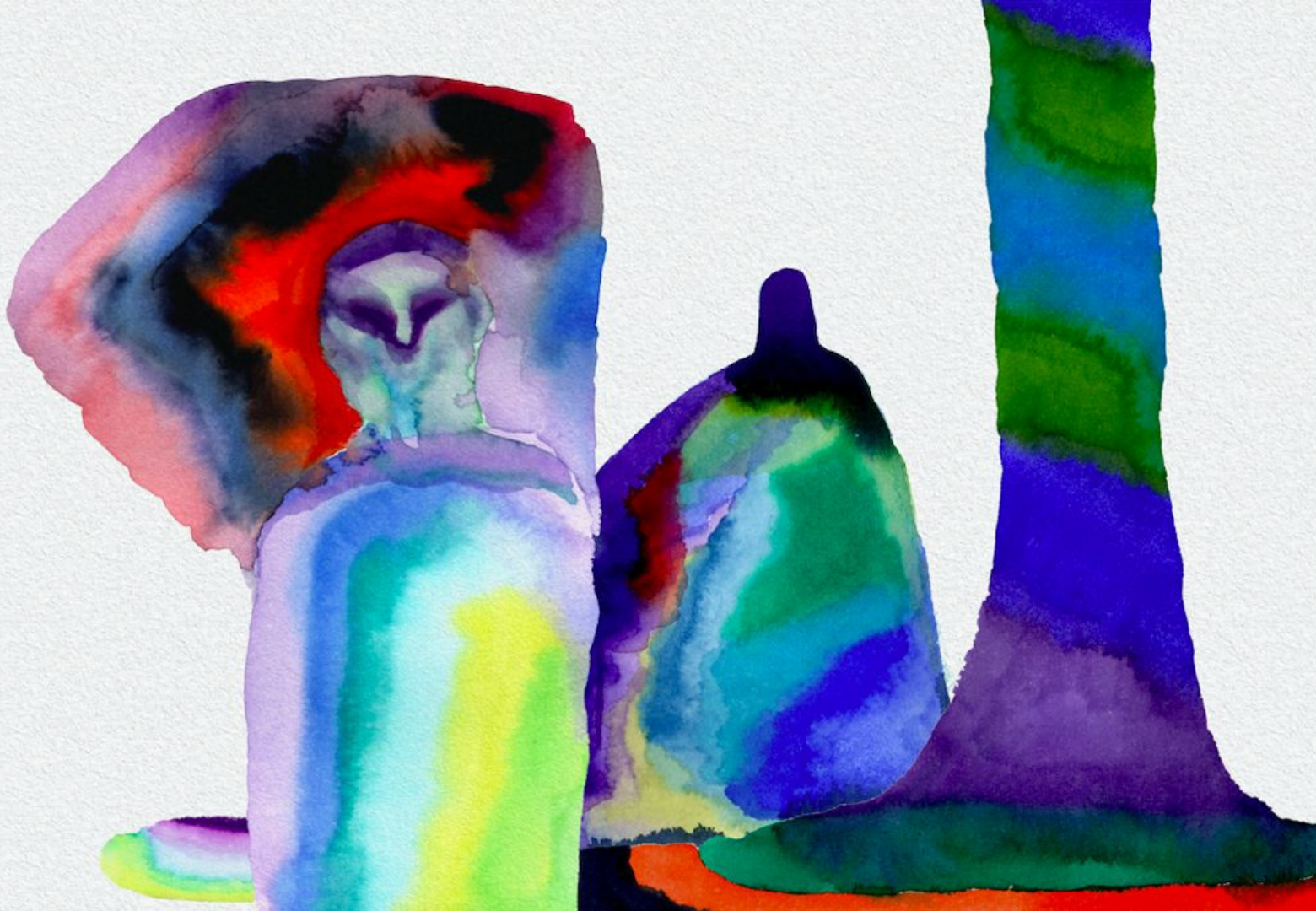


nov 2019

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issue 2



너울과 노을 / 이제니

눈물 다음에 너울이 온다 너울 다음에 하늘이 있고
하늘 너머로 얼굴이 있다 얼굴 사이로 바람이 오고
바람 속에는 마음이 있어 마음 위로는 노래가 오고
노래 사이로 호흡이 있고 호흡 속에는 죽음이 있다
죽음 너머로 구름이 있고 구름 너머로 저녁이 오고
저녁 너머로 안개가 있고 안개 너머로 들판이 있고
들판 너머로 먼지가 일고 먼지 너머로 거리가 있다
거리 속에는 정적이 있고 정적 사이로 언덕이 있고
언덕 위로는 나무가 있어 나무 다음에 눈물이 오고
눈물 다음에 너울이 있어 너울 너머로 노을이 진다

「왜냐면 우리는 우리를 모르고」
中 (2014, 문학과지성사)

Neoulgwa noeul / Lee Jenny

Nunmul daeume neouri onda Neoul daeume haneuri itgo
haneul neomeoro eolguri itda Eolgul sairo barami ogo
Baram sogeneun maeumi isseo maeum wironeun noraega ogo
noraе sairo hoheubi itgo hoheub sogeneun jugeumi itda
Jugeum neomeoro gureumi itgo gureum neomeoro jeonyeogi ogo
jeonyeong neomeoro angaega itgo angae neomeoro deulpani itgo
deulpan neomeoro meonjiga ilgo meonji neomeoro georiga itda
Geori sogeneun jeongjeogi itgo jeongjeog sairo eondeogi itgo
Eondeong wironeun namuga isseo namu daeume nunmuri ogo
nunmul daeume neouri isseo neoul neomeoro noeri jinda

from *Waenyamyeon urineun urireul moreugo* (2014, Moonji Books)

Listen to the poem [here](#).

Each issue, chogwa zine invites an artist to interpret the poem into a cover image.

Artist's Statement from Ho Hur

너울과 노을 시에서 느껴지는 규칙적인 너울같은 리듬을 느끼며 그 운율을 그림에 나타내려고 노력했습니다.

너울이 일어나는 물가에서 인물이 서서 단어를 떠올리는 장면을 나타냈습니다.

종이에 수채화 후 스캔, 디지털 보정. 2019.

Feeling the regular, wave-like rhythm of the poem, I strived to render that rhyme visually.

I depicted a scene of a figure standing up in the wavy waterside and thinking of the word.

Watercolors on paper, scanned and digitally edited. 2019.

Miss Chogwa's been booked and busy! There's a special (unnumbered) issue within the winter issue of 자음과모음 coming out at the end of this month, featuring a Heo Su-gyeong poem and six translations by six [Smoking Tigers](#). Even I have a translation in there, and I'm telling you so you can go read it and be like, **THIS* IS WHO'S EDITING CHOGWA? Guillotine.*

Well, first of all, I don't know if there's an editor because I've only fixed one typo so far. Just to keep y'all on your toes, I don't want to say I'll always accept every submission. But I think the bigger honor than being selected is to be read closely and compassionately.

My role, I've decided, is to notice things. Observation isn't objective either, but I don't want to narrow down an "aesthetic" by tinkering with word choices and whatnot because *chogwa* is about the diversity of translation. Diverting diversions. Divas maybe. But I digress.

What I love about this issue is that I had the pleasure of noticing not just differences in word choice like sea vs. ocean, but form. Every translator dove deep into their own interpretations, and I'm excited to share them with you all.

The term “literal” translation is a contested one (I recommend [“She knows too much,”](#) an essay by translators Jen Calleja and Sophie Collins), but if I were to be as descriptive as possible without regarding the sonic relationship between the two nouns in the title, I would translate *neoul* as “heaving sea” and *noeul* as “glow of the setting sun.” You can begin to imagine the challenges maneuvered by the 10 translators of our second issue.

What can I say? Lee Jenny—author of two poetry collections, winner of the 2011 Pyeon-un Literature Award and the 2016 Kim Hyeon Prize, member of the experimental text collective ‘Ru’—is a master of rhythm. Her use of repetition is like an incantation, not to mention the restraint needed to unify the number of syllables throughout this 10-line poem.

This is why I’d retweeted novelist Jeannette Ng’s [thread on Chinese palindrome poems](#). I’m still amazed by the creative brainpower needed to translate those into English! Chinese sentences have no spaces, and every word takes up the same amount of space. Korean takes more effort to be as uniform, but not as much as English. Word length varies so much more in English; even the alphabet letters are of varying widths.

This time I’ve distributed my comments throughout the issue, but here are some guiding interests:

1. Rhyme (Like *neoul* and *noeul*)
2. Rhythm (Did anyone else count syllables per line?)
3. Singular/plural nouns (Korean doesn’t distinguish them)
4. Verb variety (Lee Jenny uses four total)

Get ready for the reading!potluck!gabfest! on December 7! Lee Jenny will be there, and our contributors will read their translations in person or on video. And as if that wasn’t enough, I’m bringing a very special treat from Oaxaca!

Tag us @chogwazine with your thoughts.

Til then,
So J. Lee

A Swell and a Sunset

tr. dahyun kim

After those tears	there comes a swell	after that swell	there is a sky
Beyond that sky	there is a face	through that face	there blows a wind
Within that wind	as a heart exists	above that heart	there starts a song
Through that song	there is a breath	within that breath	there stands a death
Beyond that death	there is a cloud	beyond that cloud	there stays an eve
Beyond that eve	there is a fog	beyond that fog	there sprawls a field
Beyond that field	there rises the dust	beyond that dust	there lies a path
Within that path	there is a silence	through that silence	there looms a hill
Above that hill	there is a tree	after that tree	there come the tears
After those tears	as a swell exists	beyond that swell	there sets the sun

from *As we fail to understand ourselves*

Surge and sunset

tr. Hoyoung Moon

After tears, waves surge in After surge is sky
beyond sky are faces Between faces comes wind
within wind is want so atop want rides song
amid song is breath within breath is death
Beyond death are clouds beyond clouds comes night
beyond night is fog beyond fog is field
beyond field rise dust beyond dust are streets
In streets is silence between silence is slope
atop slope is tree so after tree come tears
after tears waves surge so over surge sinks sun

from *Because We Don't Know Ourselves*

dahyun kim's translation reflects how I read the poem in Korean; the breaks correspond with my inhalations. The caesuras are certainly an addition in that they're not there in the Korean, but they also regulate the shape of the poem. dahyun's has more straight edges than would be otherwise possible given the irregular lengths of English-language words.

As I mentioned earlier, Lee Jenny uses four basic verbs: *comes, is, rises, sets*. Dahyun uses the most number of distinct verbs, all in the fourth column.

There's no style guide about Hoyoung Moon's translation coming second in every issue, but here we are. How compact! A different rhythm!

Just look at dahyun's "above that heart / there starts a song" vs. Hoyoung's "atop want rides song." 마음 is indeed one of those tricky Korean words, encompassing both the emotional heart and the cerebral mind. But *want*!

In both translations, the omission of conjunctions allow for compactness and flow, as "and" is conjugated into the verb in Korean.

Despite the absence of punctuation, the capitalization in English is used to signal new sentences. As you can see in my transliteration, Hoyoung and I agree on where the sentences start and end.

Sea Waves and Sun Waves Back

tr. Jaewon Che

Far side of tears, Sea waves After the wave, sky
Beyond the sky, a face Amidst its fingers, a wind
Inside the whiff, an ache On its heart, a song
Amidst the song, a breath Inside the breath, a death
Past the death, a cloud Past the cloud, Sun falls
Past the fall, a fog Past the fog, a field
Past the field, a dust Past its gust, a stretch
In the stretch, silence Amidst its hair, a hill
Above the hill, a tree Behind the tree, tears
Past it, Sea waves Past it, Sun waves back

from *For We Know Us Not*

Swelling Tides and the Eventide

tr. Harim Oh

Following tears come swelling tides, beyond the tides is the sky
Beyond the sky is a face, through the face comes a wind
In the wind is the heart, on which songs come down
There is breath in songs, there is death in breath
Beyond death are clouds, beyond the clouds the day ends
Beyond day's end is the fog, beyond the fog is the field
Beyond the field rises the dust, beyond the dust are the streets
There is silence in the streets, there is a hill in silence
On the hill is a tree, following the tree come tears
Following tears come swelling tides, beyond the tides falls the eventide

from *Because We Do Not Know Ourselves*

Behold the brevity of Jaewon Che's translation, which did away with most verbs! It reads even more clipped than Hoyoung's.

The introduction of pronouns allows for a move like "In the stretch, silence Amidst its hair, a hill." I did have to read it more than once to understand what *hair* had to do with silence, but this is one way to sneak more alliteration into the translation. The hair of silence... and a hill...

The rhyme of "Sea Waves and Sun Waves Back" leads me to Harim Oh's "Swelling Tides and the Eventide," which are brilliant in different ways.

In spite (or because!) of eventide being such a dramatic word for evening, Harim's double use of tide—like Jaewon's double use of waves—is great.

Jaewon's "Sun falls / Past the fall, a fog" features an alliteration of f and heliocentrism, which makes a case for personification in the title. In contrast, with "the day ends / Beyond day's end is the fog," Harim connects the d's in *day's end* to the *death* in the previous line.

Lastly, "Sun waves back" and "falls the eventide" are such different endings! The final image and tone of the poem changes completely.

The Swelling Sea and the Setting Sun
tr. Rachel Park

The swelling sea arrives after the tears, and after the sea, the sky
Beyond the sky, there is a face and in the spaces between, the wind
Within the wind, there is the MAH-UHM and above the MAH-UHM, there is music
In the spaces between, there is breath (*inhale, exhale*) and within these gasps, there is death
Beyond death, there are clouds and beyond the clouds, dusk descends
Beyond dusk, there is fog and beyond the fog, the fields
Beyond the fields, the dust rises and beyond the dust, the roads
Within the roads, there is silence and in the spaces between, the hills
Above the hills, there are trees and beyond the trees, tears descend
After the tears, there is the swelling sea

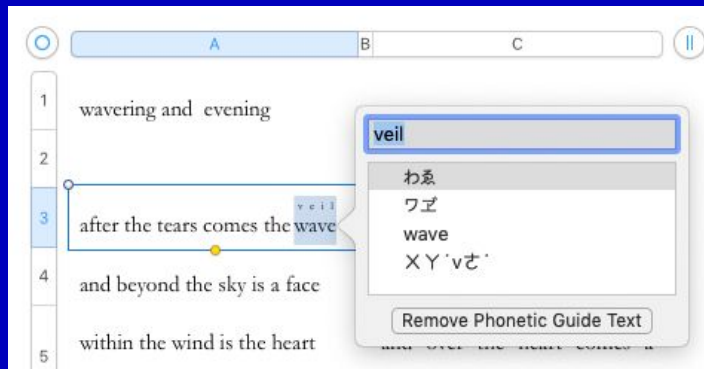
beyond the swelling sea, there lies the setting sun.

from *Because we did not know ourselves*

wavering and evening
tr. Seth Chandler

after the tears comes the wave^{veil} and after the waves^{veil} is the sky
and beyond the sky is a face and between the faces the wind
within the wind is the heart and over the heart comes a song
between songs is a breath and within the breath is a death
beyond death is the clouds and over the clouds comes dusk
and beyond the dusk is a fog and beyond the fog is a field
and beyond the field stirs a dust and beyond the dust is a street
within the street is a stillness and between the stillness a hill
and above the hill is a tree after the tree comes the tears
and after the tears^{wave} is the veil^{waves} beyond the veil evening falls

from *And Because We Don't Know Ourselves*



Seth Chandler's translation is very regular, even justified, but contains quiet additions like the space between *wavering* and *evening*, and of course, *wave^veil* and *veil^wave*.

When I asked him what I should call these details, he explained: "The function in word I used to write above the words is originally for adding 한글 glosses to 한자, so the word 'gloss' was in my mind when I did it, like providing a gloss of another possible meaning. The program calls it 윗주 or 루비텍스트."

I hadn't known about ruby characters, so I was confused by what could be read as indecision. But how cool is the idea that *wave* may be pronounced *veil*!

The only polysyllabic noun Seth uses is *stillness*, which I imagine was for the similitude between *stillness* and *hill*. He even took out a verb in line 8, though his syllable count varies.

Speaking of bold word choices, Rachel Park inserts "MAH-UHM" as a probable homage to Theresa Hak Kyung Cha. Her translation changes the rhythm completely with moments like "(*inhale, exhale*)" and the unexpected line break at the end; it also starts with the sea instead of tears. Meanwhile, the title is perfectly balanced in syllable count and alliteration.

Like Jaewon, Rachel capitalizes the start of each line, interpreting the poem as a series of sentence fragments—hence the omission of verbs in lines 6-8.

Sea storms and sunsets

tr. Archana Madhavan

After the sobs comes the sea storm and after sea storms is the sky
Beyond the sky there is a face and betwixt the face blows a wind
In the wind there is a feeling and from that feeling comes a song
Betwixt the song there is a breath and within that breath there is death
Beyond death there billow clouds and beyond the clouds comes twilight
Beyond twilight there floats a fog and beyond the fog lies a field
Beyond the field there rises dust and beyond the dust lies a path
Within the path there is a calm and from that calm rises a hill
Atop the hill there is a tree and after the tree comes the sobs
After the sobs comes the sea storm, beyond the sea storm sets the sun

from *Because We Do Not Know Ourselves*

Sea Swells and Sunglows

tr. Cookie Yomenai

after the tears comes the sea swell, after the swell is the sky
across the sky are faces, among the faces a wind blows
in the wind is a heart, above the heart wafts a melody
amid the melody is breathing, within that breathing is death
amid death is a cloud, across the cloud evening settles in
across the evening is a fog, across the fog lies a plain
across the plain dust rises upward, across the dust is a street
in the street is silence, amid the silence is a hill
above the hill is a tree, after the tree comes a tear
after the tear comes the swell, across the swell is a sunglow

from *Because We Don't Know Ourselves*

These translations by Archana Madhavan and Cookie Yomani resemble the transliteration in shape, yet they too diverge in not-so-insignificant ways.

Archana capitalizes every line, while Cookie maintains lowercase throughout. Given that there's no capitalization in Korean, literary translators are free to capitalize (or not) however they want.

It all means something, of course. Choices regardless of intent correspond with trends in Anglophone poetry: starting each line with a capital letter, capitalizing the start of each full sentence, or pulling a Lucille Clifton/e e cummings for a more intimate tone.

I said earlier that Hoyoung and I agree on where the sentences begin and end, but given that this poem isn't exactly in free verse (or at all), maybe it does make sense to emphasize the first word of each line as one would in metrical verse.

Interestingly, Archana and Cookie both added the word *sea* to *storm* and *swell*. An alliterative detail!

As previously discussed, decisions were made re: conjunctions vs. commas.

Cookie's "The heart *wafts* a melody" caught my attention for its specificity and synesthetic quality. It's bordering on a mixed metaphor—not only is the heart singing, but the song is a smell. Contrast that with Archana's "from that feeling comes a song."

Also, Archana's "betwixt" gives a sprinkle of flavor.

Swell and the Red Sky

tr. Helen

A tear comes then a swell
past the swell there is a sky

Over the sky there is a face
between gaps of the face arrives a wind

Inside the wind resides a heart
above the heart arrives a song

Between its breaths the song reveals a rhythm
inside the rhythm is a death

Beyond the death there are clouds
over the clouds arrives a night

Over the night appears a fog
over the fog exists a meadow

Above the meadow trembles dust
beyond the dust there is a road

Inside the road resides a silence
between its cracks the silence reveals a hill

Above the hill there is a tree
past the tree arrives a tear

The tear, then there is the swell
over Swell sets the Red Sky

These translations by Helen and Grace Hs.p brought me back to the question that looms over *chogwa*: What is the outer limit of translation? (My supposition of a limit, of course, says much about me.) What—and how much of it—can be changed before the text is no longer a translation but something else? An adaptation? An “After” poem? Very ship of Theseus.

A poem’s shape is our first impression. Helen’s couplets and Grace’s staggered lines can be found in any English-lit poetry mag, which I mean as neither accusation nor celebration of making the poem more familiar or “palatable” for an Anglophone audience.

Some translators believe that a translated poem should read like a poem that belongs to the literary tradition of the target language; some try to find a similar voice in the target language as a model. I, too, read English translations of French surrealist poets like Pierre Reverdy when I first started translating Lee Hyemi, but now, over a year into the project, I forgot I even did that.

So, I don't know about this outer limit business; it's not for me to decide. No single detail negates the whole thing, no? This might be getting a little too *wooooah double rainbow* for wherever you are, but just because you do something “out-of-character” doesn’t make you not yourself. Similarly, reimagining Lee Jenny’s poem in couplets doesn’t make it *not* Lee Jenny’s poem anymore. (Counterpoint: [Lord Byron’s translation of Sappho.](#))

Besides their formal divergence, the translations by Helen and grace suggest various quasi-rhyming possibilities: Helen's tree-tear vs. grace's shrubs-sobs.

While grace offers breath-death, Helen presents a particularly evocative image: "between its breaths the song reveals a rhythm / inside the rhythm is a death." The breaths are unclaimed in the Korean; for Helen, the breaths belong to the song. Then 호흡, meaning both breath and harmony, can be understood as a kind of rhythm.

Another example of Helen's pronouns (like Jaewon's) doing A Lot: "Inside the road resides a silence / between its cracks the silence reveals a hill." For the same lines, grace continues to give us satisfying pairings like hush-hill.

Unlike the more common "[preposition] sobs/tears," Helen's translation begins, "A tear comes then a swell" because 눈물 is indeed the first word of the poem! Hers is also the only one that translates 눈물 into a singular tear.

grace, on the other hand, changed the order of the title. Someone ask why! In the meantime, I'll sit with what's lovely: "Within wind there is want, / over want comes a song."

Sunset and Swell

tr. grace hs.p

after sobs comes the swells

beyond sky there are faces

within wind there is want,

between songs there is breath

beyond death there are clouds

beyond dusk there is haze

beyond fields settles dust

within distance there is hush

atop hills there are shrubs

after sobs there are swells,

after swells there is sky

between faces comes the wind

over want comes a song

within breath there is death;

beyond clouds comes the dusk

beyond haze there are fields

beyond dust there is distance;

amid hush there are hills

after shrubs come the sobs

beyond swells sets the sun.

from *For We Know Not Ourselves*

