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The Exegetical Tradition of the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*

Abstract
The *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra,* which served as an ideological foundation for the establishment and gradual development of the Huayan school, is one of the most influential Mahāyāna sūtras in East Asian Buddhism. This article shows how the exegetical tradition that focused on the study of this scripture was started by the scholar monks of the Dilun school, who highly valued the Vasubandhu's commentary on the *Daśabhūmika-sūtra* chapter of the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra,* and was completed during the Tang dynasty by the masters of the Buddhist exegesis, who later were venerated as patriarchs of the Huayan school.

Keywords: *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra,* Chinese Buddhism, Huayan Buddhism, Dilun school, Vasubandhu, *Daśabhūmika-sūtra,* Fazang 法藏

The development of Chinese Buddhist commentaries

In Chinese Buddhist literature the significance of commentaries is well illustrated by the fact that in the Taishō edition of the Buddhist canon they constitute 11.5 volumes, as opposed to the 4.5 volumes of essays expounding the teachings of schools. The formal and essential criteria of commentary writing were formulated gradually, and commentary as a genre attained its final form by the Tang dynasty. This form became the model to be followed by later generations, and no significant innovations were later observed.[1]

The first commentators were the translators who arrived from abroad and were better acquainted with the texts than were the Chinese. The works produced at the early stages of translation, when the newcomers had still not mastered the Chinese language (nor had the Chinese yet learnt to speak the language

[1] The only detailed study on the Chinese Buddhist commentaries is Ōchō Enichi's early article in 1937, which was republished in his collected works in 1979. See Ōchō 1979. Following in his footsteps, Kanno Hiroshi published articles that survey the tradition of commentary writing in Chinese Buddhism. See Kanno 2003, 2007; Kanno and Felbur 2015.

of the great masters) should be regarded as explanations rather than word-by-word translations.[2] Zachetti's recent studies have shown that a tradition of oral explanation of the translated texts can be traced back to as early as An Shigao (148–180 CE).[3] This is attested to a manuscript of the *Anban shouyi jing* 安般守意經 found in Kongōji in 1999, which turned out to be a commentary and not a different version of the scripture with the same title preserved in the Buddhist canon (T 602).[4]

The indigenous Chinese Buddhist commentaries from the 3rd and 4th centuries are called interlinear (*zhu* 注), and those from the 5th century are called expository (*shu* 疏).[5] In case of the first type, the commentary is inserted right after the relevant passage of the sūtra; thus the commentary also includes the whole text of the sūtra. However, the second type only cites a few passages or refers to a passage by its first and last words. The interlinear commentaries usually were written for shorter sūtras and focus primarily on the explanation of some words, while expository commentaries tend to focus on the underlying meaning of a sūtra.[6] However, the lines between these two types of commentary do not seem to be very fixed, as modern editions of expository commentaries are arranged along with the whole sūtra, divided into sections according to the structure of the sūtra.[7]

Early commentaries include a preface (*xu* 序) that explains the title of the sūtra and the central concept of its content and provides information on the process of the translation. It is a unique feature of Chinese Buddhist commentaries to summarise the central concept of a sūtra in one sentence. The *Commentary on the Diamond sūtra* (*Jin'gang bore boluomi jing zhu* 金剛般若波羅蜜經注), attributed to Sengzhao 僧肇 (384–414 CE) but in fact authored by the famous poet Xie Lingyun 謝靈運 (385–433 CE), for example says: 'The principle [of this sūtra] is returning to the Middle Way. Its cardinal purport is the two truths' (*fu li gui zhongdao erdi wei zong* 夫理歸中道二諦為宗).[8] The Xuanxue (Dark Learning) thinkers must have influenced Buddhist exegetes during their inten-

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[2] For the history of the translation of Buddhist works into Chinese, see Cao 1989.

[3] For An Shigao's biography and his translation works, see Nattier 2008: 38–72.

[4] Zachetti 2008. Zachetti was able to identify another component of the Kongōji manuscript, the *Twelve Gates* (*Shier men* 十二門) and the long ignored text *Ahan koujie shier yinyuan jing* 阿含口解十二因緣經 (T 1508) as part of the oral tradition related to An Shigao. See Zachetti 2003, 2004.

[5] Kanno 2003: 302–307.

[6] Kanno 2003: 302–307.

[7] A good example is the modern edition of Chengguan's commentary and subcommentary along with the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*, arranged passage by passage according to the text of the sūtra. See Chengyi 2001–2004.

[8] CBETA, X24, no. 454, p. 395a14.

sive discourse on the similarity between prajñā philosophy and Xuanxue in the 4th century.[9] One of the great Xuanxue figures, Wang Bi 王弼 (226–249 CE), whose commentary on the *Daode jing* became authoritative for future generations, stated that the message of Laozi could be summed up in one single sentence, and if one understands this sentence, it becomes easy for them to interpret the individual parts of the text. This sentence is the following: 'Emulating the root [by way] of bringing to rest the stem and branches [growing from it], that is all' (*chong ben xi mo eryi yi* 崇本息末而已矣).[10] The *Daode jing* shows us the way that leads back to the root, to the *Dao*, propagating the abandonment of the phenomenal world that the *Dao* once created.

The first extant expository commentary was written by Daosheng 道生 (360–434) on the *Lotus sūtra* and titled *Miaofa lianhua jing shu* 妙法蓮花經疏.[11] He breaks the tradition of writing a preface to the commentary; instead, he directly inserts his preliminary remarks before the text of the commentary. Later during the Sui dynasty (581–618), the formulation of Profound Meaning (*xuanyi* 玄義) or Profound Treatise (*xuanlun* 玄論), which provides the essential meaning of the sūtra and explains the system of Buddhist teachings before the commentary, must have been indebted to this work. In his commentary on the *Lotus sūtra,* Daosheng reveals the purpose of writing this commentary and emphasises that this sūtra originates from the time of Buddha. He claims that the central concept (*zong* 宗) of the *Lotus sūtra* is the Mahāyāna. The practice of summarising the tenets of a particular sūtra paved the way for the classification of teachings (*panjiao* 判教). In addition, during the Eastern Jin dynasty (317–420), a great amount of sūtras was translated into Chinese; thus a system for the treatment of their teachings had to be established. In Daosheng's commentary we find an early classification of teachings, which is a precursor to the elaborate *panjiao* 判教 formulated by the Tiantai and Huayan masters.

Another innovation of Daosheng's commentary is that each chapter's commentary is preceded by a synopsis, an explanation of the title, and a reason for the chapter's particular location in the sūtra. The fact that there is a profound basis for arranging the chapters of a sūtra implies that Buddha's words are well arranged with a clear intention, even if it does not seem to be obvious to the average reader. Later this method came to be widely used in commentaries, and this section was called 'meaning of coming' (*laiyi* 來意).[12] A similar concept

[9] Zürcher 2007: 101–102.
[10] Wagner 2000: 176.
[11] CBETA, X27, no. 577. For its English translation, see Kim 1990.
[12] Kanno and Felbur 2015: 455.

is found in the Christian tradition, as Origen and Eusebius argued that the four Gospels follow one another in an ordered sequence.[13]

The genuine hermeneutical method for structuring the text that Chinese Buddhists invented is the *kepan* 科判 or *kewen* 科文. The invention is sometimes attributed to Dao'an (312–385), but in his extant commentaries it is not found. This is the reason why Ōchō Enichi credits Daosheng, whose commentary on the *Lotus sūtra* includes the structure of the text, with inventing this device.[14] However, the categories of introductory section (*xufen* 序分), the sūtra proper (*zhengzong* 正宗), and concluding section (*liutongfen* 流通分) are not used. Ōchō Enichi surmises that these three categories, which later became the standard scheme for the division of a sūtra, originated with the commentators of the *Lotus sūtra* in the Liang dynasty. Every chapter is divided into passages, and every passage has a heading. These headings provide the outline of the text, which is the *kepan* or *kewen*. When explaining a passage, he does not repeat the whole passage but only indicates the beginning of the passage.

During the Sui dynasty (581–618) the most significant development in terms of commentary-writing was the expansion of the introduction, which became a separate treatise before the commentary. These works were divided into parts called gates (*men* 門) or meanings (*yi* 義). Following the earlier tradition, the explanation of the title and the classification of teachings are found here. However, a new feature of these works is that many Buddhist scriptures are cited, the different explanation of various schools are pointed out, and the tenets of rival schools are refuted. The reason that this kind of work became more elaborate in this period might be that the northern and southern Buddhist teachings merged, and in addition, the new translations of Paramārtha (499–569) in the South and Bodhiruci in the North introduced new ideas that had to be harmonised with the earlier teachings.

From this period we find works that are not word-by-word commentaries of the sūtras, but rather attempts to give an overall meaning of the text. For example, two leading monks, the founder of the Tiantai school Zhiyi 智顗 (538–597) and the founder of the Sanlun 三論 school Jizang 吉藏 (549–623), authored these kinds of works (*Fahua xuanyi* 妙法蓮華經玄義, T 1716; *Weimojing xuanshu* 維摩經玄疏, T 1777; *Fahua xuanlun* 法華玄論, T 1720; *Jingming xuanlun* 淨名玄論, T 1780; *Fahua youyi* 法華遊義, T 1722). If we look at the content of these texts, it turns out that they are very similar to the previous introductions to the commentaries, but instead of placing them before the commentary as an introduction, probably due their size, they became independent essays. Zhiyi's *The enigmatic meaning of the Lotus sūtra* (*Fahua xuanyi* 法華玄義) is divided

[13] Henderson 1991: 109.

[14] For an English translation of this work, see Kim 1990.

into five sections: 1. an explanation of the title (*shiming* 釋名); 2. a discussion of the essence (*bianti* 辨體), which is the description of the final reality of phenomena; 3. an illumination of the central concept (*mingzong* 明宗), which treats the reasons and results of Buddhist practice; 4. a treatment of function (*lunyong* 論用), which describes the function of wisdom that is able to dispel the doubts and awaken the faith; and 5. a classiciation of teachings (*panjiao* 判教), which evaluates the ranking of the *Lotus sūtra* among Buddha's teachings. It is interesting to note that the explanation of the title constitutes 88 pages out of the total 138 pages.[15] In the course of elaborating the meaning of two characters in the title, the dharma (*fa* 法) and wonderful (*miao* 妙), Zhiyi propounds his new teaching, the third truth, the middle truth, which is a Sinitic innovation.[16]

Jizang's work, *Pondering on the meaning of the Lotus sūtra* (*Fahua youyi* 法華遊義), gives much more information about the exegetical tradition of the *Lotus sūtra*. It is divided into 10 parts or gates (*shi men* 十門): 1. the reason for the origination of the sūtra (*laiyi* 來意), which shows the purpose of Buddha's teaching this sūtra; 2. the central concept of the sūtra (*zongzhi* 宗旨); 3. an explanation of the title (*shi mingti* 釋名題); 4. a classification of the teachings (*panjiao yi* 辨教意); 5. a discussion of the exoteric and esoteric teachings (*xianmi* 顯密), where 'esoteric' means that the real meaning is hidden for the audience; 6. the 'three' and the 'one' (*sanyi* 三一), which discusses the relation between the three vehicles and one vehicle; 7. an efficient function (*gongyong* 功用), which claims that given the 10 inconceivables of the sūtra, it is endowed with a liberating power; 8. the transmission of the sūtra (*hongjing* 弘經), which describes the way the sūtra was transmitted and the persons who were involved; 9. various versions of the sūtra (*budang* 部黨), for comparing different translations; and 10. the history of the exegetical tradition of *Lotus sūtra* (*yuanqi* 緣起).

During the Tang period (618–907) the explanation of commentaries and subcommentaries were compiled. For example, Zhanran 湛然 (711–782), the most famous Tiantai patriarch during the Tang, wrote subcommentaries on Zhiyi's commentaries. Commentators authored special works, with charts revealing the outline or the structure. This kind of work is called scriptural cartography by Robert Gimello.[17] They might have served as a kind of visual aid for commentators, or subcommentators, although the real use of these works is not known. Zhanran composed charts to three of Zhiyi's works. The appearance of this genre could be attributed to the increasing importance of the patriarchal lineage by the end of Tang and especially in the Song.

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[15] For the outline of the text, its partial translation, see Swanson 1989: 157–259.

[16] For a study on three truths, see Swanson 1989: 115–156..

[17] Based on personal communication with Robert Buswel and Robert Gimello.

Early Chinese commentaries on the *Huayan jing*

According to Fazang's 法藏 (643–712) *Huayan jing zhuan ji* 華嚴經傳記, after Buddhabhadra (359–429) had completed the translation of the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra* in 422, his scribe Faye 法業 (?–?) studied the scripture for several years, and finally attaining great enlightenment, he composed *Summary* (*Zhigui* 旨歸), which abridges the *Huayan jing* in two fascicles.[18] Unfortunately, other sources do not substantiate Fazang's record, and this first commentary has not remained. However, a manuscript titled *Summary of the Huayan jing in two fascicles* (*Huayan jing liang juan zhigui* 華嚴經兩卷旨歸) is preserved in the collection of Kanazawa Bunko.[19] Although the second fascicle is attributed to Sanzang Fotuo 三藏佛陀, which could be identified as Buddhabhadra, Ishii Kōsei showed that this work cites scriptures translated during the Sui dynasty and refers to the tenets of the Dilun school; thus it could not have been authored by Buddhabhadra or Faye. He suggests that it was written during the Sui dynasty by a monk who belonged to a branch of the Dilun school lesser known than the Fashang–Huiyuan lineage.[20]

The translation of Vasubandhu's (4th to 5th century) commentary on the *Daśabhūmika-sūtra* by Bodhiruci (6th century CE) and Ratnamati (5th to 6th century) in 511 in Luoyang, the capital of Northern Wei (386–535), and the arising interest in this work from a group of Northern scholars who later were referred to as the Dilun school definitely gave impetus to the spread and study of the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*.[21] As *Daśabhūmika-sūtra* is a chapter of the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*, the Dilun masters must have become interested in the context of the sūtra that they mainly studied.[22] However, especially the masters of the southern branch of the Dilun school seem to have taken effort in explaining and commenting on the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*. It must have been Ratnamati's disciple, Huiguang 慧光 (468–537),[23] who especially emphasised the importance of the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*, as he and his disciples,

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[18] CBETA, T51, no. 2073, p. 158a22–b4.

[19] It was Takamine Ryōshū who discovered this manuscript and first studied. See Takamine 1976: 487–499.

[20] For a detailed study on this manuscript and its critical edition, see Ishii 1996: 23–78, 519–560.

[21] Tanaka argues that none of the Dilun masters refers to himself as a Dilun master. Only during the Sui and early Tang periods was this term applied to these masters. See Tanaka 1990: 20. For the history and the main tenets of the Dilun school, see Paul 1984: 46–68.

[22] See Kimura 1977: 36–39, 1992: 39–43, Wei 1998: 64–82.

[23] For his biography, see *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* 續高僧傳, CBETA, T50, no. 2060, pp. 607b18–608b29, and *Huayan jing zhuan ji* 華嚴經傳記, CBETA, T51, no. 2073, p. 159a10–b15.

Sengfan 僧範 (476–555),[24] Huishun 慧順 (487–558),[25] Daoping 道憑 (488–559),[26] Tanzun 曇遵 (480–564?),[27] Tanyan 曇衍 (503–581),[28] and Anlin 安廩 (507–583)[29] gave lectures on the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*. It is likely that their disciples took notes and compiled an expository commentary, which was the prevalent type of Buddhist commentary at that time. The second generation of the Dilun masters, including Lingyu 靈裕 (518–605),[30] Linggan 靈幹 (535–612),[31] and Huiyuan 慧遠 (523–592),[32] following the footsteps of their masters studied the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*. Unfortunately, almost all of the commentaries written on the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra* by the Dilun masters are lost, or only some parts have remained. Only 600–700 characters from Huiguang's commentary on the chapter 'Bodhisattvas answer the questions' (*Pusa mingnan pin* 菩薩明難品) have survived.[33] Explaining the sūtra sentence by sentence, Huiguang attempts to correlate this chapter with the others. The sixth fascicle of Lingyu's commentary, which explains the last chapter of

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[24] For his biography, see *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* 續高僧傳, CBETA, T50, no. 2060, pp. 483b20–484a10, and *Huayan jing zhuan ji* 華嚴經傳記, CBETA, T51, no. 2073, p. 159b16–c18.

[25] For his biography, see *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* 續高僧傳, CBETA, T50, no. 2060, p. 484b3–23.

[26] For his biography, see *Xu gaoseng zhuan* 續高僧傳, CBETA, T50, no. 2060, p. 484b24–c19.

[27] The *Xu gaoseng zhuan* does not say that he wrote a commentary on *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*, but the *Huayan jing zhuan ji* states that he did in seven fascicles. For his biography, see *Xu gaoseng zhuan* 續高僧傳, CBETA, T50, no. 2060, p. 484a11–b2. For the information about his commentary, see *Huayan jing zhuan ji* 華嚴經傳記, CBETA, T51, no. 2073, p. 164b18.

[28] The *Xu gaoseng zhuan* does not say that he wrote a commentary on *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*, but the *Huayan jing zhuan ji* confirms that. For his biography, see *Xu gaoseng zhuan* 續高僧傳, CBETA, T50, no. 2060, p. 487b3–c7, and *Huayan jing zhuan ji* 華嚴經傳記, CBETA, T51, no. 2073, pp. 159c19–160a11.

[29] For his biography, see *Xu gaoseng zhuan* 續高僧傳, CBETA, T50, no. 2060, p. 480b3–c1.

[30] Lingyu played an important role in establishing the famous Buddhist site on Baoshan 寶山 in Henan 河南. The *Fayuan zhulin* 法苑珠林 includes his *Verses on comprehensive repentance of the ten evil deeds* (*Zongchan shi'e jiwen* 總懺十惡偈文). CBETA, T53, no. 2122, pp. 918c22–919b17. For his biography, see *Xu gaoseng zhuan* 續高僧傳, CBETA, T50, no. 2060, pp. 495b5–498a22, and *Huayan jing zhuan ji* 華嚴經傳記, CBETA, T51, no. 2073, pp. 160a12–161a11.

[31] For his biography, see *Xu gaoseng zhuan* 續高僧傳, CBETA, T50, no. 2060, p. 518a27–c27, and *Huayan jing zhuan ji* 華嚴經傳記, CBETA, T51, no. 2073, p. 161b1–22.

[32] Huiyuan was one of the most outstanding scholar monks of his time, who learnt under the famous Dilun master, Fashang 法上 (495–580), but Tanqian 曇遷 (542–607) also made a great impact on him. Of his several commentaries to Buddhist scriptures, nine have survived, and his *Mahāyāna Encyclopedia* (*Dasheng yi zhang* 大乘義章, T 1851) is also extant. Unfortunately, his commentary on the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra* is lost. For his biography, see *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* 續高僧傳, CBETA, T50, no. 2060, pp. 489c26–492b1, and *Huayan jing zhuan ji* 華嚴經傳記, CBETA, T51, no. 2073, pp. 156c28–157b5. For his modern biography, see Tanaka 1990: 20–32.

[33] *Huayan jing yiji juan di yi* 花嚴經義記卷第一, CBETA, T85, no. 2756, p. 234a10–c1. This chapter could be especially important for Dilun masters, who investigated the ultimate nature of the mind as at the beginning of the chapter Mañjuśrī poses the question: 'If the mind nature is the same [for all beings], how various retributions can be produced?' CBETA, T09, no. 278, p. 427a3

the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*, the Gaṇḍavyūha from Sudhana's 10th to 43rd visits is also extant.[34] Another commentary probably authored by a Dilun master,[35] as Vasubandhu's commentary on the *Daśabhūmika-sūtra* is often cited, is the *Short commentary on the Avataṃsaka-sūtra* (*Huayan lüeshu* 華嚴略疏), which has survived as two manuscripts from Dunhuang (S. 2694 and 北敦 01053),[36] but based on the content and the style of calligraphy they used to belong together.[37] The S. 2694 includes comments on the first eight chapters of the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*, while 北敦 01053 explains the Daśabhūmika chapter. It refers to the text of the sūtra, such as the expository commentaries, and includes the exegetical methods of structuring the text (*kewen* 科文) and the 'meaning of coming' (*laiyi* 來意).

Although, as we have seen above, the Dilun masters took great effort in the exegetical study of the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*, other masters who specialised in other areas in the North also studied this scripture. Tanwuzui 曇無最 (around 520), who was called the eastern bodhisattva by Bodhiruci, studied this sūtra along with the *Nirvāṇa-sūtra*,[38] and his disciple Zhiju 智炬 (?–?) explained and commented on *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*.[39] Zhiju is said to have had a vision of Samantabhadra, when the bodhisattva told him to follow him to the South where he was going to give him a medicine to reach deep understanding. Sengda 僧達 (475–556), who was Ratnamati's and Huiguans's disciple, specialised in the Chinese translation of the *Dharmaguptaka vinaya,* the *Four-part Vinaya* (*sifen lü* 四分律) but also studied the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*.[40] Another master of the vinaya, Hongzun 洪遵 (530–608), is said to have written a commentary on the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra* in seven fascicles.[41]

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[34] *Huayan jing wenyi ji* 華嚴經文義記, CBETA, X03, no. 211, pp. 21a4–37a2.

[35] According to the catalogue of Buddhist works, *Xinbian zhuzong jiaozang zonglu* 新編諸宗教藏總錄 (CBETA, T55, no. 2184, p. 1166a12), Huiguang wrote a short commentary in four fascicles. However, we find reference to the Northern Zhou (557–581) in the manuscript; thus it must have been written between 557–574, after the death of Huiguang. Fang 2003: 17.

[36] The S. 2694 is included in the Taishō edition of the Buddhist canon (T 2754). The other manuscript was published in the series of extracanonical documents (Fang 2003: 19–52).

[37] Fang 2003: 17.

[38] For his biography, see *Xu gaoseng zhuan* 續高僧傳, CBETA, T50, no. 2060, pp. 624b22–625a18), and the *Huayan jing zhuan ji* 華嚴經傳記 states that he wrote a commentary on the *Buddhāvataṃasaka-sūtra*, but the number of fascicle is unknown.

[39] For his biography, see *Huayan jing zhuan ji* 華嚴經傳記, CBETA, T51, no. 2073, pp. 158c27–159a9.

[40] For his biography, see *Xu gaoseng zhuan* 續高僧傳, CBETA, T50, no. 2060, pp. 552c25–553b24.

[41] For his biography, see *Xu gaoseng zhuan* 續高僧傳, CBETA, T50, no. 2060, pp. 611a26–612a20. The rererence for his commentary, see *Huayan jing zhuan ji* 華嚴經傳記, CBETA, T51, no. 2073, p. 164b26.

Fazang introduced Lingbian 靈辨 (477–522) as a devout worshipper of Mañjuśrī bodhisattva, who after having a visual experience of the bodhisattva on Wutaishan 五台山, the sacred mountain of Chinese Buddhism and the abode of Mañjuśrī bodhisattva, wrote his commentary in 100 fascicles on the mountain. Later, he was called to Luoyang to teach the sūtra in the court.[42] However, Zhang Wenliang showed that Lingbian probably had never gone to this mountain or Luoyang but rather lived all of his life on Xuanwengshan 懸甕山 in Taiyuan 太原, where he had his vision of Mañjuśrī and wrote his commentary.[43] As by Fazang's time Wutaishan gradually rose to the status of a sacred site for Buddhism, being the abode of Mañjuśrī bodhisattva, Fazang intended to give an early example for the Mañjuśrī cult on Wutaishan by linking Lingbian to this mountain.[44]

Twelve fascicles of Lingbian's commentary on the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*, the *Huayanjing lun* 華嚴經論, have survived; thus they constitute the earliest partially extant Chinese commentary on the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*.[45] It is interesting to note that even though most commentaries on sūtras were called *yishu* in Lingbian's time, his commentary is titled *lun*, like most of its contemporary Indian counterparts. Lingbian must have chosen this word deliberately in order to show the very unique style of his commentary being at variance with commentaries prevalent in his time. Lingbian was brave to break the tradition of commenting on the sūtra line by line. Instead, he first proposed his concepts on the sūtra, and then he cited from the sūtra to substantiate his statements. He cites from Indian scriptures and apocryphal sūtras, but he never refers to other Chinese masters or commentators, which makes his work different from most of the commentaries. It is important to note that he does not refer to Vasubandhu's commentary on the *Daśabhūmika-sūtra*, which seems to imply that he did not have access to this work, and as stated above, he never went to the capital, where

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[42] For his biography, see *Huayan jing zhuan ji* 華嚴經傳記, CBETA, T51, no. 2073, p. 157b6–c11.

[43] Zhang 2017: 2–17.

[44] For the Mañjuśrī cult on Wutaishan, see Birnbaum 1983. For a recent book on Wutaishan, see Andrews 2020.

[45] Only the 10th fascicle of Lingbian's commentary is preserved in the Chinese Buddhist canon (CBETA, X03, no. 208, pp. 1a5–5b18). Satō Taishun was able to identify six fascicles (51–56) in the Korean Songgwangsa 松廣寺 monastery. See Satō 1951. However, these mauscripts were lost but found again in the Korean royal library, Gyujanggak 奎章阁. These manuscripts were written based on the manuscripts discovered by Satō Taishun. See Chang 2004: 178–179. Another five fascicles (3, 14–18) were discovered in the collection of the Japanese treasure house, the Shōsōin 正倉院. For the edition of the Japanese manuscripts, see Shindō 1961a, 1961b, 1961c, 1961d, 1961e. Three Dunhuang manuscripts (S. 3960, S. 3986, S. 3987) are identified as parts from Lingbian's commentary. S. 3986 and S. 3987 consist of pages with handwritings of three or four people from the Tang period. See Ishii 1997.

he would have had a chance to consult this seminal commentary. Like *yishu* commentaries, Lingbian also provides a very detailed structure of the text (*fenke* 分科), often using the number 10 for subdividing Buddhist teachings.[46]

In the South, the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra* was studied by the Sanlun masters, which started, according to Jizang 吉藏 (549–623), with master Sheng 勝 (?–?) on Sheshan 攝山. Sheng, who is not known otherwise, was the first to teach this scripture,[47] but early Sanlun masters, including the Korean founder of the Sanlun school on Sheshan, Senglang 僧朗 (494–512),[48] and Sengquan 僧詮 (d. 528), seem to have paid attention to the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*.[49] Falang 法朗 (507–581),[50] who studied this sūtra from Sengquan, settled down in the Xinghuan 興皇 monastery in 558 and lectured on the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra* and the *Prajñāpāramita sūtras* on imperial order. Another disciple of Sengquan, Huiyong 慧勇 (515–583), who preached in the palace on the order of Emperor Chen Wen 陳文 (522–566) in 564, also studied the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*.[51] Falang's dicsiples Huijue 慧覺 (554–606),[52] Luoyun 羅雲 (542–616),[53] and Jizang 吉藏 (549–623)[54] continued lecturing on the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*. Jizang wrote an essay on the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra* titled *Huayan youyi* 華嚴遊意 in the Huiri 慧日 practice centre (*daochang* 道場) of Yangzhou 揚州 in 600.[55] He explains the meaning of the pure land in terms of the teacher (*huazhu* 化主), the place of teaching (*huachu* 化處), the teaching (*jiaomen* 教門), and the disciples (*tuzhong* 徒眾). Jizang, applying the Madhyamaka method of four phrases (*siju* 四句) and two truths (*erdi* 二諦), discusses whether the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra* was preached by the Sambhogakāya form of Buddha, Vairocana Buddha, or the nirmāṇakāya form, Śākyamuni Buddha.[56]

In the region of Jiangsu and Zhejiang, an important centre for the study of the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra* was the Yiyin monastery (*Yiyin si* 一音寺) in Yuezhou

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[46] For a study on the characteristics of Lingbian's commentary, see Zhang 2017: 18–34.

[47] See *Huayan youyi* 華嚴遊意, CBETA, T35, no. 1731, p. 1a20–21.

[48] Senglang studied *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra* from his master, Fadu 法度 (507–581). See *Gaoseng zhuan* 高僧傳, CBETA, T50, no. 2059, p. 380c15–18.

[49] See Liu 1994: 82–84. For the spread of the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra* in the South, see Wei 1998: 102–107; Kimura 1977: 40–48, 1992: 44–53.

[50] For his biography, see *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* 續高僧傳,CBETA, T50, no. 2060, pp. 477b1–478a20.

[51] For his biography, see *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* 續高僧傳,CBETA, T50, no. 2060, p. 478a21–c5.

[52] For his biography, see *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* 續高僧傳,CBETA, T50, no. 2060, p. 516a7–c18.

[53] For his biography, see *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* 續高僧傳,CBETA, T50, no. 2060, p. 493a10–c2.

[54] For his biography, see *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* 續高僧傳, CBETA, T50, no. 2060, pp. 513c19–515a8; *Shenseng zhuan* 神僧傳, CBETA, T50, no. 2064, pp. 985c22–986a10; *Huayan jing zhuan ji* 華嚴經傳記, CBETA, T51, no. 2073, p. 162a12–27.

[55] T35, no. 1731.

[56] See Sun 2019.

越州. Famin 法敏 (579–645),[57] who studied with Falang's disciple Master Ming 明 on Maoshan 茅山, settled down in this monastery in 628. He lectured on the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*, and *Huayan jing zhuan ji* credits him with writing a commentary on it in seven fascicles. His disciple Facong 法聰 (586–656)[58] continued studying the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*.

The other important school on the South was the Shelun school founded by Paramārtha,[59] but it was overshadowed by the Sanlun school. In escaping the Northern Zhou persecution of Buddhism under Emperor Wu (r. 561–577), many Dilun masters fled to the South, where they learnt Shelun teachings. One of these masters was Tanqian 曇遷 (542–607), who went to the southern capital Jiankang in 577 and mastered the Shelun teachings. With the establishment of the Sui dynasty, he returned north to Pengcheng in 581, and he went to the capital Chang'an in 587, where at the invitation of Emperor Wen of Sui dynasty (Sui Wendi 隋文帝, 541–604), he gave lectures at the court. His membership in the prestigious Taiyuan Wang 太原王 clan must have facilitated his success in Emperor Wen's court and his participation in the Renshou relic-distribution campaigns, which made him one of the most influential religious leaders in his time.[60]

Tanqian was the first monk who brought the Shelun teachings to the North, and he played an important role in creating a synthesis of Dilun and Shelun doctrines. He wrote commentaries on many scriptures, including one on the chapter 'Bodhisattvas answer the questions' (*Pusa mingnan pin* 菩薩明難品) of the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*. Unfortunately, all these works were lost.[61] Other Shelun masters, including Tanqian's disciples Fachang 法常 (567–645),[62]

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[57] For his biography, see *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* 續高僧傳, CBETA, T50, no. 2060, pp. 538b27–539a7.

[58] For his biography, see *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* 續高僧傳, CBETA, T50, no. 2060, p. 664c3–25.

[59] For Paramārtha, see Paul 1984, Keng 2009.

[60] For a very detailed study of Tanqian's political and religious career, see Chen 2002. For a short summary of his biography, see Gimello 1976: 191 n. 66, Paul 1984: 44–45.

[61] Only his two texts, the *Repentance of Ten Sins* (*Shi e chanwen* 十惡懺文) and the *Essay on Terminating Opposites* (*Wang shifei lun* 亡是非論). The former work has survived in the *Fayuan zhulin* 法苑珠林, see CBETA, T53, no. 2122, pp. 918b9–919b17, while the latter one is in the *Huayan jing nei zhangmen deng za kongmu zhang* 華嚴經內章門等雜孔目章 written by the second patriarch of the Huayan school, Zhiyan, CBETA, T45, no. 1870, pp. 580c14–581b19. For a study and English translation of the *Essay on Terminating Opposites*, see Lai 1983. His commentary on the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra* must have had some influence on the exegetes of this scripture in Tang period, as his concept of 10 kinds of profoundness (*shi shen shen* 十甚深) is cited and referred to in later commentaries. See *Huayan jing tanxuan ji* 華嚴經探玄記, CBETA, T35, no. 1733, p. 176c3–16; *Da fangguang fo huayan jing shu* 大方廣佛華嚴經疏, CBETA, T35, no. 1735, p. 601a8–15, CBETA, T35, no. 1735, pp. 612c25–613a3; *Da fangguang fo huayan jing sui shu yanyi chao* 大方廣佛華嚴經隨疏演義鈔, CBETA, T36, no. 1736, p. 233b15–21.

[62] For his biography, see *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* 續高僧傳, CBETA, T50, no. 2060, pp. 540c14–541b23.

Daoying 道英 (557–636),[63] and Daocan 道璨 (?),[64] also studied and commented on the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*.

Commentaries on the *Huayan jing* during the Tang period

During the Tang period, the *Huayan jing* received much exegetical attention by the Huayan school's scholar-monks in the form of sentence-by-sentence text analyses and summaries focused on the sūtra's central concepts. The Huayan school inherited the legacy of the Dilun and Shelun schools (i.e., their interpretation of Yogācāra philosophy), which is reflected in the commentaries of the leading figures of this exegetical tradition, retrospectively canonized as patriarchs of the Huayan school. Zhiyan 智儼 (602–668), the school's second patriarch, contributed *The Mahāvaipulya Buddhāvataṃasaka-sūtra: A System for Plumbing its Mysteries and a Model for its Thorough Understanding* (*Da fangguang fo huayan jing souxuan fenqi tongzhi fanggui* 大方廣佛華嚴經搜玄分齊通智方軌, T. 1732), which is a commentary on the 60-fascicle Chinese translation.[65]

Fazang 法藏 (643–712), who as the de facto founder of the school and its third patriarch formulated the system of Huayan thought, added another commentary on the 60-fascicle translation, titled *Exploring the Mysteries of the Avataṃsaka-sūtra* (*Huayan jing tanxuan ji* 華嚴經探玄記, T. 1733). Later, probably due to Fazang's close association with Empress Wu Zetian 武則天 (624–705), a new version of the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra* was brought to China, and he assisted in the second translation of this important Mahāyāna sūtra.[66] While Fazang died before he could complete a commentary on the 80-fascicle version, Huiyuan 慧苑 (673–743), his disciple, finished his work.

Unfortunately, this commentary, titled *A Record of Editorial Decisions Made in Continuing [Fazang's] Short Commentary on the Avataṃsaka-sūtra* (*Xu huayan jing lüeshu kanding ji* 續華嚴經略疏刊定記, X03, no. 221), has only partly been preserved, which probably can be blamed on Chengguan's severe critiques of Huiyuan, who modified Fazang's doctrines in several respects, and therefore the later Buddhists excluded Huiyuan from the patriarchal lineage. A special feature of Huiyuan's commentary is that it includes some references to the sūtra's original Sanskrit words. Huiyuan definitely had expertise in the

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[63] For his biography, see *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* 續高僧傳, CBETA, T50, no. 2060, pp. 654a14–655a4.

[64] For his biography, see *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* 續高僧傳, CBETA, T50, no. 2060, p. 669c4–14.

[65] For Zhiyan's biography and his teachings, see Gimello 1976.

[66] For Fazang's political role as a religious leader, see Chen 2007.

linguistic analysis of the Chinese translation of the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra* as is attested by his other work, *The Pronounciation and the Meaning of the Newly Translated Mahāvaipulya Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra* (*Xinyi dafangguang fo huayan jing yin yi* 新譯大方廣佛華嚴經音義, CBETA 2020.A091, no. 1057), which lists 1,288 entries collected from the Chinese translation and provides 318 Sanskrit–Chinese transliterations.[67] Huiyuan gives the pronunciation of the characters with the help of the *fanqie* 反切 system, explains the meaning of the expressions, corrects the characters that are wrongly written in the circulated manuscripts, and refers to several linguistic books from earlier times. Some of texts have not survived, and Huiyuan's citations are the only sources that provide information on them.[68]

Furthermore, Li Tongxuan 李通玄 (635–730), a lay hermit, contributed a commentary on the 80-fascicle version, titled *A Commentary on the New Avataṃsaka-sūtra* (*Xin huayan jing lun* 新華嚴經論, T. 1739). His commentary includes many innovative concepts on the meaning of the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra,* probably because, as a layman, he was not confined by a monastic education that might suppress individual, creative views in favour of a well-established, transmitted system of thoughts. It is interesting to note that it was the first Buddhist work indisputably attributed to a Chinese author that became a part of the Buddhist Canon in 938.[69]

The fourth patriarch of the Huayan school, Chengguan 澄觀 (738–839), was one of the most important Buddhist scholiasts not only during the Tang period but maybe in the whole history of Chinese Buddhism.[70] His magnum opus is a commentary on the 80-fascicle translation of the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra,* titled *A Commentary on the Mahāvaipulya Buddhāvataṃsakasūtra* (*Da fangguang fo huayan jing shu* 大方廣佛華嚴經疏, T. 1735), which he wrote on Wutaishan at the request of the Buddhist monks.[71] Regarded highly for his commentary, Chengguan was summoned to the court and served as a teacher of several emperors, and he later received several honorary titles and offices as an acknowledgement of his exceptional talent.

However, when his commentary was later deemed too abstruse, he was asked to elaborate it further. The subsequent subcommentary, which consists of his further explanations that were recorded by his disciples, is titled *A Record of the Explanation on the Meaning of the Commentary on the Mahāvaipulya*

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[67] See Luo 2018: VI.

[68] Luo Zhichun gives a very thorough study of this text and collates the text providing English translations. See Luo 2018.

[69] See Gimello 1983: 327–328.

[70] For his biography, see Hamar 2002.

[71] See Hamar 2002: 50–53.

Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra (*Da fangguang fo huayan jing suishu yanyi chao* 大方廣佛華嚴經隨疏演義鈔, T. 1736).[72] Together, his original commentary and subcommentary became the authoritative commentaries on the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra* in East Asia. Containing references to more than 300 Buddhist and non-Buddhist works, these works are considerably voluminous. In the Taishō edition of the Chinese Buddhist canon, the 80-fascicle *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra* itself is 444 pages long, which equates to nearly 1500 pages in Cleary's English translation.[73] As Chengguan's commentary and subcommentary are 460 and 700 pages long, respectively, together the three texts constitute more than 1600 pages and occupy 1.5 volumes in the Taishō canon. Altogether, the three works contain approximately 744,000 characters.

Chengguan's magnum opus is undoubtedly his commentaries, and for this reason he is sometimes referred to as the commentator (*shuzhu* 疏主). Later in his life, Chengguan also authored a commentary on the 40-fascicle *Huayan jing*. The commentary is actually a translation of the *Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra* (the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*'s last chapter) completed 796–798 by Prajñā with the assistance of Chengguan.[74] The commentary's title, *Huayanjing xingyuan pinshu* 華嚴經行願品疏 (X05, no. 227), refers to the Chinese translation of the *Bhadracaryā-praṇidhāna* (*Puxian xingyuan pin* 普賢行願品), which is included at the end of Prajñā's translation.

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[72] From an inscription on Chengguan's stūpa. The *Miaojue taji* 妙覺塔記 states that Sengrui 僧睿 and Zhikai 智愷 wrote, in addition to the 40-fascicle *Subcommentary*, another work, *Suiwen shoujing* 隨文手鏡, in 100 fascicles, which unfortunately has not survived.

[73] Cleary 1993.

[74] The colophon of the 40-fascicle *Huayanjing* mentions that Chengguan participated in the translation. See T 279: 10.848c26.

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Semantic Similarities and Differences of *kong* 空, *ti* 體, and *li* 理 *A Case Study of the* Treatise on Eighteen Kinds of Emptiness (*Shiba kong lun* 十八空論)

Abstract
This paper investigates the semantic similarities and differences between the notions of *kong* 空, *ti* 體, and *li* 理 in the *Treatise on Eighteen Kinds of Emptiness* (*Shiba kong lun* 十八空論. The treatise is arguably authored by Paramārtha (Zhendi 真諦; 499–569), one of the most prominent translators and exegetes in the Chinese Buddhist tradition. This treatise is suitable for an investigation of the semantics of the above-mentioned terms, since it aims to explain Indic Buddhist concepts for a Chinese audience. This explanation is conducted by employing both Indian and Chinese concepts, such as persons-and-*dharmas* (Skt. **pudgala-dharma*; Ch. *renfa* 人法) and the principle of the *dao* (*daoli* 道理). The explanation of various kinds of emptiness is presented through the Chinese hermeneutical framework of essence (*ti* 體) and function (*yong* 用) and altogether serves as a great example of how Indian Buddhist ideas were introduced into the Chinese philosophical landscape. An exegesis on the three terms conducted in the treatise provides readers with a highly nuanced and multi-layered picture of emptiness charged with both ontological and epistemological significance. In addition, the analysis on various aspects of emptiness is deeply connected to the Buddhist soteriological goal of *nirvāṇa*.

Keywords: *kong* 空, *ti* 體, *li* 理, *Treatise on Eighteen Kinds of Emptiness, Shiba kong lun* 十八空論, Paramārtha, *pudgala-dharma, daoli* 道理, *yong* 用

Introduction

This paper is a case study on the semantic similarities and differences between the notions of *kong* 空, *ti* 體, and *li* 理 in the *Treatise on Eighteen Kinds of Emptiness* (*Shiba kong lun* 十八空論; from here on SBKL).[1] While all three

[1] This study relies on the recension found in the Taisho Canon (*Dazheng zang* 大正藏, 1616.31.861–7). Supplemented by the reading recensions found in The Rock-Cut Canon of Fang Shan (*Fang shan shijing* 房山石經 19冊726番9) and in the Goryeo Canon (*Gaoli dazangjing* 高麗大藏經 16冊580番).

words can have varied meanings in Chinese literature, in Buddhist literature these notions most often appear as technical terms. *Kong* (Sanskrit: *śūnyatā*) is commonly translated as 'emptiness', and is one of the central concepts of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Among many other interpretations, *kong* often denotes something being empty of its own intrinsic nature or denotes emptiness in general.

Ti is a native Chinese concept and is commonly rendered as 'essence' or 'substance of things'. *Li* is another important Chinese term mostly having the connotations of 'ontological or ethical principle' or 'the makeup of reality'. The meaning is highly dependent on the tradition and time period in which it appears. As these most common translations might imply, depending on the context, the three terms can have much in common and thus can cause difficulties for a reader of Buddhist texts.

For such an investigation into the semantics of the above-mentioned terms, SBKL is very suitable, as the apparent aim of the text is to explain Indic Buddhist concepts for a Chinese audience. This explanation is conducted by employing both Indian and Chinese concepts, such persons-and-*dharmas (renfa* 人法; **pudgala-dharma)*[2] and the principle of *dao* (*daoli* 道理). It is even more fascinating that this explanation of various kinds of emptiness is presented through a Chinese hermeneutical framework of essence (*ti* 體) and function (*yong* 用).

Traditionally, SBKL was believed to be a composition of an Indian author and translated by Paramārtha (Zhendi 真諦; 499–569 BCE). Modern scholarship, however, suggests that rather than being a translation, the text was composed by Paramārtha or his circle.[3] Paramārtha was an Indian monk and one of the most prolific and prominent translators in the history of Chinese Buddhism.[4] His life in China was marked by numerous difficulties, including a lack of patronage and general turbulence in the region,[5] which meant that he often had to move from place to place. This resulted in significant issues in differentiating his translations from his original works, as well as numerous falsely attributed 'translations', of which the most famous is *The Awakening of Mahāyāna Faith* (*Dasheng qixin lun* 大乘起信論).[6] Paramārtha can also be considered one of the main disseminators of Yogācāra ideas in China, as he is responsible for introducing and translating some of the key texts of the Indian Yogācāra tradition, such as Compendium of the

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[2] It should be noted that in this text *ren (*pudgala)* refers to physical and mental elements, which according to Buddhist tradition, constitutes an individual. *Dharmas* refer to all phenomena exterior to the said individual or the world.

[3] Radich 2012: 65.

[4] For the list of texts attributed to Paramārtha see Keng – Radich 2019: 753–754.

[5] For the study on Paramārtha's turbulent life in China see Paul 1982: 42–62.

[6] For a detailed study of Paramārtha's literary corpus see Radich 2012.

Mahayana (*Mahāyāna-saṃgraha*-śāstra; *She dasheng lun* 攝大乘論, abbr. *Shelun* 攝論), which led to the formation of an exegetical tradition by the same name.[7]

The notion of emptiness is elaborately presented in SKBL, and in the light of the exegesis, definitions of *ti* and *li* are postulated as well. The main purpose of the text is to elucidate on the emptiness of persons-and-*dharmas* (*renfa* 人法), namely, the entirety of phenomena (with a special emphasis on persons) as lacking intrinsic essence or literally 'self' (*renfa er wuwo* 人法二無我). This lack of intrinsic self is precisely a characteristic that is shared between all phenomena (*yiqiefa tongxiang* 一切法通相). Besides providing a point-by-point description of what kind of phenomenon is empty of intrinsic existence, and providing an exegesis on how it is empty, the text also contains numerous side ventures undertaken by the author in the form of answering the questions invoked by an interlocutor, such as a lengthy exegesis on Buddha-nature. Overall, the text should be taken rather as pedagogical in nature, and therefore it is useful precisely in its attempt to define the concepts for the audience.

Emptiness in the Mahayana Tradition

The main focus of SKBL is the concept of emptiness. Since it is the main semantic content of the three terms in question, it is necessary to provide it with a very succinct definition. In Mahayana Buddhism, the term emptiness most often denotes the fact that any kind of phenomenon is empty of intrinsic nature, meaning that it does not have inherent existence or essence and is rather a product of various conditions. Thus, it not enough to say that a phenomenon is empty; it is more prudent to say that it is 'empty of intrinsic nature'. Jay Garfield elaborated on this point by saying that something lacking essence means that it does not exist 'from its own side'.[8]

The postulation of the idea of emptiness is an attempt by Buddhists to describe the middle-way (*Madhyamāpratipada*; *zhongdao* 中道, *zhongguan* 中觀) between the two extremes – phenomena as existing (*you* 有) and phenomena as non-existing (*wu* 無), often referred to as positions of essentialism and nihilism, respectively. The middle-way maintains a claim that phenomena arise dependently, and it is thus not correct to state that they are either existing or non-existing. The two main exegetical traditions dealing with the idea of emptiness, inherited by Chinese from India, are those of Madhyamaka and Yogācāra.

For Yogācāra, emptiness is equated with reality, which is the object of cognition of the transcendent mind and consciousness in its non-dual and

[7] Hamar 2017: 77.

[8] Garfield (trans.) 1995: 89.

non-conceptual natural state. Vasubandhu (ca. 4th or 5th century CE), one of the founders of the Yogācāra school of thought, takes phenomena as empty of intrinsic-nature, which is imagined and expressible, but not empty of ineffable intrinsic-nature. The Yogācāra view thus claims existence to be ineffable, and in such a way, emptiness appears to exist.[9] In other words, Yogācāra reduces all existents to be mental, while their truly existing referent is the momentary flow of consciousness.

The Madhyamaka view, generally speaking, is that even the flow of mind lacks fundamental status, [10] and the only existence is 'conventional designations'. In other words, any point of reference, such as existence or non-existence, is merely imagined and not applicable when reality is discussed.[11]

It could be said that the Madhyamaka tradition of interpretation seeks to undermine metaphysical claims that attempt to describe reality as existing or non-existing. Yogācāra, in turn, avoids this seemingly strong ontological commitment by establishing its famous claim of 'consciousness-only' (*Vijñaptimātra*; *wei shi* 唯識).[12] This term can have a number of interpretations, but in the case of SBKL, I would like to follow Dan Lusthaus, who suggests treating consciousness-only 'as an epistemic caution, not an ontological pronouncement'.[13] In other words, it is possible to talk about things only from the point of experience, and experience itself is inseparable from consciousness or cognition.

As we will see, the position taken in SBKL is rather the one described by Vasubandhu, as consciousness-only being an important constituent in the author's presentation of emptiness. However, the text presents the reader with many nuances about what emptiness precisely means, and it is necessary to provide various contexts in which the term is being used throughout the text.

Emptiness in SBKL

The term *kong* in SBKL is sometimes used grammatically as an adjective meaning 'empty', but most often it is a noun meaning 'emptiness'. When *kong* is employed as an adjective, the object that is described as 'empty' is always *dharma* (*fa* 法; which I chose to render as phenomena). When it is used as a noun, *kong* indicates the state of *dharmas* as being empty. The argumentation by which any kind of phenomena are deemed to be empty is precisely what defines

[9] Salvini 2015: 60–62.
[10] Garfield – Westerhoff 2015: 6–7.
[11] Salvini 2015: 60–62.
[12] Also sometimes translated as perception-only or cognition-only.
[13] Lusthaus 2002: 6.

the semantic range of the term emptiness itself. Below are passages postulating emptiness in SKBL.

From the outset, SBKL is concerned with providing evidence that constituents of the process of experiencing, namely subject, object, and cognition, are all inter-reliant on each other.

> Emptiness of the Internal is also called Emptiness of the Experiencer. Ordinary people and the followers of the two vehicles[14] say that the six sense bases constitute the experiencer, because karmic fruition is received through [the interaction] with the six sense objects. But this only explains [the functioning] of the six sense faculties. Since there is no grasper, there is also no grasping, and that is why it is said that the experiencer is empty.
>
> 內空，亦名受者空。凡夫二乘，謂六入為受者，以能受六塵果報故。今明但有六根。無有能執，以無執故言受者空也。[15]

This passage argues for the fact that although the organs of experience (i.e., the five sense faculties and the mind) constitute the subject, the subject itself is not found apart from the five sense faculties and the mind. This lack of independent subject is what SKBL takes as the emptiness of the subject. The first semantic association of *kong* is experiencer (or an individual) being empty of independent subject or self. This type of emptiness invokes the traditional Buddhist postulation of *anātman* (*wuwo* 無我), the claim that a permanent, unchanging 'self' does not exist. A subject that is dependent on faculties and is constructed is not strictly denied but rather deemed empty, and in turn affirming or denying the existence of such phenomena is not viable.

This process of emptying and the nuanced usage of the term 'there is no' (*wu* 無) can be illustrated with the example of the phrase 'there is no grasping' (*wuzhi* 無執). Here the term 'there is no' *(wu)* does not indicate a complete absence of the object, in this case 'grasping', but rather here and throughout the text, *wu* points to the lack of independent existence. Thus, the term *wu* becomes nearly synonymous with the term emptiness.

Another way of validating phenomena as empty is by invoking the idea of consciousness-only.

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[14] Two Vehicles consists of so called *śrāvakas* (*Shengwen* 聲聞; hearers, disciples) commonly understood as followers of the *āgama* and *nikāya* textual traditions and pratyekabuddhas (*bizhifo* 辟支佛; solitary buddhas). In Mahāyāna they are commonly referred as *hīnayāna* (*xiaosheng* 小乘; lower, inferior vehicle).

[15] *Shiba kong lun* 十八空論, T31, no. 1616, p. 861a26–29.

> [From the perspective of] consciousness-only, [perceptual] objects do not exist. This is called Emptiness of the External [objects]. Since there are no objects, therefore there is no consciousness either. This is equivalent to the Emptiness of the Internal.
>
> 唯識無境，故名外空。以無境故，亦無有識，即是內空。[16]

The idea of consciousness-only is used to argue for the fact that experiential (outside, *wai* 外) objects are fundamentally reliant on one's perception. This reliance translates into an epistemological assertion: outside objects are empty of existence independent from consciousness or cognition.

Another assertion made in this passage follows the logic of a house of cards. Since objects are reliant on cognition, cognition in turn is reliant on objects. This argumentation invokes the image of a structure that can exist in its shape and form only due to the fact that each constituent supports another. By the means of such argumentation, we can see that the emptying of one phenomenon in turn leads to the emptying of another. This argumentation is reminiscent of the logic used by Nāgārjuna (ca. 150–250 CE), the main figurehead of the Madhyamaka tradition, in his *Root Verses on the Middle Way* (*Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*; *Zhong lun* 中論).[17]

> Great Emptiness is also called that where the body abides, which is equivalent to the ten directions of the material world which are immeasurable, limitless, and all empty. Therefore, it is called Great Emptiness.
>
> 大空，謂身所捵託[18]，即器世界十方無量無邊，皆悉是空，故名大空。[19]

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[16] *Shiba kong lun*, T31, no. 1616, p. 861b3–5.

[17] One example of such argumentation is the relationship between the subject 'desirous one', and the action 'desire': 'If prior to desire, and without desire there were desirous one, desire would depend on him. Desire would exist when there is desirous one. Were there no desirous one, moreover, where would desire occur? Whether or not desire or the desirous exist, the analysis would be the same. Desire and desirous one cannot arise together. In that case, desire and desirous one would be mutually contingent'. In: Garfield (trans.) 1995: 16.

[18] *Qiantuo* 捵託 appears to be a rather complicated term to translate. It is written in the same way in all three renditions (Taisho, Fangshan, Goreyo). While the second character *tuo* 託 is not infrequent, and generally means 'to bear' or 'to depend on', the character *qian* 捵 seems to be a less popular orthographic variation of another character. Both characters appear together in the canon only several times, and are used only once in a seemingly similar context by the near-contemporary Jizang 吉藏 (549–623 CE) in his *Notes on Huayan* (*Huayan youyi* 華嚴遊意):「正法捵託為土也」T35, no. 1731, p. 4b17. This passage could be read as 'True Dharma supports this earth'. This reading could also be applied in the case of the passage in SBKL, since it is clear that the body is supported or held by the world. This meaning is closely related with the semantic range of *tuo* 託. Determining which more prominent orthographic variant the character *qian* 捵 exactly represents is beyond the scope of this paper.

[19] *Shiba kong lun*, T31, no. 1616, p. 861b14–15.

In this passage, the emptiness of the material world is being discussed. Its emptiness is implied by its immeasurability and limitlessness. An object that cannot be measured also cannot be grasped. The passage's terseness suggests that for the author this argumentation was sufficient enough to prove the emptiness of the world.

Emptiness can also be viewed as emptiness in terms of spatiality. Below, the emptiness of temporality is postulated.

> Emptiness in terms of non-existence of Anteriority and Posteriority is also called emptiness in terms of non-existence of beginning. It accomplishes benefiting others through the Absolute Emptiness. Absence of anteriority and posteriority is equivalent to non-existence of a beginning and an end. [If] the *bodhisattva* does not comprehend this emptiness, then [the practitioner] will give rise to a fatigued mind, and will abandon the [cycle] of life-and-death. Having seen that the [cycle] of life-and-death is empty, [the *bodhisattva*] then will not differentiate between anterior and posterior, and between a beginning and an end.
>
> 無前後空，亦名無始空。為成畢竟空利益他故。不前後即無始終。菩薩若不解其是空，則生疲厭之心捨棄生死。既見生死是空，則不分別前之與後，及以始終。[20]

This passage invites a practitioner to contemplate time as empty for the purposes of alleviating the sufferings of the world. The first clue as to why time should be considered as endless is because phenomena cannot be determined as having either a beginning or an end, since doing so would imply that phenomena are either existing or non-existing. Since this line of reasoning was previously established, the author does not elaborate on the argumentation. The message here is aimed at a practitioner and is soteriological in nature. Emptying time is supposed to relieve one from both the grief of difficulties of the past and worries regarding difficulties of the future. The passage implicitly invites the practitioner to abide to the constant present, which frees one from the above-mentioned vexations and enables one to manifest the *bodhisattva* ideal of constantly or absolutely benefiting sentient beings without exhaustion.

The following passage shows the exegetical ingenuity of the author and is rather significant in repurposing older ideas to fit newer frameworks.

> Emptiness of Emptiness. [It] is able to illuminate the characteristics of the real, and it includes four previous kinds of emptiness. Its name is derived from its

[20] *Shiba kong lun*, T31, no. 1616, p. 861c18–21.

> object, and [it is also] called Cognition of Emptiness[21]. Cognition of Emptiness is also empty; therefore, it is postulated as Emptiness of Emptiness.
>
> 空空。能照真之相。會前四空。從境得名，呼為空智。空智亦空，故立空空。[22]

Here, the concept of emptiness is viewed from a very different perspective compared to the passages discussed before. While previously it was important for the author to show phenomena as being reliant and subjective, here a cognitive mode of experiencing phenomena is being discussed. More precisely, the correct cognition (*zhi* 智) of phenomena is identified as empty. Thus, it is not an emptiness in a proper sense, but rather a cognition of emptiness.[23]

> Ultimate Emptiness *(paramārthaśūnyatā),* is also called Emptiness of the Real Object. The practitioner sees internal and external [*dharmas*] as all being empty. Persons-and-*dharmas* do not exist. This object is ultimately real, and is postulated and named the ultimate [truth]. By means of differentiated nature [of phenomena] *(parikalpitasvabhāva),* the [real] nature cannot be attained, [therefore] it is called differentiating nature. Nature being empty is equivalent to the Ultimate Emptiness.
>
> 真實空，謂真境空。行者見內外皆空，無人無法。此境真實，立真實名。由分別性，性不可得，名分別性。性空即真實空也。[24]

In this passage the *Yogācāric* definition of the state of emptiness is postulated. First, it is stated that both subject and object (internal and external *dharmas*) are empty. This state of emptiness then is referred to as the ultimately real (*zhenshi* 真實) existence of phenomena. In other words, the emptiness of phenomena here is equated with the true state of phenomena, the phenomenal world, or reality. In Mahayana Buddhist texts reality is most often referred to as suchness (*tathatā*; *zhenru* 真如), a term that is also used in SBKL.

This suchness then needs to be postulated as empty as well. This is done by declaring that by any attempt to perceive this ultimate reality, which is non-dual, the mind engages in the process of differentiating (i.e., labeling, segregating, and conceptually analysing) phenomena. Thus, the non-duality of phenomena is deemed imperceivable by ordinary cognition, which is understood as duality-making or differentiating.

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[21] Term wisdom *zhi* 智 should be understood as correct, undistorted cognition.

[22] *Shiba kong lun*, T31, no. 1616, p. 861b16–17.

[23] The exegetical reasons of this kind of association are complex and beyond the scope of this paper, but are a subject for future research.

[24] *Shiba kong lun*, T31, no. 1616, p. 861b18–20.

The nature (*xing* 性) of phenomena (again, referring to the state of being empty) is beyond conceptualisation, and it is then understood as beyond the reach (*bukede* 不可得) of a conceptual mind. This state of the unattainability or imperceivability of the ultimate existence of phenomenon by the cognition of the perceiver leads to the assertion that the object, ultimate existence, is empty.

Additional clarification is provided in the text by differentiating the types of empty phenomena into two categories: phenomena that are conditioned (*saṃskṛta*; *youwei* 有為, *xing* 行) and phenomena that are unconditioned (*asaṃskṛta*; *wuwei* 無為, *feixing* 非行). Conditioned phenomena, as their name implies, refer to phenomena that are reasoned to be empty by the fact of their being dependent on conditions and being compounded.

Unconditioned phenomena refer to already emptied phenomena, the ultimate reality that is the true and the real phenomena. Thus, SBKL deems both types of phenomena as empty, but while conditioned phenomena are empty by the fact that they are conditioned, unconditioned phenomena are empty by the fact and they are inconceivable to the ordinary mind.

Thus, the following position is reached: the emptiness of phenomena, which is ultimately real, is empty. Arguably, such a position is proposed in order to avoid the pitfalls of existence (which is done by emptying both phenomena and emptiness itself) and non-existence (which is done by claiming that emptiness is real). This latter emptiness of the real existents is what the text refers to as essence (*ti* 體).

Essence in SBKL

The term 'essence' (*ti* 體) is most often presented in a dyad with the term 'function' (*yong* 用). Together they serve as one of the most important philosophical categories in all three Chinese religious traditions. Charles Muller argues that the dyad *ti–yong* is an archetypal concept, and analogous philosophical categories appear as early as the 5th century BCE in fundamental Chinese texts, including *Liji*, *Yijing*, *Daodejing*, and *Analects*.[25]

The first exegetical application of the dyad is found in the works of Wang Bi 王弼 (226–249 CE).[26] Wang Bi was one of the founders of a new exegetical movement named Profound Learning (*Xuanxue* 玄學), which greatly influenced the first Chinese Buddhist exegetical traditions during the 4th century CE, known as the Six Houses and Seven Schools (*Liujia qizong* 六家七宗). Many Buddhist intellectuals of the following centuries were deeply steeped in

[25] Muller 2016: 114–115.

[26] Muller 2016: 120.

Xuanxue,[27] and it is not surprising that important hermeneutical models found their way into the Buddhist exegesis as well.

Muller argues that in Buddhism this dyad of *ti* and *yong* was one of the essential exegetical approaches by which Indian Buddhism was gradually sinified. Emergent Chinese Buddhist traditions, such as Tiantai and Huayan, applied archetypal models of the *ti–yong* paradigm to such 'dichotomous' pairings as emptiness (*kong* 空) and form (*se* 色), principle (*li* 理) and phenomena (*shi* 事), and others. These dyads conjoined in making two aspects of a single phenomenon.[28]

Moreover, SKBL also engages in a similar conjoining, and the dyad has significant importance in the exposition of the various types of emptiness. Since SBKL is a lecture type of text aimed at a Chinese audience, it is not surprising that the author chose to apply this hermeneutical approach as the main framework of his exegesis. The application of Chinese concepts and hermeneutical strategies was an approach often employed by not only native Chinese monks but also monks of Indian origin, and the approach was not unique to Paramārtha.[29] Since in this text the author attempts to explain 18 items, it is understandable that such an unwieldy list had to be restructured. The list of 18 kinds of emptiness was narrowed down to 14 (the author claims that the last four are just different ways of expressing the first 14). The remaining 14 were then divided into two categories: essence (emptiness types 1–6) and function (emptiness types 7–14). It can be loosely considered that the category of essence aims to philosophically establish the position of emptiness, while the category of function is intended to advise the practitioner on how the theory should be applied. The pedagogical motive can be glimpsed from the fact that the numbering is also restarted when types of emptiness belonging to the aspect of function are discussed.[30]

The first six types of emptiness of essence can be understood epistemologically:

> Furthermore, the first four are [understood] as what is knowable. The fifth is the agent of knowing. The sixth are the characteristics of what is known. The fifth, Emptiness of Cognition, governs the first four objects. The first four objects are empty. The sixth is the real emptiness which governs the fifth, [which is] the cognition, and therefore it is the cognition which establishes emptiness.

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[27] Zürcher 2007: 86–88.

[28] Muller 2016: 116–117.

[29] Funayama 2006: 55.

[30] The list of 18 kinds of emptiness and their descriptions are beyond the scope of this paper. For more information on the various lists of emptiness see: Lamotte (trans.) 1976: 1634–1680.

> 又前四所知，第五能知，第六所知相貌。第五智空治前四境。四境是空。第六真空治第五智，故智成空。[31]

The text holds that those types of emptiness that are deemed to be under the aspect of essence pertains to: I) the fact that subjects and objects are dependent on conditions; II) the cognitive process of understanding or perceiving the realities of subject and object as empty; and III) the resulting correct cognitive understanding of the empty phenomena, the non-dual reality, or the real emptiness (*zhen kong* 真空). Moreover, SBKL further explains that:

> When discussing these six kinds of emptiness, the essence of emptiness is postulated progressively. First [postulated] is the Emptiness of Experiencer. Second is the Emptiness of What is Experienced. Third is the Emptiness of One's Body. Fourth is the Emptiness of the Place Where the Body Abides. Fifth is [Cognition] Capable of Illuminating Emptiness. Sixth is the Emptiness of the Objects that are Contemplated.
>
> 此六空辯，空體自成次第。一受者空、二所受空、三自身空、四身所住處空、五能照空、六所觀境空也。[32]

This passage explains that that which is called essence needs to be postulated gradually. It begins with the emptiness of subject and object, followed by the cognitive process of perceiving such emptiness, and culminating with the postulation of an empty phenomena which is inconceivable (*bukede* 不可得), and non-dual (*wuer* 無二) reality (*zhenshi* 真實), which is also called real emptiness (*zhenkong* 真空). This then is what SBKL defines as essence, the position that I previously delineated as 'emptiness of phenomena, which is ultimately real, is empty'.

While the analysis of the term function (*yong* 用) is beyond the scope of this text, it can be briefly said that it is the aspect of emptiness that manifests (*xian* 顯) as activity. The importance of activities is that they directly influence the soteriological aims of the practitioner and soteriological activities of the realised practitioners (i.e., buddhas). Thus, types of emptiness classified under the aspect of function are concerned with Buddhist practice and the perception of that practice, such as how the practitioner should perceive time – as a beginningless and endless and, thus, as an empty phenomenon. The aim of such contemplations is to undermine the power of mundane phenomena over the practitioner.

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[31] *Shiba kong lun*, T31, no. 1616, p. 861b24–26.
[32] *Shiba kong lun*, T31, no. 1616, p. 861b20–22.

Principle in SBKL

As was briefly discussed above, according to Muller, the term *li* 理 and its counterpart *shi* 事 can be seen as another variant of the *ti–yong* archetype. The term *li* is no less essential in Chinese thought than the previously discussed *ti*. The concept of *li*, akin to the concept *ti*, also underwent a long process of development both in Buddhist and in non-Buddhist Chinese exegetical and philosophical traditions.[33] The meaning of *li* in Buddhist texts can usually be loosely translated as 'principle' or 'underlying truth'. However, the contents of this phrase can be quite nuanced, as Brook Ziporyn shows in his study[34], and should be determined in the specific text.

Unlike the two previously discussed terms, *li* does not feature as prominently in SKBL. Moreover, in contrast with *kong* and *ti*, *li* does not have a precise definition, which indicates the author's expectation that the audience would have been familiar with the term. It is also rarely paired with *shi*, and most often it is presented alone or in a compound *daoli* 道理. *Li* and *daoli* are completely interchangeable variations, and the choice between a single character or the compound seems to be determined by the rhythmic structure of the segment of the text.

It is rather unambiguous that in SBKL *li* and *daoli* indicate an order or principle of things. However, this order of things is always closely connected with emptiness.

> Speaking about Emptiness of Non-Existent *Dharmas*, it should be understood as reality which truly exists. This is the principle of the non-existence of persons, and non-existence of *dharmas*. [This reality] excludes deluded attachments of sentient beings.
>
> 言無法空者，謂真實有。此無人無法之道理。除眾生妄執。[35]

Here, the compound *daoli* 道理 is equated with existence that is real (*zhenshi you* 真實有), which in turn is the fact that all phenomena are empty. *Daoli* indicates the principle, the order, or the framework of such an arrangement. Hence, while *ti* refers to the truly existing emptiness of a particular phenomenon, *li* refers to the general order of all phenomena. In such a way the connotation of 'truth' and 'principle' is retained. The semantic content, however, is charged with previously postulated emptiness.

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[33] An extensive overview of conceptual history of *li* 理 can be found in Ziporyn 2013: 29–50.

[34] Discussion on development, and various connotations of *li* 理 in Tiantai and Huayan traditions can be found in Ziporyn 2013: 148–223.

[35] *Shiba kong lun*, T31, no. 1616, p. 863a8–9.

It is also important to note that this passage is quite indicative of an epistemological emphasis that is present in the whole exegesis. What is discussed here is the correctly cognised reality and not the 'deluded attachments of sentient beings'. As such, reality or suchness is an omnipresent affair, yet incorrect cognition is responsible for the distortions experienced by an individual. The correction of this mistake is possible if phenomena are seen as empty in their essence, thus seeing the underlying order of all things. While an ontological premise is inherent in any discussion concerning reality (suchness), the correct cognition of said reality is the main concern of the author of SBKL. This correct cognition is directly related with the soteriological aim of the practitioner, which is again defined through the lens of emptiness.

> The eighteenth [type of emptiness] reveals the fruit[36] as empty. This so-called unattainable emptiness explains that this fruit is difficult to attain. Why is it so? Such is the principle of emptiness. It is not ceasing, and it is not permanent, that is why it is called the great permanence. The truth[37] of permanence is equally unattainable, and that is why the truth of cessation is also unattainable. There are no fixed characteristics which could be attained, and that is why it is called difficult to attain.
>
> [It is because] the principle of this emptiness is neither suffering, nor bliss, and that is why it is the great bliss. It is neither self, nor non-self, and that is why it is the great self. It is neither pure, nor impure, and that is why it is the great purity.
>
> 第十八出空果。所言不可得空者，明此果難得。何以故？如此空理，非斷非常，而即是大常。常義既不可得故，斷義亦不可得。無有定相可得，故名難得。
>
> 此之空理。非苦非樂，而是大樂。非我無我，而是大我。非淨非不淨，而是大淨。

The last of the 18 types of emptiness finalises the whole project of the exegesis on emptiness with the definition of the goal of Buddhist practice itself. The underlying principle of all phenomena is that they are empty. This is the case of liberation, which is empty as well. Liberation, just like reality or suchness, is impossible to grasp with ordinary cognition. The author invites the reader to look beyond the duality-making cognition that sees becoming and ceasing; suffering and bliss; permanence and impermanence; self and non-self; or purity

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[36] Fruit denotes the fruit of liberation or *nirvāṇa*.

[37] The term *yi* 義 is notoriously difficult to translate, and depending on context it can mean goal or purpose *(artha),* gist, aspect, among others. In this case I have chosen to render it as 'truth'; however this still needs to be verified.

and impurity. The mentioned notions of utmost importance in the Buddhist philosophical framework are not discarded, but rather they should be cognised correctly as being empty of intrinsic nature.

Conclusions

In this study semantic relationships between the terms emptiness (*kong* 空), essence (*ti* 體), and principle (*li* 理) in the *Treatise of the Eighteen Kinds of Emptiness* (*Shiba kong lun* 十八空論) were briefly discussed. As a pedagogically oriented text, SBKL is extremely revealing in its careful exposition of all three concepts.

The text uses emptiness as a philosophical category to demonstrate the lack of substantiality and inherent relativity of phenomena. Moreover, SBKL postulates that subjects, objects, and cognition are all reliant on each other, and in that sense they are empty of substantiality or intrinsic nature. This type of emptiness is also called emptiness of conditioned phenomena.

The second category of emptiness is called true emptiness (*zhen kong* 真空), and it is concerned with the emptied objects themselves. This type of emptiness is equated with correctly perceived reality (*zhenshi* 真實) and is also called emptiness of unconditioned phenomena or emptiness of emptiness.

The concept of essence (*ti* 體) refers to the above-mentioned second type, when a particular phenomenon is discussed. In SBKL the essence of emptiness is semantically equivalent to the reality of phenomenon or true emptiness. The concept of principle (*li* 理, *daoli* 道理) in SBKL also refers to the second type of emptiness, but unlike *ti*, *li* refers to the order or arrangement of the reality or suchness being empty. The three terms *kong*, *ti*, and *li* are deeply tied to the Buddhist soteriological goal of nirvana. Liberation from suffering, according to SBKL, should be achieved through the correct cognition of all phenomena as inherently empty.

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Yelü Chucai's Movement in the Mongolian Court Described in *Yuanshi*

Abstract
This article is about an outstanding political figure Yelü Chucai (1189–1242), who was the main advisor of the Mongol khans. Due to his excellent abilities and skills, he managed to play a significant role at the court of Ögedei Khan (1186–1241), as well as in the elaboration of a tax policy used in Northern China. Yelü Chucai contributed to the creation of a symbiosis of the nomadic Mongolian and sedentary Chinese civilisations that took shape during the Yuan Dynasty (1271–1368) in what is modern-day China.

K**eywords:** Yelü Chucai, nomadic civilisation, tax policy, *Yuanshi* 元史

The era of the Mongol conquests (1209–1279) is undoubtedly one of the most interesting pages in Chinese history. This historical period not only features the victories and conquests of the great Genghis Khan (born Temüjin, 1162–1227) and his descendants, but it also reveals the process of the interaction of two different cultures – nomadic and agricultural. During the Mongol rule, in the vast expanses of China, for the first time in their lives local citizens lost the position of the people who politically dominated their territory and found themselves included in a polyethnic conquering empire. Particular attention should be paid to the activities of Yelü Chucai (1189–1242), an advisor of Genghis Khan and later of his son, Ögedei (1186–1241), who made a significant contribution to the development of an effective tax policy in Northern China, which had a huge impact on the restoration of the country after Genghis Khan's crushing conquest.

In the process of writing this article, materials in Chinese, English, and Russian were used. These valuable sources helped to restore the historical picture of the time. In many documents and monographs, a rather subjective assessment

of the court activities of Yelü Chucai is given. As such, I make a modest attempt to shed light on the political role of Genghis Khan's (and later Ögedei's) advisor based on a detailed study of primary sources, as well as influential pieces of work by witnesses of relevant events written almost immediately after the death of Yelü Chucai.

Review of primary and secondary sources

The biography of Yelü Chucai, written in *Yuanshi* 元史, serves as an important material in terms of the study of the chosen topic.[1] It gives a unique opportunity to plunge into the historical period and evaluate the role of Yelü Chucai. Another influential work, *Yuanchao Mingchen Shilüe* 元朝名臣事略 *[Brief History of Famous Officials in the Yuan Dynasty]* by Su Tianjue (1294–1352), was also used.[2] The author provides interesting facts of the life of Yelü Chucai, as well as analyses some of his life's more important turning points. However, it is crucial to emphasise that in the Chinese monographs, the activities of Genghis Khan's close associates are a little embellished. Therefore, some of the described episodes of the life of Yelü Chucai should be viewed with scepticism.

The works of N.Ya.Bichurin,[3] Herbert Franz Schurmann,[4] Liu Xiao,[5] A.Sh. Kadyrbaev,[6] and Igor de Rachewiltz[7] also serve as important materials for studying the historical role of Yelü Chucai. The authors focus their attention on many important facts, pointing out the reasons for the rise of Yelü Chucai as an adviser of Genghis Khan and later of his son Ögedei.

A very influential monograph is the work of N.Ts. Munkuev,[8] in which the author analyses in detail the biography of Yelü Chucai and describes the successes and failures of the political and economic courses that he proposed. The value of the work lies in the provision of unique materials of tax policy in relation to the population of Northern China. N.Ts. Munkuev also translated a very rare historical work written by a contemporary of Yelü Chucai, Song Zizhen 宋子真 (1188–1267), titled Zhongshuling Yelü gong shendaobei 中书令耶律公神道碑 *[Stella on the Path of the Spirit of His Excellency Yelü Chucai]*.[9] It is

[1] Song Lian 1976: 3455.
[2] Su 1936.
[3] Bichurin 1829: 12.
[4] Schurmann 1956: 177.
[5] Liu Xiao 2001: 15.
[6] Kadyrbaev 2016: 78.
[7] Rachewiltz 1993: 136.
[8] Munkuev 1965: 11.
[9] Song Zizhen 1965: 68–90.

important to point out that it serves as a valuable guide into the events of the chosen historical period.

The main objectives of the study are: 1) to provide a short biography of Yelü Chucai; 2) to explore the reasons for his rise as an advisor of Genghis Khan and Ögedei Khan; and 3) to analyse the tax reform of Northern China proposed by Yelü Chucai. These objectives serve to reveal why in historical materials the name and political activities of Yelü Chucai are so highly esteemed.

For almost an entire quarter of the 13th century, Northern China was the main stronghold of the long-term war between the Mongol conquerors and the Jin State (1115–1234). This historical period is characterised by a sharp decline in the economy and a complete disorganisation of social life. The arbitrariness of the Mongolian military created unbearable conditions for the existence of the conquered people. This is characterised by the following testimony from *Yuanshi*:

> 'At that time, China had just been pacified and there were no laws yet, everywhere senior officials could arbitrarily dispose of the life and death of the population under their control, for the slightest attempt of disobedience they used the executioner's tools, whole families were killed and even babies were not left alive, and in certain districts and regions, at the first impulse, troops rose up and attacked'.[10]

Moreover, the Mongolian commanders pursued a predatory policy towards the conquered population, which is expressed in countless exactions. Moreover, while representatives of the Mongolian army became progressively richer, the state treasury was empty. As such, Ögedei Khan and his court did not receive any taxes from Northern China's population. Song Zizhen 宋子真 in an influential document[11] points out that after Genghis Khan's crushing campaigns in Central Asia in 1219–1225, there was not a single measure of grain and not a single piece of silk yarn in state warehouses. For political reasons, the author deliberately does not indicate the reasons for the plundering of the khan's treasury, since he was the main witness to the historical events of that period, and his work was created during the lives of many Mongolian military leaders who actively took part in plundering the conquered people of Northern China. According to *Yuanshi*, 'The officials collected taxes and thought only of themselves, their wealth reached a myriad, but the treasury did not have any reserves'.[12] It is important to emphasise that officials here refer to not only the Mongolian commanders, but also the Chinese officials who joined the Mongolian effort. This situation did

[10] Munkuev 1965: 34.
[11] Song Zizhen 1965: 34.
[12] Song Lian 1976: 3455–3469.

not suit Ögedei Khan, since his main goal was to become rich at the expense of the conquered population and to make use of natural resources. An important developer and later implementer of policies who aimed to achieve these goals was Yelü Chucai.

Yelü Chucai was a Khitan by birth on his paternal side, and his mother apparently was Chinese.[13] After the overthrow of the Khitan Liao dynasty (916–1125) by the Jurchens, his family members began to serve the new state of Jin. During the reign of Emperor Zhangzong (1290–1208), Yelü lü (the father of Yelü Chucai) was the minister of rites and an assistant of the right in the Presidential Council.[14] After Yelü lü died when Yelü Chucai was two years old, his mother became engaged in his upbringing. Yelü Chucai was well versed in astronomy, geography, and music. He mastered the skills of divination by the elements and on tortoise shells, and wrote poetry during his spare time.[15] The above qualities characterise Yelü Chucai as a versatile personality, whose talents and skills could play a very important role in court service. It should be noted that he also received an academic degree due to his successful passing of the state exam (1205), but Yelü Chucai failed to contribute to the further prosperity of the Jin Empire due to the conquest of Genghis Khan.

In 1211, Genghis Khan's punitive campaigns to Northeast China began. The damage done by the Mongolian warriors was truly colossal. In 1215, the capital of the state of Jin was conquered by the armies of Genghis Khan.[16] In most cases the Mongols did not show mercy to the population, who chose the brave path of struggle; the same fate befell the region as a whole. Yelü Chucai miraculously managed to escape, finding refuge in a Buddhist monastery. For three years he studied Buddhist sacred books under the leadership of the monks.[17]

The year 1218 was a turning point in Yelü Chucai's life. According to *Yuanshi,* Genghis Khan actively sought representatives of the Khitan Liao dynasty for court service. It is likely that this strategic move was due to the fact that the Jurchens were enemies of the Khitans (the Liao dynasty was overthrown by the Jurchens). However, the most significant historical fact is that Genghis Khan long had respect for the Yelü family. As Temüjin became a Great Khan and struggled for supremacy among the Mongol tribal leaders, he met Yelü Ahai (ca. 1153–1226), the envoy of the Jin emperor Zhangzong (1189–1208), who was sent to the Khereite leader Wang Khan (ca. 1130–1203). Yelü Ahai expressed a desire to join Temüjin's army. In honour of his devotion to the future Mongol

[13] Kadyrbaev 2016: 78.
[14] Rachewiltz 1993: 137.
[15] Song Lian 1976: 3455.
[16] Keay 2009: 353.
[17] Munkuev 1965: 14.

khan, he left his younger brother Yelü Tuhua (11??–12??), who was accepted into Temüjin's guards; later Yelü Ahai also became one of his guards.[18] During the punitive campaign of the Mongols against the Jin dynasty, Yelü Luge (11?? –12??) began a rebellion against Temüjin's enemies. It is important to note that Genghis Khan valued devotion most of all, especially among those who showed it before he was proclaimed the Great Khan in 1206.[19]

During the meeting of Genghis Khan and Yelü Chucai, the Mongol Khan said:

> 'Liao and Jin are eternal enemies. I took revenge on them [the Jin] for you!' Yelü Chucai replied: 'Since the days of my grandfather and father, all [we] have served him [the Jin] as subjects. So can I still dare to be double-minded and become the enemy of [my] sovereign and father, being a subject and a son?' [20]

Genghis Khan was impressed with Yelü Chucai, since he did not betray the emperor to the overthrown Jin dynasty. At court Yelü Chucai was well known under the name 'the long-bearded one' (*changranren* 長髯人).[21]

It is evident that Genghis Khan's interest in Yelü Chucai is due to the following facts: 1) The Yelü family was revered by the Mongols; 2) the education of Yelü Chucai (knowledge of traditional Chinese canons, knowledge of the way of life of the Chinese) was an important strategic tool for the conquest of China; and 3) Yelü Chucai was a fortune teller and astrologer, and in most cases his forecasts were accurate (e.g., he predicted the victory of the war against Khwarezm and the death of its ruler Muhammad), which helped Genghis Khan to carry out successful campaigns on certain territories. Based on these facts, I argue that Yelü Chucai was a valuable figure to the Mongol rulers.

During the crushing defeat of the Tangut State (Xi Xia, 1038–1227), Mongolian generals and the military plundered the cities, seizing valuable booty. Noteworthy is the fact that Yelü Chucai, on the contrary, only took several books and rhubarb herbs, famous for its medicinal properties. While the choice of Yelü Chucai was ridiculed by representatives of the Mongolian army, a decoction of rhubarb later saved many Mongols from an active infection (however, the name of the disease is not given in any source).[22] Yelü Chucai's perspicacity played a key role in further promotion. Genghis Khan told his son Ögedei, 'The Sky sends us smart, noble, learned people, you need to appreciate the loyalty of Yelü Chucai!'[23]

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[18] Song Lian 1976: 3548–3549.
[19] Wilkinson 2012: 776.
[20] Rachewiltz 1993:140.
[21] Humble: 'Yelü Chucai Yuanshi Biography' – *online.*
[22] Song Lian 1976: 3456. Kadyrbaev 2016: 79.
[23] Song Lian 1976: 3456.

It is important to emphasise that Yelü Chucai actively prevented the spread of arbitrariness and violations against the population of Northern China, constantly urging Genghis Khan to show mercy. This is vividly demonstrated by the following historical event. During the conquest of a small village, when the inhabitants of which showed fierce resistance to the invaders, the Mongolian military decided to execute the population. However, Yelü Chucai persuaded the khan to not take such radical measures by saying, 'by mercy he would win the trust of the conquered people rather than by sword and fear'.[24] Consequently, it was decided to forbid the commander Subutai[25] from inflicting reprisals on the village's inhabitants. This fact shows the compassion of Yelü Chucai towards conquered individuals.

After the death of Genghis Khan in 1227, the position of Yelü Chucai in the state apparatus became even more solidified. Ögedei Khan made Yelü Chucai his main advisor and listened to his advice and recommendations regarding the future fate of the conquered population of Northern China.

It is crucial to focus our attention on another interesting fact from Yelü Chucai's biography during the regency of Tolui Khan (r. 1227–1229). In Yanjing (in modern-day Yunnan Province) there were many bandits who committed unspeakable acts, such as robbery and violence, and those who resisted were killed. Having heard of these affairs, Tolui sent an imperial commissioner together with Yelü Chucai to investigate. Yelü Chucai identified those individuals involved in these crimes, and it turned out that all of the bandits belonged to powerful families. Despite bribing the imperial commissioner, the bandits could not escape punishment. Yelü Chucai insisted on the death penalty for the guilty ones. Thus, 16 people were executed in the marketplace.[26] After that, the population of Yanjing found peace. Undoubtedly, this historical event characterises Yelü Chucai as a fair and uncorrupted official who was guided by morality and the desire to restore justice.

Yelü Chucai played a significant role in terms of Ögedei Khan's (1229–1241) ascension to the throne. According to *The Secret History of the Mongols*, Genghis Khan chose his son Ögedei as a successor after his death.[27] However, in 1229 there was a disagreement in the Mongolian assembly, a section of which supported Tolui's candidacy over Ögedei's. Tolui wanted to postpone the coronation ceremony to another day on account of this disagreement. Being an influential court astrologer, Yelü Chucai pointed out that the chosen day was auspicious,

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[24] Song Zizhen 1965: 76.

[25] Subutai (1176–1248) was a well-known general and military strategist of Genghis Khan and Ögedei Khan.

[26] Song Lian 1976: 3456–3457

[27] Onon Urgunge 2005: 262.

and the inauguration could not be postponed. Moreover, Yelü Chucai insisted that Chagatai (1183–1241; then the eldest living son of Genghis Khan) lead the imperial clan and officials, and that they all pay obeisance to Ögedei Khan in order of rank. Thus, Yelü Chucai not only contributed to the ascension of Ögedei Khan to the throne, but also introduced a new element of an inauguration ritual of the Mongol Khans (the bowing of the clan elders to the new Khans).

In addition to the above-mentioned actions of Yelü Chucai, I argue that his most valuable contribution is his effort to establish an effective tax policy for the people of Northern China. Before analysing his role at court, it is worth mentioning the goals of the conquerors towards the conquered after the conquest.

During the reign of Ögedei Khan (1229–1241), two groups arose that considered the future of Northern China in completely different ways.[28] The representatives of the first one wished to establish an effective policy of government according to the old Chinese model, involving Chinese officials and avoiding the dismemberment of the country into the inheritance of the Mongolian nobility. Actually, by the time Ögedei Khan ascended the throne, a significant part of Northern China had been turned into a number of semi-independent estates of Mongolian generals, their close entourages, as well as allies from among the Chinese and Khitan landowner-military leaders.[29] It is important to note that a city or region was placed at the disposal of the commander who captured it. Consequently, under these conditions, the Mongolian court received a small income from the occupied regions, since food supplies and collected taxes were inherited by the Mongolian commanders. It is not surprising that after Genghis Khan's campaign in Inner Asia, Ögedei Khan's court did not receive any taxes from Northern China and that Mongolian commanders and their supporters gained wealth due to their constant pillaging of the local populations. In order to suppress the activities of the generals, Ögedei Khan readily accepted the methods of exploiting Northern China, which were recommended to him by his Chinese advisers. The development and implementation of a new administrative system, the essence of which was the separation of powers in the conquered territories, became a fundamental element in changing the political and social situation in the country. According to the plan, military power would belong to the Mongolian and some Chinese military leaders who had defected to the Mongolians. Civil power would be transferred into the hands of representatives of the local educated elite.[30] Ögedei Khan supported these ideas.

It should be pointed out that Yelü Chucai was a prominent representative of the first group. Quoting the words of the ancient Chinese sage Lu Jia (240–170

[28] Kadyrbaev 2016: 79.
[29] Munkuev 1965: 27.
[30] Munkuev 1965: 35. Su 1936.

BCE), he said to Ögedei Khan, 'Although [you] conquered the Celestial Empire sitting on a horse, you cannot control [it] while sitting on a horse!'[31] These words meant that the khan needed to implement a more rational strategy for managing the conquered territories, primarily relying on the experience of China's previous ruling dynasties. He said that the development of a clear political course, a tax policy, and the use of natural resources in the interests of Ögedei Khan would become the main mechanisms for the prosperity of the new state.

The representatives of the second group included Mongolian generals, military, and influential members of the court who were opponents of a sedentary lifestyle that involves agriculture and living in towns. They called for the complete destruction of the conquered population, the seizure of their lands, and their transformation into pastures. They believed that the mixing of Mongolian and Chinese traditions would lead to the destruction of Genghis Khan's legacy and the loss of the traits that led the Mongols to power. Yelü Chucai completely rejected the concept of the second group and urged Ögedei Khan to act prudently. A compromise was made – Yelü Chucai proposed to the khan a tax policy that would prove the fallacy of the concept of the second group's representatives and become the main source of replenishment of the khan's treasury. Every year he could receive 500,000 *liang* (Chinese measure, 1 *liang* = 37.3 g) of silver, 80,000 pieces of silk cloth, and over 400,000 *shi* (Chinese measure, 1 *shi* = approximately 71.6 kg) of grain, by imposing land-based commercial and monopoly state taxes on wine, vinegar, and salt on the population of Northern China.[32] It is important to point out that the annual income of silver *liang* was envisaged only from Chinese traditional monopoly state taxes on salt and other commodities, while the pieces of silk cloth and grain came from taxes in kind from the citizens of Northern China.

Ögedei Khan approved the proposed policy, as he believed that Yelü Chucai's awareness of the peculiarities of the settled, agricultural culture and customs of the conquered people would play a key role in stabilising the situation in the country.

Tax offices *(keshuisuo)* were established in the 10 administrative regions of Northern China *(lu)*.[33] Former officials of the State of Jin were appointed as officials there. It is likely that such a decision was dictated by the fact that the Mongols were not familiar with the administrative system, and consequently, hiring experienced workers was vital to the Mongols in order to earn considerable income from the territories of Northern China. Through implementing such

[31] Munkuev 1965: 19.
[32] Song Zizhen 1965: 73.
[33] Rachewiltz 1993: 150.

a system, Yelü Chucai managed to achieve relative independence of the tax offices rescued from the impunity and arbitrariness of the Mongolian military leaders.

It is worth mentioning that the representatives of the Mongolian nobility were not satisfied with the tax policy initiated by Yelü Chucai. The main disagreement between the two groups was the first one's dissatisfaction with the issuance of a 1231 decree on the independence of tax offices from local authorities. This marked the beginning of the emergence of hostile attitudes towards Yelü Chucai, which continued until an eventual demand for his execution. Thus, the military was deprived of the right to perform arbitrariness and collect countless taxes from the inhabitants of Northern China. In all of the large administrative divisions *(lu)* into which Northern China had been divided, tax offices *(keshuisuo)* were established and were independent from local officials.[34]

The salt monopoly was established around 1230 or 1231 and was undoubtedly one of the most significant sources of government revenue. During the reign of the Mongols in China, the extraction and distribution of salt was monopolised. The state derived income from the salt monopoly by selling salt licenses. Each license cost 10 *liang* of silver and gave one the right to receive 400 *jin* (200 kg) of salt. In order to prevent robberies, tax offices were established to provide control. It is worth mentioning that this enterprise was profitable for the state.[35] For example, in Hejiang (located in east-central modern-day Hebei Province) in the early 1240s, 34,700 bags of salt had been received by the tax office annually, but from 1243, 90,000 bags were collected annually.[36] For 34,700 salt bags, the Mongolian court received 347,000 *liang* of silver, and for 90,000 bags the income was 900,000 *liang* of silver.[37] As we can see the increase in silver received by the newly established tax offices was significant. In 1230, Yelü Chucai determined the total annual amount from all monopoly taxes to be 500,000 *liang*, and in 1243, 900,000 *liang* were received from the salt monopoly from just one region of Northern China. These results show the efficiency of the tax policy implemented by Yelü Chucai.

In the early 1230s, a population census was conducted in Northern China in order to collect poll and land taxes from the conquered.[38] A tax on adults of 25 *liang* of silk yarn and on each bull or sheep of 50 *liang* of silk yarn was implemented in towns; each rural landowner had to provide 100 *liang* of silk yarn. As for peeled rice, individuals had to pay 4 *shi* from each yard annually.[39]

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[34] Song Zizhen 1965: 73.
[35] Munkuev 1965: C.56.
[36] Schurmann 1956: 177.
[37] Munkuev 1965: C.56.
[38] Munkuev 1965: 44.
[39] Munkuev 1965: 37–38.

Overall, by introducing such a system of collecting taxes from the population, Yelü Chucai wanted to show the Mongols, who were inexperienced in matters of governing settlements, that communication and humane treatment could bring great benefits to the ruler.

In 1236 another population census was held in Northern China.[40] The families registered during the previous one were called 'old households' (the total was about 730 households), and those who were first registered in 1235–1236 were deemed 'new households' (there were more than 1,100 new households). The *kezheng* tax system was implemented in the middle of the 1230s. Poll and land taxes were compulsory. An adult male's obligation was 1 *shi* of grain plus an additional 5 *dou* (approximately 15.29 kg) of grain per adult slave in their old household, and in the new households, the tax rate was 5 *dou* of grain per adult male and 2.5 *dou* of grain per slave.[41] We can conclude that all families were subject to an annual poll tax, levied on a free member in full and on a slave belonging to the family in half. Elderly people and children were exempted from paying the poll tax, but if they were engaged in agriculture, they had to pay a tax (poll or land tax) that was larger in amount.

There is comparatively little data on land tax. Song Zizhen's monograph is an important source regarding this issue.[42] In 1236, a land tax was set at 3.5 *sheng* (approximately 2.41 kg) per *mu* (1/15 of a hectare) of superior quality fields, 3 *sheng* for medium quality fields, and 2 *sheng* for inferior quality fields. The quality and quantity of land played an important role in terms of egalitarian land taxation.

Taking into account the above-mentioned data, we can conclude that such an effective tax policy served as a vital mechanism for the 'exploitation' of Northern China's population from a Chinese point of view. The revenues were colossal, and Ögedei Khan highly valued Yelü Chucai's contribution to the prosperity of China. Having seen his devoted service and the fruits of his tax policy, Ögedei Khan appointed Yelü Chucai *zhunshulin* ('head of the great imperial secretariat').[43] For Ögedei Khan, the most important goal was the annual income from the conquered lands, and the tax policy proposed by Yelü Chucai proved effective in terms of replenishing the treasury. It goes without saying that the tax policy had many positive aspects for the inhabitants of Northern China; however, during this period there were still cases of arbitrariness of officials in relation to the conquered, as well as the seizing of their territories for pastures.[44]

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[40] Allsen 1994: 378. Munkuev 1965: 48.
[41] Rachewiltz 1993: 156.
[42] Song Zizhen 1965: 68–90.
[43] Song Lian 1976: 3458.
[44] Su 1936.

However, some of Yelü Chucai's advice and suggestions were rejected by Ögedei Khan. For example, Yelü Chucai constantly fought against the introduction of a specific system in China for representatives of the Mongolian nobility. In the mid-1230s many territories were granted to the influential officials, which led to an aggravation of the social situation in the country. Furthermore, Yelü Chucai was unable to prevent the predatory policy of the local population by Ortak merchants[45] from flourishing. Farming taxes became one of the crucial problems of that time. The influence of Muslim merchants at the court steadily increased. After the death of Ögedei Khan, the tax farmer Abdar Rahman received forms with the imperial seal from Ögedei Khan's wife Töregene, so that he could issue decrees at his own discretion on behalf of the Mongol court.[46] This had a negative effect on the daily life of the conquered population.

The death of Ögedei Khan in 1241 became an important reason for the loss of influence of Yelü Chucai at the court, and constant court intrigues undermined his health. On 2 June 1243, Yelü Chucai died.

Conclusion

Yelü Chucai, a Genghis Khan- and Ögedei Khan-era progressive figure, contributed immensely to the tax system in Northern China as well as to the Mongolian court. Ögedei Khan was pleased with taxes, was interested in the establishment of social peace, and therefore supported Yelü Chucai, who proved to be a mediator between the classes of conquered and conquerors. As a court adviser to Genghis Khan, and later Ögedei Khan, he advocated the establishment of justice, humanity, and social order. Intelligence, incorruptibility, fidelity to duty, and humanity were among his main traits. Yelü Chucai's policy aimed at establishing fixed taxes from the conquered people instead of the robbery carried out by the Mongolian military leaders, as well as at creating a Chinese-style administration with the involvement of Chinese officials. In addition, preventing the dismemberment of the country into the destinies of the Mongolian nobility was a progressive principle of Yelü Chucai's policy. Consequently, Yelü Chucai sketched a draft of the Mongolian administrative system, which with all its limitations represents a humble attempt to impose the rule of the nomads on the great agrarian civilisation of the East.

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[45] Ortaks were merchants who actively collaborated with selected aristocrats in the Mongol Empire.

[46] Munkuev 1965: 22.

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Ancient Coins of Japan

Abstract
This paper aims to investigate the origins of ancient coins of Japan (until the 10th century CE), introduce the characteristics of their design and patterns, and examine their role in early Japanese culture and public administration, while briefly introducing the ancient Chinese coins that served as inspiration. Japan adopted numerous ancient Chinese cultural practices during the Asuka and Nara periods (538–794 CE). Especially from the second half of the 7th century to the 8th century CE, Japan introduced various social systems from the Tang dynasty in order to build a centralised government. Japanese nobles recognised the importance of metallic currency, leading to some silver and bronze coin production at the second half of the 7th century CE, including that of *Mumon Ginsen* and *Fuhonsen* coins. Scholars believe that they were modelled after ancient Chinese coins. The mintage was regarded as an essential tool for the Japanese government to display the independence and the authority of the nation, both inside and outside the country. The system of the first official imperial currency *(Kōchōsen)* was introduced to Japan in the early 8th century CE and inspired by the *Kāiyuán Tōngbǎo* cash coins of the Tang dynasty. The oldest known official Japanese imperial coinage is the *Wadō Kaichin*. In the second half of the 8th century CE, the national currency was reformed, and silver and gold cash coins were introduced. However, by the end of the 10th century CE, Japan subsequently suspended the mintage and circulation of coins.

Keywords: Japanese coins, imperial currency, *Kōchōsen, Mumon Ginsen, Fuhonsen, Wadō Kaichin,* numismatic charm, Japanese money, coinage, Japanese history

Introduction

While until recently Western research conducted on Japanese numismatic history mostly focused on medieval Japanese coins (starting with the importation of Sung coins in the 12th century CE), the specific research field of ancient Japanese currency remained undeveloped. Even in recent decades, English-language publications on coins in Japan prior to the medieval period have remained vastly

limited, especially those that built on the most recent Japanese academic reports and archaeological evidence.[1]

Over the last couple of decades, there have been unexpected developments in the study of the numismatic history of ancient Japan. Specifically, recent developments in archaeological research have significantly contributed to the study of coins. What were the currencies that structured economic, social, and ritual activity between the 7th and 10th centuries CE? How did their visual and cultural characteristics compare to those of ancient Chinese coins? Do the most recent archaeological findings support the documentary records?

In this paper, the author attempts to outline and re-examine the cultural-historical background, characteristics, and possible usage of ancient Japanese coins from the classical Asuka period (538–710) to the early Heian period (794–1185), focusing on both the contents of written sources (such as historical records and illustrated works) and on the ways in which new archaeological finds have cast light upon the cultural and numismatic history of ancient Japan.

The first known forms of currency in Japan

The history of Japanese currency goes back hundreds of years and has been influenced by many other countries, mostly by China. The origin of Japanese coins can be traced to the ancient Chinese *Ban Liang* 半兩[2] and *Wu Zhu* 五銖[3] bronze coins, and also to the *Kaiyuan Tongbao* 開元通寶[4] coin, all three of which were introduced to Japan in different time periods before the end of the 7th century CE. *Ban Liang* and *Wu Zhu* coins are known to use an inscription based on the weight of the coin.[5] However, the *Kaiyuan Tongbao* coin was the first coin to use the inscription *'tongbao'* 通寶 (lit. 'the inaugural currency') and an era name.[6] The inscription should be read in standard Chinese order: character on the top → on the bottom → on the right → on the left. Coins with a round

[1] Among the very few recent studies, Mikami Yoshitaka's and Joshua Batts' essential reference work *Coins and commerce in classical Japan* (2017) and William Wayne Farris' thorough article 'Trade, Money, and Merchants in Nara Japan' (1998) should be mentioned.

[2] It was the first unified currency of the Qin Chinese empire, introduced by Emperor Qin Shi Huang 秦始皇帝 around 210 BCE.

[3] First issued in 118 BC, *Wu Zhu* coins were produced from the Han dynasty when they replaced the earlier *San Zhu* cash coins, which had replaced the *Ban Liang* coins.

[4] It was a Tang dynasty (618–907 CE) cash coin that was produced from 621 CE in the capital (Chang'an) under the reign of Emperor Gaozu.

[5] These coins take their name from their two character inscription, which means 'half a *liang*'. *Liang* 兩 was the equivalent of about 16 grams (Hartill 2005; 83).

[6] Era titles/names (*nengō* 年號/年号) are the regnal years of emperors under which the coin was cast. Titles were on the obverse side, showing that the emperor was a powerful, supreme ruler.

shape and square hole were practical, as they could be easily strung together and conveniently carried.[7] Furthermore, according to the *tianyuan difang* 天圓地方 concept of ancient Chinese cosmology, these round items stand for the round shape of the sky ('heaven'), while the centre hole in this analogy is said to represent the human world ('earth').[8]

Although archaeological evidence clearly reveals that Chinese copper and iron coins were brought to Japan during the Yayoi and Kofun periods, Japan's economy, society, and public administration were not sufficiently developed at the time. As such these items were more likely to be understood as captivating objects rather than a means of exchange. During the 5th–6th centuries CE, *Wu Zhu* Chinese coins were used in Japanese and Korean (Baekje) burial rituals (serving as burial accessories) as well.[9]

Before the end of the 7th century CE, Japan used commodity money for trading. Commodities such as rice, salt, silk or hemp clothes, arrowheads, and agricultural tools with high value played the role of money. These materials were compact, transportable, easily storable, easily combined and divided, and also had a widely accepted value.[10]

In the second half of the 7th century CE, the first Japanese state (Yamato) was transformed into a centralised, strictly organised state based on the Chinese model and actively assimilated legal, administrative and social systems, and culture from China. The reform outlined the rules for everyday life, including domestic and foreign trade, mintage, and a new standard currency (based on the Chinese units of measurement). During this reform process, private coins and imperial coins modelled after Chinese ones were issued in Japan for the first time.

Presumably, the first unmarked coins produced during the Asuka period (538–710) were called *Mumon Ginsen* 無文銀銭 (lit. 'silver coins without inscription or motif'), with diameter of approx. 3 cm, a width of approx. 2 mm, and a weight of approx. 8–10 g. (*Fig.1*). All known coins are silver alloy and produced in three shapes: round (16.7%), nearly round (70.8%), and deformed (slices of silver ore, 12.5%) with or without a nearly round hole.[11] The very rare and primitive line or circle patterns on *Mumon Ginsen* are arguably reminiscent of independent Chinese characters (「廿」「卅」「丁」「高」「志」「土」「大」「伴」「田」) or simple geometric shapes (「○」「×」「-」).[12] Based on recent archaeological evidence and a particular entry of *Nihon Shoki* (which

[7] On a string, there were 1000 coins (Hartill 2005: iii,103).
[8] Major 1993: 38–39.
[9] Matsumura 2011: 3, Mikami 2017: 355.
[10] Takagi 2016: 8.
[11] Nagato 2007: 177.
[12] Takagi 2016: 9.

shall be discussed later in this paper) from about the year 683 CE (Tenmu 12), scholars believe that this private coinage was funded and forged by certain Japanese noble families and Buddhist temples from the second half of the 7th century CE.[13] Researchers still debate whether or not these silver items were used as currency in economic or private ritual activities. As of 2021, more than 120 coins have been excavated at 16 sites in present-day Nara, Shiga, Kyōto, Hyōgo, Ōsaka, and Mie Prefectures (earlier known as Yamashiro, Yamato, Ōmi, Settsu, Kawachi, and Ise Provinces).[14]

Among these discoveries, *Mumon Ginsen* coins and small slices of silver ore found at the Ogurachō-Bettōchō Site 小倉町別当町遺跡 (Kyōto Prefecture) and at Sūfukuji temple 崇福寺 (Shiga Prefecture) should be mentioned, as they are likely to be among the first coins produced in Japan. The latter find enabled Japanese researchers for the first time to date the coins to between 668 CE and the end of the 7th century CE, and also to guess that they derived their value from their weight (approx. 10 grams).[15] This discovery also suggests that the earliest phase of coinage in Japan had not been modelled merely after Qin Chinese (221 BC–206 BC) cash coins. Rather, the production presumably started in an independent, different way.

Fig. 1. *Mumon Ginsen* coin

The first government-made coins–made from an alloy of copper, antimony, lead, and tin–were called *Fuhonsen* 富本銭. According to a 1998 archaeological survey conducted at the Asukaike Ruins (飛鳥池遺跡)[16] and at the Fujiwara Palace Site (藤原宮大極殿院南門)[17] in Nara Prefecture, *Fuhonsen* coins had been minted in Nara in the latter half of the 7th century CE, presumably from 683 CE (天武12).[18]

> Nihon Shoki Vol. 29. Emperor Tenmu, Year 12 (683 CE) Summer, 4th lunar month, 15th day. *The Emperor made a decree, saying: Henceforth copper coins must be used, and not silver coins.*[19]

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[13] Matsumura 2004: 1.
[14] Takagi 2016: 7–9.
[15] Sakuraki 2009: 578.
[16] Excavation work was conducted in 1998 (Asuka Shiryōkan 2000: 27–41).
[17] Excavation work was conducted in 2016 (Takata 2008: 67–69).
[18] Takagi 2016: 9–10.
[19] The silver coins mentioned in the text are thought to be the *Mumon Ginsen* coins.

> Nihon Shoki Vol. 29. Emperor Tenmu, Year 12 (683 CE) Summer, 4th lunar month, 18th day. *A decree was issued, saying: Let the use of silver be not discontinued.*[20]
>
> 『日本書紀』巻第二十九 天武天皇十二年
> 夏四月戊午朔壬申条「詔曰、自今以後必用銅錢、莫用銀錢。」
> 同月乙亥条「詔曰、用銀莫止。」[21]

The survey revealed that these coins were unearthed together with their bronze moulds, copper rods, pots, and other tools used to produce them[22] (*Fig. 2*). The *Fuhonsen* coin has the *'fuhon'* 富本 inscription above and below the square hole on the obverse side of the coin.[23] The inscription roughly translates to 'the base/origin of wealth'. The coin also has seven dots (stars, according to Chinese religious beliefs) to the right and left of the square hole. The reverse side has no inscription or motif.

Fig. 2. *Fuhonsen* coins excavated at Asukaike Ruins in Asuka, Nara Prefecture

The government gave special attention to the development of copper mining during the Nara and Heian periods, establishing several offices in western and southwestern regions of Honshū, where most copper mines were located.[24]

[20] Aston 1990: 359–360.
[21] Sakamoto 1995: 188.
[22] Takagi 2016: 9.
[23] The earliest written source to mention *Fuhonsen* coins is the *Wakan kokon hōsen zukan* 和漢古今寶銭図鑑. This illustrated book was first published in 1694 as part nine of the encyclopedia *Banpō Zensho* 万宝全書. It is the oldest known printed Japanese numismatic work.
[24] Matsumura 2004: 1.

Based on *Nihon Shoki* records, 'mint officials' of different ranks were responsible for casting coins in local mint offices (*chūsenshi* 鋳銭司).

> *Nihon Shoki* Vol. 30. Empress Jitō, Year 8 (694 CE) *3rd lunar month, 2nd day. Ohoyake no Asomi Maro (of Jikikōshi rank), Utena no Imiki Yashima (of Gondaini rank) and Kibumi no Muraji Honjitsu were appointed as* officials (governors) of the Mint Office.[25]
>
> 『日本書紀』巻第三十 持統天皇八年 三月乙酉条「以直広肆大宅朝臣麻呂・勤大貳臺忌寸八嶋・黄書連本実等、拝鋳銭司。」

> *Shoku Nihongi* Vol. 1. Emperor Monmu, Year 3 (699 CE) *For the first time, Mint Office was established.*[26] *Nakatomi no Asomi Omimaro (of Jikidaishi rank) was appointed as the chief official.*
>
> 『続日本書紀』第一巻 文武天皇三年 十二月庚子条「始置鋳銭司。以直大肆中臣朝臣意美麻呂為長官。」[27]

Some of the main excavation sites (such as Asukaike Ruins) do not appear in historical records as places where coins were produced. Furthermore, the form of the script of the coins found at different historical places is dissimilar. Archaeological finds suggests that *Fuhonsen* were cast for different purposes in different places.[28]

Since the 17th century, the usage of *Fuhonsen* has often been interpreted as numismatic charms (*yanshengjian*/*yōshōsen* 厭勝銭) rather than a legal form of money. While coins with decorative motifs used for rituals were quite rare in ancient Japan, they were actually common in ancient China. Chinese coins with charm-like qualities presumably appeared in the Western Han dynasty (206 BCE–24 CE) and eventually developed into real talisman objects. Coins were quite suitable for being used as charms, because they were very compact forms of power, filled with symbolism. Different types of amulets[29] were cast privately and were used to suppress evil spirits, to bring 'good luck' and 'good fortune', and to avert misfortune. They were also used for fortune telling rituals. In the

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[25] Matsumura 2004: 3; Aston 1990: 414.

[26] Matsumura (2004: 2011), among other Japanese scholars, suggests that the new emperor had to formally 'reopen' the already existing offices, and also had to appoint new officials to manage the mint office.

[27] https://jhti.berkeley.edu/index.html (2022. 03. 31.).

[28] Sakuraki 2009: 579.

[29] Good luck charms (*jiyuqian* 吉語銭), safe journey charms, peace charms (*tianxia taipingqian* 天下太平銭), burial coins (*mingqian* 冥銭), good marriage charms (*fufu hehe huaqian* 夫婦和合花銭), astrological charms (*shengxiaoqian* 生肖銭, *xingxiangqian* 星相銭), gambling tokens – horse coins (*maqian* 馬銭), house charms (*zhenzhaiqian* 镇宅銭) etc.

feng shui tradition, coins (strung together with a red or yellow cord) are powerful amulets that can be used in a place to invite wealth, abundance, good fortune, and prosperity. Being round with a square hole in the centre, charm coins had auspicious motifs (such as of stars, the moon, the sun, heavenly bodies, cardinal deities, immortals, numbers, or the 'Eight Treasures' symbols) and/or 'good luck' inscriptions (raised above the face of the coin) and were merely used as amulets.

While Chinese coins can feature the 'seven star pattern' (*qiyaowen*/*shichiyōmon* 七曜文) on both the obverse and reverse, *Fuhonsen* has this motif only on its observe side. If we try to understand why one of the most common patterns to appear on early Chinese coinage was seven dots, and why there are exactly seven of them in a special arrangement on the *Fuhonsen* coin, we need to focus on the various possible meanings of the symbol. First of all, the Chinese character for 'star' or 'heavenly body' (*xing* 星) not only referred to the astronomical and cosmological bright beings in the sky, but also had the meaning of 'spreading out' or 'countless, numerous'. The implied meaning of the small star symbol itself is that Chinese coins should be like the round sky with many stars and heavenly bodies, numerous, widespread throughout the universe. However, why would they use exactly seven stars?

The seven star pattern probably originates in the Chinese Daoist belief of the Northern Dipper (*Beidou Xinyang* 北斗信仰) and the yin–yang and five phases combined theory (*yinyang wuhang sixiang* 陰陽五行思想). The yin–yang and five phases theory is that yin and yang define the universe as the interaction of polar opposite forces (heaven and earth), and the five phases or five element theory further differentiates this dynamic into five stages of transformation (a cosmic cycle of wood, fire, earth, metal, and water). From a cosmological viewpoint, the seven star motif is an artistic representation of the idea that the universe is in constant change and development (*liangyi sixiang shengcheng* 両儀四象生成), as described in many Chinese classics with philosophical commentaries on divination and cosmology (such as the *Book of Changes – Yi Jing* 易經)[30] *(Fig. 3)*.

The seven stars of the Northern Dipper (*Beidou Qixing* 北斗七星) is a major asterism of seven bright stars that was recognised as a distinct grouping in many East Asian (and other) countries and was quite important in Chinese Daoist astrology, cosmology, and divination. As Chinese culture spread widely in the Far East, the royal courts of many ancient kingdoms adopted the Daoist elements into their folk belief systems, albeit with their own interpretations.

[30] The *Book of Changes*, Book 2. Chapter 11: 'Therefore there is in the Changes the Great Primal Beginning. This generates the two primary forces *(yin-yang)*. The two primary forces generate the four images. The four images generate the eight trigrams' (Wilhelm 1977: 616).

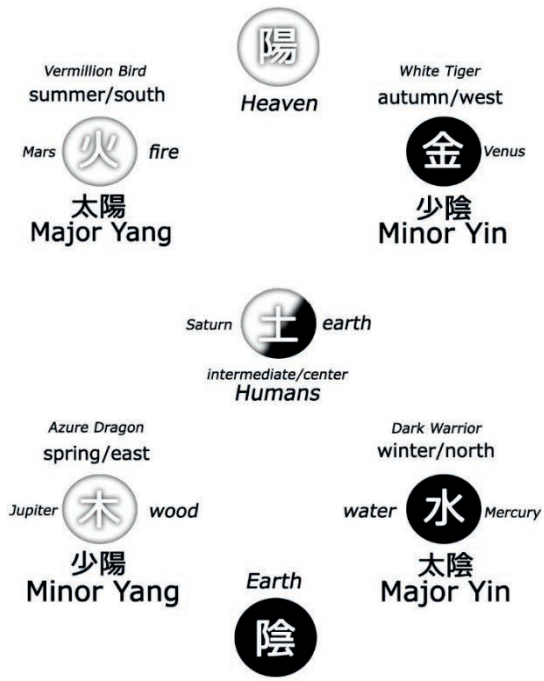

Fig 3. Diagram of the interactions between the yin–yang and five phases in the ever-changing universe (両儀四象生成図)

According to Daoist philosophy, the sky was a broad canvas for the live display of cosmological and imperial themes. Asterisms (a pattern of stars that is not a full constellation) were counterparts (*xiang* 象) of earthly formations (*xing* 形) and sources of supernatural power.[31] The centre of the northern sky was constructed around two key asterism; one of them was the Hooked/Curved Array (*Gouchen* 勾陳), where the Heavenly Emperor resided in an imperial residence called the Purple Palace (*Zigong* 紫宮). The Northern Dipper was believed to be the Heavenly Emperor's chariot.[32] It was also one of the 28 lunar mansions (*xiu* 宿) of the sky, and thus it was connected to the Dark Warrior (*Xuanwu* 玄武), which is one of the Four Symbols or Four Cardinal Deities[33] (*Sixiang* 四象・*Shishen* 四神).

[31] The *Book of Changes*, Book 2. Ch. 1. 'In this way good fortune and misfortune come about. In the heavens phenomena take form; on earth shapes take form. In this way change and transformation become manifest' (Wilhelm 1977: 562). Smith 2015:11.

[32] Ooms 2009: 173–174.

[33] The belief of the Four Guardians refers to an ancient Chinese faith in four mythological animal-beasts, each representing a cardinal direction: Azure Dragon of the East (*Qinglong* 青龍), Vermillion Bird of the South (*Zhuque* 朱雀), White Tiger of the West (*Baihu* 白虎), and Dark Warrior of the North (*Xuanwu* 玄武).

Being blended into *Onmyōdō* 陰陽道[34] in the Heian period, the Northern Dipper cult became extremely popular in Japan from about the end of the 8th century CE.[35] However, based on archaeological evidence and written records,[36] it can be assumed that ritual significance was attached to the seven stars already in the Asuka and Nara Periods, especially in the second half of the 7th century CE (during the reigns of Tenmu, Jitō, and Monmu), when Daoist philosophy had a notable influence on the culture of the Japanese imperial court. In this period, the Yamato court was already well acquainted with ancient Chinese cosmology and Daoism, thanks to Korean monks and scholars and Japanese envoys sent to Sui and Tang China from 630 CE onwards. *Fuhonsen* copper coins were produced exactly in this short time period.[37] Using the seven star pattern on the *Fuhonsen* coin as a multivalent Daoist symbol was probably a way of displaying/demonstrating the Heavenly Emperor's imperial-ritual power in the ever-changing universe, and on top of it, it commemorates the Chinese ritual coins with decorative star motifs from earlier centuries as well.

The first formal currency system of Japan

As Japanese aristocrats in the centralised government became highly interested in Tang culture, they were drawn to the utility of Tang metallic coins. From 708 CE, following the discovery of large copper deposits in the country,[38] the Japanese government focused even more on the development of mining and the improvement of casting technology. Offices produced 12 kinds of copper coins of different sizes, a gold coin, and two kinds of silver coins until the mid-10th century CE; these are referred to as *Kōchōsen* 皇朝銭 (lit. 'imperial currency').[39]

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[34] *Onmyōdō* is a traditional Japanese esoteric cosmology, formerly under the control of the imperial government. It is originally based on the ancient Chinese theories of Yin and Yang and the Five Phases. As *Onmyōdō* was formed in ancient Japan, it subsumed various elements of Daoism, Mikkyō Esoteric Buddhism and Chinese folk religion.

[35] Dolce 2006: 3–43.

[36] We know from the detailed entries of the *Nihon Shoki* chronicle that the Korean monks and scholars who arrived in Japan in the 7th century CE were of great help in interpreting the Daoist astrological and cosmological symbols and divination techniques.

[37] Empress Jitō 持統天皇 (645–703) moved the Japanese capital to Fujiwara-kyō 藤原京 in 694 CE. Archaeological excavations at the Fujiwara Palace Ruins (Kashihara City, Nara) revealed that nine *Fuhosen* coins were found in a ritual jar at the southern part of the Imperial Audience Hall (*Daigokuden* 大極殿) garden area. Takata 2008: 67–68.

[38] Mostly in present-day Kanagawa, Saitama, and Yamaguchi Prefectures. The Naganobori copper mine (*Naganobori dōzan* 長登銅山) is regarded as one of the largest copper production sites of ancient Japan.

[39] The names of the 12 *Kōchōsen* 皇朝十二銭 copper coins and their respective coinage dates

The mintage and use of coins were an essential tool for the Japanese imperial government to display the wealth, the political power, and independence of the country, both to its neighbouring countries[40] and to the clan-based Japanese society. Because of this special support of copper mining, the government also listed punishments for private coining that were exceptionally severe compared to those in China.[41]

As stated in the *Shoku Nihongi*, copper was discovered in Musashi Province (in the present-day Kantō region) during the first lunar month of 708 CE (Wadō 1) and was presented to the court. It was also recorded that in the second lunar month of the same year, the Office of the Mint was established.[42] In addition, the Japanese government issued the *Wadō Kaichin* 和同開珎[43] silver coin on the 11th day of the 5th lunar month[44] and the *Wadō Kaichin* copper coin on the 10th day of the 8th lunar month[45] on the orders of Empress Genmei 元明天皇 (660–721), as the first types of official imperial currency. There were two types of this currency: poorly made silver or copper *kowadō* 古和同 (lit. old *wadō*) coins and delicately made, thin copper *shinwadō* 新和同 (lit. new *wadō*) coins. Both versions were fully modelled after the *Kaiyuan Tongbao* coin of the Tang dynasty and made by highly trained artisans *(Fig. 4)*. *Wadō Kaichin* also has a round shape with a square hole in the centre, and its size and weight (a diameter of 2.4 cm and a weight of 3.75 g) are practically the same as those of the Chinese coin. Moreover, the inscription of the *Wadō Kaichin* was written in plain calligraphic clerical script (*lishu* 隶书) as well. However, an important difference between the inscription of the *Wadō Kaichin* compared to that of the Tang Chinese coins was that it was read clockwise, not in the Chinese standard

in chronological order: *Wadō Kaichin* 和同開珎 (708 CE), *Mannen Tsūhō* 万年通寶 (760 CE), *Jingū Kaihō* 神功開寶 (765 CE), *Ryūhei Eihō* 隆平永寶 (796 CE), *Fujū Shinpō* 富壽神寶 (818 CE), *Jōwa Shohō* 承和昌寶 (835 CE), *Chōnen Taihō* 長年大寶 (848 CE), *Nyoyaku Shinpō* 饒益神寶 (859 CE), *Jōgan Eihō* 貞観永寶 (870 CE), *Kanpyō Taihō* 寬平大寶 (890 CE), *Engi Tsūhō* 延喜通寶 (907 CE), and *Kengen Taihō* 乾元大寶 (958 CE). Takagi 2016: 16–18.

[40] *Wadō Kaichin* coins were discovered all over Japan and even in Balhae/Bohai 渤海 (a multi-ethnic kingdom whose land extends to what is now today Northeast China, the Korean Peninsula, and the Russian Far East). Fujii 2010: 142.

[41] Delmer 1993: 435; Takagi 2016: 16.

[42] 『続日本紀』和銅元年二月甲戌条「始置二催鋳銭司一。」https://jhti.berkeley.edu/index.html (2022. 03. 31.)

[43] The first word '*wadō*' 和同 could have been chosen as a homophone for the era name *wadō* 和銅 of the Asuka period (538–710), which means 'Japanese copper'. The second word *'kaichin'* likely means 'first treasure/currency'.

[44] 『続日本紀』和銅元年五月壬寅条「始行二銀銭一。」https://jhti.berkeley.edu/index.html (2022. 03. 31.)

[45] 『続日本紀』和銅元年八月己巳条「始行二銅銭一。」https://jhti.berkeley.edu/index.html (2022. 03. 31.)

order.[46] Another notable distinction is that the Japanese coin has the character *zhen* 珍 (lit. 'precious', 'valuable', 'rare') at the end of its name, instead of *bao* 寶 (lit. 'treasure'). As of 2011, 6358 coins have been excavated at 775 sites (related to government offices) in the country.[47] For instance, a striking discovery of a set of 8th century CE *Wadō Kaichin* coins (with a weight of 1.45–2.91g and a diameter of 23.7–25.2 mm) still attached to the metal branches from the mould (*zhijian*/*edazeni* 枝銭) was made at the Saikudani site (細工谷遺跡) in Osaka Prefecture in 1996.[48]

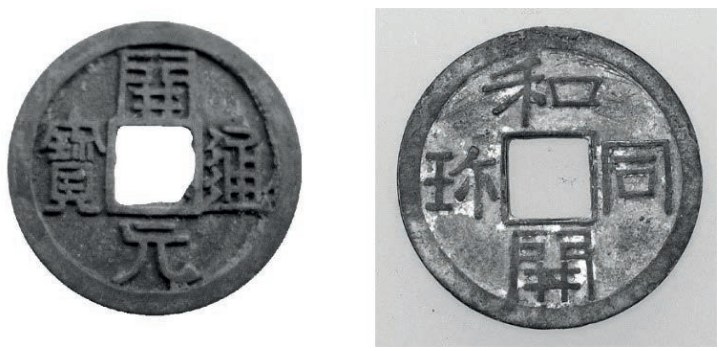

Fig.4. *Kaiyuan Tongbao* coin (on the left) and *Wadō Kaichin* coin (on the right)

As stated in Book 2 of the *Shoku Nihongi*, the silver *Wadō Kaichin* coins were partly abolished in 709 CE (Wadō 2) and fully prohibited in 710 CE (Wadō 3); only old and new copper coins were left in circulation.[49] Japanese scholars suggest that the old silver version had been issued as counterfeit money (*shichūsen* 私鋳銭) only to fully expel the *Mumon Ginsen*, which had been in private use in the capital since the second half of the 7th century CE.[50] Other researchers maintain that the production of silver coins was a trial effort in preparation for the production of copper coins, or they were used as a 'lead' to increase the total value of currency in circulation if copper coins alone might have been insufficient.[51]

Officials of the imperial court actively worked to improve copper coin circulation through various measures (especially in the Nara period 710–794). For

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[46] The inscription on *Wadō Kaichin* coins would therefore be read as *'wa'* (character at top), *'dō'* (character at right), *'kai'* (character at bottom), and *'chin'* (character at left).

[47] Matsumura 2011: 2.

[48] Sakuraki 2009: 578.

[49] 『続日本紀』巻四和銅二年八月乙酉条「廃銀銭。一行銅銭。」https://jhti.berkeley.edu/index.html (2022. 03. 31.)

[50] Mikami 2017: 356.

[51] Matsumura 2011: 1, Mikami 2017: 356.

instance, after the *Chikusen-joi-rei* 蓄銭叙位令 ordinance was issued in the 10th lunar month of 711 CE (Wadō 4), royals who had saved large amounts of coins and donated them for government projects were offered positions (ranks) in the imperial court.[52] Local produce taxes of the Kinai area (Yamashiro, Yamato, Settsu, Kawachi, and Izumi Provinces) also had to be paid in copper coins. In addition, the government used the imperial currency to cover the costs of constructing the imperial palace in more than one capital. Based on Shōsōin records,[53] we know that hired labourers were used for construction projects at the Heijō, Shigaraki, and Kuni capitals and at various temples and shrines, and these men–who constantly travelled to and from the capital–were compensated with imperial coins that could be exchanged for food.[54] Additionally, as claimed by the *Shoku Nihongi*, the court denoted a standard rate of exchange with in-kind currencies (rice and cloth) in 711 and 712 CE. Moreover, *shinwadō* coins were found buried in jars at ancient sites in Shiga or Nara Prefecture, which could be connected to an ancient *onmyōdō* practise of burying widely accepted coins to purify a highly important site and pray for the safe completion of a building such as a Buddhist temple or a royal residence.[55] These findings also suggest that no matter how much the government tried to stimulate the circulation of money, its use was limited to areas around the ancient capital cities.[56]

Written sources of exchange activities by merchants or officials during the 8th century CE are minimal. Although historically inaccurate, *Nihon Ryōiki* 日本霊異記[57] shares a story about a merchant who borrowed about 30,000 copper coins from Daianji 大安寺[58] and then went to a far-away port in Echizen Province (present-day Fukui Prefecture) to buy goods that he intended to sell at the capital. We can assume that in the Nara period, official temples were engaged in the business of lending *Kōchōsen* coins for gain (and actively encouraged it), or that these coins were used for consummating transactions between officials,

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[52] According to Chikusen-joirei, nobles who saved more than 10,000 coins (10 貫) would be promoted by one rank. Elite people who saved more than 20,000 coins (20 貫) would be promoted by two ranks. The ordinance was abolished in Enryaku 19 (800 CE). Mikami 2017: 356–357.

[53] Several contracts (for work) exist in the Shōsōin document collection (*Shōsōin monjo*正倉院文書), and some of them were rearranged for the compilation of the *Dai Nihon Komonjo* 大日本古文書 series edited by *Tōkyō Daigaku Shiryō Hensanjo* 東京大學史料編纂所 between 1901–1940.

[54] The imperial government made elite families of the countryside and district managers (*gunji* 郡司) supply rice in exchange for currency. Delmer 1993: 434–435; Mikami 2017: 356–357.

[55] https://yakushiji.or.jp (accessed: 2022. 03. 31.)

[56] Delmer 1993: 435.

[57] *Nihon Ryōiki* ('Miraculous Events in Japan') was compiled by a monk in the early 9th century CE, and it is the first major collection of (Buddhist) *setsuwa* literature in Japan.

[58] Daianji is one of the Seven Great Buddhist Temples of Nara, founded in 639 CE during the reign of Emperor Jōmei.

commoners, and the bureau.[59] Additionally, a few historical documents, such as the *Dai Nihon Komonjo* 大日本古文書, reveal reliable information about how the central government's Tōdaiji Construction Office (Zōtōdaijishi 造東大寺司) purchased virgin and cultivated lands from wealthy farmers to make a new estate (*shōen* 荘園[60]) belonging to Tōdaiji. For instance, according to the records, the office spent 180 strings of copper coins in 754 CE to buy lands in Echizen Province to form a *shōen* called Kuwabara 桑原荘.[61] It is likely that the economic life of major Buddhist temples in Nara could not have been established so easily without copper coins.

In 760 CE (Tenpyō Hōji 4), the second type of imperial copper coin (*Mannen Tsūhō* 万年通寶) was produced for the first time by the order of Fujiwara no Nakamaro 藤原仲麻呂[62], who was granted the right to issue coinage.[63] According to the monetary policies[64] he created, the exchange rate was set at one *Mannen Tsūhō* coin for 10 *Wadō Kaichin* coins. In the same year, he issued a new gold coin (*Kaiki Shōhō* 開基勝寶) and a silver coin (*Taihei Genpō* 大平元寶) as well. From this era until 958 CE, each imperial coin's official name ended with 寶 *(hō),* in accordance with the Tang tradition. Although the government made a great deal of effort to expand and stimulate the use of imperial copper coins through various measures, based on historical sources and archaeological evidence, scholars suggest that *Kaiki Shōhō* (gold coin) and *Taihei Genpō* (silver coin) had not been widely distributed. They probably were 'show money' to set a high value for imperial copper coins.[65] After Nakamaro's political fall and the changing of the era's name, a new copper coin (*Jingū Kaihō* 神功開寶) was produced in 765 CE.

In the early Heian period, the imperial government designated Yamashiro Province as a production centre for coins and attempted to recover older coins for further coinages.[66] Eventually, the circulation of currency became limited to the Heian capital from the middle of the 9th century CE. Subsequently, *Kōchōsen* coins eventually became lower in quality (the metal content changed)

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[59] Delmer 1993: 436; Yoshida 1983: 376–383.

[60] Shōen refers to the privately owned and/or managed land that was over a certain scale and not under public governance (or limiting the public governance as much as possible).

[61] Delmer 1993: 449.

[62] Also known as Emi no Oshikatsu 恵美押勝, Fujiwara no Nakamaro (706–764) was an aristocrat in the imperial court, who eventually became *daijō daijin* 太政大臣 (head of the Great Council of State) of the Japanese imperial government in the Nara period.

[63] Mikami 2017: 358.

[64] He set the value of newly issued copper coins at 10 times the value of the previous currency. This tradition continued until the early Heian period.

[65] Takagi 2016: 16.

[66] Mikami 2017: 358.

and smaller in size. This resulted in a rapid decrease in the value of the copper coins, and commoners refused to use them in trade. The government suspended casting copper coins in the late 10th century CE; the last very low quality copper alloy coin *Kengen Taihō* 乾元大寶 was issued in 958 CE. Interestingly enough, copper coins are depicted in many scenes of the late 10th century CE Japanese tale *Utsubo Monogatari* うつほ物語 ('Tale of the Hollow Tree') as a display of values for gifts and bets, which suggests that *Kōchōsen* coins were still circulating inside the Heian capital (*Heian-kyō* 平安京) after the government suspended minting copper coins in the latter part of the 10th century CE.[67] Following the abandonment of the national currency, Japanese people returned to rice, silk, and hemp clothes (which had all maintained stable value) as a currency medium by the end of the 10th century CE.[68]

Summary

Based on well-established Japanese and Western research, a textual analysis of Japanese historical records, and an examination of the most recent archaeological fieldwork reports, this paper discussed and attempted to re-investigate the cultural history, distinguished characteristics, usage, and handling of ancient metal coins circulated in Japan from the Asuka period (6–8th century CE) to the first half of the Heian period (8–10th century CE). From the latter part of the 7th century CE, Japan introduced various systems from Tang China in order to build a centralised government based on the *ritsuryō* 律令 code. During this process, as Japanese aristocrats in the centralised government became highly interested in Tang culture, metal coins were issued. According to archaeological findings and documentary records of *Nihon Shoki*, flat, round, or deformed silver plates *(Mumon Ginsen)* were forged privately, mainly during the reign of Emperor Tenmu. The Japanese imperial government issued its first coins in the latter part of the 7th century CE. *Fuhonsen* round copper coins with square holes in the centre were patterned on Chinese coins and were based on the Chinese units of measurement. During the reigns of Emperor Tenmu (r. 673–686), Empress Jitō (r. 690–697), and Emperor Monmu (r. 697–707), when Daoist philosophy had a notable influence on the culture of the Japanese imperial court, *Fuhonsen* coins were presumably used as both a circulating currency (economic character) and a numismatic charm (ritualistic character). From the early part of the 8th century CE, a gold coin, two kinds of silver coins, and 12 kinds of copper coins were issued by the government for about 250 years. The birth of these *Kōchōsen* coins

[67] Mikami 2017: 359.
[68] Takagi 2016: 20–23.

resulted from the impact of the Tang court's *Kaiyuan Tongbao* copper coins. The *ritsuryō* state issued *Wadō Kaichin* copper coins as the first *Kōchōsen*, in order to ensure the financial resources necessary for the upcoming relocation of the capital to Heijō-kyō. The mintage was regarded as an essential tool for the Japanese government to display the authority and independence of the nation. In addition, *Wadō Kaichin* coins might also have had a ritual character as they were found buried at important ancient sites as well. Decade by decade, the quality of the coinage fell considerably and – although the use of *Kōchōsen* was presumably not yet fully prohibited in everyday life – the actions of both the common people and aristocrats avoiding coins in economic transactions led the government to abandon the national currency in the latter half of the 10th century CE.

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A Kabuki Pose in Sculptures of Auguste Rodin

Abstract
Hanako (Ōta Hisa, 1868–1945) was an insignificant member of a small Japanese theatrical troupe when she was discovered by the well-known dancer, Loïe Fuller, who after seeing Hanako's death scene, decided to become her impresario. Thereafter, Fuller organised each of Hanako's European tours and wrote for her many Japanese-style dramas that always ended with the cruel but utterly expressive death of the protagonist. Hanako met Auguste Rodin, the famous sculpture, at the Marseille Colonial Exhibition in 1906. The master was fascinated by Hanako's performance and tried to sculpt the 'death face' that she expressed during her death scenes. This face, with a weird expression, was most probably a *nirami,* which is a type of *mie* pose in kabuki theatre. Rodin created numerous busts and faces from different materials trying to capture the emblematic moment when Hanako saw death. The present paper examines the short but interesting period of Hanako's Western career, focusing on her meeting with Rodin. I use their story as a unique and symbolic illustration of Japanese artists' efforts to transform themselves and their art to 'match' the Western eye and of the ways in which the West was looking for verification of its preconceptions of the 'strange' and 'exotic' East in the early 1900s.

Keywords: Auguste Rodin, Hanako, *kabuki,* Japanese theatre, death scene, Loïe Fuller, Colonial Exhibition, *mie, nirami*

Introduction

In this study I analyse the encounter between Japanese actress Ōta Hisa 大田ひさ (1868–1945), whose stage name was Hanako 花子, and the renowned sculptor Auguste Rodin (1940–1917) from the perspective of intercultural theatre history. As it is well known, the face of Hanako was sculptured several times by Rodin, who was fascinated by Hanako's death scene and attempted to sculpt it. I argue that their encounter is a symbolic example of how the West and the East used each other's preconceptions for their own purposes in the early 1900s. I focus on the special method with which the West discovered Japanese

theatre, or rather how the West created a 'new' Japanese theatre for itself. For analysing this process, the encounter between Hanako and Rodin proves to be a prime example.

> [I]n the midst of all the actors, I spotted a sweet little Japanese girl who I would willingly have made the lead actress of the group. But for these Japanese, women didn't count, and all the great roles were played by men. Yet I had noticed only her. She played a minor role, it's true, but with such intelligence, such an entertaining manner, like a toddling little mouse, and she was able suddenly to transform herself with little movements which froze all the anguish of terror onto her features. She was pretty, delicate, strange, and stood out even among her fellow countrymen. When the rehearsal was over, I gathered the actors together and told them: 'If you want to stay with me, you must do what I say. And if you don't make this little mite your main actress you will never succeed'. And since her name was unpronounceable, I baptized her Hanako then and there.[1]

This was the beginning of famous career of Ōta Hisa, whose success was owed to being discovered by a well-known dancer and performer, Loïe Fuller (1862–1928).

First and foremost, however, we have to examine the circumstances that enabled a Japanese female actress or dancer to travel to Europe in the early years of 1900s. In 1868, after the Meiji Restoration, Japan changed fundamentally. With the downfall of the last Tokugawa shogun – who led the country in the feudal period – Emperor Meiji was restored to supreme power and position. The emperor's most important action was modernisation, since Japan wanted to join the Western powers. This was the main reason for why Japan tried to adopt Western political, social, educational, and economic institutions in a fairly short time. Due to the fact that the country became open to foreign trade, Japan gained access to Western goods. Moreover, Western literature, arts, fashion, etc. opened a new world to the Japanese people. Nevertheless, while Western culture was streaming into Japan, Japanese culture was likewise streaming out from the country to the West, which increased people's interest in the exotic and remote country. As a result of the opening up, Japanese people, students, and theatre companies had the opportunity to travel, know the world, and spread Japanese culture.

The 'East fever' in Europe reached considerable proportions. The most well-known direction of it is Japonisme, which started its journey of success and conquered not only the world of Western European art but also the lives of ordinary people who bought Eastern objects, such as trinkets, fans, furniture, and lacquer objects, to decorate their homes. People were hungry for exotic items, and as a result, they welcomed every troupe arriving from the Middle and the Far East.

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[1] Fuller 1913: 208; Savarese 1988: 66.

Hanako's life and career

Ōta Hisa was a dancer who showed her talent only in the West and had never stood on a Japanese stage.[2] She was born into a peasant family in 1868. Her family was so poor that they lived under the poverty line, so according to the local customs, she was adopted by a richer family in 1875. As Hanako received an artistic upbringing from her father,[3] she became a child performer in a travelling theatre troupe when her new family had financial problems. In her teenage years, she ran away and became a geisha at the age of 16. Because of her education, she was able to acquire knowledge of moving and dancing, including of the traditional Japanese dance form *nihon buyō* 日本舞踊, which built the foundation of her stage career. In 1901 – after her two divorces[4] – she decided to join a newly organised Japanese troupe that was looking for people with stage experience to participate in the Copenhagen Zoo's 1902 human exhibition. At first, Hanako appeared as a geisha in the exhibition, and experts suppose that she performed traditional dances in the zoo's artificial Japanese village. Following this, she became a member of a small Japanese troupe as a minor actress, but fortunately enough, she was discovered by Loïe Fuller in London in 1904.[5] We can see clearly from the quotation above how Ōta Hisa was turned into an 'actress' by Fuller. She even gave Ōta Hisa a new name, Hanako, which means little flower or flower child. Fuller read this name in a novel and liked it because it was easily pronounceable.[6] It is obviously visible that with this action Ōta Hisa became the 'victim' of typisation early in her carrier. First of all, her own name was too strange; in other words, it was not acceptable and familiar for the western audience. Therefore, Fuller simply changed her name with an actually overpowering gesture and turned the strange into the familiar. After this action Fuller gave Hanako the possibility to prove herself and made the 37-year-old woman the main actress of the small troupe. Assumedly, if she had not met

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[2] The biography details see: Savarese 1988: 63–75; about her young ages in Sawada 1996: 19–24.

[3] From the age of five, she danced and played the two-stringed zither (*yakumogoto* 八雲琴). Sawada 1996: 20.

[4] She was married to Takejirō Koizmui 竹二郎小泉, who was a building contractor 20 years her elder. Their relationship were not well balanced, so after 10 years of marriage they finally divorced. Hanako almost immediately fell in love with and married a young man, Azushima 小豆島, but because of their financial difficulties the man left her, and they divorced. All in all, Hanako was not at all the symbol of the 'good wives and wise mothers' (*ryōsai kenbo* 良妻賢母) project, which was supported by the government at that time. Sawada 1996: 26–28.

[5] Sawada 1996: 34.

[6] Sawada 1983: 45.

Fuller, she 'would probably have returned to Japan as she had left it: totally unknown, with only a little more money than when she had set out'.[7]

Thus, thanks to Fuller, she became one of the most well-known and famous actresses in Europe between 1904 and 1916. Everywhere she performed, the audience admired the manifestations of the strange and the exotic. Her last show, a play titled *Ki musume,*[8] was staged in the London Coliseum in 1916. Subsequently, she travelled to Japan to enlist in a new troupe, but the First World War barred her return to Europe. After the war, she opened a Japanese style restaurant in London, and in 1922 she returned to Japan where she lived in retirement until her death in 1945.[9]

Ōta Hisa's journey from being unknown in 1901 to achieving real success was long. After discovering Ōta Hisa's, Fuller searched for a new producer for the troupe and organised a European tour. The first stop was Copenhagen, where Fuller saw her in a simple rehearsal how Hanako could improvise a death scene:

> with the tiny, tiny gestures of a frightened child… with sighs, with the cries of a wounded bird, she curled in on herself, reducing to nothing the already slender body which was lost in the wrappings of the huge, heavily embroidered Japanese costume. Her figure became immobilized as if petrified and only her eyes retained intense life. She was shaken with little sobs, uttered a cry, yet another, lay down, a sigh. Then, like something broken, her head fell onto her shoulder while with huge open eyes she stared at the death which had come to take her. She was devastating.[10]

Fuller immediately recognised great potential in this death scene, and despite protests from the troupe, 'she rewrote all the plays of the repertory in order that each might terminate with a death scene of Hanako'.[11] The success was immense. The troupe doubled the number of plays and within a period of nine months travelled around the whole of Europe. For example, after London they debuted in Paris in Fuller's theatre where one year earlier the famous Sadayakko[12] and the Kawakami-troupe had performed. 'Hanako was seen by everyone in Paris society, for whom her performances seemed to satisfy a "morbid sensationalism".'[13] '[K]neeling before a mirror and applying her makeup while

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[7] Savarese 1988: 64.

[8] *The maiden.*

[9] Savarese 1988: 73.

[10] Savarese 1988: 66–67.

[11] Keene 1972: 251.

[12] Kawakami Sadayakko was the other celebrated Japanese actress that time. She and her husband's, Kawakami Otojirō's, troupe were also managed by Fuller in 1901–1902. See more about Sadayakko: Downer 2003, Kano 2001, Doma 2022.

[13] Savarese 1988: 67.

chatting rapidly, until her jealous lover stepped from behind and strangled her with a scarf.'[14] René Chéruy, who was once Rodin's secretary, told Fuller how Hanako's talent bewitched him; despite his not comprehending the language of the play, the plot was clear and amusing.

After the nine months many of the troupe's actors returned to Japan. Hanako went to take her chance in Antwerp, but she was alone and performed only in cheap pubs. Some months later she asked for help from Fuller, who repeatedly took Hanako under her wing. Fuller sent her Japanese secretary, Kaoru Yoshikawa,[15] to Antwerp to save Hanako and bring her to Paris.

> Presently I found myself in Paris, manager of one of the most gifted Japanese artists, but, alas with no company to support her. I was puzzled to know what to do with and what to do for a kind, gentle, sweet little Japanese doll.[16]

Finally, she decided to organise a new troupe where Hanako was supposed to be the star of the company. Luckily, a theatre manager offered Hanako a chance on the condition that the future performances be successful and easily understandable. Fuller was aware of Hanako's best skills on stage and accordingly wrote the first drama specifically for Hanako, which was somewhere between the pantomime and the popular melodrama. The new drama, titled *Galatea!,* echoed the well-known Greek myth and emphasised the 'Japanese doll' thematic; thereby, Fuller gave Hanako the role of a carved statue coming alive. This way, Fuller not only positioned Hanako evidently, but she also influenced the audience's expectations. After this production, she wrote two dramas for Hanako in the 'Japanese style': *A Drama of Yoshiwara* and *The Martyr*. The latter was the first performance at Théâtre Moderne, which was Fuller's new theatre in Paris, and the two dramas became the main pillars of Hanako's repertory in the following years.[17]

> I had in all, for all, Hanako, her companion, and a young Japanese actor. I was not discouraged. I went looking for another actor. Thanks to an intermediary, I found one in London. Then I tried to think of a play with four characters, two main roles and two supporting roles. The result of my efforts was *The Martyr.* At this point, I encountered a large difficulty: wigs, shoes, props, costumes–all were necessary. But here too I was lucky. And the four opened at the Théâtre Moderne on the Boulevard des Italiens. The play was presented thirty times instead of the ten which had been negotiated.[18]

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[14] Keene 1972: 251.
[15] He became Hanako's third husband.
[16] Fuller 1913: 214.
[17] Keene 1972: 252.
[18] Savarese 1988: 67.

It is clearly visible that these performances brought success to Hanako. She toured around the whole of Europe. Among others, she performed in England, Denmark, Finland, Netherlands, France, Sweden, Russia, Turkey, Germany, Italy, Poland, the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, and the United States twice.[19] In short, Hanako was very successful, and Fuller, under the pseudonym Loi-Fu, wrote more new dramas to increase their repertory. Of course, *The Japanese Doll, The Little Japanese Girl, The Political Spy, The Japanese Ophelia, A Japanese Tea House*, and *Otake* all ended with the heroine's tragic death. 'In the sparse texts – the plays were practically pantomimes – she used standard plots and imbroglios, flat characters and strong climactic scenes, borrowed freely from Japanese models and European sources. But she cleverly allowed ample space for the deployment of gestures and mime'.[20]

> A sensational drama last Saturday evening at 9:30 p.m., in the presence of Paris' best audience. Madame Hanako committed suicide by disembowelling herself. But it was suicide. An emulator of Sada Yakko, Hanako is a tiny Japanese gifted with graceful form, lively eyes, a rebellious nose, feline movements. The comedy in which she displays her varied talents as a saucy flirt, a mime, a dancer, turns into tragedy when Ossudé (the heroine's name), the prey of gloomy sorrow, suddenly changes her behavior: she takes hold of a knife and slowly thrusts it into her flesh, her eyes convulse, her nostrils palpate, her face pales and blood spreads over her white tunic. She then collapses to the floor and dies. It is almost… too realistic, at least for those audience members whose nerves are too weak to tolerate such a performance.[21]

The death scenes in Hanako's performances became the most amusing and anticipated moments, similar to Sadayakko Kawakami's death scenes. It is worth observing the usage of blood in these scenes, which is the specialty of naturalistic theatre.

In 1907, the small troupe travelled to the USA for the first time where, despite their success in Europe, they did not impress the American audience. In an article of *Des Moines Register,* we could read the following criticism:

> I have seen faces on oriental fans, vases and screens, and I recall some like them in nightmares; but never hitherto have I seen them alive. Hanako, the starred tragedienne of the company, enacts a belle supposed to be irresistibly charming; yet she could be no unsightlier woman unless her pigmy size were increased to ordinary size… She dances awkwardly on stilts, and is clumsily blithesome

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[19] Brandon 1988: 92.

[20] Scholz-Cionca 2016: 54–55.

[21] 'Mme Hanako', *L'Illustration,* 3 November, 1906. Cf. the translate: Savarese 1988: 68.

> in antics that make her and the three others look like decrepit, yet still tricky monkeys in a cage.[22]

Unexpectedly enough, the American audience did not find Hanako‘s death scene to be too realistic either.

> The actress uses a trick knife, the blade of which recedes into the handle, and at the same time releases a red fluid so that the illusion of a blade slowly piercing her body to a depth of six inches and of blood spreading from the wound over her white robe is a grisly sight.[23]

Nonetheless, this failure did not prove to be significant. Between 1904 and 1914, Hanako visited every main European city, and everybody was eager to witness her famous death scene.[24]

Performing death has always been a challenge on stage. This is the only action that cannot fit into the theatre's illusory world. The action of dying on stage is never believed by the audience, but from the birth of naturalistic and realistic theatre, actors have always attempted to perform the scenes in a more and more believable and realistic manner. As an example, Sarah Bernhardt or Eleonora Duse were famous for their medically accurate death scenes. They ridded of all the learnt theatrical poses for illnesses and tried to show the real symptoms of each disease.[25] In short, they performed in a way that deviated from the learnt techniques, and this 'pure' imitation fascinated the audience in Hanako's case. According to a Russian journalist, dying on stage should be learnt from the Japanese actress, observing 'how to remain true to life but at the same time respect artistic proportion; how to present a perfectly credible image up to the tiniest detail, without slipping into the artless ugliness of realism'.[26]

Hanako's (and Sadayakko's) death scenes are often called 'extreme realism'. These were so different from European stage deaths that, at first, nobody thought that the scenes might be built up from learnt poses and gestures. However, owing to an encounter between Hanako and Rodin, we already know that the realistic death scene, especially the face that Hanako made during the stage dying, was a pose from traditional Japanese theatre.

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[22] Keene 1972: 253.

[23] Ibid.

[24] The critics most of the time resounded the success of Hanako, but in some cases journalists tried to uncover her non-traditional performances. That happened in Hungary, but the audience did not care about authenticity. For more on this topic see: Doma 2020: 104–106.

[25] Cf. Conti 2018. Principally: Foreign Invaders: The Transatlantic Consumptives of Sarah Bernhardt and Eleonora Duse chapter.

[26] Scholz-Cionca 2016: 56.

Meeting with Rodin

Auguste Rodin, having never learnt sculpting in a formal school of art, became a world renowned artist by the turn of the century. It was at the Exposition Universelle of 1900 – the world's fair held in Paris – where he was given his own pavilion and had his breakthrough. This was the first occasion where he encountered the two pioneers of modern dance: Loïe Fuller and the then young Isadora Duncan (1878–1927). Rodin represented the power and beauty of the human body in all of his works throughout his life. He especially loved the naturalness of the female body, but strangely enough, he had never been interested in dancing until he met Fuller and Duncan. Thanks to this 'new discovery', Rodin dedicated himself to studying the dancing body in the last years of his life. On many occasions, he drew Duncan while she was dancing. Moreover, the young talent occasionally posed nude for him. In general, the elderly master was shown the freedom of instinct by dance.[27]

It was 1906 that proved to be a special year for Rodin. Sisowath I, the new king of Cambodia, visited France accompanied by the Royal Ballet of Cambodia. Rodin saw the company perform at the Pré Catalan theatre in Paris. He made some drawings at the performance, and he was so impressed by the Cambodian dancers that he followed them to the Colonial Exhibition in Marseille. He executed about 150 life drawings of them in watercolours, notably studies of hand movements. [28]

> They [the dancers] made the antique live in me […] I am a man who has devoted all his life to the study of nature, and whose constant admiration has been for the works of antiquity: Imagine, then, my reaction to such a complete show that restored the antique by unveiling its mystery.
>
> It is admirably beautiful, and new. This is what convinces me that my girlfriends are perfect like the antique, whose eurythmy they have. These are the sounds of the emotion they have given me. And, to be honest, if they are beautiful, it is because they naturally produce just movements […]. [29]

In short, Rodin could rediscover a sense of tradition in the dances of the Cambodian company based on his respect for nature.

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[27] Laurent 2005: 132. These kinds of statues: *Eve* (1881), *Iris, Messenger of the Gods* (1895), *Dance Movement B* (circa 1911). These kinds of drawings: *Female Nude with Left Leg Outstretched* (circa 1890), *Before the Creation* (circa 1900), *Two Women Embracing* (1908).

[28] *Rodin and the Cambodian dancers* http://www.musee-rodin.fr/en/exposition/exposition/rodin-and-cambodian-dancers.

[29] Bourdon 1906: 2.

Through Fuller, Hanako met Rodin at the Colonial Exhibition in Marseille. The master was fascinated by Hanako's performance and tried to form the 'death face' that the audience saw in her death scenes. He invited her to Paris, and they worked together for two years in a friendly atmosphere. Hanako was the model whom Rodin sculpted the most. Sometimes they worked all day from morning to evening.[30]

> Hanako did not pose like other people. Her features were contracted in an expression of cold, terrible rage. She had the look of a tiger, an expression thoroughly foreign to our Occidental countenances. With the force of will which the Japanese display in the face of death, Hanako was enabled to hold this look four hours.[31]

He made more than 50 busts from different materials, including clay, bronze, and glass, and every work tried to capture that emblematic moment when she saw death. The most well-known of these works is the terra cotta figurine *The Face of Death*, which was presented to Hanako and now is the part of a private collection in Tokyo.[32]

> [H]e tried to create my 'head of death' with that cross-eyed look I made on the stage. It was difficult to hold the same expression every day. Everybody warned me that my eyes were getting funny.[33]

It was thought that this difficult and weird pose had been invented by Hanako. However, now we know from the busts and descriptions that she actually made a *nirami* 睨み, which is a *mie* 見得 kabuki pose. The *mie* (which means 'to show something') is a powerful and impressive pose or *kata* 形 struck by a kabuki actor before they freeze for some seconds. It is generally accepted that these obviously learnt and prescribed poses are capable of evoking special emotions from the audience. Therefore, it goes without saying that every pose is a significant part of a kabuki play. When the play reaches a dramatic point or juncture, namely when an important moment occurs on stage, it is highlighted by a *mie*. At the end of the cadenced movements, the actor petrifies in a *mie;* their body and limbs are in an unnatural, tensed, and twisted position for some seconds. At that moment, the whole stage freezes; an utterly picturesque view is burnt into everybody's mind, intentionally evoking feelings. In the *nirami* (which means 'to glare at') pose, the actor grimaces with one eye staring into the distance with

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[30] Sawada 1983: 69–70.
[31] Elsen – Jamison 2003: 428.
[32] Sukenobu 2001: 4.
[33] Sawada 1983: 69–70.

the other eye turned inward and then purses their mouth. The technique is connected to Danjūrō Ichikawa I, who first performed it in 1693 or 1694.[34]

It would be interesting to know why Hanako used *nirami* (since in kabuki it is used for strong male roles, not for female roles)[35] and from where she learnt it. Moreover, it is not a *mie* that is used in death scenes in kabuki, but Hanako deliberately chose to do so. Moreover, what is even more incredible is that she could hold the pose for 3 or 5 minutes and could repeat it again and again while she was posing to Rodin, which was all the more unusual as kabuki education was not available for women at the end of 19th century. On the other hand, as a geisha, she learnt some traditional Japanese dances, for example *nihon buyō,* and supposedly she saw and knew some kabuki plays, so she easily could have 'stolen' some movements and built them into her own dance.[36]

Rodin, of course, saw the ancient freedom in Hanako's movements, as well as in the dance of the Cambodian company. Beside the many busts, he created a pencil drawing depicting a nude, dancing Hanako. The circumstances of this drawing have not yet been confirmed, but the event was written about in a nominal short story in 1910 by the famous and celebrated novelist Mori Ōgai. In this story, Hanako is depicted as a 16-year-old girl. She arrives to Rodin's studio with a Japanese medical student, who interprets their conservation. Moreover, it is here that Rodin asks permission to draw Hanako nude. She consents and while the master is making the sketch, the medical student goes to Rodin's library and reads an essay by Baudelaire. The story ends with Rodin's description of Hanako's beauty:

> Mademoiselle has a truly beautiful body. It has not the least fat. The muscles move individually, like a fox-terrier's. The tendons are firm and large enough for the joints to be of the same size as the arms and legs. She is strong enough to stand indefinitely on one leg while extending the other at right angles. She is like a tree with roots sunk deep into the ground. There is a marked difference between her figure and the wide-shouldered, wide-hipped Mediterranean type or, for that matter, the Northern European type with its broad hips and narrow shoulders. Hers the beauty of strength.[37]

This story focuses on the encounter between Hanako and Rodin, so I have no possibility to analyse it. However, I highlight the description of Hanako's beauty, which is absolutely different – her beauty is strange and originates from strength. This way, Mori tries to show the same image in his story that Rodin

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[34] *Nirami* article in www.kabuki21.com.

[35] Scott 1999: 107.

[36] Brandon 1988: 92–93.

[37] Mori 1917: 17. I used the translation of Donald Keene, Keene 1996: 243.

shows in his busts and drawings. It is another interesting point that these masterpieces, which shaped Hanako's figure from a male viewpoint, emphasise the idea of Japan's fragile and feminine character much more in a traditional way than in the way that was characteristic of that time.

Conclusion

According to Donald Keene, Hanako's success on the European stage was just a part of a tendency, 'a curious by-product of the rage for great actresses that swept over Europe and America during the early years of the century',[38] including Sarah Bernhardt and Eleonore Duse. On the other hand, around this time new artists appeared, including Loïe Fuller, Isadora Duncan, and Ruth St. Denis, who did not speak but only moved or danced. The lack of speech provided the possibility of accessibility; anybody could understand their performances. Fuller applied the same technique in her plays written for Hanako, similarly creating a feeling of 'understanding' and 'accessibility'. However, in this case, everything on the stage was artificial and a consciously created make-believe. Hanako had never performed in authentic or traditional Japanese plays, only in Japanese-styled European performances written by Fuller, who built many dancing and moving scenes into her plays for the sake of presenting the audience with something that *seems* to be authentic and that, thus, creates a feeling of 'understanding'. On the other hand, it was also at this time that the naturalistic theatre conquered the West, and European people wanted to see exotic and exciting plays that end in a brutal and realistic death. This element could also be seen in Hanako's performances. That is why Hanako was extraordinary: on the one hand she satisfied the audience's hunger for the strange with her Japanese dance, and on the other hand, with her brutal and naturalistic death scenes, she shocked the people in the way that they wanted to be shocked, the same way that they were shocked by a zoo where human beings were exhibited. Hanako became a star thanks to the naturalistic death, which was, so to speak, 'wrapped' in exoticism. Moreover, that was exactly what Rodin wanted to capture in his busts of her. Of course, Rodin first saw naturalness in this face, and it was this belief that motivated him, while this face was absolutely artistic and originated from kabuki. Rodin's busts, thus, capture not only the death face of Hanako but also the moment in which Eastern theatre became the surface onto which the European eye projected its own theatrical ideals.

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[38] Keene 1972: 255.

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The Hungarian Nippon Society

Abstract
The Hungarian Nippon Society was founded in 1924, with the aim of building and developing Hungarian–Japanese relations, popularising Japan and Japanese culture in Hungary, and encouraging research on Japan. The society organised public lectures on Japan and Japanese culture and art exhibitions and social events connected to Japanese culture, and through these activities the society was the most important organiser and promoter of Japanese culture and art in Hungary between the two world wars. This society was the first (and for a long time, until the foundation of the Hungarian Japanese Friendship Society in 1987, the only) association in Hungary to focus solely on Japan and Japanese culture. This study summarises the most important issues related to the Nippon Society, with the aim of placing its history and activity in the broader historic and ideological context of its time. Examining the history of the Hungarian Nippon Society can provide us a more nuanced picture about how and why Japan's image changed during the first half of the 20th century in a Central European country that had different images and concepts about the East and thus a different approach than Western European societies had. Moreover, this case of a primarily cultural association in a politically difficult era can show how different cultural and intellectual thoughts and theories can be affected by identity issues and by contemporary politics, political thinking, and international situations.

Keywords: Hungarian Nippon Society, Hungarian–Japanese relations, Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, Orientalism, Turanism, Alajos Paikert, István Mezey, Géza Dell'Adami

This paper is a concise summary of a basic research of the history and activity of a cultural association dedicated entirely to Japan that was active in Hungary between the two world wars. The author started to explore the history of Hungarian–Japanese relations more than 20 years ago, and in doing so, among other topics, researched the history and activity of the Hungarian Nippon Society (1924–1944) on the basis of the publications of the society, the contemporary press, and archival documents. The results have been published in great detail

in Hungary and have been regularly cited in other scholarly works. This study summarises the most important issues related to the Nippon Society, with the aim of placing its history and activity in the broader historic and ideological context of its time and examining the impacts of contemporary politics, political thinking, and the international situation on the character of a cultural association in connection with Japan between the two world wars.

The Hungarian Nippon Society was founded in 1924, with the aim of building and developing Hungarian–Japanese relations, popularising Japan and Japanese culture in Hungary, and encouraging research on Japan.[1] The society organised public lectures on Japan and Japanese culture and art exhibitions and social events connected to Japanese culture, and through these activities the society was the most important organiser and promoter of Japanese culture and art in Hungary between the two world wars. This society was the first (and for a long time, until the foundation of the Hungarian Japanese Friendship Society in 1987, the only) association in Hungary to focus solely on Japan and Japanese culture.

The relationship between the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and Japan was severed after the First World War as the Monarchy disintegrated in 1918. For Hungary, the 1920 Treaty of Trianon marked the end of the war and the official establishment of its new borders. The treaty prescribed that Hungary end its the state of war with the Allied Powers (including Japan) and that subsequently they would enter into official contact with Hungary. However, embassies between Japan and Hungary were set up only in 1938.[2] Nevertheless, the two countries had cultural relations organised by civil societies, the most important of which was the Nippon Society.

The initiatives for the foundation of an independent society for the promotion of Hungarian–Japanese relations originated from different directions, which nonetheless were closely connected to each other. One direction was the ideological effect of Turanism and Orientalism in Hungary, and the other was the personal experience of several hundreds of Hungarian military officers (and thousands of soldiers) with the Japanese army and Japanese officers in 1918–1921, when the Japanese Siberian Expedition Army took over the Russian prisoner of war (POW) camps in Siberia. Later, in the second part of the 1930s, a third factor became more important: the political rapprochement (from 1936) and military alliance (from 1939) between Hungary and Japan.

Examining the history of the Hungarian Nippon Society can provide us a more nuanced picture about how and why Japan's image changed during the first half of the 20th century in a Central European country that had different

[1] Farkas 2009b: 226–247.

[2] Wintermantel 2016: 18–19.

images and concepts about the East and thus a different approach than Western European societies had.[3] Also, this case of a primarily cultural association in a politically difficult era can show how different cultural and intellectual thoughts and theories can be affected by identity issues and by contemporary politics, political thinking, and international situations.

Orientalism and Turanism in Hungary

According to new scholarly works on Orientalism, we can no longer perceive the European attitude towards the East as a homogeneous whole.[4] In contrast to Saidian Orientalism,[5] there existed an independent, Central-European Orientalism: the phenomenon of 'frontier Orientalism', referring to the historical experience of the people of this region in connection with their own roots and their occasional or everyday encounters with the Eastern world.[6] In Hungary there was more than one factor that played a dominant role in shaping the attitudes and perceptions of the East; there were Saidian or classical Orientalism, frontier Orientalism, and the oriental tradition of the Hungarian identity.

This tradition originated from the awareness of the supposed Asian origin of the Hungarian people. In the last decades of the 19th century, a romantic nationalist cultural movement called Turanism was formed around this idea.[7] The ethnic

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[3] Farkas 2009a. For the image of Japan in East Central Europe, see Dénes et al. 2020.

[4] Watanabe 2020; Gingrich 2006; Dénes et al. 2020.

[5] 'Orientalism' (i.e., the interest in the Asian cultures and peoples in Europe mainly in the second part of the 19th century) represented a distant, exotic, overseas world of the 'East' (albeit one that was regarded as inferior), which could be learnt about, even conquered, and which inspired Western art. As Edward W. Said interpreted Orientalism in his book in 1978, it was a colonial concept reflecting Western superiority and mainly referred to a British and French overseas colonial ideology most easily traced in academic, scientific, and artistic 'high culture'. Said 1978.

[6] As Andre Gingrich pointed out in his essays, in the Monarchy, the East – which in this context meant first and foremost the Ottoman Empire – represented a neighbouring world, close enough to pose a constant threat, an enemy that the region's peoples had fought against for centuries. Gingrich's Orientalism is local and multiple: it is a systematic set of metaphors and myths of folk and public culture and is reproduced in everyday life among those who live on or near a frontier (real or imagined, present or historical) with the East. Gingrich 2006.

[7] The relevant literature on Turanism connected the issue mainly to Pan-Turkism for a long time (Landau 1981: 5–8, 78–79, 176–186.) Owing to some of the elements of the ideology, after 1945 the new hegemonic ideology in Hungary condemned the whole of Turanism as an extreme nationalist (or even racist) ideology, so it was officially banned in any form. Even the research of this ideology was obstructed until the regime change in 1989. Fortunately, since then several publications of new research have been issued, so a more thorough and objective picture is beginning to emerge about Hungarian Turanism as a means of 'thinking about the East' in Hungary. (Ablonczy 2016: 14.) See Farkas 1993, Farkas 2001a, Farkas 2001b, Ablonczy 2016, 2021, 2022.

and linguistic kinship and relations between Hungarians and the so-called Turanian peoples were interpreted from the then-prevailing Ural-Altaic linguistic theory. The supposed Asian origin of the Hungarian people resulted in increasing attention towards Asian cultures, as they were thought to be closely related to 'ancient Hungarian culture'. Turanism began as and was first considered to be a scientific movement, aiming at the research of the history and cultures of Asian peoples with a special relevance to Hungarian culture.

It also became the ideology of the cultural, economic, and sometimes even political cooperation with the Turanian (Ural-Altaic) peoples. The emergence of the political implications of Turanism can be understood on the basis of the historical context of that time. Turanism was born in the age of Romanticism, parallel with other movements formed around the idea of ethnic families in Europe at the end of the 19th century. Moreover, it was actually formed with the aim of countering the effects of the romantic European pan movements (e.g., Pan-Germanism, Pan-Slavism), which were thought to be dangerous for the Hungarians, who lived 'alone' (i.e., without ethnic relatives) between two great ethnic and linguistic families, as such a circumstance would cause Hungarians to vanish because of the predominance of the Slavic and German peoples in the region.[8] On the other hand, Turanism was also able to appear as a 'modern' phenomenon, as it could be connected to European artistic movements (e.g., Art Nouveau) and scholarly interest in Oriental cultures as well. It grew into an ideology (though not homogeneous in any way) that, in various ways and to various degrees, significantly influenced the Hungarian political, social, and cultural (academic and art) elite.

Also, the concept of the 'Asian origin' of the Hungarians was a main initiative for the scientific research of the ethnogenesis of Hungarian people – scholars and explorers (e.g., Sándor Kőrösi Csoma) travelled to Asia to find the memories and relatives of Hungarians. In this way, Turanism was a major contributor

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There have been significant scholarly books and papers published on Turkish, Hungarian, and even on Japanese Turanism in the past few years in English, too; so a new discourse has started about this complex issue. Demirkan 2000, Nizam 2005, Levent 2011, Levent 2021, Ablonczy 2021, Ablonczy 2022.

[8] '[…] when Johann Gottfried Herder published the fourth volume of his Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit (Ideas for a Philosophy of the History of Mankind) in 1792, a small, rather short sentence had the greatest effect on his Hungarian readers and would remain important for many years to come. Herder's statement that "[today's Hungarians] are mixed with Slavs, Germans, Vlachs, and other peoples, they are the smallest number of inhabitants, and in a few centuries their language will probably be extinct" gave a tremendous impetus to the defenders of the Hungarian language. […] Herder had considered the possibility that the Hungarian language, and thus the Hungarian nation, might disappear. The fact that this language was a minority language in Hungary itself prompted intellectuals to reflect on its place and, above all, on its kinship and affinity with other idioms.' Ablonczy 2021: 225–248, 227.

to the formation and development of Hungarian humanities, including Oriental studies (Sándor Kőrösi Csoma, Ármin Vámbéry, and Aurel Stein), linguistics (Vilmos Pröhle), archaeology (Ferenc Pulszky), and geography (Jenő Cholnoky and Pál Teleki). The first Hungarian scholars of these academic fields usually started their careers on the basis of, or influenced by, Turanism, but that does not mean that their later scientific work had any connection to the ideology of Turanism, which usually only served as initial inspiration. The results of these scholars are important milestones of Hungarian scholarship.[9]

However, this approach of scholars and the public has never meant (except in some rare cases of a minority of extreme political ideologies) that Hungarians regarded themselves as Oriental or even part of the East. However, it does mean that especially in the time of a need to re-define identity (e.g., 19th century modernisation and the birth of the nation states, or the era between the two world wars when Hungary's position in Europe had to be re-defined) the Oriental roots were considered a part of the Hungarian historical heritage and cultural traditions. (Understanding this duality is important for the interpretation of Hungarian national consciousness of the late 19th century.) Therefore, the main motive for the research of these roots (and the contemporary Oriental cultures as well) can be seen in searching for the elements of the collective cultural and national identity of the Hungarians. Therefore, this research was attentively followed by the Hungarian public, even after the Oriental 'fashion', the intense interest in Eastern cultures, started to fade in Europe by the beginning of the 20th century.

The Hungarian Turan Society was founded in 1910 with the program of promoting, initiating, and assisting scientific research of Turanian (which meant 'Asian' in the interpretation of the Turanian Society) cultures, peoples, and regions.[10] The society arranged and funded expeditions to Asia and had a journal entitled *Turán* published on these topics. The society also aimed to introduce Turanian (Asian) cultures and peoples to the Hungarian public with educational lectures, articles, and books, and in accomplishing these goals they had a major share in making Oriental cultures known and even popular in Hungary. They definitely excluded any political and religious issues.[11]

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[9] Csaplár-Degovics 2018.

[10] Farkas 2001a, 56–75., Ablonczy 2022. Turan Society.

[11] The history of the Turan Society was reserached with the documents of the Turan Society, Hungarian National Archives, MOL P 1384. Farkas 2001a. 56–75, 110–130, 151–180.

Japan in Hungarian Turanism

Since the first years of the existence of the Turan Society, Japan was an outstanding topic among the Asian countries and peoples.[12] It was seen as the only Asian country that could avoid becoming a colony, and with a successful modernisation process it rose to the status of a great power, equal to the Western powers. This process was seen to have been achieved by carefully balancing modern development (i.e., 'becoming Western') with preserving Japan's cultural heritage (and national identity), which was a topic in the discourse on modernisation in Hungary as well. Japan was considered an outstanding example for all the other Turanian peoples to follow, through which the Turanian people could become civilised and modernised and could rise to the level of the free and powerful states.

In 1913, Alajos Paikert, one of the leaders of the Turan Society, published an article in *Turán* on 'The Future of Asia', emphasising the rapid and successful development of Japan. He set Japan as an example to the other Turanian peoples and designed the tasks of Japan and Hungary as the easternmost and westernmost nations of the Turanians to help the Turanian peoples of Asia in this process:

> We all know the epoch-making development of Japan from a closed island country at the end of the world to a considerable empire even among the greatest powers of the world. […] The country of the Rising Sun, who was looked down on so much by the powerful European neighbours, suddenly showed the world remarkably how strong and serious of a world power it became from a shy small country. […] Owing to her position, this easternmost branch of the Turanian family of peoples aspires to the same place in the East as England has in the West. The extraordinary intelligence, diligence, courage, and political sense of the Japanese enable them to play significant role in the future world history, and we, Hungarians, the westernmost representatives of the Turanian peoples in the heart of Europe, are intended the same task here as the Japanese in the Far East: to strive and work, not against other nations, but for all of us, for the unitary and friendly progress of the whole mankind.[13]

The 'Japanese model' was presented as an example to be followed by the rest of the Turanian peoples. The Hungarians and the Japanese, the most westerly and most easterly Turanian nations, had the joint task and mission of helping

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[12] Farkas 2001a, 211–216.

[13] Paikert 1913: 8. The citations from contemporary Hungarian texts are translated by the author.

the other Asian Turanian peoples along this path of 'elevation', functioning as a kind of bridge between East and West.

> This most easterly branch of the family of Turanian nations [...] The Japanese are being trained by their extraordinary intelligence, diligence, courage, and political sense for yet another great role in the future history of the world, and we Hungarians, the most westerly members of the Turanians, here in the heart of Europe, have the same mission as the Japanese in the Far East, to struggle and labour, not against the other nations, but for the unified, comradely advancement of us all, the entire human race.[14]

National/nationalist endeavours could be expressed with reference to the Japanese example, which proved that modernisation, as a Western type of progress, could be achieved without sacrificing national identity or cultural heritage.[15] Under the Japanese model, the defence of national interests and the preservation of national culture were regarded as contemporary ideas, not as the enemies of modernity. The idea that modernisation, as a Western type of progress, could be achieved without sacrificing national identity or cultural heritage was an important argument in Hungarian debates on modernisation. Discourses also revived certain traditional tropes, which had lingered in the cultural memory for centuries, about Hungary's peripheral existence on the 'borderland', 'in-between' East and West and about its periodically recurring role as a 'bridge'. In these thoughts, the 'bridge' situation of Japan could be interpreted as similar to that of Hungary, which made it possible to make comparisons and draw a parallel between the development, situation, and task or even mission of the two nations.

After World War I

After the traumas of losing World War I and the 1920 Trianon Peace Treaty for Hungarians, Turanism gained new momentum, and new motives emerged in its ideology. Hungarians saw themselves as a people originating from Asia, but after having settled in Europe and adopting Christianity in the 10th century, they became part of Western civilisation and became the defenders of Europe against the attacks coming from the East.[16] Having a strong self-image of being the 'defenders of Christianity', Hungarians felt that with the Trianon Peace Treaty Europe had betrayed Hungary and left her without any allies or friends. Hungary – as the argument went – 'had better now turn off from the West, face East again,

[14] Paikert 1913: 8.
[15] Farkas 2020: 43–56.
[16] Bulwark of Christendom.

and try to find friends, relatives, and allies in Asia'.[17] Turanism transformed into the ideology of the desperate and reflected the frustration of Hungarian society and its disappointment in the West. The internal discourse about Hungary as a frontier country or borderland (according to which the Hungarians are the easternmost Western people or, alternatively, the westernmost Eastern people) intensified after 1918.

Japan held a special place in this ideology especially after World War I, and it maintained public interest in Japan even after Japonisme in Europe started to decay.[18] A new image of Japan had solidified by that time: losing their romantic image as an exotic, uncorrupted, and noble people, the Japanese became to be seen as an example of modernisation with tradition, a nation that could develop successfully with preserving its identity and national interest.[19] The significance of the exemplary development of Japan was always emphasised in texts about Japan, underlying that this could be the possible future for the Turanian peoples:

> Japan today is tendentious, successful, and with its own push sets an example to the other Asian peoples and countries.[20]

> As Japan developed from a remotest, totally medieval, secluded state to one of the most modernised and greatest nation of the world, so will the other Asian countries follow this example. (…) The Turanian future is shown by the Japanese, who adopting the most important and useful achievements of the West while preserving their old national traditions, are now the most developed, best organised and trained, and strongest power in Asia.[21]

The articles always highlighted that the Japanese could adopt and improve Western culture and technical developments so successfully because of their earlier high level of culture. A kind of moral of the Japanese development was also drawn up: the country was closed for centuries, but they admitted that they could not develop in seclusion, so they studied Western achievements and adopted them, and this way they had all the elements of Western civilisation and did not need the help of the Western powers. All the opinions made it clear that 'Japan [would] play a great role in the development of Asia'.[22] Japan's uniqueness was also mentioned: 'No other exotic people was able to adopt the

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[17] Farkas 1993: 864.

[18] Farkas 2001b. For a new interpretation of Japonisme (i.e., an appreciation of Japan and its culture) see Watanabe 2020; Farkas 2020.

[19] Farkas 2009a: 186–216.

[20] Paikert 1934.

[21] Paikert 1936: 9.

[22] Paikert 1934.

means and methods of the European knowledge so well as the Japanese'.[23] In this way, the Japanese were seen as being capable of fusing the achievements and values of the East and the West, and through this, they were seen as being able to become an 'insuperable rival' for both the East and the West. 'Technical development has made the Japanese dangerous rivals'.[24]

Japan had a special place in Hungary: the elements of its image changed, but this image reflected a generally favourable and positive picture even when the image of Japan became less favourable in the West.[25]

The Hungarian Nippon Society

The foundation

The activity and ideas of the Nippon Society were not independent from those of Turanism, but the foundation and initial aims of the two arose from different sources.[26]

The most important initiator of the foundation and the main organiser of the society's activity during its existence was Dr. István Mezey, a lawyer and former officer of the Austro-Hungarian Army in World War I.[27] During the war Mezey was taken as a POW by the Russians and transported to Siberia, from where he fled to Japan, where he learnt Japanese. He assisted in the repatriation of Hungarian POWs as a contact officer for the Japanese commander of the Nikolsk-Ussuriysk camp. (Thus, there is good reason to assume that the camp commander obtained information about Turanism from him.)

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[23] Cholnoky 1934: 22.

[24] Ibid. Cholnoky 1934: 22.

[25] Wilkinson 1991. About the image of Japan in East Central Europe, see Dénes et al. 2020.

[26] Farkas 2009b: 226–247.

[27] Dr. István Mezey (1895–?) He obtained a law degree and began working as a lawyer. First, he was interested in Turkish culture, learnt Turkish, and in this context first came into contact with the Turan Society (he corresponded with the Turan Society about the compilation of a Turkish dictionary before World War I) and presumably with Turanism. He was on a study trip to Turkey when World War I broke out. He became a lieutenant in the army, was taken prisoner by the Russians, and was transferred to Siberia, from where he fled to Japan (where he learnt Japanese). He assisted in the repatriation of Hungarian POWs as a contact officer for the Japanese commander of the Nikolsk-Ussuriysk camp. Mezey later devoted a chapter to the topic of POWs in his book on Japan, emphasising that the Japanese approached friendship towards the Hungarians, claiming that the Hungarians are their relatives. He mentioned the helpful, friendly attitude of the Japanese towards the Hungarian POWs as an important starting point in every review of the history of relations. Mezey 1939.

The Russian POW camps were taken by the Japanese army in 1918–1920 during the Japanese Siberian expedition.[28] The topic of the history, situation, and problems of World War I POWs has become the subject of historical study in just the past decades (the first scholarly histories appearing in the 1990s).[29] Especially the case of the prisoners taken into Russian captivity is important for the history of the former members of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, as Russia captured (and held in camps) an estimated more than 2 million POWs in Russia from the Monarchy (with ethnic Germans and Hungarians each constituting around one quarter and Slavic people the other half). The repatriation of the prisoners progressed very slowly because of the Russian Civil War and organisational and financial problems of Germany and the successor states of the dissolved Monarchy, so the process took until 1922.[30]

The Hungarian sources so far have different numbers for the Hungarian prisoners of war returning home from Siberia. According to the Hungarian Defence Ministry, 6,557 Hungarian prisoners returned home by May 1920.[31] Géza Dell'Adami, the leader of the Red Cross mission to repatriate Hungarian prisoners, wrote about 8,000–10,000 Hungarians. His data were said to be based on the statistics of the International Red Cross, and it stated that approx. 13,000 Hungarian prisoners of war boarded during 1920–1921, of which approx. 8,200 went home to Hungary, while approx. 4,800 former Hungarian citizens were repatriated in their respective successor states.[32] According to the new research and relevant literature in English and German, the data given by Dell'Adami do not seem to be an exaggeration.

After the Monarchy was dismembered in 1918, the successor states had to organise the repatriation of their citizens, but it was complicated for the Hungarians, as the majority of the country became the territories of the successor states, so it was not simple to determine the actual citizenship of many ethnic Hungarian prisoners. They became the last ones to return home from Siberian camps in 1921–1922.[33]

Hungarian POWs returned home after several years of harsh ordeals after the Japanese authorities agreed to help them repatriate in cooperation with the Red Cross. This was an important encounter of Hungarians with Japanese soldiers,

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[28] Jones 2014, Leidinger–Moritz 1997.

[29] Jones 2014.

[30] Nachtigal–Radauer 2014.

[31] Wintermantel 2016: 14.

[32] Dell'Adami1925: 178. He was also a prisoner of war in Krasnoyarsk until 1917. Summary of the history of the Hungarian prisoners under Japanese control: Mezey 1930.

[33] Research on the Austrian-Hungarian prisoners of wars in Siberia: Bonhardt 1985, Kovács 1987. 近藤正憲2006. New research by Márton Mati PhD student (Károli University, Military History Doctoral School), forthcoming 2022.

officers, and officials in a large number, when the Japanese took over the Russian POW camps in Siberia. As the head of the Hungarian Red Cross's mission to repatriate POWs from Eastern Siberia, Dell'Adami later wrote a book about the mission's activities, in which he thanked the Japanese authorities for their favourable treatment of the Hungarian POWs and for their helpful attitude to the efforts of the mission. Dell'Adami wrote:

> Before we sailed, there was a farewell party in the Japanese camp in Nikolsk [...] Around the white table there were officers of three fraternities, Japanese, Hungarians, and Turks. After a few cordial greetings, Lieutenant Tanaka explained in a clever speech the need to unite the Turanian peoples and toasted to the development of the three leading valiant Turanic races.[34]

The reports from the 1920s and 1930s in Hungary stated that the Japanese–Hungarian friendship began in Siberia during these events.

> The racial kinship of the Turanian tribes in the Far East may never have been as prominent as in the post-World War I period. It was interesting to note the interest shown between the two pillars of the Turanian Bridge: Japan and Hungary. Dai-Tó (sic) (Great East), a magazine in Mukden, edited in Japanese, Hungarian, and Tatar, was the leading newspaper in the Turanian movement.[35]

The contemporary reports emphasised the important role of the former POWs in founding the new association.[36] The inner cover of the journal of the Nippon Society, *Távol Kelet*, contained the details about the foundation of the society (in English, too):

> The Hungarian Nippon Society was founded on 1 June 1924, on the suggestion of those Hungarian officers who, having been prisoners-of-war in Eastern Asia had an opportunity to get acquainted with the Japanese *bushido*. After their return to Hungary they decided to make efforts towards the tightening of the cultural and economic links between Japan and Hungary.[37]

In an overview of Hungarian–Japanese relations published in 1943, one of the directors of the Nippon Society, Iván Nagy, wrote about the establishment of the society:

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[34] Dell'Adami

[35] Dell'Adami

[36] Contemporary accounts on the foundation of the Nippon society: Mezey 1929, Mezey 1936, Nagy 1943b.

Contemporary works on the history of Hungarian POWs returning from Siberia via Japan or with Japanese help: Dell' Adami 1925, Mezey 1939.

[37] *Távol Kelet* (Far East) 1936. I. Inner cover,

> The former POW officers who enjoyed the benevolent, exceptional treatment of the Japanese Expeditionary Army at the time (1918–1920), in order to deepen relations between the two countries, founded the Hungarian-Nippon Society on 1 June 1924, with the leadership of Dr. István Mezey, a reserve lieutenant and lawyer [...] This company took over the task of organising social relations between the two countries from the Turan Society founded in 1910.[38]

In the Hungarian relevant literature, the story of the World War I Hungarian POWs returning home from Russian camps in Siberia with the help of the Japanese Army, and especially the reports about the sympathy of the Japanese towards the Hungarians, were treated with reservations and were regarded as exaggerations aimed at boosting comradery with Japan in Hungary. The same evaluation was applied in the relevant literature regarding contemporary reports about the favourable treatment of the Japanese officials towards the Hungarian claims during negotiations preceding the Trianon Peace Treaty. In the latter case, the newest research of the Japanese archives and diplomatic documents proved that the contemporary reports had not exaggerated the situation.[39] The Siberian situation still needs to be thoroughly researched, but it seems reasonable to suppose that the reports and memories of the survivors reflected the true feelings of the captives. They suffered immensely in the Siberian camps without proper – or even acceptable – housing, clothes, food, and health care. They struggled with extreme cold, hunger, and serious illnesses, and many of the POWs did not survive. When comparing the approach of the Japanese army (cooperating with the Red Cross and providing the prisoners with food, clothing, and medical aid) with the unbearable circumstances under the Russian forces understandably led the prisoners to appreciate the Japanese conduct and made them grateful for such humane treatment. Also, the Japanese officials were willing to assist and cooperate in repatriating missions (e.g., with the Hungarian mission).[40]

The former POW officers actually formed only one group of the founders. A report in the journal *Turán* (the journal of the Turan Society) in 1925 reported on the formation of the Nippon Society: 'The Hungarians who visited Japan and the Japanese who visited Hungary implemented their old plan to form a separate society in order to bring the two related peoples closer together'. Thus, a significant number of Hungarians who had travelled to Japan took part in the founding of the society (e.g., Benedek Baráthosi Balogh[41], who was an important promoter

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[38] Nagy 1943b: 113.

[39] Umemura – Wintermantel 2021.

[40] Wintermantel 2021: 34–36.

[41] Benedek Balogh of Baráthosi (1870–1945) was originally a teacher who considered it his task to research the origins of the Hungarians, and therefore he travelled to East Asia several times

of Turanism and a possible mediator between Hungarian and Japanese Turanists, as probably he introduced Turanism to Imaoka Jūichirō 今岡十一郎[42]).

Among the founders of the Nippon Society there were supporters of Turanism, but also there were scholars of Oriental cultures who did not have any specific interest in Turanism (Ervin Baktay, Gyula Germanus), and there were also researchers of Japanese culture with Turanian interest (e.g., Zoltán Felvinczi Takács, who was later the vice president of the society between 1932 and 1944, the first art historian in Hungary dealing with East Asian art, and the first director of the Hopp Ferenc Museum of Asiatic Arts). The presence of scholars without Turanist interest in founding the Nippon Society shows an important difference between the interests of the societies' respective members.

On the board of directors and among the members of the society we can also find representatives of scientific oriental studies. Among them, Zoltán Felvinczi Takács[43] and Vilmos Pröhle[44] played an important role in the society's later activities, but we can also see the names of significant experts of other oriental cultures, such as Ervin Baktay,[45] Gyula Germanus,[46] and Aladár Bán.[47]

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at his own expense, with little support from the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. In 1908–1909 he collected mainly linguistic material along the Amur. He left for Japan in 1914 and from there again to the Amur region to study the Manchu-Tunguz peoples. By 1945, he became one of the most important promoters of the Turanian movement, publishing more than 20 volumes entitled 'Turanian Books'. His ethnographic collection, especially the Ainu collection, was also of outstanding importance in the world. (Most of it is in the Ethnographic Museum, Budapest.) His work as an ethnographer has begun to be again recognised in recent decades, see Hoppál Mihály: Távoli utakon. Bp. 1996.

[42] Umemura 2006: 24–25, Levent 2011: 307–325, 312.

[43] Zoltán Takács Felvinczi (1880–1964) was the first art historian in Hungary dealing with East Asian art. In 1919 he set up the Museum of East Asian Art from the legacy of Ferenc Hopp, and as director significantly developed the museum until 1948. He published numerous studies and dissertations on oriental art, with which he gained international recognition. He was the vice president of the Nippon Society between 1932 and 1944.

[44] Vilmos Pröhle (1871–1946) originally studied Turkish languages and made several study trips to Turkey and Central Asia, and then to Japan. He is considered a pioneer in the study of Chinese and Japanese language and literature in Hungary. The East-Asia Institute was established in 1924 under his leadership, and from 1924, the Japanese government appointed him head of the Japanese consulate in Budapest.

[45] Ervin Baktay (1890–1963) was an orientalist, expert of Indian culture, deputy director of the Ferenc Hopp Museum of Oriental Art and a lecturer in Indian art history at the University of Budapest.

[46] Gyula Germanus (1884–1979) was an orientalist, primarily concerned with Arabic literature and language.

[47] Aladár Bán (1871–1960) was a translator and folklorist. He dealt with the culture of the Finno-Ugric peoples. He was the editor of *Turán*, the head of the Finnish-Estonian department of the Turan Society, and one of the most active proponents and organisers of the Finnish-Estonian-Hungarian relations.

The Turan Society also supported the establishment of the Nippon Society, and one of the presidents of the Turan Society, Alajos Paikert, took part in the formation, too. There was a close and friendly relationship between the two societies throughout their existence. There were several leading members of the Nippon Society who were also important members of the Turan Society: Vilmos Pröhle (editor of *Turán* in 1922–1925), Aladár Bán, István Mezey, Iván Nagy, Benedek Baráthosi Balogh (vice-president of the Turan Society), Zoltán Takács Felvinczi, and many others. Probably there were also some other lesser-known people who were members of both societies, but it does not mean that the Nippon Society was merely a branch of the Turan Society. The Nippon Society always deliberately emphasised the role of the former POWs in the formation of the association in its statements and documents, and this way it may have sought to prove its independence from the Turan Society.

The activity of the Nippon Society[48]

The focus of the Nippon Society was partly narrower than that of the Turan Society, with the aim at building relations with only one country, Japan, but at the same time it had a wider margin of manoeuvre in establishing contacts between the two countries, as its objectives did not include any ideology or the spread of Turanism. The Nippon Society envisaged activities of a purely cultural nature, to strengthen closer contacts between the two peoples, to build and nurture cultural relations, to promote scientific research, to hold informative and scholarly lectures and organise social events, and to publish and distribute similar publications. They more or less achieved these goals, fulfilling a real cultural mission between the two peoples, but they did much more to make Japan known – and popular – in Hungary at that time, to promote Japanese culture and even political goals, and to emphasise friendship (and sometimes kinship) between Hungary and Japan. The society organised public lectures on Japan and Japanese culture, Japanese art exhibitions, and social events connected to Japanese culture, and through these activities the society was the most important organiser and promoter of Japanese culture and art in Hungary between the two world wars.

Of course, in addition to lectures and academic papers given by experts, there were numerous lectures and public speeches not without ideological-political

[48] The journals *Turán* and *Távol Kelet* reported on the activities of the Nippon Society, on the lectures, reading sessions, exhibitions, art evenings, and every cultural or social event that could be connected to Japan. They also announced the arrival of Japanese guests or visitors in Hungary and published reviews of new books on Japan.

overtones, several of which were related to the idea of Turanism or Japan's aims for expansion and its new role in international politics. This duality – sometimes purely cultural and sometimes political – of the activities of the society can be observed throughout its operation.

Providing popular public lectures was one of the main areas of the activities. The topic of the lectures was partly related to Turanism, but most of them served more educational purposes, describing the conditions, history, art, and customs of contemporary Japan. Organising 'art evenings' (public lectures illustrated with pictures of art for the general audience) and exhibitions was also an important part of the activities of the society. These events – Japanese music performances, art exhibitions, and art performances – were of great interest to contemporary audiences.

The activities of the Nippon Society – exhibitions, concerts, public lectures, soirees, and performances – were advertised and reported in significant nationwide newspapers, so it can be assumed that the effects of these events were much larger than what the size of the actual audiences would indicate.[49] The terms 'Japan' and 'Japanese' and the notions that these words indicated at that time became well known in everyday expressions and images in Hungary.

In the first 10 years of its existence, the Nippon Society was mainly active in holding regular monthly presentations and organising social evenings on occasions, for which they were trying to win over the most illustrious public and political figures. As these events with the notable and illustrious guests were regularly reported in the social news part of the daily newspapers, it was probably an effective propaganda for society in addition to the books and articles of Japanese topics published in different journals.

Let us see some of the important events of the Nippon Society. On 29 October 1924, the Nippon Society held its first public lecture with Felvinczi Takács Zoltán talking about Japanese art. On 25 November 1924, a Japanese art soiree evening was organised in Vigadó (a prestigious and elegant concert hall in Budapest), with lectures on Japanese music and the Hungarian–Japanese relations and Hungarian artists performing Japanese songs, music, and poems. In 1925, the public lecture series of the Nippon Society included lectures about Japanese architecture, Japanese and Chinese figurines, Japanese history, literature, and contemporary economy by experts and members of the society. In 1930, a Japanese kabuki theatre had performances in Budapest, and the Nippon Society organised a Japanese music performance and lectures about the Japanese theatre for this occasion. In 1931, a Japanese art exhibition was organized in Budapest, and the special role of Japan in Hungary can be demonstrated with

[49] Prestigious or popular newspapers: *Az Est, Magyarország, Pesti Napló, Budapesti Hírlap.*

this event: despite the two countries having no diplomatic relations and being still very far from any kind of alliance, the opening ceremony of this exhibition was honoured by the presence of the Hungarian Minister of Education and Culture Kuno Klebelsberg, and even the head of the state, Governor Miklós Horthy was present.[50] He gave a speech about the significance of Japan at the ceremony: 'The Hungarian people have always turned to Japan, the nation of the Far East, with great interest. They also always expressed their warm sympathy'.[51]

Imaoka Jūichirō 今岡十一郎 (1883–1973) played an outstandingly important role in the development of Hungarian–Japanese relations, introducing and promoting Japanese culture in Hungary and later Hungarian culture in Japan (including propagating Turanism).[52] He spent nine years in Hungary as a scholarship holder between 1921 and 1930, and during these years he was very active in introducing and promoting Japanese culture (he learnt to speak excellent Hungarian). He held numerous lectures on Japan throughout the country. For example from May 1926 to May 1927, he gave 37 lectures in Hungarian to various cultural associations in Budapest, and in several cities in the country (Pécs, Győr, Békés, Debrecen, Szombathely, Makó, Székesfehérvár, Pápa, and Kisújszállás) about a wide range of Japanese topics (including fine arts, women's issues, folk customs, music, architecture, and philosophy). His lectures and articles were published in the Hungarian press, and in 1930 a book entitled *Új Nippon* containing his collected articles was published by the prestigious Hungarian publishing house Athenaeum. The same year, Governor Miklós Horthy honoured Imaoka Jūichirō with a high Hungarian award for his services in the rapprochement of the two nations. He had relations to several significant Hungarian artists, writers, and poets, and this way he undeniably had an effect on the favourable image of Japan in Hungary. He wrote that Japanese people could feel the friendliness of the Hungarians when coming to Hungary and also about the signs of Japan's benevolence towards Hungarian claims in international negotiations.[53]

In the 1930s

In the first 10 years, 'cultural' is the most appropriate descriptor of the activities of the Nippon Society and the nature of Hungarian–Japanese relations. However, from the late 1930s, social relations, which were originally non-political

[50] Newspaper report with photo of the opening ceremony, Wintermantel 2016: 52.
[51] Wintermantel 2016: 52.
[52] Umemura Yuko's significant monograph on Imaoka: Umemura 2006. See also Umemura 2013; Umemura 2010; Umemura 2009.
[53] Imaoka 1930: 241–242.

in nature, became increasingly influenced by politics. Japan's cooperation with Germany was established in 1936 with the Anti-Comintern Pact, and Hungary joined in 1939. The existence of a common ally – which had not been present in Hungarian–Japanese relations thus far – left its mark on the nature of social and cultural relations. The activity of the society is a faithful reflection of the slight changes in the course of Hungarian–Japanese relations. On the one hand, the society emphasised its role in initiating and developing scientific oriental research (mainly Japanese, but also East Asian as a whole, aspiring the status of a European Centre for East Asian Studies), and on the other hand, the contemporary political events and the changing situation in East Asia became the focus of interest in lectures and articles about Japan, with a visible bias towards Japanese aims and interests.

In 1935, Mitsui Takaharu, one of the leaders of the huge Mitsui company *(zaibatsu),* offered the Hungarian Ministry of Religion and Public Education a donation of 10,000 pengő a year and the Nippon Society 5,000 pengő for five years for the development of Hungarian–Japanese cultural relations.[54] The purpose of the foundation was to finance the trip of Hungarian researchers to Japan, the costs of university lectures on Japanese language and literature in the university in Budapest, and the publication of books and articles related to Japan. A bibliography of works published in Hungarian dealing with Japan was compiled,[55] and Hungarian scientists and researchers could embark on a study trip to Japan. In 1936 Zoltán Felvinczi Takács took part in a 13-month study trip to Japan, in 1937 István Mezey won the foundation's one-year Japanese scholarship, and in 1940 Lajos Ligeti received a six-month scholarship. (Felvinczi and Ligeti, just like Vilmos Pröhle, were among the founders of the academic field of East Asian studies in Hungary.) Associations and societies dealing with Japan, as well as the Ferenc Hopp Museum of East Asian Art, were also supported by this foundation.

In 1936 and 1937, with the help of the Mitsui Foundation 三井基金, the Nippon Society launched its quarterly magazine, *Távol Kelet,* a journal dedicated exclusively to Japan (which was and still is the first and only journal of its

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[54] Nagy 1943b: 113–114. (The contemporary average monthly wage for a public official was around 200 pengő.)

[55] *Távol Kelet* 1937. I–IV: 83–101. l. A bibliography was compiled twice, in 1937 and 1943. In 1937, the collection of works dealing with Japan published in Hungarian until then included 133 titles of books and book prints. In 1943, the bibliography contained the titles and brief descriptions of the books and book prints published between 1937 and 1943 and the journal articles on Japan published between 1937 and 1943. The two bibliographies were published in 1943 in the compilation of Dr. Gábor Lévai, titled *The Hungarian Book of Japan*, as the first booklet of East Asian papers. It contained a total of 822 titles, expanded with articles published between 1920 and 1937.

kind in Hungary).[56] It was edited by István Mezey and Zoltán Takács Felvinczi, but Iván Nagy, Vilmos Pröhle, and others also served on the editorial board. The articles written by Hungarian experts of Japanese topics embraced many aspects of traditional and contemporary Japanese culture and life. The cover was decorated with the badge of the society; two circles containing a Japanese cherry blossom and a Hungarian folk floral motif are intertwined as the number eighth, and around it there is an inscription in Hungarian and Japanese: *Magyar Nippon Társaság*. The issues of the journal mainly included articles, studies, and analyses written by Hungarian authors on Japan, as well as descriptions and reviews of Japan-themed books. At the end of each issue, a short summary of the Hungarian articles in English could also be found, but it was also common for a Hungarian author's article to be published in English.[57]

The aims of the journal were defined as follows on the inside of the cover:

> The Far East is at the centre of world interest today. The events of historical significance that took place there have aroused the interest of the widest range of the public so much that we feel a serious need to inform Hungarian society about the events in the Far East and the global political context from time to time [...] Eastern literature, science, art, social issues, and economic life are no longer a matter of mysticism for Europeans but of serious science. We want to inform the Hungarian public about all these in our journal with the articles of the best Hungarian and foreign researchers, experts, and artists [...] The long-term goal of *Távol Kelet* is to realize the old desire of Hungary to be a link between East and West and to make Hungary a European centre for Oriental research. The studies published in foreign languages in our journal, as well as the English-language extracts of our Hungarian articles, also serve this purpose.[58]

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[56] *Távol Kelet* (Far East) 1936–37.

[57] Some of the articles in *Távol Kelet* in 1936–1937: [In cases where the bibliographical data of Hungarian works are provided, names of the authors are in the original Hungarian order with surname first.] Felvinczi Takács Zoltán: A Hopp Ferenc Keletázsiai Művészeti Múzeum 1936/1. (Hopp Ferenc Museum), Szemelvények a japán költészetből. 1936/2. (Extracts from Japanese poetry), Habán Jenő: A japáni írás rendszere. 1936/3–4. (Japanese writing), Zsoldos Benő: Japán mondavilágából. 1936/3–4. (Japanese myths), Hollós Ödön: Japán gazdasági fellendülésének igazi okai I–II. 1936/1, 2. (The real causes of Japan's economic boom), Ledermann László: Japán ipari fellendülése a világháború óta. 1936/3–4. (Japan's economic boom since the World War), Nagy Iván: Japán közoktatásügye. 1–2–3. 1936/1, 2, 3. (Japan's educational system), Takahashi Ito: A japáni társadalom mai irányzatai 1936/2. (The Japanese society today), Csorba Béla – Geszty Júlia: Pillanatfelvételek a mai Japánról. 1936/2. (Pictures of Japan), Japániak Japánról. 1937. (Japanese about Japan.) (Some article titles are translated into English to show the wide range of Japanese topics presented to the Hungarian audience.)

[58] *Távol Kelet* 1936. inner cover.

In addition to cultural topics, analyses of the contemporary situation and politics in Japan were frequent topics of the lectures and articles,[59] mainly by István Mezey, with a visible bias towards Japan.[60] He interpreted the events from the point of view of the Japanese in explaining the Japanese actions in northern China and Manchuria. As he wrote in his 1936 article, 'The New Manchu Empire',

> Japan's population is growing by one million a year, and overpopulation cannot be deduced because all gates are closed before Japanese immigration. The people of Japan, who are proliferating and excluded from the possibility of emigration, need raw materials and a market for their industrial products. Manchuria is the only solution with its unlimited possibilities. So, it is understandable that it has become a dogma for Japan to stand or fall with Manchuria.[61]

Nevertheless, we can say that in the two years of *Távol Kelet*'s existence (1936–1937), the Nippon Society remained true to its fundamentally cultural character. The majority of the articles and studies were works on cultural-artistic,[62] economic,[63] or social issues[64] of Japan at the time. The review section contained information, meetings, and other events related to Japan that could be considered as contacts of Japanese and Hungarian culture or people.

With the support of the Mitsui Foundation, the Nippon Society could also publish books on Japan written by scholar members of the society, covering a wide range of topics, which is also an outstanding example of the intensive

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[59] Lectures: Simonyi-Semadam Sándor beszámolója japán útjáról (Report on his travel in Japan), Pröhle Vilmos: A japán nyelv és irodalom (Japanese language and literature), Mezey István: A Távol-Kelet jelenlegi gazdasági problémái (Economic problems of East Asia), Mezey: Japán és a turáni mozgás (Japan and the Turanian movement), Mezey: Japán és Mandzskuó (Japan and Manchukuo), Mezey: Japán új irányvonala (Japan's new directions).

[60] Mezey: Az új Mandzsu császárság (The new Manchu Empire) 1936/1., Németh Lajos: Japániak Északkínában (The Japanese in North China) 1936/1., Mezey: A japáni nép új útja (The new road of Japan) 1936/2.

[61] Mezey: Az új Mandzsu császárság (The new Manchu Empire) 1936/1.

[62] Felvinczi Takács Zoltán: A Hopp Ferenc Keletázsiai Művészeti Múzeum 1936/1. (Hopp Ferenc Museum), Szemelvények a japán költészetből. 1936/2. (Extracts from Japanese poetry), Habán Jenő: A japáni írás rendszere. 1936/3–4. (Japanese writing), Zsoldos Benő: Japán mondavilágából. 1936/3–4. (Japanese myths).

[63] Hollós Ödön: Japán gazdasági fellendülésének igazi okai I-II. 1936/1, 2. (The real causes of Japan's economic boom), Ledermann László: Japán ipari fellendülése a világháború óta. 1936/3–4. (Japan's economic boom since the World War).

[64] Nagy Iván: Japán közoktatásügye. 1–2–3 (Japan's public education) 1936/1, 2, 3, Takahashi Ito: A japáni társadalom mai irányzatai (The current trends of Japanese society) 1936/2, Csorba Béla – Geszty Júlia: Pillanatfelvételek a mai Japánról (Pictures of Japan today) 1936/2, Japániak Japánról (The Japanese about Japan) 1937.

Hungarian interest in Japan.[65] Books on Japan published between the two world wars in Hungary have in common that while introducing Japan in details – the traditional and the modern elements of the country, everyday life, customs, and culture were all among the topics – they all emphasised the inaccuracies of the stereotypes in the West about Japan. The books usually appeared as travelogues to make them more popular among the audience, but at the same time they provided a wide range of proper information about contemporary Japan. The authors emphasised the inaccuracies of the entrenched stereotypes about Japan in the West, and they aimed to disprove the errors and misunderstandings about Japan and to present the 'real Japan', the 'true Japan', and the 'unknown Japan'.[66]

At that time there were also scholarly works published on Japan, and they represented the rising scholarly field of East Asian and Japanese studies in Hungary.[67] The authors of these works, especially Zoltán Felvinczi Takács and Vilmos Pröhle, played a great role in developing East Asian studies. Takács, art historian and scholar of Oriental studies, was the first scholar in Hungary to scientifically deal with East Asian art, and thus founded the scientific research of Oriental art in Hungary. He was also an important organiser; he concentrated and arranged the Oriental art collections of different Hungarian institutions into a separate Oriental museum between 1919 and 1923 (Ferenc Hopp Museum of Asian Art, the first and most important museum of Asian art in the region). He was the first director of the museum until 1948; meanwhile he was also one of the founders and a vice president of the Nippon Society (1932–44). Vilmos Pröhle is considered a pioneer in the study of Chinese and Japanese language and literature in Hungary (though he originally studied Turkish languages). The East Asia Institute was established in 1924 at Pázmány Péter University in Budapest (today Eötvös Loránd University) under his leadership. He published

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[65] Pröhle Vilmos: A japán nemzeti irodalom kistükre (The Japanese literature), Nagy Iván: Japán közoktatásügye (Japan's educational system), Mezey István: Az igazi Japán (The real Japan), Nagy Iván: Magyarország kapcsolatai a 2600 éves Japánnal (Hungarian-Japanese relations), Felvinczi Takács Zoltán: A Hopp Ferenc Keletázsiai Múzeum (About the Hopp Ferenc Museum); Mezey István: Hungaro–Japanese Relations, Mezey István: A Historical Sketch of Hungaro–Japanese Relations (1936), Somogyi József: A Magyar Nippon Társaság magyar–japán emlékkiállítása (Exhibition of the Nippon Society), Somogyi József: Japán és a keletázsiai nagytér (Japan and Greater Asia).

[66] Mécs Alajos: Az ismeretlen Japán (The unknown Japan), Mezey: Az igazi Japán (The real Japan).

[67] Cholnoky Jenő: Japán, a felkelő nap országa (1942), Japán és Európa (Turán, 1934), Ázsia (1942), Japán fölrajza (1941), Felvinczi Takács Zoltán: A Kelet művészete, Kínai és japán képek *Nyugat*, 1914. I. 729–743, Hangok a Távol-Keletről *Nyugat*, 1914. II. 260–262, Pröhle Vilmos: A japán nemzeti irodalom kistükre (The Japanese literature) 1937, Zsigovits Béla: Japán keresztény szemmel (Japan seen from Christian viewponts) 1937.

the first scholarly works on Japanese literature and language in Hungarian. In the meantime, he was a supporter of Turanism, vice president of the Nippon Society, and also one of the leaders of the Turan Society.

The example of the lives and works of these outstanding scholars shows the particular place of Oriental research in Hungary in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. By the 20th century Hungary had developed a solid system of scientific institutions for research, and more could be found behind successful Oriental research than efforts of state or scholarly interest. The approach of Hungarian scientists and scholars – and the public – to the Orient more or less had an emotional foundation.[68] Especially in times of needing to re-define Hungary's identity (e.g., after 19th century modernisation, the birth of nation states, and the trauma of losing World War I in 1920 when the position of Hungary in Europe had to be re-interpreted), the supposed Oriental roots were more emphatically considered a part of the Hungarian historical heritage and cultural traditions. Therefore, the research of these roots (and the contemporary Oriental cultures as well) was attentively followed by the Hungarian public, even after the Oriental 'fashion' started to fade in Europe. The supposed Eastern origin of Hungarians was the main motivation behind the archaeological, anthropological, linguistic, and geographical explorations and investigations undertaken around that time by some exceptional orientalist experts. Their scientific works and their results were not connected with the Turanism that had provided the initial inspiration, but they did lay the foundations for the outstanding scientific Orientalism carried out by Hungarians.

The year 1936 provided the greatest event in the history of the Nippon Society: a three-day-long (May 16–18) Hungarian–Japanese Festival to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the society's founding.[69] During the festival, an exhibition about Hungarian–Japanese relations was organised, and a theatre play titled *The Treasure of the Ronins* (based on the story of the 47 *rōnin*s 浪人) by Hungarian playwright Miklós Kállay was staged in the Hungarian National Theatre. The ceremonies were honoured by the presence of a Japanese delegation and an honorary session of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, where in addition to the members of the Japanese delegation and the society, many leading figures of Hungarian scientific, art, and public life also appeared. After the opening ceremony with mutual greetings, a Japanese university professor gave a lecture on Japanese ethics. In addition, several receptions, gala dinners, and other events highlighted the festival.

During the late 1930s, a gradual change can be observed in the concepts and guiding ideas of the Hungarian Nippon Society, which was indirectly related to

[68] Csaplár-Degovics 2018: 15–16.

[69] Hungarian-Japanese Festival, Mezey 1936c.

the slightly changing relationship with Japan. Events in world politics (the signing of the Anti-Comintern Pact by Germany and Japan in 1936, with Hungary joining in 1939) also played a role in this, as Japan for Hungary (and Hungary for Japan) could have come into play as part of an evolving political vision. It was not yet an official political direction; however, proponents of the Japanese relationship no longer thought and referred to the Turanian kinship or the need for cultural unity among the Turanian peoples, but to the similarity of political goals (to change the status quo of the contemporary global order) and the need of political unity. With the strengthening of the German–Japanese alliance, the Japanese orientation became increasingly inseparable from the German orientation in Hungarian foreign policy, and thus it lost its underlying content: its cultural character. In the summer of 1941, Hungary entered World War II; in December, Japan attacked the United States. The dark memory of the military alliance also overshadowed cultural relations. During the war, the Hungarian–Japanese relationship lost its spontaneous, social character and became an instrument of politics, and thus, with the fall of the political structure, any contact with Japan was lost.

Nevertheless, the achievements of the cultural connection between Hungary and Japan in this period are certainly remarkable. The greatest emphasis was placed on the publication of works dealing with Japan by the proponents of the Japanese–Hungarian rapprochement. The writings about Japan conveyed the culture of Japan to an enthusiastic Hungarian audience at a high level. From 1937 onwards, the journal *Turán* took over the publication of reports and articles on Japan, which was now a prominent part of the paper.[70] In 1943, during the ongoing war, the Nippon Society published a book on Japan titled *Nagy-Kelet-Ázsia* [Great East Asia] with a collection of essays partly by scholars of Japanese studies (including Zoltán Felvinczi Takács about Japanese art and Lajos Ligeti

[70] Articles on Japan in *Turán*

1937–38: Habán Jenő: A japán történelem vázlata (Outline of Japanese history), Paikert Alajos: Metzger W. Nándor: A magyar nemzet története (Japánul) (Book review).

1939: Virányi Elemér: Lajtha Edgár: Japán tegnap, ma és holnap (book review).

1940: Isoyuki Hatta: Japán kulturális kapcsolata a külfölddel (Japan's cultural relations), Pálos György: A modern Japán (Modern Japan).

1941: Benkő István: A 2600 éves Japán állam (2600-year-old Japan), Mezey István: A japán katona (The Japanese warrior), Somogyi József: A felkelő nap országában (In the country of the Rising Sun), Sonkoly István: A japán zene főbb vonásai (The main characteristic of the Japanese music), Török László: A Turáni Társaság és a magyar-japán kapcsolatok (Turan Society and Hungarian Japanese relations), Zsuffa Sándor: Japán katonai erényei a történelem távlatában (Japan's warrior values in history).

1942: Bódis Rózsa: A japán írásról (The Japanese writing), Cholnoky Jenő: Japán, Japáni (Japan, Japanese), Máté-Törék Gyula: Japán (Japan), Zsuffa Sándor: Párhuzam Kína és Japán között (Japan and China), Zsuffa: A japán tisztek kardja (The sword of the Japanese officers).

about Hungarian researchers in Inner Asia)[71] along with papers about the culture and social conditions of Japan (e.g., literature, religion, economy) and about the military and political situation in East Asia.

The Nippon Society continued its activity, though it no longer had exclusive control over Japanese relations. In 1939, on the occasion of concluding the cultural agreement, they organised evening lectures in several towns in the country. In addition to political speeches, popular lectures on Japan continued to play an important role.

In 1938 a Hungarian institute (*Nippon Hangari Bunka Kyōkai* 日本 ハンガリ 文化 協会) was established in Tokyo with the contribution and assistance of the Mitsui Foundation, Imaoka Juichiro, and István Mezey (who at the time lived in Japan with the Mitsui scholarship).[72] In the institute, books and periodicals in Hungarian and in other languages languages about Hungary were available to those interested, and Hungarian language courses, reading sessions, music evenings, and exhibitions were planned. Also, in 1938 it was announced in Budapest that the Japanese Imperial Embassy would be based in Budapest instead of Vienna from May 1938. (Because of the Anschluss in March 1938, it no longer made sense to maintain a Japanese embassy in Vienna, so the Japanese government decided to relocate the Vienna embassy to Budapest.) A Hungarian embassy was set up in Tokyo in 1939, and this way formal diplomatic relations with ambassadors were established.

Negotiations on the possibility of a cultural agreement began the same year. After the cultural relations that had developed so far, so to speak, spontaneously, the time had come to organise cultural and scientific contacts on a regular basis. The idea of the treaty to be concluded with Japan fit nicely into the series of agreements established by Minister of Culture Bálint Hóman, deepening the cultural relations between Hungary and other countries. Turanism never became part of the official policy of the Hungarian political elite, but it was used by the government as an informal tool to break the country's international isolation and build alliances. Hungary signed treaties of friendship and collaboration with several countries regarded as 'Turanian' in the 1920s and 1930s (e.g., Turkey in 1923, Estonia in 1937, Finland in 1937, Japan in 1938, and Bulgaria in 1941). The agreement, which was signed on 15 November 1938, was officially called the Hungarian–Japanese Treaty of Friendship and Cultural Cooperation. Thus, in addition to being a cultural agreement, it was also a treaty of friendship.[73]

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[71] Nagy 1943a.

[72] About the Nippon Hangari Bunka Kyokai: 梅村 裕子, 今岡十一郎の活動を通して観る日本・ハンガリー外交関係の変遷」国際関係論叢第二巻第二号東京外国語大学国際関係研究所1－48頁2013年. Umemura 2017: 119–132.

[73] Umemura 2017: 119–132.

The articles and reports praising the treaty contained the familiar arguments of the supporters of the Hungarian–Japanese relationship: Japan's special attention to Hungary, Hungary's special position between East and West, and the resulting role of a 'bridge' for the renewal of a culturally 'aging' Europe.[74] The ministerial explanation following the text of the agreement emphasised that Japan had become one of the world's most important powers in an astonishingly short time, and thus the Hungarian government welcomed the idea of concluding a friendly and cultural agreement between the two countries. The explanatory memorandum also emphasised that Hungary had long shown great interest in Japan, mainly through its scientists and researchers. Since the turn of the century, social and cultural associations had largely nurtured relations with the Far East, namely Japan; their work was recognised with appreciation in the ministerial justification.[75] It was possible to reach and to establish relations with Japan through Turanism and the cultural activity of the Nippon Society, but once the political and diplomatic relationship had been established, these were no longer needed as maintainers but just as 'reinforcers' for ideological purposes only. Relations continued in a state-regulated channel, using, of course, the achievements of the Nippon Society.

Conclusion

The ideology of Turanism emerged around the turn of the 20th century as a distinctly Hungarian form of Orientalism, which was originally a scholarly movement aimed at researching the East and Hungary's ethnographic roots. As Turanists regarded Hungarians as belonging to the Turanian group of peoples and languages (also known as Ural-Altaic), the aim of Turanism was to carry out research into Asian peoples (those considered as being Turanian in origin) and to foster closer ties with them. After the traumas of losing World War I and the 1920 Trianon Peace Treaty for Hungarians, Turanism gained new momentum, and new motives emerged in its ideology. Hungarians felt that with the Trianon Peace Treaty, Europe had betrayed Hungary and left her without any allies or friends. Turanism transformed into the ideology of the desperate and reflected the frustration of Hungarian society and its disappointment in the West with the hope and intention of finding friends or supporters (and perhaps allies) among the Turanian peoples. The internal discourse about Hungary as a frontier country or borderland between East and West intensified after 1918. Turanism never became part of the official policy of the Hungarian political elite, but it was used

[74] Iván Nagy 121–123.
[75] Nagy 1943b: 121–123.

by the government as an informal tool in their efforts to break the country's international isolation and build alliances.

Japan was an outstanding topic among the Asian countries and peoples. It was seen as the only Asian country that had been able to avoid becoming a colony, and with a successful modernisation process it rose to the status of a great power, equal to the Western powers. This process was seen to have been achieved by carefully balancing modern development (i.e., 'becoming Western') with preserving Japan's cultural heritage (and national identity), which was a topic in the discourse on modernisation in Hungary as well. This special case of Japan made it possible to draw parallels between the Japanese and Hungarian situations, and thus between the 'East' and 'West'.

The Hungarian Nippon Society was founded in 1924, with the aim of building and developing Hungarian–Japanese relations, popularising Japan and Japanese culture in Hungary, and encouraging research on Japan. The society organised public lectures on Japan and Japanese culture, Japanese art exhibitions, and social events connected to Japanese culture, and through these activities the society was the most important organiser and promoter of Japanese culture and art in Hungary between the two world wars, at a time when the two countries had no political and diplomatic relations.

The initiatives for the foundation of an independent society for the promotion of Hungarian–Japanese relations originated from different directions, which nonetheless were closely connected to each other. One of them was the ideological effects of Turanism and Orientalism in Hungary, while the other was an actual experience of several hundreds of Hungarian military officers (and thousands of soldiers) with the Japanese army and Japanese officers in 1918–1921 when the Japanese Siberian Expedition Army took over the Russian POW camps in Siberia. Later, in the second part of the 1930s, a third factor became more important: the political rapprochement (from 1936) and military alliance (from 1939) between Hungary and Japan.

The Nippon Society envisaged activities of a purely cultural nature, to strengthen closer contacts between the two peoples, to build and nurture cultural relations, to promote scientific research, to hold informative and scholarly lectures and organise social events, and to publish and distribute similar publications.

The scholarly works dealing with Japan published at that time represented the rising scholarly field of East Asian and Japanese studies in Hungary, too. The authors of these works played a large role in developing East Asian studies. Their scientific works and their results were not connected with the Turanism that had provided the initial inspiration, but they did lay the foundations for the outstanding scientific Orientalism carried out by Hungarians.

In the first 10 years (1924–1934), 'cultural' is the most appropriate descriptor of the activities of the Nippon Society and the nature of Hungarian–Japanese relations. However, from the late 1930s, social relations, which were originally non-political in nature, became increasingly influenced by politics. During World War II, the Hungarian–Japanese relationship lost its spontaneous, social character and became an instrument of politics. Thus, with the fall of the political structure, any contact with Japan was lost.

The Nippon Society was a product of its age in the sense that it represented a remarkable mixture of influences of different but still intertwined thoughts, theories, and ideologies of the contemporary trends of that time, including Orientalism, Japonisme, Turanism, and the impact of contemporary politics, political thinking, and the international situation. The intentions for developing cultural exchange with Japan, supporting academic research, and popularising Japan in Hungary merged with Hungarian identity issues, with the intentions of building international relations, and with the search for the place of Hungary in a completely new international environment after World War I. All these were intertwined with a special Hungarian interest in Japan originating from the beginning of the 20th century, along with the widespread conviction about the 'decay of the Western world' (as described by Oswald Spengler in his famous book in 1922, *Decline of the West*) and about the emergence of the East. The activity and guiding ideas and thoughts of the society were closely connected to the image of Japan in the beginning and first third of the 20th century in Hungary, too. The history of the Hungarian Nippon Society tells us much about the image of Japan in the first half of the 20th century in a Central European country that had different images and concepts about the East and thus a different approach to the East than Western European societies had. The discourses about Japan and the East in Hungary, triggered by the changing international context of the era between the two world wars and by the changing global position of Japan, also revived the centuries-old tradition – or cultural m emory – of Hungary's 'in-between' or 'borderland' existence between East and West, and its periodically recurring possible role as a 'bridge'. These discourses, of course, had at least as much to say about Hungarian identity issues than they did about Japan and the image of Japan in the world.

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A Tale of Two Potalakas: Intercultural Relations Between China and Korea Examined Through Maritime Buddhism[1]

Abstract
Several places around the world have been identified as Potalaka, which was originally thought to be located in South India. The most well-known among these places are Mount Putuo in China and Naksan Temple in Korea. Geographically speaking, Korea is connected to China by sea, which acted as a source of cultural and material resources for a long time. For this reason, throughout history the sea became the stage of cultural exchanges between these two regions. The sea was the channel through which faith in Avalokiteśvara entered Korea from China, and where the traditions of Buddhism merged with beliefs in indigenous sea gods. The present paper focuses on the cultural exchanges between Korea and China, with special emphasis on the role that the sea played in this process examined through the faith in Potalaka.

Keywords: Potalaka, Naksan Temple, Mount Putuo, maritime religion, Kaeyang Halmi

The worship of natural phenomena can be considered the most ancient form of religious beliefs. In ancient people's minds the sea was an abundant storeroom providing essential food products, but at the same time it was a menacing force due to maritime disasters encountered during dangerous sea voyages. This approach to the ocean is reflected in religious beliefs and rites centred around sea deities, whose worship is widespread in East Asia. These indigenous sea beliefs were further enriched by Buddhism, especially because diplomatic, commercial, and cultural relations were mainly maintained via maritime routes.

[1] This article represents the partial results of my research conducted as a junior fellow at Seoul National University's Kyujanggak International Center for Korean Studies in 2021. I would like to express my deepest gratitude for the generous support that the institute provided. I am also immensely grateful for The Academy of Korean Studies, since the first steps of the research were made during my MA studies at the institution between 2017 and 2019.

This paper examines the worship of Avalokiteśvara (Ch. Guanyin Pusa 觀音菩薩; Kr. Kwanŭm Posal 관음보살) – the *bodhisattva* of compassion – in Korea from the perspective of maritime religion. The connection between Avalokiteśvara and the sea can be traced back to the *bodhisattva*'s worldly abode, Potalaka. One of the main features of the Potalaka faith is that it bears the characteristics of both mountain worship and maritime religion; according to the common belief, Avalokiteśvara dwells on a mountain, but at the same time he has a connection with the sea as well.

From a philosophical perspective, mountains bearing the nature of earth represent stability and order, while water bearing the nature of water symbolise plasticity, change, and chaos. In this sense these two can be viewed as opposing entities. However, examining their relationship more deeply, we can find that mountain and sea are linked together through a certain relationship. A clue for examining this relationship is water. As gathering places of rainclouds and sources of rivers pouring into the ocean, mountains are directly connected with water. Moreover, mountains located near the sea served as points of navigation for ships. This can be the reason why mountains on the seashore are often regarded as dwelling places of sea deities and why many shrines dedicated to maritime safety were built on the tops of mountains. The most representative place where sea and mountain meet is an island. Islands can be viewed as mountains surrounded by sea, so many sacred mountains were imagined as islands. As Potalaka is depicted as 'a mountain on the sea', it is sometimes believed to be an island.

Several places around the world have been identified as Potalaka, which was originally thought to be located in South India. The most well-known among these places are Mount Putuo (Putuo Shan 普陀山) in China and Naksan Temple (Naksan Sa 낙산사, 洛山寺) in Korea.

Geographically speaking, Korea is connected to China by sea, which acted as a source of cultural and material resources for a long time. For this reason, throughout history the sea became the stage of cultural exchanges between these two regions. The sea was the channel through which faith in Avalokiteśvara entered Korea from China, and where the traditions of Buddhism merged with beliefs in indigenous sea gods.

The present study focuses on the cultural exchanges between Korea and China, with special emphasis on the role that the sea played in this process examined through the faith in Potalaka, the worldly abode of the *bodhisattva* Avalokiteśvara.

Potalaka: a mountain on the sea

Potalaka is a sacred mountain known as Avalokitésvara's worldly abode (or *bodhimaṇḍa*)[2] that was identified with various places around the world. In order to understand its nature, it might be useful to examine the depiction of this mountain in Buddhist *sūtra*s and texts.

There are several theories concerning the meaning of the name Potalaka. In the *Flower Ornament Scripture* (Skt. *Mahāvaipulya Buddhāvataṃsaka Sūtra*; Ch. *Da fangguang fo huayan jing* 大方廣佛華嚴經)[3] in 60 scrolls, Buddhabhadra (359–429 CE) translated the name of the mountain into Chinese as 'Brilliant Mountain' (Guangming Shan 光明山). Hikosaka Shū linked the name to the toponym Pothigai, which means 'the place of enlightenment' or 'residence of a *bodhisattva*'.[4] There are also researchers who think the name is constituted by the components *pota* meaning 'ship' and *lo(ka)* meaning 'to store', resulting in the meaning 'harbour',[5] which is an interpretation that foreshadows Potalaka's relation with the ocean.

The oldest and most well-known text that mentions Potalaka is the *Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra,*[6] the last chapter of the *Flower Ornament Scripture,* which originally circulated as an independent scripture. The main character of the *sūtra* is the youth Sudhana, who sets out on a pilgrimage looking for enlightenment, during which he encounters 53 spiritual friends *(kalyāṇa-mitra),* the 28th being Avalokiteśvara himself.

The *Flower Ornament Scripture* in 80 scrolls depicts the mountain as follows:

> 'Good son! South of here is a mountain called Potalaka. There dwells a *bodhisattva* named "The One Who Observes All Existence" [Avalokiteśvara]. Go and ask him how to follow the *bodhisattva* practice, how to walk the *bodhisattva*

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[2] 'Platform of enlightenment'. The place where the Buddha reached enlightenment. In an extended sense, the spiritual presence of the Dharma at a place. The Chinese expression *daochang* 道場 is also used for all places where Buddhist practice takes place or a *buddha* or *bodhisattva* is worshipped.

[3] Two complete translations of the *Flower Ornament Scripture* exist: the 60-scroll version translated by Buddhabhadra (359–429 CE) during the Eastern Jin era (T 278) and the 80-scroll version translated by Śikṣānanda (652–710 CE) during the Tang dynasty (T 279). There is also a 40-scroll version (T 293), which despite being a partial translation, contains verses that are missing from the other two Chinese translations. Among them, notable are the 22 verses of the Avalokiteśvara section and other verses from the *Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra* that are not found in any of the existing Sanskrit versions. (T = Taishō shinshū Daizōkyō 大正新脩大蔵経)

[4] Hikosaka 1989: 375–373.

[5] Bingenheimer (2016: 195–196) refers to the theory of Samuel Beal.

[6] The *Flower Ornament Scripture* is thought to have been compiled from independent scriptures in the 4–6th centuries CE in Central Asia. The *Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra* is usually dated to the 1st century CE. Osto (2004: 60) dates the formative period of the script to roughly 200–300 CE.

> path.' Then he recited a hymn of praise saying: 'There is a mountain above the sea, where many saints and sages dwell. / Made of all kinds of jewels, it is pure beyond measure. / Trees are covered in flowers and fruits grow lush, / springs and ponds are abundant. / The resolute and undaunted Avalokiteśvara / dwells on this mountain for the benefit of the sentient beings. / You should go and ask him about his merits, / and he will reveal to you / the way of the great expedient means [*upāya*].' Sudhana then prostrated at his feet, circumambulated him several times to pay homage, then looking up on him reverentially finally bid farewell and took leave. […] Wandering on he reached the mountain, where he looked for the great *bodhisattva* everywhere. He found him in a rocky valley on the western slope of the mountain that was adorned with many springs enhancing each other's beauty, trees growing lush, and fragrant, tender lawn covering the ground. The *bodhisattva* Avalokiteśvara was sitting on a diamond rock with his legs crossed. Countless *bodhisattva*s surrounded him with respect sitting on jewelled rocks, while he was revealing them the means of great compassion and taught them how to work on the salvation of all the sentient beings.[7]

The 60-scroll version of the *sūtra* describes the mountain similarly, but the passage 'there is a mountain on the sea' (*hai shang you shan* 海上有山), which suggests a connection between Potalaka and the sea, can only be found in the 80-scroll version. The 40-scroll version of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* translated by Prajñā (734–? CE) in 796 CE contains *gāthā*s that are missing from the other translations. These depict Potalaka as a precious mountain (or treasure mountain, *baoshan* 寶山) and add the information that Avalokiteśvara is living in a cave. Potalaka is depicted in the scripture as a place with a rich natural environment, the only supernatural elements being the jewelled throne and the presence of the *bodhisattva*s. For this reason, Potalaka should be considered a place in this world. The plot of the *Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra* takes place at two main locations: South India and Northeast India. Setting off on his journey from Dhanyākara – supposedly the ancient city of Dhānyakaṭaka or Dharaṇīkoṭa[8] – Sudhana wanders the southern regions before visiting several places in Magadha, where major events of the historical Buddha's life had taken place. Entering the tower of

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[7] 『善男子!於此南方有山，名補怛洛迦。彼有菩薩，名觀自在。汝詣彼問菩薩云何學菩薩行，修菩薩道。』即說頌言:『海上有山多聖賢/眾寶所成極清淨/華果樹林皆遍滿/泉流池沼悉具足/勇猛丈夫觀自在/爲利眾生住此山/汝應往問諸功德/彼當示汝大方便。』時善財童子頂禮其足，遶無量匝已，慇懃瞻仰，辭退而去。[…] 漸次遊行至於彼山，處處求覓此大菩薩。見其西面巖谷之中泉流縈映，樹林蓊鬱，香草柔軟，右旋布地。觀自在菩薩於金剛寶石上結跏趺坐。無量菩薩皆坐寶石，恭敬圍遶，而爲宣說大慈悲法，令其攝受一切眾生。 T10, no. 279, p. 366c3–c17. Translated by the author. Another translation can be found at Cleary 1993: 1274–1275.

[8] Osto (2004: 60–61) suggests that the *Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra* was compiled in this region.

Maitreya at the end of the *sūtra*, he experiences the real nature of the universe, where all phenomena interpenetrate each other, while even the tiniest entity contains infinity. A transformation in the nature of reality takes place at this point. However, according to the message of the *sūtra*, a differentiation between conventional and ultimate realities disappears at this moment, so only perception has changed, not the geographical location. Maitreya eventually sends Sudhana back to Mañjuśrī, his first spiritual friend and thus makes him return to the starting point. Mañjuśrī appears this time as the embodiment of the originally possessed wisdom. At last, Sudhana's last mentor, Samanthabhadra, reveals that the only goal of attaining wisdom and enlightenment is to put them into practice for the benefit of all sentient beings. The search for enlightenment is thus represented in the scripture as a circular path returning to its starting point (i.e., the level of conventional reality). Sudhana is wandering in his own realm while visiting his spiritual masters, among whom there are not only *bodhisattva*s and divinities, but also ordinary lay people. The world of the *Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra* is thus a realm, where sacred and profane aspects share the same space, and the plot depicts the process that leads to the realisation of this truth.

This might not be unrelated to the philosophical meaning of the *Flower Ornament Scripture*, according to which ultimate reality (the realm of the *buddha*s) and conventional reality (the realm of sentient beings) are not separated from each other, but *saṃsāra* is none other than the world of enlightenment. In this respect, *bodhisattva*s share the same place and live together with human beings, so communication is possible with them.[9]

Even if it is so, Avalokiteśvara seems to have a closer relationship with the mundane world than do the other *buddha*s and *bodhisattva*s. Douglas Edward Osto[10] determines the significance of the chapters of the *Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra* based on the position and weight (its proportion to the whole) of the sections about each *kalyāṇa-mitra*. The most important mentors appear at the beginning and at the end of the scripture, while an ascending hierarchy can be observed among the others.

There are five *bodhisattva*s among the 53 *kalyāṇa-mitra*s: besides the three most important mentors – Mañjuśrī, Maitreya and Samanthabhadra – only Avalokiteśvara and Ananyagāmin are listed. Following Osto's thoughts, the positions of Mañjuśrī, Maitreya, and Samanthabhadra at the beginning and at the

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[9] The *Flower Ornament Scripture* calls the true nature of existence *dharmadhātu* (*fajie* 法界). According to this, the foundation and source of all phenomena in the universe are the same *buddha*-nature (*foxing* 佛性), so all beings are interconnected and influence each other in infinite ways. Consequently, ultimate reality (i.e., the realm of *buddha*s) and conventional truth are not mutually exclusive, but *saṃsāra* is none other than the realm of enlightenment.

[10] Osto 2004.

end show their important status among the other spiritual friends. On the other hand, Avalokiteśvara and Ananyagāmin are the 28th and the 29th *kalyāṇa-mitra*s, respectively, and their chapters are relatively short and positioned in the middle of the sequence. Sudhana meets lay people before them and deities after them. In my opinion this position suggests that Avalokiteśvara's dwelling place is located between the mundane and divine realms; thus his relationship with this world is closer than those of the other *bodhisattva*s'.

Based on the fact that Avalokiteśvara does not have any distinct status in the *Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra*, Märt Läänemets[11] thinks that the *sūtra* represents an early stage of the Avalokiteśvara cult and points out that in the text Avalokiteśvara appears more like a local saint or mountain god than a *bodhisattva mahāsattva*. He supports his observation by the fact that the worldly depiction of the natural environment of Potalaka gives one the impression that it was based on a concrete geographical location.[12] Other scholars, on the other hand, draw attention to the *bodhisattva*'s origin as a local sea deity.[13]

There are seven calamities listed in the *Lotus Sūtra* (Skt. *Saddharma Puṇḍarīka Sūtra*; Ch. *Miaofa lianhua jing* 妙法蓮華經) from which Avalokiteśvara can protect the believers. Many of these reflect the concern of merchants and sea traders, including being blown off course to the land of *rākṣasa* demons while searching for treasures, or being attacked by bandits in the mountains while carrying valuable goods.[14] The land of *rākṣasa*s designates present-day Sri Lanka, which was an important destination for merchants in ancient India. As the image suggests, it was perceived as a place from where valuable goods and treasures could be obtained, but at the same time it was full of potential dangers. The Potalaka faith originally may have been in connection with mer-

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[11] Läänemets 2006: 303–306.

[12] In the *gāthā*s of the 40-scroll version of the *Flower Ornament Scripture*, there are mythical creatures like *deva*s (gods) or *nāga*s (snake-like water deities) in the assembly listening to the *bodhisattva*'s preaching, so a more mystical, sacred scene unfolds in this scripture. Nevertheless, Läänemets (ibid.) regards these verses as later insertions in the text and a result of the *bodhisattva*'s transformation from local deity to a universally worshipped entity. The *gāthā*s are as follows: 'Welcome to you who has tamed your body and mind, praise me while prostrating at my feet and circumambulate me from left to right. I always reside in this precious mountain and dwelling in the great compassion always free from any restraints. / This diamond cave where I live is adorned with many marvelously colored *maṇi* jewels, and I always sit on this jewelled lotus throne with a mind resolute *(ātapaḥ)* and unrestrained. / I am always surrounded by *deva*s, *nāga*s, crowds of *asura*s, *kinnara* kings, *rākṣasa*s and other attendants while preaching the gate of great compassion to them.' 善來調伏身心者/稽首讚我而右旋/我常居此寶山中/住大慈悲恒自在/我此所住金剛窟/莊嚴妙色眾摩尼/常以勇猛自在心/坐此寶石蓮華座/天龍及以脩羅眾/緊那羅王羅剎等/如是眷屬恒圍遶/我僞演說大悲門。 T 10, no. 293, p. 73c9.

[13] Li–Jing 2019: 62; Yamauchi 1998: 346.

[14] *Miaofa lianhua jing*, T no. 262, 9: 56, c5.

chants trading with Sri Lanka, which can be confirmed by the records of the *Da Tang xiyu ji* 大唐西域記 (646 CE), which is the travel record of Xuanzang 玄奘 (ca. 602–664 CE). Not only does it state that one can reach the country of Siṃhala (Sri Lanka) by going southeast over the sea for more than 3000 *li* from Potalaka,[15] but it also quotes a legend in which Avalokiteśvara saved a group of merchants who had lost their way on the southern sea.[16] It is well known historically that merchants were the earliest converts and patrons of Buddhism, so it is not unusual that Buddhism offered practical benefits to them in exchange, including spiritual protection from dangers while traveling.[17]

Senoo Masami[18] also points out that the description of Potalaka is much more realistic than that of the Western Pure Land of Amitābha, and the reason why Potalaka is not mentioned in the *Lotus Sūtra* is probably because the cult of Avalokiteśvara can be traced back to a local sea deity in South India. She argues that while the deity was adopted to Buddhism due to its popularity and salvational role, the cultic site of a local sea god did not pique as much interest among Buddhists as did the locations connected to the historical Buddha in the beginning.

The pioneer of Guanyin research, Chün-fang Yü,[19] points out that based on the *sūtra*s we can find at least three distinct cults centred around Avalokiteśvara: one tradition approached him as a compassionate saviour without any spatial affiliation *(Lotus Sūtra);* another tradition interpreted him as the most important acolyte of Amitābha (Pure Land *sūtra*s); and one tradition worshipped him as an entity dwelling on Mount Potalaka (*Flower Ornament Scripture* and esoteric *sūtra*s). In this respect, it is also possible that the concept of Avalokiteśvara living on Potalaka constituted a separate tradition that was in close connection with the South Indian origins of the *Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra*.

But where exactly is Potalaka located? One source often cited in this respect is the 10th chapter of the *Da Tang xiyu ji*. The description of Potalaka in the text is as follows:

> Mount Potalaka is east of Mount Malaya. Its mountain paths are perilous, and its ridges and gorges are craggy. There is a lake on the top, the water of which is clear like a mirror. A river flows out of here, which courses 20 times around

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[15] *Da Tang xiyuji*, T 51, no. 2087, p. 932a21.

[16] *Da Tang xiyuji*, T 50, no. 2087, p. 917a2.

[17] Including Trapusa and Bhallika, who offered food to the Buddha after his enlightenment and became his first lay followers, or Anāthapiṇḍika, who donated the Jetavāna Monastery to the *saṅgha*. It is also notable that Sudhana, the protagonist of the *Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra*, is the son of a wealthy merchant-banker. For more on this topic see Osto 2004; Liu 1997: 114–115.

[18] Senoo 1987: 539.

[19] Yü 2011: 7–15, 31–91.

> the mountain before it empties into the southern sea. There is a heavenly palace made of stone at the lakeside, where Avalokiteśvara resides while wandering around. Those who wish to see Avalokiteśvara climb the mountain with no thought of their life or the dangerous waters. However, few are those who can get there despite going through all hardships and dangers. At the same time, if people living at the foot of the mountain devoutly pray to meet him, then [Avalokiteśvara] appears either in the form of Maheśvara or an ascetic besmeared with ash [*pāśupata*] to bring comfort to them and to help fulfil their wishes.[20]

According to this record Potalaka is located east of Mount Malaya in the South Indian country Malakūta.[21] On the top of the mountain there is a clear water lake, from which a river flows into the sea, so the connection with water is apparent in this case as well. The geographical location is concretely indicated, and Xuanzang likely thought that it was an actual location in South India, although he might not have visited the place personally.

The close connection between Potalaka and this world may have been the reason why many people tried to link it to actual, geographical sites. There is no consensus about the actual location of this mountain. There are theories that suggest that it is somewhere in the region stretching from Papanasam to Mount Agastya in South India, while others identify it with Hyderabad in the state of Telangana.[22] Hikosaka Shū[23] proposes that the name 'Potalaka' refers to Mount Potigai at the foot of the Western Ghats, while others assume the mountain is none other than Adam's Peak (Sri Pada) in Sri Lanka.[24]

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[20] 秣剌耶山東有布呾洛迦山。山徑危險，巖谷攲傾。山頂有池，其水澄鏡。流出大河周流繞山二十帀入南海。池側有石天宮，觀自在菩薩往來遊舍。其有願見菩薩者，不顧身命厲水登山，忘其艱險。能達之者蓋亦寡矣。而山下居人祈心請見，或作自在天形，或爲塗灰外道，慰喻其人果遂其願。 T 51, no. 2087, p. 932a14. In the passage 'Maheśvara' refers to the Hindu god Śiva, while the 'ascetic besmeared with ash' refers to a sect worshipping Śiva. This indicates that the syncretism of Hinduism and the cult of Avalokiteśvara had already taken place by the 7th century CE.

[21] Present Madurai or Tirunelveli region in the state of Tamil Nadu.

[22] Hikosaka (1989: 375) refers to the theories of R. F. Johnston and Alexander Cunningham.

[23] Hikosaka (1989: 375–373) thinks that the Tamil name of the mountain, Pothiyil, originally meant 'the place of enlightenment' or 'residence of the *bodhisattva*'. He presumes that the name was translated by meaning as 'Bodhiloka' in South India, which later changed to 'Potalaka'. The mountain was regarded as a sacred place in Hinduism for a long time, and mutual exchanges between Buddhism and Hinduism starting from the 3rd century CE gave birth to the cult of Avalokiteśvara. This is supported by the fact that according to a legend the holy man Agastya learnt ascetic methods from Avalokiteśvara there, and an Avalokiteśvara sculpture was found in a nearby village. The syncretism of Buddhism and Hinduism can be observed in the record of Xuanzang as well.

[24] Bingenheimer (2016: 211) refers to Samuel Beal.

Potalaka appears in several esoteric *sūtra*s as well, in which it is described in a more symbolic way. While the depiction of flora remains an important part of the description, everything in the scene is made of jewels and filled with compassion. These scriptures also mark the beginning of the symbolic interpretation of Potalaka. In the *Amoghapāśakalparāja Sūtra* (*Sūtra of the Mantra of the Unfailing Rope Snare of the Buddha Vairocana's Great Salvation*; Ch. *Bukong juansuo shenbian zhenyan jing* 不空羂索神變真言經) translated by Bodhiruci (Ch. Putiliuzhi 菩提流支; ?–727 CE) in 707 CE, reaching or seeing Potalaka is presented as a goal to be attained not by a concrete journey but by religious practice.[25]

As we can see, according to the above descriptions, the world of the *buddha*s and the world of sentient beings are connected to some extent on Mount Potalaka, so the mountain can be understood as a borderland between these two realms. In an abstract sense, the abode of the *bodhisattva* is a place or a state that is hard to access for humans, but with which communication is possible if needed. In this respect, not only is it well suited to the *bodhisattva*, who remains in this world postponing his own enlightenment, but also is in accord with the description of the *Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra.* This symbolic interpretation made it possible for Potalaka to be found at several different locations on Earth, two of which are discussed in the following chapters.

Mount Putuo and Avalokiteśvara, who was unwilling to leave

When Buddhism arrived in China in the 1st century CE, the cult of Avalokiteśvara – whose name was translated as Guanyin 觀音 or Guanshiyin 觀世音 into Chinese – was also brought along with the *mahāyāna sūtra*s. Guanyin soon became the most popular among the *bodhisattva*s, inducing the compilation of Chinese apocryphal *sūtra*s (*yijing* 疑經 or *weijing* 僞經) that were modelled after original Indian scriptures. One example is the *Foshuo Guanyin sanmei jing* 佛說觀音三昧經 *(Avalokiteśvara Samādhi Sūtra Preached by the Buddha).* What is more, miracle stories about the *bodhisattva* began to flourish starting from the 3rd century CE. The experiences recorded by these stories were called *linggan* 靈感 ('spiritual perception') or *lingying* 靈應 ('spiritual response') and were based on the notion that *buddha*s and *bodhisattva*s perceive the piety and prayers of devotees, then accordingly manifest themselves as a response. Distinct, local traditions of the Guanyin cult formed at sites where apparitions of Guanyin were witnessed, and these places developed into famous pilgrim-

[25] Li–Jing 2019: 66.

age sites in many cases. These local traditions also played an important role in producing indigenous Chinese images and fictional biographies (*zhuanji* 傳記) about the *bodhisattva*.

Starting from the 10th century CE, Putuo Shan 普陀山, one of the islands of the Zhoushan 舟山 Archipelago in Zhejiang 浙江 Province, became the most famous Guanyin *bodhimaṇḍa*. The reason for this is that Chinese started to identify Potalaka with Mount Putuo, one of the four great mountains of Chinese Buddhism (*si da mingshan* 四大名山). The highest peak of Putuo Shan is the 300-meter-high Foding Shan 佛頂山, which looks down on the 'Southern Sea'.[26] In this respect, not only does it correspond with Xuanzang's description of Potalaka, but being an island, it also meets the criterion of being a 'mountain on the sea', as described in the *Flower Ornament Scripture.* There are two caves on Putuo Shan formed by coastal erosion that remind us of the abode of Avalokiteśvara: Chaoyin Dong 潮音洞 ('The Cave of Tidal Sounds') and Fanyin Dong 梵音洞 ('The Cave of Sanskrit Sounds' or 'The Cave of Brahmā's Voice').

Although the first temple on the island is thought to have been founded in the 9th century CE, the presence of a Guanyin cult might be traced back earlier in the region. According to a record in the *Changguo-zhou tuzhi* 昌國州圖志 (*Illustrated Gazetteer of Chang State;* 1298), a Guanyin monastery (Guanyin An 觀音庵) had already been established at the Zhoushan Archipelago in the Eastern Jin era (317–420 CE).[27]

According to an orally transmitted legend, Guanyin leapt across the ocean from Potalaka in the southern seas of India to Putuo Shan, for it is known that the 1,000 peaks of the Zhoushan Archipelago in the East China Sea are the most appropriate places for Guanyin's manifestations. After arriving at Putuo Shan, the *bodhisattva* tried to count the number of the peaks by jumping three more times. However, no matter how many times she[28] counted, one was always missing, since she had forgotten to count the one peak she was standing on.[29] The story symbolically tries to explain the process through which the cult of Avalokiteśvara spread from South India first to Putuo Shan, then to the nearby islands. A site called Guanyin Leap near the Tidal Sound Cave is one of the tourist attractions on Mount Putuo today, where the *bodhisattva* allegedly left her footprint on a rock when she jumped to the mountain from India.

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[26] Since the political centre was located in Northern China, the term Southern Sea (Nanhai 南海) often indicated the East China Sea in ancient China (Zou 2017: 54–55). This coincidence may have contributed to the name Nanhai Guanyin 南海觀音 ('Guanyin of the Southern Sea').

[27] Zou 2017: 57.

[28] Guanyin started to be depicted as female in China from the 10th century. Since this time coincided with the foundation of the first temple on Mount Putuo and the Nanhai Guanyin is often depicted as female, I refer to the *bodhisattva* with the pronoun 'she' in the subsequent chapters.

[29] Bingenheimer 2016: 170; Song 2013b: 53–54.

Song Hwa Seob[30] argues that the worship of Avalokiteśvara was propagated by Indian merchants through maritime routes first in South-eastern Asia, then in China around the 4th or 5th century CE. Indian merchants arriving in the Jiangnan region discovered Putuo Shan as a place resembling Potalaka, so they established a similar place of worship there. Not only is this in accordance with the image of Potalaka as a ritual site for maritime religion, but also with one of the legends of Putuo Shan, which speaks of a mysterious Indian monk who burned his fingers in front of 'The Cave of Tidal Sounds' in 828 CE.[31] Commercial relations between China and India had been established since the Han Dynasty (202 BC–220 CE) and played a significant role in the transmission of Buddhism as well. The subsequent political division starting from the 3rd century CE, however, rapidly promoted the development of maritime trade through the southern seas, because southern states (Wu, Eastern Jin, and the Southern Dynasties) were cut off from the Central Asian caravan routes in the northern region. Merchants from India arrived at Guangdong and present-day northern Vietnam before they headed for the central plains on the Yangtze River.

Faxian 法顯 (337–422 CE), who lived in the Eastern Jin era, travelled to India via the Silk Roads in 399 CE, but used maritime routes on his way back to China in 413 CE. In his work, *Foguo ji* 佛國記 *(Record of the Buddhist Kingdoms),* he recorded that his ship encountered a violent tempest sailing on the maritime routes via Indochina. After he called the name of Guanyin, the tempest subsided, so the ship could safely reach its destination.[32] The story is an early example of Avalokiteśvara appearing as a sea guardian in the Chinese context. In addition, according to a story recorded in the 6th century CE *Guanshiyin yingyan ji* 觀世音應驗記 *(Records of the Miraculous Responses of Guanyin),* the Paekche monk Paljŏng 발정 (發正; ca. 6th century) visited the dwelling place of Guanyin (Guanyin *dushi* 觀音堵室) on Mount Jie (Jie Shan 界山) in Yuezhou 越洲 (near Putuo Shan) on his way back from China around 529–534 CE.[33]

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[30] Song 2013b: 59–61, 70–72.

[31] Yü 2001: 383–384.

[32] *Foguo ji* 40. T 51, no. 2085, p. 865c26 – p. 866c5.

[33] According to the story found in the text, some time before Paljŏng visited the place, two friends climbed the mountain and took a vow that they would leave together after one of them finished reciting the *Flower Ornament Scripture* and the other one the *Lotus Sūtra*. However, the man reading the *Lotus Sūtra* could not finish in time, so he decided to read only the *Avalokiteśvara Sūtra*. During this time an old man brought food to him every single day. The old man was none other than the manifestation of Guanyin (*Guanshiyin yingyan ji* 觀世音應驗記, 'Fahuajing zhuanji' 法華經傳記 6, 'Yuezhou Guanyin daochang daoren' 越州觀音道場道人 chapter, T 51, no. 2068, p. 72a29–c3). The *bodhisattva* appears as an old person delivering food in another legend as well that narrates the founding legend of the 'Pier of the Rebuked Sister-in-Law' (Duangu Daotou 短姑道頭) on Putuo Shan. According to this story the pier was built by an old woman who appeared from the nearby bamboo grove. She picked up stones from the ground and threw

Based on this we can assume that the cult of Guanyin following the tradition of the *Lotus Sūtra* was already present near Putuo Shan in the first half of the 6th century CE.

For this reason, Putuo Shan might have become a place of worship for Guanyin through sea routes at the end of the 4th or the beginning of the 5th century CE. Moreover, cultural exchanges taking place through the sea continued to play a significant role in the process of Putuo Shan becoming an international pilgrimage site.

There is a well-known record about Putuo Shan in volume 34 of Xu Jing's 徐兢 (1091–1153 CE) *Xuanhe fengshi Gaoli tujing* 宣和奉使高麗圖經 *(Illustrated Account of the Xuanhe Embassy to Koryŏ; 1124; hereafter Gaoli tujing),* particularly in the 'Plum Peak' ('Meicen' 梅岑) subchapter of the chapter entitled 'Sea routes 1' ('Haidao yi' 海道一). This passage narrates the founding legend of Bukenqu Guanyin Yuan 不肯去觀音院 ('Temple of Guanyin Unwilling to Leave', present-day Puji Chansi 普濟禪寺), the oldest temple on Putuo Shan.

> […] Deep in the foot of the mountain stands Baotuo Yuan 寶陁院 ['Potala Temple'] built during the Southern Liang dynasty. There is a statue of Guanyin famous for its spiritual responses in its hall. Long ago merchants from Shilla went to Mount Wutai [Wutai Shan 五臺山], where they carved this image, then wanted to load it [on a ship and] return to their country. When the ship sailed out to sea, it became stuck on a reef and could not move forward. So, they turned around and placed the statue on the rock. Zongyue 宗岳, a monk from the temple, took it and enshrined it in a hall. From this time on, ships commuting on the sea made sure to visit the place to pray for luck, and there was no one who did not get a response for their faith. […][34]

According to the record, the worship of 'Guanyin Unwilling to Leave' (Bukenqu Guanyin) was started by merchants from Shilla, but in texts written somewhat later than the *Gaoli tujing*, the founding of Bukenqu Guanyin

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them into the sea, where they turned into huge rocks to form a pier. In this way she was able to deliver food to a female worshipper who had to stay on the ship alone due to her menstruation. The motif of Guanyin building a pier shows that the *bodhisattva* played a role in maritime navigation. Bingenheimer (2016: 68) thinks this legend must have formed between the Yuan dynasty (1271–1368) and 1590 when the pier first appeared on the maps of gazetteers.

[34] […] 其深麓中有蕭梁所建寶陁院。殿有靈感觀音。昔新羅賈人往五臺刻其像，欲載歸其國。暨出海遇焦，舟膠不進。乃還置像於焦上。院僧宗岳者迎奉於殿。自後海舶往來必詣祈福，無不感應。[…] *Xuanhe fengshi Gaoli tujing* 宣和奉使高麗圖經 (online). An excellent and likely much better translation can be found in Vermeersch 2016. I hereby use my own translation following his advice to always try to make one's own translation. My translation owes much to his translation, nevertheless. I would also like to express my deepest gratitude to him for all of the precious advice that he provided during my completing this paper.

Yuan is attributed to the Japanese monk Egaku 慧萼 (ca. 9th century CE).[35] One of these records is the historical text *Fozu tongji* 佛祖統紀 (*Comprehensive History of the Buddhist Patriarchs;* 1269) written by Zhipan 志盤 (ca. 1250 CE), in which the record about the 12th year of Dazhong 大中 states that Bukenqu Guanyin Yuan was founded by Egaku in 858 CE. The text also confirms that Putuo Shan is none other than Mount Potalaka from the *Flower Ornament Scripture* and states that merchants and envoys travelling the East China Sea are sure to receive a response if they pray to the *bodhisattva* for a safe crossing.[36] It is worth noting that the text mentions a so-called Shilla Reef that is located near Putuo Shan.[37] This shows that Putuo Shan was closely related to the Shilla people. A similar story is recorded in the *Baoqing siming zhi* 寶慶四明志 *(Gazetteer of Siming during the Baoqing Reign)* compiled in 1227 CE, particularly in the 'Kaiyuan Temple in Yin County' ('Yin-xian Kaiyuan Si' 鄞縣開元寺) subchapter in the 'Chan temples 3' ('Chanyuan san' 禪院三) chapter, which states that Bukenqu Guanyin Yuan was founded by Egaku in 859 CE.[38]

The *Nittō guhō junrei kōki* 入唐求法巡禮行記 *(Record of the Pilgrimage in Tang in Search of the Dharma)*[39] written by the Japanese monk Ennin (793/794–864) in the 9th century CE confirms that Egaku made a pilgrimage to Wutai Shan, but the date does not match with the years 858 or 859 CE, which are provided by the aforementioned texts. According to *Nittō guhō junrei kōki* and other sources, Egaku went to China three times – in 841, 844, and 862 CE – but some scholars think that he made at least five journeys.[40] Thus, even if the dates do not match, we cannot preclude the possibility that Bukenqu Guanyin Yuan was founded by him. On the other hand, Marcus Bingenheimer[41] thinks that Bukenqu Guanyin

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[35] The name of Egaku is written with different Chinese characters depending on the source: 惠諤 (萼/鍔), 慧鍔 (萼/鍔).

[36] T 49, no. 2035, p. 388b16–c3.

[37] 'At present Shilla Reef is located near the mountain.' 今山側有新羅將. *Fozu tongji*, T 49, no. 2035, p. 388c01–c05. (online). The name of Egaku also appears in Juean's 覺岸 *Shishi jigu lüe* 釋氏稽古略 (*Excerpts of the Historical Research Concerning Buddhist Believers;* 1354) and Sheng Ximing's 盛熙明 *Putuoluojiashan zhuan* 補陀洛迦山傳 (*The History of Mount Potalaka;* 1361), as well as several Japanese sources, such as *Honchō kōsō den* 本朝高僧伝 (*Biographies of Eminent Monks in Japan;* 1702) or *Genkō shokusho* 元亨釋書 (1344)

[38] *Baoqing siming zhi*, 'Jun zhi' 郡志 11, 'Chanyuan san' 禪院三, 'Yin-xian Kaiyuan Si' 鄞縣開元寺 (online).

[39] The records of the 7th day in the 9th month of the year 841 CE, the 25th day in the 5th month of the year 842 CE, and the 5th day in the 7th month of the year 845 CE in volumes 3 and 4.

[40] Tanaka Fumio (2012) adds three other dates to Egaku's journeys: 848, ca. 852, and 858 CE. See also: Zou 2017: 60–62.

[41] Bingenheimer 2016: 83.

became associated with Egaku later, supposedly in the 13th century CE, since the earlier records do not mention his name at all.

At the same time, Park Hyun-kyu[42] and Cho Young-Rok[43] point out that the seemingly different legends do not necessarily contradict one another, since the founding of Putuo Shan can most likely be ascribed to the joint effort of the Japanese monk Egaku and Shilla merchants. We can confirm through *Nittō guhō junrei kōki* that Chang Pogo (787–846 CE), supervising sea trade in the territorial waters of the Korean Peninsula and China, along with the people of Shilla residing in the Tang empire, played a significant role in East Asian maritime cultural exchanges. As a part of this process, active exchanges took place in the field of Buddhism as well, and we can assume that during his visits to Tang, Egaku also needed the help of Shilla merchants. Yi Indŏk *sarang* 李仁德四郎 or Yi Indŏk 李隣德 (ca. 9th century CE), the owner of the ship used by Egaku on his return to Japan, is thought to have been from Shilla. [44] For this reason, there is a possibility that Egaku and Shilla merchants travelled together on a ship when the incident with the statue happened on the waters near Putuo Shan.

Mozhuang manlu 墨莊漫錄 *(Random Notes from the Ink Manor)* written by Zhang Bangji 張邦基 (ca. 1131) in the 12th century CE contains a record about Putuo Shan, which is as follows:

> The foreign mountains of the three Han [Korean] states are far and away, so whenever ships arrive here, [travellers] make sure to pray. There are bells, *qing*[45] instruments, and copper objects, all offered by merchants from the Kyerim state,[46] so reign names of that place are carved on many of them. There are also poems [inspired by this place] written by the foreigners, which have considerable literary value.[47]

Even if we cannot tell for sure who founded Bukenqu Guanyin Yuan, based on the above record and the name 'Shilla Reef' mentioned in the *Fozu tongji* 佛祖統紀, we can confirm that the cult of Putuo Shan was in strong connection with the people of Shilla. Putuo Shan played an important role in the cultural exchanges between China and the Korean Peninsula in later times as well,

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[42] Park 2000: 99–120.

[43] Cho 2011: 187.

[44] Reischauer 1955: 18.

[45] An L-shaped percussion instrument made of stone or jade, or the bronze percussion instrument of Buddhists resembling an alms bowl.

[46] Kyerim ('Rooster Forest') is another name for Shilla.

[47] 三韓外國諸山在杳冥間，海舶至此，必有祈禱。寺有鐘磬銅物，皆雞林商賈所施者，多刻彼國之年號。亦有外國人留題頗有文採者。 *Mozhuang manlu* 墨莊漫錄 (online).

which is also shown by the fact that the 'Pier of the Rebuked Sister-in-Law' is also called Koryŏ Pier (Gaoli Daotou 高麗道頭).[48]

As we saw, the cult of Guanyin might have been present at Putuo Shan since the 4th century CE, but international cooperation was needed for it to become an important East Asian pilgrimage site. This was not unrelated to the fact that Putuo Shan lies on the sea route between China, Korea, and Japan, which is a strategically relevant location. Through these maritime routes not only goods but also cultural elements like Buddhism were actively transmitted and circulated.

Moreover, during this process not only did Avalokiteśvara start to appear in a new iconographical form, but also the *bodhisattva*'s role as a sea deity became emphasised. Saving those encountering maritime danger was already one of Avalokiteśvara's roles in the *Lotus Sūtra*, but maritime safety might have been of special importance for those navigating on the sea near Putuo Shan. Nanhai Guanyin 南海觀音 ('Guanyin of the Southern Sea') worshipped on Putuo Shan is one of the several iconographic forms indigenous to China and was regarded as a *bodhisattva* in charge of maritime safety.

Images of Nanhai Guanyin, appearing from the 16th century CE, usually depict the *bodhisattva* as a white-robed woman who sits on a rock before a bamboo grove with the full moon in the background. There is a willow branch[49] in her hand or next to her in a vase (*huping* 胡甁). A boy and a girl, who are identified as Sudhana (Shancai tongzi 善才童子) and the Dragon Girl (Longnü 龍女), accompany her while a parrot holding a rosary soars above them. The *bodhisattva* is sometimes depicted standing on the top of waves, a giant fish,[50] or a dragon. In these cases, she usually holds a rosary or a water bottle (*jingping* 淨甁)[51] and a willow branch in her hands.

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[48] Song 2008b: 300.

[49] Helps to avoid and heal illnesses (Pak 2008: 199).

[50] *Aoyu* is a mythical creature in Chinese folklore depicted with the head of a dragon and the body of a fish (mainly that of a carp). Its image is linked to the belief that carps, being able to swim upstream, turn into dragons if they can jump up the waterfall of the Dragon Gate (Longmen). The motif of the fish can be interpreted in connection with the *makara* as well. The *makara* is a sea creature in Hindu mythology, which is often depicted as a combination of terrestrial and aquatic animals. Just like the *nāga* or the dragon, it symbolizes the beneficial and harmful nature of water: it frequently appears in stories as a monster overturning ships, but at the same time it could have a protecting role as well. The *makara* appears in scriptures (see for example the *Lotus Sūtra*, T 9, no. 263, p. 129a2–10) and legends (see for example the *Da Tang xiyuji*, T 51, no. 2087, p. 917a2–20) about Avalokiteśvara, as well as on sculptures and frescoes depicting the *bodhisattva*. (For more on this topic see Kósa 2013: 47–56.) The motif of riding a fish or a dragon thus can be understood as the symbol of taming wild, unruly forces, which in the Buddhist context includes not only natural forces but also obstructing mental states.

[51] Also referred to as *shuiping* 水瓶, one of the 18 objects possessed by monks. It can symbolize spiritual purification and the discarding of all impurities obstructing enlightenment.

The *bodhisattva* has been depicted as female in China since the 10th century CE. There are several theories to explain this phenomenon, one of which attributes the change to the influence of indigenous Chinese goddesses, such as Xiwangmu 西王母, Mazu 媽祖, or Magu 麻姑. On the other hand, Chün-fang Yü[52] argues that the process moved in the other direction: the cult of these goddesses started to spread widely due to the popularity of the female form of Guanyin. According to her, the early depictions of Guanyin as female was based on the spiritual experiences of certain individuals called *linggan* 靈感 ('spiritual perception'), *lingying* 靈應, ('spiritual response'), or *lingyan* 應驗 ('spiritual experience') in Chinese, when the *bodhisattva* reveals her power in response to the devotion of a believer.

Sudhana and the Dragon Girl have been depicted together with Guanyin since the 12th century CE and appear in different texts together with the *bodhisattva*. Avalokiteśvara is one of Sudhana's spiritual friends in the *Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra,* and the *bodhisattva* receives a jewel from the daughter of the dragon king in the esoteric *sūtra*s after teaching a *dhāraṇī* in the Dragon Palace. The Dragon Girl can also be linked to the daughter of the dragon king Sāgara in the *Lotus Sūtra*, in which case the two acolytes symbolise two cardinal scriptures about the *bodhisattva*. The composition of Sudhana and the Dragon Girl accompanying Guanyin is also thought to imitate the Jade Emperor (Yu Huang 玉皇) appearing together with the Golden Boy (Jintong 金童) and the Jade Maiden (Yunü 玉女), which shows the influence of Chinese mythology. The motif of the parrot is usually traced back to a *jātaka* and is the symbol of filial piety.[53] On the other hand, Yü suggests a connection with the goddess of Mount Kunlun, Xiwangmu 西王母 ('Queen Mother of the West'), who shares some of her characteristics with the *bodhisattva*: not only does she dwell on a mountain, but she is also thought to be accompanied by birds.[54]

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[52] Yü 2011: 182, 413.

[53] The parrot falls into the trap of humans while looking for food for its mother. By the time it manages to escape, its sick mother has already died. For this reason, after burying her with filial piety, it becomes the disciple of Guanyin. The story was elaborated on in China in the *Yingge baojuan* 鸚哥寶卷 *(The Precious Scroll of the Parrot)* and the *Yingge xing xiaoyi zhuan* 鶯哥行孝義傳 (*The Story of the Parrot's Filial Deed*; 15th century CE). There are also alternative narratives concerning the origin of Sudhana and the Dragon Girl as Guanyin's acolytes in the *Nanhai Guanyin quanzhuan* 南海觀音全傳 (*The Complete Biography of Guanyin of the Southern Sea*) and the *Shancai Longnü baojuan* 善才龍女寶卷 (*The Precious Scroll of Sudhana and the Dragon Girl*) written in the 16th century CE.

[54] According to the *Shanhai jing* 山海經 (*The Classic of Mountains and Seas*), three blue birds deliver food to Xiwangmu, and in the *Hanwu gushi* 漢武故事 (*Stories of Emperor Wu of the Han Dynasty*; 5–6th century CE), a flock of blue birds arriving from the west foreshadow the arrival of the goddess (Yü 2011: 410–411).

The influence of another indigenous deity needs to be considered as well: the Dragon King of the East Sea, which was a popular deity in the Zhoushan Archipelago. The veneration of the dragon in the Zhejiang region might be traced back to the snake-dragon worship of ancient Wu-Yue culture that later developed into the belief in the Dragon King of the East Sea and merged with Buddhist ideas from around the time of the Southern and Northern dynasties to the Sui and Tang dynasties. The Sui dynasty (581–618 CE) had already worshiped the East Sea God in Kuaiji 會稽 County (present-day Shaoxing 紹興 in Zhejiang Province),[55] and during the Song dynasty (960–1279 CE) the shrine of the God of the East Sea was relocated from Laizhou 萊州 on the Shandong Peninsula to the border of Dinghai 定海 and Changguo 昌国 County in Mingzhou 明州 (present-day Ningbo). This was related to the fact that the main sea route for diplomatic missions to Koryŏ changed from the northern route via Shandong to the southern route via Mingzhou. An Tao's 安燾 (1034–1108 CE) petition also contributed to the relocation; he suggested building a shrine in Dinghai to the king after he had escaped several dangerous situations with the help of the deity on his diplomatic mission to and from Koryŏ in 1078 CE.[56] It is notable that miracle stories about Nanhai Guanyin saving travellers on the sea first appeared in connection with diplomatic missions to Koryŏ starting from the 11th century CE,[57] which shows that diplomatic and cultural relations with the Korean Peninsula continued to be a major factor in Putuo Shan's development even after the foundation of the Bukenqu Guanyin Yuan. The dragon motif in the iconography of the Nanhai Guanyin might be connected to the presence of dragon faith in the region and can be understood as an amalgamation of Buddhist and local ideas about entities providing protection on the sea, a much-needed service at a time when diplomatic missions were frequent between Song and Koryŏ.

As we have seen, cultural exchanges between China and the Korean Peninsula played a significant role in the formation of Mount Putuo as an Avalokiteśvara *bodhimaṇḍa*. The next chapter elaborates further on this connection by examining another sacred site regarded as the dwelling place of the *bodhisattva*, the Naksan Temple in Korea.

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[55] Rong–Bi 2016: 31–52.

[56] Kim S. 2010: 199–228; *Baoqing siming zhi* 19, 'Dinghai-xian zhi' 定海縣志 2, 'Shenmiao' 神廟 (online).

[57] As examples we can mention Wang Shunfeng's 王舜封 mission in 1080 CE and Liu Da's 劉逵 and Wu Shi's 吳栻 mission to Koryŏ in the Chongning 崇寧 era (1102–1106 CE). The miracle stories about the missions are recorded in gazetters about Mount Putuo (Yü 1992: 2016–2017).

The founding legend of Naksan Sa on the eastern coast of Korea

It is uncertain when the worship of Avalokiteśvara (Kr. Kwanŭm 관음, 觀音, Kwanseŭm 관세음, 觀世音) began in Korea, but presumably it had already taken root in the Three Kingdoms period by the end of the 6th century CE.

The only archaeological find from Koguryŏ 고구려 (高句麗) is a gilt-bronze Buddha-triad engraved with the word *shinmyo* 辛卯[58] (*kŭmdong shinmyomyŏng samjonbul* 금동신묘명삼존불, 金銅辛卯銘三尊佛) dated 571 CE.[59] Moreover, Japanese sources recorded the story of the Japanese monk Gyōzen 行善 (ca. 7th century CE) who had studied in Koguryŏ. When Koguryŏ fell in 668 CE, he wanted to escape to the Tang Empire but was unable to cross a river due to a collapsed bridge. As he started to recite while meditating on Avalokiteśvara, an old man appeared and helped him safely cross the river.[60]

As a remnant of the Kwanŭm cult of Paekche 백제 (百濟), we can mention the 6th century CE rock-carved buddha-triad in T'aean (T'aean *maaebul* 태안 마애불, 泰安磨崖佛).[61] It is notable that the central figure of the triad is not Amitābha but Avalokiteśvara. Moreover, Tangjin 당진 (唐津), a nearby harbour, connected the Korean Peninsula with Tang via Shandong Province, so it is not unlikely that the Paekche people prayed here for commercial success and safe journey. As we have mentioned, according to a story recorded in the *Guanshiyin yingyan ji* 觀世音應驗記 *(Records of the Miraculous Responses of Guanyin),* the Paekche monk Paljŏng 발정 (發正) visited the dwelling place of Guanyin on Mount Jie in Yuezhou 越洲 (near Putuo Shan) on his way back from China (ca. 529–534 CE).[62] It is not unlikely that the cult of Guanyin was transmitted by Paljŏng to the Korean Peninsula.

As for Shilla, the *Samguk yusa* 삼국유사 (三國遺事, *Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms;* ca. 1282–1289 CE) compiled by Iryŏn 일연 (一然; 1206–1289 CE) records numerous stories about Kwanŭm. In these stories the *bodhisattva* appears in different roles: saving those in danger and granting children or helping practitioners attain enlightenment by making them realise the delusional nature of desires.

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[58] Ch. *xinmao*, the 28th in the Chinese sexagenary cycle.

[59] National treasure no. 85, found at Hwanghae-do Kuksan-gun Hwachon-myŏn Pongsal-li, and stored at Leeum, Samsung Museum of Art. 15. 5 cm high, Amitābha and two *bodhisattva*s are visible in front of a boat-shaped halo.

[60] *Konjaku monogatari* 今昔物語集 16, no. 1, 'Sō Gyōzen, Kannon no tasuke ni yorite Shindan yori kaerikoreru monogatari' 僧行善依観音助従震旦帰来語 (*Konjaku monogatari shū* 1993: 468–469); *Nihon ryōiki* 日本靈異記 1, no. 6, 'Kannon bosatsu wo tanominenjimatsurite genpō wo uru en' 恃憑念観音菩薩得現報縁 (*Nihon ryōiki* 1996: 208–209).

[61] Ch'ungch'ŏng-namdo T'aean-gun Paekhwa San. 140x207 cm, standing triad.

[62] *Guanshiyin yingyanji*, T 51, no. 2068, p. 72a29–c3.

The most famous sacred site of Avalokiteśvara in Korea is Naksan Temple (Naksan Sa 낙산사, 洛山寺) built on Obong San 오봉산 (五峰山, 'Five-Peaked Mountain') on the seaside of Yangyang-gun 양양군 (襄陽郡), Kangwŏn Province. The founding of the temple is attributed to the Shilla monk Ŭisang 의상 (義湘; 625–702 CE), who travelled to the Tang Empire in 661 CE to study with the second patriarch of Huayan 華嚴 Buddhism, Zhiyan 智儼 (602–668), and returned to Shilla in 671 CE. The founding legend of Naksan Sa can be found in Book 3 of the *Samguk yusa*,[63] in Part 4 called 'Pagodas and images' ('T'apsang' 탑상, 塔像), in the chapter titled 'Kwanŭm and Chŏngch'wi, the two great saints of Naksan and Choshin' (Naksan idaesŏng Kwanŭm Chŏngch'wi Chosin 낙산이대성 관음 정취 조신, 洛山二大聖觀音正趣調信). The legend is as follows:

> A long time ago when the monk Ŭisang returned from the Tang Empire for the first time, he heard that the true body of the *bodhisattva* of great compassion dwells in a cave on this seashore, so he called [this place] Naksan 洛山. Mount Potalaka (Pot'anakka San 寶陁洛伽山) in the Western region – also called 'Small White Flower'[64] – is the abode of the true body of the white-robed *bodhisattva*. That is why [Ŭisang] borrowed this name. After purifying himself for seven days, he floated his sitting cushion on the surface of the morning sea, then dragons, *deva* gods, and other representatives of the eight kinds of Dharma-protecting beings lead him into the cave. As he paid homage, a crystal rosary was bestowed on him from the sky, which he received, and he was about to leave. The dragon of the East Sea[65] also offered him a wish-fulfilling jewel, which he received and then left [the cave]. After fasting for another seven days, he got to see the true form [of the *bodhisattva*], who told him: 'A pair of bamboos shoot from the ground on the top of this mountain you sit right now. It is advised for you to build a Buddhist shrine there'. Hearing this the master came out of the cave, and really found the bamboos shooting [from the ground]. He built a golden chamber, then made a statue and enshrined it there. The rounded face and beautiful appearance

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[63] A similar story is found in the 44th fascicle of *Shinjŭng Tongguk yŏji sŭngnam*'s 신증동국여지승람 (新增東國輿地勝覽, *Revised and Augmented Gazetteer of Korea*; 1530 CE) chapter titled 'Puru' 불우 (佛宇, 'Buddhist cultic sites'), particularly in the subchapter titled 'Naksa Sa' 낙산사 (洛山寺), which preserved the records of the Sŏn 선 (禪) monk, Ikchang 익장 (益莊; 13th century CE).

[64] In the topographical accounts of Putuo Shan in China (*shanzhi* 山誌), Potalaka is translated as 'Small White Flower Mountain' (Xiaobaihua Shan 小白華山), but this is regarded as a mis-translation from Li Tongxuan's 李通玄 (635–730 CE) *Xin Huayan jing lun* 新華嚴經論 written in the 8th century CE (*Xin Huayan jing lun* 新華嚴經論 36, T 36, no. 1739, p. 981b23–18.). This translation probably appeared, because Chinese translators confused the phonetic transcription of *puṇḍarīka* ('white lotus') with the Chinese transcription of Potalaka.

[65] The Sea of Japan.

> [of the statue] was as if it was made by heaven. After that, the bamboos sank into the ground again, so it was known that it was truly the abode of the true body [of the *bodhisattva*]. For this reason, [Ŭisang] named the temple 'Naksan', and enshrined the two treasures in the chamber before he left.[66]

Naksan Temple is located on a seaside cliff, which is on the boundary of mountain and sea. Through the legend we can also confirm the relationship between Kwanŭm and caves. The building built above the cave where the spiritual encounter is believed to have taken place is the present Hongnyŏn-am 紅蓮庵 (Red Lotus Hermitage) at Naksan Temple.

According to the story, master Ŭisang had practiced for seven days before Dharma-protecting beings such as *nāga*s and *deva*s led him into the cave where he received a crystal rosary from the sky, as well as a wish-fulfilling jewel from the dragon of the East Sea. Then he needed another seven days of practice before he was able to see the true form of Kwanŭm. In the case of Mount Putuo, Avalokiteśvara made her wish known spontaneously by getting the ship stuck on a reef. On the other hand, in the case of Naksan Temple, Ŭisang consciously endeavoured to meet the *bodhisattva*, and religious practice – which is a central part in Ŭisang's Hwaŏm school – is emphasised in the founding narrative. The origin of the eight kinds of Dharma-protecting beings can be traced back to the *gāthā* in the chapter called 'Entering into the state of inconceivable liberation and the practices and vows of Samantabhadra' (Ru busiyi jietuo jingjie Puxian xingyuan pin 入不思議解脫境界普賢行願品) in the 40-scroll version of the *Flower Ornament Scripture*.[67]

On the other hand, we should pay attention to the motif of the dragon of the East Sea in the story.[68] Not only is the dragon one of the Dharma-protecting beings in Buddhism,[69] but the Chinese iconographic representation of Nanhai Guanyin

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[66] 昔義湘法師始自唐來還，聞大悲眞身住此海邊崛內，故因名洛山。蓋西域寶陁洛伽山，此云小白華，乃白衣大士眞身住處，故借此名之。齋戒七日，浮座具晨水上，龍天八部侍從，引入崛內。參禮空中出水精念珠一貫給[獻]之，湘領受而退。東海龍亦獻如意寶珠一顆，師捧出。更齋七日，乃見眞容，謂曰:『於座上山頂雙竹湧生，當其地作殿宜矣。』師聞之出崛，果有竹從地湧出。乃作金堂，塑像而安之。圓容麗質儼若天生。其竹還沒，方知正是眞身住也。因名其寺曰洛山。師以所受二珠，鎭安于聖殿而去。 Iryŏn 1982: 416–417; T 49, no. 2039, p. 996c3–14. Translation is by the author. Another translation can be found in McBride 2012: 394–396.

[67] See footnote no. 12.

[68] Despite the similar name with the deity worshipped in the Zhoushan Archipelago, the dragon of the East Sea here refers to the sea east of the Korean Peninsula (i.e., the Sea of Japan), while in the case of China it refers to the deity of the East China Sea. Even if it is so, there is no doubt that the deity was influenced by its Chinese counterpart.

[69] The origin of dragon kings in East Asian Buddhism can be traced back to the water deities of Hindu mythology called *nāga*s. These deities were depicted in the form of cobras or as

南海觀音 is also often depicted riding on the back of a dragon or accompanied by the daughter of the dragon king Sāgara. Moreover, the Buddhist *sūtra*s refer to dragon kings as protectors of those who recite the *dhāraṇī* of the Thousand-armed and Thousand-eyed Avalokiteśvara.[70] Since Naksan Sa is located on the shore, it might not seem unusual for the dragon to appear in the story.

Just like in China, the dragon of the East Sea in the founding legend might be interpreted as an attempt to incorporate an indigenous sea deity that was locally worshipped before the domestication of Kwanŭm into the Buddhist religious system. This would be the continuation of the long-standing practice of Buddhism, which always tried to adopt local gods into its pantheon.

Tonghae Shinmyo 동해신묘 (東海神廟), 'Shrine of the God of the East Sea', also Tonghae Shinsa 동해신사, 東海神祠), is located near Naksan Sa,[71] where the god of the East Sea is worshipped. Although the actual founding date of the shrine is unknown, based on a record in the 'Ingnyŏng-hyŏn' 익령현 (翼嶺縣) chapter of the 58th fascicle of the *Koryŏsa* 고려사 (高麗史; 1392–1451 CE),[72] the existence of Tonghae Shinmyo at Yangyang can be confirmed from the Koryŏ dynasty. Following the Chinese model, rites for the four seas had been conducted since the Shilla era (668–935 CE), in which system the rites for the East Sea were held in present-day Pohang 포항 (浦項) near the Shilla capital, Kyŏngju 경주 (慶州), while during the Koryŏ era (918–1392 CE) a five-sea system was established.[73] Since Yangyang is located east of the Koryŏ capital Kaesŏng 개성 (開城), it makes sense that a shrine for the deity of the East Sea was later established in this area.[74] Starting from the Chosŏn dynasty

half-serpent, half-human beings and were believed to possess a magical jewel. *Nāga*s were adopted by Buddhism as Dharma-protecting deities, and there are many legends about Buddha-relics or *sūtra*s kept by or acquired from them. In other words, the wish-fulfilling jewel that the *nāga*s possessed became the symbol of the treasures of Buddhism (i.e., relics, *sūtra*s, the Dharma, or even *bodhicitta*).

[70] *Qianshou qianyan Guanshiyin pusa guangda yuanman wuai dabeixin tuoluoni jing* 千手千眼觀世音菩薩廣大圓滿無礙大悲心陀羅尼經 T 20 no. 1060, p. 108b01–b04; Pak 2008: 205.

[71] Kangwŏn-do, Yangyang-gun, Yangyang-ŭp, Chosal-li 339-oe 1-p'il.

[72] Koryŏsa 58, 'Ingnyŏng-hyŏn' (online).

[73] Contemporary Adŭng-byŏn 아등변 (阿等邊) Kŭnohyŏng-byŏn 근오형변 (斤烏兄邊). The four seas to which rites of the medium rank (*chungsa* 中祀) were conducted are listed in the *Samguk sagi*'s 삼국사기 (三國史記, *The History of the Three Kingdoms*) chapter titled 'Miscellaneous Records 1' ('Chapchi il' 잡지 일, 雜誌一), particularly in the subchapter 'Rites' ('Chesa' 제사, 祭祀). Information about the Koryŏ rites to seas can be found in the *Koryŏsa*, and information about the Chosŏn rites can be found in the *Sejong shillŏk* 세종실록 (世宗實錄).

[74] After 1456, the shrine for the East Sea at Yangyang was moved to Kangnŭng for a while, and rituals were conducted there. At the same time, the shrine for the West Sea was moved to Inchŏn, and the shrine for the South Sea was moved to Sunchŏn. The reason that the shrines were moved was to align directions with the newly moved capital, Seoul. The shrine of the East Sea was moved back to Yangyang in 1536.

(1392–1897 CE), state-sponsored rituals were also held in the second and eighth lunar month every year in the shrine, as well as in corresponding shrines on the western and southern coasts.

Unfortunately, we cannot confirm that the worship of an indigenous sea deity was present in the region in Ŭisang's time, and if it was, what kind of deity was worshipped. Although the Dragon King of the East Sea appears frequently in the *Samguk yusa*, this deity shows strong Chinese influence. It is interesting to note that the shrine of the God of the East Sea was also near an Avalokiteśvara *bodhimaṇḍa* in China: it was relocated near Putuo Shan around the time the maritime route of diplomatic missions with Koryŏ changed for the one via Mingzhou.

Even if it is so, Naksan Sa seems to be less connected to sea worship than is Putuo Shan. Although the *bodhisattva* worshipped at Naksa Sa is known as Haesu Kwanŭm 해수관음 (海水觀音, 'Sea Water Avalokiteśvara'), this nomenclature cannot be confirmed before 1683 CE.[75] Naksan Sa on the eastern coast of Korea was not located on an important maritime route at the time of its foundation, and the role of Kwanŭm as a protector of sea travellers gained importance only after maritime trade became flourishing later during the Shilla dynasty.[76] Even in this respect, the western coast of the Peninsula was more important, since most of the trade relations and diplomatic missions took place through the East China Sea and the Yellow Sea. Moreover, Naksan Sa was established by a monk and had no connection with maritime traders or fishermen, for whom protection from danger on the sea would have been of crucial concern. Religious practice, which is a central element in Ŭisang's Hwaŏm 화엄 (華嚴, Ch. Huayan) interpretation, is emphasised instead in the legend as a premise for seeing the *bodhisattva*. Thus, Avalokiteśvara worship at Naksan Sa is based on the central text of Hwaŏm, the *Flower Ornament Scripture*, and has a different character than worship at Putuo Shan, which shows stronger influences from the *Lotus Sūtra*.

At the same time, in the case of the founding legend of Naksan Sa, a particularly Korean meaning is embedded in the motif of the dragon. The dragon of the East Sea that bestows a wish-fulfilling jewel on Ŭisang can be a symbol of King Munmu 문무 (文武; 626–681 CE), who was a supporter of the monk in real life.[77] Many stories in the *Samguk yusa* testify that the dragon has a state-protecting (*hoguk* 호국, 護國) function. The most well-known story of this kind was recorded in the chapter 'King Munmu and Pŏmmin' (Munmu wang Pŏm-

[75] Its first appearance is on a stele called 'Naksan Sa Haesu Kwanŭm kungjung sari pi' 낙산사해수관음궁중사리비 (洛山寺海水觀音空中舍利碑).

[76] Byeon 2010.

[77] So 2008: 45–86.

min 문무왕 법민, 文武王法敏) in Book 2, Part 2, titled 'Marvels 2' ('Kii i' 기이 이, 奇異二). According to the legend, King Munmu asked to be buried on a rock in the East Sea and took an oath to protect the nation by transforming into a dragon before his death. We can confirm that King Munmu turned into a 'state-protecting great dragon' (*hoguk taeryong* 호국대룡, 護國大龍) through the chapter titled 'The flute that calms all waves' ('Manp'a shikchŏk' 만파식적, 万波息笛).[78] Master Ŭisang returned from China in 670 CE to warn King Munmu of the attack the Tang Empire had planned against Shilla. In the light of this, it is possible that the presence of the dragon of the East Sea has a state-protecting function in the legend of Ŭisang as well.[79]

The state-protecting role of the dragon may be related to the historical background of the compilation of the *Samguk yusa* (i.e., the historical circumstances of the Koryŏ era). The Koryŏ dynasty, just like Shilla in the Three Kingdoms era, had to face external menaces. From the 10th century until the 12th century CE, it was engaged in wars with the nomadic Liao (947–1125) and Jin dynasties (1125–1234). Then, in the aftermath of the Mongolian invasions in the 13th

[78] In this story King Shinmun (Shinmun wang 신문왕, 神文王; r. 681–692 CE) receives a jade belt from a dragon on a strange mountain that floats on the surface of the water in the direction of Kamŭn Temple. The dragon is an envoy of Kim Yushin 김유신 (金庾信; 595–673 CE), who has turned into a heavenly deity, and of King Munmu (the father of King Shinmun), who has turned into a dragon. On the mountain resembling the head of a turtle, a pair of bamboos grow that are two during the day and one during the night. The dragon tells the king that a flute made from this bamboo can drive away enemies and bring prosperity to the country. The motifs of the mountain on the sea (i.e., the island), the dragon, and the bamboo are noteworthy. Like the legends about Kwanŭm, the concepts of the mountain on the sea, the dragon, the state-protecting role, and the magical bamboos are linked together in the story.

[79] There is much criticism directed toward the overemphasising of nation-protecting Buddhism when talking about Korean Buddhism (See for example Kim 1995, 2010; Mohan 2006). Scholars argue that the 'nation-protecting' paradigm evolved in Meiji Japan. Later, Korean scholars of Buddhism in the late colonial and postcolonial eras uncritically inherited this theoretical model, which further embedded in the national self-identity of Korean Buddhism, especially during the Pak Chŏnghŭi 박정희 (朴正熙; 1917–1979) era. These discourses are valuable for counterbalancing the uncritical emphasis on the 'nation-protecting' role of Buddhism and for deepening our understanding of Korean Buddhism. The so-called 'state-protection' was also not exclusive to Korea and thus cannot be used as a distinct characteristic when comparing it with the Buddhism of other regions. At the same time, it cannot be denied that the nation-protecting agenda is explicitly expressed through the mouths of deities or *buddha*s in many stories of the *Samguk yusa* (see for example the 'Manp'a shikchŏk' chapter), so stating that the text is devoid of this kind of meaning would also be a mistake. For a critique on the nationalistic nature of the *Samguk yusa* itself see McBride 2007. McBride questions that the *Samguk yusa* as a Buddhist response was written to rectify a perceived nationalistic shortcoming in the allegedly more Sino-centric *Samguk sagi*. Sem Vermeersch's book (2008) is also a good reference in the topic and provides a meticulous critical perspective of Buddhism as an ideological underpinning of the centralised monarchy during the Goryo period. Birtalan (2013) also addresses the question of state-protecting Buddhism.

century, it became the protectorate of the Yuan dynasty (1271–1368 CE) from around 1270 until 1356. By depicting Korea as the dwelling place of *buddha*s and *bodhisattva*s, as well as a land under the protection of dragons, *Samguk yusa* could arouse national feelings and provide an ideological basis for national defence. At the time of the building of the temple (671/676 CE), Shilla had already defeated Koguryŏ and Paekche, but still had to face the threat of the Tang Empire. Naksan Sa is located near the northern border of contemporary Shilla, a region that was exposed to attacks from the Malgal tribes. As we can confirm through the record about the year 693 CE in the 'Paengnyul-sa' 백률사 (栢栗寺) chapter of the *Samguk yusa*, offering prayers to Kwanŭm was a way to gain protection from the northern barbarians.[80]

It is worth mentioning that the legends of Ŭisang seem to be in close connection with the dragon. According to the legend about the maiden Shanmiao turning into a dragon (Sŏnmyo hwaryong 선묘 화룡, 善妙化龍),[81] the monk was protected by a dragon on his long maritime journey back to Shilla from the Tang Empire. Although the story can be originally found in a Chinese source – *Song gaoseng zhuan* 宋高僧傳 written by Zanning 贊寧 (919–1001 CE) – it is well-known not only in Korea, but also in Japan. Some researchers try to link the legend with the iconographic representation of the Nanhai Guanyin often depicted together with a dragon,[82] but a scene can call to mind the image of the dragon boat of *prajñā* (*panya yongsŏn* 반야용선, 般若龍船) as well, by which sentient beings travel to the Pure Land of Amitābha under the guidance of Avalokiteśvara. The dragon boat of *prajñā* is sometimes called 'the boat of compassion' (*taebisŏn* 대비선, 大悲船) and serves as a symbol of compassion. Even if it is impossible to find a direct link between these narratives, a complex system of symbols surround Avalokiteśvara, including the sea-dragon imagery, which was a significant element is East Asian maritime Buddhist culture.

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[80] *Samguk yusa* 3, 'T'apsang' 탑상 (塔像) 4, 'Paengnyul-sa' 백률사 (栢栗寺); Byeon 2010.

[81] In this story when Ŭisang arrived in China, he stayed in the house of a lay believer, whose daughter, Shanmiao, fell in love with him. Ŭisang kept his precepts and rejected the girl, who took a vow to help the monk until her dying day. Since Shanmiao did not have a chance to give her present to Ŭisang upon his departure, she threw the box containing the gift after the ship, then jumped into the water, where she turned into a dragon to lead and protect the ship until it reached the land of Shilla. After arriving in Korea, Shanmiao turned into a huge rock floating in the air to scare away other sects who occupied the territory where Ŭisang wanted to build a temple. The temple built with the help of Shanmiao is called Pusŏk Sa 부석사 (浮石寺, 'Temple of the Floating Rock').

[82] Cho 2011.

The relationship between Putuo Shan and Naksan

Based on the role that Shilla people played in the founding of Putuo Shan, there is an ongoing debate about the chronological order of the foundings of Putuo Shan and Naksan, as well as the relationship between these two sacred places.

There are two theories concerning the founding year of Naksan Sa: 671 and 676 CE.[83] However, several studies suggest that the temple may not have been founded by Ŭisang himself. Hwang Keum-Soon[84] argues that even the geographical name 'Naksan' itself cannot be attributed to Ŭisang in the first place. The reason for this is that the Chinese transcription of 'Potalaka' (Budanluojiasan, 補怛洛迦山), which was regarded as a prototype for the name 'Naksan', appears first in the 80-scroll version of the *Flower Ornament Scripture*, which was translated into Chinese in 699 CE. In other words, in Ŭisang's time (625–702 CE) the widely used text was the 60-scroll version of the *sūtra*, which translated the name of the mountain as 'Brilliant Mountain' (Guangming Shan 光明山). For this reason, it is not likely that it was Ŭisang who named the mountain as Naksan.[85]

The chapter titled 'Naksan idaesŏng Kwanŭm Chŏngch'wi Choshin' in the *Samguk yusa* also contains the story of Pŏmil 범일 (梵日; 810–894 CE), the founder of the Sagul San 사굴산 (闍崛山 or Kulsan) school, which was the most influential Sŏn 선 (禪) school during the Shilla era. The legend narrates how the monk introduced the worship of the *bodhisattva* Ananyagāmin (Kr. Chŏngch'wi Posal 정취보살, 正趣菩薩), who appears together with Avalokiteśvara in the *Flower Ornament Scripture*, to Naksan Sa.[86]After the unification of the three Korean kingdoms, the mainstream tradition of Shilla Buddhism was the Hwaŏm school of Ŭisang's lineage. At the same time, the territory where Naksan Sa was built was under the influence of the Sagul San Sŏn school,

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[83] Cho 2012: 204.

[84] Hwang 2007: 95–96.

[85] The transcription 'Budaluojia Shan' 布呾洛迦山 appears in the *Da Tang xiyuji* written by Xuanzang in 646 CE, so we cannot preclude the possibility that this text was the source of the name. However, the way Ŭisang visits the cave to meet the true form of Kwanŭm is similar to the scene where Sudhana meets the *bodhisattva* in the *Flower Ornament Scripture*, which shows the strong connection between Naksan Sa and this *sūtra*.

[86] According to the legend, Pŏmil went to Tang in 832 CE, where he met a half-eared monk at Kaiguo Temple 開國寺 in Mingzhou, who claimed to be from Tŏkgi Village in Ingnyŏng County (present-day Yangyang) in Shilla. He asked Pŏmil to build a house for him in Yangyang on his return to Shilla. After Pŏmil returned to his home country in 847 CE, the mysterious monk appeared in his dream to remind him of his promise. Pŏmil then visited the village at the foot of Naksan, where he found a half-eared stone *bodhisattva* statue under a bridge. The statue was an image of the *bodhisattva* Ananyagāmin and was the spitting image of the monk he met in China, so Pŏmil built a shrine for him on Naksan (T 49, no. 2039, p. 996c23 – p. 997a10).

which was dominated by a local clan. Since the 8th century CE, Yangyang had been governed as a virtually independent kingdom, over which the state could assert only token authority. The founder of the Sagul San school, Pŏmil, was the grandson of the governor of Myŏngju 명주 (溟州, present-day Kangnŭng 강능, 江陵), and the patrons of the school were mostly members of the local clan.[87] Pŏmil and his disciples maintained a close relationship with the Hwaŏm school. Hwang Keum-Soon[88] supposes that it was the Sagul San school that determined the location of Naksan Sa on the eastern coast, a region under its influence with similar natural characteristics as Potalaka. They back-dated the founding of the temple to attribute it to Ŭisang, by which they could elevate the prestige of the temple. At the same time, this could give a reason for national pride by implying that an Avalokiteśvara *bodhimaṇḍa* was established earlier in Shilla than in China.

On the other hand, Cho Young-Rok[89] has no doubt that Naksan Sa was founded by Ŭisang and upholds his opinion that – influenced by the *Da Tang xiyuji* – the very first Avalokiteśvara *bodhimaṇḍa* was established at Naksan. He suggests that because the founding of Putuo Shan and the enshrining of Anan-yagāmin by Pŏmil on Naksan overlap chronologically, the key figures involved in these two enterprises might have known each other. According to the *Samguk yusa*, Pŏmil resided at Kaiguo Temple (Kaiguo Si 開國寺)[90] after arriving in Mingzhou, then studied with master Qi'an 齊安 (?–842 CE), who lived in Haichang Yuan 海昌院 in Hangzhou. Around the same time, the Japanese monk Egaku was wandering the region of Mount Tiantai and Mingzhou. He arrived in the Tang Empire in 841 CE, then made a pilgrimage to Mount Wutai before he went to Mount Tiantai via Mingzhou. During his journey, he visited master Qi'an, who was living nearby and introduced his disciple Yikong 義空 (ca. 9th century CE) to him. After going to Tang the second time in 844, Egaku returned to Japan along with Yikong, receiving the help of the Shilla brothers Sŏ Kongjik 서공직 (徐公直) and Sŏ Kongyu 서공유 (徐公裕; ca. 9th century CE) in 847 CE. This means that he returned home in the same year as Pŏmil, who stayed in China from 831 to 847 CE. Egaku visited China two times during this period, and we can assume that he visited Qi'an during the last period of the six years while Pŏmil was studying there. It is not impossible then that the people participating in the founding of Putuo Shan and the reconstruction of Naksan Sa might have known each other.

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[87] Vermeersch 2008: 69–70.

[88] Hwang 2007: 94–101.

[89] Cho 2011: 177–205; Cho 2012: 197–235.

[90] This is supposedly a clerical error of the name of Kaiyuan Temple (Kaiyuan Si 開元寺) frequently visited by Egaku after the founding of Putuo Shan (Cho 2012: 212).

Based on this, it is very likely that there is a connection between Putuo Shan and Naksan, even if we cannot determine which one of them was founded earlier. Proponents of both versions equate the founding of Putuo Shan with the founding of the first temple on the island, Bukenqu Guanyin Yuan, though as we have seen, Guanyin worship might have been present in the area since earlier times. Since the founding date and circumstances of Naksan Sa have been questioned, it is possible that the Guanyin cult of the Zhejiang region inspired the founder or founders of Naksan Sa in some way. On the other hand, 'Plum Peak' gained importance only from the 9th century CE and was identified with Potalaka only after the 11th century CE. This was not unrelated to the role the Wu-Yue Kingdom played in international Buddhist relations, the Guanyin cult in the Zhejiang region, the dominance of Shilla merchants on the seas of China, and Korean and Japanese monks' searching for the Dharma. Therefore, I think that instead of trying to establish a chronological order or some kind of hierarchy between these places, it is more worthwhile to put the emphasis on international cooperation and examine the nature of the beliefs about each *bodhimaṇḍa*. Since the motivation of establishment, as well as the function, of these two places are very different from each other, it does not seem as if either of these sites was founded to create a local counterpart of the other through a simple transmission-localisation process. In other words, the aim was not to establish a rival Potalaka in either instance. In the case of Naksan Sa, spiritual practice was emphasised, and protection from danger on the sea does not play a central part in the cult. Moreover, Putuo Shan was accepted as the dwelling place of Avalokiteśvara among Korean merchants and envoys as well, and any other place would have questioned this authority. As a matter of fact, it would have made more sense to establish a *bodhimaṇḍa* on the western coast of the Korean Peninsula on the major sea route between the two regions.[91]

Even if we cannot find a major religious site for Kwanŭm on the western coast of Korea, the Guanyin cult of Mount Putuo has influenced the beliefs in this region. There are many Kwanŭm temples on Wido 위도 (蝟島) and the Pyŏnsan Peninsula (Pyŏnsan Pando 변산반도, 邊山半島), and the indigenous deity Kaeyang Halmi shares many characteristics with the Nanhai Guanyin. In the next chapter, I would like to briefly address this topic.

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[91] There is actually a Kwanŭm *bodhimaṇḍa* on the western coast of the Peninsula, the Nakka San 낙가산 (洛迦山) Pomun Sa 보문사 (普門寺) on Sŏngmo Island (Sŏngmo Do 석모도, 席毛島) in Kanghwa-gun, Inchŏn, which lies near the Koryŏ era sea route. However, although the foundation of the temple is dated to the 7th century CE, the worship of Kwanŭm is likely to have started only during the Japanese occupation, since there is no written or archaeological evidence for Kwanŭm cult from earlier times.

Sea worship on the Korean western coast: Kaeyang Halmi and Nanhai Guanyin

If we attribute the indigenous elements in the founding legend of Naksan Sa to syncretism, then the cult of Kaeyang Halmi at Susŏng Shrine (Susŏng Tang 수성당 水聖堂, 'Shrine of the saint of the water') in Puan-gun 부안군 (扶安郡) Chungmak-tong 죽막동 (竹幕洞) on the Pyŏnsan Peninsula can be viewed as a case of 'reverse syncretism', an expression borrowed from James Huntley Grayson.[92] Susŏng Tang bears the characteristics of the shamanic folk religion of Korea. Thus the expressions 'Kwanŭm' or 'Potalaka' are not explicitly linked to this place, but the goddess Kaeyang Halmi 개양할미 (開洋할미,'Sea-opening Grandmother') worshipped here has many similarities with the Nanhai Guanyin. Not only is the geographical location of the shrine similar to that of Putuo Shan, but also maritime exchange had taken place between the two regions since around the Paekche era (18 BCE–660 CE).

The orally transmitted legends regarding the goddess can be summarised as follows: in times past Kaeyang Halmi appeared from a cave. She is wandering between her home and Pangwŏl-li by wading through the sea, but she is so tall that the water can hardly reach the top of her feet. As she wanders through the Ch'ilsan 칠산 (七山) Sea (the territorial waters of Wido, Yanggwang, and Koch'ang), she fills up the deep parts of the water and calms the waves to guard the safety of maritime routes. She has eight daughters and is usually depicted in a sitting position, wearing white and hugging her youngest daughter. She marries off seven of her daughters to the deities of nearby shrines on the islands of the Ch'ilsan Sea, while she herself oversees the whole territory of the sea. According to the oral tradition, once a fisherman did not return from the sea, so his wife climbed up to Susŏng Shrine to ask for help from Kaeyang Halmi. The goddess appeared in front of the woman, waded into the sea, and rescued her husband.[93]

Based on the description above, Kaeyang Halmi worshipped in Susŏng Shrine and the Nanhai Guanyin of Putuo Shan have many common features. First, the *bodhisattva* appears as an old woman in the legend about the 'Pier of the Rebuked Sister-in-Law' at Putuo Shan. As her name shows, Kaeyang Halmi

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[92] Grayson (1992) calls 'high syncretism' the phenomenon by which the basic values of an indigenous religion constitute the core of the belief, while external elements of an adopted religion appear on the surface. 'Low syncretism', on the other hand is the opposite of this. It is when the basic values of the missionary religion are at the centre of a belief, with external elements of the indigenous religion. The former is also called 'reverse syncretism', because the process is contrary to what is usually understood as syncretism.

[93] Field work was conducted on the 10 July 2005 by Shin Chongwŏn, Sŏ Yŏngdae, Yi Ch'angshik, Kim Ch'anggyŏm, Sŏ Bongsu, and Choe Myŏnghwan (Shin 2006: 276–308), as well as by Song Hwa Seob in 2002 and 2003 (Song 2008a: 91–93).

is also a *halmi* ('grandmother') deity, so she was regarded as an old woman. Second, the image of the giant Kaeyang Halmi wandering the waters might call into mind the image of the Nanhai Guanyin as she leaps through the islands near Putuo Shan. Third, Nanhai Guanyin and Kaeyang Halmi are both sea deities responsible for the safety of ships. There are stories in both cases when the goddesses helped people encountering danger on the sea. Fourth, it is believed that Kaeyang Halmi appeared from a cave, based on which we can suppose that the goddess lives in a cave, as does Avalokiteśvara. There is an actual cave near Susŏng Tang, which is regarded as the dwelling place of Kaeyang Halmi. Fifth, the images of Nanhai Guanyin depict the *bodhisattva* as a white-robed woman. Similarly, Kaeyang Halmi is also depicted as a woman clad in white together with her daughters in the shamanic painting of Susŏng Tang.

Furthermore, according to Song Hwa Seob,[94] the motif of Kaeyang Halmi giving birth to eight daughters calls to mind the image of Bixia Yuanjun 碧霞元君,[95] the goddess of Taishan 泰山 in China, while the motif of her embracing the youngest resembles the image of Songzi Guanyin 送子觀音 ('Guanyin, the Bestower of Sons'). He assumes that the cult of Guanyin merged with the cult of Bixia Yuanjun in the Zhoushan Archipelago before it was transmitted to Korea. Based on this, the cult of Kaeyang Halmi was formed by indigenous Korean sea worship assimilating the image of Bixia Yuanjun, the Nanhai Guanyin, and the Songzi Guanyin. Among these goddesses, the Nanhai Guanyin bears the characteristics of a sea god, while Bixia Yuanjun can be regarded as a mountain goddess. In this respect, Kaeyang Halmi is endowed with the dual nature of sea and mountain, just like the Nanhai Guanyin who bears the nature of a sea god while living on a mountain.

The cave at Chungmak-tong, regarded as the dwelling place of Kaeyang Halmi, lies near a Paekche-era ritual site that was discovered in 1992. This shows that the sea worship on the Pyŏnsan Peninsula can be traced back to early times. Celadon fragments from the Chinese Southern dynasties have been excavated on the site, by which we can confirm that a southern maritime route[96]

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[94] Song 2013a: 169.

[95] The cult of Bixia Yuanjun bestowing longevity and offspring began during the Song dynasty (960–1279), and the goddess was often worshipped together with Guanyin in the same shrine in later ages.

[96] The sea route, later known as the 'transversal maritime route' (*sadan hangno* 사단항로, 斜斷航路), was the dominant sea route between Song China and the Koryŏ dynasty. The route connected the Hangzhou Bay (Nanjing 南京, Mingzhou 明州, or Hangzhou 杭州) with the Korean Peninsula via the Zhoushan Archipelago and Hŭksan Island (Hŭksan Do 흑산도, 黑山島), from where ships turned northward to reach the Koryŏ capital. However, during the Unified Shilla era, mainly a northern maritime route called 'traversing sea route' (*hoengdan hangno* 횡단항로, 橫斷航路) was used.

between the Jiangnan 江南 region and the Pyŏnsan Peninsula had been open since the Paekche era. Paekche maintained a close relationship with the Southern Liang dynasty (502–557 CE), so beside the exchange of cultural artifacts, the transmission of Buddhism to Korea might also have taken place through this route. As we have seen, the cult of Guanyin supposedly had already existed on Putuo Shan in the Paekche era, since the *Guanyin lingyan ji* 觀世音應驗記 recorded that the 6th century CE Paekche monk, Paljŏng, visited a Guanyin ritual site near present Putuo Shan while studying in the Liang state. The cult of Avalokiteśvara might have been transmitted to Paekche by him and might have influenced the beliefs about Kaeyang Halmi on the western coast. International relations maintained through the southern maritime route continued well into later times: artifacts dated to the Chosŏn dynasty (1392–1897), as well as ceramics originating in Kaya, Japan, and China, have been excavated from the ritual site in Chungmak-tong. This testifies that for a long period of time passengers of the ships sailing out from the Pyŏnsan Peninsula held rituals to the sea before their journey.[97]

Unfortunately, we do not have any textual evidence for the rites conducted at the site and have no way to confirm what kind of deity was worshipped there. All the narratives and beliefs about Kaeyang Halmi are folklore material collected in the modern era, and thus it is hard to draw conclusions about the past based upon them. The Susŏng Shrine itself is thought to have been built first in 1801, but the present building was erected in 1996. Even if it is so, the archaeological site near the shrine suggests that the region had been a place for maritime rituals since ancient times, which is not surprising if we consider the fact that one of the main sea routes connecting China and Korea passed through the area near Pyŏnsan Peninsula.

Conclusion

Helping those who encounter danger on the sea was already one of Avalokiteśvara's functions in the *Lotus Sūtra*. Moreover, the *bodhisattva*'s abode, Potalaka, was depicted in Buddhist texts as a 'mountain on the sea'. It is no wonder that geographical locations identified as Potalaka are all mountains lying near the sea, where the traces of mountain worship and maritime religion are simultaneously present. The sea was one of the main conduits through which Avalokiteśvara faith spread first from India to China and then from China to Korea, where the traditions of Buddhism merged with beliefs about indigenous sea gods.

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[97] Song 2008b: 300, 317; Lee 1998.

In China, Putuo Shan was located at an international maritime route. Its founding was connected to the sea trade between India, China, Japan, and Silla. This made the 'Guanyin of the Southern Sea' function as a sea deity, a savior of those who are in danger at sea, a role rooted in the teachings of the *Lotus Sūtra*. At the same time, her image was also changed by incorporating indigenous Chinese religious elements.

In Korea, the image of Avalokiteśvara was further enriched by indigenous beliefs. We could find examples for both traditional and reverse syncretism: elements from indigenous beliefs were implanted in the legends about Kwanŭm, and local deities became similar to the *bodhisattva*. There are also overlapping layers of meaning in the motif of the dragon often depicted together with the *bodhisattva*: the image of Dharma-protecting *nāga*s, local sea deities, and King Munmu protecting the state symbolically merged together. Naksan Temple was established by the monk Ŭisang; therefore the founding legend of Naksan shows the strong influence of the Hwaŏm school. Instead of maritime safety, religious practice is emphasised, which aims at entering Potalaka envisioned as a Pure Land on Earth through enlightenment. On the other hand, the indigenous sea goddess of the Pyŏnsan Peninsula, Keyang Halmi, shows the strong influence of the 'Guanyin of the Southern Sea', which can be explained by the maritime exchanges between the western coast of Korea and the area of Putuo Shan in China.

In this paper I mainly examined the legends concerning Naksan Temple on the eastern coast of the Korean Peninsula. It would be meaningful in the future to extend the research to the other three temples on the southern and western coasts that are listed among the four great Kwanŭm *bodhimaṇḍa*s in Korea.[98]

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[98] Besides Hongnyŏn Am at Naksan Sa, the other locations are the Kŭmo San Hyangil Am (Yŏsu City, Cholla-namdo, Tolsan-ŭp, Yullim-ni) together with the Kŭmsan Pori Am (Kyŏngsan-namdo, Namhae-gun, Sangju-myŏn, Sangju-ri) on the Southern coast, and the Nakka San Pomun Sa (Inchŏn City, Kanghwa-gun, Samsan-myŏn. Meŭm-ni) on the Western coast.

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On the Formation of the Public Condemnation of Epoch-making Korean Poet Sŏ Chŏngju – With a Focus on Pro-Japanese Collaboration

Abstract
Sŏ Chŏngju is no doubt one of the most significant poets of 20th century Korean literature. However, his figure is shrouded in controversies originating from his political choices in life. The first of these controversies is his being a 'pro-Japanese collaborator' during the Japanese colonial period. The purpose of this study is to move beyond the accusation of Sŏ Chŏngju being an collaborator to map the settings of the colonial background in which he lived and wrote, while also comparing his situation with that of the famous writer, I Kwangsu. Another goal of the study is to examine the approach to his figure and works in recent times. This is for the sake of gaining a deeper understanding of the important poet, who very often is cast away by the superficial criticism of his being a 'collaborator'.

Keywords: Sŏ Chŏngju, Korean poetry, Korea under Japanese rule, pro-Japanese collaboration, *ch'inilp'a,* I Kwangsu

Sŏ Chŏngju 서정주 徐廷柱 (1915–2000) is no doubt one of the most significant poets of 20th century Korean literature. However, his figure is shrouded in controversies originating from his political choices in life. The first of these controversies is his being a *ch'inilp'a* 친일파 親日派[1], a pro-Japanese collaborator during the Japanese colonial period (1910–1945).

Although more than 70 years have passed since Korea was liberated from Japanese colonial rule, cooperation with the Japanese during the colonial period is still a topical issue. Following Kim P'ongu, 'No matter what problem arises in Korean society, it is never unrelated to the question of collaboration'.[2] The reason

[1] Literally means 'a group or faction intimate with Japan'. Kwŏn 2015: 20.
[2] Quoted in De Ceuster 2002: 207.

for this may be that pro-Japanese collaboration in the past, a painful and shameful issue for the Korean people, has not been officially processed to this day.[3]

After the liberation in 1945, 'collaborative' literary works were banned and excluded from the literary canon. Instead of processing colonial events, it was typical to ignore the problem for decades to come.[4] Thus, the processing and documentation of the colonial past did not take place, resulting in unresolved misunderstandings and incomplete knowledge of the past. The main victims of this tendency are numerous important authors and literary works.

The study moves beyond the accusation of Sŏ Chŏngju being a *ch'inilp'a* to map the settings of the colonial background in which he lived and wrote, while also comparing his situation with that of the famous writer I Kwangsu 이광수 李光洙 (1892–1950). Furthermore, the study examines what people think of Sŏ Chŏngju and his works in recent times. The present paper aims to provide a deeper understanding of an important poet, one who very often is cast away by superficial criticism by those lacking deep knowledge about the colonial period during which he was a collaborator. The purpose of the present study is to provide a background analysis of colonial Korea and to examine the two writers from others' perspectives using available sources on the period. This analysis lays the foundation for future examinations of the works of Sŏ Chŏngju and his contemporaries both during the Japanese occupation and after liberation, as well as the analysis of periodicals and newspaper articles.

The colonial period and Korean literature

Western influence reached Korea in the late 19th century, and it brought about a profound social and political transformation. On the one hand, the strictly Confucian Chosŏn dynasty (1392–1897) was in power, but alongside it, pro-modernisation movements tried to introduce modern institutions and a modern social structure. The incompatibility of these two perspectives resulted in a difficult and confusing transition period, and early modernisation efforts saw strong resistance in some strata of Korean society that adhered to traditional values. An even bigger problem, however, was the external influences that threatened the country's autonomy, which ended in 1910 with the Japanese annexation.

The first literary translations into Korean appeared in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, consisting largely of works from English, Russian, French, German, and Italian literature, many of which were based on Japanese translations

[3] Treat 2012: 81.
[4] Kwŏn 2015: 196.

of the original works.[5] Korean writers and poets began to acquaint themselves with foreign works and literary styles and sought to apply them in their works. In society, Western ideas became dominant, and in literature, Western styles and genres became equally as influential.

Due to the Japanese annexation in 1910, the path of development of Korean literature faced obstacles until the liberation in 1945. Japanese colonial rule also affected the Korean way of life and thinking, and Korean authors had to face the disintegration of the traditional world.[6] At the same time, however, Japan was the link between the colony and the West (i.e., Japan represented modernisation). Innovations came through Japan, and Western ideas all came to Korea through a Japanese filter. Young Koreans travelled to Japan to study, where they became acquainted with modern sciences under Japanese professors at universities.

Korean students studying in Tokyo were also influenced by European literature and the new Japanese literature; in 1919 the journal *Ch'angjo* 창조 創造 *(Creation)* was published to promote national awareness and the development of Korean new literature.[7]

On 1 March 1919, in the form of peaceful mass demonstrations, a wave of protests against the Japanese swept across the country, which was the biggest uprising during the 35 years of colonial rule. The protests were mainly organised by leaders from the two biggest religions of the country at that time: Christianity and Ch'ŏndogyo 천도교 天道教.[8] The Korean Declaration of Independence was written by poet Ch'oe Namsŏn 최남선 崔南善 (1890–1957), who is said to have been the author of the first modern poem. Notwithstanding his important role in the independence movement, he is also one of the famous pro-Japanese collaborators of the Korean literary scene; he became involved with the Japanese in the early 1940s and as a consequence was put into prison after the liberation.[9] It seems relevant to mention another important poet of the time, Han Yongun 한용운 韓龍雲 (1879–1944), who was one of the 33 to sign the Declaration of Independence and who remained anti-Japanese throughout his life. He heavily condemned both Ch'oe Namsŏn and I Kwangsu after their conversions to pro-Japanism.

The March 1st Movement was violently suppressed by the colonial government; however, it came as a shock to the Japanese and drew attention to the need for change in the government's policies towards the colonial state.

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[5] Hyun 2004: 21.

[6] Kim 1970: 12.

[7] Lee 1965: 103.

[8] Ch'ŏndogyo is a Korean religion originating from the early 19th century. The name means 'religion of the Heavenly Way'. It incorporates elements of other Korean religions and philosophies, like Shamanism, Buddhism, and Daoism.

[9] Osváth 2016: 171.

Subsequently, from 1919 started the era of cultural policy. The new colonial administration seemingly reduced the repression and offered more freedom in many areas. During this period the heavy ban on press, newspaper publishing, and the formation of organisations was lifted, which enabled progress in Korean literature and media.[10]

After the March 1st Movement and during the era of cultural policy, a change of attitude can be noticed among Korean intellectuals; many began looking for a cultural path to nationalist goals, such as 'national strengthening', rather than demanding liberation.[11]

In literature, the 1920s were a brief period of free experimentation; writers and poets familiarised themselves with important Western and Japanese literary works and started experimenting with new literary trends. Leaving their own literary traditions, unable to create new forms and rules, writers and poets often tried to find rules to govern their otherwise turbid writing experiences in old European styles. Literature was permeated by a sense of decline caused by the loss of hope following the failure of the Korean independence movement.[12] Nayŏng Aimee Kwŏn explains the Korean experience of modernity in her book, *Intimate Empire*:

> The pained writings of Im Hwa and other colonized authors reveal that the condition of dislocation that is arguably universal to modernity was further exacerbated in the non-West by the urgent sense that modernity signified a series of standards that had to be imported from elsewhere. The brutal and ironic consequence of chasing after these imported standards was a perception in the colony that the past – and even the self – had to be discarded. In the case of Korea, this well-understood colonial predicament was hopelessly complicated by its incorporation into the Japanese empire. On the one hand, Korea shared status with its Japanese colonizers vis-à-vis Western imperialism, but on the other it had to endure the predicament of being doubly subjected, by both Japanese and Western imperialisms. Whether they are opposing or agreeing, what all these various voices have in common is their articulation of a sense of lack and belatedness that is (self-) imposed on the basis of histories of development conceived elsewhere. And all these writers tried to overcome this diagnosis of the inferior state of Korean literature and culture, either by pointing to the dynamic history of Korean culture to show that there was no lack, or by urging on a transformation of the present situation in order to meet the standards set by the West and followed efficiently by Japan.[13]

[10] Shin 2018: 115.
[11] Brother Anthony of Taizé 2005: 5.
[12] Lee 1965: 103.
[13] Kwŏn 2015: 40.

In addition, the so-called proletarian literature intensified in the late 1920s, which produced works on political subjects, but the publication of anti-Japanese writings generally entailed imprisonment. In 1925, the Korea Artista Proleta Federation (KAPF) was formed by proletarian writers, and it became one of the leading literary movements of its time, until it was finally dissolved by the government in 1935.[14]

In the 1930s, especially as a result of the incident in Manchuria in 1931, a darker phase of colonial rule took place, characterised by the strict assimilation and mobilisation of the colony to facilitate the expansion of the Japanese Empire. During this period, the use of the Korean language was gradually banned, and the emphasis was instead on the dissemination and teaching of the Japanese language. Meanwhile, a generation of Korean intellectuals grew up who were born in the colonial period, studied in Japanese schools, were familiar with the Japanese language, and also pursued higher education in Japan. This generation learnt about Western literature in the Japanese language, and they learnt about literary language and expressions in Japanese. For them Japan was the mediator of the West and modernity.[15] Over the years, more and more of them started writing in Japanese, penned works praising the colonial rule, or collaborated with Japan in other forms. However, this could be taken as their will to create, to publish, and to share opinions, for which, due to strict colonial laws, there was no other framework at that time but 'pro-Japanese collaboration'.

In 1937, Japan occupied China, culminating in a war situation that by 1940 was affecting all areas of colonial life. Men were mobilised as soldiers and women mainly as factory workers. Literary figures were used to spread and popularise war propaganda. Japanese propaganda actively mobilised works of art and literature and their creators in light of the changing political trends in the empire. During this period, the desire for modern Korean literature coincided with the increasingly strict censorship of the Korean language and the growing war demands of the empire.

In the last few years before the liberation, Japanese censorship intensified, and with the repression of the use of Korean language, the space for Korean-language creation gradually disappeared. Major journals were banned and Korean-language literary life ceased for the time being.[16]

After the liberation, the new Korean government claimed that for most Koreans their employment by the Japanese authorities was not out of ideological conviction but for the sake of livelihood. Thus, exploring the issue of Japanese collaboration became the task of historians, who, however, at that time were

[14] Shin 2018: 181.
[15] Kwŏn 2015: 27.
[16] Kwŏn 2015: 17–18.

not able to begin researching this highly sensitive topic due to the unfavourable political situation in the decades after liberation. Especially after the Korean War (1950–1953), for the purpose of national reconstruction, the topic of collaboration became a taboo, and Korean history could only be dealt with within the framework of a narrative devised and disseminated by the state, the basic idea of which was national cohesion and unity.[17]

Modernization and Assimilation

In order to gain a deep understanding of the colonial period, it is important to examine the everyday life of Koreans living in that period and the influences that may have affected their thoughts and decisions. It is fair to say that this period is perceived and evaluated completely differently by today's historians and writers, who have not personally experienced colonial life, than it was by the colonial Koreans, who had lived in it. It is not uncommon for later discussions on the topic to attach the title *ch'inilp'a* to every Korean who did not actively rebel against colonial rule but instead lived their life abiding by the rules of the colonial government and taking advantage of the new opportunities presented by the period.

As already mentioned, for many Koreans, especially the intellectuals, Japan represented modernity, development, and the gateway to the West, a perception that played a significant role in their attitude towards the colonial situation. Nor should it be forgotten that long before the annexation, since the early Meiji era (1868–1912), Japan had played an important role in spreading modernity and Western influences to Korea in the field of art. Many Korean artists travelled to Japan to study and learn about new trends. Therefore, Japanese–Korean collaboration between intellectuals can be traced back to the pre-colonial period.

Modernity thus reached Korea through Japan in several ways. However, colonial measures were also present in all areas of daily life: students learned about modern Western sciences in Japanese language; the radio, a novelty of modern times, broadcasted programs to promote Japanese language and culture; and Japanese developments provided many new opportunities for every caste and gender to finally break out of the strict and outdated caste system and female–male roles upheld by the Chosŏn dynasty. Through these steps, the

[17] De Ceuster 2001: 214.

colonial power spent years on trying to shape the colony into its own image[18] and to strengthen the idea of a common past.[19]

Furthermore, through its expansion into Manchuria and China, the Japanese Empire seemed strong and unstoppable, a true Asian superpower. Although Koreans' hopes for sovereignty were crushed in the 1920s, many believed that by Korea being part of such a strong empire, after the Japanese victory, its support during the war might lead to better colonial life.

As mentioned previously, colonial measures became increasingly strict in the 1930s, resulting in imprisonment for writers and poets who tried to publish writings criticising the colonial rule. If the writers summoned to trial promised to 'convert', they received a lighter sentence, but it is difficult to discern to what degree this promised conversion took place.[20] Furthermore, under increasing pressure, even formerly anti-Japanese, left-wing writers began to speak out in support of Japanese warfare.[21]

It is also interesting to note that the Korean mindset was largely shaped by Confucianism in the centuries before the Japanese occupation, which created a strong sense of duty and responsibility towards the supreme power, a sense of duty that never questions or defies its leaders. Because of this, Confucianism may have also contributed significantly to the general acceptance of various colonial restrictions.[22]

These points are important to be highlighted, as they provide background knowledge of the colonial situation and perhaps help to understand and digest why and how so many literary figures had become seemingly or honestly 'Japanese collaborators'.

Comparison with I Kwangsu

Before studying Sŏ Chŏngju's life in the light of colonial influences, it is worth examining the famous writer I Kwangsu in terms of Japanese collaboration. I Kwangsu was born in the late 19th century in an independent Korea; therefore he experienced both the pre-colonial times and the colonial rule. He wrote several 'collaborationist' works, for which he was heavily criticised after the

[18] One of the most often used slogans during the Japanese colonization of Korea was *Naisen ittai* 内鮮一体, which means 'Japan and Korea as one body'. However, this did not mean equality for the colony.

[19] The same ancestry theory was also a popular idea of Japan, which they used to justify the colonisation.

[20] Kwŏn 1998: 324.

[21] Pak 2009: 865.

[22] Kyu 1992: 140–141.

liberation, but in spite of his 'shameful past' he is still first and foremost referred to as an important Korean writer who created the modern Korean novel. However, Sŏ Chŏngju seems to be to this day a 'Japanese-collaborationist traitor' in the public consciousness rather than an epoch-making figure of modern Korean poetry. What might be the root of this difference in the public sentiment towards these two important literary figures?

In his study,[23] John W. Treat tries to trace back I Kwangsu's thinking and reasoning that may have led to his collaboration. Treat calls I Kwangsu a 'pro-Japanese nationalist', which may seem contradictory at first, but there is good reason for using this expression. I Kwangsu was a committed supporter of the Korean Enlightenment through modernisation, which seemed achievable through cooperation with the Japanese. However, this idea of his became more and more extreme; by resembling the Japanese, over time, becoming completely Japanese was the way towards modernisation in his opinion.

After the defeat of the March 1st Movement, Korean independence seemed utterly unattainable. In 1924, I Kwangsu stated in the newspaper *Tonga Ilbo* 동아 일보 東亞 日報 that since Japanese colonial rule could not be broken by military means, adaptation and assimilation over time was the inevitable outcome.

Furthermore, I Kwangsu's so-called autobiography, *My Confession*,[24] reveals the writer's certainty that there was no future for Korea except colonial existence and complete assimilation over time, as Japan was too strong for Korea to have a chance of liberation. However, he thought that if Korea cooperated, maybe after Japanese victory in World War II, the situation of the colony could improve, and Korea would become a truly equal part of Japan. Alternatively, he thought, if Japan loses the war, Korea will be liberated anyway, so there seemed to be no setbacks to the collaboration, only advantages. The words of philosopher Shelly Kagan illustrate the complexity of the situation of I Kwangsu and perhaps of other collaborators as well.

> But what, then, should we say, if someone does an act that looks like it will lead to the best results overall — all the best available evidence supports this belief — but in fact it leads to bad results overall? Did they do the right act, or didn't they?[25]

I Kwangsu, thinking about the expected outcome, chose the path that promised more results. In other words he concluded that collaboration, regardless of the course of the war, would do more 'good' for Korea than would no collaboration.[26]

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[23] Treat 2012: 92.
[24] Korean title: *Naŭi Kobaek* 나의 고백.
[25] Kagan 1998: 64.
[26] Treat 2021: 95.

I Kwangsu's 'treachery' caused great outrage and frustration among his readers after the liberation. He was a prominent figure in Korean literature and cultural life, appearing in the public consciousness as one of the leading figures of the Korean enlightenment. However, he became an ardent supporter of the Japanese empire and reinforced total assimilation. After the liberation, people expected a public apology from the collaborators and believed that there will be some form of calling them to account for their 'sins'. However, since there was, in fact, collaboration with the Japanese at all levels of society, the new post-liberation leadership was also not without past collaborators, so instead of confronting the topic, for a long time the typical attitude was to ignore the problem.

In his autobiography, which was first published in 1948, I Kwangsu also shared his thoughts on pro-Japanese collaboration.

> If we try to distinguish those who collaborated from those who did not during the forty years of colonial rule, and among those who cooperated differentiate those who truly collaborated from those who could not, what would the result be? Paying taxes for the Japanese, registering one's family, obeying the law, hoisting the Japanese flag, reciting the narrative of the Japanese empire's subjects, visiting shinto shrines, paying the contribution of national defense and sending children to government and public schools are all cooperation with Japan. The reason is that those who did not cooperate either died or went to prison. If someone did not cooperate at all during the forty years of colonial rule, they must have lived abroad, so is it possible to continue the country with only those people?[27]

Not abiding by the colonial rules entails almost certainly prison or death, but abiding by the oppressor's rules is cooperation. The instances that I Kwangsu highlighted are small parts of everyday life for the colonial subject; however, when looking back after the liberation, it is possible to conceive it as a form of collaboration. So the questions arise, who is considered a 'resistant' and who a 'collaborator'? Based on what does one receive one label or the other?

Nevertheless, no matter how much I Kwangsu's pro-Japanese work is condemned, he is still regarded today as a prominent figure in modern Korean literature. Then what about Sŏ Chŏngju, who was undoubtably one of the most prominent poets in 20th century Korean literature, but is still much criticised for his political writings, his pro-Japanese poems written under Japanese colonial rule, and his later poems glorifying the dictatorial leadership under the regime of Pak Chŏnghŭi and Chŏn Tuhwan?[28]

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[27] I 1972: 284.

[28] McCann 2004: 8.

The life and poetry of Sŏ Chŏngju with a focus on the colonial era

Sŏ Chŏngju (also known by the pseudonym Midang 미당 未堂) was born on 18 May 1915 in North Chŏlla Province, during the fifth year of the colonial rule.

He graduated from Chul'po Primary School in 1925 and then continued his studies at Chungang High School in 1929, where he was taught in a heavily anti-Japanese atmosphere.[29] The young Sŏ Chŏngju was arrested in 1930 in connection with the student uprising in Kwangju, and despite being released due to the suspension of the charge, he was kicked out of school. In 1931, he enrolled in Koch'ang High School, which although being a Japanese-founded school, also operated under Korean direction.[30] However, he soon left school and joined a Buddhist monastery under the guidance of Buddhist master Pak Hanyŏng박한영 朴漢永 (1870–1948).[31] In 1935, on the recommendation of Pak Hanyŏng, he was admitted to the Central Buddhist University, which was the predecessor of today's Tongguk University, but he left a year later.

In 1936, his poem *The Wall*[32] won an award at the Tonga Ilbo Annual Spring Literary Competition. In the same year, together with other poets, he became the editor of the literary magazine *Poets' Village*[33]. He married in 1938 and then lived in Manchuria for a time in the early 1940s, which by then was also a Japanese puppet state.[34]

His early poetry before 1945 was characterised as *l'art pour l'art,* in other words his poetry did not reflect the current political situation. These early works are characterised by intense sensuality and the influence of Western styles, especially the influence of Baudelaire. In this regard, it is important to point out again that for Korea, Japan was at the time the link with the West; foreign styles and works all reached the Koreans through Japan and Japanese translations. This aspect cannot be overlooked in the discussion of allegedly 'Japanese collaborator' Korean literary figures.

Sŏ Chŏngju's first collection of poems, *Hwasajip* 화사집 花蛇集, published in 1941, is an epoch-making collection, a new voice in Korean poetry whose poems are filled with intense vitality uncharacteristic of earlier Korean works.

In the last years of the colonial period, when assimilation policies and mobilisation for war purposes were particularly strict, writers and poets were also mobilised for propaganda purposes. At that time, between 1942 and 1944, Sŏ

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[29] Kim *(Korea Encyclopedia) – online.*
[30] Sŏ *(Korea Encyclopedia) – online.*
[31] Kim *(Korea Encyclopedia) – online.*
[32] Korean title: pyŏk벽
[33] Korean name: Shiinburak 시인부락 詩人部落
[34] Osváth 2016: 199–200.

Chŏngju created his pro-Japanese works, including the short story *Postman Ch'oe's Military Longing*[35] in 1943 and the poem *The Song of Corporal Matsui*[36] in 1944. Both works can be interpreted as support for Japanese warfare and the mobilisation of Koreans.[37]

In *Postman Ch'oe's Military Longing,* three generations appear: the protagonist Ch'oe (i.e., the titular postman), his elderly mother, and his son, who all relate to the colonial situation in a different way. Ch'oe, in an almost comical way, tries to follow the instructions needed to 'become Japanese', but of course these habits do not come naturally to him. For the son who was born during the colonial period, these things are completely natural, and he corrects his father's clumsy Japanese pronunciation and actions. Moreover, Ch'oe's mother represents the older generation who had experienced the pre-colonial times and have strong resistance to adopting the newly imported Japanese customs. At the end of the narrative, Ch'oe's mother is only willing to participate in a Japanese greeting so as not to embarrass her son in front of others. The narrative is thus more of a description of the confusing situation at the time than a praise of the Japanese Empire.

The poem *The Song of Corporal Matsui* is based on a true story about a young Korean soldier who fought and died in the Japanese army as a kamikaze pilot. After his death, he was promoted by the Japanese government, celebrated as a hero, and set as an example for the Koreans. Several Korean writers and poets wrote praise poems to give him homage, including I Kwangsu and Sŏ Chŏngju.[38]

After Korea was liberated from Japanese colonial rule, Sŏ Chŏngju with two fellow writers, Pak Mogwŏl 박목월 朴木月 (1916–1978) and Kim Tongni 김동리 金東里 (1913–1995), formed the Chosŏn Young Literary Association in 1946. He also received the position of first art director of the Ministry of Education. In 1949, he founded the Association of Korean Writers.[39]

In 1950, when the Korean War broke out, Sŏ Chŏngju, along with fellow poets, went to the front line to edit newspapers, give poetry readings, and deliver

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[35] Korean title*: Ch'oe Ch'ebuŭi Kunsok Chimang*최 체부의 군속 지망.

[36] Korean title: Songjŏng Ojang Songga송정 오장 송가.

[37] However, an interesting aspect that Pak Yuha highlights in his study of *ch'inil* literature is that these works are significant in the sense that they are perhaps the only sources of the colonial everyday life of Koreans and they highlight the chaos surrounding the identity of colonial Koreans. The protagonist of the *Postman Ch'oe's Military Longing* short story illustrates how Koreans experienced assimilation in everyday life and how different generations perceived the Japanese and the notion of 'becoming Japanese'. https://apjjf.org/-Park-Yuha/2923/article.html (last accessed: 2022. 01. 27.)

[38] Kang 2019.

[39] Kim (*Korea Encyclopedia) – online.*

speeches. As a result of the horrors seen in war, he developed symptoms of schizophrenia and was treated in a sanatorium for a time.[40]

He was appointed as a life member of the Korean Arts in 1954 and served as chairman of the Korean Literary Association from 1977 to 1979.

After the liberation from Japanese colonial rule, he turned to the traditions of old Korean poetry in his works, trying to combine elements of shamanism and Buddhism with Western styles. In his collection of poems *Sillach'o* (신라초 新羅抄 *Silla Notes*), for example, by using the stories of the ancient Korean state of Silla,[41] he tries to discover the power needed to rebuild Korea through the ideas and values of the Silla era.[42]

He discovered many later significant poets, such as Ko Un 고은 高銀 (1933–) and Pak Chaesam 박재삼 朴在森 (1933–1997). He also wrote several major aesthetic studies in his later years, and his volumes of poetry have been published in many foreign countries. He passed away on 24 December 2000 at the age of 85.

Sŏ Chŏngju was born, raised, and educated during the colonial period. Therefore his mindset developed under Japanese colonial rule and under the influence of colonial policies, such as propaganda and gradual assimilation. He also encountered modernisation through a Japanese filter; he was a pioneering figure in modern Korean poetry who was greatly influenced by Western literature, but which he may have encountered either in a Japanese translation or in a Korean translation of a Japanese translation.

Is his collaboration something that should be regarded differently than that of a Korean labourer working at a colonial Japanese-owned factory? Certainly, Sŏ was a literary figure; therefore his involvement was much easily seen and remembered. However, the two might be more similar than it seems at first glance, as both are merely individuals trying to stay alive under strict colonial rule.

It is possible that by the time he wrote his 'collaborative' works, ideas similar to those of I Kwangsu had come to him as well. It is also possible that he really supported the Japanese war and the mobilisation of the Koreans for war purposes, because he hoped that if Korea cooperated, after the victory of Japan, perhaps his country would be in a better situation. Alternatively, maybe in the last years of the colonial period, he had to cooperate with propaganda because of

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[40] Kim *(Korea Encyclopedia) – online.*

[41] Silla was one of the three ancient kingdoms of Korea and the one that unified the peninsula in 668 CE under the Unified Silla dynasty. This era is famous as the heyday of Buddhism and Buddhist arts and also as the era of *Hwarang*, who were knights carefully selected and trained from the nobility and who, even to this day, represent virtue and purity.

[42] Brother Anthony of Taizé 2015: 9.

strict regulations, otherwise he would not have had the opportunity to publish. However, unlike I Kwangsu, who died in 1950,[43] Sŏ Chŏngju lived a long life after the liberation. As such, he was alive to be judged, when after a long period of silence it was finally possible to discuss *ch'inil* 친일 literature in Korea.

A comprehensive examination of Sŏ Chŏngju's poetry reveals that he was a prolific poet and that the vast majority of his works, with the exception of some from the last few years of the colonial period, fostered the development of modern Korean literature and typically worked on Korean themes. Is it fair then to judge him on the basis of a few years that make up a very small percentage of his whole oeuvre?

The opinion on Sŏ Chŏngju in the 21st century

Poet I Sŭngha 이승하 talks in detail about the fall of Sŏ Chŏngju in his provocative piece *Lift Sŏ Chŏngju out of his grave and posthumously execute him.*[44] I Sŭngha was a disciple of Sŏ Chŏngju in his youth and personally saw the fall of his master followed by his gradual disappearance from the canon of Korean literature.

He stresses that although a pro-Japanese writers' association was formed in the last years of the colonial period, which included prominent writers at the time, including I Kwangsu, Kim Ok 김옥, Kim Tonghwan 김동환, and many others, the young and at the time novice poet Sŏ Chŏngju was not part of this association. Nevertheless, from this pro-Japanese literary society, the only traces that remain testify to the Japanese-collaborationist pasts of I Kwangsu and Kim Tonghwan. The works of the others have disappeared, and the poet to become singled out as a collaborator from the colonial period is Sŏ Chŏngju . Although he himself did not try to be in the good graces of the Japanese Empire, like many other collaborative literary figures had, he did leave a significant amount of pro-Japanese work.[45]

The fall of Sŏ Chŏngju and his gradual disappearance from Korean literary circles and canon began in 1985 when newspaper owner and editor I Mun'gu 이문구 published an article on collaborative literary works and works of art, listing, among other things, collaborative writers, poets, and their works. This was the first article to raise the issue of *ch'inil* literature, the avoidance of which was

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[43] North Korean troops invaded Seoul in 1950 and abducted several intellectuals. I Kwangsu was among them and supposedly died in prison in North Korea not long after.

[44] Korean title: Sŏ Chŏngjurŭl mudŏmesŏ kkŏnaeŏ pugwanch'amsihara 서정주를 무덤에서 꺼내어 부관참시하라.

[45] I 2020: 26.

before a hitherto unwritten rule in literary circles. Poems, a short story, and a literature review were also included in the publication. The name of Sŏ Chŏngju appeared not only in the poems section, but also alongside the short story, which had been written by him – the only short story in the volume – despite the fact that in colonial times numerous short stories with strongly pro-Japanese tone were created by many writers. I Sŭngha recalls in his writing the devastation that he felt when he went home with this freshly purchased edition of his teacher's *ch'inil* poems and short story. Moreover, not only Sŏ Chŏngju but also many other prestigious names from the literary sphere of the time were included on this 'list of collaborationists'. He was split; on the one hand, Sŏ Chŏngju was his beloved teacher, but on the other hand, he could not deal with the disappointment of knowing that his master had written pro-Japanese works. Also, the complexity of the situation may have been compounded by the fact that I Sŭngha personally, no matter his thoughts on the situation, probably could not, or at least did not dare, stand up for his master, who was then harshly criticised for his Japanese-collaborationist activities during the colonial period. In the end, I Sŭngha recalls never meeting Sŏ Chŏngju again, despite thinking about visiting him several times, only attending his funeral.

Although I Mun'gu's publication caused the fall of Sŏ Chŏngju, it was the poet Ko Un who played a major role in tarnishing Sŏ Chŏngju's name after his death. Although Ko Un was also once a follower and beloved disciple of Sŏ Chŏngju, after Sŏ's death Ko made a particularly negative statement about him, calling him a selfish and stubborn man. Ko Un also publicly distanced himself from Sŏ after his fall, which suggests that Sŏ may have actually received a great deal of criticism in those years.[46]

However, this distancing was probably triggered not only by Sŏ's *ch'inil* works, but also by his later unfortunate political decisions,[47] which together gave much ground for condemnation. Indeed, during Sŏ Chŏngju's long life, from 1915 to 2000, Korea went through several turbulent political periods, which most probably divided the public opinion.

Because of his political decisions, he is widely regarded in Korean public thought as a 'bad man' who 'should not be forgiven'. These negative feelings against him have become so strong that they are still present today; in the last

[46] Ko Un was also considered the most important contemporary Korean poet, nominated for the Nobel Prize in Literature numerous times, until his fall from grace in 2018 when several women accused him of sexual harassment. As a result, his poems are being removed from school textbooks. Ironically, he is in the same position now as Sŏ Chŏngju was after the publication of the article on pro-Japanese literary works.

[47] His post-liberation works portrayed the dictatorial leadership under the regime of Pak Chŏnghŭi and Chŏn Tuhwan in a positive light.

10 years, studies and writings on the Internet about him continue to carry this tone.[48]

Furthermore, poet I Sŭngha claims that today's high school and university students often do not know anything about Sŏ Chŏngju . As he is not part of the school's curriculum, they also do not know his works. Moreover, even if his name sounds familiar, the reaction of the students is indignation over his 'Japanese collaborator' past, even though they cannot recall any example of his *ch'inil* works.[49]

It seems, however, that literary circles later started trying to put emphasis on Sŏ Chŏngju's literary importance. Poet Kim Sŏkchun's article about Sŏ Chŏngju *The pharmacon of the name Sŏ Chŏngju*[50] was published in 2010. The title aptly expresses the duality that surrounds the figure of Sŏ Chŏngju in Korean literature; although it is undeniable that he is an outstanding poet, an epoch-making figure in modern Korean literature, it seems impossible to abstract this from the political decisions he made during his lifetime. In his study, Kim writes that although there is an idealistic approach according to which a poem is a mirror of the soul, and therefore the reader would expect the poet to set an example with his life, after examining many famous Western literary figures, it shows that this is not the case. Writers and poets are also mortal beings who, although they create important works, do not necessarily live a morally acceptable life.[51] Therefore, Kim also encourages the Korean literary world to consider Sŏ Chŏngju's works separately from the poet's life. In other words, even though Sŏ Chŏngju's actions are morally reprehensible, his works should not be blacklisted but rather should be discussed.[52]

In 2019, Poet Pak Yŏnjun made similar arguments in the renowned *Han'guk Ilbo* 한국일보 in an article titled 'Looking again, it is a classic – The poems

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[48] For example, a 2015 blog post emphasises that while he was an outstanding poet, it is important to remember not only his works but also the traitor poet's political views. The writer of the blog post expresses their satisfaction that the first name that comes to mind about *ch'inil* literature in Korea is now Sŏ Chŏngju and that his works have been gradually disappearing from textbooks since the 1990s. (Po 2015.)

[49] I 2020: 25–26.

[50] Korean title: *Sŏ Chŏngjuranŭn irŭmŭi p'arŭmak'on* 서정주라는 이름의 파르마콘.

[51] Although the scientific approach in the West emphasises the importance of separating the text and the author when analysing literary works, by looking through Korean studies on literature it seems like this is not necessarily the generally accepted view in Korea. The figure and feelings of the author tend to appear regularly during analyses. According to Kim's article, for many the work reflects the author's soul, so it should represent the author's feelings and principles. If this really is a generally accepted approach in Korea, that explains why it is so hard to accept the decisions made by the poet in his personal life.

[52] Kim 2010: 236–238.

are innocent… read them while hating Sŏ Chŏngju'.[53] Pak Yŏnjun is thus of the view that, although the poet is worthy of condemnation, his poems are nonetheless outstanding and classics of Korean poetry.[54]

It can be seen, then, that the judgment of literary circles has become more accepting and open over the years, in the sense that although Sŏ Chŏngju is morally condemned, contemporaries try to focus on his literary value instead.

The purpose of the present paper was to provide a historical overview of the situation of literary figures during the colonial period in order to examine the background of accusation of Sŏ Chŏngju being a *ch'inilp'a*, since oftentimes this accusation is applied without a careful evaluation of the period to which it is connected.

In the post-liberation period of Korea, colonialism, and within that, collaboration became taboo subjects for the sake of nation-building. The new Korean leadership put together a beautified, selective narrative of Korean history that radiates strong national unity, and for decades, history could only be discussed within this framework. Thus, the past was never processed and forgiven. The 'official national history' by the new Korean leadership also divided the colonial period into resistance and collaborators, although in reality it is not advisable to simplify an extremely complex situation to such an extent. Thus, a group of 'Japanese collaborators' were singled out from the colonial period as traitors to the nation, but the concept of collaboration was never clarified. As such, many individuals fell into this category regardless of what they actually did or the degree to which they 'collaborated'. Furthermore, this narrative has created a strong contrast between nationalists and collaborators, when in fact, no matter how contradictory they may seem at first, these two concepts cannot be separated so sharply, for which I Kwangsu is a good example. The figure of the collaborator thus became an extremely easy-to-use scapegoat to hate and blame for the loss of independence, which on the one hand forges the people together and on the other hand allows the majority of the population to let go of their own responsibility and possible guilt for what happened.[55]

Sŏ Chŏngju made poor, or at least publicly condemnable, political decisions several times during his long life. The first were the works of 'Japanese collaboration' written in the last years of the colonial period and then, in the years after liberation, the works written in support of various political leaders. As a result, he is seen as a *ch'inilp'a*, a traitor who does not deserve forgiveness. These

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[53] Korean title: *[Tasi ponda, kojŏn] Sinŭn chalmosi ŏpta… Sŏ Chŏngjurŭl miwŏhamyŏnsŏ ikcha* [다시 본다, 고전] 시는 잘못이 없다… 서정주를 미워하면서 읽자.

[54] Pak 2019.

[55] De Ceuster 2001: 215–217.

negative conceptions exist to this day, despite the fact that almost 80 years have passed since the liberation of Korea and 21 years since the poet's death.

However, as several studies and entries have been written on this topic in the last few years, even by contemporary poets, it can be seen that the approach towards his figure is still a topic worth discussing. Furthermore, a current tendency is to condemn the author but consider his works to be important and worthy of being included in the Korean literary canon.

In conclusion, Sŏ Chŏngju should not be excluded from Korean literary history by labelling him a 'collaborator'. Instead, the right way to deal with the controversies of his figure would be to remember both his literary importance and his actions worthy of condemnation. After all, both are part of Sŏ Chŏngju, just as they are both part of the history of Korean literature. Instead of ignoring and hiding the shameful, dark parts of history, it is time to process and to forgive in order to move forward and to gain a complete and clear picture of the events and figures that have shaped Korean literature.

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