Ajia no Koji or Orphan of Asia? — The narrator as translator in act of linguistic resistance.

Ronny Chan

Wednesday 3rd August, 2022

Originally submitted as coursework for EAS408 Modern Taiwanese Literature, Winter 2022, at the University of Toronto taught by Jennifer J. Lau, PhD.

Published on `chyyran.moe/things` November 18th, 2022.

1 Introduction

When Wu Zhuoliu first put pen to paper to write *Orphan of Asia*, he made a conscious decision to write it primarily in Japanese; a language that was not only foreign to the Taiwan of his birth and the Taiwan of which he places his characters, but also a language imposed upon him and his characters by colonial powers. Within this linguistic matrix of Japanese, poetry written in Classical Chinese, and instances of colloqial Taiwanese dialect (Hakkanese) feature susbtantially in the narration and dialogue. The end result is a narrative within a complex linguistic embedding that raises questions about the linguistic positioning of the narrator and implied reader; as Leo Ching writes, "the totality of its meaning can only be grasped when all the linguistic and cultural registers are working at the same time".[1]

In translation however, the linguistic complexity of the original work is lost, and papered over in favour of legibility. In translation, the linguistic positioning of the narrator is lost, and while the plot may be preserved, the original meaning of the text is warped, especially if it is language itself that is questioned within the narrative discourse. The dialectic of language within *Ajia no Koji* is lost in its transition to *Orphan of Asia*.

Indeed, when we speak of narrative voice, often is the linguistic aspect ignored in favour of a more abstract view of the text. However by looking past the linguistic question, we ironically arrive at a more myopic viewpoint: the language that expresses a text embeds the narrator within a fixed linguistic framework. The question of language is as much as part of the text as questions of plot and discourse; it is the vehicle by which discourse is delivered and therefore plays a pivotal role in the process of interpretation.

These questions are of course doubly true for works in translation. In translation, the vehicle of discourse has been replaced, and therefore implicates substantial differences in the very structure of the text itself vis-á-vis the original. Yet some argue, and many of us indeed do agree without a second thought, that translation is a transparent process, and we trust that the translator has given us exactly what has been meant by the original author. This is of course, an impossibility: as Theo Hermans writes, 'the translation never coincides with its source, it is not identical or equivalent in any formal or straightforward sense'.[2] Indeed to assert that discourse is transparently and isomorphically preserved in

1. Leo Ching, "Into the Muddy Stream: Triple Consciousness and Colonial Historiography in The Orphan of Asia," in *Becoming "Japanese": Colonial Taiwan and the Politics of Identity Formation.* (University of California Press, 2001), 8.

2. Theo Hermans, "The Translator's Voice in Translated Narrative," *Target. International Journal of Translation Studies* 8, no. 1 (1996): 24, ISSN: 0924-1884, doi:10.1075/target.8.1.03her.

the process of replacing and reconstructing the mode by which such discourse is delivered is an absurd proposition; yet many of us, myself included, willingly accept the absurdity when reading translated texts in general.

With *Orphan of Asia* however, I find it difficult to reconcile this absurdity given the narrative significance of language in its narrative discourse. For instance, Taiming, the protagonist, is as linguistically complex as a character as the text itself is linguistically complex. Educated in Classical Chinese, he is a fluent speaker of Japanese and a native speaker of Hakkanese. Within the narrative of the original text however, the reader only sees him speak mainly in Japanese; indeed going only by the dialogue, *most of the characters seem to be fluent speakers of Japanese*, even if they speak only in Hakkanese or other Chinese dialects. This is only excepted in short instances of Hakkanese for effect, or Hakkanese words embedded within a Japanese sentence. As well, we also see this thinning of linguistic boundary when the narrator shows the reader a Classical Chinese poem. In many instances of the translated text, it is at a cursory glance, unclear to the reader what language dialogue is taking place because most of it is delivered by the narrator in Japanese. What I see here, is the *very same absurdity of translation within the original work itself*. The appearance of such an absurdity as conscious decision by the implied author is lost in Mentzas' English translation (as well as the various Chinese translations). That is to say, the dialectic between linguistic ambiguity and occasional bouts of linguistic clarity in the original text is erased as the heterogenous vehicle of discourse in Wu's original is deconstructed and reconstructed into the homogenous framework of English (or Chinese) by the translator's hand.

It is this absurdity, and the implications of, that I wish to explore in this essay. More specifically, I aim to situate the narrator in the original text in the position of translator between diegesis and the Japanese implied reader; in doing so, I aim to show that *Ajia no Koji* is itself a translated work in the original. Assuming Emer O'Sullivan's placement of the 'implied translator' within narrative structure,[3] through a comparative reading of Mentzas's English translation, I propose that Mentzas' translated narrator necessarily subsumes the position of the translator's voice in the original, thus establishing the existence of the implied translator in the original text.

Furthermore I propose that in the original text, the implied translator and implied narrator are one and the same. However unlike Mentzas' rendition, the implied narrator is able to assert agency over their role and at times recuse themselves from the role of

3. Emer O'Sullivan, *Comparative children's literature* (Routledge, 2005), 91.

translator thus leaving the text untranslated; the narrator in the English translation is unable to do so having being subsumed completely by the implied translator. The agency to vacate the role of translator is exercised by the heterodiegetic narrator to both establish the diegetic language of discourse as *not Japanese*, as well as to demonstrate and reflect on Taiming's own linguistic complexity for figural effect; such context is erased in translation.

We will examine some key scenes where the boundaries in the Japanese linguistic matrix of the original thin out to expose a multilingual or contradictory linguistic voice, and examine if those same contradictions or hybridities exist in the English translations of those scenes. Once established, I will discuss the colonial implications of this positioning of the narrator in the wider context of Taiwan-Japanese colonial relations, and discuss how this context is erased when reading the text through translation. Indeed by choosing Japanese as the language of discourse, the implied reader is necessarily a Japanese subject (and I will argue as such later on); such context becomes lost in translation as the implied reader shifts from a Japanese speaking reader to an English-speaking reader.

2 Wu Zhuoliu and *Orphan of Asia*

Before we tackle the question of narrative voice, it seems prudent to give a short overview of the historical background behind Wu Zhuoliu and *Orphan of Asia*. Wu was born in Taiwan during the Japanese colonial period to a Hakka family. Like Taiming, he was a recipient of both traditional Chinese education in the classics, as well as Japanese colonial education;[4] as such he was fluent in both Hakkanese and Japanese. *Orphan of Asia* was written between 1943 and 1945 during the *kōminka* efforts by the colonial government to forcibly integrate Taiwan and the Taiwanese people into Imperial Japanese society as part of the war effort.[5] A politically charged text dealing with the life of a Taiwanese man during the colonial period, Wu wrote *Orphan of Asia* in secrecy, writing and hiding a few pages at a time.[6]

Originally written in Japanese, the text now known as *Orphan of Asia* was published in Taiwan from a period of 1946–1948 under the title 胡志明 *Hu Zhiming*[7]. First published

4. Xiaojue Wang, "Wu Zhuoliu, Orphanization, and Colonial Modernity in Taiwan," in *Modernity with a Cold War Face: Reimagining the Nation in Chinese Literature across the 1949 Divide.* (Harvard UAC, 2013), 159.

5. Ching, "Into the Muddy Stream: Triple Consciousness and Colonial Historiography in The Orphan of Asia," 3.

6. Ibid., 4.

7. *Hu Zhiming* being the name of the protagonist before later being changed to *Hu Taiming* in later edi-

in Japan in 1956 as アジヤの孤児 *Ajiya no koji* ('Orphan of Asia'), it was later reprinted in 1957 as 歪められた島 *Yugamerareta shima* ('Twisted Island'), and again in 1973 as アジアの孤児 *Ajia no koji* ('Orphan of Asia'). It was not until 2007 when it was once again reprinted as part of a compilation of literature from the Japanese colonial era.[8]

In Chinese, *Orphan of Asia* has been translated and reprinted multiple times by multiple different translators. Translated first by 楊召憩 in 1959 under the title 孤帆 *Gu fan* ('Lone Sail'), retranslated by 傅恩榮 in 1962 under the title 亞細亞的孤兒 *Yaxiya de gu'er* ('Orphan of Asia'), *Orphan of Asia* received its most recent Chinese translation in 2005 by translator 黃玉燕[9] once again under the title 亞細亞的孤兒.[10] It was only in 2006 that *Orphan of Asia* was translated and published in English by translator Ioannis Mentzas.[11]

While the translations of *Orphan of Asia* are readily available today both in English and Chinese in digital and physical formats[12], it is all but forgotten in the original Japanese. While reprinted relatively recently in 2007, it was as one part of a compilation of Japanese literature in Colonial Taiwan spanning several volumes meant for academic consumption. Commercially, it is all but unavailable and forgotten; locked away behind a university library card for scholars of colonial literature. I was fortunate enough to obtain a copy of the 1973 reprint, from which I will quote from for the purposes of this essay. It is quite disappointing that Wu Zhuoliu's work has become so inaccessible in Japan today, but for a host of reasons that would constitute an entirely separate essay given modern Japan's attitude towards their imperial past, it is perhaps an unsurprising reality.

tions.

8. Ming-chun Teng, "Tokuchgo ni yotte hon'yakusha no koe wo saguru — Go Dakuryu no 'ajia no koji' no hon'yaku o tatoe toshite — [Using Keyword Analysis to Search for Translators' Voices: Take the Chinese Translation of Orphan of Asia as an Example]," *Journal of Japanese Literature and Language in Taiwan*, no. 50 (2021): 84, doi:10.6205/jpllat.202112_(50).0004.

9. I could not find a source for the proper romanization of the names of the Chinese translators; as I do not speak Mandarin, I am unable to provide my own romanization and leave them here unromanized.

10. Teng, "Tokuchgo ni yotte hon'yakusha no koe wo saguru — Go Dakuryu no 'ajia no koji' no hon'yaku o tatoe toshite — [Using Keyword Analysis to Search for Translators' Voices: Take the Chinese Translation of Orphan of Asia as an Example]," 84.

11. Zhouliu Wu, *Orphan of Asia*, trans. Ioannis Mentzas (Columbia University Press, 2008).

12. A cursory search for ' 亞細亞的孤兒電子書' reveals multiple bookstores selling the Chinese translation in digital format. Orphan of Asia in English translation is also readily available from Amazon as both physical and Kindle editions, as well as a host of other digital bookstores as well as directly from Columbia University Press as of writing.

3 *Orphan of Asia* or *Ajia no koji*?

To begin our discussion, let us first examine some scenes in the original and translated editions of *Orphan of Asia*. These examples illustrate the complexity of language in the original that is erased in the English translation; furthermore they demonstrate the complex linguistic relation that places the narrator in the role of the translator in the original text.

3.1 Of Teacakes and Poverty

Let us begin with a discussion between Old Hu (胡老人) and Licentiate Peng (彭秀才) during 'Poverty Demon's Day'. Already we see that the linguistic complexity of the demon of poverty for which the day is named has been subsumed under one single expression in the translation. What is taken as simply "demon of poverty"[13] in the English translation is in the original bracketed and retranslated from Chinese into Japanese: " 窮鬼 (貧乏神)".[14] Whereas the narrator's voice in the English translation is subsumed under translation, in the original, we see an overt realization or *shift* from a narrative voicing of 'demon of poverty', i.e. 窮鬼 (*qiónggui*ǒ), to a translative voicing as 貧乏神 *binbōgami*[15].

The next example I wish to examine occurs during the same scene, that being the description of teacakes offered to Licentiate Peng. In the English translation, the entire descriptive context is elided into simply 'praised the tea cakes' (emphasis mine).

> When [Licentiate Peng] was invited into the main building, he exchanged greetings with Old Hu, **praised the tea cakes that were offered to him** [...][16]

In the original text, what we see is instead a long descriptive scene that serves as narrative establishment of the language of discourse, but the narrator refusing to assume the role of translator for such dialogue.

> [彭秀才が] 正庁へ招じ入れられた。彭秀才と、胡老人が挨拶を交わしたあとで太明はお菓子を四つの皿に入れ、それを盆にのせて恭々しく彭秀才の

13. Wu, *Orphan of Asia*, 10.
14. Zhouliu Wu, *Ajia no koji* [in Japanese] (1946; Shin-Jinbutsuoraisha, 1973), 22.
15. All Japanese romanizations are my own in modified Hepburn. Chinese romanizations are Mandarin Hanyu Pinyin sourced from Wiktionary and is for illustrative purposes not reflective of the actual language spoken on Taiwan diegetically.
16. Wu, *Orphan of Asia*, 10.

前に出した。彭秀才は「食紅棗年々好（スツフンッアウギエヌギエヌホウ）」といって赤いナツメを二つ、さらに「食冬瓜年々加（スツトンクアギエヌギエヌカー）」と冬瓜のお菓子を二つつまんで食べた。[17]

—

[Licentiate Peng] was invited inside. After Licentiate Peng and Old Hu exchanged greetings, Taiming put sweets onto four dishes, placed them on a tray, and politely put them out in front of Licentiate Peng. Licentiate Peng ate two red jujubes, saying 'shí hóngzǎo niánnián hǎo [Eating red jujubes brings good every year]', then ate two wintermelon sweets, saying 'shí dōngguā niánnián jiā [Eating wintermelon brings bounty every year]'. [18]

Note here that Peng's praise of the sweets offered is rendered in Chinese with Japanese phonetic markers (*furigana*) representing the dialect of discourse between Peng and Old Hu. Whereas in the English translation, a full description of this scene serves little purpose as the role of narrator is subsumed by the implied translator and is therefore elided into a concise statement; indeed as the entire exchange was removed, the specifics of the teacakes offered was also brushed over. However the purpose of this scene in the original text shows that the narrator has agency as to what dialogue and discourse they choose to translate to the reader; thus the narrator in the original text can at times choose to *exit the role of translator* narrating exactly what is being said. To a Japanese speaking reader, the commonality of Chinese characters may render Peng's utterance here somewhat intelligible, but the choice to include phonetic (i.e. meaningless in Japanese) *furigana* and the rendering of red jububes as 紅棗 rather than 赤いナツメ makes Peng's dialogue here *explicitly Chinese*, and therefore makes *ambiguous* its intelligibility to a Japanese speaking reader. However in the narration following the dialogue, the narrator does clarify what the sweets eaten by Peng were, perhaps to provide context to understand some of Peng's praise.

An examination of the dialogue between Old Hu and Peng right after makes obvious the agency of the narrator in the original to refuse to translate and render dialogue opaque to the Japanese speaking reader, whereas in English translation, all is made transparent. Here I juxtapose directly the original text against Mentzas' English translation.

17. Ruby text (*furigana*) is preserved exactly as in the original text. Wu, *Ajia no koji*, 22.

18. Translation mine. Chinese romanizations here are sourced from Wikitionary, and are in Mandarin Hanyu Pinyin. It is not intended to be representative of the Hakka dialect spoken and is here only for illustrative purposes for this translation. I could not find a proper transliterator for Peh-oe-ji thus I resort to using Pinyin for illustrative purposes.

「一庭雞犬繞仙境。滿徑煙霞淡俗緣。というのはよいですな。脱俗の風格があります。貴方のように達観した人でないと、こうは行かない」

と、胡家の春聯の句を賞讃した。胡老人は恐縮ながら

「貴方の今年の春聯は、どういうのですか」

と、彭秀才をうながした。彭秀才は

「駄作ですよ」と謙遜しながら

「大樹不沾新雨露。雲梯仍守旧家風。」

と吟じ、紙に書いて胡老人に渡した。胡老人は

「よきかな。伯夷叔齊にも似た気概です」[19]

—

"Excellent. 'A yard of chicken and dogs? / Tour the enchanted garden. / The smoke that fills your path? / The mist keeps out the worldly.' Such ethereal lines come only to the most detached."

In response to the licentiate's praise, Old Hu requested meekly, "And your own, how does it read this year?"

"Terribly," the Licentiate warned: "'Fresh dew does not blight the large tree, / But coats the ancient ladder to the clouds.'" He also wrote it down for the old man to see.

"Excellent. I am reminded of those brothers in ancient times who refused to be fed by a traitor who had turned against their lord—I'm talking about the young princes Boyi and Shuqi, who preferred to eat their own sandals and starve."[20]

As discussed earlier, Peng's praise of the sweets offered establishes firmly the diegetic language of dialogue as *not Japanese*; indeed the reader can also easily surmise the absurdity of two old Taiwanese men conversing about their fortunes written in Chinese while speaking fluent Japanese. However, whereas the English translation represents the yearly fortunes read aloud in the same language as the rest of the dialogue, in the original, the dialogue shifts between Chinese and Japanese: the narrator has chosen *not to translate the fortunes*, leaving them intact and opaque to the Japanese-speaking implied reader. Indeed, we do not even see the translator's voice surface as *furigana* as in the earlier instance; while the reader could in theory pronounce each individual character in Japanese pronunciation, it would render as a mixed jumble of words.

19. Wu, *Ajia no koji*, 22.
20. Wu, *Orphan of Asia*, 10.

The only exception here is the story of Boyi and Shuqi (伯夷叔齊), which is used idiomatically in the original, and quickly summarized in the English translation. For a reader already well-studied in the Chinese classics, this idiom from the *Records of the Grand Historian* (史記) is rendered はくいしゅくせい *hakuishukusei* in Japanese; such an erudite reader would also be familiar with the context and usage of this idiom.

3.2 Poetry in Translation

In her article on *Orphan of Asia*, Xiaojue Wang focuses on the poem Taiming composes on his way to the mainland. Speaking on Taiming's ambiguious identity as an ethnically Hakka (i.e. Chinese) Japanese subject, she writes

> The ambiguity is to be found in the significant detail about word alteration that Wu emphasizes in this episode. While the first couple of quatrains pop up in his mind with ease, Hu Taiming makes quite an effort to revise the last line, which originally read "*gui guguo*" (return to my motherland) instead of "*you dalu*" (travel to the mainland). In revising the line, Hu is doubtlessly aware of his dubious identity [...] The crucial moment of modification amounts to the author's awareness of his complicated identity, thus signifying the loss of innocence about being Chinese in colonial Taiwan [...][21]

It must be noted however that Wang refers to *Orphan of Asia* in the Chinese translation for her; rather she quotes from *Yaxiya de gu'er* rather than *Ajia no koji*. In analyzing the text in translation, she is unable to grasp an additional layer of nuance present in this scene. In the original text, while the final poem itself is rendered in Chinese, Taiming's musings on how to revise that line of his poem is *not rendered in Chinese, but in Japanese*. As a stand-in for the Chinese translation, I juxtapose with the original text the English translation which demonstrates the same problem as the Chinese translation (emphasis mine).

> But a couple of quatrains came to him in a flash and seemed to require hardly any revision except for the last line, **"A continent of kinsfolk nears."** [...] Changing the last line, Taiming wrote, in pencil, the final version in his notebook:
>
> O thoughts, I've aired you ten odd years
>
> [...]

21. Wang, "Wu Zhuoliu, Orphanization, and Colonial Modernity in Taiwan," 189.

> Before we greet the paradise—
> **A continent for pioneers.**[22]
> —
> 彼は一気呵成七言律詩を一首作った。ほとんど推敲を要しない詩であるが、ただ第七句に「**豈、封侯の為に故国に帰らん**」ということが気になった。[...] 彼はやっと新しい句を得て「**大陸に遊ばん**」と替えてしまった。そして鉛筆で走り書きに手帳に記した。
> 優柔不斷十余年
> [...]
> **豈為封侯遊大陸**
> 敢将文字博金錢[23]

Before the reader is shown the full text, the narrator provides the reader a peek into Taiming's thought process; this thought process is not given in Chinese, but in Japanese. This contrasts with how the anecdote about Shen Deqian's poem is rendered (emphasis mine).

> [Taiming] remembered the chilling fate of Shen Deqian and ruled out that option. The eighteenth-century poet and critic was accused of criticizing the status quo in a verse about black peonies: **"This breed bizarre usurped the throne / Rightly of the vermilion."**[24]
> —
> 彼はハッと清の沈德潜の筆禍事件を思い出して慄然とした。沈は孔子の「悪紫奪朱」という句によって黒牡丹を詠んだ。その句に「**奪朱非正色、異種也稱王**」とある問題になっ [た]。[25]

Here, the original renders the line preserved in Chinese rather than being translated into Japanese[26] as an overt marker of its provenance.

What then does this say of the provenance of Taiming's poem then? We are given two options, neither of which are accessible in translation. Either the narrator, in the position of the implied translator, has translated Taimings inner thoughts from Chinese into Japanese (while leaving the final poem untranslated), or that Taiming *conceived of the poem*

22. Wu, *Orphan of Asia*, 95.
23. Wu, *Ajia no koji*, 128.
24. Wu, *Orphan of Asia*, 95.
25. Wu, *Ajia no koji*, 127.
26. There is a long tradition of reading Classical Chinese poems using Japanese word order and pronunciation using *Kanbun Kundoku*. To the Japanese reader, a Classical Chinese text in this format would be much more intelligible than leaving it in its original Chinese. That is not provided here.

in Japanese before writing it down in Chinese; that is that the narrator has not translated Taiming's inner voice and simpy left them plain and untranslated for the reader: it *just so happens that Taiming's inner voice is primarily in Japanese*.

One can argue for both readings of this scene. I have established in the previous section that the narrator is capable of fulfilling the role of implied translator (and that such a role exists in the original text). There is also evidence to this reading in that the form of the poem was specifically noted as 七言律詩, an 8-line regulated verse with 7 characters each: this is a uniquely Chinese form. Yet when considering the meaning of each line, there is nothing preventing Taiming from conceptualizing the line first in Japanese before composing it in Chinese; indeed there is a long and ancient tradition of Chinese poetry from Japanese poets dating from time immemorial.

This second reading however adds an additional layer of nuance to what Wang calls "the author's awareness of his complicated identity"[27]. If we assume in this instance that the narrator has vacated the role of translator, the reader is given unmediated (untranslated) access into Taiming's inner voice. This implies that Taiming is not only comfortable thinking in Japanese, but it may even be his 'default' or native language of thought. It is only when thinking of poems that he learned in the original Chinese that the reader sees untranslated Chinese thoughts. This has profound implications on Taiming's linguistic identity. Leo Ching criticizes Tarumi Chie's treatment of colonial literature: "For Tarumi, the Japanese language, as an instrument of colonialism's cultural technology, deprived the colonized of their inherited 'native' or 'national' language [...] [T]he colonizers are always 'at home' with their language, while the colonized are 'never at home'".[28] If the reader is to adopt this reading, they are forced to come to the conclusion that for Taiming, not only is he 'at home' with Japanese, but that Japanese may be equally as 'native' to him, or even less so than his putatively native Hakkanese.[29]

3.3 The Language of Madness

My assertion of Taiming's native command of Japanese may be controversial. After all the disparity between nominally 'native' Japanese speakers and Taiwanese speakers of

27. Wang, "Wu Zhuoliu, Orphanization, and Colonial Modernity in Taiwan," 21.

28. Ching, "Into the Muddy Stream: Triple Consciousness and Colonial Historiography in The Orphan of Asia," 13.

29. As a heritage speaker of Cantonese myself, I relate a lot to Taiming here under this reading. I would really love to digress here and go on a long tangent about heritage speakers quoting from some sociolinguistic studies on heritage speakers of Chinese, but that would constitute an entirely separate essay.

Japanese was brought up directly within the plot.[30] There are a few problems with this argument. First, it was not Taiming specifically that was accused of speaking Japanese poorly but the faculty in general; indeed it was Instructor Zeng[31] that spoke up against the accuser, who was older than Taiming and may not have received Japanese colonial education early enough in life to acquire a native-like accent. Secondly, as Chomsky reminds us, linguistic competence (understanding of language) is not linguistic performance (speaking language).[32] Indeed the distinction between the speech interface (phonological form) and the thought interface (logical form) in language is well known and well studied in the tradition of generative linguistics.[33] Nevertheless, an exploration of the final chapter of the novel will firmly establish the equal status of Taiming's linguistic ability in both Japanese and Chinese without resorting to cognitive arguments. In doing so, I also demonstrate the full rhetoric effect of the narrator's agency over the translator's voice in the original text.

The chapter opens with a description of Taiming's deranged poem written on the wall of the Hu estate. In the English translation, the poem is presented entirely in English. In the original text however, it is clear from context that the poem is written diegetically in Chinese, but the narrator provides the reader with *a Japanese translation*, typeset directly below the Chinese verses. I present the Japanese translation here in parenthesis, see appendix 6.1 for the full poem.

> 壁に太明の筆蹟で、墨痕鮮やかに
> 志為天下士 (天下の士を志し)
> [...]
> 誓將熱血為義死 (熱き血もて義のために死せん)[34]
> —
> [Taiming] wrote the following on the wall in clear, crisp strokes:
> I aspired to be a scholar
> [...]
> Your blood simmering die for duty.[35]

Important to note is that the Japanese translation provided here is the only time that any

30. Wu, *Orphan of Asia*, 41.
31. Ibid.
32. Noam Chomsky, *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax* (1965; MIT press, 2014), 2–35.
33. Robert C. Berwick and Noam Chomsky, *Why only us: Language and Evolution* (MIT press, 2016), 2–8.
34. Wu, *Ajia no koji*, 297.
35. Wu, *Orphan of Asia*, 244.

Chinese poem was given an overt translation by the narrator. I will explore the significance of this later in this essay. Continuing with our discussion on this chapter, Taiming continues to rant in Chinese; here the narrator leaves his rant untranslated in the original.

> 「汝等、衆生に告ぐ！」とさけんだ。[...] 太明はさらに
> 頭家是大哥
> 大哥是賊頭
> 人剝皮
> 樹剝皮
> 山也剝皮
> と、朗々として吟じた。[36]
> —
> “Tell all the living things of the world!”
> [...] [Taiming] began to chant in a sonorous voice:
> The head of the family is the big brother
> The big brother is the head of the thieves
> People are skinned
> Trees are skinned
> Mountains are skinned[37]

Taiming then begins to chant nonsense. In the English translation, this is linguistically subsumed as English, but the narrator chooses to present this nonsense as Chinese rather than Japanese with phonetic Chinese characters rather than *katakana*—instead, to aid the Japanese reader, *katakana* is provided paratextually as *furigana*.

> 咿(イ)— 呀(ヤ)— 噯(オイ)!
> 白日土匪
> 哪(ナ)— 噯(アイ)— 喲(ヨー)[38]
> —
> Eee, Yaa, Oii!
> Bandits, in broad daylight!
> Nah, Aii, Roh!!

36. Wu, *Ajia no koji*, 298.
37. Wu, *Orphan of Asia*, 245.
38. Wu, *Ajia no koji*, 299.

The implication of using Chinese characters to represent the incomprehensible screams of Taiming is intentional and implicates the usage of Chinese (Hakkanese) language in this specific utterance. Taiming then continues his rant, but last rant is presented not in Chinese, but in Japanese[39].

Whereas the translated English version erases the linguistic context by subsuming both Chinese and Japanese under the totalizing English voice, the original shows again the narrator's agency in weaving between two linguistic contexts to both show Taiming's split-linguistic mental state in his derangement, torn across linguistic and cultural contexts, even disregarding the contents of his rant. Even in madness, Taiming shows fluency in both languages.

4 Split-linguistic narration as an act of resistance.

We have so far well established the bilingual nature of the narrator in the original that is erased and subsumed under a monolingual voice in the English translation. The bilingual narrator in the original is thus able to assert agency as to when and where they decide to translate between Chinese and Japanese under the framework of an 'implied translator'.

Where thus does this place the narrator vis-á-vis the reader? We know from the bilingual nature of the narrator that like Taiming, the narrator lives within the same dual-linguistic world in their ability to mediate between the language of everyday life, and the Japanese of the reader. This positions the narrator themselves as a colonized subject within the Taiwanese-Japanese locus: like Taiming, the narrator too must grasp with the schism between a culturally Chinese and a culturally Japanese locus. Therefore, despite speaking in Japanese, the narrator speaks not from the position of the colonizer's voice, but instead from a colonized position.

The remaining questions are of course, to whom is the narrator speaking to, and for what purpose? Indeed the narrator's choice to use Japanese directly refutes Chie's claim that "the colonizers are always 'at home' with their language, while the colonized are 'never' at home."[40]—despite being a colonized subject, the narrator is equally eloquent in both linguistic contexts. I am remind of Lydia Liu's analysis of the narrator in *Ah Q*—the existence of a Chinese narrator capable of criticizing the protagonist Ah Q's boorishness directly contradicts the assertion that Ah Q is representative of Chinese national character

39. See Appendix 6.2

40. Ching, "Into the Muddy Stream: Triple Consciousness and Colonial Historiography in The Orphan of Asia," 13.

as a whole.[41] However, unlike *Ah Q*, the narrator in *Orphan of Asia* never appears in overt discourse.

Instead, the narrator in *Orphan of Asia* uses their agency in their role of translator to address the Japanese-speaking reader. Borrowing from Jiang's pragmatic conception of translator's voice as summarized by Zhang,[42] the narrator most of the time performs the illocutionary act of translation for the perlocutionary effect of rendering the text intelligible for the Japanese-speaking reader. When the narrator chooses to vacate the role of translator, they allow the character to speak unmediated to the reader. Allowing the diegetic locution of dialogue to directly reach the implied reader serves two effects—either to allow the character in question to speak directly to the reader as in the case of Taiming's madness, resulting in whatever rhetorical effect affected on the characters in diegesis to also affect the reader, thus allowing the characters themselves illocutionary agency; or as a *refusal to cooperate with the implied reader* such as in the examples of untranslated poems or Chinese sayings as in 3.1. This refusal to translate is an illocutionary act of resistance against the Japanese-speaking reader as if to protect the uniqueness of Chinese culture (or the narrator's perception of Chinese culture) from the Japanese locus of the reader. It is this act of resistance that is erased in the English translation as the translated voice intends for the reader to understand *all* of the novel in opposition to just what the narrator allows in the original, *unless the reader learns or becomes knowledgeable of Chinese language and cultural reference*.

Let me now address the question of why the narrator chooses to provide the reader a paratextual translation of Taiming's rant on the wall. It is notable that throughout his rants, very little of Taiming's utterances are enquoted; only his scream to "Tell all the living things of the world!".[43] Additionally, all of the Chinese poems in *Orphan of Asia* are never enquoted and are left untranslated in Chinese. What then is the difference between those earlier poems and these scribblings of a madman?

With Taiming's final 'poem', the narrator purposefully provides a translation to allow the reader to know Taiming's pain, while still firmly establishing the language of discourse as Chinese. The narrator's later refusal to translate further, by leaving Taiming's dialogue as plain Chinese and Japanese both serves to illustrate Taiming's split-linguistic consciousness as discussed in section 3.3, but also demonstrates that the narrator too sees

41. Lydia He, *Translingual practice: Literature, national culture, and translated modernity–China, 1900-1937* (Stanford University Press, 1995), 76.

42. Qun-xing Zhang, "Translator's Voice in Translated Texts," *Journal of Literature and Art Studies* 6 (February 2016): 183, doi:10.17265/2159-5836/2016.02.007.

43. Wu, *Orphan of Asia*, 245.

Taiming as beyond comprehensibility and abdicates their position as translator in the face of Taiming's deranged mental state. This creates a powerful rhetorical effect by placing the reader in the same position as narrator; leaving the reader alone to derive meaning from Taiming's unfiltered words and emotions. We see other examples of this overt realization of the narrator-as-translator's voice in the forms of parenthetical explanations of Chinese terms such as seen in section 3.1 This clearly demonstrates cultural assumptions on the implied reader as lacking Chinese cultural context, but invites and challenges them to understand and empathize with the historical context of Taiwan as depicted in the novel.

On the other hand, subsumption of the narrator's translative agency in the English translation erases this challenge to the reader as the act of monolingual translation shifts the implied reader to a Japanese reader with Japanese, but not necessarily Chinese cultural context; to a reader with neither cultural context at all. Without such context and under translation, the narrator-as-translator's agency in the original is blocked and subsumed under the monolingual translator's voice; rendering this challenge to the reader moot and at best able to sympathize rather than empathize on the linguistic level. In the original, it is not just "Wu's risking his life to complete his novel"[44] as Ching notes, that legitimizes *Orphan of Asia* as resistance literature—resistance exists within the text itself in the way the narrator narrates the text. Under translation, this act of resistance by the narrator is unable to surface and thus erased as part of the translation process.

5 Conclusion

In the preface to *Orphan of Asia*, Wu acknoledges and thanks his Japanese supporters and friends; furthermore, he directly addresses the reader and invites them to be empathetic to Taiming's plight.

> ああ、胡太明はついに発狂して。
> 心ある者よ、誰か発狂せずにられようか。[45]
> —
> Ah, Hu Taiming has finally gone mad.
> Those with heart, is there anyone that could remain sane?[46]

44. Ching, "Into the Muddy Stream: Triple Consciousness and Colonial Historiography in The Orphan of Asia," 4.
45. Wu, *Ajia no koji*, ii.
46. Translation mine.

In the English translation, Wu's preface is not present, removing critical context as to the identity of the intended reader. As Lau argues, "This acceptance [of Japanese readers] disappears in the English preface completely, which undeniably takes away from understanding the author's thoughts and the historical background of the text [...] Wu's target audience is not mentioned in the new preface, and thus he is unheard".[47]

The omission of the preface is a paratextual example of the silencing and repainting of the text. I have demonstrated that the act of translation itself in its linguistically totalizing nature silences and repaints the voice of the narrator. Through an examination of linguistic contradictions and hybridities in *Ajia no koji*, I have shown that the narrator mediates the text from the position of translator; furthermore the narrator exercises agency in this position by choosing to abdicate the position of translator for illocutionary effect. This reflects the schizophrenic split-linguistic consciousness of Taiming as well as invites the reader to be empathetic to the split-cultural loci of Taiwan under Japanese colonial rule.

Under translation, the narrator is robbed of their agency over the position of translator, which has entirely been usurped by the English implied translator. As a result, the reader of the English translation (or even the Chinese translation) is unable to grasp the complexity of the split-linguistic consciousness that the author attempts to illustrate. *Orphan of Asia* is a text directed at Japanese readers inviting them to empathize and understand the cruelty and suffering of everyday life of Colonial Taiwan; by removing agency from the narrator the English translation renders the English edition at best capable of sympathetic, rather than empathetic rhetorical effect.

6 Appendix

6.1 Taiming's poem written in the ceremonial hall of the Hu estate.

I provide the full poem written by a deranged Taiming within the ceremonial hall of the Hu estate. Parenthesized is the Japanese translation originally typeset below the Chinese lines.

> 壁に太明の筆蹟で、墨痕鮮やかに
> 志為天下士 (天下の士を志し)
> 豈甘作賤民 (豈賤しき民に屈せん)

47. Jennifer Junwa Lau, "Unsuspected Introductions in Translated Texts: A Case Study on Wu Zhuoliu's Orphan of Asia," *Journal of Translation Studies* 14, nos. 1&2 (2011): 12.

擊暴椎何在 (いずこに暴を撃つ椎(つち)ありや)
英雄入夢頻 (常に夢見る英雄の姿)
漢魂終不滅 (漢魂永久に亡びず)
斷然捨此身 (斷じて捨てんこの命)
驢呀驢呀(リアーリアー)意如何 (リアーリアー汝如何に)
奴隸生涯抱恨多 (奴隸の生涯これ恨みぞ深き)
橫暴蛮威奈若何 (橫暴なる蛮威を如何に)
同心来復旧山河 (同志よ来れ旧き山河を復さん)
六百万民齊蹶起 (起きて、六百万の民、いざ諸共に)
誓將熱血為義死 (熱き血もて義のために死せん)[48]

—

[Taiming] wrote the following on the wall in clear, crisp strokes:
I aspired to be a scholar
But bowed to thugs —
Where is the hammer to beat violence?
As the hero ever dreams,
The Chinese spirit lives —
I will lose this life of mine.
O but how could this be?
The slave life drips with resentment,
O but how do we suffer brutes?
Comrades, reclaim old hills and streams,
Rise, ye six million, rise ye together—
Your blood simmering die for duty.[49]

6.2 Taiming's rant in Japanese.

This is Taiming's final rant in the original Japanese with Mentzas's translation provided below.

それ、見給え！
どれもこれも
虎の面をしている。

48. Wu, *Ajia no koji*, 297.
49. Wu, *Orphan of Asia*, 244.

人の肉を食らう夷(えびす)の様に
あれ狂っている。
汝の父も汝の夫も
汝の兄弟も汝の子も
皆、そいつのために—
国だ、国だとあいつは何のために叫ぶ。
そう叫ぶ奴に限ってくせものだ。
国の力を借りて
己だけ栄花を貪っている
不徳漢だ。
白日土匪だ。
人を殺せば死刑だよ、
あいつがあんなに人を殺して
それで英雄！英雄！何だって、
馬鹿もの！
虎だ。
狼だ。
獣だ。
知らぬか。
[太明はさらに]
馬鹿！
同胞だ、同胞だと言って
お前は走狗だ。
皇民ボーイだ。
模範青年。
模範保正だ。
賛成先生だ。
なんだ
馬鹿！[50]

—

Leaning on the nation's might,
He gobbles down glory alone.
Depraved scoundrel

50. Wu, *Ajia no koji*, 299–300.

Daylight bandit
Punishment for murder is death
But he goes on killing so many
And he's a hero! a hero! What?
You stupid!
Tiger
Wolf
Beast
Don't you know?
[Taiming continued:]
Fool!
You say you're a compatriot
But you're just a hound,
Imperial errand-boy,
Exemplary youth,
Exemplary arbitrator,
Praiseworthy teacher,
Hah!
Fool![51]

51. Wu, *Orphan of Asia*, 246.

References

Berwick, Robert C., and Noam Chomsky. *Why only us: Language and Evolution*. MIT press, 2016.

Ching, Leo. "Into the Muddy Stream: Triple Consciousness and Colonial Historiography in The Orphan of Asia." In *Becoming "Japanese": Colonial Taiwan and the Politics of Identity Formation.* 174–210. University of California Press, 2001.

Chomsky, Noam. *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*. 1965. MIT press, 2014.

He, Lydia. *Translingual practice: Literature, national culture, and translated modernity–China, 1900-1937*. Stanford University Press, 1995.

Hermans, Theo. "The Translator's Voice in Translated Narrative." *Target. International Journal of Translation Studies* 8, no. 1 (1996): 23–48. ISSN: 0924-1884. doi:10.1075/target.8.1.03her.

Lau, Jennifer Junwa. "Unsuspected Introductions in Translated Texts: A Case Study on Wu Zhuoliu's Orphan of Asia." *Journal of Translation Studies* 14, nos. 1&2 (2011): 1–16.

O'Sullivan, Emer. *Comparative children's literature*. Routledge, 2005.

Teng, Ming-chun. "Tokuchgo ni yotte hon'yakusha no koe wo saguru — Go Dakuryu no 'ajia no koji' no hon'yaku o tatoe toshite — [Using Keyword Analysis to Search for Translators' Voices: Take the Chinese Translation of Orphan of Asia as an Example]." *Journal of Japanese Literature and Language in Taiwan*, no. 50 (2021): 77–105. doi:10.6205/jpllat.202112_(50).0004.

Wang, Xiaojue. "Wu Zhuoliu, Orphanization, and Colonial Modernity in Taiwan." In *Modernity with a Cold War Face: Reimagining the Nation in Chinese Literature across the 1949 Divide.* 155–201. Harvard UAC, 2013.

Wu, Zhouliu. *Ajia no koji* [in Japanese]. 1946. Shin-Jinbutsuoraisha, 1973.

———. *Orphan of Asia*. Translated by Ioannis Mentzas. Columbia University Press, 2008.

Zhang, Qun-xing. "Translator's Voice in Translated Texts." *Journal of Literature and Art Studies* 6 (February 2016). doi:10.17265/2159-5836/2016.02.007.