

Also on this principle, the apostles, Paul, Barnabas, and others, should all be referred to in the respectful plural.

However, when a Marathi writer is writing in a detached and objective way, especially as a historian relating events hundreds of years past, he would use the singular in the third person, and not the plural of respect. So we, in our revision, have retained the singular form of the pronoun in the third person. In doing so, the writers may appear a little more detached than they actually were, but a Marathi reader is not jarred by any sense of incongruity. We have used the plural forms of respect only in the second person, that is, when the speakers' actual words are, as it were, being quoted.

A problem arose when we came to the great confessions of Peter in John 6 and Matthew 16. Here Peter seems to recognize Christ as more than man, and we wondered if we should here use the *tu* denoting deity. But we felt that if we used that term in these instances we would not be able to revert afterwards to *tumhi* or *apan* as far as the disciples were concerned. We then took guidance in this matter from the many modern English translations for at this point the problem is exactly the same for Marathi and English. We found these translations, including the Berkeley Bible, the Amplified New Testament, Williams, and other versions, all of which we knew were unquestionably loyal to the concept of Christ's deity, had used the plural form "you" as one would address a man, and not "thou" as one would address God, throughout the Gospels, even in the two instances mentioned. We have therefore similarly used *tumhi* or *apan* throughout the Gospels.

After His glorification, however, certified to be the Son of God by the resurrection from the dead, the situation is different. When Jesus is addressed in the book of Acts and elsewhere He is unquestionably addressed as God. Therefore, in Acts 9, for example, when Saul asks, "Who art *thou*, Lord?" and when Ananias in his prayer, addresses Christ and says, "I have heard . . . how much evil he has done to *thy* saints," we have used the singular forms to denote His deity.

IN THE REVISED HINDI NEW TESTAMENT

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A special feature of the current work of revising the Hindi New Testament is the use of "honorific" forms of address. The Hindi language is sensitive to the status of the person addressed in conversation. It is also sensitive to the status of a third party about whom one may speak. In the former case, there are three ways of addressing a person: (1) By the second person singular, equivalent to "thou" and "thee" in English. This is used either for a relationship of special intimacy or affection, or for contempt and cursing. Circumstances and context will determine which meaning is intended. In the area of religion the second person singular is appropriate for the intimacy that

a religious teacher feels toward his disciples, and is often used for addressing deity, especially among people who have been influenced by the related dialect or language of Urdu, with its bias toward Persian and Arabic. The Christian community generally uses this form for addressing God, as is the practice in English. However, among those who have a Hindu cultural background, deity is commonly addressed by the use of an honorific form to be mentioned below. The lack of uniformity in usage constitutes a part of the problem faced by the translator in this matter.

(2) The second person plural, equivalent to "you" in English, is used commonly between familiar friends when speaking informally and in addressing servants, subordinates and children in school. It would not be complimentary to address an educated stranger in this manner nor to presume a familiarity which has not yet been established. This form of address is usually acceptable for translating any conversations in the New Testament, being equivalent to the use of "you" in the Revised Standard Version. The context will determine whether one or more than one person is addressed.

(3) The third person plural is used for addressing one or more persons with respect. This is the honorific form of address. Its use is commonly a mark of courtesy and refinement. The lack of its use can be excused in the case of rustics and illiterates, but any one making any claim to education and culture would certainly know how he should talk. Since modern India, influenced by leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi, has taken the democratic ideal of the worth of every man more seriously than in the past, this polite form of address has increasingly become the standard. Many teachers have taken to addressing their pupils so, and many parents address their children in this way so as to set them an example of politeness in conversation. Against this background of modern usage the language of the New Testament has seemed increasingly remote from the living language. The question a lad put to his father is understandable. "Pitaji," (Father) he said, "why is it that when we read in the papers and in books about Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Nehru and other important people, we use polite and respectful speech, but when we speak about Jesus Christ and Peter and Paul we use disrespectful forms of speech? Should we not give as much respect to Jesus as to Nehru? The Hindus use respectful speech for Krishna and Ganesh. Do we not have as much respect for our Lord Jesus Christ?"

This trend of modern Hindi usage has led many to advocate that the honorific forms should be used in the current work of revising the Hindi New Testament. The point of view is not new, for the use of honorific forms was advocated by some in the early part of the century as against the usual practice in Bible translation.

In addition to the three ways mentioned of addressing a person

face to face, the honorific third person plural is also used for referring with respect to any absent person. The context determines whether the person referred to is present or absent. Ordinarily this use of the honorific includes both the plural form of the verb and the plural form of any pronouns and other modifiers. In translating the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles this will be the commonest type of honorific usage, with its own special problems for the translator. When the singulars of Greek are changed into honorific plurals, one is sometimes at a loss to know whether the subject of a sentence is Jesus (who is referred to with a plural) or others such as the group of disciples. So the translator must avoid such pitfalls by other literary devices, such as substituting a proper name for a pronoun to indicate the true subject, or using a singular pronoun with a plural verb (which practice is apparently open to question, although supported by some modern writers) or using a singular modifier with an otherwise plural sentence structure.

In addition to the grammatical forms which are associated with respect, Hindi uses the suffix *-ji* to express affectionate respect and deep personal loyalty. Thus, while the rest of the world may speak of Gandhi or even of Mahatma Gandhi, those who knew him personally speak of him as *Gandhiji*. A son addresses his father affectionately with respect as *Pitaji*. So there are those who think that translators of the New Testament should not be content with *Yishu* in translating "Jesus," but should use the suffix of affectionate respect and loyalty, as Hindus often do for their religious teachers, and say *Yishuji*.

In past translations of the Hindi Bible these nuances of common speech have been disregarded. On the other hand, the present tendency is to define a good translation in terms of the total transference of meaning and to recognize that strict literalness may fall far short of conveying the meaning of the original. So there is a demand that the current work of revising the Hindi New Testament should register to a greater degree than in the past, the niceties of Hindi idiom and style, including honorific forms. Just how far a translator should be literal or depart from literalness in the interests of effective meaning will always be a matter of fine discrimination. So it is not surprising that the use of honorific forms in the Hindi revision has been a point of dispute. When the chief reviser, assisted by his committee, canvassed the opinions of a panel of consultants, the result was far from unanimous. Some considered the use of honorific forms in the revisions as absolutely essential. Others were just as vehemently opposed. Between the two extremes the majority inclined toward using them, so the chief reviser proceeded to do so.

After the decision to use the honorific forms had been adopted in principle, the particular lines of application had to be worked out. The committee felt their way toward the following working rules. The third

person plural was to be used as an honorific for Jesus Christ, both when addressed by his disciples and when referred to in narrative by the evangelists. In the case of the apostles, any one apostle referred to as absent should be given the honorific if actually named. In the case of God, the committee was at first inclined to use the second person singular "Thou" and "Thee", but when objection was raised that this implied the inequality of the Persons of the Holy Trinity—since the honorific plural was being used for Jesus Christ the Son—the committee decided to use the honorific plural for God the Father also. However, the honorific forms seemed very out of place when the Father or the Son addressed each other. So, in keeping with the altogether unique relation which the Persons of the Trinity bear to one another, it was decided that the second person singular should be used within this relationship. Thus, when God the Father speaks to Jesus, as at the baptism, or when Jesus prays to his Father, as in John 17, the second person singular is used. On the other hand, when any ordinary human being prays to God, the honorific plural is used.

These working rules have proved to be fairly satisfactory. Yet they have not solved all problems. It has seemed very artificial to refer to the Holy Spirit with the honorific plural, as also to the pre-incarnate Word in John 1. So the committee have recognized that their working rules cannot be followed rigidly. But perhaps they can claim as great a measure of consistency as may be found in the Hindi language itself.

It should be added that the committee decided not to use the honorific suffix *-ji*, much as this was desired by some of the consultants. It was felt this form of expression, while fitting for hymns and personal witness, was somewhat in excess of what should be expected in a faithful translation.

It remains to be seen how the Christian church will welcome the use of the honorific forms in the forthcoming Hindi revision of the New Testament. There is every reason to believe that the revision will be greatly welcomed by non-Christians with a Hindu cultural background and by evangelists who are interested in placing the Scriptures in their hands.

IN THE BENGALI NEW TESTAMENT

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In Bengali, the personal pronoun "you" has three forms, each having its own inflexions for number and case: they are *tui*, *tum*, and *apni*. The foremost is used to small children, who soon learn to reply in it, but as they grow older it will usually be discarded; it is sometimes also used to address inferior or despised persons and sometimes in anger. The old Bengali versions have kept it in one or two places (e.g. where the soldiers mocking Christ say, "Prophecy you, who it was who smote you!") but it will not appear in the new version.