Translating Japanese Free-Verse Poetry:
Strategy and Theory in Translating Kawaji Ryūkō's *Roadside Flowers*

by

Matthew Conway Danzinger

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Department of East Asian Studies
University of Alberta

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Abstract

The publication of Kawaji Ryūkō's (川路柳虹， 1888-1959) *Shinshi yonshō* (新詩四章 "Four New Poems") in the journal *Shijin* (詩人) in 1907 has been described as pioneering the genre of Japanese free-verse poetry. This poetry differed from previous Japanese poetic works in both form and content by eschewing traditional poetic metres and subject matter. Despite Ryūkō's work being widely noted as innovative, scholarship in English has been scant, and there have been few English-language translations of his work. Furthermore, there has been little research on the translation of modern Japanese free-verse poetry (自由詩, *jiyūshi*) into English, in both English and Japanese scholarship. This study seeks to fill these gaps in the following ways: by defining the unique aspects of this genre; by translating select poetry from Ryūkō's first full collection of poetry, *Robō no hana* (路傍の花 *Roadside Flowers*, 1910), into English; by explaining and justifying translation choices and strategies using theoretical models from the field of translation studies; and by hypothesizing as to why Ryūkō's work has been neglected up to this point in English-language studies of Japanese free verse. In doing this, I aim to expand the English-language canon of translated modern Japanese poetry, contribute to the growing body of research on modern Japanese poetry, and offer new theoretical models for the translation of free-verse poetry in general.

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Introduction

Kawaji Ryūkō (川路柳虹, 1888-1959)[1] was born in Tokyo during the twenty-first year of the reign of Emperor Meiji (1888) as Kawaji Makoto (川路誠).[2] His great-grandfather, Kawaji Toshiakira (川路聖謨, 1801-1868), worked as an official under the Tokugawa Shogunate. His father, Kawaji Kandō (川路寛堂, 1845-1927), participated in the Iwakura Mission, the Meiji government's famous diplomatic mission to the United States and Europe.[3]

Ryūkō is most famous for being a pioneer of modern Japanese free-verse poetry written in the vernacular with the publication of his 1907 *Shinshi yonshō* (新詩四章, "Four New Poems").[4] In Japanese there is a significant body of scholarship and criticism which discusses or mentions his work,[5] and he is known both as a critic of art and literature himself and for his many volumes of poetry,[6] especially the final collection published during his lifetime *Waves* (波

[1] Japanese names in this thesis are given in Japanese order, with the surname followed by the given name. Additionally, many artistic figures in Japanese studies are referred to solely by their pen names, in this case Ryūkō for Kawaji Ryūkō.

[2] Nobuya Noguchi 野口存彌, "Kawaji Ryūkō shōnen shijin: saisho no kōgojiyūshi o kaku made 川路柳虹・少年詩人　－最初の口語自由詩を書くまで－ (Kawaji Ryūkō The Young Poet: Writing the First Vernacular Free Verse)," *Musashino joshi daigaku bungakubu kiyō* 武蔵野女子大学文学部紀要 *(Bulletin of the Musashino Women's University Literature Department)* 2 (2004): 69.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Scott Mehl, "The Beginnings of Japanese Free-Verse Poetry and the Dynamics of Cultural Change." *Japan Review* no. 28 (2015): 104.

[5] For a sample bibliography of Japanese scholarship and criticism written between 1907 and 1986 that discusses his work, see Yutaka Nakahara 中原豊, "*Kawaji Ryū̄ō sankōbunken mokuroku kō* 川路柳虹参考文献目録稿 (Kawaji Ryūkō Bibliography)," *Bunken kenkyū* 文獻探究 *(Literature Research)* 20 (1987).

[6] Mitsuru Sasaki 佐々木充, "*Shitataru hikari: Kawaji Ryū̄ō no baai* したたる光: 川路柳虹の場合 (Dripping Light: Kawaji Ryūkō's Situation)," *Obihiro ōtani tankidaigaku kiyō* 帯広大谷短期大学紀要 (*Bulletin of Obihiro Otani Junior College*) 38 (2000): 1.

Nami, 1958), which won the Japan Arts Academy award (*Nihon geijutsuin shō*, 日本芸術院賞) for poetry in that year.[7]

His first collection, *Roadside Flowers* (路傍の花 *Robō no hana*, 1910), notable for being the first collection of Japanese poetry written in vernacular free verse,[8] contains 71 poems with lengths as short as four lines and some over thirty-five for a total book length of 230 pages. I chose to examine this book specifically because most of the poems have not yet been translated into English, and for a work that is arguably a milestone in the development of modern Japanese poetry, it has been paid little attention in English scholarship.

Until recently, Ryūkō's role in the development of modern Japanese poetry has not been examined in English in depth, and translations of his work in English remain few. While the exact reason for the lack of attention that Ryūkō and his work have been given is not clear, there are some important factors which have contributed to this. The first is that the subject matter of his famous first free-verse poem, *Hakidame* (塵溜 "garbage pile") may not have been palatable to English-speaking audiences in the post-World War II period when modern Japanese poetry really started to be translated and studied in America. Another is that Ryūkō has been characterized by multiple scholars as having been more aligned with the naturalism movement in Japan, when other schools of poetry gained more popular traction in Japan and elsewhere, such as the romanticists and the symbolists. It wasn't that Ryūkō was entirely unpopular in Japan; it is

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[7] Mitsuhiko Naganuma 長沼光彦, "Kawaji Ryūkō to shōtōshugi shizenshugi inshōshugi taitōha 川路柳虹と象徴主義・自然主義・印象主義・頽唐派 (Kawaji Ryūkō and Symbolism, Naturalism, Impressionism, and Decadents)." *Kyōto nōtorudamu joshi daigaku kenkyū iyō* 京都ノートルダム女子大学研究紀要 (*Kyoto Notre Dame Women's University Research Bulletin*) no. 45 (2015): 109.

[8] The term used in Japanese scholarship for this style of poetry is *kōgo jiyū hi* (口語自由詩, literally "vernacular free verse").

more that he was not a poet who followed trends that later became more popular in Japan and among those English speakers interested in Japanese poetry.

In this thesis, I look at a sample of the works available in English on modern Japanese poetry, including anthologies, to give some background on the field and examine Ryūkō's place in it relative to other poets of the era. I then go on to examine the field of poetry translation generally, and in relation to free-verse poetry, finally looking in-depth at the work that has been done on translating Japanese free verse and presenting my own framework for translating modern Japanese free verse in relation to the poetic line. As part of this, I examine my own translations from Kawaji Ryūkō's first collection of poetry, *Roadside Flowers* (*Robō no hana* 路傍の花), as well as analyzing and comparing translations of a more popular poet from Ryūkō's time, Takamura Kōtarō (高村光太郎, 1883-1956), because there are many available translations of his work compared to Ryūkō's. In doing so, I hope to put forth a framework for translation of modern Japanese free verse that is useful for other scholars doing future research in this field.

Modern Japanese Poetry in English-Language Scholarship and Translation

The history of Japanese poetry in English translation is relatively short compared to the long history of its writing and begins in the mid-nineteenth century.[9] Many of the early texts translated at this point were classics, such as the oldest collection of Japanese poetry, the *Manyōshū* (万葉集, *Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves*, ca. 759), imperial anthologies of classical poetry, and other collections of *waka*, thirty-one-syllable classical Japanese poems primarily read and written by the elite and utilizing phrases of five and seven syllables.[10] Notable examples from this time are Frederick Victor Dickin's 1865 translation of the *Ogura Hyakunin isshu* (小倉百人一首, *One Hundred Poets, One Poem Each*, 13th c.),[11] Basil Hall Chamberlain's *Classical Poetry of the Japanese* (1880)[12], and the translations that appeared in William George Aston's *A History of Japanese Literature* (1899).[13] Many of these translations have been considered "naturalizing," in that they were translated with various English meters or rhyme schemes.[14]

At that time, poetry from Europe and North America was also being read in Japan, and was eventually translated into Japanese, beginning with *Shintaishishō* (新体詩抄, *A Selection of*

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[9] Joshua Mostow, *Pictures of the Heart: The Hyakunin Isshu in Word and Image* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1996), 58.
H. Mack Horton, "Making it Old: Premodern Japanese Poetry in English Translation," *Asia Pacific Translation and Intercultural Studies* 5, no. 2 (2018): 111.
[10] Anne Commons, "Japanese," in *The Oxford History of Literary Translation in English vol. 4: 1790-1900*, ed. Peter France and Kenneth Haynes (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006): 364-365.
[11] Ibid, 365.
[12] Ibid, 364.
[13] Horton, 129.
[14] Ibid, 128.

Poetry in the New Style, 1882) by Toyama Masakazu (外山正一, pen name Chuzan 丶山, 1848-1900), Yatabe Ryōkichi (矢田部良吉, pen name Shōkon 尚今, 1851-1899), and Inoue Tetsujirō (井上哲次郎, pen name Sonken 巽軒, 1855-1944), which included translations of Shakespeare, Thomas Gray, and H. W. Longfellow, among others,[15] as well as a few original compositions. *Shintaishishō* sparked many debates in Japan about what counted as "poetry." While it did represent a huge step away from traditional Japanese verse, the translations and poems were written in alternating lines of seven and five syllables (7/5 meter), which is reminiscent of previous Japanese forms such as the *waka*.[16] Essentially, the exchange and translation of poetry between the Japanese and English languages in the mid-to-late nineteenth century encouraged a general feeling that Meiji-period modernization required the development of new forms of poetry in writers of the period such as Ryūkō and others.[17]

While the end of the nineteenth century represented innovation in metered Japanese poetry, it wasn't until the early twentieth century that "free verse" was written in Japanese. Free verse, while difficult to define precisely, has been described in many ways, most of them relating to its lack of formal elements such as metre and rhyme, [18] its relation to the line as a foundational unit,[19] and its development in France ("free verse" and the corresponding Japanese term *jiyū̄ hi* [自由詩] are both literal translations of the French term *vers libre*).[20] It has been noted by many

[15] Massimiliano Tomasi, "The Rise of a New Poetic Form: The Role of Shimamura Hōgetsu in the Creation of Modern Japanese Poetry" *Japan Review* no. 19 (2007): 109.
[16] Tomasi, 109-111.
[17] Tomasi, 111.
[18] Jan Zwicky, ed. "Poetry and Meaninglessness Part III of IV: Free Verse and Its Vicissitudes." *Brick: A Literary Journal*, no. 99 (Summer 2017): 46.
[19] Chris Beyers, *A History of Free Verse*. (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2001): 18.
[20] Mehl, "The Beginnings of Japanese Free-Verse," 117.

that the first free verse written in Japanese was by Kawaji Ryūkō, with the publishing of his *Shinshi yonshō* (新詩四章, "Four New Poems") in the journal *Shijin* (詩人) in 1907,[21] particularly the poem *Hakidame* (塵溜 "garbage pile," more often translated as "Rubbish Heap"). While there has been a proliferation of research on modern Japanese free verse, especially in the last 20 years, English-language scholarship which focuses on Ryūkō and his poetry has been scant. Often, Ryūkō is mentioned or referred to, but only briefly. It isn't until more recently that English-language scholarship has begun to include him or his work in a substantial way.

Two significant English-language scholarly texts include indirect references to Ryūkō's pioneering work. One of the earliest and most comprehensive surveys of modern Japanese poetry, Donald Keene's 1964 essay, *Modern Japanese Poetry*, begins at the start of the Meiji period in 1868 and concludes with the poetry of the mid-twentieth century. When Keene begins to discuss free-verse poetry written in vernacular Japanese (as opposed to the diction of classical *waka*), he has this to say: "The modern language was used most effectively when the poet's intent was to disillusion or to be unpoetic. A pioneer effort, published in 1909, was entitled 'The Rubbish Heap,' and graphically described the odors, maggots, rotting objects and so forth found in the garbage."[22] This is clearly referencing Ryūkō's poem, although with a different date, and without mentioning his name. A similar, more modern example of this comes from the *Cambridge History of Japanese Literature*. In the chapter by Kawamoto Kōji titled "Modern

[21] Tomasi, 123.
Mehl, "Beginnings of Japanese Free-Verse," 104.
Naganuma,109.
[22] Donald Keene, *Modern Japanese Poetry: An Essay*. (Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 1964): 27.

Japanese Poetry to the 1910s," we are told that "The movement toward colloquial free verse was under way since around 1907."[23] While this could be referring to Ryūkō's *Rubbish Heap* poem, or to critical writings from the same time about the state of Japanese poetry,[24] Ryūkō is not referenced further despite his status as a pioneer in the genre of vernacular free verse.

Interestingly for this study, the earliest anthology of modern Japanese poetry in English translation that I could find which includes modern Japanese free verse actually contains two poems by Ryūkō. This collection, *Fifteen Poets of Modern Japan: A Book of Translations*, edited and translated by Glenn Hughes and Yozan T. Iwasaki, is from 1928 and in addition to Ryūkō, contains poetry by authors who are still celebrated today, such as Ishikawa Takuboku, Kunikida Doppo, and Natsume Sōseki.[25] This collection is fascinating because it was published while Ryūkō was still alive. Hughes was known as an extremely prolific editor of a series of small chapbooks (of which *Fifteen Modern Poets* is a part), which were circulated among universities in Europe and North America.[26]

Given this early representation and translation into English, it is surprising that we don't see much widespread translation of free-verse poetry from the twentieth century until Donald Keene's previously mentioned *Modern Japanese Poetry: An Essay* from 1964, which includes a few translations. An exception to this is *An Anthology of Modern Japanese Poetry*, edited by Ichiro Kōno and Rikutaro Fukuda, the first edition of which was published in 1957. This anthology was published before Keene's influential essay, and was published in Japan despite being entirely in English. The Ryūkō poems included in this anthology are from his later works,

[23] Kōji Kawamoto. "Modern Japanese Poetry to the 1910s," In *The Cambridge History of Japanese Literature*, ed. Haruo Shirane, Tomi Suzuki, and David Lurie, 613–22. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 621.
[24] Mehl, "Beginnings of Japanese Free-Verse," 109.
[25] *Fifteen Poets of Modern Japan: A Book of Translations*, translated by Glenn Hughes and Yozan T. Iwasaki (Seattle: University of Washington Book Store, 1928): 14-18, 24, 26.
[26] Casandra Tate, "Hughes, Glenn (1894-1964)," historylink.org, revised January 9th, 2019, https://historylink.org/File/3694.

but in the introduction there is an English translation of the first poem from *Roadside Flowers* (discussed below),[27] as well as a partial translation of another poem also from *Roadside Flowers*.[28] After this, we begin to see an increase in anthologies including or focused on modern Japanese free verse, a notable example being Edith Marcombe Shiffert and Yūki Sawa's 1972 *Anthology of Modern Japanese Poetry*. In the book's introduction, we see a similar line to that found in Keene's *Modern Japanese Poetry*, and Kawamoto's "Modern Japanese Poetry to the 1910s," when Shiffert and Sawa say "Around 1908 there was a colloquial free-verse movement reflecting the influences of Whitman, Baudelaire, and Rimbaud."[29] While it is not clear if they are directly referring to Ryūkō's work, it is still curious that the collection mentions vernacular Japanese free verse ("vernacular" and "colloquial" seem to be used interchangeably when discussing poetry of this period/style written in modern Japanese) and some main American and French antecedents of the movement without including the very first examples. Of course, there has to be exclusion in the act of creating an anthology, especially one that is as broad in scope as *Anthology of Modern Japanese Poetry*.

This trend continues with the publication in 1975 of J. Thomas Rimer and Robert E. Morrell's *Guide to Japanese Poetry*. According to the foreword, this annotated bibliography of Japanese poetry from earliest times to the time of the book's publishing

> was initiated in response to the needs of the non-specialist. In each volume, a general introduction to the literature under examination precedes the annotations which provide summaries and evaluations to selected works. It is hoped that these guides will aid educators and students of Asian literature as well as those in disciplines other than literature [...] who wish to take advantage of translated literature as a rich source of material for their studies.[30]

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[27] Ichiro Kōno and Rikutaro Fukuda, introduction to *An Anthology of Modern Japanese Poetry*, ed. Ichiro Kōno and Rikutaro Fukuda (Tokyo: Kenkyusha, 1957), xxiv.
[28] Kōno and Fukuda, introduction to *An Anthology of Modern Japanese Poetry*, xxvi.
[29] Edith Marcombe Shiffert and Yūki Sawa, trans., *Anthology of Modern Japanese Poetry*. (Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company Inc. 1972): 20.
[30] Bonnie R. Crown, forward to J. Thomas Rimer and Robert E. Morrell, *Guide to Japanese Poetry*. (Boston: G. K. Hall & Co., 1975): 1.

The mention of "educators and students" is important here, but we will return to this notion later. In the section on modern Japanese poetry, Ryūkō is not listed among the few free-verse poets recommended.

James Kirkup's *Modern Japanese Poetry* (1978), with an introduction by A. R. Davis tracing the trajectory of Japanese poetry's historical development, collects a wide range of poems, but once again none of them are Ryūkō's, and neither is Ryūkō mentioned in the introduction despite, as many studies on modern Japanese poetry do, beginning with 1882's *Shintaishishō* and ending far past Ryūkō's contribution to modern Japanese vernacular poetics. What's important here is that Kirkup cites a few of the works mentioned above, such as Rimer and Morrell's *Guide to Japanese Poetry* and Shiffert and Sawa's *Anthology of Modern Japanese Poetry*.[31] It is clear that these texts are circulating among those studying modern Japanese poetry, and at this point in the development of the field Ryūkō and his poetry are not being widely studied.

Makoto Ueda's 1983 *Modern Japanese Poets* takes a much more focused approach, only profiling eight poets, whose poetry represents "the great bulk of modern Japanese poetry available in English,"[32] according to Ueda. The focus of this volume is these poets' individual ideas about poetry (the poets being Takahashi Shinkichi [高橋新吉, 1901-1987], Miyazawa Kenji [宮沢賢治, 1896-1933], Hagiwara Sakutarō [萩原朔太郎, 1886-1942], Yosano Akiko [与謝野晶子, 1878-1942], Ishikawa Takuboku [石川啄木, 1886-1912], Ogiwara Seisensui [荻原井

[31] *Modern Japanese Poetry*, trans. James Kirkup (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1978): 321-323.
[32] Makoto Ueda, *Modern Japanese Poets*. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1982): v.

泉水, 1884-1976], Takamura Kōtarō [高村光太郎, 1883-1956], and Masaoka Shiki [正岡子規,1867-1902]). Something worth pointing out is that Ueda acknowledges the limits of such a selective process, saying "I feel some regret at not being able to discuss certain other poets, such as Shimazaki Tōson (島崎藤村, 1872-1943), Kitahara Hakushū (北原白秋, 1885-1942), and Tanikawa Shuntarō (谷川俊太郎, 1931). But I had to draw the line somewhere."[33] Ueda goes on to mention that studies of modern Japanese poetry are lacking, but what is more relevant is that at this point in the development of this field, there is an English canon of modern Japanese poets and Ueda is aware of who to include and even in an almost hierarchical way who could be included if given more space.

Ryūkō begins to be mentioned with slightly greater frequency with Donald Keene's 1999 book *Dawn to the West*, which is one of the most comprehensive histories of modern Japanese literature, and the section on modern Japanese poetry, and mentions Ryūkō by name. In the section on Kambara Ariake (蒲原有明, 1876-1947), a noted *shintaishi* poet and writer of sonnets in Japanese, Keene writes that "Not until 1907, when Kawaji Ryūkō created a sensation with his 'Hakidame' (Rubbish Heap), did the Naturalist poets begin to treat such subjects [as warehouses, the debris in a festering river, etc.]."[34] This is the only mention of Ryūkō until the section on Hagiwara Sakutarō, when Keene says "Kawaji Ryūkō (1888-1959) had published some graphically realistic poems in the colloquial a few years earlier, and Kitahara Hakushū had also experimented with the colloquial, but Hagiwara was essentially correct when he boasted of being

[33] Ueda, vii.
[34] Donald Keene, *Dawn to the West*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999): 235.

the first to employ this medium successfully."[35] It seems that at this point in time Ryūkō is being recognized, but only slightly.

Turning to *The Columbia Anthology of Modern Japanese Literature* (2005), Ryūkō isn't mentioned at all, but Hagiwara Sakutarō is described as being "generally accepted as the first truly 'modern' Japanese poet, for both his use of the colloquial language and his open and direct presentation of his sometimes neurotic sensibility."[36] The treatment of Hagiwara in this work and others provides a stark contrast to Ryūkō's place in English scholarship of modern Japanese poetry, as we will see.

Alexander Dolin's 2010 study, *The Silver Age of Japanese Poetry: Romanticism and Symbolism*, like Keene's *Dawn to the West* mentions Ryūkō briefly, but this time characterizes him as "an ideological leader of the poets of Naturalism and a staunch opponent of the Symbolists,"[37] and an acquaintance of Saijō Yaso (西條八十 1892-1970).[38] It seems the general trend is that, if Ryūkō is mentioned at all in a scholarly work or anthology that covers the time period in which he was writing (late Meiji period into the Taishō [1912-1926] and Shōwa [1926-1989] periods), he is mentioned only briefly, with a few relatively recent exceptions such as Tomasi's article on Shimamura Hōgetsu, which reprints Ryūkō's *Hakidame* poem with a partial English translation;[39] Scott Mehl's 2013 Ph.D. dissertation, which includes a section comparing

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[35] Ibid, 266.
[36] *The Columbia Anthology of Modern Japanese Literature, Volume 1: From Restoration to Occupation, 1868-1945*, ed. J. Thomas Rimer and Van C. Gessel with Amy Vladeck and Leith Morton (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005): 586.
[37] Alexander Dolin, *The Silver Age of Japanese Poetry: Romanticism and Symbolism* (Akita: Akita University Press, 2010): 232.
[38] Dolin, 317.
[39] Tomasi, 123-124.

the poetry of Ryūkō and Shimazaki Tōson (島崎藤村 1872-1943);[40] and Mehl's 2015 article on the development of Japanese free verse which begins by mentioning Ryūkō's contribution to the creation of the genre, but ultimately examines the broader cultural atmosphere of the poetry world in which Ryūkō was writing.[41] This overview of research and anthologization of modern Japanese free-verse poetry in relation to Ryūkō's work is not meant to be fully exhaustive, but to illustrate an observed trend in the English treatment of his work by using a representative sample of the most widely available anthologies and research concerning this genre. Hopefully, the trend of more recent research discussing Ryūkō and his work in greater detail will continue.

To further contextualize Ryūkō's place (or lack thereof) in the English canon of modern Japanese poetry, it is helpful to see how someone who *is* widely anthologized, such as Hagiwara Sakutarō, is treated in the current English-language canon of Japanese poetry and poetic scholarship. Most of the previously mentioned works highly praise his poetry, often after alluding to Ryūkō's work. For example, in Keene's previously quoted 1964 essay, *Modern Japanese Poetry*, after the quote about Ryūkō's *Hakidame* poem Keene states that "The first truly successful poet of the modern language was Hagiwara Sakutarō (1886-1942). He used it not to startle with unpleasant images or vulgar colloquialisms, but for its own music."[42] The 1972 *Anthology of Modern Japanese Poetry* by Shiffert and Sawa echoes this by saying that "It is Sakutarō Hagiwara who is acknowledged to be the greatest of modern Japanese poets,"[43] in addition to including many of his poems in English translation. As previously mentioned, Ueda's *Modern Japanese Poets* includes Hagiwara as one of its eight subjects, and he is also represented

[40] Scott Mehl, "The Concept of Expression in Modern Japanese Poetics: Thought, Consciousness, Language," PhD diss., (University of Chicago, 2013): 74.
[41] Mehl, "Beginnings of Japanese Free-Verse," 103.
[42] Keene, *Modern Japanese Poetry*, 27-28.
[43] Shiffert and Sawa, ed., 21

in in the *Columbia Anthology of Modern Japanese Literature* for both his poetry and one of his essays. Most recently, Hagiwara is mentioned in Tomasi's article about Shimamura Hōgetsu,[44] multiple times in Dolin's *The Silver Age of Japanese Poetry*,[45] as well as in Mehl's article *The Beginnings of Japanese Free-Verse Poetry*.[46] Once again, this is not a complete list of all the English texts that reference Hagiwara, but a sample to show his representation in comparison to that of Ryūkō's.

Some answers as to why Ryūkō is underrepresented in both English scholarship on modern Japanese poetry and in the English-language canon of translated modern Japanese poetry might be found in analyzing how canons are formed generally, and then looking at how those dynamics may be working within the context of Japanese literary studies.

Canon formation is today a continuously debated topic in literary studies. While it is extremely complex, examining it in relation to translation makes it even more so because in addition to factors frequently discussed in relation to canonicity such as gender, race, class, exclusion, institutional power, etc., the relationship of the two languages to each other is a defining factor. In the case of Japanese and English, it has already been shown that English poems influenced the trajectory of modern Japanese poetry through translation in volumes such as the *Shintaishi shō*. John Guillory, in describing aspects of canon formation and the debate about canon formation itself notes that "the distinction between the canonical and the noncanonical can be seen not as the form in which judgments are actually made about individual works, but as an effect of the syllabus as an institutional instrument, the fact that works not

[44] Tomasi, 123.
[45] Dolin, 21, 23, 31, among others.
[46] Mehl, "Beginnings of Japanese Free-Verse," 123.

included on a given syllabus appear to have no status at all."[47] While Guillory's arguments are much more complex than can be summarized in a few sentences, the main point relevant to our current discussion is that the "canon" does not exist as a concrete set of texts, but as lists of works taught in schools (from primary education to universities), which do exist in the syllabi of those classes, and this is one of the ways that the "canon" is reinforced institutionally.[48] This is why these anthologies and scholarly works, especially ones which frequently reference each other and are put out by such large companies as Charles E. Tuttle and large university presses like Stanford and Columbia, are important to examine critically for the way they perpetuate ideas about which poetry is the most representative of a certain time period, because this is precisely how canons are formed and reinforced.

Translation compounds the complexity of canon formation in this case. While the problem is not as simple as the English-language canon of modern Japanese poetry being a direct reflection of the same canon in Japanese, there are some obvious considerations that affect what gets translated into English such as availability of original copies for translators to work from, which is directly related to how popular a particular poet is in the source language.

In the case of Kawaji Ryūkō, we see that there is a reflection in Japanese sources of the trend in English. A simple search for Japanese-language results for "Kawaji Ryūkō" on Worldcat.org, one of the largest online databases of global library listings, only brings up around one hundred results, whereas the same search for "Hagiwara Sakutarō" brings up ten times that many. Looking at a Japanese anthology series such as the *Nihon no Shiika* (日本の詩歌 *A Treasury of Japanese Poetry*, 2003), Hagiwara Sakutarō gets his own volume, which includes a

[47] John Guillory, *Cultural Capital: The Problem of Literary Canon Formation*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993): 30.
[48] Ibid, 30-31.

large portion of his work,[49] whereas only three of Ryūkō's poems are included, and are relegated to a small section of the *Kindaishi* (近代詩, *Modern Japanese Poetry*) volume.[50] We see in this example a similar pattern to that of Ryūkō's work in English.

There still is little research on modern Japanese free-verse poetry, especially in English. In the case of Kawaji Ryūkō, his status as a pioneer in the genre is often recognized or alluded to, but not much more is said. Additionally, there are very few translations of his work into English, and certainly no complete volumes of any of his works. Going forward, this is a clear avenue for further research, including expanding on Ryūkō's contributions to modern Japanese poetry and translations of his works into English.

[49] Hagiwara Sakutarō 萩原朔太郎, *Hagiwara Sakutarō* 萩原朔太郎. (Tōkyō: Chūō Kōron Shinsha 中央公論新社, 2003).
[50] *Kindai Shishū* 近代詩集 (Modern Poetry), ed. Chūō Kōron Shinsha 中央公論新社 (Tōkyō: Chūō Kōron Shinsha, 2003).

Theory in Translating Japanese Free-Verse Poetry

The history of poetry translation is long and deeply connected to the history of translation studies as a whole, and is therefore too expansive to detail in its entirety. However, looking at a cross-section of the research on poetry translation, and specifically the research on translating modern Japanese free verse into English, can give insights into specific strategies that we can employ in analysing translations of poems from *Roadside Flowers*.

Before translation studies developed into the academic field it is today, much of the writing on translation was contained in the prefaces of translated works, such as the preface to John Dryden's translation of Ovid's *Epistles* from 1680. Dryden first places all translation generally into three categories; *metaphrase*, or word-for-word "literal" translation; *paraphrase*, or "Translation with Latitude" in which "[the author's] words are not so strictly follow'd as his sense, and that too is admitted to be amplyfied, but not alter'd;" and finally *imitation*, which Dryden describes as involving more radical changes to the source text than either metaphrase or paraphrase.[51] This hearkens back to even older writings on translation, like Jerome's 394 C.E. letter to Pammachius, which first discusses the issue of word-for-word vs. sense-for-sense translation–a dichotomy which returns throughout translation studies.[52]

Dryden's insights into poetry translation are focused on the relationship between metered and rhyming Latin verse and seventeenth-century English, but some sentiments are applicable to most kinds of poetry. Dryden cautions against translating too literally,[53] comments that being

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[51] John Dryden, "From the Preface to Ovid's Epistles," in *The Translation Studies Reader*, ed. Lawrence Venuti (New York: Routledge, 2012), 38.
[52] Jerome, "Letter to Pammachius," trans. Kathleen Davis in *The Translation Studies Reader*, ed. Lawrence Venuti (New York: Routledge, 2012), 23.
[53] John Dryden, 39.

poetic and being precise are often at odds with each other,[54] and advises that in addition to thorough knowledge of poetry the translator should be a "Master both of his Author's Language, and of his own."[55] These notions are frequently repeated in scholarship on the translation of poetry regardless of the type of poetry being translated.

A lot of research has been done on poetry translation that focuses on languages and styles other than modern Japanese free-verse poetry, and while this research is not specifically applicable, it can offer its own insights as well. Focusing on classic Greek and Latin poetry, W. H. Oldaker again points out the difficulty of translating verse, that there is always some kind of loss in any translation,[56] and that over time, translations can become outdated.[57] G. S. Fraser, in a conference lecture focusing on "some of the changes in poetry on the Italian peninsula between the end of the Republic and the flowering of the Middle Ages,"[58] brings up many of the same concepts that have been discussed already, but mentions that given that the majority of translations of poetry into English at the time were from classical or modern European languages, translations of poetry from African and Asian languages could be an avenue of cultural exchange and understanding.[59] Paul Selver's book *The Art of Translating Poetry* briefly raises large questions related to whether a translation can be as good as the poem in its original language, and points out that the answer to questions of the translation of poetry lie within the nature of poetry itself,[60] but then devotes the majority of the book to answering these questions in relation to metre and rhyme. The idea that something about the nature of poetry is inherent to

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[54] John Dryden, 39.
[55] Ibid, 40.
[56] W. H. Oldaker, "Translating Poetry (A Grumble in Five Languages)," *Greece & Rome*, vol. 7, no. 20, (1938): 87.
[57] Ibid, 88.
[58] Fraser, G. S. "On Translating Poetry," *Arion: A Journal of Humanities and the Classics*, vol. 5, no. 2 (1966): 147
[59] Fraser, 133.
[60] Paul Selver, *The Art of Translating Poetry* (London: John Baker Publishers Ltd., 1966), 10.

translating it well is an extremely important notion, essentially meaning that the elements that make poetry distinct as a form of writing are also important to consider in translation.

André Lefevere's well-known *Translating Poetry: Seven Strategies and a Blueprint* is extremely thorough, but it only focuses on one metrical poem, Catullus's sixty-fourth poem. Therefore, the strategies Lefevere outlines are not directly applicable without some modification, especially for a language as different from Catullus's classical Latin as twentieth-century Japanese is. He does, however, advocate for context to play a large part in the translation of poetry (and literature in general):

> This study proposes to tackle the problem [of literary translation] from a different point of view—one which might allow a more thorough discussion of the translation process itself and the influence of context on original and translation, without needlessly concentrating on the interaction between translator and translated.[61]

It is clear that Lefevere was writing in response to what he perceived to be issues in the study of literary translation as it existed in his time (the 1970s), and these issues, combined with the stylistic differences between the poetry he studies and Japanese free verse, only have minimal application in the present study; however, the points he raises about the role of context in literary translation are important.

In a more recent but similar vein, Abdul Sahib Mehdi Ali's *Translating Poetry into Poetry: Recreating the Unity of Content and Form* (2017) also focuses on very broad aspects of translating poetry, but all of the examples are of metrical and rhymed English poetry translated into Arabic. While I do agree that the preservation of form and content is extremely important in the translation of poetry, Ali's book focuses on "the methods and procedures that [he has]

[61] André Lefevere, *Translating Poetry: Seven Strategies and a Blueprint* (Assen/Amsterdam: Van Gorcum, 1975), 4.

followed in translating these poems,"[62] and so these procedures might not have as much of an application in translating Japanese free-verse poems into English.

One trend in works about poetry translation are edited volumes of articles with each article being written about very specific topics focusing often on one poem, style or genre of poem, one poet's work, or one issue in the research of poetry translation, such as *Translating Poetry: The Double Labyrinth* (1989),[63] *The Translation and Transmission of Concrete Poetry* (2019),[64] and *Sociologies of Poetry Translation: Emerging Perspectives* (2020).[65] While collections like these are extremely valuable to people who study the specific sub-disciplines of translation studies, genres, and poets discussed by one or more of the articles in these volumes, they have limited applicability in translating genres outside the specific subjects they discuss.

Other volumes about poetic translation attempt to answer extremely broad questions by either using examples from multiple languages or discussing translation in abstract terms, or both. Something that is interesting about this kind of translation scholarship is that it often repeats other general statements about translation, and can often be read as an opinion piece or an attempt to be very objective. One such example, The *Translation of Poetry*, which is made up of a keynote lecture by Allen Tate and then a panel discussion between a group of translators, repeats a point made by John Dryden almost three hundred years earlier, that "a translator ought to be a poet himself; that he must be a master of his own language."[66] This lecture and following panel discussion say a lot of things about the nature of poetry translation as well as the state of

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[62] Abdul Sahib Mehdi Ali, *Translating Poetry into Poetry: Recreating the Unity of Content and Form* (Washington: Academica Press, 2017), 2.
[63] *Translating Poetry: The Double Labyrinth*, ed. Daniel Weissbort (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1989).
[64] *The Translation and Transmission of Concrete Poetry*, ed. John Corbett and Ting Huang (New York: Routledge, 2019).
[65] *Sociologies of Poetry Translation: Emerging Perspectives*, ed. Jacob Blakeley (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019), Web. 25 Sep. 2020. http://dx.doi.org.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/10.5040/9781350043282.
[66] Allen Tate, *The Translation of Poetry* (Washington: Published for the Library of Congress by the Gertrude Clarke Whittall Poetry and Literature Fund, 1972), 5.

the field in the mid-to-late twentieth century, but like many previous works focus mainly on Indo-European languages with the exception of a few comments about Hebrew and Japanese. The most interesting thing about this volume for the present study is that while the Japanese translator who participated in this discussion, Harold Wright, was at the time known for translating Japanese free-verse poet Tanikawa Shuntarō (perhaps one of the most famous currently living Japanese poets globally), the discussion of Japanese poetry primarily focuses on haiku and tanka. As for Japanese free verse, all that is said is that it has no rhyme, but it "does have its rhythms which you have to convey in English somehow."[67]

Other works that aim to use multiple languages and poetic or poetic-translation traditions to make broad statements about the translation of poetry in a general sense range from more methodical and practically oriented books like Burton Raffel's *The Art of Translating Poetry*,[68] to more philosophical works like Peter Robinson's *Poetry & Translation: The Art of the Impossible*.[69] Robinson's book "aims to increase knowledge of, and thought about, the interactive processes of reading and writing poetry composed in mother tongues and in Translation."[70] The book spends a lot of time using Robert Frost's famous line, "poetry is what is lost in translation," as a sort of lens with which to view translations and ultimately concludes that while translation of poetry is impossible, it is still a worthwhile creative endeavor.[71] Robinson's viewpoint, however, is extremely subjective; in the preface he explains that he has translated poems previously with the "operative assumption that it was the aim in translating poetry to be faithfully accurate and to make translations that read well as poems in their own right,"[72] without

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[67] Tate, 36.
[68] Burton Raffel, *The Art of Translating Poetry*, (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1988).
[69] Peter Robinson, *Poetry & Translation: The Art of the Impossible* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2010).
[70] Ibid, x.
[71] Robinson, 176.
[72] Ibid, ix.

saying what it exactly means to be "faithfully accurate." He does say, however, that he "does not begin to imagine that [his] is the only view," and one of the most concise descriptions of his view seems to be this:

> [Robert Frost] might grant, after all, that people can translate poems (and did variously acknowledge that such activities took place), but that what you get won't be poetry, because though you have produced texts that resemble poems, the poetry of the original has been lost, and so, however useful, they do not rise to being what he meant by poetry. This would, presumably, depend not on the accuracy of the translation, but the compositional skills of the translator as a poet in his or her own right. [...] Yet just as this line of thought appears to offer a lifeline to translations aspiring to the condition of poetry, I sense it slipping through my fingers. The aspirant translation could be poetry, but it wouldn't be so in its character *as a translation*. Its poetic quality would be something created entirely in the terms of the translating poet's skills as a composer of verse in the receiver language. Though poetry has been achieved, as it were, the contribution of translation as an activity has dropped out of the equation.[73]

If my interpretation of Robinson's position is correct, this is where the "impossibility" that he claims is inherent in poetic translation lies; namely that if a poem is translated in such a way that it reads as poetry in the target language, then the act that has taken place is more akin to the imitation that John Dryden describes and implies that too much of the original poem has been changed in the process. Conversely, if a poem has been translated well, then the "poetry" that made the original worth reading has been lost. While Robinson's work is very thorough in approaching poetry translation in this way and through this paradigm, I think it is better for this project to focus on more practical applications of poetic translation before seeking to answer what is or is not a good poem, a good translation, or a good translated poem. Furthermore, this strikes me as a possible reinterpretation of the word-for-word vs. sense-for-sense dichotomy first introduced by St. Jerome; namely that a word-for-word translation of a poem may be a "good translation" in that the words of the original are now in a new language but due to the nature of this kind of translation the rhythms, rhymes, idioms etc. of the original no longer create the same

[73] Robinson, 25-26.

poetic effect that the original had, and that a sense-for-sense translation of a poem would involve such a drastic rewriting of the original that it is no longer really a translation, but an imitation.

On the more technical side of things, Burton Raffel's aforementioned *The Art of Translating Poetry* was written to "meet what seems to [him] an almost desperate need for some reasonably unified presentation of both the theoretical and linguistic and the practical aspects of translation."[74] Raffel then goes on to list in the preface three flowcharts describing various choices/processes involved in translating, just to give a sense of how technical he intends to be. The rest of the book is divided into two parts, "Theory and Linguistics" and "Practice." While it would be unwise to assume that this technical focus is an indicator of scientific objectivity, what is impressive about Raffel's work is the diversity of languages that he draws examples from; he makes a point of including "three non-Western tongues: Japanese, Chinese, and Indonesian."[75] Raffel lists some axioms that make one-hundred-percent-perfect translation impossible, namely that no two languages share the same phonology, syntax, vocabulary, literary history, and prosody, as "The Unavoidable Linguistic Basis of Translation,"[76] and then using examples from well-known translators of other languages (most notably Donald Keene in many of the examples drawn from Japanese translation) explains how these could be accounted for.

Raffel does assert many times that poets should translate poets, a point that he has in common with John Dryden, Allen Tate, and Peter Robinson. While going through each and every other conclusion that Raffel draws about all of these aspects of poetry translation is too much analysis for this current chapter, attention should be drawn to how broad Raffel's scope really is. In addition to the theoretical linguistic aspects of translation, he also touches on the

[74] Raffel, ix.
[75] Ibid, 5.
[76] Ibid, 11-12.

practical side of translation and brings up the idea that different translation strategies are appropriate for different audiences. Although he admits that "it needs to be stated quite clearly that most translators, as well as most of those who write about translations or translation itself, are unlikely to approve of my classifications,"[77] it is still helpful to consider that translations have audiences, and these audiences may require different approaches to the translation of a particular text. He also touches on collaborative translation, the translation of oral poetry, and the requirement of translators to take into account contextual elements such as the aesthetic, time period, and culture of the original work, concluding in the end that "the translator's ultimate responsibility is to his author."[78]

The Japanese examples used in Raffel's book are all from poetic works that are, unfortunately, not free verse, but older forms of poetry, including a section detailing the translation of six sections of popular linked verse in alternating 5/7 syllable meter from Japan's medieval period, called *renga*. To illustrate how different the concerns of translating metered Japanese poetry like *renga* and *waka* really are from those relevant to free-verse Japanese poetry, H. Mack Horton's "Making it Old: Premodern Japanese Poetry in English Translation,"[79] describes in a systematic way with copious examples how translators have historically translated *waka*-specific poetic elements, like the 5-line structure of *waka*,[80] *kakekotoba* (掛詞, "pivot words"),[81] *kireji* (切れ字, "cutting words"),[82] the use of homophones in *haiku* (a popular 17 syllable poetic form in 5/7 meter known as *hokku* before the Meiji period [1868-1912]),[83] as well

[77] Raffel, 110-111.
[78] Ibid, 186.
[79] Horton, 110-204.
[80] Horton, 118.
[81] Ibid, 119.
[82] Ibid, 120.
[83] Ibid.

as the intertextuality that is required to understand how all of these elements reference older poems.[84] Of course, there are general mechanical concerns which are shared between translating modern and premodern Japanese poetry, like the difference in word order between Japanese and English, but due to the above concerns scholarship that focuses on premodern Japanese poetry genres like *waka*, *renga*, and *haiku* is not as applicable to free verse as free verse is a marked stylistic departure from the premodern genres.

The earliest work that I could find that directly discusses the translation of modern Japanese poetry into English is Leith Morton's "Translating Japanese Poetry: Reading as Practice."[85] This paper is split into two parts, "Theory" and "Practice," and begins with several notable quotes from such recognizable names in translation studies and philosophy as John Dryden, Walter Benjamin, and Jacques Derrida, among others. These initial quotes do not serve to outline Morton's own practice, but he states that:

> the quotations outline several directions, directions that prove useful not only in justifying a particular strategy employed to translate but also in understanding the original text. One important element which cannot be over-emphasized is the way several of the writers stress "inner" resources as well as outer. It is English, our language (and of course in my case the specifically Australian version), which is as much transformed or translated as the source, in my case, Japanese.[86]

Essentially, Morton is advocating for–and in the "Practice" section demonstrates the efficacy of–translation theory as a way of understanding the translation process in a holistic way.

The practice section then goes into the particularities of translating various pieces of modern Japanese free-verse poetry. The poems are from later in the twentieth century than *Roadside Flowers*, and scholars separate the Japanese poetry of the early twentieth century and

[84] Horton, 121.
[85] Leith Morton, "Translating Japanese Poetry: Reading as Practice," *The Journal of the Association of Teachers of Japanese*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (1992): 141-179.
[86] Ibid, 145.

later twentieth century into the genres of *kindaishi* (近代詩 "early modern poetry") and *gendaishi* (現代詩 "modern poetry") respectively,[87] but they build on the techniques that Ryūkō and others pioneered at the tail end of the Meiji period. Morton tackles very specific issues commonly found in Japanese free verse, like how to translate English words present in the original, the importance of sound in a particular poem, and how to deal with word play.[88] He also uses his analysis of the first stanza of a poem to prove his larger point, that reading a text in a foreign language is also an act of translation and we don't notice this process as it happens when reading in our native languages. According to Morton, each decision we make as to what something means while reading a poem is an act of translation.[89]

Indeed, Morton's scope with each individual translation in the article is extremely broad, touching briefly on issues of translating dialogue that's already partially in English,[90] the effect of war on poetry ("the unutterable") and its implications in translation,[91] translating the "untranslatable" as it relates to highly phonetic/conceptual poetry,[92] as well as word play when the entire poem is based on word play.[93] Morton also touches upon the "provisionality of the translator's task,"[94] in this case referring to the fact that the translations he has produced in this article are not rough drafts, but they're not fully finished either: "The work is never done. It is merely in a state of suspension, fluid, awaiting another shape into which I or someone else may

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[87] See Dolin, 7. While the terms *kindai* (近代) and *gendai* (現代) both translate into English as "modern" or "modern period," in Japanese historiography the terms are generally used to delineate the period from the start of the Meiji period (1868-1912) to the end of the second World War and the period after WWII respectively.
[88] Morton, 146.
[89] Ibid, 152.
[90] Ibid, 159-160.
[91] Ibid, 161.
[92] Ibid, 168-169.
[93] Morton, 171-172.
[94] Ibid, 145.

press it."[95] The relationship of time and the possibility of re-translation are aspects that are inherent to any discussion of translation especially of poetry. Morton ends with mentioning the "tyranny of practice."[96] Taken together with everything else in the article, he advocates for more theory in translation as a guideline for and justification of specific translation choices one can make, and how these choices transform a poetic text.

James O'Brien[97] introduces an element that Morton only mentions briefly, the translation of the interplay between *kanji* (漢字, logographic Chinese characters used as part of the Japanese writing system) and *kana* (仮名, characters from either of Japanese's two syllabaries, hiragana and katakana, used in conjunction with *kanji*) when intentionally manipulated in a poetic fashion.[98] O'Brien examines a poem by Hagiwara Sakutarō. What makes the poem in question unusual is that it is written entirely in *hiragana*, with only eight total *kanji* compared to about ninety *hiragana*, a marked ratio compared to other Japanese texts, including other modern Japanese poems. English does not contain this typographic intricacy, and, as O'Brien points out,

> Typographic changes, regardless of how distinct, cannot achieve the requisite effect. Neither bold-face type nor italics nor upper-case letters carry the sense of substantiality that I see in the ideographs as used by Hagiwara.[99]

O'Brien provides three different translations, each with differing strategies. The first one O'Brien describes as "a fairly literal one that adheres to grammatical and syntactical forms as much as possible,"[100] and of the other two he says:

[95] Morton, 145.
[96] Ibid, 173.
[97] James O'Brien, "From a Dual Writing System into English: Translating a Modern Japanese Poem," *Translation Review*, vol. 61, no. 1 (2001): 13-19.
[98] Ibid, 14.
[99] Ibid, 15.
[100] Ibid, 14.

> Neither version comes close to adequately conveying the distinctions sketched above; indeed, the aspect of purely visual contrast observed in the Japanese text is better served even by those typographic methods that I have just dismissed.[101]

Going over each of the choices he makes with each successive translation would be tedious, but the core of O'Brien's argument is that in this situation this is an important element of translating modern Japanese poetry that must be considered "even when the text lies within the normal ratio of kanji to kana."[102] Essentially, the selective use of kanji is another dimension that a poet can use for a specific poetic effect in Japanese, along with more familiar parameters like syntax, diction, phonetics, and line breaks. It is also important to note that O'Brien uses the terms *ideograph* and *idiographic* throughout his article, when in reality kanji are better described as *logographic* because there is a phonetic element associated with each character in addition to the concept that it represents.[103]

The similarities between Morton and O'Brien's articles are interesting on a meta level for our discussion of translating modern Japanese poetry. The first is that both of them refer in one way or another to the temporariness of translation and the idea of future retranslation. Morton does this in his discussion of the "provisionality of the translator's task,"[104] and O'Brien does this by including multiple versions of the poem he translates and suggesting that "[p]erhaps a bolder approach than that attempted here would be in order," although he cautions that this "would distort the original poem almost inevitably."[105] The idea that translations are either never finished or constantly being done, or both, is interesting because of the implications it has during the translation process. If something is difficult to translate, should we be comforted that in the

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[101] O'Brien, 15.
[102] Ibid, 17.
[103] For a more in-depth discussion of this difference see John DeFrancis, "The Ideographic Myth," in *Difficult Characters: Interdisciplinary Studies of Chinese and Japanese Writing*, ed. Mary S. Erbaugh (Columbus: National East Asian Language Resource Center, Ohio State University, 2002).
[104] Morton, 145.
[105] O'Brien, 17.

future someone else will come along and do the original "justice" by translating it better than we could? Or should we give in to the futility of the process and not translate the text at all, leaving it to someone else, at some other time? I don't have answers to these questions, but the fact that both texts mention this aspect of translation is still interesting to consider.

The second similarity between the two articles is that they both end with a kind of non-conclusion, pointing out that the issues they raise in their respective articles are things to be considered without offering a solution that they claim to be optimal in all situations, which is a decidedly nuanced approach. As opposed to the previously mentioned writings on translation like Dryden, Tate, and Raffel, which offer very strong opinions on certain aspects of translation, Morton and O'Brien seek to draw attention to aspects of the translation process that haven't been well examined, in a genre of poetry that hasn't been thoroughly studied in English. The reason for this may precisely be because there is little research on translating modern Japanese poetry into English, and so "best practices" in this area haven't been established (if such a thing can even exist in translation studies). I think this approach, which draws attention to the various aspects of translating a text and accounts for the devices and techniques used in the original without coming to any hard conclusions or strict rules best suits the nature of translating poetry in that there is always something lost in translation, to a degree that it might appear to be a futile endeavour. If there is always something lost or changed in the process, then at least coming to a theoretical understanding of and justification for the choices that result in these losses and changes (transformations) is the best goal we can aspire to.

The most recent work that I was able to find in English that focused exclusively on the translation of modern Japanese free verse is William Fryer's 2009 Ph.D. dissertation, *Interpretive and Source-Oriented Approaches: Modern Japanese Free Verse Poetry in English*

Translation.[106] As stated in the title, Fryer's dissertation "focuses on two translation approaches, specifically 'interpretive' and 'source-oriented' translation, which have tended to be loosely associated with the vague notions of 'free' translation and 'literal' translation respectively."[107] "Free" and "literal" in this context can also be related to the previously mentioned "sense-for-sense" and "word-for-word" dichotomy introduced by St. Jerome in 395 C.E. and, as Fryer points out, a large portion of the history of translation has been characterized by this dichotomy.[108] Unlike Morton and O'Brien's articles, however, Fryer does not examine his own translations, but rather compares various translations of modern Japanese poetry which he divides into both "interpretive" and "source-oriented."

Fryer discusses many translations, but devotes individual chapters to "Gary Snyder's translations of Miyazawa Kenji in *The Back Country* (1968); Cid Corman and Kamaike Susumu's *frogs &. others: poems by Kusano Shimpei* (1969); and Hiroaki Sato's *Howling at the Moon: Poems of Hagiwara Sakutarō* (1978)."[109] Hagiwara Sakutarō and Miyazawa Kenji are especially relevant selections for the present study, because they were publishing poetry of a similar style to Kawaji Ryūkō and at the same time. Fryer begins his discussion with a brief introduction to some aspects of translation studies that is centered around the four-step model put forth by George Steiner in *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation* (trust, extraction, incorporation, and compensation[110]). Fryer's model is based on two of these steps:

> Describing translations as involving the two major processes of extraction and compensation—compensation as a strongly visible element of the incorporation process

[106] William Fryer, "Interpretive and Source-Oriented Approaches: Modern Japanese Free Verse Poetry in English Translation," PhD diss., (The University of Queensland, 2009).
[107] Ibid, 5.
[108] Ibid, 12.
[109] Ibid, 9.
[110] George Steiner, *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation (3rd ed.)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), in Fryer, 14.

> but that is also linked to Steiner's idea of restitution—allows one to account for a large number of operations that occur in literary translation activities.[111]

Essentially, Fryer's model focuses on extraction: "Whatever essence the translator saw as worthy of translation is interpreted, appropriated,";[112] and compensation: "the translator's attempt to compensate for the aggressive act of extraction and the dangerous act of incorporation[.]"[113] Fryer then goes on to explain that the inherent vagueness of the compensation step is what allows for different translation strategies, the two broad categories being source-oriented and target-oriented.[114]

Fryer then goes into a history of key translators of Japanese poetry like Arthur Waley, Donald Keene, and Edward Seidensticker (among others) while discussing how these famous translators' ideas and attitudes regarding translation line up with well-known scholars of translation studies and their theories. He stresses the influence of Arthur Waley on the history of Japanese-to-English translation with particular attention paid to the question of translations "improving" a source text. While Waley did not directly set out to improve Japanese source texts in his translations, it has been suggested by other scholars that some of his translations did just that, particularly his famous translation of Murasaki Shikibu's *The Tale of Genji* (源氏物語, early eleventh century),[115] Similarly, it is said of Donald Keene by Fryer that "good translation—i.e., non-'non-translation'—[which means in this case, non-literal translation] could involve omissions or additions,"[116] the purpose of this being to maintain the text's relevance. Of course, this is subjective and up to the translator.

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[111] Fryer, 16.
[112] Ibid, 14.
[113] Ibid, 15.
[114] Ibid, 17.
[115] Ibid, 33.
[116] Ibid, 34.

This is all to point out the tendency towards what Fryer notices as the trend in postwar Japanese translation being dominated by more target-oriented strategies, started by Waley and continued by Donald Keene and others, with an emphasis on creating "fluent, naturalised and familiarised translation" among other strategies. Fryer notes that there were dissidents who favoured a more literal approach, like Joyce Ackroyd and Roy Andrew Miller, the latter of whom noted:

> The principal translators from Japanese over the past four decades have displayed a startling lack of lexical and linguistic courage. They are unwilling, if not downright ashamed, ever to have any text, or anyone in any text, say anything that might not have been said or written by a modern American university professor of modest literacy, and concomitantly modest literary gifts.[117]

This is a bold accusation, but highlights the trend in Japanese translation studies which Fryer describes as being more target-oriented in various ways, while acknowledging a shifting of attitudes away from this and "towards literal accuracy."[118]

Fryer also gives an interesting account of the history of the translation of modern Japanese free verse, pointing out that "One notable trend among the central group of scholar-translators in the postwar decades was a relative disregard for modern Japanese free verse poetry."[119] He details how scholars like Donald Keene at first were "rather disparaging" in opinions of the genre, with writings mentioning that the genre is somehow lacking in an intellectual sense.[120] He discusses some of the early anthologies that included modern Japanese free verse, of including many of the ones mentioned previously, and points out that while their translation styles vary widely, there is no hard philosophical stance taken on translation methodologies in anthologies from before 1968. Fryer mentions that this is in contrast to book-

[117] Roy Andrew Miller, *Nihongo: in Defence of Japanese*, (London: Athlone Press, 1986), quoted in Fryer, 43.
[118] Fryer, 43.
[119] Ibid, 44.
[120] Ibid, 44-45.

length translations of work by individual poets in the late 1960s, some of whom take significant liberties, and he focuses on one of these in the following chapters.[121]

In those chapters, Fryer fleshes out the definitions of "interpretive" and "source-oriented" translations. Interpretive translations "fill in the gaps" between the source and target language, like the omission of the grammatical subject, which is permissible in Japanese but not in English, and cases where the original poem may be ambiguous.[122] In looking at Gary Snyder's translations of Miyazawa Kenji's *Haru to shura* (春と修羅, *Spring and Asura*, 1924), Fryer shows how the changes in interpretive translations can at least be rationalized when viewed through the lens of the poet-translator's other works, creating a high-visibility translator.[123] The most interesting parts of this research are the implications it has for viewing the translating of poets by poets that go "beyond questions of accuracy and fidelity,"[124] and taking a view of poetic translation that at minimum acknowledges a potential creativity in the transformative aspects of translating in this way.

Fryer divides his discussion of source-based translations into two sections. The first one introduces the concept of foreignization as described by Lawrence Venuti in *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation*.[125] Fryer begins this discussion by reminding us that the trend in postwar Japanese poetry translation included a "disdain for translation approaches that display the difference of the source text language."[126] Venuti's foreignization similarly "documents the historical emergence and dominance of a fluent, domesticating trend in Anglo-

[121] Fryer, 50-51.
[122] Ibid, 58-60.
[123] Ibid, 103-105.
[124] Ibid, 105.
[125] Lawrence Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility*, 3rd ed. (London: Routledge, 2018).
[126] Ibid, 110.

American translation, and advocates a foreignising, resistant strategy in opposition to it."[127] While Fryer does not rely on Venuti's theory as much as analysis, he does use it to introduce the concepts of fluency in translation: translations that give the impression that they "reflect[...] the foreign writer's personality or intention or the essential meaning of the foreign text – the appearance, in other words, that the translation is not in fact a translation, but the 'original.'"[128] This is done in many ways, through methods such as "adhering to current usage, maintaining continuous syntax, fixing a precise meaning,"[129], very similar to the gap-filling Fryer mentions in his definition of interpretive translations. For Venuti, fluent translations are typically domesticated translations.

Ultimately, Fryer gives us a set of criteria for identifying a foreignizing translation:

1. The translation exhibits unidiomatic expressions, unusual word choice, or impossible syntax.
2. These elements of strangeness in the target text can be traced back to the source text or source language.
3. The translation attempts to reproduce unusual, syntactically abusive, or distinctive features of the source text.
4. The translation avoids over-interpretation and explication at the expense of the foreignness of the source text, and seeks to retain the openness and ambiguity of the source text.[130]

The rest of Fryer's dissertation applies both this criterion and the previously discussed modified version of Steiner's four-step approach to look at specific translations. Ultimately, Fryer investigates many aspects of translating modern Japanese poetry, including the tendency of translators to be intolerant of translation methods they themselves do not employ,[131] the great diversity amongst approaches to translation of modern Japanese poetry and attitudes towards the

[127] Fryer, 107.
[128] Venuti, 1.
[129] Ibid.
[130] Fryer, 119.
[131] Ibid, 213.

genre,[132] the role of "the historical, biographical and literary contexts that relate the translator to the translated text," in analyzing translations,[133] and "distinguishing source-oriented translation from the vague and overused notion of 'literal' translation."[134] The scope and importance of Fryer's study cannot be understated.

In addition to occasionally referring to some of the above sources while analyzing the translation of *Roadside Flowers*, this study will draw on a few additional sources to create a solid framework to refer to in identifying the strategies involved in the translation and how they alter and interact with the original poems. The first of these is Antoine Berman's *Translation and the Trials of the Foreign*, which primarily concerns itself with the "analytic of translation," or "the system of textual deformation that operates in every translation."[135] Interestingly, Berman describes this analysis as "provisional,"[136] and although the version of Berman that I am working from is itself a translation, the temporariness that Berman describes is similar to the provisionality that Morton and O'Brien describe as well, and indeed one of the most important things about any translation strategy is its need to be flexible, especially when translating poetry.

Berman focuses on a "negative analytic," which relates to translations that seek to significantly alter their source material, because these translations have the most "deforming forces." Berman asserts that these forces are at play even when a translator may have other goals or be otherwise unaware of them.[137] These twelve tendencies are:

1 rationalization
2 clarification
3 expansion
4 ennoblement and popularization

[132] Fryer, 215.
[133] Ibid, 216.
[134] Ibid, 217.
[135] Antoine Berman, "Translation and the Trials of the Foreign," in *The Translation Studies Reader, 3rd ed*, ed. and trans. Lawrence Venuti (Routledge: 2012), 240-253.
[136] Ibid, 242.
[137] Ibid.

5 qualitative impoverishment
6 quantitative impoverishment
7 the destruction of rhythms
8 the destruction of underlying networks of signification
9 the destruction of linguistic patternings
10 the destruction of vernacular networks or their exoticization
11 the destruction of expressions and idioms
12 the effacement of the superimposition of languages[138]

These tendencies all bear on various aspects of a text, from syntax to phonetics to logical structuring. A huge caveat when using Berman is that these tendencies were primarily derived from analyzing prose translations. They are comprehensive in the way they can be applied to the analysis of changes in a text, but applying Berman specifically to poetry will require an awareness of the prose-centric nature of his arguments as well as additional sources for a more holistic analysis.

In the next source, Anthony Kwame Appiah's *Thick Translation*, Appiah invites us to consider that meaning, as it is described in the philosophy of language, is not an ideal focus when examining translations.[139] Before explaining what he believes the focus should be, Appiah focuses on the "Gricean mechanism," which he describes like this:

> Grice famously suggested that we could say what an (assertoric) utterance meant by identifying the (content of) the belief that it was conventionally intended to produce; and he identified, correctly in my view, the heart of the mechanism by which these beliefs are supposed to be produced. Roughly, he suggested that when a speaker communicates a belief by way of the utterance of a sentence, she does so by getting her hearers to recognize both that this is the belief she intends them to have and that she intends them to have that belief in part because they recognize that primary intention.[140]

Essentially, there is a recursive element in which I know that you know that you know that I know (etc.) that I intend to convey some information to you in the form of an utterance, and the

[138] Berman, 244.
[139] Anthony Kwame Appiah, "Thick Translation," *Callaloo* vol. 16, no. 4 (1993): 808-809.
[140] Ibid, 809.

meaning of my utterance is in the belief that I intend to convey within the conventions of the language that we are both speaking.

Appiah bookends his arguments with a discussion about proverbs in the Twi language, and thus throughout he mentions proverbs and metaphors as being conventional (belonging to a genre with a form, thus conventional). Proverbs and metaphors are affected by this Gricean mechanism in that the Gricean mechanism is how we can understand the literal intentions of the speaker even though metaphors and proverbs do not mean what they literally say.[141] Appiah then claims that this is the type of meaning that philosophers of language refer to when they refer to meaning, and in fact, translation "transcends what I am calling the Gricean aspects of meaning."[142] This is the core of Appiah's arguments about translation.

In a literary text, Appiah points out, it is not worthwhile to guess at the literal intentions of that text's author for many reasons, the main one being that our interests as translators have nothing to do with the intentions of the author. While Appiah admits that understanding literature does require an understanding of what the Gricean mechanism would have us take to be the meaning of the utterances and sentences in a literary text outside of said literary text, "fiction is to be offered with the literal intentions cancelled."[143] This is what makes fiction, fiction. Appiah also notes that in some literary texts, mainly poems, the Gricean mechanism doesn't even apply because there is no literal intention to be associated with the words as they exist in the poem.[144]

What makes Appiah's arguments so compelling for the translation of poetry is that literary conventions, as they exist separately from the Gricean mechanism and literal intentions, can draw reference to both meaning as well as formal elements such as rhythm, metre, and

[141] Appiah, 812-813.
[142] Ibid, 814.
[143] Ibid, 815.
[144] Ibid, 814.

rhyme. Instead of looking at the literal intentions of the author, Appiah says that the goal of literary translation is “to produce something that shares the central literary properties of the object-text; and as is obvious, these are very much under-determined by its literal meaning, even in the cases where it has one.”[145] In the case of poetry, Appiah is suggesting that this should be our focus. The issue then becomes that what makes a text literary, what the “literariness” of a text is, is not a fixed list of qualities that a translator can refer to, and if such a list were to be made it would most likely vary from one cultural/linguistic context to another.[146]

Appiah’s solution to this is to take John Guillory’s ideas about the connection between literature and academic pedagogy, that a literary text is a text that is taught in schools and these qualities of a text are intrinsically linked, and apply them to translation. If there is no list of what qualities make a text literary, then the features that we should focus on in translation are the ones that make a text worth teaching. This is what Appiah’s paper is titled for, *thick translation*: “a translation that aims to be of use in literary teaching; and here it seems to me that such ‘academic’ translation, translation that seeks with its annotations and its accompanying glosses to locate the text in a rich cultural and linguistic context, is eminently worth doing.”[147] Indeed, in relation to Ryūkō’s *Roadside Flowers*, I can only imagine that the primary audience of such a translation would be academics, and of all the qualities of *Roadside Flowers* that make it worth translating, its relevance to the history and canon of modern Japanese free-verse poetry is of primary importance.

[145] Appiah, 815.
[146] Ibid, 816.
[147] Ibid, 817.

The Role of the Poetic Line in Translating Modern Japanese Free-Verse Poetry

The poetry in *Roadside Flowers* is written in "free verse," which generally refers to poetry that "doesn't rely on either metre or a regular rhyme scheme to determine its form."[148] A short but famous example of English-language free verse from around the time Ryūkō was writing is William Carlos Williams' "The Red Wheelbarrow," originally printed in the hybrid work *Spring and All* in 1923:

> so much depends
> upon
>
> a red wheel
> barrow
>
> glazed with rain
> water
>
> beside the white
> chickens[149]

While this piece is extremely brief, it exemplifies the general qualities of free-verse poetry in the time that Ryūkō was writing, barring language-specific elements. In formal terms, we see that in William's poem there is no rhyme or meter, and the line is enjambed; it ends in the middle of compound words, clauses, and phrases before continuing on the line below. The majority of the interest, technique, and "poetry" in free verse comes from this lack of formal rhyme-scheme and set meter, and the poet's use of other rhythms and line breaks. The general focus on form is of the utmost importance to poetry, because of the way poetic form makes visible the formal

[148] Stephen Guppy, *Writing and Workshopping Poetry* (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2017), 22.
[149] William Carlos Williams, *Spring and All* (New York: New Directions Publishing Corporation, 2011), 74. Reprinted by permission of New Directions Publishing Corp. "The Red Wheelbarrow" by William Carlos Williams, from THE COLLECTED POEMS: Volume I, 1909-1939, copyright by New Directions Publishing Corp.

elements of language. "In foregrounding language's formal properties, poetry addresses itself primarily to semantic (rather than syntactic) areas; the work will make sense but it will also call to our attention the fact that not only the sense but the making of that sense are meaningful."[150] Ultimately, the line breaks in free-verse poetry like Williams' above are an inseparable part of the poem's meaning; the form and meaning cannot be removed from each other without altering semantic content of the poem in a significant way.

This definition of free verse as unrhymed, nonmetered poetry is a definition directly in relation to other forms of poetry, and in turn some definitions of poetry in general rely on their relationship to prose. American poet Stephen Dobyns notes that "the familiar distinction between poetry and prose is that prose has a justified right-hand margin and poetry has an uneven right margin. This is a distinction often caused by the frustration of not knowing how to hit upon anything better."[151] And it is true that defining poetry is itself a difficult task to complete with precision. Dobyns also points out that the differences between prose and verse that he discusses were originally attributable to poetic metre– once a line reaches the required number of syllables, then a new line begins. Once poets began to write nonmetered poetry, however, the uneven right-hand margin had to be attributed to other factors.[152] This factor is the line break. In Chris Beyers' *A History of Free Verse*, he places this idea in historical context:

> while defining free-verse practice was a persistent theoretical occupation of the twentieth century, free-verse practice remains poorly understood. [Beyers'] argument is that most have been so stimulated by free-verse theory (and the accompanying polemics) that they have underappreciated the essential fact that free verse is a *lineal* form—in fact, a group of differing lineal forms.[153]

[150] Lyn Hejinian, *The Language of Inquiry*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 297.
[151] Stephen Dobyns, *next word, better word: the craft of writing poetry* (New York: Palgrave Macmillian, 2011), 89.
[152] Ibid.
[153] Chris Beyers, *A History of Free Verse*. (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2011), 13.

The importance of the essentially lineal nature of free verse poetry cannot be overstated. For example, if we take the above Williams poem and re-write it as a simple prose sentence, "So much depends upon a red wheelbarrow glazed with rainwater beside the white chickens," all of the magic, art, and inherent *poetic-ness* is gone. In this form, any music that remains is simply a testament to Williams' skill as an author and our memories of the poem as it was originally written.

The way that the line interacts with meaning is important for reading and translating poetry, because for poets, "The line is one of the ways you teach readers to hear the poem exactly as you want them to hear it, which, of course, has as much to do with the line's (and the poem's) ulteriority as anything."[154] The line break is one of the most prominent ways in which a poet conveys meaning when writing free verse.

Before going further into the mechanical side of the poetic line and how it conveys artistic meaning, it is important to consider the elements of poetry that are much more difficult to analyze. People who read poetry outside of an academic context (and many who read it *within* such a context) do not necessarily read it because of the formal elements directly; rather, they read poems for the experience that the formal elements work to create in combination with one another. And, while poetry is currently undergoing a renaissance in the hands– and cellphones– of so called "instapoets" (poets who write short poems often accompanied by images and post them on Instagram and other similar social networking services), partially due to the explosive popularity of Canadian poet Rupi Kaur,[155] many people still profess to not understand poetry, especially older poetry. It goes without saying that there is a fair amount of elitism in the world

[154] Thomas Lux, "The Line," in *A Broken Thing: Poets on the Line*, ed. Emily Rosko and Anton Vander Zee (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2011), 155.
[155] Priya Khaira-Hanks, "Rupi Kaur: the inevitable backlash against Instagram's favourite poet," *Guardian* (London), Oct. 4 2017.

of poetry, and academic discussions of the complex elements of poetry do not always help to make poetry more accessible. The backlash against poets like Rupi Kaur, whose work "treads a fine line between accessibility and over-simplicity,"[156] is a testament to the institutional maintenance of this elitism.[157]

This all matters because poetry is, and always has been, about the specific experiences that happen between a reader and a poem in the moment that the poem is being read. Poet and translator Matthew Zapruder, in the introduction to his nonfiction collection *Why Poetry*, explains:

> To explore why we read poetry and what it does, it is necessary to talk about the experience of reading poetry. The problem is, that experience is an elusive one to try and capture in words. For one thing, it differs from person to person, though there are some commonalities about the genre of poetry, its function and effects, that we can discuss. More important, when a person truly falls in love with a poem, it is usually because it feels like a private experience. Moving through the poem, the reader feels a kind of understanding that is hard to paraphrase or resay. Therefore, the essential knowledge of a poem, what can make it feel so necessary, cannot ever fully be put into other words. The better the poem, the harder it is to talk about it.[158]

This is important to keep in mind because translation has at various times been described as taking a text and "putting it into other words," but more than that, we cannot lose sight of the reasons for which people read poetry. Hejinian echoes this, saying "It is not just a sentiment, idea, or piece of information that is to be conveyed; it is also the palpable experience, indeed, the *palpability* of experience: its realness and the reality of its being meaningful to us."[159] Furthermore, while Appiah advocates translating the elements that make a text "literary," in other words the elements of the text that are worth teaching, he also notes that "It is a feature,

[156] Khaira-Hanks.
[157] For an example of some of the criticisms of Rupi Kaur's poetry, see Chiara Giovanni, "The Problem With Rupi Kaur's Poetry," *Buzzfeed News* (New York, NY), August 4th, 2017, https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/chiaragiovanni/the-problem-with-rupi-kaurs-poetry.
[158] Matthew Zapruder, *Why Poetry* (New York: HarperCollins, 2017), xiv.
[159] Hejinian, 287-289.

simply put, of the written text that we do not have settled and definite ideas about what matters about it."[160] Appiah's article, then, is focused on "literariness" as "that which matters" about a written text, and therefore what matters for translation. In relation to poetry, this may seem at odds with what Zapruder and Heijinian say about the experience of reading poetry; that the experience of reading poetry is simultaneously what makes poetry so difficult to discuss but also so important. Yet, if we look at the formal elements that create both the experience of reading poetry *and* its literariness, then we can develop translation strategies that take all of these aspects into account.

The main motivation for looking at formal elements, particularly the line, is that so much of the essence of a poem is found in its form. As I showed earlier with the William Carlos Williams poem, altering its form significantly altered its poetic-ness. How then, does the importance of the line relate to the experience of a poem? This is primarily visible in the syntax of a poetic line, especially where a line is broken. Guppy notes that there are four general levels to line length: *sentence-generated* lines, *clause-generated* lines, *phrase-generated* lines, and *word-generated* lines. Additionally, they can include a mix of any of these elements, or break in the middle of them, becoming enjambed. Guppy mentions a "grammatical grid" against which the lines of a poem can be examined; the better a line fits within the constraints of syntax, or "aligns with the grammatical grid" the more harmonious it will tend to feel, and conversely, the more enjambment and odd line breaks, in a poem the more out of alignment with the grammatical grid and the more tension there will be.[161]

[160] Appiah, 816.
[161] Guppy, 149-154.

Dobyns goes further than this in saying that considering the end of a poetic line as an event can determine how we evaluate the line's effect. Lines that end on a syntactic unit or with punctuation create a barely noticeable pause that feels fairly natural, but

> if the line is broken where no punctuation or syntactic pause exists–if the line is enjambed–hen we have an artificial pause, a brief hiccup in the flow of the sentence. A poem exists on the page as text and in the air as sound, and if we are not mentally evoking that noise, it can hardly be said that we are reading the poem at all. Once we accept the presence of enjambment, we can imagine different degrees of it from a line being lightly enjambed to radically enjambed. So a light enjambment might be between an adjective and a noun, or an adverb and a verb; a slightly stronger enjambment might be after a conjunction or pronoun; the most radical enjambment is after an article.[162]

Both Guppy and Dobyns agree that the relationship between natural segments of language and the line create a relevant effect; where Dobyns is referring to the creation of pauses, these pauses are what creates the tension that Guppy describes. Zapruder also notes these pauses when describing Williams' *Red Wheelbarrow* poem, cited earlier: "The line breaks and the filmic way this ordinary scene is parceled out to our consciousness by the mechanism of the poem slow us down long enough for us to see once again what has become too familiar. That is the 'message' of the poem."[163] While Zapruder is describing a specific poem, I believe that this applies to most free-verse poetry. The line gives us perspective on a specific subject, and in turn our real-world perception of that subject.

This applies to Japanese free verse in a similar way that it does to English verse, especially for modern-day readers. Examining one of Ryūkō's poems from *Roadside Flowers*:

[162] Dobyns, 90.
[163] Zapruder, 61.

寂定

死——
雲——
大きな暗い海に
しづかな波の色、
白い岸の砂、
その外に
暗い空の光り——
雲——
死——

一九◯八、七月

jakujō

shi—
kumo—
ookina kurai umi ni
shizukana nami no iro,
shiroi kishi no suna,
sono hoka ni
kurai sora no hikari—
kumo—
shi—

ichi kyū aru hachi, shichigatsu

jakujō

death—
clouds—
in the large dark ocean
the colour of the quiet waves,
the sand of the white coast,
apart from that
the light of the dark sky—
clouds—
death—

July 1908[164]

It is clear that this poem is slightly more impressionistic than Williams' *Wheelbarrow* poem, but there are still clear efforts to alter the effect created by the end of each line, and this includes the copious punctuation characteristic of Ryūkō's poetry of this period. The punctuation on the

[164] Kawaji, *Roadside Flowers*, 118-119.

single words 死 (*shi*, “death”) and 曇 (*kumo*, “cloud/clouds”) creates a slow start and end to the poem that in contrast with the longer lines in the middle creates a swelling, tidal effect which is reminiscent of the ocean scene described within. The scene itself is sandwiched by two lines mentioning the environment being dark (暗い *kurai*), starting with the ocean and moving upwards towards the sky. This tidal, cyclical nature is reminiscent of the Buddhist cycle of death and reincarnation, an interpretation which is pre-empted by the Buddhist word used as the title.

This title, 寂定 *jakujō*, refers to the release from Earthly concerns, or the state of mind of being so removed. I do not feel that there is a succinct, one-word translation that conveys this in English so I decided to leave it untranslated, transliterating it instead and explaining the meaning with a footnote or endnote. The Buddhist overtones from the title colour the poem with a shade of religious ritualism and meditativeness that, in concert with the cyclical aspects mentioned previously make the poem read like a prayer or hymn.

Examining the lines more closely, we can see that in contrast to the Williams poem, the lines are still fragmented when viewed in one line; there isn’t a verb in the entire poem, although there might be an implied verb. This lack of a verb makes the actual images of the poem very static, and therefore the only movement is in our focus from one section of this scene to another, as if the reader is standing on a desolate beach and examining a coming storm. The pace of this movement is regulated by the length of each line being one complete phrase: from top to bottom (or right to left in Japanese) there is a prepositional phrase, two noun phrases with parallel syntax, another shorter prepositional phrase, and finally another noun phrase with the whole poem bookended by the same two nouns discussed above. The climax of the poem is in the second prepositional phrase (the sixth line). Each line of the piece describes or names something

on its own except for this line; read alone it begs us to ask, “apart from what?” It is a clear break that urges us forward. In Japanese the particle に *ni*, and in English the preposition *to*, implores us to find out what happens next, and the lack of any punctuation at the end of this line further quickens the pace. When we are then met with a noun phrase that syntactically mirrors two lines that we’ve just read, our pace begins to slow back down and we’re reminded that we’re still on the beach, we have just looked up. This prepositional line, その外に (*sono hoka ni*, “apart from that”), separates our noun phrases visually on the page, but also reflects the physical separation described in the three lines that come before and their images of waves, sea, coast, and sand on our level, and the line after with its image of the sky above us.

All of this information is relevant for translation. It is essential that we find ways to preserve as many of these elements as possible in English. The first step is focusing on the line. If we establish the line as a unit of translation, we can compare versions in both languages and see how the line has changed. As mentioned earlier, Antoine Berman’s *analytic of translation* is well suited to this, despite not being originally designed for poetry. When Berman mentions that he will focus on the “deforming tendencies that intervene in the domain of literary prose,”[165] many of the aspects he ascribes to prose could apply to free-verse poetry. Berman explains that literary prose “mobilizes and activates the totality of ‘languages’ that coexist in any language,” and

> The lack of control derives from the enormous linguistic mass that the prose writer must squeeze into the work – at the risk of making it formally explode. The more totalizing the writer’s aim, the more obvious the loss of control, whether in the proliferation, the swelling of the text, or in works where the most scrupulous attention is paid to form, as in Joyce, Broch, or Proust.[166]

[165] Berman, 243.
[166] Ibid.

By “languages” within a language, Berman is referring to different language registers and dialects, but if poetry “foregrounds the formal properties of language,”[167] then these multiplicities (and many others) are also encompassed in poetry, where linguistic variation, register, or dialect is one of the elements a poet can manipulate for poetic effect. Berman also draws attention to form itself, which is really the realm of poetry. While Berman’s analytic of translation might not work for all poetic translation, I believe that it can be useful in translating free verse.

Returning to Ryūkō’s poem *jakujō*, we can examine the translation using Berman’s analytic.

line	***jakujō***	**寂定**	***jakujō***
1	death—	死——	*shi*—
2	clouds—	雲——	*kumo*—
3	in the large dark ocean	大きな暗い海に	*ookina kurai umi ni*
4	the colour of the quiet waves,	しづかな波の色、	*shizukana nami no iro,*
5	the sand of the white coast,	白い岸の砂、	*shiroi kishi no suna,*
6	apart from that	その外に	*sono hoka ni*
7	the light of the dark sky—	暗い空の光り——	*kurai sora no hikari*—
8	clouds—	雲——	*kumo*—
9	death—	死——	*shi*—

Translating the first two lines, the singular nouns might seem straightforward to translate, however due to Japanese not marking plurals directly, 雲 (*kumo*) can be translated as cloud or clouds. I believe it’s clear from context that it is a cloudy sky, so translating it as “clouds” is

[167] Hejinian, 297.

appropriate here. In the next line, 大きな暗い海に (*ookina kurai umi ni*), a prepositional phrase, and while it might sound more like "English" to reverse the order of the fourth and third lines creating a subordinate clause ("the color of the quiet waves in the large dark ocean"), doing so would be what Berman calls *rationalization* or "*reversing* its basic tendency,"[168] and while many translators of Japanese free verse do re-arrange lines in this way, this deformation would change the essential experience as Ryūkō intended it. As Berman describes, rationalization "makes the original pass from concrete to abstract";[169] this poem's overall discursive essence is partially in the ordering of the lines, and this adds to its semantic concreteness. We are meant to look at the scene that Ryūkō describes in a specific way, and to rationalize this by altering the order of these two lines in translation would make the poem more abstract by removing part of its discursive construction.

The three lines with parallel syntax, 4, 5, and 7, all contain in Japanese an adjective, followed by a noun, then the possessive particle *no* (の "of"), and finally a second noun being grammatically possessed by the first. I made sure to reflect this in the English. I did have to alter the constituent parts in their English order, however, simply due to the linguistic differences between Japanese and English. I could have translated it in a way that keeps the word order, but it would be difficult to do so without avoiding adding more punctuation for clarity, for example line 4 could be rendered as "quiet, the color of the waves," or "quiet, the wave's color," but these actually create more deformations as described by Berman than my translation of "the color of the quiet waves." First, my translation avoids "the destruction of linguistic patternings,"[170] as it

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[168] Berman, 245.
[169] Ibid.
[170] Ibid, 249.

makes the syntactic relationships between the elements of these clauses clear. It also avoids "the destruction of rhythms,"[171] due to the way that the phrases read in both languages. Altering the word order of the English to more closely match the Japanese actually makes them read more slowly, thus altering the rhythm of the poem and consequently the poem's overall experience. Finally, my translation avoids what Berman describes as "ennoblement," or "producing 'elegant' sentences, while utilizing the source text, so to speak, as *raw material*."[172] Berman even refers to this in poetry as "poetization,"[173] It is essentially the altering of a text to produce a translation that sounds fancier in translation than in the original. The pause in "quiet, the color of the waves" gives these phrases a false sense of nobility due to the expectation that something will come next, because this pause doesn't exist in the Japanese. Translating it in a way that allows the line to be read in a straightforward way with the pace dictated by Ryūkō's copious punctuation and deliberate line length is truer to the experience of reading the poem in the original than some alteration that aims to mimic the word order of Japanese. This isn't to say that there aren't instances in which it would be correct to reproduce the Japanese word order in English, but if we use the effect of the poem as created by the relationship of each line to the ones surrounding it as our benchmark, then we can better justify our translations and the way that our translation choices affect the lines which create the effects we are interested in conveying. The essential framework for translating free-verse poetry that I am advocating for here, then, is one in which the translator is cognizant of the role that each line plays in the reading experience and the way that this role could be altered or changed in the process of translation.

[171] Ibid, 248,
[172] Berman, 246.
[173] Ibid.

Translation of the Line in Three Versions of the Poetry of Takamura Kōtarō

Takamura Kōtarō (高村光太郎, 1883-1956) is widely praised as an author of modern Japanese free verse poetry,[174] and was writing during the same period as Ryūkō. His work has been translated into English multiple times, and he is well known both in Japan and to English speakers with an interest in Japanese poetry. This chapter examines three different English translations of select poems from his 1941 work *Chieko shō* (智恵子抄 lit. "Chieko Selection").[175]

Takamura Kōtarō was born to sculptor Takamura Kōun in 1883. Trained as a sculptor himself, Kōtarō reportedly considered himself a sculptor first, and then a poet.[176] He began publishing poetry in traditional styles (*tanka* and *haiku*) in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, and published his first modern poem in 1906 while studying art in New York.[177] His career as a writer is sometimes characterized by a nationalistic phase during World War II, and then a renouncement of those sentiments.[178] In addition to this, one of his more famous collections is his second book of poetry, a collection of poems about his wife Chieko. Titled *Chieko shō*, it chronicles almost their entire relationship, from when they met around 1911 and married in 1914 to Chieko's struggle with schizophrenia beginning around 1931 and her eventual death of tuberculosis in 1938.[179] The 1941 *Chieko shō* is a testament to their

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[174] Ueda, 232.

[175] For this section I referred to this printing: Takamura, Kōtarō 高村光太郎. *Shishu¯ hieko shō* 詩集智恵子抄. (Tōkyō: Nihon Tosho Sentā 日本図書センター), 1999.

[176] Ueda, 233.

[177] Donald Keene, *Dawn to the West* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 293.

[178] Hiroaki Sato, introduction to *A Brief History of Imbecility: Poetry and Prose of Takamura Kōtarō* (Honolulu, University of Hawai'i Press, 1992), xxx.

[179] Ibid, xxi-xxii; see also Keene, *Dawn to the West* 297.

relationship from Kōtarō's view and is reportedly one of the best-selling books of modern Japanese poetry.[180] The main impetus for choosing to examine this work is its popularity, which has resulted in multiple English translations. In comparing these differing versions and describing the effect the differences have in relation to the original, I hope to further demonstrate the efficacy of the framework developed in the previous chapter.

The three different English translations of poems from the *Chieko shō* are found in Soichi Furuta's *Chieko's Sky* (1978), Hiroaki Sato's *A Brief History of Imbecility: Poetry and Prose of Takamura Kōtarō* (1992), and John G. Peters *The Chieko Poems* (2007). These translations all have their own goals in mind, which we can glean from their various prefaces and introductions. Furuta's translation, beautifully bound and including illustrations and other artwork by Takamura Chieko herself, seems to take as its goal a presentation of Takamura Kōtarō's deep love for his wife. The introduction (in verse) is about how "Many love poems have been written, / but none like *Chieko's Sky*, / this forty-year chronicle / of one man's love affair with a singular woman."[181] This volume presents Kōtarō as a giant of the modern Japanese poetic canon (which he is), and as I will show later, takes a more interpretive (target-oriented) translation strategy which is designed to stand alone as a book of art and poetry in English.

Hiroaki Sato's translation, included with translations of many of Kōtarō's other prose and poetic works, seems to aspire to something more academic, and partially aims to represent Kōtarō as the complex person that he was (as opposed to just "the lover of Chieko" we see in Furuta's edition). Sato is careful to mention Kōtarō's nationalistic bent early in his career and subsequent renouncement of that nationalism after Japan's defeat in World War II. This is obviously because the book contains more than just selections from the *Chieko shō*, and samples

[180] Sato, xxiii.
[181] Soichi Furuta, introduction to Takamura Kōtarō, *Chieko's Sky* (Tokyo: Kodansha International Limited, 1978), x.

Kōtarō's work from many stages in his life. As a translator, Sato has been noted for producing foreignizing, "source-oriented" translations,[182] and so will make for an enlightening comparison with Soichi Furuta's version.

The final and most recent translation of the *Chieko shō*, by John G. Peters, includes poems that don't appear in either of the previous editions by choosing to translate all of the poems from a version of the *Chieko shō* that was edited in 1967. This edition of the *Chieko shō* was published many years after Kōtarō's death.[183] Peters is clear in his goal, stating in the book's front matter that "My goal in this translation has been that of probably any other translator: to produce good literature in a language other than the original and to represent as faithfully as possible the literature as it appeared in its original language."[184] Peters follows up this statement by mentioning how difficult to reconcile these two aims are, creating a perceived dichotomy that many people familiar with translation studies should instantly recognize. It should be noted that Peters' version is a bilingual one that contains a Japanese version of the original poems; however, they are presented in an edited form that uses modernized versions of some of the Chinese characters. This stylistic choice, while worthy of discussion, is beyond the scope of the present study.

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[182] Introduction to Fryer, vi.
[183] Peters, 18.
[184] Ibid, 20.

The first poem we'll look at is *adokenai hanashi* (あどけない話). Here is the original text, romanization, and three translations:

あどけない話

智恵子は東京に空が無いといふ、
ほんとの空が見たいといふ。
私は驚いて空を見る。
桜若葉の間に在るのは、
切つても切れない
むかしなじみのきれいな空だ。
どんよりけむる地平のぼかしは
うすもも色の朝のしめりだ。
智恵子は遠くを見ながら言ふ、
阿多多羅山(あたたらやま)の山の上に
毎日出てゐる青い空が
智恵子のほんとの空だといふ。
あどけない空の話である。

adokenai hanashi

Chieko wa tōkyō ni sora ga nai to iu,
honto no sora ga mitai to iu.
watashi wa odoroite sora wo miru.
sakura wakaba no aida ni aru no wa,
kitte mo kirenai
mukashinajimi no kirei na sora da.
donyori kemuru chihei no bokashi wa
usumomoiro no asa no shimeri da.
Chieko wa tōku wo minagara iu,
Atatarayama no yama no ue ni
mainichi deteiru aoi sora ga
Chieko no honto no sora da to iu.
adokenai sora no hanashi de aru.

Shōwa san'nen-gogatsu

Furuta's 1978 translation looks like this:

innocent tale

Chieko claims there is no sky over Tokyo
and says she longs to see a real sky.
in surprise I look up.
what I see between the young cherry leaves
is that clear sky
of never separable old acquaintance.
that dull musty scumble over the horizon
is the rosy morning moisture.
gazing far away Chieko says
the blue sky that appears each day
over the crest of Mt. Atatara
is Chieko's real sky.

this is an innocent tale of sky.

May, 1928[185]

Sato's 1992 translation reads:

Child's Talk

Chieko says Tokyo has no sky at all,
says she wants to see the real sky.
Surprised, I look at the sky:
there among the fresh cherry leaves
is a familiar, clear sky
that I can't separate from.
The dull, smoldering haze at the horizon
is the pink moist of the morning.
Looking far off Chieko says:
The blue sky that every day comes out
above mount Atatara is
the real sky I mean.
This is just child's talk of the sky.[186]

Finally, Peters' 2007 translation is:

Innocent Talk

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[185] Soichi Furuta trans., Takamura Kōtarō, *Chieko's Sky*, trans. Soichi Furuta (Tokyo: Kodansha International Limited, 1978), 27. For this section, after the first citation I will cite each translation as translator-fist, because of this section's focus on different translations and translators.
[186] Takamura Kōtarō, *A Brief History of Imbecility: Poetry and Prose of Takamura Kōtarō*, trans Hiroaki Sato (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1992), 113.

Chieko says that Tōkyō has no sky,
says she wants to see the real sky.
Surprised, I look
through the young cherry leaves
at the old familiar lucid sky.
Somehow the shades of the hazy horizon
are damp in the thin peach-colored morning.
While looking far off Chieko says
that the blue sky that appears every day
above Mt. Atatara
is her real sky.
This is innocent talk about the sky.

May, 1928[187]

This poem, which probably inspired the English title of Furuta's translation of the *Chieko shō*, 'Chieko's Sky,' is well known, and in a review of Sato's translation is even used to identify Chieko as "the Chieko of 'there-is-no-sky-in-Tokyo' fame."[188] In the Japanese title, *adokenai hanashi* (あどけない話), *adokenai* implies a child-like innocence but is more often translated simply as "innocent," without this extra context. Sato has foregrounded this in his translation, which might be an example of what Antoine Berman describes as clarification, or "the manifestation of something that is not apparent, but concealed or repressed, in the original."[189]

Turning now to the line, we see that in the original poem, all the lines are arranged one after the other; the poem is a singular stanza. This indicates that there are no large pauses. There are smaller pauses, however, as punctuation is used at the end of certain lines (the Japanese punctuation marks "。" and "、" are functionally equivalent to an English period and comma,

[187] Takamura Kōtarō, *The Chieko Poems*, trans. John G. Peters (København/Los Angeles: Green Integer Books, 2007), 135.
[188] William J. Tyler, Review of *A Brief History of Imbecility: Poetry and Prose of Takamura Kôtarô*, by Takamura Kōtarō, Hiroaki Sato trans, *The Journal of the Association of Teachers of Japanese*, vol. 28, no. 2 (1993), 270.
[189] Berman, 245.

respectively). Additionally, all the lines are either complete sentences, clauses, or phrases. There is no radical enjambment here that would create effects of unease or disjointedness; instead it aligns itself with the grammatical grid, implying a state of harmony,[190] or at least a state of non-disarray.

While each line is a well-defined grammatical unit in Japanese, that doesn't mean it is simple to translate. As we can see, the first two lines in the original form a long sentence, split into two independent clauses: *Chieko wa tōkyō ni sora ga nai to iu,* / *honto no sora ga mitai to iu*. (智恵子は東京に空が無いといふ、/ ほんとの空が見たいといふ。). The three ways this is translated are:

> Chieko claims there is no sky over Tokyo
> and says she longs to see a real sky.[191]
>
> Chieko says Tokyo has no sky at all,
> says she wants to see the real sky.[192]
>
> Chieko says that Tōkyō has no sky,
> says she wants to see the real sky.[193]

The first difference is the way that the main verb of each clause, *iu* (いふ, "to say"), is translated. In the original, as well as the Sato and Peters translations, the word itself is the same, but the Furuta translation changes the first one to "claims." This makes sense in the context of Furuta's book as a whole, for as previously mentioned, it was probably published to be read as poetry on its own, by people who aren't familiar with the original Japanese. Furuta, a poet himself, might have unintentionally "ennobled" the text, another of Berman's deforming tendencies: "a

[190] Guppy, 152.
[191] Furuta trans., Takamura Kōtarō, 27.
[192] Sato trans., Takamura Kōtarō, 113.
[193] Peters trans., Takamura Kōtarō, 135.

rewriting, a 'stylistic exercise' based on – and at the expense of – the original."[194] The repetition of the word *iu* at the end of each of the first lines creates a poetic effect, which we don't get in this translation.

The only translation which preserves this aspect is Peters' version. Peters' and Sato's second lines are identical and closer to the original than Furuta's, but Sato adds "at all," which makes the line longer and changes its rhythm in English. Finding a way to represent this repetition in English partially avoids "the destruction of rhythms" pointed out by Berman.[195]

Instead of a line-by-line critique of where things were added or removed, or a record of who did this particular line "better" (if such a thing can be discussed), let's return to the overall structure of the poem in relation to the poetic line. The main change in Furuta's text is that the last line is separated from the rest of the poem. This change adds a lot of poetic weight to the last line, which while emphasized in the original by being one unbroken sentence, isn't as emphasized as it has become in Furuta's version. Small changes like this are to be expected in this version, because as we noted earlier, Furuta's translation is likely designed to be read as poetry on its own with the goal of emphasizing the poem's emotional impact as it pertains to the relationship between Chieko and Takamura.

Peters' translation stands out in terms of lines because there is one fewer line than in the original. Peters' twelve-line version seems to altogether remove one of the lines from the original, *kitte mo kirenai* (切つても切れない "inseperable"), which in addition to altering the flow of the poem also changes the meaning.

[194] Berman, 246.
[195] Berman, 248.

What are we to make of these three substantially different translations? We have Furuta's translation which smooths things over and makes them sound more like English poetry. This ennoblement, while not extreme creates a translation that is "'readable,' 'brilliant,' rid of [its] original clumsiness and complexity so as to enhance the 'meaning.'"[196] While Berman was mainly discussing literary translation of prose when describing this process, it's clear to see in Furuta's verse translation, which removes things like repetition and uses such embellished diction as to make lines which Sato translates as "there among fresh cherry leaves / is a familiar clear sky / that I cannot separate from."[197] into "what I see between the young cherry leaves / is that clear sky / of never separable old acquaintance."[198]

Sato's translation, while still adding small emphatic appendages (such as the "at all" previously discussed), is much less transformative. It uses a plain language similar to that used in the original Japanese, but the translation of the word *adokenai* (あどけない), for which the other translators use "innocent," as "childish" seems to present a specific image of Chieko which could be construed as demeaning in light of her established identity as a "member of [...] a group for women's liberation."[199] Peters' translation appears at first glance, like Sato's, to take into account things like the repetition of certain words without adding even small embellishments but then leaves out a line, thus compromising the structural integrity of the poem.

The next poem, also famous[200] is *remon aika* (レモン哀歌), translated as *Lemon Elegy* by Furuta and Sato, and *Lemon Dirge* by Peters:

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[196] Berman, 246.
[197] Sato trans., Takamura Kōtarō, 113.
[198] Furuta trans., Takamura Kōtarō, 27.
[199] Sato, introduction to Takamura Kōtarō, xxi.
[200] *Kindaishi Gendaishi Hikkei* 近代詩現代詩必携 (Handbook of Modern and Contemporary Poetry) ed. Hara Shiro 原子朗, (Tōkyō: Gakutōsha 學燈社, 1989), 46.

レモン哀歌

そんなにもあなたはレモンを待つてゐた
かなしく白くあかるい死の床で
わたしの手からとつたひとつのレモンを
あなたのきれいな歯ががりりと噛んだ
トパアズいろの香気が立つ
その数滴の天のものなるレモンの汁は
ぱつとあなたの意識を正常にした
あなたの青く澄んだ眼がかすかに笑ふ
わたしの手を握るあなたの力の健康さよ
あなたの咽喉に嵐はあるが
かういふ命の瀬戸ぎはに
智恵子はもとの智恵子となり
生涯の愛を一瞬にかたむけた
それからひと時
昔山巓でしたやうな深呼吸を一つして
あなたの機関はそれなりとまつた
写真の前に挿した桜の花かげに
すずしく光るレモンを今日も置かう

remon aika

sonna ni mo anata wa remon wo matte ita
kanashiku shiroku akarui shi no toko de
watashi no te kara totta hitotsu no remon wo
anata no kirei na ha ga gariri to kanda
topaazu iro no kōki ga tatsu
sono sūeki no ten no mono naru remon no shiru wa
patto anata no ishiki wo seijō ni shita
anata no aoku sunda me ga kasuka ni warau
watashi no te wo nigiru anata no chikara no kenkōsa yo
anata no nodo ni arashi wa aru ga
kō iu inochi no seto giwa ni
Chieko wa moto no Chieko to nari
shōgai no ai wo isshun ni katamuketa
sorekara hito toki
mukashi santen deshita yō na shinkokyū wo itotsu shite
anata no kikan wa sore nari tomatta
shashin no mae ni sashita sakura no hana kage ni
suzushiku hikaru remon wo kyō mo okō

Furuta's translation:

lemon elegy

you had yearned for a lemon so long

your clean teeth bit fresh
into the lemon taken from my hands
on a sad white light bed of death
a topaz-colored scent arose
a few drops of heavenly lemon juice
suddenly restored lucidity
your blue limpid eyes smiled a little
how healthy your strength was gripping my hands
though there was a storm in your throat
on such a brink of life as this
Chieko became the Chieko of long before
and drained a lifelong love in one moment
then for an instant
drawing a deep breath as once you did
                                        on a mountaintop long ago
your organ stopped
behind a vase of cherry blossoms in front of your picture
today I shall place a cool shining lemon again[201]

Sato's translation:

<u>Lemon Elegy</u>

So intensely you had been waiting for a lemon.
In the sad, white, light deathbed
you took that one lemon from my hand
and bit it sharply with your teeth.
A fragrance rose the color of topaz.
Those heavenly drops of juice
flashed you back to sanity.
Your eyes, blue and transparent, slightly smiled.
You grasped my hand, how vigorous you were.
There was a storm in your throat
but just at the end
Chieko found Chieko again,
all life's love into one moment fallen.
and then once
as once you did on a mountain top you let out a great sigh
and with it your engine stopped.
By the cherry blossoms in front of your photograph
today, too, I will put out a cool fresh lemon.[202]

Finally, Peters' translation:

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[201] Furuta trans., Takamura Kōtarō, 35.
[202] Sato trans., Takamura Kōtarō, 119.

Lemon Dirge

You longed so for a lemon
on your sad, white, bright deathbed.
Your pretty teeth crunched
the lemon you took from my hands.
An aroma the color of topaz arose.
Those few dew drops from heaven
suddenly brought back your mind.
Your blue-bright eyes smiled dimly.
You squeezed my hand so tight.
In your throat a storm raged,
but at the brink of this life
you became the Chieko of old.
All of life's love
leaned into an instant,
and then once
as you did long ago on a mountaintop,
you drew a deep breath, and your engine stopped.
Today in the shadow of cherry blossoms
before your photograph
I place a cool, bright lemon.[203]

While I don't need to go tediously through each individual difference in each English version of the poem, the main aspect that differs between all three poems and the original can be explained by what Berman calls *rationalization*. According to Berman, "Rationalization recomposes sentences and the sequences of sentences, rearranging them according to a certain idea of discursive *order*. Wherever the sentence structure is relatively free (i.e., wherever it doesn't answer to a specific idea of order), it risks a rationalizing contraction."[204] While Berman originally applied this idea to prose writing, I think that it has specific import here. Poetry, especially the *remon aika*, while appearing abstract at times, is in reality quite concrete in what it is trying to say. It tells a story, written after the death of Chieko, about Chieko eating a lemon on her deathbed, and then Takamura's placing a lemon at her alter in memory of this event. While

[203] Peters trans., Takamura Kōtarō, 153.
[204] Berman, 244.

Sato maintains the same number of lines as the original, Furuta and Peters add lines. This not only changes the flow of the poem when read aloud, but it changes its discursive structure.

Furuta's extra line is easy to identify because it is set apart from the left side of the page. This creates a huge break when reading, and also creates an opportunity to misinterpret where and when Chieko was "drawing a deep breath,"[205] where in the original, as in Sato's translation, it's clearer that the mountaintop is part of a flashback. Additionally, having this as one of the longer lines can imitate taking a longer breath. Furuta and Peters' translations, by splitting this up, create a different flow which obfuscates this concrete narrative found in the original.

Rationalization is also about punctuation,[206] as punctuation indicates how a text is paced. Again, Berman was relating this to prose, but pacing is important to the rhythm of poetry. As opposed to the previously examined *adokenai hanashi*, *remon aika* has no punctuation in the original and instead relies solely on line length and breaks to control how it reads. So looking at the difference between "*sorekara hito toki / mukashi santen deshita yō na shinkokyū̄ wo itotsu shite*" (それからひと時 / 昔山巓でしたやうな深呼吸を一つして "and then once / you took one deep breath as you did on a mountain top long ago"), in which the shortest line of the poem contrasts with one of the longest, this effect is important to preserve, to give a real sense of a single instance that *sorekara hito toki* (それからひと時) "and then once" (Sato and Peters' versions both translate it this way) implies.

Another aspect of this poem that is important to discuss is the use of Chinese characters, or *kanji* (漢字). There are many words in the original poem that *could* be written in *kanji*, but

[205] Furuta trans., Takamura Kōtarō, 35.
[206] Berman, 244.

instead are written in *hiragana*, a phonetic script. The tension between kanji, which are logographic (each character has an associated meaning or meanings in addition to a pronunciation), and hiragana (which only represent syllables and don't have an associated meaning) is a poetic element which poets in Japanese can manipulate to emphasize certain things. Furthermore, some words can be written with multiple kanji, each with a slightly different connotation. James O'Brien points this out, saying that "While difficult to describe with precision, the difference in poetic impact between ideographic and phonetic styles of writing is observable."[207] O'Brien also notes that of the many differences between the two orthographic elements, one of the more subtle ones that is related to history is that of gender. Because hiragana was developed and initially primarily used by women in the Heian period (794-1185), it could potentially be used to introduce a sense traditionally associated with femininity, but this is highly speculative. What that sense is and the discussion about feminism and metaphors related to writing is a large and important topic, but it is beyond the scope of our discussion.

Returning to the original poem, we see many words which Takamura could have written in kanji but instead used hiragana for. Examples include *kanashiku* (かなしく "sadly"), *akarui* (あかるい "bright"), *watashi* (わたし "I") , *iro* (いろ "color"). In the first section of the poem, the words that Takamura does write in kanji, *matte ita* (待つてゐた "was waiting"), *shiroku* (白く "white"), *shi no toko* (死の床 "deathbed"), *te* (手 "hand"), *ha* (歯 "teeth"), *kanda* (噛んだ "bit"), *kōki* (香気 "aroma") and others, all relate to Chieko's experience. By using hiragana to write words that indicate Takamura's perspective and kanji to highlight Chieko's experience, we

[207] O'Brien, 13.

are shown in this poem an impressive duality. While translating something like this, which is based heavily on interpretation, O'Brien remarks that "even an experienced reader might fail to register any special effects [of select usage of kanji and hiragana]."[208]

All of this is to highlight some of the many intricacies of translating modern Japanese poetry, specifically as they relate to the poetic line and the flow of the poem. These three collections of translations, each a huge undertaking in its own right, can each be viewed as filling a different niche. Before I reiterate what these niches are, Appiah's *Thick Translation* is important to consider in this context.

As previously mentioned, thick translation is "a translation that aims to be of use in literary teaching; and here it seems to me that such 'academic' translation, translation that seeks with its annotations and its accompanying glosses to locate the text in a rich cultural and linguistic context, is eminently worth doing."[209] This is why translations like Sato's are important, especially in their referencing of Kōtarō's nationalistic phase. Sato's translation presents a more complete image of Kōtarō, as opposed to the singular view of "Takamura Kōtarō, lover of Chieko" that Furuta's translation presents. In this way, we are given an angle on Japan and Japanese literature before, during, and after World War II. Peters' translation also mentions this briefly, and while his goal with his version is more representative of the *Chieko shō* and the various editorial changes it underwent after Kōtarō's death, we do see substantial changes to the line structure of some of the poems which might make it a slightly more "target-oriented" or "interpretive" translation.

[208] O'Brien, 17.
[209] Appiah, 817.

Analysis of Poems from *Roadside Flowers*

As previously mentioned, there are only a few English translations of some of the poems from *Roadside Flowers*. First, I will examine these previous translations and compare them to my own in terms of how they interact with the original in terms of lineation and other formal elements, and then I will examine additional poems which have not yet been translated to my knowledge. The purpose of this section is to further develop the framework introduced in previous sections in relation to the broad styles and techniques used in the poetry of Ryūkō's *Roadside Flowers*.

For my English versions, I have made some choices in translating the poems which lean more towards being "source-oriented." The most important one is attempting to keep the lineation as close to the original as possible, as much as the differing word orders of Japanese and English will allow. This means that the elements (words, clauses, phrases, etc.) in each line will, to the extent that it is feasible, remain in that line. Additionally, no extra spaces will be inserted between lines. For many of these poems, the version in *Roadside Flowers* is the only printing available, so a choice has to be made when a poem crosses from one page to another as to whether to leave a space and create a new stanza or to leave the poem as one unbroken stanza. Most of this must be considered on a poem-by-poem basis, although I did consult a 1935 edition of the *Gendai shijin zenshu¯Kawa i Ryu¯ ō shū* (現代詩人全集　川路柳虹集)[210] for some of the poems. Additionally, as seen with the previous Ryūkō poem *jakujō* (寂定), some of the poems

[210] Ryūkō Kawaji 川路柳虹, *Gendai shijin zenshu¯Kawaji Ryu¯ ō shu¯ Shinchō bunko dai 149 hen)* 現代詩人全集　川路柳虹集（新潮文庫　第 149 編）(Complete Modern Poet Collection Kawaji Ryūkō Collection (Shinchō Paperback Volume 149)) (Tokyo: Shinchōsha 新潮社, 1935).

have punctuation which by today's standards would be considered excessive. I have opted to preserve this punctuation in my translations, as I believe that it does add to the experience of reading the poem, especially because of the way that punctuation mediates the reading of the line breaks.

In a similar vein, I have chosen not to capitalize any words except the first-person pronoun "I" and proper nouns in these translations. This is partially because capitalization doesn't exist in Japanese, and so choosing to not include it in the English translation is to remove an element that would seek to partially obscure the source text's unique features. A second reason for this is that current trends in free-verse poetry in English also include lots of poetry written entirely in lower-case. Therefore, choosing to forego most capitalization not only allows for a more distinct expression of the source text, but also allows these translations to be situated within the poetic trends of the present.

These choices, in addition to the foregrounding of the poetic line as an essential element of free verse translation, are all in service of creating a translation that, in concert with the source text, can be of use to both scholars of Japanese poetry as well as those who only have a casual interest. In the process, I hope to show the ways that translation can "transform one's own culture or culture itself."[211]

The very first poem in *Roadside Flowers*, "sigh," (*toiki* 吐息), reads as follows:

[211] Morton, 173.

吐息

沈黙の庭　秋の匂ひ…………

いつかしら夜が潜んでゐる、
いつかしら月がさしてゐる、

樹の間を溢れる光りも蒼ざめ、
痛ましい影は 叢 に慄へて、
指を組み結んだ 涙 と悔のおのゝき…………

池のおもてには憂愁が銀色に曇り、
繊細い白揚の金の落葉が飛び散つてゆく、
風…………

亂れる光りは樹の葉の暗みに、 落葉の上に、
またわが空ろな 腕 のうちに、
涙さめざめとした君の 面 を…………

いつかしら夜が嘆き、
いつかしら夜が蒼ざめてゐる

toiki

chinmoku no niwa   aki no nioi...........

itsukashira yoru ga hisondeiru,
itsukashira tsuki ga sashiteiru,

konoma o koboreru hikari mo aozame,
itamashii kage wa kusamura ni furuete,
yubi wo kumimusunda namida to kai no ononoki...........

ike no omote ni wa yu¯ hu¯ga g niro ni kumori,
kabosoi hakuyou no kin no ochiba ga tobichitteyuku,
kaze...........

midareru hikari wa ko no ha no kurami ni, ochiba no ue ni,
mata waga utsuro na kaina no uchi ni,
namida samezame toshita kimi no omote o...........

itsukashira yoru ga nakeki,
itsukashira yoru ga aozameteiru

sen kyūh aku jyu¯n n, hachigatsu[212]

[212] Kawaji, *Roadside Flowers*, 1.

The translation provided by Kōno and Fukuda in the introduction to their *Anthology of Modern Japanese Poetry* is:

A Sigh

A mute garden, the smell of autumn...
The night lurks unnoticed,
the moon is bright unnoticed.

Melancholy is blurred silvery on the surface of the pond,
And the golden fallen leaves of the slender poplar fly away;
The wind...

The scattered lights are in the darkness of leaves, on the fallen leaves,
On my empty arms,
And on your face watered with tears...

The night grieves unnoticed,
The night is pale unnoticed.[213]

My version of the poem is:

sigh

silent garden   autumn's smell............

unnoticed the night hides,
unnoticed the moon shines,

the light that spills through the trees also pales,
the tragic shadow trembles in the long grass,
the shiver of tears and regret that interlaced my fingers............

melancholy clouds the surface of the pond in silver,
the fallen gold leaves of the fragile poplar scatter away,
  wind............

the dappled light on the darkness of the foliage, above the fallen leaves,
again within my empty arms,
on your face with sorrowful tears............

unnoticed the night grieves,
unnoticed the night is becoming pale

August 1910

[213] Kōno and Fukuda, introduction to *An Anthology of Modern Japanese Poetry*, xxiv.

The Kōno and Fukuda version is an excerpt and it intentionally removes the third stanza (the fourth, fifth, and sixth lines). The reason that Kōno and Fukuda included the poem in the introduction rather than in the body of the anthology is because this translation is used to highlight the stylistic similarities between Kawaji's poem (and poems of the late Meiji period in general) to the poetry of French symbolists like Paul Verlaine. From their introduction:

> At any rate, when we discuss contemporary Japanese poetry we cannot overlook the pre-eminent influence of the French symbolists, especially, perhaps, Paul Fort and Paul Verlaine, together with that Belgian wizard, Emile Verhaeren. "Song of Rain" (Ame no uta) by Rofū Miki is little more than a transcription of Verlaine and "A Sigh" (Toiki) by Ryūkō Kawaji also reminds us of some of the symbolists.[214]

We also know that Kawaji was familiar with the Symbolists because there are small excerpts of Symbolist poetry, including those from Verlaine, throughout *Roadside Flowers*.[215]

The first difference that stands out to me between my translation and Kōno and Fukuda's is the punctuation. As previously mentioned, punctuation serves to mediate our pace of reading through a poem, and so changing punctuation can change our experience of a poem. In this case, however, I don't know how meaningful these changes are in comparison to the original. Take the first line as an example. In the original, it is "*chinmoku no niwa　aki no nioi...........*" (沈黙の庭　秋の匂ひ. . . . .). There is a space roughly the width of one kanji between the two phrases. Additionally, these are not complete sentences, simply noun phrases. The space invites us to pause in a way that sets the scene and tone of the rest of the poem. It is a stylized space separating two pieces of sensory information. For the purposes of Kōno and Fukuda, their translation, "A mute garden, the smell of autumn..." conveys this pause while simultaneously

[214] Kōno and Fukuda, introduction to *An Anthology of Modern Japanese Poetry*, xxiii.

[215] For an example see Kawaji Ryūkō, *Robō no Hana* 路傍の花 *(Roadside Flowers)*, 82.

appearing more like the Verlaine poems they reference. They also remove many of the periods that Ryūkō includes at the ends of his lines, which again seeks to make their translation fit better within the context of their introduction. While these periods do affect the end of the poetic line, again, I don't believe that removing them *drastically* alters the flow of the poem, only slightly, and these changes make sense in the context of Kōno and Fukuda's introduction.

One change that I do believe substantially influences the reading of the poem is the decision they made to remove the space between the first and second lines, creating a three-line stanza at the start of the poem. This grouping, even with the periods at the end of the first line, causes them to read as if somehow connected. In the original, the sensory information of the first line is meant to stand on its own and set the scene, and then the "action" of the poem starts. This is especially clear in light of the syntax of the rest of the poem, which contains much longer grammatical units as opposed to the noun phrases which begin the poem. There is so much mechanical contrast that the space represents. This being said, it makes sense in light of the context of Kōno and Fukuda's anthology; they are simply using a more target-oriented strategy in their translation.

The next Ryūkō poem which has been partially translated into English is the much-maligned "Rubbish Heap" poem, translated by Massimiliano Tomasi in his 2007 article about Shimamura's Hōgetsu's role in the development of modern Japanese poetry:

塵塚

隣の家の穀倉の裏手に
臭い塵溜が蒸されたにほひ、
塵塚のうちにはこもる
いろ〳〵の芥の臭み、
梅雨晴れの夕をながれ漂つて
空はかつかと爛れてる。

塵溜の中には動く稲の蟲、浮蛾の卵、
また土を食む蚯蚓らが頭を擡げ、
徳利壜の虧片や紙の切れはしが腐れ蒸されて
小さい蚊は喚きながらに飛んでゆく。

そこにも絶えぬ苦しみの世界があつて
呻くも死するもの、秒刻に
かぎりも知れぬ生命の苦悶を現し、
闘つてゆく悲哀がさもあるらしく、
をり〳〵は悪臭にまじる蟲螻が
種々のをたけび、泣聲もきかれる。

その泣聲はどこまでも強い力で
重い空氣を顫はして、また軈て、
暗くなる夕の底に消え沈む。
惨しい「運命」はたゞ悲しく
いく日いく夜もこゝにきて手辛く襲ふ。
塵溜の重い悲みを訴へて
蚊は群つてまた喚く。

一九〇七、八月

hakidame

tonari no ie no komegura no urate ni
kusai hakidame ga musareta nioi,
hakidame no uchi ni wa komoru
iroiro no gomoku no kusami,
tsuyubare no yub̄ o nagare tadayotte
sora wa kakka tadareteru.

hakidame no uchi ni wa ugoku ine no mushi, unka no tamago,
mata tsuchi wo hamu mimizura ga kashira o motage,
tokkuribin no kakera ya kami no kirehashi ga kusaremusarete
chisai ka wa wamekinagara ni tonde yuku.

soko ni mo taenu kurushimi no sekai ga atte
umekumono shisurumono, byōkoku ni
kagiri mo shirenu seimei no kumon o genshi,
oriori wa oshu¯n majiru mushikera ga
shu¯ū no otakebi, nakigoe mo kikareru.

sono nakigoe wa doko made mo tsuyoi chikara de
omoi ku¯ i o furuwashite, mata yagate,
kurakunaru yub̄ no soko ni kieshizumu.
itamashii unmei wa tada kanashiku
ikuhi ikuyo mo koko ni kite tegaraku osou.
hakidame no omoi kanashimi wo uttaete
ka wa muragatte mata umeku.

My translation of the poem reads:

garbage pile

behind the granary of the neighboring house,
the smell of a steaming rancid garbage pile,
heavy from within the garbage pile
the stench of random trash,
wafting and flowing on a clear evening in the rainy season
the sky festers *hotly*.

in the garbage pile moving rice bugs, leafhopper eggs,
and dirt-eating worms rear their heads,
shards of sake bottles and scraps of paper rotting and steaming,
small mosquitoes whine while flying away.

there too is a world of unending suffering
and that which moans and dies, in an instant
displaying the unknowable extent of the anguish of existence,
it really appears as though there is a combative sorrow,
from time to time the bugs mingled in the foul stench's
various roars and crying voices can be heard.

with a persistently strong force those crying voices
shake the dense air, and finally,
sink away into the depths of the darkening evening.
brutal *destiny* is simply sad

many days and many nights I've come here with bitter intent.
appealing to the heavy sadness of the garbage pile
the mosquitoes swarm and again scream.

1907, August

Tomasi's partial translation is as follows:

Rubbish Heap

Behind the neighbor's storehouse
The stench of the steaming dump,
Something quivers inside.
The smell of rubbish
Permeates an unusually clear evening during the rainy season
And floats as the sky burns and festers.

Inside the heap, midges and their eggs,
Soil-eating worms, all moving, raising their heads,
Fragments of a broken sake bottle,
Torn pieces of paper, decayed and fermented,
Tiny, buzzing mosquitoes flying away. . . .[216]

Tomasi's version at first glance is very interesting because the transcription of the poem that he based his translation on is slightly different from the version presented in *Roadside Flowers*. Tomasi notes that he worked from a version presented in another scholarly work, which in turn printed the version originally published in *Shijin* in 1907.[217] As I do not have access to either the 1907 edition of *Shijin* that the poem is originally published in or the scholarly source that Tomasi cites, I am unable to confirm that the version he used wasn't typeset differently in some way; however the transcription I have provided above is as the poem appears both in *Roadside Flowers* and the 1935 collection of Ryūkō's work in *Gendai shijin zenshū Kawa i Ryū ō shū*. The main differences are that in the version Tomasi cites, the third line is given as *hakidame no uchi no wana wana* (塵溜のうちのわなわな), while the versions I translated from

[216] Tomasi, 124.
[217] Ibid, 131.

give the line as *hakidame no uchi ni wa komoru* (塵溜のうちにはこもる). This results in two very different third lines in our respective translations, with Tomasi's being "Something quivers inside," and mine being "heavy from within the garbage pile." In Tomasi's translation, his version resonates well with the imagery of insects in the next stanza, whereas mine fits more thematically with the sensory information about oppressive stench and heat in the first stanza. There are also some elements of the version in Tomasi's article that appear on different lines than the versions I translated from, and therefore on a different line in Tomasi's translation, and that also has a great effect on the experience of reading the poem.

On a structural level, Tomasi does intentionally alter the punctuation and some of the word order. Tomasi divides the first stanza into two sentences, adding a period and removing a comma. This makes the poem very readable as an English poem. This is an example of rationalization, as per Berman, which, as previously mentioned, removes concreteness and the "polylogism of language."[218] Dividing the first stanza into two sentences weakens the overall effect of the first stanza, both in terms of the imagery and in the flow of reading. The imagery of this overwhelming heat causing this festering odour flows through the entire first stanza. Additionally, in the version I translated from, I interpret the verb *komoru* (こもる) to directly modify the next line, a noun-phrase *iroiro no gomoku no kusami* (いろいろの芥の臭み "the stench of random trash"). While the verb *komoru* doesn't appear in the version Tomasi translated from, it's clear to me that the first stanza is bound by this common thread. The stanza is concrete

[218] Berman, 244.

in its description of this scene and its sensory details, and severing the line with a period– a strong pause– makes this image more abstract than in the original.

Another difference in the translations, which stems from the difference in the source, is that in the second stanza there is an additional line created by breaking what is the ninth line of the version I translated from into two lines, and altering the placement of several other elements. Here are the two stanzas side-by-side for comparison, with lines colorized to help visualize the differences:

Tomasi (2007)	*Roadside Flowers* (1910)
塵溜の中には動く稲の虫、	塵溜の中には動く稲の蟲、浮蛾の卵、
浮蛾の卵、また土を食む蚯蚓らが	また土を食(は)む蚯蚓らが頭を擡げ、
頭を擡げ、徳利壜の虧片や	徳利壜の虧片や紙の切れはしが腐れ蒸されて
紙の切れはしが腐れ蒸されて、	小さい蚊は喚きながらに飛んでゆく。
小さい蚊は喚きながらに飛んでゆく。	

Of the section printed in Tomasi's article, it's very possible that this could have been changed for typesetting reasons, and it is reflected in his translation, so from the perspective of comparing Tomasi's translation to the version he translated from, the line order and constituents of each line are all represented mostly the same. What Tomasi does do that further rationalizes his translation is add commas in the middle of lines where they don't exist in the original, creating pauses. The first pause in the second stanza not represented in the original, in the line "soil-eating worms, *all moving,* raising their heads," (emphasis added), comes from changing the location of the verb

“moving,” (in both versions of the original this is the basic verb “*ugoku* 動く,” “to move”), from the first line to this second line. Not only does this have the effect of slowing the reader as they read this line, but it also makes it clear that of the three listed entities, in Tomasi’s translation midges, their eggs, and worms, are all moving when in the original the line could be parsed in different ways. Additionally, Tomasi’s translation of *ine no mushi* (稲の虫) and *unka no tamago* (浮蛾の卵) as “midges and their eggs” is an example of what Berman calls *qualitative impoverishment*, or “the replacement of terms, expressions and figures in the original with terms, expressions and figures that lack their sonorous richness, or, correspondingly, their signifying or ‘iconic’ richness.”[219] While the terms *ine no mushi* and *unka* both *can* refer to the same insect, the terms are distinct enough to warrant a reflection of this different in the translation, with *ine no mushi* being more general than *unka*. And, even if in a more specifically translated version the images are lost on an English reader, as Appiah advocates, a footnote or other explanatory tool can be utilized so that these images can be clearer and more educational for a reader who is unfamiliar with the context in which Ryūkō was writing.[220]

The next poem, translated by Scott Mehl in his 2013 Ph.D. dissertation, is one of the more experimental poems in *Roadside Flowers*:

[219] Berman, 247.
[220] Appiah, 817.

感覚の瞬時

…………
…………
キチ、キチ、キチ、キチ、キチ、
　キチリ、キチリ、
リ、リ、リリリ、リリリ、
　　リリリ、
　　　リ
　　リ、
　リリリ、
…………
…………
露が瓦に沁みる
星は涼しく笑つてた――
　風――
置時計の刻む音………
…………
…………
笛の音が細くながれる――甘い、悲しい
　青い色に顫へて消える………
――　――　――
洋燈(ランプ)が音をたてる………。
水のやうに静かだ………
しめやかな反響(こだま)………

また………
　リ、リ、　リリリ
　チヨキツ、チヨキツ、
リ、　リ、　リ、
　リリリリ、　リ、
しめやかな音………
リ、　リ、リ、リ、　リ………
心を歩いてるやうなものがある………
話し聲、
たしかに路で………
タ、　タ、　タ、
…………
耳はじ――と鳴る
…………
　カタ……タ………
下駄だ………
　心は氷りのやうに冷えかへつた。
　光つた………
女のくる足音。

　　一九〇八、九月x日　夜九時七分前

kankaku no shunji

…………………………
…………………………

kichi, kichi, kichi, kichi, kichi,
kichiri, kichiri
ri, ri, ririri, ririri,
ririri,
ri
ri,
ririri,

....
....

tsuyu ga kawara ni shimiru
hoshi wa suzushiku waratteta——
kaze——

okitdokei no kizamu oto.........

....
....

fue no ne ga hosoku nagareru——amai, kanashii
aoi iro ni furuete kieru.........
—— —— ——

ranpu ga oto o tateru.........。

mizu no yō ni shizukada.........
shimeyakana kodama.........

mata.........

ri, ri, ririri
chokitsu, chokitsu,
ri, ri, ri,
riririri, ri,
shimeyakana oto.........
ri, ri, ri, ri, ri.........

kokoro o aruite iru yō na mono ga aru.........
hanashigoe,
tashikani michi de.........

ta, ta, ta,
....

mimi wa ji——to naru

....
kata......... ta.........
geta da.........
kokoro ha kōri no yō ni hiekaetta.
hikatta.........

onna no kuru ashioto.

ichi kyū aru hachi, kugatsu x-nichi yoru kuji nanafun mae

My translation is as follows:

instant of feeling

....
....

kichi, *kichi*, *kichi*, *kichi*, *kichi*,
kichiri, *kichiri*
ri, *ri*, *ririri*, *ririri*,
ririri,
ri
ri,
ririri,

....
....

dew permeates the roof tiles
the stars were laughing coolly——
wind——

the sound of the desk clock ticking.........

....
....

the whistle’s sound flows thinly—— sweet, sad
trembles a blue color and disappears.........
——— ——— ———
the lamp makes a sound.........。

it is quiet like water.........
subdued echo.........

again.........

ri, *ri*, *ririri*
chokitsu, *chokitsu*,
ri, *ri*, *ri*,
riririri, *ri*,
subdued sound.........
ri, *ri*, *ri*, *ri*, *ri*.........

it is as if there is someone walking in my heart.........
a speaking voice,
distinctly on the road.........

ta, *ta*, *ta*,
....

my ears ring with a *zi*——
....
kata......... *ta*.........
they're geta.........
my heart has frozen completely like ice.
shone.........

the footsteps of an approaching woman.

1908, September X seven minutes before nine at night

And Mehl's translation is:

The Moment of Sensation

......
......
kichi, kichi, kichi, kichi, kichi,
kichiri, kichiri,
ri, ri, ririri, ririri,
ririri,
ri
ri,
ririri,
......
......

Dew covers the shingles,
The stars are smiling coolly—
The wind—

The sound of the clock ticking on the table...

......
......
The sound of a whistle is drawn out, becomes thin—sweet, sad,
    a blue color that trembles and fades away...
— — —
The lamp is making noise....

The silence is like water....
An echo, mournful....

And then....

ri, ri, ririri
    chokitsu, chokitsu,
ri, ri, ri,
    rirriri, ri,

A mournful sound...

    ri, *ri, ri, ri,* *ri....*

There is something that walks, as it were, through my mind...
A voice,
On the road, doubtless...

Evening, evening, evening,
......
There is a sound in my ears.
......
    kata...ta...
Wooden clogs...
    Again my heart becomes cold as ice.
    There is a flash...

The approaching sound of a woman's footsteps.
1908, seven minutes before 9 p.m. on the *n*th of September[221]

Looking at the two translations, besides the previously mentioned choices I have made such as capitalization, there are not very many notable differences. As this poem relies so heavily

[221] Mehl, "The Concept of Expression in Modern Japanese Poetics," 79-81.

on its formatting, the retention of the form is, as I have been advocating throughout this thesis, extremely important. Something to be aware of is that in the version of the poem in *Roadside Flowers*, there is a line which I have transcribed as *ta, ta, ta,* (タ、　タ、　タ、), but it seems that this may have been changed to the kanji for “evening,” *yū, ū, yū* (夕、　夕、　夕、) in later editions. These graphemes highly resemble each other, and this would explain the difference in our translations of this particular line. Once again, I do not have access to the version that Mehl translated from, but it is clear in the *Roadside Flowers* version that the line is written as the katakana *ta* (タ) and not with the kanji for evening, *yū* (夕) when comparing the two characters as they are printed in the book.

Two differences that are noteworthy in these translations are that, while Ryūkō’s idiosyncratic punctuation is represented in Mehl’s version, there are lines where Mehl adds in commas where they aren’t present, in the lines “Dew covers the shingles,” and in “The sound of a whistle is drawn out, becomes thin—sweet, sad,”. In a poem that is full of punctuation that is given meaning and rhythmic importance, as Mehl acknowledges,[222] it seems that lines ending *without* punctuation are marked in a way that I think necessitates leaving these lines plain. These lines are meant to focus our attention on their contents: the dampness of the dew on the roof tiles and the sweet sadness of the sound of the whistle.

These three different poems and their translations span decades, and more importantly, span varying contexts. Each is presented in a different way, whether it is to show a connection to a specific genre or lineage of poetry, to provide an example of Ryūkō’s innovation in contrast to previous styles of poetry, or to be an example of the experimental rhythms of Ryūkō’s poetry. So

[222] Mehl, “The Concept of Expression in Modern Japanese Poetics,” 82-83.

too do my translations have a specific context and goal, which is to highlight how the ending and breaking of poetic lines in free verse have an effect on the reading of the poem and emphasize different elements and aspects. My translation strategy, and the framework I have developed here, might be described in various ways as "source-oriented," "foreignizing," or "literal," but they are also more than that. They are an attempt to teach readers why Ryūkō wrote the poetry that he did, and to highlight the specific feelings that he wanted us as readers of his poetry to experience.

Conclusion

In the preface to *Roadside Flowers*, Ryūkō lays forth his vision of poetry. He talks about how the poetry world of the early twentieth century is rapidly changing, and gives his thoughts on concepts like form, meaning, word usage, tone, register, and rhythm in Japanese poetry, all in defence of free verse.[223] In a similar vein, my goal here is to advocate for the preservation of these elements which delineate early Japanese free verse from other types of poetry, particularly "the line" as an important unit, in translation. This is taken with a goal of producing, as Appiah advocates, "a thick description of the context of literary production, a translation that draws on and creates that sort of understanding, meets the need to challenge ourselves and our students to go further, to undertake the harder project of a genuinely informed respect for others."[224] I believe that the intimate experience of reading a poem is created by the formal elements, and this experience is, at least to a degree, reproducible.

This is not to say that my translations are perfect, or that I have completely succeeded at my goal. Morton highlights the "provisionally of the translator's task,"[225] and like the translations I have examined here, there is always room for change, for reinterpretation. There are always different aspects of the source text which can be emphasized for different reasons and different contexts. So too does Ryūkō acknowledge this when he ends his preface by saying that "Furthermore, poetry collections are one monument. I leave this behind and simply wish to move on, simply wish to move on." (*mata shi shū̄wa h totsu no monyumento de aru. jibun wa kore wo*

[223] Kawaji, Introduction to *Roadside Flowers*, i.
[224] Appiah, 818.
[225] Morton, 145.

nokoshite tada susumitaku omou, tada susumitaku omou. 詩集は一つの碑(モニユメント)である。自分はこれを殘してたゞ進みたく思ふ、たゞ進みたく思ふ。). [226]

[226] Kawaji, preface to *Roadside Flowers*, xvi.

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