



## Editorial Policy

Translation today is a biannual journal published by National Translation Mission (NTM), Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL), Manasagangotri, Mysore. A peer-reviewed journal, it proposes to contribute to and enrich the burgeoning discipline of Translation Studies by publishing research articles as well as actual translations from and into Indian languages. Translation Today will feature full-length articles about translation- and translator-related issues, squibs which throw up a problem or an analytical puzzle without necessarily providing a solution, review articles and reviews of translations and of books on translation, actual translations, Letters to the Editor, and an Index of Translators, Contributors and Authors. It could in the future add new sections like Translators' job market, Translation software market, Notes from the Classroom, and so on. The problems and puzzles arising out of translation in general, and translation from and into Indian languages in particular will receive greater attention here. However, the journal would not limit itself to dealing with issues involving Indian languages alone.

### *Translation Today*

- Seeks a spurt in translation activity.
- Seeks excellence in the translated word
- Seeks to further the frontiers of Translation Studies
- seeks to raise a strong awareness about translation, its possibilities and potentialities, its undoubted place in the history of ideas, and thus help catalyse a groundswell of well-founded ideas about translation among people.

**Contributions:** Translation Today welcomes contributions of articles and other suitable material as elucidated above for its issues in the following areas:

Annotated and original translations of all literary genres, translated excerpts from novels are accepted where they stand on their own, glossaries in any subject in any language-pair (Indian Languages TO Indian Languages or Indian Languages TO English or English TO Indian Languages), specialties in the translation profession: religious, technical, scientific, legal, commercial, specialties in the interpreting profession: court, conference, medical and community, multimedia, terminology, localization, translation technology: HAMT, translation memory softwares, translation teaching softwares, papers on translation as a category of or a significant dimension of thought, pieces relating translation to society, to culture, to philosophy, to poetics, to aesthetics, to epistemology, to ontology, to movements like feminism, subalternism, to power and so on, translation universals etc., to awarenesses like civilisational space, nationalism, identity, the self, the other and so on, on translation pedagogy, translation curriculum, translation syllabus etc., ethics, status, and future of the profession, translator-related issues, translator studies: legal, copyright issues etc., squibs and discussion notes which are short pieces throwing up an interesting problem or analytical puzzle, reviews of translated texts, dictionaries and softwares, letters to the Editor.

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# Translation Today



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## **Editorial**

The National Translation Mission has been publishing Translation Today (TT) for over a decade now, and this is the second issue of volume ten of the journal. Every volume and each issue of TT is special for the content it offers and the response it attracts. Perhaps for this reason, the readership of the journal through individual and institutional subscription and online viewership has maintained an upward trajectory. After successfully bringing out ten volumes and maintaining consistency of quality, the TT team sought to internationalise its scope in the real sense of the word. The team invited globally diverse editors and contributors with an objective to widen its outreach and diversify its contents. The efforts of the team bore good results as the Journal now has a new editorial board comprising of scholars who have been instrumental in shaping up Translation and Interpreting Studies as fertile fields of endeavour. The association of these stalwarts is an honour for the journal and an accomplishment that genuinely good journals of translation can have. Concerning the contents, TT has encouraged contributions in all areas of Translation Studies and other disciplines that have regular interactions with it. Let us have a look at the contributions that have shaped up this issue. The present issue has six research articles, two interviews, a note, a book review, five literary translations and an obituary.

Avadhesh Kumar Singh considers translation as a bridge between knowledge and culture. He starts his discussion with the utterance of Translation Day that is celebrated on the feast of St. Jerome, and examines it from non-Eurocentric perspectives. Singh carries out an analytical discussion on St. Jerome, Narada, Hermes, Kumarajiva, and Dara Shukoh. Gideon Toury who passed away recently has made a phenomenal contribution to Translation Studies. Considering

his contributions, it is very apt moment that H. Lakshmi wrote a paper centring on Toury's idea of 'norms'. H. Lakshmi presents an analysis of Toury's concept of 'norms' with respect to translation in Telugu context. She has emphasised on the view that a good translation does not read like a translation after surveying many translated texts and considering generally agreed norms in Telugu translation. This issue also features a research paper on a feature-based approach to translation. K. Rajyarama and Abhijit Debnath offer a Feature Interactive Model based on a set of interactive semantic features for translating the cuisine verbs of Telugu and Bangla. It also proposes the need for building feature databases on a large scale for various semantic domains in Indian languages. Pugazhendhi Kumarasamy highlights the adaptation and appropriation of the French thoughts with a particular reference to Subramanya Bharathi. He does a comparative study of Subramanya Bharathi with Montesquieu, Voltaire, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Victor Hugo, and Proudhon. Pragya Sen and Sriparna Das focus on *Hudum Deo* and *Mecheni* two distinct folk rituals of Rajbanshis of North Bengal. They elucidate how and why *Humdum* is extinct while *Mechini* still survives. Imchasenla presents a socio-historical perspective to the head-hunting tradition of the Nagas that were distorted in the earlier (colonial) documentations of the Naga community. In this paper, translation goes a step further to rewriting as documenting or documenting as interpreting between representation and colonial politics.

Academic interactions in the form of interviews are important to engage with emerging trends that may influence the theories, practice & pedagogy and share empirical findings in slightly informal way. TT has published interviews in its earlier issues and

the team has decided to make it a regular component from this issue onwards. In the issue, Aditya Kumar Panda interviews Anthony Pym and Susan Bassnett on various theoretical underpinnings concerning translation. His interview with Pym starts with a fundamental question of ‘what a translation is’ and concentrates on the reciprocal nature of theory and practice in translation. The interview with Bassnett focuses on the advent of Translation Studies as a discipline and its expansion in the academia.

In addition to the scientific articles and academic interviews, this issue also contains a note and a book review. Under notes, Mahmoud Altarabin discusses the translation pitfalls resulting from translating the word *yahdi* (guide) into English. As usual, there is a book review on *The Known Unknowns of Translation Studies* by Deepa V. who observed that this book brings out the evolution of Translation Studies.

TT pledges to promote linguistic diversity and multilingualism. Therefore, literary translation is a natural concomitant of theoretical discourse and investigation featuring in this journal. The first among the literary translations is a Montenegrin translation of Salman Rushdie’s *Good Advice is Rarer than Rubies* by Petar Božović. Next, comes the Hindi translation of *Avasarak Nirman* by Shambhu Singh and Odia translation of *Thakur Ka Kuan* by Jhuni Mallick. Following the short stories, Ranjeeva Ranjan’s rendering of Nagarjuna’s poem *Ki Lal? Ki Lal?* into Spanish and Amitendu Bhattacharya’s translation of *Baul Songs of Shah Abdul Karim* into English appear. The final contribution is a necrological tribute to Gideon Touro that Panchanan Mohanty has offered under the obituary section.

The Translation Today team has worked hard to expand the outreach of the journal and diversify its form and content. Now, it is excited

to present the second issue of volume ten. The editorial team on behalf of the National Translation Mission is glad to present this issue of TT before the general public with a firm belief that like previous issues it will also succeed in attracting the attention of translation veterans and the scholars from Translation Studies and other allied areas of intellectual endeavour.

Wish you a delightful experience of this issue!

**Tariq Khan**

# Celebrating Translation as a Bridge between Knowledges and Cultures\*

*Avadhesh Kumar Singh*

## Abstract

*With the establishment of Translation Studies as a discipline, translation is being critiqued and celebrated in different ways. The celebration of the Translation Day demands its study from the perspective of multiple translation traditions in various civilizations. While the paper sees the Translation Day as a trope for celebration of translational endeavours all over the world, it proposes consideration of the translation as a bridge between knowledge and cultures from non-Eurocentric perspectives.*

**Keywords:** Translation Day, St. Jerome, Narada, Hermes, Kumarajiva, Dara Shukoh

## **Discussion**

Days are rage these days. Father's Day, Mother's Day, Valentine's Day, Friendship's Day; name it and the Day is there. Celebrating a day for something or other is such a craze these days that almost every day of a year is labelled after something or other. It seems that the spree of Days would soon outnumber the days in a year. If the trend continues, after sometime when we would be short of days, we would be compelled to celebrate half a day or quarters of a day after something or other. Translation Day is another addition in the sequence of Days around us. Needless to mention it here that overdoing leads to vulgarity. But none of us would have any problem with the Days if they are for a good cause like translation.

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Things as they are, on the occasion of celebrating Translation Day let me take this opportunity to be a little polemical and speculative about translation and the ‘day’ as well.

In his book *Civilization: West and the Rest* (2011), Neil Fergusson writes that if we were to go round the world in 1411, the best would have been in the Orient. But things have changed by 2011, as the Occident changed the picture with six attributes developed and employed by it: Competition, Science, Democracy, Consumerism and Work ethics. For this paradigmatic shift in which the West proposes, and the rest follows, he could have added one more as the seventh factor i.e., translation to it, for the West appropriated the intellectual resources of the rest of the world through it, and made it its own. The attendant Eurocenterism tried to establish Europe or the West as the fountain head of everything on the earth including translation. It is then not unnatural that the Translation Day is also to be named and celebrated after someone from the West. In the process, the west lionizes itself as the inventor of translation for the rest of the world that genuflects before its theories and criteria of translation. The consequence of this uncritical acceptance of everything from the west is that what makes 30<sup>th</sup> September the International Translation Day? The reason is that St. Jerome died on this day in 420 AD.

St. Jerome (347 – 420) was a Latin Christian priest, theologian and historian who translated most of *the Old Testament* from the Hebrew version, known as the *Vulgate*. So immense was his erudition that St. Augustine (August 28) is said to have remarked of him, ‘What Jerome is ignorant of, no mortal has ever known.’ He was as a master of Latin, Greek, Hebrew and Chaldaic. As

mentioned in Butler's *Lives of the Saints*, a pope is said to have remarked, on seeing a picture of Jerome striking his breast with a stone, 'You do well to carry that stone, for without it the Church would never have canonized you.'

St. Jerome knew Greek, and learnt Hebrew before he started his translation project. Later on, in Jerusalem he honed his understanding of Jewish scripture and commentary on it. In 382, he began correcting the existing Latin version of *the New Testament*, commonly known as the *Vetus Latina*. In 390, he focused his attention on translation of the *Bible* from Hebrew. He completed this work by 405. Prior to Jerome's *Vulgate*, all Latin translations of the *Old Testament* were based on the Septuagint and not the Hebrew. He decided to use a Hebrew text instead of the previously translated Septuagint, much against the advice of Christian clergy and scholars (including St. Augustine) who were of the view that the Septuagint version was inspiring in its effect. Along with this translation he wrote a number of commentaries on the Scriptures.

As a writer, St. Jerome is considered next to St. Augustine in ancient Latin Christianity in terms of the corpus of his writing. The Roman Catholic Church recognizes him as the patron saint of translators, librarians and encyclopaedists. He contributed to the domain of history with his Chronicle known also as the *Chronicon or Temporum liber* (380) in Constantinople which is a translation of the second part of the *Chronicon* of Eusebius into Latin with a supplement that deals with the period from 325 to 379. Apart from his exegesis and commentaries, the book *De situ et nominibus locorum hebraicorum* is a translation of the *Onomasticon* with his additions and corrections. Here special mention needs to be made of the translation of the homilies '*In Canticum Canticorum*, of which the Greek original has been lost.

Often history tends to be kind to some, and otherwise to others. St. Jerome has been a beneficiary of favourable glance of history. His translation of the *Bible* is often not considered the most critical edition, and its acceptance by the Church was providentially fortunate. With no intent to discount his contribution to the field of translation, it would not be appropriate to mention that in view of the contribution of many to the domain of translation in the world like Kumarajiva, John Wycliffe, Eitenne Dolet, Martin Luther, Dara Shukoh, William Jones and Fredrik Max Muller among others, St. Jerome seems to be rather fortunate to have his date of departure from this world to his heavenly abode as the International Translation Day. Eurocenterism seems to have swung the pendulum of time in his favour.

Academic domain does not permit us to either censure or celebrate uncritically. In view of the above let us use the event of the Translation Day to speculate alternatives to St. Jerome, to avoid uncritical celebration of everything given to us by the West. The derivate to the above would be the question: Was there not even a single individual outside Europe, in India, China or Persia with rich knowledge cultures of at least 3500 years who did contribute to the domain of literature that his/her birth or death day may be considered as the translation day?

Let us explore a few alternatives and justification for the choice. Mythopoeia as a human activity contains traces of collective un/conscious; hence the quest may begin with mythology from the east and the west.



## **Narada:**

Narada, among chief gods in the Hindu pantheon, is an interlocutor, messenger of gods and a link between the divine and human worlds. Since gods in all mythologies speak in classical languages only, Hindu gods also speak in Sanskrit. Human beings on the other hand use Bhasha-s. In these linguistic zones, though the gods are supposed to be omniscient, it is Narada who receives and understands the message of gods and translates it in the language/s of the people in order to transmit it to them. Also what he hears from human beings in their *deshbhasha*-s (language of the region), he translates it into Sanskrit, *devabhasha* or the divine language to 'carry it over' to immortal beings. Thus, as a translator between two worlds he acts as living bridge between different worlds. Translation being the principle means of his communication, he is the presiding deity of translation, as the domain of translation cannot be without its god.

The association of translation with Narada, a god of wisdom, aligns translation with wisdom. These attributes of Narada's wisdom may be proved by many instances in the forms of *drsahanta*, narratives as illustrations. Lord Krishna in the *Gita* calls him as the foremost of all sages. However, his wisdom does not prevent him from learning from others. In the *Chhandogya Upanishada*, a narrative deals with his quest for self-knowledge (*atmagyan*). He approaches the sage Sanatkumar for lessons in spirituality. Sanatkumar, one among the first four sannyasins, was a sibling to Narada, as they were fathered by Brahma. On being requested Sanatkumar asked Narada to tell him what he had already learnt. Narada enumerated the domains of his knowledge that he already knew as the *Rig Veda*, the *Yajur Veda*, the *Sama Veda*, and the *Atharvaveda*, *itihisas* and the Puranas, and *vyakaran* (grammar) as

the means of understanding the meaning of the Vedas, Mathematics, natural science, Mineralogy, Logic, Ethics, etymology, the Fine Arts, science of rituals, Astrology, the science of warfare, and material sciences among others. But even after this gargantuan study, he added, that he was only a *mantravid*, a knower of shastra-s or learned texts, not an *atmavid*, knower of the *Atman* or self. Sanatkumar imparted the knowledge of Brahman or the Infinite that knows no difference to Narada. The incident proves that knowledge is no guarantee of peace of mind. Only the knowledge of the Self can give one peace of mind. Self-knowledge or the knowledge of Brahman is called *parāvidyā*, or supreme knowledge, and all else is inferior knowledge, *aparavidya*. In the ancient Greek temple of Oracle of Delphi, the sentence written was ‘Know Thyself.’ William Shakespeare went a step ahead and said in Hamlet, ‘To thine ownself be true.’ If Narada is a god of translators, the lesson to be learnt from him is that translators have to know themselves and be true to it.

Endowed with an extraordinary vision and memory, he is able to act in harmony with imperceptible divine design. His attributes become evident in the conversation between Yudhishtira and Bhishma. In the ‘Bhishma Parva’ of the *Mahabharata*, Yudhishtira wished to know from Bhishma who was lying on the ‘bed of arrows’ in Kurukshetra as to who was dear to all, gladdened all, and was endowed with all merits and accomplishments. Bhishma related Krishna’s words to Ugrasena, who wanted to know why everyone spoke so highly of Narada. He enumerated the attributes of Narada that he was as learned in the scriptures, noble in conduct, yet not proud or boastful, without anger, impudence, fear, and procrastination, committed to his words and untouched by passion or greed, a man of spiritual knowledge, forgiving, self-possessed,

simple, truthful, intelligent, and modest, austere, good-natured, eloquent, soft spoken, decorous, pure, amiable, devoid of malice, and an expert in music, untouched by sin, a renouncer and dispenser of knowledge, an immensely learned, wise, free from passion, deceit, laziness, greed, anger and a man of unflinching devotion, a master of his own self, and always open to instruction from others.

As a paragon of virtues, Narada can visit anybody, anywhere and at any time, gods, demons, or human beings. His acceptance emanates from the fact that he is a sincere counsellor. Mere recitation of ‘Narayana! Narayana!’ by him gives him access to all worlds. In modern parlance, it is his master password to open systems or master-key to open doors of all worlds. The virtues of Narada recounted are far too many for anyone to emulate. However, the fact remains that a translator should never be proud of her/his talents or achievements, for translation is an act of modesty, as it begins with the recognition of the existence of the other and its acceptance in a new linguistic system and culture.

Notwithstanding, his inventory of knowledge of disciplines, skills in fine arts and wisdom, there are times when Narada behaves like a common person, even like an ignorant one. This lends his character an intriguing aura. The narrative runs that once Narada became a little proud of his musical abilities in playing the Veena as skilfully as he did. Lord Vishnu came to know about it and thought that His devotees should not suffer from pride and arrogance. For this purpose, He took Narada for a stroll in a forest where they heard someone weeping. They followed the sound, and found some women with terribly deformed bodies crying in pain. Vishnu asked them who they were and why they were weeping. They replied that

they were the Raginis (the deities of music), and their bodies were disfigured by Narada's erroneous selection of notes, for he is devoid of musical sense. His singing, out of tune with his music, had disfigured them. At this, Narada realised falsity of his arrogance. The narrative about Narada, god of translation is that arrogance on the part of translators would lead to torture of texts and even words like the women in the narrative. Along with being a messenger of gods Narada is the collective unconscious of human beings that at times suffers from frailties and foibles of human beings. His Veena is an instrument of communication and symbolic of creative faculty. However, there is a diametrically opposite perception in *loka* (common people) about Narada that he was given to inciting ill-feeling and quarrel, and infamous for intrusions at awkward times. For activities such as these he had earned the sobriquet 'piśuna' i.e., a spy, and a slanderer who is given to backbiting.

The elongated discussion about Narada was aimed at legitimising Narada's case as the god of translators with due cognizance of perception about his proficiency in communication in different worlds, 'wisdom' and 'spying'. These epithets of Narada become appellations of translation, as they are carried over.

Despite the temptation of pronouncing Narada as the god of translators, the problem is that we may not be able to have International Translation Day after him, as Indian minds obsessed with diachronic time may like to know his date of birth or death. Narada's divinity, however, prevents him from laying the claim, for he is immortal as a god, and free from birth and death. To have translational day named after him, Narada needs to opt for a change

from his status as an immortal god to a mortal being. He will have to suffer from death so that the day can be celebrated as the international translation day. This is the sacrifice that neither Narada nor his devotee would be willing to make.

For the western counterpart, it is possible to examine the claim of Hermes with full realization of the predicament of this endeavour, as that might court the same end.

### **Hermes:**

Like Narada in the Hindu mythology, Hermes in the Greek mythology as the god of transitions and boundaries, lays claim to be the god of translation. His name 'Hermes' is derived from Greek word '*hermai*' i.e., 'boundary' markers. He is a patron of travellers' herdsmen, orators and wit, litterateurs, athletes, traders and even thieves. 'Hermes' may be related to Greek '*hermeneus*' or interpreter, reflecting on Hermes' function as divine messenger. The word 'hermeneutics', the study and theory of interpretation, is derived from *hermeneus*. Plato, while examining the etymological derivation of Hermes's name, found it derived from the divine messenger's reliance on *eirein* (the power of speech). The fact, however, is that like Narada, he too moves freely between the worlds of the mortal and divine, as an emissary of the gods, an intercessor between mortals and the divine. Also he is a conductor of soul into the afterlife. As a tribute to his faculty of delivering messages, interestingly enough, the Greek post office has Hermes as its symbol. In some myths he is a trickster (similar to '*Pishun*' in case of Narada), and outwits other gods.

As the messenger of divine and herald of the Gods, he wears the gifts from his father. C. G. Jung saw Hermes's attributes as the guide to the underworld and interpreted him as the god of

unconscious, the mediator of information between the conscious and unconscious forces of the mind, and the archetypal messenger between different realms. As the guide for the inner journey, for Jung, as the trickster he is the guide for the psychotherapy. But the problem is that despite all attributes, almost similar to Narada, Hermes' divinity deprives him of laying any claim to have International Translation Day after him.

The situation then compels us to turn to the mortal world, and seeks a worthy contributor to the domain of translation who can be considered for celebrating the International Day. In the midst of various contributors, it is Kumarajiva, a contemporary of St. Jerome who emerges taller than others. Hence, he needs more elaborate treatment than others.

### **Kumarajiva:**

Among various seers, enunciators and disseminators of Buddhism, Kumarajiva is one of the most outstanding presences in the history of Buddhism. He not only studied Buddha's philosophy but also lived it. He captured the essence of Buddha's preaching and the wisdom implicit in them by focussing on crucial terms. One such term is 'shoonyata' (emptiness), which is frequently encountered in Prajnaparamita writing as well as in those of the philosophical movements that take its inspiration from them, the Madhyamika ('Middle Way').

The principle sources from which the life of Kumarajiva may be carved out include Sangyou (445-518) in *Chaui Sanzang* (Collected Records on the Making of the Tripitika), Huijiao (497-554) Gaoseng Zhuan (*Biographies of Eminent Monks*, and Boachang (464-514) Mingsen Zhuan (*Biography of Famous Monks*).

Sangyou's work is the *ur-text* of Hujiao. Among the later ones, the biography of Kumarajiva in *Jin Shu*, written in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, is a combination of the elements from the biographies by Sengyou and Huijiao, though in abridged form. It excludes his sexual transgressions. These form a part of the biographies of 'gao' (eminent) and *ming* (famous) people, for Kumarajiva was 'gao' and 'ming' both, though eminence and fame both persuade their subscribers to foreground and background attributes of the agency depending on the individual or social orientations.

However, three things made me curious to peek in the life of this great translator-monk: the character of his mother Jiva, her exhortation to Kumarajiva to disseminate Buddhism, and treatment of Kumarajiva's sexual transgressions as against his much known abstinence and incontinence or incompetence to produce his biological clones. Even at the risk of repetition, it would be appropriate to underscore a few aspects of Kumarajiva's life, for he is history, legend and myth combined in one. His life, the way he lived and is known, and his translations are intertwined. His parents, Kumarayana and Jiva, each gave a part of their names to him and called him Kumarajiva.

In case of Kumarajiva, the distinction between biography and hagiography gets considerably blurred, as most of the elements of hagiography i.e., *vita*, *passio*, *inventio*, *translatio*, *visio*, and *miracullum* are absent in it. Surprisingly, his mother Jiva gets considerable space in early biographies by his followers, something rare in the medieval Chinese period. She was reputed as a woman of sharp wit and vast memory. She had a red mole on her body that was then considered symbolic of her mothering a wise child. She was fluent in Indian language without having formally learnt it. She became a nun after the birth of the second son, Fushatipo or

Pushyadeva, who might have followed his father's path rather than his mother's, as details about him are not available.

Jiva took keen interest in Kumarajiva's education and intellectual development. After Kumarajiva was grown up and educated, Jiva is said to have stated the following profound statement with a question:

The teaching of Vaipulia should be widely propagated in the Zhendan (that is China). Its transmission to the Eastern Land will depend on your strength; yet as such it will not benefit you. What will you say to that?

Kumarajiva responded to her mother's query thus:

The way of the Mahasattvas is that he benefits others while forgetting about himself. If I must help to disseminate the teaching of great transformation, to wash away the blindness and to enlighten the ignorant, even if my body is to enter the furnace and store, I shall suffer without regret (in Huijiao's description)

It was a moment of Kumarajiva's evolution from a prodigy to psychological and spiritual independence. Jiva not only mothered Kumarajiva but planned and envisioned the course of her son's life. In the poem, Kumarajiva, it may be seen in the dialogue between Jiva and Kumarayan pertaining to Kumarajiva's future and the role that the parents should play in the child's development.

Jiva was a combination of the model mother and the model Buddhist practitioner fulfilling the medieval Chinese social expectation of a model mother before entering the monastic order. The role that Jiva played in Kumarajiva's life may be discerned from



two related facts. The first pertains to the silence about her second son Fushatipo or Pushyadeva in social psyche and in the Chinese medieval records. Had Jiva not been oriented towards Buddhist monastery life that she embraced even after initial resistance from the family, particularly her husband, she would have perhaps chiselled a different course for her younger son too. The second is related to the life of Buddhayasas, Kumarajiva's contemporary. He was no less distinguished than Kumarajiva except that he was not illustrious royal by birth. Buddhayasas was proud in his demeanor, and thought of himself as knowledgeable and wise, and used to say that few were qualified to be his teacher. Thus, he was not respected by the clergy. It was Buddhayasas who introduced Mahayan ideas to Kumarajiva. Also, when Kumarajiva was exposed to the charges of sexual transgression, Buddhayasas had openly sympathized with Kumarajiva. The question often asked is: Why did Buddhayasas's erudition contribution not achieve recognition in comparison to Kumarajiva? The answers may be many, as they may be seen in the words of Jiva who ordained Kumarajiva to propagate Buddha's message in China with 'strength' but without expecting any 'benefit'. He implemented his mother's words without limiting himself to becoming an erudite scholar. He, along with acquisition of scholarship, focused on meditative aspect of Buddhism and translated Buddhist texts. Also he completed incomplete translations with Acharya Vimalkirti during his visit to Chhang-an. His translation project that involved about two thousand scholars and translators and led to translation of at least three central Buddhist texts was in consonance with the spirit of his mother's words. Also, along with transforming lives of his disciples and people of his generation with the message of Buddha his translations were concrete evidence of his contribution for the subsequent generations to avail themselves of them.

Kumarajiva is recognized as one of the greatest translators of Buddhist scriptures from Sanskrit into Chinese. His translational transactions led to the transmission of Buddhist religious and philosophical ideas in China and beyond. His principal translational endeavours include translation of the central texts of the Madhyamika School of Buddhism that later became the basic texts of the Chinese Sanlun, known in Japanese as Sanron (Three Treatises) School of Buddhism. In the process he translated Buddha and his preaching to the people of the east (China) for whom Buddha existed as a name, and if they knew him/them the perceptions that emerged were distorted in absence of erroneous translations. In Kumarajiva's translations, the people found their own Buddha in a new avatar facilitated by Kumarajiva.

With his encyclopaedic knowledge of Indian learning in Sanskrit, he democratised Buddha's message to the people with his translations in Chinese language. In this sense, he stands out as prefiguration of the Bhakti poets, who almost one thousand years after Kumarajiva made the abstract knowledge of the Vedas and Upanishada-s available to the common people by transmitting it from Sanskrit into the languages of people. His life and its philosophical underpinning in relation to human condition, being, world and way to live in the world meaningfully are dealt with in *Kumarajiva: A Poem* (2015) by Kunwar Narain in Hindi.

### **‘Translation not a Guest House but a Home’: Kumarajiva, the translator**

Political history formed Kumarajiva while he shaped cultural history for future to an extent that it transformed the Chinese way of thinking and living. In 379, Fu Chien or Fu Jiān conquered the city of Hsiang-yang or Xiangyang and established his capital at Ch'ang-

an which was famed as a centre for the translation of Buddhist scriptures and texts. Hearing about Kumarajiva's spiritual, philosophical and linguistic abilities, Tao-an urged Fu Chien to invite him to Ch'ang-an. In 385, Tao-an died, and six months later the Yao family conquered Ch'ang-an and killed Fu Chien. The new dynasty continued many of the previous rulers' policies, as it preserved Tao-an's translation centre, and encouraged Buddhist studies. Thus, it paved way for Kumarajiva's arrival in the capital.

Yao Hsing received Kumarajiva with the title 'Teacher of the Nation.' Within six days of his arrival in Ch'ang-an, he began to translate a text on meditation, the *Tso-ch'an san-mei ching*. In the Translation Centre, supported by Yao Hsing, Kumarajiva found himself surrounded by a large group of knowledgeable monks who worked under the translation project under his guidance. He reorganized the Centre for new translations and review and revision of the preceding translations. Within the next few years, he translated almost 50 works in about 300 volumes.

Before embarking upon translations, Kumarajiva learnt Sanskrit and studied texts of Indian knowledge systems like medicine, astronomy and astrology, exegetical and hermeneutical methods of exposition, logic and the applied sciences along with learning the scriptures and treatises of the *Sarvastivadin* School, *Dīrghāgama* and *Madhyāgama*. His translations included the *Diamond Sutra*, the *Amitabha Sutra*, the *Lotus Sutra*, the *Vimalakirti Nirdeśha Sutra*, the *Mulamadhya Makakarika* and the *Panchvinshatisahatrika-Pragyaparmita Sutra*.

With his translations Kumarajiva lent a new dimension to the Chinese methodology of translation. He questioned, the Tao-an method, the *ko-i-or* 'matching the meaning' method of translation, in which unfamiliar Sanskrit Buddhist concepts were replaced by

known Chinese Taoist words. He was of the opinion that the practice compromised Buddha's teachings. However, in the process of reviewing Tao-an's work, he realized that too strict an insistence on literal translation that sometimes required the creation of awkward neologisms, rendered beautiful texts obscure. He believed that a translation should accurately convey the tone and texture of a teaching inseparably from its content. With this conviction he adopted a new methodology for translation, emphasizing the central theme of a text and editing the passages which would seem unnecessarily repetitive to Chinese readers. In other words, he employed the strategy of deletion of such parts as were extraneous to the central text by questioning the propriety of repetition of passage. To achieve this purpose, he would assemble a large working force that may be termed as a guild of translators. Then he read a text aloud to them, sentence by sentence. His disciples, including Yao Hsing would hold the original palm-leaf manuscript, in their hands while Kumarajiva explained it. After each sentence, Kumarajiva would explain its meaning and provide an oral translation in Chinese. It was followed by comments and improvements suggested by the assembly of disciple-scholars. The appropriate suggestions were incorporated into it. The translation thus approved was written down, and then reviewed by an editor from the viewpoint of style and internal consistency. Finally, a calligrapher would correct the Chinese ideographs to ensure that there were no ambiguities in transmission of the texts.

Translation is essentially a collaborative act. Kumarajiva's translations were collective works of Kumarajiva and his colleagues, though for the sake of prestiging, credit is reserved for Kumarajiva, the individual. His was an intellectual collaborator that produced texts which were readable, comprehensible and inspiring. His works became the foundation of the great movement of Buddhist thought

and teachings that ascended in China, even at a time when they dwindled in India and began to face stiff resistance from other religious quarters. In this regard it is necessary to mention two factors i.e., the support of Yao Hsing to the project, and the wholehearted cooperation of the scholarly monks who played their roles in the success of the project. Kumarajiva acknowledged their contribution suitably.

Kumarajiva revolutionized the Chinese Buddhism by bestowing clarity upon Buddhism and overcoming the former system 'geyi' or concept-matching system of translation through use of Daoist and Confucian terms. His style of translation was distinct, as it had a flowing smoothness reflecting his focus on conveying the meaning which was opposed to preceding practices of precise literal rendering. It made his translational renderings of the Mahayana texts attain acceptability and recognition in comparison to precise and literal translation, for instance by Zuangzang.

His translational practices are a case study in methodology of translation. However, his personal life came to be entwined in relation to his translational practices. Though he sustained himself in the in/famous Chinese project of manufacturing his clones by allowing maidens to bear his children, yet there were at least three alleged instances of sexual transgression. These alleged acts of sexual transgressions are often linked with his loose translations. The issue of fidelity in translation has been associated with gender till feminists objected to it. It was a prefiguration of the same attitude towards translation, though it was directed at an individual's morality or laxity of character. His disregard for the monastic codes earned him censure of his critics. Such slackness led other

practitioners of the Buddhist order and translators to suspect his sincerity. To them, his lack of understanding and interpretation of the text and loose translation could be seen in both in his translations and in his casual attitude towards sex.

Notwithstanding these interesting co-relations between Kumarajiva's life and work, the poet Kunwar Narain's *Kumarajiva* meanders through the dark chambers of sexual transgressions by taking no note of them. However, the poet deals with the Emperor Yao's project of mass manufacturing of Kumarajiva through biological mating of Kumarajiva with maidens. He resolves it with the help of discussion between the young maidens provided by the emperor for mating with Kumarajiva. In this Kunwar Narain sees an instance of human grossness that sees biological/material/physical solution as the solution of all problems. In a sense, it may be proposed that in the project, Kumarajiva was the source text both, the maidens the medium (i.e., the language), and unborn Kumarajivas the target texts. The project failed because the source text cannot translate itself, and Kumarajiva who could have been the translator was not physically and ideologically willing to oblige.

Kunwar Narain paid his tribute to Kumarajiva, the translator, thinker, author, poet in poetic terms in his poem *Kumarajiva*. His Kumarajiva tries to enter the text and its world of words that create a new time, sub-time and counter-time. For him--

Every treatise is a closed door  
I open it and enter into words  
And I take bath  
In that perpetual waterfall of Time  
That is the Time of that language. (31-32)

Expostulating his views pertaining to translation and translator in the poem Kunwar Narain, the poet, rejects the hierarchical notions of source and target text, and author as superior to translator. His Kumarajiva chooses his path with care, and announces it thus:

But I have already chosen my path  
I have not to be a preacher of Buddhism  
I want to be a student-translator-scholar and interpreter  
Of texts of Buddhist philosophy.

Kumarajiva's statement proves that a translator is a combination of 'student-translator-scholar and interpreter'. What needs to be added is that s/he has to be competent in language, if not necessarily a linguist. The so-called mother-tongue of Kumarajiva was Toshiarian (Tokharian) which belongs to Indo-European language family. Its new form is still in use in Kutch. He learnt Sanskrit and Chinese languages later on. What lent direction to his endeavour was the objective of his translational enterprise. He used his translation as an instrument for removing ignorance.

Words are lamps in the world which would be in darkness without them. Ideas in a language remain confined to it in absence of their transference in another language. Kumarajiva changed the orbit of Buddhist ideas by transmitting them into Chinese. In the process he gave a new direction of Buddhism with its circulation in China. He says:

My main objective is  
to transmit Buddhist philosophical treatises  
Into Chinese from Sanskrit and Pali  
With full sensibility and culture  
The sweetness that I hear in Sanskrit language  
I wish to preserve its echoes in Chinese also. (59)  
He was not content with translation only.

He wanted to communicate  
Sounds and echoes  
Of splendor and sweetness  
Of Sanskrit language and poetry  
Into Chinese and Tushari Languages  
That became meritorious attributes  
Of his translation. (71)

Seen from this perspective, the attributes of a good translation are attributes of a good artist or poet. Translation, like other art forms is a mode of communication of ideas and emotive feelings from one mode of communication to another. Artist or scientist deals with experiences—fictive or factual or both—and ideas—inferred from his/her experiences or provided by his/her intuition or imagination or bucketed out from the ocean of the collective human unconscious. S/he then chooses the medium— language—poetry or prose, painting, dance, music, sculpture or architecture. S/he has to wrestle with the medium to transmit her/his thoughts and feelings to do justice to their depth and shades. All along, the artist sublimates the gross, and journeys from sensual to spiritual. In the process the poet punctures the myth of translator being the native speaker of the source or target language. Neither Sanskrit nor Chinese was Kumarajiva's 'natural' languages. He did it so well that in his case translation, creativity and spirituality became synonymous.

And this creativity  
Is the sum experience of spirituality.' (176)

In this category of creativity, translator is included. But the translator's job becomes a little more difficult as s/he has to understand, interpret and carry over meaning or sense along with, to use Kunwar Narain's words 'sounds and echoes of splendor and



sweetness’ of the source text in its new abode. Kumarajiva succeeded in his endeavors as a translator, as the poet Kunwar Naraiyan words his approval for his ability to transfer:

‘Sounds and echoes  
Of splendour and sweetness  
Of Sanskrit language and poetry  
Into Chinese and Tukhari Languages’  
And he continues it--  
‘Kumarajiva’s enthusiasm  
Did not decrease  
Even after  
Translating lively  
More than three hundred  
Buddhist texts from  
Sanskrit to Chinese  
He wanted  
To transfer entire Buddhist discourse from Sanskrit  
Into Chinese language  
In such a creative manner  
As if it were its own literature  
He wanted to make their home in translated language  
Not mere its guest house.’ (173)

Here Kunwar Narain makes a major statement regarding translation. If Kumarajiva is a good translator, then the good translation is a ‘home’, not ‘a guest house.’ The former is where the source text feels at home, forever. It is not a make shift arrangement. Since the poets speak the language of metaphors, so a translator becomes a diver. A creative artist is also a diver. The poet writes about his translator:

Translating Buddhist treatises  
With his disciples

Like a diver  
He would bring away rare pearls of word  
From the fathomless sea  
Their splendour  
Used to astonish all. (174)

This is the tribute by a modern Hindi poet to Kumarajiva's translations. He does not question validity of translations, and keeps himself away from questions that have been raised particularly regarding deletion of repetitions in his translations. More than three hundred years after him, Huen Tsang who had appreciated Kumarajiva's translations but objected to this practice, as he subscribed to the traditional Chinese method of literal translation.

Kumarajiva encountered the questions that are still echoed in translation circuit. Should the translation be readable like the original or some liberties may be enjoyed? Before him the system of 'pairing' i.e., the use of similar idiom into target language-- was in vogue in Chinese language. For instance, if there was in an 'utterance' or 'discourse' of Lao-Tse or Confucius similar to Buddha's, it was not considered inappropriate to accept it and use it as equivalent to Buddha's. Kumarajiva intervened in it. Commenting on this aspect Kunwar Narain writes that Kumarajiva's perspicuity pointed out this foundational *visanagati* (inconsistency) in the Chinese practice. He understood that in order to preserve the sacredness of Buddha's thoughts, he will have to invent a new language without relying on borrowed idiom. This was a major task that he accomplished with ease and trained his disciples accordingly. (Kunwar Narain, 2013, p.122) Does the source poem take a new birth in translation or it just changes its clothes? According to Kunwar Narain, Kumarajiva preferred the first alternative (idem).

The result was that poetry and philosophy were transmitted and co-existed in Kumarajiva's translations symbiotically:

The treatises like Madhyamika, Pundrika Sutra and Pragyaparmita

Were not mere translations  
But in them was preserved  
The sweetness of poetry (174-175)

His invaluable translations became immortal in Chinese, Japanese and Korean languages and literatures. The poet avers:

This process was not merely translation  
But an unprecedented instance of  
Of a profound confluence of friendliness  
Between two languages. (175)

That is what translations do, as with them two languages, their knowledge, histories and cultures meet and the site becomes an embodiment of mutual cultural illumination. Elsewhere Kunwar Narain sums up Kumarajiva's contribution as a translator thus:

... Kumarajiva carved a unique space for Buddha's thoughts in Chinese language by extending the work of a translator. His endeavor was not a mere linguistic transference but was creativity of highest order that not only contributed something new to Chinese language but also established Buddha's thoughts in a new time, space and language—by the side of Lao Tse and Confucius, not below them. (Kunwar Narain 122)

If one looks at the metaphors and concepts used by Kunwar Narain, it seems that they may be used for an artist or a translator as well or for that matter for any sort of creativity. Rather than stopping

here the poet elevates creativity to spirituality of highest level which has nothing to do with religious or irreligious categories. What is it then? The poet explains it thus:

A creative work is spirituality of highest order  
It is a restrained transformation  
Of energy in the direction of sublimity  
The meditator and the object of meditation  
Become one  
In creativity  
And catharsis of his righteous instincts  
Assumes a new form.  
Spirituality is neither religious nor  
Irreligious  
That attains identity of spiritual in temporal  
Of man's spiritual powers  
With its re-establishment in his text.  
With the re-habilitation of man's spiritual power in a new text  
In this temporal world.  
It is a re-entry of consciousness in life  
Not its boycott; though they are different  
But not contradictory.  
  
This resolution of elements  
Is not merely physical  
Consciousness has that independent power  
That it can create  
Absolutely original concept  
And this creativity  
Is the sum experience of spirituality.

Translation is an act of creativity, hence of spirituality. But this spirituality is experienced by consummated translators only.

Kumarajiva's journey as a translator teaches us the way he lived in the midst of tumultuous times that failed to prevent him from

translating the message of Buddha. In the process he proved that cultural history that is often filmed by the material success and luxury of political powers is more potent than political history. The irony of his life was that more he wanted to tread a path of 'voluntary poverty' (*swechchhiknirdhanta*) more he was snared by wrangling of regal authority. Yet he remained undeterred and played his role as an inter/cultural transnational ambassador in Asia.

If translation is a transnational activity that lays cultural bridges and celebrates life of ideas by carrying over it into a new system with a definitive methodology, chosen consciously, the International Translational day needs to be named as Kumarajiva Day. Among all great translators in the world, Kumarajiva was a true transnational in terms of his parentage and areas of translational operation. The problem, however, is that in his case the year of his birth or death is known to us but not the day and date. Hence, Kumarajiva, a senior contemporary of St. Jerome, despite all qualifications and corpus of translation day cannot be celebrated after him due to non-availability of dates of his birth and death. As a consequence, we will have to look for other alternatives in the form of Dara Shukoh.

**Dara Shikoh** (20 March, 1615 - 30 August, 1659):

In the long history of India's intellectual and cultural history the person who deserves to be celebrated for his contribution to translational enterprise is Dara Shukoh, the eldest son and the heir apparent of Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan.

Dara Shikoh is among the most erudite enlightened living paragons of the harmonious co-existence of heterodox traditions in the Mughal history of India, as he supported mystical religious speculation and of syncretic cultural interaction among people of different faiths, and lived and paid for it too. His approach made him

a heretic in the eyes of orthodox clergy and obscurantist religious extremists including his brother Aurangzeb who killed him after ascending the throne. Through translational synthesis he was creating a third path with the Hindu and Islamic philosophies. Unfortunately, like translators in the medieval Europe he too suffered persecution, as his fatal end to some measure was determined by the perception of his translational project.

Dara was a mystic who followed Sharmad Kasani, a Persian mystic, as well as Quadiri Sufi saint Hazarat Mian Mir, whom he was introduced to by Mullah Shah Badakshi. Mullah Badakshi was Mian Mir's spiritual disciple and successor and was so widely respected among all communities that he was invited to lay the foundation stone of the Golden Temple in Amritsar by the Sikhs. This fact deserves to be mentioned, as Dara was later to develop friendship with the seventh Sikh Guru, Guru Har Rai.

Dara devoted much endeavour towards finding a common mystical language between Hinduism and Islam. Towards this goal he completed the translation of 52 Upanishads from Sanskrit into Persian in 1657 so that it could be accessed by Persian Muslim readers and scholars. In his translation of the Upanishads entitled *Sirr-e-Akbar* (The Greatest Mystery), where he speculates his hypothesis in the Introduction that the work referred to in the *Quran* as the '*Kitab al-maknun*' or 'the hidden book', is none other than the Upanishadas. His other celebrated work, *Majma-ul-Bahrain* i.e., 'The Confluence of the Two Seas', was also devoted to a revelation of the mystical and pluralistic affinities between Vedantic and Sufi philosophies. Apart from the above, the tradition credits him with the translations of the *Yoga Vashishitha* and the *Bhagvat Gita* from Sanskrit into Persian.

Translation of just the Upanishads warrants a place of eminence to Dara in the history of translation in India. Apart from the synthetic objectives that he had, the methodology and elasticity without sacrificing the ideas in his approach demands our attention. His translational project included, along with other Sanskrit and Persian scholars, Kavindra Saraswati, a major exponent of Navya-Nyaya (New Logic) School of Kashi. Apart from being an eminent philosopher, his command over Sanskrit and Persian languages was exceptionally immaculate. Danishmand Khan, one of the Mughal chiefs and an admirer of Dara and Bernier, the French traveller, physician and author who enjoyed Danishmand Khan's patronage also frequented the sessions of translation of the Upanishads. The Upanishadic hymns used to be recited, explained in Sanskrit and Persian. And with the approval of Kavindra Saraswati the translation used to be finalised. Dara's insistence was that if there was similar or resembling pronouncement in Persian discourse particularly Sufi poetry that may be added to the translation. In a way it was translation with latitude. But it shows Dara's keen consciousness of the community of the target readership because similarity or resemblance will persuade the readership to own an alien text and its ideas. The positive reception of the Upanishads in Persia and the use of Dara's translation into European languages led to the circulation of the Upanishads in Europe. Without him, 'the great secret' of the Upanishads would have been limited to Sanskrit scholars in Indian shores. In fact his translations rank him as the foremost cultural and intellectual ambassadors of India to the Persian and then European worlds.

For celebrating Translation Day, we discussed various alternatives like Narada, Hermes, Kumarajiva and Dara in the preceding paragraphs. It is possible to think of other names. In fact, every Indian language would have at least a couple of names that

with their contribution to their languages may claim to have Translation Day after them. Among the four names, stipulated earlier, the first two may be disqualified because of their divinity. In case of the third i.e., Kumarajiva despite his enormous contribution to the field of translation, it is not possible to ascertain the date of birth or death due to the absence of authentic evidence necessary for the purpose. But in case of Dara Shikoh, the problem of lack of historical evidence about the dates does not arise, as dates in his case are known to us. Why can't we then as a politically and intellectually independent nation think of 20th or 30th August as the dates for at least National Translation Day?

The question then would be: How to celebrate National Translation Day?

Translation is an act of cultural modesty, of acceptance of existence of other, and of making it one's own through the act of translation. It is not an act of display of binaries between source text and target text that hierarchy-ridden minds see it but of transcending binaries through the act of reception and acceptance.

Translation Day is a metaphor for celebration of translation, its practice and critique. It should not be squandered by yet other harangues on the importance of translation. The need is to cultivate the culture of translation with full realization of the fact that translation is indispensable for our existence, for only translating societies will survive in the days to come. Apart from cultivating the culture of translation, there is need for cultivating robust culture of criticism of translation so that bad translations do not get established as good translations.



Let us on this Day celebrate translation for its acceptance of others, and its ability to build cultures and knowledge in them for the larger good of humanity.

\* Keynote Address delivered on Translation Day, September 30, 2016, organised by Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi.

### Notes:

1. According to tradition, when Kumarajiva lay on his deathbed, he told his closest disciples that his cremation would reflect his success as a translator. If he had made errors, the funeral flames would consume his entire body. If, however, he had not made errors, his tongue would remain untouched by the fire. His disciples testified that his tongue survived the cremation of his body unharmed.

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# Norms in Translation: A Case Study of Telugu

*H. Lakshmi*

## **Abstract**

*The concept of 'norms' was introduced into Translation Studies by Gideon Toury, the pioneer of Descriptive Translation Studies, in 1978, to refer to general values or ideas shared by a community. It is the norms that inform the decision making process of the translation as they function as the socio-cultural constraints specific to a culture, society and time and become prescriptive in nature. The translators as members of a given socio cultural, historical and temporal context would know the norms of translation behaviour that are in operation in their contexts and try to observe them in their translation. The present paper makes an attempt to examine and analyse some paratexts that accompanied translated texts in Telugu to understand the norms of translation behaviour that are in vogue in Telugu and to know the predominant trends in translation that play a role in determining what a good translation is or should be. This study also brings to light to some extent translation discourse in Telugu.*

**Keywords:** Norms, Telugu, translation

## **Discussion:**

Gideon Toury, the pioneer of Descriptive Translation Studies, has introduced the concept called “Norms” into Translation Studies in 1978 with the publication of his article entitled, ‘The Nature and Role of Norms in Translation’. Continuing and building on the

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Polysystem theory proposed by his teacher Itamar Even-Zohar that argues that translated literature is a part of the social, cultural, historical and literary system of the target language and thus forms a system within the polysystem of the target language and hence cannot be studied in isolation, Toury aims to distinguish trends of translation behaviour and the factors that influence the translator's decision making process by invoking the concept of norms. He defines norms as, "the translation of general values or ideas shared by a community—as to what is right or wrong, adequate or inadequate—into performance instructions appropriate for and applicable to particular situations" (Toury,1995,p.55).

It is the norms that inform the decision making process of the translation as they function as the sociocultural constraints specific to a culture, society and time and become prescriptive in nature. The concept of norms is employed in the analysis of a translation product as it is the norms that govern the nature of the translation equivalence manifested therein. The translators as members of a given socio cultural, historical and temporal context would be well aware of the norms of translation behaviour that are in operation in their contexts and follow them in their translation. Now the question is how do we arrive at the norms that are in operation in the translation of a particular text? Toury proposes that the norms can be reconstructed from the following two types of sources: a) from the comparative analysis of the ST and TT, by examining the correspondences between the two which helps us understand the translation process/method/strategy adopted by the translator (this is a typical product oriented study that throws light on the process behind its making); b) from the explicit statements made about norms by translators, publishers, reviewers and the like. This is nothing but the examination of the paratextual elements of a

translated text. Here Toury also adds a word of caution-such statements (paratextual) may be biased in favour of the role played by the informants in the socio-cultural system. This is quite understandable as we also know that sometimes there will not be any correlation between what the translators state in their introduction about their own translation strategy and what they actually do.

The study of paratextual elements, however, proves very useful in understanding not only the norms that are in operation in a given society at a given time but also various other aspects related to the act of translation in general (Genette, 1991). Generally, in translated texts, we find paratexts like introduction either by the translator or some expert, foreword by some eminent personality in the field, a note by the publisher and the translator's note or introduction by the translator. These paratexts help us not only to understand the text better by situating it in a particular socio-cultural, historical and temporal context but also to know what is considered to be an acceptable translation by the target community in general. The paratexts also reveal what the approach of the experts or critics and the translators is towards a translation and what they consider to be a good translation which would in turn reflect also the reader's expectations of what an acceptable translation is in the target culture. The remarks made by such people make it clear to us the criteria or parameters used in translation evaluation/translation criticism and translation review which are based on translation norms that are in vogue in the given society at the given time. These paratexts thus help us understand the norms of translation behaviour that are in operation in the target culture that find voice in the statements issued by the experts and the translators alike.

In this context let us look at the norms proposed by Chesterman (1993) as well. Chesterman on the basis of the work done by Toury and Hermans proposes two kinds of norms. These are a) Expectancy norms and b) Professional norms. Expectancy norms refer to what the target language community expects a translation to look like regarding grammaticality, acceptability, appropriateness, style, textuality, preferred conventions of form or discourse and the like (Chesterman,1993,p.17). And the professional norms govern the accepted methods and strategies of the translation process.

Against this backdrop, let us now examine some paratexts that accompany translated texts in Telugu to understand the prevailing norms of translation behaviour in the Telugu context and to know the predominant trends in translation that determine what a good translation is or should be. As understood, translations are shaped by the norms of the target culture since the translators as members of the target community prioritize these norms in their translations and shape their translations accordingly. Even the selection of the source text to be translated and its production are determined by the third factor- the reception as the reading habit of the target audience plays a key role in informing the other two and thus plays a major role in shaping the translation.

An attempt is thus made in this study to examine literary translations made into Telugu from other languages in order to cull out paratexts and analyse them to arrive at some understanding of translation norms that operate in Telugu translation sphere. On the basis of the analysis of the selected paratexts the following observations are made:

- I. The Telugu translators have tremendous respect and high regard for the source authors and their writings that they have chosen to translate into Telugu, whether they are

epics, kavyas or plays from Sanskrit or literary texts of any genre from English or any other Indian language or a foreign language. This seems to be one of the preconditions for the selection of the text for translation. It could also be taken as a sign of their modesty and humility.

Let us now look at some of the statements made by the translators:

- a) Prof. G.N. Reddy in his foreword to the translation of the *Gitanjali* by Sri Anjaneya Sharma states the following:

“అనువాదకునికి మూలగ్రంథం మీద అభిమానం, తద్గ్రంథకర్త మీద భక్తి వుండటమేకాకుండా మూలగ్రంథకర్తకున్న ప్రవృత్తికి తన ప్రవృత్తికి సాదృశ్యం వుండాలి. అప్పుడే అనువాదంలో కొంత నిజాయితీ వుంటుంది. అనువాదరచన సార్థకమవుతుంది. డా. ఆంజనేయశర్మగారు ఆధ్యాత్మికమైన ప్రవృత్తి, బావనగలవారు కాబట్టి వారిని గీతాంజలి ఆకర్షించింది”.

(“The translator should have not only great love for the source text and deep devotion towards the source author but also needs to have empathy with the source writer. Only then the translation appears genuine and the purpose of the translation would be fulfilled. Since Dr. Anjaneya Sharma has got spiritual disposition and temperament, he got attracted towards the *Gitanjali*”).

- b) Lakshmikanta Mohan who has translated almost all of Shakespeare’s works into Telugu makes the following remark regarding Shakespeare’s writings:

షేక్స్పియర్ రచనలు మల్లెపువ్వులాగా కోమలమైనట్టివి, సుగంధ పూరితమైనట్టివి. ఆ కోమలత్వం, ఆ సుగంధం యెక్కడ చెడిపోతాయోననే భయంతోనే నేను ఈ నాటకాన్ని అనువాదం జేశాను.

(Shakespeare's writings are tender like jasmines and filled with great fragrance. I have translated this play with the fear of spoiling that tenderness and fragrance.)

- c) Rayaprolu Subbarao in his translator's introduction to his Telugu translation-*Ravindra Vyasavali* praises the greatness of Tagore's writings as follows:

రవీంద్రుని రచన గద్యలో పద్యములో పాటలో సంవాదములో వివిధ రుచి రూపాలతో ఒదిగి ఒప్పి - ఋతువులలో ప్రకృతిలాగా - ప్రసరించింది. ఆయన శైలిలో భావనా - బావమూ, భాషా - భణితి అపూర్వంగా భాసిస్తువి. ప్రజ్ఞా - ప్రతిభా నర్తనం చేస్తువి. సృజనా - కల్పనా ఎంత నవీనంగా ఉంటవో రచన అంత నిరంకుశలంగా ప్రవహిస్తుంది. పైగా, ఎక్కడ పట్టినా, దరహాస పరిహాసములు చెమ్మచెక్కలాడుతున్నట్లు హాస్యాలన విభ్రమిస్తుంది. ఈ నిర్వహణకోసం ఆయన సమకాల సజీవమైన సమాజభాషితమును జంకుకొంకులు లేకుండా వాడుకొన్నాడు. 'నియతికృత నియమరహితాం' అనే నిర్వచనం రవీంద్ర సాహిత్యానికి చక్కగా సరిపోతుంది.

ఇంతేకాదు, రవీంద్రుడు వస్తుతః గాంధర్వ పుత్రుడు. అంతర్విపంచి తంతులు ఎప్పుడూ మ్రోగుతునే వుంటవి. శ్రుతి స్వరలయలు -



ధాతువులలో రక్తధారలలాగా - సర్వదా స్పందిస్తూనే వుంటవి.  
నిద్రలో సంగతి తెలియదు. పిండిన పాలమీద బుడగలలాగా  
శబ్దాలు పైకి తేలి మళ్ళీ రసీభవిస్తవి. ఇది ఆయన శైలి. లీలామయి  
భగవతిప్రకృతి. స్వరమయి గీతి - భావమయి కవిత - చేష్టామయి  
భణితి - అని ఆకాంక్షించుకోవాలె ఆయన జ్యోతిర్మయ  
వాఙ్మయంలో.

(The way in which the nature smoothly turns into different seasons. Tagore's creative writing gets embedded and settled down into prose, poetry, song and dialogue with all hues and forms. In his style the thought and expression, the language and sense shine amazingly and his skill and wisdom dance beautifully. His writing flows as smoothly as the novelty of his innovation and creation. On top of it, it amuses us with its interplay of wit and humor everywhere. To manage this, he used the contemporary live social dialogue without any hesitation. The definition, 'rule-bound, un-bound' is perfectly suitable for Tagore's literature.

This is not all. Tagore is by nature the son of God of Music. The strings would always keep playing. The rhythmic melody acts upon forever -like the flow of blood in veins. It is not known what happens when he sleeps! Like the foam that springs up in the pot when you milk (a cow), the sounds spring up and then settle down into great melody. That is his style. Magic in nature. Melody in song-emotion in poem - this is how we need to approach his luminous literature.)

- d) Dr. R. Anantha Padmanabha Rao in the introduction to his Telugu translation of Mulkraj Anand's *Morning Face* remarks as follows:

గంగారురీ వేగంతో సమానమైన శైలి ఆనంద్ గారిది. ఆయన ఆంగ్లవాక్య విన్యాసం, భాషాపటిమ చదువరులను ఆకట్టుకొని ఆసాంతం చదివింపజేస్తాయి. దాని అనువాదం కత్తిమీద సాము వంటిది. మూలంలో భావానికి లోపం రాకుండా, తెలుగునుడికారం సొంపులకు వొదిగేలా నేను అనువాదం సాగించాను.

(Mr. Anand's style of writing is racy like the swiftness of the current of the Ganges. His command of the English language and his style of writing attract the readers so much so that they cannot stop until they finish reading the whole text. Translating such a text is just like doing an acrobatic stunt with a sword. I went on translating it in such a way that the meaning of the source text is not lost and at the same time it fits into the beautiful idiom of the Telugu language.)

- e) Kovvidi Lingaraju in the introduction to his Telugu translation of Maxim Gorky's *Mother* makes the following remark:

స్వతంత్ర రచనకన్నా అనువాదం చాలా కష్టం .అందులోనూ టాల్ స్టాయి, గోర్కీవంటి తత్వవేత్తల వుత్తమరచనలను తెలుగు చెయ్యడం మరీ కష్టం. గోర్కీ భాష అపూర్వమైనది. ఒక చిన్న వాక్యంలో మహత్తరమైన భావం యిమిడి వుంటుంది. అదీకాకుండా

చదువుకొనే వాళ్ళు, తంత్ర రచనను మామూలు కొలతబద్ధతోటే  
కొలుస్తారు. కాని అనువాదాన్ని అసలు రచనను బట్టి కొలుస్తారు.  
అందుచేతనే విఖ్యాతులైన వాళ్ళ గ్రంథాన్ని అనువదించాలంటే  
యెంతో సమర్థత, సాహసం ఉండాలి. ఇట్లాంటి ఉత్తమమైన  
కల్పనను తెలుగు సోదరులు కూడా చదువుకోవాలనే కోరిక,  
నన్నీ సాహసానికి పురిగొల్పింది.

(Translating is much more complex than independent writing. It becomes even more difficult to translate the best works of philosophers like Tolstoy and Gorky. Gorky's language is extraordinary. A small sentence gets loaded with tons of meaning. In addition, the reader measures an independent writing in a normal way but when it comes to translation, the evaluation will be done in terms of the comparison with the original text. Thus, to translate the works of great writers, one has to be bold and requires a high degree of competence. It is the desire to make such great writings available to my Telugu brothers compelled me to undertake this adventurous task).

This kind of reverence shown to the source authors and their writings is in sharp contrast with what Edward Fitzgerald has stated in his translation of Omar Khayyam into English in a letter to his friend E.B.Cowell - "It is an amusement for me to take what liberties I like with these Persians who are not Poets enough to frighten one from such excursions, and who really do want a little art to shape them" (Fitzgerald, 1972, VI: xvi, quoted by Lefevere, 1990:12).

We may also attribute it to the fact that in all these cases Telugu is the recipient, the target language which is translating from more established and well developed literatures, thereby introducing into its own culture and literature new genres, new models and new styles and new ideology. This practice helped Telugu not only in enriching its language and literature but also played a key role in strengthening its ties with these well-established literary traditions.

II. The various metaphors used by the Telugu translators to name their translations or to state what they think translation is for them are also interesting to note. Some of these metaphors are fresh, native and different from those that have sprung from the West:

- a) Rayaprolu Subbarao in his translator's introduction to his Telugu translation-*Ravindra Vyasavali* came up with the following metaphor to state what translation is, rather not:

అనువాదమంటే ఒక కుండలో పాలు మరొక భాండములో  
పోసుకోవడం కాదు. ఒక్క ఆవును ఇద్దరు పిండుకోవడమూ కాదు.  
భాష యేదయినా కావచ్చు. మానవ హృదయమును  
అనునయించే కశ్చిదిష్టార్థ ప్రతీతి శబ్దవృత్తిలో లభిస్తున్నది-ఆది  
కవినీ కాలాన్నీ అధిగమించి ఉంటుంది-దానిని సంగ్రహించి  
అనుభవించడానికి జరిగే సారస్వత తంత్రణం) అనువాదం.

(Translation is not like simply transferring the milk from one pot into another. It is also not like two people milking one and the same cow. It can be any language. A quality that appeals to every human heart lies in its sound system.

And it is something that goes beyond poets and ages.  
Translation is a literary exercise that tries to capture it and  
experience it.)

- b) Y.C.P. Venkata Reddy, the translator of Kundanika Kapadiya's Gujarathi novel, Satpaglan Aakshman uses the popular metaphor

‘అనువాదం కత్తిమీద సాములాంటిది’

(Translating is like doing an acrobatic stunt with a sword),  
which has also been used by many other translators like  
Jayashree Mohan Raj and R. Anantha Padmanabha Rao.

- c) Nagnamuni in his introduction to an anthology of Telugu translations of Odia short story, *Odia Kadhaa Sourabham* by Upadrasta Anuradha states the following:

అనువాదం పెంకె గుర్రం లాంటిది. అశ్వహృదయం తెలిసిన రౌతుకు  
మాత్రమే లొంగుతుంది. లేకపోతే తిప్పి తిప్పి నేలకేసి  
విసిరికొడుతుంది. తిరిగి లేవకుండా ఎముకలు విరిగేటట్లు తుక్కు  
తుక్కుగా తొక్కేస్తుంది. పదహృదయం తెలియాలి. మాట మనసు  
ఎరగాలి.

అనువాదం మొసలిపై ప్రయాణం. క్షణక్షణం మారే నీటివాలు,  
వుధృతి, కరకర నమిలే భీకరమైన మొసలి కథలికలు తెలిసిన  
వారికి మాత్రమే మొసలి స్వారీ సాధ్య. అవతలి గట్టుకు చేరడం.

(Translation is like an untamed horse. It surrenders only  
to the rider who understands its heart. Otherwise, it twists  
and turns him round and round and hurls him to the

ground. And it stamps him very badly breaking his bones.

One has to know and understand the heart of the word.

Translation is like riding on a crocodile. The crocodile ride is possible only to those who know the direction of the flow of water, its force, and the movements of the ferocious crocodile, which can chew up the rider anytime. Only such riders would be able to reach the other shore.)

- d) Jayashree Mohanraj in the introduction to her translation - భారతీయ భాషా కథలు (*Bhaaratiiya bhaasha kadhalu*) published by Sahitya Akademy remarks as follows:

వాదం చేయడం కత్తిమీది సాము .అటు మూలరచన చేసిన రచయితలోకి పరకాయ ప్రవేశం చేసి భావాలను గ్రహిస్తూ యిటు లక్ష్యభాషను చదివే పాఠకులను ఆకట్టుకుని అర్థమయ్యే భాషలో అనువాదం చేయాల్సి ఉంటుంది .ఇందులో ఎవరికి అన్యాయం చేసినా అనువాదం దెబ్బతింటుంది.

(Translating is like doing an acrobatic stunt with a sword. It is like the soul of the translator entering the body of the writer and grasping his innermost feelings and then translating them into the target language in the manner acceptable to the reader. Translation gets ruined if injustice is done to either of these things.)

It is interesting to observe the trope used here - పరకాయ ప్రవేశం (entering into another's body, in the context of translation it refers to the translator entering into the body of the source author). This is based on the Hindu philosophy known as 'Dwaita' which states that

the body and the soul are two different things which can be separated.

III. The following are the different words used by the translators in the general sense of

Translation:

Anuvadam (Translation)

Anusrujana (Transcreation)

Racana (Writing)

Teligincu (Making it Telugu)

Tenigincu / Tenigincu (Making it Telugu)

Anukaranam (Imitation)

Andrikarana (Telugization)

Andrikruti (Transcreation in Telugu)

Andranuvadam (Telugu translation)

Telugu Anukruti (Telugu Transcreation)

Anumelana (Transcreation)

Tarjuma (Changing the form)

Tenuguseta (Making it Telugu)

Parivarthana (Mutation)

It can be observed from the above that in Telugu, except the three words ‘Anuvadam’ which is neutral, and the two words- Tarjuma and Parivarthana, which indicate changing over or transmutation, all the rest are more or less synonyms that indicate target-orientation and ‘Telugization’. This itself speaks for the kind of translation activity that has taken place in the Telugu translation sphere and the norms that govern it.

IV. The following are some of the verbalizations regarding the process/nature of translation made either by the translators

themselves or the experts who have written forewords or introductions to the translations:

- a) Dasaradhi Rangacharya, a very famous writer and a translator who belongs to Telangana, in his introduction to the Telugu translation of the poetry of Mirza Ghalib from Urdu says the following regarding his process of translation:

అమరిపేటికలలో భద్రపరచబడిన మణిని సాధించడం ఎంత కష్టమో పద్యాలలో దాగిన గాలిబ్ హృదయాన్ని అందుకోవడం కూడా అంత శ్రమతో కూడిన పని. ప్రతి పద్యాన్నీ ఆకళించుకుని, ఆ పద్యానికి వివిధ వ్యాఖ్యాతలూ, విమర్శకులూ చెప్పిన అర్థాన్ని చదివి నాకు స్ఫురించిన అర్థాన్ని జీర్ణించుకుని, త్రేన్చి తెలుగు రూపంలో మళ్ళీ ఆ హృదయాన్ని ఆవిష్కరించడం కొంత క్లిష్టమైన పనే. ఒక్కొక్క పద్యాన్నీ తెలుగులోకి దింపడానికి రోజులు రోజులు పట్టేవి. అప్పటికీ సంపూర్ణంగా మూలార్థం రాకుంటే మళ్ళీ మార్పువలసి వచ్చేది. ఇది అనువాదం కాని అనుసరణ కాదు. కనుక నా కల్పన ఈషణ్మాత్రమూ పనికిరాదు. తెలుగు పాఠకులకు గాలిబ్ భావం అందడానికి కావలసిన హంగులు చేయడానికి మాత్రమే నాకు అధికారం వుంది. అంతకు మించి లేదు. ఇలాటి నిర్బంధాలతో ఈ అనువాదానికి ఉపక్రమించాను.

ఈ పని) అనువాదం (చాలా కష్టసాధ్యమైనదనుటలో అతిశయోక్తి లేదు. ఒక్కొక్క పద్యాన్నీ జీర్ణించుకుని దాన్ని తెలుగులోకి దించడానికి రోజులు రోజులు పట్టేది. కడచిన0691 వ సంవత్సరమంతా గాలిబ్ కవితను మననం చేయడంలోనూ, దానిక



తెనుగురూపం ఇవ్వడంలోనూ వ్యయించాను. ఆ సంవత్సరమంతా నా హృదయంలో సాక్షాత్కరించి అనుక్షణం నాకు తన హృదయ రహస్యములను బోధపరచిన అమరమూర్తి మీర్జా అసదుల్లాఖాన్ గాలిబ్ నా నర నరాలలో జీర్ణించుకుపోయినాడు. ఆయన అమృత హృదయం సర్వదా నా కవితకు క్లుప్తతను, గుప్తతను, ఆప్తతను ప్రసాదిస్తుందని ఆశిస్తున్నాను. బాషాభిమానులెల్లరు నా ఈ కృషిని సావధానంగా పరిశీలింతురు గాక!”

(Capturing the heart of Ghalib from his poems is as difficult as extracting the precious stone secured in a vault. Understanding the essence of every poem, reading the different interpretations of it given by different commentators and critics, and then digesting the meaning that occurs to me and belching it out to present the heart once again in the form of a Telugu poem, is indeed a complex task. I used to take days together to translate a single poem into Telugu. Even then, if the source meaning is not completely captured, I used to rewrite it again. This is a translation and not an adaptation. Even an iota of my own creation cannot be used. I have license only to make such modifications to the original that help make Ghalib's meaning comprehensible to the Telugu readers not more than that. I have embarked on this translation with all such constraints.

There is no exaggeration in saying that this work (translation) is a very difficult one. It used to take several days to digest each poem and compose it in Telugu. I have spent the whole year of 1960 in understanding Ghalib's poems and giving them a shape in Telugu. That whole year, Mirja Asadulla Ghalib resided in my

heart and explained the secrets of his heart every moment and thus became an integral part of every cell of my body. I hope his kind heart would gift my poetry with brevity, mystery and entrancement. May all the language lovers positively consider this effort of mine!”)

In the same text, Devulappali Ramanuja Rao (the then Secretary, Andhra Pradesh Sahitya akademi) in his ‘Avatharika’ comes out with similar remarks as that of Dasaradhi regarding the process of translation. He too uses the word జీర్ణించుకొను (to digest). He also uses another word ‘parivarthimcu’(to transform) for translation. Consider the following:

“శ్రీ దాశరథి మహాకవి ఈ అనువాదమును మిక్కిలి ప్రతిభావంతముగా నిర్వహించినారు .అనువాద ధోరణి చాలా సరళంగానున్నది .అనువాదము కొరకు స్వీకరించిన చందస్సు , భాష ఔచిత్య శోభితములై యున్నవి .శ్రీ దాశరథి అనుసరించిన చందస్సు ‘గజల్’ పోకడకు అనుగుణముగా నున్నది . అనువాదకునికి మూల గ్రంథకర్తతో సమానమైన భావనాశక్తి అవసరమై యుండును .ఆ భావనాశక్తి శ్రీ దాశరథికి సంపూర్ణముగా కలదని ఈ అనువాదములోని ప్రతి పంక్తి నిరూపించుచున్నది . అనువాదము చేయుటలో శ్రీ దాశరథి చూపించిన నేర్పు అనన్యము.

గాలిబ్ కవిత్వములోని హైందవేతర వాతావరణమును హైందవ వాతావరణముగా పరివర్తించుటలో దాశరథి ప్రత్యేక ప్రతిభ చూపించినారు.

ఉమర్ ఖయ్యాంను జీర్ణించుకొని ఆంగ్లభాషలో పరివర్తించిన పిట్టుజీరాల్దవలె ,దాశరథి గాలిబ్ కవిత్వమును హృద్గతము

గావించుకొని అనన్య సాధ్యమైన రీతిని ఆంధ్రీకరించినాడు .  
మూలమునకు అనువాదము కడు సరసముగా సాగినది .  
పూర్వజన్మలో దాశరథియే గాలిబ్‌మో! లేక ఈ జన్మలో గాలిబ్  
దాశరథియై అవతరించేనేమో!”

(Dasaradhi, a great poet, has done this translation in a very effective way. The translation reads very smooth. The language and prosody that are chosen for translation are very apt. The prosody adapted by Dasaradhi was appropriate to the ‘Gazal’ style. A translator requires the power of imagination equivalent to that of the source writer. Every line of this translation stands to prove that Dasaradhi has the kind of imaginative power-the skill that he displayed in translating this text is extraordinary!

Dasaradhi has exhibited a special talent in transforming the non-Hindu cultural context in Ghalib’s poetry into that of Hindu.

Just like Fitzgerald, who digested Omar Khayyam and transformed him into English, Dasaradhi got Ghalib’s poetry melted into his heart and brought it out into the language of Andhra in an exceptional manner. Translation is very close to the source text. Probably, in the last birth Dasaradhi must have been Ghalib, or may be in this birth Ghalib has taken the form of Dasaradhi.

There are two points that are worth mentioning here. Firstly, as can be clearly observed from the above remarks, some resemblance to the notion of Cannibalism that emerged from the Brazilian school of Translation Studies. It basically refers to the idea of devouring the source text, digesting it and making it an integral part of your own self. This is an attempt to exploit the source texts in order to enrich the target culture and its literature. It is also to do with the dominant

source and the dominated target culture. There is however a difference between the Brazilian context and the Indian context in general and the Telugu context in particular. Though both are postcolonial contexts, the Brazilian tendency of aggression and vengeance does not exist in the Telugu translation tradition. It is in this sense; it does not share with the Brazilian cannibalistic theory of translation, the postcolonial political attitude of the empire writing back, at least in the earlier times.

Secondly, the similarity with the sentiment expressed in many quarters in the field of translation- ‘ If Shakespeare were to write in Telugu, he would write it this way’ or ‘One wonders whether Shakespeare has written it in Telugu’ and so on. Such remarks only point to the naturalness and readability of the translated texts in Telugu that would read as though they were originally written in Telugu. In other words the statements like పూర్వజన్మలో దాశరథియే గాలిబ్ మో! లేక ఈ జన్మలో గాలిబ్ దాశరథియై అవతరించినా! (May be in the previous birth Dasaradhi himself was Ghalib! Or Ghalib himself was reborn as Dasaradhi in the present life!) would sound prima facie hyperbolic but reflect the sentiment related to the oneness of the source writer and the translator in terms of their creativity and literary genius. Yet another way of looking at it is from the perspective of dynamic equivalence proposed by Eugene Nida.

- b) In the introduction to the Telugu translation of C. Rajagopalachary’s Tamil text-Srikrishnudu cuupina maargam (The path shown by Srikrishna), the publisher-Hindusamajam, makes the following remark:

మరియొక భాష నుండి యనువదించవలసి  
వచ్చినప్పుడునువాదకుడు రెండు విధములయిన భయములకు  
లోనగును. మొదటిది మూల గ్రంథకర్త యభిప్రాయమునకు  
భంగము కలుగునేమోయను భయము. రెండవది  
మూలమునున్నదున్నట్లుగా, మక్కస్త్రముక్కగా  
భాషాంతరీకరించిన యెడల అనువాదితీ గ్రంథమంత సుబోధకము  
కాదేమోయను భయము.

(When it comes to translating from another language, the translator is always worried about two aspects. The first one is the fear that the source text might get distorted. The second one is that if a word to word translation is attempted, the translation may not be readable.)

This is the fear expressed by many translators all over the world. They intend to do justice to both the source text/author and the target audience. This is the reason why we say theoretically that the translators have to strike a balance between the two opposite poles-the source text and the target audience by going for a middle path. But it is easier said than done. Practically it may not be possible always. It goes without saying that a translation cannot afford to be too literal or too free. But as scholars working in the field of Translation Studies, we are now aware of the fact that there are many other things to be considered in a translation other than the source text and the target reader like the skopos of the translation, the ideology of the translator and the patron or the publisher, the

translation norms that exist in the target culture at the given moment, the place occupied by the translation in the target polysystem and so on. It is of course unfair to expect these translators or reviewers to have the knowledge of the later developments in the field of Translation Studies and judge the translators going by them.

- c) Rayaprolu Subbarao in his translator's introduction to his Telugu translation-*Ravindra Vyasavali* (1962) comments on the translation as follows:

కావ్య సృజనకు మూఖ్యాలంబనం శబ్దమే, అయినా అక్కడ శబ్దం బుజీషప్రాయమంటాడు. వొక వ్యాఖ్యాత. అంతకంటే శయ్యాగృహ కవాటంవంటి దంటి బాగుండేది. ఎందుకంటే వాక్యగతమైన శబ్దం చేతనంవలె వ్యవహరిస్తుంది. చల్లగాలి వీచిందంటే తలుపు తెరుస్తుంది. చలిగాలి, అంటే మూసివేస్తుంది. రచనలో భావము ముత్యములో నీరులాగా ఇష్టార్థ లావణ్యముతో తొణికిసలాడుతూ వుంటుంది. కేవలం భావప్రకటన చేస్తే మీగడ తీసిన పెరుగు అవుతుంది. తాత్పర్యం వ్రాస్తే పొరిగింటి మజ్జిగలాగా పలచబడుతుంది. రచనలో శిల్పమునే కర్మకౌశలం వున్నది గదా! అందువల్ల అనువాదములో పదబంధమునూ, వాక్యరీతినీ కూడా వీలయినంతవరకూ సంగ్రహించడం ఆవశ్యక మనిపించింది.

(Form is central to the creation of any poetic work. But according to a critic the form is only accidental. I think it would be better if we say that form of a text is like a valve to the bed room. Because the form that constitutes a sentence works like a regulator. If a cool breeze comes, the

window gets opened, and if the breeze is cold it gets closed. The sense expressed in a work shines gracefully like the water in a pearl. If only the meaning is expressed, it becomes like the curd after the cream is removed from it. If it is paraphrased, it gets diluted like the buttermilk borrowed from the neighbour. There is creativity and meaning in the form of the text itself and thus it is felt necessary that the collocations, the form, and the structure of the sentences should also be retained in the translation as far as possible.)

- d) V. Venkatachalam in his English translation of monograph on Bhasudu (Telugu) by Pullela Sriramachandrudu remarks as follows regarding the translation:

ఆనువాదం మక్కికి మక్కి కాకుండా ఉండేటట్లు ప్రయత్నించాను. అలాంటి అనువాదాలవల్ల మూలానికిగాని, ఏ బాషలోనికి అనువదిస్తామో ఆ భాషకు గాని ఏ మాత్రమూ ప్రయోజనం ఉండదు. నేను చేసిన అనువాదాలన్నీ మూలంలోని అందాన్ని ఇంగ్లీషు అనువాదంలోనికి తీసుకొని వచ్చేటట్లు చేసిన స్వేచ్ఛానువాదాలు. శక్యమైనంత వరకు ఇవి మూలానికి దగ్గరగా ఉండేటట్లు చేసిన పునర్నిర్మాణాలు, కేవలం అనువాదాలు కావు.

(I tried not to go for word to word translation. Such translations are useful neither to the source language, nor to the target language. All my translations were free translations done in such a way that the aesthetic beauty of the source text was brought into English. These are reconstructions done to be as close as possible to the source text and are not mere translations.)

- e) M.B.S. Prasad in his introduction to Mullapudi Venkataramana's Telugu translations of *Around the World in 80 Days* and *PT 109: John F. Kennedy in World War II* states the following:

రచయితలోకి పరకాయ ప్రవేశం చేసి ఆయన తెలుగులో రాసివుంటే ఎలా రాసేవాడో అలా రాశారు. తనే ఆ నవల ఒరిజినల్ రాసినంత ధాటిగా, స్వేచ్ఛగా రాశారు”.

“ఈ నవల అనువాదం కూడా ఒరిజినల్ లాగానే గంభీరంగా సాగుతుంది.”

“రెండు భాషలూ వచ్చినంత మాత్రాన అనువాదం చేయడం సాధ్యం కాదు. అనువాదంలో అందం, మూలానికి విధేయత - ఈ రెండింటిలోనూ ఏదో ఒకటి సాధ్యపడతాయంటారు పెద్దలు. అనువాదపు వాసనలు లేకుండా చక్కటి తెలుగు నుడికారంతో రాయగలగడం రమణకు అచ్చిన విద్య. చాలా విద్యలు నేర్పనిదే ఈ విద్య పట్టబడదు”.

(This translation is done as if the translator's soul has entered into the source writer and the text is written in Telugu in such a way that had the source writer were to write it in Telugu he would have written in this way. Translation is done with such vigour and freedom as if the translator himself has written the original novel.)

The translation of this novel also reads as profound as the original.



It is not possible to translate by simply knowing two languages. It is said that in any translation of the two things – beauty of the target text and fidelity to the source – only one is possible. Writing in a beautiful Telugu style using the native idiom without any features that mark it as a translation is a special skill that Ramana has acquired. It is not possible to master this skill unless one acquires many other skills.)

M.B.S. Prasad's above statement touches upon two things- firstly, how the translator has entered into the body of the source writer and has written this work as though the source writer himself is writing it in Telugu and secondly, the conflict between truth (fidelity) and beauty and how the translator has written the translation using fine Telugu idiom and taking care that the translation does not smell (read) like a translation.

## **Conclusion:**

Coming to the norms of translation behavior in the Telugu context, one can see that the predominant view voiced by many translators, reviewers and scholars alike is that 'a translation has to read like something written originally in Telugu'. All such translations seem to have been considered as good/satisfactory translations by a vast majority of the Telugu reading public. One statement that keeps recurring in many reviews or forewords or introduction to translated literary works from other languages has been - 'This translation does not read like a translation. It reads as though it were originally written in Telugu'. This statement is used as a compliment, praising the work of a translator and is taken as sign of a good translation. This seems to be the predominant notion that the Telugu reading public have about a translation. Since they

have been bred on the translations of the *Mahabharat* from Sanskrit into Telugu by the trio-Nannaya, Tikkana and Errapragada and several other subsequent translations from Sanskrit kavyas by other translators who have taken their predecessors as their role models, it is not surprising that they would want a translation to read like an original written in the target language and accepted as such despite their high regard and respect for the source writers. In a way the Telugu translation tradition seems to have always given priority to rewritings than to mere translations.

And some even use metaphors like ‘parakaya pravesham’ (entering into another body/soul, in this context the source writer’s) and argue that the translator has to do this (in order to be a successful translator) or has done this; and some others strongly feel that the translator must have been the source author in his previous birth or the translation reads as though the source writer herself/himself has written it in Telugu. One does not know whether this kind of a praise showered on the translators by the experts is simply patting the back of the translator for all the hard work s/he has put in to make the source text available in the target language or really genuine and means what it says! Well, in many cases it could be former than the latter.

As far as the process of translation is concerned, all translators would state their dilemma overtly- how to remain faithful to the source writer/text and yet make the text readable in the target language. This conflict between loyalty to the source text and the readability of the target text, and the desire to balance both seem to mark the major concern of most of the translators. However, when one observes the actual practice of the translators, in a vast majority of the cases, irrespective of what they say in their introductions or

translators' notes, what one realizes is that in their actual practice they give more preference to the readability of the target text than the fidelity to the source and would sacrifice the former for the sake of the latter. One can thus conclude that it is the readability of the target text and a desire to make it read as though it is originally written in Telugu seems to have been the unwritten norm of translation that played a prescriptive role and informed the translation process and thus ultimately had a greater role in shaping the nature of translations in the Telugu translation tradition until very recent times when the new crop of academics started taking the practice of translation seriously and would foreignize their translations giving priority to the source text and its cultural, stylistic and literary nuances rather than the convenience of the target readers. It is especially the case with the recent translations made from Indian languages into English. It is interesting to note that even now we find two categories of translations that are being published in the Indian context in general- the scholarly and the public, and each of these not only have their own specific market but also earmarked function.

**Note:**

1. All English translations are by me unless otherwise mentioned.

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# A Feature Based Approach to Translating Cuisine Verbs of Telugu and Bangla

*K.Rajyarama  
Abhijit Debnath*

## Abstract

*This paper attempts to establish a feature-based approach to translate words related to the semantic domain of 'cuisine' with particular emphasis on verbs. Identification and listing of features belonging to a particular semantic domain is a challenging task as both deterministic and delimiting criteria need to be developed. Feature matrices thus developed are of immense help in tasks like translation, where cross-linguistic mapping of the maximum number of features will assist in selecting an appropriate equivalent. The main objective of the paper is to unify the established semantic theories like componential analysis, semantic domains and the implementation of the Lambda Calculus.*

**Keywords:** Feature based approach, semantic domains, cuisine, translation, componential analysis, Lambda Calculus.

## **1.0 Introduction:**

One can witness a marked increase in the study of culinary and gastronomic literature from historical, social and linguistic perspectives in the past few decades. Because of increased opportunities to travel, internet as a major resource for accessing culinary practices across the world, availability of hitherto unavailable ingredients, and the effect of globalization, cuisine

literature has gained significance. Translating cook books has gained importance in this process and acquired the nature of a professional activity. Since cooking is an integral part of culture and cooking practices vary significantly from one culture to another, translating cuisine literature is quite a challenging task. The problems of translating cook books are distinctive and deserve a serious study. In this paper we focus on translating cook books from a linguistic perspective taking a semantic factorization approach. The central idea is to develop a set of language-independent semantic features which are capable of handling translation both manual as well as machine, across languages.

We propose to develop a ‘Feature interactive model’ (FIM) based on a set of interactive semantic features for translating the cuisine verbs of Telugu and Bangla, the two widely spoken Indian languages belonging to Dravidian and Indo-Aryan language families respectively. Large scale ‘feature data bases’ representing various semantic domains, play a crucial role in natural language processing tasks like word sense disambiguation, information extraction and retrieval, question and answering, machine translation etc. A lot of research in Indian languages is being aimed at developing grammatical and lexical resources like morphological analysers, parts of speech taggers, parsers and WordNet etc. over the past few decades. The present work is an attempt to develop lexical resources which help in translating at word level.

### **1.1 Feature based approach has an edge over the conventional lexicons in the following ways:**

1. The traditional organization of lexicons as in componential analysis, Katz's theory (1972) and others advocate that word meaning can be defined exhaustively

by a finite set of senses per word. When such a system encounters instances of lexical ambiguity, the above theories presume that disambiguation can be achieved by predetermining the set of contexts in which the ambiguous words may appear. The recursive nature of language, however, renders this approach an unmanageable and humongous task.

2. Further, dictionaries and lexicons are static by nature and they fail to account for the creative use of words in new contexts.
3. Feature-based approach, as proposed in this paper, can overcome these flaws by accommodating the novel contexts in which a word might appear. A new feature that may arise due to the use of a word in a novel context can be accommodated in the feature matrix making it dynamic by nature. A more elaborate explanation is provided in section 3.

The 'Feature Interactive Model' proposed here is based on certain aspects of Pustojevsky's (1995) Generative Lexicon.

## **1.2 Problems of lexical transfer:**

The difficulties in translating lexical items involve:

1. Firstly, what counts as one word in one language can be expressed by two or more lexical items in another language.
2. Secondly, the fragment of outside reality covered by a lexical label in one language doesn't usually correspond exactly to the available equivalents in another language.



3. Thirdly, there may be absence of a lexical item in a structured pattern of lexical field that is conventionally called as lexical gap.

Specifying feature sets as envisaged in this paper would address the problems cited above through establishing ranked hierarchy of preferred choices thereby enabling an effective translation.

Feature sets of a particular semantic domain, cuisine in this particular context, combined with one of the existing models of formal semantics like ‘characteristic function of features’ provides a viable solution for resolving problems of lexical transfer.

The paper is organized into four sections. The second section deals with data drawn from both Telugu and Bangla. The third section discusses the model proposed. Section four concludes the paper.

### **1.3 The notions of Semantic Domains and Semantic features:**

The notions of semantic domain and semantic features as employed in this paper are based on their conventional definitions. ‘... Semantic Domains are common areas of human discussion, such as Economics, Politics, Law, and Science which demonstrate lexical coherence. ... The Semantic Domain associated to a particular field is the set of domain specific terms belonging to it, and it is characterized by a set of domain words whose main property is to co-occur in texts ... (Gliozzo, 2006:4). The implications of this work follow from the usefulness of semantic domains to various natural language processing tasks. At a lexical level, Semantic Domains can be used as a (shallow) model for lexical ambiguity and variability, while at a textual level semantic domains provide meaningful topic

taxonomies that can be used to group texts into semantic clusters. In addition, the inherent multilingual nature of semantic domains allows a uniform representation of both the lexicon and the texts in most of the natural languages (ibid).

Semantic features represent the basic conceptual components of meaning for any lexical item. They help in establishing semantic domains. Words that share certain features may be members of the same semantic domain. Correspondingly, diverging semantic features help establish contrast in meanings of words.

The taxonomy of the cooking verbs and the diagnostic features (the sets of semantic features) adopted in this work with a few exceptions, are modelled on Lehrer (1969). A number of features devised in the present work, may hold good cross-linguistically to describe the processes of cooking at a generic level. Distinctions in culinary culture and practices among the speech communities are reflected in their vocabulary. The cuisine terms of each language possess certain features that are unique and unavailable in other languages. The feature matrices proposed in this paper aim to represent these as well.

A detailed analysis of cooking terms would include syntactic derivations like nominalizations, morphological modifications and collocations and also figurative use like metaphorical extensions etc. In this paper, we confine ourselves to the primary meaning of the terms and do not delve into other extended usages. The verbs chosen for study in this paper are those that are directly used in the process of cooking and hence have [+heat] as a default feature. Verbs denoting ancillary actions to cooking like chopping, slicing, grinding, pounding etc. have been excluded.

## 2.0 Cuisine verbs of Telugu and Bangla:

The cuisine verbs which form the data for the present study are based on the native speaker's intuitions.

<b>Telugu</b>	<b>Bangla</b>
1. vaMDu 'to cook'	1. ranna (to cook)
2. uDuku 'to boil'	2. shedd <sup>h</sup> o (boil)
3. veepu 'to fry'	3. b <sup>h</sup> apa (steam)
4. kaalcu 'to roast'	4. b <sup>h</sup> aja (to fry)
5. maggu 'to simmer'	5. shenka (to roast)
6. iguru 'boil till evaporation'	6. poraa (to burn)
7. kaagu 'to heat'	7. garamkora (heat up)
8. marugu 'boil for a long time'	8. naracarakora (stir)
9. terlu 'wavy boiling'	9. shedd <sup>h</sup> o (solids)
10. veeDekku 'to heat'	10. p <sup>h</sup> ota (liquids)

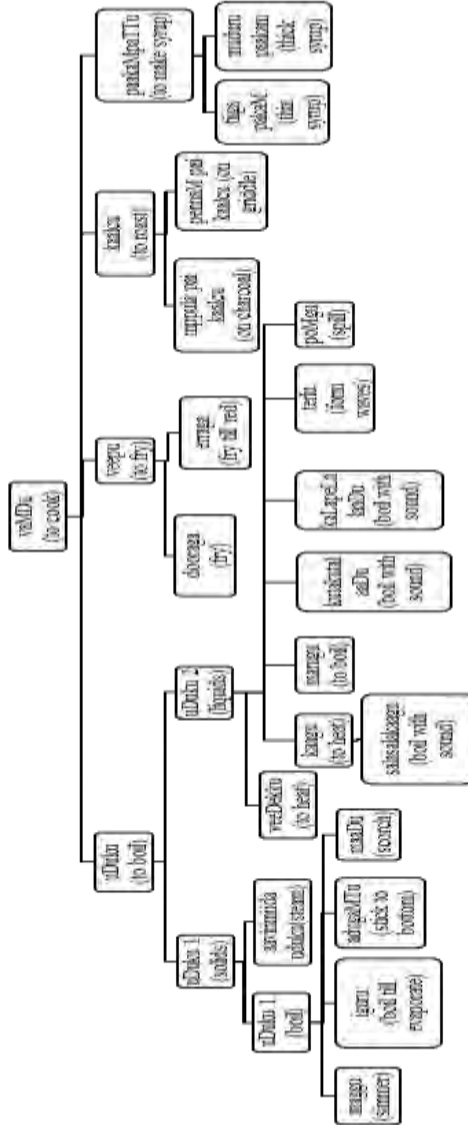
**Table 1**

The following list of features identifies the verbs in an exclusive manner. The binary values [1/0] imply the presence or absence of the feature.

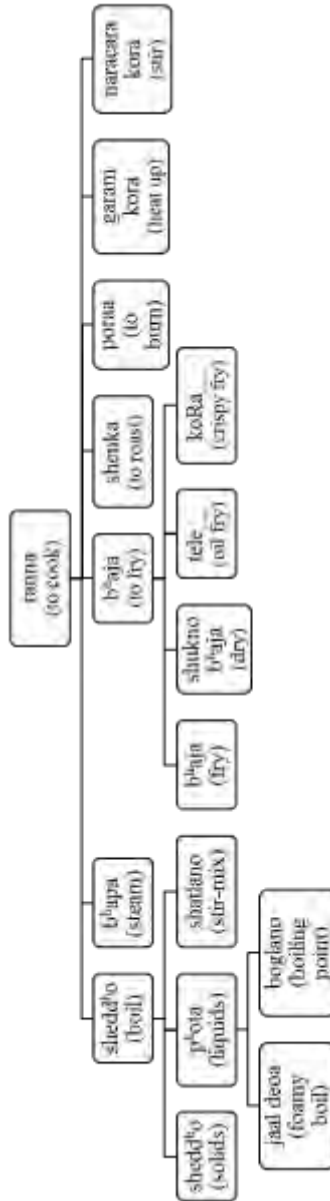
- |                     |                           |
|---------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>1. Heat</b>      | c. Steam/vapour [1/0]     |
| a. Intense [1/0]    | Steam/vapour [1/0]        |
| b. Medium [1/0]     | <b>5. Liquid</b>          |
| c. Low [1/0]        | a. Water [1/0]            |
| <b>2. Flame</b>     | b. Oil/Fat [1/0]          |
| a. High [1/0]       | <b>6. Viscosity [1/0]</b> |
| b. Sim [1/0]        | <b>7. Vessel</b>          |
| c. Low [1/0]        | a. Flat [1/0]             |
| <b>3. State</b>     | b. deep [1/0]             |
| a. Soft [1/0]       | <b>8. Process</b>         |
| b. crisp [1/0]      | a. Cook [1/0]             |
| c. dry [1/0]        | b. Fry [1/0]              |
| d. Evaporated [1/0] | c. Boil [1/0]             |
| e. Melted [1/0]     | d. simmer [1/0]           |
| <b>4. Medium</b>    | <b>9. Cooking Time</b>    |
| a. Null [1/0]       | a. Long [1/0]             |
| b. Liquid [1/0]     | b. Short [1/0]            |

**Table 2**

The terms in a semantic domain enter into the relations of synonymy, antonymy, and hyponymy. This is evident of cuisine terms as well. The following flowcharts illustrate this.



Telugu Cuisine Verbs:  
Table 1



**Bangla Cuisine Verbs: Table 2**

The feature assignment proposed in this paper is exemplified below with the help of the verb *iguru* 'boil till evaporation' drawn from the source language Telugu:

A recipe instruction (Malati Chandur, 1974) in Telugu reads as follows:

... ciMtapamDu pulusu igiripooyi mukka baagaa mettagaa ayyaaka diMcukoovaali.

Tamarind juice evaporated vegetable piece well soft after Remove.

'...remove the curry after the tamarind juice evaporates and the vegetable gets softened well'

In the above example, the word *iguru* 'to boil till evaporation' is used as a complex predicate *igiripoovu* 'to evaporate completely' this has an intensifying function. The context in which *iguru* is used enables us to associate the following features with it.

<p><b>1. Heat</b>                      a. Intense [0]                      b. Medium [0]                      c. Low [1]  <b>2. Flame</b>                      a. High [0]                      b. Sim [1]                      c. Low [1]  <b>3. State</b>                      a. Soft [0]                      b. Crisp [0]                      c. Dry [0]                      d. Evaporated [1]                      e. Melted [0]  <b>4. Medium</b>                      a. Null [0]                      b. Liquid [1]                      c. Steam/vapour [0]</p>	<p><b>1. Liquid</b>                      a. Water [1]                      b. Oil/Fat [1]  <b>2. Viscosity</b> [0]  <b>3. Vessel</b>                      a. Flat [0]                      b. Deep [1]  <b>4. Process</b>                      a. Cook [1]                      b. Fry [1]                      c. Boil [1]                      d. Simmer [0]  <b>5. Cooking Time</b>                      a. Long [1]                      b. Medium [0]                      c. Short [0]</p>
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**Table 3**

### **3.0 Feature Interactive Model (FIM): A working hypothesis:**

In this section, we describe the various components of the proposed model. This model includes the identification of semantic features associated with each word (the cuisine verbs in particular) followed by building of a feature matrix for each word. Then an interactive device is developed that works as a two-step method,

- a) *Feature Check*: Take any given word as input in any given source language and identify the features built for that word.
- b) *Feature Mapping*: Mapping this feature set onto any specified target language word. This process will be based on conditionally sequenced operations.
  - i) *Equal match*: If an exact match of feature set is found in the target language, then that feature matrix will be considered as first priority and the model will extract the word which has been given that feature matrix. Or else, if an exact feature matrix match is not available, then the model will look for a ranked match.
  - ii) *Ranked Match*: The model will look for a number of feature matrices in the specified target language and rank them for most number of matches with the matrix of the given input word. Thus, it will create a ranked list of matrices. Then it will pick the highest ranked feature matrix and extract the word which has been given that feature matrix.

The most generic term is ranked highest in the hierarchy and the related terms, as they acquire more specificity, are placed at the lower levels. The terms placed at the same level are mutually



incompatible making substitution impossible. However, the substitutability of the terms across the levels is highly constrained. The number of levels crossed to replace a word has to be as minimal as possible.

The distribution of the cooking verbs is restricted by the objects with which they collocate even though the semantic process of cooking is the same. The model proposed will be able to account for the issues of ambiguity and polysemy by taking into account collocational restrictions.

Telugu: *kaacu* 'to boil (liquids)' cannot be replaced either by *vaMDu/vaMTaceyyi* 'to cook' or *uDuku* 'to boil' as *kaacu* is a specific term which is realized only in the case of liquids

*paalu/niiru / nuune ... kaacu*

milk /water/ oilboil

'boil/heat milk, water, oil...'

In the case of solid substances, the verb would be *uDuku* 'boil', though semantically the process of 'boiling' is subsumed in both the categories.

Similar mechanism is operative in Bangla as evident from the following example.

*du:dʰ / jol / caa/kheer ... jaal-deo/\*shedho-koro*

milk / water / tea / kheer boil

'boil/heat milk, water, tea, kheer...'

Likewise, in the case of 'boiling solids' a different collocation is licensed.

*aalu/ dim / gajor ... sheddho-koro/\*jaal-deo*  
potato / egg / carrot boil  
'boil potato, egg, carrot, kheer...'

The formalization of the Feature Interactive Model is a direct implementation of Characteristic Feature Set and Characteristic Functions from the Lambda Calculus (Church, 1965) borrowed from the area of compositional semantics in logic to create a computational model suitable for the interaction. As illustrated in Figure 1, the calculus provides a decision making assistance for the model in the Feature Check and Feature Ranking operations in selecting any given word according to feasible matches of given feature set values (available in binary properties). The device will take the input word in the source language (here Telugu) and find its way to the final binary truth value from which the feature checking module will be able to extract a feature-value matrix and superimpose the same upon all feature matrices in the target language and retrieve the matching or best ranked match on the word and extract that word.

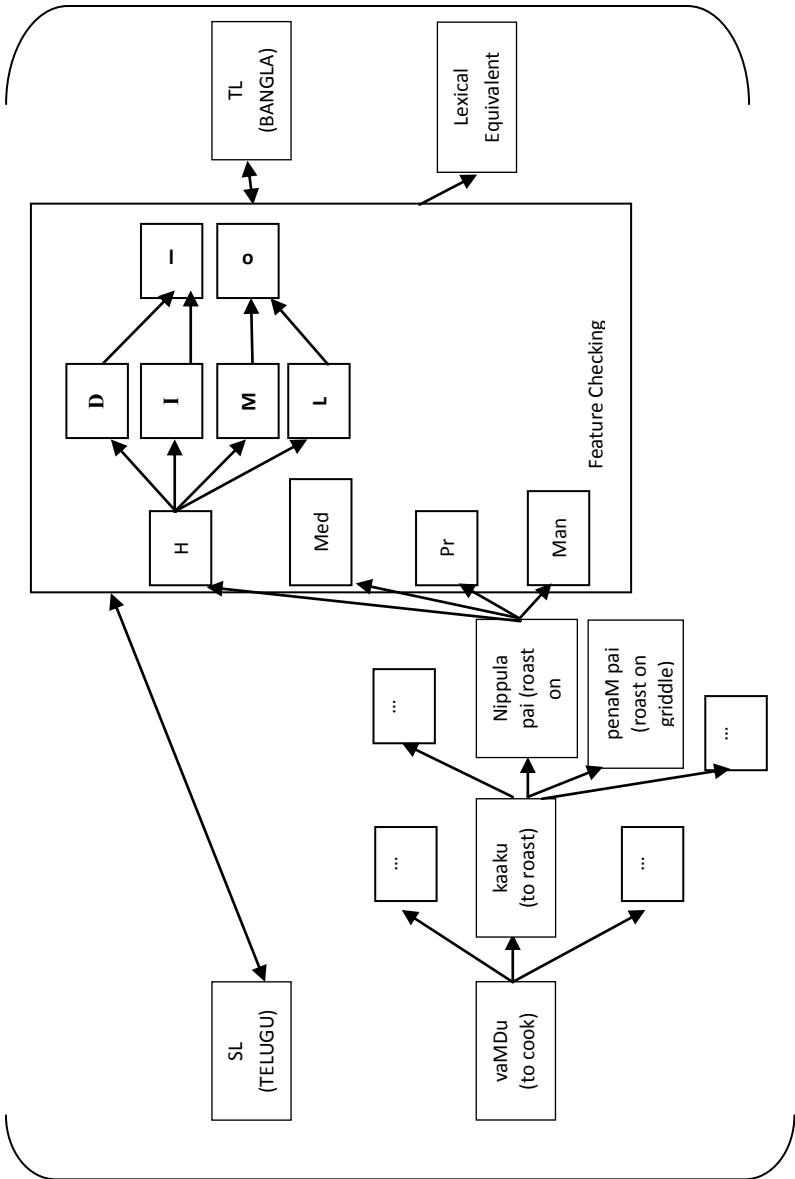


Table 3a

#### **4.0 Conclusion:**

The following inferences can be drawn from the above analysis:

1. Constructing feature matrices is based on analysis of the verbs at three levels:
  - a. Coarse grain
  - b. Medium grain
  - c. Fine grain

A fine grain analysis would involve identifying many more features and thereby feature sets that would capture specific processes of cooking. This should enable capture of the processes that are culture specific and facilitate translating language specific and culture specific terms.

2. The loops available at each layer in the model (see Fig 1) accommodate the distinctive feature of recursiveness of natural languages in an elegant manner.
3. The model also gives scope for scalability to other semantic domains.
4. New terms entering the semantic domain would enrich the existing data bases. A new term that enters, brings along with it a number of associated semantic features which would fit into already existing feature sets or result in recognizing a new feature set.

This paper reports the work in progress and checking the formalism proposed, against a corpus would be the next step in implementing it. This work underlines the need for building feature databases on a large scale for various semantic domains in Indian languages, in view of the fact that very few such resources are available. An integration of established linguistic theories like

componential analysis, generative lexicon and those of formal semantics like characteristic functions of features would help evolve robust and efficient NLP tools.

### Notes:

1. For the full form of the abbreviations in Table 3, refer Table 2 & 3.

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# **Bharati's Adaptation and Appropriation of French Thoughts**

*Pugazhendhi Kumarasamy*

## **Abstract**

*The political context, during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, in India, prompted many Indian writers to pen against the colonial power. The aim of their literary productions was to exercise a twofold influence over the readers: heightening their awareness about freedom and also about the need for a major social reform that will serve as a foundation for the development of post-independent India. By doing so, some of the writers wrote their individual ideas while others sought to introduce, through their writings, thoughts they borrowed from their European counterparts. They translated, adapted or even appropriated these thoughts as per the requirement of the socio-political framework in which the writing and the reading took place. Subramanya Bharathi, a national poet of India, was highly influenced by French literary works during his stay in Pondicherry in 1920s. In many of his essays, he expressed the thoughts of a few French authors, not merely because he personally valued them but the need of these thoughts to intensify the freedom movement in India. This article attempts to draw attention to the relation that Subramanya Bharathi had with the French literary world.*

**Keywords:** Subramania Bharathi, French thoughts, Indian literature, Colonial context.

## **Introduction:**

Chinnaswami Subramanya Bharathi is recognized as one of the most multifaceted literary figures of the 20th century India. Despite being a fervent scholar and devotee of Tamil language, he learned several other languages including French. In other words, he was exceptionally multitalented and multilingual.

His scholarly curiosity about other literatures and the world outside India made him discover, during his stay in Pondicherry, many French authors and thinkers whom he appreciated greatly. In his essays, we believe that some of his writings might have been inspired by these French personalities. We also notice that he translated some of their writings, by giving due credit to the authors. It also seems in his essays that he borrowed ideas from some French thinkers, as and when their ideas were compatible, with the message he wanted to convey to the Indian readership of his time.

The purpose of this article is twofold, first it will give an account of the French authors and thinkers whose ideas are found in Subramanya Bharathi's essays and then it will also attempt to examine the reasons for borrowing or accepting these ideas by the national poet.

## **Bharathi's awareness about France and French**

In 1907, when Subramanya Bharathi started working as an editor for the Tamil weekly *India*, he also expressed his creativity and thoughts in the journal by publishing many essays, poems and songs. Most of his writings in those days were nationalistic and spiritual in nature and he published a few songs admiring the Russian and the French revolutions. In 1908, when the proprietor of the *India* was arrested by the British, knowing that he would also be

arrested soon, Bharathi was compelled to leave Madras and take refuge in Pondicherry which was then a territory under the French rule.

Though he was expelled from the British India, this period of his life was the most productive in terms of writings. One of the reasons behind this may be that Bharathi's stay in Pondicherry brought him closer to many other Indian political figures such as Sri Aurobindo, as well as to the French culture, socio-political thoughts and literature. Even though the journal was banned in the British India, Bharathi continued to edit and publish the weekly journal *India* from Pondicherry. The new editions of the *India* published from Pondicherry carried the translation of French national motto in Tamil: **ஸ்வதந்திரம், ஸமத்துவம், சகோதரத்துவம் (swadhandhiram, samathuvam, sagodharathuvam)** which means Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity in Tamil.

During his stay in Pondicherry, Bharathi learned French thoroughly with the help of a native French speaker called Antoine Arloque. He discovered slowly through books and conversations with French natives, the French culture, history and literature, and developed a keen liking for the same. He had even learnt the French national anthem by heart and used to sing it as good as a French native. Mr. R. Ganagalingam, who was made to wear the holy thread by Bharathi, mentions in his book how passionate was Bharathi about singing the French national anthem.

Bharathiyar had great love for French music. Particularly, he liked the French National Anthem, la Marseillaise, immensely. Both Bharathiyar and "pappa" - Tmt. Sakunthala – learnt the French National Anthem from Antoine Arloque.



When Bharathiyar sang *la Marseillaise* in solitude, he used to sing it, stamping his right foot down ferociously, and the song dripping with a martial spirit. It never occurred to those who heard him from outside that a Tamil was singing. It would appear as though, a European or a Frenchman was singing. The French pronunciation was so clear and perfect (My Revered Guru, 2006).

Bharathi was so inspired by the French national anthem that he translated the first two stanzas into Tamil with the title **போர்க்கோலம் பூணுவீரே (porkolam poonuveere)** which means "Let's get ready for the war" in Tamil. It's also said that he gave this translation to some school children who sang it in a play staged during a school function.

Apart from these cultural and political knowledge of France, Bharathi also constantly updated himself about the political events in France. For instance, he writes in one of his essays entitled **அடங்கி நட (adangi nada)** which means "be submissive", about the case of *Dreyfus* in France and argues that mistakes do take place even in a republic but it does not mean that we cannot rectify them. He mentions that the irregularities in the present French Republic were exposed through the case of *Dreyfus* but the people of France still believe that republic is the best form of government. Hence, the people of India should also believe in their ability to run the government themselves and they should not pay attention to the comments of the British who claim that Indians will commit mistakes if India is entirely handed over to them.

In addition to his cultural and political awareness about France, Bharathi was also well-read about French Literature and socio-

political thoughts. One could come across several citations, translations, ideas of various French thinkers, and literary figures in his essays. Notably, one can find the works of Montesquieu, Voltaire, Jean Jacques Rousseau, Victor Hugo and Proudhon. In many places, Bharathi gives due credit to the author from whom he borrows the idea, and in other places one can only observe a strong resemblance between Bharathi's ideas and the writings of the French author. In such cases, we may assume that either Bharathi got inspired from the author or it's a coincidence that his ideas are similar to the ones of the French author.

## Montesquieu and Bharathi

In his well-known work, *The Spirit of Laws*, Montesquieu holds that priests have more power amongst the barbarian people as they use superstitions to gain such power and gives the Germans the examples of his time. Bharathi in his essay, entitled **யாரை தொழுவது? (yarai thozhuvadhu?)** which means "Whom to pray enough?") in Tamil, holds that priests use superstitions and blind beliefs to cheat common men; hence we should stop believing in their intermediary and worship God in our own way. He also says that one can get God's favor and protection just by doing good deeds. Such a person does not even need to go to a temple.

Although Bharathi's denouncement of the insincerity of priests in the beginning of the essay reflects the thought of Montesquieu, he goes further and provides a solution to the common men. In other words, Montesquieu's writing is more descriptive about the role of Priests whereas Bharathi's essay is advisory in nature.

## Voltaire and Bharathi

Voltaire in his work, *Candid or the Optimism*, talks about an imaginary country called "El Dorado" where gold is found abundantly and no one values gold or any material objects and only human virtues are valued, thus showing the reader the ideal world that Voltaire aspired for and therefore influencing the reader of his time to desire the same.

Similarly, Bharathi talks about an imaginary island in his short story entitled **சந்திர தீவு (sandhira theevu)** which literally means moon island in Tamil. In the story, the island is ruled by a king called Ganga Putiran who is in search of a groom for his daughter Chandrigai. Meanwhile, the king of Kasi in India named Vithya putiran sends his mother and his minister named Sthaman to ask for king Ganga Putiran's daughter's hand in marriage to the king of Kasi.

The King Ganga Putiran, his Minister Govinda Rajan and Sthaman go for hunting and rest under a tree and engage in a detailed, long conversation. Through this discussion which occupies most of the story, Bharathi presents his ideologies about country, kingdom, equality, women's freedom, and so on. Also, he talks about slavery referring implicitly to the colonisation in India.

Bharathi and Voltaire create an imaginary country in their stories through which they present their ideal world to the reader, thereby inspiring him or her to follow their ideology in real life. Although, the ideas are not the same between Voltaire and Bharathi, their methods of conveying the message implicitly through an imaginary space and time are common between them.

## **Jean Jacques Rousseau and Bharathi**

Rousseau, in his famous work, *The Social Contract* mentions that there are three kinds of government, namely aristocracy or monarchy, representative democracy and direct democracy and gives a detailed explanation of these governments. Bharathi, in his essay entitled **ராஜ்ய சாஸ்திரம் (radjiya saasthiram)** which means “Political Science” in sankritized Tamil mentions these three different kinds of governments that exist in western countries and insists that such discipline be taught to school students so that they can contribute to the political development of India.

Although the types of government mentioned in Bharathi’s essay are the same as in Rousseau’s work, one cannot entirely be sure of the origin as Bharathi does not give any credit to any foreign author in his essay. Moreover, Bharathi presents many other ideas in the same essay that seem to be well-suited to the Indian context, such as the development of villages and temples and houses for the poor etc.

In short, it appears that Bharathi had read Rousseau but borrowed only a few ideas and added many of his own so that it suits the Indian socio-political situation.

## **Victor Hugo and Bharathi**

Bharathi has translated several passages from Victor Hugo’s *Les Misérables*, giving due credit to the author. It is interesting to note that though Bharathi gave credit to the author, he does not mention the name of the literary work in his translation and he

translated only some selected parts in which there is no trace of the storyline or of characters that are found in the novel.

Such selection implies a deliberate omission of the rest of the story to which Bharathi may not have given importance. Also, it seems that he selected these parts because they could be related to the Indian context. For example, from the novel *Les Misérables* he has translated a passage where social equality is discussed and he gave it the title "What is equality?". He did not translate the other ideas that are there in the same chapter of the novel. It is probably because the idea about social equality was important to the Indian context as there was casteism and other social hierarchies with which Bharathi was not happy and coincidentally he found the same idea in Victor Hugo's novel and translated it immediately.

He translated another passage from the same novel which is about love. In fact, in the novel a character called Marius writes a love letter to the women with whom he is in love. In this letter Marius gives a definition of love. Bharathi translated only this definition of love. Bharathi intentionally omitted the parts that are purely admirations and hyperboles which don't describe the real feeling of love.

We can therefore conclude that Bharathi's translation of Victor Hugo's works was motivated more socially and ideologically than literarily.

## **Proudhon and Bharathi**

Pierre-Joseph Proudhon was the first French politician who declared himself as anarchist and who said "Property is theft". Bharathi, in one of his essays entitled **செல்வம் (selvam)** which

means fortune in Tamil, quotes Proudhon and presents his anti-industrialist ideas.

Once again Bharathi seems to be motivated by the ideology of Proudhon which is pro-workers and anti-capitalistic. Bharathi further extends this ideology of Proudhon to his essay and adapts it to the Indian context; he says rich men in villages should help the poor by providing them the basic necessities such as food and shelter. He continues that we should not let the gap between the rich and the poor widen and deepen otherwise we might end-up like in Europe where there is big social discrimination between the rich and the poor.

## **Conclusion**

In brief, one can say that Bharathi as a scholar read a lot about the French literature, the socio-political context of France and got influenced by some of the thinkers and authors. He chose to translate, adapt or appropriate, those with whom he entirely agreed and especially those relating to the problems and mind-set existed in colonized India. He might have been, as we don't have any explicit proof or open statement from the national poet himself, saying that he was inspired by some socio-political thinkers such as Voltaire, Jean Jacques Rousseau, Montesquieu and Proudhon.

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# Reading Rain, Reading River: An Interpretative Discussion on Rajbanshi Folk Ritual

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## Abstract

*This paper aims at reading the folk rituals concerning rain and river among the Rajbanshi community of North Bengal. The different meanings associated with the ingredients of the rituals and the ritual symbols changed with the passage of time and space structure. However, case studies show that man-nature and super-nature are closely connected and this connection can be observed by reading and interpreting the ritual symbols. The extinction and presence of rituals also hint at how the people practicing them have changed according to their demands and necessities.*

**Keywords:** Hudum Deo, Mecheni Khela, Rajbanshi

## **Discussion:**

This paper is focussed on reading two specific folk rituals of Rajbanshis of North Bengal: Hudum Deo and Mecheni. In terms of discussing folk rituals, it will examine the folk tale, ritual practices and the songs associated with each of them. The attempt here is to identify the symbolic specificities as well as the multiple meanings associated with each narrative.

On this pretext, we expand our readings to Turner's *Forest of Symbols* and though Turner distinguishes the meanings of a symbol



in three levels: exegetical, operational and positional, we will discuss only the first two levels of meaning. On an exegetic level, when we look into the ritual symbols, we have our information mostly from secondary sources, i.e the literature available in printed form. Because the field study we have done so far explains the slow disappearance of the rituals. To begin with, we will first discuss the practice of worshipping Hudum Deo, where women pray in nude for the annual rain on a new moon night, is a symbol of pleasing the rain god for a good harvest<sup>1</sup>.

Now, as we derive the exegetic meanings of this ritual, it also helps us to understand the multiple voices of the symbols found in the ritual. For example, in this ritual the symbol of nudity refers to multiple meanings. First, it is an act of pleasing God. Secondly, it is a mark of barren land that needs to be blessed for more production. Here nudity becomes the dominant symbol which allows us to observe the economic representation of their community where rain or water is an absolute necessity for their sustenance. The recessive symbol here would be that of the male members which again portrays the gender role played within the community. The cry for rain is probably also an indication of more powerful fertilization since the community's population had also suffered due to migration and foreign invaders. Hudum Deo thus becomes the symbol of invisible power which will protect them from diseases and natural catastrophes. Here in this paper we can observe how the lack of water has resulted in composition of their folk songs.

*Deoya Jhori Aayre*  
*Dakiya Dakiya*  
*Ek Chilki Jhori Deo*  
*Jang Gao Dhuiya*

Translation: God showers on us with a thunder. Splash little water on us and return after taking a bath.

*Hudum Deo re Hudum Deo  
Hagi Acchi Paanideo  
Hamar Dyashotnai Paani  
Hagatikaay Bara Baani.*

Translation: Lord Hudum! O Lord Hudum! I have defecated, please give water. In our country there is no water. So we farm without cleaning after defecation.

The above songs speak about two concepts: fear and pollution. The first song invokes the fear of scarcity of water to that extent the God himself is being asked to take a bath. This implies that the image of God in their mind is no less than a human body which also needs to be kept clean. In the second song, fear is of a drought implying scarcity of water and non-yielding sufficient food-crops. Pollution is implied in the second two lines of the song which translates their economic and societal condition and the anxiety of remaining as a polluted group. This needs to be read in the context of how their culture has been visualised by the mainstream communities over the years.

As we have already read that Hudum's idol is a temporary one and it is not designed in the shape of a human being,

*Aaye re Deoya Giji  
Dhan Chal Jauk Bhiji.  
Aaye re Deoya Shoshey  
Maang Niya Thhak Bhyashreya.  
Aaye re Deoya Dakiya  
DhaanChauljauk Bhashia.  
Aaye re Deoyadakiya  
Doichiradengmakhiya*

Translation: O God! Come with thunder. Let the paddy and rice get wet. Come God, with the sound of storm. The womb is widened for you. Come God, with roar. Let the paddy and rice float away. Come God, with a call. Will mix curd and flaked rice and serve it.

There is a shift in the tone of this song too. In the first line, when God is summoned, it is just for cultivation. If the paddy field gets drenched, then the crop production will be abundant. The second line where female reproductive organ is mentioned about, it implies that the population should also flourish with the food crops. So there are sufficient mouths to be fed with the production. This is a kind of maintaining balance. But then the tone shifts where an anxiety is covertly expressed when the speaker says let the rice and paddy float away. This is an implication of excess rain which is disastrous for both crops and people. In the final line, there is a mention of flaked rice which is considered to be a secondary food for rural population and mostly used when the crop production is minimal. A quality of flaked rice is that it can fill the hunger even if the amount is less. So Hudum is also offered flaked rice when there is a shortage.

#### **Song 4:**

*Hura Hudumer Biyao Hoy*  
*Sitar Sendur Daane Paay*  
*Joy Joy Aaji Hudumer Biyao Hoy*  
*Kaaner Sona Daane Paay*  
*Joy Joy Aaaji HudumerBiyao Hoy*  
*Huda Hudumir Biyao Hoy*  
*Poroner Shari Daane Paay.*

Translation: Hura and Hudum get married, and they get sindur (vermillion powder) as gift. Bless Bless, today is Hudum's marriage and he gets gold for ears as a gift. Hura and Hudum get married and they get Sari as gift.

**Song 5:**

*Aami Kochur Lotar Maton Helibo Na*

*Olpo Boyosher Hudum Deo*

*Ayeyaaye re Kaala Megh*

*Aaye Parbot Dhaya*

Translation: I'll not wave like creeping plants, O my young Hudum Deo. Come O dark clouds, chasing the mountains.

The fourth and fifth songs are symbolising the association of the marital aspects. In the fourth song, the lines to some extent indicate to what gifts are given on Rajbangshi wedding, while in the fifth song the invocation Hudum is more like a lover and not a God. The song is composed with an idea of a young, energetic God who will chase the women like a passionate lover. Thus, the need of a body merges with the sacred, and what we find is that the supernatural is invoked through the natural objects to fulfil the needs of people.

On an operational level, our study is stretched to observe the ritual of Mecheni in Jalpaiguri district of West Bengal. Mecheni Puja is the other name of Tistaburi Puja which is performed on the month of Baishakh. It is performed along with Mecheni Khela which involves collecting rice, paddy and vegetables from the village households in that month. The devotee is usually a woman who along with some other women goes to every Rajbangshi house in the village, sings songs, dances and collects the ingredients. The Mecheni khela is performed throughout the month of Baishakh.

They carry an umbrella with them which is decorated with flowers and in the handle of it a small piece of cloth containing rice is tied. The umbrella is their symbol of deity which they address as Tistaburi or the river Tista. The symbol of umbrella can also be read as a shelter to the people. Before the umbrella is taken out of the devotee's house, it is worshipped along with the household deities. The devotee holds the umbrella in her hand and one of the members in Mecheni group holds a sacred bamboo stick which they symbolise as Shiva. The group starts singing the Mecheni songs from the devotee's house itself and continues to perform even when they are walking towards the houses of other villagers. Before entering each house they make Uludhwani, after which they enter and inform the residents that they have come for Mecheni Khela. The women folk of each house bring a wooden stool and keep it in front of their household temples. The devotee places the umbrella there to cover the stool. The married women in each house bring some mustard oil, vermilion powder and a plate or a winnowing tray full of paddy or rice and vegetables grown in their crop-fields. The devotee makes a mixture of oil and vermilion and puts three red marks on the umbrella and the stool. She collects the rice and other crops in her bag and leaves a few grains of rice from the cloth attached to the umbrella in the plate as *prasad*. During this entire ritual practice others sing songs and dance around the umbrella. The stool becomes a sacred space as it is recognised then as a place where Tistaburi has settled. If there is any diseased person in the household, he/she is advised to sit there after the ritual is over as it is believed that the blessed seat of Tistaburi will cure the diseases. Once the collection is over for a day, the Mecheni group assembles in an open space or field where they make a circle and sing the Bhong/ Bish songs or vulgar songs. Like this the ritual is performed for a month until the collection from each household in the village is over. Finally, on the

last day of Baishakh, Mecheni Puja is performed. On that day the devotee takes bath in the morning, worships the household deities and the sacred umbrella and takes it to the Jalpesh temple. A local priest or Adhikari assists in worshipping the deities in their house. The other women in the Mecheni group also join her and they perform the Mecheni songs and dances while they walk to the temple. In the temple, first they enter the temple building with the umbrella, worship Lord Shiva and return to the temple ground where other groups have also assembled. They make a dongaa, a small alter shaped structure, with plantain stems and mark it with tel-sindur. They place a bunch of bananas, a pair of eggs, flowers and sweets on that dongaa and keep it under the umbrella. Another series of songs and dances are performed. They also light some lamps and incense sticks to pray. Finally the devotee lifts the donga on her head and carries it to the temple pond/lake. The other women also accompany her, and one of them holds the umbrella. The devotee prays to the Sun God and immerses the donga in water and takes a dip. The flowers and rice bag on the umbrella are also immersed in water. The umbrella is washed. Finally, they return to the ground where the entire community sits in a circle and have their meal.

The practice of Hudum Deo has become extinct among the Rajbanshis, while Mecheni Khela is still surviving. The reasons for such changes are space and time. The space for practicing Hudum Deo has become limited and with the arrival of modernization, nudity cannot be exercised in public. On the contrary, Mecheni can be accommodated with time and space since it offers no such secrecy. While Hudum Deo was more primitive forms of ritual, Mecheni to a large extent has been made a part of mainstream culture. Even though Mecheni Khela is performed in the village households, the final emersion takes place in the temple premises.

**Notes:**

1. Biswas, Ratan. 'RajbangshiLokachar O HudumDeo': This ritual is usually performed in the onset of monsoon when in a dark night or a new moon night few married Rajbangshi women gather in a distant farm land. The participants undress themselves and begin the performances related to the ritual. First they make an idol Hudum with clay or cowdung and then chant the mantras to perform the worshipping. These chants are composed in the Rajbangshi language. Since no men are allowed in the venue of ritual, an experienced woman performs the puja. The god is offered a naibidya made of banana, milk, sugar etc. After the puja everyone prostrates in front of the idol and prays. Then a couple of women sit on their knees and a plough is tied on their shoulder. They pull the plough like bulls and on the ploughed field few seeds are sowed and a few women enact the performance of planting small plants. Following that they return their village together, and the moment they enter a household, the men folk of that house leave or hide themselves. Likewise, each of them returns to their own house and the performative groups take their clothes and return their home.
2. Tista is a river in north Bengal. The name Tistaburi refers to the river Goddess.
3. The first month in Bengali calendar.
4. It's a sound uttered by women on festive occasions
5. Bish can be literally translated as poison. The Bish songs refer to those which cannot be sung or heard in public because of their contents which are mostly vulgar.

6. Tel-sindur can be literally translated as oil and vermillion powder. A mixture of mustard oil and vermillion powder is made by the devotee and it is used to mark any object as sacred.

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# Reading the Ao-Naga Folksongs: Rewriting the Custom of Head Taking

*Imchasenla*

## Abstract

*Besides the transformation brought to the Naga Hills by colonization and American missionaries, the subsequent colonial documentation/ representation of the community has been of academic and scholarly interest in the recent years. Naga Hills were turned into a field of study. The literatures of the colonizing cultures distorted the experience and realities of the Nagas and portrayed them as inferior. The literatures framed the mindset of the readers to see the Nagas as chaotic, irrational and primitive, savage and effeminate people while the colonizers as ordered, rational and masculine. This article aims to focus on the Naga custom of taking heads that served as the important foundation of the ancient Naga society. The Nagas in the colonial literatures by and large are famously known for their “headhunting” tradition. This custom has given them a widespread notoriety in the colonial documentary records and in the neighbouring valleys. In fact, no tribe has a more established reputation for “headhunting” than the Nagas and even today Nagas are strongly associated with the term “head-hunters” by other ethnic groups. At present,, this practice may sound “barbaric” and “savage” but this game of glory was a part and parcel of every Naga village and was a serious business where the social, economic, political and other significant aspects of the lives of Nagas were tightly interwoven to this custom. However, the invading, “cultured” colonial Euro-Americans promoted the image of “headhunting” as a*

*cruel and barbarous practice. The standards of “evaluation” deployed by the ethnographers which was not really an anthropologist’s array was not just. The ancient Nagas practised decapitation to serve a different purpose. Here, the intention is not to defend head-hunting” as a practice, but to provide a socio-historical perspective of it from within, from the perspective of the Nagas.*

**Keywords:** Nagas, Head-hunting, Nokinketer, Ao-Naga Folksongs, Rewriting

## **Discussion:**

The adjectives such as “savages”, “heathen”, “barbarous”, and “head-hunters” have been constantly used almost synonymously with the Nagas in colonial representations over decades. The usages of such derogatory concepts have resulted in misrepresentation and misinterpretation. Therefore, it is important to understand the community from the perspectives of an insider to contest the social constructions of the community by the outsiders. There is a need for a critical study of the Naga ethnography and for an attempt to revise and reassess the colonial literatures. A re-interpretation of the community and its culture by using different methodologies and with new perspectives is important to rise above the colonial anthropological and conventional interpretations. Such re-interpretation is crucially important to decipher the act of colonial representation and thereby, bring out a new meaning, a new identity. However, reconstituting or going home completely would be impossible since the Naga community has undergone tremendous changes and development over the years. It could only be re-claimed, revisited and realized in partial, fragmented ways. Helen

Tiffin (1995) identifies this problem in relation to the African literatures as follows:

Processes of artistic and literary decolonization have involved a radical dis/mantling of European codes and post-colonial subversion and appropriation of the dominant European discourses. This has frequently been accompanied by the demand for an entirely new or wholly received ‘reality’, free from all colonial taint. Given the nature of the relationships between coloniser and colonised, with its pandemic brutalities and its cultural denigration, such a demand is desirable and inevitable. But as the contradictions inherent in a project such as Chinweizu, Jemie and Madubuike’s the decolonization of the African Literature demonstrate....such pre-colonial cultural purity can never be fully recovered. (p. 95)

Tiffin talks about the infeasibility of creating and recreating national or regional formations that is wholly independent of the European historical implication in the colonial enterprise. At the impossibility of recovering pre-colonial cultural purity, however, she puts forward a vital and inevitable task to the colonized “others” i.e., to re-read and re-write the European historical and fictional records. She also emphasizes that the role/project of the post-colonial writing is to interrogate the discourses and strategies of the Europeans and to investigate the means by which Europe “imposed and maintained its codes in the colonial domination of so much of the rest of the world” (1995, p. 95). And such interrogation and investigation according to her is the “subversive manoeuvres” which is a characteristic of post-colonial texts.

Tejaswini Niranjana (1995) states that the “post-colonial desire to *re-translate* is linked to the desire to *re-write history*.” Rewriting according to her is:

...based on the act of reading, for translation in the post-colonial context involves what Benjamin would call “citation” and not an “absolute forgetting.” Hence there is no simple rupture with the past but a radical rewriting of it. To read existing translations against the grain is also to read colonial historiography from a post-colonial perspective, and a critic alert to the ruses of colonial discourse can help uncover what Walter Benjamin calls the “second tradition,” the history of resistance. (p. 172)

Thus, the potential of re-translation/re-writing as a subversive strategy of resistance against subjugation needs to be explored. Likewise, the Naga colonial narratives need to be liberated by taking recourse to re-translation and re-writing and reject the legitimized theory and practices framed by British imperialism. In the present day, Naga scholars create “new perspectives” and attempt to reclaim the ancient history and articulate and represent their identity drawing lessons from the rich oral tradition of the community. However, given the diversity of the Naga tribes, it would be impossible to do a research on the oral tradition of all the Naga tribes because of the vastness of the material. Therefore, to contest the colonial representation of the Nagas, the primary focus of this paper is limited only to the translation of the Ao-Naga folksongs. Through these Ao-Naga folksongs, an attempt is made to delve into the past lived experience and realities of the Ao-Naga community. This “new perspective” would give a new platform to the Nagas in general and Ao-Naga community in particular, to bring about change in the colonized consciousness of the readers which was framed and

reinforced by the colonizers. For this study, the Ao-Naga folksongs would be taken as an indispensable tool to re-create and rewrite the lost past which in turn determines a present and a future.

### **The Custom of Head Taking:**

Strange activities in other humans have the ability to catch the attention or fascinate people and the practice of “head-hunting” falls in this category. The term describes the practice of chopping off of the head of the fallen enemy and preserving the skulls for various reasons. “Headhunting” was practiced in the Naga Hills and other parts of Southeast Asia like the Ilongot of Philippines and Dayaks of Borneo. This practice served particular purposes for all these tribals. It was an aspect of their life, intrinsically linked to cosmology, agriculture, human fertility and religious power. It was also for defence and proof of manhood and spirituality. The inclination to take the head was seen as essential as many believed that the head represented the core of the personality. Therefore, to chop off the head was both an act of violence against and an insult to the fallen victim. It was also commonly believed that the soul lives in the head and taking an enemy’s head would take its skills, strength, and power and therefore weakens the enemy’s entire community. In many “headhunting” societies, skulls represented the most powerful magic in the world and vital transfusions of energy. Taking a head was a ritual passage to manhood, denoting the transition from childhood to adulthood. The proud owner of an enemy’s head victoriously displayed it outstandingly and this increased his personal status. This practice has a long history as a supremely effective weapon and the more one could procure the heads, the more the status of the tribe as a whole increased because of the added bonus of helping to threaten existing or future enemies. And

for that reason, those that have the highest trophies often had extremely fierce reputations (Linda Heaphy, 2014).

The Nagas in the colonial literatures by and large are famously known for their “headhunting” tradition. Earlier times like for many ancient tribes, for every Naga the custom of taking heads was an accepted customary existence and has extensively been “established as a custom in the process of history and had gained recognition as a sign of bravery” (Thong, 1997, p. 10). On the whole, the entire Naga life in the ancient period appears to revolve around the practice of taking heads and its glory. It was a custom practised to achieve social mobility in society as well as political and economic success (Longchar, 1999, p. 29). However, this custom has given them a widespread notoriety in the colonial documentary records and in the neighbouring valleys. In fact, no tribe has a more established reputation for “headhunting” than the Nagas. It is remarkable that Nagas are still strongly associated with the term “head-hunters” by other ethnic groups and whenever one utters “Nagas” the message invariably sent across is headhunting. The Nagas did practice taking heads but defining them as “head-hunters” is problematic because it carries an enormous potential for misinterpretation and misunderstanding. It sounds like a hobby or the only ultimate desire or objective of existence. It only serves as a justification for colonial intervention (civilizing the savages). In short, the usage of term Nagas as “head-hunters” is logically incorrect as it gives value judgment as substantiated by preceding discussions. Thus, the notion of “contest” arises here and the necessity to read the Naga struggles, from the perspective of the Nagas gains ground.

The Nagas never addressed themselves as “headhunters.” For instance, the only title that was awarded to an Ao-Naga warrior after procuring a *mangko* was *Nokinketer*. *Nok* meaning *dao*, *in* meaning power and *keter* meaning possessor that culturally meant a warrior using a *dao* with much power and valour. The cultural history of the Nagas in general defines the people as warrior tribesman and the Aos were no different. In the Ao-Naga society, the most prominent people were the warriors, and among the warriors, the *Nokinketer* were considered a cut above the rest. They were defined as good warriors, distinguished in war for success in many combats or for having killed many men at war. The *Nokinketer* with the power of the *nok* as the vanguard brought security, prestige, honour and prosperity to the people. The *nok* executed the power of might and strength. In the present context, this prestigious title has translated into a different usage. Influential and powerful learned Ao-Nagas in the society are called *Nokinketers*. Today the term *Nok* is metaphorically used as pen which is “mightier than a sword” as Edward Bulwer-Lytton has coined. Although the practice of taking heads is a thing of the past, contemporary Nagas are urged to use the past glorious power of *nok* to move forward to bring out many young Naga writers, intellectuals, and philosophers in the society. The power of *nok* is invoked to influence people and thereby play an important role in inspiring and guiding people.

Regarding the origin of beheading, there is a growing discrepancy of folktales among the Nagas and one such Ao-Naga folktale can be traced. According to the traditional Ao tale, they learnt this practice from the ants. In the beginning there was only one tree on the surface of the earth. This tree bore much fruit and all the birds settled on its branches to eat the fruits. One day a bird dropped one of the fruits on the ground and a lizard ate it up. When

the bird searched for the fallen fruit, it was informed by the lizard that an ant had eaten the fruit. Since both the lizard and the ant denied eating the fruit, it was arranged that the case would be decided by taking an oath. After taking the oath, it was clear that the lizard was guilty. At this time all the ants chopped off the head of the lizard and took it out in a procession as a sign of victory, which was seen by human beings. It was in imitation of this incident that Ao-Nagas ritualized and practiced taking the heads of the enemies (Pongener, 2011, p. 46-47). The tale or myth about the beginning of this custom is enshrined in the short song:

Oh! In *Chungliyimti*, we *Aos*  
With bare hands  
Fought in battle  
With bare hands alone  
We the humans could not kill our enemy  
*Longsemba* on his way to work saw  
Black ants cut the lizard's head  
Saw them yell their victor's cry  
Imitating that on the day  
When *Pasa* village was invaded

*Hemsüla*'s head was cut and brought  
From then on, we, the *Aos*, too started beheading.

The story and the song cited signify several things and work as clues to the Naga custom of headhunting apart from conflict with other tribes which were inevitable for survival in ancient times. The metaphors of bird, lizard and ant are significant. Ant is the smallest



and most helpless of all and the lizard actually lies to birds. The ants were angered by the injustice meted out to them and hence, the right to anger. Secondly, though they are the smallest of beings, united they are a force. The song refers to fighting with “bare hands” and “bare hands alone” which could not defeat the enemy. It is then that *Longsemba* decides to go about the ants’ way. He cuts the head of *Hemsüla* when the village was invaded. It is injustice and invasion that which is opposed and fought back in order to protect one’s own community and people which is common to all cultures and civilizations in the world. Unlike big nations and kings, the small community of Nagas cannot afford to have a separate army to protect them, making a division of labour between them army and the civilians. Every member of the community is a warrior and protector. In such a society war and valour are cherished virtues and keeping war trophies as a proof of that is quite but natural. There is no community that does not have war literature, epics, poetry and narratives. Hence, calling a Naga warrior as an “aggressor” or describing headhunting as an unprovoked act and a “game” is uncalled for. Moreover, there is also a hint at the community’s transformation from fighting with bare hands to acquiring weapons. This is how oral communities preserve their history through cultural memory.

The invading, “cultured” colonial Euro-Americans promoted the image of “headhunting” as a cruel and barbarous practice. However, the ancient Nagas practised decapitation to serve a different purpose. Traditionally, the Nagas differentiated between the soul (a celestial body) and the spirit (a supernatural being). They believed that the soul of a person resides in the nape of the neck and could only be set free by beheading and the spiritual being in the head would bring good luck and prosperity to the village. The

practice of beheading was intimately connected with agrarian rites. The heads were considered as “manna” and essential ingredients in agricultural fertility rites. According to the beliefs of the Nagas, if a work in a new spot for cultivation was carried out without the sacrifice of a head, the spirit of the field would destroy the crops by causing drought or sending hailstorms, wild animals, birds and so forth. It was also believed that it would avert the displeasure of some evil spirits and please gods in times of an epidemic. Hence, head was regarded as the most precious gem among all, in fact an “intrinsic component of their culture as it was based on the concept of fertility and was thus the mainspring of their lives and activities” (Pongener, 2011, p. 47).

Among the Nagas, the practice of decapitation was also a space of contesting masculinity; a sign of bravery, prestige and honour. The desire for social recognition is a natural impulse in every human being and likewise a Naga would strive relentlessly to seek any opportunity to be socially recognized and wish for nothing more in life than to prove his worth, his strength and power as a warrior. A warrior who could procure a head earned the greatest honour of wearing elaborately designed traditional attires and ornaments which were envied by all and which could not be worn by everyone. Beheading was also closely associated with funerary and eschatological rites. It was believed by some Naga communities that the warriors whose heads they took would become their slaves in the next world. For this reason, several stone monuments were placed over the warriors’ tomb to represent the number of heads they took while they were alive.

Every Naga village was an independent state and Nagas lived under the constant threat of raids and intertribal conflicts. And for that reason, the villages were usually located at the top of the hills

and for security and defence. The practice of beheading was obligatory because those days “might was right” and Charles Darwin’s theory of “Survival of the fittest” held well. It was their policy to slay the enemy’s head before they were attacked. They executed this practice “as a call of duty to adjust themselves to their environment, and their very survival depended on it” (Thong, 1997, p. 10). An account of the intertribal raids or conflicts of the Nagas during the ancient period is briefly narrated in the short song below:

Oh! The enemies  
Of the downstream of *Tsüsu* river  
You may be united as the *Fifi* You may resemble the  
handsomeness of the *warojakshi*  
But deep inside,  
Bitter are your deeds.

**Context:** In the olden days, *Longkhum* villagers (an Ao-Naga village) and *Sumi-Nagas* were great enemies and were often engaged in raids. *Tsüsu* River is situated in the *Longkhum* village and the *Sumi-Nagas* resided in the downstream of the river. This song was sung by the *Longkhum* warriors to show their feelings of intense dislike and lack of respect for the *Sumi-Nagas*. They mocked at the nature of the *Sumi-Nagas* singing that they may be united as the *Fifi* bird and may look as handsome as the *Warojakshi* bird but not a soul should be lured by their outward beauty as their deeds are crooked and bitter inside.

In the words of Christoph von Furer-Haimendorf (1938):

Headhunting and frequent wars made intercourse between villages extremely difficult and cut off the people on the hills in the interior from all contact with the outside world, for traveling alone or even in small groups in the un-administered parts of the country is, for Nagas as for Europeans, a venture little short of suicide. "Cheap" heads of defenceless wanderers are only too welcome in every Naga village. (p. 201-202)

Taking an enemy's head in a raid was never a game of pleasure for Nagas. Fürer-Haimendorf's comment that "Cheap" heads of defenceless wanderers are only too welcome in every Naga village expresses colonial desire to visit and its anxiety and innocence of "unknown" territories and people. One should not also forget that the British Empire was interfering in the affairs of independent tribes in order to exploit them. In such situation it is not surprising if Nagas considered any one belonging to it as an invader. The song cited above clearly mentions the animosity between Naga communities and their struggle for survival.

Further, Fürer-Haimendorf's much sought-after "cheap" trophy was short-lived as in the latter part of his article he showed himself as an ambitious anthropologist devotedly procuring the skulls as "gems for museum display" that were left scattered in the Konyak-Naga village of *Pangsha* when an expedition took place. The British Raj burnt the village of *Pangsha* and for Fürer-Haimendorf, it was agonizing to see the craftsmanship of the village ruined and reduced to ashes. Though the motives for procuring the trophies might be different for him and for the Nagas, but the pleasure of being a proud owner of the trophy is the same. In his article, he states:

Many heads hung from a tree...and I decided to take some of these heads back with me as anthropological

specimens, is though we found a convenient basket in which to carry them none of the Nagas in our company volunteered to carry the heads. Thus I had, to the amusement of the Nagas and the surprise of the sepoy, to take the basket on my own shoulders.....through all the fight I had carried the head trophies and I proudly brought them into camp when we re-joined the rest of the column some hours later. (1938, p. 209-210)

After Fürer-Haimendorf returned from the wild adventure, he shared the looted trophies with some of the administered villages of Konyak, and his “cheap” trophies only gained him the thrilling opportunity to take part in the after head hunting ceremonies that he claimed “no white man had ever watched” (1938, p. 212).

W.H. Furness (1902) held, “...now that the Indian Government has assumed control over the larger part of the hills south of the Dikku river, and has thrown a depressing damper on the distracting and highly diverting pastime of human head-hunting in raids on the hills” (p. 445-446). His judgment on the Nagas’ game of glory as distracting and diverting pastime is an affront that reduced the rich cultural heritage of the Nagas to a mere activity of uselessness and of leisure time. The custom of taking head was a part and parcel of every Naga village and was a serious business where the social, economic, political and other significant aspects of the lives of Nagas were tightly interwoven to this custom. Often young men would take vows not to enter into any pleasurable activities until they had taken a head. Whenever a war was planned, the whole village would observe compulsory *genna* with fitting offerings and worship. Taking head was therefore not merely a diverting pastime game for ethical codes and fair means were strictly attached to the practice. Many different rules, techniques and groundwork were

used to gain the trophy head as well as to defend themselves against any enemy attack. As losing in warfare would bring bad fortune and bad harvest to the village, strict ethics and code of conducts were maintained during the raid as well as in its preparation. Even W.C. Smith's comment on "headhunting" as a "mode of recreation" is contradictory because at the end he held that, "Whatever may have been the motives which prompted many Aos to take heads, they did not enter upon these things lightly. When a village would undertake an expedition, it was preceded by day of *genna* and fitting worship of the village gods" (1925, p. 73).

Certainly, the custom was never a mode of entertainment as the spirit of vengeance fuelled the practice of beheading for generations to come. R.G. Woodthrope (1882) who states that the Nagas were bloodthirsty, treacherous and revengeful expresses that "...it is an article of faith that blood once shed can never be expiated except by the death of the murderer or some of his near relatives and though years may pass away vengeance will assuredly be taken some day" (p. 26). Thus, the fear of vengeance was a strong deterrent to beheading and the act of vengeance greatly minimized acts of bloodshed in the Naga Hills and this verity is emphasized by J.P. Mills (2003):

On the other hand the number of persons killed on raids is very small; it is not often realized how small. Big scoops are made at times, but they are very much the exception and as a rule only occur in areas where for some reason there has long been peace, with a corresponding lack of vigilance. Usually a Naga war is a singularly innocuous affair, for both sides are on the alert. The Konyak villages of Tamlu and Namsang, with only a valley between them, were at war for sixteen years. The casualties on both sides totalled four. There were raids innumerable, but neither

could catch the other napping, and an attack is never pressed home against an enemy who is ready. This is not an exceptional case. A village which lost on an average a head a year would consider itself subjected to a series of blows. (p. 209)

In the ancient tradition of the Aos, *mangko* unlawfully sought was condemned and disregarded, for it would draw hatred and unwanted animosity. It was only restricted to the enemy heads and whenever the villages were in raid. Only those *mangkos* that was lawfully gained were honoured and welcomed highly. A *mangko* fraudulently gained is seen in a responsive song sung by a mother and her deceased son who was tricked and killed by his friend. However, in the dream the anguished soul revealed the truth to his mother about the deceitful slayer. The folksong also reveals the value of a *mangko* that drove the warrior to even slay his fellow friend which was against the law of the practice:

I dream of you at night  
Yet your presence at home is missing.  
The *changsen* worn by you  
Beautifies the doorway of my house.

My friend and I were at the enemies' *letenjang*  
Yet I was not killed by the enemies' *dao*  
My friend has no head  
I plead not  
To smear my flesh and face with *arajang* at the *yimrong*  
tree.

**Context:** Two good friends went to a raid with the aim to bring home scores of *mangko* but on the way to the enemy site, one of the friends tricked the other friend and

killed him. The wicked friend was jealous of his friend who has procured *mangko* in a previous raid. The first paragraph was sung by the mother seeing at her son's ill fate. In her dream she could see only a half part of the son's body in the doorway wearing *changsen*. She was heartbroken as the son was no more alive even though she sees him in her dream. The second paragraph was the reply of the son to his mother. He narrates the tragic episode that when they reached the enemy's roadside, he was tricked by his friend and was murdered. In the song, he scorns the unfaithful friend that he is not a brave warrior and has not procured any *mangko*. At the end, he is seen asking the enemies not to perform any rituals upon his dead body when they find him. He also asked the enemies not to rejoice and strew *arojang* on his face and smear his face with white flour before his head was hung in the enemies' *yimrong* as he was not splayed by them but by his own native fellow friend.

It was also considered a taboo to slay the head of a person belonging to the same clan though living in different villages and also restricted to slaying an insane or infirm person. However, in some contexts, sex or age had no consideration. In fact, warriors were highly praised and honored if they could bring the *mangko* of a woman and a child. The reason behind is that children and women were not allowed beyond the vicinity of the village and were well-protected. Even the women in the fields were well guarded by the warriors. Therefore, a warrior's prestige gets higher because such *mangko* could only be procured by an extraordinary act of courage. However, some Naga tribes do not slay children and women. According to the Ao traditional reports, the first *mangko* procured



was that of a woman which acquired for the Ao-Nagas the reputation of being a head hunter (Longchar, 1999, p. 29). The *mangko* of a female with long hair was deemed as more valuable and highly priced especially because of the difficulty of getting it. Female hairs were used as a valuable source of decorating spears, *daos* (Naga machete) and headgears for warriors.

Among some Naga tribes, during the raid, if a helpless person called out “father” to the raider who is ready to slay him, that person’s life was to be spared and was to be taken captive. For the Aos, if the captor wished to make peace, the prisoner’s life was spared in order that he would be used as a negotiator between enemy villages. He would be made to put up a stone under the head-tree/skull tree and to take an oath that until the stone rotted he would not make war on his captors anymore. After his release, he would become a *lampur*, meaning “the go-between between villages.” The *lampur* who enjoys a sacrosanct existence could go with perfect safety to a village with which his own village was at war and a *lampur*, even if he is from a hostile village must on no account be killed. It is through them that peace negotiations were carried between villages.

Here is a song sung by a young man whose life was spared from the hands of the enemies:

The fearless *Longin* warriors attacked *Azümonglo*  
*Longin!* The Great warriors  
Even held *Phirrülü* as hostages  
*Mongzü* do not match up your vigor  
But strong and swift as *Orijang*.

**Context:** The *Longin* warriors captured the young man with the intention to kill him. In the intense hour of danger, the young man in order to save his life started singing of their bravery and triumphs. He sings that the *Longin* warriors have not only defeated the *Azümonglo* warriors but also captured the *Phirrülü villagers* as hostages. So powerful and fearless are the *Longin* warriors that *mongzū* bird cannot match them as their swiftness matches the swiftness and the strength of the *orijang* bird. Because of this praiseworthy song, his life was spared and escaped death.

Occasionally when two enemy villages reach a decision to wage a war against each other, they would agree to meet at a certain spot. Such an arrangement according to the Aos was called *tungpangrarr* (*Chungli*) or *tungpangtep* (*Mongsen*), meaning “to fight a battle.” When a village reached a decision to wage war against an enemy village, a messenger was sent to it with the message of an impending attack and decided on the number of days after which the war would be carried out. Also, decapitation was practiced when circumstances of wicked raids and feuds raged out between villages. It was also the custom for the stronger villages to demand subservience from weaker villages. When this was refused, war was declared. There were also raids where heads were taken due to disputes over boundaries and land. *Aluayen* (*Chungli*) or *aluyen* (*Mongsen*) was the most common form of attack where a party of raiders would attack especially women and children working in the rice-fields and the raiders could make a good escape before help could arrive. The next common attack was *tamamen* (*Chungli*) or *tumentang* (*Mongsen*), an ambush that would be laid by a path along which people were most likely to pass. The raiders would hide behind a thin screen of jungle purposely left uncut, holding branches in front of their faces and with their spears every ready to attack.

Another favourite form of attack was by lurking by the springs and killing the women and children when they came to fetch water. And sometimes, the raiders cut the aqueduct that brought water from the stream to the village path. When one or two men went out looking for the break, they would walk straight into the ambush. It was told that tigers knew this trick and would dislodge a section of the bamboo channel and then seized those who go to mend it. For this reason, even today, no one goes alone to repair an aqueduct. And because of such surprise attacks, women and children went in large parties to the jungle to collect firewood and to the springs which were well protected by the village men.

After the war ended, the expiatory ritual process involved catharsis and cleansing of the community of the impurities of bloodshed. The raiding party did not go home because it was *genna* (taboo) as war was considered contaminating and unclean. The warriors were to be ritually cleansed and also the entire community was to be cleansed of the impurities of the war. Therefore, purification ceremonies and necessary sacrifices were made before resuming a normal life. The warriors observed *genna* for some designated days at the *morung*. During the *genna* period, they slept and ate food prepared on temporary hearths and ritually washed their weapons and bodies. Since the warrior's hands and weapons were considered defiled, they used special stiff leaves called war-spoon leaves to feed themselves and the end of the *genna*, all the utensils were destroyed.

According to the tradition of the Aos, the *mangko* was hung by cane strings to the end of a long bamboo which was made to lean against the branches of the head-tree/skull-tree. The *Tir* (leader) under the tree plucked a chicken alive with a declaration that the *mangko* was taken only as a revenge for the offence committed by

the enemy village. Prayers were offered for more *mangko*, human and animal fertility. Finally, the chicken's throat was cut with a bamboo knife and omens were taken from its entrails. It was firmly believed that if the village failed to observe and fulfil the ceremonial obligations, it would result in untoward misfortune for some individual or for the village as a whole. When a foe was killed, it was also expected to treat the dead body with reverence, because the desecration or ill treatment of the dead body was considered *genna* and would also bring retribution upon oneself and the village (Thong, 1997, p. 378). On the sixth day after the *mangko* was hung up, the warrior took down his piece and cleaned it and if married, hung it up on the outside of the front wall of his house but if unmarried, he hung his trophy up in the *morung*. In some Ao villages, dogs' skulls were hung above each human skull. The reason is that if the dead man's relations call him, the dog would bark and the departed soul could not hear them and tell them who had killed him.

The rituals performed on the *mangko* and the magical works that happened afterwards is transcendental and inexplicable. An instance that guaranteed good crops and fertility can be seen in the experience of Furer-Haimendorf when he was on fieldwork in the Konyak village of Wakching, who states that:

All the people of Wakching were convinced that this year, in which the heads have been brought in, would have a particularly good harvest, and when I left Wakching in June the promise of the crops seemed really better than they had been for many years. It is obvious that the bringing in of the head does not only provide an opportunity for feasting, a pleasant interruption in the monotonous life of a Naga village, but it exerts also a

stimulating influence on the economics of the people.  
(1925, p. 214)

For a Naga what eggs him on to fight and succeed in the war was the most deep-lying drive because a man's social position depended upon his success in war and also ensured a glorious memory after his death. Hunger for respect, fame and honour stirred the heart of every Naga as well as that of the noblest soldier who ever marched under the British colours. To the Naga, there was nothing more glorious and brave than procuring a head trophy. A warrior who had taken a head was ceremonially honoured and respected. It was every warrior's desire to own a head as his praises would be sung and was held in the highest esteem. The strongest and the most courageous men were lauded by the villagers especially the womenfolk. Therefore, there was always a contest among the young warriors to be the best. A warrior with head not only gets the honorary title but the prospects of scoring a beautiful bride increase proportionately. Men were ridiculed and were called boys or woman or even cows until they had contributed to the village skull-tree. Even the villages that had taken only a few skulls were looked down upon. The song below compares brave warriors with coward folks who choose to remain at home. This song also emphasizes the importance of every warrior to bring *mangko* to the village:

Anyone not going to the battle  
Is like a far-off cotton flower.  
But *anoknaro* of *MoyaTsüen* awaits  
In the pathway  
Those who press onward to the battle.

**Context:** This is a song that mocks the cowards who avoided being a part of the gallant game. The brave warriors sing that those who march to the battle will be rewarded by the *anoknaro* or *mango* of *MoyaTsüen* and continue to scorn at the coward folks that their only rewards will be mere *kumbanaro* (*Kumba* meaning cotton, *naro* meaning flower). Referring to a man as a *kumbanaro* is an insult to a man's masculinity.

Another song shows the brave warriors teasing and mocking those men who were not brave enough to join a pitched battle:

Those who do not go to the battle  
Do not touch the *dao's* decorations  
Lest the streets feel shy  
Oh! Those who do not cut the enemy's head in battle  
Bind your hair in the likeness of a woman's *kolang*  
And burn *ngüpsen*  
Far in the village of *Tsüen*  
As a warrior's decoration  
The *anoknaro*  
Waits.

**Context:** The brave ones sing that the cowards are not entitled to touch a warrior *dao's* decoration and the *mankgo*. They ridicule that because of their cowardice, the villagers mock and laugh at them in the village street. They decry those without any *mankgo* to merely bind their hairs like a woman and bear the great humiliation. Bravery and pride raged in the breasts of these warriors claiming that they are not scared of devils that were usually chased away by *ngüpsen*. For them, a warrior's only decoration is the *anoknaro* or *mankgo* of the *Tsüen* (Sumi-Naga).

Special occasions of festivity and ceremonies were also the golden opportunity and platform for the warriors to flaunt their prized possession trophies with pride and vigour. During these periods, the *Nokinketer* were bestowed with a degree of social prestige and popularity. Women and children also attended these festivals with enthusiastic enjoyment wearing beautiful attires and ornaments and joined the celebrations honouring the warriors through songs of praises. In their song of praises, the heads were held as the most significant and the greatest achievement of all. Even sacrifices of scores of *mithuns* were not comparable to their achievements. The more heads a warrior could gather more songs of honour and praises were showered upon them. In the participation of the Naga women and children after a successful raid, Smiths comments as:

It seems rather strange that the women should do all in their power to encourage such practices, for it was they and the children who suffered the most, since they were unarmed and not so fleet-footed as the men. Thus, it was, but still they sang the praises of the successful warrior, while they scornfully laughed at the young men who attended the feasts without the adornments which distinguished the successful warrior. (1925, p. 72)

However, as evident from the preceding points discussed, decapitation practice was closely associated with many factors of establishing wellbeing and propriety. The practice was not the least a rational act and not just a game for pleasure. It was something more than a barbaric act and it is not one of the worst horrors of the world as it was sometimes thought to be:

The practice of head-hunting is found all over the world and has attracted great attention. So-called civilized countries, which can destroy whole populations with a single atom bomb, can hardly afford to look down on a method of ritual warfare which, at most, involved the loss of a few hundreds of lives every year. (Elwin, 1969, p. 11)

In Bombay, more than half of the children die before they are one year old. In 1921, the figures were 666 per thousands. There are forces against which no popular outcry is raised, far more destructive of human life than head-hunting. (Mills, 2003, p. 210)

The glory of procuring head inculcated many positive values such as discipline, perseverance, vigilance at all times, abstinence from objectionable foods, and the practice of chastity. The essence of this practice had a socio-cultural, religious and political significance. It inspired wonderful dances and artistic productions such as elaborate traditional textiles to be worn only by a *Nokinketer*. In the Naga societies, variety of artefacts symbolizes clan identification, social status, wealth and valorous deeds. Such artifacts include weapons, carved objects, weavings, ornaments as head dresses and jewellery and sometimes the head themselves. Small replica of head was carved out to be worn and also vigorous human figures were carved and attached to the baskets. And the graves of the *Nokinketer* were the most splendid of all where human skulls were placed on the corpse platform as an insignia of valour. Thus, from the preceding discussions it can be noted that the many facets of the Naga practice of taking the head were often overlooked.



To sum up, the colonial construction of head-hunting as a barbaric practice amounts to misread the values and customs of the Naga communities and it is a reading full of colonial and racial prejudice. It is done in a time when the European nations have colonized the rest of the globe with their treacherous schemes, horrible wars and everyday killings. It is the expansion of the Empire that gives an opportunity to study others and the power of colonialism that provides legitimacy to their narratives. In turn, these narratives provide legitimacy to colonialism and the white man's burden.

As far as war and killings are concerned human race is not free of wars and violence even today. The ways, strategies, ethics and values differ from place to place and people to people. No one can be proud of it. But power provides legitimacy to certain form of violence and it delegitimizes certain other. As a small community the Nagas had to go to war for their self-protection, economic prosperity and survival in which the bravery of its members becomes paramount and celebrated. Modern societies are not free from such forms of rewarding and celebrations. Hence, an ethnographer has to understand a society from its own terms and to historicize the ways of life, beliefs, customs and social practices of a community while describing it. Yes. Nagas fought their wars! So are other communities. Yes. There was violence and celebration of bravery! So was in other communities. But let us not gloss over the fact that like other communities they too had their values, ethics, beliefs, cosmological explanations and rituals related wars. Here, our intention is not to defend head-hunting as a practice, but to provide a socio-historical perspective of it from within. It was just a "moment" in the history of the Naga people. For this reason the

standards of “evaluation” deployed by ethnographers which was not really an anthropologist’s array was not just.

**Notes:**

1. *Mangko* is the enemy head in Ao dialect. It was the prized owned trophy.
2. *Nok* which also means *dao* is a hatchet with a long blade carved in wooden handle. It is also known as a Naga weapon or one of the most important equipment as it serves many purposes, especially in the past, for their survival. *Nok* is seen as life-giving and life-taking because it saved many lives and killed many lives too in the past. There are different types of *dao* used for different purposes viz., head hunting, animal hunting, working and ceremonial *daos*. During the ancient period, nobody could predict as to when and from which direction the enemies would come. Therefore, men of a particular age group were always kept ready with the war equipment to fight with their enemies. The adult male members of the family were ever alert with weapons, such as *dao*, spear, war shield (bamboo shield) and spikes (*aso*), or bows and arrows. When a *mangko* was brought to the village severed by a *dao*, was sanctified again (Ao, 1999, p. 60-61).
3. A name of a river in the *Longhkum* village of the Aos.
4. *Fifi* is the name of a bird in Ao-Naga *Mongsen* dialect. *Fifi* bird tends to stay in big group.
5. *Warojakshi* is the name of a bird in Ao-Naga *Mongsen* dialect.
6. The concept *genna* is used in two ways. It may mean practically a holiday, i.e., a man will say my village is doing *genna* today, by which he means that, owing either to the occurrence of a

village festival or some such unusual occurrence as an earthquake, an eclipse, or burning of a village within sight of his own, his village people are observing a holiday; *genna* means anything forbidden. Verrier Elwin, *The Nagas in the 19<sup>th</sup> century* (London, Oxford Univ. Press, 1970), 514.

7. *Changsen* is an Ao-Naga traditional leg gloves worn by males on special occasion of festivity. It is worn between the ankles and knees.
8. A road or a surrounding nearby a village or a region.
9. In the ancient times, the *mangko* was brought to the *yimrong* (the place where the heads were hung on a tree for public display) and before hanging it on the tree, they performed some rituals. The *mangko* was first strewed by the *arolang* (pig weed) and was smeared with white flour.
10. The Konyak-Nagas also set up witness stones when making peace. If either party intends to break the oath or the peace, breach of covenant must be explained and justified to the stone first.
11. *Mongzū* is a large and lightish-colored bird, as large as an eagle or large hawk with piercing cries. The Ao believes that this bird has the spirit of some dead person. It is believed that this *mongzū* is apt to appear three/ four days after a man's death and such a bird is called the *tanela* (soul) of the deceased. The Aos also have superstitions that if this bird appears at other times, it is supposed to be an omen that some deceased relative in the form of a bird is calling and so someone will probably die soon.

12. *Orijang* is a large hawk or kite that is rather swift and bad for carrying off domestic fowls. It is also known as the bird pursuer and killer.
13. AOs has several dialects of which *Chungli*, *Mongsen* and *Changki* are the prominent ones. *Chungli* dialect is accepted as the standard dialect of AO community. All the printed works of the AO language are in this dialect.
14. *Morung* was an ancient Naga traditional learning institution or the dormitory for the young unmarried men. It was also a village guard house, a barrack where men would sleep at night and supposed to be in readiness to repel any night attack on the village. In AO language, *Morung* is known as *Ariju*.
15. *Anok* meaning *dao*, *naro* meaning flower which means *mangko*.
16. *Moya* meaning Sumi-Naga and *Tsüen* meaning Lotha-Naga tribes. In the ancient period, these tribes were regarded as enemies by the AO-Nagas.
17. A hairstyle in which hair is put into a tight roll at the back of the head.
18. An incense used by women to frighten the devil.
19. A species of Indian bison domesticated in the jungle, mainly used for the “feast of merit” and was also used as currency.

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# Interviews

# An Interview with Anthony Pym

*Aditya Kumar Panda*

Anthony Pym (abridged as AP) is a scholar in the field of Translation Studies. He is currently the distinguished Professor of Translation and Intercultural Studies at the Rovira i Virgili University in Tarragona, Spain, and Professor of Translation Studies at the University of Melbourne, Australia. Aditya Kumar Panda (abridged as AKP) interviews Pym on various theoretical underpinnings concerning translation and reciprocal nature of theory and practice in translation. His interview starts with a fundamental question of *what a translation is*.

**AKP:** You have mentioned *anuvaad* being a word Indians use for translation which has the meaning of repeating or saying later. The Western notion of translation has not been encapsulated in this *anuvaad*. Indians did attribute transcreation, adaptation to translation. Will you consider transcreation or adaptation as translation? If so, how would you define translation?

**AP:** There are many different translation concepts throughout history and across cultures, and most of them seem not to make a systematic distinction between translating and retelling or adaptation. Harish Trivedi tells me that prior to British influence there was actually no concept like Western translation in the cultures of the subcontinent, which for me suggests that there was a Western translation form that was disseminated along with modernity. As a rule of thumb, when the railway lines appeared, so did traces of this Western translation form.



For me, it is not hard to define the Western translation form. First, it uses the alien-I: when the translating translator says “I am tired”, it is not the translator who is tired. This is interesting, since it means that translating translators, like acting actors, do not have a first-person voice; they work with a repressive discursive structure that can be struggled against. Second, the Western form incorporates a maxim of quantitative dependence: for each increase in textual length, it is assumed there is an increased length in an anterior text. This doesn't mean that the texts have the same length, of course, but there is a relation of dependence. And third, it is assumed that there has been a switch of languages. Those three features can define the Western translation form (Gideon Toury formulates the features in a different way, but they do the same job). The alien-I is a discontinuous variable; the other two are continuous and allow for a prototype approach. All three function as maxims in the Gricean sense: their transgressions can produce meaning effects.

Is that how I personally define translation? When I translate or interpret for my clients, yes, mostly it is, since I like to be paid and those are the unspoken maxims that regulate our transactions. As for research, well, I tell my doctoral students that they can use any terms they like as long as they make the meanings clear. So if I am talking about the contemporary Western kind of translation, the above description fits with the way I am using the term. But I am happy to talk about any other form as well.

That said, I do not believe the Western form is a particularly

good communication solution these days. Thanks to technologies, to social complexity and to ubiquitous mobility, cross-cultural communication problems are increasingly solved by the use of lingua francas, code-switching, inter-comprehension (bilingual conversations) and badly understood free online translation technologies, for which we have to teach post-editing instead of translation. Professional mediators have become something of an anachronistic luxury, to be reserved for high-risk communication only. The study of translation is no longer sufficient in itself.

I think this also holds when we go back and work on periods prior to the Western translation form. If we only look at texts that meet our current sense of “translation”, we are missing out on most of the actual transmission and rewriting activities, especially the spoken activities of which there are only traces in the written texts. In that historical frame, I think it makes sense to work on cross-cultural communication in general, and to adopt a disciplinary name like “intercultural studies”. I suspect that such a terminological shift is intellectually more honest than pretending that translation is and always was everywhere.

There is a further rider here. People who currently use the term “translation” in increasingly wider and less precise senses risk theorizing themselves out of pertinence. When Edwin Gentzler, for example, proclaims the advent of “post-translation studies”, what you mostly find is good old Comparative Literature with a newish name. Similarly, “cultural translation” is often just a name for cultural studies that have become aware there is more than one culture and that things move. There is a long etcetera of pseudo-

intellectual pap that insists on finding translation everywhere, in all texts, in all thought processes, in all possible modes of liberation.

I suspect that Translation Studies, as an academic discipline, owes most of its success to the enrolment of students who want to learn how to translate and interpret and get paid for it. The sad part of the wider uses of “translation” in pedagogical contexts is that we are now misusing the students’ aspirations as institutional support for our own intellectual pretensions.

**AKP:** Scholars always discuss various theories of translation and issues in the practice of translation. In translation, theory and practice go hand in hand. They are mutually inclusive and complement each other. How would you respond to the reciprocity between the practice and the theory of translation?

**AP:** I do not like to teach translation theory as such at Undergraduate or Masters level. For undergraduate students, the ideal class is when students come up with different renditions, you get them to argue with each other, then they find they need words to describe the things they are arguing about. That’s when you can offer a few terms and concepts, or some established arguments, in order to develop the kind of theorizing that evolves from practice.

At Masters level, I insist there is a third term that runs across this false division of theory from practice. I am referring to research. I try to get students to do basic empirical research on their own translation processes, or to experiment with different ways of translating and to compare the results, or to look around and see how translation is actually being used in

business or in websites, for example. And then I show them what translation scholars have found when doing research on the same variables, mostly with the integration of a few models and concepts. That is a way of conducting the translation practice class in a non-authoritarian manner: I don't know what the best translation is, or the best way of translating, or the definitive social role of translation, so let's find out together and then look at what empirical research has found.

I only teach theory as such at doctoral level, when candidates really have to learn how to think clearly and how to navigate through the standard arguments.

**AKP:** Do universal translation theories exist? Could dynamic and formal equivalence be applied across cultures? These days translators try to apply theories of literary translation to non-literary translation. Can there be a translation theory across the types of translation?

**AP:** I am not really interested in aspirations to universalism. I think it is far more important to identify problems and work on solutions to those problems. If the problems extend over time and across cultures, then some solutions might travel along the same tracks, and that is all well and good. But it is just as noble to seek local solutions to local problems.

I do not think any of the binary concepts, such as formal correspondence versus dynamic equivalence, attain more than a tautological universality. It is relatively easy to formulate a translation concept, model two alternatives, and fool yourself into thinking the result is universal. For Eugene Nida, the formal/dynamic model did the historical work of turning Bible

translation towards the concerns of receiving communities, breaking with start-text fixation. But that dialectic work is not required in other cultural situations, particularly with respect to translations into major cultures. In those cases, it is usually more fruitful to cut the cake in other ways, and there are rarely translation problems for which there are just two viable solutions.

On the other hand, there is nothing wrong with picking up concepts or models developed for one problem and trying to apply them to others. When you are trying to solve a problem, you accept ideas and help from wherever they can be found. There is no reason why a binary pair formulated for Bible translation should not be applied to literary or technical texts, for example, just as there is no reason why ideas that talk about literature should not prove useful in other discursive fields. The transfers and applications will never be neat or straightforward, but the encounters between discursive fields are often stimulating.

The idea that each discursive field somehow has its own translation theory seems to me to be terribly petty, divisive, and conducive to a fractious interdisciplinarity at best. It was rife in the Russian theorizing of the 1950s, for example, with results that were scarcely edifying.

**AKP:** Translation Studies scholars don't agree that every translation has a purpose. Most of the theorists of Skopos theory don't find any Skopos behind a literary translation. Would you agree with them?

**AP:** I am not aware of the theorists you are referring to, but I seem to remember Vermeer constructing something similar as a

straw-man argument. In any case, one could use Kantian *Zwecklosigkeit*, the idea that the aesthetic text has no aim beyond aesthetic pleasure, to argue that there is no *Skopos* for a literary translation. I would prefer to say that the aesthetic text particularly lends itself to many possible readings, and thus to many possible purposes, but I suspect that this amounts to much the same critique at the end of the day.

For me, the place where the *Skopos* argument falls down is the supposition that there is just one purpose for any action, be it literary or otherwise. I think this is an absurdly essentialist article of faith. Most of our actions are motivated by several purposes at once (think of the many minor reasons why we are producing this dialogue, for example); we are constantly hedging our bets, seeking trade-offs and exploring the unknown, in ways that are far more complex than any simple purpose could ever be.

**AKP:** Translation does not exist as a recognized object in the world. It is there in the form of a writing or in the form of a book. The layman knows it as a poetry, as a novel, as a story, as a document. How would you make it visible where someone would immediately recognize a translation?

**AP:** I'm not sure I understand the question. There are cultures where all texts are considered translational to a degree, so there is no separate category for translations; there are other cultures where translations are clearly marked as such, on covers, in the translator's name, and often in the foreignized stylistics. It does not seem excessively difficult to have translations marked as such, but first you need a social translation concept that separates clearly between translations

and non-translations. That kind of concept may not be available, or may not be desirable.

**AKP:** Can you train a translator whose language you have never mastered?

**AP:** You can help someone train themselves. And if you have at least two students who share the same language pair, you can help them monitor their progress.

**AKP:** The National Translation Mission organizes training programme for the translators where multilingual heterogeneous group of speakers do participate. In this set up, it is impossible to have an instructor who knows about all the languages the participants speak of. What would you suggest for training and evaluating them?

**AP:** This is something I have been working on for the past eight years or so, specifically in a multilingual practicum class in Monterey, California. A report on this (“Teaching translation in a multilingual practicum”) is available on my website but I can summarize the main points here.

First, when instructors do not know the students’ language pair, they should focus on translation *processes*, not products. You should make the student aware of how they are translating, how they can organize their work differently, and thus how they can try to improve. This concerns aspects such as using translation memories, post-editing machine translation output, documentation, web searches, integrated revision processes, reversing directionality, and team translating. Many of these aspects are best taught through students making screen recordings of their performances,

then playing them back at four times the original speed so that they can see where they go wrong and especially how they lose a lot of time.

Second, the quality of translation products can be controlled to a certain extent through peer revision, if and when you have at least two students with the same language pair. Rather than have a definitive model translation to which students should aspire – there are always several good solutions to any translation problem – it is best to have students revise each other’s translations right after each has translated either the same text or a parallel text rendered in the opposite language direction. That is, each student checks on the other, in the form of a revision exercise that should lead into dialogue.

This second aspect is very valuable in itself. Thanks to the growing use of translation technologies, revision is now one of the major things we have to teach, as is the post-editing of machine translation output. Those are skills that can be developed quite well in the multilingual practicum class, if and when all students can at least work into a shared language.

**AKP:** I got the idea of translation as a “move” from your book, *Translation and Text Transfer*. What is it that moves in translation? This moving also causes many transactions to take place and it may bring out new ideas where we may be able to look at ourselves critically. Translation causes movements. It is not only a static text or idea but also a dynamic progression of human endeavour. How would you respond to this?



**AP:** Translation happens because something (or someone) has moved or is meant to be moved. Translation is thus caused by material movements, prior to its own work on semiotic movement. That simple proposition was, for me in 1980 or thereabouts, a way to think about translation in very materialist terms, without assuming systems or their boundaries; it was the central idea in a dissertation on the political economy of translation. I still think this is a useful way to think about translation: if you use material movement as a basis for your categories, you do not have to assume axiomatic boundaries between the languages and the cultures in play; you track the movements and let those movements reveal the boundaries as moments of resistance and transformation.

I hesitate, however, to claim that movement in itself entails some kind of ethical benefit. The traveller can suffer from the blindness of assumed superiority, or can just as blindly attribute assumed prestige to the other. There is no necessary self-criticism involved; nothing indicates that the more translations we have, the closer we come to earthly paradise.

The best one could argue, I believe, is that transfers between cultures are a necessary part of avoiding the stagnation or death of cultures. This has been argued by Jared Diamond and Itamar Even-Zohar, and there are indeed cases where cultures have died because of isolation from other cultures. On this view, translation would be useful for helping maintain cultural diversity. To make any braver claims, we would have to know what is being translated, and how.

**AKP:** Language is infinite with a finite numbers of rules as our linguist has postulated. Our language conventions are made

by us. No native speaker of a language can speak of the cent percent of that language. An equivalent can be challenged anytime. It is not only the ideal equivalent that interrogates itself but also any equivalent can be challenged. How would you perceive the unstable position of equivalents in a language or in a translation?

**AP:** Potential equivalents are produced by translations; they do not exist prior to the moment of translation. The belief in equivalence, as a valid and durable relationship, is thus a fiction produced in the reception of translations, basically as a matter of convenient expedience. I don't think equivalence has anything to do with knowing the whole of a language. Nor does translation for that matter. There is a fundamental indeterminacy in language use, I believe, and equivalence beliefs are a practical way of communicating in spite of that.

It is no different in the economy. No one commands the entirety of transactions in an economic system, and there is systemic fluctuation in exchange values of all goods and services, but we still accept the value of a banknote in our daily transactions.

**AKP:** We have been using the translation procedures formulated by Vinay and Darbelnet for decades in teaching the techniques of translation in the classroom. Are these techniques sufficient? Can we apply these techniques across languages?

**AP:** This is a question addressed in my book *Translation Solutions for Many Languages*, where I generally ask whether typologies like Vinay and Darbelnet's are different for each language pair. So I compared the various typologies developed for Russian, Chinese, German, Slovak, Czech, and

so on, as well as the Spanish and English typologies directly inspired by Vinay and Darbelnet's work on French.

My general finding is that the differences between the typologies have more to do with varying translation concepts and linguistic politics than with differences between the languages themselves. There are some obvious differences, of course: for work with Chinese or Japanese, for example, more attention has to be given to re-segmentation (the breaking or joining of sentences) and to various ways of producing loans (especially phonetic imitation or semantic re-composition). Also, work between European and Asian languages tends to centre around what Vinay and Darbelnet termed "transposition" and "modulation", whereas the French linguists assumed that what they called "literal translation" was the starting point.

In the end, though, the categorization of the actual solutions is not determined in any close way by the language structures themselves. It has more to do with what is pedagogically efficacious for certain learners at certain levels, and how a particular translation culture places values on foreign languages.

**AKP:** In your recent book *Translation Solutions for Many Languages*, why did you give the subtitle "Histories of a flawed dream"?

**AP:** The main flaw, I think, is the pretension to produce a typology that works for all languages, for all translation cultures, and for all time. There are several reasons why this aspiration to the universal fails. Not only are our languages indeterminate in their relation with meaning and value, but concepts of

translation themselves change with cultures and epochs.

You might be able to propose a particular solution that will work for all languages and in all directions. Established technical terms, for instance, tend to be standardized across all languages that share the technology, and are made so by authoritative power structures (as in the Microsoft Glossaries). However, someone can always come along and say that what you are describing is not “real” translation or “translation proper”, in this case perhaps because there is no real choice for a translator to make: terminology is not the same thing as translation, I suggest. So the Universalist would have to look for an authoritative power structure that can impose on everyone the one true meaning of the word “translation”, but personally I cannot envisage any such instance of authority. That particular dream is thus flawed, and fatally so.

**AKP:** Translation was shunned from language-learning classes. But is it being re-introduced in many countries? Did the translation policy fail in early years or was it the methodology that was failed to keep translation as a language learning skill?

**AP:** I’m not sure that translation activities are actually being reintroduced in any massive way, although there are certainly increasing calls for reconsiderations of the way translation has been excluded by ideologies of linguistic immersion or communicative language teaching.

There are several reasons for this trend. I think translation and interpreting (or “linguistic mediation” as a wider set of skills) are things that students want to learn at the more advanced

levels, so there is no reason not to teach them. There are also common-sense arguments based on the fact that adult beginners tend to use “mental translation” when they start learning a foreign language anyway. Many of the arguments in favour of immersion somehow assumed that all learners were young children.

I think the important point to bear in mind here is that there are many kinds and levels of translation. The kind of simple equivalence used for some basic vocabulary acquisition has nothing to do with the use of translation as a fully communicative activity in the classroom, or with the kinds of translation activities that inductively introduce and elucidate the differences between grammatical systems, or again with the complex creativity involved in the translating of texts at the highest level, when the advanced learner activates linguistic and communicative skills in two languages and on many levels at once. Most of the arguments against translation have been based on the misleading idea that it is just a word-replacement exercise. Our first task is to show that translation is much more than that, and that communicative translation can be used in a wide range of classroom activities.

However, I would not claim that students who use translation thereby learn better or faster, and I certainly would not argue that translation activities enhance fluency, for example. The best we can claim, on the basis of the few empirical studies that test the use of communicative translation as opposed to non-translational activities, is that translation does no harm, and that is an extra set of skills that students generally enjoy learning.

Part of the problem here is historical. There is the widespread idea that language learning up to the later decades of the nineteenth century was exclusively based on translation, on the so-called “grammar translation” method, which was followed by the use of immersion and communicative techniques towards the end of the century. However, when I went back and actually looked at the nineteenth-century textbooks for learning European languages, I was surprised to find that almost all of them proposed a mixture of spoken and written activities, with a range of translation exercises constituting just one part of the mix.

Another relative surprise came when Kirsten Malmkjær and I did a study for the European Commission in 2012-13. We found that the countries in Europe with the highest scores for learning English are generally those with the *most* reported use of translation in the classroom, although the teachers in Germany prefer to speak of “mediation” rather than “translation”. That is why I would claim that translation does no harm, but I would also insist that it has to be mixed with other teaching activities, and that its pedagogical use should start from its spoken forms.

# An Interview with Susan Bassnett

*Aditya Kumar Panda*

Susan Bassnett (abridged as SB) holds Professorships of Comparative Literature at the Universities of Glasgow and Warwick. She is an elected Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, an elected Fellow of the Institute of Linguists and a member of the Academia Europea. Her most recent book, an edited collection of essays on translation and world literature will be published by Routledge later this year. Aditya Kumar Panda (abridged as AKP) interviews Bassnett on the emergence of Translation Studies as a discipline and on the becoming of translation as an interdisciplinary area of studies.

**AKP:** You established the Department of Comparative Literature at the University of Warwick in your early years at the same university. But your first book is *Translation Studies* which has seen its fourth edition in 2014. What was the stuff that comparative literature contributed to Translation Studies?

**SB:** a) I was appointed to the University of Warwick as The Lecturer in Comparative Literature. My task was to set up an MA in Comparative Literature and to teach in the 3 departments of English and Comparative Literary Studies, French and Italian. I duly set up the MA, followed by an MA in Translation Studies and then in British Cultural Studies, and as student numbers increased I was able to set up an independent Graduate School. I always saw translation as fundamental to Comparative Literature (and also to World Literature) so there was never any lack of harmony in building the programmes.

b) I was lucky enough to meet a small group of people who were dissatisfied with the marginalization of translation in both literary studies and linguistics. They were Itamar Even-Zohar, Gideon Toury, Andre Lefevere, Jose Lambert and James Holmes, the key founding figures in Translation Studies. We shared ideas and quickly became friends and at a meeting in Leuven, Belgium in 1976 we decided on the name Translation Studies (coined by James Holmes) to describe what we were trying to develop as a new field of study.

**AKP:** Bassnett is synonymous with Translation Studies now. How did you begin the journey of becoming a scholar in the field of Translation Studies? Your first book also witnesses the same. One could say that Translation Studies visibly started with this book, as there was no such book before. You named the book also as Translation Studies.

**SB:** In 1977 the late Terence Hawkes had started to edit a pioneering series of books entitled *New Accents*. The objective was to introduce readers to the bewildering array of new critical approaches that were sweeping through the Humanities in the 1970s and 1980s- semiotics, narratology, feminist criticism, deconstruction, post-structuralism, post colonialism, etc. I managed to persuade him that there should be a book on a new field called Translation Studies. The first edition in 1980 was hailed by the late Bernard Bergonzi as one of his choices for Book of the Year in the *Observer* newspaper, but it took another decade for the book to begin its successful rise ( 4 subsequent revised editions, translated into over a dozen languages and one of the most cited books on translation ).*The New Accents* series was a phenomenal



success and I believe has sold well over half a million copies world-wide. There is a whole chapter on how Translation Studies came into being in my other Routledge book, *Translation*, published in 2013 in the New Critical Idiom series.

**AKP:** Translation of literary text is not a skill but an effective rewriting. You had mentioned this in an interview. Don't you think that rewriting is also a skill? Can rewriting be called a translation? Is there any boundary to define translation?

**SB:** I am of the view that translation is ALWAYS rewriting as no 2 languages and no 2 texts are identical. Translation is the result of one person's reading of a text and then recreating it (that is, rewriting) in another language. It is important to remember that translation is subjective, that no 2 individuals will produce an identical version of anything. Of course rewriting is a skill- how could it not be?

**AKP:** We are living in a time when various categories are being minimized. We are crossing the boundary of category. With the passage of time, we are moving towards a cosmopolitan world where we are also trying to produce literature which can be considered as world literature. What could be the role of translation here?

**SB:** I do not understand the question about categories being minimized. Cultures change all the time; hence aesthetics and ideologies are forever in movement. Translation Studies was a very marginal subject until the 1990s, when it suddenly became super fashionable around the world. Why? the answer surely lies in the massive socio-political changes that

began in 1989 with the fall of the Berlin Wall, the end of the Soviet Union, China opening up to the West, then the end of apartheid... all these events enabled millions of people to begin to move around the planet and so translation and intercultural competencies started to become more significant.

**AKP:** We are crossing the border. Translator is a traveler. As Michael Cronin in his book "*Across the Lines: travel, language, translation*" emphasizes on translator as a traveler, someone engaged in a journey from one source to another. The twenty-first century surely promises to be the great age of travel, not only across space but also across time. Translation is becoming a part of inter-cultural relationship. In 21st century, it is causing negotiation not only between two cultures but more than two cultures and times. One could say that a history of translation is a history of cultural transformation. How would you respond to this?

**SB:** From the outset, we were all of the view that a key element in Translation Studies should be the history of translation in different cultural contexts. Literary histories have tended to marginalize translation, whereas I see translation as absolutely crucial in the movement of texts across border of language, culture and time. When you have a map of the history of translation in literature, it becomes possible to understand far, far more than if you simply take a narrow nationalist focus.

**AKP:** Is there any translation theory that can be considered as the theory of translation applicable across language and culture?

**SB:** If I understand your question you are seeking some sort of universalizing theory, there is no such thing. The closest we can come is the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis about the relativity of languages and cultures- ‘No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality. The worlds in which different societies live are distinct worlds, not merely the same world with different labels attached.’”

**AKP:** In the preface to the third edition of your book *Translation Studies*, you have mentioned that in the early years, Translation Studies advocates positioned themselves against both linguists and literary scholars, arguing that "linguists failed to take into account broader contextual dimensions and that literary scholars were obsessed with making pointless evaluative judgments" which gave a way to Translation Studies to come out of its own and it should not be under Comparative Literature and Applied Linguistics. Could you please elaborate this point?

**SB:** In the early meetings of the Translation Studies group (sometimes known as the Polysystems group, also the Manipulation School) we could see that linguistics tended to downplay contextual issues, also the socio-political aspects of languages. Literary Studies on the other hand was concerned to establish roots and origins for national literatures, and translation was derided as second-class derivative work, not as creative work at all. To some extent that view is still around and has to be constantly challenged so as to assert the crucial importance of translation in literary history and in all our activities.

**AKP:** What should be the object of study for a translation theorist? Is it the target text as the Skopos theory puts forth? Is it equivalence or the source text as has been the case traditionally? Is it the translation norm as Toury perceives? Is it the culture as the polysystem scholars like Zohar and postcolonial scholars Bhaba, Spivak study?

**SB:** The object of study is multifaceted. Attention must be paid to the production of a translation: both the micro-systemic (stylistic features, lexicon, and translator's choices) together with the macro-systemic (the various agents in the translation process- funders, publishers, copy-editors, marketers etc). And it should never be forgotten that texts come into being in a specific cultural context. So we need to look at the contexts in which the source text is produced, the translation is produced and the translation is then received.

**AKP:** Your book *Constructing Cultures: Essays on Literary Translation* came out in 1998, now in 2016 tell us where are we in Translation Studies? You have introduced a new concept called "Collusion" in this book? Could you please tell something about this concept?

**SB:** I used the word 'collusion' first in relation to travel writing, where we the readers take at face value the traveller's account of his/her experiences, conversations, perceptions of another culture. I have a special interest in travel writing, because it is a genre where fact and fiction blur, and we collude in letting go of our common sense as for example, when a writer tells us of amazing conversations with locals in half a dozen different countries when it is clear that the writer has no linguistic competence in those languages and dialects.

So it is with translations- we collude with the idea that we are somehow actually reading Tolstoy when we are given a translation of one of his novels, for example, whereas what we are actually reading is the rewritten version produced by a translator.

**AKP:** You don't seem to agree with the notion of performability espounded by many scholars that they find a kind of universal performability inherent in the text, what is the danger in such universalizing concept?

**SB:** ‘Performability’ is a very vague term. It is often used when talking about theatre texts to suggest that there is some inherent component that enables actors to perform. Some have referred to ‘speakability’. My objections to the term are

- a. it is not defined, nor is it definable- where exactly can we see it in a play text? is it semantic? rhythmical?
- b. If it exists, why do different actors perform such texts so differently?
- c. How can such a vague concept be translated? if it cannot be identified as a textual component, what is a translator supposed to do?
- d. Different cultures have completely different acting traditions, so how could there ever be a universalizing notion of performability?

To sum up, I view translation as enormously important, and I believe, as Bella Brodzki has suggested in her 2007 book, that translation, like gender, is present in all cultural

transactions. The research project I directed which led to the monograph with Esperanza Bielsa on translation and global news in 2009 showed the dangers of underestimating the power of translation in our multimedia, fast-moving globalized world, which added a new dimension to my thinking about why translation is so important.

# Notes

# Investigating the Translation of Yahdi (Guide) in the Quran

*Mahmoud Altarabin*

## Abstract

*The thirst for knowledge has brought people into contact with people of other cultures. Translation is the sole means to promote the cultural and religious exchange between different nations. However, linguistic, cultural and religious factors can affect the translation product. This paper aims to discuss the translation pitfalls resulting from translating the word yahdi (guide) into English. It is fair to assume that a translation product may entail loss of meaning as Baker (1992:57) argues. Such loss of meaning or failure to account for the possible connotations of words (yahdi in the context of this paper) may lead to undesirable results on the target reader. This study examines the implications of the failure to account for the connotations of yahdi (guide). The translation of the word has been examined in three main translations of the meaning of the Holy Quran: Sahih International, Pickthall and Yusuf Ali.*

**Keywords:** the Quran, translation, equivalence, denotation, guide

## **1. Equivalence at glance**

Equivalence is regarded as the controlling concept of most of the translation theories. Venuti (2000:121) says that the fifties of the



twentieth century witnessed an opposition between translating for pragmatic equivalence and translating that is formally equivalent, aiming to reflect the linguistic and cultural features of the foreign text. A number of scholars argued for equivalence and others opposed to it. Catford (1965:21) says that “the central problem of translation practice is that of finding TL equivalents.” The equivalence relation with the SL text is problematic (Hervey et al. 1995:14). Gentzler (1993:58) believes that equivalence is a rather a necessary and important term in the field of Translation Studies.

Baker and Saldanha (2008:96) argue that theorists like (Catford 1965, Nida and Taber 1969, Toury 1980, Pym 1992) define translation based on equivalence relations. Baker (1992: 5-6) explains that she uses the term equivalence “for the sake of convenience – because most of the translators are used to it rather than because it has any theoretical status”. She believes that linguistic and cultural aspects influence equivalence and make it relative. Pym (1992:37) says that equivalence defines translation and translation, in turn, defines equivalence.

Equivalence relation has resulted in a considerable debate among translation theorists. Biguenet and Schulte (1989: xiii) believe that “an exact equivalence from one language to another will never be possible.” They also believe that perfect translation is an impossible task (1989: vii). Gregory Rabassa (in Biguenet and Schulte 1989:1) stresses that “a translation can never equal the original.” House (1997:24) stresses the importance of linguistic and extra-linguistic factors to specify, refine and modify the equivalence relation. Ivir (1996:155 in Hickey, 1998:63) argues that “equivalence is ... relative and not absolute.” Catford (1965:21) says that the task of translation theory is to define the nature and conditions of translation equivalence.

Equivalence becomes more challenging when dealing with religious or cultural texts. The values which the ST reflects may not be similar to those of the TT readers. Bassnett (2002:32) says “to attempt to impose the value system of the SL culture onto the TL culture is dangerous ground.” Sapir says that “no two languages are very sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality.”

Arabic and English reflect two different social, cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds. The structure of Arabic is rich in that one word *asa'altomoniha* can represent a full sentence in English (Did you ask me for it?). On the other hand, an English term like *outsourcing* may be understood by the speakers of Arabic, yet it is not lexicalized and thus needs to be paraphrased to render the meaning. There are also English specific terms which have no ‘exact equivalents’ in any other language. An example of that is *speaker* in the ‘speaker of the House of Commons’. On the cultural level, the translation of *Allah* (the only God) into English as *God* (any God) reflects the difference in the implication of the use of such term.

## **2. Religious texts and the translator’s role**

The translation of religious texts between two distinct languages, cultures and religions entails some challenges. Such may be attributed to the linguistic or religious variance. A concept, say divorce, exists in English and Arabic. However, translating the same from Arabic into English is challenging. The Islamic law distinguishes between *talaqraj'I* (revocable divorce) and *talaqba'in* (final divorce). An example of another term is *iddah* (this term refers to the period a woman must observe after the death of her husband or after a divorce, during which she may not marry another man).

Such terms are culture specific and no direct equivalence is available for the same in any other language.

The translator in such a context shall be able to communicate the meaning of such specific terms. Hatim and Mason (1997:1) believe that a translator is “both a receiver and producer.” They (1990:92) explain that the role of the translator includes constructing a model of source text intended meaning and evaluating its impacts on intended receivers. Nida (1964:145) says that a translator must have control over the language into which he is translating. “He cannot simply match words from a dictionary” (Nida,1964). Translators need to render texts which are easily understood by the target readers.

### 3. *Yahdi* (guide): challenges and horizons

This analysis of the three different translations of *yahdi* (guide and its derivations) attempts to show how the translators did not account for the type of guidance intended by the use of the word in different Quranic verses. We will cite three different translations of each intended meaning of the word. Al Salihi (p.209) explains that there are four different types of *hidayah* (guidance).

#### I. *Hidayah ‘ammah* (general guidance)

This type of guidance is given to all creation through which they fulfill the purpose for which they were created. All people share this type of guidance regardless of their beliefs. This *hidayah* is referred to in the *Quran* 20:50:

قَالَ رَبُّنَا الَّذِي أَعْطَى كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلْقَهُ ثُمَّ هَدَىٰ

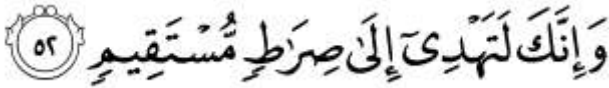
**Sahih International:** He said, “Our Lord is He who gave each thing its form and then **guided** [it].”

**Pickthall:** He said: Our Lord is He Who gave unto everything its nature, then **guided it aright**.

**Yusuf Ali:** He said: “Our Lord is He Who gave to each (created) thing its form and nature, and further, **gave (it) guidance**.”

## II. *Hidayat* bayan (explanation guidance):

In this type of guidance, the two paths of good and evil are defined and explained according to Islam. This is the type of *hidayah* referred to in the *Quran* 42:52:

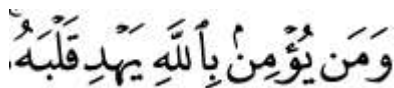


**Sahih International:** “And indeed, [O Muhammad], you guide to a straight path”

**Pickthall:** “And lo! thou verily dost guide unto a right path,”

**Yusuf Ali:** “and verily thou dost guide (men) to the Straight Way,”

III. *Hidayattawfiq* (a heavenly guidance). Allah inspires and guides some to the truth of faith. The type it refers to in the *Quran* 64:11:



**Sahih International:** And whoever believes in Allah - He will guide his heart.

**Pickthall:** And whosoever believeth in Allah, He guideth his heart.

**Yusuf Ali:** and if any one believes in Allah, (Allah) guides his heart (aright).

**IV. *Hidayah* in the next life.** An example of this is reflected in the *Quran* 7:43

وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي هَدَانَا لِهَذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لِنَهْتَدِيَ لَوْلَا أَنْ هَدَانَا اللَّهُ

**Sahih International:** And they will say, “Praise to Allah , who has guided us to this; and we would never have been guided if Allah had not guided us.”

**Pickthall:** The praise to Allah, Who hath guided us to this. We could not truly have been led aright if Allah had not guided us.”

**Yusuf Ali:** and they shall say: “Praise be to Allah, who hath guided us to this (felicity): never could we have found guidance.”

	<b>Sahih International</b>	<b>Pickthall</b>	<b>Yusuf Ali</b>
<b>Type 1</b>	guided	guided	guidance
<b>Type 2</b>	guide	guide	guide
<b>Type 3</b>	guide	guideth	guide
<b>Type 4</b>	guided	guided	guided

## Commentary

The different derivations of *yahdi* in the above four types were mentioned around 269 times in the *Quran*. The first type of guidance is general and is bestowed on all creations. None of the translators reflected this meaning while rendering the word into English. This type of guidance resembles the natural instinct which drives creations to fulfill certain tasks.

The second type of guidance is specific in that a human may guide another human through explanation and teaching. This is related to showing the good path from the evil path. The third type of guidance is more specific in which Allah guides those who follow His path. The fourth type is inevitable on the judgment day.

The translations of the word in English did not account for any of these types of *hidayah*. Given that the word has different implications in Arabic, the same can be accounted for in English through the use of a note to indicate which type of guidance the word refers to in a given context. This can overcome the pitfall of failure to account for the different connotations of the word. By way of concluding this paper, it is essential to assume that it is possible to render any type of text into other languages using different strategies which can facilitate accounting for the intended meaning of the ST items.

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# **Book Review**

## **The Known Unknowns of Translation Studies\***

**\*Brems, E., Meylaerts, R., & Van Doorslaer, L. (Eds.). (2014). *The Known Unknowns of Translation Studies*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.**

*Deepa V.*

*The Known Unknowns of Translation Studies*, edited by Elke Brems, Reine Meylaerts and Luc van Doorslaer is a collection of essays by eminent scholars within Translation Studies that attempts to look into the explored and unexplored areas within Translation Studies. It reflects the journey of Translation Studies as an independent interdisciplinary area of research since 1970s, identifies the present state of Translation Studies as a discipline focusing on the changing tendencies and directions within Translation Studies and its sub-domains and charts out its future directions and perspectives.

This book is an extended and modified version of the special issue of the *Target* 24:1 (Brems, Meylaerts and van Doorslaer, 2012) which in turn was an outcome of the conference 'The Known Unknowns of Translation Studies' organised by the University of Leuven in Belgium in August 2009. This book is published under Benjamins Current Topics series which publish special issues of established journals to make them reach out to a wider audience. With its simplicity and lucid narrative style, this work undoubtedly meets this goal as it appeals to anyone within or outside Translation Studies.

The first article by Susan Bassnett sets in the context for further discussions by tracing the successful story of Translation Studies as a discipline since the conference at University of Leuven in 1975.

She delivers an account of the nature and concerns of Translation Studies as an emerging discipline, its growth, development and its achievements. It is beyond any doubts that Translation Studies as a discipline has been successful in achieving its goals and targets, in questioning the orthodoxy and establishments. However, the present situation of Translation Studies pauses certain concerns and challenges to Translation Studies scholars. One of the concerns raised by Bassnett is the place Translation Studies has in the academia and the impact the discipline of Translation Studies has on other disciplines. Though the term translation is being used immensely in the academia, most of its usages are coming from outside the discipline and translation is used in a metaphorical sense to refer to the multilingual multicultural situations with no proper dues given to the 'actual realities of interlingual transfer process (23).' Such situation, according to her, demands introspection. Translation Studies needs to redefine itself, to broaden its reach and scope, to widen its goals and targets and to negotiate with the changing linguistic, cultural and temporal boundaries in new ways. It has to build effective communicative channels with other related disciplines and engage in more interdisciplinary, collaborative projects.

In a globalised world, where multilingualism and multiculturalism are realities, the actual processes of translation and interpreting become part of everyday life. Though translating and interpreting has been a major concern of Translation Studies from the beginning, many of the authors feel that Translation Studies could not reach out to these areas in an effective way. Functional Translatology is one such area. Christiane Nord traces the emergence of functionalist approach in Germany back to the 1970s. The Skopos theory proposed by Vermeer has been used to develop

Deepa V.

translation methodology, translation oriented text analysis, quality assessment and so on in the 1980s. However, it was not recognised within the academic circle until recently. Even now the approach is different. According to Nord, while its usefulness and applicability in translating advertisements and operating instructions are widely acknowledged, the same approach for biblical translation and literary translation is not accepted. However, there is significant improvement in the present context. With the growing demand for translation and interpreting in multilingual and multicultural countries like South Africa, there is a growing interest in the Functionalist approach. There is a need for more research in these fields. Translational action like cross-cultural consulting, intercultural technical writing etc. offers new scope for research. Miriam Shlesinger and Noam Ordan's study attempts to look into the inter-relationship between translation and interpreting and also written and oral translations. Their study aims to look at the way the modalities, whether written or spoken, influence translation than ontology, whether original or translated.

Another unexplored area within Translation Studies is the Translation Process Research (TPR). Though James Holmes in his famous article 'The Name and Nature of Translation Studies' allots an entire sub-branch of Descriptive Studies for the research on the process of translation, it is unfortunate that till recently, this area has been largely unexplored within Translation Studies as the focus of most of the researches within Translation Studies has been the production, reception and the product of translation. According to Arnt Lykke Jakobsen, the attempts to understand the writing process through observational protocols can be seen in the early 1970s itself in the US. These attempts were carried forward by the pioneers of

think-aloud methods in the 1980s. However, it was with the development of keylogging, developed out of combination of key stroke logging and eye tracking supported by computational and statistical data analysis that marked the start of Translation Process Research. Keystroke logging along with gaze data gives a closer view of the way text is read and comprehended through monitoring eye movements while reading the text, checking the text, re-reading etc. Though there are experiments happening in this area, the ecological validity of these laboratory experiments is largely unknown and unexplored.

While Translation Process Research looks at the process involved in translation activity through its external manifestations, Maria Tymozko argues for the need to look at the actual process going on within the human brain at the cognitive or neurological level of both the translator and the receiver through a collaborative research by translation studies scholars and neurophysiologists. She points out that some of the current areas of research in neuroscience especially on perception, memory and plasticity can contribute immensely to Translation Studies. The research in this field may question and challenge some of the existing views and understandings about translation itself. For instance, the finding that perception is not merely a sense data rather it is shaped by culture and experience can have huge impact on Translation Studies especially in translator training as translation is highly influenced by our perception of the source as well as the target culture. Thus an understanding of the possibility of deconstructing such formative experiences and neurological processes that shapes our perception through self- reflexivity can be of huge help in translator training.

In Christina Schaffner's opinion, though the questions of power relations and the politics of language have gained an important place

in Translation Studies research, the actual translations happening in the political situations and institutions like joint letters, press conferences etc. have been rarely explored in TS. While some research have been done within Critical Discourse Analysis identifying certain patterns of language use in particular political settings and an entirely new domain of research that explores the relation between language and politics names 'Political Linguistics' has emerged within Linguistics, Translation Studies, so far, has been largely blind to these issues and concerns. According to Schaffner, the significant role played by translation and interpreting in these domains provide immense scope for research for Translation Studies scholars that can enrich our understandings of power relations, language politics and the like. She argues that 'such discursive elements in the international politics like state visits, joint press conference etc. are highly complex events which are also discursive events which include translational elements' (133).

Sherry Simon employs the concept of translation to understand the aspects of city life. Though there are a number of studies on city, the language aspects of city are largely unexplored. According to her, the complex multilingual, multicultural situations of cities involve translation at various levels. She takes the city of Czernowitz in Central Europe which was home to German, Romanian, Ukranian and Yiddish language and culture as a case study. The convergence, exchanges and interchanges between these languages and cultures have been crucial in shaping the city life of Czernowitz. Therefore, for her, the city is also translational. The translational city, argues Simon, offers a new view into city life and in turn it also offers new perspectives on translation. Looking at cities as translation space using language passage, according to Simon, provides a key to understand the political and cultural tensions of that city.

What makes this work significant is the very fact that it is a self- reflection of Translation Studies itself. It mirrors the evolution of Translation Studies. This work looks at some of the areas that are not sufficiently engaged with within Translation Studies but may decide the future directions of Translation Studies. These studies stress on the need for Translation Studies to redefine itself. To constantly negotiate with its own boundaries, to revisit and to re examine its nature and concerns in order to respond to the changing societal needs and developments in a globalised digital era.

It opens up in front of the readers, enormous opportunities and scope within Translation Studies. Though the immediate beneficiaries would be students, scholars, practitioners of Translation Studies, anyone outside the discipline can also hugely benefit from it. Though the topics discussed and the terminologies used are technical, it does not obstruct non- Translation Studies audience from understanding the basic arguments of the text.

# Translation



## **Dobar savjet zlata vrijedi**

**Rushdie, S. (1994). Good Advice is Rarer than Rubies. In *East, West*. London: Random House**

*Translated into Montenegrin by Petar Božović*

Posljednjeg utorka u mjesecu, gospođica Rehana stiže pred kapiju konzulata Velike Britanije prvim jutarnjim autobusom čiji farovi još uvijek bjehu upaljeni. Kada je zakočio, podiže oblak prašine kojim sakri njenu ljepotu od nepoznatih pogleda. Autobus bješe jarke boje s šarenim ukrasima, a na prednjem dijelu stajaše natpis „POMJERI SE DRAGA“ ispisan zelenim i zlatnim slovima, dok na zadnjem stajaše „PA – PA“<sup>1</sup> i „OK. SREĆNO“. Vozaču reče da je autobus prelijep, a on odmah poskoči da joj pridrži vrata uz teatralan naklon.

Imala je krupne, crne oči, dovoljno svjetlucave da joj ni sjenka ne bješe potrebna, a kada ih stručnjak za davanje savjeta, Muhamed Ali, ugleda, osjeti se ponovo mladim. Posmatrao ju je kako se približava kapiji konzulata dok se razdanjivalo i kako prilazi bradatom stražaru u smeđožutoj uniformi s zlatnim dugmadima i ukrašenim turbanom da ga pita kada se otvara. Stažar, koji je obično bio vrlo drzak prema ženama koje su utorkom dolazile u konzulat, njoj odgovori prilično učtivo.

„Za po' ure“, reče mrzovoljno. „A moguće i za dva sata. Ko će ga znat'. Gospoda doručkuju.“

Prašnjav prilaz kapiji bješe pun žena koje dolaze utorkom. Neke bjehu pokrivenne velom, druge, poput gospođice Rehane, ne. Sve djelovahu uplašeno, i čvrsto držaše za ruku ujake i braću koji su se trudili da izgledaju samouvjereno. Ali, gospođica Rehana je došla sama, i uopšte ne djelovaše uznemireno.

Dobar savjet zlata vrijedi

Muhamed Ali, ekspert za davanje savjeta ovim ubogim ženama koje su dolazile svake sedmice, uputi se ka ovoj neobičnoj, samostalnoj curi krupnih očiju.

„Gospođice“, obrati joj se, „pretpostavljam da ste došli da tražite dozvolu za putovanje u London?“

Stajaše do tezge s toplim obrocima u malom divljem naselju na samom rubu kompleksa i zadovoljno grickaše ljute pakore<sup>2</sup>. Okrenu se, pogleda ga, a njemu zastade dah.

„Da, jesam.“

„Onda mi, molim Vas, dozvolite da Vam pružim jedan savjet. Neću ga skupo naplatiti.“

Gospođica Rehana se osmijehnu. „Dobar savjet zlata vrijedi“, reče. „Ali, nažalost, ne mogu da ga priuštim. Siroče sam, a ne jedna od ovih Vaših bogatašica.“

„Imajte povjerenja u moju sijedu kosu“, Muhamed Ali je ubjeđivaše. „Moj savjet je dobro okaljen iskustvom. Sigurno će Vam biti od koristi.“

Ona odmahnu glavom. „Ali ja stvarno nemam ni kinte. Vidite i sami da ovdje ima žena u pratnji muškaraca koji dobro zarađuju. Pridite njima. Dobar savjet treba da se dobro i naplati.“

*Mora da sam potpuno poludio*, pomisli Muhamed Ali jer uhvati sebe kako govori: „Gospođice Rehana, sudbina nas je spojila. Šta mogu. Tako je zapisano. I ja sam siromašan čovjek, ali za Vas će savjet biti besplatan“.

Rehana se opet nasmiješi. „Onda ga moram saslušati. Kada sudbina pošalje dar, to donosi sreću.“

Odvede je do niskog drvenog stola u njegov kutak divljeg naselja. Ona ga slijedaše jedući pakore iz kutijice od novina. Ne posluži ga ni jednom.

Muhamed Ali stavi jastuče na prašnjavo tlo. „Sjedite, molim Vas.“ Učinila je tako. Sjede i prekrsti noge za stolom naspram nje svjestan da mnoštvo zavidnih muških pogleda zuri u njega, i da svi muškarci iz tog divljeg naselja kibicuju na ovu mladu ljepoticu koju je šarmirao ovaj matori prevarant. Udahnu duboko da bi došao k sebi.

„Kako se zovete?“

„Gospođica Rehana“, odgovori. „Vjerena sam za Mustafu Dara iz Bredforda u Londonu.“

„Mislite, iz Bredforda u Engleskoj“, ljubazno je ispravi. „London je samo grad poput Multana ili Bahavalpura<sup>3</sup>. Engleska je velika zemlja, puna hladnokrvnih ljudi.“

„Shvatam. Hvala Vam“, odgovori s takvom ozbiljnošću da mu ne bješe jasno da li se šali.

„Da li ste popunili prijavu? Dajte da je pogledam.“

Uruči mu dokument koji bješe uredno presavijen u žutoj koverti.

„Je li sve u redu?“ Po prvi put osjeti zabrinutost u njenom glasu.

Tapkaše rukom o sto blizu njene ruke. „Sigurno jeste“, reče. „Pričekajte malo da provjerim.“

Rehana dovrši svoje pakore dok on pregledaše dokumenta.

„Tip-top“, reče s posebnim naglašavanjem. „Sve je u redu.“

Dobar savjet zlata vrijedi

„Hvala Vam za savjet“, reče i krenu da ustaje. „Oдох da čekam kod kapije.“

„Šta Vam pada na pamet?“, poviknu i udari rukom o čelo. „Mislite da to ide tako lako? Samo date obrazac i, paf, s osmjehom Vam daju dozvolu? Gospođice Rehana, vjerujte mi da ulazite u jazbinu koja je gora od bilo koje policijske stanice.“

„Stvarno?“ Njegov govor je upalio. Budno ga je slušala, te je mogao još malo da je posmatra.

Ponovo udahnu duboko da bi došao k sebi i otpoče s dobro uvježbanom pričom. Reče joj da su gospoda uvjerenja da su sve žene koje dolaze utorkom, a tvrde da su vjerenice tamo nekih vozača autobusa iz Lutona ili računovođa iz Mančestera, obični prevaranti, lažovi i varalice.

Ona odmah odreagova: „Onda ću im lijepo objasniti da ja nisam takva!“

Obuze ga jeza zbog njenog neiskustva i strah šta bi joj se moglo desiti. Reče joj da je ona je poput vrapca, a ti prepredeni muškarci su prave grabljivice.

Muhamed Ali namjerno bješe bez dlake na jeziku kako bi je pripremio ako do toga, ili nečeg sličnog, dođe. Gledala je u jednu tačku, a ruke na ivici stola počеше da joj tresu.

Nastavio je:

„Pitaće Vas koliko soba imate u porodičnoj kući, koje su boje zidovi, kojim danima bacate smeće. Pitaće Vas za srednje ime pastorke tetke trećeg rođaka Vaše svekrve. A sve su to već pitali i Vašeg Mustafu Dara u Bredfordu. Ako i makar jednom pogriješite, gotovi ste.“

„Da”, kako ovo izgovori, Muhamed osjeti da se Rehana trudi da ostane smirena. „I šta me savjetujete, starče?”

Obično bi u ovom trenutku Muhamed Ali počeo da ubrzanim tonom šapuće kako poznaje jednog čovjeka, mnogo dobrog čovjeka, koji radi u konzulatu i da, za razumnu sumu, preko njega može da nabavi potrebna dokumenta sa svim neophodnim ovjerama. Ovaj posao je bio unosan jer bi mu žene obično platile petsto rupija ili bi mu davale zlatne narukvice za uslugu i otišle zadovoljne.

Muhamed Ali bi, prije nego što bi ih nasamario, prvo provjerio da li su doputovale izdaleka, tako da čak i kada bi saznale da su prevarene ne bi se vraćale. Vratile bi se u Sargodu ili Laluket<sup>4</sup> i počele da se pakuju i ko zna u koje doba bi saznale da su prevarene. Tada bi, svakako, bilo prekasno za bilo kakvu reakciju.

Život je težak, a starac poput njega mora nekako da se snalazi. Ne treba da žali ove žene koje su utorkom dolazile.

Ali, glas ga je opet izdao, i umjesto uobičajenog govora, poče da joj otkriva najveću tajnu.

„Gospođice Rehana,” ote mu se rečenica, „rijetke su osobe poput Vas; Vi ste poput dragulja, i uradio bih za Vas ono što možda ne bih ni za rođenu ćerku. Došao sam do dokumenta koji bez po' muke može da riješi sve Vaše brige.“

„A o kakvom se to čarobnom dokumentu radi“, upita s osmjehom.

A onda poče da joj šapuće.

„Gospođice Rehana, riječ je o britanskom pasošu. Pravi pravcijati pasoš. Imam dobrog prijatelja koji će unijeti Vaše ime i zalijepiti Vašu fotografiju, a onda Vas eto u Engleskoj za tili čas!“

Dobar savjet zlata vrijedi

Eto. Rekao joj je.

Ovog ludog dana je sve moguće. Vjerovatno bi joj ga dao besplatno, a onda bi se kasnije živ pojeo zbog toga.

*Stara budalo*, prebacivao je sebi. *Matorcima mlađe curice pamet popiju.*

„Nisam razumjela“, reče. „Sugerišete mi da počinim krivično djelo?“

„Ne krivično djelo“, uskoči. „Nego da ubrzate proceduru.“

„...i pođem u Bredford u Londonu ilegalno, i da im dam povod za ionako loše mišljenje koje gospoda iz konzulata imaju o svima nama. Gospodine, to i nije baš dobar savjet.“

„Bredford u *Engleskoj*“, ispravi je tužnim glasom. „Ne bi trebalo da na takav način gledate na moj dar.“

„Nego kako?“

„Gospođice, ja sam siromašan čovjek, a ovu uslugu sam Vam ponudio zbog Vaše ljepote. Pokažite malo cijenjenja za moju velikodušnost. Uzmite ga. Ili nemojte, vratite se kući, zaboravite na Englesku, samo nemojte ulaziti u tu zgradu i pogaziti svoje dostojanstvo.“

Ona već bješe na nogama i udaljavala se od njega. Išla je ka kapiji gdje počеше da se okupljaju žene kojima je stražar prijetio da budu strpljive ili im neće dozvoliti prijem.

„Dobro, radi kako hoćeš“, povika Muhamed Ali za njom. „Meni ni u džep, ni iz džepa.“

Nije se okretala.

„Mi smo proklet narod“, povika. „Siromašni smo, neuki, i nećemo da učimo.“

„Alo, Muhamede“, pozva ga žena za tezgom s betelovim orasima. „Šteta što voli mlade.“

Muhamed Ali cijelog dana samo čučaše u blizini kapije konzulata. Često bi sebe grdio *Ma, idi odavde matora budalo, dama više neće željeti s tobom ni riječ da progovori*. Ali, kada je izašla, zateče ga kako je i dalje čeka.

„Selam, dobri savjetniče“, pozdravi ga.

Djelovaše smireno, i da više nije ljuta na njega te pomisli, *Dragi Bože, uspjela je. Njene lijepe oči su opčinile i Britance; dobila je dozvolu za put*.

Osmjehnu joj se, a ona mu odmah uzvratila.

„Gospođice Rehana Begum“, reče, „sve čestitke, kćeri, za tvoj uspjeh“.

Istog trena ga uze pod ruku.

„Hajde“, reče. „Da Vas častim pakorama i da Vam se zahvalim za Vaš savjet, a i iskupim za to što sam bila gruba.“

Stajahu u prašini u blizini autobusa koji se spremaše za polazak. Nosači su vezivali vreće za spavanje za krov. Ulični prodavci su dozivali prolaznike pokušavajući da prodaju ljubavne priče i prirodne lijekove. I jedno i drugo je liječilo tugu. Gospođica Rehana i zadovoljni Muhamed Ali su jeli svoje pakore naslonjeni na prednji

Dobar savjet zlata vrijedi

branik autobusa. Stari savjetodavac počeo tiho da pjevuši melodiju iz nekog filma. Dnevna žega je bila na izmaku.

„Bila je to ugovorena vjeridba“, gospođica Rehana odjednom prokomentarisala. „Imala sam devet godina kada su moji roditelji sve sredili. Mustafa Dar je tada već imao trideset godina, ali otac je želio nekoga ko bi se mogao brinuti o meni kao što je to on činio, a Mustafa je kod tate imao reputaciju dobrog i pouzdanog čovjeka. Onda su roditelji umrli i Mustafa Dar je oputovao u Englesku i rekao da će poslati nekoga po mene. Davno je to bilo. Imam njegovu fotografiju, ali za mene je potpuni stranac. Čak mu ni glas ne prepoznajem preko telefona.“

Ova ispovijest iznenadi Muhamed Alija ali ipak klimnu glavom s nadom da će izgledati mudro.

„Ali, ipak“, reče, „roditelji nam žele samo najbolje. Pronašli su ti dobrog i poštenog čovjeka koji je održao riječ i poslao ti poziv. A sada je cijeli život pred tobom da ga upoznaš i zavoliš.“

Zbuni ga njen kisjeli osmjeh.

„Ali, starče“, upita ga, „zašto si me već spakovao i poslao u Englesku?“

Ustade šokiran.

„Djeluješ srećno, pa sam pomislio ... oprost, ali jesu li te odbili?“

„Nisam tačno odgovorila ni na jedno pitanje“, odgovori. „Ukrasni biljeg sam stavila na pogrešan obraz, potpuno sam na svoj način preuredila kupatilo i to sve naopako, shvatate?“

„Pa, šta ćeš sada? Kako ćeš otići?“



„Sada ću da se vratim u Lahor svom poslu. Radim u jednoj velikoj kući kao dadilja. Čuvam tri dobra dječaka. Bili bi tužni da sam otputovala.“

„Ali, ovo je užasno!“, požali se Muhamed Ali. „Žali Bože što ne prihvati moju ponudu! Žao mi je što ti ovo moram reći, ali sad je kasno. Imaju tvoj obrazac dokumentovan i mogu te provjeriti kad god požele tako da ni pasoš više ne pomaže.“

„Sve je propalo, sve, ali moglo je biti tako lako samo da si me na vrijeme poslušala.“

„Mislim da zaista nema razloga da Vam bude žao“, reče.

U svom dugom, samotnom i teškom životu po ovoj vrelini, nije vidio radosnijeg osmjeha od onog koji mu je uputila posljednji put prije nego što je prašina od autobusa potpuno zakloni.

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1. Izvorno: TATA-BATA (Prim. prev.).
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# अवसर का निर्माण

*Avasarak Nirman, written (Maithili)  
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(0)

धनमा का थोबड़ा देखकर ही मैं समझ गया कि आज फिर उसकी धुनाई हुई है।

प्रो. साहेब के यहाँ नौकरी करते हुए धनमा का यह चौथा महीना था। इसका बड़ा भाई भी इन्हीं के यहाँ दो वर्षों से काम कर रहा था, पिछले महीने ही उसका स्थानान्तरण प्रो. साहेब के छोटे भाई के यहाँ झरिया हो गया। धनमा का भाई ही उसे पिछले तीन महीने से ट्रेनिंग दे रहा था, बर्तन-बासन से लेकर खाना पकाना, झाड़ू लगाना, कपड़ा-लत्ता साफ करना आदि। सभी गुण तो उसने सीख लिया था पर सब्जी में नमक देने का ठिकाना उसे अबतक नहीं रहता। इसी कारण से उसे कभी-कभी धुनाई सहना पड़ता था।

बारह वर्ष का धनमा देखने में एकदम गोरा-चिट्टा। दप-दप उजले सर्ट को जब वह सिलेठी रंग के हाफ-पैट के नीचे बिना बेल्ट का ही डोराडोर चढ़ा अंडरसेटिंग करता तो ऐसा लगता मानो किसी अंग्रेजी स्कूल का छात्र हो। वैसे वह चौथी कक्षा तक पढ़ा भी था। उसके बाप ने कहा था “गरीब का बेटा अब इससे ज्यादा पढ़कर क्या करेगा? जाओ नौकरी करो, घर में दो पैसे का मदद हो जाएगा।”

न जाने क्यों मुझे धनमा से स्नेह हो गया। इसलिए जब-जब मैं प्रो. साहेब के डेरा पर रात को ठहरता, धनमा से भरपेट गप्प-सप्प करता। बच्चा जात, पहली बार घर से निकला था, सो जब-जब उसे अपने माँ-बाप की याद आ जाती वह

बिलख-बिलख कर रोने लगता। उसका रोना और उसकी मनोदशा देखकर मुझे उसपर दया आ जाती। उसपर दया होने कारण, मुझमें और धनमा में एक समानता थी। धनमा भी अपने परिवार के लिए नौकरी करता था और मैं भी अपने परिवार के लिए नौकरी करता था। अंतर बस यही था कि धनमा की उम्र थी 03 और मेरी उम्र थी 25 साल। धनमा अपने पगार का सारा पैसा अपने माँ-बाप को दे देता था और मैं अपने पगार में से कुछ बचाकर पढ़ाई भी करता था। मैं अभी एम. ए. का छात्र था।

वैसे तो धनमा सब दिन ड्राइंग-हॉल में सोता था पर उस रात वह मेरे ही पलंग के नीचे अपनी चटाई-दरी बिछाकर सो गया। जब रात निःशब्द हो गयी, प्रो. साहब अब सो गए होंगे ऐसा जानकर धनमा ने मुझे टोका—“अच्छा भाइजी, टाटा का नमक और नमक से ज्यादा नमकीन होता है क्या?”

“नहीं तो!”

नहीं भाइजी मैं यह नहीं मानूँगा, इससे पहले हमारे यहाँ ‘कैप्टन कूक’ नमक आता था, सब्जी में दो चम्मच भी दे देता तो भी मालिक और मालकिन कुछ भी नहीं बोलती थी। ये स्साला टाटा का नमक जब से आया है तब से मुझे इसका कोई अंदाजा ही नहीं रहता। डेढ़ चम्मच दीजिए तो भी जहर एक चम्मच दीजिए तो भी जहर। इसी नमक के चलते मुझे इतनी मार खानी पड़ती है।

अच्छा एक बात बताओ धनमा—“तुम्हारे यहाँ टाटा का नमक कब से आ रहा है?”

“एक महीने से।”

“इस एक महीने में तुझे कितनी बार मार लगी है?”

“इसी बार।”

“बस! इसका मतलब हुआ कि गलती तुम्हारी है, नमक का नहीं।”

और मेरे मालिक की कोई गलती नहीं है? वो नहीं समझ सकते हैं कि बच्चा है एक दिन गलती ही हो गई तो क्या होगा, इस तरह की छोटी-छोटी गलतियों के लिए ऐसी मार? उनका बेटा भी तो मेरा ही हमउम्र है उन्हें क्यों नहीं मारते? जानते हैं भाइजी, कल ही गणेश मेरा 31 रू. चुराकर आइसक्रीम खा गया, लेकिन चोरी-जैसा अपराध करने के बाबजूद मालिक ने उसे कुछ नहीं कहा।

तुम्हारा 31 रू. चुरा लिया! तुम्हारे पास पैसे कहाँ से आए?

हूँ-हूँ! भाइजी मेरे पास 63 रू. है। मालिक के यहाँ यदा-कदा जो अतिथि लोग आते रहते हैं मैं ही उनका अटैची-बैग आदि नीचे तक ले जाता हूँ उनसे मेरे से कई लोग मुझे कभी-कभी पाँच-दस रू. दे देते हैं। ये रूपये मैं अपने मालकिन को रखने दे देता हूँ। उस घर में आपने स्रो का एक उजला डिब्बा देखा है? मेरे सभी रूपये उसी डिब्बे में रहता है। जिस दिन 011 रू. पूरे हो जाएँगे मैं अपने छोटी बहन के लिए एक फ्रॉक खरीदूँगा। गणेश मेरे उसी पैसे में से कल चोरी कर लिया था।

अच्छा कोई बात नहीं, प्रो. साहेब ने गणेश को कुछ नहीं कहा इसका मतलब हुआ कि आगे चलकर गणेश का संस्कार खराब हो जाएगा। तू तो चोरी नहीं करता न! इसलिए तेरा संस्कार अच्छा हो जाएगा। अभी तुम बच्चे हो ये सभी बातें अभी नहीं समझ पाओगे।

भाइजी मैं सारी बातें समझता हूँ। गणेश पढाई कर रहा है उसका संस्कार कितना भी खराब क्यों न हो जाय वह बाबू ही कहलाएगा और धनमा, धनमा ही रह जाएगा।

ऐसी बात नहीं है धनमा, गुलटोपी को पहचानते हो? वो कितना पढ़ा-लिखा है जानते हो? नहीं न! वो अंगूठा छाप है, अंगूठा छाप! और देखते हो वो कैसी चमचमाती हुई गाड़ी पर चढ़ता है? उसका मुंशी बी. ए. पास है। गुलटोपी एक ठिकेदार है। लोगों में बस मेहनत, लगन और ईमानदारी होनी चाहिए वो कभी भी कुछ भी कर सकता है। ये सारी बातें तुम अभी नहीं समझ पाओगे थोड़ा और बड़े हो जाओगे तो सारी बातें समझ में आ जाएगी।

“.....”

“अच्छा भाइजी, आप भी गरीब हैं क्या?”

“तुम्हें किसने कहा?”

प्रो. साहेब एकदिन बोल रहे थे कि “विवेक बहुत ही गरीब है। कमा कर घर भी देखता है और पढ़ता भी है।”

“हाँ, ठीक ही कहा उसने।”

तो आप मैथिली क्यों पढ़ते हैं, साइंस क्यों नहीं पढ़ते? साइंस पढ़कर लोग डॉक्टर, इंजीनियर बनते हैं, ऐसा प्रो. साहब कहते हैं। वो कह रहे थे, “बेचारा साइंस कहाँ से पढ़ सकेगा? ट्यूशन के लिए रूपये कहाँ से लाएगा? इसलिए मैथिली पढ़ रहा है।” अच्छा भाईजी, एक बात बताईए, मैथिली बहुत खराब विषय है क्या?

ना रे बेअक्ल! भाषा कोई भी खराब नहीं होती। भाषा के विषय में ऐसी सोच रखने वाले खराब होते हैं। अच्छा तुम एक बात बताओ, “यदि तुम्हें मैथिली बोलने नहीं आती तो क्या तुम मुझसे बात कर सकता था?”

नहीं भाईजी! वो तो सत्य है, प्रो. साहेब झूठ ही बोल रहे थे। उनको मैं प्रायः देखता हूँ कि वे प्रो. लोगों के साथ मैथिली बोलते-बोलते अंगरेजी में न जाने क्या गिटिर-पिटिर, गिटिर-पिटिर बोलने लगते हैं।

अच्छा भाइजी, आप एक बात मुझे बताइए, मैथिली पढ़ के आप कभी प्रो. बन सकते हैं क्या?

हाँ, क्यों नहीं।

तब तो आप निश्चय ही प्रो. बनिएगा भाइजी।

धत्! बुढ़ा कहीं का।

भाइजी, एक बात मुझे और बताइए, “गरीब लोग क्या कभी अमीर बन सकता है?”

“एकदम बन सकता है।”

धनमा थोड़ी देर तक चुप रहा और पता नहीं कब उसे नींद आ गई।

(2)

मैं साल भर से दिल्ली के एक प्राइवेट कम्पनी में काम कर रहा हूँ। प्रेमनगर से लाजपतनगर तक प्रायः बस से ही आना-जाना होता है, कभी-कभार लोकल ट्रेन से भी चला जाता हूँ। अतिरिक्त कार्यभार के कारण आज कम्पनी में कुछ ज्यादा समय के लिए रुकना पड़ा था सो थोड़ी भूख लग गई थी, इसलिए पापड़-पापड़ शब्द सुनकर पापड़वाले को बुलाया-“ऐ पापड़वाले! एक पापड़ देना।” पापड़वाला मेरे सामने आया, मुझे एक पापड़ दिया। मैं जैसे ही पैसा देने लगा कि वो पापड़वाला मेरे पैरों पर गिर गया और बड़े ही दुःखी स्वर में बोला – “भाइजी, आपने मुझे पहचाना नहीं? मैं धनमा।” ध्यान से देखा तो वह धनमा ही

था। मुझे थोड़ी ग्लानि भी हुई। मैं तत्क्षण उठकर धनमा को गले से लगा लिया और दोनों ही व्यक्ति भाव-विभोर हो गए। मैंने धनमा को अपने बगल में बिठाते हुए पूछा- “कहो धनमा, क्या हाल-चाल है, यहाँ कैसे?”

उसने कहा- “भाइजी आपको कुछ स्मरण है मेरा मार? वो रात?” मैं वहाँ मार खाते-खाते तंग हो गया था। सब्जी में नमक ज्यादा हो गया तो मार, कम हो गया तो मार, कपड़ा में कहीं दाग रह गया तो मार...। भाइजी उस अंतिम रात को जब मुझे आपसे भेंट हुई थी उसके सुबह की ही बात है, प्रो. साहेब के डेरा के नीचे जो चाय की दुकान थी हलाल खान की, उसका बेटा दिल्ली में दर्जी का काम करता है। उसीसे उसदिन मेरी भेंट हुई तो उसने कहा-“चलो मेरे साथ दिल्ली, वहाँ बैठे-बैठे कपड़े में काज-बटन लगाना, खाने-पीने के अलावा पाँच सौ रूपया महीना दूँगा।” मेरे पास भाड़ा के लायक रू. तो था ही सो उसी दिन मैं भाग गया वहाँ से। तीन महीने तक मैं उसी के दुकान पर रहा। उस दुकान के बगल में ही एक पापड़वाला रहता था जिसके यहाँ मैं प्रतिदिन देखता था कि मेरे ही उम्र के कई बच्चे लोग थोक-का थोक सेंका हुआ पापड़ ले जाते थे। एकदिन मैं यँ ही उस दुकान पर चला गया तो भाईसाहब (पापड़वाले) ने मुझसे कहा- “पापड़ बेचोगे? देखते हो ये लोग तुम्हारी ही उम्र के हैं, 011 रू. रोज कमाता है। इसमें पूँजी भी तुम्हारी नहीं लगेगी, बस यहाँ से सेंका हुआ पापड़ ले जाओ, घूम-घूमकर बेचो और शाम को पैसा जमा कर दो। एक पापड़ का तुमको 51 पैसा देना होगा, उस पापड़ को तुम 2 रू. में बेचो। मतलब एक पापड़ पर तुमको 0.51 पैसा बचेगा, जितना बेचोगे उतना कमाओगे।” मुझे यह बिजनेस जँच गया। मैं दूसरे ही दिन से पापड़ बेचने लगा। पहले कुछ दिनों तक तो मैं करोलबाग तक ही रहता था लेकिन अब तो दिल्ली का शायद ही कोई कोना होगा जहाँ मैं नहीं गया होऊँगा। अभी मेरा दो बिजनेस चल रहा है भाइजी। सुबह 8 बजे से 00 बजे तक राममनोहर लोहिया अस्पताल के सामने नारियल बेचता हूँ, जिसमें एक पीस पर लगभग 51 पैसा तक बच जाता है। दो सौ पीस तो निदान बेच ही लेता

हूँ। शाम 4 बजे से रात के 6 बजे तक बस, लोकल ट्रेन, पार्क आदि जगहों पर पापड़ बेचता हूँ जहाँ चार-पाँच सौ पीस तक बेच ही लेता हूँ। मैं मन-ही-मन हिसाब लगाने लगा, “नारियल में 011रु. और पापड़ में चार ड्योटे 911 रु.। इसका मतलब हुआ कि धनमा की दैनिक कमाई अभी 711 से 811 रु. तक है।”

धनमा आगे कहता गया—भाइजी, मैंने तीन साल तक अपने घर में कोई चिट्ठी-पत्री नहीं दिया और न ही किसी को कोई जानकारी ही कि, मैं कहाँ हूँ। मेरे माँ-बाबूजी और गाँव-समाज के लोग समझते कि “धनमा कहीं मर-हर गया।” तीन साल के बाद मैं गाँव गया। वहाँ दो कमरे का पक्का मकान बनाया। बाबूजी को तीन बीघा खेत खरीदवा दिया। एक जोड़ा बैल और एक पंपसेट भी खरीद दिया बाबूजी को। अगले महीने मैं एक ट्रैक्टर खरीदने की सोच रहा हूँ। मेरा बड़ा भाई भी अब गाँव में ही रहकर खेती-बारी का काम देखता है। प्रो. साहब के भाई के यहाँ से मैंने उन्हें भी चाकरी छुड़वा दिया। मेरी बहन अभी मिल्लत स्कूल, दरभंगा में पढ़ती है। अभी वो दशवीं कक्षा की छात्रा है। पढ़ने में बड़ी ही मेधावी है, हर साल अपने कक्षा में प्रथम ही आती है। कहती है—“डॉ. बनूँगी।” मुझे पूरा विश्वास है भाइजी, मैं उसे डॉक्टर बना ही दूँगा। धनमा आगे बोला—“अब आप अपने बारे में कुछ बताईए भाइजी, आप यहाँ कैसे?”

मैं यहाँ पिछले एक साल से हूँ, एक प्राइवेट कम्पनी में काम कर रहा हूँ। मेरा वेतन है 5,111 रु. मासिक।

“केवल पाँच हजार! इस राशि में दिल्ली जैसे शहर में आप कैसे गुजारा करते हैं भाइजी?”

धनेसर! तुझे तो पता है ही न कि मैंने मैथिली से एम. ए. किया था। मैथिली का सर्टिफिकेट लेकर पूरे दिल्ली को छान मारा, इस शहर में भाषा नहीं टेक्निकल ज्ञान का ज्यादा महत्व है।



धनमा थोड़ी देर के लिए चुप-सा हो गया..., वह बोला—भाइजी, आपने तो ऐसी बातें कह दी कि मेरे समझ में ही नहीं आ रहा है कि मैं आपको क्या जवाब दूँ। अब आज मैं आपको नहीं छोड़ने वाला हूँ, आज आपको मेरे डेरा पर जाना ही होगा।

धनमा ने मुझे विवश कर दिया, उस दिन मैं करोलबाग स्टेशन पर ही उतर गया।

धनमा का डेरा करोलबाग स्टेशन के करीब ही था।

उस छोटे-से घर के एक कोने में खाना बनाने का बर्तन-बासन था, दूसरी ओर कपड़ा-लत्ता, बिछावन आदि और शेष भाग में एक बहुत बड़ा सा रैक जिसमें किताबें ठूस-ठूस कर भरे पड़े थे। उसके बिछावन पर मैथिली की कई पत्र-पत्रिकाएँ बिखरी पड़ी थी, जिसे देख मुझे थोड़ा अचरज हुआ। धनमा हमारी मनोदशा को भाँप गया। उसने कहा—“निश्चिन्त रहिए भाइजी, यह डेरा मेरा ही है। मैं आपको यहाँ कतई नहीं लाता ज्योंहि आपने यह बोल दिया कि मैथिली से एम. ए. ... । भाइजी मुझे आपके द्वारा दिया गया वो सब उपदेश अभी तक याद है। आपही ने एकदिन मुझसे कहा था कि, प्रेमचंद गणित में फेल कर गए थे, जयशंकर प्रसाद, पाँचवी कक्षा तक की औपचारिक शिक्षा के बाद केवल स्वाध्याय के बल पर इतने सारे साहित्य का सृजनकर्ता बने, गुलटेन अंगूठा छाप है और..., भाषा कोई भी खराब नहीं होती..., मेहनत, लगन, ईमानदारी से...। भाइजी आप मैथिली के धनेसर कामत को जानते हैं?”

हाँ, मैंने उनकी कुछ रचनाएँ पढ़ी है, चेहरे से मैं उन्हें नहीं जानता।

तो फिर लीजिए, आज चेहरा भी देख लीजिए—मैं ही हूँ आपका धनेसर कामत। भाइजी, मैंने आपही से प्रेरणा लेकर आज स्वाध्याय के बल पर मैथिली साहित्य मध्य धनेसर कामत के नाम से ख्यात हूँ। भाइजी, मैं प्रतिमाह उतना रू. कमा लेता हूँ जितना प्रो. साहेब का मासिक वेतन है। आप पढ़े-लिखे लोग हैं,

5,111 को 51,111 में कैसे बदला जाय? सो आप सोच सकते हैं। मुझे माफ कीजिएगा भाइजी, छोटी मुँह बड़ी बातें। जहाँ तक मुझे लगता है, आप अवसर की प्रतीक्षा कर रहे हैं, कुछ भी नहीं मिलने वाला है, कुछ भी नहीं कर पाइएगा, भाइजी, अवसर का निर्माण कीजिए निर्माण... ।

मैं मन ही मन सोचने को बाध्य हो गया कि 08 वर्षीय अनपढ़ (?) धनमा अच्छा या फिर मेरे जैसा 31 वर्षीय मैथिली का स्नातकोत्तर?

## ଠାକୁର କୁଅ

***Thakur Ka Kuan, Munshi Premchand  
Translated into Odia by Jhuni Mallick***

ଜୋଖୁ ଲୋଚା ମୁହଁ ପାଖକୁ ନେଲାକ୍ଷଣି ପାଣିରୁ ବହୁତ ଦୁର୍ଗନ୍ଧ ଆସୁଥିଲା । ସେ ଗଙ୍ଗାକୁ କହିଲା, “ଏ କେମିତିଆ ପାଣି? ବହୁତ ଦୁର୍ଗନ୍ଧ ହେଉଛି, ପିଇପାରିବି ନାହିଁ! ମୋ ଡକ୍ଟର ଶୁଖିଯାଉଛି ଆଉ ତୁ ମତେ ଖରାପ ପାଣି ଆଣି ଦେଉଛୁ।”

ଗଙ୍ଗା ପ୍ରତିସନ୍ଧ୍ୟାରେ ମାଠିଆରେ ପାଣି ଭର୍ତ୍ତି କରିଥାଏ। କୁଅଟି ବହୁତ ଦୂରରେ ଥିଲା; ଏବଂ ତାକୁ ବାରମ୍ବାର ଯିବା ପାଇଁ କଷ୍ଟ ହେଉଥିଲା । ସେ ଗଡକାଲି ପାଣି ଆଣିଥିଲା, ସେଥିରେ ବିଲକୁଲ୍ ଦୁର୍ଗନ୍ଧ ନଥିଲା; କିନ୍ତୁ ଆଜି ପାଣିରେ ଦୁର୍ଗନ୍ଧ କେମିତି ଆସୁଛି? ସେ ଲୋଚାକୁ ନାକ ପାଖରେ ଲଗେଇଲା, ତ ସତରେ ଦୁର୍ଗନ୍ଧ ଆସୁଥିଲା । ନିଶ୍ଚୟ କୌଣସି ପଶୁ କୁଅରେ ପଡ଼ି ମରିଯାଇଥିବ, କିନ୍ତୁ ସେ ଜାଣିପାରୁନଥିଲା ଭଲ ପାଣି ଆସିବ କେଉଁଠୁ?

ଠାକୁରଙ୍କ କୁଅ ଯାଏଁ ତାକୁ କେହି ଛାଡ଼ିବେନି । ଦୂରରୁ ମଧ୍ୟ ଲୋକ ଚିଲେଇବେ । ଗାଁର ଶେଷମୁଣ୍ଡରେ ସାହୁର କୁଅ ଅଛି, କିନ୍ତୁ ସେଠାରେ ମଧ୍ୟ ପାଣି ଭର୍ତ୍ତିକରିବାକୁ ଦେବେନି । ଆଉ ତା’ପରି ଲୋକଙ୍କ ପାଖରେ କୌଣସି କୁଅ ନାହିଁ ।

ଜୋଖୁର ଦେହ କିଛି ଦିନ ହେଲାଣି ଭଲ ନାହିଁ । କିଛି ସମୟ ପାଣି ନ ପିଇ ରହିଲା । ତାପରେ କହିଲା, ଏବେ ତ ଶୋଷରେ ରହି ହେଉନାହିଁ । ଆଶେ, କିଛି ପାଣି ନାକ ବନ୍ଦ କରି ପିଇଦିଏ ।

ଗଙ୍ଗା ପାଣି ଦେଲାନାହିଁ । ଖରାପ ପାଣି ପିଇଲେ ତା’ର ରୋଗ ବଢ଼ିଯିବ ବୋଲି ସେ ଜାଣିଥିଲା । କିନ୍ତୁ ସେ ଜାଣି ନଥିଲା ଯେ ପାଣିକୁ ଫୁଟେଇ ଦେଲେ ପାଣି ପିଇ ହେବ । ସେ କହିଲା “ଏ ପାଣି କେମିତି ପିଇବୁ? କିଏ ଜାଣେ ଏଥିରେ କଣ ମରିପଡ଼ିଛି! ମୁଁ ଯାଉଛି କୁଅରୁ କିଛି ପାଣି ନେଇ ଆସିବି।”

ଜୋଖୁ ଆଶ୍ଚର୍ଯ୍ୟ ହୋଇ ତା ଆଡ଼କୁ ଦେଖିଲା – ପାଣି କେଉଁଠୁ ଆଣିବୁ?

“ଠାକୁର ଓ ସାହୁ ଦୁଇଜଣଙ୍କର ଦୁଇଟି କୁଅ ଅଛି | କ’ଣ ଗୋଟିଏ ଲୋଟା ପାଣି ଦେବେନି?”

“ହାତ-ଗୋଡ଼ ଭାଙ୍ଗିକି ଆସିବୁ ଆଉ କିଛି ହେବନି | ବସେ ଚୁପ୍ କି ଭଲ ହେବ | ବ୍ରାହ୍ମଣ-ଦେବତା ଅଭିଶାପ ଦେବେ, ଠାକୁର ବାଡ଼ିରେ ବାଡ଼େଇବେ, ଆଉ ସେ ଉଧାର ଦେଉଥିବା ସାହୁ ଗୋଟିଏକୁ ପାଞ୍ଚ କହିବ | ତୁ ଭାବୁଛୁ କି ଏପରି ଲୋକ ତତେ କୁଅରୁ ପାଣି ଦେବେ | ଗରିବର ଦୁଃଖ କିଏ ବୁଝୁଛି! ମରିଗଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ କେହି ଦୁଆରକୁ ଆସିବେନି, କାନ୍ଧେଇବା ତ ଦୂରର କଥା | ଏପରି ଲୋକ କୁଅରୁ ପାଣି ଭର୍ତ୍ତି କରିବାକୁ ଦେବେ?”

ଏହି କଥାରେ ନିରାଟ ସତ୍ୟ କଥା ଥିଲା | ଗଙ୍ଗା କ’ଣ କହିଥାନ୍ତା; କିନ୍ତୁ ସେ ଦୁର୍ଗନ୍ଧ ପାଣି ପିଇବାକୁ ଦେଲା ନାହିଁ |

ରାତି ନଅ’ଟା ବାଜିଥିଲା | ଅଧି ଯାଇଥିବା ଶ୍ରମିକ ଶୋଇ ପଡ଼ିଥିଲେ; ଠାକୁରଙ୍କ କବାଟ ପାଖରେ ପାଞ୍ଚ-ଦଶ ଜଣ ବେପରୁଆମାନେ ଜମା ହୋଇଥିଲେ | ସାମ୍ବାକୁ ଆସି କହିବା ଲୋକଙ୍କର ତ ଏବେ ଜମାନା | କାନୁନୀ ବାହାଦୁରୀଙ୍କର କଥା ଚାଲିଥିଲା; କେତେ ଚତୁରତାର ସହିତ ଠାକୁର ଥାନେଦାରକୁ ଗୋଟିଏ ବିଶେଷ ମକଦ୍ଦମାରେ ଲାଞ୍ଚ ଦେଇ ଖସିଗଲା | ବହୁତ ଚାଲାକିରେ ଜଣକର ମକଦ୍ଦମାର ନକଲ ନେଇ ଆସିଲା | ନାଜିର ଓ ମୋହତମିମ୍, ସମସ୍ତେ କହୁଥିଲେ, ନକଲ ମିଳିବ ନାହିଁ | କେହି କେହି ପଚାଶ ମାଗନ୍ତି; ତ କେହି ଶହେ | କାମ କରିବାର ବାହାନା ଦରକାର |

ଏହି ସମୟରେ ଗଙ୍ଗା କୁଅରୁ ପାଣି ଆଣିବାକୁ ପହଞ୍ଚିଲା |

ଲୋଟାର ଅସ୍ଥାଲୋକ କୁଅ ଉପରେ ପଡ଼ୁଥିଲା | ଗଙ୍ଗା କାନ୍ଧର ପଛପଟେ ଲୁଚି ବସିଲା ଏବଂ ଠିକ୍ ମଉକାର ଅପେକ୍ଷା କଲା | ସାରା ଗାଁ ଏହି କୁଅର ପାଣି ପିଉଛି | କାହାକୁ ବି ବାଧା ନାହିଁ; କେବଳ ମୋ ପରି ଅଭାଗୀ ପାଣି ଭର୍ତ୍ତି କରିପାରିବ ନାହିଁ |

ଗଙ୍ଗୀର ବିଦ୍ରୋହୀ ମନ ଏହି ପରମ୍ପରାଗତ ପ୍ରତିବନ୍ଧକ ଓ ବାଧା ଉପରେ ପ୍ରସାର କରିବାକୁ ଲାଗିଲା- ଆମେ କାହିଁକି ନୀଚ ଆଉ ଏମାନେ କାହିଁକି ଉଚ୍ଚ? ଏଥିପାଇଁ କି ଏମାନେ ଗଳାରେ ସୂତା ପିନ୍ଧିଛନ୍ତି | ଏଠାରେ ଯେତେଜଣ ଅଛନ୍ତି ସମସ୍ତେ ବଦମାସ, ଚୋରି କରନ୍ତି, ଜାଳ-କୌଶଳ କରନ୍ତି, ମିଛ ମକଦ୍ଦମା କରନ୍ତି | ତେବେ ସେମାନେ କିପରି ଉଚ୍ଚ ଏବଂ ମହାନ? ଏବେ ଠାକୁର ସେଦିନ ବିଚାରୀ ଗଡ଼ରିଏର ମେଣ୍ଟା ଚୋରେଇକି ନେଇଯାଇଥିଲା ଆଉ ପରେ ମାରିକି ଖାଇଗଲା | ଏହି ପଣ୍ଡିତମାନଙ୍କ ଘରେ ବାର ମାସ

କୁଆଖେଳ ଚାଲିଥାଏ। ସାହୁ ତ ଘିଅରେ ତେଲ ମିଶେଇକି ବିକଳି । କାମ କରେଇ ନିଅନ୍ତି, ମଜୁରି ଦେବାକୁ ଜାଣିଶୁଣି ଦେଖେଇ ହୁଅନ୍ତି । କେଉଁଥିରେ ଏମାନେ ଉଚ୍ଚ? ହଁ, ମୁଁହରେ ଆମଠାରୁ ଉଚ୍ଚ । ଆମେ ଗଳି-ଗଳି ଯାଇ ଚିଲେଇକି କହୁନୁ କି ଆମେ ଉଚ୍ଚ! କେବେ ଗାଁକୁ ଆସିଗଲେ ଲୁହଭରା ଆଖିରେ ଦେଖେ । ଯେପରିକି ସବୁରି ଛାତିରେ ଈର୍ଷା, କିନ୍ତୁ ଗର୍ବ ଯେ ଆମେ ଉଚ୍ଚ ।

ସେତେବେଳେ କୁଅ ପାଖରେ କାହାର ଆସିବାର ଶବ୍ଦ ଶୁଭିଲା । ଗଙ୍ଗୀର ଛାତି ଭୟରେ ଥରିଗଲା । କେହି ଦେଖୁଦେଲେ କଥା ସରିଯିବ! ଗୋଟେ ବି ମାଡ଼ ତଳେ ପଡ଼ିବନି । ସେ ମାଠିଆ ଆଉ ଦଉଡ଼ି ଉଠେଇ ନଇଁ ନଇଁ ଯାଇ ଗୋଟିଏ ଗଛ ଛାଇରେ ଲୁଚିଗଲା । ଆଉ ଏ ଲୋକଙ୍କୁ କେବେ ଦୟା ଆସେ କାହା ଉପରେ । ବିଚରା ମହୁଗୁକୁ ଏତେ ମାରିଛନ୍ତି ଯେ ପୁରା ମାସ ତା ମୁହଁରୁ ରକ୍ତ ବାହାରୁଥିଲା । କ’ଣ ପାଉଣା ଦେଇ ନଥିଲା ବୋଲି; ତା’ ଉପରେ ଏ ଲୋକମାନେ ନିଜକୁ ଉଚ୍ଚ ଭାବୁଛନ୍ତି ।

କୁଅକୁ ଦୁଇଜଣ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀଲୋକ ପାଣି ନେବାକୁ ଆସିଥିଲେ । ସେମାନେ ନିଜ ନିଜ ମଧ୍ୟରେ କଥା ହେଉଥିଲେ ।

“ଖାଇବାକୁ ଗଲାବେଳେ ଆଦେଶ ଆସିଲା କି ତାଜା ପାଣି ଭର୍ତ୍ତି କରିକି ଆଣ । ମାଠିଆ ପାଇଁ ପଇସା ନାହିଁ!”

“ଆମମାନଙ୍କୁ ଆରାମରେ ବସିବା ଦେଖୁ ପୁରୁଷମାନେ ଯେମିତି ଈର୍ଷା କରୁଛନ୍ତି !”

ହଁ, ଏହା ତ ହେବନି କି ମାଠିଆ ଉଠେଇକି ଭର୍ତ୍ତି କରି ନେଇ ଆସିବ । ଖାଲି ହୁକୁମ୍ କରିଦେଲେ କି ତାଜା ପାଣି ଆଣ, ଯେମିତିକି ଆମେ ଏମିତି ସେମିତି ଝିଅ ।

“ଏମିତି ସେମିତି ଝିଅ ନୁହେଁ ତ ଆଉ କ’ଣ ତୁମେ? ଖାଇବା ପିଇବା ପାଇନଥାନ୍ତୁ? ଦଶ-ପାଞ୍ଚ ଟଙ୍କା ଛଡେଇକି ନେଇଯାଉଛି । ଆଉ ଏମିତି ସେମିତି ଝିଅମାନେ କେମିତି ହୋଇଥାନ୍ତି ।”

“ଲାଜ କରନି ଦିବି ! ପୁରା ଦିନ ଆରାମ କରିବାକୁ ଭାବି ଭାବି ରହିଯାଉଛି । ଏତିକି କାମ ଅନ୍ୟ କାହା ଘରେ କରିଥାନ୍ତୁ, ତ ଏହାଠାରୁ ଅଧିକ ଆରାମରେ ରହିଥାନ୍ତୁ । ଆଉ ସେ ଉପକାର ବି ଭାବିଥାନ୍ତା

| ଏଠି କାମ କରି କରି ମରେ, କିନ୍ତୁ କାହାର ମୁଁହ ସିଧା ହେବନି ।”

## Thakur Ka Kuan

ଦୁଇଜଣ ପାଣି ଭର୍ତ୍ତି କରି ଚାଲିଗଲେ, ତା ପରେ ଯାଇ ଗଙ୍ଗୀ ଗଛ ଉତ୍ତରୁ ବାହାରିଲା ଓ କୁଅ ପାଖକୁ ଆସିଲା । ବେପରୁଆ ମାନେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଚାଲିଯାଇଥିଲେ । ଆଉ ଠାକୁର ମଧ୍ୟ କବାଟ ବନ୍ଦ କରି ଭିତର ଅଗଣାରେ ଶୋଇବାକୁ ଯାଉଥିଲେ । ଗଙ୍ଗୀ କ୍ଷଣକ ପାଇଁ ଶାନ୍ତିରେ ନିଶ୍ଚାସ ନେଲା । ଯାହା ହେଉ ଆଖପାଖ ଖାଲି ତ ହେଲା । କେବେ ଅମୃତ ଚୋରେଇବା ପାଇଁ ଯେଉଁ ରାଜକୁମାର ଯାଇଥିଲା, ସେ ବି ସମ୍ଭବତଃ ଏତେ ସାବଧାନତା ସହିତ ଯାଇ ନଥିବ । ଗଙ୍ଗୀ ପାଦକୁ ଚୁପି ଚୁପି କୁଅ ଉପରେ ଚଢ଼ିଲା । ସାହାସର ଏପରି ଅନୁଭବ ତାକୁ ଆଗରୁ କେବେ ବି ହୋଇ ନଥିଲା ।

ସେ ଦଉଡ଼ିର ଫାନ୍ଦ ମାଠିଆରେ ବାନ୍ଧିଲା । ଡାହାଣ-ବାମ ହୁସିଆର୍ ହୋଇ ଦେଖିଲା, ଯେପରିକି କେଉଁ ସିପାହୀ ରାତିରେ ଶତ୍ରୁର ଗଡ଼ରେ ପଶିବାକୁ ଚେଷ୍ଟାକରୁଛି । ଯଦି ସେ ସମୟରେ ସେ ଧରାପଡ଼ିଯାଏ, ତେବେ ତା ପାଇଁ ଦୟା କି ଅନୁକମ୍ପାର ଚିନ୍ତା ବି ଆଶା ନାହିଁ । ଶେଷରେ ଭଗବାନଙ୍କୁ ମନେପକେଇ ସେ କଲିଜା ମଜବୁତ କରି ମାଠିଆ କୁଅରେ ପକେଇଦେଲା ।

ଧୀରେ ଧୀରେ ମାଠିଆରେ ପାଣି ଭର୍ତ୍ତି କଲା । କିଛି ବି ଶବ୍ଦ ହେଲାନି । ଗଙ୍ଗୀ ଦୁଇ-ଚାରି ଥର ଜଳଦି ପାଣି ଆଣିପାରେ । ମାଠିଆ କୁଅ ଉପରକୁ ଆସିଲା । ଜଣେ ବଡ଼ ପହିଲିବାନ୍ ମଧ୍ୟ ଏତେ ଜୋରରେ ଚାଣି ପାରି ନଥାନ୍ତା ।

ଗଙ୍ଗୀ ନଇଁକି କୁଅ ବନ୍ଦ ଉପରେ ମାଠିଆ ରଖିଲା ମାତ୍ରେ ହଠାତ୍ କି ଠାକୁର ସାହେବଙ୍କର କବାଟ ଖୋଲିଗଲା । ସିଂହର ମୁହଁ ମଧ୍ୟ ଏତେ ଭୟଙ୍କର ଦେଖାଯିବନି ।

ଗଙ୍ଗୀ ହାତରୁ ଦଉଡ଼ି ଖସିଗଲା । ଦଉଡ଼ି ସହିତ ମାଠିଆ, ଶବ୍ଦ କରି ପାଣିରେ ପଡ଼ିଲା ଆଉ ବହୁତ ସମୟ ପାଣିରେ ଡବ୍ ଡବ୍ ଶବ୍ଦ କଲା ।

ଠାକୁର “କିଏ, କିଏ?” ଡାକି କୁଅ ଆଡ଼କୁ ଆସୁଥିଲେ ଆଉ ଗଙ୍ଗୀ କୁଅ ଉପରୁ ଡେଇଁ କି ଦଉଡ଼ି କରି ଯାଉଥିଲା ।

ଘରେ ପହଞ୍ଚି ଦେଖିଲା କି ଜୋଖୁ ଲୋଟା ମୁହଁରେ ଲଗାଇ ସେହି ମଇଳା-ଗନ୍ଧ ପାଣି ପିଇ ଚାଲିଥିଲା ।

## ¿Qué rojo? ¿Qué rojo?

*Ki Lal? Ki Lal?, Nagarjun*

*Translated into Spanish by Ranjeeva Ranjan*

¿Qué rojo? ¿Qué rojo?  
¿Qué rojo? ¿Qué rojo?  
¡La flor de arhul<sup>1</sup> roja!  
¡La hoja de aarti<sup>2</sup> roja!  
¡La fruta de trikol<sup>3</sup> roja!  
¡Los labios de chica rojos!  
¡La corbata de chico roja!  
¡El picotazo de loro rojo!  
¡Este rojo! ¡Ese rojo!  
¿Qué rojo? ¿Qué rojo?  
¡La sangre roja, la revolución roja!  
¡La paz de la posguerra roja!  
¡El cuerpo de Rusia rojo!  
¡El corazón de China rojo!  
¡La nariz de América roja!  
¡La lengua de Gran Bretaña roja!  
¡Este rojo! ¡Ese rojo!  
¡Qué rojo! ¡Qué rojo!  
¡Mi tinta<sup>4</sup> roja!  
¡Su<sup>5</sup> pluma roja!  
¡Su<sup>6</sup> libro rojo!  
¡Su encuadernación roja!  
¡La mejilla de alguien roja!  
¡El ojo de alguien rojo!  
¡Este rojo! ¡Ese rojo!

**Notes :**

1. A type of flower which is red in colour. It's called "arhul" in Hindi.'
2. "Aarti" is the utensil used for worshipping generally at the end of worship ceremony of Hindus. Sometimes it is also equivalent to blessings.
3. A type of fruit.
4. "Tinta" means ink which is generally black ink. But the poet has deliberately used the red for his ink colour.
5. "Su" here is your (formal).
6. "Su" here is his/her (third person).



# You Have Beguiled My Mind

*Baul Songs of Shah Abdul Karim\*  
Translated into English by Amitendu Bhattacharya*

## **Allāhu Allāhu Allāhu**

Allāhu Allāhu Allāhu

Let Your Name rend the air

Let people everywhere offer You prayers

I'm a wretch, don't live apart from me

If You don't make me do it, how can I worship Thee?

Let Your brilliance pierce every heart and soul

Let Your attributes make the blind see

And once again make them whole

You are the Merciful, the Divine One

I'm the ignoramus

Let me live or let me die but

In You I trust

Prophet Yunus drew power from Your Name

And lived forty days in the belly of a whale

Your lustre made solid mountains crumble

Nabi Musa found solace in meditating on Your Name

King Nimrod against Nabi Ibrahim conspired

Tying Ibrahim's limbs, catapulted him to a bonfire

It was the power of Your Name

That doused the flames

You were the oarsman of Noah's Ark

When the land was overrun by flood

Thrown into a well who but You

Should come to Nabi Yusuf's rescue

In Your Name Ibrahim plunged  
The dagger into Ishmael's back  
It was You who gave the son an armour  
And repulsed the attack

Do give me shelter for I'm a sinner  
Begs Abdul Karim:  
You are Ghafoor's Rahim, the Forgiving  
Do take me under Your wing

### **How Shall I Know You**

How shall I know you, O precious guide of mine?  
Neither granting a glimpse nor brooking intimacy  
How long shall we stay far apart like this?

How long shall I be a captive in the cage of illusions?  
Continually think of seeking you leaving everything behind  
Hope to find redemption before the dying of the light  
How shall I know you, O precious guide of mine?  
Don't find you in incantations and charms  
Move away from you the more I read scriptures  
Wonder in my heart in which ocean you're dispersed  
How shall I know you, O precious guide of mine?

Says Baul Abdul Karim, shower your kindness on me  
In your hall of audience with bowed head and folded hands  
I make an appeal: submit yourself to your devotee  
And abide in me till eternity

### **You're Always Nigh**

Make me live or make me die  
Do me just this one favour:  
That I should never forget

You're always nigh  
Day and night, in sleep and in dream  
Merging soul with soul  
In this dark night if You take me along  
Revealing your attributes, O Merciful  
My devotion to You should never dilute  
Mad about You, I repose my faith in You alone  
You the friend of the poor and the destitute  
If You ever seek my news, I'll attain immortality  
Drinking the ambrosia of Your Name, O Merciful  
Forgetting You I should never be blissful

For Your sympathy for the living  
Your Name has universal currency  
Abdul Karim says, let me stay at Your feet  
Don't push me away, O Merciful  
Allow me to savour Your presence sweet

### **I Had No Inkling**

I had no inkling of what my friend had in mind  
Showering love, he has now abandoned me  
Listen, O companion, I have no restraint  
If I can't see you, I'll die  
Tell me how else can I survive?

Our tales flood my memory  
He left me and I didn't see  
Thought he'll forever be there for me  
And never flee

Baul Abdul Karim says  
I burn in the blaze of separation  
Dearest friend didn't take me along  
When he moved on

### **Krishna Comes to Radha's Arbour**

Krishna comes to Radha's arbour  
Sees honeybees sucking nectar from flowers  
Prances in peacock robes  
Radhika the worshipper

Flower garlands in her friends' hands  
Radha arrives, pure, resplendent and calm  
Her body perfumed and sandalbalm  
Krishna puts a garland round her neck  
Lights up the bridal chamber  
Krishna and Radha exchange garlands  
Dance with abandon all her friends  
Witnessing their game of ardour

Sing, dance and make merry them all  
The lovers of Krishna's play of devoted love  
Did they care for family, clan or honour  
Lalita or Vishaka?

### **You have Beguiled My Mind, O *Baula* Songs**

For all that you have given me, what shall I give you in return?  
You have beguiled my mind, O *Baula* songs

After entering my heart when you gave a nudge  
Taking the *ektara* with me, alongside you I trudged  
Without you I'm restless, I've offered you my soul  
You have beguiled my mind, O *Baula* songs

The way to be united with you I think of continually  
My thoughts I express by stringing together word and melody  
In love, the river-waters of the heart instead of downstream flow  
upstream

You have beguiled my mind, O *Baula* songs

Congenial poets have sung numerous mushy songs  
I present the picture of the land's sorrows and wrongs  
The demands of the vulnerable

Karim wants the reign of peace, You have beguiled my mind, O *Baula* songs

\* Shah Abdul Karim (1916-2009) is the preeminent Baul singer and song writer of recent times. Throughout his life he lived in Ujan Dhol village by the Kalni river in Sylhet division of Bangladesh. Born to poverty and hardship, he earned his living by becoming an agricultural help. As a shepherd he had ample time to jot down his passing thoughts and emotions. Nobody exactly knows the number of songs he had composed but the figure is estimated to be around fifteen hundred. He received his spiritual and musical training from Shah Ibrahim Mastan Baksh. His songs transcend the narrow demarcations of religious, political and national boundaries, and are shining examples of the rich heritage of devotional poetry that thrives in the land of Bengal even today. In 2001, Shah Abdul Karim was honoured with the Ekushey Padak, the second highest civilian award in Bangladesh, for his contributions to folk music and culture.

# Obituary

**Gideon Toury**

1942-2016

*By Panchanan Mohanty*

Gideon Toury, a scholar of repute, made tremendous contributions to the discipline of Translation Studies. Considering his contributions, it would be appropriate to call him one of the founding fathers of Translation Studies. It is important to note that Toury had a strong foothold in translation practice and translation theory. His skills and scholarships are formidable as he exceeded most of his contemporaries in accomplishments. Gideon Toury engaged in practical translation as well as the development of translation theory.

Toury studied at the Tel Aviv University and later taught at it before moving to the University of Leuven. He had won the Hans Christian Andersen Award for his translation of C.S. Lewis's *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* into Hebrew. He received an honorary doctorate Middlesex University, London and honorary membership of the UNESCO Chair of Translation Studies at Comenius University, Bratislava, Slovakia. He also served as M. Bernstein Chair of Translation Theory at Tel Aviv University and First Chair Professor in CETRA (Centre for Translation Studies) at the University of Leuven. His seminal works include (a) *Translational Norms and Literary Translation into Hebrew* in 1977, (b) *In Search of a Theory of Translation* in 1980, and (c) *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond* in 1995.

## Obituary

Gideon Toury will be remembered for widening the scope of Translation Studies as an academic pursuit and for foregrounding the socio-cultural approaches to translation. Toury had the pleasure of doing research and co-authoring works with Itamar Even-Zohar and editing books with Roman Jakobson. He initiated the journal *Target* with Jose Lambert and collaborated with Itamar Even-Zohar for the journal *Literature*. Toury also served as the editor of the newsletter TRANSST and as vice president of the European Society for Translation Studies. Toury was not keeping well for quite some time. The prolonging ill-health finally culminating into a sad demise has brought an end to his illustrious career on 04 October 2016.

He has led and inspired a generation of researchers in the discipline, and this note is a humble tribute to place on record that his contribution is so phenomenal that both young and established scholars will continue to emulate him in their work.

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## Contributors

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## NTM Publications



**Gibi Bharatni Jarimin: Sigangnifrai AD 1300 sim,**

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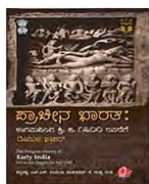
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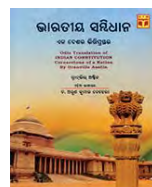
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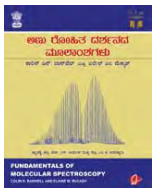
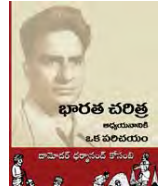
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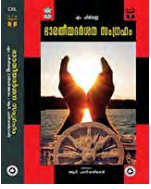
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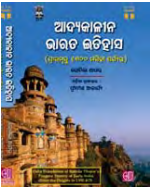
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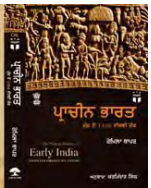
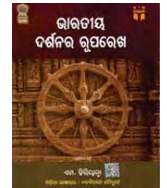
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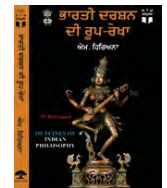
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by Romila Thapar  
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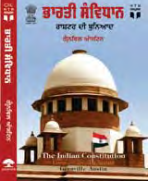


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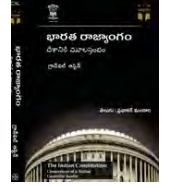
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