

## **Translation Culture in the West zone**

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### **Introduction**

Translation “is the communication of the meaning of a source language text by means of an equivalent target language text.”(Wikipedia). It means that the correct and understandable version of the content from source language has to be carried into target language without losing the essence of the original. (Dr Shiben Krishen Raina, 2007) Hence the skill of Translation is an art and also a craft.

India is a country of diversity with multiplicity of cultures as well as languages. Our country has 22 languages recognized in the eighth schedule of the constitution, 15 different scripts, hundreds of mother-tongues and thousands of dialects. One can very well say that India's is a translating consciousness and the very circumstances of their real existence and the conditions of their every day communication have turned Indians bilingual if not multilingual. One can even add without exaggeration that India would not have been a nation without translation and we keep translating almost unconsciously from our mother-tongues when we converse with people who use a language different from ours. Translation has helped this diverse India to be linked together throughout her history. (K. Satchidanandan, 2011).

If we take into consideration the multilingual nature of our country, it is amply clear that translation must have been part and parcel of the ancient Indian psyche as the cross section of the population had their business interest, relationships by marriage, needs of the conquerors and the conquered. This culture seems to have continued till date. In fact today, it has been converted into commercial opportunities.

### **Objectives**

The topic of my paper is “Translation Culture in West Zone of India”, wherein I will be speaking about translation culture in Konkani language in Goa. The mother-tongue of Goa is Konkani, so primarily I will take an overview of Konkani translation culture in the State of Goa in Romi as well as Devnagri Script.

Since the topic is vast I have limited the scope of the paper to the importance and need of the translations and problems faced by translators in Goa.

## History of Translation in Goa

Translation does not happen in vacuum. To translate there should be existence of a source language. So while discussing the culture of translation in Konkani language in Goa, it is important to understand little bit of history of this language. Many people feel that Konkani is a young language. Many felt that Konkani is not an independent language but dialect of Marathi. But there are ample historical proofs to ascertain that this language is at least 2500 years old. The following table shows different milestones of the Konkani language.

Year	Milestones
800-1000 AD	The Birth of Konkani. (The stone inscriptions Identify the first alphabets.)
1000-1200 AD	Speech, figures of speech, folklore, folk music, folk songs, folk tales etc.  Oral literature-The birth of Konkani folklore.
1200-1500 AD	Probably the Era of poetry.
1500-1600 AD	The age of Krishnadas Shama & other writers. (Literature created based on our Epics like Ramayana & Mahabharata.)
1510-1575 AD	The migration of Konkani society.
1575-1684 AD	The Portuguese Era- the creation of Christian Religious Literature.
1684-1855 AD	The Era of Repression of Konkani. The Neglect of Konkani. The Barren age of Konkani.
1855-1961 AD	The Era of the Resurrection or revival of Konkani.
1961-1962 AD	The Independent Era: creative literature-A movement of Production of literature.

Table 1 (Taken from the book “the Konkani Language, Nature and tradition Dr. S.B. Kulkarni (Marathi) and translated by Srinivas Kamat).

If we look at table No 1, it is clear that the people from Konkan belt especially Goa did speak in Konkani and their Speech, figures of speech, folklore, folk music, folk songs, folk tales etc were in Konkani. So it can be seen that Konkani language had extensive tradition of folk literature, the evidence which is found in written literature of end of 15<sup>th</sup> century or at the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century of Krishnadas Shama. So we can safely say that till then there was no culture of written translation. But there was definitely tradition of oral translation.

Prof K satchidanadan says that India is a nation of translation and we keep translating almost unconsciously from our mother-tongue when we converse with other people whose language is different from ours. According to him our first writers were translators. Thus Indian literature is founded on the free translation and adaptation, interpretation and retelling. I feel the same premise applies to Goa too.

Goa was one of the major trade centers in India, thus it had always been attracting the influential dynasties, seafarers, merchants, traders, monks and missionaries since its earliest known history. Around 16 rulers have ruled Goa, to name a few, Sumerian, Harrappa people, Mauryas, Shatvahanas, Bhojas, Chalukya, Kadamba, Yadavas of Devgiri, Vijaynagar Empire, Bahamani sultanate, Adilshhas and Portuguese.

It means these rulers brought in with them their cultures, customs, religions, dialects and beliefs etc. Historical evidence shows that along with Konkani, Marathi, Hindi, Kannada, Sanskrit and later Portuguese languages were spoken in Goa. It means that the natives must have unconsciously translated from Konkani to other languages.

### **Translation of Devotional works.**

During the Portuguese rule in Goa, Christian Missionaries came to spread teachings of their religion. From among these missionaries there were many priests who realized that if they do not preach in local tongue, natives will not understand the true meaning of their religion.

So the very first works of Christian Konkani prose were a few catechisms. Many translations of religious text followed. Fr. Thomas Stephens was an important pioneer in translations and prepared a version of Marcos Jorge's catechism. Diogo Rebeiro translated Bellarmine's catechism in Konkani. Joao de Matias, Amador de Santana, Joao de Pedrosa also translated devotional books. The subject that they translated dealt with saint's lives, meditations and catechism. The work that was done by many others like Mathias, Joseph, Miguel, Hosten etc was essentially translations of devotional work. In 1855, probably the first translation in Konkani done by a native Goan from Latin Christian Classic poem entitled "Stabat Mater and other hymns", was F. X. Fernandes. He translated the old testament of the Bible.

Many of the works that were translated by the missionaries was with the intension of carrying forward their religious teachings, thus it did not have literary flavor.

### **Literary Translations**

**It was Vaman R. Varde Valaulikar alias Shennoy Goembab**, the most ardent crusader of the modern Konkani movement, who did adaptation of many dramas and showed the Konkani people power of our language. His adaptation of Shakespearean dramas are Rajput Hamlet ani Bapaichem Bhut, Mudiam Khatir Ghova-bailechem Zhogddem, Gore bailecho kalo ghov etc. His

Akbar patxai ani Birbal and Bakaulechem ful were published in 1902. His Ghatmaro Ixtt and Goenkaracho Mumbaikar are also in a published form. In 1895 S. S. Jesus Dias translated a book on Holy Roman Emperor, Jose Maria de sa, Pascoal Francisco Fernandes, Antonio Xavier de souse, Joao Caetano Francisco de souza, Jose Manual Pinto, Mariano de souza are the Goans who translated religious literature. The written record of the other translators of that period are Jose Manuel Pinto ( 1916), Mario de Souza ( 1927), Horacio Lobo ( 1938), Acharya Ramchandra Shankar Naik (1955, Drama), Andre Brune (1956, Drama) Ramkrishna Zuwarkar and others.

These translators of 19<sup>th</sup> century and beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century were well read Individuals and knew more than two languages of other countries and Indian Languages also. The translations are from Latin, Italian, Russian, French, Portuguese and English languages. They translated different genres of literature like poetry, drama, autobiography, biography and short stories.

**The initiators of third phase of translations** were Ravindra Kelekar, Ramkrishna Zuwarkar, Bakibab Borkar, Manohar rai Sardesai, N. N. Anandan, Felix Cardoz, Yeshwant Palekar, J. B. Moraes, R.K. Rao, Gurunath Kelekar, Raghunath V. Pandit. Olvinho Gomes, R. K. Rao, Pandurang Bhanghi, Shantaram Anat Hedro, Purshotam Singbal, Manikrao Gavnekar, Nagesh Sonde, Narayan Vadolkar.

The authors/Translators who have translated from 1970 till 1990 are classified in the above phase. Again the most interesting part of these translations are that the source languages are in Indian as well as Foreign. Powerful writers like Sarte, Shakespere, Kalidas were translated during this period. The genres of literature that was translated were poetry, dramas, essays, Novels, short stories, children's literature, religious books, hymns etc.

**The fourth phase of translators** that I would like to include is from 1991 to 2010- Raghunath V Pandit, Harishchandra Nagvekar, , Chandrakant Keni, Yeshwant Paleykar, Pandurang Bhanghi, Prakash Thaly, Chandrakant Keni, Gokuldas Prabhu, Prabhakar Nadkarni, Manoharrao Sardesai , Mahabaleshwar Sail, Shrinivas shenvi Bhobe, Pundalik Naik, Sheela Kolamkar, Narendra Ballal, Sudha Amonkar, Suresh Amonkar, Jyoti Kunkolienkar, Melwin Rodriguese, Madhav Borkar, Shrinivas Kamat, Gurunath Kelekar, Ramesh Veluskar, SnehaLata Bhatikar, Mukesh Thaly, Deelip Borkar, Madhavi Sardesai, R. S. Bhaskar, Dattaram Kamat Bambolkar, Shridhar Kamat Bambolkar, Kasturi Desai, Alka Asoldekar, Ramesh Laad , Narendra Kamat, Mukesh Thali, Pushpa Pai, Jyoti Kunkolienkar, Shrinivas Kamat, Avinash Chari, shrikant Nagvekar, Bhushan Bhawe, Paresh N. Kamat, Kiran Mhambre, Narayan Desai, Rupa Chari, Sheela Kolambkar, Hema Naik, Jaimala Danayat, Sandesh Prabhudesai, Nayan Adarkar, Maya Kharangate, Jayanti Naik, Narendra Kamat , Zilu Gaonkar, Akalpita Desai and Premada gawas, Dr. Anant Ram Bhat , Kiran Mhambre and others.

**The Fifth phase is considered from 2011- 2015** Hema Naik, Meena Kakodkar, Maya Kharangatye, Prashanti Talpankar, N. Shivdas, Ramnath Manerikar, Soniya Sirsat, Nutan Sakhardande, Deelip Borkar, Jayanti Naik, Jay Naik, Seby Fernandes and others.

In the fourth and fifth phase, barring two or three translations, all others are from Indian languages like Bengali, Assamese, Hindi, Gujarat, Malyalam, Marathi, Sindi etc. The translations include children's literature; folk based children's literature, Novels, Short stories, Poetry, Autobiography. Few translations are of non-fictional nature. During this period the quantity of translations have increased thanks to Sahiya Akademi, Goa Konkani Akademi, Asmitai Pratistan. We must also appreciate publications like kulagar prakashan, Apurbai Prakashan, Sahitya Prakashan, Rajhauns Prakashan and some prakashans from Pune etc. Though they knew that the Konkani readership is limited they did not deter from their duty of serving their mother tongue. The Konkani community must be obliged to the translation work of children's stories which would not have been possible without the help of National book trust and children's book trust, Delhi

Translation is a link between two languages. While translating from source language to target language the culture, philosophy, knowledge and concepts should pour into target language. We have many original books of high quality of eminent writers wherein we can understand their culture, their thoughts, their struggles, their philosophies. Similarly, we have highly acclaimed Goan writers, Poets, Philosophers. Since they only write in Konkani their work is hidden to the outer world. So it is very important that our literature is also translated in other languages too. Thanks to Vidya Pai, Mukesh Thaly, S. M. Borges, Augusto Pinto and few more translators, some of our literature is translated in English and these translated books are read widely and appreciated too. Few authors like Ravindra Kelekar, Damodar Mauzo, Sheela kolamkar, Pundalik Naik, Jayanti naik, Mahabaleswar Sail, N. Shivdas, Nayana Adarkar, Meena Kakodkar, Deelip Borkar, Nutan Sakhardande, Maya Kharangate and others are lucky to get their literature translated in English and other Indian Languages. But the attempt of translating our literature in other languages is very limited and it needs to gain momentum urgently.

### **Non-literary Translations**

Translations can be categorized into different types like 1) literary translation 2) Technical translation 3) Administrative translation 4) legal translation 5) commercial translation 6) computer translation 7) Financial translation 8) General translation 7) Medical translation 8) Judicial translation.

Though, on one hand, the literary translation activities are widening, the non-literary related translation culture just taking roots. The Konkani language got its official language status, the "Rajashray" but it still has not got support from the bureaucracy and the people, "Lokashray". The slogan "Konkani ulay, Konkani Baray" has not been implemented properly. The entire administrative system should have been in Konkani, Judiciary, commercial establishments, medical field, financial transactions should have been in the Official language. But due to lack of political will, bureaucratic stubbornness and peoples careless attitude is the reason for non-

functioning of government machinery in the official Language. Hence, the translations that would have required in above mentioned category is hardly carried out. Out of compulsion, some of the establishments and departments try to translate some of their material but it is either done word to word transformation or of a hybrid quality with mixture of words from different languages which makes no sense at all.

For a good translation, you require good dictionary and we do have few good dictionaries but if we try to surf the net for Konkani dictionary, we do not get authentic translations. Almost after 27 years of Konkani becoming the official language, Goa government's official language department has now published a book on the basic administrative terminology. The terminologies of different branches of knowledge is still in a pipeline. A book on History of Official Language is published in Marathi last year and its English translation is in a pipeline. Similarly, a Guide in Konkani for the Assembly Proceedings and Multilingual Government Websites are still in pipeline. All the government Schemes have been translated in Konkani and Marathi too. So from last four years, official language Department is trying to complete the work that has been neglected for the last 27 years. The department has also formed a panel of translators and trained them in the art of translations, especially to translate technical words. In fact Goa could be the only state which has Portuguese translators. The department has also started the process of training young boys and girls to type Devnagari. The government has also raised translation rates to 1.25 per word for general translations and 1.50 per word for technical translations. I think Sahitya Academy should follow the new pattern. The speed of the work carried out by the Official Language Department is an ample proof that political will and Bureaucratic will power can create a Konkani culture in Goa.

CIIL, Mysore is also chipping in their efforts in creating battery of translators by training them and translating books based on history, science, law, sociology, political science and other knowledge books etc.

There are many NGO that are working in the field of health, mental health, children's Rights, women's issues etc. Many a times, these organizations require translation of their literature/pamphlets, books, brochure and other technical literature etc. Mukesh Thaly , Damodar Ghanekar, Sandesh Prabhudesai, Shailendra Mehta, Prashanti Talpankar, Sushma Pawar, Anwasha Singbal and many other translators that have been empanelled by official language department have been translating this type of non-literary work.

I will fail in my duty if I do not acknowledge the work done by Dr. Bhikaji Ghanekar in the medical field to create Konkani culture. In the late 70's and early 80's there were no takers for Konkani. In fact they looked down on Konkani. For all the official purposes English or Marathi was being used. At that time, Dr. Ghanekar translated posters and slogans in Konkani and because of that the campaign against T.B. and Cancer percolated among the masses. His famous slogan "Cigar, Vidi ani Paan, Bhalaykechye dusman" is still being used for publicity and is very popular.

## Analysis and Challenges

Before discussing challenges before translators to create translation culture, it is important to analyze the present situation in this field.

Translation is mission. It is a bridge between two languages. It is not a mechanical process of word-to-word translation, but it is supposed to carry the culture of the source language to the target language. In a literary work, the original writer may depict his/her local culture, beliefs, traditions, proverbs in his literary work. It is the duty of the translator to tailor-fit original writer's work into the target language without losing its content and essence. S/he should be able to identify equivalents of the concepts, proverbs, situations ( If Possible) from the target language. To create such a transformation the translator needs to have mastery over source and target language. They should also understand the language structure of source and target language. For example, Portuguese nouns have only two genders whereas Konkani has three. It is important to understand that the Indian languages follow a subject-object and predicate pattern where as foreign languages follow subject-object and predicate order. If we do not understand this, then the translation will not be fault free. For example initially when the missionaries learnt Indian languages to spread their gospel, they did not take into consideration structures of the sentences. For example "our father who is in the heaven art" became "Amcho Bappa Jo sorgar Asa" where as the correct translation would be " amcho sorgavello bappa". Of course later on, these missionaries improved their translational skill and wrote in simple and proper Konkani.

If we analyze the second and third phase, ( few in fourth phase)translations and translator had a passion burning among them for literature and the cause. They knew exactly what was their mission and duty. They were well-read and had a mastery over more than two languages, Indian as well as foreign languages. So the work that they have produced is of highest quality in terms of content and the style. The Konkani that is used by them is pure and virgin. In contrast to that, the present generation does not read voraciously. If someone commissions them to do the translation, they will take it up. The concept of liking a book and then choosing does not apply here. (In fact many senior writers refuse to take translations because they are just off-handily given the books to translate). These new breed of translators do not understand the concept of translation. They have no mastery over the languages that they translate. Hence the work suffers. Some of the latest translations have hybrid language where Konkani is primarily mixed with Marathi words and also sprinkled with Portuguese words too.

The major problem that is being faced today is we do not get good translators. That is because very few people are well versed in more than one language. There was a time when Goan society was multi-lingual. Most of the people knew three or four languages very well. Konkani, Marathi, Hindi was spoken by all. Few spoke Portuguese, French too. But now we find that the language controversy has made people bitter about other languages. Multi-lingual culture is condensed to mono-linguality. The students are not keen to learn more than one languages. They do not like to read books. The English medium of Instruction at the primary level also indirectly discourages

reading habits in other languages. Secondly, the new education system has stopped teaching Linguistics of a Language in Goa. So In few years we may not have translators at all.

## **Conclusion**

It is time to sit up and think seriously about shriveling of multi-lingual status of Goa. It is important to encourage students to take up interest in languages. Let's not hate any language. Instead, let's love and respect all the languages. Whichever may be your medium of Instruction, the child should be encouraged to learn more and more languages. Translation industry is knowledge based industry. Colleges and universities should include translation studies in their curriculum.

The organizations, publication houses must choose the right person for the right type of translation. We must take into consideration the translators knowledge and language skill, their interest and then give the books to the right person for translation. The translators must be rigorously trained. They must be paid reasonably and timely. There should be special scheme for translation and translators must be awarded.

It is time that we acknowledge that translations have knowledge value at the same times lots of job opportunities are hidden in this industry. So, all the stakeholders including the government should understand the importance, need and value of this industry.

And last, but not the least. Goa has historically been a multi-lingual multi-cultural state, like how India is. One wonders how India can remain united as One Nation in spite of these multiplicities. It's also because of the multi-lingual character of Indian and respect for other languages and cultures. This diversity is the strength of our unity. India will remain united until this multi-lingual and multi-cultural character of Indian would remain. In Goa, we are fast losing this multi-lingual multi-cultural character, which is our unique character. Translation is an inherent part of this character, may it be the culture of oral translation or written. To maintain this unique character of Goa, we need to go back to our original nature – the multilingual character and not mono-lingual.

(Kindly note, the list of translators given by me may not be complete. I may have missed out some very important translators but kindly bear with me. I have given the information based on books available in the Konkani Akademi Library and List of names of the books given by Konkani Akademi. I would also like to humbly admit that I have not written names of the authors in seniority order nor their work-contribution. I may have missed out some names in each phase. I have also not been able to get names of translators who have have done translations for NBT and CBT. Kindly bear with me-Prashanti Talpankar)

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2. Department of Official Language  
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