

TAPROOTING TRANSLATION: REFLECTIONS ON THE EPISTEMOLOGY OF TRANSLATION

P.P Giridhar
Associate Professor
Central Institute of Indian Languages
Mysuru, India

Whatever is intelligible is translatable. Whatever is intelligible is by definition subject to externalisation, and whatever is subject to externalisation is by definition subject to translation.

PREFACE

The paper constitutes a prolegomena, a framework, or a scaffolding for a theoretical understructure of the phenomenon of translation, seeking to articulate what it is and what it is not, what it could be and what it could not possibly be. In its internal weave, translation is a complex, rich, and varied phenomenon, and in its external function, it is a life-giving, life-affirming, life-nourishing, bridge-building, bridge-repairing, barrier-breaching, breach-filling globalising, synergizing humanising exercise. Much like language itself, which, in its internal architectonics, is such a rigorously elegantly rule-governed, complex, rich, varied, thought-facilitating and mental-world creating enterprise and in its external function, is such a life-giving, life-creating, light-creating, light-giving, knowledge-building and -giving, civilization-building, evolutionary enlightenment-targeting, Self-building socially synergising exercise. I am not sure if translation is best seen as a cluster concept, or that the definitional thrust of translation should be an open one. One needs to do some sorting, taxonomising and modularising, in case and after it is accepted as an open-ended cluster. The present exposition will claim that it is necessary to pin down things in any credible academic discipline before it endeavours to elucidate the place translation has in the history of ideas. There is doubtless some epistemic muck attached to translation at present in regard to how it relates to language, bearing on questions of translatability and untranslatability, and equally importantly, on how it is conceived as an academic discipline. One characterisation of this muck in relation to literary translation is 'prescriptive anti-essentialism'. Except for a few people like the redoubtable Wittgenstein who made sublime sense while taking about language, quite a few other non-linguists (e.g Derrida, Tejaswini Niranjana, Quine, Steiner, Eco and some others) have been remarkably off-target in what they think about language. They have either overshoot the target or missed it by nearly a mile. It is necessary in the interest of the pursuit of truth to outlast, and move beyond, them. Some hint of the untenability of such naive and theoretically uninformed postures about the nature of language and the nature of the

phenomenon of translation is beginning to be available in the literature in the form of Clifford (1997), Giridhar (2005) and Singh (2004) inter alia. One such miscued shot (by Quine) has been successfully caught, among others, by Dasgupta (1989). On the positive side, of course, one needs to talk of how and why the place of translation is secure in the history of ideas, how it is such a powerful, life-giving, life-nourishing act and to explore how -- while it creates conditions for globalisation -- it pulls the lid off, sustains and fosters the important differences that mask the essential equally important grounding sameness of us as human beings. Without assuming an air of completeness or finality, the present paper will attempt to accomplish this, in terms of examining the sites of literary translation and expository knowledge-translation. If poetry is untranslatable, we need to see why. We need to elucidate the dynamics, mechanics and the source of the element of 'unself-identity' that inheres in the transcendent original. One reason why poetry is untranslatable is that while being transcendental, the original is arguably not self-identical (Sarukkai 2001). As we argue, it is difficult however to see how discursive texts are not self-identical. An automobile manual, for instance. If, as we argue, all intelligibility is necessarily subject to translation, then whatever is intelligible including poetry must be translatable. Is it the case that intelligibility works at cross purposes with a text being not self-identical, with the nonself-identity of these texts? In any case we need a theory of semantic competence/performance, a theory that is diacritical of a principled dichotomy between grammatically determined meaning and extragrammatically determined meaning, something that Chomsky failed to do with any success (Cf Katz 1980). To deny the existence of extragrammatically determined meaning may be presumptuous. We are nowhere near a theory or explanation of such extragrammatically designed worlds in literary cosmoses despite a long hoary bequest in poetics that man has been heir to. One needs such a theory partly to explain the fact that (literary) originals are not absolutely self-identical, an insight first noticed by Benjamin (1923).

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In some of its sundry areas, translation as a phenomenon has not been perspectivised as well as it could or should have been. This paper will attempt to elucidate and objectively correlativise this intuition in some of its ramified facets and phases. It will in particular

- clear away some cognitive clutter, some epistemic muck that attaches to translation in its interface with language.
- address the triangular space between man, translation and culture.
- try in a less definitive, less complete, more ruminative way to technicalise or cerebralise the distinction between discursive-discourse translation and human-discourse translation, between knowledge-translation and literary translation, an important consequence of which is that the site is thrown open for a multiplicity of translations in the one and not in the other. This is prior to elucidating other ramified consequences that this distinction could lead to, hazarding the possible lines and contours of the site of literary translation, the meeting ground of two sociocultural ethos in the light of what has transpired on the site i.e. what mediative negotiative appropriative, expropriative conflictive osmotic struggles, battles, skirmishes, blood transfusions, and exchanges have taken place on the site.

2.0 THE DEFINITIONAL IMPULSE

One needs to remember that when one is talking about translation, the analysis definitely proceeds from language. There is no translating the blank page, the absence of the linguistic word, is there? On the other hand, one could obviously talk about translation without talking about language at all. In a word, we can't translate the blank page i.e. the absence of language: we need language although we needn't talk about language while discoursing about translation! We need language to talk about non-language as translated. This is a situation where one needs x although x need never be the topic of discourse, although x is possibly considered not worthy of attention. Why do we need x? We need it for us to be able to talk about non-x made possible by x. Incidentally, the very fact that one could talk about nonx without talking about x in any sense, the x that in fact carries non-x, is an eloquent comment on the separability of x and non-x. This important aspect of the language-nonlanguage interface we will

have occasion to discuss as we progress below.

2.1 When one says 'every translation is a translation of a translation of a translation' or when one says 'I am a translated being' or '(original) creative literature is also translation', or "If translators are readers of the source text that they translate, scientists are readers of the 'book of nature' which they then translate." (the last by Sarukkai (2001) taking the cake), one is talking of a sense of 'translation' which is different from the sense one means usually when one talks, let's say, of the Kannada translation of Macbeth or the Hopi translation of the novel 'A Hundred Years of Solitude'. The claim is that while translation could be a cluster concept across cultures, for comments on which see below, in an academic discipline, notions must have some definably technical charge. The argument is that modularity is the best way to pursue knowledge unless there is proof to the contrary. There is something seriously wrong if we are to say in regard to

1. Tom and Benjamin are translated beings.

and

2. Tom and Benjamin have translated Uncle Tom's Cabin into Gikuyu.

the meaning of the lexeme 'translate' is the same because of what have been called 'family resemblances'. One needs to examine the two uses separately, in a modular fashion before arriving at a decision. There are any number of obvious differences between the two. For starters, Tom and Benjamin in sentence 1 may be congenital deaf-mutes, whereas that can't be the case in sentence 2. Which is to say language is necessarily involved in the latter while it need not be in the former. What the translation is from and into is not clear in (1), while it is in (2). Such differences are solid enough to actualise a difference in kind.

Notice that the above mix-up has nothing to do with culture. What follows is a discussion of translation as it is culturally coloured and configured. Prima facie it is less of a muddle if TS allows culturally configured differences in the definition of translation. The submission even here however is that the grounds for saying that the differences that do exist between cultures as regards how they view translation are not as irreducible as they appear, are not as irreducible as the Tourian definition of translation of "any target language text which is presented or regarded as such

within the target system itself, on whatever grounds” (Toury 1982) suggests. I mean it is difficult to conceive for example an ethos which considers interlinguistic transmission of an automobile manual as anything other than transmission of bare information. At the least one of the possibilities of interlinguistic translation of an automobile manual for instance must be the culture-neutral transfer of bare denotative information: cognitive translation or translation of what has been called ‘cognitive texts’, discursive texts as opposed to human texts, is clearly on a completely different footing. Otherwise the dissemination, secularisation and democratisation of knowledge, which are universally acknowledged to be among the functions of translation, which in fact give translation its place in the history of ideas, would be empirically vacuous claims. There is something seriously wrong if a translated legal document is allowed to be coloured by cultural intervention, allowed to be manipulated by agendas except solely in pursuit of the eternal human values of freedom, equity, justice. Or if a non-communal literary piece is given a communal colour in translation. Or a non-carnal piece is carnalised. The Igbo word for translation means ‘deconstruct and narrate’. I would be surprised if the Igbo translation of a manual on geriatric care would mean deconstruct it and rewrite it the way one wants. This can not be. And should the internationalisation of translation studies, one wonders, mean ‘cultural self-definition’ and ‘self-representation’ of this kind. My submission is that there is the phenomenon of interlinguistic transmission of embodied linguistic texts and human groups may have their own valid culturally configured definitions, definitions, as Tymzscoko (2005) avers, that allow various cultures to identify factors that enter into their decisions to identify certain phenomena as translations and reject others as not translations, the types of correlations there are between these identifications and other cultural processes and products, the correlations there are between such determinations and social conditions, and the like. There could be mode 1 of interlinguistic transmission, mode2, mode 3, mode 4 and so on within the culture. If the processes and products these modes entail are perceptibly different, then there is no meaning in saying there is only one concept called ‘translation’ and we have a cluster definition of this concept so as to accomodate how every human ethos views it. I am, in other words, submitting that for each of these modes that have their own definably obvious diacritics, the definitional impulse must mean closure.

There are two things:

- a. the noncultural mix up and
- b. the cultural mix up

In the first of the above, the definitional route must meet a dead-end for the various senses of the word ‘translate’ discussed above, as exemplified in utterances like

- a. I am a translated being.
- b. Life is a translation.
- c. Original writing is a translation.
- d. I have translated my weaknesses into strengths.
- e. He couldn’t translate his dreams into reality.
- f. I have translated music into painting.
- g. Scientists read the ‘book of nature’ and then translate it.
- h. My wife is my translation.
- i. All my kids are faithful translations of me.
- j. All my friends are my translations of my ideas.
- k. I have translated my talent into cash.
- l. The world is a translation of God by God.
- m. Will the turn-out at the rally translate into votes?
- n. Mona has translated Moby Dick into Moyon Naga.
- o. We should help translate scientific and technological advancements into innovative and affordable technologies and health solutions

(This is the goal of the Translational Health Science and Techonology Institute (THSTI) of the Dept of Biotechnology of the Government of India)

At the least it must mean closure for the sense in n) above as against the rest viz a) to m)and o). In the second namely the cultural mix-up, each of the modes of interlinguistic transmission viz, translation, adaptation, original writing, paraphrase, summary, inspired original creation, intersemiotic transmission must mean closure across cultures. This tack is what would facilitate epistemology. Culture x has this mode or modes of interlinguistic transmission and culture y has the other mode or modes and so on. But these modes are defined cross-culturally. The take in a culture that views x as translation and y as nontranslation while there is a culture that views the

same x as nontranslation and the same y as translation is suspect in as much as its epistemological spin-offs are suspect. In illustrative terms, what does it mean to say the concept of translation in India meant 'rewriting' and this view is different from the Western view?

What it means epistemologically is that there can't be any across-the-board examination of this phenomenon called translation simply because because of internal cultural processes, what is called translation in culture x is not considered translation in culture y. What is 'adaptation' for you is 'translation' for me and what is 'translation' for you is 'rewriting' for me and what is 'transcreation' for you is 'original creation' for me, what is 'translation' for me is 'original creation' for you, what is 'inspired creation' for me is 'translation' for you and so on. Then we could only have cultural-internal investigation into a muddle called 'translation'. If everything is translation, nothing is translation. Everything about translation is then culture-determined, the sociology, the ontology, the philosophy, the phenomenology, the politics, the neurophysiology, the linguistics etc. of translation. One wonders if this is okay. If this reveals deep insights into how a culture organizes itself, it could make sense. Otherwise, a blanket culture-specificity of the phenomenon of translation is suspect as this piece has repeatedly tried to assert. This needs looking into. It is not that simple.

It must be a culture-free axiom of translation qua phenomenon for example that translation is a 'decisional act of ethical responsibility', as indeed are all products of human consciousness. The resemblances in sentences (1) and (2) above and sentences (3) and (4) below

3. His words never translate into action
4. I translated my weaknesses into strengths

are to be sure not fortuitous at some level of the etymology and history of the word 'translation', but they belong for sure to different orders, to different planes of existence. So that to consider them manifestations of the same underlying phenomenon would lead us up and astray upon an epistemological and ontological garden path.

2.2 MISCONSTRUALS

There are numerous misconceptions and misconstruals because people turn a blind eye to the aspect of translation that has to do with language.

(My commentary on these would have a reining-in effect on the implications of centrifugality, nonstability and evanescence that the fact that the transcendent original is not self-identical implies). This is despite a Catford or a Nida or a Roger Bell if you will, who have done significant work on what may be called the 'Linguistics of Translation'. Even Catford is guilty of nontruisms: for example, he claims that a sentence in language x has a meaning that belongs uniquely to language x. This is not true or cannot be true, pace what postmodernists and other literary cognoscenti think. It is much like saying x has a hand or a leg which is uniquely different from the rest of humankind.

Suppose there is a set of objects, say, a, b and c, pre-systematically and pre-analytically unrelated, but found empirically to have the following characteristics:

- i. a, b and c have the properties x, y and z.
- ii. a has the feature d.
- iii. b has the feature e.
- iv. c has the feature f.
- v. neither a nor b nor c has, or, more importantly, can have the feature g

The empirical fact mentioned at v above leads to the conclusion that a, b and c are the same at an important level. They belong to the same class existentially, ontologically and epistemologically. They share the same ontology at an important and deep level of their existence, although their manifest superficial shapes may be different.

a, b and c are the class of human languages.

This fact allows us to make a number of deductive essentialist statements about human languages. Deductively speaking, certain word orders are not possible and certain rules are not possible, there being an existent and a non-existent core to language that is largely changeless. While there is no particle of evidence that linguistic structure is a cultural artefact, which fact is in fact what makes for the above-mentioned sameness of human languages, at some level of their existence, there is neither doubt nor debate that the lexical cosmos of a speech community is culturally driven. And that at this level the relationship between cognition and experience is culturally specified. While this cultural origin of lexical items could be adduced to say languages at some level are 'native', 'original' and 'specialised' evolutions of the human capacity to think and create mental worlds, it is necessary to realise that this

cultural distinctiveness is obviously a subset of the larger set of human cognition, which every human is biologically equipped with. Which is to say no speaker of any language can claim that the conceptual constructs that her language has linguisticised are not intelligible, and if they are unintelligible, cannot be made intelligible, to speakers of other human languages. If this is true, as I think it is, this is only a step away from saying that whatever is expressible in any language is expressible in any other language. This is of course subject to provisos of interlinguistic translation that could well be made explicit: the ‘untranslatability’ of sound, of puns, rhymes and alliteration, for example, which are functions of linguistic sound, the ‘untranslatability’ of grammatical dynamics, of metaphoricity, idiomaticity and so on. The locution ‘untranslatability’ is in quotes because we don’t think some of such much-ballyhooed ‘untranslatability’ is as significant as some people make it out to be.

3.0 ALLEGED UNTRANSLATABLES

Examples of phonologically driven feedback to linguistic or rhetorical effect (not ‘meaning’) are:

1. If you want tea badly you will get bad tea here.
2. the clutter of rattling cutlery.
3. If you are on fire, you can put the world on fire.
4. I will treat you to some treated drinking water.
5. I was a misogynist. But over the years, I have softened to have a soft corner for the softer sex!
6. dil churaake aankh na churaawoo.
heart steal-cnj eye neg steal-imp

‘having stolen my heart, don’t avoid eye-contact (lit. don’t steal eyes)’

7. Big Ben to the Tower of Pisa: If you have the inclination, I have the time.
...

Differential grammatical dynamics is illustrated by sentences like the English

I am bereaved.

and their possible translations in Indian languages, where, unlike in the instant English sentence, the topic of discourse must per force not be ‘I’, and where the relationship of the dier and the speaker of the sentence has per force to be made explicit, which

is not the case in the English sentence.

It is also illustrated by the Urdu couplet of

aap ban gayii tum
tum ban gayi tuu

the English translation of which would be arguably inelegant if it is

you (the honourable stranger)
became you (the dear one)
and you (the dear one) became you
(the dearest one)

and downright laughable if it is

you₁ became you₂
and you₂ became you₃

aap in Urdu means ‘you (pl or sg honorific)’, *tum* means ‘you (pl or if sg less honorific than *aap*)’ and *tuu* means ‘you (sg)’. It is there for all to see that English with the formal monopartiteness of its second person pronoun pales into a vapidness that is inexpressive, colourless and inelegant in a non Euro-Atlantic trans-linguistic perspective. This needs to be admitted, notwithstanding the (valid) thesis that whatever experiential or cognitive expanse has found expression in any natural language is necessarily subject to expression of some kind in another natural language.

Some translations, while being equivalent because of identity of meaning, may not have equivalent effect. As we saw, phonologically contrived feedback to semantic effect (‘meaning’ may not be the word to use here) cannot be carried across. The following illustrates untranslatability caused by a combination of sound and grammatical dynamics:

My brain has two parts: the left and the right. There is nothing right about the right part and as for the left, there is nothing left!

Interlinguistic translations of this passage into languages in which there is no such resonant interplay between the two ‘right’s and the two ‘left’s could be argued to be vapid. But to say that the original passage is not translatable into such languages does not hold water. One could even argue that the effect of such interplay between linguistic

expressions is but merely cosmetic, not really substantial, really outside the life-blood of life experience. It is said that the greatness of all great poetry is locked up in the source language. It is also said that “poetry is by definition untranslatable” Jakobson (1959) 1989:59-60). This, as Chesterman points out, is linked to the equivalence supermeme viz no ‘translation that is not totally equivalent is a translation.’ Both positions viz that the greatness of all great poetry is locked up in the SL or that poetry is by definition untranslatable, need to be seen in perspective: Clearly part of this greatness is driven by the phonologically contrived feedback to linguistic effect. To the extent that such sound-motivated effect as pointed out is outside the life-blood of non-linguistic experience, or can hardly be said to be reflective of the essence or the substantive core of non-linguistic experience, the alleged untranslatability of (at least part of) such greatness is not a big deal, so to speak. And as we repeatedly stress in this piece, there is nothing that a human group does that another human group can’t understand---because all human biological form is essentially the same and as a consequence the nature of cognition of all human groups is essentially, foundationally the same. There is nothing sociohistorical or sociocultural about this. The non-DNA factors that play a role in human evolution can’t substantially alter this, rendering what a human group does totally esoteric, inscrutable and impermeable to another group. In fact, the thesis that the greatness of all great poetry is inalienably part of the source language, too strong a thesis, could be one form of what could be called the irrational ‘fetishisation’ or ‘valorisation’ or veneration of the ‘sacred’ original. On the other hand, there seems to be no reason for saying the original is sacred in a SL-TL perspective. On what basis does one say the original is sacred in comparison with the translation? Because it came into being before its translation did? A fifty-year old is more sacred than a forty-year old because the former landed on earth before the latter? On what basis could we say the father is more sacred than the son? That the original is somehow ‘better’ than its translation is also reflected in Corpus Linguistics, where it is believed that translations are less natural than their originals and therefore not to be counted as textual corpora. This is intriguing. The following Kannada sentence

kelasa pragatiyallide
work-nom progress-loc-be-tns-
sn

as the pervasive and putative translation of the English

work in progress

is not natural, although it is structurally felicitous. The natural parallel in Kannada of this English sentence is

kelasa naDita ide.
Work-nom walk-cont be-
tns-

“Work is on.”

The question that corpus linguists should ask is whether the translated natural parallels in the TL should or should not constitute legitimate data. The answer to this question cannot be negative. The point is that such utterances occur naturally anyway in TL, although they materialise as responses to the SL sentence in the enterprise of translation. On the other hand, if the parallels are structurally, systemically felicitous even when they are not exactly ‘natural’, they ARE legitimate, aren’t they?

4.0 TEMPORAL PRECEDENCE AND SACREDNESS

A thought-movement is more sacred than another thought-movement simply because the former happens to be older than the latter? Does that make sense? Even otherwise, there is nothing sacred in any human group except as defined by the internally, organically related axiological triad of freedom, equity, justice. In point of fact, the only thing sacred that one needs to be religiously after in any human group is this non-anthropomorphic non-divine deity called FEJ: freedom, equity, justice. Only FEJ should overarch and hold communitarian sway among humans, nothing else even while societies ought to respect individual beliefs and convictions that could well be irrational, undebatable, unfalsifiable and unproveable, but from which individuals derive mental, spiritual and emotional sustenance, and which are, or should be, strictly confined to private spaces. (In other words, (privately professed and practiced) religions ought not to be banned by the state.) Under the overarching moral sky, or the blanket ethical sun, of the axiological triad broached above, the rational felicitousness, soundness and efficacy of ideas, of the memes of human intellection, and the human behaviour that such ideas and memes delightfully and inexorably drive in a society, are what are paramount in any human group, nothing else.

4.1 IDIOMATICITY, METAPHORICITY AND LITERARY 'MEANING'

Translations of expressions that are metaphorical and idiomatic in the source language, to get back from the excursion in the above paragraph, could sound vapid in target languages where the equivalents are per force non-metaphorical. The following exemplify this

I need to ratchet up my life.
One wants a girl/boy one can breathe into
one's soul.
Brenda is broad-in-the-beam.
Merwyn is epigamous.
It is raining cats and dogs in Koyoto

What may be called 'literary meaning' is not quite translatable simply because languages are structured the way they are.

Gazing up into the darkness, I saw myself as
a creature driven and derided by vanity.

is a sentence from Joyce's short story 'Araby'. A number of 'literary' meanings are said to emerge from the way the sentence is structured in English. The protagonist is sandwiched between the darkness above and the world inside, where the realization occurs.

This is iconically reflected by the 'stunning symmetry' of the English linguistic structure of a main clause (viz. I saw myself) balanced on either side by a subordinate clause of five words each. (See Giridhar 1991). Such 'literary' meanings go per force unrendered in languages where subordinate clauses never follow the main clause.

4.2 One is pleasantly surprised when one finds some realisation in the literature on Translation Studies (TS) of what is a basic motif of this essay, i.e., that languages and cultures cannot be foundationally or totally or discontinuously or incurably different from one another. That even as the culturally configured differences that mask the similarities are interesting, so are the samenesses or the similarities that ground us humans as a species. The following quote is from de Ward and Nida (1986), and it deals with culture:

All peoples share more cultural similarities than is usually thought to be the case. What binds people together is much greater than what separates them. In adjustments to the physical environment, in the

organisation of the society, in dealing with crucial stages of life (birth, puberty, marriage and death), in the development of elaborate ritual and symbolism, and in the drive for aesthetic expression...people are amazingly alike. Because of all this, translation can be undertaken with the expectation of communicative effectiveness

And, bang on target, the following from Benjamin (1923 [1979]:185)

Translation thus ultimately serves the purpose of expressing the central reciprocal relationship between languages. ..Languages are not strangers to one another, but, a priori, and apart from all historical relationships, interrelated in what they want to express

has to do both with language and nonlanguage. Incidentally, most of the time thought-provoking, Benjamin's celebrated 1923 essay also has unacceptable averrals. For example, the last sentence in the essay states that the interlinear version of the Scriptures is the prototype or ideal of all translation. One can't think of any rational underpinning to this averral. There is also the view that the view that the literal and the figural are opposed to each other and to accord primacy to the literal as opposed to the figural is a limited view of language (Sarukkai 2001). The questions this piece poses are:

are the figural, nonliteral radiations out of
the empirical linguistic objects as elusive,
evanescent and unstable as people make
them out to be?

Are they really fugitive catch-me-if-you-can
entities?

I don't think they are. They can't be. The problem is people who say these things don't take a real world linguistic object, an actual text or a sentence or a cluster of sentences and show us the soundness and efficacy of their beliefs and pronouncements. To that extent one doesn't need to contest or engage them. On the other hand as we have argued in this piece, a theory of what is now thought extragrammatical extralinguistic senses that linguistic objects are deemed to carry, a theory of semantic competence/performance is very much a desideratum. Meaning that is a matter of language and meaning that is a matter of use or context of utterance need to be distinguished in a principled nonairy manner. Meaning that is grammatically

determined and meaning that is a cultural reconfiguration of a grammatical output. A clear example of these two is the following example from Kannada:

A Kannadiga says

naanu bartini
i-nom come-tns-1s

as he takes leave and the sentence literally means “I (will) come!”

bartini ‘will come’ would mean a movement toward the listener, but in this case the speaker is moving away from the listener, but is still saying ‘I will come’. Further, this sentence with time and other adverbials doesn’t qualify to be called formal a leave-taking linguistic ritual.

The meaning of the utterance in this context viz. of leave-taking is a cultural or extragrammatical reconfiguration of a grammatically determined semantic output.

I fully agree that while that the original is a statement of transcendence is not in doubt, its self-identity is (Sarukkai 2001). While the original is a transcendent reality in the sense it is at some level of its existence self-contained, formally separate from everything else, it is not absolutely self-identical. This is one reason one uses the word ‘equivalence’ rather than ‘equality’. And I also agree with Sarukkai (2001) that “the original, beyond its primary objecthood, can only be given, whether it is a book, a painting, or the world, only through translation,

and this fact of the original being in a state of transcendence without being self-identical gives a unique space to translation.” It is also clear that that the original is not absolutely self-identical is what makes the space between the (literary) original and the translation a passage of philosophy. This is among the things that make translation as a phenomenon a paradigm for philosophy, in fact for a range of practices. A cogent piece of evidence that the literary original is not absolutely self-identical is the fact that back translations are typically not identical. A possible English translation of vibhUti, for example, of Kannada is ‘sacred ash’. The first back translation that comes to mind of ‘sacred ash’ is ‘pavitravAda bUdi’, not vibhUti. If sea gull is

translated as jal kawwa in Hindi, the first back translation of jal kawwa is not ‘sea gull’ but ‘water-crow’. Note that this is typically true of lexical items, and not of syntactic structures. Equational sentences, for example, are equational sentences both ways. In other words, the nonself-identity of texts has to do, not with the internal weave or build of natural languages, but with their lexical items. What this in effect means is that the nonself-identity is not total but only partial.

4.3 PHASES OF TRANSLATION

The ‘linguistics of translation’ is of course not the only translation that there exists or there is to talk about. Far from it. As Tymoczko (2005) points out, on the other hand, the much ballyhooed ‘cultural turn’ or the ‘power turn’ are themselves circumscribed parts of this varied and complex phenomenon. There are various facets or faces or phases of the phenomenon of translation like the politics of translation, the sociology of translation, the axiology of translation, the epistemology of translation (of which this disquisition is an instance), the phenomenology of translation, the philosophy, the ethnography, the ontology of translation, the neurophysiology of translation and so on. In point of fact when one says meaning that escapes the code is no longer the same one is pointing to the existence of possibilities beyond strict linguistic equivalence, to code-allegiant, code-compliant rather than the objective nonlinguistic world-allegiant meaning. Translation as a manifest phenomenon can be clearly slotted into two foundational divisions viz. one where one necessarily deals with language and language-based equivalence, and one where one need not talk about language at all even though one is talking about interlinguistic translation, translation which proceeds from one language and journeys into another. In the former the translator seeks to transmit bare information and so is best seen as a ‘technician’, a ‘workman’ a ‘craftsman’. and in the latter, bare information is not the end (by definition one doesn’t go to a literary piece to seek anthropological or other kinds of info, one does or expects other things in a literary piece) and hence the translator functions more than as a ‘technician’, translation in this case being a different kind of path-creation. This path is more absorptive, accommodative, negotiative, mediative, conflictive and appropriative than knowledge-translation. At least, literary translation is mediative, negotiative, absorptive, accomodative, conflictive and appropriative in a way that knowledge-translation is not. This difference, we submit, is a function of the fact that the site of literary

translation is interactive and is pretty much a two-way traffic unlike that of cognitive translation.

5.0 THE CLUTTER

Some examples of the clutter that was broached earlier: There are observations made as naive as the following:

How do you consider, someone could ask, the translation of an English sentence like

1. This is a book into a language like Kannada as

1a. idu pustaka
this-nom book

as translation because the copula and the article have gone unrepresented in Kannada, the TL. Who adjudicates this equation? Or worse, how does one consider as translation the translation of sentences with different word orders? The Kannada translation of a sentence like

2. Kishore killed the king

viz.

2a. kishoor raajanannu konda
Kishore-nom king-acc kill-
tns-3sm

Only She (=a female goddess) knows how these are not translations or how these are theoretically a problem for interlinguistic translation. These clearly betray ignorance of the nature of natural languages. In particular, ignorance of a basic fact about natural languages viz. that languages are species-specific evolutions of the human capacity for thinking and for creating mental worlds and subsequently and in a sense, trivially truly, to communicate. Ignorance of a basic premise of interlinguistic translation viz. of structural equivalence. Sentences 1 and 1a and sentences 2 and 2a are structurally equivalent, the grammatical differences between them notwithstanding. As you can see, that someone has to declare the two 'equivalent' doesn't make good sense atleast in such cases. They are perceived to be equivalent from a language-neutral position. People have also said this is 'adaptation'. This is NOT adaptation or 'transfer'. In adaptation, as should be used in Translation Studies, the translator's agency is crucial -- unlike here, where the expressions in the target code suggest themselves. Typically, structural equivalents suggest themselves, without much

mulling. When equivalents or a range of equivalents suggests itself, what it means is that there is something significantly more at work, viz. that there is a common level from which these structural templates and linguisticised meanings originated, diverged and grew formally apart. Or else: 'on what basis do these suggest themselves as equivalents?' is the question to ask and mull. Notice that this is not comparable, for example, to

$$4+5=7+2=1+8...$$

The multiple sides of the equation do not come from a unit at a more basic level as do cross-linguistic equivalents, which are, arguably or unarguably, superficial derivative variants of the same underlying reality. However, the above mathematical equation signifies the fact the multiple arms of the equation are differential componential manifestations of a unitary rational number viz 7. There is no basic/derivative distinction in it as there is in the case of cross-linguistic equivalents and their source.

Whatever identity the equivalence is underpinned in – identity of meaning, of structure or of function - must have common shared, system-driven, speaker-free roots. Even in a case like finding the parallel of the pleasant connotations of 'summer's day' in the Shakespearean

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?

in something like

Shall I compare thee to a spring's day?

or whatever, or when a Kannada translator finds the parallel of the English *every Tom, Dick and Harry* in

every Sita, Gita and Gayatri

it is a case not so much of the translator's agency as the possibility that suggests itself in the target situation, which could have to do with the translator's competence in the language-pair. Translational action here is confined, restricted to the search for what already exists. The translator doesn't create anything here. It is also said all translation entails some adaptability (cf. Classe 2000). In translating "journalism, tourist brochures, advertisement material and instruction manuals, adaptation is entirely a part of the translation process and tropes, names and text structure may be adapted to accord with the conventions of the target language." (Classe

2000: p 2). I am not sure of the use of the word 'adaptation' here. When such changes suggest themselves not so much with the translator's agency as through the natural requirements of the target code, it should not be called 'adaptation' in Translation Studies. If this is the right sense of the word 'adaptation', then the word 'adaptation' needs to be given some technical charge. The suggestion here is that adaptation, as it should be understood in Translation Studies, occurs entirely due to the agency of the translator, and NOT as a function of the conventions of the target language. In which sense in point of fact it is distinctly different from what could be called 'translation'.

What happens in the case of (literary) 'translation' is that while there is largely an attempt to accord with the conventions of the target language, a translator is clearly more than a mere 'technician'. A literary translator 'creates' paths to a different cosmos that the other sociocultural ethos constitutes. This fact of the translator being more than a technician, of the translator being a 'path-creator' makes theoretical room for a churning to take place. There is this translating consciousness and the original author's consciousness which meet in the interfacing cauldron or site called 'translation' and what issues from this non-real time face-to-face rendezvous or encounter is not entirely predictable. This unpredictability makes for theoretical room for a multiplicity of translated products, which is not the case in the case of cognitive translation. What however seems to be very much predictable is that the creative, life-giving, life-nourishing, being-enhancing churn is what will make for the fact - which is what I have drawn attention to in the final paragraphs of this piece - that the new born is in a position to speak to the original, has evolved and grown naturally to be able to speak to the original. Which is something that you can't say of a photocopy. It also needs to be stressed that there is NO question of 'transfer'. If there are differential structures or word orders such as SOV, VSO, head noun-adjective, adjective-head noun and so on, it doesn't make theoretical sense that we 'transfer' this SL structure to the TL one. What the translator does is to find out the parallel representation in the TL cosmos. Given a foundationally similar cognitive apparatus that all of us humans are endowed with, and assuming that individual codes took divergent paths within what is possible for human biological form, translation has quitesentially to do with finding out matches of parallel representations, differently contexted simulacra, 'constructing comparables'. Clearly, in their origin these linguistic codes didn't take the 'transfer' route. To say that there was x structural or semantic path that some

languages took, and other languages 'transferred' these to another structural and semantic configuration, is clearly wrong. These codes are, in a manner of speaking, originally different. It is thus incorrect to say English has SVO word order, and the translator 'transfers' this onto an SOV word order. The word 'transfer' in the case of interlinguistic translation is theoretically skewed. For practical expedience however, as in MT, for example, one could use the word. But it makes no theoretical sense.

Note that the above discussion rejects two things:

- a) the idea that equivalence is 'produced' by translation, that it doesn't exist before. PAUL RICOUER. and
- b) that in translation one is dealing with equivalence without identity.

Further that, as Paul Ricoeur maintains, there is no third text to judge the translation as a set of equivalent parallels doesn't merit extended comment. It is weird to think that we need a third party, a third text to sit in judgment on the equivalence question between two languages.

6.0 To say that the relationship between a non-linguistic construct, a concept and its linguisticisation is arbitrary is to say what has already been said.

There is a triadic typology of communicative signs: the picture of smoke is imitative and is an icon. Smoke the real-life object is an index of fire. An index is not imitative but is a natural extension of the signified. 'smoke' the English word is a symbol because it stands for something other than itself and has no smokiness about it. Symbol is neither an imitative nor a natural representation of its signified. Since there is no mutually reciprocal or logical or natural relation between the word 'smoke' and what it represents, since the word 'smoke' is outside the ontological domain of the object 'smoke' in the real world, it is possible to detach the word 'smoke' from what it represents and call it by different names in other languages. This is the crux of the possibility of interlinguistic translation. This said, however, one also needs to stress that ready-made parallels in the TL may be difficult to come by for some SL expressions, which fact is a function of the fact that several thousand languages spoken on planet earth embed several different ways of looking at the universe. Such ready entities may not be there. But to say that the TL speaker can't conceive what the SL expression means or/and that no parallel expression could be conceptualised and minted in TL are

positions difficult to take. The difficulty, not so much in conceptualising, but in phonic expression is an expression of the skewed character resulting from the differential configuration of expressive power that individual languages entail. This fresh new minting from what is universally available to man, from the conceptually universal minting press is in fact a great contribution of translation qua phenomenon to the expressive power, energy and wherewithal of the TL. As Rudolf Pannwitz (cited in Benjamin 1992:81) words it,

The basic error of the translator is that he preserves the state in which his own language happens to be instead of allowing his language to be powerfully affected by the foreign tongue...He must expand and deepen his language by means of the foreign language.

7.0 THE INTELLIGIBILITY- TRANSLATABILITY DIALECTIC

There is another basic premise about interlinguistic translation that was elaborated on earlier, namely that intelligibility without translatability is not valid. Part of what this means is that if you know a linguistic object and the language in which it occurs, it follows that you will convert the one into a series of alternate linguistic objects. If you know the word dharma for instance, and if you know the language in which it occurs, it follows that you should be able to elucidate the word in so many words, and if you know some other language to a definable extent, an interlinguistic translation should naturally follow. People have argued that knowledge and behaviour are different things and that if one knows a word it doesn't necessarily follow that one should be able to 'behave' it, to put it across in so many words. I am not sure if this is okay. I am not sure if such knowledge can't be goaded to a level of conscious awareness before being made to find linguistic utterance. All intelligibility is subject to externalisation and all externalisation to translatability. If one can externalise the meanings a word is pregnant with, via capturing the contextual variables that in fact make for the plurality of senses, a translation into any other language is very much on the cards. The inability to externalise the pregnancy is a distinctly different, albeit related, story! Admittedly, a long equivalent would dent the architecture and architectonics of the original so as to make the translation possibly laughable, but the important thing is to realise that the laughability issues from the skewedness that has to happen because the expressive power of languages is configured widely differently and delightfully

diversely, for either genetic reasons or cultural.

The translation may be long-winded, circuitous, awkward-sounding, etc. compared with the source language. But that is the way it is in that language. The Hindi *jal kawwa* (=water crow) for the English sea gull could be the paradigm example here. This is also an example of the difference in configuration of the expressive power of human languages.

In a grammar I wrote, two subheadings were The people and The language. When we translated the grammar into the language which it is a grammar of, we couldn't translate these expressions as they are in English. We had to do it in terms of the proper nouns instead of the individuated common nouns. That is in fact what the English expressions meant in the ultimate analysis viz the proper nouns arrived at by the definite common nouns in a context. But the proper nouns themselves don't surface in English, which fact may be argued to be a factor contributing to or constituting the aesthetic that may be said to animate the linguistic structure, the aesthetic being a function of the difference between how individuation or particularisation of noun phrases, the determiner-phrases operates in these two languages. This is lost in transition.

The widely known Sanskrit word dharma could be taken as another illustration here and examined for what I am claiming. The untranslatability of this word has been mindlessly exaggerated. Contrary to what is putatively thought, the meaning of this word is pretty delimitable in various contexts. In the Kannada phrase *dharma patni* 'dharma wife' for instance it means only 'legally wedded'. In application forms, it means only 'religion', and nothing else. In *dharma chatra* 'charitable community hall', it means only 'charitable' and nothing else. In

haryuvudu nIrina dharma
flow-ger-nom water-gen dharma

'flowing is water's natural property'

the meaning of dharma is 'natural property' or perhaps 'essential being'.

It was A.L Basham who, in his *The Wonder that was India*, claimed that the word dharma is more pregnant with meaning than 'righteousness' could capture. This is not a terribly perceptive claim. And it was U.R Ananthamuthy, a distinguished thinker in the Kannada world who once said that dharma doesn't mean 'religion'. Nor is this a terribly perceptive

claim. The meaning of any word in natural language is capturable by depicting the selectional affinities that the word displays in a sentence. These selectional affinities are captured in terms of the contextual variables that operate in sentences. We do that with respect to the word dharma in a tabularised form below:

WORD	MEANING	CONTEXT THAT DISPLAYS THE SELECTIONAL AFFINITY
dharma	morally obligatory duty	idu nanna dharma. This is my morally obligatory duty.
dharma	righteousness truthfulness righteous conduct	nanna dharma nannan kApADitu my righteousness protected me.
dharma	natural property/ essential being	haryuvudu niirina dharma flowing is water's natural property/essential being.
dharma	religion	Application forms
dharma	legal weddedness	dharma patni legally wedded wife
dharma	charitable	dharma chatra charitable community hall
dharma	free; gratis	idu dharmakke alla this is not for free

The general claim is that although some nonlinguistic experience may not and does not lend itself to linguisticisation (eg. drug-induced visions, oracular experience, mystical experience etc), although the Barthesian characterisation of language as 'prison-house' is right in a definable sense, all that has already found expression in language has to per force lend itself to interlinguistic translation, subject of course to limitations of interlinguistic translation which can be made explicit. Whatever is intelligible is translatable. Whatever is intelligible is by definition subject to externalisation, and whatever is subject to externalisation is by definition subject to translation.

It is difficult to conceive the idea that the word

dharma is unintelligibly unself-identical in the language in which it figures, even granting the thesis that lexical items are only prompts because the promptee worlds that words could trigger cannot appear from out of the blue. The element of nonself-identity of lexical items necessarily bears on the foundational oneness of all linguistic behaviour of a speech community, which in turn bears on the question of intelligibility. And once intelligible, it is externalisable and hence translatable. If this is true, then the putative untranslatability of words like dharma into other human languages is seriously under question.

8.0 THE LANGUAGE-CULTURE DIALECTIC

Another conspicuous lack of awareness about language is about the way language relates to culture. It is pretty clear that language and culture are not inalienably contracted. There are several pieces of clear evidence, pointing to the fact that language and culture are NOT inalienably epoxied together. First, man has antedated language. Which is to say: the material from which linguistic meanings are forged existed well before language as a formal system came into being. Which is to say: the meaning material and the form it is encoded in are not simultaneous, although of course the chiselled meaning finally encoded in form and the form are simultaneous, and for purposes of thinking and creating mental worlds, and for communication need to be treated as though the relation between the two is not arbitrary. The two i.e. the meaning and the form came from different directions before they were artificially put together. In other words, meanings that attach to linguistic form are detachable. Pace Saussure, they are not two sides of a piece of paper. One can't separate the two sides of a piece of paper.

When one detaches or unwelds the two, some of the attachment may still stick with the detached part, in which case (part of) linguistic meaning is (formal) code-allegiant rather than concept-allegiant. Examples can be given here of connotations and other associational meanings and semantic effects that linguistic locutions carry. This could be the case when a person tends to use the words in the source language even though the meanings are pretty clear. Hence the tendency to use foreign expressions like quid pro quo, mutatis mutandis, per se, ipso facto, weltanschauung, mea culpa etc. As Hermans (2002) points out, when the Jesuits tried proselytisation in China in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, they needed to express very Western Christian concepts such as 'god', 'heaven', 'soul' and so on in Chinese

and they found themselves up against a discursive stone wall. In Chinese, the only terms available to them were those that echoed Buddhist and Confucian usage. These were wholly incommensurate with the Christian message. The Jesuits, Hermans concludes, were greatly puzzled by their lack of success in China. We need to balance these two views, i.e. that there is nothing that language x expresses that the speakers of other languages can't be receptive to, and that the foreignness of concepts and the consequent expressive askewness in cross-linguistic perspectives is something to reckon with, although not a really, desperately or incurably big deal.

9.0 CODE-DEPENDENT MEANING

A PhD student of mine studied the consequences of rendering a literary piece in Dalit Kannada (Kannada spoken by people living in the social backwaters) into standard Kannada. What we found was that although the world of the objective denotative meaning could be captured in Standard Kannada, there was something missing in it which may be attributed to what could be called 'code-dependent', 'code-allegiant' or 'code-driven' effect (meaning?). This area is still murky and elusive. The possible truism that the meaning that escapes the code is no longer the same meaning belongs here. Is there anything more here than the basic fact that the internal varieties of language mark user-id (= dialects, regional and social), use-id (=registers or content-oriented domains of discourse)) and situation id (=styles) ? My own feeling is that this could be a more open question than some of us would like to believe. One simply doesn't know. There could be a theory of the nonlinguistic meaning/effect that words carry in addition to those that grammars compute and output, which is what makes for the impossibility of a full interlinguistic translation of a great poem. But such a viable and academically credible scaffolding for elucidating the dynamics of what makes for the untranslatability of the greatness of great poetry is still a desideratum. A theory that explains the aesthetic or poetic that may be said to animate linguistic structures in particular contexts of use needs to be in place. Such a theory, if and when successful, could also be a formidable argument for a discretely different poetic language, the highest use of, the highest-resolution hi-tech hi-serious, high-definition exploration of, the resources of a natural language although admittedly even such a highly rarefied use of language would be well within the repertoire of all native speakers of that language.

10.0 THE SPACE BETWEEN WORDS AND WHAT THEY MEAN

Generally speaking, however, if objects in the non-linguistic world may be said to have an ontology, then their linguistic expressions are clearly outside such ontology, much like externally pasted badges of identity that humans are enveloped by viz. religion, caste, nationhood etc. Secondly, any Chomskyan linguist would tell you that there are any number of principles underlying linguistic structure which have nothing to do with individual cultures, which have to do solely with culture-free human cognition. Thirdly, that what is called 'translation' is possible at all because of the separability of form and content in human language. Fourthly that particular sociocultural ethos desire translations from other particular sociocultural ethos, that for example, Malayalis (living in the south-western part of India) want more and more literary artefacts from Latin American literature translated into Malayalam has nothing to do with their language, Malayalam. Fifthly, that it is possible to break away from the cultures that particular languages encode is evidenced by literary pieces like *Things Fall Apart*, *The Serpent* and *the Rope*, etc. If one thinks that one cannot appropriate English to express one's own sensibility, one has to concede that the two literary artefacts cited above encode two different and disparate sociocultural ethos, i.e the Igbo and the Kannada ethos respectively, in addition to the English cultural ethos in a single unitary expressive vector. That claim is, as you can see, quite absurd. The proposal that when you use English for business purposes or for purposes which have nothing to do with the English culture that it is supposed to be a carrier of, you are still expressing English culture is on grounds comparable to quick-sand. It is clear at the very least that, being delightfully irrelevant, the idea that a particular code is expressive in such eventualities of an 'inalienably, relevantly, inviolably sacred original' culture falls by the wayside.

11.0 THE TURNS

As touched upon earlier in this paper, there is a face to translation that has nothing to do with language --- this although paradoxically all translation, intra- or interlinguistic, proceeds inescapably and inexorably from language, the thesis that this essay struck out with. Rather it has to do with non-language that all human languages carry. That is in a sense much like creative literature, where one need not talk about language at all even though we are all the time

talking about literature that is embodied and realised in concrete language. In the former, one is essentially engaging in exercises in contrastive linguistics (this is the case with non-literary translation), whereas in the latter one goes far beyond to questions of the human creative urge to deal with larger questions of the human condition, man's existence, his ontology, his identity, the sociocultural ethos humans find themselves suspended in, and their relationship with it. This is the case when translation becomes the site where, much like creative literature, questions having to do with human existence and non-existence, human consciousness are raised, addressed, wrestled with and meditated on. Literary translation is a form of intercultural articulation, cross-cultural osmosis where the translated piece assumes a position from which it 'speaks' to the original. When a son effloresces and effervesces to attain a position from which he can 'speak' to the father, he is no longer a subordinate part of an identity of which the father's is the dominant face. Although the son technically issues from the father, he has become unique, standing as he obviously can on an even keel with the father. This seems to be the most appropriate analogy. To say that the translation is as original as the original completely, culpably and successfully misses the point. If it is as original as the original, why should it be based on an original? This is the question nobody has answered and nobody can answer! Is it the case that the object in question can't be 'original' except as a translation of an original? A significant empirical fact is that PEN Translation Fund in the US says in case of equal merit of the original work and the translation, priority will be given to underrepresented authors and languages. For it there are nothing like underrepresented translators.

12.0 THE NONLANGUAGE ASPECT OF TRANSLATION

This non-language aspect of Translation Studies as it obtains now is far from convincing and satisfactory. A considerable part of Translation Studies, as this field exists today, is highly subjective, imperceptive and non-rigorous. 'Created fiction' rather than rational discursive discourse occupies considerable space of the literary translation site. Any credible phenomenon of intellectual interest or philosophical depth must be governed by ideas of across-the-board genericity. Any viable phenomenon of any intellectual interest is driven and sanctioned by a grid of organising principles, by a network, by a sprawling network if you will, of taproots. A grid like that, a network of taproots needs to drive Translation Studies. There are empirically vacuous,

meaninglessly redundant and theoretically naive statements in the literature like "we translate not words but culture" etc. The turns, the linguistic turn, the cultural turn, the ideological turn, the empirical turn, the power turn, and so on seem to me to be more superficial than substantial. They scratch surfaces rather than plumb depths.

In fact there is, I submit, nothing like 'cultural translation' as opposed to 'linguistic translation' simply because there are no 'linguistic' as opposed to 'cultural' ways of looking at the universe! Are there examples of translations done keeping the 'cultural turn' in mind as opposed to the 'linguistic turn'? There are NONE. More importantly, there can't be any. Notice that this is not to deny the possible argument made below that knowledge-translation is less of a cultural phenomenon than literary translation. It is more of a culture-free, though not mechanical, human cognitive act. It is not mechanical because even cognitive texts are not fully self-identical. They are not fully self-identical because human languages that they are made from are per se at some level specialised and native, though not exactly unique, evolutions of the human capacity to think and create mental worlds. But one ignores the nonself-identical characteristic of cognitive texts. As I wish to argue, neutrality is not an issue. Neutrality cannot be an issue in interlinguistic translation in so far as all acts of, and products of, human consciousness, as we said, should be decisional acts of ethical and rational responsibility. Neutrality in the sense of not taking sides in a power struggle or a contest or a dispute or a war of words or weapons may not be the right way of looking at it.

Do these turns exist in praxis, or are they exercises in airy precept?

Who practised the 'power turn'? Are there real-life examples of texts which were translated keeping the 'power turn' in mind?...The point to make is that there are certain things that happen when the donor culture and the donee culture are in an asymmetrical equation. The nature of the translation could be, but not necessarily is, a function of the nature of the space that obtains between the source culture and the target culture. My own strong feeling is that this has been made too much of.

13.0 KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION VS LITERARY TRANSLATION

Both knowledge-translation and literary translation make 'global connectedness' possible, but in ways that are crucially different. Arguably, knowledge

translation is culture-neutral while literary translation is typically a cultural phenomenon. Both meet when all translation is considered a decisional act of ethical responsibility, which follows the ideal that all writing in fact is, or ought to be, a decisional, life-enhancing, life-illuminating act of ethical responsibility and rational accountability.

If one thinks of globalisation as a phenomenon, one could taxonomise it the following way:

- a) physical
- b) economic
- c) cultural
- d) emotional

the first two of the above could be argued to be necessary but are clearly NOT sufficient. It is the cultural and emotional, or human integration that is crucial for getting to the profound truism as worded by Jiddu Krishnamurthy:

“In every one of us is the rest of mankind.”

13.1 Physical globalisation means shrinking of physical distance. Quick and efficient ease of access to physical places and to information and knowledge has truly shrunk the world. This could well be and, in fact is, salutary. Social networking sites have brought us humans together and have proved to be heartening catalysers of social change, as in the case of the Arab Spring 2011. They have led to human synergy in the form of marriage across what seemed earlier insurmountable, if man-made, barriers. Easy and efficient journeying, physical or virtual, to places other than one's own, both physical and conceptual, deepens one's idea of the world one lives in, and could deepen one's idea of life-horizons and interhuman interfacial sites in ways that could lead one to the fourth and ultimate mode of globalisation enumerated above. Aside from these, physical and economic globalisation are basically driven by business. They of course do erase barriers of some kind, bringing humans together in terms of shared information, knowledge, and international capital flows and trade, but could typically keep intact spaces that continue to be seamed, impermeable, enclosed and sealed off. Knowledge translation belongs here. Supposing I read a Kannada translation of a Japanese book on paediatric audiology, or on prosthetic dental mechanics, I am the better for it. I would be truly thankful for the translation for two reasons:

The medium or vector of translation would answer to

something in my ontology: mother-tongues, like mothers, answer to a need in one's ontology.

It would enrich me in an intimate, emotionally pleasant manner because of the reason at (a) above.

But it need not, and does not, trigger waves of sympathy and synergy in me for the Japanese people and culture. I only get to have knowledge of something that was previously unavailable in my language. In other words, the link that is forged when I read a knowledge translation is crucially and qualitatively different from the link that is forged when one reads a literary translation. Literature and literary translation touch one in an area of consciousness we as human beings share. That is precisely why they appeal to you and thereon drive you on to synergetic, even if heterogenising but healthily heterogenising, paths. Original literature, unlike translation, is not interfacial. As an interfacial site, where two different sociocultural ethos meet, a whole lot of things can happen in translation within the constraints that this exposition has tried to draw the reader's attention to.

It is only literary translation that could humanise the speaking animal across artificially seamed spaces by creating conditions that make real global connectedness possible. By allowing the local and the global to stand face to face, translation facilitates this. It is always by being rooted in and then by simultaneously transcending the local that we go global. One can't go home to someone else's parents, to some other village, to some other social group or nation. You don't replace the local by the global. One must step into, through and go past the local before identifying oneself with the global. A situation where you are rooted in a global identity without first being oriented to a local identity and then transcending it is a highly advanced level of human consciousness, a level that may be possible but rare. Only meta-normals and perhaps mentally unbalanced persons are in this situation. All creative literature does this, i.e. juxtapose the local with the global. It does it since it has to because we humans are made that way. But the point germane here is that translation does this more interestingly because translation is now not (seen as) an unproblematically 'mechanical transfer of determinate semantic cargo from one phonetic vehicle to another'. A fully grown and evolved man or group imbibing various perspectives that are possible about mankind gotten through translations of those ethos is a step in becoming a cog in the wheel of humanity. A perspective where one doesn't look down on the Other but looks over one's shoulder at the Other in a spirit of appreciative wonder, humility,

equity and fellowship. The movement of colonial modernity that India experienced in the nineteenth century, we know, was because of translations from European and English authors. Literary translation is a site of cultural traffic, cultural give and take, a tool of cultural affirmation, a catalyst of change, of cultural interarticulation, an engine for synergy and growth, a cultural weapon or form of cultural contamination. This site is fraught with the positive possibilities of creating conditions whereby man sees himself as a trustee for the rest of creation by recognising in himself the local and the non-local, the personal and the transpersonal. This is the site where the local and global meet and emerge better for the meeting! One needs to identify the technical contours of this site in terms of its interdisciplinary dynamics, in terms of humankind's situatedness on mother earth, in terms of human evolutionary enlightenment. Humankind hasn't quite done this in a rigorously rational and exhaustive way. One strong reason for this is that the dynamics of literary translation, unlike that of knowledge-translation, is more inductive than deductive. Arguably, while all sites of interlinguistic translation are sites of linguistic hospitality, that of knowledge-translation is more a case of linguistic ventriloquism. 'Linguistic hospitality', Brennan (Brennan 2007) tells us, means the world of 'lived experience' in the sense of Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger's *lebenswelt* and Jean Paul Sartre and Morris Merleau-Ponty's *le monde vécu*. Linguistic hospitality is the experience every translator comes to live when she translates. She comes to feel, as we argued before, that natural languages in principle accommodate foreign meanings. As Ricoeur puts it (Ricoeur 2006:10), "linguistic hospitality gives us a) the pleasure of dwelling in the other's language and b) the pleasure of receiving the foreign word at home, in one's own welcoming house."

Deleuzian view of translation applies only to the literary variety. As Levan (Levan 2007) puts it, "A Deleuzian philosophy of translation would not be concerned with origins or products (i.e., with faithful representation of one language in that of another) but with a style of interaction, a fluid orientation of approach rooted in an ontology of change." I agree. A literary translation is of course rooted in concrete soil somewhere but it could grow off into an infinite expanse of the skies of change, evolution and enlightenment. The nonliterary kind is by definition limited in the short term but could be a brook, expanding the horizons of an ethos, but leading ultimately to this ocean of change, evolution and enlightenment. Knowledge-translation of course has a place in the ontology of change.

13.2 The translator, unlike the original author, has two ethoses, two world-views to look at, to contend with, to attend to. The mode of dealing with the co-existing duality could be domesticating or foreignising, manipulation, distortion, enrichment or impoverishment and so on --- to suit the target ethos or in pursuance of the translator's agenda. One of the best ways of putting in words what literary translation is about, or what literary translation can do, is stated by Hermans (2002):

...Translation is of interest as a cultural phenomenon precisely because of its lack of neutrality or innocence, because of its density, its specific weight and added value. If it were merely a mechanical exercise, it would be as interesting as a photocopier. It is more interesting than a photocopier in that it presents us with a privileged index of cultural self-preference, or if you prefer, self-definition. The practice of translation comprises the selection and importation of cultural goods from a outside a given circuit, and their transformation into terms which the receiving community can understand, if only in linguistic terms, and which it thus recognises, to some extent atleast as its own. And because each translation offers its own, overdetermined, distinct construction of the 'otherness' of the imported text, we can learn a great deal from these cultural constructions – and from the construction of the self that accompanies them. The paradigms and templates which a culture uses to build images of the foreign offer privileged insight into self-definition.

I don't however quite agree with the first sentence that Herman's otherwise delightfully sublimely worded assertion begins with. Literary translation need not be prescriptively stubbornly anti-essentialist, or be non-innocent or non-neutral as a precondition. That can't be the defining feature of the site. An enriching churn, yes. A life-giving give-and-take, yes. A change-inducing human effort, yes. But necessarily non-innocent? Non-neutral? 'Innocence' and 'neutrality' may not be the words to use. It is possible for something to be 'innocent' but piquantly vibrantly intense and yet not be characterised by the mechanicality of a photocopy. I remember a multilogue in which I was a participant. Somebody was talking about a discussion that happened elsewhere, in which, he said, x messed up things. Somebody whose friend was the one who messed up things submitted in the instant multilogue that x was innocent, to which the man who said x messed up things, retorted, very relevantly: "am I not innocent?!" One could absorb all that is good and vibrant in any sociocultural ethos and when that kind of osmosis

happens, the question of neutrality could be supremely irrelevant. Cultural phenomena could be innocently, if piquantly, distinctive but operating well within the constraints that all human cultures are heir to, which were broached earlier in this essay. A dialogue could be innocent, piquant and non-mechanical. I have Englished five Kannada pieces of creative fiction. In none of them did I adopt any agenda, wittingly or unwittingly. Unless one says interlinguistic translation is by definition agenda-driven. This is the irrational and untenable extreme that colonial and postcolonial translation has taken translation to. This is not to say that I have done it mechanically either! Not at all. Interlinguistic intercultural translation is never mechanical. (One possible reason for this being that the original is not self-identical.) Nor is interlinguistic translation necessarily agenda-driven. We are thus envisioning the distinct possibility of a situation of non-agenda-driven non-mechanical penetrative vibrancy, intensity and value-addedness. Knowledge-translation and literary translation could both be non-mechanical and non-agenda-driven. Where then are they different? Literary translation, unlike knowledge-translation, is a cultural transaction and is the site of a dialogue, the site of intercultural communication and osmosis. A dialogue could be innocent, piquant, non-mechanical, and value-added. The question of neutrality doesn't necessarily arise in such a scenario. In fact neutrality, as we argue, is not an issue in so far as all products of human consciousness, including translation, are, or ought to be, decisional acts of rational and ethical responsibility. As argued here, neutrality in the sense of not taking sides in a power struggle, in a contest, dispute, war of weapons or words, may not be exactly right in the context of translation.

The rest of the Hermans quote above is luminous in that the recontextualisation that translation is, is at the same time production and reproduction in the TL; a redoing of the world of the SL text mediated by the translating consciousness, which is a kaleidoscopic welter of things defining the self as against the Other, defining the self that is an incurably seamless part of a singular human consciousness. On the other hand if the site of the original – the literary original rather than the discursive original - is itself plural, then the translation of this plurality could be that much more plural, given the unself-identity of the original.

13.3 Admittedly inductive, we are yet to fully realise what translation as a human enterprise can do, what it can potentiate, given the complex, varied and rich translation traditions in various speech communities around the world that are yet waiting to be unpacked. Some of these may not even be capable of being

unearthed. There is for instance no knowing the difference between the state of affairs that reading authors like Dostoevsky in translation, which most of us Indians did, and in the original, may result in.

13.4 Another huge desideratum in the translation academia, as stated already, is the elucidation of the dynamics, mechanics and the source of the nonself-identity of the transcendent literary originals. Attempted discourses in this direction are bubbles floating in the air!

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