

HONORIFICS IN INDIA

One problem which confronts the translator into many languages of India is that of the translation of Greek personal pronouns, for in Greek there is only one form of each whereas many of our languages have three forms of the second person pronoun as well as distinctions in the third (and in some cases the first) person.

In many early translations (not in all), it was decided to "translate" by using only one equivalent for each Greek pronoun. This is no longer considered satisfactory and much thought has been given to alternatives. We invited three persons who have been considering the issues involved to write a few notes on the solutions advocated by their particular revision committee. We believe the resulting symposium will interest translators and revisers in other languages. We shall be glad if it also stimulates discussion and elicits information. ¹

IN THE MARATHI NEW TESTAMENT

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Marathi has three pronouns in the second person. These are *tu*, *tumhi* and *apan*. *Tu* is singular "thou", and is used in addressing a child, a servant or an inferior. It is also used familiarly among very close friends. Children use it in addressing their mother (but not their father) and then of course it carries affection. It is used respectfully to God, in prayer. At all other times the use of *tu* would be definitely insolent or derogatory. *Tumhi* is plural "you". It is used when more than one individual is addressed. But it is also ordinarily used in addressing any one individual when the use of *tu* as described above would not be appropriate. Hence it is the common ordinary word that strangers, acquaintances and friends will use in speaking to one another courteously and casually. The third word, *apan* is still more courteous and will be used when it is desired to be especially polite to the one addressed. *Tumhi* and *apan* are plural in form, and all words in the sentence that are governed by them will therefore have plural inflexions even when the sense is singular.

Since Greek and Hebrew have only simple "thou" and "you", without any complications depending on the degree of respect intended (though such respect is often clearly shown by the use of *Kurios*, 'Sir', etc.) the problem is whether to use *tu* always for the second person singular, or sometimes also *tumhi* and *apan* depending on the occasion.

Earlier translations had consistently used *tu* in order to be literally faithful to the text. But the Marathi reader would often be confused. For example, when Paul, arrested by the soldiers, wants permission to

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