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Abstract

Theory and Practice of Poetry Translation in the Hebrew Bible -The translation of Psalm 49

Jung-woo Kim

The aim of this article is twofold: (1) to investigate theory and practice of poetry translation in the Hebrew Bible with special reference to the Korean Bible translations, and (2) to apply our new understanding of Hebrew poetry to the translation of Psalm 49, thereby suggesting a new translation. The first part examines the popular myth of existence of meter in Hebrew poetry, parallelism, image, 'poetic meaning,' and several issues relating to the translation of Hebrew poetry such as 'formal correspondence and dynamic equivalence,' textual criticism, the possibility of 'form-critical correspondence' of the poems between the source language and the receptor language, and structural analysis of the poem. In the second part of the article, a new translation of Psalm 49 is offered, based on a thorough exegesis and textual criticism in the BHS textual apparatus.

Abstract

Critical Reflections on Bible Translation

Tai-il Wang

Based on a discussion of grammatical problems, semantic implications, textual witnesses and the relationship to Comparative Midrash, this paper discusses the appearances of the Hebrew terms and phrase 'ehad in Deut. 6:4, 'azab in Gen. 2:24, umesos in Isa. 8:6, and halak yhwh.....lekol ha'ammim tahat kol-hassamayim in Deut. 4:19, which have long constituted either difficult exegetical issues or multivalent problems in Bible translation. After readings of MT, the ancient versions (LXX, Targums), and modern translations including Korean Bibles, this paper proposes a hermeneutic which, when brought to bear on texts, results in performing Translation Criticism. It provides a model that has several analogies to textual criticism involved in the canonical process. The upshot of this analysis is to explore how the messages of the Hebrew Bible can be faithfully translated and communicated to the Korean Bible in ways that avoid philological, cultural or theological interference between original text and translated text.

Abstract

How to use the critical apparatus of the Novum Testamentum Graece(Nestle-Aland²⁷) and the Greek New Testament(UBS⁴)

Chang-nack Kim

The aim of this article is to illustrate how to use the critical apparatus of the Novum Testamentum Graece (Nestle-Aland²⁷) and the Greek New Testament (UBS⁴).

Its main contents are: 1) a short account of the textus receptus in the past three centuries (except for the 20th century), 2) a short history of how Nestle-Aland's Novum Testamentum Graece and the Greek New Testament of UBS came into being and earned status as the so-called "standard text" of the New Testament in the original Greek, 3) the similarities as well as differences between the Novum Testamentum Graece and the Greek New Testament, 4) an explanation of the various signs used in the textual criticism, and 5) explanation of the critical apparatus of a particular common part of the two Greek New Testaments

Abstract

Use of CD-Rom Titles for Bible Translation

Jin-hee Park

The use of CD-ROM databases for Bible translation requires understanding of information resources and media. In particular, the integrated search engine that accompanies the CD-ROM databases helps these materials become useful tools for Bible translation. This article explains and describes the major CD-ROM databases that can be utilized for Bible translation from the perspective of Information and Library Science. In this connection, it includes the bibliographical information of each CD-ROM database such as titles and authors, publication details, contents, coverages, characteristics, etc., and basic explanations regarding their usage. The CD-ROM titles discussed in this article include [Bibleworks 5.0] and [Scholar's Library] which carry the most comprehensive Bible study materials, and [Religion's Database], [Korean Religious & Theological Indexes and Abstracts], [Dissertation Abstracts On Disc: Humanities & Social Sciences], [R&TA on CD-ROM], and [The Catalogue de l'Ecole Biblique et Archeologique Francaise] which carry indices and abstracts. In addition, it also lists information on the seven CD-ROM databases that serve as reference sources for Bible translation. The Logos Library System and search engines of Bibleworks 5.0 and Libronix can be particularly helpful for Bible translation. Such search engines are also utilized in other Bible-related CD-ROM databases that carry different materials developed by other companies. The development of the integrated digital search engine enables a wide and various use of CD-ROM databases for Bible translation.

Abstract

Proposal for Korean Bible Translators Curriculum

- The Skopos Theory and the Practice of Translation

Ji-youn Cho

To suggest an appropriate curriculum for Korean Bible translators, this article first reviews the one-year program for Bible translators at the Free University in the Netherlands, which is a program that has been supported by the Netherlands Bible Society for the last ten years, and focuses on evaluating Korean translations using the Skopos theory and the translation practices of Prof. Lourens de Vries. The translation principles of the three Korean translations that have been most widely read by Korean Christians have moved from the principle of formal equivalence to the principle of functional equivalence. In the strict sense, however, it is almost impossible to achieve equivalence between the source and the target in Korean translation. As translators select a part of the source, they lose the rest; therefore, they must be sensitive to the intended skopos (goal) of the translation committee and the expected skopos of readers.

In terms of the shift from equivalence to skopos, this article deals with the effective usage of paratext, the anthropological approach to Bible translation, and the selection of the style and discourse. In addition to this approach to translation, it is necessary for the potential translators to receive translation training with an emphasis on the interrelationships among theology, linguistics and translation studies.

In particular, cooperation between the Korean Bible Society and the universities that have theology or linguistics departments will contribute importantly to the new Bible translation project. The Bible Society is in a position to sensitively reflect not only the needs of the churches but the information on recent theories and methodologies worldwide as well, while the universities will be able to give lectures related to Bible translation and use new translations as textbooks in order to evaluate or criticize translations. Most important, however, is for the Bible translators to continuously improve their professional capacity and to realize their strong calling from God, as did the first translators of the Korean Bible.

Bible Translation in the Context of the “Text, Church and World” Matrix – a post Nida Perspective

Aloo Osotsi Mojola

Introduction:

At the top of the agenda of the Bible Society and Bible translation movement worldwide is a certain text, namely the Biblical text. The Biblical text has been understood and may be understood in any number of ways depending on the perspective, ideology or background of its reader. This in turn can generate widely differing readings, interpretations and translations. The Bible Society/Bible translation movement is primarily dominated by the Church. The term Church here refers to the Christian church community in both its Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant manifestations. This is evidently not a monolithic block – but exhibits a wide diversity of colors, textures and shades, some complimentary and some clashing. It may however be understood to possess a certain fundamental unity in spite of the visible internal and external diversity. The Biblical text as understood by the Christian church comprises of the collection of books commonly called the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Christian church community holds that this collection of writings contains Gods Word, or that it is a record of Gods dealings with the people of Ancient Israel/Palestine, who were the recipients of His message as spoken through certain of them – Abraham, Moses, Isaac, Jacob, the prophets and others, but supremely through Jesus of Nazareth – God has communicated a divine Message that is authoritative, truthful, reliable and relevant for the entire human community for all time. In other words, these Biblical writings contain Gods Word to all people everywhere. (For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished Matthew 5.18/ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words

will not pass away Mark 13.31). The Biblical text is accepted and believed by the church, and yet is intended not only for the church but for the whole world. However the whole world does not and may not believe nor accept the authority or the relevance of this text.¹⁾ Moreover the world may read or interpret this text in ways that are completely divergent from official church readings or interpretations.²⁾ What is the role of Bible translation in this context? This question is the main concern of this paper.

The Text – base and original source of translated texts:

There is no doubt that the Biblical text is an ancient text, written by a variety of individuals and groups of people over several hundred years and covering a wide range of contexts, periods, peoples and cultural traditions as well as linguistic and religious traditions. To complicate the picture are the thick and impenetrable layers of both traditional and modern interpretations spanning a wide range of periods – Jewish, Christian and secular. The resulting kaleidoscope of meanings and beliefs coexist in unexpected environments and in unrecognizable guises. The challenge posed in deciphering the complexity implied by such a corpus is truly immense. There is no certain handle or single key available for capturing the essence or the whole truth pertaining to totality of the Biblical writings. It is not surprising that professional biblical scholars dedicate their entire lives to this enterprise, yet none of them has claimed to have been able to tell us everything there is to be known about this set of writings. The proliferation of specializations in the domain of Biblical studies has enormously complicated the ability to master the whole. The need for an integrated vision or unified view of the whole grows ever greater with the plethora of Biblical specializations, ranging from Biblical archaeology, Biblical text criticism, Biblical languages – (Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek), Old Testament Studies, New Testament Studies, Septuagint Studies, Biblical Anthropology and Cultural Studies, Biblical Geographical and Historical Studies, Individual Biblical Book Studies, Individual Biblical

1) For an illuminating discussion of the authority, reliability and inspiration of Scripture see Paul J. Achtemeier (1980).

2) On the question of interpretation see for example Wolfgang Iser (2000) or Mikko Lehtonen (2000).

Character Studies, etc. Besides there are also a diversity of methodological approaches and perspectives in most of these areas – thus complicating the task considerably. The Biblical books as indicated above were written over a number of years by a wide variety of human authors, reflecting their individuality and unique gifts and employing diverse literary styles, discourse types, genres, narrative and poetic types and covering a wide range of subject matter from virtually every area of life and culture.³⁾

The original Biblical text does not exist. Or to put it another way – no one has until now laid their eye or hand on it. Extant copies of copies of these have been unearthed in various locations of the ancient Biblical world. Thanks to the painstaking, patient and demanding labors of textual/text scholars, we have a rational basis for believing that current critical editions of the Biblical writings are as close to the real thing as we can get, given available evidence.⁴⁾ But still the resulting critical editions of the Biblical text remain in ancient languages rooted in ancient cultures, traditions and religions.

The Bible Translation Imperative:

As everyone knows the Old Testament, elsewhere referred to as the Hebrew Bible, was originally written in ancient Hebrew while parts of it such as Genesis 31.47, Jeremiah 10.11, Ezra 4.8-6.18, 7.12-26 and Daniel 2.46-7.28 are written in the closely related ancient tongue of Aramaic. The books of the New Testament on the other hand are written in the ancient Greek tongue current at the time of early church, commonly called Koiné. The ancient African/Alexandrian translation of the Old Testament of the Hebrew/Jewish Holy Scriptures commonly referred to as the Septuagint is written in ancient Greek. If this text is intended for every man and woman in the affluent modern suburban malls of the northern continents or the sprawling slum ghettos and impoverished rural villages of the southern continents – the need

3) John Barton's ed. *Cambridge Companion to Biblical Interpretatio* (1998) and Steven L Mackenzie & Stephen R. Haynes eds. *An Introduction to Biblical Criticisms and their Application – To Each Its Own Meaning*(1999) are a good place to begin for more on this. See also Julio Trebolle Barrera's wide ranging text *The Jewish and the Christian Bibl* (1998).

4) See Emanuel Tov's *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bibl* (1992) and Kurt Aland & Barbara Aland's *The Text of the New Testament* (1987) provide excellent introductions on this problem.

for the translator's intervention becomes indispensable. Indeed without translation the Biblical writings would remain forever closed and inaccessible to the millions whose lives are touched by them. For the vast majority of people the Bible that they know and read is a translated Bible, that is, a Bible in a language they can read and understand, a domesticated Bible that has with the help of the translator crossed the boundaries of time and space, of language and culture, of the cultures and languages of the Biblical world to those of our time, of the ancient political, economic, historical and religious environments to those of our own time. To what extent does this Bible resemble the original one? Is it possible to recover the original meanings of this ancient text in our modern translations and environments? Is it possible to read this ancient text other than from our own current contexts and in terms of our needs and situation? To what extent then is translation a betrayal or is 'traduire sans trahir' (Margot) a live possibility?⁵⁾ These and numerous other questions continue to bedevil the modern and postmodern translator.

Yet Bible translation remains unavoidable, at least for the Christian church. It is no secret that the Biblical writings are central and indispensable in the life and work of the Church. These writings are so to speak her foundational document, her guiding document, her compass point. They are understood to provide the basis for reliable and authoritative teaching and preaching, the basis for evaluating true and untrue positions, correct and incorrect teachings and in general for a true understanding of the faith, i.e. what Christians believe. The role and function of the Bible in evangelism and in revitalizing Christian worship and liturgy is believed to be central to Christian existence and almost taken as a given. So is its role in fostering close and loving Christian communities through common small group as well as individual Bible study, reflection and mediation. Scriptural texts such as 1 Timothy 3.16-17 ('All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching the truth, rebuking error, correcting faults, and giving instruction for right living, so that the person who serves God may be fully qualified and equipped to do every kind of good deed' TEV) are used to reinforce this view of the role and function of the Scriptures. If the Scriptures are central to the Church's self understanding and identity and for the spiritual nurture and growth of her

5) A former UBS translation consultant Dr Jean Claude Margot wrote a book on this problem with the title – *Traduire sans trahi* (1979).

members as well as for her worldwide mission and expansion, their availability and accessibility becomes not only imperative but necessary for her continued existence and vitality.⁶⁾

The Bible is the Church's book. No church can exist and carry out its historic mission and ministry without appeal to the Scriptures. (While in practice some churches may actually carry on without any appeal or dependence on the Bible – it would be difficult for such churches to justify their existence without some appeal to the Christian Scriptures). The old traditional and liturgical churches of the northern continents need it. No less the new indigenous or the so-called independent churches of the southern continents, or the charismatic and Pentecostal churches now mushrooming everywhere. A possible problem in this love affair between church and Bible is the danger of bibliolatry – a legalistic and slavish appeal to the letter rather than the spirit of the Scriptures, poorly lacking in sound exegesis or interpretation.. Undoubtedly this problem exists in some pockets where proper Biblical education is lacking. It could and does lead to a certain fanaticism and intolerance, especially of those whose positions may differ. Another danger relates to churches and individuals in established and traditional Christian communities who have lost touch with the Bible and prefer rather to refer to theological tomes and seminary textbooks, or the word of their professors and former seminary teachers to validate or give authority to their message. Both dangers exist and ought to be guarded against. The middle ground that respects the Biblical text and also gives ear to theological and biblical scholarship is to be commended.

It has been noted⁷⁾ that in the case of the indigenous and so-called independent churches of the southern continents – their coming into existence coincided with the emergence of Bible translations in the languages of the

6) See A.O. Mojola's paper "The Bible – a Tool for Change, Renewal and Mutual Learning" presented at the OD and Churches Consultation held at Mbagathi, Nairobi Kenya, 18-22 November 2002.

7) See for example David Barrett's writings, notably his "The Spread of the Bible and the Growth of the Church in Africa" in *UBS Bulletin* No.128/129, 3rd and 4th Quarters, 1982/1984:5-18 or William Smalley's *Translation as Mission – Bible Translation in the Modern Missionary Movement*(1991: Chapter 10 on "Translation and Indigenous Theology"). Philip C. Stine ed. *Bible Translation and the Spread of the Church – The last 200 Years*(1990) contains some stimulating presentations on this subject

people. The first missionary churches were often closely tied to the cultures, practices and values of the missionaries and moreover depended on foreign Bibles usually in the languages of the missionaries. The vernacular Bible was in a sense the tool that liberated and empowered the indigenous or native Christians. It gave them direct access to the Bible in their own languages. They could hear God speaking to them in their own native languages. Translation brought about another Pentecost. The new indigenous Christians were now in a position to engage the missionaries, to contest their interpretations, to question the authority of the missionaries on the basis of the more reliable authority of the Bible. The Bible thus empowered and released the native believers to relate directly to the God of the Bible without the mediation of the missionary. The translated Bible thus becomes an agent of church growth and of providing Christian identity in new environments. Needless to say the translated Bible is everywhere perceived as the Bible and God's Word for the people for whom it is intended and in whose language it is written. The translated Bible in any language becomes for the Christian believer the inspired and authoritative Word of God in that language.

The Church – custodian and interpreter of the Biblical text:

The Church has an inalienable vested interest in the Bible and more or less has the controlling share on the Bible. No wonder she sees herself as the custodian of the Bible, to keep and protect it, to save it from disappearance, distortion or corruption. This role implies that the Church has a strong interest in maintaining the integrity or purity of the Biblical text through the ages. In other words, nothing ought to be added to it, or taken from it or changed in any way. This is quite an important and pivotal function given that there are those who have wanted to change the Biblical text in precisely this way by adding, subtracting or changing it. Some have actually succeeded in doing so. The motivation for this is simply the desire to have a text that is consonant with one's beliefs, teachings, or statement/s of faith. Translations such as those of sects like the Jehovah's Witnesses are of this type.

Related to this is the thorny issue of canon. How many books belong to the Bible? Who should decide which books are part of the Bible? Is the canon open or closed? Can any new books be admitted or has a decision on

this question been made once and for all? What in fact were the criteria for deciding which books should be part of the Biblical canon? How about the question of their ordering? Is the sequence in which they come one after another important? Was this also settled once and for all? Can any new ordering of the books-based for example on some preferred and defensible scheme- be permitted? Is the present system permanently frozen? How about the system of chapter and verse divisions of the Biblical text? Is it permissible to originate a new system of versification and chapter division based for example on a careful study of discourse elements, genre typology, literary structure and function, etc.? Why not? A strong case can obviously be made for any of these suggestions. The main question here however is: who is qualified to decide? And by what authority? Would their decision be binding? Donn F. Morgan's observations in his book *Between Text and Community* is of relevance here. There he writes: "...the shaping of the text by the community is accomplished by the way in which it is read and interpreted. We may perhaps speak of a 'canon within a canon' at this point. Communities select those parts of the canon that they will use to understand, even to justify, the way they will live out the authoritative story. Although we agree that the canon as a whole remains authoritative for the community, nonetheless, no community can structure its concept of mission, identity, and social norms without highlighting some scripture and often ignoring or disagreeing with other scripture. In all of this, the community-shaping function of canon remains constant, regardless of the changing or unchanging nature of the text"⁸)

There is no consensus in the Christian church community on the exact nature of the canon – especially concerning how many books belong to the Biblical canon? Or which books these should be? There is however a core of books on which everyone is agreed. There is in fact a general consensus by all Christian churches on the 27 books of the standard *Greek New Testament* – in any of the Nestle and Aland editions, normally used as a basis for UBS sponsored Church translations. Disagreements begin beyond this basic list. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church for example is not dogmatic on this question and is inclined to allow for some additions. However the suggestion that the Gospel of Thomas should form a part of any officially accepted

8) Don F. Morgan, (1990), p.16.

Christian New Testament still remains on the margins and fringes. There is also a general consensus by all Christian churches on the 39 books of the Hebrew Bible, as found for example in the UBS distributed *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. Some differences exist in the ordering of these books as well as in the chapter and verse schemes followed. Some traditions follow the Hebrew book order as well as chapter and verse schemes while some other traditions follow alternative schemes. In addition to this basic core some churches admit additional books.⁹⁾ The Catholic church admits all the additional books contained in the African/Alexandrian Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible – but which are lacking in the *Biblia Hebraica* as we now have it. The Orthodox churches would also in addition admit other books not in the Septuagint. The question of Biblical canon is not a matter for individuals or even para-church agencies or institutions such as the UBS to make decisions on. It is entirely a question for the Christian faith communities themselves.¹⁰⁾ Translators have no say on this matter. They are merely servants and as servants can only translate as per the instructions or brief given them by the commissioning churches.

The role and function of the church as custodian of the integrity of the Biblical text as indicated above goes hand in hand with its role as the arbiter of permissible readings and interpretations as well as what may be termed non-permissible or heretical readings and interpretations of the divine Word as found in the Biblical text. Christian faith communities are concerned that readings and interpretations of the Biblical text be in accord with the historical creeds, with the received traditions of the various Christian faith communities and with their official doctrinal positions or declared statements of faith. Within certain limits and under certain circumstances these communities may allow for certain corrections or changes to established traditions or declared doctrines or statements of faith in the light of new Scriptural readings or interpretations. Movements of reform, renewal and change emerge from time to time within the Christian church. The Protestant

9) For a detailed discussion of this see Siegfried Meurer, ed. *The Apocrypha in Ecumenical Perspective* (1991).

10) Lee Martin McDonald's *The Formation of the Christian Biblical Canon* (1988), John Barton's *Holy Writings, Sacred Text – The Canon in Early Christianity* (1997), C. Theobald's *Le Canon des Ecritures* (1990) or Gerald Maier's (Hrsg) *Der Kanon der Bible* (1990) offer good discussions of the issues.

reformation is a well known example. In recent times the Second Roman Catholic Vatican Council of the last century is another important example. These movements in turn have impacted traditional interpretations of the teachings of the Church in a range of areas. Such movements of reform and renewal no doubt through their fresh readings and interpretations and resulting practices cannot fail to impact exegetical and translation praxis. In many situations where the Bible is being translated for the first time translators are often the first theologians, and the ones who invent and create the terms and concepts of theological discourse and liturgical practice in the target or receptor language and culture.¹¹⁾ Their exegetical readings and interpretations in the new or first translations often become the preferred readings and interpretations. An interventionist approach to translation could also through new translations contribute to the creation of fresh readings of familiar texts and to new interpretative practices and uses of language¹²⁾. Such translation activism could through use of fresh and new concepts, exploratory turns of phrase to re-express the familiar and stale further contribute to new reinterpretations of traditional doctrines. It is no wonder that Bible translation is too important to be left to the translator!

Does this imply that the Church is a censor of texts? Some churches may understand their role and function with respect to texts in precisely this way. Hence the need for 'imprimatur' and 'nihil obstat'!. Others may do the same thing but rather unobtrusively. The idea of target audience acceptability and endorsement may play a similar role. The recent case of a new revised edition of the NIV that incorporates gender sensitive language is illustrative of the powerful role of target audience acceptability in influencing and shaping translations.

The Church and the initiation or commissioning of translations:

Bible translation is intended to serve the interests of the Church, including the missiological interest to reach the un-churched. The majority of Bible translations are initiated or commissioned by the Church to serve such

11) See William A. Smalley (1991), *ibid.*

12) In his *The Translator's Tur* (1991:223-231) Douglas Robinson discusses this phenomenon in terms of 'subversion'.

interests. In the real world it is increasingly being recognized that translations are purpose driven and outcome oriented. No translation happens merely for sake of translation. And none happens in a vacuum. Translations are products of their time, reflecting the circumstances of their production as well as the reasons for their production. They mirror the contexts of those who produce them as well as the contexts of those who actually do ‘consume’ them or those originally intended to ‘consume’ them. Functionalist approaches to translation make no secret of their view that translations need to consciously take into account those who are going to use them or benefit by them.¹³⁾ Translations must seriously take into account the needs of these ‘consumers’ of the Biblical text – their backgrounds – their social, cultural, economic, educational, religious backgrounds, their age, gender, ideology, etc. These considerations in turn influence the translation methodology, strategies, procedures, choices, etc as well as the type and level of the resulting translation.

The British philosopher John L Austin in his classic text *How to Do Things with Words* (1962) popularized the idea that we actually do things with words – with our sayings, statements, declarations, promises, oaths, curses, greetings, etc. This can be extended to the idea that we also actually do things with texts, including translated texts. The question of text-function thus becomes crucial. Those who initiate and commission any new translation need to investigate and determine which of the many possible desirable text functions, the resulting translation is intended to serve, i.e. the uses to which the intended text is expected to be put. In practice it is possible to have a translation that has no clearly defined text function and that has no clear audience, addressee or intended user in mind. Such a translation cannot be judged a success. To succeed a translation must have a clearly defined purpose and intended outcomes as well as a clearly defined audience group or addressee satisfying certain characteristics and values.

In Eugene Nida and Charles Taber’s now classic text *The Theory and Practice of Translation* (1969), Nida and Taber spoke of two types of situations, namely (1) “those in which the language in question has a long

13) For a clear exposition and introduction to functionalist approaches to translation, see Christiane Nord’s *Translating as a Purposeful Activity* (1997) or Hans Vermeer’s “Skopos and Commission in translational action” in Lawrence Venuti, ed (2000), pp. 221-232.

literary tradition and in which the Scriptures have existed for some time and (2) those in which the language has no such literary tradition and in which the Scriptures have either not been translated or not so set in their form as to pose serious problems for revisers".¹⁴⁾ In these kinds of situation, Nida and Taber argued that "it is usually necessary to have three types of Scriptures: (1) a translation which will reflect the traditional usage and be used in the churches, largely for liturgical purposes (this may be called an 'ecclesiastical translation', (2) a translation in the present day literary language, so as to communicate to the well-educated constituency, and (3) a translation in the 'common' or 'popular' language, which is known to and used by the common people, and which is at the same time acceptable as a standard for published materials"¹⁵⁾. In reference to the second situation above – which has no literary tradition and no Biblical text rooted in the life of the church – Nida and Taber added that "one must usually accept as the norm the oral form of the speech used in formal discourse".

A new look will reveal that so many other audience groups or addressees with real and diverse needs can now be readily identified, sometimes on the basis of consumer and market oriented empirical research. At the time of Nida's writing, priority and emphasis was placed on what has come to be known as a 'common language translation' of the Bible with the aim of catering to the needs of the second situation. In line with this emphasis, Nida and Taber spelt out a system of priorities. The key priority given there was that – 'The audience has priority over the forms of language'. Secondly he made clear that – 'Non-Christians have priority over Christians'. Thirdly that – 'The use of language by persons twenty five to thirty years of age has priority over the language of older people or of children', and lastly that – 'In certain situations the speech of women should have priority over the speech of men'.¹⁶⁾ The type of translation that meets these specifications was referred to as a 'common language translation' and for many years and in many places, was the preferred translation and was much championed by the Bible Societies. Some of what Nida and Taber spell out in these priorities would enter into what in modern parlance is referred to as the 'skopos' of the

14) Op. cit. p31. This text is usually referred to as TAPOT.

15) Ibid.

16) see TAPOT, pp31-32,

translation in question. Skopos simply stands for a clear definition of the intended purposes or uses of a translation in view of its intended audience or receivers.¹⁷⁾

It has increasingly become evident that a scientific market survey of Scripture needs is necessary to spell out the kinds of audience groups who should be addressed, or whose specific needs ought to be taken into account. The resulting list of addressees far outnumbers the three types identified by Nida and Taber. The segmentation or fragmentation (as some refer to it) of the target/receptor audience groups considerably increases the nature of the task and the ability to adequately satisfy existing needs. The church and those individual Christians who heavily sponsor or finance this enterprise are increasingly being faced with hard choices – how to use dwindling resources to meet expanding needs and how to prioritize among the competing Scripture needs.

The World – What does it does it have to do with text and church:

The Text – Church – World matrix is an inseparable three member set. The two member set of **text and church** alone – is clearly inadequate. A church with the Biblical text but out of touch with the world, would be irrelevant and unconnected with it. The church is of the world and part of the present world order. The church serves the world, is sent to the world and her mission is to the world. Similarly the two member set of - **church and world** – is equally inadequate. A church without the Biblical text would be ill equipped to face the world or to serve and minister to it. The text shapes the church and empowers for her mission. The matrix as is evident needs to be at the very minimum a three member set of **text- church- world**.¹⁸⁾

The church is necessarily in the world. She finds herself in specific world situations, specific world languages, specific cultural configurations, specific historical, political, social, economic, educational and religious conjunctures.

17) see Hans Vermeer's paper (in L. Venuti 2000: 221-232) cited above for a discussion of this term.

18) See Francis Watson who looks at this <text-church-world> matrix in his book *Text, Church and World – Biblical Interpretation in Theological Perspectiv* (1994) from a theological and hermeneutical point of view.

The church inevitably finds herself perceived to be part of a specific civilization, ethnic grouping, racial group, etc. even though she transcends all such entities and outlasts them. The nature and form of the world in which the church finds herself influences to a considerable degree the nature and form of the church – her color and shape, her texture and self identity, her fidelity to the Gospel of Christ, her effectiveness in witnessing to this message, etc. The church is called to be light and salt to the world around it, to be a symbol of the life, of truth and justice, of peace and reconciliation, of harmonious living and inclusiveness. If the church is true to herself and to her mission, or if the values that she preaches are embodied in her institutions and exemplified in the lives of her members – then inevitably the church is bound to impact and transform the world around her in a fundamental way.

The world is an amalgam of cultures and civilizations, of religions and contexts, of peoples and languages, of diverse value systems and traditions. The world is defined by diversity and plurality. Yet underlying all this is a unifying thread, namely the unity of humankind and human needs, the unity of our common destiny and common brotherhood and sisterhood in God, the Creator of all and the One Father and Mother of all. The message of the church has relevance and meaning only in this context. The Christian Scriptures are of universal and global import. This Gospel of the Kingdom is for the entire world and for all peoples:

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1.8)

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age”. (Matthew 28.19-20)

“After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. They cried out in a loud voice, saying, ‘Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!’” (Revelation 7.9-10)

Bible translation is a mediation between languages and cultures, a bridge

between worlds and in the case of the Biblical text, a bridge between distant historical periods. Translation has been described as an act of not just of translating texts but of translating cultures, translating worlds. It needs to place one foot firmly in the world of the source text and its underlying source cultures and languages and the other foot firmly in the world of the target/receptor text and its underlying target cultures and languages. A competent translator is expected to be a master of both the source and target languages as well as steeped or immersed in their underlying cultures, a competent exegete of the source text and a mother tongue speaker / first language speaker of the target language. The languages and cultures embodied in the Biblical texts are not an exclusive property of believers but of all members of the cultures that produced these texts or in which those texts were produced. These texts are only subsets of the larger culture which is by definition larger than the sum of all its parts. There is in fact no exclusive Christian or holy language or culture exclusive to them as such. The language of any translation is part of the language of the larger culture – of which the language of any text is only a limited manifestation.

A proper understanding of any text therefore entails a full understanding of the group that produced it and the system of belief of which it is a part. Thus Christians understand the Biblical text in terms of their Christian practices, rituals, traditions, values, lifestyles, history, belief systems and interpretative or hermeneutical practices. But Christians are members of the world and of their societies. They share in the cultural practices, prejudices, or even crimes of their specific societies. National values, ethnic attitudes, civilizational hubris, ethnocentric myopia, etc. – all have a way of distorting or perverting the values and ideals of the Church in specific locations. A competent translator has therefore no alternative but to gain knowledge of the world of both the source text and target text. This will aid in understanding those who produced the source text as well as the world of which they were a part, and of understanding those who are the intended receivers of the translated text in the context of their faith communities, as well as understanding the larger world they inhabit – its language, culture, values, traditions, ideologies and alternative religions/belief systems, politics, economics, etc.

The <text, church and world> matrix and some implications for Bible translation:

The upshot of the foregoing is simply that Bible translation needs to take place in the context of the <text-church-world> matrix. This of course only applies to translations initiated or commissioned by the Church or Christian groups for purposes and uses of their choice. Translations by non-Church or non-Christian groups, including for example groups of secular scholars, or scholars of other religious or alternative belief systems, would by no means be governed by this matrix. In such cases their particular belief system would substitute for the 'church' slot in the schema, <text - ** - world>, where ** would be substituted by the name of the presuppositions or belief-system of whoever is translating, and then the same rules and considerations would apply.

Bible translators are servants of the churches or of whoever is the sponsor or financier of the translation project/s they are involved in. They receive instructions or the translation brief (skopos) from the sponsors/financiers of the project. The sponsors would normally specify in advance the type of audience or addressee for whom the translation is intended, the function or use for which the translation is intended or expected to be put, the type or kind of translation required or the type and level of language recommended for use, etc. Translators are expected to use their expertise and skills to produce a high quality product that is faithful to the original within the constraints of the skopos and that will be acceptable to the sponsors as well as to the intended recipients of the product.¹⁹⁾

Bible translators need to be trained to a very high level of competence. Geoffrey Samuelsson-Brown writing mainly with commercial translation in view, includes among other key desirable requirements – the completion of a university degree in modern languages or linguistics as well as a postgraduate course in translation studies.²⁰⁾ As already indicated above they are expected to be competent mother tongue speakers or habitual users of the target/receptor language and also well trained to handle the intricacies and nuances of the source language text. They should moreover be knowledgeable

19) On this see Nord or Vermeer, op.cit.

20) See Geoffrey Samuelsson-Brown, *A Practical Guide for Translator*, (1993), p6.

in handling other texts in the source language and culture. They should have a wide knowledge of both the oral and written literature of their own mother tongue. Besides they should be trained in interpreting and competently analyzing the realities of the world of both the source and target language. These are high demands and very few translators in current Bible Society translation projects are able to meet them. Even the obvious and basic requirement that translators should normally translate into their mother tongue or language of habitual use is widely flouted, so much that the non-mother tongue translator is the unmarked case – i.e the norm! A quick look at many Bible translation journals shows this to be case. Non-mother tongue translators should in fact be the odd ones out.

The widespread practice of using other translations as source texts for third language target texts is another serious challenge that needs to be overcome. There is much benefit to be derived by moving directly from a source text in the original to the target text in a second language rather than via the medium of a secondary source text in a secondary language. This challenge is not as impossible as it has been made to appear. If resources are set aside for the adequate training of translators in Biblical languages, there is no reason why they would fail to master them. After all these languages are languages like any other. Prioritizing this need should make a real difference in the quality of the resulting Bible translations. Bypassing the secondary source texts and their languages will have the added benefit of bypassing the weaknesses and misreadings as well as the baggage and distortions that may flow from ‘source’ texts in secondary languages that may be far removed culturally and linguistically from the original source language and culture. It may happen that some target languages and cultures have more in common with the original source text and language, and that the secondary source texts and languages may obscure this fact in addition to creating their own peculiar problems unrelated to the original.²¹⁾

Working directly with the source texts and with a proper understanding of their underlying cultures is likely to greatly facilitate a direct comparative analysis of both the source and target cultures and languages. For a majority of African translation projects translators have often expressed the feeling that

21) On this point see also A.O.Mojola, “Bible Translation in African Christianity” in AICMAR Bulletin, Vol 1/2002:1-14.

the underlying Biblical source culture may be closer to the target African cultures than to the mediating secondary cultures, usually Western European. That this is so greatly contributes to satisfying the demands for the inculturation and contextualization of the Biblical message. This demand clearly follows from the fact of the incarnation. God became human and fully employed the full resources of the receptor culture to communicate the divine message of salvation. This has a link to translation methodology and approach.²²⁾

Translations based on this perspective see the act of translation as essentially a cross-cultural communication challenge requiring every tool and insight needed for the understanding of persons, peoples, cultures and languages as well as of cultural products including texts in their original contexts²³⁾ From this perspective translation goes beyond the words or sentences in a given source text, and beyond the discourse units or entire text type to the immediate contexts within which a given text was produced. Moreover the circumstances of a text's production and the general contexts in which such texts are produced, including the entire underlying culture and its system of meaning production and communication – all these may provide a key to understanding a given text and to better rendering it in another language and culture. The new discipline of Translation Studies realizing the complexity of translation phenomena draws on a whole range of other disciplines. Basil Hatim²⁴⁾ includes in his list the following – contrastive analysis, sociolinguistics, corpus linguistics, text linguistics, psycholinguistics, cultural studies, gender studies and literary studies, while Mona Baker²⁵⁾ for example includes – psychology, communication theory, literary theory, anthropology, philosophy and cultural studies. Baker goes on to remark that “The study of translation has gone far beyond the confines of any one discipline and it has become clear that research requirements in this area cannot be catered for by any existing field”.²⁶⁾

22) See also Andrew Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History – studies in the transmission of the Faith* (1996), pp. 27-28.

23) See David Katan, *Translating Culture* (1999), Basil Hatim, *Communication Across Culture* (1997), Eugene Nida, *Message and Mission* (1960). See further Andrew Walls, *The Cross Cultural Process in Christian History- Studies in the transmission and appropriation of the Faith* (2002).

24) See Basil Hatim, *Teaching and Researching* (2001), pp80-84.

25) Mona Baker, ed. *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*, (1998), p.279.

In this interdisciplinary/multidisciplinary environment, a variety of methodological approaches to translation have become common place, among them – Linguistic, Literary, Semiotic, Interpretivist, Functionalist, Descriptive and system oriented and Post-colonial approaches. As indicated elsewhere by the present writer²⁷⁾ :

There remains however the question whether it is necessary in Scripture translation to commit oneself to any one theory, or to be eclectic and use whatever useful insight or technique there may be in any number of theories, for the accomplishment of one's task in accordance with the expected functions of the translation in question and the particular needs and situation of the audience envisaged. It seems to us that in the current interdisciplinary environment within translation studies, the question, as I see it, is no longer which theory is the correct one. Clearly an openness to helpful insights and ideas from whatever source or theoretical origin, seems to be the wiser move. This naturally calls for a certain healthy and critical eclecticism that draws on all available resources, data and information to create or recreate translations that are culture sensitive and attentive to the specifications/commission/skopos of the translation project in question, while endeavouring to maintain fidelity to the source text within the constraints and limitations available for realizing this goal.

From the perspective of this presentation – Bible translation ultimately seeks to be faithful to the Text and to serving the interests of the Church and her mission to the World. What is important therefore is that the translator use the best tools at their disposal to produce high quality texts in the receptor language and culture that meet the needs of the intended target audience or group, in accordance with the intended uses of the translation in question. It is expected of the translator to be firmly focused on the original

26) Ibid.

27) See Aloo Osotsi Mojola, *“Rethinking the Place of Nida's Theory of Translation in the New Millenium: Scripture Translation in the Era of Translation Studies – A Critical Assessmet”* p18 of original version of paper presented at the UBS TTW in Malaga, 2000, noy in abridged version in Tai-il Wang, ed. 2000: 277-304.

texts,

standing on the ground and soil of their faith community and the **church** that commissions the translation while at the same time taking into account the historical and cultural contexts of the underlying social worlds, that of the source text and that of the target language and culture.

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Why So Many Bible Versions

Anicia del Corro

1. Introduction

“Why so many versions?” This is a common question people ask. For the less informed, this has provided a reason to suspect that there might be too much subjectivity in Bible translation. The labels such as, Catholic Bible, Protestant Bible, which should rather be Catholic edition Bible, and Protestant edition Bible aggravate this. I think, we Christians, have a responsibility to make sure that the true facts are communicated because it will be for the good of the body of Christ. This paper is such an attempt.

We have information that the NIV cost eight million dollars to produce. It involved 115 translators (and probably this includes the editors). The other English versions do not differ that much. KJV had 50, NEB had 46, and NAB had 55 and NKJ 119. This would give us an idea how expensive it is to produce an English translation. But the number of English versions keeps going up. What is the reason for this?

Any discussion on Bible versions usually includes a comparison of the features that each version has. But more than this, the real challenge is to look into the motives or reasons why translation teams or publishing companies decide on such features. In this paper, I would like to look into the intentions behind the development of different Bible versions in English. This will be done by first focusing on one translation, to me the most interesting to talk about, the very first one, the Septuagint. From there, I will compare the different aspects of the translation such as the events that led to the choice of features.

2. The Septuagint:

2.1. History

A story is told of Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285-246 BCE) in a document of uncertain date called *Letter of Aristaeus*, that he wanted to make a collection of the world's best literature. His librarian, Demetrius of Phalerum, called his attention to the fact that the Hebrew Scriptures should have a place in the famous library. The king therefore sent emissaries to Eleazar, the Jewish High Priest at Jerusalem, giving him as well gold, jewelry and royal salutations. The king's request was for a copy of the Hebrew Scriptures to be sent together with learned men who can translate the text into Greek.

Eleazar complied, selecting six elders from the twelve tribes who were well versed with the Jewish law. Upon arrival in Alexandria, the seventy-two translators were conducted to a quiet house by the harbor of the city. From this point onwards, there has developed versions of the story. Still from the *Letter of Aristaeus*, as the translators completed several tasks, they compared their work and reached an agreement. In Philo's version of the story however, as the translators worked under divine inspiration, they all arrived at an identical translation. In both versions, the translation was done in exactly seventy-two days.

2.2. Motivation

Most scholars who have analyzed the letter think that the author was a Jew who wrote a fictitious account in order to enhance the importance of the Hebrew Scriptures by suggesting that a pagan king had recognized their value and therefore had them translated into Greek (Metzger, 2001, p. 15). Still others say that the translation rose from a liturgical and educational need of the Jewish community in Alexandria. The Jews of the Diaspora have forgotten their Hebrew and spoke only the common Greek of the Mediterranean world. Another motive could be to defend the literary activities of Alexandrian Jews against the attacks of other Jews in Palestine or elsewhere in Egypt. The LXX translation could also be a propaganda for the original Greek translation against a contemporary revision (ABD, 1992).

2.3.Textual base

The textual base is the very soul of a translation. This continues to be a burning issue in LXX studies. Paul de Lagarde (ABD, 1992) and the Gottingen school, represented as the mainstream of contemporary scholarship, believe that all manuscripts can ultimately be traced to one prototype. On the other hand, the position of Paul Kahle (ABD, 1992) is that there was never one original translation but rather several designed to meet the needs of specific communities. Furthermore, the order of the biblical books in the LXX is different from that of the Hebrew Scriptures. Job is about 1/6th shorter in the LXX and Jeremiah lacks about 1/8th of the material in the Hebrew Bible. So, will we ever know the textual base? One thing is for sure. It is not exactly the same manuscript as the extant Hebrew Bible witnessed by Codex Leningradensis. This will keep biblical scholars busy for the next hundred years.

2.4.Approach

Even as the very first translation, one already finds the two ways of translating. The books of Job, Proverbs, Isaiah, Daniel and Esther are “free” while the books of Judges, Psalms, Ecclesiastes, Lamentations, Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles are literal (Metzger, 2001, p.17). In Isaiah 6.1, the Hebrew has ‘the hem of his robe filled the temple’ but LXX has ‘the temple was full of his glory’. But, of course, with the question on textual base, one can always argue that the Hebrew in front of the translator of that particular manuscript of LXX is really “full of his glory”. Metzger (2001, p.16) adds that in the LXX, anthropomorphisms are toned down - God does not repent, is not seen, does not have a hand.

2.5.No model for the first translation

Translating the LXX was a difficult task because they had to form and invent the vocabulary to translate the Pentateuch. The LXX is not only the first translation in Greek, it was the very first translation. There is no explicit evidence that the translators possessed dictionaries or wordlists. When

attempting to determine the meaning of a word, the translators drew upon context and etymology. It is not known if there had been exegetical traditions at that time. This is so different from present day translation, which can draw upon some existing interpretation, if not to follow as a model, but can be used for the sake of comparison.

2.6. "Purification"

Because of the tradition of copying by hand, the earliest copies would soon come to differ among themselves. Eventually, the text became so unreliable that other people, such as Origen in an attempt to "purify" the text embarked on his huge work called the Hexapla, similar to what is the modern day parallel translations, of 6 different translations and versions. There were other scholars who did their own translations such as Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion.

Because of the great influence of the LXX, it became the textual base to produce other translations such as: Old Latin, Coptic, Gothic, Armenian, Georgian, Ethiopic, Christian Palestinian Aramaic and Syriac. The autographs of some of these predate considerably the oldest complete Greek manuscript such as Vaticanus, which is from the 4th CE where as Coptic and Old Latin are known to have been prepared in the 2nd and 3rd CE. It is for this reason that these early translations (although usually referred to as ancient versions) are very valuable for the text critical study of the LXX. To this day, the LXX remains to be the authoritative biblical text for the OT of the Greek Orthodox Church.

Out of the translations based on the LXX, the Syriac and Latin are considered most important because they became text bases for other translations. Latin became a dominant language of Western part of the Roman Empire, but second only to Greek on the eastern part. By the close of the 4th century, there was such a confusing diversity among Latin manuscripts. Augustine is recorded to have said that anyone who happened to gain possession of a Greek manuscript of the NT and thought he had any facility in both languages, however slight that might have been, attempted to make a translation.

In the midst of so many divergent translations, Pope Damasus in 383 CE

urged Jerome, the most learned Christian scholar of his day, to produce a dependable translation into Latin. In the case of Jerome, unlike those who translated the Scriptures before him, he had access to two translations, the Hebrew and the LXX for the OT. He had such a high regard for the Hebrew text that he foreshadowed what the reformists would do centuries later which is to distinguish between the apocryphal and the canonical books.

When finished, the Vulgate provoked both criticism and anger of many. Augustine for one preferred the LXX to be the textual base. The Vulgate became the recognized text of Scripture throughout Western Europe for almost a thousand years. Both Protestants and Roman Catholics are heirs of terminology that Jerome either coined or used with fresh significance in words such as salvation, regeneration, justification, sanctification, propitiation, reconciliation, inspiration, sacrament and many others.

Access through translations in major languages gives rise to more new translations. With many knowing Latin, it became the basis of pre-reformation vernacular Scriptures such as Wycliffe's English translation (1382), German (1466); Italian (1471), Catalan (1478), Czech (1488) and French (1530).

3.English Bibles: Pre-King James Version

3.1.A Bible to be understood

The first complete English Bible was due to the influence and activity of John Wycliffe (1330-84), an eminent Oxford theologian. He believed that the Bible is the word of God and the sole criterion of doctrine and therefore should be understandable to any ordinary English speaker. He was interested in both religious and political reform in England. He had powerful enemies who finally were able to bring him on trial for heresy.

It is not certain if he actually made the translation but it is generally accepted that it was under his inspiration that the translation was done. His pupils and colleagues produced two complete versions first in 1382, then in 1388. The basis for translation was the Latin Vulgate. The first version is said to be very literal, corresponding word for word to the Latin. The second version was more free, making use of native English idiom. Because of the

textual base used, the Wycliffe Bible included the Apocrypha.

In 1415, the Wycliffe Bible was burned and in 1428, the exhumed body of John Wycliffe was burned and his ashes cast into the river.

3.2. Era of printing

In the 15th century, the movable type of printing was invented and this brought greater awareness and access to the Scriptures in their original languages. The first printed Hebrew Bible was issued in 1488 and the first published Greek NT came out in 1516.

William Tyndale, educated at Oxford and Cambridge in Greek and Hebrew, conceived of a plan to make a better English translation that is based on the original languages. But there was strong resistance to this in England so he went to Germany. Through a lot of struggle, Tyndale finished the NT, the Pentateuch and several other books of the OT (1526). He was tried for heresy and put to death by strangling and his body burned. By then, the situation in England has started to improve. A complete English Bible based largely on the work of Tyndale, but without his name, was circulated and it could be read openly. Tyndale's translation is free, bold and idiomatic.¹⁾

The following are English Bibles subsequent to Tyndale's with their distinguishing features:

Miles Coverdale (1535)

- first complete printed Bible
- books of the Apocrypha separated
- original phraseology in Psalm 23 "Thou enoyntest my heade with oyle"
- the valley of the shadowe of death;

Matthew's Bible (1537)

- John Rogers believed to be the translator who is a friend of Tyndale. He came into possession of unpublished translations of Tyndale
- includes Prayer of Manasseh;

Taverner's Bible (1539): translated the Apocrypha that differed greatly

1) Some examples are: Gen 39.2 "the Lorde was with Joseph, and he was a luckie felowe. Exo 15.4 Pharaohs jolly captians are drowned in the Red Sea.

Exo 15.26 (God introduces himself) the Lord thy surgeon

from Coverdale and Matthew

The Great Bible (1539):

- It was called “great” because of the size
- the first “authorized” version for the use of the churches
- discontinued practice which followed Luther’s order of books : Hebrews, James, Jude and Revelation, and instead followed the order of books of Erasmus and this was followed by the principal English versions after 1539.

Geneva Bible: (1560) careful revision of the NT; with doctrinal notes Calvinist in tone.²⁾

- first English Bible with numbered verses
- contained marginal annotations and helps such as maps, tables, chapter summaries
- because of various features, superior and attractive character of the version itself, it enjoyed widespread acceptance
- said to be the Bible of Shakespeare, the Puritan pilgrims to the New World, King James himself

Bishop’s Bible (1568):

- reaction to the popularity and superiority of the Genevan Bible and so wanted to supplant Geneva Bible and other versions
- all revisors were bishops
- Great Bible used as basis
- translator’s initial at the end of the section revised to make them more accountable
- became the second authorized English version and eventually displaced the Great Bible as the Bible to be read in churches

Rheims-Douay Bible (1582)

- based on Latin Vulgate
- too literal
- strong tendency to retain technical words such as: supersubstantial bread Mt 6.11; prevaricator of the law Rom 2.25

2) One of the reasons that led King James in 1604 to agree readily to a new translation of the Scriptures was his dislike of the politics preached in the margins of the Geneva Bible.

3.3.Overview: Pre-King James era

One will note the significant increase of English versions after the invention of printing. In 200 years, at least eight English versions were produced.

The understanding of the word of God should not be a prerogative of anyone or a chosen few but should be open to everyone. From this very noble objective of John Wycliffe, motivations for new versions became varied. For William Tyndale, the availability of the Scriptures in the original languages was a boost to translate into English. The versions that followed always included a new feature as one starts to see the competition for readership.

In featuring something new, Coverdale had a complete printed Bible. John Rogers of the Matthew's Bible used the unpublished translations of Tyndale and a different translation of the Apocrypha. The Great Bible is said to have improved the poetical section and presented a new order of the four books: Hebrews, James, Jude and Revelation to follow the order in the NT of Erasmus and not following Luther's order of books. The Geneva Bible had doctrinal notes Calvinist in tone. It is also the first English Bible to use numbered verses, marginal annotations and helps such as maps, tables and chapter summaries. The Bishops' Bible put the initials of the translator at the end of the section revised to make them more accountable. Like the Geneva Bible, it also included extensive supplementary materials. The Rheims-Douay version was a reaction to the reformist slant, especially of the Geneva Bible and so went back to the Latin Vulgate as its textual base. And because it had a tendency to use technical terms, it also provided a glossary of terms.

4.The King James Version and Post-KJV

4.1.The King James Version (1611)

King James I of England saw that the different English versions were a source of division among religious parties. So, he called for a conference where both the bishops and the puritan clergy were invited. The discussion

centered on the imperfections of the current Bibles. The conference itself did not arrive at any conclusion but it was King James who endorsed the idea of a new translation. He himself supported this plan vigorously that within a year, a committee of fifty learned men were chosen and the rules of procedure provided. The Bishops' Bible was to be a starting point and to depart from it only for a better rendering. The other English Bibles can be used as references. The old ecclesiastical terms were to be retained, *congregation* was not to be used but instead *church*, and no marginal notes were to be used unless to explain the Hebrew and the Greek.

It may seem like a political move on the part of King James to call for a new translation, but there is enough evidence that he himself was very interested in biblical studies and had a genuine intention to improve the versions being used. Because of this, it was actually a revision project although it was generally known as a new translation. It was a revision of the Bishops' Bible, which was a revision of the Great Bible.

Despite the KJV being an improvement of the earlier versions, it still had its own problems such as consistency of use of proper names. Jeremiah was sometimes Jeremias and sometimes Jeremy. Judas is also Jude. With other words (not names), however, the editors of the KJV indicate that they did not slavishly stick to terms when others were more suitable in a particular context (Rhodes, 1997, p83). The translation of the book of Job is said to be the most defective, in several places unintelligible. Psalms is said to be less musical. Not as a flaw but a result of the long span of time the KJV was used, by 1861 and then also in 1932, the orthography had to be revised.

The KJV was appointed to be read in churches because of the royal authority under which it was made but it was never authorized by ecclesiastical or legislative sanction. Nevertheless, it attained popularity as the "authorized" version, but in a sense different from the authorization of the Great Bible and the Bishops' Bible.

A new translation is not usually accepted right away. So it was for the KJV. But through time, the critical evaluation became increasingly favorable. With the publication of the KJV, the history of the English Bible closes for a long time. For one, the era was characterized also by political and social upheavals in the society in general. But the main reason for this pause was that, finality had been reached. The version of 1611 was an adequate

translation of the original languages as scholars then knew them. The language style appealed to the common people with great charm and dignity.

4.2. The New King James Version (1979)³⁾

The 1611 KJV was revised primarily to modernize its language. It was publicized to be the work of “119 scholars, editors and church leaders”. The connective “and” based on the Greek *καὶ* or the Hebrew *waw* is now translated as a conjunction or adverbial such as “now, so, thus, then” depending on its context. The pronouns referring to God are now capitalized. The NKJV continued to retain, however, the Elizabethan style of language and more serious than this is its use of the same textual base, the *Textus Receptus*, despite the availability of what many scholars believe to be more reliable manuscripts. This can be viewed as a tendency in Bible versions to improve the translation within the boundaries of its own tradition. So, in the NKJV, modernizing the language is just part of this tradition or theological predisposition.

4.3. Post-King James Version

After more than a century of use, the 1611 KJV was still the version to contend with. The succeeding versions were mostly reactions to it, namely: Edward Harwood’s NT (1768), Charles Thomson’s Bible (1808) and Noah Webster’s Bible (1833). For Harwood, the KJV style was too vulgar. For Thomson and Webster, the language of KJV had become too archaic. There was another English Bible version, one by Julia E. Smith (1876). She wanted to prove women’s intellectual capabilities in the midst of court battle her family had to fight.

After more than a century of usage, the KJV was still the Bible version that people had to contend with. All the revisions above reacted to the language. For Harwood, the KJV style was vulgar. For the rest, the language had become too archaic.

3) Whenever there is an existing revision of a Bible translation included in this study, a comparison will immediately be provided.

4.4.Revisions of the KJV

A few years after the KJV was published, more superior manuscripts of the Greek text started to be discovered. First was Codex Alexandrinus (5th BCE) which was given to the king of England as a gift from the patriarch of Constantinople in 1627. Then in 1830 came the codices Sinaiticus, discovered by Constantine Tischendorf and Vaticanus both from the fourth century. Such discoveries greatly stimulated interest in the field of textual criticism in an attempt to recover the original Greek text as free as possible from errors and additions. With these evidences, it was shown how the newly discovered manuscripts were superior to those used as basis for the KJV which was based on some twelve manuscripts of much later date. The Westcott-Hort Greek text of 1881 became an alternative.

It was not surprising that from the middle of the 19th century, proposals for the revision of the KJV in keeping with the new knowledge of the Greek text were both advocated and opposed. Ultimately, a decision was made in England to do the revision. Just as the Bishops' Bible had been the basis of the KJV, the 1611 KJV was to be the starting point for its revision. The policy was to introduce as few alterations as possible. The changes were to be approved by a 2/3 majority vote from its revisers. Later on, a resolution was passed to involve Americans. During the years of work, the British proposals were sent to America, then returned with suggestions made by the American committee. For the sake of harmony, the differences of reading and rendering of the American committee will be stated either in the Preface of the Revised Version (to be published first) or in the appendix to the volume during a term of fourteen years from the date of publication.

The **English Revised Version** was published in 1885 after which the British committee disbanded. The American committee continued to function, waiting for the expiration of the 14-year period. In 1901, the **American Standard Version** was published. The most significant difference in the ASV is its use of Jehovah for Lord and God wherever the Tetragrammaton occurs in the Hebrew text. Other changes are: Holy Spirit for Holy Ghost; Sheol for the grave, pit and hell; titles of the gospels do not include 'saint'; the title of the epistle to the Hebrews no longer attributes it to Paul the Apostle. The

English style is said to have been improved in the ASV compared to the Revised Version, which was woodenly literal.

Despite the efforts of the British and American committees, their revisions did not succeed to supplant the KJV. This could be because the archaic flavor of the KJV was still there.

4.5.Reaction to the formal translations

The KJV and then followed by the English Revised Version and then the American Standard Version, all formal translations, dominated the field of Bible translation in English for at least two centuries. At the turn of the 19th century, a large number of Greek papyri from Egypt were discovered and help shed light on every aspect of life of the Greek speaking people of the ancient world. One revelation was that the NT documents were written in plain, simple style to meet the needs of ordinary men and women. This led to endeavors to translate the Bible in modern day ordinary speech. Worthy of mention are the: Twentieth Century New Testament (1901-1904) and Weymouth's New Testament in Modern Speech (1903). The initial motivation to translate in easy understandable style was in consideration of an included audience, children. Mofatt's Translation of the Bible (1913, 1925) and Smith and Goodspeed's American Translation (1923, 1927) describe their use of language as free style.

If one wants to write reflecting the way people speak, the style inevitably becomes "free". Even in some books of the LXX can be described as "free", the use of this style as a consistent approach in translation became established with the English versions mentioned above. These will be forerunners of the meaning-based translations of the 60's and following.

5.New Motives?

From 1952 - 1990 when the RSV was first published and then NRSV respectively, 27 English versions of the OT were issued, and 28 for the NT alone. I selected only those, which would significant in our study of motivations for new versions.

5.1. Revised Standard Version (1952)

- a revision of the ASV which is excessively literal but stay as close as possible within the KJV tradition
- 2nd edition (1971) used the UBS Greek text, 3rd edition
- start of controversy of specific verses such as Col 1.14 which was rendered in the KJV ‘in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins’ because RSV does not include ‘through his blood’ and this is because the more ancient manuscripts do not have ‘through his blood’
- Truly ecumenical because it included the expanded Apocrypha, with 3 and 4 Maccabees, Psalm 151 to serve Roman Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox churches

New Revised Standard Version (1990)

The main motivation to revise the RSV is the new developments in biblical studies in the light of the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Changes were to be made to attain greater accuracy, clarity and euphony; eliminate archaisms and to eliminate masculine-oriented language reflecting the ancient patriarchal culture and society.

Material equivalent to three or four verses is added at the end of 1 Sam 10 on the testimony of a newly edited Qumran manuscript and also supported by Josephus.⁴⁾

4) The following are some examples of changes from RSV to NRSV:

Improved clarity: Exodus 11.8

(RSV) And he (Moses) went out from Pharaoh in hot anger.

(NRSV) And in hot anger he left Pharaoh.

More natural English: Deut 29.5

(RSV) Your sandals have not worn off your feet.

(NRSV) The sandals on your feet have not worn out.

Avoidance of ambiguity: Psa 122.5

(RSV) There thrones for judgment were set.

(NRSV) For there the thrones for judgment were set up.

Elimination of man or men when neither occurs in the text

Rom 16.7

(RSV) [Adronicus and Junias] are men of note among the apostles.

(NRSV) [Andronicus and Junia] are prominent among the apostles.

The NRSV also has a British edition, which makes accommodations in spelling, grammar, punctuation and changes in words to replace Americanisms. Examples of changes are from (American) grain fields to (British) cornfields (Mat 12.1); stump of Jesse to stock of Jesse (Isa 11.1).

5.2. The Jerusalem Bible (1966)

The Jerusalem Bible started as a French translation with extensive notes. This was later translated into English but the text was later compared word for word with the Hebrew and Aramaic by the general editor and amended where necessary to ensure complete conformity with the ancient text. This is the first Roman Catholic Bible in English translated from the original languages and thus breaks from Jerome's Vulgate. It is also the first to take major advantage of the Dead Sea Scrolls. The translators expressed their objectives as serving two pressing needs of the church: to keep abreast with the times and to deepen theological thought. To achieve the first, the translators rendered the ancient text "into the language we use today". And to achieve the second, they provided extensive notes that are "neither sectarian nor superficial".

With the background and production of the Jerusalem Bible, Metzger (2001) says that the level of scholarship reflected in both translation and comments is so good that the distinction between Protestant and Roman Catholic biblical scholarship has been reduced almost to the vanishing point.

The JB use of language has a contemporary ring to it. It uses Yahweh for the personal name of God. Goliath was one of the Philistine "shock-troopers" (1 Sam 17.4). Isaiah 7.14 is rendered with 'maiden' but with a footnote that says: "The Greek version reads 'the virgin' being more explicit than the Hebrew which uses *almah* meaning either a young girl or a young, recently married woman". For 1 John 5.7b-8, the spurious message is given only in the comments where it is recognized that the reference to the Trinity is probably a gloss that crept into inferior manuscripts of the Latin Vulgate.

The New Jerusalem Bible (1985)

One of the changes made in the NJB is the reduction of masculine-oriented

language in passages, which clearly refer to both men and women.

The attempt to make the language contemporary in the JB came under heavy criticism and was therefore altered in the NJB. Examples of some changes are:

Matt 5.3-11 JB happy

NJB blessed

John 16.20 (JB) I tell you most solemnly

(NJB) In all truth I tell you

5.3.The New American Bible (1970)

The beginnings of the translation were from a translation based on the Latin Vulgate. But in 1944, the direction changed when it was decided to translate from the original languages. The translation aims to use modern American idiom. In the OT, the translators departed more than a few times from the Masoretic text of 1 and 2 Samuel. Instead, the MT was corrected by a more ancient Hebrew manuscript from Cave 4 of Qumran.

Isaiah 7.14 is translated with 'virgin', with a lengthy annotation.

Revised New Testament, New American Bible (1986)

Eight years after the publication of the NAB, plans were drawn for a thorough revision of the NT. The reasons given are the recent developments in biblical studies and the changing nature of languages. The result of this found a movement to a more literal translation. The other change is in the accommodation of gender-neutral language insofar that the faithfulness to the original allows.

5.4.The New English Bible (1970)

At the time when the collaboration of the Protestant churches in Great Britain was considered for the revision of the RSV, a decision was made that they will instead begin a new translation that is not within the tradition of the 1611 KJV. The outcome was the NEB.

The aim of the translators was to cut loose from all previous renderings

and to render the original language as it is understood in the present day and put this in the natural vocabulary, constructions, rhythm of contemporary speech. One of the exceptions is the use of 'thou' in prayer addressed to God. The result can be seen in the following examples:

1 Thes 4.13 those who sleep in *death*⁵⁾

Col 1.22 in his body of flesh *and blood*

Matt 18.10 *guardian* angel

1 Cor 5.9 (Paul advises the Corinthians) you must have nothing to do with loose-livers.)

John 6.60 This is more than we can stomach.

Revised English Bible (1989)

In the preface on the intentions of the reviewers, it is explicitly mentioned that the style of English is fluent and appropriate for liturgical use, while maintaining intelligibility for worshippers of a wide range of ages and backgrounds. The 'thou' use even in prayer to God is abandoned in the revision and gender inclusive language is used when applicable.

The changes resulted in more conservative and less idiosyncratic rendering. The following changes are made:

Jos 15.18 NEB she broke wind

REB she dismounted

Eze 21.7 NEB all men's knees run with urine

REB All knees will turn to water

1Cor 5.9 NEB have nothing to do with loose-livers

REB have nothing to do with those who are sexually immoral

5.5. New International Version (1978)

After the RSV was severely criticized after its publication, the Bibles published under conservative auspices are: Amplified Bible (1965), Modern Language Bible (1969) and NASB (1971). None of these succeeded in becoming the standard Bible for the conservative Protestant as much as the

5) The words in italics are not in the original text.

NIV. It is now generally accepted as the English Bible version for the conservative in theology and politics.

The NIV is widely publicized as interdenominational. The preface lists thirteen different denominations represented. Emphasis was on the translator's high view of Scripture, the infallibility of God's word in written form.

Some inconsistencies are noted in the name of Mary Magdalene, for example. It is such, Mary Magdalene in the synoptic gospels but Mary of Magdala in John. In the reckoning of time, the form of the Greek is retained in the gospels, such as 'third hour'. But in Acts, it uses the modern way, 'nine in the morning'.

The NIV is not consistently formal neither is it consistently free or meaning based. For words and phrases that bear important theological concepts, the form of the source language is retained. Some examples are:

Mark 1.4	baptism of repentance
Matt 3.15	righteousness
Rom 4.25	justification
Rom 9.11	election

New International Reader's Version (NIRV) (1996)

This is an attempt of Zondervan, the publisher of NIV, to provide a simplified Bible version at a reading level of 3rd or 4th grade students which can serve as a transition to the level of NIV. The committee that was formed agreed to use gender-inclusive language. The complete Bible was finished in 1995.

In 1996, a simplified NIV was issued in Great Britain under the title, *New International Version Popular Edition, Inclusive Language* and in 1997 under the title NIV Inclusive Language edition (NIVI). This is not sold legally in the United States. Some of the clientele of Zondervan reacted violently. Some examples to compare the difference are given below:

Gen 1.27	
NIV	God created man in his own image.
NIVI	God created human beings in his likeness.
NIRV	God created man in his own likeness.

Prov 5.21

NIV A man's ways are in full view of the Lord.

NIVI Your ways are in full view of the Lord.

NIRV The Lord watches a man's ways.

John 11.50

NIV It is better for you that one man die for the people.

NIVI It is better for you that one person die for the people.

NIRV It is better for you if one man dies for the people.

5.6. The New American Standard Bible (1971)

The Lockman Foundation, a nonprofit Christian corporation formed in 1942 to promote Christian education, evangelism and Bible translation, launched a new translation project in 1959. By this time, the copyright on the 1901 ASV had expired. The ASV was chosen as the basis of the new translation.

The revisers reverted to the traditional format of the Geneva Bible (1560) and the KJV (1611) in which each verse begins a new paragraph. So, new paragraphs based on the thought of the discourse are signaled by the use of boldface numbers or letters. Unlike the ASV, Jehovah is not used and instead uses LORD. All pronouns referring to God are capitalized.

5.7. Jewish translations

The Holy Scriptures according to the Masoretic Text is a publication of the Jewish Publication Society of America that was published in 1917. It has close affinity to the King James Version and the Revised Version. A totally new translation called the *Tanakh* was finished in 1962. The style is highly literary. For the Tetragrammaton, LORD is used. It is interesting to note that 190 times, the translator admits that the meaning of the Hebrew is obscure.

Heinz W. Cassirer's New Testament (1989) and **David H. Stern's Complete Jewish Bible (1998)** are translations intended to show the Jewishness of the Scriptures. The two authors undertook the translation after their conversion to Christianity. Stern's translation of the OT is something between a translation and a paraphrase.

6. Meaning based versions

6.1. Basic English Bible (1949)

Basic English is a simplified form of English. It comprises a vocabulary of 850 words and the assumption is that, when used in accordance with a few simple rules, these can express the meaning of everything that can be said in English. The Basic English Bible was devised based on this principle. However, to accommodate concepts that are typical of the material, the number of vocabulary was increased to 1,000.

6.2. J.B Phillips' Version (1958)

The translation is committed to convey to the modern reader the full import of the original in an easy-to-read style. To attain this, Phillips says that the translator should be free to expand or explain the text. The only setback is that the Textus Receptus was used in numerous passages. However, following the UBS Greek Text in 1966, Phillips made adjustments accordingly. Phillips removed many conversationally worded additions such as, "as I am sure you realize" or "you must know now" and many extra words that are not found in the Greek text at all.

6.3. Good News Bible(1976) (now Good News Translation)

In 1961, the American Bible Society (ABS) received a letter inquiring about a translation that would suit the needs of new literates and foreign language groups in the United States. So, the ABS embarked on a project to prepare a common-language translation of the Scriptures in English. The main translator is Robert Bratcher. He made the initial drafts which were sent to consultants in ABS and also in British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS). The New Testament called *Good News for Modern Man* was published in 1966. With the help of many other scholars, the OT was issued in 1976 and with the Apocrypha in 1979. The 1976 edition endeavored to avoid male-oriented

language but more changes were needed to show more sensitivity to issues of gender and this was done in the 1992 edition.

The GNT adopts the principle called Dynamic Equivalence or Functional Equivalence. Customs and concepts in the Bible are expressed in terms understandable to the modern audience. Some examples are:

Ps 23.5 ...anointed my head with oil > welcomed me as an honored guest

Rom 12.20 heap coals of fire on his head > make him burn with shame

2 Sam 7.16 thy throne shall be established forever > your dynasty will never end

6.4. Contemporary English Version (1995)

This is the second English translation from the ABS using modern speech. At the start, it was planned to be a translation for the early youth and focused on the vocabulary and understanding of children in grades one through three. But now it is being promoted as a Bible for the whole family. The CEV is made from the original texts and is not a paraphrase. The main translator is Barclay Newman assisted by over a hundred members who function as translators, English language specialists and biblical scholars. The CEV is said to be more easily understood than the GNT, both when read and heard. A lot of care was put into the way the translation is heard since more people hear the Bible read to them than they themselves reading it.

Theological terms are replaced by other expressions or phrases appropriate to the context. Some examples are: parable > story; hosanna > hooray. 'grace' is never used but instead is translated in many ways such as: Acts 4.33 blessed, 18.27 God's kindness, Gal 2.21 undeserved kindness.

7. Paraphrases

7.1. The Living Bible (1971)

The *Living Bible, Paraphrased* has enjoyed phenomenal distribution in publishing history. By the mid-70's, it had captured 46% of the total sales of

the Bible in the USA. By the close of the century, it had been translated into nearly 100 languages spoken by 90% of the world's population.

The LB is the result of a father's effort to make the Bible more understandable to his family for their daily family devotions. So, on his way to work, he occupied his 45-minute train ride by paraphrasing the ASV. This man is Kenneth Taylor. He acknowledges his work to be a paraphrase of the Bible, taking a rigid evangelical position. Examples of such terms reflecting this are: Rom 3.21 righteousness of God > way to heaven; Rom 5.16 justification > glorious life; Mark 10.17 the richness of eternal life > get to heaven; Mark 1.1 gospel > wonderful story.

One example that gives reason to call it a paraphrase, and not a translation, is Amos 1.1.

NRSV

The words of Amos, who was among the shepherds of Tekoa,

LB

Amos was a herdsman living in the village of Tekoa. All day long he sat on the hillsides watching the sheep, keeping them from

New Living Translation (1996)

This is a revision of the Living Bible but no longer as a paraphrase but as a translation from the original languages using dynamic equivalence. The translation is aimed at the reading level of a junior-high student. It also uses gender inclusive language. One example is chosen here to show the shift from the paraphrase to a translation:

Matt 7.2

LB For others will treat you as you treat them.

NLT For others will treat you as you treat them. Whatever measure you use in judging others, it will be used to measure how you are judged.

7.2.The Message (NT 1993)

Eugene Peterson's *The Message: The New Testament in Contemporary Language* attempts to do for the 1990's what Kenneth Taylor's *Living Bible* did in the 1970's. In the introduction, Peterson states his goal to convert the tone, the rhythm, the events, the ideas of the Greek NT into the way people of today actually think and speak. It is not particularly important to use

simple words but rather to forcefully convey the meaning to the reader. However, the danger of a paraphrase is to go beyond the bounds of legitimate translation as in the following example:

Matt 5.41

RSV and if anyone forces you to go one mile, go also the second mile.

NLT If someone takes unfair advantage of you, use the occasion to practice the servant life. No more tit-for-tat. Live generously.

The biblical culture is completely lost where Roman soldiers had the right to require Jews to carry their packs.

8. Bible Versions with Doctrinal comment

8.1. The New World Translation (1961)

The New World Translation is the version used by the Jehovah's Witnesses. Its doctrines are reflected in the translation. The word "Jehovah" is used in the New Testament 237 times. It is quite arbitrary how they substitute it for κυριος Lord . And example is

Acts 19.20

NWT Thus in a mighty way the word of Jehovah kept growing and prevailing...

NRSV So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed.

John 1.1

NWT In the beginning the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god.

NRSV In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

8.2. Christian Community Bible (1988)

The introduction says that the Christian Community Bible was translated from the Hebrew and Greek texts. The doctrinal content is not found in the text itself but rather in the notes. For example, for Matthew 16.13-20, the

notes include reference to the Pope as the successor of Peter.

9.Synthesis

So, why are there so many versions?

The decision to produce a certain version is situated in a particular milieu. It is therefore necessary to see the intention only in a certain context, then the execution of the intention through a version with all its characteristics and features. The intention or motivation can only be appreciated in the light of its milieu or context.

9.1.Need motive

The context relevant to the production of the LXX was that the Greek speaking Jews did not have the Scriptures in their language. The Jews did not abandon their Jewish customs and beliefs but they have adopted the Greek language in their new home in the Mediterranean. It was only natural to desire to have a copy of the Scriptures in the language that they spoke. The story in the Letter of Aristeas gives the reason that the Egyptian king wanted to complete his library and therefore wanted also a copy of the Hebrew Scriptures in Greek. But as mentioned earlier, scholars now believe that the real reason must have been the need for a copy of the Scriptures in the language the people understood.

The Hebrew Scriptures became available to another group of people when it was translated into Old Latin, by way of the Greek translation. The Old Latin translation became a daughter translation of the LXX. This was the start of secondary text bases for the translation into other languages. The more widespread the secondary text base is, such as Latin which was a dominant language in the Roman Empire, the more access it gave to other languages. The Old Latin translation of the LXX became the basis of translations in English (Wycliffe), German, Italian, Catalan, Czech and French.

There was no translation of the Scriptures into English that's why John Wycliffe made his first English translation. It was important to Wycliffe that every individual understand the Bible, which is the sole criterion of doctrine.

Through the centuries, this need motive changed considerably. What started as a need for a translation in a language that did not have one, and this was for a whole population, need became specific for a sector of the population, differentiated by religious faith (Jewish, Roman Catholic) or religious orientation (NIV), mode of contact with the text (CEV). This tendency to publish for specific segments of society is most evident in special editions of Bibles now such as Bible for pastors, for women, for the student, for the colored man, etc. Although the same biblical text is used, it is the features that make them appeal to these different segments of society.

9.2. Textual base

Why so many versions? The choice of different textual bases generates new versions. The LXX was based on the Hebrew Scriptures but the LXX also became a textual base for other translations such as Old Latin. However, Jerome's Vulgate was based on the Hebrew text. Although an English translation was already available during the time of Tyndale, he nevertheless wanted to make a better translation based on the Hebrew text.

For the New Testament, English versions are sometimes differentiated based on the textual base used. The famous case, of course, is the KJV and NKJV that use the Textus Receptus. The British Revised Version (1885) and American Standard Version (1901) were planned as new translations because of the discovery of what is believed to be more reliable manuscripts, the Westcott and Hort text of 1881. And critical texts continue to be updated, the latest now being the 4th edition of the UBS GNT and the 27th edition of Nestle-Aland text.

9.3. Approach in translation

In the LXX, the two types of translation are found; one reflecting form and one reflecting meaning. A variety of approaches are also evident in the early English versions. Wycliffe's first attempt was literal but produced a version that was more free after that. Tyndale's was quite free as well. The other English versions that followed, especially the Bishops' Bible which was to be the starting point of the KJV, must have been quite literal, judging from the

preface to the KJV 1611. Though restrained by this provision, the primary concern of the KJV translators was for the word of God to be clearly understood.

The English versions following the KJV remained quite formal. But also in reaction to this, versions that were more reflective of how people spoke or wrote in more natural form started to appear. The GNT provided a faithful translation that is easy to understand, especially for those who are non-native speakers of the language.

9.4.Added New Feature

An added new feature is a motivation for a new version. So for Tyndale, it was the first to be based on the original languages. For Coverdale, it was the first complete Bible. For the Great Bible, it discontinued the practice of following Luther's order of books. The Geneva Bible included notes that were Calvinist in tone but it had features that help the reader such as maps, tables and chapter summaries.

In the expanded edition of the RSV, aside from the Apocrypha, it included the additional books: Psalm 151, 3 and 4 Maccabees that are part of the canon of Eastern Orthodox churches. Thus, it can be considered a truly common Bible because of its ecumenical nature.

9.5.Improvement of a translation or versions

The early Christian church rejected the translation of Daniel in the LXX for being deficient and used instead a translation by Theodotion done in the 2nd century CE. Jerome was commissioned by Pope Damasus to make a new translation that was more uniform and dependable, which became the Latin Vulgate, because of the then numerous divergent Latin translations. Although the KJV was used to unify the different factions in the religious community, the revision was understood to be an improvement of the Bishops' Bible.

It is inevitable that the language used in a translation lags behind the many changes in the language used in a community. At the same time, there are new developments in the field both of biblical studies and translation principles that can be used in new Bible translations. For these reasons,

revisions become necessary. If one looks at the history of Bible translation, it seems that versions are always intended to be improvements of the older versions. This has not been more pronounced than in the last 50 years in English Bible translation history. One can see the completion of the RSV, NASB, Jerusalem Bible, New American Bible, New English Bible, New International Version, Living Bible, GNT and CEV, and their respective revisions or updated editions.

9.6. Different audiences

The improvement of versions (9.5) has to be discussed together with different audiences. In the 20th century, different versions were published to meet the needs of their constituency. Different constituencies could be the conservative evangelical for the NIV, the Roman Catholic for the NAB and JB, the audience that prefers literary language for the NEB, or the one who is more likely to hear the text rather than read it for the CEV, and so on.

10. Age of Refinement

10.1. Improve comprehension, naturalness

In the last 30 years or so, there has been a revision of the complete Bible for four of these (RSV, NEB, JB and LB), and a revision of the NT for two of these. Because of these revisions, I think we have reached the age of refinement. It is an age of refinement because the revisions do not entail drastic changes such as the changes one saw in the 17th to the 19th century.⁶⁾ Many of the changes now are intended to improve the communication of the message through less than major changes.

Ps 86.11

RSV Unite my heart to fear thy name.

NRSV Give me an undivided heart to revere your name.

Gen 1.27

6) Such as from the use of LORD to Jehovah; or from a bloodless translation to one that uses blood.

NIV God created man in his own image.

NIRV God created man in his own likeness.

Differences in dialects have also resulted in different editions such as NRSV, which has an American and British edition. The GNT has also both editions, and CEV even has an Australian edition.

10.2.Sensitive to feedback

The age of refinement shows that Bible publishers or translation teams have become sensitive to feedback from Bible users. For this reason, revisions can entail a substantial change such as the shift in approach of the LB from a paraphrase to a translation in the NLT. Another significant change in the versions/revisions after 1985 is the introduction of gender inclusive language.

Because of the very essence of Bible translation, it persists to be a conservative endeavor. Revisions introduce changes showing a development from the previous version. In the REB, the revision has become more conservative compared to the NEB, and the revised NT of the NAB also became more literal. Although the GNT has not really been revised, the 1979 edition modified verses that formerly omitted blood. The 1992 edition made numerous changes relating to inclusive language.

The reasons to revise could be a combination of many reasons rather than just one.

Considering that a new translation, whether a new one or just a revision, is so expensive, sometimes one wonders if the motivation for producing new versions is still mission driven or market driven. Are there Bible translations that are sensitive to what the market wants? Is “constituency” still the appropriate term or should it be “clientele”? It scary to think motivations could become market driven because when it does, will a translation contain what the reader wants to find rather than what the text is actually saying?

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Abbreviations:

CEV Contemporary English Version
GNT Good News Translation
JB Jerusalem Bible
KJV King James Version
LB Living Bible
LXX Septuagint
NAB New American Bible
NASB New American Standard Bible
NIV New International Version
NIRV New International Reader's Version
NJB New Jerusalem Bible
NKJV New King James Version
NLT New Living Translation
NRSV New Revised Standard Version
NWT New World Translation
REB Revised English Bible
RSV Revised Standard Version

Bible Translations for the Majority Population from West Asia to East Asia with a Focus in Southeast Asia

Daud Soesilo

Introduction

In Bible translation there is no one size that fits all. Indeed it is only a dream to think that there is one translation that will meet the needs of everyone from all walks of life. Years ago Eugene Nida and Charles Taber even stated that the old question “Is this a correct translation?” must be replied by raising another question, “For whom?”¹⁾ Hence, discussing Bible Translations in West Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia and East Asia contexts means we must consider the diverse audiences to know which Bible translations are potentially suitable to meet the needs of the majority population so that they can understand the biblical message correctly and will not misunderstand it.

Let’s take the example of the situation in one country in East Asia where the majority of the population has had wide exposure to Buddhism. William Smalley told us what an average saffron-robed Buddhist monk of Bangkok, Thailand, would understand the meaning of the translation of Jn 3:16 into Thai:

The Sacred Lord was so infatuated with the entangling world that he gave his only sacred son so that anybody gullible enough to believe in the sacred one would not die, but would have the misfortune of continuing in the endless round of suffering.²⁾

Smalley went on to say that in the orthodox Thai Buddhist view senses and

1) Eugene A. Nida and Charles R. Taber, *The Theory and Practice of Translation*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1974, p. 1.

2) William A. Smalley, “Theology as Language” in *I Must Speak to You Plainly. Essays in Honor of Robert G. Bratcher*, edited by Roger L. Omanson. Carlisle, Cumbria, UK: Paternoster, 2000, p. 215.

feelings (like love) create wants and anxieties which entangle us in the world of suffering. A ‘Sacred Lord’ must be far above such an emotion as loving.³⁾ Moreover, gullibility is frequently implied in Thai expressions used to translate ‘believe.’⁴⁾ Last but not least, Thai typically believe that when any creature dies it is reborn as another creature, with greater or lesser suffering. The only way to escape the endless round of suffering is to become ‘enlightened’ so as to move out of the cycle. Thus, the last thing a Thai Buddhist wants is to keep on living forever.⁵⁾

As a matter of fact, for the most part in East Asia and parts of South Asia the presentation of the 4 Gospels’ accounts of Jesus’ birth, life and death in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, could easily be misunderstood as affirming the teaching of reincarnation. In addition, Jesus sending the man with the dreaded skin disease to see the priest (Mt 8:1-4, Mk 1:40-45, Lk 5:12-16), could easily be understood as Jesus did not succeed in healing the person, hence Jesus sent this man to see a (Buddhist) priest.

Similarly in West Asia, South Asia and Southeast Asia where the majority of the population has had much exposure to Islam, they will have some preconceived ideas about Bible and Bible translation which will somehow color their understanding when they hear or read the translation. Among other things, many would understand that when God put Abraham (*Ibrahim*) to the test of faith, Abraham was ready to offer his son Ishmael born of Hagar as a sacrifice following the dominant traditional view among Muslims today⁶⁾ rather than his son Isaac born of his wife Sarah following the biblical account (Gn 22:1-14).

It would hardly do justice to cover all majority audiences in West Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia and East Asia in this brief paper. Thus the discussion will be limited to a bird’s eye view of the various attempts in Bible translating for the majority population in Southeast Asia, especially in Indonesia and Malaysia, with some relevant references to other countries in the region.

3) Ibid., p. 216.

4) Ibid., p. 216.

5) Ibid., p. 216.

6) John Kaltner, “Abraham’s Sons: How the Bible and Qur’an See the Same Story Differently” in *Bible Review*, Vol. XVIII, No. 2 (April, 2002):16-23, 45-46.

How Do Bible Societies Serve Bible Translation Needs?

The first task for which a national Bible Society was founded is Bible translation, it has been the backbone of Bible Society ministries, and is still a key element in our mission. It is to make the Word of God available to all people in a translation that is faithful to the meaning of the original texts (Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek) and in a language which is easily understood.

In the year 2000 when representatives from national Bible Societies in the fellowship of the United Bible Societies met during its World Assembly in Midrand, South Africa, they agreed on the Identity and Ethos statement of the organization which describes its common task as achieving the widest possible, effective and meaningful distribution of the Holy Scriptures and of helping people interact with the Word of God.

In line with the UBS Identity and Ethos, each member society serves the churches by translating, publishing and supplying Scriptures in the languages of the people (national and the various vernacular languages), to meet the churches' need for Scriptures for their life and worship, for spiritual nurture, for ministry, mission and evangelism.

Although basically there are five different types of Bible translations which are geared to satisfy different needs,⁷⁾ each member society will normally

7) Eugene A. Nida and Jan de Waard, *Functional Equivalence in Bible Translating: From One Language to Another*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1986, pp. 40-41.

The five types of Bible translations are as follows:

(1) An interlinear translation is a "word-for-word" rendering strictly following the syntactic order in the source language (often accompanied by a literal translation). This is helpful for one who wishes to know the forms, the word order, and the literary devices in the original without having to learn this particular language oneself, but is quite awkward to be useful for the average person. For example, the NIV Interlinear Hebrew-English Old Testament; the RSV Interlinear Greek-English New Testament. Lexically speaking the words are English, but syntactically they are Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek.

(2) A literal translation/formal-correspondence is a traditional translation which adheres to the form wherever possible, though stylistically awkward in the target language. This is helpful for those who have had background in theological education, particularly those well-grounded in exegesis and hermeneutics. Some examples are, the King James Version (1611), the English Revised Version (1881, 1885), the American Standard Version (1901), the American Translation by Smith and Goodspeed (1923), Moffatt Translation (1924), the Revised Standard Version (1952), the Jerusalem Bible (1966), the New American Bible (1970), the New American Standard Version (1976,

1978), the New International Version (1978), the New King James Version (1979), Tanakh: A New Translation of the Holy Scriptures According to the Traditional Hebrew Text (1985), the New Jerusalem Bible (1985), the New Revised Standard Version (1989); Martin Luther's Die Bibel; Bible de la Pleiade (1959), Nouvelle Version Segond Revisee (1978), La Bible de Jerusalem (1955, 1974), Traduction Oecumenique de la Bible (1975), etc.

(3) A functional/dynamic equivalent translation is a translation which is very serious in conveying the intended message of the original; though the forms have been changed, the meaning and function are preserved. Linguistic findings are fully employed in this type of translation (such as back transformation in the source language, componential analysis, making the implicit explicit, contextual consistency in the transfer, transformation in the receptor language). Moreover, this method of translation is informed and developed by the findings in the fields of communication and sociosemiotics. This type of translation is very helpful not only for theologically-trained readers, but also for laypersons who desire to read and study the Bible. Some examples are, Today's English Version/the Good News Bible (1966, 1976), the New English Bible (1961, 1970), the Revised English Bible (1989); the Contemporary English Bible (1997). Die Gute Nachricht des Alten und Neuen Testaments (1982); La Bible Ancient et Nouveau Testament--Traduite de l'hebreu et du grec en francais courant (1982).

(4) Adapted translations are "free" translations which must be adapted to an accompanying code, such as music, literary genres such as poems, and performing medias such as drama, film, video, and television. A second type of adaptation is usually prompted by different views as to the nature of translating, resulting in harmonizations and embellishments. A paraphrase is an example of the second form of adapted translations. The purpose of the Living Bible--Paraphrased (1971) is "to say as exactly as possible what the writers of the Scriptures meant, and to say it simply, expanding where necessary for a clear understanding by the modern reader." However, the 'translator,' or rather the adaptor feels free to inject personal opinions and even theological biases into the text, harmonizing and correcting the difficult passages. Though easy reading, we cannot rely on it for a serious study of the Bible, for its accuracy in terms of meaning and function is suspect. Notes: The good thing is that its revision, the New Living Translation is a much better version.

(5) Cultural reinterpretations are describing in one's own words the contents of the original text, by transferring the cultural setting from one particular context to another. These cultural reinterpretations make interesting reading materials particularly to those from the specific culture in question, but are not as useful for studying the message and function of the text in its own historical and cultural background. For example, Clarence Jordan's Cotton Patch Version of the Gospels transfers the context of the ancient near eastern to contemporary southern United States one. Thus, Pontius Pilate was Governor of Georgia, Annas and Caiaphas were co-presidents of the Southern Baptist Convention, Jesus was born in Gainesville, GA, and without trials Jesus was put to death by a mob in Atlanta, GA. Similarly Roger Parmentier's French rendition of Amos using the contemporary political setting of modern world. An Indonesian of North Sulawesi gave this rendering of John 15:1-8 as "I am the true clove, nutmeg,

provide at least one meaning based translation in a target language, and in many instances two different translations in the same language, being a formal correspondence translation and a functional equivalent translation. In addition, in some situations, an interlinear translation may be produced to meet a specific need. On top of these, a Study Bible may be prepared, along with Bible Study Materials, Scholarly Editions, Handbooks, Digtots, and other Scripture products such as Children's Scriptures, Braille Scriptures, as well as Audio and Video Scriptures, etc.

What are the Guidelines for Preparing Scriptures for Majority Population?

Kenneth Thomas has come up with a very helpful set of guidelines to assist Bible Societies that are located in countries where the dominant religion is a non-Christian faith in preparing Scripture materials for people of other faiths,⁸⁾ as follows:

1. There is to be respect for people of other faiths as fellow human beings created and loved by God who share with Christians common human concerns.
2. There is to be respect for people of other faiths as ones who are sincere in their religious convictions and have a right to share their faith with others in the same way Christians do.
3. There should be sensitivity to the symbols, customs, and convictions which are valued by people of other faiths so as not to offend them and create barriers to communication.

and copra". Or, a certain Captains J. Rodgers' reinterpretation of Ps. 23 following the style of King James Version:

"Seamen's Version of the Twenty-third Psalm. The Lord is my pilot, I shall not drift. He lighteth me across the dark waters: He steered me in the deep channels. He keepeth my log; He guideth me by the Star of Holiness for His Name's sake. Yea, though I sail 'mid the thunders and tempests of life, I shall dread no danger; for Thou art with me; Thy love and Thy care they shelter me. Thou preparest a harbour before me in the homeland of eternity; Thou anointest the waves with oil; my ship rideth calmly. Surely sunlight and starlight shall favour me on the voyage I take; and I will rest in the port of my God forever."

8) Kenneth J. Thomas, "People of Other Faiths" in *Communicating Scriptures: The Bible in Audio and Video Formats*, edited by Viggo Sogaard. Reading, England: United Bible Societies, 2001, 13:1-4.

4. There is to be recognition of the respect that people of other faiths have for their own scriptures and the Scriptures of Christians.
5. It is recognized that the Abrahamic faiths come out of a common cultural milieu and share some of the same historical background, religious concerns, and theological language.
6. It is possible to have good relations with people of other faiths while each witnesses to one's own faith.
7. The relationship of the indigenous Christian community with people of other faiths should be respected as primary in any given situation.

Which Bible Translations were Available in Indonesia and Malaysia?

Long before we got Bible translations in other Asian languages, we already had Matthew's Gospel translated into Malay by a Dutch tradesman named Albert Cornelisz Ruyl. The following is a sketch of the history of Bible translations in Indonesia and Malaysia.

In 1600 just six years after the first Dutch ship sailed to Indonesia, Ruyl, an employee of the Dutch East Indies Company sailed to what is now Indonesia. He studied the Malay language and started translating the Gospel of Matthew. Ruyl finished his translation in 1612, just one year after the King James version was published. In 1629 Ruyl's translation was published in the Netherlands. It was a diglot version with parallel texts in Malay and Dutch entitled IANG TESTAMENTUM BAHARU: EUANGELIUM ULKADUS BERSURATNJA KAPADA MATTHEUM. It is now found at the Public Library of Stuttgart, Germany and in the British Museum in England.

The British and Foreign Bible Society and the United Bible Societies note this historic event as follows:

The first Malay Gospel, printed in 1629, is significant as the earliest example of the translation and printing for evangelistic purposes of a portion of the Bible in a non-European language.⁹⁾

Ruyl completed the Malay translation of the Four Gospels and Acts with the assistance of Jan van Hasel and Justus Heurnius. This edition of the Four Gospels plus Acts was printed in 1651. A year later van Hasel and Heurnius

9) Eugene A. Nida, ed. *The Book of a Thousand Tongues*. 2nd ed. New York: United Bible Societies, 1972, p. 269.

had their Malay translation of Psalms printed.

Further important work was undertaken by Rev. Daniel Brouwerious. His translation of Genesis was published in 1662 and the complete New Testament in 1668. Unfortunately, this translation borrowed too many Portuguese words, e.g. *Spirito Sancto* “Holy Spirit”, *crus* “cross” and some Portuguese spelling.

It was a Dutch medical doctor with theological training named Melchior Leijdecker who, with the assistance of a review committee, gave us the very first complete Bible in Malay. At first Leijdecker went to East Java as a military chaplain in 1675. But in 1678 he became the minister of the Malay congregation in Batavia (now Jakarta). In 1691 he started translating the whole Bible into high Malay, which was used as the language of literature at that time. He translated from the original biblical languages.

Leijdecker, with the assistance of a review committee consisting of Pieter van der Vorm, George Henric Werndly, Engelbertus Cornelius Ninaber and Arnoldus Brants, completed the New Testament which was printed in 1731. They produced the first Malay Bible ELKITAB, IJA ITU SEGALA SURAT PERDJANDJIAN LAMA DAN BAHARUW printed in Amsterdam in Roman script in 1733. Twenty-five years later a 5-volume Malay Bible in Jawi (Arabic) script was printed in 1758.

The following is a list of those who were involved in the effort of revising Leijdecker’s Malay Bible translation, some of them were carried out in what is now called Indonesia, while others were carried out in what is now called Peninsular Malaysia (marked by an asterisk):

William Robinson (Matthew, 1815; John)

*Robert Hutchings and J. McGinnis (NT, 1817 Serampore; OT, 1821) in Pulau Pinang

*Claudius Thomsen of London Missionary Society (LMS) + Munsyi Abdullah (Matthew, 1821)

*C. Thomsen and Robert Burns + Munsyi Abdullah (Four Gospels + Acts, 1832)

Johannes Emde, D. Lenting, Walter Henry Medhurst (NT, 1835; Psalms) in Surabaya

C. T. Hermann (Matthew, 1850) in Minahasa

J. G. Bierhaus (Mark, 1856)

Nathaniel M. Ward (Genesis, 1856) in Padang

B. N. I. Roskott (NT) in Ambon

*Benjamin Keasberry of LMS + Munsyi Abdullah completed the revision of the New Testament that was published in Singapore in 1852 (Roman script edition), and in 1856 (Jawi/Arabic script edition).

A Dutch Mennonite missionary named Hillebrandus Cornelius Klinkert came to work in Jepara, Central Java with Rev Pieter Jansz, a translator of the Bible into Javanese. Klinkert saw the need for a translation more easily understood than Leijdecker's because his Indonesian wife only understood Javanese and low Malay. Klinkert translated the New Testament into the Semarang dialect of low Malay. The four Gospels were printed in 1861 and the complete New Testament in 1863. This "market Malay" translation was very popular and was still being reprinted in 1949.

The systematic distribution of the Bible in Malay only began after the employment of the British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS) staff in Singapore in 1880. In 1890 Bishop Hose from the Anglican Church in Singapore complained to the BFBS that the New Testament revision done by Keasberry was difficult to understand. He quickly prepared a translation of Matthew and the person who became the main translator was an LMS missionary by the name of William Girdlestone Shellabear. Shellabear gave us the first Malay Bible translation specifically in the Malay of what is now called Peninsular Malaysia.

The following is a list of those who collaborated with Shellabear in the effort of Malay Bible translation and revision:

*Anglican Bishop Hose (Matthew)

*William Girdlestone Shellabear, Hose, W. H. Gomes (Matthew, 1897)

*W. G. Shellabear, H. L. E. Leuring, Hose + Datuk Dalam of Johor (NT, 1910; OT in Jawi/Arabic script, 1912; in Roman script, 1927-29) Malaka and Singapore

*W. G. Shellabear + Chew Chin Yong + Suleiman (NT in Baba Malay, 1913).

In 1929 the Netherlands Bible Society, the BFBS and the National Bible Society of Scotland combined to produce a Malay Bible translation that would meet the needs of both Indonesia and Peninsular Malaya. This new translation

was supposed to be a replacement for the previous Bible translations by Leijdecker (1733), Klinkert (1879) and Shellabear (1912). So a German missionary named Werner August Bode who was then teaching Theology in Tomohon, Minahasa, worked on a new Malay translation of the New Testament with the assistance of A. W. Keiluhu of Ambon, Mashohor of Perak, Abdul Gani, W. Shellabear and Hendrik Kraemer.

It is interesting to point out that in order to meet the needs of the Indonesian Christians in an independent Indonesia, the Indonesian Bible Society (*Lembaga Alkitab Indonesia*) printed the so-called *Terjemahan Lama* (Old Translation) comprising Klinkert's Old Testament (1879) and Bode's New Testament (1938). (In the preface to this 1958 Bible edition it was noted that since 1952 a Translation Committee had been working on a more modern translation). This edition was meant to meet the needs of those who wanted both the Old Testament and the New Testament in one volume. So it was basically produced as an interim measure until a fully Indonesian Bible translation became available.

Meanwhile Father J. Bouma of the Catholic Church in Indonesia produced a new Indonesian translation of the New Testament published by Arnoldus of Ende, Flores in 1964 and the revised edition followed in 1968. Father Cletus Groenen worked on the translation of the Old Testament books until 1968 when the Catholic Church agreed to work with the Indonesian Bible Society in a joint Bible translation program. Consequently they discontinued their own translation project.

Work on the Indonesian New Translation was begun in 1952 by the Netherlands Bible Society and in 1959 it was taken over by the Indonesian Bible Society. The committee consisted of experts from the Netherlands, Switzerland and various parts of Indonesia such as North Sumatra, Java, Minahasa and Timor. The team was chaired by a Dutchman Dr. J. L. Swellengrebel from 1952 till 1959. Later an Indonesian Dr. J. L. Abineno chaired it from 1962 to the completion of the project. The team members include C. D. Grijns, P. S. Naipospos, Dr. Chr. F. Barth, E. I. Soekarso, Dr. R. Soedarmo, M. H. Simanungkalit, O. E. Ch. Woewoengan, Dr. Liem Khiem Yang, J. P. Siboroetorop, Dr. A. de Kuiper, J. Koper and Rikin-Bijleveld. The New Testament was published in 1971 and the Bible was finally released by the Indonesian Bible Society (LAI) in 1974 with the Deuterocanonical edition

also made available. Thus this version called *Terjemahan Baru* “New Translation” was the first truly ecumenical Bible translation used by all Christians in Indonesia. This version is also used by some churches in Malaysia.

It is helpful to point out that in October 1997 the Indonesian Bible Society launched the newly revised New Testament called *Perjanjian Baru Terjemahan Baru, Edisi Ke-2* “New Testament: New Translation, Second Edition.” This was prepared by a team of biblical scholars who were experts in biblical Greek and Indonesian language to take care of the following:

a) Changes in Indonesian Language

Just as all living languages change, so has Indonesian. Some words have become obsolete, some new ones have entered the language, and others have changed meaning. Time and usage determine which new terms are accepted and which are not. As a matter of fact unless our translations reflect the current usage, there is a good chance of communicating wrong or unintended meaning to the readers. Examples of words no longer in common usage are:

Mt 24:17 *peranginan* housetop

Mt 13:33 *sukat* measure

Lk 13:21 *khamir* leavened

1 Tim 1:10 *pemburit* homosexual

b) Developments in Biblical Research

Today’s translators have access to better Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek texts from which to translate. Discovery of more ancient manuscripts, increased use of lexicons, dictionaries and commentaries have all affected the translation process. Philologists have studied more ancient manuscripts and more modern translations have been based on their work.

c) Developments in Linguistics and Translation Methods

Since the beginning of the nineteenth century and the modern missionary movement many missionaries have translated the Bible. However in modern times more use has been made of translation theory and native speakers. Findings in the fields of linguistics and communication have given us a better

understanding of the translator's task.

In fact in the final stage of this Indonesian New Testament Revision numerous biblical scholars and heads of churches from all over Indonesia gathered in Cipayung, West Java to discuss the remaining issues before finalizing this revised edition.¹⁰⁾

With respect to translation methods up to late 1960s, most translations were based on the Formal Equivalence translation method which, as much as possible, attempts to retain the form of the original languages. It was generally thought that each of these translations will be able to be used for worship and liturgical use all the way to mission and evangelism, somewhat like one size fits all. Then a new translation method was introduced by Dr. Eugene A. Nida.¹¹⁾ It is called the Dynamic Equivalence (later known as Functional Equivalence) method and it emphasises the transfer of the meaning and function of the original biblical languages rather than retaining the form. This new Bible translation method was applied to both modern Malay and Indonesian Bible translations.

Not long had the first edition of Today's Malay Version (TMV, 1987) been distributed, when the Bible Society of Malaysia was asked to consider revising this translation. A meeting was held with the Bible Society of Malaysia Language Committee. It was then decided that the revision will be carried out to take care of the following (references are based on the TMV):

- (1) Spelling errors or misprints, for instance, the word for *mengikut* 'to follow' was printed as *mengikat*, meaning 'to tie up' (Dan 3:21); *Allan* instead of *Allah* (Is 40:9).
- (2) Patterns which follow the English Good News Bible (GNB) too closely -- often word-for-word, such as in Mk 1:7 *Aku tidak layak bahkan*

10) Daud Soesilo, "Revisi Perjanjian Baru Terjemahan Baru" in *Forum Biblika* No. 7 (1998):15-28. See also Daud Soesilo, "Malay Bible Translation: What's in Store for Malaysian Churches" *Christian Reflections within an Emerging Industrialised Society*, edited by Thu En Yu, David R. Burfield, Romeo L. del Rosario and Chong Tet Loi (Kota Kinabalu: Seminari Teologi Sabah, 1998), pp. 77-97.

11) Eugene A. Nida and Charles R. Taber, *The Theory and Practice of Translation*. Helps for Translators, No. 8. Leiden: E J Brill for the United Bible Societies, 1969. See also Eugene A. Nida and Jan de Waard. *Functional Equivalence in Bible Translating: From One Language to Another*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1986. As it's been cited earlier the other translation methods are (a) interlinear, (b) paraphrase and (c) cultural adaptation.

menunduk dan membuka tali kasutnya “I am not worthy even to bow down and untie his thongs”

(3) Usage which reflects more Indonesianism rather than Malay one, for example, *barangsiapa* rather than *sesiapa* ‘whoever’ (Mk 3:29); *mulai* instead of *mula* “begin” (Mk 1:21).

(4) Mistranslations, for instance, *Sabtu* ‘Saturday’ instead of *Sabat* ‘Sabbath’ (Ex 20:8); a worse example is found in 1 Sam 24:4 *berehat* ‘took a rest’ rather than *membuang air besar* ‘to relieve himself’.¹²⁾

To Use Allah or Not to Use Allah?

Since the time of William Shellabear we already faced the question of which set of names and terms to use in Bible translation. Shellabear, who was then stationed in Singapore, began translating the Ten Commandments, the Sermon on the Mount, the Beatitudes and a few hymns into Malay.¹³⁾ Shellabear was really keen to spread God’s Word in Malay, so he resigned from the military in 1890 and began to serve as a Methodist missionary. In 1899 he was appointed by the Bible Society as the main translator for the New Testament in Malay. The New Testament was finished in 1904 and printed in 1910. His revision of Klinkert’s Old Testament was finished in 1909 and published in Jawi (Arabic) script in 1912. In 1927-29 the Roman script version was printed, one based on English spelling for the Malay Peninsula (now Malaysia) and the other based on Dutch spelling for the East Indies (now Indonesia).

Shellabear initiated work among the Malays. He and his wife began mission work and as a result, a small Malay congregation was formed. Unfortunately,

12) Daud Soesilo, “Focus on Translators: Revising the Malay Bible” *The Bible Translator*, Vol. 48, No. 4 (October 1997): 433-42. Cf. Daud Soesilo “Malay Bible Translation: What’s in Store for Malaysian Churches” in *Christian Reflections within an Emerging Industrialised Society*, edited by Thu En Yu, David R. Burfield, Romeo L. del Rosario and Chong Tet Loi (Kota Kinabalu: Seminari Teologi Sabah, 1998), pp. 77-97.

13) Shellabear is also known for his editions of classical Malay. He also translated Bible stories into Malay poetry *syair*. He also attempted a translation of the Qur’an into Malay, but he died before completing it. For a more complete list of Shellabear’s works in Malay and in English, see Robert Hunt, *The Legacy of William Shellabear in International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, Vol. 26, No 1 January 2002, p. 31.

this tiny Malay congregation that he had started disintegrated just as he began his Malay Bible translation.¹⁴⁾

One unique feature of Shellabear's translation was the use of the word *Isa* for Jesus and *Isa al-Masih* for Jesus Christ. The previous Malay translations used *Yesus*, as did those after World War II. To Shellabear's way of thinking *Isa* and *Isa al-Masih* would be a bridge between the contents and the readers, as *Isa* is the Arabic form for Jesus which is a form of the Hebrew name *Yehoshua* "Joshua", while *al-Masih* is the Arabic form for the Greek *Christ* and the Hebrew *Messiah*.

In the early 1990's a Christian organization in West Java approached the Indonesian Bible Society and requested a special Indonesian Bible version with Arabic names and terms for their ministry among the majority population. After serious consideration, the Indonesian Bible Society suggested that a revision of the Shellabear Malay Bible translation be prepared since this translation had already used the Arabic names and terms.¹⁵⁾

a) Text and Exegesis

Shellabear NT does not have the longer ending of the Lord's Prayer. It is not part of the text (Mt 6:13), the insertion in Acts 8:37 is missing, and the so-called Trinitarian proof text (1 Jn 5:7-8) is not part of this translation. However, the longer ending of Mark (Mk 16:9-20) was kept as part of the text without any indicators such as square brackets and there is a shorter ending of this gospel. Similarly the passage Jn 7:53-8:11 is included without any indicators of its status in the older Greek manuscripts.

In addition, there are some renderings that reflect wrong exegesis such as 1 Sam 24:2 *Maka masuklah Syaul ke sana hendak tidur* "Then Saul went there (i.e. into the cave) to sleep." Obviously the translator did not understand the actual meaning of the biblical euphemism "to cover his feet" which means relieving oneself.

There are also modifiers which are not part of the meaning of the text or they now convey different meaning, e.g. *dalam negeri Bait Lahim di tanah*

14) Robert Hunt, Lee Kam Hing and John Roxborough. *Christianity in Malaysia. A Denominational History*. Petaling Jaya: Pelanduk Publications, 1992.

15) Daud Soesilo, "Revising the Shellabear Bible: Reviving an Old Translation for a Special Audience" *The Bible Translator*, Vol. 45, No. 4 (October, 1994):426-34.

Yahudiah “in the state of Bethlehem in the land of Judah” (Mt 2:5), and *di benua Syam* “in the continent of Syria” (Mt 4:24).

b) Language Usage

1. Old Language - The Shellabear Bible used certain Malay vocabulary, phrases and syntactical constructions which were probably correct in Shellabear’s time, but are no longer in use or have changed in meaning. Consider the following examples:

Griek “Greek” (Acts 11:20): nobody uses it in Indonesia -> becomes *Yunani* “Greek”

Syam Syria (Mt 4:24); archaic -> *Siria* Syria

Bini wife (1 Cor 7:4): colloquial and not very polite -> *istri* wife

tasik lake (Jn 6:1): common in Malaysia, but not in Indonesia -> *danau* lake

alamat sign (Is 7:14; Jn 3:2): today’s unmarked meaning is address-> *tanda* sign

sidang Allah God’s council (Acts 20:28): usually legal council -> *jemaah Allah* God’s group of devout people

alam barzakh “abyss” (Rom 10:7) -> *alam kubur* “abyss”

Some Malay syntactical constructions used in the Shellabear Bible also need to be updated. This is because they follow Hebrew, Aramaic or Greek constructions too closely. Today they sound very archaic and even ridiculous, such as the following:

Karena kita kejadiannya juga “For we (are) the event also” (Acts 17:28b)

Maka perahu itu pun sudah penuh air ruangnya “Then the boat was full of water its space” (Lk 8:23)

Setelah petanglah hari, karena itulah hari kelengkapan, yaitu malam hari perhentian “After the evening had come, that was the day of completeness, i.e. the evening of stopping” (Mk 15:42)

Inilah surat keturunan Isa al-Masih “This is the letter of the descendant of Jesus the Christ” (Mt 1:1)

Ibrahim beranakkan Ishak “Abraham gave birth to Isaac” (Mt 1:2)

Hai perempuan, apakah yang kena mengena di antaraku dengan dikau? “O woman, what is the relationship between me and you?” (Jn 2:4)

In terms of discourse, the use of *adapun* “as for, as regard to, concerning” to begin a narrative is now very outdated (e.g. Gn 3:1 ff). Moreover in the whole of Gn 3 which consists of a total of 24 verses, every verse begins with either *maka* “then” (19 times) or *lalu* “then” (4 times). It will need to be revised so that it will read as naturally as any typically good Indonesian prose.

Similarly old spelling will have to be revised to reflect the present spelling system, for instance:

Sorga “heaven” (Mk 8:11) -> *surga*
korban “sacrifice” (Lk 2:24) -> *kurban*
Rohu’lkudus “Holy Spirit” (Lk 4:1) -> *Ruh Allah*
Baharu “new” (Jn 2:10; Acts 17:21) -> *baru*

Thus in this revision work as in any other, old language, spelling, vocabulary, syntax and discourse have to be replaced by contemporary usage.

2. Arabic Loan Words - Since this is a special edition designated for a special audience, Arabic loan words and terms would be retained in as much as they still reflect current usage, e.g.:

arasy “throne” (Rev 5:11)
mahzab “sect, party” (Acts 15:5)
Insya Allah “God willing” (Acts 18:21; 1 Cor 4:19)
bani (Israil) “children of (Israel)” (Jn 12:13)

However, when the loan words or terms convey wrong meaning then these will be revised in line with present usage. For instance the word *Ka’abah* is used for the Temple (e.g. Lk 24:53; Acts 21:28; Rev 11:19). However in today’s Indonesian usage *Ka’abah* only mean one thing, i.e. the holy rectangular building situated in Masjid Dilharam in Mecca. It has been decided that occurrences of *Ka’abah* will be revised to read *Bait Tuhan* “house of the Lord.” Revisers will of course be careful not to change it throughout. Rather they will first check the original texts to make sure which words are used in the original, i.e. the Hebrew *hyekal*, or *miqdas*, or *debyr*, or the Greek *hieron*, or *naos*, etc.

Some Arabic loan words which were not used in the Shellabear Bible but have been used in other Malay Bible translations (e.g. M. Leijdecker, 1733; H. C. Klinkert 1879; or W. A. Bode 1938) are incorporated in the revised

edition provided they still represent the present usage, e.g.

Perkataan Allah “Word of God” (Jn 1:1) -> *Kalam Allah* “Word of God”

Lawan al-Masih “Opponent of the Savior” (1 Jn 4:3, 2 Jn 7) -> *Si Dajal* “Anti Christ” or “the Devil who will descend to earth before the Day of Judgment”

al-Masih yang dusta “the deceiving Savior” (Mt 24:24; Mk 13:22) -> *Al-Masih palsu* “the false Savior.”¹⁶⁾

3. Euphemism - In most cases the Shellabear translation keeps the form in translating biblical euphemism, i.e. the use of mild, delicate, indirect terms to hint at an unpleasant matter instead of saying it plainly. As a result, however, the translation sounds strange, as in:

Maka dikenal oleh manusia itu akan isterinya Hawa itu maka mengandunglah ia lalu memperanakan akan Kabil Then Eve his wife was known to the man; and she conceived, and bore Cain (Gn. 4:1).

The same euphemism is maintained in similar fashion in Gn. 4:17, 25. In the revised version, a straight forward Indonesian word that is decent and acceptable in polite conversation is used, namely *bersetubuh* “to become one body,” i.e. to copulate.

The following are other instances of euphemism related to the genitals and one referring to death. These were translated literally and thus obscured the intended meaning:

Bubuhlah tanganmu di bawah pahaku “Lay your hand under my thigh” (Gn 24:2)

Tuhan akan mencukur ... roma di kaki “The Lord will shave ... fine hair of the legs and feet” (Is 7:20)

Maka Abia pun beradulah di depan segala nenek moyangnya “Then Abia went to sleep in front of all his forefathers” (2 Chr 14:1)

Since this literal rendering of biblical euphemisms sometimes produces unintelligible translation, it has been decided that if the form misleads the reader, even though it is a formal translation, then the euphemism will be translated meaningfully.

16) However, the Indonesian Bible Society rejected the request of the team to introduce new Arabic terms in the revision of Shellabear NT. E.g. *Hawari* instead of *murid, pengikut* “the followers of Jesus”, or *Maulid Isa Almasih* instead of *kelahiran Yesus Kristus* “the birth of Jesus Christ” (cf. Natal).

c) Names

1. Proper Names - Keeping in mind this special target audience, as much as possible the Arabic forms of proper names would be kept, e.g.

Isa Al Masih Jesus Christ, Jesus the Savior (Mt 1:1; 1:18; Acts 10:36 ff)

Syaul Saul (Acts 9:1 ff)

Yahya John (Mt 3:1 ff)

Maryam Mary (Lk 1:27 ff)

Yusuf Joseph (Mt 1:19 ff)

Jibrail Gabriel (Lk 1:26 ff)

Ibrahim Abraham (Mt 1:1 ff)

Daud David (Mt 1:6 ff)

There has been a long debate on the use of *Isa* rather than *Jesus* for Jesus. Subsequent to the Shellabear Bible translation, all Malay/Indonesian Bibles have used *Jesus* (cf. Today's Arabic Version also uses a form of Jesus.) The heads of churches in Indonesia and Malaysia believe that *Jesus* covers a wider meaning than *Isa*. Nevertheless a few Bible translations in the regional languages maintain the use of *Isa*. Having considered the historical use of *Isa* in the Shellabear Bible and having taken into account the special needs of this specific target audience, the Indonesian Bible Society agreed to the continued use of *Isa* rather than *Jesus* in this particular revision.

2. Names of God - In the present Shellabear edition, the Tetragrammaton is usually translated as *Allah*, the revealed name of God. This is quite acceptable to the Muslim audience, especially because it is in keeping with the Islamic creed *la ilaha illa allah* which is usually rendered into Indonesian as *Tiada Tuhan selain Allah* "There is no other Lord beside God" (a more correct translation would be "There is no other deity beside God" since "the Lord" is the equivalent of the Arabic word *Rabb*). This usage as reflected in the existing Shellabear version is in direct conflict with the other Indonesian Bible translations both formal and common language versions.

Moreover, the Christian practice of saying *Allahku* "my God" *Allahmu* "your God" or *Allah kami* "our God" is quite offensive to the Muslim audience who have some knowledge of Arabic. In Arabic *Allah* is short for *al Illah* "the God" (cf. Hebrew *ha eloah*, Greek *ho theos*), so one cannot say *Allahku* since it would be construed as awkward as is the English construction

“(*) my the God”. In contrast to the different meanings and functions of the generic Hebrew word *elohim*, *Allah* is specific. It is only the revealed name of God (whereas the revealed name in the Hebrew Bible is *YHWH*). So those who feel more Arabic than Indonesian cannot say “my God,” “your God,” “our God” or “the God of the Philistines,” etc. Similarly it would be offensive to say *Allah Ibrahim, Ishak dan Yakub* “God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.” One can say *Allah Tuhanku* “God my Lord,” but not *Tuhan Allahku* “the Lord my God.”

Most Indonesian speaking Christians have no problems with these expressions. In fact they write and say them all the time. However since this revision is being prepared for an audience of the Muslim background who may have strong feelings about this specific use of the language, it has been decided to find a way out. Such a rendering would need to be both faithful to the meaning and function of the original biblical texts, and faithful to the form in the socio-religious dialect of the receptor’s language.

After a lengthy discussion, it was decided that it is important and preferable to preserve the Old Testament usage of *YHWH* and its translation tradition in the Septuagint. This has been the long term practice of the Indonesian speaking churches (i.e. following the widely circulated Indonesian Bibles). The names will not be reversed to conform to their commonly known creed. However, special accommodation will be made for this special need especially when dealing with the possessive pronoun and the genitive form.¹⁷⁾

That is how they have done it in the **Revised Shellabear New Testament** (see appendix 3):

Sabda Isa kepadanya, “Perintah yang terutama ialah, ‘Dengarlah hai orang Israil, Allah, Tuhan kita, adalah Tuhan Yang Maha Esa.’ ”

Isa said to him, “The most important commandment is, ‘Listen, O Israel: God is our Lord, the only one Lord.’ ” (Mk 12.28)

Other names of God are to be handled as follows:

Yahweh -> **TUHAN** “LORD”

17) Cf. Kenneth J. Thomas. “Allah in Translations of the Bible” in *The Bible Translator*, Vol.52, No.3 (July, 2001):301-306. See also Daud Soesilo. “Translating the Names of God: Recent Experience from Indonesia and Malaysia.” *The Bible Translator*, Vol.52, No. 4 (October, 2001):414-423.

Adonai -> *Tuhan* “Lord”

Yahweh Zebaoth -> *TUHAN yang Maha Kuasa* “the LORD Almighty”

Elyon -> *Allah yang Maha Tinggi* “Most High God”

So, this has been an attempt to prepare a special translation for the majority population.

Translations Which Try Not to Use Allah

Unfortunately, Bible translation is often utilized as a vehicle to justify a certain ideology or theology, as the following cases illustrate. It is indeed sad and unfortunate that the Scripture Union of Malaysia has been quoting from the Indonesian Bible translation *Terjemahan Baru* “New Translation” and acknowledges the use of the texts in their Malay publication. However, each time the word *Allah* “God” occurs, it has been consistently changed to *Tuhan* “Lord” without the consent of the copyright holder, namely the Indonesian Bible Society.

As a matter of fact this Malaysian organization published *Alkitab Kanak-Kanak: Kisah Teragung di Dunia Diceritakan Semula untuk Kanak-Kanak* (2000) which is a Malay translation of the English Lion publication. In this publication, the word *Allah* was also dropped so there is now no difference between *YHWH* and *Elohim*. This was partly done due to a certain fear on the part of the leadership of this organization after some states and the federal government prohibited the use of *Allah* by non-Muslims.

In response to this kind of challenge the Heads of Malaysian Churches met in Kuala Lumpur in 1985 (sponsored by the Bible Society of Malaysia) as well as in the 1989 Kuching Consultation of the Heads of Churches (sponsored by the Christian Federation of Malaysia). Considering the unanimous decision of both meetings to keep the name *Allah*, the Bible Society of Malaysia as the servant of the Malaysian churches is obliged to honor this decision in the Malay Bible and Deuterocanonical Books (*Alkitab Berita Baik*, BSM 1996).¹⁸⁾

After all, the Arabic loanword *Allah* is the cognate of the Hebrew names of God *El*, *Elohim*, *Eloah* in the Hebrew Old Testament. Arab Christians from before the dawn of Islam have been praying to *Allah* and *Allah* was used by

18) “Documents on the Kuching Consultation of the Heads of Churches” (1989).

Christian theologians writing in Arabic. So the Christian usage of *Allah* predates Islam. In addition *Allah* is the name of God in the old Arabic Bible as well as in the modern Arabic Bible (Today's Arabic Version). Thus, Christians in Egypt, Lebanon, Iraq, Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei and other places in Asia, Africa, etc., where the languages are in contact with Arabic, have been using the word *Allah* as the Creator God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Finally in Malay and Indonesian the word *Allah* has been used continuously since the very first printed edition of Matthew's Gospel in Malay (Ruy1, 1629), then also in the first complete Malay Bible (Leijdecker, 1733) and in the second complete Malay Bible (Klinkert, 1879) up to the present.¹⁹⁾

Some have tried to argue that there should be two versions in Malay, one using *Allah* God and the other *Tuhan* Lord, just as Chinese Bible translations have one Catholic and two Protestant versions with their respective sets of names for God, Holy Spirit and prophets, etc. However, this argument cannot be used as justification for two Malay versions. The different Chinese versions reflect three distinct communities who refer to God by different names. In contrast there is no genuinely Malay speaking church that is using only *Tuhan* and all Malay speaking churches use *Allah* when referring to the Creator God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is worth pointing out that unlike Malaysia, in Indonesia *Allah* is accepted as the supreme being for all, thus there has never been a prohibition such as the one in Malaysia. See also the all inclusive definition of *Allah* in the Indonesian Dictionary *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*. *Allah — Nama Tuhan dalam bahasa Arab, pencipta alam semesta yang mahasempurna; Tuhan yang Maha Esa yang disembah oleh orang yang beriman* "The name of the Lord in Arabic, creator of the universe who is most perfect; the Lord, the one and only God who is worshipped by people of faith."²⁰⁾

19) Olaf Schumann. "Mengenai Kata Allah." in *Berita Oikoumene* (October, 1992):28-30. See also Daud Soesilo. "Translating the Names of God: Recent Experience from Indonesia and Malaysia." *The Bible Translator*, Vol.52, No. 4 (October 2001):414-423.

20) Cf. The struggle of the choices for the Name of God in Mongolian Bible translation, namely whether to use *Burhan* ("Bur" means "burhesen" or covered, everything, the whole universe; and "han" means king/ruler) or "Orchlongiin Ezen" ("master of universe"). For helpful articles, see Practical Papers for *The Bible Translator*. Vol. 43, No. 4 (October 1992) which was a special issue devoted to the

A couple of years ago 30,000 copies of *Kitab Suci: Torat dan Injil* (Jakarta: Bet Yesua Hamasih, no date) was published in Indonesia where the text of the Indonesian formal translation *Terjemahan Baru* “New Translation” published by the Indonesian Bible Society has been systematically changed here and there without the permission of the copyright holder (see appendix 4). It’s very likely that whoever did this one got the idea from David Stern’s *Complete Jewish Bible* which is a translation intended to show the Jewishness of the Scriptures. Stern undertook the translation after his conversion to Christianity.²¹⁾ It seems that this *Kitab Suci: Torat dan Injil* has been prepared by using some kind of computer assisted consistency table. Hence, Jesus is written as *Yesua* “Joshua”, Jesus Christ is rendered *Yesua Hamasih*, the tetragrammaton (YHWH) is transliterated as *YAHWE*, and God is transliterated as *Eloim* (rather than the Hebrew *Elohim*). Interestingly this form *Eloim* is also used for “God” in the New Testament (Greek *Theos*); therefore readers find *Eloim* all over the Old and New Testaments. It was explained in the brochure distributed by the organization behind this edition that in a

topic of translating the names of God, especially “How to Translate the Name - UBS Statement” *The Bible Translator*, Vol. 43, No. 4 (October 1992): 403-406.

21) David H. Stern did both *The Jewish New Testament* (1989) and *The Complete Jewish Bible* (Jerusalem and Clarksville, MD: Jewish New Testament Publications, 1998). This is a mixture of a formal correspondence and functional equivalent translation prepared for the rather limited need of those who refer to themselves as Messianic Jews primarily in North America. Its stated purpose is to express its Jewishness among other things by transliterating several keywords such as Torah, and phrases such as *Shalom aleikhem* for “Peace be with you” (Jn 20:19), as well as proper nouns such as *Yitz-chak* for Isaac, and *Ye-shu-a* for Jesus. The tetragrammaton in the OT and the OT quotes in the NT is translated *ADONAI*, while *Elohim* is translated “God” when it stands alone, or as compound words *Adonai Elohim* for *adonai YHWH*, *ADONAI-Tzva’ot* for “Lord of Hosts,” *Elyon* or *Ha’Elyon* for “the Most High”. In 3 Jn 7 the Name is rendered *HaShem*, however, in the Old Testament it is translated the Name. Cf. Philip E. Goble’s *The Orthodox Jewish Brit Chadasha* (New York: AFI International Publishers, 1996, 1997). This English translation of the New Testament (*Brit Chadasha*), which is copyrighted by Artists for Israel International, uses the Hebrew form of the names. The form for Jesus is *Yehoshua* and the form for Messiah is *Moshiach*. In addition, it contains many Hebrew words in transliterated forms, so unless one reads and understands Hebrew, this English translation is very difficult to comprehend. The situation would be very similar if one were to come up with an Indonesian translation that contains numerous Arabic words in Romanized scripts. Here is an example: “*Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach* answered, *SHEMA YISROEL ADONAY ELOHEINU ADONAY ECHAD is harishonah.*” (Mk 12:29).

nutshell Allah is a pagan god, the god of the Arabs, thus Christians cannot use Allah. This organization is also working among the majority population. Fortunately, the Indonesian Department of Religious Affairs has issued a strong statement against this pirated edition.

Some examples from the text of this *Kitab Suci: Torat dan Injil* are:

Dengarlah, hai orang Israel: YAHWE itu Eloim kita. YAHWE itu esa!
“Listen O nation of Israel: YAHWE is our Eloim. YAHWE is one!”
(Dt 6:4)

Jawab Yesua: “Hukum yang terutama ialah: Dengarlah, hai orang Israel, YAHWE Eloim kita, YAHWE itu esa.”

Joshua replied, “The most important commandment is: ‘Listen, O nation of Israel! YAHWE is our Eloim. YAHWE is one.’ ” (Mk 12:28)

Yesua Hamasiah, anak Dawid, anak Abraham
“Jesus Christ, son of David, son of Abraham” (Mt 1:1)

**** di bubungan Bet Eloim*
“*** on the pinnacle of the Bet Eloim” (Mt 4:5)

Roh Eloim “Spirit of Eloim” (1 Cor 12:3)

Yesua adalah Tuhan “Joshua is Lord” (1 Cor 12:3)

The Holy Gospel: Study Edition

Although there is an attempt to prepare a special translation for the majority population, Bible Societies in Asia Pacific have prepared a special Study Edition commenting on the text of a functional equivalent English translation *Today’s English Version* (TEV) also known as *The Good News Translation* (GNT).

There are various reasons and needs that call for the preparation and publication of a Study Bible. Although most Study Bibles are meant for members and leaders in the Christian community, there is also a need for a special Study Edition for seekers and new believers. Study notes are meant to guide and assist readers to understand the message as intended by the author.

A team of Translation Officers in the Asia Pacific region started working in the early 1980’s on preparing Scripture materials suitable for the majority

population in West Asia, South Asia and Southeast Asia. The fruit of their labor of love was **The Holy Gospel: Study Edition** published in 2001. As stated in the introduction:

The Study Edition of the New Testament has been prepared for those interested in learning about the life and teaching of Jesus the Messiah (Isa Al Masih) and his followers. Since the various parts of the New Testament were written almost two thousand years ago, several types of information have been provided to help the readers understand the situation and culture of that time.²²⁾

This Study Edition is now available in English (see appendix 1) and Urdu (see appendix 2), and it will soon be available in Indonesian and a few other languages.

Among other things, this Study Edition features the introduction to the New Testament, and introduction to each part of the New Testament with information about its history, language, translation, major themes and emphases, more specifically:

1. Themes of each paragraph
2. Meanings of particular words and phrases
3. Explanation of cultural customs
4. Historical references
5. Religious background and practices
6. References to other parts of the Bible (the Torah, Psalms and Prophets).²³⁾

Another helpful feature of this Study Edition is its glossary. Recurring words and phrases are marked with an asterisk (*) to indicate that there are entries in the glossary at the end of the text which explains these recurring words and phrases. In addition, it has maps and plates of sample Bible manuscripts.

Based on the report of the UBS Regional WASAI Consultant,²⁴⁾ a draft translation of the Urdu Study Edition was prepared by an experienced professional Christian translator. A basic principle involved in preparing the

22) *The Holy Gospel also called The New Testament: Study Edition*. Brisbane: UBS Asia Pacific Region, 2001, p. vii.

23) *Ibid*, p. viii.

24) Kenneth J. Thomas' report on WASAI NT Urdu Translation Review Workshop, dated July 31, 2000.

translation was to produce material acceptable to both church and majority audience so as not to offend either that would lead to the rejection of the notes. Prior to the review workshop, the draft was checked for spelling and grammatical errors. The corrected draft was then reviewed by thirteen people in a workshop setting. The participants included two women, one a professor and head of the department of Urdu literature and the other a member of the diocesan staff with primary responsibility for adult literacy education. The men included two ministers, a professor of OT, a lecturer of linguistics who is a Bible translator, a member of the training staff for the Asia region of the Far East Broadcasting Corporation, the retired head of the Salvation Army in Pakistan, a retired principal of a church-related high school, and an evangelist among the majority audiences, among these were two converts. Most of the issues faced in the review had to do with insuring the use of correct Urdu terminology that had the right nuances of meaning. However, some notes had to be expanded (e.g., Glossary note on “Samaritans” was expanded to include more historical information that is otherwise unavailable in Urdu) and some additional notes were included where the text of the Urdu Bible was not clear (e.g. “righteous” and “fellowship with God”) and where the TEV did not reflect the Urdu literal translation of the Greek (e.g. Hosanna). It is interesting to point out that these notes are primarily for the majority audience but the church is watching over the shoulder at all times ready to criticize and object. It was discovered in the process of reviewing the translation that the notes will be very valuable to the Christian community which has almost no study materials. After all this is the first study New Testament published in the Urdu language.²⁵⁾

The Indonesian Study Edition has been prepared along the same principles

25) It is worth mentioning that Pakistan Bible Society has just begun a new project preparing an “Interlinear Greek and Urdu New Testament with Interpretation.” It is an important new venture and probably one of the most important projects ever undertaken by this society. This project has three major target audiences. It will enable seekers and scholars from both Christian communities and the majority population see clearly the original Greek from which the NT has been translated. Moreover, Christian students who want some help in learning biblical Greek will find this edition an important resource. Last but not least, the Urdu speaking people will get great assistance in understanding the text of the Urdu formal translation because the accompanying Interpretation will present the meaning of the text in language that is natural and closer to today’s Urdu speech.

and procedures as the Urdu. It should be published later this year.

We now have the Study Edition of the New Testament *Injil Sharif (Ahd Jadid)*, however, we do not have the Study Edition of the Old Testament (*Ahd Atiq*) which include the Torah *Tawrat*, the Prophets *Anbiya*, and the other writings such as the Psalms *Zabur* and the Proverbs *Amsal*).

At this moment we do not have a Study Edition for the majority population of East Asia and parts of South Asia. Perhaps it is high time for Bible Societies in this part of the world to start thinking and planning along this line so that what is now available for majority population in West Asia, South Asia and Southeast Asia, may also be made available for the majority population of East Asia and parts of South Asia.

Conclusion

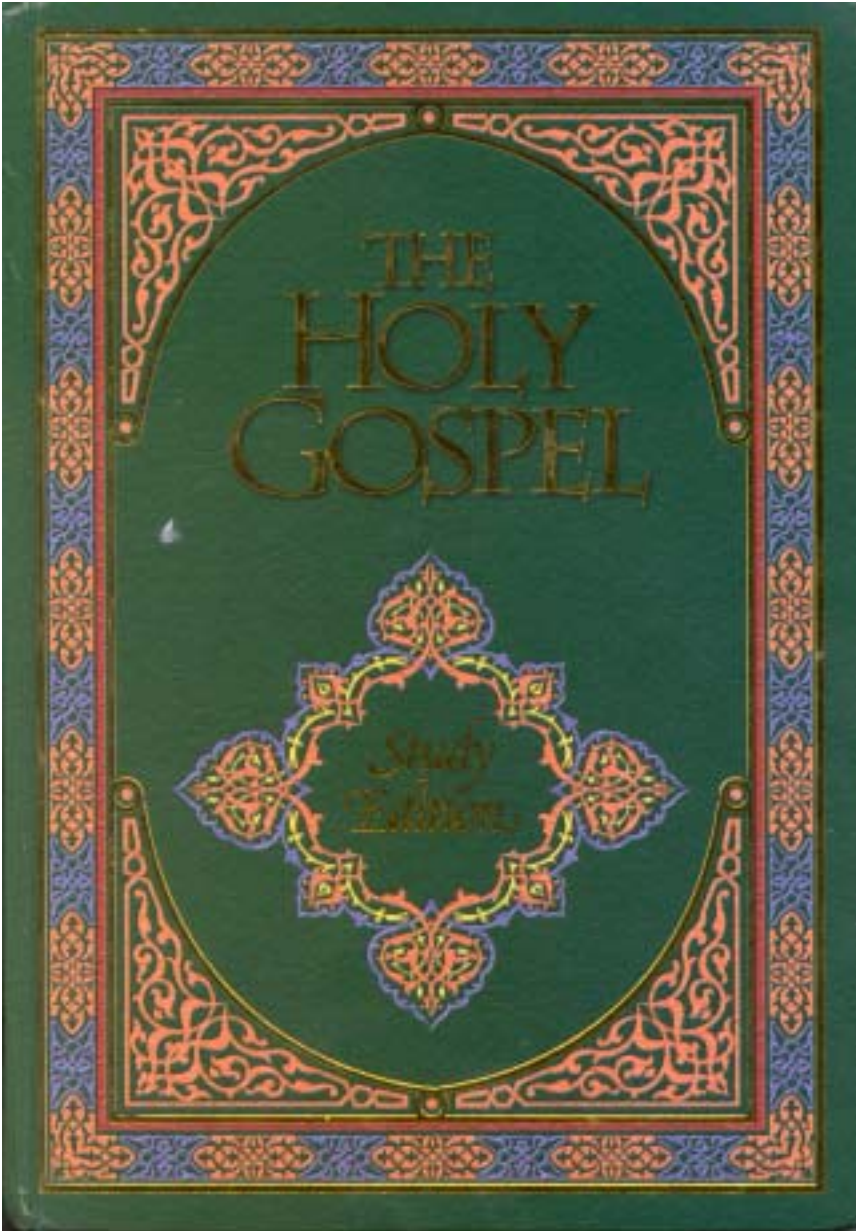
To sum it up, Bible Societies have committed themselves to achieving the widest possible, effective and meaningful distribution of the Holy Scriptures and of helping people interact with the Word of God. What concrete programs are needed to achieve our common task?

Yes, we have prepared special translations, and we have prepared a New Testament (*Ahd Jadid*) Study Edition with special notes for seekers and new believers, but we still need the Study Edition of the Old Testament (*Ahd Atiq*). Moreover, we need to have the Study Edition of both the New and the Old Testaments for the majority population of East Asia and parts of South Asia.

To that goals, we need more Bible translators and translation officers who are well trained and well equipped in biblical studies, linguistics, anthropology and translation studies. They must be deeply committed to preparing meaning based Bible translations following the guidelines of responsible, biblical scholarship which is most up-to-date, as well as the most up-to-date usage of the national and regional languages, and at the same time being respectful and sensitive to the needs of the majority population.

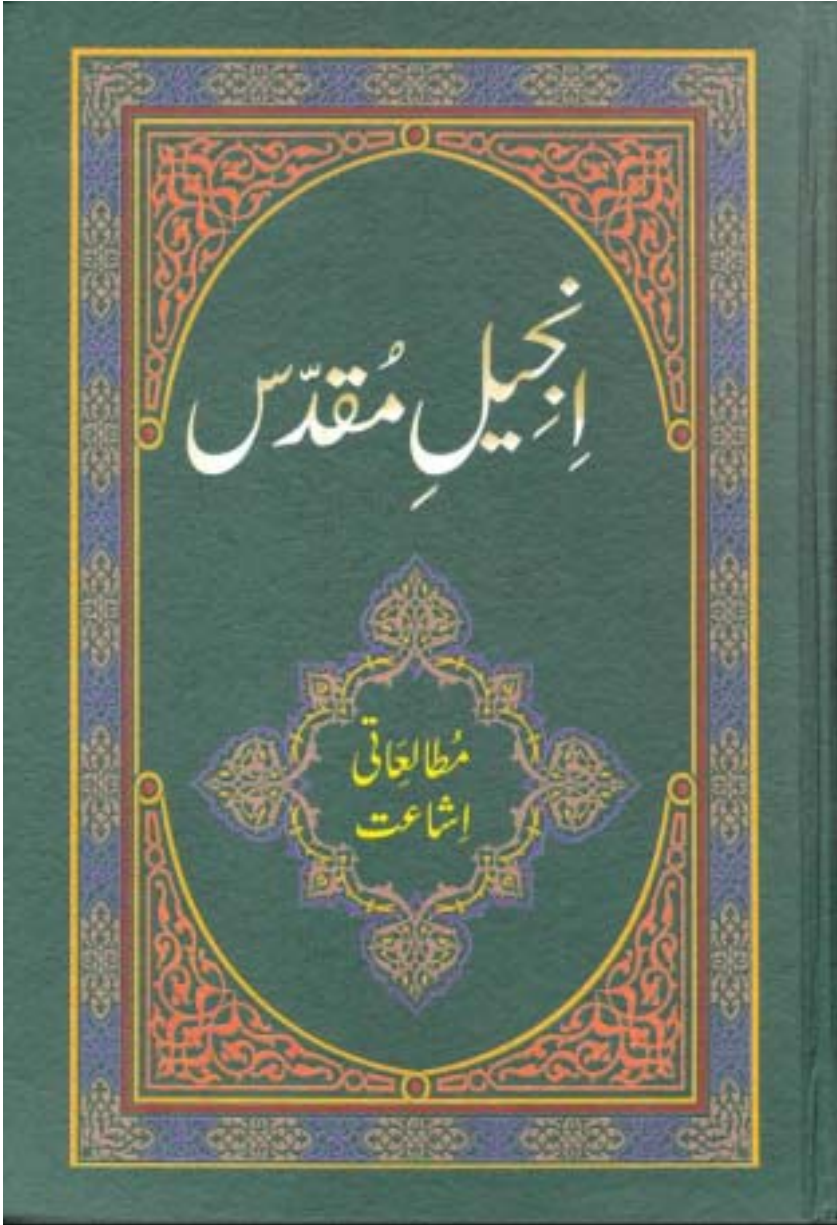
APPENDIX 1

The Holy Gospel: Study Edition — in English (2001)



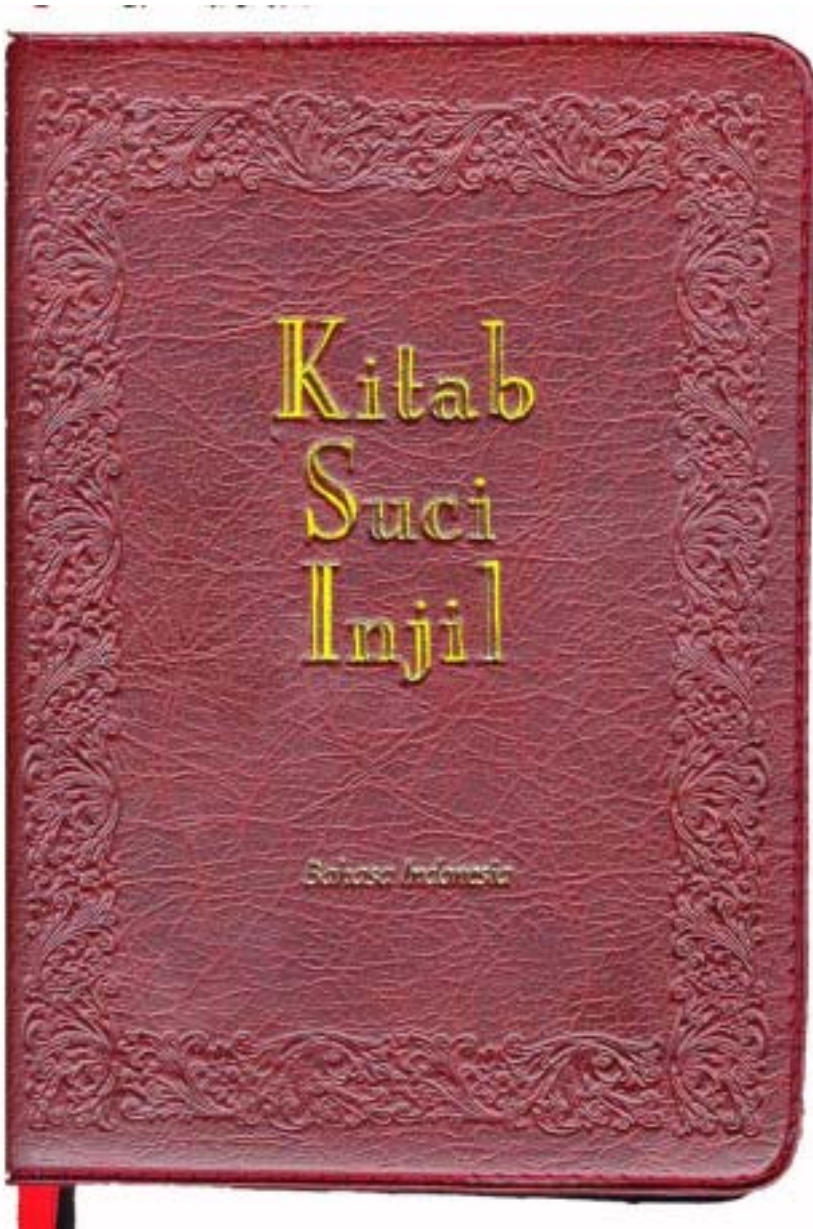
APPENDIX 2

TAZI New Testament with Study Notes — in Urdu (2001)



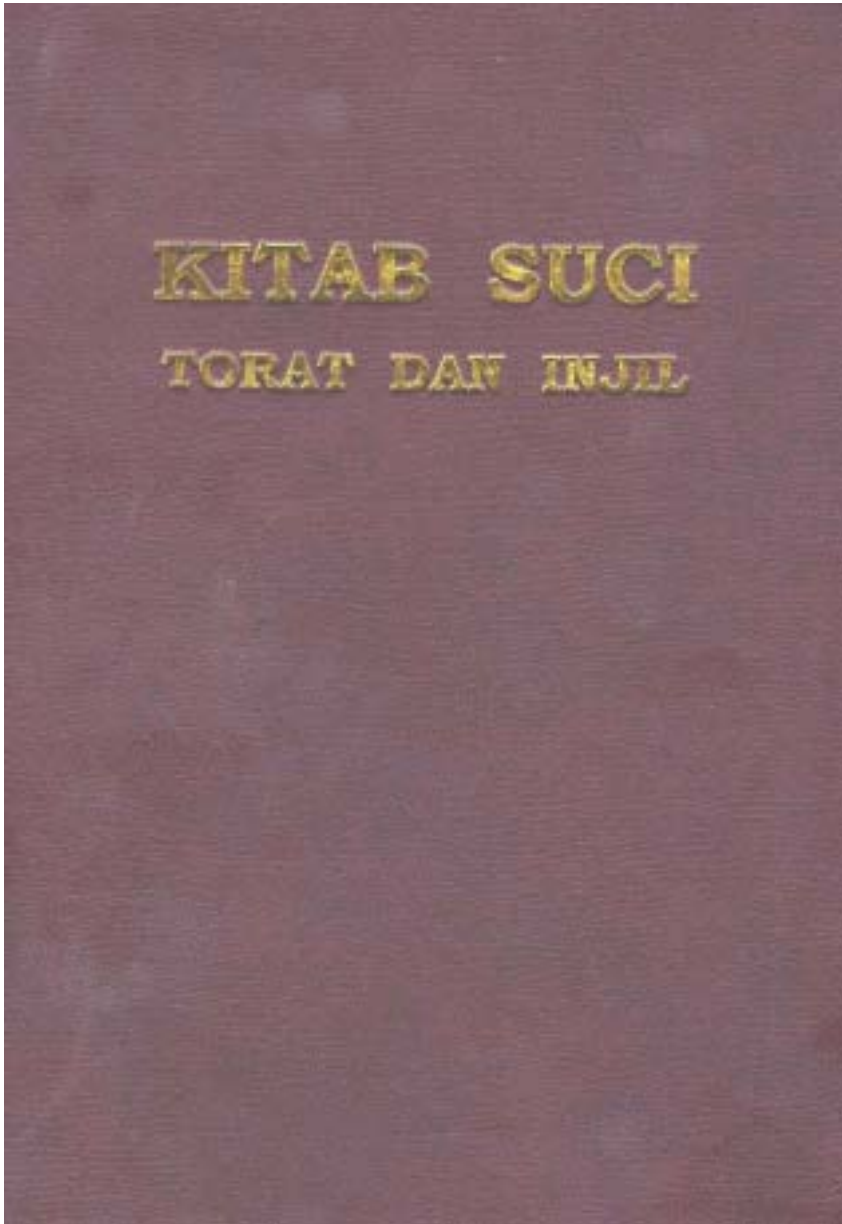
APPENDIX 3

Revised Shellabear New Testament — in Indonesian (2000)



APPENDIX 4

Kitab Suci: Torat dan Injil — in Indonesian (no date)



A Curriculum For Translators

Graham Ogden

Translator training is the key to a successful translation project. Every TO in UBS is more than well aware of this fact, having perhaps had to suffer through the frustrations of a project in which the translators and others related to the translation task were of lower than expected competence. Those of us involved in the Bible Society's translation programme all readily acknowledge that a worthwhile translation project cannot be undertaken unless those doing the work are competent. And since translation is a skill that one can learn and further develop as well as being an art or science, well-structured training can make all the difference between a good translation and a poor one. And we all expect that our projects will result in a **good** translation.

In the Asia-Pacific region of UBS we have spent some considerable time looking at the requirements for translators and trying to put together materials for TC's to use in their training programmes. The plan is to have materials for both TC's and also a workbook for translators to use. In other regions training has also been given a high priority but probably approached a little differently since local situations demand contextual plans and implementation. What I have to say then will attempt to be more general and point out the kinds of things that we have focused on and the outline we have developed for this region. Of course, Korea is a unique situation with many potential translators holding the highest of academic biblical qualifications. I therefore don't need to stress as much the need for biblical qualifications and expertise in this context as would be required in other situations.

What we have moved towards in Asia-Pacific is a 2-year curriculum. An initial 2-week introductory workshop is to be followed by another 6 weeks of formal training over the next 2 years. Workshops on specific issues can be arranged to fit the translation schedule. The initial workshop is, of course, merely introductory, giving the basic principles involved in translation and forming the basis for the further development of issues in a more in-depth

manner.

Since translation is a skill, we have to recognize that not everyone has the requisite skill to translate well. Good translation requires that a person have the basic skills but also have a literary sensitivity, a good knowledge of their own language and its unique or specific features, and a willingness to further develop and sharpen those skills. Involvement in the task itself presents the translator with daily opportunities to further hone the skills required.

What is Translation?

There are those who would argue that, given the differences between languages and the cultures they reflect, translation is ultimately an impossible task. Nevertheless, translation is taking place every day under all kinds of different circumstances. Translation can be thought of as an exercise in communication. Crudely put, it is the transfer of information or ideas from one to another across the barriers of culture and language that divide them. The degree of success of that communication will vary with the skill of the translator in bridging that gap. The good translator is able to take the thought resident in the Source Language (SL) and express it meaningfully in the Target or Receptor Language (TL or RL) such that as little as possible of the original is lost.

Since languages and the cultures they reflect are unique, there is never a total or complete correspondence between one language and another. Even cognate languages and dialects of a language usually differ markedly in some respect, so translators can never assume that one word or thought in the SL will have its exact equivalent in the TL.

Bible Translation

There are many communication situations that require a translator. Instantaneous translation is usually required in international meetings such as those of the UN. Translation of official documents, scientific papers, instructions on how to use new software and so on, all require the work of a translator. Is Bible translation any different? Do different requirements apply?

Or different principles?

Perhaps the basic principles in all translation are similar, but in the case of Bible translation it is important that we render the ancient text as faithfully and accurately and meaningfully as is humanly possible. We are after all dealing with God's Word so we want the result of our translation work to support the values we believe reside in the text. We have therefore these 3 general terms with which to express our hopes for any Bible translation – we want them to be *faithful*, *accurate*, and *meaningful*.

We want the result to be **faithful**. Our translation must render the original text in such a way as to faithfully represent what it is saying, and not distort it in any way. It must be culturally faithful to its ancient setting; it must be exegetically faithful and not subject to personal or denominational or sectarian interests; as far as we can possibly ascertain it, we want it to convey the message of the text faithfully.

We want the result to be **accurate**. Close attention to the original languages, the expressions used, the emphases given by form and discourse structures, grammar and syntax and so on will hopefully ensure that the translation will be an accurate representation of the original. We do not modify the text in any way to have it say what we want or hope it might say. Honesty is required in indicating when a text is uncertain or its meaning unclear so that readers know that a given rendering is based on the best of textual and exegetical scholarship.

We want it to be **meaningful**. It must be meaningful at the level of intelligibility; readers must be able to comprehend what is being said. It must be meaningful at the level of communicability; readers must be able to grasp the essentials of the text's message. Although this is a somewhat contentious issue – can we today know what the original author and subsequent editors intended to say? – nevertheless, we still need to be able to have a measure of confidence about the intended meaning based on the premise that authors and editors intended to convey something by what they wrote and the way in which they structured the material they worked with. In the case of John's Gospel we are at least told what the intended message was (Jn 20.30-31), but in other cases (Ecclesiastes?) there is considerable debate. Again, we lean on the principle of “best scholarship” to assist us with meeting this challenge.

Additionally, a good BS translation is an interdenominational one and

non-sectarian; it must serve the needs of all churches or all speakers of a given language. Translators must not allow their personal ideologies or theologies determine how a text is translated, especially those that carry important theological associations. The translation group needs therefore to be broad-based, including at some level, members of the church at large in both its Protestant and Catholic or Orthodox expressions.

COMPONENTS OF TRANSLATOR TRAINING CURRICULUM

What follows is some comment on the major components of a training curriculum. They are not necessarily given in any order of priority since all are important, nor are they exclusive. Since each translation project is unique, the components need to be considered in terms of the specific requirements of that project. For that reason I conclude this presentation with a list of components that can then be arranged to suit the individual needs of a project. At some point in the early history of a project the components can be determined. What will probably happen is that many items will need to be covered in a preliminary way at the outset, with treatment in greater depth to follow.

1. Language and Culture

Since language is an essential element of culture, the task of translation recognizes that the passing of ideas across cultural boundaries will inevitably involve facing the issue of cultural difference. Training programmes for translators need to include a component in which translators are made more aware of the way in which the culture of the Source Text has determined how its language expresses the ideas it contains.

Translation involves preserving the source culture and its values rather than rendering the text in a way that removes or hides that source culture. E.g. male-oriented language.

The values and customs of the source need to be appreciated, explained in some cases, but never translated in a way that prevents the RL reader from recognizing that the source comes from a different time and culture, that the source in OT or NT is not the same as that of modern Korea (for example)

– concubines/ Abraham and Hagar/levirate marriage etc.

The worldview of the source is to be respected and not modernized – the 3-decker universe and ancient cosmology/ Paul’s reference to the third heaven (2 Cor 12.2) etc. The day begins at sunset; third hour of the day. Footnotes will probably be necessary to explain some of these.

Idiomatic expressions unique to a culture usually cannot be rendered literally in the RL and still bear the same meaning as in the SL. “Slept with his fathers” (1 Kgs 2.10; Gen 9.22); “What to you and to me?” (Jdg 11.12).

2. Sociolinguistics

Language reflects the social patterns and structure of a social group. Within any one group there are social settings – e.g. formal, informal, intimate – which determine the level (academic, common, slang) and variety (flowery, poetic, royal) of speech used.

Geographical factors also play a part here since regional variations in a national language may be present, leading to a “standard” language and forms of that standard varying with regions – e.g. Mandarin Chinese, standard Japanese and “zuzu-ben” French and Malay.

Regional differences (e.g. between N and S Korea?) may depend on political and/or religious differences (Bengali Bible in India and Bangladesh).

In multi-language contexts there is usually a dominant language or national language that has higher social status than regional dialects or languages. Knowledge of the national language and the ability to speak it well reflect on the speaker’s social status.

Honorifics in certain languages (Thai, Korean, Burmese etc.) reflect different social and other distinctions within the society.

Terms for family relationships in one language may not be present in others -brother/sister/grandson etc.; terms that reflect the male-dominated culture of Israel – “sons of..” = “children of..” “brethren..”

Age factors in language – older people speak differently than the younger generation; language changes diachronically as well as synchronically.

3. Intended Audience

It is important for all translator to be fully aware of the specific audience for whom the translation is intended, as well as the special features of that audience. For example, Bible students, average church attendees, children, illiterates, blind and deaf etc. Every audience has specific features and these need to be addressed or the translation will not meet the goal of being meaningful to that group.

Research by those planning the translation needs to be comprehensive and thorough to establish the special features of the group and then be communicated to the translators who must bear those features in mind. An initial training workshop requires those who have undertaken the research to be present to explain clearly to the translators who the audience is and what their needs are.

4. Type of Translation Needed

An initial workshop will need to clarify the kind of translation being proposed. Common language, formal. Liturgical, Study edition, for children, audio, comic etc. are just some of the types of Bible translation undertaken.

Matters such as language level, vocabulary range, kind of notes if any, other readers' helps, illustrations, maps charts, glossary, word list etc. are some of the element to be considered.

Many translations are not suitable for those who cannot read, such as the blind or illiterate, or who prefer not to read such as the under-educated, and who prefer to listen to the text being read. Such a translation needs to consider the specific needs of such people – shorter sentences, clarity of expression, identification of speakers or participants, textual links.

5. Form and Meaning

Two basic elements of language need to be appreciated in their relationship to one another.

Form can be said to be a structure to support meaning. They are the structures in the language that carry the message. Every language has a specific set of forms – sentence patterns, syntax, as well as other literary structures. Since many elements of Form are language specific, translators

must be able to recognize these in the biblical text and then render them appropriately in the RL. Remaining too close to the form of the SL may mean that the translation is unnatural. This is “formal correspondence” translation – many older translations followed this pattern (KJV etc.) In many cases retaining the surface form of the SL text can hide the real meaning of the text.

Form can also apply to *genre*, those fixed and established forms appropriate to a certain type of literature. Hebrew and Greek forms in both narrative and poetry may need to be modified in translation to sound natural in the RL. Choosing the inappropriate or wrong form in the RL can also lead to misunderstanding.

BUT *form* actually has meaning as well, especially in poetry – parallelism, chiasmic structures etc. are *part* of the meaning, not just a support for meaning as though it was independent of form. Workshops are necessary at an early stage of the project in order to discuss the issue of form and meaning and how the project will handle it. That is, how closely will the translation hold to the forms of the original languages.

6. Meaning is conveyed in contexts

“What we say is not what we mean.” The literal or surface meaning of words and phrases is often far from what we intend their message to be. For example, “Good Morning” is an ungrammatical, incomplete and “meaningless” combination of two English words. However, we know what is intended when they are spoken – a warm greeting early in the day. The social context tells us what these words mean, words which on the surface are “meaningless.”

Individual words have a dictionary meaning(s) but more importantly they have contextual meanings. Translators usually need to be sensitized to this fact and taught to work from the larger context or discourse through to the sentence and phrase level before determining the meaning of specific terms. The wider context determines the meaning of the component parts of any sentence. Dictionary glosses may be of some help, but without a context meaning can be distorted or missed completely.

A common problem in biblical texts is the *hapax legomena*, words that appear only once in the entire corpus. Meaning here is sometimes impossible

to determine with certainty. Even cognate languages may not even point in the right direction. What to do in cases such as these?

What of ambiguity? There are examples of deliberate ambiguity in some stories – see Jdg 3 and the Ehud story (Benjamin – right hand for a left-handed person; the “divine word” in the sword etc. Ambiguity, puns and plays-on-words need to be treated carefully to enable modern (Korean) readers grasp the full flavour of the original language text when so much is dependent on knowledge of Hebrew or Greek .

Having determined the meaning of a particular phrase or term the translator then needs to render that sense in the RL giving as accurately as possible the sense of the SL. It has been traditional in UBS to speak of the “closest natural equivalent” meaning as the goal of translation. However, this is a somewhat misleading phrase since there is no equivalence between languages in the strict sense, only similarity. We speak of being “faithful” to the original meaning or message, though even this is a matter of debate. What we can aim for is a translation that conveys as much as possible of what scholars have determined to be the most likely sense of any given text. In the search for the meaning of a text we have to depend on the clues provided within the text itself. The overall pattern of the discourse, rhetorical devices and other literary features are used constructively to ensure that the author’s or editor’s point is relatively clear. By working through these devices it must theoretically be possible to uncover with a good degree of certainty what was intended by the text. For example: Amos 1-2 has a clear structure within each of its sections – repeated patterns within wench section providing the overall framework, the narrowing focus of interest as subjects are identified and so on all contribute to making the prophet’s point fairly obvious. To say that all meaning rests with the reader is a distortion, even though we have to admit that every reader inevitably invests his or her meaning into a text. Another example is Amos 4.6-12 where again repetition of ending phrases provides a structure that leads into the final verse and its introductory “Therefore...” It is difficult to deny that the prophet’s meaning is abundantly clear here.

Emphasis is provided in Hebrew by modifying the usual syntax pattern-placing the subject before the verb, for example is one way to draw attention to it.

Emotion is one of those things that is more difficult and therefore more

subjective a thing to determine from a written text, and especially one from an ancient and alien culture. However, there are occasional indications of the level of emotion within an encounter or narrative. Acts 8.20, for example. But there are countless places in narrative texts where the interaction between the participants would suggest that a high degree of emotion was involved. Translators need to become sensitive to these clues and then translate accordingly rather than produce a mere “flat” rendering of the surface text.

7. Figurative language

Apart from what we might call their “plain meaning,” words also have figurative uses. These are senses that are derived from the plain meaning and so we speak of “literal” and “figurative” meanings of words. For example, the English word “bear” has a literal sense in which it refers to a class of furry animal, varying widely in size and habitat but nevertheless belonging to the same general class. But we can apply that word “bear” to other situations having nothing to do with furry animals. We can use it to describe a person. In Australia we can use it to refer in an endearing way to a person “he/she is cuddly as a bear” (koala in Australia!). Or as a “great bear of a man” to describe someone who is very large and powerful, whether or not he is covered in hair! We also use it to refer to the stock market and economy.

Figures of speech vary greatly from one culture to another. Two distinct languages may use the same word figuratively but apply it with quite a different meaning. Translators must know the biblical culture well enough to be able to first identify a figurative use of a term and then be sure what sense it carries in the language so as to translate in a way that conveys the SL meaning. The word “fox” seems to be widely used in languages in a figurative way. However, the translator must first understand what sense it carries in the NT context before translating it with the RL connotation. Many cultures appear to view the fox as a sly or cunning animal and so apply that sense figuratively to people. However, that is not the way the NT understands it. In the biblical context the fox is a destructive animal since it eats the roots of vines and other crops causing them to die. So when in Lk 13.32 Jesus refers to Herod as a “fox” he is not calling him a sly person but a destructive one. Many readers of current translations probably do not get that

message. Perhaps a footnote is needed to indicate the SL sense of the comment.

Among the important figures of speech are:

Similes

Metaphors (Ps 23.1)

Euphemisms (death/sex/bodily functions – 1 Sam 24.3)

Puns or Plays-on-words (Amos 8.1)

Personification (mountains skip like rams – Ps 114.4-6)

Irony (Amos 4.4)

etc.

It is almost certain that translators will need a special workshop dealing with figurative language and how best to render it. This can be introduced at an early stage since almost all biblical literature makes use of it. However, it is especially important before translating poetry since much wider use is made there of figures of speech.

8. Verbs and Nouns

Words that describe an action we normally assume are verbs. Certainly verbs are “action” words. However, nouns not only describe an object whether material or abstract. They also may be referring to an action. The word “baptism” in English grammar is a noun, but it actually refers to the act of baptizing a person. The extent of the phenomenon in which nouns refer to actions varies no doubt from one language to another.

In translation it is usually noted that a verb describing an action produces a more dynamic or vibrant picture than does a noun referring to the same event. Compare:

“At John’s baptism of Jesus…”

“When John baptized Jesus…”

“When Jesus was baptized by John…”

Is one rendering more dynamic than the other?

Verbs may be passive or active – and some languages have other modes as well. Languages vary as to the extent to which they like to use passive forms. English and Hebrew both use passive voice often. However, for those languages that do not have a passive voice, or those who do but use it only

in special circumstances, with special connotations or who prefer to limit its use, biblical passive forms have to be treated carefully. Of course, it usually requires identifying the subject of the action, even if we have to say “someone” rather than being able to actually name the individual. Translators in certain languages may need to be trained to deal with the features of their own language and the way in which they handle passive concepts.

A further feature of verbs in both Hebrew and Greek is that they are modulated on the basis of Aspect (or State) rather than of Time. That is to say, a verb may refer to an action that is completed whether that action has occurred, is occurring, or is yet to take place. Alternatively, the action may be incomplete or a frequent happening, again without reference to time. The participle refers to something immanent or progressive. These and other verbal features of the SL need to be considered carefully when rendering them into languages where the underlying conceptual framework is different. (consider Isa 7.14)

9. Connotative Meaning

Words are said to have “denotative” meaning when they refer directly to or point literally to an object. However, there are also “connotative” meanings attached to many words. These connotative meanings are culturally determined. The connotations of a particular word include the thoughts and emotions associated with it. Translators need to be made more sensitive to the connotations of words within the SL culture. For example, the word “Samaritan” carries very negative connotations within the NT; so also “tax collector,” and so on. What connotations does the word “Law” have in OT, in Paul’s writing? Is it *always* negative? How does one convey the contextual “connotative meaning” when a word may or may not have certain connotations depending on the context? What connotations do the words “black,” “white,” and “red” have in Korean? (Ecc 9.8)

10. Implicit and Explicit Information.

Something that is “explicit” contains all the information necessary for understanding what is meant. However, often terms or expressions are used which seem to an “outsider” to be vague or lacking in sufficient information

for them to be processed properly. Understanding the full meaning of that term or expression depends on being an “insider,” sharing the same pool of information about a topic as the speaker or writer. Language users often omit a lot of relevant information when they speak to someone who shares their background, their culture or nationality. We say that the speaker leaves certain information implicit – it is implied and doesn’t need to be stated fully.

Since we do not share the same culture, language or historical setting as the writers of OT and NT, and since they were not intentionally writing to us, the authors and editors of these texts didn’t think it necessary to describe or explain everything. (Heb 11.4-32) They assumed their readers knew much about the context being addressed.

Translators have to be aware of what is implied in certain terms and expressions in the text and then, if necessary, make that explicit for modern readers. Otherwise the modern reader may not know what is being talked about and fail to grasp the significance of the text. Mth 20.3 does not explain “the third hour of the day”; “Chloe’s people” is not explained in 1 Cor 1.11; we have do real knowledge of an “ephod” etc. Handling information that is implicit in the biblical text requires a workshop for discussion.

While, in principle, we agree that for modern readers to understand a given text it might be required that certain things be made explicit, it is the *degree* of explication that can be problematic. How much can be placed in the translated text to make things understandable and what should be provided by other means such as footnotes etc. usually requires discussion in a workshop. We need to bridge the gap between the biblical setting and the modern world, but how that might best be done is a challenge.

11. Pronouns and Referents

Hebrew makes much use of personal pronouns (Greek?) as well as the demonstratives “this,” “these” etc. (Acts 8.17 they/their 3 times; “this” in concluding statements in Ecc 2.23, 4.8, 16 points back, while in 7.23 it points forward). Often the specific person or referent identified by the pronoun is unclear. Translators need to know how to handle these issues – specify the object?

12. Rhetorical Questions

These are questions asked not for the purpose of gaining information but for other purposes. Hebrew uses these very often as a way of making a strong statement, sometimes to criticize harshly or to scold another – Isaiah; Job 38, 41 etc.. How should the RL treat them? Are they a common feature of the RL? Do they have the same function?

13. General-Specific terms

In cross-cultural communication there will always be gaps between the two languages since individual terms in one language may not be present in the other. This can result from geographical, climatic and cultural differences between the SL and the RL. Common areas of difficulty are: birds and animals, trees and plants, geographical features, cultural and religious customs etc..

Translators may have to resort to (1) using a generic term rather than a specific one, (2) using some kind of classifier for identification, (3) borrowing a term from another related language, or (4) using the original term plus explanatory phrase.

14. Quotations – direct and indirect speech

Throughout the OT and NT there is much reporting of another persons words by the speaker or writer. These quoted words may contain within them the words of yet another person. There needs to be considerable discussion about the way a translation wishes to handle such “quotes within quotes,” and in some cases whether quoted speech itself requires special treatment. See Isa 37.21-26 in NRSV and TEV. Audience needs as well as language preferences determine the level of quoted speech in a translation.

OT quotations in NT should reflect NT’s wording; NT wording should not be read back into OT rendering.

15. Style and Levels of Language

Each translation needs to consider the audience and then determine the appropriate level of TL for that audience. High level or technical language may be appropriate in some translations, otherwise “common” language that falls within a range of intermediate levels – not too high or too low – is to be used so as to communicate to the widest possible audience. Liturgical-use Bibles may wish to retain a high level of language that would not suit a Children’s Bible.

Some languages have a distinct style of language used by women that differs from the style used by men. The translation must reflect this difference in style of the speaker.

Honorific forms are a feature of many languages, incl. Korean. Translators need to consider the impression (the connotations) given by the use of honorifics. Where a strong Bible tradition is in place in a language, such as in Korean, translators need to be able to review the traditional renderings and consider how to best convey the text within the constraints of honorific forms and what they might imply.

Should the Bible translation being planned use high literary style, the very best that the language is capable of, and run the risk of being at a great distance from the people for whom it is intended?

16. Textual Problems

Others will speak to this issue but in setting up a translation project special attention needs to be given to this matter and how the translation will handle it. Principles have to be established as to which base text is to be used and the amount of notice to be taken of alternative readings. How much notice will be taken of emendations needs to be agreed upon.

How to deal with the ending of Marks Gospel?

What of the Gloria at the conclusion of the Lord’s Prayer?

How to deal with gaps in the text such as 1 Sam 13.1?

17. Theological Presuppositions

These are present in all of us. There is no such thing as a totally objective

exegete and translator. Nevertheless, the task of Bible translation demands that we be aware of the presuppositions we hold and ensure that as far as possible we do not allow them to determine how we translate a given text.

We may hold certain beliefs about the nature of OT prophecy and allow that to influence the way we render texts such as Isa 7.14 that run counter to the grammar of the text itself or the historical setting in the 8th. century of the prophet's words.

We may hold a certain view of the Second Coming and want to place a comma *after* the word "Today" rather than *before* it in Jesus words to the thief on the cross: (Lk 23.43) "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise." Or "Truly I tell you today, you will be with me in Paradise." A small difference, especially when we know that the original text did not have any such punctuation, but a certain Christian group wants it translated that way so as to fit its theological view.

A responsible translator must pay close attention to the text in all its elements and, from the UBS point of view, not depart from the widely-accepted scholarly position even if he or she doesn't particularly subscribe to it. Nor can the translator introduce a new exegesis that does not meet with accepted opinion without noting that the rendering suggested is novel but defensible.

18. Key terms

A list of key terms needs to be established for projects and this may require in many cases a special workshop for all to agree upon what those terms should be.

The divine name, YHWH, and a term like "the Jews" in the fourth Gospel may require a special discussion group, involving the wider church as well as the exegetes and translators. Any change to an older tradition will need wide discussion before being adopted.

19. Borrowing terms

It is unlikely that any language has the full range of terms present in another language. Overlap in the semantic range of terms is never 100%. In

point 13 above, the issue of general-specific terms was noted. Borrowing of terms from another language, whether the biblical languages or other, is an issue in most translations. Many cultural items, foods, practices and the like in the biblical worlds may not exist in the TL. All languages have to borrow terms at times.

If terms are borrowed they must be able to convey meaning, or the point is lost. Translators must be given training in some of the principles that determine whether borrowing should take place and under what circumstances. (1) borrow the biblical term – “baptism,” “Sabbath,” “Sadducee” etc. (2) borrow a term from a common or related language (3) resurrect an ancient term (in languages where there has been great language change), (4) use a descriptive phrase. In all cases the term or phrase chosen must be understood by the readers and be acceptable. If a glossary or other readers’ help is being provided then the new term must be included and explained.

20. Names – translate or transliterate?

Names of people and places in the biblical text can be handled in various ways. They can be translated for meaning, (since most biblical names have meaning) such as Decapolis (“The Ten Cities”), or they can be transliterated. Consistency is important.

If a Bible is to be used by both Protestant and R. Catholic audiences then there will probably be a need for a workshop to agree on the form of the names to be used since the form of names used has usually derived from different textual traditions.

Another alternative is to use the modern name for a place rather than the biblical name – “Ethiopia” in place of “Cush” (though that is also problematic!), “Spain” in lieu of “Tarshish” in Jonah.

21. Poetry

Large sections of the Bible, especially OT, are in poetic form and since biblical poetry is a very special kind of literature, it requires special handling. A workshop to deal with this issue is always required. Such a workshop will focus on features such as the highly figurative language, literary genres,

technical language, poetic forms, chiasm, inclusio etc. as well as determine how best to handle these in the RL.

Determining what is and what is not poetry in the OT context especially is not always a simple matter. How the particular translation wants to deal with this needs close attention. One way is to choose a model text and adopt its decisions about what is poetry.

Translators, since they are concerned with meaning, also have a responsibility to assist typesetters so that the layout of poetic lines does not inhibit understanding.

A more basic issue is whether to adopt RL forms of poetry to render biblical poetry, and if so then how that might be best done will require much preparation and training, remembering that not all translators are poets!

22. Order of books for translation

Some translation projects with several or many translators may divide the entire Bible up among themselves without regard to the difficulty of each book or the level of expertise each translator has. Since translation is basically a skill that not all possess to the required level of competence, it is important that the “easier” material, that is, narrative, be set first. The more difficult poetic material of Psalms, Proverbs, and the prophets should be left until translators have both more experience and training.

23. Other possible workshop needs

Any language project will have need for language-specific workshops and training to ensure that translators are prepared for the task. The use of honorifics, compass points, key terms, what to do when the text is unintelligible (leave a blank space? Guess at some meaning? etc.) and a host of special issues will arise during the course of the translation that will require closer attention than a general introduction to translation can handle. Those in charge of the project need to keep in close touch with the translators so as to monitor not only the quality of the translation but to assess when a special training session is called for.

24. Translation as Teamwork

With very few exceptions, translation work is done as members of a team. Several translators, reviewers, a stylist, a translation committee, typesetters, layout persons, the NBS Gen. Sec., all are members of the translation team in one way or another. All should have some grasp of translation principles so that they understand the particular nature of the translation and accept the principles on which it is being done.

There is no room in the translation team for a *prima donna* who will not accept advice or criticism that is given constructively. Each person in the team has a role, including that of the TO who provides guidance, encouragement and technical expertise to ensure the quality of the work. Each member of the team must understand the role and function of others in the team and allow them to do the work assigned that function.

25. The Translator

What kind of a person makes a good translator? Apart from the technical training and expertise in biblical studies and an understanding of translation principles, translation requires a person who has a certain personality. The translator must be able to accept criticism, be a team player, be able to work independently, be able to work day after day, year after year, consistently and diligently; one who will not be distracted by other demands and perhaps prefer to be out doing other things that make him or her “look busy.” Translators are unusual people, able to sit in their study and work solidly at the same task for months on end. Not all are good at this .An initial training workshop for potential translators hopefully will reveal those who seem to have these special traits and those who are not. Sometimes it is better to suggest that a potential translator see his or her ministry as that of praying for the others in the team rather than actively doing the translation!

TRANSLATOR TRAINING ITEMS

Rather than set out a training curriculum in detail, the following lists the

various items that need to be covered in any translator training program. They can be arranged to suit the needs of the individual project.

This list also assumes that translators have all the requisite biblical training in Greek and Hebrew as well as exegesis. If not, then these need to be added as well BEFORE the project is undertaken.

Introduction to Translation – what is it?

Individuals and Roles in the project

The specific features of the project as determined will meet the need of the the intended audience

Features of the Receptor Language that will affect the translation

Language and culture – their relationship and role in translation

Sociolinguistics

Type of translation intended – common language; formal; liturgical, study edition; children's; audio, comic etc.

Form and Meaning; components of meaning

Discourse, pericope, sentence, words – meaning conveyed in contexts

Figurative language; similes metaphors; euphemisms; plays-on-words; irony and humor; anthropomorphism

Key terms

Idioms

Verbs and Nouns, passive and active forms

Connotation and Denotation

Implicit and Explicit information

Pronouns and reference

General and specific terms – what to do when the language has no word for something

Styles and levels of language

Quotations and quoted material

Literary genres and rhetorical devices

Poetry – Psalms, proverbs and prophets; poetry in the RL

Language borrowing – reasons for etc.

Names – translate or transliterate; harmonize when an individual's names has two or more forms?

Teamwork and procedures to be followed by all members

Footnotes and how to handle them; glossaries etc.

Readers' Helps and other material – weights and measure; distance; money values etc.

Use of computers and other electronic resources (Paratext etc.)

Keying in the text

Testing the translation – audience response; church acceptance?

“Little girl, get up!” – The Story of Bible Translation

Phil Noss

Τὸ κοράσιον, σοὶ λέγω, ἔγειρε

“Little girl, I say to you, arise.” (RSV)

“Little girl, get up!” (CEV)

1. Introduction

The gospel writer Mark tells of a leader of the synagogue named Jairus who came to Jesus with a desperate request. His daughter was very ill and was dying and he asked Jesus to come and lay his hands on her so that she would be healed and would live. Jesus was apparently willing to help, but he was delayed on the way by a woman who wanted to be healed of an illness from which she had suffered for twelve years. Before he could reach the little girl, messengers arrived with the sad news that she had died. There was no longer any point in troubling the Teacher, they said. But Jesus did not accept the message and he did not want others to accept it either. “Do not fear, only believe,” he told those around him. He continued on the way to Jairus’ home, and when he arrived there, he remonstrated with those weeping outside the house. “She is not dead, only sleeping,” he announced. Then he went inside to the child, took her by the hand and said, “*Talitha cum!*” which means ‘Little girl, get up!’” The narrator of the story reports, “The girl got straight up and started walking around” (CEV). Everyone was greatly surprised, but Jesus commanded them to tell no one what had happened and he instructed them to give the little girl something to eat!

2. *Talitha cum!* - The Power of the Word

In many societies words are very powerful. They may be used to communicate messages, and in their use they have power to effect both good and evil. Many words are not generally considered to be good things. In the Bible, likewise, the word has a creative function and it has a communicative role from Genesis to the Apocalypse.

2.1. The Word and Creation

The first spoken words that are recorded in the Old Testament are a command pronounced by the God of Creation, "Let there be light!" The Creation account then reports, "And there was light." It affirms that the Creator judged the light to be good and he separated light from darkness. The account continues with the quotation of the next command of the Creator God without any commentary. The power of the words is assumed and accepted. No explanation is given by the writer of how the words of God were fulfilled in the Creation Story any more than Mark explains how Jesus' words awakened the little girl from her sleep. Perhaps the ancient Israelites who first told this story orally understood the creative power of words; perhaps it was because the words were spoken by the Creator himself that they were fulfilled. In any case, the narrators who preserved the ancient oral account preserved the words in the quoted form as though an unknown listener had recorded the very words of God's mouth. Those who wrote the story then presented them in the form of direct quotation because this was the style that was used by the Hebrew Scriptures for portraying the dramatic force of words.

An extension of the creative power of words is found in words of blessing. Very early in the Creation Story God's words not only created but also blessed. God's first blessing was pronounced on the sea monsters and the fishes and the birds, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth," he said (Gen 1.22 RSV). The story of Genesis includes other blessings to give good life, to give children and to protect and prolong life. But there are also curses, and the first curse is a result of the first sin. Curses are the opposite of blessings: they take away life and bring sorrow and tragedy to the victim of the curse. The power of words is reflected in the English terms, "benediction" and "malediction" from

Latin roots that mean literally “good speaking” and “bad speaking”.

Indeed, poets have long known the power of words. Ancient Greek poets and dramatists used satire in their poetry and plays, and Roman poets developed satire into the form of a poetic genre. This was poetry that used irony, innuendo and derision to attack someone the poet considered not to be living according to accepted social standards. To be targeted by the poet was frightening and dangerous. In more recent times, the African poets of *négritude* have spoken of the creative power of the poet. To record an event in a poem is not merely to describe the event, but to create it. Naming is creating.

Throughout the Scriptures the creative power of words is evident. John proclaims this truth in the prologue to his Gospel, “In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God.” Jesus’ words to the little girl, “Talitha cum!” are an expression of benediction in its most literal sense. They are a command that recreates life in Jairus’ daughter. The result is an unexpected turn of events for the mourners, a wonderful surprise for everyone who witness the event, and a call to get on with the daily tasks of life, specifically, to give her something to eat!

2.2.The Word and Communication

The role of words in communication is an important theme in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. The book of Genesis establishes this biblical theme in God’s communication with Adam and Even and in their broken communication after the Fall. But the epitome of this theme is found in the story of the Tower of Babel. Humankind was able to accomplish great things through cooperation in planning and in laboring together, but God was displeased with their arrogant scheming and he announced,

These people are working together because they all speak the same language. This is just the beginning. Soon they will be able to do anything they want. Come on! Let’s go down and confuse them by making them speak different languages - then they won’t be able to understand each other. (Gen 11.6-7 CEV)

The result of God’s decision, though once again it is not reported how he

carried out his plan, was that the work on the Tower came to a rapid end, “because the LORD confused their language and scattered them over all the earth” (Gen 11.8-9 CEV). Clearly, the builders had no experience in translation and were unable to restore communication across the newly existing barrier of language on such short notice.

In the book of Esther it is recorded that King Xerxes ruled over an empire that extended from India in the east to Ethiopia in the west. Maintaining effective political control over this vast empire required a highly developed and effective system of communication. When Haman plotted to destroy the Jews in the entire kingdom, he called upon the King’s secretaries to write letters “to every province in its own script and every people in its own language” (Esther 3.12 RSV). Royal couriers carried these messages to all the high provincial officials and national leaders throughout the empire. When Esther pleaded with the King for the life of her people, a second message was sent throughout the 127 provinces of the empire. This one likewise was written in all the scripts and all the languages of the kingdom, including the language of the Jews in their own script. The messages were marked with the King’s seal and were taken by horsemen mounted on swift horses throughout the empire. Obviously, translators and interpreters played an important role in the Persian courts of antiquity.

The profusion of languages that resulted from God’s night-time creative act at the Tower of Babel finds its dénouement in the New Testament event of Pentecost. The writer of the book of The Acts of the Apostles records that the apostles were gathered together and, “The Holy Spirit took control of everyone, and they began speaking whatever languages the Spirit let them speak” (Acts 2.2 CEV). The result was that many different nationalities and races from three continents, Asia, Africa and Europe, heard the men from Galilee speaking in their own languages about God’s powerful deeds. The language barrier that was established by God at the Tower of Babel is broken by the presence of the Holy Spirit in the apostles on the Day of Pentecost.

Each of these events is a record of the communication of an important message. At the Tower of Babel, the message that the people were communicating to one another was a message of human arrogance and rebellion against God. The messages that were sent in the name of King

Xerxes throughout his kingdom brought first a message of death and despair, then a counter message of life and hope. The message that Jairus brought to Jesus was his personal request for help, but messengers soon arrived with a different message. Theirs was a message of sorrow about a change in circumstances that should logically have changed Jesus' course of action. But Jesus continued on the basis of the first message. He also refused to accept the message of the mourners whose weeping was an announcement of death. After raising up Jairus' daughter, he commanded the people not to communicate to others what they had seen. On Pentecost Day, the ability of the apostles to speak other languages allowed them to communicate the Good News of salvation.

3. *Talitha cum!* - Transmitting the Message

The history of the translation of the Bible is the story of the communication of the Word of God to the people of the world. This is a direct response to the "Great Commission" of Jesus in Matthew 28.18-20 and of his final words to his disciples as recorded in Acts 1.8. In New Testament terms, the aim of Scripture translation is the communication of the Good News.

3.1. Translation in the Bible

In his account of the raising of Jairus' daughter, the gospel writer Mark performs an act of translation in his text. He recognizes that some of his readers or hearers may not understand the Aramaic words of Jesus to the little girl that he quotes verbatim. Therefore, within his text, he gives the meaning in Greek,¹⁾ as he explains with the phrase "which means." Literally, the Greek explanation is a relative clause, "what is translated" or "which is interpreted." There follows the writer's own Greek translation of the original Aramaic text. Mark takes his reader from a source text to a receptor text.

1) Several times in his Gospel he gives Aramaic or Hebrew words and then provides an interpretation. They may be a personal name ("Sons of Thunder", 3.17), a place name (Golgotha, 15.22), a command as here and "Ephphatha!" (7.34), and Jesus' cry on the cross (15.34), "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

If this is an example of translation within the biblical text, the history of Scripture translation also goes back to the Bible itself. The first account of a translation event is related in Nehemiah 8.1-12 when the Jews had returned from 70 years in Babylonian captivity. After resettling in their old home territory, the people gathered in Jerusalem and called upon Ezra the priest and scribe to bring out the Law of Moses and read it to them. Ezra and the Levites read to the people, men, women and children who could listen with understanding. But the people had adopted the Aramaic language while they were in Babylon and they did not understand the Hebrew of the Torah when they heard it read. So the Levites helped them to understand. “They gave an oral translation of God’s Law and explained it so that the people could understand it” (Neh 8.8 GNB).

The only record of written translation in the Scriptures is found in the Prologue to the deuterocanonical book Ecclesiasticus that is also known as The Wisdom of Jesus Son of Sirach. This book was originally written in Hebrew in about 180 B.C. and according to the Prologue it was translated into Greek by Sirach’s grandson who spent some years in Egypt during the reign of King Euergetes. In his foreword to the book he writes, “I wanted to use all my diligence and skill to complete it and make it available for all those living in foreign lands,” but he adds that Hebrew and Greek are not identical. Therefore, he asks his readers, “And please be patient in those places where, in spite of all my diligent efforts, I may not have translated some phrases very well” (GNB).

Sirach’s grandson refers in his foreword to other books that had already been translated into Greek. He cites specifically the Law and the Prophets and indicates that there were other books also. In fact, it was just before and during this time that the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures called the Septuagint was translated. This was also done in Egypt in Alexandria. According to the “legend of the Septuagint” (Robinson 1997:4), this was a committee project in which 6 scribes representing each of the 12 tribes of Israel were sent by Eleazer the high priest in Jerusalem to Egypt. They worked in teams of two translators for 72 days, each team in isolation from the others. All the teams translated the Hebrew text and their drafts were identical, this being proof of the divine inspiration of their work. In honor of the seventy-two translators, the translation was given the name “Septante” or

“Septuagint”, often referred to as the “LXX”. This Greek translation was the version of Hebrew Scriptures that was used extensively by the Jewish community during and shortly after the time of Christ. This was the version that was quoted most often by the New Testament writers.²⁾

Just as Mark wanted his readers to understand the meaning of his original text, the early Christians wanted their message to be understood. From the time of Pentecost, Jewish Christians were scattered very widely both because Jews had been living in distant countries before then and because of persecutions that soon befell the Christians. But their vision was not one of a closed faith. It was open and the Word of the Incarnate Christ was soon translated from the Greek of the LXX and of the New Testament writings into new languages.

3.2. History of Bible Translation

The history of Bible translation may be broken into several eras. Eugene Nida speaks of four principal translation periods in terms of church activity (Nida 1972:ix-x). These eras are essentially historical, but each represents an important period of translation activity.

1. early Christians and the dominant languages of the Ancient world

1. Reformation

1. “Great Missionary Endeavor”

1. mother tongue translators in new churches and common language translations

3.2.1. Early Church Era

The first era of Scripture translation was the time of the consolidation and expansion of the early Christian church. During this time the Christian church and, with it, Scripture translation moved in three broad directions from its early beginning in Egypt, eastward across Asia, southward and west across northern Africa, and northward and east into Europe.

2) Extensive study is being conducted by scholars to understand the translation methods and techniques that were used by the translators of the Septuagint. See, among others, Olofsson 1990.

Following the translation of the LXX within the Jewish community in Egypt, the earliest translation activity apparently occurred in Old Syriac. Syriac was a Semitic language closely related to Aramaic that was spoken to the north-east of Palestine around the upper Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. It was the literary language of Edessa in what is now south-eastern Turkey. Parts of the Pentateuch were translated into Syriac as early as the 1st century A.D. (Wegner 1999:242). It is not known whether the earliest translation was done by Jews, by Jewish Christians, or by non-Jewish Christians.³⁾ By the 3rd century Edessa was an important Christian center. The 5th century revision of the Syriac translation called the Peshitta was influenced by the Septuagint. The Syriac Scriptures were taken eastwards to India at a very early date and in the 6th century the Peshitta was taken by the Nestorians to what is now called Sri Lanka and to China. Although it is reported that the Nestorians had translated the Gospels into Chinese for Emperor Tai-Tsung by 640 A.D., no samples remain of that translation (Nida 1972:70).

During the 1st century A.D. the Christian church was becoming established in Alexandria. The Apostle Mark is believed to have brought Christianity to Egypt and Libya. By 65 A.D. the first church was founded in Alexandria. It used both the LXX and Greek manuscripts of the New Testament. The oldest manuscript fragments of the Gospel of John dating to the 2nd century were found in Egypt.

The Christian church grew in North Africa moving up the Nile River and westward along the Mediterranean coast. Translation took place in Egyptian languages possibly as early as the 2nd century. By the end of the 3rd century the entire Bible had been translated into the Coptic dialect called Sahidic. This dialect was spoken in Upper Egypt but became extinct by the 10th century. In the 6th-7th centuries the Bible was translated into Bohairic, the dialect of Lower Egypt. This was the language of Alexandria and it became the language of the Coptic Church and is used liturgically up to the present day, although popular use died out in the 17th century. These translations, and those in other Coptic dialects, were all from the Septuagint.

Far to the west in Carthage, in what is today Tunisia, a Christian community had been established by the end of the 2nd century. Some three

3) In the 2nd century a new and very literal Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures was made by Aquila to replace the LXX for the Jews.

centuries earlier Rome had defeated Carthage and many Romans lived in Carthage and the surrounding area. Although the local languages were Punic and Berber, the language of commerce and of the elite was Latin, and this was the language of the Christians. It is possible that the earliest Latin translations of the Scriptures, both Old and New Testament texts, were done in North Africa in what is now referred to as “Old Latin” (Wegner 1999:250-251). There were many “Old Latin” translations dating from about 150-220 AD, one of which is known as “Afra”. Because of the widespread early translation of the Scriptures that occurred in North Africa, beginning with the Septuagint, Africa has been called “the cradle of Bible translation” (Sugirtharajah 2001:31).⁴

Meanwhile, in Asia the Christian church was moving northward into Armenia and Georgia. Tradition relates that the apostles Bartholomew and Thaddaeus went to Armenia. However, it was through the efforts of St Gregory the Illuminator that Armenia became the first nation to officially adopt Christianity as the state religion. This occurred at the end of the 3rd century or the beginning of the 4th century. The Bible was translated into Armenian in the beginning of the 5th century. The names of two translators are associated with the Armenian Bible, Mesrop who devised the alphabet for Armenian, and Patriarch Sahak. The translation was done from both Greek and Syriac source texts, since both languages were known by the translators and their assistants (Delisle and Woodsworth 1995:12).

Georgia lay to the north of Armenia and some traditions identify the creation of the Georgian alphabet, as well as the Albanian alphabet, with Mesrop. Christianity was introduced into Georgia in the 4th century through a slave woman named Nino (Wegner 1999:248). She was a Christian who had been captured by the Georgian king and who later became a nun. Translation of the Scriptures had begun by the middle of the 5th century and was probably based at first on the Armenian translation.

Meanwhile, to the south of Egypt there were Nubia and Ethiopia. The Ethiopian eunuch who was baptized by the Apostle Philip was from the royal court of Candace in Meroe in the land that was called Cush or Nubia. According to tradition, he returned to his homeland with his new faith, but

4) See Ype Schaaf’s book *On Their Way Rejoicing*(1994) for an account of Bible translation and the church in Africa. See also Noss 2001.

there is no evidence of the establishment of a Christian church at that time. However, it is known that the Gospel had reached Nubia by the 3rd century and there was an established church in the 5th and 6th centuries. The Nubian language was written with the Greek alphabet and parts of the Bible were translated into Nubian from Greek source texts. The Christian church flourished until the 16th century when it finally succumbed to Arab and Islamic influence.

To the south-east of Nubia in what is the modern state of Ethiopia, legends recall the journey of the Queen of Sheba to visit King Solomon in Jerusalem. The son that she bore from her visit to King Solomon became Menelik the First, king of Axum, the capital of Ethiopia. Legend further maintains that his mother took him back to Jerusalem to be educated and when he returned to Axum with the son of the high priest, they brought back the Ark of the Covenant to Axum where it is said to be preserved to the present day.

It is not known precisely when the Christian church came to Ethiopia. The story is told of two young men named Frumentius and Aedesius from Syria who had travelled to India by sea in the 4th century. The two men were captured along the Red Sea coast of present-day Eritrea and were taken to the royal court in Axum where they were given good treatment. They were assigned duties in the court and they received a royal education. Through Frumentius the royal family became Christian. Many years later when they were allowed to leave Axum, Frumentius went to the Coptic Patriarch of Alexandria and asked him to send a bishop to Axum. The bishop consecrated Frumentius himself and sent him back to Ethiopia.

According to some traditions Bishop Frumentius translated the Bible into Ge'ez, the language of the people of Axum. According to other traditions a group of monks known as the "Nine Saints" came to Ethiopia from Syria and it was they who translated the Bible. By the end of the 6th century the entire Bible had been translated into Ge'ez, or Ethiopic, as it is also called. The source text was the Greek although there is also Syriac influence. This is the Bible that is used by the Ethiopian Orthodox Church today. It has 54 Old Testament books and 27 New Testament for a total of 81 books, making it the longest Christian canon. It includes the books of Jubilees and Enoch that are not found in either the LXX or the Vulgate.

3.2.2.Reformation Era

Nida's second major period of translation activity is associated with the Protestant Reformation in Europe in the 15th and 16th centuries. This is combined with the invention of the Gutenberg Printing press in the mid-15th century. The combination of the reformers' call for the Bible to be made available to the people instead of remaining essentially in the hands of the clergy and the relatively easy and inexpensive means of mass producing books on the printing press was a great boon to Scripture translation and distribution.

During several centuries before the time of the Reformation, there was relatively little translation activity. In Africa the Nubian and Ethiopian churches did not translate the Scriptures into the languages of the surrounding local peoples. In North Africa, the language of the church was Greek in the east and Latin in the west. These were the languages of business and trade, of the Jewish diaspora and of Roman colonizers. Even Augustine, of Punic origins himself, who took great interest in translation, preferred to use the Old Latin versions and gravitated toward Rome rather than toward his own African origins. Some would argue that one of the reasons why the church disappeared in North Africa, apart from the Coptic Church in Egypt, was the fact that the Bible was not translated into the languages of the people. Scripture translation did not move south of the Sahara Desert until the Missionary Era.

The earliest Arabic translations of Scripture occurred relatively late. Numerous manuscripts exist from the 9th and 10th centuries, although Scripture translation may have taken place as early as the 7th century. Early Arabic Old Testament translations were based on the Coptic translations that were themselves based on the Greek Septuagint.

In Asia the Syriac translation has already been mentioned above. This was the translation that was used in India by the church that St.Thomas had founded. The first missionaries from the West encountered this Bible when they arrived in India at the beginning of the missionary era. No translation was done into local languages by the church in India until a translation was made into Malayalam in 1811 from the Syriac. In China Bible translations

were reported in the 13th century, but no actual evidence of these translations has survived (Nida 1972:70).

Up until the time of the Reformation the Bible that was used throughout the church in Europe was mainly the Latin Vulgate. In the east the translation of the Slavonic Bible was begun by St. Cyril and after his death was completed by his brother Methodius in the 9th century. This Bible in the Slavic language became the liturgical translation of the Church. This version, like the Syriac and Armenian versions that were also used by the eastern church, was based on the Septuagint.

Among Reformation translators, the greatest recognition usually goes to Martin Luther who translated the Bible into his own German language. Martin Luther espoused a specific type of translation: one based on the language as spoken by the people. His emphasis was on clear communication of the biblical message. Because of Luther's translation technique and his mastery of language, this Bible in its language and style established a lasting standard for German language and literary expression. The translation itself, "the Luther Bible," remains in use, after numerous revisions, still today.

The first book to be printed on the Gutenberg Press was the two-volume Vulgate in 1456 that is known as the "Gutenberg Bible". Ten years later the second Bible was printed. This was the German Bible printed in 1466, the first modern language Bible to be printed. By the end of that century, at least a portion of Scripture had been printed in 12 different languages (Nida 1972:484). Of these languages only Hebrew and Aramaic were not European languages. By 1500 the Scriptures had been translated into a total of 35 languages worldwide. Three centuries later, at the beginning of the 19th century, the total stood at 74 (Smalley 1991:34).

3.2.3.Missionary Era

The beginnings of the modern era of Christian work are to be found in the 16th and 17th centuries and through the 18th century. In their early missionary activity in Africa and the Americas, Catholic missionaries mostly used the Vulgate, although they did translate Scripture texts for use in catechisms and lectionaries, for example, in Angola in Kikongo in the 16th century and Kimbundu in the 17th century, and in Mexico in Nahuatl and in

Peru in Quechua both in the 16th century (Mitchell 2001:420-21). Roman Catholic translation activity also took place in China in the 16th century.

The 19th century was the era of the “Great Missionary Endeavor” as Nida called it. The Industrial Revolution had taken place in Europe, the period of colonization by European powers was beginning, and spiritual awakening was occurring in Europe with religious movements that were both local and international. This was a period of much missionary activity, mostly going out from the Christian churches of Europe and North America to the rest of the world. It was a time of intense translation activity. During the 19th century alone, the Scriptures were translated into 446 new languages. This missionary activity continued in the 20th century and by its end at least a Scripture portion had been published in an additional 1390 new languages for a total of 2287 languages.⁵⁾

Many of the foreign mission bodies supported Bible translation work, but much credit must also go to the Bible Society Movement that traces its beginning to March 7, 1804, when the first Bible Society was formed. This was the British and Foreign Bible Society and it upheld three principles, namely, “a missionary and evangelistic concern, a world vision, and an inter-denominational undertaking in the service of and on behalf of all Churches” (Béguin 1965:12). The formation of new Bible Societies occurred rapidly during the early part of the 19th Century, spreading from the British Isles to the European mainland and in all directions overseas. Late in the same year of 1804 a Bible Society was formed in Basle in Switzerland. In 1806 the Dublin Bible Society was formed, in the United States of America the Philadelphia Bible Society began in 1808, and the Finnish Bible Society in 1812. In the same year Bible Society activity began in Mauritius in the Indian Ocean, and in Ceylon. It began a year earlier in East Pakistan. In Africa Bible Society work began in Ethiopia in 1812, in South Africa a Bible Society was founded in 1820. During the early part of the 19th Century the Bible Society Movement spread throughout the world.

The primary goal of the Bible Societies was to make the Scriptures available to Christians and non-Christians. The Bible was to be provided without notes and doctrinal comment in languages the people could

5) See United Bible Societies, *World Annual Report* 2001, p. 330.

understand and at prices they could afford to pay. Where there were no Scriptures available in a language, translation was required. As early as 1818 the American Bible Society published its first Scriptures in Native American languages of North America. In 1819 the British and Foreign Bible Society opened a Translation Department.

The beginning surge of missionary Bibles came in the late 18th century in Asia with the Tamil Bible in 1727 and the Malay Bible in 1733. The first Chinese Bible was Joshua Marshman's translation in 1822 immediately followed by Robert Morrison's Chinese Bible in 1823. The surge continued with the Malagasy Bible, the first Bible in Africa, in 1835, and the first in the Pacific Islands in Tahitian in 1838. By the end of the 19th century some portion of the Scriptures had been translated into 620 languages (Smalley 1991:34).⁶⁾

The impetus for this immense translation effort came from the missionaries themselves, who actively learned new languages, wrote them down, and began translating the Bible with the help of new Christians and sometimes with the assistance of non-Christians. The impetus came equally from mission boards and the Bible Societies who provided financial and organizational support.

3.2.4. Modern Era

The Modern Era may be associated generally with the mid 20th-century period when the "winds of change" were blowing, marking the end of the colonial era. Political independence was often accompanied by ecclesiastical independence and a diminishing role of the traditional missionary. Translation methods also changed, with emphasis on anthropology and linguistics and a more professional approach to translation. From literal and formal translations, the new approach called for common language levels and dynamic and then functional equivalence.⁷⁾ The emphasis was on the message less than on the form. Instead of missionary translators, mother tongue speakers of the language became the primary translators. The Bible Societies were in the forefront of this movement.

6) For summaries of Bible translation in Asia, see Ogden 2001 and for Europe see Ellingworth 2001.

7) See Nida 1964; Taber and Nida 1982; Larson 1984; Wilt, ed. 2002.

In 1946 individual Bible Societies established a world fellowship of Bible Societies that is known as the United Bible Societies. This organization today includes 138 member Bible Societies that are located and that work in over 200 nations and territories around the world.⁸⁾

In the earliest days of Bible Society development there was openness to common efforts with Roman Catholics. However, in 1826 the British and Foreign Bible Society, under pressure from Scottish revivalist movements, not only barred publication of the books that are referred to by Protestants as the “Apocrypha”, but they even decided to cease to collaborate with other Bible Societies that did publish and distribute Bibles that included the Deuterocanonical books. Although there were occasional contacts and even overtures that resulted in very limited co-operation between certain Bible Societies in Great Britain and the United States with the Roman Catholic Church, the ecclesiastical division that resulted from the Protestant Reformation was not easily bridged.

Nevertheless, during the past half-century the climate of alienation and frequently even of hostility has undergone a radical change. Many factors may be cited as having contributed to this change. Perhaps the most important was the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council and Pope Paul VI’s pronouncements in 1965 on the importance of Scripture as the basis for preaching, on easy access to the Scriptures, and on co-operation in the translation of the Scriptures. Today nearly one-half of Bible Society translation projects are inter-confessional.⁹⁾

Most recently, discussions have been initiated and agreements have been made between the Bible Societies and Orthodox Churches for cooperation in Scripture translation and publication. Currently the Greek Bible Society is translating the Septuagint into Modern Greek, the revision of the Patriarchate Bible in Armenian is underway through the Armenian Bible Society, and Slavonic and Syriac text projects are underway through the Bible Societies of Russia and Turkey respectively. In Africa the Bible Society of Ethiopia is

8) For a history of the United Bible Societies, see *Taking the Word to the World: Fifty Years of the United Bible Societies* by Edwin H. Robertson (1996).

9) The United Bible Societies and the Vatican have signed a document entitled *Guidelines for Interconfessional Cooperation in Translating the Bible* (1968, 1987) in which guidelines are set down for joint translation projects.

working with the Ethiopian Orthodox Church on a new edition of the ancient Ge'ez New Testament and on a new translation of the complete Orthodox Bible into Modern Amharic.

A number of similar organizations have been created with the primary goal of Bible translation. The oldest and largest of these is Wycliffe Bible Translators (WBT) and their academic counterpart, Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL), who work closely with the Bible Societies in many parts of the world. Their main focus has been in writing down hitherto unwritten languages and translating the New Testament into these new languages. Increasingly they are also becoming engaged in Old Testament translation. The International Bible Translators (IBT), the Lutheran Bible Translators (LBT), the Pioneer Bible Translators (PBT), the International Bible Society (IBS) and Bibles International (BI) are all dedicated to the same task of Bible translation. Nearly 20 sister organizations have joined together in the "Forum of Bible Agencies" to promote common efforts in the translation and distribution of the Scriptures.

3.3. Bible Translators

The development and movement of Scripture translation can be traced chronologically across geographic areas, but often a translation is due to the vision and the effort primarily of one person, even though others may be brought into the effort. In the following paragraphs brief sketches are provided of four translators who represent different eras, different traditions, and different approaches to translation. The four representative translators are the following:

- Bishop Wulfilas who reduced the first language to writing for Bible translation
- St. Jerome, a churchman who might have become pope but who instead became the "father" of the Vulgate
- William Carey, one of the first translators of the classical missionary tradition
- Bishop Samuel Ajai Crowther, an African Christian who became a churchman and a translator of the Bible into his own language

3.3.1. Bishop Wulfilas

Wulfilas or Ulfila (311?-383?), whose name means “Little Wolf”, was a Goth and was born in what is now Romania. Later in life he fled religious persecution and moved to the area that is Bulgaria today where he remained the rest of his life. Wulfilas owed his Christian faith to his Roman Christian ancestors on his mother’s side who had been captured by the Goths in their raids on Cappadocia in what is now eastern Turkey. He was a reader in religious services and studied the Bible. When he was about 30 years old, he was consecrated bishop and he worked to evangelize the people he was serving. However, he came to realize that a translation in the language of the people was necessary if his efforts were to succeed. Because the Gothic language was not written, he devised an alphabet of 27 characters using Greek and Latin letters and a few German runic letters to write the language. He thus became the first of many Bible translators who have first had to reduce a language to writing before they could undertake translation in the language.

For the next forty years he translated the Bible into Gothic, basing his translation on the Septuagint. The New Testament translation was based on the Byzantium text. His approach was a very literal word-for-word approach, closely following the Greek syntax. Because he did not want to encourage the Goths in their bellicose ways, he left out the books of 1 and 2 Samuel and 1 and 2 Kings with their stories of Israel’s wars. Nevertheless, the Goths continued to fight and in the 5th century the Gothic Bible went with them as far as Spain and Italy. Few fragments remain of this translation, except the beautifully decorated 6th century *Codex Argenteus* in the library of the University of Uppsala in Sweden.

3.3.2. St. Jerome

Jerome, whose full name was Eusebius Hieronymus (345?-420), is known today as the patron saint of translators. He was born into a Christian family in Dalmatia in modern Yugoslavia and at the age of 12 he was sent to Rome to get an education. There he was a student of the best-known grammarian of the day, the famous Aelius Donatus. He studied rhetoric and

the Classical authors, Vergil, Cicero and Horace, among others. From Rome he travelled as a young man throughout the Roman Empire. He went to Antioch where he studied Greek but while there he became very ill. During his illness he had a dream in which he found himself being judged. When he was asked who he was and he replied that he was a Christian, the Judge replied, "Thou liest, thou art a follower of Cicero and not of Christ". In his dream he promised from then on to read only "the books of God" (Wegner 1999:254). From Antioch he went to the desert of Chalcis in Syria where he lived for two years as a hermit. Here he learned Hebrew as well as gaining a great appreciation for an ascetic way of life. He returned to Rome in 382 and was appointed secretary to Pope Damasus who commissioned him to revise and standardise the Latin Bible.

As Jerome began his work, he saw the disarray of the Scripture translations in Old Latin and he began to revise them, working first on the Psalms and the New Testament from Greek texts that were available to him. However, he soon became convinced that he needed to go back to the original Hebrew text of the Old Testament instead of the Septuagint which was itself a translation from the Hebrew. In 384 when Pope Damasus died, Jerome returned to Bethlehem where he studied Hebrew and translated the Old Testament books into Latin from the Hebrew source text. He completed the work in 405 and his translation came to be known as the Vulgate, which means "popular" or "common". It was in the popular or common Latin of the day and it was not immediately accepted by churchmen who preferred the archaisms of the "Old Latin". Gradually, however, its merits were recognized and at the Council of Trent in 1546 it was pronounced the official Bible of the Church. The Vulgate has served the Church for more than a thousand years, longer than any other translation of the Bible.

Jerome held the accuracy of the original text in great esteem and he attempted to provide a critical text for the New Testament (Baker 1998:497). His approach to translation as stated in his famous letter to Pammachius in 395 was "sense for sense and not word for word." This was clearly influenced by his study of Cicero's approach to translation. Nevertheless, he also seemed to make allowances for what is called today Sacred Text by arguing that even the order of the words had meaning.

3.3.3. William Carey

William Carey (1761-1834) was “the prototypical missionary-translator-scholar, writ large” (Smalley 1991:40). Coming from a very humble background in England, Carey went to India in 1793 and became a missionary legend in his own time. He had very little formal education and was mostly self-taught, learning Latin and Greek and Hebrew from books and grammars that he borrowed. He also learned to read French and Dutch and Italian. With this linguistic background he went with his wife to work in India.

On arrival in India he took up employment with the East India Company because he believed that missionaries should be self-supporting. He set about learning Bengali, partly relying on a translation that had been done by an earlier missionary. He soon became convinced that the translation he was using was not acceptable and he began to do his own translation. Carey’s Bengali New Testament was completed three years after he arrived in India!

In 1799 Carey was joined by two new colleagues, William Ward, a printer, and Joshua Marshman, a translator and scholar like Carey. The three of them established a printing press at Serampore, a Danish colony. Carey revised his Bengali New Testament several times and published it in 1801 on the new press. The Pentateuch in Bengali also translated by Carey followed in 1802. Carey soon realized the importance of Sanskrit as a religious language. He set about learning Sanskrit and he translated the Bible into Sanskrit. Then he learned Marathi and translated the Bible, and then Hindi. For each language except Hindi he wrote a grammar and a dictionary. His colleague Joshua Marshman translated the Bible into Chinese and published the first full Chinese Bible on the Serampore Press in 1822.

In addition to the translations that Carey did himself, he also worked with teams of native speakers. They would translate, he would correct their drafts, and the translations would be published. In this way Scripture translations in a total of 40 languages had been published on the Serampore Press by 1832, in addition to numerous grammars and dictionaries and other materials.

In retrospect, however, there were fatal flaws in Carey’s approach to Bible translation. Perhaps it was his early method of learning languages that flawed

his understanding of the subtleties of natural language use. Perhaps it was his failure to understand the nature of mother-tongue speech. Partly, it was also his own lack of both formal linguistic and biblical training. In addition, there was his emphasis on “accuracy” that he attempted to achieve by following the wording and structure of the original Greek and Hebrew as closely as possible. In any case, very few of the translations produced at Serampore were greatly used. Nevertheless, Lamin Sanneh observes that the significance of William Carey was not in the numbers of languages, but in the important influence that he and his colleagues had through their linguistic, literary, agricultural, and botanical efforts, through launching education schemes and new industries, and through efforts in the area of social reform. And as a missionary, Sanneh writes, “Carey allowed for the indigenous expression of Christianity, trusting that the gospel, faithfully proclaimed, would stimulate the arrangements proper to it” (1989:101).

3.3.4. Bishop Samuel Crowther

Samuel Adjai Crowther (1810-1889) is a predecessor of contemporary Third World Christians who have become translators of the Scriptures in their own languages. He was a Yoruba born in what is now Nigeria. As a 12-year old boy he was taken as a slave and was put on a Portuguese ship going to America. The ship was stopped by a British warship and its cargo of slaves was freed and taken to Freetown in Sierra Leone. Here the boy was introduced to Christianity, he was baptized, and he became the first student at Fourah Bay College, the first secondary school in Africa. He became a teacher and an Anglican catechist and in 1841 he participated in the Niger Expedition on behalf of the Church Missionary Society to explore possibilities for mission work inland along the Niger River. When the Expedition failed, he returned to Sierra Leone and was sent for theological studies in England. He was ordained the first African priest of the Church of England and was later consecrated a bishop.

From England Bishop Crowther returned to Sierra Leone where he preached the Gospel to the freed Yoruba slaves in their own language. Then in 1845 he returned to his home area of Abeokuta in Nigeria in a team of three missionaries, an Englishman, a German and himself a Yoruba. On the occasion of his mother’s baptism, he translated the baptismal liturgy into

Yoruba. Then he began translating the Bible, starting first with the Epistle to the Romans, then the Gospel of Luke, and next the Book of Genesis, followed by the book of Exodus. Starting the work alone, he enlisted others to help him until he was supervising a team of both Yoruba and missionary translators. The Yoruba New Testament was published in 1862 and in a revised edition in 1865. The complete Yoruba Bible was published in 1884 and with various revisions, it is still being used today.

4. *Talitha cum!* - Translating the Words

The Bible is without doubt the most translated document in the world, but that is not to say that translating it is easy or simple. As has been indicated in the historical overview above, there has often been controversy and difference of opinion over what to translate and how to translate. Wulfila was so concerned over the accuracy of his translation that it is questionable how well his translation could have been understood by its intended audience (Wegner 1999:256). Jerome took a more free stance regarding translation and became embroiled in argument with the theologian Augustine, among others, over his approach to translation. Carey, like Wulfila, was concerned about accuracy, but unlike Wulfila, he was not a mother tongue speaker of the languages he translated and his approach to translation seriously compromised the quality of his translations. Crowther's approach to translation was similar to Martin Luther's and his Bible translation holds a place in Yoruba literary tradition that is similar to the place of Martin Luther's Bible in the history of German language and literature.

The challenges facing the translator are many and in the following paragraphs we will briefly survey several of them:

1. translation principles and issues in the Aramaic text and its Greek translation of Jesus' command to Jairus' daughter
2. translation of names of God
3. interpretation and translation of key terms
4. transmission of source language literary form and the appropriation of receptor language literary form

4.1. Translation Issues

Jerome's translation principle of "sense for sense" was a precursor to Eugene Nida's principle of functional equivalence. By this principle, the emphasis was placed, not on imitating the words and the structure of the original, but on the communication of their meaning. Jerome defended his approach using Mark's translation of Jesus' words to Jairus' daughter (Nida 1964:13).

Aramaic: **Ταλιθα κουμ.**

Greek: **Τὸ κοράσιον, σοὶ λέγω, ἔγειρε.**

RSV: "Little girl, I say to you, arise."

CEV: "Little girl, get up!" (CEV)

The Aramaic source text is comprised of two words. The first is a feminine noun meaning "little girl" or "maiden". It is a vocative, that is, it is a form of address. Jesus is addressing the little girl. The Greek noun is a diminutive. Therefore, RSV and CEV both say "little girl" while some French versions use the French diminutive *fillette*. The second word is a singular second person imperative verb form that expresses a command, "arise" or "get up." Jerome justified his own free translation style by pointing to the Gospel writer's insertion of the clause, "I say to you," that does not occur in the source text. In contemporary translation terminology, it could be said the Mark was making explicit what was implicit in the original text. The RSV faithfully represents the Greek translation of the Aramaic source text. CEV, on the other hand, translates the Aramaic, omitting Mark's addition.¹⁰⁾

There are two additional textual problems that are found in the manuscripts of this text. Some manuscripts have "Tabitha" in place of "Talitha". According the Metzger (1975:87), this is a result of confusion by scribes with the proper name in Acts 9.40 where Peter says to the woman who had this name, "Tabitha, arise." The second textual problem is in the verb form. The gender of the Aramaic noun is feminine, but the verb form "cum" is

10) Compare the parallel passage in Luke 8.54 where the same event is recorded and the quoted words of Jesus do not include "I say to you." See, however, Luke 7.14 where in a similar situation, Jesus does add these words to his command to the young man to rise up.

masculine. The more correct grammatical form in the feminine gender is “cumi” and this is found in some manuscripts and in some translations. However, “cum” may also occur with feminine and neuter nouns and this form is found in many translations on the basis of the best manuscript evidence.

Finally, in this text the translator faces an ambiguity. Does the verb mean to arise in the sense of physically sitting up from a lying position or does it have the deeper meaning of rising from the dead? In other New Testament contexts this Greek verb is used for resurrection from the dead, but here most translations today understand it in light of Jesus’ assertion that the little girl was sleeping. The RSV retains the ambiguity of the Greek, whereas the CEV interprets it in terms of getting up from sleep. The following verse tells us that she got up and started walking around, emphasizing the normal human experience of waking up from sleep and getting up from bed.

4.2. Translating Key Terms

Key terms or key words are found in any text, whether Scriptural or not. They are the basic words that carry the central meaning of the text. For the translator, the correct or at least the best translation of these words is extremely important for the communication of the message. The names of God are, of course, key terms. Key terms are often divided into two types, the technical or concrete terms and the abstract or more philosophical terms. The technical terms relate to biblical life and culture and include terms like tabernacle, temple, synagogue, vine, cedar, snow, winter, satrapy, governor, talent, crown, and many others. The abstract terms relate to biblical thought and theology. These include terms like holy, law, sacrifice, covenant, wisdom, favor, faith, righteousness, truth, grace, glory, flesh, spirit, and life, to cite only a few examples. The verb “arise” in the story of Jairus’ daughter is associated with the key term and concept of resurrection.

Key terms that express basic concepts of biblical theology and of Christian faith require thorough understanding on the part of the translator as regards both the source context and the receptor context. Young-Jin Min demonstrated this point in his discussion of the meaning of Ecclesiastes 1.7 as this verse is rendered in the Korean versions of the Bible (1991:226-231). Eugene Nida

in his most recent book *Contexts in Translating* (2001) also focuses on the importance of context for the translator.

Among the most difficult terms are those that relate to God's characteristics such as the Old Testament concept of *chesed* and the New Testament concept of *charis*. *Chesed* represents God's loving relationship with his people. It is God's long-term commitment to be faithful to the covenant that he made with the people of Israel. The King James Version translates it as "lovingkindness" but this term is archaic in English today. RSV calls it "steadfast love" while CEV refers to it as "faithful love". Some contemporary translations simply refer to it as God's "mercy", his "kindness" or his "favor", but these do not seem to capture the full scope of the Hebrew term.

New Testament epistle writers speak of God's *charis* to refer to God's great goodness that is extended toward people because of his great love for them and not because of any merit on their part. It is God's underserved love for his people. English and French have borrowed a word from Latin that is used in Jerome's Vulgate, namely, "grace". CEV avoids the borrowed term and says instead that God "treats us much better than we deserve" (Romans 3.24). In the benediction CEV says, "I pray that God will be kind to you" (1 Peter 1.2). However, the translator must ask whether in rendering the term according to the different contexts in which it occurs, the translation does not lose something of the significance of repeated use of a key term throughout the text. On the other hand, to borrow the term "grace" as many languages have done from English and French, does this not introduce an unknown word and therefore a meaningless concept into the receptor culture?

The concept of sacrifice is well-known in many traditional cultures. Translators therefore frequently find an affinity between the religious practices of their own traditions and the practices that they find in the Bible, especially in the sacrifices of the Old Testament. But the question that often faces the translator is whether terms may be used from traditional religion without implying acceptance and endorsement of the indigenous religious practices. In some cases, translators choose to adopt terms from Islam instead of from their own religions. For example, *sadaka* might be borrowed from Arabic through a neighboring language to take the place of a term for sacrifice as practised by the ancestors. Or, in the case of the sacrament of baptism, translators might adopt a form of the English or French words that

are themselves borrowed from Greek instead of using terms that were associated with purification rites in their own traditions.

4.3. Translating Names of God

God is a very central person in the Bible from Genesis to the Apocalypse and the words that are used to refer to God are important key terms. How then shall God be referred to in a translation of the Bible? The translator must go first to the source text where the first reference to God in the Bible is in the very first verse of Genesis. Here God is referred to by the Hebrew term *Elohim*. This is a plural masculine form that is used as the generic term for God in the Old Testament. The singular form *El* is also used as well as *Eloah*. But God also has a personal name in the Hebrew Scriptures. This is the name that was given to the Israelites through Moses at the burning bush (Exodus 3.14). It is referred to as the Tetragrammaton or by the short form Tetragram. This means that the name is made up of four consonants *YHWH* in its original Hebrew form.

In the Septuagint the common Greek term for god was used for Elohim. This was *theos* and it was this masculine noun that was used in the New Testament as a generic reference to a god or to the one God of Israel or, in the plural, to gods. The Christian church has followed this practice very widely, that is, using the local language term for God in translation. In the Gbaya language of Cameroon and the Central African Republic, God is called *Sõ*, which is a term that means “spirit”. The “Spirit that put humankind” is the Creator God. Among the Samba who live in the Alantika Mountains along the Cameroon-Nigeria border, God is known by two names. Some call him *Venèb* and others call him *Yaama*. *Vanèb* is the Creator and *Yaama* is the sun that was created by *Vanèb*; therefore *Yaama* as the sun is also associated with God. In the early days of Scripture translation, the Samba were divided over which name to use for God in the Bible. They have chosen to call him *Vanèb*, although he is also still known as *Yaama*. Among the Zimé of Chad, the name that has been used for the God of the Bible by translators is a traditional name for God that is identified with Rain.

The choice of the word to use for God is not always easy or self-evident. Among the Pévé of Chad the name for God is *Ifray*. This is a compound

word in feminine gender that means literally “mother-sky/heavens” (Venberg 1971:68). Similarly, among the Iraqw in Tanzania the God of Creation is *Looa* who is a female god. “Looa is referred to as the Mother of all and the source of life,” Aloo Mojola writes (1994:87). Pévé translators adopted the Pévé term and found ways to avoid direct collocational clashes of referring to *Ifray* as “Our Father”. However, up to the time of Mojola’s writing, the Iraqw translators had found no solution except to borrow the Swahili name for God, *Mungu*, but this had not been fully accepted by Iraqw Christians.

Translation of a personal name may be more difficult than translating a common noun. Therefore, proper nouns are often transliterated and thereby carried across into the receptor language. But God’s name YHWH posed a unique problem in that it came to be seen by the Jews as being too sacred to pronounce. In its place they read *Adonai* which was a title meaning “Lord”. Accordingly, in the Septuagint, the Greek term *kurios* “Lord” replaced the tetragram. Many modern translations follow the practice of the Septuagint translators. Wherever they encounter *YHWH* in the source text, they read it as *Adonai* and render that as “Lord”. This is often written in upper case letters or in slightly reduced upper case letters as in RSV and CEV. The use of capital letters for the entire word is meant to indicate that this is a special use of “LORD” as opposed to its usual meaning of “Lord” with reference to God or to someone else who is considered to be one’s superior. Some translations seek to express the meaning of the name *YHWH* that is associated with the concept of existence. For example, some French versions translate it as *l’Eternel* “the Eternal One”. Some versions transliterate the tetragram. The King James Version writes it as “Jehovah” and other contemporary versions use the form “Yahweh”. In some languages a transliterated form “Yehova” has been used, especially in translations of the early missionary era.

Debate continues among translators over the most appropriate way to render God’s name. Some suggest that it should be a transliteration of the name itself. Others argue that the attitude of the Jews toward the name should be respected as was done by the translators of the LXX. Others suggest that an equivalent receptor language name for YHWH should be used in place of the Hebrew name. For example, the Chichewa Bible translation team adopted a traditional praise name, *Chauta* meaning “Great-[God]-of the-Bow”. This was

the one whom the Chewa considered to be “the great Provider and Defender of his people” (Wendland 1992:436).

4.4. Translation and Literary Form

A Gbaya folktale session begins with the following antiphonal chorus:

Ngai no'o, zii to-o
To-o zekeDe zekeDe, zii to-o,
To-o zekeDe!
Zonga no'o, zii to'o
To-o zekeDe zekeDe, zii to-o,
To-o zekeDe!
Hirr kpinggim to-o!

The storyteller sings the first line as a call to his or her audience, “Young men, listen to a tale,” “Young women, listen to a tale,” “Mothers, listen to a tale,” “Elders, listen to a tale,” and the song may continue until all the members of the audience have been invited into active participation in the performance. The members of the audience reply in chorus, “A tale laugh, laugh, listen to a tale.” At the end, the performer calls out “Hirr kpinggim to-o!” These words represent the sound of something heavy being pulled or of pushing a very heavy object followed by a heavy crashing sound.

By this song the audience is reminded that a folktale is for laughter, but it is also weighty. It is for fun, but it is also serious. It is entertaining, but at the same time there may be a lesson to be learned. In brief, a tale is performed to entertain and simultaneously to communicate a message. In order to be successful in this effort, the artist uses all possible means. That is, the artist uses all the riches of the language at his or her disposal. These include the lexicon and the grammar of the language, as well as its various aesthetic devices. This is true of what is called literary art whether it is oral or written.

The Bible as we have it today is written, but in its earliest stages much of it was oral. Evidence of this fact can be observed in both the Old and the New Testaments. In its written form, the biblical writers have retained and developed devices that enhance the communication of their message. This is especially evident in the prophetic texts of the Old Testament that are mostly

poetic. Like the Gbaya folktale performer, the biblical poets used sound to express and to emphasize their message. They used various literary devices like rhyme, rhythm, stress, plays on sound, wordplays, and many others.¹¹⁾

In the Creation Story as recorded in the first chapter of Genesis, the primordial state of the earth is described by the Hebrew expression *tohu va bohu* (Genesis 1.2). This was translated in the Septuagint as “unsightly and unfurnished” and in the Vulgate by adjectives meaning “void and empty.” But the Hebrew expression plays with the repetition of sounds. The sound expresses the meaning of formlessness and emptiness. In many languages, especially in Africa, these words with their special dependence on sound for meaning would be ideophones. In Bishop Crowther’s Yoruba translation, this is rendered, “[The earth was] *jūjū*, [it was] *ṣofo*.” The first of these Yoruba words is an ideophone depicting something that is in disorder or that is topsy-turvy. The second is a verbal form meaning “be empty.”

The book of Isaiah, like the majority of the prophetic messages in the Old Testament, uses poetic form and this includes many poetic devices. In Isaiah 10.14 the prophet quotes the words of the arrogant Assyrian king who boasts that he conquered the whole world without *upotseh peh umetsaptsep* “anyone opening the mouth and chirping.” The repetition of the “p” and “ts” sounds is apparent in these words, but there is especially the *tsaptsep* which represents the chirping sounds of little birds. The Revised English Bible translates, “not a beak gaped, no cheep was heard,” and CEV says, “no one even ... made a peep.” This is a well-known literary device that is called onomatopoeia.

Onomatopoeia falls within the larger category of terms that are today called ideophones. These are a virtually universal category of lexical items that express whatever can be physically perceived. Onomatopoeic words specifically imitate sounds that one hears, like the chirping of birds, the barking of dogs or the pulling and dropping of a very heavy object. But other ideophones depict what one sees, smells, tastes, or feels, or even emotions that one experiences. Therefore, the earth that was in disorder is described in the Yoruba Bible as *jūjū*.

11) For an introduction to Hebrew poetic form see Zogbo and Wendland’s book *Hebrew Poetry in the Bible: A Guide for Understanding and for Translating*(2000).

In cultures where ideophones are commonly used in everyday speech and especially where they are prominent in oral art forms like folktales, narratives, proverbs, riddles, and poetry and song, it is appropriate to use them in Bible translation. In many biblical texts, they may be used with great effect. The Korean writer Lee Young Shin uses onomatopoeia in his Bible comics. In the story of David and Goliath (1999:64), he describes the twirling of David's sling "bung bung bung", the launching of the stone "hwak!" the stone striking Goliath's forehead "p^hok!" and the thud of his fall "k^hung!" In Indonesia the sound of David's sling is *SYIIING*..., the stone flies *SYUUUUUT*... and *BUK!* it strikes Goliath's forehead. Translators tend to be more conservative in the biblical text than in comic versions. Thus, in the Gbaya Bible only one ideophone is used in this narrative and this is to describe the giant's fall to the ground *rum*. To introduce more ideophones here could create an air of comedy that is appropriate in comics but not in the biblical text.

In biblical narrative where description is used, ideophones are often the most effective means of expressing the meaning of the source text, even when ideophone expression may not be used there. When Ezra was in shock and dismay after being told of the Jews' mixed marriages (Ezra 9.3), the Gbaya translators depict him sitting *tokoro*, that is, in adject despair. In the Gbaya translation of Revelation 1.14, the color of the Son of Man's head and hair is described as being *kpung kpung*. This is an ideophone that describes something that is pure white. In verse 16 the sword that came out of his mouth is *peDeng-peDeng*, this being the ideophone that describes a very sharp blade.

Poetry is the biblical genre in which ideophones may occur the most prominently. In Psalm 19.8 the Lord's commandment is pure *ngelele*; in the 23rd psalm, the psalmist says that his cup is filled to overflowing *zerere*. Parallelism is a feature of Hebrew poetry as well as of Gbaya verbal art. In Psalm 20.8 ideophones were used by the translators to reflect the parallelism and express the meaning of the original text:

RSV: They will collapse and fall;

but we shall rise and stand upright.

Gbaya: For them it's falling to the ground *samgbang*,

but for us it's standing upright *keng*.

Ideophones must, of course, be used with care because they are dramatic words that call attention to themselves and may result in what is sometimes called “over-translating.” For example, most translations do not use ideophones to describe the state of the earth in Creation because to do so would imply that the writer of the Creation Story in Genesis had been personally present to observe what the earth looked like as God began the process of creation.

5. *Talitha cum!* - Reading the Message

The reading of the Bible and Bible use are topics that may have been overlooked in the past, but they are presently receiving increased attention among both Bible translators and theologians. In the following paragraphs we will consider first the reading of the Bible by the translator, then we will consider the reading and use of the Bible by the audience.

5.1. Bible Translators and Bible Reading

Bible translators are taught that one of the three key translation principles is faithfulness to the original text. The other two principles are clarity and a natural language style. Being faithful to the source requires an accurate reading of the source text. Translators therefore concentrate on the exegesis of the text in order to achieve an accurate understanding of the original text. Translators are instructed to be objective and not to interpret. This has been underscored by the Bible Society stipulation that the translation should be “without doctrinal note or comment.” But clearly the text does not stand as a formula that may be read without any possible deviation. In fact, we recognize that in our reading of the text, we do interpret, we do have perspectives, and indeed we are influenced by theology and by ideologies. Our understanding of the message we translate is filtered through a number of frames (Wilt 2002).

For example, in Mark’s translation of Jesus command to the daughter of Jairus, do we understand the words, “I say to you,” to be Mark’s way of rendering explicit what he understood to be implicit in the Aramaic text within the context where Jesus was speaking? Or was this his way of

indicating a formulaic expression that had a kind of magical power? Or perhaps, this may have been a discourse marker that Mark as writer used in his translation to draw the reader's attention to the importance of the words that would follow? Did this phrase have theological significance, namely, that Mark was drawing attention to the speaker as being Jesus, and was he thereby emphasizing Jesus' power and authority? Mark's motivation for inserting this clause may not affect how we translate it today, except in the case of the CEV. At the same time, this example reveals the many frames that can be applied to what would appear to be a relatively straightforward translation.

In the case of the verb, "to arise", the theological implications are potentially more prominent. Although Jesus downplays the event by putting it in terms of sleep, the reader believes the information that was brought by the messengers that the little girl had died. Therefore, the command "Arise!" has a double meaning, that of getting up and that of coming back to life. In some languages the ambiguity of the Aramaic and of the Greek will not be possible. Then the translator will be obliged to make a theological decision about the translation.

There are many ambiguities in the text where the translator must adopt a perspective, but there are also ideological positions held by the translator that may affect the entire Bible translation. Recent New Testament translations in languages of Europe and North America have been influenced by the "hoi Ioudaioi" question. This is whether the article and noun *hoi Ioudaioi* that occurs frequently in John's Gospel should be translated literally "the Jews" as was done in most earlier translations, or should it be interpreted according to context? Where it does not intentionally refer to all the Jews, but refers instead to the Jewish religious and political leadership, should it not be translated "the leaders of Jews"? The discussion, of course, arises out of the context of the post-war Europe. CEV and other recent translations have adopted this latter approach.

Some writers, among them Gosnell Yorke of the United Bible Societies (2000:114-123), have called for an Afrocentric approach to translation. It is argued that the oversights and distortions of earlier translations from a predominantly European ethnocentric perspective need to be corrected in the translation itself, in introductions to individual books in the Bible, and in

supplementary materials like footnotes, glossaries and maps in order to give a correct and accurate interpretation and rendering of the biblical source text. This relates not only to the geographic implications of Afrocentrism, but to the issue of race as well. A verse that is often cited in this regard is Song of Songs 1.5 that in RSV reads, “I am very dark, but comely.” In CEV this has been rendered, “My skin is dark and beautiful” to make it clear that the connotation is positive and not pejorative.

A very recent example of ideological influence is in the position of those who wish to exclude “Allah” from Bible translation on the grounds that the God of Islam cannot be the same as the God of the Old and New Testaments. In some earlier translations, names and vocabulary that had Arabic etymologies were excluded from use because of a missionary ideology. Today, the issue has more to do with world events and global politics than with theology.

5.2. Bible Reading and Bible Use

Bible translation is a process that may appear to end when the manuscript is submitted for printing. However, the significance of a Bible is ultimately not in its translation but in the use of the translation. It is as the Bible is read and studied and taught that it can have an influence on the lives of its readers and on the theology of those who preach and teach and learn from it.¹²⁾ Throughout history this has been true and the King James Version in English and the Luther Version in German are only two examples. The African theologian John Mbiti affirmed that this was also true for Africa when he wrote, “The Bible in the local language becomes the most directly influential single factor in shaping the life of the church in Africa” (1986:28). William Mitchell of the United Bible Societies anticipated the arrival of the first Old Testaments on the languages of the Quechua and Aymara peoples of the Andes Mountains in South America when he suggested that “the Old Testament will be appropriated by the Andean people in a unique way” (1987:129).

12) For a collection of important papers on this topic, see *Bible Translation and the Spread of the Church: The last two hundred year* edited by Philip C. Stine (1990).

R.S. Sugirtharajah in his book *The Bible and the Third World* (2001) looks at the Bible through the ideological perspective of colonialism. He divides the history of translation into three eras, precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial. While Nida divided the history of translation according to an ecclesiastical and missiological perspective, Sugirtharajah's perspective is political. It interprets the world and its history within the framework of a particular colonial experience, that of the European imperialism of the 19th-20th centuries. Thus, both the translation and the reading of the translated Scriptures are interpreted against the backdrop of colonialism. Sugirtharajah describes the Bible before the time of the European colonial empires as "a marginal and minority text" (2001:13). During the colonial era, he sees Bible translation and the expansion of the colonial political and commercial empire as going hand in hand. He refers to Biblical imperialism for which he gives much credit to the success of the Bible Societies in translating and disseminating the Scriptures. Finally, he refers to "postcolonial reclamations" of the Bible (2001:173) and here he includes liberation theologies, vernacular readings and postcolonial biblical criticism.¹³⁾

The issue of inclusive language has recently been a subject of great debate and controversy especially in the world of English-language translation, but it is a more significant issue than language alone. Nyambura Njoroge and Musa Dube are contemporary African women theologians from Kenya and Botswana respectively who have edited a book entitled *Talitha cum! Theologies of African Women* (2001). In their book they use Jesus' command to Jairus' daughter as a call to African women to "get up, arise and echo the cries of the people who exist in their context of pain and suffering, exclusion and marginalization, violence and helplessness" (p. viii).¹⁴⁾

If the translation of the Bible can be seen in terms of the incarnation of Christ, the fact that in translations of the Bible the name of God is usually translated into the local or indigenous language has been seen as a sign of God's acceptance of all people of all cultures. Musa Dube, however, charges that "Instead of bringing the gospel home to women, translation of the Bible

13) See also "A Korean Minjung Perspective: The Hebrews and the Exodus" by Cyris H.S. Moon in Sugirtharajah 2000:228-243.

14) See "Women's Rereading of the Bible" by Elsa Tamez in Sugirtharajah 2000:48-57.

in Africa has, in fact, marginalized African women and excluded them from social and spiritual spaces” (2001:22). The Ghanaian Presbyterian minister, Rose Teteki Abbey, explains that even though the Gã name for God has been adopted and is used by Gã Christians, this has not counter-balanced the heavily male-oriented and patriarchal portrayal of God by the church (2001:140ff). The name *Ataa Naa Nyonmo*, literally, “Father Mother God”, refers to the maleness and femaleness of God, but the attributes of God as evident in the traditional Gã name have not been associated with the God of the Bible although he is also portrayed in the Old Testament by metaphors that are feminine or that speak to the experience of women. Rose Abbey cites the compassion of God in Hosea 2.21, God as a woman in labor in Isaiah 42.14 and God as a mother in Isaiah 46.3-4 and 66.13. Thus she calls for a rediscovery of *Ataa Naa Nyonmo* in “a theology that recognizes both the maleness as well as the femaleness of God” (p. 154). It is thus not insignificant that the Iraqw Christians have not been willing to abandon their own name for the female God Looa in favor of the masculine Mungu borrowed from Swahili.

6. Conclusion

Bible translation is crucial to the communication of the Word of God to humankind and it continues today at a greater pace than at anytime in history. Even though estimates indicate that 94% or more of the world’s population has access to the Scriptures in a language that they can understand, there are still some 3000 languages in which no Bible translation exists. If the incarnate Christ came for all human beings and if God reveals himself through his translated Word, then all peoples have a right to receive God’s Word in their own languages.

Meanwhile, there are languages that are dying as their speakers adopt other languages. Do Christians have an obligation to translate Scripture texts into languages before they disappear forever? At the same time, there are new languages, those commonly referred to as pidgins and creoles. Increasingly, translations of New Testaments and Bibles are being done in these languages.

At the same time as new translations are being done, earlier translations

are being revised. Many English versions could be cited, the New King James Version, the New Revised Standard Version, the Revised English Bible, and the New Living Bible, for example. The same is occurring in other languages where much appreciated older versions are being revised for new generations of users.

While translation is still carried out in the written medium, the new media are increasingly being used both for new translations and in the diffusion of existing translations. Radio and television, video and interactive CD-Roms offer new opportunities for sharing the Scriptures with those who may not take time to read or who may not be able to read the written word on the printed page.

In brief, the task of communicating the Scriptures in the languages of the people of the world is greater today than it has ever been. The vision that we share as Bible translators is the vision that John recorded in Revelation 7.9-10 (CEV):

After this, I saw a large crowd with more people than could be counted. They were from every race, tribe, nation, and language, and they stood before the throne and before the Lamb. They wore white robes and held palm branches in their hands, as they shouted,

“Our God, who sits upon the throne,
has the power to save his people,
and so does the Lamb.”

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New Testament Textual Criticism & Bible Translation

Kuo-Wei Peng

1. Introduction

Ideally, the translation of any text should start with the original copy (called “autograph”); but for most ancient documents, including the Old and New Testaments, the original copy does not survive. In a situation as such, the translation should start at least with a text which is as close as possible to the autograph if the translation is to be faithful. To achieve this, the reconstruction of the original by using extant handwritten copies (called “manuscripts;” MSS) is then necessary before translation.

For any document produced before the invention of modern printing, it could be transmitted only by copyists’ laboriously copying. The MSS of the ancient books, including the New Testament (NT) writings, are therefore prone to contain errors due to the copyists’ oversights as well as the changes (either intentionally or unintentionally) made by them. Therefore, the extant MSS and relevant documents (together called “witnesses”) should be studied and examined closely so that a text close to the autograph can be reconstructed. A task as such is normally known as “textual criticism;” and the aim of this article is to provide a brief introduction to NT textual criticism and then to the way of using its outcomes in Bible translation.

2. The Formation and Early Transmission of the New Testament Documents

As noted earlier, the task of the textual criticism of the NT documents is to reconstruct a text close to the original writings by way of studying the witnesses.¹⁾ The value and significance of the witnesses, however, cannot be

properly appreciated unless we know something about the formation and early transmission of those documents.²⁾

The NT is a collection of twenty-seven books written independently and at first transmitted separately. Each of the original NT writings was handwritten in Greek³⁾ during the second half of the first century.⁴⁾ The collection of the NT writings was a gradual process. The earliest to be collected were probably the letters of Paul; and all the fourteen Pauline letters (including Hebrews) were gathered as one collection about the mid-second century.⁵⁾ But not until A.D.180 do we hear of the tetraeuagglion.⁶⁾ For Acts, Revelation and the Catholic letters, it was not until late in the fourth century their authorities were recognized.⁷⁾ In view of the textual history described as above, the NT

1) Whether it is possible to determine the exact text of the original writings and whether this should be the primary purpose of textual criticism are much debated issues. Regarding this, a good bibliography can be found in Roger L. Omanson, *The Text of the New Testament*, in *Discover the Bible* (ed. Roger Omanson; UBS, 2001), 135n1. However, as far as Bible translation is concerned, the reconstruction of the original text is still the primary reason that we engage in the textual criticism of the New Testament documents.

2) This is rightly stressed in Kurt and Barbara Aland, *The Text of the New Testament* (2nd ed.; trans. Erroll F. Rhodes; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 49-50.

3) It should be noted that, for Matthew, the external evidence, such as Papias (ca.60-130) and Irenaeus (ca.130-200), points to a Hebrew or Aramaic autograph while the internal evidence points to a Greek autograph which used Greek sources. See W.D. Davies and D.C. Allison, *Matthew* (3 vols; ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988, 1991, 1997), 1:7-9.

4) While, for some scholars, some of the original NT writings may be handwritten as late as the first half of the second century.

5) As early as about A.D.95, a collection of Pauls letters has been hinted in 1 Clement, the earliest Christian document outside the NT. See Alands, *The Text of the New Testament*, 49.

6) That is, a collection of four Gospels regarded as equally authoritative accounts of the gospel story; see Alands, *The Text of the New Testament*, 48-49.

7) However, it should be noted that, although the authority of Revelation has been recognize as early as in the second and third century in the Western churches, it took much longer for the Eastern churches to recognize its authority and even today the Eastern Orthodox and the Nestorians still do not fully recognize its canonicity. See Alands, *The Text of the New Testament*, 49-50; also L.M. McDonall, *Canon*, in *Dictionary of the Later New Testament and Its Developments* (eds. R.P. Martin and P.H. Davids; Dawners Grove: IVP, 1997), 134-44.

documents should not be seen as a single product from the textual-critical point of view. The textual criticism of the NT writings, then, should be dealt with individually. There are also other things about the history of the text of the NT that we can learn from the church history. Firstly, if following the expansion of the early Church closely, we should find that the production of the MSS in the first three to four centuries was probably mainly a phenomenon in the east of Mediterranean, Asia Minor, the Aegean coast of Greece, Palestine, and North Africa.⁸⁾ The role of the West and of Rome in the early period of church history with regard to theological and scholarly interests was mainly a subordinate one.⁹⁾ Any theory of the development of text types (see below), then, should take this factor into account.

Secondly, the persecution under Diocletian (ca.303-313) and the age of Constantine (d.337) were two significant periods in the textual history of the NT documents. One of the major characteristics of the Diocletianic persecutions was the systematic destruction of church buildings and also the MSS found in them. The result was a widespread shortage of NT MSS when the persecution ceased.¹⁰⁾ The tremendous growth of Christianity after Diocletianic persecutions caused the problem of the shortage of MSS even more acute. The outcome was then a period of “mass production” of MSS by large copying houses. The exemplar used in those production centers was mainly related to the exegetical school of Antioch, which provided bishops for many dioceses throughout the East; and in such a way this text type soon widely spread and eventually influenced the text type used in the Imperial capital, Constantinople, later when entering into the age of Constantine.¹¹⁾ The only region that was not influenced by this text type was probably the region around Alexandria of North Egypt, where the church was governed with a tightly centralized administrative structure. A different text type was then probably produced here due to different church administration.¹²⁾

Thirdly, the mission activity of the early Church produced several ancient versions (Syriac, Latin, and, Coptic)¹³⁾ during the period when the NT canon

8) Cf. Alands, *The Text of the New Testament*, 53-54.

9) Alands, *The Text of the New Testament*, 54.

10) Alands, *The Text of the New Testament*, 65.

11) See Alands, *The Text of the New Testament*, 65-66.

12) See Alands, *The Text of the New Testament*, 65.

13) Other early versions that are of value in the textual criticism of the NT

was still in the stage of collection and formation. Therefore, these early versions are of special value in understanding the textual history of the NT documents,¹⁴⁾ as all these versions had existed even before the NT canon was officially established.

3.The Witnesses and Their Symbols

The above brief discussion shows that the witnesses of the NT documents should include the extant Greek NT MSS as well as the MSS of the early NT versions. In addition to the above two sets of witnesses, two more sets should be also considered: the Greek NT lectionaries and the patristic citations of the NT.

The Greek MSS can be divided into three sub-categories: the papyrus MSS, the uncial (or majuscule) MSS, and the minuscule MSS. All the NT writings were very probably written on papyrus, as was all the literature of the time, and were then copied on papyrus. Therefore, the earliest MSS are on papyrus, using the capital script (called the “uncial” or “majuscule”). Not until the beginning in the fourth century did the use of parchment for writing material become increasingly popular and the script used then was still the uncial. About the beginning of the ninth century, the lower case of Greek alphabet (called “minuscule”) was invented and the practice of copying soon reflected this change of script as the earliest extant minuscule MSS date in the ninth century.¹⁵⁾

include Ethiopic, Armenian, and Georgian. For detailed discussions of the early versions, see B.D. Ehrman and M.W. Holmes (eds.), *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research* (Studies & Documents 46; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), chs. 5-11.

14) The earliest extant MSS of Syriac versions of the Four Gospels reflect a form of text which dates from the end of the second century or the beginning of the third century; the Old Latin version or versions emerged and circulated in North Africa and Europe during the third century; while in the beginning of the third century portions of the NT had been translated into Sahidic, one of the dialect of Coptic. See B.M. Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament* (3rd, enlarged ed.; Oxford: OUP, 1964, 1992), 68-69, 72, 79.

15) For detailed discussion of this topic, see Alands, *The Text of the New Testament*, 75-77; Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament*, 1-19.

For the symbols representing the MSS, the old system, which is still in use for uncial MSS discovered earlier, uses Latin and Greek capital letters to identify the uncials (e.g., A, B, and C), sometimes superscript letters are used to indicate the portions contained (e.g., D^{ca} and D^p). Very rarely Hebrew letters are also used (e.g., Ⓢ). When the number of uncial MSS grew so large to exceed the number of letters of Latin and Greek alphabets, a new system was devised by Caspar René Gregory (1846-1917) and this system has been used to the present. Since Gregory, the papyri have been indicated by an initial \mathfrak{P} with a superscript numeral (e.g., \mathfrak{P}^{46}), the uncials by numerals with an initial 0 (with = 01, A = 02, B = 03, C = 04, D^{ca} = 05, D^p = 06, etc.), the minuscules with simple Arabic numerals (e.g., 1, 13, 33, etc.), and the lectionaries with a prefixed ℓ (e.g., $\ell 1$).¹⁶⁾

There are 94 extant papyrus MSS. The earliest one is \mathfrak{P}^5 , dated ca.125, containing merely five verses of John 18 (31-33, 37-38) and the latest ones are in the eighth century.¹⁷⁾ There are 299 uncial MSS registered at present. The earliest one comes from about the end of the second or the beginning of the third century and the latest one comes from the eleventh century.¹⁸⁾ The number of the registered minuscule MSS is about 2,800, dated starting from the ninth century and onwards.¹⁹⁾

The purpose of lectionary system is to provide fixed lessons, which are pericopes from the Bible, for the church to read on particular days during the year. The Greek lectionaries, therefore, contains separate pericopes extracted from the text of the NT. There are 2,280 more lectionary MSS registered at present. All of them are on parchment, and 286 of them are uncial MSS.²⁰⁾

16) See Alands, *The Text of the New Testament*, 72-3.

17) Detailed discussions see Alands, *The Text of the New Testament*, 81-102; Eldon Jay Epp, *The Papyrus Manuscripts of the New Testament*, in Ehrman and Holmes, *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research*, ch. 1.

18) Detailed discussions see Alands, *The Text of the New Testament*, 81-2, 103-28.

19) Detailed discussions see Alands, *The Text of the New Testament*, 81-2, 128-58; Barbara Aland and Klaus Wachtel, *The Greek Minuscule Manuscripts of the New Testament*, in Ehrman and Holmes, *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research*, ch. 3.

20) Detailed discussions see Alands, *The Text of the New Testament*, 81-2, 163-70; Carroll D. Osburn, *The Greek Lectionaries of the New Testament*, in Ehrman and Holmes, *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research*, ch. 4.

The Gregory system does not provide standardized symbols for early versions and patristic witnesses. For the early versions of the NT, the two critical editions of the Bible Societies (which will be introduced below) use similar symbols and they can be found in the introductory sections.²¹⁾ NT citations in the Church Fathers are normally referred by the names of the Fathers or their abbreviations in critical editions and the names or abbreviations can also be found in the introductory sections.²²⁾

4. Methods and Guiding Principles in Reconstructing the Original Text

As introduced earlier, contemporary NT textual criticism needs to deal with about 3,200 Greek text MSS, 2,200 more Greek lectionary MSS, several early language versions, as well as the NT citations of a very long list of names of the early Church Fathers in reconstructing a text very close to the original. Therefore, textual critics need to formulate a certain method or a certain set of guiding principles to do the job. Since the advent of modern NT textual criticism in the beginning of the nineteenth century, several methods have been formulated in tackling this very challenging task.²³⁾

Two very important general principles, though not the only two to be taken into account in practice, have been agreed among most textual critics after the

21) See Barbara Aland et al (eds.), *The Greek New Testament* (4th revised ed.; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994), 22*-29*; Barbara Aland et al (eds.), *Nestle-Aland Novum Testamentum Graece* (27th ed.; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1898, 1993), 63*-72*.

22) E.g., Aland et al (eds.), *The Greek New Testament*, 29*-36*; Aland et al (eds.), *Nestle-Aland Novum Testamentum Graece*, 72*-6*.

23) Anyone who is serious in NT textual criticism is advised to be familiar with the history of the development of methods of NT textual criticism. A starting point can be Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament*, ch. IV and VI. The development of *Textus Receptus* and its problems is also a topic with which one should be familiar; a good discussion can be seen in Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament*, ch. III. For advanced discussions, see Ehrman and Holmes, *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research*, chs. 16,17,19-21 and Eldon J. Epp and Gordon D. Fee (eds.), *Studies in the Theory and Method of New Testament Textual Criticism* (Studies & Documents 45; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993).

development in the past two hundred years: (1) the dates and the quantity of the evidence, though not insignificant, are not as important as the quality of the evidence in deciding which reading is closer to the original; and (2) to reach an appropriate textual judgment, both the external evidences as well as the internal evidences should be properly evaluated.²⁴⁾

One of the factors contributing to the quality of a certain MS is related to the text type that it belongs to. The laborious studies of the MSS of textual critics have found that most MSS can be loosely grouped into one of three (or four) text types and MSS that belong to the same text type are characterized by having the same variant readings in a number of units of variation.²⁵⁾ These three (or four) text types are as follows:²⁶⁾

The Alexandrian text type, represented by most of the papyrus MSS (e.g., \mathfrak{P}^{45} , \mathfrak{P}^{46} , \mathfrak{P}^{47} , \mathfrak{P}^{64+67} , \mathfrak{P}^{66} , \mathfrak{P}^{75} etc.) and several uncial MSS of the fourth and fifth centuries (such as \aleph , B, 057, and the Rev. of A), is considered by most of the textual critics today as the text type closest to the original. This text type was the one developed in the region around Alexandria of North Africa as discussed earlier.

The second text type is the so-called “Western” text type. The name of this text type comes from the misunderstanding of earlier textual critics and it was very unlikely developed in the West according to our earlier discussion of the formation and transmission of the NT. The main reason that it was thought to be “Western” is that the MSS of the Old Latin and the Vulgate reflect this type of text, while this text type was probably still a product of the East, a revision done without a concern about restoring the original. The major

24) This represents the reasoned eclectic approach used for the production of the Bible Societies critical editions. Although it is the mainstream approach today, it should be noted that not all contemporary textual critics follow the same principle. For reasoned eclectic approach, see Michael W. Holmes, Reasoned Eclecticism in New Testament Textual Criticism, in Ehrman and Holmes (eds.), *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research*, 336-60; its practice, see Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament*, 207-46.

25) A unit of variation is that in a passage there are two or more variant readings in MSS.

26) A good brief description can be seen in Omandson, *The Text of the New Testament*, 341-2. For the distribution of Greek MSS by century and category, see Table 8 in Alands, *The Text of the New Testament*, 159-62, 332-37.

representative of this text type is D^{ca} or 05 (therefore sometimes called D text), and it is characterized by innumerable additions, transpositions, and omissions.

The third one is the Byzantine text type, which can be found in about eighty percent of the minuscule MSS and almost all the lectionary MSS. This text type was the one developed in the Imperial context of Constantinople. It is also considered by most textual critics as the least valuable one in reconstructing the original text because the editorial work done to this text type was mainly for practical, liturgical, or theological purpose and not for textual. The Byzantine text type was actually a further development of the text type developed by the Antiochene School. This pre-Byzantine text type is also known as the Koine text type.

For the students of textual criticism, it is very crucial to familiarize themselves with the most famous and important MSS and their text types from the very beginning of learning. Nevertheless, text types are only general descriptive terms. The students also need to be aware that there are always minor differences among MSS belonging to the same text type and even the best MSS of the Alexandrian text type are not free from errors. To reconstruct original text (or a text very close to the original) textual critics need something more than text types to operate. For this, textual critics have also developed certain guidelines in evaluating external evidences and internal evidences. A very succinct summary can be found in Omanson's article as quoted here:

(1) *External evidence.* (a) The oldest manuscripts are more likely to preserve the original reading. (b) A variant reading known in widely separated geographical areas is more likely original than one known only in one geographical area. (c) A reading supported by a vast majority of existing manuscripts is not necessarily the best reading since these manuscripts may all come from a common ancestor. Manuscripts, therefore, must be "weighed" (evaluated) and not just counted to see how many support certain variants.

(2) *Internal evidence.* (a) The shorter reading is more likely original. In most cases, scribes added words to the text rather than omitted words. . . . (b) The more difficult-to-understand reading should be followed since scribes usually altered a difficult text to make it easier, rather than vice

versa. (c) The reading which best fits the writer's style and vocabulary is more likely original. (d) Similarly, the reading that best fits the context is to be preferred.²⁷⁾

These guidelines should not be applied blindly or formulaically. Students of textual criticism should understand that this discipline is partly a science and partly an art. Therefore, experience is crucial in arriving at sound and proper textual judgments.²⁸⁾

5. Two Bible Societies' Critical Editions

For two different purposes, the Bible Societies provides two different critical editions of the NT: the twenty-seventh edition of *Nestle-Aland Novum Testamentum Graece* (Nestle-Aland²⁷⁾ and the fourth edition of *The Greek New Testament* (UBS⁴). Nestle-Aland²⁷ is designed as a pocket scholarly edition to provide as much as information about the variants of the NT text in a handy volume. This edition can trace its tradition back to the beginning of the twentieth century.²⁹⁾ As a pocket edition, Nestle-Aland²⁷ should be seen as a handy reference for those who need the textual information but not as the edition for specialized textual study for which one should refer to editions such as the older editions of von Soden and Tischendorf³⁰⁾ as well as the outcomes of the on-going International Greek New Testament Project (IGNTP).

UBS⁴ aims at a different concern, which is the provision of a base text for Bible translation, and, as a result, only the units of variation which are significant for translators or necessary for the establishing of the text are selected.³¹⁾ The units of variation in UBS⁴, then, are fewer than those in

27) Omanson, *The Text of the New Testament*, 142. A more detailed and elaborate guidelines can be found in Alands, *The Text of the New Testament*, 280-82.

28) For those who are new to this field, it is advisable to start with the examples in Alands and Metzgers textbooks. See Alands, *The Text of the New Testament*, 282-316; Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament*, 219-46.

29) The history of this edition, see Alands, *The Text of the New Testament*, 19-36 and Aland et al (eds.), *Nestle-Aland Novum Testamentum Graece*, 44*-45*.

30) Hermann Freiherr von Soden, *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments* (1913); Constantin von Tischendorf, *Editio octava critica maior* (1869-72).

31) See the Preface to the First Edition in Aland et al (eds.) *The Greek New*

Nestle-Aland²⁷ but with fuller list of representative evidence for each variant. One very unique feature of UBS⁴ is the evaluations given to each unit of variation. This is designed to help the translators how to make decisions on the selection of readings for the main text as well as for the notes. Since it is very relevant to Bible translation, the last section of this article will be devoted to the discussion of this evaluation system.

6. The Use of the Textual Apparatus in UBS⁴ in Bible translation

In UBS⁴, 1,438 passages are marked with textual apparatus and at the beginning of each apparatus one of four levels of certainty (i.e., the evaluations, from {A} to {D}) is also marked. According to the introduction of the edition:

The letter A indicates that the text is certain.

The letter B indicates that the text is almost certain.

The letter C, however, indicates that the Committee had difficulty in deciding which variant to place in the text.

The letter D, which occurs only rarely, indicates that the committee had great difficulty in arriving at a decision.³²⁾

The practical meaning of this evaluation system can be understood as this: the translators are encouraged to follow the main text of UBS⁴ when the editors have given an {A} or a {B} evaluation to the printed text; while for the printed text to which the editors have given a {C} or a {D} evaluation the translators should feel more freedom to translate the variant readings in the critical apparatus.³³⁾

If the translation is to use footnotes to indicate variant readings, it is in principle no need to insert a note for a passage whose apparatus comes with an {A} or a {B} evaluation if the printed text is translated, while it is recommended to put a footnote for a passage whose apparatus comes with a {C} or a {D} evaluation. Of course these guidelines cannot be applied

Testament, viii-x.

32) Aland et al (eds.), *The Greek New Testament*, 3*.

33) Cf. Omanson, *The Text of the New Testament*, 150.

blindly, either. The translators should take into account the tradition of the faith community and deal with the cases individually.

7. Final Comments

In view that the issues behind two passages that have been given the same level of evaluation may actually very different from each other in terms of the rationales behind the evaluations, an accompanying *Textual Commentary* has been supplied since the third edition of the UBS *Greek New Testament* to provide further discussion about the evaluations.³⁴⁾ This commentary provides valuable information about the nature of the issues as well as the rationale and, sometimes, the process behind the evaluations. However, this commentary assumes certain basic knowledge of the textual criticism of the NT. Therefore, even with the help of the *Textual Commentary*, the translators are still advised and encouraged to gain proper knowledge of NT textual criticism if they want to reflect the textual phenomenon of the Greek text in their translation.

34) The one accompanying UBS4 is Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual commentary on the Greek New Testament* (2nd ed.; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994).

The Ancient Translations of the Bible for Its Modern Translators

Takamitsu Muraoka

The Bible is unique among the world literature, not only for its message and literary qualities, but also for the fact that people have been translating it very, very long time. The first such attempt we know of goes back to the third century BC, and that is of course a Greek translation of the Jewish Bible, the so-called Septuagint.¹⁾ This was followed, within a matter of a few centuries, by a few more translations into other ancient languages of the region such as a Jewish dialect of Aramaic (Targum), another dialect of Aramaic, namely Syriac (Peshitta), and Latin (Jerome's Vulgate), all translations made directly from the original Bible.

It is often taken for granted that the Bible is translated in order to bring its message to a specific community. It is thus motivated by educational or missionary designs. Such a goal is best achieved by making the Bible available in a language easily comprehensible by the masses of the community, not its elite who might know Greek or Hebrew. According to the famous second-century BC letter of Aristeas, it was precisely this sort of concern that convinced King Ptolemy II of the desirability of having the Jewish Bible translated into a language which was used and understood by the cultured ruling class and the upper echelon of the time, namely Hellenistic Greek.²⁾ According to the commonly heard theory, the Septuagint was

1) It is generally agreed that the translation project took several generations to complete, and the first part to be done into Greek was naturally the Pentateuch. The dating of various parts of the translation is still a disputed issue. Nor is it known whether or not a complete written translation of a major segment such as the Pentateuch was preceded by sporadic, tentative or private written translations of parts of the Bible, say, the Decalogue or some major poems or psalms. For a fairly recent discussion of these general issues, see M. Harl et al., *La Bible grecque des Septante: du judaïsme hellénistique au christianisme ancien*(Paris, 1988), pp. 39-79.

2) Pseudo-Letter of Aristeas §10-11. The historicity of this anecdote is looked upon by many scholars with more than a modicum of scepticism. However, Gutman made,

produced against the background of the assumed deteriorating knowledge of Hebrew in the Hellenistic diaspora or the Targum came about to meet the needs of Palestinian or Syrian Jews whose Hebrew knowledge was poor and whose daily language was Aramaic. It appears, however, that there were other motives at work. The presence among the Dead Sea documents of fragments of a Greek translation of the Jewish Bible and fragments of a complete Aramaic translation of the book of Job is highly significant to our consideration of this issue.³⁾ From a study of the Hebrew and Aramaic documents from the same library we can conclude with confidence that members of the Qumran community were highly competent not only in Aramaic, but also in Hebrew in its classical form as a literary language, whilst in their daily mundane discourse they may have spoken Aramaic or a form of Hebrew close to the so-called Mishnaic Hebrew.⁴⁾ Why did they need an Aramaic version of the book of Job? Is the above-average number of hapax legomena, obscure Hebrew words and phrases present in the book a sufficient motive for translating the whole book into Aramaic? Can we really assume that the Aramaic of 11QtgJob was as easily understood as their mother tongue? In this context, I also pointed out that the book of Job has never formed part of the regular Jewish synagogue liturgy, like the Pentateuch or parts of the Prophets or the Megilloth regularly recited in the synagogue service. What about fragments of the Septuagint including a fragment of a non-canonical book of the Epistle of Jeremiah (7Q2)? After all, Ein Feshcha is not Alexandria. I believe that to translate the Bible was a way of verbalising, in a written form, one's interpretation and analysis of the biblical text. Someone said: "What are translations but compressed commentaries?"⁵⁾ I

I believe, quite a plausible case for the general probability of such a notion: Y. Gutman, *The Beginnings of Jewish Hellenistic Literature*, vol. 2 [Heb.](Jerusalem, 1958), pp. 115-20.

3) For example, papLXXExod(7Q1) containing fragments of Ex 28.4-7 and 4QLXXLeva(4Q119) containing a Greek text of Lv 26.2-16, and 11QtgJob preserving portions of chapters 17-41, about 15% of the original, in an Aramaic translation. For a complete listing, see E. Tov et al., *The Texts from the Judaean Desert: Indices and an Introduction to the Discoveries in the Judaean Desert Series* [DJD XXXIX] (Oxford, 2002), esp. pp. 203-20.

4) On the nature of Qumran Hebrew, see discussions by E. Qimron, A. Hurvitz and J. Blau in particular in T. Muraoka and J.F. Elwolde(eds), *Diggers at the Well: Proceedings of a Third International Symposium on the Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Ben Sira* (Leiden,2000), pp. 20-25, 110-14, 232-44.

am not denying that the Bible was often translated to meet liturgical or missionary needs, but not exclusively for those purposes. One read a translation of the Bible, not necessarily because one was ignorant of its original language or languages, but out of scholarly or exegetical interests. A translation is not a commentary; unlike a commentary writer a translator does not go on chatting or spilling a large quantity of ink, whether ink in a pot or in a toner cartridge. As L. Morris says, it is a compressed commentary. Such a consideration can account for, or perhaps justify, the multiplication of Bible translation in a given language, as in English or Japanese, for instance. Such a situation is not a modern phenomenon affordable and fundable only in rich countries. We have ancient precedents: the so-called Old Greek, the first Greek translation of the Jewish Bible was, at various stages of its subsequent history, felt to be in need of revision or complete overhaul: the Kaige recension, Lucianic recension, Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion, the Origenic recension of the Hexapla; Jerome's Vulgate as against *Vetus Latina*; Targum Onkelos as against the Palestinian Targum; the Peshitta as against the Syro-Hexapla. The question as to whether the fragments of an Aramaic or Greek translation of the Bible were local products or not is a question interesting in itself, but peripheral to the issue under discussion here. Even if they were just copied at Qumran or imported from outside, whether purchased or brought along as part of members' possessions, their presence among the Dead Sea Scrolls indicates that they were of interest to members of the community and probably read and studied by them.

This brings us to a consideration of an important question as to how modern translators of the Bible should or could look at its ancient translations and draw upon them.

Here our assumption is that Bible translators are first and foremost students of the Bible. Bible translators are different, should be different, from translators employed by a multilingual agency to translate business documents, manuals for fridges, televisions or whatever or an army of translators working at the EU headquarters in Brussels translating a mountain of documents in a dozen or so national languages of the EU member states. First, they work for pay. Second, the source language is mostly their contemporary, mother tongue.

5) L. Morris, *The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians* [Tyndale New Testament Commentaries] (London, 1958), p. 9.

As long as they have basic knowledge of the subject matter, they would hardly face complicated or almost impossible problems of grammar or semantics of the source language. Third, they do not have to be personally involved in the message of what they are translating. The second difference is of crucial importance. Bible translators are confronted with ancient languages or very early phases of the languages, which after more than two millennia's study still challenge us constantly with hard questions and problems at every level of the language system? Phonetics, morphology, syntax, semantics, and stylistics. Just as Bible translators consult, as a matter of course, modern commentaries on biblical books as well as grammars, dictionaries of the biblical languages, they ought to be encouraged to consult ancient versions as a valuable depository of the earliest bible exegesis. If we are to do justice to their Bible exegesis, we need to read and study the versions as a complete, running text, not piecemeal or atomistically. Fruits of such an atomistic analysis of the versions are presented typically in the critical apparatus of *Biblia Hebraica*, for instance, with lettered textcritical details referring to a word or short sequence of words in the main body of the MT. Many of those textcritical details in the apparatus refer to the versions which are assumed to go with or against the MT, or to support a proposed emendation. Presentday Bible translators who would be working from the BHS or the latest edition of Nestle's Greek New Testament are likely to approach the ancient versions from this perspective, namely that of textual criticism, seeking to establish the oldest biblical text, or if they feel not competent enough to establish such a text themselves, to try to see how specialist textcritics of the Bible are trying to arrive at such a pristine text. Put it differently, such a textcritical perspective is interested in the ancient versions primarily as a source and a quarry of possible variant readings. This in itself is a legitimate approach. After all, the text of the Hebrew Pentateuch used by the first translators of the Septuagint was nearly 1300 years older than the *Codex Leningrandensis*, of which both the BHK and BHS are effectively a diplomatic edition. With the discovery among the Dead Sea Scrolls of fragments of the Hebrew Bible which appear to agree more with the Septuagint than with the MT, the value of the Septuagint for the Old Testament textcriticism has been recognised anew. However, no Hebrew text or manuscript used by Septuagint translators, their so-called *Vorlage*, has actually come down to us; such a *Vorlage* can be recovered only with careful,

meticulous analysis of the Septuagint text and its translation, retroversion, back into Hebrew. This of course is no easy task, even for scholars who might be credited with sound knowledge of Greek and Hebrew. This difficulty and uncertainty is caused by a number of factors.

1) Until the Dead Sea Scrolls came to light, the quality, and even the quantity, of textual variants of the Hebrew Bible were minimal and would not substantially alter the message of the text. Even after the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, this assessment can still be maintained with the few important exceptions such as the books of Jeremiah and Samuel. In comparison, the amount of variants and the complexity of transmission and history of the Septuagint text is staggering. There is hardly a page in any book in the critical Göttingen Septuagint in which the critical apparatus does not occupy more than half of the page in comparison with the reconstructed proto-Septuagint printed on top of the page. It is not the sheer multitude of variants to be found in a considerable number of manuscripts, readings preserved in commentaries written by church fathers on Septuagint books or possible variants retrieved by retroverting daughter versions. Although I have so far talked about “the Septuagint,” we cannot strictly speak of “the Septuagint” in the singular and with the definite article, for we know that there have existed a variety of Greek versions of the Jewish Bible, though not in the sense of P. Kahle, who held that right from the beginning there were multiple translations in circulation. During the few centuries following the original, Proto-Septuagint it would undergo various kinds and extents of alteration or revision. Some were focused on the improvement of the Greek language used in the translation, while others were based on one form or another of the Hebrew Bible. The latter type of revision or recension should interest serious textcritics of the Hebrew Bible, for they ought to be interested in the historical evolution of the Hebrew Bible text in ancient times.

2) Different approaches to translation. If you read and compare different books of the Septuagint on the one hand and compare them with the Hebrew Bible on the other hand, you cannot fail to notice that one translator took quite a different approach to his original text than his colleague or colleagues. Take, for instance, the books of Genesis and Isaiah. They must have been translated by at least two translators. Secondly, if you would translate the Septuagint Isaiah back into Hebrew, it would be extremely hard to believe

that such a Hebrew text ever existed of the book of Isaiah. This second point could be made in regard to books such as Job or Proverbs. Or take the book of Daniel, which has come down to us in two distinct recensions known as Old Greek and Theodotionic. The Hebrew/Aramaic texts obtained by retroverting the respective Greek text would be so vastly different from each other, it would be a priori improbable that the book of Daniel ever existed in two such mutually divergent forms. Those who are interested primarily in the Septuagint as Greek documents can only be grateful for the divine providence which has preserved for us two such ancient, divergent versions of the book. But the job of the textcritic of the Hebrew Bible would become extremely demanding in such a case.

With the sole exception of the Vulgate, on whose translator, Jerome, we have some idea as to how he went about his task of translation and what his motive and policy was, we are totally in the dark as regards the other ancient versions. One does not know whether there was something like the archive of the United Bible Societies or some national Bible society in which you can find minutes of meetings of translation committees. In order to be able to make intelligent, educated and responsible use of data contained in the ancient versions, the textcritic of the Bible must have some idea of the motive behind them and the way the translators went about their task. A degree of circularity is unavoidable here. In order to establish the proto-Septuagint, the proto-Aquilanic version and so on, one needs to sift, analyse and evaluate textual data, which are often mixed. Some readings ascribed to Aquila, for instance, are considered to be wrong ascriptions, possibly due to errors of transmission. None the less, when one knows more or less for certain that Aquila tended to translate the Hebrew particle *ta* with the Greek preposition *su:n* followed by, against the Greek grammar, an accusative, the textcritic's task is made easier in evaluating Greek manuscript evidences and reconstructing the Hebrew original of the book used by this translator. In view of his Greek text *ejn kefalaiw/ e[ktisen qeo:" su:n to:n oujrano:n kai; su:n th;n gh'n*, Aquila's Hebrew Vorlage must have had the particle as in the MT. For him the principle of concordant translation, consistent translation of same Hebrew words with same Greek words, counted more than the rules of Greek grammar. He must have known that the Hebrew *ta* is homonymous, concealing two distinct lexemes, one of direct object marker and the other of

a preposition meaning “together with.”⁶⁾

As intimated earlier, this kind of research is bound to be accompanied by a certain measure of circularity. One is trying to establish the Vorlage of a particular version on the basis of manuscript evidences of the version and on the basis of those same manuscript evidences one needs to establish the translator’s working methods, his translation techniques. In these matters, absolute certainty is hardly attainable.

An investigation into translation techniques can touch on a variety of things. Firstly, we need to establish which lexeme in the target language is used to render a given lexeme in the source language. One-to-one equivalence such as Engl. oxygen vs. Germ. Sauerstoff would be the exception rather than the norm. This can be confirmed by looking up any Greek lexeme in Hatch and Redpath’s Septuagint concordance to see how often a given Greek word is used to render multiple Hebrew words or, the other way round, with how many Greek words a given Hebrew word is rendered, as can be seen from a reverse index to the concordance.⁷⁾ All the same, when we learn that the Hebrew noun *tyrIB]*, which occurs in the MT 283 times, was rendered as often as 275 times with *diaqhvkh*,⁸⁾ we have an important piece of information in our hands. The use of multiple lexemes to render a single lexeme in the source language may have to do with the fact that the latter has more than one distinct sense: so the Hebrew noun *hm;je*, if it were a single lexeme and not two separate homophonous lexemes,⁹⁾ is rendered, on the one hand, with one of a series of Greek words denoting anger, and on the other hand, with *ijov* “poison, venom”. Yet, where either the source language or the target

6) The prepositional *ta* occurs, for instance, at Ge 6.9 *σὺν τῷ θεῷ περιεπτει* for *אֶת הָאֱלֹהִים הַחַיִּים*. Note the dative, though the dative is also used occasionally to render the object marker, e.g. Ge 1.30.

7) T. Muraoka, *Hebrew/Aramaic Index to the Septuagint Keyed to the Hatch-Redpath Concordance* (Grand Rapids, 1998). This kind of valuable information is now becoming available for other versions as well: see P.G. Borbonne and K.D. Jenner: *The Old Testament in Syriac according to the Peshitta Version. Part V: Concordance*, vol.1, *The Pentateuch* (Leiden, 1997); T.C. Falla: *A Key to the Peshitta Gospels*, I (Alaph-Dalath), (Leiden, 1991), II (H?-yo) (Leiden, 2000).

8) According to E.C. dos Santos, *An Expanded Hebrew Index for the Hatch-Redpath Concordance to the Septuagint* (Jerusalem, 1973).

9) See my forthcoming article: “Apports de la LXX dans notre compréhension de l’hébreu et dugrec, et de leur vocabulaire.”

language, or both of them, has or have synonyms or near-synonyms, we could run into difficulties. If the number of synonyms in the source language differs from that in the target language, the difficulty could be further exacerbated. These issues are largely concerned with lexical semantics.

Although our ancient translators did most probably not operate with the kinds of grammatical categories as those which we are familiar with, there are none the less matters which belong to the sphere of grammar and which can be of interest not only for Hebrew grammarians, but also for Bible translators.¹⁰⁾ The knowledge that the Greek translator or reviser of certain parts of the books of Samuel and Kings, the so-called Kaige recension, often translates the Hebrew pronoun *ykna* with *ejgwv eijmi* even in conjunction with a finite Greek verb as in 2Sm 12.7 אנכי מושהחידך — *ejgwv eijmi e[crisav se* is important not only textcritically in that it establishes the identity of the reviser's Vorlage with the MT in this regard, but also for modern translators, if they should decide to follow this Hebrew text here, for such a Hebrew pronoun has a pragmatic value of prominence or emphasis.

3) Difficulties and obscurities inherent in the source language and the target language. Ancient languages are characterised by varying degrees of difficulty and obscurity. This applies even to relatively well-known, well-documented and long studied languages such as Greek and Latin. Where we are dealing with rare linguistic forms, lexemes or grammatical forms, the difficulty can be acute. The ancient versions have traditionally been seen as a source of potential illumination,¹¹⁾ although one needs to bear in mind that the target languages themselves, such as Greek and Latin have their own share of difficulties and obscurities. The problem may be similar to one faced by someone attempting to fill in lacunae in a fragmentary text written in an ancient language, say an attempt to complete missing lines in the Meshah inscription in Moabite. There are anecdotes over quite distinguished Semitists who had to swallow their words or bite their tongue when more fragments of

10) The Finnish school of Septuagint scholars with the late Soisalon-Soisanninen as its founder is well known for their research in the translation technique as applied to syntactic issues.

11) See, for instance, T. Muraoka, "The semantics of the LXX and its role in clarifying Ancient Hebrew semantics," in T. Muraoka(ed.), *Studies in Ancient Hebrew Semantics* [Abr-Nahrain Supplement 4] (Leuven, 1995), pp. 19-32, and J. Margain, "Sémanétique hebraïque: l'apport des Targums," *ib.*, pp. 11-17.

the original text concerned subsequently came to light.

Let me conclude by briefly reverting to one of the points I was trying to make early on, namely the value of studying the ancient versions as a depository of ancient Bible interpretation. Over the past two decennia or so we have been witnessing a new, growing trend in biblical studies, especially the Old Testament studies. This new trend was characterised by one of its pioneers, M. Harl of Paris, as *aval*, a French word meaning “down-stream,” whereas the traditional approach to the ancient versions has been given the label *amont*, a word meaning “up-stream,” a sort of *ad fontes*, back to the sources.¹²⁾ The French group of scholars has been publishing a copiously annotated French translation of books of the Septuagint, so far 12 volumes published.¹³⁾ The International Organisation for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, though with a significantly different philosophy, has launched a project called NETS, A New English Translation of the Septuagint, the first fascicule of which was published in 2000.¹⁴⁾ There is an incomplete Italian translation.¹⁵⁾ Last year there came out an annotated Japanese translation by G. Hata of the Septuagint Genesis. There is also a project of putting out a German translation of the Septuagint making steady progress. In addition, a modern English translation of the Targum is available (ed. M. McNamara: Edinburgh 1987-). There is a Spanish translation by A. Diez Macho of the Targum Neofiti (Madrid-Barcelona, 1968-76) and a French translation by R. le Déaut of the Targum Neofiti and the Pseudo-Jonathan of the Pentateuch (Paris, 1978-81). The Peshitta Institute of Leiden University is committed to

12) See M. Harl, “Traduire la Septante en Français: pourquoi et comment?,” *LALIES* (Paris, 1984), pp. 83-93 [now in M. Harl, *La langue de Japhet. Quinze études sur la septante et le grec des chrétiens* (Paris, 1992), pp. 33-42; for an assessment of this trend, see H. Utzschneider, “Auf Augenhöhe mit dem Text. Überlegungen zum wissenschaftlichen Standort einer Übersetzung der Septuaginta ins Deutsche,” in H.-J. Fabry and U. Offerhaus (eds), *Im Brennpunkt: Die Septuaginta: Studien zur Entstehung und Bedeutung der griechischen Bibel* (Stuttgart, 2001), pp. 11-50, esp. 14-19.

13) A volume containing both the Greek text and the French translation of the Pentateuch with selected notes and a series of highly instructive articles is also now in print: C. Dogniez and M. Harl, *La Bible des Septante. Le Pentateuque d’Alexandrie. Texte grec et traduction* (Paris, 2001).

14) The Psalms by A. Pietersma (Oxford, 2000).

15) *La Bibbia dei LXX. I. Il Pentateuco a cura di Luciana Mortari. Testo greco con traduzione italiana a fronte* (Roma, 1999).

publishing an annotated English translation of the Peshitta. This new direction of studies on the ancient versions promises to play an important role and produce rich fruits in the future. My own involvement in the Septuagint lexicography fits into this scheme, for a Septuagint dictionary can be compiled only through studying the version as a running Greek text and is an essential tool for a thorough study of it.

Introduction to the Bible Societies' Computer Tools for Bible Translation

Kuo-Wei Peng

1. Introduction

It would be very hard for today's scholars and Bible translators (at least in the more developed parts of the world) to imagine not having computer in our daily works as scholars and translators. The reason that computer becomes seemingly indispensable is not because our works cannot be done without it. As a matter of fact, computer has not been part of our life until very recently; and we should also remind ourselves that none of the great versions in the history, such as Latin Vulgate, Luther Bibel, and King James, was done with computer. The reason that we are so reliant on computer today is because it is a very power tool that makes many parts of the job easier and faster. Sometimes it also makes possible for us to do our jobs in new ways with which the overall quality of the output can be improved.

In the past several years, the Bible Societies has developed several computer tools for Bible translation: Paratext, Checklists Tool, Translation Notes Editor (TNE), and Translation Management Component (TMC). The aim of this article is then to provide a brief introduction to these tools. Since tools are always designed to suit certain purposes, the first part of the following discussion will be a brief revisit of certain aspects of the activities of Bible translation to identify the areas that computer may be used. The second part of the article, then, will be the introduction of the computer tools not only by describing their functions but also by pointing out how they are related to the activities of Bible translation.

2. Bible Translation Re-visited

From the viewpoint of text-processing: One basic nature of Bible translation is that Bible translation is a kind of writing activity, just like many other

kinds of writing activities. The translators need to write down the translation by means of a certain tool, no matter it is pencil and paper or it is computer. To be a tool for Bible translation, the computer program requires being able to handle basic functions of text processing, such as input, editing, filing, etc.

From the viewpoint of translation process: The core translation process includes the following steps: (1) the grammatical and semantic analysis of the source language; (2) the transfer from the source language to the receptor's language; and (3) the restructuring in the receptor's language.¹⁾ For the second and the third steps, the state of the art of computer technology may not be able to help much; while for the first step, today's computer technology has plenty to offer. Parsing information, electronic lexicons of the original languages and electronic Bible commentaries are among the most useful ones.

From the viewpoint of review process and consultant checking: Bible translation today is basically teamwork. The translation team normally comprises translators, reviewers, and the translation consultant. The help that computer can offer in this area includes tools for communication when the team members are apart from each other, tools for exchange of comments and manuscripts, and also tools for marking comments. In addition, for the purpose of checking, the powerful searching ability of computer can also be used to check various aspects of the manuscript so that a very high level of consistency of terms and phrases used in translation can be achieved.

From the viewpoint of project management: One of the crucial tasks in project management is the tracking of the progress in comparison with the planned schedule. Another important task in project management is to keep backups throughout the very long period of the project. These tasks are well within the capability of today's computer technology.

From the viewpoint of publishing process management: The development of audio and video scriptures does not change the fact that print media is and will continue to be one of the major types of Bible production. The format of print media requires the manuscripts generated to have proper markings for features such as headings, sub-titles, running headers, different types of paragraphing, chapter and verse numbers, and footnotes, etc. Although all the markings can be done after the manuscripts have been yielded, adding the

1) See Figure 6 in Eugene A. Nida and Charles R. Taber, *The Theory and Practice of Translatio* (Leiden: Brill, 1969), 31.

markings during translation proves to be a way more efficient and less prone to errors. A way of using computer in this area can be the generation of pre-defined templates (i.e., with all the chapter and verse markers) for translators to start with. In addition to this, computer can also be used for checking the markers by comparing with standard templates or with a model text that comes with markers.

The above brief revisit shows that a comprehensive computer solution for Bible translation should consider the following elements: (1) basic text-processing functions; (2) provision of adequate resources; (3) tools for communication and exchange of notes and comments; (4) tools for various kinds of checking; (5) backup and restore functions; (6) tools for tracking progress; and (7) basic pre-processing for publishing.

3. The Bible Societies' Computer Tools for Bible Translation

The existing computer solution provided by the Bible Societies comprises the following four parts: Paratext, Checklists Tool,²⁾ Translation Notes Editor (TNE), and Translation Management Component (TMC). Each of the tools is designed to include one or more of the elements identified above.

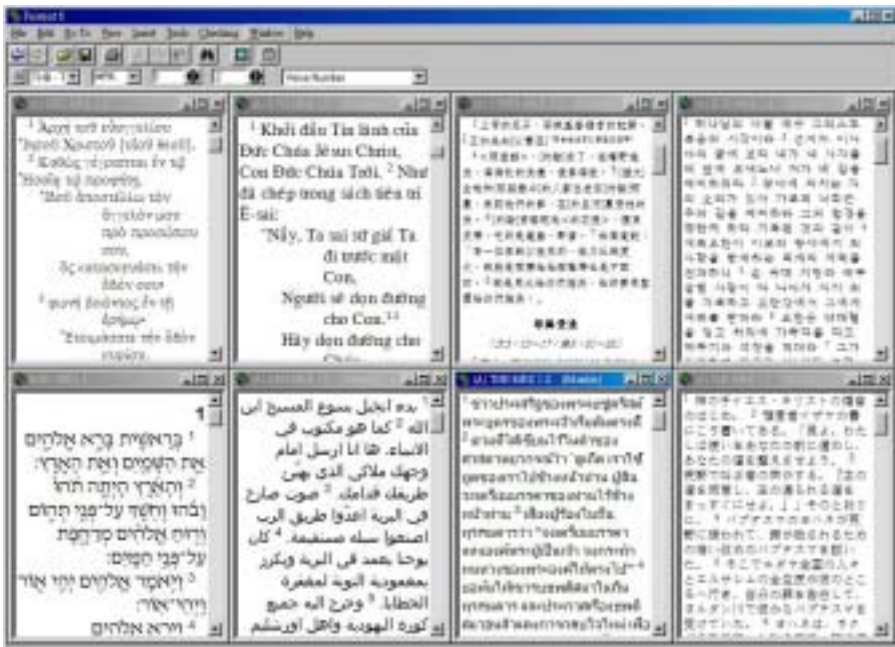
3.1. Paratext³⁾

Among the four, the one most relevant to the translators is probably Paratext. Paratext was originally created by Reinier de Blois, who was a translation advisor in African Region and now is a translation consultant with UBS. The basic idea of Paratext, as shown by its name, is to display the original texts and model versions alongside with the version on which the translator is working. In such a way, the translator can easily consult the original texts and other versions while translating. For the purpose of translation, basic text-processing functions, such as copying, cutting, pasting, searching, and replacing, were also built in.

2) Checklists Tool can be run within Paratext and, therefore, seen as a component of Paratext; while it is actually a stand-alone program which can be run independently.

3) The information of this section is indebted to Nathan Miles.

When it was decided to make Paratext widely available, the responsibility of development of the program was transferred to a team in Dallas; while Reiner de Blois continued to work on modules of original language tools and maintain the Greek and Hebrew resources to be used in Paratext. Before the team in Dallas assumed the responsibility, Reiner de Blois had issued 3 versions of Paratext and the third version had allowed unformatted editing and simultaneous scrolling of multiple texts. In version 4, which was the first Dallas release, a standardized user interface was supplied; and later in version 5 the function of formatted editing was added. Until then, however, the encoding used was ANSI and, as a result, Paratext could not work fully properly with many non-roman scripts, including Chinese, Japanese and Korean (CJK). One of the major breakthroughs of Paratext 6, which is being beta-tested and scheduled to be released early next year (2003), is the support of Unicode, which means most of the non-roman scripts, including CJK scripts, should work well with the newest version (see Screen Shot 1).



Screen Shot 1

From the very beginning, the design of Paratext has included the parsing information and lexicons for Greek and Hebrew texts. In vesion 6, these functions are realized by two original language study tools, Analusis and

Vocabula (see Screen Shot 2). With Analysis, the translator can easily display the dictionary forms and parsing information of all the Greek or Hebrew words in the verse in question; and, whenever it is needed, the translator can look up the Greek or Hebrew



Screen Shot 2

word in question in one of the three dictionaries supplied by Vocabula.

Apart from the original language study tools, UBS Handbooks are now also included in Paratext 6 as part of the resources for the first time. The Handbooks as a whole act as a Bible version in Paratext 6 and, therefore, it is shown in a separate window as other Bible versions do (see Screen Shot 3).



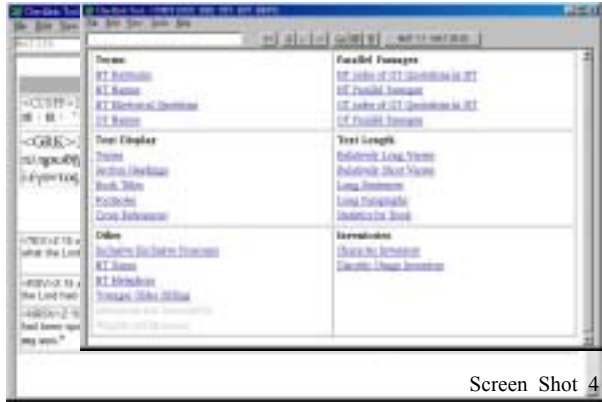
Screen Shot 3

Another significant advance of Paratext 6 is the integration with Checklists Tool. As Checklists Tool can be run as a stand-alone program, it will be introduced in next section.

3.2. Checklists Tool

Checklists Tool is a joint product between UBS and SIL. Several of its functions have existed as stand-alone DOS programs or scripts which can be run or called by earlier versions (4 and 5) of Paratext. However, it is with Paratext 6 that all those stand-alone programs and scripts are gathered together to become one integrated program, Checklists Tool. Checklists Tool is not only a collection of the old checking tools, though. All the old checking tools have been enhanced before they are incorporated into Checklists Tool; and, in

addition, new features are also added. Checklists Tool is actually designed in a way that, as long as the standard of the interface is followed, new functions can be easily “hooked up onto Checklists Tool.



Screen Shot 4

The checking functions included in Checklists Tool at this moment are divided into six categories (see Screen Shot 4): (1) Terms, including NT Keyterms, NT Names, NT Rhetorical Questions, and OT Names; (2) Parallel Passages, including NT order of OT Quotations in NT (see Screen Shot 5), NT Parallel Passages (see Screen Shot 6), OT order of OT Quotations in NT, and OT Parallel Passages; (3) Text Display, including Verses, Section Headings, Book Titles, Footnotes, and Cross References; (4) Text Length, including Relative Long Verses, Relative Short Verses, Long Sentences, and Long Paragraphs; (5) Other, including Inclusive/Exclusive Pronouns, NT Genre, NT Metaphors, and Younger/Older Sibling; and (6) Inventories, including Character Inventory and Diacritic Usage Inventory.

Screen Shot 5

Among the computer tools introduced here, Checklists Tool is the one most relevant to the improvement of quality of translation. Not only does Checklists Tool make some of the most notorious but essential



Screen Shot 6

checking processes (such as parallel passages in the OT and the NT and the OT quotations in the NT) much easier but also it opens new dimensions in consistency checking. For example, those functions under text length can

generate statistics information for the team to identify areas where the translator might miss or repeat a certain part of the original texts (Relative Long and Short Verses) and also areas where the translation might be awkwardly complex or unnaturally long (Long Sentence) or might deviate from the style that the rest of the translation use (all the checking functions).

Moreover, the checking functions under “Text Display” can ensure the finalized manuscripts to have all the basic markings that are essential for publishing. In such a way, the publishing process can be accelerated and errors of format can be minimized.

3.3. Translation Notes Editor (TNE)

For translators and reviewers, there is always a need to write down notes to explain the reason of the choices of terms and phrases in translation and to record the difficulties encountered and the solutions come to. Between translators, reviewers and their translation consultant there is also a need to communicate with each other about the exegetical and translation issues when the team feel the need of the input from the consultant. For the translation consultants, the record of the issues that the translation teams encountered as well as their solutions is a very valuable resource for later translation project. The design of TNE is then to meet all the above needs. TNE can be used as a stand-alone program, while it can also be used to link with Paratext. When TNE is running, the user can click the TNE icon in Paratext to open a new Note window to fill in (see Screen Shot 7). The notes taken later can be exported and sent to the other people in the team or to the consultant for input.

TNE is actually more than a tool of taking notes. Coming with the program, there are standard databases of translation notes generated by translation consultants of UBS and SIL in the past. This makes TNE also a very valuable resource for the translators in translating. As TNE can scroll simultaneously with Paratext, the translators can easily turn to TNE to look up all the translation notes related to the verse that they are translating (see Screen Shot 8).

3.4. Translation Management Component (TMC)

TMC is designed not for translators and reviewers but for people who are responsible for translation projects (such as translation officers, translation managers, general secretaries, regional coordinators, and world service coordinator etc.) to record the basic data and keep the tracks of translation projects (see



Screen Shot 9

Screen Shot 9). All the information in TMC in individual's computer can be synchronized with a central database by Internet connection. In such a way, all the people who use this program can always keep the most updated information that they need to keep. The WTPR can also be generated easily with the information in the central database.

4. More Things to Come

By the grace of computer, Today's translators and translation officers do not need to carry a lot of lexicons, dictionaries, and reference books to attend review meetings. With the help of the computer tools introduced above, thorough checking for consistency becomes much easier and more efficient and the management of translation projects also becomes less burdensome. What has been introduced is not the end of the story, though. The development team in Dallas is now working on more new features for Paratext and TNE so that the translation teams around the world can be equipped with even more powerful tools. What they are doing include the

addition of critical apparatus of UBS⁴ and HOTTP into the Greek and Hebrew texts in Paratext, and the support of Unicode for TNE (so that non-roman script can be used for writing notes). The link between TNE and e-mail service has also be discussed and this should be realized one day. Therefore, let us look forward to more things to come to help us in Bible translation.

Computers in the Translation Process: Getting the most out of IT Resources for Translations

Robert P. Batzinger

1. Introduction

In the past two decades, translators and computer-support staff have learned many lessons and techniques that have affected the impact of this technology on the process and the products of Bible translation. Word processors have helped to shorten the time and effort required to prepare and publish manuscripts. Text processing utilities have facilitated analysis and cross-checking of the translated text in ways that were not feasible using only manual methods. The same technology that allows local newspaper companies publish an edition half the size of a New Testaments each morning¹⁾ is now affordable by Bible translation project teams.

Despite all the advances in hardware and software, the actual results of any given translation project team depend mainly on the expectations, collaboration, diligence and creativity shared between the translator, the computer operator and the copyeditor. While support staff can attempt to teach new skills, effective application of technology seems to occur best when the relevance and value of the computer-based tools are appreciated by members of the team and are exploited for the benefit of the project. At the same time

1) The weekday Singapore Straits Times morning edition (excluding the classified section) averages 1.5 MBytes of text printed on 50 pages of newsprint, containing illustrations and photographs that account for approximately 30% of the page. This volume of material and graphics is similar to that found in Gospels and Acts of the Good News Colour Reference Bible (which represents half of the NT).

it has been noted that the enhancement in speed of production provided by the technology comes with the increased risk of publishing mistakes or lack-luster translations.

In short, the classic and excellent advice to budding authors in the day of pencil and paper is just as relevant today to translation teams in the modern Cyber Age:

“Things written with little effort are read with little delight”²⁾

2. Enhanced Access to the Biblical Material

Knowledge of Biblical languages has always been a major asset to translation teams. While the computer technology cannot replace the value of personal and professional study of these languages, it can enhance appreciation of the Biblical text by presenting information in a way that is easier to analyze and understand particularly in the following ways:

- **Search for specific words in Hebrew and Greek text bases:** In recent years, computer systems have begun to adopt Unicode, a standard character encoding that support major writing systems of the world. This has made it possible for software to search the Biblical text in the native scripts of Asia in much the same way one would search for English or Korean. Table 1 displays but a few of the 64 Biblical occurrences of the Greek verb βαπτίζω
- **Parsing of word forms into morphemes:** The Biblical languages affix morphemes to root words to modify the meaning or sense of a word. While students of Hebrew and Greek struggle to learn how to parse the Biblical text for themselves, Biblical scholars have parsed the entire corpus.³⁾ The computer makes it possible for the electronic text bases of the Biblical text to be linked this parsing information via a single mouse click providing expert assistance with the interpretation and translation of the Biblical text. The parsing of various forms of the Greek work βαπτίζω shown

2) A quotation attributed to Mark Twain.

3) The two most popular parsing attempts have been published by Gramcord and Baker. The electronic databases are available in numerous electronic study Bible products.

in Table 1 comes from the translator's editor called Paratext.⁴⁾

Table 1: Resources Associated with Occurrences of the Greek Word βαπτίζω

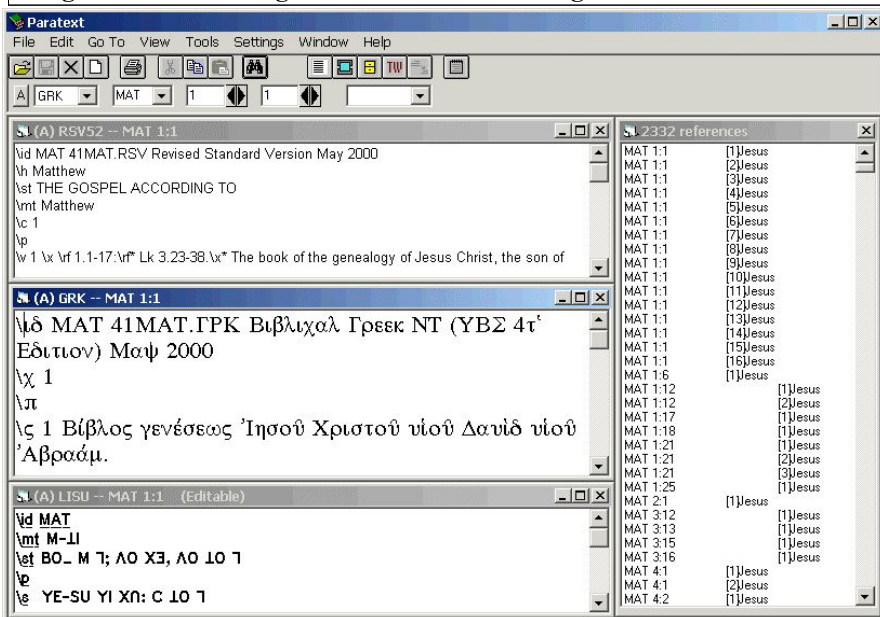
Ref	Concordance View		
Luk 3:12	ἦλθον δὲ καὶ τελῶναι	βαπτισθῆναι (verb, indicative, future, active, third person, singular) <i>Be baptized</i>	καὶ εἶπαν πρὸς αὐτόν, Διδάσκαλε, τί ποιήσωμεν;
Luk 3:16	ἀπεκρίνατο λέγων πᾶσιν ὁ Ἰωάννης, Ἐγὼ μὲν ὕδατι	βαπτίζω (verb, participle, aorist, passive, nominative, masculine, plural) <i>Baptize</i>	ὕμᾱς· ἔρχεται δὲ ὁ ἰσχυρότερός μου,
Luk 7:29	Καὶ πᾶς ὁ λαὸς ἀκούσας καὶ οἱ τελῶναι ἐδικαίωσαν τὸν θεόν	βαπτισθέντες (verb, participle, aorist, passive, nominative, masculine, plural) <i>Having been baptized</i>	τὸ βάπτισμα Ἰωάννου
Luk 7:30	οἱ δὲ Φαρισαῖοι καὶ οἱ νομικοὶ τὴν βουλὴν τοῦ θεοῦ ἠθέτησαν εἰς ἑαυτοὺς μὴ	βαπτισθέντες (verb, participle, aorist, passive, nominative, masculine, plural) <i>Have been baptized</i>	ὑπ' αὐτοῦ.
Luk 11:38	ὁ δὲ Φαρισαῖος ἰδὼν ἐθαύμασεν ὅτι οὐ πρῶτον	ἐβαπτίσθη (verb, indicative, aorist, passive, third person, singular) <i>Wash</i>	πρὸ τοῦ ἀρίστου.
Luk 12:50	βάπτισμα δὲ ἔχω	βαπτισθῆναι, (verb, infinitive, aorist,	καὶ πῶς συνέχομαι

4) Paratext is a translations tool originally written by Renier du Blois and further developed and made available to Bible translators by the United Bible Societies. It provides multiple windows with synchronized scrolling allowing the translator to edit the target text while comparing it against model Bible translations. For further information, please refer to the main support website for this product: <http://www.ubs-translations.org>

		passive) <i>To be baptized with</i>	ἕως ὄτου τελεσθῆ
--	--	--	---------------------

- **Cross-indexing to lexicons and other reference materials:** In the days before computers, it was typical to find the writing desk of translators cluttered with nearly a dozen Bibles commentaries and other Biblical reference text opened to the verse under consideration. As the translator reviewed this material a draft of the translation was penned into his workbooks. Modern computer software for translators mimics this work environment by linking text bases and other information together in a manner that can increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the translator.

Figure 1: Paratext Being Used to Check Lisu Text Against RSV and UBS Greek



Paratext shown in Figure 1 has become a very popular working environment for translators and copy-editors of Scripture. It not only supports synchronized scrolling of multiple windows of translations, it also has the ability to link to some commentaries and the UBS Translator Handbook series in the same fashion.

- **Concordant word views:** The various senses, nuances and shades of meaning ascribed to a word are most commonly derived by careful

comparison of the context for each occurrence of a word. For example, as shown in Table 1, the Greek word βαπτίζω can mean either to wash or to baptize depending on the context. The computer can render concordant views that span the entire corpus of the Biblical text base within seconds. Armed with this information and the ability to cross index against model and target text, a translator can easily verify that the proper nuance has been accurately preserved in the target translation.

3. Critical Analysis of Model and Target text

- Comparison of similarities between translations:** When there are multiple attempts to translate the same material, it is possible to map the similarities between the approaches taken. The most common means to do this is to measure the degree of similarity between the different versions that exist by separating the words of both translations into 3 lines: those representing words unique to the first version, those common to both translation and finally those unique to the second translation. An example of a verse-wise comparison between RSV and GNT are given in Figure 2. This representation displays the degree of similarity. A numerical value of the similarity or difference, which can be calculated by the following formulae:

$$\text{Similarity} = \frac{2 \times (\text{Number of words in Common})}{(\text{Total Number of words in both versions})} = \frac{2 \times 3}{22} = 0.273$$

$$\text{Difference} = \frac{(\text{Num of unique V1 wrds}) + (\text{Num of unique V2 wrds})}{(\text{Total Number of words in both versions})} = \frac{8+8}{22} = 0.727$$

Figure 2. Comparison of the Rendering of Phi 4:5 Between RSV and GNT

RSV	Let all men know your forbearance.		at hand.
Common		The Lord is	
GNT	Show a gentle attitude towards everyone.		coming soon.

With modern personal computers, the comparison between full Bibles process can be done in a matter of hours. The results can be tabulated as in Table 2 or plotted using Cluster Mapping Techniques as in Figure 3.

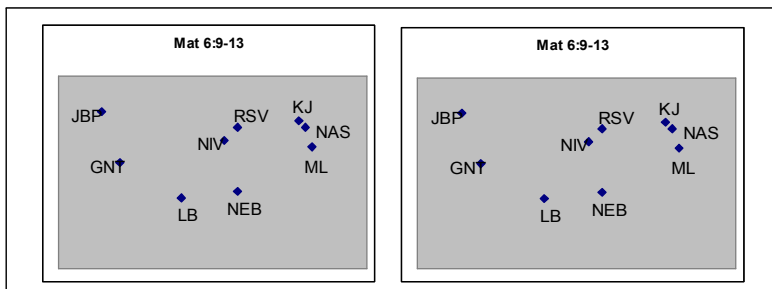


Figure 3. Similarities between English Translations

With modern personal computers, the comparison between full Bibles process can be done in a matter of hours. The results can be tabulated as in Table 2 or plotted using Cluster Mapping Techniques as in Figure 3.

Table 2. Variation Between English Translations

		% Variation Between Versions of Psa. 1:1								
		GNB	KJ	LB	ML	NAS	NEB	NIV	RSV	
GNT	Good News Translation		55	48	53	51	49	51	53	
KJ	King James Bible	55		60	32	22	56	18	13	
LB	Living Bible	48	60		40	60	62	54	61	
ML	Modern Language Bible	53	32	40		20	45	27	20	
NAS	New American Standard Bible	51	22	60	20		41	12	11	
NEB	New English Bible	49	56	62	45	41		43	42	
NIV	New International Version	51	18	54	27	12	43		9	
RSV	Revised Standard Bible	53	13	61	20	11	42	9		
		% Variation Between Versions of Mat 6:9-13								

		GNB	JBP	KJ	LB	ML	NAS	NEB	NIV	RSV
GNT	Good News Bible		33	42	29	40	42	24	30	36
JBP	J.B. Phillips Translation	32		45	37	44	44	35	35	36
KJ	King James Bible	41	46		38	10	4	36	21	16
LB	Living Bible	29	38	38		35	37	30	27	31
LML	Modern Language Bible	39	44	10	37		10	30	22	20
NAS	New American Standard Bible	40	45	4	37	10		34	21	16
NEB	New English Bible	23	35	35	31	29	34		24	27
NIV	New International Version	29	35	21	29	22	21	24		9
RSV	Revised Standard Bible	37	37	16	32	20	16	27	9	

This analysis is useful for ascertaining the history, derivation, and approach used for each translation that exists. Dynamic translations will be dispersed across the map while formal translations will tend to cluster around the Bible manuscript from which they are derived. It is also useful for demonstrating whether popular passages of Scriptures are being handled in the same manner as the rest of the translation.

- **Cluster mapping of semantics:** Translation can be described as a quest to transfer meaning from one language to another through a process of appropriate choices. It takes tremendous skill to take the ancient Hebrew words of King David and render them into words that would communicate the message of Psalms effectively to an eight-year-old Korean girl. In the past, scholars would attempt this task by guessing or prescribing which grammar would be used, and which words would populate the semantic domains of the target audience. However, recent studies of the medical profession have clearly shown that educated scholars grossly overestimate how well they communicate with the general public⁵⁾. My informal observations of youth listening to public readings of the Bible also indicate that translations used in worship do

5) According to the University of Michigan Health Services Patient Education Repository, the 1992 Adult Literacy Survey showed that about half of US adults read at or below the eighth grade reading level. Most of the materials submitted to the Patient Education Repository had to be rewritten at or below the eighth grade reading level. URL: <http://www.med.umich.edu/pteducation/read.html>

not speak as clearly as one might hope.

However, with modern personal computers, it is possible to create and analyze corpus of literature and collected sayings of any given target group in order to actually measure and describe the specific features of the actual form of the language used. Comparing this information against that of the Bible text is useful for identifying the parts of the Bible, which will be difficult to translate. This task has been made easier through the use of standard cataloguing systems developed for thesaurus in order to identify the semantic domains of each word in the lexicon.

As one compares the data, important clues for a translation project emerge. Words in one language often lack the precision of words used in another. For example, it is well known that the single English word *love* by itself does not describe the exact nature of the affection described by either Greek word: ἀγάπη, or φιλία. In addition, the number of word choices within the semantic domains of the Bible will vary greatly from one language to another. Sindhi speakers would want to know which of the 12 different kinds of earrings were used to make the golden calf. The Inuit of northern Canada would like to know which of 15 different types of snow represents the color of our forgiven sins. In short, where the grammatical and lexicon mapping between the source and the target languages are significantly different, one can expect difficulties in translation that will require special care and testing.

In addition, this approach can also be used to compare various attempts at translation to determine which approach would communicate better with a specific target audience. The translation that best mimics the vocabulary, grammar and style of the language of a target audience will have far less difficulty in conveying the Good News.

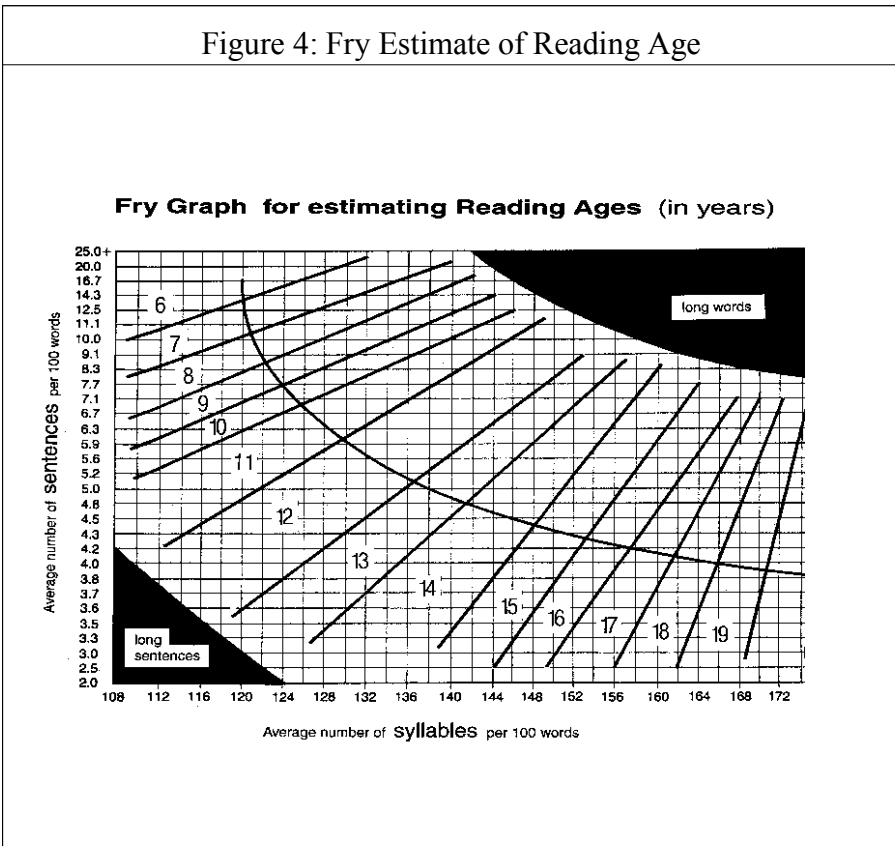
- **Checking for Readability and Understanding:** Developing dynamic translations that are easy to read and understand is the main goal of UBS Translations. Despite the importance of this, many translation teams do not actually measure these characteristics with member of the target audience. Without proper prepublication testing, a new translation represents a major risk to the reputation of a Bible publisher.

There are a number of tests that have been used for determining the

reading level of English material and which can be easily calibrated for other languages. In American English, the most commonly used tests for readability are Fry⁶⁾,

Fleishmen⁷⁾, and SMOG⁸⁾. The basic principle is that long sentences and long words add to the complexity of a passage and conversely to the level of education required to understand the material. A simple Perl program can quickly measure the readability of passages from a Bible. It can also be used to highlight passages that may be too difficult for the target audience to read.

Figure 4: Fry Estimate of Reading Age



6) The Fry Readability Method is to determine the average number of sentences and number of syllables that can be found in consecutive 100-word samples. The reading level can be looked up on the Fry Readability chart. Method published in 1978 by E. Fry *Fry's readability graph: clarifications, validity and extension to level 17*, Journal of Reading, vol 21

Understanding of a passage is a little harder to determine as it requires testing the comprehension of readers. The cloze test is the most popular way to test for understanding. These tests are generated by replacing keywords of a passage of Scripture with a blank that the reader fills in. These tests are easy to produce and can accurately measure whether one version of a translation is better understood by the target audience.

4. Preparation of Bible Manuscripts for Publication

The most challenging and time-consuming part of translation is developing a manuscript that accurately captures the translation being developed. The manuscript forms the key resource to arise from a translation project, as it would be used dynamically to develop a wide range of Scripture products. However, a Bible manuscript can take 3 man-months to proofread and in that time it is hard for a single reader to remember all aspects of the manuscript. The following check are a list of computer checks that have been designed to facilitate the checking process.

- **Completeness and consistency:** Editors of Bible manuscripts are well acquainted with the warning of Rev 22:18-19 that warns that Scripture must be complete and correct. There are various programs around that automatically check the sequencing of chapters and verses in the manuscript according to various traditions of canonical order. Missing verses or empty verses (verses with no text) are reported to the computer

7) Flesch-Kincaid Formula is a US Government standard test used by the Department of Defense. The grade level is calculated by determining L, the sentence length (average number of words per sentence) and N, number of syllables per word. The grade level is equal to $(L \times 0.39) + (N \times 11.8) - 15.59$ URL: <http://www.nist.gov/itl/div894/ovrt/people/sressler/Persp/Views.html>

8) SMOG (Simplified Measure of Gobbledygook) test is another quick, consistent, and easy to use tool to determine reading level of written materials. However, it is considered to not be as accurate for materials written at a less than sixth grade reading level. To conduct this test, a sampling is done by collecting 10 consecutive sentences near the beginning of the work, 10 sentences in the middle and 10 sentences near the end (30 sentences in total). From this sample, N (the number of words in this sample with three or more syllables) is determined. The grade level is equal to 3 plus the square root of N. Described in McLaughlin, H. (1969), SMOG grading: A new readability formula. Journal of Reading, 2 (8) 639-646.

user. In addition, sequence variations are compared to known variants (such as multiple endings of Mark) and discrepancies are reported.

At the same time, it has been found that for each genre in the Bible, there appears to be a general ratio between the length of the source and target text. Utilities are available to compare the target text to the source text and determine which verses appear to contain significantly more or less words than expected. This test has been useful to identify verses that were not fully translated, passages that were difficult to translate concisely, sentence fragments that were orphaned by cut and paste operations as well as interesting features of a target language that efficiently render a Bible phrase.

- **Titling, headings, footnotes and reader helps:** A century ago, most Bibles had few section headings and other reader helps. However, it was been found that readers find it easier to read a Bible that has been divided into meanful sections. Section breaks and headings can easily be inserted into unmarked Bible version automatically and the results can easily be compared against model texts using tools that work with Paratext. In addition, extract tools exist to enable the translator to view headers and titles in isolation to better focus on the readability and relevance of the reader helps as well as to compare against those in model text to ensure completeness.
- **Paragraphing, Indentation and Line breaks:** Using utility software designed to work with Paratext, it is possible to compare paragraphing, indentation and line breaks against that used in model text. In addition, the appearance of the final product can be simulated to allow translators to double check the accuracy of paragraphing, indentation and line breaks. This is particularly important in poetic sections that use indentation to display the underlying structure of the section.
- **Punctuation:** Computers can use comparison against model text to check the location, pairing and use of quotation marks in a translation. In addition, the text can be checked against known text bases to provide markings needed for extracting the discourse into a format needed to drive captioning systems used for audio production of dramatized readings of the Bible, and video typesetting of captions for Bible films like the

Jesus Film.

- **Spelling, Orthography, and Hyphenation:** Spelling is a major challenge for any publication project but for a Bible translation project extra special care must be taken to ensure accuracy and correctness of the words given. This is especially true with Biblical names like Babylon that occur in low frequency across the length the volume. It is not uncommon to discover multiple renderings for such names as the words are infrequent enough that the misspellings go undetected. New utilities have been developed to address this problem using a variety of approaches: identification of abnormal character sequences, matching of words that sound alike or that differ by a single typo or transposition, and removal of affixes to identify the underlying root forms.

Because a Bible translation project can span a number of years, major changes in orthography can be expected before the Bible translation is completed. Using dictionary or rule-based approaches, it is possible to automatically update a Bible manuscript. The computer can also analyze the impact of a proposed orthography change by listing all words that would be affected.

Within Asia-Pacific there are numerous minority groups that span political borders. While individuals on either side of the border speak the same language, local political pressure has created situations where multiple scripts are used to represent this language. For example, the Kamut of Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Myanmar speak the same language but use 4 separate writing systems. In these cases, it is often possible to use dictionary and rule-based processing to create software that supports both orthographies from the same manuscript. This makes it easier to develop Scripture products that can be used on either side of the border.

Automated hyphenation can be developed from a variety of approaches that can be tailored to the needs of a particular language group. The emphasis not attempting to identify every place that can hyphenated in a word but rather that every computer-generated hyphen appear in a correct position. Currently, computer-generated hyphenation for the personal computer includes a combination of the following approaches that can be used as required on any language in the Asia/Pacific region:

- Uses of a fully hyphenated dictionary to auto generate hyphenation rules and exceptions.
- Use of fully hyphenated list of long words. (Words not in the list are not hyphenated).
- Rule based hyphenation that identifies syllable boundaries.
- Rule based hyphenation that identifies morpheme/affix boundaries
- Exceptional word process

5. Improved Bible Search Engines and Indices

Commitment to helping readers understand and get the most out of their Bibles is one of the major themes of the UBS worldwide program. This includes helping readers look up things in the Bible. Initially, Scripture search engines were only designed to able to deliver exact matches. For example, a search for the English word *love* was unable to find the word *loving*. However, this simple dictionary-like look up does not work well in a world of decreasing Biblical literacy because this approach requires prior knowledge of the vocabulary used in the Bible.

In addressing this problem, Bible publishers have been developing new generation of search engines that can provide information and relevant Scripture to those unfamiliar with the text. Here is a list of approaches that have been used:

- **Parsing surface forms to lexical roots:** This technique maps words as they appear in the Bible to standard dictionary form without affixes. If user types the English word *love*, the system is able to locate all derivative forms of the word such as *loves*, *loving*, *beloved*, *loved*, and *lovable*. This makes it easier to search for all occurrences of a common root word without working through all the various possible combinations.
- **Semantic mapping of lexical roots using a thesaurus:** This technology links together words of similar meaning into semantic domains. A traditional search of the RSV for the English word *affection* yields only 7 matches. A modern search of this word would also suggest several

hundred references for *love*, and *charity* as well.

- **Topical mapping:** This technology links together major themes and concepts found in the Bible and attempts to provide additional information that is relevant to the search. There two major applications of this method:
 - grading the relevance of search results by specific topics: A traditional search of the RSV for the English name *John* would return a mixture of references to *John the Baptist*, *John the Apostle*, and *John Mark*. However, a topically oriented search would give preference to additional references to specific person currently under consideration.
 - identifying related themes: A traditional search of the RSV for the English word **despondency** will not succeed, as the word does not occur in the Bible. However, a topical search of the Bible for depression would yield over a dozen passage that illustrate this human condition.⁹⁾ In fact, clinical psychology instructors in some medical schools have used 1Ki 19 as an excellent case study of depression.

All of these approaches are attempts to provide relevant information to those unfamiliar with the text of a Bible translation. This technology will require extra linguistic and Biblical input to be tagged to each word used in a Bible translation. The best Web and CD examples of this technology are products of close collaboration of translators and computer specialists to develop applications that use IT to capture the linguistic and Biblical information into a practical and useful knowledge base.

6. Conclusion

Computer technology opens new doors at an astounding rate. However, most translation project teams do not fully exploit the potential either because they are unaware of the possibilities or they have not learned how to harness the power of this technology. The best results have come from project teams that encourage and foster collaboration between translators and Computer-

⁹⁾ Despondency turns out to be a fairly common human condition that is recorded in the Bible: Gen 4:13-14, 21:15-16, Exo 4:1,10,13, 6:9, 14:15, Num 11:15, Jos 7:7-9, 1Ki 19:4, Act 27:20

Assisted Publishing (CAP) specialists. An enlightened programmer can develop a simple linguistic tool in minutes and hours that could save a project teams days and weeks of hard work. Likewise, with proper training and technical support, a translator can complete a new translation in a fraction of the time and with fewer errors. A little synergy between CAP staff and translation project teams can make a huge difference in the progress and outcome of a translation project.

Abstract

In the past two decades, process of translating Scripture has been greatly facilitated by the use of personal computers and has driven their development. This paper is an attempt to explore practical and useful ways translators can use their computers effectively in the development of new translations of Scripture.