

ANELA ILIJAŠ

Problems of Korean Literature's Indirect Translation: A Case Study of Božo Kukolja's Croatian Translation of Korean Poetry

Problemi posrednog prijevoda korejske književnosti na primjeru hrvatskog prijevoda korejske poezije Bože Kukolje

Sažetak

*Kako korejska kultura osvaja cijeli svijet, različiti aspekti korejske kulture postaju sve više i više popularni. Jedan je od takvih aspekata i korejska književnost, o čijoj popularnosti svjedoči i činjenica da se svake godine broj prijevoda korejske književnosti na strane jezike znatno povećava. Budući da korejska književnost steče veliku popularnost, potreba za prevođenjem javlja se i u zemljama gdje koreanistika još ne postoji kao zasebna akademska disciplina. Što se tiče situacije u Hrvatskoj, kod nas se koreanistika nalazi tek u začecima, stoga u državi još nema dovoljno prevoditelja koji bi mogli prevesti korejsku književnost direktno s korejskog jezika. Zbog toga većina korejske književnosti prevedena na hrvatski jezik rezultat je posrednog prijevoda, tj. prijevoda koji je napravljen preko posredničkog jezika. Prvo djelo korejske književnosti prevedeno na hrvatski jezik, zbirka korejske poezije prevedena Božom Kukoljom 1960. godine, također je rezultat posrednog prijevoda. Većinu pjesama iz zbirke *Korejska poezija* (1960.) Kukolja je preveo koristeći se zbirkom ruskih prijevoda korejske poezije *Корейская классическая поэзия* (Korejska klasična poezija) objavljene 1956. godine. Pjesme u toj zbirci bile su prvo prevedene s korejskog na ruski sovjetskim koreanistom Aleksandrom Holodovičem, a poslije bile pjesnički preoblikovane pjesnikinjom Anom Ahmatovom, koja je promijenila strukture pjesama i zamijenila neke pjesničke motive da ruski čitatelji mogu lakše uživati u poeziji. Tako je već dosta udaljen od izvornih djela ruski prijevod korejske poezije postao još dalji od originalnih pjesama u prijevodu Kukolje koji je prevodio pjesme s ruskog jezika, nekad kopirajući greške iz ruske zbirke, a nekad i radeći greške samostalno. Zbog toga se u Kukoljinoj zbirci pojavio velik broj nepravilno prevedenih pjesama te odsustvo ikakvih pojašnjenja potrebnih za razumijevanje korejske poezije. Naprimjer, jednim od problema Kukoljine zbirke bilo je i odsustvo pojašnjenja povijesnog konteksta poezije. Pogledajmo Kukoljin prijevod pjesme „이별하던 날에“ („Na dan našeg rastanka“) korejskog pjesnika Honga Seo-bonga.*

*Pa zar su se vode Amnokkana
Zato prestale plaviti,
Što je u času našega rastanka
Iz mojih očiju potekla krv?
I reče sjedokosi veslač:
„Svašta vidjeh na svijetu, ali ovako nešto doista prvi put!*

(Kukolja 1960)

Bez predznanja povijesnog konteksta, ova pjesma će hrvatskim čitateljima izgledati kao ljubavna pjesma gdje je glavna tema rastanak dvaju ljubavnika. Međutim, ova pjesma opisuje značajan povijesni događaj: mandžursku invaziju. Kad su Mandžurci osvojili Joseon (tadašnji naziv Korejskog kraljevstva), odveli su dva korejska princa kao zarobljenike. Rastanak opisan u ovoj pjesmi jest rastanak korejskog naroda sa svojim prinčevima. Rijeka Amnok vrlo je važna u tom kontekstu jer je to rijeka koja je razgraničavala Joseon i Kinu gdje su tad vladali Mandžurci. Vode rijeke Amnok koje su pocrvenile zbog krvavih suza simboliziraju tugu i poniženost korejskog naroda tijekom te povijesne tragedije. Tek znajući taj povijesni kontekst, čitatelji mogu shvatiti osjećaje koje je pjesnik uložio u ovu pjesmu, međutim, u Kukoljinoj zbirci nema ni jednog objašnjenja. Ovaj rad provodi detaljnu usporednu analizu izvornih pjesama, ruskog i hrvatskog prijevoda te na temelju provedene analize otkriva probleme posrednog prijevoda korejske književnosti na primjeru Kukolja prijevoda. Najznačajniji otkriveni problemi Kukolja prijevoda jesu nepravilno napisana imena pjesnika, pogrešno pripisano autorstvo, izmijenjena struktura pjesama, djelomični prijevod, pogrešno interpretirani idiomi, netočni ili izbrisani geografski nazivi, neispravno korištenje gramatičkog roda, odsustvo bilo kakvih objašnjenja specifičnih korejskih kulturnih pojmova te povijesnog konteksta poezije. Predstavljene problemi dokazuju da posredni prijevod nije adekvatan za prevođenje strane književnosti, pogotovo književnosti poput korejske koja dolazi iz kulture koja se vrlo razlikuje od hrvatske kulture i za koju je potrebna interpretacija stručnjaka.

Introduction

As the Korean Wave spreads around the world, various aspects of Korean culture are becoming popular abroad. One of these aspects is Korean literature, and while it is still not as popular as Korean music or Korean film culture, the number of Korean books translated into foreign languages is increasing every year. According to the Literature Translation Institute of Korea, 180 Korean literary works were translated into 29 different languages with assistance from the Literature Translation Institute of Korea in 2021. This marked the largest number of works translated in a year since LTI Korea was established in 1996 (Song 2021). As Korean literature gains more and more attention, the need for translations of Korean literature arises even in small countries where Korean

Studies still do not exist as a separate discipline, and there are no experts in the field of Korean language translation. In such cases, the absence of Korean language translators forces publishers to resort to the so-called indirect translation. Indirect translation involves translating from a translated version of the ultimate original source text (e.g., source language – Korean, intermediary language – English, target language – Finnish).

At the time of writing this thesis, there are almost no experts in the field of Korean Studies who can introduce Korean culture in Croatia. The lack of translators fluent in Korean has resulted in the fact that as of 2023, only a handful of Korean fiction books have been translated into Croatian. The oldest of them is a collection of Korean poetry published in 1960, which remains the only Korean poetry collection available in Croatian. This poetry collection was the first attempt to introduce Korean literature to Croatia, and its significance is immense. However, upon closer examination, several issues with this book become apparent. Croatian translations significantly differ from the original poems. The structure of the poems has been altered, geographical names in the poems are misspelled or omitted, and even the main message of some poems is lost. Identifying the authors of these poems is challenging because the names of the poets are not Romanized according to the standard Korean romanization. The reason behind these mistranslations in the poetry collection is that Božo Kukolja, the translator of Korean poems in this book, did not know the Korean language. He primarily relied on Russian translations of Korean poetry to produce the Croatian translations. Therefore, the mistranslation problems in this book can be attributed to the practice of indirect translation.

In this research, we aim to explore the types of mistranslations and problems that can arise as a result of indirect translation of Korean literature, using Božo Kukolja's Korean poetry translation as a case study. Given that Kukolja's poetry collection marked the initial endeavor to introduce Korean literature in Croatia, the author of this thesis hopes that this study will exert a significant influence on the translation of Korean literature in Croatia and, more broadly, on the translation of Korean literature into foreign languages.

Historical background

In 1960, the first and only collection of Korean poetry translated into Croatian was published. The book *Korejska poezija* (*Korean Poetry*) was released as a part of the *Pjesnici i narodi* (*Poets and Nations*) series, which aimed to introduce poetry from exotic countries to Croatian readers. Some of the books in this series were translated by Božo Kukolja, a Croatian literary translator and author. While Kukolja originally specialized in translating Russian and French

literature, he also ventured into translating works from other countries, relying on Russian and French translations as intermediaries. For his collection of poems titled *Korejska poezija*, Kukolja primarily relied on Russian translations.

Kukolja's collection of poems can be roughly categorized into "traditional poetry" (84.6%) and "modern poetry" (15.4%). It's important to note that when Kukolja compiled this collection, he based it on Russian translations from the 1950s. During this period, Russia was part of the Soviet Union and had friendly relations with the newly established North Korea. Consequently, the "Korean modern poetry" in Kukolja's collection is North Korean poetry. As most of the original texts of North Korean poetry translated by Kukolja cannot be found in South Korea, where this research took place, this paper will focus solely on the analysis of the translation of traditional poetry.

All the traditional poems in Kukolja's collection were sourced from a Russian poetry collection of Korean poetry titled *Корейская классическая поэзия* (*Korean Classical Poetry*) published in 1956. This was the first-ever collection of traditional Korean poetry published in Russia. The Russian translation was meticulously prepared by the Department of Korean Language Studies at Leningrad State University. Alexander Holodovich, the department's professor and dean, oversaw the verbatim translation process with the assistance of department staff and graduate students. Holodovich entrusted this translation to Anna Akhmatova, a renowned Russian poet, requesting her to edit the poems in a literary manner. Although Akhmatova is now known as one of the most important European poets of the 20th century, in the 1950s Akhmatova couldn't publish her poems due to political conflicts with the Soviet government, so she was only able to make money by doing part-time jobs such as editing the literary translations. Later, Akhmatova would tell her friends that she really hated doing editing part-time jobs, but Korean poetry was an exception because it had its special mysterious charm (Kozubovskaya and Malysheva 1998).

In 1956, a collection of traditional Korean poetry edited by Akhmatova was published. She edited the poetry to make it resonate naturally with Russian readers. Akhmatova removed several geographical names unfamiliar to Russian readers, employed epithets and metaphors characteristic of Russian poetry, and adjusted some words to establish a poetic rhythm. Additionally, owing to the relative length of Russian words compared to Korean words, Akhmatova altered the structure of the poems, converting one line in the original poem into two lines in the Russian translation. For instance, three-lined *sijo* were transformed into six-lined poems. (However, contemporary Russian translators like M.V. Leonov and Roman He tend to preserve the three-lined structure of *sijo*, demonstrating that it is indeed possible to maintain this structure when translating *sijo* into European languages.) Given that Božo Kukolja did not have access

to original poems, in his translation he followed all the modifications made by Akhmatova.

Methodology

To investigate the types of mistranslations and issues that can arise from the indirect translation of Korean literature, our research focused on Božo Kukolja's Korean poetry translations. We employed a comparative analysis approach to identify and describe discrepancies between the original texts in the source language (Korean poems) and the translations in the target language (Kukolja's versions of the poems). Additionally, our comparative analysis included the translations from the 1956 Russian poetry collection. This was crucial to determine whether some of Kukolja's mistranslations were directly inherited from the inaccurate Russian translations or if they were a result of Kukolja's own translation choices.

Kukolja's poetry collection includes various types of Korean traditional poetry: goryeo gayo, gasa, hanshi, and sijo. It is important to explain each of these genres. Goryeo gayo (고려 가요) is defined by Lee and Kim (1995) as a folk song with the rhythmic unit of three syllables which was derived from the singing and dancing that was performed during the rituals. Gasa (가사) is defined by Go (2017) as a poetic form with the rhythmic unit of four syllables which is characterized by repetition and parallelism. She also mentions that while gasa does not have a defined length, it tends to be a very long poetic form. Hanshi (한시) is described by J. Kim (1984) as a Korean poetry written in Chinese characters. He explains that before the invention of Hangeul, classical Chinese was the primary written language in Korea, and even after the invention of Hangeul, Chinese remained the primary medium of record and expression among Korean intellectuals, which led to creation of numerous poems written in Chinese. Sijo (시조) is defined by J. Kim (1993) as a traditional Korean poetic form of three lines averaging 45 syllable counts in a stanza, each line made up of four phrase-groupings with a major pause after each grouping. He explains that the word sijo consists of two Sino-Korean characters meaning "time" and "rhythm"/"harmony," so it is sometimes called "the song of seasons," but exact etymology of the word still remains a matter of debate. A poetic form that includes more than one sijo in a row is called yeonsijo (연시조).

The research process was divided into four main steps: 1) identifying the poets, 2) search for the original poems, 3) comparative analysis of original poems and their Croatian translation, and 4) summarizing problems of the indirect translation based on the comparative analysis. In the first step of the research, it was important to find out poets' original names (names written in Hangeul),

because knowing poets' original names was crucial in finding original texts of Korean poems. The comparative analysis was designed as compare-and-contrast work where we investigated how precise Croatian translations are and how well they reflect the main message and motifs from original poems. The last step was to summarize the results of the comparative analysis in order to see what common mistranslations happen in the indirect translation.

Results of the comparative analysis

The mistranslations in the analyzed poems could be classified into the following categories: a) changed structure, b) incomplete poems, c) false attribution, d) misspelled names, e) mistranslation of the idioms, f) misspelled geographical terms, g) omitted geographical terms, h) wrong usage of grammatical gender, i) absence of explanatory footnotes, j) absence of historical background's explanation, k) uneven number of different types of poetry. Let us examine each of these categories.

Changed structure

All the translated poems' structures were different from the original poems' structures. In the case of sijo, the three-lined structure was replaced by the six-lined structure, with each line from the original poem translated into two lines. Let us compare the three-lined structure of Yu Eung-bu's poem “간밤에 부던 바람” with Kukolja's six-lined translation.

Original poem:

간밤에 부던 바람 눈서리 치단 말가.
落落長松(낙락장송)이 다 기울어 가노매라.
하물며 못다 핀 꽃이야 일러 무삼하리오.
(Sim 1972: 29)

Božo Kukolja's Croatian version:

*Prošle je noći padao snijeg,
Duvao vjetar i sipilo inje.
I čvrsta su borova stabla
Oborena sva nice.
A što tek da kažem o cvijeću,
Koje više ne će procvasti?*
(Kukolja 1960: 13)

The same principle was applied during the translation of gasa, where one line in the original gasa was translated into two lines. The three-lined verses of two Goryeo gayo appearing in this poetry collection were translated unevenly. In some cases, there was a five-lined structure, sometimes a seven-lined structure, at times an eight-lined structure, and even a nine-lined structure. In the case of four-lined hanshi appearing in that collection, it was translated into six lines, which is also illogical. Let us compare the four-lined structure of Jeong Chol's hanshi with Kukolja's six-lined translation.

Original poem:

渚鷺雙雙白
江雲片片青
世間無別恨
吾亦一杯停
(Cheonggudaehak 1961)

Božo Kukolja's Croatian version:

*Ždralovi – napustivši moju topolu,
Odletješe, i ne će se dugo vratiti.
Tko zna, hoću li se ja ikada još vratiti,
Otputovavši u daleku zemlju?
Odlazak, dolazak – nije li sve to isto?
Pijmo, dakle, prijatelji.
(Kukolja 1960: 14)*

While the changed structure of sijo and gasa could be justified to some extent, as doubling the number of lines was not uncommon in Western translations of Korean traditional poetry in the past (see Jaihiun J. Kim (1993) and Peter H. Lee (2002)'s translations of sijo), the altered structure of goryeo gayo and hanshi lacks logic and disrupts the poetic harmony of the poems. Modern translators of Korean poetry emphasize the importance of preserving the original structure of the poem, and, who knows, maybe Kukolja would have also translated these poems while maintaining the original structure if he had access to the original Korean poems. Unfortunately, the only resources available to him were already translated poems with altered structures.

Incomplete poems

Božo Kukolja presents four yeonsijo in his poetry collection: Yi I's "고산구곡가," Yun Seon-do's "오우가," Yi Hwang's "도산십이곡," and Yi Hyeon-bo's "어부단가." However, none of these yeonsijo is translated in its entirety. Let us

compare Yi Hyeon-bo's yeonsijo “어부단가” with Kukolja's incomplete translation of this poem.

Original poem:

<제1수>

이 등에 시름업스니 漁父(어부)의 生涯(생애)이로다.
一葉片舟(일엽편주)를 萬頃波(만경파)에 띄워 두고,
人世(인세)를 다 니젯거니 날 가는 주를 안가.

<제2수>

구버는 千尋綠水(천심녹수) 도라보니 萬疊青山(만첩청산)
十丈紅塵(십장 홍진)이 언제나 가렛는고
江湖(강호)에 月白(월백)하거든 더욱 無心(무심)하애라.

<제3수>

靑荷(청하)에 바블 싸고 녹류에 고기 껴여,
蘆荻花叢(노적화총)애 배 매아두고,
一般淸意味(일반청의미)를 어니 부니 아르실고.

<제4수>

山頭(산두)에 閑雲(한운)이 起(기)하고 水中(수중)에 白鷗(백구)이
飛(비)이라.

無心(무심)코 多情(다정)하니 이 두 거시로다.
一生(일생)애 시르믈 닛고 너를 조차 노로리라.

<제5수>

長安(장안)을 도라보니 北闕(북궐)이 千里(천리)로다.
漁舟(어주)에 누어신니들 스치 이시랴.
두어라, 내 시름 아니라 濟世賢(제세현)이 업스랴.
(Sim 1972: 846, 102, 1077, 512, 906)

Božo Kukolja's Croatian version:

Nagneš se i vidiš: plave se vodeni bezdani.

Osvrneš se natrag – zelene se planine.

I crna prašina ovoga zlog svijeta

Ne doseže nikad do tih blaženih mjesta,

Jasan je nad vodama mjesec,

Bezбриžna mi je duša.

Šaku riže zaviti u list lotosov

I na vrbovu grančicu nanizati riba.

Svoj čamac laki privezati za trstiku,

Što raste iznad dubokih voda.

Recite, kome je dano da spozna

Čar zanosnijega života?

(Kukolja 1960: 20, 21)

Each of Kukolja's translations is missing some verses, and in the case of Yi Hwang's "도산십이곡," only one verse is translated. In the case of "도산십이곡," it was not Kukolja's fault since in the Russian poetry collection, the verses from Yi Hwang's "도산십이곡" are published in an order that is very different from the original order, and there is no mention that these verses are not separate poems but are all parts of "도산십이곡." Therefore, Kukolja could not have known that this sijo is a verse from a yeonsijo. However, in all other cases, he deliberately translated only a few verses from each yeonsijo. Even though a yeonsijo consists of many sijo, it is a single poetic unit, so translating only a few verses from yeonsijo is completely incorrect and changes the whole meaning of the poem. Kukolja repeated the same mistake when he was translating goryeo gayo: he translated goryeo gayo "동동" and goryeo gayo "청산별곡," and in both cases, he missed some verses. Just like yeonsijo, goryeo gayo is a single poetic unit, and an incomplete translation of it is a translator's mistake. Also, Kukolja's poetry collection features one gasa: "사미인곡" by Jeong Chol. This gasa also was not translated completely; Kukolja only translated the seosa (서사 序詞) – the first part of the gasa. Of course, just like in the case of yeonsijo and goryeo gayo, gasa is a single poetic unit and should be translated in its entirety.

False attribution

Two false attributions were identified in Kukolja's poetry collection. The first occurred in the case of the gasa "사미인곡," which was erroneously labeled as a folk song, and "Čon Čolj" (a misspelling of Jeong Cheol) was incorrectly attributed as the title of the poem. In reality, Jeong Cheol is the author of this gasa, and the correct title is "사미인곡." The second attribution issue arose with the sijo "말하면 잡류라 하고." In Kukolja's poetry collection, this sijo was attributed to Kim Sang-yong, while the actual author is Ju Ui-sik. In the first case, it was an inadvertent error on Kukolja's part, and in the second case, it was a false attribution that initially appeared in the Russian poetry collection, which Kukolja adopted.

Misspelled names

Since Kukolja did not know Korean, he attempted to transliterate the Cyrillic versions of poets' names from a Russian poetry collection into the Croatian Latin script. Consequently, the names of numerous poets became highly distorted, making it challenging to identify them. In the languages where the main

writing system is Latin script (like in the case of the Croatian language), Korean names should be romanized according to Revised Romanization of Korean, because this standardized system ensures a more accurate and consistent representation of Korean names. The table below illustrates the disparity between the names in Kukolja's poetry collection and the names romanized according to the Revised Romanization of Korean.

Poets' names in Kukolja's poetry collection	Cyrillized versions of poets' names in Russian poetry collection	Original names of the poets written in hangeul	Poets' names romanized according to revised romanization of Korean
Nam I	Нам И [Nam I]	남이	Nam I
Kim Čon So	Ким Чон Со [Kim Chon So]	김종서	Kim Jong-seo
Son Sam Mun	Сон Сам Мун [Son Sam Mun]	성삼문	Seong Sam-mun
Ju In Bu	Ю Ын Бу [Yu Yn Bu]	유응부	Yu Eung-bu
Čon Čholj	Чон Чхоль [Chon Chhol']	정철	Jeong Cheol
Li I	Ли И [Li I]	이이	Yi I
Jun Son Do	Юн Сон До [Yun Son Do]	윤선도	Yun Seon-do
Sin Him	Син Хым [Sin Hym]	신흠	Sin Heum
Li Hvan	Ли Хван [Li Hvan]	이황	Yi Hwang
Li Hjon Bo	Ли Хён Бо [Li Hyon Bo]	이현보	Yi Hyeon-bo
Li Sun Sin	Ли Сун Син [Li Sun Sin]	이순신	Yi Sun-sin
Kim Sam Hjon	Ким Сам Хён [Kim Sam Hyon]	김상헌	Kim Sang-heon
Ču Ji Sik	Чу Ый Сик [Chu Yu Sik]	주의식	Ju Ui-sik
Li An Nulj	Ли Ан Нуль [Li An Nul']	이안눌	Yi An-nul
Čo Hon	Чо Хон [Cho Hon]	조헌	Jo Heon
Čhon Kim	Чхон Кым [Chhon Kym]	천금	Cheon Geum
Kim San Jon	Ким Сан Ён [Kim San Yon]	김상용	Kim Sang-yong

Son In	Сон Ин [Son In]	송인	Song In
Li Von Ik	Ли Вон Ик [Li Von Ik]	이원익	Yi Won-ik
Hon So Bon	Хон Со Бон [Hon So Bon]	홍서봉	Hong Seo-bong
Li Van	Ли Ван [Li Van]	이완	Yi Wan
Hvan Čin I	Хван Чин И [Hvan Chin I]	황진이	Hwang Jin-i
Kim Jon	Ким Ён [Kim Yon]	김영	Kim Yeong
Kim Su Čžan	Ким Су Чжан [Kim Su Chzhan]	김수장	Kim Su-jang
Kim Čhom Thek	Ким Чхон Тхэк [Kim Chhon Thek]	김천택	Kim Cheon-taek
An Mun En	Ан Мун Ён [An Mun Yon]	안민영	An Min-yeong

Table 1: Comparison of original poets' names, its Revised Romanized versions, and versions in Kukolja's poetry collection and Russian poetry collection

Mistranslations of the idioms

What we often encountered during the analysis were mistranslations of Korean idioms that led to a misinterpretation of the poem's meaning. One such mistranslation can be observed in Kukolja's translation of Yi Hwang's "산전에 유대하고."

Original poem:

山前(산전)에 有臺(유대)하고 臺下(대하)에 有水(유수)로다
 떴든 갈며기는 오명가명 하거든
 엇다다 皎皎白駒(교교백구)는 머리 마음 하는고
 (Sim 1972: 519)

Verbatim translation of the original poem:

There is a pavilion in front of the mountain, and water flows under the pavilion.

Flocks of seagulls fly back and forth.

Why does the white colt*'s heart is so far away from here?

*white colt = metaphor for "a man of virtue"

Božo Kukolja's Croatian version:

*Ispred brda, gle, stoji sjenica,
A ispod sjenice protječe rijeka.
Jato galebova, bijelih kao snijeg,
Kruži i igra se nad vodom.
O ptice! Zašto se vi nikada
Ne ćete poigrati sa mnom?
(Kukolja 1960: 20)*

Verbatim translation of Kukolja's version:

Look, here is a pavilion in front of the mountain,
And the river flows under the pavilion.
Flocks of gulls, white as snow,
Fly in circles and play above the water.
Oh birds! Why do you never
Want to play with me?

In the last line of the original poem, the poet uses the idiom 皎皎白駒 (교교백구), which could be literally translated as “white colt,” but it carries a metaphorical meaning of “a man of virtue.” The poet is pondering why a man of virtue sets his heart so far away from nature. In other words, he criticizes wise men who only concern themselves with the mundane world, disregarding the beauty of the surrounding nature. However, in Kukolja's translation, the meaning is completely altered. This mistranslation can be traced back to the Russian translation of the poem (“Отчего же эти чайки/ Не хотят со мной играть?” – “Why don't these seagulls/ Want to play with me?”). It is plausible that the idiom 皎皎白駒 confused Holodovich, who was preparing the verbatim Russian translation, as the Chinese character for the colt 駒 in the idiom 皎皎白駒 somewhat resembles the Chinese character 鷗, which means seagull and shares the same pronunciation as 駒 in Korean, both pronounced as [구]. Since seagulls were already mentioned in the second line of the original poem, Holodovich might have mistakenly thought that those setting their hearts far away were seagulls. Consequently, he interpreted the last line as the lyrical subject's sadness over the seagulls' neglect. Kukolja, not knowing Korean, couldn't verify the original text and thus replicated the mistake from the Russian translation.

Another good example can be seen in Kukolja's translation of Kim Yeong's sijo “소년 십오 이십시를.”

Original poem:

少年(소년) 十五二十時(십오이십시)을 매양만 너겨더니
三十四五十(삼사오륙십)이 어언간의 지나거다

남은 해 七十八九十(칠팔구십)으란 秉燭夜遊(병촉야유)하오리다
(Sim 1972: 583)

Verbatim translation of the original poem:

When I was a boy, I always counted only tens and twenties,
So thirties, fourties, fifties, sixties have passed before I knew it
The rest of my years: seventies, eighties, nineties, I will ravel day and
night.

Božo Kukolja's Croatian version:

*Kada mi je bilo dvanaest godina
Mislio sam, da mladost nema kraja
Ali godine su neprimjetno prolazile
I ispunilo se pola stoljeća.
Pa što onda? Zapalit ću svijeću,
Da probančim ostatak života.
(Kukolja 1960: 26)*

Verbatim translation of Kukolja's version:

When I was twelve years old
I thought that youth has no end
But the years passed imperceptibly
And half a century has passed.
So what? I'll light the candle
To revel for the rest of my life.

In the original poem, Kim Yeong uses the word 秉燭夜遊 (병촉야유), which consists of four Chinese characters: 秉 – to take, 燭 – light of the lamp or a candle, 夜 – night, 遊 – have fun. However, the word 秉燭夜遊 has the following meaning: “when the atmosphere is good, the excitement of having fun during the day is insufficient, so one continues to have fun until midnight” (Naver Hanja Dictionary 2018). It is probable that Holodovich, who was preparing the translation of the original poem into Russian, was unfamiliar with the meaning of this idiom. Consequently, he translated each character literally, resulting in the motif of lighting the lamp in the Russian version. Kukolja replicated this mistranslation in his version. This illustrates that even when translating directly from the original language, such mistranslations can occur if the translator is not familiar with the language's idioms. In the case of indirect translation, these mistranslations can become even more pronounced.

Misspelled geographical terms

Many Korean and Chinese geographical terms were misspelled in Kukolja's translation because he was transliterating Russian names for those geographical terms. For example, in the poem “군산을 삭평턴들,” poet Yi Wan mentioned the Chinese lake Dongting. Let us compare his poem with Kukolja's translation.

Original poem:

君山(군산)을 削平(삭평)턴들 洞庭湖(동정호) 너를랴다
계수를 버히던들 달이 더욱 밝을 것을
뜻 두고 이루지 못하니 늙기 설워하노라
(Sim 1972: 109)

Verbatim translation of the original poem:

If I could raze Junshan Island* to the ground, the Dongting Lake* would
be wider,
If I could cut down the cinnamon tree*, the moon would be brighter,
It is sad to grow old without achieving that even though I have a will!

* Junshan Island – an island in China on Dongting Lake

* Dongting Lake - a large lake in Hunan Province (China), often mentioned in Chinese history and literature

* cut down the cinnamon tree – according to Chinese legend, there is a cinnamon tree on the moon. The man named Wu Gang (吴刚) received a punishment of endlessly cutting down a self-healing cinnamon tree on the moon.

Božo Kukolja's Croatian version:

*O, da je sva brda izravnati sa zemljom,
Bilo bi više mjesta za jezero Duntin.
O, da je na mjesecu posjeći sva stabla,
Bila bi jače obasjana noć.
Ali kako je gorko spoznati vlastitu nemoć
I htjeti, a ne moći ništa učiniti!*
(Kukolja 1960: 25)

Verbatim translation of Kukolja's version:

Oh, if I could raze all mountains to the ground,
Duntin Lake would become more spacious.
Oh, if I could cut down all trees on the moon,
It would brighten the night.
But how bitter it is to realize one's own powerlessness
And to want, but not being able to do anything!

While Croatian spelling of this lake is also Dongting, Kukolja misspells it as “Duntin,” which is a mistake that happened because he copied Russian name for this lake – “Дунтин (Duntin).”

Also, in his poem “이 몸이 죽어 가서,” Seong Sam-mun mentions the mountain 蓬萊山 from Chinese mythology. The Korean pronunciation of that mountain is Bongnae, but in the Russian translation, this mountain was rendered as “Pynlaj,” which is a Chinese pronunciation of these characters. This likely happened because Holodovich was also proficient in Chinese, and he accidentally used the Chinese pronunciation instead of the Korean one. Kukolja repeated this mistake, using the Chinese pronunciation instead of the Korean one. As an indirect translator, Kukolja lacked sufficient knowledge of the geography and mythology of the region from which these poems originate, which led to such misspellings in his translations.

Omitted geographical terms

In some of Kukolja’s translations, geographical terms are completely omitted. Let us examine Kukolja’s translation of the sijo “장검을 빼혀 들고” written by Nam I.

Original poem:

장검을 빼혀 들고 백두산에 올라보니
대명천지에 성진이 잠겼어라
언제나 남북풍진을 헤쳐 볼까 하노라
(Sim 1972: 896)

Verbatim translation of the original poem:

When I climbed the mountain Baekdu with a long sword,
A big bright world has sunk in battle dust.
When will we overcome the war of the South and North?

Božo Kukolja’s Croatian version:

*Na vrhu brda stojim sam
Sa golim mačem u ruci.
Listiću s drveta – Korejo moja!
Stisnuta između dvaju neprijateljskih plemena,
Kada, o kad ćemo mi
Raspršiti prašinu sa sjevera i juga.*
(Kukolja 1960: 12)

Verbatim translation of Kukolja’s version:

I stand alone on the top of the hill
 With the drawn sword in the hand.
 A leaf from a tree – my Korea!
 Trapped between two hostile tribes,
 When, oh, when will we
 Scatter the dust from the north and south.

Nam I's *sijo* begins with the following line: “장검을 빼혀 들고 백두산에 올라보니” (“When I climbed the mountain Baekdu with a long sword”). The mountain Baekdu mentioned in the original poem is the tallest mountain in the Korean Peninsula, and it holds special strategic significance. The poet conveys that he is atop the highest mountain in Korea, implying that he can see the entire country from that vantage point. In Croatian translation, however, it is translated as a nameless mountain, so readers can not understand just how high and important that mountain is.

Yi Wan's *sijo* “군산을 삭평턴들,” which we already mentioned in the previous section, starts with the line “君山(군산)을 削平(삭평)턴들 洞庭湖(동정호) 너를랏다” (“If I could raze Junshan Island to the ground, the Dongting Lake would be wider”). However, in the Croatian translation, Junshan Island is not mentioned; it was replaced by the general term “mountains.” This translation does not make sense to Croatian readers because there are no reasons for Dongting Lake to become wider if mountains are razed to the ground. The original line, however, does make sense because Junshan Island is located directly in Dongting Lake, so removing Junshan Island would actually affect the size of Dongting Lake. Moreover, most Croatian readers would not even know what Dongting Lake is and where it is located. While the Russian translation provides readers with a footnote saying that Dongting Lake is “a large lake in Hunan Province (China); it was often praised in Chinese poetry” (Holodovich 1956), the Croatian translation does not have any footnotes, making it difficult for readers to understand which lake is mentioned in the poem and why it is important for the poem.

Excluding some of the geographical terms from translations was not done by Kukolja intentionally, he just copied Russian translations where these toponyms were already excluded. If he could check the original texts of the poems, he probably would not exclude these geographical terms from his translations.

Wrong usage of grammatical gender

This problem of indirect translations is a specific one and could be applied only to the languages that have a grammatical gender system. In the Korean language, there is no grammatical gender system, so the genders of the narrator and the

object of narration about could not be known, or could only be guessed from the context. However, grammatical gender system exists in the Croatian language, so it is easy to determine the gender of the narrator, object, etc. Kukolja translated some of the poems using male grammatical gender both for the narrator and the narrator's beloved one, making the poems look like they address the topic of the homosexual relationships, which they do not. For example, his translation of Jeong Chol's *sijo* titled "내 마음 버혀내여" looks like this:

Original poem:

내 마음 버혀내여 더 별들을 밍글고져
九萬里長天(구만리장천)의 번드시 걸려 이서
고은 님 계신 고뒤 가 비최어나 보리라.
(Sim 1972: 198)

Verbatim translation of the original poem:

I want to cut my heart and make stars from it.
Floating in the broad sky that spreads for tens of thousands of li,
I want to shine above the place where my love is.

Božo Kukolja's Croatian version:

*Htio bih u komadičke razbiti svoje srce,
Kako bi svaki djelić postao sjajnom zvijezdom.
Pa neka se te zvijezde zapale na nebeskoj visini,
Što se prostrla nad nama u desecima tisućâ li.
Neka se zapale nad mjestom, gdje živi moj dragi,
I neka zasvijetle, diveći se, ljepoti njegova lica.*
(Kukolja 1960: 14)

Verbatim translation of Kukolja's version:

I (*male gender*) want to break my heart into pieces
So that every piece can become a bright star
So let these stars light up in heavenly heights
That spread over us for tens of thousands of li.
Let them rise above the place where my beloved (*male gender*) lives,
And let them shine, admiring the beauty of *his* face.

Kukolja also used the male gender for both the lyrical subject and his beloved one in the translation of Kim Sang-yong's poem "사랑이 거짓말이." Such gender mistranslations probably happened because Kukolja was not familiar with Korean poets' genders.

Absence of explanatory notes

Korean traditional poetry often references Asian mythology, Chinese classical literature, mentions strategic Korean mountains and rivers, etc. For Croatian readers, understanding these references can be challenging, making additional explanations necessary. The Russian poetry collection provides readers with footnotes that explain specific terms from Korean mythology, history, and geography. However, Kukolja's poetry collection lacks any footnotes. This omission is a significant oversight because providing explanatory notes is crucial when translating literature from a culture that most readers are not familiar with.

Absence of historical background's explanation

Most Korean traditional poems have a historical background. Either they are written by important historical figures, or are referring to important historical events like Manchu invasion of Joseon, Imjin War, etc. Knowing the historical background of the poem is crucial for understanding its meaning. Nevertheless, there are no explanatory notes accompanying any of the poems in Kukolja's poetry collection. Let us compare Hong Seo-bong's poem “이별하던 날에” and Kukolja's translation of this poem.

Original poem:

離別(이별)하던 날에 피눈물이 난지 만지
鴨綠江(압록강) 내린 물이 푸른빛이 전혀 없네
배 우에 허여센 沙工(사공)이 처음 보랴 하더라.
(Sim 1972: 833)

Verbatim translation of the original poem:

I'm not sure is it because bloody tears were shed on the day of our breakup,
But waters flowing in the Amnok River have no blue light at all.
The gray-haired boatman on the boat said he saw this for the first time.

Božo Kukolja's Croatian version:

*Pa zar su se vode Amnokkana
Zato prestale plaviti,
Što je u času našega rastanka
Iz mojih očiju potekla krv?
I reče sjedokosi veslač:
"Svašta vidjeh na svijetu, ali ovako nešto doista prvi put!"*
(Kukolja 1960: 25)

Verbatim translation of Kukolja's version:

Did the waters of Amnokkan
Ceased blueing
Because at the moment of our parting
Blood was shed from my eyes?
And the gray-haired rower said:
"I saw everything in the world, but something like this – for the first
time!"

This *sijo* was written after the historical events known as the Manchu invasion of Joseon occurred. When the Manchus defeated Joseon, two of Joseon's princes, Crown Prince Sohyeon and Prince Hyojong, were taken as captives by the Manchus to Shenyang, the capital of the early Qing Dynasty. Therefore, the parting described in this *sijo* is the parting with the princes. The Amnok River is very important in this context as it served as the border between Joseon and the Chinese Empire (ruled by the Manchus' Qing Dynasty at that time). The waters of the Amnok River, which turned red because of the bloody tears, symbolize the Korean nation's pain and humiliation. However, without historical context, this *sijo* looks like a love poem describing parting with a lover to Croatian readers.

A lot of Korean poems in Kukolja's poetry collection have deep historical significance. However, without annotations describing the historical background, they lose their original meaning. In the case of Korean traditional poetry, providing a short explanation that describes the historical period in which the poem was written and why it was written is necessary. This can aid readers in comprehending the poem in its entirety and grasping the emotions conveyed by the poet.

Uneven number of different types of poetry

Most of the poems translated by Kukolja were *sijo*. However, in the collection, there were two *goryeo gayo*, one *gasa*, and one *hanshi* as well; therefore, the ratio of different types of traditional poetry is very unbalanced. It would be better

to include more goryeo gayo, gasa, and hanshi, or to exclude them altogether, making this poetry collection exclusively a sijo collection. If we take a look at anthologies of Korean traditional poetry in other foreign languages, they usually include an equal or similar number of poems of different genres or introduce only one genre of Korean traditional poetry. Unfortunately, Kukolja could not add more poems of different types because he was limited by the resources available in the languages he could translate from.

Conclusion

In this research, we attempted to identify the common problems and mistranslations that arise in the indirect translation of Korean literature. Indirect translation often occurs due to a lack of competent translators in the source language, making it somewhat inevitable in such cases. While Božo Kukolja's Korean poetry collection contains numerous mistranslations and mistakes, credit must be given for his effort to introduce Korean poetry to Croatian readers. When no other options are available, indirect translation can be used to introduce foreign literature, but it may not provide the most accurate representation.

As demonstrated in this research, indirect translation can lead to a significant number of mistranslations, making it challenging for readers to understand the literature or creating a distorted image of the literature they are reading. This study reaffirms the importance of employing a direct translation approach to produce high-quality literary translations. Through the example of Korean literature translation, we have witnessed how the vast cultural differences between the source and target languages lead to a layer of unfamiliar concepts appears, so in order to interpret them adequately, a translator with not only a deep knowledge of a source language, but also a deep knowledge of source language's culture is needed.

As more people become interested in the Korean language and choose to major in Korean studies, we can anticipate an increase in the number of Korean language translators in the future. The author of this thesis hopes that translations of Korean literature overseas will improve over time, and direct translations of Korean literature will become more prevalent.

Works cited

1. Cheonggudaehak, Gugeogungmunhakoe (ed.) (1961) *Gosan. Nogye. Songgang jeonjip* (孤山. 蘆溪. 松江 全集). Daegu, Cheonggudaehakchulpanbu.
2. China Daily (2022) Mount Wuyi serves as prime location for great thinkers throughout history. *China Daily*, 27 July. Available from: http://fujian.chinadaily.com.cn/2022-07/27/c_792491.htm [Accessed 1 March 2023].
3. Galimullina, Nina Sergeyevna (2019) Osobennosti perevoda klassicheskoy koreyskoy poezii XV-XVII vv (na materiale trekhstishiy sijo) (Особенности перевода классической корейской поэзии XV-XVII вв (на материале трехстиший си чжо)). *Sintez nauki i obshchestva v reshenii global'nykh problem sovremennosti*, pp. 99-102.
4. Go, Sunhui (2017) *Gojeon si.ga.youi sihakgwa hwaryong*. (고전 詩.歌.謠의 시학과 활용). Seoul, Bangmunsa.
5. Han, Christina (2013) Between poetry and philosophy: The Neo-Confucian hermeneutics of Zhu Xi's nine bends poem. *Asian Philosophy*. 23, 1, 62-85.
6. Han, Christina (2021) Turning Songs into Poems and Poems into Songs: Intersections of Literary Sinitic and Vernacular Korean in Chosŏn Literature. *Sungkyun Journal of East Asian Studies*. 21, 2, 211-235.
7. Holodovich, Alexander Alekseyevich (ed.) (1956) *Koreyskaya klassicheskaya poeziya* (Корейская классическая поэзия). Translated by A. Akhmatova. Moscow, Goslitizdat.
8. Kim, Jaihiun (1993) *Gems of Korean verse II. Sijosiseon (godae mit hyeondae)* (Gems of Korean verse II. 시조시선 (고대 및 현대)). Seoul, Hanshin Publishing Co.
9. Kim, Sujang (ed.) (2020). *Wonseobalchwe haedonggayo* (원서발취 해동가요). Seoul, ZMANZ.
10. Kim, Yeol-gyu, Kim, Jong-gil, Pak, Chol-hui, Yi, Sang-bo, Chung, Han-mo, Kim, Han-kon, Buzo, Adrian F., Cho, Un-je, O'Rourke, Kevin, Lee, Young-gul, Kim, U-chang, Ko, Chang-soo, Poitras, E.W., Lee, Joon-young, and Kim, Dong-ho (1984) *Korean poetry: an anthology with critical essays*. Seoul, Korean Culture and Arts Foundation.
11. Kozubovskaya, Galina, and Malysheva, E.V. (1998) «Vostochnyye perevody» A. Akhmatovoy («Восточные переводы» А. Ахматовой). *Kul'tura i tekst*. 3, 62-77.
12. Kukulja, Božo (1960) *Korejska poezija*. Zagreb, Lykos.
13. Lee, Janghui, and Kim, Yunwan (1995) *Hangugui gojeonsiga: haeseokgwa gam-sang*. (한국의 고전시가: 해석과 감상). Seoul, Geulbeotsa.

14. Lee, Peter H. (ed.) (2002) *The Columbia anthology of traditional Korean poetry*. Columbia University Press.
15. Lee, Sangbo (1982) *Myeongsijogamsang* (名時調鑑賞). Seoul, Euryumunhwasa.
16. Munday, Jeremy (2002) *Introducing translation studies: Theories and applications*. Routledge.
17. Naver Hanja Dictionary (2018) *Naver Hanja Dictionary*. Available from: <https://hanja.dict.naver.com/#/entry/ccko/d932a1c733f54576a78a198ce81238ca> [Accessed 21 April 2023].
18. Nikolayeva, Aleksandra Sergeyevna (2011) Koreyskaya klassicheskaya poeziya sidzho kak ob''yekt perevoda (Корейская классическая поэзия сиджо как объект перевода). *Molodozh' i nauka: Sbornik materialov VII Vserossiyskoy nauchno-tekhnicheskoy konferentsii studentov, aspirantov i molodykh uchonykh, posvyashchennoy 50-letiyu pervogo poleta cheloveka v kosmos*. Krasnoyarsk, Siberian Federal University.
19. Sim, Jaewan (ed.) (1972) *Yeokdaesijojeonseo* (歷代時調全書). Seoul, Sejongmunhwasa.
20. Song, Seung-hyun (2021) Korean literature becoming popular overseas. *The Korean Herald*, 22 December. Available from: <http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20211222000688> [Accessed 23 March 2023].