

4. We rearrange the order of certain clauses where needed to make a more natural order, and we break up or combine clauses where needed to make it natural in Shipibo.

5. We introduce Shipibo conjunctions on the basis of the interlinear notations.

6. In terms of "rules," we replace nouns at certain points by pronouns, or even drop them entirely; this to convey the same meaning in the most natural and unstilted way.

Translation and Revision in India

H. K. Moulton

A general survey of translation and revision work in India today covers very wide ground. The 1951 census report lists 782 languages, but as 378 of these are spoken by less than a hundred people, they may be disregarded.¹

The Bible Society of India and Ceylon has 95 language files on hand, out of which about 50 may be said to be in various conditions of activity. A recent survey has shown that translations of the Scriptures (in whole or part) serve 98 per cent of the population in their mother tongues, and that many of the remaining two per cent do not need translations, as they are literate in a neighboring tongue. Work on six new languages has, however, begun during 1955 and 1956.

This article will concern itself with two main groups of languages: (1) the languages of Assam, now one of the strongest Christian areas in India, where the older and larger linguistic groups are completing, and even revising, their Bibles, while the newer Christians, particularly the various Naga tribes, are beginning with one Gospel or working forward to a complete New Testament and even into the Old Testament; and (2) the major languages of India, where old, established versions are now being revised in accordance with the standard Greek text of today and so that their language may be in line with that spoken by the modern educated Indians of their region. Hindi, Bengali, Marathi, Nepali, Oriya, Santali, and others come in this category; and it must not be forgotten that this work has already been done (for the time being) in Tamil, Kannada, Gurumukhi, Urdu, and other tongues.

Hindustani and Urdu

A most interesting project which does not come under any of these categories is Hindustani. In many areas of the north, there has for centuries been an overlapping of Urdu, with its Persian script and Muslim background, and Hindi, with its Devanagari script and Hindu

¹ Quite a number are listed as being spoken by only one person. How nice to have no one who can contradict you!

background. The resultant common language, which has no pretensions to literary excellence (or no more than Koine Greek), is nevertheless exceedingly useful for daily intercourse and even for more elevated purposes. We are told that it is the medium which the Prime Minister deliberately uses in his public speeches.

The majority of the Church in North India is Urdu-speaking and has an excellent Urdu revision of the Bible at its disposal. Since Independence, however, Urdu has been on the wane, and the children are mostly learning Devanagari script in the schools. This means that they, and many others, cannot read the Urdu version, which they understand, and cannot fully understand the Hindi version which they can read.

It has therefore been decided to transliterate the existing Urdu New Testament into Devanagari, at the same time making a standardized list of words, religious and general, which will need substituting for the Arabic, Persian, and other words unfamiliar to the new reader for whom it is intended. This will be very much of an *ad hoc* version. How long it will last no one can say. It might even be permanent. But even if it lasts only twenty years, it is badly needed *now*, and work on it is proceeding rapidly.

Hill Tribes in Assam

We turn now to the first main group of languages in which there is considerable activity, the languages of the various hill tribes in Assam, many of them small, many of them *Nagas*—a word which simply means 'naked', and does not necessarily imply any other natural community. These were the headhunters in the past (possibly the word "past" is not entirely correct), and even now many of them are reluctant to be assimilated into the Indian political structure. Many areas are in a state of armed revolt, though their efforts are not of much more than nuisance value.

Large numbers have, however, become Christians and are eager for Scriptures. Angami Nagas, numbering perhaps 50,000 and including 10,000 Christians, have their center in Kohima, famous for its part in the war against Japan. They have a full New Testament, together with Genesis and the Psalms, and are working on the Old Testament. (This does not necessarily mean any very immediate fruit.) Ao Nagas (50,000, with 23,000 Christians) are in the same position, but their work on the Old Testament is in an advanced state. Kabui (or Nruangmei) Naga (35,000, with 7,000 Christians), spoken in Cachar District between the Naga Hills and Shillong, has just had Luke, its first Gospel, sent to the press; John and Acts are progressing well. This is one of the few tribal areas where missionary help is still available. In many others, government policy has been to ask foreigners, especially non-Commonwealth missionaries, to withdraw.

Mao Naga (perhaps 30,000, with 1,500 Christians) already has Mark and John. Matthew is now in the press. A striking thing about this work is that, in an area with few competent translators, a senior Christian government official has voluntarily taken two months pre-

cious leave to check the original work done on Matthew by the translators.

Rengma Naga, which serves a fairly small community (only 6,048 in the census), has the four Gospels printed. The text of Acts has recently been approved by the B.F.B.S., not so much for the normal general purposes as for special urgent use in Sunday School courses.

Sema Naga (40,000 in the census report) shows one aspect of the difficulties of work in this area. Printing was actually begun, but the committee felt increasingly dissatisfied with their work, and for a long time asked that printing be suspended. Then the scarcity of Scriptures compelled them to be satisfied with the second-best, and a temporary edition is being printed to serve until their revision is ready. Even so, the disturbed state of the area holds up work, and proofs are returned by the Post Office marked "Service Suspended."

Sangtam Naga (11,000 in the census report, 40,000 according to Bible Society questionnaires, with some 9,000 Christians) illustrates another problem. Missionary leadership has been withdrawn; political conditions are unsettled; proofs have been lost and manuscripts mislaid; and, though Matthew and Mark have been printed, the order has had to be given most reluctantly for the breaking up of the partially composed type of Luke, which had long been standing idle at the press.

A catalogue of the other ten Naga languages on our files would be monotonous. Some would show good progress, others stagnation. The general picture, however, is one of great eagerness, limited though growing experience, and a church that will increasingly require all the translation facilities we can give them.

Two Great Churches

In contrast with these smaller, and often remote, Christian groups, there are two magnificently vigorous Churches: the Khasi Church with the kindred Pnar people in the Khasi-Jaintia hills around Shillong, and the Lushai Church further south. The Khasis are 230,000 in the census report, the Lushais 163,000 (probably more). Each group is overwhelmingly Christian and full of life. The Khasis completed their Bible in 1897; a new edition, slightly corrected, has been published very recently. The Lushais, on the other hand, have just finished their first translation of the Old Testament and are eagerly awaiting its publication, so that they may have their full Bible.

The Assamese Church in the plains, a smaller though older-established group of 36,000 Christians in a population of 5,000,000 Assamese-speaking people, had a revision of their Bible between 1950 and 1953.

Revisions in Major Languages

Coming to the revisions now in progress in major languages of other parts of India, undoubtedly the most important is Hindi. It is the mother tongue of the largest single group in India, being given in the census report as the first language of over 110,000,000 people—perhaps more—a third of the population of the country. It is also to be the official

state language from 1965, and systematic steps are being taken to prepare technical vocabularies for all spheres of knowledge in which the language has so far been imperfect.

It is therefore essential that we should have a Hindi version that will match up to the openings available for it. Many non-Christians read the English Bible with a keen appreciation of its literary value, but for the literary merits of the present Hindi version they have little but scorn. The attempt is therefore being made to produce a version in accurate, idiomatic, straightforward Hindi, such as a high school boy or girl could appreciate—aiming at a mean between the “literacy Gospel” for the villager and the language that would require a pandit to elucidate it.

We have been able to break new ground by appointing for the first time an Indian as chief reviser. The Rev. Y. D. Tiwari, a Brahmin convert and a Serampore graduate, spent 1954-55 in Oxford under Professor Kilpatrick, and is now residing in one of our theological colleges in the heart of the Hindi-speaking area. He has a good committee to help him, of whom all but one are Indians, and they have been working with great thoroughness. A sample Gospel (Mark) and a sample Epistle (Philippians) have been produced, and while these are being digested by the church, they will proceed with a tentative edition of St. John’s Gospel and Epistles. Mark has already been printed in a tentative edition, and first comments on it are very favorable.

The Bengali revision has reached an almost identical position. Bengali was William Carey’s own language, but in this century it has had a literary renaissance under Rabindranath Tagore and now has one of the best literatures in India. A revision of the Bible to meet this situation was urgently required, and the work was begun two years ago under the Rev. A. G. MacLeod. He has been succeeded, on his return to England, by the Rev. H. M. Angus. Mark has been published in a tentative edition, and the committee is now studying reactions, while the chief reviser is preparing drafts of Philippians, Matthew, and Luke.

Tibetan has presented peculiar problems. Tibet itself has been almost entirely closed to Christian workers, first by the Buddhists and now by the Communists, but there have been many Tibetan-speaking people in the adjacent areas of China, among whom it was previously possible to work; and others have spilled into India, particularly around Ladakh, on the borders of Kashmir, and near Kalimpong, at the Bengal end of the Himalayas.

Owing to the variety of Tibetan dialects, it has hitherto been very hard to produce a version that will meet with acceptance in west, central, and eastern Tibet. The Shanghai, or Ghoom, version of 1902 (printed in Shanghai, translated in Ghoom near Darjeeling) has been approved in central Tibet but not elsewhere. The Ladakh version, published in Lahore in 1950, has been more approved in the west than elsewhere.

A great step forward was taken in the middle of 1955 when, for the first time, two men from Ladakh (a national and a Swiss missionary), an American missionary from Formosa who had had considerable

previous experience in the eastern area, and several men from Kalimpong itself who were acquainted with the central form of the language, were able to hold discussions in Kalimpong, as a result of which they decided that a unified version, intelligible to all, was practicable. Steps are now being taken to use as many of these men as possible in a standing revision committee which will, it is hoped, begin its work next year.

Nepali revision work has also been going on in Kalimpong, and in Darjeeling across the valley from it. According to Indian census figures, there are 420,000 Nepali-speaking people in India, and of course many more in Nepal itself. They have had a complete Bible since 1915 but, owing to the fact that Nepal was until recently a closed country, all the work on it was done by nationals and missionaries in India. This was clearly not ideal, and it has been providential that since late 1955 it has at last been possible to associate a Nepali national with the work—a member of the Nepal royal family and a retired army officer, but a deeply committed Christian man, who has been able to do much to make the new version acceptable for Nepal itself. He and a Nepali-speaking Indian, together with a veteran Scottish missionary, form an ideal team.

The actual royal language of Nepal is not Nepali but Newari, which is spoken by quite a large number of people. The first beginnings of translation work have been undertaken in that language, and we look hopefully for developments.

It may be sufficient to mention one more major revision: Marathi. This language is spoken by 27 million people, coming third after Telugu and the great Hindi-Urdu group. The last full revision appeared in 1924 and, as J. S. M. Hooper says in his invaluable book *The Bible in India*, all who were engaged in its production would agree that the day of the perfect Marathi rendering of the Bible has not yet come. A member of the committee, Rao Bahadur B. N. Athavale, "the Moffatt of Maharashtra," produced his own freer version. The saintly Pandita Ramabai also produced hers, more faithful than idiomatic. The need for revision has been deeply felt, and in 1955 an excellent committee began work. The chief reviser is an admirably qualified and much respected American missionary, but all the other members except one are Indians. Special mention might be made of the son of the great poet, N. V. Tilak, whose hymn "One who is all unfit to count as scholar in Thy school" has been familiarized by Nicol Manicol's beautiful translation. Mr. Tilak is in the legal profession, but he continues his father's deep interest in the Scriptures and in his mother tongue. Mark's Gospel and Ephesians are being published tentatively to elicit opinion.

Completed Revisions

Finally, it must not be forgotten that a number of other important revisions have been completed within recent years. I may be allowed to give pride of place to Tamil. The recent celebrations of the 250th anniversary of the landing of the first Protestant missionaries at Tranquebar in 1706 have reminded us of Ziegenbalg's pioneer translation

of the Tamil New Testament published in 1715. The Old Testament, half finished at his death, followed in 1726. The improved Fabricius version of 1777 is still in use in many Lutheran churches, though the bulk of Tamil Christians have made the Union or Bower Version of 1868 their own. But the feeling among many that it was "missionary Tamil," and the knowledge that it was based on the Textus Receptus, set in motion plans for revision, and in 1936 another Lutheran scholar, Dr. L. P. Larsen, with an Indian colleague, produced a version which was welcomed by many but was not acceptable to the majority because of its divergence from both the familiar language and the familiar text. In fact, opinion was so strong that the Bible Society appointed a new committee, under the chairmanship of the veteran missionary C. H. Monahan to make it more acceptable. In the event, this committee—a strong one, including Bishop Azariah, Bishop Stephen Neill, and both Lutheran and non-Lutheran scholars (together with the present writer, who regards the experience as one of the major elements in his education)—produced what was in many places a new revision, though it followed Larsen as closely as possible. The New Testament came out in 1942, the Old Testament in 1949. Minor adjustments were made to the New Testament in 1954 in order to bring it in line with what had been done on the Old Testament, and in 1956 a beautiful photo-offset reprint was done in London, the first Indian Bible to contain maps and pictures.

The revised Urdu version, completed in 1930, has proved more acceptable, perhaps, than any other Indian version. The scholarship behind it is satisfactory, but it is the style of the language that seems to have won its way for it. The Muslim appears to find pleasure in reading it for its own sake, and it has been spared nearly all the linguistic criticisms that descend upon the heads of most translations. The number of Muslims in India is now much smaller than before, and the probability is that the church will tend to turn over to Hindi in course of time, but this beautiful version will continue to be used in Pakistan and by many in India. It is being transliterated (see above) into Devanagari characters for the present emergency which may well continue for some time. It also still has a considerable sale in Roman characters. This was the script used by the British army, and many Indians still find it easiest to use.

The Gurmukhi version has come into existence in a somewhat piecemeal fashion. The New Testament was first published in full in 1868, and a revised version appeared in 1900, but the Old Testament was confined to isolated publication of certain books. At the time of partition, however, with the concentration of all the Sikhs on the Indian side of the boundary, it was felt essential that there should be a whole Bible available for the use of the seven or eight hundred thousand of Gurmukhi-speaking people. In 1948 the work was put into the hands of the Rev. Dr. C. H. Loehlin and the Rev. Sunder Singh, himself a Sikh convert. The translation of the whole of the Old Testament has been completed, and the proofs are being read. The New Testament has also been revised to some extent, care being taken to see that there is no Muslim terminology which might give offence.

It may be enough to mention one further language in conclusion. The Kannada (Kanarese) version, in a language spoken by 14,400,000 persons in the state of Mysore and neighboring areas, was finely revised by an outstanding series of scholars and published as recently as 1934, though the New Testament definitive edition is earlier. One of the revisers' terms of reference was that slavish literalness should be avoided, and the result is that there is a certain amount of excellent paraphrase. The cry is now raised that this is interpretation rather than translation, and that room should have been left for other interpretations. It remains to be seen if any steps need to be taken to meet this protest, but it is an illustration of the knife-edge division between slavishness and interpretation, along which it is well-nigh impossible to walk without slipping.

The total picture is one of great vitality and activity. Advanced areas and backward ones; revisions and new translations; rapid and accurate workers and slower, less well-equipped ones; those with many problems and those with few; strong committees and weaker ones—all together create a remarkable effect for one who is able to see the whole picture: "first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear," some tares among the wheat, some withering in a few places; but the promise in part and the fulfillment in part of what in India we call "a 16 anna crop" of the Word that will not return void but will accomplish that whereunto it is being sent.

Translation Procedure in Huichol

Joseph E. Grimes

In producing the first draft of the New Testament in Huichol it was necessary to make the fullest use of the informants' time. During a large portion of the time spent in preparing the translation there were no qualified informants close at hand; either the informants or I made special trips for the purpose of working intensively together for short periods of time. When informants were to be found nearby, their personal responsibilities kept them from giving more than a small part of their time to the work. For this reason I found it useful to proceed along the lines described here.¹

When translation was undertaken for the first time, I read sentence by sentence from the Reina-Valera Spanish version to the informant, who rendered the sentence into Huichol. He did not understand literary Spanish very well, and perhaps because of his lack of familiarity with

¹Eugene A. Nida (*Bible Translating*, New York: American Bible Society, 1951) has remarked on this approach to translating in his chapter on translation procedures. This report on its use in the field may have further value. The Huichol are a Mexican tribe of the Sierra Madre Occidental.