



Significance of Translated Literature and Hans Christian Andersen

Sanjay Gadge (Researcher)

School of Studies in English

Vikram University

Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh, India

Abstract

The aim of the present paper is to discuss the significance of translated literature and its world-wide necessity for the understanding of a larger readership. This is the time, when no one can deny the acceptance and importance of the translated literature in the age of globalization. So far as the literature written originally in the Greek language is concerned, until it was translated into English, it was confined only to a very small geographical area. After its translation, the whole world paid attention to its importance and its principles were adopted by the authors and students of the world. Similarly, the literature written in other languages got recognition only when they were translated into other languages and in English particularly. The same condition of translation applies to the Danish writer Hans Christian Andersen.

Introduction

Hans Christian Andersen is a Danish author and has written so many short stories in his own Danish language, but he was not known until his works got translated into English. Literature is not bound to remain in a very small geographical area, it is the carrier of so many human emotions, information, knowledge, customs and traditions including the flight of imagination. Literature has to be spread as the fragrance of a flower. Hans Christian Andersen is full of lovely tales, minute observations, wonder and awe, magic and fairies etc. The writings of Andersen not only entertain us but also tickle us to smile. He is a writer with optimistic approach and most of his short stories end in a happy note. His tools are little children, birds, gardens, flowers, tiny dew drops, golden sand, rivers, brooks, forests, caves, hills, palaces, insects, butterflies, animals etc. But all this comes before us only in translation; otherwise we would have been blind to his writings, if his works had come to us in Danish.

Importance of Translation

It has been a very frequent and regular phenomenon that until and unless any work originally written and published in any language does not come before the eyes of the world class readership, it does not receive any acclaim. For this purpose the

works of almost all languages get translated into other languages and into English language particularly, and thereby they become the world class works. The English language, being the language of trade, commerce and information, has its special and all pervasive effect. It is, for this reason that *The Ramayana*, originally written in the Sanskrit language by Valmiki, has got place in the syllabus of English literature, both in the schools and colleges. One can easily find such translated literature in the syllabus set by the Central Board of Studies and by the Board of studies of all the Universities of India. Similarly, the play, *Oedipus Rex* by Sophocles is originally written in Greek. It is known by its Greek title as the *Oedipus Rex* and needs no translation into English language. The play is famous for the special feature of its prophecies that ultimately come to be true in its disguised form and then create tragedy by imposing on the protagonist an “unmerited misfortune” (Aristotle 12; ch.13). Likewise, the *Poetics* by Aristotle is also prescribed in the syllabi of the Indian universities and the institutions of the higher education, but the work is originally written in Greek language and its English translation by S.H. Butcher is considered to be the best. The *Poetics* may be considered as the Bible of poetic theories and discourses. It is specially referred for the



theory of drama dealing with tragedy and other forms of imitation. Another Greek work is *Politics* by Plato which is famous for political theory and philosophy. There are so many other Greek works which are originally written in Greek language and afterward, translated into English. These works are prescribed in the syllabi of Indian universities. Moreover, various other notable works of the Greek language are *Antigone* by Sophocles, *Metamorphosis* by Ovid, *Lysistrata* by Aristophanes, and *Medea* by Euripides. Most of the aforementioned Greek magnum opuses are prescribed in the programmes of the English studies in the universities of India.

In the same manner the *Don Quixote* by Miguel De Cervantes is originally written in Spanish, and later on translated into English, making the work famous worldwide. This novel, particularly, is well-known for the chivalric romance, knighthood and adventures. Further, the great Nobel laureates are Gabriel García Márquez and Mario Vargas Llosa. Both of them published their works in the Spanish language initially, and afterwards got translated into English and drew the attention of the world towards the literary production of the Latin American world. On the one hand Gabriel García Márquez presents the corrupt world and the brutal massacre of the farm workers by the United Fruit Company in Columbia in his *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, and the miracle of the magical realism technique in his other stories, and on the other hand Vargas Llosa presents the world of stern reality through a completely dislocated structure in his novels like *The Time of the Hero*, *The Green House*, the *Conversation in the Cathedral* etc. Márquez and Llosa are studied for the purpose of research and Ph.D. degrees not only in the world outside India but in Indian universities too. Some of the scholars have been awarded their Ph.D. degrees and published ample of research papers on these writers in India. Gustave Flaubert's *Madam Bovary* is a greatly inspirational literary novel originally written in

the French language and is studied in Indian universities as a part of English programme in its English translation and has a great influence on the world literature. The novel is based on the story of Emma, a peasant girl, who marries an old doctor Charles Bovary. The main purpose of Emma to marry with Charles in the novel is to get off from the dull routine rural of the life and enjoy the dreamy romantic and an aristocratic life which is full of love. Ultimately she leads to a pathetic end consuming arsenic, because her dreams could not be fulfilled and her various lovers abandoned her helpless.

Similarly, the *Abhigyanashakuntalam* by Kalidas, is originally written in Sanskrit language and translated into English. The *Abhigyanashakuntalam* is also known as the Recognition of Shakuntla in the play. The play is the story of Shakuntala and King Dushyanta. The root word Shakuntala is the bird with that name, and as the abandoned daughter of the sage Vishwamitra and Urvashi, a beautiful dancer of the heavens, was taken to the hermitage of the Kanva, the sage, she was given called Shakuntala. The play tells that how Shakuntala who lives in forest gets married to the king Dushyanta of Avantika. The text of the play is the part and parcel of the programme of English literature students in Indian universities.

The great authors like Maxim Gorky and Anton Chekhov have left the world- wide legacy behind them. Alexei Maximovich Peshkov is better known as Maxim Gorky and Anton Pavlovich Chekhov knows as Anton Chekhov. Both the writers are native of Russia and have originally produced their works in Russian. Gorky's *Mother* acclaimed world-wide popularity and was translated in various languages. The novel is marked with the theme of revolution of the factory workers. Gorky was the five times nominee for the Noble Prize in literature. Anton Chekhov is also a renowned Russian short story writer. His best known short stories are 'The Three Sisters,' 'The Lady with the Dog,' 'The Death of a Clerk' and 'The Seagull.' He is



particularly recognized for his epigrammatic style of his writings. Both Gorky and Chekhov are prescribed in the Indian University programmes for the studies of English literature.

Translated Literature of Hans Christain

Hans Christian Andersen, being a Danish author, is read in English through the world. The world of Hans Christian Andersen is equally pleasant as the works of any other author and it is only because it has come in the mainstream through translation. His radiant world has 'The Wild Swans,' 'The Ugly Duckling,' 'The Little Mermaid,' 'The Fir Tree,' 'The Nightingale,' 'The Emperor's New Clothes,' 'The Tinder Box,' 'The Snow Queen,' etc. and each of these short stories presents a great upheaval of human sentiments and emotions. Where 'The Wild Swans' presents the Kings and Queens, magic and awe, 'The Ugly Duckling' directly influences the human heart and feelings; where 'The Little Mermaid' has the mermaid and other supernatural elements, 'The Emperor's New Clothes' is full of joy and laughter.

In 'The Ugly Duckling,' the personified duckling is presented saying as: "I am so ugly that even a dog will not bite me" ("The Wild Swans" 47). The sense of truth in the duckling's expression arouses out sympathy towards him. The short story 'The Emperor's New Clothes,' shows the concern of not only the Emperor but also the public about his new clothes: "How splendid His Majesty looks in his new clothes! and how well they fit! every one cried out. 'What a design! what colours! These are indeed royal robes!'" (113). This creates a comic situation and the joy of the Emperor in having suitable clothes. The natural love and affection among the brothers and the sister is very clearly evident when we go through "The Wild Swans." The Princes and the Princess are forced to leave the palace and the Princess is living with a peasant and his wife and the eleven Princes have been turned into the Wild Swans through the magic spell of the witch Queen. The Princess is

presented engrossed in her thoughts about her brothers as: "She pricked a hole in the leaf and peeped through it at the sun, and then she fancied she saw her brothers' bright eyes, and whenever the warm sunbeams shone full upon her cheeks, she thought of her brothers' kisses" (141). We find unprecedented joy while going through the short stories of Hans Christian Andersen, but it is all only because of translation.

References

- Aristotle. *The Poetics*. Trans. S.H. Butcher: *The Theory of Poetry and Fine Arts*. Kalyani Publishers: New Delhi-Ludhiana. 1987. Print.
- Sharma, L.R, ed. and trans. "The Emperor's New Clothes." *Favourite Fairy Tales: Hans Christian Andersen*. Glasgow: Blackie and Sons Ltd., 107-113. n.d. Print.
- ---, ed. and trans. "The Ugly Duckling." *Favourite Fairy Tales: Hans Christian Andersen*. Glasgow: Blackie and Sons Ltd., 43-51. n.d. Print.
- ---, ed. and trans. "The Wild Swans." *Favourite Fairy Tales: Hans Christian Andersen*. Glasgow: Blackie and Sons Ltd., 140-156. n.d. Print.