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DIPLOMOVÁ PRÁCE

Analysis of Han Kang's novel 'Human Acts' English  
translation by Deborah Smith

Analýza anglického překladu novely 'Human Acts' od Deborah Smith

OLOMOUC 2021 Jana Hrubá

Vedoucí diplomové práce: Mag. Andreas Schirmer, Dr.

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prameny a literaturu.

V Olomouci dne: .....

Podpis: .....

## **Annotation**

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Han Kang is a famous South Korean poetess and novelist. 'The Vegetarian' was her first novel that was translated into English by Deborah Smith. Han and Smith both received the Man Booker International Prize for their work. However, this English translation created some controversy as mistranslations have been found. Previous research has shown that part of the novel was mistranslated and several percent of the original text were omitted. Following this translation controversy, I aim to analyze Deborah Smith's English translation of another novel by Han Kang 'Human Acts', using Juliane House's TQA model and focusing mainly on the first chapter. I intend to use the Czech translation for comparison as I hypothesize that the Czech translation is more consistent with the original work. The results of my analysis will then be compared with the mistakes and problems pointed out in evaluations of the English translation of 'The Vegetarian'. My findings provide an insight into issues of literary translation, identifying the main problems and prompting a re-thinking of the norms common in Anglophone translation.

## **Anotace**

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Han Kang je slavná básnířka a spisovatelka. 'The Vegetarian' byla její první novela, který přeložila Deborah Smith do angličtiny. Han a Smith za svou práci obdržely Man Booker International Prize. Tento anglický překlad však vyvolal jistou míru kontroverze, jelikož byly v něm byly nalezeny nepřesnosti. Předchozí výzkum ukázal, že část románu byla přeložena chybně a bylo vynecháno několik procent původního textu. V návaznosti na tuto kontroverzi je mým cílem analyzovat další překlad novely Han Kang od Deborah Smith 'Human Acts' s využitím TQA modelu Juliane House a zaměřením především na první kapitolu. Český překlad novely bude využit ke srovnání, jelikož předpokládám, že je více v souladu s původním textem. Výsledky mé analýzy budou následně porovnány s chybami a problémy, na které poukázaly evaluace anglického překladu 'The Vegetarian'. Moje zjištění poskytují vhled do problematiky literárního překladu, identifikují hlavní problémy a nabádají k přehodnocení norem běžných v anglofonním překladu.

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## **Transcription**

For the examples from English translation is used the English transcription of Korean writing. For the examples from the Czech translation is used the Czech transcription Korean writing.

## Introduction

The popularity of Korean literature in translation has recently increased as South Koreans promote their culture and its products internationally. Although the most popular products are Korean popular music and TV dramas, there are some Korean novels that received a lot of attention internationally and created a demand for more translations. Widely translated was the Korean novel *Please Look After Mom* which was also well critically accepted and created an opportunity for other South Korean books to enter the Anglophone literature market. Examples of the newcomers would include Ha Seong-nan or Yun Ko-eun and their English translators Janet Hong and Lizzie Buehler.

The most discussed English translation of South Korean literary work could be considered Han Kang's novel *The Vegetarian* that was translated by Deborah Smith. The main contentious issue was the quality of her translation as Korean academics pointed out a significant number of mistranslations. Their findings did not show only mistakes on the level of vocabulary but also a significant percentage of omitted text. Kim Wook-Dong marked Smith's translation as creative since he found added parts of text that were more expressive than the source text.

Following this controversy the aim of this thesis is to analyze the translation (again by Deborah Smith) of another novel by Han Kang: *Human Acts*, published only one year after *The Vegetarian*. The analysis focuses on the first chapter of the novel using Juliane House's Translation Quality Assessment model. The comparison includes not only the Korean original but also the Czech translation. My hypothesis is that the Czech translation is more faithful to the source text. The results are then compared with previous studies on the English translation of *The Vegetarian*, asking whether there are similarities or differences regarding mistranslations in these two English translations done by the same translator.

# 1. Translation theories and a history of Translation Studies

Translation has been needed everyday throughout ages, be it in a written or spoken form. Naturally various theories arose around this process and eventually an academic field was created. Jeremy Munday in his book *Introducing Translation Studies* describes translation studies as an “academic discipline related to the study of the theory and phenomena of translation, which is multilingual and also interdisciplinary, encompassing any language combinations, various branches of linguistics, comparative literature, communication studies, philosophy and a range of types of cultural studies including postcolonialism and postmodernism as well as sociology and historiography” (Munday 2008: 7). This definition points out the complexity of translation and the processes related to its studies. But thoughts and discussions about translation are dating a long time back before the establishment of translatology as an academic field.

The first notable discussions that are mentioned when we talk about the history of translation studies happened in the first century BCE. From that time came Cicero’s famous quotation “non verbum de verbo, sed sensum exprimere de sensu”: not word for word but sense for sense, which is sometimes called the oldest norm for translating. A famous figure from the first century BCE is Horace with his work *De Arte Poetica*. Because the main object of this thesis is a Korean novel, it is important to consider the evolution of translation and translation approaches in South East Asia. One historical point, which Jeremy Munday included in his introduction of the discipline's history, is from the first century CE. While the main topic in Europe circles was the Bible, a long discussion on translation practice in China revolved around the translation of the Buddhist sutras.<sup>1</sup> It is considered as the first documented translation of Buddhist scriptures, which was done by Buddhist monks from various Indian languages.<sup>2</sup>

Following these early thoughts, in the fourth century CE St. Jerome’s translation method strengthened the distinction between word-for-word (i.e. literal) and sense-for-sense (i.e. free), tending towards the sense-for-sense translation method.<sup>3</sup> Jerome is, not only in the Catholic Church but also commonly, recognized as the patron of translators.

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<sup>1</sup> MUNDAY, Jeremy. *Introducing Translation Studies. Theories and Applications*. 2. vyd. Londýn a New York: Routledge, 2008.

<sup>2</sup> For more see ZÜRCHER, Erik. *The Buddhist Conquest of China: The Spread and Adaptation of Buddhism in Early Medieval China*. 1972.

<sup>3</sup> MUNDAY, Jeremy. *Introducing Translation Studies. Theories and Applications*. 2. vyd. Londýn a New York: Routledge, 2008.

There are also many important figures for translation theories before the development of the field. One of them was an English poet, playwright, translator, and literary critic John Dryden (1631–1700). Dryden's work as translator and his comments on the translation process were not only the most influential at that time but are considered an important part of the history of translation theories. For the problematic, which this work deals with, is significant his definition of imitation. That expanded the dichotomy “word-for-word and sense-for-sense” into a triad. In Dryden's case we talk about metaphrase, paraphrase and imitation, which he proposed in the Preface to *Ovid's Epistles* (1680). The difference of imitation from metaphrase and paraphrase is that it's seen as an original where the translator only follows the pattern of the author and creates an illusion of the original but cultural references are modified to suit the domestic reader.<sup>4</sup> John Dryden (1680: 19) claims that “imitation is not to translate the author's words, or to be confined to his sense, but only to set him as a pattern, and to write, as he supposes that author would have done, had he lived in our age, and in our country”.

In the 19th century another famous theory came from German philosopher and Reformed theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1834). His dichotomy is usually shortly introduced as “toward the writer” and “toward the reader”. Schleiermacher in his lecture (1813) and essay (1815) *On the Different Methods of Translating* discusses the task of translator, which is to bring the reader and the writer together. The importance of the tasks is “to assist...in obtaining the most correct and complete understanding and enjoyment possible” (Schleiermacher, 1813) which creates said two ways for the translator to choose from. “Either the translator leaves the writer alone, as much as possible, and moves the reader toward the writer, or he leaves the reader alone as much as possible and moves the writer toward the reader.” (Schleiermacher, 1813) Unlike the previous theories that are focusing on the text, Schleiermacher points out a distinction between the author and the reader and the choice of the translator later inspired Venuti's domesticating and foreignizing strategies of translation.<sup>5</sup>

Although we have all these famous translators and philosophers who discussed the theories since the first century BCE, the academic field wasn't developed until the second half of the 20th century. The fundament for Translation Studies as a discipline

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<sup>4</sup> ELMGRAB, Ramadan Ahmed. Authenticity and Imitation in Translating Exposition: A Corpus-Based Study. *Journal of Educational Issues* [online]. 2015, 1(1), 191-204

<sup>5</sup> ALEKSANYAN, Heghine. The Role and Status of the Translator: Friedrich Schleiermacher's Formula. *Enlight* [online]. Yerevan, 2021.

became James S. Holmes's paper *The name and nature of translation studies* (1972/1988), which was generally accepted by other translato-logists as the founding statement. Holmes described what translation studies as a field covers and made an overall framework, which is called The Holmes/Toury 'map' of translation studies, as it was published in Toury's *Descriptive Translation Studies – And Beyond* (1995).

The 20th century overall was an expansion for translation theories and translatology as a field. Translatologists came with new approaches and discussed different turns that can be taken. For example in the 1950s and 1960s mostly linguistic-oriented systematic approach of translation studies that was more started than previous works. The linguistics-oriented approach also referred to as 'science' of translation continued in the 70s mostly in Germany, where discussion about text types and text purpose arised. One of the important figures was Eugene Nida (1914–2011) and his book *Toward a Science of Translating* (1964). At the same time, a book called *Umění překladau* [=The Art of Translation] that became a foundation of translatology in Czech republic from Jiří Levý (1926–1967) was published in 1963. In the late 70s and the 80s a descriptive approach originated from comparative literature which was followed by Even-Zohar and Gideon Toury's idea of the literary polysystem.

### **1.1. The Art of Translation**

*Umění překladau* is a comprehensive description of the translation process written by Jiří Levý based on the author's deep historical, literary and linguistic knowledge. The book was translated into English in 2011 by Patrick John Corness. It deals with aesthetic problems of translation and also discusses areas such as book title translation and translation of drama and poetry. The author views the issues of literary translation from many different angles and for his views provides a large number of examples of not only mistranslation but also good translations. Levý says that the creativity of translators is natural but dangerous because the translator is often subjective. One of his ideas is the duality of translations as translation's original content is dependent on the target language and overcoming this contradiction creates better translations.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> LEVÝ, Jiří. *Umění překladau*. 4., upr. vyd. Praha: Apostrof, 2012.

## 1.2. Equivalence and translating factors

Nida abolished the terms “literal”, “free” and “faithful” translation that theoreticians before him used. He favoured a dichotomic look at translation and came up with terms “dynamic equivalence” and “formal equivalence”. In *Toward a Science of Translating* (1964) he defines these two equivalences as follows. Formal equivalence is more oriented toward the source text and its structure. In Nida’s words it “focuses attention on the message itself, in both form and content ” (Nida, 1964: 159). This creates a closer access for the reader to the source language, culture and customs. On the other hand dynamic equivalence, also called functional, is focusing on creating the same relationship the original reader has with the source text for the reader of the targeted language. Nida calls it “the principle of equivalent effect” (Nida, 1964: 159).

It is not only the “dynamic equivalence” and “formal equivalence” with which Nida enriched the translation theories. Nida defines four requirements to create a successful translation. Translation should be “(1) making sense, (2) conveying the spirit and manner of the original, (3) having a natural and easy form of expression, (4) producing a similar response” (Nida, 1964: 164).<sup>7</sup> In another seminal work *Principles of Correspondence* he pointed out circumstances that have to be considered for translating. One of them are differences in translations, which he divided into three factors: “(1) the nature of the message, (2) the purpose or purposes of the author and, by proxy, of the translator, and (3) the type of audience” (Venuti, 2000: 127).

## 1.3. Literary polysystem

Even-Zohar in *The Position of Translated Literature within The Literary Polysystem* defines the literary polysystem and talks about differences that occur depending on the position of translated literature. The literary polysystem is divided into central position and peripheral position. If translated literature has no influence in the target literature it is considered to maintain a peripheral position. This tends to happen in English speaking countries where the percentage of translated literature is low compared to the original home literature. The peripheral position of translated literature has an effect on translator’s work. Even-Zohar claims that in that case “the translator’s main effort is to concentrate upon finding the best ready-made secondary models for the foreign text,

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<sup>7</sup> MUNDAY, Jeremy. *Introducing Translation Studies. Theories and Applications*. 2. vyd. Londýn a New York: Routledge, 2008.

and the result often turns out to be a non-adequate translation or a greater discrepancy between the equivalence achieved and the adequacy postulated” (Even-Zohar, 1990: 51). In other words, the literary polysystem has an impact on translation approach, which then reflects in translated literature.<sup>8</sup>

#### 1.4. Visibility of translator

One of the most influential translato­logists of the 90s is the American translation theorist and critic Lawrence Venuti. Inspired by Schleiermacher, he discusses differences between domesticating and foreignizing in his work *Translation, Community, Utopia*. The peripheral position of translated literature in English speaking countries is one of the signs of the domesticating process during the translation. That causes a reduction in the linguistic and cultural differences of source texts. Venuti suggests that this happens “by reducing them and supplying another set of differences, basically domestic, drawn from the receiving language and culture to enable the foreign to be received there” (Venuti, 2000: 469). This is a reason why he thinks that translation is ideological. He states that “it releases a domestic remainder, an inscription of values, beliefs, and representations linked to historical moments and social positions in the domestic culture.” (Venuti, 2000: 485)<sup>9</sup>

In *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation* Venuti links the translator's invisible figure to the domesticating strategy. He states three types of invisibility. The first is when a translator is seen only as a text co-producer in the practices used for translations marketing. The second happens within the text where translator activity is in accordance with prevailing notions of “fluency”, which Venuti sees as a kind of translator’s self-erasing. The third invisibility of translators is on the cultural level. Here Venuti points out the low number of translations from foreign languages into English and the “trade imbalance” if we compare it with translation from Anglophone literature. Before the discussion of domesticating and foreignizing in *Translation, Community, Utopia* he already pointed out a "domesticating practices" which make translators work under a "discursive regime". Because translators have to adhere to the current standard norms and orthodox conventions of the target language their presence in the text is not visible. Venuti favours foreignizing translation, which

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<sup>8</sup> Even-Zohar, Itamar. The Position of Translated Literature within the Literary Polysystem. *Polysystem Studies* [=Poetics Today, Vol. 11: 1]. Durham NC: Duke University Press, 1990, 45-51.

<sup>9</sup> VENUTI, Lawrence. *The Translation studies reader*. New York: Routledge, 2000.

so-called sends the reader abroad. When the strategy of foreignization is used it challenges dominant values in the receiving culture. He also emphasizes that translators should inscribe themselves visibly into the text instead of following domesticating patterns.<sup>10</sup>

### **1.5. Anglophone literature and translations**

It's not only translatoologists as Even-Zohar and Venuti who point out the position of translated books and the tendency to domesticate in Anglophone literature. In 2021, the Czech literary translator Lucie Mikolajková wrote a comment on this issue. Lucie Mikolajková received a creative award at the Josef Jungmann Prize in 2016, one of her translations was nominated for Magnesia litera award and overall she translated almost 40 books. Mikolajková points to the fact the number of translations into English is very low and is usually done only by academics or literary enthusiasts. If we compare it with Czech market 39% of published books in 2019, precisely 6 722 titles, were translations from foreign languages according to The Report on the Czech Book Market 2019/2020.<sup>11</sup> While continental European countries have a long history of translation, Anglophone literature has a domestic high output of books, which in consequence could be the cause of the low demand for translations. Mikolajková highlights the fact that in the US book market, which is the biggest in the world, only 0,13% of fiction books are translations. This is equivalent to approximately 300-500 books a year and she claims that the situation in the UK is very similar. The small number of translations is being concomitant with a low number of source languages. Their publication is usually done by small non-profit publishing houses, making the translator work for free.

The problem is not only the number but also the process of translation. Mikolajková shares her experience with a colleague from a translators' conference in the US. He claimed that his specialization is French and Chinese, which looked very impressive, until she found out, he can only speak a little bit of French and some "supertranslator" is translating texts from Chinese for him word-by-word and he then makes English poems out of it.

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<sup>10</sup> VENUTI, Lawrence. *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation* (2nd ed.). Abingdon, Oxon, U.K., 2008.

<sup>11</sup> *Zpráva o českém knižním trhu 2019/2020*. Svaz českých knihkupců a nakladatelů, 2020.



Mikolajková then compares the situation in the US with the Czech republic. She suggests that the requirements for students of translation studies have an influence on the norms and expectations of the translation, which are in the Czech republic more strict than in the US. She also claims that Czech translators have more publications and manuals for translators and unlike in the world of Anglophone literature there are much more redactors that know the source languages, who provide expert reviews of the translations.

Mikolajková suggests that the result of the situation in Anglophone literature is translators being more an artist, who creates their own piece of writing, than a provider of the original work for the domestic reader. One of the examples that Mikolajková provides is the English translation, by Deborah Smith, of Han Kang's novel *The Vegetarian* which caused a discussion not only in Korea but also on an international level. While Korean side offered a detailed analysis of mistakes, the Anglophone world tended to defend the translator. In Mikolajková's opinion translators in Anglophone literature use the text as their own, sometimes omitting the part they don't understand or simply don't want in the story. She states that the translators don't understand that there is no need to fully domesticate the text to be understandable.<sup>12</sup> The problem here might be that the readers are already too used to the domestication of source texts since the standards have been different for a long time.

## **2. The controversy around the translation of *The Vegetarian***

Korean literature is slowly getting more attention all around the world and many novels get translated to English and other languages. But this positive phenomenon has its negative side as not every translation turns out well. One case in point is the English translation of Han Kang's novel *The Vegetarian*. The translation controversy around this translation started in 2016 when she and Deborah Smiths received the Man Booker International Prize for English translation of this book. The English version of the book was labeled as an adaptation more than a translation.

Deborah Smith herself called her translation creative and admitted adding some scenes into the book<sup>13</sup>, so according to Venuti we could say she inscribed herself into

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<sup>12</sup> MIKOLAJKOVÁ, Lucie. Lekce amatérismu, nadšenectví a přehlíživosti. K anglosaskému literárnímu překladu. *H7O: host 7 dní online* [online]. Brno: H7O, 2021.

<sup>13</sup> SMITH, Deborah. What We Talk About When We Talk About Translation. *Los Angeles Review of Books* [online]. Los Angeles, 2018.

the text. Yet this approach wasn't accepted well. Academic Charse Yun in the *Korea Exposé* expressed his feelings about the translation. He points out a research that was presented in 2016 at a conference at Ewha Womans University which shows that 10.9 percent of the first part of the novel was mistranslated and 5.7 percent of the original text was omitted. Considering the length of the novel, Yun claimed that “the number of mistranslations in *The Vegetarian* is much higher than one would expect from a professional translator” (Yun, 2017). He also discussed the enormous difference between Han Kang’s writing style in Korean and Smith’s English translation as she has poeticized the novel. Smith inserted adverbs, superlatives and emphatic word choices that are not in the original text. That makes changes to how characters are depicted. The first section of the novel consists 31.5 percent of these re-written embellishments. But problems are not only in the storyline and writing style.

On March 30, 2016, Kim Wook-Dong published an article *The ‘Creative’ English Translation of ‘The Vegetarian’ by Han Kang*, in which he assessed the accuracy of the translation. He is a retired professor of the Hankuk University of Foreign Studies that boasts the oldest and leading graduate school for translation and interpretation (GSIT) in South Korea. Kim Wook-Dong declared that he chose the book because it became an international bestseller and wrote the article straight after reading the English version because he found the translation messy. He found mistakes even in basic Korean words such as arms, which got translated as feet. Kim Wook-Dong states that Smith also struggled with Korean slang and colloquial expressions. She also misidentifies the subjects of sentences which results in several places, actions and dialogue being attributed to wrong characters. For example Korean expression “the kid who works part-time” got translated as “the babysitter”. Kim Wook-Dong admits that although “her translation is problematic; on the other hand, it is creative in terms of accessibility to target-language readers” (Kim, 2018: 78). He agrees that translation needs creativity, but only in cases where the translator is solving “‘context’ problems”. In his opinion Smith didn’t manage to “render ‘the spirit of the original’” (Kim, 2018: 78) in her English translation of the novel.

## **2.1. Smith’s response to the controversy**

Deborah Smith defended herself in an essay called *What We Talk About When We Talk About Translation*, which was published on January 11, 2018. She argues that

translation will always have flaws and calls it “a profoundly strange and often counterintuitive art” (Smith, 2018). Smith agrees that in one sense her translation of *The Vegetarian* can be evaluated as a “completely different book”. By that she means the difference between the two languages such as grammar, vocabulary or structure of sentences. She claims that the book was successful by itself without the English translation, that only brought an international interest, even though there were translations into other languages, which didn’t make it internationally because of cultural imperialism.

Another point of Smith's essay is Han Kang’s “poetic” style of writing, which we can see more in *Human Acts* and *The White Book*. Smith says that she “wasn’t trying to produce an overblown, ornate style in English” and she also doesn't “think it happened unconsciously, either” (Smith, 2018). Yet a few sentences before this statement she argues that “structure, plot, themes, characterization, et cetera, are all the work of the author. Translators, in the great majority of cases, do the language: style, tone, rhythm ” (Smith, 2018). In her defense she points out the differences between two languages where Korean is “more accommodating of ambiguity, repetition, and plain prose” while English “favors precision, concision, and lyricism ” (Smith, 2018). She also suggests that it seems impossible to translate the author's individual style because it shifts away from the middle ground of the source language and that translators can be faithful to the quality of the source text. Smith then claims that readers evaluate the final product of the translation and since they don't have access to the original it’s the translation on it’s own that matters to them.

In the last part of the essay she explains the value of getting a prize for her translation and the discussion that it raised. *The Vegetarian* was Smith’s first translation, choosing it because she admires the author. She’s aware that winning a prize doesn’t make her “approach to translation the best or only way” (Smith, 2018). She also points out it was not only her but also the author who got the prize and she was glad that the book received international attention. But the success was followed by mistake-listing articles and emails. Smith agrees that translations should go through the process of critique, but “without taking into consideration how translation norms vary between countries and contexts, and how this might shape individual approaches, it’s hard to move on to the point of difference rather than just pointing it out” (Smith, 2018). She’s also asking if the critics would have to focus more on the story in case her translation was close to “impossible perfection”.

The whole problem with translating into English goes much deeper than mistranslations. We have to take an overall look at translated literature and differences between English speaking and non-speaking countries. Another important element that influences translation is the translator's background and scope of knowledge and background information needed for their work.

### **3. The translators and their background**

Kim Haeyoung in her research focuses on translation from Korean into English. In her research she examines the impact of background information on the translation quality. Kim Haeyoung's research results indicated that having access to background information does have an effect on translation quality while reading ability in source language do not appear to affect it. Quantity of the background information had only a little effect.<sup>14</sup> At the beginning of the article she discusses what is needed to be a good translator, pointing out some relevant theories. Gerding-Salas in *Translation: Problems and Solution* (2000) listed what students preparing to be translators should be capable of. The qualities of ideal student are: "(1) sound linguistic training in the two languages, (2) knowledge covering a wide cultural spectrum, (3) high reading comprehension competence and permanent interest in reading, (4) adequate use of translation procedures and strategies, (5) adequate management of documentation sources, (6) improvement capacity and constant interest in learning, (7) initiative, creativity, honesty and perseverance, (8) accuracy, truthfulness, patience, and dedication, (9) capacity for analysis and self-criticism, (10) ability to maintain constructive interpersonal relationships, (11) capacity to develop teamwork, (12) efficient data processing training at user's level, and (13) acquaintance with translation software for MT(Machine Translation)" (Gerding-Salas, 2000). But Kim Haeyoung suggests that reality is often very different from theories. She also points out the importance of background information and right ways of their research, especially cross checking the information to avoid blind trust. In her research she found a surprisingly high number of students that were relying more on Korean search engines than English sites. This result is understandable since Korean search engines are designed for Korean language,

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<sup>14</sup> KIM, Haeyoung. The Influence of Background Information in Translation: Quantity vs. Quality or Both? *Meta* [online]. 2006, 51(2), 328-342.

therefore better for a translator's work than English sites, when we deal with Korean language.

### 3.1. Deborah Smith

Born in 1987, she is a British translator focusing on Korean novels. She graduated from the University of Cambridge in 2009, getting a BA in English literature, and received her PhD in Korean Studies from the University of London in 2015. Her motivation for studying Korean language was the small amount of Korean literature translated into English.<sup>15</sup> In 2015 she founded Tilted Axis Press which is presented on the official page as “a non-profit press publishing mainly work by Asian writers, translated into a variety of Englishes”.<sup>16</sup> Although Smith went through a controversy for her translation, she was elected Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature in the initiative “40 Under 40” in 2018.<sup>17</sup>

### 3.2. Petra Ben-Ari

Born 1983, she is a Czech translator and interpreter. Her specialization is Korean, Chinese, Italian and English. She got a Bachelor's degree from Sinology at Charles University in Prague and studied Comparative Literature at Seoul National University.<sup>18</sup> She lived in South Korea for 5 years and after graduation in 2014 she returned to Czech republic and started translating Korean novels. Petra Ben-Ari is currently the only professional translator from Korean language in Czech republic. She attended a two-semester translation seminar for Korean literature organized by the Literature Translation Institute of Korea (LTI Korea). With the support of the LTI Korea she translated into Czech language three Han Kang's novels — *The Vegetarian*, *Human Acts* and *The White Book*. Her translation of *Human Acts* (in Czech *Kde kvete tráva*) was nominated for the Magnesia litera award.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> CALLEJA, Jen. Verfreundungseffekt: A Question Of Humanity – Han Kang & An Interview With Deborah Smith. *The Quietus* [online]. 2016

<sup>16</sup> About. *Tilted Axis Press* [online]. c2020.

<sup>17</sup> FLOOD, Alison. Royal Society of Literature admits 40 new fellows to address historical biases. *The Guardian* [online]. 2018.

<sup>18</sup> Petra Ben-Ari. *Linkedin* [online]. c2021.

<sup>19</sup> Petra Ben-Ari. KOSMAS [online]. Praha: Kosmas, [2021].

## 4. Translation and South Korea

Andreas Schirmer in his article *Aspects of the Never-Ending Translation Wars in South Korea: A Cultural Phenomenon and its Reasons* introduces the situation around translations in South Korea and explains the phenomenon of “translation wars”, which are specific by involvement of the general public and not only the professionals. The media are Korean media, who are interested in translation issues and bring them to their readers, making the public discourse involved as well. The discussion tends to focus on translation’s quality and reliability and the public is involved much more compared to Western countries. The search for mistakes is also supported by books that compile translation mistakes. To understand why Deborah Smith’s translation created such a controversy, we must first look more closely at the situation in South Korea and the view of translations there. The article contains six main points that introduce aspects of the translation wars phenomenon in detail.

The first facet that Schirmer explains is “an added value of translation critique”. There are two sides where some point out the critique is too harsh. The other side claims that “the hunt for mistakes and the exposure of underperformers will lead to an improvement in translation quality and at the same time benefit Koreans in general, pushing them forward in terms of intellectual maturity” (Schirmer, 2020: 392). This idea implies that Koreans search more for a mistake in themselves than in the original message. Schirmer proposes that the reason here might be an education system that is lacking in teaching critical thinking, which ends up with the risk-averse listener’s “uncertainty avoidance”, where the speaker is not questioned, instead the confusion gets accepted.

The role of cyberspace is the second point of the article. It is not only media but also online platforms where discussion about translation arises. Personal blogs and comment sections, which are highly popular in South Korea, give space also to people that are not translators themselves “because of too much or unfair competition, or because they lack the necessary network, or because their active skills are not on a par with their passive ones” (Schirmer, 2020: 394). As an outcome they pick up on the work of others and criticise without access to “the most established and respected media”. The modernization of Korea and the growing importance of English knowledge also plays its role. Schirmer suggests that is the reason why there is a high number of readers and netizens who are able to criticise translations by simply comparing them with

source text. An example of one big cyber translation that Schirmer gives is Korean translation of Steve Jobs' authorized biography, which was started by two translators. One of them then uploaded his version of the translation and asked readers to judge it, bringing also the general public into debate. But Korea also benefits from this kind of amateur expertise when the users help to find mistakes in online digitized translations.

The third aspect is the fear that Korea might be "losing out in the globalized world because of mistranslation" as Koreans believe the possibility of a negative situation being created simply by inaccurate translation or interpretation. One of the reasons is translation being an important tool during modernization when Korea opened and started to create international relationships. Schirmer explains that Koreans are striving for perfect rendering of their wisdom so they get worried when problems with omitted parts of translation or mistranslations occur. He points out cases where Koreans even forced publishers to get the translation reviewed and publish a new version. Yet nowadays we can come across some promotional materials or instructions that were translated with an automatic translator, instead of getting a professional translator to do that.

The role of English is the fourth element of the phenomenon as English is usually the only source language in translation wars in which the public gets involved. Schirmer points out the growth of interest in Korean literature translations into Western languages, especially English, and the problems of translation critique of English translation. The evaluations focus a lot on "loss" which they found by analysing the vocabulary sphere of the translation. The issue here is that not everything in the source language has an adequate equivalence in the target language so the translator has to find a way to render the original meaning in the target language. According to Schirmer, we should also take a look at the whole part of text and not only the excerpt because the meaning might be part of the whole context, which Koreans don't tend to do.

The fifth point builds on the previous one and introduces more the topic of "quarreling about words, neglecting syntax". Schirmer points out that what the general public usually criticise in debates as "mistakes" is usually "largely confined to vocabulary, idioms and collocations" (Schirmer, 2020: 402) and the syntax, which he suggests to be possibly the most interesting facet, gets ignored. This is not only a problem of public discourse debates but also professional translation critiques. As an example Schirmer mentions Kim Wook-Dong's analysis of *The Vegetarian*, which has a section called "errors made on the syntactic level" (73–75). Mistakes grouped in this

section are focusing on the subject of sentences or by whom was the action caused. But Schirmer suggests that we have to look for more when we discuss the syntactic level of translation, where we have to look at how the “sentence is built, and how (in the case of a complex sentence) its various clauses and constituents are crafted into an integral and well-balanced architecture” (Schirmer, 2020: 404). He also points out the connection between syntax and sequence, which influences the delivery of plot to the reader. From this point of view syntax is still not fully part of the translation critique.

The last aspect that Schirmer discusses is *Unfruitful Manichaeism: Either you know Korean or you don't*. In this part he explains the excessive demands on translators when they are expected to make the perfect choices and have a perfect deep knowledge of everything. In the controversy around *The Vegetarian* English translation Deborah Smith was accused that the reason for the high number of mistakes in her translation was her lack of knowledge of Korean language and culture. Schirmer suggests that to avoid these type of mistakes translators doesn't need a deep overall knowledge and may compensate for their deficiencies by a consultation with native speaker or someone with higher proficiency level during the process of translating. Another problem is editors that don't know the source language therefore don't countercheck with the original text, which happened in the case of *The Vegetarian*. In such cases it is important to check the changes to avoid mistranslations or find an editor with the needed knowledge.<sup>20</sup>

#### **4.1. Deborah Smith about *Human Acts* translation**

Deborah Smith did not lose courage and continued with the translation of Han Kang's novel. In 2017 her translation of the novel *Human Acts* was published, about which she wrote an essay called *On Translating Human Acts by Han Kang*. In her essay she states the most challenging parts that she had to translate, the first being already the novel's title. Another complexity of the novel is the change of narrator in every chapter, which makes the reader feel as moving forward yet separated. On the vocabulary level, she had to deal with the difference between Korean and English in repetition of words, which is often used in Korean while avoided in English. She also points out the connection between some words in different chapters, which was made on purpose to

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<sup>20</sup> SCHIRMER, Andreas. Aspects of the Never-Ending Translation Wars in South Korea. *Lebende Sprachen* [online]. 2020, 65(2), 390-410.



make the reader think about the past events.<sup>21</sup> Her rendering of the translation will be more discussed in the results of this thesis.

## 5. Methodology

The discussion around *The Vegetarian* translation by Deborah Smith and the creativity aspect of it raises a question how her other translations are faithful to the original text. The aim of this thesis is to analyze her translation of Han Kang's *Human Acts*, focusing mainly on the first chapter of the novel. Her translation of *The Vegetarian* was published in January 2015, when she had been studying Korean for only 3 years, and her translation of *Human Acts* was published in 2016, only a year later before the discussion around *The Vegetarian* translation arised. Therefore, her translation of *Human Acts* might be in a way also creative and more expressive than the original text. It might also include some inadequate equivalents, mistranslations or omissions of the text. Using the Translation Quality Assessment model, the analysis of the first chapter aims to look at these aspects of her translation using also the Czech translation of this novel for comparison.

### 5.1. Assessment of translation quality

As with most disciplines, translation as well has the evaluation process. The criteria vary depending on the type of translation we are evaluating considering each type of translation needs a different approach and focus. Many well-known translatoologists introduced theories for translation assessment including Nida, Venuti, Munday, House or Baker.

Mona Baker approached the quality assessment in an equivalence form defining five levels of it, which shows that we have to look for more than a word for word equivalence. The levels, which she presents as chapters of her book *In other words: a coursebook on translation*, are: (1) Word level: This equivalence is focusing on the word itself and is common in almost all languages. (2) Above word level: This equivalence shifts the focus from single words to words' collocations and their meaning. (3) Grammatical level: This level of equivalence examines the order of words in sentences. (4) Textual level: This equivalence levels are thematic and information

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<sup>21</sup> SMITH, Deborah. On Translating *Human Acts* by Han Kang. *Asymptote* [online]. c2021.

structures like references, substitutions, ellipses, conjunctions, or lexical cohesion. (5) Pragmatic level: This equivalence level contains coherence and processes of interpretation e.g. forces of the act of speech.<sup>22</sup>

### 5.1.1. TQA model

One of the most known and frequently revisited model used for evaluation is the Translation Quality Assessment (TQA), which is also used for literary translation evaluation. Juliane House's model that is based on functional equivalence was introduced in 1977 and was twice revised by her, in 1997 and 2015. In the 1997 revisited model, which is used for the *Human Acts* English translation analysis in this thesis, she classified translation into two types - covert, which includes commercial, scientific, academic text etc., and overt, where readers know they are reading a translation that has a cultural source. The errors in overt translation are divided into seven categories: (1) not translated, (2) slight change in meaning, (3) significant change in meaning, (4) distortion of meaning, (5) breach of the source-language system, (6) creative translation, (7) cultural filtering.<sup>23</sup>

Kim Wook-Dong in his analysis of *The Vegetarian* compares House's model with Sager's TQA model, which is more simple having only five categories. J. C. Sager's model contains (1) inversion of meaning, (2) omission, (3) addition, (4) deviation, (5) modification. Kim Wook-Dong then combined the two models and proposed his own version for the analysis of Han Kang's *The Vegetarian* English translation. Kim's model also contains five categories which are: "(1) vocabulary errors, (2) homonymy errors, (3) undertranslation and overtranslation, (4) errors made on the syntactic level, (5) words or phrases charged with culturally specific features" (Kim, 2018: 67).

## 6. Results

The results are presented in the categories of House's 1997 TQA model. Categories with smaller numbers of findings present the examples in text. As the number of text omissions, additions and changes of meaning is significantly higher, the findings

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<sup>22</sup> BAKER, Mona. *In other words: a coursebook on translation*. London: Routledge, 1992.

<sup>23</sup> HOUSE, Juliane. *Translation Quality Assessment: A Model Revisited*. G. Narr, 1997.

presented in tables for the sake of clarity and comparison between the original and the two translations. The first published versions of all three languages of the novel — Korean, English and Czech — are used for the comparison.

## **6.1. Not translated**

The first part of the TQA model is examining not translated parts of the original text. As well as in *The Vegetarian* translation, there are omitted text passages in the English translation of *Human Acts*, some of them short, some of them more significant. The omission starts on the very first page of the first chapter not only with the title of the chapter but a half of a paragraph. Throughout the chapter we can see a not translated range of text length from minor details like adjectives to nearly whole sentences. In many cases part of the phrase is translated. Nevertheless we can find examples of phrases that are omitted completely. The following tables with the analysis results show the not translated parts in detail.

### **6.1.1. Titles of chapters**

The original novel consists of six chapters and the author's epilog, which all have their titles. It is unfortunate that all these seven titles were omitted in the English translation and replaced with the main character of the chapter and a year of the events. One reason why Smith, perhaps her editor or publisher, decided for this solution might be to give the reader some sort of guideline. In the original we are left to deduce the person and the time from the plot, given some hints in the text. However, in Korean language it is much clearer to define who is the speaker, from aspects like the chosen verb endings etc. The speaker has to position themselves much more. Therefore, a Korean reader is more easily aware of the change of the narrator.

The very lyrical titles of the chapters are a meaningful component of the novel. In case that Smith wanted to add some kind of a guiding information for the reader, there is an option to add the information — the main character of the chapter and the year of the events — under the title of chapters. The Czech translator decided for the same direction as the author and kept the mystery for the reader to deduce, which might be a little bit confusing at the beginning of the chapters. However, a focused reader should be able to follow the flow of the story. As previously mentioned, in the Czech

translation the title of the novel is switched with the title of the sixth chapter. The only divergence from the original meaning in the Czech version is the second chapter title translated as “last breath” instead of “black breath”.

**Tab. 1: Titles of chapters**

Original titles	English translation	Czech translation	Meaning of the Czech translation
1 장 어린 새 (13) A Young Bird	Chapter 1: The Boy, 1980 (7)	1.Ptáče (5)	Young bird
2 장 검은 숨 (54) Black Breath	Chapter 2: The Boy's Friend, 1980 (33)	2.Poslední dech (44)	Last breath
3 장 일곱 개의 뺨 (74) Seven Slaps	Chapter 3: The Editor, 1985 (45)	3.Sedm facek (62)	Seven slaps
4 장 쇠와 피 (114) Iron and Blood	Chapter 4: The Prisoner, 1990 (73)	4.Ocel a krev (102)	Steel and blood
5 장 밤의 눈동자 (148) Pupil of the Night	Chapter 5: The Factory Girl, 2002 (92)	5.Zřítelnice noci (132)	Beholder of the night
6 장 꽃 핀 쪽으로 (192) Towards The Blooming Flowers	Chapter 6: The Boy's Mother, 2010 (119)	6.Chlapec přichází (173)	The boy comes
에필로그 눈 덮인 램프 (208) Epilogue Snow Covered Lamp	Epilogue: The Writer (130)	Epilog: Světlo zaváté sněhem (188)	Snowbound light

### 6.1.2. Adjectives

The analysis of the first chapter shows 7 cases of not translated adjectives in Smith's translation. These omissions do not have any significant impact on the story line.

However, these words portray scenes and give readers some aesthetically relevant details. Among those words are not translated expressions like “shaking” or “transparent” that are not complicated to render in English and there is no particular reason to not translate them. The cause of omission might be an editor that wanted to make the target language text shorter, more succinct, less “talkative”.

**Tab. 2: Adjectives**

Original text	English translation	Czech translation	Meaning of the Czech translation
흔들리는 가지 사이로 (13) between shaking branches	between those branches (7)	mezi chvějícími větvemi (5)	between shaking branches
투명한 보석들 (13) transparent/clear jewels	jewels (7)	průsvitné drahokamy (5)	transparent gems
무겁디무겁게 올라가다가 (14) heavily-heavily rises up	surges up (7)	graduje ponurým cresendem (6)	escalates with a gloomy crescendo
급히 입관을 해 (14) quickly/in hurry placed in in coffins	These were then placed in coffins (8)	...a tak byla také spěšně uložena do rakví (6)	...and so they were also quickly placed in coffins
여전히 바람에 흔들리고 있다 (16) are still shaking in the wind	are shaking in the wind (9)	které se stejně jako před chvílí komíhají ve větru (8)	which, as before, shaking in the wind
놀란 그 새들은 (30) those frightened birds	they (17)	ta vyplašená ptáčata (21)	those frightened birds
마이크를 쥔 남자가 다급히 외친다. (30) The man holding the microphone shouts	The man with the microphone shouts out, (17)	Muž u mikrofonu překvapeně vzkřikne (22)	The man at the microphone shouts in surprise

urgently.			
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### 6.1.3. Phrases

The table of not translated phrases contains 22 findings of various omissions. The examples range from leaving out a name of ceremonial to half of a sentence being not translated. Some of the omitted parts contain important details or actions for example “You put the ledger aside under your arm”. In three cases the not translated phrases are part of dialogs. Dialogs were already a very problematic part in Smith’s translation of *The Vegetarian*, where she according to Kim Wook-Dong had a problem with the right identification of the agent-action.

**Tab. 3: Phrases**

Original text	English translation	Czech translation	Meaning of the Czech translation
여자의 목소리에 귀 기울인다 (14) listen carefully to woman's voice	simply listen (7)	soustředíš se na hlas mladé ženy (6)	You focus on the voice of a young woman
상무관에 있는 여든세개의 관들 중 (14) Among the eighty-three coffins that had been (kept/stored/lying) in Sangmunwan	twenty-six of the eighty-three coffins (8)	Mezi třiaosmdesáti mrtvými, kteří v Sangmugwanu spočinuli v rakvích, (6)	Among the eighty-three dead who rested in coffins in Sangmugwan,
긴 괄호로 목록을 묶고 '합동추도식 3'이라고 적었다. (15) enclosed the list in long brackets and wrote down 'Joint memorial	you added 'group memorial service' in parentheses (8)	celý seznam jsi uzavřel dlouhou svorkou a k té připojil poznámku „Společný smuteční obřad č. 3“ (6-7)	you closed the whole list with a long bracket and added a note "Joint Funeral Ceremony No. 3"

service 3'			
시간을 벌기 위해선지, (16) Perhaps to earn some time,	(none)	snad aby získala trochu času (8)	perhaps to gain some time
옆구리에 장부를 끼우고 (17) You put the ledger aside under your arm	(none)	zápisník si zasuneš do podpaží (8)	you put the ledger into your armpit
탁자 아래 둔 박스에서 (18) from the box under the table	from the box (10)	z krabice pod stolem (10)	from the box under the table
코피가 터질 것 같은 시취를 견디며 (18) Enduring a stink of dead bodies that makes you feel like a nosebleed will burst	Fighting the putrid stink, (10)	přítom se snažíš ovládnout nevolnost z mrtvolného puchu, který tě dráždí tak nesnesitelně, až máš pocit, že se ti z nosu musí spustit krev. (10)	at the same time you try to control the nausea from the corpse odor, which irritates you so unbearably that you feel that your nose must bleed.
친구 부모님은 어디 계시고 네가 다녀? (20) Where are your friend's parents, why are you looking for him?	'What about this friend's parents?' (11)	„A co je s jeho rodiči, že ho hledáš zrovna ty?“ (12)	“And what about his parents that you're looking for him?”
총 맞은 사람이 너무 많아서, 병원 영안실엔 자리가 없단다. (21) They say there's no	They say there's no room left in the morgues. (12)	V márnících už není místo, zastřelení přibývají příliš rychle. (12)	There is no place in the morgue, the number of people shot is increasing too fast.

room left in the hospital morgues because there are too many people who got shot			
연두색 셔츠 소매를 걷어 입은 선주 (22) Seon-ju that was wearing the light green shirt with rolled up sleeves	the woman in the green shirt (12)	Dívka v zelenkavé blůze s vykasanými rukávy se jmenovala Sondžu. (13)	The girl in a green blouse with rolled up sleeves was called Seon-ju.
너는 흰 천을 열어 죽은 몸들을 보여주었다. (23) You pulled up the white cloth and showed the dead bodies.	(none)	odkryl jsi na okamžik sukno, aby si mrtvého prohlédli. (15)	you uncovered the cloth for a moment so they could have a look at the dead body.
뒤뜰과 통로에 누어놓은 몸들을 그들이 트럭에 싣는 동안 (25) While they load the truck with bodies that you carried and laid in the backyard and in the aisle	While they loaded the bodies into a truck (14)	Zatímco vršili všechna těla – ta v chodbě i ta, která jste vynesli ven – na korbu nákladního auta, (16)	As they piled up all the bodies — the ones in the hallway and the ones you carried out — on the back of the truck,
이따금 고개를 뒤로 젖히고 마스크 위로 콧잔등을 누른 채 강당 천장을 올려다보았다. (27)	could often be seen with her head tipped back, pressing her mask over her nose. (15)	čas od času zaklonila hlavu, přes roušku si tiskla kořen nosu a hodnou chvíli nepřítomně zírala do stropu. (18)	from time to time she tilted her head, pressed the root of her nose over the mask, and stared vacantly at the ceiling for a moment.



From time to time tilted her head back and looked up at the ceiling of the hall and pressed her nose over the mask.			
땀은 머리부터 흰 점퍼, 청바지 밑단까지 (32) from braided hair to the white jumper to the hems of jeans	from her braids to the hems of her jeans (19)	Od spletených vlasů je přes bílou bundu až po lem džínových kalhot (23)	From braided hair to the white jacket to the hem of jeans
뭘 그렇게 놀래? (32) What surprised you so much?	(none)	„Čeho ses tak lekl, prosímte?“ (24)	"What scared you so much, oh my?"
타이르듯 너에게 말한다 (35) 타이르다 = reason (with) Like reasoning, she tells you	(none)	Nakonec si káravě povzdechne: (27)	At last, she sighs scoldingly:
큰형은 오히려 얼굴이 곱고 체형이 작아서 (37) Older brother has a pretty face and a small body	delicately built (21)	nejstarší bratr,... působí díky své drobné postavě a jemné tváříčce mladší (27)	eldest brother, ... looks younger thanks to his small figure and gentle face
네 옆에 서 있던, 머리가 반쯤 벗어진 아저씨가 숨차게 중얼거렸다. (38) Standing next to you, the half bald man	the man next to you muttered. (22)	zamumlal přidušeným hlasem muž stojící vedle tebe. Na temeni hlavy mu prosvítala počínající pleš. (29)	the man standing next to you muttered in a muffled voice. On the top of his head shone incipient baldness.

murmured breathlessly.			
너는 점퍼도 안 걸치고 (45) You don't even have a jumper on	(none)	aniž by sis přes sebe aspoň hodil svetr (36)	without at least putting a sweater on
부드러운 천으로 겹겹이 손끝을 감싼 것 같은 노크 소리. (46) The knock sound, like a layer of soft cloth was wrapped around fingertips.	That muffled- sounding knock. (28)	to tlumené zaklepání, jako by na dveře ťukaly konečky prstů ovázané vrstvami měkkého plátna (37)	the muffled knock, as if fingertips bandaged with layers of soft cloth were tapping on the door
동호야아, (49)	(none)	„Tonghóóó!“ (40)	“Dong-hooo!”
의무를 피하고 싶어 너는 주저한다. (52) You hesitate, wanting to avoid the obligation/duty.	You hesitate, (31)	Zaváháš, jako by ses chtěl odpovědi vyhnout. (42)	You hesitate, as if you wanted to avoid answering.
체머리 떠는 노인의 얼굴을 너는 돌아본다. (53) You look back at the face of the old man, his head shaking.	You look round at the old man. (32)	Ohlédneš se na staříka. Jeho hlava se třese. (43)	You look back at the old man. His head is shaking.

#### 6.1.4. Longer passages

The results show two longer passages of the first chapter that are omitted in the English translation. One is a memory of the main character's brother and the second passage is part of a description of corpses that the character is watching. This omission might be also a decision of making the text shorter. However, if we have a look at the findings of

added text we can see a big amount of text that is included even though it is not part of the original. In that case it is hard to tell how much the author and the editor were aiming for text shortage or whether the omission was caused by other reasons. For example not translating the part because of difficult rendering in the target language.

**Tab. 4: Longer passages**

Original text	English translation	Czech translation	Meaning of the Czech translation
<p>언젠가 안경을 맞춰야 하려나. 네모난 밤색 뿔테 안경을 쓴 작은형의 부루퉁한 얼굴이 떠올랐다가, 분수대 쪽에서 들려오는 함성과 박수 소리에 묻혀 희미해진다. 여름이면 콧잔등을 타고 자꾸 안경이 흘러내린다고, 겨울엔 실내에 들어갈 때마다 안경알에 김이 서려 아무것도 안 보인다고 작은형이 그랬는데. (13)</p> <p>You wonder if you'll get glasses one day. The sulky face of your brother wearing square brown horn-rimmed glasses comes to your mind and then gets buried and fades under the sound of shouts and applause from the fountain. Your brother said that his glasses</p>	<p>You're going to need glasses before long. This thought gets briefly disturbed by the whooping and applause which breaks out from the direction of the fountain. (7)</p>	<p>Neměl by sis snad pořídit brýle? Náhle se ti vybaví zamračený obličej tvého bratra, orámovaný brýlemi s hranatými kostěnými obroučkami tmavé barvy. Jeho tvář však vzápětí pohltí výkřiky a potlesk, doléhající sem od kašny. Vzpomínáš ještě, jak si bratr v létě často stěžoval, že mu brýle sjíždějí ze zpoceného nosu, v zimě zase, že jakmile vkročí do místnosti, sklíčka se mu zamlží a nic nevidí. (8)</p>	<p>Shouldn't you buy glasses? Suddenly you remember your brother's frowning face, framed with dark-colored square bone rims. However, his face is immediately engulfed by screams and applause from the fountain. You still remember how your brother often complained in the summer that his glasses were coming off his sweaty nose, and in the winter that once he entered the room, his glasses misted up and he couldn't see anything.</p>

<p>often keep slipping down the bridge of his nose in the summer, and that he couldn't see anything in the winter when he got inside because of the steam on his glasses.</p>			
<p>그 밤 뻑뻑이 강당을 메운 죽은 사람들의 모습을 문득 둘러보며, 마치 이곳에 집결하기로 약속한 군중 같다고 너는 생각했다. 소리치지도 움직이지도 손을 맞잡지도 않는, 지독한 시취만을 뿜어내는 군중 (27) That night, while you were looking around at the dead people who densely filled the hall, you thought it was like a crowd promised to rally here. A crowd of people who don't scream, don't move, don't hold hands and only spout a terrible stink of dead bodies.</p>	<p>That night, looking around at all those dead bodies crammed into the gym hall, you thought to yourself how like a convention it seemed, a mass rally of corpses who were all there by pre-arrangement, whose only action was the production of that horrible putrid smell. (16)</p>	<p>Když ses pak oné noci bezděčně zadíval na všechny ty mrtvé, kteří plnili každý kout rozměrného sálu, pomyslel sis najednou, že se podobají účastníkům neplánované manifestace, svolané právě sem. Demonstranti, kteří nemůžou pozvednout hlas, kteří se nemůžou pohnout, kteří se nemůžou chytit za ruce. Demonstranti vydávající příšerný zápach. (19)</p>	<p>That night when you inadvertently looked at all the dead that filled every corner of the large hall, you suddenly thought that they resembled the participants in an unplanned manifestation called here. Protesters who can't raise their voices, who can't move, who can't hold hands. Protesters emitting a terrible smell.</p>

### 6.1.5. Dialect omission

As many others Korean language contains several dialects that differ in each province. The protagonists in *Human Acts* come from the city of Gwangju, where part of the story also takes place. Gwangju is located in the South Jeolla province on the southwest part of Korean peninsula, where the Jeolla dialect is used. Therefore, naturally the Jeolla

dialect can be found in the original text of the novel. A few short passages can be detected already in the first chapter. However, the most significant is the sixth chapter, where the story teller is Dong-ho's mother.

Her speech throughout the whole book is completely written in dialect. Even in the first chapter, where she has a short encounter with Dong-ho, we can already see from the verbs' ending, that she is not speaking in standardized Korean. The large use of Jeolla dialect also gives the character of the mother a personality of an older woman living outside of the capital city. The question that arises is how the dialect was translated into English. Unfortunately the answer is that it wasn't at all.

Translation of dialects is a very challenging process with many options to choose from. Since dialects are bound to their region of origin, there is no perfectly corresponding equivalent for them. If a translator decides to use some regional dialect from their target language, it shifts the story from the country of the source language to the country of the target language and creates a big domesticating element in the translation. On the contrary, not translating the dialect and omitting this aspect of the text entirely may possibly affect the character's personality or erase an important part of the story.

While Deborah Smith chose a way of neutralization and rendered in standard English all the dialogs and the story-telling in dialect, Petra Ben-Ari in her Czech translation used various forms of language. For the part in Jeolla dialect she mixed non-standard form of words and informal phrases with a few archaisms, which are mostly used in the sixth chapter as a part of Dongho's mother's speech in her late years.

## **6.2. Slight change in meaning**

This category contains differences in equivalence that do not have a big impact on the story line. Yet these parts of translation are not completely faithful to the source text and create a slightly different meaning. The number of these changes in the translation might be even higher but we have to consider the target language system, as literal translation could create an awkward expression in the translation. For example Smith chose the more natural English phrase "Listen to me if you know what's good for you" (7) instead of the original phrase which literally says "Listen to me when I say it nicely". Therefore the mistranslations shown below are changes where a different choice of words for more faithful yet readable translation would have been possible.

The table contains 28 findings, which range from the word level to the grammar equivalence level.

**Tab. 5: Slight change in meaning**

Original text	English translation	Czech translation	Meaning of the Czech translation
여자의 카랑카랑한 음성이 (14) clear, high-pitched woman's voice	the clear, crisp voice of the young woman (7)	jasnému hlasu mladé ženy (6)	clear voice of a young woman
여자의 선창으로 애국가 시작된다. (14) With the woman's start off the anthem begins.	The woman then leads the crowd gathered in the square in a chorus of the national anthem. (7)	Žena u mikrofonu začíná jako první zpívat hymnu. (6)	The woman at the microphone is the first to start singing the anthem.
한 서른명 될 거다. (14) It will be about thirty.	thirty (7)	„Tak třicet.“ (6)	"About thirty."
연한 하늘색 체육복 바지 (15) light blue gym pants	thin tracksuit bottoms (8)	světle modrých tepláků (7)	light blue sweatpants
더 알아줘야 할 초들이 없는지 찬찬히 살피며 너는 출입구를 향해 걷는다. (19) You carefully look for more candles to change while walking toward the entrance.	You give the room a thorough once- over, making sure there are no other candles that need to be changed, and walk towards the door. (10)	Kráčíš ke vchodu a pozorně se rozhlížíš, zda nenajdeš ještě nějakou dohořívající svíčku, kterou by bylo třeba vyměnit. (10)	You are walking to the entrance and looking closely to see if you can find another burning candle that needs to be replaced.
조금 튀어나온 눈이 귀염성 있게 동그랗고	Her round eyes were her best feature, though	Kulaté oči, trochu vystupující z profilu tváře,	Round eyes, a little protruding from the profile of

<p>(19) The slightly protruding eyes were round, having a cute nature.</p>	<p>ever-so-slightly protruding (11)</p>	<p>dodávaly jejímu výrazu roztomilý dívčí půvab. (11)</p>	<p>her face, gave her expression a cute girlish charm.</p>
<p>피비린내 때문에 코를 막고 있던 손을 내리며 너는 대답했다. (19) Lowering your hand that was covering your nose because of the smell of blood you answered.</p>	<p>you said, holding out the hand which you'd been using to cover your nose, unused to the stench of blood. (11)</p>	<p>Spustil jsi ruku, kterou sis chránil nos před dráždivým zápachem krve, a odpověděl jsi (11)</p>	<p>You lowered your hand, which protected your nose from the irritating smell of blood, and you answered</p>
<p>복도 벽을 따라 누운 스무남은사람들의 얼굴과 몸을 (20) faces and bodies of twenty people lying along the corridor wall</p>	<p>the faces and bodies of the twenty-odd people lying against the corridor wall. (11)</p>	<p>Procházíš podél stěny chodby a postupně upíráš zrak na tváře a těla mrtvých, kterých tu leží víc než dvacet. (11)</p>	<p>You walk along the wall of the corridor, gradually staring at the faces and bodies of the dead, of whom there are more than twenty.</p>
<p>오래 눈을 두기 어려워 자꾸 눈을 깜박였다. (20) you kept blinking because it was hard to keep your eyes open for a long time.</p>	<p>you had to keep blinking to try and refocus. (11)</p>	<p>protože se nedokážeš příliš dlouho soustředit, co chvíli zavíráš oči. (11)</p>	<p>because you can't concentrate for too long, you close your eyes every now and then.</p>
<p>그럼 며칠 더 이쪽으로 와봐. (21) Try to come here also the next couple of days</p>	<p>'Come by again tomorrow, and the next couple of days,' (11)</p>	<p>„Přijď se sem podívat za pár dní. (12)</p>	<p>Come here to have a look in a few days.</p>
<p>여기 일은 힘든데, 집에 들어가라. (22)</p>	<p>This is no place for you. (12)</p>	<p>Tohle není práce pro děti, koukej mazat domů. (14)</p>	<p>This is not a job for children, you better go home.</p>

The work here is difficult, go back home.			
저는 힘든 거 없어요. 사실이였다. 너의 일은 힘들지 않았다. (22) I have no difficulties. It was true. Your work wasn't hard.	And I don't have a problem with the work here.' This wasn't bravado; there was nothing technically difficult about the tasks you'd been assigned. (12)	A práce tady pro mě není těžká.“ Nepřeháněl jsi. Nic těžkého jsi nedělal. (14)	And working here is not hard for me.” You didn't exaggerate. You didn't do anything hard.
유난히 죽은 사람들이 많았던 밤에는 (27) On a night when there were exceptionally many dead people,	On nights when the influx of new arrivals was especially overwhelming (15)	Jedné noci, když bylo mrtvých nečekaně mnoho, (19)	One night, when there were unexpectedly many dead people,
마이크를 쥔 젊은 남자의 목소리가 들린다. (28) You hear the voice of a young man holding a microphone.	Now the voice coming from the speakers is that of a young man. (16)	Slyšíš hlas mladého muže, který převzal mikrofon (19)	You hear the voice of a young man, who work over the microphone
비가 안 들이치는 출입문 앞 처마로 너는 뛰어 돌아온다. (30) You run back to the eaves in front of the gate where it doesn't rain.	you hurry to shelter under the eaves projecting over the main door. (18)	Doběhneš zpátky pod přístřešek nad vchodem do Sangmugwanu, který tě chrání před deštěm. (22)	You run back under the shelter above the entrance to Sangmugwan, which protects you from the rain.
세수할 때 (33) wash your face	wash your hands (19)	oplachuješ obličej (24)	wash your face



<p>집에 가면 이제 여기 오지 마. (33) If you go home don't come back here now.</p>	<p>If you go home, stay there. Don't try and come back tonight. (19)</p>	<p>Jestli půjdeš domů, už tam zůstaň a sem prozatím nechod'. (25)</p>	<p>If you go home, stay there and don't come here for now.</p>
<p>은숙 누나가 문득 고개를 움츠린다. 머리카락이 목덜미를 간지럽히나보다. (33) Eun-sook suddenly shrugs. It looks like her hair tickles the back of her neck</p>	<p>Eun-sook draws up her shoulders, and the hairs escaping from her braids tickle the nape of her neck. (19)</p>	<p>Unsuk najednou pohodí hlavou. Vlasy uvolněné z copánků ji nejspíš pošimraly na krku. (25)</p>	<p>Eun-sook suddenly shakes her head. Her hair, loose from her braids, probably tickled her neck.</p>
<p>너는 눈을 가늘게 뜨고 (39) You squint your eyes</p>	<p>You opened your eyes a fraction (22)</p>	<p>Privřel jsi oči (30)</p>	<p>You squint your eyes</p>
<p>이어 얼굴을 담갔다. (41) then dipped your face.</p>	<p>then scooped up the water to splash over your face. (24)</p>	<p>vzápětí jsi však do nádoby sklonil celou hlavu. (31)</p>	<p>then you dipped your whole head into the container.</p>
<p>꿈보다 무서운 생시가 너를 기다리고 있었다. (42) Waking hours scarier than a dream were waiting for you.</p>	<p>In any case, the waking hours that stretched out in front of you were far more frightening than any dream. (24)</p>	<p>Skutečnost, která na tebe za otevřenými víčky čekala, však byla ještě mnohem děsivější než jakýkoliv sen. (32)</p>	<p>But the reality that awaited you in front of your open eyelids was far more frightening than any dream.</p>
<p>야근이 잦았다. (44) night overtimes were frequent.</p>	<p>frequently on night shifts (26)</p>	<p>často dělat přesčasy do pozdních nočních hodin (35)</p>	<p>often work overtime until late night.</p>
<p>모서리의 사람에게서</p>	<p>You force yourself to focus on the</p>	<p>Nemůžeš od těl ležících ve</p>	<p>You can't take your eyes off the</p>

<p>눈길이 떴어지지 않는다. (47) You can't take your eyes off the person in the corner.</p>	<p>person in the corner. (29)</p>	<p>vzdáleném koutě haly odtrhnout oči. (38)</p>	<p>bodies in a far corner of the hall.</p>
<p>비슷한 주름치마를 입은 모습을 봤던 것도 같았다. (48) You felt like you saw her wearing a similar pleated skirt.</p>	<p>And that pleated skirt. Yes, it was definitely similar. (29)</p>	<p>Dokonce se ti zdálo, žes na ní viděl i podobnou plisovanou sukni. (39)</p>	<p>It even seemed to you that you saw a similar pleated skirt on it.</p>
<p>탁자 왼편에 장부를 펼쳐놓고, 죽은 사람의 이름과 일련번호, 전화번호나 주소를 십육절 갱지에 큼직하게 옮겨적는다. (49) You open the book and place it on the left side of the table and transcribe the dead person's name, serial number, phone number or address on a paper of ordinary notebook size.</p>	<p>Your ledger is lying open on the left-hand side of the table, and your eyes are scanning the column of names, numbers, phone numbers and addresses, checking you have the correct details before writing them in big letters on A4 paper. (29-30)</p>	<p>Na levou stranu desky sis položil rozevřený zápisník a na čisté listy papíru přepisuješ velkými písmeny jména zemřelých, jejich pořadová čísla a telefon nebo adresu pozůstalých. (40)</p>	<p>You placed an open notebook on the left side of the board, and on clean sheets of paper you write the names of the dead, their serial numbers, and the telephone number or address of the bereaved in large letters.</p>
<p>이가 빠져 불분명한 발음으로 노인이 말한다. (51) The old man speaks in unclear pronunciation because his teeth are missing.</p>	<p>He seems to be missing several teeth, which doesn't exactly help you puzzle out his thick accent. (31)</p>	<p>Chybějící zuby mu znesnadňují výslovnost. (41)</p>	<p>Missing teeth make it difficult for him to pronounce.</p>

<p>군인들 안 지키는 산길을 겨우겨우 넘어갔고. (51) I barely managed to get over the mountain path that the soldiers didn't protect.</p>	<p>I found a path over the mountains that the soldiers weren't guarding. I only just made it. (31)</p>	<p>tak šem še šem doškrábal neštráženou horškou štežkou.“ (41)</p>	<p>so I scrambled here over an unguarded mountain path.</p>
<p>너를 기다리고 있다. (52) are waiting for you</p>	<p>You're waiting for (31)</p>	<p>bude na tebe čekat (42)</p>	<p>will be waiting for you</p>

### 6.3. Significant change in meaning

The changes in this category have a significant impact on the story, even creating an opposite meaning in some of the cases. For example in the original text the character stands up to leave while in the English translation he stands up to “observe a minute’s silence”. There are 28 findings from the first chapter, which are on this level of non-equivalence. Even though the overall storyline is corresponding with the original, these details are not translated in a good way and it is obvious that these passages should be revised to make the translation better and more consistent with the source text. Some of the changes of meaning could be an outcome of the editor's work. However, if we consider examples where the meaning is an opposite of the original it is probably more a case of mistranslation than a change from the editor or the publisher.

**Tab. 6: Significant change in meaning**

Original text	English translation	Czech translation	Meaning of the Czech translation
<p>주변의 정적이 갑자기 도드라지게 느껴져 너는 놀란다. (17) The silence around suddenly stands out and you're surprised</p>	<p>and the silence it leaves in its wake seems shockingly stark. (9)</p>	<p>zapůsobí na tebe mocné ticho, které se kolem tebe v tu chvíli rozhostí. (8)</p>	<p>a powerful silence that spreads around you at that moment strikes you.</p>

<p>함께 묵념하는 대신 일어선다. (17) Instead of paying silent tribute with them you stand up.</p>	<p>You get to your feet to observe the minute's silence (9)</p>	<p>Místo tiché vzpomínky vstaneš (8)</p>	<p>Instead of a silent tribute, you get up</p>
<p>죽은 사람들의 머리맡에서 일렁이는 촛불 하나하나가 고요한 눈동자들처럼 너를 지켜보고 있다. (18) Each one of the candle flames floating beside the heads of the dead is watching you like silent eyes.</p>	<p>you drag your gaze lingeringly past each candle as it wavers by the side of a corpse, the pupils of quiet eyes. (10)</p>	<p>zažíváš se postupně do plamenů všech svíček hořících u hlav mrtvých těl. Jako by to byly zřítelnice netečných očí. (10)</p>	<p>you look into the flames of all the candles burning at the heads of dead bodies one by one. As if they were the pupils of inert eyes.</p>
<p>연두색 셔츠를 입은 누나가 양동이를 들고 일어서며 말했다. (21) The girl in the light green shirt grabbed the bucket and as she lifted it up said.</p>	<p>The woman in the green shirt stood up. (12)</p>	<p>Dívka v zelenkavé blůze kyblík popadla do ruky a zatímco ho zvedala ze země, pronesla: (13)</p>	<p>The girl in the green blouse grabbed the bucket and said it as she lifted it off the ground</p>
<p>하나씩 걸어서 보여주고. (21) uncover and show them one by one</p>	<p>you uncover them again (12)</p>	<p>jedno po druhém odkrývat (13)</p>	<p>uncover one by one</p>
<p>상황실에서 온 진수 (22) Jin-su who came from the situation room</p>	<p>Jin-su's work mostly kept him confined to the briefing room (12)</p>	<p>Činsu, který dorazil z krizového štábu (14)</p>	<p>Jin-su who arrived from the crisis staff office</p>

<p>언제나처럼 바쁜 걸음으로 상황실에서 건너온 진수 형은 놀라며 물었다. 비가 오면 어찌려고요? (24) Jin-soo, who came from the situation room with his usual hurried steps, asked in surprise. "What are you going to do if it rains?"</p>	<p>Jin-su came marching from the briefing room, brisk as always, and demanded to know what you were planning to do if it rained. (14)</p>	<p>Činsu, který k vám jako obvykle přispěchal z krizového štábu, se překvapeně zeptal: „Co chcete dělat, když začne pršet?“ (16)</p>	<p>Jin-su, who hurried to you as usual from the crisis staff office, asked in surprise, "What do you want to do when it starts to rain?"</p>
<p>거기선 계속 내보내기만 해서 몰랐는데..... (25) I didn't realise because they kept exporting from there...</p>	<p>'I didn't realise they'd been bringing them all here ... (14)</p>	<p>Jak jsme je sem posílali po troškách, tak mi to nedocházelo... (17)</p>	<p>As we sent them here little by little, I didn't realise</p>
<p>급한 대로 베니어판을 구해 (26) Get the veneer in a hurry</p>	<p>so he'd got hold of as much plywood as they thought they'd need (15)</p>	<p>co nejrychleji skoupit dřevotřískové desky (17)</p>	<p>buy up chipboard as fast as possible</p>
<p>출입구의 탁자 앞에 서서 하나씩 양초를 밝힌 뒤 유리병에 꽂아놓으면 유족들이 가져다 관 앞에 놓았다. (26) Standing in front of the table at the entrance, you were lighting candles one by one, and putting them in a</p>	<p>The bereaved queued at the table by the entrance while you lit each candle and inserted it into one of the bottles. They then carried the bottle over to their coffin and set it down at the head. (15)</p>	<p>Pak ses postavil ke stolku u vchodu v hlavní hale Sangmugwanu, zažíhal jednu svíčku po druhé a upevňoval je do skleněných hrdel. Připravené svíčky si rozebírali truchlící a nosili je k rakvím. (18)</p>	<p>Then you stood at a table at the entrance to Sangmugwan's main hall, lit one candle after another, and fastened them to the glass necks. The mourners took the prepared candles and carried them to the coffins.</p>

<p>glass bottle, the bereaved families took them and put them in front of the coffin.</p>			
<p>갑자기 외할머니의 상태가 위급해져, 외삼촌 내외가 서둘러 택시를 타고 오는 동안 너와 엄마 둘이서 임종을 지켰다. (29) Suddenly, your grandmother's condition became urgent, so while your uncle and his wife rushed to take a taxi and were on their way, you and your mother together watched her passing.</p>	<p>Your mother contacted her brother and told him to come as quickly as possible, but he was still stuck in traffic when the old woman breathed her last. (17)</p>	<p>Její stav se však najednou prudce zhoršil. Zatímco jste s mámou čekali, než dorazí taxík se strýcem a tetou, kteří se ve spěchu vydali na cestu, pozorovali jste, jak babička umírá. (21)</p>	<p>However, her condition suddenly worsened rapidly. While you and your mother waited for a taxi to arrive with your uncle and aunt, who set off in a hurry, you two watched how grandma was dying.</p>
<p>날카로운 고탐 소리가 (31) Sound of a sharp scream</p>	<p>A thin scream (18)</p>	<p>pronikavých výkřiků (23)</p>	<p>piercing screams</p>
<p>양복 입은 남자의 말이 채 끝나기 전에, 사람의 팔이 어떤 것인지 너는 보았다. 사람의 손, 사람의 허리, 사람의 다리가 어떤 일을 할 수 있는지 보았다. (31)</p>	<p>Before the man in the suit had finished speaking, you saw a person's arm – what? Something you wouldn't have thought it capable of. Too much to process – what you saw happen to that hand, that</p>	<p>Než mohl muž v obleku dokončit větu, uviděl jsi, jak vypadá lidská ruka zlomená vedví. A hned potom dlaň, pas, noha – nikdy bys nevěřil, jak moc mohou části lidského těla po úderu holí ztratit svou formu. (23)</p>	<p>Before the man in the suit could complete the sentence, you saw what a human hand looked like, broken into two parts. And then the palm, a waist, a leg - you would never believe how much parts of the human body can lose their form after</p>

Before the man in the suit finished speaking, you saw what a human's arm was like. You saw what human hands, human waist, and human legs could do.	back, that leg. A human being. (18)		being struck by a stick.
비가 오니까 일어나기 미안해서 (32) I was sorry to stand up because of the rain	sorry you got caught up in this rain (19)	bylo mi hloupý se zvednout, když začalo pršet (24)	it seemed silly to me to get up when it started to rain
너, 땀 냄새 많이 나. 도청서 먹고 잔 지 한참 됐잖아. (33) You smell like sweat. It's been a while since you have been eating and sleeping at The Provincial Office.	'The Provincial Office doesn't exactly have many home comforts, you know,' Eun-sook says delicately. 'And it's hard work you've been doing ...' (19)	„Hele, popravdě, jsi dost cítit potem. Přece jen už je to nějaká doba, cos nebyl doma a přespáváš ve služebním křídle správy.“ (24)	"Look, actually, you smell of sweat a lot. After all, it's been a while since you've been home and you're sleeping in the administration's service wing."
너와 나란히 계단에 걸터앉아, 차츰 잦아드는 빗발을 보며 그걸 나눠 먹는다. (34) She is sitting with you side by side on the stairs, watching the rain slowly subside while you are eating the shared (food).	You pinch a piece between your fingers and pop it into your mouth while Seon-ju stares out at the gradually lessening rain. (20)	Zatímco si rozebíráte kolečka kimbapu, pozorujete provazy deště, které pomalu řídnou. (25)	As you share the kimbap pieces, you watch the streaks of pouring rain get slowly thinner.
하지만 엄마 말이 맞을 수도 있다. (36) But mother's words	your mother's still convinced (21)	Ale pravdu může mít i máma. (27)	But mom may also be right.

may be right.			
네가 한 말 중 사실이 아닌 게 있었다. (37) Something of what you said wasn't true.	There wasn't a scrap of truth in what you told (22)	v jedné věci jsi jim tak docela neřekl pravdu (29)	you didn't quite tell them the truth about one thing
앞쪽에 쓰러진 사람들을 신속하게 끌고 가기 시작했다. (40) They started to drag away quickly the people who fell in the front.	They worked swiftly and methodically, dragging them back to the other soldiers. (23)	Začali chvatně čistit náměstí od těl demonstrantů, kteří padli v předních řadách. (30)	They started to hurriedly clear the square of the bodies of the protesters who had fallen in the front lines.
조금 아까 또 삐끗해버려갖고, 일어나질 못하겠다. 엉덩이 쪽으로 조금만 밟아봐라야. (41) I sprained it a little bit earlier and I don't think I can get up. Step on it a little bit toward the butt.	'The muscle was giving me gyp earlier, and I couldn't get up. Give it a trample down near the base.' (24)	„Před chvílí jsem si s tím asi zase hnul, nemůžu se zvednout. Trochu mi to pomasíruj nohou, tam na kostrči.“ (32)	"I probably sprained it again a while ago, I can't get up. Massage it with your leg a bit, on the coccyx. "
정미 누나와 친남매가 만나 싶게 못생긴 정대. (42) Unattractive Jeong-dae made you wonder if he and Jeong-mi are really brother and sister.	Jeong-dae, whose plain features made you marvel that he could be related to Jeong-mi. (25)	Který byl tak škaredý, až ses někdy divil, zda je Čongmi opravdu jeho sestra. (33)	Who was so ugly that you sometimes wondered if Jeong-mi was really his sister.
너희 누난 이걸 뭐에다 쓰게? 글썄,	'Well, she keeps talking about it. It's her main	„Co s tím bude ségra dělat, prosim tě?“ „Nevím, ale má	"What will your sister do with it?" "I don't know, but she has a



<p>이게 자꾸 생각난대. 중학교 다닐 때 공부보다 주변이 더 재미있었다지 뭐냐? 한번은 만우절이라고 애들이 칠판 가득 글자를 써놨더라. (43)</p> <p>What's your sister gonna use this for? Well, she keeps thinking about this. She said that weekly duty was more fun than studying when she was in middle school, is it? One time it was April Fool's Day, the kids wrote letters on the entire blackboard.</p>	<p>memory of middle school.' 'A blackboard cleaner? Must have been a pretty boring time.' 'No, it's just there was a story connected with it. It was April Fool's Day, and the kids in her class covered the entire blackboard with writing, for a prank (25)</p>	<p>takovou historku, kterou občas vypráví. Říká, že na základce ji víc bavily pořádkový služby než učení. Jednou prej na apríla jejich třída počmárala celou tabuli. (34)</p>	<p>story she sometimes tells. She says she enjoyed cleaning duty more than studying at the elementary school. Once on April Fool's Day, their class had scribbled on the entire board.</p>
<p>아부지보다도 누나가 훨씬 무서워. (44)</p> <p>She's much scarier than our father.</p>	<p><i>She's actually even more stubborn than my dad. (26)</i></p>	<p>Bojím se jí víc než našeho tatíka. (35)</p>	<p>I'm more scared of her than our dad.</p>
<p>그녀는 고마워 어쩔 줄 몰랐다. (45)</p> <p>She was so grateful she didn't know what to do.</p>	<p><i>Thank you, she would say, I didn't know what to do. (27)</i></p>	<p>samou vděčností nevěděla co říct. (36)</p>	<p>she was so grateful she did not know what to say.</p>
<p>그렇게 잠깐 궁금했을 뿐인데, 그후로 자꾸 떠올랐다. (46)</p> <p>You just wondered for a moment, but after that it often came up</p>	<p>After only a brief while, these doubts were replaced by more intimate imaginings. (28)</p>	<p>Na chvíli ses zvědavě zadumal a pak se ti ta úvaha často vracela na mysl. (37)</p>	<p>You wondered curiously for a moment, and then the thought often returned to your mind.</p>

(in your mind).			
그는 화가 난 듯 단호한 걸음걸이로 너를 지나쳐 강당으로 들어간다. (47) Jin-su, who seems angry, walks past you with firm steps into the hall.	Jin-su bites down on whatever else he was going to say, and marches past you into the gymnasium. (28)	Činsu tě rázným krokem obejde a pokračuje do hlavní haly. Zdá se, že je rozzlobený. (38)	Jin-su walks around you with firm steps and continues to the main hall. He seems angry.
한눈에 더워 보이는 밤색 두루마기 차림의 노인 An old man in chestnut colour traditional Korean overcoat that looks hot at a glance (50)	his old-fashioned brown jacket has clearly seen better days. (30)	staříka v tmavohnědém plášti tradičního střihu, který se v každém případě zdá příliš teplý pro tohle roční období (41)	an old man in a dark brown coat of traditional cut, which in any case seems too warm for this time of year
나 자신까지도. (53) Not even for me	<i>Least of all for me.</i> (32)	Ani šám šobě. (43)	Not even to myself.

### 6.3.1. Title of the book

All three versions of the novels — the original, the English translation and the Czech translation — have a different title. Han Kang named her novel *Sonyeon i onda* (소년이 온다), Deborah Smith called her translation *Human Acts* and Petra Ben-Ari chose *Kde kvete tráva* as the title, which all have different meaning. While Ben-Ari is still using a term from the book, Smith created her own title.

Deborah Smith explained her process of the title creation in her essay *On Translating Human Acts by Han Kang*. She found the literal translation of the title, which would be *The Boy Comes* or *The Boy Is Coming*, “awkward enough even without the euphemistic implications”. It’s understandable that she rather chose a path of

creating a new title that would suit the story. Considering the topic Smith says that her first idea for replacement was *Gwangju Elegy* which would not only refer to the 1980 Gwangju Uprising but also refer to the polyphonic style of the novel. However, she admits that “‘Gwangju Elegy’ completely lacks the neutrality of ‘The Boy is Coming’” since Han Kang uses non revealing titles and the tone elastic but had more of visual producing effect. Her other ideas were “Restitution” or “Reparation” but she didn’t find them good at all considering what the book is telling us about these topics and moved to the idea of “Abrasions”. Smith also considered the Korean word for a memory “surfacing” or “rising up” which would also be “a pun on the Gwangju Uprising, and on all the subsequent uprisings, both literal and psychological, that pepper this novel”. This process escalated into the final title *Human Acts*, which to Smiths “embodied the neutrality” and yet is “disorienting and even terrifying”. At the end of the essay she also comes up with an option “The Boy Approaches” while writing it, which is very close to the original.

Petra Ben-Ari decided to exchange the title of the novel with the title of the sixth chapter. She mentions this in a footnote (p. 218) that is part of the translator's note, which she added at the end of the book. There she also explains the whole topic of the novel and historical background. Unlike Smith she kept the original meaning of both — the novel title and titles of chapters.

## **6.4. Distortion of meaning**

### **6.4.1. Movement and placement**

The first type of inadequate rendering in the English translation that creates meaning distortion concerns verbs for movement of things or people. Especially when the verb is a combination of two actions, which is very common in the Korean language. Wrong renderings of such converbal forms can cause significant distortion.

An example can be found at the very beginning of the novel. The verb 날라놓다 is a combination of “carry” and “put”, but it got translated into English as “laid out this morning, the line stretching all the way from the gym to the fountain“(8). The particles “from” and “to” which are added to the places might also be understood as the space in between them, but the verb being “carry and put” implies the meaning of relocation.

**Tab. 7: Movement and placement**

Original text	English translation	Czech translation	Meaning of the Czech translation
<p>상무관에서 분수대 앞까지 날라놓은 (14) carried from the gym in front of the fountain</p>	<p>laid out this morning, the line stretching all the way from the gym to the fountain (8)</p>	<p>před kašnou ... přemístili z tělocvičny (6)</p>	<p>in front of the fountain ... moved from the gym</p>

#### 6.4.2. Number of people

Korean honorific words are often used for referring to people of specific gender and age group. This problem will be further explained below, in the section on “cultural filtering” (6.7.). The distortion of meaning in this case happens when the translator doesn't render how people are referred to by the right honorific word. The first example is the translation of the phrase 네가 형들과 함께 (14) (you together with the older boys). The phrase contains a plural form of the word *hyung* that is used by men for older men. Smith translated this only as “you and Jin-su” (7), which leaves out the other boys. The Czech translation for this phrase is “s ostatními dobrovolníky” (6) (“with other volunteers”), which implies more people than only Dong-ho and Jin-su. The plural of *hyung* appears one more time in the first chapter. Petra Ben-Ari translated it shortly as “mladíky” (28) (“young boys”), which is equivalent to the original since the character Dong-ho is an elementary school boy and the other volunteers are older students. Deborah Smith was in this case more creative and rendered it as “The bereaved, and a handful of men“ (22), which could be even considered as added text and slight change of meaning.

#### 6.4.3. Non-continuity

On the first page of the novel Deborah Smith omitted a quite long part of text. This omission is connected later in the text causing a distortion of meaning and non-continuity of this part of the story line. The omitted text contains a memory of Dong-

ho's brother, which is followed by another memory of him. In the English translation Smith did not translate the first memory and included only the second one, which is only: "You shake your head, trying to rid yourself of the memory, the anger lacing your brother's voice." (7) This rendering does not provide the continuity of the two memories to readers and might create a bit of confusion with the memory being presented only as "the anger lacing your brother's voice". Petra Ben-Ari translated this sentence as follows: "Pohodiš hlavou, abys z ní slova rozhněvaného bratra vytrásl." (6) ("You shake your head to get rid of the words of your angry brother.")

### **6.5. Breach of the source-language system**

Korean grammar is a complex system that differs a lot from Czech and English grammar, be it the sentence structure or the use of vocabulary. Deborah Smith in her essay gives as an example the use of body in Korean when talking about movement. While in English we would use terms like "turn to the left" or "lean against a wall", Korean language is using the term body in these cases. The examples given by Smith are that "you turn or lean *your body*" or "someone bumps into *your body* rather than into *you*" (Smith, c2021). This is only one of many examples that could be given. An analysis of the *breach of the source-language system* in the novel would be a complex piece of work that requires at least an involvement of a native speaker or someone with a high Korean proficiency level. The overall look at the language system and rendering of syntax in the English translation of *Human Acts* can be in future done as a separate research.

### **6.6. Creative translation**

The English translation of *Human Acts* has not only omitted parts of text, as shown in the "not translated" part of results, but also the opposite - added parts of text. Deborah Smith has been known for her creative tendencies from *The Vegetarian* translation analysis. The outcome of her creativity is in some cases a different personality of a character or a change of some situation's details. What's important to distinguish is if the added text is somehow linked to the original text. Some of the added parts followed after the not translated text. Therefore, there is a possibility of carrying some part of the original meaning but in much more expressive phrases than in the source text. Yet

substituting the original text with her own text passage has an impact on the translation, pushing it further from the original. The outcome of the first chapter analysis are 17 findings of added text with basis in the original text and 27 cases of added text without basis in the original text.

### 6.6.1. Added expressive text with basis in the original text

**Tab. 8: Added expressive text with basis in the original text**

Original text	English translation	Czech translation	Meaning of the Czech translation
무겁디무겁게 올라가다가 절정에서 결연히 쓸려내려오는 그 곡조를, (14) The tune that heavily-heavily rises up and is swept down from its peak,	The melody surges up to a peak, only to swing down <i>again</i> <i>like a pen dulum.</i> (7)	K melodii, která graduje ponurým crescendem a pak zase zvolna a přitom nezadržitelně slábne, (6)	To a melody escalates with a gloomy crescendo and then slowly and yet unmistakably weakens,...
진수 형은 짧게 대답했다. (14) Jin-su answered shortly.	Jin-su's reply was <i>no more elaborate than it needed to be</i> (7)	dostalo se ti strohé odpovědi (6)	you got a brief answer
급히 입관을 해 (14) quickly/in hurry placed in in coffins	These were then placed in coffins, <i>with a necessarily hasty and improvised version of the usual rites.</i> (8)	a tak byla také spěšně uložena do rakví (6)	and so they were also quickly placed in coffins
시간을 벌기 위해선지,	The woman holding the microphone suggests they all sing	Žena u mikrofonu, snad aby získala trochu času, začíná zpívat Arirang.	The woman at the microphone, perhaps to gain

<p>마이크를 쥘 여자가 이번엔 아리랑을 부르자고 한다. (16) Perhaps to earn some time, the woman holding a microphone asks to sing Arirang this time.</p>	<p>‘Arirang’ while they wait for the coffins to be got ready. (9)</p>	<p>(8)</p>	<p>some time, begins to sing Arirang.</p>
<p>수천사람의 웅성거림이 일제히 멎은 순간, 주변의 정적이 갑자기 도드라지게 느껴져 너는 놀란다. (17) At the moment when thousands of people's buzz stops at once you are surprised because you suddenly feel the silence around you.</p>	<p>The hubbub of a crowd of thousands dies down as instantaneously as if someone had pressed a mute button, and the silence it leaves in its wake seems shockingly stark. (9)</p>	<p>Když hluk několikatisícového shromáždění najednou umlkne, zapůsobí na tebe mocné ticho, které se kolem tebe v tu chvíli rozhostí. (8)</p>	<p>When the noise of a crowd of several thousand suddenly falls silent, a powerful silence strikes you, which spreads around you at that moment.</p>
<p>그럼 확인해봐 (20) Have a look then</p>	<p>‘I see. You can come and have a look, if you like.’ (11)</p>	<p>Tak si je prohlédni. (11)</p>	<p>So take a look at them.</p>
<p>확인을 하려면 잘 들여다봐야 하는데, 오래 눈을</p>	<p>You had to look closely if you wanted to be sure; your eyes soon started to feel</p>	<p>Aby ses přesvědčil, zda je ti nebožtík povědomý, musíš si ho důkladně prohlédnout,</p>	<p>To make sure the deceased is familiar to you, you need to look at</p>

<p>두기 어려워 자꾸 눈을 깜박였다. (20) You have to look carefully to check, but you kept blinking because it was hard to keep your eyes open for a long time.</p>	<p><i>the strain</i>, and you had to keep blinking to try and refocus. (11)</p>	<p>ale protože se nedokážeš příliš dlouho soustředit, co chvíli zavíráš oči. (11)</p>	<p>him closely, but because you can't concentrate for too long, you close your eyes every now and then.</p>
<p>목소리도 또렷했다. (20) Even her voice was distinct.</p>	<p>And there was nothing feeble about her voice. (11)</p>	<p>I hlas má pevný. (12)</p>	<p>Even her voice is firm.</p>
<p>하루 안에 구해주었다. (26) obtained it within a day</p>	<p>and within the same day, <i>seemingly out of nowhere, it would materialise</i>. (14)</p>	<p>a nejpozději druhý den žádanou věc obstaral. (17)</p>	<p>and procured the requested item no later than the next day.</p>
<p>삼시간에 빗발이 되어 쏟아진다. (30) In an instant it's pouring streaks of rain.</p>	<p>Seemingly in an instant, the individual drops meld and blur into thick streaks, pouring down with ferocious speed. (17)</p>	<p>V mžiku se z nebe spustí prudký liják. (22)</p>	<p>In an instant, a heavy downpour from the sky begins.</p>
<p>신혼부부로 보이는 (31) Looked like newly-weds</p>	<p>Something about the way they were talking made you think they must be newly-weds. (18)</p>	<p>zřejmě novomanželé (23)</p>	<p>apparently newlyweds</p>
<p>네 뺨이 붉어진다. (33) Your cheeks turn red.</p>	<p>You blush; <i>you know you stink of sweat</i>. (19)</p>	<p>Zrudnou ti tváře. (24)</p>	<p>Your cheeks flushed.</p>



<p>큰형은 오히려 얼굴이 곱고 체형이 작아서 (37) Older brother has a pretty face and a small body</p>	<p>your eldest brother,... is much more delicately built – <i>you could almost call him pretty.</i> (21)</p>	<p>nejstarší bratr,... působí díky své drobné postavě a jemné tváříčce mladší (27-28)</p>	<p>eldest brother, ... looks younger thanks to his small figure and gentle face</p>
<p>무서워서 안 들어오는 것 같냐 (37) You think they are not coming back because they are scared</p>	<p>you really think they're <i>quaking in their boots at the thought of</i> (21)</p>	<p>Fakt si myslíš, že se armáda doted' nevrátila, protože... jsou podělaný (28)</p>	<p>You really think that the army didn't come back yet because.... they are scared</p>
<p>운동화가 벗겨진 맨발이 꿈틀거린 것 같았다. (39) The bare feet without the sneakers seemed to wobble.</p>	<p>Bare feet – <i>what had happened to his trainers?</i> – seemed to be twitching. (23)</p>	<p>(none)</p>	<p>(none)</p>
<p>스무살 정미 누나도 키가 작다. (44) 20 years old Jeong- mi is also short.</p>	<p><i>Just like her brother,</i> Jeong-mi is small for her age. (26)</p>	<p>Čongmi sice bylo už devatenáct, ale ani ona mnoho nevyrostla. (35)</p>	<p>Jeong-mi was already nineteen, but she didn't grow much either.</p>
<p>이 순간이면 언제나 주저했다. (52) You are always hesitant at this moment.</p>	<p>You hesitate, <i>lips twitching at the deep sense of dread this question never fails to thud into you.</i> (31)</p>	<p>Znejistíš pokaždé, když tuhle otázku dostaneš. (42)</p>	<p>You start to feel uncertain every time you get this question.</p>

### 6.6.2. Added text with no basis in the original text

**Tab. 9: Added text with no basis in the original text**

Original text	English translation	Czech translation	Meaning of the Czech translation
<p>공기 틈에 숨어 있던 빔방울들이 일제히 튕겨져나와, 투명한 보석들같이 허공에 떠서 반짝이기라도 할 것처럼. (13)</p> <p>It's like the raindrops hiding in the air are going to bounce out all at once, floating in the air like transparent jewels and glistening.</p>	<p>As though the raindrops suspended in the air, <i>held breath before the plunge</i>, are on the cusp of trembling down, glittering like jewels. (7)</p>	<p>Jako by dešťové kapky, mající zatím podobu par rozptýlených v povětří, měly najednou zkapalnět a snést se nad tvoji hlavu, zářící jako průsvitné drahokamy. (5)</p>	<p>It was as if raindrops, still in the form of scattered steam in the air, should suddenly liquefy and fall over your head, shining like transparent gems.</p>
<p>상무관에 있는 여든세개의 관들 중 아직 합동추도식을 치르지 않은 것은 모두 스물여섯이었는데, (14)</p> <p>Twenty-six of the eighty-three coffins in Sangmunwan have not yet held a joint memorial service</p>	<p><i>Before yesterday evening</i>, twenty-six of the eighty-three coffins hadn't yet been brought out for a group memorial service (8)</p>	<p>Mezi třiaosmdesáti mrtvými, kteří v Sangmugwanu spočinuli v rakvích, jich do včerejška bylo dvacet šest, co dosud neprošli smutečním obřadem. (6)</p>	<p>Among the eighty-three dead who rested in coffins in Sangmugwan, there were twenty-six by yesterday who had not yet gone through a mourning ceremony.</p>
<p>애국가가 끝났는데도 아직 관이 정리되지 않았나보다. (16)</p>	<p>The anthem is over, but there seems to be some delay with the</p>	<p>Hymna už skončila, ale zdá se, že všechny rakve nebyly</p>	<p>The anthem is over, but it seems that not all the coffins have been laid down yet.</p>

<p>Even though the national anthem is over, it seems that the coffins are not arranged yet</p>	<p>coffins. <i>Perhaps there are just too many.</i> (9)</p>	<p>dosud sneseny. (8)</p>	
<p>이들은 정수리까지 완전히 흰 무명천으로 덮어놓고, (17) They are covered up to the top of their heads with white cotton cloth,</p>	<p><i>Whereas the others have their cloths pulled up only to their throats, almost as though they are sleeping,</i> these are all fully covered. (9)</p>	<p>Bílé sukno nezakrývá jen těla, ale celé postavy až po temeno hlavy. (9)</p>	<p>The white cloth covers not only the bodies, but the entire figure up to the top of the head.</p>
<p>그중에서도 맨 끝 모서리에 있는 사람의 상태가 가장 나쁘다. (17) Among them, the condition of the person at the very end corner is the worst.</p>	<p>Even among these, <i>there are differing degrees of horror,</i> the worst being the corpse in the very furthest corner. (9)</p>	<p>Z těch sedmi mrtvol je v nejhorším stavu ta docela na kraji, úplně v rohu. (9)</p>	<p>Among the seven corpses, the one in the worst condition is the one on the edge, right in the corner.</p>
<p>냄새를 태워준다는 반투명한 걸불꽃이 어른어른 타오른다. (18) The translucent outer flame that burns the smell is glimmeringly burning.</p>	<p>Its translucent edges flicker in constant motion, supposedly burning up the smell of death <i>which hangs like a pall in the room.</i> (10)</p>	<p>Na okrajích plamene se mihotá průsvitná slupka, ta, která má čistit vzduch a spalovat zápach. (10)</p>	<p>At the edges of the flame, a translucent husk flickers, one that is supposed to clean the air and burn the odor.</p>
<p>너는 멍하게 지켜보았다. (19) You observed blankly.</p>	<p>You stared blankly, <i>forgetting for a moment why you'd come,</i> (10)</p>	<p>zůstal jsi zaraženě civět (11)</p>	<p>you started stunned/dumbfounded</p>

<p>키 순서로 자리가 배정되는 교실에서 너는 언제나 맨 앞에 앉는 아이였다. (22)</p> <p>In the classroom, where seats were assigned in order of height you always were the front-seat kid.</p>	<p>In the classroom, where seats were assigned in order of height, you were always the one at the very front – <i>in other words, the shortest.</i> (12)</p>	<p>Na základní škole, kde se zasedací pořádek určoval podle tělesné výšky, jsi vždycky seděl v lavici docela vepředu. (14)</p>	<p>In elementary school, where the order of the seats was determined by your height, you always sat at the very front desk.</p>
<p>선주 누나와 은숙 누나는 베니어합판이나 스티로폼 판에 미리 비닐을 깔아놓고 (22)</p> <p>Sunjoo and Eunsook put plastic on a veneer plywood or styrofoam board in advance</p>	<p>Seon-ju and Eun- sook <i>had already done most of the heavy work, which involved covering plywood or Styrofoam boards with plastic.</i> (12)</p>	<p>Sondžu s Unsuk připravovaly desky z překližky nebo polystyrénu, potahovaly je igelitem (14)</p>	<p>Sonju and Unsuk prepared plywood or polystyrene boards, covered them with plastic</p>
<p>강당을 나와 숨을 깊게 들이마시며 너는 생각한다. (28)</p> <p>Coming out of the hall, taking a deep breath, you think.</p>	<p>you think, drawing in a deep breath as you emerge from the <i>dim, twilit world of the gymnasium.</i> (16)</p>	<p>pomyslíš si, když vyjdeš ze smradem zamořené haly ven a zhluboka se nadechneš (19)</p>	<p>you think as you come out of the stinking hall and take a deep breath</p>
<p>가까워지자마자 묻는다. (34)</p> <p>As soon as she gets closer, she asks.</p>	<p>she asks, as soon as she's near <i>enough not to have to shout.</i> (20)</p>	<p>Jakmile dojde blíž, hned se tě začne vyptávat. (25)</p>	<p>As soon as she gets closer, she starts asking.</p>
<p>네가 고개를 젓자 이어 말한다. (34)</p> <p>You shake your head, she continues</p>	<p><i>and you need a moment before shaking your head in reply. ...</i> Seon-ju</p>	<p>Místo odpovědi jen zatřešeš hlavou. Sondžu pokračuje: (26)</p>	<p>Instead of answering, you just shake your head. Sonju continues:</p>

speaking.	continues <i>briskly</i> (20)		
작전 날짜만 보고 있는 거야. (37) They are just looking for the date of the operation.	They're just <i>biding their time</i> and waiting for orders from higher up. (21)	Kdepak, kamaráde, ty jenom čekaj na den, kterej určí jejich velení! (28)	No, buddy, they are just waiting for the day that their command will determine!
인산인해를 이뤘던 저 광장에서 (38) at that square that was packed with people	In that same square <i>you're looking at now</i> , where hordes of people gathered to demonstrate, (22)	na tom stejném náměstí, kde se tehdy sešly nedozírné zástupy lidí, (29)	at the same square where immense crowds of people gathered
귀를 찢는 총소리에 모두 뒤돌아 뛰기 시작했다. (38) At the sound of an ear ripping gunfire everyone turned around and started running.	Then the earsplitting sound of gunfire <i>tore through the afternoon</i> and everyone was <i>pushing and shoving</i> , trying to run back the way they'd come. (22)	Vtom zazněla ohlušující střelba a všichni se obrátili k útěku. (29)	Then there was a deafening gunfire and everyone turned to run away.
비트적비트적 일어나려던 남자의 등이 튀어올랐다. (38) The back of the man, who was standing up bit by bit, bounced up.	The man Yeongyu, who had been staggering to his feet, flipped backwards <i>as though someone had pushed him over</i> . (22)	Muž, který se vrávoravě zvedal ze země, se prudce zlomil do záklonu. (29)	The man, who was staggered up from the ground, violently bent backwards
반쯤 잠긴 철제 대문을 힘주어 밀고 (40)	You pushed open the main gate, <i>which was always left with</i>	Strčil jsi vší silou do zpolo zavřených železných vrat	You pushed the half-closed iron gate with all your strength

<p>Push the half-locked iron gate with strength</p>	<p>one half unlocked, <i>the metal rasping against the stone.</i> (23)</p>	<p>(31)</p>	
<p>사랑채 정대의 방에선 당연히 누구의 기척도 들리지 않았다. (42) Of course, you couldn't hear a sign of anyone from Jeongdae's room in the men's quarters.</p>	<p>Naturally, there were no sounds of anyone moving around in the room Jeong-dae <i>shared with his sister</i>, a tiny annex off the main gate. (24)</p>	<p>Z přístavku, kde měl Čongde pokoj, k tobě podle očekávání nedoléhal žádný zvuk. (32)</p>	<p>As expected, no sound came to you from the annex where Jeong-dae had a room.</p>
<p>슬리퍼를 끌고 좁은 마당을 건너 사랑채 앞에 섰다. (43) You shuffled in slippers across the narrow courtyard and stood in front of the men's quarters.</p>	<p><i>Walked to the door, slid it open</i>, put your slippers on. Shuffled across the narrow courtyard and stopped in front of the annex. (25)</p>	<p>Natáhneš si pantofle a úzkým dvorkem dojdeš až k přístavku. (34)</p>	<p>You put on your slippers and walk through the narrow yard to the annex.</p>
<p>같이 도청 앞으로 가서 정대를 찾자고 할 텐데. (44) You would ask her to go in front of the Provincial Office together and look for Jeong-dae.</p>	<p>beg her to go with you to look for Jeong-dae <i>among the bodies lined up</i> in front of the Provincial Office. (26)</p>	<p>Prosil bys ji, aby se s tebou vrátila před provinční správou a pomohla ti Čongdeho najít. (35)</p>	<p>You would ask her to return to the Provincial Office with you and help you look for Jeong-dae.</p>
<p>하지만 정대는 혀를 내두르며 너에게 말했다. (44) But dumbfounded</p>	<p>And yet, according to Jeong-dae, <i>she had strong opinions on certain matters</i>,</p>	<p>Jenomže Čongde ti tvrdil něco jiného. (35)</p>	<p>But Chongde claimed something else.</p>

Jeong-dae told you.	<i>and was more than capable of holding her own in a debate. (26)</i>		
그것들이 가슴을 저며 너는 깊은 잠을 이루지 못했다. (46) Those things filled your heart and you couldn't get a deep sleep.	You felt lacerated by <i>everything you imagined going on in the annex, a bare couple of metres from the room where you spent the nights tossing and turning. (28)</i>	Jakmile ses nechal unášet představami, nedokázal jsi pořádně usnout. (37)	Once you got carried away by the imagination, you couldn't fall asleep properly.
검은 마분지를 댄 장부를 보물처럼 가슴에 안은 채 너는 진수 형의 뒷모습을 지켜본다. (47) Hugging the black cardboard ledger on your chest like a treasure, you watch Jin-su's back.	Clutching the ledger to your chest as you would a treasured possession, you stare after his retreating figure, <i>at the sense of responsibility stiffening his shoulders. (28)</i>	Zápisník vázaný v černé lepence držíš pevně na hrudi jako svůj nejcennější poklad a očima sleduješ vzdalujícího se Činsua (38)	You hold the notebook bound in black cardboard firmly on your chest as your most precious treasure, and with your eyes you watch leaving Jin-su
누군가가 다시 목소리를 높이면 다른 누군가가 나직이 달래는 사이 (48) When someone raises their voice again, someone else is soothing quietly	and when the other voice rose in turn <i>that meant the tables had turned,</i> and this time it was the former who was being talked down (29)	když se začal zvyšovat ten druhý, první ho tiše mírnil (39)	as the second began to rise, the first soothed them quietly
부엌머리 방에서	until the point when you slid	Ležel jsi ve svém pokoji a pomalu	You lay in your room, slowly surrender to the

까무룩이 잠들 때까지 (49) in the kitchen headroom until you lose your senses and fall asleep	into sleep <i>as though falling into a sudden abyss</i> , you lay in your room (29)	ses poddával mátožnému snění (39-40)	dull of sleeping
멈춘다. 엄마가 허겁지겁 계단을 뛰어올라와 네 손을 잡는다. (49) you stop. Mom hurries up the stairs and grabs your hand.	You stop <i>short, confused</i> , and your mother scurries up to grab your hand <i>before you have time to retreat back to the safety of the gym.</i> (30)	Najednou se zarazíš. Mámá kvapně vybíhá na schody za tebou, sotva popadá dech, a chytá tě za ruku (40)	Suddenly you stop. Mom rushes up the stairs to you, she barely catches her breath, and grabs your hand.
여섯시에 여기 문 닫는대요 엄마. (50) It closes here at 6 o'clock, Mum.	<i>You turn round and call back to her:</i> ‘We’re going to close up here at six, Mum.’ (30)	„V šest to tady zavřou, mami.“ (41)	"They'll close it here at six, Mum."

## 6.7. Cultural filtering

### 6.7.1. Clothes

Another challenge for translators can be the description of traditional clothes of the source culture in the target text. At the time when events of the first chapter took place it was still very common that older people would wear Korean traditional clothes on a daily basis instead of the Western style clothes. The differences are also in the school uniforms patterns. If we take a look at specific cases in the first chapter of *Human Acts* the need for translation of traditional clothes occurs twice.

The first case is *gyoryeonbok* (교련복), which is an uniform for high school (military) drill. It has a black and white camouflage pattern. In the Czech translation this piece of clothes is described as “camouflage jacket from military training” (“maskáčové



bundy z branného výcviku”). Smith in her English translation renders it only as “PE jacket” (8) with no further description.

The second one is *durumagi* (두루마기), which as an overcoat part of Korean traditional clothing — hanbok. Petra Ben-Ari translated this traditional overcoat as “tmavohnědém plášti tradičního střihu” (41) (“a dark brown coat of traditional cut”). In the English translation Deborah Smith called it an “old-fashioned brown jacket” (30) instead of traditional. Calling part of hanbok an “old-fashioned” clothing is a bit inappropriate since Koreans are very proud of their traditional clothes. Koreans are still wearing hanbok during traditional holidays, there are many hanbok rental places in South Korea and hanbok’s patterns have even become part of their modern clothing.

### 6.7.2. Food

Source culture also contains a food category. Authors usually use local food names in the original text, which doesn’t need any explanation for the source language readers. In the case of Korean cuisine, some of the food is already internationally known, for example kimchi, bibimbap or bulgogi. The first chapter of the novel contains a scene of Dong-ho eating with Eun-sook and Seon-ju where one Korean drink and two Korean snacks are mentioned.

The two snacks are *castella* (카스텔라), which is a type of sponge cake with moist texture, and *gimbap* (김밥), a dish where rice, vegetables and eventually some kind of meat or fish are rolled in seaweed and cut into slices. The *castella* has similar description in both translations, the Czech one being “měkkou piškotovou buchtu” (24) (“soft sponge cake”) and the English one simply “a sponge cake” (19). A different approach can be seen in the case of *gimbap*, which is mentioned three times in the first chapter. Ben-Ari in all cases uses only the original name of the dish “kimbap”. Smith put into her translation not only the name “gimbap” but in one case she switched the name with the description of gimbap as “seaweed-wrapped rice” (20).

The mentioned Korean drink is yogurt (요구르트), which refers to Korean yogurt milk (internationally better known under its Japanese-derived brand name *yakult*) that is usually sold in small plastic bottles with foil cover. In the Czech translation this difference is overcome by the use of the term “lahvičku jogurtového mléka” (24) (“a

bottle of yogurt milk”). Smith describes the Korean yogurt only as a “yoghurt pot” (19), which might be a bit misleading. The use of “pot”, which is no more specified in the translation, might prompt an idea of some kind of bigger container. The description of the substance as something milky, i.e. liquid, is not included in the English translation directly but we are told that the character drinks the yogurt.

In the chapter is also mentioned Korean food used during the memorial service for ancestors. To be specific, the two sweetmeats in the novel are yugwa (유과) and gangjeong (강정) that are both small sized sweets. Yet Smith refers to them as “the cakes” (17), which prompts an idea of a somewhat bigger sweet object. In the Czech translation the word “sladkosti” (21) (“sweetmeats”) is used. Both of the translators then specify, by way of explicitation, the ingredients that the sweetmeats are made of in more detail as these very specific traditional sweets would need more description for target language readers.

### **6.7.3. Names of places**

The story of the first chapter takes place in the city of Gwangju during the 1980 Gwangju Uprising. The main character Dongho wanders around the city looking for his wounded friend, which brings about a few names of places for translation. The problem with Korean places is the complexity of their names, many of them having a basis in Chinese characters and carrying a meaning in each syllable. Using only a transcription for the name usually ends up by erasing most of the meaning. For example, Chuncheon translated to English would mean Spring River, which is for a Korean non-speaker easier to remember. Furthermore, keeping the whole original name in transcription and adding a “place distinguishing English word”, such as mountain, island or river, usually creates a duplications of the ending word. For example “Jejudo island” where “do” means island contains the word island twice, being Jeju island island if we translate the “do” into English as well.

This problematic brings a question how to approach the translation of places’ names in a story line. We can’t expect all the readers to have knowledge of Korean geography, especially if the story takes place outside of the capital city, which is generally the most well-known place from South Korea. The reader is already challenged with Korean names of the characters and many other elements of Korean

culture, which can be very foreign to them. The choice between domestication and foreignization arises again. One option is using the typical Korean way of keeping the title of the place in transcription. The other way is using an only English term for the place, which contains the right meaning, and abolishing the rest of the title. The third option would be keeping the whole title but translating all possible components into the target language. The translator can also choose a mix of these approaches depending his choice on the importance of the place or complexity of the name.

The places that are mentioned in the first chapter of *Human Acts* repeatedly are Provincial Office, the Red Cross hospital, Jeonnam University Hospital and Sangmugwan. Both translations kept the names Provincial Office, the Red Cross hospital, Jeonnam University Hospital similar to the original. In the case of Sangmugwan Smith the English translation refers to it as “the gym” or “gymnasium” while Ben-Ari in the Czech translation uses only the name Sangmugwan and the meaning of it being a gym hall is rendered in the text.

#### **6.7.4. Housing**

One segment of the first chapter takes place in Dong-ho’s house, where Han Kang uses names of traditional Korean house parts. Each part has a specific purpose, which is generally known in South Korea. Therefore, the author in the original text is only using the official names. The problem of the translation is the deep meaning of it. There is an option of a very long cultural explanation that would disturb the story or create a very long footnote if put into the translated text. The translator can also decide to omit this meaning and use a neutral name for part of a house when the exact term for the traditional Korean house part is not necessary for the story line. In this case the translator should be consistent and use the same name they chose every time that part of the house is mentioned.

This problematics was already mentioned by Yun in his article where he pointed out the translation of the term *anbang* (안방) in Smith’s *The Vegetarian* translation. Yun says that “English readers will simply glide over the fact that *anbang*, the main bedroom, is rendered as ‘living room’” (Yun, 2017). The literal meaning of *anbang* is an inner room. It was a multi-purpose space that was primarily the household’s head-

woman's space that only her husband could enter.<sup>24</sup> In *Human Acts* the word *anbang* is translated in two different ways — twice as a “main room” (24) and then a few paragraphs later as an “inner room” (24). The meaning is more consistent with the original term than in Smith’s translation of *The Vegetarian*. However, this is an inconsistent approach from the translator when the referring is to the same part of the house.

One more part of hanok that is mentioned in the first chapter of *Human Acts* is *sarangchae* (사랑채), which is the men’s part of a house. It is the main living space of the household male owner that originated from a building designed to entertain guests before rituals.<sup>25</sup> Both of the translators called this room in their text “an annex”, Smith even used a phrase “annex off the main gate” (24). If we take into consideration the original purpose of the room and the fact that the characters living in the *sarangchae* are not part of the family, the choice of word here could be “guest room”.

#### 6.7.5. Honorifics

Korean language contains a group of four honorific words — *hyung*, *oppa*, *unnie*, *noona* — that are used for addressing older siblings. However, the use on a friendly level for slightly older people that are not the speaker’s relatives is very common. Two of them are used in the first chapter of the novel when Dong-ho is referring to the people older than him. The chapter is written from the boy’s point of view therefore the author used the words for a girl older than a boy and a boy older than a boy, putting them behind the names or using them without a name as reference for a group of older people than Dong-ho. Later in the chapter is also used a word for an older man. None of the translators rendered these words in their translation since there are no equivalents, neither in Czech nor English. Only a person with some knowledge of Korean language and culture would have a chance to understand in case a translator kept these honorific words in the translation using some kind of transcription. While translating passages where these words are used we have to be careful what they are referring to and find the right equivalent in the target language to describe the situation correctly. Deborah Smith in her translation made a mistranslation in a few cases, which are mentioned in the “distortion of meaning” part of the results.

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<sup>24</sup> *An illustrated guide to Korean culture: 233 traditional key words*. 1th ed. Seoul: Hakgojae, 2002.

<sup>25</sup> 사랑채. *ENCYCLOPEDIA OF KOREAN FOLK CULTURE* [online]. Seoul: 국립민속박물관, [2021].

## Conclusion

Our analysis of Deborah Smith's translation of *Human Acts* reveals a number of similarities with Smith's translation of *The Vegetarian*. One of the categories in Kim Wook-Dong's analysis is "undertranslation and overtranslation" which is related to the findings presented under the "not translated" and "creative translation" categories. The first omissions in *Human Acts* that can be instantly noticed concern the titles of the chapters. This is followed by a significant number of not translated parts of text in the first chapter, which are not only on word level. The omissions include phrases and whole sentences as well.

By contrast to this omitted text we find also creatively augmented parts of the translation. The analysis shows cases where the added text parts are based on information given in the source text; this information being rendered in a more expressive way in the translation than in the original. However, the analysis also showed 27 cases of added text with no basis in the original at all, and in these cases the "extra" explanations are not necessitated by cultural differences. The expressiveness of Smith's translational approach was already pointed out by Kim Wook-Dong in his analysis. Just like in *The Vegetarian*, this tendency affects in *Human Acts* the representation of personal traits of the characters or the descriptions of scenery

The changes of meaning are divided into categories of slight changes, significant changes and distortion and focus more on the whole meaning of the text. Kim Wook-Dong took his analysis on a more linguistic level, using his knowledge of native speaker. Compared to the translation of *The Vegetarian* in the first chapter of *Human Acts* a significant problem in translation of dialog was not detected. However, there are a few cases of change in the agent-action, which were a common mistranslation in *The Vegetarian*. To explore the vocabulary rendering in a more linguistic approach another analysis of *Human Acts* is recommended.

On a cultural level *Human Acts* and *The Vegetarian* both include the challenge of translation Korean food and housing terms. Opposite to Smith's translation of *The Vegetarian*, in her translation of *Human Acts* she uses better equivalences for Korean food and terms like *anbang* that are mentioned in the first chapter. Her descriptions of traditional Korean clothing and school uniforms are not sufficient and could be rendered differently.

The findings of the analysis were compared with corresponding parts of the text in the Czech translation. The results of the comparison show that the Czech translation is in most of the cases more consistent with the source text. Yet even Petra Ben-Ari's translation contains a few parts of text that differs from the original. The reason might be the different translation norms between the two languages and the education of the translators.

The results of the analysis are corresponding with the domesticating approach of translation, which is common in the Anglophone translation. The Czech norms are more in favor with foreignization as the number of translations on the Czech literary market is almost half of it and the readers are used to foreign aspects in the books. These aspects have to be considered when we are evaluating and comparing different translations. Therefore, to call Deborah Smith's translation completely wrong would be inappropriate. Her translation of *Human Acts* is more consistent with the source text than in the case of *The Vegetarian*. With all the obstacles that translators are facing during the process, it is almost an impossible task to render a perfect translation.

## Resumé

Tato práce se zaměřuje na anglický literární překlad z korejského jazyka, přesněji na novelu *Human Acts* od autorky Han Kang, kterou do anglického jazyka přeložila Deborah Smith. Práce navazuje na kontroverzi, která vznikla kolem jejího překladu novely *The Vegetarian*, kterou Smith přeložila před *Human Acts*. Vzniklá debata se zaobírala kvalitou jejího překladu a poukazovala na jeho chyby. Analýza se zaměřuje na první kapitolu novely *Human Acts* a je k ní využita metoda Translation Quality Assessment, přesněji model od Juliane House z roku 1997. Podle tohoto modelu byly výsledky rozděleny do sedmi kategorií. Analýza odhalila vysoký počet nepřeložených částí textu, oproti nimž byly do textu přidány fráze, které originál neobsahuje, nebo jsou oproti němu příliš expresivní. Tato expresivita byla vytýkána již v analýze překladu *The Vegetarian*, kterou provedl Kim Wook-Dong. Příliš expresivní výrazy mění charaktery postav i detaily některých scén. V dalších kategoriích byly zkoumány větší a menší změny významu. Ty vykazaly chyby nejen na úrovni slovíček, ale i celých frází. V potaz byl přitom brán nejen význam jednotlivých slov ale celého textu. V překladu Smith jsou problémy se slovesy, které obsahují dvě různé aktivity a jejich nepřesný překlad způsobuje místy zkreslení významu. Z kulturního hlediska Deborah Smith přeložila text obsahující výrazy s korejským jídlem nebo částmi tradičních korejských domů lépe, než tomu bylo v jejím překladu *The Vegetarian*. Nedostatečný překlad však najdeme u výrazů pro tradiční korejské oblečení a školní uniformy. Překlad Smith byl srovnán s českým překladem od Petry Ben-Ari — *Kde kvete tráva*. Český překlad oproti anglickému se vyznačuje větší věrností originalu, avšak i v něm jde nalézt malý počet případů, kdy úplně neodpovídá výchozímu textu. Tyto rozdíly jsou způsobeny rozdílnými normami mezi českým a anglickým překladem. Český překlad se spíše kloní k zcizující metodě, zatímco anglické překlady jsou více domestikativní. Anglický překlad *Human Acts* od Smith je více konzistentní s výchozím textem než je tomu v případě jejího překladu *The Vegetarian*.

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