

Critical Reflections on Migration and Translation in/from the Indian Context

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Abstract

Migration as an analytical category has been fruitfully deployed in translation studies in the last couple of decades. Nevertheless, in the field of Indian Translation Studies, this has not shown up as an essential concept to be employed and explored. In this context, this present paper tries to sketch the progress so far at the global level and tries to understand the relationship between translation and migration in the Indian context or involving Indian languages in any context. This sketch is more about charting the possible explorable issues than making any decisive argument about them. This paper has three sections, the first one takes stock of the research in the area to tease out the central tenets of the field; while the second one tries to see migration with reference to Kannada historically in a broad stroke; the third and the final section tries to list out the issues for further research in the Indian context or involving Indian languages.

Keywords: Migration, Translation, Indian Languages, Kannada, History of Translation.

In the last couple of decades, migration as an analytical category has been employed in Translation Studies and has paid rich dividends. However, in the field of Indian Translation Studies, this has not shown up as an essential concept to be employed and explored. In this context, the present paper tries to sketch in a nutshell the progress so far at the global level and tries to understand the relationship between translation and migration in the Indian context or involving Indian languages in any context. This sketch is more about charting the possible explorable issues than making any decisive argument about

them. This paper has three sections. The first one takes stock of the research in the area to tease out the main tenets of the field; while the second one tries to see migration with reference to Kannada historically in a broad stroke; the third and the final section try to list out the issues for further research in the Indian context or involving Indian languages.

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The field of Sociology of Translation, which is also named social turn in Translation Studies (Hanna Sameh 2016:1-14), came into being first with the Tel-Aviv school's work, borrowing concepts from Sociology to understand the practices of translation (Tourey 1980 & 1995); followed by Actor-Network theory and Bourdieu's concepts of Field, Agency, Doxa (Hanna 2016); some of the issues about the discipline of sociology also made inroads into Translation Studies (for a different perspective on the coming together of Sociology and Translation Studies, see Buzelin 2013). One such issue is migration. The concept of migration entered the field of Translation Studies in the late 1990s and early 2000s when scholars working in the field of Interpretation Studies looked at the role of interpretation in shaping migration and the identity of immigrants in Europe (House et al. 2005, mainly Mason 2005). Since then, this interaction between translation and migration has thrown up several issues for discussion and has been fruitful, as evident in the following discussion of the significant issues.

One of the major developments is that while exploring the interconnectedness of these two phenomena, one is used to understand the other. The translation is seen as the migration of texts, ideas, and meanings across space, time and place. While migration is seen as a translation of people, which is best expressed by postcolonial writers and thinkers as "migrants as translated beings". It was articulated first by Salman Rushdie

while comparing migrant authors in Europe like him to the Britain-born authors writing in English in his collection of essays *Imaginary Homelands*, where he named writers like himself being “translated men” (Rushdie 1991). At the same time, the postcolonial thinker Homi K. Bhabha’s book *The Location of Culture* too brought out the centrality of the concept of translation in understanding cultural transformations and used the term cultural translation (Bhabha 1994). These two statements in the early 90s too contributed immensely to the field of Migration and Translation, giving rise to works such as translation as migration and migration as translation, where one becomes the metaphor for the other.

Another front that opened, mainly in literary studies, as a consequence of the postcolonial theory, was that of looking at the diasporic writings, where their sense of displacement, their efforts at negotiating new culture, retaining the old one, creating something new in the process, their identity crisis, their trauma were highlighted. Migration to the first world was seen as an essential condition of the colonies. Consequently, migration to other colonial countries, which were part of the empire, and the postcolonial migration to the first world were equated and analyzed despite some scholars arguing against such tendencies highlighting the myriad waves of migration, different reasons and consequences of such migration.¹ This tendency continues even today in our academics, ignoring the problems of constituting the nation-state and the accompanying problems in the “liberated” colonies and the violence that the nation-state itself has unleashed on specific communities. The “trauma” of the people, who did not migrate in the aftermath of the formation of the nation-state was

¹ The discussions in the IACLALS conferences in late 1990s and also in its email groups, especially the warning from scholars such as Meenakshi Mukherjee and Harish Trivedi can be recalled here.

drowned in the upbeat of the “trauma” of the people who migrated to the first world countries in the academia and literary world. People who constantly lived as minorities in a nation-state did not get reflected in our “literature” or our “academic writing on literature”; partition and migration gained currency over these issues. Similarly, when the younger generation migrated to the first world, the older generation had to live in the third world countries without the emotional support of their offspring. Though now, with new technology, they can be in touch with each other on a day-to-day basis, and the migrated younger generation does financially support the older generation. It has not mitigated the trauma of living alone in their big houses or specific enclaves in Indian global-metropolitan cities.² The impact of the migration on the family members who did/could not migrate needs to be understood, as the subjectivities that they are increasingly occupying as a consequence and its consequences for the nation-state and the modern fabric that holds it together is yet to be analyzed.

Apart from the metaphorical usage of the terms, translation and migration, the kind of work that has happened in the field, which is more fruitful and socio-historical, is keeping these two phenomena distinct and separate. Trying to understand the interconnectedness of the two is a pivotal task. Many have explored the role the translation can play or has played in fostering the dialogue between migrants, the guests, and the

² Though they may not accept it as a trauma and might claim that they are happy that their children and grandchildren are doing well in the first world countries; and may even occasionally boast of visiting these countries to take care of the new-born, grand children or even just as visitors. This has enhanced their prestige among the relatives and financially they are well-off too. As they are beneficiaries of the migration of their children, they don't complain about it; but they do complain about the larger changes that are being wrought on the nation-state and many of them have become votaries of the fundamentalist discourses that are in circulation as an opposition to the changes that the force, named as globalization, is creating.

hosts in a positive way (Vidal, Ricarda. & Perteghella, Manuela 2018; Inghilleri, Moira 2017, the first two chapters). The role translation plays in assimilating the migrants to the host culture and the dialogue necessary for that between the two is also a subject of discussion in Inghillieri, Moira 2021 too.

Siri Nergaard, while talking about the nexus between industrialization and mobility of people in the context of globalization, says that the newer generation is constantly ready to live in flux. She calls it living in translation (Nergaard 2021:146-160). Paola Gentile, while noting the impetus to migration in the context of globalization, talks about the development in interpretation (both conference interpretation and public service interpretation); this line of argument looks at the impact of migration on translation/interpretation. It also acknowledges that interpretation is thriving not only in the first world/European context but also in Arab countries and China and calls for a comparative analysis of the situation (Gentile 2021:161-175).

The role played by activists/translators/legal advisors in the context of immigration and seeking asylum is well explored through the personal narrative/experience in Fani, Aria (2020). There are studies which have looked at the issues of food and gender in the translation of refugees/immigrant narratives to argue for a feminist translation framework as part of activism in translation (Cantelli, Veruska.; and Shringarpure, Bhakti 2020). There are also issues of labourers, sex workers, and female labourers being explored in migration/globalization and translation (Chapter 3 of Inghilleri, Moira 2017:69-107). The issue of trafficking is also explored in this body of literature. The European Union, perceiving migration into Europe as a “crisis”, has also commissioned studies exploring the issues related to translation and migration in the 21st century

(<https://termcoord.eu/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Mariani-PhD-Project-2017.pdf>). The relationship between self-translation and immigrant literature is also explored, as the immigrant writers often have to resort to it (Gjurčinova 2013). The rise of translanguaging due to migration and the problem of translation and translanguaging is also addressed. As the translanguaging text is already in the in-between-ness, at the intersection of borders/cultures, how do we translate it into another language, as we usually understand translation as an act of crossing the border/culture, is the question that is raised here.

The Journal *Translation Studies* created a discussion forum on the topic way back in 2012, in which Loredana Polezzi posed the issues related to it (Polezzi 2012:345-368), and there were quite a few responses to it in the same issue and in the following issues, where the discussion took place on Migrants as objects and subjects of translation, translation as self-translation, bio-politics of languages to the status of Translation Studies and negative/positive models of translation. The interconnectedness between translation, migration and memory is explored in a recent publication (Radstone & Wilson, Rita 2020).

There are hardly any studies which cover migration in a premodern era. Most of the studies discussed so far focus on the modern context of migration, immigration and globalization. One such attempt is Moatti, Claudia (2006)³ where translation and migration are discussed in the context of the Roman Empire. This article by exploring the interrelationship among translation, migration and communication (this third aspect means- a movement of written documents) calls it a movement and further argues that

³ Though the article was published in 2006, it was based on the talk that she delivered in 2002 at University of Southern California.

this movement “changes the role of the state as well as relations between individual and states, augments the use of writing in society, transforms identities, and gives impulse to internal and external regulations” (Moatti 2006:109). I do concur with the writer when she says that the conception of ancient societies as face-to-face societies by academics tended to ignore issues such as translation, migration and communication in them, studying ancient societies in a static way (Moatti 2006:109).

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In the Indian context, though we have written from the Buddhist period just before the beginning of the Christian era, they are mainly in rock edicts/inscriptions followed by copper inscriptions. Tapping the inscriptional sources to understand translation is yet to take place in a significant way in the Indian context. This section looks at the concept of migration and its relation to translation in the Kannada literary context in a sketchy way to tease out the issues for further research.

Writing in the present Kannada speaking regions dates back to the Ashokan period, with Buddhist inscriptions in Karnataka mainly on the eastern front. The Buddhist inscriptions are variously dated from the 3rd century B.C. to the 3rd Century A.D. and generally are considered the heydays of the Buddhist era in present-day Karnataka. However, there is archaeological evidence of its existence even in the latter days. The later period is considered a waning era. After the Ashokan period,, we also find the Buddhist inscriptions in other parts of Karnataka today. As many of these are in Brahmi script and the language being Pali, which was not the spoken language of the region then, it is assumed that the messengers of Buddhism and the scripters, who were instrumental in creating these rock/stone inscriptions have come from elsewhere or must have been wandering ascetics/workers who travelled along the

line of Buddhist centres. The patrons of such inscriptions might have been the local rulers/residents/wandering merchants but the workers and the scripters might have been from elsewhere, who possessed the necessary knowledge of the language and the work of sculpting (Settar 2019). Interestingly one of the scribes sent by Ashoka, who was ruling from Pataliputra, was Chapada and he hailed from Gandhara, in present-day Afghanistan (Settar 2019:1). So, wandering ascetics and skilled workers were responsible for the appearance of writing between the 3rd century B.C. to 3rd century A.D.

At the dawn of the Christian era, we find another group migrating to Karnataka, who made their mainstay at Shravanabelagola. This group was led by Chandragupta Maurya and the Jaina monk Bhdrabahu (Long 2009:59-60). Historians have different versions as to why they migrated to the South: one popular version is that there was a big famine in the north, which pushed them to the south. Even the identity of the Chandragupta Maurya is also debated quite extensively. After their entry into the south, we have evidences to suggest that the Jain monks and their monasteries were thriving in what we today call northern Karnataka. This community preserved its narratives/ theological discussions in oral form (in Prakrit) at the beginning of the first millennium. Only in the latter part of the millennium do we see textual production in Prakrit (different varieties), Sanskrit, Kannada, and Tamil. Though the migration happened at the beginning of the first millennium it doesn't give rise to translations until the first millennium. I have elsewhere argued that Shravanabelagola and other Jain monasteries became centres of multilingual production of Jaina texts in Sanskrit, Prakrit and Kannada. We find many bilingual writers who wrote both in Sanskrit and Kannada (Tharakeshwar 2006). Migration did not immediately impact the translation practices of textual production practices

(including inscriptional carvings). The migration took several centuries to get reflected in the discursive arena in bi/multilingual writers/translators. In a way, this turn is a shift from orality to writing. Sanskrit had become the language of the court and had gained ascendancy as well as visibility; languages like Kannada were also creating a cosmopolitan vernacular (Pollock 1998). Scholars like Pollock credit the formation of the state and the creation of the cosmopolitan vernacular sphere as responsible for the rise of Kannada literature at the end of the first millennium. It might not have anything to do with the migration of Jaina monks at the beginning of the millennium. Because there is a time lag between the migration and the multilingual textual production/translations, which mark the beginning of written literature in Kannada.

The Vaidik traditions and the textual production in Kannada have nothing to do with each other in the first millennium, though Vaidik traditions were present after the 3rd century A.D.⁴ Textual production and translation by the followers of Vaidik tradition/s began later in the second millennium. Nevertheless, Vaidik presence is felt in inscriptional discourse from the 3rd century A.D. onwards. If we consider Vyasa's *Mahabharatha* as being part of Vaidik tradition, the first translation of it into Kannada was carried out by Pampa, a Jaina poet in the 10th century, and he considered it a Loukika text (of this world, secular text) (Tharakeshwar 2005).

Nevertheless, translations in the early part of the first millennium with these spiritual/religious migrations into what

⁴ Some scholars looking at the inscriptional and also archaeological evidence suggest that the Brahmins/Vaidik followers migrated to Karnataka after 3rd century A.D., while the older scholars suggest that they were present earlier but had weakened and got revived later on in the 2nd millennium.

we today call Kannada speaking regions get reflected mainly in inscriptional literature, mainly as affairs of State and trade. During this period, Kannada, from the 4th century onwards, becomes the language of inscription following Prakrit/Pali and Sanskrit. We also find several bilingual and multilingual inscriptions, sometimes, they are translations of the same message in different languages, and sometimes different parts of the texts are in different languages. This continues well into the 18th century. This needs detailed study further.

At the turn of the second millennium, we also find other spiritual traditions making their presence felt in Karnataka such as Natha, Pashupatha, Lakulashaiva, Kalamukha, Siddha cults, etc. Recent discussions have also shown the presence of Ajivika sects in Karnataka. But the main discursive literature is available for what is called the Sharana movement in the form of the vachana literature from the 12th century onwards. Though vachanas were oral, they were also probably textualized in the 12th century though none of those texts is available; but the collections in the later centuries are identified and available. The Veerashaiva/Sharana movement, though brief for about 20 years, is said to have attracted people from different regions such as Kashmir, Saurashtra, Maharashtra, Kerala etc. into a tiny town in present-day Bidar district of Karnataka called Kalyana. What did these people bring in with them to the movement, and how could these people compose vachanas in Kannada in such a short period, are the issues that need attention and are to be answered if material evidence is available to that end.

Later we also find Dasa Sahitya, which was Vaishnava literature in a way opposed to Vachanas (Veera) Shaiva in nature. These various spiritual practices suggest that many of these practices/traditions that entered Karnataka and tried to find a place here competed with each other. They borrowed

from each other in the process of finishing the other off/digesting it. Some of the discursive narrative strategies are similar to these traditions (Hawley 2015).⁵ Despite the competition between these various sects/practices, they seem to have fashioned a language of the relationship between an individual and the god, sometimes creating a community through their shared practices. If the competition and dialogue between these practices/sects can be seen as translation; then again, the ascetic wanderers and itinerant saints make this possible. If these ascetic itinerant preachers/ singers/ performers can be conceived as migration, then we have a rich vernacular corpus for further research. Here it is not migration that we find; there might be a few of such kind too, but itinerant wandering ascetics who interact with others where they temporarily halt become the instruments of confluences, and divergences throughout some time.

During this time, we also find that both Veerashaiva and Dasa literature had more emotional connections with mainly Tamil and Telugu literature of the same *sampradaya* but also with Marathi; which we can conceptualize as translations, though there are actual translations also during this period among these south Indian major languages. If it was not textual translations, motifs, narratives with deviations/ domestication/ localization, discursive frameworks, and narrative tropes were in abundance in this period. These are mainly possible because of these itinerant saints, singers, pilgrims, and performers. We also find during this period reference to migrant communities in the service of performances; they were identified by their profession such as Bahuroopi (Multiple personas), Hagaluvesha (Day-costume) etc. Until recently, we could also

⁵ In fact Hawley explores the interconnectedness between these various traditions/sects/practices around Shaiva and Vaishnava traditions as constituting the idea of India; of course he is following many of the colonial/ nationalist scholars/ thinkers here, through their shared heritage.

find individual singers/troupes who could sing epic-length narratives in multiple languages, such as Daroji Eramma⁶, over several nights just based on their creativity/translation ability and memory. All these performative traditions, some of which are still alive, but are on the vane, need to be studied to understand the role of migration and translation in the oral/performative traditions across languages.

Another vital intervention which is not much documented here is the migration of Persian people into Deccan and the concomitant changes that it brings in. Though with the Mughal and pre-Mughal Delhi Sultanate trying to bring South India under its control, we do have the movement of military troupes and Sufis in the South, it might not have had a long-lasting impact the way the Bahmani kingdom had on Deccan from the mid 14th century. Even Persian, the language of the court during the Tughlaq period, was introduced in the Deccan plateau; the Delhi Sultanate's possession of Deccan was not permanent as the caretakers used to declare independence periodically. The Bahmani kingdom also arose similarly (Sherwani 1946) and is characterized by historians as a Persianate empire. Later in the 16th century, this Bahmani kingdom splintered into Deccan Sultanate and then was solely governed by Asafjahis from Hyderabad. Hindavi, the earlier form of Hindustani/Urdu/Hindi, was introduced to the Deccan when the capital was shifted from Delhi to Devagiri/

⁶ Eeramma, who belongs to a Burrakatha performing community, could easily narrate tens of epic length narratives in both Kannada and Telugu. She was awarded honorary doctorate from Kannada University-Hampi for being the repository of so many oral epics, some of which are recorded, transcribed and published. There are many other such performers/singers/repositories in the border districts of what we today call as Karnataka, Andhra and Telangana. Another living performer is Shankamma Mahadevappa from Chittapur of Gulbarga District in Karnataka, who was awarded the Rajyotsava Prashasti from Government of Karnataka.

Daulatabad by Tughlaq. It necessitated a large-scale migration of officials and the army. But the intermingling of this army language with Marathi, Telugu and Kannada, coupled with massive recruitment into the army of people from Persia, Turkey etc., created a new form of language called Deccani. With the establishment of the Bahmani kingdom, this new language got patronage and became a literary language. The Sufis also adopted this language to reach out to the people rather than using Persian. Thus, both in and outside of the court, we have Deccani as a literary language. By the 15th century, we witness texts like *Kadam Rao Padam Rao* a masnavi of 4,000 lines in Deccani written by Fakruddin Nizami in Bidar. Later in the 16th century, we have Adil Shahi II of Bijapur writing *Kitaba-a-Navras*, where the influence of Sanskritic poetic tradition could be seen in Deccani writing. There were a lot of translations/retellings from Persian into Deccani too during this period (Sharma 2020:401-420 for a fuller account of it, for mobility, migration and its impact on art/culture, see Overton ed., 2020). There was also much Persian literature written in this region during the period (see, Devare T. N. 2018, chapter 7 talks about the influence of Persian on Deccani and Marathi). Thus, this period was vibrant in terms of Persian migration and North Indian military language culture migrating to Deccan/South; its impact on the literature, apart from Deccani, of the other languages such as Marathi, Kannada and Telugu need to be studied further. Especially with regard to what we today call oral Tatvapadas which have been brought to print in 32 volumes in Kannada. A majority of them are from the region formerly ruled by Bahamanis, Adilshahis and Asafjahis and now called Hyderabad Karnataka/Kalyana Karnataka. The interaction between Sufi ideas and the Tatvapadas (which also interestingly could claim Vachana heritage and the heritage of

Swaravachanas of the Post-Basava period) is something that needs to be studied.

The fall of the Adilshahis of Bijapur was caused by the Portuguese with the help of the Vijayanagara kingdom. The phenomenon brought the Portuguese to power in Goa in the first decades of the 16th century. This is a noteworthy event as it marks the entry of the Europeans into Kannada speaking areas. Whether we should call it migration or not is a debatable issue. They brought the printing press to the region; there are reports claiming that they worked on Canarese (the name of the Kannada language given to it by them) and printed many books. But not much information is available on it. We had to wait for William Carey to arrive at Serampore near Kolkata in the late 18th and early 20th century for Kannada to get into print. Through the effort of Basel Missionaries, many old Kannada texts from Palm-leaf manuscripts were brought into print around the mid-19th century onwards.

Many of the Europeans came here to carry out missionary activities or administrative activities, but many of them lived here for a significant part of their life, though sometimes they were on the move; some of them picked up Indian languages and rendered the compositions of texts as well as translations into English of Indian language texts/oral literature. The missionaries associated with Basel Missionaries are a case in point, such as Rev. Ferdinand Kittel and Rev. Hermann Friedrich Moegling. This colonial context induced migration for missionary or administrative purposes did leave a long-lasting impact on the translation scene in the 19th century, which was carried forward by the native elites later on. The translation of biblical literature into Indian languages, translation of Indian language literature (both oral as well as from palm-leaf based texts), translation of historical sources, and anthropological documents, though well documented in

various languages and analyzed extensively from the perspective of postcolonial theory is not seen from the lens of the migration and translation (Tharakeshwar 2003). The only exception I could find is Markovits, Claude.; Pouchepadass, Jacques.; and Subrahmanyam, Sanjay (eds.), 2003. There is a discussion related to the movement of ideas, things/goods and people under the rubric of Society and Circulation between 1750 to 1950, or what they would call as Early Modern period, which is essentially the encounter between South Asian cultures and European cultures from an interdisciplinary historical perspective.

The Modern Period

As a consequence of the entry of Europeans into Kannada speaking regions and the introduction of the English system of Education, new native elite was created. This native elite was the one that spearheaded the translation of European/British literature into Kannada. As a consequence of English education and colonialism, we also see this native elite inaugurating Modern Kannada literature by translating new genres such as lyrics, novels, Short stories, drama (mainly of the drawing-room variety and historical plays, but also based on Puranic tales), sonnet, autobiography, etc. This was also the time when the educated native elite saw large-scale migration to new territories looking for new administrative/teaching jobs. The establishment of institutions of modern governance in Princely states and colonial metropolis drew this educated elite section into their fold. In Mysore, we see a large-scale migration of educated Tamils, which triggered a Mysore movement for Mysoreans at the end of the 19th century. However, soon, by the 1910s, we saw many of these migrated Tamilians switching to Kannada, and some of them went on to become prominent writers in Kannada (for example, Masti Venkatesh Iyengar). Apart from engaging in translations from English, some of

these people have also translated religious literature from their mother tongue into the language of the land of their migration.

Similarly, Hyderabad also witnessed the migration of large scale educated Kannadigas from the regions ruled by the Nizam into Hyderabad for jobs. Hyderabad was a multilingual city with Deccani as the spoken language, Urdu as the language of instructions with a sizable population speaking Kannada, Telugu, Marathi. The Kannadigas organized themselves too with Karnataka Sahitya Mandira being formed in 1936 and also undertaking the publication of books. Some of the second/third generation migrants to Hyderabad city are now translating between two languages.

Higher education itself was a cause of temporary migration during that period as people went to Madras, Bombay, and Pune for higher studies before the establishment of Mysore University in Mysore princely state. Even after the establishment of Mysore University in 1914, we see that the Kannada speaking regions adjoining these cities drew a lot of young educated people coming for higher studies. Some of these people would get absorbed, turning into permanent migrants; some would go back and become vehicles of change in their native places. The autobiographies and autobiographical jottings of many of the early modern Kannada writers document this movement and they are being a vehicle of modernity in literature. Even the much-celebrated engineer M. Visvesvaraya, went to various foreign countries as part of his work such as Russia, Japan, the United States, and Egypt, and came back to work in Mysore, and worked in various other places in colonial/princely India. His writings and works need to be looked at from the point of view of his travels abroad and within India. He was the Diwan of Princely Mysore and is remembered fondly for it. Thus, the link between fashioning modernity, anti-colonial nationalism and

also linguistic nationalism in Mysore needs to be looked at through these travels, though they may not be strictly seen as migration, within India as well as outside.⁷ Though they might not have anything to do with textual translations, such travels certainly played a role in translating discourses and non-discursive elements.

If we look at the emergence of nationalist literature in Kannada there seem to be two main sources, viz., Marathi and Bengali. Marathi was the dominant language in what we today call North Karnataka/ Mumbai Karnataka. Then it was Southern Maratha which was a part of the Bombay presidency, and contiguous with and adjoining the Kannada region. We had a lot of movement during the colonial period across linguistic zones but it was a single administrative unit. It was not surprising to see translations from Marathi into Kannada in the early 20th century and even competing translations⁸ from English into Kannada. Though Bengali was not a contiguous language, still from the late 19th century, we find many translations into Kannada from that language; how did this happen? Quite a number of translators learnt Bengali to translate due to the pull of the new literature in Bengali at that point in time. Though it has nothing to do with migration in a sociological sense, metaphorically, it does. How we understand these issues is the question for further research.

The vibrant translation practices between contiguous languages in India in the precolonial period underwent a sea change in the modern context. In the modern context, we hardly find that kind of interaction with the neighbouring languages. The few translators from neighbouring languages

⁷ For the discussion of Mysore Modernity see Nair, 2011 and Gowda, 2007.

⁸ What I mean by competing translations here is just because a text is translated into Marathi, there is a desire to see that the text be translated into Kannada as well.

into Kannada are mainly those who hail from the border areas, the twilight zone. One can see that many of our translators from Marathi into Kannada today are located in Belgaum and adjoining districts; translators from Malayalam are in Kasaragod or Mangalore region. Because a large number of districts share a border with Telugu speaking regions. We find translators from Telugu into Kannada hailing from Raichur, Bellary, Tumkur, and Kolar districts. There are very few migrants who have newly learnt the language in contemporary times and taken up the translation in a major way. As Hindi and Urdu have become a kind of non-territorial pan Indian languages replacing Sanskrit, Prakrit, and Persian in today's context, it is interesting to see, where the translators from these languages into Kannada are hailing from or how they are initiated into translation.

Individual migration to various European countries and the United States, Australia, and Arab regions has increased in contemporary times, but we hardly find this migration giving rise to translators between those languages and Kannada. Even today, most of the translations from non-English languages of the world into Kannada happen through English translation. We have very few direct translations from non-English and non-Indian languages. Though the number of Indians learning foreign languages is increasing as the number of institutions and colleges/schools offering it is also increasing, many of these teachers themselves are Indian language speakers, but they are not visibly taking to translation in a significant way. But some of these are in interpretation and business translation, working either part-time for Government or part-time/ full time for MNCs. Some of them travel extensively into these nations/linguistic regions, but literary or cultural translations are hardly seen.

The only exception was the translation of Russian literature and discursive texts. Some of the scholars who learnt Russian were employed by publishers such as Raduga, Mir, and Progressive publishers, so we can see direct translations from Russian into Kannada. I have no data about translations from Kannada into Russian, if any, arisen from such institutional practices. Transnational migration is increasing, but its impact on translation is not visible in the Kannada Translation scenario.

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The sketchy mapping of the relationship between translation and migration in the Kannada context in the previous section calls for further research in terms of analysis that needs to be carried out and in terms of the primary data available for such analysis. It also calls for rethinking some of the conceptual terminologies that we need to employ to understand the relationship between translation and migration. Here, I try to indicate some of these issues for further discussion.

As we have seen, the word migrants is contingent on the time factor. If the Jains who came around the beginning of the Christian era into Kannada speaking regions were migrants, can we see them as migrants even after nearly 900 to 1000 years is the question that we need to ponder over. What factors influence the cessation or continuation of the status of a migrant is worth exploring in this context? Can it be measured in terms of generations? What if each generation is a migrant one? What about the families that don't reside in the same geographical location but meet regularly? What if one is not a migrant but has accepted the tenets of a spiritual /religious practice of a group which migrated hundreds of years ago? Would the popular majoritarian memory look at such people/persons still as a migrant? Is the role of memory in the measurement of assimilation/distinction, in being objective or

subjective, conditioned by several ideological and political factors?

Should we use migration as an umbrella term and/or look at the various categories such as migration, immigration, itinerant cultures, nomadic cultures, semi-nomadic cultures, seasonal migration, educational migration, travel for leisure, travel for business, and travel for work separately? Or do we need to use a more generic word as an umbrella term? The mass scale migration that we have witnessed in the west might not be identifiable here, or we do not have data about it. We have individual aspirational migrations, itinerant people, nomadic communities, seasonal migrations and semi-nomadic communities. People who are converted are also seen as migrants because they have embraced a faith migrated from elsewhere. In such a case, what generic term is appropriate to interrogate such circulation of people and its cultural impact on translation?

The inscriptional evidence related to migration, literary evidence, linguistic evidence, and pieces of evidence based on the memories of the communities themselves are not in place for us to conduct the analysis; we need to put them together in each Indian language at the language level as well as collectively to identify the region of migration/circulation/movement. We also do not have the data about translation itself, despite our efforts in the field of the history of translation in India/Indian languages in terms of full-length studies and databases. When it comes to pre-modern/pre-colonial translation practices, we do not have a commonly accepted definition of a translation to see what construes translation or non-translation. What do we do with multi-lingual/ bi-lingual texts, with commentary literature in the same language or different languages? What do we do with oral versions in different languages, as they cannot be dated

and seen as the source text and target texts unambiguously? Similarly, in the age of digital and multimedia content production, such as OTT platforms offering sub-titles and dubbed versions of different films where the information regarding the translation practices is not in the public domain or not readily available, how do we proceed are some of the issues one has to think through in this area of research. I am assuming that some of the issues I am raising here in the context of Kannada are applicable to most of the Indian languages in general. Still, there could be a completely new set of issues related to languages of the nomadic communities, oral cultures and translation.

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