

On the Problems Underlying the Translation of Mystical Texts: The Case of Ruzbehan Baghli Shirazi

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Received: 14 October 2016

Accepted: 7 February 2017

Extended Abstract

1. Introduction

In this paper, the problems underlying the translation of mystical texts will be discussed. More specifically, the book *'Abhar al- 'ashiqin* (Loyal Lovers' Jasmine) written by *Ruzbehan Baqli Shirazi* (1128-1209), an important mystique sufi poet and a famous Persian philosopher, and its translated version by *Henri Corbin* (1903-1978), a French philosopher, translator and orientalist, are selected as our sources of investigation. *Abhar al- 'ashiqin* (Loyal Lovers' Jasmine) is a poetic text that not only leads us to a better comprehension of Iranian soul and studies, in particular, sufism, but also offers a good source for examining problems concerning translation of mystical documents because this book has been translated in various languages including French.

1. In general, Mysticism is full of images. In order to explain them we need a large quantity of language features, including style figures, allegories, metaphors, comparison, images, or descriptions which make abstract meanings clearer to understand.
2. Mystical text is a type of imaginative text and the translator has to translate this imaginative text to another language, and that is exactly the difficult point.
3. A professional translator of mystical texts should be familiar with mystical texts' particularities, mystical terminology, the metaphors, the comparisons, the special conventions of mystical texts, different models of mystic imaginational world and surely a personality in harmony with these texts.

The main goal of this text is to analyze the problems a translator face while translating mystical texts or poems; the rhetoric, lexical, sociocultural, stylistic skills which are necessary in his work. So in this text as we read translation of Baqli's work, we will analyze the difficulties of this type of texts.

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2. Methodology

For better understanding the subject, first, we are going to give a description and a definition of mysticism and anything necessary for well understanding the mystical atmosphere.

Then we will present the author of the source book, *Ruzbehan Baqli Shirazi* and the translator *Henry Corbin*, This work is considered as a descriptive, comparative and analytic research. After that, we present the mystical texts' particularities and the translator's necessary skills, and then we will analyze the corpus.

3. Discussion

If we compare mystical texts' translations and other types of translations, we understand that the loss of words and definition and the complexity of this genre of text is more than all other types. This is because of the origins of mystical texts which come from a direct and immediate experience with endless spiritual principles. Sometimes the origins are from unusual experiences of ecstasy, levitations or visions. The most difficult problem that we faced during this research was finding proper equivalents for specialized words which exist in this field. Finding the explicit and implicit sense of words, phrases and metaphors is a time consuming activity for the translator and this difficulty can sometimes make the text untranslatable; no need to say the translator has used elongation in many parts for translating a word or a phrase.

4. Conclusion

After studying the translation of "Abhar-al-asheghin" we find that translating mystical texts is a very difficult work to do, which requires deep empathy of the translator with this type of text.

The translator of mystical texts should gain different skills like all other professional translators. These skills contain sufficient proficiency in cognitive language sources used by today specialists, specific conventions which exist in mystical texts as well as terminology to be able to adapt the translation with subjects mentioned by author. But there is no doubt that there are always obstacles such as translation loss, respecting the rhythm of the text, word prolongation, metaphors' translation, repetition and fidelity to the text that the translator faces. The point which has been studied in this article is the study of mystical texts especially rhythmic texts of "*Baqli Shirazi* 's textes" to see how translatable they are in another language like French. It seems that the mystique translation needs more cognitive try and a complete stock of vocabulary for both languages: The target language and the source language.

Keywords: problems of translation, the translation of the mystical texts, mystical literature, Ruzbehan Baqli Shirazi, Abhar-al-asheghin.

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