Translation in Modern Japan

Edited by
Indra Levy

Routledge Contemporary Japan Series

Translation in Modern Japan

The role of translation in the formation of modern Japanese identities has become one of the most exciting new fields of inquiry in Japanese studies. This book marks the first attempt to establish the contours of this new field, bringing together seminal works of Japanese scholarship and criticism with cutting-edge English-language scholarship.

Collectively, the contributors to this book address two critical questions: (1) how does the conception of modern Japan as a culture of translation affect our understanding of Japanese modernity and its relation to the East/West divide? And (2) how does the example of a distinctly East Asian tradition of translation affect our understanding of translation itself? The chapters engage a wide array of disciplines, perspectives, and topics from politics to culture, the written language to visual culture, scientific discourse to children's literature and the Japanese conception of a national literature.

Translation in Modern Japan will be of huge interest to a diverse readership in both Japanese studies and translation studies as well as students and scholars of the theory and practice of Japanese literary translation, traditional and modern Japanese history and culture, and Japanese women's studies.

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Preface

The impetus for putting together this volume was the desire to make it possible to think, in English, about the multiple practices of translation into Japanese. These practices have been central to the formation of Japanese language, literature, art, national identity, politics, and social life.

Japan not only has an exceptionally long history of mediating hegemonic foreign languages but also a modern history of exerting its own forms of political, economic, and cultural power within Asia. The study of translation practices in Japan, and their complex implications for so many aspects of cultural, social, and political life, thus offers a particularly promising avenue for genuinely expanding knowledge about how translation may negotiate, produce, reduce, and otherwise complicate critical relations between self and other.

Just as this volume was in the first round of editing, I taught a new course on the bilateral flow of translation between Japanese and English and assigned many of the essays collected here. It was nothing short of thrilling to see how quickly both the translations from Japanese and the English-language scholarship selected for this volume opened up new vistas for students whose grasp of the Japanese language ranged from non-existent to upper-intermediate, and whose concepts of translation had been purely based on English-language practices. The materials gathered here clearly provided them with a new set of tools for re-evaluating the possible spectrum of relations between languages, cultures, and peoples. Thinking in English about translation into Japanese may turn out to be one of the most efficient means for transcending the limitations of the English language, breaking its hold on our concept of translation, and expanding the range of relations between self and other that translations into English might enable.

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Introduction

Modern Japan and the trialectics of translation

Indra Levy

Modern Japan is a culture of translation. This simple proposition, long taken for granted among modern Japanese readers and writers, is now rapidly gaining momentum among Japan studies scholars working in English and other Western languages as well. Once stated, the idea seems so self-evident as to require no further comment, and yet we have only begun to unravel its manifold implications.

This volume has been designed to illuminate the various ways in which the conception of Japan as a culture of translation can productively intervene in our understanding of – and approach to – both "Japan" and "translation." It is the first collection of its kind, bringing together translations of seminal works of Japanese scholarship and criticism with works of English-language scholarship that stand on the cutting edge of this new field of inquiry. Its very nature as a metatranslational project has required so many excursions between and within languages as to nullify any conception of travel as a movement between the two poles of departure and arrival, or any analogous conception of translation itself as a one-way transfer from a single source to a single target. By way of introduction, then, I would like to consider two basic questions. First, what, in concrete terms, does "translation" mean in the context of Japan? And second, what does the focus on translation bring to the study of Japanese modernity?

The essays in this volume mainly draw our focus to "modern" Japan – a term somewhat loosely, but not without reason, applied here to cover those aspects of Japanese culture that have apparently been affected by contact with the West. However, any general inquiry into the meaning and nature of "translation" in the Japanese linguistic context must begin by taking stock of Japan's long history of mediating Chinese letters.[1] In the Japanese archipelago, the era of written history begins with the adoption of Chinese script in the fifth century, probably first used in Japan by scribes from the Korean peninsula. By the seventh century, Japanese scribes had begun to use the phonetic element of Chinese characters to represent the sounds of Japanese speech, a development that made possible what is now known as the first extant "Japanese" book, *A Record of Ancient Matters* (Kojiki, 712).[2] In the ninth century, we find evidence of abbreviated Chinese characters being used as phonograms, a practice that appears to have originated in the effort to render Chinese texts readable in "Japanese"; the earliest examples of these signs occur in notations of Chinese texts to indicate Japanized pronunciations of certain Chinese

characters, Japanese grammatical particles that define the relations between words, and Japanese verbal inflections (both of which are alien to the Chinese language, whether written or spoken). Spurred by the attempt to decode Chinese texts, this technological innovation led the way to a further development that would have a profound impact on the history of Japanese letters: the formation of syllabic script, the basis for the two Japanese syllabaries now known as *katakana* and *hiragana*. Over the next millennium, the combined use of Chinese and Japanese scripts would become the dominant practice of writing in Japan, as it remains today.

The historical consequences of these developments defy easy summarization. For our purposes here, however, the most important general points are as follows:

1 phonographic script in Japan developed as a means for negotiating the gap between "Chinese writing" and "Japanese enunciation" (a term that should not be misconstrued with purely "native" speech); and
2 the co-existence and commingling of "Chinese" and "Japanese" scripts, within a historical context that invested the lion's share of cultural capital in Chinese writing, produced a condition of linguistic hybridity that has no parallel in other parts of Asia, much less the West.

In defining the parameters of "translation," the most salient aspect of this complex history is the longstanding practice of *kanbun kundoku* (literally, the Japanese reading of Chinese writing), the proverbial "mother" to the invention of phonographic script. Until the late-nineteenth century, when the palpable threat of Western domination supplanted the study of Chinese with the study of multiple Western languages (with English at the forefront), this practice of reading had dominated elite education in Japan, and its impact can be clearly seen in practices of writing as well. Its origins have been traced back to the effort to orally teach and disseminate Buddhist texts to a Japanese clergy.[3] In visual terms, texts that bear the traces of *kanbun kundoku* give the appearance of allowing "direct access" to the original Chinese text, leading to the question of whether the term "translation" can properly be applied to a practice of reading that did not produce a parallel text.[4] But as translation studies scholar Yukino Semizu rather brilliantly puts it:

> Since there was no other form of reading, to the ancient Japanese, reading was synonymous with translation . . . *Kanbun kundoku* was never called translation, not because it was considered to be unlike translation but because there were no other texts that were not translations.[5]

As Andre Haag points out in Chapter 1 of this volume, Maruyama Masao and Katō Shūichi – co-editors of a seminal volume on the intellectual history of translation in Japan[6] – clearly support the view of *kanbun kundoku* as translation. Maruyama sees a tremendous difference between reading Chinese texts in Chinese and reading them according to the Japanese invention of *kanbun kundoku*.[7] On the one hand, the language of *kanbun kundoku* does not conform to the modern-day expectation of "Japanese" as defined by assumptions of an isomorphic relationship between

nation and language (i.e. "folk" and "speech"). On the other, it most definitely functioned as a *spoken* domestic prestige language, one that was not only distinct from the "original" Chinese text – i.e., its enunciation would not have been understood by a native speaker of Chinese – but that also exerted demonstrable influence on both the spoken and written expressions of the Japanese elite, a class whose idioms cannot be meaningfully separated from the category of "Japanese" language itself. In this sense, *kanbun kundoku* perfectly fulfills the ideal of translation posited by the rising line of modern Western critics that extends from Johann Wolfgang von Goethe to Walter Benjamin, Antoine Berman, and Lawrence Venuti[8] – that of preserving the foreign character of the source text in a way that radically expands the horizons of the target language.

Maruyama and Katō clearly work from the premise that the tradition of *kanbun kundoku* constitutes the most important local precedent for the translations of Western texts that have dominated and shaped the modern era. The controversy over whether or not *kanbun kundoku* constitutes a form of translation is essentially the product of a Western-centered view, one that habitually conceives of translation in terms of transference from a strictly "foreign" source language to a strictly "native" target language. As translation studies scholar Judy Wakabayashi points out in her exploration of the relationship between translation and *kanbun kundoku*, contemporary translation studies scholars have shown increasing interest in the prospect of a hybrid language that can productively intervene in the traditional source/target dichotomy.[9] Wakabayashi has proposed the term "interlanguage"[10] to describe this phenomenon in the case of *kanbun kundoku*, and the complex history of the Japanese language indeed suggests that "translation" can be usefully redefined as a range of strategies for making available the meanings, values, and/or techniques of one language in another that may not be "native" to anyone in any usual sense of the term.

This is the expanded definition of translation adopted by this volume, and it is in this sense that Japan most clearly merits the designation of "a culture of translation." To expand the meaning of translation in this way opens up the possibility for transference into a *tertiary* language, one that is neither entirely "foreign" nor "domestic," but that clearly mediates between the two and may have a transformative effect on the target culture. In this case, we cannot assume an isomorphic relationship between the target culture and the "native" language.[11] Rather, we must reconceptualize the target culture as a local domain shaped by the complex effects of an ongoing interaction between multiple linguistic realms, some of which quite consciously point to other worlds beyond its territorial borders.

Thus defined, what then does the focus on translation contribute to our understanding of modern Japan? Careful attention to the practice and reception of translation mobilizes a set of heuristic tools that take us far beyond the often vague and slippery trope of "influence." Whereas the old trope gave rise to "images of a one-way traffic between a larger and more powerful unit ('China,' 'continental culture,' or 'the West') and a passively receptive smaller entity named Japan,"[12] as literary scholar Irmela Hijiya-Kirschnereit recently put it, we are now beginning to see translators and their audiences as active agents in the complex processes of

transculturation, and to situate those processes themselves not only in relation to global, but also domestic, balances of power. In addition to the most basic questions of who, what, when, why, and how (i.e. who was the translator, what was the source of the translation, when, why, and how was the translation undertaken?), the focus on the "linguistic ligatures" – to borrow a term from comparative literature scholar Sandra Bermann – that connect Japan to other worlds inquires into the specifics of what a translation may mean in its own linguistic and cultural milieu, and how it affects the local linguistic, social, and cultural landscapes as well as the lives and sensibilities of its inhabitants.

In her poignant account of what is at stake in the humanistic attention to the field of translation, Bermann observes:

> Closely considered, language and translation in fact open up the unavoidable complexities, the historically ingrained problems and prejudices, and the intense day-to-day negotiations that occupy our interwoven global communities, setting into stark relief the difficult suturing of global networks and the over-stressed joints of the international body politic . . . Only a more deeply nuanced understanding of these linguistic ligatures, and a heightened awareness of their relationship to the national as well as to the "post-national," and "subnational," can begin to parse the painful dialectics of local and global, past and present, that cross the contemporary world.[13]

The most expedient way to illustrate the multiplicity of approaches and insights enabled by such a focus on language and translation in the context of modern Japan is to introduce the essays collected in this volume.

Together, these essays cover a period that spans from the seventeenth century, coinciding with the influx of Western visual and written media via the Dutch settlement at Nagasaki in the Tokugawa era (1600–1867), through the mid-twentieth century, ending with a moment when the forces of world literature and national literature converged to produce an image of Japanese culture that remains in force today. Japan's contact with the West provides the basis for this historical grouping, which goes against the grain of the normal periodization of "modern Japan" as beginning with the Meiji period (1868–1912). The purpose of this idiosyncrasy, however, is not to challenge conventional historiography, as some recent assertions of continuity over Japan's "long nineteenth century" have done. Rather, its purpose is to illuminate one of the most crucial – and confounding – features of the culture of translation in modern Japan: the co-existence and complex commingling of multiple dialectics between the local/particular and the global/universal, with vectors that point simultaneously toward "Japan," the "old world" of China, and the "new world" of the West. To extend the notion of a tertiary language of translation, it may be more apt to describe this condition in terms of a "trialectics" – i.e. the interplay of three rather than two opposing forces. It is this particular condition that constitutes the underlying foundation common to all of the essays in this volume.

The volume opens with two macroscopic views of translation. First, Andre Haag presents an overview and analysis of an extensive dialogue between Maruyama

Masao and Katō Shūichi recorded in *Translation and Japanese Modernity* (Hon'yaku to Nihon no kindai, 1998), which considers the "almost ideological emphasis on translation" (*hon'yakushugi*) in the Meiji period from the perspectives of intellectual and political history. Maruyama was the most influential Japanese political theorist and intellectual historian of the postwar period; Katō was a prominent Japanese literary critic whose monumental *Nihon bungaku shi josetsu* (A History of Japanese Literature, 1975–80) was the first work of its kind to be translated and published in English.[14] As Haag points out, their wide-ranging discussion addresses a few deceptively simple questions: Why the rush to translate the West in the Meiji period? What ideas and texts were translated, by whom, and to what ends? What were the local precedents that enabled this process of rapid learning? And what were its effects on the domestic political scene? Among the many seemingly casual yet stunningly erudite insights dropped along the way, Haag highlights Maruyama and Katō's discussions of the importance of Japan's long history of reading Chinese texts, the political implications of translating Western texts as opposed to simply consuming them in their original forms, and the possibility that the form and kind of information parlayed by translation may make "ideological precocity" of both the state and its opposition a characteristic of many late-developing countries.

The second macroscopic view is offered by Yanabu Akira, the critic who pioneered the study of "translation words" (*hon'yakugo*) in Japanese. In the essay "In the beginning was the Word" ("Hajime ni kotoba ga atta"), an acute awareness of the extra-semantic value of such words brings Yanabu to focus on another aspect of Japan's long history of dealing with Chinese texts: *ondoku*. Whereas *kanbun kundoku* names the practice of reading Chinese texts in a "Japanese" style, *ondoku* refers to the practice of reading Chinese texts according to their original syntax and pronouncing each character in the closest Japanese approximation of the Chinese sound. In other words, *ondoku* constitutes a *refusal* to translate. As Yanabu points out, *ondoku* has always dominated the recitation of Buddhist sutras in Japan, and he suggests that it may very well epitomize the Japanese approach to foreign texts. His point is that the *ondoku* method – particularly when contrasted with Christian efforts to propagate God's message through translation of the Bible into local tongues – reflects a Japanese tendency to treat the materiality of foreign words themselves as more precious than any "kernel message" they might convey. By contrast, the religious meaning atttached to the word in Christianity provided the very basis for Eugene Nida's famous theory of "dynamic equivalence," which asserted both the need and the possibility of translating the "kernel message" of the source text. Yanabu's theory of a broad divergence between the Japanese and Christian cultures of translation constitutes an extremely thought-provoking intervention into translation studies itself, one that is perhaps only made possible by the particular perspective of a critic and scholar who has devoted himself to the study of translation in Japan.

The excerpts from Yanabu's *Translation Words: Formation and Background* (Hon'yakugo seiritsu jijō, 1982) refocus the lens, leading us into a close analysis of the language of Japanese translation. By carefully examining the actual usage

of translation words and situating them within the inherited Japanese lexicon, Yanabu compellingly questions the widespread assumption of equivalence between fixed Japanese translations and their Western sources. His analysis of the fixed translations for keywords such as *society* or the gendered, third-person pronouns of *he* and *she* illuminates the process by which the language of translation can serve as a tertiary language of abstraction, one that is neither bound by the normal conventions of everyday parlance nor necessarily comprehensible to those for whom everyday spoken Japanese constitutes the primary basis for thinking and feeling. Whereas Maruyama and Katō emphasize the macroscopic political achievements enabled by translation (specifically, the fact that Meiji Japan managed to avert complete domination by the West), Yanabu presents the view that the modern Japanese culture of translation, which prioritizes the word-for-word over the sense-for-sense approach, has had the iniquitous effect of rendering the semantic and ideological contents of translation words inaccessible, while ensuring that their powerful aura as fixed translations for prestigious Western signs would discourage any real attempt to question their meaning and use value. Given the prevalence of the translation keywords Yanabu interrogates in a wide range of modern discourses, his richly nuanced analysis of the form, meaning, and usage of these linguistic ligatures has wide-ranging implications for any consideration of Japan as a culture of translation.

Building upon Yanabu's approach, Saeki Junko's chapter from *Comparative Cultural History of "Iro" and "Ai"* ("Iro" to "ai" no hikaku bunkashi, 1998) offers an extended analysis of the troubled relationship between the new Western concept of *love* and the longstanding Japanese sensibility reflected in *iro*. A word for sexual relations that finds no parallels in the English language, *iro* contains emotional, aesthetic, cultural, and even other-worldly values that were prized for centuries in Japan. Illustrating her points with concrete examples from a wide range of literary and critical texts, Saeki shows how the translation of *love* as *ai* transformed the understanding of *iro* from a multidimensional pursuit of amorous relations to a base manifestation of lust, and how the new sign of *ai=love* proceeded to shape the mentalities and behaviors of those who fell under its sway. Her study of this particular linguistic ligature illuminates the transformative impact of translation on conceptions of gender, sexuality, and the body itself. Moreover, by arguing that these transformations resulted in the violent abjection of women engaged in what now came to be seen simply as the "sex" trade, Saeki presents a provocative challenge to the longstanding association of *ai* with sexual equality and, by extension, to the liberatory claims of Japanese feminism in the Meiji era. In this sense, her work suggests new avenues for exploring the relationship between translation and the conceptualization of women in modern Japan.

Yoshimoto Takaaki's landmark essay "On Ideological Conversion" (Tenkō-ron, *Gendai hihyō*, November 1958), an analysis of the ideological stance of Japanese Marxists in the prewar era who were induced to recant their political views, does not take up the question of translation directly. But when read in conjunction with the aforementioned articles, this meditation on the roots of ideological transformation in modern Japan presents a haunting vision of the personal, political, and

ideological perils that the conditions of a translated modernity can bring into play. Yoshimoto argues that the ultimate cause for the capitulation of Japanese communists was not to be found in the draconian government suppression of leftists, but rather in the fact that communist ideology was adopted as a self-enclosed system, one that was never tested against the actual ground of social reality in Japan. His characterization of the typical process by which modern Japanese intellectuals adopted Western theories strikes a chord with many of the observations on the culture of translation made by Maruyama, Katō, Yanabu, and Saeki. In particular, Yoshimoto's critique of the ideological phantasms of what he broadly labels "Japanese modernism" reverberates with Yanabu's critique of Japanese translation words as signs that point to some hallowed, unknown beyond, having no meaningful relation to the local linguistic and social environment of those who embrace and propagate them.

One critical question that emerges from these essays is the relationship between translation and the formation of national community. On the one hand, the global, comparative perspective of Maruyama and Katō suggests the possibility that the widespread practice of translation in modern Japan – as opposed to consuming Western texts only in their original languages, or adopting English as the primary language of the educated elite – could be seen as a way of preventing the formation of a linguistically stratified society that would impede the development of national community. On the other hand, Yanabu, Saeki, and Yoshimoto focus on the disjunction between the language of translation and the local languages and lived realities of Japan. Their critiques of the relationship between translation, the intellectual elite, and the rest of Japan appear to argue that the cultural predominance of translation itself presents a significant barrier to the formation of national community. In light of this interesting contrast, the fact that the very notion of "nation" has always been the product of contact with other "nations" and the ostensibly monoglot languages by which they typically identify themselves as discrete communal entities suggests that there is a great deal more work to be done on the fundamental question of how "translation" and "nation" may interact, and that the discursive complexity of modern Japan offers particularly fertile ground for further inquiry.

Launching the selection of new perspectives from English-language scholarship, Christine M. E. Guth brings the heuristics of translation to bear on our understanding of visual language in an analysis of Katsushika Hokusai's celebrated 1812 manual, *Quick Guide to Painting* (Ryakuga haya oshie). Rejecting the framework of "influence" that views cultural exchange in terms of an active agent and passive recipient, Guth shifts the locus of agency to the Japanese artist-translator. Guiding us through the local languages of Japanese painting, craft, and Chinese cosmology, Guth reveals the multiple layers of mediation that enabled Hokusai's translation of Western painting techniques for his Japanese audience. In particular, her analysis of the relationships between the modulated line of the literati, the mechanical precision of the compass and square associated with both the Japanese craftsman and the Dutch (i.e., "Western") mindset, and the cosmological proportions defined by *The Book of Changes* offers a new model from which to examine the "trialectics" of Japanese translation. Her richly nuanced reading of Hokusai's work and milieu

produces some dazzling conclusions about the meaning of "Hokusai's Geometry," and a powerful inducement to question assumptions about influence and equivalence in the visual ligatures that mark nineteenth-century Japan's encounter with the West.

Atsuko Ueda offers a much-needed road map to one of the least-charted areas of Meiji linguistic terrain: the widespread use of *kanbun kundokutai* among the literati in the 1880s and 1890s. *Kanbun kundokutai* names a style of writing derived from the reading practice of *kanbun kundoku*; its popularity during this period came from its versatility in translating new forms of knowledge from the West. This style of writing was often maligned in its heyday, and has been largely forgotten or ignored by recent scholarly inquiries into the language reforms of the Meiji era. The period of Ueda's focus is undoubtedly one of the most complicated and densely layered eras in the history of writing in Japan, shaped as it was by the multiple collisions and cross-fertilizations of heterogeneous linguistic forms at a time when the perceived relationship between language and cultural identity was in a state of ideological flux. Deftly pinpointing the subtle rhetorical and conceptual shifts taking place in this era of foment, when the translation of concepts from Western linguistics was transforming the very ground upon which language was perceived, Ueda argues that critical changes in the style, usage, and genre identity of *kanbun kundokutai* opened up the discursive space that the concept of national language, with its exclusive emphasis on *wabun* ("Japanese writing"), would come to occupy in the post-Sino-Japanese War era of the late 1890s. In particular, her insight into the "liberation" of *kanbun kundokutai* from its longstanding ties to the "original" of *kanbun* ("Chinese" writing) adds an important new dimension to our understanding of translation in the Meiji era. Ueda's study underscores the fact that the linguistic ligatures of translation, in the very process of forging new connections between languages, effectively severed the old ones, thereby setting the stage for Japanese modernity's radical linguistic rupture from the past.

Miri Nakamura examines the translation of the modern Western scientific discourse of hygiene into a host of visual, discursive, and literary forms in the Meiji period. Like Guth, she draws our attention to the local languages that were mobilized to make such translations comprehensible to their Japanese audiences – with a particular focus on traditional images of shape-shifting monsters and their longstanding association with the seductive female body – and she questions simplistic assumptions of a straightforward equivalence between Western rationalism and its Japanese translations. Her careful attention to the intersemiotic ligatures that joined the modern discourse of hygiene to inherited Japanese conceptions of visually deceptive threats to human life launches a surprising re-evaluation of a landmark work by Izumi Kyōka, a Meiji novelist whose name is most closely associated with the modern Japanese literature of the fantastic and the premodern antecedents to which its lineage is typically traced.

While Guth's approach to the problematic of translation enables the radical re-evaluation of a visual text that has been typically valued for its traces of "Western influence," Nakamura applies a similar approach to the re-evaluation of a text that has been typically valued for its "native Japanese-ness." When read in tandem,

these studies suggest the manifold possibilities of conceptualizing Japan as a culture of translation and applying methodologies and thematics to that conception that are not narrowly confined to the conventional model of semiotically parallel "sources" and "targets."

From the opposite trajectory, Melek Ortabasi's study of Wakamatsu Shizuko's landmark translation of *Little Lord Fauntleroy* (Shōkōshi, 1890) clearly demonstrates that, when undertaken with a careful consideration of local contexts, the revelations made possible by the method of comparing parallel "source" and "target" texts have yet to be fully mined – particularly with respect to the participation of Japanese women in the Meiji project of translation. Her focus on Shizuko brings a number of disparate strands of inquiry into the same field of vision in order to illuminate the intertwined developments of children's literature, print media, Meiji translations of Western texts, the modern Japanese vernacular literary style (*genbun itchi*), and the female voice in modern Japanese literary expression. Ortabasi's careful attention to the linguistic ligatures created in Shizuko's translation offers a refreshingly new perspective on the relationship between gender and language in the complex linguistic milieu of a rapidly modernizing Japan. In particular, her acute insight into the new form of maternal subjectivity made possible in Japanese writing by Shizuko's work presents a powerful challenge to conventional histories of modern Japanese vernacular style, which generally either ignore Shizuko's innovations or treat them as an interesting exception within a male-dominated field.

Jan Bardsley's essay on translation and the New Women of *Seitō* – the Japanese translation for Bluestockings, the name of the first Japanese literary journal devoted exclusively to nurturing women writers – constitutes another important gendered intervention into the study of modern Japan's culture of translation. Herself the translator of Japan's New Women into English (2007), Bardsley brings an astonishing wealth of perspective to this important topic. She not only surveys the general development of translation in the journal, from its early emphasis on decadent and gothic literature by a highly cosmopolitan mix of Western, and mostly male, writers to its conspicuous shift toward writings by an equally cosmopolitan mix of New Women writers, but also treats us to a detailed examination of how three of *Seitō*'s most renowned women – Hiratsuka Raichō, Nogami Yaeko, and Itō Noe – engaged in and experienced the act of translation. While amply attending to the very different experiences of translation by these three women, Bardsley pinpoints a feature shared in common by all, and no doubt herself as well: what she calls "the intimate bonds of translation," emotional ligatures that connected these women translators to the worlds of women struggling to identify and represent themselves in other languages.

In sharp contrast to the critiques of modern Japan's culture of translation, both Ortabasi and Bardsley draw our attention to the specific ways in which the culture of translation opened up new possibilities for expression and self-identification for Japanese women in the modern era. An important warning against drawing hasty theoretical conclusions about the role, nature, and meaning of translation in modern Japan, their work challenges us to bring the topics of gender and translation into further dialogue.

Michael Emmerich brings the panoramic view of world literature to bear upon our understanding of modern Japan's culture of translation with a brilliant and provocative analysis of the underlying relationship between Arthur Waley's landmark translation of *Genji monogatari* (*The Tale of Genji*, 1925–33) and Tanizaki Jun'ichirō's translation of the same classical Japanese text into modern Japanese (*Jun'ichirō-yaku "Genji monogatari,"* 1939–41). Himself an accomplished and widely recognized translator of contemporary Japanese literature and thereby an active participant in the ongoing formation of world literature, Emmerich draws our attention to the ways in which translated texts circulate, to the wide variance in the cultural capital imputed to different languages, and to the distinct possibility that it was by means of translation *into English* that a classical Japanese literary text first accrued value and meaning in modern Japan as a positive representation of Japanese culture. His focus on Masamune Hakuchō, a literary critic who described himself as a "translation person," suggests yet another way in which the culture of translation has shaped values and sensibilities in modern Japan. Moreover, when read in tandem with the studies by Ortabasi and Bardsley, Emmerich's analysis of the intersecting discursive fields that frame *The Tale of Genji* – a work also distinguished by the fact that it was written by a woman of eleventh-century Japan – as a classic of world literature opens up further avenues of inquiry into the relationship between translation, gender, and the representation of Japanese culture on the whole.

Finally, although the focus on the culture of translation is still a relative newcomer to the field of Japanese studies, a number of scholars from diverse disciplines have already made important contributions, and there is also a significant body of reference works available for those who wish to pursue this topic further. The annotated bibliography, compiled by Aragorn Quinn, offers an overview of English-language books and articles that attend to issues of translation into Japanese, together with a selection of seminal Japanese-language works that were considered to be the most immediately instrumental introductions to the topic.

As the contributions to this volume make clear, to approach modern Japan as a culture of translation is, in essence, to acknowledge the tremendous complexity of Japan's relation to the world and, more generally, to recognize that the boundaries separating languages, cultures, and nations are as porous as the ligatures connecting them are intricately wrought and unpredictable. Moreover, while the practice of translation is virtually ubiquitous to all forms of intercultural exchange, the diverse ways in which translation has been conceptualized, practiced, and received defy any easy attempt to generalize about its meaning or the way in which it shapes the world as we think we know it. Thus, careful attention to the various roles translation has played in the development of modern Japan – from political and social movements to aesthetic sensibilities and personal transformations – can offer a powerful tool for unraveling the complex and at times convoluted processes of transculturation that have shaped Japan's relation to the world and to itself. At the same time, attending to the particularity of Japan's culture of translation also compels us to recognize that many of our assumptions about translation – about the range of possibilities for negotiating linguistic and cultural differences and the

relations between self and other that translation can effect – have been the highly parochial offspring of modern-day English, a language whose hegemonic status has rendered it highly resistant to the kinds of transformations we find in modern Japanese. This collection of essays is thus offered in the spirit of a translation that seeks to expand the horizons of the English-language worldview by making it possible to read – and think – in English about translation into Japanese.

NB: Unless otherwise noted, the place of publication for all Japanese-language sources cited in this volume is Tokyo.

Notes

1 A number of Japanese scholars have made this point. See especially Katō Shūichi, "Meiji shoki no hon'yaku: naze, nani o, ika ni yaku shita ka" in *Hon'yaku no shisō* (Iwanami Shoten, 1991), pp. 342–80; Saitō Fumitoshi as cited by Judy Wakabayashi, "The Reconceptualization of Translation from Chinese in 18th-century Japan," in *Translation and Cultural Change: Studies in history, norms and image-projection*, ed. Eva Hung (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2005), p. 129; and Yukino Semizu, "Invisible Translation: Reading Chinese Texts in Ancient Japan," in *Translating Others*, vol. 2, ed. Theo Hermans (Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing, 2006), pp. 283–95.

2 This narrative represents an extreme condensation of Christopher Seeley's detailed study, *A History of Writing in Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000). Seeley points out that the use of Chinese characters as phonograms can be found in China as well.

3 Ibid., pp. 62–6.

4 For a thorough discussion of this question, see Wakabayashi, "Translation from Chinese," and Semizu, "Invisible Translation."

5 Semizu, "Invisible Translation," p. 294.

6 Maruyama Masao and Katō Shūichi, eds., *Hon'yaku no shisō* (Iwanami Shoten, 1991).

7 See Chapter 1 in this volume for Maruyama's discussion of the Tokugawa era (1600–1867) Confucian scholar Ogyū Sorai (1666–1728).

8 Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, "Translations," in Lawrence Venuti, ed., *The Translation Studies Reader*, Second Edition (New York: Routledge, 2004), pp. 64–6; Walter Benjamin, "The Task of the Translator," also in *The Translation Studies Reader*, pp. 75–83; Antoine Berman, *The Experience of the Foreign: Culture and Translation in Romantic Germany*, trans. S. Heyvaert (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992); and Lawrence Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation* (London: Routledge, 1995) and *The Scandals of Translation: Towards an Ethics of Difference* (London: Routledge, 1998).

9 Judy Wakabayashi, "Translation from Chinese," pp. 130–31.

10 Ibid., p. 135. See also Judy Wakabayashi, "Marginal Forms of Translation in Japan – Variations from the Norm," in L. Bowker, M. Cronin, D. Kenny and J. Pearson, eds., *Unity in Diversity? Current Trends in Translation Studies* (Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing, 1998), p. 59.

11 Naoki Sakai makes this point with respect to eighteenth-century Japan in *Voices of the Past: The Status of Language in Eighteenth-Century Japanese Discourse* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992). But his discussion of the question of translation and *kanbun kundoku* in the work of Ogyū Sōrai preserves the definition of translation as a transference between a strictly "foreign" source and a strictly "native" target: "Translation implicitly requires that two language unities be clearly delineated; where

it is impossible to demarcate them, translation is also impossible." (p. 216) While his argument makes a great deal of sense in that particular context, and does much to illuminate the development of a new conception of language in eighteenth-century Japan, what we gain by expanding the parameters of translation to include the "interlanguage" of *kanbun kundoku* is a new understanding of the linguistic and cultural precedents for modern Japanese translations of Western texts – a connection explicitly articulated by Yanabu Akira in Chapter 2 of this volume.

12 Irmela Hijiya-Kirschnereit, "Moebius Strip: Instances of Cultural Translation between China, Japan, and 'the West,'" *Monumenta Nipponica*, 62, no. 3 (Autumn 2007): 347.

13 "Introduction," in Sandra Bermann and Michael Wood, eds., *Nation, Language, and the Ethics of Translation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), pp. 1–2.

14 Katō Shūichi, *A History of Japanese Literature* (Tokyo and New York: Kodansha International, 1979–83).

Part I

Critical Japanese sources

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1 Maruyama Masao and Katō Shūichi on *Translation and Japanese Modernity*

Andre Haag

Introduction

Passing references to translation are quite commonplace in Japan, where intellectuals remain keenly aware of the pivotal role it has played in Japan's modernization process. Interestingly, however, extended studies of the Japanese culture of translation have been something of a rarity.[1] *Translation and Japanese Modernity* (Hon'yaku to Nihon no kindai, 1998) by Maruyama Masao (1914–96) and Katō Shūichi (1919–2008) stands out as a valuable exception. This article introduces the book to English-language readers and highlights its most significant contributions to our understanding of modern Japan as a culture of translation.

Maruyama, a leading postwar political theorist and historian, and Katō, a prominent literary critic and author, had been co-editing *The Ideologies of Translation* (Hon'yaku no shisō, 1991)[2] when Maruyama, then in his eighties, suffered a decline in health. Having been entrusted with the remaining editorial work, Katō visited Maruyama several times in order to discuss and record his views on the relationship between translation and modernity.[3] A transcription of their conversations formed the basis for *Translation and Japanese Modernity*, which was published two years after Maruyama's death. The two scholars brought the full weight of their collective erudition to bear on their wide-ranging inquiry; the result is a highly engaging macroscopic overview of the history, philosophy, practice, and socio-political implications of translation during the formative Meiji era (1868–1912), with careful attention to critical precedents established in the Edo era (1600–1868).

Published dialogues (*taidan*) between public intellectuals are a popular fixture of magazines and journals in Japan; *Translation and Japanese Modernity*, however, is also a *mondō*, or question and answer session, as Katō probes the great knowledge of the ailing Maruyama. Katō plays the role of initiator and facilitator, setting the terms and boundaries of the discussion. At the outset, he presents five questions that will broadly define the exchange:

1 What was the historical backdrop of modern translation in Japan, and how did Japan's foreign relations in the late Edo and early Meiji period determine the course of translation?
2 Generally speaking, what kinds of texts were translated? What was perceived as necessary to translate? Who was doing the translating?

3 Why did Japanese embrace translation as a means of learning about the world, and why was such priority placed on translating every text available – an almost ideological drive that Katō dubs *hon'yaku-shugi* (literally, "translation-ism")?
4 How were things translated, specifically what concepts were translated and in what fashion?
5 Finally, what were the positive and negative implications of Meiji Japan's preference for translation, i.e., *hon'yaku-shugi*, for Japanese culture?

Maruyama's response to this initial set of questions is laughter – as he rightly points out, to answer them properly would require a "massive treatise." And yet, astonishingly enough, the ensuing dialogue manages to address all five areas of inquiry, with often stunning results.

Within just a few decades the translation project that lay at the very heart of Japan's modernization had already brought into Japanese a large corpus of Western texts from a variety of disciplines. Maruyama and Katō share two basic premises about this tremendous undertaking: first, that it played a formative role in the constitution of Japanese modernity, and second, that to fully grasp the implications of translation for modern Japan requires traversing the disciplinary boundaries of history, politics, international relations, literature, culture, language, and ideology. What results is an investigation unprecedented in breadth of scope, which aims to trace the contours of an emerging culture of translation.

The two scholars begin by outlining the geopolitical context that both spurred this translation project and enabled it to proceed apace. What distinguishes their approach is the consistent attention to the mediating role of China in the encounter with the West. Their interest in this subject often leads to penetrating discussions of issues not directly related to the topic of translation narrowly defined; these parts of their discussion will not be addressed here. Instead, the following account focuses on issues of immediate interest from the standpoint of translation in modern Japan, specifically: how the historical precedents of the Edo period (1603–1868) conditioned and enabled the reception of Western thought in translation in the nineteenth century; the pioneering contributions of Confucian scholar Ogyū Sorai (1666–1728) to the Japanese understanding of language and translation; the unanticipated impact of translated ideologies on both the state and its political opponents; the conspicuous interest in translating Western and world history; and finally, the various ways in which the translated ideology of "civilization and enlightenment" (*bunmei kaika*) was disseminated by the state and intellectual elites, and how it was received by the general populace.

The dialogue is particularly well suited to this type of wide-ranging investigation, allowing as it does for the introduction of multiple perspectives and lively interaction between participants who bring different interests and areas of expertise to bear upon a shared set of questions. The informal nature of the conversational format also readily lends itself to digressions. Maruyama and Katō demonstrate the breadth of their knowledge through the extended chat, casually dropping references to everything from the classical Chinese canon to Meiji-era translations of

relatively obscure European texts and the more recent theories of their intellectual acquaintances. But if the dialogue often seems to stray from the stated topic, Maruyama and Katō never fail to return to their main themes with interesting conclusions and fresh insight.

Situating *hon'yaku-shugi* ("translation-ism") in geopolitical context: between China and the West

Katō and Maruyama begin their inquiry with a macroscopic overview of the geopolitical context of the mid-nineteenth century, when the global reach of Western imperialism was precipitating radical changes in the traditional East Asian world order. In essence, they reframe the story of Japan's modern "opening" to the Western world from the standpoint of the history of translation in order to emphasize the causal relationship between shifting global power relations and the modern origins of translation in Japan. The history of Japan's foreign relations illuminates the question of why the Japanese so rapidly and enthusiastically embraced translation as the preferred method of interacting with the outside world – a question that comes down, in large part, to a collective understanding of the relationship between power and knowledge.

Katō offers the following account of how the changing international situation conditioned Japan's embrace of translation:

> Until the Meiji period, or rather, until the end of the eighteenth century, although Japan hosted delegations from Korea and maintained contact with the Dutch through Nagasaki, Japan's foreign relations were constituted primarily by Japan's relations with China. Excluding the so-called "Mongol Invasions" of the thirteenth century, there was never any direct military threat from China. International travel was quite arduous before the Edo period, and the country was officially closed by the seclusion edict once the Edo period began. Setting aside relations with the Korean peninsula, there was little physical contact, particularly human interaction, with foreign countries. Visitors from China during the Edo period – not to mention the Muromachi period (1336–1573) or the period of Northern and Southern Courts (1336–92) – were extremely rare. In short, I think that for Japan, China was too distant for direct contact, but close enough to allow for the influx of information.

When it came to the West, in contrast, there was direct contact from around the beginning of the nineteenth century. Ships from the West appeared and with them Westerners – though they were few in number in contrast to the Chinese – and the West emerged as an entity that Japan had to face and negotiate with directly. Why did this happen? This was a result, of course, of the development of Western seafaring techniques following the Age of Geographical Discovery. Westerners could now come as far as the shores of Japan if they so wished. Knowledge about the West, however, was quite scarce. Viewed from this perspective, the situation was the complete reverse of that with China. The West was even more distant than