

***Translating and Interpreting in Korean Contexts: Engaging with Asian and Western Others*, Eds. Ji-Hae Kang and Judy Wakabayashi. Routledge: London and New York, 2021.**

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A valuable recent addition to Korean and translation studies is, without doubt, the title *Translating and Interpreting in Korean Contexts. Engaging with Asian and Western Others*. This monograph, edited by Ji-Hae Kang and Judy Wakabayashi, both with an impressive track record in the world of translation with Asian languages, consists of thirteen chapters written by various authors that coherently present Korean achievements in the field of translation.

The book is very well written and edited, providing a solid research basis for further work on various materials and from various perspectives, presenting the interdisciplinarity of Korean translation and its various dimensions, e.g. historical, contemporary, oral, written, environmental, audiovisual, and more. The monograph opens with an insight into the past, and closes with a vision of the future. The well-thought-out structure of the book emphasizes with every chapter that translation has been a bearer of modernization and progress, allowing for contact with other countries and civilizations. In the *Introduction*, the editors give a signal of what the readers can expect, and what they will receive on reading the entire book – and so the technical layout and thematic arrangement of individual chapters also allows for the gradual assimilation of the presented information. As one reads, one appreciates the clear structure of the two parts: the one made up of chapters with a more historical background and one made up of texts focusing on more contemporary translation issues.

The first chapter by Baek Okkyoung (2021) introduces the world of the historical conditions which translators worked in during Joseon times. The translators' duties and rights, and also human vices, often

resulting in behaviour unworthy of an official in Confucian Joseon, are shown. Speaking about the status of translators at that time, their social perception both by *yangban* (양반) and the lower social strata *chungin* (중인) is also presented.

Yu Jung-hwa (2021), on the other hand, introduces the reader to the world of changes at the end of the 19th century, which was marked by constant social, political and economic tensions, resulting in contesting stagnant conservative norms. Emphasizing the shift in education from “China-focused” to “Western-oriented” (31), she paints a noteworthy track record of the development of translation studies education in Korea, pointing to the factors shaping education and history, relationships and impact on society, as well as the flexibility and changes within institutions. The determinants of Japanese policy and, during the occupation, the shift of emphasis to practical subjects and Japanese language teaching, lead to a summary of historical, political and economic factors.

In the next chapter, Choi Jinsil (2021) describes the problems of translating religious texts with the example of the achievements and profile of the Canadian missionary, Gale, who undertook work on the hagiography of the Buddha. The very fact that it is the work of a missionary is surprising. The author’s social perception in Korea was weighed down by his religion, through the prism of which Gale’s output was assessed without a deeper analysis of his skills. The examples given in the text indicate that Gale translated *The Life of the Buddha* with a deep understanding and a positive attitude. The analysis of the translation of the story beautifully shows the internal transformation of the translator, maturing and consciously making decisions that also show his path of transformation (a kind of a religious paradox). The examples, in turn, show how much the translator has ‘christianized’ the translation of the Buddha’s hagiography through the use of biblical style and terminology.

Yu Han-Nae (2021) surprises the reader with the issue of social Darwinism in Japanese, Chinese and Korean specialist translations. Against this background, the author emphasizes the problem of borrowings expressing previously non-existent concepts in translation, and by quoting the explanations of the translators she highlights the phenomenon of neologisms of various types (old, with a meaning shift, and new). The author discusses social changes as a step towards the modernization of Korea, Japan and China.

The chapter by Theresa Hyun (2021) is devoted to literary translation. The author constructs her chapter around literature during a Japanese colonial period (1910-1930) and North Korean writing (1940-1950). She writes about the work of Han Yong-Un and the influence of Tagore’s

poetics also in the context of translation as a medium of new ways of expressing lyrical mood. Tagore's then Korean translators (Kim Ok and Yang Ju Dong) showed a different approach to the output, not only in the vision of the translation (free vs. faithful) but also in terms of subject matter, which led to a fierce polemic between them. This dispute led, paradoxically, to the flourishing of literature and literary translation. The occupation period led to social changes resulting in women's activity. Foreign feminists, writers and translators also marked their presence at that time, such as the writer Im Sun Duk (who moved later to North Korea), whose output is analysed through the prism of Western trends in translation. In her works, she shows an approach bearing the features of domestication, and thematically, her works show and promote the ideal of woman in North Korea that combines family roles (mothers, wives) and professional roles (activists and workers).

Newspapers as another medium for publishing translations of various kinds of texts as a means of disseminating knowledge are mentioned in the text by Kim Ye Jin (2021). During the Cold War period, newspapers were a propaganda tool, with particularly careful selection of content. The text focuses on the title *Wolgan Amerika*, thanks to which the US could create its own image in South Korea and also influence the policy-making process. The Koreans saw in this cooperation a way to improve the level of education. Particularly valuable are examples showing decisions that perfectly illustrate errors in the light of the art of translation, but which were made consciously in order to manipulate the recipient. They also show problems with the lack of equivalence. One of the most interesting measures was transliteration for foreign proper names.

An interesting chapter is Kang Ji-Hae's (2021) text about the translation of Samuel Smiles' work. The chapter focuses on the phenomenon of retranslation and paratextual elements referring to the background of the translation publication process and its reception. Retranslations discussed over the centuries are a significant contribution to the development of translation in Korea. The discussed eighteen examples of text translation show different approaches to the original (adaptations, versions under different titles, etc.). The author conducts her argument by grouping the retranslations historically, showing also changes in the translation approach and technical and editorial elements as a background in order to create a specific perception. Therefore, it can be said that translation shapes reality in a specific way. It is emphasized that in re-translations, paratextual elements are sometimes more obvious, sometimes more hidden, but thanks to such analyses not only is the phenomenon of translation discussed, but also the

often-overlooked phenomenon of indirect translation.

Institutional translation with the use of the media as a medium disseminating knowledge and shaping certain attitudes and perceptions, and the translator associated with it, but often without specialized knowledge, is looked at by Hong Jungmin (2021). Institutional translation based on industry press texts assumes the presence of three elements, so she examines whether and to what extent the model was implemented in the Korean-English translation process. The article discusses the individual stages until the desired result is achieved, together with examples of errors in the production of the translated text, and provides valuable comments indicating the importance of the translator's competence, the cooperation of the client in translation and cooperation with the proofreader.

Kim Kyung Hye (2021) looks at translation that is *de facto* voluntary work, but done by professionals who care about content with the lack of censorship. She pays particular attention to trans-editing procedures in its various areas. The article focuses on texts devoted to the subject of 'comfort women', and in particular how translations of articles reflect, or to what extent they change the meaning of the topic in this discourse. This shows another face of translation, in which juxtaposition gradually makes the reader aware of the importance of 'correct' translation and the enormous impact of words on the world. The article interestingly shows how different the approach to the original can be, depending on whether the translator is an independent person, or related to an ordering institution.

Lee Seryun (2021) introduces the reader to the world of translations made on online fan forums for serials, while emphasizing the contribution of translators as "productive agents of popular culture" (166). They deal not only with translation (e.g. subtitling), but also information-related activities as they supplement entries on the web, create graphics with text elements from the series or write popularizing texts for a given series. Thus, the author highlights the future fields of exploration for amateur translators, translator-fans or professional translators, often cooperating in the name of popularizing a given element of mass culture and using various types of translation in a variety of manners.

The chapter by Lee Jieun, Choi Moonson, Huh Jiun and Chang Aili (2021), dedicated to environmental translation, sheds light on the current South Korean context, highlighting the increasing demands on limited human and material resources. The authors refer to the most important translation services provided by MOGEF to multicultural families, in light of the demand for specific languages and types (interpretation/translation) over the years, and in specific circumstances.

An important element is to pay attention to the motivation to work and satisfaction with work. The chapter is based on a survey and qualitative research conducted among employees (senior and lower level) in the MOGEF T&I services help centres, which provides holistic comprehensive information to improve services and communication within the centres, and not only to enforce obligations from employees.

The penultimate text by Lee Hyang and Yun Seong Woo (2021) is a departure from the previous review of historical or empirical translation studies and focuses on philosophy in translation. Shedding light on the theoretical approach to contemporary Korean concepts of translation, the authors pay special attention to European philosophers, with particular emphasis on French ones. From the place of translation in philosophy, through the philosophical discourse in translation studies, the authors skilfully paint a picture of the internal development of this research discipline. Thus, areas, approaches, and types of research are discussed, in order to lead the reader ultimately to future, potentially new, interdisciplinary (or not) fields of science and philosophical practice.

Changes in the paradigms of translation, including interpreting, are discussed in the final text at the end of the book. It focuses on interpreting and gives an insight into the South Korean educational foundation for the discipline. However, it not only lists the main academic centres where young students can learn interpretation, but also lists the main journals devoted to the subject. Of particular value is the list of paradigms observable in this discipline (see Won Jong Hwa 2021: 222) in South Korea in the years 1997-2014. It forms the basis for the subsequent quantitative analysis of achievements in particular dimensions of interpreting, which in turn provides and constitutes the basis for the authors to draw conclusions and indicate some prognoses for the future.

Reading these thirteen chapters provides the reader with a comprehensive insight into the topic of translation in Korea, both historically and in contemporary terms. Therefore, this ranking is valuable, because it allows you to sail through the ocean of theoretical knowledge and practical examples, not only referring to individual eras and stages of development of this field, but also to various areas of its implementation. The meaning of the translator, and the knowledge and competences which are particularly desirable in selected types of translation becomes visible. The monograph shows problematic areas, but also gives hope, because in addition to the quality of the work performed, more and more attention is paid to the comfort of work performed by the contractor – thus an attempt to reconcile the interests of both parties, the translation contractor and the client, is visible. What is

particularly valuable in this book, among many other elements, is the examples of errors cited, which for various reasons happens relatively rarely. The book is a valuable asset for Korean scholars and philologists, as well as theoreticians and practitioners of translation.