

conscious Icelanders are quick to spot and criticize borrowings and unnatural phrasing or word order. A translation which sounds good in Icelandic is thus often considered a translation of quality. Newspaper reviews of new translations into Icelandic (on the few occasions when reviewers decide to devote any space to discussing aspects of translation as such) almost unfailingly point out that the works sound natural and are written in good style, or lack these qualities.

However, while the medieval translators knew their Latin, and very seldom made major errors or omissions, the same cannot be said of Icelandic translators today. One could speculate that the difference may lie partly in the fact that medieval translators were simply not paid by the page and that financial considerations did not therefore interfere with their quest for quality. Whatever the reasons, the fact remains that, even in works of recognized literary quality, sentences or even paragraphs are often missing, misunderstood or misconstrued. By and large, such changes appear to be unmotivated and the situation applies to translations both into and from Icelandic. Several articles have been published by literary scholars in Iceland in recent years pointing out these deficiencies. One can only imagine the quality of translations of less revered works, such as popular or pulp fiction, in comparison.

The present time

In today's world of mass media, small nations are obviously highly dependent on translation for their leisure as well as their work. Between 60 per cent and 70 per cent of television broadcasting in Iceland consists of subtitled foreign material; programmes for children are limited in number but are largely dubbed. Foreign news items on radio and television and in newspapers are almost all translated from foreign sources, as is a large part of the rest of the printed or broadcast material and advertisements. A great deal of translation is also carried out by or for small user-groups such as politicians and specialists in various fields; this includes official and legal documents, contracts, instructional materials, and so on. Given the size of the population and the level of translation

activity, it is no exaggeration to say that a much larger proportion of the population is occupied with translation in Iceland than in most other countries of the world.

It is surprising, given these facts, that there is not today and never has been in the past any programme of education for translators in Iceland, neither in the form of classroom-based instruction nor apprenticeship of any kind. A law passed in 1914, apparently as a result of the then current conflict and vague concern at impending hostilities in the North Atlantic, provided for 'legally approved document translators and court interpreters', but little provision was subsequently made for training or testing either group. Indeed, until relatively recently, anyone applying for permission to use this title was authorized to do so, provided he or she could demonstrate having either studied foreign languages or resided abroad for a considerable length of time. The Ministry of Justice now holds regular examinations for those applying to use the qualification. The exams are widely respected and considered a serious test of professional ability. There is no preparatory course offered, and no attempt is made to train or approve translators who specialize in areas other than legal translation.

Further reading

Einarsson 1961; *Kulturhistorisk leksikon for nordisk middelalder fra vikingetid til reformasjonstid* 1982; Seelow 1989; Zuck 1990; Pulsiano and Wolf 1993.

KENEVA KUNZ

Indian tradition

This entry sketches the history of translation in the Indian subcontinent rather than in the post-1947 nation state of India. The subcontinent is a roughly diamond-shaped area about 1,500 miles from north to south and the same east to west, bounded by the Himalayan mountains in the north and by the sea to the south. The languages currently spoken in this area fall into two main groups. About 70 per cent of the population, mainly in the northern half, speak Indo-European languages derived

directly from Sanskrit, such as Hindi, Punjabi, Gujarati, Marathi, Bengali, and Nepali. Sinhalese, spoken in Sri Lanka, also belongs to this group. Another 20 per cent, mainly in the south, speak Dravidian languages, namely Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, and Malayalam. The rest speak Austric languages (mainly scattered tribal peoples), Tibeto-Burman languages (in the north-east), and Dardic languages (in the north-west). Urdu, the main language of Pakistan, is closely related to Hindi, but has adopted many Persian and Arabic words and uses the Arabic script. The main non-indigenous language, English, is used alongside their mother tongue by most educated people.

Several problems arise when attempting to deal with the earlier history of translation in the subcontinent. The evidence is extremely patchy, partly because of a predominantly oral tradition, partly because of the destruction of innumerable texts by climatic conditions, pests such as white ants, or hostile human agency. Extant copies of texts are often several centuries later than the date of their composition. The longevity and continuity of linguistic development in the area means that individual texts often exhibit features of more than one historical period. The chronology of texts is rarely exact and is often based largely on internal evidence such as references to previous authors and works. Similarly, the great geographical extent of the subcontinent often makes distinctions between language and dialect rather problematic. The evolving cultural homogeneity causes problems in distinguishing between retellings and variant renderings of common source material, adaptations of previous texts, and actual translations. Finally, little previous work has been done in the field of translation history for this region.

The ancient period (c.2500–800 BC)

The first need for inter-language communication in the subcontinent probably arose through trade. The oldest linguistic evidence is to be found in the characters inscribed on steatite seals found in the Indus valley in the north-west. These are said to date from 2500 to 1500 BC, but unfortunately the script has not yet been deciphered. The remains of a harbour

have been unearthed in the area, and Indus-style artefacts have been found as far away as Mesopotamia. For some 2,000 years after this, until the inscriptions of the emperor Asoka in the third century BC, there is no material linguistic evidence at all. This is primarily due to the Aryans, bands of nomadic cattle-herders from central Asia who settled in the Indus area in the latter part of the 2nd millennium BC. They spoke Sanskrit, an Indo-European language, and brought with them a wealth of poetry which they subsequently collected together under the name *Rigveda* or 'hymns of wisdom'; another group of Aryans moved into Persia at around the same time and their sacred book, the *Avesta*, reflects a very similar culture to that of the *Rigveda*.

The Aryans regarded themselves as superior to the indigenous people and tried to preserve their cultural and linguistic purity. Once they had settled in the subcontinent, the *Rigveda* was endowed with extreme sanctity and mystic power by the priests. Only Aryans were allowed to learn and use the Rigvedic hymns. No reference to writing is found for several hundred years, so the linguistic and religious tradition was entirely oral, despite the continual elaboration of the original Rigvedic material. Even after the advent of writing, and the development of vernacular languages, so sacred were the Vedic texts considered that only commentaries written in Sanskrit are found until late medieval times, and certainly no translations until Western scholars gained access to them in the nineteenth century. However, ironically, even the *Rigveda* displays evidence of Dravidian influence in its use of retroflex sounds, and the *Atharvaveda*, the youngest of the four *Vedas*, contains magic spells and customs that are clearly non-Aryan. Some form of interaction, then, must have taken place between the Aryans and the indigenous linguistic communities, but its exact nature remains a matter of speculation.

The pre-classical period (c.800 BC–AD 100)

From about 800 BC onwards the Aryans began to spread out from the Indus region, eastwards into the Ganges valley and south towards the Deccan, and the Persian Achaemenid Empire took control of the Indus. Aryans also began

to go beyond their tribal territories: students and traders travelled to Taxila in the kingdom of Gandhara in the north-west, soldiers mounted on elephants apparently fought in the Achaemenid army against the Greeks.

As the Aryans began to disperse, several major developments took place. A more scientific attitude became evident in their culture, and Sanskrit texts were composed on law, astronomy, astrology, and especially linguistic subjects such as etymology, metrics, prosody, and grammar. At the same time, the Aryan language started to fragment into dialectal or regional forms known as *Prakrits*. Panini's well-known grammar is regarded by some as a response to the Aryan diaspora, an attempt to fix the form of Sanskrit before it disintegrated into mutually unintelligible dialects. The disintegration process was reinforced by the great religious reformers of the sixth century BC, especially the Buddha and Mahavira (founder of Jainism), who propagated vernacular languages in order to make their teachings accessible to the masses. Panini's grammar may therefore also represent part of the orthodox religious backlash against these anti-Vedic movements.

Kautilya, the minister of the fourth-century BC Indian emperor Candragupta Maurya, wrote a treatise on statecraft (often compared to the work of the sixteenth-century Italian, Machiavelli) which gives us some indication of the status that a translator might have had during this period. Although the term 'translator' is not used, Kautilya mentions 'scribes' towards the end of a long list of occupations and salaries: the king's chief priest, other high priests, the prime minister, military commander, and members of the royal family (48,000 panas); chiefs of police, harem, armoury, prison, revenue, and treasury (24,000 panas); lesser royals, the chief of industry, counsellors (12,000 panas); guild masters, regimental heads, chariot-commanders, physicians, fortune-tellers, bards, professors and spies (500–8,000 panas); infantrymen, scribes, and accountants (500 panas). In the very last rank are craftsmen, servants, medical assistants and cowherds (with notional figures for slaves, elephants, horses, and oxen).

In the fourth century BC, contacts with the subcontinent are externally attested: we know that Alexander the Great of Macedon reached the Indus in 326 BC and that the Greek

chronicler Megasthenes was the ambassador of Seleucus, Alexander's successor, at the Mauryan court. Among the earliest recorded translations are probably the names of places and rulers. The capital of Gandhara was known as *Takshashila* to the Indians and *Taxila* to the Greeks. The Greek historian Plutarch uses the Greek version, *Sandracottos*, for the name of the Indian emperor *Candragupta*.

With the arrival in India of Greeks from Bactria, we see coins issued with Greek legends on one face and the Indian Brahmi script on the other. Greek ideas on astrology, medicine, and drama are also perceived in Indian literature of the period. The Indo-Greek kings and the Bactrian kings of the Kushana tribe who ruled over parts of India often took imperial titles that seem to be borrowed from the Persians, such as *maharajadiraja* or 'king-of-kings' (cf. *shah-in-shah*), or from the Chinese, for example *daivaputra* or 'son of heaven'. The Kushana king Kanishka (c. AD 78–101) was a great patron of Buddhism, and Buddhist art flourished, especially in Gandhara. Kanishka also accelerated the spread of Buddhism into Central Asia and China.

Early Buddhism

Unlike the Vedic religion, Buddhism was an overtly proselytizing religion from the outset. Buddha himself urged his disciples to propagate his teachings. In the middle of the third century BC, the Indian emperor Asoka, after some particularly bloody campaigns, followed the general trend away from Vedic sacrifices and towards an ideology of non-injury and universal compassion (particularly stressed by Buddhism) and erected numerous pillars with inscriptions that record his edicts in local languages, probably in imitation of the Persian emperor Darius I. This must have required some translation-type activities on the part of the scribes. Various scripts are used on Asoka's pillars, and they name Syrian, Egyptian and Macedonian kings.

From about 250 BC onwards, Buddhist missions were sent south and west, and with notable success to Sri Lanka. The Buddhist canon (in Pali, one of the Prakrits) was probably written in Sri Lanka in the first century BC, about 500 years after Buddha's death. However, as well as

being written in vernacular languages, Buddhist texts also began to be written in Sanskrit. Translation therefore became an important part of the transmission of the Buddha's teachings. In some cases, essentially the same texts, such as the *Jatakas* (stories of the Buddha's past lives, probably composed between the first century BC and the first century AD), are available in Sanskrit and Pali, though they may not strictly speaking be translations, but parallel texts with a common source. Indian Buddhist scholars travelled to China in the first century AD and were no doubt responsible for some of the earliest translations of Buddhist texts into Chinese (see CHINESE TRADITION).

Ashvaghosha's poem *Buddhacarita*, the 'life of Buddha', represents the earliest surviving Classical Sanskrit poetry (c. first century AD), but the manuscripts of it found at Turfan in Gobi are a Chinese translation by an Indian scholar.

The classical period (c.100–1000)

The Hindu Epics, two of the most important source texts for subsequent translation history, were consolidated during this period. *The Mahabharata* (c.300 BC to AD 300) tells the story of a major war, probably representing the Aryans' eastward expansion along the Ganges valley. *The Ramayana* (c.200 BC to AD 200) is about the abduction of Prince Rama's wife by the king of Lanka (Sri Lanka) and her subsequent rescue, probably echoing the Aryans' southward movement. These texts can also be said to represent the beginning of Hindu theism, as the heroes are gradually elevated to divine status as incarnations of the god Vishnu.

It is often difficult to tell which language a text was originally in, as opposed to the language of the extant version. However, small points of grammar and metre in these Epics suggest that the extant Sanskrit versions may have been translated from original Prakrit versions, or that at least the extant versions may represent attempts to 'Sanskritize' the Prakrit versions. Similar processes are certainly evident in the rewriting of the vernacular *Puranas* or 'Ancient Stories' (collections of legends, religious material, and pseudo-historical king-lists) in classical Sanskrit, with the idea of enhancing their status thereby.

In the case of Jainism and Buddhism, later texts were often written in Sanskrit, because by then the vernacular languages had either diverged too far to be mutually intelligible or were too regionally restricted. So, in the interests of the transmission of the teachings, scholars reverted to Sanskrit. However, later still, the trend is reversed once again, and translation mainly proceeded from Sanskrit into other languages. For example, the Bhakti religious movement not only composed original material in vernacular languages, but also translated many devotional poems, as well as the Epics and *Puranas*, from Sanskrit into local languages. There were also adaptations of the Epics and *Puranas* into Dravidian languages.

One area of literature which shows significant development in this period is drama. Some scholars attribute this to Greek influence, but this has not been proven. The importance of the rise of drama for translation is that Sanskrit plays started to allow characters who were not kings or brahmins (Hindu priests) to speak in Prakrits, which represent an intermediate stage between Classical Sanskrit and the modern Indian languages derived from Sanskrit. However, a *chaya* or 'gloss' was still provided in Sanskrit for the Prakrit speeches in the plays.

Another literary genre particularly important to translation history is the fable. This becomes popular with the *Pali Jatakas* and often involves talking animals. Some scholars again see Greek influence behind this development, but it is more likely that story-telling traditions from the Middle East through to China exchanged plots and characters. One collection of animal fables in particular, the *Pancatantra* or 'Five Treatises', has an astonishing translation history. It was first translated from Sanskrit into Pahlavi in the sixth century at the order of Khusrau Anushirwan, the Persian emperor. A Syriac translation followed in c.570, and an Arabic translation in the eighth century. The eleventh century saw new translations in Syrian, Arabic (as the story of *Kalila wa Dimna*), and Persian (as *Kalia Daman*), as well as a Greek translation from the Syrian which was used for a Hebrew version. A Latin version from this period is also known, and the stories gradually spread throughout Europe in all its major languages during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The first English version, by Sir Thomas North, appeared in 1570 and

was called *The Morall Philosophie of Doni*, after the name of the Italian translator. The fables of La Fontaine are explicitly acknowledged as based on the stories of Pilpay, the name by which their reputed Indian narrator Vidyapati was known in Europe. The *Pancatantra* was probably responsible for the stories of Reynard the Fox, common to many European folk traditions, which were given their finished European form by Goethe. Other stories of Indian origin, including some of the Sinbad stories, are to be found in *The Arabian Nights*.

Medical texts were the target of much translation activity during this period. Sanskrit treatises were translated first into Pali, and later into Bengali and Nepali. Outside India, translations are known in Korean, Khotanese, Tibetan, Mongolian, Chinese, and Arabic. The Muslim Caliphs at Baghdad, the seat of the Islamic Empire, also showed great interest in Indian science. The translation bureau set up by Caliph Al-Mansour (c.710–75) produced translations of Sanskrit texts on astronomy, medicine and mathematics (notably Aryabhata's fifth-century Sanskrit treatise), introducing the numeral system of Indian origin into Europe as well as various other Indian algebraic, geometrical, and astronomical concepts. Harun-al-Rashid (766–809) and al-Mamun (786–833) continued the translation work into the ninth century, but it ceased thereafter as Baghdad began to lose its political power.

Southern India and the Dravidian languages

The earliest literature of the south, unlike the *Rigveda*, is not particularly religious in content. Tradition tells us of three *sangams*, competitive poetic 'assemblies' at Madurai. No texts survive from the first, the Tamil grammar *Tolkappiyam* is supposedly a product of the second, and the eight anthologies of Sangam poetry (over 2,000 poems) are from the third. Tradition also attributes the introduction of Aryan culture into the south to the Vedic sage Agastya, claims that southern kings took part in the Mahabharata war and refers to them performing Vedic sacrifices. If nothing else, this reflects the extent of Aryan influence in the south at an early period. At the same time, archaeological evidence at Arikamedu near the south-eastern city of

Pondicherry has revealed sea-trade with the Romans in the first century AD.

Early inscriptions found in this area are in Prakrit and Sanskrit, but Tamil soon replaces Prakrit. Education was initially dominated by Jains and Buddhists, but gradually the Hindu tradition overtook them. Jain texts, originally in Sanskrit and Prakrit, began to be written in Tamil, and Buddhism and Hinduism competed for royal patronage. Tamil literature naturally shows Jain influences, and Tamil epic poems such as *Silappadikaram* and *Manimekalai* have features of Sanskrit style. However, Tamil religious poetry of the highest quality was also being composed. There are references to an extensive early literature in Kannada as well, but very little has survived.

A religious movement known as Bhakti propagated the personal, devotional worship of the Hindu gods Vishnu and Siva. This gave rise to much poetic activity in the sixth and seventh centuries and won over many of the ordinary people. Education was mainly at orthodox Hindu temples and in Sanskrit, and many people were therefore excluded. They gained oral instruction from the Bhakti schools in Tamil instead. As the classical period of Sanskrit began to wane, works in Sanskrit became increasingly derivative, artificial, and lifeless. At the same time, local languages began to flourish: Kamban's version of the *Ramayana* is written in highly vigorous Tamil.

Tamil, Telugu, and Kannada had acquired much vocabulary from Sanskrit, but the connections were becoming looser. Sanskrit works, such as those of Kalidasa, and the Epics, were adapted to Telugu and made available to popular audiences. Kannada had been favoured by Jain patronage in Mysore, but again the first written Kannada texts are adaptations of Sanskrit originals. Marathi (although Indo-European) developed similarly: through patronage from Yadava kings, then used to render Sanskrit texts such as the *Bhagavad Gita* (a late interpolation in the *Mahabharata*), but also used for religious poems inspired by Bhakti texts introduced from the south.

Later Buddhism

As Buddhism developed, some sects began to follow similar paths to the Hindus, incorpo-

rating *Yoga* (physical exercises, meditation, and the philosophy of self-realization) and *Tantra* (visualization techniques involving a pantheon of iconic deities, symbolic rituals including sexual intercourse, and so on) into their practices. These sects, collectively termed *Mahayana* or 'the Northern school', as opposed to the more conservative *Hinayana* or 'Southern school', wrote mainly in Sanskrit rather than Pali.

The University of Nalanda in the north-east of India was particularly renowned for training translators from the fourth century onwards. Kumarajiva (344–413) went to China in 401 and translated the *Life of Nagarjuna* (a major Buddhist philosopher) into Chinese, and one of his pupils, Fa-hsien, came to India soon afterwards (405–11) to collect more texts. Jinagupta translated thirty-seven Sanskrit works into Chinese. Another translator, Paramartha, went to China in the fifth century and translated the *Life of Vasubandhu* (an earlier authority on Yoga at Nalanda). The Chinese Buddhist pilgrims Hsuan Tsang and I Tsing came to India in the seventh century and studied at Nalanda. Hsuan Tsang is said to have translated over thirty major Buddhist volumes, and I Tsing took several hundred texts back to China. Dharma Deva (960–1000) is credited with translating 118 Buddhist texts into Chinese. Some 8,000 Indian texts, many in translation, are preserved in the Sung-pao collection; they relate to Buddhism, Hinduism, astronomy, mathematics, and medicine. Among the earliest printed books in China are books in Sanskrit printed from wooden blocks, a technique probably taken from Tibet.

Tibetan culture was totally oral until the arrival of Buddhism. The alphabet was initially created solely for the purpose of receiving Buddhist texts in Sanskrit. The Nalanda scholars Arya Deva, Silabhadra, and Dharmapala went to Tibet, and their works were translated into Tibetan. Santarakshita and Padmasambhava were especially active in the transmission of Buddhism in the eighth century. After a period of persecution in the tenth century, the Bengali Atisa Dipankara Srijnana restored Buddhism in Tibet. The cooperation between Indian, Tibetan and Chinese scholars is evident in the *Mahavyutpatti*, a Sanskrit–Tibetan–Chinese dictionary of Buddhist technical terms which dates from the ninth or tenth century.

Long after Buddhism went to China, it passed to Japan in the form of Zen. In the turbulent times from the eleventh century onwards, Buddhist monks took Sanskrit manuscripts to Nepal, Tibet, or China, and many of those texts now survive only in their translated versions.

The medieval period (c. 1000–1750)

Baghdad's decline from the tenth century onwards allowed the Turkic rulers of Afghanistan to grow in self-confidence, and they began to mount raids into northern India. Mahmud of Ghazni made seventeen such raids in the north-west between 1001 and 1027, destroying palaces, temples, and libraries. In the twelfth century, Mohammed of Ghor annexed Ghazni and its possessions in India, and his generals emulated Mahmud by destroying buildings, images, and texts as far as Bengal. However, Mohammed's successors subsequently became Indianized, settled in Delhi, resisted the Mongol invaders in the north-west, extended their sway into the Deccan and South India, and established an Islamic Sultanate which lasted in part until the arrival of the Moghuls.

Sanskrit competed to a certain extent with Persian at court during this period, but became increasingly redundant elsewhere as the vernacular languages flourished. Some Muslim poets began to write in Hindi. The increasing dominance of Persian in business and literature ironically gave regional tongues a great boost. In due course, however, even the Delhi Sultanate began to show interest in the indigenous culture. In 1357, after a visit to a library in Kangra, Sultan Firuz Shah ordered the translation of Sanskrit manuscripts on Hinduism into Persian and Arabic.

In 1398, Tamerlane destroyed the waning Sultanate and left its territories in the hands of local Muslim rulers. The Lodi Afghans briefly rebuilt the core in the fifteenth century, but Bengal remained outside their control, the Rajputs disputed the western areas with the kingdom of Gujarat, and the breakaway Muslim Bahmani kings ruled in the Deccan, with the Hindu Vijayanagar kingdom to the East.

Meanwhile in the south, as Islam and other religions such as Bhakti and Tantra started to

erode orthodox Hinduism, scholars such as Sankara, Ramanuja and Madhva tried to incorporate some of the new ideas into the traditional Hindu framework. One particularly strong cult was the Virashaivas or Lingayats. The main exponent, Basava, was originally a Jain but was probably influenced by Buddhism and Islam as well as the Bhakti cults. His teachings, usually called simply the *Basava*, exist in one form in Palkurika Soma's Telugu *Basava* (1195). In the fourteenth century, this work was adapted into Kannada by Sumatibhima or Bhimacandra Kavi.

Puranas ('ancient stories') were composed in Kannada by Vishnu worshippers as well as by followers of Basava, and the Sanskrit *Bhagavata Purana* was translated into Kannada in the sixteenth century. Since then, most of the other major Puranas have been translated into Kannada. Hastimalla's *Adi Purana* is a Jain text in Kannada prose, but each of its sections begins with a Sanskrit verse identical with the opening verses of Jinasena's Sanskrit version. The Tamil Puranas are often far more complex and sophisticated than their Sanskrit counterparts. The *Bagavadam*, a Tamil version of the *Bhagavata Purana*, was translated into French at an early date. Telugu versions of the Puranas date back to the thirteenth century. However, Sanskrit retained its place at royal courts and among orthodox Hindu scholars. Major commentaries were written: on the *Dharmasastras* (Hindu Law) by Hemadri in the thirteenth century (keeping very close to the northern versions), and on the *Vedas* by Sayana in the fourteenth century. Although regional languages were diverging and flourishing, the population of the subcontinent was beginning to share a considerable degree of cultural homogeneity.

In 1337, the major southern kingdom of Vijayanagara was founded, and rapidly dominated the south. It shook off both the Delhi Sultans and the Muslim Bahmani kings of the Deccan, and restored Hinduism. Gradually, the centre of religious activity moved from the Tamil lands to Mysore and Maharashtra. The *Bhagavad Gita* was rendered in Marathi by Jnanadeva (1291), and he was followed in the fourteenth century by Namadeva, whose works denounce idol worship. The Vijayanagara kings had adopted a popular Marathi deity. Sanskrit works, especially the Epics and Puranas,

continued to be adapted into Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, and Marathi, but Bhakti texts were steadily produced as well. Persian and Arabic had been introduced by the Muslim Bahmani kings in the northern Deccan. Malayalam, originally a western dialect of Tamil, started to enjoy an independent status as Malabar became less a part of the Tamil kingdoms, and more influenced by its foreign settlers, especially the Arabs.

Meanwhile, Hindu Bhakti still flourished, now propagated by the popular devotional poet Chaitanya in Bengal, and by the Marathi saints. Guru Nanak (1469–1539) incorporated Bhakti into a new religion, Sikhism. Orthodox Islam withdrew into an intellectual elite, but the Sufis shared the popular stage with Bhakti. Persian still dominated the courts.

The Moghul Empire

In 1504, Babur, a descendant of Tamerlane whose claims to kinship with the Mongol Genghiz Khan are the basis for the term *Moghul*, established himself in Afghanistan and, after a few initial raids, conquered Delhi in 1526. His memoirs were later translated from Turki into Persian and then into English. Babur's son Humayun conquered Gujarat. His son Akbar extended the empire, employing mainly non-Indian staff in his administration. He developed an eccentric religious system, engaging Hindus, Jains, Portuguese Christians, and Zoroastrians as advisers, and crushed a revolt by orthodox Muslims. Persia had by now freed itself from the Mongols. Pre-Islamic Persian culture was more acceptable to Hindus than Islam, the non-orthodox Persian Sufis being closer to Bhakti than Muslims, and Arabic therefore took second place to Persian.

Religion was a major spur to translation. Dara Shukoh, son of Shah Jahan, heard of the *Upanishads* (late Vedic and early Hindu philosophical texts) in Kashmir in 1640, and had about fifty of them translated from Sanskrit into Persian by 1657. These were later translated into Latin by Anquetil Duperron and published in Paris in 1802. The theologian Shah Wali Allah Dihlawi (1703–62) took the revolutionary step of translating the Qur'an into Persian. His annotated version was begun before 1730 and

was not completed until 1738. He later compiled a set of instructions in Persian for scholars attempting to translate the Qurʾān. He also translated an Arabic grammar into Persian verse (c.1751–2) for the benefit of one of his sons and a Persian text (‘Refutation of the Shiʿites’) into Arabic. Until recently, his contribution to Islamic thought had been underestimated by both Western and Islamic scholars, who tended to pay far more attention to his political views.

Science also gave rise to translation activities: Sawai Jai Singh of Jaipur, mathematician, astronomer, and builder of several observatories, had some classical Greek texts on mathematics (including Euclid) translated into Sanskrit, as well as more recent European works on trigonometry and logarithms, and Arabic texts on astronomy.

During the Delhi Sultanate and the Moghul period, Hindu nobles and ministers used Persian at court, and many Hindus wrote books in Persian. Muslim scholars translated Sanskrit texts into Persian. Sanskrit Puranas have been discovered in Persian translations, one version of the *Bhagavata Purana* reputedly translated at Akbar’s express command. Persian also gave rise to Urdu, which influenced both Hindustani, the vernacular language of the north, and Hindi.

The European period (c.1750–1947)

The Europeans had gradually begun to vie with the Arabs for trade dominance by the thirteenth century. Marco Polo visited the southern Pandyan kingdoms, Nicolo Conti, Athanasius Nikitin, and Duarte Barbosa travelled overland to Asia, and Vasco da Gama opened the sea route in 1498. In addition to these traders, Catholic missionaries arrived, especially the Portuguese, who soon translated the New Testament into Persian.

In 1600, the British East India Company was incorporated – essentially to trade in East Indian spices – but it soon came to exercise considerable political power in India as a whole. The need for translations of Indian texts was recognized early on by Company administrators. Muslim law had already been summarized in a digest at the order of the Moghul emperor Aurangzeb (1659–1707) and was universally acknowledged

by Indian courts. Hindu law, although much older, had never been systematically codified. Warren Hastings, the East India Company’s Governor-General of Bengal, gathered together ten eminent Hindu pundits and commissioned them to prepare a digest of Hindu law for the courts. This had first to be translated from Sanskrit into Persian and then from Persian into English, because no English person as yet knew Sanskrit.

Indian scholars were initially reluctant to teach Sanskrit to the Europeans. Sir William Jones (1746–94), a judge of the Supreme Court in Calcutta, eventually managed to find a non-Brahmin medical practitioner who agreed to teach him, but only under the most stringent conditions. Sir William learned twenty-eight languages, including Chinese. In 1782, he translated seven pre-Islamic odes, *Muʿallaqaat*, from Arabic. In 1786, his presidential speech to the Asiatic Society contained his speculations on the common ancestry of Sanskrit and Greek, one of the earliest and most influential texts on comparative linguistics. Jones’s translation in 1789 of the classical Sanskrit play *Sakuntala* by Kalidasa was almost immediately translated into German, French, Danish and Italian. Goethe was extremely impressed by the play, and the prologue of his *Faust* is widely considered to be modelled on that of *Sakuntala*. German scholars continued to show much interest in Sanskrit and played a prominent part in Sanskrit studies.

After the initial enthusiasm of Hastings, Jones and others, Indian culture in general and Sanskrit works in particular were increasingly subjected to negative judgements by English-speakers, who compared them with Victorian English models – rather than classical Greek or Latin models, which would have been a more appropriate basis for comparison – and ignored Sanskrit poetical rules and the opinions of native critics. The flow of translation began to move in the opposite direction (from European into Indian languages). Isolated attempts had been made to render Christian teachings into Indian languages during the eighteenth century. William Carey (1761–1834), a missionary, went to Calcutta in 1793, where he began his first Bible translation. Forced to leave British jurisdiction, he moved to the nearby Danish colony of Frederiksnagar in 1800. In 1801, he was appointed to teach Bengali, Sanskrit, and

Marathi at Fort William College. He translated the Bible into Bengali, Oriya, Marathi, Hindi, Assamese and Sanskrit. He also translated parts of it into twenty-nine other languages and dialects. In addition, he co-compiled dictionaries of Bengali, Sanskrit, and Marathi, and co-translated three volumes of the Hindu epic *Ramayana*. Carey is also credited with establishing a printing press at Serampore, urging the government to end infanticide and *sati*, and encouraging the use of Indians as missionaries. In 1813, the British opened India to missionaries, and their numbers rapidly increased.

Initially, the East India Company had followed the Moghul pattern of patronage to Indian learning, though on a much more modest level. Hastings set up a College of Arabic and Persian studies at Calcutta, and Jonathan Duncan a Sanskrit College at Benares. In 1813, the Charter Act granted £10,000 annually to 'the revival and improvement of literature and the encouragement of the learned Natives of India and for the introduction and promotion of a knowledge of the sciences among the inhabitants of the British Territories in India' (Spear 1970: 126). At first, under the influence of British orientalists, this led to the printing of classics and the translation of modern works into Sanskrit. However, in 1835 the Governor-General William Bentinck issued a resolution declaring that the funds should thereafter be used to impart 'knowledge of English literature and science through the medium of the English language' (ibid.: 127). English became the official state language instead of Persian; in the lower courts, Persian was replaced by the local languages, whose development was broadened by the needs of administrative and legal prose, rather than devotional poetry. Meanwhile, Indians began to realize the advantages of English for career advancement. The Hindu College, where English language and literature were taught, was founded in Bengal in 1816. The British founded three English-style universities between 1848 and 1856 and developed a grant system to enable Indians to open private colleges which were affiliated to them. The Aligarh College was founded by Sayyid Ahmad Khan in 1875 to cater for the needs of Muslims in Delhi.

The advent of the printing press had initially enabled prose translations of the Bible to be

made available in the vernaculars. Various missionary societies also published translations of catechisms and other texts. But the presses also served to encourage other prose writing in the local languages: social reformers published tracts on women's education, child marriage, widow remarriage, and caste. Ram Mohan Roy (1772–1833) printed the first Indian newspaper and a bilingual English–Bengali magazine. Bengali and Hindi were his first languages, but he also spoke Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic, Hebrew, Greek and English. He criticized Hindu sectarianism and superstition, urging a return to a monotheism based on the Vedas and Upanisads, which he translated from Sanskrit into Hindi, Bengali, and English. The translations angered the orthodox tradition, but led to him being elected to honorary membership of the Société Asiatique in 1824. He also published some works on the teachings of Christ. As founder and editor of two of India's earliest newspapers, he urged the government to ban *sati*, which it did in 1829.

Indian religions also regained confidence, and Ramakrishna (a successor to the Bhakti tradition) inspired his disciple Vivekananda to found the Ramakrishna Mission, which began to play an important part in publishing Hindu texts in Sanskrit, with English glosses, and distributing them in India and abroad, especially in the United States. Puranas and Upanishads were also translated, for example by Durgaprasad into Hindi. Versions of Sanskrit and Persian tales began to appear in local languages, for example those of Raja Bhoj, Raja Birbal, Akbar, and Hakim Tai in Hindi.

European academics meanwhile sponsored the establishment of learned societies, such as the Royal Asiatic Society, the Pali Text Society, and so on, and continued the production of translations of Sanskrit and Pali texts. Dictionaries and grammars were compiled, serving the needs of both orientalist scholars and Christian missionaries. The Independence movement also encouraged considerable linguistic activity in local languages and in English, as well as in translation between them.

Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941) translated his own work from Bengali into English, and was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913 for the English version of what is probably his most enduring work, *Gitanjali*, 'Song

Offering'. He was knighted in 1915 but surrendered his knighthood in 1919 in protest at the Amritsar Massacre (where hundreds of Indian nationalists were killed by troops under British control). Many of his works have been translated into English, by himself and others (for discussions of his own translations of his work, see Mukherjee 1981 and Sengupta 1990).

The modern period (1947 to the present)

Gonda's ten-volume *History of Indian Literature* (1975–) contains innumerable references to translations between Indian languages and between them and English. Works translated include Vedic texts, the Hindu Epics, Puranas and Upanishads, and classical Sanskrit drama; English poetry by Keats and Tennyson; Shakespeare's plays and poems; Bengali plays, poetry, and novels; Hindi and Urdu fiction; the Gospels and other Christian texts; American literature, especially short stories and drama; European literature: Cervantes, Tolstoy, Ibsen – mostly via English translations.

Hindi, Urdu and, more recently, Punjabi are becoming important intermediaries in the translation process, both from English and other European languages and from the less widespread local languages. The dearth of children's literature in Indian languages is slowly beginning to receive attention.

Political and administrative needs have exerted their own pressures. For example a specialized prose had to be created for translating the Indian Constitution into Kashmiri, and the official Review Committee sadly noted the poverty of its vocabulary and the lack of a standard orthography (Kachru 1981: 97). However, the regional language academies do little to encourage translation work, and funding and publication are left to individual initiative and choice. Western publishers are playing their part in the translation of modern Indian writing into English; for example Heinemann followed their pioneering translations in the African Writers Series with the Asian Writers Series. The academic tradition is receiving a wider audience with publishers like Penguin and their translated editions of Sanskrit texts, the *Upanishads* and the *Bhagavad Gita*, Sanskrit drama and

poetry, the *Rgveda* and Hindu myths. Several Tibetan spiritual leaders in exile have translated key Buddhist works.

The output of Indian publishing houses varies from the Epics and other popular works translated by the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan (Indian Institute of Culture) for the general Indian English-reading public, to the new editions of old translations published by Jaico Books (for example Sir Edwin Arnold's translation of the *Bhagavad Gita*), and the Indian University series of Sanskrit Classics with detailed pedagogic commentaries, published by Banarsidass. Religious publishers like the Ramakrishna Mission and the Advaita Ashrama have published highly literal glosses of the Upanishads and standard Sanskrit compendia of the Indian philosophical systems.

The study of translation and the organization of the profession

One might imagine that, with its multiplicity of languages and long tradition of translation, India would be a thriving centre for the theory and practice of translation in the modern era. However, as Mohanty (1994: 9) explains, 'the situation is just the reverse. Translation and Translation Studies hitherto have remained a marginalised affair.' Although the general situation is as Mohanty describes it, there are some reasons for cheer. The Centre for Applied Linguistics and Translation Studies (CALTS), created as a research centre in 1988 at the University of Hyderabad, now has a training programme for translators. A Centre for Literary Translation was set up in New Delhi, with an academic campus in Goa, in 1993.

The Indian Scientific Translators Association, based in New Delhi, is a member of FIT. The Sahitya Akademi, also in Delhi, has published a directory of translators and offers awards for translations.

Further reading

Humphreys 1951; Jesudasan and Jesudasan 1961; Dudley and Lang 1969; Dimock 1974; Gonda 1975; Mukherjee 1981; Dasgupta 1983; Niranjana 1992.

RAMESH KRISHNAMURTHY