It is also known that Sesson was very well versed in the Chinese Classics,¹⁹ so it does not come as a surprise that he knew such a well-known poem as *Shudaonan* (Which was later included in Three Hundred Tang Poems).

Even though *Minzanka* might certainly be called derivative, one should not dismiss it on the grounds of our modern approach where originality and freshness is demanded if a literary text is to be considered a work of art. Originality was

¹⁹ As we can see already in his hagiography Gyodoki written not too long after his death.

often not the most demanded characteristic in the *shi* 詩 poetry. *Shi* poems, and the whole Chinese poetry in general, are of a very intertextual character. They are rife with allusions to other poems, to historical events, even to philosophical texts. And *Minzanka*, a poem written in Chinese by a Japanese monk, is no exception. This does not have to be considered a demerit. A skillful use of such an allusion was considered an evidence of the poet's erudition, especially when it was achieved in an organic way, not disturbing the composition and the flow of the text. If Sesson achieved this, I leave to the reader to decide.

Having presented the basic characteristics of *Minzanka*, it is time to expound on the way nature is presented in it. It clearly is influenced deeply by the form of the poem.

Minzanka, being a long poem consisting of seven-syllable lines, is written in an ornamental style with an abundance of disyllabic words. The imagery tends to be bombastic with rich allusions to the older Chinese literature and to the history of Sichuan. The mood in which this description is done is quite direct, only with a few rhetoric questions in the middle and at the end. What makes it very different from the Japanese language poems of the time is its sheer scale, both in length and in the magnitude of phenomena described in it. Whereas poets writing in Japanese focused on smaller objects and even if they mention large natural phenomena such as mountains, rivers and the Moon, their description is much plainer and very rarely would they exhort the size and magnificence of the natural scenery, as will become clear later. Sesson clearly employs ornate style that can be found in some Chinese poems on nature, even though his approach is rather mechanical. Sesson creates layer upon layer of striking images of natural beauty and majesty. Mountain, rivers, snow and ice, cliffs and wells, fragrant plants and gems, even supernatural creatures such as phenixes and dragons inhabit his poem. This all creates an idea of magical beauty and reminds reader of the world of Taoist Immortals. This is perhaps less surprising than expected. Sesson's fondness of and erudition in Taoist classics was well-known. And clearly, it was fitting for the object of his description: A natural scenery much less docile than his native Japan. This is not to say that in Medieval Japan one could not find similar scenery, however it was often very far away from the urban centers of Kyoto and Kamakura, unlike the city of Chengdu in Sichuan, where Sesson was interred.

2 *Nature in Japanese-language Poetry*

To compare the process of description of nature in Chinese and Japanese, a variety of medieval Japanese texts have been chosen—a selection of Saigyō’s (1118–1190) 西行 poems, Yoshida Kenkō’s (1283–1350) 吉田兼好 *Tsurezuregusa* 徒然草 (a piece of prose, but interesting for this analysis nonetheless), medieval *renga* 連歌 (linked-verse poem), and a *wakan renku* 和漢聯句 (Japanese-Chinese) poem. Let us start with the most famous of classical Japanese poetic forms—the *waka*.

In *waka* 和歌 poetry one can see the nature as a truly lyrical subject, the description condensed just into a few words. This is again enhanced by the formal constraints of this form. *Waka* appears as if it was shorter in comparison to the Chinese *shi* poetry of regular length (4 or 8 lines), not to mention long poems like *Minzanka*. Although it consists of 31 mora,²⁰ as compared to the shortest *shi* poems of just 20 syllables, it somehow feels shorter, and rightly so. This is for linguistic reasons. Because of the polysyllabic character of the Japanese morphemes (and by extension words), there are only a few autosemantic (content) words in each poem, thus making the poem’s morphemic structure much less dense. Let us take an example of one of late Heian period monk/poet Saigyō’s *waka* works:²¹

	Semantic morphemes	Autosemantic words
水の音とは	2	2
The sound of the water		
さびしき庵の	2	2
is my companion		
ともなれや	2	2
in this lonely hut		
みねの嵐の	2	2
in lulls between		
たえまたえまに	2	1
the storms on the peak.		

²⁰ Mora being a more useful unit of length in Japanese poetry than syllable.

²¹ From Saigyō. *Sankashū*, 1983.

And to compare it to just the first two lines of *Minzanka*:

	Semantic morphemes	Autosemantic words
岷山岌岌天尺咫	7	4?
The Min mountains are towering, just a foot from the sky.		
岷水湯湯濤万里	7	4?
The Min waters are flowing, waves in ten thousand miles.		

There are just 9 autosemantic words in Saigyō's whole poem, compared to approximately 8 autosemantic words²² in two lines of *Minzanka*. The picture would look much different if we were counting the synsemantic, i.e., the grammatical morphemes, of which there are none in the chosen excerpt of *Minzanka*. It is because of the prevalent tendency of the Chinese poetry to omit grammatical words. However, as far as the words carrying concrete meanings go, the two examples are roughly equivalent. Such a ratio makes it almost impossible for the poems to have the same strategy of transferring information and simply put off word use. The *waka* poem has to present a certain self-contained discourse with just 9 autosemantic words, whereas in case of even the shortest Chinese poem the number is many times higher. Therefore, Chinese poems can afford to be much more verbose, especially in such a long poem as *Minzanka*. This difference will be only partially mitigated in the *Wakan renku* poem that will be analyzed later where the *waka* strophes are organized into a larger whole.

Especially in the Chinese seven-syllable poetry, poets often move to richer attributes that are, simply put, easier to fit into the verse than with a five-syllable line. That also leads to the use of such reduplicated words like *jiji* (jp. *kyūkyū*) 岌岌 “towering” or *shangshang* (jp. *tōtō*) 湯湯 “wide and fluent”. The *waka* poem focuses on the basic words from its *utakotoba* 歌言葉 vocabulary—*mizu no oto* “the sound of water” or *mine no arashi* “storm on the peak” are quite general, but it also makes them quite accessible to any reader. Everyone in Japan at that time could probably imagine what the sound of falling water sounds like, and the same goes

²² It is even more difficult to distinguish between words and short phrases in Chinese than in Japanese.

for a storm in the mountains. The whole image of a remote mountain hut in the middle of a storm is created in the reader's mind by just a few words he or she can easily associate with powerful natural forces, and thus the image of the sound of water being heard in between the storms becomes very strong. *Minzanka* achieves similar effects employing the exactly opposite approach. The images appealing to a reader or at least producing a strong reaction are induced by almost an ornamental verbosity that piles one layer of vivid descriptions upon another. As was mentioned before, by adding deep ravines, steep mountains, rainbows, unicorns and phoenixes, the already dramatic mountain scenery gains almost a fantasy-like quality a modern reader might consider kitsch. Luckily such bombastic expressions are spread throughout the whole length of the *Minzanka* poem connected by more somber pieces.

There is one place that is somewhat reminiscent of *waka*. Roughly in the middle of *Minzanka*, there is a following line: 水豈不水山不山 This can be rendered in Japanese as *Mizu ani mizu narazu, yama yama narazaranya?* “How could the waters not be waters, the mountains not be mountains.” Together with the preceding verse, this is the second place where the storyteller breaks silence and appears as an active participant in the poem. The poet here puts emphasis on the nature's thusness in quite a bold change of style that puts it apart from the rest of the poem. Ornamentality is for a moment put away baring the influence of Chinese classical texts and of Buddhist though. It also fits well with the slight Taoist overtones of *Minzanka*. It is known that Sesson was well-read in the Taoist thinker Zhuangzi's 莊子 (369–286 BC) writing (Ulman 2012). And Zhuangzi himself would probably be happy to hear such a question.

If we look at the way natural phenomena act in *Minzanka* for example from the viewpoint of cognitive linguistics, we will find a few interesting points worth mentioning. In the poem we can find no passive markers, even in case of verbs pertaining to things that cannot be active actants per se. It is quite common in human languages that words work metaphorically even in their basic meanings (Lakoff, Jonson, 2003). For example, the mountains “loom” which is a verb denoting an action, even though it is a simple fact of them being tall or large. This is not true only of English, but also of Japanese and Chinese. “*Sobieru*” (or *sobiyu* in classical Japanese) is an active verb, as is the Chinese verb *song* 翳 used in this poem. The peaks of Min mountains, even when metaphorically called tips of the *Moye* sword, cannot really do anything, they are just standing there, immobile from the

point of view of the watcher. The most they could really do is to crumble. This kind of a description of nature is present in both the Chinese and the Japanese poetry. In general, personification of inanimate objects is reasonably common in both poetic traditions. Just in *Minzanka* we see steep mountains that do not allow climbing, moss that seals a mirror, moon that follows people, clouds that pull sorrow. Normally none of these things have volition, but here they are personalized and changed into something that can interact actively with the world. Such things can be seen often in the Japanese poetry too, probably even more often than in Chinese. What distinguishes the two literary traditions is that in Japanese poetry the natural phenomena are frequently attributed also mental capabilities—wants, dislikes, questions, sadness, etc. As an example let us take a line from a *renga* written chiefly by the *renga* poet Gusai 救濟 (1283?–1376?) and imperial regent Nijo Yoshimoto 二条良基 (1320–1388) in 1355.

Renga, Japanese linked verse, is usually written by multiple poets taking turn at composing after every single stanza. Of course, there are huge differences between a long Chinese poem like *Minzanka* written by a single poet and a collaborative effort like *renga*. However, *renga* (including *wakan renku*) was the longest form of poetry in medieval Japan, thus being the only form that could contain a discourse of similar length to *Minzanka*.

For length constraints it is impossible to quote the whole *renga*, however, in this case, even a small part will suffice. In the 10th line of the aforementioned poem Yoshimoto writes: *Kyō yori nochī no hana ha tanomazu* 今日よりのちの花はたのまづ (Plants blooming after today will not ask). It is a wordplay at an older poem from *Goshūi wakashū* 後拾遺和歌集 by the crown prince Tomohira 具平親王 (964–1009) where he says that even if the flowers all fall, the next ones will be waiting for people. However, Yoshimoto says that it is not true, as later flowers will not count on anyone visiting them. (*Renga haikai shū* 1976, 100) This is a typical example of personification, as flowers, of course, cannot actively wait for anyone, not even for an imperial prince or for a regent like Yoshimoto. Yoshimoto therefore goes even a step further than Sesson, and not only uses natural phenomena as active participants, but also as distinct sentient beings.

Even for all *renga*'s length, it is interesting how little the composition and descriptive strategy changes from *waka*. Even if the 5-7-5 and 7-7 strophes are

organized into a higher unit, internally they stay almost the same. Of course, we can see a great deal of effort to match the lines to the preceding ones, but the way natural description is constructed is quite comparable to *waka*. Perhaps it is the collaborative character of this style of poetry that hinders it from changing the style of description to a wordier one.

However, there are some interesting phenomena pertaining to the poem as a whole, connected to description of nature. In *renga* we often see the application of a seasonal change rule. It is a development of principles coming from the *waka* poetry. In one poem the poet was supposed to adhere to one single season of the year, be it spring, summer, autumn or winter. However, in *renga*, which was very often 100 lines long, such adherence could be detrimental, the work as a whole could become monotonous and tedious. This is why a seasonal cycle system came to be used. One season is maintained only for a few lines, and then the poem switches to the next season, i.e., if the poem starts with spring, it turns into summer and then to autumn, and finally to winter. This cycle can be repeated many times in one poem. Sometimes summer and winter are skipped, to leave only the two principal seasons of the Japanese poetry: spring and autumn (Keene 1993, 925). In *Minzanka*, such a structured variation cannot be seen, it is hard to say in which season it is supposed to be set, except for the fact it is mostly not winter, except for one line beginning with the words *ice and snow*. This can have also real-world reasons, as Sesson was exhorting the beauty of a mountainous region, there were vast differences in climate between the mountaintops and the bottoms of the valleys. However, it is much more probable that Sesson is painting a general picture, a kaleidoscope of various moments frozen in time, and therefore as a whole timeless.

The lyrical approach to natural phenomena in Japanese literature we have been able to observe is not limited to poetry. In *Tsurezuregusa*, a collection of essays known in English as *Essays in Idleness*, nature is used more as a means of describing the inner thoughts of the author, of the way he reacts to it. To quote from the 7th chapter:

あだし野の露消ゆる時なく、鳥部山とりべやまの烟けぶり立ち去らでのみ住み果つる習ひならば、いかにもののはれもなからん。世は定めなきこそいみじけれ。命あるものを見るに、人ばかり久しきはなし。かげろふの夕べを待ち、夏の蝉の春秋はるあきを知らぬもあるぞかし。

Were we to live on forever—were the dews of Adashino never to vanish, the smoke on Toribeyama never to fade away then indeed would men not feel the pity of things. Truly the beauty of life is its uncertainty. Of all living things, none lives so long as man. Consider how the ephemera awaits the fall of evening, and the summer cicada knows neither spring nor autumn.²³

As can be seen from the excerpt, in *Tsurezuregusa* the nature is internalized as a part of an inner mental countryside. It becomes a part of a discourse on a general outlook on life of the author. In a way one could say it is more lyrical than *Minzanka*, although it is a work of prose. The focus is on the particularities, rather than on the whole. In *Minzanka*, we see large parts of the natural scenery like mountains, rivers, ridges, and ravines. And they are much more active. Rivers flow and expand, mountains loom high above, their peaks sharp like legendary swords. The nature of *Tsurezuregusa* is much more docile. There are singular trees, branches, flowers, insects, and many mentions of dew. The excessive amount of dew can be explained by the fact that dew is a common poetic figure in classical Japanese literature, usually meaning tears.

To put it concisely, although nature appears very often in *Tsurezuregusa*, the focus always stays on man (Yoshida 1993, 22).

In *Minzanka*, to compare it to the style of *Tsurezuregusa*, the description is much less personal. Where the storyteller persona of Yoshida Kenkō explains his feelings and deliberations on the natural phenomena presented, in *Minzanka*, Sesson is hardly noticeable, there are no direct expressions of his presence, even fewer than in case of *Shudaonan* of Li Bai. Whereas Li Bai uses rhetorical questions and interjections, Sesson concentrates on a direct, albeit very picturesque description of the Minshan scenery. In *Minzanka* we can see only three rhetorical questions being the only means showing the presence of a storyteller. The most significant can be found right at the end, in the final line when the poet is asking an unknown person (maybe the reader) to come back soon and fly with swans, but it is quite evident it is not really a question, it is just how to express the storyteller's

²³ Translation by G. B. Sansom, 1998.

wish. Such a use of a negative question is quite typical of the classical Chinese writing, and it clearly expresses intention which puts it apart from the directly descriptive mood of the rest of the poem.

The last comparison in this paper will be to the fascinating poetic form *wakan renku* 和漢聯句. *Wakan renku* are poems similar to *renga* in the way they are made, they are a result of a collaborative effort, also usually 100 verses long, but what distinguishes them from a normal *renga* is the fact that they consist of alternating verses in Chinese and Japanese. The first verse is in Japanese (5-7-5), and then the verses start to alternate. The alternation is not regular, but if a Chinese verse becomes an even line of the poem, it is supposed to rhyme as it does in normal Chinese regulated poetry. The *wakan renku* analyzed here is a product of Nijō Yoshimoto's poetic coterie that included Zen monks like Zekkai Chūshin and Gidō Shūshin, the best *kanshi* poets of his time. Nijō, who has been already mentioned before, was a statesman, a poet, and also a *renga* theoretician. Therefore, being a part of his group was quite an honor, and many of the brightest poets of the generation were more than happy to join and mingle with important dignitaries of Kyoto. *Wakan renku* were especially demanding for the participants, as both authors of Japanese language poems and Chinese language poems had to be present, and preferably all would have at least a passing knowledge of both literary traditions. It is therefore not surprising that *wakan renku* did not reach the popularity of *renga*, which was much more accessible to the general Japanese public.

The *wakan renku* analyzed here conforms to the demands of the form that are mostly identical to *renga*. What is curious we do not see the seasonal change often employed in *renga*, which has been mentioned in the preceding part of the paper? The late autumn/winter themes are maintained throughout the whole poem with only a few excursions to early spring. The authors maybe thought that the alternation between the Japanese and Chinese lines provides enough distraction, so such changes were unnecessary. We can be quite sure that the seasonal rotation had been already used by the time this *wakan renku* was produced because it appears in *renga* poems that were composed by Nijō Yoshimoto with his teacher, the *renga* master Gusai. The first line of the following poem was written by Yoshimoto, as he was the host of the poetry session and therefore had the right to start the poem and to choose its theme.

It is important to note that the Chinese verses used are just five characters long. It was a very clever decision made by the creators of the genre because when one looks at the Japanese and Chinese lines more closely, it becomes apparent that semantically they are of virtually the same length. Hopefully, just the beginning of the poem will suffice to illustrate this point:

1. 露ふけば 玉に聲ある 松の風
Rich dew has a voice in the drops/rarely,²⁴ wind in the pines.
2. 山静葉鳴秋 山 静かにぞ葉秋を鳴す
In the mountains, the leaves sing silently of autumn.
3. 西閣宜新月 西閣 新月に宜し
The western tower is good for the new Moon.
4. 南栄俯碧流 南栄碧流俯す
A Chinese parasol tree bends down to the emerald flow.
5. 白雲簾下宿 白雲簾下の宿
White clouds lodge under the eaves.
6. 緑心檻前脩 緑心檻前脩ナカシ
A green heart dries up in front of a cage.
7. 今ことに かしこき人は 世に出て
Especially now brilliant people²⁵ appeared in the world.
8. 聖功皆可謳 聖功皆謳ふべし
Saintly achievements are worth to be sung by all.
9. 商霖民願望 商霖民望を慰す
Shang rain fulfills peoples' hopes.²⁶
10. 舟のやすきもただかちのまま
Even if ship is cheap, it still has worth.²⁷
11. 松原の雪もなひきて吹風に
Even the snow on the pine plain is swayed by the wind.

²⁴ *Tama ni* 玉に probably has the function of *kakekotoba* here. It means both “drops of dew” and “sometimes”.

²⁵ It could also be one person. In here it is conceivable that it is Yoshimoto.

²⁶ The composition of this line does not seem to be correct. Shang rain is a metaphorical name for a good minister. It could also mean Yoshimoto.

²⁷ Possibly a *kakekotoba*, *kachi* meaning “worth” and *kaji* meaning “rudder”.

12. 月の氷は雲のなきほと

The ice on the Moon in a place without clouds.²⁸

The lines of this uncommon collaborative poem are quite evidently narratively interconnected, like in case of *renga*, and we can see the focus of the narrative slowly changing, each line adding something new and gradually moving forward both in Japanese and Chinese. Even though the languages are different, as is the structure of the lines, the composition seems surprisingly balanced. The key to it is the length of the lines. For example, the first line by Yoshimoto contains six autosemantic words—*tsuyufuke, tama, koe, aru, matsu, fuyu*. As does the 7. line. The 10. and the 12. line contain just five such words. Therefore, the number oscillates between five or six which is very close to the number contained in the Chinese five-syllable verse. It is also important to notice that we see no reduplicated words in this excerpt, also the number of disyllabic words is much lower than in *Minzanka*. This brings the style and the vocabulary of the Chinese verse much closer to the Japanese verse, and therefore we can see a certain level of unity in this poem. It is quite common for Chinese couplets to exhibit parallelism, both lexically and syntactically, but such fluid connections are visible even between the Japanese and Chinese parts as it is the case between the first and the second line. The scenery is distinctively autumn. The first word “dew” is a *kigo* immediately telling a knowing reader what season the topic of the next lines will be. The author of the next line, Zekkai, recognized it, and he expressed this information explicitly at the end of his line. To the words “dew” and “pine” he added “leaves” to finish the logical connection; he also used the near antonym of *koe aru* “has voice”—*shizuka* “quiet” creating an interesting imagery of silent leaves speaking of autumn. This line also adds location to the first line—the mountains. Which is probably where we could expect a pine covered in dew being swayed by the wind to be. Afterwards, there comes a sequence of Chinese five-syllable verses each moving away slightly from the topic of the first verse. Their style is much simpler than that of *Minzanka*, there is no place for ornamentalism and monumentality. Even though they are written in the same language, semantically they are much more similar to the Japanese lines of the same poem. This proves the great variety of styles in which the Japanese people of the Middle Ages wrote their Chinese language poems and that they were capable of coupling them successfully with their own native poetry.

²⁸ Based on the revised version from *Wakanrenku yakuchū: Yoshimoto, Zekkai, Yōbimitsu tō ichiba*, 2009.

Conclusion

From this brief analysis of *Minzanka* and its comparison to Japanese literary works, it is evident how much the description of different phenomena is influenced by the form of the particular poem. This fact is quite obvious even in case of the description of the world of nature. *Minzanka* itself, being a long poem consisting of seven-syllable lines, is written in an ornamental style with an abundance of disyllabic words. The imagery tends to be bombastic with rich allusions to the older Chinese literature and to the history of Sichuan. The mood in which this description is done is quite direct, only with a few rhetoric questions in the middle and at the end. Again, when a comparison to the Japanese poetry is made, formal constraints of the language and of the form become apparent. In case of a *waka* poem such as those of Saigyō, the natural description becomes more general, with only a few keywords evoking the atmosphere as the *waka* form does not allow for longer descriptions and rich attributes. However, at least some basic poetic devices are common to both works, such as personification of natural phenomena and, of course, allusions to older poetry.

Although *Tsurezuregusa* is a work of prose, thanks to its frequent descriptions of nature it provides for a viable comparison. However, what distinguishes it greatly from *Minzanka*, is the motivation of the natural description. In *Tsurezuregusa* the nature is a medium of reaching into the author's thoughts, the focus is always on the side of the human, its description can be called internal, whereas in *Minzanka* it is strongly external, focusing more on the world outside and its history.²⁹ *Renga* poems are similar in length to *Minzanka* and they share many characteristics with *waka* poetry. However, even though they represent a long poetic form, they are incapable of producing a more verbose description of nature exactly because of their adherence to the *waka* poetic tradition. What puts some of them apart is the seasonal change rule employed in them, there is nothing of that sort in *Minzanka*, the time of the year in which it takes place is unknown, we only know that the season described is not winter. *Wakan renku*, a special

²⁹ This evaluation has to be understood in relative terms, even in *Minzanka* the description is not entirely straightforward, and it speaks of the poets' heart.

hybrid form of poetry employing both Japanese and Chinese verses, is even closer to *Minzanka*. In the poem used as an example, there is no change of seasons, and it is filled with descriptions of nature. It exhibits a strong connection between lines in Japanese and Chinese. The lines in Chinese are well integrated thanks to their length (five-syllables), making them similar in length to the Japanese ones, and they are written in a much simpler style, employing short keywords similar to the Japanese verse. Therefore, the contrast with the style of *Minzanka* is very strong, even though they share the same language and the same poetic tradition.

Overall, poetry in both languages creates quite a wide spectrum of approaches and style in natural description, even if viewed only partially through the literary production of Japanese people during the Middle Ages. This spectrum seems to be wider in case of the Chinese language poetry, but this might be a result of the choice of the Japanese language material. *Minzanka*, as the main focus of this analysis has proven to be an interesting work of art, quite different in its approach from most of the literature written by the Japanese people at that time. It certainly deserves further analysis from other angles. To paraphrase the final part of *Minzanka*: “The mountains of work on the medieval Japanese literature still to be done are towering, the waters of East Asian poetry are vast.”

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Was *Amaterasu* a Male and Where Did their Descendants Come from? A Study in the Genesis of Japonic

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Abstract This study addresses the issue of what purport the direction of the arrival of the “heavenly deities” (*ama-tu kamiy*) depicted in the oldest Japanese chronicles, the *Kojiki* and *Nihon Shoki* may have for the general idea of the genesis of the Japanese people and language. Mythology corroborates archaeological data to elucidate particular linguistic processes such as phonosemantic matching, transitory borrowing, taboos, or political interventions in the language, seen in the etymology of some basic Old Japanese terms, e.g., *kamiy* “deity”, *amey* “Heaven” or *pyi* “the Sun; day”. The study reveals their potentially different original semantic scope and explains its change in the context of several theories of the genesis of the Japonic languages.

The two Korea-based “marginal” alternative versions of the legendary “descent from Heaven (*ama-kudari*)” that are included in the *Nihon Shoki* are used as reference points for the proposal that the Kyushu-based descent from Heaven might be a geographical transposition of the original Korea-based myth(s).

Keywords China, Chinese modern literature state political narrative, Yamato court, solar cult, Amaterasu, Susanoo, Ninigi, Niniki, Takachiho, Usa, Japanese *kami* “deities”, *hi* “Sun; day”, *teru* “to shine”, Okinawan *tīra* “Sun”, Ewenkī *dylachā* “Sun”, *amākā* “bear; god”, Ainu *kamuy* “bear; god”, Korean *kum* “bear”, Kara · Gara · Gaya, Silla, Baekje, Goguryeo, taboo

Introduction

Theories addressing the origin and genesis of Japonic can be classified into three groups:

- Austro-Tai
- macro-Altaic (or “Transeurasian”)
- autochthonous

These theories arose on the basis of etymology and typology. Typologically, Japanese is perhaps closest to Korean and the Altaic languages. Etymological attempts have led to the status quo we see today, with a lot of cases where several different etymologies have been proposed for a single Japanese word.

Strictly speaking, each word has only one etymology that demonstrates the origin of the lexeme. Nevertheless, in the linguistic reality that is apparent in the genesis of Japanese, there were probably many other influences besides the genuine single etymon, for instance, temporal borrowings, phonosemantic matchings, and other processes in the various strata occurring in the process of language formation, i.e., substrata, superstrata and adstrata. Therefore, I suggest that the multiple etymologies and the several genesis theories issuing from them should not be considered mutually exclusive. Rather than refuting this multiplicity, I argue that we may benefit from it; it makes much more sense if we look at it inclusively, as it can give us a deeper insight into the processes. Such an approach might be more effective in that it allows us to draw a lot of information about possible influences between the various strata which Japonic no doubt possesses, and the identification of which could help us achieve a much clearer picture of the processes behind the obviously complex genesis of the Japonic language family.

A certain pitfall of this approach is that it might to some extent challenge the idea of a single “proto-Japonic”, the kernel language identifiable as always being present throughout the millennia of the formation of Japonic. Rather, it might (mis)lead to the assumption that there were several proto-Japonics represented by all or most of the strata that contributed to this formation. Nevertheless, an analysis of these various tributaries might be conducive to a subsequent synthesis, part of which would clarify which tributary is the principal proto-Japonic and which ones are mere “strata”. This study is an attempt at contributing to the analytical part of this methodology, and endeavours to identify the “tributaries” by means of linguistic, archaeological and mythological data.

I *A Note on Romanisation*

The earliest detectable phase of the Japanese language, referred to as Old Japanese (OJ), is the language of the oldest texts written in Japanese—the proper names and songs in the oldest chronicles; the poems of the *Man'yōshū* anthology (completed after 759); norito prayers; and mikotonori edicts (also called *senmyō*).

The romanisation of Old Japanese vowels used here is an attempt at harmonising two recently devised systems, namely Vovin 2008 (and 2010) and Frellesvig 2010. This is because the Old Japanese vowels represented a richer range than the classical fivefold a, i, u, e, o system. Old Japanese had two vowels for each of the classical i, e, and o. Vovin transcribes them as yi - iy, ye - ey, and wo - øi, while Frellesvig's transcription is i - wi, ye - e and wo - o, respectively. After some consonants, the binary distinction is no more reconstructible in OJ since the *Man'yōgana* script did not distinguish them, presumably because the members of each of the pairs had already phonetically merged into a single vowel in those phonetic contexts in real speech. Frellesvig's and the traditional systems use the simple “i, e, o” for both “1st i, 2nd e, 2nd o” and the general “undistinguished i, e, o”, while Vovin's system uses the graphemes “i, e, o” only for the undistinguished ones. I have adopted Vovin's system as the basis of my romanisation.

Frellesvig's and Vovin's transcriptions clearly differ chronologically in terms of the development of some of the vocalic phonemes from proposed earlier diphthongs. It is to be seen most clearly in the case of “the 2nd i”, where Frellesvig has wi and Vovin has iy. These two transcriptions can be seen as reflecting the phonetic development from the hypothetical *[ui] via *[wi] > *[i i] > *[iy] > *[iy] to the classical [i]. Moreover, Vovin's system provides a binary opposition of rising vs. falling diphthongs (yi - iy, ye - ey), which makes it clear and easy to comprehend. I therefore adopt Vovin's system, taking the liberty of adjusting it with one minor change which is based on Frellesvig's phonological analysis in his book, *A History of the Japanese language*.² This change reflects the closest possible phonetic values of the phonemes in the final stage before the merging of the diphthongs into simple vowels. Thus, the system proposed here is: yi - iy, ye - ey and wo - ø.

¹ Vovin's system is based on the Yale system of Samuel E. Martin's *The Japanese language through time*, with the exception of a phonetically more explicit ø (spelled as o in the Yale system).

² Frellesvig 2010, 44–50.

Furthermore, for the sake of clarity for readers who are not fully acquainted with the complex exclusive combinatory rules of OJ phonotactics, I would also propose two additional orthographical rules:

1. if the letter sequence EY is followed by a vowel, then an apostrophe should be inserted to mark the syllabic boundary to distinguish cases like ey'a from e'ya.
2. use of ".yě, .wô". The thing is the "1st e" and "1st o" did not occur without an initial consonant; actually, they may be one of the sources of the syllables ye and wo, e. g. yekiy as a variant of yokiy 良き; and wo 男. Nevertheless, this may not be clear to everyone, which is why I propose the spelling of the "1st e" after the consonant Y- as -ě (yěkiy), and the "1st o" after the consonant W- as -ô (wô) to avoid confusion. The usual spellings "ye-" and "wo-" starting a word did not make it clear whether they represented the initial "1st e / o", or indeed y+e / w+o, but we know which quality these vowels are.

Table 1
Rumánek's proposal of Old Japanese vowel transcriptions

Description	Traditional	Vovin	Frellesvig	Rumánek
"1st i"	i	yi	i	yi
"2nd i"	ī	iy	wi	iy
undistinguished i	i	i	i	i
"1st e"	e	ye	ye	ye / .yě
"2nd e"	ě	ey	e	ey
undistinguished e	e	e	e	e
"1st o"	o	wo / ô	wo	wo / .wô
"2nd o"	ö	ø	o	ø
undistinguished o	o	o	o	o

As for the phoneme /p/, I keep the transcription via “p” as is generally the practice for OJ. It evolved into the bilabial “f” - [ɸ] of the early Heian period (9th century), but in my opinion this fricatisation may have started as early as the 8th century (Nara): this would explain the early fusion of “pwo” and “pø” into “po”, in that OJ [p] (and [m]) had a very rounded character, which is more conceivable if we assume that [p] had already become somewhat fricative. (Let me add that [ɸ] corresponds to the later “h” of modern Japanese, which many authors infelicitously transcribe as “h” even for pre-modern Japanese, causing unnecessary phonological chaos. In all likelihood, it was still generally not [h] well into the 1600s.)

I also follow the consensus that the immediately preceding Old Japanese stage of classical “voiced” counterparts of consonants, which was marked by the *nigori* (g, z, d, b), was prenasalised voiceless counterparts, i.e. nk, ns, nt, mp. However, some of the modern voiced consonants may not have been pronounced as voiced well into the 13th century (Kamakura), so a prenasalisation as early as OJ cannot be assumed for them, e.g., Niniki.

2 *The Theories of the Genesis of Japonic*

The term **Austro-Tai** is central in the theory proposed by Benedict (1990, 1). It is a broad term which includes, in the respective order of proposed genealogical relatedness between the language families, from the closest to the most distant:

- ... Japonic and Austronesian;
- plus Kadai;
- plus Miao-Yao.

This theory attains more credibility in the light of recent archaeological findings. Elements in the Japanese language which can be identified as southern - Austro-Tai, might have been introduced in Japan from Taiwan via the Ryukyus, and/or along the Chinese coast.

The Austro-Tai population split by settling in Taiwan where the Austronesian family branched off from it, but continued to exist on the continent. Some of these populations may have shifted northwards along the coast, perhaps as far as Korea, from where some of them may have reached Japan at the end of early Jōmon (before 5000 BC) and later continued as the distinct middle Jōmon central

Honshu mountain culture that grew taro³ (J satoimo, koimo), a typically southern crop originating in southern China and cultivated as far as Polynesia.

Settlement of the northern Ryukyus by Japonic Proto-Ryukyuan speakers from the north started relatively late—in the 2nd century AD at the earliest, perhaps even later, and continued until the 9th century (Shomoji 2010, 2). Previously, the islands from Okinawa northwards belonged to the Jōmon sphere, while the southern half of the Ryukyus (from Miyako towards the south-west) was characterized by independent development: an Austronesian colonisation from Taiwan was detected on the island of Yaeyama from around 4500 BC (the Shimotabarū pottery), followed, after several centuries, by a culture using no pottery or agriculture and lasting until about 1100 AD.⁴ This means that the pre-Japonic inhabitants of the southern Ryukyus may well have been of Austronesian stock, and though there is little archaeological evidence that the northern part of the Ryukyus was ever inhabited by Austronesians, this does not mean that they may have never attempted to explore the islands to the north-east of Miyako, possibly even as far as the main Japanese islands. This scenario provides another dimension to the background of any possible Austronesian traces in Japonic.

The **macro-Altaic** (or “Transeurasian”, a term proposed by Martine Robbeets) theory classifies Koreanic and Japonic into one superfamily or phylum along with the previously devised Altaic language family consisting of the Tungusic, Mongolic and Turkic language groups.

The Tungusic language group is supposedly the closest one to Japonic and Koreanic. Although Japonic and Koreanic lack the rich Tungusic verbal morphology of the “classical Nostratic” threefold person and twofold number, my research (Rumánek 2016) has indicated that some parallels can indeed be identified between Tungusic and Japonic in the verbal systems themselves, especially in terms of aspectual and temporal suffixes. That is, proto-Japonic may have had closer ties with proto-Tungusic. Robbeets and Wang (2020, 9) posit the original homeland of ancestral Tungusic speakers, before 3000 BC, around Lake

³ Kidder Jr. 1993, 65.

⁴ See Pellard 2015, 27.

Khanka in the southern Primorje,⁵ which lies north of Korea. This makes the possible connection of Tungusic, Japonic, and Koreanic also geographically plausible. Furthermore, it seems that some form of Japonic (termed para-Japanese by Unger /2009/ and Koguryo by Beckwith/2004/) demonstrably existed in Korea even after the main Japonic population emigrated to the Japanese isles in the last centuries BC (the Yayoi period, beginning around 1000 BC). This would suggest that Japonic or proto-Japanese may have actually originated on the Korean peninsula.

It should be noted though that the Altaic theory has had a cardinal opponent in Alexander Vovin. Nevertheless, even he admits that some of the obvious correspondencies between Koreanic and Japonic may have been borrowings due to their contact since the times when they were neighbours in Korea both before and after the Yayoi emigration.

The **autochthonous** theory (e.g., J. Edward Kidder, Jr.) postulates that Japonic evolved on the soil of the Japanese isles, possibly alongside the Ainu language. Some connection between Japonic and Ainu can indeed be identified (as will be shown in this study), but these two families are obviously much more distant in time than Japonic and Koreanic. This can be clearly seen in verbal morphology; whereas Japonic and Koreanic have no distinction between person or number, Ainu has retained a rich morphology of these categories—four persons, two numbers and two “numbers of actions”. Ainu forms such as

- kusanke* “I put (it/them) out”,
- kusapte* “I put (it/them) out many(times)”,
- esankean* “I/someone put(s) you out”,
- sanke* “he/she put(s) (it/them) out”⁶

etc., correspond to only one form in Old Japanese, namely *idasu*. Japanese, on the other hand, is more specific in terms of tenses than Ainu.

Ainu demonstrates many typological similarities with Native American languages, which clearly distinguishes Ainu from Japonic. These include features such as verbal suffixes indicating the person of both subject and object (also shared with Kartvelian); different verbal stems (even roots) for the two poles of the

⁵ I transcribe the Russian consonant [j] with the letter J, reserving the letter Y for the Russian vowel ы [({y})].

⁶ Tamura 2000, 590.

“number of actions”; difference between exclusive and inclusive 1st person plural (this is shared with Austronesian, and partly also with Tungusic and the Ryukyuan branch of Japonic); and differences in the rules of possessivity in different classes of nouns (also shared with Austronesian). However, the correlations between Ainu and Japonic might be, in the very least, the outcome of a very long period of contact due to the symbiosis of the two populations on the Japanese isles, which obviously lasted for many centuries, even millennia.

3 *The Mythology*

Surprisingly, reflections of various theories of linguistic genesis can be found in Japanese mythology, particularly through the direction in which the mythical beings referred to as *ama tsu kami* (“celestial deities”, Old Japanese *ama-tu kami*) came to Japan. The myths have come down to us in two principal forms: the *Kojiki* chronicle completed in 712, and the *Nihon Shoki* (or *Nibongi*) chronicle completed in 720. The *fudoki* materials collected between 713 and 733 represent a third contribution, preserved, however, in torso.

The first Japanese chronicle of 712 was the result of several decades of collecting and archiving various sources of historical material pertaining chiefly to the ruling family. A year after its completion, the ruling *tennō* (a woman, in this rare case) ordered that this work be continued in order to collect materials from across the country. These materials were collected over a period of twenty years and are referred to as *fudoki* – “gazetteers / documents about the country and customs”. Meanwhile, a second grand project of the imperial court was completed, a much more extensive and accurate chronicle called the *Nihon Shoki* written in a much more refined literary Chinese.

However, poems, songs, and proper names were generally transcribed in their original Japanese form by means of phonetically used Chinese characters. In contrast with the *Kojiki*, the *Nihon Shoki* provides alternative versions of the events based on various documents extant at the time of the compilation of the chronicle, which gives it an almost scientific character. These alternative quotations are introduced by such curt phrases as “一書曰” (“One [=another] book says”), leaving

us, alas, without any further explanation as to what kind of material these sources were, where they came from and in what language (Chinese? or perhaps Japanese?) they were written or recited. These variant accounts based on “alternative” sources provide useful data, much more diversified than is the case with the eight-year older *Kojiki*, where the narrative has been unified into a single storyline.

This study takes into account the storyline of the *Kojiki*, and both the primary text of the *Nihon Shoki* and the variant accounts quoted therein.

Takachibo is the name of the mountain known from myth as the place where the celestial deities reportedly descended on their way from their celestial abode of *Takamanohara* to Japan, where their descendants founded the ruling dynasty. The name of the “Peak” (*mine*)—*Takachibomine*—is etymologized as “The High Peak of Thousands of Rice Ears” (Ienaga 1997, 372), which is directly expressed by the characters with which this toponym is inscribed: 高千穂峰. A mountain of this name is located in the historical province of Hyūga in south-eastern Kyushu. Nevertheless, this is where the primary controversy starts. The fact is that there is not one *Takachibo*, but several of them. On my frequent visits to the island of Kyushu, I have heard from the local people that there are several mountains called *Takachibo* throughout Kyushu, and each of them is believed by locals to be that very spot of the mythical Celestial Descent (*Ama-kudari*). Of the two most famous, one *Takachibo* is located in the Kirishima Mountains (*Kirishima-yama* 霧島山) on the border of Kagoshima and Miyazaki Prefectures (in the historical Hyūga province), and the other is near the town of Takachiho (*Takachiho-chō* 高千穂町) in the north of Miyazaki Prefecture.

The toponym *Takachibo* is mentioned in the chronicles in connection with the grandson of the Sun goddess *Amaterasu*, who is believed to be the ancestor of the Yamato ruling family of Japan. There is another important descent from the Skies, that of *Susano*, *Amaterasu*’s younger brother standing behind the Izumo centre of power. This study aims to address the issue of where the “celestial deities” (*ama-tu kamiy*) actually came from, and what purport the direction of their arrival may have for the general idea of the genesis of the Japanese people and language.

The arrival of the *ama-tu kamiy* in the Japanese archipelago is termed as *Amakudari* (OJ *Amakuntari*), which literally means “Descent from the Skies”. Their original realm was *Takamanohara* (OJ *Takamanōpara*), which translates (etymologizes) as “The High Celestial Plain” when considering the *takama-* part as

the phonetic fusion, common in Old Japanese, of *taka-ama-* > *takama*, i. e. “high-skies”.

Not much is said about what *Takamanohara* looked like, although we know from the chronicles that there were rice fields, the Celestial Peace River (*Ame no yasu no kawa*), and we are told of a palace and two mountains—*Ame no Kanayama* and *Ame no Kaguyama*. The palace is the place where deities including *Amaterasu* wove robes (Kubovčáková 2012, 14). The *Ame no Kaguyama* mountain is believed to have later descended from the Skies and is identified with the *Kaguyama* hill, one of the three sacred Yamato hills (*Yamato sanzan*) located in a triangle in the south of the Yamato Basin in Nara Prefecture.

3.1 Susanoo’s descent

According to the chronicles, *Takachibo* was not the first location of the descent from the *Takamanohara* upon the “earth” or “land” (*kuni*), and it was also not the one done by the lineage of the Sun Deity *Amaterasu* (OJ *id.*). In fact, it was preceded, we are told, by her younger brother *Susanoo* (OJ *Susanowō*), who was supposedly expelled from the Skies in retribution for his evil deeds. As for the location of the descent, various places in the province of *Izumo* (OJ *Intumwo*) and elsewhere in the western part of the island of Honshu are named. Typically, the banks of the River *Hi(i)* (OJ *Piy*) in the land of *Izumo* are mentioned.

3.1.1 Susanoo’s descent according to the *Kojiki*

故、所避追而、降出雲國之肥上河上・名鳥髮地。⁷

So, having been expelled, [His-Swift-Impetuous-Male-Augustness] descended to a place [called] Tori-kami at the head-waters of the River Hi in the Land of Idzumo.⁸ The River *Hi(i)*, today written as 斐伊川, is to be found in the eastern part of Shimane Prefecture, which lies on the northern coast of the western part of Honshu. According to Fiala (2012, 74), the site is located at the foothills of the Torikami mountain near the source of this river. The River *Hi(i)* flows near one

⁷ *Kojiki* 古事記; http://www.seisaku.bz/kojiki/kojiki_03.html (accessed July 15, 2022).

⁸ English translation according to Chamberlain (tr.) 1932, 72.

of the most important Shinto shrines, the Izumo Taisha (Grand Shrine of Izumo), dedicated to Susanoo's descendants.

3.1.2 Susanoo's descent according to the *Nihon Shoki*

是時、素戔鳴尊、自天而降到於出雲國簸之川上。⁹

Old Japanese translation:

是の時に、素戔鳴尊、天より出雲國の簸の川上に降到ります。¹⁰

(Kana transcription:

このときニ、すさのをのみこと、あめよりいづものくにのひのかはかみにいたります。)

Then Sosa no wo [=Susanowô] no Mikoto descended from the Skies and proceeded to the head-waters of the River Hi, in the province of Idzumo.¹¹

This account is basically identical with the one found in the *Kojiki*; nevertheless, the *Nihon Shoki* mentions alternative locations, which make the issue more complex:

一書曰、是時、素戔鳴尊、下到於安藝國可愛之川上也。¹²

Old Japanese translation:

一書に曰はく、是の時、素戔鳴尊、安藝國の可愛の川上に下り到ります。¹³

(Kana transcription:

あるふみにいはく、このときに、すさのをのみこと、あきのくにのえのかはかみにくだりいたします。)

In one writing it is said:—"At this time Sosa no wo no Mikoto went down and came to the head-waters of the River Ye, in the province of Aki.¹⁴

The River Ye, today called Gōkawa, flows between Shimane and Hiroshima prefectures.¹⁵

⁹ Ienaga et al. 1997, 446.

¹⁰ Ienaga et al. 1997, 90.

¹¹ English translation according to Aston (tr.) 1896, 38.

¹² Ienaga et al. 1997, 447.

¹³ Ienaga et al. 1997, 94.

¹⁴ Aston (tr.) 1896, 41.

¹⁵ Ienaga et al. 1997, 97.

Nevertheless, a most striking reference is found in another alternative “other source” in the *Nihon Shoki* I.56:

一書曰、素戔鳴尊所行無狀。故諸神、科以千座置戶、而遂逐之。是時、素戔鳴尊、帥其子五十猛神、降到於新羅國、居曾戸茂梨之處。乃興言曰、此地吾不欲居。遂以埴土作舟、乘之東渡、到出雲國簸川上所在、鳥上之峯。¹⁶

Old Japanese translation:

一書に曰はく、素戔鳴尊の所行無状し。故、諸の神、科するに千座置戸を以てし、遂に逐ふ。是の時に、素戔鳴尊、其の子五十猛神を師ゐて、新羅国に降到りまして、曾戸茂梨の処に居します。乃ち興言して曰はく、「此の地は吾居らまく欲せじ」とのたまひて、遂に埴土を以て舟を作りて、乗りて東に渡りて、出雲国のかんの川上に所在る、鳥上の峯にいたる。¹⁷

(Kana transcription:

あるふみにいはく、すさのをのみことのしわざあづきなし。かれ、もろもろのかみたち、おほするに、ちくらおきとをもちてし、つひにやらふ。このときに、すさのをのみこと、そのみこいたけるのかみをひきみて、しらぎのくにあまくだりまして、そしもりのところにまします。すなはち、ことあげして、のたまはく、「このくにはわれをらまくほりせじ」とのたまひて、つひにはにをもちてふねにつくりて、のりてひむがしのかたにわたりて、いづものくにのひのかはかみにある、とりかみのたけにいたる。)

In one writing it is said:—“Sosa no wo no Mikoto’s behaviour was unmannly. A fine was therefore imposed on him by all the Gods of a thousand tables, and he was driven into banishment. At this time, Sosa no wo no Mikoto, accompanied by his son Iso-takeru no Kami, descended to the Land of Silla, where he dwelt at Soshi-mori. There he lifted up his voice and said:—“I will not dwell in this land.” He at length took clay and made of it a boat, in which he embarked, and crossed over eastwards until he arrived at Mount Tori-kamu no Take, which is by the upper waters of the river Hi in Idzumo.”¹⁸ This entry is remarkable because it completely changes our perspective: according to this account, Susanoo would first have descended in the land of “Sira(n)kiy”

¹⁶ Ienaga et al. 1997, 448-449.

¹⁷ Ienaga et al. 1997, 98 and 100.

¹⁸ Aston (tr.) 1896, 43.

before crossing the Sea of Japan over to Intumwo, and the place of his descent in Sirankiy would be “Søsimori” (曾戸茂梨).

Sira-(n)kiy was the vernacular Japanese name for Saro, later Silla, one of the three ancient Korean kingdoms. Its original territory was the south-east of the Korean peninsula, but it expanded by conquering Paekche and Koguryo, uniting the three kingdoms in 676, shortly before the *Nihon Shoki* was written. Thus, the language of Silla, referred to as Sillan or Old Korean, spread across the peninsula and became the basis of the language of unified Korea.

The place of Susanoo’s descent, Søsimori, has been, according to Ienaga et al., interpreted as a syllabic Sino-Japanese transcription of *sio-s-mori, where the internal -s- might be the Korean genitive case particle. This could identify the toponym Soshimori with the endonymous Sillan designation of the capital, “Sio-(ia)-por” (sic!¹⁹, probably a typo for Sio-(ra)-por), later Seo(ra)beor, which was Gyeongju, and subsequently Seoul. Aston hypothesized (1896, endnote 267) that -mori can be Korean *moi* “mountain”, which is corroborated by modern research which directly connects Japanese *mori* “deep forest”, Okinawan *mui* “hill, mountain” and Korean *moi* “mountain” as cognates or mutual borrowings: Okinawan *mui* is a regular phonological counterpart of the Japanese *mori*, while being semantically closer to its Korean counterpart, proto-Korean **mwo-lib* “mountain” and Middle Korean *mwoyb* “mountain” (Frellesvig 2010, 147). Also, -mori can be regarded as phonosemantic matching, i.e., partially explanatory Japanese substitution for Sillan -por, or indeed its inexact Japanese phonetic adaptation via the b > mb (= /mp/) > m change. This analysis would yield the place of Susanoo’s descent before coming to Japan as the kingdom of Silla, perhaps even its very capital.

3.2 Niniki’s descent

The descent of Niniki and his retinue is traditionally called “The Descent of the Celestial Grandson” (*tenson-kōrin*). Despite the divergent local legends in Kyushu, both chronicles specify the place of the Descent of Amaterasu’s grandchild Hiko Ho no Niniki (OJ *Pzikwo Pwo-no Ninikyi*) as follows:

¹⁹ Ienaga et al. 1997, 1.

3.2.1 Niniki's descent according to the *Kojiki*

天降坐于竺紫日向之高千穗之久士布流多氣。²⁰[...] and descended from Heaven on to the peak of Kuzhifuru which is Takachiho [in Himuka] in Tsukushi.²¹

The toponyms we find here are identified as follows:

Himuka (OJ Pyimuka) is an older phonetic version of Hyūga, the name of the south-eastern province of Kyushu.

The Takachiho of the Kirishima group of volcanos has several summits, as is indeed suggested by the reference peak of Kuzhifuru which is Takachiho. Let me anticipate here that the *Nibon Shoki* too contains this reference in one of its alternative versions, while most of its other versions give the form Kushibi. Since it seems highly probable that Kuzhifuru (OJ Kusipuru) and Kushibi (OJ Kusi(m)pyi) point at the same reference, they will be analysed together in the *Nibon Shoki* section further below.

A puzzling piece of geographical information is to be found several lines down, where the *Kojiki* quotes Niniki:

「此地者、向韓國真來通、笠紗之御前而、朝日之直刺國、夕日之日照國也。故、此地甚吉地。」²²

This place is opposite to the land of Kara. One comes straight across to the august Cape of Kasasa; and it is a land whereon the morning sun shines straight, a land which the evening sun's sunlight illumines. So this place is an exceedingly good place.²³

This seemingly illogical geographical note makes more sense in the context of the versions preserved in the *Nibon Shoki* (below). The Cape of Kasasa is clearly recognisable as Noma Cape (野間岬) in the area of the present-day Kasasa Town (笠沙町). It is the western tip of southern Kyushu,²⁴ which makes the idea of “Kara” being perceived as “opposite” more probable, along with the mention of the setting sun. “Kara” could possibly mean Korea, but perhaps also “origin”, so

²⁰ *Kojiki* 古事記; http://www.seisaku.bz/kojiki/kojiki_03.html (accessed July 15, 2022).

²¹ Chamberlain (tr.) 1932, 134. Edition in brackets by Ivan Rumánek.

²² *Kojiki* 古事記; http://www.seisaku.bz/kojiki/kojiki_03.html (accessed July 15, 2022).

²³ Chamberlain (tr.) 1932, 135.

²⁴ Aston's footnote no. 16 in Chamberlain (tr.) 1932, 136.

this toponym might represent some kind of reminiscence of where Niniki and his retinue really came from. The meaning of “Continent” and “China” is attested in the toponym Kara only later, in the Heian period, but—was “kara” really Korea?

The characters 韓 and 族 probably cover the same OJ word, as both kara-s have the same accentuation, so it is probably a single lexeme which occurs in two script renderings according to the specification of its wide semantic scale. The OJ kara developed its meaning from the initial “clan, origin”, probably cognate with Mongolic and Tungusic *xala “family, clan, relatives” (Nikolaeva et al. 2010, 3). Later it was used to refer to the south-Korean Kara region, which the Yamato court managed to claim for many centuries, only to lose it eventually in the process of the unification of the Korean peninsula by Silla in the 7th century. Thus, the mention of “kara” by the descending celestial deity, and the deity being the ancestor of the Japanese rulers at that, occurring in a chronicle that was written several decades later may have been a remark with political undertone. Linguistically, “Kara” as a name of the southern Korean polity may have meant “(area of) origin”, both in Japanese and in the language spoken in Kara: the Kara language may have been another form of para-Japanese, which is why Yamato rulers tried so hard to maintain their control over it. It is believed that this toponym subsequently expanded its semantic range to involve the Korean Peninsula as a whole, and eventually the “continent” in general. Should a more remote antiquity were ascribed to Niniki’s utterance, it could be understood as a hazy reference to the “origin” he and his retinue came from – pretty much any stretch of the continental coastline, imaginably from Korea down to Shanghai. This would also imply that the lexeme kara may have included the sense of “the continent” as “the area of (our) origin” much earlier than is generally believed.

3.2.2 Niniki’s descent according to the *Nihon Shoki*

3.2.2.1 *The Nihon Shoki II.10—the “main text”—Source A*

皇孫乃離天磐座。〈天磐座。此云阿麻能以簸矩羅。〉²⁵且排分天八重雲。稜威之道別道別而天降於日向襲之高千穗峯矣。既而皇孫遊行之狀也者。則自櫛日二上天浮橋。立於浮渚在平處。〈立於浮渚在平處。此云羽企爾磨梨陀毘邏而陀陀

²⁵ Passages in brackets are old commentaries.

志。〉〉而脅完²⁶之空國、自頓丘覓國行去。〈〈頓丘。此云毘²⁷陀烏。覓國。此云矩貳磨儀。行去。此云騰褒屢。〉〉到於吾田長屋笠狹之崎矣。²⁸

Old Japanese translation:

皇孫、乃ち天磐座（天磐座、此をば阿麻能以簸矩羅と云ふ。）を離ち、〉且天八重雲を排分けて、稜威の道別に道別きて、日向の襲の高千穂峯に天降ります。既にして皇孫の遊行す状は穂日の二上の天浮橋より、浮渚在平処に立たして、（立於浮渚在平処、此をば羽企爾磨梨陀毘邏而陀志と云ふ。）〉脅完²⁹の空国を、頓丘から国覓ぎ行去りて、（頓丘、此をば毘³⁰陀烏と云ふ。覓國、此をば矩貳磨儀と云ふ。行去、此をば騰褒屢と云ふ。）吾田の長屋の笠狹の崎に到ります。³¹

(Kana transcription:

すめみま、すなはちあまのいはくら（あまのいはくら、此をばあまのいはくらといふ。）をおしはなち、またあめのやへたなぐもをおしわけて、いつのちわきにちわきて、ひむかのそのたかちはくしひのふたがみのあまうきはしより、うきじまりたひらにたたして、（うきじまりたひらにたたして、これをばうきじまりたひらにたたしといふ。）そししのむなくにを、ひたをからくにまぎとほりて、（ひたを、これをばひたをといふ。くにまぎ、これをばくにまぎといふ。とほる、これをばとほるといふ。）あたのながやのかささのみさきにいたります。）

So the August Grandchild left his Heavenly Rock-seat, and with an awful path-cleaving, clove his way through the eight-fold clouds of Heaven, and descended on the Peak of Takachiho of So in Hiuga. After this the manner of the progress of the August Grandchild was as follows: —From the Floating Bridge of Heaven on the twin summits of Kushibi, he took his stand on a level part of the floating sand-bank. Then he traversed

²⁶ The old character I transcribe here as 完, has 穴 as the upper part (kanmuri) and 六 below.

²⁷ The old character comprises the same parts but in the left-right order (田 + 比).

²⁸ Ienaga et al. 1997, 455.

²⁹ The old character I transcribe here as 完, has 穴 as the upper part (kanmuri) and 六 below.

³⁰ The old character comprises the same parts but in the left-right order (田 + 比).

³¹ Ienaga et al. 1997, 120 and 122.

the desert land of Sojishi from the Hill of Hitawo in his search for a country, until he came to Cape Kasasa, in Ata-no-nagaya.³²

In addition to Hiuga, which is already in the *Kojiki* section (above), we also have So (OJ Sø) here. Aston points out that this name probably remained in the designation of that part of Niniki's future progeny which stayed on to live in the locality Kumasø³³ (OJ Kuma-sø). I shall return to this issue below in the section analysing the lexeme kuma.

Kushibi (OJ Kusi(m)pyi) is explained as kusi pyi, where kusi means 奇し “mysterious” and pyi is 靈 “spirit”³⁴ or “spiritual power”³⁵, so that the whole phrase “kusi pyi-nø puta-nkamyi” can be understood in the sense of “the holy double peak” as an additional description of the mountain (“Pyimuka-nø Sø-nø Takatipomyine... kusipyi-nø puta-nkamyi”) rather than a different mountain. As mentioned earlier, the Takachiho of the Kirishima volcano group has several summits, and the Karakunidake near it is even more strikingly double-peaked. The fact is that the phrase *Sunte-ni site* there does not necessarily express a temporal succession as suggested by Aston (“After this the manner of the progress of the August Grandchild was as follows”). It can also mean “On the whole” or “Generally”, which would make the following account not a new toponym but an additional reference to the previous one: “the Floating Bridge of Heaven on that holy double-peak [of the aforesaid mountain]”. There seems to have been a celestial bridge arching over the two peaks, which was the start of Niniki's terrestrial journey.

Ienaga et al. (1997, 123) present another explanation for the word kusi, mentioning a possible connection with the southern-Korean state of Kara (Kaya) and the descent of its founder King Suro, in which the leader descends to a mountain called 亀旨峰, which could be read *Kusi/Kuji.³⁶ One of the volcanoes near Takachiho in the Kirishima group, the twin-peaked Karakunidake, bears a name which can thus be translated as “Peak of the Land of Kara or Korea”. On the other hand, the name of the mountain associated with Suro can be considered as an example of the para-Japanese placenames which have been identified on the

³² Aston (tr.) 1896, 6-7.

³³ Aston (tr.) 1896, 28.

³⁴ Ienaga et al. 1997, 123.

³⁵ Kirkland 1997, 111.

³⁶ Ienaga et al. 1997, 372.

territory of the Korean peninsula; it suggests that calling mountains of celestial descent kusi “mysterious” was a more general practice than the single case of Kushibi in the south-east of Kyushu.

The account of Niniki’s further progression in the *Nihon Shoki* seems to involve some general descriptions besides proper names:

ukijimari-taira—“floating sandbank” (Aston /tr./ 1896, 267) or a flat sandy location “with an island” (**(n)sima ari*) in it (Ienaga et al. 1997, 372).

sojishi no munakuni—sø “back”, sisi “flesh”—“a bare land of backbone flesh” (Ienaga et al. 1896, 123).

hitao—“a hilly area” (Ienaga et al. 1896, 123).

And then it gets to more specific places identifiable by their names:

Ata is an ancient geographical name in the western part of Kagoshima Prefecture which used to be the Ata no kuni—Ata Province. It includes the western of the two peninsulas encompassing Kagoshima Bay on the southernmost end of Kyushu.

Nagaya most probably refers to the area around Mt Nagaya 長屋山 in the Ata region.

This suggests that Niniki’s descent took place in the south-east and south of Kyushu. He descended from the Skies upon one of the Takachiho peaks in the province of Hyūga and then proceeded further south, reaching the southernmost part of Kyushu—its southwestern tip, the above-mentioned cape in Kasasa, nowadays called Noma Cape.

3.2.2.2 “Alternative” sources

The *Nihon Shoki* goes on to give further details regarding the location of Niniki’s descent, quoting alternative sources. Since their identities or names are unknown, they will be referred to here in capital letters “B, C, F, I”, according to the order in which they appear in the chronicle:

Source B:

皇孫則到筑紫日向高千穗槐觸之峯³⁷

Old Japanese translation:

皇孫をば筑紫の日向の高千穂の槐触峯に至します。³⁸

³⁷ Ienaga et al. 1997, 459.

³⁸ Ienaga et al. 1997, 134.

(Kana transcription:

すべみまをばつくしのひむかのたかちほのくしふるたけにいたします。)

*the August Grandchild [...] [was made to arrive] at the peak of Kushifuru of Takachibō in Hiuga, in the land of Tsukushi*³⁹

Source C:

故天津彦火瓊瓊杵尊、降到於日向穗日高千穗之峯、而薈完⁴⁰胸副國、自頓丘覓國行去、立於浮渚在平地、⁴¹

Old Japanese translation:

故、天津彦火瓊瓊杵、日向の穗日の高千穂の峯に降到りまして、薈完⁴²の胸副國を、頓丘から国覓ぎ行去りて、浮渚在平地に立たして、⁴³

(Kana transcription:

ひむかのくしひのたかちほのたけにあまくだりまして、そししのむなそふくにを、ひたをからくにまざとほりて、うきじまりたひらにたたして、)

*Ama-tsu-hiko-bo no ninigi no Mikoto descentted [sic] to the peak of Takachibō of Kushibi in Hiuga. Then he passed through the Land of Munasobi [Munasofī], in Sojishi [Sosisi], by way of the Hill of Hitawo, in search of a country, and stood on a level part of the floating sandbank.*⁴⁴

Source F:

遊行降來、到於日向穗之高千穗穗日二上峯天浮橋、而立於浮渚在之平地、薈完⁴⁵空國、自頓丘覓國行去、到於吾田長屋笠狹之御崎。⁴⁶

Old Japanese translation:

39 Aston (tr.) 1896, 14.

40 The old character I transcribe here as 完, has 穴 as the upper part (kanmuri) and 六 below.

41 Ienaga et al. 1997, 461.

42 The old character I transcribe here as 完, has 穴 as the upper part (kanmuri) and 六 below.

43 Ienaga et al. 1997, 142.

44 Aston (tr.) 1896, 17.

45 The old character I transcribe here as 完, has 穴 as the upper part (kanmuri) and 六 below.

46 Ienaga et al. 1997, 463.

遊行き降來りて、日向の襲の高千穂の槻日の二上峯の天浮橋に到りて、浮渚在之平地に立たして、簪完⁴⁷の空国を、頓丘から國覓ぎ行去りて、吾田の長屋の笠狹の御碕に到ります。⁴⁸

(Kana transcription:

ゆきくだりて、ひむかのそのたかちほのくしひのふたがみのたけのあまのうきはしにいたりて、うきじまりたひらに立たして、そししのむなくにを、ひたをからくにまぎとほりて、あたのながやのかささのみさきにいたります。)

*proceeded downwards as far as the floating bridge of Heaven, which is on the two peaks of Kushibi [Kusipil] of Takachibo in So in Hiuga. Then he stood on a level part of the floating sand-bank and passed through the desert land of Sojishi by way of Hitawo in search of a country until he came to Cape Kasasa in Ata no Nagaya.*⁴⁹

Source I:

降到之處者。呼曰日向襲之高千穗添山峯矣。及其遊行之時也、云々。到于吾田笠狹之御碕。遂登長屋之竹嶋。⁵⁰

Old Japanese translation:

降到りましし処をば、呼びて日向の襲の高千穂の添山峯と曰ふ。其の遊行す時に及りて、云々。吾田の笠狹の御碕に到ります。遂に長屋の竹嶋に到ります。⁵¹

(Kana transcription:

あまくだりまししところをば、よびてひむかのそのたかちほのそほりのやまのたけといふ。そのいでますときにいたりて、しかしかいふ。あたのかささのみさきにいたります。つひにながやのたかしまにのぼります。)

*Now the place at which he [Ame-kuni-nigishi-hiko-ho-ninigi no Mikoto] arrived on his descent is called the Peak of Sobori-yama of Takachibo in So in Hiuga. When he proceeded therefore on his way, etc., etc., he arrived at Cape Kasasa in Ata, and finally ascended the Island of Takashima in Nagaya.*⁵²

47 The old character I transcribe here as 完, has 穴 as the upper part (kanmuri) and 六 below.

48 Ienaga et al. 1997, 148.

49 Aston (tr.) 1896, 20.

50 Ienaga et al. 1997, 465.

51 Ienaga et al. 1997, 154.

52 Aston (tr.) 1896, 23.

As can be seen, the basic information found in the main text of the *Nihon Shoki* is supplemented in more detail in the “alternative” sources, and more toponyms connected with Niniki’s *ama-kudari* are identified.

We are supplied with more names of the mountain of the descent: in addition to the *Kusipyi* (*Kushibi*) (sources C and F), which we already know from the main text, we see the versions *Kusipuru* peak (source B, also occurs in the *Kojiki*) and *Sopori-nō yama* (source I). The OJ pronunciation of the latter is made possible by its transcription in Chinese logograms later in the text as 曾褒里能耶麻.⁵³ Also, in source I we see *Nankaya-nō Takasima*.

As in the main text, it is important to take into consideration the particular position of the toponym *Kusipyi* and the general wording in the original:

C: Pyimuka-nō Kusipyi-nō Takatipo-nō takey ひむかのくしひのたかちはのたけ

F: Pyuimuka-nō Sō-nō Takatipo-nō Kusipyi-nō puta-nkamyi-nō takey ひむかのそのかちはのくしひのふたがみのたけ

Aston’s translations:

C: the peak of Takachiho of Kushibi in Hiuga

F: the two peaks of Kushibi of Takachiho in So in Hiuga

So, *Kusipyi* and *Takatipo* seem to be closely related with each other, as already indicated in my analysis of the corresponding passage in the main text above.

As far as the form *Kusipuru* is concerned, its syntactical surrounding is the same both in the *Kojiki* and in version B:

Kojiki: Tukusi(-nō) Pyimuka-nō Takatipo-nō Kusipuru takey 竹紫日向之高千穗之久士布流多氣

B: Tukusi-nō Pyimuka-nō Takatipo-nō Kusipuru takey つくしのひむかのたかちはのくしふるたけ

which can be either, “peak of *Kuzhifuru* which is *Takachiho*” (Chamberlain) / “peak of *Kushifuru* of *Takachiho*” (Aston), or “the *kusi puru* peak of *Takatipo*”.

The *pyi/puru* variation (*Kusipyi* / *Kusipuru*) is difficult to explain if we are looking for a direct equivalence between the two counterparts. The *pi* is written with 日 which is clearly *pyi*, not *piy*. If it were *piy*, the form *puru* would be etymologically easier to explain, since one of the phonological sources for *iy* was **ur* (*ur* > *uy* > *iy*).

⁵³ Ienaga et al. 1997, 465.

Nevertheless, some kind of explanation of a *pyi* / *puru* equivalence can be derived from the Japanese-Austro-Tai theory of Benedict.

Benedict (1990, 198) groups the Austronesian, Kadai, and Japanese lexemes linked by the semantics of “god/spirit/sun” into an etymological nest of the hypothetical Proto-Austro-Kadai etymon *(*m*)*pili*, e.g.,

Proto-Austronesian **pili* – Saaroa (Tsouic, in Taiwan), *pili* “shadow”;

Proto-Kadai **pbri*⁴ “devil, ghost, spirit”;

Japanese *myi*, *-ri* and *pyi*: *myi* (**mpi(ri)*) “godly, holy”, *-ri* “god” (as in *ina-ri* “rice god”), and *pyi* meaning not only “sun” but also “spirit” (Ienaga, Saburō et al. 1997, 123) or “spiritual power” (Kirkland 1997, 111).

Based on this comparison, Japanese may have had a regular extended counterpart to *pyi*—and that would be *pyiri*, or indeed *pyiru*. This form may actually be preserved in one of the alternative names of the Sun goddess, *Öpo-pyiru-mye*, explained as “great-spirit-woman” rather than the later interpretation as 大日靈 “great-daytime-woman” (Ienaga, Saburō et al. 1997, 428). That is why it is doubtful whether *puru* can be a counterpart to *pyi*.

Another solution can be found in the verbal system of Old Japanese. *Puru* is written with the character 觸, the logogram for the OJ verb *puru* “touch”. It could be, however, just a *kungana* notation, where the Japanese reading (*kun*) of the Chinese character is used to write down any homonym. If *puru* was indeed a verb or perceived as such by the scribe, there were basically two verbs *puru* in OJ: *puru* 1 meant “shake”, *puru* 2 meant “touch”. Both were quadrigrade (i.e., consonant verb *pur-*), but *puru* 2 very early on shifted to the lower bigrade (-e-verb) form (*pure-*) that still exists in Japanese today (*fureru* “touch”). Thus, the form *furu* could be either the *rentaikei* (attribute form) of the consonant verb *pur-*, or the *shūshikei* (predicate form) of the -e-verb *fure-*, bearing in mind that the *shūshikei* form of OJ verbs and adjectives often occurs in the attributive (qualifier) function in ancient established phrases and toponyms. Moreover, *puru* could also be the attributive form of the verb *pe-*; however, its meaning—“passing (as of time)” makes it a weaker candidate than the more probable *puru* “shaking”, which could refer to the volcanic character of the mountain. The Old Japanese verbal system has no vestige of a *pi-* / *puru* paradigm analogous to the *pe-* / *puru* verb. Only longer verbs whose stems have two or more syllables show the *-i* / *-uru* variation. So, either *kusi puru* (“mysterious-

shaking") might be taken as a mere pun or variation on the original *kusi pyi*, or it can be the longer -*i*-verb *kusipyi-kusipuru*, attested in the "voiced" version *kusiburu* (*kusimpuru*) "to have mysterious/magic effects".

The above analysis is based on the Old Japanese verbal system. However, it must be allowed that the name of the mountain was much older, and conceivably referred to an older, pre-OJ, system.

Yet another possibility is that if we tentatively accept the *pyi-pyiri / puru* alternative, which perhaps points in the direction of southern, Austro-Kadai origin of this lexeme (in concord with the apparently southern origin of the Takachiho newcomers), the variant *kusi puru* would mean the same as *kusi pyi*, i.e., "mysterious-holy".

We seem to have concluded that *kusipyi* and *kusipuru* could be alternative versions of the same toponym or place description. A more challenging problem is the version *Sopori-no yama* given in the last source I. Its syntactical surrounding is as follows:

I: Pyuimuka-nø Sø-nø Takatipo-nø Sopori-nø yama-nø takey ひむかのそのたか
ちほのそほりのやまのたけ

Aston: the Peak of Sohori-yama of Takachiho in So in Hiuga

Ienaga et al. (1997, 155) note that *Sopori* is said to be the transcription of the name of the Sillan capital *Sio-por*. This would tie in with the alternative version of the descent of Susanoo to Silla mentioned above (*Sosimori - ?Sio-(ia)-por*)⁵⁴ and bring together the two crucial events—the descent of Susanoo and that of Niniki—in one place, the capital of Silla. Perhaps the compilers of the *Nihon Shoki*, in their scholarly efforts, added one source to the end of their list of alternative sources that was indeed very alternative in stating that the place of descent of both the Susanoo and Amaterasu lines was in Korea, and we can be grateful to what appears to be a genuine attempt at an objective, scholarly approach that we have these Korean alternatives extant and available to us. Another explanation would be that the place to which Niniki descended was *called after* the Sillan capital ("Siopor Mountain") only later, in memory of Niniki's Korean origins—yet it is questionable why any "Koreans" would have come to Japan from exactly the opposite direction (the south-east).

⁵⁴ Ienaga et al. 1997, 101.

The *Takasima* part of *Nankaya-no Takasima* may refer to a high place, rather than an actual separate island. The fact is that the word *shima* has a wider semantic scale in Okinawan, where it means “a village, a native place” besides “an island” (Uchima and Nohara 2006, 130); this wider range may be the original semantics of this Japonic lexeme, as corroborated by the hundreds of inland toponyms throughout Japan, which suggest that *shima* hardly designates an “island” in them.

Let us now move on to the next part of Niniki’s progression after his landing on one of the peaks of Takachiho:

As in the main text, Niniki proceeded to reach Cape Kasasa in Ata, across a “floating level bank” (C, F), the desert land of Munasoi in Sojishi (C, F), and Hitao (C, F); only the order of the places is different:

F has the same order as the main text, namely:

F: うきじまりたひらに立たして、そしのむなくにを、ひたをからくにま
ぎとほりて、あたのながやのかささのみさきにいたります
uki(n)simaritapira
↓
Sosisi no munakuni 脣完⁵⁵空國 (main text: 脣完⁵⁶之空國)
pitawo-kara kuni ma(n)ki

whereas C has the *uki(n)simaritapira* at the end, after “*pitawo-kara kuni ma(n)ki*”:

C: そしのむなそふくにを、ひたをからくにまぎとほりて、うきじまりた
ひらにたたして、
Sosisi (no muna...)
pitawo-kara kuni ma(n)ki
↓
uki(n)simaritapira

⁵⁵ The old character I transcribe here as 完, has 穴 as the upper part (kanmuri) and 六 below.

⁵⁶ The old character I transcribe here as 完, has 穴 as the upper part (kanmuri) and 六 below.

C has a slightly different version of the designation *munakuni* in *Sosisi*: it is spelled 胸副國, which is read as *muna-sopu kuni* “bosom-joining land”. As we can see, the homonymous *muna* is written as 胸 (“bosom”) in C and as 空 (“empty”) in the main text and in F. Since *Sosisi no munasopukuni* immediately follows *Takachiho* in C (降到於日向穗日高千穗之峯、而脣完⁵⁷胸副國), the possibility comes to mind of whether the meaning of “bosom-joining” might refer to the “double-peaked” volcano of Karakuni-dake. Conversely, the volcano’s name, *Karakuni*, besides the obvious meaning of “the country of Kara (or Korea)” might also mean “empty land”, which would be synonymous with *munakuni* 空國 found both in F and the main text: its modern name could thus come from the alternative, synonymous words *kara / muna*, both meaning “empty”, perhaps owing to an error in reading the characters 空國. And apparently it may have a connection with the *Sopori-nō yama* mentioned in I, both of which perhaps mean the same mountain, named either after *Karakuni* (Korea) or *Sopori* (Sillan capital *Seobeor*).

An explanation can be found in the volcanic background of some myths as has been suggested by Unger (2009, 128–136). In this case, it would be to assume a distant mythological reminiscence of the inhospitable centuries that southern Kyushu experienced due to several colossal destructive eruptions of volcanoes at and near its southern tip. These included the eruption of Aira around 20 000 BC, of which the Sakurajima in Kagoshima Bay is a secondary volcano (Kidder 2007, 112). The centre of this eruption is situated halfway between our “Takachiho” and “Cape Kasasa” (Noma) on the Ata peninsula (the south-western peninsula of southern Kyushu). The next massive eruption was that of Kikai-Akahoya in around 7300 BC, exactly south of the Ata peninsula.⁵⁸ This was followed by the slightly less destructive “Ikeda-ko” eruption around 4400 BC (Kidder 2007, 113), the remnant of which is the south-eastern part of the Ata peninsula including Lake Ikeda, just opposite “Cape Kasasa” across the southern part of the Ata peninsula. Later, the Sakurajima and others also erupted (Kidder 2007, 113).

As can be seen, the variant accounts found in the *Nihon Shoki* do not fundamentally challenge the geography of Niniki’s descent described in the main text, with the exception of the Korean explanation of *Sopori-nō yama*. They all can be said to fit well into the landscape of the region: Niniki clearly traversed a highly

⁵⁷ The old character I transcribe here as 完, has 穴 as the upper part (kanmuri) and 六 below.

⁵⁸ Takahashi 1989, 75 and 139 (English summary p. 127) cited in Hudson 1994, 236.

tectonic region on his way from Takachiho before reaching “Cape Kasasa”. This tectonic region is probably behind the reference to *munakuni / karakuni / munasopu-kuni* – the Kagoshima Bay region may have still been an “empty” or “bare” land in the early Yayoi period from which this myth supposedly dates, or may have been imprinted in the collective memory as such, despite the fact that the most destructive eruptions dated back to as remote a past as the early Jōmon (Ikeda-ko), earliest Jōmon (Kikai-Akahoya), even pre-Jōmon palaeolithic (Aira) periods. Toponyms often encapsulate the remote past.

4 *Further, Possibly Ethnolinguistic, Directions*

Niniki’s progeny lived in Sō in southern Kyushu for three generations until, according to the chronicles, one of his great-grandsons moved to the north of Kyushu (the Usa area) and thence further east. He conquered Yamato in central Honshu and founded the Yamato dynasty. He is known by his later Sino-Japanese name Jinmu. This Jinmu’s “eastward expansion” (御東遷 *gotōsen*) corresponds to our general knowledge of the direction of the expansion of the Yayoi culture and the traditional⁵⁹ dating of the myth corresponds to the early Yayoi period as well. Jinmu’s eastward expansion may thus be a mythological reflection of the actual progression of the Yayoi culture which, according to documented data, spread slowly eastward from the west of the Japanese archipelago over a period of nearly a dozen centuries (950 BC–250 AD).

Based on archaeology and later chronicle accounts, there are two other relevant geographical dimensions that perhaps occurred later in time. In the periods following the Yayoi period, the Yamato sword tradition seems to have originated in the west of the country (northern Kyushu), as it was in this latter region that bronze weapons were the typical artefact, whereas *dōtaku* bronze bells were characteristic of Kinki (the wider area including Yamato) (Matsumae 1993, 333). So, the “sword culture” probably reached Kinki later than the traditional 7th

⁵⁹ As opposed to the “revolutionary” dating based on correspondences between events in Japanese chronicles and events on the Continent, applied e.g., in *Cambridge History of Japan*.

century BC, which is ascribed to Jinmu's progression eastward. This may mean two things. The first possibility is that—if we connect the sword culture with the eastward progression—Jinmu came to Yamato at a later date. This could also explain why the *Wei Chronicle* places the kingdom of "Yamatøy" to southern Kyushu still for the period between 183 and 248 AD: the expansion of Yamato to the east might have occurred centuries later than the traditional dating. Another possibility is that the expansion of the sword culture from Kyushu (and perhaps also from Izumo) to Kinki was independent of the Jinmu progression.

Not to be forgotten is the opposite direction that probably happened somewhat later: kofun tombs (Kofun period: 250–450), which spread from Kinki to Kyushu. A mythological reflection of this process could be seen in the event in the chronicle about Empress Jingū, who stopped at Usa in northern Kyushu sometime during the Kofun, or Yamato (450–710), periods. It was the start of an important cult in that area, by which the Yamato rulers *either* venerated the area where Jinmu had left the shores of Kyushu to start his eastward campaign, *or* attempted to reconquer that area: after all, the Kumaso (*Kuma-sø, see below) of southern Kyushu, who were probably also Niniki's descendants, and thus distant cousins to the Yamato dynasty, defied Yamato's suzerainty well into the historic period. The founding of the Usa Jingū shrine may have been of political significance, establishing a Yamato stronghold in the west.

All these geographical dimensions of Japanese prehistory could be useful in shedding light on the formation of Japonic, one of the enigmas that many linguists and other scholars have been trying to resolve. It is certain that various mixings of multiple internal groups as well as immigrants lay behind this complex process. The *Kojiki* and *Nihon Shoki*, along with archaeological and other data provide us with several specific events in the possible scenario.

Nevertheless, the two principal myths in the chronicles—the descent of Susanoo, and that of Niniki—provide geographical dimensions that allow us to believe that they refer to two separate directions of arrival: Susanoo came from the west to the northern coast of the western part of Honshu, and Niniki most probably came from the south, hitting the south-eastern and southernmost part of Kyushu.

5 *Gods, Spirits or Ancestors?*

The term *kamiy*, usually translated as “gods” or “deities”, refers to mythological creatures. However, they did not live exclusively in the celestial *Takamanōpara* but also on earth. According to their abodes, they are distinguished as *ama-tu kamiy* and *kuni-tu kamiy*—celestial and terrestrial “deities”. It is therefore questionable whether the latter were “deities” at all.

The word *kamiy* is hard to pin down etymologically as it has no other relatives in Japonic that would enable us to make extended semantic clarifications or extrapolations. It does, however, have a generally accepted relative in Ainu: *kamuy*.

There is no common consensus on whether OJ *kamiy* and Ainu *kamuy* are cognates, i.e., they share a theoretical common ancestor from Ainu and Japonic, or whether this is a borrowing, and if it is a borrowing, in which direction—which of the two languages borrowed it from the other. Its Ainu form with the final falling diphthong “-uy” perfectly reflects the OJ *kamiy*, whose older form was **kamwi*. Although the lexemes seem fairly isolated in both languages, OJ still had the open form *kamu-* used in compounds as their non-final member. This form is not attested in Ainu, which possibly indicates that Ainu *kamuy* is a borrowing from Japanese after all.

The open OJ form *kamu-* basically carries the meaning “deity” or “divine”. Nevertheless, it could also be contained in words like *kaze* “wind” (**kamu-se*) and *kangae-* “to think” (**kamu-kap-ey-*), which would suggest a wider original semantic scope related to “air” and “psyche”. Ainu is still semantically richer, as *kamuy* there means not only “deity” and the natural forces of volcanoes, earthquakes, winds, tsunami, fogs etc.,⁶⁰ but also “bear”.

“Bear” in Japanese is *kuma*, a word that is obviously related, either via cognition or borrowing, to its para-Japanese relatives on the Korean Peninsula—

⁶⁰ Nonno 2015, 34.

Koguryoic **kum* / *kuŋ(m)*,⁶¹ Paekche *kuma*,⁶² and Middle Korean *kwom(a)*⁶³ > Korean *kom* (cf. also Ewenkī *kuma* “seal”).⁶⁴

In this context, it is important to mention here that Japan is far from being the only nation whose founding myth is based on a descent from the Skies. The Korean mythology contains this *topos*, too: a *bear* transformed into a *woman* to mate with the Sky-descended creature to give birth to Tan’gun, the founder of the nation (Seo 2000, 3–4). The Ewenkī also regard the bear as their ancestor: in their tradition, it was a *male bear* who mated with a human female (Brzáková 1996, 184) without, however, any reference to a descent from the Skies. This implies that the dual semantics of the Ainu word *kamuy*—“deity” and “bear”—might not be a mere extension of the notion of “deity” to the biggest and most dangerous animal in the environment in which the Ainu lived, or a taboo replacement for their original word for bear, but it might go back to the archetypal roots connecting Ainu, Japanese, and Korean mythologies where “deity” and “bear” were close notions. A similar “bear / deity” semantic scope can be found in one of the many Ewenkī synonyms for bear—*amākā* (Boldyrev 1994) etymologizable as “grandfather”.

As for the Japanese words *kamiy* and *kuma* and their semantic relationship, it is not inconceivable that the latter appeared in Japanese as a continental loan rather than as a Koreanic-Japonic cognate (Vovin 2010, 143). The *-a* of *kuma*, besides the possibility that it was part of the word’s setting in the original language, may also have been added as a word-forming suffix known to have existed in OJ. The result was a new word in Japanese—*kuma*, by which, imaginably, the Japanese started to specify the meaning of “bear”, which might have originally been contained in the bisemantic **kamiy*.

Assuming that OJ *kuma* is a later continental loan into Japonic, a borrowing taking place on the Korean-Japonic-Ainu contact line, the question of the origin of the name of the Kumaso⁶⁵ of southern Kyushu arises: if they were descendants of Niniki’s progeny in Sō, the presence of the element *kuma-* in their tribal name does not fit well geographically and chronologically, since Niniki’s language would

61 Beckwith 2004, 252.

62 Vovin 2010, 143.

63 Unger 2009, 54.

64 Starostin et al. 2003, 688.

65 Aston (tr.) 1896, 28.

not have contained this lexeme. This discrepancy could be explained in several ways: 1. They were a later population that was not directly connected with Niniki's descendants and spoke a form of Japonic which already contained this loan. 2. Their tribal name was formed only later, either by themselves or for them from the Yamato centre, by adding *kuma-* as an attribute of strength, danger, or a reference to their noble origins—the “*kuma*” *Sø* (i.e., the mighty/noble *Sø*). 3. The element *kuma-* might be a homonym of a different etymology, which was only additionally reinterpreted as “bear” (i.e., phonosemantic matching).

Some scholars propose a different, southern etymology for *kamiy*. While Kumar & Rose suggest Old Javanese *kadang* “kinsman”⁶⁶ (dubious), Benedict points towards “mythological ancestors”⁶⁷ and proposes **k-amu-i* as a derivative of Proto-Austro-Kadai **?amu* “ancestors / gods”, seen, for example, in Fijian Nadrau *kamu* “father (voc.)”, Proto-Rukai *(*t*-)*omo* < *(*t*-)*umu* < *(*t*-)*amu* “grandfather”, and Proto-Southern Thai **hmua* > Lao *mua*^H “grandparent (mother's father)”. This does not in any way contradict the semantics of “bear” in Ainu, as long as we keep in mind Korean mythology of bear ancestry—the notion of “bear” may have been a semantic extension that happened on the Japanese isles as part of Korean influence or heritage. The three sememes—“deity”, “bear”, and “ancestor”—are not mutually exclusive, on the contrary, they are perfectly compatible as demonstrated by Ewk *amākā*, which includes all three.

The Tungusic root *am-* means “father” (*ambyn*, *ama*). Interestingly, it is not entirely dissimilar to Proto-Austro-Kadai **?amu* “ancestors / gods” proposed by Benedict. Japonic and Ainu **kamuy* with the initial *k-* could be explained via Ainu, where *k-* is the prefix for 1st person sg. possessive pronoun *ku-* reduced to *k-* before a vowel. Although supposedly originally two different lexemes, **k-am-* “my father”, and **k-amu-* “my ancestors”, they may have fused into one lexeme in Ainu-(or-)Japonic, with a future independent semantic development.

As mentioned above, Japanese mythology lists two races of the *kamiy*: terrestrial (*kuni-tu kamiy*) and celestial (*ama-tu kamiy*); the former simply lived on earth—concretely on the soil of the Japanese isles—and there is no account

66 Kumar and Rose 2000, 241.

67 Benedict 1990, 161–162.

whatsoever regarding their origin. That is, we can assume that these “*kamiy*” were simply—humans, those who lived in the Japanese archipelago before the arrival of the Susanoo and Niniki related newcomers. On the other hand, these latter two groups of “celestial deities” are reported to have *arrived*, and a good portion of the classical myths contained in the ancient chronicles is dedicated to the story of why and how these celestial deities arrived on earth, more precisely, “descended” to the soil of the Japanese isles. The above etymology linking *kamiy* to the notion of “ancestors” (or indeed “father”) provides a possible explanation for why there was no need to account for the origin of the terrestrial “deities”: they were simply *ancestors* rather than *gods* in the metaphysical sense.

The lexicological development can be summarized as follows: the Japanese-Ainu word **kamuy* may have combined two similar sounding lexemes of southern and western origin; the first of these, Austro-Tai, was possibly brought to Japan by the population reflected in the Niniki myth, and meant primarily “ancestor”, secondarily also “deity”. The *topos of bear as ancestor*, known from Korean and Tungusic mythology and probably connected with the population represented in the Susanoo myth, enriched the semantic scope of **kamuy* with the element of “bear (as ancestor)”, resulting in **kamuy* = “ancestor. deity. bear”. This semantics subsequently split in Japanese, where the third meaning (“bear”) was taken over by the loanword *kuma*. Another possible explanation would be that the Japanese-Ainu **kamuy* meant only “ancestor. deity” and the semantic extension happened in Ainu which enriched the meaning, probably through contamination with the meaning of the similar-sounding continental-based *kuma*. This might have happened through transitory loan and phonosemantic matching, resulting in semantic expansion. Specifically, the process would be as follows: “*kum(a)*” was also temporarily borrowed into Ainu, but was subsequently mixed up with *kamuy*, leading to *kamuy* ending up meaning “bear” in addition to its original meanings “ancestor. deity”, while the loanword “*kum(a)*” itself subsequently fell out of use in Ainu. The transition of the metaphysical, abstract meaning contained in the Ainu *kamuy*, which Nonno regards as its original meaning that pre-dated the later more concrete Japanese sense of “deity”,⁶⁸ could be explained as a further semantic process within Ainu spiritual world.

68 Nonno 2015, 24–35.

As mentioned earlier, the OJ word *pyi* “day. Sun” may have originally meant “spirit, ghost” according to Benedict’s southern etymology, which would bring it semantically closer to *kamiy*. In that case, its attributive use “*pyi*-(*-no*)...” would mean “spiritual, holy” rather than “sunny, Sun-originated”.

This formulation may explain some other expressions as well. *Aoi* - wild ginger (*Asarum caudescens*) is a plant that is considered vital in the ritual of one of the oldest surviving festivals in the world, the *Aoi matsuri* of Kyoto.⁶⁹ It was ordered by the deity of Kamo as hair decoration for the participants of the religious procession. The mythological etymology of the plant’s name, OJ **apu pyi*, could make as much sense in the meaning of “meeting/suiting spirits” as that of “meeting the day/Sun”.

The lexeme *pyi* may thus be of southern origin and poses a central question: why the radical change of meaning (“spirit” > “Sun”)? One possible explanation that offers itself is that it was a *political intervention* in the language, representing a process similar to the way taboos functioned in Polynesian societies, where certain words ceased to be used if they were part of the ruler’s name, and for other taboo and religious motives, words were replaced by other words, sometimes disappearing from the language completely (Krupa 1988, 44). In the Japanese context, it is conceivable that after the introduction of the solar cult of Amaterasu as the ancestress of the ruling Yamato clan, the word *pyi* “spirit(ual)” was promoted as a reference by the devotees to the Sun, and subsequently also to “day”, thus virtually replacing the original lexemes for these latter notions.

There may also have been an influence from Korean at work here, viz. Middle Korean *pyēth* “sunshine”, *pīch* “light” (Vovin 2010, 107). Vovin rejects them as cognates to OJ *pyi*. Nevertheless, they could have worked through semantic contamination of a temporary loan, as in the above case of *kum(a)* – *kamuy*, with the result that the meaning “(sun)shine” extended the semantic scope of the word *pyi*, which subsequently could be used to refer to both the Sun and the day, while gradually shedding its original meaning completely. And the extended form *pyiru*, identifiable perhaps as far back as the hypothetical Proto-Austro-Kadai *(*m*)*pili*

⁶⁹ Aoi can also refer to several other plant species—mallow and hollyhock—but in terms of the Aoi matsuri, it is wild ginger. The usual translation “Hollyhock Festival” is botanically erroneous.

(Benedict 1990, 198), came to mean “daytime” (perhaps influenced by the doublet *yo* / *yoru* “night”).

The original word for “Sun”, which was avoided and thus perhaps “taboo” in the speech of the Yamato court, might have been a word cognate with the Okinawan *tīra* “Sun” (Uchima et al. 2006, 180). Ewenkī and its closest relative Negidal have a word for “Sun” which is remarkably similar to the Okinawan: *dylachā* (also *dilichā* in Ajan and Jerbogochev dialect of Ewenkī, and *dilichī* in the Tokmin dialect, *de'echā* in Solon)⁷⁰ where *-chā/-chī* is separable as a suffix. (Note the diverse counterparts in other Tungusic languages: Even *ňulten*, Manchu *šun*, Nanai *siun* < proto-Tungusic **sigun*⁷¹). This lexeme can also serve as a verb “to shine, illuminate”, which, again, corresponds to the Japonic verb *ter-* “to shine” (Japanese *ter-u*, Okinawan *tīn* / *tir*⁷²). We can see it in the very name of the Japanese Sun deity—*Ama-ter-asu*. Indeed, the use of the original Japonic noun for “Sun” might have been tabooed and thus “forbidden” in the Yamato state exactly because of its occurrence in the name of the main ancestral deity, although the verb *ter-u* itself did not fall out of use.

Ama- in the deity’s name is generally taken as OJ *ama-/amey* “heaven. rain”. No clear etymology exists for this word, although Middle Korean **mah* “rain”⁷³ and proto-Korean-Japonic **əməŋ*⁷⁴ have been proposed (but rejected by Vovin).⁷⁵ “Heaven” and “rain” are rather distant notions at any rate and their union in one Japanese lexeme is intriguing. As in the case of *kamiy* above, a contamination through a transitory loan is conceivable.

The parallel between Japonic *ter-* and Ewenkī *dylachā* draws the comparison of *Ama-ter-(asu)* and Tungusic **amā-dyl-(achā)* “father Sun”. Could Amaterasu have originally been a male deity? Or was “Amaterasu” a theonym, the original gender of which became forgotten? I dare not reconstruct a transgenderising process of this kind in the sphere of religion, yet I can see a solution to explain the gender swap linguistically: the original (Tungusic) meaning of *amā* “father” was

⁷⁰ Tsintsius (ed.) 1975, 206.

⁷¹ Vovin 2013, no pagination in the pdf—page numbers show the order in the pdf.

⁷² Uchima et al. 2006, 180.

⁷³ Whitman 1985, 236.

⁷⁴ Francis-Ratte 2016, 354.

⁷⁵ Vovin 2010, 190–191.

gradually blurred and forgotten under the influence of similarly sounding words for “mother” in OJ (*ōmo*, Azuma *amo*), Baekje (*omo*), Middle Korean *emi*.⁷⁶ (The Buddhist accretion *ama* “a nun” stemming from Pali *ammā* “mother”⁷⁷, probably came too late to be part of this process.) Even though the element *ama-* in the name of the ancestral deity lost its original meaning “father”, it retained its highly ritualistic connotation, conceivably also due to its presence in the name *Takamanopara*, which may originally have referred to the fatherland. With the progressive celestification of the origin myth, the place of the ancestors was transferred to the sky and *ama-* “father” fused with *ama(y)* “rain” into a single lexeme denoting the mythical heavenly abode of the ancestral deities.

As for the original Japanese word for “day”, it may have been the *-ka / ko-* retained in Japanese *ko-yomi* “calendar” or *futu-ka* “two days”. There is a potential cognate in Ainu, viz. *-ko* “counter for days”, e. g. *tut-ko* “2 days”, *rer-ko* “3 days”. However, for an independent reference to “day”, Ainu has the word *to: sine to* “a day, one day”, which also occurs in compounds like *tanto* “today” and *kasto* “every day”.⁷⁸ This could correspond to the Japanese element *-ta* in *asita* “the next day” (“tomorrow” in modern Japanese), where *asi-* is a modification of *asu* “tomorrow” or *asa* “morning” (perhaps in its ancient genitive form, **asu/asa + -i*). Middle Korean *bóy* “sun”,⁷⁹ Old Korean **koy* is also considered as cognate to Japanese *-ka / ko-*.⁸⁰

Okinawan shares *hī / fī* with Japanese, but *only* in the sense of “day”,⁸¹ not “Sun”. Here one can assume Japanese influence on Okinawan in the sense that the semantic extension “spirit” > “Sun” > “day” did not go so far as to exclude the word

⁷⁶ Vovin 2010, 97.

⁷⁷ Frellsvig 2010, 149.

⁷⁸ Tamura 2000, 258

⁷⁹ Francis-Ratte (2016, 401) also gives the meaning “year”.

⁸⁰ Unger 2000, 120.

⁸¹ Uchima et al. 2006, 226.

tīra “Sun” from Okinawan.⁸² To make the lexical list complete, let me add that Okinawan also shares with Japanese the extended form *fīru/biru* “daytime”.⁸³

6 Conclusion—Geographical Transpositions of the Myths of Descent

The geographical dimension given in the chronicles could provide a useful tool in evaluating other data on Japanese prehistory. The account of Niniki’s descent contained in most of the versions in the chronicles seems to point to the Takachiho in the Kirishima Mountains near the south-eastern coast of Kyushu. I assume that this myth is a reminiscence of southern newcomers, while Susanoo’s descent to (or eventual settlement in) Izumo could suggest the arrival of people from the Korean peninsula. As shown above, the OJ word *kamiy* (“ancestor; deity”) perhaps illustrates the mutual influences between the various incoming languages; being of southern (Austro-Tai) ancestry, the word was subsequently influenced by the stratum associated with the western (Koguryo, Paekche) influence. On the other hand, the OJ word *pyi* may be indicative of political interference in language similar to the practice of taboo.

The remarkable fact that in both celestial descent stories the “marginal” alternative variants associated with Korea were included, *one each* for *Sōsimori* and *Sōpori*, provides us with a broader perspective as to the reason for their inclusion. It is not clear why the *Nihon Shoki* embarked on the strategy of including alternative variants in the first place. I perceive them as an expression of the compilers’ genuine attempt at objectivity, for what in modern Western terms we would call scientific exactitude and scholarly integrity (unless a different motivation is detected). The inclusion of one Korea-linked variant in each of the tales seems to confirm this interpretation. Nevertheless, the chronicle was obviously compiled at a time of intense political pressure. Were the Korea-linked variants merely marginal, or were they a remnant of a then declining tradition that was increasingly overshadowed by the ever more prevailing tendency towards “descent-to-Japan” supported by the state political narrative? Even though the

82 To complete the comparison, the Ainu for “Sun” is *cup*, which also means “Moon” and “month” (Batchelor 1905, 84).

83 Uchima et al. 2006, 234.

ruling family were indeed partly of Korean descent, they had established themselves on the isles and ruled for centuries from their centre in Yamato and adjoining regions, so that claims of Japanese descent had become part of the state policy, including the identification of *Japanese locations for their celestial descent*. In that case, the process of producing new vernacular Japanese locations may have been based on original continental myths transposed onto the geography of the islands, including the orientation in terms of cardinal points and the shape of the coastline.

The position of the Takachiho-Kasasa route of Niniki's first steps on the soil of Kyushu and the region's southeast-to-south orientation is reminiscent of the position of Silla and its oldest capital Gyeongju, or indeed the state of Kara on the Korean Peninsula. The main Korean mythical mountain of descent is in the north, on the present-day Korea-China border. Its placement, within Japan, in the *south* could perhaps suggest that the ancestral cultural memory did indeed have it *in the south*, i.e., that such cultural memory must have originated somewhere *north* of the mountain. This could indicate Tungusic ancestral areas. On the other hand, the name of one of the Kyushu peaks, Kushibi / Kushifuru, is reminiscent of a mountain that appears in the myth concerning the founding of Kara, whose name 龜旨峰 might read **Kusi* / *Kuji* (Ienaga et al. 1997, 372). Two other Kyushu toponyms might contain a direct reference to Korea—*Karakuni* (“Land of Kara”) and *Sopori* (Sillan capital *Seobeor*). If we remember that the marginal Korean version of Susanoo's descent, *Sosimori*, is also interpretable as a reference to the Sillan capital, this would somewhat paradoxically place two crucial mythological events—the descent of Susanoo and that of Niniki—in the same area.

On the other hand, the place on Kyushu to which Niniki descended might have been *named after* the Sillan capital (“Seobeor Mountain”) only later, in memory of Niniki's supposed Korean origin - yet it is questionable why any “Koreans” would come to Japan from exactly the opposite direction, the south-east. This brings us to the alternative interpretation, which considers the versions of vernacular descents to Izumo and Kyushu to be genuine. In this case, the exceptional Silla version for Susanoo, and especially the identification of some of the Kyushu place names with Korean localities for Niniki, would really be only marginal attempts by those who sought to link the origins of the Yamato rulers

with the powerful Kingdom of Silla, which was successfully expanding at the very time when the first chronicles were being prepared. This faction at the Yamato Court would have been strong enough not to be completely ignored when the *Nihon Shoki* was written, so that their Korea-linked versions would have made it in after all. Additionally, Yamato's traditional ally on the Korean Peninsula had been the Kingdom of Baekje, the defender of Yamato's claims to Kara, so this factor might have been at play, too. Nevertheless, whether it was either the pro-Silla or pro-Kara factions whose versions just could not be ignored and were included in the end, they still seem to have been securely “tucked away” as the last in the enumerations of alternative versions in the *Nihon Shoki*.

To sum up, leaving aside the marginal Korean versions, we basically have *two different places* of descent for the Susanoo and Niniki lineages: Susanoo's on the northern coast of the western part of Honshu (Izumo), and Niniki's in the south of Kyushu (Hyūga). While Susanoo's *Takamanōpara* may have been the opposite shore of Korea, i.e., the area of the future Silla, the line of the Yamato rulers may have had a different, southern origin. This is corroborated by the very name of the province in which Niniki descended: *Pyimuka* (mod.J *Hyūga*). As for the tentative “original—southern” meaning of *pyi*, the toponym *Pyimuka* could originally have meant “welcoming the spirits (gods)”. After the “classical” meaning “Sun” for *pyi* had become established, the name of the province was re-assessed in the sense of “facing the Sun”, i.e. southward, and—given Yamato's spiritual orientation towards the *rising* of the Sun—the south-east was the side that best suited the Yamato conception of *facing (the rise of) the Sun*.

The south-eastern and southern shores of Kyushu are highly unlikely as the place of arrival of a Korea-originated race of Korean or Tungusic ancestry. Niniki and his later Yamato-based descendants may have been of southern origin, of Austronesian stock. This would explain what has been identified as a possible Austronesian, or Austro-Kadai, element or “stratum” in Japanese, illustrated in the core notions for divinity and spirituality: *kami* and *hi*. As hypothesized above, one of the alternative names for Amaterasu, *Öpo-pyiru-mye*, may have originally meant “great-*spirit*-woman” rather than the later interpretation as 大日靈 “great-*daytime*-woman”.⁸⁴ This female deity might still later have been united with the hypothetical (western-Tungusic) conception of “father Sun” **amā-dylachā* to

⁸⁴ Ienaga et al. 1997, 428.

form Amaterasu the Sun Goddess, representing the union of the two main streams of immigration into Japan reflected in the mythology.

Japanese as a language probably represents a similar fusion. The idiom cultivated at the Yamato court eventually became the language of the earliest literature—Old Japanese—and, with the conquest of most of the Japanese territory, it spread to the provinces, giving birth to subsequent local dialects of the Japanese language.

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A Forgotten Buddhist Philanthropist from Boṅgabhūmi: The Life and Works of Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō (1865–1927)

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Abstract This article outlines the life, legacy, philanthropic contributions, and times of Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō, focusing on his prominence as a well-known Buddhist philanthropist in undivided India and in the wider Bengali Buddhist community of Boṅgabhūmi. It aims to fill a gap in current research by presenting Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō’s contribution to Buddhist transmission. By doing so, this research seeks to shed some light on the life of one of the most significant Buddhist figures in the history of undivided India and Boṅgabhūmi. This study intends to explore, in three separate parts, Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō’s earlier biography, including his spiritual journey, his missionary service in establishing Buddhist institutions, and his insights on educational welfare, as well as an overview of the highlights of his remarkable career. As this article demonstrates, all three of these stages are equally significant turning points in Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō’s life; and his altruistic contributions to Theravāda Buddhism in Bangladesh and India at different times can be better understood in the context of the corresponding era.

Keywords Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō, Boṅgabhūmi · Buddhist philanthropy, Theravāda, Buddhism in Bangladesh.

Introduction

Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō (June 22, 1865–April 30, 1927), a Theravāda Buddhist philanthropist, made outstanding contributions to the spread of Buddhism by developing local social philanthropy and extending humanitarian activities and education in undivided India and Boṅgabhūmi,¹ which include present-day

¹ Boṅgabhūmi refers to the Bengali region, particularly the lands where the language Bengali or

Bangladesh and West Bengal in India (Mahāsthabīra 2021, 202–203). During the British colonial era in undivided India, when Theravāda Buddhism was being reformed in the Bengal Delta, Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō took on a significant role in the propagation of Buddhism by establishing a number of monasteries, Buddhist organizations, and educational institutions. His unwavering benevolence in reshaping society and propagating Buddhism has earned him the respect and appreciation of the devotees locally and globally. In recognition of his immense humanitarian services, moral-spiritual support, and concern for social welfare, Bengali people honor him with the title “Karmayōgi”² and often address him as “Karmayōgi Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō” (Chowdhury 2021a, 52).

However, little research has been done on Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō to date. Previous studies on Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō have been limited in scope (Brahmacārī 1950, 46–48). They highlighted his services in social welfare and propagation of Buddhism, as well as his organizational activities (Barua 2015, 38). Although the writings of Sīlānanda Brahmacārī,³ Bhikkhu Bodhipal, and Shimul

Bānlā is considered to be primarily spoken. Prior to the partition of India in 1847, the two Bengali regions, including East Bengal (present-day Bangladesh) and West Bengal (now a state in India), were unified. The term Boṅgabhūmi consists of two words: Boṅga and bhūmi. “Boṅga” implies “Bengal” [unified Bengal], whereas “bhūmi” means “land”. From the geo-cultural point of view, Boṅgabhūmi refers to the unified territory that includes modern-day Bangladesh and West Bengal in India. Indeed, the majority of the people in Boṅgabhūmi speak the same language, Bangla, and also have similar customs, traditions, and cultures.

² The term “Karmayōgi” has the same meaning in both Bengali and Sanskrit. In terms of grammatical structure, the word “Karmayōgi” is divided into two parts: *Karma* and *Yōgi* (*Karma* + *Yōgī*). The term “Karma” here refers to “work” or “service”, whereas the term “yōgi” refers to “noble meditator” or “practitioner”. Recognizing Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō’s contributions, devotees and followers have given him the title “Karmayōgi” to express his dignity and tireless welfare services for the sake of sentient beings. It is worth noting that Bengali Buddhist monks and devotees have used the title, “Karmayōgi” exclusively for Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō for the past hundred years in attributing his legacy and significant charitable and philanthropic services to Bangladesh and the Indian subcontinent.

³ Sīlānanda Brahmacārī (December 25, 1907–February 5, 2002) was a prominent Buddhist scholar

Barua briefly cover his biography and contribution to the formation of a noble society in Boṅgabhūmi, including modern-day Bangladesh and West Bengal, they say little about his activities with Buddhists and non-Buddhist communities. Therefore, more research is needed on Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō's contribution to the wider Buddhist communities in present-day Bangladesh, West Bengal, India, and beyond. In general, current research on Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō's altruistic and humanitarian services to Buddhism and societal welfare is still in its infancy and lacks a systematic analysis.

Based on the life, legacy, philanthropic contributions, and times of Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō, this research paper is designed into three separate parts. The first part explores Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō's early biography including the history of his entrance into the spiritual path, the second one delineated his altruistic services to establish spiritual institutions with the purpose of propagating Theravāda Buddhism in undivided India and modern Bangladesh, and the ending section reveals his philanthropic activities for educational welfare with highlighting the overview of his entire humanitarian services.

1 *Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō's Early Life and Spiritual Journey into Buddhism*

Kṛpāśaraṇa was born on June 22, 1865, in Unainpūrā,⁴ a notable spiritual village in the Patiya subdistrict of Caṭṭagrāma district in present-day Bangladesh. His

from Boṅgabhūmi. Like the renowned philanthropist Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō, Sīlānanda Brahmacārī was born in the spiritual village of Unainpūrā. It is worth noting that Sīlānanda Brahmacārī was a disciple of Jñānīśvara Mahāsthabira (December 20, 1887–October 28, 1974), a well-known Theravāda Buddhist scholar and meditation master. A prolific scholar, Sīlānanda Brahmacārī wrote various books in Bengali, Hindi, and English, as well as conducted translation projects from Pāli into English and Bengali. His major works include *An Introduction to Abhidhamma; The Dhammapada; Mabāśanti Mahāprēma; Karmayōgi Kṛpāśaraṇa; The Eternal Message of Lord Buddha; Visuddhimagga, The Saṃyukta Nikāya* (translation) and others.

⁴ Unainpūrā is one of the important spiritual villages in modern-day Bangladesh where a number of Buddhist scholars and monks grew up, and who, over the centuries, led the spread of Theravāda Buddhism in Boṅgabhūmi and the Indian subcontinent. Dr. Dharmasen Mahāthērō (June 17, 1928–March 21, 2020), the 12th Saṅgharāja of Bangladesh, recorded a list of fourteen prominent

father's name was Ānandamōhana Baṇuŷā and his mother's name was Ārādhanā Baṇuŷā (Brahmacārī 1950, 46–48). He was the sixth child of his parents. Because of his father's poverty, young Kṛpāśaraṇa was deprived of the opportunity to attend school. In his commemorative biographical book, *Karmayōgi Kṛpāśaraṇa*, the eminent Sīlānanda Brahmacārī (1950, 13) stated that despite the reality that the young Kṛpāśaraṇa wanted to study in school and would have been privileged to acquire formal education, he did not express his sorrow to his father if he was regretful of his deprivation and poverty. When Kṛpāśaraṇa was only ten years old, his father Ānandamōhana Baṇuŷā died unexpectedly. His mother Ārādhanā Baṇuŷā was widowed and was unable to take care of her children. Understanding his mother's plight, the young Kṛpāśaraṇa worked as a laborer in a relative's house, earned two takas (currency corresponding to the British India period) and gave that money to his mother for family expenses. Ārādhanā was flabbergasted when she saw that young Kṛpāśaraṇa's heart was so charitable. With a compassionate heart, Ārādhanā realized that Kṛpāśaraṇa was born to aid and help others, and that he should be initiated into the path of awakening by becoming a Buddhist monk.

Under the mentorship of a noble preceptor (*upajjhāya*) Sūdhancandra Mahāsthabīra, Kṛpāśaraṇa was ordained as a novice (*sāmañera* or *pabbajja*) on April

Buddhist monks born in Unainpūrā on a white stone rock. The white-stoned rock edict was depicted in 1982 and respectfully placed in the Unainpūrā Laṅkārāma on the eve of the auspicious Buddha Pūrṇimā (Buddhist Year 2525). We have learned of sixteen Buddhist monks who came from Unainpūrā, including two contemporary monks, and they are: (1) Śrīmat Jayādharā Mahāsthabīra (1600–1672); (2) Śrīmat Dhruba Mahāsthabīra (1630–1690); (3) Śrīmat Cāda Mahāsthabīra (1630–1690); (4) Śrīmat Krēmlahā Mahāsthabīra (1700–1780); (5) Śrīmat Thānā'i Mahāsthabīra (1720–1785); (6) Śrīmat Hrepasu'i Mahāsthabīra (1725–1790); (7) Śrīmat Mōhana Candra Mahāsthabīra (1730–1780); (8) Śrīmat Mukulacāna Mahāsthabīra (1730–1795); (9) Śrīmat Sudhana Candra Mahāsthabīra (1735–1810); (10) Śrīmat Saṅgharāja Ācārya Pūrṇācāra Candramōhana Mahāsthabīra (1838–1905); (11) Śrīmat Jagat Candra Mahāsthabīra (1852–1948); (12) Śrīmat Gauracandra Mahāsthabīra (1850–1910); (13) Śrīmat Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāsthabīra (1865–1926); (14) Śrīmat Saṅgharāja Dr. Dharmasen Mahāsthabīra (1928–2020); (15) Śrīmat Bōdhipāla Bhikkhu (1968–2020) and (16) Śrīmat Bōdhimitra Mahāsthabīra (1970–present).

14, 1881, at Unainpūrā Laṅkārāma, located in the Patiya subdistrict of Caṭṭagráma district in present-day Bangladesh (Brahmacārī 1950, 13; Bodhipala 2005, 17; Barua 2021, 273). Ever since Kṛpāśaraṇa Sāmañera became a novice monk, he carefully studied Buddhist monastic rules and disciplines (*vinaya*) from his preceptor. Due to his meticulous learning, Kṛpāśaraṇa Sāmañera established himself as one of the best students among his peers and other members of the monastery. Kṛpāśaraṇa received higher ordination (*bbikkhu*) at the age of twenty under the spiritual preceptor (*upajjhāya*) Ācārya Pūrṇācāra Candramōhana Mahāsthabīra (June 19, 1834–February 4, 1907),⁵ the second Saṅgharāja of Bangladesh (Brahmacārī 1950, 13–15). Kṛpāśaraṇa was given a new monastic name, “Candrajyoti Bhikkhu” by the teacher Ācārya Pūrṇācāra Candramōhana Mahāsthabīra in accordance with the Theravāda monastic order (*vinaya*). He was known mainly by his original name, “Kṛpāśaraṇa”, which was given to him by his parents, and his monastic name “Candrajyoti Bhikkhu” was never pronounced (Barua 2021, 274). Subsequently, he was often referred to as Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō by his followers, devotees, and fellow monks.

The Legacy of Ācārya Pūrṇācāra had a tremendous impact on Kṛpāśaraṇa’s monastic journey. After Kṛpāśaraṇa received higher ordination, he traveled to Bodhgaya (present-day Bihār, India) with Ācārya Pūrṇācāra. Sīlānanda Brahmacārī (1950, 14–15) noted that Kṛpāśaraṇa had an insight in Bodhgaya while he was reflecting on the declining status of Buddhism in India and the entire Indian subcontinent. At that time he was thinking about the possibility of reviving Buddhism in India and beyond. Kṛpāśaraṇa thought on how to bring devotees and

⁵ Ācārya Pūrṇācāra Candramōhana Mahāsthabīra (June 19, 1834–February 4, 1907), the second Saṅgharāja of Bangladesh was a pioneer reformer of Theravāda Buddhism in present-day Bangladesh as well as in the Indian subcontinent. He was born in Unainpūrā, the previously mentioned spiritual village. Mr. Paul, a British-based government officer, inspired Ācārya Pūrṇācāra to learn the *Tipitaka*, or Triple Baskets of Buddhism. After learning about the *Bhikkhu Pātimokkha* (The Desciple Monks’ Code), he was motivated to reform Theravāda Buddhism in undivided India, including present-day Bangladesh. Under the spiritual direction and preceptorship (*Upajjhāya*) of Saṅgharāja Sāramēdha Mahāsthabīra (1801–1882), Ācārya Pūrṇācāra Candramōhana was ordained as a *bbikkhu* (higher ordination). Ācārya Pūrṇācāra Candramōhana was one of the founding members of Rāmañña Nikāya of Sri Lanka in 1864 (Dharmādhār 2009, 174–175).

seekers together again by helping each other and to save Buddhism and the Buddhist community from mass extinction. As a devout follower of Buddhism, Kṛpāśaraṇa was inspired by the Buddha's instruction to monks to walk for the welfare of the multitudes and for the happiness of the many sentient beings (*babujana-bitāya babujana-sukhāya*).⁶ Kṛpāśaraṇa's journey into Buddhism matured during his first pilgrimage owing to his teacher's encouragement, and his intrinsic philanthropic nature⁸ blossomed.

2 Kṛpāśaraṇa's Contribution to Establishing Buddhist Institutions

After completing his noble pilgrimage to Northern India, Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō finally went back to Cāṭṭagrāma. He then lived in a local Buddhist monastery in the village of Bākkhālī, located in the Patiya subdistrict of Cāṭṭagrāma district, present-day Bangladesh, as instructed by his teacher Ācārya Pūrṇācāra Candramōhana Mahāsthabīra (Brahmacārī 1950, 15). In addition to his monastic responsibilities at the temple, he pondered on how he could contribute to the Buddhist community, protect devotees from suffering, and spread Theravāda Buddhism⁹ throughout Boṅgabhūmi and British India, even so he reflected on his

6 This is the Buddha's famous instruction to his first sixty enlightened disciples (*arahants*) to go forth for the sake of many. A similar passage also occurs in the *Vinaya Piṭaka I* 20, 36 -21, 16 (Bodhi 2000, 413).

7 See S IV: (I) 5, 237.

8 As previously indicated, the term "philanthropic nature" is used to express the Buddha's instruction to go forth for the sake of many (*babujana-bitāya babujana-sukhāya*). Thich Nhat Hanh (1926–2022), a Vietnamese Buddhist philanthropist, coined the term "engaged Buddhism" to describe Buddhism-inspired philanthropy and social activism (Gleig 2021, 2).

9 Theravāda Buddhism was revived in Cāṭṭagrāma during the time of Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō and later spread throughout Boṅgabhūmi. Professor Deepak Kumar Barua has noted that Theravāda Buddhism began to reform in the Bengal region in the early nineteenth century (Barua 2021, 209). Dharmādhār Mahāsthabīra, on the other hand, stated that Theravāda Buddhism was

innate humanistic nature (Barua 2021, 274-275). Coincidentally, when he was contemplating whether or not to begin his philanthropic activities in British India, he received a request from devotees of Kolkata (West Bengal, India) to spend some time teaching Buddhism. On June 15, 1886, he arrived in Kolkata and resided at Nabīna Bihāra, on the street 72/73 Maṅgalā lē’ina (Bodhipala 2005, 17-19). While staying at Nabīna Bihāra, he came to the realization that Kolkata needed more Buddhist monasteries where members of the monastic community could dwell in order to carry out community work. Understanding the significance of having more Buddhist temples in Kolkata, he established Mahānagara Bihāra at 21/26 Bho Street. (Barua 2021, 210) Although Mahānagara Bihāra was founded in Kolkata as a rental building, it is crucial to note that it was the first Buddhist monastery that Krpāśaraṇa established.

During his time at Nabīna Bihāra, Krpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō became concerned about how disorganized and ignorant the Buddhist communities in Kolkata were about the Buddha’s teachings. Realizing the need to establish a social society and protect the ethnic Buddhist communities of Boṅgabhūmi, Krpāśaraṇa was compelled to start a Buddhist organization in the heart of British India. His intention was to create a Buddhist institution that would encourage devotees and seekers to interact with one another in thought and maintain their faith in the Triple Gems of the Buddha, his teachings, and the noble community. He founded the Baud’dha Dharmāṅkūra Sabhā (Bengal Buddhist Association)¹⁰ in Kolkata on the eve of Prabāraṇā Pūrṇimā (Āśvinī Pūrṇimā) on October 5, 1892 (Brahmacārī 1950, 46-48). The well-known modern philanthropist and Buddhist scholar Bhikkhu Bodhipala asserts (2005, 17-19) that the Dharmāṅkūra Sabhā was one of the pioneering Buddhist organizations in undivided British India. In describing the hardships of Krpāśaraṇa on the way to founding the Baud’dha Dharmāṅkūra Sabhā, Sīlānanda Brahmacārī (1950, 13-20) remarked as follows:

One of his dream noble initiatives was the Baud’dha Dharmāṅkūra Sabhā, to which Krpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō devoted all his time for years. Despite his unwavering

reintroduced in Caṭṭagṛāma in 1864 under the direction of the first Saṅgharāja, Sāramēḍha Mahāsthabīra (Mahāsthabīra 2009, 172-173).

¹⁰ Banglapedia: National Encyclopedia of Bangladesh. 2021. “Bauddha Dharmankur Sabha”. Available online: https://en.banglapedia.org/index.php/Bauddha_Dharmankur_Sabha (accessed June 26, 2022).

commitment and full energy, it took a while for this organization to become successful. Kṛpāśaraṇa, however, continued to be forbearing and passionate about his work throughout the journey, encouraged by the guidance of his teacher Ācārya Pūrṇācāra Candramōhana Mahāsthabīra. While Kṛpāśaraṇa was striving on his own, a Buddhist devotee by the name of Gopāla Sinha Caudhurī extended his compassionate assistance and support to him so that his dream project could advance. After that, kind-hearted local followers began to support him and provided him with financial assistance in the accomplishment of his noble cause. Kṛpāśaraṇa saved all the funds he received from followers and seekers in order to carry out his goal of establishing the Baud'dha Dharmāṅkūra Sabhā. Apart from the additional costs he incurred in setting up the institution, he never spent a penny on personal expenses. Over the years he accumulated several thousand takas (the equivalent of money in British India). Since the Baud'dha Dharmāṅkūra Sabhā had no former properties, he purchased a 3,600 square foot (5 kāṭhā) plot of land on Street 5, Lalita Mōhana Dās lē'ina in Kolkata. At that time, the price of the 3,600 square feet of land was 4,500 Taka. He used all of his savings and any donations he received to establish the Baud'dha Dharmāṅkūra Sabhā in combination with the founding monastery (*Bihāra*). In order to properly complete this great endeavor for the benefit of devotees and seekers in Kolkata as well as in undivided British India, he borrowed some money from the well-wishers because he did not have enough to purchase the land. Kṛpāśaraṇa laid the foundation of the Baud'dha Dharmāṅkūra Bihāra in Kolkata in 1901. The monastery was inaugurated in 1903.

After successfully establishing the Baud'dha Dharmāṅkūra Sabhā and Baud'dha Dharmāṅkūra Bihāra in Kolkata, Kṛpāśaraṇa's name gained widespread recognition among followers and Buddhist aspirants. This prompted him to further his philanthropic activities by establishing sister institutions and organizations in Boṅgabhūmi and undivided India. In 1907, Kṛpāśaraṇa sought the assistance of the District Divisional Commissioner of Lucknow Division to purchase a 7,200 square foot (10 kāṭhā) plot of land in the Lucknow District of British India so that he could build a sister institution to the Baud'dha Dharmāṅkūra Bihāra, which he named, the "Lucknow Bodhisattva Bihāra" (Bodhipala 2005, 17–21). That same year, he established the "Shimla Baud'dha Samiti," another branch of the institution in Shimla, Himachal Pradesh. In 1910, he traveled to Darjeeling to start a new sister institution to the Baud'dha

Dharmāṅkūra Bihāra, and was granted permission by King Bijayā Chandra Mahatāba, the majesty of Bardhaman, to establish a monastery on the land. The construction of the temple was completed in 1919. After fulfilling his mission in Darjeeling, Kṛpāśaraṇa thought of the devotees in Ranchi, the capital of the state of Jharkhand. In 1915, he established a new branch of the Baud'dha Dharmāṅkūra Bihāra in Ranchi with the support of his previous registration with the British-Indian Government. In 1918, another branch of the Baud'dha Dharmāṅkūra Bihāra was established in Shillong, the capital of Meghalaya (Brahmacārī 1950, 46-48).

In addition to his extensive altruistic activities in northern India and West Bengal, Kṛpāśaraṇa made significant contributions to the development of the village of Unainpūrā, where he was born. He renovated and reconstructed the ancient monastery of Unainpūrā Laṅkārāma in 1921. After being requested to do so by the noble residents of Unainpūrā, he established a branch of the Dharmāṅkūra Baud'dha Sabhā in his beloved village. In the same year, he opened a new branch of the Dharmāṅkūra Baud'dha Sabhā in the Cāṭtagrāma Hill Tract (CHT) area of Rangamati (Brahmacārī 1950, 48). He returned to Kolkata after fulfilling his mission in his hometown of Cāṭtagrāma. After that, in 1922, he founded a sister institution of the Baud'dha Dharmāṅkūra Sabhā in Jamshedpur, Tatanagar. The well-known Tata Company in Jamshedpur, based in Tatanagar, gave him a 60,480 square foot (1 Bighā and 1 kāthā) plot of land for the construction of a Buddhist monastery and meditation center. The last monastery established by Kṛpāśaraṇa was built in Shillong in 1925 (Bodhipala 2005, 18).

Even after his rigorous philanthropic journey, Kṛpāśaraṇa remained devoted to spreading Buddhism in Boṅgabhūmi and Undivided India. Despite all challenges and obstacles, he did not give up his noble aim of establishing Buddhist institutions as respective branches of the Baud'dha Dharmāṅkūra Sabhā and Baud'dha Dharmāṅkūra Bihāra. Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō diligently managed to establish Buddhist institutions for the benefit of devotees and aspirants wherever he had the privilege throughout Boṅgabhūmi and Undivided India.

3 *Kṛpāśaraṇa's Work on Educational Welfare*

While Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō was working devotedly to establish branches of the Baud'dha Dharmāṅkūra Sabhā and Baud'dha Dharmāṅkūra Bihāra in Boṅgabhūmi and Undivided India, he was deeply saddened to observe how educationally inferior Bengali Buddhists were. As a result of lack of formal education, Buddhist society was unable to advance and adapt to the advancement of rational thought. Professor Shimul Barua (2021, 275) wrote in his book, Mānava Cintanē Bud'dha Cintā-Jāgaranē, that Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō, who was a self-educated person, understood the reason of the substandard nature of the Buddhist community in both East and West Bengal, i.e., the lack of education. At the fifth assembly of the Baud'dha Dharmāṅkūra Sabhā in 1913, Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō delivered the following speech that emphasized the value of holistic education for the welfare of oneself and others in Boṅgabhūmi:

The distinguished speakers on this occasion spoke about their perspectives on education, which I found to be interesting. In contrast to the large contingent, we currently have only a limited number of educated people. I do not believe that a small number of educated people can make a significant impact on society as well as on the growth of the economy. Although there are not many educated people in our society, I am disappointed in many of them because of their selfishness. A person with the right education is one who not only cares for himself and his family members but also contributes to society's welfare and has a generous heart for others. For the sake of the benefit of many people in this society, I expect the people of this noble community to educate themselves internally and externally (Chowdhury 1990, 43).

It is important to mention that Kṛpāśaraṇa had purely philanthropic views on educational welfare, as evidenced by the fact that he established numerous schools and colleges in Boṅgabhūmi. In addition to establishing the Baud'dha Dharmāṅkūra Sabhā and its two-story building, he also founded the "Kṛpāśaraṇa Free Institution", a nonprofit school, in 1913 (Brahmacārī 1950, 46-48). Although this school was located in the grounds of a Buddhist monastery called Baud'dha Dharmāṅkūra Bihāra, it accepted students of all religious backgrounds and has since been providing free education in both Bengali and English. With the assistance of the prominent Buddhist scholar, Dr. Benimadhab Barua (B. M.

Barua),¹¹ Kṛpāśaraṇa supervised this institution, which immediately drew the attention of the locals (Barua 2021, 276).

When Kṛpāśaraṇa was in the process of founding Kṛpāśaraṇa Free Institution, he had another thought: the importance of education for individuals of all ages, from young children to the elderly. He also understood the significance of education in enabling working people to advance both morally and materially by securing respectable positions. In 1916, Kṛpāśaraṇa started an evening school for the benefit of working people in affiliation with the Baud’dha Dharmāṅkūra Sabhā (Brahmacārī 1950, 47). With the help of Mr. W. C. Wordsworth, former director of the Education Ministry in the Bengal territory of British India, the Baud’dha Dharmāṅkūra Sabhā received government funding for running both Kṛpāśaraṇa Free Institution and the Evening School for Working People (Barua 2021, 277).

Nevertheless, Kṛpāśaraṇa’s friendship with Sir Ashutosh Mookerjee,¹² former Vice-Chancellor of Kolkata University, grew and his moral vision expanded to encapsulate the educational welfare in Boṅgabhūmi. Dr. Dharmasen Mahāsthabīra¹³ recognized that the friendship of Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō and Sir

¹¹ Dr. Benimadhab Barua, also known as Professor B. M. Barua (December 31, 1888–March 23, 1948), was a pioneer of indological studies and the first Asian to receive a DLitt from the University of London in 1917. Under the supervision of Dr. T. W. Rhys Davids and Mrs. Rhys Davids, Dr. B. M. Barua carried out his research entitled “Indian Philosophy: Its Origin and Growth from Vedas to the Buddha” (Benimadhab 1921, pp. v–xiii). In 1913, he took a position as a guest lecturer at the University of Kolkata. In 1918, he was promoted to full professor and continued to work there until the end of his life. Dr. B. M. Barua was a prolific scholar who authored 86 research papers, and 18 texts in English, along with compiling 7 books and 22 research articles in the Bengali language (Barua 2019, 28). He was a member of the Baud’dha Dharmāṅkūra Sabhā from 1909 and generously assisted Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō’s philanthropic efforts in Boṅgabhūmi and Undivided India.

¹² Sir Ashutosh Mookerjee (June 29, 1864–May 25, 1924) was a well-known Bengali educator, jurist, and mathematician. He served as Vice-Chancellor at the University of Calcutta for four consecutive two-year terms (1906–1914). Due to his strong sense of self-worth, courage, and academic integrity, he was frequently alluded to as “Banglar Bagh” which translates to “the royal Bengal tiger of Boṅgabhūmi” (Barua 2019, 52).

¹³ On June 22, 2015, a significant congregation was held in Unainpūrā Laṅkārāma (located in the Patiya subdistrict of Caṭṭagṛāma district, present-day Bangladesh) to commemorate Karmayōgī

Ashutosh Mookerjee was a shining example of noble companionship, or *Kalyāṇa-mittatā*.¹⁴ This friendship, however, had a significant influence on the establishment of traditional studies and secular education in Boṅgabhūmi. Kṛpāśaraṇa convinced Sir Ashutosh that since the present educational structure was based on university affiliation, rural schools and colleges should recognize Kolkata University as the model of contemporary universities. This affiliation was to encourage pupils from the underprivileged schools and colleges to compete for jobs with graduates from prestigious secular institutions (Bodhipala 2005, 20–21). Deeply influenced by Kṛpāśaraṇa, Sir Ashutosh helped to establish academic ties between Kolkata University and rural institutions in Catṭagrāma, including Mahamuni Anglo-Pali Institution; Silak Dowing Primary School; Kartala-Belkaine Middle English School; Noapara English High School; Andharmanik High School; Naikaine Purnachar Pali School; Dhamakhali High School; Pancharia Middle English School; Satbaria Girl's School and Library; Unainpura Primary School; Unainpura Junior High School; Rangunia English High School; M.A. Rahat Ali High School; Sakhpura English School; Rangamati School and Library (Barua 2019, 279; Bodhipala 2005, 19).

Kṛpāśaraṇa was not only concerned with the introduction of secular education but also reflected on the promotion of ancient Indic languages, such as

Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō's 150th birthday (Barua 2015, 11–30). The assembly was presided over by Saṅgharāja Dr. Dharmasen Mahāsthabīra (June 17, 1928–March 20, 2020), the 12th Supreme Patriarch of Bangladesh. The late Saṅgharāja, Dr. Dharmasen Mahāsthabīra, spoke of Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō's work on educational welfare and asserted that Kṛpāśaraṇa's welfare mission could not have been carried out without Sir Ashutosh Mookerjee, who kindly provided his assistance and offered him additional guidance on how to do so. Kṛpāśaraṇa and Ashutosh shared the same passion for helping the community in a comprehensive approach. Dr. Dharmasen Mahāsthabīra further mentioned that the outstanding friendship between Kṛpāśaraṇa and Ashutosh functioned as a prime example of *Kalyāṇa-mittatā* from a Buddhist perspective.

¹⁴ The Pāli word *Kalyāṇa-mittatā* is used to render the Sanskrit term *kalyāṇa-mitra*, which means admirable companionship, or noble friendship. According to the Buddha, *Kalyāṇa-mittatā* refers to those who are advanced in virtue, engage in noble discussion, extend generous help when required, and consummate in discernment. For a detailed analysis, see D III 180; A IV 281.

Pāli and Sanskrit. At the request of Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō, Sir Ashutosh Mookerjee granted permission for the establishment of a Department of Pāli Studies at Kolkata University in 1907 (Barua 2019, 278). It is noteworthy that Kolkata University¹⁵ was the first institution in South Asia to introduce a program in Pāli Studies. In addition to promoting Pāli Studies within the institution, Kṛpāśaraṇa also paid attention to promising young scholars so that they would integrate their education and have access to adequate research privileges for their future endeavors. Thanks to Kṛpāśaraṇa's thoughtful guidelines and support, Benimadhab Barua flourished in his academic career and made tremendous contributions to Pāli and Buddhist Studies as well as to Indology. It is crucial to remember that Benimadhab Barua received funding for his education at the University of London from the British government. His application was brought to light when Kṛpāśaraṇa sincerely requested Sir Ashutosh to send a recommendation to the British government and the university so that the officials may accept Benimadhab Barua's request for funding.¹⁶

Because Kṛpāśaraṇa was aware of the merits of education for socio-economic advancement, he also laid great emphasis on the education of women. In 1913, he founded the "Baud'dha Mahilā Sam'milanī" organization with the aim of enhancing the welfare of women (Brahmacārī 1950, pp. 47). Baud'dha Mahilā Sam'milanī was formed with the intention of uniting women and inspiring them to pursue education for the sake of themselves and society. During the women's assembly at the Baud'dha Dharmāṅkūra Bihāra in 1913, he stated that every woman deserved the same rights as men and that a woman could work outdoors as well as a man (Chowdhury 1992, 52). An expert on women's education named L. L. Jennie graciously assisted Kṛpāśaraṇa in launching a scholarship program for women's

15 In the footsteps of Kolkata University, contemporary Indian universities such as Delhi University, Pune University, Naba Nalanda University, Gautam Buddha University, and Magadha University, as well as present Bangladeshi institutions such as the University of Dhaka, University of Chittagong, and Government City College of Chattogram, established Pāli and Buddhist Studies (Chowdhury 2020, 110–120).

16 Roy, Ajay. 2018. "The Life of Kripasaran Mahashtavir." Available online: https://dharma-documentaries.net/life-of-kripasaran-mahashtavir?fbclid=IwARo6brdRvtZymwdPLEocN3Sx_vtkmor3dTOWN7O_4xVOvnCG8EU-NLg3DisE (accessed June 22, 2022).

education. It is worth mentioning that this fellowship for women provides financial support to women who are pursuing academic education in school, college, and university as well as vocational training (Barua 2021, 281).

As part of expanding social welfare through education, Kṛpāśaraṇa recognized the significance of establishing libraries and journals. Professor Shimul Barua (2021, 282) noted that Kṛpāśaraṇa was passionately inspired by the glorious legacy of Nālandā Mahāvihāra.¹⁷ In 1909, he founded the “Guṇālaṅkāra Library” at the Baud’ha Dharmāṅkūra Bihāra in Kolkata. With the assistance of the Baud’ha Dharmāṅkūra Sabhā, he collected a large number of books, manuscripts, and Buddhist scriptures for the library so that scholars and educators could continue their research and study to acquire knowledge and wisdom (Chowdhury 1992, 47). Besides establishing a library, he realized the value of academic journals that allowed scholars to publish their research papers, articles, and academic works. He founded “Jagatjyoti”,¹⁸ a monthly Buddhist journal, in 1908. Two renowned scholars, Guṇālaṅkāra Mahāsthabīra and Sāmañera Pūrṇānanda Sāmī, were given the responsibility of editing Jagatjyoti by Kṛpāśaraṇa (Brahmacārī 1950, 47–48).

¹⁷ Nālandā Mahāvihāra or Nālandā University, a relic of ancient India’s glorious past, was regarded as one of the most prestigious educational institutions that represented the foremost Buddhist scholasticism of that time. Nālandā Mahāvihāra University was founded by King Śakrāditya (reign. 467–473) in the fifth century. Historically, Nālandā was recognized as an important location where the Buddha often taught. His chief disciple, Śāriputra was born in Nālandā and taught his benevolent mother the essence of the Dharma. A few hundred years after the Buddha’s passing, renowned Buddhist scholars often gathered in Nālandā to teach and exchange the Dharma. With the advent of the Gupta period (240–550), Nālandā Mahāvihāra University continued to flourish as a prestigious educational institution. A Tibetan account recorded that Nālandā Mahāvihāra University was home to 30,000 students and 20,000 teachers. When the Pāla Dynasty (750–1162 CE.) came into power, the growth of Nālandā Mahāvihāra University extended into Central Asia and Europe (Chowdhury 2020, 110–125).

¹⁸ “Jagatjyoti” established by Kṛpāśarana Mahāthērō over a century ago, became one of the leading Buddhist journals, publishing a plethora of high-quality articles and research papers on Buddhist anthropology, history, contemporary issues, archaeological data, scriptures, culture, and literature (Brahmacārī 1950, 47–48).

Since its inception, the esteemed journal Jagatjyoti has continued to shed light on the social and cultural awakening in Bangladesh and India, as well as throughout the world.

As mentioned in the previous discussion, Kṛpāśaraṇa's passionate contributions to the educational welfare followed in the footsteps of the awakening society in Boṅgabhūmi and undivided India. Understanding the value of education for both men and women, he devoted his life to founding schools, colleges, libraries, and publications, as well as supporting local academics and educators. His ideas on educational welfare, however, were well ahead of his time.

4 *Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō's Significant Life Events and Notable Contributions at a Glance*

The table below, categorized by year, lists the noteworthy life events, accomplishments, and philanthropic contributions of Karmayōgī Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō (Barua 2021, 279–285; Bodhipala 2005, 17–21; Brahmaśārī 1950, 46–48).

Year	Important Events in the Life of Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō
1865	Kṛpāśaraṇa was born on June 22, in the prominent spiritual village of Unainpūrā, located in the Patiya subdistrict of Caṭṭagrāma district, Bangladesh. His father's name was Ānandamōhana Baruẏā, and his mother's name was Ārādhanā Baruẏā.
1875	Kṛpāśaraṇa's father Ānandamōhana Baruẏā died.
1881	On April 14, Kṛpāśaraṇa was ordained as a novice (<i>sāmaṇera</i> or <i>pabbajjā</i>) by the noble preceptor, Sūdhancandra Mahāsthabīra.
1885	Kṛpāśaraṇa received higher ordination (<i>bhikkhu</i>) under the spiritual guidance and preceptorship (<i>Upajjhāya</i>) of the second Saṅgharāja (supreme patriarch), Ācārya Pūrṇācāra Candramōhana Mahāsthabīra (June 19, 1834–February 4, 1907). Thereafter, Kṛpāśaraṇa traveled to

	Bodhgaya (present-day Bihār, India) accompanied by his master. In the same year, his mother Ārādhana Baruṭyā died.
1886	Kṛpāśaraṇa arrived in Kolkata (Present-day West Bengal, India) on June 15; the date was a Tuesday. He lived in Nabīna Bihāra, at 72/73 Maṅgalā lē’ina Street.
1889	He stayed in Mahānagara Bihāra, at 21/26 Bho Street in Kolkata.
1892	On October 5, on the eve of Prabāraṇā Pūrṇimā (Āśvinī Pūrṇimā), Kṛpāśaraṇa founded the Baud’dha Dharmāñkūra Sabhā (Bengal Buddhist Association).
1893	Accompanied by Mahābīra Bhikkhu, Kṛpāśaraṇa visited Lucknow, Allahabad, and Kushinagar in Uttar Pradesh (present-day North India).
1896	Kṛpāśaraṇa attended the coronation ceremony of King Bhubanamōhana Roy of Chakma Circle in Rangamati, Chattogram Hill Track (CHT) of present Bangladesh.
1900	Kṛpāśaraṇa purchased a 3,600 square foot (5 kāṭhā) plot of land on street 5 Lalita Mōhana Dās lē’ina in Kolkata. At that time, the price of the 3,600 square feet of land was 4,500 Taka, which was equivalent to British India’s currency.
1901	Kṛpāśaraṇa discovered Jatavana Bihāra ¹⁹ , a historic Buddhist archeological site in present-day Uttara Pradesh (UP), India. In the

¹⁹ According to Pāli literature, the Buddha spent 19 rainy retreats (*Vassa*) in the Jetavaba Bihāra during his 45-year monastic career. During the time of the Buddha, a prominent wealthy merchant named Anāthapiṇḍika (Sanskrit: Anāthapiṇḍada) offered Jatavana Bihāra to the Buddha and his noble followers (see Dha-a I.3).

	same year, he laid the foundation of the Baud’dha Dharmāṅkūra Bihāra in Kolkata.
1902	The second Saṅgharāja, Ācārya Pūrṇācāra Candramōhana Mahāsthabīra (June 19, 1834–February 4, 1907) received his “Mahāsthabīra” recognition at Rājānagara Śākyamūni Bihāra of Chattogram Hill Track (CHT) of present Bangladesh, led by Kṛpāśaraṇa and his fellow noble Buddhist monks (<i>bhikkhū</i>). In the same year, he traveled to Burma (present Myanmar) on a pilgrimage.
1903	On the eve of the holy Āśārhī Pūrṇimā, Kṛpāśaraṇa Bhikkhu spent a rainy retreat (<i>Vassa</i>) at the Baud’dha Dharmāṅkūra Bihāra in Kolkata, which was ready to be launched for devotees and monastic members. It is worth noting that Guṇālāṅkāra Mahāsthabīra (1874–1924), an eminent Bengali Buddhist monk, traveled from Chattogram to Kolkata to visit the Baud’dha Dharmāṅkūra Bihāra. Due to his extensive knowledge of Buddhism and his skill in compiling Dharma poetries, the most Venerable Guṇālāṅkāra Mahāsthabīra was also known as “Jñānaratna Kabidhajjā”. In the same year, Pūrṇacandra Baruẏā, also known as Pūrṇānanda Sāmī, a well-educated Dharma aspirant, was ordained as a Buddhist monk by Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō. Pūrṇānanda Sāmī (1878–1928) was considered Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthēro’s first disciple.
1905	Tibetan spiritual leader, Tasi Lama, was warmly welcomed and respected at the Baud’dha Dharmāṅkūra Bihāra on December 31. In the same year, the Prince of Wales of the United Kingdom paid a visit to Kolkata. The Bengal government hosted a reception at which Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō met the Prince of Wales and bestowed a Buddhist blessing on him.
1906	Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō ordained Nagēndralāla Baruẏā as a novice (<i>sāmaṇera</i> or <i>pabbajjā</i>) on the eve of Māghī pūrṇimā. For advanced Buddhist education, he sent Nagēndralāla Sāmaṇera to the island of Ceylon (present-day Sri Lanka) to study higher Dharma Studies.

1907	The District Divisional Commissioner of Lucknow Division aided Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō in obtaining a 7,200 square foot (10 kāṭhā) plot of land in the Lucknow District of British India for the purpose of establishing a sister institution of the Baud'dha Dharmāṅkūra Bihāra. He named this institution "Lucknow Bodhisattva Bihāra". In the same year, he founded a sister organization of the Baud'dha Dharmāṅkūra Sabhā called "Shimla Baud'dha Samiti" in Shimla, Himachal Pradesh, Northern India.
1908	On the eve of the holy Āśārhī Pūrnīmā, a Buddhist monthly journal named "Jagatjyoti" was published, jointly edited by Guṇālāṅkāra Mahāsthabīra and Sāmañera Pūrṇānanda Sāmī. In the same year, Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō entrusted Kālikumāra Bhikkhu with the responsibility for the maintenance of the Lucknow Bodhisattva Bihāra construction site. Another Baud'dha Dharmāṅkūra Sabhā sister institution was established in Dibrugarh, Assam. Kṛpāśaraṇa returned to Burma (present Myanmar) on a pilgrimage.
1909	Kṛpāśaraṇa returned to his birthplace Unainpūrā (Patiya subdistrict of Caṭṭagrāma district, present-day Bangladesh) to attend the funeral of his teacher, the second Saṅgharāja, Ācārya Pūrṇācāra Candramōhana Mahāsthabīra. Both Ācārya Pūrṇācāra Candramōhana Mahāsthabīra and Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō were coincidentally born in the same village, Unainpūrā. The same year, he founded the "Guṇālāṅkāra Library" at the Baud'dha Dharmāṅkūra Bihāra in Kolkata. On December 28, he brought to the Baud'dha Dharmāṅkūra Bihāra a rare Aṣṭadhātu (eight metal or <i>octo-alloy</i>) Buddha statue, which was 5 ½ feet in height. The chief Buddhist monk from Akyab (in present-day Myanmar) offered 6,000 takas to purchase and establish the Aṣṭadhātu Buddha statue.
1910	The thirteenth Dalai Lama, Ngawang Lobsang Thupten Gyatso Jigdral Chokley Namgyal (February 12, 1876–December 17, 1933) was invited by the British Indian Government to visit West Bengal. Kṛpāśaraṇa

invited the thirteenth Dalai Lama to pay a visit to the Baud'dha Dharmāṅkūra Bihāra. The noble community of the Baud'dha Dharmāṅkūra Bihāra, led by Kṛpāśaraṇa, welcomed the thirteenth Dalai Lama of Tibet with open arms. Apart from the spiritual visitors, a number of representatives of the British Indian Government paid a visit to the Baud'dha Dharmāṅkūra Bihāra that year. Mr. Butler and Mr. Kairail, both British Indian high-ranked officers, visited the Baud'dha Dharmāṅkūra Bihāra on January 23 and February 12, respectively. Kṛpāśaraṇa traveled to Darjeeling in July to establish a sister institution to the Baud'dha Dharmāṅkūra Bihāra. The same year, he convened a mass youth congregation at Kolkata's Baud'dha Dharmāṅkūra Bihāra.

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| 1911 | Kṛpāśaraṇa visited Sri Lanka on March 18 at the invitation of Anāgarika Dharmapāla (September 17, 1864–April 29, 1933). The following year, the Central government hosted a reception in Delhi, where, accompanied by Guṇālaṅkāra Mahāsthabīra, he met the Prince of Wales for the second time and bestowed a Buddhist blessing on him. |
| 1912 | Kṛpāśaraṇa traveled to Lucknow and Delhi with Anāgarika Dharmapāla. Students from Chattogram, who were studying in Kolkata, organized a congregation in which students of all religions including Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism, actively participated. He established a student dormitory in Kolkata to assist Buddhist students in Chattogram and elsewhere. In the same year, he visited Assam for philanthropic and missionary purposes. |
| 1913 | The Baud'dha Dharmāṅkūra Bihāra was built as a two-story structure. Kṛpāśaraṇa charitable elementary school was founded. For the first time, a women's Buddhist organization, "Baud'dha Mahilā Sam'milanī", was founded in Kolkata at the Dharmāṅkūra Bihāra. |
| 1914 | Inspired by Kṛpāśaraṇa, Sir Ashutosh Mookerjee (June 19, 1864–May 25, 1924), Vice-chancellor of the University of Kolkata, and Mr. Butler, a British-Indian high-ranking officer, recommended the brilliant |

	Bengali scholar, Benimadhab Barua (December 31, 1888–March 23, 1948), who received a government scholarship to study in London. As a result, B. M. Barua received a Master's degree in Greek and Modern European Philosophy from the University of London. He received a D.Litt (Doctor of Literature) degree from the same institution in 1917. Dr. B. M. Barua was the first Asian to obtain a D.Litt degree; his dissertation was entitled: "Indian Philosophy—Its Origin and Growth from the Vedas to the Buddha."
1915	Anāgarika Dharmapāla was invited by Kṛpāśaraṇa to visit Chattogram in modern-day Bangladesh, where he was honored and respected by the Bengali Buddhist community. In the same year, a memorable ceremony honoring Kṛpāśaraṇa took place at the Dharmāñkūra Bihāra, which was attended by Anāgarika Dharmapāla and Sir Ashutosh Mookerjee. During this special ceremony, a marble statue of Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō was erected at the Dharmāñkūra Bihāra. This year, he reached another milestone in his efforts to establish a sister institution to the Dharmāñkūra Bihāra in Ranchi, the state capital of Jharkhand. On December 6, this institution at Ranchi received its former registration from the British-Indian Government.
1916	Kṛpāśaraṇa established another charity school for working students who could arrange their time in the evening after finishing their daily duties. In this year, Guṇālāṅkāra Mahāsthabīra, his lifelong Dharma colleague, passed away. The street in front of the Dharmāñkūra Bihāra was renamed "Buddhist Temple Street" with the approval of the Kolkata Municipality Office, and the name has remained since then.
1917	Sir Thomas Gibson-Carmichael (March 18, 1859–January 16, 1926), a Scottish-British Liberal politician and colonial administrator, visited the Dharmāñkūra Bihāra on February 28. This year was one of the most pleasurable for Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō because it marked the return of Dr. Benimadhab Barua (B. M. Barua) at the end of his successful completion of the D.Litt degree from the University of

	<p>London. The noble community of the Dharmāṅkūra Bihāra organized a felicitation to celebrate Dr. B. M. Barua's achievement, which was organized by Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō. Sir Dēbaprasāda presided as chief guest at this congratulatory ceremony. In the same year, he traveled to Bhutan, a Himalayan country.</p>
1918	On May 28, a new branch of the Dharmāṅkūra Bihāra was opened in Shillong, the capital of Meghalaya. Mrs. Jennie, a professor at Bethune College in Kolkata, led “Mahilā Sam’milāni” at the Dharmāṅkūra Bihāra.
1919	In Darjeeling, devotees and followers celebrated Kṛpāśaraṇa’s 54 th birthday with reverence. The majesty of Bardhaman, King Bijāya Cāmīda Mahatāba, offered a plot of land for the establishment of a Buddhist monastery. In the same year, Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō went to a Buddhist fair in Sitakundo, Bangladesh.
1920	On April 10, Mr. Ronaldsay, a representative of the British colonial empire that ruled the Bengal region, paid a visit to the Dharmāṅkūra Bihāra. In order to facilitate the reception of the award, “Sambud’dhā Cakrabartī” by Sir Ashutosh Mookerjee (Vice-Chancellor of the University of Kolkata), Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō organized a congratulatory program at the Dharmāṅkūra Bihāra. This year was notable for another reason: Śibānanda Bhāratī, a Hindu ascetic, was ordained as a Buddhist monk under the noble guidance and preceptorship of Kṛpāśaraṇa. After becoming a Buddhist monk, Śibānanda Bhāratī was renamed Bōdhānanda Bhikkhu.
1921	Kṛpāśaraṇa established a branch of the Baud’dha Dharmāṅkūra Sabhā in his birthplace, Unainpūrā. The old monastery of Unainpūrā was renovated and rebuilt with the help of the noble villagers. In the same year, he established another branch of the Baud’dha Dharmāṅkūra Sabhā in the Chattogram Hill Tract (CHT) area of Rangamati.
1922	Kṛpāśaraṇa established a branch of the Baud’dha Dharmāṅkūra Sabhā in Jamshedpur, Tatanagar. A 60,480 square foot (1 Bighā and 1 kāṭhā)

	plot of land was offered to Kṛpāśaraṇa by the prominent Tata company for the establishment of a Buddhist monastery and meditation center in Jamshedpur, Tatanagar.
1924	Kṛpāśaraṇa called for an international Buddhist conference in Kolkata. He built a <i>Bhikṣu Sīmā</i> or Uposatha Hall and laid the groundwork for the Bud'dha Dhatu Caitya (a monument where the Buddha's holy relics are restored) at the Dharmāñkūra Bihāra. During Buddhist lent day, monastic members gather in Bhikṣu Sīmā (ordination all) to recite Pātimokkha, whereas the Bud'dha Dhatu Caitya is a monument where devotees restore the Buddha's relics to pay reverence and respect.
1925	Kṛpāśaraṇa founded a Buddhist monastery in Shilong. He also visited his newly established temple in Darjeeling.
1926	Kṛpāśaraṇa passed away on Friday, April 30, in Kolkata.
1927	Kṛpāśaraṇa's body was returned to his birthplace, Unainpūrā, as per his final wish. A grand funeral ceremony, conducted by Buddhist monks and organized by a large number of devotees and followers of Kṛpāśaraṇa, was held in the spiritual village of Unainpūrā.

5 Conclusion

Throughout his life, Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō, who had an altruistic and philanthropic nature, continued his humanitarian activities for Boṅgabhūmi's social and educational welfare as well as moral advancement. His early association with Buddhism and Buddhist teachings undoubtedly grew into his intrinsic compassionate nature. Inquiry into Kṛpāśaraṇa's life unfolds that he embarked on his career path as a philanthropist, following in the Buddha's footsteps to go forth for the welfare of the multitudes and for the benefit of many sentient beings

(*bahujana-bitāya bahujana-sukhāya*).²⁰ In recognition of Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō’s selfless contributions that expressed his dignity and tireless services for the benefit of society, the devotees and followers of Boṅgabhūmi conferred upon him the honorific title of “Karmayōgī”. Since then he has been widely renowned as “Karmayōgī Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō”.

Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō was far ahead of his time in his philanthropic endeavors to establish the splendid Buddhist institutions: “Baud’dha Dharmāṇikūra Sabhā” and “Baud’dha Dharmāṇikūra Bihāra” and their noble branches. Moreover, his unconditional service for educational welfare, such as funding schools and colleges in affiliation with leading institutions, made a notable contribution to the advancement of education in the rural areas of Boṅgabhūmi. Kṛpāśaraṇa persisted in his humanitarian efforts despite all hardships and obstacles, just like a Bodhisattva who generated the thought of awakening (*bodhicitta*) for the benefit of all sentient beings until they attained ultimate liberation (Jamspal 2019, 2-20).

Since the beginning of the last century, the magnificent works and legacies of Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō have been enriching Bengali society. Kṛpāśaraṇa was a source of inspiration for his charitable endeavors. Following in the footsteps of Kṛpāśaraṇa, a number of Theravāda monks have made notable contributions to the social and educational welfare in Boṅgabhūmi, including Biśud’dhānanda Mahāthērō, Jyotiṣpāla Mahāthērō; Śud’dhānanda Mahāthērō; Prajñābansā Mahāthērō; Dr. Bōdhipāla Mahāthērō; Saṅghapriya Mahāthērō; Śasanarakṣitā Mahāthērō; Śaranasēna Mahāthērō, etc. Thus, the Bengali communities in Boṅgabhūmi have reverently remembered the contributions of Karmayōgī Kṛpāśaraṇa Mahāthērō, as long as they have kept on honoring their legacies and heritage.

Abbreviations

A	<i>Āṅguttara Nikāya</i>
D	<i>Dīghanikāya</i>
S	<i>Saṃyutta Nikāya</i>
Dha-a	<i>Dhammapada Atṭhakathā</i>

References to Pāli texts refer to the Pāli Text Society (PTS) editions.

²⁰ See S IV: (I) 5, 237.

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Recenzie · Reviews

An Introduction to Arabic Translation. Edited by Hussein Abdul-Raof. London: Routledge, 2022—338 pp. eBook ISBN 9781003268956.

Syaichon Yusuf EFENDI, Fadhli Hakim BAHTIYAR, Imroatul NGARIFAH

The recently published *An Introduction to Arabic Translation* carries an insightful discussion of high value for both students and teachers of translation, complemented by a methodologically comprehensive course in Arabic-English-Arabic translation studies. The major emphasis in this book is on solving Arabic-English-Arabic translation problems, which are explained in terms of translation theory and supplemented by critical comments on goals and strategy. This volume can be used as a manual to train translators, providing them with a theoretical foundation during the translation process to be able to achieve proper translation. The book introduces the reader to textual analysis of diverse types of Arabic and English texts, followed by their translations and a critical discussion of the approaches used. The textual analysis demonstrates the distinctive textual features (linguistic, discoursal, and cultural) that are the norms employed by both the source language (SL) and the target language (TL). *An Introduction to Arabic Translation* consists of 6 chapters.

Chapter 1 describes in detail what happens during the process of translation and how the translation product is received by the consumer. The analysis of the process of translation is mainly based on the translation approach used. It is useful for the translator to get acquainted with the steps to produce a thorough translation, such as monitoring and management and, most importantly the major translation approaches the translator can use during translation process. Hussein Abdul Raof has given two new translation approaches, 1) stylistic literalness approach and 2) jargon translation approach.

Chapter 2 outlines practical training for the students and teachers of translation in the critical evaluation of translation quality through contrastive stylistic analysis of source texts (ST) and target texts (TT). Stylistically based translation quality assessment is a measurement tool that aims to: (a) enhance the students' skills in critical analysis of translation, and (b) train them in how to employ stylistic analysis in the assessment of the translation process and product, as well as the evaluation of STs and TTs.

Chapter 3 deals with the stylistics. This chapter elucidates the foreignization of Qur'anic style using some examples of translations of the Qur'an. As the author explains, in some translations of the Qur'an, we encounter a greater focus of attention upon the SL stylistic features (form). Such translations are unique

examples of foreignization of the SL style and syntactic patterns. Different translations of the Qur'an give different consideration to content and form. As a Qur'anic translation strategy, the foreignization of Qur'anic style (stylistic literalness) form is favored over content, thus giving style (stylistic features) a higher priority in the TT. In such translations of the Qur'an, the importance of the TL form far exceeds the consideration of the content of the message of the SL.

Chapter 4 is about the sequence of the TT sentences, their re-shuffle according to word order, and their arrangement into a coherent and cohesive TL sentence/paragraph structure. It aims to rid the TT of the clumsiness and structural complexity of the ST in order to enhance clarity and meaning. This chapter also accounts for the translation of punctuation and how punctuation plays a significant role in the TL textual continuity and coherence. Arabic and English depict two distinct linguistic and textual systems. Thus, different SL and TL punctuation and cohesive systems designate distinct stylistic preferences in the two languages.

Chapter 5 examines different types of cohesive devices like substitution, ellipsis, reference, lexical cohesion (lexical repetition), and conjunction. It questions whether overrepresented SL additive conjunctions like *و* are necessary in the TL. The ST (the Qur'an) is characterized by a dense structure where some of its elements—such as nominalizations, the active participles, the no main verb nominal sentences, and the subject noun-initial sentences with a main verb—have a performative intent that may not be possible to reproduce in the TL. Shift is a case in point. The chapter elaborates on the unnatural TT style and how the TL audience is alienated by a TT that does not adhere to the linguistic norms and cohesion system of the TL.

Chapter 6 provides a detailed analysis with numerous examples of the different linguistic approaches through which the SL jargon (terminology) generates jargon in the TL. It describes the creation of jargon, as a concept, in Arabic. This chapter also explains the semantic relationship between the SL and the TL jargon. The discussion addresses whether the approach of literal (foreignization) translation through phonetic borrowings (transliteration) can always be used in the product of new jargon, or whether the approach of naturalization translation through semantic borrowings is an option for the translator to deliver new jargon.

This edition of the book can be used at an intermediate level and is suitable for translation modules, translation programs, and short translation training

courses, as this book introduces the translation student and translation instructor to textual and discourse analysis of varied types of Arabic and English texts, followed by their translation and critical analysis of the strategies adopted in each example of translation. The textual and discourse analysis demonstrates the distinctive textual features (linguistic, discoursal, and cultural) that are the norms used in both the source language (SL) and the target language (TL).

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The present work of literary thesis focuses primarily on the exploration and literary analysis of the influence of the famous Oriental popular collection of stories, *The Thousand and One Nights*, on—and its particular relations to—Arabic Nobel Prize-winning author Naṣīb Maḥfūz's (1911–2006) novel *Layālī Alf Layla* (“Nights of the Thousand Nights”, translated into English by Denys Johnson-Davies as *Arabian Nights and Days*, 1995). The very title of the novel explicitly recalls the source of its inspiration. The author of this analysis also mentions some other works of Naṣīb Maḥfūz in apt contexts. The broad historical, sociological, political, and cultural context remains present throughout the author's reflections. Her research is based on a rich bibliography of English, Arabic, Slovak and Czech sources made available to her on her several scholarship and grant project stays in Arab and European countries. The resulting study was published in the *Studio Orientalia Monographica* issue by the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Slovak Academy of Sciences as its 10th volume. In addition to its basic characteristics, here is a selection of what we consider to be the main ideas or topics and pieces of information that we can extract from this compact and fluent research output.

The mutual influence between the European-American Western culture and Arab culture is strongly manifested in their respective national literatures. The collection *The Thousand and One Nights* gained immediate wide-spread success and fame only after some of its manuscripts (along with some others) were first translated into a European language, or rather adapted for its new audience, by Antoine Galland (*Les Mille et Une Nuits, contes arabes traduits en français*, vol. I–X: 1704–1712; vol. XI–XII: 1717). However, it was not always equally appreciated in the Arab milieu, where, it was in fact considered as a literature of rather low taste for a long time, or even of no value whatsoever. Nevertheless, the collective attitudes of a society (if such a thing even exists or can be called such) sometimes change and alternate, and thus the despised may for certain reasons (or for certain recipients) become a fruitful source of inspiration, or may evoke admiration and offer positive motivation.

The work reveals, comments, and interprets Maḥfūz's play with the rich symbolism of several poetical notions such as night, journey, madness, desire,

personal metamorphoses, and fate, in addition to its other qualities. The introduction recounts how the Nobel Laureate's life circumstances and life and political changes shaped his personal and artistic actions. It also examines how he achieved the comprehensive development of the genre of novel, which was not as widely and firmly rooted in Arabic literature as in its Western counterparts. Similarly, it touches on the question of the dichotomy between the sense of obligation to emulate what is considered right, and upon discovering that it is rather inevitable, to establish one's own "right". We are informed about Mahfūz's own relationship to *The Thousand and One Nights*, his experiences of reading it (initially in secret) and his reflections on its value to him.

The very title of Mahfūz's novel offers the present author scope for interesting interpretations of the motivation and possible extent of reference of its use. We gain information about its principal source of inspiration of this title: *The Thousand and One Nights*, its nature, content, and origins (different layers of provenance, collective authorship, etc.). Indeed, the multiculturality and open-to-modification character of *The Thousand and One Nights* provides a wide range of readers with a broad scope for imagination and other creative processes. The author elaborates the theme by comparing this collection with Mahfūz's novel in terms of their narrative frameworks and shared characters (or—to put it more "safely"—persons bearing the same hypothetic identities, taking into account that the novel offers a kind of hypothetical continuation of their life experiences). The comparison between *The Thousand and One Nights* and *Layālī Alf Layla* is taken even further, e. g. Sindibād's physical journey is likened to Šahriyār's mental one; the lives of the new characters who appear in the novel are detected to be similar in many respects to the lives of the protagonists of *The Thousand and One Nights*; and some episodes of the novel are compared to certain episodes in different parts of the original collection. The author has even suggested parallels between the pair of Mahfūz's Šahriyār and Šahrazād and that of Egypt's political rulers and people, as well as between (especially) Šahriyār's experiences and conduct and today's familiar political regimes and other political, sociological, and psychological phenomena in general. The work reveals the interconnection of philosophical/religious currents such as existentialism, fatalism, mysticism in the (modern) Arabic work with the presence of strong allusions to—and symbols of—the political regimes and figures of the ancient times. It also touches on Mahfūz's attitude towards Sufism, his understanding and—shall we say—love for its aspects beneficial for the Sufi's worldly life (in addition to his personal relationship with God).

The work comes with a solid annotation apparatus. Various interpretations by different literary theorists are included at multiple places, sometimes in an

almost polemical manner. The author also comments on the educational value of the novel. In many cases, it lies in its ability to extract moral lessons from the tales of the nights. Šahriyār, for example—like Adam and Eve in Paradise—too, experiences that the prohibition of something secret (and therefore tempting) may actually protect a person from tragic misfortune.

In this book, the author has demonstrated her solid knowledge and advanced skills in scientific literary analysis with the application of a psychological insight. She has produced a very thorough research output supported by a broad array of existing literature of diverse types and has compiled a work that is both scientifically valuable and stylistically mature.

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Ye Rong. *The Origin and Evolution of 300 Chinese Characters*. Bratislava: Comenius University Press, 2022.

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A Long Overdue Reference for Learning Chinese Characters

The newly published *The Origin and Evolution of 300 Chinese Characters* (Ye Rong, 2022) is a long-awaited reference book for students of the Chinese language. Characters are a constant challenge for learners of Chinese, particularly for those who have started to learn the language in European countries with limited teaching resources and relatively small Chinese communities, such as Czechia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Croatia, Hungary, and Poland. In fact, most Chinese language textbooks that are commonly used in these countries often only briefly cover basic knowledge of Chinese characters in the first semester of the elementary level, and only in a few pages at that. Generally, such an overview includes some typical characters and their shapes, their relevant stroke order, a dozen or so commonly used radicals, and the shape and position of these radicals in different characters in a fairly simple way. However, there are no follow-up elaborations in other textbooks for subsequent semesters or levels. In addition, Chinese language instructors tend to spend almost all of their class time on teaching and practicing pronunciation, new words and grammatical structures besides explaining the material. They practically have no time for teaching characters specifically due to the constraint of the limited number of contact hours each week. As a result, students who are accustomed to reading and writing in alphabetic and phonetic Latin system are left to struggle on their own to learn this completely unfamiliar pictographic and non-phonetic Chinese script, in which one character is seemingly unrelated to another and unpronounceable without its *pinyin* spelling. Moreover, it is next to impossible for the layman's eye to obtain information such as the core meaning of each individual character, its structure, its components, and the correct stroke order, etc., just by looking at the character. Without proper guidance, students must labor hard to commit each individual character to memory on their own, often by rote learning to memorize a word or phrase that

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consists of one, two, three or four characters, knowing little about the exact meaning of each individual character, but knowing the meaning of the word or phrase only from the translation. Such learning process is not only arduous but also inefficient. *The Origin and Evolution of 300 Chinese Characters* (Ye Rong, 2022), as a reference book, can help both teachers and students better deal with the challenge of teaching or learning Chinese characters in and after class.

The book begins with an introduction on the origins of the Chinese script and its evolution, which succinctly recounts when, who, and how the characters were created. The introductory section argues that Chinese characters originated at least 5,500 years ago, relying on a variety of well-documented archaeological evidence. Although historical records credit the creation of Chinese characters to the legendary figure of ancient China, *Cang Jie* (*Cāngjié* 仓颉) (c. 2650 BC), as do many Chinese scholars, the author is of the opinion that it was the product of the collective wisdom of all ancient people rather than the great achievement of a lone genius. The author then advances the introductory section to the principles of categorizing Chinese characters, which indirectly explains how characters were created. While Chinese writing system has long been labelled as pictographic, as a matter of fact only a fraction of characters (about 264 in total) are truly pictographic. These ancient characters were not merely pictures, even though they resemble each other at first glance. They contain semantic meanings that are identical to their corresponding characters in modern Chinese primarily. Moreover, it was practically impossible for any language to use exclusively pictures to represent all ideas in the whole world, particularly the abstract and complex ones. Therefore, there must be other ways that could fulfill this task. Instead of stating outright how characters were created, the author describes in some detail the six principles of categorizing characters in Ancient China, namely *liùshū* (六書, literally “six writings” or “six [categories] of characters”). The term *liùshū* appeared as early as the Warring States Period (c. 475–221 BC), but it was not until sometime in the Eastern Han Dynasty (25–220 AD) that the famous scholar *Xǔ Shèn* (许慎) clearly defined each of the six principles in his dictionary *Shuōwén Jiězì* (说文解字 the *Structure Analysis of Primary Characters and Meaning Explanation of Secondary Characters*) compiled in 100 AD. These six principles, in addition to the above-mentioned pictography (象形 *xiàngxíng*, literally “form imitation”), also included ideography (指事 *zhǐshì*, literally “indicating matter/thing”), compound ideography (会意 *huìyì*, literally “joined meaning”), pictophonetics (形声 *xíngshēng*, literally “form and sound”), cognate derivation (转注 *zhuǎnzhù*, literally “mutual explanation”), and phonetic loan (假借 *jiǎjíè*, literally “[sound] loan/borrowing”).

The author selects typical characters peculiar to each individual category as examples to describe how the characters were grouped in accordance with these six principles. Moreover, she also cites various fonts of all the characters given as examples to illustrate the gradual development of writing styles of Chinese characters throughout history, from the original Oracle bone inscriptions (甲骨文, *Jiǎgǔwén*) of the Shang Dynasty and the Bronze inscriptions (金文, *Jīnwén*) of the Zhou Dynasty, then to the Small seal inscriptions (小篆, *Xiǎozhuàn*) of the Qin Dynasty, the Clerical script (隶书, *Lìshù*) of the Han Dynasty, and to the Regular script (楷书, *Kǎishù*) of the Tang Dynasty. Characters in traditional characters (繁体字, *Fántǐ zì*) are also provided whenever possible for comparison with the simplified version, often known as the simplified characters (简体字, *Jiǎntǐ zì*), which are presented as examples of the Regular script (楷书, *Kǎishù*). Such descriptions enable readers not only to understand the principles of the categorization of Chinese characters, but also to get a general idea of how the characters were created by reverse inference.

In addition, the author devotes one section to specifically introduce Chinese radicals, the indexing components by which characters are organized and listed in Chinese dictionaries. In a sense, a radical is often a semantic indicator analogous to the root of a word. One can intelligently infer or guess the relevant meaning of an unknown character based on the knowledge of the basic meaning of the radical. The author maintains with conviction that in teaching, emphasis must be placed on the core meaning of individual characters rather than simply word by word as chunks that are often disyllabic and consisted of two different characters in modern Chinese, particularly when teaching Chinese as a foreign language and aiming at bringing students' Chinese literacy to a high level. Therefore, it is crucial to teach students of Chinese both the commonly used radicals and their basic meanings. It will not only help students surmount the fear of difficulties in learning characters, but also provide them with a useful tool to ultimately unlock the treasure trove of Chinese literacy. This character-oriented instruction, also known as *Ziběnwèi jiàoxué* (字本位教学), has been advocated in the Chinese teaching community in recent decades and has proven to be more effective in teaching foreign students to develop reading and writing skills in a long run. In this section the author purposely selects 105 most useful radicals from the standard 214 radicals introduced in *Zibui*, (字彙, *Collection of Characters*) by Méi Yingzuò (梅膺祚), a famous Ming Dynasty scholar in 1615, and listed them in a table. All of them can be traced to some extent to their original pictographic shapes, especially if they are characters as such or are not reduced to symbols with only two or three strokes. The general meaning denoted by each radical is also provided in the column to its right in the table. As mentioned previously, most

radicals originated from pictographs that can be combined with a different character, i.e. a phonetic component indicating pronunciation, to form pictophonetic characters (形声字 *xíngshēngzì*) and about 90 percent of characters in modern Chinese fall into this category. Although this reference includes only four such pictophonetic characters, the table of radicals can be considered to some extent as a compensation for the small number of these characters, which may have been underrepresented in terms of their proportion. The author concludes the introduction with some suggestions and examples for teaching the characters based on her experience.

As a professor of Chinese who has had extensive experience teaching Chinese to European students for decades, the author is well acquainted with the difficulties and frustrations students encounter in learning Chinese characters. Keeping in mind the need of students, she has selected 300 characters from the vast number of Chinese characters, which conform to the first four major categorizing principles of *liushū* (六書) and has listed them in the book after the introduction. She deliberately excludes characters in the last two categories *zhuǎnzhuì* (转注, literally “mutual explanation”) and *jiāijiè* (假借literally “[sound] loan/borrowing”) for those characters are much less relevant and practical for European students in learning Chinese. Among these 300 selected characters, there are 94 pictographic characters (象形字 *xiàngxíngzì*), 15 ideographic characters (指事字 *zhǐshìzì*), 187 compound ideographic characters (会意字 *huìyìzì*), and 4 pictophonetic characters (形声字 *xíngshēngzì*). The rationale behind including so many pictographs, almost a third of the total number of characters in the book, is that not only they were powerful in generating other new characters, but also many of them later became radicals in the development of Chinese writing system. By contrast, only 15 in the list are ideographic ones because the total number of such characters in this category in the influential and renowned dictionary *Shuōwén Jiězì* (*The Structure Analysis of Primary Characters and Meaning Explanation of Secondary Characters*) is 125, which is only a small fraction. Moreover, unlike pictographs, they are much weaker as the basis for generating new characters together with other components. Although 7697 characters in *Shuōwén Jiězì* were considered pictophonetic, accounting for 82% of all 9353 characters included in the dictionary, and later increased to almost 90% of Chinese characters at present with the development of the language over the past centuries, only 4 pictophonetic characters were included in this reference. This is not surprising given that the components of most characters in this category, both their meanings and pronunciation, have changed significantly over time, thus no

longer reliable guides to either meaning or pronunciation, particularly in most of the simplified characters adopted after the 1950s. Therefore, the largest proportion of characters included in *Shuōwén Jiězì* has shrunk significantly to such a tiny fraction in this reference. On the contrary, compound ideographic characters (会意字 *huìyìzì*) have become the majority, accounting for 187 in total, because the author believes that ideographs were the strongest source in generating other new characters at the early stage of Chinese character creation.

The 300 characters are not presented sequentially in line with the six categories (*Liùshū* 六書) as mentioned above. Instead, they have been placed in three chapters in accordance with the relevancy of the code meanings they signify, namely characters relevant to humans and body parts (Chapter 1, characters #1-92), characters relevant to nature (Chapter 2, characters #93-213), and characters relevant to human activities (Chapter 3, characters #214-300). While Chapter 2 contains three parts: plants (characters #93-119), animals (characters #120-175), and nature and landscape (characters #176-213), Chapter 3 includes two: architectures (characters #214-234) and tools (characters #235-300).

However, in each chapter the author does not simply list each character with its basic meaning one by one and label them as a pictograph or ideograph. Rather, a serial number is first assigned to each character printed in the *Kai font* (楷书, *kǎishù*) in its simplified form. The traditional form of the same character, if applicable, is also placed in parentheses next to it in *Song font* (宋体, *sòngtǐ*). Of course, the *pinyin* pronunciation of each listed character is indispensable and placed right next to the character. In addition, whenever possible, different fonts of original Oracle bone inscriptions (甲骨文, *Jiǎgǔwén*), the Bronze inscriptions (金文, *Jīnwén*), or Small seal inscriptions (小篆, *Xiǎozuàn*) are placed next to the *pinyin* spelling. The number in subscript is the corresponding footnote that indicates the source of the original font(s) of the character.

For each character entry, an explanation is given in both Chinese and English, including the following general information:

The category in which the character was listed according to the principles of *Liùshū* (六書) in *Shuōwén Jiězì* (说文解字), how the character was created in ancient times and how it evolved in terms of shape or font in history, for example, its possible simplification.

The original meaning of the character and the basic extended meaning in its later development.

Cases when the character can serve as a radical and some examples of characters containing the radical.

Some commonly used words or short phrases that consist of the character in question, and others.

Most of the characters selected in this reference are commonly used characters. Of the total 300 characters, 72 are Level 1 characters in the HSK Test Syllabus (2021 edition), 45 are Level 2, 46 are Level 3, and 37 are Level 4, altogether 200 characters that account for 66.7% of the total. Additionally, 28 are Level 5 characters in the same test syllabus, whereas 16 characters are Level 6. Only 50 of them are in Levels 7–9, and 6² beyond the scope of the syllabus. There are 100 characters above Level 4 and they account for approximately 33.3% of the total. Therefore, the 300 characters are a representative sample, which are quite familiar to most students who have studied Chinese for 2–3 years.

What distinguishes this reference from other similar ones that introduce the origin and evolution of Chinese characters, is its interconnectedness and practicality. Unlike other similar books published in Chinese on the same topic, which simply list hundreds of characters and briefly introduce their structure, shape, and origin one by one, usually with eccentric graphic illustrations, this reference not only presents the historical account of the creation and evolution of Chinese script, but also provides succinct descriptions to the creation and evolution of 300 characters in the light of the principles of *liùshū* (六書), which ultimately makes it more informative. In addition, the bilingual explanation for each character entry also gives the basic meaning and several examples that show how the given character can be combined with others to form various commonly used words, short phrases, or idioms. Thus, a limited number of Chinese characters can function as roots of words, so to speak, and generate many more words, which is helpful for students in enlarging their vocabulary in addition to learning the characters. Some explanations even include usage of certain characters, such as formal or colloquial, positive or negative, the distinctions between some seemingly synonyms or near-synonyms in their original meaning but different in modern usage, etc.

Although no examples have been provided explicitly for the radicals listed in the table of radicals, 60 of the 300 characters listed in the three chapters after the introduction section overlap with the 105 radicals in question, for example, 大 (*dà*) in Chapter 1 (character #2, p.18), 土 (*tǔ*) in Chapter 2, (character #187 p. 92), 刀 (*dāo*) in Chapter 3 (character #235, p.114), etc. These 60 characters account for

² These 6 characters are 扌 (*shǒu*) in Chapter 1 (character #18, p.25), 禾 (*gē*) in Chapter 2 (character #137, p.73), 阝 (*fù*) in Chapter 2 (character #188, p.92), 刂 (*rèn*) in Chapter 3 (character #236, p.115), 丶 (*mǐn*) in Chapter 3 (character #294, p.143), and酉 (*yǒu*) in Chapter 3 (character #290, p.141) respectively.

almost 57.1% of the radicals listed, which helps illustrate how each of them can function independently as a character and also jointly with other components as radicals to form different characters. In addition, based on a rough estimate, approximately one-third of the 300 characters, especially in their simplified form, share one of the 105 radicals listed in the table mentioned previously. Among these characters, at least two share the same radical, while some amount to half a dozen or even more than a dozen. All of these characters indirectly show how radicals serve as part of the components in the formation of various characters, for example, 水/water (shuǐ) in 涉(shè) in Chapter 1 (character #83, p.51), 沙(sand) Chapter 2 (character #185, p.91), and 游(swim) Chapter 3 (character #266, p.130). Here are few other examples, the radical 口(kǒu), can be found in characters 吹(chuī) in Chapter 1 (character #42, p.34), 告(gào) Chapter 2 (character #127, p.69), and 向(xiàng) Chapter 3 (character #227, p.110). Again, characters 从(cóng) in Chapter 1 (character #6, p.20), 位(wèi) Chapter 1 (character #30, p.29), 休(xiū) Chapter 2 (character #116, p.64), and 令(lìng) Chapter 3 (character #220, p.107) all share the same radical 人 or 亼(rén). Likewise, characters 宀(tā) in Chapter 2 (character #153, p.79), 灬(zāi) Chapter 2 (character #198, p.97), 家(jiā) Chapter 3 (character #214, p.104), and 定(dìng) Chapter 3 (character #217, p.105), share the same radical 宀(mián). These 100 characters, together with the 60 that can individually serve as radicals, account for 53.3% of the 300 characters listed in this reference. Thus, the author has brilliantly used these characters from a limited number of 300 to establish a link between characters and radicals to demonstrate how they may function as radicals and combine with other components to generate a variety of new characters, whether they are pictographs, ideographs, compound ideographs, or pictophonetic characters.

There is undoubtedly room for improvement in this manual, as in most other books. First, all the 300 characters might have been possibly better presented had they been arranged differently. It is understandable that the author has tried to place characters referring to the same entity, radical, or shape side by side, such as 手(shǒu), 爪(zhuǎ), 左(zuǒ), and 右(yòu) on pages 38-9, or 尸(shì), 尸(shì), and 尿(niào) on page 25. While this makes perfect sense for educated native speakers of Chinese, it is rather challenging for speakers of other languages who have had little knowledge of the basic meanings of these characters or their radicals. Additionally, the entire book contains only 300 characters but covers too many possible entities and radicals. Many of them can hardly be related to one another and must stand alone next to another character that neither refers to the same entity nor shares the same radical or shape, for example, 自(zì), 口(kǒu), and 欠(qiàn) on page 33, and 小(xiǎo), 土(tǔ), and 阝(fù) on page 92. Conventionally, character entries in most, if not all, Chinese dictionaries are organized in alphabetical order according

to the *pinyin* spelling or by the number of stroke counts. It might possibly be clearer and easier for foreign students to follow or look up a specific character if the character entries were arranged differently, let's say following the same convention in alphabetical order or by number of stroke counts.

Second, while 200 of the total number of selected characters are commonly used and are in the HSK character syllabus levels 1 to 4, others are in levels 5 to 6, or even in levels 7–9 and beyond, which are not used that frequently and are already at an advanced level of proficiency in Chinese. Indeed, the author has tried hard to include as many typical characters as possible to demonstrate how Chinese characters were created according to the principles of *liùshù* (六書), and has used examples to show how some of them can serve as radicals or components to form new characters, such as 邑 (*yì*) and 阜 (*fù*). However, students may have little chance of encountering these characters (see footnote 2) even after they have studied Chinese formally for 3 or 4 years at a European university. Moreover, pictophonetic characters seem to be underrepresented. There are 4 of them in a total of 300 characters and account for only 1.3%, which is quite disproportionate.

Finally, the terms *piānpáng* (偏旁) and *bùshǒu* (部首) are two different concepts in Chinese that are rather subtle. Roughly speaking, the former refers to the side or component of a character that is used to form a specific character, usually a compound with two or more parts. Conversely, the latter is a radical whose function is to list characters or look them up in a dictionary. A *bùshǒu* can serve as a radical, but a *piānpáng*, the side or component of a character, may or may not. Moreover, there are approximately 500 *piānpáng* characters, but *bùshǒu* are less than half that number, only 214 in modern Chinese. There are, unfortunately, some inconsistencies in the Chinese explanatory notes for certain characters regarding the use of these terms in the book. Most of the radicals are correctly named as *bùshǒu*, but a few are referred to as *piānpáng*, although in the context they are all meant as radicals³. Such inconsistencies could have been avoided if the author had been a little more careful in editing the manuscript.

As the saying goes, every bean has its black, so it is in this newly published book. However, the shortcomings mentioned above cannot overshadow its merits. The timely publication of *The Origin and Evolution of three hundred Chinese Characters* certainly adds a valuable reference to the library of Chinese language studies. We shall wait and see whether it can be a game changer for students,

³ These characters are 口 (*kǒu*) on p.33, 欠 (*qiàn*) p.33, 言 (*yán*) p.35, and 鬼 (*guǐ*) p.54 respectively.

especially those who are studying Chinese as a foreign language in European universities, to be able to learn Chinese characters more effectively and consequently to expand their vocabulary.

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