CHAPTER FIFTEEN

EXPLICITNESS AND THE WESTERNIZATION OF SCRIPTURE

The final issue to be considered in this thesis, and one raised by the investigation made in Chapter 11, is how DE translations handle implicit information and metaphorical language in the ST.

A. IMPLICIT INFORMATION IN THE SOURCE TEXT

It has long been recognized in the history of translation that a source text (ST) has implicit meaning that may need to be made explicit if its translation is to be understandable in the Receptor language (RL).

For instance, the Authorized Version (1611) regularly supplied words in italics where the King James translators felt English required this for the translation to be intelligible. Thus, in Matthew 1:6 we have 'her that had been the wife of Urias,' in Matthew 15:6 'and honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free,' in Acts 1:13 'James the son of Alphaeus ... Judas the brother of James,' in Romans 11:4 'who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal,' and in 1 Corinthians 10:27 'If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast.'

The practice of using italics for this purpose was deliberately abandoned in the (English) Revised Version. The preface to the first edition of the Old Testament (1884, p.x) states, 'that all such words, now printed in italics, as are plainly implied in the Hebrew and necessary in the English, be printed in common type.' Although the printing of italics was abandoned, the principle was clearly recognized and stated that some of the implicit information in the original has to be expressed explicitly in a translation.

More recent translation fashions favour those procedures which lead to what is termed a 'natural, clear, simple and unambiguous translation.' The determinative role granted to the receptor in Eugene Nida's Dynamic Equivalence theory of Translation, to which the United Bible Societies are committed, has led inevitably to a new emphasis on explicitness in modern versions. In fact, Robert Bratcher, Nida's colleague who is the main translator of the GNB, has singled out explicitness as one of

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1 From the Introduction to the Good News Bible 1976
2 See my 'Dynamic Equivalence Bible Translations' Colloquium 19 (1986),43-45
3 Euan Fry 'Current Trends in Scripture Translation' UBS Bulletin No. 124/125
the three features that mark the GNB as a Dynamic Equivalence (DE) translation, the other two being contextual consistency and naturalness.

The modern translator of a Biblical text faces the problem that the original writer and his readers had shared information which he did not need to elaborate or specify. This shared information may not be available today. Bratcher cites 1 Corinthians 7:36-38 as an example of a situation where we simply do not know enough to determine the exact relationship between a man and his ἀρπάγω. He then goes on to argue:

But where there is information implicit in the text itself the translator may make it explicit in order to allow his readers to understand the meaning of the text. Contrary to what some might think this does not add anything to the text: it simply gives the reader of the translation explicit information which was implicitly available to the original readers. To identify 'myrrh' as a drug in Mark 15:23 is not to add anything to the text: it simply tells the modern reader what the ancient reader knew, that myrrh was used as a narcotic to dull the senses. And to identify 'Asia' in Acts 16:6 as a province keeps the modern reader from taking it to mean the modern continent of Asia.

The meaning of idioms and figures of speech must be set forth plainly so that today's readers will understand them as did the readers of the original. Since we do not share the Semitic culture of most of the writers and original readers of the books of the Greek New Testament, we may miss the force and meaning of the figures used. In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, for example, we read that Lazarus died and was carried by the angels 'to the bosom of Abraham'. A literal translation tells nothing to the reader who does not know the way in which people at that time reclined at feasts, and does not realize that in Jewish circles the hereafter for the righteous was sometimes portrayed as a great banquet in heaven, with Abraham as the host of God's people. The meaning of the phrase is that Lazarus was taken by the angels to occupy the place of honor and intimacy at the right side of Abraham at the heavenly feast. That is why the TEV has, 'the poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's side, at the feast in heaven' (Luke 16:22). In Matthew 5:41 we read, 'If any one forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles.' The verb translated 'forces' reflects the right which a Roman soldier in Palestine had of compelling a Jew to carry his pack one mile; this is made clear by translating, 'And if one of the occupation troops forces you to carry his pack one mile, carry it another mile.'

Even such a slight literary idiosyncrasy as the use of the passive voice will pose problems, if translated literally. Wishing to avoid naming the holy name of God, the Jews would often use a title ('heaven', 'power', 'the Blessed One', 'the Almighty'), or else use the passive voice of the verb, thus making it unnecessary to name God as the actor. But if a translation simply reproduces the verb in the passive, the reader will not know, as did the original readers, that this is a literary convention and that the real actor is God. Matthew 5:7 reads, 'Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.' It is probably true that some will understand that the mercy

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received is from God, not from men. But in order to avoid any uncertainty or ambiguity, it is better to translate straightforwardly, 'Happy are those who are merciful to others; God will be merciful to them.' So in the other Beatitudes: 'God will comfort them ... God will call them his sons' (Matthew 5:4, 6, 9). In the same way God is the actor in Jesus' warning against judging others (Matthew 7:1-2): 'Do not judge others, so that God will not judge you - because God will judge you in the same way you judge others, and he will apply to you the same rules you apply to others' (see also Mark 4:24, Luke 6:37-38).  

There is much in Bratcher's argument with which we can empathize. Many of the additions in the GNB are uncontroversial and enhance the intelligibility of the translation for the modern reader, e.g. the provision of classifiers ('city of Antioch', 'sect of the Pharisees') and the clarification of ellipses. But often the attempt to explicate is not only more boldly interpretative where traditional translations have retained the ambivalence of the ST, but also raises serious questions about the nature of translation. Moreover, in this chapter, I wish to highlight the implications for receptors in non-western societies, who do not have access to the range of versions we have in English, of the emphasis on explicitness in translation. It is not insignificant that Bratcher's examples of explicitness above, and GNB renderings generally, are reproduced in the recent Malay, Indonesian and Chinese versions, including the highly imaginative 'explication' of δοκίμασε τό ἄγγελον ... in Matthew 5:41 as 'if one of the occupation troops forces you to carry his pack ....'!

Nida himself does not seem to treat this question systematically. On the one hand he wants to restructure the message according to the 'channel capacity' of the receptors. On the other hand, one may not add information that is not implicit in the original message. He claims the Amplified New Testament is guilty of that. However,

cultural conditioning may be supplied if:

1. the text is likely to be misunderstood by the receptors
2. the text is likely to have no meaning for the receptors
3. the resulting translation is so 'overloaded' that it will constitute too much of a problem for the average reader to figure out.

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6 E.A. Nida, and C.R. Taber, Theory and Practice of Translation (Helps for Translators, No.8; Leiden: Brill, 1969) 164-165
7 E.A. Nida, and C.R. Taber, Theory and Practice of Translation (Helps for Translators, No.8; Leiden: Brill, 1969)110
More recent manuals on translation have devoted whole chapters to 'Implicit and 
Explicit Information'. Barnwell, a key SIL theorist, is typical. She says that implicit 
information should be made explicit,

(a) when the grammatical or lexical form of the receptor language 
requires this,

(b) when the natural style in the receptor language requires this; and

c) when the principle of full accurate communication of the meaning of 
the original message demands it.

The first is unexceptionable as the King James Version's italics witness. The translator
will be forced by the receptor language to be more explicit than the original Hebrew or 
Greek at various points. Thus Bahasa Indonesia distinguishes between the inclusive 
and exclusive 'we', and in rendering Ephesians 1:3-14 the translator will have to 
frequently interpret the varying scope of the Greek pronoun ἥμετέρας. Languages such as 
Balinese and Javanese employ honorific forms and reported speech has completely 
different forms according to whether the speaker is speaking up (to God, King or 
social superior), speaking down (as to servants), or speaking to peers. Australian 
Aboriginal languages do not have passive forms, so Bratcher's example above of Matt 
7:1 'Judge not that you be not judged' is apposite. It has to be rendered 'Judge not so 
that God will not judge you', making explicit that the actor is God. One might well 
query, however, whether this was really necessary in the GNB or in the Indonesian 
and Malay counterparts. In fact, Bratcher's 'unpacking' of Jesus' cryptic sayings 
regularly robs them of their shock value.

The second criterion, that of naturalness, is more problematic. Nida's oft repeated 
example is Mark 1:4 'John the baptizer appeared...preaching a baptism for the 
forgiveness of sins' (RSV). He argues that this translation

is artificial in English and in many languages it is entirely impossible. In 
fact, in many language there simply are no nouns for "baptism", 
"repentance", "forgiveness", or "sins", because these are really not objects 
but events, and events must be expressed by verbs, not by nouns. 
Furthermore, one cannot ordinarily speak of events in such languages 
without specifying who takes part in the events, the participants. In Mark 
1:4, however, there are no indications in the immediate context as to who 
does what. In other words, the participants in the events of baptism, 
repentance, forgiveness, and sins are not indicated. Nevertheless, if this 
passage is to be really meaningful and natural, even in English, the 
participants need to be identified.

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8 eg J. Beekman and J. Callow, Translating the Word of God, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974).
K.G.L. Barnwell, Introduction to Semantics and Translation, (High Wycombe: SIL, 1974). M.
With the aid of the 'science of semantics' Nida is able to reveal the relations between participants and events which are implicit in Mark 1:4 and the meaning of the relation between the events involved. As a result of this analysis he comes up with the restructuring adopted by the GNB and claims that he has only made explicit what is fully implicit in the verse: Mark 1:4

Greek: ἐγένετο Ἰωάννης ὁ βαπτίζων ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ κηρύσσων βάπτισμα μετανοίας εἰς ἀφέσιν ἁμαρτιῶν

RSV: John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

TEV: So John appeared in the desert baptizing people and preaching his message:
'Turn away from your sins and be baptized,' he told the people, 'and God will forgive your sins'.

It is a testimony to Nida's immense prestige and influence in the United Bible Societies that most, if not all, versions published since 1970 have accepted this explanation of Mark 1:4.

However, Mark could have expressed it like the GNB in Greek had he chosen to (as Luke does in Acts 2:38). Archbishop Robinson's comment is apt:

Nida does not explain why, if the participants can remain implicit in Greek, they have to be explicit in English. A sentence like 'the salesman offered a reduction for cash, for clearing his stock' is perfectly good English, and does not always require to be changed into: 'the salesman cried, 'hurry, hurry, hurry...etc.'

If Mark explains the matter no more fully than that, why should the translator?10

Naturalness then is a dubious aim in translation. We do not even know whether the Hebraicized Greek of the New Testament was natural for the writers, let alone the original receptors. We have already suggested that intelligibility is a more appropriate aim than naturalness.

Barnwell's third criterion for explicitation—'when the principle of full accurate communication of the meaning of the original message requires this'—is the most questionable of all. It would seem to give the translator a blank cheque.

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B. THE PROBLEM—FORM AND MEANING

The problem is that 'the communication of the meaning of the original message', includes implicit information, but this 'implicit information' turns out to be indeterminate. For instance, Larson states that situational meaning is also crucial to the understanding of any text and it may have to be made more explicit in translation.

A text may be completely unintelligible to someone who does not know the culture in which the language is spoken because there is so much SITUATIONAL MEANING. When translating into another language, the original SITUATIONAL MEANING may need to be included in a more overt form if the same total meaning is to be communicated to the readers.\(^\text{11}\)

Larson's point may be valid for communication but is it legitimate or feasible for translation?

Beekman and Callow's discussion of the translation of Mark 2:4 highlights the problem.

Mark 2:4 says, 'and when they could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him...'. Since no indication was given of how four men, carrying a paralyzed friend, could get onto a roof (and the language helper tended, naturally enough, to think in terms of his own familiar steep thatched roof), the language helper assumed a miracle, similar toPhilip's sudden removal from the presence of the Ethiopian official to Azotus. Here, the Greek narrative left an intervening event implicit—that they climbed the outside stairs onto the roof. It is not always possible to leave this implicit in other languages.\(^\text{12}\)

The problem they seek to address is really twofold. Firstly, in translation we seldom find equivalence at the level of words. Thus στέγη in the ST conjured up a 'flat roof' for the original readers whereas the RL word suggested a 'steep thatched roof'. Secondly, and more significantly, the RL readers were completely unaware of information assumed in the ST. In fact, they supplied from their own cultural context the belief that people can move from place to place miraculously and arrived at the conclusion that the five men got onto the roof by supernatural means.

Beekman and Callow recommend explication in cases like the above on the grounds that misunderstanding arises from the differing properties of the two languages concerned. They profess to adopt the conservative approach that implicit information may be expressed, if and only if, the RL necessitates it' but then add, 'it is made


\(^{12}\) J. Beekman and J. Callow, Translating the Word of God, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974) 47.
explicit because the grammar or the meanings, or the dynamics of the RL require it in
order that the information conveyed will be the same as that conveyed to the original
readers.¹³

However, as has recently been pointed out by Ernst-August Gutt¹⁴, most of their
examples of 'implicit information' do not derive from language-specific principles but
rather from the differences in the encyclopaedic knowledge that SL and RL readers
respectively bring to the text. There is no way that those problems can be fully
overcome in the translation itself.

The whole area of implicit information will continue to be a minefield for translators as
long as the UBS and SIL manuals fail to distinguish between translation and
communication. The aim of Bible translation should be equivalence between the ST
and the RL version in terms of their semantic contents.¹⁵ Any background
information or contextual adjustments necessary for successful communication of the
message must be supplied by other means, not least the teaching ministry of the
church.

Form and Meaning
Western translators are consistently frustrated by the high regard shown by indigenous
co-workers for the forms of the original. To Westerners, it is the message that counts.
It is not surprising that such disparagement of the significance of the form of the ST
leads to restructurings that are far more radical than the norms of the RL demand.

The truth is that language is not a mere receptacle. Nor does the Bible translator work
with some disembodied 'message' or 'meaning'. He is struggling to establish
correspondences between expressions of the different languages involved. He can
only operate with these expressions and not with wordless ideas that he might imagine
lie behind them. Translators must not undervalue the complex relationship between
form and meaning. One cannot make explicit in the RL text certain background
information without risking distortion of the text and its message.

As we noted in the previous chapter the GNB version of the Letter to the Hebrews
inserts the adjective 'Jewish' before 'priest', 'law', 'temple' at , e.g., Heb 8:4, 9:25,
10:1, 10:11, 13:10, 13:11 (as do the recent Malay, Indonesian and Chinese versions,
even though the preface to each claims that the translation is from the original

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¹³ J. Beekman and J. Callow, Translating the Word of God, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974) 58.
¹⁴ E.-A. Gutt, 'What is the Meaning We Translate?', Occasional Papers in Translation and Text
the classic treatment.
languages). Not only are such interpolations gratuitous since the background information is retrievable from the 'co-text', especially the Old Testament, but they also change the atmosphere of the message. One begins to feel that what is being described was as alien to the original writer as it is to the modern Gentile receptor.

Serious distortion occurs, too, in the GNB's handling of worship vocabulary. It is not insignificant that neither Paul nor any other New Testament writer applies the cultic language of the Temple to the Christian assembly. Rather, these terms are applied to the believer's whole life before God under the New Covenant. However, the GNB seeks to help us to understand what kind of assembly Paul is referring to in 1Cor 11:4, 11:5, 11:13, 11:16, 11:17, 14:19, 14:26 by regularly inserting the word 'worship'.

Again seeking to be more explicit for the modern receptor, the GNB regularly interpolates words like 'sacred', 'ritual', thus arguably importing a western perspective into the text.

e.g. Gen 12:6 he came to the sacred tree of Moreh, the holy place
Exod 33:19 I will pronounce my sacred name
Deut 7:5 ...break their sacred stone pillars
2 Sam 6:16 David jumping around in the sacred dance
2 Sam 15:24 the Levites carrying the sacred Covenant Box
Neh 12:43 the people gave a sacred offering to the Levites

In fact, the attempt to be explicit for the modern English reader often results in cultural transposition. Thus Bratcher's translation of τὸ Ἱερὸν τῶν συναγωνιῶν in John 20, verses 1, 19 seems to fall into that category. The RSV had 'On the first day of the week' which preserves the Jewish context of the events narrated. The GNB substitutes 'Sunday' which has a different meaning in our culture. Again the influence of the GNB is such that its rendering has been adopted in subsequent Dutch, French, Portuguese, Malay, Indonesian and Javanese versions. The German translates literally at 20:1 but follows the GNB at 20:19.

The GNB frequently changes names to make the reference more explicit. For instance, in Genesis 35-50, it replaces 'Israel' by 'Jacob' over twenty times, but the nuances are completely different and the change of name has been announced and explained in Gen 32:8. We are left in no doubt by the ST that a name with dubious connotations has been replaced with a noble one. The GNB, in its determination to homogenize names ignores this. Later, in the Prophets, names such as Zion, Ephraim, Jospeh, etc. with their own distinctive nuances are dropped. There is similar replacement of Jerubaal by Gideon in Judges 8:29, 9:1, 16, 9:19, 9:24, 9:28, 9:57,
despite the preceding explanation in 6:32. In the NT Paul addresses Prisca formally by her correct name but the GNB substitutes the diminutive Priscilla (Luke’s usage) at Rom 16:3, 1 Cor 16:19, 2 Tim 4:19. Names are not of great importance to Westerners. But it is a matter of regret that the GNB’s handling of names is replicated in non-Western Versions such as the Indonesian and Aboriginal Kriol.

Explicitness in sexual language is a hallmark of modern Western culture. Not surprisingly we find this exemplified in the GNB and in its foreign language counterparts. Here I simply cite again Gen 4:1, where the literal ‘Adam knew Eve his wife’ is replaced by ‘Then Adam had intercourse with his wife.’ Yet had the Hebrew author wished to be so precise and knowing, he could have used דָּבָר instead of נַעֲרָה. The GNB rendering underestimates the reader and loses the force and delicacy of the original. We have suggested earlier that the Biblical understanding of both knowledge and sex may well have been severely compromised.

C. FIGURES OF SPEECH

Translating figures of speech is notoriously difficult and is worthy of a chapter in itself. The image may be unknown in the RL or have a different association. Or the point of comparison of two items may not be obvious. On the other hand, languages are not immutable systems, and through the centuries English itself has been developed and enriched through translations, not least by the importation of Biblical idioms and figures.

When explicitness is regarded as a virtue, the prospects for Biblical imagery are not good. We have noted earlier the RSV and GNB renderings of Zech 2:6-13 where the Jewish exiles are being summoned home.

Zechariah 2:6-13

RSV

6 He! He! Flee from the land of the north, says the Lord; for I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heavens, says the Lord.
7 He! Escape to Zion, you who dwell with the daughter of Babylon.
8 For thus said the Lord of hosts, after his glory sent me to the nations who plundered you, for he who touches the apple of his eye:
9 Behold, I will shake my hand over them, and they shall become plunder for those who served them. Then you will know that the Lord of hosts has sent me.
10 Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion; for lo, I come and I will dwell in the midst of you, says the Lord.
11 And many nations shall join themselves to the Lord in that day, and shall be my people; and I will dwell in the midst of you, and you shall know that the Lord of hosts has sent me to you.
12 And the Lord will inherit Judah as his portion in the holy land, and will again choose Jerusalem.'
13 Be silent, all flesh, before the Lord; for he has roused himself from his holy dwelling.

GNB

6-7 The Lord said to his people, 'I scattered you in all directions. But now, you exiles, escape from Babylonia and return to Jerusalem.
8 Anyone who strikes you strikes what is most precious to me.'
So the Lord Almighty sent me with this message for the nations that had plundered his people:
9 'The Lord himself will fight against you, and you will be plundered by the people who were once your servants.'
When this happens, everyone will know that the Lord Almighty sent me.
10 The Lord said, 'Sing for joy, people of Jerusalem! I am coming to live among you!'
11 At that time many nations will come to the Lord and become his people. He will live among you, and you will know that he has sent me to you.
12 Once again Judah will be the special possession of the Lord in his sacred land, and Jerusalem will be the city he loves most of all.
13 Be silent, everyone, in the presence of the Lord, for he is coming from his holy dwelling-place.

That the GNB contracts verses six and seven, makes explicit that the land of the North is Babylonia, and restructures verse 8, is not our concern here. Our focus is on the fate of the imagery of the ST.

The GNB drops the twelve figures retained in the RSV. These figures are perhaps not central ones, though "inheritance" vocabulary (verse 12) reflects a theme of both testaments which is generally disappears in the GNB. As to flesh, (verse 13) the GNB's aversion to the metonyms "flesh", and even more "blood", is well-known even where these words are a motif in the ST (e.g., σῶμα in Paul; הדם in Ezek 22:1-13, 24:6-9).

The dropping of shake my hand and He has roused Himself (verse 13) signal an important theological tendency of the GNB to sterilize language about God.
Anthropomorphic images are censored out. The Lord is no longer allowed "to bare his holy arm" (or even stretch it out). References to His "jealousy" are normally replaced by bland paraphrases. The new Indonesian translation at Zech 2:6-13 faithfully reproduces all these features noted above.

Elsewhere the GNB replaces a ST figure with another that is regarded as more appropriate in English. Its rendering of Matt 6:2 has been extraordinarily influential in other DE versions.

RSV  "When you give alms sound no trumpet before you...but...do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing".

GNB  "When you give something to a needy person do not make a big show of it...but...do it in such a way that even your closest friend will not know about it."

It is astonishing that Bratcher's parable has been judged superior to that of Jesus in most foreign language versions published by the United Bible Societies. These idioms which GNB finds so difficult have in fact proved so arresting that they entered English permanently as a result of Bible translation in the sixteenth century!

In Matt 5:13-16 Jesus uses two arresting images of his disciples, "You are the salt of the earth...You are the light of the world". When the GNB changes the metaphor to a simile, it reduces the impact of Jesus' words. The German goes even further: "Was Salz für die Nahrung ist, das seid ihr für die Menschen". (What salt is to food, you are to people).

D. METAPHOR AND ITS TRANSLATION

Metaphors fulfil an important role in all human communication. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) have claimed that they structure not only our speech but our conceptual system. It is arguably impossible to think about abstract concepts, not least metaphysical concepts, except in terms of metaphor. This is important in view of the common negative view of Biblical metaphor as something characteristic of a primitive culture.

Our study of the GNB has noted a distaste for anthropomorphic imagery describing God. To the sophisticated modern Westerner it seems childish to picture God as a man who comes down to earth to check how things are going (Gen 18:21) or who utters terrible threats in fury, only to change when someone argues with him, or who is jealous (Ex. 34:14). Yet in the end if such anthropomorphic imagery were deleted, we would be left with imagery derived from our physical environment. There would be no other source. Caird claimed that anthropomorphism is the commonest source of metaphor.

Metaphor is of course largely culture dependent and translators of the Bible are confronted by imagery drawn from cultures separated not only by geographical distance but also by distance in time. Dagut is a Hebrew linguist who is pessimistic about the translatability of metaphor: 'Metaphor is governed by a subtle interaction of cultural experience and semantic associations so that what determines the translatability of a SL metaphor is...the extent to which the cultural experience and semantic associations on which it draws are shared by speakers of the particular TL.'

In an earlier article Dagut (1976)20 spoke of the paradoxical neglect of metaphor by translation theorists. Significantly Nida (1964) heads Dagut's list of negligent translation theorists. Nida and Taber in TAPOT (1969) limit themselves to a three page discussion of 'figurative meanings.'

The whole subject of metaphor its nature and translatability is beyond the scope of this thesis. Seminal work in English was done by Max Black (1962) who acknowledged his debt to I.A. Richards (1936). Black distinguished between three views of metaphor: the substitution view, the comparison view and the interaction view. It is the last on which he focuses attention.21 In the course of exploring his well known example 'Man is a wolf', Black makes the point that though the metaphor is intended to say something about the subject 'man', the statement also tends to influence the hearers' view of the wolf as well.

Caird comments on this interaction phenomenon which he calls a 'two way traffic in ideas' with his comment on Biblical 'God-talk':

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17 It is helpful to distinguish anthropomorphic imagery from anthropomorphic language such as we find in the narratives of Genesis 3:8-10 or Genesis 18 where God visits Abraham.
When the Bible calls God judge, king, father or husband it is, in the first instance, using the human known to throw light on the divine unknown, and particularly on God's attitude to his worshippers. But no sooner has the metaphor travelled from earth to heaven than it begins the return journey to earth, bearing with it an ideal standard by which the conduct of human judges, kings, fathers and husbands is to be assessed. Because 'the father of the fatherless, the widow's champion is God in his holy dwelling-place' (Ps 68.5), God's human counterpart must 'give the orphan his rights, plead the widow's cause' (Isa 1.17). The human king must be endowed with the insight of God (Isa.11.3; cf. 1 Sam. 16.7). Husbands must love their wives as Christ loved the church (Eph.5.25).  

Subsequent theorists such as Kittay and Lehrer have built on Black's interaction approach with their claim that 'in metaphor two otherwise unrelated conceptual domains are brought into contact in a manner specifiable through the use of the linguistic notion of a semantic field'. Semantic field theory would seem particularly relevant for translation of key Biblical metaphors. Black's principal subject becomes the recipient field while the semantic field of the subsidiary subject is designated the donor field.

Two recent important Biblical studies have utilized the insights of Kittay and Lehrer. In God is King: Understanding an Israelite Metaphor, Marc Brettler examines what he claims to be the predominant relational metaphor used of God in the Bible together with its 'associated submetaphors'. Nelly Stienstra's study (1993) YHWH is the Husband of His People looks at the whole metaphorical system or network implied by this concept whose entailments are seen to pervade the Biblical writings at least from the time of the pre-exilic prophets and not just the obvious passages in Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

The significant implication of these two studies, particularly that of Stienstra, is to underline the need for translation theorists to look beyond individual specimens of metaphor (weighing up the cultural obstacles to successful literal translation) and to recognize the significant number of systemic metaphors which structure the basic notion of the relationship of YHWH and His people in the OT particularly.

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24 In this brief reference I am sidestepping the debate between semantic theories of metaphors and pragmatic theories that see metaphors as function of speaker meaning. Metaphors have meaning and therefore require a semantic account, but this must be supplemented by pragmatic considerations. After all, all language is understood contextually.
26 N. Stienstra, YHWH is the Husband of His People (Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1993).
A recognition and faithful translation of these pervasive metaphorical networks, Sienstra claims, helps reconcile the need for historical accuracy and for present day intelligibility. However, the Bible cannot be brought to the reader. Rather the historical embedding of the text evidenced in, among other things, the pervasive metaphorical networks, means that the reader must be prepared to come to the Bible.

E. CONCLUSION

A salutary article on trends in Bible translation appeared in 1986 in the International Review of Mission. It was written by Paul D. Fueter who recently retired from the post of UBS consultant for Europe:

Our way of transposing the original text into the language and culture of today consists mainly in making its meaning explicit by introducing some analytical language into the message we want to transmit. But our technique may mar the Bible's analogical language and make it less therapeutic. Once we recognize that our explanations appeal to the left part of our reader's brains, while the evangelists wanted their audiences "to change" rather than "to know", we have to ask ourselves whether our transpositions are dynamic and equivalent enough. It seems that the best formal equivalent translations, which are so difficult to understand immediately, have often retained the analogical language of the original. I believe that we should revise the Good News Bibles to make them more dynamic and more equivalent, to give them a better chance to let the language of change speak.27

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