ISSN 0972-8740

EDITORS

1

Awadesh Kumar Mishra
V. Saratchandran Nair

ARTICLES

- Translation Theories and Translating Assamese Texts — 5
  Manjeet Baruah
- Translation: An Inter-Cultural Textual Transference — 31
  Shamala Ratnakar
- Role of Translation in Comparative Literature — 40
  Surjeet Singh Warwal
- The Ghost of the Author and the Afterlife of Translation — 61
  Farheena Danta and Bijay K Danta
- Translation as Handloom: Acknowledging Family as (Re-) Source — 76
  Akshaya Kumar
- Discerning the Intimacies of Intertextuality: A. K. Ramanujan's Hyphenated Cosmopolitan Approach to Translation Theory and Practice — 90
  A. S. Dasan
- Tread gingerly! Translation as a cultural act — 105
  Ravichandra P. Chittampalli
- Indenting the Proverbs: Some Notes on Translation — 117
  Vijay Sheshadri
- Issues in Translation: Translating from English to Maithili — 132
  P.K. Choudhary
- Integration of Technology & Translation for Measuring Meaning Interpretation — 147
  C.M. Vinaya Kumar et.al

NOTES

- Translating a Classic The Experience of Translating Kanyasulkam — 162
  T Vijay Kumar & C Vijayasree
- Indian English Drama: Badal Sircar in Translation — 169
  Dhanya Johnson

TRANSLATIONS

- Load — 176
  Tutun Mukherjee

CONTRIBUTORS

186

N T M

Volume 8, Number 2 Translation Today National Translation Mission 2014

Volume 8 Number 2, 2014

Translation Today

N T M

राष्ट्रीय अनुवाद मिशन
NATIONAL TRANSLATION MISSION

Editors
Awadesh Kumar Mishra
V. Saratchandran Nair

Translation Today

Editors
Awadesh Kumar Mishra
V. Saratchandran Nair

Volume 8, Number 2, 2014

Translation Today
Volume 8 No.2, 2014

Editors:

Awadesh Kumar Mishra
V. Saratchandran Nair

Prof. Awadesh Kumar Mishra
Director
Central Institute of Indian Languages,
Manasagangotri, Hunsur Road, Mysore – 570 006, INDIA

Phone: 0091/ 0821 -2515820 (Director)
Pabx: 0091/ 0821 -2345052
Grams: BHARATI
Fax: 0091/ 0821 -2345218
E-mail: awadeshkumar@ciil.stpmy.soft.net (Director)
Website: http://www.ciil.org
www.ntm.org.in

To contact
Head, Publications

ISSN-0972-8740

Single Issue: INR 200; US $ 6: EURO 5; POUND 4
including postage (air-mail)

Published by Prof. Awadesh Kumar Mishra, Director

Designed By : Nandakumar L, NTM, CIIL, Mysore

Printed by M.N. Chandrashekar
CIIL Printing Press, Manasagangotri, Hunsur Road
Mysore – 570 006, India

In This Issue

EDITORIAL 1

ARTICLES

Translation Theories and Translating Assamese Texts 5
Manjeet Baruah

Translation: An Inter-Cultural Textual Transference 31
Shamala Ratnakar

Role of Translation in Comparative Literature 40
Surjeet Singh Warwal

The Ghost of the Author and the Afterlife of Translation 61
Farheena Danta and Bijay K Danta

Translation as Handloom: Acknowledging Family as (Re-) Source 76
Akshaya Kumar

Discerning the Intimacies of Intertextuality: A. K. Ramanujan's Hyphenated Cosmopolitan Approach to Translation Theory and Practice 90
A. S. Dasan

Tread gingerly! Translation as a cultural act 105
Ravichandra P. Chittampalli

Indenting the Proverbs: Some Notes on Translation 117
Vijay Sheshadri

Issues in Translation: Translating from English to Maithili 132
P.K. Choudhary

Integration of Technology & Translation for Measuring Meaning Interpretation 147
C.M. Vinaya Kumar et.al

NOTES

Translating a Classic
The Experience of Translating Kanyasulkam 162
T Vijay Kumar & C Vijayasree

Indian English Drama: Badal Sircar in Translation 169
Dhanya Johnson

TRANSLATIONS

Load 176
Tutun Mukherjee

CONTRIBUTORS 186

Editorial

We are extremely gratified to bring out the second issue of Vol.8 of Translation Today and thankful to the contributors who have extended support for their scholarly papers. We also express our immense thanks to the anonymous peer reviewers who have kept their deadlines.

The paper by Manjeet Baruah draws our attention to the theoretical constructs of translation vis-à-vis with an analytical account of certain literary works in Assamese language. It also draws to our attention the overpowering cultural elements in Indian languages and the need for accounting it. For better elucidation he brings in Nida's dynamic equivalence theory and Chomsky's deep structure/surface structure theory. In fact, Chomsky cautioned against its appropriation in such a fashion (see Gentzler : 46). Shamala Ratnakar delves into the realms of culture and its intricacies when one transfers from source text to target text. She explains in detail the complexities involved.The paper by Surjeet Singh Warawal highlights the importance of translation in comparative literature without which one cannot study the intricacies of comparative literature. Great literatures in different languages have been shared by the humanity through translation. Copiously quoting several instances, he tries to establish his point of view. In the new criticism the dearth of the culture is appreciated and liberated from the text, whereas in middle ages, the name of the author was pertinent and critical. Then one can think of the translator. In fact the author relives better when his work is translated and becomes more visible. These are issues discussed by Farheena Danta and Bijay K Danta in their paper "The ghost of the author and the afterlife of Translator". Quoting several works, Akshay Kumar considers translation as a family enterprise or as a handloom industry wherein involvement of family members or colleagues and friends have a great role to play, particularly he studies acknowledgements quoted by the translators. A.S.

Dasan narrates lucidly and vividly A.K. Ramanujan's translations in the paper, "Discerning the Intimacies of Intertextuality: A.K. Ramanujan's Hyphenated Cosmopolitan Approach to Translation Theory and Practice". He analyses the proper understanding of AKR's work, the dichotomies it presents, the outer and inner poetic forms from two different sources, his multilingual and pluricultural background, his translations being wrongly interpreted by Tejaswini Niranjana with post-colonial theoretical underpinning and Vinay Dharwadker criticism of Niranjana are worth reading. Ravichandra C.P's paper, "Tread gingerly! Translation as a cultural Act", discusses about the politics of translation. He wades through various aspects of translation theory, market interventions, postcolonial, postmodern, deconstruction etc. quite often quoting translations from Kannada. The next paper is an interesting and original one on translation of proverbs used by Myasabedas, a tribal community of Chitradurga, Karnataka. Translation of such proverbs takes us to the anthropocentric nature of the usages. The paper by Vinay Kumar et.al is an empirical study of the meaning interpretation, when one is translating through "google translate, a computer assisted translation. The result/interpretation of which can gauged based on the presentation. Pawan Kumar Choudhary's paper entitled "Issues in Translation: translating from English to Maithili" deals with various linguistics issues while translating from English to Maithili.

The views expressed in this journal are of the authors and the editors or the editorial board would not be responsible in any manner.

30th December, 2014

Prof. Awadesh kumar Mishra

Prof.V. Saratchandran Nair

Translation Theories and Translating Assamese Texts

Manjeet Baruah

Abstract

The paper is divided into two broad sections. The first section examines the changing focus of translation theories worldwide, especially in the last three decades, and the facility that the newer developments in translation theories have provided in translating texts in multi-lingual societies. It will be shown that vis-à-vis the old school of linguistic equivalence, the shifts into the fields of power discourse (i.e. politics of translation) and translation have provided the framework for approaching the praxis of translation in multilingual societies more fruitfully. The second section of the paper comprises two case studies of specific forms of writing in the Assamese language, viz. (a) Bezbarua and colloquial aesthetics, and (b) Indira (Mamoni Raisom) Goswami and multiple language variant textual structure. The two textual methods will be discussed vis-à-vis the problematic of their respective translations and in the context of the theoretical outline drawn in the first section. The objective of the exercise is twofold, viz. (a) to highlight and explore the potentials in applied translation vis-à-vis languages of North East India and (b) to emphasize the peculiarities in translating texts from or into languages and cultures of North East India.

Keywords: translation theory, South Asia, North East India, Laksminath Bezbarua, Indira (Mamoni) Raisom Goswami, Assamese literature, modern Indian language, ideology, textual structure.

Section I

In this section, the attempt is to draw a broad outline of the debates in translation theories, especially in the 20th century,

and create the platform for the discussion on translation vis-à-vis languages of north east India (with Assamese texts as the illustration) in the subsequent section. Between the 1950s/60s and 1980s/90s, translation theories have undergone paradigm shift. The fundamental component of the shift has been the transition from models of praxis to models of analysis. For example, one of the most distinct features of translation debates in the 1950s/60s was the question of linguistic equivalence, i.e. how to arrive at linguistic equivalence between the source language (SL) and target language (TL). One of the underlying factors of the debate was the assumption of universal language. It was precisely because of the assumption of universal language that, irrespective of the positions that theorists held, that linguistic equivalence between the SL and TL was possible was never questioned.

On the issue of linguistic equivalence and how to arrive at it between the SL and TL, one of the most comprehensive frameworks was perhaps offered by Nida (Nida, 1964). Nida not only focused on the possibility of equivalence, but also developed a model based on Chomsky's system of deep structure-surface structure of language vis-à-vis SL-TL relation. The fundamental argument of Nida was that from the surface structure of the SL, the translator has to move into its deep structure, and then find the equivalent of the SL deep structure in the deep structure of the TL. Thereafter, the TL can be developed into its surface structure. Nida argued that through this process, a scientific equivalence between the SL and TL can be arrived at. Nida also advocated that translation *should* be of dynamic equivalence and not formal equivalence and that through the above process of deep structure-surface structure inter-language relation, dynamic equivalence can be arrived at. The basic thrust in Nida's argument, i.e. of dynamic equivalence, can be traced back to earlier periods as well. However, what was unique about his model was that it offered a systematic mechanism, unlike the previous theories, of how to achieve dynamic equivalence between SL and TL while translating. For example, a simple illustration of the complex process of dynamic equivalence can be shown in translation of

proverbs. Going by Nida's argument, a proverb in SL would need to be broken down into its deep structure, and then through its deep structure equivalence in the TL, the surface structure linguistic equivalence can be arrived at in the TL. Proverbs are notable illustration of Nida's argument on two counts. On the one hand, it negates the notion of untranslatability, i.e. something as peculiar to locale as proverbs cannot be translated. On the other hand, it highlights how meaning of proverbs cannot be translated in literal method. The specifics of linguistic expression of the proverb in the SL and TL may vary. But in the process, their meaning would remain the same. Noam Chomsky's theory of Syntax and generative grammar was not, nor was it intended to be, a theory of Translation. In fact, Chomsky cautioned against its appropriation (Gentzler, 2010: 46-64)

It is evident that a founding principle of the Nida's model was *how* to translate. Nida himself was a practicing translator, involved in translation of the Bible. His objective was that the Bible should reach the maximum people in the world. But this intent behind translation also highlights another point, viz. the *why* behind the *how* to translate. In other words, if Nida demonstrated that through the paradigm and method of dynamic equivalence, the problem of untranslatability can be overcome, it was because it was necessary for him that the Bible is translatable in any language. Nida's approach was evidently influenced by the reigning approach of the times, namely structuralism. Therefore, if one returns to the example of proverbs, there is the underlying assumption that its meaning in the deep structures of the SL and TL can remain same due to the *reality* of universal language. But where Nida was different was that despite his assumption of universal language and a structuralist method of arriving at it, he took into account the problem of linguistic differences and that the problem can only be addressed "dynamically" and not formally or literally. Behind these theoretical explorations, his politics of religion was of crucial importance.

It was such cases as Nida's, i.e. exposing the often hidden

or invisible reality of motive/objective behind translation, and how it shapes theoretical explorations, that came to be foregrounded in the 1980s. This foregrounding became a paradigm shift in translation, pushing the domain from translation to translation studies, i.e. from praxis to studies. This shift has come to be called the 'cultural turn in translation', traced to a series of new studies since the late 1970s and 1980s. The primary shift that took place through these studies was that translation debates were no longer in terms of *how* to translate; rather they were in terms of the three factors of *who*, *why* and *when* vis-à-vis any translation. How to translate, in fact, became now a corollary of the above three factors of who translates, why it is translated and when it is translated. In other words, vis-à-vis the text, it is the context that became more crucial in explaining or comprehending a translation. Now the understanding was that once the context is explained or can be determined, how to translate can also be arrived at. This shift, as well known today, came to be termed "cultural turn in translation". What it meant was that it was not language and its structure wherein the meaning of translation can be located. The meaning of translation was in the socio-political and cultural context (or specifics) of translation which involved questions of who, why and when rather than how.

'Cultural turn in translation' was marked by multiplicity in approaches vis-à-vis the relation between translation and its context. For example, the polysystem model (Toury: 1995) emphasized the importance of target culture in explaining the nature of translation. The model followed a binary classification of target (language) culture in terms of weak and strong target cultures, and argued that when the target culture is weak, translations are more naturalized or domesticated in the TL, whereas when the target culture is strong, the foreignness of the SL text in the translation remains visibly evident. In other words, a weak TL culture tends to naturalise translations in its own repertoire (and gives the appearance of being its own cultural production rather than as one originating elsewhere) while a strong TL culture does not suffer such anxieties and therefore

does not hesitate to highlight that the translated text is not its own cultural production, but has come from another culture into its now expanded repertoire.

Despite the apparent similarity of the model to the 18th-19th century nationalist approach to translation in Europe, especially in France and Germany (Venuti: 2004) wherein foreignness of SL culture in translation was argued to highlight the unique national character of the TL, the polysystem model is fundamentally different in its principles from it. The main difference is that the polysystem model is not premised on one particular assumption of politics. On the contrary, it leaves open a space for context specific politics to be incorporated within the larger framework of weak-strong binary in target culture. But one of the main problems of the polysystem model is how to ascertain whether a culture is weak or strong. It may be argued that the strength or weakness of TL culture could be ascertained by its very practice of translation. But such an approach only explains the action (nature of translation practiced), not what produces the action itself. To use a South Asian illustration of the problem, the pre-colonial transcreations of the epic in different languages, though borrowed from the "cosmopolitan" Sanskrit literary world to which they traced their connected histories, nevertheless claimed their difference overtly from that "cosmopolitan" world through their very act of transcreation (and not "translation"). The problem here is twofold. On the one hand, how would one ascertain the strength or weakness of the TL culture in such cases of transcreation which stands outside the foreign-natural act/nature of translation. In other words, how does one explain transcreation through the polysystem model. On the other hand, transcreations also raise an additional question, i.e. how meaningful are binaries such as cosmopolitan and vernacular, or great and little traditions etc. When seen from this question, the polysystem model once again falls short of explaining a historical phenomenon of literary culture found widely in pre-colonial South Asia.

In contrast to the polysystem model and its assumptions

of strong or weak TL culture, therefore, there are approaches which highlight the critical significance of ideology or ideological relation between SL and TL to explain the nature of a given translation. For example, in the works of Lefevere (Lefevere, 1993), the discussion is more concentrated on the historical or socio-political context of the target culture or in the relation between the source and target cultures rather than on the linguistic or grammatical aspects of the SL and TL in question. Lefevere argues that peculiarities of grammar and language do not sufficiently explain the textual features in translation. The broader argument he makes is that while translating, which is a practice, linguistic choices are exercised by the translator. These choices are not necessarily pre-given in languages per se. These choices are conditioned by the context and objective of the translator/ translation. It may be interesting to note here the remarks of Levi Strauss vis-à-vis the significance of totems in this regard (Strauss, 1982). Strauss argued that totems are interfaces that translate nature to human society and vice versa. Thus, if the argument is carried forward, one can present a case that totems may be seen as codes of translation. Such an approach to translation opens a tremendous space for ethnographic study vis-à-vis translation. However, we will return to this point later in the discussion.

With regard to the role of ideology, there are three major approaches or models of the period that needs to be emphasized. Each of them takes the study and practice of translation away from the linguistic orientation that the field predominantly had until the 1960s. One of them has been the model of linguistic discourse analysis. Under this model, a text is analyzed in terms of the three linguistic registers of field, tone and mode (Baker, 1992), in which field refers to the content, tone to who is communicating through the text and mode to the medium of communication, i.e. oral or written. The model, based on Halliday's framework, compares the text in its SL version and TL version based on the three linguistic registers, and indicates the changes or character that they assume in their respective conditions. One of the fundamental principles of this model is that it is not language per se but the use of language

in given contexts that is more important. It is given usage of language that explains the character of a text and its relation to the context. It is evident here that though based on study of language and its use, the model fundamentally differs from the concept of linguistic equivalence. Among others, one of the basic differences is that unlike the concept of linguistic equivalence, it is not based on any assumption of universal language; thus, the emphasis on usage of language as the key to understanding or translating meaning in text. Needless to point out that usage of language is located in the ideological use of language rather than merely the linguistic features of a given language.

Another major breakthrough in the field of translation studies came in the late 1980s and early 1990s through the translation debates that Subaltern Studies initiated in India (Spivak, Paul, 2007). Subaltern Studies sought to interrogate and engage with the voices of the marginal which, it claimed, are frequently lost in textual sources or written materials. It is because language and communicating through language is mediated through the relations of unequal power. Since written language bears the hegemony of the powerful in a society, therefore, it fails to carry or communicate the voices of the marginal which inhabits that society. Spivak's translation of Mahasweta Devi's fiction is notable in this regard. The challenge that Spivak, as a translator, poses can be stated as when translation is taking place into a dominant language in any give social context, what are the possibilities of retaining the message of protest of the dominated against the dominant within the linguistic or narrative framework of the translated text. The translation strategy that Spivak uses in this regard has two aspects. At one level, Spivak retains words/ syntax (in italics) of the (dominated) SL in the (dominant) TL. At another level, sentences/words/passages will be put in italics in the TL which, in the SL, is not placed in italics. The objective in the second case is to indicate to the reader that the italicized carries meaning or message that the reader needs to take note of. Therefore, Spivak makes an active intervention in the translation and in the process adds new dimensions to the interpretation

of the SL text and production of culture in general. From the perspective of Subaltern Studies, this nature of intervention is considered as necessary for three reasons, viz. (a) to prevent the cultural appropriation of the dominated by the dominant, (b) to emphasize that the dominant culture (in this case language and narrative of text) lacks the capacity to communicate the culture of the dominated, and (c) through the use of italics (as already noted) and making the reading of the translation uneven, the attention of the reader can be drawn to the deeper context of power relation in culture and production of culture.

The act of active intervention that a translator can and needs to make in the larger context of production of culture has come to be most significantly advocated in the 1990s by Lawrence Venuti (Venuti, 1992). He has put the debate in the framework of visibility vs. invisibility of translator. Venuti's argument rests primarily on two factors, viz. ideology of translator and translator communicating with readers beyond the mediation of the author of the SL text. On the question of ideology and translator, he points out that every translation is premised on ideological choices and ideological acts. Therefore, if a translation has to be understood or explained, it is necessary that the ideological foundations of the translation needs to be taken into consideration. In this case, the translator's ideology assumes critical significance. Without explaining the translator's role, the translation too cannot be comprehended. But Venuti makes a further point as well, which follows from the above point. He argues that precisely because translator plays a critical role in the production of meaning in a given translation, it is necessary that s/he communicates with the reader beyond the author of the SL text. Translation is an ideological *reproduction* of the SL text. Therefore, the meaning in the translation goes beyond the meaning in the SL text. As a result, a translator should seek to highlight the role that s/he plays in the *reproduction* of the original that the translation is. In other words, a translator has to make himself or herself visible.

The above position challenged one the fundamental

premises of form in TL text. Translation theories in the West have historically favoured meaning based translation to word based translation. In other words, compared to word-for-word translation, the emphasis needs to be on translation of meaning from the SL text to the TL text. Thus, translation theories focused on paraphrase or dynamic equivalence vis-à-vis metaphrase or formal equivalence. The critical point here is the relation between form and readability in translation. Paraphrase or dynamic equivalence places emphasis on naturalizing or domesticating of SL in TL text. The deep structure-surface structure process is nothing but a mechanism to arrive at the naturalized form of the SL text in the TL. However, in stark contrast to the above approach, the paradigm of visibility vs. invisibility of translator argues that naturalized form masks the deeper ideological meaning in translation, and therefore it needs to be shed. In other words, narrative realism is to be avoided in translation. To be noted here is that Spivak's use of italics in the translation also forms part of this paradigm of translator's visibility, seeking to communicate with the reader beyond the role of the author of the original. (It may also be noted that challenging narrative realism to indicate the ideological construct of art was at the root of neo realist cinema of post World War II Europe.)

Section II

In the previous section, we have tried to draw a broad outline of the 'paradigm shift' that debates in translation have undergone in the course of half a century in Europe, especially after World War II. In this section, we will try and situate the question of situating translation of literary productions in the Assamese language in this above debate on translation and translation theory. As already noted, two case studies of specific forms of writing in Assamese language, viz. (a) Bezbarua and colloquial aesthetics, and (b) Mamoni Raisom Goswami and multiple language variant textual structure will be taken into consideration in this regard.

The writings of Lakhminath Bezbarua (1868–1938) are taken as the first example (Baruah, 2010). The particularity of Bezbarua's literary aesthetic was in the way the oral and textual narrative elements could come together. If aesthetic is approached as a structure, it becomes evident that two sets of relations were central to the aesthetic structure of Bezbarua's writings, namely (a) language-narration-narrator/author and (b) plot-narration-narrator/author.

One of the most distinct features of Bezbarua's aesthetic structure is the simultaneity of realism and traditional anti-realism that could be achieved through the relation of language, narration and narrator/author. The difference in the structure of language that Bezbarua used comes into sharper relief when compared to other writers, either contemporary or especially those since 1940s. Bezbarua did not maintain any significant distinction between the language of the characters (conversations, first person) and that of (third person) narration. But unlike many other writers, he did not make his characters speak in textual Assamese, or in the written form of the language. Therefore, both the characters and the narration could proceed based generally on colloquial Assamese of the eastern part (upon which the Sibsagar variant of Assamese language is based) of Assam. Another author (as discussed later) who made extensive use of colloquial language in conversations among the characters was Indira (Mamoni Raisom) Goswami. However, in her writings, the language of narration was different from that of conversation among the characters. The textual form of Assamese exists in her writings as the referent against which the language of conversations operates and gives meaning to the text.

In terms of aesthetic structure, the method of Bezbarua with regard to the relation between language and narration made the narrator/author a far greater distinct a factor of the text. More appropriately, the narrator/author did not remain a covert textual factor but as an overt textual factor. Further, it is necessary to mention here that Bezbarua's use of traditional anti-realism was also evident in the impersonal relation between narration

and narrator. The narrator would distinctly be different from the narration. The narrator is not part of the narration and the world of the narration. In that, it was closer to the mode of tale. In the case of Bezbarua, it was tale that was situated in the genre of satire.

However, it would be incorrect to consider his aesthetic as non-modern. It was modern in nature not only because he worked through modern narrative forms such as short stories or novels, or because his fictions existed as mass consumed 'books' and not 'texts', but because his aesthetic was also to heighten the effect of his (a) nationalist ideology and (b) to expose the reality of the process of modernity that the society was experiencing during the period. A liberal nationalist in his political ideology, Bezbarua made language, narration and narrator/author distinct and different from each other within the aesthetic structure. His aesthetic did not deny differences; rather he developed an aesthetic structure to accommodate that social reality, and through it, create a nationalist construct of 'Assamese people'. In other words, his aesthetic *indicated* acutely both the modern context and it's (both the society and the aesthetic) location in that modern context and that it was precisely that location that allowed it its distinct character as an aesthetic.

The other issue that gets highlighted in/through such use of oral short narratives is that it is not only that a literary narrative structure is borrowing from oral culture but that it is also possible to invent oral narratives, and thereby forms of oral culture, through such literary aesthetic. Unlike in other kinds of literary aesthetics used in Assamese literature where the textual is generally used as referent for the oral, in Bezbarua's case, it would be difficult to locate any referent, whether in the textual or in the oral, in the structure of the narrative. All the constituents of the structure exist as referents for each other and it is that exchange that gives meaning to the narrative. Therefore, it is quite possible to argue that Bezbarua's aesthetic structure could also invent oral narratives within itself by situating it in specific relation to the various elements of the narrative structure. In other

words, it shows that oral forms could be invented through literary structures as well.

The second writer whose writings have made a critical difference to literary aesthetic in modern Assamese fiction is Indira (Mamoni Raisom) Goswami (1942-2011). Her writings brought to the fore the subject of 'women' in modern Assamese literature. The structural characteristics of her fiction have already been indicated in the preceding discussion. What needs to be emphasized in this context is the role of direct and indirect speech in the construction of 'people' in or through the literary aesthetic. The facility of direct and indirect speech is a modern grammatical mechanism in Assamese literature. In all pre-modern Assamese literature, the distinction between the narration of the narrator and conversation among the characters of the plot was descriptively indicated (i.e. the narrator would say that the following is a conversation between the characters).[1] The difference that the facility of direct and indirect speech introduced was that it was no longer necessary to describe the nature or progression of plot; rather it could be achieved through the structure of the language itself. But if the significance of this facility is seen in reference to the construction of identity or 'people' through the narrative itself, it found its most effective usage in the fictions of Mamoni Raisom. Her fictions indicated that Assamese identity was not a homogenous phenomenon. And the exploration and demonstration of the fact was carried out through the use of this grammatical facility.

In her fictions, people of different caste or class or region or gender would speak differently. But, as already noted, her fictions would not lack a referent to indicate that the diversity that the text exhibits in the social nature of the characters exists within the larger category of Assamese identity. The language of narrator's narration (in the third person) of the plot takes place in the Sibsagar variant of the Assamese language. This variant exists as the indicator of the larger Assamese identity within which the diversity exists. The other aspect in this character of the narrative

structure is that it highlights the relation of the various social groups within the larger Assamese identity (as part of the plot) and it also highlights the relation that the author/narrator seeks to establish with the fact of social stratification and interaction thereof. In other words, her different language variant exists as a marker of her ideological position since it is the narration of the plot that is giving a character to the plot itself. In the process, in the space of the text, both the constituents and the constituted of the 'people' come to be accommodated.

Further, it is important to note that if the fictions of Mamoni Raisom are assessed in terms of issues that are taken up in her writings, women emerge as a focal point of that engagement or exploration of society. But if her texts are analysed in terms of its narrative structure, what emerges as more fundamental is the engagement with the construction of identity (Assamese people) through or in literature. This difference is central to analyzing her whether as a woman writer or a feminist writer. In this context, locale of the plot has played a crucial role.

Mamoni Raisom has been one of the few writers in Assamese literature whose major works are based on locales both within and without Assam. Among her major novels which are based on locales outside Assam are *Senabor Strot,* 1971 (The Currents of the Chenab, Kashmir), *Nellkanthi Braj,* 1976 (The Blue Necked Braja, Vrindavan), *Ahiron*, 1980 (Ahiron, Madhya Pradesh), *Mamore Dhara Taruwal,* 1980 (The Rusted Sword, Uttar Pradesh) and *Tez Aru Dhulire Dhusarita Pristha,* 1990 (Pages Stained in Dust and Blood, Delhi). The critical difference that locale made in her fictions is evident from the fact that in fictions based outside Assam, the mechanism of direct–indirect speech only has a functional rather than any conceptual value. Unlike as in the case of fictions based in Assam, the role of direct and indirect speech in the above mentioned novels is only to indicate a conversation rather than to indicate any process of identity formation. Therefore, though in most of her writings the focus on women is paramount, the meaning of/in the narrative structures varies based on the

locales in which the plot of the narrative is based. In the case of plots that are based outside Assam, the issue emerges as both the text and the subtext. But when the locale has been within Assam, the meaning of the text and the subtext could differ, based on which one (issue/topic or narrative structure) is considered the text and the subtext.

It is not to argue that this principle applies to all her fictions. Two notable exceptions in this regard are *Mamore Dhara Taruwal* (The Rusted Sword) and *Datal Hantir Une Khowa Howda* (The Moth Eaten Howdah). In *Mamore Dhara Taruwal,* the character of Narayani, a Dalit woman labourer, is torn between her identity as a Dalit labourer and as a woman. Even though she fights for her right over her body and sexuality against control by the community, she herself remains unsure to what extent the distinction of the individual and community could be possible or realizable. Similarly, in *Datal Hantir Une Khowa Howda,* relation of power and the conflict between the religious head/landlord and the lower caste/landless peasants and the dilemma of the widows caught up in between is brought out through the very nature of the topic and not through that of language and its variants. The two novels highlights that locale under all conditions need not indicate social stratification through linguistic structure and thereby point to the larger context of identity that the text is engaging with. Whether in the case of Narayani in *Mamore Dhara Taruwal* or in the case of the widows in *Datal Hantir Une Khowa Howdah,* that gender is not a homogenous construct in itself is brought out by the nature of the issue/topic rather than any component of the narrative structure. The plot or the language or its grammatical usage merely fulfills the conditions that the topic creates for/in the text.

Does the distinction that specificity of locale introduces in her texts help us when considering the ideological orientation of Mamoni Raisom's writings? The answer is yes. It is possible to identify two different results that the specificity of locale introduces to her liberal humanist position. In her fictions based

on locale outside Assam, the engagement with the fact of social stratification (along caste, class or gender lines) in society has been in terms of an abstract idea of 'human'. The pathos that mark the life of the characters and the progression in the plot emerge from the idea that the category of 'human' and all its humaneness needs to be restored and therein only lies the solution to social stratification and the conflicts that emerges from it in society. In other words, it is humanity that can bring solution to the problem of social stratification rather than any revolution. But in the case of fictions where the locale has been within Assam, the basic problem that the texts seek to engage with is the challenge not only in the restoration of the 'human' but also in the restoration of its political face, namely the Assamese identity. If a political identity lacks humanity, the identity too would lack ability to accommodate diversity. The difference between the two situations is evident. Whereas in the former, the 'human' is an abstract idea, in the latter, it exists as a far more political idea. Also, whereas in the former, (with the exception of novels like *Mamore Dhara Taruwal*) the treatment of women characters in terms of issue/topic and narrative structure has little distinction, in the latter, there is a fundamental difference. The difference is that women, in the latter, are no longer only women but are also part of the larger process of national identity formation. And in the texts, the difference becomes evident in the split of meaning between the issue/topic and structure of the narrative, something largely absent in the former. The difference between the two cases is also evident in that whereas in the former, social stratification is emphasized, in the latter social differences (i.e. 'local' vis-à-vis 'national') are also emphasized along with social stratification.

One of the central contributions of Mamoni Raisom's writings in modern Assamese fiction has been that it made possible the split of meaning between the issue/topic and structure of the narrative in a given text. In other words, meaning was distributed among the various elements of the textual structure. There are three dimensions to the significance in this regard. Firstly, it facilitated correcting a rupture that texts, or more

appropriately, narrative structures in Assamese fiction had faced in the twentieth century. One of the major problematic that fiction had faced, especially since the 1940s, was how to establish the legitimacy of Assamese identity vis-à-vis social/ethnic differences and social stratification. Most texts that attempted to address differences of ethnicity, race or class among the people who constituted Assamese identity, tried to work through a narrative structure in which characters shed the specificity of their social origin. They neither speak their own language variant nor the plot aimed to emphasize that they are different. The differences would only be described by the author in the third person narrative. Therefore, differences generally played a functional role in the text than any conceptual role. This conscious role allotted by the author to differences of being merely functional rather than being conceptual exposed the ruptures in the texts, that what could be conceptual existed only as functional in the narrative structure, for example, as in Birinchi Barua's *Seuji Pator Kahini* (a novel based on the multi-cultural social world of the tea plantations of Assam). Mamoni Raisom's writings helped overcome this dichotomy or rupture in a major way. It was no longer necessary to provide differences only a functional role. Even by providing it a conceptual role in the structure of the text, the larger argument of the validity of the Assamese identity could still be made. And a split in meaning between the issue/topic of the text and the structure of the narrative could facilitate this process. As a result, it was also no longer necessary that narrative structure merely fulfills the conditions that the topic of the text creates. The meaning of text and subtext could vary, given which one between the issue/topic of the text or its narrative structure is taken as the text and the subtext.[2]

The second significance of her writings, related to the preceding point, has been that it opened an enormous space for the exploration of the category of women through/in literature. Women's literature need not be only about women. A textual structure was now available through which multiple identities, including gender, could be addressed simultaneously without

creating any textual ruptures. By the 1980s, Mamoni Raisom's literary aesthetic was well in place. And since then, it had emerged as one of the most distinct literary aesthetic not only on women's issues (written by women or men) but also on various other kinds of issues.

The third significance of her writings is the nature of relation between the oral and the textual that was used or established in the text, especially in comparison to the writings of Lakhminath Bezbarua. The nature of this relation in their writings can be seen at two levels. Firstly, whereas in the case of Bezbarua, there was a constant attempt to dilute the difference between the oral and the textual in the structure of the text to give expression to their respective constructs of 'people', in the case of Goswami, the difference between the oral and the textual was retained through the mechanism of direct and indirect speech and the distinction was used to highlight the multiplicity rather than homogeneity within any construct of 'people' (including gender) in the Assamese society.

Secondly, with regard to Bezbarua and Mamoni Raisom, it needs to be mentioned that neither author tried to undermine social differences and social stratification within the Assamese identity through their plot and characterization. The critical difference here is that whereas Bezbarua, with his peculiar mix of the oral and the textual and with the overwhelming role retained for narration, overwhelmed the differences and/or conflicts within the category of his 'people' which the characters, plot and narrator symbolically represented, while in Mamoni Raisom, the author/narrator existing as only a referent did not overwhelm differences and/or conflicts within the larger identity. The relation between plot, narrator and narration played a crucial role in this regard. In Bezbarua's writing, as has already been highlighted, narration was more than the sum of narrator and plot. Bezbarua's fictions, especially short stories, had two conclusions, first where the narration of the plot ends (whether or not the problem that the plot addresses concludes or not) and second with the

concluding oral short narrative where, and through which, the narrator/author concludes the narration of the entire narrative by stating that the narration finally ends. The use of such oral forms (borrowed from tales) as concluding devises is both important and interesting because they not only constitute a particular modern literary aesthetic but also because they expose the fact that within the structure of the aesthetic, the plot, the narration and the narrator/author are three distinct constituting elements related to each other in a certain mode. It was this character of the narration that made possible to retain the totality of meaning within the aesthetic. Therefore, whereas in Bezbarua's writings, there is no split of meaning within the text, in the case of Mamoni Raisom, the split of meaning between the issue/topic of text and its narrative structure is evident. In Mamoni Raisom's fictions, the narration and the narrative end with the end of the plot as well.

The Challenge of Translation

Is it possible to argue that the two cases discussed above are cases of embedded translation? It is evident that in either case, the elements of the textual structure share (a) multiple forms or layers of relations with each other, and (b) these relations are dynamic in nature. In the factor (a), respective meanings are translated into each other and this constitutes the dynamic fundamental (i.e. factor (b)) of the relations. Whether it is in terms of voice(s) and meaning thereof, or in terms of use of language, or in terms of narration and narrative, or in terms of ideology or that of text and context, it is amply evident that meaning is located at the intersections of relations among the textual elements, one attempting to translate the meaning of the other(s).

Therefore, the question is where do we situate translation of such texts in the existing debate on translation and translation theory as outlined in Section I? Secondly, is it possible to posit that Indian literature (Assamese literature in this case) can play a crucial role in making fundamental breakthroughs in the future direction of translation debate? That the principle of semantic transference

of meaning through translation cannot be a translation methodology in this case is already evident. This is despite the fact that in South Asia, the framework of semantic transference of meaning has been based not on SL and TL equivalents as in the West but, as noted in Section I, on SL culture and TL culture, a process facilitated by the simultaneity and difference within South Asian culture formations. Therefore, the methodological option available for translation of such texts is the generative approach (which encompasses the perspectives of the "cultural turn in translation"). In this approach, the basic assumption is that translations reproduce the meaning of the SL text in its own given context. As a result, translations generate their own meanings of the SL text rather than merely making available the meaning of the SL text in another language. Without entering into the debate on meta-text or total text (Fitch: 1988), it is evident that dynamic fundamental is basic to the generative approach in translation. From the discussion in Section I, it is also evident that the generative approach has come to constitute one of the most influential approaches to the study of translation since the 1980s.

But in contrast to the debates on 'translation studies', the challenge while translating under the rubric of generative approach is/will be methodological. In other words, how does one develop a methodological framework of translation praxis that can accommodate SL textual structures as highlighted in the above two case studies of literatures in Assamese language and be considered "translation" and not "transcreation"? To be noted here is that it was the ability to develop a methodological framework for translation (and translators) that perhaps was one of the high points of the model of semantic transference of meaning through translation, best exemplified in Nida's model of dynamic equivalence.

In this given problematic, two factors assume centrality, viz. (a) the role of translator and (b) objective of translation. The nature of translation crucially hinges on the two factors. This can be explained through an example in which Indira (Mamoni Raisom)

Goswami herself has been involved. In the book *Melodies and Guns* (translation of militant/ 'secessionist' Assamese poetry into English), published in 2006 and edited by Goswami, it is stated in the introduction and discussions that followed its publication that the objective of the project was to bring to the democratic space (of public domain) literatures that are not 'nationalist' in nature, yet which have emerged as significant genres in Assamese language especially since the 1990s. Since the objective was that the literature is successfully situated in the public domain, therefore the principles of non-translatability or of resistant or 'subaltern' translation were ruled out as possible frameworks. Therefore, the fundamental assumption behind the translation was that the selected poetry lies within the domain of translatability. The introduction to the volume make it amply clear that the nature of translation practiced in the book needs to be understood vis-à-vis the above assumption or objective of the work. *Melodies and Guns* is a case wherein the role of translator and objective of translation play a fundamental role in the translation framework or translation principle being followed. The nature of the translation can only be explained in relation to the two factors. It also highlights the fact that the given translation in *Melodies and Guns* cannot be taken as the only available model to translate the selected poems. If the objective of translation and the role of translator are assumed differently, the nature of translation will vary.

It is this facility that the generative approach provides which can make possible more successful translation of complex textual structures as in the cases of Bezbarua or Goswami. For example, with regard to a text like Goswami's *Bhikhar Patra Bhangi* (To Break the Begging Bowl), it is quite possible to argue that only one principle of translation, whether be based on culture, gender, class, nationhood or region, may be insufficient to communicate (a) the meaning of the text which encompasses all the above issues and (b) serve the presumed objective behind relating it to the context of the TL culture, since the meaning of the text lies in the interstices of the issues. Evidently, the basic issue here is not whether equivalence between SL text and TL text is arrived at

through the translation. Rather, the issue is whether translation (of meaning) of the SL text, its interpretation and the politics behind its translation has been accommodated in the given translation available in the TL text. In other words, the question is whether the TL text accommodates the objective/ideology behind the translation successfully.

But an obvious corollary that emerges then is can one argue that any translation in that case be a *valid* translation? The question can be answered at two levels. Firstly, *valid* translation needs to be disconnected from the notion of 'good' and 'bad' translation, both 'good' and 'bad' being subjective experiential qualities. In other words, translation cannot be classified, despite Nida's dynamic equivalence, into 'good' and 'bad'. Secondly, and more importantly, validity is connected here to the three premises of translation, interpretation and its politics rather than to arriving at 'equivalence'. But the question of validity also raises another methodological question of assessment, viz. (a) is translation to be judged or (b) is translation (of the same text but differently) only to be classified into different types rather than be judged.

If it is assumed that under the rubric of generative approach to translation, the latter (i.e. translation be classified rather than be judged) is to be considered the option that can be critically accepted vis-à-vis the assessment of translation, the immediate question to emerge then is whether it slips into the post-modernist dilemma of fragmented reality. However, as discussed in Section I, classification of translation is premised on criteria, such as the objective behind translation or the role of translator, etc. Translation is a unique area of simultaneous critical intervention in theory and praxis. In this nature of intervention, the translator and his/her objective of translation play a fundamental role. Therefore, classification of translation needs to be based on the above criterion. It is this criterion that situates the translation in relation to both SL culture and TL culture and also locating the role of translation in this entire process of culture production. Further, in such an approach, the premise of *validity*

of a given translation does not stand, precisely because there is no claim in the translation to any absolute translation of the SL text (as is claimed in the principle of equivalence). Thus, the mode of classification and assessment gets established.

In the light of the above discussion, one may argue that that it is only the above framework of translation that can be most fruitful vis-à-vis translation of texts written in modern Indian languages (MIL). Compared to western practices, there has been a difference in the principle of equivalence followed since the 19th century vis-à-vis translations in MIL. The difference has been that rather than SL-TL paradigm as in the West it has been primarily SL culture-TL culture paradigm in the case of MIL. The difference in the paradigm possibly emerges from one basic feature in MIL, viz. these languages share both commonality and difference at the same time with each other due to the nature of historical development of these languages since the latter part of first millennium AD. Further, in the case of most texts in MIL, the multiple language variant model (for example, the case of Goswami in Assamese literature) is widely practiced. As a result, embedded translation as a feature remains central to textual structure in most texts written in MIL. In other words, given the nature and use of MIL language in a given text, the framework of surface structure-deep structure may prove insufficient to arrive at any absolute translation. It can only remain a mythical ideal.

Studies on the history of development of languages, connected histories and delimiting the expanse of such cultural connectedness over time or space have shown that the meaning of texts often exist at the interstices of relations, both at inter-lingual and intra-textual levels. In this essay, few dimensions in this regard were demonstrated through Goswami's writings. However, it would be correct to argue that the case is general to most textual productions in MIL. If that be the case, wouldn't the generative translation approach be more conducive than the semantic transference approach of translation across MIL, an approach which is institutionally promoted in India? Secondly,

if the generative approach is accepted as the one better suited to both examine and do translation in MIL, wouldn't one have to return to the question of criteria of assessment and classification of translation as more appropriate rather than judgement of translation? This possibly is an unexplored area of translation studies and praxis in South Asia, which also holds the potential of liberating text and literary culture from the institutional emphasis on "source" text and culture, and thereby allowing re-connecting to the older historical processes of cultural exchanges which lay at the heart of generation of language, genres and literary traditions. Such a possibility is of utmost importance for literary cultures in regions like North East India, especially if one is to redraw the literary map of the region where the oral and written texts had frequently intersected historically in the production of cultural meaning at both inter-lingual and intra-textual levels.

One concluding point maybe submitted here. This paper has used the illustrations from Assamese literature to make the general arguments. Given the history of development of the language and literary traditions in it (Baruah: 2012), one may therefore ask to what extent the illustration encompasses the other languages of northeast India, especially those which have generally not shared historical ties with Sanskrit in some form. Against this hypothetical question, I would argue that the point made in the paper is not about SL-TL relation, but about relation between SL-TL cultures. In fact, the argument has been that the SL-TL model of translation, borrowed from West, and which is predominant in institutional translation practices in South Asia, itself needs revision. When one moves from SL-TL paradigm to SL-TL culture paradigm, the basic contention of the paper, i.e. meanings are located at interstices of inter-lingual and intra-textual relations, stands valid for languages or literary traditions in the region, whether or not they have shared historical relations with Sanskrit.

For example, the point can be illustrated through the traditions of folktales widely found in the region. A frequently

occurring dimension in folktales across societies is that of socio-cultural relations across space and society. Whether in the form of travels, of material culture or politics, folktales amply demonstrate that processes of culture and society were premised on relations rather than isolation. The moot point is that cultural forms in individual societies did not develop in isolation from one another. They were fashioned by and through these relations. If that be the case, the argument elaborated with regard to MIL stands applicable to literatures in those languages of the region, which irrespective of ties with overarching languages such as Sanskrit or Chinese or Burmese, shared relations with one another in the region. To draw linguistic affinity with Sanskrit, or Chinese or Burmese or Tibetan, etc, and to locate the problem of translation in such linguistic affinities would only be a return to the SL-TL model.

As shown in the case of Goswami's texts, linguistic affinity of modern Assamese with Sanskrit does not necessarily aid in deciphering textual meaning, and neither does it help in locating the position from which the act/choices of translation will be done by the translator. This is because of the understanding that meaning does not exist independent of the translator or the translator's context. Therefore, by shifting the focus away from languages to locating languages in the larger context of inter-cultural relations, and by emphasizing the importance of interpretation of culture in the understanding and reproduction of meanings through translation, the generative approach provides scope to explore beyond the idea of linguistic affinities between SL and TL. It allows locating inter-cultural relations at multiple levels and forms. In other words, if one method of locating Assamese could be the MIL context, another method could be its relations in the context of culture formations through Tibeto-Burman languages in the region. Therefore, the notion of linguistic affinity with languages within a "language family" may be insufficient criteria for SL-TL methodologies vis-à-vis languages such as Assamese. At this juncture, one may return to the point with which Section I was concluded, viz. the problem with the

assumption of naturalizing the SL text in the TL text, and the methodologies developed towards it. It was the understanding of linguistic difference and the necessity to translate despite it that methodologies were developed towards the possibility of such translations. The notion of naturalizing translation hinged on it. By shifting the focus to interpretation of culture and therefore necessities of translation, the question of equivalence and its methodological implications can be meaningfully refocused towards newer forms and methods, not only of translation, but also of interpreting cultural relations across societies in northeast India. And in this regard, perhaps it would not be an exaggeration to remark that the generative approach holds the possibilities of significant experiments in theoretical and practical domains of translation in northeast India.

NOTES

1. Sarma, S.N. (ed.) 1955. *Katha Ramayana*. Calcutta: Sribharati Publications

2. The concept of rupture within text is different from that of split of meaning within the structure of the text. In the former, shown especially in Marxist structuralist literary criticism, the problematic is that the various elements that constitute the narrative of the text, such as language and grammar, the role of the author, characterization, or plot and its progression, do not necessarily mean the same individually as they mean as a totality. In other words, there exists an inconsistency between the individual elements and that of the total meaning that texts seek to express. The difference is overcome through the role of ideology; however close study of texts always reveals the failure of ideology to completely overcome or knit together the inconsistencies into what it seeks to express. In the case of split of meaning that is found for example in Mamoni Raisom's texts, the role of the subject matter and its arrangement into a narrative structure are already different. Therefore, ideology does not try to knit together inconsistencies of

the individual elements. Rather, the inconsistencies get a meaning of their own in the process of split between subject matter and its arrangement into a narrative. The split is part of the larger ideological statement that author/text seeks to make. Therefore, split is not rupture. In fact, it is the means to overcome rupture. On why rupture can exist in texts, see Macherey, P. 1978. *A Theory on Literary Production*. London: Routledge and Kegan & Paul.

REFERENCES

Baker, M. 1992. *In Other Words: A Coursebook on Translation*. London & New York: Routledge

Baruah, Manjeet. 2012. *Frontier Culture: A Social History of Assamese Literature.* Delhi: Routledge.

Fitch, Brian T. 1988. *Beckett and Babel: An Investigation into the Status of the Bilingual Work.* U of Toronto Press: Toronto.

Gentzler, Edwin. 2010. 2001 *Contemporary Translation Theories,* Multilingual Matters Ltd., England

Lefevere, A. (ed) 1993. T*ranslation/History/Culture.* London: Routledge.

Nida, E. 1964. *Toward a Science of Translating*. Lieden: E.J. Brill.

Spivak, G. 'Translation as Culture', in Paul, St Pierre et al (ed.). 2007. *In Translation-Reflections, Refractions, Transformations*, pp. 263-276. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Strauss, L. 1984. 'Totemism and the Savage Mind', in Anthropology & Myth: Lectures 1951 – 1982, pp. 33. Basil Blackwell: Oxford.

Venuti, L. (ed.). 1992. *Rethinking Translation: Discourse Subjectivity Ideology.* London and New York: Routledge.

Venuti, L. (ed.). 2004. *The Translation Studies Reader.* London and New York: Routledge.

Translation: An Inter-Cultural Textual Transference

Shamala Ratnakar

Abstract

Translation is widely understood as the rendering of a text from one language to another that is from the Source Text (ST) and Source Language (SL) to the Target Text (TT) and Target Language (TL). Translation is not just a transfer of meanings contained in one set of language signs into another set of language signs through competent use of the dictionary. The process of translation involves along with linguistic ones the extra-linguistic preoccupations. These extra-linguistic requirements include the transference of culture of the source text to the target text without primary distortions in the source text. Because translation is the representation of the culture of the source text into the target text which the translator does by replacing the source culture shown in the foreign language text by representing the equivalent meanings which are acceptable for the target language culture. In the process, the responsibility falls on the translator who has to preserve the culture of the source text and has to be faithful to the intentions of the source text. A study of the history of Translation Studies reveals the ways in which the source texts are rewritten, re-cast, adapted, transliterated, transformed, transcreated, and it also exposes the routes through which innovations are introduced in the translation field. Discussions on the theory of translation generally give short shift to the transference of culture as an important aspect of translation activity. The present paper proposes to reflect the differences among the cultures, the cultural transference and the extra-linguistic difficulties involved in the process of literary translation. It also illustrates how the translators overcome some of the problems of cultural issues how the process of transferring cultures through literary translations becomes a complicated and a vital task.

The culture that is "the customs, ideas and social behaviour of a particular people or group" (Soanes & Stevenson

2008:349) shape the text of any writer. Culture is that complex collection of experiences which condition the daily life of people belonging to particular language group and region. Culture includes the traditional customs and usages of everyday life of people, the history, the social structures, and the religion of a given society. It also relates to the inter-relationship among the people belonging to various social classes and religious groups which exist in close relationship with one another in any given society. This kind of culture is bound to influence the formation of literature. "Literary systems do not occur in a void, but in the ideological milieu of an era" (Gentzler 2004:136). The society is the constellations of these systems which vary from one region to another, from one country to another.

This social system invariably controls the literary system. And this literary system when crosses the boundaries of its origin travels along with its social and cultural system. Translation is to "secure the relations between literature and its environment" (Hermans 2004:126). The translation aims at conveying the cultural environment of the source text to the target text. In the process, the linguistic knowledge of the source as well as target text on the part of the translator is not just enough. The translator's knowledge of the cultural aspects of the source text is of utmost importance. The translator should be able to transfer the cultural connotations of the sign systems of the source text society to the target text society in a comprehensible manner. Translation no doubt has to rely heavily on information and abilities that are not specifically cultural and also linguistic. The traditional view that the problem is mainly a linguistic one is clearly not tenable. Translating as an activity and translation as the result of this activity are inseparable from the concept of culture which operates largely through translational activity. By the inclusion of new texts into another culture through translation that the particular culture undergoes innovation and it perceives the specificity of another culture. The translated work or the target text becomes the identity of source culture for receiving culture. This is what is termed as "the identity forming power" of translations (Venuti 1998:68).

Translation leads to the journey of the source text from the one culture to another culture of target text. It is thus the inter-cultural textual transference leading to transmigration of texts. Translation is of course a necessary condition of all scholarly works. Translation leads to the movement of the source text beyond the frontiers of its language and culture. Hence the demands of this inter-cultural textual transference are heavy. The danger of this transference is the texts can get distorted as they travel across time, place and cultural domains which are also possible within a relatively homogenous cultural milieu. Rendering the Source Text faithfully into another language complete with its cultural underpinnings is definitely difficult. The translator hence follows certain via media like transcreation, adaptation, representation and transformation. The study of translation becomes particularly interesting when textual tranference takes place across culture leading also to linguistic and cultural encounter. The history of the representation of the texts like the Ramayan illustrates the ways in which the travels of a text through time, space and cultural forms test the limits of translation and impose upon that text new forms of expressions. Translation in the realm of Cultural Studies has become significant for the way in which the languages shape the texts. While translation implies linguistic activity wherein the printed texts are rendered in different cultures and languages. An understanding of source language and target language where linguistic codes are transferred across linguistic and cultural boundaries have been the domain of Translation studies. Translation could thus be considered as a form of creative endeavour, circumscribed within the limits of cultural codes, structures, standards and so on.

Each culture has its own sign system distinct from other cultures. On the basis of this sign system or language cultures communicate. Thus one possibility to understand a culture is to learn the languages of that culture and also the sign system operating within the culture. The problem with the translator while transforming the text into another language, however is that the languages of culture are apt to vary from region to region and from community to community within the same region. As a result

the meanings may become ambiguous and many a same words will have different cultural connotations. However, in the present context it should be added that translation activity is an activity that explains the mechanisms of culture. Translation and translating are concepts concurrent with an active culture and allow the readers in the situation of that culture.

Translator is usually considered a shadowy figure, a negotiator or a compromise seeking agent between two languages and two cultures. But his responsibilities are immense primarily to both the source language text and its target text culture. The translators have to transplant the spirit and the essence of the source text in the target text by de-familiarising the source language to suit the culture to the target text. They have to familiarise source language culture to target language culture. As the translators work through the languages of source and target texts, certain aspects of culture automatically get transferred into the target culture. The translators face uncertainty when they come across the impossibility to identify equivalent words, in familiarising or de-familiarising the source language on the complexities and difficulties involved in translating culture specific items. They can reinvent new techniques, new devices as they are available and also conveniently acceptable in the target text culture. They should translate what the author intends to say and not what he has written.

Translation fails or untranslatability occurs when it becomes impossible to build functionally relevant features of the situation into the contextual meaning of the target language text. Broadly speaking, the case of untranslatability where this happens fall into two categories - those where the difficulty is linguistic and those where it is cultural. The linguistic as well as cultural transference becomes problematic as one takes a look at the scene of multi-lingual and multi-cultural variety of Indian society. Most of the theories of translation formulated so far do not seem to have taken into consideration the variety and multiplicity of such a cultural scenario. There needs to be the formulation of a meta-theory that would take into account India's multi-linguistic and multi-cultural diversity.

'Phaniyamma' is a novel written in Kannada by M. K. Indira in 1976. It has been translated into English as *'Phaniyamma'* by Tejaswini Niranjana a renowned translation critic. She won the Sahitya Akademi award for her translation of *Phaniyamma* in 1993. The original title has been retained into English by the translator. The English translation of the novel becomes a powerful transmitter of the Indian traditional Brahmin society of Karnataka of 1970s and its culture to the English speaking audience not only across the country but the whole world. The Kannada words have been transcreated into English which demand an explanation e.g. the word 'madi' which is taken to mean a cleansed woman. The word has its cultural connotation. Such words need to be decoded in the footnotes. The eponymous protagonist of the novel becomes a widow at the age of nine. At the age of fourteen when she starts menstruating she is shaven off and made a 'madi' woman and is forced to join the group of old widows at home. The mere transcreation of words with loaded cultural connotation cannot be totally comprehensible to the people belonging to other culture because many of such social practices are totally alien to other cultures of the world. The English translation - "Nor can she perform any "madi" task. The fourth day after she menstruates, her hair must be shaved off and she must be made to take up 'madi' for the rest of her life" (Niranjana 1994:46). The context of the novel may no doubt provide the hint of the situation but it is highly impossible to transfer the real connotation of a particular word into an alien language. Words like 'madi', 'mangalasutra' and many other words that are retained in the translated text are deeply loaded with cultural inferences and are not explained at all either directly or indirectly. Despite, Tejaswini Niranjana in her translation creates an ambience of Indian domestic and social context and is successful in maintaining the individual specificity of the Brahmin culture by documenting the specificities of local Brahmin customs, culture and Kannada language. Therefore she has retained the culture-specific terms like 'madi', 'atte', 'mangalasutra', 'sandige' and many more Kannada words are retained. These cultural limits on translatability occur due to the absence of a relevant similar situation in the target language culture. It creates difficulty in carrying across the ethos.

Chandragiriya Tiradalli is a Kannada novel written by Sara Abubaker. It has been translated into English as *Breaking Ties* by Vanamala Viswanath, who employs the technique of transformation while translating. She clarifies, "The title could have been translated into English as On *the Banks of Chandragiri* to reflect its Kannada source. But since it sounded too literary to reflect the political edge to the book and some what familiar . . . After a prolonged discussion on the implications of the title we selected the more neutral and nuanced title *Breaking Ties*" (Niranjana xix, xxi). Besides, the original title does not contain the sense of compulsion and severity underlying the social practice of 'talaaq' among the Muslims. The cultural conditioning of women in general and Muslim women in particular is successfully brought about in her translation. Here too, the translator retains the culture specific terms of Muslims like *talaaq mehar, abba* and others for which there is a glossary at the end. Both Tejaswini Niranjana and Vanamala Viswanath have consciously set themselves to the task of transferring the cultural situation through a foreign language for an audience which may not be familiar with the social and cultural situation. They are thus during their translation activity caught between the need of the local colour and the need to be understood by an audience outside the source text cultural and lingual situation. In order to convey the flavours of local culture both of them have retained the culture specific original words. The literal translation of such words would be jarring and clumsy.

The endeavorus of these translaters remind of what Horst Frenz has observed that translation is "neither a creative art nor an imitative art but stands somewhere between the two" (Frenz 1961:72-96) because a literal translation will distort the sense of the original cultural terms and may sound clumsy to target text readers. Hence a translator should try "to produce the source language in the target language while producing at the same an acceptable paraphrase of the sense" (Bassanet 1980:84). Translation can only be an adequate interpretation of an alien sign unit and so exact equivalence is impossible. Limits are imposed on translatability at all the levels - word, sentence, etc.

Derrida prefers the term "Transformation" to translation (Michael Thomas 2006) for certain words that resist translation and which can only be transformed. Biological features no doubt are universal but not aesthetic concepts. Items of food, dress etc. differ from culture to culture, hence the translator has to retain the original words as the translators Niranjana and Vanamala have done.

India is a multi-lingual and multi-cultural in nature. So, none of the translation theories constructed in the 1960s on a purely linguistic basis are not adequate to meet all these multiple cultural requirements. The translation theories of 1960s passed through the 1970s with their shift of focus from linguistic to the textual and have now reached a culture-based orientation. Translation is now viewed as establishing links between different cultures. A meta-theory has to be evolved taking into account the problematic situations faced by new translators in the multiplicity of cultures especially in the Indian context.

The texts that get translated need not be translated in purely linguistic terms. Apart from addressing the linguistic, semantic or cultural specific problems the translators are desired and proposed to address the ways in which translation crosses linguistic boundaries while re-casting and reinscribing the new spaces that are of cultural significance. It involves the selection of equivalents, in the manner of retaining culture specific items, in the selection of the language and of course the confidence in presenting it to the other culture. Sometimes the translator may be compelled to compromise in order to make the source text palatable to the target language readers. In the process the translator may follow the technique of addition, edition, deletion, suppression, mutilations and so on. Many a times the translators place themselves in a position of authority to decide what the target language reader should read. And ironically, the local cultural specificities will be deleted. Instead, a translator should follow a policy of italicising the culture-specific and locale-specific terms and must try to retain as far as possible the voice of the original author.

Recognising such parametres can always lead to a certain degree of excellence in transferring source culture to the target culture. Such an objective orientation makes the translators confident without which they can not hope to be excellent even they are fully aware of the fact that in translation everything of the source text can not be transferred and that whatever they translate into the target culture text would generate another text altogether in a new culture.

Culture has always remained problematic to the translators. It is paradoxical that because of such a culture specific factor, translation becomes a necessity. It may be said that ultimately it is impossible to translate the words directly. Culture, on the other hand can not be translated directly without grotesque distortions. Nobody either Giovanni Pontiero or Ramanujan or for that matter any translator can even present a formulaic framework and solution to the complex and problematic area of culture in translation. A particular device used to overcome the linguistic and cultural problem in a particular text can not necessarily hold good to another text. Moreover while translating a particular text the translator must bear in mind that time and locale of the text where it is situated also matter much in context of culture. The translators have therefore to be dynamic and competent in their ability to comprehend the rich cultural nuances of source as well as target culture. They should have an understanding and competence to create a cultural context with items specific to recipient culture. However, this depends entirely on the translator's ability in making the right kind of selection in order to achieve excellence.

Theodor Savory in his *The Art of Translation* has presented the enormity of the complexities involved in translation. He also was unable to provide a clear cut solution for the problem. Whatsoever, the inter-cultural textual transference through translation bridges the gap between diverse cultures and makes available to readers outside one's own language and culture. The translators must be aware of and alive to the culture of their source language text and target language text before they attempt to build any bridge

between them. While transferring the cultural material of the original composition the translators must strive to attain readability of their translated text in the new language.

REFERENCES

Bassanet, Susan. 1980. Ed. *Translation Studies*. London: Methuen.

Frenz, Horst. 1961. "The Art of Translation". *Comparative Literary Method and Perspective*. Ed. N.P.Stalknecht and Horst Frenz. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.

Gentzler, Edwin. 2004. *Contemporary Translation Theories*. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.

Hermans, Theo. 2004. *Translating in systems: Descriptive and Systemic Approach Explained*. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.

Michael Thomas. 2006. The Reception of Derrida: Translation and Transformation, New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan.

Niranjana, Tejaswini.1994. *Phaniyamma*., New Delhi: Kali for women, 2nd Ed.

Savory, Theodore. 1957. *The Art of Translation*. London: Jonathan Cape.

Soanes, Catharine and Angus Stevenson. 2008. Eds. *Concise Oxford English Dictionary*. 11th Ed. Revised. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Venuti, Lawrence. 1998. *The Scandals of Translation: Towards an Ethics of Difference. Routledge.*

Role of Translation in Comparative Literature

Surjeet Singh Warwal

Abstract

In today's world Translation is getting more and more popularity. There are many reasons behind it. The first and the foremost reason is that it contributes to the unity of nations. It also encourages mutual understanding, broad-mindedness, cultural dialogues and intertextuality. But one can hardly think of comparative literature without immediate thinking of translation. For instance most readers in India know the works of Goethe, Tolstoy, Balzac, Shakespeare and Gorky only through translation. It is through the intermediary of translator that we get access to other literatures.

Thus Comparative Literature and translation humanize relationship between people and nations. As an intermediary between languages, thoughts and cultures, they contribute to the respect of difference and alterability. Moreover, they unite the self and the other in their truths, myths, force and weakness. From a historical perspective, comparative literature and translation have always been complementary. Without the help of translation a normal person, who usually knows two to three languages would never have known the universal masterpieces of Dante, Shakespeare, Borges, Kalidas, and Cervantes etc. A normal person usually may not know more than two-three languages. But if s/he wanted to study and compare the literature of two or more languages s/he must be familiar with those languages and cultures. If s/he does not know any of these languages s/he can take help of translation. Those texts might be translated by someone else who knows that language and the comparativist can use that translated text to solve his/her purpose. So we can say that:

1. *Both comparative literature and translation are inter-linked.*

2. *A layman can come closer to the major writers of different fields.*

3. *Through the translation of literature from different languages we can understand their philosophy, sociology, psychology and above all their culture.*

4. *Either translation or through comparison the problems of particular area's people will be analyzed.*

5. *With the help of translation a text become able to get a wider range of readers.*

Comparative literature is a discipline dedicated to the study of literature without national and linguistic barriers. The student of comparative literature studies problems in genre, mode, literary period or movement. The comparatists probe the mechanics of literary forms and engage themselves in the analysis of existing theoretical and critical approaches and the formulation of necessary critical distinctions of equal importance. The compartivist also deal with the questions of interaction between literature, other arts and disciplines. The compartivist may study the political, social and an intellectual context of literary emphasis is preserved. In other words, the main objective of the study of comparative literature is the proper appreciation of literature in a larger perspective, involving more than one literature and specially those growing across the national boundaries. In a multilingual country like ours we have two basic objectives for studying comparative literature.

No doubt the role of translation in comparative literature is very important. It becomes more valuable in today's world when the whole world has become a global village. With the advancement of technology people living in different countries with different languages come closer to each other. Although there is a one international language, English, which is the common source of communication between people but still there is a problem in the study of literature as literatures is usually written in regional languages or languages of that particular countries such as France's

literature is in French and literature of Russia is in Russian language. It is not compulsory that every comparativist will know the all languages. So there is need of translation by which a comparativist can read and understand those literary works which are not in his/ her own language. With the help of translation we become familiar with the customs, dress code and culture of other countries.

In short it can be said that translation plays a great role in comparative literature. We can even say that comparative study of literatures from different languages, cultures and socio-cultural backgrounds is not possible. So translation occupies a special place in comparative literature. In this age of globalization comparative literature as a subject is getting more and more popularity. But there is no one who is perfect in all the languages. So translation has played a very important role to understand the literature & culture of different languages without which we cannot do a comparative study of various literary works written in different languages. So Comparative literature is a tree with translation as its most important branch.

Comparative literature is a new discipline in our country which is fully grown in the academic fields of western World. Basically it is a method through which we study literature from the comparative point of view using comparison as a main tool of study. At the earlier stages although comparative study of literature was a part of general literary criticism but now a days it has become a separate discipline with all its implications. Now it becomes an aspect of literary criticism which aids our understanding and enjoyment of literature. Here literature is studied not in isolation but in comparison. Under this discipline we may compare two or more similar or even dissimilar forms or trends within the literature of the same language. It can be a comparison of two or more authors or two or more works in the same language. It may be a comparison of similar or dissimilar forms or trends of two or more languages of the same country like we can do a comparative study of Lyric in Punjabi, Hindi and Malayalam. It can also cut across the national boundaries

and compare themes, literary forms of the authors of various languages of the world to discover the underlying elements of unity in diversity with a universal view of literature. In such a broad view literature is independent of linguistics, national and racial demarcations. So we can say that Comparative Literature is critical study dealing with literature of two or more different linguistics, cultural or national groups. It also include the range of inquiry and comparison of different types of art: for example a comparativist might investigate the relationship of film to literature, dance, music etc. it also include the comparison of literature with other disciplines like literature with history, sociology, psychology etc.

In today's world this subject is getting more and more popularity. There are many reasons behind it. The first and the foremost reason is that it contributes to the unity of nations. It also encourages mutual understanding, broad-mindedness, cultural dialogues and intertextuality. But one can hardly think of comparative literature without immediate thinking of translation. For instance most readers in India know the works of Goethe, Tolstoy, Balzac, Shakespear and Gorky only through translation. It is through the intermediary of translator that we get access to other literature.

Thus Comparative Literature and translation humanize relationship between people and nations. As an intermediary between languages, thoughts and cultures, they contribute to the respect of difference and alterability. Moreover, they unite the self and the other in their truths, myths, force and weakness. From a historical perspective, comparative literature and translation have always been complementary. Without the help of translation a normal person who usually know two or three languages would never have known the universal masterpieces of Dante, Shakespeare, Borges, Kalidas, Cervantes etc. it is only through translation we get access to the great literary works written in other languages which we can't read. Before discussing the relationship of translation we must know what is translation?

What is translation?

Translation is the process in which a written communication or a text in a first language is produced as the written communication or text in the second language interpreting the same meaning. Here the text in the first language is called "source text" and the equivalent text that communicates the same message in another language is called target text. The term "Translation" is generally defined as the action of interpretation of the meaning of the text, and production of an equivalent text that communicates the same message in another language.

According to Nida & Taber *Translation consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style*. (Nida and Taber 1982:32)

But translation of literature is not merely a matter of finding words in one language as substitute for those of another. It is not only a matter of finding adequate literary expression of linguistic constructions corresponding to the language of the original work. In the translated version it involves more-the transfer of concepts, aesthetic, cultural, psychological and historical- from people speaking one language to those speaking another. This implies at least mastery on the part of the translator of three important placements.

i) The language of the original

ii) The Content- in its widest sense of the original work

iii) Ability to adequately render the original linguistics and contextual material into the target language

Thus translation of literary works especially poetry is not an easy task. But a good translation of literature gives us the substitute to the original works.

What is Comparative literature?

Comparative literature is an academic field dealing with the literature of two or more different languages. While most frequently practised with work of different languages, it may also be performed on works of the same language if the work of that language originate from different nations or cultures among which that language is spoken. It also includes the comparisons with different types of arts, for example a relationship of film to literature, literature and folk/fine arts and literature and music etc. Under interdisciplinary activities we also discuss the relation of literature with other disciplines like history, philosophy, sociology and psychology etc. To understand literature in totality it is very necessary to study in comparison to other disciplines.

Definitions of Comparative Literature

According to Remak (1971)

"Comparative literature is viewed as a study of literature beyond national boundaries and it is concerned with the study of the relationship between literature and other areas of knowledge and beliefs"(Borrowed from a article "Comparative Literature" written by Ceritera hati, 29th January, 2010 http://butterflyneeraz.blogspot.com//)

According to Sussan Bassnett

" comparative literature is the study of text from different culture contexts and origins to identify their points of convergence and divergence with reference to these two highly reliable and credible sources, it is best to summarise that comparative literature is basically portrayed as the study of literature beyond national boundaries that aims to highlight the relationship between literature and other areas of knowledge and belief as well as to ascertain their point of convergence and divergence. (Sussan Bassnett 1993:25)

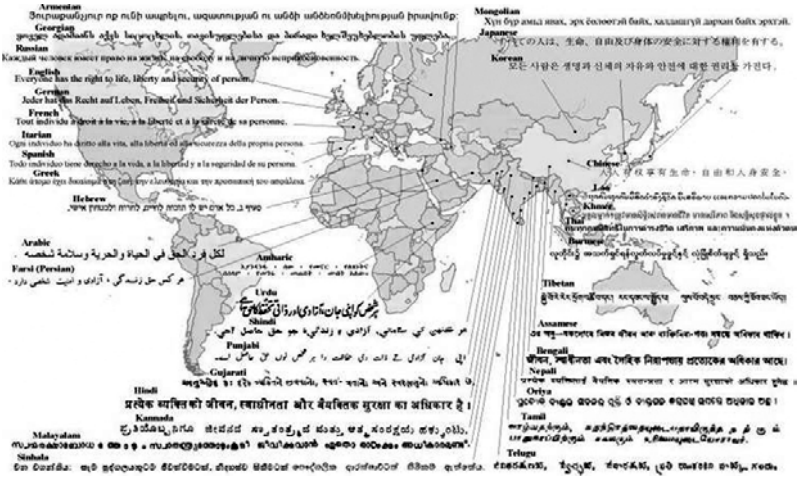
The study of *'Cinderella'* for example, is said to be

comparative provided that it involves with two or more short stories of Cinderella written by different national boundaries and it underscores the dissimilarities and similarities shared by those literary texts. By keeping this condensed definition in mind, it is very helpful in drawing a line between what is said to be a study of comparative literature and what is not meant to be a study of comparative literature.

Importance/Role of translation in Comparative Literature

I will start my point with the help of map given below. In this map we can see that there are so many languages spoken all over the world. People from all these languages are interconnected. To understand the views, ideas, feelings and emotions of people from different parts of the world we need translation. In this era of globalization when the whole world has become a global village where a human being comes into contact with other language speaking people daily.

Map showing different languages spoken at different parts of the world



Thus we can see that there are so many languages and almost every language has its own literature, its own culture. A normal person usually not knows more than two-three languages. But if s/he wanted to study and compare the literature of two or more languages s/he must be familiar with those languages and cultures. If s/he does not know any of that particular languages/he can take help of translation. Those texts might be translated by someone else who knows that language and the comparativist can use that translated text to solve his/her purpose. So we can say that:

1. Comparative literature and translation are inter-linked.

2. A layman can come closer to the major writers of different fields.

3. Through the translation of literature from different languages we can understand their philosophy, sociology, psychology and above all their culture.

4. Either translation or through comparison the problems of particular area's people will analyzed.

5. With the help of translation a text become able to get a wider range of readers.

Comparative literature is a discipline dedicated to the study of literature without national and linguistic barriers. The student of comparative literature study problems in genre, mode, literary period or movement. The comparativists probe the mechanics of literary forms and engage themselves in the analysis of existing theoretical and critical approaches and the formulation of necessary critical distinctions of equal importance. The comparativists also deal with the questions of interaction between literature and other arts and disciplines. The compartivist may study the political, social and an intellectual context of literary emphasis is preserved. In other words, the main objective

of the study of comparative literature is the proper appreciation of literature in a larger perspective, involving more than one literature and specially those growing across the national boundaries. In a multilingual country like ours we have two basic objectives for studying comparative literature.

On the Indian literary scene, comparative literary methodology can be extremely useful in developing a concept of unified Indian literary history on a single level of organization. By Indian literary history, I mean, the history of the regional manifestations of Indian literature, giving Sanskrit its due place as a preamble to the whole structure, depicting a historically convincing graph of continuous literary emergence in terms of varying dimensions of our national experience. While a good deal of literature is produced in India, it has not yet been possible to develop the idea of a unified Indian literature since it is written in many languages. At present, in spite of individual studies of regional literatures on a broad comparative and critical scale, the idea of one Indian literature is yet to be developed in its proper perspective. Indian literature is still a mere collection of different literatures having diverse linguistic manifestations. Through comparative literary studies alone can we arrive at the oneness of Indian literature.

The other objective is to develop a fuller appreciation of western literature. Professor Buddhadeva Bose says that English being the most widespread foreign language in India, the unfortunate and incongruous situation for an ambitious student of western literature is to concentrate solely on English and know Europe exclusively through England. As a result, we imbibe British prejudices, applaud Robert Bridges and denigrate D.H. Lawrence, and do our English literature without even hearing of Baudelaire or Heine, Ovid or Dante, Whitman or the Great Russians. An obvious remedy for this is the dissemination of the knowledge of western literature other than English , and it is here that comparative literature can fulfill a genuine need of our literary pursuits . This lengthy introduction is in defense of the propagation of the study

of comparative literature (C. L.) in india is to emphasise its role in evolving the idea of one Indian literature and understanding western literature in a more comprehensive manner . Coming to the means and methods of securing these objectives we are faced with the most important but controversial question of literary translations.

A decisive requirement for the study of Comparative Literature for achieving the aforesaid objectives is a broad knowledge of several literatures available in different language. This is an accidental fact that Indian civilization is polyglot, and has been so for centuries. The knowledge of two or more Indian languages may be an asset for a student of literature, but how many of them can one learn, particularly when we have 22 major languages? Similarly, how many foreign languages can one learn to appreciate western literature? Eventually, one will have to go for translations to study the literature of different languages.

To write a history of Indian literature with the help of comparative methodology one should know the majority of Indian languages or s/he will take the help of translation. To know the minds of great Indian writers who wrote in different Indian languages and the great writers from different foreign languages and cultures the comparativist must know their languages which is rarely possible. In this case translation becomes a very big helping hand.

No doubt knowledge of language is important, but it has no direct bearing on literary understanding .The Nobel Committee awarded the Nobel prize to Tagore on the basis of the translation of Gitanjali, of course, rendered by the poet himself. It was a translation from the original Bengali. One is free to choose between the two alternatives: the grim satisfaction of struggling through a few pages of the original or the enriching experience of racing through the author's 'inscape' in a language one can easily comprehend. The latter one is the best option for a literature student. Though s/he needs the knowledge of language but as

s/he is not a student of a language school, his or her main focus should be on the content and form of the text.

There are numerous practical problems in translating literature, particularly when such translations are going to be used by readers in a different country. It is certainly not easy to appreciate a western author placing him in the historical context and evaluating him aesthetically in the broader context of English or any other western literature.

Literature being a creative work, the translation according to Henry Gifford "can never be more than an oil painting reproduced in black and white" (Henry Gifford, Comparative Literature, 1969). One more thing which we have to keep in mind is that when the creative imagination works intensely- whether in a lyric, a play or a novel – it organizes the material with a degree of subtlety and comprehensiveness that no translation may match. The unity of the completed work draws together a multitude of converging details but is bound to be impoverished in a translation.

A translation has to accept one of the two equations as the basis for his activity. One equation is A-B= nearer to the original. Here 'A' indicates the original and 'B' indicates the degrees of loss. The second equation is A-B+C = separated quite away from the original. Here 'C' means the things added by the translator. The translator of the literary work generally goes in for the latter. But s/he must have the necessary training to keep a control on the second equation if at all s/he accepts it. This can be done by analysis of the textual material of source language (SL) and semantic analysis of referential and connotative meaning and restructuring it into equivalent textual material of target language (TL).

When the translator follow the second equation i.e. while translating the Source Language Text into Target Language Text there is always a possibility of modification in the meaning generally associated with some degree of gain and loss. In this

process the translator's work may be good, or even great, and may even surpass the original if s/he is a good craftsman and artist.

In fact, translations often lose sight of the fact that translation itself is an interpretation, a creative process by it mean that s/he should not bother about fidelity to the original and take liberties with the author's mind at the time of creation? William Cowper says that "total fidelity is also unfaithfulness." But too many liberties with the original would also be impermissible.

The question of taking liberties or freedom in translation is sometimes raised in the name of ease and pleasure. It is argued that a translation must be such as can be read with ease and pleasure but without violating the meaning or message of the original text. The risks lie in the extent of the degree of freedom which the translator permits himself. It must be admitted that there is a distinction between the original author and the translator because of two things: one the translator has his own expression and style which is influenced both by his/her personality and by the period of history in which s/he lives. Secondly, the system of form and meaning in the source language may be similar to that in the target language, but is never the same. As a result there can be no exact translation.

We can know about the socio-cultural context of a particular author through the dimensions of language users-geographical origin, social class and time and also through the dimensions of language use-medium (simple/complex) the social role (relationship between addresser and addressee the social attitude (the degree of social formality as evident in the style). Thus every source text has its own socio-cultural and linguistic context. But when the translator translates a text, his/her socio-cultural and linguistic contexts governs the process of translation and as a result we have a text not free from the impact of translator's background.

So translation plays a very important role in the comparative study of literature. But at the same time a comparative study of the two referential systems (the particular linguistic and cultural systems of the writer and the translator) helps us to understand the translated version of a literary text with reference to the translator's reading strategies, degree of objectivation, the extent to which the general is modified or replaced by the specific and the type of bilingualism. Comparison of seven significant English translations of *Gita Govinda* done by William Jones (1792) Edwin Arnold (1875), George Keats (1940), Lakshmi Narayan Shastri (1956), Duncan Greenlidge (1962), Monika Verma(1968), Barbara Stoler Miller (1977) provides not only an insight into literature but also captures the change in sensibility that marks different epochs and mood and the temperament of the translator. At the same time a comparative study of the source text having linguistic/ literary and extra- literary conventions gives an idea of the literary idiom and cultural tenor of the source text and perceives the textual profile in its proper perspective. In fact, comparative criticism in the process of analyzing translation brings close analysis of language to bear on cross-cultural literary questions in a way central to comparative literature, since a unique creative energy is generated where languages converge.

In comparative literature, the knowledge of language is important, but it has no direct bearing on literary understanding. In many cases the study of translation becomes a comparative critical exercise of great value, even for readers who lack the original. Intelligent students of literature can benefit from a systematic comparison of six significant translations in Hindi of the *Rubaiyats* of Omar Khayyam. All these are retranslations of the English translation by Fitzgerald. One of Persian Rubaiyats translated by Fitzgerald is:

Dreaming when Dawn's left hand was in the sky

I heard a voice within the tavern cry

Awake my little ones, and fill the cup

Before life's liquor in its cup be dry.

Now *'my little ones '* is the translation of Khayyam's *'A Rind Kharavati'* which means *'Drunkards of the tavern'* 'Drunkards of the tavern' is wrongly translated as *'My little ones'* and this has raised different connotative meaning in the mind of various translators according to different cultural setups in which they live . Harivanshrai Bachchan translates it as *'Mere Sishuo nadan', Keshab Pd. Pathak* as '*Mera Sishudal'* and Maithisharan Gupta as *'O mere Bachhe'* Sumitranandan Pant has a pedagogic attitude to this term and translates it as *'Madira ke Chhatra'.* Bachchan does not stop at the filling of the cup and insists other to drink it even- 'Bujha lo pi–pi mandira bhukh'. Maithilisharan Gupta, being a *Vaishnavite*, slowly utters *'Patra Bharo na Vilamba Karo',* as if afraid of drinking.

A comparison of these various translations can shed light not only on the changes in a given civilization's attitude towards literature, but also on the changes in a society's attitude towards certain other topics. These culture-bound attitudes so thoroughly stylize our perceptions that we experience our *'traditionality'* as natural but without going deep into the historical causes, the roots of determinism which underlie the *'recursive'* structure of our sensibility and expressive codes we cannot translate properly. The cultural contexts of a given discourse could be extremely deep rooted, e.g., in *'Asadhya veena'* by Agyeya the terms kesh kambali, Gufa-geha, Hatha sadhana, Krricha tapa are taken from the Buddhist Hinayana yogic terminology, indicating that communion with the ultimate in a state of selflessness may lead to spiritual accomplishment. Agyeya picks up this cultural reference to project his idea about the creative process. In his translation of this poem with the help of professor Leonard E Nathan the corresponding terms *'whose robe a rug',* 'whose home was a cave in the hills', *'irresistible vow',* 'disciplined devotion', could not project the cultural-bound meanings which reside in our unconscious. In the same way *'Main kanfata hun',* - a line of poem ' *Mein tum logo se dure hun'* by Muktibodh is translated as *'I am the split-eared,*

the underground wretch' by Vishnu Khare which cannot fit with cultural milieu and as a result the cross- cultural communication becomes an impossibility.

Thus translation of a text or concept by different translators from different cultural and language backgrounds show the distance between the respective source and target language communities. Obvious differences in the unique cultural heritage of the two communities must be considered in the translation studies. This culture-bound assessment leads us near to comparative literature which is study of literature of the relationship between literatures on the one hand and other areas of knowledge and belief on the other hand. Comparative perspective looks at all literature as one organic process, a continuous and cumulative whole. That being the reason one can hope that the comparative method can be helpful in cross- cultural communication in translation . We all know that no language can exist unless it is steeped in the context of culture, so the exact translation is a hypothesis only. We all know that translation is done for a unilingual community bound by its own cultural properties. It means that any discourse in the SL and its translation in TL should be accepted as two sets of possible worlds having a *'Dynamic equivalence'* (Nida). The question of equivalence is related to meaning, to be precise- pragmatic meaning. *'Equivalent'* does not mean identical: the response can never be identical because of different cultural, historical and situational setting. So it is always necessary to aim at equivalence of programmatic meaning, if necessary at the expense of semantic equivalence. Pragmatics relates to the correlation between linguistic units and the user(s) of these units in a given communicative situation. We may therefore consider a translation to be primarily a pragmatic reconstruction of its source text. Only then the cross- cultural communication becomes feasible.

One can quote two translations- one in Hindi and the other in Bengali- of T.S *Eliot's* Ash Wednesday. In the Hindi translation by Vishnu Khare the *'formal correspondence'* method

is used. The effect of this method on the reader is unnatural and tiring because this method seeks to produce a counterpart in a receptor language whose form corresponds to the original as nearly as possible. Now for the Hindi unilingual reader the terms like '*Ash Wednesday', 'Juniper-Briksha', 'Dhyan me Virgin ka adar karti hain', 'Mai ke Samay', 'Bakain k phool'* , *'Neel Mery ke Varna ke Vastra Pahine'* are foreign and indicate the cultural gap. Knowledge of these foriegn terms demands from the reader a lengthy learning process with the help of secondary literature which very few readers are prepared to undertake. How can a reader in Hindi without special knowledge understand '*Ash Wednesday'* that it is the first day of Lent in the Roman Catholic, Anglican and some other churches? It is so named from the ceremonial use of ashes as a symbol of penitence in the service for the day. To cover this cultural gap, Bishnu Dey in Bengali transforms all these foreign terms into Indian terms, particularly which are familiar with the Bengali unilingual reader. As a result *'Ash Wednesday'* is changed into *'Charaker Gan'*- a similar kind of religious ceremony of Bengal (Man is always taking a new form by discarding the old); 'Juniper briksha' as *'jaytri Gach',* 'Dhyan Me Virgin ke Adar Karti Hain' as *'Devaki mata Dhyan Karen'* ; 'May' is changed into 'Phalguni' , *'Bakain ke phool'* as Atasi puspa' ; *'Neel mery ke Verna ke Vastra Pahine'* is changed into *'Sri Radhar Neelamber'.*

Bishnu Dey's effort of dynamic equivalence in translation does not attempt to fill the cultural gap, rather it makes the difference between the cultures as clear as possible but by matching the communicative value of the source text with the communicative value of the target text, i.e., where both the texts are related to pragmatic meaning and in popovic's term where the invariant core of the ST is not lost, the proper result is achieved. In another poem *Gerontion* by Eliot, Vishnu Khare keeps the same caption in Devanagari Script, Whereas Vishnu Dey translate it as 'jarayan' in Bengali which immediately communicates the meaning to a Bengali reader.

Besides, some of the names of persons and places which occur in the poem like Brussels, London, Mr. Silvero, Madame de Tarnquist , Fraulein von Kulp are exactly reproduced in Hindi, whereas in the Bengali version they are changed to Kanpur, Kalkatai (in Calcutta), Hatilal Mehta, Lady Mukherjee, Mister Tarafder to give an Indian or/ and bangtail colouring. We may be prone to believe that only in this way the process of communication become meaningful. In the interlingual communication, the link is the translator who is both the receptor of the original message and the source of the secondary message. Both these messages are embedded in their particular cultural frame and as a result in the cross-cultural communication there are interferences which signify difficulties that concern both the translator and the translation process. Once the translator is freed from his role as an objective mediator and keeps his receptors in mind and foresees their possible relations, conditioned by the presuppositions and the behavior patterns of their culture, only then the literary translation become possible. If the receptors are to understand a discourse bound by an alien culture then they need not only be linguistically clear reproduction, but also a minimum of information about the thought patterns and values of the source culture is to be dished out .

For this purpose the translator must make certain adaptations, as done by Bishnu Dey, but these must be minimal with an eye at equivalence of pragmatic meaning. Comparison gives us the clue to the understanding of literature as one entity having different manifestations- almost like the one ultimate Brahma having different forms of the Hindu theology. It helps us understand literature as literature in English, in Bengali, in Hindi, not as English literature, Bengali literature or Hindi literature. Thus in spite of the obvious cultural distance between English and Hindi and Bengali language communities, some kind of an equation of balance is possible in the process of translating one discourse into another.

However, there is another point of view which is more valuable. It says that it cannot reduce a cross cultural reference to such a level where the very idea for going for translation for enjoying foreign literature with its cultural contexts becomes redundant. Bishnu Dey could have filled up the gap or the time–place-tradition elements with footnotes or he could have ignored this problem of cross-cultural references as done in Hindi translation. But it would have been ignoring the problem without solving it. Use of footnotes would have unreasonably divided the source text into parts- target text and the footnotes. And these two parts could have disturbed the autonomy of the source text. Moreover; the footnotes could have spoiled the overall structure of the source text.

Sometimes critics talk of a solution of using less unfamiliar references in place of unfamiliar references. With reference to flora, name of cities or proper personal names one could make use of this method but transferring 'Christ the tiger' into 'Elo Krishna Narashimha' is making use of completely familiar terms of the target language for conveying a meaning. Colour locale is changed here which goes well with the target language. But it may not be accepted as proper.

Regarding conveying the core meaning through the target text one may not forget that the source text in its totality manifests the core meaning and it is quite important to know how the translator picks up this meaning which is commonly known as the invariant core of the original text. Bishnu Dey transforms this invariant core or the original message by Indianising the cultural references.

To sum up I may say that it is very difficult to create the same text in the target language through translation. By using his/her creativity translator tries to reproduce the meaning/ knowledge and material of the source text into target language keeping in mind the socio-cultural preferences of the target readers. Through a translated text we become able to reach

nearest to that point of the distance between two cultures. The job of a translation is to turn strangeness into likeness and in the process the strangeness of the original becomes more vivid but this vividness itself liberates us from the cultural person and gives us the taste of another culture.

The role of translation in comparative literature is really admirable. Translation has not only combined the countries with different languages of this global world but also it has introduced us to great poets and other writers. So translation is a main tool in the comparative study of literature. Without translation a comparativist cannot reach the world classics, texts written in different languages and without knowing or understanding these texts s/he cannot go for comparative study. In our country we see that most of the work in the field of comparative literature is bilingual i.e. it is mainly between our national language Hindi and any one of the regional languages. But after the interaction with international language, English, the area of comparative study of literature in our country becomes wider than earlier. Now we are comparing our literature with any of the foreign languages literatures. Through translation we also get familiar with literatures of other foreign languages like French, Italian, Russian, German etc. and some efforts have also been done to do a comparative study of Indian literature with literature of these languages. Realizing the importance of translation in the comparative study of literatures from different languages the Universities which offer the academic programme in Comparative Literature also introduced one paper of the theory and practice of translation.

Conclusion

No doubt the role of translation in comparative literature is very important. It becomes more valuable in today's world when the whole world has become a global village. With the advancement of technology people living in different countries with different languages come closer to each other. Although there is a one international language, English, which is the common

source of communication between people but still there is a problem in the study of literature as literatures is usually written in regional languages or languages of that particular countries such as France's literature is in French and literature of Russia is in Russian language. It is not compulsory that every comparativist will know the all languages. So there is need of translation by which a comparativist can read and understand those literary works which are not in his/her own language. With the help of translation we become familiar with the customs, dress code, and culture of other countries.

In short it can be said that translation plays a great role in comparative literature. We can even say that comparative study of literatures from different languages, cultures and socio-cultural backgrounds is not possible without translation. So translation occupies a special place in comparative literature. In this age of globalization comparative literature as a subject is getting more and more popularity. But there is no one who is perfect in all the languages. So translation has played/plays a very important role to understand the literature & culture of different languages without which we cannot do a comparative study of various literary works written in different languages. So comparative literature is a tree with translation as its most important branch.

REFERENCES

Apter, Emily. 2005. *The Translation Zone: A new Comparative Literature*, Princeton University Press.

Bassnett, Sussan. 1993. *Comparative Literature: A Critical introduction*, Oxford, Blackwell Publishers.

Henry Gifford. 1969. *Comparative literature, London,* Routledge and K. Paul.

Horst, Frenz and Newton P. Stallknecht. 1961. *Comparative Literature: Method and Perspective,* IlliNois, Southern Illinois University press.

James, S. Holmes. 1970. *"Literature and Translation",* Katholike universiteit te Leuven.

Mueller, Kurt, Volluner and Michael Transcher (Ed.). 1998. *Translating Literatures, Translating cultures: New vistas and approaches in Literary studies*, Burlin, Erich Schmidt.

Nida, E.A., and taber, C.R. 1982. *Theory and Practice of Translation,* Boston, Brill Academic Publishers.

Popovic, A. 1975. *A Dictionary for the Analysis of literary translation*, Department of Comparative Literature, University of Alberta.

Totosy day Zepetnek steven. 1998. *Comparative Literature: Theory*, *Method, Application*, Atlanta, B.V. Amsterdam.

The Ghost of the Author and the Afterlife of Translation

Farheena Danta and Bijay K Danta

Abstract

This paper examines the politics that surrounds the translation of a text, especially the factors that go into the making of putatively canonical classics in translation. It argues that no translation is a faithful reproduction of an 'original' text in another language. Rather it shows how power relations, language hierarchies, political compulsions, cultural anxieties, ambiguous translation strategies, linguistic inadequacies, and misplaced notions of fidelity, among others, create an interesting trail that gives every translated text an interesting afterlife. Given that every act of translation is a translinguistic activity, it would be useful to examine how translated texts transcend their national and notional boundaries. The afterlife in the title refers to the involuntary network of which a text becomes part. Using the case of Phakir Mohan Senapati's Atmajivana, the authors argue that fidelity in translation has to be viewed not only in terms of the language from which one translates but also of the language to which one translates. Every translation has an afterlife that needs to be reckoned with.

This paper examines the relationship of authors to translators. While authors are likely to think of themselves as hosts and translators as parasites, to recall a famous formulation by J. Hillis Miller in a different but related context, the host-parasite register can neither explain nor reflect the situation correctly. The relationship changes in unexpected ways in different contexts of translation, depending on the nature and purpose of the translation. It would be interesting to see how the relationship is also bound by terms of affiliation, complicity, compliance, fidelity, betrayal, etc. already creating a divide between the "body" and its

"excess." For instance when the "from-text" is less visible than the "to-text" (Ramanujan's words), the translator acquires considerable visibility, and sometimes demands as much critical attention as the author.

Lefevere and Bermann point out how translation is part of a larger social imperative which attempts (a) to make texts accessible and (b) to manipulate them in the service of a certain poetics and/or ideology. We will return to the implications of access and manipulation in translation, whether personal or professional. As well as a translinguistic activity, translation emerges as a social strategy. In fact, as Lefevere puts it, translation is "one of the strategies cultures develop to deal with what lies outside their boundaries and to maintain their own character while doing so—the kind of strategy that ultimately belongs in the realm of change and survival, not in dictionaries and grammars" (Lefevere, 2003: 10).

Here, one could possibly draw on Bhabha's famous nation-narration link, and recall Bermann's critique of the nationalist character of translations. It is our intention here to foreground the political premises of both writing and translation. As dealing with the vast body of scholarship and polemic that goes into the theses of Bhabha and Berman is bound to be distracting at this stage, we only expect to utilize their assumptions to arrive at a common hypothesis: given that writing is political, translation is bound to be political too.

Both Lefevere and Bermann concentrate on the politics and compulsions of translating alien texts into particular national languages. To this extent translation becomes a socially symbolic act, to use an expression by Fredric Jameson. The danger of distortion in such cases is high and any account of fidelity can be meaningfully discussed only in terms of the politics of choices and compulsions that may have led to bowdlerisations and alterations. In (post)colonial India, for example, there is ample evidence to show how translators acquired authority over the

original producer of the text by translating political hierarchy into literary or linguistic hierarchy. In other words, colonization helped the translator to appropriate literary authority through political authority, allowing him to take liberties with the text without the author's permission or knowledge.

We would like to establish that ideas such as author and authority do not have a fixed meaning. As a matter of fact, what we call author (and by implication author or authority), is a complex network of images and associations ranging from book cover to rights and from book history to print types. In short the author is an elusive thing; rather than seeing the author as the undisputed producer of books and articles, we see the author also as a production of market requirements, national sentiments, and not infrequently academic or political opportunism. Once we accept this formulation, the role of the translator becomes even more interesting. In such a situation, the translator is neither the trustee nor the overseer of language transactions.

So what kind of space does the translator occupy? Is it the space granted to him by the author, by the project, or by the profession? Where does s/he belong? Is it along with the author, after the author, or before the author? Each is possible, and each has been a key to the translator's prestige and plight.

Is the translator bothered by the writer's authority, authorship, the unhappy reminder that s/he is a worker in terms of manufacture or marketing capital goods, where the capital, and therefore, the authority rests with someone else? Is s/he required to play the catching up game *ad infinitum, ad nauseum*, and *ad nihilum?* In other words, can the translator speak when s/he is not expected to be anything other than an agent, a conveyor or carrier of meaning on behalf of somebody else or something else? If we further say that this somebody has the authority (that is the power) of authorship, authority (a government, administration, court, king or a powerful patron), institution, publisher, or even market expectation and packaging, the translator will always be

looking over his/her shoulder for these ghosts. These ghosts are powerful when they are invisible to the naked eye, sickeningly present when they are supposed to be absent. Authors and authority can be authoritarian.

But who is an author? Is he the producer or the owner? Given that the author is seen as the arbiter of meaning and method, it would be instructive to look at alternative trajectories of authorship. We can draw on the plight of the author as producer, so powerfully articulated by Raymond Williams and Walter Benjamin. The author, or the artist-turned-artisan as they call him, not only has to part with his produce in a market economy but also produce what the market chooses for him. We are fascinated by the figure of this artist, this romantic artist alienated from art, and often want to restore the artist to his original position.

The word *author* is derived from the Latin word *auctor/ augure* (it could also be related to the word *akshara*) which means to produce or to increase. Interestingly, the nearest equivalent of the word in English is not writer but *auctioneer* (from the same root auctor), which means one who seeks out the highest bidder. Two other words with which the *author* claims kinship in the history of meaning (not equivalence) are writer and scribe. Both words have more to do with (*writan* or scrape) engraving or scratching as unruly children (or even creative adults), perhaps do on their writing desks. The maximum the history of the word may allow the writer to do is *put pen to paper*, scratch on the surface of the paper, or scribble (the Oriya word is *gareiba*, to draw lines from the word *gara* or line). Writing is in such company scribbling in an illegible manner. The authority of the writer as an ever present sentient being or transcendent subject has more to with the anxiety of the writer to something meaningful, something that will lift his profession. If we follow this trajectory we will see why and how New Criticism killed the author, which will release the text from its apparent owner, and allow the text to come into play.

Following on we may even see why Foucault said that

the relationship between author and authority is critical. During the Middle Ages, the name of an author was important in the *auctoritates*, the auction place, where authority would be proof of identity, nothing else. The interesting part was that in case the translation was fake, the auctioneer can point to the producer. Any claim to authority was in a way the auctioneer's guarantee against incrimination and arrest for wrongdoing, or for bad or inaccurate copies.

It was more a sign of the author's helplessness than power, as we see it today. With the modern era, the conditions are reversed. A scientific text, in order to be truthful, must be anonymous. That is, a condition of its truthfulness is that it must be made up of statements which could have been proffered by *anyone*. The guarantee of their truthfulness lies in the quality of the demonstration.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a totally new conception was developed when scientific texts were accepted on their own merits and positioned within an anonymous and coherent conceptual system of established truths and methods of verification. Authentication no longer required reference to the individual who had produced them; the role of the author disappeared as an index of truthfulness. (Foucault, 1977:126)

There are many other kinds of complexity which enter into the definition of authorship. For instance, is Nietzsche to be considered the "author" of laundry lists? Does authorship pertain only to texts or can it be extended to modes and systems of discourse, such as Marxism or psychoanalysis? The definition of authorship and the critical meaning which we attribute to the identity of the author have a lot to do with regimes of literary property, with the romanticized equation of authors with heroes, and with the terms which are used to evaluate literature. Our conceptions of authorship, despite the "death" of the author in twentieth century literature, have come from the renaissance construction of individualism and the romantic construction of

subjective empowerment.

What of the translator, then? If we define translation today as referring to any kind of translinguistic activity, the translator is someone who transfers texts from one language to another, regardless of the type of text. But this is where the problem lies. The "poverty" of our understanding of translation and fidelity lies in its reliance on numerous sets of rigid binary oppositions which reciprocally validate one another. Translation is considered to be an act of re-production, through which the meaning of a text is transferred from one language to another. Each polar element in the translating process is construed as an absolute, and meaning is transposed from one pole to the other. But the fixity implied in the oppositions between languages, between original/copy, author/translator, and, by analogy, male/female, cannot be absolute; these terms are rather to be placed on a continuum where each can be considered in relative terms. As Susan Bassnett points out, contemporary translation studies often runs into "the old binary concept of translation [which] saw original and translated text as two poles." It seeks to work with translation as a dynamic activity fully engaged with cultural systems (Bassnett, 2002:66). Barbara Godard emphasizes the ways in which this view of translation eliminates "cultural traces and self-reflexive elements," depriving the translated text of its "foundation in events." This is the only way to stop thinking of the "translator [as] a servant, an invisible hand mechanically turning the word of one language into another" (Godard, 1990:91). It is by destroying the absolutes of polarity that we can advance in our understanding of social and literary relations.

Attention must shift to those areas of identity where the indeterminate comes into play. Equivalence in translation, as contemporary translation theory emphasizes, cannot be a one-to-one proposition. The process of translation must be seen as a fluid production of meaning, similar to other kinds of writing. However, instead of perpetuating the hierarchy of writing roles, by reversing race or gender identities, translators can see themselves

as part of a mobile and performative community. The interstitial may become the focus of investigation, and indeed a point to work with, once the polarized extremes are set aside. Because it is an activity which has long been theorized in terms of a hierarchy of class or gender positions, the rethinking of translation will necessarily upset traditional vocabularies of domination.

In particular, the rethinking of translation involves a widening of the definition of the translating subject. Who translates? Fidelity can only be understood if we take a new look at the identity of translating subjects and their enlarged area of responsibility as signatories of "doubly authored" documents. At the same time, a whole nexus of assumptions around issues of authority and agency come to be challenged. When meaning is no longer a hidden truth to be "discovered," but a set of discursive conditions to be "re-created," the work of the translator acquires added dimensions.

We are not sure that everybody agrees, but there is a point in what is suggested. Translations are productions, performances. We talk about Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and "hundred and six" performances, John Gielgud's 1947 classic or the Beijing University student guild's 1956 production where everybody wore the same college uniform, and there was no such thing like a boy or a girl doing the boy and the girl. Each has its own logic of production and if we believe Jan Kott, one of Shakespeare's most influential critics, the performances were blessed by Shakespeare's ghost. After all these performances, make Shakespeare their contemporary, making the Shakespeare text respond to their present. In spirit this is the role and responsibility of the translator. Lest we should be mistaken, this is not a plea of adaptation, which has its own place and worth, and which possibly has played a greater part in the transmission of culture than what we call translation today.

We would refer to two interesting cases here. The first one is the 1924 translation of Tagore's *Gora* (1909), by Macmillan, London, which ran fifteen reprints between 1924 and 1976. The

book was reissued by Macmillan India in 1980, and was reprinted twice in 1993 and 1995. The book was presented by Macmillan as a translation but the name of the translator was not given. In the Indian editions, it was presented as part of a series that was called "Tagore in English," giving the impression that it was either translated by Tagore or worse still, it was a book written by Tagore in English. What is, however, more interesting is this kind of packaging. The 1924 English translation was apparently of the book published in 1909, which was at variance with the original magazine version serialized in *Probashi*.

It is true that the book that Tagore published had already excluded many portions from the magazine serializations. In 1922-23, as the translation was being done by WW Pearson, one-time missionary and later teacher at Shantiniketan, Tagore said in a letter that he was not sure about the ability of the English reading public to see the importance of passages involving "scenes and sentiments which are foreign to them" (Mukherjee, 1981: 102). Tagore in fact proposed that once completed, the translation "will have to be carefully abridged" (102). Tagore's letter was not read by the addressee (Pearson), as he fell from a moving train in Italy and died. Pearson's translation was as reported by Tagore himself was read and revised by his nephew, Surendranath Tagore, but even as he had read not more than half the manuscript, Macmillan published the book. This book neither carried the abridgements that Tagore intended nor incorporated revisions of the entire text.

But this seemingly full-length book with inaccuracies was the only English translation of *Gora* in circulation till 1997 when Sahitya Akademi asked Sujit Mukherjee to translate the full version of the text. Incidentally the Bangla text had been corrected and restored from the magazine version in 1928 and 1941 respectively. Macmillan paid no heed to the fact that its translation of Gora was incomplete and inauthentic. More importantly, Tagore didn't seem to really worry much about the incomplete text and inauthentic translation. The fact that it gave him a presence in the English speaking world was more important at that stage. What we want

to say here is that many of us have read only this version of the novel, and Tagore's international reputation as a novelist at least has been created by a text that was doubly flawed. In India, several translations of Gora have used this text of 1924. This already puts the relationship between authority and author-ity under the scanner. The Nobel Prize of 1912, and fact that Tagore was and continues to be the most widely known Indian writer abroad, hardly allowed the space to review the translation histories of his work. For people who read Tagore in translation only, there was no way to know that Tagore's finest novel was not even the novel that one was supposed to have read.

The second case relates to John Boulton's English translation of the Oriya novelist Phakir Mohan Senapti's *Atmajivanacharita,* the first autobiography in Oriya[1]. It is an exceptional book, important for its critique of British rule, which often bordered between the insane and the ludicrous, of the response of the new middleclass to the declining fortunes of Orissa, and for its portrayal of the death of a way of life. The book was translated into English as *My Times and I* by J V Boulton and published as part of *Phakir Mohan Senapati: Life and Times* (1969). In fact, Phakir Mohan's reputation outside Orissa (and possibly India), can be attributed to this book. In the translation, Boulton's disaffection with Phakir Mohan's historical ramblings on his family is immediately evident as he excises a sizable chunk of the text and provides a short summary of the portion thus excised. A peculiar practice throughout the translation is Boulton's unwillingness to explain why the cuts are made where they are made. Space does not seem to be a consideration as he provides commentaries along with the short summaries.

More than that, Boulton mixes his own summaries and commentaries with Phakir Mohan's text without any transparent indication, though bilingual readers who compare the two texts will find that Boulton has unfailingly indicated breaks in the text by providing asterisks between his text and Phakir Mohan's. For readers without access to the original, these asterisks do not serve

the purpose for which they were put by Boulton. Again, more comparisons of the two texts reveal a pattern that cannot be ignored. While Boulton assiduously keeps to Phakir Mohan's text when he is very critical of the British, he avoids passages that in his reckoning would be offensive to the Bengali and Oriya readers.

It is now difficult to decide how much of this arrangement owed to Phakir Mohan's ambiguous response towards vernacular education imparted to Oriyas in undivided Bengal, left as it was to the itinerant teachers who were left to their own devices without any state policy. Moreover, in Phakir Mohan's text these men resembled cows let loose after Dol Purnima. Interestingly, this version of the book has been used by many Indian translators for their translations. While we do not have the evidence as yet, the Hindi translation may have been used by the others perpetuating the story of truncated authorship. The Assamese translation by Jayantimala Borpujari mostly follows the Boulton selections and excludes the passages not included in the latter.

The king inspected my body again and again, and with each scrutiny was more and more unimpressed. He saw I was wiry, and therefore emaciated, and therefore ugly and stupid. So he reached the conclusion that 'This new secretary is ugly and dumb. But since the person has been sent by the Superdant [sic] Sahib, he has to be made sound in the mind and good-looking, too.' So he arranged to send two seers of ghee for my daily consumption (Senapati, 1997).

We the inhabitants of Balasore must admit openly that we have acquired good conduct, fine bearings, and education, etc. from our association with the Bengali gentlemen. But, our own nature notwithstanding, I dare say that we have also acquired our alcoholism from these gentlemen…. Then all the Bengali officials posted at Balasore were alcoholics. I still remember the names of two or three Bengali teachers who never touched alcohol. I am talking of times when educated young men not exposed to drinking were treated with disdain by one and all. A young man

teetotaller would normally buy and keep a little alcohol in a small glass bottle at home. Whenever he went out to the so-called high society, he used to rub a little alcohol in his whiskers and pretended to be drunk (Senapati, 1997).

Translation theorists have rightly pleaded for translation of sense rather than word order. This type of translation, which tries above all to save the spirit, also fails to keep the letter, but seems to go unnoticed even when it takes the greatest liberties. It is not a faithful copy of its original, but a second original in its own right. Bad translations, it is suggested, render the letter without the spirit in a low and servile imitation. Good translations, it follows, keep the spirit even when they seem to move away from the letter. But the question is: whose letter and whose spirit? As A. K. Ramanujan says:

To translate is to 'metaphor', to 'carry across'. Translations are transpositions, re-enactments, interpretations. Some elements of the original cannot be transposed at all. One can often convey a sense of the original rhythm. but not the language-bound metre: one can mimic levels of diction, but not the actual sound of the original words. Textures are harder (maybe impossible) to translate than structures, linear order more difficult than syntax, lines more difficult than larger patterns. Poetry is made at all these levels-and so is translation…The translation must not only represent, but re-present, the original. One walks a tightrope between the To-language and the From-language, in a double loyalty. A translator is an 'artist on oath'. Sometimes one may succeed only in re-presenting a poem, not in closely representing it. (Ramanujan, 1999: 23-31)

Writing, as Stephen Greenblatt says of Shakespeare's work, is the circulation of social energy. This circulation arrests the unilinear flow of state power and social authority by admitting exceptions to norms. Writing subverts social authority by circulating social energy in unexpected ways, and in unexpected quarters. Materialist critiques of power draw our attention to the

similarity between hegemonic control over people and capitalistic hold on production, and the dangers of both.

In the translation scene, the authority of the author flows from what seems to be (a) the ownership of capital and (b) his refusal to part with his undisputed right over his property. In such a situation, the translator threatens to spoil the party by constantly trying to unsettle the author from his position, by releasing the text as it were from the author, or by creating conditions where such release would come without fail. Given the ferocity with which the author or authority would hold on to its terrain, the translator in his turn would interrupt the flow of power by inserting into the translation what we call "revisionary ratios" after Bloom. While it is possible to work with the six ratios proposed by Bloom, the translator may find only some of these more useful than the others. So the translator can challenge the author by returning the text to a moment prior to its birth, that is, by re-locating the text in its social circumstance of production, and not in its auctorial logic.

In so doing, the translator not only dislodges the author from his hierarchical position but also redefines authority outside the personal, often by highlighting the inconsequentiality of authorial intention. This is not a hypothetical position: in fact, every translator redefines his relation to the author of the source text while identifying the spirit of the work. This is not done through a customary declaration regarding obligations and responsibilities of the translator, but in the evidentiary choice of words, registers, setting of the translational universe. The choice or choices will specify whether the translator is willing to expose the "into text" to the violent uncertainties of the structures of the "from text."

In other words, the translator violates the social hierarchy of texts by admitting/coercing into already existing book histories/ literary traditions names, texts, and ideologies (some people prefer to call them values), that are alien to say the least. In the process the "into" language is compelled by the translator to

forgo its assured look, and shed some of its grammatical markers, features, and compulsions.

We have been talking about the similarity in status of critics and translators. However, authors have learnt to be more tolerant towards critics than translators, realizing that books discussed by academic critics, often run into multiple editions and can rekindle the dying embers of reputations and sales. It is possible that the author, who has already invested in a particular interpretive universe in the process of writing, expects the translator to re-produce the same in another language. There is no reason for him to expect the translator, in all fairness, to contribute anything to the process except by way of inter-language transport service, almost like a mover of goods. He is sure of his work and its meaning, and rules out critical intervention or difference. If this figuration sounds a little comic, the expectation that the translator carry the author's load faithfully and deliver it to the reader in good faith suggests how the author would want the translator to be an authorized transporter of goods, and nothing else.

The translator has his say/revenge by giving the author an afterlife. Some may think of this as a reward, a recognition, an acknowledgement not of authority but of affection, or of an opportunity (for getting fame, money, visibility). In any case translation is a search for authority, a search for what Derrida calls not the perfect but the possible.

NOTES

Fakir Mohan Senapati is now spelt Phakir Mohan Senapti, the same way as the author signed his name. Though the autobiography has been variously called *Atmajivana* and *Atmajivanacharita*, editors like Debedra K Dash increasingly advocate the former.

REFERENCES

Bassnett, Susan, 1980/2002. *Translation Studies,* New York: Routledge, 3rd rev. edn.

Benjamin, Walter, 1969. "The Task of the Translator." In *Illuminations.* Trans. H. Zohn, ed.H. Arendt. New York: Schocken Books.

Bermann, Sandra, and Michael Wood, eds. 2005. *Nation, Language, and the Ethics of Translation*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Bhabha, Homi K, ed. 1990. *Nation and Narration*, London: Routledge.

Derrida, Jacques. 1985. "Roundtable on Translation." *In The Ear of the Other: Otobiography, Transference, Translation.* Ed. Christie V. McDonald. Trans. Peggy Kamuf. New Yourk: Schocken Books: 98-110.

Foucault, Michel. Foucault, M. 1977. "What Is an Author?", In *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice*. Ed. D. Bouchard. Trans. D. Bouchard and S. Simon. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Godard, Barbara. 1990. "Theorizing Feminist Discourse/ Translation", *In Translation.History and Culture*. Ed. Susan Basnett and André Lefevere. London: FrancesPinter: 87-96.

Jameson, Fredric. 1981. The *Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press

Lefevere, Andre, ed. 2003. *Translation/History/Culture: A Sourcebook*. London: Routledge.

Miller, J Hillis. 1977. "Limits of Pluralism III: The Critic as Host", *Critical Inquiry* 3.3: 43947.

Mukherjee, Sujit. 1981. *Translation as Discovery and Other Essays on Indian Literature in English Translation*. New Delhi: Allied Publishers.

Ramanujan, AK. 1999. On Translating a Tamil Poem." In *The Collected Essays of A.K. Ramanujan.* Ed. Vinay Dhrawadker. New York: Oxford University Press: 217-31.

Senapati, Phakir Mohan. 1997. *Atmajivani.* Assamese Trans. Jayantimala Borpijari. National Book Trust New Delhi.

Senapati, Phakir Mohan. 1997. *Story of My Life.* Trans. J. K. Nayak and P. Das. Bhubaneswar: Sateertha Publications.

Senapati, Phakir Mohan.1985. *My Times and I*. Trans. J. Boulton. Bhubaneswar: OrissaSahitya Akademi.

Williams, Raymond, 1958/1960. *Culture and Society*, New York: Doubleday.

Translation as Handloom: Acknowledging Family as (Re-)Source

Akshaya Kumar

Abstract

Indian English poets as translators in their prefatory remarks or extended acknowledgements often refer to the intimate familial sites that propel them into the act of translation. The paper takes a close look at 'acknowledgements' that these poet-translators write, to map how at a fundamental level Indian translation tends to be family-enterprise, a kind of small scale handloom industry in which every member of the family partakes in tangible ways. Family/home continues to be the primary site of translation-encounter. It is the source as well as destination of translation.

Among the pantheon of modern Indian English poetry, there is hardly a poet who has not shown more than part-time interest in translating regional poetry into English. Dilip Chitre and Arun Kolatkar translated *Tukaram* and *Jnaneshwar*; A.K. Ramanujan translated Tamil *Sangam* poetry and Kannada vacana poetry; Arvind Krishan Mehrotra translated *Gatha Saptasati* of Hala and Kabir; Agha Shahid Ali translated Faiz Ahmed Faiz. Even the poets of the new generation retain the fervor for translation. Sudeep Sen translates poems from Hindi and Bangla; Ranjit Hoskote translates Kashmiri medieval poet Lal Ded; Mani Rao has translated *Bhagwad Gita* and Kalidas. Although these poets as translators are not obliged to write explicitly about their translations, yet in their prefaces, forewords, acknowledgements or interviews, they do throw up autobiographical anecdotes which if put together or even just catalogued in a consistent frame, can offer us a real-time peep into the very act of translation in the Indian context. Through a reading of their prefatory remarks, extended acknowledgements

and occasional remarks on their practices of translation, I intend to identify and foreground the intimate sites and circumstantial drives that propel these poet-translators to enter into inter-lingual cross fertilization, so necessary for translation to fructify.

I

In his characteristic way of saying through the narrative, A. K. Ramanujan in his essay "On Translating a Tamil Poem", recounts a tale to underline not only the impervious nature of the original poetical text to be translated into alien tongue, but also the necessary team work that is required to do so. The tale goes like this:

A Chinese emperor ordered a tunnel to be bored through a great mountain. The engineers decided that the best and quickest way to do it would be to begin work on both sides of the mountain, after precise measurements. If the measurements were precise enough, the two tunnels would meet in the middle, making a single one. 'But what happens If they don't meet?' asks the emperor. The counselors, in their wisdom, answered, 'If they don't meet, we will have two tunnels instead of one'. (Ramanujan, "On Translating a Tamil Poem". 231)

Clearly translator alone is not the sole individual who translates, there are many other players – acknowledged or unacknowledged, who partake in the serious enterprise. Who are the players (or co-translators) here? In this tale there are many – a Chinese emperor who orders the tunnel to be dug, two sets of engineers who decide to bore across the mountain from both the sides and the counselors who encourage to go ahead with the enterprise. At an allegorical level, it would mean that translation requires bold and benign state patronage, prudent artisans/ artists and the empathetic critics/ wise readers in a definite sequence of commands.

Does Ramanujan translate alone or is he too assisted by a

team of unofficial co-translators/ engineers? This is an important question, because it would to a large extent determine whether translation in his case is just a matter of personal will, professional compulsion or organic social circumstances involving his family and community or even the institution he works with. In his "Translator's Note" to *Poems of Love and War*, he begins with his 'home' and straightaway identifies his 'mother' as his prime mover thus: "… I have also accumulated debts – beginning at home with my late mother who gave me more than a mother tongue and my wife Molly whose literary insight and advice have been a mainstay …" (Ramanujan,"Translator's Note", *Poems of Love and War,* not paginated). In the same piece of acknowledgement, Ramanujan enlists the names of other co-workers and counselors, but what is significant is the precedence that it gives to 'mother' over all other. The 'mother' receives precedence not due to some emotional piety or some oedipal pull; rather 'she' is seen as an active agent and keen participant in the act of translation. Therefore, very emphatically he would say that the mother bequeaths "more than a mother-tongue".

Translation, in Ramanujan's case, is more than anything else a medium of dialogue between mother (-tongue) and father (-tongue); the former is the occupant of ground floor, the latter is positioned upstairs. In other words, home is the primary site of happening, of translating encounter. Translation in the bilingual/ tri-lingual Indian context begins right inside the home where mother happens to be the repository of interiority (*akam*) and father of the exteriority (*puram*) and son/ daughter happens to a creative and compulsive translator between the two. The following excerpt from his long interview with A.L. Becker (ALB) and Keith Taylor (KT) needs to be quoted here to understand the respective place and necessary flow of languages within Ramanujan's home:

> AKR: … I have literally lived my life in three different cultures, although they are connected. I think it is in the dialogue of these three cultures – which I sometimes refer to as downstairs, upstairs and outside the

house – and in the conflict between these three languages, that I am made. That's

not special to me. About 10 percent of India is bilingual. If they happen to be educated, they will be trilingual.

KT: Let me see if I have the metaphor right. The downstairs language would be Tamil?

AKR: Tamil. Yes. The language of my family. Kannada would be the language of the city, Mysore. The language outside the house. English would be upstairs.

ALB: Upstairs would be the father?

AKR: Yes. I sometimes call them father tongues and mother tongues. My father was a mathematician. He did much of his work in English, and he literally lived upstairs. His library was there. (Ramanujan, "Interview Two", *Uncollected Poems*, 53)

This is not just a candid explanation of Ramanujan's linguistic make-up; this is rather an account of a compelling translation ecology which an Indian (translator) is born into. Translation is not just the necessary condition of cultural co-existence in postcolonial multi-lingual India; it is an intimate domesticate need, a household practice particularly in families where mother, rooted as she is in native traditions, operates largely through the native tongue and father, literate and professional as he is, speaks the language of the outer-world.

II

Agha Shahid Ali is not as prolific a translator as Ramanujan is, but he too cannot escape the obligation of translating native Urdu literature. Despite his own limitations of competence in Urdu language, Shahid Ali is simply gravitated towards the Urdu poetry of Ghalib and Faiz that used to reverberate in his home back in

Kashmir. He recounts: "Before the partition of the subcontinent, Faiz had stayed in our house in Srinagar, the summer capital of Kashmir…. When I was six or seven, he sent my father a copy from Lahore of his then latest volume – *Zindan-nama*. My father often quoted Faiz, especially his elegy for the Rosenbergs …" (Ali, "The Rebel Silhouette",76). Faiz was recited in the family, and that was, what he terms as, his first "sensuous encounter" with the great Urdu poet, but Faiz did not make inroads into the poetic unconscious of young Shahid Ali.

Decades later Faiz comes back in a much more intrusive way into Shahid's 'home' though Begum Akhtar who sings the revolutionary poet in a private concert meant exclusively for family and friends of Shahid Ali. In an elegy written in the memory of Faiz, this is how Shahid Ali puts his journey of fascination with the poet:

I didn't listen when my father recited your poems to us by heart. What could it mean to a boy that you had redefined the cruel beloved, that figure who already was Friend, Woman, God? In your hands she was Revolution. You gave her silver hands, her lips were red. Impoverished lovers waited all night every night, but she remained only a glimpse behind light. When I learned of her I was

no longer a boy, and Urdu

a silhouette traced by

the voices of singers, by

Begum Akhtar who wove your couplets

into ragas: both language and music

were sharpened. I listened:

and you became, like memory,

necessary. Dast-e-Saba,

I said to myself. And quietly

the wind opened its palms: I read

there of the night: the secrets

of lovers, the secrets of prisons.

(richautumns.blogspot.in)

It is the subsequent singing of Begum Akhtar that brings Faiz back into the active memory of the young poet. Home once again provides the exciting cause. Translating native poetry into English is not as much an academic pursuit for the Indian poet-translators; it is an intimate act of survival, an act of unburdening the over-laden self, an inner urge. It is only in this sense can these translations be seen as extension of poet-translators' own poetic output and vice versa.

It is not just the oral influence of Faiz that precipitates into a translating act; it is actual intellectual help that comes from Shahid's mother. He would say that when he went to Srinagar in the summer of 1989, "my [his] mother helped me translate[d] Faiz" (Ali, "The Rebel Silhouette", 77). It is not just mother who contributes tangibly, even Shahid's grandmother help him get over the crisis of translating Faiz into 'English' thus: "… my grandmother, quite by chance, quoted Milton during a conversation in English. She was then eighty-eight. Ever since I can remember, she could quote Ghalib and Faiz-in Urdu; Habba Khatun, Mahjoor, Zinda Kaul - in Kashmiri. But she'd never quoted Milton before. I was thrilled because I once again didn't need proof of my rights to the canonical English texts. Significantly, not only was all my training in school in English (I mean I grew up with English as my first language), but, paradoxically, my first language was/is not my mother-tongue which is Urdu. When I wrote my first poems, at the age of ten, it was in English. I did not "choose" to write in English.

It happened that way naturally" (Ali, "The Rebel Silhouette",77). The poet-translator inherits both Faiz and Milton, and this really felicitates, at the level of poetic unconscious, Faiz's translation into English.

Repeatedly Shahid Ali in prose interventions and interviews keeps on reminding that his translations take off not as much from the reading of Faiz, as from his listening of his ghazals, recited and sung by his family members and Begum Akhtar, later on. This, as he would underline, was his advantage over other translations of Faiz: "My distinct advantage was that I could "hear" and say the originals to myself, as I translated, something Rich and Merwin just couldn't have" ("The Rebel Silhouette", 85). He often claimed to have "rare tapes' of "Begum Akhtar singing his [Faiz's] ghazals in private concerts" (Ali, "The Rebel Silhouette", 86). The tapes ensure not only an after-life to Faiz's ghazals, but also transport back, on and off, the poet-translator into the world of the originals at the rarefied oracular level.

III

Dilip Chitre, translator of medieval *bhakti* poet Tukaram and his contemporary dalit poet Namdeo Dhasal, also owes his forays into the domain of translation to his family. In his path-breaking effort of translating Marathi saint poet Tukaram into English, he says: "I would like to recall here that it was my maternal grandfather, Kashinath Martand Gupte, who impressed upon my mind the greatness of Tukaram when I was only a child. My paternal grandfather, Sitabai Atmaram Chitre, gave my first insight into Bhakti. My parents – my father in particular – regularly gave me books that were relevant to my work on Tukaram." – (Chitre, *Says Tuka*, xxviii). If one were to undertake an anthropological excavation of the roots of the translating endeavour of the contemporary Indian English poet-translator, it would require going past the immediate parentage. The grand-parents, often invoked as they are in the acknowledgements, lend rare diachronicity to the cultural enterprise of translation. Formally

Says Tuka is a work of Chitre himself, but in terms of the temporal mapping of its authorship/ translator-ship, it is a project handed down to him by his ancestors.

Even when it comes to the translation of a contemporary dalit poet Namadeo Dhasal, Chitre is essentially responding to his inherited family values, his nurturing and his childhood camaraderie with dalit boys and girls. This is how he recounts his upbringing:

> As a child I was looked after by Dagdu, a mahar from the coastal Konkan region of Maharashtra. Dagdu was a trusted employee of my father and was treated as a family member. Other caste Hindu children in our neighbourhood thought we were all 'degraded' as we had a mahar working for our family who had access right into our kitchen. At home and at school, I mingled with as many 'others' as with Hindus in all their caste and jati variety. (Dhasal 178)

More than anything else, translating Namdeo for Chitre is an act of becoming "déclassé and decaste" which he says "was the best natural route life offered to me [him]"(178). As a modern Indian poet-translator, Chitre is answerable to his family credo and therefore both *bhakti* and dalit texts become his preferred choices for translation. Translating a text is a task more of retrieving the original, of lapsing back into the familial zone of intimacy and comfort, of possessing all over again the lost or marginalized traditions.

IV

Sudeep Sen, one among the leading poet-translators of the post-Ramanujan era, approaches translation in terms of parallel pleasure which he realizes through a "collaborative" effort. In his translation of Bangla poems, he would take active support of his father. He would explicitly acknowledge it thus:

> …, I will give you some examples; when I was translating

Tagore, I was sitting with my dad, so he had his own input and I had my own version. So in fact, we were collaboratively doing it. I was probably doing the harder work, because dad being dad just preferred to have his cup of tea and spot some wisdom but then that was essential to the process of translation for me. Therefore, I want to give him credit because without his inputs it would have been a poorer poem (Sen 161).

Even though the inputs given by the poet-translator's father may not have the requisite finesse or aesthetic elegance, yet they go into the very act of translation. The important aspect of this father-son cultural exchange is that there is no easy correspondence between the two versions. The son as poet-translator uses the version provided by his father as raw material which he later on chisels with his poetic prowess and superior control of the English language. The homely intervention, thus, is an essential aspect of Sudeep's translations from Bangla. In case of languages other than Bangla or Hindi, Sudeep devises a novel strategy of 'translating with the poet' (of the original text). In any case, the poet-translator requires not just an approval of the 'original author' but he seeks to take him on board for his act of translation.

Ranjit Hoskote, another front-line contemporary poet of Indian English, has recently translated a Kashmiri woman poet Lad Ded under the title *I, Lalla*. In his acknowledgements, he mentions the names of whole lot of people who provided intellectual or emotional impetus to him, but he does announce that more than anything else, the entire exercise of translating Lal Ded was an act of rediscovering "a connection to an ancestral land, to a homeland and a language that I[He] had lost as the descendant of Kashmiri Saraswat Brahmins who migrated to southwestern India in several waves of diaspora between the tenth and fourteenth centuries"(Hoskote, *I, Lalla,* lxx). In case of Indian English poet, the act of translating is driven by two impulses – the centripetal umbilical pull that compels him to go back to his homeland, its literature and culture and the centrifugal pull of transmitting

native literature to the global audience by way of its translation into English. He does mention the name of his cousins who counseled him during the twenty long years which he invested into the translation of Lal Ded.

As a creative writer, Ranjit Hoskote in his poem does make repeated references to Ghalib. His recent collection of poems *Central Time* includes a translation of a couplet of a ghazal of Ghalib. The couplet in Urdu read thus:

ug rahaa hai dar-o deevaar se sabzah Ghalib

ham bayaabaan mein hain aur ghar mein bahaar aayi hai

(Jafri, *Diwan-e-Ghalib*157, 117)

It is translated thus: "The doors and windows of my shaky house,/ says Ghalib, have broken into green tendrils./ Why should I complain,/ he draws his shawl closer in the rain,/ when spring has visited my house?" (Hoskote, "Monsoon Evening, Horniman Circle", *Central Time*, 39). In the same collection there is another poem, "Night Runner" (Hoskote, Central Time, 63), which also is a free-translation of a Ghalib's ghazal. Its opening couplet reads thus:

har qadam doori manzil hai numaayaan mujh se

meri raftar se bhage hai bayaabaan mujh se

(Jafri, *Diwan-e-Ghalib*, 191, 140)

The point which needs to be re-iterated here is that as the poet co-opts Ghalib into his poetry through his translations, he is assisted by his parents in a very overt way. This is how he accounts for his love for Ghalib: "Ghalib has long been a very special and important presence for me. I was born in 1969, which marked the centennial of Ghalib's passing. My mother has always admired Ghalib's poetry – she studied Shakespeare and Keats formally with Armando Menezes and V N Gokak in the mid-1950s,

and read Ghalib by herself – and my father presented her with a number of publications that had appeared during the centennial. From these, she would read to me, as I was growing up" (Hoskote, "Interview with Mustanvir Dalvi"). The modern-day young poet-translators inherit a very robust and properly cultivated bilingual literary competence in the sense that their parents are well-read and well-versed in both canonical European and popular native literature.

Mani Rao's bold and experimental translation of a text as intimidating as the *Bhagvad Gita* is also in some measure a family enterprise. Very economical in her acknowledgements, she would say: "An army of friends participated in my experience of the Gita and this translation – I only acknowledge here those who were in the thick of it. My father was my first reader: He read every chapter as I drafted it, and his responsiveness vindicated my translation strategy. My mother's sense of humour renewed my energy and kept me grounded – memorably when I expressed nervousness about confronting the revelation or *visvarupam* in Chapter 11, she said, "Relax, it's just a lot of hands and legs" (xiii). The young generation of poet-translators exploits domestic resources to the hilt – and these resources are not just emotional, these are intellectual as well. These poet-translators never have the crisis of choosing a text to translate; it is the text that chooses them. This often happens to be the text that is read aloud or sung or just recited frequently, if not regularly, within the home. The father (or the mother) is invariably the first draft-maker; he (or she) also volunteers to be the editor as well. Home thus provides the readiness, in a way determines the tenor of translation. The mother's rather casual version of '*visvarupam*' might appear very innocuous, but it is this naughtiness that runs through Mani Rao's translation of *Gita*. The mother lends her the playful ease; the father the necessary scholarship.

Vijay Nambisan, another young Indian English poet, who undertakes the translation of two *bhakti* texts – Puntanam Namputiri's *Jnana-paana* and Melpattur's *Narayaniyam*, actually

goes on to demand help from his parents. In an exceptional note entitled as "Translator's Apology", the poet-translator very candidly admits his handicap on two counts – one, his not being very competent both in Sanskrit and Malayalam, the language of the original texts, and two his lack of interest or rather skepticism towards the relevance of *bhakti* as a credo of critical faith in modern India. About Malayalam he admits that "I [He] can barely comprehend the newspapers, and most literary texts are closed books to me" (2). And Sanskrit was his "third language in school" (2), which he does not "really know" either (2). Yet he decides to translate the two texts which offer him "two measures of bhakti". He asks his father to provide the first literal draft in translation of the original poems: "That is why I asked my father, two years ago and more, if he would supply me with literal translations of these three poems which I could turn into verse. He consented readily and unstintingly. He wrote them all down in longhand, though he has used a keyboard before. He considers pen and paper as better befitting literary work" (44). It seems that the role of these young translators is more directed towards versification of a literal draft prepared by (either of) parents. He thanks his mother too: "I thank my mother, too, for reading my drafts and encouraging me" (44). The labour involved in the literary act thus stands suitably divided between the literal and the literary – the former is taken care of by the parents, the latter by the poet-son.

V

Indian poet-translators are not lone rangers; nor are they autonomous individual beings who carry out their intellectual or creative pursuits strictly on the basis of their personal volition. In the instances quoted above it becomes evident that the presence of parents (or family/ home) in the translating act is not just salutary; it is tangible and substantial. It is the culture of the home that provides both the boundary and perspective to translation in India. Contemporary Indian poet-translator acknowledges, without any inhibition, the collective labour of the family towards the realization of his task of translation. Translation in the Indian

context is a family-enterprise, a kind of a small handloom industry in which all the members of the family (including grandparents) pitch in. Of course it would be too apocalyptic to suggest that Indian translator is mere a scripter and that his position or authority is usurped by his family members in fundamental ways. 'Home' coordinates the poet-translator, it never controls him; it propels him into a potential situation of translation, but it never forfeits his right to be playful and creative. Indian way of translating, if one can sum up, is thus very enabling for it entails both reaching out (to the outer world) and reaching in (back towards the home/ mother).

REFERENCES

Ali, Agha Shahid., 1995. "The Rebel's Silhouette: Translating Faiz Ahmed Faiz." *Between Languages and Cultures: Translation and Cross-Cultural Contexts*. Eds. Anuradha Dingwaney and Carol Maier. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 75-90. Print.

---."Homage to Faiz." Web. 05 Sept. 2014 <richautumns.blogspot.in/2014/05/homage-to-faiz-agha-shahid-ali.html,>.

Chitre, Dilip. 2009. "A Translator's Delight and Despair." *Namdeo Dhasal: Poet of the Underworld*. Trans. Dilip Chitre. Chennai: Navayana, 174-180. Print.

---. 1991. "Introduction." *Says Tuka*. By Tukaram. Trans. Dilip Chitre. Delhi: Penguin, vii-xxviii. Print.

Ded, Lal. 2011. *I, Lalla: The Poems of Lal Ded*.Trans. Ranjit Hoskote. Delhi: Penguin,.Print.

Hoskote, Ranjit. 2014. *Central Time: Poems 2006-14*. Delhi: Penguin, Print.

---.Web.12Sept.2014.InterviewbyMustansirDalvi.<asanyfuleknow.blogspot.in/2014/07/central-time-in-conversation-with html>.

Jafri, Ali Sardar, 1989. *Diwan-e-Ghalib*. 2nd Ed. Delhi: Rajkamal,

Print.

Rao, Mani. 2011. trans. "Translator's Note." *Bhagavad Gita*. By Ved Vyas. Penguin: Delhi, ix-xix. Print.

Nambisan, Vijay. 2009. "Translator's Apology." *Puntanam and Melpattur: Two Measures of Bhakti*. Trans. Vijay Nambisan. Delhi: Penguin, 1-45. Print.

---. 1996. *Poems of Love and War*. Trans. A. K. Ramanujan. Delhi: Oxford University Publicatio, Print.

--- 2001. "Interview Two." *Uncollected Poems and Prose*. Eds. Molly Daniels-Ramanujan & Keith Harrison. Delhi: OUP, 52-79. Print.

---. 1999. "On Translating a Tamil Poem." *The Collected Essays of A.K. Ramanujan*. Ed. Vinay

Dharwadkar. Delhi: OUP, 219-231. Print.

Sen, Sudeep. 2011. "Akshaya Kumar in Conversation with Sudeep Sen." Akshaya Kumar. *Dialog*, A Bi-annual Interdisciplinary Journal of Department of English and Cultural Studies, Panjab University, Chandigarh, No.21, Autumn 140-168. Print.

Discerning the Intimacies of Intertextuality: A.K. Ramanujan's Hyphenated Cosmopolitan Approach to Translation Theory and Practice

A. S. Dasan

Abstract

*A.K. Ramanujan (1929-1993) -- poet, philologist, folklorist, translator, and playwright, wrote widely in a number of genres spanning across disciplines. Well versed in five languages -- English, Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, and Sanskrit, his theoretical and aesthetic assimilations and articulations, vis-à-vis translation, argued for non-standardized dialectics, context-sensitive and pragmatic hermeneutics and sensibilities and glocalized aesthetics espousing at the same time a cosmopolitan approach to translation theory and practice. This paper, originally delivered as the Keynote Address in a UGC-sponsored National Seminar on "A.K. Ramanujan and the Postcolonial Theory and Practice of Translation" at KLE Society's Lingaraj College (Autonomous), Belgaum, Karnataka, in March, 2014, is a revised version wherein Ramanujan's approach to translation is viewed as a bridge-making endeavour between abstractions and experience so as to discern the affinities between aham (the interior) and puram (the exterior) vis-à-vis intertextualities.**

A.K. Ramanujan (AKR) was a master-story teller whose writing-career spanned more than four decades. His literary life may be summed up as **'a story in search of an audience' across disciplines** to use his own phrase.[1] The sagacity with which he tells every story, be it through his poems or translated texts of folktales, not only delights us, readers across disciplines, but also

* A.S.Dasan, PhD, formerly Chairman, Dept. of English, and Founder-Director of the Centre for Proficiency Development and Placement Services (CPDPS), University of Mysore, is currently Professor of English and Director, **Tap-Me Academy:** Shukrodaya's School of Proficiency for HRD, Mysore. Correspondence to: asdmysore@gmail.com

inspires us to look at him as 'an *akshayapatra*', with the fullness of the pot never getting emptied, to quote Girish Karnad [2] whose close contacts with AKR enabled him to compliment that way at the end of his 'A.K. Ramanjuan Memorial Lecture', the first one organised at Ramjas College, University of Delhi on 21st March, 2012.

Though Mathematics, which was his father's and his brother's profession, was not his cup of tea, AKR's story-telling ways, his context-sensitive translating and narrative techniques and his audience-centred sensitivity manifest an algebraic precision. One Kannada text that spontaneously comes to my mind is:

Ullavaru,
Shivalaya Va Maaduvaru:

The rich,
will make temples for Siva.

Naanuenu Maadali,

Badavanaiya:
What shall I,

a poor man,
do?[3]

Born in 1929 in a Hindu Brahmin-family with Tamil as mother tongue, schooled in Kannada, graduated in English, married to a Malayalee Christian, and professionally focused on a diachronic and cosmopolitan outlook and worldview leaning towards Buddhism, AKR's philological versatility and academic research ranged across five languages -- Tamil, Kannada, Telugu, Sanskrit, and English -- and took him beyond the frontiers of India, his motherland, motivating him to ignite and harness his intellectual energies through the green pastures of America, the land of critical literacy and promising future for the meritorious. For more than forty years, AKR pursued resolutely and vibrantly multifaceted careers – as a bilingual poet, pragmatic-formalist-linguist, practising-translator, and insightful folklorist, involved

ethnographer, intermittent novella-writer, and playwright, pursuing all these careers simultaneously, almost like his full-time preoccupations. He wrote books on both classical and modern literatures and convincingly argued for non-standardized dialectics, context-sensitive and pragmatic hermeneutics and sensibilities and glocalized aesthetics. From this point of view, his trend-setting contribution towards cosmopolitan approach to translation theory and practice is of immense value. Out of all the careers he pursued till his death in 1993, writing as a bilingual poet was his foremost vocation. But the one that bridged his literary and scholarly careers was his vocation as translator which is the prime focus of this paper.

Before I delve deep into the prime focus, I wish to clarify that bracketing AKR as a translator within the 'postcolonial turn' as if he were a postcolonial ideologue would be rather a narrow reading, if not a misreading, as AKR's theory and practice of translation does not fit well within that bracket. AKR neither subscribed to nor restricted himself to the 'postcolonial turn', the turn either as an ideological movement, meaning political act that includes resistance and transformation against colonial/hegemonic schema, or as a temporal marker, meaning periodicity. He was neither a postcolonial ideologue in the sense as espoused by Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Gayatri C. Spivak and Homi K. Bhabha nor he belonged to the Stephanian group of diasporic or postcolonial writers. His story-telling or theory and practice of translation did not focus on examining the relationships between language and power across cultural boundaries, or redefining the meanings of cultural or ethnic identity. Ideology or postcolonial discoursing was not his forte.

In her book, *Siting Translation* (1992), Tejaswini Niranjana slams AKR, with reference to his translated text, *Speaking of Shiva* (1973), for his 'reliance on formalist and modernist frameworks', critiquing that such frameworks 'are inappropriate to the task of translating poetry'. Unfortunately, Tejaswini Niranjana critiques AKR from an ideological bracket alone. It is not fair. The way Vinay

Dharwadker has tackled Niranjana's criticism is worth reading.[4] It is sufficient and relevant here to note that the periodicity of AKR's vocation as a translator begins soon after his entry into the University of Chicago (1962) after having passed through the University of Indiana for his doctoral studies, and much before the postcolonial theoretical ideologues emerged in the postcolonial scenario with *The Empire Writes Back* (1989) and the much talked about 'cultural turn' in translation studies (Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere, 1990). The context-sensitivity AKR is conscious of in his translation endeavours and exercises is much more pragmatic, synthesizing, synergizing and cosmopolitan than merely being viewed as part of postcolonial-turns or contextual-extremes. Today, the term, 'postcolonial', itself, is a withering concept, and therefore, when we read AKR, we need to move beyond postcolonial angularities and limitations.

To come back to the focus of this paper, AKR's approach to translation was a conscious and perennial quest for bridge-making between abstractions and experience towards discerning the affinities between *aham* (the interior) and *puram* (the exterior) vis-à-vis intertextualities. The selection of 'Thevakulathär's love-lyric from **Kurunthokai** of Tamil Sangam Poetry), which is translated and placed as the opening lines in his book, *The Interior Landscape*, cited later in another context in this paper, may be considered as the touch-stone and hallmark of his approaches to translation. The number of Introductions and Commentaries AKR wrote to his own collections of poems and other translated texts serve, as Karnad notes, also as windows allowing fresh-air towards understanding and appreciating his pragmatic approach to translation theory and practice. They connect readers with his perennial quest for discerning the intimacies of intertextuality and 'aesthetic heterodoxy' in terms of linguistic, semiotic and semantic categories, the interior *(aham)* and the exterior *(puram)* and the visual and the aural forms which, as Vinay Dharwadker comments, cumulatively 'bring together an unparalleled variety of languages, texts, genres, literatures, historical periods, and past and present cultures'.[5] Vinay Dharwadker adds that AKR

'translated literary works mainly from Kannada and Tamil into English, but also, less extensively, from English into Kannada and, with the help of collaborators, from Malayalam, Telugu, Marathi, and Sanskrit into English'. 'He focused his attention on verse as well as prose, rendering epic and classical poetry from the ancient period (chiefly works composed between about 500 B.C. and 500 A.D.), early and late poetic texts from the middle period -- from the eighth to the eighteenth centuries, and poems, short stories, novelistic fiction, and numerous folktales from the modern period -- the nineteenth and twentieth centuries'. The gentle but radical departures he made in the course of rendering translations not only dismantled existing standardized principles but also delighted readers across disciplines, cultures and continents by virtue of their creative and plurisignifying possibilities.

AKR's classroom and formal lectures, his scholarly articles, his conference papers, and translation exercises ranged with 'effortless expertise over linguistics, anthropology, history of religions, folklore, and literary studies, usually covering several South Asian, British, American, and European discursive traditions reveal his predilection for foregrounding intertextuality and celebrating cosmopolitanism. His essays, "The Indian Oedipus" (1983), "Telling Tales" (1989), "Where Mirrors Are Windows" (1989), "Toward a Counter-System: Women's Tales" (1991), and "Three Hundred Rãmãyanas" (1991) may be cited here as instances wherein his interdisciplinary, critical, and interpretive engagements are evident.

The cosmopolitanism he was committed to as a person, author, scholar, teacher, and translator had something to do with his innate tastes, *rasas* and *gunas*. Though brought up in the ambience of Mysore Brahminical Puritanism, the places he traversed and located both in India and abroad vis-à-vis his professional engagements and commitments served as matrices for practising cosmopolitan aesthetics. His balanced context-sensitivity evident in his translations which include *Interior Landscapes: Love Poems from a Classical Tamil Anthology* (1967),

Speaking of Siva (1973), *Hymns for the Drowning* (1981), and *A Flowering Tree* and *Other Oral Tales from India* (1997) foregrounds intertextual influences coming from varied sources, especially non-Sanskrit Indian regional literatures (Tamil *Sangam* Poetry, for instance) and establishes the complex sources and resources of creativity and poetry. It is within these intertextual matrices that 'the sublime and the earthy, the outstanding and the ordinary, the poetic and the prosaic, the tentative and the definitive interface in a catalysing fertility' exuding the contours and the fragrance of his open and inclusive secular imagination, ushering in certain modernist secularist ethos. This was his way of celebrating cosmopolitanism that connects the linguistic formalism with the semantics which connect the *aham* and the *puram* as enunciated in *Sangam* Poetry and illustrated in his translations such as the one quoted here below:

தலைமகன் சிறைப்புறமாக, அவன் வரைந்து கொள்வது வேண்டி, தோழி இயற் பழித்தவழி, தலைமகள் இயற்பட மொழிந்தது:

What the heroine said about her love for the hero, at the intervention of her friend, so that the hero, who was listening nearby, could hear:

நிலத்தினும் பெரிதே; வானினும் உயர்ந்தன்று;
Nilathinum peridhe; vaninum uyardhanru;

நீரினும் ஆர் அளவின்றே - சாரல்
Neerinum aar alavindre-saaral

கருங் கோல் குறிஞ்சிப்பூக் கொண்டு
karunkòl kuriñci puukondu

பெருந்தேன் இழைக்கும் நாடனொடு நட்பே
perundhaen laikkum naadanodu natpae.

--- ---தேவகுலத்தார்: குறுந்தொகை 3,
குறிஞ்சித் திணை

Bigger than earth, certainly,
higher than the sky,
more unfathomable than the waters
is this love for this man
of the mountain slopes
where bees make rich honey
from the flowers of the *kurinji*
that has such black stalks.

- 'Thevakulathaar's Kuriñci-Thogai, 3[6]

This medieval and complex Tamil text consists of a single long sentence allowing considerable freedom in the ordering of the parts of the sentence wherein the theme of love, a human feeling, is connoted and placed only at the end of the sentence. *Sangam* poets were deft at capturing the spirit of the poetic moment within a language of brevity. Brevity was the lifeline of their poetry in terms of both semiotics and semantics. In fact, the Tamil text cited above integrates the exterior analogy (bees gathering honey from *kurinji* flowers at the mountain slopes and taking it to the mountain top) with the logic of the interior thought (the union of two hearts coming from two different places and merging into one) in such a fine rhetoric brevity that it is a shining illustration of intertextuality that paves the way for hermeneutics with multiple connotations. The intertextuality AKR was conscious of foregrounds notions of relationality, interconnectedness and interdependence in a literary text. It implies 'a paradoxical nature of the discursive space that makes a text intelligible', to rephrase the language Julia Kristeva uses when she defines intertextuality. Within this intelligibility, diachrony is transformed into synchrony. This is what happens in the Tamil text quoted above and in the translation by AKR. The intertextualities ingrained in the text cumulatively exude the fragrance of literary excellences vis-à-vis 'the power of imagination' (கற்பனை), 'the language of rhetoric'

(சொல்லாட்சி), 'the use of analogy (உவமை), 'the logic of inner thought' (உள்ளுறை), and 'the technique of indirection or suggestion' (இறைச்சி). The task of rendering of the theme of love, the virgin's love 'moving towards the black-stalked kuriñci, acting out by analogue the virgin's progress from abstraction to experience',[7] into idiomatic English with such terseness and compactness as it is in Tamil is a tough one indeed. The translation done by AKR in terms of conceptualization, style, and presentation similar to that in the original text is a superb one for the way it ensures that the structure of the language (the exterior) 'moves from the earth, sky and water through the slopes, bees and flowers of the mountain country', all converging just to convey the deeper truth, the inner thought (the interior), namely the lady's love as 'bigger than the earth and higher than the sky'. That is the quintessence of the inner and figural landscape of the Tamil poetic text, and AKR conveys it succinctly.

This complex and terse translation is an instance which indicates why and how the translator has a responsibility to respond visually to the aural form of the original in terms of *aham* (the inner core) and *puram* (the outer core). Here, the whole universe permeates the visual form spiralling down to the details of the *kurinji* flower (Strobilanthes Kunthiana). The way AKR connects the exterior and the interior, the particular and the universal, the mundane and the contemplative, and the local and the cosmic shows the distinctive style of his translation-practice. This is the Indic touch AKR is particular to ingrain within the target language, and the source language text he has chosen yields to such rendering. His axiom, 'only a poet can translate a poem' can be extended to include, 'only a poet with such Indic sensitivity and sensibility can translate a poem' this way. This justifies the title of this paper vis-à-vis intimacies of intertextuality and hyphenated cosmopolitanism.

The Indic touch of eclectic accommodativeness and qualified universalism (Indian ways of celebrating differences and diversities) is the hallmark of his writing-career. It was his

conscious choice and commitment in the course his translational activities too. His stupendous contributions to Indian sub-continent studies and South Asian studies serve as mirrors and windows for a multidimensional anthology of reflections on cross-disciplinary perspectives, complexities of culture, and subtleties of Indic thought. His translations of select classical and *bhakti* poetry in Tamil, *Veerasaiva Vachanas* in Kannada, *bhakti* literature in Telugu and oral narratives strike a fine balance between source and target languages and between the author's interest and his own interest. A reading of *Speaking of Shiva* and two of his select essays, "Is there an Indian way of Thinking?" (1990) and "Three Hundred Ramanayanas" (1991) would vouchsafe and confirm such a perception.

True, as Vinay Dharwadker notes, AKR may have 'developed his ideas of outer and inner poetic forms from two different sources' – Noam Chomsky's concept of deep and surface structures and Roman Jakobson's distinction between 'verse instance' and 'verse design'. Looking for similarities between AKR's approach and Julia Kristeva's distinction between 'phenotext' (the manifest text) and 'genotext' (the innate signifying structure) may be tenable too. But, what is more true is that his fluency in English and in the disciplines of linguistics and anthropology gave him his outer form while personal and career-focused predilections for Tamil, Kannada and other Indian folklore forms gave him his inner self. He was particular that 'these two forms had to be in dialogue with each other'. The dialogic consort and connection he ingrains in the course of translating a text, to quote Vinay Dharwadker again, "evolves into an open-ended, multi-track process, in which translator, author, poem and reader move back and forth between two different sets of languages, cultures, historical situations and traditions".[8] The multiple levels his theory and practice of translation emphasize consort and interact, just like the process involved in a *bricolage*, without collapsing onto each other, in such a way that they ensure that 'sentences have priority over words, and discursive structures have priority over sentences'. In other words, in his view, words have relevance within sentences and

sentences within discursive structures. The multi levels converge towards enabling readers to enjoy and experience a holistic and synergic reading of the translated text.

AKR's selections of literary texts – poems and stories – for the purpose of translation, done during the four decades of his active involvement in translation-activities, stand as a collective testimony to this dialogic and context-sensitive connections. They ensure that translation is a conscious heteroglassic exercise that can 'energize' readers to discern the scintillating polyphony a great translated text ushers in without missing or bypassing the inner logic of the original text. Such an exercise widens not only translator's 'translating consciousness' vis-à-vis 'inter-lingual language systems' and 'inter-lingual synonymy' to use the phrases of G.N.Devy[9], but also readers' mirroring of the inner self to the world.

With regard to AKR's position on the question of equivalence, AKR states, with reference to Kampan's retelling of Valmiki's *Rãmãmyana*, that 'iconic fidelity to the original may be a great value in the West' but we, in India / Asia, 'rejoice in the similarity and cherish and savour the differences'. His essay, "Three Hundred Rãmãmyanas", is a fine example of such cultural and aesthetic heterodoxy. Practising and prospective translators may be reminded that AKR was not an imitator or follower of the Western metaphysics of translation -- readers may remember Hillis Miller's statement, namely 'translation is a wandering existence in a perpetual exile', a post-Babel crisis -- which has an obsession with the quest for equivalence, a quest linked to the Christian theological concern vis-à-vis paradise lost and paradise to be regained. To him, what matters ultimately is the rasa-*anubhava*, Bharata's shaping principle that gives the work of art, original or translated text, its distinctive quality, its authentic art-emotion.

In the light of these observations, let me touch on the basic principles of AKR's theory and practice of translation:

1. Author-Translator-Reader Relationship to be Maintained:

It is good to keep in mind that AKR is not a poststructuralist-translator to do away with the intimacies of the author-translator-reader relationship. He does not indulge in an ad-infinitum exercise 'exploding the binary opposition between the original and the target language'. He does not project himself as an elitist 'exaggerating the indeterminacy in meaning-making'. He does not advocate an autonomous or agentless textuality or intertextuality that tends to ignore or reject humanistic aesthetics. He is aware of the fact that conflict-ridden situations would arise but it is the responsibility of the translator to reconcile through context-sensitivity without yielding to extremes. There should be a balance between transmission of the original and expression of the translator in resonance with the target context and text striking a rhythmic inner landscaping balance between a source-oriented translation and target-oriented without privileging one against the other. This resonance should pave the way for *rasa-anubhava/ ananda* in the ambience of the intimacies of intertextuality. Emotive proximities and affinities within the triangle of author-translator-reader relationship could help discern the intimacies of intertextuality better.

2. Translation involves a reader-sensitive cross-cultural transmission:

The intertextual network implied in the task of translation opens out a multi-track process in terms of cross-cultural transmission and expression. The author's source text needs to be transmitted in the context of the contemporary reader. While taking a particular text from one culture into another, the translator also translates the reader from the second culture into the first one keeping in mind the expectations of the reader. The reader expects reliability of representation and delight and aesthetic pleasure. This is what AKR does in his translation (1976) of U.R. Ananthamurthy's *Samskara* (1965). In other words, as Vinay Dharwadker adds, the process of translation, according to AKR,

'energizes' everyone concerned. It should 'bridge the divide of cultures, languages and years between the text and the reader'.

3. Socio-linguistic Approach:

Critiquing and moving beyond the monolithic Sanskrit-grammatology and Tamil-brahminical dialects, AKR tries to legitimize a vast variety of non-Sanskrit / non-monolithic linguistic dialects of India which suits his linguistic innovation in the course of translating a text. This is his way of responding to the expectations of various social groups among his readers in India and Indian diasporic readers outside India. This thrust is abundantly clear in his essay co-authored with W. Bright, "Sociolinguistic Variation and Language Change" (1964). This is why AKR recommends 'phrase-to phrase' rather than 'word to word' translation without losing sight of the inner logic of the original and suggests that parallelism rather complete equivalence is of significant value in terms of relationality between the source text and the target text. This implies that multiple translations of one and the same text are possible, all the more because of the complexity involved when one takes into account the diachronic diversity of the sub-continent's cultures.

4. Pragmatic and Inclusive Aesthetic Approach:

As a practitioner, AKR was more focused on 'the back of the embroidery' than on the finished product which becomes the object of the reader's delight. Parts contribute to the whole. Parts are as fascinating as the whole. This explains his sense of pragmatism. His linguistic-formalist approach cannot be separated from his pragmatic approach to art, literature and culture. He insists more on the principles of construction (the process) than on the product.

5. Hyphenated Cosmopolitanism:

In AKR's paradoxical worldview, no language is pure and

yet, every language is potentially grammatical and grammatically a complete system. In the process of translation, what matters is the network of relations. The 'inner logics' ingrained within the two languages / cultures of the texts in question ensure that irrationalities of external boundaries are overcome by 'the leap of imagination' the translator is capable of. From this point of view, AKR felt home everywhere.[10] He did not have problems like the postcolonial diasporic writers who write with their angst on 'roosts', 'exile' and 'memory' or with a predilection for resistance. Yet, the Indianness to which he was personally, professionally and aesthetically committed never deserted him in his quest for constructive cosmopolitanism. His constructive cosmopolitanism was an irresistible and ceaseless poetry of connections which could tie relations between and across nations, cultures and languages, where 'nothing would be lost', celebrating diachronic rather than synchronic multiculturalism. His poetry of connections is not 'predicated by any one monolithic, Eurocentric, unipolar direction'. This sums up his 'relativist multicultural approach' that hyphenated his ideas of cosmopolitanism and restricted universalism in the backdrop of the complexities and intimacies of intertextuality associated with the art and task of translation.

To conclude, I have embraced more or less the known paths than the new ones in this paper. It is only a modest proposal to highlight the Indic affinities of AKR vis-à-vis his theory and practice of translation for further provocations and explorations. There are quite a few more roads not yet taken. The times we live in are prone to binary oppositions and conflicts, 'circling the square or squaring the circle'. AKR's approaches to translation counter such vanities. Mere binary approaches in the name of poststructuralism or postcolonialism may not take us anywhere beyond perpetuating conflict-ridden contexts and situations. We need to think like an ecologist who sees the value of boundary-less roots and routes consorting together beneath the soil and yet retaining their own uniqueness, fragrance and fruit-bearing abilities to the delight of onlookers and consumers. Let the spirit of ecology strike at the penury of translators who may struggle to

possess the sense of discernment to see the power and beauty of the presence of balanced context-sensitive intuition, 'the third language', guiding them. The intuitive 'third language', I mean here, is the universal language, audible to ecologists, seers, and poets who think and see like seers, that transcends differences and barriers and builds bridges of understanding between the source language and the target language in the ambience of author-translator-reader relationship kept live by context-sensitivities. Such a notion requires another keynote address, or a paper to be written.

REFERENCES

1. Ramanujan, A. K. Ed. — *Folktales from India, Oral Tales from Twenty Indian Languages*. Penguin Books 1991. Readers may be familiar with AKR's telling of a Telugu folktale, called "A Story in Search of an Audience" (narrated by K.Katayani in Hyderabad in 1988, and orally translated by V. Narayana Rao).

2. Karnad, Girish. — "A.K. Ramanujan Memorial Lecture." Ramjas College, University of Delhi. 21st March, 2012. South Asia Citizens Web: http://www.sacw.net/article4762.html

3. Ramanujan, A. K. — *Speaking of Siva*. Penguin, 1973. *Vachana Sahitya*: 'The Temple and the Body' by Basava (1134-1196) –Trans. by AKR.

4. Dharwadker, Vinay. — "A. K. Ramanujan's Theory and Practice of Translation" in

Post- colonial Translation: Theory and Practice, Ed. By Bassnett and Trivedi, 1999. Pp. 114-140

5. *Ibid.*

6. Ramanujan, A. K. Ed. and Transl. *The Interior Landscape – Classical Tamil Love Poems. New York Review of tBooks. 1967.*

7. Krishna, Nakul. "The Heron and the Lamprey." http://thepointmag.com/2014/criticism/the-heron-and-the-lamprey

8. Dharwadker, Vinay. "A. K. Ramanujan's Theory and Practice of Translation."

9. Devy, G.N. *In Another Tongue – Essays on Indian English Literature*. Lang, Peter Publishing. 1993.

10. Dharwadker, Vinay. "Postcolonial Cosmopolitanism: A Note on A.K. Ramanujan's Theory and Practice of Criticism and Translation." 1994.

Tread gingerly!
Translation as a cultural act

Ravichandra P. Chittampalli

Abstract

The paper is a Keynote Address and attempts to delineate the ethics as well as the politics of translation. Drawing on a variety of resources it attempts to argue how translations are always necessarily open ended. The transgressory nature of translation is discussed in detail. While detailing the culturally interventionist nature of translation, the hegemonic as well as the esoteric nature of the act of translation is also spoken of. Translation is seen as an act that resists balkanization and promotes the agenda of civilization and inclusivity. An attempt then is made to comprehend what freedom entails for a translator.

Key Words : Translation, Theory, Postcolonial, Postmodern, Market, Deconstruction, Authenticity.

Translations are at once sites of contestation because they are foremost, appropriations, whatever the intent or reason may be. Politically, they have always happened between trading interest groups, between an ambassador and the receiving court. Conquests have resulted in acquiring the library of the vanquished. Within cultural domains the transaction has been from the language of power to the many dialects and languages of the folk. In all such instances we are aware of at least one process, and that is the seepage of the validations in the source system into the target system. Ranjan Lal Gammeddage, the Sinhalese scholar points out in his 'An Introduction to Translation' that the Sinhalese word for Translation is 'pariwarthanaya' which comes from the Sanskritic root of *vrith* taking the suffix *pari* leading to the idea of a complete, perfect linguistic transposition, 'parivarthana'.

Translation replaces the original silently. It is at once the destruction and the making of an icon. To borrow the Baudrillardian phraseology, the original is the fantastic, the translation, the hyperreal, both in a procession of simulacra. Each is opposed to the other, yet each survives because of the other. The act of writing is no dictation; it is its failure. The edict stands cancelled in the exploding semantics. The *vak* when it becomes the *sutra* necessarily must yield to discourse, which is a constant assertion of approximation. Translation thus prefers newer linguistic matrix for existence. Poets have from time immemorial freely translated for their own purpose or for that of their times. There was perhaps no sense of transgression then, when esotericism led to choice. In exercising this choice the poet was embarking on a journey of alterity. However, as the contours of world politics changed even the actions of humanity entered newer phases of subjectivity. What we see today is a writer and a reader who are no more monolingual. The polyglot translator is a phenomenon of the seventies and after, in the Twentieth Century. Simple binaries in any discourse in such a circumstance grow suspect at once.

The question, 'why translate?' leads us at once into a complex world of ideologies of production mechanisms and of cultural contexts. Language as play, as 'rupture' effectively allows the translator to transgress at every possible moment the fixity of meaning as well as the sanctity of established order. Consider for instance Suzanne Jill Levine's reasons for translating specific authors:

Since it is at the level of language that the translator can be most creative, inventive, even subversive, I have preferred to translate writers like Cabrera Infante, Manuel Puig and Severo Sarduy, who play with language, exposing its infidelity to itself, writers who create a new literature by parodying the old[1].

One of the strong cultural identity markers in the life of a nation is its literature. It is an empowering agent and at most times also allow people to arrogate to themselves a relative

superiority. B.M. Srikantaiah, in his note on the History of Kannada Literature as quoted by Ramachandra Sharma, pays rich tribute to Pampa, the Patriarch of that literature, ' Pampa is the source poet for all Kannada poets, the emperor, the one name pervasive in Kannada'[2]. (translation mine) The poet who was thrown out of the republic is not only very much a citizen here but also the 'prima don'. Of course he had the patronage of Arikesari of the Chalukya Dynasty (C.940 AD) in the 10th Century. B.M. Srikantaiah was one of the first translators from English into Kannada. His English Geethegalu provided certain formal innovations for the *Navodaya* School of poets. However, he strove towards authenticity, 'However, I have striven keeping in view the duty of reflecting the original, as far as my intelligence would permit' [3]. But such a notion of authenticity is no more unproblematic. The Empire through fabulation attempted to process all contestations into acquiescence. The idea of the Master could not be either established or perpetuated outside the gambit of language. One certain way of erasing identities was to marginalise the linguistic heritage of the subject race. The discourse then becomes a closed argument. The translator at that juncture faces an unforeseen obstacle. It is in that context that one pays heed to what Samia Mehrez says of the inherent problems in translation today:

Hence, in using the language of the ex-colonizer it was important for postcolonial bilingual writers to go beyond a passive form of contestation, where the postcolonial text remained prisoner of western literary models and standards, restrained by the dominant form and language. It was crucial for the postcolonial text to challenge both (sic) its own indigenous, conventional models as well as the dominant structures and institutions of the colonizer in a newly forged language that would accomplish this double movement. Indeed, the ultimate goal of such literature was to subvert hierarchies by bringing together the 'dominant' and the 'underdeveloped', by exploding and confounding different symbolic worlds and separate systems of signification in order to create a mutual interdependence and intersignification[4].

One such attempt is by A.K. Ramanujan in Speaking of Siva. He shows in his introduction to the book the problems that one might face in attempting to be sincere to syntactical requirements of the two languages. " English syntax does not allow a natural and succinct translation of all these symmetries" [5].

It is undeniably the most successful of any Kannada translations to have been published so far, including his own translation of U.R. Ananthamurthy's Samskara. However, with all his care and attention to linguistic niceties even Ramanujan has allowed himself to be subverted by his assumptions of the needs of the dominant language, especially in his scrupulous translation of the signature lines of the *Vacanas*. That in itself is not inexcusable. Look at what happens when a translator takes a step too far in the direction of the target language to be authentic to that expectation. In P. Sreenivasa Rao's translation of U.R. Ananthamurthy's Bharathipura, the main street of a Malnad village becomes "downtown" [6]. in the opening paragraphs of chapter one, or two pages later, the lane turns into a "ghetto". Such instances reveal how the translator at certain moments plays into the hands of power structures that constantly operate around him. Yet again, today translation is an activity goaded by professional needs, sponsored by professional organizations. Andre Lefevere makes explicit the sorry state of affairs:

If educational institutions increasingly function as a "reservation" where high literature, its readers, and its practitioners are allowed to roam in relative, though not necessarily relevant freedom, they also further contribute to the isolation of the professional reader. Professional readers need to publish in order to advance up the professional ladder, and the pressures of publication relentlessly lead to "the progressive trivialization of topics" that has indeed made the annual meetings of the Modern Language Association of America 'a laughing stock in the national press….. Needless to say, this "progressive trivialization" also serves to undermine further the professional reader's prestige outside the charmed circle drawn around him, or her, by educational

institutions[7].

Translators really need to tread gingerly in such a bleak situation. God help you if you should wish to translate a play. The market is too wet a sponge – useless. So much for literature as an identity marker in the present day cultural requirement of a society! The only possibility of a discourse arises is when we go along with the Kannada Poet Ramachandra Sharma's belief: 'It is possible to sit down for a discussion about how best to translate, what the solutions to problems that naturally arise in such a business are, etc… when we accept that the task of translation is a business of the world of Arts'[8]. Sharma sees himself performing the task of a 'stabilizer' as a translator, '*To pour words into the ready syntax of tradition will never produce poetry*. The primary intention of translation should be to capture the attitude of the original. All that may help him in that endeavour are the tools of the translator'[9]. Such understanding and confidence are by themselves enough indicators of the translator having escaped the hubris of a Fitzgerald translating Omar Khayyam, whose arrogated freedom emanated from his being a representative of the Empire. Translation is also believed to be a search, at best a via media, for the perfect language. Umberto Eco has this to tell us, 'The solution for the future is more likely to be in a community of peoples with an increased ability to receive the spirit, to taste or savour the aroma of different dialects'[10].

Translation has an onerous responsibility, to transcend all agendas of National constructs and grow into a grand process of civilization. To assert thus does not necessarily mean that one opts out of discussing the multifacetedness of Translation as an intellectual activity. To translate today one needs to be empanelled, be part of the establishment. That in itself may not be such a bad thing as it may sound. For concerted and standardized translations to be produced, translation has to be an organized activity. However, the danger lies in its hegemonic interests, which retard its own basic premise, that of offering to the reader works that are fascinatingly novel to his experience. If you are not

commissioned then your translation may find it difficult to reach a publisher. Lefevere once again observes with much perspicacity:

Acceptance of patronage implies integration into a certain support group and its lifestyle, whether the recipient is Tasso at the court of Ferrara, the Best poets gathering around the City Lights Bookstore in San Francisco, Adolf Bartels proudly proclaiming that he has been decorated by Adolf Hitler, or the medieval Latin Archipoeta, who supplied the epigraph to this chapter, which reads, rewritten in English; "I shall write unheard of poems for you, if you give me wealth[11].

Thus the pleasurable intellectual act of writing is ineluctably linked to the business of promotion. Translation thus enters the force field of ideology- the ideology of production that determines not only the marketability but also the choice of translation. The translator, unlike the author, has an expectant readership whose aesthetics, ideology and cultural ambiance are all predetermined. The reader of translations is acquisitory in nature, and therefore the success of a translation is also measured against the magnitude of yield in translation.

If Ananthamurthy's **Samskara** is successful that is because it is seen to be ethnically different by the target group. An Indian reading Tolstoy does so under the "humanistic", "universal" value system while an Australian, an American or a European reader of **Samskara** approaches the work with an anthropological interest. In other words the translation is subject to the gaze. What appeals to a reader of the translation is the direction of modernity that a conservative society appears to be taking. Here Modernity is the proximate and Conservatism is the other. In both the reader identifies his own image as the model. His sense of superiority stands satisfied. However, this need not always be the case. My own early readings of novels in Kannada were translations of Bengali Writers like Sharatchandra Chatterjee. A work like **Gora** or **Anadmath** was read not because it represented a different cultural ethos but because it made for an inclusive experience.

Yet, when a translation happens between languages of unequal power structures, reading tends to be an exclusive activity. In other words, translation between cultural boundaries defeats the project of postcolonialism, which is to convince that colonization is a thing of the past. The Bible, itself, as a tool of conversion, of colonization, is proof enough. The Swami Bhagavatpada translations of the **Upanishad**, the Ramakrishna Mutt Editions of the **Bhagavadgita**, the **Puranas** and the **Upanishad** all aim at a readership beyond the cultural immediacy. In the instance of the Bible, what necessitates translations is the clerical need to address its folk, in its expanding diocese. The Krishna consciousness translations are effected towards a neo-conversion project. In both instances, the intent is the same.

Yet, the question of what gets translated remains unanswered most of the time. Edwin Gentzler throws a little light on how the 'What' can never be answered, 'there is no kernel or deep structure, nothing we may ever discern – let alone represent, translate or found a theory there on'[12]. This explication of Derrida's relativist understanding of transaction across linguistic spaces results in a cultural trap. If there is nothing to translate or represent why does one strive so much? The answer perhaps lies beyond all linguistic and political domains, in that of the philosophical. The belief that there is something to translate is founded on the belief that 'I can translate'. Here, the presumption is the inaccessibility to knowledge of the many to the knowledge of the private. Such hegemonic attitude is the result of a political astuteness of the operative within the force field of semiotics. This is so even when the translator is unfamiliar with the source language and uses interpreters to 'research' translate / 'deductive' translate the original. Whatever may the question of authenticity be, translation as a cultural activity is also one that attempts to familiarise the reader with certain congruencies in the 'other' as well as the 'different'.

A translator, finally, is at least to himself aware of one thing, that is his civility and his ability both are under scrutiny when

he translates. If all acts of writing involve a certain essentialist process, that of an encoding in a specific language, the act of translation is one that problematizes writing. All translations are negotiations, and as such the borders of translation as a paradigm are amorphous. Translation at once deconstructs the given of the assumed relationship between the writer and the work. Translation deals with the other. It is anthropological at the exploitative end and aesthetic at the romantic. It is transgression of the unchanging essence of the original. Each translation, therefore, is popularly conceived as a minimal release of a word, a historicizing of the ahistoric meaning. Translation is the meant of the meaning, and therefore at the point of emergence necessitates a further othering. Lawrence Venuti sums up the status of translation today in the following words: ' The hierarchy of cultural practices that ranks translation lowest is grounded on romantic expressive theory and projects a platonic metaphysics of the text, distinguishing between the authorized copy and the simulacrum that deviates from the author'[13].

Translation in India is perhaps the result of a constant need to familiarize oneself with the canonical literature. It is doubtful how many could commonly access either Pali or Sanskritic texts. Yet again, translations from Sanskrit into other languages have existed on palmyra for a long time. Such translations were necessarily outside the religious and the ritualistic needs of a society. One may therefore very well arrive at a conjecture that in India at least, translation was an activity, which secularised the text, and helped establish distinct linguistic traditions in a regional context. Non-formal events like *Kathakalakshepa* have traditionally resorted to translation as orature. What is being stressed at this point is the remarkable tentativeness of the act of translation. It is an intellectual process where discourses are set in flow. It is therefore, almost always, meaningless to ask the question what is being translated. For, the question assumes that there is not only a unitary text of frozen contour but that there is a tenacious physical relationship between the author and the text that is being translated. Such assumptions can hardly be tenable

in the face of Derrida's categorical assertion:

" And the sign must be the unity of a heterogeneity, since the signified (sense or thing, noeme or reality) is not in itself a signifier, a trace……. The formal essence of the signified is presence, and the privilege of its proximity to the logos as phone is the privilege of essence"[14].

It is therefore that translators abrogate a demanded responsibility to be true to the original. After all translating the original is a notion that is fraught with problems. For Andrew Benjamin, in his article " *Translating origins: Psychoanalysis and Philosophy*", the act of translation is to question the origin itself. Look at what he says:

The origin as that which is put into question brings psychoanalysis and translation into contact since both are marked by the inevitability and necessity within their origins – including their own conception of the origin – of the process named within psychoanalysis as "Nachtra glichkeit"; a term which at this stage can be translated as "deferred action", or "action at a distance"[15].

Such notions of the'essence'and of the'origin'lead to either conceiving of writing as an act of representations not dissimilar to Derrida's notion of presence as a "Supplement of a supplement'[16], or as what interpolates. However, in both instances what is at stake is the notion of translation as a search for precise match. It is possible to concur with such a departure from a conservative notion of precision in translation. One is at this juncture reminded of Octavio Paz's own belief that poetry is an act of divorcing a word from its historicity (cf. Octavio Paz, "Introduction" Selected Poems,) If the act of writing then is an act of freeing a word from its texted associations, translating that word should then necessarily involve not merely to identify the word in a climate of synonymous resonance. There are in fact always, in most cases, synonimity. However, synonyms betray. So then, is translation a search for uniqueness? One answer rests perhaps in the question

why does one translate? The answers could be many. However, it is also conceivable that a translator is born when (s)he essays on a sanguinary search for that which allows complimentarity in life. It would perhaps be wise to involve Umberto Eco at this juncture:

" The solution for the future is more likely to be in a community of peoples with an increased ability to receive the spirit, to taste or savour the aroma of different dialects. Polyglot Europe will not be a continent where individuals converse fluently in all the other languages; in the best of cases, it could be a continent where differences of language are no longer barrier to communication, where people can meet each other and speak together, each in his or her own tongue, understanding, as best they can, the speech of others" [17].

Translation strives towards such an end, of the commonweal. The business of a translator then could perhaps be to bring the genius of one language into the climate of the other. That would constitute a practice in which the translator would work to the full the resources of the target language. It does not merely involve a couple of dictionaries, a thesaurus and a book of grammar. Look at what a significant translator of our classical texts says in a recent book of his:

You need to savour the sound and semantic values of words and to be in love with them. Surrendering to the text in this way means most of the time being literal- for the " spirit killeth and the letter giveth life". That is how you retextualize the original in the receiving language. To maximize the problematic of translation, you need that the language you translate from and the one you translate into are alien, and not cognate languages[18].

Sharma is here talking about the aesthetics involved in the act of translating literary texts. Even as he summons Baudrillard's notion of the simulacra to disinvest the faith in the notion of the ' real' [19], he clearly prioritizes the translator's right to freedom from the linguistic categories of the source language. Such freedom is

not absolute. No translator really takes it to be so. It is a limited freedom, which a musician or a dancer enjoys in the performance of a composition. Apart from the achieved movement in its musicality, the significance of the verbal dynamics may yield very little.

No word exists in any language without its cultural resonances. Therefore, in the task of transferring those cultural inscriptions of a word into the target language lies the genius of a translator. It is precisely here that the exercise of freedom prefigures. Finally, the translator and the translated work are both deeply embedded. Only when we realize this political inscription of Transl ation as always already in existence will we realize the onerous task that a translator performs.

NOTE:

Quotations from B.C.Ramachandra are all translated by the author.

Works cited:

1. Levine, Suzanne Jill. " Translation as (Sub)version: On Translating Infante's Inferno", *Rethinking Translation: Discourse, Subjectivity, Ideology, Lawrence Venuti (Ed), London & New York: Routledge. 1992, 79*
2. Sharma, B.C.Ramachandra. I: Satamanada Nooru English Kavanagalu, Bangalore: Kannada Pustaka Pradhikara, 1982, 431
3. Loc.Cit 57
4. Mehrez, Samia. "Translation and the Postcolonial Experience: the Francophone North African Text", ", *Rethinking Translation: Discourse, Subjectivity, Ideology, Lawrence Venuti (Ed), London & New York: Routledge. 1992, 121-122*
5. *A.K.Ramanujan (Tr). Speaking of Shiva, London: Penguin, 1973, 42*

6. Ananthamurthy, U.R. Bharathipura , Trans. P.Sreenivasa Rao, Madras: Macmillan India Pvt. Ltd., 1996,NP

7. Lefevere, Andre. Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation of Literary Fame, London & NY: Routedge, 3-4

8. loc.cit. xxi

9. loc.cit. xxviii

10. Eco, Umberto, The Search for the Perfect Language, Trans. James Fentress, London: Fontana, 1997, 350-351

11. loc.cit, 16.

12. Gentzler, Edwin. Contemporary Translation Theories, London & NY: Routledge, 1993, 146

13. Venuti, Lawrence.*(Ed) "Introduction", Rethinking Translation: Discourse, Subjectivity, Ideology, London & New York: Routledge, 3*

14. Derrida,Jacques. Of Grammatology, *Trans.Gayatri Chakravarty Spivak, Delhi: Motilal Banararidas Pub.Pvt.Ltd., 1994, 18*

15. *Venuti, Lawrence (Ed). Rethinking Translation: Discourse, Subjectivity, Ideology, 1992, 18*

16. Derrida,Jacques. Of Grammatology, *Trans.Gayatri Chakravarty Spivak, Delhi: Motilal Banararidas Pub.Pvt.Ltd., 1994, 298*

17. *loc.cit. 350-351*

18. Sharma T R S, *Toward an Alternative Discourse, Shimla: IIAS.2000, 113*

19. *oc.cit. 118*

*Key Note address delivered at the Manonmaniam Sundarnar University, Tirunelveli on 19 February 2013.

3-day Orientation Programme on Literature, Media & Translation 19-23 Feb 2013

Indenting the Proverbs: Some Notes on Translation

Vijay Sheshadri

Abstract

Translation is a symbiotic act that transacts between one language and another and hence cultures. Translation enables a culture to be introduced into a new geographical and psychic space avoiding effacement of a culture, reflecting the hegemonic relationship between the two cultures. Today, absence of translation can be an anathema to the flourishing of a literature that has roots invariably in a region, a specific native context. Thus translation can provide a platform of multiple voices for literature to flourish.

The paper is divided into two sections. The First section will deliberate on Translation in general and then go on to view translation as an attempt at interpreting two cultures. In the Second section, by selecting a few popular Proverbs from the Myasabedas, a tribal community living in and around Challakere, Jagaloor and Molakalmooru taluks of Chitradurga District in Central Karnataka, an attempt will be made to show how a pluralistic community of multiple voices can strengthen the fabric of a country's literature without resorting to narrow ethnicity. The translated proverbs from the Kannada original into English will be subjected to a close study to examine the dual nature of Translation, in the making or marring the contexts of a specific text and its space in Indian literature.

> "In Principle a work of art has always been reproducible. Man made artifacts could always be imitated by men. Replicas were made by pupils in practice of their craft, by masters for diffusing their works, and finally, by third parties in pursuit of gain"

Translation of the oral into the written, I presume, is an attempt at enunciating the verbal into the linguistic, the transformation of sensory perception into the written. In other words, it is an act of making the world "hear" operating with the motif or belief that it would be an all-embracing activity.

In principle, all languages are commensurable as opposed to American pragmatism observes Ajaz Ahamed. (Ahamed, 2004) In any act of translation, I feel that capturing sense is an easier task than that of making someone spot, see or experience sensibilities. For instance, translating Bhagavadgita into the tongue of an indigenous culture is as difficult as translating a native culture and language into another. Since language is embedded in power politics under the sign of globalization, the acquisition of English as a language invariably reflects the class, say bourgeois or elite class. Hence, in today's world of information technology where various information bombard our psyche, in a country like India where there is population explosion, language operates as a pointer of an episteme, a sort of diagnostic system. Therefore, any translation of an oral culture of Kannada into English results in English getting richer. Since English has become one of the languages of India and much sought after today, it is wielding much power vis-à-vis day to day affairs as well as in the academic circles. Another factor is, India is advocating free trade policy and opening its market to foreign investors has added more power and glamour to English in India. In other words if a person is a glib in English, he is intelligent. Immaculate use of English results in bestowing undue credit and intelligence to the person speaking in English. Hence, Indian Writing in English and other regional languages and literature (not Desi for god's sake) should be studied as comparative literature and not as a hegemonic structure. It also should not be viewed from that sweeping generalization of Fredric Jameson who calls all third world literatures are national allegories. I think it is here that translations vital contribution rests.

In a polylingual and polycultural situation like India,

translation should aim at building a chronopolitan culture (Werner, 2000: 331-345)1 that aims at homogeneity and not difference. In doing so, translational process paves way for the interfacing of Translator-Reader-Source Text, resulting in what Deborah Bower opines: "The wholeness of one person can be received in a known context by the wholeness of another". (Bower, 1988: 66) There rests a tendency to anglicize and clothe the oral/regional (Kannada experience here) thus falling into the trap of "English as universal" or "Postcoloniality as the inevitable real condition, a paradigmatic exercise of enlightenment". In the words of Theo Hermans,

> Translation, then, is the visible sign of the openness of the literary system, of a specific literary system; it opens the way to what can be called both subversion and transformation depending on where the guardians of the dominant poetics, the dominant ideology stand! (Hermans, 1985: 237)

Any translator of a folk/oral narrative confronts three referential systems-the verbal/oral into text, the system of language and culture into which the verbal/oral gets translated into (Kannada here) and the cultural system into which it gets re-created as a meta text through English. Culture no doubt is a site of contestation and translation must negotiate the complex realities of language which the culture comprises. Translation thus is a process of unlearning, de-colonizing the mind. When one translates oral into the written, English in this case, one is just not asserting his ego but also showing the richness embedded in a tradition which the west has been ignorant of. The translational process of oral to the written can be viewed as a percolation function where the text gets re-created with a new set of ideological framework generating a specific response. This sort of an enterprise I suppose, results in breaking down of hierarchies, a discursive project of writing back or writing home or returning the gaze. Just as we have received translated texts from the west since Sophoclean times, the non-western has been little talked of. Hence this endeavour. Susan Bassnett McGuire's observations are apt here:

Language, then is the heart within the body of culture, and it is the interaction between the two that results in the continuation of life-energy. In the same way that the surgeon, operating the heart, cannot neglect the body that surrounds it, so the translator treats the text in isolation from the culture at his peril". (McGuire, 1980: 14)

It is here that writing and translation render their vital contribution. Just imagine these voices not recorded in Kannada language? A whole community would have hit by an epidemic called aphasia and would have been erased from this world. But the other vital question that needs more attention is, are the translations of Folk Narratives meant for readers who are ignorant of the original or for a particular set of readers? The answer would be yes because the attempt is to say the same thing by re-creation in a different medium. In other words it is not just a function of transmitting information but an endeavour of transmitting essential things in a meticulous fashion. This then pushes the translator to muse over the translatability of the original work since the oral creation is devoid of any mass appeal but sets out as a matter of tradition or ritual.

II

The oral tradition-stories, epics and songs of the people-which formerly were filed as set pieces are now beginning to change. The storytellers who used to relate inert episodes now bring them alive and introduce into them modifications which are increasingly fundamental. There is a tendency to bring conflicts up to date and to modernize the kinds of struggle which the stories evoke, together with the names of heroes and the types of weapons. The method of allusion is more and more widely used. The formula 'this all happened long ago' is substituted by that of 'what (were/are) going to speak of happened somewhere else, but it might well have happened here today, and it might happen tomorrow" (Fanon, 1967, 85:193)

In the present day scenario where every nation is adjudicated as an Imagined Community, it becomes essential for anyone to be aware of the fact that the trait of any nation is not homogenous. India no doubt serves as an interesting exemplar. In a polycultural situation like India where there is ample room for languages to grow and hence cultures to flourish, there is definitely an opportunity for a fascinating study of cultures. India as we all know is responding to the changes that have been going on in the entire world over due to the onset of globalization. Under the sign of Information Technology, the shrinking of spaces, geographical as well as psychological, is taking place leading to the notion of the whole world as the "Global Village". We are not far from the days where the last of the first nations' people will be effaced from this universe, leaving us to comprehend the fact that the basics of mankind are lost forever.

My attempt in this paper is to showcase (not the kind of showcasing that occurs during any cultural fest or with the visit of foreign dignitaries) the Mysabedas a tribal community living in Chitradurga district in central part of Karnataka state. These are communities who were untouched by the technological changes that were going on as recent as twenty years ago. Today they are on the verge of erasure vis-à-vis their traditional mores and customs. My attempt in this paper reflects what Claude Levis Strauss observes:

> Any man can turn himself into an ethnographer and go and share on the spot the life of a society in which his is interested; on the other hand, even if he becomes a historian or an archaeologist, he will never enter directly into contact with a vanished civilization, but will only do so through the written documents or figurative monuments which this society-or others-have left. (Levis-Strauss, 1976: 326)

Among the Myasabedas and Kadugollas, there is a sub sect called *Oorubedas*, village hunters and *Ooru Gollas*, village shepherds. If the Kadugollas speak good Kannada, the Oorugollas

speak Telugu. Myasabedas who trace their native origins to Andhra Pradesh, the neighbouring state, speak Telugu in their settlements and while interacting with the outside world they speak Kannada. Interestingly, the literatures of Kadugollas and Myasabedas are in Kannada language. The proverbs and riddles that are in circulation among the communities are not clan or group specific. But as a rare exception or instance, some proverbs are only about Myasabedas. The following proverbs are in circulation among the Myasabedas:

1. Will the stealer of an ox forget the rope?

   ಎತ್ತಿನ ಕಳ್ಳ ಹಗ್ಗ ಮರೆತಾನೆ

2. Hunter is a thief and untouchable is a liar.

   ಬೇಡ ಕಳ್ಳ ಮಾಟೀದ ಸುಳ್ಳ

3. Even when in need of Jaggery, do not believe a *Beda*, the huntsman.

   ಬೆಲ್ಲದ ಹಂಗಿದ್ದರು ಬೇಡನನ್ನು ನಂಬಬಾರದು

4. If one grows the *Jaali* thorn, its danger to the legs, danger to life if one shelters a huntsman.

   ಜಾಲಿ ಸಾಕಿದರೆ ಕಾಲಿಗೆ ಮೂಲ,ಬೇಡನನ್ನು ಸಾಕಿದರೆ ಜೀವಕ್ಕೆ ಮೂಲ

5. If unmoved, buttocks will catch termites.

   ಕೂತ ಜಾಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಕುಂಡಿಗೆ ಗೆದ್ದಲು ಹಿಡಿದಾವು

6. A voyeuristic huntsman rubs his organ to the fence.

   ಕೊಬ್ಬಿದ ಬೇಡ ಬೇಲಿಗೆ ಎಟ್ಟಿದ.

7. No graze for the cattle, no medicine for the Myasabeda

   ರಾಶೀಗೆ ಮೇವಿಲ್ಲ ಬೇಡನಿಗೆ ಮದ್ದಿಲ್ಲ

8. He ate where food was aplenty, slept in a warm place

   ಹಚ್ಚಗಿದ್ದ ಕಡೆ ಉಂಡನು,ಬೆಚ್ಚಗಿದ್ದ ಕಡೆ ಮಲಗಿದನು

9. Man with skinny buttocks, what does he know about the rains?

   ತಗಲು ಮುಖಳಿಯವ ಮುಗಿಲು ಸುದ್ದಿಯೇನು ಬಲ್ಲ

10. Still cloud the winds disturbed/winds scattered the gathered cloud

    ಕಟ್ಟೀದ ಮೋಡವ ಗಾಳಿಯೆದ್ದು ಕೆಡಚೀತು

11. Disciplined workers are achievers

    ನಡಕೊಂದವರು ಪಡಕೊಂಡರು

12. To the clan, clan is a destroyer, to the fields, a limping ox

    ಕುಲಕ್ಕೆ ಕುಲವೇಮೂಲ

13. There is no limit to wants/desires, beggars are shameless.

    ಆಸೆಗೆ ಮಿತಿ ಇಲ್ಲ,ಬಿಕ್ಷುಕನಿಗೆ ನಾಚಿಕೆ ಇಲ

14. A Seer less monastery and headless house are one

    ಗುರುವಿಲ್ಲದ ಮಠ ಹಿರಿಯರಿಲ್ಲದ ಮನೆಯೊಂದೇ

15. After the *guru* its *gulla*, his disciple

    ಗುರುವಿನಂತರ ಗುಡ್ಡ

16. To the foolish king, a moronic prime minister

    ಮಡ್ಡುದೊರೆಗೆ ಹೆಡ್ಡು ಪ್ರಧಾನಿ

17. Destitute widow licked the rolling pin.

ಗತಿಯಿಲ್ಲದ ಮುಂಡೆ ಲತೂಡಿ ನೆಕ್ಕಿದಳು

18. A stopper to ears, and a thorn to the eyes.

ಕಿವಿಗೆ ಗೂಟ,ಕಣ್ಣಿಗೆ ಮುಳ್ಳು

19. No relatives for the wayward and no gods for the dead one.

ಕೆಟ್ಟು ಹೋದವರಿಗೆ ನೆಂಟರಿಲ್ಲ, ಸಾಯುವವರಿಗೆ ದೇವರಿಲ್ಲ

20. More you pay, value for your money.

ಅಂತದೆ ಕಾಸು ,ಅಂತದೇ ಕಡಲೆ

21. It's like desiring a *hombale*, the plantain inflorescence in a *kaare* weed bush.

ಕಾರೆ ಗಿಡದಲ್ಲಿ ಓಂಬಾಳೆ ಬಯಸಿದಂತೆ

22. Arriving at an empty house, departed knocking the door.

ಬರಿಮನೆಗೆ ಬಂದ ದಾಸಯ್ಯ ಬಾಗಿಲು ಬಡಿದು ಹೋದ

23. What if you bite the Roti from any side?

ರೊಟ್ಟಿಯಾವಕಡೆ ಕಡಿದರೇನು?

24. Man without a tool left early in the morning (to work)

ಹತಾರೀ ಇಲ್ಲದವನು,ಹೊತಾರೆಗೆ ಹೋದ

25. An incessant talker/cribber is the biggest of all irritations.

ಎಲ್ಲಾ ಕಾಟಕ್ಕಿನ್ನ ಲೊಟಕಪ್ಪನ ಕಾಟ ದೊಡ್ಡದ್ದು. (Hanur:162–63)

In the above proverbs, the first seven to eight are exclusively about Myasabedas and they use it quite frequently among themselves during every day talk. The first proverb "will the stealer of an ox forget the rope" is very popular among both

Myasabedas and Kadugollas who view the ox as holy, as property and riches. As a matter of fact, when a group of thieves drive away a herd of cattle, the method involved is different than a thief walking away with an ox or calf. If a thief walks away with an Ox forgetting the rope, it is of no use for him since he cannot control the Ox as he wishes and it might run away from him. But when a herd of cattle is driven together and stolen, ropes do not have any role to play. In this fashion, this proverb has surfaced vis-à-vis an instance where a thief attempts to walk away with an ox or a calf.

"Myasabeda is a thief and Untouchable a liar" is a proverb that has moorings in caste related issues. In a class, caste-oriented society like India, proverbs that praise or mock a particular caste, their lifestyles, professions, traits are in abundance. Along with their caste or profession of cattle rearing, the Myasabedas also took up the job of being soldiers and hunting. If the job of waging war or hunting was not possible either due to old age or for any other reason, a Myasabeda had to lead his life at least by rearing cattle. As he desires to do this, chances of he getting the cattle might be very slim, since he is well trained either to hunt or to wage war. Chances of he eyeing a cattle belonging to someone or may be more the practice of stealing either a sheep or an ox from a shed amongst themselves in the settlement is still in vogue according to some Myasabedas. At the same time, one can infer that their chances of becoming big thieves are also very thin. Keeping this in mind, the word "Myasabeda thief" has been attached to the word Untouchable thief" as a practice and rhyming word. As a sequel to these, proverbs dealing with caste mocking are seen in "Though in need of Jaggery do not believe the Myasabeda""If you grow a *Jaali,* danger to your legs" and "if you raise a Myasabeda danger to your life" have been in circulation or practice.

Bedanayakas who have experience in hunting, fighting, dwelling in the forests have remained to this day as adventurous youths full of life and energy. Such young Bedanayakas bustling with youthful energy neglect any thorny fence and do not clear it either with hands or legs. When his sexual desire is intense,

placing his penis or organ on the thorny fence the Bedanayaka youth scratches it. Such will be the intensity of his sexual desire in his youth opines an elderly Bedanayaka tribal explaining the meaning and intension of the proverb "A Voyeuristic huntsman rubs his organ to the fence". The proverb "if unmoved buttocks will catch termites" is related to the legal disputes of not only Bedanayakas and Kadugollas but also to other tribal communities. To the Myasabedas their clan, clan goddesses, the patterns of division in the clan, marriage customs are of vital importance. Any dispute or arguments relating to the above mentioned issues would take a minimum of three days to settle or else can prolong to the extent of a week. If the dispute is about gods or its priest, it might go unsolved and reach *Kattamane*, the house of justice and later *Gurumane*, the supreme house of justice. In the present day context these disputes are reaching the courts or law houses in the cities. In the past, these disputes would not go beyond the *Kattemane*, the supreme house of justice and the dispute would not settle for ages. Keeping the legal disputes of such nature the above proverb was used.

The proverbs "He ate where food was aplenty and slept in a warm place" and "No graze for the cattle, no medicine for the Myasabeda" delineate the lifestyles and patterns in times of prosperity and in times of drought. The first proverb is quite popular among majority of the tribal communities. If it rains and forests are full of greenery, there will be grass in abundance for the cattle to feed on. If the cattle have grazed well, life for its overseer would be smooth and trouble free because the milk and curd of cattle provide enough food for forests dwellers. But if the whole place dries up, the cattle fall short of grazing fields and the *Kilaris* have to drive the cattle in search of greener areas where there is sufficient grass for the cattle. This driving from one place to another is a tiresome job and results in shortage of food for both the cattle and its overseers the *Kilaris*. All these proverbs are used keeping the rain, the greenery of the forest, grass for the cattle and the lifestyles of the Myasabedas as a backdrop.

Be it the forest dwellers or the village dwellers, their future days or lifestyles depend heavily on rain. But nature has its own cycle. One year it might rain profusely and in another it might not. Hence the proverb "Man with skinny buttocks, what does he know about the rains" to imply that it is nearly impossible to decipher the happenings in nature for the human mind. An extension of this proverb "Winds scattered the gathered still clouds" seems to imply more symbolic meaning than literal meaning. This proverb perhaps can be applied to any work that is about to bear fruition or results being destroyed, or any work getting destroyed at the point of yielding fruits.

The proverb "Disciplined workers are achievers" is very much in circulation in and round Nayakanahatti settlement. The genesis of this proverb can be traced to a miracle performed by Sharana Thippeswamy. When chieftain Baodimallappanayaka was constructing a pond named Hirekere at Chikkere in Nayakanahatti settlement, his coffers got empty. At that juncture, Sharana Thippeswamy would visit the pond every evening and ask all the workers to erect a small mound in front of each one. Later with his staff when Sharana Thippeswamy touched these mounds, the mud turned into money only if the worker has toiled that day. If he had not, the mud would remain as mud. In this fashion, people who toiled got rewarded from Thisppeswamy and the proverb is used in this connection. Incidentally this proverb seems to be of great importance to the tribals of Nayakanahatti, Challakere, Jagaloor and Molakalmooru. It appears this proverb is not in circulation among other regions or settlements.

Proverbs like "To the Clan, Clan is the destroyer, limping ox to the fields" and "there is no limit to desires/wants, beggars are shameless" are not just limited to Chitradurga district or Myasabeda tribal settlements but is in circulation in almost all parts of Karnataka. This proverb reminds of the bickering that arouse as brothers grew up due to variegated reasons, an age-old issue. To this proverb, "limping Ox to the fields" is a later inclusion. It is true that ox is essential to plough the fields but it is difficult to

plough a field and reap harvest using a lame ox. Just as healthy ox without a handicap is essential to till a field, for betterment of life, compatibility between clans is the most essential factor. If there is a breakdown of relationships between clans and if the ox is lame, tilling cannot be fast and harvest cannot be reaped on time resulting in impediment to progress. In fact this proverb that is in circulation in all parts of Karnataka has somehow slipped into the Myasabeda community. Under normal circumstances, this proverb doesn't acquire meaning and significance in the Myasabeda community because in tribal settlements, the bondage between clans is more solid and strong and very seldom there is breakdown of relationships. The bond is so strong so much so that it becomes very difficult for an outsider to spot and name the person belonging to a particular hut because you see him hopping from one hut to another with absolute ease. Moreover, each one would be addressing the other either as brother, sister, uncle, aunty, big/elder father, elder mother though these relationships might not be associated with the mode of their address. In tribal life, socializing is very important and first preference is given to the concept of unity in the tribe. Hence the statement "To the clan, clan is the destroyer" which is of civilized texture doesn't seem to be compatible with either Bedanayaka or Kadugolla tribal lifestyles.

Similarly the proverb "No relatives for the wayward, no God for the dead" doesn't seem to fit into the schema of life patterns or styles of the Myasabeda community. It is a known fact that it is quite impossible to have a very rich man and a very poor man at a time. Since the tribal preoccupation or jobs are almost one, the income level would be uniform. To top it all, the statement "To the dead there is no God" doesn't agree with the tribal outlook towards life because birth or death in any hut of the settlement becomes an important event for everyone. Folks congregate and unite invariably during a death in the settlement if not during other occasions because they believe that the dead person would go and join their progenitors in heaven. Since the dead person would be the eldest and godlike after his death, the ritual of the

dead man becomes important and holy to all the tribes of the settlement. Though the proverb "No relatives for the wayward, no Gods for the dying" is in circulation among the Myasabeda tribes, it doesn't seem to gel with the outlook towards life.

Other proverbs like "There is no limit to want, beggars are shameless" "A Monastery without a *guru*, house without a head are one""After the guru, its *gudda* his disciple""To the foolish king, a moronic prime minister" "Destitute widow licked the rolling pin" "More you pay, value for your Money" have all come from towns, villages and cities and have percolated into the Bedanayaka communities.

There goes a saying in Kannada that, "The Vedas might go wrong but not the Proverbs". How true the statement turns out to be when one examines the Proverbs of the Myasabedas! The Proverbs not only provide us the cultural milieu but also the world of the lived experiences of a community that was totally cut off from the civilized world.

To conclude, folk literatures are to be translated because of their originality in thought and of cultural significance. Translation, no doubt might be considered less significant than the original but the original has affinity with the translation, a vital affinity. The task of the translator in translating an oral piece into the written should focus on the intention of the original getting reflected in the language into which he is translating. Basing on the premise that the translated work is not a literary work but a literary enterprise marked by an attempt to integrate language, literature, culture etc., because "the intention of the author is spontaneous, primary, graphic; that of the translator is derivative, ultimate, ideational. Translation is midway between poetry and doctrine". (Benjamin: 77-78) The translation of an oral piece into the written no doubt suffers from a loss, the loss of the rhythm of the original language. But making the target language adhere close to the sense of the original language perhaps could compensate this loss because,

"Translation proposes a sort of parallel universe (to that of the original work) another space and time in which the text reveals other, extraordinary possible meanings. For these meanings, however, there are no other words, since they exist in the intuitive no man's land between the language of the original and the language of the translator" (Manguel, 1977: 276)

NOTES

1. Chronopolitanism is developed as a theoretical as well as ethical opening that reconfigures the search for a world political community in time and history. It is a move that has the explicit aim of extending social and political responsibilities to past, present and future generations, as well as to the diversity of histories and rhythms of life that co-exists in the global present. S. Werner, "The Chronopolitan Ideal: Time, Belonging and Globalisation". *Time and Society*, Vol 9, Nos 2&3. 2000 Print.

REFERENCES

Ahamed, Ajaz. Key Note Address. 2004. *National Seminar on Translation and Socio-literary Space*, 12-14th February Department of English and Modern European Languages, Jamia Milia Islamia University, New Delhi.

Benjamin, Walter. 1999. "The Work of Art in the age of Mechanical Reproduction" in *Illuminations*. Pimlico: London, Print. pp. 212

Bower, Deborah. 1988. "*Squaring the Circle: The Problem of Translation in The Temptations of Big Bear*" in W. H. New Ed. *Canadian Literature*, No. 117, Summer, 1988.

Fanon, Frantz. 1967-85 "On National Culture" in The Wretched of the Earth. New York: Penguin. P. 193.

Hanur, Krishnamurthy. 1993. *Myasabedara Samskriti*, Karnataka Sahitya Academy, Bangalore.

Hermans, Theo. 1985. "*Why Waste our time on rewrites? The trouble*

with Interpretation and the role of rewriting in an alternative paradigm" in Theo Hermans. Ed. *The Manipulation of Literature Studies in Literary Translation*. Croom Helen: London, Print.

Levis-Strauss, Claude. 1976. *Structural Anthropology* Vol 2. Trans. Monique Layton. New York: Penguin, Print.

Manguel, Alberto. 1997. *A History of Reading*, London, Flamingo, Print.

McGuire, Susan Bassnett. 1980. *Translation Studies*. London: Routledge, Print.

Issues in Translation: translating from English to Maithili

P.K. Choudhary

Abstract

Translation from Foreign languages to Indian languages requires a lot of skills, tools and techniques. There are a lots of translation theories available in the market but I have not come across any such theory which can address all the issues, difficulties and techniques required for a good translation in a particular language. There are issues like Word-order, Grammatical categories, Syntax and Technical words etc. where we need to apply our own knowledge about the language in question while translating from one language to other. To make translation more acceptable for common people, sometimes, it is required to transliterate or put English words in brackets so that it can be understood by reader properly as it has been used in source language. Translation also require glossary of technical words, if it is not available in the target language, it will be more difficult for translator to translate and get desired result. There are other equipments required for translation i.e. modern bilingual dictionary, thesaurus, and some available material in the language which will help while translating from Source to Target language. If there are no such tools available in the language as in the case of Maithili, it will be more difficult task for translator. This paper will discuss above mentioned issues and their possible solution to be adhered, while translating from English to Maithili for better result.

Key words: Translation, Culture, Lexical, Syntax

1. Introduction

Translation has played critical role in inter-human communication, providing access to important texts for

scholarship, business and religious purposes. As world trade has grown due to globalization, so as the importance of translation.

As we know, compared to other disciplines, "Translation Studies" is much younger. It is only in 1972, James Holms suggested a discipline called "Translation Studies" came in to being and now it is unquestionably one of the main discipline used throughout the academic circles. It has been enriched with scholars from various fields. Translation Studies is multilingual and interdisciplinary in its nature. It is encompassing through Languages, Linguistics, Philosophy, Communication studies and Cultural studies. It has witnessed rise and fall of theoretical approaches from word to word translation, from sense to sense translation, from linguistic equivalence theory to cultural equivalence theory and from functional theories of translation to philosophical equivalence theory of translation. Each of these theories has its own effect and relevance on the discipline and has enriched the Translation theory.

There are two types of translation in the world, i.e., paraphrase and imitation (word for word). These have been defined by Lefevere (1977: 73)

Paraphrase strives to conquer the irrationality of languages, but only in a mechanical way. (…) The paraphrasist treats the elements of the two languages as if they were mathematical signs which may be reduced to the same value by means of addition and subtraction. (…) Imitation on the other hand, submits to the irrationality of languages; it grants that one cannot render a copy… - Lefevere (1977: 73)

In the above statement mathematical signs look forward to the concept of structural linguistics, terminology and machine translation. He is probably the first scholar to make a distinction between 'genuine translation' and 'mere interpreting' where the latter one refers to both oral and written translation of everyday business text.

These two methods are recognized in the English speaking community as "foreignization" and "domestication". Schleiermacher emphasizes on the "bending" of the target language to create a deliberately contrived foreignness in the translation. He himself used this method while translating Plato. During the course of time the maxims presented by this great theologian has been taken up by many scholars throughout the world from Victorian England to Germany of the 1920s.

Different scholars have different views regarding theories. Here is another extract from Weaver (1955) who thinks that there are a few differences between paraphrase and imitation.

While mere word for word translation would be inadequate, only a few items on the left or right of the word concerned need to be considered to ensure a correct translation (Weaver, 1955)

Translation from foreign languages to Indian languages requires a lot of skills, tools and techniques. There are lots of translation theories available but I have not come across any such theory which can address all the issues, difficulties and technique required for a good translation in a particular language. There are issues like word-order, grammatical categories, syntax and technical words etc. where we need to apply our own knowledge about the language in question while translating from one language to the other. To make translation more acceptable for common people, sometimes, it is required to transliterate or put English words in brackets so that it can be understood by the reader properly as it has been used for in source language. Translation also requires glossary of technical words, if it is not available in the target language, it will be more difficult for translator to translate and get desired result. There are other equipments required for translation, i.e., modern bilingual dictionary, thesaurus, and some available material in the language which will help while translating from the source to the target language. If there are no such tools available in the language as in the case of Maithili, it will

be more difficult task for translator. This paper will discuss above mentioned issues and their possible solution to be adhered while translating from English to Maithili for better result.

2. Problems in translating technical terms

One of the first steps in analysis is careful study of key words in order to find a good lexical equivalent in the target language. There are certain requirements which needs to be taken care of, i.e., dialect, education level, age, bilingualism and social level of users as these things can have an effect on the form of target language.

It is always difficult to translate technical terms into Indian languages even though we may have words for it. It creates problems in making consistency throughout the text, i.e., air, we may use '*həwa*' but in phrase like "*Air tight situation*", it is confusing if we use translation for word "*air*". To avoid inconsistency and confusion we were compelled to transliterate it. Sometimes technical words formed by us are so difficult for general speakers of the language to understand and pronounce that it will be better to transliterate source words, i.e., *dhumrəśəkʈə viśraməaləyə* for "railway station".

There are some other important issues to be taken care of while translating. We have been losing our words day by day due to influence of foreign languages and due to globalization. As to be part of global world, we need to have an international language to interact with world people. There is also a general tendency that knowing a foreign language means you will get jobs in the market easily. In such scenario, people prefer to speak English or even if speaking in their mother-tongue prefer to mix English words acquired from different means. This trend is killing our own words and giving place for foreign words. While translating from English to Indian languages, if we use Indian words or in other words, terms from our own language will be odd in comparison to English words, e.g., word for grave, *kitchen* and even *match-box*

etc. For more details in this regard please see (Choudhary, 2013)

Words with same form and function, lexical equivalents when concepts are unknown because of differences in geography, custom, beliefs made by using generic words and a descriptive modification, e. g.,*'fierce animal'*, need to be taken care of during translation.

Same lexical items can be used in different cultures differently. As in U S (I had a dream) and in U K (I saw a dream). These two sentences are used in different places (culture) for same meaning.

Taboo in one culture may be useful word in another culture. There are various such examples across the cultures. Thus cultural differences may create differences in usage of word, e.g., '*niru*' in Kannada is used for drinking water whereas the same word in Maithili means sacred water got after performing worship to the idol.

Situational context of a word is another important area to be taken care of as words reflect emotions and attitudes. Lack of context causes ambiguity. For example: 'Air tight situation', when translated into Maithili, we need to take care of lexical equivalence in our language. There are some examples showing such cases below which I came across while translating smart phones guidelines:

1. Picture quality optimized for advertisement display is set. विज्ञापन प्रदर्शनक लेल फोटोक गुणवत्ता ऑप्टीमाइज्ड/अनुकूल सेट कायल गेल।

2. It releases background color adjustment. ई बैकग्राउंड रंगक एडजस्टमेन्ट/**सुधार** निर्गत करैत अछि।

3. The speed of the fan in each set is automatically adjusted. प्रत्येक सेट/ बक्सा में पंखा केर गति अपने आप/स्वतः **एडजस्ट भए/सुधरि**

जाइत अछि/

4. Camera Setting- कैमराक सेटिंग।

5. Start/Stop Slideshow- स्लाइडशो शुरु / बन्द करु।

There are certain words which always create confusion when translated into Maithili, e.g., update, saving, processing, default, network, account, overwrite etc. To avoid ambiguity and maintain consistency in a given text, we have to either put English words in bracket by the side of translated words or there is no need to translate these words rather we may transliterate them. For clarification we may consider the following statement by Nida and Taber (1969).

Translating consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source-language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style. (Nida and Taber 1969:12)

There is another important issue to be taken care of during translation. There are different uses of pronoun across languages, i.e., animate and inanimate; inclusive in comparison with exclusive; honorific in comparison with non-honorific and gender sensitive language in comparison with gender non-sensitive language. Below we will discuss such pronouns in Maithili and difficulty in translating such pronouns.

There is another phrase called idiom. It needs to be taken special care while translating. As idioms are semantically one unit; one should not break and substitute one word for another to avoid offensive or socially unacceptable expression.

Real translation is transparent, it does not hide the original, it does not steal its light, but allows the pure language, as if reinforced through its own medium, to fall on the original work with greater fullness. This lies above all in the power of literalness

in the translation of syntax, and even these points to the word, not the sentence, as the translator's original element. (Lefevere 1977: 102)

Thus message in a text is more important than lexicon, syntax and other elements of language. Our primary goal should be to capture the meaning of the original text and then present it in target language's natural order. Such translation will convey meaning to the reader without creating ambiguity.

3. Word order differences and its effects on translation

As we know, Maithilii has nominative-accusative constructions. English has Subject-Verb-Object order whereas Maithili has Subject-Object-Verb order. If there is different word order in the languages in question then other differences too follow, some of these are mentioned below: The Indirect Object (IO) precedes the Direct Object (DO) in unmarked word order. The verb final languages have postpositions. The genitives precede the governing noun. The marker of comparison precedes the standard of comparison. Time adverbial (T) precede place adverbials (P). The complementizer follows the embedded sentence as a post-sentential marker. The adjectives precede the head noun. Question words occur in-situ in Maithili. The subject pronoun can be dropped. Similarly, if the verb is carrying the agreement markers of the IO and DO, they can be dropped. It has been accepted by scholars that contrastive analysis of languages is very useful in translation.

6. həm ɟa-itə chi

I go-INF be

'I go'

7. mohən ghər ɟa-rəhəl chə-thɪ

Mohan home go-PROG be-3SG,H

'Mohan is going home.'

8. radha mohən-kẽ ek-ʈa am de-l-əin

Radha Mohan-ACC one-CL mango give-PST-3SG,H

'Radha gave a mango to Mohan.'

9. sunita əpən pəti-kẽ cɪʈʈhi lɪkhə-l-əin

Sunita self husband-ACC letter write-PST-3SG,H

'Sunita wrote a letter to her husband.'

10. rəmesh suresh-kẽ ek-ʈa pothi de-l-əin

Ramesh Suresh-ACC one-CL book give-PST-3SG,H

'Ramesh gave a book to Suresh.'

Therefore, it is necessary for a translator to know natural word-order in their languages. As expectancy chain shows, certain words or phrases are expected to follow certain others. It differs from language to language. Or may be parameter determines word order in a language. Wrong word-order, awkward phrasing, and collocation classes can create awkward translation. It is expected from translators to have very good command over both target and source languages. It means one should know the basics of the language before going to translate a text.

4. Grammatical categories and its translation in target language

There may be change in categories while translating from English to Indian languages, i.e., adjective becomes Noun, Verb becomes Adverb or vice versa. Agreement, Tense, Aspect & Mood (TAM) and other factors of grammar needs to be confronting properly. Languages differ in their instrument for mentioning time,

tense and mood that need to be taken care of. Here I mean one should not follow the norms of source language while translating.

11. stroke- n- a soft gentle movement of your hand across something: हाथ फेरब ~ सहलाएब -- *Give the cat a stroke*. बिलाइर कैं सहला दिअौक। (n→v.)

12. oil- v -to put oil on something to make it work more smoothly: तेल देब, भरब -- *You should oil your bike more often*. तोरा अक्सर अपन फटफटिया मे तेल देबाक चाही।(V or N?)

13. cousin, may be translated into Maithili in three ways, ममियौत, पिसियौत, पितियौत।

14. beautiful- (adjectives in predicate position in English become adverb when translated into most of Indian languages). It is very beautiful. ई बड सुन्दर अछि।

15. sad /sæd/ adj. (sadder, saddest)-unhappy: उदास, श्रीहीन - I liked my school and I was sad to leave. हमरा अपन विद्यालय पसिन्न छल आ हम ओकरा छोड़ि उदास भोलौं। (adjective becoming adverb when translated into Maithili)

Wrong grammatical forms or obscure constructions, semantic reunite for users, user's level and education are some of the essential things to be known before translating a text. Though, as explained above message is more important but artlessness of language must be maintained throughout.

4.1. Agreement marking in Maithili and its effects on translation

As mentioned above, Maithili has three-way distinction of pronouns in second person, namely, əhã 'you honorable' tũ 'you non-honorable' əpne 'you extra honorable'. Honorific marker plays very important role in agreement marking in Maithili. There is

always confusion when we translate such sentences into Maithili as explained above. Even for nouns for example:

16. mohən ghər ɟa-i(tə) chə-thɪ

Mohan home go-INF be-3SG,H

'Mohan goes home.'

17. mohən ghər ɟa-itə əch-ɪ

Mohan home go-INF be-3SG,NH

'Mohan goes home.'

18. rəmesh$_i$ babu-ɟi-kẽ mar-l-ək$_i$

Ramesh father-H-ACC beat-PST-3SG,NH

'Ramesh beat father.'

19. babu-ɟi$_i$ rəmesh-kẽ mar-l-əin$_i$

Father-H Ramesh-ACC beat-PST-3S,GH

'Father beat Ramesh'.

20. kənɪja puɟa kərə-it-heti

Bride worship do-INF-3SG,F,H

'Bride may be worshiping.'

21. chəũra-səb səb-ʈa am gachhə-mesə toɖɪ-le-l-ək

boy-PL all-CL mango tree-PP pick-take-PST-3SG, NH

'boys have picked all the Mangoes from the tree.'

It has been shown above that honorific marker plays important role in agreement marking. It is not possible to catch such honorificity in English pronouns. Therefore, back translation cannot be done. Even translating from English to Maithili may

require extra effort to understand and put such pronouns in Maithili. Moreover, only native speakers of Maithili can understand such differences between honorific and non-honorific pronouns or nouns. As shown in above examples Noun Phrase determines agreement on the verb.

4.2. Tense and Aspect system in Maithili and its effect on translation

Maithili verb system has Verb+Tense+Agreement order. As shown above honorificity of noun or pronoun dominates the Agreement. Adverb precedes the main verb as shown in (22). Most of the times Maithili has Main Verb+ Auxiliary Verb+ Tense+ Agreement order. But there are constructions like (24) where Main Verb + Tense + verb + Agreement order exists.

22. choũra teɟ dəuɖə-it əch-ɪ

boy fast run- INF be+3SG,NH

'Boy runs fast.'

23. ek-ʈa sundər kənɪja məndɪr-me paʈh kər-əit-chə-l-ih

One-CL beautiful lady temple-PP read do-INF-be-PST-3SG,F,H

'One beautiful lady was reading secret book in the temple.'

24. həm hunka ghər-pər ge-l-rəh-i

I his home-PP go-PST-stay-3SG,NH

'I went to his home.'

25. mohən-kẽ əpən kaɟ kər-ba-me kono sənkoc nəhɪ ho-bak

Mohan-ACC self work do-FUT-PP any shame not happen-FUT cahi-yən

should-3SG,H

'Mohan should not feel any shame in doing his own work.'

As shown in above examples there are different '*be*' forms in Maithili which varies as per nouns and their class. Generally, we try to capture the source language meaning and in such scenario we may disrupt naturality of the target language. We need to avoid such disruption and maintain target language rules in terms of word formation, pronunciation, and grammatical categories in natural order.

5. Cultural differences between English and Maithili

Language and culture cannot be separated as a language creates word/lexicon according to their needs for their culture and rituals. Thus one language is rich in one area and other in others. Customs and Rituals differ amongst language community and to explain certain customs in a particular language may be difficult as M N Srininvasa's book titled "*Social Change in Modern India*" has some such examples. In this book, he discussed about the Lingayat caste and their rituals that cannot be found elsewhere.

This is one of the important areas where we come across difficulties while translating bilingual dictionaries. Most of bilingual dictionaries of India are from English to Indian languages or vice versa. While preparing bilingual dictionaries we come across cultural differences which are difficult to bridge or create words for expressions like the following:

26. boy·friend / ˈbɔɪfrend/ n. a boy or man that you have a romantic relationship with: प्रेमी, प्रियतम -- *Can my boyfriend come to the **party**?* (की) हमर प्रेमी **भोजमे** आबि सकैत छथि ?

27. girl· friend / ˈgɜːlfrend/ n. 1. a girl or woman that you are having a romantic relationship with: प्रेयसी, प्रियतम -- *I'm going out with my girlfriend tonight*. आइ राति हम अपन प्रेयसीक सँग बाहर

जा रहल छी। 2 . a girl or woman who is the friend of another girl or woman: सखी (we do not have concept of such things in Indian context as it is used in western languages)

28. bread /bred/ *n. (no pl.*) a food made by mixing flour and water and then baking it: डबलरोटी, पाँवरोटी -- a *loaf* of *bread*. पैघ डबलरोटी। a *slice* of *bread*. पाँवरोटी केर टुकडी। (we do have bread made of flour of wheat but different than that of bread used in English)

29. date /deɪt/ *n*. 2. an arrangement to meet someone you like in a romantic way: समय, भेंट - आबंध (अपन प्रिय स्त्री ~ पुरुष सं पूर्व निर्धारित समय आ स्थान पड़ भेंटब) I have got a date tonight. हमरा आई रातिक समय भेटल अछि। (we do not have such sense of date in our culture as conveyed by the English word above)

30. hel·lo /həˈləʊ/ also hallo, hullo the usual word that we say when we meet someone or begin to talk on the telephone: हेलो, हेल्लो (फोन पर वा भेंट भेला पर अभिवादनक शब्द) - हेलो। (I think we do not have a word matching semantics of hello in our culture, instead we have other means/lexicon for such purpose)

31. fi•anc•ée / fiːˈɒnseɪ/n. a woman who has promised to marry a particular man: होबय बला पत्नी – His fiancee is called Susan. हुनकर होबय वाली पत्नी के नाम सुजन छनि ।

In such cases it is better to explain things in note or keep the transliteration of the English words that convey message to reader better. As translation of such words which has no cultural values or such practice is not available in the target language culture may create confusion or illusion in the minds of the reader.

6. Conclusion

Translation is not merely transcoding of words or sentences from

one language into another, but a complex phenomena in which source text information will be transferred under a new functional, cultural and linguistic condition, preserving all aspects of source language as far as possible.

Translation should be accurate, clear and natural. As shown above to get such translation we should follow certain norms. Following extract will clear certain illusion:

We translate neither words nor languages but texts. Text translation indicates a demarcation; because every text is embedded in a situation which itself is not language. This situation is the cultural, historical, economic or social space in which a text speaks to us. (Klaus Berger and Hans-Michael, 1986: 159)

There are needs of detailed syntactic rules, an extensive lexicon and high-speed processing of ambiguities would be an adequate basis for a perfect type of translation known as fully automatic high quality translation. While translating our primary goal is to present the source language text into the target language in simple and natural way. As mentioned earlier, meaning of the source text is more important than theory, syntax and other elements of language to be presented in target language.

Here is another extract about the type of translation:

Despite all contrary assertions translation is based on understanding and not primarily on theoretical reasoning. It does not move only in linguistic behavior patterns or react in set linguistic reflexes; it is open for what has not been delimited. (Klaus Berger and Hans-Michael, 1986: 158)

Abbreviations

3- Third Person	NH- Non-honorific
ACC-Accusative Case	PROG-Progressive
CL- Classifier	PST-Past Tense

FUT-Future Tense PP-Post Position

H-Honorific PL-Plural

INF-Infinite SG-Singular

Acknowledgements: Thanks Professor Awadhesh Kumar Mishra and Prof. Saratchandran Nair for their valuable comments and corrections which make this paper clearer than it was.

REFERENCES

Choudhary, P. K. 2012. Issues in making bi-lingual dictionary, paper presented at SPSTU Hyderabad, 5-6, December, 2012.

Choudhary, P.K. 2013. Causes and Effects of Super-stratum Language Influence, with Reference to Maithili, *The journal of Indo-European Studies*, Volume 41, Number 3 & 4, Fall/Winter 2013.

Gentzler, Edwin, 2001. *Contemporary Translation Theories*. Cromwell press Ltd. London.

Holmes, James S. 1987. "The name and nature of translation studies." *Indian Journal of Applied Linguistics* 13 (2): 9–24.

Berger, Klaus; Paepcke, Fritz; Speier, Hans-Michael.1986. *Im Übersetzen leben. Übersetzen und Textvergleich*, Christa von Baum, Berlin.

Lefevere, A. 1977. *Translating Literature*. The German Tradition from Luther to Rosenzweig (Approaches to Translation 4). Assen/ Amsterdam: Van Gorcum.

Nida, Eugene A. and Charles Taber. 1969. *The Theory and Practice of Translation*. Leiden: Brill.

Schleiermacher, F. 1813/2004. 'On the different methords of translating', in Lawrence Venuti (ed.) 2004. *The Translation Studies Reader*, 2nd Edition, London and New York: Routledge, pp.43-63.

Weaver, Warren. 1955. *Translation, a memorandum*, 15.07.1949." In Machine Translation of Languages, W.N. Locke and A.D. Booth (eds.), 15–23.New York.

Integration of Technology & Translation for Measuring Meaning Interpretation

C.M.Vinaya Kumar, Romesh Chaturvedi, Shruti Mehrotra

Abstract

Internet users have the choice between several machine translation services that can automatically translate a given text or website in another language. Google Translate is one of the most popular services of this kind. It allows web users to translate text or websites into 51 languages. The present research aims at exploring the integration of translation and technology for measuring meaning interpretation. The scope of the research is confined to Translation from English to Telugu. The data used in this study is based on short copy that was translated from English to Telugu using Google Translator. The study will be significant in analyzing how translation and technology plays an important role in measuring the impact on interpretation.

Keywords: Translation, Technology, Google translate, Interpretation, Measuring meaning

INTRODUCTION

In a world of growing globalization and increasing mobility, more and more people find themselves in situations which involve some sort of translation. Messages are adapted to new situations, local texts are transferred to global contexts, and global texts are localized into multiple languages. The production of knowledge, entertainment, services and industrial products presupposes interaction and communication across languages and cultures. Translation, interpretation and exchange of knowledge and information are becoming a still more integral part of both global production processes and of the way we think,

communicate and construct our cultural identities.

The relation between technology and translation is part of the wider question of what technology does to language. Technology should help us with whatever we are doing. Technology might thus be driving us to a world of amateurish fun. This would be a world where translation is no longer a special task left for special people – translation becomes one of the basic things you do with language: you speak, you listen, you write, you read, and you translate (Campbell, 2002).

The designers of technology are often not in the same communities as the users, and the risk of exploitation remains constant. Google, Facebook, dotSUB and the like are in the translation game in order to make profits (Smolens, 2011). Then again, the social distance between design and use is not as extreme as it was in Taylorist production which emphasize that the time gaps between user-feedback and technology redesign are vastly reduced; the more significant problem is the social distance and temporal delay of researchers like ourselves (Pym, 2011b).

This study attempts to measure the impact on meaning interpretation as a result of integration of technology and translation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Online tools have received increased attention as witnessed by rapidly changing of Technology. Students use those tools in solving the barrier of second language (e.g, Gaspari, 2007; Conroy, 2010; Zengin & Karçar, 2011, Garcia and Pena, 2011). On the basis of the above notion, it is obviously declared by researchers that young people are in the age of digital technology and Internet. With the advancement of technology and wireless, there are increasingly used of "laptop computers", "palmtop computers", and "mobile phones" in education. These technology

provide "anytime, and anywhere education" to students (Cavus & Ibrahim, 2009). No doubt, technology facilitates them to access varieties of endless learning (Gardner & Holmes, 2006). They have evidently demonstrated itself the relationship within itself to young people.

Many current studies are widespread to students who have used online dictionaries in solving difficulties and consulting language in translation (Zengin and Kaçar, 2011, Fujii, n.d, Somers, Gaspari, and Niño, 2006). For example, Zengin and Kaçar (2011) stated that learners used online dictionaries in order to "correct accuracy of style, and structure" consulted difficulties of language.

Apart from online dictionaries, machine translations were used in assisting students in translation. Yamamoto (n.d) claimed that machine translation (MT) is used in translating source texts to target texts. Google Translator's survey announced on "For what purpose(s) did you use Google Translator today?" responded by a language learner. The results showed that a learner used Google Translator in order o learn foreign words, short phrases, read webpage, email, and article. He/she also learnt how to write and saying a word or phrase (as cited in Garcia & Pena, 2011). Recently, there has been an emphasis on the new trends of acquiring new language by using online tools among students.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The present research will be significant in exploring the nature of the translation process provided by Google Translate Service with an eye on the impact on meaning interpretation.

The study will be important in investigating the possibility of refining the system used so as to make a better use of it on the part of the average Internet user, who is, by no means a professional translator and depends on web based translation technology.

TRANSLATION USING TECHNOLOGY

Machine translation or MT, with its various forms and types, have increasingly become a subject of interest to those who seeks the translation of a given texts as a means to another end and the translation specialist who attempts to conduct an academic research on MT as such. There have recently been an increasing number of Web Sites that offer the service of an automatic/machine translation of individual sentences or even whole texts. Internet users have the choice between several machine translation services that can automatically translate a given text or website in another language.

Google Translate is one of the most popular services of this kind. It allows web users to translate text or websites into 51 languages. Google has recently announced that they had expanded their translation services by offering a translate gadget for webmasters, by which the latter can integrate the code of the Google Translate gadget into their website to offer visitors the option to automatically translate the text that is displayed on the website into a different language. In this research, however, the interest is confined to the general Google Translate Service which is available for all Internet users.

One of the most exciting areas of research in Machine Translation is to investigate free of charge Internet on-line service translators.

GOOGLE TRANSLATE SERVICE

Google Translate Service is one of the most popular computer-aided translation services, however, using an online-translator for individual lexical items, sentences and even full texts.

The following questions arise:

- How context is maintained in texts produced by Google

Translate Service?

- What is the level of accuracy in the translated text?
- How does that translation function in understanding interpretation of translated text

MEANING INTERPRETATION

The present study aims to measure the meaning interpretation in terms of context, meaning construction, and clarity as a result of translation using technology.

The major problem with machine translators is to maintain context; without context we can never achieve a perfect translation. Another problem is that a lot of machine translators produce very literal translations; clearly, they cannot be expected to abide by the many different syntactical rules of a foreign language, yet this is a crucial aspect that needs to be addressed when translating, otherwise the target audience won't be able to interpret the meaning of the message.

What is missing at even the simplest level is domain knowledge, from which greater relevance of context can be derived. Without context, many words can be ambiguous. Online translators are becoming an increasingly popular means of translation, but in terms of accuracy it cannot be relied on.

Clarity is defined as the ease with which a reader can understand the translation (Fiederer and O'Brien, 2009). Clarity is synonymous with intelligibility, comprehensibility or what is understandable. Simply put, the less the evaluator understands, the lower the quality of the translation. Fidelity is defined as the extent to which the translated text contains the same information as the original (Fiederer and O'Brien 2009). One other major difference between the studies carried out up to now and our own is that each of our sentences is targeted to test a specific feature of a language. That is to say, each sentence tests the free

online translator's ability to translate a particular element in the language.

Technology aided translation can help in overcoming language barrier and transfer off cultural meaning. Cultural problems arise when some concepts in the source text are totally missing in the TL culture or at least confused with similar yet far from identical ones. Among the most common techniques used to handle such problem is usually transliteration (ElShiekh, 2011).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The guiding questions for this study are as follows:

RQ I: Does the context of text and construction of intended meaning is maintained in translation using technology?

RQ II: Does translation using technology maintain accuracy and meaning of text is not distorted?

RQ III: Does translation using technology helps in minimizing language barrier and transfer of cultural meaning?

RQIV: Does translation using technology helps in easy understanding of meaning interpretation of text?

MEASUREMENT

To determine the impact of technology on translation and its meaning interpretation and study research question, seven measures were employed in this research: 1.Integration & context, 2. Integration & intended meaning, 3. Integration & accuracy, 4. Integration & distortion, 5. Integration &language barrier, 6. Integration & cultural meaning, and 7. Integration & meaning interpretation. These measures will contribute to judging impact of integration of technology & translation on meaning interpretation. To test the validity of these measures chi square test was conducted.

POPULATION

The study was designed to analyze the meaning interpretation as a result of doing translation using technology. The social and multidisciplinary characteristics of translation technology are the reason to focus on the field of various disciplines. Our sampling frame comprised of students of Krishna University, Machilipatnam. The sample size of 24 students came from three departments; namely, Mass Communication, Telugu, & English.

METHODS

To measure the meaning interpretation as a result of integration of translation using technology, transcript was prepared. The news story published in The Hindu, Vijayawada dated July 21, 2013 was translated using Google Translator in Telugu. Students were given copy of the text both in English & Telugu. The transcript is mentioned in Annexure I. Students were asked to read them and as per their interpretation they were asked to fill the questionnaire. Likert scale based questions (APPENDIX II) ensured that meaning interpretation can be measured. The statements were on a five point Likert-type scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. Scores of 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 were awarded to the given statements.

DATA ANALYSIS

The Likert Scale results are listed in frequency table (Table 1) that demonstrates the responses to the 10 statements. Ordinal-level data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (Mean, Standard Deviation & Mode). Chi-square analysis was conducted on each of the mentioned measures to determine if there was a significant relationship between integration of technology and translation on meaning interpretation.

Table 1: Frequency distribution of the ratings on statements on meaning interpretation by respondents (n=24)[figures in parenthesis are percentages]

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

MEASURES

1. Integration & context

Frequency of Response -"Context of the text was maintained in translation (using technology)."The responses for this measure have a mean of 2.7917 (SD = 1.28). The mode for this statement is 5. The P value equals 0.1712 (Chi square(X2) =6.4, Df=4), this difference is considered to be not statistically significant. Hence majority of students were of opinion that context of text is not maintained in translation using technology. This one had over a 37 percent agreement rate (those who preferred agree or strongly agree).-

2. Integration & intended meaning

Frequency of Response -"Translation (using technology) helped in the construction of intended meaning of text."The responses for this measure have a mean of 3.0 (SD = 1.02). The mode for this statement is 4. . The P value equals 0.0328 (Chi square(X2) =10.5, Df=4), this difference is considered to be extremely statistically significant. Hence majority of students were of opinion that translation using technology helped in the construction of intended meaning of text. This one had over 37 percent agreement rate (those who preferred agree or strongly agree).

3. Integration & accuracy

Frequency of Response -"Accuracy of the text was sustained in translation (using technology)." The responses for this measure have a mean of 2.9 (SD = 1.17). The mode for this statement is 5. The P value equals 0.07490(Chi square(X2) =8.5, Df=4) this difference is considered to be not statistically significant. Hence students are of opinion that translation of the text does not sustain the accuracy of text. The precision in the translation did not match the original text. This one had over 41 percent disagreement rate

(those who preferred disagree or strongly disagree).

4. Integration & distortion

Frequency of Response -"Translation (using technology) did not distort the meaning of text." The responses for this measure have a mean of 3.2 (SD = 0.93). The mode for this statement is 5. The P value equals 0.0091 (Chi square(X2) =13.5, Df=4), this difference is considered to be extremely statistically significant. Hence majority of students opine that translation using technology did not distort the meaning of text. Though the accuracy level was not maintained in the translation, but its meaning was not distorted. This research question had agreement rate of over 33% and 37 % were neutral to it.

5. Integration &language barrier

Frequency of Response -"Translation (using technology) helped in minimizing language barrier." The responses for this measure have a mean of 3.3 (SD = 1.27). The mode for this statement is 4. The P value equals 0.2772 (Chi square(X2) =5.1, Df=4), this difference is considered to be not statistically significant.

6. Integration & cultural meaning

Frequency of Response -"Translation (using technology) helped in transfer of cultural meaning in text." The responses for this measure have a mean of 3.3 (SD = 1.27). The mode for this statement is 3. The P value equals 0.2772 (Chi square(X2) =5.1, Df=4), this difference is considered to be not statistically significant.

7. Integration & meaning interpretation

Frequency of Response -"Translation (using technology) helped me in easy understanding of meaning interpretation of text." The responses for this measure have a mean of 3.5(SD = 1.24). The mode for this statement is 4. The P value equals 0.0189 (Chi square(X2) =11.8, Df=4, P value=0.0), this difference is considered

to be extremely statistically significant.

CONCLUSION

With the development of networks and online translation services, online translation tools have played a great part in translation. With the advancement in technology, web based online translation has achieved greater readability in translation. The result of the study shows that there exists room for improvement in the translation. Although *Google Translate* provides translations among a large number of languages, the accuracies vary greatly.

The style in the machine translation text is clumsy and not organized. The suggested translation is more or less typical of a word-for-word approach. The inevitable result is that the translated version lacks the communicative effect of the original passage in the source language.

REFERENCES

Campbell, S. (2002). Translation in the context of EFL - the fifth macro skill? TEFLIN, 13(1), 15pp.

Conroy, M. A. (2010). Internet tools for language learning University students taking control of their writing. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, 26(6), 861-882. Retrieved from http://www.as cilite.org.au/ajet26/conroy.html

ElShiekh, A., & Saleh, Mona (2011). Translation versus Transliteration of Religious Terms in Contemporary Islamic Discourse in Western Communities. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, Vol. 1, No. 2, September 2011. http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/ijel.v1n2p141

Fiederer, Rebecca; O'BRIEN Sharon (2009). «Quality and Machine Translation: A realistic objective?». *The Journal of Specialised Translation* 11: 52-74.

Garcia, I., & Pena, I. (2011). Machine translation-assisted language

learning: writing for beginners. *Computer Assisted Language Learning,* 24(5), 471-487. doi: 10.1080/09588221.2011.582687

Gardner, J., & Holmes, B. (2006). The Internet generation. *E-Learning-An educational Revolution* (pp.61-62). London: SAGE Publication Ltd.

Gaspari, F. (2007). The role of online MT in webpage translation (Doctoral dissertation, the University of Manchester), 1-305. doi: 10.1.1.100.840

Pym, A. (2011b). Democratizing translation technologies – the role of humanistic research. Paper presented to the *Luspio Translation Automation Conference*, Rome, April 5 2011. http://usuaris.tinet.cat/apym/on-line/research_methods/2011_rome.pdf. Accessed June 2011.

Smolens, M. L. (2011). Interview by Anthony Pym. http://www.facebook.com/video/video.php?v=1377495333910&oi. Accessed June 2011.

Zengin, B., & Kaçar, I. (2011). Turkish EFL academicians' problems concerning translation activities and practices, attitudes toward the use of online and printed translation tools, and suggestions for quality translation practice. *The Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology*, 10(2), 274-286. Retrieve from http://tojet.net/articles/v10i2/10227.pdf

ANNEXURE I

THE HINDU

VIJAYAWADA, July 21, 2013

Rtc Workshops in Krishna Division to Get Feminine Touch

కృష్ణ డివిజన్‌లో RTC కార్ఖానాలు స్త్రీటచ్ పొందుటకు Court Faults Rtc for Barring Women from Posts of Mechanics and 'shramiks'

ముఖం మీద పండ్లు మరియు 'shramiks' నుండి మహిళలు నిషేధిత కోసం RTC హైకోర్టు లోపాలుగా

A woman underneath a bus with tool belt strapped to the hips and grease stains on the face is not a familiar site, but soon, a new set of AP State Road Transport Corporation employees will change the way we think about who should be under the vehicle, cleaning or repairing it.

The RTC workshops across Krishna Division will acquire a feminine touch with the doors being opened for women to work as mechanics and 'shramiks' (assistants to the mechanics). With this, women will be storming yet another male bastion as a heavy vehicle workshop is considered a 'man's domain'.

"Shramiks assist mechanics in garages and have physically strenuous work. They need to do servicing of the vehicles, dissemble and assemble parts, lift heavy weights, squat on the floor, work in the maintenance pit and in the night shifts. It will be a hard labour and depend on the grit and determination of the individual on how ably she handles the task," says RTC Regional Manager G. Sudesh Kumar.

No directive has, however, come from the corporate office on the recruitment. Performance of women conductors was fairly good. "Transfers may be a problem because they are posted wherever vacancies exist and they have to leave their families behind," he says.

VIOLATION

This avenue has been opened for women after Justice B. Chandra Kumar of the A.P. High Court found fault with the RTC for barring women from applying for the posts of shramiks, mechanics and chargeman, stating that such exclusion violates Article 16 of the Constitution. The judge was responding to a plea by G. Anita Rani and K. Sulochana, who contended that denial of the posts

to women was illegal. The Corporation's contention that it had never recruited women for the posts as they involved heavy and strenuous work and as such it had sought exception from the Government from recruiting women to these posts and the latter had approved its plea, did not cut any ice.

RECRUITMENT

Citing documents, the judge pointed to the fact that the exemption was given only for certain special circumstances and that it was not meant to be a permanent exemption and directed the RTC to allow recruitment of women to the posts within four weeks.

ముఖంమీద ఎండ్లు మరియు జిడ్డు మరకలుకు వేయబడి సాధనం బెల్ట్ తో ఒక బస్సు కింద ఒక మహిళ వెంటనే తెలిసిన సైట్ కాదు, కానీ, రాష్ట్ర రోడ్ రవాణా సంస్థ ఉద్యోగులు ఒక కొత్త సెట్ మేము వాహనం కింద ఉండాలి ఎవరు గురించి ఆలోచించడం మార్గం మారుతుంది, శుద్ధి లేదా మరమ్మత్తు.
కృష్ణ విభజన అంతటా RTC కార్ఖానాలు మెకానిక్స్ మరియు 'shramiks' (మెకానిక్స్ సహాయకుల) వంటి పని మహిళలకు తెరువబడి తలుపులు స్త్రీ టచ్ పొందుతుంది. ఒక భారీ వాహనం వర్క్ ఒక కోమనిషి యొక్క డొమైన్' పరిగణిస్తూ ఈ స్త్రీల మరొక పురుషుడు బురుజు పేల్చివేసినట్లు ఉంటుంది.

"Shramiks గ్యారేజీలు మెకానిక్స్ సహాయం మరియు భౌతికంగా బలమైన పని కలిగి. వారు, వాహనాల సర్వీసింగ్ చేయండి dissemble భాగాలు స కరించటం, నిర్వహణ పిట్ మరియు రాత్రి మార్పులు పని, నేలపై చతికిలబడిన భారీ బరువులు, లిఫ్ట్ అవసరం. ఇది ఒక కఠిన మరియు ఆమె పనిని ఎలా సమర్థవంతంగా న గ్రిట్ మరియు వ్యక్తిగత నిర్ణయంలో ఆధారపడి ఉంటుంది, "RTC ప్రాంతీయ మేనేజర్ జి. సుదేశ్ కుమార్.

సంఖ్య నిర్దేశకం, అయతే, నియామకన కార్పొరేట్ కార్యాలయం నుంచి వచ్చిన మహిళలు, కండక్టర్ల యొక్క ప్రదర్శన చాలా మంచి "ఖాళీలు ఉన్నాయి ఎక్కడ పోస్ట్ చేసిన ఎందుకంటే, బదిలీలు సమస్య ఉండవచ్చు మరియు వారు వెనుక వారి

కుటుంబాలు వదిలి" అతను చెప్పిన.

ఉల్లంఘన

AP హైకోర్టు న్యాయమూర్తి బి. చంద్రకుమార్, shramiks, మెకానిక్స్ మరియు chargeman పదవులను కోసం దరఖాస్తు నుండి మహిళలు నిషేధిత అలాంటి మినహాయింపు రాజ్యాంగంలోని ఆర్టికల్ 16 ఉల్లంఘించే తెలిపాయి కోసం RTC తో తప్పు దొరకలేదు తర్వాత ఈ AVENUE మహిళలకు తెరవబడింది. న్యాయమూర్తి మహిళలు పోస్ట్ ల ఆ తిరస్కారం ఉద్ఘాటించాడు. ఎవరు జి. అనితరాణి మరియు K. Sulochana, కె. సులోచన ఒక హేతువు స్పందించిన చట్ట రుద్ధమని వారు భారీ మరియు బలమైన పని చేరి మరియు అది నియామక మహిళల ఈ పోస్ట్ మరియు తరువాత దాని హేతువు అనుమతించని ప్రభుత్వం నుండి మినహాయింపు కోరిన దానిని పోస్ట్స్ కోసం మహిళలు నియంచుకుంది. ఎప్పుడూ కార్పొరేషన్ యొక్క వాదన, ఏ

మంచు కట్ లేదు.

రిక్రూట్మెంట్

పత్రాలు, న్యాయమూర్తి మినహాయింపు కేవలం కొన్ని ప్రత్యేక పరిస్థితులలో మరియు ఇది ఒక శాశ్వత మినహాయింపు అని అర్థం మరియు నాలుగు వారాలలో పోస్ట్ మహిళలు నియామక అనుమతించేందుకు

RTC దర్శకత్వం లేదని ఇచ్చిన వాస్తవానికి చూపారు.

QUESTIONNAIRE

INTEGRATION OF TECHNOLOGY & TRANSLATION FOR MEASURING MEANING INTERPRETATION

NAME_____AGE_____

OCCUPATION_____Mb. No_____ M ☐ F ☐

S no.	Statements	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Context of the text was maintained in translation (using technology).	06(25)	03(12.5)	06(25)	08(33.33)	01(4.1t2)
2	Translation (using technology) helped in the construction of intended meaning of text.	06(25)	08(33.33)	01(4.1)	08(33.33)	01(4.1)
3	Accuracy of the text was sustained in translation (using technology).	04(16.6)	09(37.5)	01(4.1)	09(37.5)	01(4.1)
4	Translation (using technology) did not distort the meaning of text.	09(37.5)	07(29.1)	01(4.1)	07(29.1)	01(4.1)
5	Translation (using technology) helped in minimizing language barrier.	05(20.8)	09(37.5)	04(16.6)	09(37.5)	04(16.6)
6	Translation (using technology) helped in transfer of cultural meaning in text.	09(37.5)	09(37.5)	01(4.1)	09(37.5)	01(4.1)
7	Translation (using technology) helped me in easy understanding of meaning interpretation of text.	04(16.6)	11(45.8)	05(20.8)	11(45.8)	05(20.8)

NOTES

Translating a Classic
The Experience of Translating *Kanyasulkam*

T . Vijay Kumar & C Vijayasree

It is indeed a happy occasion to share our experience of translating *Kanyasulkam* when the year-long celebrations of the 150th birth anniversary of its author Gurajada Venkata Appa Rao's (1862-1915) are still fresh in memory. *Kanyasulkam* was first performed in 1892 and published in 1897. The second, 'recast' edition that is currently available was published in 1909. Widely regarded as the "*adikavyam*" of modern Telugu literature, the play enjoys several distinctions: it was the first social play in Telugu, the first full-length play in prose, the first to employ colloquial Telugu, and the first to use 'local' actors. It was made into a film in 1955 and was as successful on screen as it was on stage, and in print. But for Telugu readers, *Kanyasulkam* is not an archival document—words and phrases from the play have now become part of their vocabulary, and characters and their mannerisms have become familiar points of reference.

Kanyasulkam was Gurajada's first work in Telugu, in any genre. Prior to this he had written and published poems in English and had also written a series of songs in praise of the Queen under the title "Victoria Prasasti". Even after the publication of the first edition of *Kanyasulkam*, Gurajada wrote most of his reviews, prefaces, pamphlets, and parodies in English. In fact, he always wrote his letters, diaries, plot summaries, and notes in English. It is indeed ironical that *Kanyasulkam* which advocates the use of spoken Telugu as the literary dialect had a "Dedication" and "Preface" written in English.

Social context

Gurajada was the official epigraphist (in 1895) to the Maharajah of Vizianagaram, H H Ananda Gajapathi Raju (1850-1897). Ever since he was first introduced to the Maharaja in 1887, Gurajada enjoyed a close rapport with his patron and shared his progressive outlook. The Maharajah held a special place in the colonial administration of the time, and he used his influence with the government to usher in social reforms, particularly those concerning the amelioration of women. As a member of the Madras Legislative Council he proposed the Kanyasulkam Bill—"a Bill to discontinue the sordid practice of selling girls in marriages among the Brahmins under the guise of religion." But the colonial government showed extreme caution in effecting any change in matters concerning familial and religious issues, partly because it was unwilling to incur popular displeasure by seeming to interfere in the "private" matters of the natives, and partly because it suited them to let the status quo remain and allow obsolete social systems to turn into ossified structures. Ananda Gajapathi's Bill was referred to a council of experts and was promptly dropped.

The Maharajah, however, did not lose heart when his efforts failed at the political level—he successfully consolidated public opinion in favour of his cause. Gurajada wrote *Kanyasulkam* to further his patron's movement for social reform and dedicated the play to him. "… when the question was engaging your Highness's attention," writes Gurajada in his dedication, "an humble servant made a feeble effort to arouse public opinion on the subject, by exposing the evil in a popular drama."

However, though written with express intent "to advance the cause of social reform and to combat a popular prejudice that the Telugu language was unsuited to the stage" ("Preface to the Second Edition" [1909]), the play is far from propagandist. In fact, it displays a healthy scepticism towards idealistic reform movements, and their well-meaning but naïve leaders. The plot revolves around a clever courtesan, a lovable rogue, a young

widow, an old man who wants to buy as his wife a very young girl and so on—altogether 38 major and minor characters.

How it all began

The long and arduous process of translating *Kanyasulkam* began sometime in 2000-2001 when the well-known literary critic Prof Meenakshi Mukherjee was asked by *The Hindu* to plan and guest-edit a monthly column in their *Sunday Literary Review*. Titled "Past Continuous", the column published English translation of short extracts from texts in the Indian languages belonging to the early modern period. The largely 19th and early 20th century texts were selected for the continued relevance of the issues they dealt with. As Prof. Mukherjee had made Hyderabad her home after retiring from Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi, she wanted to begin the series with a text in Telugu and asked us to help in identifying one. We then suggested *Kanyasulkam* and as no English translation was easily available, we offered to translate a thousand-word excerpt from it. After its publication, several non-Telugu readers, friends and colleagues wanted to read more of the play. But to everyone's surprise, including ours, it was found that an English translation of the play in its entirety simply did not exist! So, the obvious suggestion everyone made was 'Having made a beginning, why don't you go ahead and complete the task? At least then it will become available to not only non-Telugus but also those Telugus who can't read the original in Telugu'.

Meanwhile, The Book Review Literary Trust, New Delhi was celebrating the silver jubilee of their journal, *The Book Review* and wanted to venture into publishing books. They were enthused by the response that the extracts published in "Past Continuous" were getting and planned to publish some of these works in full. So, it was only then, with the encouragement provided by readers, critics, and the publisher that we embarked on the daunting task of translating *Kanyasulkam*.

From the very beginning, we knew that we were trying to translate the untranslatable. But our attempt was an act of homage to one of the greatest classics of modern Indian literature, and we are happy that our endeavour has been recognized as such. When His Excellency the President of India Sri KR Narayanan released the translation in the Rashtrapathi Bhavan (in July 2002), or when Sri Ashoka Gajapathi Raju, Revenue Minister and the great grandson of Sri Ananda Gajapathi Raju (1850-1897), the Maharajah of Vizianagaram and Gurajada's patron, agreed to launch the book in Hyderabad (in Sep 2002), or when the play came to be included in the syllabuses of universities in India and abroad—on all such happy and proud occasions, we were acutely aware that the honour belongs entirely to the original. The translation, in a way, was merely a pretext to recall and celebrate the original text.

Basic issues in this translation

Before and during the course of translating *Kanyasulkam*, we discussed and agreed upon certain issues that will have a bearing on our method of translation. The first question we asked ourselves was 'Who is the target reader of this translation?' From the very beginning we were clear that our translation was meant for an Indian reader who wants to but cannot read the original in Telugu. This imagined Indian reader may not be familiar with some of the specific customs, traditions, and cultural practices depicted in the book but perhaps can recognize the similarities or find equivalents in her/his own linguistic and cultural milieu. Retaining the title as 'Kanyasulkam' without giving into the temptation of changing it to 'Bride-Price' or even adding an explanatory sub-title was a conscious decision as we had the implicit faith that a reader familiar with Indian social, cultural, and linguistic milieu would know the meaning of the word or will be able to make an intelligent guess.

The second issue that we had to resolve was 'What kind of translation?' We agreed that we should not iron out all the cultural or textual characteristics and produce a 'smooth' translation.

Readability in the target language and fidelity to the original were our guiding principles and we did not want to sacrifice one for the sake of the other. In this regard, we were cautious not to make the same mistake (at least in our opinion) that an earlier translation made by totally anglicizing the text. We wanted to make it clear, implicitly, that ours is a translation of an *Indian, Telugu* text.

'How much liberty should we allow ourselves to take with the original?' was the next issue that presented itself during the course of the translation. We were aware that several Indian language texts undergo dramatic transformation in the hands of translators who feel free to revise, update, edit, or improve the original exercising their own judgment. We, however, restricted ourselves to the task of translation and did not add or delete anything to or from the original to make it either politically correct or ideologically compliant.

The translation process

The process of translating *Kanyasulkam* was, not unexpectedly, strenuous and highly demanding. Besides the familiar problems that most non-English texts pose while being translated into English—problems such as kinship terms, culture specific vocabulary, dialects etc—*Kanyasulkam* presents certain additional complications. One such problem was the proliferation of English words, phrases, idioms etc in the text. These words stand out in the original and serve to define the character of Girisam. But how does one carry that aspect into the translation where the rest of the text too is in English? We used special typographical markers to highlight the English words in the original. Similarly, certain English words appear in their Telugized form ('kumphini' for company, 'konstibu' for constable etc) and several Urdu words are also used (particularly the vocabulary of revenue administration). We had to make a judicious choice between translating them into 'standard' English and retaining some of them as in the original to indicate the linguistic richness of the text.

We did not try to give any 'period flavor' to the English used in the translation to represent the time of the original. We used the English that is used in the contemporary Indian (formal) context. We were also familiar with the practice among some Indian translators of using dialects of English (cockney, pidgin etc) to reflect the dialects of the 'standard' language used in the original. We considered the option but finally decided against it as we felt that the dialects of English that are available to us are culture specific and therefore cannot be treated as free floating models. Sometimes, however, we did coin words to convey the humour succinctly—one such coinage which has been widely appreciated is "broomance" (broom + romance) for "cheepuru katta sringaaram".

One of the characteristics of Telugu speech, as it is of speech in many Indian languages, is the use of echo words (such as "marbles-geerbles") in which the second part is merely alliterative and entirely nonsensical. We retained a few such constructions to indicate this linguistic feature.

Unfinished tasks

Unlike many texts which lose general readers when they are labelled as 'classics', *Kanyasulkam* continues to have popular appeal and is considered 'an all-time best-seller'. Several publishers still bring out new editions and reprints. But in spite of, or perhaps because of, the many editions in circulation, we found to our dismay, that there isn't a single definitive edition of this seminal text. As we were wrestling with the text, and more so with the textual variations among the different editions, we fondly desired a definitive and fully annotated edition of the original that can then become the basis for an authentic translation. We also dreamed of the day when we could muster enough courage to attempt this impossible task and bring out an edition which will bear resemblance to the Variorum Editions of Shakespeare's plays.

By and large, the translation has been well received by the readers and fellow practitioners. However, we realized that a few inaccuracies and some typos had crept into it either due to oversight or due to lack of time to copy edit the text. We also noticed that there is still a lot of scope to annotate the plethora of references in the text. We started making notes and hoped to bring out a new, paperback edition of the translation that is error free and will provide the reader with more information and generally make the overall experience of reading the classic even richer.

While this latter task may still be accomplished, the earlier dream—of bringing out a definitive edition in Telugu—will now have to be realized by someone else who has the resources, the stamina and the courage to undertake the task. Best wishes to that brave soul.

(*I have used 'we' and 'our' in this essay because though Prof C Vijayasree [1953-2012] is no more, the experiences shared here belong to both of us. I am confident that she would have approved—as she always did—the manner in which I have presented them. I offer this essay as a tribute to her. T Vijay Kumar)

(A shorter version of this essay was presented in the session "Meet the Translator" at the Workshop on "Translation and Media" organized by Department of English and Department of Mass Communication & Journalism, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli in collaboration with National Translation Mission, Mysore. 19-21 February 2013).

Indian English Drama: Badal Sircar in Translation

Dhanya Johnson

Indian Drama in English translation has made daring innovations and prolific experiments in terms of both thematic concerns and technical virtuosities. It has been increasingly turning to history, legend, myth and folklore beating their springs of vivacity and choral cords of popularity with grand results. Plays written in various Indian languages are being translated into English and other languages as they are produced and appreciated in the various parts of the country. A closer contact is being established between the theatre workers from different regions and languages through these translations. Thus, regional drama in India is slowly paving a way for a 'national theatre' into which all streams of theatrical art seem to coverage. The major language theatres that are active all through the turbulent years of rejuvenation and consolidations are those of Hindi, Bengali, Marathi and Kannada.

The plays mentioned so far, both under the Pre-Independence and the Post-Independence phase were originally written in English. Among the plays translated into English, there are a few, which were first written in the regional languages and subsequently translated into English by the authors themselves. Though, strictly speaking, these works cannot be called fully English plays, they can be mentioned under the topic, in view of the fact, that at least some of them are transcreations and not simply translations. Rabindranath Tagore, Mohan Rakesh, Badal Sircar, Vijay Tendulkar, and Girish Karnad have remained the most representative of the Indian English drama not only in Bengali, Hindi, Marathi and Kannada respectively but also on the pan-Indian level.

The driving force behind the "third theatre" (alternate theatre or street theatre performed in villages as opposed to auditoriums), Badal Sirkar (15 July 1925 – 13 May 2011), popularly known as a 'barefoot playwright' for Bengali theatre was a legend. Through the seventies along with Girish Karnad(Kannada), Vijay Tendulkar(Marathi) and Mohan Rakesh (Hindi) Badal Sircar spearheaded the Indian playwriting movement providing with it some great masterpieces.

An influential Indian dramatist and theatre director he was a pioneering figure in street theatre as well as in experimental and contemporary Bengali theatre. Serving first as a popular proscenium playwright and director and then as an anonymous street theatre artist he prolifically wrote scripts for his Aanganmanch (courtyard stage) performances, and remains one of the most translated Indian playwrights. "The theatre of Badal Sircar", was described by Rustom Bharucha "as the most rigorously noncommercial political theatre in India". (Raustom Bharucha: 1993:127)

With the intention of enlightening the society, his plays reflected the atrocities that prevailed in the society and the decayed hierarchical system. He is also known for picking up ordinary people from ordinary life, who he feels, suit a particular role and gets them to act for his skits and plays. He depicts the existential attitude of modern man in the present times.

Badal Sircar, the great Bengali playwright uses contemporary situations and social problems to project the life-in-death attitude of modern life. The central theme of many of his early plays is a sense of utter meaninglessness in our existence, which leads to a state of metaphysical anguish. This anguish is in fact closely embedded in the Bengali middle-class psyche, the tearing up of which was Sircar's constant concern since his early theater career.

Sircar started his dramatic career with some comedies

and came to the limelight in 1965 with his celebrated Evam Indrajit. The unique structure of the play and the social utility of its theme drew an immediate attention of all concerned, and won widespread reputation through its translation into several languages including English. It is clearly existential. Like Beckett's play, *Waiting for Godot*, it makes clear that our existence is "a pointless particle of dust".

Emotions are excluded as meaningless property and the external world is reduced to an unreal and weightless existence. The play makes the point that "nothing worth mentioning ever happens". As Satyadev Dubey rightly observes, Evam Indrajit is about the residue of the middle class "who have failed to adjust, align and ceased to aspire and also those who are enmeshed in the day-today struggle for survival".

Evam Indrajit is a tale of a playwright who struggles painfully in vain to write a play. As he, furiously tears up his manuscripts, his inspiration appears as a woman whom the dramatist calls Manasi. The writer is not able to write a play, because as a conscientious and honest artist, he finds that life is too chaotic and fragmentary to cohere into dramatic mould and too mechanical to have any meaning. His agony is the agony of the artist who is deeply aware of the sterility and horror of life. Badal Sircar, like T. S. Eliot in The Waste Land, offers no hope. The protagonist of the play ultimately meets with only despair, the keynote which is struck at the beginning itself. Satyadev Dubey, in his introduction to Evam Indrajit, praises the play as a milestone in the history of modern Indian drama. The play provided for theatre practitioners all over India the shock of recognition. Badal Sircar shook off all the conventions of the traditional drama by this play.

The subsequent plays by Sircar focus on various aspects of modern life, ranging from man-woman relationship to social and political evils. These include The Mad Horse, The Whole Night, Procession, Bhoma, Stale News, Circle, The Pleasant History of India and others. The chief characteristics of Sircar's plays are

choice of the middle class people as characters in the drama, revelation of the hidden social and moral evils, an attempt to remove the complacence of the people and a change in the dramatic technique. Badal Sircar has also portrayed a realistic picture of contemporary society. The problems of population growth, unemployment, poverty, and child labour are presented dramatically. The ills of the society are also ruthlessly satirized. Along with Spartacus, Sircar's later plays Procession (1972), Bhoma (1974), and Stale News (1980) are based on the concepts of third theatre. Procession is one of his most intricately structured plays with innumerable transactions and juxtapositions. These plays have placed him on a pedestal higher than other contemporary playwrights of Indian drama. Through these three typical plays, one can see the realization of Sircar's philosophy and vision of making people aware of their social responsibility. He makes theatre a medium of conveying individual responsibility of the people towards the society.

Sircar's Procession is about the search for a "real" home – a new society based on equality. It is about a new society where man does not have to live by exploiting man and where each works according to his ability and gets according to his needs. His Bhoma is a dramatization of a life of the oppressed peasant in Indian rural society. It presents his social and economical exploitation through a series of scenes. A conscientious playwright not only presents the gravity of the problem but also offers a solution by employing powerful symbols and images. The society, full of opportunists and exploiters, is presented as a forest of poisonous trees and Bhoma, an aboriginal barbarian as a woodcutter. Bhoma is an archetype of the oppressed exploited peasant who, finally takes up his "rusty axe", grinds and sharpens it to cut the poisonous trees that grow around him. These three plays are based on the concept of the Third Theatre.

Stale News deals with the theme of revolt. It centres round a young man who is bombarded with shattering information full of contradictions and contrasts, which come to him as "stale news".

However, he becomes aware through the inspiring guidance of the Dead Man of the pathetic conditions of the poor and the need for social reform. The young man is not ready to come out of the strange hold of the traditional, routine life and develop a sense of commitment so as to revolt against the social and economic justice.

It is through his form "Third Theatre" Sircar makes the society especially, the middle class, and feels guilty for being indifferent towards man and his problems. The characters in his plays are not individualized used at all. They can be seen as what Sircar himself has said, "I can be taken as a prototype of a particular class in a society at a particular period".

Badal Sircar's *Some Day Later* (Pare Konodin) is a complex interviewing of the realistic and the fantastical modes. Time is broken up so that the present as seen in the play is already past time to some of the characters. The play raises several questions- What is history? How would a change in a historical process affect the present? What is the relation of the present to the past? The answer is not given in intellectual terms but through the felt experience of the central character Shankar. The play opens and closes on a darkened stage with the tortured voice of Shankar asserting his determination to speak, to write, to tell all, so that some later day the horror of his experience may not have to be repeated. Suspense is cleverly interwoven as the play unfolds. The playwright's method of juxtaposing the real and the fantastic serves to further irony. Human beings, with their ordinary concerns- property, career, and marriage- are merely puppets in the inexorable cycle of historical process. Thus, the human condition is "absurd" and can arouse only compassion. On the other hand, it can also arouse laughter. In fact, laughter becomes a means by which men can face the realities of their existence. According to him, comedy does not rank low in the dramatic categories. Comedy does not have a message, it does not discuss social problems, it does not voice opinions- even if one accepts these premises, still laughter does not lose its value in his

estimation. He further writes that people can laugh in the midst of greatest sorrow, they can heighten the profoundest tragedy through laughter; deal with the most complex problems through laughter. That is why he does not undervalue the importance of laughter. His play Poet's Story (Kobi Kahini) is a suave comedy on a contemporary theme- an election campaign. It centres round the problems of Manibhushan as he sets about the task of winning a seat to the Assembly. The play makes use of one of the most conventional devices of comedy- the mistaken identity theme. Sircar directs his witty barbs at personal foibles as well as social aberrations. Sircar laughs at a society where an Honours degree in literature can be had by memorizing a few standard texts, where a more meaningless a poem is, the more it is admired. The laughter becomes more mocking when it is directed at the underhand means employed by politicians to gain their selfish ends. The play succeeds eminently in its aim of holding up a mirror to society.

An important aim of Badal Sircar's comedies is almost missionary dedication to the cause of social change and his use of theatre to highlight the ideal by exposing the gap between the ideal and the real. He worked to change the contents of his plays drastically. His plays, belonging to the Third Theatre were powerful responses to the various socio-political realities he encouraged. These plays show Sircar's deeper understanding of the problems of the nuclear age and the poverty, corruption, greed and the industrial and agricultural exploitation of the poor. Contemporary issues are what make street plays succeed. Perennial issues like communalism, terrorism, police brutality, bride burning, dowry system, caste inequalities, industrial and agricultural exploitation, health care and alcoholism are included in their repertory. "Street theater has become an important tool to promote awareness in the minds of people on topical and perennial issues".

Badal Sircar is among the three great contemporary writers – Karnad, Tendulkar and Rakesh. He delves deep into the problems of middle-class society. He uses contemporary situations to project the existential attitude of modern life.

Popularly known as a 'barefoot playwright', he stands in the forefront of a new theatrical movement in India. He has created a genuine people's theatre known as Third Theatre, supported and created by the people and not merely performed by the people. Sircar's professional career as an urban planner, his training as a civil engineer, is mixed with his inner life as a playwright and its outward expression in his role as a theatre director and actor. His uncompromising attitude to social evils shows his link with his contemporaries. The distinctive qualities of his plays, which go by the name of 'Third Theatre', lie in their appeal to the mind of the audience. Here lies his success as a playwright. Sircar is one of the brightest stars in the constellation of Indian Drama. His plays prove that Post-Independence Drama has made a fresh ground both technically and thematically.

REFERENCES

Bharuch, Rustam, 1993. *Rehearsals of Revolution: The Political Theatre of Bengal Honolulni*: University of Hawai Press.

Breisach, Ernst, 1962. *Introduction to Modern Existentialism*. New York: Grove Press.

Camus, Albert, 1954. *The Stranger*. Translated. Stuart Gilbert. New York: Vintage Books.

Kafka, Franz, 1986. *The Metamorphosis*. Translated. Stanley Corngold. New York: Bantam Books.

Karnad, Girish, 1974. *Ebam Indrajit*. English Description Calcutta: Oxford University Press.

Lal, Ananda, 2009. *Oxford Companion to Indian Theatre*. New Delhi: Oxford press.

"Badal Sarkar" criterion.18 April 2012. < http://www.the-criterion.com The Criterion: An International Journal in English/ badal sarkar>

TRANSLATIONS

LOAD

Writer: Joya Mitra

Bojhha

Translator: Tutun Mukherjee

The body refuses to move. The exhaustion is so great that it is difficult to even stir from the sliver of shade under the tree to walk up and collect the weekly wages. The body seems broken to pieces. Carrying eight bricks at a time on the head keeping the neck firm and climbing three floors up the bamboo ladder – leaves no chance for the neck to move, which stiffens by itself. Regardless of the rebellious will, or the protesting shoulders and back, the neck continues to perform its task automatically – it keeps itself straight. It knows that if it does not hold strong and firm, then eight times one and a half –twelve kilos of weight would not be easy to carry. The slightest misbalance could bring the whole lot down. The slipping load would not just pound the feet, there was the chance of falling in a heap and breaking the spinal chord. But the greater risk was being immediately dismissed from work by the *sardar* or the contractor.

It was just a few days ago that Sabo sat on the first floor roof catching the bricks thrown up from below. Her pregnant belly had become so big that she could bend with difficulty to pick up the platters of cement mix. So Nilmoni exchanged duties with her, surreptitiously, without letting the supervisor know. It was the easiest of jobs for women in Sabo's condition. Bricks would be thrown up from below that she had to quickly catch standing at the edge of the roof and pass on to the next handler. But Sabo was afraid of even such an easy job as that. Her fear made her movements slow, her hands did not move fast enough. Suddenly something went wrong in the relay. Before she could

pass the brick and turn in readiness, the next one was thrown up. Sabo's hands were not in place to catch the brick; but her belly was where her hands should have been. Nothing could be done after that. Blood had already started to flow before hands could lift Sabo from where she had fallen and bring her down the ladder. As she lay on the ground, the blood seeped into the earth around her and made a puddle. The men moved away quickly. But barely had the old timers Budhni and Lokhimoni managed to pull the baby out, that the supervisor arrived.

He stood slightly away but started yelling at the men.

'Why have you rascals left your work and crowded around here? Who brought that heavy-bellied female to work here? Didn't I see her carry cement mix the last few days? Who's the leader that changed her 'depty' without my order?'

He sacked Sabo and Nilmoni on the spot. Even before Budhni and Lokhimoni had fetched two platters of water from the brick-soaking tank to clean her up, Sabo was jobless.

So the neck knows its duty; it stays straight. But at the end of the day, after countless twelve kilo loads, when the body sinks -- that is when it can move as it likes – but the body refuses to move altogether. Not even to pick up the weekly wages. But move one must. The yellow smoke from the Wariar Factory burns into the lungs as one breathes. The smoke is a part of the atmosphere, and one must get used to it. After all, how can one not become used to the air one inhales? Living here, people have also become used to their persistent cough. All who live here, the young and the old alike – have the same kind of chest-wracking cough that threatens to drag the entrails out with its force. The ribs rattle, threatening to fall off and let the soot-filled barely pulsating heart splatter on the coal dust.

That is the way Akuli's father-in law had coughed. Was there only the Wariar Factory? That man used to work in the Colliery. Wearing the light-fixed hard hat, he rode the trolley into

the mines. When he came up, he was like an owl, couldn't see a thing in the light. He frowned and blinked and tried to focus. Akuli's father worked in the colliery too. She was so small when he died. She barely reached his shoulders. The colliery became famous when he died. It was in the papers, in the radio – every body came to know about it. Many people came to see the colliery. Even the annual *Pous mela* didn't draw such crowds. Akuli's father did not die alone; many died with him. He became famous after he died; many people came to see and hear about what had happened. But why they hadn't come before, Akuli wondered.

After duty her father used to come home and comment,

'Things don't feel right – what'll happen one day in the mines, only Mother Kali knows!'

He said,

'There used to be a ban on cutting coal near the river. Now the *sahibs* don't go down into the mines, don't check; they are happy with more 'poduction'. With so much water seeping in, who knows when the whole river will enter the mines!'

And that was exactly what happened. Every body knew the disaster they suffered at Chasnala – Akuli's family and so many others. Yet no one had paid any attention before; neither the supervisors nor the *sahibs* – no one.

That was when Akuli stopped her studies too. Her brother got a job in another colliery and her mother got Akuli married in a hurry with the money they got from the government on her father's death.

Now the contractor asks,

'Tell your name.'

'Akuli Patorain.'

Without raising his eyes from the paper, the contractor comments,

'What a voice. Your mother left it choked at your birth. Here, put your thumbprint.'

'I can write my name.'

'Is that so? I see you've become Indira Gandhi!'

When she had insisted on studying up to the fifth class, her father had said the same thing.

'*Bap re*! My daughter will now become Indira Gandhi. She'll talk *gat mat* -- '

Akuli harboured a certain degree of vanity too, especially when she used to work in the colliery. While her husband and brother-in-law put their thumbprints, she signed her name 'Akuli Patorain', notwithstanding the crooked letters, and collected her wages. There too she did the same work of carrying load. Women were not permitted to go down into the mines any more -- such was the new government rule. So they worked outside. Only in the open mines where the earth was dug out in big ponds, was the coal carried up in baskets by the women, the *kamins*. The pond-like mines became deep with digging. Though they were not like the tunnel mines, they were deep enough to make the miners working at the pit appear tiny from the upper rim. When the office horn sounded, take the basket and the trowel and go to the mines; when the horn sounded again, the shift was over. Akuli went with her husband and brother-in-law, Surin Pator and Boron Pator, for duty in the colliery. They carried their food in three shining tiffin boxes. They spent the holidays roaming the Sitarampur bazaar or went to the cinema. Then, one day, her mother-in-law fixed a match for Boron and sent word to them.

The two old people lived in the village near Bankura and cared for their land after her father-in-law's severe asthma forced them to leave the colliery area. There wasn't much land; just a bit that didn't even yield six months' rice. Yet it was land, mother

earth. The mother-in-law also planted some millet and pulses. There was another reason. The adjoining land belonged to the uncle. If there was no one to supervise, they could easily encroach and plough the fields. After all, if the land was not cultivated, there was reason for it to be taken over. For the last few years, one of the two brothers Surin or Boron, insisted on being present during the sowing season. There was simmering acrimony between the uncle's family and theirs. Often the two families were not on talking terms. However, when the sons were around, no open quarrels ensued. The uncle had a large family – three sons, their wives and children – a full house.

Coming home to see Boron's bride provided the occasion for more things to happen. Through the years Akuli's father-in-law had saved the sons' money carefully. Now he expressed a wish to buy more land. Actually it was the mother-in-law's wish that some new land be bought before Boron's marriage. Since Akuli did not conceive even after several years of marriage, it was hoped that after Boron's marriage the family would grow; that there would come some children and more mouths to feed. The logic was, when there was some money in hand and there was good land available, why not seize the chance. The comment carried a censure for Akuli too. Five years had passed yet her womb had not become fruitful. For that fault of hers, the mother-in-law often curled her lip at what Akuli said. But there wasn't anything new in that. What was new was the matter that came out of the talk about buying more land.

The land in view was adjacent theirs; close for both the families. That land belonged to Hariram Sau of their village. Though he was a Sau, Hariram wasn't rich. He had land but not much cash. His family was also a large one. Now his daughter's marriage was fixed, so he needed to raise some money. That's why he wanted to sell the land. He wasn't greedy nor had he quoted a high price, but he wanted the entire sum at once. Now, Surin's uncle also had his eye on that land. But whereas he needed some time, at least a couple of months to raise the amount, Surin's

father had ready cash in hand. Sau finalized the sale with Surin's father and the registry was to be done in a few days. But Surin's cousins were furious. They had always lived in the village and knew all the party boys from the panchayat. 'Which father's son will dare to step on that land…,' they growled threateningly from their courtyard.

On the day they were to go to see Boron's bride, Surin was the first to notice that on their almost-registered land was hoisted a small red flag. He ran to inform the others and immediately the father and the two brothers rushed to the field with spades and trowels. No sooner had they thrown the flag aside that the young men from the uncle's house charged in. All of them carried *lathis*. The other villagers had just begun to reach their own fields. The shouting and yelling soon drew a big crowd at the spot. Some tried to pull the two groups apart, some merely stood and watched. Before one could take three breaths, three bodies had fallen on the field: the father-in-law, one of the uncle's sons and another boy staying the night at the uncle's house. He was the brother of a panchayat member. Everything seemed to happen in a blink of an eye. Akuli had not even grasped what happened. But what she understood hardly mattered. The police arrived within the hour. All the male members of the two families present on the field were dragged to the police station along with Akuli's mother-in-law Kusum Patorain crying at her husband's feet, and Akuli Patorain herself. Those left free were the uncle's wife who wasn't present at home and their two daughters-in-law who were in confinement.

Their confinement served as ground for one of the boys of their family to be released on bail. Through her brother's untiring efforts and great expense, Akuli was given bail too. But she was restricted from leaving the village. Finally after a lot of pleading, the second officer of the police station permitted her to go to the colliery through the Niyamatpur bazaar accompanied by a constable. Akuli wanted to weep and sink into the earth in embarrassment. She used to walk to the colliery office with her

head held high to sign her name and collect her wages every month. Now people stared at her in amazement to see the constable walking behind her. But no one came forward to ask her anything. What was there for Akuli to say, any way, and to whom could she say it? Nor did she have any time for explanations. She had to return to Durgapur and from there to Bankura before nightfall. A few steps beyond the office were the mines. All her friends were working there. Why did such a thing have to happen to her when she hadn't been involved in anything at all? Tears of humiliation blurred her eyes.

She walked nervously to the supervisor's table. The latter had noticed her already. Who hadn't? Wasn't there the constable accompanying her? Who wasn't aware that the police never accompanied good people; that they never came on good occasions? Why didn't they come forward to escort poor old men or solitary young women safely home or help terribly sick persons to reach the hospital? The police never came for such things. Doing such things was not a part of their duty. Thus the arrival of the khaki uniform invariably spelt outrage, crime, and calamity. That was why every one stared at Akuli the moment she entered the office but lowered their eyes when she looked at them.

Akuli reached the supervisor's table and stood silently in front. He looked up suddenly from some important calculation he was doing and stared at her in shock.

Akuli quickly explained their terrible predicament. She made no attempts to prove anything. It was like having a bad dream; a horrible nightmare. Standing in the colliery office had seemed so real, as though she was getting ready to pick up her basket and the trowel to go the mines.

The amount in their P.F. was meager, accumulated for only four years. Yes, Surin and Boron had slightly more than Akuli. But they had to submit applications affixed with their thumbprints to borrow from that sum. The application would then be considered

at the next P.F. meeting. The money would be disbursed as per the committee's decision. At the moment they could only draw the previous month's unclaimed salaries.

Their case was decided after one and a half years. According to the Indian Penal Code numbers 307, 304 and 302, Gopal Pator and his two sons, his nephews Surin and Boron Pator and Surin's wife Akuli Patorain were sentenced to life imprisonment. Kusum Patorain was released due to lack of proof. Generally, those accused of life imprisonment received government funds to engage government lawyers. But without depending upon that provision, Kusum Patorain ran to her relatives – to her father's family and the son's in- laws – trying desperately to gather money for a defense lawyer.

In accordance to the government rules, on being proved guilty of crime in the courts of law, the three unskilled labourers of the collieries lost their jobs. As a result, instead of being given a loan, all their dues were settled and were collected by Kusum Patorain.

In the jail, the friendless Akuli didn't even get time to weep while serving the sentence of rigorous punishment. For a fifteen-minute duration once every month she got the chance to meet Surin lodged in the other section of the same jail. Surin told her to implore her brother to somehow raise money and engage clever lawyers. If the lawyers could arrange witnesses, he was sure that they would be released by the High Court.

Akuli got the chance to cry when her brother came to meet her. She also told him what Surin had said.

Two ladies used to come to the women's ward to teach the children. Akuli loved to sit with them. She wanted to so much to read again. The children used to ask her repeatedly,

'Eh, what is your name?'

Akuli would reply in her thin reedy voice,

'Akuli Patorain.'

And the children sitting in the shade of the wall would roll on the ground in laughter.

Soon, what Surin had said was proved right.

With great difficulty, Kusum Patorain and Akuli's brother had managed to engage good lawyers. As a result, in response to their appeal in the High Court, all three of them were released from jail.

Akuli ties the few rupees in the corner of her sari, gets up slowly and walks to the shop, stiff with pain. At the end of the road is her small hut with a bamboo fence.

Soon after their release, Surin Pator started a new family with a new bride and new utensils in a new home.

The expenses of the case left Akuli's brother destitute. There was no money left to get his two younger sisters married.

Akuli continues to carry bricks and load and bricks and load and bricks. Her neck and back grow taut and stiff with pain.

People ask her from time to time,

'Here you, what's your name?'

But no one laughs at her answer any more

Note on the Writer:

Joya Mitra is a creative writer, columnist and environmentalist with several novels, collections of poems, short stories and essays to her credit. Her creative language is Bengali. In 1967, barely 18 years old, she started her college career with a dream of changing the world. She belonged to the politically sensitive generation of college students that became involved in the political turmoil that engulfed Bengal in the 1970s. She was

imprisoned between 1970 and 1974 for her association with the Naxal Movement. Out of those experiences emerged her critically acclaimed prison memoir *Hanyaman* [translated into English as *Killing Days*] which was awarded the Ananda Puraskar in 1991. Mitra lives in Asansol, a mofussil town close to collieries and steel factories. She is a deeply ideological person who believes in the social responsibility of a writer and has faith in the power of the writer's pen. She writes about the lives of the disprivileged working class around her with rare understanding and warmth. Her perception is acute and unwavering and since it is that of a woman, the style of writing has a special edge. Some of her other well known works are --

Poetry collections:

Pratnoprashtharer Gaan [The Song of the Ancient Stones]

Deergha Ektara [The Long One-Stringed Lute]

Short Story collections:

Yuddhaparba [The Battle Cantos]

Kal-Porshur Dharabahik [The Serial of Tomorrow and Day-after]

Novels:

Swarna Kamaler Chinha [The Mark of the White Lotus]

Shada Kalo Bataash [White and Black Bree

Note on the Translator:

Tutun Mukherjee is Professor and Head of the Centre for Comparative Literature, University of Hyderabad, India. Her specialization is Literary Criticism and Theory, and research interests: Translation, Women's Writing, Theatre and Film Studies. She has publications in all these subjects.

CONTRIBUTORS

Manjeet Baruah has been serving as an Assistant Professor in School of Translation Studies and Training, Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi. He had completed his PhD in Cultural History from University of Delhi. Areas of specialisation include cultural history, endangered knowledge and borderland studies, focusing on North east India. Currently researching on memory, indigenous knowledge and cultural mapping among communities of North east India. Jointly coordinating a project on Translation and Indigenous knowledge. Widely published in Indian and international journals, recent publication--Frontier Cultures: A Social History of Assamese Literature (2012). Actively involved in translating fiction and poetry, including protest writings, from Assamese to English. Involved in developing and coordinating IGNOU academic programmes pertaining to North east India. An occasional writer of fiction, Published in Indian Literature (India), the South Asian Review (USA) and other Journals of Literature and Literary Criticism.

Shamala Ratnakar has completed 18 years of service in the Department of English, Karnatak University, Dharwad. Her area of specialization is Indian English Literature, besides Gender Studies, Dalit Literature, Women Empowerment, Higher Education, and Capacity Building Programs. She is also interested in skill development, student counselling, Crisis management. Her publications include 50 research articles and 3 books on Shashi Deshpande, Anita Desai and Rohinton Mistry.

Surjeet Singh Warwal is a Junior Research Fellow (UGC) in the Department of Hindi, Dr. Hari Singh Gour Central University, Sagar

Farheena Danta is Professor of English at the Department of English and Foreign Languages, Tezpur University. She holds a PhD in American Modernist Poetics. Her areas of interest include Shakespeare Studies, Travel Writing, Translation and Life Writing.

She has published, among others, critical essays on Shakespeare, TS Eliot, Ezra Pound, William Faulkner, Ralph Ellison, Jyotiprasad Agrawalla, and VS Naipaul. She translates from Assamese to English. Her English translation of Debendra Kumar Acharjya's iconic Assamese novel Jangam will be published soon. She is now working on a book on Assamese Life Writing and Modernity.

Bijay K Danta is Professor of English at the Department of English and Foreign Languages, Tezpur University. He has a PhD on "Frames for Reading Metafiction." His areas of research and interest include Critical Theory, Fiction Studies, Translation Politics and Alternative Modernities. He has published, among others, critical essays on Metafiction, Sankaradeva, Shakespeare, Mark Twain, Herman Melville, William Faulkner, Kurt Vonnegut, Toni Morrison, Edward Said, Alternative Modernities, Comparative Religion, and Phakir Mohan Senapati. He translates between Assamese and Odia, and from Assamese and Odia to English. He is now working on a book on Alternative Modernities and Self-Fashioning in Postcolonial Life Writing and Travel Writing.

Akshaya Kumar is a professor of English at Department of English and Cultural Studies, Panjab University, Chandigarh. He has authored two books – A.K.Ramanujan: In Fragment and Profile (Rawat: New Delhi, 2004) and Poetry, Politics and Culture: Essays on Indian Texts and Contexts (Routledge, 2009). The latter was shortlisted as one of most valuable books of the last sixty years on Indian literature by World Literature Today. Besides this has published more than 40 research papers in South Asian Review, Indian Literature, Kavya-Bharati, Chandrabhaga and Gandhi Marg..

A.S. Dasan, PhD, formerly Chairman, Dept. of English and Founder-Director of the Centre for Proficiency Development and Placement Services (CPDPS), University of Mysore, is currently Professor of English and Director, Shukrodaya's Academy for HRD – human resource development, Mysore.

Ravichandra P. Chittampalli was educated in Mysore, and

took a Ph.D in English Literature on the Poetry of A.D.Hope. He joined the University of Mysore in 1986 as a Lecturer in English. He won the K.Tirumalachar award from Dhvanyaloka, Mysore for research in 1983. Saga Magazine, Kent honoured him with a travel fellowship to visit U.K and Ireland in 1990 to visit adventure centres and climb in Ireland and the UK in 1990. He was nominated the Northrop Frye Fellow in 1992 from Victoria University in the University of Toronto, Canada. He was twice the Shastri Fellow, in 1994 and in 2004, carrying out research at various universities in Canada. His major disciplines are Poetry, Literary Theory, Feminism and Cultural Studies. He is at present Professor at the Department of Studies in English, Manasagangotri, University of Mysore. He was formerly the President of the Indian Association for Canadian Studies, and was one of the Directors of International Council for Canadian Studies, Ottawa , Canada .His translations have been published by Kendra Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi . He writes poetry in English and is an avid mountaineer and rock climber who has climbed extensively in the Himalaya and Europe. One of the Founders of The School of Adventure, Mysore he has been instrumental in training a large number of youth in rock climbing from 1974 onwards.

Vijay Sheshadri has got his Masters in English and Doctoral Degree (Ph.D) from the University of Mysore. Currently he is Professor of English at the University of Mysore (Mandya Campus). He is also Member, Executive Council, Indian Association for Canadian Studies (IACS) and the Coordinator of the Centre for Canadian Studies (CCS), Dept. of English, University of Mysore. He has written and translated several books and has published a number of book reviews and articles in journals of repute. He has made several presentations at the National and International Conferences in India as well as abroad. He has also won a number of awards to his credit.

Pawan Kumar Choudhary has been working as Consultant Academic in NTM since 2009. His area of interest is Linguistics, syntax, typology, sociolinguistics, translation etc. He has several

publications to his credit, i.e., Quantifiers and Negative Polarity Items in Mundari, Agreement in Mundari, Clause Structure of Ho, Tense, Aspect and Modals in Ho, Anaphors and Pronouns in Ho, Causes and Effects of Super-stratum Language Influence, with reference to Maithili and Mundari Grammar. He has also made several presentations at National and international seminars.

C.M. Vinaya Kumar is Head, Department of Journalism and Mass Communications, Krishna University, Machilipatnam-India. He also holds positions of Programme Coordinator, National Service Scheme (NSS) Cell, Krishna University and Public Relations Officer, Krishna University. He is a Ph.D. in Journalism and Mass Communication. He has to his credit a number of research publications in National & International Journals.

Romesh Chaturvedi is a Sr. Lecturer, Electronic media in Amity School of Communication, Amity University, Uttar Pradesh. He holds a Master Degree in Journalism & Mass Communication from Lucknow University. His core areas of specialization include film making & television production.

Shruti Mehrotra is presently associated as Sr.Lecturer with Amity School of Communication, Amity University, Uttar Pradesh. She has completed her Masters in Journalism and Mass Communication from Lucknow University. She has qualified the National Eligibility Test (NET) for lectureship. Her core areas of specialization include advertising, brand management and corporate communication.

Vijay Kumar Tadakamalla is Professor of English at Osmania University, Hyderabad. In Fall 2013, he designed and taught a course on the Indian Novel at the University of Utah, USA. His research interests include postcolonial literatures, the Indian literary diaspora, translation, and educational television. He is also a translator and one of his major publications is the English translation of Kanyasulkam ('Bride Price')—an early 20th century Telugu classic by Gurajada Venkata Appa Rao. His co-edited volumes include Globalisation: Australian-Asian Perspectives

(2014) and Focus India: Postcolonial Narratives of the Nation (2007). He is one of the founder directors of the Hyderabad Literary Festival held every year in January.

Dhanya Johnson a research scholar in the Department of English, Mar Ivanios College, University of Kerala, working on A Feminist Reappraisal of Women Characters in the Holy Bible. She is interested in writing poems and doing research on literary works.

Tutun Mukherjee is a professor, Centre for Comparative Literature at Centre for Women's Studies and Theatre Department at University of Hyderabad. Her specialization is literary criticism and theory. Research interests include Translation, Women's writing and Theatre & film studies. Her publications cover her diverse interests.

Translation Today

Please find enclosed herewith a demand draft for INR / USD / EURO / POUND…..……..……..…… as my / our subscription for one year / three years of Translation Today.

Name.....
Profession.....
Address.....
.....
.....
.....Pin
Phone: ☐☐☐☐☐☐

e-mail:

Signature & Date……...

SUBSCRIPTION DETAILS
Individuals

INDIA

One year Subscription	: INR 350 (for 2 issues)
Three years Subscription	: INR 900 (for 6 issues)

OVERSEAS

One year Subscription	: USD $10/EURO 8/£ 6(for 2 issues)
Three years Subscription	: USD $30/EURO 24/£ 18(for 6 issues)

Institutions
INDIA

One year Subscription	: INR 400 (for 2 issues)
Three years Subscription	:INR 1200 (for 6 issues)

OVERSEAS

One year Subscription	: USD $12/EURO 10/£ 8(for 2 issues)
Three years Subscription	: USD $36/EURO 30/£ 24(for 6 issues)

Payment has to be made by Demand Draft /IMO/Cheque, which should be in favour of Assistant Director (Admn), CIIL (Translation Today) payable at Mysore and should be posted to the following address:

Asst. Director (Admn),
Translation Today,
Central Institute of Indian Languages
Hunsur Road, Manasagangotri, Mysore – 570 006, INDIA