A story about my first attempt for fair-trade translation of David Epston in Tokyo:

Reminiscing about the distilling-typhoon-like experience

By Sumie Ishikawa

The only sure thing is that translating for David Epston’s 2-day workshop in Tokyo was like a distilling typhoon. It came in the middle of peaceful sunny afternoon, out of nowhere, stirred up everything around me without giving me enough seconds to understand what was clouding my vision, and then the typhoon disappeared, allowing my peaceful sunny afternoon to resume... I’m thinking, “What just happened...?!” Was that even real...?” Although I still haven’t been able to put that distilling-typhoon-like experience in presentable perspective at all, David encouraged me to “REMINisce’ ABOUT THE ’STAGES’ YOU WENT THROUGH TO JAPAN-ESING A WORKSHOP” and “SHARE YOUR ‘JOURNEY SO FAR.'” So this is a sincere fore-warning that the story I’m going to tell now won’t have any extraordinary climax or conclusion. My hope is that even a tiniest part of this story can contribute to generating further conversation about re-imagining and re-inventing narrative therapy beyond the Michael’s and David’s version of narrative therapy.

In the middle of the night on December 31, 2016, I was walking up on the steep snow-covered hiking trail in the mysteriously-beautiful night mountain. My heart was full of excitement and hopes for what I am about to encounter as seeing the first sun rise of the year, hatsuhinode, from the top of mountain has been my small but procrastinated dream for some years and also is culturally associated with bringing good luck to the new coming year. The hatsuhinode was rather mesmerizing than just beautiful. What also welcomed us on the top of the mountain was 200 bowls of hot delicious ozouni (traditional soup dish for New Year’s day) cooked and served by a small group of mountain lovers in their 50s and 60s who brought up all the heavy fresh ingredients and pots and cooked this soup in the middle of the cold dark night for stranger hikers each of whom probably has his/her own particular hopes for seeing hatsuhinode this year. I was touched and inspired by their humble and unspoken way of doing the caring and sharing, and felt truly glad about my decision to move back to my home country in 2015 after living in Canada for 12 years.

After a long hatsuhinode hike, my friend and I decided to take a nap in a parking lot of friendly convenience store in the countryside. As soon as we started snoozing in delight being hugged by warm sunshine, ‘ding!’ here comes my email. The sound of smartphone brought us right back to the electronic reality. My friend joked, “Who is clicking on computer on the New Year’s morning?” I checked my phone lazily with my eyes half closed... “Holy shit, it’s David Epston!” David contacted me, out of nowhere, and was asking me if I want to translate for his upcoming workshop in Tokyo. During the sleepless nap time, I thought about million reasons to say ‘yes!’ and another million excuses to politely say ‘no’ simply because I know nothing about translation and I didn’t want to mess it up especially when David Epston is coming to Japan for the first time...! Too much pressure...! However, I couldn’t help thinking, ‘but it could be a good-luck gift from seeing hatsuhinode...’ Since the New Year’s ‘ding’ on my smartphone, David and I corresponded back and forth every day for the next three months, which was far from business-like
communication sending PowerPoints and outlines, but rather like exchanging and merging of each other’s spirits through stories.

One day David introduced me to Marcela Polanco’s “Language Justice: Narrative therapy on the fringes of Columbian magical realism” (Polanco, 2016) and “Mumbai plenary address” written by David. I still vividly remember the shocking moment when I read Marcela’s words:

“I was doing a domesticating translation, which was literal, concerned for fidelity and to remain pure to Michael’s original text. I consumed ‘maps’ like a Macdonald’s burger. I was dismayed to realize that I was engaging in the ‘whitening of my identity’ without any reference to the geopolitics of knowledge and political disparities.”

I felt like I finally located where I might have got stung by a mosquito in such a covert unexpected place (maybe some weird spot like between fingers) after all this time of suffering from undeniable itchiness but never knowing the exact spot to scratch.

<My first story: A bitter experience of self-translation project...>

At the end of my Master’s program, I wrote a paper about co-researching ‘hikikomori’ problem, for which I collected insider-knowledges of hikikomori insiders across the oceans and generations. Since I put my whole-hearted effort to this project, I could not wait to translate this paper and share it with other hikikomori insiders, their families, friends and other ‘professionals’ as soon as I returned to Japan. However, once I started translating my own paper into my native tongue, Japanese, I could not feel the lively spirit of the writer, myself, in the translated version. It was such a disconcerting and even shame-evoking experience because what I felt so genuine when thinking and writing in English felt all of a sudden so distant, foreign, illegitimate and un-explainable in my own native tongue. I had this un-tolerable thought that my knowledge and beliefs written in English might have been possibly a mere product of ‘seijo-kabure’ (derogatory term for western-culture/people-admirer) spirit, which left such a bad taste in my mouth that I had no choice but to end my self-translation project abruptly.

<My second story: ‘Yikes... is this still narrative therapy?!’>

When I moved back to Japan and started practicing narrative therapy in Japanese in 2016, I remember that my Euro-Americanized part of me was asking my favorite go-to Euro-American spirited questions, superficially sprayed with Japanese-texts. Japanese part of me was listening to these questions, shaking her head and saying “your Euro-American-spirited questions won’t reach

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1 “Hikikomori” is a social phenomenon where people don’t come out of their home for months and years without social interactions outside home.
Japanese people’s hearts...!” Euro-Americanized questions in my head had unknowingly become a way to assure myself that I’m not off the track (of English version of narrative therapy). I had no choice but to stop translating English questions in my head into Japanese. I only had my favorite spirits of narrative therapy to guide my questions: radical-playfulness, mischievous subversive-ness, love for adventure, and uncompromising ethics (although I hadn’t named them at that time), which is where the spirits of narrative therapy meets my own living spirits that are well-grounded in my mother tongue, my family and ancestors in my homeland. Strangely it was no longer a daunting task of translating magical English questions into equally-magical Japanese texts. It was rather like an exciting tightrope act challenge outside on a windy day. My focus is to stay on the rope, which is made out of the fine line where spirits of narrative therapy meets my own living spirits. As wind swings the rope, questions were generated spontaneously and creatively in response to stay balanced on the rope. I sometimes landed on the un-heard-of questions that got me wondering with nervous laugh, “Yikes...is this still narrative therapy?!”

After reading Marcela’s articles about domesticating/foreignizing translation, I felt like I was finally finding some missing key pieces to further work on my own puzzle. For my first story above, I started thinking to myself, “Maybe I was doing domesticating translation of my own paper, so concerned for fidelity to the original texts in English as if the texts themselves contain the spirits. By holding on to the texts too tightly, the guiding spirits ended up slipping through my fingers... How silly... in a horrifying way...!” To my second story, I wanted to say to my nervous ‘yikes’ face, “Hey, that might mean that you just re-invented more culturally-resonating texts within the particular socio-political context of your conversation..! That’s worth celebrating..!”

Marcela’s readings also allowed me to realize that translator is not a mere ‘text switchers’ whose skills are praised for leaving the content untouched. Instead, I started seeing translators as a political role as ‘knowledge-importer’ who has considerable leverage over “language justice’ that maintains fair trade relationship with reciprocity” (Salon, 2017) between the language and culture of exporter and that of importer. With that in mind, I for the first time engaged in this political act of translation. Unlike the daunting responsibility of translating heavily-valued texts, I for the first time experienced translation as creative, fun and enjoyable process. If you happen to walk by me translating David’s transcripts, you might have seen me trying to hold back my giggles or having mischievous up-to-something look on my face. I think Marcela’s reading set me at least freer from the pressure to be faithful to every word, and instead allowed me to focus on staying faithful to the spirits and ethics as creatively as possible in search of the most culturally-fitting expressions that can touch/move Japanese people’s hearts and lives.

<In a quest for foreignizing translation>

I only had a solid commitment to somehow foreignizing David’s transcripts but didn’t know
how. I was fumbling for what I don’t even know what it might look like in the pitch darkness. Marcela’s words were the only guiding light in the dark, and David’s unwavering faith in my quest was like a protective helmet to keep going through rough spots. This quest unfolded itself into four stages, yielding four different editions of translations.

<1st to 3rd edition of the translation>

My initial plan was to ask my colleague Keiko, who doesn’t understand English or narrative therapy but very enthusiastic about learning narrative therapy, to read my rough draft and edit together to ensure that this transcript is well-tuned into the particularity of epistemological, cultural and linguistic experience of participants. Such process of imagination is impossible without Keiko’s help because my understanding of English and narrative therapy inevitably restricts my ability to imagine the raw experience of imported-knowledge-consumers. However, just in time David introduced me to Akari who is a Japanese linguist living in New Zealand for decades. She happily agreed to check the expressions and sentence structures in my rough draft and made a number of thoughtful suggestions for alternative ways to translate. As many of her suggestions were far smoother coming into the ears and hearts of Japanese people, it was no-brainer decision to apply those suggestions. There were also other parts that I chose to keep the spirit of ‘Anti-language’ and intentionally-awkward “made-up-ness” (Polanco, 2016) so that the spirits of narrative therapy is vividly present. For other parts, I kept both my version and Akari’s versions, let them sit for now, and wait for Keiko’s fresh feedback.

Keiko happily spent hours going through the second edition of the transcript with me. Knowing that we will be performing this transcript in the workshop, I asked for detailed feedback on any:

- (grammatically) unclear subjects and objects (we often omit subjects and objects in informal Japanese conversation, but then too many omissions can make things unclear)
- disconnection in the flow of conversation (How did the conversation go from here to there?)
- unclear questions (What is David trying to understand by asking this question?)
- parts where it was hard to imagine the facial expressions and body movements of the characters (This was crucial because this transcript has to have the quality of script for actors)

When I filled her in as much as possible, she edited wording and added unspoken-but-necessary descriptions in brackets to fill in the gaps for actors and other participants, which became our third edition of the translation. For the parts that I kept two versions of translation, Keiko either picked one or the other, or came up with her version inspired by the previous two versions.

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2 Made-up-ness of language is a Rushdie’s (2014) terms that “unshackles language from the prison house of words in which godly grammatical conventions confines the doings of language to perform only in naturalistic and unimaginative ways.” (Polanco, 2016)
<4th edition: the surprise baby...!>

I thought that the 3rd version, recreated with the feedback from Akari and Keiko, was the final version. As suggested by David, Kaori and I decided to give it a nice-and-quick rehearsal in distance on skype so that I can start printing out these transcripts. We were cramped for time as David was arriving in three days....! Kaori and I started reading out loud a transcript. Kaori played a role of 10-year-old girl Kelly in New Zealand. I played a role of David. As we were trying our best to put our feelings into words and be animated as genuinely as possible, there was this undeniable sense of artificial awkwardness and un-playful forcedness..., which I found very familiar without knowing exactly what it was.

Several minutes into our rehearsing, I interrupted Kaori and suggested that, instead of calling each other Euro-American-centric names, we call each other by real names. Although I was still conscious of keeping David’s friendly, playful and ethical spirits all intact, as soon as I started calling Kaori ‘Kaori-chan’ (‘chan’ is a term of endearment, especially for children), instead of Kelly, I could see the vivid difference in her acting. Her facial expressions were much softer, more spontaneous and even came with 10-year-old-like shy adorable smile! I, too, experienced the act of addressing her ‘Kaori-chan’ quite differently. As I was directly seeing the eye of Kaori and her adorable 10-year-old-like smile and spirit and addressed her so endearingly, “Neh (Hey), Kaori-chan?”, I could feel that my own spirit ‘meant it’. It no longer took any effort for us to spontaneously laugh, express and read each other’s meaningful pauses. The profound difference the act of foreignizing names ended up having on the way we experienced ourselves were far beyond our imagination.

At that point, we were mischievously excited and wanted to Japan-eze everything we found foreign-sounding/looking/meaning...! We changed Kelly’s wonderfulness, Irish/Kilkenny humour, to Kaori-chan’s wonderfulness, Osaka humour, (Osaka is well-known for humourous culture traditionally and today. We asked the workshop organizer, Nobu, who is originally from Osaka to perform the role of Kaori-chan’s dad with strong Osaka dialect and Osaka humour with absolute freedom to play around with the texts, which he happily agreed. We changed Kelly’s aunt Sara with Irish humour to aunt Miyoko with Osaka humour (Miyoko is such a showa-era(1926-1989)-specific women’s name. Combined with Osaka’s loud funny culture, those elements instantly gives vivid characterization). We changed the book ‘New Yorker Book of Dog Cartoons’ into Japanese humorous kid’s book ‘Jimmy to Boku (Jimmy and me).’ The list of changes we made goes on and on... It took only several minutes to change around the names and settings with wild imagination and laugh. When we rehearsed the fourth edition of translation, we were relaxed and having fun. With mischievous giggles, Keiko and I went through similar process of Japan-ising the names and settings for other transcripts as well.

With a little nervousness, I reported to David about our eye-opening rehearsal experience
and a whole bunch of edits I ended up making on his transcripts without his permission. This is the encouraging response I got from him:

“GREAT…GREAT…YOU DID IT, SUMIE! YOU ‘JAPAN-ESED’ IT!!!!! [...] THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT I WAS NOT ONLY HOPING FOR BUT DREAMING ABOUT...AND YOU ARE GOING TO FULFILL MY DREAM OF A ‘RE-CREATED’ VERSION OF NZ NARRATIVE THERAPY....AS UNDERTAKEN BY ME! [...] SUMIE, YOU NO LONGER NEED MY PERMISSION...I HANDED OVER TO YOU TO ‘CONDUCT’ THIS TRANSCRIPT, THE SAME WAY A COMPOSER MUST HAND OVER TO THE CONDUCTOR HOW THEIR MUSIC IS PLAYED.....SO FROM NOW ON, ALL YOU ARE REQUIRED TO DO IS TELL ME WHAT YOU DECIDE ON... [...] YOU ARE THE AUTHORITY, NOT ME! AND I AM GLAD YOU ARE ‘THERE’ TO ASSUME THE MANTLE OF SUCH ‘AUTHORITY’ IN YOUR COUNTRY, IN YOUR LANGUAGE, AND YOUR CULTURE...”

At the end of rehearsal with Kaori, I ended up sharing a story about why the “artificial awkwardness and un-playful forcedness” above might felt so familiar and intolerable...

<My third story: Not playing ‘Meg’, but being ‘Meg’>

When I was 10-year-old, my friend and I used to go to after-school English conversation class. Our American teacher told us to pick an English name and call each other by English name even during our break. I remember happily picking ‘Meg’ for my English name which came right from a beautiful young female character from a popular Sunday-dinner-time animation based on a novel, “Little woman” written by Louisa May Alcott in 1868. (As I grew up, many popular TV programs during breakfast/dinner hours were based on Euro-American novels about Euro-American lives in the mid/late 19th century, such as “Little House on the Prairie” by Laura Ingalls Wilder”, “A little princess” by Frances Hodgeson Burnett, “The Adventures of Tom Sawyer” by Mark Twain). So it was quite easy to pick a favorite English name but even to enjoy being ‘Meg’.

When I was 20-year-old and decided to live in Canada, my homestay mom told all the homestay students in the house to not speak in our mother tongues in or outside the home, and try not to make friends from home-country so that our English skills improve faster. I appreciatively followed the advice and chatted with my Japanese best friend in English even when no one is watching us. In no time, I was surrounded by white friends who told me that they can’t tell that I’m Japanese at all because my English is good. Back then I thought that was simply a compliment on my linguistic skills, but in retrospect I think what they were noticing was my fine art of being ‘Meg’ who found it acceptable to mute my Japanese-ness in me for a greater cause: learning English fast and well. It took about seven years to start wondering what being ‘Meg’ might have costed me: my sense of connection with and love for my home country’s worldview, mother tongue, my family, ancestors and kami-sama (animistic spirits). I might have accepted and internalized the disparity in
status between the Euro-American-centric way and peripherally-located Japanese way. This was how my journey of un-learning being ‘Meg’ started and eventually turned into my ever-growing desire to repatriate myself after living in Canada for 12 years.

After going through this rather unfamiliar and counter-intuitive process of ‘Japan-ising’, Kaori and I were shocked to realize how accustomed we are to carelessly consume imported knowledge, literature, music, and films that are literally translated into Japanese... without knowing or even imagining what sorts of spirits and values we might be unconsciously importing, along with the domesticating translation.

<Workshop in Tokyo Day ONE>

On the first day, regardless of my commitment to decolonizing translation, there was a judgment-clouding degree of the pressure to be reasonably obedient to the original texts that David speaks. I remember the loud presence of well-known translator, bilingual psychiatrists and other bilingual professionals sitting in the front rows... I could sense their expectations in sync for me to perform domesticating translation with dictionary-like loyalty to texts so that I never miss a word David speaks. I was probably under the influence of “failure voice” (FV) which is my externalized problem. FV was trying to convince me that proud bilingual enthusiasts are wondering, “How did this girl with no name end up translating David Epston? Why isn’t more experienced translator translating David? She better not waste this rare workshop...!!” To make matters worse, once I started translating David, it was much harder than I thought to tell whether or not I was really doing foreignizing translation because translating on the spot was thoughts-consuming enough.

As the workshop goes on, I was gradually feeling less overwhelmed by the texts David speaks and experiencing more moments where I wished I had translated more freely by adding comments or using more Japan-esed expressions. Although I ended up hesitating to do what I wished to do due to the pressure to stay inside the cage of language, I did recognize that the cage actually had an open door if I ever decide to escape. At the end of the first day, we had a warm reception. Surprisingly, many participants came up to me and commented that they appreciated my “character-full” translation because the “warm” and “unpretentious” spirits of narrative therapy reached their hearts, in the way “highly academic” and “proper” language that is prevalent in narrative therapy books and conferences didn’t reach. Such encouraging comments made me regret that I held back my spontaneous temptations to be more playful, flexible, and/or culturally specific. So I renewed my commitment to be more experimental on the second day.

<Workshop in Tokyo Day TWO>

David also encouraged me to reminisce especially the second day of the workshop: “NO ONE HAS EVER DONE ANYTHING LIKE WHAT YOU CONTRIVED TO DO ON THE SECOND DAY...CAN YOU
PLEASE TELL US ABOUT WHAT YOU INVENTED...OF COURSE, I COULD NOT REALLY 'TELL' AS I COULD NOT UNDERSTAND YOU BUT WHAT I COULD DO WAS WATCH HOW ENTRANCED THE ATTENDEES WERE BY YOUR 'TRANSLATION'...PERHAPS THAT IS ALSO AN INEXACT WORD...PERHAPS WE NEED ANOTHER TERM' FOR WHAT YOU WERE DOING...” Other people including participants also mentioned that something about the way I translated shifted on the second day.

The second day started rather tragically. It began with an unexpected serious apology for the lack of precision in my literal translation because some of bilingual participants complained about it the day before. The apology was followed by another unexpected apology for not being able to find more qualified translator for this workshop. Being lost in translation about what just happened, David started the morning portion of the second day. Although the stirred-up emotions were still vibrating in my heart and mind, David's same-old inquisitive and adventurous eyes and spirits had strange calming effects. However, not surprisingly it was impossible to not notice the sharply un-trusting gaze from the audience. (This time, it surely wasn’t FV trying to trick me!) As soon as I intentionally paused in mid-sentence, to try to think outside the 'prison of the language' to reinvent the foreignizing texts, my pause was right away translated as a sign of another failure in literal translation, therefore a bunch of 'right answers' for domesticating translation from bilingual participants were flying in the air towards me to ‘aid’ domesticating translation or ‘correct’ my foreignizing translation. Being introduced as unqualified translator, it was hard to openly dismiss those loud ‘aid’ and ‘corrections’ from supposedly more ‘qualified’ bilingual translators, professors and psychiatrists, etc. I felt like I had no choice but to reluctantly take those suggestions, feeling incapable (of subverting this pressure), lost, shocked and upset. In the lunch time, I managed to externalize my upset-ness and gathered myself up, remembering that:

- David said that narrative therapy involves a "POETIC MISUSE OF ENGLISH,” which is why "ONLY POET CAN TRANSLATE A POET.” He also said, “I KNEW ‘DOWN DEEP’ YOU WERE ONE OF THE FEW WITH THE AUDACITY AND BILINGUALITY AND POETRY TO NOT ONLY ASSUME THIS RESPONSIBILITY BUT TO REVEL IN IT.” I realized that that is what I’m trusted with, not my ability to match words ‘correctly’ like a dictionary.

- David said that “I HAVE A COMMITMENT AND PASSION TO ‘SPEAK’ AND DEMONSTRATE NT AS MUCH AND AS FAR AWAY AS I CAN WITH THE TIME AND ENERGY I HAVE LEFT TO ME.” I remember feeling so moved to put in this context the enormous amount of time, effort and heart that David was pouring into this workshop in Japan. Being in solidarity with the reason why David was in Tokyo was far more important than tip-toeing around the Macdonalizing corrections from the audience.

After the lunch break, I switched my gear. I asked myself, what do the spirits of narrative therapy mean to me? The narrative spirits I’m personally drawn to is the spirits of radical-playfulness, subversive-ness, adventure, and un-compromising ethics. So I can only try to convey those spirits to the hearts of Japanese audience by trying to live out those spirits myself through my
foreignizing translation. When I let go of the temptation to somehow come up with the universal version of translation that pleases everybody, it unexpectedly brought back to life my own spirits of loving adventure, mischievous and fearless subversive-ness, and outside-the-box-playfulness.

In the afternoon, I focused on being loyal to the spirits and decided to be bolder about being re-creative about the texts. I was adding summary of what David has said so far, making explicit references to the word/story that David described earlier. Also, David has a particular way of telling stories with one key element missing that successfully keeps the audience on the edge of their seats. Because I, too, had no clue about where this story is going, even though I did my best to keep the suspense as alive as possible, when David finally pulled out the last missing piece, it sometimes didn’t quite fit with how I had been setting up the suspense up till then. If such unfortunate landing happened on the first day, I left it as ‘Oh... if I knew that, I could have set it up better...!’ On the second day, I had more shameless way of adding extra descriptions to fill in the gap between David’s set-up in English and mine in Japanese so that audience don’t miss out on the laughs or A-ha! factors. Moreover, when I see a bunch of Macdonalizing suggestions and corrections flying towards me, I no longer felt obligated to take them because even if there may be an equivalent word in dictionary, it doesn’t necessarily hold the same effect in moving or intriguing the hearts of Japanese people. So I took even longer time to re-focus back on taking the original texts beyond the cage of literal translation, and tried to find more culturally-relevant descriptions that have equivalent effects in moving or intriguing the hearts of audience, even though that might require much longer descriptions than the length of English texts that David spoke. I truly believe that such bold reinvention was only possible because David always went the extra miles to make sure that I know that he trusts me throughout our correspondence. David also patiently and repetitively explained to audience that he is not looking for domesticating translation or Macdonalizing way of learning, which helped me make bold decisions or try experimental things.

The disparity in status between the Euro-American-centric way and peripherally-located Japanese way can be internalized so potently and prevalently that it comes up in subtle and taken-for-granted ways. For example, I often see narrative therapy and other therapies of western origin being introduced by knowledge-importer in the context that “Japan is so behind that we should learn from these western approaches that are more scientifically advanced, ethical and effective. It is not surprising that such a discourse creates popular demand for domesticating translation, especially from enthusiastic learners. In another occasion, there was a narrative therapy transcript that was translated in google-translation-like quality. As I felt like the translated words were like Euro-American thinking sprayed with artificial Japanese flavor, I asked my colleague why no one complains about the hardly-understandable Japanese quality. She told me that because this happens too often when learning therapies of western origin, enthusiasts are usually used to and willing to take responsibility for trying to figure out the cultural and linguistic gaps that literal translation couldn’t fill.
When putting the dominant demand for domesticating translation in the socio-political context of internalized disparity, I think, in a way, that I needed that excruciating experience on the second day morning to set my subversive spirit on fire generated the necessary ‘foreignizing momentum’ for me to come back in stronger connection with my own revived spirits and commitments that are well-grounded in my mother tongue and mother culture. Similarly, I needed to re-experience that familiar and uncomfortable feelings of being “Meg” while rehearsing the 3rd edition of the translation because it, too, generated ‘foreignizing momentum’ that was necessary to revive my spirits of mischievous subversive-ness and to reinvent the 4th edition in which all the names and settings became Japan-esed.

David asked me, “WHAT WOULD YOU CALL THE TRANSLATION YOU LEFT BEHIND...WHAT WOULD YOU CALL THE TRANSLATION YOU HAD ARRIVED AT?” The translation I left behind is ‘kiss-ass translation’ in which knowledge-importer plays along with exporter-centric assumption that the knowledge has universal values and pretend as if it only requires nice and compact literal translation in order for the contents to be truly understood and appreciated. As a result, imported-knowledge-consumers have to pick up the slack, being left with two choices: to accept the exporter’s worldview as universal (as often implied by the knowledge-importer) and consume the Macdonalized knowledge; or to hold themselves accountable for not being able to fully appreciate the literally-translated contents, despite the advertised universal values. The translation that I ended up arriving at is ‘equivalent-effects translation’ which is not concerned for maintaining equivalence in texts between two languages, but concerned for creating equivalence in the moving/intriguing effects on the hearts of the imported-knowledge-consumers. ‘Equivalent-effects’ translation assumes that reinventing culturally-resonant texts is a necessary means to generate such equivalent effects.

This is not the end of the story because I feel like I only scratched the surface of an enormous iceberg. Since I have a feeling that this is going to be a long journey in search for fair trade translation, it would be make it much more enjoyable if we have company to exchange travel stories with, and to co-invent insider wisdoms and know-hows to collectively ensure ‘language justice’.

References