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“Death to the Translator!” -- A Case Study on Risk in Translation

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Abstract

Controversial, potentially dangerous issues are bound to arise in an increasingly globalised world. Translators, as always, will need to provide linguistic assistance to facilitate understanding for all concerned parties. In this paper, through the exploration of the Japanese *manga* comic medium, I demonstrate an innovative translation methodology, which whilst serving as a pedagogical tool for gaining deeper insight into the difficult nature of the translation process, also provides potential risk management elements that can be employed when dealing with so-called controversial material, such as politically or historically debated texts. This paper explores issues surrounding the translation of Japanese graphic novel *Manga Kenkanryū* which addresses key debated historical and political issues pertaining to Japan-Korea relations. In the past four decades, linguistic, ethical, and risk management issues have been raised in the field of Translation Studies and Linguistics. Researchers such as Venuti and Tymoczko have placed particular focus on the power and visibility (or lack thereof) of the translator in the production of translations of controversial texts. However, risks associated with the translation of controversial texts have not been discussed in great detail, in spite of prominent examples such as mistranslation of political texts in the Middle-East and Europe.

“What must be translated of that which is translatable can only be the untranslatable”.

-- Jacques Derrida (Attridge 258)

Introduction

In this paper, I explore the issues that surround the translation of controversial and multi-modal texts by translating a volume of the Japanese graphic novel ‘*Manga Kenkanryū*’ (*Hate Hallyu: The Comic*) by Yamano Sharin (2005, *pennname*), which I undertook as part of doctoral research (2018). In the process of translating *Manga Kenkanryū*, I propose a methodology for the translation of politically charged texts for pedagogical purposes which, at the same time, tackles the problem of translator and translation invisibility. I argue that translations of politically charged texts offer a specific pedagogical purpose to readers because they exemplify, in ways that cannot be replicated elsewhere, the nature of debate that is intercultural, inter-lingual, and historically and politically bound. The fact that in my project I translate multi-modal media, in this case a *manga*, allows me to highlight in precise ways the interaction of the historical, political, and cultural on the text, and the nature of translation of such texts. Such an endeavour, however, endows the translator with an unequivocally political role, and therefore, I argue here, translation may be conducted following certain guidelines, placing the translator and their decisions in full view of the reader.

In essence, the translator of a project such as this may work in such a way that they are seen at work, countering the outdated assumption that translators are passive conduits or should remain invisible (Venuti).

In the past four decades, linguistic and ethical issues associated with the translation of controversial texts have been discussed in the field of Translation Studies (e.g., Venuti; Akbari; Tymoczko). Researchers such as Venuti and Tymoczko have placed particular focus on the power and visibility (or lack thereof) of the translator in the production of translations of controversial texts (definition of ‘controversial’ discussed later in the paper). Risks, whether they be political, cultural, or personal, associated with the translation of controversial texts, have not been discussed in great detail, although there has been some research that addresses economic risk factors in translation (Akbari), as shall be discussed in more detail below. This lack in scholarship is in spite of prominent examples of translation risk outcomes such as the mistranslation of political texts in the Middle-East and Europe (cf. e.g., Schäffner; Sharifian; ElSheikh), and the infamous case of Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*, which resulted in a *fatwa* that is linked to the assassination of the book's Japanese translator (Weisman), and to death threats followed by assassination attempts on three others (Fazzo; Yalman; Petrou).¹

Issues related to the translation of political texts have been discussed more generally in Translation Studies (TS) literature by scholars such as Schäffner, Tymoczko, Gentzler, and Hermans, but not so much in relation to translation methodology, or the translation process. This gap in literature is particularly noticeable in Asian Studies: there is limited interest in the translation of controversial and/or political discourse, let alone Japan-South Korea relations, with one a few notable examples such as an article by Sakamoto & Allen about anti-Korean sentiments in Japan which features excerpts of texts translated by the article's authors. Translation of political materials must happen, although in a controlled environment with a clearly set-out purpose. The purpose of an activity such as translating excerpts of a political text as part of research has academic value in its own right. And yet, it would be beneficial for someone who is not a speaker of Japanese/Korean (or other languages for that matter) also to have direct access to such cited works, as opposed to potentially biased interpretations, even if technically it would perhaps be impossible to call a translation a "perfect" copy of the source text because of the limitations of translation (e.g., translation of implicit meanings). Translation where the target text is deemed a “perfect” copy is, nevertheless, common practice particularly in political and government documents, where all translations are considered as ‘authentic’ (e.g., Treaty on Basic Relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea) (Shelton). As proposed in this paper, such full translations should be completed following a certain formula.

Risk management in translation

The method of what Akbari terms ‘Risk Treatment’ is categorised as 'Risk Avoidance', 'Risk Reduction'/'Mitigation', 'Risk Transfer', and 'Risk Retention' (5). Examples of such methods may include: Choosing not to engage in a translation after consideration of the risks (avoidance); inclusion of a translator's forward/notes so as to disambiguate

¹ One of these assassination attempts resulted in the death of 37 bystanders, in an event known as the 'Sivas Massacre', where a mob of Islamic fundamentalists stormed into a hotel where Aziz Nesin, the Turkish translator of *The Satanic Verses* was attending a literary event, eventually burning down the premise (Yalman).

precarious terms and explain the translator's approach and/or word-for-word translation or transliteration so as to retain important lexical features found in the ST (thus increasing fidelity to the ST) (reduction/mitigation); conducting a group translation (risk transfer); and finally, decision to accept risk (retention) (Akbari 1-5). The gravest risk requiring consideration in the project at hand, was 'misleading of the readership' through inaccurate translations (production process and product risks). Following an ethical model of risk retention and reduction, in all its imperfection, combined with a foreignizing approach, would seem to be the safest path.

A widely discussed view (e.g. Buden; Bellos) is that translation is “impossible”, especially when considering concepts such as semantic equivalence. But perhaps even more intriguing than this, is translatability with reference to ideology, as translating political texts when viewed from an ethical or philosophical perspective, as discussed in the literature review, goes beyond a matter of replacing words, or even meanings. A TT may be received in any number of ways, not only by the target audience/culture, but also that of the source culture/language through the media, as exemplified by the case of the translations of Salman Rushdie's novel the *Satanic Verses*.

How can something as subjective as “success” in translation be achieved or even determined when there are so many factors, so many “unknowns” (e.g., potential risks, ethical pitfalls) involved? The definition of “success” requires clarification: the translation’s commissioner and their view of “success” may not necessarily be the same as that of the translator, the information conduit or commissioner, not only in the sense of a traditional human being one, but also the expectations and hegemonic discourses created by the source “culture”. There is no such thing as a “risk-free” translation when what is translated is problematic. However, my methodology proposes a solution that mitigates the problem. What may be achieved as a result is increased discussion and dialogue regarding both the issues discussed in source texts, through increased visibility of the translator, the translation process itself. On a shallow, idealist level, “success” in the case of this project, where the translator is also the commissioner and is working freely, is achieving a translation that is 'accurate' and 'faithful' to the source text (ST) on a micro-textual level, thus meeting the purpose of scholarly, pedagogical translation. Any new “controversies” that may arise as a result will need to be dealt with as they happen. Another condition for this particular project to be deemed as a success is a translation which may serve as an *unbiased* scholarly resource, one that is not likely to inflame further tensions. What differentiates this kind of project from other documentary translations can be attributed to the temporal nature of the undertaking.

What is “controversy”?

The primary aim of this paper is to propose a model for a new translation methodology for the translation of texts shrouded with controversy, where even the etymological meaning of individual words is so laden with political and ideological values that the translation needs to be transparent. The chosen text, *Manga Kenkanryū*, has been deemed a ‘racist’ and ‘acidic’ work by critics in both Japan and South Korea (e.g., Itagaki; Sugiura; Song; Kim S. H.), as well as overseas (e.g., White & Kaplan; Sakamoto & Allen; Liscutin).

Controversy, I argue, stems from a loss of communication due to not only differing perceptions of events, but also the actual way these events are referred to through language (and, finally, translation). This communication, however, is not in reference to a sudden formation of linguistic difference, such as may be imagined, for example, upon a literal interpretation of the outcome of the fall of the Tower of Babel.

Communication issues are not always caused by language difficulty, but also differing ideas. Translation and the translator, in this case, play the role of a pedagogical tool or conduit in the furthering of knowledge, understanding and, ultimately, dialogue.

The translation of political texts or texts that are intertwined with political discourse or any kind of ideology can pose ethical challenges for the translator (Vidal & Alvarez; Baker). The translation of controversial material, the origin of ‘controversy’ and the risks the act of translating controversial material poses, may be seen through many lenses and, thus, discussed in relation to a number of broad discourses, for example, “power”. Baker writes on power’s influence on conflict:

Definitions of conflict inevitably draw on notions of power, and vice versa. Traditional scholarship assumed that power is something that some people have over others. Some theorists of power, such as Bachrach and Baratz (1962, 1970), further insisted that power is only present in situations of observable conflict, where one party forces another to act against its will or what it perceives to be its own interest. More robust definitions of power, however, acknowledge that the supreme exercise of power involves shaping and influencing another party’s desires and wants in such a way as to avert observable conflict, that “the most effective and insidious use of power is to prevent...conflict from arising in the first place”.

(Translation and Conflict 1)

Bassnett further notes that ‘the study and practice of translation is inevitably an exploration of power relationships within textual practice that reflect power structures within the wider cultural context’. Baker and Bassnett’s discussion and definitions of power related directly to the cultural turn in translation and, although beyond the scope of this paper, may be further expanded through understanding of the discourse of ‘patronage’.

Indeed, the influence of power is something that a translator has to be well-aware of when making a choice to translate based on, for example, ‘preliminary norms’ (Toury), as this will decide the success of the project (or accomplishment of ‘skopos’). This is of course mostly the case when the project is self-commissioned. In situations where the translator has little choice as to whether to translate or not (or what approach to take), the power relationship is much more complex (Vidal & Alvarez). In this paper I argue, on a number of occasions, that translating for a clearly pedagogical purpose whilst employing techniques such as extended translator’s notes most often associated with such an approach (cf., e.g., Katan) may be a good way of mitigating various project related risks whilst allowing for better informed discussions in relation to complex issues with the involvement of a broader range of the public (the target readership).

What are the risks?

The risks associated with translation can be far reaching, something that was very relevant in the case of this project where the subject text is a source of controversy in Japan-South Korea relations. Translation risk can affect the translator, readership and, sometimes, even those not directly associated with the translation, as was illustrated earlier. Those associated with translation, be it translators or commissioners, must, therefore, acknowledge this fact before proceeding with a project, something which carries both ethical and practical implications.

Risks associated with the translation of a controversial text include creating new controversies, as well as aforementioned tangible risks that affect source text authors, such as potential travel restrictions or prosecution. Indeed, the author of *Manga Kenkanryū* has himself stated that he refused offers of a Korean translation of the text for the South Korean market upon advice from a lawyer that the venture could end with legal prosecution for anyone involved (Yamano). This is due to the existence of specific laws in South Korea banning any activities which may be deemed as anti-Korean or pro-Japanese. Apart from such tangible risks, the translation also risks continuing the controversy by rehearsing and spreading discourse that has been widely criticised as offensive.

Derrida's work has itself seen controversy and, in many ways embodies the very concept. The concept of *différance*, for example, or the idea of meaning differing/deferring in relation to adjacent modifiers is evidence of the difficulty in not deeming something 'controversial' or debated. The translator's struggle in translating controversial terms found within this never-ending chain of signified-signifier and the very often end-result of this being completely overlooked by target readerships must, therefore, be acknowledged and dealt with appropriately by reintroducing the translator and inserting them into the chain. In other words, without falling victim to absolute relativism, one should acknowledge that risk can arise at any moment and/or situation as a result of modification or *différance*, whilst also striving to make this situation visible to the readership.

Why should controversial texts be translated?

One of the key aspects of translating controversial texts is 'risk management'. It may be beneficial for translators to be aware of potential risks, tangible or not, particularly when they are also the commissioners of a project, such as is the case here. The cognitive process of reviewing project risks allows the translator to make better translational decisions and, in the case of this project, the creation of a suitable methodology based on a clear pedagogical purpose. However, that still leaves debate about justification as to why controversial texts should be translated.

Translation, in the sense of pure language or *différance*, may be seen as a key tool in directing us to mutual understanding and acceptance, not through one language, but through common ways of reading discourse. Translating controversial texts provides new potential for furthering understanding of 'the other'. The purpose of such a translation and the difficult decisions that must be made before the commencement of such a task may also be likened to the ideas of existentialist scholars such as Søren Kierkegaard and, later, Karl Jaspers. Kierkegaard in his book *The Concept of Anxiety* illustrates the idea arguing that whilst the thought of absolute freedom is terrifying, it is at the same time empowering in that it helps us become aware of our choices. This may be likened to the translator of the task at hand acknowledging their vast potential as information conduit and conforming to a carefully thought out, purpose specific translation approach. Thus, the translator in a task such as this is effectively an activist for dialogue and discussion through pedagogy.

Although not risk-free, the benefits of a translation such as that proposed as part of this project provide ample justification; the project aims to extend discussion on controversial topics through increased multilingual access to key texts found within relevant discourse (e.g., Japan-South Korea relations), as well as allowing for the

development of a methodology that may be applied to other tasks such as translator training and text analysis.

Translating in a politically tense context

Translating a controversial text carries many of the same risks as the outright creation of a new (controversial) text. The nature of a text poses some risk to the translator as well as the readership. The translator may face backlash for having chosen to translate a text seen as ‘inappropriate’ or ‘acidic’, with potentially tangible implications on ability to travel freely as there is, for example, a law in South Korea which punishes authors of publications seen as either pro-Japanese or anti-Korean (Kr. *chin’il banminjok haengwi*, 친일반민족행위). Thus, the translator needs to be particularly sensitive to the environment in which the original text was published, and to the range and nature of disputes that the original text engendered.

No matter how noble the project purpose, there is always bound to be some kind of risk associated, be it economic or of a more serious nature, such as discussed earlier in relation to the translation of the *Satanic Verses*.

Inadequately managed risk of any kind can lead to any number of negative outcomes, as outlined by Akbari in *Risk Management in Translation*, so much so that some scholars such as Emily Apter in *The Translation Zone: A New Comparative Literature*, alludes to the notion that translation may very well be regarded as a ‘weapon of war’ (16). Akbari thoroughly analyses different kinds of project risk, dividing them into five translation activities: “Market”, “Financial”, “Project”, “Production Process”, and “Product” risks (1-2). In the case of this project, however, only “Production Process” and “Product” risks are of relevance, as the *skopos* is not subject to “commercial” issues. “Production Process” and “Product” risks are of significance, as they relate to the act of translation (possible mistranslations), and “acceptability” (readership reception), respectively (Akbari 2-5). The relevance of translation risk management is reinforced by Pym, who asserts that translators must carefully judge which risks pose the most danger. Pym places risk into a spectrum ranging from “very low” to “very high” risk (1-4), and even briefly alludes to “real”, “dangerous” risk. Pym, for example, asserts: “If and when [translators] misjudge the risks and give real offence, real damage can result”, adding “Those of us who train translators should be thinking in terms of those kinds of actual conflict, where the risks are something more than *metaphorical* [emphasis added]” (10). As discussed in the Introduction, examples of such risk in translation are numerous, ranging from the mistranslation of political texts (Schäffner; Sharifian; ElShiekh), to fallout following translation of literature such as the *Satanic Verses* (Weisman).

Although my project was most likely “low-risk” according to Pym, the scale of such *potentially* dangerous factors could not be overlooked. Here, it must also be noted that such seemingly “metaphorical” risk (e.g., misunderstanding of the TT by readers) too, can bring “real”, “physical” outcomes upon the translator (Maier 11), and other parties, including the commissioner and readership.² In terms of the task at hand, this may include, as discussed earlier, potential bans from entering South Korea or prosecution based on perceived defamation. The main type of risk requiring careful consideration, however, is that of a (con) textual nature, in other words, translator bias and (un)intentionally misleading readers.

² Maier, upon discussing some of the hardships of interpreters at Guantanamo, states: “The interesting thing for a discussion of translation, though, is the suggestion that translating or interpreting can cause such disease that one’s organism becomes literally (as opposed to metaphorically) diseased.” (11)

Approach for translating controversy

Scholars in Translation Studies such as Venuti, Gentzler, and Robinson, utilising readings of prominent thinkers such as Benjamin, Foucault, and Derrida, have over recent years come to favour strongly certain translation techniques that allow for the preservation of the “other”. In *The Translator’s Invisibility: A History of Translation*, advocating a foreignizing approach as a “highly desirable...strategic cultural intervention”, Venuti asserts that translators should try and stray away from total domestication so as to avoid invisibility (14-16). The concept of translator invisibility is a significant one, but perhaps not necessarily in the sense Venuti would argue, claiming domestication (i.e. fluent translation) as dominating both British and American translation culture (15). The idea that foreignization, for example, is an ethical translation strategy should be noted, with Venuti stating that ‘domestication and foreignization indicate fundamentally ethical attitudes towards a foreign text and culture, ethical effects produced by the choice of a text for translation and by the strategy devised to translate it’ (19). In the case of the project at hand, it is crucial to allow the receivers of the source culture to recognise the translated texts as translations through a fair representation of the ST and increased visibility of the translator is crucial. No matter how “toxic” the source texts may seem to some, the approach that must be followed throughout the translation process is the maintenance of the “foreignness” or “otherness” of the originals through a certain amount of fidelity adjusted according to the project purpose, as exemplified later in this paper.

A foreignizing approach to translation, for example, may be defined as generally constituting an emphasis on source text features through glossing, transliteration of ST terms, and inclusion of translator notes. It would, however, be impractical to try and prescribe one micro-analytical, definite list of rules. Instead, the best approach would be to format a set of rules relevant to the current translation project. Above all, the most important step in achieving a pedagogical approach is rendering the methodology (and conduit or translator) visible to the target readership.

Creating dialogue between source text, translator and readership

The approach proposed in this paper aims to foster critique on part of the readership achieved through recognition of the TT as a pedagogical translation. This interaction is achieved through increased visibility of the translator and translation.

Empowering the translator

The central figure in this paper is the translator and, as has been discussed previously, there has been ample scholarship on empowering translators (e.g., Venuti; Tymoczko; Tymoczko & Gentzler; Maier). Much of this research has focused on issues of cultural hegemony and how translators and translation may have an effect on minority cultures (Venuti; Tymoczko & Gentzler; Maier).

The empowerment proposed in this paper, however, is a means of helping the translator *help others* make changes. Translation, whether it be inter or intra-linguistic, can aid in opening new dialogues through the increase of relevant resources. In other words, translation plays a crucial role in fostering communication. The translator of a project such as this should, thus, feel empowered, knowing that they are working towards increased discussion and mediation of all discourse, not just one particular agenda. The possession of this feeling of empowerment is vital in maintaining the push to engage in a translation that may otherwise appear too risky to work with. As

mentioned earlier, the act of such a translation itself is a form of activism aimed at fostering knowledge and learning, however it must be conducted following certain guidelines.

Taking responsibility - precision in guidance

Once the translator is empowered and aware of the responsibilities their “new” power carries, there is a need to act. The translator may try to aim to guide the readership in understanding the source text including all the various implicit subtleties and, in the case of this translation, image. The translation of *Manga Kenkanryū* is aimed to serve a documentary and pedagogical function in the form of a scholarly resource. Translator visibility, discussed earlier, thus, may be manifested in a different manner than in, for example, a novel, with the use of thorough, carefully composed translator notes and additional commentary relating to images that may otherwise be misunderstood by the readership. In the context of literary translation, for instance, translator visibility may carry the aim of preserving a foreign culture through the use of a foreignizing approach. As aforementioned, a foreignizing approach may consist of any number of translation methods, including transliteration, foreign word usage, irregular grammar, and translator’s notes.

The suitability of the latter, translator’s notes, annotation, or paratext (in the sense of elements other than the main body of text) in general, is debated, particularly when considering literary translation (e.g., Genette; Pellatt). Annotations carry a pedagogical function which may also in turn aid in risk mitigation through supplementation of, for example, ST terms otherwise potentially out of reach of the target readership (Delisle, Lee-Jahnke & Cormier). The value of annotations is especially relevant in the case of documentary and scholarly translation, and of particular importance considering the pedagogical nature of the project at hand. Not all translator’s notes, however, are equal. Translator’s notes may be objective or subjective and, in that sense, pose risks such as potential overuse of power by the translator (Pellatt). In the translation of historical documents, for example, translators (who often happen to also be historians) tend to express their own opinions on the ST discourse (e.g., Hou; Wu & Shen).

In the project at hand, translator notes play multiple roles. In addition to informing readers about terms that are difficult to translate and providing information on certain cultural aspects found in the ST (Delisle, Lee-Jahnke & Cormier), translator notes are also used to make sure that readers, regardless of their source language ability, can understand and see the difficulties of reaching an appropriate set of meanings in a controversial context. In other words, translator notes play a crucial function in giving additional visibility to the translator through an explicit exposition of the translation process. Thus, such notes may guide readers so as to their appreciation of the many challenges faced by the translator during the translation process. From the perspective of the translator, this may also be seen as a form a risk mitigation.

Case study: Manga Kenkanryū (Hate Hally: The Comic)

Manga Kenkanryū (Yamano, *Hate Hallyu: The Comic*) sold in excess of 1 million volumes under the publisher *Shinyusha Mook*, despite the ambivalence of the Japanese public’s reception of the series at the time of its initial publication in 2005 (*New York Times*). As of 2011, the series has gone into reprint, suggesting ongoing popularity in some circles (Yamano). It may be argued that Yamano’s work both reflects and sustains the tense relationship between South Korea and Japan. Yamano credits *Manga*

Kenkanryū as having played a key role in initiating the ‘Hate *hallyu/kanryū*’ movement in Japan. The movement countered *hallyu/kanryū* (Kr. 한류, Jp. 韓流) or the “Korean Wave”, a period beginning around the year 2000 in which South Korean popular culture became highly fashionable, with South Korean soap operas, South Korean pop singers, and South Korean actors becoming increasingly visible in Japanese pop culture. Yamano claims the Korean Wave is simply ‘hype’ created by the mass media, as opposed to real valuable cultural exchange (Yamano, n.d.). As a graphic novel aimed at Japanese adults interested in Japan-South Korea relations, *Manga Kenkanryū* by Sharin Yamano contains numerous historical and political terms, some of which contain more than one English equivalent or existing translation. The issue of selection here is important, as some choices may be directly linked to what often sparks “controversy”, thus raising risk.

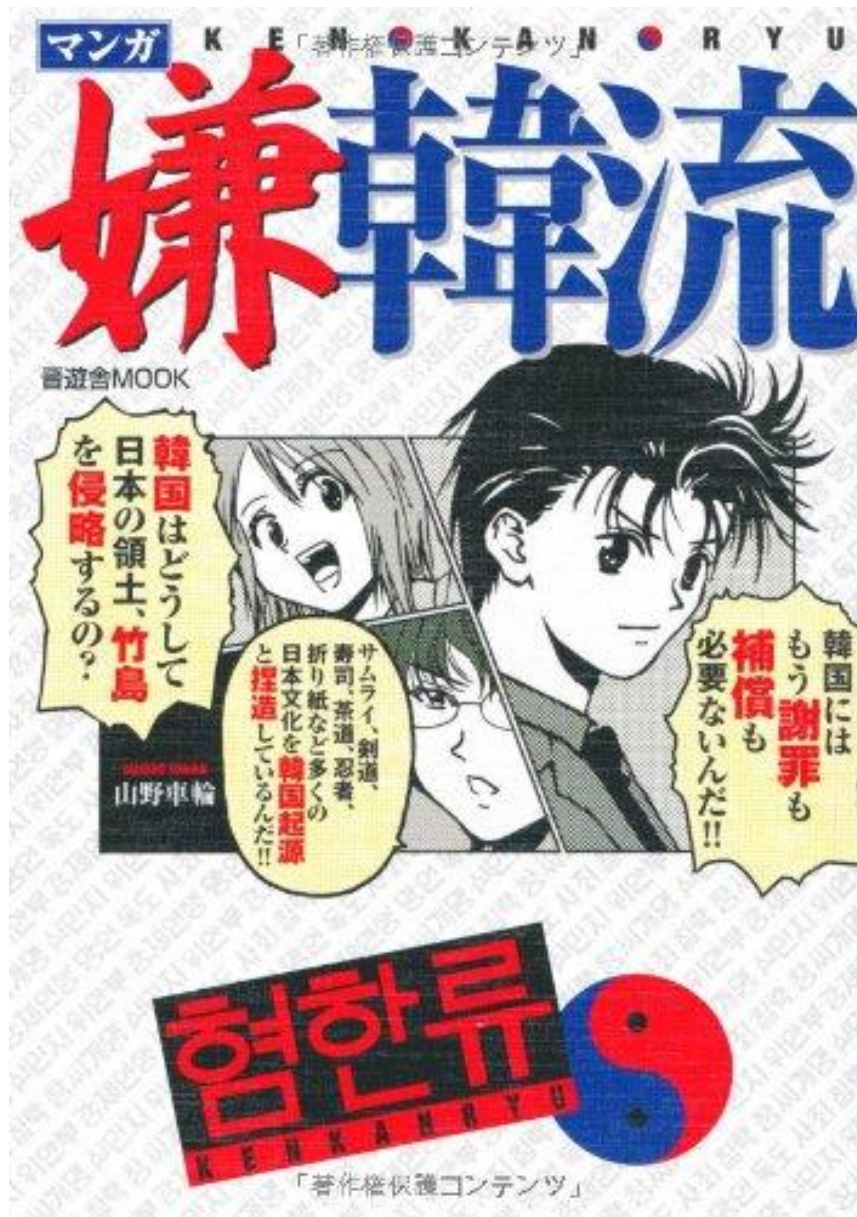


Figure 1. Cover of *Manga Kenkanryū* (Yamano, 2005)

Translator notes (TN) play a big role in helping manage risk, by allowing the translator to explain, to the best of their ability, issues pertaining to certain choices, whilst also allowing for the creation of new, alternative translations. The decision to include TNs for such terms was made on the basis that the target audience may wish to further investigate the issues. An example is the term *kōminka seisaku* (Jp. 皇民化政策), which I translated as ‘Imperialisation of the People policy’, a calque translation (Delisle, Lee-Jahnke & Cormier). Although this term is often translated into English as either *Japanisation*, *Tennōisation*, or *assimilation* (“*kōminkaseisaku*”), each choice is problematic: *Japanisation* can be seen as considerably Eurocentric, as the concept of assimilation into empire is certainly not exclusive to Japan, whilst *Tennōisation* is a term derived from *tennō*, the Japanese word for *emperor* and not *kōmin* (emperor’s people). When compared with *Nazification*, a similar term, *Tennōisation* is in fact illogical and inaccurate in terms of lexical composition. Whereas *Nazification* (*Nazi* + *fication*) makes sense in that it is *making something/someone Nazi*, *Tennōisation* (*tennō* + *isation*) literally means *turning something/someone into the Emperor of Japan*. When back-translated into Japanese (Jp. *tennōka*, 天皇化), the term makes just as little sense. Neither are terms that Japanese characters in *Hate Hallyu: The Comic* would use. Finally, *assimilation*, another lexical option, is on the other side of the spectrum, too broad with no reference to *empire* and thus not in line with the general foreignizing approach utilised as part of my project.

From the perspective of a Japanese person coming in contact with the term *kōminka seisaku*, it is likely that the image that first comes to mind is that of a people becoming part of a/the “Japanese Empire”, or “the Emperor’s people”. Indeed, the term is often defined as such in Japanese dictionaries: ‘A Japanese occupational policy from World War II which colonised Korea [*chōsen*] as part of wartime mobilisation. Under the name of “cultural assimilation” it was aimed at making Koreans loyal people of the [Japanese] Emperor, whilst obliterating national identity. The policy included name change [*sōshikai*] and educational regulations [*kyōikurei*] [my translation]’ (*Nihon Kokugo Daijiten* 741). Thus, it is hard to imagine a Japanese reader envisioning *kōminka seisaku* as a policy that *Japanises*, *Tennōises* (?), or simply *assimilates* a people. Furthermore, *Japanisation* and *Tennōisation* may both be seen as orientalist terms that were coined for a non-Japanese, anglophone readership reading in a context that purely focuses on Japanese imperialism, making both terms exclusive to that particular setting. Nevertheless, all three terms, *Japanisation*, *Tennōisation*, and *assimilation*, have been mentioned in the TNs for reference, as they are commonly used terms when referring to the concept of *kōminka seisaku*.

A further, politically significant term, often raised by those involved in Japan-South Korea relations and the issue of wartime reparations/compensation/apologies, is the very ST term for compensation and reparation, *hoshō* (Jp. 補償) and *tsugunai* (Jp. 償い). Official Japanese government ST documents use both terms, the latter also carrying the meaning of *atonement* (for wrongdoings). Organisations arguing that Japan did not provide sufficient compensation or that the compensation was not “heartfelt” tend to render both terms simply as (financial) *compensation*. Parties which, on the other hand, argue that Japan has done everything it needs to, argue that *tsugunai* indeed refers to both compensation and atonement, thus “no further apologies from the government are required”. My translation project did not aim to argue that translators are to determine which party is “correct”. Rather, the aim was to argue that one function

a translator may wish to offer, is the provision of access to detailed translations of controversial terms, so that third parties may reach a more complete or sophisticated understanding of the finer points of certain debates.

A particularly challenging aspect was the translation of *Korea* itself. As the topics in *Manga Kenkanryū* largely pertain to *Korea*, translating the variations present in the text took on profound importance. Languages that contain words derived from Chinese such as Japanese and Korean, have more than one term for what is generally translated in English simply as *Korea*. These variations carry their own political implications and deeply impinge on the perceptions of the general populations of Japan and South/North Korea.

The Korean Peninsula has seen great unrest in the past century, transforming from a Kingdom to an Empire, then a Japanese colony and, finally, the two separate states of the present day. It is paramount to keep in mind this history when dealing with translation pertaining to Japan-Korea relations, as in a translation with a pedagogical purpose such as this (creation of a research source) there should be well-balanced, informative translator notes that do not try and persuade the readership in any particular direction, allowing for further, independent research on the subject matter.

There exist two general terms for “unified Korea” in Japanese and Korean when written using Chinese characters; *Chōsen/Joseon* (Jp/Kr. 朝鮮) and *Kankoku/Hanguk* (Jp. 韓国, Kr. 韓國), respectively. The former, *Chōsen/Joseon*, was used in both Japan and Korea (prior to division) to refer to the kingdom and, with the addition of *peninsula*, to the *Korean Peninsula* as well. When the Korean Empire was established in 1897, the formal name was changed to *Daikan-teikoku/Daehan-jeguk* (Jp. 大韓帝國, Kr. 大韓帝國), the *Kan/Han* character being used for the first time in Korea in thousands of years. There is debate as to the origins and usage of *Daikan/Daehan*, with some scholars such as Choe Nam-Seon arguing that the two characters when used together phonetically trace their root back to an ancient word simply meaning ‘person who lives in the area that is now the south of the Korean Peninsula’, as opposed to *Dai/Dae* being a glorifying adjective meaning *big* or *great*, as in “Great Korea”. At the time of the establishment of the empire, however, Japan, by far the biggest force in East Asia (and arguably a driving force in both the formation and downfall of the Korean Empire), also used the same character in front of *Japan* to mean *Great Japanese Empire* (Jp. *Dai-Nihon Teikoku*, 大日本帝國). The variations present in *Manga Kenkanryū* and their proposed English translations may be summarised as follows:

Source Text	Target Text
韓・韓民族	Korea/the Korean people
韓国	South Korea/Republic of Korea (ROK)
嫌韓流	Hate Hallyu
韓国人・韓国語/朝鮮語	South Korean/Korean (language)
北朝鮮	North Korea/Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK)
朝鮮・朝鮮人	Joseon Korea/Joseon Korean
朝鮮半島	Joseon Peninsula

Table 1. Comparison of “Korea” related translation choices

When the Korean Empire then became part of the Japanese Empire in 1910, the name of the region reverted back to *Chōsen/Joseon*. Then, after the end of World War Two,

and the Korean War, the peninsula was divided into the North and South, both factions choosing to use different official names based on their political ideologies. The different names used for *Korea* and the *Korean Peninsula* may be summarised as follows:

English	Japanese ³	North Korean	South Korean
Korea (general)	韓国・朝鮮 <i>Kankoku/Chōsen</i>	조선 (朝鮮) <i>Joseon</i>	한국 (韓國) <i>Hanguk</i>
Korean Peninsula	朝鮮半島 <i>Chōsen Hantō</i>	조선반도 (朝鮮半島) <i>Joseon Bando</i>	한반도 (韓半島) <i>Han-Bando</i>
North Korea (DPRK)	朝鮮人民共和國・北朝鮮 <i>Chōsen Minshushugi Jinmin Kyōwakoku/Kita-Chōsen</i>	조선인민공화국/북조선 (朝鮮人民共和國/北朝鮮) <i>Joseon Minjujuwi Inmin Gonghwaguk/Buk-Joseon</i>	북한 (北韓) <i>Buk-Han</i>
South Korea (ROK)	大韓民國・韓國 <i>Daikan minkoku/Kankoku</i>	남조선 (南朝鮮) <i>Nam-Joseon</i>	대한민국/한국/남한 (大韓民國/韓國/南韓) <i>Daehan minguk/Hanguk/ Nam-Han</i>

Table 2: Comparison of naming of “Korea”

The communist North (DPRK) chose to retain the pre/post-imperial era *Chōsen/Joseon* (adding *Democratic People’s Republic*), whilst the South (ROK) took the *Daikan/Daehan* from imperial times (adding *minkoku/minguk*, meaning *republic*).⁴ When referring to one another, the DPRK and ROK opt to use their own selected name, with the addition of North/South for disambiguation. In other words, in the DPRK North and South Korea are called *Buk-Joseon/Nam-Joseon* (北朝鮮・南朝鮮), with the peninsula referred to as the *Joseon Bando* (朝鮮半島). In contrast to this, in South Korea, the North and South are referred to as *Buk-Han* and *Nam-Han* (北韓・南韓), with the peninsula referred to as the *Han-Bando* (韓半島). The same is the case for most adjectival usage, such as in language (Kr. *Joseon-mal* versus *Hanguk-mal*) and the Korean ethnicity (N. Kr *Joseon-minjok* versus S. Kr *Han-minjok*). What complicates matters further is third-party naming. In non-Sino-background languages, both *Joseon* and *Han* are known simply as *Korea*, as in the *Korean Peninsula*, *Korean language*, and *Korean people*. A distinction can only be made with the addition of North/South, but this is rarely done, and does not come of help when dealing with *Korea* prior to division. In Sino-background languages such as Chinese, Japanese, and Vietnamese, there is a balance in usage, with each state referred to using its preferred

³ Chinese and other languages that use Chinese background vocabulary, such as Vietnamese, utilise the same or similar word choice as Japanese, with their own native pronunciation (e.g., the Korean Peninsula in Mandarin Chinese is *Cháoxiǎn Bāndǎo* (Ch. 朝鮮半島) and *Bán đảo Triều Tiên* (半島朝鮮) in Vietnamese).

⁴ *Minkoku/Minguk* (Jp. 民国, Kr. 民國) itself is a South Korean variant of the word *republic* (normally referred to in Japanese and Korean as 共和国/共和國, Jp. *Kyōwakoku*, Kr. *Gonghwaguk*, respectively), first proposed as a suffix to *Daikan/Daehan* during the Korean independence movement of 1919 (Song, 2013).

name, and the Korean Peninsula as the *Joseon Peninsula* (using each language's respective pronunciation), in other words, using the historical reference of the peninsula prior to division.

The multiplicity of terms is a problem when translating, as the usage of either of the two terms, namely, *Joseon Peninsula* or *Han Peninsula*, is not recognised by the opposing faction. On the contrary, the use of, for example, *Chōsen Hantō* (*Joseon Peninsula*) in Japanese, is often met with distaste from South Korea as it is perceived as a reminder of Japanese Imperial rule. Prominent figures in South Korean society such as Lim Jong-geon, ex-president of *Seoul Gyeongje* newspaper, even argue that the Japanese usage of the term “in place” of the South Korean variant may be seen as sympathetic of North Korea, or as taking pride in Japanese colonial history (Lim, 2015).

As a translator with knowledge of the Japanese and Korean languages, as well as the situation surrounding language use in certain circles, I contend that there is a need to provide additional detail pertaining to such ST features. It must be noted, however, that in the case of this project, it is not my intent to guide TT readers to any particular conclusion regarding the ST. The project purpose is to create a research resource, with addition of information in the form of didactic translator notes. Ultimately, whether or not this has been carried out properly will be decided by the readers and the exercise of trying to translate for such a purpose carries further pedagogical value. When translating a text for pedagogical purposes, such as in the case of this project, a choice has to be made as to what to do with politically charged terms, not so much as to appease either side of the divide, but how to (or *if to*) highlight the existence of this “différance”. Whatever the language may be, every reader (native or not) has the potential to (mis)understand a text in any given way.

A translator may assume that there is a certain, “general” habitual understanding/knowledge, common to, for example, Japan and the “general” Japanese public. This assumption does not, however, solve the problem of translation, as the translator and the envisaged target readership have to be accounted for as well. Thus, as discussed in the methodology chapter, just as there is no “total equivalence”, there is no “neutral” or “perfect” translation. The aim of this project, however, is to propose new methods of engaging with this “impossible” task. In other words, the purpose is to allow the target readership to see the many dimensions to understanding a text, through the translation process. This understanding, in turn, may allow for deeper insight into the complexity of controversial issues, such as Japan-Korea relations, ultimately leading to further research and dialogue.

Conclusions

In this paper, I discussed a number of questions surrounding the translation of controversial texts. The term controversy was defined and re-conceptualised so as to incorporate deconstructionist ideas of reading and trying to make sense of discourse. Risk factors directly relating to the translation of the controversial graphic novel, *Manga Kenkanryū*, were discussed in light of both physical (mortal risk) and metaphorical aspects with emphasis on the unavoidable (con)textual risks. Factors surrounding the text pose significant risk which led to the discussion of whether or not anything could be achieved in terms of risk management. I argue that little could be done in eliminating translation related risks as risk is governed more by the ST than how a translation is carried out. What may be achieved, then, is a clear purpose and

project justification – increased discussion about controversial discourse with the hope of attaining increased understanding through discussion. What is more, it was noted that although full safety (zero risk) would only be achievable if a translation does not happen in the first place, there are methods which may help lower risk factors. This led to my proposal for applying a methodological framework to translating as a visible guide. The translator has the power to supplement the ST and potentially mislead the readership, thus I argued that there is a need to provide guidance to the readership in the form of detailed, unbiased translator’s notes which also have the function of risk management. There is great potential for further research, particularly in regards to the development of translation tools used for annotation – in other words, the creation of an augmented translation space. There is room for the development of both academic/professional and general use applications: an extended academic/professional program which may be part of an online learning network for the translation and evaluation of multi-modal texts and translator education, and a separate public application divided into a translation program and a viewing platform for accessing expanded multi-modal translations.

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