TRANSLATION TODAY

Editors:
Udaya Narayana Singh
P.P Giridhar

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Editorial Policy

'Translation Today' is a biannual journal published by Central Institute of Indian Languages, Manasagangotri, Mysore. It is jointly brought out by Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi, National Book Trust, India, New Delhi, and Central Institute of Indian Languages, 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, and so on. Notes from the Classroom is added from this issue. 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:
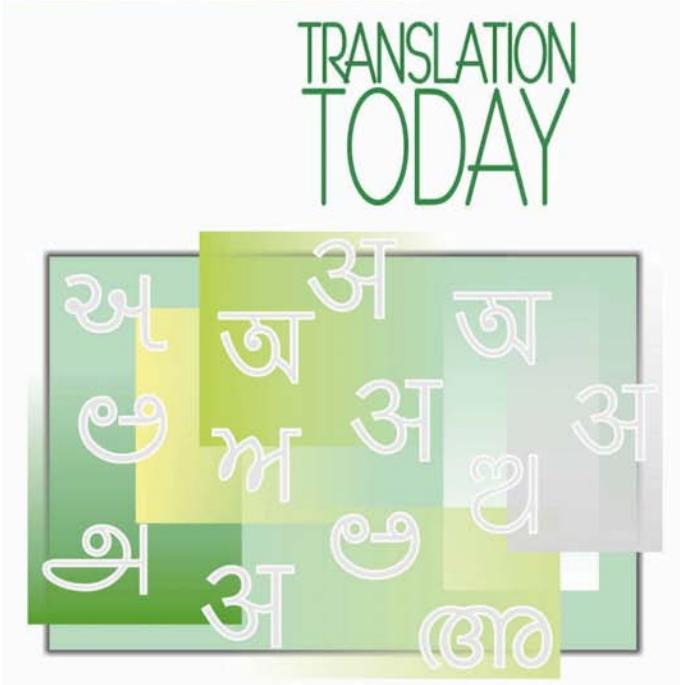
Annotated and original translations of all literary genres, translated excerpts from novels are accepted where they stand on their own, glossaries in any subject in any language-pair (Indian Languages TO Indian Languages or Indian Languages TO English or English TO Indian Languages), specialties in the translation profession: religious, technical, scientific, legal, commercial, specialities 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.

Submission:

All submissions, contributions and queries should be addressed to:

P. P. Giridhar Ph D
Central Institute of Indian languages,
Hunsur road
Manasagangotri,
Mysore 570006.

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EDITORIAL

Man must feel a profound sense of self-containedness, an imperious personal power, a kind of power that goes perfectly hand in hand with respect and concern for fellow beings including subhuman life. The first half of the above statement is man's intrapersonal dimension, having to do with man's joyous and unbridled efforescence and the latter half is his interpersonal dimension, having to do with mankind's survival and efflorescence: the self and the other in the self, and the other in the other. As Jiddu Krishnamurthy put it, "there is in every one of us the rest of humanity". Cultures are the same at a significant level of man's ontology (human consciousness is the common ground between all cultures) as are languages at a significant level of structure (Universal Grammar, and (the existent and nonexistent) changeless core underwriting natural languages). The potentially barrierial differences among human communities are man-made and the variation across the languages of the world parametric. As Jiddu Krishnamurthy would say, anything that separates the self from the other (outside the self) is ill-founded. The resonance zone between cultures cries out to exploited, and it needs to be exploited, needs to be taken to its natural logical extreme. One can't think of a better means of doing it than translation as we have come increasingly to realise. There is no better route to having respect and concern for our fellow beings than by coming to know of their ethoses and understanding, appreciating those ethoses. It was the redoubtable Mahatma Gandhi who said that trying to understand others is a great step to understanding our own selves. Translation is a great bridge of interpersonal interhuman space, of huge rivers in spate of misunderstanding, misinformation, misperception, misjudgement, prejudgement, miscommunication and malice.... It can throw up both the oneness of all humanity and the interesting differences that inhere in, and underwrite, this oneness with delightful felicity.Glib talks about the untranslatabilty of cultures notwithstanding, translation has an undoubted place in the history of ideas, in disseminating and democratising knowledge, and in evening out,

harmonising and synergising human space even in the face of the delightful and interesting heterogeneity that exists across cultures.

The editors are pleased to place this issue before the public. The content in this issue will drive home the point made above about translation as a human enterprise, and will dwell on the various issues, the problems and the general dynamics of this phenomenon. In particular there are papers about the semiotics of translation, translating (into) India, gender issues in translation, the translation of culture, translation norms, the problematics of the linguistic-cultural osmosis from Indian languages into nonindian languages, postcolonial translation, translation of socially oppressed sections of society and the issues thereof and so on, two delightful pieces in the new section called Notes from the Classroom, and the newly introduced sections on Book Reviews and Book Beat. We are happy to inform our readers that the journal Translation Today has compelled international attention: there are two pieces from Spain and one from China in this issue. The journal is now abstracted in TSA (Translation Studies Abstracts, Manchester, UK). Some of the content published in TT is now used as web material for various courses across the world. Happy viewing and reading!

We would be grateful for any feedback.

Udaya Narayana Singh
P. P. Giridhar

In This Issue

Articles

Notes from the Classroom

Book Reviews

Translation Review

Book Beat

The Dialectics of Human Intellection *and the* Semiotics of Translation: A *Comparative Reading of Rabindranath Tagore's Karˌakuntˌsambāda* in Bangla and English

ANURADHA GHOSH

Abstract

The paper attempts to examine certain key issues addressed by the theoretical corpus of writings on the 'translation paradox' by engaging in a semiotic reading of Tagore's *Karˌakuntˌsambāda* written originally in Bengali and translated by the poet into English for a wider audience. Aware of the difficulties involved, the poet himself admits in a letter to Ajit Kumar Chakravarti (13 March 1913) written from Illinois, USA: 'What I try to capture in my English translation is the heart and core of my original Bengali. That is bound to make for a fairly wide deviation. If I were not there to help you out, you might probably find it impossible to identify the original in translation.' (Translated by Kshitish Ray, Jadavpur Journal of Comparative Literature, Vol. 9, P. 124).The question of the authenticity of a translation was the chief concern in early translation studies and no matter what position we might be taking now, it continues to concern translation scholars. The cultural and linguistic

contours of different communities at different historical conjunctures make the act of translation a very challenging task not only to the scholar engaged in the process but also to the outsider to the domain as it reveals, within the process, the dialectics of human intellection.

I. Introduction

The domain of Translation Studies focuses on a whole range of theoretical issues that engage scholars in the academia. An ideological discourse leads one to focus on the dialectics of the twin forces of hegemonization and disempowerment on the one hand and resistance on the other. The complexity arises due to the operation of not only binary categories but several collateral forces that are continuously at work in a given ideological field. The goal of this disquisition is a micro-level comparative analysis of a literary artefact which was written by one of the first generation Indian English writers who, their individuality and brilliance notwithstanding, were undoubtedly the children of a renaissance that came to Bengal by virtue of it being the capital city of colonial India via the western dialectic of Enlightenment. The crisis within that enlightenment movement in Europe had its impact on the intellectual movements within the country too and the call for independence and the movements woven around it were not completely independent, indigenous, or home-grown. We thus come to the fundamental question that leads us to investigate the dialectics of human intellection and how individual subjectivity is constituted within the ideological structures that are in a continuous state of *becoming* in order to have a *being* of their own.

As the title suggests, the paper is divided into two parts: the first part aims to study the process of human intellection involved in the act of translation of a literary text from one cultural/lingual

The Dialectics of Human Intellection and The Semiotics of Translation: 3
A Comparative Reading of Rabindranath Tagore's
Karˌakuntɛsambāda in Bengali and English

situation to that of another and how that leads to a situation of paradox as the semantic import of the narrative text undergoes transmission changes when this act of transaction or negotiation happens, bound as it is to the ideological hegemony of the two socio-literary domains which are under consideration at a specific historical conjuncture. In fact literary metaphysics is supposed to rule out the possibility of (literary) translation.The second part of the paper is at the level of praxis. It focuses on the analysis of a literary narrative to understand how bi-lingualism imposes an identity that changes the contours of the process of signification making the translation an act of intellection that has a potential autonomy relative to the hegemony inherent in the major/minor language dichotomy, resulting in a complete transmutation even when the creative subjectivity is the same and yet not the same.

The aforesaid purpose drove my selection of Rabindranath Tagore's *Karˌakuntɛsambāda* from the corpus of his works.The narrative was published in a compilation titled *Kahini* in the Bangla year 1306 which is approximately 1819-1900 C.E. and the English translation was first published in Calcutta in a collection titled *The Fugitive* in 1919, and then two years later in London by Macmillan.

That the author himself is the translator here makes this translation situation more complex. His competence in the languages, viz. Bangla and English - the two language situations that we are concerned with here - can hardly be questioned. Further, the author/translator in question is undoubtedly a poet par excellence and my attempt in the paper is not a mechanical inquiry into whether the translated narrative is an authentic version of the original or not. The authenticity debate is central to translation practitioners and is crucial for translation theory. When however it is the same creative subjectivity, in this case the bi-lingual identity of Tagore, engaged in the twin acts of generation and translation, one can possibly take one

of two stands: first, the author/translator's will or intention was to transmute the narrative to make it more communicable and communicative to the western audience and he is thereby justified in doing what he does. Secondly, the author/translator's pragmatic choice for the transmutation of *Kar̥akunt̥sambāda* as *Karna and Kunti* is the articulation of the unconscious that finds an expression that is not free from the ideological hegemony within which he tries to negotiate the intercultural transfer, and thus the difference poses a theoretical problematic, warranting the study that I propose to do. The question therefore that becomes central here is: why does the Bangla *Kar̥akunt̥sambāda* become *Karna and Kunti* in English and what implications does this process have in understanding the dynamics of the dialectics of human intellection?

The method of inquiry that I adopt falls within the Aberlardian tradition of semiotics that proposes a *theory of mental images* for communication to be possible between two *thinking beings* and language is as a consequence a system of signs that allows for the correspondence between the "word" and the "thing". The significative function is therefore a matter of intellection through the dual mental operations of abstraction and synthesis of conceptually re-constituted mental realities. Accordingly, Abelard argues that there are three degrees of knowledge in *Peri Hermeneias: sensus* or sensation*, imaginatio* or imagination and *intellectus* or intellection - the dialectical relation of which helps in comprehension and analysis and thereby articulation through the individual psychic/cognitive apparatus conditioned by existential experience (*parole* in the Saussurian sense) following the norms of the social order in which the subject is situated (*langue*). But the conditioning is never absolute and should not be considered as a fixed state of being, but rather as a dynamic one since the process of exchange becomes possible through a continuous intervention and contestation of the thematic system of an ideological field. Human intellection is based on the senses whereby the apprehension of a thing is abstracted from the material/physical domain to the realm of

The Dialectics of Human Intellection and The Semiotics of Translation: 5
A Comparative Reading of Rabindranath Tagore's
Karˏakuntˌsambāda in Bengali and English

the imagination and it is the synthesis of the word and the image through intellection that creates a concept which is communicable through the medium of language between interlocutors.But the subject under consideration is the constitution of a literary discourse and the problematic at hand is not the semiotics of the creative process, but that of translation not within the same semiotic system but that of another and the parameters involved are embedded within the material historical processes that posit the possibility of exchange from one domain to the other. If we agree that no matter what cultural ethos a language is embedded in, it is a system of signs, translation of a discourse in it becomes possible because despite all specificities, the human condition is universal in terms of man's biological equipment and ability to cognise and conceptualise the universe. But yet there are processes that impede the transaction and whenever this happens, certain concepts become untranslatable because of the differences that inhere as a function of the culture-determined relationship between experience and cognition in the anthropological cosmos of a speech community that operates within a specific cultural-ideological world and the subjective engagement of the intellective/creative being.

I subject both of Tagore's narratives to a syntagmatic and paradigmatic reading using the anthropological semiotic model that first emerged through a rigorous praxis of H. S. Gill during 1976-79 when he applied it to several of his translating, editing and analytic activities from which I construe the thematic configurations embodied in them. The semic configurations that constitute the narratives embody within their lexicalized structures the translation paradox that researchers both within and outside the domain have tried to unravel. Scholars have often tried to circumvent the translation paradox that emanates from the English writings of Tagore by preferring to refer to them as 'transcreations' rather than as 'translations' and the authenticity question (which is central when the

translator is not the author himself or herself) is hung in limbo and the same evaluative criterion is not called into action. As is known, the problem of translatability is not one of language alone but it is rather of cultural practices and living experiences that find expression in the language being used. (Literary) Translation is typically a hermeneutic act and the paradox of (un)translatability is a paradox of the living reality of experiences conditioned through cultures and traditions that go back to the very dawn of civilization and the organization of social structures and institutions that have evolved through several micro-political processes that were at work. It is the material reality of our social life that conditions the politics of the hermeneutics in operation. The act of communication through translation is possible as, despite all specificities, there is an immanent nature of ideas as pure intellections which can be both expressed and comprehended if one is conscious of the anthropological order of the universe in which the discourse is embedded.

II. The Praxis

The praxis involves the analysis of a discourse. It is like watching as well as unravelling the pattern woven into an embroidered fabric where the distinct image emerges due to the weaving in of several threads towards a single goal. The signification that emanates is of the finished image which is created by a synchronic organization at the manifest level, but the pattern at the conceptual level is however the result of diachronic associations. Similarly, the textual narrative of a literary discourse is constituted by the arrangement of semantic units that are embedded within their lexicalized structures. Francois Rastier's work *Meaning and Textuality* focuses on how a narrow structural linguistic approach undermines the semantic import of the narrative and to understand the process of signification, one has to unravel the semic configurations that are embodied in the text. In order to interpret the code, one has to understand the organization of the signifiers at the

The Dialectics of Human Intellection and The Semiotics of Translation: 7
A Comparative Reading of Rabindranath Tagore's
Kar ̩akunt̬sambāda in Bengali and English

syntagmatic level and consequently interpret the signifieds at the paradigmatic level. An understanding of the semiotics of the discourse leads to the comprehension of the semiological patterns that constitute the process of signification. The "free association of ideas" (see, for an elaboration of the idea, *Semiotics of the Creative Process* by H. S. Gill) allows one to comprehend the semiotic and semiological universe of the discourse and thereby to constitute meaning by an act of reading. The dialectics of human intellection is based on an understanding of the multiple forms through which the mind finds expression in order to be able to create a discourse. The following section focuses on identifying and comparing the syntagmatic arrangement of Tagore's narrative in the Bangla source text as well as in the receptor text to understand the complexities involved in the process that leads to the creation of two distinct semiological universes.

A Comparative Reading of Tagore's *Kar ̩akunt̬sambāda* in Bangla and English

Tagore's primary narrative in Bangla is a poetic rendering written in the mode of the epic structure of the *Mahabharata* and is in the form of a report of the dialogue that happens between *Karna* and *Kunti* just before the battle that was to resume with Karna as the commander of the Kaurava forces. The reporter is not mentioned but the absence is actually an implication of the presence, and the narrative text that emerges in print is a testimony to that. The whole of the *Mahabharata* epic is also in the form of a narration by a seer and Vedyagya viz. Vyas Dev who is the human agent who is blessed to become the inspired author of the narrative. There are several narratives in the eighteen books of the epic and it works within the mythic paradigm. Even the battle of Kurukshetra was related by Sanjay, a royal minister of the court of Hastinapura who was blessed by Vyas Dev with the eyes of a seer so that the blind King

Dhritarashtra could be informed of the course of the war and thereby become a vicarious participant in the war. Tagore too adopts a similar style and chooses a single incident from the *Karna Parva* of the *Mahabharata* and to retain the epic style of narration, he titles his poetic piece as *Kar akunt sambāda*. But when he translates his title into English as *Karna and Kunti,* he uses only the dramatic form as a poetic device and the lyrical quality of the primary is completely lost in the translation as the nuances change because the language that becomes the medium of communication is embedded in a cultural context where the epic symbolism of the sub-continent holds little meaning. The conflict that becomes central in the translation then is one between the characters of Karna and Kunti and the only subject that finds a thematic treatment is the angst of a mother who has abandoned her infant boy to save herself from social disgrace and that of a son who lives with a vengeance against the Pandavas as the course of his life is such that he is fated to live under the curse of hatred as he is not in the know of the mystery of his own birth and thereby of his identity. The curse that determines the fate of Karna as well as Kunti in the translation leads to the tragic consequence of defeat and death and, keeping to the spirit of the classical heroic tradition of Europe, Karna rushes forward to meet his inevitable end. The narrative logic in the translation thus follows a simple linearity of movement whereas in the Bangla version, a layered matrix evolves to create a dialectical tension between the domain of nature and culture whereby the anthropological universe paves the way for the cosmological unity in which Karna finds the psychic equipoise not possible in the turmoil of the former.

The First Sequence: The opening lines of the narrative show Karna in humble supplication by the banks of the holy river Ganges, praying to the Sun God. He is taken by surprise when he sees before him the figure of a lady who later reveals her identity as Kunti, the queen-mother. Leaving behind all notions of shame, she has come to tell him the truth of his identity and birth but implores him to wait till darkness envelops the earth.

The Dialectics of Human Intellection and The Semiotics of Translation: 9
A Comparative Reading of Rabindranath Tagore's
Karˌakuntˌsambāda in Bengali and English

The Second Sequence: Kunti recalls the day of the trial of arms in Hastinapura when Karna was humiliated by the Pandavas and Kripa, the royal priest for his mean birth. She then makes her entreaty and says that she has come to re-unite him with his brothers and place him highest among all her sons since he is her first-born.

The Third Sequence: Kunti's revelation puts Karna in a dilemma. His sense of duty puts him in a strange moral predicament when he comes to know about the truth of his real identity. He seems to lose himself in a world of dreams refusing to allow his consciousness to return.

The Fourth Sequence: Kunti's yearning brings him back to reality. The dream-like state is soon torn asunder as underlying the sweetness of his re-union to his mother lies the angry bitterness of the rejection by her when he was merely an infant. He seeks the cause of that early betrayal but realizing her discomfiture, he refrains from insisting on answers to his questions. But the question she has to answer is: why did she choose that particular moment to take him back and unite him with his brothers?

Kunti, well prepared for the question, acknowledges her guilt and, seeking forgiveness, says that only through the fire of suffering would she be purified and be free from the burden of bearing it.

The Fifth Sequence: Karna, humbled by her words of repentance, seeks her blessing but refuses to go with her and foregoes any claim to honour or pride in a royal identity. He resolves to free himself from the envy that he fed on and embarks on the path of liberating himself from the bonds of life. He urges Kunti to abandon him once more to his fate, like at the hour of his birth, nameless, shelter-less,

and to bless him that he may not be swerved from the path of heroic virtue even though he is assured of death and defeat.

Syntagmatics

In this section, an attempt is made to present the outline of the semiotic structure of the discourse without going into the details of textual configuration. The semiological patterns of the ensembles and subensembles of signifying units will be discussed in the next section.

In the *first sequence* five signifying ensembles by five images or subensembles can be delineated. The first sub-ensemble begins with a "comprehensive" proposition where in a sentence the whole ambience of the narrative is unfolded. On the banks of the holy Jahnabi River, (*Jahnabi* refers to Ganga but there the name is significant because it refers to the legend of the river being the daughter of Rishi Jahnu who had on a certain auspicious day drunk up the waters of the entire river). Karna is seen engaged in humble supplication at the twilight hour. His meditative posture and his concentrated worship of the Sun God (*sabita* refers to 'sun', to the benevolent aspect of Sun rather, and here the Sun is seen setting and hence the light and radiance are gradually fading, calling forth the hour of darkness) is indicative of his internal psychic constitution which is to be soon disturbed, leading to an inner disorder which would witness a violence of the highest order.

The following sentence is an evocation of the central question that the narrative grapples with - identity - and the partial signifiers are propositions in extension of the absent-yet-present subject as it only unfolds the image of a being engaged in meditation at a holy hour when the light is seen fading away, heralding the peace that is present only in the womb of darkness. So, the concluding signifying sub-ensemble indicates the name of the subject - *kar a nāma ara-* "One whose name is Karna"; and

The Dialectics of Human Intellection and The Semiotics of Translation: 11
A Comparative Reading of Rabindranath Tagore's
Karˌakuntᴇsambāda in Bengali and English

through it is indicated the parentage - *adhiratha sūtaputra* - "the son
of the charioteer Adhiratha" and in the phrase, *rādhā-garbha-jāta*
'born from Radha's womb', and the proposition finds completion in
[1. d. iv] - *shēi āmi* "That is me". The way the identity is revealed is
highly complex. Karna indicates who he is by separating the
speaking subject from the meditative subject indicating a psychic
split within his being which even in an intensely reflective mood, at
a holy hour, he is unable to restore even some semblance of unity. In
[1. e], he now asks the long-absent intruder: *kahō mōrē tumi kē gō
mātaℋ*"Tell me who you are, mother!"

Now if one compares the first signifying ensemble with the
translated text, one sees that the proposition begins as a statement of
obvious facts - "I am Karna, the son of the charioteer, Adhiratha, and
I sit here by the holy bank of the Ganges, to worship the setting sun.
Tell me who you are". The order of the sentences has changed and
there is the unnecessary emphasis on 'I' which is repeated twice in
the same sentence and is counter-pointed against the 'you' in the next
line making the conflict apparent as a conflict between Karna and
Kunti. But this ego-centricity is not there in the original text and the
emphasis that is created evocatively is to indicate the mood of
meditative reflection through the play of the thickening light that
darkens with the fading rays of the sun into complete darkness and a
mother's protective womb, where there is complete silence and
peace - a condition that Karna never had the good fortune to enjoy or
revel in. The psychic state that makes the subject split his internal
self into the speaking and the meditative/reflective self can never be
imposed as the subjective 'I', as in the English translation, as it is in
this inner tension of the sub-conscious that the drama of the rape of
desire plays out: the desire to know and thereby withdraw into the
state of passive oblivion. The reference to his mother –
r*adhagarbhajato* 'born of radha's womb' - and the reference to
Kunti as "mother" are significant absences in the translated text and

one thus witnesses a complete reversal of the psychic state and further, the tonal quality of the mood evoked is also lost in the translation. The rhythm of the Bangla version has a slow temporality and the spatial dynamics that is operative hinges on indeterminacy as it is truly the twilight hour when truth and existence teeter on the brink of collapse - a final collapse and the human question becomes obfuscated in a feeling of crucial nothingness that intensifies with the gathering darkness. The translation shows Karna full of confidence and well aware of his identity and he seeks to ask the stranger who she is in no uncertain terms. The soft, gentleness of the opening lines and the flowing rhythm imitates the flow of the river and encapsulates within its core the continuum of time (and thought) that flows by unhindered (if no intrusion happens). The disjunction/distortion of the translation is thus apparent and the causes for it would be traced later.

The second signifying sub-ensemble begins in the form of an address, *vatsa - vatsa* means "child" - which is indicative of the extension of the earlier proposition establishing a relation that exists or can exist irrespective of blood ties. Kunti's address to Karna as "child" is pre-emptive of the course of events to follow. The phrase - *tōra jₑvanēra prathama prabhātē* - "in the first dawn of your life" - is a partial signifier which is further extended through - *paricaya karāyēchi tōrē viśva-sāthē* - "had acquainted you with this world" The word *parichoy* is very important as the Bangla word reflects both acquaintance and identity which fact is in turn indicative of the central problematic of the narrative. The next two micro-units reflect the purpose of Kunti's visit. Kunti, shedding all hesitation – *lāja / lajja* - (something which she wasn't able to do at the moment of his birth as a maiden-mother) - had come to confer on him the truth of his identity - *parichoy.* The word *parichoy* is repeated twice in this sub-ensemble to create the inner play that is so central to evoking the *bhaava* that reflects the tense mental state of the characters.

The Dialectics of Human Intellection and The Semiotics of Translation: 13
A Comparative Reading of Rabindranath Tagore's
Karֈakuntֈsambāda in Bengali and English

In the translated text, the format is of a reply to the question that was earlier asked regarding identity, but the word itself never finds any mention. The hesitation that Kunti has because of her sense of guilt towards Karna and the responsibility of being the mother of not only the Pandavas but also of Karna find no resonance in the English version. Rather a new idea is introduced in the phrase "with that light you are worshipping" indicating the "setting sun" of the earlier stanza. The co-relation of *viśva*r "world" and the dual meanings of "parichoy" viz. 'acquaintance' and 'identity' are completely lost. The whole idea of unfolding as opposed to a factual statement of identity makes the translation too direct and the symbolic overtones and the poetic nuances of the Bangla version are completely obliterated and along with it, the aesthetic rigour of the portrayal.

The third ensemble is an address to Kunti and the play of images is indicative of the implications that the revelation had on him. In the first micro-ensemble, he expresses the state of his consciousness and says that the rays from her lowered eyelids seemed to stir his inner being just like the impact the rays of the sun have on the snow-capped mountain peaks. In the next micro-unit, he says that her voice seems to emanate from another world, as if from his previous birth and arouses in him a strange melancholy (*apūrva vēdanā*). The third micro-unit is therfore a proposition in extension, and it urges her to reveal to him how the mystery of his birth is related to her, someone who is yet unknown to him.

In the translation, the introduction of the word "cause" changes the whole ambience of signification as then what Karna is seeking to do is to know merely the source of his "blind sadness" (which is not quite an equivalent of *apūrva vēdanā*) that "may well lie beyond the reach of my earlier memory". The notion of 'previous birth' (*pūrvajanma*) again is not the same as "earlier" (or even

earliest) memory" but the obvious connotative and denotative differences arise due to the specificity of the semantic field in which a language operates within the material, historical forces that give shape to a living or lived culture. The notion of "earlier memory" is embedded in the Platonic idealist tradition that conceives of reality in purely metaphysical terms as an abstraction and the material world that appears as real is actually a reflection of the real that lies embedded in the hidden depths of a mind that has swerved from the contemplation of the real as ideal. But *purbajanma* or 'previous birth' has in its conception the idea of re-births that keep occurring on a physical/material level till *atman* 'soul' is free from the bondage of the cycle of birth, death and re-birth. The idea of causality in the translated text is therefore central while in the Bangla original, such an idea would be foreign to the idea of life being a continuous cycle, and it is the freedom from this chain of events that leads to *moksha* 'liberation'.

In the fourth sub-ensemble, Kunti urges him to be patient for a while as the Sun God is seen retiring for the day. She waits for the darkness of the evening to condense further into the blackness of the night as she is unable to reveal her true identity in the illumination of the sun. Her *laj* (or *lajja* - 'sense of shame') prevents her from speaking when there is still light and it is only in the pitch darkness of the night that she is able to unfold the truth of her identity as well as her relation to Karna.

In the translated text, the notion of darkness is counter-pointed against the "prying eyes of day" as the metaphoric resonance of *deb dibaakar* has a mythic relevance related to Karna's birth because Kunti had tried to test the boon of her ability to conceive by engaging the elemental forces and her first unconscious target was the Sun God (*dēva divākara*- 'lord of the day'). The result was the birth of Karna when she was still a maiden and it is this that made her hesitate. The English translation of this unit is not a disjunction but a shift in meaning, which occurs not only due to the difference in

The Dialectics of Human Intellection and The Semiotics of Translation: 15
A Comparative Reading of Rabindranath Tagore's
Kar̞akunt̞sambāda in Bengali and English

cultural contexts and a kind of pragmatism that might be there to suit the needs of, or pander to, the target readership.

The fifth sub-ensemble is a single-unit entity as Karna acknowledges with surprise the identity of Kunti, the mother of Arjuna, his arch-opponent. The semanteme *arjunajanan̞* is what creates a discord at the end of the first sequence of the narrative as it breaks into the silent, meditative ambience of the earlier sub-ensembles initiating the beginning of a disintegration of the inner psychic order.

The *second sequence* has two signifying ensembles. The first ensemble has eight sub-ensembles. Kunti answers Karna in the affirmative knowing full well the implications inherent in the fact of being Arjuna's mother, but that prompts her to make the further entreaty - "But do not, therefore, hate me" [P. 304]. The reference to Arjuna as "your antagonist" is to make it clear to the western audience the relational axis between Karna and Arjuna as adversaries in the battle of Kurukshetra that was fought between the Kauravas and Pandavas over the throne of Hastinapura.

The next few micro-ensembles recount all the painful moments that Kunti as Karna's mother had to undergo. This makes her recall all the moments of humiliation that Karna (*kaninputra* 'one born from the ear', *kumarigarbhajata* 'born from the womb of a maiden') had to contend with due to the (unfortunate) circumstances of his birth and upbringing. The propositions in this unit are in the form of an elaborate "infix" as it has connections with events that are yet to follow and in fact, they prepare the ground for the final violence that is to take place. The incident recounted is the day of the trial of arms in Hastinanagar when Karna made his first entry. The attributes used to describe the appearance of Karna is in relation to the first light of dawn and again we witness how the

symbolic matrix is enriched with the reference to the sun as "arun",
which indicates the radiant aspect of the sun. The use of the word
pūrvāśā in [1. b] of this sequence is interesting as it indicates a
duality - the word means both *purba dik* - "the eastern horizon" and
pūrvēra prati aśā - "past expectation" and in the translated text,
this whole unit is missing. Kunti's sorrow too is expressed in a series
of images and in the translation, her speechlessness- *vākyahẹnā
abhāginẹ* 'mute hapless woman' - and her thirst for the love of her
child inducing an agony as intense as the sting of a thousand snakes
- *atẓpta snēhakẠudhāra sahasra nāginẹ jāgāyē jarjara vakẠe*
- is reduced to a single epithet "unhappy", quite in keeping with the
factual thrust of a literal discourse and it thus fails to capture the
psychic overtones of a mother forced to conceal her identity and
thereby conceal the fact of her motherhood from her son due to the
burden of tradition and the strictures of common morality.

In the third sub-ensemble, Kripa's intervention is recounted.
It is who has made Karna's humiliation complete: at the royal
gathering, he has asked him the name of his father. Realizing that
Karna does not have a royal parentage, Kripa claims that he has no
right to fight with Arjuna

>   rājakulē janma nahē »ara
>   arjunēra sāthē »uddhe nāhi adhikāra.

>   'Since Karna is not born of royal blood,
>   he has no right to fight with Arjuna'

The proposition made through the issue of *adhikar* 'right' is
central to Karna's existential human condition.The reduction of the
concept of "royal birth" and "rights" to a mere "mean birth" is
problematic. Further, the whole idea expressed in

>   arakta anata mukhe na rahila va ₎ ₑ
>   daẠẠaye rahile, sei lajja-abhakhani

The Dialectics of Human Intellection and The Semiotics of Translation: 17
A Comparative Reading of Rabindranath Tagore's
Kar̠akunt̠esambāda in Bengali and English

dahila »ahara vakṀa agnisama teje
ke se abhagin₎?

is lost in its putative rendering,

> *"You stood speechless, like a thunder-cloud at sunset*
> *flashing with an agony of suppressed light."*

That Karna's face is "flushed" - (whether in shame or in anger or both) is indicated by the word *arakta* followed by *anato mukhe* - "lowered face", and hence his state of speechlessness and the transfixed posture! Nowhere features the idea of "an agony of suppressed light" and hence the state of "speechlessness" and the only bhaava that emanates in the English translation is of concealed or barely restrained anger which is hardly the way in which Karna is presented in the Bangla version.

Duryodhana, the usurper of the throne of Hastinapura is referred to by Kunti as *dhan»a*. She hails him as her son since he has retrieved Karna from this situation of shame by declaring him the king of Anga, a prominent province under the rule of the Kauravas. In the translation, however, Tagore again tries to indicate a cause for Duryodhana's action and states - "who perceived your worth" - and hence Kunti is profuse in her praise of Duryodhana. There is again a problem in the translated text because in the Bangla version Tagore is pre-occupied with presenting only Kunti's agony at not being able to shield her child from the fingers pointing to his birth. Kunti is not engaged in any evaluation of Karna as she has come to him with a prayer in mind and she wants him to grant it with all his heart. But the deviation in the translation can be rationalized because arguably the idea in the expressions "who perceived your worth" and "thus winning the Kauravas a champion" is to communicate the reason why and how Karna was fighting on

the side of the Kauravas as the Commander-in Chief in the battle of Kurukshetra.

In the next micro-ensemble, Kunti recounts her moment of joy when Karna places his crowned head at the feet of Adhiratha, the charioteer, his father and seeing this, the Pandavas break into "jeering laughter". The translation of

> abhiṣekasikta sira luṭāyē caraṇē
> sūtavṛddhē praṇamilē pitṛsambhāṣaṇē
>
> laid his crowned head at his (= Adhirath's) feet
> and greeted him as a father

as "laid your crown at his feet" communicates the central idea of humility, but what it fails to indicate is the proud acknowledgement by Karna of the fatherhood of the old charioteer. Again, placing the crown at one's feet is quite inadequate as, in the western context, it is an act of surrender but in the open court Karna is acknowledging with dignity his humble birth and parentage that has no royal connection and he thus places his newly crowned head on the feet of the old charioteer who has come to bless him, braving the milling crowd, thereby making a silent statement of resistance against Kripa's words, as mentioned earlier. It is this heroic humility and the capacity for resistance that Kunti hails him for and feels proud of begetting him and it thus acts as an "infix" to be elaborated on later.

In the next sub-ensemble, the first three micro-ensembles reveal that Karna has learnt the reason why Kunti, the mother of kings, has come to him alone, in the battlefield to the Commander-in-Chief of the Kaurava forces. She had a prayer - and for the first time, she addresses him as "son" instead of "child" and the partial signifier of *bhikṣā ache* (begging for alms / prayer) is completed by the command-like entreaty - *viphala na phiri yena* 'don't send me empty-handed'. She makes the request as a mother and like the

The Dialectics of Human Intellection and The Semiotics of Translation: 19
A Comparative Reading of Rabindranath Tagore's
Kar̥akunt̥sambāda in Bengali and English

royal mother she imposes her will, saying that she should not return without the grant of her wish. Karna is dumb-founded - *bhikṣā, mōr kāchē!* 'You want alms from me?' and his surprise is expressed not only in the reversal of the order of words in the sentence, but also by the exclamation mark in the end. And then even before hearing what her prayer is, he swears that apart from his own manhood and sense of duty he is ready to obey her command. In the English translation, Tagore uses the word "honour" to indicate the notion of "dharma" and qualifies it by relating it to the idea of manhood and the honour of a Kshatriya, but Karna's "dharma" is rather the sense of duty that makes him swear that he would fulfil her prayer. He has been overwhelmed by the revelation of Kunti being his mother and his existential situation makes it imperative that he fulfils his duty as a son here rather than as a Kshatriya warrior. Again, *bhikṣā* is not "boon" and the translation of *putra, bhikṣā ache -viphala na phiri ṣena* as "I have a boon to crave" is in complete disjunction to the connotation in the original text. Kunti being the royal mother has her own pride as a *kṣhartiya nārē* and she can never "crave" for a "boon" - her prayer or entreaty would rather have the form of a command as she has come to reveal her identity to Karna to impose her will.

The following sub-ensemble is a proposition in comprehension as it indicates the purpose of Kunti who asserts that she has come to take him, and to Karna's question regarding the intended destination, she responds with "in the midst of her thirsting breast, in the lap of her motherliness". The notion of *mātṛkrōṛē* is missing in the translation and its absence is supported by the phrase "for your love" - the connotation of which is more context-friendly for the western audience.

In the next two sub-ensembles, the semantic thrust of the proposition is extended. Karna still tries to grapple with the fact that

Kunti, blessed as she is with five sons, is undoubtedly fortunate, and yet she has approached him, who has no proper ancestral lineage or any family honour and is a small chieftain.What place could Kunti give him? In the receiver English text *paμcaputra* has been translated as "five brave kings" whereas it merely means "five sons" and the shift that results even contradicts the narrative of the epic.

The conflict that Karna poses in the translated text is an opposition between his position as a "small chieftain" and that of kings but in the Bangla version, the problem is of finding his position - legitimacy - among the five other sons of Kunti. And therefore in the next sub-ensemble which is an extension of the earlier proposition, Kunti says:

> sarva-uccabhāgē
> tomāre vasāva mōra sarvaputra-āgē
> jₚēₐₜₕha putra tumi!

> "at the highest position, will I place you, before all my
> sons - you are my first born"

But the translation condenses the semantic expanse of the proposition and reduces it to "your place is before all my sons" which has no co-relation to the earlier line - "five brave kings".

In the third sequence, there are four signifying ensembles. The first ensemble can be divided into three sub-units in which, Karna asks Kunti the most fundamental question that indicates his human predicament: *kōn adhikāra madē / pravēₐa kariva sēthā?* – 'with what right would I enter there?' In the translated text, the next two micro-units are not indicated and yet they are crucial to the narrative because they reflect the essence of Karna's inner constitution. These are propositions, which work together as an infix that later finds an extension. The phrase *jₚēₐₜₕha putra tumi!* of the second sequence finds an evocation in this unit as *jₚēₐₜₕha* which not

The Dialectics of Human Intellection and The Semiotics of Translation: 21
A Comparative Reading of Rabindranath Tagore's
Karˌakuntˌsambāda in Bengali and English

only means "first born" or "eldest" but also *brahmaˌa* - it indicates
Karna's renunciatory capacity which is the only attribute of a true
brahmaˌa - the one who has conquered all material desires of the
physical world. So Karna asks in the second and third micro-units of
the first signifying sub-ensemble what rights he had to curtail the
rights of those who have been denied their rights to their kingdom
over maternal love which neither follows the mercantile logic of
exchange nor can be won by the virtue of physical strength - it is a
gift of the divine! By acknowledging the rights of the Pandavas over
and above his claim to his mother's love, Karna accepts them as his
brothers and thereby fulfils his "dharma" or duty as a son and that
too, the duty of the first-born.

Kunti's plea in the next ensemble can be divided into four
sub-units. She raises the issue both of his right and of the divinely
ordained claim by saying that it is with the 'permission of the
creator' (= *vidhātāra adhikāra*) that he had been born to her and
therefore, he had the right to return amid all his brothers and his
mother with dignity and without any hesitation. In the translated
text, the four sub-units are reduced into a single-unit proposition -
"your own God-given right to your mother's love".

The third ensemble has eleven sub-units. The first sub-
ensemble is a proposition in comprehension. It indicates the
sequence of a dream that Kunti's words has evoked. The next sub-
unit is an extension of the idea of a dream whereby the darkness
seems to be permeating the very atmosphere, and all nature is hidden
while the Bhagirathi flows soundlessly (another name of Ganges,
that has mythic overtones - Bhagirath's penance had been successful
in bringing the waters of the Ganges to the earth from the heavens
and directed her course so that it could be taken towards the place
where the sons of King Sagar lay in a heap of ashes due to the curse
of Kapil Muni and it is through the purificatory effect of the holy

waters that their lives were renewed and hence, the reference to Ganga as Bhagirathi). It is this connotation that the river bears that is carried forward when Karna feels that his inner being is being taken into some illusory world, a forgotten abode in the dawn of primal consciousness. In the next sub-ensemble, there are several partial signifiers that constitute the highly charged narrative matrix. Like the oldest truth, the words of Kunti orchestrated upon him, holding him in a thrall. As if in the state of primal infancy he is engulfed in the darkness of his mother's womb. This whole sub-ensemble has been condensed in the translation and the next five sub-units have been fused into a single-unit proposition - "The gloom of evening ... twilight consciousness". The next proposition in the translated version is therefore a query into the irreality of the state of being he is in and he wants a return to the world of the real and so, asks Kunti to place her right hand on his forehead. But in the Bangla text, he foregoes the urge to delve into the world of the real and it is in extension to the first proposition in the opening sequence that his meditative self requests her - "the loving one" (*snēhamayē*) - to place her right hand in a momentary caress over his forehead and chin.

The phrase *suniyāchi lōkamukhē* has been rendered as "rumour" in English, but the Bangla word merely indicates that he has heard from the people that his mother has abandoned him at birth. The next six micro-units are thus an extension of his dream, which encapsulates the hidden core of his desire - in the depths of his unconscious he had seen his birth-giver (= *jananē*) come to see him and he had pleadingly cried in agony - "unveil your face". But as soon as his voice shattered the silence of the night, the dream-image of his mother disappeared from in front of his mental eye and the illusion faded. But how is it that the dream of his sub-conscious took a physical shape and appeared as a tangible reality in the form of the Pandava mother that evening hour, in the middle of the battlefield, by the banks of the river Bhagirathi! The exclamation

The Dialectics of Human Intellection and The Semiotics of Translation: 23
A Comparative Reading of Rabindranath Tagore's
Karṇakuntasambāda in Bengali and English

mark at the end of this sub-sequence is denotative of Karna's inner psychic state which hovers between the twilight threshold of belief and disbelief.

The next sub-unit however brings him back to the physical world and the inner dialogue of the mind is externalized in his address to Kunti as "devi" - as he sees the lights illuminating the Pandava camp and the sound of horses in the Kaurava side - his reverie is finally broken. He comes back to the real world as he realizes that the following morning would herald the beginning of the biggest of wars. And hence the next proposition in disjunction. He wonders why he had to hear the tone of motherly affection in the language of addressing that Arjuna's mother uses? Why did his name sound like sweet music when uttered by her? Completely taken aback, he realizes that his mind has acquired an autonomy of its own and he has an unwitting, and an uncontrollably felt, desire to be acknowledged as the brother of the Pandavas.

The translation does not embody the duality that enhances the ambivalence in Karna's mind and the queries that are raised emanate from the external speaking self rather than from the withdrawn, internal self, the depths of the sub-conscious mind.

In the fourth signifying ensemble Kunti endearingly beckons him, addressing him as 'child' but in the translation, the notion of "delay not, my son!" is introduced, as if Kunti is in a hurry to take him away, although it could never have been her intention. Karna assures her that he would accompany her without questions, without any doubt or fear since she is his mother. His inner consciousness has been stirred by her call, and forgotten to him is the victory of war. False to him is the hatred of war, the strife for glory and the desire for fame in vanquishing the adversary. He agrees to go wherever she takes him along. But in the following sub-unit, when

she indicates the opposite bank of the river as her destination he knows that the reality is nothing but an illusion. He therefore requests her to re-affirm that he is truly her son and on the opposite bank there was the hope of finding his mother forever. Her answer makes him contend with the discord that is imminent in the proposition - *putra mōra* - "O my son!" Ironically it has a jarring effect because the acknowledgement of her identity makes him face the bitterest truth - the ultimate violence of Kunti that robs him even of his anger against those whom he considered his opponents, making his whole endeavour in the battle a meaningless exercise.

The *fourth sequence* has three signifying ensembles and the first unit has four sub-ensembles which are in complete disjunction with the Karna's earlier utterances. In the first unit, Karna questions why Kunti abandoned him in a world completely unknown to him without any identity or name and even without the love of a mother? Why did she foresake him and allow him to float adrift in the current of rejection, outlaw him from the natural kinship of his brothers? The chasm between Arjuna and him had been widened forever and therefore the proposition here is both an extension and an infix as he asks why from early childhood he had been sustained on a blind envy and unabated hatred for Arjuna. He questions his mother's speechlessness! And in the third sub-unit, there is a change of tone as his mother's shame permeates through the engulfing darkness and he could feel it with his very being. His eyes droop in her shame and therefore he seeks to refrain from pestering her with questions that have no obvious answers. In the translation, the sub-unit is only partially presented and in the earlier section - *māta꞊ꞏꞏꞏ, niruttara?* (= mother, answerless?) has become "you remain speechless". But it is the acknowledgement of her as his mother that makes it possible for him to empathize with her painful shame and the discomfiture of her position and also make his forgiveness later imperative. Otherwise, the inner relationship that Karna and Kunti share becomes merely an external factor and creates a disjunction in the

The Dialectics of Human Intellection and The Semiotics of Translation: 25
A Comparative Reading of Rabindranath Tagore's
Karᵢakuntₑsambāda in Bengali and English

psychic progression of the being. The sub-ensemble beginning with the lines

> vidhira prathama dāna ē viśvasaℋsārē
> māt≈snēha kēna sēi dēvatāra dhana
> āpana santāna hatē karilē haraᵢa
> sē kathāra diyō nā uttara

can never mean the same as "never explain to me what made you rob your son of his mother's love!" as kernel semantemes like *vidhira prathama dāna* and d*ēvatāra dhana* are equated with m*āt≈snēha* and the first divine gift is therfore the blessing of the love of a mother. The translation centres on the notion of *haraᵢa* "snatch away by force" rather than merely "rob" slyly and the violence that inheres in the Bangla sentence is completely lost in English. The micro-unit is therfore an extension of the proposition in the third sequence and through it, the idea indicated there about the real purpose of her visit finds completion.

In the second signifying ensemble, Kunti's answer can be divided into sub-ensembles. In the first one, she emphasizes the justification for Karna's rage and avers that her act of abandonment has become a sin and it followed her through life like a dogged curse because she has forever been yearning for her lost son and in the second, she calls herself fortunate (= *bhāg≈avatₑ*) because she has now met him, acknowledges her sin, and hopes that it is the innocence of speechless infancy that would make Karna forgive his 'recreant mother' (= *kumātā*). And it is this forgiveness that would render her pure by burning away her sinful shame. In the translation, there is mention of being "dogged by a curse" (P. 307) which makes Kunti's sin an act not of choice but of compulsion, much like the impact of fate as a force that subordinates the will of an individual and makes him/her a plaything in the hands of the powers above.

Kunti never mentions anything about her "life's pleasures .... run to waste" or her pain being similar to that of childlessness as a state of mind – *tavu mōra citta putrahₑna* "I don't consider you as my son" literally, 'you are not my mind-son'. Her physical motherhood of begetting five more sons could not bridge the gap, nor reduce her yearning for her abandoned first-born and it is this guilt that became the curse.

In the third sub-sequence, addressing his mother Karna says *dēha pādadhūlₑ* - "give me the dust on your feet" and accept my tears or rather "annoint thy feet with my tears". In a cultural context, where the idea of *praṇāma* (greeting by touching the feet) is foreign, the notion of *pādadhūlₑ* (the dust of feet) would also perhaps seem ridiculous and hence the omission. But what one has to remember is that the omission is largely due to the nature of the colonial dominance over local languages and cultures, which either transforms native concepts or obliterates them completely as they are subordinate and do not require any comprehension on the part of the white reader.

In the *fifth sequence,* there are six signifying ensembles. The first ensemble contradicts every proposition that Kunti has made before:

tōrē lava vakṣē tuli
sē sukha-āśāya, putra, āsi nāi dvārē.

'I have not come at your door with that happy hope
 Of enfolding you in my heart'

She claimed that she had not come with the hope of winning Karna back when her emotional victory over him was truly complete. Her purpose, as she asserted, was to restore him his due right. She purposefully attempts to reinforce the idea that he was not the son of a charioteer, but rather the son of a king and therefore

The Dialectics of Human Intellection and The Semiotics of Translation: 27
A Comparative Reading of Rabindranath Tagore's
Kar̤akunt̤esambāda in Bengali and English

abandoning the memory of all earlier episodes, he should accompany her to where the Pandavas were.

The single-unit proposition in the next signifying ensemble reflects Karna's misunderstanding of her purpose and he tries to convince her that he is truly the son of the charioteer and that Radha was his mother and in his humility lay his pride and hence his assertion that the Pandavas may be where they are and the Kauravas in their own place - he has no reason to envy any one. The translation does not acknowledge the third micro-ensemble and the proposition thus remains incomplete as neither the emotional turmoil of Karna is reflected nor the hidden purpose behind Kunti's play of words - the acknowledgement of which makes the rape of his desire a complete annihilation of his existence.

Kunti's imploring speech constitutes the third signifying ensemble and here the same idea is extended as she urges him to win back his kingdom by the force of his strength. In the next five micro-ensembles, she paints an elaborate picture of how Yudhisthira, Bhima and Arjuna would assist him in different ways while the holy Brahmins would be chanting the *Vedas* giving divine sanction to his legitimate claims of kingship. She lures him with the offer of the kingdom making her underlying motive evident but this whole section is absent in the translation which leaves the fake ring of her words unnoticed and thereby her real intention. She has been able to provoke Karna and incite his scorn and contempt for kingly rights and yet retain his sympathy for her as his mother, thereby guaranteeing the safety of her five sons in the forthcoming battle.

In the fourth sub-unit of the fourth signifying ensemble, Karna hurls the word "kingdom!" at her with all his being and follows it with the next micro-unit by saying, "Must you, who once refused me mother's love, tempt me with a kingdom?" (P. 307) His

refusal to claim his material rights is imperative as he follows the
chivalric code of conduct and thinks that adhering to it is his sole
duty.

>   ekadina ⸗e sampadē karēcha va⸗cita
>   sē āra phirāyē dēōyā tava sādh⸗āt⸗ta
>
>   'It is beyond your powers to return the wealth
>   that you once deprived me of '

This unit indicates his absolute comprehension of Kunti's
paradox and he thus sees a way out of it by refusing to leave his
charioteer-parents and his allegiance to the Kauravas in [4b] and
rationalizes his statement, saying *tavē dhik mōrē* - "Then, shame be
on me!" if he transgresses the heroic code and cheats those to whom
he owes his existence.

In the fifth ensemble, the four sub-units complete Kunti's
final victory over Karna. In the first unit, she addresses him as *v⸗ra*
which means 'brave' and *dhan⸗a*, which means 'blessed' and
thereby "great". In the next sub-unit, she blames *dharma*, and not
"God" as it is indicated in the translation, because it is the sense of
duty which she had not fulfilled as mother when Karna was an infant
and it is this that comes back to claim her all in the persona of the
adult Karna through the hoary gloom of a past darkness to pitilessly
snatch away the children from his own mother. This is the curse -
"*abhiśāpa*" - that returns to avenge her failings in motherly duties
and central to it is the notion of the law of "*karma*" - so central to the
Vedic philosophy which is elaborately articulated in the *Gita.*

In the concluding ensemble, there are three sub-units. The
first sub-sequence reassures the mother, the second re-affirms that
the final victory would be the Pandavas' and the third urges her to
abandon him once more, but with the blessing that he may never
swerve from the path of heroic duty. In this proposition is a futuristic
prediction as through the eyes of the seer, that he is able to witness

The Dialectics of Human Intellection and The Semiotics of Translation: 29
A Comparative Reading of Rabindranath Tagore's
Karṇakuntesambāda in Bengali and English

the outcome of the war by reading the signs evident in the path of the stars in heaven. The silence all around enables him to hear the music of defeated endeavours and the hopeless strife for action.He could see the void that waits as the consequence of the war:

> ēi śānta stavdhakāṣe ē
> ananta ākāśa hatē paśitēchē manē
> jayahena cēṣṭāra saᵓgeta, āśāhena
> karmᵒra udᵥama - hēritēchi śāntimaya
> śūnᵥa pariṇāma.

In the translation, the line is rendered as "my heart is full of the music of a hopeless venture, and baffled end". Later the proposition is extended by the ideas of "desperate and forlorn" and "expectation of defeat and death" which completely contradict the image of Karna as in the Bangla version but completes the idea of Karna as the egotistical being as presented in the English text and his doomed end as a natural consequence of some kind of hubris or pride.

But the Karna in *Karṇakuntesambāda,* the original text withdraws into his meditative self like the perfect sage and he continues to be on the side of the vanquished, not as an act of fate but as a matter of choice and the destiny that awaits him is thus not pre-ordained, but of his own making as per the law of Karma. He no longer yearns for either fame or glory as action itself has become meaningless. He gains in inner strength, and despite the knowledge of the violence committed by his mother against his desire to avenge his destiny (adṛṣṭa), he calmly relents and lets go of all claim seeking only one blessing:

> śudhu ēi āśervāda diyē jāō mōrē
> jayalōbhē ᵥaśolobhe rājᵥalōbhē, ayi,

vₑrēra sadgati hatē bhra𝒜𝟙a nāhi hoi

'give me this blessing of heroic death
not as a covetor of wealth, success and kingdom'

which does not find an echo in the translation. *vₑrēra sadgati* 'heroic death' indicates the passage from mortal life on the merit of one's own excellence and Karna's excellence lies in the idea of *daana* or 'the supreme act of giving' which carries with it the import of renouncing all personal claims to physical/mortal/material life.

Semiological Patterns

Following the synchrony of events as unfolded by the linguistic units of signification, the detailed semiotic analysis of the text in Bangla in contrast with the English translation, prepares us to attempt a delineation of the semiological patterns in the narrative discourse and see how the same author's articulation becomes not merely a matter of "differance" and "deference" but how the very act of intellection is governed by structures received through language and culture. Karna's character undergoes a significant change as it transits from Bangla into English. Attracted as Tagore is by the strangeness in Karna's character, the duality in Karna seems to be Tagore's main pre-occupation in the Bangla original. Quite in keeping with the Rasa theory in Indian Poetics, he evokes the *vₑrarasa* as the governing rasa and elaborates on the central *bhaava* associated with the concept of *dāna* or giving (Karna is also known as *dānavₑra karˌa,* the munificent, magnanimous Karna). When however he translates the text into the language of the then colonial masters, Karna becomes an Anglo-Saxon character whose destiny forces him to lie vanquished in the "expectation of defeat and death". He becomes more like a figure of European Renaissance humanism rather than the legendary renderings about him in both popular oral folk traditions as well as those in the classical ones. Now, how does one resolve the impasse with which a translator is grappling on the

The Dialectics of Human Intellection and The Semiotics of Translation: 31
A Comparative Reading of Rabindranath Tagore's
Karˌakuntₑsambāda in Bengali and English

interfacial threshold of two languages and two cultures? Let us first
focus on the thematic configurations of the narratives and see where
and how the disjunctions occur:

a) The concept of identity vs. conflict
b) The concept of conflict vs. curse
c) The concept of resignation vs. defeat

The First Thematic Configuration: The Concept of Identity vs. the Concept of Conflict

In the first narrative sequence, Karna's meditative posture by
the banks of the river Jahnabi shows him in a state of complete
withdrawal as his whole being is focused in establishing a holy
communion with the fading light of the Sun (*sabita*) as it is setting.
It is an interesting paradox that the poet introduces in the opening
lines as the inner enlightenment is possible only by a willing
annihilation of the physical senses and absolving of all subjective
pre-suppositions by a willing suspension of the self. In the use of the
epithet *jahnabi* as opposed to Ganga (the daughter of Himadri) the
poet establishes a thematic co-relation with the legend of *Jahnu
muni* (*Jahnu* sage) who had swallowed the waters of the entire river
as she (= the river) had the audacity of destroying his 'ashrama' and
it was only later, when his anger subsided, that he related and
allowed Ganga to flow free through a complete re-birth by severing
the flesh of his upper thigh (*Jahnu*, the sanskrit word for 'thigh')
and hence, her identity as Jahnabi. Karna's references to himself are
indirect since his existence is not free from the obscure origins of his
parentage. Karna never appears in the persona of Basusen, the name
given to him by Adhiratha and Radha, but he is *kanin-putra* "son
born from the ear' and *kumari-garbha-jata* "born from the womb of
a maiden" and thereby Karna. Like the mythic resonance of the fate
of *Jahnabi*, the river, Karna too awaits a similar destiny when Kunti

intrudes upon his contemplativeness by the banks of the river as he unknowingly attempts a communion with the Sun-God, who was his father. But that communion could never have been completed without the revelation of Kunti but interestingly, the narrative centres only on motherhood, not on fatherhood and the omission is not without reason. The answers to this issue are to be found in the ethnographic and anthropological constitutions of ancient societies and the whole problem of Vedic incorporation of older forms of living practices and rituals and the process of hegemonization that subsumed primitive tribal formations. But a foray into that would be a culpable digression at this juncture.

Kunti reveals her identity first as his begetter and then asks him to patiently wait for the light of day (*dēva divākara* - 'lord / god of day') to completely fade away so that in the darkness of the night she is able to tell him her name. The whole notion of waiting for darkness is extremely crucial as her shame forbids her to face the light and her guilt-ridden consciousness makes it imperative that she meets Karna, her son in the absence of light. Again, the sun being her partner in bringing Karna into the world due to a boon by *ऋषि dūrvāsā* made the sun, the male cosmic principle and due to the force of custom and tradition, it was difficult for Kunti to reveal to Karna the mystery around his birth.

The impact of Kunti's first utterance struck a resonant chord, a kind of prior knowledge in Karna as if the sound emanated from a forgotten domain in some previous birth, but what it unfailingly did was produce a certain harmony despite the strangeness of the melancholic strain (a*pūrva vēdanā*). Kunti's endearing address to him as child and Karna's reference to her as mother instead of *dēvī* establishes the relation even before any utterance specifying the relation was made.

The Dialectics of Human Intellection and The Semiotics of Translation: 33
A Comparative Reading of Rabindranath Tagore's
Kar̤akunt̤sambāda in Bengali and English

As opposed to this, in Tagore's English translation, the first thematic configuration is structured around the theme of conflict. The obvious statement of facts with which the narrative begins and the opposition between the propositions "I am Karna" and "Tell me who you are" in the first stanza indicates the absolute self-confidence of the speaking subject and there is no reflection of the inner duality that he as a character suffered from as represented in the primary text. The river flowing by and the setting sun are merely parts of a painted canvas which form a visual backdrop to the whole narrative whereas in the Bangla version they, imbued as they are with a living force, assume the form of a character. The mythic overtones parallel the destiny of the human condition of Karna and Kunti and to an informed, native reader, the cultural conditioning enables a conceptual communion that is otherwise impossible to make.

The absence of the word *mata* and the semanteme *radha-garbha-jata* 'born from Radha's womb' is a crucial one as the essential connection that one makes at the very opening of the narrative is subverted because the crisis that emerges in the translation is external rather than internal in nature. The relation between a mother and her son is not merely a biological question of asserting one's identity. It is rather the question of finding one's moorings and it is a quest for the very source of one's own existence. The play on the word *garbha* meaning 'womb / uterus' is indicative of the fact that Karna who knew Radha to be his adopted mother and had heard rumours relating to his birth accepts his own identity in terms of their social position and yet he is unable to contain himself within the parameter of being a charioteer like his father. The in-born nobility in him makes him question his source and yearn for the knowledge about the identity of his mother both literally and metaphorically; hence, his meditative stance by the river Jahnabi or

Ganges, which does not have the same connotation as discussed earlier.

The conflict in the translation is therefore one between Karna's character and Kunti's character. The propositions are structured in a way that creates a universe of co-relations that are external to the psychic development of the characters. The idea that although Karna and Kunti are in an oppositional role and yet they are held together as a unity since they are bound by the relationship of mother and son who are essentially in dialogue with each other (as suggested even by the title in the primary text) is reduced to the idea of *Karna and Kunti* as per the title in the translated version. The conflict then develops into one of denial of mere rights whether it is access to maternal sentiments, filial bonding and kinship ties, royal name or lineage, title, wealth and even kingdom. Karna has been bereft of all that he could have had or called his own because Kunti has abandoned him at birth and now as a matter of honour he could not accept her offer of reconciliation. His rejection is then a protest exclusively against his mother's sin and he needn't be then called either *danavir* Karna or k*aninputra* Karna. It would have been ideal to have followed his name as *Basusen*, but Tagore chose otherwise in the original text as the conflict for him was an internal one, one that percolated deep down to the protagonist's subconscious.

The Second Thematic Configuration: The Concept of Conflict vs. the Concept of Curse

In the source text, the conflict is centred within the mind of Karna who is torn between the desire to prolong the sweet nature of the re-union with his mother Kunti and the objective conditions of his life that make it imperative for him to withdraw from a career that helped nurse the hate and thereby sustain an angry resistance to his existential being that forced him to keep alive the meditative core of his inner self. It is the series of mediations that make him ultimately decide that renunciation is the only dharma that he can

The Dialectics of Human Intellection and The Semiotics of Translation: 35
A Comparative Reading of Rabindranath Tagore's
Kar̞akunt̞sambāda in Bengali and English

pursue, not as a matter of external honour but because that is where his psychic self can find the peace of a mother's womb in the depth of his inner consciousness. The communion with *sandhya sabita* is completed at the end of the narrative and like the story of Bhagirath guiding the waters of river Ganges to the site where the mortal remains of the sons of King Sagara lay he too is guided by the light of an inner wisdom that releases him from the obsessive hatred against the Pandavas when Kunti reveals to him the truth about his identity.

The conflict within Karna was the search for the source as exemplified metaphorically through the desire of trying to know his mother and when he realizes who she really was, he seems to be at peace but is troubled by the question of why she chose to reveal it to him just before the battle that he was supposed to command began. Kunti's intentions were obvious and it is reflected through the first and second ensembles of the second sequence where she makes it clear that she had a prayer which she wanted her son to grant. The earlier references to Karna as "child" changes for the first time to "son" to embody the idea that she was using her motherhood to make him (her adult son) commit something which he otherwise would not. And Karna grants the prayer even before knowing what it was because it was the dharma, the obligatory moral duty of a son, to do so, and when Kunti asks him to accompany her to the opposite bank where the Pandava camps were, he knows quite well that his dharma as a warrior would not allow him to grant her request. And hence her objective is fulfilled. Karna assures the safety of the Pandavas, and like a true seer, claims that his inner eye told him on whose side victory lay. Replete with the knowledge of what the future had in store for him he chooses to go ahead in the war and asks his mother willingly now to abandon him like she had when he was an infant and again at a juncture when he needed her the most.

Against this is posed the idea of the curse in the English translation which says that human action is not determined by free will but by the action of forces that are beyond one's control. Arjuna is his "antagonist" (P.304) and Kunti was indeed the "mother of Arjuna" (P.304) and not Karna. It is this realization that extends a thematic continuum to the earlier conceptual configuration of conflict in the translation and carries forward the idea of the curse: "*I am dogged by a curse more deadly than your reproaches*" (P.307) whereas the idea of *abhishap* - 'curse' is more in the nature of punishment due to a sin that Kunti had committed and therefore the son whom she had abandoned has now grown into adulthood and has returned to take revenge by drawing the blood of his brothers. The notion of Arjuna being the "antagonist" does not merely contribute to the addition of necessary information to the reader but it changes the whole universe of signification and contradicts the psychic tenor of Karna as understood by the mythical tradition in which he is embedded, making the understanding of the character possible in a different linguistic and cultural context.

The curse that Kunti talks about in the primary text does not have the same semantic contours as in the translation. The term *abhishap* could be either in the form of a consequence of an action or false accusation or even sin, which returns to vitiate the life of an individual. The notion of curse in the Greek sense is the idea of the utterance of a deity or a person invoking a deity to doom a person to destruction. The latter sense is also relevant in the Indian epic tradition. The use of the word by Tagore in Bangla however indicates the former and not the latter because Kunti had conceived all her sons through the divine boon of Durbasha Muni and it is her act of trying to experiment with it as a maiden that led to the birth of Karna and the boon became a curse in return. But without the same boon she could not have become the mother of the Pandavas either as King Pandu was cursed by the copulating deer whom he disturbed during the act and got cursed by them (in the Greek sense of the word), the curse being that he would die the moment he attempted

The Dialectics of Human Intellection and The Semiotics of Translation: 37
A Comparative Reading of Rabindranath Tagore's
Karᵣakuntᵉsambāda in Bengali and English

conjugal union and the curse comes true when he is unable to
restrain himself sexually when he sees his younger wife Madri
bathing and this becomes the cause of his death. The duality of
divine wisdom and the double-edged nature of a boon that becomes
a curse and vice-versa is something fundamental to the philosophy
of Karma or human action which alone is the true testing ground for
the actualization of the will of the Providence. But in the translation
when Kunti mentions it, she tries to give some reason of causality
that made her feel motherless even after becoming the mother of five
sons as she had abandoned Karna at birth and she knew no happiness
or peace because of her knowledge of the sin she had committed to
avoid social defamation for being a maiden mother. Which is to say
that the translation only carries the partial significance of the idea
and is not able to convey the whole idea as it is found in the original
due to the distinctively different cultural and linguistic structures in
which the author/translator is operating.

The Third Thematic Configuration: The Concept of Resignation vs. the Concept of Defeat

The concluding sequence of the narrative is the culmination
of the earlier thematic units of identity and conflict wherein Karna
questions his legitimacy and refuses to acknowledge that he has the
divine sanction of asserting his rights as son, elder brother and even
king. Kunti's enticing offer of the kingdom fails to veer him from his
path of duty. It in fact makes him question her as to what right he
had to usurp from his brothers the love of their mother when they
have been denied even their rightful claims over the throne of
Hastinapur. He was the first-born - *jestha* - and so he had the duties
of the first-born and like a true Brahman, the one who has conquered
all desires of the world, he decides not to snatch away from them
even their mother's love. The word *horon* (meaning 'usurp') is
central here because it indicates that Karna unlike Kunti would not

be able to swerve from the path of his duty even though he knew what the consequences would be. He grants her the prayer and assures her that her five Pandava sons would remain safe as victory would be on the side of the righteous. The revelation of his identity makes him acknowledge more firmly that he was the son of the charioteer and his mother was Radha and the re-statement of the obvious in the fourth sequence helps him to withdraw from the turmoil of a life that thrived/throve on the emotion of anger and hate. The silence all-around enables him to resign to a life of action, which despite its futility and meaninglessness, would assure him of returning to the path where his karma leads. *birer sadgati* - 'heroic end/death' is what he desires and that is possible only when he has conquered all desires of this world. The passage to eternal life is possible only through the good, positive/liberating end (*sadgati*) to one's life by the giving up of all claims to the material/physical world. The *sabita-bandana* 'worship of the Sun God' has helped him renounce the world of love, anger, hatred, success and defeat. And now no longer is there any need for him to be baffled and confused with anything. He could return to the source of his primal existence and in the embalmed darkness that surrounded him he wanted only one blessing from Kunti and that was the fulfilment of the desire to be free from all bondage whatsoever after fulfilling his obligations to those with whom he was associated - the Kauravas and his foster parents, Adhiratha the charioteer and his wife Radha. It is with that blessing of Kunti, the mother that his quest was complete with the understanding of how futile his conflict was, how meaningless his endeavour to win a battle against his own brothers and the final recognition of the fact regarding his identity and the realization that his desire to establish communion with the source of his existence (mother and the ideal embodied in the cosmic principle of life itself) could be fulfilled by annihilating the notion of the self by withdrawing into the contemplative being of his inner consciousness - the final womb of the universe from which all life truly began, finds sustenance, and finally returns to.

The Dialectics of Human Intellection and The Semiotics of Translation: 39
A Comparative Reading of Rabindranath Tagore's
Karṇakuntesambāda in Bengali and English

Contrary to this is the idea of "defeat and death" that appears in the translation and the misery of one who had once thought of being able to lead the Kaurava forces to a decisive victory over the Pandavas and thus fulfil the dharma of a kshatriya or warrior. The connotation of honor in the notion of dharma and its equation to that of the honour of a Kshatriya is not a problem of translation for Tagore, but the problem of trying to communicate concepts embedded within the oriental tradition which embodies within it the matrix of a cultural history that is three thousand years old. The veneration of core philosophical concepts and its intrusion into lived practices and customs are part of the collective subjectivity of a people and its universalizing role gives it a transcendence that cuts across all material / physical divisions and consequently, the micro-formations within it. The defeat and death of Karna is possible in the translation and ironically it is the only possibility if one works within the colonial subjectivity of a language and culture that Tagore for one was not unaware of. In fact that was one reason why he had refused to translate his works into English at one point of time but later agreed to the idea. He began by translating parts of the *Gitanjali* while aboard a ship sailing to America, agreeing to translate beause he felt the need to communicate ideas to the western audience and subvert the context of domination by working within the parameters of the hegemonic language of the oppressor race.

Karna's ego-centricity in the first sequence of the translated text makes his final end in death and defeat plausible as what he emerges to be is in keeping with the notion of the tragic hero who accepts his fate as there was no alternative. The notion of *birer sadgati* - 'heroic end' does not find any resonance in the translation presumably because the idea of *sadgati* or 'good positive/liberating end' is inconceivable to the West. The ordering of the narrative follows a unidirectional trajectory that reaches its culmination when Kunti and Karna struggle over the issue of why he was abandoned

by his mother as "a castaway uprooted from... ancestral soil, adrift in a homeless current of indignity?" (P. 306) The reference to the "curse" makes Kunti's answer plausible and it takes care of Tagore's concern of trying to communicate to an audience unacquainted with the story of the *Mahabharata* and therefore the curse provides an external agency which Kunti can hold responsible for her deplorable action of abandoning infant Karna in the hope that somebody would find the baby and take pity on him. So now she feels she can ask her son to take pity on his 'remorseful mother' (P. 307) and implore him for "generous words" (P. 307) which is not the same as the idea of *khama* - 'pardon' (as in the original) that would penetrate her guilt-ridden conscience worse than his angry allegations and it is in that fire of remorse that she would be able to purify her being. The "curse" of the mother extends to stifle the destiny of the son, relentlessly pushing him towards a future from which there is no redemption. The certain conviction of Karna makes him well prepared to calmly expect his end much in keeping with the tragic tone of Greek narratives. Whereas the primary text in Bangla uses the idea of calm serenity and darkness to which he resigns to return as by making communion with the eternal womb of consciousness Karna can find sanction in the heroic tradition ("vira") of the orient which envisions release as liberation from the cycle of life.

The Dialectics of Human Intellection

Language and culture have a relational autonomy and the mind fashions images not in the negation of the material world but in comprehension of the objectivity that determines the subjective domain both of the conscious and the unconscious. The translation paradox and the problem of authenticity that theoretical discourse tries to articulate has to be located within an understanding of the relational autonomy of the individual mind both in its conscious and unconscious states and the role of the socio-cultural structure of the languages in use. Transfer of concepts that have roots in the lived history of the people fashion the subconscious mind of the artist as

The Dialectics of Human Intellection and The Semiotics of Translation: 41
A Comparative Reading of Rabindranath Tagore's
Kar̦akunțsambāda in Bengali and English

creator and Tagore as both the author and translator is seen at his best trying to grapple with the problem of communication within two cultural and linguistic entities of the narratives embedded within two different domains of reality. Tagore realized this problem and was aware of the difficulties involved and in a letter to Ajit Kumar Chakravarti (13 March 1913) written from Illinois, USA, he wrote: 'What I try to capture in my English translation is the heart and core of my original Bengali. That is bound to make for a fairly wide deviation. If I were not there to help you out, you might probably find it impossible to identify the original in the translation' (Ray, 1913: 124). As the poet admits, there is a wide deviation. One needs to analyse the reasons as to why it happens. Questions like, is it the failure of the poet as a translator of his own works? or is it a problem of human intellection per se? need to be addressed.

On the one hand, the difference between the source text and the translated one is the result of the compulsions of the different subjectivities of the author operating within the socio-cultural collective of two different linguistic domains. In the Bangla text, the author is conscious of the nuances he is developing in the articulation of the character of Karna. He is concerned not only with the aspect of Karna in the Brahminical tradition but rather he is focussed on the aspect of *daanavir Karna* 'Karna the Magnanimous', or 'Karna the Munificent' of popular folk tradition and the character thus becomes the symbol of resistance to the injustice of the circumstances in which he is born. The final triumph of the protagonist lies in being able to find the path towards the communion with the immortal order of things as opposed to the mortal order in which he had been so long trapped since he willingly resigns from the quest of victory. Contrary to this, the Karna of the English translation is embedded in the heroic tradition of the West and is much in keeping with the Greek genre of tragedy. Consequently in the translated narrative, the governing psychic order

undergoes a slow disintegration as Karna asks Kunti to abandon him once more to the "calm expectation of defeat and death" (P. 308) - *parabhab pore* . But the idea contained in the last two lines of the Bangla original that turns a final moment of defeat to victory, finds no place in the translation as it does not agree with the governing conceptual universe of the West as a construct in the mind of the poet. The space occupied by the primary narrative in Bangla changes in form as well as in the organization of the content when the text is translated into English because even when the author/translator is the same person, his governing subjectivity at the level of the conscious and the unconscious aspects of his mind is not the same. The colonized subconscious surfaces in the translator but not in the author of the primary text and we therfore find him trying to translate concepts in a form that is comprehensible in the target linguistic community rather than playing around with the language to make it malleable and suitable to communicate concepts that are alien to it.

Translation was taken up by Tagore quite late in his career, at the age of fifty-one to be precise. He started translating, goaded by his friends from diverse backgrounds when he was already an established figure in Bangla literature. According to Sisir Kumar Das' introduction to *The English Writings of Tagore,* Volume One, published by the Sahitya Academi in 1994, what seems to have changed Tagore's career altogether was his interaction with William Rothenstein. It was on a demand by the English reading clientele that he formally engaged in the translation of his works, which gave him the place he deserved in world literature. Unlike the intellectuals of his times, Tagore never faced the crisis of a language choice and he embarked on the act of translating his own works while writing a few things in English and then translating them into Bangla, chasing the possibility of a wider audiemce and interaction, and today he is known outside the country because of the translations of his English works in other languages. But at the same time it is an irony of the colonial predicament that the author, who claimed that the natural

The Dialectics of Human Intellection and The Semiotics of Translation: 43
A Comparative Reading of Rabindranath Tagore's
Kar̤ akunt̤ sambāda in Bengali and English

language of a creative writer was his/her own mother tongue fell prey to the same governing subjectivity in his translation of the narrative discussed before. The act of colonization creates an oppressive order but it is sustained not through oppression but the consent gathered through the process of acculturation whereby the language which was an alien medium for the act of communication at one point of time becomes or may become the natural language of expression at another historical conjuncture as the act of appropriation frees it from the constraint of being the domain of the other. But Tagore had to contend with the otherness of the English language as articulated in the numerous letters that figure in his biography and it is this that he constantly grapples with when he is translating the narrative and trying to come to terms with the boon and bane of a western enlightenment to which the whole Brahmo Samaj movement owed its roots. And yet it is his consciousness as the son of the soil that makes his writings rooted in the cultural tradition to which he is born and gives him the stature of a universal poet.

Conclusion

        In an attempt to answer the question that I raised at the very outset regarding the translation paradox, one has to examine how far the conditioning of one's subjectivity is responsible for the conscious as well as unconscious articulation in a literary narrative of the human condition and to what extent the transfer of ideas from one cultural space to the other is possible. The answer to this riddle lies in understanding that the act of translation being a form of 'transaction' or 'negotiation' (to borrow a concept used by Umberto Eco in 2003), the exchange is always an unequal one, as the literary text in the source domain and the target domain operate differently as they are governed by the structural logic of two cultural contours that stand in a situation of relational autonomy in a certain power

paradigm. With reference to the narratives discussed before, it is apparent that the act of intervention would have been possible if Tagore had tried to translate the source text in terms of its distinctive universe and not the other way round. Despite the heightened kind of consciousness that a bi-lingual author/translator like Tagore has, it is interesting to see that the criticality with which he viewed the West does not enable him to overcome the barriers of a socio-political space determined by the colonial discourse and instead he transmutes the narrative into one that fits in with the western paradigm and what is more, agrees with his own understanding of what the west is in terms of a monolith. In fact he acknowledged the problem of translating his own writings in a letter to Ajit Kumar Chakravarti when he said, "My English writing emerges out of my subconscious... Once I mount the peak of conscious will all my wit and wisdom get muddled. That is why I cannot but gird up my loins to do a translation. I can only set my boat adrift and not sit at the helm of it all. Then, if and when I touch shore I cannot quite understand myself how it all happened" (12 May, 1913, translated by Kshitis Ray, *Jadavpur Journal of Comparative Literature,* Vol.9, P.125-26). The mythic archetypes that he uses in the original are not untranslatable if one agrees with Levi-Strauss' reading of the 'Structure of the Myth': "Whatever our ignorance of the language and the culture of the people where it originated, a myth is still felt as a myth by any reader anywhere in the world. Its substance does not lie in its style, its original music, or its syntax, but in the story which it tells. . ." *(*Claude Levi-Strauss*, Structural Anthropology: The Structural Study of Myth). And as an author who rejected the award of knighthood at one point of time in his life, as an expression of nationalism, paradoxically falls prey to the unconscious subjectivity that has conditioned in him a fixed idea of the West as well as an aura about western enlightenment which acts as an insurmountable barrier that impedes the process of translation of his own works into English. It is at the same time important to note here that the crisis that Tagore underwent never made him uncritical of the aura that enthralled him and it is this consciousness that made

The Dialectics of Human Intellection and The Semiotics of Translation: 45
A Comparative Reading of Rabindranath Tagore's
Karʾakuntᵉsambāda in Bengali and English

him wage a continuous struggle against the colonial hegemony in operation (See his essay *Shabhyatar Shankat* 'The Crisis of Civilisation'). What then emerges as a consequence are two different narrative orders that use the same theme, but the universe of signification that is created changes completely as they are governed by the ideologies and thought-movements of two different culture-systems expressed in two different languages shaping the subjectivity of the author-cum-translator whose potential autonomy is in no way independent of the material/historical context. Keeping the authenticity question aside it is therefore important to re-read Tagore comparatively, both as author and as translator and come to terms with the paradox that underwrites the act of reflection. With the recent withdrawal of the copyright that Bishwabharati had on the writings of the poet we have already entered another era of the possibilities of reading and translating the works of Tagore using the freedom that the earlier copy-right situation did not permit. Being an unabashed Tagorephile, I cannot suppress the optimism that is opened up by doing away with institutional regulations that restricted the tradition of Tagorean thought by always circumscribing it to rules about authenticity, and despite all the risks involved, the poet's writings must be returned to the world community where it belongs, as perhaps, he too wanted it to be. An interesting area of academic study would be to compare English translations of Tagore's works done by others in the 21st century to Tagore's own English Translations and see how the politics of the postcolonial serves to be a testing ground of re-aligning languages and cultures creating in the bargain a hybridity that was earlier not possible because it was the critical phase, the phase of preparation needed to write an Indian History of the English Language.

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The Dialectics of Human Intellection and The Semiotics of Translation: 47
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Karˌakunt̤sambāda in Bengali and English

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Translation Norms and the Translator's Agency

HE XIANBIN

Abstract

Translator Studies has undergone a shift from a focus on SC constraints to the manipulation by TC patronage. Translators play an active role in different phases of the activity and their agency has not been given due attention.Norms determine the suitability of translation. Non-compliance is not only possible but also necessary at times, though the behavior involves a price to pay. Norms and the translator's agency are two sides of every translation activity. The former lays down socio-cultural constraints on translating, and the latter is the source of creativity. Both adherence to and breach of norms require the translator's agency. Both the theory and praxis of translation would stand to benefit from a dialectical, rather than a mechanical, view of their relationship.

Norms refer to the translation of general values or ideas shared by a group - as to what is conventionally right and wrong, adequate and inadequate - into performance instructions, appropriate for and applicable to particular situations, specifying what is prescribed and forbidden, as well as what is tolerated and permitted in a certain behavioral dimension *(Toury 1998: 15)*. Translation, as a social and cultural activity, or a socio-cultural activity is norms-

governed. Norms are not to be understood as hard and fast rules though. Norms operate not only in translation of all kinds, but also at every stage in the translating event *(Toury 1995: 58).* John Dryden's metaphor of '*dancing on ropes with fettered legs*' refers to the constraints imposed by the source text and by the linguistic-cultural ethos of the potential or intended target text as well as to the linguistic and cultural norms on translation.

On the other hand, as a highly creative task, translation sometimes requires the practitioners to move beyond norms. The relationship between translation norms and the translator's agency is hence paradoxical and complex. This paper is an attempt at clarifying the relationship between the two. The article begins with a review of the translator-studies literature, and after a discussion of the possibility and necessity of loosening up norms, investigates the translator's role in the different phases of translation. It perorates with the conclusion of a dialectical view of the relationship between translation norms and the translator's agency.

1. Change of Focus in Translator Studies

Concern with the 'how-to' in interlingual transfer determines the focus of traditional translator studies on the prerequisites for becoming a translator. In ancient Rome, Philo Judaeus (20 B. C (?) - 50 A.D (?)) and St Augustine (254-430) stressed the significance of 'God's inspiration' to Bible translation and argued that only the pious clergymen were qualified for the job. They prescribed that translators were but dictating tools and there was nothing creative at all in translation *(Tan 1991: 28).* In China, one of the first to have commented on translator qualifications was Yan Cong (557-610). In his translation treatise *On Dialectic Translation,* Yan listed eight conditions for a translator, half of which were about morality, and another half was about educational requirements. These include faithfulness to the Buddhist cause, modesty, discipline, a good command of the Sanskrit and Chinese, knowledge of the Buddhist

scriptures and the Chinese classics, etc. *(Chen 1992: 38)*. It was impossible for people in Yan's time to possess all the *eight conditions*, because Chinese 'translators' were typically monolingual then.

These source-oriented researchers are also interested in formulating all sorts of standards for translators to follow. Translators are required to imitate the authors, to the extent that the translations are so smooth in vocabulary, so idiomatic in phrase, so correct in construction, so smooth in flow of thought, so clear in meaning, and so elegant in style, that they do not appear to be translations at all, and yet at the same time fully transmit the message of the originals. Translators are considered servants of the 'master' authors and are expected to be absolutely objective and invisible.

Scholars in the Manipulation School initiated a target-oriented paradigm in Translation Studies. They were convinced that,

> "from the point of view of the target literature,
> all translation implies a degree of manipulation of the
> source text for a certain purpose"
>
> (Hermans 1985: 10)

Translations were one of the primary literary tools that larger social institutions - educational systems, arts councils, publishing firms, and even governments - had at their disposal to *manipulate* a given society in order to *construct* the kind of *culture* desired *(Hermans 1985: 10).* Translators are manipulators of the source texts and the target readers, and the manipulating tools of their patronage.

It follows that the paradigm shift in Translation Studies just means a change from emphasis on the constraints of the source texts and cultures to those of the target cultures. Hardly have translators

shaken off the shackles of the source texts and authors when they are again chained by the target cultures. The translator's agency has not been given due attention.

2. Possibilities and the Necessity of the Loosening Up of Norms

Norms always imply *sanctions,* actual or potential, whether negative (to those who violate them) or positive (to those who abide by them). Within the group, norms also serve as a yardstick according to which instances of behaviour and/or their results are evaluated *(Toury 1995:55 / 1998:17).*

Acceptance of the idea that translation events are basically norm-governed does not entail the denial of free choice during an act of translation *(Toury 1998: 20).* Non-normative behavior is always a possibility. After all, it is the translator who decides how to behave, be that decision fully conscious or not. So far as the solution to specific problems is concerned, translators obviously have great power, for they are the only people doing the creative work of translation. Translators are manipulated by the patronage. But as the actual performers of the act of translating, they can at times move beyond the constraints.

Breaking norms may be closely related to the motivation of translation. As social agents, translators work in a certain context. They have certain goals to reach, personal or collective interests to pursue, and material and symbolic stakes to defend. Some translators are politically motivated and their very purpose is to subvert the dominant norms.

Ideological control of translation is strict in many societies. But some translators are defiant of or indifferent to the political or ethical norms of the target culture and remain faithful to the source text even if it is hostile or threatening to dominant political or ethical values. And for certain purposes, some would rather challenge the

target culture ideological norms and face possible severe punishment.

For example, in the Medieval Period, the Bible was prohibited from being translated into vernacular languages. But the attempt of the church authorities finally failed. In the Middle East, similar things happened to the rendition of Koran. In China, during T*he Proletariat Cultural Revolution* (1966-1976), ideological control went to the extreme. In the five years from May 1965 to November 1971, not a single translation of foreign literature was published. And in the remaining years of the 'cultural revolution', only a total of 34 translations got printed. But some people secretly translated Western literature, not to serve the dominant ideology, but just for the sake of translation, and their translations came out soon after the end of the 'cultural revolution'. *(Ma 2003:65)*

The existence of competing norms in a society involves choices. Translators tend to follow the mainstream norms so as to be more easily patronized. In some cases, however, particularly at times of cultural transition, several conflicting norms might be equally influential. This enables translators to decide to go with one norm and accept one patronage rather than another.The translator's position is crucial at this moment. One example is that during the Sino-Japan War (1937-1945), works both in praise of and severely critical of, the Japanese aggression were translated into Chinese, though in different regions of China.

Breach of poetical norms is very common in literary translation and is diversified by the translator's personal aesthetic preferences. For instance, at the beginning of the 20th century, three kinds of temporal dialects co-existed and were available for the translation of creative fiction in Chinese:
a)   The classical dialect *(wenyan)*
b)   The simple classical dialect and
c)   The vernacular dialect *(baihua).*

Most translators stuck to the use of one form, but some alternated between the two. In rendering the same text, some people followed the source culture norms and translated more literally, while others attached greater importance to the readership and produced works with more latitude.

The translator's response to the editor's poetic requirements and the critic's comments is also complex. Translators normally obey the obligatory requirements, but may accept or reject the technical suggestions according to their own professional judgment. Some translators may establish good relationships with the critics while others may insist on their own principles in spite of the critics' opposition.

The selection of alternative norms involves a price to pay. But it does not necessarily lead to severe punishment, nor does it mean the invalidity of norms. At times, a slight breach of norms is not only tolerated, but also encouraged.

> "Some literary translators might claim that their intention is precisely to break these norms. And translations of advertisements sometimes appear deliberately to flout the expectancy norms of the target culture"
>
> (Chesterman 1997: 60)

Norms are *"the main factors ensuring the establishment and stability of a social order"* (Toury 1995:55), but they may also, in effect, restrain innovation. In this sense, they must sometimes be challenged and changed. Otherwise, prejudice will last a long time. Hence failure to adhere to norms does not always mean anything negative. On the contrary, it may be the source of cultural creativity. Only when the previous norms are broken is it possible for new ones to become dominant, and for cultures to develop.

3. The Translator's Agency in Different Phases of Translation

Translation is governed by norms, but as a creative activity, it also requires the maximum use of the translator's agency.

> "The translator's agency is manifested not only in the translator's comprehension, interpretation and artistic re-presentation of the source texts, but also in the selection of source texts, the cultural motivations of translation, the adoption of strategies, and the manipulation in the prefaces of the expected functions of the translations in the target culture".
>
> (Cha et al 2003: 22)

The translator's role in text selection varies from time to time. In most cases, it is the publisher who selects source texts and translators. But translators have the right to accept or reject the rendition of certain works. Regardless of the actual power of translators, in the Chinese context, text selection has often been an important criterion of translation criticism. A case in point is the different evaluations Yan Fu (1853-1921) and Lin Shu (1852-1924) received. Patriotic motivations and careful selection of Western social works have often been considered a significant feature of Yan's translation whereas Lin Shu has been repeatedly criticized for being unselective and having wasted most of his time rendering a large percentage of secondary or third-class literature into Chinese.
The product of translating is directly shaped by the translator's comprehension of the source texts and the specific strategies he employs. Competence is crucial to the accuracy of translation, but the translator's conscious or unconscious intervention is inevitable, particularly in the forms of ideological and/or poetical deletions, rewritings and additions. Manipulation exists not only in the translations, but also in the prefaces and postscripts, which are short, conspicuous, and therefore very effective in manipulating the readers to produce the desired cultural results.

Translators manipulate the source texts in the service of power. They are in turn manipulated by the patronage so that the target readers and society are manipulated. On some occasions, however, translators may manipulate their patrons.

> "Translation involves trust. The audience, which does not know the original, trusts that the translation is a fair representation of it".
>
> (Lefevere 1990: 15)

Trust from readers and translation commissioners bring some power to translators, the exercise of which is closely connected with the translator's loyalty and reliability. In case translators have access to information unavailable to their clients, or where translators are in short supply, they might make full use of this and manipulate both the source texts and the patrons in order to achieve certain purposes. This helps us to understand why translators who have exclusive or near-exclusive access to information otherwise unavailable to those in power tend to be closely supervised and vetted for political loyalty *(Hermans 1999b: 130).*

One Chinese example of manipulating the patrons is found in the *Treaty of Tientsin* (1858), signed between the Qing dynasty feudal court and the British government. Article L of the English version stipulated that

> All official communications addressed by the Diplomatic and Consular Agents of Her Majesty the Queen to the Chinese Authorities shall, henceforth, be written in English. They will for the present be accompanied by a Chinese version, but it is understood that, in the event of there being any difference of meaning between the English and the Chinese text, the English government will hold the sense as expressed in the English text to be the correct sense. This provision

is to apply to the Treaty now negotiated, the Chinese text of which has been carefully corrected by the English original.

(1917, Vol. 1: 418)

However, the Chinese text of the same article read somewhat differently, which is:

Henceforth the communication shall be written in English; but *until China has selected students for learning the English language and their English has become very fluent,* the communication shall be accompanied with a parallel text in Chinese. …

There is no way of telling how this statement found its way into the Chinese text. Due to lack of bilingual Chinese, for a long time, the Qing court had relied on Western missionaries for interpretation in diplomatic communications or in signing treaties with Western powers. Wang Kefei and Fan Shouyi (1999) said that the negotiators probably intended to include the statement in the Chinese text in order to force the Emperor to start a language school for training interpreters.

Manipulation in translation is often very subversive because translation offers a cover for the translator to go against the dominant constraints of his or her time, not in his or her own name, but rather in the name of a writer. This gives the translator two privileges: S/He relies on the authority of the author when s/he himself is not well known.Expressing his own opinions with the discourse of the author, within a certain limit, the translator takes no responsibility for his/her own statements. Moreover, deviations occurring in translations often meet with greater tolerance. And the way censorship is applied to translations has often been much more lenient. One reason for this difference is that the presumed non-domestic origin of translations makes them look less menacing.

Another reason is that there seems to be no way of actually going after the 'absent' author, who should presumably take most of the blame. Translation thus constitutes a convenient way of introducing novelties into a culture, without arousing too much antagonism, especially in cultures reluctant to deviate from sanctioned models and norms *(Toury 1995: 41).*

Translating involves both the source and target norms and this enables translators to make a choice as to which to follow. Translators tend to stay partly within and partly out of these two sets of norms.

4. Social Determinism and the Translator's Idiosyncrasy

Government and creativity are two sides of the same translation coin. In contrast to scholars from the philological school, who highly value artistic creation and the translator's freedom in literary translation, scholars in the Manipulation School attach greater importance to the constraints of the target cultural norms on translation. This evokes criticism from some scholars. Antoine Berman, for example, argued that since norms tended to prescribe translations of the naturalizing kind, and translators were supposed to obey norms, a norm-based approach denied all creativity to translation and translators (Berman cited in *Hermans* 1999b: 154-5). And as Anthony Pym pointed out, a mechanistic application of the norms concept is bound to downgrade the individual translator's agency (Pym cited in Hermans 1999b: 154 -5).

However Hermans contends that constraints are conditioning factors, not absolutes. Individuals can choose to go with or against them. Translators, too, can decide to defer to the powers or foment opposition, be it poetic or political. He then quotes from Bourdieu, adding that two dangers threaten research in the human sciences:

> ...naïve teleological or 'finalist' thinking, which sees the end of a known process as illuminating the path towards the goal; and mechanistic determinism, which interprets processes as the inevitable unraveling of a set of initial conditions.
>
> (Hermans 1999b: 128-132)

A translator is at the same time social and individual, which means he is constrained by social and cultural norms of the time, and at the same time, has his own specific individuality and agency. The translator's agency and the factors that constrain his agency exist side by side. On the one hand, the translator is bound to constraints by certain factors in his exercise of agency. Faced with many constraints, on the other hand, the translator still has room to exert his agency. Translation is a combination of universal constraints on translators as a group and the agency of translators as individuals. As Hermans (*Hermans 1999b: 74*) put it, "*translation decisions are neither fully predetermined nor totally idiosyncratic*". Over-emphasis on social constraints and ignoring the translator's agency will result in the fall of the translator's status and responsibility as well as the quality of translations. And negligence of cultural norms might lead to random translation.

Translation, as a norms-governed creative work, requires the translator to follow his own inclinations, but within an acceptable range of norms. For this, the maximum use of the translator's agency is required. Norms ensure the suitability of the translation behavior, and the translator's agency is the source of creativity. Both the adherence to and loosening up of norms require the translator's agency. A dialectical rather than a mechanical view of their relationship is healthy for translation studies and practice.

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Training Legal Translators Through The Internet: Promises and Pitfalls

ESTHER MONZÓ

Abstract

This contribution presents the design, development and results of several projects implemented between 1999 and 2003 with groups of students who were enrolled in legal translation courses at the Universitat Jaume I (Castello, Spain). I will explain how face-to-face classes were combined with activities carried out and tutored in virtual environments and then present the data collected by monitoring the classes, from the reports generated from the different environments used, and from the questionnaires administered to the students taking part in the projects. I will describe how we evolved from a first basic project with the WWW, which involved designing a legal translation portal (URL www.gitrad.uji.es), consisting of traditional web pages. The scheme was tested with a small group of students and then given the go-ahead and extended to all legal translation courses in the degree. The following year, this more common environment was combined with BSCW in order to introduce new ways of interacting with students and to enhance cooperative tasks. After detecting several drawbacks in this new model, the virtual environment and the face-to-face

classes were complemented by compulsory tutorial sessions and extracurricular technological training. Thanks to the acquisition of WebCT licences by the Universitat Jaume I, it became possible to introduce a new combination of environments in this mixed model of teaching. Reducing the numbers of students in the groups taking part in this new project (2003-2004) enabled us to carry out a personalised control of the value and real use of the tool in learning and teaching. Finally, a new environment (Moodle) has been adopted by the University in 2004-2005, forcing us to change again the dynamics and materials used in the classes. This instability, however, has given us the chance to reflect on what best serves the aims of a technology enhanced legal translation course.

Introduction

The process of teaching and learning legal translation to undergraduate students is usually impaired by one special feature: students have no knowledge whatsoever of the field they have to translate nor do they have any idea what law or legal translation is. The limited extent to which Law is popularised in society and the relatively scarce mentions it gets in the mass media grant us the opportunity to do away with a large number of prejudices, misconceptions, etc. before starting work. Yet, this fact involves a great deal of disadvantages both for trainers and trainees. Because of their age, these students have never had to come into contact with the legal formalities that are going to bewilder them a few years into the future. For the same reason, they haven't usually needed to have any foreign qualifications recognised or to register a citizen from another country. Consequently, when they begin the degree course, the contents of the syllabus are as unknown to them as they are boring and, apparently, difficult. The thing is that the students'

having no idea of Law when classes start will indeed have repercussions in how they face the course. Having to learn many things about the topic and getting used to new sources of information in just three semesters is a daunting task. However, thanks to that effort, a better understanding of the day-to-day social reality we live in can be gained and this newfound literacy in that subject matter can enable students to enjoy many personal and professional satisfactions. The question is, if the result is so rewarding, why does getting there have to be so unpleasant?

During the three semesters I myself attended legal translation subjects at the University, I had to seek out a vast amount of information from a great variety of sources. That meant a lot of work gathering sources and then choosing the ones that could make the job of assimilating law more appealing to me. Fortunately, it was a time when online resources had already started to become widely available and in which the Internet opened up a whole new range of possibilities in that sense. From all that information I built up a large collection of materials. Shortly afterwards, I had the chance to begin conducting research into legal translation and I started working with members of the teaching staff at the Universitat Jaume I, more particularly, with Dr. Anabel Borja. One of the projects we were most enthusiastic about was the idea of making both all those resources and the electronic corpus Dr. Borja had been compiling for some time (together with any other material we might create or find in the future) available to anyone who was interested in legal translation. That was how we brought into being a support tool that has gone on developing and growing relentlessly ever since and which we, perhaps somewhat pretentiously, decided to call the Legal Translator's Website (URL www.gitrad.uji.es). Just a few weeks after the website was launched, the impact it was having made us aware of how attractive this tool was and we immediately decided to look for a way to make use of it in the classroom. Thus, from what started out almost as a pastime, we have gradually built up an aid that has given excellent results in the technology enhanced (that is to

say, partly online and partly face-to-face) training of legal translation.

The Beginnings: A Documentary Tool on the WWW

The Legal Translator's Website (GITRAD) was presented as a place for recycling, that is, an open space that was to generate a varied range of resources that could make the legal translator's professional practice easier and make them available to everyone. At the same time it would provide a common space that could be shared by both professional and apprentice translators of this specialised field. After a fairly shallow analysis of what was needed by different translation situations, we drew up a preliminary list of the resources that could satisfy those needs and then designed a website that was launched during the academic year 1999-2000. Obviously, these design phases have been repeated periodically in an attempt to improve the materials on offer. In those early days, however, the resources were set out in three main sections that included several different subsections, as will be explained below.

- **Academic Information Section**

In this first section students could see the career stream that the University offers future legal translators, have access to the syllabi of the specialised subjects and get in touch with their teachers by email. They could also find out about complementary training activities (workshops, seminars, conferences, and so on).

- **Documentary Section**

Here we offered all sorts of *resources* structured following a number of publications about information science and translation and about information science and law (*Maciá* 1998, *Pinto* and *Cordón* 1999). We wanted to organise the information that was online, the material that we had already prepared and that we were

going to prepare, and then put it all together at different levels of complexity. The data was then distributed in a contrastive fashion to allow users to obtain a comparative vision of Law and legal language in the main languages of the website (English, Catalan1 and Spanish).

An important section here was that devoted to *bibliography,* where students could access a list of bibliographical references organised by subject matter which later included access to full texts we obtained from different authors. In this way we gradually built up a virtual library containing documents about a wide range of topics related to legal translation, language and legal systems.

Another section offered student information about the *official exams* that lead to the qualifications required to be an official translator in Catalan (Autonomous Government of Catalonia) or in Spanish (Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The website also had a directory of professional official and legal translators which included a list of teachers giving this subject in different universities and also information about professionals who agreed to collaborate with the website. Lastly, we added a link to the database of the register of official translators and interpreters at the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and at the Autonomous Government of Catalonia.

The next section was devoted to specialised *glossaries.* One of the tasks that the legal translator has to perform most frequently is terminology research. In order to make this work easier, we included legal glossaries in several languages available on the Internet, glossaries elaborated by the author or provided by other students, and also the terminological registers that were being created by our research group. The last area of this section consisted of a corpus of original and translated legal documents, which were organised by legal systems, branches of law, textual genres and languages. This parallel corpus (URL www.cdj.uji.es) was designed so as to make it

possible to consult the original and translated versions of legal texts at the same time *(Monzó, 2003)*.

- **Interactive section**

    The following subsections constituted what we called the *interactive section.* Here, firstly, there was a newsgroup (which has since disappeared) where we hoped that students would discuss the problems they might have with legal translation with other students or with any professionals who wished to collaborate. Also a notice board was used to post information about job offers and requests, reviews, and new publications. Finally, the last subsection enabled users of the website to contact us to comment on anything they found was missing from the site or any other matters concerning the contents on offer.

    This website was used in class during the academic year 1999-2000 with specific practical activities involving case studies. A translation case was proposed and students had to use the website to access sources of information while also using other programs available in the translation laboratory. In this way students became more familiar with the Legal Translator's Website, which, according to the records of visits per day, was very popular with our students and those from other universities, as well as with professionals in the sector, some of whom were regularly in touch with the research group. This quickly led us to think of ways to make better use of the website in legal translation classes and to periodically renew the contents, which has meant that at present some subsections have been discarded and replaced by others. The current structure of the website can be seen on its home page:

Fig. 1. Screenshot of the Legal Translator's Website home page

As can be seen, we have included a subsection about the GITRAD group, a subsection about research in legal translation and the possibility of registering as a member of our virtual community.

The WWW Enters the Classroom: A Hybrid Environment

Given the success and appeal of the website among students, the research group (called GITRAD after the domain it was assigned by the university Computing Service - www.gitrad.uji.es) decided to give it a more active role in the teaching activities carried out in the classroom. The fundamental aim was to make legal translation more appealing to students, who usually see this course as highly difficult. It should be pointed out here that in the beginning (academic year 1998-1999) the author's knowledge of how to create computer resources was quite limited, as were the chances of engaging multimedia production services, and the technical means available at that time did not allow those of us with a restricted knowledge of programming to develop websites to the same extent they do nowadays. As these conditions evolved, our objectives and the

educational improvements had to be fitted to the technological tools that became available.

Another noteworthy objective was to make use of the online resources that began to flourish and which constituted an easy-to-access, quick look-up library that could be used in the classroom with the right equipment, which in fact was already available in the Translation Laboratory in our Department. This environment would enable us to introduce specific tools for translators with which to create new resources that could, in turn, be made available to a wider public through the website.

On the other hand, our intention was to improve the traditional classes so that the students not only felt more motivated by the subjects but also assimilated the contents of the course more easily. In addition, I wanted to take advantage of the potential for self-evaluation offered by multimedia material I had already experienced in other contexts (for example with the HotPotatoes software) and be able to reach learners in a wider variety of environments, such as during their stays abroad as exchange students.

Therefore, the subject needed to be re-engineered to allow us to train students in the new technologies, familiarise them with a career that is becoming more and more *technologised* and enhance performance not only in the academic subject of legal translation but in all those that make up the course of studies in the degree of Translation and Interpreting. At the same time, it had to allow us to improve students' capabilities in their professional practice, prepare them to work in an international market and help them mature as citizens of a technological society by making them look at the new technologies with a critical eye. We had to make the existing system advance by reorganising it and introducing modifications so that it allowed for the new objectives. In consequence, in the academic

year 2000-2001, we conducted a new needs analysis and designed a new solution.

In that academic year we began to offer online the materials of the course. The website hosted the contents which were developed in the classroom (tasks, documents to translate, notes, slides to follow lectures…), posted the grades obtained in the exercises, and introduced communication tools so that the students may address the trainer online. This project was first piloted with the legal translation group working from English to Catalan. Because of its bilingual context, the University Jaume I offers students the possibility to study two languages, Catalan and Spanish, as mother tongues. Students will chose one of these as their A1 language (first mother tongue), and the other will be their A2 language (second mother tongue). Catalan being a minorized language in our region, most students chose Spanish as their A1 language. As a consequence, those students who chose Catalan as A1 language will share a short of advantageous milieu in translation classes with 15 to 20 students, as compared to their classmates who have chosen Spanish as A1, who attend classes with 60 to 70 students. The Catalan A1 group was chosen because of its size (17 students in the third year at the time), which would allow to evaluate the changes before exporting the project to a larger group.

In the classes we combined sessions in conventional classrooms with others in the translation laboratory, where, through our website, students accessed explanations in HTML, PowerPoint presentations, texts in Word format, and exercises in HTML and JAVA script, among others. The answers to questionnaires that were not self-evaluating, translation exercises and other tasks such as estimates or bills had to be submitted by email so that the teacher could correct and post them on the website with any comments that might accompany them. The experience was well received by students, but there were a number of methodological and technological shortcomings. For example, we noticed important

differences between the performances of some students, which could be accounted for by the fact that some of them were adopting an individualistic approach to participation, although many of the case studies were set out as work to be done in teams. The comfort to work with online materials had driven them to a quite passive attitude towards the course. This pushed me to look for a way of intensifying the role of the teams not only in the classroom but also in the tasks that had to be performed outside it and which, I hoped, would foster peer learning and a greater degree of integration among all the members of the class.

Yet, to do so would mean increasing students' chances of interaction through the learning environment, since their participation in this environment was at that time mediated by the teacher. Communication, which was done by email but always asynchronously, needed speeding up. Some tasks, which involved downloading files, working on them and then sending them back to the teacher, who eventually posted them on the site, had to be made simpler and quicker. In an attempt to promote cooperation among students, we offered them a public forum, GITRAD, which they did not find was suited to communicating with each other about matters concerning specific tasks. In order to put this situation to rights, we took the objectives we had set out while this first project was being implemented, and which could not be fulfilled with the means we had available to us, over to the Universitat Jaume I's Centre for Education and New Technologies (CENT), which was set up towards the end of 2000. What we wanted and were asking the professionals from the Centre to help us achieve with our technology were the following:

- to increase the autonomy of students and work teams with respect to the teacher;
- to grant students a higher degree of flexibility in their participation (time limits, independence from the tasks performed by others);

- to allow fluent communication not only with the teacher but also with other learners;
- to enable students to play a more important role in the materials offered, and in relation to this,
- not to increase the workload on students to an excessive extent by adding different tools and environments that implement different technologies.

Towards online interactivity: WWW and BSCW

With the help of the Centre for Education and New Technologies and the collaboration of Doctor Alicia Bolaños, in 2001 we began to plan the second year of the project. Both the CENT and Doctor Bolaños (Bolaños and Máñez 2000) used an environment designed for cooperative work, BSCW, in project management and teaching, respectively. BSCW (Basic Support for Cooperative Work) was not designed specifically for use in education but for teamwork in general and that is why some teams of professional translators use it as a place that allows them to exchange information and material. Nevertheless, the importance of cooperative learning techniques in current research into education makes it a very useful tool in teaching. It allows us to introduce user-friendly techniques to increase performance and the participation of all the learners, as well as to generate positive behaviours in the socialisation of the group, whose members learn to share goals and rewards, an attitude which they will probably continue to have in their professional live (on the importance of this for the professional group, see Monzó 2002). Thus, the design is extremely well suited to these activities and saves a lot of time when it comes to preparing the environment for them. For educational centres, this application has an added advantage in that the licence is free, which means that, apart from all its other positive points, it is inexpensive to use in the classroom.

The latest version of BSCW has a very broad range of features including an agenda for each individual and group, an address book and capabilities allowing the user to send and receive email, and to store URL addresses and files in a very simply structured directory of folders. It also offers forums where users can exchange messages about a particular subject matter. What makes this an ideal environment for working in groups, however, is the opportunity it affords to share information about a given topic (which could be an academic subject but also a research or translation project) with certain people who identify themselves every time they log onto the space and who share the same responsibility in the development of the contents. There are also other features that are helpful in this sense, such as the possibility of adding new versions of documents without losing the previous ones, which makes it easier to revise translations within a group and for the teacher to access the versions belonging to different members of the team. Another possibility it offers that must be highlighted is that of controlling all the activities that take place in the environment either by logging in and checking the actions done to each of the documents or folders or by means of a daily or weekly report of the actions carried out within the cyberspace which can be automatically generated and sent to the trainer's mailbox. The fact that the files can be marked or that comments can be added to them is also a big advantage when it comes to correcting exercises.

In general, this space did a good job of simulating a collaborative professional environment in the legal translation classroom. Nonetheless, the fact that I wanted to prevent the students from manipulating certain explanatory texts led me to combine this environment with the previous one. This would enable us to provide a more flexible structure for the material. The introduction to the subject and the work plan (objectives, methodology and contents) programmed for the semester were posted on the website as permanent and fast look-up contents. The website also displayed the tasks students would be asked to do, together with related

informative material. After receiving the instructions for the exercises or the translation briefs, students accessed the cooperative environment where the texts were hosted and where they had to leave the results of their work (documentary materials, translations, resources, glossaries, bills and estimates, etc.), ordered systematically.

For these tasks, we combined Aronson and colleagues' (1978) Jigsaw puzzle model with Slavin's (1978) objectives model, which is also used by the TACTICS group in Mexico (Juárez and Waldegg 2003). Both of them adapt case studies for use in teamwork. After splitting the class into teams, each group is given an assignment that is analysed and divided into tasks that are allocated separately to the different members (Aronson's model) or which are performed as a joint effort by all the members working together (Slavin's model). Once the search has been conducted, the information is synthesised in the team so it can be presented to the rest of the class. By the end of the sessions Aronson's model was seen to be more productive for the translation tasks, in which we clearly simulated a professional division of the work. In contrast, when the objective was the acquisition of declarative knowledge, as in the tasks involving knowledge of the legal system, students' confidence in their own capabilities diminished and Slavin's model was more effective. This may be due to the fact that it allows students to be permanently in contact with and have the support of their companions and they are not individually responsible for any of the parts of the project. In any case, BSCW proved to be a very appropriate platform for exchanging information.

With regard to the technological aspects, at first this environment was set up in a server belonging to the Department of Translation and Communication, which meant taking active steps to protect it against malicious attacks by hackers. In fact we had more than our fair share of this kind of problems and so when the University offered us the chance to use an institutional server we

jumped at the opportunity. Nevertheless, an increase in the number of bureaucratic barriers (hard disk quotas on the server or its administration and maintenance by third parties) and other problems with some versions of the most common browsers meant that this tool was not the ideal setup.

On the other hand, right from the outset students had difficulties with learning how to use the technology in this environment, which obliged us to organise specific extracurricular courses that did not resolve all the problems. Moreover, the environment was not visually very attractive and this ran against one of our basic premises: to make legal translation classes more appealing through the way materials are presented. As regards following up the students, no reports were made regarding individual users but instead reports were drawn up on folders or files, which meant it was easy to monitor the activities carried out by the group but not the individual exercises. It was also a simple task to track the participation of each individual in the work done by the team (students did the work in groups outside the environment and submitted the results together, so that the work appeared under just one alias) or to monitor the progress made by students throughout the semester.

Back to the Classroom: Face-To-Face Support

One way to offset these shortcomings was to monitor the student's progress by means of tutorial sessions, which simulated a meeting between the customer and the translation company. In this way we were able to determine how students were progressing and at the same time how the project was coming along. In these tutorials students were encouraged to talk about the problems they were encountering, the improvements they had achieved and their experiences with the environment in order to obtain a personalised guide that would be reinforced later when information was put together and discussed in the classroom.

With a view to improving communication between students and the teacher, the CENT recommended that we use a tool that was then in an experimental phase but which they wanted to make available to the university community so as to enable them to evaluate its usefulness and applications in teaching. This instrument was an instant messaging (mi.uji.es) tool based on an open code. Many of the students were already familiar with instant messaging so that using it as a means of carrying out long-distance tutorials in real time, on the one hand, was made easier by the existence of students' having prior knowledge of the method but, on the other hand, was handicapped by the fact that they used MSN Messenger and were reluctant to change to another application. This system was especially useful for resolving any doubts students had while they were doing the exercises and translations, but one serious drawback for the teacher was the repetition of questions, which were asked as the doubts arose (sometimes the same question was asked by all the students but at different times). In consequence, the time given over to tutorials became fragmented and multiplied.

Another feature of the face-to-face interaction was the technology training seminars which were entirely devoted to learning about the capabilities of the tools. These sessions were planned as extracurricular activities, outside class time, and students were given a certificate of attendance (which they need when presenting their CVs in the Spanish context) in order to encourage them to participate. By so doing we solved the problems of technological literacy and, by extending the initiative to other subjects given as part of the degree course, we managed to save time for a number of academic subjects, since otherwise each of them would have had to devote time to training in the use of the same tool.

Although combining BSCW with the website and tutorials brought about a notable improvement, there were still deficits that needed solving if we were to fulfil our initial aims. The factors that

had to be reinforced so that this hybrid model of teaching would offer advantages over the traditional situation included the following:

- Take steps to ensure that tasks were finished on time: owing to the continual presence of material within the virtual environment students tended to leave their work there at any time, even after the time limit set by the study programme, and this hampered its correction.
- Make it easier for the teacher to carry out a ongoing assessment of the students' work: even though the BSCW registered the name of the person depositing the material, they found it very practical to upload their classmates' work along with theirs; individual tasks undertaken within the group were not documented because the students did not usually employ this environment to exchange materials amongst themselves; the reports were not easily broken down by users.
- Make it easier for students to appreciate their own progress: there was no simple way to make students' ongoing assessment available to them individually; self-evaluating exercises were not well integrated into the environment and had to be developed outside it (the HotPotatoes suit proved useful to do so).
- Allow for a distinction to be made between profiles: in BSCW, the different profiles are only applied to the technological possibilities of the environment - no specific changes can be made for users, although it is possible to restrict access to certain folders.
- Make it easier to reuse material in forthcoming academic years. Exploiting material becomes difficult if it is not saved in a parallel space on the teacher's hard disk.
- Solve the problems encountered when trying to make backup copies of material: to make backup copies they

have to be downloaded one by one or stored in compressed files in order to download a whole space, which, in our case, has given us more than a few technological headaches.
- Ensure the time the teacher devoted to this matter was spent as profitably as possible.

New Technologies for New Ambitions

In the academic year 2003-2004, the Universitat Jaume I showed its support for technology-enhanced teaching by acquiring licences for a new environment, WebCT, which was specially created for giving distance learning courses. WebCT, which was originally developed by the University of British Columbia, includes tools for the design and development of interactive teaching material. Since it was developed ad hoc for educational settings, its capabilities have been conceived from this perspective and simulate the classical environment together with the classical hierarchical relationships between teacher and pupil. On the other hand, it includes a number of very useful applications that solve many of the problems we faced when using BSCW. It is, for example, visually attractive and navigation is very intuitive. Some of the activities that are possible in this environment are the following:

o **Evaluation Tools:**
  - Creation of self-evaluation questionnaires: it is possible to define a database with questions and answers and use them to make different questionnaires.
  - Tasks can be defined with fixed or flexible hand-in dates; students give in their work in the same space where the task is defined and they can then see the correction and grade given by the teacher.
  - Ongoing assessment. Students have access to a record for the academic year where they can check the progress

they have made by looking up the grades they have been given for all the work completed throughout the year.

- Monitoring students. There is a wide range of instruments available for tracking students' progress, from checking the pages consulted by each user to the number of visits received by each section of the course and the time spent there, as well as finding out whether it has been a long time since a student last accessed the environment.

o **Communication Tools:** Within the environment itself, users can access three different types of support:
  - Chat: a program enabling communication in real time allows interaction between all the users of the environment, between members of the class group or those in the work group, depending on the settings used by the teacher.
  - Forum: a space where messages about open matters or topics set by the teacher can be exchanged asynchronously; the application includes selection and filtering features.
  - Email: all the users have an account which can only receive messages from other WebCT users and which is only accessible from this environment; the address book includes all the members of the class group.

o **Access to Material:** Materials can be presented in all formats, although the simplest to visualise are HTML and PDF. The others have to be downloaded prior to opening them as in the case of BSCW. These materials are available in folders that are:
  - shared by all the students, where the teacher leaves common materials,
  - shared by the work groups, where they can create their own work, or

- available to individual students, who can create and administer personal pages.

- o **Programming:** It also includes tools for programming activities. More specifically:
  - Agenda: there is a calendar that all the members can modify and where it is possible to keep track of classes, include personal and public appointments, and so on.
  - Notices: the teacher can create notices that appear when students log onto the cyberspace.

Processing the materials is a very simple task and there are also online support materials. One particularly attractive feature in this sense allows you to programme the dates on which certain materials will appear right at the beginning of the year. This makes it possible to control students' progress or to let them know about the work to be done throughout the course. There are different tools for creating the different types of materials that we might want to use. There is, for example, a specific feature for creating the syllabus that includes fields for the most common materials and allows for different levels of detail in the explanation of the contents. Students therefore have access to detailed explanations of each unit (called *lessons*). Another feature is designed to create and organise the course materials the teacher wants to make permanently available to students, such as study notes, presentations, a list of objectives assigned to tasks or units, reference materials, glossaries, etc. Data migration is also very simple and we have not had any technological hitches with it. The same can be said of making backups, uploading and downloading files or generally administering the environment.

Nevertheless, we must also point out its negative aspects, such as its more traditional class conception, which was avoided by tools like BSCW, and the hierarchy that is established between teacher and pupil (which does not stop us from carrying out the same cooperative tasks as those that were previously done with BSCW -

with less ease and comfort, though). Nevertheless, it is a tool that does greatly simplify the creation and development of technology enhanced classes.

However, in the course we used other methods, and so teletraining was combined with face-to-face sessions in conventional classrooms and in a translation laboratory, asynchronous tutorials with forums, chats and email, as well as face-to-face tutorials about the contents of the academic subject and the technology we use (computer-aided translation tools). In teletraining, WebCT was combined with the Legal Translator's Website as a documentary instrument and as an access point to the virtual community of legal translators.

All in all, this was a very useful tool in that it was easy to use for both trainees and the trainer. However, it was not practical for cooperative tasks, since the forum was the only place where students may upload files accessible to the whole class and it did not allow them to create folders and organize materials. Moreover, our university cancelled its subscription in the following year and we had to move to a free open-source online learning solution - Moodle.

Never-Ending Changes, and Never-Ending Opportunities

The latest phase of this project has been to adapt the methodology to a new e learning tool with different possibilities. Moodle is a free open-source application, which means that, obviously, anyone can afford it and that each institution can modify whatever they consider necessary to adapt it to its particular needs. Moreover, there is a virtual community of developers who share and make new tools to enhance this virtual environment available to everyone using Moodle, so that limitations can be shared and gradually solved. As said, this is the latest phase of the project and we will have to wait some time before we can really stand back and see the results from a little further away. However, we can already

comment on some issues which should be improved if this is going to be a useful tool for translation trainers and trainees, as well as other issues which contribute to a positive evaluation of the tool.

First of all, the environment offers a pleasant appearance and several built-in applications which the teacher may add to any one section. The following figure is an example of a self-assessment exercise where the student first reads on different translation techniques and has different examples from legal translations. Then s/he must decide on the translation technique given to one particular example. After giving the right answer to this question s/he will be led to others from this same module on translation theory applied to legal translation practice. The students must complete the whole exercise and then they will get their marks immediately. (The exercise has been translated into English and shortened.)

Translation theory for legal translating
Translation techniques
Although we already accept that word per word translation becomes impossible and that translation as a communication activity deals with texts and not words, when translating we also decide on microlinguistic units. If we need to decide how to translate into Catalan an English institution (such as the Law of Property Act) we may think of different options: • Law of Property Act   • la llei anglesa de propietat   • la llei anglesa de propietat (*Law of Property Act)*   • Llei sobre Dret de Propietat   • la llei que regula el dret de propietat a Anglaterra i Gal·les   • la Law of Property Act, que regula el dret de propietat a Anglaterra i Gal·les   • Law of Property Act ('Llei sobre Dret de Propietat')
[…]

Which of the previously explained translation techniques has been applied to this particular case regarding the translation of *provisions* and *section*?

 The provisions contained in sections 5 to 8 […]

 El que disposen els articles 5 a 8 […]

  ⬜   Variation and borrowing

  ⬜   Transposition and calque

  ⬜   Transposition and equivalence

  ⬜   Calque and transposition

Please check one Answer

Fig. 2. Sample self-assessment translation exercise

The overall structure may be varied according to course needs, and so it may look like a forum, where leading topics dealt with by all participants would structure all contents, or else it may be divided into weeks or into topics. I particularly use the three of them in different subjects. The forum best suits a final course where the students have to develop a complete translation project involving more complex translation and some research competence with no face-to-face classes. This environment is thus used as a virtual customer-translator meeting point, where questions, answers, documents and resources may be exchanged, and advice given to all would-be translators. In another course, materials are structured according to topics - all related to company law - so that the students can specialise in one of them and work with it from the start. These students will be responsible for shedding light on issues arising from their assigned specialty when we work with the translation of the

different texts included in the syllabus. Finally, the first of the legal translation courses in the degree is structured around a (fairly tight) time schedule and materials are presented in the same week they are going to be worked on in class, so that students know what they have (or had) to do every week. This, together with notices on upcoming events, allows students to follow the learning process with a high degree of certainty as to what they are expected to do, which helps to minimise the typical rejection with which they face this subject in this first year.

Other positive features of this environment are the 'recent activity' and the 'online users' sections, whereby, on logging on, both trainer and trainees may know what has been changed since they last entered the virtual classroom and who is working at the same time, wherever they may be. Assignments, quizzes, glossaries, self-correcting exercises, chats, forums, as well as files and links are some of the resources and activities which may be used in this environment. A very special type of activity is what is known as a 'wiki', a traditional webpage that can be modified and updated by anyone in the system. However, participants cannot upload files, so everything must be converted to txt, rtf or HTML formats, which precludes easy management of translation memories and terminology databases.

**Fig. 3 Moodle environment for a legal translation course
in the Universitat Jaume I**

All in all, Moodle shares common ground with WebCT in
that it is designed for a hierarchical learning process, and thus the
possibilities to enhance cooperation values among the group are
diminished. This is something which definitely needs changing, and
from the Department of Translation and Communication we have
asked the University to allow for a wider range of possibilities for
cooperative tasks. Thus, we hope we will be able to maintain
diversity in the development and management of course contents and
students' results - something which we were not able to do with the
cooperative work environment - while at the same time avoiding the
need to sacrifice a value we consider essential for the success of the
translation and interpreting community in our country. We are closer
than ever to a virtual campus for legal translation training, but
obviously there are still many things that need considering.

Progressions and Regressions

The responses to the questionnaires administered to the users of the different environments have enabled me to record the experiences they have undergone with each of the technology enhanced teaching models described here. Below, I will comment on them.
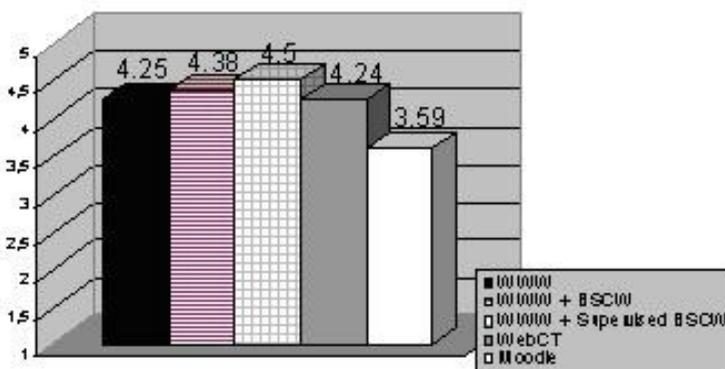

Fig. 4 Students' evaluation of the environment used (range 1-5)

Before going on, it should be pointed out that the students' literacy in technology was expected to increase gradually over the years, but this did not happen; they are not more used to computers, the Internet and well-known tools such as chats. This may, at least partially, account for the fact that the year when seminars on technology were introduced (with WWW used together with BSCW and a greater emphasis on supervision), seems to score higher in students' acceptance. On the other hand, WebCT and Moodle were rated lower than a simple WWW environment, despite their offering increased ease-of-use for the trainer, and the fact that interactivity and autonomy were clearly fostered to a lesser extent with WWW and BSCW had several additional technological problems. Overall, 86.5% stated that working with online resources is practical as

opposed to the remaining 13.5%, who did not find it such a handy way of working mainly due to the shortage of connections, especially at home.

As regards user-friendliness, in general terms most students found these tools easy to use but there were very significant differences from one environment to another. Thus, while 100% of the students thought WebCT is easy to use, 50% believed that BSCW is hard to learn at first even with the aid of support classes. This was brought out by the fact that in the second year of using BSCW 25% still thought that it is a difficult tool to learn to handle. Moodle is also hard to work with at first, and 50% of students who had been working with this environment expressed this opinion. In contrast, 100% of cases perceived the website as being easy to handle and the comments made by technologically less literate students showed their enthusiasm for it. This enthusiastic response was also the case with regard to WebCT, but not so often.
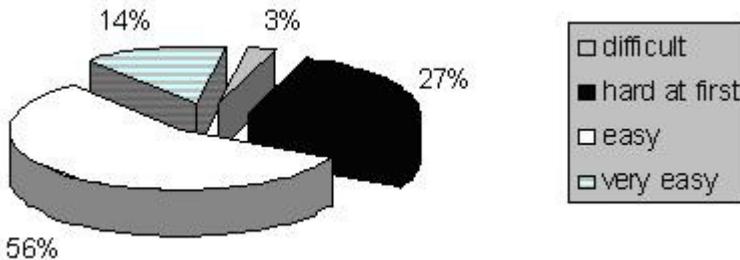

Fig. 5. Overall ease-of-use of the virtual environments

Turning to the influence on attitudinal aspects, the environment raised students' motivation in 57% of cases and of those who did not find it increased it (35% of cases), 96% claimed they already found themselves motivated to study the subject due to other factors, and that this was not affected (the other 4% did not answer). In consequence, the main aim of the project remained intact. Overall, we found that, for one reason or another, the evaluation of students'

interest towards the course was positive in 96.7% of cases. Nevertheless, we should highlight the drop in the percentages obtained with the use of BSCW without face-to-face tutorials, where the percentage of people who became more interested in the subject because of the environment fell to 25%. Even more worrying is the fact that Moodle decreased interest in 4% of cases, and only increased interest in 40% of that year's students.
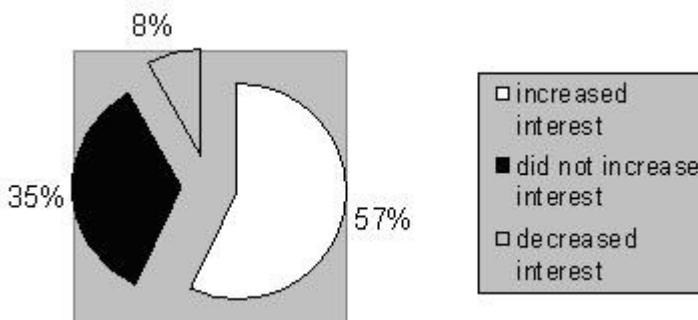

Fig. 6 Influence of the environment on students' interest in the subject, as perceived by the students themselves

With regard to academic achievement, 67% of the students thought that using the tool as part of the subject helped them to improve their academic achievement and only 19% believed that this was not so. Those who viewed this factor positively stressed that they rated the environment highly as a means of fostering ongoing assessment of the subject by requiring them to periodically submit work over the Internet. They also appreciated the fact that both the materials the teacher posted in the environment as *surprise* incentives and the resources added from time to time by their companions encouraged them to get into the habit of checking the environment almost every time they logged onto the network, thus enabling them to receive the information in a more continuous manner. The fact that students were given study notes written by the teacher was also judged positively, as this allowed them to complete

or to correct those they themselves had taken in class. More especially, it was claimed that this method enabled them to hand in more exercises and practice translations and, in consequence, they felt better prepared to sit their final exam. In this case, there were no differences in terms of which environment was utilised, but certain distinctions could be seen in another aspect: 100% of the students who followed the subject, either wholly or partially, while on a study visit to another country stated that one important advantage of the environment was that it had enabled them to improve their academic achievement. Another important issue is that no one thought the use of any environment had a negative influence on their final achievement.
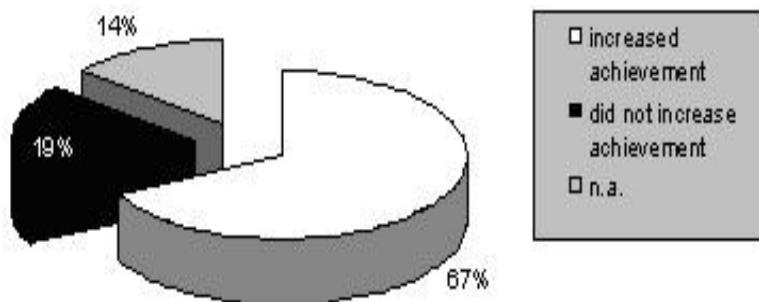

Fig. 7. Influence of the virtual environment on academic achievement, as perceived by students

Turning to look at participation, 71% of students found that having the virtual environment at their disposal increased their participation in the subject, while 24% thought that this was not the case. One interesting point is that the people who had difficulties in their early days with technological environments said that, although they did not make use of the environment at first, they did the work anyway but felt that their efforts did not show and this gradually encouraged them to interact with the cyberspace. Other important elements that stand out include students' realising that the subject

was not limited to just the time spent in class, thanks to their being able to continuously consult others, submit corrections and see corrected work outside those hours, which somehow granted it a more significant position in their daily lives. In addition, being able to see the changes that took place throughout the year, for example, with regard to the organisation of the materials they themselves uploaded or getting answers to the questions they posed or further information they had requested, made them aware of the teacher's involvement and a sort of commitment to the subject. Being able to miss the classes without losing contact with the course was something that, in our sample, received little attention and, in fact, was only mentioned by one student.

If we deal with each of the different environments separately we can see how they clearly exerted an effect on participation, which progressively increased with the first years of project implementation. In the project with WebCT, however, despite a slight drop participation was still very high, both comparatively and in absolute terms. Then, again, Moodle rates very poorly, only 50%, in comparison to other environments.
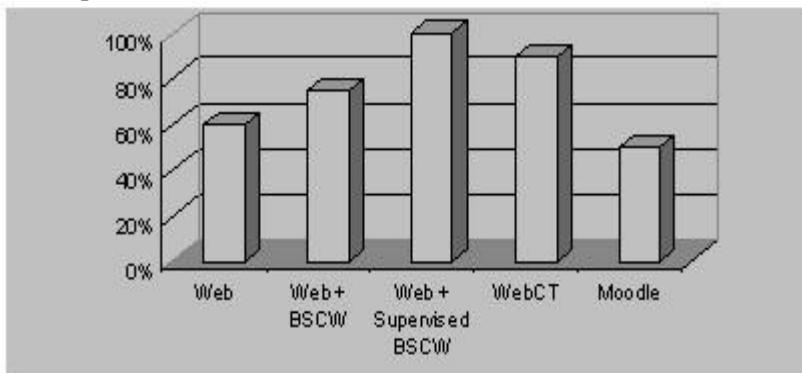

Fig. 8 Rating of the different environments in terms of the increase in participation with respect to the conventional classroom setting

As for the amount of time devoted to the academic subject, there was very little difference between those who believed they had spent more time on the subject because of working with the virtual environment and those who thought the opposite. Similarly, there were no differences between one environment and another. Some of those who did dedicate more time to it claimed that this was due to the control the teacher had over the work they submitted with the tools they were using, whereas others emphasised the fact that they had far more information available to them. Nevertheless, none of the students thought that the extra time that had to be devoted to the subject was a negative factor or something resulting from technological shortcomings.
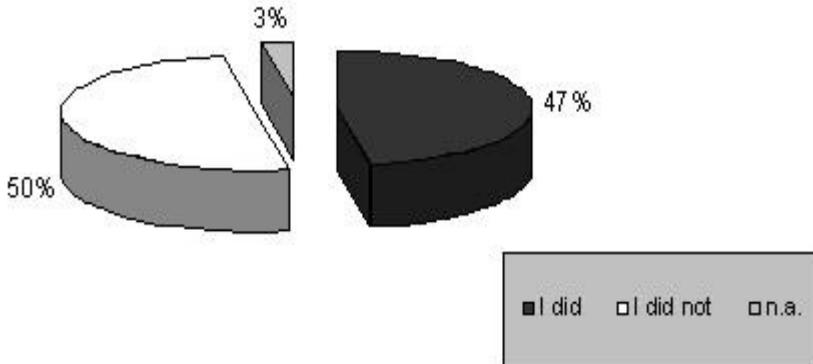
Fig. 9 Increase in the time spent on the subject because of the environment

Turning to consider the communicative features, I asked students about how the environment affected communication with the teacher and with their companions. It is very interesting to note that here there were significant differences from one environment to another. In the cases of the website alone, of the website with BSCW together with tutorials, and with Moodle the majority of students did not perceive any improvement in communication as a result of using the tool. On the other hand, in the BSCW with website environment

and WebCT, a substantial number of students (75% and 90%, respectively) found communication with the teacher had been enhanced by the use of the environments. In these cases, the improvements consisted in the convenience of not having to actually go to tutorials (which would explain why there was no improvement in the third year of the project) and the immediacy of communication offered by instant messaging, chats, newsgroups and email.

It can be clearly seen how the cooperative environment exerts a very positive influence on in-group communication and 100% of the students believed it enhances communication, versus 40% who thought the same about the website and WebCT and a rather low 29% with Moodle (though that year's class showed itself to be a very close knit group). It is also worth highlighting the large number of comments made regarding the feeling of being a group generated by working with BSCW and the fact that the work done in the academic subject aroused their interest in teamwork and led them to consider it in a new light. Similar comments were made about WebCT because it enabled them to access the materials of the whole class and the students who had been abroad on a placement through the European Union Erasmus scheme drew attention to the chance it gave them to keep in touch, work and participate in the class. Likewise, students had a very positive view of the environments that had an address book (and more especially so in the case of WebCT) because this provided them with their classmates' addresses, including those whom they did not see very often.

In each academic year the students have made very positive comments about having access to the exercises, translations and resources produced by other companions (87% mentioned this point). They were also pleased to be able to let the rest of the group see their own work in order to get feedback on it and to use the environment to see the corrections made by the teacher before all the work was put together in the classroom. There were also a number of positive comments about being able to follow the syllabus and the

actual classes by means of the common agenda. When this follow-up was done in the website environment, nothing was said about this aspect. It could therefore be said that the way the progress of the classes is presented, and perhaps the possibility of combining this particular method of keeping up with the class with other personal entries, encourage its use.

When asked about points that could be improved, in the first environment there were no suggestions, but in the second they insisted on the need to train students in the use of the technology before beginning the classes. In the third academic year, when such courses were already being run, we focused our attention on the file formats. Documents were usually supplied as Word documents, but because many of the texts required very complex and time-consuming editing after being scanned, PDF seemed to be a far better choice of format. Since, in class, students are asked to imitate the layout and formats used in the original documents as far as possible, they asked for the texts to be well formatted so that such tasks would be made a little easier. Again, PDF made it easier to satisfy this demand. During that year, students also mentioned the need to encourage some people who did not take part in the virtual environment to do so, as this would help prevent unpleasant situations arising from the fact that some people accessed the work of others but did not share their own. In the last year, the WebCT feature for uploading and downloading students' work came under some criticism about its capabilities. Students working with Moodle, on the other hand, highlighted the help of the structure in organising the materials.

One of the most positive aspects that students praised every year was the possibility of comparing their translations with those of all their classmates. Another positive factor students stressed was the novelty of the system and the effect this had on their motivation. Nevertheless, this observation has gradually become less common over the years, to the point where it is now of little significance.

Frequently repeated comments also referred to environmental friendliness (less paper is used) and the saving in the length of time spent at the copy-shop, as well as its interactivity, convenience and the training given in the use of the new technologies. The fact that information remains permanently posted in the environment and can therefore be consulted even though the academic subject has ended was another highly-valued feature despite this being a problem with WebCT. This application has an onerous limit to the number of licences and the list of students who have access to it must therefore be renewed every year. As regards personal interaction, students were especially satisfied with how the teacher tracked their progress and with the effort made by the whole class to keep up to date with the activities and materials.

Lastly, 100% of the students claimed they had enjoyed the experience and in fact believed that the project should be extended to other subjects on the degree course. Moreover, those students who have already finished their degree said that the satisfaction they got from having studied the subject with virtual environments increased once they had entered the translation marketplace, as they have seen the practical application of this training in the new technologies in their work as professionals.

About Technology Enhanced Teaching in Legal Translation

Although the new technologies are undoubtedly appealing to our learners and despite the advantages distance learning may have for many sectors of the public, we must also bear in mind that the step towards working in a virtual environment entails drastic changes in the roles played by the learner and the teacher. At the same time, in addition to the positive aspects there are also a number of negative points. We will now discuss some of these factors in the light of our own experience.

One argument that is often wielded as a negative factor in virtual education is that it is an impersonal system. Not having set times for interaction reduces motivation in the learners, and also in teachers. Individuals who find accessing the cyberspace so easy that they never get round to actually doing so find that their time is given over to other urgent work, which does have fixed timetables and time limits and which is perceived as being *real*. In our case, we got round this problem by using a technology enhanced system which involved holding face-to-face sessions where the class went over part of the virtual work and the remaining work was complemented with tutorials carried out both face-to-face and by means of instant messaging. Furthermore, this type of 'faceless' interaction offered yet another advantage, i.e. we were surprised how much this method helped some students to overcome their shyness, since they very often played an active part in the forums and virtual activities but they did not display the same attitude when they attended the face-to-face sessions.

On the other hand, because students can work from home, they do not need to travel in order to follow their studies. This allows them to save time and a greater number of people (mainly those in working-age who attend regular classes, but also those who live a long way from the centre where they want to study their degree) can afford to continue with their education. Nevertheless, this was seen to increase the number of different types of profiles and so the teacher had to programme different academic streams that enable everyone to take full advantage of the courses. This affects us when, for instance, it comes to explaining certain concepts, since references that are geographically or generationally close and familiar to some students may not be so easily recognisable to others. Cyberspace makes the group more heterogeneous and forces us to take into account a greater number of factors that affect students' lives, understanding and performance. Sometimes we therefore have to avoid localised examples and look for others that are more neutral, although to a certain extent that may have a

detrimental effect on communication, which becomes more distant and less familiar. As an alternative, in such cases we can increase the references and vary them so as to make them fit the different student profiles, which not only increments the teacher's workload but also students' reading time so that they have more chance of becoming bored by the teaching material.

Another problem is that of discipline while the work is being done. While students are in the classroom, and provided that we keep an eye on what they are browsing, they are concentrated on their work. Elsewhere, however, they are open to many distractions that are difficult to control. Nevertheless, we have observed that our students do most of the virtual work in the translation laboratory, which largely, but not completely, reduces the number of distractions. It has also been claimed that students who follow their classes by virtual means find that their education becomes a less important part of their day-to-day lives. In our case we have found that this is not a result of the virtual methodology employed, since these students are motivated by factors that have little to do with technology (family and occupational needs) and that, rather than leading students away from academic life, the new technology-based methods tend to help them to connect with it. The independence of these and other students is seen to increase notably. They can miss a class and not have to have the notes taken in class that day because they are in the cyberspace, but they can also keep up to date with the activities and what is going on in the sessions without the need to take notes because they already have access to them.

Another very interesting matter when dealing with virtual systems is asynchrony. The flexible timetables enable students to participate how and when they can. This means that some students decide to do all the work during the last week of the year, which is undoubtedly an example of educational failure because with this method they have not assimilated the course material and have never got a good mark in any of the exams. To prevent this from

happening we decided to stagger the tasks, which imposes a rigid programming of the work and, in some cases, gives rise to certain technical problems. In BSCW, for example, we had to eliminate students' access rights to the folders, which meant changing them from one place to another; in WWW, we had to deny access to the webpage. In both cases, the steps taken were effective but the teacher had to keep track of the dates each piece of work entered and justify the environment throughout the whole course. WebCT, however, makes this a lot easier and it is possible to programme when events should take place at the beginning of the semester. The flexible timetable also makes life easier for the teacher by allowing her to control the work and to keep in touch with the subject and her students although she has other commitments at the same time.

Asynchrony also implies that communication is very often delayed. This can have a detrimental effect on students' satisfaction and motivation, which is to be avoided if we are to keep to our aim of making the subject more appealing. Students therefore have to know when the teacher will definitely be available to answer their questions, although that does not exclude the possibility of there being extra time, so as to speak, in which they can have their doubts settled outside the established timetable. Additionally, during these hours I opted for the use of instant messaging and chats, which allowed me to give immediate answers to their inquiries. Even so, up to a couple of weeks ago, it was not possible to save the conversations held in the instant messaging sessions and for this reason the teacher, but not students, preferred to use chats, where the exchanges could be recorded. Other communication services, such as forums and electronic messaging, have this advantage and allow students to think about the answers and to select the messages that are of most interest to them, while erasing or devoting less time to the others. It must also be borne in mind that the structure students can follow does not necessarily always match the pace of the class; there is no hurry and most of the topics dealt with do not have an

expiry date. All this means that the problems with delayed communication are more to do with motivation than anything else.

In fourth place, there are also factors concerning the software resources that are used in this kind of teaching. The most obvious requirement is that of having terminals connected to the network. Despite not having to stick to a certain timetable or travel, you do need a computer that is connected to the Internet. In a few cases, the students can find no reason to set up a connection from home and when this happens the teacher has to convince them individually of the advantages of the Internet, and not just for this subject. Moreover, there is the problem of the specific translation software, which makes it necessary to work with computers that are equipped with the right programs. In our faculty, the Translation Laboratory is the ideal place, but other computer rooms for general use for faculty members do not have these applications installed in them. At home, students do not have all the specific software (the TRADOS package, for instance) either. This means that virtual methods in translation clearly limit the tasks that can be carried out: students cannot be required to do work that surpasses the limits of the shareware they are using, which makes it impossible to work on large semester-long projects or that follow the course of the whole syllabus. Again, this means that, in the study programme, the teacher must take into account another factor that conditions the activities she wishes to do outside the classroom and to make it clear to students that certain tasks can only be done in the classroom, during the times they have free access to the Translation Laboratory, or with the necessary software. In short, these matters are of no aid whatsoever to virtual or technology enhanced teaching.

These technologies, however, do have many other advantages. For example, students can have an identical workspace wherever they are working from, which avoids the inconveniences of working with different setups or file structures. The different elements offer a dynamic, more stimulating environment, although

to achieve this, the materials must be adapted to fit the most appropriate applications. This requires the teacher to make a greater effort and to have a better understanding of the technology to be used. In our case, the Centre for Education and New Technologies helps us with this specific knowledge by offering us guidance and training on the sole condition that we constitute a group that is big enough to justify asking a teacher to give a specific course. Furthermore, as teachers, we have also attempted to share this advantage with our students by organising courses and seminars in order to ensure that they are sufficiently computer-literate to be able to make the most of the new technologies.

Another important conditioning factor is speed of the students' Internet connections. Until the use of broadband becomes widespread this will continue to be a problem because a dial-up connection imposes serious limits on the use of audiovisual materials. So, the solution we adopted has been to limit this kind of material, although we also considered setting up a system that provided students with a multimedia client application with texts, pictures, sound and video stored locally on the hard disks. The idea was ruled out, however, because of the excessively large memory requirements.

A fifth matter that I have been able to evaluate is that there is less formality within the classroom. The interpersonal distance between the teacher and students is reduced, which calls for a new teaching style that we will discuss below.

In sixth place, technology enhanced teaching fosters individuality. The teacher pays attention to students one by one and, even though she answers their enquiries globally, people who consult the forums feel that the answers are addressed to them and this is, in fact, often the case because emails, chats, and so on, get the participants involved individually. Thus, it is easy to motivate people on an individual basis because it is also easier to know what

they do (there are very simple tools that provide the teacher with information about students' participation, and it is easy to keep track of the work they do, the work they hand in to the teacher, and so on), although this requires greater dedication from the teacher. At the same time, it is easier to respect the different rates at which students learn and to attend to the more advanced pupils without the slower ones feeling they are not up to standard. Nevertheless, it must be pointed out that the distinct levels of dedication open up huge differences in the knowledge acquired by students, and in-group communication (in forums or in the face-to-face sessions) sometimes becomes complicated.

I must make it clear, however, that I have not managed to create a virtual community, since most students did not find this necessary or even rewarding. As a consequence, the partly virtual nature of the setup leads to differences between those who attend classes and those who do not - for different reasons. Students who attend classes prefer to use face-to-face communication with one another (bar, class) and with the teacher (class and, to a lesser extent, tutorials), whereas those who follow the course virtually only have a fluent relationship with the teacher. Nevertheless, all of them have access to their companions' work, which otherwise they would not have. And this is a point that is highlighted by students year after year.

Roles Change

The use of this technology enhanced methodology imposes changes for both teaching and learning and, consequently, the teacher and the learner have to accept modifications in the way they work. Students are expected to participate actively as well as to be technologically literate and thus become responsible for their own learning. The classroom sets a number of demands that go far beyond the traditional blackboard and chalk. The university needs an important amount of technological equipment. The materials are of a

completely different nature (they are interactive, they need to be continually updated and they have to be independent of the notes students might take). And the methodology needs re-engineering to make it suitable for the new teaching/learning processes. The extra workload is considerable, especially for the teacher, which is a point I would like to deal with in greater length.

The teacher's role changes from that of a transmitter of knowledge to one of guiding research. In the project I describe here and in most cases, students have the same information as the teacher but they need guidance on how to manage the avalanche of information they can find not only in the classroom setting but more especially on the Internet, in order to ensure they fulfil the learning objectives. We run the risk, however, of becoming administrators of information or technologists. We are obliged to master computer systems and we have to seek out information, gain experience in technology, select the best tools and design specific materials to suit the environments. Once it is constructed, we have to have a good command of the environment, despite the changes our students may make to it, and be wholly familiarised with its structure. We must know exactly what each file is for and have a clear understanding of the different career paths our students may choose to follow.

Furthermore, these systems allow for, but also require, the teacher's personalised attention. Prior to the use of this system, face-to-face contact with students enabled us to gain an understanding of students' attitudes and now we have to seek out the person behind the screen in order to identify what they need and what their strong points are. These may include elements such as possible rejection of the new technologies, attitudes towards technology that need correcting, lack of motivation, and excessive amounts of data, and so on. Organising extracurricular courses, if and when necessary, will also become part of the teacher's job. Encouraging students to participate in the virtual environment is a must if the academic subject is to work properly: we have to take part in the forums, get in

touch personally with those who do not join in, and convince those who are reluctant about using the new technologies to ensure learning is taking place under equal conditions.

So as not to lose track of the progress made by the class, we have to combine face-to-face classes with a weekly follow-up of each student, because students have to feel that what they place in the environment is used to evaluate their performance in the subject and that the teacher acknowledges and responds to the time and effort they dedicate to their work. There are also a series of other aspects that we must keep an eye on, such as which pages students visit, how many visits they make while studying the subject and how they are distributed in time, and, above all, whether they finish the tasks they are set. Thus, we can check that they are making progress in an orderly fashion, that they are interested in the subject and spend time on it, and that they want to learn.

As a result of all this, the teaching plan has to be both strict and flexible. The teacher has to set time limits for handing in work, have a good understanding of the environment (materials and technology) to allow for exceptions, and to continually update the materials. At the same time, however, the programme has to be extensive and thorough: we have to cater for different profiles, design alternative study paths and pay attention to the different technologies we have available. In short, we have a series of new jobs to be carried out in the same number of hours.

The rewards from this added workload are strictly personal. I would like to highlight the relation I have with the students, who acknowledge and are grateful for the work that is being done for them. Our relationship is very close and, in fact, they are very often friendlier in their messages than they might seem in person. It is also interesting to note that students' finishing their studies of legal translation as an academic subject does not mean we are no longer in contact with each other, since they get into the habit of writing

emails and continue to tell me how things are going, the problems they are having, or to ask for information about all sorts of topics.

The numbers of students taking part, the quality of the work done both by the groups and on an individual basis, as well as the final results shown by the grades obtained have all progressively improved with each new project. I do not think that this change can be attributed to the students themselves, but rather to my becoming aware of what can hamper their progress and of the ways to motivate them, since I have learnt how semi virtual communities work by my own experience and from how students evaluate them each year. From a more affective point of view, I have seen how students' answers to the evaluations and the satisfaction they express have motivated me to get involved in other projects dealing with the use of virtual environments in academic subjects. At the same time, I have also been encouraged by the personal interaction in face-to-face classes and tutorials, where discussions often stray away from the main subject matter, perhaps due to the absolute immediacy of this kind of communication and the absence of a task that has a time limit. For this reason, I am already planning to incorporate face-to-face tutoring in the Moodle environment, as well as technology seminars, for the next academic year, so that the poor results obtained with the last project can be improved.

Despite the satisfaction that comes from improving details year after year, and the impulse of abandoning environments with poorer results, we work within an institution and therefore we cannot decide directly on what platform to use. Moreover, we need to attain technological stability because it does not make much sense to train oneself in the use of different technologies only to employ them for one academic year until their shortcomings become apparent and we need to introduce another tool to put them to rights. There are environments that can be tried with lower risks as regards the costs of training, such as WebCT, but which, on the other hand, require a very considerable investment by the institution. For this reason it

becomes essential to share our own experiences to help others avoid some of the pitfalls of e-learning.

NOTES

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Translating the Translated: Interrogating the Post-Colonial Condition

K. SRIPAD BHAT

Abstract

The paper deals with the issues related to the landscape of translation particularly in the post-colonial world. The paper argues that translation does not take place in an ideologically neutral ground. On the contrary, it is mediated through the dominant ideologies of the time. Translation during the post-colonial period has been subject to Euro centric norms. Concepts like 'hybridity' and 'post-nationalism' tend to legitimize only those translations/writers that adhere to Eurocentric norms. Finally, the paper argues for the historical necessity of coming back to nationalist discourse to redefine the discourse of translation as well as literature.

> *"I too am a translated man".*
>
> Salman Rushdie

> *"The vernacular literature of India will be gradually enriched by the translation of European books whose minds have been imbued with the spirit of European advancement, so that European knowledge may gradually be placed in the manner within the reach of all classes of the people".*
>
> From the dispatch on educational matters by the East India Company in 1894

Translation has never remained a noble or innocent literary engagement in the colonial or post-colonial context. *"Translation during the colonial period"*, as Sherry Simon observes, *"was an expression of the cultural power of the colonizer. Missionaries, anthropologists and learned Orientalists chose to translate the texts which corresponded to the image of the subjugated world that they wished to construc"* (*Simon* 2000: 10). Translation referred not only to the transfer of specific texts into European languages, but to all the practices whose aim was to compact and reduce an alien reality to the terms imposed by a triumphant western culture.

Tejaswini Niranjana *(Niranjana 1992)* argues that the meaning of *historicity* in translation involves examining *effective history*, questions such as *who did the translation, how,* and *why* and more importantly, the *translation's impact* needs to be addressed. By examining the history of translation of classical Indian works into English from this point of view, it became apparent to Niranjana that the translators were always European missionaries or colonial administrators since Indians themselves were not considered worthy. Niranjana goes on to observe, rightly, that the translators' prefaces reflected a desire to present Indian culture in a *purified* state so as to make it seem more *English (Tervonen 2002: 1).*

Perhaps, this desire to experience the familiar has emerged as the dominant equation behind translation in the post-colonial world, particularly from the Third World languages to the master language, which in today's globalized world happens to be English.

Of course, the unfamiliar or the exotic in the Orient has always been the object of curiosity and wonder in the western imagination. Such a perspective generated a lot of stereotypes about the East in the West. India being projected as a land of elephants and snake-charmers is a case in point. The popularity of *Panchatantra* stories is indeed reflective of the imaginative tour de force of the West because it kindled their imagination. Nevertheless, despite its

popularity *Panchatantra* has not become a part of the Western canonical establishment. The reasons are not far to seek. The main reason is the wholesale application of Eurocentric norms while studying and translating literatures belonging to the colonial and the post-colonial world. The term Eurocentrism stands for the conscious or the unconscious process by which Europe and European cultural assumptions are constructed as or assumed to be normal - the natural or the universal *(Ashcroft 2004: 90-91)*. Eurocentrism is masked in literary study by literary universality and the universal human subject. Such a Eurocentric perspective was responsible for scrutinizing, analyzing, labeling and finally canonizing literatures of the colonial world. It was Chinua Achebe, a prominent writer from Africa, who for the first time pointed out way back in 1974 that the universal qualities expected of literature from Western criticism were not so much universal as European in universal disguise. Even today there is little change in the ground reality. Narratives or translations originating in the Third World become a part of the canonical establishment only if their authors pick up and deal with typical western/modernist motifs in their narratives. Perhaps for this reason, a writer like Salman Rushdie has become part of the canon in the West. The same norms are applicable to translations too.

Certain varieties of post-colonial theories have succeeded in rationalizing such perspectives. The notion of *hybridity* for instance belongs to this realm. Of late, hybridity is used to legitimize and authenticate the ambivalent post-colonial reality saturated by Western ideas. It is one of the most widely employed terms in post-colonial theory. It refers to the creation of new transcultural forms within the contact zone produced by colonization.

The term 'hybridity' is associated with the work of Homi. J. Bhabha *(Bhabha 1994)*. His analysis of colonizer/colonized relationship stresses their inter-dependence and the mutual construction of their subjectivities. Bhabha contends that all cultural

statements and systems are constructed in a space that he calls the 'third space of enunciation'. Cultural identity always emerges in a contradictory and ambivalent space, which, for Bhabha, makes the claim to a hierarchical purity of cultures untenable. According to him, the recognition of this ambivalent space of cultural identity may help us to overcome the exoticism of cultural diversity in favour of the recognition of an empowering hybridity within which cultural differences may operate.Let me quote Bhabha in full:

> It is significant that the productive capacities of this Third Space have a colonial or post-colonial provenance. For, a willingness to descend into that alien territory…may open the way to conceptualizing an international culture, based not on the exoticism of multiculturalism or the diversity of cultures, but on the inscription and articulation of culture's hybridity.
>
> (Bhabha 1994: 98)

Bhabha is categorical in his rejection of old liberal humanist notions of multiculturalism and cultural diversity. According to him, it is the in-between or third space that carries the burden and meaning of culture and this is what makes the notion of hybrid important *(Ashcroft 2004: 119)*.

Bhabha's notion of hybridity or celebration of in-between or third space quickly became a part of the vocabuary of modern translation theory, and there have been many attempts to look at the whole discourse of translation from this angle. Samia Mehrer *(Mehrer: 2000)*, for example, argues that post-colonial texts understood as 'hybrids' have created their own language. Michaela Wolf's essay entitled *The Third Space in Postcolonial Representation (Wolf 2000: 127-145)* is a plea for the application of the notion of *hybridity* in the field of translation.

What does this mean for the conception of translation? All attempts at cultural and textual translation must work on the assumption of the multi-tracked, non-synchronous nature of cultural hybridities, not of a one-way road leading from the source text to the target text. Thus, one discovers not only a sphere of new internationalism in the sense of the complex practice and poetics of world-wide migration and the cultural symbolism into which the historical processes of the transformation of the post-colonial societies themselves are translated, but also the powerhouses where global or international culture is retranslated into specific cultural or historical locality. Post-colonial translations postulate the decentralization and location of hybrid cultures across the traditional axis of translation between separate cultures and literatures *(Medick 1996: 11).*

Arjun Appadurai has developed perspectives for the study of the tendency of globalization *(Appadurai 1991: 191-210)*. He has proposed a landmark theory according to which translation must reflect deterritorialization and displacement by the transfer, blending and shifting of local experience towards new multiple ethnic and social identities. He argues that the concept of the nation as the container of world literatures and the source and the target of translations has become increasingly questionable in a world that can now be regarded as post-national because of such phenomena as globalization, migration, exile and diaspora.

Therefore, a text originating in a post-colonial world like India, to be accepted or legitimized has to be in the translated state: Bhabha defines it as

Hybridity = International Culture

in opposition to cultural diversity. Appadurai on the other hand, locates it in the collective post-national psyche of modern migrant population.

Unmasking such rationalizations enables us to understand as to why most of the translations of the narratives of eminent writers like Shivarama Karanth (Kannada) and Vaikum Mohammed Bashir (Malayalam) have failed to accomplish legitimacy in terms of not being made into the part of the Western canon. Anita Mannur (2000) states with full statistical details that during these five decades after India's Independence, 1074 Indian texts from sixteen different languages have been translated into English *(Mannur* 2000*: 229)*. Of these, only a few texts have been given entry into the western canonical establishment. The reason is very clear: translations into the master language get legitimized only if such translated narratives exist in an already translated - post-national - hybrid state. For instance, *Tughluq* by Girish Karnad or *Samskara* by U.R. Ananthamurthy have been integrated into the Western canon in view of their representation of post-colonial hybrid experience. Both Tughluq and Praneshacharya, the protagonists of *Tughluq* and *Samskara* respectively, speak from dehistoricised locations saturated by Sartrean existentialism. Aren't they our post-national heroes celebrating our hybridity appealing to an international audience? If Girish Karnad's *Tughluq* is cast in the mould of Camus' Caligula, Praneshacharya, the protagonist of Ananthamurthy's *Samskara* looks like a Sartrean prototype with incessant bouts of existential turmoil. On the other hand, despite the fact that not less than half a dozen major novels of Shivarama Karanth's have been translated into English, none of them has found a place in the critical canon in the West, precisely because he does not speak from a hybrid location. The fictional world of Karanth brilliantly portrays modern India's arrival as a nation with all her problematic and complex historical and intellectual baggage. Regrettably, such distinct nationalist preoccupations of Third World writers have attracted little critical attention in view of the alien nature of their ideological location.

On the contrary, the works of Ananthamurthy and Karnad are not only legitimized by the Western academic establishment as representing modern Indian experience, but also routinely prescribed as texts in Euro-American universities. Since the location of their intellect and sensibility signifies a translated state, translations of their works appeal immediately to the western psyche, which always operates from within the familiar experiential reality. In other words, these works have been legitimized since they operate within Eurocentric norms.

I have drawn upon Kannada literature mainly because that is my home ground. Even translations from other languages have been subject to the same criteria. For instance, we are told that 61 works of art were translated from Marathi into English after Independence *(Mannur 2000: 229)*. How many of these translations or writers have been accepted or legitimized? Only a few writers like Vijay Tendulkar have been given entry into this elite circle. I believe one needs to look at the intellectual location of such writers to come to understand their acceptability in the West.

How should we negotiate this awkward post-colonial predicament? We are accepted only if we are articulated as translated, hybrid and post-national selves. Perhaps, the solution lies in consciously challenging the hegemonic Western critical discourse by constructing an alternative nationalist discourse, which, through translation between and among different Indian languages, facilitates and strengthens the multi-cultural and multi-ethnic ambience of our nation. One could argue that Sahitya Akademi, the National Body of Letters, has been endeavoring to promote nationalistic discourse through translation all these years. But it has concentrated only on translating the dominant and mainstream writers from one language to the other. The counter-nationalist discourse on the other hand, must accommodate the subaltern and the marginalized voices by introducing and familiarizing them to the readers of literatures in

other Indian languages. Making a marginalized voice of Assam to be prominently heard in a remote village of Maharashtra through translation into Marathi for instance is the most desirable way of challenging and resisting the hegemonic post-colonial discourse.

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Translating Cultural Encounters: Hali's *Muqaddama*

TANWEER ALAM MAZHARI

Abstract

The translational relationship between Urdu and English can be traced back to the first formal contact between the British and the Indians on Indian soil. The institutionalised interaction, however, began only with the establishment of College of Fort William in Calcutta in 1800. It marked the beginning of a cultural interface which led to a major shift in literary attitudes in Urdu. Khwaja Altaf Husain Hali's Muqaddama Sh'ir-o Sh'airi (1890), a critical treatise on poetry which attempts to formulate a new poetics, is a product of his encounters, solely through translations as he knew no English, with the English literary tradition. Hali's success, even if limited, in transplanting the western literay precepts and practices in an alien but receptive milieu is translation in a wider sense.

Translations can be taken as one of the reliable indicators of the nature of cultural transactions that take place between or amongst various cultural groups or speech communities. Whether the relationship is one of equality or of dominance can be, more or less, correctly gauged by the volume and the direction of the translated traffic between the concerned groups or communities. However, these apparently valid generalizations are open to many

qualifications if the languages involved are English and one of the *bhasas*, necessitated, as is obvious, by the unique position that English occupies in colonial and postcolonial India's cultural configurations. These and other related issues are sure to arise in any discussion on the translational relationship that exists between Urdu and English.

The beginning of this relationship can be traced back to the first formal contact between the English and the Indians on Indian soil. Sir Thomas Roe during his presence at the Mughal court between 1615 and 1618 must have interacted with the same cultural group, the Mughal elite or the *ashraf*, which, though Persian-speaking, was slowly adopting Urdu as a language of preference. This was, however, an isolated and brief encounter and one has to wait for nearly two centuries for an institutionalized interaction between the two languages. It was at the College of Fort William in Calcutta, established in 1800 for preparing textbooks for the British civilians that the scholars of Urdu worked in collaboration with the British. Mir Amman, brought from Delhi to work as a translator at the College, produced his classic Bagh-o Bahar, a translation of the Persian text Qissa-i Chahar Darvish under the supervision of John Gilchrist, Professor of Hindustani at the College of Fort William. This marks the beginning of Urdu prose though scholars are divided on the importance of its role in the development of the main current of Urdu prose. The other institution that brought Urdu and English closer was Delhi College. Started in 1702, the College, originally established for the study of Arabic and Persian, had an English class attached to it in 1828. It was under the aegis of this College that the Vernacular Translation Society, the first formal body to translate and publish English books into Urdu, was established in 1843. Muhammad Sadiq, the noted historian of Urdu literature, has described the College as "*the foremost interpreter of the genius of the West*" *(Mohanty 1984: 315).*

The first Urdu literary text to be translated into English was *Bagh-o Bahar* or *Qissa-i Chahar Darvish*. Lewis Ferdinand Smith translated this Urdu classic by Mir Amman Dehlavi in 1841/1845.1 Though there is no definite information on the first English literary text to be translated into Urdu, it can be affirmed on the basis of many references to organized translation activities from English to Urdu in the nineteenth century that Urdu-English literary and cultural interface through translations was not altogether a unidirectional one. In fact many Urdu writers, including Khwaja Altaf Husain Hali (1836-37 to 1914), whose book is my point of reference, came in contact with Western literary and cultural traditions through Urdu translations of English texts as they knew no English. Apart from the Vernacular Translation Society of Delhi there was the Punjab Book Depot, an arm of Anjuman-e Punjab (founded in 1865), established with the object of translating English texts into Urdu and publishing them. It was during his employment with Punjab Book Depot in the 1870's as an assistant translator (his job was to correct Urdu translations made from English) that Hali had his encounter with a wide range of English literary texts.

From these early encounters in the colonial era the interface between the two literary traditions through translations has continued even after the end of the Empire, though their frequency may have varied from regular to occasional. The 1970's, however, saw a significant growth in the translation of Urdu texts into English. Mirza Ghalib's centenary celebrations in 1969-70 probably gave a big fillip to these translation activities. As many as eleven English translations of Ghalib's poetry appeared between 1969 and 1975. This proved infectious and other important Urdu poets and writers were translated into English. Among them Krishan Chandar stands out as ten of his fictional works were translated between 1968 and 1975. Many translated anthologies of Classical Urdu poetry came out during this period. The most comprehensive one was *Classical Urdu Poetry*, edited by M. A. R. Barker and Shah Abdul Salem, and published in 1977 from New York. The collection anthologized as

many as thirty-four poets beginning with Quli Qutub Shah and coming up to Muhammad Iqbal. It may be mentioned in passing that the 1970's saw a spurt in English translations not only of Urdu literature but also of other major Indian literatures. Since a majority of the translators were Indians it was seen by many as breaking *"the barrier between one Indian literature and another . . ."* (Mohanty 1984: viii).

The remarkable translational harvest of Urdu literature in the English language created the right platform for a new area of specialized study to appear on the academic scene, generally referred to as Urdu Studies. This new discipline, offered as part of South Asian Studies in various universities, found adherents on both sides of the Atlantic and elsewhere. Scholars and translators from SOAS and the various American universities showed great vigour and enthusiasm in disseminating Urdu literature's rich harvest to the English-speaking readership. In fact, translation activities in the 1980's and thereafter were not confined to literary texts alone as books dealing with the cultural life of the Urdu-speaking people, predominantly but not exclusively Muslim, were also taken up for translation. The most notable example of such a cultural text is Behisti Zevar, a manual for a newly married Muslim woman compiled by Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi (1864-1943) and given till recently as part of her dowry. This manual was translated by Barbara Metcalf as Perfecting Women in 1990. If one looks at the recent crop of translations one is surprised by the variety of the translated texts and the large number of translators and scholars at work. The old team of Russell and Khurshid ul Islam has been joined by C. M. Naim, Frances Pritchett, Gail Minault, Muhammad Umar Memon, Christopher Shackle, Javed Majeed and Laurel Steele. The list remains incomplete as new names are being added each passing day.

Such frenzied translation activities are sure to make one euphoric. But this is just one side of the story. The other side, the

number of translations from English to Urdu, necessary for sustaining its vigour and freshness, is not such a happy one. Such translations in recent times have been few and far between. There is neither an institutionalized set-up for its creation nor a ready market for its consumption. The lack of individual initiatives has further compounded the problem. A few literary journals like the *Shabkhoon* do publish Urdu translations from other languages but they do not go beyond a short story or a few poems. This gives an unhealthy twist to the cultural transactions between Urdu and English and disturbing questions regarding the nature of the relationship are sure to be raised. The spectre of neocolonialism may appear more and more real.

What accounts for the kind of interest Western scholars and translators have in Urdu literary and cultural texts? Is it a manifestation of the Anglo-American West's acceptance of the fact of multiculturalism? Or, is it a refashioning of the old interest in the oriental exotica? Or, is it sheer ennui with the Self which turns the gaze to the significant Other? As of now we have to remain satisfied with framing these questions for the answers are perhaps still in the process of making.

An equally relevant question is: why does a scholar rooted in the traditions of Urdu choose to translate into English? Is he, through the act of translation claiming the agency to represent himself and all that that self is constituted of? Or, is he acting as a self-appointed cultural ambassador of the language community he belongs to and has the competence and confidence to reach out to a non-Urdu audience wherever it may be? Or, is he a collaborator in the neo-colonial designs of the Anglo-American cultural industry?

The concern of the present paper is, however, not the politics or poetics of translation but the translation of a poetics. Altaf Husain Hali's *Muqaddama Shir-o Shairi* (first published in 1890 as a long prose introduction to his divan or collection of ghazals, and

then brought out as a book in its own right in 1893) is the first, and perhaps, the only major theoretical treatise on poetry in Urdu. It is also credited with laying the foundation of modern Urdu poetry. Surprisingly, such an important text has not been translated despite Hali being a favourite quarry of the English translators of literary and cultural texts in Urdu. The only attempt to introduce it to the English language readership was made by Laurel Steele, who published a translated summary of the text in the inaugural issue of the journal *Annual of Urdu Studies (1981)*. This significant omission made me choose the *Muqaddama* for English rendition.

While the literary and cultural importance of the text is obvious, for a student of Translation Studies the importance may also lie elsewhere. The new poetics that Hali tried to formulate in his book is based on his encounters with the English literary tradition solely through translation. As mentioned earlier Hali knew no English. He relied on Urdu translations of English texts that came to him for correction during his employment in Lahore in the 1870's. The other significant aspect is how Hali transplanted the Western literary precepts and practices in an alien but receptive milieu. This is also translation in a wider sense.

Muqaddama is a product of the later phase of Hali's life, a phase in which Sayyid Ahmad Khan (1817-98) and his Aligarh Movement had become the shaping influence on him. The amelioration of the Muslim community, defeated and persecuted in the aftermath of the failed uprising of 1857 (Hali had first hand experience of the chaos and misery that followed the suppression of the uprising) had become Sayyid Ahmad's mission, and Hali joined him as a committed soldier. Hali took up the mission at the literary front. Giving up the traditional poetic form of ghazal, which he had cultivated in the company of his patron Mustafa Khan Shefta (1806-69) and through occasional consultations with Mirza Ghalib (whose biography *Yadgar-e Ghalib* he wrote in 1897), Hali started working towards the creation of a new poetic attitude and a new idiom. In

place of eroticism and formal eulogy which were the major preoccupations of *ghazal, qasida* and *masnavi*, which are traditional forms of Urdu poetry, Hali focussed on social issues touching the life of his community. Aesthetic pleasure became subservient to social concerns. Like his mentor Hali also moved closer to English, especially to English literature.

The first concrete manifestation of Hali's poetic attitude was his *Musaddas* (1879), a long poem on the existing miserable state of the Muslims and their former glory, written at the behest of Sayyid Ahmed Khan.2 The book was enthusiastically received and Hali's new mentor commented in his congratulatory letter to the poet:

> It would be entirely correct to say that with this Musaddas begins the modern age of [Urdu] poetry.
> (qtd. in Shackle and Majeed 1997: 35)

Buoyed by the success of *Musaddas* Hali took upon himself the task of ridding Urdu poetry of its perceived ills, the excessive artifice employed by the poets in the ghazal form being his main concern. In a letter of 1882 he writes:

> I want to write a long essay on the poetry of the Muslims from the days of Jahiliya to the present keeping Urdu poetry in mind. The purpose is to describe ways to reform Urdu poetry, which has become very poor and harmful. It will also be shown that if poetry is based on good principles how beneficial it would be for the nation and the art.
> (Qtd. in Qureshi 1954: 56, my translation)

This promised long essay came out as *Muqaddama Shir-o Shairi* (Preface to Poetry and Poetics). The *Muqaddama* shows Hali's preoccupation with what he calls 'natural poetry'. It is poetry

which in words and thought, is in accordance with nature or habit. By 'words in accordance with nature' it is meant that words and their arrangement should be, as far as possible, in keeping with the ordinary everyday speech of the language concerned. This is because the language of ordinary speech is nature or second nature for the people speaking the language . . . . By 'thought in accordance with nature' it is meant that poetry should deal with those matters which always happen or should happen in the world *(Hali 1893: 158-59, my translation).*

The passage, as is obvious, echoes Wordsworth's idea of poetic language in the Preface to *Lyrical Ballads:* '… the language of such poetry as is here recommended is, as far as is possible, a selection of the language really spoken by men' *(Wordsworth 1800: 170).*

The quest for natural poetry takes Hali to Milton and Coleridge's normative spin to Milton's obiter dictum. In his tract *Of Education* Milton, while comparing rhetoric with poetry, described poetry as "*simple, sensuous and passionate*" *(Milton 1644: 444).* Coleridge in his Lectures and Notes of 1818 enthusiastically accepted and amplified Milton's "*three incidental words*" *(Coleridge 1818: 226).* Hali, relying on a mistranslation, quoted Milton as saying: "*Good poetry should be simple, passionate and based on truth*" (*Hali 1893: 127, my translation).* Hali seems to be relying on Coleridge's Lectures but having no idea of the European scholar's (this is how Hali refers to his source and Coleridge remains anonymous in the *Muqaddama)* intellectual roots in Neoplatonism and German idealism, either misunderstands or partially understands the import of Coleridge's representation of Milton. The consequences are predictable. By the time Milton's words reach Hali, mediated through Coleridge, they acquire a significance which neither the original author nor the mediator had intended.

Besides the authorities referred to earlier, Hali also draws upon Goldsmith [(?) 1730-1774] and Thomas Macaulay (1800-1859), the latter being a particular favourite, for the formulation of his new poetic creed. And by the time his long essay comes to an end, we see the Perso-Arabic literary tradition, which had been the basis of Urdu poetry since its inception, lying in an uneasy but utilitarian embrace of the Western literary tradition. Hali, of course, greatly benefits from the contradictions which such a situation gives rise to. While he employs his English scalpel to remove the 'unnatural' growth in the body poetic of Urdu, he manages to retain enough space within his new poetics to accommodate the richness of traditional Urdu poetry. His poetics, without jettisoning Mir (1722-1810) and Ghalib (1797-1869), paved the way for the emergence of Iqbal (1878-1938).

Judging the contemporary relevance of Hali's *Muqaddama* is not an easy task. It involves piecing together what he approved of as natural and what he had rejected as unnatural. It also involves a close examination of what he had borrowed and what he had made out of those borrowings. It has often been seen that Hali is at his original best when he misunderstands what he borrows and relies on his native genius to represent his misunderstood borrowings. Not that the process has not begun. Shamsur Rahman Faruqi's article *Saadgi, asliyat aur josh* on Hali's use of Milton and Coleridge is the best example of such a reconstruction *(Faruqi 1990: 233-44)*. But only a beginning has been made in what will prove to be a long and painstaking exercise.

NOTES

1. There is some controversy as to the actual date of the book's publication. Jatindra Mohan Mohanty's checklist *Indian Literature in English Translation* has two entries on *Qissa-i Chahar Darvish* and they carry two different dates, viz. 1841 and 1845.

2. Christopher Shackle and Javed Majeed translated the poem into English as *Hali's Musaddas, the Flow and Ebb of Islam* in 1997.

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Translations into Kannada in the 10th Century: Comments on Precolonial Translation

V.B.THARAKESHWAR

Abstract

Looking at early Kannada literary texts like Kaviraja Maarga *and* Vikramarjuna Vijaya *(10th century), this paper tries to argue that employing binaries such as western/indian, colonial/indigenous, Kannada / Sanskrit would not do.Such early texts have to be placed in the context of the emerging writing culture (textual production) in the region, the uses to which it was put (economy, polity, religion), the question of patronage, the religious order of the day apart from subjecting it to a comparison with the source texts so as to figure out the function that they perform in the target culture. The paper identifies the existing pitfalls in theorizing pre-colonial translation practices and suggests that the complex matrix in which the practice is embedded has to be unearthed in further research in this area.*

It has been thought over the last two decades that in pre-colonial times, India had a different notion of "bringing" texts into Indian languages from "classical languages" such as Sanskrit, Prakrit etc., from the one that exists today. People who posit such an

argument also inform us that it was a "dynamic notion of translation" compared to the one that is prevalent today, which is "western" and "colonial". It has been pointed out by several critics/scholars that the writers, who "rewrote" Sanskrit texts in Kannada, have transformed the "original text" to "suit the politics of Kannada" which was trying to negotiate the "hegemony of Sanskrit".[1]

In this paper I argue that employing binaries such as Kannada/Sanskrit, orient/occident is not terribly useful in getting to know the interface between the phenomenon of translation and what drives it.We need instead to look at the social context in which these translations took place to unearth the complex processes that are set in motion when two "language-cultures"[2] meet on an uneven plane, and at an uneven place. Further, I look at some of the pre-colonial translations into Kannada, trying to place them in the "social space" of that period. I use the word "social space" to mean the socio-political context of the period. What helps us to understand translations is not the metanarrative but something that drives the translation, something that creates the translation in the first place, and at the same time gets transformed by the "translation". That is, not only are translations conditioned by socio-political spaces but translations themselves produce socio-political spaces or modify the existing ones. In the first section of the paper I look at a text that is the oldest available text in Kannada. It is called *Kaviraja Marga*. It is a text of poetics.The story of *Mahabharatha* has been retold in Kannada by many a writer.The first available retelling of the epic in Kannada is *Pampa Bharatham or Vikramarjuna Vijayam* of the 10th century[3]. This text is analyzed in the second section. In the last section I make some remarks that would facilitate further research in this area.

I

Many literary traditions have begun with translations.[4] Translations mark the beginning of literature in Kannada language too. The first available written text in Kannada is *Kaviraja Marga*

(The Way of the King of Poets, 814 -877 A.D., henceforth *KRM*). This is treated as a work of rhetoric/poetics in Kannada, and is heavily indebted to Dandi's Sanskrit work *Kavyadarsha* (The Mirror of Literature). Some even call it a translation of *Kavyadarsha*. However it has been noted by scholars that this work differs from the Sanskrit one in many ways. This difference would account for the changes that a treatise on literature undergoes as it travels from one language to another and from one social space to another[5].

        The first poem in *KRM* is a salutation poem *(Seetharamaiah, 1994: (I:1) 73)*. In Dandi's *Kavyadarsha* the salutation to Saraswathi, the god of learning, comes in the beginning. In *KRM* this becomes the third poem. The first two poems of *KRM* indirectly praise King Nrupatunga by praising Lord Vishnu *(Seetharamaiah 1994: (I: 2 & 3) 73)*[6]. Praising the king by equating him with a god or gods is something that we don't find in Sanskrit texts. This is one of the vital differences between Sanskrit texts and Kannada texts of this period. In Sanskrit human beings, whether kings or ordinary beings, are not equated with God. But the Jaina poets of this period in Kannada make it a custom to equate the king with God, whom they salute at the beginning of the text. Commenting on this aspect, Kurtakoti, a Kannada critic, says that this is not surprising because Jains don't believe in God and they consider the king himself as a god (*Kurtakoti 1995:v*)[7]. Kurtakoti's argument is hard to accept, as praising the king by equating him with God is not a simple issue of praising the king instead of God, but is more complex. Jainism is not an atheistic religion like Buddhism, so it is hard to accept that "instead" of God they praised the king. Interestingly, the texts that they are translating/rewriting belong to a "Vedic religion"[8].

        The pantheon of gods that we find in certain texts like *Mahabharatha* and such other Puranic texts has inspired the texts which are supposed to be part of "Sanskrit Literature" in general[9]. God Vishnu with whom King Nrupatunga is equated is part of such

a milieu. Nrupatunga was a Vaishnava, but Srivijaya the poet was supposed to be a Jaina.

The situatedness of a Vaishnava king and a Jaina poet on the same scene is a very curious one. Jaina poets were supposed to translate Vaishnava texts as commissioned by the king, or on their own took up that task to curry favors with the Vaishnava King. It is normally suggested that to obtain the king's favor or as expression of their regard to the kindness bestowed by the king, these writers praised the king by using such ambiguous words which equivocally denote both king and God. Elevating the king to the status of a god is not seen as dishonor to the god.

Similarly Dandi's first poem, which becomes the third poem in *KRM,* the author translates in such a way that it is not against the tenets of Jaina belief; for example, deleting reference to Brahma in the poem. Invocation of goddess Saraswati at the beginning of the epic is not an old custom in Sanskrit literature. It doesn't happen in *Mahabharatha* or in Kalidasa's plays. It must be a later development. While translating Dandi's poem into Kannada, the author of *KRM* adds a few adjectives to Goddess Saraswati: "madhura aaraavochite, chatura ruchira padarachane". Here we see a sense of tenderness associated with Saraswathi and Kaavya: in a sense, feminization of (epic) literature is happening here.

It has been remarked *(Pollock, 1998: 21)* that one could talk not just of the cosmopolis of languages like Sanskrit but even vernacularization took the form of a cosmopolis, and Pollock calls it 'making the global local' or calling the vernacular thus formed "the cosmopolitan vernacular". Here the imperial political space that Sanskrit had created for itself across South Asia was replicated at a different level of empire using the vernacular. Sanskrit was normally used before this period all over South Asia in Epigraphy to praise the king, while local languages were used, if at all, to document business transactions. This kind of division of linguistic labour that existed

during this period is termed "hyperglossia" by Pollock (*Pollock
1998:11*)[10]. With the vernacularization process, vernacular languages
also sought to become the language of literature and the language
that could be used for praising the gods. So with this process they
replicated the Sanskrit model in the vernacular. It is not that the
hyperglossia or diglossia of Sanskrit and Kannada discontinued with
the vernacularization process. It indeed continued. The literary
composition in Kannada presupposed literacy in Sanskrit. It in fact
followed Sanskrit texts, but adapted it to local needs. What these
"local needs" were need to be pinpointed by analyzing the
differences that we find in the Kannada texts to understand the
socio-political space that existed and which itself was shaped by
these translations.

Apart from the first two stanzas that praise the king, *KRM* is
different from *Kavyadarsha* in three ways:

1. Though it is the first extant text in Kannada, it refers to
    earlier poets in Kannada such as Kavishwara, Chandra, and
    Lokapala, whose texts have not been found yet. It is natural
    that *KRM,* which is trying to make Kannada a literary
    language, mentions earlier poets in Kannada to claim a
    tradition for Kannada literature. It also envisaged a space
    that maps the use of Kannada, as *Mahabharatha* does for
    Sanskrit[11]. It thus talks about the geo-linguistic space of
    Kannada. Whether this space is real or far-fetched is not our
    concern, but the act of imagining a geo-linguistic space to
    elevate Kannada language is important for us here. It also
    talks of the people who use the Kannada language. It claims
    that they are well versed in spite of not reading anything
    (Seetharamaiah 1994 (I: 36, 38): 79). Kannada scholars feel
    that while saying this, the writer of *KRM* must be referring
    to folk literature that existed in Kannada. *KRM* also
    formulates certain rules and regulations to use Kannada.

2. *KRM* lists the "doshas"(= defects) in earlier Kannada poetry and suggests corrections *(Seetharamaiah 1994 (I: 41-50) 80-81)*. The main purpose behind suggesting rules of writing is how to use Sanskrit while writing in Kannada. How to mix the two languages, what the best method is to combine these two languages while writing in Kannada are the concerns that emerge from this text. This part can only be part of the Kannada version, not the Sanskrit version, as this is an added burden that the writer of *KRM* has taken upon himself. It accepts the inevitability of the use of Sanskrit in Kannada *(Seetharamaiah 1994 (I: 51-67) 81-84)*.

3. It also comments on Anandavardhana's 'dhwani theory' and upholds 'alankara theory'. This is also an added comment. Here the writer uses a poem by Anandhavardhana to oppose his argument that dhwani ('suggestion') is the mainstay of poetry *(Seetharamaiah 1994 (III: 208) 167)*. Though it is heavily indebted to *Kavyadarsha,* it is a meta-text on it, as any translation would be - a *vyakhyana* (commentary)/ *teeke* (interpretation) of the original, in a literal sense.

II

Now let us take up another text - the first available written epic of Kannada - to illuminate further the issues that this paper addresses. *Pampa Bharatham* or *Vikramarjuna Vijayam* (henceforth *VV)* is a text written by Pampa in 959 A.D[12]. According to the poems that come in the last chapter (the 14th) in *VV*, where the poet talks about the history of his ancestors, he was born in a family which was converted to Jainism in his father's generation *(Venkatanaranappa, 1990: (14: 40-49) 401-403)*. Before that the family was a Brahmin family. Though he is an ardent follower of Jainism as expressed in his text *Adipuranam* (*Venkatachala Shastri, 1995)*, (Hereinafter AP)[13], he was proud of his Brahmin background. In fact talking about the family's conversion to Jainism he claims that as it was a

religion that was fit for the Brahmins, his father got converted to that
religion.

What comes out in this statement is that the 'varna' system
was also a part of Jainism as those who converted to Jainism did not
shed their sense of superiority even in the new religion, although
while sketching the issue of Karna's "low-caste" origin in *VV*, Pampa
seems to have been aware of the brahmin-shudra hierarchical
opposition and arguments that were for and against the varna system
(Venkatachala Shastri, 1995 (II: 80-85) 60-61). Even in *KRM* there
are poems that clearly support the varna system[14]. In *VV*, there are
many poems in which the characters glorify the old times as golden
times, calling the present context as ruinous of the older one, with
the rhetorical question that is usually asked - what will happen to the
varna system with these changes? Preservation of the varna system
thus seems to be the preoccupation of the period[15]. But it is also true
that to some extent these conversions would have destabilized the
system or rearranged the system in a slightly different way[16]. For
example, Pampa, who was a Jaina Brahmin, was also a scholar, in
the sense that he knew old texts and was conversant with the ways of
training people for wars..

From the previous discussion we can deduce that religion or
the author's beliefs might have played a major role in shaping the
context of the texts. This would become clearer as we go on to
explore some more examples of differences that we come across in
the texts. In the first chapter of the epic, the poet himself says that
Vyasa Munindra Rudra Vachanaamruta Vaardhiyanisuven Kavi|
Vyasanenemba Garvamenagilla (Venkatachala Shastri, 1995 (1:13)
3)[17] meaning, "though I am trying to swim across the ocean of the
speech - nectar of sage Vyasa, I don't feel conceited about it". Here it
is clear that he is acknowledging *Mahabharatha,* which is
supposedly composed by sage Vyasa as the "original" text. But he
seems to have taken a humble stand vis-à-vis the "original author".

How does he translate? He elucidates on why he translates mentions that in a poem:

> *Kathe Piridaadodam Katheyameygadaliiyade Mum*
> *Samasta Bha | rathamanapoorvamaage Sale Peldha*
> *(Kavishwarari)/*
> *(da Vastuviivude) lla Varnakam ||*
> *Katheyoladambadam Padeye Pelvode Pampane*
> *Pelgumendu Pam |*
> *ditare Taguldu Bicchalise Pelalodarchidenii*
> *Prabhandhamam ||*
>   (Venkatachala Shastri, 1995 (1:11), 0.2-3)

> "As the story is vast, no poet-lord has been able to tell the complete story of Bharatha in an appealing manner. I started narrating this epic (prabhandam) by integrating the Varnaka style in the story to make the pandits proclaim that only Pampa could do it."

The poet is aware of the fact that the story of *Mahabharatha* is very vast. This is evident when he uses the metaphor of the ocean to refer to Vyasa's *Mahabharatha* to which I have alluded earlier *(Venkatachala Shastri, 1995 (I: 13)* but which appears after this poem in the text. According to the first version, he claims that no poet till now has been able to retell the complete Bharatha without affecting the framework of the story/theme. In the second version he seems to be claiming that till now nobody has been able to retell the complete tale of Bharatha in a "descriptive" way weaving that description with the story/theme[18]. He also claims that learned people say that only Pampa (that is, himself) can handle such a work.

What we see in the above analysis is that Pampa is aware of the Sanskrit *Mahabharatha* text and also knows that his audience

would be familiar with the "original text". Being able to retell the "original" without affecting the body of the story/theme either fusing "Vastuka" and "Varnaka" in the story or telling the story by fusing both Vastuka and Varnaka into the story is the challenge that he has taken up in these translations. Pampa's respect to both the "author" of the original and the story of the original is evident in these statements[19]. But this doesn't mean that *VV* has no differences when compared with Vyasa's *Mahabharatha*.

Many scholars have identified the differences between the Sanskrit *Mahabharatha* and Pampa's *VV*. Among these I here refer to Bellave Venkatanaranayappa *(Venkatanarayanappa 1990)*, who has listed 27 such differences in the Introduction to his edition of *VV*, and Krishna Kumar (1999).

The first major difference that we come across in *VV* is that the hero of the epic is Arikesari II, the king in whose court the poet Pampa was. Arikesari II, as it comes out in the epic is equated with Arjuna, the hero of the epic. Some of the details regarding Arikesari II have been corroborated by other Kannada and Sanskrit texts, and also by epigraphs of the period. Arikesari was a Chalukya king and the Chalukyas and the Rastrakutas, the other and bigger kingdom of the period, had a love-hate relationship[20].

This act of equating king Arikesari II with Arjuna of the epic is the biggest challenge that Pampa has faced in *VV*. Venkatanaranappa has felt that the changes that have been wrought because of this equation between Arikesari II and Arjuna seem to be "inappropriate" at certain places. The equation is achieved by equating the attributes that the king had with Arjuna in the beginning of each chapter. While describing the heroic qualities of Arjuna and his victories, he tries to equate victories with the wars that were waged by the king. Dharmaraja was worried that Arjuna would not be able to win against Karna. When Arjuna retorts to Dharmaraja,

Arjuna speaks as if he is born to Arikesari's actual parents. In the beginning of the epic Pampa praises the king using all his talents, and similarly at the end before embarking on a description of his own genealogy, he again praises the king.

Mahabharatha (Hereinafter *MB*) in Sanskrit is a Vaidic text as it appears today, whatever may be its origins. By the time of Pampa also this seems to have been the case. The poet has left out a major chunk of MB that alludes to religious issues and the explication of it. This may have been done as he was trying to compress the "original without affecting the main body of the theme/story, which is very vast. But it may also be due to the religious orientation of the poet. However, he has not been able to completely divest it of its religious connotations in his Kannada version. This point might again suggest that though he might have left out a large chunk of *MB*, it was not his intention to entirely leave out its religious connotations. In his epic he claims that, he has written a 'loukika' (secular) epic here and a "jinagamam" (Jaina Agama) over there[21]. The word 'there' refers to his other epic Adipurana, which is very much a Jaina Purana.

The sequence of situations in *MB* and *VV* are almost similar. He has not left out any parva of *MB*. Sometimes he has added new stories, stories that are not found in *MB*. While performing Rajasuya yaaga (sacrificial ritual) in *MB* the victories of each of the Pandavas have been described in great and rich detail. In *VV*, Pampa describes victories of all other Pandavas in just one line each and devotes the rest to praise Arjuna/Arikesari.

In Kirataarjuniya episode, Shiva defeats Arjuna in *MB*, but in *VV*, Arjuna defeats Shiva. Such is Pampa's loyalty to his king. Similarly during the fight between Bhima and Duryodhana, it is Arjuna who signals to Bhima to have a go at Duryodhana's thigh, but in *VV* it is Krishna who does the signalling. Hitting below the belt was against the rules of the fight. Violation of rules is something that

a king should not be doing. Krishna thus performs that role in *VV*. The story of a Brahmin child dying because of a penance undertaken by Sudraka, a non-dwija (non-brahmin i.e., a non twice-born) is found in both Ramayana and *MB*. It is Rama who upholds the varna system by killing the Shudra who performs penance in MB, whereas in *VV* it is Arjuna. This also reinforces my earlier point about the varna system.

Many such differences can be pointed out. I will, however, limit myself to the above examples. It is not that Pampa has taken only MB as his source for narration. He has also freely translated from other Sanskrit texts. He has taken poems from Kalidasa, Bhatta Narayana, and Bharavi and also from Bana's *Kadambari.* Pampa takes a poem out of its situation and uses it in other situations to suit his narration. For example, a poem describing Urvashi in Kalidasa's *Vikramorvashiya* is translated verbatim to describe Subhadre in *VV*. Similarly the description of the usefulness of hunting in *Abhijyana Shakuntala* is used in *VV*. While translating poems from Bhatta Narayana's *Veni Samhara* he adheres to a word-to-word translation. In other places while translating, he has modified them to suit his situations. Thus he engages in all kinds of translation - what we call today re-creation, adaptation, word-to-word translation etc.

Later writers have assiduously followed Pampa, the path bearer of Old Kannada literature. Ranna, another Jaina poet of the same century but who comes after Pampa, has written *Gadhayuddham*, focusing on the final fight between Duryodhana and Bheema. In fact he has taken the storyline from Pampa's *VV* and elaborated on it. While doing so he has borrowed freely from Pampa, and it hints at the kind of borrowing that existed then not only from other languages like Sanskrit but also from old Kannada texts. It is appropriate here to keep in mind another important concept of poetics called "Kavisamaya", a stereotypical description of certain characters, moods, situations that poets easily borrow from older

poets for better communication, which indicates inter-textuality, and appeals to the readers' knowledge of those texts.

III

What appear as prominent markers that etch their stamp on the texts produced at the turn of the first millennium in the central Kannada-speaking part of today's South India are religion and polity. The analysis that has been carried out on texts such as *KRM* and *VV* of 10th century Kannada literature indicates several important issues pertaining to the movement of texts from one language to another across time and space. I would like to indicate those issues for further research here by no more than mentioning them.

Emergence of a literary tradition through textual production in a language other than Sanskrit and Prakrit is one of the main issues. Translation or inter-textuality did not appear as translation in the sense we know today - that of translation as "discovery" or translation as "opposition" to or an appropriation of a "dominant" tradition, but as that of a context of bilingualism that existed then. Then writers and the listeners/readers of that period knew both Sanskrit and Kannada. The writers of this period very well knew that the readers would know the source text, so it was not to introduce a new story to them, but a new theme to them in a different context/space[22].

The issue of the king being the follower of a different faith than that of the poet is also an interesting issue that needs further research. Why the Jaina poets equated the king with the god of the Vaidic cult very easily is a question that needs to be probed further. Is it because they just wanted to praise the king and so equated him with god? Was it just the manifestation of their gratitude for the king in whose court they sought livelihood? Didn't they think that it was "wrong" to equate the king, a human being with god? Or as Pampa claims that his *VV* is not a religious text but a secular text. Did these

poets not think of it as profane at all, as their faith was different? How did they manage to toe the line both of "religion" and "polity"? Is it that the polity itself was hospitable to "other" religions? Or does it mean that there was perfect harmony between different faiths/cults during this period and only from the following century onwards we frequently get texts that depict other faiths in antagonistic terms and the violence that accompanies forced conversion?

I would say that instead of resorting to easy theorizing of the pre-colonial notion of translation as different from today's notion of translation and looking at it as just Kannada v/s Sanskrit, we need to place those texts in the socio-political space that gave rise to such texts and also look at the space that these texts were carving out during that period in the society. There is ample scope for research to be carried out in this field that would throw more light on issues such as language-community, language-culture, secular notion of running a polity, interaction between religious faith and polity etc.

NOTES

1. Such formulations can be found in Mukherjee *(Mukherjee 1981)*, Devy *(Devy 2001)*, Satchidanandan *(Satchidanandan 1998: 171-77)* and also by many Kannada critics such as Narayana *(Narayana 1998)*, Nagabhushanaswamy *(Nagabushanaswamy 1998)* and Kurtakoti *(Kurtakoti 1994)*. Elsewhere I have taken up these formulations for analyses to show the problems or holes in their arguments *(Tharakeshwar, 2002)*.

2. Though I am using the word "language-cultures" to mean cultures defined on the basis of a language, I still have doubts whether the boundaries of a language and culture are coterminous. But as any notion of a culture is an abstraction based on certain identifiable traits, I use the word "language-culture" in this paper with all its problematics.

3. There are other texts in Kannada, which are also derived from *Mahabharatha* such as *Sahasa Bhima Vijayam (Kulkarni, 1998), Karnata Bharatha Kathamanjari (Kuvempu & Iyengar, 1988)* and J*aimini Bharatha (Sannaiah & Ramegowda, 1993).*

4. Whether one should call these 'translations' or not is itself an issue in many writings as they "drastically" differ from the so-called 'originals'. For us any translation is a difference of the "original" text, and the "original" doesn't carry much weight apart from serving us as a reference point for comparison so as to analyze the differe(a)nce of the translation.

5. This text has been analyzed by Pollock as the one that marks the birth both of "cosmopolitan vernacular" not as opposed to, but on the model of "Sanskrit Cosmopolis" in South Asia. *(Pollock 1998).*

6. The authorship of *KRM* was a contentious issue for quite some time. Some claimed that the author was King Nrupatunga, who was a devotee of Lord Vishnu but later might have veered towards Jainism. Some others claimed that Srivijaya, a Jaina follower, who was in the court of King Nrupatunga, wrote it. People like Fleet have suspected that a poet by the name Kavishwara might have written it. It is now accepted that the author was Srivijaya. But the authorship issue doesn't concern us much, except for his leanings towards religion.

7. As my knowledge of the Sanskrit texts in question is not adequate, I have taken up only those differences that have been identified by scholars such as Kurtakoti or as noted in their preface by the editors of the concerned text in Kannada.

8. 'Vedic' is a terminology that is found in some of these Kannada texts composed by Jaina poets. What it means is, non-Jaina and Non-Buddhist sects. Terming these various sects, as Jaina Poets/writers have done, as "Vedic" is problematic, but still at this stage I would like to persist with this category for purposes of expository clarity.

9. This is not to suggest that Jaina and Buddhist texts are not in Sanskrit. Though Buddhists preferred earlier Pali and Jains

preferred Prakit, they too, especially scholars of the Jaina religion, composed texts in other languages later on.

10. Hyperglossia refers to a situation of hierarchical bilingualism.

11. For the existence of this spatial imagination in *Mahabharatha* see Pollock *(Pollock, 1988:15-16).*

12. The editor of the revised version of this text (1931) Bellave Venkatanarayanappa says that the text was published in the year 863 of the Shalivahana calendar that corresponds to year 941 A.D. of the Christian era *(Venkatanarayanappa, 1990: xxii)*

13. This is the first text composed by Pampa and is religious in nature.

14. In *KRM* the order of the varnas is slightly different: first come the Vaishyas, then the Brahmins, followed by Kshatriyas and Shudras.

15. Here it is not inappropriate to recall another text of this period, which is supposed to be the first prose text in Kannada, *Vaddaradhane (Narasimhachar, 1998)* of the same century. This is a collection of short stories, which aims at converting people to Jainism. Interestingly it targets only the first three varnas of the varna system viz. Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas.

16. The destabilization (re-organization?) of the varna system is more evident in the context of the Shaiva (Veerashaiva) and Vaishnava drive to recruit Shudras or those who are outside the varna system or who have not yet become part of the varna system (as these communities might have been in their formative stages due to emergence of new occupations) in the 12th and 15th centuries respectively, than in conversions to Jainism. But occupation shifts don't seem to have taken place in spite of conversion to a new sect or adapting to a new sect.

17. All references to page numbers chapter and poem numbers are based on the text edited by Bellave Venkatanarayanappa (1990).

18. The words in parentheses are found in different manuscripts indicating two different versions of the text.

19. The words "Vastuka" and "Varnaka" are used as conceptual categories in Kannada literary tradition, but without exactly defining it. Various scholars have defined it in different ways, but Seetharamaiah argues that the concepts have changed their meaning over time (Seetharamaiah, 1974).

20. These kingdoms where situated in today's northern Karnataka, which the historians of the medieval period normally identify as the Deccan plateau.

21. Agamas are sacred texts that lay out the tenets of the religion.

22. This situation is something similar to the one that is pointed out by Bassnett *(Bassnett 1991)* with regard to Roman translations, in her classification of various stages of translation in Europe. There also, the translations were carried out for an audience who knew the source language well and would have read the translated text in original form. But there the Roman polity had taken firm root against that of the Greek polity. Here in South Asia we find no correspondence between language and polity. Even if there are correspondence between language and polity. Even if there are correspondences it is quite different from that of the European situation as sketched in the second part of this paper.

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Translating Calcutta / Kolkata

JAYITA SENGUPTA

Abstract

Calcutta now 'postcolonised' as Kolkata, with its history a little over three hundred years, has been a constant source of inspiration and provocation for writers, artists and film-makers. No matter how dirty the city is, how outrageous its politicians are and how 'impossible' life seems to be here, Calcutta has never met with indifference. A mere Indian twist to the name given by the colonial masters cannot change its history. Nor can the colonial hangover which still looms ghost-like over the city, be underestimated. Just as each and every place has a flavour, odour, sound, tone and intonation of its own, Calcutta too has a dialect singularly its own. The main dialect, which the bhadralok class speaks, is commonly known as the 'Kolkataiya Bangla'. Though there have been earlier attempts by Tekchand Thakur to familiarize people with this dialect, the father of this Bengali is evidently Tagore. He could successfully modernize the language by using the "chalti Bangla" instead of the"shudha bhasha" as used by his predecessor Bankimchandra and by his contemporaries like Saratchandra. Besides this mainstream urbane Bengali there are other dialects, - the voices and the tones of the suburbs and the bangal accent in the language of the people who migrated to

Calcutta in the wake of partition. And even within the bhadralok class there is a difference in the use of the spoken Bengali in the north and the south of the metropolis. For those who have watched the film made on Tagore's Chokher Bali *by the director Rituparno Ghosh, the point would be clear indeed. Interestingly, a study of dialects can be a study of culture too. The spoken word with its tone and intonation speaks of the cultural / educational background of the speaker and his social status. Rendering the difference of dialect and division is easy in a film as for example the word pronounced as "aishee" and "ashchee" meaning "I am coming" would immediately appeal to the ear. But how does a translator, translating the text into English, make this difference visible and audible through translation? Most of the publishing houses in their endeavour to maintain the Indian flavour in English just end up by following certain stereotypical norms, which may lead to mistranslation of expressions and give wrong impressions. Just a mere retaining of cultural expressions like "Hai Ram!" or "Hai Rabba!" cannot carry enough weight as cultural signifiers. This paper will take up the issue of translating the Calcutta mainstream culture and its other(s) with illustrations from existing English translations and a few other relevant Bengali texts. It will attempt to discuss the 'untranslatable' or the problems involved in crossing over cultural barriers and the possibility of cultural slippage in English translation.*

> *Ajob Shahar Kolkata*
> *Randhi Bari Judigadi*
> *Michey kather ke keta*
>
> (Seth 1990:314)

Any place has a sound, smell, language, atmosphere of its own which the mind absorbs and tries to rationalize or translate in definite terms. Such an act of translating perceptions into language and literature and re-translating it into other languages is a complex process indeed. When there is interplay of many languages and dialects, the task of the translator becomes further complicated and difficult. Calcutta or Kolkata, like the other metropolises Delhi and Mumbai, is a cultural text involving problematic subtexts such as dialect, which includes para-texts like race, class and caste differences, through a diachronic historical perspective. As there never was any question of cultural purity from the very beginning, one cannot look for any coherent cultural identity in the Kolkata of the present times or the Calcutta of yore. Kolkata has never been free from cultural contaminations. Whore-like in its cultural charm it has attracted visitors, artists, tradesmen and dwellers from time to time. It has had a rich cultural matrix not always free from filthy and complex political and ideological strife. For developing a proper perspective, a casual reading of translations of Bengali texts in any regional language or in English may not be sufficient. The social history of Kolkata is a dialectical one; so supplementary reading of background, social history and dialects are important. The postcolonial debate about the *Bengalisising* of Calcutta as Kolkata in the above context is possibly a rather simplistic gesture of pinning down the city in a word. A brief look at the controversy regarding the name may help justify the case.

Well-known historians like Suniti Chattopadhyay argue that *Kolikata* is a pure Bengali word. He goes on to say that in Bengali it actually means 'lime shell'. *Koli* (lime) was obtained from the specialized process of burning shells *(kata)* and was stacked in a

place close to what we now know as Strand Road. Binoy Ghosh adds on to Suniti Chattopadhyay's argument by pointing out that there were three roads namely, Chunapukur Lane, Chunagali and Chunarpara Lane where the lime trade was carried on by lime-merchants across the Ganges, which flowed at that time by the side of the Strand Road. There are also theories about the derivation of Kolkata from *Kali Kota,* where *kota* ('mandir or temple') refers to the famous *Kali* temple at Kalighat. So some scholars suggest that Kolkata owes its name to one of the oldest pilgrimage shrines or the *Kali templ*e at Kalighat. Certain critics however are of the view that Calcutta is derived from Calicut. The Portuguese ship merchants had embarked on a trip to Calicut to begin their trade with India, so the name Calicut became quite familiar to the European ears even before the British merchants came. Later on the Armenians and the British used the name of Calicut, which had already made a reputation for itself for its products on their native soils. But they actually collected their raw materials from the port at Saptagram and then later from Sutanati, Gobidopur and the Garden Reach, Strand Road areas. It was much later that Calicut was changed to Calcutta. Purnendu Patri quotes Hunter in his book *Purono Kolkatar Kathachitra* to suggest another theory of the name's origin:

> "It (Kolkata) was identified by our mariners with Golgatha, the place of skulls". [1]
>
> (Patri 1979:111-113)

The Chowringhee area at that time was notorious for dacoits, associating skulls and Golgatha with Kolkata, which many critics later had pointed out as a picturesque error. Purnendu Patri and H.E.A Cotton (Cotton 1980: 22-23) posit yet another view that The name, they say, could be derived from Kilkila, by which the area between *Saraswati* on the west and *Jamuna* on the east was formerly known. There are thus many conjectures about the name *Kolikata* or *Kolkata* and the colonial version, *Calcutta.* Thus no deterministic principle can be worked out in fixing the etymology of

the name *Kolkata.* So Suniti Chattopadhyay's argument about *Kolkata* as a pure Bengali word, which underlies the race of *Kolkatans* as being purely Bengali, is questionable.

Perhaps it was Tagore who quite aptly defined the cultural possibilities of the Bengalis in their fervour for the assimilation of cultures, races and linguistic nuances in a very brief statement in his *Japan Jatri:*

> "In such a huge nation such as India, the Bengalis were the first to accept the new ideas and even now they have this absorbing quality to accept and re-invent … There has been a rigorous mixing of blood in Bengalis; it is doubtful whether there has been such mixing elsewhere in India"

> "The task of inaugurating the gateway for an exchange between East and West has been on the *Bengalis".*
> (Rabindra Rachonaboli 1961: 526-527)

He continues his debate on culture in the same essay, where he suggests,

> "The mind of a profusely mixed race cannot be cast into a definite mould. In the process of confrontation between various ideas it has to have a progressive outlook … if we are hell-bent looking for purity in blood, we can find it only in the race of barbarians".
> (Rabindra Rachonaboli 1961: 526-527)

Here he comes quite close to Edward Said's opinion of 'culture' as a theatre of sorts engaged in an interplay of ideology and political strategies together … of being not monolithic … not the *exclusive property of East and West, nor of small groups of men and women* (Said 1994: xxvii). Tagore's debate on the Bengalis and his

definition of 'culture' paralleling Said's definition of culture, calls to mind an interesting anecdote about the beginnings of bi-lingualism in Kolkata. Nakul Chattopadhyay in his book, *Tin Shataker Kolkata* (Chattopadhyay 1965:2) humorously narrates how the first Britishers of the ship Falcon in 1679 at Garden-Reach had created a *do-bhashiya* or the *bi-lingual* to solve their problems of communication with the inhabitants of the land. When the Britishers spelled out their need for a *do-bhashiya* to the dominant community of *Basaks* in the place, there was confusion about ascertaining the meaning of the word. The *Basaks* had mistaken the meaning of *do-bhashiya* for *dhopa* or the 'washer-man' as they thought that the *sahibs* desperately needed someone to wash their clothes in the ship. So they sent a washer-man (not before a lot of coaxing and bribing for the man scared him out of his wits), all garbed in new clothes along with few molasses, nuts and gifts via a boat to *Falcon*. The washer-man was to his surprise received with a lot of celebration and gifts that made him change his mind about the British and prompted him to be a regular visitor to the ship. The interaction proved fruitful for he gradually picked up enough English to act as a mediator between the British and the local inhabitants. So with the help of their mediator, the British had a *palkee* or *palanquin* sent for them by the *Basaks*, which finally gave them the access to the inland area and set up their trade in that region. With the gradual infiltration of the British there is the resultant syncretism of cultures in this phase of the history of Kolkata as evident from the paintings, travelers' documents and *Calcutta Gazette* of the period. Cotton gives a vivid description of the re-invention of the *palanquin*, which the Britishers once used as their mode of transport. He also gives details of how *hookah* smoking became a fashion among the Europeans in those days *(Cotton 1980: 77)*. Thus taking into account that from its very beginnings Kolkata has always been receptive to all kinds of influences, we can attempt to detect these changes in Bengali literature and consider their translatability.

Prior to Lebedoff's theatre in 1795 and the beginnings of Bengali literature in print we have had a long tradition of *Kabi-sangeet*, which were vibrant with the strains of the popular culture. According to Sri Bhudeb Choudhury *(Choudhury 1964)*, this tradition gradually died out after Ram Basu's *kabiyal* in the nineteenth century and was absorbed into *toppas*, which were becoming popular. However the last strains of this long tradition of *kabi-geeti* beautifully capture the cultural milieu of those times. Take for example the following lines which depict a dialogue between Ram Basu and Anthony Henceman or Anthony Firingee as he was popularly known, who had a Portuguese father and an Indian mother and was a devotee of *Kali*:

> "Oh come on Anthony, tell me the story
> What became of your hat and coat in this country*?*"

> (Balo hey Antuni ami ekta katha jante chai
> Eshe edeshe ebeshe tomar gaye keno kurti nai)

And Anthony replies:

> "In this Bengal, the Bengali garb suits me fine.
> Have changed my attire as Thakur Sinha's father's jamai".

> (Ei Banglai Bangalir beshe anande acchi
> Hoye Thakre Simher baper jamai kurti-tupi
> ccherechi)
>
>   (Choudhury 1964: 9)

If we compare the original version of the limerick with the possible translation, there are cultural slippages that cannot be helped. In the Bangla version, *thakur* is pronounced as *thakre*. Such instances of colloquial strain in *kobir lorai* sessions are typical and one misses much of the fun in English translation. The same light-

hearted spirit is evoked through the slang *baper* in *baper jamai*, which is flattened out in English; *kurti* and *tupi*, the Bengalisised versions of the *sahebi* attire, which in Hindi version would be *kurta* and *topi* have a touch of harmless sarcasm which ring out probably only to the Indian ears and those who are familiar with the milieu. More complex are the lines that follow:

> "For nothing Saheb, you shaved your head and laid it
> down on those black feet.
> If that padri Saheb, your father knows, he will smear
> your face with lime and grit"
>
> *(*Saheb mithhe tui Krishna paode-e matha murrali
> O tor padri saheb shunte pele gale debe chun-kali)

And Anthony answers firmly:

> There's hardly any difference between Krishna and
> Christ, brother
> Never heard that the sound of names could make
> things matter
> No different is my god from the Hindu Hari whom
> you claim as yours…
>
> (Christe aar Krishte kicchu bhinno nai-re bhai
> Shudhu nam-er fere manush fere e-o katha shuni nai
> Amar khoda Hindu hari she…)
>
> (Choudhury 1964)

While *padri* colloquially refers to clergymen, *firinghee* would mean a half-caste and later, Eurasian and then Anglo-Indian. There's a play of ideas in *Krishna* paod. Ram Basu was definitely referring to *Kali* for Anthony was known to be a *Kali* devotee. But when Anthony replies he changes it to *Krishna,* both *Kali* and *Krishna* being dark-complexioned. Again the word *murrali*

beautifully puns at shaving of head as a part of Anthony's initiation into the worship of *Kali* along with self-dedication at the altar of the goddess. The suggestion that Anthony has made a fool of himself cannot be missed in the line, for the act of shaving has another cultural overtone, that of declaring oneself a fool. Probably there is much more to these tongue-in-cheek verses as they provide a moving cultural picture of the times. While these limericks reflect the Bengali reception of Anthony into their religion and culture, it also calls to mind the worship of *Kali* popularized by Ramakrishna at Dakshineshwar and his ideas on religion based on *jato mat tato path* (As many religions, as many ways to the same God) in the nineteenth century and provide links to the socio-cultural-religious history of the period. The idea of many cultures enriching the Bengali culture continues to be accepted by the Kolkatans from various angles.

As *toppas* take over and Ramnidhi Gupta creates a style of his own which is adopted by his followers to form a school of Nidhubabur toppa, he too sings:

> Various regions speaking various tongues
> Without which the mother-tongue
> Can its dreams flutter?

> (Nanan desher nanan bhasa
> bine swadeshi bhasha
> poore kee aasha*?*)
>
> (Choudhury 1964: 47)

Dasu Roy's *pachali-gaan* or *jatra-sangeet* too captures the changing socio-cultural matrix in its praise of Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar advocating widow remarriage:

> The talk about widow-remarriage
> Has painted the supreme of all kolis (flower-buds)

Kolikata red …
Salutations to him
One Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar by name
He is the leader of Bengalis
And a professor too of the company's Hindu College.

(Bidhoba-bibaho pratha
Koli-r prodhan kolikata
Nagar-e uthecche oti rob …
Dhanya dhanya goonodham
Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar naam
Tini karta bangalir
Tate abar companyr
Hindu colleger odhyapok)

(Choudhury 1964:50)

These *kabi-gaan*, *toppas* and *pachali-gaan* create the background for Bengali theatre and prose manuals like Dikdarshan published by the missionaries of Serampore in 1888. Publication of Dikdarshan, was followed within a month by Marshman edited Samachar Darpan. William Carey edited Itihasmala and Kathopokathan were also published around the same time, as Fort William College publications. Ramram Basu created interest in national history with the publication of the Raja Protapaditya Charitro in 1801, followed by Batrish Sinhashan, Hitopodesh, and Rajaboli Probod Chandrika by Mrittunjoy Bidyalankar in 1813; these were also published by Fort William college publications. Such interest in national history later finds its fine flowering in Bankim Chandra's works. Prose manuals in conversational Bangla inspired Kali Prasanna Sinha to write his satirized version of Kolkata society of the times, in Hutum Panchar Naksha. The book is the first attempt at modernizing Bengali literature in print and incorporating the parole or the *chalti Bangla* rather than the langue. An extract from the naksha will reveal how vibrantly, vividly and picturesquely the sound and smell of Kolkata are captured in Hutum's description:

The sophisticated merchant house worker washed his face and hands and finished his tiffin to pick up his sitar. In the next room, the kids shout - "a bog - *nicher ghar*" (a room downstairs), "a nap, *ek aalpo nidra*" (mild sleep), "a doll, *baloker kelibar ghari*" (a boy's playwatch) - they're reading Vidyasagar's *Barno-Parichay*. *Pil iyar cchokras* (good for nothing rascals) have learnt to fly. The goldsmiths use the *Durgapradip* (meaning a huge lamp) as a blowpipe. A few clothes, furniture and utensil shops flank both sides of the street. The *rokor* - shopkeeper, *Poddar* - who deals with the buying and selling of gold and silver and gold merchants, count their cash and talk at length about their monetary dealings. At Shobhabazaar downtown - market owned by the rajas of the place, fisher-women with lamps in their hands sort out the decayed fish and salty *hilsa* and shout provocations to the prospective buyers - "*O*" the *gamocha* cries, "*want some good fish?*" They cajole "… *O Khengra Goopo minshe, will you give four annas for it?*" Some customers respond teasingly to be abused in turn for it. Opium addicts, drunkards and hemp-smokers with empty pockets stroll down the streets pretending to be blind - "*Some alms for the blind Brahmin please!*" and they make provision for procuring narcotics. Then at this hour, a *dhak* booms out at the *gajan tola* owned by the *babu* people - "*Bole Bhadesshwar Shibo*" - this kicks up a row, '*this time it is the case of a fake sanyas…*' These people cling to the rich as cooing doves in their residence. They never put their cunning to rest. So when the *babu* is in need of a woman, they fetch that too.

(Sinha 1861: 37)

The slang locutions used in the passage are a part of the colourful evening scenario in the open North Kolkata market place. The fact that English was taught in schools like number tables, finds mention in Bhudeb Choudhury's book too (*Choudhury* 1964: 18). The mistakes in the corresponding Bangla meanings of the English words were deliberate satirization of the business class's endeavors toward learning English. Probably after a second thought, this satirization was removed from the second edition. But the *Babu* continued to be satirized by *Hutum* in many pages of the book. Even Pearychand Mitra or *Tekchand Thakur* was not spared the sarcasm. The illustration in the book with the caption: "*Thonthon-er hathat abotar*" or *the sudden arrival of "Thonthon"* depicts the Brahmin in *dhoti* and full sleeved *kameez* with a shawl around his neck, *kocha* in hand and *tupi* or cap on his head along with his five disciples, the last being Pearychand Mitra. A Brahmin *pandit* with a *tiki* and *gamocha* on his shoulder smokes a cigarette as he holds an umbrella over *thonthon's* head. *Thonthon*, as one might guess, is the *Babu* - a cross-cultural product of Bengali-European syncreticism. *Hutum* describes *thonthon* as a *janto shong* or *a living clown*. The illustration in *Hutum's* book on wood engraving of *Bindubashini* by one Ramdhon goldsmith depicts beautifully the co-mingling of the two cultures, where *Durga, Unicorn and Angels* figure together. A humorous description of the *barowari protima* or the public place idol and her worship in his tongue-in-cheek vein perfectly matches with the illustration in *Hutum*:

> The news spread in the town rapidly that there was to be a *half aankrai* in a public place of worship in a certain part of the town. Whether it was the *iyaar* type schoolboy, or the seventy-year-old invalid, everyone was crazy about *half aankrai*. There was a hullabaloo in the market. The washer-man started earning at the opportunity. The price for the puckered *dhoti*, the neatly ironed *kameez* and the

striped *urni* of Shantipur variety hiked to eight annas
…

The public place of worship filled up with people -
on the one hand was the mud clown in an encircling
wooden frame and on the other hand were the *living
clowns* in colourful attires within the wooden
framework and outside it. The big people in their
tanshwala tupi, chapkan, belt and desire looked even
more arrogant than the demon in the *chalchitra*. The
principal, Birkrishna Babu was roving round like a
fop-top, betel leaf spittle streamed down the sides of
his lips like some blood teethed demon - servants,
couriers, *sarkars*, clerks, managers nobody had any
time to breathe even.

(Sinha 1864: 87-88)

True to his intention *Hutum's* alias Kaliprasanna Sinha's
lively description in colloquial tongue paints a moving chronicle of
Kolkata in the 1860s. The book also contains a self-illustration,
where *Hutum* does not spare himself either from self-caricature.
Hutum in the drawing is seen to be a Brahmin *pandit* with a tiki
wearing a *dhoti* and full-sleeve *kameez*, sitting on a globe and flying
nakshas or satirical sketches. The caption runs: *Hutum Paancha
ashman-e bosh-e naksha orancchen* (*Hutum* the owl is flying
nakshas in the sky). The distinction between the *Bengali Babu* and
Hutum is thus that of a *tupi* and a *tiki*; one is as wise as an owl in his
satirical vision and the other a cross-cultural clown. While much of
the art and architecture in this period reflect such hybrid quality
about them, the *Babu* becomes an unlimited subject of ridicule in
many literary works. Saratchandra in his three-part novel *Srikanta*
satirizes the *Bengali Babu* or the *thonthon* as *Natunda* singing
thunthun peyala (Part One). *Srikanta's* narration describes the shock
and amazement at the *Kolkataiya Babu* when he goes over to meet
his friend Indra one winter evening:

The sight of him in the moonlight was quite a scare. A *kolkataiya babu* - means a terrible *babu*. Silk socks, glittering pump-shoe, wrapped in an over-coat from head to feet, gloves, a *tupi* for the head - there's no limit to his precautionary strategies against the western winter. Slighting our favourite canoe as disgusting in a tone of firm admonition, he balanced his body-weight on Indra's shoulders and held on to my hand for support and with careful steps after a lot of hassle settled himself snugly at the centre of the boat.

"*What's your name?*"
"*Srikanta*" I replied fearfully.

He responded with a grimace,
"*Sri and then Kanta -! Only Kanta will suffice. Come on; arrange the tobacco leaves. Indra, where did you keep the hookah and the tobacco bowl? Give that to this rascal - let him do it!*"

<div align="right">(Sarat Rachonaboli 1975:36)</div>

In Tagore, the theme is taken up once again in many of his novels, say, for example, *Shesher Kobita*. Amit Roy, the modern *Bengali Babu* without his *hookah* and *tupi* but with a copy of *Donne* in his pocket is the strange creature *Amitray*. He is a split personality, for his pseudonym is Nibaran Chakraborty, when he wishes to project his Bengali self. *Ketaki* is *Ketki* and *Naredra Mittir* is *Naren Mitter*. Tagore here makes two clear-cut distinctions: the *Babu* and the *Bengali*. While *Ketaki*, whom *Amit* marries against his wishes is the Anglicized Bengali woman and is despicable for her *Anglo mannerisms* Labonya has been idealized by Tagore as the *modern Bengali woman* in the making. She may not be all glowing with ideologies like *Suchorita* in *Gora*, but she has developed her

own identity as a product of cherished cultural syncreticism. Tagore maneuvers the plot, blending it with his ideological presumptions that *Ketkis* will become *Ketakis* when married to *Nibaran Chakrabortys* and not *Amitrays*; Amit too will be able to balance his high-flown poetic sensibilities with commonsense. The strife between *Babu* and the *Bengali*, regionalism, nationalism and internationalism probably required a larger canvas, which we find in *Gora* (1909). The name *Gora*, meaning the European or the *sahib*, becomes a contested plane of ideas in the novel.

There is a gap of around fifty years between Kaliprasanna Sinha's *Hutum* (1861) and Saratchandra Chattopadhyay's *Srikanta* (1917) and then again another eleven years passed before Tagore wrote his *Shesher Kobita* (1928). By this time *babuwana* had been a part of the city's culture. While the *sahibs* were hooked on to their *hookahs*, the *Bengali Babus* languished over teacups as they took their puff from the *hookahs*. Then the *sahibs*, and the *babus* after them, discovered the cigarette. Bangla language too underwent certain noticeable changes. Kali Prasanna's *Bangla*, which still provides an enjoyable reading, is written exclusively in the North Kolkatan conversational dialect. It is *chalti bhasha* in a typical North Kolkata ch strain as *karche*, *khachche*, instead of *korchhe*, *kachhe* etc. Saratchandra Chattopadhyay's literature compared to the *Bankimi bhasha* is *shudha Bangla* (as *koriyacche* instead of *karcche* would show), with a difference. Unlike Bankim, his language is fluid, bordering on the colloquial. He does not use ch as in North Kolkata dialect but *chh* instead. It was Pearychand Mitra or *Tekchand Thakur* as he was nicknamed, who took up the banner against the *Bankimi* style referring to him and his followers as the *shab pora maura dahor daul* (*shab* in *shudha bhasha*, meaning the dead body, is *maura* in *chalti bangla* and *daho* referring to funeral rites, is *pora* in *chalti bhasha*). The sarcasm is intended at the *Bankimi* writers mixing up the two strains and producing a hotchpotch Bangla in their endeavor to remain *shudha* or pure. Pearychand Mitra's *Alaler Ghare Dulal*, serves to be another

dialectical chronicle of Kolkata like *Hutum* in the late nineteenth century. Works like *Kalpatoru* by Indranath Bandopadhyay, *Model Bhogini* by Jogendranath Basu, *Sneholata* by Swarnakumari Debi, around the same time reflect the influence of Kaliprasanna Sinha and Pearychand Mitra. For example, the intermingling of sounds, notes and dialects at the *Ahirtola Ganga Ghat* in Sneholata's book, recall the dialogical descriptions in *Hutum*. Voices, attitudes are vividly portrayed along with a variety of dialects. Voices of fisherwomen shouting, business class abusing each other, students discussing their classroom achievements, tunes from mercantile boats in *Chattogram* dialect co-mingle to create the evening canvas on the *Ahirtola Ganga ghat*. While it is easier for a painter to depict the polyphony in shades of colour or for a filmmaker to translate the atmosphere, translating the same in another language, especially into English with its foreign origins is no easy task. Take for example the lines floating across the Ganges waters in Sneholata's book:

> Aaar kuyelan dahio
> Bandhu gecche bedeshat, khat na lehan
> Chhomashat
> Bandhur lagi mor kalija jauli jauli jai
> Koyela na dahio
>
> (Dasgupta 1989:742)

A translation of the same into English can retain the meaning without flavour, its cultural contours flattened out. Precisely, dialects such as this are untranslatable just as the differences between *ch* and *chh* or pronunciation of *lebu* as *nebu* meaning lemon, are also untranslatable. There can be so much of a cultural slippage between the two sounds - *l* is how the *South Kolkatans*, initially from the East-Bengal pronounce and n is how the North Kolkatans, the people of *adi-Kolkata* pronounce. As Narendranath Dasgupta in *Pearychand Mitra*: *Samaj Chinta o Sahitya* (Dasgupta 1989:17) points out - language that we utter reflects our intention, our background, our mental set up and how we

wish to project ourselves. Language creates a dialectical relationship between human beings and their society. In translation, where dialectical differences cannot be retained, communication process is also faulty. While Tagore's predecessors experimented with *shudha* or *chalti bhasha* as their style, in Tagore we find both. Novels like Gora, Ghare Baire and Chaturanga are written in *shudha bhasha* with *kariachhe, giyacche* etc, but *Shesher Kobita*, *Jogajog*, *Char Odhyay* are in *chalti bhasha* and closer to the spoken language of the *bhadralok* class of our century. The modernization of Bangla in Tagore can be traced by comparing his earlier works with the later ones. Here too when the translator would set himself to the task of translating in another language or English, the hidden cultural history will be dismissed or has to be stated in *notes* or *footnotes*. In a film probably, the changing times could be depicted artistically as Rituparno Ghosh does in *Chokher Bali*. Asha, who is illiterate, uses her rustic dialect, where ascchi is *aishee*. Mahendra, her educated husband, a doctor by profession, in his arrogance puns at her *aishee* as *I see*, which bewilders the simplistic Asha. The dialectical difference brings out the complexities in their ill-matched marriage. Binodini's convent education, her knowledge of English is her charm. She is what Asha is not. Binodini is the new woman, while Asha is the typical one. So just by the sound of a word, so much can be told.

The 1920s are marked by an anti-Tagore modernity, which Tagore had anticipated in his characterization of Amit Ray, the hero in *Shesher Kobita*. This anti-Tagore modernity phase or the Bengal renaissance owes its source to the literary *addas* and little magazines around the time. In 1921, Gokulchandra Nag and Dineshranjan Das set up the *Four Arts Club* on Hazra Road, in association with Manindralal Basu and Sunita Debi. This was a kind of a prelude to the *adda* that grew up around the magazine *Kallol*, which was celebrated largely owing to Achintokumar Sengupta's *Kallol Yug*. It included writers like Shibram Chakraborty, Pramothonath Bishi, Premendra Mitra, Shailajananda Mukherji, Tarashankar Banerji,

Nazrul Islam and others. Along with *Kallol* the other journals, which joined hands in their striving for anti-Rabindranath modernity, were *Sanhati* (1923), *Uttara* (1925), *Kalikalam* (1926), *Pragati* (1926) and *Purbasha* (1932). In the words of Premendranath, *Kallol* was "*a rebellious wave risen from the sullen vacancy of the material and intellectual world after First World War … It was anxious to test all life and civilization for inertness and decay*" (Chaudhuri (np): 230). Wedding Marx to Freud, the *Kallol Yug* saw the human entity as a combination of the biological man and the economical man. Possibly in carrying the Prufrockian strain to its extreme, the *Kallol* writers were charged with obscenity. Shanibarer Chithi, though no friend of Tagore's, began to criticize openly the Kallol writers on the ground of depicting the hyper-reality or the *curry powder reality - the flaunting poverty combined with unrestrained lust*. The modernization of the language initiated by Kaliprasanna Sinha comes a long way in the writings of these young men in the rapidly changing 1920s and 30s. Poetry, in the main catches the changing moods - the disillusionment, disgust, hope, despairs and hunger in the Kolkata metropolis. Jibanananda Das's *Midnight* gives us a glimpse of a nocturnal scene on a Kolkata street:

> The leper licks water from the hydrant
> Or perhaps the hydrant is broken.
> Now midnight crowds upon the city:
> A car passes with a foolish cough.
>
> (Chaudhuri (nd): 253)

The poet in his hopeful moods, which is not, however without a touch of irony, utters what now has become proverbial: *Kolkata, one day, will be a vibrant Tilottama*. As time marches on, India is partitioned and we are pushed into the post-colonial realities. The changing phases of politics and cultural milieu continue to be the source of inspiration for the writers in 1946-47. Riots, partition, independence and the change of times find reflection in the writings of Jibanananda Das, Bishnu Dey, Nirad Majumdar and others. The

poet Jibanananda Das records in his *Dhusor Pandulipi* (Bleak Manuscript), the *strange darkness around him in those days*:

> 'I'm Yaseen,
> Hanif, Muhammad, Maqbul, Karim, Aziz -
> And you?' Hand on my breast, his eyes upraised
> In his dead face, churning the bloody river
> He'll say: 'I'm Gagan, Bipin, Shashi, of
> Pathuriaghata,
> Maniktala, Shyambazar, Galiff Street, Entali …'
>
> (Chaudhuri (nd): 235)

Jal Dao ('Give Me Water') by Nirad Majumdar weaves together the painful memories and afflictions of the partition years:

> Everywhere see homeless men gasp in the shadows
> In parks, camps, roadways, mansion porches, beds
> On hard floors -
> What do they think? Have they left their homes to
> Look for their country?
> Where will they go? Perhaps to Howrah, perhaps to
> Dhaka …
>
> (Chaudhuri (nd): 236)

The romantic note of the Bengal renaissance continues in the writings of writers like Protibha Basu. Protibha Basu and Ashapurna Debi's stories and novels, and Maitraye Debi's *Nahanyate* beautifully depict the various facets of the Kolkata middle class society in these transition years - the phase marked by the *colonial hangover* and the *post-colonial modernity*. The writings of fifties and sixties continue to depict the influence of modernist writers/poets in the West. The *Eliotsian* strain continues in the lines of Subhash Mukhopadhyay:

> On the lane the evening slowly falls,
> The hawkers cry their old tunes on the way

The radio in the distance spreads a dream
The burning gas marks the end of a day …
                              (Chaudhuri (nd.): 254)

Sunil Gangopadhyay wishes to smother the Tilottama Kolkata in his arms:

Where can you find refuge in Kolkata?
I shall turn round all the ships on the Ganga
I shall focus their giant searchlights
On the darkness of the Maidan:
I shall then smother you in my arms.
                              (Chaudhuri (nd.): 253)

However, the *Tilottama* is beaten up and abused again in the 1970s by the naxalite struggle, which devastates a generation of young intellectuals. This is depicted in the second and the third parts of Samaresh Majumdar's Trilogy: *Uttaradhikar*, *Kalbela* and *Kalpurush* and in Mahasweta Debi's *Hajar Churashir Ma*. Though the relationship between the poet / writer and Kolkata has always been a dialectical one, the language used from the 1920s onwards to the late 60s, unfolding the contradictory moods, dreams and realities of Kolkata, is the *chalti bhasha* of the middle class intellectual with permissible slang expressions here and there to add flavour to the conversation sometimes. The interplay of dialects signifying class division is not much noticed. The novel *Kalpurush* by Samaresh Majumdar depicting the post-naxalite phase, where the low and the middle classes mix and idealisms are crushed or renamed uses a play of dialects. The translated passage below attempts to capture as in the original the cultural and ideological premises of the speaker(s), and the ensuing conflict:

Arko entered the room with tea, "*It's possible that Anu's mother will <u>not last for much long</u>*" *(tenshe jabe)*

> "*Anu's mother?*" The dialect *tenshe jabe* hit her in the
> ears.
>
> (Majumdar 1985:14)

Here *her* refers to *Madhabilata*, wife of an idealist husband who has been maimed in the naxalite torture. They are compelled to live in a slum for economic and social reasons after the naxalite fervour dies down reducing their dreams and aspirations to ashes. Their son is Arko. So it is natural that the colloquial *tenshe jabe*, a slum slang which differentiates the *bhadra samaj* from the uneducated, coming as it does from her own blood, upsets *Madhabilata*.

While such use of dialects can pose hazards in translation, the experimentation in the language continues in the writings of the contemporary novelists and poets as they attempt to depict Kolkata in its variety. Such mingling of regional languages with the mainstream Kolkata dialect found in the writings of the colonial times too as mentioned earlier in the essay, sometimes produces a strange language. Take for example such a line: *Hapner to ekta banduk bhi aacche* (Basu 2003: 229). This - which is a quaint Bangla-Hindi mix - is also a part of the Kolkata dialect. Anyone listening to the Bangla FM will have the privilege of listening to more of this stuff with a peculiar intonation, not always by the non-Bengalis, but by *pucca Kolkatans*. While in the colonial era such sprinkling of Hindi in Bengali was the spoken tongue of the mercantile class from other regions in India, now there is a tendency toward it developing as a particular style taken up by persons in the media. The *bhadralok* class, which owes its modernity to the efforts of Kaliprasanna Sinha, Pearychand Mitra and Tagore in the main, too has their differentiating characteristics. Many of Bani Basu's stories and novels based on Kolkata reveal the absorption of the Tagore culture by the middle-class. A novel like *Gandharbi* or a short story like *Kharap Chhele*, weaves its language and imagination with melodies from Tagore to depict how deeply the culture has

sunk into these minds. While the translation of the interplay of
dialects in the above illustrations can be a translator's headache,
translation of Bani Basu is not an easy task either. Just to cite an
example of mistranslation here:

> What, Why? What's new about them? Pishi-Mesho, you
> know them inside out. Old wine in a new bottle? Hasn't
> the poet said, knowing it's old, don't ask for it, don't ask
> for it … from the corners of your half closed eyes! Jina
> laughed merrily.
>
> (Basu 2002: 153)

The translated quote in the extract produces almost a lurid
effect! The *cheyo na* in the original *Purano jania cheyo na, cheyo na
tomar adheko aankhir-o kone, tomar aulosho onnyo- mon-e* appeals
to the sight (*Don't slight me by such a casual glance* is the idea).
Cheyo na is definitely not *ask* as in the translation. The idea of
desirability is subsumed in the neglect suggested by the words and
the rhythm of the line. There's no lurid suggestion in the poet but
teasing and pleading blended into one, which perfectly fits into the
light-hearted conversation between the two sisters about the fond old
folk in the family. There are other cases too of mistranslation, which
results from the adoption of a homogenous strategy for retaining the
flavour of the work and italicizing the original words in the
translated text. As evident from the discussion in my paper it's not
just the word, which is important as a signifier of a culture, the
sound of the word, the intonation is also important. Translation of
"*tai na?*" in Bengali is often Indianised in English "*isn't it na?*" A
sensitive ear will immediately feel the difference, for the English
version is the translation of the Hindi-speaking Bengali or the
probashi Bengali where "*hai na?*" is changed to "*hocche na?*" A
Kolkatan Bengali would never use this dialect.

While one can consider the cases of the untranslatable
dialects, such mistranslations can surely be avoided. Just the

knowledge of the language won't do. A translator has to be an insider to the culture to depict its flavour, colour, smell and sounds. Or else we would find ourselves groping for authenticity in a constant slippage of cultural signifiers and excuse our blunders as *post-modernism* or is it *solipsism*?

NOTES

1. Patri discusses in detail these conjectures about the transmogrification of Calcutta as 'Kolkata'. He also mentions Job Charnock quoting from other sources that he too must have named Calcutta after Kalighat.

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Shakespeare Re-Configured: Hemchandra Bandyopadhyay's Bangla Transcreations

TAPATI GUPTA

Abstract

Translation presupposes the existence of borders between cultures. The translator is aware of these borders and the necessity of crossing them. In actual fact however there is a common resonance zone between cultures without which translation would not have been possible. The borders too are not lines but dots, which offer entry points to the translator to come and go freely across cultures so that the intersections become horizontal portal lines. Borders, which are thus porous and open, should not be considered barriers. That the activity of translation obliterates borders is not quite true. The translator's knowledge of the source text may be termed internal knowledge. She knows the language and culture of the source text as well as the target text she creates. The reader's knowledge is only of the target language and culture and she is made aware of the source text only as it appears in the translation. The translator is supremely powerful and may empower the translation with a linguistic nationalism and instrument of resistance, which may reinforce borders rather than annihilate them. The above hypothesis is cogently expressed in the

*writings of Anthony Pym. I would like to add that the
translator herself is necessarily bilingual and is the self-
styled agent of the source culture but the vehicle she
drives is meant for monolingual, mono-cultural people
who respond better and become more politically charged if
that vehicle belongs to the colonizer's territory. The
reassembling of it, re-configurations, are suitable
instruments of appropriation which re-inforce the
differences between the two cultures -- the British
colonizer's and the native colonized people's, and at the
same time show the way towards vulnerable entry points.
I have chosen two late 19th century translations of
Shakespeare's The Tempest and Romeo & Juliet by the
poet Hemchandra Bandyopadhyay as paradigmatic of the
above viewpoint. Since there is no record of their
performance I shall treat them as texts to be read.*

The Bengali translations of Shakespeare began to appear
during the 1890s. Most of these were adaptations and not 'faithful'
translations. Shakespeare's world was so far removed from that of the
Bengali middle class that it was felt to be comprehensible only on
being endowed with the Indian ambience. In the preface to his
translation of The Merchant of Venice (adapted as *Bhanumoti
Chittabilas*) Harachandra Ghosh (1817-84) says,

"I undertake to write it in the shape of a Bengali
natuck or drama taking only the plot and underplots
of the Merchant of Venice with considerable
additions and alterations to suit the native taste; but
at the same time losing no opportunity to convey to
my countrymen, who have no means of getting
themselves acquainted with Shakespeare - save
through the medium of their own language – the

> beauty of the author's sentiments as expressed in the
> best passages in the play in question". [1]
>
> (---- 1964: 8)

The translator is armed with internal knowledge. She/he is bilingual and is supposed to have acquired intimate knowledge of the SC and SL (Source Culture and Source Language). She/he is also conscious of her/his power over the text as well as aware of her/his responsibility. She/he knows at what point the border is crossed and how best to plant a foreign seed in the native soil. The 19th century Shakespeare translator was on the one hand the colonizer's deputy, and on the other, a cultural ambassador as well as an agent of subversion of the SC and ST. If opening up of gateways was the aim of 19th century translations of the English dramatist, the task was not easy at all. It was found that translation, more often than not, set up barbed wire fencings across cultures. The translator crossed borders not to erase them but to mark them afresh on the cultural map.

The availability of translated texts of mainstream British narratives to the educated middle class Bengali must have lessened the desire to take the trouble to read the originals. It also must have given him the opportunity to develop a sense of self-gratification for accessing a text across the border and transgressing into the white colonizer's territory. The SC certainly acquired an indigenous look through transcreation. The politics of translation as an intercultural exercise paved the way towards decolonization of the bard. The accession of agency in a linguistic nationalism is the subtle appropriation of Shakespeare who was more precious to the British than the Empire.

Ironically, the first appropriation of Shakespeare into an 'other' script in an Indian language (=Bengali) was done by an Englishman, one Monckton. He translated *The Tempest* into Bengali as part of a college exercise in 1809/1811. The text is lost and there

is no record of its performance. There is no way of studying the quality of the translation for no copy is extant. One may assume however that the translation was more or less literal and the problem of intercultural transference may not have been attended to. Though it is unfair to suggest attitudes without first hand knowledge one may take a theoretical stance and even attribute a certain condescension on the part of the British colonizer and a certain nationalistic pride in handing over an object of the white man's literary domain to the colonized people and in their own language - a touch of ego and a consciousness of power.

In the event of an Indian writer translating a Shakespeare text the satisfaction of having attempted a difficult task would have been commingled with a subtle, unarticulated consciousness of power, a feeling of gratification at the thought of having appropriated the colonizer's product and indigenized it, because cultural transfer is an integral part of translation. In translating an alien culture into one's own realm of knowledge the consciousness of difference, the difficulties of erecting bridges led to adaptations and Indianized versions of Shakespeare. It was also the dawn of a sense of the power and potentiality of one's own mother tongue and an awareness of the need to develop it so that it should cope with Shakespearean nuances. It may not have been a coincidence that the creative potentialities of the Bengali language came to be realized in the hands of subsequent generations of original writers, just as its critical power was explored in the articles of Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay's periodical *Bangadarshan.*

In this paper I seek to examine the relevance of the above remarks with reference to Hemchandra Badyopadhyay's *Nolini Basanta* (1868), and Romeo-Juliet, which are transcreations of *The Tempest* and *Romeo and Juliet* respectively.

Hemchandra Vandyopadhyay Indianized the names and tried to preserve the Shakespearian characteristics of the characters.

He pours the Shakespeare's plot and characters into a native mould in order to please the readers. We do find that Hemchandra's Prospero - Baijayanta - is endowed with a native tenderness and becomes a sentimental Bengali father. Gonzalo - Procheta - is likewise sentimentalized.

In the case of *Nolini Basanta* there is no record of the play being performed. Shakespeare's blank verse becomes in Hemchandra's hands a monotonous undramatic rhymed verse. The sentimental - lyrical - poetic disposition of Bengal was imposed upon the robust mature blank verse of Shakespeare. The reason perhaps was that because Hemchandra was primarily a poet, the theatrical potentialities of *The Tempest* attracted him less than its lyrical richness, its political symbolism less than its romance.

Culture is manifested not in social custom and manners alone but in the overall ambience as well. Drama, more than other genres, communicates the atmosphere of the period of its textual location as well as that of the social space of the dramatist and contemporary audience. In the case of translated drama something of the background of the translator's milieu may very well interpenetrate the TT.

The transcultural spaces in the ST and the TT are where cultures overlap and points on the border are pierced through. As Anthony Pym suggests the borders are not impregnable lines but innumerable dots, operative points along which the translator moves in a horizontal trajectory. But by introducing major deviations from the ST Hemachandra trespasses into the canonical narrative's hegemonic territory and reinforces the borders, draws demarcating lines, underlines differences.

In *Nolini Basanta* Hemchandra transplants the Shakespearean text from its Mediterranean terrain and introduces

various regions of India as the habitat of its characters. This necessitates a parallel change in depicting race, custom and folk psyche.

Right from the outset a barrier is erected between our culture and that of the bard. The seafaring nature of British culture, the gruff and growling jargon of mariners and boatswain, the Elizabethan consciousness and Shakespeare's realism undergo a sea-change when the first scene of the shipwreck and the tempest is omitted and the play opens with scene ii. Miranda-Nolini and her father Baijayanta, while a ship can be seen sinking far off, speak entirely lyrical, monotonous rhymed verse.

The geographical locale of the setting is transformed from the Mediterranean region to distant places in our vast subcontinent. Caliban-Barbat's mother is made to hail from Udaipur and not Argier as in Shakespeare. One may venture to conjecture the reason for this curious change. Was it because Udaipur was sufficiently remote from Bengal? But then, historically it was the seat of the heroic Rajputs. Perhaps romantic distance and the exotic locale fascinated the poet? The racial significance, the equivalence of black-ugliness-evil is definitely obliterated and Sycorax-Trijata is a simple witch. A nation's prejudices indicate the nature of its culture. Witch is simply evil but Shakespeare's Sycorax would have provoked greater abhorrence among his contemporaries. The point at which Hemchandra crosses the border induces a culture overlap as far as witch hatred is concerned. A culture transformation occurs when he does away with the concept of the traditional European medieval 'darkness' and the white man's racial arrogance.

Moreover in the translated text, there are ironic references to the fragrance of Varanasi's sewage system, the scent of Sunderbans soil; also to '3 crore deities' of the Hindu pantheon and 'kinkoris', the beautiful dancers of the court of Indra, the king of gods. It is interesting to note however that in order to explain fairy rings, which relate to authentically English rural superstition Hemchandra sticks

to the original and adds an explanatory footnote on English superstition[2], a brief incursion into hybridization of cultural space.

Barbat's servility is subtly Indianized when Baijayanta calls him 'padukabahak', carrier of shoes. Carrying the master's shoes upon one's head shows reverence, obeisance, and humility. A nation's culture is assessed not only by its intellectual resources but also through the culture of the body, its eating habits. "Do you mean I shall not have rice?" *tai bole ami ki bhat khabo na*? asks Barbat. A Bengali ambience is at once created. The Bengali's unequivocal love for *machher-jhol bhat!*

The post-colonial signifier is preserved when we find Barbat pointing out that he, who once was the king of this vast island, is now their one and only subject. Here is a bit of culture overlap. Colonization is the common signified but was Hemchandra thinking of India's colonization of the Far East? The work becomes an exercise in mixing and matching the ST with the setting of the TT. The methodology is uneven. Culture equalizers are used without consistency but they do remind the reader that the ST is being steadily injected with cultural inputs from the T culture. A subversion of the dominant narrative and a creation of boundary fencing reinforce the differences.

In spite of the inputs of local culture the very fact that Shakespeare was so easily absorbed into Bengali literature is a measure of the eclecticism of Bengali culture, which from the 17th century onwards absorbed into it some of the elements of other cultures. Jagadish Nandi in *Bangla Sanskriti Sampute Sakespeare* (Nandi 1998: 28) points out that from the 17th century onwards inter-culturality became part of the fabric of Bengali literature, which became popular even outside Bengal because of this universality. It included deities of the Hindu pantheon as well as the sayings of Jesus and Allah. It was accommodative. For instance the lines from the *Raimangal Kavya*

Ardhek mathate kala ekmatha chura tala
Banamala chhili mili tate
Dharla ardhek kaye ardhaneel megh praye
Koran puran dui hate.

(Nandi 1998: 28)

Nandi points out further that liberal eclecticism was the hallmark of Bengali literature, and because of this Shakespeare was enthusiastically received into the culture. Apparently this suggests that there were no barriers, no opaque lines, only a border comprising dots.

From the middle of the 19th century (1855) the exuberance of the 'Alal' and 'Hutum' tradition of picaresque adventurism, didacticism, farce and derision pervaded literature.[3]

The tradition of 'Prohoson' and 'Hasyakautuk', robust appreciation of the inconsistencies of human nature, farcical elements, the Gopal Bhanr type of coarse stories form part of the fabric of 19th century culture. So in Bengal the ground was already prepared for the reception of Shakespeare's fools and the boisterous appreciation of the moral as well as questionable ingredients of society.

Jokes and pranks reveal the psyche of a nation and are embedded deep in local culture. The adventurous strain in Elizabethan culture, the deep-seated nautical temperament, the sailor's loose conduct and generic songs are either omitted by Hemchandra or transferred into something bawdily urban and smacking of the 19th century babu's excursions into brothels. One should also recall that Bengal's folk culture accommodated 'tarja', 'kheure' and 'kobigan'.[4] The salty, sea-drenched ambience of *The Tempest* is transformed. Shakespeare's Stephano enters singing, 'I shall no more to sea, to sea / Here shall I die ashore."

In *Nolini Basanta* sings Tilak

'O amar adorini pran
      Chalo jabe gangasnan
           Hathkholate tomay amay khabo paka pan.
              Chalo adorini pran'. [5]

Hemchandra's transliteration is in keeping with the cultural ambience in which he locates Shakespeare. The metaphoric, ribald implications of 'ganga-snan' (literally, a bath in the Ganges), taking pan together, and 'adorini pran' or 'O my heart's darling.'

Let us now take Trinculo's speech in T II I "*If I were in England now … not a holiday fool there but would give a piece of silver… When they will not give a doit to relieve a lame beggar, they would lay out ten to see a dead Indian*".

The locale-specific reference to the American Indian, the recreations of the people of Shakespeare's own time is transferred into locale-specific reference to the space of the target text and satire against Hemchandra's urban contemporaries. Uday says that the babus of Calcutta nowadays make merry ever so often, indulging in 'bibir nautch' (referring to what the white sahib would call 'nautch girls'), horse's dance, spirits' dance, motley clown's dance--- they spend money on all this. Yet they do not give even a fistful of rice to a beggar. Even though the pundits in the tol have become almost extinct, they would not give a paisa to these Brahmin pundits.[6]

The derision is in keeping with the strain of satire prevalent in contemporary Bengali literature.There is intercultural fusion of the 17th c. Shakespeare text with local 19th colour. As Shakespeare was steeped in his own age, so also Hemchandra's rendering of the Shakespeare text. Although the historical time and culture were so different, yet the culture overlaps between the SC and TC lead to

embedding in the TT subaltern voices that are critical of their colonial betters. In this way the translation is made to create cultural equivalences.

But when all is said and done, and though borders are not lines and intercultural change is valid, the changes incorporated do draw a line of difference between the two texts. The colonial grand narrative is subverted and appropriated in order to enrich Bengali literature. The ST on the other hand becomes a viable paradigm of flexibility. The irony is that instead of obliterating borders translation very often reinforces them at least in the regions of the text where such changes take place.

Gonzalo's speech on the ideal commonwealth derived from Montaigne, based on the concept of an illusory golden age, acquires in *NB* a different hue. The gist of it is as follows: I have always wanted to rule but our country being an old one is so very overcrowded with rulers… I used to think if I could get a smaller land to rule, a secluded one, I would show people what it was to be a good ruler. This island is ideal for that. If there could be a few communities of subjects here it could be organized. There would not be any of the superstitions one finds in an ancient land. There would not be the convention of marriage and inequality in the distribution of wealth - All women would be enjoyed by all men and all men by all women. There would be no jealousy, malice, and rivalry. There would be no falsehood. Everyone would be altruistic. Disease, sorrow, agony, tension would all be eradicated.[6]

The embedded references to India, and criticism of its ways yoked to the Shakespearean framework, politicize the TT, creating an intercultural ideology that lends to the work an additional raison d'etre. The ST allows itself to be broken into by intercultural material while at the same time the areas of culture-overlap suggest that borders are not impenetrable lines. In translations in which the ST and the TT are so far distanced in historical time, space and

culture translation initiates a discourse of inter-culturality. This in its turn reinforces the notion that although translation activity is meant to obliterate borders it is also a way of impressing borders. On the part of the common reader, thanks to translation, she/he is able to glean the fruits of an alien literature with just a bit of external knowledge. Whereas the translator's power and dominance become overwhelming as the only person who holds the key to the ST: who has, what is termed 'internal knowledge', a close acquaintance with both SL and SC. The translator is thus empowered.

Hemchandra's translation of *Romeo & Juliet* appeared as *Charumukh Chittahara Natak* in 1864 and 17 years later as *Romeo-Juliet*. But Hemchandra was basically a poet and did not think of making his work stage-worthy so that it reads like a verse drama addressed to the sentiments of the romantic Bengali middle class. There is neither Shakespeare's robust blank verse nor the bard's theatricality. It is lyrical and quite faithful to the original especially where dialogue is concerned. Hemchandra did get carried away however by the excitement of the sequence so much so that he sometimes introduces an extra scene e.g when he splits II. ii into two. Proper names are also transformed into their nearest Bengali equivalents e.g. Verona becomes Barana, Capulet becomes Capalat, Montagu becomes Montago, Paris becomes Parash and so on. Only Romeo and Juliet remain unchanged. Friar Lawrence is metamorphosed into Mathurananda, a Hindu monk and Brother John is transmogrified as Gonshai, a Hindu priest. Funnily the graveyard becomes a crematorium. The play is therefore a translation-cum-adaptation. The two families are like zamindar families. The preparation for the marriage of Juliet with Paris is rendered in the guise of such a marriage ceremony in an upper class Bengali home with all the women gossiping away and typical Bengali social rituals taking place in Act II iv which becomes II v in Hemachandra. The play is thus uprooted from its Mediterranean ambience. Rather incongruously however the word "duel" is retained. Though odd in

the changed social context this must have sounded a fashionable note to the English-educated Bengali middle and upper middle class readers; technical words relating to a duel e.g. 'passado'and 'punto reverso' are however omitted.

In this article I have endeavoured to point out the intercultural aspect of Hemchandra Bandyopadhyay's Indianized translation of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and *Romeo & Juliet*. The texts become paradigms of the paradox that instead of deleting borders translation reinforces them. Though the borders are not impregnable, border crossing is done at the cost of losing some of the goods on the way, although compensatory material is also accessible.

NOTES

1. See also Sanatkumar Mitra's 'Shakespeare O Bangla Natak' (Mitra 1983).

2. The note may be translated thus: 'In the olden times there was among the common folk in England the belief that such a ring was drawn by fairies; and at night the fairies would assemble and dance within these rings Nobody would dare to touch the grass within the rings'.

3. Peary Chand Mitra's Alaler Gharer Dulal (pampered son of a front ranking family; 1855-57) is a work of fiction in the picaresque vein of didacticism and humour. Kaliprasanna Sinha's Hutom Penchar Naksa (Sketches by a watching owl, 1862) Sukumar Sen in History of Bengali Literature, Sahitya Akademi ,1960, rpt.1992, p.210 calls the latter "an enjoyable work, if one goes in for cheap and vulgar wit".

4. Tarja: popular folk song in the form of question and answer. Kheure: obscene song; ribaldry.
   Kobigan: light song in the form of questions and answers

5. The original Bengali reads: *Sekhankar babura aajkaal bhari hujuge hoye uthechhe; Ghora nach, bibir nach, bhut naban, sang nachan niye boroi sakharache hoye poreche --- kintu edike ekjan bhikiri ele ek mutho chal jote na. --- tolchauparigulo ekbare lop pabar jo hoeychhe, tobuo brahm;ian punditder ek poysha dite sahajya korlo na.*

6. Hemchandra's Bengali runs as follows: *Mahasay balyakal obdhi amar basana achhe je ami ekbar rajatya kori; kintu prachin desh matroi rajarajrader eto bhir je, tar bhitor matha gunje probesh korai bhar; tai chirokalta mone mone bhabtum je, ori modhe chhotokhato nirela desh pai to seikhane ekbar rajotyo kore ni,ar kemon kore rajotto korte hoy ekbar dekhai.Ei Dwipti dekhchi, tar samyak upojukto sthan. Eikhane katakguli projar basati karywe tader uttamroop taribat dite palle ekti ekti ashcharya janapad srishti hoy. Prachin deshnibasidiger je samasta kusangskar achhe, tar kichhumatro ekhane probesh katte di na. Amar thake na, dhon sampattite swattaswatter probhed thake na, she rajye bibahoroop kuprotha swechhadheen sokol streee sokol purusher ghogya --- sokol pui sokol streer karushmyo, abal btidhho banita sokolei chaushotti kolaye kathaye byutpanna, hingsha dwesh, bishad bisambad , juddha bigraha rajyamodhey ekebare bilupto hoy; protaronashunyo satyabadi janagan porohitayshi paropokari hoy; --- swatasidhha dharmajyotite sakolei nirudbeg shantochitto thake. Rog, shok, taap, chinta, daridra nirmool hoy ebang sukh swachhanda sarbatre birajito hoye preeti sampadan kore.*

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British Imperialism and the Politics of Translation: Texts from, and from Beyond, the Empire

NABANITA SENGUPTA

Abstract

Tejaswini Niranjana suggests that translation both shapes and takes shape 'within the asymmetrical relations of power that operates under colonialism'. By suggesting this she rightly brings colonialism, translation and power politics together. Imperialist mission, which was essentially a play for power control went hand in hand with the project of translation and could not have been effectively carried out for over two centuries without it. Beginning with Niranjana's premise then shows that translation has to perform the dual role of shaping the colonial enterprise as well as being shaped by it. Translation has been used as a tool for invasion, specifically of the minds, by the imperialists. But even here there is a paradox inherent in its purpose. Though it has been undertaken by the West to further their colonial cause, often it has been seen that the translations from the West have brought about waves of nationalism as well as modernism in the literature of the colonial countries. This paper attempts to study the relationship that existed between Orientalism and translation in China the country of

the Far East, technically beyond the Empire; and India, the most important colony of the English in the Near East. The difference in the nature of imperialism in the countries of the Far East, who were never a direct colony of any Western power, and that of India also reveal a difference in the attitude of the West in the projects of translation that they undertook. Translations from Sanskrit that were undertaken had a very practical purpose behind them while most of the translations from Chinese and Japanese were taken up for the lure of their exoticism to the Western readers. Proximity with India also accounts for a greater and more organised enterprise of translations from Sanskrit into English than those from the other two languages, at least initially. In spite of certain differences in the attitude of the West in undertaking the translations of the literature of these countries, this entire activity has been given a common platform in the Oriental discourse by the snobbery of the West. Hence at the heart of such acts of translation the 'lack' in the native languages is always stressed upon and they are rendered deficient when compared with those of the West. Translations by the Christian missionaries mark the beginning of the epoch of translation in all these three countries. In fact it signifies the beginning of Western invasion as well as the enterprise of Oriental translation. The translation of popular literature is an affair of the modern times when the Western interest in colonialism started waning. This broadened the outlook of the Western litterateurs and they started looking towards the East for the sake of their interest in those cultures. Another important characteristic common to all these three linguistic communities is the impact of

Western translation upon their literatures. A profusion of Western popular literature available in translation in these languages has led to the beginning of modernization in these literatures. The great impact of Western literature upon these cultures has been much more than the influence of the East on the Western literary traditions. The reason for it can be attributed to the constant and well-organized efforts by the West to maintain the hegemony of its discourse in the colonial East. Hence a study of the process of translation with respect to these three colonial countries and their relationship with the West proves that in spite of the difference in their political situations, the features of such translations remained more or less the same.

Tejaswini Niranjana suggests that translation both shapes and takes shape '*within the asymmetrical relation of power that operates under colonialism*' (cited in *Bassnett and Trivedi 1999: 3*). In this paper I shall endeavour to show how this lop-sided cultural encounter associated with imperialism created the scope for translation even as it affected the translational strategies in the days of the early British Imperialists by drawing references from the two Asian countries where imperialism was effective in different degrees and modalities, viz. India, the most important colony of the British Empire, and China, a semi-colonial state where Britain's colonial ambition was thwarted more successfully.

The Chinese conception of the centrality of their Empire and the arrogance with which they tried to maintain it was a challenge to the West's construction of the myth of its racial superiority over the East. British colonial history speaks of a number of their futile attempts to enter the Chinese territory. In 1759, James Flint, a British emissary to the Chinese Emperor was arrested and

imprisoned for breaking the Quing regulations, and amongst other charges, for having learnt Chinese! Again, in 1792-93, another British emissary, this time from King George the third, was sent back from China, unsuccessful in his attempt to gain an entry into the Chinese territory, with an answer that smacked of arrogance and racial pride. The emperor replied to the British Crown as:

> "We have never valued ingenuous articles nor do we have the slightest need of your country's manufactures, therefore O King, as regards to your request to send someone to remain at the capital, which it is not in harmony with the regulations of the Celestial Empire - we also feel very much that it is of no advantage to your country"
>
> (Spencer 1990: 122)

This answer to the British Emperor shows the extent to which the Chinese preferred isolation from the West denying the Western powers their traditional initial foothold into any country, which is trade and commerce. Many such evidences of insularity practiced by China are present in Chinese history, which can be identified as a result of their extreme racial pride and a strong central government. On the other hand, the fall of the Mughals and the almost non-existence of a cohesive political structure made India easily accessible to the British Imperial power. Not facing any strong and unified opposition then, the English merchants, and later, the Crown could easily establish their hegemonic rule here.

This difference in the political status of the British Imperialists in India and China is deeply reflected in their attitudes towards the English translations from the Indian and the English translations from the Chinese languages. The nature and quality of the translations lead us to the conclusion that there is no engagement with the Chinese culture in the same sense as there is with the Indian culture, as I have tried to show here.

The British imperialists had a very practical purpose behind translating Indian classics - the necessity to know the colonized in order to rule them more effectively. Hence as early as 1776, Governor-general Warren Hastings commissioned a group of Indian pundits to translate from the Dharmasastras which, he was informed were the law-books, into Persian and which was then retranslated into English by Halhead, one of the Orientalists. Thus began an epoch of the Western interest in the Indian classics. The first direct translation from Sanskrit to English was of the *Bhagwadgita* by Charles Wilkins *(Wilkins 1785)*. The then Governor-General, Hastings, arranged for its publication and wrote a letter of introduction to it, which amply focuses on the nature and purpose behind such an endeavor. Wilkins also translated the fables from the Hitopadésa. William Jones translated a number of Sanskrit works into English, for example, Kalidasa's *Sakuntala* (1789), translations from the *Laws of Manu* (1794), etc. Many other Orientalists followed suit.

The different subjective position of the British Imperialists in China did not create any practical necessity to translate in the Chinese context. It did not therefore lead to the translations of any such works of law or philosophy into Western languages. Apart from two translations of a romantic Chinese novel into English, an anonymous one in 1761, followed by that of J.E. Davis, the earliest translations from Chinese were those of religious texts, generally undertaken by the missionaries, who were almost always, the heralds of imperialism unlike the Indian counterparts where the translations undertaken were more secular in nature and had a greater political approach. We thus have James Medhurst's translation of The *Shoo King* or the *Historical Classics (1846*) and James Legge's (1814-97) complete translation of the Confucian Analects and of some of the texts of Taoism. Samuel Beale, a naval chaplain, in about the 1850s translated various Buddhist works from the Chinese. Another

important translator was Herbert Giles (1845-1935). His translations encompassed a wider area, selecting texts from Philosophy *(e.g. Chuen Tza Mystic, Moralist and Social Reformer),* poetry *(e.g. Chinese Poetry in English Verses)* and classical prose *(Strange Stories from a Chinese Studio, Gems from Chinese Literature).*

China was erased or suppressed in the Western consciousness up until Arthur Waley and Ezra Pound who come late in the History of British Imperialism, almost towards the decline of its colonial enterprise. But in the heydays of British colonialism, no parallel to, say, Arnold's engagement with India, in terms of a Western scholar's engagement with China could be found. It could be persuasively argued, then, that such erasure or suppression, almost a political parallel to that erasure of Annette Valon in *The Prelude* which Spivak has persuasively argued for in 'In Other Worlds', is a compensatory psychological mechanism for a repeated political and commercial failure to integrate China into the British Empire. Wolfgang Franke in his work *China and the West reasons*, *"The West in the nineteenth and the twentieth century were lesser ready to understand China, than China was to understand the West" (Franke 1967: 140).* This change in attitude came about more after the Treaty of Nankeen in which the balance tilted in West's favour and the Western missionaries got the protection from the Imperial masters. Since China was not a direct colony, the West was also saved from the administrative bothering, which was there in the case of India. Hence the English had absolutely no requirement to engage with Chinese language and culture. Though in the mid eighteenth century, Voltaire and some of his contemporaries had found a source of profound wisdom in China; this interest was really short lived. What is not translated is dismissed as trivial or unworthy. Paradoxically, however, this establishes a similarity also with India because what is conquered is equally dismissed as trivial or unworthy.

The fact that Chinese literature, in spite of having a long and rich history, remains for so long out of the reach of the West is as much a result of the West's failure to integrate it as a part of its colonial property, as also of China's xenophobic tendencies which isolated it from the rest of the world. Some Chinese policies like kowtowing before the Emperor were injurious to the British sense of dignity and this also forced these foreigners to remain away from China for quite a long time. Conversely then, the growing interest of the British in Indian philosophy and literature is closely related to the rise in the English colonial engagements in India.

A study of the English translations of both these countries reveal another major difference in the attitudes of both these countries - a profusion of attempts by the Indians to render their texts in English translations is starkly contrasted with an absence of any such endeavors in China. The response of the Indians to represent their works in English translation is an evidence of a complex psychology of the colonized. On the one hand there is obviously the desire to earn approbation from their Western masters by presenting their literature in English, but on the other hand, a xenophobic tendency can also be discerned which attempts to dislodge the Western notion of its superiority by giving them a taste of the Indian antiquities. China, not having a long colonial history at its back and being able to check Western invasion with considerable success, was free from this muddling psychological complexity. Not only that, Western language, culture or literature was also largely ignored by the Chinese, because of the latter's contempt for Christianity and everything associated with it. Even after the May Fourth Movement, when they started translating Western classics finally into English, the desire to render their own work into any European language is surprisingly absent.

Contrastingly, the desire amongst the Indians to translate their indigenous works into English marks the beginning of a new

epoch of translation in India, which was preceded by an age of British, or European monopoly as translators of the Indian texts into Western languages. It was Tagore's winning of the Nobel Prize in 1913, which symbolised the recognition of the intellectual capacities of the East by the West, and which spurred the Indian efforts towards the renderings of their own texts in English.

In spite of the difference in the terms of the texts translated from the Indian and the Chinese and in the quality and ideology of these translations, certain parallels can be drawn between the English translations from the literature of both these countries. Almost always, the colonialist's translations were from the texts belonging to the ancient past of the colonies - from which they could unearth gems of the ancient wisdom, for example, both Confucian texts as well as the Gita appealed to the West for their philosophies. This tendency amongst the early imperialists, to find seeds of wisdom in the texts of the past is a strategy to negate or suppress the 'present' in the colonies which is necessary to maintain the position of ideological supremacy and also to give validity to their self-constructed doctrine of the 'white man's burden', their attitude being to restore the East from its current fallen state by the means of Western enlightenment. Contrastingly, however, the books translated from European into either Chinese or Indian languages are always those belonging to the contemporary period or otherwise, the Bible, further validating the notion of the enlightened West and the dark East. Robert Morrison in 1823 made the Bible available to the Chinese by translating it in their language and in the Indian context this task was undertaken much earlier, by William Carey, the missionary who tried to make the text available to the Indians in a number of regional languages and also helped establish The Bible Society of India in 1811. Some of the books that had been translated from English into Chinese by the native scholars in the early phase of such translations are Thomas Huxley's *Evolution and Ethics* (Trans. 1894-95), Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nation* (Trans. 1897-

1901, pub. 1901), John S. Mill's *On Liberty* (Trans. 1899, pub. 1903), etc. [1]

In both these countries, such translations as well as the study of the original Western classics had a great impact on the indigenous form, content and literature. One such example in the Indian context is the sonnet form introduced in Bengali literature by Michael Madhusudan Dutt. Indigenous Chinese literature too underwent a sea change in both form and content under the influence of the Western literature, though in their case, unlike their Indian counterpart, English was not the only dominating influence. Russian, German and other Western literature too asserted their own presence in the form of the translated works. The introduction of English teaching into the Indian education system, which was actually done to cater to the ruling country's need for the English knowing native intelligentsia for the smooth running of the administrative machinery, equipped the Indians to read the English classics in their original forms though translations were also made available in a number of cases. China did not have any such direct access to Western literature.

Wolfgang Franke says the following in his work China and the West:

> "because of the exclusive orientation towards Europe
> of the Western academic study, Oriental civilizations
> were studied in the first instance purely on the basis
> of their importance for the civilization of the West"
>   (Franke 1967: 145)

Sanskrit, therefore, occupies an important place in Western scholarship by virtue of it being considered to be an Indo-European language by Europeans. Similarly Confucianism drew Western attention for the similarity that the West could trace between it and

early Christianity. It is thus not just intercultural diversity that is necessary, but also a certain amount of cultural and morphological similarity, to generate and sustain the interest in translation from one language to another.

This factor of diversity also worked as a hindrance to translation from Chinese to English, as the language itself appeared to be 'formidable' and 'bewildering' to the West, 'rendering the problems of equivalence among the languages almost absurd' *(Schwab 1984: 6)* The orientalist, E.D. Ross recommended the study of the Chinese language because *'it is fascinating to try and puzzle out, say the writing on… a Chinese tea-set' (Schwab 1984: 20).* The written Chinese characters generally represented the meanings of the word rather than its pronunciation, while in the Roman as well as in the Indian scripts the characters represented sounds, which formed different combinations to make different words having particular meanings. Therefore translation of Chinese works, particularly poetry, became a matter of great difficulty. Much later when Arthur Waley took up the task of translating from Chinese, he had to find a way to deal with this problem. The solution that he arrived at was the use of sprung rhythm in the English versions of the poems. As the entry on Waley in the *Encyclopedia of Literary Translation into English* says,

> "In the Chinese original, the rhythm in a given line is dependent on the alteration between syllables, each unit distinguished by a different 'tone' quality. English, on the other hand, is an accented language. To solve this problem, Waley adopted 'sprung rhythm'… he tried to have the number of stressed syllables per English lines equal to the number of syllables in a Chinese line, disregarding the number of unstressed syllables within".
>
> (Classe 2000: 96) [2]

Lack of any motive apart from the curiosity in the exoticism of the pictorial script of the Chinese led to a dearth of Western interest in the Chinese language. Curiosity formed a part of their engagement with Indian literature as well, as Warren Hastings wrote in the letter to the Chairman of the East India Company, forwarding Wilkins's translation of the *Gita*: "*I presume to offer, and to recommend through you, for an offering to the public, a very curious specimen of the literature, the mythology, and the Morality of the ancient Hindus*" (Wilkins 1785: 5). According to Sharpe, this introduction was particularly necessary because Hastings *"knew very well that a philosophical discourse was unlikely to appeal to the hard-headed businessmen who administered 'John Company'*". (Sharpe, 6)

The politics of translation operating in the age of colonialism signals that cultural relativity is not the only factor that determines either quality or quantity of the texts translated. The position of the imperial power in the dominated countries and the extent of direct engagement with the colonies play an important role in determining its translational strategies. What gets translated and how is a result of the coloniser's need to represent, suppress, or erase the colonial presence in order to maintain its political, economic and ideological supremacy. On the other hand, translatability is also affected by the colonised's engagement with this act of translation itself and this is clearly reflected by the difference in the attitudes of the Chinese and the Indians towards their translations of their literature into English or any other Western language. India was part of the Empire and China was beyond it. Translation between the English and Chinese languages (in either direction) and those between English and Indian languages are amply shaped by and reflects this empirical fact.

NOTES

1. A detailed knowledge of Western books translated into Chinese and their impact on Chinese society and literature is available in Chow Tse-tsung's *The May Fourth Movement: Intellectual Revolution in Modern China,* Chapter XI.
2. Such a rendering of Chinese verses into English mars the readability of the original as is evident from the following sample of poetry, a poem traditionally attributed to Chü Yüan of the third or second century B.C., selected from the vast oeuvre of Waley's works:

<div align="center">

The Great Summons
Invocation to the soul of a dead or sick man

</div>

Green Spring Receiveth
The vacant earth;
The white sun shineth;
Spring wind provoketh
To burst and burgeon
Each sprout and flower.
The dark ice melts and moves; hide not, my soul!
O Soul, come back again! O do not stray!

O Soul, come back again and go not east or west, north or south!
For to the East a mighty water drowneth Earth's other shore;
Tossed on its waves and heaving with its tides
    The hornless Dragon of the Ocean rideth;
Clouds gather low and fogs unfold the sea
    And gleaming ice drifts past.
O Soul, go not to the East,
To the silent Valley of Sunrise!

(Morris 1970: 165)

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Locating and Collating Translated Short Stories of Rabindranath Tagore

SWATI DATTA

Abstract

Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) has been a seminal figure of the Indian literary and cultural scene. His vast and versatile literary contribution includes a large number of short stories that are highly reflective of the sociocultural climate of his times and yet convey ideas and feelings that are perennially relevant to a humanitarian society. Interestingly, the translation world testifies to a history of over one hundred years of English translation of Tagore's Bengali short stories. The paper concentrates on this significant body of translated literature and bases itself primarily on the source text of Galpaguchchha, *which is a collection of ninety short stories composed by Tagore. The short stories of Rabindranath are a rich source of cross-cultural transmission. That the stories have been translated into English for more than a century now and the translation activity in this sphere still continues, is a phenomenon which merits serious reflection. Keeping in view the complexities of linguistic and cultural transference, the paper discusses the location of this translated literature and attempts a collation of various target language texts. This has been done by analyzing the nature of the stories selected for*

translation together with the probable reasons for the same and by presenting a comparative study of portions of some of the translations to highlight the translational complexities and nuances. The task to locate and collate the translated short stories, which belong to both the pre- and post-independent years of Indian history, naturally takes into account the complications that develop out of colonial and post-colonial situations. Besides, as over the years, the stories have been translated by Indians as well as non-Indians, the issues like what gets translated, who translates, and for whom, automatically arises in the course of the projection. Finally, the paper endeavours to see beyond the politics of translation and explores the potential of such translated stories in promoting cross-border solidarities - a feeling that is fundamental in realizing an enlightened multicultural world community.

In one of his famous poems in *Chitra*, Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941), a seminal figure on the Bengali literary and cultural scene, addressed his future reader:

> "Who are you, reader, reading my poems an hundred years hence?"
>
> (Das 1994: 125)

> "আজি হতে শতবর্ষ পরে
>
> কে তুমি পড়িছ বসি আমার কবিতাখানি..."
>
> (Rabindra Rachanabali 1961a: 531)

Tagore here visualized a reader of a remote future encountering his writings. Interestingly, a consideration of the English translations of Tagore's short stories would at once relate to a readership across temporal as well as spatial distances. Across

time, because the translation world testifies to a history of over one hundred years of English translations of Tagore's short stories; and, current translations of his stories reflect a twentyfirst century reader-translator's response to a body of literature composed in the latter half of the twentieth centuries. 'Across space' because the English translations of Tagore short stories involve a cross-cultural transmission, that is, a communication beyond the borders of lands, languages, and cultures.

In recent times, particularly in the fields of literary and culture studies, translation activities have received an impetus, and Tagore's short stories have continued to attract attention. Rabindranath has been a leading exponent of the Bengali short story and has experimented with many styles and techniques. His stories are highly reflective of the sociocultural climate of his times and yet convey ideas and feelings that are perennially relevant to a humanitarian society. Naturally, his work has attracted and influenced contemporary as well as later writers, thinkers, and translators, both at home and abroad. Viewed in this context, English translations of Tagore's short stories offer interesting avenues for critical enquiries. Accordingly, this paper concentrates primarily on the English translations of the short stories of Tagore's *Galpaguchchha (Rabindra Rachanabali 1961b),*[1] which literally means a bunch of stories, is a collection of ninety Bengali short stories. This apart, Tagore's *Lipika, Se, Tin Sangi,* and *Galpasalpa* together comprise sixty-three stories. However, for the purpose of providing a convenient framework for discussion, *Galpaguchchha,* which contains the largest number of Tagore's short stories, has been chosen.

Locating the Translated Stories

English translations of Tagore's short stories belong both to the pre- and post-independent years of Indian history. An attempt to

locate and collate the translated stories should therefore take into account the complications that develop out of colonial and postcolonial situations. Besides, over the years, the stories have been translated by various hands - Indians as well as nonindians. Another striking feature is that Tagore himself has translated a few of his own stories into English. Hence, issues like what gets translated, who translates, and for whom automatically assume significance.

Tagore has been an abiding influence on modern life and thought. Thematically and stylistically, his short stories are of a wide range and variety. However, translations of his short stories, which appeared in various publications, reveal that certain types of stories have dominated the selection for translation. *First*, the stories that depict elemental human feelings and predominantly explore human experiences and situations have found projection in many volumes of translations. In this group are included stories like *'Postmaster', 'Khokababur Pratyabartan'*, *'Kabuliwala'*, *'Chhuti'*, *'Subha'*, *'Samapti'*, *'Apad'* and *'Atithi'*. Noticeably, all these stories possess a transnational appeal.

Secondly, there has been a consistent leaning for translations of stories with supernatural overtones. Translations - whether new or reprints or revised versions - of *'Kankal', 'Nishithe', 'Kshudita Pashan', 'Manihara', 'Mastermashai'*, have recurred in several publications. In fact, the first Macmillan publication of the English translations of Tagore's short stories - *Hungry stones and other Stories*, published in 1916, derives its name from the title of the English rendering of *'Kshudita Pashan'*. Understandably, the bygone Persian setting in the story has appealed to the Western fascination for a fabulous oriental ambience, and the story has appeared and reappeared in translation.

Thirdly, the published translations of Tagore's stories in pre-independent India show a preference in selection for politically 'safe'

and 'non-controversial' stories. Translations of 'Megh o Raudra' and 'Namanjur Galpa', which reflected on colonial domination, did not appear in any of the volumes published before Indian Independence. Yet none other than Edward John Thompson, a liberal British advocate of Indian culture, attempted a translation of 'Megh o Raudra' well before 1947. E.P. Thompson notes that in May 1920 Edward Thompson "wrote to Tagore sending a fragment of 'Cloud and Sunlight' (*Megh O Raudra*')". He even mentions that Tagore appears to have informed Macmillan that the story could be included in the next collection. But the "manuscript still remains among his papers and it was not (I think) ever published" *(Thompson 1993: 23-24)*. Mary Lago in her biography of Edward John Thompson, titled, "India's Prisoner", also observes, "Edward translated a long story, apparently 'Megh o raudra' (Cloud and sun)" *(Lago 2001: 100).*

Finally*,* some of the stories selected for translation are forceful expositions of women's issues although many of them are not to be seen in any of the early volumes of translations. Possibly, trends in feminist developments influenced incorporations of such stories in English translations: renderings of "Denapaona', 'Nashtanir', 'Haimanti', Strir Patra', 'Aparichita', 'Paila Number', are to be found in selections published after 1960.

Having seen some of the features characterising the selection of Tagore's short stories for translation into English, we may turn to the translators that have been engaged in this field. These translators have been both Indians and foreigners, translating during and after the lifetime of the author, and also before and after Indian Independence. Naturally, this body of translated literature encompasses attempts by allied as well as alien minds, the insiders' as well as the outsiders' versions of the original stories. It has indeed been an impressive case of readings by the home and the world.

Indian translators of Tagore's short stories include eminent persons such as Rajani Ranjan Sen, Panna Lal Basu, Prabhat Kumar Mukherji, Surendranath Tagore, Indira Devi Chaudhurani, Jadunath Sarkar, Amiya Chakravarty, Somnath Maitra, Sujit Mukherjee, Sukanta Chaudhuri, Ranjita Basu, and others. However, recent translations record the efforts of translators of Indian origin - Krishna Dutta and Kalpana Bardhan - living abroad and turning back to literature at home. Some of the non-Indian translators are Edward Thompson, W.W. Pearson, C.F. Andrews, Mary Lago, W.W. Pearson, C.F. Andrews, feeling at home in India and working on Indian literature. Not only was this trio considerably acquainted with the source culture but also with the author of the source texts.

Turning to the audience of the translated stories, that is, the target language readers, another interesting and variegated structure comes to view. Obviously and primarily, the target group is a non-Bengali readership. It includes non-Bengali Indians and non-Indians. Non-Bengali Indians are somewhat familiar with the Bengali culture due to their proximity to it and the common nationality they share with their Bengali brethren. Non-Indians are comparatively less familiar or completely unfamiliar with the source culture. Among these non-Indians, the people of Great Britain have been in closer interaction with Indian culture because of long years of colonial rule. Nearer home, the people of Bangladesh are pretty much acquainted with the source culture, having once shared the same nationality and still sharing the same source language.

Another feature of the readership of English translations of Tagore's writings is that it surprisingly includes a significant number of Bengali readers too. These Bengali readers are generally of two types. Some of them have had an upbringing outside Bengal and hence are not well conversant in the Bengali language. Others are bilingual, that is, they are comfortable in Bengali and in English, and read the translations out of curiosity or for some specific purposes.

But their reading usually involves a critical perspective as they are in
a position to judge how far the target language text has approximated
its source counterpart. Hence, although they do not conventionally
belong to the domain of target readers, they are indeed an important
and valuable segment of the readership.

Collating the Translated Texts

Evidently, this varied and cosmopolitan nature of translators
and target readers of Tagore's translated short stories casts its
impressions on the translations. As it is, translation activities in the
field of literature are often ridden by complexities of linguistic and
cultural transference. For example, the ailing postmaster in Tagore's
eponymous story longs for his mother and elder sister: "তপ্ত ললাটের

উপর শাঁখাপরা কোমল হস্তের স্পর্শ মনে পড়ে।" The word 'Shakha' is alien
to English culture. To source language readers, however, the
contextual use of the word here immediately evokes suggestions of
the affectionate, tender, and caressing hands of a married woman - a
mother, wife or sister. Debendra Nath Mitter translates the Bengali
sentence as: "*He remembers the sweet touch of hands, with shell
bracelets on, on his fevered brow*" *(Mitter 1911: 38)*. The translation
in *Mashi and Other Stories* reads: "*He longed to remember the touch
on the forehead of soft hands with tinkling bracelets...*" *(Tagore
1918: 164)* Krishna Dutta and Mary Lago have translated the source
sentence thus: "He savoured a memory of a soft touch from a
bangled hand on a feverish forehead" *(Datta & Lago 1991: 28)*.
William Radice's version is: "*He remembered the touch on his
forehead of soft hands, conch-shell bangles*". *(Radice 1994: 44)*

Mitter and Radice make some effort to preserve the
speciality of 'Shakha' in their respective use of "shell bracelets" and
"conch-shell bangles". But the specificity of the bangle is completely

lost in the other two renderings -"tinkling bracelets" and "bangled hand".

Similarly, when the postmaster tells Ratan that he would soon be leaving, never to return, Ratan is overcome by sadness. Her emotions are conveyed by a stroke of aesthetic ingenuity that is difficult to parallel in translation: "মিটমিট করিয়া প্রদীপ জ্বলিতে লাগিল এবং একস্থানে ঘরের জীর্ণ চাল ভেদ করিয়া একটি মাটির সরার উপর টপটপ করিয়া বৃষ্টির জল পড়িতে লাগিল।". While Ratan's tear-drops are echoed in the falling raindrops, the flickering lamp reflects her dampened spirit. Debendra Nath Mitter translates the aforesaid sentence as: "The lamp burnt dimly and pitpat the rain fell on an earthen plate through a chink in the dilapidated thatched roof." *(Mitter 1911: 38)* *In Mashi and Other Stories*, the translated sentence reads: "The lamp went dimly burning, and from a leak in one corner of the thatch water dripped steadily into an earthen vessel on the floor beneath it" *(Dutta & Lago 1991: 166)*. Krishna Dutta and Mary Lago offer the following version: "The lamp flickered, and at one point in the room rain dripped from the decrepit thatched roof into a clay saucer placed on the floor" *(Dutta & Lago 1991: 29)*. William Radice's translation is: "The lamp flickered weakly; through a hole in the crumbling thatched roof, rain water steadily dripped on to an earthenware dish" *(Radice 1994: 45)*. The onomatopoeic expressions in Bengali, *"mitmit"* and *"toptop"*, find inadequate representations in all these versions, with Mitter's being the sole attempt to capture the impression of sound in "pitpat". However, the Bengali word, *"toptop"*, echoes both the falling tears and the falling rain while "pitpat" captures the beat of raindrops only.

In 'Shasti', Chandara's decision to embrace the gallows is propelled by a strong feeling of *'abhiman'*: "এ কী নিদারুণ অভিমান।" This commonly used and extremely evocative Bengali word has

perplexed translators over the years. Rajani Ranjan Sen in his translation of the story, titled, 'The Sentence', published in *Glimpses of Bengal Life, (Sen 1913),* steers away from this uncomfortable situation by omitting the sentence. 'Punishment' by Mary Lago and Tarun Gupta, published in The Housewarming and Other Selected Writings, offers the following version: "What a terrible pride this was!" *(Chakravarty et.al 1965: 42)* Kalpana Bardhan's translation is: "How terribly she was reacting to her hurt feeling..." *(Bardhan 1990: 69)* Krishna Dutta and Mary Lago write it as: "What unrelenting resentment!" *(Dutta & Lago 1991: 76)* William Radice, in his 1991 edition, renders the sentence as, "Such fierce, passionate pride!" and in his 1994 revised-edition as, "Such fierce, disastrous pride!" In both the editions, he appends a footnote: "*abhiman*: there is no single English word for this emotion. It includes hurt pride, bruised feeling, and rejection by someone we love, Chandara is abhiman incarnate" *(Radice 1991: 133).* Supriya Chaudhuri's rendering of the said source sentence is: "How terrible was this pride of hers" *(Chaudhuri 2000: 118).* Radice's footnote is a candid acknowledgement of the absence of an equivalent in target language usage. By what degree an English translation of 'Shasti' stands a chance of missing its mark, becomes evident when one realizes that a sense of 'abhiman' is the quintessence that spins the story.

The choice of an equivalent can be further complicated by the translator's identity and point of view. For instance, William Radice translates "শ্বশুরঘর" in "Jibita o Mrita', as "husband's house" *(Radice 1994: 37).* In the Indian context, "shashurghar" implies literally and culturally, the father-in-law's house. But Radice naturally reads with an Englishman's eyes and gives the source language expression a western interpretation. Expectedly an Indian translating primarily for a non-Bengali Indian target group would not stray away from the source expression and select "husband's house" because this equivalent does not fit into the conventional

cultural frame of an Indian family. Another intriguing factor influencing the choice of an equivalent is then the kind of target readership in the translator's mind. When Krishna Dutta and Mary Lago turn the Indian "বাটি" into a western "cup" *(Dutta & Lago 1991: 65)*, in their rendering of 'Madhyabartini,' they actually opt for a target culture-oriented equivalent. Again, in keeping with English etiquette, "খোলাগায়ে" in 'Madhyabartini' becomes "shirtless" *(Chakravarty et.al 1965: 45)* instead of 'bare-chested' in 'The Girl Between', published in *The. Housewarming and Other Selected Writings.* In these instances, subtly but surely, the dominant culture tends to prevail over its counterpart. And, the western-oriented equivalents, "husband's house", "cup", "shirtless", become manifestations of the tussle that generally ensues when two cultures that are not at par in power equations, encounter each other in the territory of translation.

Correlating the Author and the Self-translator

The topic for deliberation also registers the unusual case of the author as the translator of his own stories. Apart from assisting, revising, or partly translating some of his stories, Tagore translated in full three of his stories from *Galpaguchchha*.These are 'Jayparajay', 'Manbhanjan', and 'Samskar'. These twin roles entwine the self-translator in entanglements that can be variously explained.

Rabindranath Tagore had ventured a Bengali translation of Percy Bysshe Shelley's 'Love's Philosophy' under the title, 'premtattwa'. The original as well as the translated texts of the first stanza are quoted here:

"The fountains mingle with the river
And the rivers with the ocean,
The winds of heaven mix for ever

> With a sweet emotion;
> Nothing in the world is single,
> All things by a law divine
> In one another's being mingle-
> Why not I with thine?"

<div align="right">(Palgrave 1954: 185)</div>

"নিঝর মিশিছে তটিনীর সাথে

    তটিনী মিশিছে সাগর –' পরে,

    পবনের সাথে মিশিছে পবন

        চিরসুমধুর প্রণয়ভরে !

    জগতে কেহই নহিকো একেলা,

        সকলি বিধির নিয়মগুণে,

    একের সহিত মিশিছে অপরে

        আমি বা কেন না তোমার সনে ?"

<div align="right">(Sikdar 1998: 40)</div>

This is indeed an instance of Shelley translated at his best. Tagore here makes his translated lines read natural and he shows an astounding faithfulness to the original. Even the suggestion of original ethereality in "The winds of heaven" is retained in "paban" which means 'wind' or 'air' while also referring to 'the wind-god' (comparable with the Latin *Aeolus* and the Greek *Aiolos* - god of the winds).

What could then possibly have happened to Tagore when he translated his own Bengali writings into English? For, in his self-translations, the source text often finds a simplified and generalized rendering; and, this is evident in his English translations of his own

stories too. In fact, the laden implications of the titles, 'Jayparajay' and 'Manbhanjan', have been reduced to only 'The Victory' and a name, 'Giribala', respectively.

In his self-translations, Tagore seems to be more interested in communicating ideas. So, at places, he omits portions of the original or condenses drastically the source language text to a brief and bland expression. For example, of Giribala's elaboration to revenge herself upon her husband in 'Manbhanjan', all that finds representation in translation is: "…prayed in her mind that a day might come when she might have an opportunity to spurn him away with her contempt" (Tagore 1917: 503) The Bengali counterpart however reads: "সে জর্জরিত চিত্তে মনে করিল, যদি কখনো এমন দিন আসে যে, তাহার স্বামী তাহার রূপে আকৃষ্ট হইয়া দগ্ধপক্ষ পতঙ্গের মতো তাহার পদতলে আসিয়া পড়ে, এবং সে আপন চরণনখরের প্রান্ত হইতে উপেক্ষা বিকীর্ণ করিয়া দিয়া অভিমানভরে চলিয়া যাইতে পারে, তবেই তাহার এই ব্যর্থ রূপ ব্যর্থ যৌবন সার্থকতা লাভ করিবে।"

Tagore the self-translator also showed an excessive and obsessive concern for his target readers. He nursed a grave anxiety about the degree to which the complex source specificities in his writings could be conveyed across cultures. That is why he sometimes resorted to target-friendly substitutes for source culture specificities. That is why even the simple specificity in "নমস্কার" in 'Jayparajay' gathers a western hue in Tagore's own rendering, "greeted…with a smile and a bow"*(Various Writers 1985: 18)*. In the process of such transformations, the translated stories are shorn of much of their culture specificities and to that extent, the translated texts have become feebler representations of their originals. For example, the humour in re-christening 'Banbihari' as 'Konbihari' in 'Samskar' is lost when Tagore omits in his translation, *(Tagore*

1928), the short source sentence: "আমি তার নাম দিয়েছি কোণবিহারী"
'Banbihari' implies roving in forests and groves, especially for
pleasure It also bears references to *Krishna*, who used to rove in
groves, playing his flute. In fact, *'bihari'* means sporting, frolicking,
dallying, promenading, or even indulging in amorous frolics, while
'kon' means an angle or a corner. And the humorous implication of
the source sentence is that *Banbihari,* contrary to his name, is fond
of sedentary discussions.

Finally, Tagore was illimitably freer in his creative and
imaginative strokes while composing the original stories in his
mother tongue than he was while translating them into a language of
foreign origin. And in his letters, he has often expressed this
apprehension of using English to full advantage. In all this, however,
it has to be conceded that Tagore could generously take liberties
with the originals because they were his own compositions.
Probably, he even assumed that he had the right to take liberties.
And so he could afford to forego the translator's fealty to the source
text with a note of nonchalance.

Translation - A Transnational Perspective

Evidently, English translations of Tagore's short stories, like
all   cross-cultural   translations,   involve   a   translocation,   a
communication across languages and cultures. The source text,
rooted in its own culture, is conveyed through another linguistic
medium to a target group that generally hails from a different
cultural milieu. The Bengali text in English translation thus
encounters a new locational context in the target world. Patently or
latently, the linguistic and cultural resources of the target language
and the kind of target group tend to influence the translated text.
Also, a translation ideally aspires to acquire a place in the literary
repertoire of the target language, and it has to fulfill the primary

criterion of readability. At the same time, a translation is invariably judged with reference to its original and this claims that a good translation should make an optimum effort to retain the source specificities. Indeed, most of the translational dilemmas can be traced to those conflicting demands of a shift in location. These complications usually intensify whenever the source and target counterparts do not enjoy equal standing in international power balance. There then arise chances of appropriation or misappropriation of the text and the conquest of the less powerful side by the more dominant one.

However, although propelled by economic logic of taking advantage of the opening of markets, the prevalent tendency all over the world, of regions coming closer and together, has offered tremendous scope for a spurt in translation activities. The European Union (EU), the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), and similar other collaborative efforts elsewhere are concrete manifestations of this trend. One of the positive effects of such endeavours is an impetus for interactions amongst different nations and cultures. In the context of these developments, the need for a liberal and transnational outlook of people becomes more and more relevant, and the translators are expected to encash these opportunities.

Fortunately, Tagore's personality, his thoughts and ideas reflected an all encompassing approach that found a crystallized expression in his concept of the Universal Man. Naturally, his writings voiced this vision and this is to be found in many of his short stories too. That is why, in promoting integration amongst nations, his writings have a great potential for translation, and translators are required to respond to this challenge. Possibly, it was Tagore's own transnational attitude that urged him to reach out to an international readership and prompted him to translate his own

writings into English. After all, English translations enjoy a larger target readership as English has been operating on a global footing.

In this era of interdisciplinary approach and vigorous co-operative ventures amongst nations, translation activity needs to be attended to by a liberated mind that will be, as far as practicable, free from any incriminating influences of major-minor power equations in conveying cultures across national boundaries. The translational forum would thereby ensure mutual respect and appreciation for cultures other than one's own and encourage receptivity and responsiveness to new literatures. In such an atmosphere, source specificities would be conserved as indispensable elements of a world culture and not be mowed down by target language-oriented substitutes of a more dominant culture. It should then be possible to initiate a process of reterritorialisation and relocation by which people will view themselves in a wider context without compromising their distinctive identities. This realization of a symbiotic relationship between one's roots and the world outside would provide a positive perspective for translation as a subject of study as well as an area of operation.

A look into the available English translations of Tagore's short stories reveals that Jatindra M. Bagchi's rendering of the Bengali 'Subha', which appeared in the 16 September 1901 issue of *New India: A Weekly Record and Review of Modern Thought & Life,* is the first published English translation. However, a year before this, an attempt at translating Tagore's short stories into English had already been made. Three translated stories were a part of his debut, but only one of these translations appeared in print *(Paul 1988: 298)* and that too, not until 1912. Yet, in the emerging context of a global village, this maiden translation and its translator acquire a symbolic significance.

NOTES

1. All portions quoted in this paper from the Bengali texts of Tagore's short stories bear reference to this publication.

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Translating *Suno Shefali*:
A Dual Empowerment

B.T. SEETHA

Abstract

The paper addresses the issue of translation and empowerment in the contemporary context. It basically deals with the concerns of translation in an intercultural situation. Translation from Indian Languages to English and from English to Indian Languages entails an intercultural dialogue. Drama is polyphonic and thus not rigid. While translating a play the translator needs to be aware of the aspects of performance and presentation. The source text (ST) passing through the different stages of anuvad *as translation or interpretation,* bhashantaram *as transformation or translation and* vivarta *as trans-creation, enforces decisions which find their way into performance as textual strategies in the form of a dialect or an idiom or audio-visual signs by way of body language, design, sound, and music. This paper is divided into three sections. The first two parts explore the theoretical assumptions of translation and the last part deals with the thematic analysis of the text Listen Shefali wherein Shefali's predicament is viewed as the predicament of the translator.*

Translating *Suno Shefali,* a Hindi play by Kusum Kumar as *Listen Shefali* was indeed an empowering experience, both at the level of the translational process involved as well as the necessary thematic understanding. Translation of thought and language, which overlap, leads to an empowerment of the writer, translator, reader and also of the text. As the title of the text suggests, Shefali's act of listening to what is said and to what is left unsaid, is similar to the translator's attempt of interpreting the text and creating a faithful re-production.

This paper is divided into three sections.The first two parts explore the theoretical assumptions of translation and the last part deals with the thematic analysis of the text, Listen Shefali, wherein Shefali's predicament is viewed as the predicament of the translator.

In the year 2000-02 Osmania University decided to offer specialization courses, in its constituent colleges. Following this decision Postgraduate College Secunderabad, Osmania University offered six courses in Indian Literatures in Translation as a specialization. As a result, translations in English from various Indian "vernacular" languages gained special significance, for both students and teachers. These six courses spanned a vast range of literary texts and excerpts from different genres like a chapter on Rasa from Bharatamuni's *Natyasastra*; Somadeva's *Kathasarithsagar* (chapters I and II: Kathapita and Kathamukha); Kalidasa's *Abhijnana Shakuntalam*; selected poems of Kabir from *Mystic Songs of Kabir*; Gazal's of Mir Galib, Insha Allah Insha, Bahadur Shah Zafar and Quli Qutub Shah from *Urdu Gazals and Nazm*; Prasad's *Kamayani* (books I and III); Gurrum Joshua's *Gabbilam* (part I) and Tendulkar's *Silence, the Court is in Session* to mention a few.

The students' response to these texts was much better than to the other core texts from British and American literatures. Some of them went to the source text in their enthusiasm to learn more and

perhaps read only the source texts! It was a pleasant surprise when one of the students wanted to pursue further studies on Thyagaraja. Her reason for doing so, she said, was that she was learning music and also that if a foreigner, William. J. Jackson in his book *Thyagaraja: A Renewal of Tradition* could work on Thyagaraja's musical compositions, a culture-specific text, she felt she could do equal justice or even better. Why was she so confident to think that she was better equipped? This could be a simple case of reiterating confidence in oneself which a vernacular language offers by way of familiarity with the culture, no doubt embedded in the source language. Or it could be a mere desire to reach out to a wider audience by way of translation because the target language has the sanction of a language widely used.

The locuton "Translation and Empowerment" raises certain questions. How and who or what does translation empower? Being translated, has the writer been empowered by gaining wider readership? Has the translator empowered himself/herself by reaching out to a wider audience? Have the translator and the enlarged readership empower the source text/culture or the target text/culture by way of giving the source text one more medium of expression?

Literature, whether classical or contemporary, identifies the need of a sympathetic and at times even an empathetic reception, people who have such an empathy being termed *sahridaya* in Sanskrit. Unlike other genres, drama and theatre show a different relationship between the text and the reader or the performance and the audience. If in literature, the relationship between *sruti* and *smriti* forms the very basis of transcreation, wherein an idea is translated into a text and the text consciously acquires a form, the text in drama further includes other forms of perception. Citing Lesley Soule in *Theatre Praxis* McCullough refers to the relationship between the performer, spectator, and character/ text, to assert,

> The meaning of a performance is not fixed in the 'character' mirroring life, but the result of a plurality of readings located in the spectators' perceptions. The 'who' of a performed identity is not a state of being but 'a process of interaction, *residing not in the subjective individual but a social behaviour*'.
>
> (McCullough Christopher 1998:12)

Translation from Indian Languages into English and from English into Indian Languages thus involves an intercultural dialogue. Thus in the process of inter-semiotic transposition leading to meaningful inter-lingual transposition, creativity works at different levels of culture, character, plot and structure of the source/target texts. After a comprehensive understanding of the text, the translator needs to find proper words and phrases that can convey the mood and meaning of the source text in the target text too.

According to the *nyaya* school of thought, linguistic utterance or *sabda* is a way of knowledge, which includes perception and inference. Theatre as a mode of communication through word and action has an immediate influence on the receiver leading to a possible critical inquiry. Thus an active interaction of perception and inference could lead to knowledge. The power of expression at these different levels, which theatre has, is its element of beauty. Therefore a play even when it is being written, translating an idea or thought into words, or being translated, from a source text to a target text needs a multi-dimensional approach because of the polyphony involved. It is not merely the context, mood and tone of the character but also the action that calls for attention. The settings and surroundings too tend to influence expression and action. A play merely written or read is half done, it gains complete form only when performed or seen. Therefore while writing or translating a play, one needs to visualize not merely the performance on the stage but also the possible composition and the reception of the audience.

The composition of and reception of the audience are often a function of the sociocultural milieu. When a performance moves from a specific milieu to another, changes could occur in expression or presentation. The audience could be anyone: anyone who walks into the theatre and watches the play constitutes the audience, which makes it difficult for the writer or the translator to have a specific group in mind. Thus, a drama text, which has to be staged and performed has no rigid text. Every translation or performance envisages creativity.

'Performability' of a text is often equated with the 'speakability' of a text, that is, the ability to produce fluid texts, which performers may utter without much difficulty and which the audience could grasp without much effort. From a theatrical viewpoint, during the process of translation the need or will to appeal to audiences usually involves a tension between foreignization and domestication. The source text (ST) passing through the different stages of *anuvad* as translation or interpretation, *bhashantaram* as transformation or translation and *vivarta* as trans-creation thus enforces decisions which find their way into performance as textual strategies in the form of a dialect or an idiom or audio-visual signs by way of body language, design, sound, and music. The use of Sanskrit terms here shows that a culture that creates a need or demand for translation has an indigenous framework of reference which helps in the interpretation and translation of the text in that culture. Performability, a way of *arthakriya*, from one medium to another, from verbal or written to performance, is also determined by the ideology of the theatre that the performing unit espouses, and is related to questions of a social standing of both the performers and the audience.

The translation process is therefore adaptation, interpretation, paraphrasing, and contemporization and most importantly, understanding the combine to create meaning in the theatre. The nature of contemporary theatre has changed from being

necessarily a mere interpretation of experience to being a manifestation of it. The experimental and experiential quality of theatre today has led to a definite interaction between the audience and the performers, often setting aside the role of the author. Thus translation at these different levels, which gains a multi-dimensional character, is indeed dual empowerment. James MacDonald, an Honorary Fellow in Drama at the University of Exter, who has written plays and assisted performances in *Adaptation and the Drama Student*, has this to say

> Indian Play translation is a relatively humble form of playwriting. Little is ever made of it, in publication or in production. In production, indeed, it is more commonly thought of as a literal rendering of the foreign original or as a transcription of the director's concept of the play.

(MacDonald 1998:137-38)

II

Both the translator and the playwright need to constantly visualize performance. If a linguistic utterance itself is a translation of an idea or thought, it is this translation of an idea into words and then into action that is indeed empowering. Translation of a dramatic text therefore works at two levels. Language in theatre is most often the spoken language unlike that of prose and of poetry. This language of performance is the language that communicates instantly, in more ways than one, with the spectators, and hence the need to use a code that could be received and perhaps even responded to immediately. Preparedness of the spectators or audience acquires a significant meaning. The rhetoric of historical and mythological plays presented a heightened and flamboyant register while contemporary theatre, on the contrary, across the centuries, redefined language which is close to the spoken word to present socially relevant elements in plays. A sense of ownership or

rigidity of the written word has little meaning in theatre. Giving voice to others may literally mean letting the performers put the text into their own words or tone through devising or improvisation. Thus language on the stage gains a gesture, a body language. The language needs to become a coordinate of the action. This could be termed Brechtian or simply an element of clarity given to the actor so as to have freedom to concentrate on action. If the source text can be considered as a work of art from the universal to the particular, the target text in turn evolves as art from the particular to the universal.

Referring to one of her Indian adaptations of the German silen theatre, Request Concert in her unpublished autobiographical dramatic narrative *antaryatra,* Usha Ganguli, a well known playwright-actor-director says:

> …the play was being performed in a cowshed. About twenty Santhal women, strong able-bodied women used to hard work, came to watch the play that night. In the last scene, I'm not able to sleep, so I pick up the tablets. Immediately I felt the riveting stare of twenty pairs of eyes on me, as if forcing life on me. I could not swallow the tablets to commit suicide in the last scene that night. That changed the history of the play…
>
> (Mukherjee 2005)

Contemporary performers often argue and also practice the very notion of a rigid text or a structured script as redundant since it prioritizes the word over body, text over the visual, the written over the spoken and the writer/performer over the audience. There are often cases wherein the writer or the director changed the text, context and even the form of the play. In theatre therfore the spoken word and the performance transcend a rigid script.

In our postmodernist culture, where narrative structures are fragmented, theatre substitutes for 'the marketplace' and its various contributors become subsumed in the whole. In this context, the author is not so much 'dead' (Barthes 1977) as indivisible from the totality, her/his personal strategy - text - becoming one strand, merely among many (MacDonald 1998: 128).

In modern/ postcolonial theatre/ literature, English words and phrases are often used in vernacular language texts. While translating such a text one needs to use extralinguistic methods in the form of quotes or italics. If the translator is aware of the fact that one of the characters doesn't know English the dialogue attributed to such a character could remain the source language or a different register could be used. Keeping in mind not merely the text but also the performance, the act of translating plays becomes audience - specific. In intercultural translations of the plays the translator finds himself/ herself further in a complex dilemma. As G.N.Devy puts it,

> An Indian student of Literature finds himself precariously hanging between a literary metaphysics, which rules out the very possibility of translation, and a literary ethos where translation is becoming increasingly important.
>
> (Devy 1998: 46)

A relationship between author, text and translator can be viewed in terms of the image of a bird in a cage. Flights of imagination captured within a framework, both linguistic and stylistic, form the text. The reader or the translator releases the bird, lets loose his imagination, only to capture it in another form/another cage or frame for another set of readers to release the bird again. However, playwriting being more of a social genre than a literary genre invariably locates the writer in a specific culture, and therefore in a specific audience group. Translation therefore brings about a

radical relocation and even transubstantiation. Thus translating a play imposes certain limitations, limitations of period and locale and the related speech patterns. How good or authentic the translation is, is a question often asked. As Matilal in his note on Translation: *Bhartrahari on Sabda* says,

> The goodness or badness of a translation, the distortion, falsity or correctness of it, would not be determined simply by the inter-linguistic or intra-linguistic semantic rules, but by the entire situation of each translation with all its uniqueness, that is, by the kind of total reactions, effects, motivations and references it generates on that occasion.

> (Matilal 2001:123)

Translation of literary texts unlike the translation of scientific texts becomes more of an aesthetic concern, a 'creative transposition' rather than a linguistic transposition wherein a literal translation may often miss out on the nuances in the source text. Translation emerges as a window onto something new and different even while maintaining the source text and culture. There emerges a possiblility of understanding others, their cultural history and power relations in the contemporary world. This awareness and knowledge is an empowering experience. Michaela Wolf in one of her papers (affirms that translators and translation scholars are becoming aware of the fact that translation need not be necessarily viewed as a transfer "between cultures", but also to be seen from the standpoint where cultures merge and create new spaces. She further asserts that translation therefore does not confirm borders and inscribe the dichotomy of centre-periphery, but rather identifies pluricentres where cultural differences are negotiated, - mainly in the context of asymmetrical cultures.

Why does a translator choose a particular text for translation? Is it just because he/she likes it? Or are there other

reasons? Translation is not merely a linguistic activity, but it is also an economic, artistic, intercultural or intracultural communication, a power-political activity. When one translates for pleasure initially it is he or she who is a translator, the reader, the audience. But when one translates for reasons academic these parameters change. The choice of the text depends on structural, thematic, and even social concerns. The composition of the audience plays a significant role. If the audience is familiar with the SL culture, translation into TL is different from the case wherein the audience is unfamiliar with the SL culture. Therefore there could be various translations of a text depending not merely on the translator but based on the target audience / reader.

III

The text under discussion is Suno Shefali, a modern Hindi play by Kusum Kumar published in 1992, and being a modern play at least one hurdle could be partially overcome viz. that of language and the social idiom. However, in the process of translating the text there were moments of difficulty, espcially when the writer used poetry and music to highlight specific aspects of the play. Theatre across cultures has roots in the divine and the religious. Natyasastra, accorded the place of a fifth Veda, is deemed to have taken tradition *(itihasa)* and combined it with instruction. Various characteristics were taken from the four Vedas; "from the Rigveda the element of recitation, from the Samaveda song, from the Yajurveda the mimetic art, and from Atharvaveda sentiment" (The Sas Dra. P.14). Although they are traced to the Vedas these elemnts have in fact made their presence discernible only in the epics and the literature that followed. If music is used for mere ornamentation for instance soft music or the beat of the soldiers or even music evoking seasons there is no problem of transferring the mood and tone from the SL to the TL as translation here is nonverbal. The problem arises when the music is accompanied by poetic verses. It is the intercultural idiom

that makes it difficult to maintain a proper balance between the performance-oriented text and the reader/audience-oriented text.

Listen Shefali is the story of a young dalit woman of self-respect and dignity. Even as a child she was always different. She would refuse to accept 'alms', as she would call it, 'free books and free food'. She considered them as a way of distancing from the regular and accepted norms of society. She refuses to be exploited and desired to 'be like every one else', to be a part of the mainstream. Her mother works for Miss Sahib. It is Miss Sahib who encourages Shefali to educate herself. She recommends Shefali to a prospective politician, Satamev Dikshit to teach her English. English and the presence of Miss Sahib bring in the subtle presence of the colonial powers that open the windows to the outer world. It is here that Shefali falls in love with Dikshit's son, Bakul. However she realizes that Bakul's interest in her is not for her as a person or as an individual but his interest is because she is a dalit. Both Satyamev Dikshit and Bakul want to cash in on the fact that she is a dalit. They want to say that they show no discrimination against dalits, they want to use this as an exploit for winning the elections. But Shefali refuses to be used as a commodity or material for propaganda. Seeing through their game, she declines to marry Bakul, thus shattering their dreams:

> *Bakul:* 'Oh! I am sitting properly' …(silence for sometime) last night I dreamt … near the ghat … at the very spot we were getting married … after marriage……..
>
> *Shefali:* (with mocking anger) from there we get on to a Jeep … moving all over the city we announce through loud speakers - 'Ladies and gentlemen, vote for us' … *(disturbed, her voice becomes louder)* you are standing above me saying 'vote for Dikshit, vote for …' People on either side of the road are moving towards their destinations. You want to draw their

attention so you stop at one of the crossroads and say, 'ladies and gentlemen for a bright future vote for us … today it is this Harijan girl that is telling you. I just married her. *(Louder)* upliftment of the Harijans is as important as eliminating poverty. *(Bakul is agitated)* whatever efforts we made so far are not enough … *(Bakul covers his ears and hangs his head)* when I realized that all efforts towards the upliftment of the untouchables were in vain in a moment of desperation I first fell in love with this woman, then I married her, so ladies and gentlemen now all of you will cast your valuable votes in our favour'. This was your dream, wasn't it?

(Seetha 2005: 224-225.LS)

It is at this point of refusal to be a victim of exploitation for self gain that the two voices are heard: one that of Shefali's mother and the other that of an astrologer. The mother as one who is weak and is willing to accept anything that is offered to her; if only to improve her family's social position; and the astrologer who went through the process of purgation when he was able to constrain himself from committing suicide on the banks of Yamuna, thus emerging a strong man. The astrologer is now able to give strength and conviction not only to him but also to others who come to him for help. It is when Shefali is struggling with the powers of love and of her own convictions that the people are speaking to her. She has to now choose whether she would be "consumed by life or would consume life". Her mother tries to convince her to compromise and accept the situation. Her only concern is a comfortable life devoid of 'self'. She is projected as one who has no courage to fight for recognition or acceptance. Her only concern is to get her three daughters married. She is unable to understand Shefali's rigid attitude towards society. Shefali's mother has no identity of her own. She is merely a mother figure, socially committed, only recognizes her duty towards the outward world. She is unable to perceive the

struggle within Shefali, a struggle to assert an identity of her own, an identity that belongs to the mainstream. Shefali refuses to be marginalized.

Shefali has been meeting Bakul on the banks of the river Yamuna. On the ghat next to where they used to meet, is the astrologer. The play in fact opens, showing first the astrologer, Acharya Manan Dev in a typical atmosphere. He has all his paraphernalia displayed around him, a mat spread out, a bird in a cage, people consulting him and a little boy running errands for him. Why does he choose the banks of the river? Why is he not on the streets where there could be more people? He has reasons. He has a purpose. He feels that people in the streets merely want to know how better their life could be but people here on the ghat come to a point of desperation, a moment of crisis, when life's problems demand (re)solutions, they are forced to chose between life and death; so he could guide them to life and a better one too. He plays the role of an opposing force as against the weak assertion of Shefali's mother. He becomes a symbol of power, a mysterious power. However he reveals his true self only to Shefali, like Lord Krishna revealing his self to Arjuna on the battlefield. Like Arjuna, Shefali finds herself fighting her own people, her love and the rigid, divisive and exploitative forces in society. She refuses to become a pawn in the gamble played by politicians. The astrologer constantly uses poetry and song to infuse strength in Shefali.

> Kick it off, hurt not thyself!
> Impediments in your path we shall not be!
> Whatever you wish to be..
> You can be, but never a coward be!
> *(Manan forgets. Geru continues alone)*
> Suppress how long can be the laughter of peace!
> What is this life to give and take!
> Shall we not do? Or shall we strive?
> Peans of one's own joy!

Whatever you wish to be…
You can be, but never a coward be!
(Manan recollects the poem and joins Geru)
Either win with the power of love
Or let the smuggler kiss your feet
Revenge is also a weakness
But cowardice is more vicious
(loudly) Whatever you wish to be..
You can be, but never a coward be!

<div align="right">(Seetha 2005:198-199. LS)</div>

He sees poetry as the ultimate truth and astrology as falsehood or rather maya. The rhythm and pattern of words in poetry extend the power of expression. So we find in this play another dimension added in the structural pattern. A shift in the mode of translation is evident in that it moves from a realistic dialogue form to a symbolic poetic expression. Poetry is considered as the only reality. If poetry is seen as creativity at the levels of imagination, how could it be reality? Bhartrhari states that language gains its meaning only when it transcends language. Reality begins only when language ends. Translation of the dialogue is close to the speech patterns, "the uttered or fully sequenced speech" which can be placed at the level of *Vaikari Vak*.

Translations of poetry and song need a different approach wherein the rhythmic, metaphorical and idiomatic uses of language take the translator into the realms of imagination. The most difficult task is the translation of a song with its melody and music. To capture the cadence of music in translation is like the photographer in *Listen Shefali* who is taking the pictures of a group of singers. He wants them to sing and sing aloud. When asked why he expects them to sing aloud as he would not be able to capture the music, he replies that he would be able to capture different postures of their head and mouth.

Photographer: (To the singers) start, start singing….
I'm coming.

Dikshit: (Startled) why are you making them sing aloud? … That won't come in the photograph.

Photographer: *Maza aata hai!* I enjoy keertan sounds. If they don't sing so loud, how will I get the uneven expression of the faces on my film? Some with closed lips and some with open mouths. I like that.

(Seetha 2005: LS. 202)

Thus translating music and poetry is at the level of *madhyama vak* wherein thought and intuition are captured. There are four levels of expression, according to the philosophy of Nyaya Sastra wherein the surface value of speech, the speech act itself is called Vaikhari; a subtler level of speech, the level of thought, is called *Madhyama*; the sublest value of speech is called Pasyanthi and the transcendental level of speech on the level of pure consciousness is called Para which is the level of bliss.

Suno Shefali, therefore, is an appeal not merely to the sense of hearing but to something beyond. It is a call to the inner self, a call of awakening. Shefali's mother with her mere practical approach to life uses intensive dialogue form a level of *vaikhari vak*. Manan dev Acharya, the astrologer as the name suggests dwells at the level of thought or chintan and therefore could be related to the *madhyama vak*. At the end of the play when he says listen Shefali, Shefali is standing with her eyes closed. Manan says nothing; yet a statement is heard from behind the curtains. This statement is at the level of *pasyanthi vak* "an apparently imitative intuition" wherein "sequencing is present only as a pregnant force". It could be Shefali's ability now to hear beyond the word or Manan's attempt to communicate his thoughts without really saying them to someone on

the same wavelength, or it could be a statement of reaction on the part of the reader/audience. Just as a writer has an identity by way of his/her culture, language and style, so does the speaker in a play. A statement heard without the mention of the speaker leaves the statement open to a wide interpretation and multiple reading. This is a statement that is merely heard without any mention of the speaker. We hear 'thus written are the chronicles of the brave.' However this last line could evoke other similar conclusions like, 'thus made are the statements of the power-hungry' 'thus exploited are the ignorant' and so forth. As the open ending of the play suggests various possibilities, so does a work of art in the process of transference from an idea to a text to an interpretation and an idea thus formulated again could suggest a cyclic process which though not reaching the same point but forming a spring pattern, sends forth ripples of consciousness with the text as focus.

Names of the characters gain special significance in understanding the play which could be missed in translation. As already suggested, Manan signifies thought processes, the little boy Geru, meaning red-coloured mud found in quarries, running errands adds colour to the staid, serious and thoughtful attitude of Manan. The child in him and the innocence he represents becomes the link between Manan's sub-conscious and the conscious world around. Manan and Geru can be identified as a *sutradhar/sthapaka* and *vidushaka*. If Manan introduces and holds the strings of action together, Geru adds a note of lighthearted element to the action. Shefali is a tree, bearing blue-coloured fragrant flowers. Blue coloured flowers are considered a special offering to Lord Shiva, the lord of destruction. Thus the Shiva temple in the play gains added significance. Kiran is married to Bakul in this very temple. Bakul is a small brown-coloured flower dear to Lord Krishna. Bakul walks away with Kiran, literally 'the sunray', thus causing darkness in Shefali's life. However, the silent presence of Manan is a ray of hope. The *ghat* on the riverside is symbolic of life and death, joy and sorrow, construction and destruction of flow and stasis. *Listen*

Shefali is therefore not an idealization of life (*of itihasa*) like in Ramayana wherein the characters are presented as embodiments of perfection, but a down-to-earth practical approach to life with its struggle and strife like in the *Mahabharata.* It is on the battlefield of Kurukshetra that thought (Lord Krishna's *Geetopadesha*) is translated into action (Arjuna's).

Translating *Suno Shefali* is therefore a reaching forth of not merely the author/translator but also the characters in the play that become symbolic of the modern predicament of class, caste and gender struggle. Empowerment lies in recapturing by way of imagination the thematic and linguistic reconstruction of *kutch bhi ban par kaayar math ban!* "Become anything but not a coward"

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War, Women and Translational Empowerment in Seela Subhadra Devi's Poetry

P. JAYALAKSHMI

Abstract

Translation in recent times has come to be a means to enrich the language and literature of a culture. What are the problems of translation faced by translators in arriving at an acceptable translation? Can a translated text hope to attain a status equivalent to the Source Text remaining within its confines? If so, what is the modality to be adopted? The paper looks at some of these concerns as the translators undertook to translate Seela Subhadra Devi's full-length poem in Telugu titled Yudham Oka Gunde Kotha into English as War, a Heart's Ravage. Should treatment of the post-September-Eleven politico-religious scene necessarily call for a gendered response in the hands of a woman-writer? Can she transcend the limits of her consciousness? Can a marginalized woman as a mother hope to widen her scope for discovering her potential, facilitating a discourse of alternative power? Some of these questions are intrinsic to woman's subjectivity, but having a woman as writer and translator bears also on the issue of empowerment. What are the challenges encountered in the process of translation when the

poem in the Source Language is rich in its allusion to native Telugu culture and literature and when the translation has for its objective symbolic stability of meaning? Besides attempting to answer the above questions, the paper seeks to trace the various stages involved in the translational process as well by analyzing at length an illustrative passage from the translated text.

Dharma and Adharma of Translation

At the beginning of the Kurukshetra war, Vyasa came to his blind son Dhritarashtra offering him sight to see the war. Dhritarashtra pleaded not to give him sight, if it were only to see his sons die. Instead, he would be satisfied to hear through someone who could relate vividly the details of the war. Vyasa, offering a boon, replied:

> "So be it. This Sanjaya will give you a true report of the entire war. I will grant him inner sight. He will be like the Rishis who can see all … Sanjaya will see everything that happens in the war. He will know even the thoughts of all … whether spoken, or whether it is just in the mind of a man, Sanjaya will know it all".
>
> (Subramanyam 2001: 479 & 480)

A translator shares with Sanjaya the anxiety to represent what she has visualized into articulate speech, and at the same time remain within the limited confines of the Source Text and not to over-read or under-read what she sees or reads and comprehends. Although outside the field of creativity (in this instance, poetic creativity), her inner sight should privilege her to see beneath surface meanings as well as discern the creative process behind the ST. She is also within its understanding and she internalizes the field within

herself. She is urged to relate exactly without debate or question the just and unjust actions of men. Any transgression would invite reproach with a shriek of *adharma* (immoral behaviour) from the blind Dhritarashtra - or the reader - who has no access to the Kurukshetra war or the ST, hence is blind. She has, therefore, to watch her tread with care. Despite this *limit* to *(her)* visual sight, and her distance from the field of action, the translated text emerges, since the ability of *Dhritarashtra* (the reader) "*to see with the mind's eye*" is boundless. The sights to which access is denied, "*those he is obliged to see through his mind*". Sanjaya, the translator, with his extended and enlarged vision is out to project the unfolding action: "*Maharaj, hearken to all that I can see*" (Bhattacharya 1992: 281-282).

War and the Empowerment of Women

Among the many issues frequently debated with regard to women's writing, one is the question of gendering of translations. In the politics of translation, an issue such as this, not surprisingly, invites an equally gendered response. If a woman writer were to create space for herself within and outside the boundaries of her SL, which amounts to giving her writing a public presence and legitimacy, finding a translator from the mainstream is as challenging as seeking recognition within the same. Hence, more often than not, women translate in order to undertake the task of carving out space for women writers outside the mainstream, which has also been *male-stream,* (SL 2) as well as gain access for them to global readership. In outreaching global attention, the long narrative poem *War, a Heart's Ravage* of Seela Subhadra Devi, written in Telugu, is a confluence of three voices - all of women. Viewing the post-September-Eleven politico-religious situation in the world contextually in the midst of Afghan war, the poet being a woman, records her response as a mother, as

> Scene of man-made mammoth structures' collapse
>   Lingers still afresh on eye's iris.
>   (Jayalakshmi and Rao 2003: 31)

Secondly, the poem celebrates the centrality of woman as subject, the main narrative voice - a woman-conscious mother. In the contemporaneous context of the poem, the poet's response is highly meditative on the theme of woman as a mother, a silent sufferer in war since times immemorial. Thirdly, the translation is a collaborative effort of two women, in effect reinforcing the issue of empowerment.

The theme of women's empowerment, however unsettling to the mainstream writing and readership, obviates itself in literature, to begin with, as a gender-genre-stereotypic divide in women's writing. Except for prose writing, novels and lyric poetry, genres like epic, humour, travelogue, drama, criticism, satire etc. seem to be traditionally outside the gender-genre space of women's writing. By choosing to write a long narrative poem (*War, a Heart's Ravage* is fifty-page long in the original), Seela Subhadra Devi transgresses into a hitherto male-specific genre of long poems. It is relevant, in this regard, to recall the words of Nabaneeta Dev Sen who avers with confidence that such gender-genre-stereotypic "*distinction doesn't hold any longer*" *(Subhadra Devi 2003: 67).* True to these words, Seela Subhadra Devi happens to be the first woman writer at least in Telugu literature, if not in Indian literature, to write a long poem. The poem although not characterized by epic features, has in it a metaphorical, symbolic, metaphysical and cosmic epic struggle going on between innocent and evil forces, besides shading off into folklore and fable as a search for meaning at the human level. These are concerns that are epical in nature. Such a transgression into a new genre, indeed, is empowerment in itself.

The translation of a literary text has in recent times come to be a means of enriching a culture's language and literature - an

intercultural and intra-cultural activity, besides being a *lingua-cultural activity*. In the additional context of Indian regional literatures, it is a mode of empowerment to gain global recognition even as it retains its singular regional ethos, its ethnic character. Though the corpus of translation from English to Telugu has been encouraging, the same is not true of translations into English. That translation into English is a mode of joining the general pool of national literatures is also true of Seela Subhadra Devi's *War, a Heart's Ravage*. Its multi-dimensional, international and universal treatment of the subject of war and the related suffering of women as well as children warrants its translation into English. The multi-dimensionality of its thematic concerns - plural, heterogeneous and diverse - is as varied as the concerns of woman as individual in the society, with socio-political and economic role-playing denied to her. This multi-dimensionality of theme is inclusive of a denial of political and civic rights leading to crisis of identity. As such, in times as cataclysmic as war, her suffering is no less heroic than that of soldiers fighting on the battlefront. Following close on its heels is the issue of the ravages of war and its impact on children irrespective of the gender divide. By a conscious choice of the subject of war, with the collapse of WTO towers lurking constantly as shadows in the background, the poem breaks free of the limitations of the rationality of its theme. Then there is the subject of the religio-political struggle for domination fought out on the canvas of human life. In treating such an all encompassing subject as this, the poem maps its own space at the national and international levels, facilitating a culture study and bonding nations together in an inter-exchange of human values. Into this web of interdependencies is woven an elemental simplicity of theme, which in this vitiated modern world may appear transparently innocent. In a world "*devoured by fire of hatred* ", the poem successfully legitimizes the essential necessity of the discourse of family and motherhood as crucial for the sustenance of a viable social order. The poem seems to lend credence to the words of Nabaneetha Dev Sen:

> "Now we see that the kind of history we write is
> what historians won't write about. That, which is not
> seen … by men is written by us. It fills that gap".
> (Nabaneetha Dev Sen cited in
> Subhadra Devi 2003: 68)

If historical sensibility alone is a measure of a poem's significance, it is nowhere better evidenced than here in *War, a Heart's Ravage*, since the poem grows out of the writer's subjectivity, her own being.

That the poem is inextricably interwoven in its native Telugu culture does not allow it in any way to compromise the international political issues of the contemporary world, which demand everybody's attention at this very moment when the "*world's theatre of war has shifted to living rooms*" *(Jayalakshmi and Rao 2003: 23)*. Treating the theme of death and violence as common in the present day world, Seela Subhadra Devi cautions that the world is inexorably moving to the brink of disaster, an Apocalypse. Catastrophic to war are terrorism, nuclear stockpiles, nuclear testing in oceanic depths, manufacture of weapons of mass destruction and other related destructive attitudes with accompanying mass migration, poverty, hunger, homelessness and the like.

As an empowering construct *War, a Heart's Ravage* is a recognition of, a drawing out and an expression of power at once both intrinsic and a given from without. It awakens the deeply hidden powers of a woman, "*which comes from being at home to, and connected with, the life force*" as Bryan Law, affirms in his *From Power to Empowerment*. Her potential to indulge in a discourse of alternativity on power, away from her marginalized identity by re-contextualizing it in social discourse, needs to be recognized. As such, through translation, the poem empowers itself,

raising a voice of caution to the world of the impending collapse of cultures, when

> World's countries mindless
> continue to cross bounds
> as boundaries unbound,
> trench earth
> sow seeds to root war shoots.
>
> (Jayalakshmi and Rao 2003: 13)

Today doubt, suspicion and uncertainty are endemic to life, militancy and militarization mistaken for empowerment, and nations are caught between the contentious issues of religion and politics. For which reason, the poem calls for demilitarization and disarmament, implicit in which is the necessity of disempowering unhealthy competitors in war, who strike at man's *personal power*, a power which, according to Julia Kraft and Andreas Speck, has a *spiritual quality*. The war games represent an '*instrument of power*' comparable to the sport of war:

> Power, strength, arrogance -
> Twisted together, ride the world.
> Men persist, flock of sheep-like
> Till all pawns arranged are played out.
>
> (Jayalakshmi and Rao 2003: 29)

War in all forms denies the discovery of, according to Bryan Law, "*power within*" as well as "*co-operative power*" among all groups and communities, which help in working toward a common goal, a shared vision of peace. When operative in its true spirit, existing only in times of peace, this power can become a consciousness-raising mode, with power sharing as its end. The poem *War, a Heart's Ravage*, in this context, is a voice-raise, an awareness awakening against a "*world maddened and possessed*" of war. The chief casualty of this madness is spiritual knowledge

"*culled*" since centuries "*being pounded to powdery dust*" (WHR 47). The poem refers to a mythic struggle between religion and politics, and demands for a change over to a more egalitarian society, where a non-violent power would prevail. It is a "*power to be and to do*" *(Kraft & Speck 2003),* but the real war as always is waged on the "*canvas of women's hearts … where tearful thoughts are penned!*" *(Jayalakshmi and Rao 2003: 20)* The poet reminiscences

> Wherever war is fought,
> Don't women-victims alone,
> with their cohort-consort train
> leap to watery well's death,
> resort to selves' immolations on funeral pyres,
> torch inner courts, bear fourth degree tortures
> behind closed closet doors?
> From pages of history leap out
> such tales of owe
> as slag from ore!

> (Jayalakshmi and Rao 2003: 20-21)

If at the human level women represent a petrified, regressive force, at the level of aesthesis they regain their regenerative empowering force. In this, the demonic "*Satans, Hiranyakhasipas/ Black magicians, Bhasmasuras threaten, upheaving from earth's deep sepulchres*" (WHR 49) not really belonging to the dead past but living, throbbing and pulsating, fattening and spreading flames of hatred among nations. Recovery of life is attempted wherein women exercise control, "*Ahalya's stone-cursed*" as quasi-mystical creators, are sought to be revived. They regenerate ethical and spiritual values of purity and chastity, since the petrified woman and emasculated humanity both are found incapable of power to offer release and relief from oppression of *arrogance blown heads or from those mad of religion*. She is the "*carrier of human values, a therapist who raise(s) voice as a fresh leaf bud / to show us the way*

through the dark crematory. This apart, she helps to *re-consecrate this planet with humane touch and people with human beings*" (WHR 50), capable of burning down the destructive forces by harnessing constructive forces.

Translation as a Mode of Empowerment

As has been stated earlier, the thematic concern of the poem and the translation's intent is empowerment. This point, when taken further as a language having internationally recognized excellence and merit, translation from a less known SL like Telugu into a wider and widely accepted literary tradition of English is also empowerment and enrichment of vernacular creative literature. Besides the problematics of the hierarchization of languages, the politics of translation recognizes translation into English as a necessity for the survival of Indian vernacular literatures in a world fast moving towards globalization, be it mainstream literature or gendered writing like that of women. Adding to the difficulty is urban youth moving away from regional mother tongues to acquire skills in English. So to speak, the translation of *War, a Heart's Ravage* not only stretches the linguistic boundaries of the SL Telugu gaining a revitalizing force in English, but also takes the TT to readers estranged from their mother tongue. Besides pitching the poem against political and economic power structures in today's world, the poet also invests it firmly in its regional Telugu culture. In doing this the writer appears to be adept at co-mingling the two on a wide canvas. If a poet's work, in addition, has to cut across a plethora of class, gender, race, and linguistic groups, then, a translator subscribing to this view gives the poem out to the world, by traversing through all groups trans-nationally. The readers can by no means be dismissive of this poem terming it as regional, vernacular and local, hence, "*less likely to be seriously reviewed and receive widespread publicity; thus less likely to be translated and published in other languages …*" *(Subhadra Devi 2003: 24).* Since

the readers of the TT are not necessarily limited to one regional language group, they have an access to participate and have a share in that consciousness-raising attempt. Translation, in this regard, opens lines of communication between languages and cultures.

Besides being a mode of empowerment as enunciated earlier the translational mode adopted in *War, a Heart's Ravage* may be likened to a tri-level approach postulated by Serghei G. Nikolayev in his article "Poor Results in Foreign-Native Translation: Reasons and Ways of Avoidance". His approach to empowerment works in a three-phased manner - the initial '*superficial awareness*' of the original to a stage of deep awareness of the original to finally a creation of the new utterance - as a parallel semantic and connotative construct in the TT. In analyzing the mode employed in translating the poem, the passage, as instanced below, traces these different stages of the process, which also finds a parallel in Julia Kristeva's linguistic-psychoanalytical approach. Looking at her *Two Modalities of Signification: the Semiotic and the Symbolic*, the mode of translation may be said to have passed through the initial stage of translational transfer of unstable meanings at the Semiotic stage to that of Symbolic stability of meaning. Translation of *War, a Heart's Ravage* involved an initial reading aloud, followed by a reading to oneself absorbing the sounds and rhythms of the poem in the ST analogous to Kristevian idea of the babbling incoherence of a child. The stage may also find a likeness in the *semiotic,* and language of poetry - a pre-entry stage into the receptor language domain. The initial readings of the text were, therefore, always a random toss *(of)* "*words back and forth / between mouth and ear*" *(Jayalakshmi and Rao 2003: 17)* between the translators and from time to time in the interactive sessions with the poet. Issues were called into question, debated and ruled. To cite Julia Kristeva, "issues were over-ruled" and opinions were "brought to trial", and unstable ambivalent meanings were identified, until the process reached the "possibility of creation, of sublimation" *(Kristeva 1996: 129-131).* The disruptions hallmarking this stage passed through silences, elisions,

and not through any semantic arrangements amounting to a "refusal to submit to communication" (Kristeva 1996:131). It was a refusal to submit to translational poetic articulation. It is a realm for experimentation at the level of thought and idea, not precisely meaningless, but reserving for itself that which is traditionally accepted as emotive, intuitive and trans-rational. More generally, the stage is an acquaintance with alliterative, metaphoric, symbolic and the musical rhythms native to the words in the SL.

Following is an attempt at tracing the contours of the translational mode, and the three stages or versions through which a passage, for instance, reached its final symbolic articulation,

> Variant A: When will there be peace
>   for this fire which once before
>   quenched itself only in Khandav fire?
>   How many lives with holy water held in
>   hand
>   will help to quench this fire?

> Variant B: Whence peace?
>   Once before this fire gratified itself
>   only with the Khandav fire.
>   How many lives held in hand
>   sacrificed to holy fire
>   help to satisfy this wild fire?

> Variant C: Whence peace?
>   Once before this digestive fire
>   gratified itself with Khandav fire alone.
>   How calm this wild fire?
>   How many, lives held in hand
>   sacrificed to holy fire?
>   (Jayalakshmi and Rao 2003:45)

It may be noticed that the problematics of translation of the above passage revolved around words such as "fire" employed twice in Variant-A above, consisting two very different connotative referents, and "gratified" mistakenly finds identity in the word quenching. However, "quenching" semantically goes with thirst, meaning also "to put out the flame as well as slake" while in actuality the passage refers to Agni the god of fire asking to satisfy his hunger. In variant-B hunger, then, gains referentiality of meaning to one form of fire - a digestive "fire" - hungering for gratification. At this stage as Kristeva maintains in her "Interview, patterns appear but which do not have any stable identity: they are blurred and fluctuating" *(Kristeva 1996:129)*. Besides, the *whatness* of the problem of finding an appropriate word for the ritual of symbolic offering of food as oblation to *Agni*, i.e. taking water in hand as *avaposana* - in this instance fire - is a minor irritant. This in turn relates to warlords setting afire cities of life to satisfy their hunger for power. Extending the complexity of the problem further, there is a mytho-culture-specific reference to the forest at *Khandavprastha* that needs to be set afire if Agni's voracious "digestive fire" is to be gratified.

The translational resolution of the tangle in the above passage, in fact, lies elsewhere. The word 'wild' offers the final link in resolving all the allusive complexities of meaning. The hunger of *Agni* and the hunger of war-lords both being 'wild', ironically require sacrifice - the former calls for *Khandav fire* alone and the latter life itself as a ritual offering. Accentuating the irony further is the fact that ritual sacrifice is normally offered to 'holy fire', and the "wild of the digestive fire" and wildness of the competitors in war find a synonymy in gratification, a better word to use than quench. Besides, in the case of the warlords it amounts to being violent. Moreover, *Khandav fire* when gratified calms itself, but the hunger of the power-hungry defies gratification. The war hunger in today's world defies reason. Hence is the exasperating question "How calm this wild fire? " Similarly, the drawn out interrogative in Variant-A

sounds prosaic, in contrast to the short and pointed "Whence peace?" that carries in its tonal quality a sense of urgency and immediacy.

Requisite to arriving at a final shaping of the translation it required, hence, beside a nodding "superficial awareness of the original", also a corresponding acquaintance with cultural referents that went into the composition of the ST. The sacrificial ritual and the mythic allusion to *Khandav* fire from The Mahabharata are a case in point. This knowledge of the cultural referents takes us into the second stage of the three-phased approach to empowerment as enunciated by Serghei G. Nikolayev – "a deep awareness" of the original. Imperative to it is knowledge of the semantic and syntactical peculiarities of the Telugu language. At the first two stages the meanings float freely, jostle with each other, freely transgressing beyond their denoted meanings. They are rule-transcending signifiers, not yet ready to have a finality or fixed identity of meaning. These two stages are the initial making available to oneself a range of possible meanings and their corresponding words, until the translators strike at the right word associative of right sound. Limiting themselves to overcoming the linguistic hurdle and cultural referents at this point, the translators desisted from indulging in unhealthy imitation of words and their meanings, word constructions and structures in the SL. Care is also being taken, to compress and decompress language, to match ST's tone and mood swings. So much so, in the end *creation of a new utterance*, an aesthesis, a 'dynamic equivalence' is reached. Venessa Leonardi, in this context, quoting Eugene A. Nida and C.R. Taber's "The Theory and Practice of Translation", (Leonardi 2003) maintains, "in such a way that the TL wording", to quote words of Nikoloyev, "trigger the same impact on the TC audiences as the original wording did upon ST audience". Thus, in variant C the implicit and the explicit coalesce to present a unified coherent completeness of meaning to the passage. This translational process

finds a more precise echo in Kristeva's quotation of Vladimir Mayakovsky from his, *How are Verses Made? (Mayakovsky 1970)*

> '… rhythm is the basis of any poetic work ... When the fundamentals are already there, one has a sudden sensation that the rhythm is strained: there's some little syllable or sound missing. You begin to shape all the words anew … It's like having a tooth crowned. A hundred times (or so it seems) the dentist tries a crown on the tooth, and it's the wrong size; but at last, after a hundred attempts, he presses one down, and it fits … Where this basic dull roar of a rhythm comes from is a mystery'
>
> (EL 234)

The translator's task like that of a dentist is to try words in TL like crowns over words in the ST till the right sized crown feigning the original is discovered. Once pressed down, the little syllable and sound found wanting till then is fixed to its sticking place. Thus, the translation gives in to creation of a new utterance, a near approximation to the rhythm of the poetic work in the SL. What we have here is an evolving process of a translational transfer of words unstable in meaning at the Semiotic stage, to begin with, to stability of meaning at the Symbolic. This is not to say, however, that the Semiotic is unstable in principle, but innate to it is a roaring energy, a creative force that needs/awaits discharge. The translator is merely a witness to a display of transfer of this energy from the Semiotic to the Symbolic, from one text to another, when she can exclaim: "it fits"!

Implicit to this problematic of translation of War a Heart's Ravage is the translators' individual style and her cultural perspective, which is Telugu at one level and Indian at another, and English at the level of translation, calling for focused attention. At the same time, collaborative exchange demanded that a balanced

perspective was necessary for the TT in order to attain a viable final meaningful shape, that is, adopt the style and choice of words in the TL while yet accommodating the writer's perspective.

The awareness at this stage is of untranslatable syntactic constructions and idiomatic expressions in the ST, which no dictionary would help explain. It is an awareness that linguistic equivalence cannot exist between two languages since the fact that languages are structured the way they are does not allow linguistic fidelity. This is all the more so when they belong to diametrically opposing cultures and linguistic genealogies, like Telugu and English. There is no linguistic and cultural commonality, sameness or parity. Such expressions were translated and reproduced literally and explained in the glossary, as for instance, "*quaffing cities and cities by handfuls*" *(43)*, a culture-specific expression, or " *piercing fingers may be anyone's; but eye belongs to us all* " *(6)*. Meanings in such idiomatic expressions can neither be detachable nor translatable. Tonal equivalence alone is something that a translation can hope to achieve, however. Restructuring constructions in the TL English is constitutive of this stage, since overcoming this hurdle would offer a smooth passage to the third and final stage of "creation of new utterance". In compliance with the translational transfer of rhythmic meanings that are unstable at the Semiotic to the Symbolic stability of meaning at the final stage, the temptation of employing grammatically correct constructions or indulgence in a mechanical imitation of English word structures or unjustified use of excessive Latinisms, as is the wont with teachers of English, is avoided. Perhaps, no translation has a finality of determinable fixed identity of meaning resembling or really capturing the source text. The translational process moving through the three variants is at best a series of readings, merely illusory steps leading to near approximate meanings in the ST. Each variant merely accentuates meaning to a seemingly fuller understanding of the semiotic creative process underlying the creation of the ST.

Nevertheless, the question of excessive dependence on the linguistic peculiarities of SL viz. Telugu remains. Any such indulgence viewed skeptically is a violation that could lower the quality of the translation itself. For instance, the semantic distortion that occurs at the stage of variant A due to misunderstanding the meaning of the source utterance appears in English as faulty and wrong syntax. Hence moving through the three levels from one variant to another, the translators felt how essential an acquaintance with the syntactical and semantic specificities in both SL as well as TL is, besides being woefully conscious of the limitations of their own position. In consequence, it is felt that no translation can offer a satisfying reading unless the TT like the ST lays claim to being a literary aesthetic creation, a work of creative force on display. A translated poem in the receptor language has to exist in its own right as an aesthetic work, and read as a poem in TL as a 'creative utterance'. In translating the long poem, meanings got significantly reinvested and reconstituted, revealing new and meaningful relationships since meanings as essences are present in the subjectivity both of the writer and the translators, and essentially not identical.

The last idea takes one to the question of the involvement of the translator's own subjectivity in the process of translation. An objective distancing may merely succeed in generating an objective response from the translator. Such a translation would be scientific and rational but would suffer by failing to carry the creative force of the ST to the TT. The translation of a poem, in fact any translation, necessarily and inescapably presupposes an involvement of the subjectivity of the translator. The success of a translation, hence, lies in the translator's subjective mediation between the ST and the TT, as well as in the objective distancing from both the ST and the TL in giving a conscious expression using stable sign system. The subjective self as always has a way of making its presence felt in the conscious mode in an unambiguous manner. The subjective mediation would evoke a better emotional, aesthetic and appreciative

response to TT through which a translator hopes to achieve "a creative utterance" , bringing to mind A.K. Ramanujan's words in his *Poems of Love and War* that *"only poems can translate poems"* (A.K. Ramanujan 1985: 296).

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The Problematics of Transmissibility: Modern Marathi Literature vis-a-vis English and Non-Indian Languages

SUNIL SAWANT

Abstract

This paper proposes to study the dynamics of the nature of the linguistic-cultural osmosis between Marathi and English and between Marathi and nonindian languages. It also seeks to examine whether there is a difference between the problematics of rendering Marathi litearature into English as opposed to into nonindian languages. The inclusion of the footnotes in the translated fiction, the near non-existent audience for English theatre in India, the dearth of British or American translators have adversely affected the process of exporting Marathi literature into other English-knowing countries. Some of the problems of Chitre's anthology of translated Modern Marathi poetry pointed out by Bhalchandra Nemade are: mistakes of English grammar, spelling errors, clumsy notes on contributors, repetition of the name of the translator page after page, unattractive cover, inadequate equivalents, hackneyed phrases, irrelevant but attractive expressions, paraphrases, wordiness, improper rhythm, loose and dazzling words, etc. Vilas Sarang draws our attention to the bothersome tendency among Marathi bilingual

translators to substitute vivid images or metaphors with abstract, generalized ideas. A dearth of properly trained translators, a dearth of good reviewing, a dearth of critical discussion in English, a dearth of funds for commissioning translators, a dearth of readership of our translations abroad, are some of the extratextual problems that prevent the smooth spread of Modern Marathi literature elsewhere.

I

The colonial encounter brought in an era of translations in the Marathi literary culture. Initially, Christian missionaries such as William Carey and others, British officials such as George Jervis, Thomas Candy, and Marathi pundits such as Sadashiv Kashinath Chhatre, Hari Keshavji Pathare, Balshashtri Jambhekar, and a host of others produced a great deal of translation of English non-literary texts in Marathi. Soon the natives began to import European literary forms such as the novel, Shakespearean and other forms of drama, the personal essay, the short story, the autobiography, the sonnet and other forms of the lyric through translations and imitations. Although the majority of European and American readers were initially interested only in the import of classical Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic literature, there also emerged a tradition of translating literary works from modern Indian languages into English.

It was Justine E. Abbot, an American missionary, who did the pioneering work of translating poetry of almost all Marathi saints into English. He published in all eleven books in the series entitled The Poet-Saints of Maharashtra. They are as follows: *Bhanudas* (1926), *Eknath* (1927), *Bhikshugeet Athva Anutaptakadarya* (1927), *Dasopant Digambar (1927), Bahinabai (1929), Stotramala (1929), Tukaram (1930), Ramdas* (1932), *Stories of Indian Saints, Vol I* (1933), *Stories of Indian Saints, Vol. II* (1934), and *Nectar from*

Indian Saints (1935). Justine Abbot became almost an insider to Marathi culture and tried to absorb the best in the medieval 'saint poetry' tradition of Maharashtra. (Sawant, 2002: 31-32) Abbot's lifelong translation work of Marathi saint-poets thus marked a significant shift in the cultural and literary contact between the West and Maharashtra. The tradition of translating from Marathi into English continued when some of our own bilingual authors began to render Modern Marathi literature in English. This paper proposes to study the dynamics of this interlingual and intercultural possibility in order to probe the problematics of this transfer. It also seeks to examine whether the problematics of rendering Marathi into other nonindian languages is the same as that of the Marathi-English cross-over.

To begin with, a large number of Marathi works of creative fiction has been translated into English. Ian Raeside, Lecturer in Marathi at the University of London, has translated a collection of modern Marathi short stories written by Gangadhar Gadgil, Arvind Gokhale, P. B. Bhave, Vyankatech Madgulkar, D. B. Mokashi, D. M. Mirasdar, Malatibai Bedekar and others as *The Rough and the Smooth*. He has also translated *Garambicha Bapu* by S. N. Pendse as the *Wild Bapu of Garambi*. Shuba Slee's translation *Seven Sixes are Forty-three* of Kiran Nagarkar's novel *Saat Sakkam Trechalis* enjoyed the rare fortune of getting published in Australia by University of Queensland Press, St. Lucia, Queensland in 1980. Jim Marselos, History Department, University of Sydney, has written a very insightful foreword to this Australian edition on the place and significance of this novel in the history of the Marathi novel. Kumud Mehta has translated P. S. Rege's *Avalokita*. Vilas Sarang's short stories, published in American, Canadian and English as well as Indian journals, have been published under the title *The Fair Tree of Void.* Such English language periodicals as *Bombay Literary Review, The New Quest, Indian Literature, The Little Magazine* from

New Delhi and a host of others have rendered Marathi fiction, especially short stories, into English. Recently, Sudhakar Marathe has translated Bhalchandra Nemade's epoch-making novel *Kosla* as *Cacoon* for MacMillan India Limited. Showing his awareness of the formidable challenges in translating this novel, Marathe asserts: "The following translation must be read for what it is. And it cannot be read without either some knowledge or some sense of the novel." (Marathe in Nemade, 1997: xv). Marathe has supplied chapter-wise footnotes at the end of the book to explain certain Maharashtrian dishes such as 'bhakri', 'bhajis', 'amti', 'shrikhand', 'shira', 'bhel', 'batatawada', 'basundi', 'laddu', 'shev-chivda', 'khichdi', etc.; relations such as 'maushi', 'aaee', 'dada', 'bhai', etc.; musical instruments such as 'tabla', 'sanai'; religious practices and figures such as 'namaskars', 'shloka', 'samadhi', 'varkaris', 'kirtanas', 'aarti', 'bhagat', 'shraddha', 'shaligram', etc.; articles such as 'pat', 'lungi', 'rangoli', 'gulal', 'kumkum', etc.; festivals such as 'pola', 'yatra'; institutions such as 'math', 'balutedars', 'tamasha', etc. Inclusion of such footnotes of course could bother the reader as he is forced to go to the end of the book each time to know something more about the Marathi word. This could be an inevitable part of the phenomenon of literary translation.

For a long time, Marathi drama had not been sufficiently represented in English translation. Shanta Shahane and Kumud Mehta translated Vijay Tendulkar's *Sakharam Binder* into English in 1973. Published in 1989, Three Modern Indian Plays included only one of Vijay Tendulkar's *Silence, The Court is in Session* translated by Priya Adarkar. This situation of poor representation of Marathi drama in English translation underwent a change during the next decade. Oxford University Press has published *Five Plays* of Tendulkar translated by Priya Adarkar in 1992. Today, much of recent Marathi drama written by G. P. Deshpande, Satish Alekar, Shanta Ghokale, and Mahesh Elkunchwar has been substantially translated into English. The problematics here as summed up by G N Devy is: "the audience for English theatre in India is non-existent,

though the readership for printed English is very large." (*Devy,* 1993: 127) Interestingly, some plays like *Ghasiram Kotwal* were taken to be performed abroad. The doors for the transmission of Marathi fiction and drama through the medium of motion pictures seem to have been opened by the news of the Oscar nomination for the national award-winning Marathi movie *Shwas* (Breath).

Compared with fiction and drama, the terse culture-specific use of words in poetry makes it relatively difficult to achieve any adequate or definitive translation. Different rhetorical devices such as symbol, analogy, allusion, simile, or ironic counterpoint produce complexity in poetry. A poem employs a variety of influences, which are literary and cultural, historical and mythical, universal and topical. The use of a foreign language for translating it distorts some of the subtleties of native experience. Since English does not have as strong a cultural basis as a regional poetic tradition has in relation to the use of the resources of folk culture and folk tradition, poetry translation poses a series of problems and difficulties. Despite such problems of poetry translation, various attempts have been made to introduce the gallery of Marathi poets to the English-knowing readers. Besides his most outstanding translation of Tukaram's poems *Says Tuka* (1991), Dilip Chitre's *Anthology of Marathi Poetry* 1945-65 (1967) is a comprehensive collection of translated Marathi poems. Some other collections of poetic translations of this earlier period are: Krishna Chaudhari and P. S. Nerurkar's *On the Pavements of Life* (1973) of Narayan Surve's poems; *Poems of Vinda* (1975) of G. V. Karandikar; Vrinda Nabar and Nissim Ezekiel's *Snake-skin and Other Poems* (1975) of Indira Sant's poetry. *More Poems of Vinda* and *Om* are two of G. V. Karandikar's recent additions. Philip Enblom has translated P. S. Rege's poems. Ranjit Hoskote and Mangesh Kulkarni have translated Vasant Abhaji Dahake's Yogabhrashta as *The Terrorist of Spirit*. Dilip Chitre has translated, along with *Amritanubhav*, Hemant Divate's poems as

Virus Alert. N. D. Manohar's translated poems are included in *Ajanta*. Arjun Dangle has edited *Poisoned Bread,* an anthology of Dalit writings, which includes several translations of poems written by Namdeo Dhasal, Keshav Meshram and other Dalit poets. Some periodicals have published poems written by women such as Mallika Amar Shaikh, Rajani Parulekar, Prabha Ganorkar and others. The Atlantic Quarterly has given one of its sections to Marathi poetry in English translation. Literary Olympics has published translations of Marathi poems along with Marathi script. The special issue of the Sahitya Akademi's journal Indian Literature included the cross-section of Marathi poetry. *The Little Magazine* edited by Antara Dev Sen has published translations of Surve, Kolatkar, Chitre, Dhasal, Dahake and others. Nowadays, Sachin Ketkar is busy translating the younger Marathi poets into English. *Tehalka dot com,* before its closure, had given publicity to an article on Dhasal and to his poems. The website *Poetry International: India Issue* has lately made available some Marathi poetry in English translation. A careful look at this phenomenon reveals that almost all translators are Maharashtrian bilinguals. Unlike in the case of some Indian languages, there has also been a dearth of a large number of native English - British or American - translators doing Marathi-English translation.

II

        To understand and problematise the types of textual issues that hamper the quality of some of these translations, let us now examine the kind of reception, for example, Chitre's anthology has received from its readers, critics and reviewers. Chitre himself finds it unfortunate to quote two of Mardhekar's lines in translation (*Chitre*, 1967: 12). Further, after commenting on the subtle effects achieved by P. S. Rege through his rhythmical liberties in Marathi, he finds this discussion irrelevant in the context of the translations of his poems, which, he admits, "cannot achieve the musical excellence of the originals". (*Chitre, 1967: 16*) Adil Jussawalla, an Indian

English poet, who reviewed the anthology in *The New Quest*, expresses his disappointment with 'the general absence of lyrical work in the anthology'. (*Jussawalla,* 1968: 109) In *Teekasvayamvara*, Bhalchandra Nemade, Marathi poet, critic and novelist, has made elaborate comments on the issues that attend Chitre's anthology. He calls Chitre's venture 'a programme of no importance'. He criticizes Chitre for his lopsidedness in selecting poems of a particular group. He further asserts that the tradition of Modernist poetry in Marathi is extremely sickly and will not be able to occupy any significant position in English. He points out the following in Chitre's anthology: mistakes of English grammar, spelling errors, clumsy notes on contributors, repetition of the name of the translator page after page, unattractive cover, etc. Some other irritants found by him in the actual translations of the poems are as follows: inadequate equivalents, hackneyed phrases, irrelevant but attractive expressions, paraphrases, wordiness, improper rhythm, loose and dazzling words. Some of the examples of wrong equivalents used by Chitre and others mentioned by him are: 'retard' instead of 'stunt', 'hypnosis' in place of 'stupor', 'leprous' in place of 'mangy', 'thistles' for 'bristle', 'slopes' in place of 'pods of gram', 'thick soup' in place of 'vinegar', 'in the desert' instead of 'dune', 'itch under its scalp' in place of one of 'swank, swagger, strut', 'lemon tree' in place of 'neem or margosa tree', etc. (*Nemade,* 1990: 100-109) Commenting on the irritating tendency to substitute vivid image or metaphor with an abstract, generalized idea, Vilas Sarang criticizes Dilip Chitre for his misleading translation of Vinda Karandikar's "You and I Run":

> Truth has fled from here
> In a Chariot of Gold
> Each one's breast
> Bears the mark of a rigid fate.

Here, Chitre has wrongly substituted Karandikar's socialist awareness conveyed through the precise image of "*the mark of a wheel*" with classical fatalism by rendering it as '*the mark of a rigid fate*' (Sarang, 1988: 188). Thus, Chitre, Jussawalla, Nemade and Sarang all make us aware of the difficulties of translation.

III

To turn to extra textual irritants in exporting Modern Marathi literature into English, *firstly*, we notice that there is a dearth of properly trained translators. About the Maharashtrian bilinguals, Vilas Sarang says that "*their English is of an "official" wooden type; their grasp of contemporary, colloquial English idiom is shaky*". (Sarang, 1988: 3) Good translators are few and far between. Dilip Chitre, Arun Kolatkar, Gouri Deshpande have done some excellent pioneering work, but nobody is there to follow in their footsteps. Our institutions such as libraries and colleges and universities fail to play an important role in assisting the growth of Marathi literature in English translation. The Departments of Marathi at various universities in Maharashtra are often ineffective in terms of motivating the students to undertake the work of translating Marathi literature. By and large, our students are not adequately stimulated to write, translate and in general to contribute to intellectual life.

Secondly, there is a dearth of good reviewing and a dearth of critical discussion. Critics and reviewers in the west have for obvious reasons responded more to modern Indian English literature than to modern Marathi literature. This means in other words that there is a need for a better and greater interface between modern Marathi literature and western literary cultures. Translation theoreticians, translation reviewers and translators themselves will have to evolve an engagement with the act of translation in such a way that translated works are seen as part of global literary culture. This is something, which has happened with modern Latin American literature. And what has happened in the case of Latin American

literature needs to happen in the case of modern Marathi literature and for that matter, modern literature in any regional Indian language.

Thirdly, there is a dearth of adequate financing for commissioning translators. The publishing houses play a major role in book imports and exports. They dominate such elements as copyright policy, wholesaling and distribution networks. Exporting of literature from one language to another depends to a large extent on their ability to siphon off the best talent in terms of authors and translators, and they are better able to obtain commercial financing. Today, Marathi has to function in a national and international market dominated by English. The English language publishers and multinational firms, however, do not take initiative for translating from Marathi into English. At present, as Sujit Mukherjee has pointed out, an Indian's translation into English is not widely received in England and America.

Very rarely has a British or American publisher found an Indian translation into English acceptable. There have been several cases when a UNESCO-sponsored translation of an Indian work by an Indian could not find a publisher outside India *(Mukherjee, 1976: 43)*.

Fourthly, there is a dearth of readership of our translations abroad. The educational market determines the nature and volume of exporting literature from one language to another. The books are bought in an educational context only when the imported material has some sort of relevance to different courses of study. Since many universities and colleges in the West prescribe at the most Indian Writing in English, there is a want of buyers of translations. Therefore, even if the export of Marathi literature receives some state support, there is no guarantee that the translated works would

ever figure in the reading lists of the departments of languages abroad.

Noticeably there is some demand for literary translations among Indian readers of English. G. N. Devy writes,

> There is at least as large, if not larger, an Indian audience for Indian English books and translations as there is for books in some major Indian languages. Besides, there is an increasing urge among regional writers to see their works translated into English which is reflected in the growth in commercial, literary and journalistic publishing devoted to Indian literature in English translation.
>
> (Devy, 1993: 118)

All over the country, English reigns as the medium of instruction. English is the language not only of industry and business but also of all services, military and civil administration both at the centre and in the states. Indian writers in English have extensively used this language delightfully felicitously for creative purposes. Translation at least into English of any major literary work from Marathi is imperative if the rest of the country is even to be made aware of it. The minimum requirement is that the translation must sound English while at the same time of course it could creatively stretch English.

IV

What we have noticed in the context of Marathi literature in English translation is more or less true about translating from Marathi into other 'non-Indian' languages. It is quite obvious that the initiative for import ought to come from the language in which the work is to be rendered rather than be forced upon every other language. After all, the supply of literary translations corresponds to

the demand for it. As there is little or no demand from other 'world' languages such as French, German, Spanish, etc. very few translations from Marathi into these languages have been made. Vilas Sarang's editing of the special issue of a French journal devoted to Indian literature (Europe, Jan-Feb 1982) and the publication of his short stories translated into French by Alain Nadaud in April 1988 are exceptions. Unlike English-knowing scholars, men who know French or German or Spanish well enough to undertake the work of gettibg across Modern Marathi literature into these languages are still quite rare. And our teachers of French, German, or Russian fail to be representatives of cross-cultural fertilization.

V

To conclude, we can say that the clumsy English grammar, staccato style, the haphazard substitution of English words for Marathi ones are some of the textual irritants that often mar the quality of translations exported from Marathi into English. The relative indifference of 'non-Indian' literary cultures, the want of non-native readership, the monopoly of international firms in publishing, are some of the extra textual cumbers, which are causing the transmission problems.Despite these constraints, Modern Marathi literature needs to be exported, especially into English, so as to exert some sort of impact on the rest of our country, and if made possible by foreign readership, on the rest of the world.

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On Translating Dalit Texts with Special Reference to Bali Adugal (*Scapegoats*)

S. ARMSTRONG

Abstract

The paper is a study in the politics of translation with reference to the Tamil Dalit play **Bali Adugal**. *The play is structured around an inscription on human sacrifice and threaded with a conversation between.B.R.Ambedkar and Mulk Raj Anand, which has been extracted from Ambedkar's book The Annihilation of Caste. The paper contains three sections. The introduction discusses the relevance and importance of translating Dalit texts into English and other foreign languages. The important Dalit translations available in India and abroad have also been discussed in this part. The second part of the paper deals with the personal experiences of the writer of this paper in translating the Tamil Dalit play* Bali Adugal *into English supported by relevant theories of translation and culture referring to the practice of human sacrifice as narrated by James Frazer in* The Golden Bough *(Frazer 1993-94). The concluding section discusses the challenges that the translators of Dalit texts find themselves face to face with in the process of translation.*

> I say to the untouchable: Be a lion! Hindus
> sacrificed goats to the goddess Kali for power. You
> be your own light - **atta dipa bhav!**
> -Dr. B. R. Ambedkar *(Ambedkar 1980:130-35)*

The translation of Dalit literatures in India into English and other foreign languages like French and Spanish is a leapfrogging transformation for providing a space for sharing the Indian dalit's age-old stigma of untouchability with foreign readers. The Indian Dalit literatures not only discuss social discriminations now, they also assert their identities and prove their creative potentialities. In this process, the translation of Indian Dalit texts plays a vital role in creating historical awareness as well as historical sense through this interlinguistic process. The inference of historical sense will help the historical recovery of the dalits through the mode of translation. These translations will create a socio-cultural space for intercultural dialogues among other people and the Othered or Unempowered or Disoriented peoples in this world. In this historical journey, translation becomes an act of socio-cultural practice, which is an alternative sphere for translation rather than a mere change of linguistic form. Recent translators concentrate more on the transformation of cultural milieus than of mere verbal transformative process into an alien tongue. They also play a crucial role in liberating the dalits in a social system as one can see in India.

This article is an attempt to highlight the problems involved in translating Dalit texts into English with special reference to Bali Adugal, a Tamil Dalit play, written by K.A.Gunasekaran. The article tries to show that the play itself is a site of multiple layers of translated texts within texts and dialogues within dialogues as the play is built around a fragment of an inscription and threaded with a conversation between Ambedkar the redoubtable Indian figure and Mulk Raj Anand, the renowned Indian English author. The final part of the essay seeks to construct a new theory of translation by taking a cue from one of the characters in the play, who is a eunuch.

The translator who is the second writer of the intended translated text plays a more responsible role than that of the original writer. The translator who willingly or unwillingly takes up the translation of a Dalit text tends to become a cultural ambassador and he has to bear in mind the social commitment of rendering a literature of a people who have been excluded in all realms of society even before their birth. In this context, translations of Dalit texts assume a pivotal role in the process of transformation of the mindsets of people living in a country, which practices caste-based discrimination that denies even a dignified existence of millions of Dalits.

In the kind of freedom a translator takes, there are chances of 'aberration' and 'misrepresentation' of the source text. Dalit literature deals with socio-cultural liberation and a translator needs to be aware of this. Translation is no longer a mere change of a linguistic container. The role of translation and that of the translator has now changed. He has become a cultural mediator, who traverses the resonance zone between cultures.

Dalit literatures are no longer emotive expressions of pain and suffering. Being liberative in nature, they talk about the Dalit lifestyle, ceremonies, rituals and rites that form the background of their expressions. They are also intertwined with their real life experiences. These literatures have to survive against distortion and misrepresentation by market forces, both by the mediators within and outside India. Translators who delve deep into these literatures need to be careful in transforming Dalit's socio-cultural practices. In adapting Western theories in translation and literature, the translator and the writer have to conceptualise the Indian Dalit situation in their minds. A translator who is associated with Dalit literature seems to be in a much better position and can bring better impact in translating the source text if he/she has:

- Personal association with the author, the people and the native speakers of the source language and can avoid problems in the acquisition of dialects and of Dalit slang
- Familiarity with the marginaled submerged experience to translate the milieus Emotional affinity/sensibility towards the social problems of Dalits.
- An activist's impulse to contribute to the struggle for liberation.
- Active participation in creating capacity-building or affirmative actions to help the mainstreaming and the social habilitation of Dalits.

These suggestions might help the translator in the process of illumination and representation in a worthwhile and desirable manner and are likely to impact the target text.

Translations of Tamil Dalit Texts into English

Earlier, Dalit literatures often dealt with suffering and pain. Currently, they also discuss the solutions and suggestions for the age-old problem. Translations of Tamil Dalit literatures include Bama's novels Karukku, Sangati and short stories that were translated by Lakshmi Holmstrom. Sangati has also been translated into Spanish and French. Imayam's Koveru Kazhuthaigal has been translated into English as The Beast of Burden. Vizhi Pa. Idayavendan's short story has been translated and published by Sahitya Akademi along with other Dalit Tamil translations. The short stories of Imayam, Poomani and Dharman have also been translated into English.

It is surprising to see that only very few books are written and translated by Dalits themselves. Dalit texts, written by one Dalit and translated by another Dalit, are very few in Tamilnadu. For example, the leader of the Dalit Panthers of India, Thol Thirumavalavan's *Talisman* and *Uproot Hindutva*, were translated by

Meena Kandasamy.Sivakami, an activist writer and administrator, has written Pazhayana Kazhitalum, Anandayee and Kurukkuvettu and she is currently engaged in translating them into English. He is also translating Captain S.Kaliyaperumal's *Tamilar Unmai Varalaru* into English as *The True History of Tamils.*

Bali Adugal (Scapegoats) is a Tamil Dalit play written and directed by K.A. Gunasekaran. He is well known as an activist, artist, actor, scholar, folk musician, playwright and director. Being a Dalit artist, he has authored many issue-based plays, which were performed in remote villages in Tamil Nadu. He has won many state level honours and awards. His major plays are *Sathiya Sodanai, Pavalakkodi or Kudumba Vazhakku, Ariguri, Thodu, Maartram [a play about the eunuchs], Mazhi*, Kandan or *Valli, Kanavulagavasi, Parayai Pilandhukondu* and *Thottil Thodangi.*

Somewhat surprisingly, *Bali Adugal* is the only written Dalit play in recent times in India. The play was premiered more than 250 times, both at the regional and the national levels, including one at the National School of Drama's 5th National Theatre Festival, held from 20th March - 8th April 2003. The play was premiered on the 26th of March 2003.

The Thannane Theatre Group headed by K.A.Gunasekaran often premieres the play. *Thannane* appeared on the theatre scene in 1995. Since then, the group has been creating an awareness of suppression of the oppressed and underprivileged people. It meets the people in every nook and corner of the interior villages of Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry through theatre and folk musical concerts. It is also actively involved in Dalit movements for creating awareness among these people. The group also conducts workshops at the national, state and village levels to help educate the theatre aspirants including by training eunuchs as performers. He also tries to

construct a theatre for eunuchs to highlight the problems faced by them.

Bali Adugal takes a cue from an inscription, found in a temple of a village in Tamil Nadu, particularly in Kongu Nadu. The inscription is about a human sacrifice that took place in the past. The author with contemporaneity has successfully interpreted this text and highlighted the social oppression that the dalits suffered in the past. The play has textually blended yet another historic dialogue between Ambedkar and Mulk Raj Anand on social oppression which has been extracted from the book *Annihilation of Caste* written by Ambedkar.

The play depicts the practice of scapegoating and the conflicts between the dominant Brahmins and the downtrodden, the Dalits of the village. In this play, the rich and the powerful Brahmins dominate the poor and the downtrodden of the same village, always ridiculing and suppressing them on all occasions. The play features a scene where a 'rath' (chariot) is carried by dalits and it accidentally breaks. This damage of the rath is attributed to the dalits because a dalit designed it. In order to pacify the village goddess, the Brahmin priests demand a human sacrifice. Hearing the news everyone flees in fear. In the end, a person is identified as the one to be sacrificed but the latter to save his own skin bargains with the priests. He places his wife as the sacrificial lamb and saves himself from being killed. Thus, the play deals with the problem of dalits and how they are victimized by the 'system'. Though the play at the beginning tries to put forward the concept of dalit theatre and to popularise it as a major tool against atrocities against them, in the end, the play turns out to be a strong dalit feminist manifesto.

The songs and music have to be heard and felt during the performance. Or else it would be very difficult to translate the emotive language of this play. Dalit's songs and music vary for death, marriage and war. The introductory and also recurring

musical song in Bali Adugal is 'Thanthana'. 'Thanthana' is a song of lamentation played often by the dalits to free themselves of the pain they undergo from oppression. It can be compared to the Blues of Afro-American music.

The second song in *Bali Adugal* begins with (*naaluvarna sadhiyela*) the description of four Varnas. The music tuned for this song is tragic. The holy thread of the Brahmins and the ropes of the tied Dalits are symbolic. The "threads" and the "ropes" are intertwined with the rhythm of the music and songs. One can find the fusion of the language of music and the language of body in the performance where the Brahmins beat with their holy threads on the tied Dalits. This scene is symbolically enacted to bring out the centuries-old oppression of the Dalits. The symbolic usage of thread, the author said, was designed for the audience

The third song in Bali Adugal is on *lahirtham.* In Pondicherry children sing this 'song' in schools and on streets. Children jumping across a child who is made to bow down utter this word. Literally speaking the word has no meaning and in the play it is used as a pun to mock at the meaninglessness of the Sanskrit mantras uttered in rituals of the dominant castes.

In their very breath, in the tunes hummed, in their simple mocking songs, in their very use of language, dalits have imbued a rebuffing attitude towards the hegemonic dominance that inheres in the caste hierarchy and it is a Herculean task that befalls the translator to transfer these cultural and linguistic nuances into the targetlanguage.

Human Scapegoats and *Bali Adugal*

The practice of human sacrifice was widely prevalent among the ancient Greeks, and in Slavonic ceremonies. In ancient Rome

Human scapegoats such as *Mamurius Returius* (*Frazer* 1993-94) were too common. The King of the Bean in Twelfth Night, the Medieval Bishops of Fools, Abbot of Unreason, or the Lord of Misrule are figures of the same sort in Italy, Spain, and France. A close reading of Frazer's chapters (*Frazer* 1993-94 LVII and LVIII) on scapegoats in *The Golden Bough* shows how the servile classes such as slaves, serfs, bondsmen, and generally the poor were used as human scapegoats. Athenians regularly maintained a number of degraded and 'useless' beings for human sacrifice during the period of calamities such as plague, drought or famine in the city. They used to sacrifice two of the outcasts as scapegoats. One of the victims was sacrificed for the men and the other for the women.

The play *Bali Adugal* takes its cue from this practice of human sacrifice that was widely prevalent in India. In the Indian social context the people chosen as the scapegoats were often people from the backwaters of society and quite often Dalits who refused to abide by the norms of the cast hierarchy. They were chosen as scapegoats with the explicit motive of removing the 'evil' from the body politic though ritualising the whole event and making it look divinely ordained in the eyes of the public. The playwright objectively questions this practice of scapegoating Dalits, at the same time subtly criticising the point of the transference of this oppression on Dalit women.

Texts within Texts in *Bali Adugal*

The play opens up multi-layered levels of texts within texts. The text incorporates the conversation between B.R.Ambedkar [BRA] and Mulk Raj Anand [MRA], which took place on an evening in May 1950, on a beach in Cuffe Parade Colaba, Mumbai. The conversation has been extracted from Appendix III of B.R.Ambedkar's *Annihilation of Caste*. The play apart from taking a cue from an inscription also blends/intertwines the historic conversation throughout the text and turns the text into a dialogue,

between the dialogues of the play. The play blends different pasts that become histories and reinterprets them with the contemporary problems in mind.

The very opening of the play puts forward the question of meaning and brings forth the politics of the translation of culture and language. The conversation follows:

Mulk Raj Anand	*:*	Namaskar, Dr. Ambedkar
Ambedkar	:	I prefer the Buddhist greeting-Om Mani Padmaye!
Mulk Raj Anand	:	I agree. How thoughtless we are! We inherit words without questioning their meanings! Of, course, Namaskar means I bow before you…
Ambedkar	:	That perpetuates submission! May the lotuses awake is a prayer for enlightenment!

(Ambedkar 1980:130)

This text of the 50's [a historical text] is about the Buddhist text [and practice] of addressing which itself is 2000 years old. These are the opening lines of the play, a conversation about the form of addressing which itself becomes a form of addressing the audience. Further, the conversation also strengthens the meaning-making process of words by explaining the meaning of the particular word 'idiocy', which means, "going round and round in a circle" [which has not been included in the Tamil translation but is found in the English version of the conversation].

Later in a conversation that interludes the play Dr. Ambedkar confesses about his participation in the Constitution Drafting Committee viz. that he was merely a scapegoat, which is the title of the play.

Such inter-textual references reverberate throughout the play. It opens up layers of texts within texts. Basically, the play revolves around a fragment of an inscription which has the dominant people's history or social text inscribed on the stones. The play is a careful intertwining of the historical text - the inscription, expanded and extended into a performance text - the play. In other words, there seems to be a translation of one text into another text or one genre into another. At another level, the play is a blend of dialogues in between the dialogues between B.R.Ambedkar and M.R.Anand. The play opens and ends with the dialogue between two - whereas the dialogues of the characters of the play become a subtext. Again, the dialogue between B.R.Ambedkar and M.R.Anand is a sub- text taken from Appendix III of the main text, *Annihilation of Caste*. The dialogue as a sub text of a historical text becomes a main text in the play, which spins around the dialogue of the characters. The play is built upon such translation and transformation into an innovative framework of texts and genres.

As noted earlier, the play begins with a conversation between Dr. Ambedkar and Anand. Dr. Ambedkar alerts Anand on the first word he utters 'namashkar', and thereby the politics of language is brought to the forefront.

As for the translator, he is in a unique position with regard to this text i.e., the text of conversation between the two which itself is a translation in Tamil from English (which probably might be a translation from Marathi). One has to note here the point that the play itself is a site of a translated text.

In this context, it may be in order here to recall the views of Octavia Paz who in his short work on translation claims that all texts, being part of a literary system descended from and related to other systems, are "translations of translations of translations'. He continues:

> Every text is unique and, at the same time, it is the translation of another text. No text is entirely original because language itself, in its essence, is already a translation: firstly, of the non-verbal world and secondly, since every sign and every phrase is the translation of another sign and another phrase. However, this argument can be turned around without losing any of its validity: all texts are original because every translation, up to a certain point, is an invention and as such it constitutes a unique text
>
>   (quoted in Bassnett 1996)

The whole text itself is an 'inspiration' from a fragment of an inscription. The inscription itself is a round-shaped script ['vattezhuthu' script] which often has to go through a rigorous process of decoding, i.e., a translation to modern Tamil script.

Bali Adugal and the Limits of Hermeneutics

From another perspective, the play also raises important questions about the limits of interpretation. The first problem one faces is that of recovering the voice of the dalit who was 'sacrificed' according to the inscription. The act of inscription itself is a project of the dominant at the expense of annihilating, effacing the body of the dalit, silencing the voice of the oppressed. To recover the voice of the dalit from a 'document' of the dominant is a project of history, which is basically a hermeneutical project.

As often happens historical hermeneutics falls into a meta discourse/grand narrative of the nation, the citizen and as a final recourse that of history itself. This is an inevitable risk and pitfall.

It would be appropriate here to recall two attempts at resuscitating fragments. Ranajit Guha in his influential essay "*Chandra's Death*" reconstructs and reinterprets a fragment of the testimony of judicial discourse for the project of history. In his meticulous analysis of the piece of judicial document, he recovers the voice of the subjugated dalit woman. It is a laudable attempt at recovering the suppressed voices of history from a document of the dominant but there remains the problem of falling into the labyrinth of history for its own sake.

The other attempt by Gyanendra Pandey (*Pandey* 1994) problematizes the whole project of history itself. Pandey captures the core of the problem, as the "'historians' history, at least the history of the last few centuries, has been predominantly a history of transition". One can translate this as a history of translation. How are we to translate the *lived experience* of violence, subjugation, of the oppressed, for us, the experience of dalits? Criticizing the historians' history i.e., the academic writing of history on Partition as a "prose of otherness", he contrasts the representation of Partition in the fictional works of Sadat Hasan Manto. Implicitly, he suggests that historical hermeneutics as a project has serious limitations in bringing out the violence and pain that is lived and suffered by the oppressed people and probably art and literature can be the appropriate spheres in bringing out the lived experience of the oppressed, in giving voice in other words to the oppressed who are deprived of their own voices. To recover the voice of the effaced dalit body and its voice is invariably and inevitably a political project of the *Arts* enmeshed in the present, not that of evoking the past for its own sake.

In *Bali Adugal*, this task has been successfully taken up by the artist/activist K. A. Gunasekaran as an artistic reinterpretation of the 'inscribed' event.

Bali Adugal and the Text as an Object of Desire/Love

The translator's relationship to the text he/she has taken up to translate could be seen as one of amorous love. The translator chooses a particular text basically out of desire. Needless to say, all relationships are enmeshed in a matrix of power. With love, this relationship can be put, in a nutshell, as possessive love: dominant or submissive because one wishes to possess the apple of one's eye.

The problem that arises here for the translator is: can he/she transcend this matrix of the power relationship in the act of translating any particular text?

Could the translator make love to the text he/she has chosen to translate, in a way that is not possessive, i.e., interpretative: fidelity to the original, 'sticking' to the authors 'intentions' or else perfidious to the text, selective in his interpretative maneuver?

Fidelity in love and translation is feminine and perfidy, the subject location of the male. Could one locate a subject location that escapes this binary opposition in the act of translation? Could one in other words perform the act of translation in a way that is not possessive, interpretative or at the least that gets beyond the interpretative maneuver? Could one be flirtive? And could there be a subject location, a figure for the flirtive?

Unexpectedly the text *Bali Adugal* offers one such figure. Out of the blue, a eunuch emerges from nowhere and laments over the unfairness of the prejudice of sacrificing the dalit woman, her subjection to the subjected dalit male subject location.

The whole text becomes a *limit-text or border text* at this juncture in the play. The dalit female who bears the brunt of oppression, who is at the extreme receiving end of the oppressive caste system, subject even to the dalit male, is given voice by an eunuch: a group of people, who are in close proximity to the oppressed, is oppressed by the system and at the same time out of the system. This is what makes the text a border-text that operates at the boundaries, defies classification and creates fissures (Broadhurst, 1999; Humm, 1991). By giving voice to the eunuch, by the eunuch speaking for the dalit female, the text also decidedly refuses to essentialize the dalit identity by moving into a liminal sphere of irreducible difference.

The translator's task is to make love to the text he/she has chosen, as a eunuch would flirt. The figure of the eunuch would be the art and an act of translation. This is not to deny 'seriousness' or 'responsibility' on the part of the translator and interpretation on the whole, but to move beyond interpretation, just as the figure of the eunuch is at the liminal point - both inside the system, oppressed by the system, in close proximity with the oppressed, yet defying classification and out of the system.

The figure of an eunuch and the act of flirting with the text chosen for translation, is to suggest returning to the particular text again and again, a form of rereading which has nothing to do with 'seriousness', not an exercise in search for meanings buried deep within the text but a perverse economy of dispersion, of waste, of frenzy (*Barthes* 1978). It is an exuberance of the child, which asks for the same story again and again for the sake of the pure pleasure of hearing it. Each recital of the story is a unique exercise in pleasure, in the flush of which the child generates its own images, meanings and hallucinations.

It happened that, this particular translator, in one of his encounters with the text he had chosen to translate, in his

hallucinations, had this figure of the eunuch emerge from the text itself. And with the simple innocence and exuberance have that story shared here

Challenges

In the process of translating dalit texts, the following are important challenges that dalit literatures and their translators have to encounter:

Publishing

Publishing today is a highly competitive arena and the dalits, already a marginalized group, find it difficult to find a space whereby they can get their works published. Several factors work against their interests and getting a foothold in the publishing industry is definitely a Sisyphean task for Dalit writers.

Demands of the Market

Meeting the demands of the market that is dominated by several factors like the banner of the publishing house and the popularity of a translator, becomes an important problem to be grappled with by Dalit authors. There is a felt need for instituting a publishing industry, which is completely managed by Dalits. The Dalits need to make their strong presence in all the wings of the mass media - from the editorial to the marketing teams. For example, in Canada there is a Press for the First Nations' peoples and women. A similar move would be welcome with the Dalits in India. Dalit publishing networks along with Dalit news agency and Dalit media network must have links with the mainstream counterparts for generating counter-productive programmes.

Readership

Readers to a great extent decide the success or failure of a book. As far as Dalit literature is concerned, there is a minority of readers. It is a difficult task to make a dent in the mindset of the general readership but the content and quality of present and future Dalit work will hopefully do it. This is at the same time a hope and a challenge.

Intra-cultural Variations within Dalits at the Regional/National Level

Even within the Dalit communities there are several layers of differences ranging from their cultural practices to their linguistic preferences. Slang and other forms of language are different among Dalits themselves in the districts of Thanjavur, Ramanathapuram and Madurai of Tamil Nadu. A Dalit from one of these districts has to face some difficulty to understand the slang of a Dalit from another district. The translator thus has to mediate between these extremes and find the appropriate mode of expression while translating literatures written by Dalits of different districts.

Translation / Power Relations

The practice of translation carries within itself the seeds of power relations. Earlier, the emphasis in the world of translation was on the quality of translation but now there is a perceptible shift from the author to the translator. Who translates a particular work makes all the difference. The best example is that of the English versions of Russian classics translated by Constance Garnett. There is a politics of the text, of the author, of the translator and of the publisher. Writers and Dalits wish to see their works published in the mainstream publishing houses and in foreign languages and they welcome them.

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NOTES FROM THE CLASSROOM

Teaching Documentation for Translation Studies: The Key Discipline of Information Literacy

DORA SALES-SALVADOR

> "The work of translation is above all a problem of documentation."
> *Roberto Mayoral*
> (Mayoral 1994: 118)

In today's ramifyingly complex information society, it is essential to stress the key importance of documentation in the field of translation studies, as a tool existing in relation to all the other disciplines involved in the educational process. We may usefully point out that in Europe all higher education courses in translation and interpretation include, as compulsory curricular elements, components intended to develop documentation skills related to the information retrieval and the evaluation of its quality, in the context of a multiplicity of formats. Certainly, the translator's documentary activity is a vital instrumental link in the chain of mediation and transfer of knowledge that makes up translation, an indispensable part of translational know-how. Documentary competence is essential for the practice of translation, and, therefore, for the translator's (ongoing) learning process.

In this connection and in the area of translation studies, the group PACTE (based at the Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona, Spain) has been stressing in its work the importance of this instrumental skill in the process of acquiring the general skill of translation (Hurtado Albir, 2001: 394-408). Authors such as

Consuelo Gonzalo García (2004) have defined this skill as documentary competence. A succinct definition of what we mean by this concept is provided by María Pinto, who sees it as "grounded in the handling of information, defining needs, programming search, employing strategies to locate and obtain information, sifting and evaluating information with a view to decision-making..." (PINTO, Coord., Portal e-coms. URL: http://mpinto.ugr.es/e-coms, my translation). In any process of transfer between an ST (source text) and a TT (target text), the translator needs to be trained in documentation, as an essential part of translational competence.

Following the position of María Pinto (forthcoming), we argue that it is ever more important that the translator should acquire the skill of information literacy, defining this process as the acquisition of skills, competences, knowledge and values enabling the access to, use of and communication of information in whatever form, with the aim of producing competent professionals and users, trained in the habit of identifying and registering information sources in appropriate ways, able to process and produce their own information, able to sift and evaluate the information process, and able to produce quality communication products (ACRL/ALA, 2000). This is a 'generic habit' which is of major importance in enabling people to successfully tackle decision-making, problem-solving or research. Information literacy comprises the whole range of experience in all its forms, detecting what forms and modes of information are relevant to different situations.

True, the Internet offers the translator an invaluable and inexhaustible source of information, a working medium and a means of communication which modifies the constraints of time and space. But in view of what many critical voices have called 'infoxication' (Cornellà, 2000) on the Internet, we need to stress the importance of maintaining a critical perspective when handling sources and evaluating their credibility.

Documentary search throughout the translation process entails learning how to locate, validate and correctly use the information sources offered by the library and the new technologies. Translators are faced with the challenge and the responsibility of becoming acquainted with and using the diverse means which now exist for the location, recovery, handling and dissemination of information, manipulating the new and extraordinary resources which information and telecommunications technology have made available for their work. In other words, it remains up to the translator to find the data, the information source; and the translator is responsible for knowing how to use it. To translate is to mediate between languages and cultures, to operate a constant decision-making procedure, and, most certainly, to know what documentation means. Otherwise, decision-making cannot be based on proper criteria. If one is to translate, acquiring the right documentation means knowing how to identify the informational requirements of the text to be translated, and knowing how to find the right solutions. Beyond all doubt, the field of documentation as applied to translation is a notably transversal domain, in which much research still needs to be done, along with much reflection on the necessary interdisciplinary strategies and methods that this training implies.

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Language, Literature and Culture: Through the Prism of Translation

VANAMALA VISHWANATHA

From the Translation Firmament

If the fledgling discipline of Translation Studies has to take wing and soar high, what better ground can it seek other than this vast and varied 'translation area' called India, where several languages jostle animatedly - now in unison, now in confrontation - in the daily business of living? Conversely, if one is looking for new light on issues of language, literature and culture, where else can one turn with benefit but to the young discipline of Translation Studies? Translation Studies, which investigates both the processes and products of translation within a particular cultural politics, history and location, offers the following insights in the Indian context:

Translation, which is founded on the basic fact that cultures in contact negotiate (gain some, lose some), thrive and grow by establishing links between/among the languages and literatures of a region, compels us to add the plural suffix '-s' to all the three terms in the label to rewrite them as 'Languages, Literatures and Cultures' - only more so in the multi-lingual and multi-ethnic political economy of India.

a) Translation Studies, in the last two decades, is marked by a paradigm shift in the very definition and understanding of the phenomenon of translation. Translation is no longer seen as a simple matter of replacing one linguistic text by another. Even the translation of a simple sentence from one language to another presupposes a tacit knowledge of assumptions which are at once linguistic, textual, cultural and political. This insight forces us to rethink the punctuation marks that set up each term in the above

label as a separate and discrete entity in order to suggest the essential interconnectedness among them. Humanities education in post-independent India has witnessed a rather unproductive and artificial segregation between Language and Literature Studies with culture forcing a sly, backdoor entry into the classroom, thereby eclipsing the fundamental fact that language, literature and culture are essentially constitutive of one another.

b) Even within the area of Language Studies, the teaching of the first language bears no relation to the teaching of the second and third languages; the same is the case with the teaching of literature. For instance, a child in Karnataka makes no connections between the literary texts s/he reads in the Kannada class and the English or Hindi class. One hand does not know what the other is doing. That explains why textbooks in the English language, which is introduced only in the V standard in Karnataka, often contain lessons whose cognitive content is so elementary that it is an insult to the intelligence of any normal child. For, these texts are oblivious of what cognitive and communicative skills have already been in play in the life of the child in the context of the first language. The child who is at the centre of this education process is a single, organic, holistic being. The consciousness of this learning-self, despite our attempt at fragmenting it across the timetable, is still one and the same. Therefore, it is imperative that we make connections among the languages and literatures that are taught across the curriculum. To quote E M Forster, we need to "only connect", by establishing and strengthening the inherent connections between our teachings of languages, literatures and cultures within the discipline of Humanities. The holistic and integrating nature of successful communication, which is at the heart of all translation practice, is best captured using the metaphor of the six blind men and the elephant. Language, narrative, culture and history simultaneously inhere and cohere in a specific configuration and a unique chemistry to produce particular texts; they are organically related to one

another like the different parts of the elephant, without which the gestalt of the elephant would remain incomplete.

c) Perspectives derived from translation help us to build stronger bridges between the home and the world as well as the home and the school, by legitimately and systematically building into the curriculum the available knowledge and worlds that students already possess and bring in along with their *'world-view'*. This can form a tremendous if untapped resource in an educational system that is increasingly divorced from the challenges of 'real' life and living.

d) Translation works on the basis of two contradictory conditions, a fact that is described by the Spanish philosopher Jose Ortega Y Gasset (Gasset 2000: 49-64) as 'the misery and splendour' of translation. It works because of the dual and simultaneous possibility of shared ground as well as difference. To put it in A K Ramanujan's (Ramanujan nd.) inimitable words, when we are reading a translated work, we need to "attend carefully both to the uniqueness of cultural expression and to the universal elements in it, both to its specificity and its accessibility, both to its otherness and to its challenge to our ability to share it." This defining feature of translation, which deals with the traffic and transaction between/among languages of contact can help in fostering the two larger goals of Humanities Education - Articulation (communicative skills) and Awareness (critique-al abilities).

The Shifting Grounds of English Studies

"English", whether as language, literature or culture, has always been a contentious project in India. It has played a pivotal role in our history as Indian society faced the impact of colonial modernity, the nation-state and more recently, globalization. English exists as the language of dominance simultaneously with the other languages of India as well as in the global village - buffeted and shaped by forces local and global. Within academia also, the

discipline of English Studies has been marked by changing constitutive discourses about English as a humanizing force, a functional subject (as the library language), a political /cultural project in a post-colonial nation and now, as the 'single window' to upward socio-economic mobility in a globalize India. The scholarship on English Studies in the last 10 to 15 years - Gauri Viswanathan's *Masks of Conquest* (Viswanathan 1990), Swati Joshi (Ed) *Rethinking English* (Joshi 1991) and Susie Tharu (Ed) *Subject to Change* (Tharu 1998) - has offered incisive critiques of established practices of English teaching. The questions of what and how are overshadowed by issues of who, why and where. Yet another force that has compelled us to interrogate the English classroom is the changing profile of students in higher education. What was once the preserve of the urban, English-educated elite has now rightly become more democratic and heterogeneous. In particular, the English classroom which was once dominated by young women (literature, being a soft option in market terms, was deemed fit only as a female domain) has today both women and men, coming from a wide variety of classes, castes, languages, ethnic groups and locations -village, small town and city. And thanks to globalization, a degree in English does offer job opportunities comparable to or better than disciplines such as Kannada Studies, Economics or Psychology. These larger realities have left us with no choice but to dislodge English Studies from its colonial moorings and relocate it in a setting of contemporary polemics.

As Braj Kachru *(Kachru 1998)* argues, English not only provides social status, it also gives access to attitudinally and materially desirable domains of power and knowledge, creating a new caste system. Access to this perennial resource called 'English' is not equally distributed among the people, thus creating a cleavage between the English-educated elite and all the others, especially from the regional language stream who have 'failed to make it'. Thus, government-sponsored institutions of higher education owe it

to the large majority of people who have been blithely bypassed by the system to offer credible courses, which meet market demands. This implies that English teaching programmes ought to fulfill a communicative function by providing students with the requisite skills and competence in using English. Catering to market forces demands conformity to standards set by the unseen hands of the market. This situation has given rise to many questions regarding the legitimate goal of English teaching such as - "Are we not merely producing 'cyber coolies' who have to carry out the fiats of our neo-colonial masters?" I wish to argue that courses in English should necessarily *equip* our students with the basic skills of the notorious foursome LSRW, which make for communicative competence in the language. This could justifiably be viewed as mindless enslavement to market forces if English teaching stopped at this. An equally imperative role that English *has* to play in our context is to counter the effect of its complicity in spawning an unequal power structure by enabling students to think critically and self-consciously about their situation, about important issues of public life in the 'largest democracy in the world'. It is, therefore, imperative at this stage in our history that the enabling potential of critical thinking which can fashion a cultural critique of globalization should be explored with commitment in the English curriculum at the UG and PG levels if we want to transform an entrenched tradition of imparting training for mindless cultural and political conformity to a 'pedagogy of the oppressed'.

The Case of / A Case for Modern Indian Literatures in Translation

Using the new perspectives offered by Translation Studies, I wish to argue that translation - both as process and as product - offers a potent ground for teaching both communicative competence and 'critique-al' thinking. One proposal of how this potential can be realized using the *process of translation* has been demonstrated in my earlier article "Literary Translation: A Technique for Teaching

English Literature in a Bi-literary Context" *(Vishwanatha 1998: 170 -180)*. Now, I would like to outline a curricular innovation based on using the product of translation.

a) The Context: By way of illustration, I will describe a course on *Modern Indian Literatures in Translation* (MILT, from now on), a compulsory paper at the PG level, offered by the Department of English, Bangalore University from 1998 -2003.I wish to acknowledge the inspiring and untiring support and participation of my colleague Dr Ramdas Rao, Reader in English, Department of English, Bangalore University in shaping and teaching this course with me. MILT was one of the many new courses introduced at the time such as English for Literary Study, Women's Writing, Literature and Film, and Teaching English Language and Literature. The claim to innovation comes from the perception that the MILT course made for a certain opening out of the boundaries of the discipline, which brought a new energy, stoking fiery debate and dissent in our classroom.

b) The Choice of Texts: We wanted to focus not on ancient or medieval Indian literature or on Sanskrit literature in translation but solely on *modern*, bhasha (=vernacular) literatures in order to interrogate the constitutive categories of the notion of India. We selected texts from Kannada, Bengali and Malayalam in English translation keeping pragmatic considerations such as availability of translations, cost, length and accessibility to students. Please refer to Appendix A for details on texts and their organization. A section on the critical texts necessary to contextualize the debates in the study of Indian Literature was built into the course in order to historicize our reading of the texts.

c) The Critical Frame for Reading Texts: In evolving a mode of reading diverse literatures, we wanted to steer clear of two available models: on the one hand, the nationalist paradigm dominant in Commonwealth Writing, especially, Indian Writing in English,

which sees literature as an authentic expression of a homogenous identity called 'the nation'; and on the other, the nativist paradigm that is largely evident in the Indian Comparative Literature and Indian Literatures scene (Kannada literature teaching, for example) in which texts are studied as regional - an essential expression of a specific language/culture/region complex, based on the ideology of cultural nationalism . As opposed to the homogenous identity of the nation, this model posits a harmonious, unproblematic plurality using the slogan 'unity in diversity'. Despite their rival claims, the nationalist as well as the nativist paradigms have both participated in the construction of a homogenous identity - that of the Indian nation, practicing the very same exclusions. The constituents of this identity are male, upper caste, middle class and Hindu. Using the cultural discourses on gender, caste and religion available within in Cultural Studies, we have attempted through the MILT course to unpack the ideology of the nation and the national-modern.

d) The Mode of Teaching: Typically, each category was introduced with an elaboration of the issues and debates that mark the territory, then moving on to the texts themselves to see how these issues are represented in the text, leading to a comprehensive discussion of all the three texts vis a vis the questions raised by the category/ies under discussion. Rather than reading the texts as *literary texts*, a bibliography of cultural and critical texts was put together for use by the teachers and student presenters for supporting our cultural analysis and discussion. Many workshops were conducted for the teachers teaching this paper in the three PG centres to facilitate a shift to an unfamiliar mode of reading these texts using the Cultural Studies model.

Instead of the usual teacher-fronted way of teaching, teachers and students in a team-teaching mode shared the agony and ecstasy of teaching. Students largely lead the discussions after making sure that the contours of the text were established in class. We productively made use of the film texts of *Phaniamma* and

Agnisakshi, while the local theatre productions of *Taledanda* and Rudali provided an extra edge to the mediation of these texts in class.

   While most students read the texts in their English translation, many students especially coming from rural backgrounds read nine out of the twelve texts in the Kannada original or in Kannada translation. In an educational set up where guidebooks have obliterated the need for reading primary texts, what was very heartening was that our students were able to read the texts in the language of their comfort. On occasion, even when a few had not read the text, they still participated meaningfully in the class discussion because the focus was on issues within their experiential universe.

e) Mobilization of Resources: Our students who brought in their first-hand experience of the issues of caste, gender and religion constituted our most inspiring and dependable resource. An array of resource persons from across the disciplines of History, Sociology, Kannada Studies and Political Science, Malayalam and Bengali literatures were invited to fill in on the many aspects of the texts that we had no access to in the English department. Film critics and Cultural commentators made significant contributions to our programme.

          Our enthusiasm and energy was matched by the patronage offered by Katha (who made it possible for us to bring the resource persons from outside) the Sahitya Akademi (who offered us books worth Rs.5,000, for the purpose) and our University administration who partially funded the Annual Seminars on MILT regularly for 4 to 5 years. Using the financial resources made available by Katha, we managed to compile an anthology of cultural criticism - readings of texts and issues in the paper - contributed by experts, teachers and students alike. In the absence of readily available critical material on

the subject, this anthology served the needs of our students to a great extent.

f) The Evaluation Scheme: Experience has taught us that any innovation is best achieved by catching the tiger by its tail. So we had to ensure not only a new mode of teaching but also put in place an evaluation scheme that would reflect the thrust of the MILT course. See Appendix B for a copy of the question paper. Our aim in devising this kind of question paper was to make it student-friendly while still maintaining a degree of integrity to the founding principles of the course and retaining the intellectual challenge of the programme itself. There were three sections: a 15-mark General Section on the Critical Texts which framed the study of Indian Literatures; a 45-mark Comparative section in which the students had to answer any three out of four questions, discussing the various issues in comparison and contrast; and a Single-text Section of 40 marks consisting of short notes on any four texts, a format students are comfortable with. Thus we tried to ensure that the texts were read in earnest keeping the larger intent of the course intact.

Looking Back and Moving On

To talk about the failure of success,
        Though the original impulse behind the course was to move away from a 'Literary Studies' to a 'Cultural Studies' model, because we based the teaching on an established literary form like the novel, we seem to have legitimized a pre-dominantly text-centric approach to the reading of only literary texts. Hence, we have currently brought in shorter and more varied texts both literary and non-literary, to gain the advantage of juxtaposition and contrast.We discovered that our choice of texts, which was based on pragmatic reasons of access and availability, ended up containing texts written only by 'upper caste' writers where the writing was marked by the brahminical ethos. This is as much a comment on the cultural politics of what texts and whose texts are being translated and marketed

today. In our search for difference, we had come upon an uncanny 'centre', brahminical and patriarchal in character. 'A terrible unity' had been born. For instance, the female protagonists of all the three novels from regions as far apart as Karnataka, Kerala and West Bengal - M K Indira's *Phaniamma*, Lalitambika Anterjanam's *Agnisakshi* and Jyotirmoyee Devi's *The River Churning* - compulsively visit Kashi to purify themselves and for a sense of sanctity, indicative of their co-option by a brahminical patriarchy. We are now trying out a full-fledged, compulsory paper in Gender Studies where issues in/of gender are being discussed using diverse texts including marginalized narratives and genres that offer other utopias.Our assessment of the course is that both the communicative and critical thinking objectives were largely achieved through the course. There was even some carry over effect into other papers by way of questioning a purely aesthetic approach to literature. While the course positively impacted the listening, speaking, reading and thinking skills (many students reported just how confident they felt after the MILT class presentations to go out and face a class in real life when they launched out on a teaching career or when they had to face an interview for a job), their writing skill as evidenced in the final examination could not adequately express their complex understanding of the texts and issues. As the evaluation in the annual scheme was entirely based on the end-of-the-year written examination, the students often felt let down by the results, which did not match their own sense of involvement and interest in the course. Now, as we have changed over to a semester scheme with 25% marks in each paper earmarked for internal assessment, we will be able to do some justice to the students by valuing the work they put in through the term by way of oral presentations and group discussions.

And yet,

The most gainful aspect of the course, however, was the way translated texts from the bhashas (= the vernaculars) could build

bridges between the world of teaching/learning and the world of many languages that our students live in with all its challenges. We were able to bring together through translation the two destabilized and interpenetrating poles of *English and India* (not to forget that the in-between and illegitimate Indian Writing in English, as Susie Tharu characterizes it, an angle which also created newer questions in class) to make it *English-in-India* or *India-in-English*, if you like, with its richly textured life of/in/with several languages/literatures/cultures, which have been kept clinically separated until now in our curriculum. The juxtaposition of the two poles in the context of their contrasting historical formation and their location in contemporary politics, calling into question both the poles made for animated discussion and dissent, creating the right ambience for developing critical thinking. The experience of being connected to the many worlds around us was (not to speak of its relevance, power and affective appeal) as af-firming and enabling as walking with both feet firmly on the ground.

NOTE:

* This paper was presented at the UGC National Conference on "New Directions for Language and Literature Studies", in Kolkata, Nov 28 & 29, 2003.

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Appendix A

<u>**Bangalore University, Department of English**</u>

<u>**Syllabus for II M.A. English 1998 - 2003 (English)**</u>

<u>**Paper VII: Modern Indian Literatures in Translation**</u>

One of the chief concerns of Modern Indian Literatures has been the construction of a viable and vibrant national and cultural identity. In the context of India's transition to modernity, such an identity hinges on and is largely constituted by the interplay of four elements: 1. Nationalism, 2. Religion, 3 Caste, 4. Gender. This paper presents a selection from three Indian literatures (Malayalam, Bengali and Kannada), of modern texts on these themes as well as critical texts that provide a framework for their study. All texts are available and will be studied in English translation.

A. Nation

1. O.V.Vijayan - <u>***The Saga of Dharmapuri***</u> (Malayalam)
2. Tarashankar Bandopadhyay - <u>***Ganadevata***</u> (Bengali)
3. Shivarama Karantha - ***Back to the Soil*** (Kannada)

B. Religion
1. Tagore, ***Gora*** (Bengali)
2. Vaikkom Mohammed Bashir - <u>***Me Grandad had an Elepha***</u>nt (Malayalam)
3. U.R.Ananthamurthy - <u>***Bharathipura***</u> (Kannada)

C. Caste
1. Chandu Menon - <u>***Indulekha***</u> (Malayalam)
2. Mahashweta Devi - <u>***Rudali***</u> (Bengali)
3. Girish Karnad - <u>***Taledanda***</u> (Kannada)

D. Gender
1. Lalithambika Antarjanam - <u>***Agnisakshi***</u> (Malayalam)
2. Jyothirmoyee Devi - ***The River Churning*** (Bengali)
3. M.K.Indira - <u>***Phaniamma***</u> (Kannada)

E. Critical Texts
1. Umashankar Joshi - ***"The Idea of Indian Literature"***
   (Sahitya Akademi Samvatsar Lectures: Three, 1990)
2. Meenakshi Mukherjee - "From Purana to Nutana" (3-18) in ***Realism and Reality*** : ***The Novel and Society in India.***
3. Aijaz Ahamad, "Indian Literature: Notes Towards the Definition of a Category" in ***In Theory: Classes, Nations, Literatures*** (1992)
4. G.N.Devy - ***After Amnesia*** , 1993, pp.61-92.
5. Trivedi, Harish "Reading English, Writing Hindi" in ***Colonial Transactions,*** 1993.

Appendix B
The Question Paper: A Sample

Final M A Examination, May-June 2000
(New Scheme)

ENGLISH
(Paper 7) Modern Indian Literatures in Translation

Time: 3 hours   **Max Marks: 100**

SECTION – A

Attempt **one** of the following questions:

                                                                (15x1=15)
1. Comment on the idea of 'Indianness' in Indian literatures as debated by any two prescribed critics.
                                   OR
2. What are the problems faced by a historiographer of Modern Indian Literatures? Discuss with reference to two or more critical essays you have studied
                                   OR
3. Write short notes on **any two** of the following :
   a) pre-novel narrative traditions in India
   b) Colonialism and the rise of the Indian novel
   c) 'Marga' and 'Desi' traditions in Indian Literatures

SECTION - B

Answer **three** of the following questions with reference to at least **two** prescribed texts: **(15x3=45)**

1. a) "The novel is the narrative of the nation". Comment.
                              OR
   b) Back to the *Soil* and *Ganadevatha* are not merely regional   novels but texts of the nation." Discuss.

2 .a) "The assertion of religious identity in modern India has been based on the myth of a golden past" Comment.
                              OR
   b) "Hinduism in practice functions not so much as religion but as caste." Discuss this view with reference to *Gora* and *Bharathipura.*

3. a) "In Indian society, caste oppression inevitably entails consequences for the woman." Substantiate.
                              OR
   b) Comment on the changing representations of caste in different historical contexts.

4. a) Discuss the relationship between gender and modernity as portrayed by any two novelists prescribed.

                              OR
   b) Write an essay on the role of marriage in a woman's life as imaged in any two modern Indian novels you have studied.

SECTION - C

Write short notes on any **four** of the following:

                                                    (4x10=40)
a.   Widowhood in *Phaniamma.*
b.   Treatment of the Muslim community in *The River Churning.*
c.   Relationship between Basavanna and *Bijjala* in *Taledanda.*
d.   The role of Dulan Ganju in *Rudali.*
e.   Significance of the title *Me Grandad* 'Ad *and Elephant.*
f.   The Saligrama episode in *Bharatipura.*
g.   Nagaveni in *Back to the Soil.*
h.   Motherhood as portrayed in *Agnisakshi.*

BOOK REVIEWS

Writing Outside the Nation

By Azade Seyhan
Translation/Transnation Series
Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001.
Pages 189

Azade Seyhan's diverse intellectual pursuits are reflected in the book *Writing Outside the Nation.* She seeks to highlight the complexities attending the notion of culture and identity in the contemporary world through the lens of transnational literature, which she in consonance with Arjun Appadurai's usage of the term, defines as writing operating outside the national canon to engage with issues confronting "deterritorialized cultures" seeking to articulate the concerns of "paranational communities". In the book under review Azade Seyhan focuses in particular on the diasporic writing by women. She undertakes a comparative study of contemporary Chicano/a and Turkish-German writing as examples of the dominant 'minor literatures' in the U.S.A and Germany, not with the purpose of highlighting the similarities and differences in the writing of marginalized peoples writing in the language of their host country,viz. the major language as 'outsiders' but rather with the objective of generating a dialogue and discourse on the politics of emergent identities that challenges the hitherto accepted notion of the monopoly of monolingual writing and celebrates the heterogeneity of community, beyond language and homogenous culture.

The remarkable feature of all such writing is said to be the straddling of two cultures and languages with memory and representation as the focal points. The writing is distinctive also in that it is "creative and experimental, self-reflexive and theoretical" transcending the confines of the conventional categories of defining the nation as bounded by territory, language, ethnicity, history and religion. Consequently the markers of identity also become mutable

and malleable, and democratic and egalitarian participation is seen as the key in the forging of an emergent identity.

This entails translation both at the metaphorical and linguistic levels. The two levels are closely interlinked and enmeshed because even the abstract notions of history, culture, community and self are ultimately articulated through language that facilitates the translation of these concepts into the materiality of texts. The translation of the past involves the recall of myths, legends and rituals which are then rendered in the acquired language, and resituated in a "hyphenated culture" because, as Seyhan succinctly puts it, this process reflects the transformation of a complex semiotic map of a given culture into another. At another level it is the translation of memory and representation, and again this process is really a reconstruction of the past, enabling omissions and silences of officially documented history and chronology to be questioned and an alternate script to be fashioned which also addresses issues of gender and suppression. Closely connected with this is the issue of translating silences into 'voice' for, as Seyhan points out, "mastery over language is the passport to visibility, presence and power". This voice is a powerful vehicle to not only restructure the inherited cultural legacy of fragmented consciousness and history of the transnational but to also challenge the dominance and hegemony of both the major language and the myths woven by it of the marginalized existing on its peripheries. It is thus an instrument to contest the representational validity of the sterotypical 'Other' created by dominant voices in the major language. It provides a platform for projecting a critical public identity of the self and community.

Finally at the linguistic level translation is reflected in the experimental use of language, typical of which is code switching and code mixing, resulting in innovative aesthetics and poetics, renewing and enriching the repertoire and inventory of the linguistic and literary tradition of the host country. Concretely this is achieved by the redefinition of existing genres, where for example as in the case of autobiographies, these no longer are centred on the life

testimonies of one individual but reflect multiple voices across generations, geographies and time, chronicling the life of a community in transit. Intertextuality is an inherent feature of such texts. Typical stylistic devices of such writing are the use of forgotten idioms and grammar, metaphor, allegory, irony often a deliberate mismatch of language, the literal translation of proverbs and culturally loaded phrases, and the use of bilingualism/multilingualism inscribing the major language with the accents and inflections of transnationals. The resulting hybridity calls for a knowledge of two or more cultures for the text to be appropriately understood.

The book is extremely useful from a translator's perspective since the stylistic devices it describes as typical of transnational writing are precisely the tools used by the translator to ply his/her trade. Moreover the challenge of facilitating the border crossing of complex semiotic maps without effacing the cultural particularity of the original while at the same time ensuring that the original is not appropriated by the receiving culture is precisely the central issue in Translation Studies today. The book offers valuable insights in addressing this challenge. The book, which is divided into two parts, (the first offering a theoretical framework that is applied to the writings of amongst others Ana Castillo,Gloria Anzaldua, Aysel Özakin and Emine Sevgi Özdamar), concludes with an 'Afterword' entitled *Pedagogical Gains,* where Seyhan engages at length with Walter Benjamin's essay *The Task of the Translator* to convincingly present a case for the resonance of the original in translation, that it might be granted a meaningful and significant 'afterlife'.

Reviewed by
Chitra Harshvardhan Ph.D
Senior Lecturer, Dept of German
Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Mehrauli Road,
New Delhi

Teaching and Researching Translation
By Basil Hatim
Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2001
Pages 254.

Teaching and Researching Translation by Basil Hatim is part of the *Applied Linguistics in Action Series,* which has Christopher N Candlin and David R Hall as General Editors and aims to focus on the issues and challenges that practitioners and researchers face in the broad field of Applied Linguistics and provide them with useful tools to undertake practice-related research.

Translation Studies has come of age and has burgeoned into an academic discipline which, as has been realized, is yet dependent on and feeds on praxis. An awareness of the importance of translation praxis is valuable, as one understands its role in carrying cultures across borders, making pervious the boundaries between nations, languages, cultures and texts. In the last few decades translation theory has also made tremendous headway, travelling as it has from clichéd reflections and general formulations to a large corpus of scholarly writing that has elevated it to an interdisciplinary discipline. The very eclectic nature of translation theory, with roots branching out and drawing sustenance from varied sources, coupled with the fact that it goes hand in hand with translation methodology, again an applied and interrelated discipline, make it impossible for any one theory to gain ground and hold sway. Although of course the borders of Translation Studies seem to be undefined, the place of translation in the history of ideas is beyond debate.

It is in this context that one looks at Basil Hatim's *Teaching and Researching Translation.* The book attempts to create geography of translation studies and thus analyse how the field is mapped and landscaped. It is written in pursuance of the objectives of this innovative series as to what research in this area tells us, what

it does tell us, doesn't tell us and what it should tell us. It also seeks to analyse how research has been carried out, applied, and the interesting research possibilities the practice raises, as also the issues that need further exploration.

The book is divided into four major sections. Section-I deals with the history, basic concepts and key issues in translation research. It provides some knowledge of the various paradigms that inform research and researches into some of these paradigms. Key issues like the dichotomy of 'literal' vs. 'free', the problematics of equivalence and relevance, translator's invisibility, and linkages to other disciplines are all touched upon cursorily. Though the concept maps prove helpful and some models like Polysystem and Skopos are dealt with in a student-friendly manner, this attempt to cover the conceptual framework of translation studies falls far short of a comprehensive overview of the discipline.

Section II deals with research models in Translation Studies and seeks to study how the perspectives outlined in the first section have yielded operational frameworks for research. Hatim looks at current practical applications of theory in terms of three major aspects of research into translation strategy - a register, language use/user perspective, an approach to the study of intentionality within the discipline of pragmatics, and a model of language as a social semiotic informed by text linguistics, genre theory and discourse analysis. The chapter on 'Translation and Ideology', especially the section on feminist perspectives, leaves much to be desired since what is covered is evidently only the tip of the iceberg. Hatim has managed to touch upon most of the models and approaches to the study of translation, however perfunctorily. That he has attempted a systematisation where there was none is a laudable task in itself. But a lack of sustained examination creates a rather superficial representation. One of the problems of Hatim's organization of these models is an apparent lack of chronology and historical background. Thus for example why a translation strategy

came up when it did is not analysed, nor its significance in the historical context given much importance. A vague sense of chronology, which seems paradoxical and a lack of attempt to historicise the 'why' of a theory make this diachronic study partly skewed. However the chapter on 'Translation of Genre vs. Translation as Genre' would be a useful one for researchers as it describes research models which have addressed the theme of genre in translation as well as the genre of translation from the perspectives both of Applied Linguistics and Culture Studies. It places under scrutiny research into the issue of translation 'norms' which has underpinned approaches to translation as a genre. The subsequent chapter on 'Empirical research in translation study' describes models of empirical research undertaken with corpus translation. 'Theory and Practice in Translation Teaching' would prove particularly useful to teachers of Translation Studies as it outlines models of research into translation pedagogy, assesses research relating to pedagogical issues, but most important of all, attempts a detailed analysis of curriculum design in translator training, making an elaborate examination of a number of syllabi.

Section III deals with ''Emphasis on Practitioner Research', wherein the first two sections become a set of reference for the third. Hatim's own insights into the practice and teaching of translation are perspicuous and precise, but presuming as it does that all readers have advanced knowledge in linguistic theory and terminology it might dampen the enthusiasm of the novice in Translation Studies. If intended for the advanced reader, then again the section does not have the necessary depth for that readership. However the chapter on 'Researching text, discourse and genre' listing different research contexts within which frameworks are envisaged and suggesting appropriate research projects detailing aims, procedures and evaluation, would provide an invaluable exercise for the student. The lengthy glossary is excellent and does indeed facilitate comprehension. Certain important and upcoming areas of study like machine translation and audio visual translation have not found any

mention, though on the whole Hatim has managed to present the variety that is part of the charm of translation study.

This book will be of use to many who have opted into Translation Studies but are confused and frustrated by the innumerable writings in this area, all of which seek to evolve solutions in diverse ways to the same problems. It takes the readers unfamiliar with Translation Studies through a series of conceptual frameworks that orient them to the field. With admirable simplicity Hatim has managed to unfold the infinite connections and the intertwining mesh of concepts and theories in Translation Studies without approaching it from any narrow position. Given the huge canvas of works in this area, he has done some rigorous sifting and exercised discrete choices. He has attempted to map the links and relationships between what would often appear to be disparate congeries of highly individual theories and concepts of translation. In a way the book is an attempt at a historiography of Translation Studies, which in being concise makes it a reductionistic exercise. This does not quite afford the reader the feel of the original meaning and intentions of the theories. In its conciseness it assumes prior knowledge which the student might not have, but in guiding him/her to a new reading it would, I hope, be successful. In the light of the changes that are taking place in our curricula in the direction of interdisciplinarity, this book offers a good understanding of the complexity and responsibility involved in the multifarious tasks a translator performs and which a theoretician should be aware of.

Except for the last section on 'further reading', there is nothing excitingly new about the book as far as a Translation Studies scholar is concerned, to add to the already existing fare of writings in this area. There is of course the range desired by the beginner but sans the depth required by the scholar. It exposes the reader to a vast spectrum of ideas, facts, theories and strategies of translation but is lacking in a strong conceptual introduction that could help launch the reader into a new critical pedagogical framework of translation

theory. The book does a fairly good job of meeting the criteria of breadth and coverage that would suit any graduate program. Though some entries and sections are brief to the point of being hardly useful, for the most part the book is cogent, interesting and complemented by all crucial bibliographic references. Well researched and referenced, with a remarkable resource of secondary literature for future researchers, *Teaching and Researching Translation* is a handy and pedagogically useful book.

<div align="right">

Reviewed by
Meena T Pillai Ph. D
Senior Lecturer,
Sri Shankaracharya Sanskrit University,
Thiruvananthapuram Campus,
Thiruvananthapuram

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TRANSLATION REVIEW

BETRAYAL
An English Translation by Basavaraj Naikar
of the Kannada folkplay
Sangya-Balya by Rayappa Pattar
New Delhi and London: Minerva Publications, 2004

The tradition of Indian folk theatre - both religious and secular - reaches back to distant antiquity. In Karnataka, folk theatre comprises an array of fascinating forms, the most important among them being the *Bayalata,* or open air theatre, which includes types such as *Dasarata, Sannata, Doddata, Parijatha and Yakshagana.* Prof. Basavaraj Naikar's rendition of Rayappa Pattar's original text from Kannada into English brings to life a well-known *Sannata* text from North Karnataka: *Sangya-Balya.* Indeed, as the translator clarifies in his introduction (ix), *Sangya-Balya* is a *dappinata*, in which songs (sung to the accompaniment of a small, flat drum called *dappu*) play an important part.

Unlike many a translator who takes his sources for granted, Dr. Naikar has acknowledged in his introduction both the composer and the minstrels who recorded the text. The play was originally composed by Rayappa Pattar (1860-1950), endearingly known as Patter master, who was a native of Shapurpet of Gadag bur resided in the Bailawada village of Bailahongala taluk of Belgaum district in Northern Karnataka. The oral composition of Patter master was recorded by Basavanagouda Patil, Gangappam Mulimani and Fakritappa Madiwalar of Mutanala village and published by Dr. Mallikarjun Latthe, in 1991. Prof. Naikar's translation of the play into English in based on this secondary tantalization.

Oral narratives, by definition, are simple straightforward tales that employ a colloquial language. They have a strong regional flavour both in terms of their setting and in terms of their

embodiment of the beliefs and practices, aspirations and fears, of local people. Appropriately subtitled, *Betrayal* the play deals with the elemental passions of love and betrayal as they interweave with the destinies of ordinary mortals.

The plot of the play is straight forward: Sangappa (or Sangya) is a rich landlord of Bailahongala village who falls in love with Ganga (or Gangi), the wife of Virabhadra (or Irya), a trader, at the annual fair of Lord Basavanna. He presses his bosom friend, Balappa (or Balya), into service in order to enlist the love of Ganga. The reluctant Balya, forced because of his indigence into doing his master's bidding, is insulted by Ganga, who also spurns the illicit love of Sangya. On the advice of a *koravanji,* or fortune-teller, the services of Paramma, an old woman who is Sangya's aunt and Ganga's neighbour are procured on the promise of money, gold and bungalows. As a result, Ganga is trapped and she agrees to receive Sangya in her bed in the absence of her husband, who is away on a long business trip to Bellary. Meanwhile, as the love between the two blossoms, and becomes the topic of village gossip, Virabhadra returns from Bellary and catches the two in the act. Furious at the turn of events, he confiscates Ganga's jewelry and sends her away to her parental home at Bailawada. He then persuades Balya to betray his friend/master and proceeds cold-bloodedly, despite Ganga's best efforts to pre-empt him, to murder Sangya, after which he surrenders to the *mamledar* or magistrate at Belgaum. Thus, as the translator rightly says, 'illicit sex, crushing poverty, and betrayal happen to be the main thematic concerns of the play" (introduction, x).

The translation throws light upon a unique feature of the *sannata* play, which is the supposed preponderance of music and songs. The play starts conventionally with a prayer to Lord Ganapati, the god who wards off evil and makes beginnings auspicious. The first song of the play after the choral ode is the one that Sangya sings dolefully, for he has not seen his childhood friend Balya for some time. A prose dialogue containing a summary of the

song follows almost every song. In his introduction, the translator points out that this may seem redundant to Western readers, but rightly adds that this feature derives from the live presentation of the play before an audience, and must be understood as such (xiii). Prof. Naikar's decision to retain the songs along with their summaries speaks of a wholesome approach to keeping the translation faithful to the original text/form.

In the play, there is a masculinist bias. While it is true that the violation of chastity is the cause of the tragedy in this play, it is also true that Ganga's own sensibilities do not find much scope. As her husband Virabhadra gets ready to go on his long trip, Ganga pines for his love: "I am a young lady who cannot stay alone here. My body and youth will go waste, what shall I do?" (28) Ganga's plaintive pleas fall on deaf ears, and her frustration is intensified when she understands from Paramma that her husband now mistrusts her. This aspect of the play is perhaps attributable to the fact that Rayappa Pattar, or Pattar master, belonged to the *Haradesi* tradition of singing (which upheld male superiority) as against the *Nagesi* tradition (which upheld female superiority). It may also be ascribed to the times in which the play was written and the moral code of the folk culture.

Indeed, the moral vision of the play is closely tied to its folk origins, and this feature has been retained in Prof. Naikar's translation. Folk plays that paint the play of love magnify its dangerous aspects and assert the working of justice. In this sense, anything excessive has to meet a punishment in the traditional outlook of the folk, and hence murder and retribution become inevitable. The presence of the policeman in the play is a symbol of this world-view, but also an index to the changing times under the British regime. *Sannata* is an operatic performance that, unlike the other types of *Bayalata*, brings folk theatre to the social plane. It is

essentially a social play, which takes up issues, and concerns that are central to the society.

Humour, or *hasya rasa*, is inextricably associated with theatre. The point of reference here is not merely the exigencies of dramatic presentation, but also the fun-loving audience with their crude language of humour. Prof. Naikar's translation brings out the complexities of the native language well, even though he has confessed to the impossibility of translating the flavour and rhythm of the original. The rough and ready give and take of folk life are presented with great gusto, as in the scenes between the Marwari and Sangya-Balya in the first act, and between Paramma and her husband in the second act, and even between Ganga and Balya in the third act.

The translator confesses that he undertook the translation because he felt that the elemental theme ingrained in it has universal appeal. Whether the purpose of translation is to reinvigorate the playwright's psyche and create a coherent bridge between the native and the foreign languages/cultures, or whether it is to translate the non-native reader into a native one, there is no doubt that Prof. Naikar's translation is a notable contribution to the field.

Coming as it does at a time when there is a wider interest in translations from native languages into English, it is a timely attempt.

Reviewed by
Ravishankar Rao, Ph.D
Reader, Dept. of English, Mangalore University,
Mangalagangotri Campus, Mangalore.

BOOK BEAT

TRANSLATION
An Advanced Resource Book
Basil Hatim and Jeremy Munday
Routledge Applied Linguistics Series.
Series Editors: Prof. Christopher N. Candlin and Prof. Ronald Carter
First published by London and New York: Routledge, 2004
Cover: Paper bound.
No. of pages 373
ISBN 0-415-28305-1 (hbk)
ISBN 0-415-28306-x (pbk)

Translation: An Advanced Resource Book, by Basil Hatim and Jeremy Munday is a part of the series of comprehensive resource books on Applied Linguistics by Routledge, edited by Prof. Christopher N. Candlin and Prof. Ronald Carter. Each book in this series is divided into three sections - Section A, giving an introduction, Section B, an extension and Section C, the exploration. Each section of the book focuses on 14 vital issues in translation.This includes what translation is, translation strategies, the unit of translation, translation shifts, analysis of meaning, dynamic equivalence and the receptor of the message, textual pragmatics and equivalence, translation and relevance, text type in translation, text register in translation, text, genre and discourse shifts in translation, agents of power in translation, ideology and translation and translation in the information technology era.Hatim and Munday have brought out the various aspects of translation in each chapter very well with illustrations and diagrammatic representations. Numerous examples add up to the easy comprehension of the reader. Separate Concept Boxes for additional information also facilitates easier understanding of the various concepts of the translation. The appendix containing a glossary of translation terminology is an added advantage to the reader. A

student of Translation Studies finds this highly useful both as a part of the studies and as a guide to the process of translation.

INTRODUCING INTERPRETING STUDIES
Franz Pöchhacker
London and New York: Routledge, 2004
Cover: Paper bound .
No. of pages 252
ISBN 0-415-26886-9 (hbk)
ISBN 0-415-26887-7 (pbk)

Introducing Interpreting Studies by Franz Pöchhacker highlights the evolution of the field of Interpretation, by reviewing influential concepts, models and methodological approaches. Being a complement to Interpreting Studies Reader (Routledge, 2002), the book helps an interpreter to comprehend the profession to the best.

The book is divided into three broad sections: Foundations, Selected topics and research and Directions. 'Foundations' deals with Concepts, Evolution, Approaches, Paradigms and Models, 'Selected Topics and Research' with Process, Product and Performance, Practice and Profession and Pedagogy, and 'Directions' deals with developing trends and perspectives in the profession.*Foundations,* is further divided into five chapters - *Concepts* analyzes the process of interpretation through its roots, definitions and other criteria, *Evolution* evaluates the profession of interpretation through various settings of social and professional backgrounds and the future of the profession, *Approaches* deals with perspectives, *Paradigms* elucidates the notion of paradigms and experimentation in the profession, and *Models* discusses various models and schools of the profession.The second part, *Selected Topics and Research,* contains four chapters: *Process* explains the various elements of the interpretation profession like bilingualism, simultaneity etc., *Product and Performance* is elucidated in terms of discourse, correspondence, effect, role and quality, *Practice and Profession*

establishes the historical settings of the profession, and *Pedagogy* deals with assessment of the interpretation process. *Directions* the third part talks about the developing trends and the future of the profession.

Overall the book gives a comprehensive and detailed analysis of the process of interpretation through various interpreting tools. It is a good guidebook for the students of the interpreting profession.

INTRODUCING CORPORA IN TRANSLATION STUDIES
Maeve Olohan
London and New York: Routledge, 2004
Cover: Paper bound.
No. of pages 220
ISBN 0-415-26884-2 (hbk)
ISBN 0-415-26885-0 (pbk)

Introducing Corpora in Translation Studies by Maeve Olohan is a primary resource book for corpus-based translation studies. With the area of corpora and corpus-based translation studies seeing drastic improvements, such books are the need of the hour. This is a collection of texts, selected and compiled suiting certain criteria of translation studies. It focuses on the use of corpora in translation studies, by tracing historical attempts at it.

The book contains 10 chapters related to various aspects of corpus-based translation, viz., Introducing translation studies research, corpus linguistics and translation, parallel corpora, Comparable corpora, corpus design, corpus tools and data analysis, features of translation, translators, style and ideology, corpora in translator training and corpora in translation practice. Each chapter is a treasure-trove of knowledge and guides the reader through the aspects of the corpus-based translation studies in the detail. The book traces the introduction and development of corpus-based

methods in translation studies and defines translation corpora research. Issues like corpus design, tools for data extraction and analysis are addressed and uses of corpora by translator and in translation training are assessed. The volume gives a detailed account of how the analysis of corpus data can make a contribution to the study of translation. Case studies and illustrative information facilitate better understanding of the uses of corpora in translation studies. The detailed conclusion and notes section are an added advantage.This also helps to expand the translation activity during different periods of time and to compare the influence of divergent norms, practices and conventions on the translation process and product.

Introducing Corpora in Translation Studies is yet another addition to the emerging trends of Ttranslation studies.

DE- / RE-CONTEXTUALISING CONFERENCE INTERPRETING
Ebru Diriker
Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company
Cover: Hard bound .
No. of pages 373
ISBN 9-0272-1659-2 (hbk)
Price: Euro 99.00

This book focuses Interpreting Studies, an altogether new branch in the academia, newer even than Translation Studies.

With the growing demand for Simultaneous Interpreters, during various occasions, Ebru Diriker concentrates on the importance of Simultaneous Interpreters in the current day scenario. She highlights the performance of Simultaneous conference interpreters in the socio-cultural and interaction contexts.

The book is classified into five chapters. Chapter 1, Previous Literature, Key Concepts and Grounding Theories is sub-divided

into five sections. It focuses on research and the theoretical assumptions on discourse in Simultaneous Interpreting.Chapter 2, titled Broader Social context in Simultaneous Interpreting is sub-divided into two main heads - Meta-discourse as Social context and meta-discourse on Simultaneous Interpreting, which is further divided into seven sections dealing with discourses related to various fields of study.Chapter 3, viz. Analyzing an Actual Conference Context deals with the construction of corpus for Interpretation Studies. This highlights the role of Conference Languages, Recruitment, Technical matters, Booth positions, Participants, Speakers, Documentations, Interviews and other related elements in the process of constructing the corpus. Chapter 4, Analyzing an actual Simultaneous Interpretation performance deals with the transcripts of this study and analysis and exploration of shifts in the speaking subject. Chapter 5, Juxta- and Conter-posing actual Simultaneous Interpretation behavior with the meta-discourse is divided into two major heads - Juxtaposing actual Simultaneous Interpretation behaviour with the meta-discourse and counterposing actual simultaneous interpretation behaviour with the meta-discourse. While the former deals with issues like Broader Socio-cultural context, presence and performance of interpreters in the background of transcripts, observations and interviews the latter discusses their implications for Simultaneous Interpretation Research.

Diriker's study helps to understand the various elements of Simultaneous and Conference Interpretation in the present Interpretation scenario. With the field of Simultaneous Interpretation Studies still in its infancy, this is a welcome study.

CLAIMS, CHANGES AND CHALLENGES IN TRANSLATION STUDIES
Gyde Hansen, Kirsten Malmkjær and Daniel Gile (ed.)
Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2004
Cover: Hard bound.
No. of pages 320
ISBN 90-272-1656-8 (hbk)

European Society for Translation Studies (EST) has contributed tremendously to the growth of research in Translation Studies. The three congresses held by this society in 1995, 1998 and 2001 has helped in compiling the opinions and recent developments in Translation Studies by various eminent personalities in the field.

This book is a compilation of the papers presented at the 2001 EST Congress. It contains 24 articles by prominent translators and teachers of translation. Many papers are in English.There are also a few Danish and German writings.

The first three papers by Andrew Chesterman, Gideon Toury and Palo Poski & Koskinen concentrate on Translation Universals These discuss the pros and cons of automatic corpus processing. Stole discusses the hermeneutic language philosophy and the role of the Source Text in translation.While Pál Heltai discusses the ready-made language-translation, the Danish article by Hamne Korzen highlights the rules for translating free adjuncts between French and Danish.Michael Schreiber discusses the linguistic comparisons and language-pair-specific translation analysis. Patrick Zabalbeascoa and Nike K Pokorn's papers also deal with language elements. Marie-Louise Nob's German paper addresses the expectations of TT through a questionnaire-based pilot study. Kirsten Malmkjær addresses the question of shift and tries to differentiate between choice-based shifts and actual errors. Thorsten Schröter's paper also discusses the shifts but through the screen humours in translation.

John Milton, Hanna Risku and Barbara Dragsted and Benjamin Kjeldsen's papers deal with the analysis of translation, migration of translators and translation terminology respectively. João Azenha Junior attempts to extablish the relationship between translation and music, while Luc Van Doorslaer discusses translations under the tensions of intra and international linguistic communities.

Articles by Barbara Ahrens, Magdalena Bartlomiejlzyk, Helle V Dam, Sabine Fenton and Mett Rudvin deal with Interpretation Studies. Nigel Hall discusses language brokering.

Overall, the book gives a comprehensive picture of the present day translation and interpretation studies. Though this is a compilation of various opinions, it effectively traces the emerging trends in the academic circles of translation and interpretation.

Contributors

Anuradha Ghosh teaches English in the Dept. of English, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi. She got her Ph.D in 2000 (JNU, New Delhi) for her thesis titled '*Ideological Discourse on Indian Cinema. Bengal of the '60s & 70s: The Genre of Protest*'. It is partly published under the title *Signification in Image and Space*, in the book Signification in Language and Culture, edited by H.S. Gill. Her fields of specialization are Film & Media, Culture Studies and Literary Theory. She co-edited the book *The Politics of Imperialism and Counterstrategies* (2004, Aakar Books).

He Xianbin, who has a Ph.D. in English Linguistics and Literature, is Associate Professor in the English Department of Guangdong Polytechnic Normal University, China. Sponsored by China Scholarship Council, he is currently an academic visitor at the Centre for Translation and Intercultural Studies at the University of Manchester, UK. He has to his credit a number of published papers and articles over the decades in many conferences and seminars. His postal address is English Department, Guangdong Polytechnic Normal University, 293 ZhongShan DaDao, Guangzhou, China, 510665.

K. Sripad Bhat is the Head of the Dept. of English, Goa University. His area of specialisation is Literary Theory & Cultural Studies. He has published more than two dozen articles in various national & international Journals.His postal address is Head, Dept. of English, Goa University, Goa - 403206.

Esther Monzó Nebot teaches legal translation in the Department of Translation and Communication at University Jaume I of Castelló in Spain. After finishing her degree in Translation and Interpreting in 1998, she taught Catalan, Spanish and Translation at the University of Cambridge (UK). She `

became a certified translator and interpreter in 1999 and completed her PhD studies in translation at University Jaume I while freelancing as a legal and technical translator. In her PhD Dissertation she studied the legal translator in the Spanish context from a sociological perspective. She coordinates the research team Gitrad (www.gitrad.uji.es) and directs the Active project (www.active.uji.es). She is also a founding member of the Lextra study network (www.lextra.uji.es), a group of scholars and professionals interested in the study of translation and the law.
e-mail: monzo@trad.uji.es

Tanweer Alam Mazhari teaches in the Department of English, Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandira, a college under Calcutta University. After working in the field of modern British drama (his M. Phil Dissertation was on Harold Pinter) he has shifted his attention to Urdu Studies. He is currently working on a few 19th century Urdu texts which are central to the understanding of Urdu-centric cultural group's interface with the cultural tradition of the empire.
e-mail: teemazhari@yahoo.com

V.B.Tharakeshwar is Lecturer, Department of Translation Studies at Kannada University, Hampi. He has published research articles both in Kannada and English. He also translates between Kannada and English. He has carried out many research projects related to issues of Colonialism, Nationalism and Translation, Emergence of Modern Kannada Literature, Rethinking the "Crisis" in English Studies. Currently he is doing a research project on *"Pre-colonial Notions of Translation in Kannada"*. His postal address is: Department of Translation Studies, Kannada University-Hampi, Vidyaranya, Hospet-583 276, Karnataka.

Jayita Sengupta teaches English Literature in South Calcutta Girls College, Calcutta University. She completed her Bachelor of

Arts in English from Loreto College, Kolkata, Master of Arts from Calcutta University and M. Phil and Ph.D from J.M.I, New Delhi. She was the recipient of the Charles Wallace Grant in 2000, which allowed her to do research in U.K, and was a British Council Fellow for the Oxford Conference in the same year. Her publications include research articles on post-colonial literatures, critical theory and feminist literatures in journals of repute. Her translations from Bangla to English include, *Relationships*, short stories by Sirshendu Mukhopadhyay, (Kolkata: Writers Workshop, 2003) and *In the Other Bengal: A Creative Travelogue* by Ramkumar Mukhopadhyay, (New Delhi: Foundation for SAARC Writers & Literature, 2005). She has edited a collection of stories from various Indian languages in English translation, *The Muffled Heart: Stories of the Disempowered Male*, forthcoming from Rupa and translated a Bani Basu novel, *Gandharbi*, which is to be brought out by Katha.Her postal address is P-553, Hemanta Mukherjee Sarani, Srijan Apts, Flat 2C, Kolkata 700029.

Tapati Gupta is Professor and Head, Department of English, Calcutta University, College Street, Kolkata, West Bengal. She had her Ph.D. from Calcutta University with a Teacher Fellowship from the University Grants Commission. The Title of her Ph. D thesis is *"Identity & Adjustment in Shakespeare's Problem Plays: Studies in an aspect of the relationship between the individual and society in All's Well that Ends Well, Measure for Measure, Troilus & Cressida, and Hamlet"*. She has to her credit a number of published articles and translations. Her areas of special interest include Drama, Translation – Bangla to English-, and Literature and the visual arts. She was on the Board of Editors of Subodh Chandra Sen Gupta Foundation, 2000. Her postal address is 47A Diamond Harbour Road, Flat 4A, Kolkata 700027, West Bengal.

Nabanita Sengupta teaches English literature at Hiralal Mazumdar Memorial College, Dakshineshwar, University of Calcutta, as a Guest Lecturer. She is also pursuing M.Phil in English at the University of Calcutta. She has completed her graduation with honours and postgraduation in English from the University of Delhi, Ramjas College and Hindu College respectively. Her postal address is Ramkrishna Sarada Road, P.O: Natagarh, Kolkata: 700113.

Swati Datta, M.A. (Bombay), Ph.D. (Visva Bharati), PGDHE (IGNOU), is Reader in English in Serampore College, Serampore, West Bengal. Her areas of specialization are Indian Writing in English, Tagore Studies and Translation Studies. She has to her credit a number of published papers and articles which include 'Ideas of Tagore and National Integration'*, National Integration: Vision of a Poet* , Visva-Bharati, 1995; 'Tagore's concept of Education', *New Frontiers in Education,* New Delhi, April-June, 1996; 'The Maestro in English', *Ritichhanda,* Kolkata, June 2002; 'Throttled Language: Fatal Lapses in Teaching of English'*, The Statesman* , Kolkata, 14th November, 2002; 'Problematics of Tagore's English *Gitanjali', Journal of the Department of English,* Vol xxx, nos. 1 & 2, University of Calcutta, 2002-2003; 'Whose Failure is it Anyway?', *The Statesman,* Kolkata, 11th January 2005; etc. She has also written short stories and reviewed books. Her postal address is 'USHANIL', 46, Dharmatala Lane, Bhadrakali P.O. 712 232, HOOGHLY, West Bengal.

B.T Seetha is Associate professor in English at Nizam College, Osmania University, Hyderabad. She received her Ph.D in 1994 from Osmania University for her thesis, '*Ed Bullins and Aime Cesaire: A Comparative Study'*. Her areas of specialization and Research interest are Afro-American

Drama, Modern Indian Drama and Translation.Her postal address is # 19, Radhika Colony, West Marredpally, Secunderabad - 500 026, Andhra Pradesh**.**

P. Jayalakshmi is Associate Professor teaching literatures in English at Osmania University, Nizam College, Hyderabad. Her area of specialization is Indian Poetry in English and Nineteenth Century British Poetry. She has translated poems and short stories from Telugu into English. In collaboration with Dr. Bhargavi Rao she has translated and published Seela Subhadra Devi's full-length poem *Yudham Oka Gunde Kotha* into English as *War a Heart's Ravage* (March 2003). Besides literature her interests include Indian philosophy and music. Her postal address is: 5-9-34, NLR Residency, Basheer Bagh, Hyderabad-500029, India.

Sunil Sawant is Reader in English at Kisan Veer Mahavidyalaya, Wai, Satara District, Maharashtra. His publications include '*A Mirror to a Poet's Mind'*, '*Gieve Patel Answers a Questionnaire'* He has translated D T Bhosale's Marathi book *Sanskritichya Paulkhuna* into English as *Footprints of Culture* (2005, Yashawantrao Chavan Pratishthan, Mumbai and MacMillan India Ltd. Pune). His postal address is: "Akanksha", Plot No. 15, Survey No. 9A/2 Sidhanathwadi, Wai - 412 803, Satara District, Maharashtra. e-mail: drsrsawant@yahoo.com

S. Armstrong teaches English Literature at the University of Madras. He was a Shastri Indo-Canadian Fellow at the University of Guelph, Canada. He has presented research papers in International conferences held in Sri Lanka, Australia, Italy, Canada and the United States of America. His areas of interest include Canadian Studies, Culture Studies, Translation, Performance and Aboriginal Literatures. His postal address is: Lecturer in English, University of Madras, Chepauk, Chennai-600005.

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