

Korean

오네경, 미끈한 토브들이
풀언덕에서 맴돌며 송팡했다.
보르고브들은 전부 준비했고
녹돼들은 길을 잃고 에취핻핻거렸다.

“아들아. 재벼워키를 조심하렴!
물어뜯는 주둥이, 날카로운 발톱!
주브주브 새를 조심하렴!
부글부글 화난 밴더스내치를 피하렴!”

아들은 커다란 칼을 들고 있었다.
오랫동안 어마무시한 적을 쫓다가
통통 나무 옆에 휴식을 취하며
잠시 생각에 잠겨 있었다.

그렇게 곰곰이 생각에 잠겨 있는데,
재벼워키가 눈을 이글거리며
나무 뺨뺨 어두운 숲 사이로 어슬렁어슬렁
시끌시끌 중얼거리며 다가왔다.

하나, 둘! 하나, 둘! 커다란 칼이
이리저리 훑훑 움직였다.
아들은 재벼워키를 해치운 뒤
머리만 들고 깡충거리며 신 나서 뛰어왔다.

“재벼워키를 해치운 거냐?
이리 온, 반짝이며 빛나는 내 아들아!
오, 아름다운 날이로다! 칼루! 칼레이!”
그는 기쁨에 차올라 꺄꺄 웃었다.

오네경, 미끈한 토브들이
풀단지에서 맴돌며 송팡했다.
보르고브들은 전부 준비했고
녹돼들은 길을 잃고 에취핻핻거렸다.

Onegyöng, mikkünhan t'obüdül i
p'uröndök esö maemdolmyö songp'ang haetta.
Porogobüdül ün chönbu chobi haetko
nokdwaedül ün kil ül ilk'o ech'wi hwithwit köryötta.

“Adül a. Chaeböwök'i rül chosim haryöm!
Muröttünnün chudungi, nalk'aroun palt'op!
Chubüjubüsaе rül chosim haryöm!
Pugül pugül hwanan paendösünaech'i rül p'iharyöm!”

Adül ün k'ödaran k'al ül tülgo issötta.
Oraet tongan öma musihan chök ül tchottaga
t'ongt'ong namu yöp e hyusik ül ch'wihamyö
chamsi saenggak e chamgyö issötta.

Kürök'e kkomkkomi saenggak e chamgyö innünde
chaeböwök'i ka nun ül igülgörimyö
namu ppaekppaek öduun sup sai ro ösüllöng ösüllöng
sikkül sikkül chungöl körimyö taga watta.

Hana, tul! Hana, tul! K'ödaran k'al i
iri chöri hwikhwik umjigyötta.
Adül ün chaeböwök'i rül haech'iun twi
möri man tülgo kkangch'ung körimyö sin nasö ttwiö watta.

“Chaeböwök'i rül haech'iun könya?
Iri on, pantchagimyö pinnanün nae adül a!
O, arümdaun nal iroda! K'allu! K'allei!”
Kü nün kippüm e ch'aolla kkölköl usötta.

Onegyöng, mikkünhan t'obüdül i
p'uröndök esö maemdolmyö songp'ang haetta.
Porogobüdül ün chönbu chobi haekko
nokdwaedül ün kil ül ilk'o ech'wi hwithwit köryötta.

Yunhüi Chöng

“Jabberwocky” in Korean

Dafna Zur

While translations of children’s literature from other languages began to appear in Korean magazines for young readers already in the early 1900s, the translations of Lewis Carroll’s masterpieces prove a striking exception. One adaptation of *Alice in Wonderland* was written in Korean by Yosöp Chu in the late 1930s under the title *Unch’öri üi Mohöm*, but a full Korean translation of *Alice in Wonderland* appeared only in 1959. The translator was Nagwön Han, who was born in 1912 in the Northern part of the peninsula around the time of Japan’s colonization of Korea. Like many young intellectuals, Han was educated in Japan, and after the liberation of the peninsula following the defeat of the Japanese in 1945, he became South Korea’s first writer of science fiction for young readers.

Through the Looking-Glass was not translated into Korean until the 1970s. The first translation was titled *Köul nara üi Aellisü* and was by Hyön’gyu Yang, but because it was aimed at very young readers it was significantly abridged and did not contain the “Jabberwocky.” It wasn’t until 1992 that the first full translation of *Through the Looking-Glass* appeared. Since then, at least two dozen translations have been published in South Korea.

The first full translation published in 1992 was by Chongmin Ch’oe and was based on Martin Gardner’s annotated volume from 1960. There, the “Jabberwocky” poem appeared, unreversed. When Alice says to herself, “That’s right! This is a book from the Mirror World! If I hold it up to the mirror, the words will come back to me right side up,” (35) the reader has no visual cue to reinforce her confusion. In his translation, Ch’oe translated the verbs and adjectives into Korean, but left Carroll’s nouns mostly intact while relying on Gardner’s notes to explain their meaning. The first two sentences, for example, read,

The sun was setting when the slithery and restless toves

scratched and dug ‘round the mountain bend.
The pathetic, slender borogove birds screeched
as did the raths that had lost their way. (35)

While Ch’oe rendered many of Carroll’s nonsense words meaningful in Korean, he employed onomatopoeia to recreate the experience the text’s less conventional aspects. For example, “chortled” became “kkilkkil ssikssik,” and “whiffling” became “tchiktchik ungöl tchaektchaek,” both of which were his inventions. The illustrations used in this translation were by John Tenniel, although their source was not acknowledged on the cover page.

Yöngmi Son’s translation from 1996 was the first to mirror-reverse the opening stanza of “Jabberwocky” in Korean. Unlike the 1992 translation, Son does not rely on footnotes, but she used in-text parentheses to explain words she left in the original such as toves, borogoves, and raths. Like Ch’oe before her, Son translated many of the words so as to make them semantically meaningful, but her interpretations are different from Ch’oe’s. For example, where Ch’oe translated “All mimsy were the borogoves” as “pathetic and slender borogove birds,” Son wrote “The borogoves were depressed, the lot of them.” Son contributed her own set of onomatopoeia—she translated “whiffling” as “hündül hündül”—but on the whole she translated the Jabberwocky as an entirely coherent poem. This translation also carried John Tenniel’s “Jabberwocky” illustrations.

In 2008, Sökhüi Kim published a translation with Helen Oxenbury’s illustrations. Here too, the “Jabberwocky” poem appears mirrored. Her translation is laid out in a single page in two columns, at the end of which the following five words are defined with asterisks: toves, borogoves, Jabberwocky, Jubjub, and Bandersnatch. In her translation she describes toves as “gentle and sleek,” and borogoves as “pitiable.” She translates “raths” as “*Ssukssaek* pigs,” with “*ssukssaek*” being her onomatopoeia invention. She translates “whiffling” as “hoekheok.” And while previous translators left, “Callooh! Callay!” in its original, Kim domesticates this triumphant cry into a common Korean exclamation, “Yaho! Yaho!” (29).

Two translations from 2010, one by Kyöngmi Kim and one by Soyön Yi, are interesting in the way they come up with their own play on words. Kim brings together words that don’t usually appear as such, such as “nagüt allang” to describe the toves, a word which is a combination of “nagüt” (“soft,” “tender”) and “allanghada” (“to flatter”). Yi Soyön, whose translation was based on notes by Hugh Haughton, describes toves with the adverb “yukkühata,” which does not appear in the dictionary nor is it an onomatopoeia. She also defines the “wabe”

as her invented word “rorokil” or “Roro way.” Yi, like many of the translators, keeps the word “vorpal” in the original so that it reads like the noun modifier of the sword (“Bop’al k’al”).

One translation from 2012 by Yunyǒng Hwang stands out for the number of words that Hwang invented. These include the made-up words for uffish (the state of being “swinkkach’il kǒmanhan”) and for wabe (“haesi byǒndǒk”). Hwang changed “tumtum” to “T’ingt’ing” and “Callooh Callay” to “K’yaho! K’yatho!” Her translation has no glosses or definitions; instead she inserts a note that follows the poem explaining that Carroll deliberately intended for many of the words to make no sense.

Finally, two recent translations from 2015 and 2019 make bold wordplay central to their work. The 2015 translation by Yunhŭi Chǒng (transliterated above) includes new words for which she provides no explanation. “Onegyǒng” is “brillig,” “songp’ang” is “gimble,” “nokdwae” is “raths,” and “ech’wi hwithwit” is “outgrabe.” For some terms Chǒng opts for translation over invention: she renders “vorpal” as “large,” and “galumphing” as “hopping.” In her 2019 translation, Ryu Jiwǒn, too, comes up with her own inventions such as “kuŭllyǒk” for “brillig” and “kubulssang” for “mimsy.” Neither translator follows with a gloss or explanation of their choices.

None of the Korean translations carry an original illustration of the Jabberwock. Of the dozens of translations published in the last three decades, fewer than six come with original illustrations by Korean artists and none have contributed an original “Jabberwocky” image. A search in the Korean online engine Naver reveals digital images of the Jabberwocky that have found their way into video games and onto the face of card collectibles.

It is not clear why *Through the Looking-Glass* appeared so late compared with other foreign language masterpieces that were translated into Korean in the early twentieth century. Judging by the degree to which the translators relied on Martin Gardner’s notes from the 1960s, it seems that the incomprehensibility of the poem may have been a significant barrier. And while earlier translators opted for onomatopoeia as their innovative tool, in recent years translators seem to have gotten increasingly comfortable with inventing words, with ambiguities, and with the chaos and play that were at the heart of Lewis’ *Through the Looking-Glass*.

Translations into Korean

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