Chapter-II

GENERAL PROBLEMS AND WORK SO FAR DONE ON PROSE TRANSLATIONS

Mark Twain is not only one of the most popular authors all over the world, but a widely translated novelist whose works continue to be read in fresh editions in different languages. Prof. Sukumar Azhikode, the first and foremost translator of Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn* into Malayalam, has made a significant point when he drew our attention to the complexities of translating dialects. However, that is only a tip of the iceberg. Indeed a great diversity of problems which translators have to face has been revealed as a result of investigations in this field.

But translation is a relatively new discipline in our universities. Although some attempts have been made in the past, and this subject is getting wider recognition and acceptance among the reading public as well as universities in India, more work on this subject needs to be done.
Research is essential in the field of translation especially on the reasons for the variety and diversity in translations, and also the difficulties faced by the translators. Because of the large number of regional languages, translation activity in India is like a drop in the ocean. Moreover in translating literature, particularly when such translations are going to be used by readers in a different country, the problems are bound to increase.

In our colleges and universities there are, of course, courses in English literature and in literatures of Indian languages. However, there are hardly any course which acquaint one language or literature with other Indian literatures.

The Sahitya Akademi awards have since their institution in 1955 been given to scores of writers and poets different Indian languages. The prestigious Jnanpith award in literature have gone since 1966 to such eminent writers as Tarashankar Bandhyopadhyaya, Bishnu Dey and Ashapurna Devi in Bengali, Umashankar Joshi in Gujarati, Sumitranandan Pant, Ramadhari Singh Dinkar and Mahadevi Verma in Hindi,

As a result very few of our writers can be truly termed Indian writers - most remain confined within the four walls of their own languages. The Indian reader in all the languages is thus very much the poorer. Had these writers been made available to him in translation in his own language, he would not only have had access to other Indian literatures but would have come to know much better what India is like. Each Indian literature would then have gained from all others and the reader in each language would have had the enviable choice of reading the best Indian writers, irrespective of the first language in which they were published. What better way of bringing about national integration
than this. If these translations could be made available, some of the best works of literature could also be staged, screened and adapted for the radio and TV, thus reaching out to millions through the mass media.

R.M.Bakaya in his article "Literary Translation as a Factor of National Integration in India" says: "We need conscious, sustained and planned efforts both at the governmental and non-governmental levels."¹

Translations from one Indian language into another are much easier to do than from foreign languages into Indian languages. The reasons are obvious; we have a much larger number of bilinguals in Indian languages from amongst whom to draw potential translators, and because of our common cultural heritage and history many of the social concepts which create great difficulties for translators interpreting disparate cultures, are much easier to render into Indian languages.

R. M. Bakaya adds that official and non-official agencies as well as writers, translators and publishers should join together to attain these aims as early as possible and keep up sustained efforts in this important national cause. The Sahitya Akademi, the Publications Division, the National Book Trust and other Government aided organisations should put out translations of the best literary works in all Indian languages possible. The Government can help the publishers by giving grants for publishing translated literary works to be brought out in mass paperback editions at cheap prices.

In each of the principal languages, literary journals should be started with governmental and non-official support. These should be made available at prices which people can afford and government should publish the best current prose and poetry translations from all Indian languages.

Literary translators should be given the pride of place that is their due, both in society and by the government. A translated literary work is said to have two authors, the original writer and the creative
translator. Translators should be paid much better than they are at present; their names should invariably appear along with those of the original writers when the translation is published. National and State awards as well as other literary awards should be instituted for gifted translators.

At least one monthly journal in each of the principal language should be published with government assistance, dealing with the theory and practice of translation, reviewing translations published in different languages. Such a journal will not only be of invaluable help to practising translators but also to linguists.

Television and radio should pay much greater attention to the dissemination of the best plays, short stories and other literary works in translation from various Indian languages.

One can only hope that several of our better journals and newspapers will also pay greater attention to publishing the best translations of literary work - poetry, essays, short stories and plays - from other languages.
Of course, all this cannot be achieved in a day. Long and sustained effort is needed to attain these objectives. It may, however, be worthwhile to start at least by translating the best works of all Indian languages in the three pan-Indian languages - Hindi, Urdu and English. These would make them available to readers in all the states.

About more than a quarter of a century ago on October 19, 1961, Jawaharlal Nehru had said:

It has been amply proved that a language grows by its intrinsic strength and not by Government order. Government support may make it grow a little but it does not grow in the real sense. It grows only when it has life. Our languages have that vitality. They are progressing. But if we take a wrong path and insulate Hindi and other languages from each other, they will wither and lose their spark of life. If we want our languages to be strong and to be fresh, they will have to open their doors and windows not only to each other but to the languages of the whole world in order that they may gain from the contacts. This will keep our languages as well as our country fresh.

1. Jawaharlal Nehru, "The Question of Language in the Unity of India", Collected Writings 1937-40 (Lindsay Drummond, 1942) 243-44.
Eugene Nida, who is probably the world's leading scholar on translation, states that translating is "probably the most complex type of event yet produced in the evolution of the cosmos. Translation is the general term referring to the transfer of thoughts and ideas from one language (source) to another (target). Interpretation is one type of translation, and it refers to oral communication situations in which one person speaks in the source language, an interpreter processes this input and produces output in a second language, and a third person listens to the language version of the translator.

Casagrande (1954) wrote of the four "ends" of translation. The expansion on each of the four types draws from analyses done since 1954. Type one is pragmatic translation referring to the translation of a message with an interest in accuracy of the information that was meant to be conveyed in the source language form. Pragmatic translation is not concerned with other aspects of the original language version (e.g., aesthetic form) that would be considered

as part of the other three ends of translation. The clearest example of pragmatic translation is in the treatment of technical documents in which information about, say, repairing a machine is translated into another language. Mechanics should be able to repair the machine using the translated materials. Translators would have no concern other than getting the information across in the second language.

The first 'end (approach) contrasts sharply with type two, aesthetic poetic translation, in which the translator takes into account the effect, emotion, and feelings of an original language version: the 'aesthetic form (e.g., sonnet, heroic couplet, dramatic dialogue) used by the original author, as well as any information in the message.

The third type is ethnographic translation, and its purpose is to explicate the cultural context of the source and second language versions. With this as their goal, translators have to be sensitive to the way words are used (e.g., yes versus yea in American English), and how the words fit into the cultures that use the source and the target languages. This
type is similar to that discussed by Nida under the heading, "Sociolinguistics and Translation" and his most compelling example was the description of the translation from the Bible used by students who were protesting social injustice in a Latin American country. Their translation was in common, everyday language, and it was mimeographed on the type of paper often used in the past for their activist communications. The translation and the form in which it appears thus fit the cultural context.

The fourth type of translation is called linguistic and it is concerned with equivalent meanings of the constituent morphemes of the second language and with grammatical form.

Although there is a large body of work debating the issues that surround the translation of poetry, far less time has been spent studying the specific problems of translating literary prose. One explanation for this could be the higher status that poetry holds, but it is more probably due to the widespread erroneous notion that a novel is somehow a simpler structure than a poem and is consequently easier to translate. Moreover while we have a number of detailed statement by poet-translators regarding their methodology, we have fewer statements from prose translators.
When Susan Bassnett - Mc Guire asked some students to translate novels, they simply opened the SL text and began at the beginning, without considering how that opening section related to the structure of the work as a whole. Yet it would be quite unacceptable to approach the translation of a poem in this way. This is significant because it shows that a different concept of the imaginary distinction between form and content prevails when the text to be considered is a novel. It seems to be easier to the prose translator to consider content as separable from form.

Although analysis of narrative has had enormous influence, there are obviously many readers who still adhere to the principle that a novel consists primarily of paraphrasable material content that can be translated straightforwardly. And whereas there seems to be a common consensus that prose paraphrase of a poem is judged to be inadequate, there is no such consensus regarding the prose text. Again and again translators of novels take pains to create readable TL texts, avoiding the stilted effect that can follow from adhering too closely to SL syntactical structures
but fail to consider the way in which individual sentences form part of the total structure.

It must be clear at the outset that the text, understood to be in a dialectical relationship with other texts and located within a specific historical context, is the prime unit. But where as the poet translator can more easily break the prime text down into translatable units, e.g., lines, verses, stanzas; the prose translation has more complex task. Yet if the translator takes each sentence or a paragraph as a minimum unit and translates it without relating it to the overall work, he runs the risk of ending up with a TL text, where the paraphrasable content of the passages has been translated at the cost of everything else.

In the discussion of equivalence it was shown that any notion of sameness between SL and TL must be discarded. What the translator must do, therefore, is to first determine the function of the SL system and then to find a TL system that will adequately render that function.
Translation studies is still a young discipline and still has a long way to go. There is a need for more general theoretical discussion as to the nature of translation and a need for an accessible terminology with which to engage in such discussion. Anton Popovic's first attempt at *A Dictionary of Literary Translation Terminology* is to be applauded, but it needs streamlining and extending to cover discussion of theatre and cinematic texts. By understanding more about the changing face of translation studies and the changing status of the translated text, we are better equipped to tackle the problems as they arise within our own contexts. There is a need for much more serious attention to be given to the specific problems of prose translation.

By literary translation, we mean translation of poetry, drama, short stories, long stories, novels, essays and criticism. Literatures interact within each other and are influenced by one another. Writing in any language would be poorer if the writer has no access to the work of writers of other languages. The enrichment of world literature takes place through
highly creative work of translation. Kalidas, Shakespeare, Goethe, Tolstoy, Roman Rolland and Tagore would not have become world writers but for the translation.

When Christianity spread far and wide, translation was used as a means to make known the words of God to Men. St. Jerome who had brought out a translation of the Bible had expressed the idea that importance should be given to sense rather than words. Even the pope came to agree with it. It was Wycliffe with some other bishops who translated the complete Bible into English. He held the belief that people should pray directly to God and should abide by the laws of God. Hence came into effect the translations of Bible in different languages. When Wycliffe was burnt at the stake for his revolutionary ideas, his disciple John Purvey went on with the work and came out with a revised edition. It was issued in the form of manuscripts. Wycliff had done his translation work, so well that it is said even now that the Yorkshire people for whom the translation was done would clearly understand each word of it. After Wycliffe, a good
translation was brought out by Tyndale and Coverdale. By that time printing machine was also invented. William Tyndale a student of Erasmus, the co-worker of Martin Luther wished wholeheartedly for the success of his translation and he said "If God spare me, I will one day make the boy that drives the plough to know more of the Scriptures than the Pope of Rome." He was also burnt at the stake. It was Coverdale who could finally come out with a good printed English Bible. Later the Germanic translation of the Bible by Martin Luther gave German a constant standard. Inspite of all the backlashes, Bible was constantly translated into different languages. William Caxton the founder of printing press contributed to the field of translation. He almost translated twenty eight works from Latin, French and Dutch. The next greatest translator was Jacques Amyot, the Bishop of Auxere who was known as the Prince of the translators. He translated Plutarch's *Lives of Famous Romans*. Sir Thomas North took inspiration from this book to create his all time famous work, *Lives*, from which great dramatists like Shakespeare have gathered information.

The fifteenth century is called the golden age of English prose translation. It started off with Thomas
Malory's *La Morte d'Arthur*. Malory uses a different technique in which he sticks close to the essence of the material and brings alterations for the good of the story. This has hence been named the most beautiful prose romance in English language. Great writers like Sir Walter Scott and Tennyson were ardent admirers and derived inspiration from the above work. But there is little that is English in the work except the spelling.

And when they were at the water-side, even fast by the bank hove a little barge with many fair ladies in it, and among them all was a Queen, and they all had black hood and they all wept and shrieked when they saw King Arthur. "Now put me into the barge," said the king, and so they did softly. And there received him thre Queens, and in one of their laps King Arthur laid his head, and then that queen said, "Ah, dear brother! Why have ye tarried so long from me? Alas, this wound on your head hath caught overmuch cold."  

The work of Malory gave English literature a new chivalry and romance that was not experienced until then. Major translations from Spanish were done by John Bourchier and Lord Bernes. Among his works the translation of *Chronicles* of Froessart is the most

notice able, Jean Froessart had visited many countries and had written his travelling accounts. He visited England twice in the reign of Richard III and Edward III respectively. He also visited Scotland and Italy and had acquaintance with Chaucer and Plutarch. The original work was so popular that the translation of his work was immediately accepted. A group of translators at the same period in Italy began translations which were to enrich the whole of the Western World. It all began with the revival of Greek in Sicily. The 'most precious translation on Plato's' works was done by Massilio Ficino. This translation and the Latin version of the Bible were the two great achievements of Renaissance literature. People appreciated and wholeheartedly welcomed these translations. Thus literature of entertainment went on to be translated more and with greater freedom.

A well set theory for translation came a bit late into the area of translation, when Efiene Dollet, a French humanist gave the first credible theory in his book *How to Translate Well From One Language into Another*. In this book he gave certain principles that should be followed by the translators.
The age of the Elizabeths - Elizabeth I and Elizabeth II, was the golden age in the history of English translation. The literature of that age represented the spirit of the age. People became more aware of other places and urged to inherit their good cultures. Hence a person who knew two languages always tried to translate matters into his mother tongue. Philemon Holland who made translations from Xenophon, Livy, Suetonius Pliny and Plutarch, described his translations as literary conquests and hence was given the title Translator General. One defect of Holland was that he used more than twice number of words than the original to give the same sense. The other great Elizabethan translators included Shelton, Sir Thomas Urquhart and Arthur Golding. Shelton translated into Spanish, Cervante's Don Quixote, Sir Thomas Urquhart translated from French the first three books of Rabelais. Ovid's Metamorphoses were translated into English by Arthur Golding.

During this period, George Chapman translated Homer and Virgil's Iliad into English. But today Chapman is remembered just because of his name being used for an ode by the great poet John Keats. In Chapman's prefix to the translation of The Iliad, Chapman
had given some rules for the translator. He believed in capturing the original spirit and exhibiting it in the translation. Chapman through his translation of *The Iliad* was able to convey an immediate experience of heroic glory and terror, violent passions of the Homeric hero and a high moral drama. The names of Thomas Wyatt and Earl Or Survey cannot go unmentioned when remembering the translations in poetry. When they initially did their works, they were not acknowledged and were considered just adaptators. But the recent literary people consider their works as very good at translations. Translation gives the essay form to English when John Florio translated Montaigne's *Essays*. Great Dramatists like Shakespeare gathered inspiration from the above. The period of queen Elizabeth was one of the most remarkable period for translations. Over a period changes came in style of translation. Though styles changed no one ever tried for verbal accuracy.

In France, the translation of classics gathered speed. The French Writers were then translated into English. But the classic translations were less successful. For example great classics like *Thucydides*
and Homer brought little appreciation from the readers. The translations of Cicero, Juvenal and Seneca by Sir Roger I' Estrange was too strayed away from the original that it too could not satisfy the public. Many tried to lay down rules for translation. The Augustans did it in England but could not perceive art as imitative.

Sir John Denham in the preface to his translation of *The Destruction of Troy* speaks of the art and the spirit or nature of the works of translation. He believes that the norms for translation of prose and poetry are different. In effect he says "for it is not his business alone to translate language into language, but Poesie into Poesie; and Poesie is of so subtle a spirit, that in pouring out of one language into another, it will all evaporate, and if a new spirit be not added in transfusion there will remain nothing but a 'Caput Mortuum'." (Bassnett McGuire 59).

John Dryden was the first to recognise translation as an art with definite principles and an underlying theory
But he himself did not follow certain norms that he advocated. But he observes that all those were for the sake of successful translation. So his translations were always praiseworthy and noble. Remarkably about the translators difficult task of keeping the thoughts as well as the words of the original writer Dryden said:

"T'is much like dancing on ropes with fettered legs, a man may shun a fall by using caution, but the gracefulness of motion is not to be expected and when we have said the best of it, it is but a foolish task, for no sober man would put himself into a danger for the applause of escaping without breaking his neck".¹

It is often said that Earl Roscommon is the predecessor of all these translation theories. This was confirmed by Savory as illustrated in Roscommon's Essay on Translated Verse.

In the eighteenth century, Pope was the important figure in the field of translation. Pope translated...

Iliad and Odyssey in between 1715 and 1725. Although his translations were very different from the original, they were very well accepted and appreciated. William Cowper who translated Homer into verse is the one who had done an original translation. Then came Peter Motteux who retranslated Don Quixote at the same time Gray Published Poems from Welsh eventhough he did not know these languages well. Goethe a prominent literary figure felt that every literature must pass three phases of translation. The first phase acquaints us with foreign countries on our own terms while the second phase is that of appropriation through substitution and reproduction. During the third phase, one aims at perfect identity between the SL text and the TL text.

The book Essay on the Principles of Translations by Alexander Fraser Tytler is the first systematic study in English of the translation process. He gave examples from Greek, Latin, French, Spanish and Italian to illustrate his arguments.

The nineteenth century brought great development in the field of translation. Thomas Carlyle is the most
important, in the period, Goethe's Wilhelm Neister was translated by him into English. This became admirable among the English public and made German literature popular. But in spite of all these popularity, it suffered severe criticism. Similar treatment was given to Sir Richard Francis Burton's translation of Arabian Nights. Outstanding poets like Shelley, Byron, Longfellow, D.G. Rossetti, William Morrie and Robert Browning also produced translations. S.T. Coleridge translated widely from Pindar, Heraclitus, Aristophanes and Claudin. Shelley was in no support to translation and observed: "What is translation of Homer into English? A person need only look at Paradise Lost or the tragedy of Lear translated into French to obtain an analogical conception of its worthless and miserable inadequacy". But Shelley has contributed his share in translation by rendering into English Bion and Moschus. Also his translations of Goethe's Faust and Calderon's El magico Pradigioso rank as the finest translation ever attempted. D.G. Rossetti was also a good translator. All these poets had given their own theories on translation. But it was difficult for them to practice their theories. For example Robert Browning who requested the translators to be faithful

could not keep up his words when put into practice. But in 1859, there came the translation of Edward Fitzgerald which was a superb experience. His translation into English was the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam from Persian. He revised Rubaiyat thrice and even today it enjoys great popularity. It was Fitzgerald who maintained that a text should live at all costs and that it is better to have a live sparrow than a stuffed eagle. Mathew Arnold expressed his views on translation in his essay "On Translating Homer". He expresses the idea that only a person who enjoys poetry and knows the source language well is eligible to evaluate a work of translation. But Newman's theory of translation was exactly opposite to that of Arnold. Arnold urged for equivalent aesthetic effect and Newman wished for verbal exactitude. Newman believed in the creation of an impression that the translation was a translation and not an original composition. Nineteenth century set new standards for the translation of creative literature. The earlier accepted notion was that translation meant copying of just the text with the exception of indecent passages and the addition of explanatory notes. But when translators tried to cross barriers of rules, their
works became popular. Hence a new notion of free spirit and expression came into effect in the later periods of translation.

In the beginning of twentieth century the use of language became simpler. This was begun by Benjamin Jowett who translated Plato into simple modern English. He considered translation as a compromise between the effort to be literal and the effort to be idiomatic. He set the target of plain accuracy. When the language became simpler, more and more and even unqualified people tried hands at translation. The quality of translation suffered. But even then we got an idea of the multitudes of books produced in different languages. It also made popular many writers like Tolstoy who would have remained unnoticed without the aid of translation. Again it is only because of translation that the dramas of Anton Chekov, Ibsen and Strindborg could influence the world of modern drama. Other works like Arabian Nights, Rubaiyat all gained importance in England. Many works were so well received that people merely forgot that they were translations.
By twentieth century, translation developed so much that it almost to an industry. Good works belonging to any place were immediately translated into other languages. Some of the important translations are given. The most important is Robert Grave's rendering of Ducan's *Pharsalia*. Jackson Knight's *Aeneid*, Leonard Bacon's *Lusiads*, Robert Fitzgerald's *Aristophanes* and *Sophocles* all became very popular. In England Arthur Waley's Chinese poems were well accepted. Famous writers like Carl Jung, Sigmund Freud and Soren A. Kierkegaard were all translated into English.

Later a new trend came as to give a scientific approach to translation. Each language has its own genius and to rebuild a certain language into another it really needs skill. Translation was tried to be done by machines but human brain was found to be the least complicated machine for translation. Translation is not a word by word conversion. It should take into account the denotative and connotative attire of the sentence. Translation techniques vary from language to language. French and Spanish constructions in English
cannot even be compared. German needs recasting. Sanskrit and Russian need expansion as well as modification. Till now no computers have been devised to acquire all these abilities. So now a days translations are merely the products of human intelligence. So the interest for machine translation has slowly withered off.

In machine translation, the phenomenon of language is converted into a form that can be processed by an electronic digital computer, i.e., into a numerical form. The first machine translation experimenters were scientists and engineers and they thought that to translate was to replace each sign in the SL system by an equivalent sign in the TL system. They conceived language as a finite system obeying regular laws and organised logically and hence susceptible to quantitative analysis. Later, word-for-word analysis was found inadequate and sentence was recognised as more feasible translation unit. Though several international conferences have been held to discuss the problems of machine translation, the progress made in this field is not satisfactory. As
can be expected, machine translation has to encounter all the problems generally faced by the translators and also the problems peculiar to itself. At present computers are looked upon as aids to the human translators rather than as substitutes for them.

It was in the twentieth century that literary critics began to give importance to the theories on translation. Two important names that are to be mentioned here are Eugene A. Nida and J. C. Catford. The theory by J. C. Catford is given in his book *A Linguistic Theory of Translation*. He gave three types of translational theories. According to the first, a translation can be done in two levels, total and restricted levels of translation. In total translation the SL material will be replaced at all levels by the TL material whereas in restricted translation the source material should be replaced by TL material only at one level. The next type of translation depends on the extent of the SL material to which the translation work is done. When the SL material is fully translated it is full translation and when it is partially translated it is partial.
A third type of translation is related to the rank at which translation equivalence is established. There can be 'rank bound' and 'unbounded' translations when TL material is selected at the same rank of the SL, it is called rank bound and when it is not bound by any, it is called unbounded translations. It can also be called free translations.

Eugene A. Nida is another authentic source in the field of translation. He could really know the problems of a translator as he himself was a translator. He translated Bible. His theory was based that on the fact—the translated material ought to be close to the source material. But weightage has to be given primarily to meaning and then to style. His model of translation can be represented.

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\text{TEXT} \quad \xrightarrow{\text{ANALYSIS}} \quad \text{TRANSFER} \quad \xrightarrow{\text{RESTRICTURING}} \quad \text{RECEPTOR LANGUAGE TRANSLATION}
\]

(Bassnett McGuire 16).
Peter Newmark, another important figure in the area of translation studies gave his theory in his Approaches to Translation. He gave his notion that translation was done in its semantic and communicative basis. The first according to the sentence structure and the second meant to produce the closest effect as of the source material as the target material.

Translation is considered to be divided primarily into three types according to Roman Jackobson. This is given in his article "On Linguistic Aspects of Translation". He divided it as Intralingual, Interlingual and Intersemiotic Translations.

Malayalam literature was immensely enriched by translation especially through the translation of Bible. Bible was accepted in Malayalam both for its divine nature and the use of rich vocabulary. Both the old testament and the new testament were immediately received by the public. Many new works, phrases and collocations were derived from the Bible for Malayalam. So Bible has to be considered as the major stepping stone in the prospering of Malayalam language.
The rendering of Victor Hugo's *Les Miserables* was a tremendous impact in the Malayalam literary field. This translation was done by Nalappatt Narayana Menon. The translated version of *Les Miserables*, called *Pavangal*, is so popular that it is considered as one of the most important translations done into Malayalam. The popularity of *Pavangal* led many men of letters to try their hand at translation. Translation came from different languages far and wide, especially from French, German, Italian, Spanish, Greek, Norwegian, and Russian. Kesari Balakrishna Pillai translated the works of Maupassant and Ibsen into Malayalam. Important works were those of Tolstoy, Anton Chekov, Gogol, Pushkin, Lenin and Maxim Gorkhy. The name of N.K. Damodaran is unforgettable when it comes to Russian translation. He translated almost fifteen Russian works. Translations were fewer from languages like Chinese and Japanese. But nowadays more efforts are made to enrich Malayalam with the inclusion of these languages, also.
thousands or even millions of dollars and innumerable hours have been wasted in the duplication of research. But even in these fields, one can rapidly reach the domain of pure speculation. For example, it is a fact that half of the world's medical literature is not in English. The American National Institutes of Health serves the entire English-speaking world with a very adequate, heavily subsidized bibliographic programme that is so modern, it is computerized. Yet, in spite of the fact that half the medical knowledge is not in English, the physician who queries the computer is invited to exclude these non-English items from the results of the literature search. In other words, we admit that the English speaking countries of the world have not been able to cope with the question of translation as effectively as we have with that of bibliography and information retrieval. As a result, we can merely imagine what bad effects the lack of translation may eventually have on our health.

Indeed, the very survival of civilization as we know it, may some day come to depend upon translation. It has been related that a short phrase in the Japanese
reply to an Allied ultimatum towards the close of the Second World War could have several meanings. The translator selected one which sealed the door to further communication and dialogue. As a result, the first atomic bombs were dropped. Yet, few Americans seem to be troubled by the fact that no college in the country offers a degree in translation.

Perhaps similar speculations in the area of the humanities will not produce nightmarish results, but they are nevertheless disheartening. There is simply no way even to begin measuring the pleasure or inspiration which has been lost for the lack of a translation.

A. Nida is particularly significant, even in the choice of a title: Toward a Science of Translating. The knowledge symbolized by the vast bibliography of books and papers on machine translation has not yet been evaluated and interpreted for what may be the most significant benefit to be derived from these efforts: a new awareness and understanding of natural language which should eventually be accompanied by the application of this new knowledge in further developing
translation theory and in improving human translation. Linguistic research now seems aimed at providing machine aided computer aids for humans. It suggests that translation is not the earliest profession to which one can aspire and that the source and target language abilities of a translator far overshadow the importance of subject matter knowledge in the trinity of skills. Acquisition of specialised knowledge is a process which begins relatively late in life, and only subsequent to the acquisition of learning at least one language! Further more, a certain portion of this effort represents the learning of vocabulary, jargon or perhaps what could best be designated the language (or sub-language of the specialized field.) The translator would then be defined -ideally but not unrealistically as a person who masters both target language and source language. Subject matter, if it need be mentioned at all, would be discusssed only in terms of the language of any particular subject area. And the rarity of perfect translators in our world is a well known phenomenon.

Many problems presently encountered by translators (and their clients) can readily be solved by a
language approach to translation that views translation and editing as different, separate problems. If the translator takes each sentence or paragraph as a minimum unit and translates it without relating it to the overall work, he runs the risk of ending up with a TL text like those quoted above, where the paraphrasable content of the passages has been translated at the cost of everything else. The way round this dilemma must once again be sought through considering the function both of the text and of the devices within the text itself. Every prime text is made up of a series of interlocking systems, each of which has a determinable function in relation to the whole, and it is the task of the translator to apprehend these functions.

We need to know much more about the history of Translation Studies. More documentation, more information about changing concepts of translation has become a priority and the establishment of an international collaborative venture on translation history, of the kind envisioned by James Holmes of Amsterdam, seems a logical way to proceed. By understanding more about the changing face of Translation studies and the
changing status of the translated text, we are better equipped to tackle the problems as they arise within our own context.

Within literary translation the work to be done is also glaringly obvious. There is a need for much more serious attention to be given to the specific problems of prose translation and the discussion of all types of literary translation will also be greatly advanced by a consideration of the problems of translating texts from outside Europe and the America.

But in listing some projects that need to be pursued further, it is important not to forget two key points: the enormous progress made so rapidly within the discipline itself and the interrelationship between scholarship and practice that still prevails. Roman Jakobson, discussing the complexities of translation, noted ironically that:

"Both the practice and the theory of translation abound with intricacies, from time to time attempts
are made to sever the Gordian knot by proclaiming the
dogma of untranslatability.¹

Dr.R.A.Asher, Department of Linguistics, Edinburgh University has enriched Malayalam by
translating Vaikom Muhammed Basheer's works into English under the title Basheer Translations. As a
result of that Basheer is known to all English knowing people.

O.V.Vijayan has translated his Khasakkinte Ithihasangal into English under the title The legends
of Khasack. The original Malayalam novel has so far 14 editions. Though it is an authentic translation made
by the original author, he meets so many problem of translation in his work. In order to convey the idea
of one word, he had to write a number of words in English. He adds 'how can a word 'priest' mean the
Malayalam word 'Poojari'. As far as Malayalam is concerned the English translation of O.V.Vijayan is an
important land mark in the field of translation. It conveys Kerala culture across different countries of
the world. Though Basheer, Thakazhy, M.T.Vasudeva Nair and Malayattoor etc. have been translated into other

1. R.Jakobson, 'On Linguistic Aspects of Translation', On Translation, ed.R.A.Browes. (Cambridge,Mass:
languages they have not been discussed with as much importance as that of *The Legends of Khasak*. "The translator should be able to make free translation without changing the core of the original for which ability to write in both the source language and Target language is essential "\(^1\).