

Hidden Struggles: Presentations of Korea in Translated Korean Literature

Interaction between images and cultural references can make illustrations, and especially book covers, become more than mere supplements to texts. In this study I analyze the topics, paratextual presentations, and covers of Korean literature translated into English and published in the United States after the Korean War. I organize topics, discourses and images into four categories of analysis (Modernity, Tradition, Religion and Struggle) and I look into the relations between the four. I aim to discern, first, the main image presented of Korea in this corpus of publications. Second, I want to uncover to what extent these three categories, which may correspond to the three stages of the creation of a literary translation (selection – translation – marketing), have a common focus. Third, based on the results, I draw conclusions regarding the different visions of Korea and the agents involved in the translation of Korean literature. The results show contradictory presentations of the different agents involved with a common hidden discourse: struggle.

Keywords: cultural identity, cultural representation, identity construction, Korean literature, minority languages, Republic of Korea

Introduction

Surrounded by the mightier Japan, China and Russia, Korea was virtually unknown to the West until the end of the Second World War and the subsequent Korean War, when the division of the country by the 38th parallel put the peninsula in a central role on the Cold War stage.

Since the rise of the Republic of Korea, there has been increasing effort and investment in making Korean literature known to the world, especially to the English-speaking world. UNESCO and the Korean government have supported plans for the translation and publication of Korean literary works with the objective of making Korean cultural heritage known to the rest of the world. Literature in translation is seen as a mode of self-representation. Texts, whether they be representative of high culture or popular culture, influence identity at all levels: from the individual to the nation.

However, Korea might not have achieved the expected self-representation. When literature becomes a commercial good, the agents involved in selling it rely on common knowledge, on similar expectations, on shared grounds to project their product and seduce the consumer into buying it. In translation, those same texts may become something else: they may project an image that does not seem to represent the identity of the national context. The Western publishing market seems to have created a parallel discourse in the presentation of Korean literature, homogenizing it within ‘the Asian world’, reproducing

old-fashioned colonialist visions and denying Koreans recognition of their modernization. To evaluate this, the literary production must be situated in context.

Answering the call ‘to transform monological and Westcentric international scholarship by making concerted and informed efforts to reconstruct Eastern paradigms in co-existence and dialogue with the dominant Western counterparts’ (Shi-xu 2009: 4), this study will first review relevant previous literature, then proceed to a comparison of the images presented by paratextual elements of Korean literature in translation created by agents of the source culture and the target culture, followed by an analysis of the results in terms of what image Koreans would like to present of themselves as compared to the image that is actually presented. Finally, the paper will propose suggestions for the practice of cultural representation and understanding.

Theoretical Background

In order to evaluate the different images of Korea in the translations, I used paratexts, defined as ‘verbal or other productions [...] accompanying [a book], which vary in extent and appearance’ (Genette 1997: 1). Paratexts are more flexible and versatile than body texts, and they thus function like ‘an instrument of adaptation’ (Genette 1997: 408). Hence, they are mirrors of changes. Moreover, paratexts ‘also have an independent existence since they stand physically separate from the translated text and are more likely to meet the reader before the translation itself’ (Tahir-Gurçalar 2011: 113). On the one hand, paratexts provide useful information on the creation of the books. On the other hand, paratexts function as a tool of representation:

Being immutable, the text in itself is incapable of adapting to changes and its public in space and over time. The paratext – more flexible, more versatile, always transitory because transitive – is, as it were, an instrument of adaptation. Hence the continual modification in the ‘presentation’ of the text. (Genette 1997: 408)

The use of paratexts as a methodological tool within translation studies has been supported as a way to define if a certain volume is a translation (Pym 1998: 62-5) or to reflect the concept of translation carried by the agents (Tahir-Gürçağlar 2002), to provide information on the translation phenomena (Kung 2013) or to investigate the presentation of literature as a translated phenomenon (Munday 2008). However, paratexts must always be looked at within wider sociocultural contexts (Kovala 1998). The versatility of

paratexts and their link to the translation process (understood from the selection of the book until its marketing) has informed studies on different translation exchanges. Several qualitative studies have looked into the presentation of a certain image in translated literature based on paratexts (Pellat 2013), reviews (Chalmers 1999, Munday 2008), introductions and translators' notes (Haase 2006), and covers (Harvey 2003; O'Sullivan 2005; Kos 2009). Kos analyzes the paratexts of the translations of Simone de Beauvoir's novels into Turkish, discerning how Beauvoir's feminism and femininity is under-represented. Harvey studies the covers of translated American gay literature in France, to conclude how the image was manipulated to adapt to French expectations. O'Sullivan looks at covers of Italian crime fiction translated in the United Kingdom to see how Italian stereotypes are reinforced.

Given its strategic location between cultures, translation is rarely free of power struggles. As Hermans states, 'for the colonizer, translation into the hegemonic language amounts to bringing home an anthropological exhibit which adds to the centre's knowledge of the colonies, and knowledge is power' (2009: 101). Within this context, it is important to know which agents – other than translators – are involved in the process.

In a very generic approach to literary translation, there are three stages of a translated book: the selection of the work, the translation of the work, and the publishing and marketing of that work. Despite its generality – or maybe because of it – this broad classification helps not just to show the different stages of translating a book, but also to situate the actors in play. It also acts as a reminder that:

The publication of a text in translation depends on editorial policies, that is, sets of choices and strategies adopted by editorial agents – publishers, journal editors, translators, literary agents – on the basis of objectives and values, which may be cultural, political and/or economic. (Sapiro 2012: 32)

It is not then surprising that, even when there is an aim or desire to bring the other's culture closer, translated literary works often become entangled in the need – whether commercial, political or other – to fit into the existing discourses in the target culture. The image of societies in translation can be distorted and the other can then become more alien (see, for example, Carbonell's considerations on the presentation of Arabic culture in Spanish (2000)). Even authors with a defined trajectory in their source

cultures are reinterpreted for marketing purposes in the Western world (see Karashima 2008 on the role assigned to Murakami in Japanese literature in the United States, Prado-Fonts 2008 on Gao Xingjian's mis-representation in the global literary system, or Rodríguez-Navarro 2008 on Inazo Nitobe's translations into French, to mention but a few case studies).

Since Korean literature in translation is highly subsidized, the selection of works is usually in the hands of translators, but their field of choice tends to be reduced to what the government foundations find acceptable to subsidize. In the long run, it is the Korean administration that decides what texts to translate. The selection of books to be translated lies in the hands of the source culture, as previous studies have found ([name deleted to maintain the integrity of the review process] 2013). However, what to accept and how to present it is then the publisher's choice. Alvstad argues that:

Even in those cases when somebody (a translator) who is not a publisher decides to translate a book and then presents it to a publisher, it is the publisher who makes the decision whether to publish the book, whether to publish it in the translation by that translator and whether to introduce changes into the translation. (Alvstad 2003: 274)

It is precisely this power struggle we are looking into with the help of paratexts. So, three elements are analyzed in relation to the three stages outlined above. Topics are understood as markers of the source-culture preference. In other words, it is necessary to define the profile and the content of the most important books that need translation according to the source culture. This is part of the selection process. Discourses in translational paratexts are expected to reflect the translator's view on the exchange. Last, the marketing and publishing is assumed to have been carried out in the target culture, with an orientation towards the American market, and that could be reflected in the cover. The cover is the publishers' paratext and it provides insights on what matters for the final public or, more specifically, what publishers think matters for the final audience.

Aims of the Study

This study analyzes the differences in representation in the translation of Korean literature in the United States from 1950 to 1975 as compared to that image from 1976 to 2000, taking into account the different agents involved in the translation process and their voices in the paratexts. I aim to discern, first, the main image of Korea in this corpus of

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publications. Second, I want to uncover differences between the selection, translation and marketing of those works. Third, based on the results, I will try to draw conclusions regarding the different projections of Korea and the agents involved in the translation of Korean literature. By comparing topics, discourses in translational paratexts, and book covers, I aim to identify contradictions in the presentation of Korean literature translated into English and published in the United States after the Korean War and show agreements and disagreements between source agents, target agents and translators regarding what Korea and Korean literature are.

Methodology

Given the Korean-American history, two stages have been defined in this research: from 1951 to 1975 and from 1976 to 2000. In the first period, the United States and Korea had just begun to build up a diplomatic relationship that strengthened with the Korean War (1950 to 1953) and the post-War, and ended with the division of the peninsula as it is today. During this period, Korea was a stronghold against Communism for an American public opinion dominated by the Cold War. In the mid-seventies, Korea lost part of its strategic importance with the re-establishment of diplomatic ties between China and the US, the failed Korean War becoming the Forgotten War, and the miraculous economic recovery of Korea began to show. At the end of the second stage, the Republic of Korea emerged as one of the main players in world economics.

The corpus has been compiled on the basis of volumes recorded in the *Index translationum* (UNESCO 1957-2000), the catalogue of the library of Yonsei (<http://library.yonsei.ac.kr/>) and the list of Korean works in English compiled by the academic and translator Brother Anthony (An 2006). This exhaustive catalogue was then limited to those works that had either been published or specifically distributed in the US as stated in their copyright. For the purpose of this research, volumes which were not accessible and anthologies that covered several topics were removed from the corpus (see the Appendix for a full list of works studied). Then, topics, discourses in the paratexts and discourses in the covers were analyzed.

First, I analyzed topics. After the corpus was collected, I defined four categories bottom-up. That is, the categories correspond to the most common issues dealt with in the works of the corpus. The resulting categories were: 'Modernity,' for volumes that highlight a contemporary Korea and post-modern Korean literature; 'Spirituality,' for

books that rely on highlighting a connection with a superior being; ‘Struggle,’ for works whose main concern are the hardships encountered and overcome by the Korean people represented by their characters and often related to historical hardships; and ‘Tradition,’ for the classics, bucolic poetry and story-telling, and other works set in pre-annexation Korea.

The discourses used to introduce the works and, by extension, to introduce Korea to the reader were analyzed. The analysis covers paratexts – here understood as translator’s notes, acknowledgements, introductions, postfaces and prefaces. The categories for discourses were also defined bottom-up and four categories identified: ‘Tradition’, ‘Modernity’, ‘Struggle’ and ‘Orient’. Topic labels and discourse categories overlapped to a certain extent, but it was not a perfect match. For example, Modernity included works that experiment with narrative techniques, a situation that cannot be found in the presentational discourses. Also, Spirituality referred to books with a religious background, be it Buddhist, Catholic, or Shamanistic. While the images associated with Buddhism could be linked to an Oriental Korea (like the minimalistic images of nature), Christianity is not usually linked to the Land of the Morning Calm, in spite of being the most widespread religion (if Protestants and Catholics are included in the one group). Shamanistic rites, on the other hand, are traditionally Korean. To avoid these discrepancies, topics and discourses were again reviewed to fit in four final joint categories: ‘Tradition’, for works that reflected pre-annexation Korea and specific Korean folk traditions; ‘Modernity’, for works that highlighted an established developed country. ‘Struggle’, seen as an emphasis on the hardships encountered and the endurance shown by the Korean people in different historical moments; and ‘Orient’, understood as a suggestive and evocative landscape and tradition somewhere in Asia, emphasizing the contrast between the West and the East, in a discourse that could be interpreted within Edward Said’s Orientalist paradigm (Said 1990).

Last, I analyzed the covers. It is worth noting that Genette (1997: 24) saw illustrations as mere supplements to texts, but he did not reflect on the interaction between images and cultural references (Lees-Jeffries 2010: 186), neither did he envision illustrations which not only contradict the text but have the power to predetermine how a reader recalls its content, as has been proved to be the case in some situations (cf. Stallybras 2010: 205). Initially I intended to apply the same methodology of analysis: a bottom-up description. However, the techniques used, the position of the elements on the cover, the size of the elements, their background and the inter- and intra-cultural referents

made it difficult to ascertain in a just a quick glance what type of discourse they were representing. A bottom-up analysis can reveal a complexity that says much about the imaginary, but it is misleading to determine to what extent they reflect the topics and discourses of the works they accompany, which is the main aim of this study.

Therefore, instead of attempting a descriptive bottom-up classification of the covers, I focused on whether covers coincide with the topic and/or discourses used to present the books. To reach these figures, I first assigned a preliminary label to each cover based on the elements found in its center, the focus point, usually the image but sometimes the title. Then I compared my initial results with the categories of discourses and the topics of the books, and I went through the results again, paying special attention to the volumes with discrepancies. I could then review cases where an a priori discrepancy was possible.

For example, *The Ever White Mountain* is a book of classic poems. It is traditional in topic, but the introduction concerns Asia and is quite Orientalist. The cover shows two relatively modern mountains, open to multiple readings: Spiritual due to the representation of nature, Modern due to the style of the book, Traditional implied by the importance of mountains in Korea, and more. The cover could thus be considered representative of a Traditional topic and an Oriental discourse.

As the analysis of the 76 covers has been done individually in this way, I have been able to recognize several possible readings of the images, allowing a more complete description of the function of iconographic elements and typographical choices, always hoping for the best match.

Results

Analysis of Topics and Discourses

The total corpus located and identified add up to 119 volumes: 14 volumes were published between 1951 and 1975 and thus correspond to the first stage and 105 volumes were published between 1976 and 2000, and are located in the second stage. Within those, 81 volumes in total had translational paratexts. As more than one discourse is possible, a total of 105 tags were applied to those volumes: 25 in the first stage and 80 in the second (see Table 1).

Table 1: Classification of topics and discourses

	Topics		Discourses	
	1951–1975	1976–2000	1951–1975	1976–2000
Modernity	1 (7%)	16 (14%)	2 (8%)	3(4%)
Orient	0	12 (10%)	12 (48%)	16 (20%)
Struggle	3 (21%)	52 (45%)	8 (32%)	45(56%)
Tradition	10 (71%)	25 (22%)	3 (12%)	16(20%)

In the first stage, the most common topic is ‘Tradition’ (71%), followed by ‘Struggle’ (21%). In the second period, ‘Struggle’ is more common (45%), then followed by ‘Tradition’ (22%). If I add both periods, ‘Struggle’ is by far the most common topic (46% of all volumes).

There are also changes between discourses in the different periods. In this case, the discourse of the ‘Orient’ is of great importance, especially in the first period (48%) but also in the second, at the same level of ‘Tradition’ (20% each). ‘Struggle’ is the most common discourse translators resorted to in the second period (56%) and also the most common discourse if both periods are merged (with a 50%).

This classification already shows certain discrepancies between topics and discourses. The postscript to the *The Yalu flows*, a novel about the difficult childhood of a boy in occupied Korea, does not convey how difficult that period of history proved to be but presents it as an ideal moment of life: ‘The picture he paints of the joys and sorrows of his childhood has the qualities of an eastern brushdrawing, its warmth and its most sensitive delicacy.’ (Hammelmann 1956: 190). *The unenlightened* is an anthology of post-war stories within the the Si-sa-yong-sa series. This collection was developed for the 30th anniversary of UNESCO Korea with the purpose to show the development of the country’s *twentieth-century Korean* literature. While most of these anthologies compile modern post-war stories, most volumes are just presented with a perfunctory preface that informs the reader that

Literary distinction traditionally has been the hallmark of the refined man in Korea. This tradition is as alive and vital in Korea today as it was when Ch’oe Ch’i-won first impressed the Chinese with his fluid, limpid quatrains, or when Ch’ong Ch’ol sang the praises of Li Po in the sixteenth century. (Park 1983:v)

The idea of traditional Korea is reinforced over the image of a fighting nation. However, discrepancies can be better seen when all the elements are compared.

Now, I will present the classification of covers in relation to concordance and non-concordance with topic and discourses in the volumes with all three elements (topics, discourses and covers), that is, a total of 76 volumes (see Appendix), 14 in the first period and 62 in the second period.

Analysis of Covers

Correspondence and non-correspondence among presentation concepts in the different elements of a translated literary work are presented in Table 2. Below each category, the quantity of volumes showing (S) or hiding (H) such concept is listed according to the coincidence in elements – discourses (D), topics (T) and covers (C). That is, next to ‘DC’, discourses and covers represent one concept (the shared one), while topics relate to another concept (the hidden one).

Table 2: Shared and hidden concepts in discourse, topic and covers

	1950 – 1975								1976 – 2000							
	Modernity		Orient		Struggle		Tradition		Modernity		Orient		Struggle		Tradition	
	S	H	S	H	S	H	S	H	S	H	S	H	S	H	S	H
DTC	0	-	0	-	0	-	10 72%	-	3 5%	-	1 2%	-	10 16%	-	13 21%	-
DC	0	0	0	0	0	1 7%	1 7%	0	0	1 2%	5 8%	0	0	8 13%	4 6%	0
TC	0	0	0	1 7%	1 7%	0	0	0	3 5%	1 2%	3 5%	2 3%	1 2%	4 6%	0	0
DT	1 7%	1 7%	1 7%	1 7%	0	0	0	0	0	6 10%	1 2%	1 2%	9 14%	0	0	3 5%
None					0								10 16%			

In the first stage, there is a high ratio of coincidence between the three elements presenting the book (72%). These concordances are represented by images that can be labeled as ‘Traditional.’

On one occasion the discourse and the cover coincide in this stage, but the topic does not. *The Yalu flows* narrates the boyhood struggles of the author in Japanese-

occupied Korea; it is represented on the cover by an idealistic minimalist image of a boy playing the flute and riding an ox, and that Oriental view is also reflected in the paratexts.

Cry of the people is the other side of the coin: topic and covers match but discourses presenting the book do not. It is a volume of poetry by Kim Chi-ha, whose close-up picture is reproduced on the front cover, representing the same struggle as his poems do, while the remaining paratexts introduce mostly the *Asian* writer.

In this earth and in that wind is a collection of essays that criticize the backwardness of Korea and seek modernization in a period in which Japan was the referent for Asian development. Bearing in mind the topic of the book, the translator explains in the introduction the situation of Korea when the essays were written. That is, the topic and the main discourse in the paratexts coincide. However, neither the topic nor the discourse is represented by the tree on the cover. Similarly, *Postwar Korean short stories* stress the hardships after the war behind a very modern-looking cover.

In this stage, at least two of the three elements analyzed coincide at some point.

In the second stage, the rate of correspondence is lower than in the first stage, but still relevance with 44% of the analyzed volumes showing concordance in discourse, topic and cover. Again the concept most commonly shared is 'Tradition' (21%), followed by 'Struggle' (16%). For example, *The moonlit pond* comprises classical poetry written in Chinese, and the paratexts invite the reader to enjoy the beauty of Asian poetry. The cover design shows a typical Chinese misty mountain scenario.

Paratexts and covers tend to highlight the concepts of 'Tradition' and the 'Orient', which are not present in the content of books that dwell on 'Struggle' or 'Modernity.'

This divergence from 'Struggle' is again present in the link between covers and topics versus paratexts. The most often hidden discourse is, again, 'Struggle.'

If in general a book cannot be judged by its cover, in ten of the titles in the corpus this is quite literally true. 'Struggle' is the most commonly shared concept between topics and paratexts, but it is not present on those books jackets. As stated above, covers are the publishers' realm. So, according to the analysis, publishers seem to have sought to reduce the image of Korea as a land of struggle and highlight its traditional and oriental features. Given the three classifications of non-concordance, I can infer that covers tend to avoid using Struggle to represent Korea on their volumes

In this second stage, ten volumes did not show any correspondence between the elements of the translated Korean books. Covers in these volumes were modern (eight volumes) or reflected a traditional Korean activity or an Asian style landscape (one volume).
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volume each). The books were about hardships of the Korean (five volumes), traditional stories (three volumes) and post-modern literature (two volumes). They were most often introduced by stressing their relevance within the Asian context (eight volumes) or making reference to the war (two volumes). It is important to stress, that again covers hid representations of 'Struggle' that could be found in the other two elements.

Discussion: Correspondence vs. non-Correspondence

Differences uncovered in the results can be understood according to different factors. First, I look at explanations to differences between the first and second stage. Then, I analyze how the discourses relate to the different agents involved in the process. In this analysis, I consider contextual reasons that might explain the publishers' choices.

First Stage vs. Second Stage

In the first stage there was a higher correspondence between topic, discourse and cover (72%) than in the second stage (44%). The greater degree of harmony between the different elements in the translations in the first stage could be explained by the smaller number of people involved in the process, with more translators assuming a combination of/different roles. Toury (1995: 183) claims that 'one can never be sure just how many hands were actually involved in the establishment of the translation as I have it,' and the same can be said of 'the exact way the target text came into being' (ibid.). Whatever the actual number of hands at work in the corpus, the discrepancies between discourses and covers show a clear conflict of agency. The higher rate of harmony in the first period would then correspond to common agreement on what image should be presented or, as mentioned to a multiplicity of roles on the hands of a few agents. The shift in the second period would point at a wider diversity of agents, which is actually the case, but it could also be partly explained by the greater agency of the publishers, who were trying to present a specific image.

Discourses and Agents

As regards the selection process of books, it seems that Korea wanted to be represented as a fighting nation with a long tradition but a clear aim at modernization. Not only is this a good image for a recovering country to promote itself internationally,

but it would easily relate to the Korean attempts to recover its ‘Koreanness’, lost after half a century of invasion and wars (cf. Han 2003).

Translators seem to have understood the need to convey that concept and also present the image of Koreans as fighters, but they partially accommodate that image to target culture expectations by highlighting the connection to Asia at the expense of its modernity.

However, publishers seem to be divided between presenting two images of Korea to their readers: the traditionally Oriental Korea and the very modern Korea. Ironically, publishers assume that readers will be oblivious to the courage of a country best known for having been divided in South and North in a war nicknamed the Forgotten War. Can this be a coincidence of unrelated factors?

Other Possible Factors

We considered three possible reasons that would explain hiding a discourse, struggle, which is so clearly present in Korean literature: diplomatic exchanges in the area, collections’ homogeneity and the lack of marketability of hardship and struggle.

Initially, I considered the idea that certain discourses might be hidden due to the development of political relations between Korea, Japan, and the United States. It could have been argued that the initial unstable relationship would have encouraged highlighting common grounds (Korea and Japan like the Far East, the Orient) and hiding lands of conflict (Japan’s annexation of Korea, mostly). However, the more unstable diplomatic situation between the three took place in the first stage of this research. If political relations were behind this shift of image, the idea of conflict would be expected to emerge in the latter stage, and it does not.

The continuity in cover designs within collections could have explained why a certain discourse arises so often. The covers of the Si-sa-yong-sa series of 20th-century Korean literature are designed to convey the image of a modern Korea. The trademark of the collection is to have the title in a large modern design with a small picture below it. That picture, though, does not usually represent the topic of the book and it often brings back very traditional concepts. For example, on the cover of the anthology of post-war stories *Early spring mid-summer*, the image of mandarin oranges, a very common fruit in Korea, suggests a traditional family meeting, when this fruit is usually shared, or given as an offering to the ancestors. A connection to the seasons in the title is discarded as

mandarin oranges in Korea are associated to the opposite time of the year, late autumn or early winter. Readers International also highlight the modernity of their volumes in the short caption that accompany the cover image. *The House of twilight* is presented as the '[f]irst English collection by Korea's most original and stylish young writer' (Yun 1989: front cover) while Hwang Sun-won's *The book of masks* becomes a collection of 'searing psychological tales by Korea's modern short story master' (Hwang 1989: front cover). The image, however, is not necessarily modern. Last, Kegan Paul International combines modern and classic works, but their publications are wrapped in eighteenth-century illustrations. These examples show a misplaced concern for consistency: if a collection had an entity on its own, the selection of the works would be consistent, too. The few series in the corpus seem to be an umbrella for any type of Korean literature which is later presented with an often unrelated image, so it is difficult to accept homogeneity in the series as a valid reason to manipulate discourses.

Could it be that hardships and struggles do not have a clear market in the Western world? It has actually been claimed that the attraction of despair that Koreans reflect and enjoy in their literature is not shared by Western readers. In a short text for a Korean publisher's online journal – the *Changbi Weekly Commentary* – the translator An Sonjae mentions that a common reaction among English speakers to Korean fiction is 'Why is it so depressing?' (An 2007). If readers disliked sad stories, the success of works like *The boy in the striped pyjamas* or classics like *Wuthering Heights* would not have a place in the Western world.

If the problem was to convey hardship and struggle on a cover in a successful and attractive way, volumes like *Silver stallion* or *Wayfarer* would be difficult to find. *Silver stallion* is set in the Korean War and post-war period. The original cover – there is a 2001 edition based on a movie – shows three men leaning over and a fourth looking enquiringly towards the sky. The men might be bowing deeply to a bloody master (a possible reference to the Japanese, the North Koreans, or even the Americans) or might be helping the man in the middle to stand, while bombs fall around them. Regardless, it clearly conveys an image of despair and struggle. The struggle in *Wayfarer* is much more subtle. It is indicated by the dead branches and the leafless sunflowers in a garden and, to the right of the picture, a grey sunflower: the symbol of sunshine, warmth, and loyalty has been painted grey, dry, and dead.

If these examples are not enough to counteract the argument that only cheerful modern covers might lure readers who would later develop an interest in Korean literature

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as such, I should consider why abstract, oriental images of mist and mystery are deemed more adequate on the front covers. It is true that some relate to the title of the book. *The wind and the waves* shows wind and waves on the cover, but the picture does not represent the modernity of the poems included. It is just the representation of an old Asian painting. And then one might accept that this continuation of the Orientalist discourse that had permeated the presentation of all Asian countries as the Orient regardless of their individual characteristics is, undoubtedly, an image American readers already had experienced and could relate to.

Conclusions

There is room for several interpretations of what a culture is away from any source-target dichotomy, but case studies like this one reflect a contradictory position among the agents that can export that image. In the case of Korea, the translated texts explain the story of a country that has built itself; the covers present a land anchored in the past. If the visual aesthetics override what is happening on the level of discourse, the target culture/publisher selection stand out as the only representation of the complex Republic of Korea, highlighting its mystic side but hiding the struggle behind its current position in the global economic system.

One might argue that it is positive to highlight the peacefulness of a people. However, the background of the country (the colonization period, and the Korean War and post-war) are well-known historical facts, which are often highlighted in collections by subheadings like 'Post-war stories.' Within this context, emphasizing their traditional surface instead of their fighting spirit makes Koreans look passive and submissive. From the end of the 19th century, before and after the involvement of foreign troops, Koreans faced, fought and overcame all types of hardships before achieving their status as a developed economy. Making implicit reference to the hardships but stripping them of their struggle creates an image of a people that needed to be rescued. The image becomes that of a country that 'could not strike one blow in their own defense' (President Theodore Roosevelt quoted in Schnabel 1992:4). The covers make some concessions to Korean modernity but, in general, reproduce old-fashioned colonialist assumptions.

Rewritings of the other to comply with supposedly shared target culture expectations are commonplace, but the increase in cultural exchanges at all levels makes this practice outdated. Nowadays, translated literature does not have the central role of

culture-shaping it had prior to globalization and therefore it might have to reconsider the exploitation of foreignizing images to present a culture which is now closer in time and space. Probably, requesting the advice of translators or source-culture literary agents would benefit the final selection of images on the covers. Cooperation with public authorities in countries with languages of limited diffusion, like the Republic of Korea, is assured, given their investment in literary translation into other languages. If publishers seek to keep full control of the process without external advice, at least encouraging covers to illustrate the content or main topics of the book they present would be a first step in opening the space to divergent discourses.

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