

a general picture. The term animism, once employed to cover the situation more or less completely, is now seen to be only partially relevant. At one end a less precise 'animatism' (as proposed by R. R. Marett) is recognized to exist, while at the other the ancestral spirits themselves are often enough found to be regarded as intermediaries between the living clan and the Supreme Being. Here the symposium, *African Ideas of God*, edited by Edwin W. Smith, offers the most recent findings, to which Dr. Nida admits himself indebted.

The place of magic in relation to the rest is a subject of much inconclusive debate. Of this Dr. Nida is well aware, and cautions against any confusion of magic and religion. He might have gone further and indicated the difference between witchcraft and sorcery (or black magic i.e. anti-social) as Evans-Pritchard first reported it among the Azande and since paralleled in a number of areas, with distinct vernacular terms for the two. The former is the destructive action of an infected personality (often a kind of vampirism) without any use of material medium, rite, or spell, whereas sorcery uses all of these. It is witchcraft rather than sorcery that is most dreaded in these communities. The witch-doctor is strictly, in this capacity, the detector of witches on behalf of the threatened community, and the term is therefore best kept distinct from that of medicine-man or doctor pure and simple.

In the changing society produced by migration of labour reverence for the departed ancestors, rooted to the ancestral soil, is a fading faith, but the practice of magic survives and becomes readily adapted to the new environment in an attempt to close the circle of security, which has always been its function. As Dr. Otto F. Raum once emphasized, it can only be displaced in the last resort by the offer of a greater security, contained in Paul's triumphant assertion of faith in Romans 8 : 35-39.

We can do no more than refer to the valuable chapter on language in which would-be translators are put upon their guard with many a warning derived from past experience on the various pitfalls that await them. Those already familiar with the author's more technical *Learning a Foreign Language* and *Bible Translating* will appreciate the authority with which this chapter is written.

This is altogether a notable book both in what it attempts and in what it achieves, and is to be warmly commended as required reading for any outgoing missionary.

Readers' Corner

From the Rev. Dr. H. G. Meecham of Rhos-on-Sea:

In Dr. J. Harold Greenlee's useful account of "Iva Clauses and Related Expressions" (*The Bible Translator*, Volume 6, No. 1, January 1955, pp. 12ff.) he cites 1 Thessalonians 2 : 16 (*εἰς τὸ ἀναπληρῶσαι αὐτῶν τὰς ἀμαρτίας πάντοτε*) as showing a prepositional phrase of *result*.

It may not be "syntactically permissible to introduce God as the subject of the purpose"; but exegetically in the light of the context and of analogous instances elsewhere (Romans 1:20, 4:11) it may be so permitted. What is intended is not the primary purposive action of the Jews but the secondary one of God (for the thought cf. Romans 1:24). See the discussion in Moulton's *Prolegomena*, pp. 218ff., and the notes in Milligan, *Thessalonians*, p. 31 and Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, p. 44. More unambiguous instances of *εἰς τό* with infinitive expressing result may be seen in Galatians 3:17 and possibly 2 Corinthians 8:6.

To the instance of the participle expressing purpose (2 Corinthians 1:23) add Matthew 27:49, Acts 22:5 (*future* participle), and for the rarer *present* participle Acts 15:27 (D reads *ἀπαγγελοῦντας*) and possibly Acts 3:26.

It would be of interest to know Dr. Greenlee's views on the imperatival use of *ἵνα* with subjunctive in the New Testament. Perhaps it may be permitted to call attention to the discussion by C. J. Cadoux, A. R. George and the present writer in *The Journal of Theological Studies*, xlii, p. 173; xliii, pp. 179f.; xlv, pp. 56ff.

From the Rev. P. Middelkoop of Timor:

With great interest I have read the article by Dr. R. Roolvink, "An Old Malay Criticism of an even older Translation of the Bible", in *The Bible Translator*, Volume 5, No. 3, July 1954, pp. 117-120, and after having read it I feel urged to make a few comments in a broader context. Perhaps I may be allowed to explain my ideas on this subject under four headings:—

- a) The significance of the statement of Abdullah.
- b) The difficulty of the special style of the Bible and its character as revelation.
- c) The influence of this translation on the Ambonese church.
- d) The scientific basis of this translation.

a) *The significance of the statement of Abdullah*

In reading Abdullah's statement, "When I had once read a page, it went on more quickly and the whole evening till late in the night I did nothing but read, so that I nearly finished it", it occurred to me that Abdullah must have been rather fascinated by the contents of the book he read. How can a man be so fascinated if he does not understand anything of what he is reading and is constantly irritated by the anomalies of its language? Very significant too is the argument of his friends, "Do not read that book, it is a white man's book and presently will lead to us losing our faith". Apparently his friends too have been deeply impressed by the eagerness with which Abdullah had been reading the gospel. Moreover they were not unbiased, because they argued, "it is a white man's book". They could not conceive of it as a book of divine revelation, but only as a white man's book and as a danger to their Islamic belief; which in itself means a hindrance to the understanding of it.

b) *The difficulty of the special style of the Bible and its character as revelation*

It is a well known fact, that the Bible has its own style and a translator has to submit himself to the original meaning of the text he has to translate into another language. Nowadays in modern translations there is a tendency to adapt a translation to the understanding of the modern reader so that he can comprehend it without explanation. In the discussion about the new translation in Dutch two aspects of this question are stressed: (1) a free translation is needed for the modern reader and (2) on the other hand an exact translation that does justice to the peculiar Hebrew colouring and cultural background of the Scripture. The latter kind of translation is needed for church use as a real basis for exegesis. Now we may be sure that the translation of Leydecker was intended for church use and aimed at an exact translation from the original Hebrew and Greek version. And from this point of view it is quite possible that a reader who is not conversant with the message of the Scripture would experience difficulties in understanding it. That is not only and primarily a question of language, it is closely connected with the peculiar spiritual sphere, and the sphere of the *mysterium magnum* we are to be led into by the Scripture.

c) *The influence of this translation on the Ambonese Church for about two centuries*

The translation of Leydecker is deeply rooted in the spiritual life of the Ambonese church. Many Ambonese Christians like it better than the translation of Klinkert, and it has really become for them the holy Scripture on which is based their church services and their own spiritual existence. Moreover its language has also influenced the well known Malay hymn book, *Mazmur dan tahlil* (i.e. Psalms and Hymns), translated by the late Rev. C. Ch. J. Schröder, that is still used all over Indonesia up to the present day. (The late Rev. Schröder was the director of a school for education and training of future ministers of the Ambonese church.) There are still old Ambonese who cling strongly to the use of Leydecker's translation and will not part with it at any price, because they are so attached to it. Even if they may have misunderstood some difficult passages, there is no doubt that as a whole it has been comprehensible to them and has fed the spiritual life of generations of Ambonese Christians among whom are many evangelists who took it with them to many other islands of the Indonesian archipelago as the foundation text of their message.

d) *The scientific basis of this translation*

It is very clear that Leydecker had studied the Hebrew text of the Old Testament thoroughly. During the last few years I have had the privilege of using his translation for the sake of comparison while translating the Old Testament into the Timorese vernacular. There are many instances from which it appears that Leydecker truly kept to the principle of approaching the original meaning as nearly as possible. It may suffice to mention only a few in this context.

In Genesis 42 : 36 the Hebrew text reads, *alai haju kullannah*. The Revised Standard Version translates "all this has come upon me"; Powis Smith, "It is on me that all this befalls"; Segond, *C'est sur moi que tout cela retombe*; Buber and Züricher, *Ueber mich komt alles (dieses alles)*. The Malay translation of Klinkert has *segala perkara adalah melawan aku* (i.e. all these things are against me), but Leydecker conforms to the above quoted translations, *atasku sudah berlaku segala perkara itu*. The latter closely agrees with the original and stresses the burden loaded upon Jacob's head by all these experiences.

In Genesis 49 : 6 we find *bisedoom*. This Hebrew expression, i.e. the substantive *sedoom* is explained in Köhler's dictionary, meaning, 'confidential talk, secret'. The Revised Standard Version has "into their council"; Powis Smith, "enter their circle"; Segond, *dans leur conciliabule*; Buber, *in ihrem Rat*; Züricher also, *in ihrem Rat*. The Afrikaans translation has *in hulle raad* (in their council), the same in *Tekst en Uitleg* (i.e. text and exegesis) by Prof. F. M. Th. Böhl. Here Klinkert reads *masuk bitjara mereka itu* (*bitjara* means 'discourse, discussion'), but Leydecker *masuk rahasianja* (i.e. enter into their secret). The latter is a nearer approach to the original than the former.

Another striking instance is found in Genesis 48 : 16, in Hebrew *wajidgu le roob*. The verbal form *jidgu* is derived from the noun *dag*, i.e. fish, but all modern translations refrain from the original metaphor here used and translate in a general sense as the Revised Standard Version does, 'to grow into a multitude' or 'to multiply' or something similar. Only Buber has stuck to the original metaphor and translates *Fischgleich mögen sie wachsen*, and according to this Leydecker reads *seperti ikan djadi banjaknja*. It is rather striking that such an old translation into Malay as Leydecker's is in agreement with the modern translation of Martin Buber, but that is because Leydecker based his translation on the Hebrew text.

Finally in this context Genesis 49 : 24 ought to be mentioned. There the Hebrew text gives *misjsjam roo'eh eben Jisrael*, which is translated by Buber, *von dorthen, den Hirten vom Jisraels Stein*. The Revised Standard Version has "by the name of the Shepherd of the Rock of Israel ('name' in accordance with the critical note in Kittel, suggesting *sjam* to be substituted by *sjem*, i.e. 'name')"; and Powis Smith, "At the name of the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel". The translation of Klinkert has lost the metaphor of 'Shepherd' by using *penunggu*, which means 'guard, watchman', but Leydecker maintains it by translating *gombala*. And this is essential for the context. (Compare also Genesis 48 : 15, Powis Smith, "The Lord who has been my shepherd"; Züricher, *der Herr der mein Hirten gewesen*; Buber, *der Gott der mich weidete*; and the new Dutch translation also using *herder* (shepherd).)

So we may sum up the argument in two main points: —

a) The criticism of Abdullah is indeed unique in considering the gospel of St. Mark as a white man's book and as a danger for his Islamic belief and as such is an honest statement of his attitude towards it. His language criteria and their implications are based on this attitude

in consequence of which he does not collect any instances of bad Malay syntax or incomprehensible words or sentences to justify his judgement.

b) As a comfort to the Bible Society and the church under whose charge Leydecker accomplished his task and as a comfort in general for all Bible translators, it may be stated that Leydecker's translation has not been made in vain, neither is it worthless; on the contrary it has been a blessing for generations of the Ambonese church and the dissemination of the gospel in the neighbouring archipelago.

Sealed by the Holy Spirit

There are plenty of difficult figures of speech in the Bible, and perhaps "you were sealed by the Holy Spirit" (Ephesians 1 : 13) is as hard a phrase to translate as there is—at least it seems to be so in some languages. Even in English the meaning of "sealing" in the sense of establishing ownership is relatively infrequent. We know about sealing letters and sealing jars, but putting on seals to indicate the right of ownership or to validate contracts is on the periphery of our use of the word. If then we have difficulty understanding Ephesians 1 : 13, what are we to expect a Dinka of the Sudan to understand by a literal translation of such an expression? The answer is, "Practically nothing". It would take almost a paragraph to explain the process and its meaning. Is it any wonder that the translator of the New Testament into Ngok Dinka chose a cultural parallel as the basis of a translational metaphor, "You were branded in the heart by the Holy Spirit". The cattle-herding Dinkas have understood perfectly.

The Contributors

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