CHAPTER V

Karnad’s Bi-directional Self-translation

In this chapter the researcher discusses an important feature of Karnad’s self-translations, namely, bi-directionality. It identifies two distinct practices within bi-directionality and the nature of self-translations within those practices.

Translation theory as well as translation studies have in general always assumed translation to be a unidirectional activity. It is assumed that a source text is translated to a target language and is believed that with this activity the process of translation ends. The postcolonial studies on translation too missed the diverse practices of translation, generalising that translations normally take place from the language of the coloniser to the languages of the colonised, in an asymmetrical process, for instance, translation from English to the regional languages in India. However, the ecology of translation has diverse ways in which the translation process operates. Another kind of translation is where a translator translates across two languages, in that he/she switches between source texts in two different languages creating target texts in two different languages. This kind of bi-directionality is rare among translators, rarer still in self-translation. Karnad has claimed to have written *Bimba* and *Broken Images* in this manner (Kamad, Email Interview).

One of the unique features of Kamad’s self-translation is its bi-directionality, i.e, alternating between two languages for writing and self-translating. Karnad has self-translated into two languages—English and Kannada. In quite a few cases he writes his plays in Kannada and then self-translates them to English, as in the case of *Yayathi, Hittina Hunja, Tale-danda*, and in another few cases he writes his plays in English and
self-translates them to Kannada, as in the cases of *The Dreams of Tipu Sultan* and *Flowers*, thereby making his self-translations bi-directional. This bi-directionality in self-translation makes Kamad one of the unique self-translators in India. Although quite a few authors have self-translated their works, Kamad is the only contemporary writer who is practising bi-directional self-translation. The self-translation studies in Europe point to very few such instances such as that of Becket of bi-directional self-translation. The available evidence in India points to only two bi-directional self-translators—Tagore and Kamad.

All of Tagore’s self-translations are from Bengali to English, with the exception of *The Child* which he wrote in English first and then translated it to Bengali. But what makes Karnad distinct from Tagore are his theories of bi-directionality and more importantly the number of plays that he has self-translated bi-directionally.

Bi-directionality in the case of Kamad’s self-translation can be understood in two ways: one, in the initial phase of his writing career he wrote his plays first in Kannada and self-translated them to English later, e.g. *Tughlakh*, and in the later phase, beginning with 1997, he started writing his plays first in English and then self-translates them to Kannada, e.g. *The Dreams of Tipu Sultan*; two, he writes his plays first in Kannada and later translates them with considerable re-writing to English and then translates the English self-translation back to Kannada. For instance, *Hittina Hunja* was translated to English as *Bali: The Sacrifice* which was translated back to Kannada as *Bali*. The second type of self-translation can be called circular self-translation. This chapter will engage with both these bi-directional self-translations. The first one will be termed linguistic bi-directionality and the second one, textual bi-directionality or
circular self-translation. In the absence of prior research on this issue, this researcher has coined the terras bi-directional self-translation, linguistic bi-directionality, and textual bi-directionality or circular self-translation to refer to different kinds and processes of self-translations.

Linguistic Bi-directionality

Of his thirteen self-translated plays, Kamad wrote eleven in Kannada first and then translated them to English. They include *Yayathi* (Kannada/1960), *Ma Nishada* (Kannada/1964), *Tughlakh* (Kannada/1964), *Hayavadana* (Kannada/1971), *Anju Mallige* (Kannada/1977), *Hittina Hunja* (Kannada/1980), *Nagamandala* (Kannada/1989), *Taledanda* (Kannada/1990), *Agni Mattu Male* (Kannada/1994), *Maduve Album* (Kannada/2006), and *Odakalu Bimba* (Kannada/2006). He wrote two plays in English first and then translated them to Kannada. They include *Flowers* (English/2004), and *The Dreams of Tipu Sultan* (English/2004). Writing in Kannada and self-translating to English marks one direction of movement across languages; writing in English and self-translating to Kannada marks the second direction of the movement.

Textual Bi-directionality or Circular Self-translation

In the fourth decade of his writing career, Kamad takes to a unique practice in self-translation, namely, textual bi-directionality. There are two plays that represent his textual bi-directionality in self-translation: *Hittina Hunja* and *Odakalu Bimba*. Kamad’s *Hittina Hunja* was first published in 1966. He brought out the rewritten version in 1980. In 2004, he rewrote it in English under the title *Bali: The Sacrifice*. In 2007, he translated the English version back to Kannada under the title *Bali*. Similarly, he published *Bimba* in 2002. It was rewritten in self-translation and published in 2004 as
He published the Kannada translation of the English version in 2006 as *Odakalu Bimba*. In these two texts, if writing in Kannada and then rewriting in English marks one linguistic movement of the text, self-translating the rewritten English version back to Kannada marks the second movement of the same source text, thereby making the self-translation circular. What is crucial in this process is the rewriting of the play in English and not just translation from the source text to the target text. Therefore, one could conclude that this rewriting entails bi-directionality.

Table 5.1

Kamad’s Circular Self-translation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SI No</th>
<th>Title, language and year of first work published</th>
<th>Title, language and year of self-translation</th>
<th>Period between two texts</th>
<th>Title, language and year of second self-translation</th>
<th>Period between two self-translations</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Hittina Hunja (Kan/1966)</td>
<td>Bali: The Sacrifice (Eng/2004)</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Bali (Kan/2007)</td>
<td>3</td>
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</table>

It is also important to note that in the process of Karand’s bi-directional self-translation there is change in the title as well. The title of the Kannada text of *Hittina Hunja* literally means “cock of dough.” But when it is re-written in English it is titled...
Bali: The Sacrifice where the first word “Bali” is a Kannada word which means sacrifice and the sub-title is a translation of the main title, namely, Bali. Thus, there is a translation encoded within the title itself through the process of code-switching. Hence, if literally translated, the title would be Sacrifice: The Sacrifice. A similar process of shift in title happens with Bimba as well. Karnad published Bimba in Kannada in 2002, and the Kannada word literally means “image.” In 2004 when he published its rewritten version in English he titled it Broken Images. The title not only had an additional word “broken” bringing about a significant change to the meaning of the Kannada source-text title but also pluralised the translated Kannada title, making it “images.”

In Karnad’s bi-directional textual self-translation, another aspect that needs attention is the fact that the change in titles happens to only those plays which he wrote in Kannada first and not to those he wrote in English first. Hittina Hunja becomes Bali: The Sacrifice in English, which is a significant shift in the meaning of the source-text title. But Bali: The Sacrifice remains Bali in the self-translated version in Kannada. Similarly, the source text title Bimba becomes Broken Images bringing about perceptible change in the denotations and connotations of the first source-text title, but when he self-translates the target text Broken Images to Kannada as Odakalu Bimba, the title of the translation retains the semblance of meaning of the target-text/source text, Broken Images.

Circular Self-translation of Hittina Hunja

Kamad’s Hittina Hunja was first published in 1966 in Kannada. He rewrote this play in Kannada and published it in 1980. He self-translated this play in 2004 changing its title to Bali: The Sacrifice. He then self-translated the English version back to

What such an activity does is to destabilise the notion of text in language. In the context of the multiple versions of *Hittina Hunja*, and that too by the same person, the idea of a definitive and final text becomes elusive. Which is the final text? Is each text final in itself? Or, is the chronologically later text the final text? But if we hold the chronologically later text as the final text, the idea of the final text is deferred, for Kamad revises his texts frequently. Both linguistic bi-directional self-translation and textual bi-directional translation in Karnad’s case need to be seen as part of his aesthetic practice.

For Kamad, *Bali: The Sacrifice* “is not a translation of *Hittina Hunja*, but totally original” (Email Interview). Although this claim gives an insight into his notion of translation and the meaning of an original text, within the discourse of translation studies *Bali: The Sacrifice* needs to be seen as a translation of *Hittina Hunja*. Some of the elements of the translated text show that it is a translation. For instance, the story and plot are largely unchanged, and all the characters remain the same and no new characters have been added.

The other issue is also about the nature of the texts. Since there is a strong performative function attached to these texts, it allows them to be re-written continuously, in self-translation as well as performance. Because of the performative dimension attached to them which is the primary function of plays, these texts retained
the possibilities of constant reworking. This is not the case with other genres like novel and poetry because of the dimension of fixity attached to them, since they belong to the print culture.

When one looks at the relationship between language and textual stability, it becomes clear that the language where Kamad’s texts are relatively unstable is Kannada. His in Kannada texts get continuously rewritten, as in the case of *Yayathi*, *Hittina Hunja*, and *Maduve Album*. But Kamad has not reworked those texts originally written in English or those self-translated to Kannada from English. Thus, English comes across as a stabilising language for Kamad.

One of the ways Kamad’s textual movements can be understood is by seeing them as attempts to stabilise a text. The ultimate destination of his texts is possibly Kannada, and English seems to give texts stability. The pattern of self-translation also suggests that for Kamad a lot more is at stake in English than Kannada. While he writes and rewrites in Kannada with ease, he is very careful in English with regard to both rewriting and publishing. This can be seen in his resistance to publishing plays like *Anjumallige* in English as he is unhappy with its structure. But he has allowed multiple re-prints of the play in Kannada despite not publishing it in English. This goes to suggest that Kamad has different relationships to Kannada and English—an experimental and fluid relationship to Kannada but a relatively fixed relationship with English.

*Hittina Hunja*. Self-translation as Structural Concern

While there is a serious shift from *Hittina Hunja*, the first Kannada text, to *Bali: The Sacrifice*, there is little difference between *Bali: The Sacrifice* and its Kannada
translation, *Bali*. This suggests that Kannada becomes the final destination of Kamad’s textual creation and experimentation. English can be read as a mediator which allows him to resolve the uncertainty concerning the “finality” of the text. While Kannada is a medium of preliminary textual construction, English becomes the medium that gives the text a desired structure. This makes it clear that Kamad’s concern is not so much linguistic but generic and structural. One gets a hint of this fascination with structure in his interview to Tutun Mukherjee.

**TM:** You studied Mathematics in B.A. at Dharwad and Statistics for M.A. at the Bombay University. Of what use have these subjects been to you as a dramatist?

**GK:** Very useful. Strange as it may seem, mathematics gave me a sense of structure and the discipline to maintain the tension among the different parts of a play. Mathematics trains the mind to think logically. It imparts a sense of equilibrium very useful for a creative writer. Writing a play is like building a house. What happens to each unit affects the rest of the structure. I was fascinated to find that changing one half of an equation brings about a change in the other half too.

**TM:** Does this then explain the basic binary form of your plays? There is this preoccupation in you to split the persona and explore the opposing aspects of character or the two forces that contradict and complement each other at once?

**GK:** It fascinates me to explore the many dimensions of a problem. The structure helps me to control a big play - to balance the development of
each character. One can never find a monochromatic character, unilateral meaning or predictive behaviour. Life is not like that. (29-30)

Kamad’s primary concern has been structures. The references to ‘house,’ ‘units of house,’ and the mention of ‘equilibrium,’ and change in one half of an equation bringing about change in the other half reflect his fascination with structures. It looks like that this equilibrium for Kamad is achieved in self-translating the text to English. Once that is achieved he is able to “translate” the equilibrium back to Kannada quickly. This is further justified by the fact that he has not significantly revised the plays he has written in English while self-translating them to Kannada.

The second area that gets transformed in the process of self-translation from Kannada to English is characterisation. But, as reiterated by Kamad, it also brings about equilibrium in the play and more importantly in the structure of the play. Bali: The Sacrifice being a play on violence in thinking and women’s sexuality, becomes a play both on violence and one on violation of women’s body through thought.

Treatment of Characters

Man-woman relationships are treated differently in the different versions of Bali: The Sacrifice. While the first text, namely, Hittina Hunja, shows the Mahout as domineering in their relationship, the English text shows the Queen as a stronger person and the Mahout less violent. For example, in the source published Kannada text (1966/80), the play begins with a reference to the Queen crying:

MAHOUT. Who are you?

(No reply)

I haven’t seen a girl like you. You came masked at midnight like a
ghost; did what you wanted to. Now why are you crying?

QUEEN. I am going. (3) [Trans, mine]

But in *Bali: The Sacrifice* (2004) there is no reference to the Queen crying.

MAHOUT. Who are you?

*(No reply)*

Tell me.

QUEEN. Let me go. (190-91)

It is important to note this aspect of the second text (2004) where the Queen does not cry and this goes well with her self-sacrifice in the second text, making the character consistent. But the first text (1966/80) which depicts the Queen as crying does not end with the Queen sacrificing herself.

In the 1980 Kannada text, the Mahout says:

MAHOUT. . . . you do not know my anger. It is not a big deal for me to drag you in the moonlight and see your face. (3) [Trans, mine]

It has to be noted that this particular conversation which reeks of masculinity is absent in the English text.

*Hittina Hunja* and *Bali: The Sacrifice* approach the question of identity differently. The Kannada text shows the Mahout as one who wants to know her identity by having a glimpse of her face in the beginning of the play and much later shows him asking her name. But the English text begins asking for the name and much later the Mahout ask for seeing her face. In the beginning of the play when the Queen wants to go, in the Kannada text the Mahout asks the Queen to show her face: “But before going at least show me your face.” But the English text asks for the name: “But before you go,
In the Kannada text the Mahout has a name—Ashtawanka— which he mentions to the Queen. But the English text does not mention one. Further, when the play begins the Mahout in *Hittina Hunja* stops the Queen from opening the door and drags her away and blocks her way whereas in the English version this extends to physical overpowering. The Kannada text observes:

(The Queen runs and tries to open the door. The Mahout jumps and drags her. Blocks her way.) (3)

But the English version reads:

*The Queen makes a sudden move to the door and tries to open it, but he is faster than her and grabs her. There is a scuffle. He drags her back and literally throws her into a corner. She moans in pain* (192)

The English text shows the Mahout’s violence as consequent to the actions of the Queen. But in the Kannada text his being violent is not necessarily dependent on the Queen’s actions.

In the Kannada text, the Mahout is shown as someone who goes through shifting emotions. As much as he is harsh, he is also soft and pleading. For example, in one dialogue he shifts his feelings. At one point she says, “Ei, didn’t you hear what I said? A few exchanges later he says:

(Gently)

Why are you doing like this? Just to mention a name why are you being so adamant? (3)

At the same time the Queen is shown to be more submissive to the Mahout in
the English than the Kannada text. In the Kannada text, she makes attempts to leave, a gesture of ignoring the authority of the Mahout. But in the English text she does not.

The English version is less direct about the sexual transgression. While the first Kannada version begins with the dialogue between the Mahout and the Queen after their sexual union, the English version begins with a monologue which is in the form of a prologue. The prologue not only introduces the play but also sets the mood and spells out the different themes of the play.

There are differences in the stage movements in both the texts. The first Kannada text opens with the king sitting on the steps of the temple shrunk whereas in the English text

*The King enters the courtyard of the outer temple. He has a torch in his hand.*

*He enters and sits on the outer steps of the temple.* (190)

In the Kannada play, Kamad is able to make a distinction between the social status of the Mahout and the other characters through their sociolect. The Mahout’s language is characteristic of the oral mode whereas the language of the other characters, namely, the Queen, the King and the Queen Mother, are given print-reading like properties.

There is also a discussion about god between the Queen and the Mahout in the English text which is absent in the Kannada text. The Mahout identifies her religion as Jainism, based on the values her speech displays. But both these—discussion about god and the identification of religion—are absent in the interaction between the Queen and the Mahout in the Kannada text.
Further, in the English text the Mahout’s character is given a past and he is endowed with the capability of self-reflection, which are absent in the source Kannada text. In the Kannada text the Mahout has a profession, and has ugly looks, an attractive voice and a name. In the English, he has a profession and an attractive voice, but no name. But he is capable of reflective thinking and is lonely. In the English text his sexual relationships with women are given a reason—his loneliness. But in the Kannada text his sexual escapades are not given any reason, thereby leading to a stereotypical representation of the Mahout based on his social status. The English text makes stereotypes difficult as it develops a causal relationship to the actions of the characters in the play.

Just as the Mahout, the Queen is also presented as a complex character with a deep understanding of human weaknesses and predicaments. She is able to appreciate his capabilities as much as understand his need for companionship. She leaves the Mahout offering him genuine compliments like, “It’s been lovely meeting you. Every minute of it” (192); “I like you” (198); and “I will never forget you” (198) which are not there in the source Kannada text.

The changes in the English text also suggest political shifts in the social structure since the publication of the source Kannada text which the play seems to be addressing. In the source Kannada text there are no clear references to caste identity. But in the English text there are dialogues which discuss caste inequality. This is a new dimension to the play. The Kannada text is seen as one dealing with violence. It represents a negotiation between old community-based religious traditions which believe in violence as in the case of animal sacrifice and the new religion of reason and
non-violence. In the source Kannada text when the Queen offers her necklace to the Mahout, he refuses to take it saying he does not want to invite trouble because of the necklace, as he will not be able to do anything with it for fear of inviting undue attention. But in the English text he refuses it which can be interpreted as a gesture of rejecting the power-equations and a stereotypical representation of his caste. A reason for this could be corroboratively found in Karnad’s short story “Alida Mele” where he shows how theatre after the demolition of Babri Masjid and Mandal Reforms has affected the equations between various religious and caste communities, and the consequent birth of new identity politics. The English play, which gets rewritten almost a decade after the demolition of Babri Masjid and the introduction of Mandal Reforms, takes on board the complexities that have emerged due to the changed social contexts of the audience. This aspect of self-translation of not merely translating the source text but also transforming the text to address newer concerns is an important feature of Karnad’s bi-directional translation. The concerns of Bali: The Sacrifice are: communal violence, gender violence, and the changed social equations among castes. The text is translated by the social concerns that Karnad wants to embed in the play.

**Relationship between Characters**

There are significant differences in the equation between the characters in the source Kannada and the English texts. The relationship between the Mahout and the Queen is a lot more sensuous in the English text. If the Kannada text merely projects the Queen as someone lured by the song, the English text gives strong reasons for such an act. Further, the English text dwells on the sensuousness in the relationship between the Mahout and the Queen whereas the Kannada text does not. In both the texts the Mahout
sees the Queen’s face. But in the English text the Queen cooks up a name for herself—Kamalatasundari—which is absent in the Kannada text. In the English text the Queen thanks the Mahout while leaving but not in the Kannada text: “Thank you. I’ll not forget you” (198)

In the last scene involving the Mahout and the Queen where the Mahout and the Queen are trying to drive away people gathered outside the sanctum, in the Kannada text the Mahout and the Queen laugh suggesting a love play between the couple (9-10). But in the English text they pant and moan suggesting a sexual act (202).

The relationship between the King and the Queen is also differently portrayed in the two texts. When the King sees the Queen in the sanctum, the Kannada text reads as follows:

QUEEN: (Emotionless) Why did you come here?

(The King goes to her and takes the torch close to her face. The Queen scared, retracts and moves her face away.)

KING: Don’t be scared. Won’t bum your face. Wanted to see how much your lips have swollen.

Anyhow, he is not your husband hence, it’s normal to be worried!

(11)

Whereas in the English text soon after he sees the Queen,

(The King goes to her. Pushes back the veil covering her face. Takes the torch to her face. She recoils. He stares at her. Silence. Dazed, he looks at her as though he can't recognize her. Pinches her cheek as though to
make sure she is there.)

QUEEN (gently): Please . . . don’t . . .

(The King wakes up with a start. He is obviously embarrassed by what he’s been doing.)

KING: (dazed and without malice): Is it you? I don’t want to hurt you.

(203)

The relationship between the Mahout and the King is perhaps one element which does not change in both the texts either in terms of the number of dialogues assigned to each character. The English text introduces new elements into the play. The Kannada text has no prologue whereas the English text has two prologues—one by the Queen and the other by the King. Further, there are four songs in the Kannada text, which are absent in the English version.

There are also shifts in scenes. The flashback on the childhood experiences of the Queen and the King is advanced in the English text. Where as the entry of the Mother is delayed. In the Kannada text, the Mother is already there when the play begins, whereas in the English version the Mother enters after the three flashbacks—of the King and Queen’s childhood, the Queen’s faked second pregnancy, and the King and Queen’s meeting that night—which unfold one after the other in succession.

The flashbacks are treated differently in both the Kannada and the English texts. One is the order of the appearance of plays and the other is the treatment. There are three major references to the past of the King and the Queen in both the texts: the King and the Queen’s childhood, the Queen’s faked second pregnancy, and the King and the Queen’s meeting that night. In the English text they occur sequentially. But in the
Kannada text they not only occur in a different sequence but are also enacted differently—the last flashback comes first, the first flashback comes second and the second comes third. But the third flashback is not enacted as a flashback but is recalled verbally by the King and the Queen.

The ending of the play is remarkably different in both the plays. In the Kannada text the play ends with the Queen trying to feed the cock of dough and the King screaming at the sight. The scene suggests possibilities of mental instability on the part of the Queen. It is important to note that when the Kannada source text ends, the cock of dough is intact and the Queen is alive. The Kannada text ends thus:


KING: (Screams) Amritamati....

In the Kannada text the last word spoken is the Queen’s name which suggests the King’s love for her or at least his concern for her. The last scene is very different in the English text. Some of the crucial shifts in the last scene in the English text are:

*He [King] picks up the dough and squashes it into a mass.*

It’s dough. Plain and Simple! Dough. (240)

This is the last line spoken in this text. But the last line of the English text also suggests the King’s sense of authority or self-possessiveness, and he comes across as a different character from that of the Kannada source-text. The rest of the play happens with gestures without speech before it ends in an epilogue uttered by both the Queen and the King.

*(The Queen looks up at him in sudden hatred, picks up the sword and lunges at him to stab him. She freezes. She stares at the sword in her*
hand horrified.

A cock crows outside. That takes the King by surprise. He turns to the door.

Suddenly, she presses the point of the blade on her womb and impales herself on the sword. Collapses into his arms.

The King holds her, uncomprehending, listening to the cock’s crowing.

It's dawn.

The Queen is lit by a beam. She stands up and they both sing.) (240)

Important additions here are the Queen trying to stab the King and later killing herself.

Songs are an important addition to the English version of the play. And there are four songs. They are absent in the Kannada versions. These songs perform diverse functions in the play. One, they act as translations. Two, they take on the role of prayer. The first song makes a transition to the first flashback, the theme of which is memory (205). The second song effects a transition from first flashback to the second flashback (209). The second song not only enables the transition from one flashback to the other but also helps maintain the unity of action, time, and memory. The songs emphasise memory as an important theme of the play. Song three acts as a prelude to the symbolic violence of sacrificing the dough and introduces the theme of violence (226). The play at this point begins a discussion on violence (239). Song four is a sacrificial prayer to the cock. It marks the end of the discussion on the sacrifice and indicates the beginning of the sacrifice.

The Kannada target text, Bali, although it follows its English source text closely,
seems to be using two source texts, namely, *Hittina Hunja*, and *Bali: The Sacrifice*, forming an intricate and complex triangular relationship among these three texts. *Bali* depends on these two source texts for two different reasons. It depends on *Bali: The Sacrifice* for the text of the play but for the Kannada texture it depends on *Hittina Hunja*. The text of *Bali* closely follows the text of *Bali: The Sacrifice*. But in terms of sociolect and ideolects it follows *Hittina Hunja*.

Apart from these, there is one other feature which is not found either in *Hittina Hunja* or *Bali: The Sacrifice* but is seen in *Bali*—the presence of a narrator in paratexts. The presence goes beyond the scope of stage direction, and is directed towards the reader. The distinction can be understood if the closing scene of *Bali: The Sacrifice* and *Bali* are compared. The text of *Bali: The Sacrifice* reads:

(The Queen looks up at him in sudden hatred, picks up the sword and lunges at him to stab him. She freezes. She stares at the sword in her hand horrified.

A cock crows outside. That takes the King by surprise. He turns to the door.

Suddenly, she presses the point of the blade on her womb and impales herself on the sword. Collapses into his arms.

The King holds her, uncomprehending, listening to the cock ’s crowing.

It’s dawn.

The Queen is lit by a beam. She stands up and they both sing.) (240)

But the text of *Bali* reads as follows:

(The Queen gets up enraged, as if he killed a live cock Picks up the
sword and goes to stab the King. Stops there frozen. He stares at the sword in her hand without understanding the eruption of violence within. Even the King is Frozen. Turns his face away.

Disgusted at the violence within she stabs herself. The king runs and takes her in his arms.

A street cock is heard crowing far away. In response to that another cock crows further away. Further still some more crows.

Dawn. (50) [Trans, mine]

Bali: The Sacrifice leaves the reasons for the Queen stabbing herself to the imagination and interpretation of the audience as well as the actors and directors. This is the most crucial aspect of the play which is perhaps the most important differentiator of the play from Hittina Hunja. Yet, in Bali, the Kannada text, Kamad decides to interpret the actions for the reader which could be considered the dumbing down of the audience.

The reason why Karnad decides to interpret the Queen’s action in Bali for the readers could be the fact that his Kannada texts are used mostly in higher education and hence the need to clarify the issue although it can also be inconclusively read as Kamad’s assessment of the Kannada theatre.

A review of the discussion of the circular self-translation of Hittina Hunja to Bali: The Sacrifice, and Bali: The Sacrifice and Hittina Hunja to Bali suggests that the self-translation process is circular, with each text acting as the improvised version of the other. But such improvisation is limited to Kannada to Kannada, and Kannada to English but not from English to Kannada. It also suggests that the final self-translated text not only borrows and closely follows the source text, but also depends heavily on
the source text of the source text—*Hittina Hunja*—for linguistic purposes, and cultural specificities of language.

**Bi-directional Self-translation of Broken Images**

Bimba is the first play in an anthology of three plays entitled, *Bimba Mattu Itara Natakagalu*. The other two plays in the anthology are Kamad’s translations of Elkunchwar’s *Wasansi Jeernanai* and *Dharmaputra*.

Kamad claims that he wrote both the English and Kannada texts of *Bimba Broken Images* simultaneously, switching between languages (Email Interview). This kind of switching between languages while producing a text disrupts the traditional categorisation of texts in translation studies as source text and target text, and source language and target language, for during the writing of a text the target and source texts are enmeshed woven into a composite text from where two texts emerge denying the categorisation of them as source and target texts.

In *Collected Plays* Vol. II, where *Broken Images* first appeared, the editors classified it under a separate section called “Two Monologues” that appears at the end of the volume and *Broken Images* is the second monologue. Dharwadker in her Introduction identifies “two natural and distinct sequences” in Kamad’s plays: “the first beginning with *Yayathi* in 1961 and concluding with *Hittina Hunja* in 1980, and the second beginning with *Ndga-Mandala* in 1988 and continuing into the present with two recent monologues, *Broken Images* and *Flowers* (2004)” (*Collected Plays* Vol. 2 vii). In terms of form and content she finds *Broken Images* representing carefully chosen aspects of contemporary life along with *Anjumallige*. The differences between *Broken Images* and *Odakalu Bimba* can be identified in terms of title, characterisation, narrative
style, and culture-specific codes, especially in paratexts.

_Self-translation of Titles_

A title is an important element of a work. The title and the name of the author are crucial entries in a text and play a key role in determining both the reader and the reading. Although the title is a paratext, it is important to deal with the title separately from other paratexts since it is an important site of discussion on debates on translations. Within translation studies, debates on ‘faithful’ translations take into consideration the translation of the title as much as its text.

The play was initially entitled _Bimba_, which means image or reflection. But the English self-translation is entitled _Broken Images_. Its Kannada translation is titled _Odakalu Bimba_ which literally means “cracked image”. The word “bimba” has another meaning—reflection. The “image” referred to in the plural in the English title has become singular in the Kannada title. Within the world of the text, the singular noun of the Kannada title, namely, “image”, would suggest the cracked image of Manjula portrayed up to the end of her telecast speech. This suggests that in the rest of the text, the image is cracked layer by layer as the alter ego of Manjula probes her past. This gives us the binary division—Manjula’s character up to the telecast of the speech and her character post-telecast. What was depicted as a unified character in the first part gets presented as dismantled, unpacked images in the second part of the text, leading to two different images of Manjula. But the Kannada title, in referring to the singularity of the image, limits these connotations.

But the English title, with its plural noun “images”, would necessitate the incorporation of the image of Manjula presented up to the end of the telecast of her
speech—the unique ‘vernacular’ language writer who became an international best seller, intelligent woman, good wife—as one of the images among several others that get unravelled in the aftermath of Manjula’s speech on television, namely, daughter, wife, teacher, sister, struggling Kannada writer, separated woman, jealous, weak, clever, and crafty.

The first word in the English title “broken,” past participle of a transitive verb, suggests that the image was broken by somebody, which is true, in that the image of Manjula was broken by the television image, i.e. electrically projected “alter ego” the “conscience” the “Freudian Unconscious” (274). But the first word of the Kannada title “Odakalu” is not a verb. It is an adjective qualifying the following word in the title “bimba” suggesting that the fault is inherent in the image. It does not have the connotations of the word “broken” of the English title. The differing titles, therefore, connote a different range or play of meanings, not only of the title but also in the reading and interpretation of the play.

**Characterisation**

One of the important areas where self-translation intervenes is in terms of developing the character of Manjula, the protagonist. The whole play revolves around her. Despite this being a case of self-translation and one that occurred within a year of the publication of the English text, there are significant differences in characterisation between the two texts.

When the play begins, the Kannada text mentions Manjula’s age as about 40-50 (1) whereas the English text puts it as “mid-thirties/forties” (261). The Kannada text suggests that she is wearing a sari. It mentions that she is wearing a lapel mike on the
neck of her blouse but the English text merely mentions, “She is wearing a lapel mike” (261). This indicates that the playwright is allowing a greater freedom to the prospective director of the play.

According to Dharwadker, the play is a linguistic-political debate between English which wants to be seen as an Indian language and modern Indian languages. She remarks:

*Broken Images* takes up a debate that has grown steadily edgier since independence—the politics of language in Indian literary culture, specially in relation to the respective claims of the modern Indian languages and English, which must also be recognised now as Indian, though not an indigenous, language. (Vol. 2 xxvii).

An aspect of Manjula’s character represents this debate. But this dimension has more connotations in the Kannada text than the English one. In both the Kannada and the English texts, Manjula’s opening dialogue in the play is: “Nice. Very nice. Neat!” (1; 261). This dialogue has an important connotation in the context of the bilingual writer writing in English in India which is raised in the initial part of the play. But this dimension is absent in the English text.

Asymmetrical power relation between Kannada and English which gets played out in the urban speakers in the form of code-switching gets completely left out in the English text. This loss in “code-switching” in translation is at one level an integral problem of translation in the context of the play. While the problem can be negotiated in novels and short stories, it is difficult to negotiate in the context of drama, unless the playwright introduces a narrator. But the presence of narrator a is rare in modern plays.
This makes translation of code-switching a genre-related problem, especially when the translation is between the dominant colonial language and the native language.

The researcher is not making a claim that code-mixing and code-switching are to be brought into the target text. This issue emerges because the site of code-switching in translation is less common in translation debates. The issue of code-mixing and code-switching that we are encountering in Kamad’s work is essentially a postcolonial one.

In Kamad’s works, code-mixing and code-switching are rare occurrences. This is because most of his plays situated in the “past”. Of his thirteen plays seven are mythological plays, three are historical, and only three are contemporary ones. Among the three—Maduve Album, Anju Mallige, and Odakalu Bimba—code-mixing and code-switching are evident only in Odakalu Bimba.

Code-switching is an important area which makes both the English and Kannada versions almost distinct texts. While in Kannada code-switching has the connotations of colonial legacies, in English it merely indicates the exchange of information sans the postcolonial politics operating at the bottom. The opening of the play in Kannada with the words “Nice. Very nice. Neat!” (1; 261), and immediately switching over to a sentence in Kannada, “Sari, camera Elli?” [“Alright. Where is the camera?”] which is a code-mix, connotes cultural politics at play—colonial, post-colonial, urban, globalisation. These connotations are absent in the English text.

If we were to approach the issue from a semiotic perspective, each character is possible due to the value of each character sign. Value is a negative relation in a semiotic system. Manjula Nayak is possible because she has characteristics that Malini and Pramod do not have. Malini or Pramod has characteristics which Manjula does not
have. Seen in this way, semiotically Kamad quite successfully translates these differences in characters. If what makes a character are traits like his/her profession, gender, marital status, abilities, and shortcomings then this self-translation quite successfully does that. Perhaps the only place where the translation appears as a different text, is as discussed earlier, in the context of colonial and neocolonial subject identity that gets revealed in Manjula’s language.

If we look at translation as an act of re-presenting and reproducing a signifying system of the text presently inherent in one language into another language then we do have a semiotically equivalent translation. But if we probe whether the same signification is possible in another language, then because of the nature of the text the limits of a signifying system of a language discussed above make the same signification untenable.

**Paratexts**

What does a translator translate? A common response would be the source text. However, the idea of the source text in translation studies is that which not a paratext is. According to Genette in his *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation,*

More than a boundary or a sealed border, the paratext is, rather, a *threshold*. He sees it as a “a zone between text and off-text, a zone not only of transition but also of transaction: a privileged place of pragmatics and a strategy, of an influence on the public, an influence that ... is at the service of a better reception for the text and a more pertinent reading of it... a fringe of the printed text which in reality controls one’s whole reading of the text” (1-2).
When a self-translator translates his/her work, he/she generally translates the text which is his/her construction. But not the paratext, which many a time is a construction of other agencies which intervene in the text.

Paratexts are the most affected sections in Karnad’s self-translation. In the source Kannada text the play begins with nearly two pages of stage direction titled “Scene Creation” (1). But in the English text it comes after the Queen’s prologue. Secondly, the Kannada text does not have the prologue, but the English text has one.

When *Broken Mages* gets translated to Kannada and circulated in the cultural economy of Kannada-speaking circles, the paratext gets reformulated. The reformulation of the paratext means reformulation of the zone of translations and renegotiation of the reception of the text. The play was published under the title *Odakalu Bimba* by Manohara Grantha Mala, Dharwad which has a reputation in Kannada for literary publications akin to the one enjoyed by Oxford University Press. The play appears with a different cover page, which has the most distinguishable face of Karnataka theatre circles and the founder-director of Rangashankara, Arundhati Nag. She derives her cultural capital from the fact that she is the wife of matinee idol of Kannada cinema and an icon of Kannada nationalism, Shankar Nag who died in 1990. The cover page portrays Arundati Nag performing a scene from *Odakalu Bimba* at Rangashankara. The self-translation does not claim to be a self-translation of *Broken Images* but a reworked version of *Bimba*, its earlier Kannada version. The attempt to make the text academic by the paratext called “Introduction” in the English edition is not there in the Kannada publication. This perhaps is due to the fact that Kamad’s plays have comparatively more performance value in Kannada as against their academic value.
in the English context. Kamad’s works are circulated in Indian languages mostly through performances. Their circulation as academic texts, languages other than Kannada, is much less. But in English, Kamad’s plays have continuously drawn academic and critical attention.

Unlike the text, the paratext emerges due to various agencies that come into play in the circulation of the text such as the law, publishing house, printing technology, retailers and the larger idea called market. What one sees then is the circulation of the text within two different cultural spheres appropriating the cultural economy of the respective market.

We also have to consider other parts of the play such as the stage directions and descriptions that occur in the play. These paratexts are specific to plays. They are demarcated either through parentheses, use of font types different from those of the text, or through italicisation, the most popular way of representing them. This is a zone where the authorial position is negotiated, challenged, ignored or rewritten by readers, the audience and most importantly the directors of the plays. And Karnad’s self-translation practice significantly varies with reference to paratexts.

A particular work is shown as a translation or an ‘original work’ through paratexts. In translations paratexts indicate that they are target texts of particular source texts. They also make the writer of the source text visible, even if sometimes they make the translator invisible. In contrast, Kamad’s self-translation makes the self-translator invisible by not speaking of the self-translation as self-transition but passing it off as an ‘original work.’ It is also a process through which he makes the source texts become invisible. In Kamad there is the visibility of the source-text writer and the target text.
Neither the English publications nor the Kannada publications mention on the front cover that the work is a self-translation or translation. In OUP whenever a text is a translation, the front cover *carries* the names of both the writer and the translator, with an appendage “translated by”. But the case of Kamad is different.

The linguistic and textual shifts that Karnad makes in *intra-lingual* rewriting and translingual self-translation suggest that the texts grow with author and his times. They grow with Kamad as he realises their limitations through their *performances* and his attempts to address them. They grow with time due to his interaction with various socio-political changes. Among the two bi-directional translations discussed in this chapter, *Broken Images* is an example for texts growing with Kamad realising the need to refine the texts based on their *performances*. One of the reasons for his quick rewriting of this play across English and then Kannada could be seen as a result of his directorial engagement with this play along with K.M. Chaitanya. The textual journey of *Hittina Hunja* *intralinguistically*, i.e. from the 1966 text to the 1980 text can be seen as an evolution of the text with time. The journey starting with *Hittina Hunja* to *Bali: The Sacrifice* is definitely the journey of his encounter with larger socio-political shifts to which he wants the play to respond. Considering that the play was written in English after two important socio-political events in India, namely, Mandal reforms and the violence that erupted as a reaction to it, and the demolition of Babri Masjid and its consequent violence, one cannot but see *Bali: The Sacrifice* as a play rewritten to respond to socio-political events.

**Texts and Paratexts in Bi-directional Translation**

While self-translating, Kamad treats texts and paratexts differently. His
reference to achieving equilibrium and his structural concern in plays which he spoke about in his interview to Mukherjee (“A Conversation” 29) applies largely to texts and not to paratexts. There are two kinds of paratexts in his texts—those that appear prior to the text and those that appear in the text. Those that appear prior to the text can be subdivided into those of Kamad, the playwright, and those of the publishers. His paratexts which appear sequentially before the text of a play, do not undergo significant changes in intralinguistic translations as in the case of *Hittina Hunja* of 1966 and 1980. But in interlingual translation paratexts significantly get affected as in the case of the self-translation from *Hittina Hunja* to *Bali: The Sacrifice*.

The chapter discussed bi-directionality in Karnad’s self-translations. It identified two kinds of bi-directionalities—linguistic bi-directionality and textual bi-directionality or circular self-translation—and the nature of self-translations within them. It discussed Kamad’s circular self-translation with the help of *Hittina Hunja* and *Bimba* and their self-translation trajectories. It also discussed these self-translations with a focus on titles, characterisations, relationship between characters and paratexts.