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Čínsky znak na obálke znamenajúci ‘východ’, pochádzajúci od Liu Xie 劉澥 (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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The Prosodic Hierarchy in Standard Chinese: A Proposal for a New Tier

Zuzana POSPĚCHOVÁ

Abstract This paper examines prosodic units in Standard Chinese. In discussing the function and behavior of prosodic units in the flow of speech, their adequacy must be given special consideration. Through corpus analysis, we identified the existence of a distinct and necessary new prosodic unit. Within the widely used hierarchy of prosodic units, this new unit occupies the position between the prosodic word and the prosodic phrase. We have provisionally named it as the prosodic superword (PSw). The PSw shows a closer union of two (or, in rare cases, three) prosodic words and helps to keep the prosodic analysis consistent. Its occurrence in a sentence reflects the behavior of prosodic words in the event of increased speech tempo. The introduction of this new unit increases the variability of spoken sentence realization and provides a means to prosodically express different semantic meanings. This paper focuses on the analysis of PSws, especially the number of syllables that form a PSw, their combination in a PSw, and the position of PSws within sentences.

Keywords prosody, prosodic transcription, prosodic superword, Standard Chinese

Introduction

In recent years, interest in the study of prosodic units in Standard Chinese has been increasing. However, the vast majority of studies focus on speech synthesis and recognition (Cao 2003; Chu 2004, etc.). This study approaches prosodic units from a different point of view, proposing a method based on a theory established by the Czech sinologist Oldřich Švarný.

At the beginning of this paper, we provide a brief outline of the basic descriptions of prosodic units adopted by most linguists specializing in Standard Chinese (Li 2002; Tseng et al. 2005; Duanmu 2007 etc.). Naturally, there are slight differences among these descriptions; however, they usually appear in terminology. Generally speaking, a sentence consists of several layers of prosodic structure: from the bottom up, these are the syllable, foot, prosodic word, prosodic phrase, and intonational phrase. A simplified description of these units follows below.

A syllable is the smallest constituent of a sentence and, aside from a few exceptions, one syllable is equal to one Chinese character (one morpheme). The occurrence of exceptions is rare, appearing in only about 5% of morphemes. These could be summarized into three categories:

1. Two syllables drawn together (e.g., béng 甭 = bùyòng 不用 "not necessary");
2. A syllable combined with the non-syllabic morpheme *–r*, a phenomenon called erization. This is a phonological process that adds a special *–r* sound to a syllable (e.g., hér 盒儿 "a box");
3. Monomorphemic words compounded of two syllables, usually loanwords (e.g., húdié 胡蝶 "a butterfly").[1]

Standard Chinese has a very limited syllable inventory: only about 400 syllables. Each syllable can occur in up to four tones. Therefore, given the existence of four tones, there are nearly 1,300 syllables. Syllables are grouped into intermediate-sized constituents called *feet*. According to the number of constituent syllables, three types can be distinguished: bisyllabic feet (the most common), monosyllabic feet (also called *degenerate feet*, generally disfavored as too light), and trisyllabic feet (also called *suprafeet* or *superfeet*).[2] In Standard Chinese feet operate within the scope of the tone sandhi domain (Lai and Kuang 2016).

The *prosodic word* (PW), a higher-level unit, is regarded as the basic rhythmic unit in Standard Chinese speech. It is defined as a group of syllables in close relationship. A PW is formed dynamically according to situational context, and thus in speech perception it is indispensable for the understanding of larger prosodic units. The most frequent PWs are disyllabic and trisyllabic, while

1 See Chen 1999.

2 See Shih 1997; Li 2002.

monosyllabic PWs occur only rarely. Boundaries between PWs are perceived as minor breaks, not pauses (Tseng and Chou 2009; Peng et al. 2006; Tseng et al. 2005). PWs are usually marked by prosodic word-initial syllable shortening, pre-boundary lengthening, and pitch discontinuity of the intonation contour (Yang and Wang 2002).

One unit above the PW is the *prosodic phrase* (PPh), which is usually composed of two or three PWs. There may or may not be a semantic or syntactic relation (or both) between the PWs. Boundaries between PPhs are perceived as major breaks and minor pauses and are usually marked by pre-boundary lengthening and pitch reset across phrases (Tseng and Chou 2009; Peng et al. 2006; Tseng et al. 2005). In research on speech synthesis and recognition, the PPh corresponds to the *minor phrase* (MIP) and *major phrase* (MAP) (Li 2002; Peng et al. 2006). The highest unit in prosodic hierarchy is the *intonational phrase* (IPh, also called breath group or prosodic group). It is usually indicated by punctuation marks and marked by pre-boundary lengthening, an audible pause, and clear pitch reset across boundaries (Peng et al. 2006).[3]

The aim of this paper is to focus on the middle level of prosodic units, especially a newly proposed unit in the position between the prosodic phrase and the prosodic word, which is well-suited to prosodic transcription within the framework of Standard Chinese theory. The theoretical frame and position of this newly proposed unit are presented in the following sections.

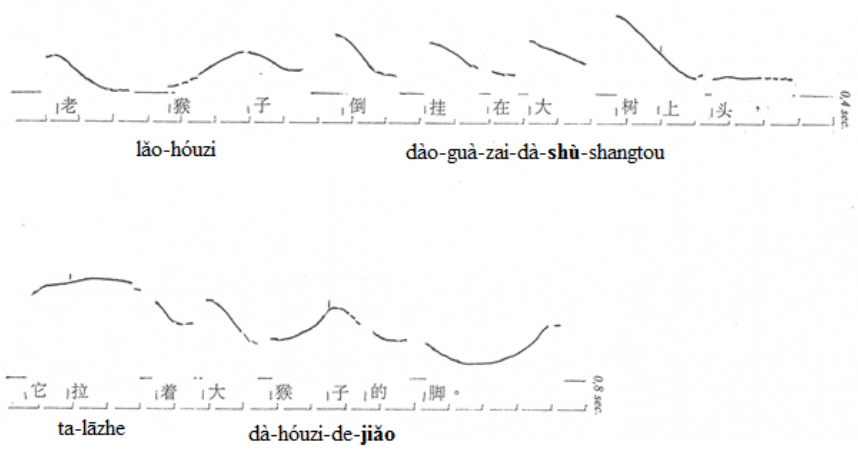
1 *Theoretical Frame*

As outlined in the introduction, this study adopts the research method for analyzing sentence prosodic structure established by Švarný. His method is based on a general three-tier prosodic hierarchy consisting of the PW, PPh, and IPh. The widely used international terminology for prosodic units was slightly adapted by Švarný to align more closely with functions in European languages. For example, his term *segment* is equivalent to the PW, while his term *colon* corresponds to the PPh. In this paper, however, we adhere to the generally used terminology.

Four decades from the 1960s onward, Švarný pursued the study of speech prosody and developed a complex system of prosodic transcription (PTR). The main aim of PTR is to capture all of the prosodic features of spoken Standard Chinese. The core prosodic features include the stress (tone) prominence and linear prosodic segmentation. This study will focus only on linear segmentation.

Originally, PTR was created to help beginner students pronounce Standard Chinese sentences correctly, and it has had a considerable influence on their learning progress. Based on the experience obtained in our department, our native speaker confirmed that the spoken realization of prosodically transcribed text sounds far more natural than the realization of the same text in pinyin or even in Chinese characters. At present, we are using PTR in several research projects that focus on variations in realization caused by factors such as age and gender of speakers, as well as in the analysis of different types of texts (e.g., fiction, radio talks, and scientific texts).

The key rules of PTR were determined through precise auditory analysis. A significant number of audio recordings of utterances resembling spontaneous speech, produced by native speakers of Standard Chinese, were transcribed and analyzed. This auditory method was further supported by objective measurements at the Phonetics Laboratory of the University of Berkeley, where machine processing of the speech recordings was employed. Graphs of the F_0 were compiled to confirm the adequacy of the prosodic rules and the fundamental method of PTR. The correspondence between the results of auditory analysis (PTR) and those obtained through automatic processing are illustrated in a sample portion of a sentence in Oscillogram 1.



Oscillogram 1
(Švarný 1998*, lxiii—graphs* 34*).*

As for the design of transcription, PTR employs the official romanization system for Chinese characters, *pinyin*, with slight modifications. Basic words and phrases in pinyin are given special marks that capture the prosodic level of utterances. As for the rhythmical grouping, it can be argued that there are generally two kinds of boundaries: objective boundaries and prosodic boundaries. An objective boundary corresponds to a pause, while a prosodic boundary corresponds to an ictus (an accent-bearing syllable). Thus, there are three basic types of boundaries: junctures, blank spaces, and breaks (Švarný 2000).

Junctures occur between bisyllabic feet and/or monosyllabic feet within the frame of rhythmical segments (PWs). They are marked by a hyphen between the sequences (e.g., *chī-kǎoyā*) (Švarný and Uher 2014). Blank spaces are used between rhythmical segments (PWs) that do not belong together—that is, when each of them belongs to a different stress group (e.g., *qǐng-women-qu*^{4} *ta*^{1}*-jiā*). Breaks indicate the boundaries of PPhs and correspond to a pause of approximately 0.75 seconds. PPhs are marked by standard punctuation marks such as the comma, period, exclamation mark, and semicolon (e.g., *zuótiān, zhāng-lao*^{3}*shī*). A large number of PPhs occur at the end of a sentence; however, they may also appear after preverbal noun elements, after the combination of a preposition and its object, and also among enumerated noun elements (Švarný and Uher 2014). As for

syllable stress prominence, this topic is set aside here due to the length restrictions of this study.[1]

Regarding the transcription process, PTR is always carried out by at least two people. The steps of the process are as follows:

1. **Hypothetical pre-transcription without listening to the audio recording.**
   This first step is based on knowledge of the target language. While transcription could theoretically be done without this knowledge, the process would be far more complicated and time-consuming (in such cases, this step would naturally be skipped). As David Uher, Švarný's prominent follower, explains: Švarný once asked several phoneticians to transcribe text without the knowledge of Standard Chinese, and some were able to do it correctly, but it was a much more complicated and lengthy process. For this reason, only researchers with knowledge of Standard Chinese conduct this research. At the same time, the fact that phoneticians without knowledge of the target language could transcribe correctly proves the validity and reliability of PTR theory and methodology.
2. **Transcription with listening to the audio recording.**
   In this step, the first hypothetical draft is corrected.
3. **Two rounds of correction through listening to the audio recording.**
   The first correction is made one day after the initial transcription, and the second two weeks later.
4. **Verification of the final transcription in Praat.**

As for the time spent on the transcription process, transcribing a one- minute audio recording, including all steps, takes approximately one hundred and twenty minutes.

The three-tier prosodic hierarchy used in this research is shown in Fig. 1. The described sentence was chosen from a corpus of speech produced by native speakers of Standard Chinese and transcribed using PTR based on the audio recording. Finally, the segmentation of prosodic units is not an artificial construct derived from the mere application of rules without reference to actual speech. On the contrary, it reflects the segmentation of a real spoken sentence, as described

3 For precise description of marking syllable stress prominences, see Pospěchová 2016; Uher et al. 2016.

above. Certainly, there are examples in which generally applied rules do not fully align with the spoken realization. However, if we are committed to describing a "living" language, actual versions of a spoken realization must be considered as more powerful.

Example sentence (1):

Chinese characters:

偶尔	也	打几下，	但是	我
ǒu'ěr	yě	dǎ jǐ xià	dànshì	wǒ
occasionally	too	to play	but	I

对	羽毛球	不	感兴趣。
duì	yǔmáoqiú	bù	gǎn xìngqù
towards	badminton	not	be interested in

English translation:

"I occasionally play, but I am not interested in badminton."

PTR version:

"ǒu'ěr yě-da-ji-xia^{4}, **dàn**shi, wo^{3}-dui-yǔmaoqiu^{2} bu^{4}-gan-xìngqu."

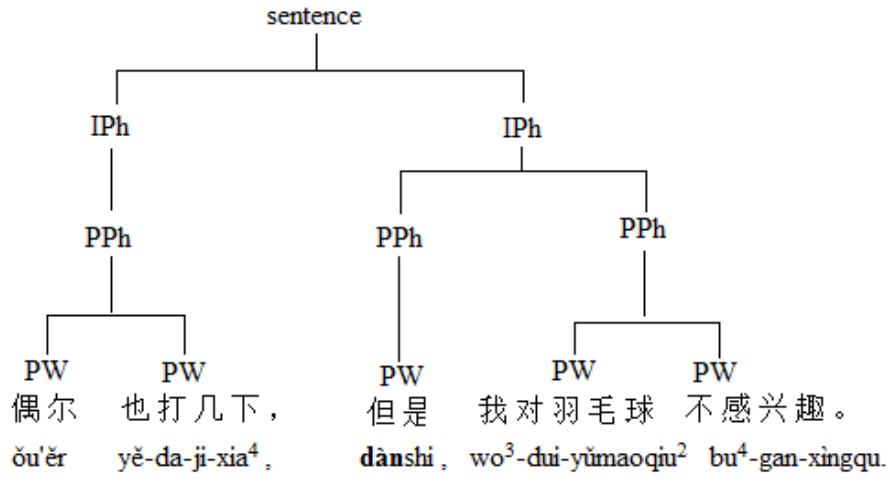


Figure 1
Three-tier prosodic structure of a real spoken sentence.

In the course of corpus analysis conducted for another research (focusing on the influence of speakers' demographics on prosody), it was discovered that a new unit of linear segmentation, which is not studied and described yet, could be established. Its existence was therefore taken into consideration, and its occurrences in the corpus were analyzed. Within the approved hierarchy of prosodic units, this unit occupies the position between the PW and PPh. After careful analysis, the implementation of this identifiable and a highly necessary new prosodic unit is proposed. The unit is provisionally called *prosodic superword* (PSw); in Švarný's terminology, it could be referred to as a *supersegment*. In PTR, this unit is indicated by a mathematical plus sign. Basically, PSw shows a closer union between two (or in rare cases, three) PWs and helps to keep the prosodic analysis consistent. Its presence in a sentence is a sign of PW behavior in the event of increased speech tempo. In such cases, PWs are likely to merge, composing one longer PW—or, using the new terminology proposed in this paper, one PSw. The introduction of this new unit increases the variability of spoken sentence realization, strengthens the plasticity of sentence content, and thus it enables us, among other things, to prosodically express different semantic meanings. For

example, the sentence "Yìndù kāfēi hěn piányi" (印度咖啡很便宜) can have two possible interpretations depending on its prosodic realization:

1. "Yìndù+kāfēi hěn-piányi" — Indian coffee is cheap.
2. "Yìndù kāfēi hěn-piányi" — Coffee in India is cheap.

The newly proposed four-tier prosodic hierarchy is shown in Fig. 2.[4] As in the previous example, a sentence from the spoken corpus was chosen and transcribed using PTR. The main difference between Fig. 1. and Fig. 2. is the addition of the new PSw level.

Example sentence 2:

Chinese characters version:

没	问题，	你	先	到	前面	的
méi	wèntǐ,	nǐ	xiān	dào	qiánmian	de
not	problem	you	first	up	front side	(atr)

自动	售票	机	买	票，	在	上面
zìdòng	shòupiào	jī	mǎi	piào,	zài	shàngmian
automatic	to sell tickets	machine	to buy	ticket	than	upstairs

选择	目的	地	站	名，	然后
xuǎnzé	mùdì	de	zhàn	míng	ránhòu
to choose	terminal	(atr)	station	name	afterwards

投	币	买	票。
tóu	bì	mǎi	piào
to insert	coin	to buy	ticket

English translation:

"Of course, first buy a ticket at the ticket machine at the front, choose your final station, and then insert coins."

4 We are aware of the fact that this kind of representation goes against the strict layer hypothesis as presented by Selkirk 1984.

PTR version:
"mei-wènti, ni-xiān-dào qiánmian$_4$-d zìdong-shōupiàojī+mai-piào, zai-shàngmian xuǎnzé+mùdide-zhànmíng, ránhòu, tóu-bì-mǎi-piào."

This example sentence is composed of four IPhs. The first three of them are composed of one PPh, while the fourth IPh is composed of two PPhs. Within there PPhs: The first PPh is composed of one PW, the second of four PWs (two of which are connected as one PSw), the third PPh is composed of three PWs (two of which are connected as one PSw), and the fourth and fifth PPhs are each composed of one PW.

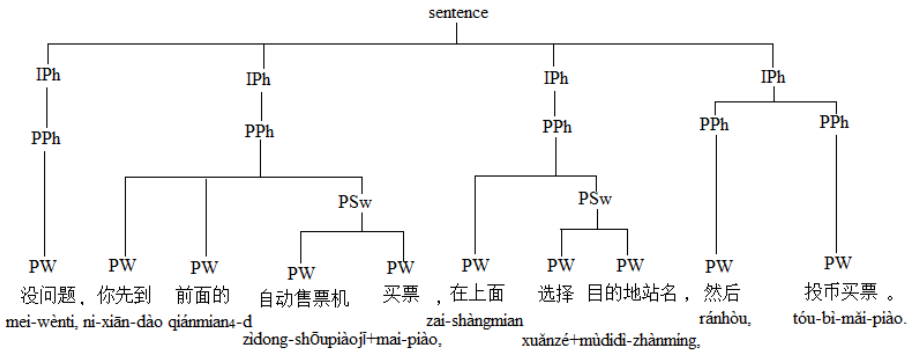


Figure 2
Four-tier prosodic structure of a real spoken sentence.

2 *Speech Material*

The speech material used in this study was collected during a research stay in Beijing, P.R.C., in 2014. Since Standard Chinese is based on the Beijing dialect and in order to eliminate any influence from other dialects, the subjects who featured as speakers were all life-long residents of Beijing. Selected parts of *Textbook of Chinese Conversation 2* were used as the primary material for recording. These parts contain everyday conversational texts such as at the doctor's, shopping, and travelling. Despite the fact that the textbook contains scripted

dialogues, it uses spoken, rather than written Standard Chinese,[5] and thus it is suitable for this kind of research on spoken language. The use of scripted dialogues was motivated by the need to obtain texts of a comparable level of difficulty, as all vocabulary, syntax, and grammar are drawn from spoken discourse. This research represents an initial proposal, with further research on real spoken speech planned for subsequent work.

Respondents were given a set of texts and could freely choose which ones to record. As a rule, older respondents tended to choose dialogues set in the park or at the doctor's, while younger respondents mostly chose dialogues about shopping or travelling. Moreover, the participants were allowed to make minor changes to the texts, such as changes in vocabulary or grammar, in order to sound more natural.

To provide examples of the speech material to readers, the following samples are included:

1. one sample text illustrating the design of a prosodically transcribed audio recording (see Appendix). The topic of this text is an informal TV-watching situation.
2. three sample audio recordings, each including both PTR and Chinese character text versions.

To preserve the naturalness of the recordings and avoid making respondents nervous (as studio recording could discourage participation), the recordings were conducted in familiar locations, such as parks, schools, and homes. The obtained recordings were filtered and only uninterrupted and naturally sounding recordings selected. First, recordings containing excessive background noises, obvious slips of the tongue or stutters were removed. Next, two native speakers of Standard Chinese were asked to listen to the recordings carefully in order to prove their saponaceousness and to filter out any with non-standard or non-spontaneous spoken forms, distorted intonation, speech rhythm, or pause layouts. Only one recording per subject was retained for research purposes.

5 There are significant differences between written and spoken variation of Standard Chinese, especially in lexicon, common phrases, and grammar. See, e. g., Chen 1999.

Due to the large size of the textbook,[6] only a fragment of the texts was used. After the selection procedure, 42 texts remained. As for duration, almost five hours of recordings were made; after the above-described selection process, the corpus contains 23.2 minutes of recordings, comprising 471 sentences and 4,806 syllables. On average, one recording lasts approximately 33 seconds.

A total of 116 speakers were recorded, and the speech of 70 of them was retained after the selection process. The participants were recruited randomly or through snowball sampling (Milroy and Gordon 2003). They were divided into groups according to gender and age. Two gender categories and three age categories were created. The gender categories are male and female, while the age categories are respondents of younger (20–40 years), middle-aged (41–60 years), and older (61–80 years).

There exist many different age categorizations in sociolinguistics, and researchers often create their own. The categorization used here is most similar to the one created by Dubois and Horvath (1998) in their research of language variation in English speakers from Louisiana.

In each age category there are at least ten speakers (female speakers: 10 younger, 13 middle-aged, 12 older; male speakers: 11 younger, 13 middle-aged, 11 older). Two other commonly used sociolinguistic categories, namely ethnicity and social class, are not relevant for this research and are therefore omitted. Since the data are linked to the gender and age of speakers, subsequent research into prosodic superwords based on these two categories would be valuable.

The differences in word choice arose from the speakers' intention to make the sentence as spontaneous as possible; nonetheless, both follow basic punctuation rules. This paper is primarily concerned with different realizations of linear segmentation, however, different realizations of syllable stress prominence are also evident. The IPh and PW levels seem to be stable here, while differences appeared at the PPh and PSw levels. Speaker 1 used two PSws, whereas speaker 2 used three. Importantly, the position of the two PSws at the beginning of the sentences are identical for both speakers. This verifies the existence of the PSw unit, suggesting that this prosodic level is demonstrably valid and merits

6 This textbook is organized into ten parts. Each part focuses on one main topic (at the doctor's, transportation, visiting friends, etc.). Each topic contains about ten to twenty short texts.

subsequent research. The hierarchical structures of both versions are presented in Fig. 3 and Fig. 4. These figures are accompanied by oscillograms (Oscillogram 2 and Oscillogram 3), where PSws are marked by arrow signs.

Speaker 1 (male):

Chinese character version:

您	要	先	坐	地铁	从	三
nín	yào	xiān	zuò	dìtiě	cóng	sān
you	must	first	to go	by subway	from	three

山	站	到	鼓楼	站，	再	换
shān	zhàn	dào	gǔlóu	zhàn,	zài	huàn
mountain	station	to	drum tower	station	than	to change

三	路	公共汽车	到	隋家仓
sān	lù	gōnggòngqìchē	dào	suíjiā cāng
three	line	bus	to	Sui Family Storehouse

终点	就	行	了。
zhōngdiǎn	jiù	xíng	le
final	at once	to be all right	(particle)

English translation:

"First, you must go by subway from Three Mountains Station to Drum Tower Station. After that, change to bus number three and continue to the final stop, Sui Family Storehouse."

PTR version:

"nin²-yao+xiān-zuo-dìtiě cong-sānshān-zhàn dao-gǔlóu-zhàn,
zai-huàn-sān-lu+gōnggong-qìchē dao-suíjiācāng zhongdiǎn jiu-xing²-le."

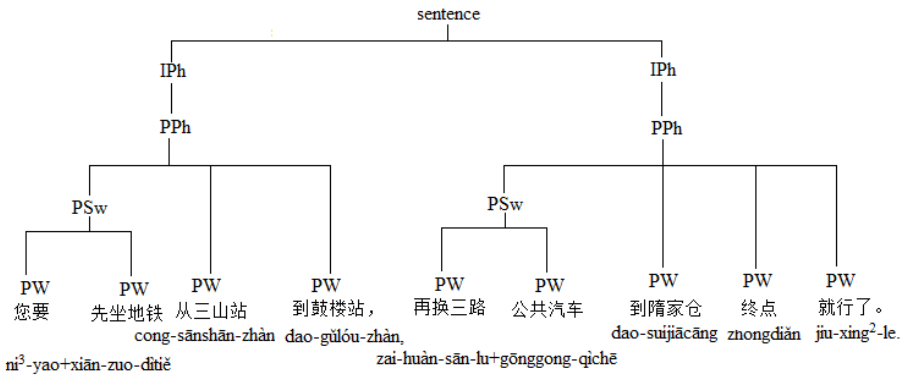
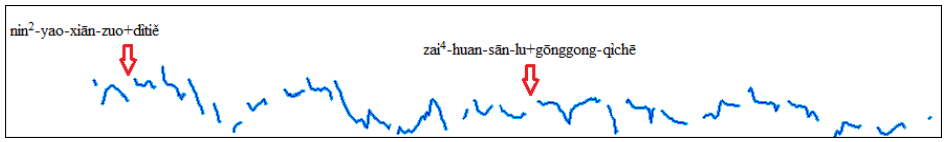


Figure 3
Prosodic realization produced by Speaker 1.



Oscillogram 2
Speaker 1.

Speaker 2 (female):

Chinese characters version:

您	要	先	坐	地铁	从	三
nín	yào	xiān	zuò	dìtiě	cóng	sān
you	to must	first	to go	by subway	from	three

山	街	站	到	钟鼓楼	站，
shān	jiē	zhàn	dào	zhōnggǔlóu	zhàn,
mountain	street	station	to	drum and bell tower	station

再	换	三	路	公共汽车	到
zài	huàn	sān	lù	gōnggòngqìchē	dào
than	to change	three	line	bus	to

隋家仓	终点	站	就	行	了。
suíjiā cāng	zhōngdiǎn	zhàn	jiù	xíng	le
Sui Family Storehouse final		station	at once	to be all right	(particle)

English translation:

"First, you must go by subway from Three Mountains Station to Bell and Drum Tower Station. After that, change to bus number three and continue to the final station, Sui Family Storehouse."

PTR version:

"nin²-yao-xiān-zuo+dìtiě cong-sānshanjiē-zhàn$_4$, dao-zhōnggǔlóu-zhan$_4$, zai⁴-huan-sān-lu+gōnggong-qìchē, dao-suíjiacāng zhōngdiǎn-zhàn+jiu-xing²-le."

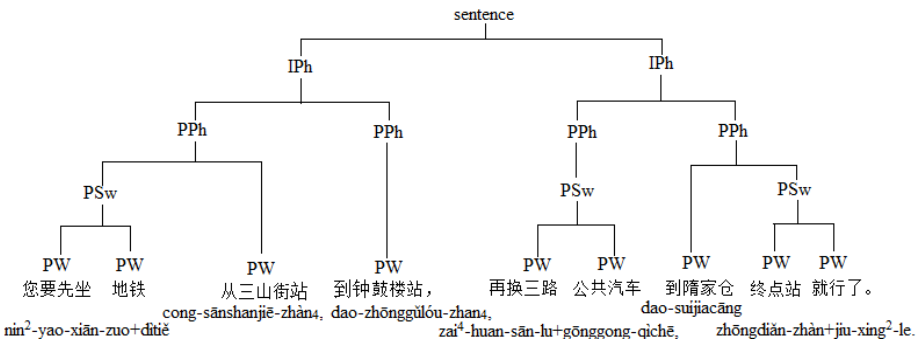
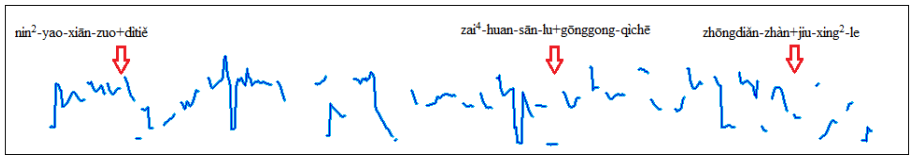


Figure 4
Prosodic realization produced by Speaker 2.



Oscillogram 3
Speaker 2.

As an example of semantic differences, we analyze the first PSw: Speaker 1 produced "ni³-yao+xiān-zuo-dìtiě", while Speaker 2 produced "nin²-yao-xiān-zuo+dìtiě". In general, the basic meaning of both of these realizations is the same: "*First, you must go by subway*". However, there is a slight difference between the two natural realizations.
Speaker 1 places the PSw between "ni³-yao" and "xiān-zuo-dìtiě". At a slower speech rate, these two PWs stay separated, yielding the literal meaning "*you must*" and "*go by subway first*".

Speaker 2 places the PSw between "nin²-yao-xiān-zuo" and "dìtiě". At a slower speech rate, these two PWs stay separated and produce the literal meaning *"first you must go (by)"* and *"subway"*.

So according to these different realizations, Speaker 1 places more emphasis on *"go by subway first",* and Speaker 2 on *"subway"*.

3 *Analysis*

In total, a large corpus containing 4,806 syllables was collected and transcribed using PTR. The analysis is based on auditory judgments, a method established by Švarný in the 1960s and successfully continued by his disciples up to the present day. All text materials in the corpus were transcribed by two researchers, one of whom had been directly trained by Švarný. Thus, the final transcription (including the appearance of PSws), is a result of a consensus between the two researchers. Inter-rater reliability was high at 90%. In rare cases where there was no consensus,

the version (PSw present or not) provided by the more experienced researcher was taken as correct.

Since some texts appeared more than once, the same sentences were read repeatedly and syllables of each repetition were multiplied according to the number of repetitions. In total 1,598 PWs were identified, 228 of which were connected to PSws. This means that PSws take up 13.8% of all PWs in the corpus—a proportion that is far from negligible and warrants further investigation.

Here, this paper focuses on a detailed analysis and description of PSws, especially the number of syllables that create a PSw, their possible combinations within a PSw, and the position of a PSw within a sentence.

3. 1 Number of syllables composing a PSw

The first phenomenon to be examined is the number of syllables that compose a PSw. In the corpus, PSws ranging from 2 to 11 syllables were found. Table 1 shows the percentage of occurrences, which can be summarized into four categories.

The first group with the highest number of occurrences is PSws composed of 5 and 6 syllables. They are the most frequent PSws and constitute the basis of PSw theory. The second most frequent group contains PSws of 4 and 7 syllables, occurring in around 15–16% cases. The third group, with a relatively low frequency (around 3–4%) consists of PSws composed of 3 and 8 syllables. Finally, the fourth group, with very low occurrence rate not exceeding 1%, contains PSws of 2, 9, or 11 syllables. Overall, the PSws of 2, 9, or 11 syllables occurred at the negligible rate of 0.4%, corresponding to a single occurrence of each per corpus.

As shown in Table 1, PSws composed of 5 or 6 syllables are the most frequent, and thus can be regarded as the basis of the PSw system. The frequency decreases gradually toward both ends of the spectrum. The presented results completely correspond with the observation made in the introductory part, i.e. the most frequent PWs are disyllabic and trisyllabic. Since a PSw mainly consists of two PWs, the total number of composing syllables mostly falls between four to six and the data confirms this. Therefore, the introduction of the new prosodic unit PSw is fully consistent with the established system of prosodic units.

Table 1
Number of syllables in a PSw

Number of syllables in a PSw	Percentage of occurrence
2	0.4%
3	3.1%
4	15.4%
5	32%
6	28.1%
7	15.8%
8	4.4%
9	0.4%
11	0.4%

3.2 PW combinations in creating PSws

The second phenomenon analyzed is the combination of syllables in PWs that form PSws. There are plenty of different possible syllable arrangements. Table 2 shows the different syllable combinations in PWs that compose PSws and randomly chosen PSws examples from the corpus based on PW combination. PSws with very low occurrence of 0.4% (comprising 2, 9, or 11 syllables) were omitted from this analysis. Some PSws composed of three PWs appeared here. Although the frequency rate is not high, three-PW combination contribute to longer PSws and merit subsequent research.

In the most common group of 5-syllable PSws, only two combinations were observed: 3+2 and 2+3. There is not a significant percentage difference between these two. 3+2 combination accounts for 45.2%, while 2+3 combination is more frequent, at 54.8%. 6-syllable PSws appeared in four combinations. The most frequent is 2+4, comprising 43.8% of cases. The next two combinations, 3+3 and 4+2 have similar occurrence rates of 29.7% and 25% respectively. Finally, the rare three PW combination 2+2+2 accounts for only 1.6%.

In 5-syllable PSws, only two combinations were observed, whereas 6- syllable PSws generated four combinations. This suggests a higher degree of variability in

6-syllable PSws. This is worth doing additional research to verify their existence and behavior.

PSws composed of 4 syllables appeared in three combinations 2+2, 1+3, and 3+1. The most frequent combination is 2+2 (85.7%). The other two combinations appear at rates of 8.6% and 5.7% respectively. As we can see, the majority of this kind of PSws are concentrated in 2+2 combination, which supports the observation that two-syllable PWs are very common in Standard Chinese. PSws compounded of 7 syllables appeared in six combinations: 2+5, 5+2, 3+4, 4+3, 2+3+2, and 2+2+3. 2+5 and 3+4 combinations (33.3% each) seem to be the most common, after these there is 5+2 combination at 16.7%. The remaining combinations occur very rarely and are therefore not described. The last two categories are also relatively rare. There is only one combination in three-syllable PSws, 1+2, so it accounts for 100% of cases. In eight-syllable PSws, there are several combinations, the most frequent of which is 4+4 at 70%.

Table 2
Syllable combinations in PWs composing PSws

Number of syllables in a PSw	PWs syllable combination	Percentage of occurrence	Example
3	1+2	100%	*qing+shūru*
4	2+2	85.7%	*wo-yao⁴+liang-kuàir*
	1+3	8.6%	*shi+jīnnian-de*
	3+1	5.7%	*wo³men-bù+shou*
5	3+2	45.2%	*xiang-chī-dianr₃+shen²me*
	2+3	54.8%	*wo³men+hai²-you-shìr*
6	2+4	43.8%	*guǒrán+míng-bu-xū-chuán*
	4+2	25%	*zhèi-tiao-kùzi+pò-le*
	3+3	29.7%	*xīhongshì+jīdan-tāng*
	2+2+2	1.6%	*wo³-ye+zhènghaor₃+xiang-qù*
7	2+5	33.3%	*diànzi+xiǎnshipíngshang-shuō*

	5+2	16.7%	*ni³-dui-zhèli-de+qìhou*
	3+4	33.3%	*lai-bàn-zhī+běijing-kǎoyā*
	4+3	8.3%	*chuān-de-tài-shǎo+ke³-bu-xing²*
	2+3+2	2.8%	*tiānqi+yùbao$_4$-le+mei-you³*
	2+2+3	5.6%	*cāntīng+kètīng+he-chúfáng*
8	4+4	70%	*gèng-bu-yong-shuō+diǎnshilóu-le*
	2+6	10%	*wo-shi⁴+guo²ji-lǚxingshè-de*
	3+5	10%	*máfan-ni+gei-yùntàng-yi-xia⁴*
	2+3+3	10%	*budan⁴+you-línyù+you-yùgāng*

(Note: The different tone markings—some indicated by digits and others by diacritic over the vowel—are intentional and reflect the PTR system. Syllables marked with digits indicate weakened tones, while syllables marked with diacritics represent full or stressed tones.)

3.3 PSws position in sentences

The last phenomenon analyzed is the position of PSws within sentences. This analysis follows Švarný's methodology (Švarný and Tang Rusková 1991a; 1991b), which distinguishes two possible positions for a prosodic word in a sentence: at the beginning or in the middle, and at the end. In cases where a PPh consisted of only one PW, it is also counted as being at the end of the sentence. While Švarný's two position research methodology originally examined PWs, it is here applied to PSws.

Table 3 shows the percentage of occurrences of PSws in each position. As is clear from the table, 37.3% of PSws are located at the beginning or in the middle of a sentence, while the vast majority, 62.7%, is located at the end of sentences. These results are highly interesting and merit subsequent research to confirm them, to explore the origin of this percentage of occurrences. One possible explanation for these results comes from linguistic anthropology. People start to speak slowly and gradually increase their speech rate. As they aim to convey the intended information quickly, their speech gets faster and faster, causing PWs to

combine into PSws. This may account for the higher occurrence of PSws at the end of sentences.

Table 3
PSw position in sentences

PSw position in sentences	Percentage of occurrence
at the beginning/in the middle	37.3%
at the end	62.7%

Moreover, there is likely a link between the position of a PSw in a sentence and the functional sentence perspective,[7] especially the theme and rheme. The theme (topic or background) indicates what is being talked about, while the rheme (comment and focus) indicates what is being said about the theme. In Standard Chinese (and many other languages) there is a tendency to put the theme at the beginning and the rheme at the end of a sentence,[8] since the recipient's perception of new information is better at the end of the sentence and the recipient pays closer attention to the end of the sentence (Fang et al. 1995). The theme is usually followed by a pause (Fang et al. 1995), and the rheme follows afterwards.

In Standard Chinese, it is important to distinguish the theme from subject, the subject must always have a semantic relationship with the verb as the entity performing the action, whereas the theme does not carry out this function (for a detailed discussion, see Li and Thompson 1981).

When we take into consideration the results gained from the PSw position in sentences, it is important to note that 37.3% of PSws appear in the theme position, while 62.7% of PSws appear in the rheme position. However, there is one important contradictory fact: in a closer theme–rheme analysis of all sentences in which PSws appeared we got different results. Only 11.9% of PSws occurred in the theme position, whereas 88.1% of PSws occurred in the rheme position. This indicates an increase in the proportion of PSws located in the rheme position.

The percentage of PSws in the rheme position is higher due to the fact that some of the PSws that are classified to be in the position at the beginning or in

7 Established by Prague linguistic circle (1926–present).

8 This order corresponds with SVO (subject–verb–object) word order in a sentence.

the middle of a sentence do not actually correspond to the theme, but to the rheme. This happens when the theme has already been established in one of the previous sentences. Thus, a sentence is not divided into a theme and a rheme part; for example, in the sentence "*Běijīng-dui$_4$ yíngle+liǎng-ge-qiu^{2}r*" ("Peking team has won two matches"), *"Peking team"* is the theme, and *"has won two matches"* is the rheme.

In contrast, some analyzed sentences with PSws contain only a rheme, for example, *"Wo-péngyou cong-hángzhōu dàilai-d xī-hú lóngjing-chá"* ("A Dragon Well tea from West Lake brought from Hangzhou by my friend") and "*Shi+jīnnian-d míngqian-cha*"[2] ("It is picked this year before the Pure Brightness holiday"). In the first sentence the theme is *"A Dragon Well tea from West Lake"* and the rheme is *"brought from Hangzhou by my friend"*. The second sentence continues with additional information about the theme, functioning as a second rheme that occupies a separate sentence: *"It is picked this year before the Pure Brightness holiday"*.

4 *Discussion and Conclusion*

This paper investigates the prosody of Standard Chinese, with a particular focus on linear sentence segmentation. It proposes a new prosodic unit that appears in the position between the prosodic phrase (PPh) and the prosodic word (PW). This newly established unit is provisionally called a prosodic superword (PSw) and is well suited to prosodic transcription theory. The presence of PSw allows us to observe linear sentence segmentation when speech tempo speeds up. In that case, two (or rarely three) PWs merge to create a single PSw. The existence of this unit increases the variability of spoken sentence realization and enables us to prosodically express different semantic meanings.

A corpus containing 4,806 syllables was analyzed, revealing 1,598 PWs, of which 13.8% were connected to PSws, a proportion that is not negligible. This finding supports the validity of PSws and warrants subsequent research. This paper presents analysis of PSws in terms of the number of syllables they contain, PW combinations within a PSw, and the position of PSws within sentences. The research serves as an initial proposal for this new unit, with subsequent research expected to follow. In particular, extended analyses of PSws composed of three

PWs are planned. Since PSws enable the prosodic expression of different semantic meanings, precise studies of the correlation between speech rate and PSw occurrence is highly required. Also, a detailed comparison with the ToBI system is proposed, as we believe that this kind of comparison would provide valuable insights despite the fact that the ToBi and PTR were established for different purposes. Ongoing research on Taiwanese Mandarin is underway, and additional research on natural spoken texts are needed. Finally, examining the research corpus from the perspectives of speaker's gender and age is also intended.

Appendix

A sample dialogue.[9]

电视, diànshì, TV

A: 你在看电视报吗？
ni-zài kàn-diànshibào-ma?
Are you looking at a TV guide?
今~~天~~晚~~上~~电视<u>上</u>有什么节目？
jīn~~**tian**~~-wǎn~~**shang**~~ diànshi$_4$**<u>shang</u>** you-shénme+jiému?
Which program is going to be broadcast tonight?

B: 五频道今天有足球比赛现场直播，咱们一起看吧。
wǔ-pindao jīntian-you zúqiu-bǐsài xiànchang-zhíbō, zan^{2}men-yìqǐ kàn-ba.
There is a live football match on the fifth channel, let´s watch it together.

A: 哪个队对哪个队？
nǎ-ge-dui$_4$ dui-nǎ-ge-dui$_4$-a?
Who is playing?

B: 江苏队对北京队。
jiāngsū-dui$_4$ dui-běijīng-dui$_4$.
Jiangsu against Beijing.
都是国内数得着的球队。
dōu-shi-guónèi shǔdezháo-de-qiúrduì.
Both of them are leading national teams.

9 Changes done by speakers themselves are highlighted (the boldfaced and added words are underlined, left out words are crossed out).

A: 快打开电视。
kuai-dǎkai+diànshì.
Quickly turn the TV on.
哎呀，比赛已经开始了。
aiya, bǐsài yǐjing-kāishǐ-le.
Oh no, the match has started already.
现在场上的比分是多少？
xiànzài chǎngshang bǐfen shi-duōshao?
What is the score now?
B: 比分是二比零。
bǐfen shi-èr-bi-líng.
2:0.
北京队赢了两个球。
běijīng-dui$_4$ yíngle+liǎng-ge-qiu^{2}r.
Beijing is two goals ahead.
A: 你估计哪个队能赢？
nǐ[10]-guji^4 nǎ-ge-dui^4 néng-yíng?
What do you think, which team will win?
B: 很难说，过去这两个队互有胜负。
hen-nánshuō, guòqu zhei^4-liang-ge-duì hù-yǒu-shèngfù.
Hard to say, they have equal mutual score.
A: **啊**, 咱们~~**还是**~~好好看**看**吧，待**一**会儿就知道比赛的结果了。
a, zánmen ~~**háishi**~~ hǎohāor kàn-**kan**-ba, dai^4-~~**yi**~~huǐr jiu-zhīdao bǐsài-de+jiéguǒ-le.
Let´s watch carefully, we will know the final score in a minute.
B: 对啊，这场球**儿赛**太精彩了，看着真过瘾。
duì-a, zhei^4-chang-qiú~~**rsài**~~ tài-jingcai^3-le, kan^{4}zhe+zhēn-guoyin^3.
Right! It is a great match; it is fun to watch it.

10 Bold red font is in PTR used to mark stressed tone syllable.

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Semi-classical, Elegant, Not-verbose, Yet Understandable to Ordinary People: The Story of Vernacular-Based Classical Wenyan (Yuluti) as Seen by Lin Yutang

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Abstract This paper explores Lin Yutang's reflections on the trajectory of modern Chinese written language during the 1930s, a time when the vernacular-based *baihua* was widely promoted yet also increasingly critiqued. Once a strong advocate of *baihua,* Lin later came to regard it as stylistically deformed—caught between awkward, European-influenced translations and the "language of the masses". In response, Lin proposed *yuluti*—a semi-classical style blending the lucidity of *wenyan* with the accessibility of *baihua,* modeled partly on the *xiaopinwen* of the Ming and Qing dynasties and the Western "familiar essay". Focusing on Lin's essay about the impossible task of composing a simple note to a carpenter, this study illuminates the cultural anxieties surrounding language reform and Lin's personal quest for elegant yet intelligible prose. Though *yuluti* was never widely adopted, it reveals a distinctive vision of Chinese modernity that balanced tradition with innovation.

Keywords Lin Yutang, yuluti, baihua, wenyan · China in 1930s, modernity

Introduction

The May Fourth Movement (*Wusi yundong* 五四運動, 1916–1920s) marks a decisive watershed moment in China's transition to modernity. Out of this period of intellectual and sociopolitical upheaval emerged the New Culture Movement (*Xin wenhua yundong* 新文化運動), whose central project was the radical reconfiguration—commonly framed as the "modernization"—of the Chinese language and cultural sphere. Within this broader framework, the New Literature

Movement (*Xin wenxue yundong* 新文學運動), or Literary Revolution, played a pivotal role, concentrating its efforts on the reform of language and literary production.

The dual objectives of these movements were, first, the institutionalization of vernacular-based literary language (*baihua* 白話) as the national written language, and second, the cultivation of a new literary canon articulated in this medium. Hu Shi (胡適, 1891–1962), widely regarded as the intellectual progenitor of the Literary Revolution, advanced the proposition that *baihua* must become the authoritative vehicle of modern Chinese literature. In elaborating this position, he drew an explicit historical analogy with late medieval Europe, where writers in Italy, England, and France abandoned the exclusive use of Latin in favor of vernacular dialects and colloquial registers—a shift that not only consolidated emerging national languages but also, in Hu Shi's view, laid the fundamental groundwork for the European Renaissance.[1]

By early 1920s, the May Fourth Movement had spread so quickly that *baihua* became a dominant "national language" in journals and newspapers (Qian 2016, 182). This formative period of shaping a new "national language" and "new literature" is often referred to as the Chinese Renaissance, a term coined—most notably by Hu Shi—echoing its European counterpart.

In early twentieth-century China, the notion of "modernity" was often associated with emulating Western models. At the same time, leading intellectuals and writers such as Lin Yutang and Qian Zhongshu 錢鍾書 (1910–1998) argued that Chinese literary traditions were an equally vital resource for articulating a distinctly Chinese modernity. Similar opinions became more pronounced after the initial phase of the Chinese modernization movement, which concluded in the 1930s. During this period, the impact of Westernization on Chinese culture, literature, and language was reassessed in various ways—sometimes to serve

1 Elisabeth Kaske (2008) argues that in Europe, the process of replacing classical languages (Latin and Greek) with local languages—Italian, French, German. English, and so on—is generally associated with the Renaissanc. Yet even in most advanced countries such as Germany or Great Britain, native languages did not fully replace Latin in the most prestigious fields of scholarship until the late 18th century. In China, by contrast, the position of the classical language remained unchallenged throughout the 19th century.

personal political goals, sometimes to refines the aesthetics of contemporary written language, and sometimes for other motivations.

Lin Yutang was one of the most active intellectuals in the reform of written Chinese and belonged to the circle of influential figures in the Literary Revolution who promoted *baihua* as the language of a new literature. Yet by the early 1930s, he became increasingly critical of *baihua* as it was practiced. He found it *deformed* and identified two primary causes for its deformation: first, the syntactical, grammatical, and lexical distortions resulting from translations of Western literature and scientific texts; and second, the excessive infiltration of all sorts of vernacular registers into written genres, mainly resulting from the "language of the masses movement" (see below).

This paper examines how Lin Yutang, initially a strong advocate of *baihua* as the national language for communication and literature, began advocating a semi-classical language—a hybrid of classical *wenyan* and vernacular-based *baihua*—as an alternative to replace *baihua* in its role of national written language in response to these deformations,

1 *Concept of* Baihua

A key concept of *baihua*, the vernacular-based literary language, was established from the outset in contrast to *wenyan* (文言), the classical literary language. It was Hu Shi, the intellectual father of the Chinese Literary Revolution, who first clearly set *baihua* and *wenyan* in sharp opposition, thereby assigning them new significance. He argued that vernacular-based *baihua* and the literature written in it were "alive", while *wenyan* (referred to by Hu Shi as *guwen* 古文) and traditional literature written in *wenyan* were "dead". Believing that classical *wenyan* was inadequate for clearly expressing meaning in the modern era, Hu Shi championed *baihua*—a vernacular-based written style that had first emerged in early Buddhist translations and was later used extensively in the so-called "low" literature of the Song, Ming, and Qing dynasties.[2] The modern form of *baihua* (May Fourth-style *baihua*) was thus envisioned by proponents of the Literary Revolution as drawing upon representative works of modern China written in vernacular language,

2 For a detailed discussion, see Ping Chen 2015, 5-60; Jing Tsu 2010, 1-48.

shaped both by contemporary spoken language and by models from Western literature.

1.1 *Baihua* as an ill-defined language

However, as Wang Ming-Huei (2018, 21) argues, the May Fourth notion of *baihua* was at best an ill-defined, if not dubious, concept produced in opposition to classical Chinese.[3] The proclaimed sharp opposition between the two written languages, *baihua* and *wenyan*, was itself questionable—since they should be understood as largely complementary. First, *baihua* was the vernacular-based form of written language that drew on particular literary traditions rather than being an exact emulation of speaking. It was originally limited to certain genres of popular literature, mainly the medieval stories recorded by storytellers (Norman 1997, 137). The popularity of these traditional vernacular works in the late dynastic period ensured a readership that transcended regional differences. Thus, the purpose of the Literary Revolution extended beyond merely changing the medium of writing—i.e., replacing *wenyan* with *baihua*—to addressing the questions of literary style.

Another reason *baihua* was difficult to define lies in the term itself. Modern *baihua* has been widely debated for decades. It aspired to become a national normative written language that closely resembled spoken language. Yet, in practice, it represented a compromise among the diverse array of languages spoken across China, including a wide range of local dialects and regional variations.

3 John DeFrancis in his book *The Chinese Language. Fact and Fantasy* (1984, 244) writes: "The term *Baihua* has come to represent a variety of substyles that can be defined by the degree to which they have incorporated elements from classical Chinese on the one hand and everyday speech on the other. Old habits die hard. Apart from some continuation of writing in a purely classical style, as in Mao Zedong's poetry, there is often considerable incorporation of classical elements—stereotyped phrases, truncated terms, even classical constructions—into what is ostensibly a vernacular piece of writing. At the other extreme are works such as those of popular writer Lao She, well known for depicting the lower depths of society and evoking their manner of speech."

1.2 *Baihua* as a "deformed" language

The period in which Lin Yutang actively promoted *baihua* was later described by himself as "pioneering"—and, as we will see in the following text, he had good reasons for making that claim. Starting from early 1930's, Lin became increasingly sceptical about the role that *baihua* played in literature and other written genres. His observations on the texts written in *baihua* in early 1930s led him to believe that the language had taken basicaly two problematic turns. On the one hand, *baihua* had grown too close to spoken language; on the other hand, it was becoming more and more divorced from actual speech. Accordingly, Lin argued that it should be reformed, or even replaced.

In this respect, he even warned[4] that the vernacular-based *baihua* could easily become "a housewife's rattle"—talkative, long-winded, and pointless. In light of this, he called for a *baihua* that paid particular attention to stylistic cultivation. Using his own words, it should strive for "lucidity, perspicuity, cogency of thought, truth, and appropriateness of expression," qualities he believed were common in Western literature.[5]

In general, during the 1930s, *baihua* faced criticism from two main directions: from leftist intellectuals on one side, and from opponents of its so-called "Europeanization" on the other.

Believing that modern *baihua* had become more and more divorced from speech, leftist writers and intellectuals under the organization of the Left League—who saw themselves as the most progressive inheritors of May Fourth Movement spirit— began to advocate the use of *dazhongyu* 大衆語 ("language of the masses"), which they regarded as more modern and progressive than *baihua* (Qian 2010, xxiv).[6] According to the literary historian Chen Zizhan 陳子展 (1898-

4 In one of his earliest essays published in *The New Youth* (Xin qingnian 新青年).

5 Lin Yutang 1918: 132. See Qian 2017, 48.
Lin Yutang belonged to the circle of Republican-era intellectuals who believed that the role of writing is also to idealize speech, purging it of the "redundancy" of spoken language—as we will see in the following discussion. For more detail, see Edward Gunn 1991.

6 The promotion of this approach was apparently a policy decision by the Left League, as part of its program of "popularization of literature and arts" (Qian 2012, 119). Denouncing the May-fourth-style *baihua* for deviating from the real colloquial speech, they proposed replacing it with a "mass language".

1990), *dazhongyu* was meant to be a language that could be spoken, listened to, and read by the "ordinary people". This group included the majority of the national population—peasants, craftsmen, industrial workers, shopkeepers, shop employees, and street hawkers (Chen 1934: 51). It was precisely this that Lin Yutang criticized, calling it as an "a housewife's rattle".

Dissatisfaction with the May Fourth-style *baihua* did not come only from the leftists. Intellectuals and writers such as Lin Yutang became more and more concerned about the emergence of a so called "Europeanized *baihua*", which had developed in Chinese texts under the influence of translations of Western literature. The adoption of stylistic and syntactical features of Western literature and scientific discourse in Chinese translations introduced a number of unpredictable stylistic and syntactical variations in modern Chinese. These phenomena of "ill Westernization" soon began to affect the writing of many Chinese writers who produced literature full of "western deformations" in both style and language.[7]

The above-mentioned observations first led Lin Yutang, along with other prominent intellectuals of his times such as Qian Zhongshu, to argue that the more succinct and historicizing register of *wenyan* should be preserved for certain forms of writing—such as letters—during the period when the vernacular *baihua* was rapidly spreading as a literary medium in China. Later, Lin went even further, writing a number of essays in which he proposed that a different language register—neither *baihua* nor *wenyan*—should be rediscovered and adopted for modern literary works and educated discourse. This new register, he claimed, could better fulfil the goals which were originally proposed for *baihua*.

His search for a "purification" of *baihua* seems to anticipate Lin's later promotion of *yuluti* (*baihua*-based classical language, or vernacular *wenyan*), [8] He believed this as a more authentic form of *baihua*, distinct from what was in practice at the time, and as an alternative to the corrupt usage of *baihua* that had emerged in the 1930s (Qian 2017, 48).

7 For the influence of the Western languages and literature (also Japanese) on modern Chinese, see Gunn 1991.

8 Regarding the term *yuluti* 語錄體 itself, dictionaries and literary compendia define it as a language imitating the style of Chan or Neo-Confucian *yulu* 語錄 (recorded sayings), dating back to the Song and Ming dynasties.

2 *Yuluti* 語錄體

Lin Yutang's historicizing *yuluti* was first practiced and promoted mainly through the journals he launched (or co-founded) in the 1930s[9]—alongside his "mission" of spreading humour throughout China. Lin thus emerged as a leading essayist in the modern Chinese literary scene, with a distinctive prose style of wit and humour.[10] He first gained recognition as a member of the *Yusi* 語絲 (Thread of Words) literary group headed by Lu Xun and his younger brother Zhou Zuoren in the 1920s, and later as the leader of the *Lunyu* (Analects) group[11] and editor of a series of popular literary periodicals. Lin Yutang (and *Lunyu* Group) thus promoted *yuluti* (vernacular-based classical style) as part of a broader effort to putting into practice his visions for essay writing in modern China during the 1920s and 1930s.

2.1 Literary sources of *yuluti*

2.1.1 Western "leisure familiar essays"

As Qian Suoqiao (2011, 123) argues, Lin Yutang first associated the *yuluti* style with the Western (or English) term "familiar essay". Bilingual from his youth, Lin wrote short stories, essays, and other genres in English. In 1930, he started a weekly column called "The Little Critic" in an English-language journal run by a group of English- and American-trained returned students. Written in English in the proclaimed "familiar essay style", these weekly *Little Critic* essays were important forerunners of Lin's literary career.

In fact, most of his notable Chinese language modern *xiaopinwen* ("little essays") first appeared in *The Little Critic* and were only later—mainly self-translated—into Chinese and published in his Chinese-language journals.[12] His

9 Lin Yutang established several journals during the 1930s. The journals *Lunyu* 論語 (Analects; 1932–1948), *Renjianshi* 人間世 (In the Human World; 1934–1935), *Yuzhoufeng* 宇宙風 (Cosmic Winds; 1935–1947) and *Yijing* 逸經 (Heterodox Canonical Writings; 1936–1937), as well as *Wanxiang* 萬象 (About All and Everything, 1941-1945; rebounded in the PRC, 1998 ff) are all connected to Lin Yutang's name.

10 Lin's prescription for Western civilization is a conflation of Daoist cynicism and Confucian humanism.

11 For example, it was *Lunyu* that first promoted the use of simplified Chinese characters.

12 See Qian 2017, 21.

initial choice to borrow the English term "familiar essay" to introduce a literary style or language register for modern Chinese literary pieces is therefore understandable, given that "Western" was widely regarded as a synonym for modernity in China. During the1920s and 1930s, it was very usual that literature of Chinese modernity was often acknowledged as inspired by European *belles lettres*.

However, as Qian Suoqiao (2011, 122-123) argues, the connection between *yuluti* and English "familiar style" also served to cloak the use of *yuluti* under the dominant discourse of modernity. By comparing *yuluti* to the English "familiar style," *yuluti* immediately gains legitimacy as a modern literary form.

2.1.2 Traditional Chinese literature: "little prose pieces" (*xiaopinwen* 小品文) as representatives of Chinese "leisure literature"—of the Ming and Qing dynasties

As Charles A. Laughlin (2008) points out, although modern Chinese essays emerging from the atmosphere of the Literary Revolution aligned themselves with European *belles lettres*, only a decade later, in 1932, Zhou Zuoren 周作人 (1885-1967) was already able to associate them, on a fundamental aesthetic and ideological level, with the late Ming 明 (1378–1644) dynasty *xiaopinwen* ("little prose pieces", or "occasional essays").[13] These were non-formal literary pieces dating back to the Ming dynasty and considered as traditional forms of Chinese "leisure literature" (*xianqing wenxue* 閑情文學).

Ming and Qing dynasty *xioapinwen* mostly took the form of short travelogues, letters, notes, prefaces, or other non-formal genres. They were primarily intended for entertainment and for impressing friends. Their motto was something akin to

13 The *xiaopinwen* genre existed in the Chinese literature for centuries and reached its climax around the turn of the Ming and Qing dynasties. Charles A. Laughlin in his *The Literature of Leisure & Chinese Modernity* (2008, 14), points out: "The miscellaneous variety of the forms classified as *xiaopinwen* did not diminish once the term was adopted in the literary context. [...] This can be described as a comparatively casual mood and an emphasis on the trivial, the everyday little things that make life charming and meaningful on a day-to-day basis. It is possible to identify features that are common to this kind of essay and that distinguish it from more grand and self-important modes of prose writing—vernacular, local and colloquial elements in the language, generally short length of text, emphasis on certain kinds of subject matter."

"self-expression." Cultivation of meaningful private life and its expression in literary form became an alternative objective to the service to the realm and emperor represented by the civil service examination system.

Thus, beyond simply being modern, Lin Yutang argued that modern *baihua* should be rooted in its own historical tradition, namely in the style of *yuluti*.

3 *How to Write in* Yuluti *and Why it was Needed*

Though Lin Yutang does not provide a systematic examination of *yuluti* in its linguistic, aesthetic, or socio-linguistic facets,[14] his famous motto remains widely cited: "You can always use colloquial language in *wenyan* and classical expressions in *baihua*."[15] However, a closer look at Lin's essays from the early 1930s reveals his literary preferences. He devoted a series of articles to *yuluti,* the most notable of which include:

- "Lun *yuluti* zhi yong" 論語錄體之用 (On the Use of *Yuluti*)[16]
- "Kezeng de baihua liusi" 可憎的白話六四 (Disgusting *baihua liusi;* Disgusting Dogmatic *Baihua*)[17]
- "Yizhang zitiao de xiefa" 一張字條的寫法 ("How to Write a Note")[18]
- "Yuluti juli" 語錄體舉例 (Examples of *Yuluti*)[19]
- "Yu Xujin lun baihua wenyan shu" 與徐君論白話文言書 (A Talk with Mr. Xu on *Baihua* and *Wenyan*)[20]

14 His theoretical writings in Chinese on China's informal prose writing tradition can be said to have been crystallized in his two-part essay "On Writing" (Lunwen 論文), a title that alludes to an equally important manifesto of the same title written four hundred years earlier by the late-Ming advocate of informal prose Yuan Hongdao 袁宏道 (1568–1610). See Laughlin 2015, 42.

15 Lin Yutang: "Da Zhou Shao lun yuluti xiefa" 答周邵論語錄體写法 (Reply to Zhou Shao How to Write in *Yulu* Style). *Lunyu* no. 30 (December 1, 1933). *Lin Yutang mingzhu quanji,* 14: 197.

16 *Lunyu* no. 26 (October 1, 1933). *Lin Yutang mingzhu quanji,* 14: 188-192.

17 *Lunyu* no. 26 (October 1, 1933). *Yutang mingzhu quanji,* 14: 193-195. English translations of the titles by Qian 2013: 123

18 *Lin Yutang mingzhu quanji,* 17: 203-207.

19 *Lunyu* no 40 (May 1, 1934). *Lin Yutang mingzhu quanji,* 14: 198-203.

20 *Lunyu* no. 63 (April 16, 1935).

3.1 Why *yuluti* was needed?

3.1.1 "A Talk with Mr. Xu on *Baihua* and *Wenyan*

After a decade of institutionalizing *baihua*, Lin Yutang observed that by the 1930s it was still not able to entirely replace classical Chinese:

> Today in China, students learn *baihua*, [but] after graduation, [they] learn classical Chinese in order to work; this is the first odd thing. The pro-vernacular literati write articles in *baihua*, [but] they use literary Chinese for notes and private letters; this is the second oddity. The *xiaopin* essays in newspapers are in *baihua*, [but] the news and editorials are in classical Chinese; this is the third oddity.[21]

The literary language appropriate in China in 1930s was thus intended primarily to function as an acceptable compromise between *wenyan* and *baihua,* accommodating various literary styles.

3.1.2 "Kezeng de baihua liusi" 可憎的白話六四 (Disgusting *baihua liusi*)

According to Lin, as discussed in this essay, a form of "dogmatic" language was widespread in China during his time, serving a role similar to that once played by the "parallel rhymed style" (*piansi liliu* 駢四儷六)[22] in earlier times. This language, however, did not imitate the patterns of classical "parallel literature." Lin alludes to the term because, in his view, this modern "dogmatic *baihua*" excessively imitated other flawed influences of his times: the language of translations of Western literary works on one hand, and the contemporary spoken vernacular on the other hand—both marked by what he calls "excessive verbosity" (*lusu* 嚕蘇) or "annoyingly long-winded talk" (*lulilusu* 嚕哩嚕蘇).

At the end of the essay, Lin reiterates that while *baihua* might be employed for longer narrative genres, it is entirely unsuitable for shorter forms such as letters, glosses, or juridical texts. Nevertheless, this was largely how the language functioned in 1920s and 1930s China.

21 *Ibid.*

22 Lin Yutang labels this "deformed" language *baihua liusi* 白話六四, or "parallel-style *baihua*". The term *liusi* appears to allude to *siliu* 四六 or *piansi liliu* 駢四儷六—terms associated with the so-called *piantiwen* 駢體文, a parallel and rhythmical literary style, particularly as it was practiced during the Tang 唐 dynasty (618–906) and was characterized by lines of four and six characters. See also further text.

3.1.3 "Lun *yuluti* zhi yong" 論語錄體之用 (On the use of *yuluti*).[23]

The essay begins with the following rhetorical question:

> 有人問我，何為作文言，豈非開倒車？吾非好作文言，吾不得已也。[24]
>
> I was asked: why are you writing in the classical *wenyan*, isn't that against the historical tide [of evolution]? Well, it's not that I am fond of writing in *wenyan*, but I don't have any other choice.[25]

Lin proclaims that he was "forced" to keep writing in a historicizing language (here referred to as *wenyan* 文言) due to the fact, that the modern medium of literary expression—contemporary *baihua*—was no longer able to fulfil its intended role. In a way, it had lost the ability "to truly express the meaning of what should be spoken out."

He further confesses:

> 吾惡白話之**文**，而喜文言之**白**，故提倡語錄體。[26]
>
> I hate the "literariness" (*wen* 文)[27] of *baihua*, and like the "simplicity" (*bai* 白) of *wenyan*, thus I advocate *yuluti*.

Baihua was suitable, or good enough, for writing longer genres based on free fabulation on a certain topic, or extended narration. Yet, when the clear expression of a *true meaning* or *idea* was required, it failed, being too redundant, uneconomical, or obscure. For texts of argumentation, reasoning, essays, letters, or other shorter genres, there was no alternative but to use succinct, historicizing language. Lin Yutang illustrates the redundancy, verbosity, or otherwise biasness of the modern *baihua* in the following examples:

> 憂鬱則曰心弦的顫動，
> 欣喜則曰快樂的幸福，
> 受勸則曰接收意見，
> 快點則曰加上速度。[28]
>
> "Melancholy" is then called "vibration of the heart strings",
> "Happiness" is then called "joyful happiness",

23 *Lin Yutang mingzhu quanji*, 14: 188-192.

24 *Lin Yutang mingzhu quanji,* 14: 188.

25 Translations according to Qian Suoqiao 2010, xxiv-xxv.

26 *Lin Yutang mingzhu quanji,* 14: 188.

27 Qian Suoqiao (2010, xxv) translates the character *wen* 文 as "literariness/opaqueness".

28 *Lin Yutang mingzhu quanji*, 14: 188.

"To be advised" is then called "to receive opinion",
"Slightly faster" is then called "to add speed".

Further Lin gives us a list of words typical of *wenyan* (or old Chinese) that should definitely be preserved in the written language of modern times, since they are, in his view, "better" (*sheng yu* 勝於) than their equivalents in *baihua*—more suitable for a refined style derived from literary Chinese.[29]

Table 1
Wenyan versus baihua

Wenyan	*Baihua*
gai 蓋	*yinwei* 因為
shi 使	*tangshi* 倘使
yi 抑	*haishi* 還是
yue 曰	*shuo* 說
jie 皆	*tongtong* 統統
wu 無	*meiyou* 沒有
he shi 何時	*shenme shehou* 什麼時候
he di 何地	*shenme difang* 什麼地方

In this respect, Lin argues that if somebody claims that "*yuluti* is *baihua*," he would not disagree—provided that the *yuluti* is written "truly" (*laoshi* 老實), and not "awkward" (*bieniu* 蹩扭).[30] Qian Souqiao (2010, xxiv) thus concludes that Lin considered *yuluti* to be the more authentic form of *baihua*.

3.2 How to write in *yuluti?*

3.2.1 "How to Write a Note"

This essay, written in a "leisurely spirit," seeks to illustrate what prose, or simply the language of communication, was expected to look like in China in the 1930s. It recounts Lin Yutang's struggle to draft a brief note to the craftsman who had installed his window screens, requesting some putty to seal the gaps. What should

29 *Lin Yutang mingzhu quanji,* 14: 189.

30 *Lin Yutang mingzhu quanji,* 14: 189.

have been a simple task turned out to be anything but, and Lin spent the entire morning wrestling with the challenge of finding the right style. The essay opens as follows:

> In the morning it seemed to take an eternity just to ask the carpenter for a bit of putty. Not long ago, I had called him to make some **screen windows (*shachuang* 紗窗),** and now I must leave a note requesting a little putty to fill the cracks. [...] Yet no sooner had I begun than even those two characters [(gauze) screen windows 紗窗], unfolded into a whole web of questions.[31] [...]
>
> The little houses of Beijing always used gauze screen windows, but today's residents of Shanghai no longer use them. The so-called "(gauze) screen windows" (紗窗) are in fact nothing more than barriers made of metal threads against flies and mosquitoes. [...] If we were to make a direct interpretation, we would have to call them "iron wire barriers" (*tiesi zhang* 鐵絲障)—a term so inelegant it would never make its way into poetry in the future. [...] Because this word [like the wire themselves] is so harsh and [cumbersome], there is no way to "roll it up" [roll it up like a blind, since now it is made of wire, though it is still called a "gauze screen window"], and so not only can it no longer be used in the sense of rolling up a blind, but even "the shadow of flowers behind the blind" (*gelian huaying* 隔簾花影) [the silhouette of a beauty behind the gauze window] cannot be turned into "the shadow of flowers behind a wire barrier" (*gezhang huaying* 隔障花影).[32] [...]
>
> If we choose to call it an "iron wire barrier" (*tiesi zhang* 鐵絲障), then—even if it seems to represent western culture—our guiding principle would be to stand proudly at the forefront of the age. Those who advocate a return to the old days will condemn it as a sign of "using the foreign [barbaric] to deform the Chinese, bringing the state to ruin and extinguishing our race."[33] [...]

31 早晨為了向木匠討一點油灰，費了半天工夫。原因是前日叫木匠做紗窗，現要寫張字條去討油灰來補窟隆。但一起稿，這"紗窗"二字，就含了不少問題，可見做現代人真不易也。 (All citations are from *Lin Yutang mingzhu quanji,* 17: 203-207.)

32 因為字既生硬，又無從卷法，將來不但不能用"捲簾"字樣，且亦不好易"隔簾花影"為"隔障花影"也。

33 況且更有嚴重問題，就是：名之為"紗窗"，頗有文言復古意味，是罪不容誅。名之為"鐵絲障"，雖似介紹西洋文化，儼然有站在時代前鋒之概，而提倡復古者，又將斥為用夷變夏亡國滅種之兆。

> This also gives rise to a more serious problem: Is the "language of the masses" close to "returning to the past" (*fugu* 復古)? Or is it close to a neologism (*xinmingci* 新名詞)? On top of all the problems, there is another problem: is it patriotic to call it a "screen window" Or is it patriotic to call it a "wire barrier"? Because in the buzzing of modern China, even the problem of mosquitoes and flies seems to carry the weight of saving or losing the country. [34]

The seemingly simple use of two characters meaning "screen window" brought Lin Yutang considerable "trouble"—to the point that he feared it might ignite a "cultural war," given that in the China of his time, even the smallest matters were taken with utmost seriousness and completely devoid of a sense of humor. As a result, even composing a brief note to a carpenter demanded several revisions. [35]

In search of an appropriate languge style, Lin wrote four short letters to the carpenter, each in different language register and style. His aim was to keep the text understandable and elegant, while avoiding verbosity. Yet, in the end, he was not satisfied with any of them and finally decided to send an assistant to bring the putty in person.

Four letters to a carpenter

The first note to the carpenter was written in what Lin Yutang calls "natural style" (*tianran xiefa* 天然寫法)[36]—that is, "*baihua* within *wenyan*":

> 1【白話的文言】 "*Baihua* in *wenyan*"
>
> ××寶號。
>
> 前日由汝裝置**紗窗**，只因邊沿有縫，蚊子仍得而入，來一隻，捉一隻，又來一隻，令人日間做不得，夜間眠不得，苦甚。茲差人前來，請給予油灰少許，俾修補，為荷。幸毋以油灰為重，信用為輕。是禱。
>
> ×× 啟。

34 此中又生出更嚴重問題，就是"大眾語"是近於復古呢？是近於新名詞呢？眾問題之上又有問題：是稱之為"紗窗"者愛國？還是稱之為"鐵絲障"者愛國？因為在嗡嗡嗡的現代中國，任何蚊子蒼蠅問題，亦有救國亡國之意義在焉。

35 做人之苦，至此已極，真有"時日曷喪，予及汝偕亡"之感。"紗窗"二字已引起這樣嚴重問題，寫一張字條與木匠，當然要幾番易稿。

36 We believe *yuluti* is meant.

×× Company.

In recent days, your company installed my window screens. However, a gap remains along one side through which the dreaded mosquitoes find passage into my quarters. When one of these pests enter, I swiftly endeavor to capture it. Yet, as soon as one is caught, another invariably makes its way inside. Thus, I find myself without peace during the day and utterly deprived of sleep at night—a most vexing and intolerable situation. I therefore send a trusted individual to your esteemed self with a humble request: please provide me with some putty so that I may seal the gap. Surely, you would not consider putty to be of greater value than your own reputation, which will only be enhanced by this small gesture. Rest assured, I will regard you in the highest esteem for this kindness.

Respectfully, ××.

Having written the Note no. 1, Lin says: "Although this note was not bad, as such it was expressive enough in conveying the meaning; but when I later thought it over again, I realized that if someone were to see this note, they would say that I am against *baihua*. What should I do then? I rewrote the note using a style of '*wenyan* in *baihua*'." [37]

2【文言的白話】"*Wenyan* within *baihua*"

××寶號啊！

你們豈不記得在不久的以前——似乎是十天以前吧——你們曾取得我的同意，把我們家裡的鐵絲障安裝起來？這是不容疑惑的事實。

現在邊沿不緊貼，發生空隙，竟然有半個生丁之距離，已比蚊子高度多二倍了。現在滿屋都是蚊子，嗡嗡嗡，其數量至不可思議之程度。在這懶洋洋的夏天，這是如何地壓迫人啊！這鐵絲障已然無疑的終於等於虛設了。倘若你們不相信，可以來參觀，事實終必勝於雄辯的啊！事實告訴我們，你們有修補這些空隙的義務，而鐵絲障又有被修補之必要。那麼，我派人來給你們取點油灰補好它，料想不至於被拒絕吧？

×× 啟。

Company ××,

You will certainly recall that you recently, some ten days ago, obtained my approval and installed iron-wire barriers (*tiesi zhang* 鐵絲障) in my home. That is an indisputable fact. Now it doesn't seal on the side, it's made a gap of about half a centimetre, which

37 *Lin Yutang mingzhu quanji*, 17: 203-207.

is three times the size of a mosquito. Now the room is full of mosquitoes, stinging one after the other, their numbers have reached an outrageous degree. In this lazy summer, it's particularly disheartening.

So, this iron wire screen was no doubt installed in vain after all. If you don't believe me, you can come and see for yourself. After all, the facts outweigh all conjecture. The facts show that you have a duty to repair these cracks, and the wire screen requires such repair. So, I am sending someone to you to take some putty from you to repair it, I hope the person in question will not be turned away.

Respectfully ××,

Although Lin found note no. 2 fashionable (*shixing* 時行), in his commentary he once again "feared criticism"—namely, that this time the "ordinary" carpenter might not understand the note—and thus set it aside. At this point, one might assume that Lin would try to compose a note in a plainer, more accessible language, something a craftsman could readily understand. Yet his anxiety about being dismissed as a "proletarian" writer—a label he wished to avoid—proved stronger than his concern for clarity. Consequently, he abandoned the "language of the masses" approach and reverted to *wenyan*.

So, I turned to the "*Wenxuan* School"[38]—the style of parallel, rhythmical prose. But since I had never trained in it, and had always found such rhymed and well-adjusted sentences unappealing, my efforts were shallow. The more I wrote, the less coherent it became, until it finally turned into the following:[39]

38 *Wenxuanpai* refers to a literary school that took the anthology *Wenxuan* 文選 (*Selections of Refined Literature*), compiled during the Liang dynasty (501–531), as its stylistic model and authoritative canon. The literati of *Wenxuan* School emphasized refined diction, elegant structure, and elaborate rhetorical devices, drawing mainly on the *fu* and court poetry of the Han and Six Dynasties. However, the school was often criticized for excessive ornamentation and insufficient substance.

39 這篇雖然時行，卻生怕 "大眾" 的木匠不懂，於是不用。這時已費半點多鐘工夫。大概早晨不用做別的事了。所以索性再起一稿，回到文言，一面也是避免人家稱我普羅，一面自作遐想，倘是我要討好 "文選派" 與 "桐城派"，不知又當如何寫法，乃先由"文選派"下手，只因未經訓練，又向來駢四儷六，皆看不入眼，修養工夫甚淺，乃愈寫愈不成話，而有以下的結果

3【文選派】"*Wenxuanpai* style"

×× 水木兩作寶號大鑒。

別來數日，又賦契闊，定蔔起居兮而佳吉，履祉兮而迎祥，既劄闥以鴻庥，又鍥著而不盡。

余路則憶定而盤，門則而立加五。前因蚊患，曾置金絲。

方慶蠅蚋不入，將睹天下之升平，豈料異孽複生，更變本而加厲？

邊幅不修，逐臭之徒，豈有孔而不入？

銀縷無綻，尋羶之輩，自縮地以有方。

吾非吳猛，不毆於蚊蚋，誰效子平，當避於清涼。

茲當大夏，益肆咆哮，驅之不去，捉之不得，欲為補苴之計，當借丸泥之助。

請賜一封，交與奚奴，拜賜實多，銘心無既。

To the hands of the company working with water and wood ××.

After only a few days, I am once again filled with longing for you. May Fortuna bless you on weekdays, and I wish you, oh, only the favour of Fate, that your gates may only bear inscriptions that portend great favour, and that you may continue in your splendid work.

My street is called Edinburgh, the number on the door equals Christ's age plus two (而立加五).

I have recently been plagued by mosquitoes, so I had a metal fibre net placed in.

I was rejoicing that neither flies nor mosquitoes would fly in, that I would enjoy the peace and tranquillity of the climate. Who would have thought that a new scourge would come along that would radically change everything for the worse?

If the net on the side is not repaired, the creatures following the smell will surely enter through every opening!

If the metal fibres are not sealed, the vermin craving the stench will use every trick to find a way in.

I'm not Wu Meng and I won't suffer the sting of mosquitoes in silence. Whoever wants to emulate Zi Ping must seek refuge in the shade. [40]

40 Wu Meng, courtesy name Zi Ping 子平, lived during the Jin dynasty (4th century). His family was very poor and could not afford a mosquito net. Out of filial devotion, when swarms of mosquitoes bit his parents at night, he would take off his shirt and sit beside them, offering himself instead. He hoped that once the insects had fed on his blood, they would leave his parents in peace. His story is included in the *Twenty-Four Filial Exemplars* (*Ershisi xiao* 二十四孝).

In this peak of summer, one wants to scream all the more. They can't be chased away and they can't be caught.

I therefore wish to make a plan to fix it, and must ask for a little help. Please provide me with some seals and hand them over to my butler. I will remain forever grateful for this gift and it will be imprinted on my heart forever.

Here Lin admits that the more he revised this note, the more tangled and confusing it became—until the text somehow slipped into *siliu* (四六),[41] a style of parallel prose that was neither properly clear nor deliberately obscure. Dissatisfied with this outcome, he decided to try yet another approach: reviving the ancient-style prose of classical *wenyan*, following the model of the Tongcheng School 桐城派,[42] thereby also "learning from Han Yu 韓愈 (768–824)."

4【桐城派】"*Tongcheng pai* style"

×× 匠人斧石。

余依憶定盤以為居，其號則而立又五焉，以甲為別。曩者曾雇吾子安置銅扉，儼然一新，和風曉日得以入而無礙焉，快甚。嗣見蚊蚋麇集如故，倘非窗沿有隙，蚊蠅乘間而入，曷克臻此？茲遣書僮前來，請與以……（油灰，未得雅馴古語）少許，聊作補苴之用，吾知吾子必不以此見吝，而吾亦不負吾子矣。若賜電話請撥立志知命之號，而益以三焉。惟吾子其實圖之。

×× working like the craftsman's tools, refining the rough into something enduring.

I reside on Edinburgh Street, at door number 35A.

41 The hallmark of *siliu* style is that sentences are arranged in balanced pairs. Each pair of phrases, clauses, or sentences is parallel in both meaning and structure. In a typical four-six format, each part of a sentence pair consists of four characters in one part and six characters in the other, though there is some flexibility in this pattern. This creates a rhythmic, balanced structure that is aesthetically pleasing.

42 The Tongcheng School was one of the most influential literary movements of the Qing dynasty. Rooted in the tradition of *guwen* 古文 ("ancient-style prose"), it drew inspiration from classical models of the pre-Qin and Han periods. Advocates of the school upheld clarity, structural coherence, and moral gravitas as the essential qualities of prose, explicitly opposing the ornate diction and vacuous embellishments that had characterized much of late Ming and early Qing writing, such as Wenxuan School.

> Some time past, I engaged your skill to install a bronze screen. When first completed, it allowed the morning breeze to pass through unhindered, bringing great satisfaction. Yet I have lately observed mosquitoes gathering once more. If not for some small gap at the edge of the window, through which they find their way in, how could this be?
> I therefore send a young boy to you, with a request for a modest amount of … (*putty,* I couldn't find a well-sounding old word) to serve for a temporary repair. I trust you will not begrudge this, and I, in turn, shall not trouble you further.
> Should you wish to call, please dial 301550 and append the number 3.
> I leave this matter to your careful consideration.

In this last effort, Lin even turned to the*Yuanjian Lihuan* (淵鑒類函) and *Yiwen Liju* (藝文類聚)[43] for inspiration—only to discover that terms like "oil" and "putty" stubbornly refused to sound elegant (*yaxun* 雅馴)—"how could one possibly craft refined prose around such crude vocabulary?" Conceding defeat, he once more gave up halfway.[44]

The note has been written in four different styles:

Table 2
Four styles and objections towards them

	Style	Objections
1.	"natural way" (***yuluti***; "*baihua* in *wenyan*")	against *baihua*
2.	"*wenyan* in *baihua*"	not understandable to ordinary people
3.	"*siliu* style" (parallel style to *wenyan*)	neither properly clear nor deliberately obscure
4.	"*guwen*" (classical *wenyan*)	"oil" and "puty" not elegant enough to be used in a text

43 Encyclopedias compiled during the Qing and Tang dynasties.

44 後來越改越昏，竟無意中作出一篇似 通非通的四六，自覺不愜意，乃又學韓退之，起八代之衰，作三代古文，覺得"油灰"二字文不雅馴，乃複半途而廢。

None of the four styles satisfied Lin. Thus, he put down his pen and instructed his "bookboy" (*shutong* 書僮) to go and fetch the putty in person. Within half an hour, Ah Jing had conveyed the message and returned swiftly with a packet of oil putty in hand. Lin here confesses: "I was both delighted and annoyed, and threw my pen to the ground, exclaiming: 'Guancheng is useless! Why don't we scholars just kill ourselves sooner?'"[45]

Conclusion

Lin Yutang's observations and reflections on *yuluti* were less about linguistic rules—though he was a linguist—and more about aesthetic values. As an intellectual, attracted to elegant-styled literature of the past, in 1930, he started to voice his disgust of contemporary *baihua*, and advocate the use of a kind of historicizing language, which he considered to be a more authentic form of *baihua*—*yuluti* (modeled on *xiaopinwen* of the Ming and Qing dynasties).

Lin Yutang's struggle with the "four notes to a carpenter" illustrates in miniature, the broader dilemmas of language reform in 1930s China. His dissatisfaction with every possible register—whether *baihua*, *wenyan*, hybrid, or ornate—exposed the difficulty of reconciling elegance, clarity, and social function in a single written medium. For Lin, what mattered most was not a linguistic system in the technical sense, but the cultivation of style: prose that could be graceful without being verbose, refined yet understandable to ordinary readers.

45 管城子不中用！我輩書生何不早自殺 [...]. The phrase "管城子不中用" originates from the *Shishuo Xinyu* 世说新语, a fifth-century collection of anecdotes. It refers to the scholar Guan Ning 管宁, who declined positions of material or political advantage, emphasizing moral integrity over worldly gain. In later usage, the expression denotes an individual who eschews material ambition while being admired for ethical steadfastness.
稿已起了四次，仍不滿意。而且翻盡《淵鑒類函》、《藝文類聚》，油灰二字仍舊無法使之"雅馴"。至是乃投筆而起，令阿經（即韓文中之"書僮"，卻已三十三歲）口頭傳話取去，不半小時，阿經已經傳情達意，手拿一包油灰快步而來。我既喜又嗔，擲筆於地曰："管城子不中用！我輩書生何不早自殺 [...].

Although *yuluti* did not become the new standard for modern Chinese writing, Lin's advocacy of it was far from futile. Through his essays and journals, he brought to attention the aesthetic dimension of prose at a time when literary debates were often dominated by ideology. To many of his contemporaries, his call for semi-classical elegance seemed retrogressive; yet for Lin himself, drawing on the traditions of *wenyan* and *xiaopinwen* was a way of preserving continuity while articulating a distinctly Chinese modernity. His experiments remind us that language reform is inseparable from questions of culture and identity, and that the pursuit of a literary medium both beautiful and accessible remains as relevant today as it was in his time.

Though his efforts in this field did not cause a broader impact on literati in his times, his visions were known in China, mainly through his essays published in the periodicals he founded or co-founded, which reached a substantial readership. His way of writing essays, so-called "modern xiaopinwen", was circulated widely through these magazines and earned high esteem among intellectuals. In the context of Chinese modernity, his promotion of historicizing language was also seen as retrogressive. Yet for Lin, writing in the elegant, urban, "self-expressive" literary style of the Ming and Qing dynasties represented a legitimate medium of modernity, even in the twentieth century.

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Old Japanese "*Kara*" in Myth and Etymology (Locating the *Kara* from which the Proto-Japonics Originated)

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Abstract The toponym *Kara* is associated with the potential continental origin of proto-Japanese speakers, according to several theories corroborated by mentions in the ancient Japanese chronicles. In order to clarify the possible location of *Kara*, these references are analysed and connected with the multiple homonyms of *kara*. An etymological analysis of these words suggest that many may reflect Indo-European origin—cognacy or borrowing. The particular sources of the words, directions of borrowings, routes of reception, and detailed processes are yet to be clarified; however, the aim of this study is to identify possible distant connections spanning far beyond the Koreanic-Japonic and macro-Altaic relationships. The results of the analyses show that rather than referring exclusively to the polity on the southern tip of Korean Peninsula, *Kara* as the origin of Japonic may represent a broader geographical concept encompassing Korea and northeastern coastal China.

Keywords genesis of Japanese, Japonic language family, language prehistory, Japanese-Indo-European etymology, Izumo Fudoki, Kara polity, Silla, *kentum, satem* Indo-European languages.

Introduction

In my previous studies, I investigated the origin of Japonic by means of a detailed analysis of the geographical data concerning the deities Niniki's and Susanoo's "descent from Heaven", contained in the chronicles *Kojiki* (completed in 712) and *Nihon Shoki* or *Nihongi* (completed in 720). These two most ancient literary memorials, which I analyzed in Rumánek 2022a (188-218) and Rumánek 2022b, (47-

87), form a conceptual triangle together with *Izumo Fudoki,* the only near-complete extant specimen of the *fudoki* "gazetteers" collected between 713 and 733.

1 *Kara as a Mythical Toponym based on the Ancient Sources* Kojiki, Nihongi, *and Izumo* Fudoki

The *Izumo Fudoki* concerns the deity Susanoo, whose descendants inhabited and ruled the land of Izumo, located on the northern coast of western part of Honshu, before "giving up their land" (*kuni yuzuri*) to the dynasty ruling in Yamato, whose forefather was Niniki.

While the *Izumo Fudoki* does not deal with the origin of Susanoo, ample sources related to this tradition are preserved in the two chronicles, which provide several versions of the myths of the *Ama-kudari* ("descent from Heaven"). Susanoo and Niniki are said to have descended from the mythical *Takamanohara*, the High Celestial Plain; and in most versions, the place of descent is identified as southwestern Kyushu for Niniki and Izumo for Susanoo. Nevertheless, the *Nihon Shoki* contains one intriguing version (out of three in total), which differs from the other two by stating:

> 一書曰、素戔嗚尊所行無狀。故諸神、科以千座置戶、而遂逐之。是時、素戔嗚尊、帥其子五十猛神、降到於**新羅**國、居**曾尸茂梨**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。[1]
>
> In one writing it is said: "Sosa no wo[2] no Mikoto's behavior was unmannerly. 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 Isotakeru 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

1 Ienaga et al. 1997, 448-449.

2 Aston's transcription of the name Susanoo, Old Japanese "*Susanowo*".

> arrived at Mount Tori-kamu no Take, which is by the upper waters of the river Hi in Idzumo."[3]

This entry (*Nihon Shoki I.56*) is remarkable in that it includes data which completely changes the general perspective on Susanoo's descent from Heaven. According to this account, this god first descended in the land of *Shiraki/Shiragi* [Old Japanese *Sira(n)kiy*] before crossing the Sea of Japan to *Izumo* (Old Japanese *Intumwo*). The place of his descent in Shiragi is referred to as 曾戸茂梨 – *Søsimori*.

Sira(n)kiy was the vernacular Old Japanese name for Saro—later known as Silla—one of the three ancient Korean kingdoms. Its original territory lay in the southeast of the Korean peninsula. Much later, it expanded, conquering Paekche and Koguryo, unifying the three kingdoms in 676, shortly before the *Nihon Shoki* was written. In this way, the language of Silla, referred to as Sillan or Old Korean, spread across the peninsula and provided the basis for the language of unified Korea.

The place of Susanoo's descent, *Søsimori*, has been interpreted by Ienaga et al. as a syllabic-based Sino-Japanese transcription of **sio-s-mori*, in which the internal *-s-* may represent the Korean genitive case suffix. This could identify the toponym *Soshimori* with the endonymous Sillan designation of the capital, *Sio-(ia)-por* [sic[4], probably a typo for *Sio-(ra)-por*], later *Seo(ra)beor*, which was Gyeongju, and subsequently Seoul. Aston (1896, endnote 267) hypothesized that *-mori* can be the Korean *moi* "mountain", a view corroborated by modern research directly linking Japanese *mori* "deep forest", Okinawan *mui* "hill, mountain", and Korean *moi* "mountain" as cognates or mutual borrowings. Specifically, Okinawan *mui* is the regular phonological counterpart (and apparently a cognate) of Japanese *mori*, while being semantically closer to the Korean counterpart: Proto-Korean **mwoˑlih* "mountain" and Middle Korean *mwoyh* "mountain".[5] Also, *-mori* can be regarded as a phonosemantic matching, i.e., a partially explanatory Japanese substitution for Sillan *-por*, or indeed its inexact Japanese phonetic adaptation via the Old Japanese phonetic change *b* > *mb* (= */mp/*) > *m*. This analysis would yield the place

3 Aston 1896, 43.

4 Ienaga et al. 1997.

5 Frellesvig 2010, 147.

of Susanoo's descent prior to his arrival in Japan, as the kingdom of Silla, potentially even its capital.

A lot of passages in the *Izumo Fudoki* corroborate this unique *Nihon Shoki* version of Susanoo's arrival. For example, Izumo's connection with the area of original Silla—southeastern Korea—is supported by the "land-pulling (*kunihiki*)" myth. The *Izumo Fudoki* relates how certain littoral parts of the land of Izumo were "pulled over" from Korea and attached to expand Izumo's territory, because Yatsukamizu no Mikoto declared that Izumo should be enlarged and accordingly added portions of land from "Shiragi" (Uegaki /ed./ 1997, 135-136).

Besides its concrete geographical dimension, this topos may be interpreted as carrying broader political impact. In the words of Anders Carlquist, who analysed this myth:

> Arguably, the land-pulling myth is geographically describing the political and commercial network built up by the political power that existed in Izumo during the late Yayoi period [1st/2nd century AD, note IR]; a political power that manifested its strength in the erection of large burial mounds with protruding corners.[6]

Notwithstanding its power, the mighty state of Izumo eventually yielded to the Yamato state. According to the *Izumo Fudoki*, Susanoo gave his daughter Waka-Suseri-hime in marriage to the principal "creator" god of Izumo, Ōnamochi[7] (elsewhere called Ōnamuchi or Ōkuninushi), who is described as making the following big political decision:

> 大神大穴持命、[...]「我造坐而命国者、皇御孫命平世所知依奉。[...]」詔。[8]
>
> The great god Ōnamochi no Mikoto said that he would offer his land to the descendants of the August Grandchild, that they may govern it in peace.[9]

This event, referred to as *kuni yuzuri,* is of high relevance to the Japanese nation as it probably marks the final stage of formation of the unified Yamato state.

6 Carlqvist 2010, 201.

7 Uegaki (ed.) 1997, 231.

8 Ibid., 140.

9 Ibid., 139-140. Translation Ivan Rumánek.

Izumo appears to have been the last territory in central Japan to yield to the unification process.

After conquering Izumo, the Yamato state greatly venerated Ōnamochi as an important deity within the national pantheon; and his main shrine in Izumo, the Izumo Taisha, became one of the most prominent Shinto shrines of imperial significance.

The territory denoted by the toponym *Kara* lies geographically close to *Shiragi*. While the latter seems to have been used to denote specifically the territory of what would later become the kingdom of Silla, *Kara* exhibits a complex and variegated diachronic usage. It may originally have possessed a broader meaning (to be discussed further in section 2). In historical times, however—particularly during the first centuries AD—*Kara* referred to a somewhat vague geographical and political territory located at the southern tip of the Korean Peninsula. The Korean version of this name is *Kaya*, and it was also referred to as *Mimana* (Japanese) or *Imna* (Korean). *Kara* was originally a confederation of six small states. It is described in the Japanese chronicles as a Japanese domain in around 500 AD. Of particular relevance to our discourse is the likelihood that at least part of this *Kara* was ethnically close to Yamato. It was this linguistic relatedness of these "Wa of southern Korea"[10] that may have provided the pretext for Yamato's political effort to keep its hold over this last remnant of its peninsular power—assuming, of course, that such influence had previously been more extensive.

The language of south Korean *Kara* may have been the last remnant of the peninsular linguistic entity referred to as either "para-Japanese" (Unger 2009), "Koguryo" (Beckwith 2004), or "peninsular Japanese" (Francis-Ratte 2021), which originally extended much farther north, as testified by para-Japanese toponyms in central Korea. It cannot be ruled out that this language originated much farther north, where Tungusic, Koreanic, and Japonic either shared a common motherland or experienced prolonged periods of intensive language contact. This southward shift of what would become para-Japanese may have been a combination of natural tendencies and pressures exerted by neighbouring peoples.

10 Kirkland 1981, 124.

The narrative of *Kara*'s dependence on Yamato was accepted only unilaterally. "According to Korean sources, [...] the Kaya confederation remained quite independent until it was overrun by Silla in 562." [11] Nevertheless, after Yamato lost Kara to Silla's expansion, the Japonic element in *Kara* imaginably came to a definitive and rapid end. It was perhaps with a sense of nostalgia for *Kara*, and certainly also in commemoration of the mythical connection between Izumo and Korea, that the names of some of the shrines linked with the Susanoo cult in Izumo came to bear the prefix *Karakuni* ("land of Kara"). Examples include the *Karakuni-Itate Jinja* 韓国伊太氏神社), as recorded in the book *Engishiki*[12] dating from 927.

Nevertheless, the references to a connection with Korea are not limited to the Izumo cycle. There are also occasional references to *Kara* in the myths relating to the origin of the Yamato dynasty, most notably, in the Niniki myth in both chronicles. A somewhat puzzling piece of geographical information is found in the *Kojiki*. Following a detailed story of Niniki's descent in the Takachiho area and his first steps onto the territory of southeastern Kyushu, the chronicle quotes him as saying:

> 「此地者、**向韓國**眞來通、**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。」 [13]
>
> This place is **opposite to the land of Kara** [**"Karakuni"**, IR]. 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."[14]

Provided we identify the **Cape of Kasasa** as Noma Cape (野間岬 in the area of present-day Kasasa Town 笠沙町), the western tip of southern Kyushu,[15] the seemingly surprising idea of "Kara" as "opposite" the place of Niniki's descent becomes more plausible, particularly in view of the mention of the setting sun.

11 Ibid., 123.

12 http://kamnavi.jp/itakiso/karakuniitate.html (accessed July 15, 2022).

13 http://www.seisaku.bz/kojiki/kojiki_06.html (accessed July 15, 2022).

14 Chamberlain 1932, 135.

15 Aston's footnote no. 16 in Chamberlain 1932, 136.

The *Nihon Shoki* presents more versions of the Niniki's descent myth, thus offering a broader context to the above *Kojiki's* geographical note, in that these versions contain two potentially Korea-related names of mountains in the Takachiho area where Niniki is said to have descended: ***Kusi*** *pyi-nø puta-nkamyi* and ***Søpori****-nø yama*. The contexts in which these names appear do not allow a clear identification of their particular location or identity; it is even possible to regard them as synonyms or epithets referring to the same single sacred peak in the Takachiho mountains.

In the name of *Kusi pyi* (or *Kusi puru* in some *Nihon Shoki* sources) *nø puta-nkamyi* ("Kushipi/Kushipuru double peak"), the *kusi pyi* part is explained via *kusi* 奇し "mysterious" and *pyi* 霊 "spirit"[16] or "spiritual power".[17] The *puru* variant may refer to "shaking," in reference to the mountain's volcanic character.[18] So, it is probably an epithet and the whole phrase *kusi pyi-nø puta-nkamyi* can be translated approximately as "the holy/sacred double peak," while the *kusi puru* version could be rendered as "the mysterious shaking double peak." Based on the context of its occurrence in the chronicle ("*Pyimuka-nø Sø-nø Takatipomyine … kusipyi-nø puta-nkamyi*"), the toponym might well be just an additional description of *Takachihomine*—the mountain of Niniki's descent, rather than a different one—"the Takachiho peak of So in Hyūga … the holy (shaking) double-peaked one."

Besides the Old Japanese definition of *kusi* in *Kusi pyi-nø puta-nkamyi*, there is another explanation rooted in Korean mythology. It links the toponym with *Kara*, where a mountain whose name 亀旨峰 might read **Kusi* or **Kuji*, appears in the foundation myth of *Kara* as the place of descent of the kings of the *Kara* states.[19] Logographically, the mountain name translates as "Turtle Mandate Peak", but it can also be a mere phonetic transcription of **Kusi*.

> According to the Kaya foundation myth, the kings of the six Kaya states emerged from golden eggs that descended, during a festival, from heaven onto a peak known

16 Ienaga et al. 1997, 123.

17 Kirkland 1997, 111.

18 Rumánek 2022b, 68.

19 Kirkland 1981, 114.

> as Kuji. Kuji means "Turtle Mandate", and the eggs appeared as the local chieftains sang a song about a turtle at the command of a strange voice from the mountain.[20]

Ienaga et al. name particularly king Suro in this context.[21]

Conversely, the name of this Korean mountain contained in the *Kara* foundation myth may also be considered as part of the body of para-Japanese place names which have been identified on the territory of the Korean peninsula, suggesting that to call mountains of celestial descent ***kusi*** "mysterious" may have been a more general practice than just the one instance of "Kushibi" in southeastern Kyushu.

There are several mountains named Takachiho in Kyushu, but based on the chronicles, the Takachiho mountain of the Kirishima volcanic group near the southeastern coast appears the strongest candidate, based on my previous analyses.[22] Moreover, while this Takachihomine itself has several summits, nearby lies another, even more conspicuously *double-peaked* volcano, today called *Karakuni-dake*. This feature makes it an even stronger candidate for the epithet of *Kusi pyi/puru-nø puta-nkamyi*, especially if its name can translate "Peak of the Land of Kara (or Korea)". The name *Karakuni-dake*, however, does not appear in the chronicles.

In view of the *Karakuni-* prefix seen in the later names of some old shrines of Izumo connection, this mountain name could likewise be of a later date, intended to mean "the peak of the land of Kara." However, originally, *kara* may have carried a different meaning—"empty"—which does appear in some of the entries in the *Nihon Shoki* denoting places presumably situated not far from this mountain. In these texts, we find expressions *munakuni* (main text and source F, "desert/empty land") and *muna-sopu kuni* (source C, "bosom-joining land"). The thing is the homonymous *muna* is written in two different ways: as 空 ("empty") in the main text and in source F, and as 胸 ("bosom") in source C. The whole geographical information "Søsisi-nø munasopukuni" follows directly after "Takatipwo"

20 *Samguk yusa* 18, ed. Yi Pyŏng-do (Seoul, 1965): 81*f*.; translated in: Kirkland 1981, 114.

21 Ienaga et al. 1997, 123.

22 Rumánek 2022, 205.

(*Takachiho*) in C (降到於日向槵日高千穗之峯、而筲完[23]胸副國、). Since the character 空 ("empty") can express not only the word *muna* but also *kara*, the possibility arises that the meaning "bosom-joining" might refer to the "double-peaked" volcano of *Karakuni-dake*.

Consequently, the name *Karakuni*, beyond its obvious meaning of "the country of Kara (or Korea)", could also mean "empty land", functioning as a synonym of *munakuni* 空國, found both in source F and the main text. Its modern name may thus have arisen from the interchangeability of the synonymous words *kara / muna*, both meaning "empty". This, in turn, may reflect an error in the reading of the characters 空國, which could well have represented "*karakuni*" rather than "*munakuni*".

This interpretation may also connect with *Søpori-nø yama* mentioned in the *Nihon Shoki*'s last version (source I: *"Pyuimuka-nø Sø-nø Takatipo-nø Søpori-nø yama-nø takey,"* translated by Aston as "the Peak of Sohori-yama of Takachiho in So in Hiuga"). Ienaga et al. note that *Søpori* is said to represent a transcription of the name of the Sillan capital *Sio-por*.[24] This interpretation aligns with the alternative Silla descent of Susanoo mentioned above (*Søsimori-? Sio-(ia)-por*[25]) and connects the two crucial events—the descents of Susanoo and Niniki— at a single location: the Sillan capital. Consequently, both toponyms, *kusi pyi...* and *Sopori...*, may refer to the same mountain, named either after *Karakuni* (Korea) or *Søpori* (the Sillan capital *Seobeor*).

The story of Susanoo's descent via Silla may reflect the notion that he was "a late addition to the Japanese pantheon, coming over with the immigrants who brought to the islands the technical know-how of the technologies that distinguished Kofun from Yayoi cultures." (Unger 2010, 5-6).[26]The god's name is traditionally interpreted as deriving from the toponym *Susa no sato* ("Susa Village") in Izumo. However, the *Izumo Fudoki* states that this *Susa no sato* in Izumo owes its name *conversely to the name of Susanoo* who "decided to place his *mitama* here,"[27]

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

24 Ienaga et al. 1997, 155.

25 Ibid. 1997.

26 Unger 2010, 5-6.

27 Uegaki (ed.) 1997, 243.

thus suggesting that the god's name is primary. James Unger proposes that the name reflects the (modern) Korean *sos.ta* "spurt, gush". He argues that

> this does not mean that the immigrants should be called ethnically or linguistically 'Korean', but simply that they had become familiar with a Korean deity of storms and floods prior to moving to the islands. In fact, there is considerable evidence that the cult of Susa-no-wo was brought specifically to the western and hillside parts of Izumo that had not yet been developed by the earlier Yayoi descendants centered in the lowland areas around the Nogi, Ou, and Izumo plains.[28]

So, were these places located in Japan or in Korea? One possible explanation that seeks to unify the contradictory versions is that the compilers of *Nihon Shoki*, in their scholarly attempt, appended to their list of alternative sources one that was very alternative indeed, stating that the place of descent for both the Susanoo and Amaterasu lines lay actually in Korea. James Unger even characterizes it as "a self-conscious effort by the eighth-century compilers of *Nihon Shoki* to rationalize earlier traditions in terms of new circumstances," because "[b]y that time, there were hundreds of new refugee *kikaijin* in Japan, many with considerable standing in the new state."[29] In this light, we can be grateful for what seems to be a real attempt at a pluralistic, objective, and scholarly approach, which has left these Korean alternatives extant and available to us. Another explanation, however, is that the place where Niniki descended was consequently *named after* the Sillan capital ("Siopor Mountain"), in memory of Niniki's Korean origin. This explanation, however, raises a geographical puzzle: why any people from the Korean Peninsula would have arrived in Japan from exactly the opposite direction—the southeast.

The following section will analyze the name *Kara* from a linguistic point of view, examining it as a lexeme with its variegated semantics and various written forms.

28 Unger 2010, 5-6.

29 Ibid., 7.

2 *Kara the Lexeme*

The reference to a polity in Korea is only one of the possible meanings of the word *kara*. *"Kara"* is a multiplex homonym in Japanese, representing a broad variety of lexemes and mixtures of semantic scopes. Their detailed analysis might expand our understanding and offer a broader perspective on the possible connotations of *kara* as toponym. Moreover, from the point of view of historic linguistics, the fact that *kara* constitutes a homonymic conglomerate increases the probability of establishing that, while some instances represent inherited words, others may reflect borrowings. I have attempted to attribute potential etymologies to the individual items of this homonymic conglomerate, which may contribute insight into the difficult task of identifying various linguistic strata at work in shaping the Japonic family and thus expand our understanding of its genesis.

Perhaps the most striking aspect of this analysis lies in my proposals of Proto-Indo-European etymologies. If they are correct, they may represent a very old stratum, most probably adopted far inland on the Continent during some of the very ancient—and currently undatable—stages preceding the Proto-Japonic phase of the language. This adoption could have occurred at a Koreanic-Japonic, Tungusic-Koreanic-Japonic or even macro-Altaic level. Geographically, Tocharian in the Tarim Basin appears to be the nearest conceivable Indo-European language relevant to this inquiry. Nevertheless, Tocharian presents certain complications: it is a relatively late phenomenon (dating from mid-1st millennium AD), and it is a *kentum* language, whereas some of the potential Japanese-Indo-European etymologies I propose exhibit a *satem* reflex, as illustrated, for example, by:

> **I, shi/MA**┐ "island"; Okinawan "island, (one's native) village"; **shi/MO**┐ "bottom, lower part"; Middle Korean *sjəm*; Proto-Indo-European **dʰégʰem-* "earth, soil, land" (cf. Greek *chthō´n, cham-aí*; Tocharian A *tkaṃ*; Tocharian B *keṃ*; Avestan *zam-*; Slavic *zem-*).
>
> **II, shi/MO**┐ "(hoar) frost"; Okinawan "cold rain"; Proto-Altaic **si̯ òmì* "wet snow, hoar frost" (Ewenkī *sumu* "wet snow; rain with snow"); Proto-Indo-European **ǵʰeim-* "winter, snow"; (cf. Greek *chéim-a* "winter (blizzard)," *chiō´n* "snow"; Avestan *zyam-* "winter"; Slavic *zim-* "winter").

These correspondences seem to point towards either an Aryan branch, which is *satem*, or potentially some other, as yet unidentified, Indo-European dialect exhibiting a *satem* reflex, with which one of the earlier source forms of Japanese may have come into contact. On the other hand, a *kentum* language could also be considered a potential source. In both cases, **ǵ* is followed by a front vowel, so additional palatalization of a depalatalized *kentum *g* is conceivable. It should also be noted that, in rare cases, even *satem* languages can display *kentum* reflexes (cf. Sankrit *kṛpā* from PIE * *ḱrp,* discussed below).

The following is a list of Old Japanese *kara* homonyms, accompanied by their usual scriptal representations in Chinese characters, traditionally attributed to the particular sememes of these words.

kara I - "empty, sheer" 空、乾

kara II - "husk, hull, shell; cast-off skin; dead body" 殻

kara III - "body, stature" 柄、体

kara IV - "birth, origin" 柄、故

kara V - "continent; Kara; China" 韓、伽羅, 加羅,唐,

kara VI - "character, nature (of sth, sb)" 柄

gara VII - "completely" （柄）

kara VIII - "handle, stalk" 柄

kara IX - "hot (in taste)" 辛

Based on their semantics, I have grouped these multiple meanings of the homonym *kara* into several lexical nests, each of which might represent a potential common etymological source, based on their semantic and accentual affinities. One of the most striking findings is that a potential Indo-European candidate can

be provisionally attributed to most of them—a cognate or a direct etymon. Where such a tentative IE connection is proposed, it is listed first, followed by additional potential etymologies.

2.1 Kara A

The sememes of the following two words could be related, based on their identical accentuation patterns (both are oxytonic in Tokyo Japanese, and Lo type in Kansai[30]). However, the existence of differing possible etymological reflexes on a broader proposed etymological scale may indicate that they are ultimately unrelated.

kara I "empty, sheer" 空、乾

accent type:

Tokyo: *ka/RA*⌝

Kansai: *ka/RA* – *kara/GA* (Lo)

Okinawan 「*KARA,* 「*GARA* "empty"

Proto-Indo-European:

1. **gelH-* "bald, naked"; Germanic *calu-* (German *kahl*, English *callow*); Slavic *gol–* "bald"[31]
2. **g*^{h}*eld*^{h} or *g*^{w}*el*; Slavic *gold-* "hunger"[32]

Proto-Altaic:

górà/ góŕà "starve, be empty"; Tungusic **gure-* "spacious"; Mongolic **guri-* "hungry"; Korean **kòrh-* "be hungry, empty"[33]

Proto-Korean-Japanese: MK *kwolpho-, kwolh-* "is empty" (Martin 1966: # 74); pre-MK **kwol-* < **kola-* "empty"; PKJ **kəra* "empty"[34]

Proto-Austro-Kadai:

**ga[r,R]ap* "empty (unoccupied) / slough / corpse"; Proto-Kadai **graap* (Thai *khraap*) "old skin of snakes, scorpions etc"; Lao *khaap* "corpse, (compound) slough of a snake"

30 Nakai 2002, 69.

31 Králik 2015, 203.

32 Ibid.

33 Starostin et al. 2003, 567.

34 Francis-Ratte 2016, 245.

Benedict includes within this lexeme also the meanings "husk, hull, shell; cast-off skin; corpse," which I treat separately below as **kara II**.[35]
I would tentatively include Polynesian *kore* "primordial mythological emptiness, darkness" within this semantic cluster.

phonemic correspondences

k – PIE *g, g^{h}, g^{w}*; PAltaic *g*; PKJ *k*; PAustro-Kadai *g*

a – PIE *e*; PAltaic *o*, *-a*; PKJ *wo*; PAustro-Kadai *a*

r – PIE *l*; PAltaic *r/ŕ*; PKJ *l*; PAustro-Kadai *r*

accentual correspondences

oxytonic *kaRA* – PIE *gelH*, *g^{h}eld^{h}*, *g^{w}el*; PAltaic *górà/ góŕà*

kara II "husk, hull, shell; cast-off skin; dead body" 殼

accent type:

Tokyo: *ka/RA*⌉

Kansai central: *ka/RA* – *kara/GA* (Lo)

Kansai peripherical: *ka/RAa* – *ka/RA*⌉ *ga* (L2p)

Okinawan ⌈*KARA*, ⌈*GARA* "shell"

Proto-Indo-European:

(s)ker-* "cut off, separate" (Latin *corium* "hide"; Slavic *kora* "bark"). Cf. **Nostratic *k^{h}ar-a*[36], Hungarian *hárs* "phloem, linden tree."[37] This word may also have wider **Eurasiatic** cognacy, e.g., Quechua *qara* "skin, leather, peel, rind, bark."

Proto-Altaic:

**k'éŕà* "skin"[38]: Proto-Turkic *kaŕ(-diŕ)*, Old Turkic *qadɨz*, Kyrgyz *qurum/xəram* "hide"; Proto-Tungusic **xerekte*, Ewenkī *erekte* "skin, bark"; Middle Mongolic *körisü* "hide, skin, crust, surface layer"

Proto-Austro-Kadai:

35 Benedict 1990, 185.

36 Bomhard 2018d, 701.

37 Bomhard (2018d, 701) gives "phloem", but the common meaning of Hungarian *hárs* is "lime tree, linden tree". Cf. Chrenková et al. 1990, 143.

38 Starostin et al. 2003, 782.

ga[r,R]ap* "husk, hull, shell; cast-off skin; corpse" (more detail under **kara I).[39]

(?) Early Old Chinese:

kara, whence also *krac/krap* "armor, shell".[40]

phonemic correspondences

k – PIE *k*; PAltaic *k´*; KJ *k*; Nostratic *k^{b}*; PAustro-Kadai *g*

a – PIE *e*; PAltaic *e, (a)*; Nostratic *a*; PAustro-Kadai *a*

r – PIE *r*; PAltaic *ŕ*; Nostratic *r*; PAustro-Kadai *r*

accentual correspondences

TK oxytonic *kaRA*, Keihan low-register *kaRA* – PIE *ker*; Nostratic *k^{b}ar-a;* PAustro-Kadai *garap*; PAltaic *k'ĕŕà*

2.2 Kara B

This semantic nest includes several words which seem to be linked by a common sememe and may therefore have a common origin. However, their different accentuation suggests that there may have been separate developments—perhaps through derivation, and the complexity of etymological solutions does not allow an unambiguous judgement on common origin.

kara III "body, stature" 柄、体

accent type:

Tokyo: x (present only in the derived form *karada*)

Kansai: *KA*⌝ *ra* (1) (e.g., *kara ga ookii* "is tall in stature")

Okinawan 「*KARA* "bodily strength

Proto-Indo-European:

kŕp-* "body" (Latin *corpus* "body"; Vedic *kṛpā* "appearance")[41]. This PIE root resembles Benedict's Proto-Austro-Kadai **ga[r,R]ap* (see **kara I and **II**), whose meaning also includes the sememe "corpse". Three separate PIE solutions for **kara I, II** and **III**, as well as for Proto-Austro-Kadai **ga[r,R]ap* may mean phonetic blending of three originally separate roots on the Asian side (or conversely a complete unrelatedness between PIE and the PAK / PJ, which is always a possibility).

39 Benedict 1990, 185.

40 Beckwith 2004, 149.

41 de Vaan 2008, 137-138.

phonemic correspondences
k – PIE *ḱ*
a – PIE *o*
r – PIE *r*
accentual correspondences
Keihan prototonic *KAra* – PIE *ḱrp*

kara IV "birth, origin" 柄、故. 族

accent type:
Tokyo: *ga/RA* (atonic)
Kansai: *GARA* (o)
(Okinawan *kara* "counter for animals"?)
Proto-Indo-European:
**(s)kʷel* "turn, travel, settle": Slavic *čel-o-věk-* "human" < *čel-jad-* "family" where *čel-* "clan, kinship";[42] Irish Gaelic *clann,* older *cland* "progeny, family, clan"; Welsh *plant* "children"
Proto-Altaic:
**kala* "family, gathering": Manchu *xala*, widely borrowed into: Solon *Xala*; Neg. *xala*; Oroch *xala*; Ud. *Xa*; Ul., Orok., Nan. *xala*[43]
Korean:
Middle Korean *hal* "clan"
phonemic correspondences
k – PIE *kʷ*; Proto-Altaic *k*; Middle Korean *h*; Tungusic *x*
a – PIE *e*; Proto-Altaic *k*; Middle Korean *a*; Tungusic *a*
r – PIE *l;* Proto-Altaic *l*;Middle Korean *l*; Tungusic *l*

accentual correspondences (for **kara IV**)
atonic – PIE *kʷel*; Middle Korean *hal*; Mongolic+Tungusic *xala*

Moreover, **kara IV** might conceivably be the source of the ablative function of the case suffix ***-kara***. This suffix has two basic functions:

42 Králik 2015, 101.

43 Starostin et al. 2003, 634-635.

1. "from" (ablative proper), and
2. "via, along, down (a lane)".

It is possible that these two functions may have occurred as the result of merging of two different etyma. -***kara* 2.** can be cognate of---or influenced by:
Ainu *kari*: I. *verb* "pass along, go by," II. *suffix* "by, through, along";[44] or
Ewenkī *-(i)klii* "along, down (a lane)."[45]
This possibly original, inherited meaning "along" may have undergone a process of semantic contamination, whereby **kara IV**, signifying "origin", developed into the usage as an ablative suffix (the function originally performed by *yu(ri)*), and the two units subsequently merged.

kara V. "Kara; Korea; China; Continent" 伽羅,加羅,伽耶,加耶,韓,唐

accent type:
Tokyo: *x*
Kansai: *KA┐ra* (1)
ka/RAa – ka/RA┐ga (L2)
Okinawan x

The polysemy and polygraphy of this word reflect the historical phases of semantic development that this lexeme may have undergone during the Yamato period, which is generally considered to have proceeded as follows:

伽羅,加羅,伽耶, or 加耶 as the region in the southern tip of the Korean peninsula. It had strong political ties with Japan until it was lost in connection with unification of Korea under Silla.

Subsequently, the concept extended its scope to cover the whole Korean peninsula—韓. Later, as Japan's ties with China predominated at the expense of Korea, the term *Kara* came to include China, notably its Tang period of history, which is why the word adopted the character 唐 too.

However, this semantic development may not have followed a strictly linear trajectory. **kara V** is regarded by many scholars (Ōno et al 1974; Fukuda 1989; Mabuchi 1999, 413-430; Unger 2009; Francis-Ratte 2016) as a clear cognate of **kara IV** "clan". It is even possible that the Chinese character 韓, referring to

44 Batchelor 1905, 212.
45 Tsintsius 1948, 524.

Korea, was chosen because its Chinese word (Old Chinese **γan*[46] / **gˤar*[47], Sino-Korean *han*) echoed *xala* (Mongolic and Tungusic) or **xara* (Proto-Koreanic-Japonic)[48] "clan, tribe, people"[49] (cf. Middle Korean *hal*, Old Japanese *kara*).

Mabuchi (1999, 413-30) believes that Kara (or Kaya) originally referred to the entire southern portion of the Korean Peninsula beyond the pale of the Chinese commanderies, and that it was only later that the Japanese used the word *kara* specifically to denote the Mimana polity. In this sense, it was usually transcribed 伽羅 or 加羅, with the variants 伽耶 or 加耶 representing *kaya*. Unger argues:

> That this name once referred to many different polities of the southern peninsula is supported by the Kwanggaet'o stele, which says that Wa troops repelled by Koguryŏ retreated to 任那加羅, a phrase that is illogical if 任那 [Mimana] and 加羅 [Kara] were different names for the same place, implying that 加羅 was just a generic term meaning "(southern) tribes".[50]

To this, I would add that the particular wording 任那加羅 could also indicate that Kara functioned as a sub-unit within Mimana.

I propose that, based on the meaning of the Tungusic *xala*, it is conceivable that the word *kara* was initially used by the Japanese to refer to certain tribes in southern Korea—i.e., Kara in the sense of "clan"—and only later came to denote the area in which they lived. These tribes may well have been speakers of para-Japanese, relatives of the Japanese who, for various reasons, did not cross the strait and remained on the continent. Early Yamato court's political ambitions in this direction may be explained by these ethnic ties between Kara and Yamato.

Thus, Kara did not merely signify some tribes from southern Korea, but also "our relatives" (when referring to the population), and "the area of our origin" (when referring to the land). This supposition—that Kara might have more generally designated "origin" rather than "Korea"—suggests that the Kojiki quotation of Niniki's mentioning of this toponym represented a reminiscence of

46 Unger 2009, 84, fn. 7.

47 Francis-Ratte 2016, 213.

48 Francis-Ratte 2016, 213.

49 Nikolaeva et al. 2001, 3.

50 Unger 2009, 84, fn. 7.

where Niniki and his retinue actually came from (besides their official celestial origin).

Although the meaning of "the Continent" and "China" is attested for the toponym Kara only later, in the Heian period, the preceding analysis indicates that Kara was not necessarily limited to "Korea". On this basis, **kara IV** and **kara V** (usually written as 族 and 韓 respectively) probably represent identical or related Old Japanese words—originating from a single etymon that subsequently developed into two or more lexemes through the process of derivation yielding different accentuation, and splitting into multiple scriptal renderings according to specification within its broad semantic range.

Thus, before coming to denote the polity in southern Korea, Old Japanese *kara* appears to have developed its meaning from the initial word for "clan, origin," that was cognate with Korean *hal* and Tungusic **xala* "family, clan, relatives."[51] Later, the Yamato court managed to claim the Kara polity for some time before losing it to unified Silla in the 7th century, and the authors of the Japanese chronicles, compiled around 700, perhaps identified the *kara* of mythology with the Kara state. The very Kojiki mention of "kara" from the mouth of the descending celestial deity Niniki, ancestor of the Japanese rulers, written several decades after the loss of Kara, may be considered as a remark of some political undertone.

If my analysis is correct, it is not a matter of course that any mention of kara in myths should automatically refer to the polity of Kara associated with Mimana. Etymologically, the name of the southern Korean polity may originally have meant "(the area of) origin," not only in Japanese, but probably also in the language spoken in Kara, another form of para-Japanese, with similar-sounding and semantically related cognates existing in other surrounding continental languages such as Korean and Tungusic. Should a more remote, mythical antiquity be credited to Niniki's utterance, it could be regarded as a vague reference to the "origin" from which he and his retinue had come—potentially any stretch of the continental seashore, imaginably from Korea down to Shanghai. This would imply that *kara* may have referred to the continent (as the "area of origin") much earlier than is generally believed.

51 Nikolaeva et al. 2001, 3.

kara VI "character, nature (of sth, sb)" 柄

accent type:

Tokyo: *ga/RA* (atonic)

Kansai: *KARA, GARA* (0)

Okinawan 「*GARA* "nature, quality"

This sense may represent a semantic development from **kara IV** "origin" (both atonic). It is also the lexical source of the derivational suffix -***gara*** (e.g., *hitogara* "the personal quality; what kind of person").

2.3 Kara C

gara VII "completely" 柄）

accent type:

Tokyo: x

Kansai: x

Okinawan x

Proto-Indo-European:

**kai-l-*[52] "whole": Slavic *cěl-* "whole"; Proto-Germanic **hail-* (English *whole, heal*); Proto-Italic **kail-* (Latin *coelum*)

This word is attested at a relatively late date, from around 1800 (e. g., *Tōkaidōchū Hizakurige*, 1802),[53] including the reduplicated form *garara*, which may point to imitative onomatopoeia, where lexicological semantic etymologies are dubious. Moreover, the meanings "completely, all" and "empty" tend to coalesce, as in Old Japanese *utu-* I. "completely, all", II. "empty". Thus, it cannot be excluded that this lexeme represents a semantic development of **kara I**.

phonemic correspondences

k – PIE *k*

a – PIE *ai*

r – PIE *l*

52 Králik 2015 91

53 Matsumura et al. 1993, 332.

2.4 Kara D

kara VIII "handle, stalk" 柄

accent type:

Tokyo: x

Kansai: x

Okinawan x

Altaic:

Dolgan (Siberian Turkic) *xol* "arm"; Proto-Tungusic **ŋāla*[54] (Manchu *gala*, Ewenkī *ŋālə* "hand". (Please note that as for the similarly sounding Ewenkī *gara* "bough, branch" and Mongolic *gar* "hand, arm", Robbeets attributes them to Japanese *kata* "shoulder").[55]

Nostratic:

Georgian *xeli* "hand"; less probably **Proto-Indo-European** **ǵʰésōr* "hand" (Greek *cheir-*).

phonemic correspondences

k–Dolgan *x*; PTungusic *ŋ;* Georgian *x*

a – Dolgan *o*; PTungusic *ā, ə*; Georgian *e*

r – Dolgan *l*; PTungusic *l*; Georgian *l*

2.5 Kara E

kara- IX "hot (as of taste)" 辛

accent type:

Tokyo: *ka/RA┐i*

Kansai: *ka/RA┐i*

Okinawan *ka/RA┐san*

Proto-Indo-European:

**gʷHer-* "hot" (Slavic *gor-ъ-k-* "bitter") or **ker-* "hard" (Germanic *har-du-*)

Macro-Altaic:

Starostin et al. (2003, 626) attribute this word to the etymological nest **kàbro* "a kind of ferment": Proto-Mongolic **kowr* "poison, harm"; Proto-Turkic **kor* I. "ferment,

54 Vovin 2013, 1 (no pagination in the pdf—page number shows the page order in the pdf).

55 Robbeets 2009, 5.

yeast," II. "bitter, astringent"; Proto-Koreanic **kòr* "wine fungus, mold, scum" (Modern Korean *kolmaʒi*).

Miller (1971, 146) gives Old Turkic *qadyr* "grimmig, hart", *qadghur-* "sich sorgen", *qadghu* "Trauer, Leid", and Chuvash *xĕrxü* "bitter".

phonemic correspondences

k – PIE *$g^{w}H$ or k*; PAltaic *k*; Old Turkic *q*

a – PIE *e*; PAltaic *-a(b)-, -o*; Old Turkic *a*

r – PIE *r*; PAltaic *(b)r*; Old Turkic *d*

accentual correspondences

tonic – PIE *$g^{w}Her$-* or *ker*; PAltaic *kàbro*

2.6 Analytical outcomes

2.6.1 Results of analyses—phonological correspondences

The above etymologies present a range of phonological correspondences, suggesting the ancestral sound spectrum from which Old Japanese sounds may have developed.

Table 1

Phonemic correspondences of proposed etymologies of kara

OJ	PIE	Nost	PAusKad	PAlt	PTung	OTurk	Dolg	PKJ	MKo
k	k, k^{w}, (g), g^{h}, g^{w}(H), ḱ	k^{h}	g	k^{h}, k, g	ŋ	q	x	k	h
a	e	a	a	e, a(b), (-a), -o, -a	ā, ə	a	o	wo	a
r	r, l	r	r	r, ŕ[56], l	l	d	l	l	l

56 Palatalized r.

If we incorporate the *shima/shimo* etymologies into the analysis, we obtain the following results:

Table 2

Phonemic correspondences of proposed etymologies of kara, shima *and* shimo

OJ	PIE	Nost	PAus Kad	PAlt	PTung	Ewk	OTurk	Dolg	PKJ	MKo
k	k, k^w, (g), g^h, g^w(H), ḱ	k^h	g	k^h, k, g	ŋ	ŋ	q	x	k	h
a	e	a	a	e, a(b), (-a), -o, -a	ā, ə	ā, ə	a	o	wo	a
r si m -o	r, l (d^he)$ǵ^h$e m	r	r	r, ŕ[57], l si˛ò m	l	l su m -u	d	l	l	l sjə m

Based on these tables, it is evident that a single Old Japanese sound often has multiple correspondences. The limited phonemic inventory, as we know it from Old Japanese, may result from extensive simplification, assuming the plausibility of the etymologies proposed in this article. Two possible mechanisms for this process can be envisaged:

1. substratum–adstratum interactions, in which the substratum's phonological apparatus was much simpler than that of the adstratum; or

57 Palatalized r.

2. internal simplification within Japonic, whereby an originally more complex phonological framework gradually reduced to a more simplified pattern as encountered, typically, in Old Japanese and Ryukyuan.

The factors driving these changes are obviously difficult to pin down, as is indeed the case with any processes happening in prehistoric or pre-record periods, unless particular indices or information are available.

2.6.2.1 Accent types of the words kara

Although the words and roots **kara** are homonymous at the phonemic level, they differ on the suprasegmental level of accent, representing all possible options on the accentual scale of bisyllabic words—oxytona, prototona, and atona.

Same in Tokyo, Keihan and Okinawan:
tonic: adjective IX “hot”

Same in Tokyo and Keihan:
oxytonic: I “empty”, II “shell” (in peripherical Keihan)
atonic: IV “origin”, VI “character”

Differing cases:
Okinawan: All available lexemes are atonic, except the adjective IX “hot”, which is **tonic**.
Keihan:
low-register: (central Keihan) II “shell”
prototonic: III “body”
oxy-/prototonic: V “continent”

2.6.2.2 Accent correspondences

If we compare the accent types with the proposed etymologies in an effort to determine whether the accent types reflect some element of etymological origin (for example, whether tonicity or atonicity point to any specific phonologocial features in the proposed etymologies), the results are as follows:

TK/Keihan oxytonic kara I:
PIE *gelH, g^{w}el, g^{h}el*,
PAltaic *górà/góŕà*

TK/peripheral Keihan oxytonic kara II**, central Keihan low-register** kara II:
PIE ker
Nostratic *k^{h}ar-a*
PAustro-Kadai *garap*
PAltaic *k'éŕà*
Keihan prototonic kara III:
PIE *ḱrp*

tonic kara IX:
PIE *g^{w}Her-* or *ker*
PAltaic *kàbro*

atonic kara IV and VI:
PIE *k^{w}el*
PAltaic: **kala*
Manchu *xala*
Middle Korean *hal*

The Proto-Altaic accents proposed by Starostin et al. reflect the Japanese tonic characteristics. The models are:

"*acute – gravis*" for oxytonic kara I, II, and low-register kara II,
"*gravis – atonic*" for the tonic adjective kara- IX, and
"*atonic – atonic*" for the atonic kara IV and VI.

Examining the proto-Indo-European etymologies proposed here, the presence of a *tonos* or other marked melodic feature (prototony, oxytony, Keihan low-register) appears to correspond with the presence of a laryngeal in PIE. This pattern is seen in two of the six counterparts: however, taking into consideration that some of these etymologies are exclusive—sometimes several proposed for the same

Japanese word—the realistic proportion of the correspondences between PIE laryngeal and Japanese *tonos* may be higher. Another illustrative case is represented by the comparison between kara III and PIE *ḱrp*, where the (Keihan) prototony corresponds to PIE palatal ḱ and a final stop. I am not aware of kara III existing in Tokyo Japanese, so I could not identify its accent, but it is likely to be oxytonic in Tokyo, as is often observed in Keihan-Tokyo accentual correspondences. Notably, Tokyo oxytony has often been linked with a lost hypothetical final consonant, and this case would add another item to this theory.

Considering the *shima/shimo* etymologies, they do not substantially contribute to elucidating the issue to any higher degree. All of these words are tonic (oxytonic in TK), which might be reflected in the Proto-Altaic **si̯ò̯mì*, but the Proto-Indo-European etymologies do not present any strong candidates for a corresponding *tonos*, except perhaps in the aspirated quality of the root-initial consonant and its palatality. A more plausible explanation for the tonicity is that each of the three Japanese words apparently contains a suffix of lexical derivation (*-a, -o*), both of which may have originated in ancestral forms whose certain inherent qualities caused *tonos* to develop.

3 *Conclusion*

The linguistic analysis demonstrates that *kara* was a multiple homonym in Old Japanese. Within its semantic scope, we identify meanings like "family, tribe, origin", which may have served as the source for the toponym *Kara* as a geographical reference to the historical and mythological memory that the Yamato state preserved concerning the forefathers of its rulers. Therefore, it can be concluded that, geographically, the designation *Kara* was not necessarily limited to the political unit in the southern Korean Peninsula but referred more vaguely to the areas from which the ancestors—and presumably Japonic speakers—arrived. The most probable candidate is Korea, though even the wider coastal areas of northeastern China cannot be excluded, either for the Korean-Tungusic stratum in Japonic, or for the southern, Austro-Kadai connection. While Austronesian is more closely associated with islands—from Taiwan as the

motherland eastwards and southwards—it is estimated that the protolanguage had reached Taiwan via the adjoining coast before 3000 BC. Consequently, the Austronesian-related elements in Japanese may not necessarily have entered Japan through the Ryukyus but rather along the continental coast northwards, before crossing over to Japan. The original meaning of *Kara* as a geographical reference, therefore, was considerably broader in the Yayoi and Kofun periods, curtailed only later, in the Yamato period, to denote specifically the southern Korean polity of *Kara*, but subsequently expanding its semantic scope again to include Korea and, eventually, China.

Abbreviations

Alt	Altaic
AusKad	Austro-Kadai
Dolg	Dolgan
Ewk	Ewenkī
IE	Indo-European
KJ	Koreanic-Japonic
Ko	Korean
Nost	Nostratic
O	old
OJ	Old Japanese
P	proto
Tung	Tungusic
Turk	Turkish

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Where Are You from? An Analysis of How North Korean Refugees Express Their National Identity Differently in Various Societies: South Korea and the UK

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Abstract This study examines how North Korean refugees articulate and navigate their national identity in South Korea and the UK. Although the number of refugees has decreased since Kim Jong-un took power, their socio-political influence continues to be considerable, especially in South Korea. The rise of the talnam phenomenon, in which some refugees, encountering discrimination and integration challenges, opt to leave South Korea, underscores the difficulties this community endures. Developing an individual or group identity involves an ongoing negotiation between assimilation and distinction from others, beginning with naming newcomers in society. Consequently, this research first explores the meanings of the language and terms used by the South Korean government to describe North Korean refugees residing in South Korea, along with the various state names employed by both Koreas. This study provides a basis for comprehending the broader dynamics of assimilation and differentiation among North Korean refugees. In 2021, fieldwork was carried out in South Korea and the UK via in-depth interviews, concentrating on how North Korean refugees navigate their national identity. This research looks into the challenges faced by these refugees and aims to develop policy frameworks that foster their smooth integration with South Koreans and different communities. By recognising the intricate facets of their national identity, host societies can facilitate improved integration and enhance individual autonomy for this resilient group.

Keywords North Korean refugees, social assimilation, social distinction, social integration

Introduction

Nearly thirty years have passed since North Koreans began fleeing their country due to famine. Although this crisis ended in the early 2000s, the flow of refugees continues. Since Kim Jong-un came to power in 2012, there has been a significant decline in the number of North Korean refugees. Recent data from the South Korean Ministry of Reunification shows that only 105 individuals arrived in South Korea in 2024. This number is even lower than during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, when 229 North Korean refugees moved to South Korea in the early months of that year. From 1998 onward, a total of 33,981 North Koreans have migrated, with about 27,000 now residing in South Korea. Although North Korean refugees make up merely 0.05% of South Korea's entire population, their socio-political impact is significant in both Koreas.

In the mid-1990s, when the South Korean government urgently accepted North Korean refugees during the famine, few comprehended the scale of North Koreans that would relocate to South Korea, and even fewer anticipated the challenges they would encounter while integrating into South Korean society. Their hardships did not garner significant attention from the government or the public until the emergence of the *talnam* phenomenon. In the Korean language, *talnam* signifies defecting or escaping from South Korea. The *talnam* phenomenon among North Korean refugees has become more noticeable since 2007. Hundreds of North Korean refugees, who had resided in South Korea for three to four years, opted to depart in pursuit of improved living conditions in more developed nations. One of the primary motivations for their exodus was widespread discrimination encountered in their daily lives. To mitigate this discrimination, they felt compelled to obscure their origins and modify their North Korean accents to achieve more rapid acceptance within South Korean society. Concealing one's origins involves hiding a substantial aspect of one's personal and national identity. When individuals are compelled to perpetually conceal and deny their identity, it can have detrimental effects on their self-esteem and ultimately impede their adaptation to a new society.

The *talnam* phenomenon has attracted considerable attention from the South Korean government and various researchers. The majority of research has

concentrated on the economic hardships and discrimination encountered by North Korean refugees within South Korean social contexts to elucidate their motivations for departing from South Korea (Oh 2011; Bell and Hough 2020; Chun 2022; Hough 2022; M. Kim 2016; Park 2022; Son 2016). These researchers established that socio-economic adversities and discrimination were the predominant reasons for their exodus from South Korea. This argument is valid, as the study indicated that many North Korean refugees encounter substantial challenges in integrating into South Korean society due to discrimination. Nonetheless, does any society exist without discrimination? Do South Koreans not discriminate against one another? The same inquiry could be directed towards North Korean refugees: Did they reside in a society devoid of discrimination before they arrived in South Korea? The answer remains no. Human societies have historically operated based on the processes of assimilation and differentiation among individuals since their inception. When this delicate equilibrium is unduly disturbed, we identify it as discrimination. The critical element consistently revolves around the "degree" or "level" of equilibrium that the members of society are willing to tolerate or accept.

This research shifts the emphasis from merely "cataloguing" the social challenges encountered by North Korean refugees in South Korea and other societies to exploring their strategies for managing assimilation while preserving their distinctiveness in these new environments. To evaluate how they navigate these dynamics, the study analyses how they articulate their national identity in South Korea and the United Kingdom. Why is national identity a pertinent subject of research? It constitutes a multifaceted concept that encompasses personal, cultural, social, political, and emotional dimensions. As previously noted, North Korean refugees in South Korea frequently feel compelled to conceal their origins. Investigating how openly North Korean refugees express their national identity in other societies may serve as an indicator of their ability to integrate into diverse communities. The United Kingdom hosts a significant population of North Korean refugees compared to other Western countries; thus, this research focuses specifically on this demographic within the United Kingdom.

As a theoretical framework and conceptual instrument, this research draws upon Claude Lévi-Strauss's magisterial work, *Pensée Sauvage* (Lévi-Strauss 1962). The concept of identity is inherently dualistic; it encompasses assimilation to others while concurrently distinguishing oneself from them. As Lévi-Strauss

underscored, the uniqueness of each individual neither negates nor contradicts their integration into a community. According to Lévi-Strauss, a significant challenge that every society encounter is the incorporation of elements that exist beyond its established order, such as foreigners or individuals who are ill. The newborn also categorically falls into this group of beings that disrupt the existing order. Thus, promptly assigning an appropriate name to a child is essential as it individualizes the child and signifies their place within the kinship system.

Identifying "others" plays a vital role in the identity formation process at both individual and group levels; how newcomers are labeled in society reflects their prevailing perceptions. However, North Korean refugees are not "newborn" individuals; they are newcomers from a society with a rich history and culture developed over seventy-eight years. Due to the neglect of the socio-cultural contexts of these refugees by South Korean society, both groups struggle to accurately "name" each other. A notable instance is the South Korean government's change of the official terminology for North Korean refugees on three separate occasions. It is crucial to consider how North Korean refugees wish to be identified, not as "newborns" but as "adult newcomers". Therefore, this research focuses on how they express their national identity in South Korea and the UK.

The initial segment of this research concentrates on the research questions and methodologies employed. The subsequent section examines the various English terms utilized for North Korean refugees, along with their corresponding Korean equivalents. This discussion evaluates whether these terms adequately represent the realities encountered by North Korean refugees; should they be found lacking, we shall propose a more appropriate alternative. The third section presents findings from interviews conducted in the United Kingdom and South Korea in 2021, highlighting the reasons behind the interviewees' selection of specific terms to denote South and North Korea. Based on this analysis, the article advocates for a more flexible policy aimed at fostering a harmonious coexistence between North Korean residents and South Koreans.

1 *The Research Questions, Literature Review, and Research Methods*

1.1 National identity or state identity?

Identity constitutes a multifaceted and intricate construct, encompassing a range of descriptors, including individual, political, social, cultural and national dimensions, thereby underscoring its diverse elements. The notion of "national identity" has recently emerged as a central theme in political discourse. Far-right groups frequently utilize this concept to bolster their ideologies, often leading to discussions that foster societal divisions and engender hostility among individuals.

The political landscape in Western Europe has witnessed a significant surge of extreme right-wing groups, leading both traditional right-wing and left-wing parties to incorporate the concept of "national identity" into their official rhetoric to attract more electoral support. When politicians invoke the term 'national identity' in their discussions, there is an implicit understanding that national identity possesses a definitive and static form to which every member of the nation is expected to conform. The subsequent discourse reinforces this notion: "Our national unity and identity are perceived to be at risk due to immigrants, foreigners, or specific religious groups. We must re-establish a clear national identity to restore and strengthen national unity."

South Korea is not exempt from this global phenomenon; an extreme right-wing nationalist party emerged in 2016, underpinned by South Korean Protestant fundamentalists. This was a reaction to the social movement against the impeachment of the right-wing President Park Geun-hye, which was predominantly spearheaded by progressive civil society. Under these conditions, the concept of "national identity" may be susceptible to misinterpretation. To mitigate potential misunderstandings, it is imperative to elucidate how this research will engage with the concepts of national identity and their relevance to the phenomenon referred to as *talnam*, which is associated with North Korean refugees. As previously indicated, identity is a relational construct; it is intrinsically dependent on others. Given its relational nature, it is fluid, multifaceted, contextually contingent, and occasionally contradictory (M. Kim 2016). The identification process frequently exhibits biases that affect both individuals and society in a seemingly unilateral fashion. While societal norms and influences play a significant role in identity formation, individuals retain the agency to shape their identities according to their personal convictions. Despite

the inherent challenges in defining identity as a static construct, it remains possible to categorize specific identities within a given framework.

Lévi-Strauss demonstrated that the uniqueness of each individual does not impede their assimilation into a community, whether within a "primitive" or modern society. He posited that a substantial issue faced by every society is the integration of individuals who appear to lie outside its established order, including foreigners and the sick. This phenomenon is currently more observable than ever at a global level. Tajfel further underscored the importance of social categorization, noting that intergroup dynamics constitute an integral aspect of human behavior (Tajfel et al. 1971). Consequently, the act of identifying oneself or others represents a universal human and social behavior, which is both predictable and "calculable". Without this phenomenon, the sustainability of human society would be compromised, and the very fabric of human society could not endure.

Within this theoretical framework, the concept of national identity falls under the domain of social categorization. However, it is characterized by a lack of concrete and consistent substance, despite what extreme right-wing groups assert. This lack of substance, nonetheless, does not imply that individuals do not identify with a particular nation; indeed, most individuals perceive themselves as belonging to a specific country. When a significant proportion of a society's members exhibit similar behavior, resulting in a noteworthy social effect, this phenomenon is recognized as a social fact, thereby providing social scientists with the legitimacy to conduct analyses (Anderson 2016; Hobsbawm 2014). Should one define national identity as the sense of sharing characteristics, values, culture, and a community of individuals, it is essential to note that this does not necessarily require the existence of a formal state. In contrast, state identity pertains to the collective identity and characteristics of a specific political entity or government. On an individual level, state identity is linked to citizenship or nationality. The Korean peninsula is a case in point, representing a divided nation that encompasses two states recognized by the United Nations; South Korea and North Korea were admitted as members of the UN on 17 September 1991.

Legally, North Korean refugees automatically acquire (South) Korean nationality, as stipulated in Article 3 of the Constitution of the Republic of Korea, which states, "The territory of the Republic of Korea shall consist of the Korean

Peninsula and its adjacent islands." According to this article, the northern region of the Korean Peninsula is also considered part of the Republic of Korea; consequently, individuals residing there are recognized as (South) Korean citizens by default. In contrast, North Korea does not define its territory within its constitution. Nevertheless, the leader of North Korea, Kim Jong-un, recently proposed an amendment to the North Korean constitution during the Supreme People's Assembly meeting on 15 January 2024. Among the various elements of the amendment, a clear reference to North Korean territory was included (J. Lee 2024).

Having citizenship, being acknowledged as members of society, and assimilating into a new culture are separate ideas. Ironically, after North Korean refugees settled in South Korea—a country where people share the same language and a significant amount of historical and cultural background—they began to question their sense of belonging. Mastery of the language did not ease their integration into South Korean society; they became acutely aware of even minor discrimination in their everyday lives. Many North Korean participants in this study confirmed that they pondered their national identity more in South Korea than in China or other transitional countries before their arrival. The distinction between "self" and "others" was clearly defined in those contexts: North Koreans viewed themselves as outsiders compared to the foreign society (state). They did not anticipate a warm welcome from those nations; however, they did expect one from their compatriots.

Building on the initial exploration of identity and its socio-political implications, the following section examines current literature to deepen our understanding of the diverse experiences of North Korean refugees and the evolving narratives surrounding their integration and identity adaptation.

1.2 Literature review

While we cannot distinctly separate the research, themes related to North Korean refugees, we can categorize them into three main areas: firstly, socio-economic integration and discrimination; secondly, language, identity, and emotional challenges; and lastly, transnational experiences and global displacement. Many researchers critically investigate the first theme by analyzing policies relevant to North Korean refugees. Yoon's (2009) study is crucial for understanding their integration, as it comprehensively examines their intricate challenges and

proposes specific support policies. However, his research was conducted during the early stages of North Korean refugees' settlement in South Korea, primarily focusing on their rapid integration into South Korean society, which led to a perception of them as welfare recipients. Since 2011, the Korea Hana Foundation has conducted an annual survey on North Korean refugee settlement, yielding statistically significant data to evaluate their socio-economic conditions. While this structured research aids in the development of settlement policies, it does not adequately capture the lived experiences and aspirations of the refugees. Choi (2018) analyzes the settlement policies within a broader political and humanitarian framework, focusing on their impact on South Korea's strategies. More recently Hough (2022) critically evaluates whether South Korea's resettlement policies, which emphasize economic welfare, contribute to the social exclusion of North Korean refugees, as many South Koreans perceive that they hold greater privilege than other South Koreans.

The second research theme examines language, identity, and emotional challenges. Kim (2016) investigated how North Korean refugee students manage their identities through their attitudes toward learning English. These students face significant internal conflicts while trying to preserve their "original self" and cultivate a "new self" in alignment with South Korean societal standards. This internal conflict frequently leads to emotional distress as they contend with conflicting societal expectations and personal beliefs. Lee and Ahn (2016) discovered that although North Korean refugee college students adjust their language to align with South Korean standards, they frequently experience pressure to conceal their North Korean accent during interactions with South Korean peers. This sense of marginalization is exacerbated when they encounter difficulties with English, which serves as a crucial indicator of social competence in South Korean academic environments. Recently, Park (2022) explored how certain refugees challenge-imposed constraints by imagining alternative futures where their bilingual and bicultural abilities are seen as valuable resources, especially in relation to the possible reunification of Korea. By reframing their situation, North Korean refugees demonstrate agency in developing empowered and flexible identities.

Ha and Jang (2016) redirected their focus to how South Koreans perceive national identity, particularly whether they consider North Korean refugees' part of their "in-group". Their study revealed that "ethnic" national identity does not significantly close the gap between South Koreans and North Korean refugees. Instead, "civic" identity holds greater importance for South Koreans when viewing these newcomers as members of their in-group. The seventy-year divide between South and North Korea has deeply influenced perceptions of a unified nation. The misunderstanding of this situation among three parties—the South Korean government, the South Korean populace, and the North Korean refugees—serves as a key factor in the *talnam* phenomenon.

Thus, the third research theme concerning North Korean refugees explores their transnational experiences and global displacement. Oh (2011) conducted a pivotal study on the *talnam* phenomenon, following up with former North Korean refugee students currently residing in the UK. He emphasized that the national and state identities of young North Korean refugees, intricately linked to their origins prior to leaving North Korea, have transformed due to their experiences of displacement across North Korea, China, and the UK, culminating in the establishment of a diaspora identity. Shin (2017) investigated the interactions among South Korean, North Korean, and *Joseonjok* (Korean Chinese) migrants in New Malden, London, illuminating the complexities of their transnational practices and the geopolitical factors influencing their lives.

This research challenged the traditional perception of ethnic enclaves as fixed and uniform, advocating for a more nuanced understanding of their territorial dynamics. A more recent study examining the dynamics within the North Korean refugee community in the UK is the illuminating article by Shin and Son (Shin and Son 2025). They explore the reasons behind the persistent mistrust among North Korean refugees in the UK, underlining how their past experiences and cultural norms impede trust-building within their community, ultimately impacting their social integration.

These internal tensions resonate with a broader theme: identity negotiation across borders. People generally do not question their identity or sense of belonging unless they encounter a situation where they must choose between borders or boundaries, as seen in the case of North Korean refugees. Searching for a "new" identity can be a stressful experience; it involves negotiating one's sense of self, one's relationships with others, and societal expectations. As

mentioned in the Introduction, this research focuses on how North Korean refugees express their national identity in South Korea and the UK. To this end, the research first examines how South Korean society (including the government) refers to North Korean refugees. As Lévi-Strauss confirmed, naming newcomers to society is the first step toward individualization and integration into that society (Lévi-Strauss 1962).

Why is it necessary for this research to analyze the rationale behind the South Korean government's naming policy for North Korean refugees as they integrate into society? Although government policy does not necessarily encapsulate the intentions of the populace regarding societal management, examining the rationale and context of the policy proves significant, as a government cannot arbitrarily implement a policy without the support of the citizenry in a democratic framework. The relationship between government policy and the populace is inherently dynamic and reciprocal, even in autocratic regimes. La Boétie (2016) compellingly argues in *La Servitude Volontaire* that a tyrant cannot persist without the cooperation of the people. Investigating the reasoning and socio-political context underlying the naming of North Korean refugees illuminates how South Korean society perceives its newcomers. Given that the government possesses the institutional capacity to shape public discourse, once an 'official' designation is announced, it may profoundly influence the consciousness and perceptions of the populace. This research aims to evaluate whether this phenomenon was evident in the official nomenclature designated for North Korean refugees in South Korea.

As the process of identity formation is not unidirectional, this study additionally investigates how North Korean refugees perceive their citizenship in South Korea and the United Kingdom. To accomplish this objective, semi-structured, in-person interviews were conducted with twenty-five North Korean refugees—thirteen residing in South Korea and twelve in the United Kingdom—in the year 2021. Each interview had a duration of approximately two hours and incorporated sixty-five questions; however, in this research uses only four/five questions. The section pertaining to research findings will elucidate the interview questions and the rationale behind their selection. Prior to examining how the South Korean government characterizes North Korean refugees, it is imperative

to first evaluate whether the English terminology employed to describe North Koreans who have departed from their native country is appropriate.

1.3 English expressions for North Koreans who have left their country to live elsewhere: defectors, refugees, or escapees

Numerous English terms describe North Koreans who escaped famine during the mid-1990s. Among the most commonly used terms are defectors, refugees, and escapees. The term defector, embraced by Western media, has become the main label employed by both the public and academics. However, "defector" carries historical and political baggage, especially from the Cold War era, which may render it an unsuitable choice for those who fled famine in North Korea. The Oxford English Dictionary characterizes a defector as "A person who defects from a person, party, organization, or cause. One who abandons a communist country to settle in a non-communist country, or vice versa." (Oxford English Dictionary 2016). Meanwhile, the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary describes the verb to defect as "to leave a political party, country, to join another considered an enemy." (Oxford English Dictionary 2015). Analyzing both definitions reveals two essential criteria for someone to be deemed a defector. Firstly, a conscious choice must be made; defectors purposefully leave one side to align with another deemed adversarial. Secondly, this choice imposes an inherent consequence; by siding with the enemy, they are regarded as traitors by those they have deserted. Notably, one synonymous term for defector is "traitor" (Merriam-Webster 2023), and the North Korean government labels individuals who flee without permission as "traitors". Furthermore, North Korean refugees often refer to themselves as traitors, a term that can diminish their self-worth and impede their transition into a new life elsewhere.

The primary aspect of the term "defector" is characterized by a deliberate act motivated by political convictions. This notion is not applicable to North Koreans who fled during the famine, as they did not make a conscious decision to abandon their homeland, forsake their families to ally with adversaries, or advocate for their political views. The disintegration of the state's distribution system amidst the famine compelled these individuals to choose between remaining and facing death or fleeing to pursue survival. Therefore, it is inappropriate to categorize their actions as intentional decisions, particularly in relation to political ideologies. It is reasonable to infer that many harbor "mixed" sentiments regarding their

government, given its inability to ensure fundamental survival necessities. Numerous individuals witnessed the deaths of family members due to starvation, and, upon fleeing, they encountered hazardous conditions in China and other countries. Considering these circumstances, they likely did not fully support their government's policies and ideologies. The central issue is not whether their departure was politically motivated but that they were compelled to seek survival. Consequently, the distinguishing characteristic of a defector—intentional choice—does not apply to North Koreans who fled during the famine.

The second component of the term "defector" signifies an affiliation with the adversary, a concept that is inapplicable to North Koreans who were fleeing from famine. Their primary entry point was China, which the North Korean government did not regard as an enemy. Furthermore, China has consistently repatriated these North Koreans for two primary reasons: firstly, to adhere to requests from the North Korean government; and secondly, because Chinese authorities classify these individuals as illegal immigrants rather than refugees. While those who choose to settle in South Korea may be perceived as defecting to the "enemy", it is crucial to acknowledge that during the famine period, their principal aim was not to go to South Korea; instead, they were primarily striving to escape starvation. Nevertheless, they swiftly recognized that residing in China without the necessary documentation posed significant risks to their safety.

Initially, the South Korean government under the leadership of Kim Young-sam displayed a considerable degree of indifference towards the predicaments encountered by North Koreans residing in China. It was only when the international community illuminated the issues faced by North Korean refugees that Kim Young-sam's government commenced efforts to facilitate their rescue and relocation to South Korea. Consequently, the concepts of "deliberate choice" and "defecting to the enemy's side" are inapplicable to individuals who fled due to famine; it is far more appropriate to categorize them as refugees amidst this crisis. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees defines refugees as "people who have been forced to flee their homes and have crossed an international border to find safety in another country." The use of accurate terminology is of critical importance, as recognition as refugees ensures access to legal protections, rights, and broader societal acceptance.

Since the early 2000s, particularly after the famine, the motivations for North Koreans to emigrate and their support-network frameworks have evolved considerably. Nowadays, North Koreans seek to leave in pursuit of a 'better' life, encompassing economic prospects, political and personal freedoms, and enhanced educational opportunities for their children, among other reasons. While the structure and methods of assisting North Korean immigrants differ from those of other countries, we can categorize the North Korean "escapees" ten years post-famine that is, from 2010 onwards as immigrants rather than refugees (Song 2016).

The following section discusses how South Koreans, especially the South Korean government, have labeled North Korean refugees.

1.4 The socio-political contexts and the justifications for the Korean terminology employed regarding North Koreans relocating to South Korea: *gwisunyongsa*, *saeteomin*, and *bukanitaljumin*

After the Korean War, migrants from North Korea to South Korea were referred to as *silhyangmin*. This term applies to those who cannot return to their homeland due to external pressures. It arose organically rather than being imposed by the state. However, during the authoritarian era that lasted until 1993, South Korean media, subject to strict government control, adhered to rules regarding the naming and portrayal of North Korean migrants who arrived post-1962, coinciding with the onset of Park Jeong-hee's regime. As a result, the government's terminology regarding these North Koreans dominated media stories and public discussions. Understanding the socio-political background and reasoning behind the South Korean government's terminology is crucial. In both democratic and authoritarian systems, the state is a dominant institution; it holds the exclusive right to use violence (Weber 1978) and shapes public discourse to uphold the ruling ideology (Foucault 2002). Typically, governments purposefully choose official language that reflects the ideologies of those in power. Therefore, it is important to examine the socio-political landscape and the motivations behind governmental language to grasp the status of North Koreans in South Korean society. The authority in power significantly impacts the legitimization of official terms, influencing various government actions that ultimately shape social structures and personal experiences. While changes instigated by the populace during revolutionary periods are significant, acknowledging the government's role as a leading actor is essential. South Koreans experienced nearly four decades of authoritarian

governance after liberation, with the regime's ideological grip deeply affecting daily life. The South Korean government's language related to North Korean refugees stands as an intriguing case for exploring the motives behind official terminology.

1.5 Context of the Cold War and authoritarian regimes: *gwisunyongsa* (defector hero)

In 1962, the administration of Park Jeong-hee introduced the term *gwisunyongsa* to categorize North Korean refugees. This term, meaning "defector hero", specifically refers to those who have fled North Korea, recognized as an adversarial state. The phrase gained significance in South Korean society during the authoritarian regime, which lasted until the early 1990s. The government viewed these "defectors" as war heroes, granting them legal and moral rights that required protection and respect. The Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs was tasked with overseeing their welfare. However, it is essential to note that they do not fit the traditional definition of war veterans; they did not fight for South Korea or engage in patriotic acts on its behalf. By labeling them as *gwisunyongsa* (defector hero), the authoritarian government effectively conferred upon them the status of national heroes, regardless of their personal opinions on this title.

An important question arises: Why did the authoritarian regime label these individuals as "defector heroes" and acknowledge them as national figures? What prompted this choice? The main reason was to exploit them as a propaganda tool to underscore the shortcomings of the North Korean government. The secondary reason focuses on using the testimonies of "defector heroes" to maintain authoritarian dominance. These narratives served as propaganda to strengthen the government's power and promote its ideological objectives.

The authoritarian government of South Korea tightly controlled public testimonies from North Korean refugees, compelling these individuals to adhere to government-approved "scripts" in their public statements, which compliant media outlets faithfully followed. The South Korean media widely circulated somewhat exaggerated narratives of the struggles faced by North Koreans and the alleged atrocities committed by the North Korean regime. This depiction of "defector heroes" suggested that only the authoritarian government possessed the

necessary power to confront North Korea's aggression; otherwise, citizens might face a fate akin to that of the North Korean people. Before the mid-1990s, North Korean refugees were rare and thus seen as valuable by the South Korean authoritarian government. Consequently, the term *gwisunyongsa* (defector hero) represents a deliberate propaganda tactic employed by the South Korean authoritarian government to bolster its illegitimate authority by exploiting existing divisions.

1.6 The political democratization of South Korea and the context of its progressive government: *saeteomin* (individuals who have commenced anew in a different location)

The term *gwisunyongsa* (defector hero) has diminished in significance with the decline of South Korea's authoritarian regime. During the mid-1990s, a significant number of North Korean refugees migrated to South Korea because of famine. The South Korean government and media then referred to them as *talbukdongpo* (North Korean defector brethren) until the early 2000s. Eventually, the prevalent terminology evolved into *talbookja*, which denotes individuals who escape from North Korea. This designation received criticism for accentuating the negative connotations associated with North Korea and its populace. As a result, the progressive Roh Moo-hyun administration endeavored to identify a more suitable nomenclature for North Korean refugees. In 2004, they conducted an opinion poll that indicated 53% of respondents preferred the term *saeteomin*. This term integrates the Korean word "saeteo" (new foundation or new place) with the Chinese character "min" 民 (people), signifying individuals who have commenced anew in a different locality, emphasizing South Korea as the "new place".

Since 2005, individuals fleeing from North Korea have been designated as *saeteomin,* a term chosen with careful consideration. Although this label was introduced in 2005, the social and political groundwork was established during the first progressive Kim Dae-jung administration (1998–2003), which sought to enhance relations with North Korea. Kim Dae-jung successfully facilitated the historic summit between North and South Korea in Pyongyang in 2000, an initiative subsequently continued by his successor, Roh Moo-hyun, who convened another summit in 2007. The selection of an appropriate designation for North Korean refugees reflected the Kim Dae-jung administration's perspective on inter-Korean relations and its efforts toward unification. The number of North

Korean refugees increased significantly from 1994, and in this atmosphere of reconciliation, the progressive Roh Moo-hyun government adopted the term *saeteomin* for these refugees. A public opinion poll indicated that this designation was favored, as it carries no political implications and symbolizes renewed hope for those affected. However, the subsequent conservative government led by Lee Myung-bak (2008–2013) rejected this term, contending that *saeteomin* was ambiguous, thereby questioning whether it referred solely to North Korean refugees or included other migrants.

1.7 The context of conservative neoliberal governance: *bukanitaljumin* (North Korean defector)

During the administration of President Lee, relations between the two Koreas deteriorated, culminating in military conflict. His government transitioned from utilising the term *saeteomin* to adopting *bukanitaljumin* in reference to North Korean refugees. The term *bukanitaljumin* is comprised of three components: *Bukhan* (North Korea), *ital* (defector or deserter), and *jumin* (resident), which collectively translates to "North Korean defectors" in English. The official website of the Ministry of Unification in the English version currently employs the term "North Korean defectors". On 21 November 2008, the conservative Lee administration officially supplanted *saeteomin* with *bukanitaljumin*. This modification was supported by the *bukanitaljumin* (North Korean defectors) Protection and Resettlement Support Act of 1997, which defines North Korean defectors as "individuals who have an address, immediate family, spouse, or workplace north of the Military Demarcation Line, and who have not acquired foreign citizenship after leaving North Korea". Since then, *bukanitaljumin* has emerged as the most frequently utilized term in South Korean media.

While *bukanitaljumin* carries a more straightforward meaning than *saeteomin*, it comes with stronger negative implications. The English term "defector" is considered derogatory, and the South Korean government officially labels *bukanitaljumin* as "North Korean defector". The conservative Lee administration intentionally changed the language regarding North Korean refugees. This reflects two significant political messages: The Lee government's position on inter-

Korean relations and their handling of North Korean refugee matters in South Korea, particularly in comparison to previous progressive governments.

In the context of inter-Korean relations, the term "defection" signifies the act of entering an adversary's territory or organization. During Lee's presidency, North Korea was regarded more as an adversary than as a neighboring entity, resulting in a swift decline in inter-Korean relations throughout his conservative administration. Furthermore, South Korean attitudes towards North Korean refugees have undergone a significant evolution. The designation "defector" connotes a "deliberate" decision, implying that these individuals bear responsibility for their choices. They endure societal stigma, being labeled as "traitors" by the North Korean regime and "enemies" by citizens of South Korea. Initially welcomed as "brothers" upon their arrival in South Korea, they have increasingly experienced feelings of betrayal from the North and hostility from South Koreans. North Korean refugee interviewees have commented on a discernible shift in Korean attitudes towards them, influenced by each new policy concerning North Korea. For instance, negative perceptions were particularly pronounced during the conservative government. Changes in government policy impact societal perceptions and individual behaviors. The adjustments made by the conservative South Korean government regarding inter-Korean policy, communicated to the public the boundaries of acceptable conduct. This situation exemplifies that the terminology employed to describe newcomers reflects societal viewpoints, elucidating their anticipated social status and influencing both personal and national identities.

Over the past three decades, over thirty-five thousand North Koreans have immigrated to South Korea. In this context, it is worth asking for the perspectives of these people regarding the terminology employed to describe them, both within South Korea and on the international stage. What designations do they prefer? Do they accept these labels, or are they striving to cultivate their own identity within society? Recently, members of the North Korean refugee community, particularly the younger generation, have begun to express their discomfort regarding how South Korean authorities and society refer to them. For many, the term *talbuk*, which denotes individuals who have ostensibly "escaped" North Korea, symbolizes the stagnation caused by the division of Korea, devoid of any prospect for reunification.

The persistent use of specific terminology may reinforce the social isolation of North Korean residents within South Korean society and may further impact South Koreans, thereby constraining both collective and individual openness to a prospective future and potential reunification. Consequently, certain advocates recommend the alternative term *bukhyangmin*, which denotes individuals originating from North Korea, as this terminology is less associated with the Cold War and carries a reduced stigma compared to three other designations: *gwisunyongsa* (defector hero), *saeteomin* (those who have rebuilt their lives elsewhere), and *bukanitaljumin* (North Korean defectors). Although the South Korean government has consistently revised the terminology used for North Koreans seeking asylum, North Korean authorities continue to refer to these individuals as *uigeo ipgukja*, translating to righteous entrant. The subsequent section will present research findings from field studies investigating how the first and one-and-a-half generations of North Korean refugees in South Korea and the UK construct their national identity. In this context, the "first" generation refers to individuals over 19 years old without a necessity for primary and secondary education, while the 1.5 generation comprises those aged between 7 and 19 who require primary and secondary education in South Korea.

2 *Research Findings: What is the Significance of Inquiring about the "Familiarity" of the State Name for North Korean Refugees?*

Korea is a divided nation comprising two states. Since the division in 1945, the Korean people have adopted different appellations to refer to "unitary" Korea. South Koreans utilize three distinct state names. The first is *Hanguk*, denoting "unitary" Korea, South Koreans' most frequently employed designation. The second is *Daehan Minguk*, which translates to the Republic of Korea, South Korea's official designation. This term can be traced back to the Shanghai provisional government established on 11 April 1919, shortly following the March 1st Independence Movement of 1919. Although *Daehan Minguk* serves as South Korea's official designation, it also refers to unitary Korea due to its historical significance. South Koreans typically employ this term in public and official

contexts. The third designation is *Namhan*, signifying "South" Korea, which is utilized solely when contrasting it with "North" Korea. The term most commonly used for North Korea is *Bukhan*, meaning "North" Korea.

North Koreans use three different names for their country. The most common name is *Joseon*, which comes from the *Joseon* Dynasty. The North Korean government emphasizes *Joseon* to highlight the nation's cultural and historical continuity. *Joseon* is similar to *Hanguk* in South Korea, as both refer to "unitary" Korea. The second name is the official designation, *Joseon Minjujuui Inmin Gonghwaguk* (the Democratic People's Republic of Korea), chosen by Kim Il-sung when it was announced on 9 September 1948; North Koreans celebrate this date as National Foundation Day. The third term, *Buk Joseon*, means "North" Korea and is used only in relation to South Korea.

In summary, individuals from South Korea commonly refer to their nation as *Hanguk*, while those from North Korea utilize the term *Joseon*. Consequently, when presented with the inquiry, "Which state names are familiar to you?" it is anticipated that the majority of South Koreans will respond with *Hanguk*, whereas most North Koreans will answer with *Joseon*. Furthermore, the North Korean government enforces stringent media regulations, consistently employing only the term *Joseon* to denote their state, in contrast to South Korea, which has traditionally been recognized as *Nam Joseon*. The following table offers a comparative overview of the state names employed in both North and South Korea.

Table 1
State names in North and South Korea

	State names used in North Korea	State names used in South Korea
Unitary name	*Joseon*	*Hanguk*
Official term	*Joseon Minjujuui Inmin Gonghwaguk*	*Daehan Minguk*
Divided name	*Buk Josen*	*Namhan*
Divided name of the "other" state	*Nam Joseon*	*Buk Han*

In 2022, the state-run newspaper of North Korea, the *Rodong Sinmun*, portrayed South Korea in an unfavorable light, referring to it as *Daehan Minguk* (Republic of Korea). The publication asserted that South Korea was no longer regarded as a fraternal nation, emphasizing that North Korea would cease its efforts towards Korean reunification. The North Korean government and media seldom employ the term *Daehan Minguk* when mentioning South Korea; they prefer *Nam Joseon*. Consequently, designations such as *Daehan Minguk* or *Hanguk* were not recognized by North Korean refugees who fled in the mid-1990s; they were more familiar with the term *Nam Joseon*. Therefore, investigating how North Korean refugees perceive the differing designations for South and North Korea can illuminate their integration into either new or traditional national identities and how they express these in their new surroundings. This understanding is particularly relevant for North Koreans residing in the United Kingdom.

This research deliberately chose the term "familiar" for two survey questions: "When people refer to North Korea, which Korean terms do you find most familiar among the three names for North and South Korea?" and "When people refer to South Korea, which Korean terms do you find most familiar?" This method avoids the more straightforward question, "How do you define your national identity?" These direct questions might not provoke honest answers, as North Korean refugees often hide their true feelings when engaging with South Koreans; they frequently feel a sense of obligation towards South Koreans, which may lead them to express that they now focus more on South Koreans' thoughts.

Between July 2021 and January 2022, two field studies were conducted in the United Kingdom and South Korea to investigate the self-identification and nationality of North Korean refugees. The researcher developed a comprehensive set of 65 questions; however, for the purpose of this study, a focused selection of four common questions was employed in the UK, while five common questions were utilized in South Korea. The interviews were conducted using a semi-structured format and included three modalities: face-to-face, video, and email communication. In-person interviews extended beyond two hours, whereas video interviews averaged approximately one and a half hours in duration.

The process of identifying interviewees within the United Kingdom presented significant challenges when a North Korean refugee, who had

committed to assisting the researcher, failed to arrive at the predetermined time and location. Consequently, the researcher sought alternative methods by visiting Korean shops in New Malden to locate individuals familiar with North Korean refugees. Unlike previous scholars who engaged an agent for participant recruitment in New Malden, this approach yielded advantages in obtaining impartial information. These earlier researchers relied on personal connections through an agent to select participants, resulting in repetitive interviews with the same individuals, ultimately compromising the research's integrity.

Ultimately, the researcher established a connection with Mrs. Han, the president of the Association of North Korean Residents in the UK, through a referral from the owner of a Chinese Korean restaurant originating from Yanbian, China. Mrs. Han subsequently communicated the researcher's interview requests to her social network group of North Korean refugees in New Malden; however, only a single respondent emerged from this outreach effort. In light of this, the researcher employed snowball sampling to identify additional participants, given that North Korean refugees typically exhibit reluctance to engage in interviews absent endorsements from acquaintances. Overall, the researcher gathered insights from twenty-five North Korean interviewees: twelve from the UK and thirteen from South Korea, whose ages ranged from twelve to seventy years. While this sample size may not achieve statistical significance, the diversity among the interviewees in terms of age, socio-economic backgrounds, and motivations for leaving North Korea allows the research data to provide valuable insights into how North Koreans view themselves and their national identity within various societies. It is noteworthy that the majority of the interviewees from the UK are first-generation refugees who experienced life in North Korea during the famine, whereas most participants from South Korea did not directly confront the famine.

Here are the four common questions that the researcher posed to the interviewees in the UK and South Korea:

1. How do you identify yourself? (자신의 정체성을 어떻게 정립하고 계시는지요)?
2. When we refer to North Korea, which words among these are most familiar to you in Korean: *Bukan*, *Buk Joseon*, *Joseon Minjujuui Inmin Gonghwaguk*? (북한을 가리킬 때 어느 단어가 제일 익숙하신지요? 북한, 북조선, 조선민주주의 인민 공화국?)

3. When we refer to South Korea, which words are you most familiar with in Korean: *Namhan, Nam Joseon*, *Hanguk*, *Daehan Minguk*? (한국을 가리킬 때 어느 단어가 제일 익숙하신지요?: 남한, 남조선, 한국, 대한민국?)
4. How do you respond when a foreigner asks you, "Where are you from?": North Korea, South Korea? (외국인이 어느 나라에서 왔는지 물어보면 어떻게 대답하실래요?)

2.1 Findings in the UK

Table 2
Individual identity and the state name choice of North Korean refugees in the UK

How do you identify yourself?	When we refer to North Korea, which words among these are most familiar to you in Korean?	When we refer to South Korea, which words are you most familiar with in Korean?	How do you respond when a foreigner asks you, "Where are you from?"
North Korean (9) South Korean (3)	*Bukan* (11) *Buk Joseon* (1)	*Namhan* (2) *Hanguk* (2) *Daehan Minguk* (7) *Nam Joseon* (1)	North Korea (1) South Korea (11)
Total: 12	Total: 12	Total: 12	Total: 12

In answer to question 1 about self-identification, nine out of twelve participants recognized themselves as North Koreans. The individuals who identified as South Koreans were either under five years old upon their arrival in South Korea or were born in South Korea, leading to a lack of vivid memories or experiences connected to North Korea. According to this sample, the majority of first-generation North Korean refugees living in the UK classify themselves as North Koreans.

The responses to question 2 regarding the designation of North Korea reveal a compelling subject for analysis. Out of twelve respondents, eleven indicated a preference for *Bukhan*, the South Korean term for North Korea, while only one favored *Joseon*, the nomenclature for 'unitary' Korea utilized in the North. It was apparent that the majority of North Koreans residing in the UK identified themselves as North Korean. This observation, however, prompts the inquiry: Why do most interviewees select the South Korean designation? Opting for an alternative name for the region in which they spent their formative years may present challenges. The respondents in the UK provided two reasons for their preference for *Bukhan*. Firstly, after nearly two decades away from North Korea, they perceive *Bukhan* to be more personally familiar. Secondly, they sought to emphasize their dissociation from North Korea. The solitary respondent who chose *Joseon* came from an elite background in Pyongyang, which likely engenders a more profound connection to North Korea and a clearer sense of North Korean national identity than that of other North Korean refugees in the UK. He expressed astonishment when informed by the researcher that the majority favored the South Korean term *Bukhan*. He explained his compatriots' attitude: due to the researcher's South Korean background, they may have felt obliged to conceal their true feelings to prevent causing discomfort to South Koreans, to whom they perceive themselves as indebted.

Nevertheless, a sociological rationale transcending individual psychology elucidates why the majority of North Korean refugee interviewees residing in the United Kingdom favor the South Korean term, *Bukhan*. This viewpoint underscores that numerous North Korean refugees have engaged extensively with South Koreans in the UK. Their economic circumstances and quotidian experiences are intricately linked with those of South Koreans, prompting them to employ South Korean expressions more frequently than those from their North Korean heritage in routine conversations.

Most interviewees indicated that this linguistic transition appears to be instinctive; after nearly two decades residing in the UK, they consider North Korean phrases to be somewhat ostentatious. Indeed, most interviewees prefer the term *Bukhan*, as it is perceived as more "natural" in their context. Despite their residence in the UK, significant language barriers and insufficient language skills considerably limit their employment prospects, primarily restricting them to New Malden or South Korean enterprises. Their economic, social, and cultural

backgrounds are intrinsically linked to those of South Korean immigrants in the UK, leading them to adapt their language use in alignment with their socio-economic environments. This linguistic choice does not suggest a "rejection" of their North Korean identity; rather, it reflects a process of "negotiation" regarding their national identity within the framework of their individual circumstances and the socio-economic context in the UK.

In answer to question 3, South Korea's name, *Daehan Minguk* (Republic of Korea), received the most support, totaling seven out of twelve votes. In contrast, the alternatives—*Namhan* (the Korean term for South Korea) and *Hanguk* (representing Unified Korea to South Koreans)—each received two votes, while *Nam Joseon* (the name for South Korea used in North Korea) garnered just one vote. This outcome highlights the concerns mentioned in question 2 regarding North Korean preferences for state names. Notably, they did not choose the term *Nam Joseon* for South Korea, as it aligns with its official name in North Korea. Rather than opting for a familiar term, what accounts for their preference for *Daehan Minguk*? South Koreans rarely refer to this name in daily conversations. The term *Daehan Minguk* is usually reserved for specific occasions, such as international sporting events or national holidays. Additionally, several interviewees noted their initial confusion upon seeing the term *Daehan Minguk* on rice bags during humanitarian aid distribution during the famine; they recognized the script since it was written in Korean and remembered the name due to the rice's high quality, but at that moment they did not realize that *Daehan Minguk* referred to South Korea, as they had never encountered it before. Why did they choose the term *Daehan Minguk*, which was not a familiar term when they lived in North Korea?

The living conditions faced by North Korean refugees illustrate their preference for South Korea's official name, *Daehan Minguk*. Upon their arrival, they encountered Korean National Intelligence Service (KNIS) officers specializing in North Korean issues, who have been linked to human rights violations and intimidation since the 1960s. Even though these refugees arrived after the mid-1990s, a time of political democratization, they still found the demeanor of the KNIS agents to be intense. They also spent around three months at *Hanawon,* the North Korean Refugee Centre, where they were confined to the

facility. Although interviewees described the accommodation as clean and the meals as satisfactory, their early experiences with South Korean officials left a lasting negative impact, leading them to see little difference in personal freedom compared to their lives in North Korea. Furthermore, as they began to assimilate into South Korean society, it became clear that they shared few identity traits with South Koreans. Daily experiences of discrimination may have further deepened their views on the official and somewhat distant name of the South Korean state.

The responses to question number 4 indicate a persistent denial of North Korean national identity at the individual level, observed in both South Korea and the United Kingdom. Eleven of twelve respondents in the UK noted that when asked by a foreigner about their origins, they would state they were from South Korea. However, in relation to question 1, which examines their national identity, all first-generation North Korean refugee interviewees identified as North Koreans. Despite feeling more accepted and equal in the UK compared to South Korea, these individuals preferred to conceal their North Korean national identity rather than disclose it. This results in a paradoxical situation for North Korean refugees in the UK: they must reveal or even substantiate their North Korean origins to gain acceptance as refugees from the UK government, yet they opt to hide their origins in daily interactions. As outlined in the methodology and theoretical sections, individualization and integration are intertwined processes within society. For example, the act of naming a newborn demonstrates both individualization and community integration. Unlike newborns, North Korean refugees have already developed their personal and national identities. Their answers to question 4 highlight a tendency to conceal their origins from foreigners, implying that they have yet to fully navigate the processes of individualization and integration as newcomers in UK society. Conversely, findings concerning the 1.5 generation of North Korean refugees' views on their personal and national identity in South Korea present a stark contrast to those who were primarily first-generation North Koreans in the UK.

Having examined the findings relating to North Koreans in the UK in this section, the following will cover the findings in South Korea.

2.2 Findings in South Korea

Table 3
Choices of individual identity and state names among 1.5 generation of North Korean immigrants in South Korea

Individual identity	Familiar state name choice		Response regarding national origin for foreigners	Political orientation
- Korean born in North Korea (2) - North Korean immigrant (2) - North Korean (5: North Koreans living in the South) - South Korean (2) - Not decided (2)	North Korea *Bukan* (9) *Joseon* (4)	South Korea *Hanguk* (4) *Daehan Minguk* (9)	North Korea: 7 South Korea: 6	Conservative: 4 Progressive: 9
Total: 13	Total: 13	Total: 13	Total: 13	Total: 13

The researcher asked the same four questions to interviewees in South Korea that were posed in the UK, with the aim of evaluating individual and national identity among North Koreans. With the upcoming South Korean presidential election in May 2022, an additional question was added to gauge the political views of the interviewees. In Table 2's title, the term 1.5 generations of North Korean 'immigrants' was used instead of North Korean refugees. Most participants had

left North Korea after 2010. Since the famine ended in 2000, their reasons for leaving were driven less by survival and more by the pursuit of a "better quality of life". All interviewees reported paying substantial immigration broker fees to arrive in South Korea, and many left North Korea safely with family or were later reunited in either China or South Korea. When asked about their departure reasons, most indicated that their parents aimed to secure them a "better life", particularly concerning educational opportunities outside North Korea. Thus, it is more accurate to classify them as North Korean immigrants rather than refugees.

Such a classification, however, does not overlook the fact that "immigrants" who left North Korea after 2010 did so for reasons similar to previous "refugees". Although the famine ended in 2000, North Korea still suffers from food shortages, and the regime remains oppressive; even a mild challenge to its policies could result in life-threatening consequences. Nonetheless, North Korean interviewees in South Korea indicate that those who choose to leave today utilize "well-organized" immigration broker networks to reduce risks, although the costs for these services are prohibitively high for the average North Korean. Most individuals embarking on the "immigration" journey pay part of the fee before leaving North Korea and the rest upon arrival in their host countries. According to interviewee testimony, the broker fee per person ranges from approximately 2,000 to 3,000 US dollars. Therefore, the economic and social standing of the so-called "Planned North Korean defectors" cannot be categorized as desperate or marginal. Most interviewees' parents had at least a secondary education, and some have relatives or friends in China, allowing them to engage in business and build significant social and economic resources for the immigration process. Their socio-economic status can be considered middle class in North Korea. After experiencing improved living conditions outside their homeland, they chose to leave so their children could have better opportunities. Given all these factors, it is more appropriate and justified to refer to these people as "immigrants" rather than "refugees".

All interviewees in South Korea had completed at least primary education in North Korea. After relocating to South Korea, they attended intensive primary or secondary education designed for North Korean children at specialized schools. They transitioned to mainstream South Korean education once they adjusted to the school environment in South Korea. They have strong memories of their

schooling and community life in North Korea, and have integrated their new South Korean experiences into their identities. With their unique backgrounds from North and South Korea, this group of interviewees is particularly well-suited for this research. The identity shaped during adolescence is resistant to change; they preserved their individual and national identities from North Korea while simultaneously engaging with South Korean education and society during their youth. When interviewed at the end of 2021, they were either graduates of South Korean universities, embarking on their professional careers, or current university students. Their age and maturity enabled them to articulate their thoughts and contrast the two distinct social systems.

Table 3 shows the responses to question 1 regarding individuals' perceptions of their identity. The answers reveal a greater complexity than those from North Korean refugees in the United Kingdom. North Korean immigrants in South Korea categorized their identities into five distinct groups, whereas nine out of twelve North Korean refugees in the United Kingdom identified solely as North Korean. Among the three who identified as South Korean, two were born in South Korea to North Korean parents, and one moved there before the age of five. However, all first-generation North Korean refugee interviewees in the UK identified themselves as North Koreans. In contrast, the South Korean interviewees adopted a more proactive and independent stance, describing their identities in various ways. Those identifying as North Korean preferred the term *bukhyangmin*, meaning "a person whose hometown is in North Korea". They wish to be acknowledged as fellow South Koreans from other regions. In Lévi-Strauss's terms, they "individualize" themselves (unlike newborns who must accept assigned names) while also striving for "integration" into South Korean society through adopting different names. This sense of individualization and subsequent societal integration was noticeably lacking among the first-generation North Korean refugees in the UK.

In response to question 2 concerning awareness of North Korea's state name, nine out of thirteen participants chose the South Korean term *Bukan*, while four opted for *Joseon* (the term for Unitary Korea in North Korea). In the UK, only one out of twelve selected *Buk Josen*, with the rest preferring the South Korean *Bukan* when referring to North Korea. This result is surprising because the South

Korean respondents have had shorter durations of exposure to North Korea than their UK counterparts. Their choices likely stem from the findings of the first question. Unlike those in the UK, they did not directly endure famine, and their experiences in North Korea were generally less traumatic, resulting in a lower level of antipathy towards the North Korean terminology. Furthermore, as most currently live with family members in South Korea, they have greater opportunities to use North Korean terms than those residing in the UK.

In addressing question 3 regarding their awareness of South Korea's official name, nine out of thirteen interviewees recognized *Daehan Minguk*, while four opted for *Hankuk*. This suggests that the majority see South Korea primarily as a state rather than as a nation. Similarly, seven of the nine first-generation North Korean refugees in the UK also identified *Daehan Minguk*. Though these outcomes are comparable, their interpretations vary within the context of the UK. The preference for *Daehan Minguk* among the 1.5 generation North Korean immigrants strongly correlates with their self-identification, as highlighted in question 1. They adopt a more assertive and autonomous stance in defining their position within Korean society compared to their compatriots in the UK. Instead of passively accepting the labels assigned by South Koreans, they proactively assert their identity as *bukhyangmin*. Their choice of *Daehan Minguk* indicates they perceive South Korea in terms of statehood rather than nationhood.

In contrast to individuals in the UK, North Korean refugees in South Korea actively articulated their distinct social and individual identity within the context of South Korean society. This divergence has resulted in considerably different outcomes when considering question 4: How do you respond when a foreigner asks you, "Where are you from?". Among the thirteen respondents, seven identified themselves as originating from North Korea, whereas only one of twelve respondents from the UK indicated a similar response. This phenomenon prompts a complex discussion, particularly when considering that a primary motivation for North Korean refugees to relocate to South Korea includes the pervasive discrimination and lack of equitable opportunities afforded to their children. Additionally, the necessity to assert their authentic North Korean identity during the refugee status determination process further complicates the interpretation of these findings, thus rendering these results somewhat perplexing.

A potential explanation for the differences in identity formation between North Korean refugees in South Korea and the United Kingdom lies in the

distinct social circumstances of these two groups. The majority of North Korean immigrants in the 1.5 generation residing in South Korea did not experience famine; they retained a "middle class" social status in North Korea and achieved secondary and tertiary education in South Korea. Such social dynamics facilitate a more independent development of personal and social awareness for these individuals when contrasted with the first generation of North Korean refugees. On the other hand, first-generation North Korean refugees residing in the United Kingdom have endured significant challenges, including famine, limited access to educational opportunities, and subpar living conditions during their time in China. Currently, they face considerable language barriers in the UK, making daily life more challenging than for their 1.5 generation counterparts in South Korea. These barriers further complicate their capacity for "individualization" and "integration", contrasting with the experiences of the 1.5 generation of North Korean refugees in South Korea.

One opportunity for further research would be to focus on comparing the same generation of North Korean "refugees" in both the UK and South Korea. Unfortunately, most of the North Korean refugee interviewees in the UK did not allow their children to participate in interviews, which limited the ability to scrutinize various aspects of identity formation relative to their counterparts in South Korea. This constraint hindered a systematic comparison of personal and national identity development between the 1.5 generation of North Korean refugees in South Korea and the UK.

Nonetheless, numerous interviewees from the UK underscored the importance of their children's education as a primary concern. Given that the second generation of North Korean refugees in the UK confronts fewer language barriers than the first generation, it is reasonable to posit that they may develop an autonomous identity in ways that are, at least partially, comparable to their peers in South Korea.

Conclusion

This research investigated the development of personal and national identities among North Korean refugees belonging to the first and the "1.5" generation in the UK and South Korea respectively. Two field studies were conducted in both locales to explore this pertinent issue. Prior to discussing the research findings, the study underscored the inappropriate application of the term "defector" in reference to North Koreans who left during the famine, advocating instead for the terms "refugees" for those who fled during that period and "immigrants" for those who departed post-2010. Acknowledging that an individual's identity commences with their name, this research examines the socio-political contexts surrounding the official name changes of North Korean refugees in South Korea, from the era of the authoritarian regime to the present day.

This study primarily aims to investigate the identity differences of the 1.5 generation of North Korean refugees in South Korea compared to their counterparts in the United Kingdom, following the emergence of the *talnam* phenomenon in 2007. Regrettably, due to the limited participation of North Korean refugee parents in the UK, there are still opportunities for more research in this area. However, fieldwork conducted in South Korea yielded promising insights; the researcher managed to successfully interview younger members of the refugee community who arrived post-2010. This group, now in their twenties and early thirties, did not endure famine and emigrated from North Korea in search of a "better life" rather than from necessity, distinguishing them from earlier generations of refugees.

Two field research projects were conducted in the United Kingdom and South Korea through both in-person and online interviews. The central theoretical framework of this research posits that individual and national identities are not fixed; rather, they evolve in response to the surrounding social environment. As highlighted by Lévi-Strauss, the assimilation of newcomers into society is intrinsically connected to their process of individualization. A fundamental universal concept in identity formation across human societies is the naming of newcomers. Building on this universal principle, this research explored how North Koreans identify themselves and the names they ascribe to the two Koreas.

Regarding individual identity, North Korean refugees residing in the United Kingdom clearly expressed their North Korean identity, whereas the 1.5 generation North Korean immigrants in South Korea have developed a range of diverse and "autonomous" identities, even creating a new term: *bukhyangmin* (referring to those with roots in North Korea). This indicates that their individualization and integration process as newcomers to South Korean society is more active than that of those in the UK.

Both groups regard South Korea as a state rather than a nation. The 1.5 generation perceives South Korea as part of the Unitary Korean framework. Notably, when they disclose their North Korean background to outsiders, the 1.5 generation in South Korea tends to exhibit more positivity and confidence than North Korean refugees residing in the UK. The formation of a new identity is a multifaceted endeavor that demands mental, physical, and intellectual investment. For the South Korean interviewees, pursuing a university education may help facilitate this developmental process.

If this research can provide some modest guidance to the South Korean government, prioritizing "ethnic weness" or "historic weness" may not be an effective approach for either North or South Koreans. Focusing on "national weness" could potentially foster resentment in both groups. A clear example of this is the *talnam* phenomenon. Rather, it would be more beneficial to cultivate a social environment that acknowledges differences and enables North Korean residents to express their distinct identities, starting with how they choose to name themselves. This way, they can find their place in South Korean society.

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Navigating Czechoslovak Cold War Diplomacy: From the 1988 Seoul Olympics to the 1989 Pyongyang World Festival of Youth and Students

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Abstract The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic participated in the 1988 24th Summer Olympics in Seoul and the 1989 13th World Festival of Youth and Students in Pyongyang, despite maintaining diplomatic relations only with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. This article aims to explain Czechoslovakia's diplomatic strategies in managing its relations with both Koreas during the Cold War. Following the 1988 Summer Olympics, Czechoslovakia gradually shifted its focus toward developing business relations with South Korea while continuing cautious and highly formal relations with the North, limited mainly to mutual declarations of support. The article also investigates the changing objectives of the Olympic movement and North Korea's diplomatic approach toward socialist states. The research draws on Czech archival materials from the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, the Central Committee of Czechoslovak Socialist Youth Union, and the former Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic.

Keywords CSSR, Czechoslovakia, Korean Peninsula, North Korea, Cold War, international relations, 13th WFYS 1989, 24th Summer Olympics 1988, Olympic movement

Introduction

The 1891 decision made in Baden-Baden to hold the 24th Summer Olympics in Seoul was significant for South Korea, shaping both its the social and economic development and shifting the trends in the international relations of the

Peninsula.[1] Soon after the decision was made, the capital of South Korea was selected to host the 10th Asia Games in 1986, serving as a "trial run" for the Olympics. As Victor Cha notes, both events were crucial for South Korean diplomacy: the ROK recognized the need to navigate Cold War dynamics and establish relations with the USSR and China to accomplish its goal of joining the UN. It used both events adroitly to foster ties with other socialist states (Cha 2009, 83-84).

Since the previous Olympic Games had been affected by political boycotts in the years before the 1988 Olympics,[2] the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and, gradually, other governments increased their efforts to avoid another massive boycott. For a short period, the idea of sanctioning members of the Olympic movement who would boycott the games was considered, but it was ultimately not implemented (Pound 1994, 64). Once North Korea failed in its attempts to co-host[3] the Olympics and join the South in its international glory, it approached

1 The decision was at the time controversial due to the unstable situation on the Korean Peninsula and the dictatorial regime of Chŏn Tuhwan 전두환 (1931–2021, 5th president of ROK, in office 1980–1988), and it led to a series of discussions and deliberations about co-hosting the Olympics with the DPRK (for more details, see Pound 1994).

2 The most seriously affected Olympics around this period was Moscow's 22nd Summer Olympics in 1980, where only 81 states participated. This created significant tension leading up to the 23rd Summer Olympics in LA in 1984, which also faced a massive boycott. The USSR, after some hesitation caused by a change in leadership, ended up boycotting the Games, though many other socialist states did not join them (Pound 1994, 33-34). Czechoslovakia did participate in the boycott, following the orders of the ÚV KSČ (Bublák 2008, 62-63). In the broader Asian Olympics context, China's two-decade boycott due to the unresolved "two Chinas" issue was also significant (Cha 2009, chap. 1: Boycotts and bans).

3 Since the DPRK's Olympic Committee was recognized in 1957 and the DPRK participated in its first Olympics in 1969 (having not taken part in Tokyo 1964), there have been several attempts to create unified teams for the Olympics with South Korea, which had a National Olympic Committee since 1946 (reorganized in 1947) and joined its first Olympics in 1948. These attempts, however, failed each time. The two Koreas did walk under a single flag at the opening ceremonies in 2000 and 2003, and during some Asian games, but a fully unified team has only been put

socialist countries and sought to pressure them into openly boycotting the event. The USSR, however, decided to participate and break the pattern of previous boycotts.[4] The 1988 Seoul Olympics were thus a great success, with 159 nations participating and only six declining the invitation.[5]

North Korea then shifted its focus on organizing the 13th World Festival of Youth and Students (WFYS) in 1989, with Pyongyang selected as a host city in 1987. Hosting such a large-scale event was a challenging task; even though the DPRK was able to use some of the newly constructed buildings initially intended for the joint hosting of the Summer Olympics, it still required a significant amount of material and financial assistance from its allied socialist countries. The first Festival held in Asia was also the last of such scale (177 nations participated) for decades, until the 19th WFYS in Sochi in 2017 that saw participation from 185 nations. The collapse of the communist bloc in 1989 led to the loss of the Festival's popularity in Eastern Europe.

This article examines Czechoslovakia's approach to these sports events using materials from Czechoslovak (Czech) archives. The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic (CSSR),[6] as its name suggests, was a socialist state whose politics, especially foreign policy, were dependent on the decisions made in the USSR. It was among the first countries to tie diplomatic relations with the DPRK in 1948, repeatedly called for an end to the Korean War and followed all decisions and proclamations of the USSR concerning the conflict in the United Nations (UN) (Löwensteinová and Popa /eds/. 2019, 335). It played a noteworthy role in the

together for the 2018 Winter Olympics in Pyongyang and a few smaller tournaments. For more details about the negotiations for joint hosting, see Pound 1994.

4 Other factors influenced this decision. Among the most important were the efforts of Juan Antonio Samaranch (1920–2010), President of the IOC, to lead productive dialogue with Moscow, and the internal leadership change in the Soviet Union when Mikhail Gorbachev came to power (1931–2022; General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union 1985–1991), (Pound 1994, 56-57).

5 In the end, only North Korea and Cuba officially boycotted the Olympics; Albania, Ethiopia, and Seychelles declined the invitation, and Nicaragua and Madagascar did not participate for financial reasons.

6 The CSSR had existed since 1960, prior to which it was the Czechoslovak Republic, and ultimately it split into the Czech Republic and Slovak Republic in 1993.

Neutral Nations' Supervisory Commission (NNSC)[7] since the Korean War and was among the countries that provided significant economic aid to the DPRK, even though the bilateral relations were often difficult (Vavrincová 2014, 126). Relations with South Korea (primarily called as such in Czechoslovak materials rather than the Republic of Korea), were limited to rare official contacts during certain sports events, Red Cross meetings, or NNSC activities. The 1980s represented a shift in this aspect when their contacts became more frequent, as the political situation in the CSSR started moving toward the Velvet Revolution, which ended the Communist Party rule in November 1989.[8]

The article focuses on the general political dimensions of these events and decisions, aspects that have not been explained elsewhere. Only a few references to Czechoslovakia's position in the Olympic movement in connection to the Korean Peninsula and the 1988 Olympics can be found in Pound's *Five Rings over Korea: The Secret Negotiations Behind the* 1988 *Olympic Games in Seoul* (1994) and Victor Cha's *Beyond the Final Score: The Politics of Sport in Asia* (2009). Zuzana Hritzová's (neé Vavrincová) research (2014; 2020) focuses on Czechoslovakia's role in the NNSC, while Miroslav Bublák's master's thesis *Československý olympismus v období komunismu* 1948–1989" (Czechoslovak Olympism in the Communist Era, 1948–1989; 2008), provides an informative study of Czechoslovakia's role in the Olympic movement.

The unique aspect of this study is the use of the materials from the Czechoslovak Olympic Committee held in the National Archive, which were not accessible to the general and academic public at the time this article was written. The topic of socialist aid to the 13th WFYS is very rarely mentioned and usually appears only as a side note within other economic or political studies.

This paper builds on existing research and expands it by exploring documents from the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (ÚV KSČ), the Central Committee of Czechoslovak Socialist Youth Union (ÚV SSM) held in the National Archive, and the archive of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the

7 For more on Czechoslovakia's role in NNSC, see Vavrincová 2014; 2020.

8 The term *Velvet Revolution* refers to the non-violent demonstrations and transition of power that happened as a result of the shift in Soviet politics after 1985 and the fall of communist governments in other Warsaw Pact countries—especially in neighboring Poland and Hungary.

Czech Republic. The latter proved invaluable for this research, as it contains newly accessible materials from the 1980s related to the diplomatic mission in Pyongyang. These consist mainly of delegation reports and general informational reports prepared for the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Czechoslovakia (FMFA). Although some of these materials are already known from the "socialist bloc" perspective, they provide new insights into CSSR's participation in the Summer Olympics and the WFYS on the Korean Peninsula, revealing exciting specifics of the Czechoslovak approach.

The first chapter delves into Czechoslovakia's approach to the 1988 Olympics in Seoul, mostly through the lenses of its delegations in Pyongyang and P'anmunjŏm (NNSC). Additional valuable reports were found in the materials of the ÚV KSČ and the Diplomatic archive of ROK. These sources show the reasoning behind Czechoslovakia's decision to participate in the Games and reveal its nuanced diplomatic maneuvers with North Korea on the topic of the Olympics.

The second chapter analyses diplomatic exchanges between the CSSR and North Korea regarding the organization of the 1989 World Festival of Youth and Students in Pyongyang. Based on the materials from ÚV SSM, ÚV KSČ, and the diplomatic mission in Pyongyang, it offers an overview of Czechoslovakia's assistance but also uncovers growing criticism of North Korea's efforts to distance itself from the Socialist bloc.

1 *Hesitations towards the* 1988 *Summer Olympics*

Czechoslovakia was an active member of the Olympic movement, having joined in 1899 when the Czech Olympic Committee was established and had a representative in the IOC. Since 1957, the Czechoslovak National Olympic Committee (CS NOC) operated under the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Association of Physical Education, with both organizations sharing the same chairman. Sport was an essential tool for the communist regime, not only in terms of engaging youth, but increasingly in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the Olympics were viewed as an opportunity to "win over" capitalist countries (Bublák 2008, 41).

As a socialist state, Czechoslovakia voiced its disagreement when the decision was made to host the 24th Summer Olympics in Seoul, South Korea. At that point,

the CSSR had no official relations with the ROK and, like other socialist countries, viewed the situation on the Peninsula as unstable. Reports from the FMFA describe the regime of Chŏn Tuhwan as undemocratic, violent, anti-communist, and entirely under U.S. influence (FMFA 1983, June 30).

At that time, South Korea had no official interest in the CSSR[9] and vice versa. A 1983 report from the Czechoslovak delegation at the NNSC regarding South Korea's stance towards socialist countries suggests that any South Korean proclamations of interest in establishing relations with the CSSR were merely a pretense. The report argues that South Korea's ultimate goal was to join the UN and gain legitimacy, and that its primary goal was to impress the international community. The report states:

> [...] To hide the fact that [the ROK] is the one who takes an interest in being recognized by socialist countries, it nowadays tries to connect this question [of wanting relations with the socialist bloc] with the [issue of] acknowledgment of the DPRK by the capitalist states, and it speaks of "certain hints", that the USA and Japan are willing to recognize DPRK in case USSR and China recognize South Korea. (FMFA 1983, June 30, 2).

Although the report doubts South Korea's motives and methods for achieving its goals, it simultaneously compliments the ROK's planning and preparations for the Olympics and expects good results from them.

The DPRK communicated the situation regarding the Olympics to the CSSR at an early stage. Ho Tam 허담 (1929–1991), the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the DPRK (in office 1970–1983), visited the CSSR[10] in 1982 and was received by president Gustav Husák (1913–1991; in office 1975–1989, and First Secretary of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia from 1968-1987), Prime Minister Lubomír Štrougal (1924–2023; in office 1970–1988) and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Bohuslav Chňoupek (1925–2004; in office 1971–1988). During his visit, he

9 According to the reports on the situation in the ROK and its stance towards the CSSR, it is stated that all its interest was limited to plain exclamations of President Chŏn Tuhwan about an "open door" policy towards socialist countries, and any further efforts were pursued only when considered advantageous for its "puppet master", the USA (FMFA 1983, June 30).

10 Ho Tam was invited by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Bohuslav Chňoupek, and visited the CSSR between March 26-29, 1982.

expressed appreciation for the CSSR's support of the DPRK and their good relations in general. He urged the Czechoslovak representatives to continue "exposing the intentions of the USA and Chŏn Tuhwan's clique to definitively divide Korea into two separate states" (FMFA 1982, June 9, 4). He warned them that South Korea was trying to approach the countries of the "Third World" as well as the socialist bloc, and expressed the DPRK's wish that socialist countries, including the CSSR, boycott the Olympic games in Seoul. To that, B. Chňoupek replied cautiously that "the question of the Olympic games in 1988 will be dealt with in due time, taking into account the interests of the whole socialist fellowship and its goal of preventing the misuse of the Olympic games (for political purposes)." (FMFA 1982, June 9, 4).

A similar line was taken during the visit of O Mansŏk 오만석 (dates unknown), head of the First Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the DPRK, to the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the CSSR (FMFA).[11] During his visit, he also warned the Czechoslovak side to be wary of South Korea and oppose any attempts to misuse the Olympic Games in 1988 to legitimize the two separate Korean states. He did not, however, ask the CSSR to boycott the event or issue any instructions on limiting the contacts with South Korea[12] (FMFA 1982).

That same year, the CSSR and DPRK signed in Prague a new two-year plan of cultural cooperation for 1982 and 1983. On this basis, an Agreement between the Central Committee of Czechoslovak Union of Physical Education and the North Korean Committee for Physical Education and Sport was signed on February 24, 1982, in Prague. According to this agreement, both sides pledged to:

> [...] stand up in all manners against the organization of official sports events in South Korea and their manipulation for the political aims [of South Korea]. With maximum effort, they will seek not to attend these events in South Korea and not accept South Korean athletes at sports events in their [CSSR and DPRK] countries (FMFA 1982, November 9, 2).

11 The delegation visited Prague from March 29 to April 3, 1982, where it was received by Vladimír Kubát (1923–1995), then Deputy Head of the Third Territorial Department of FMFA, and by Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Stanislav Svoboda (1926–).

12 Two years later, in 1984, O Mansŏk expressed a much stronger view on this topic during his visit to Poland, threatening that any state supporting the Olympics in Seoul would be perceived as the enemy of DPRK (Hánderek 2018, 34).

This agreement was valid for five years, covering the period including the 1986 Asian Games in Seoul. If no objections were raised, the agreement would be automatically prolonged for another five years, also encompassing the Summer Olympics in Seoul 1988. The appendix to the agreement anticipated a North Korean boycott of the Olympics. This agreement was, however, signed without the knowledge of the diplomatic mission in Pyongyang. Although, as will be shown below, this "pledge" was not followed through, it sent a clear message. It also had an impact on the cooperation of the two states in sports—the CSSR helped train North Korean athletes for the Asian Games in New Delhi in 1982 (FMFA 1982, November 9).

A different approach from the Czechoslovak FMFA can already be observed only two years later. While reaffirming the aspiration for stronger and more active relations with the DPRK, an FMFA report on Czechoslovak–North Korean relations emphasized that, if an international organization were to meet in the ROK or if sports events were held there, the CSSR should carefully consider each case individually and if deemed appropriate, the Czechoslovak delegation could participate. Special consideration, the report noted, should be given to the Olympic Games in Seoul (FMFA 1984, October 7-8).

The same year, Antonín Himl (1933–1988; in office 1974–1988), president of the Czechoslovakian National Olympic Committee (CSSR NOC), proclaimed that even though the selection of Seoul was unfortunate, the Soviet bloc would participate (Pound 1994, 66n). When North Korea gave up its hope of sabotaging the Olympics altogether and officially applied to co-host in July 1985 (Pound 1994, 366), the CSSR, along with other socialist states, supported its decision (FMFA 1988, March 28). During the annual meeting of the Socialist Ministers of Sport in Hanoi (November 14–16, 1985), Himl supported the DPRK's aim to hold some events in Pyongyang (Pound 1944, 122-123). This way, the CSSR could keep supporting the DPRK stance while still participating in the Olympics.

While North Korea started negotiations about the conditions for joint hosting, meetings in the CSSR confirmed that, should the DPRK fail, it would seek the socialist bloc's support for a boycott. This is evident from the political consultations between the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Stanislav Svoboda

and his North Korean counterpart Ri Chongmok 리종목[13,14] in 1985, during which the DPRK asked for continuous support in this matter (FMFA 1985, July 4). Later that summer, Alois Indra (1921–1990), Chairman of the Federal Assembly of the CSSR (in office 1969–1971), reaffirmed Czechoslovak support during an official delegation of the Federal Assembly in the DPRK.[15]

The CSSR had concerns about the regime of Chŏn Tuhwan and the student protest in the ROK, points repeatedly emphasized by DPRK representatives on numerous occasions (FMFA 1987, February 23; ÚV KSČ 1988, September 15), along with warnings about health issues in the South, primarily concerns of AIDS.[16] Despite this, the CSSR remained inclined to participate in the Olympics even if the DRPK did not co-host, recognizing that many reports (especially about health risks) were false. At the same time, the CSSR and other socialist states were worried that should anything happen during the Olympics, the DPRK would be blamed[17] (FMFA 1988, August 24). Once it was obvious that North and South Korea had reached an agreement on co-hosting conditions, most socialist states, with only a few exceptions, decided to participate in the 1988 Olympics[18] (FMFA

13 The date of birth and death are unknown, however, Ri Chongmok was an imporant figure of North Korean diplomacy as the first deputy minister of Foreign Affairs in the 1970s and 1980s.

14 Deputy Minister Svoboda visited DPRK on June 17–21, 1985, and the talks took place on June 17 and 18, 1985.

15 The delegation visited Pyongyang between August 29–September 3, 1985.

16 Those references can be found early on, in a report from 1986, it is noted that DPRK often contradicts itself—it warns against AIDS (allegedly up to 600 000 South Koreans infected, North Korean media even mentions that infected are isolated on small islands and their corpses are then secretly burned; FMFA 1986, December 1, 6), tuberculosis, toxic food products, polluted air and water etc., but when it comes to the possibility of the joint hosting of the Olympics, these arguments suddenly disappear (FMFA 1986, 8).

17 This was for a good reason since there were several terrorist attacks that were either confirmed or believed to have been carried out by North Korea in the decade before the Olympics, such as the assassination attempt on Chŏn Tuhwan in Burma in 1983, the shooting down of the Korean Airlines Flight 007 in the same year, and, later an explosion at the Kimp'o International Airport just six days before the 1986 Asian Games in Seoul.

18 Around this time, Czechoslovakia also decided to award J. A. Samaranch, President of the IOC (in office 1980–2001), the Doctor Honoris Causa from Charles University in Prague for his

1988, February 10). This decision was reached in 1987 after sports delegations of the socialist countries participated in various pre-Olympic trials and games held in Seoul.

Nevertheless, the CSSR continued to support the DPRK's position, trying to reduce the number of campaigns against it following the South Korean airplane crash incident [19]. It also continued to "patiently react to comments from Pyongyang concerning its business trades with South Korean enterprises" (FMFA 1988, October 26). At the same time, the tone of various reports suggests that the DPRK should accept that socialist states could not ignore the ROK forever and that, especially after the Olympics, some contacts would be maintained (FMFA 1988, March 15, 10). A shift in the approach to the Korean Peninsula was also evident in a directive from the FMFA instructing Czechoslovak media—in the spirit of calming relations on the Korean peninsula—to reduce references to the threat of an open conflict on the peninsula, and when informing about South Korea, rely less on the North Korean one-sided news (FMFA 1988, April 6, 6-7).

When socialist states informed the DPRK of their decision to participate in the Olympics in 1987, the North Koreans insisted they at least postpone the announcement until the very last minute, a request CSSR honored (FMFA 1988, February 10). It seems that the DPRK did not take this decision lightly since a report from the Czechoslovak diplomatic mission in Pyongyang from February 3, 1988, says that although they did receive daily reports, they did not receive the copy containing Czech News Agency reports about the CSSR NOC's decision to participate in the 1988 Olympics (FMFA 1988, February 3). This omission does not appear to have been accidental, suggesting that the DPRK may have still been attempting to press for joint hosting of the Olympics and to delay the news.

achievements and contributions to the Olympic movement. One of the reasons leading to this decision was Samaranch' support for awarding the Olympic flag to the Czechoslovak Spartakiad of 1985, an honor bestowed by the IOC "for extraordinary contribution to the Olympic movement" (ÚV KSČ 1988, April 1).

19 Also known as the Korean Air Flight 858, which occurred on November 29, 1987, when a bomb planted by North Korean agents detonated mid-air, killing 115 passangers on board.

The 1988 Olympics, held in Seoul from September 17 to October 2, proved to be an enormous success.[20] Although the Czechoslovak delegation, consisting of 163 athletes,[21] did not achieve placement among the top eleven nations as hoped in a report from the ÚV KSČ (ÚV KSČ 1988, January 3), they nonetheless won three gold, three silver, and two bronze medals. As confirmed by the diplomatic archives of the ROK, because there was no Czechoslovak embassy in the ROK, Jaroslav Bařinka (1931–2020) was dispatched to act as a representative for the duration of the Games, similar to the arrangement made by the USSR delegation, whose representatives acted as contemporary consuls (Oegyosaryogwan 1988, 77).

Overall, the response to the Olympics in Czechoslovakia was positive. Media attention in the CSSR focused primarily on the sports results and discussions surrounding the use of doping. However, the study has its limitations on this regard, as materials from the CS NOC are not accessible for studying as of 2024, and this study did not independently analyze media coverage. The general atmosphere within the CS NOC began to shift around this time, and the need for reformation within the organization was voiced by Himl and his successor Jindřich Poledník (1937–; in office as the Chairman 1988–1990), reflecting discussions within the international Olympic movement during the 1980s (Bublák, 2008, 67-68).

2 *Contributions and Critical Approach to the* 13th *WFYS's Direction*

When it was decided in 1987 that the 13th WFYS would be held in Pyongyang[22] from September 20 to October 5, 1989, Czechoslovakia did not hesitate to agree

20 While the 1988 Olympics were successful in many ways, they were not without scandals. The issue of doping was a pressing concern in the 1980s and was highlighted during the 1988 Summer Olympics, when Canadian sprinter Ben Johnson was stripped of his gold medal after testing positive for anabolic steroids.

21 Information about the total number of delegates sent to the ROK, except the number of athletes, could not be found. The closest avilable data, offered in Huttr (1988b, 5-6), indicates that 294 seats were secured on a plane from Prague to Seoul for the Czechoslovak delegation and 266 seats for the return journey, with no additional details provided.

22 The decision was made at the first meeting of the IPC in February 1987 in Moscow. It became the first Asian city chosen to host the Festival.

to participate and took a particular interest in the Festival. After all, Prague was the first host of the WFYS, organized by the World Federation of Democratic Youth, in 1947,[23] establishing a long-standing tradition. The organization of the delegation was in the hands of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Socialist Youth Union. It also operated within the International Preparatory Committee (IPC) and actively participated in various consultations with the DPRK's Preparation Committee. For that reason, a standing member of the Union was sent to the DPRK as early as in December 1987 (ÚV SSM 1989, January 27).

However, Czechoslovaks, just like other socialist states, remained cautious about the DPRK's objectives for the event. While anticipating that the Festival would be "grandiose" enough to rival the Olympics, the diplomatic mission in Pyongyang suggested in early February 1989 [24] that the leadership of the Czechoslovak delegation should be alert to the North Korea's intention to use the Festival to project its own interests in the first place, portraying an image of the "happy life" of North Korean society under the Juche ideology. And thus, selectively showing that "its style of socialism" was worthy and only what it wanted foreigners to see. The report further states that the society is already affected by the preparations, not only through the massive mobilization of working forces but also via reductions in rations, electricity, and hot water, which "causes various negative feelings about the Festival within the society" (FMFA 1989, February 8, 4).

All of this contrasted with the wishes and plans of the Standing Committee of the WFYS. As debated at the fourth meeting of the IPC in April 1989, the Committee hoped that recent changes in the international situation—such as

23 Student activities also had another importance in the CSSR. The International Union of Students (IUS) had its headquarters in Prague since its establishment in 1946 until it was expelled from Czechoslovakia in 1991, just two years after the Velvet Revolution. Materials collected from the IUS headquarters have been deposited in the National Archive since 2012, but are not accessible to the public to this date.

24 A growing emphasis on the advantages of Juche and its preference over socialism since early 1987 has already been reported by the diplomatic mission in 1988 in the context of the preparations for the WFYS (FMFA 1988, March 15).

agreements between the USSR and the USA in the 1980s—could be reflected in the message of the 13th WFYS. This included promoting peaceful solutions to regional conflicts, addressing environment issues, and other concerns (FMFA 1989, April 4).

A report by the Czechoslovak diplomatic mission in Pyongyang indicates that the apparent direction of the North Korean Preparatory Committee (and North Korean politics in general), was causing the USSR and the socialist block to pressure the DPRK to adopt a more socialist orientation. The CSSR agreed that it should continue supporting this effort since "only the socialist countries can be the real support for DPRK" (FMFA 1988, March 15, 11). One of the approaches the CSSR took in this direction was fostering rich exchanges between Czechoslovak and North Korean students and youth groups. Through this approach, it aimed to influence the Festival's preparations so that the event would reflect the interests of the world's youth, not only the interests of the political objectives of North Korea (FMFA 1988, April 6).

While a 1982 report on cultural exchange suggested that cooperation in sports was sufficient and satisfactory, the 1988 report on cultural cooperation reflects a notable shift in tone. Although political exchanges[25] remained rich—marked by significant events such as the 40th anniversary of the DPRK's establishment and the anniversary of Czechoslovak–North Korean relations—cultural exchanges, including sports, were reduced. This was because the DPRK had to invest every effort in organizing events in Pyongyang. It was expected that North Korea would "freeze the [cultural] relations" for some time due to the Festival. Sports exchanges were underutilized: in the year of the Olympics, only junior teams visited the DPRK, no adult teams participated, and there were no mutual training sessions, unlike the arrangements DPRK maintained with other socialist countries (FMFA 1988, November 15).

Summarizing the preparations for the WFYS in Pyongyang and its evaluation from an external perspective, the city appeared well-prepared for the Festival. Buildings and sports centers were already constructed or at least planned, as a

25 President Kim Ilsŏng 김일성 (1912–1994) visited the CSSR in 1984, followed by a state visit to the DPRK by Czechoslovak President Gustav Husák in 1988. There were also many other official visits between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of both states and the representatives of the Federal Assembly of the CSSR in the DPRK in 1985.

result of earlier preparations for potential co-hosting of the Olympics. Some constructions were praised for their value, as they could serve as apartments for the capital's citizens after the Festival. However, some were criticized for being overly grand and unsuitable for alternative uses after the event—contrasting with South Korea, which had plans to transfer all suitable constructions to private businesses (FMFA 1982, December 8, 2). A notable concern was the lack of attention paid to national clubs for the visiting teams. The CSSR suspected it was intentional, so as to discourage teams from using them due to insufficient equipment (including electrification).

From the Czechoslovak perspective, transportation arrangements were also underestimated. According to the plan provided to CSSR, the buses reserved for Czechoslovak teams were expected to operate at full occupancy at all times, even though two teams were scheduled to be in different locations at the same time (FMFA 1989, February 8). This situation can be taken as an example of the DPRK's inexperience in hosting such an event, especially on such short notice.

Just as Seoul was making its trial run in the form of the Asian Games 1986, Pyongyang also used what time it had to make trial runs for parts of its program. The 7th April Spring Friendship Art Festival in 1989 was considered as a rehearsal for the Festival's cultural program later that year. The CSSR representative choir, Lúčnica, received great praise from the North Korean audience. Even though it did not win any prizes,[26] it was invited to perform in front of Kim Ilsŏng during the final gala event (FMFA 1989, June 7).

As mentioned above, the 13th WFYS could not have been realized without material and financial aid from the socialist bloc. The DPRK struggled to meet all the Festival's logistic needs and relied on assistance from other socialist countries.[27] CSSR was amongst the contributors, offering both material and

26 North Korea included prizes to make the Festival more appealing to foreign representatives. The Czechoslovak representation felt bitter about the results, which were influenced by political motives. The Festival had been losing its prestige for some time now, and the one in 1989 confirmed that the DPRK wanted to impress the nations of the "Third World" more than to uphold the quality of the Festival (FMFA 1989, June 7).

27 For example, Marek Hańderek discusses inquiries for aid from Poland, in his article "Poland and North Korea in the 1980s—from Partnership to Stagnancy" (Hańderek 2018).

financial aid. During meetings of the official delegations in the CCSR (December 1987) and in the DPRK (summer 1989), Czechoslovakia promised 20 million CSK from the Fund of Solidarity, and additional 10 million CSK in material assistance from the Fund for Aid to Developing countries and Non-European Socialist States (FMFA 1988, October 26).

Czechoslovakia's support covered the supply of 141 telexes, nine ambulances, financial coverage for tutoring Korean interpreters, the loan of equipment for interpreters, financial support for the transport and accommodation of foreign participants in the CSSR, and more technical equipment such as transistors, integrated circuits, diodes, capacitors, textiles for flags, PVC floor coverings, paints, and filtration and cooling systems for the brewery. Altogether, including donations, gifts, currency coverage, transport of material, and other minor expenditures, it paid 63.7 million CSK to the 13th WFYS, of which 31.8 million were expenses of the Czechoslovak delegation. For comparison, an even higher total amount, 75.5 CSK million, was allocated for the 11th WFYS in Havana in 1978, while a slightly lower amount, 59 million CSK, was spent on the 12th WFYS in Moscow in 1985. However, the expenses of the Czechoslovak delegation were highest for Pyongyang, at 31.8 million CSK, compared to 30.5 million in Havana and 19.5 million in Moscow (ÚV KSČ 1988, December 22).

General feedback on the Festival was positive, with no major deficiencies reported, at least not beyond what was typical for similar events.[28] Czechoslovakia sent around 600 delegates and 300 tourists to the DPRK (ÚV SSM 1989, March 24). Delegates reported cheerful reactions from North Korean youth during the events and a sense of pride in a job well done. Nevertheless, it was already anticipated that the Festival's expenses would slow economic growth for the following four to five years (FMFA 1989, July 24), which manifested, combined

28 At least not for the Czechoslovak delegation. According to the reports from Czechoslovak diplomatic mission in Pyongyang, the Hungarians decided to go without their program at the national club, which was located too far from the main Festival area, and they also complained about being given drivers who were allegedly not familiar with Pyongyang, often getting lost or needing to stop for mechanical repairs (FMFA 1989, July 24, 3). This reaction likely reflected the dramatic shift in North Korean–Hungarian diplomatic relations after Hungary became the first socialist country to sign diplomatic relations with the ROK during the Summer Olympics, less than a year before the Festival.

with other factors such as the fall of the socialist bloc and bad environmental conditions, in worsening conditions and hunger in the 1990s.

It did not go unnoticed that the North Korean Festival was heavily infused with propaganda. As a result, the youth groups largely agreed that the future Festivals should be less anti-imperialist and more focused on issues of concern to young people, such as the environment, human rights, and education. Regarding human rights, the Czechoslovak diplomatic mission in Pyongyang reported that by July 1989, most interpreters, guides, drivers, and others who had close contact with foreigners were sent to the countryside for several weeks of labor to "eliminate the 'harmful' influence" (FMFA 1989, July 24, 4-5). It was also notable that North Korea presented a vision of a united Korea "all in red colors", signaling that unification was more important over keeping peace (FMFA 1989, September 9).

When reviewing the Festival and the relations between Czechoslovaks and North Koreans in the preceding decade, it has been noted that while the political delegations of both states met frequently, their interactions were "very formal and in fact limited only to the mutual proclamation of aid" (FMFA 1989). The DPRK has long had problems repaying debts and supplying agreed-upon materials, and in 1988, it attributed these difficulties to its focus on organizing the 13th WFYS. After Miloš Jakeš (1922–2020), then First Secretary of the ÚV KSČ (in office 1987–1989), visited the DPRK in 1989, his report suggested that Czechoslovakia should approach the DPRK cautiously in the following years, aiming not only to strengthen political relations, but mainly to expand economic ties. He also advised considering relations between CSSR and ROK, "which will not go further than business, cultural, and sports contacts" (ÚV KSČ 1989, July 4, 4-5), meaning that the CSSR was already looking into business contacts with ROK after the Olympics, though not diplomatic ones.

Another aspect of the Festival reflects DPRK–CSSR relations. The whole world watched the arrival of South Korean student Im Sugyŏng 임수경 (1968–) in the DPRK for the Festival. The CSSR, together with three other states in the NNSC, became involved in the complicated return of Im Sugyŏng and pastor Mun Kyuhyŏn's 문규현 (1949–) to South Korea via the DMZ. The DPRK praised their assistance in convincing the Swedish and Swiss delegates—and by extension South Korea and the USA—that § 7 of the armistice agreement had not been violated,

as it was a South Korean, not a foreigner or North Korean, who sought to cross the border at DMZ (FMFA 1989, August 16a; FMFA 1989, August 16b; FMFA 1989, August 15).

North Korea used this "incident" to its advantage to criticize the ROK for initially refusing the student's passage home and then arresting her. The episode allowed the DPRK to intensify nationalistic rhetoric and elevate the Juche system above the socialism during and after the Festival. Following the Festival, the DPRK was not afraid to loudly and strongly oppose socialist states that, while maintaining diplomatic relations with it, they also considered establishing new diplomatic relations with the ROK. The response by the DPRK was to threaten those states, citing the example of Hungary, whose diplomatic relations with the DPRK were severed after it signed official diplomatic ties with the ROK (FMFA 1989, September 13). Nevertheless, North Korea never broke diplomatic relations with Czechoslovakia, even in the wake of the Velvet Revolution and the establishment of diplomatic relations between Czechoslovakia and the ROK in 1990.

Conclusion

The study of Czechoslovak internal and diplomatic materials regarding participation in two major international events on the Korean Peninsula—the 24th Summer Olympics in Seoul and the 13th WFYS in Pyongyang—reveals the shifting diplomatic dynamics among the Koreas and Czechoslovakia during the 1980s. Initially hesitant due to ideological differences and concerns about the political climate, Czechoslovakia, while constantly supporting North Korea's bid for joint hosting, eventually participated in the 1988 Seoul Olympics. The decision was made after the USSR decided to participate, as the Olympic movement and its participants in general sought to avoid another large-scale boycott and viewed the Olympic Games as an important instrument of international politics. Czechoslovakia also perceived participation as an opportunity to establish potential business relations with the ROK, based on positive impressions formed during pre-Olympic training events. Engaging with the ROK in this context seemed natural, particularly as the DPRK was becoming an increasingly unstable trade partner.

The article further highlights the rocky relations between the DPRK and the USSR in the 1980s. DPRK's emphasis on promoting Juche over socialist ideology led the USSR and other socialist states to pressure the DPRK to realign with socialism, which proved unsuccessful following the 13th WFYS in Pyongyang. Czechoslovakia's involvement in the Festival demonstrated its commitment to socialist solidarity, providing substantial aid while cautiously attempting to influence North Korea's political objectives for the Festival. As the political landscape evolved, the article suggests a potential shift in Czechoslovakia's approach, with greater focus on strengthening economic ties and acknowledging the changing global dynamics.

This research followed only the main political line and underscores the need for further analysis of relations between ROK and Czechoslovakia, and North Korea's response to it. Further research is limited by inaccessibility of materials in Czech archives from the 1990s, as well as some materials from the 1980s. To gain a better understanding of the Eastern bloc's approach to major events on the Korean Peninsula during the 1980s, the author plans to continue investigations in archives in both the Czech Republic and South Korea and hopes to collaborate with researchers from former Eastern bloc nations to provide a more comprehensive account of Cold War diplomacy.

Abbreviations

AMZV	Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
CSSR	NOC Czechoslovakian National Olympic Committee
CSSR	Czechoslovak Socialist Republic
DMZ	Demilitarized Zone
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
FMFA	Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs of CSSR
IOC	International Olympic Committee
IPC	International Preparatory Committee
IUS	International Union of Students
NA	National Archive (of Czech Republic)
NNSC	Neutral Nations' Supervisory Commission
ROK	Republic of Korea

USSR Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
ÚV KSČ Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia
ÚV SSM Central Committee of Czechoslovak Socialist Youth Union
WFYS World Festival of Youth and Students

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Sampradāy or *Sampradāyikatā?* Muslim Marathi Saint-poets in the Marathi Scholarship

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Abstract This article analyzes the approaches of Marathi scholars to early modern Muslim saint-poets. It traces the gradual development of these approaches from the latter half of the nineteenth century, highlights their embeddedness in the projects of nationalist and cultural historians informed by colonial discourse, and asks whom these Muslim saint-poets represent in Marathi academic works. It argues that a deeper engagement with the devotional networks that shaped the voices of the poets, or social environments where their voices are still being transmitted, creates a more productive space for discussion than merely reframing the colonial categories.

Keywords bhakti, colonial, Marathi, Maharashtra, scholars, saint-poets, Muslim

By telling don't write songs or poems on Hindu gods, how can the inborn belonging to region and being a Maharashtrian be taken away from a Muslim? Is it even possible to purify the blood and nature of any human being in a religious sense?[1]

Introduction

"Musalmān Marāṭhī santakavī" (Muslim Marathi saint-poets, hereafter MMS),[2] is an established descriptive and analytic category employed by cultural historians of Maharashtra. It serves to interpret Muslim saints such as Sheikh Muhammad, Shaha Muni, Shaha Muntoji Bahmani, and many others, who used Marathi as the

1 हिंदू देवदेवतांवर गाणी, कविता, लिहू नका म्हटल्याने मुसलमान माणसात जन्मतःच येणारी प्रादेशिकता, महाराष्ट्रीयनपणा कसा काय जाणार आहे? धार्मिक अर्थाने कोणत्याही माणसाच्या रक्ताचे त्याच्या प्रकृतीचे शुद्धीकरण शक्य तरी आहे का? (Shahajinde 2014, 195).

2 A designation sometimes altered with musalmān santakavi, or simple musalmān kavi.

vehicle of their thought and thus spoke for the vernacular[3] Muslims who often acquired the regional piety and cultural traits. The compositions of Muslim Marathi poets span a range of genres—from religious philosophy and devotional poetry which at times targeted social maladies, to narratives infused with folklore imaginations, or reflections on the ideas and biographical details of other saint-poets. The rhetorical strategies and vocabulary of MMS have often led to scholarly debates on their religious belonging, just as their social critique has led to appropriation of their voices within modern politically inflected discourses. Labelling these saintly and literary figures as MMS thus includes and reproduces several interconnected meanings pertaining to religious and regional identities, belonging, and literary expression. Moreover, addressing religious and regional identities and belonging in the literary context necessarily invokes historical developments, or even generates a specific type of historical enquiry, because most of the Muslim saints known through their Marathi compositions—seen as the putative source-persons of historical reasoning—were figures of the past.

Deconstructing this established category would require a detailed enquiry into how a poet comes to be understood as a holy figure, what such an understanding means in terms of people's religiosity, how this religiosity connects with the history and politics, and how, in turn, it shapes the ideas and practices of collective belonging both to religion and region. My aim here, however, is more modest. Rather than going into the details of the lived religiosity and the forms of religious belonging conceived and inspired by the saints and their followers, I limit my discussion to the works of Marathi (literary) historians whose ideas on the MMS were not only academically foundational but also rooted in the broader public perception of the Maharashtrian cultural history. Therefore, this article while linking scholarly works with their tangible historical contexts, seeks to answer the following questions: Whom do the MMS represent in Marathi academic works, and how do the ideas found therein translate into wider historical narratives on Maharashtra's past and present?

The MMS have been academically approached within Marathi, and at times other Indian, scholarship through the fields of literary studies (e.g., by V. L. Bhave,

3 In this case, vernacularity is defined in terms of region, locality, language, and related social ideas and practices. Cf. Sohoni 2016; Mohammad 2013.

M. G. Ranade, G. K. Chandorkar, J. R. Ajgavkar, Sh. L. Atar, A. K. Priyolkar, V. S. Bendre, R. C. Dhere, Y. M. Pathan, A. N. Deshpande, Sh. G. Tulpule, F. Bennur, and F. M. Shahazinde), history (V. K. Rajwade, T. Chand, A. Ahmad, S. Pagdi, V. S. Bendre, A. R. Kulkarni, M. Mujawar), religious philosophy (A. Vakil, F. Bennur), and anthropology (J. J. R. Burman).[4] The earliest academic debates on the MMS appeared in the domain of literary history and were tightly connected to the modern nationalist project of documenting ethnic literature (Deshpande 2023b). Discussing figures who were considered holy and had their religious following, Marathi scholarship throughout much of the twentieth century turned to the notion of bhakti movement (*bhakti andolan*), which was, in turn, understood as contributing to national development (Hawley 2015, 3-4 and 13-58).

The idea of "*bhakti movement*" further triggered the rethinking of the MMS in comparative and all-India context. Literary historians accented their cultural and religious embeddedness in regional (often construed as Hindu) culture; historians highlighted their role in promoting social cohesion against the modernly imagined divisions of Hindus and Muslims; and anthropologists viewed them as figures whose ideas and practices of their followers formed the religious syncretism.[5] Mutually borrowing the interpretations, often these three academic fields (there are others, of course) were somewhat blurred. Consequently, it is the texts—mostly poetry, philosophical treatises, and hagiographies—together with the ideas found therein, their philosophical and literary resonances, the memory and imagination coupled with the inquiries into living tradition and their modern politicization, that have structured the Marathi scholarly debate on the MMS and created their academic representations.

The combination of historical methods and literary analysis that a few authors enriched by ethnographic enquiry has rendered understanding of the MMS a complex endeavor. However, what seems most significant in the Marathi debates on the MMS are the various shades of modern concepts of social and religious collectivity and their appeal for explaining the historical processes of the emergence of national or ethnic communities. Indeed, in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the search for a common denominator of the national

4 This list includes only a selection of the otherwise numerous authors.

5 See the recent critical approach to this concept in Ernst and Stewart 2003, and Leopold and Jensen 2016.

collective in South Asia, which arose as an outcome of the colonial experience, brought forth the modernly essentialized religious identity as the basis for the idea of the nation (Van den Veer, 1994). Although ethnic markers such as language, customs, and social organization did play an inevitable role in articulating collective belonging, in scholarly discourse of the twentieth century they were subordinated to the idea of religious nation.

This shift reverberated in the modern reconceptualization of South Asian notions of collectivity that had earlier been expressed in terms of caste and religious group—both hierarchically structured and at the same time dependent on diverse channels of social exchange (cf. Chatterjee 2015). In modern times, however, these social forms came to be reimagined as continuously present and beyond historical change representing neatly delineated collectives. Even though the scholars discussed in this article were aware of South Asia's social diversity and of the complex ways through which collectivity was (and in many ways still is) socially realized, when engaged with Western ideas of nation and collectivity, they struggled to negotiate the articulation of Indian concepts through a modern conceptual apparatus—as this article will attempt to show. The historical presence of Muslims, and especially their medieval and early modern political domination, when juxtaposed with the literary and saintly figures such as the MMS, thus posed a challenge for modern Maharashtrian intellectuals, and in a way, continues to do so today.

Early Antiquarian Efforts of the Nationalists

The intermingling of historical and literary studies of religious texts, for which field observations served as evidence of continuity of the tradition, displayed methodological frameworks inherited from the colonial study of Indian cultures and literatures. Focusing on writing, script, and language practices, Prachi Deshpande has shown how the colonial encounter, and particularly Western linguistic methods, informed Marathi scholarly debates on the history of Marathi language and literature within the larger framework of articulating a modern Marathi identity. Initially conceived in caste- and gender-based terms, and later homologized with nationalist terms, these efforts allowed the intellectuals to link

the ideas on geography, community, language, and place (Deshpande 2023a, 166 and 179). Such links opened new avenues for rearticulating the old idea of purity associated with caste and the language of Gods, Sanskrit—in terms of the purity of ethnic language, region, place, and their pasts (Deshpande 2023a, 144-185).

Alongside these debates, an archive of Marathi literary compositions gradually entered the emerging public sphere of the nineteenth century Maharashtra. Marathi compositions were extracted from their manuscript versions and standardized in printed form—a process itself related to the modernly reshaped idea of purity. These compositions first appeared in print as part of periodicals, as separate editions of single works, or as anthologies. Beginning in the 1850s, anthologies were published, and later enlarged and reprinted, laying the groundwork for what is today commonly understood as the printed archive of "*sant-vāṅmay*"—the voice, or literature of the saints (Naregal 2001, 183-184). The colonial engagement with religious texts—often perceived as representing culture, a stereotype common in Western perception of India—was translated into the rhetorical strategies of both Marathi literary scholars and historians of Maharashtra.

Earlier debates concerning community, region, as well as the social and moral order (*dharma*), and the greatness of the Maratha past were largely the domain of nationalist historians like V. K. Rajwade or M. G. Ranade. Rajwade, through his extensive archival efforts to collect all possible records of the Maratha past in manuscript form,[6] which also included texts related to saint-poets, criticized most of these poets for their passive piety. He emphasized instead the active approach of seventeenth century Brahman saint-poet Ramdas, grounded in upper caste values and rigorous training to defend the country against Muslim political dominance and preserve the so-called Maharashtra dharma (Deshpande 2023b, 82). Ranade, in turn, modelled his understanding of saint-poets on the Protestant movement in Europe. He saw saint-poets as modifying "the strictness of the old spirit of caste exclusiveness", giving "sanctity to the family traditions", raising "the

6 You can get an idea of the sheer volume of Rajwade's collection, for instance, at www.vkrajwade.com.

status of women", and making "the nation more humane" (Ranade 1900, 172).[7] Ranade further argued that the Maratha nation was built on the ideas of common regional identity, language and literature, pedagogic efforts to counter popular superstitions[8] and promote social equality deeply embedded in spirituality. This discursive move was vitally connected with V. L. Bhave's foundational study of Marathi literature, *Mahārāṣṭra Sārasvat* (1898/1899), published just two years prior to Ranade's work.[9] Similarly, as Ranade saw eras prior to the rise of the Marathas engulfed by "militant religion like Mahomedanism" (1900, 170),[10] Bhave's words also render a classical Orientalist trope: "It seems that our saints truly faded when facing those cruel people, who holding Quran in one hand and sword in the other, strove for the whole country to become Muslim (*avindhamay*)."[11]

Perhaps as a repercussion of the ethnic-cum-religious notions of purity that cannot be so easily dissociated from the idea of the language purity, no Muslim Marathi poets were included in the earliest of literary anthologies, such as Pandit Godbole's *Navanīt,* published in 1854 (Naregal 2001, 184). Other collectors of saint-poetry, however, did include Muslim saintly voices, thereby carving a space for them in the public imagination. Basically, there were two modes of publication through which this inclusion took place. First, the works of Muslim saint-poets appeared in single author/editor publications, such as *Siddhāntabodha* of Shaha Muni, published in 1870 by the publishing house of Ganpat Krishnaji (Dhere 1967,

7 Although Ranade calls them "Saints and Prophets", he mostly refers to those whose heritage he accessed through texts from the newly created archive and through oral stories—mostly, even if not exclusively, *santakavī*.

8 In Ranade's (1900, 162) language informed by the Protestant ideas, "the polytheistic worship".

9 I here refer to the original text that Bhave later revised, however, the diction of his language regarding Muslim poets did not alter much.

10 Ranade (1900, 171), nevertheless, could admit that Sultanates of the Deccan, were not partisans of "militant religion" and that the "outbursts of fanatic Mahomedanism" were occasional. Conversely, Bhave projected the early Sultanate period as an age where the production of literature in Marathi was thwarted (1898/1899, 28-30), an idea that later in the twentieth century was still seen as viable by Shankar G. Tulpule (1979, 344-348, "The Dark Age").

11 एका हातात कुराण एका हातात शमशेर घेऊन सर्व देश अविंधमय करून पाहणाऱ्या, या क्रूर लोकांपुढे आमची संतमंडळी बरीच मावळी असे दिसते. (Bhave 1898/1899, 29).

136),[12] and *Yogasaṅgrām* of Sheikh Muhammad, edited by Shivaram S. Wagle (1888). Second, their poems were included in larger anthological works.

It is significant, however, that it was Hindi saint-poets like Kabir, Kamal, Latifshah, and Sajan Kasai, who appeared in T. H. Avate's anthology *Gāthāpañchak* as early as 1908,[13] and continued to feature in later editions of the text, which became known as *Sakalasantagāthā*—a title used by Avate also for subsequent editions (Keune 2021, 79). In these anthologies, it was only Sheikh Muhammad from Shrigonda who represented a Muslim Marathi voice, a position he similarly held in the *Naven Navanīt* (1959, 218-223), collected and edited by J. Sh. Deshpande.[14]

This fact points to methodical aspects of the early antiquarian efforts. One approach leaned towards the representation of looser or tighter networks of devotees (*sampradāy*), which might espouse a variety of names, forms, philosophies and practices,[15] as representing mainstream. An anthology such as *Sakalasantagāthā,* which overwhelmingly, though not exclusively, promotes *Vaiṣṇava Vārkarī*[16] poets and their "*Bhāgavat dharma*", and often includes Sheikh Muhammad, well illustrates this aspect. Another approach was more inclusive, as seen in Godbole's older *Navanīt* or the later *Naven Navanīt,* where many kinds of poets were

12 Unfortunately, Dhere does not give the name of the editor, and this early edition of *Siddhāntabodha* was not available to me.

13 I am grateful to Jon Keune for sharing with me several editions of Godbole's and Avate's volumes.

14 Currently, I do not have access to all editions of *Sakalasantagāthā*. Sheikh Muhammad's compositions were not present in Joshi's edition (1923), nor in Rahirkar, Bahirat and Kampani's (1955), but appear in the edition of Gosavi (2000). However, Sheikh's compositions might have been included in Dhere's edition (1983).

15 For an elaboration on the problems when the *sampradāys* are seen solely in collective terms as organizations that transmit religious teachings and practices, see Eschman 2001 and Hawley (2015, 99-147). Jon Keune and Christian Novetzke highlight decentralized character of the most popular *sampradāy* among Maharashtrians, the *Vārkarī sampradāy,* formed through various sub-traditions and often centered around different leaders (2011, 617-619).

16 *Vārkarī sampradāy* combines the philosophy of non-dualism (*advaita*) with *Vaiṣṇava* devotion (*bhakti*) towards Vitthal or Pandurang, a deity from the *sampradāy*'s center in Pandharpur, which is biannually visited by pilgrims. See more in Deleury 1960; and Bahirat and Bhalerav 1988. For a very insightful overview on the *sampradāy's* publishing efforts, see Keune 2021, 78-82.

included, not just saint-poets. The non-inclusion of other well-known Muslim saint-poets, such as Shaha Muni, or Shah Bahmani, however, suggests other motives. In a further turn, Govind K. Chandorkar's encyclopedic work *Mahārāṣṭrīy Sant-kavi-kāvya sūchī* (1915), provided basic information on the compositions (though without quoting them), devotional community belonging, and guru-lineage of saint-poets, thus allowing their historicization. Similarly, Jagannath R. Ajgavkar's six volumed *Mahārāṣṭra-kavi-charitra* (1913–1924), which included both biographies and selected poems of the saints, also referenced MMS—this time without a *sampradāyik* bias.

The inclusion of Muslim saintly voices within the archive of Marathi literature reflected, in part, the earlier accommodation of these saint-poets by the *sampradāys* themselves. The poetry of the MMS, full of respect for local divine figures, philosophical ideas and practices, indeed secured their place within regional devotional networks such as *sampradāys*. Therefore, Sheikh Muhammad was already associated with *Vārkarī* saints in Mahipati's *Bhaktavijaya*; Shaha Muni is mentioned in the *Mahānubhāvs'* list of authors; Alamkhan appears in the foundational text of *Nāgeś*'s followers—*Nāgeślīlāmṛta*; and Shah Bahmani, under the name Mrutyunjay, features in the texts of *Ānanda sampradāy* (Dhere 1967). At the same time, the Muslim identity of these saint-poets was seen as ambiguous in the pre-partition period. It was either completely neglected (Bhave 1898/1899, 74), given a caste identity ("*jātiche yavan asūn*", Bhave 1898/1899, cf. 48, 50), or in modern terms considered as converts to Hinduism (e.g., Ranade 1900, 155 and 176; or Ajgavkar, 1977, 27). This articulation of ambiguity, informed in part by the rhetoric and imagination of the MMS, was also expressed in the writings of Marathi Muslims.

Early Scholarly Voices of Marathi Muslims

Writing in the first half of the twentieth century, Marathi Muslim scholars reacted to the claims of nationalist historians regarding the literary past informed by colonial discourse. Political debates during this period were increasingly shaped by the rise of Hindutva ideology, whose main Maharashtrian proponent, V. D. Savarkar, openly agitated against the belonging of Muslims to India (Savarkar

1923).[17] Reform movements among Indian Muslims[18] supplied these authors with ideas of exclusivity that in many ways neglected voices of Muslim saint-poets, while also promoting social progressivism in opposition to caste hierarchies (Mujawar 2018). This period, therefore, left an imprint on the chosen themes and ideals pursued by the Marathi Muslim scholars. It is perhaps no coincidence that communalism in South Asia—the partisanship for a single, essentialized, and politicized religious community—translates into modern Indian languages, alongside terms such as "*jātivād*", and also as "*sampradāyikatā*".

As documented by Muphid Mujawar, the Qura'n was translated into Marathi for the first time in 1916 by Moulvi Hakim Soofi Meer Mahommed Yacoob Khan, thus enabling Marathi Muslims, and general Marathi public, a linguistically convenient access to the scripture. Periodical publications such as *Islām Prakāś aṇī Muslim Mahārāṣṭra* (The Light of Islam and Muslim Maharashtra) and *Islām Dharma athvā Mahārāṣṭriy-Musalmān-Sāhitya-Patrikā* (The Way of Islam or The Journal of Maharashtrian Muslim literature), appeared due to the efforts of Muhammad Ismail Bhaldar. They brought to public view the reformist ideas concerning modern education, social reforms, and criticism of "*pīrī-murīdī*" beliefs,[19] opulent Muharram processions, and other practices infused with what the reformists regarded as superstitious (recall Ranade's critiques of idol worship). Importantly, these publications were not aimed only at a Muslim readership; they allowed all readers of Marathi to engage with the modern ideas promoted by Marathi Muslims and their partners in the debate over the role of religious communities in building modern Indian society (Mujawar 2019).

These efforts also highlighted a demand to discuss the Muslim Marathi saint-poets, who posed a challenge for reform-oriented Marathi Muslims seeking an understanding of Islam stemming from what they saw as original Islamic traditions. Shikandar Lal Atar—a scholar of literature, primary school teacher, translator from southern Maharashtra, and editor of *Islām Dharma*—verbalized his doubts about the poetry of the MMS. He regarded literature as the "life of society" and likened people's engagement with it to "service to Sarasvati", echoing both

17 In fact, several other prominent Hindutva voices came from Maharashtra (e.g. K.B. Hedgevar, M.S. Golvarkar, or Babasaheb Apte).

18 For Islamic reformism in India, see Robinson 2008.

19 I.e., beliefs in the divine agency of the religious preceptor (*pīr*), by his disciples (*murīd*).

the practices of the saint-poets and the broader Indic discourse that associates Sarasvati with art and knowledge (Atar 1930, 1). In his article titled *Musalmān āṇī Marāṭhī bhāṣā* (Muslims and Marathi language), Atar expresses his skepticism regarding the compositions of the MMS and their ability to address modern Marathi speaking Muslim audiences.

> Although our Muslim saint-poets did compose the books in Marathi, nevertheless, they did not break with (the tradition of) Hindu saint-poets. Moreover, since most of the poems are by the poets inspired by Vitthal devotion,[20] it is clear that these poems are, in a way, a Hindu treasure. Our poets have created these compositions by imitating Vaishnava poets. How can we call that literature our ethnic (jātīy) literature? Muslims have composed it, so if we want, we can call it Muslim literature, i.e., literature created by Muslims. But do the intimate ideas of Muslims appear in it? No. No Muslim would consider these compositions as a reflection of his thoughts, feelings, or culture; nor would he glorify it. He will only marvel at it, and that is all.[21]

Atar's ideas were built on the modernly shaped notions of religious and ethnic purity, concepts that he combines.[22] For him, it is the genres covering Islamic religious and historic themes, and scholarly and royal figures, like for instance, folk oral poetry (*rivāyatī*) on the martyrdom of Husain (Atar 1930, 3; in greater detail in Atar 1943, 9-17), and not solely the Muslim origin that is crucial for the literary engagements of Muslims writing in Marathi. Atar thus formulated a new project for Muslim Marathi literature. While maintaining and articulating Muslim identity, his approach also meant a deeper link with Hindus and whole Maharashtrian culture in general, thereby firmly voicing Muslim belonging to the region.

20 See note 16 above.

21 शिवाय बहुतेक कविता विठ्ठल-भक्तीने प्रेरित झालेल्या कवींची असल्यामुळे ती एक प्रकारे हिंदूंची ग्रंथसंपत्ती आहे हे उघड आहे. आमचे हे कवी वैष्णव कवींचे अनुकरण करून ही रचना करून गेले आहेत. ते साहित्य आम्ही आमचे जातीय साहित्य कसे म्हणावे बरे? मुसलमानांनी ही रचना केली आहे, ह्या दृष्टीने हवे तर त्याला मुसलमान साहित्य म्हणजे मुसलमानद्वारा निर्माण झालेले साहित्य म्हणता येईल. पण मुसलमानांच्या जिव्हाळ्याचे विचार त्यांत दृष्टीस पडतात काय? नाही. तर मग ह्या रचनेला कोणीही मुसलमान आपल्या विचाराचे, भावनेचे किंवा संस्कृतीचे प्रतिबिंब समजणार नाही व तिचे गौरवही करणार नाही. फक्त कौतुक करील इतकेच (Atar 1930, 3).

22 E.g., महाराष्ट्रात हिंदू व मुसलमान या दोन *जातींची* मुख्यतः वस्ती आहे (Principally, in Maharashtra, there live these two *ethnic/birth* groups—Hindus and Muslims (Atar 1930, 1).

> To make Muslims more inclined towards Marathi, literature on Islam should be created. Similarly, biographies of Muslim religious scholars, emperors, literary workers, researchers and leaders should also be published. This will also enrich Marathi literature, and our Hindu brothers will also benefit from it.[23]

The Post-partition Approaches to the MMS: between Caste, Collaboration, and Sufism

The political partition of the Indian subcontinent, a product of communal politics, significantly altered the scholarly approaches to Muslim saint-poetry. The ideas voiced by the MMS were far from the modern framework of the division of Indians into essentialized religious blocs interpreted as nations. Their critique of caste and other forms of social exclusivity and hierarchies that emphasize the insistence on submission and service (*bhakti*) to a higher, divine, singular power, complicated the efforts of conservative nationalists, innovative reformists, as well as new leftist secularists alike. Furthermore, Marathi Muslim poets were figures of the pre-modern past,[24] and thus important for contemporary nationalist imagination. Addressing them, therefore, opened a space for claims of tradition and continuity, while demanding new approaches from those who wanted to accommodate the MMS within their rhetoric of interpreting the past for the sake of the future of the new republic.

The idea of common ethnic roots, coupled, after the painful experiences of partition, with an emphasis on cultural harmony (*sānskṛtik samanjasya/susamvād*) and mutual connections/collaboration (*samanvay*), then emerged as a viable probe into such diverse traits, including their sectarian affiliations, which resisted smooth incorporation of the MMS into diverse discourses on cultural history and state-building. In a way, the ethnic roots exemplified on the imagined collectivity of the shared Maharashtrian culture resembled the earlier ideas on conversion.

23 मुसलमानांचें मराठीकडे चित्त-वेधण्याकरितां इस्लामधर्मावर वाङ्मय निर्माण झालें पाहिजे. तसेंच मुसलमान धर्माचार्य, बादशहा, साहित्यसेवक, शास्त्र-शोधक व पुढारी यांची चरित्रेही प्रकाशित केली पाहिजेत. यानें मराठी साहित्याचे संवर्धनहि होईल व हिंदूबंधूंनाहि त्यापासून लाभ हाईल. (Atar 1930, 6-8). Atar's call found its main modern proponent in Sayyad Amin, who for the reasons stated above, avoided discussing Muslim Marathi poets. I thank to Muphid Mujawar for this information on Amin's works.

24 Most of them belong roughly to sixteenth to eighteenth centuries.

What the earlier scholars saw as conversion, was after the partition seen in terms of ethnicity—an articulation likely influenced by "*Mahārāṣṭra samyukta andolan*" (Movement for united Maharashtra), which ultimately led to the creation of Maharashtra state within the Indian federation. The pioneer of this approach was Ramachandra Chintaman Dhere, whose deep interest in Maharashtrian folklore and rural religiosity led him to the exploration of the MMS in his seminal work *Musalmān Marāṭhī santakavī* (1967).

This was the first monograph in Marathi dedicated solely to regional Muslim saintly voices. Although in the context of the theme he was preceded by A. K. Priyolkar (1965), it was Dhere who meticulously researched the Marathi Muslim saint-poetry, linking it with hagiographies, historical documents, and the devotional communities of Maharashtra, such as *Vārkarī*, *Nāth*, *Lingāyat*, *Mahānubhāv*, *Rāmdasī*, *Nāges'* s followers, or various groups worshipping *Dattātreya*. Moreover, Dhere appears to have been the first scholar to go beyond textual or literary analysis, undertaking field visits of sites where folklore surrounding the MMS had taken shape and preserved its popularity. Such detailed engagement captured in his words as an effort "*to elaborate on the cultural significance stemming from the inner selves of the MMS*",[25] also displays Dhere's personal commitment as well as devotional piety, which he never tried to hide.[26]

Dhere's deep knowledge of Maharashtrian rural religiosity and the bhakti that he shared with people whose traditions he explored and documented allowed him not only easier socialization in the rural environments but also influenced the interpretations he offered regarding the MMS. Emphasizing the embeddedness of Marathi Muslims in the regional culture and the connectedness of the rural, devotional, and communal—idealized as cultural harmony—led him to seek the descriptive categories that would match his project. Beyond the concept of the MMS itself, he sees the poets through the lens of Avindha-Govinda,[27] one who is

25 त्यांच्या अंतरंगातील आंदोलनांचे सांस्कृतिक महत्त्व विशद करणारे (Dhere 1967, 5).

26 On Dhere's *bhakti* see Dhere 2011, 8-9.

27 This descriptive term comes from an alleged poem of Sheikh Muhammad; however, Bhave (1898/1899, 50) mentions also attribution of the verse to Sheikh Sultan. *Avindha* stands for the one whose ears are *"avindha* – unpierced", which was a colloquial Marathi name for Muslims in many pre-modern and modern texts. Govinda is another name of Krishna.

both Hindu and Muslim, allowing him to insert both religious and ethnic belonging into the framework of regional Marathi bhakti (recall Atar).

Dhere, however, could not fully escape the influence of well-known colonial thesis (cf. Ernst, 18-22), which depicted Muslims largely as conquerors and proselytizers, as well the colonial arguments that retrospectively kept the categories of Hindu and Muslim decisive for historical processes. Therefore, the summarizing chapter of his book titled Avindha āṇi Govinda (Dhere 1967, 158-184) devotes some parts to the narration of what he views as the Muslim military and cultural onslaught (*ākramaṇ*) on the Marathi lands. He notes: "In a nutshell, the ideas of the saints proved effective in uniting a society riddled with various differences, and the society influenced by their ideas kept religious devotion alive, even in a depressed state."[28] At the same time, Dhere is clear in dividing the responsibilities for such a depressed state of affairs along communal lines, with an emphasis on the imagined and essentialized inner nature of Hindus:

> Since the Hindus are inherently tolerant and cooperative, the path[29] was always open for them. But there was not much response from the others. Therefore, our respect for the few great souls who, with utmost sincerity, put everything into accelerating these efforts deepens, and our voices rise while singing devotedly their praise.[30]

This view, which conditioned collaboration on Hindu tolerance, conversely, allowed Dhere to emphasize regional ethnic and religious culture as the primary cause that turned the MMS into those "few great souls" whose "*sankīrtan*" the people of Maharashtra continue to chant (cf. Dhere 1967: 158-159; 169; 177; 183), thereby marginalizing the agency of the Muslim poets themselves. Even if his work clearly, and in admirable details, suggests that it was the sampradāys and their local adaptations of the MMS' voices through various communities that sustained their influence, he did not rework this insight into a thesis that could help better positing the ideas of the MMS vis-à-vis the colonial arguments. However, his minute research, in this and many other contexts, opened the door for other

28 नाना भेदांनी बुजबुजलेल्या समाजाला एका सूत्रात बांधण्यासाठी संतांची विचारधारा प्रभावी ठरली आणि त्यांच्या विचारांनी प्रभावित झालेल्या समाजाने दबलेल्या अवस्थेत का होईना धर्मनिष्ठा जिवंत ठेवली (Dhere 1967, 166).

29 I.e., the path of collaboration showed by the *bhakti* saints.

30 हिंदूंची प्रवृत्ती मुळातच सहिष्णू आणि समन्वयशील असल्याने त्यांच्या बाजूने सदैव वाट मोकळीच राहिली. परंतु दुसरीकडून फारसा प्रतिसाद मिळाला नाही. त्यामुळे ज्या अल्पस्वल्प महात्म्यांनी अत्यंत प्रामाणिकपणाने या प्रयत्नांना गती देण्यासाठी सर्वस्व पणास लावले, त्यांच्याविषयीचा आपला आदरभाव दुणावतो आणि त्यांचे संकीर्तन करतांना आपली वाणी उमलून येते (Dhere 1967, 183).

researchers. Despite its age, Musalmān Marāṭhī santakavī thus remains an invaluable source for the study of regional religiosity in Maharashtra.

The ideological leanings of scholars stemming from the lived experience of the partition hence generated both deeper regional research as well as reproduction of colonial theses in ethnicized and religious terms. Debating the notion of Sufism in South Asian scholarship, Nile Green (2008, 1055-1056) cautions against the easy slip between the modern "world religion" understanding of the category of Muslim and the employed social classification such as caste. As shown above, caste designations accompanied religious ones in the works of the earlier generations of scholars—a connection that the MMS themselves also reflected (e.g., Yogasaṅgrām 16: 62-67; Siddhāntabodha 2: 129-132). It is as if, for post-partition Marathi scholars who espoused the modern ideals of social equality, caste had been replaced by ethnicity. However, even if ethnicity appeared to soften the hierarchies of caste, the religion—imagined through textually analyzed doctrines and ethnographically documented practices, both essentialized as traditions (at times national and at other times regional)—continued to carry the colonial and modern communal stigma. One of the newly employed categories in the post-partition period that enabled Marathi scholars to maneuver between politically endorsed rejection of both communalism and caste, as well the diverse phenomena clapped under ethnicity, religion, bhakti and tradition, was Sufism.

The voice of the MMS trapped in the Marathi scholarly discourse shaped by both the denigrative and the exploratory colonial ideas on Islam, reappeared under the label of Sufism (Bendre 1957; Dhere 1967; Sheikh 2009; Pathan 2011; Azam 2012),[31] or Sufi-bhakti (Mujawar 2017, 4). However, Sufism in South Asia is itself a problematic category. For instance, Tschacher and Dandekar introduce Sufism as a kind of modern neologism (Tschacher, 2016, 198) or as a concept defined more by how it is used than by its content, hence a name and a label (Tschacher and Dandekar, 2016, 4). Even if the question of whether "all is in the name" lingers, the given observation is especially pertinent to the Marathi debates on the MMS,

31 Unfortunately, I could not consult Kiran Paithankar's book *Sufism in Maharashtra: Perspective on Literature of Sufi Saints* (2021). However, its description on the Amazon shows that it does not significantly waver from the explanations offered by the referred authors. Similarly, a new enlarged volume on Sufism in Marathi by Muhammad Azam was not at my disposal.

where the context of belonging is heavily pronounced. Regarding regional Muslim voices, Tschacher shows how Sufism was not a category in classifying Muslim Tamil poets in the first half of the twentieth century. Their poetry was homologized with the so-called poetry of the Siddhar, to which the Muslim "songs of gnosis" could be compared because of the shared vocabulary and imagery (Tschacher 2016, 203). He also shows, how the employment of the category of Sufism arose in the second half of the century, even though it remained marginal. A similar process occurred in Maharashtra regarding the MMS, their *sampradāyik* vocabulary, and imagery with one significant difference. Far from being marginal, the categories of Muslim saint and Sufi became fused in the context of Marathi Muslim saint-poetry.

Setumadhavrav Pagdi's *Sūfī sampradāy* published in 1953 was, to my knowledge, the first book that academically introduced Marathi audiences to Sufism on a larger scale.[32] The fact that Pagdi's work was the first monograph on Sufis written in Marathi should be also understood in the light of another consideration: until the early 1950s, Marathi scholarship had paid little expert attention to Sufism. Historically, ideas about the MMS first appeared in Marathi hagiographic writings, particularly in the works of Mahipati in the eighteenth century. Although he was preceded by brief references to certain MMS in the works of Uddhav Chidghan and the Ramdasi author Atmaramswami Yekkehalikar. Importantly, there seems to be no earlier account of the MMS coming from the pen of any Muslim hagiographers. The earlier scholars' neglect of Sufis in their studies of the MMS, therefore, along with their direct engagement with the poetry of Marathi saint-poets, speaks for their reliance on the claims of Marathi Hindu hagiographers.

Pagdi introduces the mystical ideas of the global Sufis, outlines the organizational framework of the *tarīqas,* and discusses the Sufis of South Asia in detail. When addressing the Sufis of Maharashtra, he relies heavily on Malkapuri's *Tazkīra-i Awliyā-i Dakkan*, a modern Urdu text that narrates the miraculous agency of Deccani Sufis with a strong emphasis on their proselytizing role (Pagdi 1993, 58-59). However, Pagdi suggests that the MMS as interpreted by the earlier scholars in terms of "*Bhāgavat Dharma*"*,* had no real connection with Sufism: "There is no historical support for the claim that Sufis and (the followers of)

32 I admit that there may be an article of an older Marathi scholar that discussed Sufism, which, however, Pagdi does not mention, and that escaped my attention.

Bhāgavat Dharma were linked and exchanged anything."[33] In fact, he does not even mention the MMS, apparently for this very reason. Overall, Pagdi's treatment of the Sufis was in many extents influential for subsequent Marathi authors and remains so today (cf. Sheikh 2009). In his attempt to modernize Marathi vocabulary, he introduced the terms "*Sūfī sant*" and "*Sūfī sampradāy*". This effort, however, disconnects these terms from their historical context. As difficult as such an effort always is, it provided a semantic framework for understanding the Sufis in Marathi scholarship, particularly in relation to the MMS.

Although Marathi scholars drew heavily on Pagdi's work, they also diverged from his approach. Perhaps the most notable difference is seen in the writings of Y. M. Pathan (2011), who homologized the MMS with Sufis—as the title of his monograph *Musalmān (Sūfī) santanche Marāṭhī sāhitya* (The literature of the Muslim [Sufi] saints) clearly suggests. What Dhere conveyed through ethnic belonging, Pathan did through Sufis: it is them who he sees as the main transmitters of "*samanjasya*, *samanvay,* and *ekātmatā*" (harmony, collaboration, and unity).

> "Muslim Saint-Poets and Maharashtra" makes for a large topic. There was a great need to study it in order to shed light on the mutual relationship between Maharashtrian religious sects and Muslim saints/saint-poets, especially Sufi saint-poets. These Muslim saint-poets also had a significant impact on the Maharashtrian public. By accepting their extensive humanitarian role, they helped to create an atmosphere of mutual harmony, unity, and collaboration in Maharashtra.[34]

Like Dhere, Pathan recognizes the interconnectedness of the MMS with the wider circles of their followers formed through *sampradāys*. However, while Dhere considers the ethnic embedment of the MMS within these devotional networks, Pathan adds one more dimension—the Sufis. He understands them not as proselytizers, as Dhere (1967, 160) does, but as mystics and thinkers able to unite

33 सूफींचा आणि भागवत धर्माचा संबंध दाखविण्यात येऊन परस्परांत देवघेव झाली असे मानण्यांत येते त्याला कोणताही ऐतिहासिक आधार नाही (Pagdi 1993, 105).

34 'मुसलमान संतकवी नि महाराष्ट्र' या विषयाची व्याप्ती फार मोठी आहे. त्याच्या अध्ययन संशोधनाची फार आवश्यकता होती, त्यामुळं महाराष्ट्रीय धर्मसंप्रदाय नि मुसलमान संत/ संतकवी विशेषतः सूफी संतकवी यांच्या परस्पर संबंधावर त्यामुळं प्रकाश पडेल. या मुसलमान संतकवींचाही महाराष्ट्रातील जनमानसावर लक्षणीय प्रभाव होता. या सर्वांनीच विशाल मानवतावादी भूमिका स्वीकारल्यानं महाराष्ट्रात परस्पर-सामंजस्याचं, एकात्मतेचं नि समन्वयाचं वातावरण निर्माण व्हायला साहाय्य झालं (Pathan 2011, 4).

the society[35]—a view that yet again resonates with the colonial-era debates (cf. Green 2008, 1045-1051). Although Pathan offers valuable insights into the thought, language, and literary qualities of the MMS, his limited historical and textual engagement with South Asian Sufi networks and discourses—coupled with his reliance on later, often hagiographic materials—leads him to rather easily project the presence of organized *tarīqa* Sufism onto much complex and multi-layered materials created over centuries. He is largely disinterested in the historicity of how and whether the MMS came to be seen as Sufis, how the verses that are at our disposal today have been attributed to them, or how exactly the MMS were linked with the *sampradāys* and what those connections historically represented. Much of this complexity is compromised through idealistic emphasis on collaboration and harmony.

Given that the heuristic study of the voices of the MMS is a multifaceted effort that requires historicizing the manuscripts[36] and later hagiographical reception of the MMS, as well as engagement with the history of the communities of their followers, there will always remain a space for speculation on how and whether a given saint engaged with organized Sufism. Pathan, however, is rather unequivocal in his conclusions, which in turn has contributed to the wider public tendency to regard every Muslim saint as a Sufi.[37] For instance, he harshly criticizes Zulfi Sheikh's work on Shaha Bahmani (2011, 5; 29; 38) and, through his

35 Seeing Sufis as historical agents of the social and religious unity is, of course, not a new idea. Cf. Anil Vakil's words when introducing Sufism: "सुफींनी सामाजिक ऐक्यासाठी मोठे योगदान दिले [...] काही सुफींनी आपला वारस शिष्यांमधून त्यांच्या कर्मावरून ठरविला; मात्र व्यापक दृष्टीने मराठी संत आणि सुफी दृष्टी सामाजिक कल्याणाचीच राहिली (Vakil 2009, VIII, X)." (Sufis made great contributions to social unity [...] Some Sufis chose their successors from among their disciples based on their conduct; but in a broader sense, the vision of the Marathi saints and Sufis remained that of social welfare). Importantly, Vakil does distinguish between the MMS and Sufis.) Vakil 2009, X.

36 For instance, there exist several works of identical names, which, apart from the fact that it points to lineages of transmission, also complicates their attribution to the authors. *Pancīkaraṇ* attributed to Shaha Bahmani whom Pathan has chosen for documenting Sufism, is a good example of such case.

37 The limits of this approach are seen in journalistic writings that ahistorically exchange Muslim saintly identity for Sufi identity. See, e.g., https://polticalface.in/single/2578, accessed October 23, 2025.

analysis of the alleged *Pancīkaraṇ* of Shaha, attempts to prove his Sufi identity. *Pancīkaraṇ,*[38] a bilingual Marathi-Dakhni text, indeed contains a rich array of Sufi terminology. However, apart from the fact that the manuscript itself does not clearly identify its author, Pathan completely overlooks the fact that *Pancīkaraṇ* is a later Vedantic concept, linked to Mukundaraj's *Vivekasindhu* (e.g., Gokhale 1977), which attempts to approximate Sufi concepts rather than the reverse.[39] This certainly indicates a dialogue, but primarily reflects a holy man who had the knowledge of Sufism but subordinated it to the *Ānanda Sampradāy's* Vedanta. Moreover, other texts attributed to Shaha Bahmani that contain even more Vedantic rhetoric, a point emphasized by Zulfi Sheikh, have been completely disregarded by Pathan as flawed, without any deeper engagement with the historical evidence regarding the author or his texts in relation to Sufi philosophy and terminology.[40]

A somewhat similar approach regarding Sufism and the MMS has recently been adopted by Muhammad Azam. Like Pagdi, he aims to introduce global Sufism to Maharashtrian audiences—a theme that occupies majority of his voluminous and greatly informative work. The MMS, by contrast, receive relatively brief treatment, serving as examples of how Sufi ideas were locally accommodated (cf. Azam 2015, 415-426). Although a thorough discussion of Pathan's and Azam's work on the MMS[41] would need more space. both best

38 https://eap.bl.uk/archive-file/EAP023-1-1-223, accessed October 23, 2025. I am preparing a separate article just on this text, for it tells us much about the process of how the multilingual local is constituted (cf. Orsini 2012).

39 This is, for instance, clearly seen at the places where the text, for the lack of other terms, uses yogic (e.g., *vāsana, bindū*), or where it offers rather enigmatic approximations (*Rugved*/*Taured* (Torah), *Ɣajurved*/*Injil* (Gospel), *viśva abhimān*/ *Jabrāīl, taijas abhimān* /*Isrāfil,* and the like) https://eap.bl.uk/archive-file/EAP023-1-1-223, accessed October 23, 2025.

40 One of the best methodological approaches to such dialogic texts firmly grounded in the texts themselves, but also in historical evidence and deep philosophical knowledge, is Shankar Nair's *Translating Wisdom: Hindu-Muslim Intellectual Interactions in Early Modern South Asia* (2020).

41 It was particularly Pathan who devoted several other publications to them, apart from the rest of his voluminous textual production.

display the trend of certain post-partition Marathi authors to project the MMS under the label of Sufism (Cf. Sheikh 2009, 217-222).

On one hand, there is certainly room to understand the MMS in terms of their voices enabling mutual dialogue between different communities. Dhere convincingly showed this by providing evidence of their embeddedness in the *sampradāyik* networks. Such embedding speaks for the diversity of religious belonging among the MMS, which in turn, points to the diverse approaches Maharashtrian Muslims adopted toward religious, ethnic, as well as social questions. These questions are notably present in the poetry of the MMS. Since the discourse around the MMS aligns with their own, it enables the Maharashtrian Muslim community to maintain a sense of continuity with longstanding thematic content. On the other hand, the academic employment of the dialogue or collaboration (*samanvay)*, when seen solely through anachronistic Hindu-Muslim framework, but also through Sufi-bhakti framework, risks oversimplifying the diversity of MMS voices.

For instance, while Sheikh Muhammad disregards caste and employs Vaishnava *Vārkarī* and yoga rhetoric,[42] he is vague about Sufism, if not openly dismissive, yet never forgets to emphasize his being a Muslim (cf. *Yogasaṅgrām* 16: 66; 18: 213). Similarly, Shaha Muni posits caste as the cause of his own denigration, but his *Mahānubhāv*-inflected Krishna devotion bears little connection to anything historically Islamic, let alone Sufi (cf. *Siddhāntabodha*, 2:129-132; 23: 195-210). In turn, the bulk of texts attributed to Shaha Bahmani do not discuss religious belonging [43] and while *Pancīkaraṇ* shows his knowledge of Sufi terminology, he subordinates it to the Vedantic diction of *Vivekasindhu*. None of these saints, however, completely renounce their Muslim identity. All of them, in different language coded by the *sampradāyik* terms, acknowledge the absolute

42 The rhetoric that philosophically borrows vocabulary and themes from *Vārkarīs* like Jnanadev and Eknath.

43 There exists only one verse of Shaha Bahmani, where he claims to unite Hindus and Muslims. This verse, however, is the most quoted by Marathi authors, even though its location to any of Bahmani's known manuscripts is highly problematic. Pathan reproduces Dhere's claim, who in turn, references it with Kanole's claim. However, Kanole (1956/1957, 57), though claiming the verse to be from *Pancīkaraṇ* does not say anything about which version of the composition he used, and where this *Pancīkaraṇ* comes from.

agency of a single divine principle. And thusly it goes also with the other MMS. Without exploring them through the lenses of the devotional networks through which these saint-poets moved, learned, espoused a particular philosophical frame,[44] and engaged in debates and practices, as well as considering the agency of their followers in creating representations of the MMS coupled with the impact of broader learned discourses on this agency, the narrative of collaboration risks becoming either anachronistic or political.

There was yet another way how the post-partition scholars approached the dialogues initiated by the MMS, which contributed to ambiguities in their scholarly representations. Although the state promoted Indian secularism, it was not successful in securing the social position of Muslims—a fact that has become vividly evident since the second decade of the twenty-first century. Most of the memories that affected the themes of Marathi Muslim scholarship in the post-partition decades revolve around political portrayal of Muslims through the concept of violence and the suppression of the regional culture (Shahajinde and Tamboli 2014; Mujawar 2012). Some authors, in response, sought to defend their ethnic rootedness through dialogue and collaboration, pointing to the philosophical similarities between Vedanta and Sufism (e.g. Vakil 2000; 2012 or Azam 2015).

Although reconfigurations of religious belonging based on varieties of philosophical monism and mutual dialogue through ideational challenges of Vedanta and Sufism have happened in the past, as recently documented on the example of Northern Indian materials by Shankar Nair (2020) and Supriya Gandhi (2020), such efforts largely remained marginal. For Marathi Muslim scholars, the appropriation of the Vedanta-Sufism dialogue was thus more a form of scholarly political apologetics, sometimes accompanied by the dialogue-focused readings of the MMS texts and their histories. Considering the life-experiences of these scholars (cf. Bennur 2014, 48-54), their academic response to stereotypical labelling represents an honest attempt, which in a way also answered Atar's calls for a new Muslim Marathi literature. For Marathi readers, these efforts created an image of a generic, tolerant Sufi Muslim, whose philosophy was not alien and

44 *Vārkarī* Vedanta for Sheikh Muhammad, Mukundaraj's Vedanta for Shaha Bahmani, or *Mahānubhāv* peculiar Krishnaite framework for the Shaha Muni.

who could find regional and ethnic representation in the works of the MMS (c.f. Vakil 2009, 10-11) and in the traditions of their followers.[45] However, any attempt to locate such traditions today again suggests their marginality and underscores practices that more closely align with what Robert Hayden (2016) called "antagonistic tolerance" rather than willful mutual respect and collaboration (*samanvay*).[46]

Conclusion

India's modern struggle with its own diversity emerges as a multifaceted effort, encompassing, among other aspects, ideas of social justice, collectivity, and past. As this article has shown through the example of scholarly discussions on the Muslim Marathi saint-poets, modern Marathi scholars approached these ideas through antiquarian efforts that contributed to debates on Marathi literature and the ethnicized past, as well as the politically shaped notions of nation, ethnic culture, and religion—concepts that were closely intertwined with questions of social equality and, ultimately, caste. The negotiation of diversity and the attempts to posit collective belonging inevitably bore a colonial discursive mark, which allowed ideas and practices of collectivity to take different forms and names and, for some, even became a source of trauma. I have argued that a deeper engagement with the devotional networks (*sampradāys*) that shaped the voices of the MMS, or social environments where their voices are still being transmitted, creates a more productive space for discussion than merely reframing the colonial categories.

45 The limits of this approach are seen in journalistic writings that apply Sufi identity, where it is completely missing. See, e.g., https://polticalface.in/single/2578, accessed October 23, 2025.

46 Consider, for instance, the ongoing court case regarding ownership and control over the ritual practices of Sheikh Muhammad's tomb in Shrigonda, or public demands for rejuvenation of his tomb according to the ideals of *Vārkarīs* (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0hjIh3b0pzk, accessed October 23, 2025). Apart from this, there is yet another tomb of the saint. Similarly, the ownership of Shaha Bahmani's tomb is also disputed as is evident from the personal archive of S.M., who currently acts as one of the owners and stores legal documents from the dispute dating back to late nineteenth century.

In this context Indrani Chatterji's problematization of the Foucauldian notion of governmentality, particularly its pastoring character, provides a methodologically salient approach (2015). Indeed, refocusing emphasis from nation, ethnic culture, and nationalized religious collectives to the processes of how spaces and practices of exchange—that engage patrons, teachers, and followers—produced, reproduced, and sanctified the literary figures, opens new venues of addressing both the MMS' past and presence.

The new generation of Maharashtrian scholars has offered similarly productive ways of approaching the saintly Muslim Marathi voices. Pushkar Sohoni's (2016) conceptualization of the vernacular as a space highlights the often-marginalized pockets of differently imagined *sampradāyik* exchanges that have their own specific literary representation. Deepra Dandekar (2017, 2020) explores regions like the Konkan, which was rather omitted from the scholarly engagement with Muslim litterateurs. Muphid Mujawar emphasizes the social struggles accompanying the production of historical narratives about Marathi Muslims. Together, these scholars chart new and vital directions in the research of the MMS, while productively drawing on the previous research discussed in this article.

Ultimately, the diversity found in the *sampradāyik*—whether philosophical or narrative—discourses and history[47] does not stand in opposition to ethnic or cultural regional belonging. On the contrary, it is often through this diversity that ethnic and cultural belonging is articulated. Recognizing this could identify newly framed repercussions of the scholarly discourse in the public sphere, currently mediated through printed, electronic, and visual media. Furthermore, while diversity understandably poses a challenge for scholars, it may be timely to ask where *sampradāy* ends and *sampradāyikatā* begins, and to consider whether reading of the MMS with modern perspective that articulates ambiguities is not the result, rather than the cause, of the rhetoric of collaboration (*samanvay*).

47 For an illustrative example on how an essentialist view of the *sampradāys* breaks when confronted with the diverse *sampradāyik* narratives, see Joshi 1971 on sage Dattatreya clad in Fakir's garb (Shaha Datta), read in the context of *Ānanda Sampradāy*'s and *Mahānubhāv*'s avataric conceptions.

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Rybár, Lukáš. *Cisár a šáh versus sultán. Habzbursko-safíjovská diplomacia a protiosmanská aliancia*. [The Emperor and the Shah versus the Sultan: Habsburg–Safavid diplomacy and the Anti-Ottoman Alliance]. Bratislava: Veda, 2024—— 302 pp. ISBN 9788022420761.

Zuzana GAŽÁKOVÁ

There are hardly any monographs on the early modern history of the Arab Islamic world and its diplomatic relations with Europe in our scholarly landscape. *The Emperor and the Shah versus the Sultan*, published in 2024 by Veda (Slovak Academy of Sciences in Bratislava), therefore marks an important *achievement.* The monograph is all the more impressive considering that the author, Lukáš Rybár, is a young Slovak historian who is not formally trained in Oriental studies. His engagement with research on the Oriental world has grown over the years through his systematic study of the Persian language and culture, along with extensive field experience, including research stays at academic institutions and libraries in Iran. Rybár dedicated already his doctoral thesis to the study of trade relations between Shirvan—a historical region in northeastern Azerbaijan that was an important commercial hub connecting Persia, the Caucasus, and the European markets in the 16th and 17th centuries, a topic he has continued to explore and develop ever since. In his work he further illustrates his expertise through the use of **elaborate terminology** from several Oriental languages and an exceptionally rich multilingual bibliography.

The book explores a crucial aspect of Habsburg–Safavid relations, specifically their attempt to forge an anti-Ottoman alliance; a subject that has not yet been thoroughly explored. Rybár investigates these interactions primarily through a detailed analysis of diplomatic correspondence between the great powers.

The information is presented in a systematic, clear, and reader-friendly way over the introduction, ten main chapters, and an eleventh chapter that provides a concluding assessment. The work begins by examining diplomatic relations between Emperor Charles V and Safavid Shah Ismail I and concludes with the Ottoman siege of Vienna in 1683 and Emperor Leopold I's final attempts to persuade Shah Soleiman to join the war against the Ottomans. There is a wealth of new and detailed insights into the diplomatic maneuvers of the great powers—particularly the Habsburg Monarchy, Safavid Persia, and the Ottoman Empire—in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Tsarist Russia is also included, as diplomatic envoys and other representatives frequently traversed its territory. Indeed, the Muscovite Tsar played a key role as an intermediary in the effort to establish an anti-Ottoman alliance. Rybár describes how certain maneuvers were

designed to reinforce specific alliances, while others sought to undermine them. Some actions were made publicly visible, whereas others were carried out in secret. These efforts were periodically halted by the establishment of truces. In the final chapter, Rybár examines possible reasons behind the failure of these initiatives, highlighting the substantial distances as well as the significant religious and cultural differences.

The book stands out for its thorough historical analysis and for its careful reconstruction of the practical realities of early modern diplomacy. By tracing the routes of imperial agents, examining the early practices of espionage, and highlighting case studies like Georg Tectander's journey to the Persian court (1602–1605), this work vividly illustrates the potential and the limitations of cooperation between the Habsburgs and the Safavids. It provides valuable insights into diplomatic etiquette, modes of communication, the customs of the Persian court, and the intriguing practices of espionage agents. Above all, it highlights how significant distances and deep religious and cultural differences limited these diplomatic initiatives, providing readers with a nuanced understanding of the complexities of international relations in the 16th and the 17th centuries.

Lukáš Rybár's work makes a significant contribution to the study of early modern diplomacy, a period marked by the establishment of systematic missions between European powers and the states of the Orient. By combining thorough archival research with insightful analysis, his book enhances our understanding of historical developments and diplomatic practices. It could also serve as an inspiration for other colleagues to undertake similarly rigorous research.

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Kaminski, Johannes. *Lives and Deaths of Werther: Interpretation, Translation and Adaptation in Europe and East Asia*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2023——272 pp. ISBN 978-0-19-726755-4.

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Lives and Deaths of Werther: Interpretation, Translation and Adaptation in Europe and East Asia by Johannes Kaminski constitutes a comprehensive guide for those interested in the exploration of the Werther nursery fostered by different reading approaches towards the original, namely interpretation, translation, and adaptation, across the centuries and in both Europe and East Asia. The book consists of six individual sections: an introduction, four main chapters, and closing remarks. The introduction comprises several thematical subsections to provide the readers with an overall understanding of Werther's reception in different cultures by taking into consideration socio-political aspects and historical circumstances in the individual countries. First, the author summarizes the reception of the original from the perspective of its contemporary readership. Although Goethe's *Werther* is considered an essential work among the classics of German literature, and despite its established position in world literary culture, discussion of Goethe's original is still ongoing, as is shown by the large number of recently published book reviews or the big screen adaptations in the early 2000s, albeit without re-interpreting the original or proposing a new meaning, which only underlines the discrepancy between its earlier and more recent perceptions (p.1-2).

When looking back in history, *Werther*'s impact can be traced not only in other European countries than Germany, such as in pre-Risorgimento Italy and the era of French Romanticism, where it represents "*highly original examples of how foreign contexts distorted and freed Werther from canonised reading routines*" (p.2), but we also find numerous examples of *Werther* adaptations and re-interpretations in East Asia, such as China, where it was adapted to new contexts. On the other hand, in Japan it was mainly linked to melancholic analyses of the socio-political transitions in the country. Considering Werther as an integral part of the critical study of world literature and going back to the subtitle of the book—interpretation, translation, and adaptation—the second part of the introductory section is devoted to these three terms and their different understandings when discussing Werther and its reception from a global perspective. The introduction further discusses Werther and its position within world literature, the concept of the Werther nursery, as well as the inevitable plurality in the process of reading and interpreting the text. A separate subsection is concerned with the embodiment of

romantic love reflected through the figure of Werther. The introductory section closes with a brief summary of the book chapters and outlines the purpose of the study, namely to provide a thorough exploration of the Werther nursery across different eras, countries, and languages.

Chapter one comprises four subsections followed by a brief conclusion, and develops the first concept in the title, interpretation. The author maps the multipolar and sometimes even contradictory interpretations of *Werther* in order to equip readers with "*a mental map to better navigate the Werther nursery*" (p.23) instead of creating "*another rigid framework of literary interpretation*" (ibid.). This chapter presents several examples of reading approaches employed by scholars, with excerpts from their commentaries. Apart from the monochromatic interpretation of *Werther* and its perception as an over-studied topic in academia, another common approach towards the interpretation of the text was by making use of Goethe's autobiography *Poetry and Truth* (1811–1833). However, Kaminski in his book does not limit the explanation of a singular meaning in regard to the Werther nursery only to contemporary interpretations and analysis, but he also discusses the influential works written up to the second half of the 20th century: a psychoanalytic approach employed by K.R. Eissler, hermeneutics as shown in the works of H.R. Jauss and R. Haverkamp, and discourse analysis combined with media theory by F. Kittler.

Taking the reading of *Werther* in East Asia as an example, this subsection moves from a singular meaning towards plurality by presenting completely different interpretations of the text, e.g., Guo Moruo's detached perception of the author and the protagonist. In addition to the above-mentioned interpretative strategies, plurality also touches upon the protagonist himself in regard to the indefinite options under the Either-Or formula (p. 51-53). The chapter concludes with five contradictory summaries on *Werther* by exemplifying a "graftage" of irony, overidentification, rebellion, transcendence, and masochism; followed by a brief chapter-themed conclusion.

The second chapter, divided into three subsections and a conclusion, is concerned with translations and translators. The opening section discusses the different approaches of English-speaking translators towards *Werther* as demonstrated by translation excerpts covering earlier versions published shortly after the original up to more recent ones. Although this subsection is focused only on one target language, it reveals remarkable differences among the English translations, varying from a minimal degree of translator interference and a preference for translator invisibility to disruption of the original and even the

insertion of new sections. The third subsection, which is focused on translations into Japanese and Chinese, also briefly comments on the historical events which had an impact on the perception of German in these target-language countries. The author selects three different translations into Japanese and also presents short excerpts to demonstrate the peculiarity of each translator's choice for rendering *Werther* by using vernacular language (at that time still in the process of formation) with back-translations in English. One of the examples of different translation techniques can be demonstrated by the translation of names into Japanese: in the case of Takayama naturalized and rendered based on the usual form of Japanese names written in *kanji*, and on the other hand, the foreignizing translation of Kubo by using *hiragana* and *katakana* to reflect the original pronunciation of the protagonists' names (p. 100).

The second part on the translations from East Asia presents the works of three Chinese translators: Ma Junwu, Guo Moruo, and Qian Tianyou. As in previous sections, the reader is first acquainted with the important historical background that revolves around the formation of modern vernacular language in China. Taking into consideration the belated circulation of European literary works in China, firstly after 1900, as with the Japanese translations, Chinese translators also selected different language varieties for their Werthers. For instance, Ma Junwu's translation is in Classical Chinese whereas Guo Moruo opted for the modern vernacular. The Ossian passage in the original represents another example of the different translation approaches to rendering it into Chinese. Guo Moruo's translation lacks the use of any language other than Chinese, leading to missing the distinction between Werther's translation of the poem found in Goethe's original and the main text (p. 107).

The third chapter, comprising two subsections and a conclusion, is concerned with the *Wertherian novels* from the perspective of the socio-political contexts with a particular focus on the revolutionary stances in the target countries, including the 18th and 19th centuries in Europe and mainly at the turn of the 20th century in East Asia. Before discussing the textual corpus used for the analysis of *Werther's* revolutionary afterlives, Kaminski summarizes in the introductory section four characteristics that can be used as distinguishing features for a Wertherian adaptation. He also systematically maps the revolutionary movements in the relevant countries to provide the necessary historical background of the works analyzed. Under the category of politically committed texts that can be considered Wertherian adaptations, the earliest text included in the corpus is *The Last Letters of Jacobo Ortis* (1798/1802) written by Ugo Foscolo. Kaminski describes the similarities between *Werther* and *Ortis* as follows: "*Both are epistolary texts in which the narration is dominated by the musings of young men who despair of their cruel*

environments. Both men see their beloveds married off to other men and commit suicide towards the end of the texts." (p. 121). In contrast, one of the distinguishing features between the protagonists is the level of their political commitment.

In line with the preceding chapters, the second subsection depicts the situation of *Werther* reinterpretations and adaptations in East Asia. The literary works discussed in this section are introduced based on their thematic division, such as the motif of sexual frustration reflected through the individual's suppressed passion in *Caramel Girl* (1924) by Guo Moruo which is juxtaposed to Yu Dafu's *Sinking* (1921) that finds relief in national rejuvenation. Apart from the works of Chinese writers, this section also addresses one Korean novel by Yi Kwangsu, *Heartless* (1917), which depicts a love triangle with two protagonists in whom we can find certain similarities with Werther. Following the societal changes and the alternation of Wertherian figures in the adaptations of the original, another perspective emerges through the revolutionary protagonists as observed in *Trilogy of Love* (1931–1935) by Ba Jin. The subconclusion to this chapter synthetizes the texts analyzed from the perspective of dignity in suffering, martial aggression, and patriotism (p. 155).

Chapter four, which consists of three subsections and chapter-specific conclusion, adds the final layer to the study of the *Wertherian* nursery in regard to the thanatological aspect of such literary works. In this chapter Kaminski investigates a possible explanation of the Wertherian protagonist's death drive by employing the concepts introduced by Schopenhauer and Freud in combination with studies on thanatological works such as Korff's S*pirit of Goethe's Age* (1923-1953) or Kamei Katsuichirō's *Education of Man* (1937). The second subsection concentrates on the French Romantics and develops the topic of the last chapter primarily through the works of Chateaubriand (*René*, 1802), Senancour (*Obermann*, 1804), and Constant (*Adolphe*, 1816). The last subsection prior to the conclusion is devoted to the literary works of Japanese authors; among others the works discussed include: *Kokoro* (1914) by Sōseki Natsume, which can be linked to the attempt of an honor-based ending of one's life, *The Life of a Stupid Man* (1927) by Akutagawa Ryūnosuke as an example of the I-novel, or *No Longer Human* (1948) by Dazai Osamu as representative of the Decadent School.

In conclusion, the present book provides a comprehensive overview of the spreading "trajectory" of Goethe's *Werther* in different countries worldwide and summarizes the multifaceted perception of the book in different cultures as well as devoting attention to aspects linked to the complex nature of *Werther* and Werther nursery across the world. The study informs the reader about the

influential works which have been part of the Werther nursery since its first appearance up to the 20th century and the author moves from a singular meaning towards plurality to investigate the different reading approaches, though, not with the objective of establishing another rigid framework but rather to present the variety of textual interpretations. Kaminski also poses interesting questions for further discussion (e.g., 46-47). Another important aspect of the Werther nursery is the question of the reception of translations originating from English-speaking translators in the region of East Asia by analyzing works in Japanese and Chinese. Taking into consideration the revolutionary afterlives of *Werther*, the present study also explores the early literary works published shortly after Goethe's original up to the first half of the 20th century marked by the socio-political changes in Europe and East Asia and investigates *Wertherian novels* in which the protagonists show different degree of longing for national rejuvenation. Along with other topics, the last section examines thanatological aspects of the Werther nursery by presenting diversified perspectives on the variety of Wertherian protagonists across the cultures.

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