Emergence and Interpretation of Han in Korean Society: A Sociohistorical Perspective

by

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Abstract

Han is a complex cultural concept that insinuates the feelings of sadness, anger, resentment, grief, sorrow, hopelessness and hope. While plenty of historical literature examining the origins of *han* exists in Western scholarship, there is a lack of sociological exanimation on *han.*. This study examines *han* from a socio-historical perspective, analyzing an under explored period of the Joseon Dynasty within *han* research, while also exploring contemporary interpretation of *han* in Korean society through qualitative methods. It will show the particular salience of the Neo-Confucian order of the Joseon Dynasty in sowing the emotional nuances of *han* into Korean society through systematically hierarchical and dogmatic domination. This study will also show the role that the public imagination of their collective or personal "past" has in contemporary Korean interpretation of *han,* and explain how it could be framed as a precondition for social movements. While *han* was often represented as a bygone means of the past, this study shows a new understanding of *han* as a lingering force of past tragedy in Korean people and society, ready to manifest into movements, emotional responses and personal development.

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Glossary

Book of Rites: One of the Five Classics of Confucianism written during the warring states period of China. Collection of various social ideas and rituals that reinforce Confucian social conducts.

CDA: Cultural Domain Analysis. A method of research that aims to analyze how a cultural group organizes and perceives their cultural ideas.

Chongming: “Vulgar commoners." The lowest caste group of classes in Joseon social hierarchy. Included classes like the *Nobi* and other outcast groups.

Changing: A group of classes that made up the middle and the upper middle class of Joseon social hierarchy. Made up of skilled workers, educated non-yangban scholars and bureaucrats

Donghai: A philosophy and a social movement based on “Eastern teachings,” lead by Confucian scholars that wanted to reform Korean society away from Western ideas, with their own reformed ideas around Confucianism during the late 19th century. The movement led to a rise of peasant rebellion across the country, where the promises of a new and improved society under a “rebranded” Confucian ideology attracted many commoners and desperate farmers.

Essentialists: Side of the *han* discourse that argues hat the concept of *han* can be traced back to ancient Korea, thus, it is a Korean “spirit” tied to Korean ethnicity.

Goryeo: The Korean dynasty was established in 918, and ended in 1392 with a coup d’etat lead by Yi Song-gye. Buddhism was its state religion, with its order structuring governance, social life, relations and hierarchy of Goryeo society.

Guensabuilchae: 君(Guen, 군, liege) 師 (Sam 사, teacher) 父 (Bu, 부, father) 一 (Il, 일, one) 體 (Chae, 체, embodied). A Confucian idiom that directly translates to “liege, teacher, father as one

body, meaning that the grace given by lord, teacher and fathers are essentially the same, and thus, they should be treated with similar social respect.

Fengshui: East Asian geomancy that utilizes ideas of natural energies and forces to create harmonious settings.

Han: Ethnocultural Korean concept that encompasses emotional nuances of sorrow, grievance, resentfulness, and hope. Also considered by some to be a Korean "spirit," tied to Korean identity and culture.

Hyangni: Minor country officials and bureaucrats with hereditary occupations. Considered a part of Chungin but sometimes treated as its own group.

Hwabyeong: "Anger Illness." Medically pathologized diagnosis for people suffering from too much *han*.

Joseon: Korean dynasty established by Yi Seong-gye after his coup against the Goryeo that emerged in 1392 and ended in 1897 with the proclamation of the Korean Empire. Joseon lived the longest out of all the Korean states with many Koreans referring to its 500-year history when remembering the Korean "past."

Mencius: Classical Chinese text on Confucian traditions written by Confucian Scholar Mencius

NAVER: Korean search engine and online platform.

Namzonyeobi: 男(Nam,남, men) 尊(Zon, 존, high), 女(Yeo,여, women)卑(bi, 비, low).

Confucian idiom that directly translates to "men high, women low," meaning that men are noble and women are lowly.

Neo-Confucianism: A movement that saw rationalistic rediscovery and revival of Confucian philosophy and social ideas. Became a ruling ideology that structured Joseon Society.

Nobi: Slave/ Serf class of Joseon society, belonging in the Chonmin caste.

Oryun: “Five relationships” A Confucian social tenet that stress the significance of the five fundamental relationships between individuals to maintain harmony: righteousness and justice between rulers and subject (ui), the closeness between parents and their children (chin),

Pansori: A traditional musical entertainment through storytelling that involves a singer and a drummer. Both comedy and drama exist as genre, with contemporary pansori focusing more on dramatic themes.

Post-Modernists: Side of the *han* discourse that argues that the concept of *han* was socially constructed in the 20th century from various social actors, including Japanese imperialist, Korean nationalists and authoritarians.

Saguek: Refers to historical drama, both in its in-person play form and televised form.

Samgang: “Three bonds." A Confucian social tenet that stresses the significance of the three fundamental bonds of society to maintain harmony: father and son (*hyo;* 효; filial piety), the lord and subject (Chung; 충; loyalty), and the husband and wife (yeol; 열; martial faithfulness and patriarchy.

Salpurichum: Traditional Korean dance, usually done as a part of exorcism rituals, but treated more so as a form of traditional dance in Contemporary Korea.

Saudade: A Portuguese social emotion of embodied longing and nostalgia.

Sohak: Not to be confused with Seohak (Western teachings). A Confucian introductory text designed for children to learn important Confucian social tenets, moral conduct and ethics.

Sunneung: Korean Scholastic Ability Test, required to be taken by high school students to enter into post-secondary institutions.

Taegyo: Traditional Korean practices of prenatal education.

Veritable Record of The Joseon Dynasty: A court document that recorded the history of the royal court and the lives of Joseon Kings, from their most private and public movements.

Yangban: The upper caste of Joseon social hierarchy, composed of various class groups, such as military elites, scholar-aristocrats, and high-ranking bureaucrats.

Yangin: A collection of classes and castes that is not Chonmin. Essentially defined as “free people.”

Introduction: The "Hanful" Han

Han is a complex Korean cultural concept encompassing the emotions of sorrow, grievance, resentfulness, and hope, which is also claimed to be inherently tied to the Korean blood. Much of the contemporary literature on *han* is either historical or psychological, and there is little sociological research done on *han*. Specifically, there is a lack of literature explaining how *han* became accepted in Korean society as a national characteristic despite its inauspiciously negative nuance. There also is a lack of literature regarding contemporary expression, understanding and impact of han in everyday life. To fully understand the context of the expression of han, two questions must be answered: how did *han* socio-historically become accepted in Korean society? And how is *han* understood, expressed, and culturally embedded within contemporary everyday life? It is important to highlight how *han* goes beyond emotions—*han* must be examined together, through the lenses of the sociology of emotion, memory and social history, with historical and qualitative methods to capture its multifaceted nuances. Through the investigation of *han*, this research will show the salience of historical experience and memory of the past in evoking emotions, identity and value systems within contemporary society.

Literature review

The Story of Han: The Romantic Essentialists and the Postmodernists

There is a contemporary discourse on the authenticity of *han*, broadly separated into two camps: scholars who generally argue that *han* is a traditional essence of Korean identity, to whom this paper will refer as "essentialists," and the post-modernists—as their views are tied with the various post-modern and post-colonial perspectives—who oppose the idea that *han* was a historically authentic Korean essence, but argue rather that it is a concept appropriated through

specific actors of Japanese Imperialism and 20th-century Korean nationalism (Pfizer, 2020). While it would be tempting to conclude that the essentialists are naive in their romantic-nationalist claims of *han,* post-modernists are equally naive; post-modern perspectives in *han* fail to consider the sociohistorical experience of the past before the 20th century to explain the sociocultural acceptance of *han*. Thus, current discourses on *han's* historical and cultural authenticity do not capture the full story of its emergence as a national emotion and spirit.

Proponents of the essentialist view of *han* use historical-cultural studies of past events, and Korean traditional and folk mediums to justify to existence of *han* in past Korean societies. They argue that the nuance of *han* as being sorrowful, sad, resentful and filled with grievance can be seen throughout Korean history and culture—inherently tied to Korean "blood" (Kim, n.d; Kim, 1999, pp. 124-126; Chu, 2008; Han, 2021; Kim, 1995; Lim, 2019). For example, the main historical argument of the essentialists is that Korea has experienced continuous oppression from foreign powers throughout most of its history, including China, Japan, the United States and the Soviet Union (Kim, n.d; Chu, 2008; Han, 2021). This continuous domination from foreign powers, and historical suffering through invasions and domestic turmoil fuels the essentialist view of *han* as an ethnically bound value system (Kim, n.d; Kim, 1999, pp. 124-126; Chu, 2008; Han, 2021). They also claim that many traditional cultural proverbs, myths, legends, folk stories, and folk songs depict nuances of *han (*Kim, n.d; Lee, 2019*).* Overall, the essentialist framework of *han* offers an understanding of *han* as a national and ethnic spirit—an inherent core "essence" of Koreans.

On the other hand, post-modernists argue against the essentialist notion of *han* as a historically Korean-made phenomenon, but a relatively recent modern one. These scholars argue that *han* is a modern Korean concept, developed to create a sense of national essence under a

new emerging capitalist regime rising from turmoil of the Korean war (Shin.2018; Pilzer, 2016; Kwak, 2024; Lim, 2019). They emphasize the colonial rule of Imperial Japan during its occupation of Korea from 1910 to 1945, and the Japanese imposition of a negative racial social construct of Koreans during their occupation (Kim, 2017; Kang, 2022). They also pay close attention to the rise of ethnonationalism in Korea during the 20th century and frame *han* as a product of the nationalist imagination of Koreans. They insist that the nuance of *han* did not exist in Korean folk culture (Shin, 2018; Shin, 2019; Kang, 2022; Lim, 2019), and argue that the notion that Korea had a particular tragic history of invasions and turmoil was a defeatist attitude adopted from an Imperial Japanese view of Koreans (Kim, 2017; Kang, 2022; Peterson, 2023). To the contrary, they argue that Korea had a relative era of peace, prosperity and order for most of its history (Duncan, 2015; Kang, 2022; Peterson, 2023). That sad, both post-modernists and essentialists acknowledge that *han* plays a meaningful role in the lives of contemporary Koreans.

However, there is a curious gap in the current historical literature that tries to explain *how* the idea of *han* became accepted into Korean society. Since the postmodernists view *han* as a "modern" phenomenon, they do not explore the possibility that the notion of *han* could have been formulated through experiences other than nationalism and colonialism—putting aside the analysis of past experiences, like from the Joseon period (1392-1897). An exploration of the past beyond the experience of nationalism and colonialism is likely to show that the idea of *han* is not entirely a foreign or manufactured concept, or a romantic-nationalist essence, but an authentic Korean concept that emerged from a unique historical-structural experience. Arguments such as that Koreans were searching for a national character to define themselves during critical moments of authoritarian oppression and democratic struggle (Kim, 2017; Han, 2021; Lim, 2019) or that *han* was imposed upon the populace within the colonial context (Kim, 2017; Kang,

2022) imply that the population was "ready" to accept such ideas as a national character of themselves. In other words, most literature on *han* does not attempt to explain how the Koreans, through historical and sociological processes, had become conditioned to believe in the notion of *han*. This study tries to explore this conditioning of *han*, through the examination of the sociohistorical emergence of *han*, and how it became generally interpreted and accepted as what it is today in Korean culture, identity and ethnic emotions.

Making Sense of *Han*: Emotion, Identity, and Social Memory

The following characteristics must be investigated together to understand *han:* emotion, identity and social memory. These three characteristics are fundamental because *han* is framed within academic and public discourse as feeling-emotion, spirit-identity and social-collective memories (Chu, 2008; Han, 2021; Kim, 2017; Lim, 2019; Shin, 2018). Within sociology, there are various areas of study that could aid our understanding of *han* that relates to the above characteristics: the sociology of emotions, culture, ethnicity, and memory. While research done on *han* in these areas is small, a review of existing literature in the social sciences on *han* and other "ethnic emotions" will show ways to approach *han* through a sociological lens.

The current literature on *han* as an emotion bases its context of expression around fatalistic powerlessness, sorrow and injustice, with religious connections. Kim and Choi's (1995) psychological study using survey methods frames *han* as an "indigenous form of lamentation" expressed through an episode of phases, while Hwang's (2024) cultural-historical study frames it as a sense of collective and symbolic sentiment of the past that reflects Korea expressed through cultural expressions such as salpurichum (Korean traditional dance). Han's (2021) historical-religious study also provides an alternative way to conceptualize *han* as an expression tied to the Minjung theology—a liberation theology that was popularized during Korean democratization

movement of the 80s— which is expressed in the context of liberatory relief from oppression (pp. 8-9). Therefore, the context of expression of *han* seems to mostly arise from both collective and subjective perceptions of powerlessness, sorrow, injustice, and inauspiciousness.

Studies done on national emotions in different ethnocultural contexts also reveal some insights that can help us understand *han* as an emotion. For example, Silva's (2012) linguistic analysis of the Portuguese national emotion *saudade*—with a meaning roughly close to nostalgic longing—argues that national emotions such as *saudade* must be culturally defined and not referred to as a relatively marginal emotion. She argues that *saudade* is a cultural concept that is also seen as a national identity which covers nuances of emotion ranging from sadness to happiness; she claims that *saudade* is an ambivalence of feelings, both "a memory and a feeling; it is both pleasure and pain" (Silva, 2012, p. 209). *Han* is like *saudade:* they are a national emotion and cover a range of emotions, related to social memory and constantly lingering in the lives of the people. Thus, like *saudade*, *han* cannot be referred to from within a group of Anglo emotional terms and should be culturally described by the people who experience it.

Historically, within the sociology of emotion, there were few attempts to approach emotions as emergent historical phenomena; history was treated more as simple contextual material with little role in the creation of emotions (Newton, 1997; Stearns, 1989). The sociology of emotion rose from the 18th-century Scottish enlightenment, from authors such as Adam Smith and Ferguson, and throughout the 19th century through sociologists such as Durkheim, Simmel and Tonnies in their use of emotions as explanatory variables examined through socio-structural relationships (Barbalet, 2001). However, with sociology taking a more rationalist turn at the end of the 19th century, emotion became a less appealing topic within sociology as it was seen as a romantic-nationalist concept of social analysis (Barbalet, 2001). Some research still existed, such

as Norbert Elias' works on understanding emotions through socio-historical lenses, developing what is called today as "historical sociology of emotion," which combines the disciplines of sociology of emotions, history of emotion, historical sociology, Freud's psychoanalysis and the hydraulic theory of emotions (van Krieken, 2022; Newton, 1997). It was not until the 1970s that emotions in sociology were revived through the works of Theodore Kemper, Arlie Hochschild and Norman Denzin. This research takes particular interest in Theodore Kemper's theory of emotions, and its offspring perspective from his writings: structuralist theory of emotion.

Based on the idea that emotions find meaning in the context of social relations and arise within specific social situations, structuralist perspectives stress the need to understand both the social relation and situation of emotion (Bericat, 2015). Kemper's early theories revolved around relational aspects of emotions, focusing particularly on power and status, arguing that actors with power and status in interaction experience different emotions to those with lower status and power. Developing further from his theory, the structural theory of emotions aims to show the salience of social structure in creating conditions for the emergence of emotion in actors and groups, through both micro and macro interactions (Bericat, 2016; Barbalet, 2001). In the context of *han*, the structural theory of emotion is useful as it allows the examination of the historical experience of the past allegedly associated and filled with *han.*

In this vein, it may be helpful to frame the post-modern framework of *han* as an identity as an "invented tradition." The concept of the invented tradition was utilized by Eric Hobsbawm to refer to many traditions that claim to be ancient, but are relatively recent in construction, made by historical agitators, tied specifically to the rise of nationalism and the development of nation-states, and a response to or a direct result of dramatic sociocultural change (Hobsbawm, 2012, pp. 1-2, 7, 13-14). This argument of the "modern" construction tradition fits nicely with the

post-modern explanation of the emergence of *han*—an invented national essence made through historical agitators (Japan, nationalist actors, post-liberation South Korean governments) to promote some form of national solidarity, developed in response to social change (colonial oppression and liberation). However, Hobsbawm also argues that people in each society must see a historical continuity to the proposed tradition—which could also be invented—to transcend itself as a collectively believed national idea (p. 1-2, 7, 14). Where exactly can the Korean people see the historical continuity of *han?* This is a question that post-modern scholars rarely engage with, at the cost of justifying *han* as an entirely 20th-century phenomenon, and a question that my study explores.

Han can also be imagined as an identity through the lens of popular social memory. Paul Connerton claims that ethnic identity could be shaped through social memory, arguing that people's remembrance and knowledge of the past are "conveyed and sustained" by rituals and habitual bodily practices (Connerton, 2009, pp. 1-4). To argue this point, Connerton examines specific experiences of life within historical settings, such as the French aristocratic life, to demonstrate that habitual performances embody social memory (pp. 85-88). This type of historical interrogation of past settings in relation to the lived experience from such settings, and the ways sociocultural and religious domains and structures all influence remembrance of the past can be useful to analyzing the salience of *han* as perceived by Koreans today.

Realizing *Han*: Internalization and Manifestation.

As an identity, the notion of *han* becomes a core characteristic of the Korean personality and life—it internalizes the belief that Koreans are somehow resentful, and sorrowful, with a soul filled with unresolved grievances. These internalized feelings of *han* manifest themselves in various ways, beyond the realm of emotions (Kim and Choi, 1995; Han 2021; Kang, 2002) or

cultural mediums (Hwang, 2024; Kim, 1993; Pilzer, 2020). As Pilzer's chapter on *han* in Korean traditional and indigenous music claims, *han* is often a characteristic that people can detect and perceive within musical mediums (Pilzer, 2020). It can also manifest itself as an illness, called "hwabyeong," with specific procedures of treatments referred to as "*han-puri."* meaning *han* resolving/ appeasing/ liberating/ freeing, and etc (Min, 2009, pp. 15-16). *Han* is also sometimes contextualized as a power that *"*possesses*"* an individual, which has invited many religions and new religious movements to tap into the market of resolving han through spirituality and rituals (Lee, 1999, pp. 59-74). There also is an association between *han* and women, rather that it be that women tend to feel more *han*, or are connected to historical, traditional and cultural practices and experiences of *hanful* expressions and memory (Hwang, 2024; Kim, 2022; Lee, 2019). Even within immigrant communities, *han* is seen as an ethnic trait that cannot be erased, which forever lingers within the Korean conscience, taught through generational and cultural socialization (Chu, 2008; Kim, 1993).

Therefore, the current literature on *han* in history and in the social sciences reveals insightful scholarly perspectives on *han,* while also revealing many gaps in the literature that require further inquiry. The lack of explanations as to how Korean society has become conditioned or emerged historically before the twentieth century within the post-modern perspective demands a structural-historical analysis of the past that acknowledges both the historically Korean and post-modern/colonial origins of *han.* The lack of sociological literature on the expression of *han* in contemporary society as an emotion, but more specifically its manifestation in English language research also demonstrates the need for further qualitative inquiry on *han.* Thus, through analyzing historical data of the tragic past insinuated through the nuances of *han* with the structural theory of emotion would reveal the *hanful* Korean past from a

socio-historical lens. This analysis, compared with qualitative approaches that questions the feeling-emotion, spirit-identity, and social-collective memories of *han* will show contemporary understanding, interaction, interpretation and manifestation of *han*.

Positionality

It is important to discuss the limits of this research that comes from the inherent position of the researcher. As a student researcher of Korean Canadian identity, I was always interested in delving into the mystique of Korean culture—powerful aspects and ideas that seems mysterious for both an outsider, and especially more wondrous for those with liminal identities in between the insider and outsider perspectives. The term *han* was one such cultural mystique: a concept that many from my cultural-ethnic community said was real, that "we Koreans can understand and feel," but nevertheless uncomprehensible for a Korean-Canadian like me. Thus, it was this personal curiosity about the mystique of *han*, which came from my own mixed identity, that compelled me to begin this research so I could also understand, perceive and feel the nuances of *han* in Korean life.

Analysing *Han*: Historical and Qualitative Methods

This research used three methods: secondary and primary historical analysis, online open-ended questionnaires and cultural domain analysis (CDA). These data were analyzed inductively, to theorize not only the emergence of *han* through the lens of sociology of emotions and identity but also find consensus in popular manifestations of *han* in contemporary South Korean society. The secondary and primary historical analysis used Korean secondary historical literature on the Joseon Dynasty, as well as some key Neo-Confucian texts written during the early years of Joseon (1400~1550) and used to create the Joseon social structures, as well as The Veritable

Records of the Joseon Dynasty, which documented the reigns of Joseon kings. Both open-ended questionnaires and CDA were conducted online.

Historical analysis is an indirect method of observation that uses data collected from secondary research and archival sources (Bernard et al, 2017, p. 66-70). *Han* as an ethnocultural concept is historically bound—there is continuity in the nuances of *han* from the past to the present that makes the concept accepted as a national spirit and character of the Korean people. Thus, secondary historical analysis is crucial not only to analyze through the lens of the structured theory of emotions, which warrants an examination of social structures as conditions to the emergence of emotions, but also to find lingering themes within contemporary Korean's perception, expression, realization and understanding of *han* today. As I did not have access to primary Korean historical documents, nor the ability to read *Hanja* (Chinese script), I had to use secondary historical data, including journal articles and books discussing Joseon social structure and society. Primary sources used for this research are translated passages of key Confucian texts and the Veritable Records of the Joseon Dynasty provided by the Korean Ministry of Culture and scholar-translators. As such, the data gathered from the historical analysis were analyzed to understand Joseon social structures and social interactions in the context of power relations and status to theorize the conditions that may have emerged the nuances of *han*.

To also gauge into the contemporary thoughts and interpretation around *han* I also conducted an open-ended online questionnaire. I asked the participant to answer 14 questions regarding context, expression and manifestation of *han* within Korean society, as well as 3 ordinal-scale questions asking for demographic information, with no limits to how much they wrote. As the experiences of *han* are both individual and collective in their contextual nuance, open-ended questions allowed individuals to write as freely as possible, while also allowing me

to analyze for consensus. Allowing participants to write entire narratives as they wish allowed for more themes and relationships in the data to emerge, especially when researching under-studied phenomena such as *han* (Bernard et al, 2017, pp. 81-83*)*. The responses were analyzed to connect to themes found in historical analysis through the lens of the structural theory of emotion and to broadly produce a general outline of *han* as perceived, defined and understood by contemporary Koreans.

CDA is a method of collecting cultural data from participants to analyze and find the relationships within how cultural groups think, rationalize and understand cultural ideas, and find change, differences, or consensus between them (Bernard et al., 2017, pp. 403-404). For this study, I identified four cultural genres in which *han* could be "embedded": music; "moments" (through images); practices; and historical period. I listed 10 instances under each genre, which I chose through my online content analysis of discussions surrounding *han.* Participants were asked to identify whether they find that the instance (e.g. musical excerpt) is associated with *han*, then rank them relative to other instances within the same genre. Participants were also asked to justify their identification and ranking briefly. CDA is particularly useful for finding change, differences, or consensus within cultural domains of a single idea (Bernard et al., 2017, pp. 403-404; Dengah II et al., 2024; Hailie and Woldu, 2024). Thus, CDA was used to find consensus in perception and organization of what exactly *han* is in Korean society and possibly capture the liminal individual and collective thoughts around *han*. The data gathered from the CDA questionnaire were analyzed to find consensus in the perception, understanding and popular thoughts on the manifestation of *han,* both in relation to the past and contemporary society

As the questionnaires for both open-ended questions and Cultural Domain Analysis were administered through the Internet, participants were recruited through a Korean internet platform

called NAVER, through their online community forums called NAVER Cafe. I posted a recruitment poster on these NAVER cafes, where I introduced myself, clarified what my research topic was, and explained what I expected from participants for my research, providing the links to my questionnaires. These questionnaires were created through Microsoft Forms in both Korean and English, with the expected time of completion for both questionnaires at about hour, but the total time spent would depend on how much the participant wrote. These questionnaires were completed over the internet, as I am not skilled at direct translation and transcription of Korean text into English, Thus, having the Korean text as written by the participants themselves would yield the best data for analysis and retain the most of its original meanings. As *han* is a culturally special emotion and "spirit" of the Korean people, the research aimed to recruit only those who are Korean to gain authentic insights into *han*. Thus, there were no other exclusion criteria for this research other than age; Koreans of all sexes, genders, classes and other characteristics over the age of eighteen registered in Naver cafes with my questionnaires could participate.

Some ethical concerns must be addressed in the context of this research. While this research ensured the privacy of the individual through pseudonyms, discussion around one's *han*—due to its individual and collective nature of experience—brought up names of people and places sensitive to them or others related to the participants. In case participants revealed sensitive information about others, and the researcher wished to use that participant's response in analysis, that information was treated accordingly to ensure privacy, by giving them pseudonyms. This research also confirmed with participants if they would allow direct usage of their responses in the analysis and writing of my research, in case one decided that what they wrote is too personal. Otherwise, this research presented minimal risk for the participants.

A total of 30 people participated in the study, with 20 people participating in the online open-ended questionnaire and 10 people participating in the CDA. In terms of gender, most participants were female (16), with about a third identifying as male (11), and a small minority choosing to not answer the gender question (3) For the age group, only one was of age between 18-24 (1), 65 or above (1), or choose to not answer the question (1). Most of the participants were aged 45-54 (15, with just over a quarter being 55-64 (8, 26.7%) years old, along with a handful of participants aged 35-44 (4, 13.3%). In terms of education, a significant majority of participants had post-secondary certificate diploma or university degree (24, 80%), with the rest achieving only secondary school education (4, 13.3%) or choosing not to answer (2, 6.67%). Abnormal responses (5), such as responses with pseudonyms without any answers, those that answered only demographic questions, and others were removed and deleted for this study.

Results

The Neo-Confucian Order: Emotions and Feelings from Neo-Confucian Oppression

The hierarchical structure and rationalizing imperatives of the Neo-Confucian Joseon period created the conditions for fomenting *han*, particularly among the majority classes in Korean society, including women. This historical analysis will introduce the Neo-Confucian social order, its social tenets, aims, systematic hierarchical structure, and impact on the common people. With its five-hundred-year reign coming to a dramatic end with Western encroachment and Japanese imperialism, *han* was already sown within the Korean milieu through the Neo-Confucian system, which broke free from its chains to manifest itself freely in the 20th century.

The structural foundation of the Joseon Dynasty (1392~1897) was one of Neo-Confucian social order (Napoli, 2020; Michael, 2020; Kevin, 2021; Lee, 2016; Koh, 2003). This social order, developed in reaction to the perceived corruption of the Buddhist order within the

previous Goryeo Dynasty (918-1392), aimed to completely restructure Korean society and norms through the ideology of Neo-Confucianism (Seth, 2020; Lee, 2016; Koh, 2003; Shin, 2014). It was a reactionary ideology that built upon Confucianism against the forces of other religious thoughts, such as Daoism, Buddhism and other folk religions in East Asia, as a step towards a more rational theory of governance and social life rather than a metaphysical one (Seth, 2020; Lee, 2016; Koh, 2003; Shin, 2014). The guiding principles, dogma, and statecraft of the new Neo-Confucian state depended on the study of many Confucian texts such as the Five Classics, Four Books, and the Rites of Zhou; concepts such as the interplay of "ki" (material forces) and "li" (principles); and moral principles such as benevolence, virtuous rule, and hegemony (Lee, 2016; Koh, 2003). Specifically in terms of social relations, the *samgang* (Three Bonds) and the *oryun* (Five Relations) outlined the basis for the hierarchy of different groups of people within Korean Society (Koh, 2003). This resulted in the creation of the Joseon social structure based on the Confucian theory of "rational humanness" with concrete rules, roles, norms and power relations between different strata, relationships and gender, upheld by all members of society in the name of social harmony and propriety (Seth, 2020; Koh, 2003).

The *samgang* and the *oryun* were precepts for the system of moral, dogmatic, structural and interpersonal relations between individuals in Joseon society (Seth, 2020; Koh, 2003). As elaborated within the Samgang haengsildo (Illustrated Conduct of the Three Bonds), written by Confucian scholars at the command of King Sejong in 1434, the *samgang* stressed the importance of adherence and devotion to the three social bonds: father and son (*hyo;* 효; filial piety), the lord and subject (*Chung*; 충; loyalty), and the husband and wife (*yeol*; 열; marital faithfulness and patriarchy) (Seth, 2020; Koh, 2003; National Museum of Korea, n.d). The

oryun, highlighted within the *Oryun haengsildo* (Illustrated Stories Exemplifying the Five Virtues), written by another group of scholars by the command of King Jeongjo and published in 1797, stressed the adherence to five social relations as "natural" social norms: righteousness and justice between rulers and subject (*ui*), the closeness between parents and their children (*chin*), distinction between husbands and wives (*byeol*), order between elderly and the young (*seo*), and trust between friends (*sin*) (Seth, 2020; Koh, 2003; Encyclopedia of Korean Culture, n.d). Neo-Confucian socio-ideological tenets such as G*uensabuilchae* (sameness of king, teacher, and father; Korean Confucian idea that kings, teachers and fathers deserve the same grace), and *Namzonyeobi (*Men high, women low*;* Korean Neo-Confucian idea of male superiority based on the Ying-yang theory of society) also spread and simmered into the Korean consciousness by the 1600s (Kim, 2017; Kim, 2008). These concepts became the foundational ideas for the Neo-Confucian social structure and were used in various social systems, such as the family relations, government institutions, and social hierarchies that would theoretically ensure social order and harmony by following the heavenly principles of Confucian philosophy.

Rules on social relations that limited social mobility and other forms of social life were heavily regulated within the Joseon hierarchy through both dogmatic and systematic Neo-Confucian order that insinuated *han'*s feelings of powerlessness for the majority classes who were pitilessly blocked from social mobility. There were three official classes and some outcast classes within the Joseon social hierarchy that came from the interplay between the concepts of *samgang*, *oryun,* and other Neo-Confucian ideas. At the top were the *yangban*, the hereditary nobles who held the most power and status in Joseon society. Their influence was present in public institutions, bureaucracy, and policymaking, while they also held considerable moral and legitimate power over their local communities (Napoli, 2020, pp.152-154; Seth, 2020. pp. 174-

181). The next were the *chungin* and *hyangni*, who were not officially a class, but made into one as they did not fit into any other caste within the Joseon hierarchy (Seth, 2020, pp. 179-180; Hwang, 2004). These groups were technical specialists and hereditary clerks from cities and towns across Joseon, who did not have the wealth and power of the yangban, but were above the other two lower classes, thus being recognized today as a "middle class" of Joseon society (Seth, 2020, pp. 179-180; Hwang, 2004, pp. 106-107, 161-165). Most of the population made up the third class, called the commoners, consisting of farmers, merchants, and craftsmen, most of whom lived in precarious contexts (Seth, 2020. Pp. 173-177; Kim, 2014, pp. 66-68). The fourth was the *chonmin*, consisting of *nobi*" (slaves, both free and enslaved and sometimes understood as serfs) and social outcasts who were not considered *yangmin* (good people), with the *nobi* making up the majority of its class due to the extensive institution of *nobi* that existed in the Joseon Dynasty (Seth, 2020, pp. 176-178; Brezis and Kim, 2009, pp.3-5).

The Joseon power relations and the moral-ethical conduct of social relations between the people of different statuses were regulated heavily through Neo-Confucian ideals, with limited, if any upward social mobility. The *oryun. samgang,* and other tenets of Neo-Confucianism such as g*uensabuilchae* and n*amzonyeobi* constructed a society where people had to know their place in the social hierarchy, and act based on the inherent relational social superiority or inferiority of social actors based on their status and demographic features such as age, gender and class (Seth, 2020; Koh, 2003; Kim, 2017; Encyclopedia of Korean Culture, n.d). Anyone acting out of line from the hierarchy would mean that they were working against the heavenly principles of what was *right* and *rational*—against the efforts to ensure social harmony and the Neo-Confucian order (Napoli, 2020, pp. 151-153; Lee, 2016, pp. 166-167; Koh, 2003, pp. 3,7-9; Seth, 2020, p. 166; Shin, 2014 pp.6-7). Upward social mobility was theoretically possible but was manipulated

and rigged by the *yangban* class to prevent other classes from advancing upwards, requiring a tremendous amount of economic and social capital to study and become academically capable of passing the scholastic examinations required to obtain the *yangban* status (Seth, 2020 p. 142, 195; Shin, 2014, p. 4). In other words, classes in Korean societies became increasingly based on blood and privilege—even compared to other Confucian nation-states such as China (Seth, 2020, p. 195). Most of the Joseon population remained fatalistically locked within their hierarchy, with Confucian power relations imposed upon the lower strata to serve their dogmatic superiors. Thus, the feelings of *han* of powerlessness and resentment, especially against those with power, were built into Joseon class structure hierarchy, with its common populace rubbing their palms and bowing their head to the Neo-Confucian order to live and save their faces.

Using this context of a Neo-Confucian structure of Joseon society, the nuances of *han* can be revealed by analyzing the relational characteristics of Joseon social structure. *Han* contains a variety of feelings of negativity, such as resentment, sadness, anger, and grievance that can only be resolved through acts that confront the causes of *han* (Kim, n.d; Kim, 1999, pp. 124-126; Chu, 2008; Han, 2021; Kim, 1995; Lim, 2019). As the ruling ideology of Neo-Confucianism constructed the social structure with strict relational characteristics, types of negative feelings associated with *han* were forcibly conditioned within the people of the lower strata of Joseon society. A society that demanded complete adherence to social norms of inherent superiority based on the privilege of class and which also pitilessly blocked other classes from social mobility to enforce elitist social relations, was internalized within the Korean consciousness over 500 years of Neo-Confucian experience. The *samgang*, *oryun,* and the g*uensabuilchae* that founded the social and moral obligation to adhere to principles of hierarchical dominance in filial, socio-political, and interpersonal relationships for the sake of

harmony and order reinforced the internalization of structural oppression. Feelings of fatalism dominated the life of the lower strata, who had the lowest standard of living in East Asia (Seth, 2020, pp.327-328): these feelings included resentment from powerlessness, anger from unfairness, and grievance from pitilessness, and overall sadness.

What internalized these feelings into a single emotional force was the Neo-Confucian norms and ethics of emotional expression. Korean Neo-Confucian ideas about emotions developed from debates surrounding the textual concepts from "Seven Feelings" (love, joy, anger, sadness, fear, hate and desire) from the *Book of Rites,* and the "Four Beginnings" (compassion, courtesy, shame, discernment of right and wrong) from the *Mencius* (Classical Confucian text) (Seth, 2020. Pp.188; Sancho, 2023, pp. 5-6; Chung and Oh, 2022, pp. 30, 52-53). The general conclusion of this debate was that emotions are directly connected to human nature, thus they must be cultivated, managed, and controlled for the sake of civil and harmonious society (Chung and Oh, 2022, p. 14; Seth, 2020, p. 188). This meant that there were socially celebrated feelings that signaled one's virtue, which included many positive emotions, and socially repudiated feelings that insinuated one's inability to conform and control their human nature, typically associated with negative emotions (Chung and Oh, 2022, pp.17, 50; Sancho, 2023, p. 6). While this did not mean that negative emotions were suppressed in Joseon society, it meant that negative emotions must be expressed *correctly* following proper rules through the practice of rituals (Sancho, 2023, pp. 5-6). For example, sadness and grief from losing a loved one were expected to be expressed in the context of annual ancestral rites or funeral rites, and nowhere else. As Neo-Confucianism did not offer a ritual medium of relief towards *hanful* manifestations, people turned to religious rituals from outcast religions such pacification rituals from Korean Shamanism to resolve *han* (Kim, 2022).Thus, the ideology of Neo-Confucianism

discouraged the complete expression of negative emotions, especially that of social emotions that could deter social harmony and order.

The nuance of *han's* association with women in contemporary scholarly and popular discussions can also be explained through their experience of Joseon's social structure. The Neo-Confucian order, as stressed through tenets such as G*uensabuilchae* and N*amzonyeobi,* and the relational ideas of *oryun* and *samgang* segregated and subordinated women to the domestic family sphere, while also enforcing patriarchy through Confucian gendered social ideas of chastity (Han, 2004, p. 115; Kwon, 2014, p. 189). This was in contrast to the previous period of Goryeo, where women held comparatively more power, such as the right to inheritance (Shin, 2014, p. 6). From birth, females were conditioned with Confucian gender expectations: they were sat on the ground from birth (compared to boys who were sat at tables), socialized to respond slowly, were given clothes of worse quality, taught domestic chores and crafts rather than given a proper scholarly education, learned to prepare for funeral rites and also practiced to force tears for when the context called for it (Kwon, 2014, pp. 190-191). Women were also treated as the property of the in-laws when married and faced social consequences for misbehaviours (Han, 2004, p. 124; Kwon, 2014, p. 193). Later Confucian teachings such as *sohak* also encouraged women to serve their husbands like their lord, preserve chastity, and speak in a specific manner of respect and virtue to become the ideal Confucian female subject (Han, 2004, pp. 117-118). Women of the commoner class were also expected to participate in agricultural activities, on top of weaving and preparing for any ancestral rites or rituals (Han, 2004, pp. 141-142). In this respect, the people who had experienced and were socially expected to suppress negative emotions the most in Joseon society were the common women. Therefore, the association of *han* with women reflects not only the socioeconomic and political burden they

were tasked and regulated with but also the pitiless fatality of their existence within the Neo-Confucian hierarchy.

Han Unbound

When the Neo-Confucian Order fell in the late 19th century, its social structure also fell and was restructured with every new order that came thereafter (Ha, 2013, 46-49; Seth, 2020, pp. 275, 304; Shin, 2001, pp. 139-141), opening spaces for mass emotional expression of *han* not bounded by Neo-Confucian dogma. New opposing forces from the dogmatic spheres of foreign religions such as Christianity (Seth, 2020), new religious movements such as Donghak (A philosophy and a social movement based on "Eastern teachings," responsible for several peasant uprisings in the late 19th century) (Chong, 1969), and the sociopolitical clutches of Japanese imperialism and Westernization began to radically change Korean society (Ha, 2013). While the dogma of Confucianism largely stayed within the populace, new forms of oppression arose: imperialist, partitionist, authoritarian and the contemporary democratic-capitalist mode of social order and structure, each had their unique conditions of oppression and subordination for many groups in Korean society (Ha, 2013, Seth, 2020; Shin, 2001). However, the *han* of the Joseon past—sown and nurtured throughout the Neo-Confucian era in the Korean conscience—were ready to manifest themselves in these new orders, with forces of nationalism and democracy fueling their expression in the modern era.

Joseon society, under its Neo-Confucian structure and social relations, left plenty of room for the emergence of emotions with the nuances of *han* in everyday life. The rigid and fatalistic social structure based on adherence to Neo-Confucian ideals created a society where social contexts of superiority and inferiority dominated social interactions, from the most private to the most public spheres. Common people, based on their hierarchical and relational positions of

power, were dogmatically suppressed and culturally regulated for the sake of social order and harmony. The relational dimensions in family, gender and status that were reinforced through Neo-Confucian social norms of emotional expression and social expectations repudiated expressions of negativity. When the Neo-Confucian order collapsed in the early 20th century, so did the barriers that held up the pent-up emotions of *han,* which began to be manifested freely in the modern era against new orders of oppression.

Han In the Minds of Contemporary Koreans: Results from Online Questionnaires

The "past" as imagined by Koreans today, plays a large role in their interpretation of *han*. This past can go as far as the Joseon Period as discussed above, but it often reaches back to the most recent and resented events of the past that the Korean collective conscience refuses to forget. Whether it be through collective-historical experiences, or a deeply traumatic personal experience, contemporary Koreans in my research interpreted *han* through their own reflection on the tragedies and sufferings of their past.

Contemporary Koreans identify *han* as a state of being or feeling tugged behind tragic contexts that make people feel both individual and collective emotions. Grief, resentment, lamentation, sadness, and anger were all present in the questionnaire results as descriptive emotions of *han.* Another popular interpretation of *han* was framing it as a continued experience and subjection to tragedy—an unhealed and unresolved experience, circumstance, or situation that remains with individuals and impacts their everyday lives. However, some also pointed out the difficulties of describing and distinguishing *han* as a singular or a group of emotions. Some respondents stressed the general interpretation of *han* as a collection of negative images and symbolism rather than as emotions, such as *han* becoming a symbol of women's resentment. *Han* was also framed as both a collective and individual concept, but the context of *han* played a

dominant role in determining its specific personal or group manifestation. Participants reflected on their collective social memory, filial origins, generational trauma, interpersonal history, and historical oppressions from various periods of Korean history to formulate their understanding, manifestation and interpretation of *han*.

Most respondents also contended that *han* was not a special Korean concept but played a major role in the development of Korean identity and history. *Han* was never defined strictly as a "Korean" terminology, and respondents often imagined its application as a universal feeling that any people could feel given the correct context. However, both respondents who saw *han* as exclusively Korean and those who saw it as universal highlighted its connection to the formation of Korean identity. Specifically, artistic portrayal of *han* through various forms, such as *salpurichum* (Korean traditional dance), *saguek* (folk drama/historical drama), creative writing and visual arts were discussed as special expressions of *han* unique to Korea. In this way, *han* was interpreted as a cultural artifact of tragic past, as participant "Clear Blue Sky" explains in their questionnaire: "It is a unique sentiment of Koreans who sublimated resentment into art rather than revenge, stemming from the historical background of numerous invasions and the injustice suffered from the ruling class in the feudal era." Like "Clear Blue Sky," other participants also highlighted *han's* unique place in various moments of 16th to 20th century Korean history, and its connection to the culture of *han.*

Han manifested itself in society and people in both inauspicious and materially consequential ways. Places or objects with historical connections to collective tragedy and injustice were imbued with *han* (images, with some additional explanation on Appendix D), such as the statue of Yi-Soonshin, Comfort Women statues, Seodaemun prison (prison used by Imperial Japanese Authorities to imprison Korean dissenters), and the grave of An Jung-guen.

Objects and places of personal connections to *han* can become *hanful* as well, like family homes and childhood residences with experiences of hardship and poverty. Some examples of social manifestations of *han were* criminal behaviours, loneliness and withdrawal from public life. *Han* can also be internalized into the body, manifesting into health *conditions s*uch as *hwabyeong (*Anger illness, a medical diagnosis associated with *han),* with the interpretation that suicide symbolizes *han's* ultimate manifestation.

Of course, there are ways to free oneself from *han,* but methods to do so varied among respondents. The most common way to cure *han* was through either sharing and expressing the sufferings of *han,* or through resolving the source in which the *han* embedded itself from the individual. This is the reason why some groups incite *han* against the Japanese for their historic crimes against the Korean people, as people do not feel that the injustice of the Japanese occupation had been resolved nor taken seriously through genuine discussion nor reflection on the part of the Japanese government. Some other ways of liberation included teachings of "correct history," showing forgiveness, "moving on," and through self-cultivation against *hanful* thoughts and feelings. Some respondents however contended that *han* is by definition engraved and internalized into a person, to the point that they cannot be free from it.

Throughout the questionnaires, almost all the respondents agreed and expressed the notion that *han* is often associated with women. When asked to provide emotions, proverbs or phrases associated with *han,* many respondents answered with the following proverb: "If a woman bears *han*, there will be frost in the summer (여자가 한을 품으면 오뉴월에도 서리가 내린다)." This proverb suggests the notion that women's *han* can manifest into otherworldly phenomena, such as frosts appearing in the summer. Issues such as the historical oppression of

women in Korean history, Japanese wartime institution of sexual slavery with comfort women, and the contemporary woes of Korean women regarding sexism and inequality were discussed through the questionnaires as well. Some women alluded to feeling *han* from their filial context by other family members, as participant "Angel" stated her *han* in the questionnaire: "When I was living with my in-laws and was treated like maid, even when I was their daughter in-law." Women's filial context of *han,* especially through in-law dynamics, was also seen within the historical analysis, showing that in-law objectification of their son's wives continues in Korea.

There was a clear consensus that *han* is more associated with the past than the present. While historical moments of the past, such as the Joseon period, Japanese occupation, the division of Korea, and the authoritarianism of the late 20th century were attributed as causes and origins of collective *han,* individual *han* was grounded more in experience and history. However, the notion of "past" still echoed in descriptions of personal *han,* where many respondents discussed the past filial experiences, memories and grievances as constructing the *han* that carries on within individuals through time, and generationally as well. New sources of collective *han* can also be found through contemporary events, as "S, Kim" states on the questionnaire question on the existence of "new and contemporary *han*":

> Social tragedies like the Sewol Incident[1], Itaewon Incident[2], recent airplane crashes, etc, can be quite traumatizing for the victims and their families. They need to be comforted and cared for, and if they don't get that, I think it can lead to the build-up of resentment, anger, and sadness that becomes *han*.

As the main interpretation of *han* is that it comes from experiences of tragedy and injustice that never get resolved, it does not necessarily exclude contemporary events from becoming the cause

[1] Sewol Incident refers to the tragedy of the passenger ferry MV Sewol that sunk in 16th of April, 2014. Out of the 476 people on board, only 172 survived, with most casualties coming from high school students that was on a field trip. Poor government handling of the incident resulted in large social discontent within Korean society.
[2] Itaewon Incident was a crowd crush 159 people on 29th of October, 2022. With the loosening of social distancing and grouping policies, the Halloween festivities of 2022 saw many people gather for the festivities. Many people were discontent with the government handling, and their role in potentially causing the incident.

of new *han* of the future. However, some respondents agree with the notion that the concept of *han* is slowly becoming less relevant in contemporary society.

Hanful Cultural Domains in Contemporary Korean Society

The following is the ranked CDA table of the four domains of *han*: music, practice, "moments" and historical periods. The table shows the ranking of all the instances listed under the four domains in relation to their level of association with *han*, ranked by its mean value. The standard deviation of each instances are also present for consensus analysis, with a smaller number indicating that respondents ranked the instances more similarly to each other.

Figure 1. Cultural Domain Analysis of *Han*

	Music	Practice	"Moments"	Historical Periods
1	(If I Leave) (Sumi Jo) [0.911] [σ: 0.169]	Salpurichum [0.811] [σ: 0.276]	An Junggeun's Grave [0.763] [σ: 0.276]	Japanese Colonial Period (1910–1945 CE) [0.933] [σ: 0.132]
2	March For You [0.8] [σ: 0.166]	Pansori [0.744] [σ: 0.219]	Panmunjeom [0.75] [σ: 0.233]	Early North-South Division Period (1948~1961 CE) [0.813] [σ: 0.233]
3	My Country Korea (Sumi Jo) [0.789] [σ: 0.162]	Funeral [0.611] [σ: 0.271]	Remnants of Imperialism: "Chosen Shrine [0.738] [σ: 0.226]	Joseon Period (1392–1897 CE) [0.7] [σ: 0.194]
4	Sangroksu (Mingi-Kim) [0.722] [σ: 0.259]	Suicide [0.667] [σ: 0.374]	The Colonial "Government Nobi" [7] [σ: 0.321]	Minjung Democratization Movement (1980~1988) [0.656] [σ: 0.23]
5	Biikyeonli (Lovers) [0.444] [σ: 0.167]	Ritual [0.611] [σ: 0.276]	Gwangju Democratization Movement 1 [0.663] [σ: 0.308]	Park Jung Hee Government (1961~1981 CE) [0.644] [σ: 0.201]
6	Fado Português, (Amália Rodrigues) [0.444] [σ: 0.27]	Praying [0.533] [σ: 0.224]	Gwangju Democratization Movement 2 [0.6] [σ: 0.278]	1997 Asian Financial Crisis (1997~2001) [0.567] [σ: 0.141]
7	Onara (From Daejanguem) [0.4] [σ: 0.2]	Worship [0.411] [σ: 0.226]	The Elderly Poor in Korea [0.375] [σ: 0.158]	Goryeo Period [0.43] [σ: 0.276] [σ: 0.26]
8	Guemsohwadonghsook [0.333] [σ: 0.15]	Fengshui [0.389] [σ: 0.215]	12/3 Emergency Martial Law Protest [0.363] [σ: 0.2]	Three Kingdoms Period [0.367] [σ: 0.276] [σ: 0.235]
9	Merry-Go-Round of Life (Joe Hisaishi) [0.311] [σ: 0.183]	Taegyo [0.389] [σ: 0.226]	Ulsan 1920 [0.338] [σ: 0.16]	Ancient Korea (2333 –108 BCE) [0.244] [σ: 0.201]
10	Wolhwajeongin [0.311] [σ: 0.196]	Sunneung [0.344] [σ: 0.188]	"Red Devils" [0.2] [σ: 0.207]	21st century Korea (2001~2024) [0.233] [σ: 0.158]

From the CDA, the pieces of music with the most *han* were songs affiliated with historical movements or contexts of oppression and tragedy. Respondents ranked songs such as "March For You" and "Sangroksu"— pro-democracy songs of the 1970s and 1980s—higher compared to other traditionally themed music. Nationalistic songs like "My Country Korea" also ranked high as *hanful* in the CDA. According to participant justifications, participants based their rankings on personal perception of sadness, grief and anger that "hurts the heart," with some also considering historical background surrounding the music as well. The most *hanful* was "If I Leave," which was the original vocal soundtrack played in the drama series *Empress Myeongseong.* This drama series covers the story of the Empress Myeongseong's political efforts to curb Japanese influence in the Korean court, and her assassination in 1895 from Japanese agitators. Stories and histories of such tragedies as these tended to enchant music with *han*.

In terms of practice, respondents ranked traditional practices in Korean culture higher, with some variation in interpretation between individuals. Traditional Korean cultural practices of grief and sadness, such as *salpurichum* (Korean traditional dance) and *pansori* (Korean storytelling) ranked the highest in the cultural domain analysis, with the most contemporary practice of *sunneung* (Korean Scholastic Ability Test) ranked at the bottom. Funerals and rituals were also ranked higher than other inauspicious and religious practices of worship, praying, *taegyo* (prenatal education) and fengshui. Suicide was the most contentious practice, with many respondents either ranking them on the top or the bottom of the scale. The ranking of the practice domain was mainly rationalized through what respondents thought were traditional practices that were *hanful* in Korean society.

The "Moments" domain shown in images depicting significant events in Korean history were more associated with *han* than contemporary moments in Korea. The mundane historical

moment of "Ulsan 1920," (image of Ulsan taken at 1920) with more contemporary moments of "Red Devils" (image of "Red Devils," a national soccer supporting club) and "The Elderly Poor in Korea" had the lowest ranking. Moments of the democratization movements, Japanese imperialism, and hierarchical oppression through the image of *Nobi* class ranked significantly higher, with variance between them existing among respondents based on what they perceived as the more "painful" memory or moments of the past. While consensus in differentiating the past and present in terms of *han* did exist, there were some contentions in determining which depiction of "moments" were more *hanful* than others (e.g. colonialism vs authoritarianism).

However, the historical period domain did show a comparably higher group consensus compared to other domains, with only the music domain having a higher overall consensus in ranking. There was a clear consensus that the Japanese Colonial Period, South-North Division, Joseon Period, and the authoritarian period were the most *hanful* in their respective order. While Contemporary Korea as a historical period was ranked lower in the rankings, the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis did rank higher, being ranked higher than other historical periods before the 14th century. Respondents justified their rationale through various means. Some respondents analyzed how much *han* remained unresolved or healed from a period compared to others, while others based it on how much "pain' they could feel from each historical period concerning the notion that Korea had a particularly tragic past. Just like the rankings, there was a clearer consensus in justification between respondents in the historical period domain than in other domains.

Discussion

The Neo-Confucian Salience of *Han* in Contemporary Interpretation

Without a doubt, many respondents echoed that Korean Neo-Confucian hierarchy, ethical norms and moral systems play a large role in the realization of *han*. This was shown by tracing

the structural conditions for the emergence of emotions related to *han* in the Joseon period, connecting *han*'s emotions to past experience before the 20th century. This connection were also shown within contemporary participants' interpretation of *han*, as *han* was framed as unresolved or unhealed references of the past that were manifested as negative emotions and feelings. While other historical periods were present as well, the injustice from the system of the Neo-Confucian Order remained significant for many respondents through both direct and indirect references to it. These Confucian themes came in three forms: the filial dimension, women's oppression, and inauspicious stories and nuances inherited from Neo-Confucian ideology. Analysis of the historical period of the Joseon Dynasty through the structural theory of emotion showed how salient the Neo-Confucian social structure was, and how emotions of *han* were filtered through hierarchical, moral and ethical domination.

One of the dominant themes in respondent interpretation of *han* was its filial manifestation. Filial piety and the importance of family hierarchy, relations, and order were all key tenets of Korean Neo-Confucianism (Han, 2004, p. 115; Kwon, 2014, p. 189). These filial ideas became causes or contexts that lead to the realization of *han*. For example, many respondents commented on their *han* or what they perceived as *han* through experiences or past troubles with family. From parents grieving at their inability to teach their children, sending their children to primary and secondary education, perpetuating filial violence, and experiencing other family tragedies, *han* rose in individuals in many filial contexts. *Han* became ingrained through family and generational experience, with participants recalling its impact not only on their parents but also on themselves as children, with some reproducing it in their own children as well. These filial manifestations reflect the salience of Neo-Confucian family relation and structure, and the reverence of filial piety that continues to create emotions of *han* in the present.

However, *han* does not necessarily demand a specific event of tragedy or injustice to be realized, as *han* can also manifest through positive interpretation of filial dynamics. As one respondent stated: "To grow up with the love of parents that did not have much and living to fulfil and give back to their expectation is my han." In this case, *han* came from the respondent's continued life of meeting expectations and duty for parents that gave love notwithstanding their lowly economic position and feeling as if they are failing to give back to parental benevolence. This is also one example of the nuance of hope in contemporary imaginaries of *han; han* often becomes the justification for one's betterment and hopeful redemption after recovering from its hopeless lamentation. This supports Kim and Choi's (1995) psychological conceptualization of *han* as a process of lamentation and (Han's) Minjung framework as a liberatory process from resentment: *han* as a tragedy embodied within an individual procedurally dissipates. Thus, the dominance of Neo-Confucianism is still seen today in creating *hanful* contexts and situations.

The continued oppression of women in Korean history and Society was another theme that reinforced *han*'s association with women. Many respondents associated *han* with women from the perspective of patriarchy and male domination of the past, comfort women, and contemporary gender inequality. Thus, there is a nuance that *han's* association with women was due to women's continued unresolved grievances throughout Korean history. As discussed before, women's rights and place in society deteriorated greatly from Goryeo to Joseon with the imposition of Korean Neo-Confucianism that specifically aimed to put women into a docile social position. The role that the Neo-Confucian order had played in the suppression of women without a doubt played a significant role in marking women with *han*.

The proverb "If a woman bears Han, there will be frost in the summer," widespread among respondents, also shows the salience of women's oppression and Joseon Neo-

Confucianism. This proverb likely originated in and was popularized during the 15th century when Neo-Confucian ideals were being disseminated (Seth, 2020; Shin, 2012). However, this proverb did not at first target women. Many proverbs and nuances connecting "frosts" in the summer that would devastate harvests were written and discussed before the 1500s in Veritable Records of the Joseon Dynasty (Veritable Records of the Joseon Dynasty, Year 13, July 5; Sejong Year 13, October 16). However, the connection between negative feelings of women and frost in the summer started to appear in the Veritable Records from about the early 15th century, directing the blame for summer frosts onto women (Jungjong, Year 39, May, 2). With the change of the target of the proverb happening at the height of Neo-Confucian dissemination, this proverb was very much a part of the Neo-Confucian project of diminishing women.

Han presents itself in Korean society in inauspicious ways that echo Neo-Confucian dogma. Respondents described *han* as something that embeds and attaches itself to the material world to influence its surroundings with negativity. One example of such inauspicious powers of *han* was present in participant Austin's story about *han* in their home village:

> There was a small plunge pool (pool of water under a waterfall) in the river in the middle of the village, and an 8-year-old girl drowned in it. Every 8 years since then, a villager drowned in the same place, and when the third person drowned after the incident, the family and the villagers held a *jesa* (ancestor ritual), and there were no more incidents. At that time, the villagers were discussing just how much *han* the girl must have had for her to take people from the village every eight years.

In this story, *han* is portrayed as a force of the past simmered into the place of tragedy. Villagers interpreted the continuous cycle of tragedy that occurred in the plunge pool as inauspicious workings of the dead girl's *han.* Thus, through ancestor ritual—a key ritual of Neo-Confucian Korea that reinforced filial piety—the villagers hoped to resolve the han of the girl, ending the continuous forces of han that created tragedy in their village. Austin's story of *han* exemplifies the inauspicious interpretation and manifestation of han as a force that can go beyond the

individual to haunt communities and groups, which can only be healed through proper Confucian rituals to respect the dead. It shows the salience of Neo-Confucian moral order—reinforced through centuries of hierarchical domination—in impacting people's interpretation and interaction with *han* in contemporary society.

Despite the lack of attention on han and Joseon dynasty within Western literature, the historical forces of Neo-Confucianism and Joseon hierarchy are salient to contemporary interpretations of *han*. The clearest example of this was through the association of *han* with women—the group whose rights deteriorated and were oppressed the most with the changing winds of Neo-Confucian order. This *han* remained in contemporary society, unresolved and stigmatized into contemporary interpretations of *han*. The filial dimensions of the realization of *han* today also show a particular dominance of Confucian dogma. The moral, normative and hierarchal order of Neo-Confucianism of the Joseon dynasty enabled the emergence of emotions of *han* in Korean society; sowing the Korean peninsula ripe for *han's* dramatic manifestation in the 20th century. Thus, *han* as a feeling-emotion began its social construction from the Neo-Confucian order of Joseon, developing its negative nuances of resentment, grievance, hopelessness and pitilessness from the people's reflection on their sorrowful existence.

Han as an Omnipotent Force of Negative Past

Respondents' description of *han,* like most existing literature, associated *han* with negative emotions, but emotional terminologies were not *han*'s defining characteristics. Another dominant interpretation of *han* was as a state of being, where one's deepest regrets, grievances and injustice experiences in the past remained unresolved, lingering as a force called *han*. This distinction between *han,* and what *han* could do to make people feel emotion*s* were a key

distinction made by many participants that made *han* different than just a group of emotions that one may feel; it is a haunting feeling that sticks with a person, until it is perceived to be resolved.

Moreover, *han's* exceptionalism in Korean history and culture, despite its supposed universalism, shows the flexibility of *han* as a cultural concept. While *han* could be conceptualized as universal, it is nonetheless a concept derived by Koreans reflection about their historical-cultural memory of the past, similar to how Connerton theorized identity as derived through social memory. This is apparent in respondents' reflection on *han* and Korean identity, where han's artistic expression through traditional practices was considered a unique way of showing *han* that is exclusive to Korean society. This was also reflected in the Cultural Domain Analysis with traditional cultural practices such as *salpurichum* and *pansori* dominating the practice rankings, and songs echoing Korean historical tragedy ranking highly. However, as a cultural concept, Koreans were also able to apply their knowledge of *han* to social problems outside of Korea, like the Hikikomori (voluntary social withdrawal) problem of Japan, or the inequality seen across the world as a result of *han*. In this way, the practical applicability of *han* to various social situations outside of the Korean milieu, especially towards Asian societies, shows *han* not as an emotional terminology, but a force that perpetuates negative consequences.

However, this universalized framework prevents interpreting *han's* spirit-identity as an *"*invented tradition.*"* Hobsbawm deeply grounded the rise of certain traditions of the 19th and 29th centuries through the lens of nationalism and opportunistic social agitators. However, most participants did not use nationalist nuances, nor nationalist histories to interpret *han*. While most participants were able to imagine a historical continuity of *han* through interpreting *han* as a remaining culture of tragedy, none insisted that it was necessarily Korean, nor insinuated that *han* was "invented" by them. As a universal state of being, participants imagined how *han* could

manifest itself in other cultures, through their own unique histories of tragedy, suffering and sorrow. While *han* may be a traditional concept with a spirit-identity of "Koreanness" within specific cultural mediums, it was not considered a nationalistically distinct trait unique to Korea.

The nuances of people's association with *han* were those of its importance in brewing discontent and grievances in society, which are in fact the preconditions for social progress, liberatory struggles, and democracy enabled by mass feelings of group *han* and individual *han*. These types of interactions and interpretations were common in the Minjung Theology movement, a liberation theology born against the military dictatorship of the 70s and 80s in South Korea (Han, 2021). In fact, most nuances of hope within *han* comes from this notion, that through collective experience and struggle against the *han* of the masses, they could achieve a brighter future, healing the hopelessness of *han.* Thus, the mass invocation of *han* through the injustice and tragedy of the Joseon Period, Japanese occupation, national division, and authoritarianism were perceived to be an essential force that enabled South Korea to become what is today. The cultural domain analysis of historical periods and moments also supports this notion, as people ranked the instances based on how much *han* they felt were not resolved or were especially painful in collective memory. Indeed, as Connerton had claimed about the role of social memory and collective historical experience creating ethnic identity, the experience of the *hanful* past seem to be "conveyed and sustained" through people's resistance against *han* for a better future. From the Joseon period, Japanese occupation, national division and authoritarianism, Koreans saw *han* as a force that reminded them of their fatalistic position in society to strive for collective liberation from oppression and betterment of life. Thus, *han,* through social-collective memory of the past, and the lived experience that carried along through mass remembrance, had become a omnipotently lingering force of the past in Korean society.

While the concept of *han* is associated with the past, it is not exclusive to it—new *han* can always appear in contemporary life beyond the individual level. New unresolved grievances of the present can turn into forces of *han* that can manifest themselves in the present and future. As some respondents stressed, recent events such as the Sewol Incident in 2014, a sinking of a ferry ship with 300 causalities with high school 250 students; Itaewon Incident in 2022, a crowd surge that tragically killed 159 people; and the 12-3 martial law crisis, where President Yoon Suk-yeol declared martial law in 2024 to eliminate political rivals, have become events that reignited past resentments and trauma for many Koreans. Perhaps if these events remain unresolved, and leave a bad collective social memory behind, they may become a new force of *han* that would resonate with people of the future. In fact, unlike previous studies done on *han* in the Western literature , which focused on Japanese occupation and national division, both the questionnaire and the Cultural Domain Analysis saw a heightened agency and relevance in discussing contemporary democracy in relation to *han*. Although the 12-3 martial law incidents were ranked low in the Cultural Domain Analysis, it without a doubt increased the relevance of the democratization movements and dictatorship in both questionnaires as it resonated with the social memory of authoritarianism within many Koreans. Thus, *han* is not just a force of a distant or ancient past that haunt, but also a force that continuously adapts itself to new contexts.

Limitations

Other than the limited inability of this research to access Korean literature and historical documents related to *han*, the main limitation of this research is its sample size. As an Honours research, this study was not able to acquire a large sample due to time constraints. Thus, the representativeness of this research may be questioned, albeit its qualitative nature aims for exploring *han* rather than quantitatively representing *han*. Also, most of the respondents were in

their middle age, meaning beliefs about *han* from the perspective of the younger generation are not represented in this research. As some respondents have highlighted in their questionnaire, there seems to be a consensus that the concept of *han* is less known or even unknown to the younger generation. Perhaps younger respondents would have found *suneung*, Korea's "College Scholiastic Ability Test" to be particularly more *hanful* than others. Therefore, future research on *han* should aim to achieve a larger and diverse sample.

Conclusion

Han in the 21st century

By investigating Korean experience of Neo-Confucian past, and contemporary imaginaries around *han,* this study presents an understanding of *han* grounded through historical experience and social memory. The Neo-Confucian Order and its systematic hierarchy of the Joseon Dynasty subjected the common people to a pitilessly blocked existence, sowing the nuances of *han* within the collective Korean consciousness. As analyzed through the lens of the structural theory of emotions, the Neo-Confucian structure of Korean society—constructed through Korean actors and reactionary ideology against the Goryeo past—sowed the feelings commonly associated with *han*, such as resentment, grievance, and hopelessness. Driven by the thought of continued oppression, injustice and unanswered grievances, contemporary Koreans construct their understanding of *han* as a force of the collective or personal pitiless past that lingers within individuals and society. This understanding, perception and manifestation of *han* depended on how well or poorly addressed or resolved the social or personal memory of a tragic past was in contemporary society. While the notion of *han* is tied to the nuance of past experiences, new *han* or pre-existing *han* could continue or formulate within contemporary society from new tragedies, evocation of social memory, and generational-filial inheritance.

Moreover, this research also offers a sociological and historical approach of interpreting *han* . Rather than understanding *han* as a Korean essence, or a social construction created by social agitators of the 20th century, it offers an interpretation of *han* as a Korean-made emotion-inducing force that was internalized from experiences of the Joseon Neo-Confucian Order. It acknowledges how national concepts such as *han* could not simply be embraced by the masses, without a collective socio-historical experience and pre-conditions that make such ideas appealing and rational for the laypeople. Future research on *han* must delve deeper into the manifestation and realization of *han* in Korean society, with a large and more diverse sample to fully encapsulate contemporary and popular interpretation of *han*.

With the recent events surrounding the failed attempt of President Yoon Suk-yeol to instate martial law, it has become evident that Korean society still had not fully recovered from the authoritarian order of the 1980s. Whether or not the aftermath of this event would become a *hanful* moment of the 21st Century Korea is uncertain, but with many respondents reflecting back to the 80s while interpreting *han* in this research, contemporary events did seem to evoke the social memory of authoritarianism. As some respondents claimed, *han* can also be a progressive necessity. For the masses to overcome injustice and struggle together and construct solidarity, they must congregate behind a common experience—the collective realization of *han*. Thus, we may be passing through a possible mass manifestation of *han,* evoked through the injustices and suffering against their perceived oppressors, to build a better future free of *han*.

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Appendix A: Online post information

Hello!

My name is Uihyeok Jung, a student from Dalhousie University completing a degree with Combined Honours in Sociology and History, and I am reaching out to this community because I am seeking 10 participants for my Honours research study on *han*!

This research aims to answer the reason why and how *han* became accepted in Korean society as a characteristic ethnic "spirit," and how it is understood, expressed and manifested in contemporary Korean society. You will be asked to write about your experience or knowledge of *han!*

You may choose to complete one or both of two questionnaires. One is an open-ended questionnaire that will ask you to answer a list of questions, and the other is a cultural domain analysis questionnaire that will ask you to identify and rank the degree to which *han* is present in specific cultural instances. You are free to write as much as you want in each questionnaire. While the time spent on the questionnaires will differ from individual to individual, I anticipate it will take about 1 hour to complete each questionnaire, and may take longer if you decide to answer at length.

Any information you provide that could identify you will be anonymized. However, Participants are encouraged to use pseudonyms of their own when writing about such information!

Thank you for reading, and also for your participation in this research if you choose so!

To contact me with any questions or concern, please email uh820907@dal.ca

Appendix B: Consent Form

Exploration of Han in Korean Society.

You are invited to take part in research being conducted by me, Uihyeok Jung, an undergraduate student completing a Combined Honours degree in Sociology and History at Dalhousie University, Halifax, Canada. The purpose of this research is to understand how *han* became accepted in Korean society as an ethnocultural or national spirit, and how *han* is understood, expressed and manifests itself in contemporary Korean society. I will write up the results of this research in a paper for my class, called the Honours thesis.

As a participant in this study, you will be asked to complete and answer several questions about context, expression and cultural manifestation of *han.* The questionnaire will take about 1 hour to complete and will be conducted online through Microsoft Forms. You are free to write as much as you want. You will be asked to provide a pseudonym, which I will use if I quote your responses (translated into English) in my thesis.

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. You do not have to answer questions that you do not want to answer (by selecting prefer not to answer), and you are welcome to stop the questionnaire at any time if you no longer want to participate. All you need to do is close your browser. I will not include any incomplete questionnaires in my analyses. If you do complete your questionnaire and change your mind later, you can withdraw your response by contacting me and telling me the pseudonym you chose by March 1, 2025. I will not be able to remove the information you provided after that date, because I will have completed my analysis, but the information will not be used in any other research.

The information that you provide to me will be kept private. I will not know your real name or identity, but I will also fully anonymize it by removing any mention of names or other information that could possibly lead someone else to guess your identity. Any other identifying information that you provide in the questionnaires will be anonymized as well. Only I will have access to the unprocessed information you offer. I may share anonymized information with my research supervisor or classmates to help with the analysis. I will describe and share general findings in a presentation to the Sociology and Social Anthropology Department and in my Honours thesis. With your consent, I will keep anonymized information so that I can learn more from it as I continue with my studies. The information I keep for future research will only be used in studies related to *han* . It will be used in cases that I am the sole researcher of a research project. However, the retention of your information is optional, and is not required to participate in this research. Please check the checkbox if you consent to your information being used for future research. If not, your information will be deleted after the completion of this research.

The risks associated with this study are no greater than those you encounter in your everyday life when discussing *han* or completing online surveys.

There will be no direct benefit to you in participating in this research and you will not receive compensation. The research, however, will contribute to new knowledge to the development and sociological understanding of *han*, and expand sociological knowledge of Korean history, culture, and society. If you would like to see how your information is used, please feel free to contact me and I will send you a copy of my Honours thesis after April 30, or consult https://hdl.handle.net/10222/56276 where a copy will be uploaded. Please note that the thesis will be in English.

If you have questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact me at uh820907@dal.ca. You can also contact the Honours class supervisor, Dr Martha Radice, at the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology, Dalhousie University on (902) 494-6747, or email martha.radice@dal.ca.

If you have any ethical concerns about your participation *i*n this research, you may contact Catherine Connors, Director, Research Ethics, Dalhousie University at (902) 494-1462, or email ethics@dal.ca.

[ ] I consent to participate in this research study. I understand that the researcher may quote my responses in reports or presentations about the research. (required to proceed to questionnaire)

[ ] I consent to have my anonymized responses stored by the researcher for future research (optional).

Researcher's Signature: Uihyeok Jung

Date: 2024/10/31

Appendix C: Open-ended questionnaire on *Han*

Before you start!

Please, create a pseudonym! (if you have completed the other questionnaire, please use the same pseudonym)

Please respond to the following questions, which ask you about *han*. You are free to write as much as you like as long as it pertains to the topic of the questions. You are free to skip certain questions by checking 'prefer not to answer'.

1. **How would you define *han?***

[ ] prefer not to answer

2. **What are some feelings, terms or proverbs associated with *han?***

[ ] prefer not to answer

3. **From what you know, how is *han* expressed within Korean society?**

[ ] prefer not to answer

4. **Tell me a story about *han. (*This can be as simple as stories from your family, legends you have heard somewhere, or folklore on *han*.)**

[ ] prefer not to answer

5. **What are some modern / recent examples of *han* discussed in Korean society?**

[ ] prefer not to answer

6. **Have you ever felt *han* yourself? If so, please describe your experience with *han*.**

[ ] prefer not to answer

7. **Can you feel *han* that is not yours? If so, how can you tell that someone or something is giving off *han* or transmitting *han* to you?**

[ ] prefer not to answer

8. **If you have not experienced *han* yourself, was there any examples of someone you know who experienced *han*, how would you describe their experience with *han*.**

[ ] prefer not to answer

9. **Can *han* embed itself onto objects, places or people? If so, please give me one or more examples, explaining in what ways *han* embeds itself into these examples.**

[ ] prefer not to answer

10. **How can someone become free from *han*?**

[ ] prefer not to answer

11. Do you think *han* is something special to the Korean ethnicity? Why or why not?

[ ] prefer not to answer

12. Do you believe *han* is inherently individual or collective, or both?

[ ] prefer not to answer

13. Is there such a thing as collective *han* of Korean people impacting Koreans today or the past?

[ ] prefer not to answer

14. Do you believe the idea of *han* is more associated with the past than the present? Why do you believe so?

[ ] prefer not to answer

Demographic Information

Gender: What is your gender identity?

A. Female
B. Male
C. Transgender
D. Nonbinary
E. Other (please specify)

[ ] prefer not to answer

Age: What is your age?

B. 18-24 years old
C. 25-34 years old
D. 35-44 years old
E. 45-54 years old
F. 55-64 years old
G. 65+ years old

[ ] prefer not to answer

Educational Attainment: Please select your level of education.

A. Less than secondary school graduation

B. Secondary school graduation, no post-secondary education

C. Post-secondary certificate diploma or university degree

[ ] prefer not to answer

Thank you for your participation!... but before we end!

Please confirm again

[ ] I consent to participate in this research study. I understand that the researcher may quote my responses in reports or presentations about the research. (required to proceed to questionnaire)

[ ] I consent to have my anonymized responses stored by the researcher for future research (optional).

Do you want a copy of the research paper (in English) when it is completed? If so, please click here to enter your email address.. I will send you a hyperlink to the document and a downloadable PDF by April 30, 2025!

Appendix D: Cultural Domain Analysis questionnaire

Note: The precise questions may change slightly before the study begins. Also, this is not how the questionnaires will look in the final Microsoft Forms version, because I will be using Microsoft Forms formatting and style. The questions will be translated into Korean.

Before you start!

Please, create a pseudonym! (if you have completed the other questionnaire, please use the same pseudonym)

***Han* Cultural Domain Analysis**

Cultural Domain Analysis	Music	Moments	Practice	Historical Period
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				

Music

Please provide an explanation of your reason for the presence or absence of han in each music.

[ ] prefer not to answer

Amália Rodrigues - Fado Português

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ARS7Zi-Zpkw

비익련리(比翼連里) (Lovers)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EuSmZzLG1xI

Sakura "Cherry Blossoms"

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AK51LblcEOw

남인수 애수의 소야곡

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wpCItL4dX_o

March for You - Original Song: [First Recording]

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M9vKGPKLz0U

오나라

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IYby_iCcdE4&list=RDb5NHvQiy7Q4&index=18

Merry-Go-Round of Life (from 'Howl's Moving Castle')

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xxsvTvDQKMY&list=RDTZf2SKLn2OE&index=25

今宵花同宿(금소화동숙)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AzRQjAi64xk&list=RDAzRQjAi64xk&start_radio=1

매화

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mh4uAvTyQZQ&list=RDGMEMCMFH2exzjBeE_zAHHJOdxgVMMh4uAvTyQZQ&start_radio=1

月下情人(월하정인)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Ah2K1Er0ik

[교과서국악] 성금연류 가야금산조

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5AQz7iztREQ

여우비 - 이선희 Cover by 대금이누나

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5dhU6ObazXE

Cultural or Social Practices

Please read the following cultural or social practices and rank all instances according to their level of han.

Please provide an explanation of your reason for the presence or absence of han in each cultural or social practices.

[ ] prefer not to answer

Salpurichum (살풀이춤) (a traditional Korean dance)

Tal-chum (탈춤) (A traditional Korean dance)

Taegyo (태교) (Korean Prenatal Education)

Funeral (장례식)

Suicide (자살)

Praying (기도)

Worship (예배)

Ritual (의식)

Sunneung (수능) (Korean College Entrance Exam/ "College Scholastic Ability Test")

Fengshui (풍수)

Moments

Please look the following art, “moments” and illustrations and rank all instances according to their level of han.

[ ] prefer not to answer

Panmunjeom 판문점 (Division border of North and South Korea)

A photo taken of Korean people celebrating Olympic performance during 2002, called “red devils”. (붉은 악마)

An Junggeun's Grave (안중근 묘) (Tomb of An Junggeun, a Korean independence activist, whose body was never found)

Chosen Shrine (남산 조선신궁) (The biggest official Shinto shrine built in Korea during the Imperial Japanese Colonial period that deified Amaterasu and the Meiji Emperor.

Demolished after liberation in 1945)

Ulsan 1920 (1920 년대 울산객사)

Shin Yunbok (artist), Yeolhwajeongin (title of work) (신윤복 월하정인)

A photo taken of the elderly poor in Korea. (가난한 노인 사진)

A picture taken during the Gwangju Democratization Movement 1 (광주 민주화 운동 사진)

A picture taken during the Gwangju Democratization Movement 2 (광주 민주화 운동 사진 2)

일제강점기 함경도 문천군의 관노비 (the "Government Nobi" during the Japanese Imperial period).


44

Historical Periods.

Please read the following historical periods and rank all instances according to their level of han.

Please provide an explanation of your reason for the presence or absence of han in each historical periods

[ ] prefer not to answer

Ancient Korea (고조선 시대) (2333 –108 BCE)

Three Kingdoms Period (삼국 시대) (1~900 CE)

Goryeo Period (고려 시대) (918–1392 CE)

Joseon Period (조선 시대) (1392–1897 CE)

Japanese Colonial Period (일제강점기) (1910–1945 CE)

Early North-South Division Period (초기 한반도 분할 시기) (1948~1961 CE)

Park Jung Hee Government (박정희 정부) (1961~1981 CE)

Minjung Democratization Movement (민중운동/ 민주화운동) (1980~1988)

Post 1997 Asian Financial Crisis (1997 년 아시아 금융 위기) (1997~2001)

21st century Korea (21 새기 한국) (2001~2024)

Demographic Information

Gender: What is your gender identity?

A. Female
B. Male
C. Transgender
D. Nonbinary
E. Other (please specify)

[ ] prefer not to answer

Age: What is your age cohort?

B. 18-24 years old
C. 25-34 years old
D. 35-44 years old
E. 45-54 years old
F. 55-64 years old
G. 65+ years old

[ ] prefer not to answer

Educational Attainment: Please select your level of education.

A. Less than secondary school graduation

B. Secondary school graduation, no post-secondary education

C. Post-secondary certificate diploma or university degree

[ ] prefer not to answer

Thank you for your participation!... but before we end!

Please confirm again

[ ] I consent to participate in this research study. I understand that the researcher may quote my responses in reports or presentations about the research. (required to proceed to questionnaire)

[ ] I consent to have my anonymized responses stored by the researcher for future research (optional).

Do you want a copy of the research paper (in English) when it is completed? If so, please click here to enter your email address. I will send you a hyperlink to the document and a downloadable PDF by April 30, 2025!

Appendix E: REB Final Report

DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY

ANNUAL/FINAL REPORT

Annual report to the Research Ethics Board for the continuing ethical review of research involving humans / Final report to conclude REB oversight

A. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

This report is (*select one*): ☐ An annual report ☒ A final report				
REB file number:	2024-7584			
Study title:	Emergence and Interpretation of Han in Korean Society: A Sociohistorical Perspective			
Lead researcher (named on REB submission)	Name	Uihyeok Jung		
	Email	Uh820907@dal.ca	Phone	9025805818
Current status of lead researcher (at Dalhousie University): ☐ Employee/Academic Appointment ☐ Former student ☒ Current student ☐ Other (please explain):				
Supervisor *(if lead researcher is/was a student/resident/postdoc)*	Name	Martha Radice		
	Email	martha.radice@dal.ca		
Contact person for this report (if not lead researcher)	Name			
	Email		Phone	

B. RECRUITMENT & DATA COLLECTION STATUS

Instructions: Complete **ALL** sections relevant to this study

Study involves/involved recruiting participants: ☒ Yes ☐ No
If yes, complete section B1.

Study involves/involved secondary use of data: ☒ Yes ☒ No
If yes, complete section B2.

Study involves/involved use of human biological materials: ☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, complete section B2.

B1. Recruitment of participants	☐ Not Applicable
B1.1 How many participants did the researcher intend to recruit? *(provide number approved in the most recent REB application/amendment)*	30
B1.2 How many participants have been recruited? *(if applicable, identify by participant group/method e.g. interviews: 10, focus groups: 25)* a) In total, since the beginning of the study: Open-ended Online questionnaire: 20, Cultural Domain Analysis: 10 b) Since the last annual report:	
B1.3 Recruitment for this study is: ☒ complete; or ☐ on-going	
B1.4 Data collection from participants for this study is: ☒ complete; or ☐ on-going	
B1.5 Communication with participants related to this study is: ☒ complete; or ☐ on-going	

B2. Use of secondary data and/or biological materials	☒ Not Applicable
B2.1 How many individual records/biological materials did the researcher intend to access? *(provide number approved in the most recent REB application/amendment)*	
B2.2 How many individual participant records/biological materials have been accessed? a) In total, since the beginning of the study: b) Since the last annual report:	

C. PROJECT HISTORY

Since your last annual report (or since initial submission if this is your first annual report):

C1. Have there been any variations to the original research project that have NOT been approved with an amendment request? This includes changes to the research methods, recruitment material, consent documents, study instruments or research team.

☒ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please explain: Some questions in the Cultural Domain Analysis were deleted for simplification.

C2. Have you experienced any challenges or delays recruiting or retaining participants or accessing records or biological materials?

☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, please explain:

C3. Have you experienced any problems in carrying out this project?

☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, please explain:

C4. Have any participants experienced any harm as a result of their participation in this study?

☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, please explain:

C5. Has any study participant expressed complaints, or experienced any difficulties in relation to their participation in the study?

☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, please explain:

C6. Since the original approval, have there been any new reports in the literature that would suggest a change in the nature or likelihood of risks or benefits resulting from participation in this study?

☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, please explain:

D. APPLYING FOR STUDY CLOSURE

Complete this section only if this is a FINAL report as indicated in section A

D1. For studies involving recruitment of participants, a closure may be submitted when:

☒ all research-related interventions or interactions with participants have been completed

☐ N/A (this study did not involve recruitment of participants)

D2. For studies involving secondary use of data and/or human biological materials, a closure may be submitted when: ☐ all data acquisition is complete, there will be no further access to participant records or collection of biological materials ☒ N/A (this study did not involve secondary use of data and/or human biological materials)
D3. Closure Request ☒ I am applying for study closure

E. ATTESTATION (both boxes *must* be checked for the report to be accepted by the REB)

☒ I agree that the information provided in this report accurately portrays the status of this project and describes to the Research Ethics Board any new developments related to the study since initial approval or the latest report.

☒ I attest this project was, or will continue to be, completed in accordance with the approved REB application (or most recent approved amendment) and in compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS 2).

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

1. Submit this completed form to Research Ethics, Dalhousie University, by email at ethics@dal.ca at least 21 days prior to the expiry date of your current Research Ethics Board approval.

2. Enter subject line: REB# (8-digit number), last name, annual (or final) report.

3. Student researchers (including postdoctoral fellows and medical residents) must copy their supervisor(s) in the cc. line of the annual/final report email.

RESPONSE FROM THE REB

Your report will be reviewed, and any follow-up inquiries will be directed to you. You must respond to inquiries as part of the continuing review process.

Annual reports will be reviewed and may be approved for up to an additional 12 months; you will receive an annual renewal letter of approval from the Board that will include your new expiry date.

Final reports will be reviewed and study closure acknowledged in writing.

CONTACT RESEARCH ETHICS

- Phone: 902-494-3423
- Email: ethics@dal.ca