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DOI: [https://doi.org/10.38140/
jtsa.2.5141](https://doi.org/10.38140/jtsa.2.5141).

*Journal for Translation
Studies in Africa*

2021 (2): 1-27

PUBLISHED:

13 August 2021

TRANSLATION STUDIES AND BIBLE TRANSLATION. INTERVIEW ON BT LIST LIVE

ABSTRACT

A live webinar on translation studies and its implications for Bible translation was held on 20 August 2020. The goal was to answer the question: What insights can Bible translation practitioners glean from the field of translation studies? It is argued that the contribution of translation studies to Bible translation cannot be ignored; instead, translation studies is indispensable for Bible translation, especially in the planning, the establishment and the execution of a Bible translation project. After the introduction, the webinar focused on the nature of translation studies followed by the dissemination of translation knowledge for Bible translation. The conclusion listed the shifts that need to take place in Bible translation on the basis of its engagement with translation studies.

1. INTRODUCTION

Drew Maust: Help us understand, or interpret, through the lens of translation studies what is happening in the news report “Tanzanian Guide Arrested for ‘Fake Translation’ of Tourist’s Remark.” BBC News, February 10, 2017. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-38930058>

Jacobus Naudé: The tools of translation studies will be of great help to understand and to interpret what is happening in this BBC News report. A full analysis would require a whole paper or article and so it is beyond the limits of an interview. However, I am going to try to sketch the broad lines of a possible analysis of this video. Note that the news report is about an act of consecutive interpreting (the technical term used for “oral translation”), which according to some falls within the discipline of interpreting studies and is studied theoretically together with translation studies as translation and interpreting studies (see for example Gile 2009; Pöchhacker & Schlesinger 2001). This specific incident is related to news translation. The report is based on the video of an interpreting act – a tour guide in Tanzania purported to interpret a tourist’s English remarks into Swahili. Although the interpreting act resembles the original in length and format, the actual content bears little resemblance to the original. But it is important to note that the intended audience of the interpreting is not clear. However, to describe this act of interpreting puts us within



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descriptive translation studies (Toury 2012 [1995]) and specifically the model of José Lambert and Hendrik van Gorp (2006 [1985]). In their article entitled “On describing translations”, they propose a scheme for the comparison of the source text and target text literary systems and for the description of relations within them. The result of such an analysis leads us to Itamar Even-Zohar’s polysystem theory (2012 [1978]) which sees translated literature as part of the cultural, literary and historical system of the target language. In terms of our translational knowledge, “fake translation” is related to the genre of pseudotranslation (fictitious translation), which is the term used to refer to “texts which have been presented as translations with no corresponding source texts in other languages ever having existed – hence no factual ‘transfer operations’ and translation relationships” are present (Toury 2012, 47-59, see also Apter 2005, O’Sullivan 2011, Naudé 2019a). Pseudotranslation may function as a way of importing texts not otherwise acceptable as original writing into a literary system (Toury 1984, 83). One can further then utilise Baker’s narrative frame analysis (2006) to describe the various frames of the interpretive act, namely the translational frame, sociocultural frame, sociopolitical frame, and sociohistorical frame. The functionalist approach can then be used to determine the intention of this consecutive interpreting act.

I am an outsider to the Tanzanian context and much more information needs to be gathered to make a definite analysis, but as a first draft it seems to me that the guide utilised a pseudotranslation in Swahili (with words and phrases similar to those used by the Tanzanian president) (in a widely circulated video clip). The tour guide is then either conveying the message “the tourist supports the president” (if the guide is a supporter of the president) or the message “our president speaks like a tourist” (if the guide wants to criticise the president). The tour guide was accused by the government of casting the tourism ministry in a “bad light” and secondly as protesting against the strict fines for spreading so-called “fake” news. The police were investigating whether he had circulated the video on social media in violation of cybercrime legislation. But is the message of his pseudotranslation really bad? It is similar to the message of the president and the translation is not intended for the tourist, but for Swahili speakers – the tourist therefore could not be misled and there was no real damage. In a fair court case, the evidence of a translation studies scholar can be used and on the grounds of the genre of “pseudotranslation” the tour guide would go free. Again I have to stress – I am an outsider to the Tanzanian context and much more information needs to be gathered to make a definite analysis.

In the history of translation studies the strategy of pseudotranslation was also used to promote Bible translation. Until the end of the nineteenth century Afrikaans was not regarded as a cultural language. The church imposed a ban on the use of the Afrikaans language for sermons and Bible translation. Furthermore, the British and Foreign Bible Society refused to allow the Bible to be translated into Afrikaans. Afrikaans was merely a colloquial language. To change from a colloquial to a cultural language requires radical social and linguistic processes. For Afrikaans, this change to a cultural language was facilitated by the first Afrikaans novel *Di Koningin fan Skeba* (The Queen of Sheba) (1898), written by SJ du Toit precisely for the purpose of demonstrating that Afrikaans could be used to convey all of the concepts and ideas of the Bible (Naudé 2008a; Naudé & Miller-Naudé 2019a). The novel concerns the fictive translation (in the sense of translation as product) of a so-called parchment scroll in Classical Hebrew purporting to have been written by Elihoref, Solomon’s scribe and consort of the queen of Sheba. The novel also concerns fictive translation of the three so-called parchment scrolls discovered beneath Mount Afoer in what was then Rhodesia. In the novel,

Du Toit himself as a character in his novel translated the scrolls, which consist mainly of sixteen pseudotranslations. They are in a poetic and biblical style. They tell of paradise on the African plateau, the flood, the diaspora of the nations and finally the establishment of the empire of Sheba. Hatasu, the Queen of Egypt, sends the first fleet of ships to the Land of Gold, anticipating Solomon's enterprise by seven centuries. On account of Du Toit's pseudotranslations, Afrikaans was able to play a role similar to that of the dominant languages, English and Dutch, and thereby achieve an identity as a cultural language. The narrative in the novel is spatially and chronologically remote from the South Africa of Du Toit, but by utilising foreign and ancient cultures in the novel Du Toit proves that it is possible to write in Afrikaans about any topic, no matter how far removed from the common colloquial language. The biblical connection to the pseudotranslation in the novel is momentous. This affords Du Toit the opportunity to involve the world of the Bible without infringing on the church-imposed ban on the use of the Afrikaans language for sermons and Bible translation and the refusal by the British and Foreign Bible Society to translate the Bible into Afrikaans. Pseudotranslation thus helped to extend the expressive capacities of a minority "target" language. The reaction of Afrikaans readers was that the narrative is misleading because the so-called discovered scrolls do not really exist. However, the influence of the narrative and its role in promoting Afrikaans was considerable, but its role as a pseudotranslation can only be understood through translation studies.

By making use of the readers' expectations, pseudotranslations tell us, inevitably, much more about the patterns of the receiving culture than about the patterns (faked, imitated or pastiched) of the putative source culture (O'Sullivan 2011). The implication is that the identity of a target text as a translation is determined first and foremost by considerations pertinent to the receptor system, with no necessary connection with the source text (Touy 1984, 81).

2. TRANSLATION STUDIES IN GENERAL

2.1 Nature of Translation

Drew Maust: First, I've got to know: is translation possible?

Jacobus Naudé: Translatability is determined by the nature of alterity – or "otherness" – as a prominent feature of the source text or source culture (Makutoane, Miller-Naudé & Naudé 2015, 156-174; Naudé & Miller-Naudé 2018, 299-313; Miller-Naudé & Naudé 2019, 290-294).

Alterity as a concept within translation studies has been explored in an insightful way by Kate Sturge (2007, 24-33) who describes alterity as the assertion of *distance* of culture, and familiarity, its opposite, as the assertion of *proximity* of culture. Translation, then, involves what she refers to as the "dilemma of distance" (see also Hermans 2006), the problem in bridging the gap between alterity and familiarity.

One fundamental debate involves the question of how great the gap between alterity and familiarity is – some anthropologists argue that the dilemma of difference is deep and ultimately unbridgeable – translation cannot occur, whereas other anthropologists as well as linguists such as Noam Chomsky argue that the dilemma of difference is shallow and bridgeable and translation is possible (Robinson 1997a, 79–131). In this regard, Eugene Nida follows Chomsky in arguing for the translatability of all texts; Sturge, by contrast, argues that ultimately it is impossible to translate culture in such a way as to preserve the integrity of alterity and simultaneously to assert proximity.

Drew Maust: Apter 2006's "Twenty Theses on Translation" starts with "Nothing is translatable" and ends with "Everything is translatable" and has things like "Translation is the language of planets and monsters" in between. What's going on here?

Jacobus Naudé: What we have here is the application of translation studies within the field of literary translation. Emily Apter is Professor of French and Comparative Literature at New York University. In her book, *The Translation Zone: A New Comparative Literature*, she argues for a new basis for the study of comparative literature as an academic discipline. Note that the book is within comparative literature and not within translation studies proper. To achieve this goal, she utilises the field of translation studies, which became a key factor in the post – 9/11 American world. During 2006 when the book was written, the world was at once more monolingual and more multilingual (Naudé, Miller-Naudé & Makutoane 2017, 154-209). To compare world literature you need translated literature into the working language of the comparative literature scholar. Rather than a narrow view of translation confined to linguistic fidelity to an original or accuracy, you need an expanded view of translation as the basis for a new comparative literature. The term "translation zone" refers to an area of intense interaction across languages. Her book is organised around a series of propositions that range from the idea that "nothing is translatable" which means that the original or source text is always and inevitably lost in translation to "everything is translatable". Translation studies increasingly explores the possibility that everything is translatable; every evolved language can be considered a translation of all the others.

As a point of criticism, she is not aware that most of the issues that she discusses have already been handled within the academic discipline of translation studies, which developed over the past forty years. A better reference book for literary translation is *The Routledge Handbook of Literary Translation* edited by Kelly Washbourne and Ben Van Wyke, published in 2019. It handles the limits and forms of literary translation, namely the academic contexts of teaching, learning and research; the commercial contexts of publishing, protecting and promoting; genres, such as poetry, prose, oral literature, fiction and non-fiction, comics, music, theatre and sacred texts; the methods, frameworks and methodologies (tools, techniques and processes); applications and debates in production and reception.

Note that judicial (law), technical, medical, and financial translation are other applications of translation studies.

Related to literary translation is the application of translation studies to religion (Naudé 2011a, 2018, 2020, forthcoming; Naudé & Miller-Naudé 2019b). For the majority of religious communities, contact with sacred texts is entirely through translation which they require for participation, while their adherence to that religious tradition is itself often the result of translation (for the role of agency see Milton & Bandia 2009). Knowledge in the discipline of religious studies is facilitated by translation since most religious texts are read in translation by scholars. Michael DeJonge and Christiane Tietz (2016) argued that religious translation is a critical category in religious studies for understanding the historical diffusion of religion, for interreligious dialogue and for the comparative study of religion. Most texts that perpetuate religion as an object of study are translations. (The same message is conveyed in "Translation and religion. Holy untranslatable?" edited by Lynne Long [2005]).

2.2 Nature of Translation Studies

Drew Maust: What is translation studies?

Jacobus Naudé: Translation studies is the now established academic discipline related to the study of the theory, practice and phenomena of translation, including its history. It is concerned with the complex of problems clustered around the phenomenon of translating and translations. Translation studies is associated with its own technical language or metalanguage. There is a range of theoretical approaches relevant for those in the academic study of translation as well as for professional language practitioners, including Bible translators. The practice of translating is long established, but the discipline of translation studies is relatively new.

In 1972, James Holmes provided the first framework for the discipline, dividing it into two principal areas: pure science and applied science. The pure science comprises two sub-disciplines, namely, the theoretical science of translation (translation theory) in which principles are developed for the description and explanation of the phenomenon of translation, and the descriptive science of translation in which translation is described from the perspective of the product, process, or function. Under the theoretical branch, Holmes distinguishes between general translation theory and partial theories. The latter includes divisions like medium restricted (e.g., written vs. oral interpretation), and text-type restricted (e.g., literary translation or Bible translation). The applied branch of Holmes's framework concerns applications to the practice of translation: translator training, translation aids and translation criticism.

In 2007 Luc van Doorslaer developed a "map" for the Benjamins *Translation Studies Bibliography*. He draws a distinction between "translation" and "translation studies". Translation involves lingual mode (interlingual, intralingual), media (printed, audiovisual, electronic), mode (covert/overt; direct/indirect, etc.), field (religious, literary, journalistic, scientific, etc.). Translation studies contains approaches (e.g. linguistic), theories (e.g. polysystem theory), research methods (e.g. descriptive, empirical), applied translation studies (e.g. criticism, didactics). Van Doorslaer also includes a basic transfer map consisting of translation strategies (the overall orientation of translated texts) and translation procedures (specific techniques used at a given point in a text).

Drew Maust: Is translation studies a single subdiscipline of applied linguistics? For example, Neubert and Shreve (1992, 9) state "The evolution of translation studies has been marked by several recognisable trends....One development is the shrinking role of linguistics as the intellectual basis for translation studies."

Jacobus Naudé: I differ with the statement of Neubert and Shreve – in the emergence of translation studies the tendency is broadening and enlarging (to include the wide spectrum of linguistics and culture) and not shrinking (see Tymoczko 2007). Translation studies is not any more a single subdiscipline of applied linguistics, but is enlarging: from the study of words to text to sociocultural context to the working practices of the translators themselves.

From the 1980s onwards, scholars of translation studies made use of frameworks and methodologies borrowed from other disciplines such as psychology, communication theory, literary theory, anthropology, philosophy, and more recently cultural studies (Bassnett & Lefevere 1990). During this time translation studies was justifiably regarded as a multidisciplinary science or a multidiscipline, referring to the use of multiple disciplines (Snell-Hornby, Pöchhacker & Kaindl 1994).

Around the 2000s the distinctive methodologies and theoretical frameworks derived from other disciplines were adapted and re-evaluated in order to serve the needs of translation studies as an integral and autonomous discipline.

Translation studies is definitely an autonomous discipline, because it demonstrates the 6 criteria which Krishnan (2009, 9) argued are necessary for an academic discipline: 1) “a particular object of research, 2) ... a body of accumulated specialist knowledge 3) ... theories and concepts that can organise the accumulated specialist knowledge effectively; 4) ... specific terminologies or a specific technical language; 5) ... specific research methods and, finally, 6), disciplines must have some institutional manifestation in the form of subjects taught at universities or colleges, or academic departments.”

Translation studies has expanded in huge ways and is still expanding. Evidence for this expansion can be gauged by the nineteen panels (including one panel on the history, theory and practice of Bible translation) at the **fifth IATIS** [International Association of Translation and Intercultural Studies] conference held in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, in July 2015. At the **EST** [European Association of Translation Studies] meeting in Stellenbosch during September 2019 there were fifteen panels including one on Bible translation: Translation as empowerment: new Bible (re)translations. There is also an **Association for Translation Studies in Africa** with its first official conference in May 2018. The second conference was supposed to be in Ghana in June 2020, but is postponed until 2021.

Translation studies is now often considered an interdiscipline (that is, research that takes place *between* academic disciplines), for example by Juliane House (2014) and Jeremy Munday (2016, 24-27). Interdisciplinarity adds to the spread of paradigms and may weaken the status of translation studies as an autonomous discipline in the future.

I prefer to describe translation studies as *transdisciplinary*, which refers to research which draws upon multiple disciplines in a holistic way. Within complexity theory, scholars can use whatever disciplines are required for the study of the text, each discipline that is appropriated maintains its own identity, integrity, its theoretical basis and its methodological features, thus promoting transdisciplinarity while preserving disciplinarity.

2.2 Introductory texts to Translation Studies for Bible translation practitioners

Drew Maust: What would you consider the best introductory texts to translation studies for Bible translators/practitioners?

Jacobus Naudé: I mention only a few sources, which are prescribed for our students in Bible translation. A basic reference is the *Handbook of Translation Studies*, Volume 1 – 4 edited by Yves Gambier and Luc van Doorslaer (2010-2013). Articles are updated electronically, some exist also in translation. Volume 5 is in preparation and will probably be published in 2021. Jeremy Munday (2016) introduces the theories and applications of translation studies in the form of a textbook with a companion website. For the functionalist approach with its influence on Bible translation, the second edition of the volume by Christiane Nord (2018) may be helpful. The third edition of Mona Baker (2018)'s course book on translation has a companion website with a step-by-step explanation for linguistic (from the lexical to the pragmatic levels) and social semiotic analysis in translation studies. Then there is the newly found open source journal (since 2020) which is specifically relevant for translation studies in Africa: *Journal for Translation Studies in Africa* <https://journals.ufs.ac.za/index.php/jtsa>

Of particular importance for the dissemination of translation studies to serve Bible translation, the *Guide to Bible Translation* edited by Noss and Hauser (2019) as well as the articles of Naudé (2000, 2002, 2008b, 2011b, 2019b) and Naudé and Miller-Naudé (2019c, 2019d) may be helpful. There are two open access edited volumes dedicated to Bible translation from a translation studies perspective namely *Acta Theologica Supplementum 2* (2002) and 12 (2009) <https://journals.ufs.ac.za/index.php/at>

The *Biblical Performance Criticism Series* edited by David Rhoads and Kelly R. Iverson with more than eighteen volumes on oral features of the ancient societies represented in the Old Testament and the New Testament, reframe work on the biblical text from the perspective of modern print cultures to that of oral/scribal cultures.

2.3 Concept of translation of the ancients

Drew Maust: In what ways might contemporary assumptions and expectations of translation differ from those of the ancients?

Jacobus Naudé: My view is that contemporary assumptions and expectations of translation are similar to those of the ancients. Translation, either as process or product, is emerging. Our attention must be focused on the ways in which ancient and contemporary assumptions and expectations interrelate in the process of emergent translation. It might be more fruitful to consider translation as a complex phenomenon rather than considering it in terms of successive “turns” (i.e. paradigm shifts) over a period of time (Marais 2019a).

From Greek antiquity to the 1960s, translation was a tool of philology, where early terms used to describe translation are vague; translators presented a justification for their approach in a preface to the translation; translators paid little attention to what others before them had written; there is a sterile debate since Cicero in Classical antiquity concerning whether translations should be literal (word-for-word) (= faithful) or free (sense-for-sense) (=clarity, logic and elegant).

After 1800 philology began to fragment/subdivide into independent modern disciplines because of specific specialisations (see Naudé & Miller-Naudé 2020). In the 1960s translation studies became an “academic discipline” as one of the latest offshoots of philology, which implies that learning is organised and that new knowledge is systematically produced within translation studies (Krishnan 2009, 9).

In the study of a discipline it is impossible for human beings to focus their attention on everything around them. This attentional constraint means that it makes good sense to study things one aspect at a time. However, it might also be worthwhile, now that we have some information about the various aspects of translation, to focus our attention on the ways in which they interrelate.

In translation studies, the various “turns” in the field have told us that linguistics, pragmatics, culture, society, ideology power, a brain, a human personality and meaning, to name but a few, are involved in the emergence of a translational system or complex (Snell-Hornby 2006). Complexity Theory provides a way to look at these various aspects of translation in a holistic rather than in a reductionist way (Marais 2014, 2019b).

Drew Maust: Who from antiquity would you most like to sit down with for a meal/chat/coffee?

Jacobus Naudé: Persons of name from antiquity have written records, which are well-studied. If I had the choice to sit down for a meal/chat/coffee, I would rather do it with an initiator and translation team of a successful Bible translation project within an oral tradition. Such a successful project is within the third language into which the complete Bible was translated in Southern Africa, namely Sesotho. I repeat this history from a previous account (Naudé 2020, 19-20): Moshoeshoe, the leader of the Southern Sotho-speaking people in the early 1800s opened up his country, Basutoland, currently known as Lesotho, to Bible translation work in 1833/1834 (Casalis 1997; Ellenberger 1992; Makutoane & Naudé 2009, 81). Moshoeshoe also acknowledged the importance of acquiring the skills from the farmers, settlers, hunters, and adventurers, who increasingly moved across his borders from the south. He therefore welcomed the missionaries from the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society (Société des Missions Évangéliques) when they arrived at Thaba Bosiu in 1833 as a source of information about the rest of the world (Makutoane & Naudé 2009, 81; see also Harries 2007). He placed them in strategically important parts of the kingdom, where they gave the Sotho their first experience with Christianity, literacy, and commodity production for long-distance trading (Latourette 1978, 363-364; Makutoane & Naudé 2009, 81). For commodity production on farms and for trading, a kind of pidgin language developed to achieve communication between Dutch/Afrikaans-speaking farmers and the speakers of Sesotho. When translating the Bible into Sesotho, this was the terminology the translators of the first Sesotho Bible translation used for foreign concepts that were unknown in Sesotho (Makutoane & Naudé 2009, 888-91). By 1878 the complete Bible was translated by missionaries of the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society. It was published in 1881 in one volume and is still widely in use (Smit 1970, 210-212). In contrast to the unidirectional character of much missionary translation, there was the unique reciprocal character of the Paris Missionary Society's translation effort: the Bible was translated into Sesotho, while Sesotho praise poems were translated into French, which presupposed an uncommon positive attitude towards African oral poetry during the colonial times of the mid-nineteenth century. It would be an honour to have this Sesotho Bible translation team including Emile Rolland, T Arbousset, DF Ellenberger, J Maitin, HM Dyke, A Mabile, L Cochet and L Duvoisin for a meal/chat/coffee – successful Bible translations are team work and not the work of an individual.

3. TRANSLATION STUDIES AND BIBLE TRANSLATION

3.1 The ways Bible Translation contributed to Translation Studies

Drew Maust: How are early pioneers of contemporary Bible translation viewed within the broader translation studies community?

Jacobus Naudé: The only early pioneer of contemporary Bible translation recognised within the broader translation studies community as having made an important contribution to the historical development of translation studies is Eugene A. Nida. He attempted to move Bible translation into a scientific era by incorporating Noam Chomsky (1957, 1965)'s generative-transformational grammar into translation in order to develop dynamic equivalence. The shift was away from the "literal versus free" debate, which was stagnant for centuries, and towards the emphasis in translation theory to the receiver of the message, where this relationship should be the same as between the original receivers and the message. These ideas have exerted huge influence over subsequent theoreticians, for example on Peter Newmark (1988). Eugene Nida's contribution forms part of translation knowledge and has been discussed in a large range of publications on translation studies in the following decades. For example,

Nida (1964) is present in the *Translation Studies Reader* of Venuti (2012, 141-151) and in the introduction to translation studies by Munday (2016, 62-71).

Ernst-August Gutt (2000 [1991]) is the only other exponent of contemporary Bible translation who has some recognition within translation studies (see Munday 2016, 101-102). Gutt (1991) is published in Venuti (2000), but is left out of the later editions of Venuti (2004, 2012).

Note that the relationship between translators of the Bible and translation in general was quite different during the period when translation was a tool of philology. At that time, the ancient translations of the Bible and other religious and philosophical texts were central to translation knowledge in the west – especially the writings of the translators dealing specifically with their translation strategies. For example, the writing of Aristeas, the writings of Jerome (Eusebius Hieronymus), Augustine (Aurelius Augustinus), Desiderius Erasmus, Martin Luther, William Tyndale, Etienne Dolet, etc. (Robinson 1997b).

Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834), recognised as a founder of modern Protestant theology and modern hermeneutics, delivered his seminal lecture (“On the different methods of translating”) in 1813 (Venuti 2012, 43-63). Schleiermacher distinguishes two different types of translators working on two different types of text (Munday 2016, 47). These are: the Dolmetscher who translates commercial texts; and the Übersetzer, who works on scholarly and artistic texts. In the last instance, Schleiermacher moves beyond the strict issues of word-for-word and sense-for-sense and considers there to be only two paths open for the true translator: Move the reader towards the writer or moves the writer towards the reader. He prefers the first option: the translator must adopt an alienating, foreignising method of translation to import foreign concepts and culture into the language of the reader. Schleiermacher influenced specifically Katharina Reiss’s text typology of the functionalist approach; alienating is taken up by Lawrence Venuti as foreignisation; the vision of language as translation is pursued by Walter Benjamin; and, the description of the hermeneutics of translation is prominent in George Steiner’s “hermeneutic motion” (Munday 2016, 49).

It is unfortunate that contemporary Bible translators are not contributing in the same way that Nida (and his predecessors as described above) did to the development, refinement and expansion of the theory of translation studies.

3.2 Implications of translation studies for Bible translation as in Naudé (2002)

Drew Maust: In Naudé (2002) you made the claim that Bible translation is normal translation. In the past (and still sometimes today), the Bible and New Testament Greek in particular are considered “special Holy Spirit language” or “Holy Greek” (see for example, Marcos 2000, 3). So I have to ask, can Bible translation be studied like any other translation (a contemporary novel, for example), or is Bible translation *sui generis*, unique?

Jacobus Naudé: The translation of the Bible is a normal translation in that it requires profound factual knowledge (similar to medical, financial, technical translation) in addition to cultural and linguistic knowledge (similar to literary translation). In this sense Bible translation is a translational activity not substantially different from the translation of other texts belonging to a culture that is removed from the target readers in time and space. It also implies that Bible translators should have the command over translation competence and also they have to be actually trained in the field (similar to, for example, medical, financial, literary translators). New developments in translation studies must not only be taken seriously and implemented in the

practice of Bible translation, but the best translation approach available should be utilised by Bible translators.

It is therefore strange that the Bible translation committee of the NIV, which is typified by Barker (1999, 21) as a balanced committee does not include trained translators in its ranks. Translators were chosen on the basis of their recognised expertise in the books they worked on (hermeneutics, exegetes, and theologians) and their personal religious confession. The other group of the committee consists of English stylists and critics. A huge step forward in Bible translation is *Das neue Testament*, translated by the late Klaus Berger, who was a New Testament scholar at Heidelberg University, and Christiane Nord, who is extraordinary professor at the University of the Free State and previously professor in translation studies at Magdeburg. They worked on the basis of split competence. The source-culture expert (Berger) produced a draft translation in the light of more than twenty five years of scholarly research in the fields of Judaism and Christianity. The translation expert (Nord) considered herself as a prototypical representative of the intended audience and tried to understand and re-formulate incoherencies of the draft translation into receiver-oriented German. They discovered that it was the lack of cultural knowledge which caused discrepancies between their approaches. In these cases explanations were fitted into the translation as smoothly as possible (Nord 2002, 98-116).

No new attempt at Bible translation can afford to ignore the role of translation studies as a discipline. Since translators rarely manage to achieve a sufficient depth of knowledge in the complex field of Judaism and Christianity and theologians rarely combine their factual knowledge with good translation competence, teamwork may be eminently advisable in the translation of the Bible. The emergence of translation studies as a discipline needs to be acknowledged by Bible translation committees.

Mary Snell-Hornby (1988, revised 1995), the Vienna-based scholar, teacher and translator, developed an integrated approach to translation based on text types on six levels. On her Level A she integrates literary, general language and special language translation into a single continuum, rather than isolating them according to separate areas of translation. On her level B she indicates the prototypical basic types, so for example, for literary translation there is the Bible, stage/film, lyric poetry, etc. Level C shows the non-linguistic disciplines – the special subject studies for specialised translation. Level D covers the translation process. Level E covers areas of linguistics relevant to translation. Level F covers aspects such as alliteration, rhythm, etc.

Accordingly, Bible translation is normal translation just like other specialised kinds of translation, but it is unique in its subject.

3.3 Importance of Translation Studies for Bible translation

Drew Maust: Give us your best pitch for why Bible translation practitioners should care about translation studies.

Jacobus Naudé: A Bible translation practitioner without knowledge of translation studies is similar to a ghost without a sheet or a corn cob without kernels – useless or at least not very effective. Such a Bible translation practitioner is unable to be optimal in the work he or she is doing. It is similar to someone treating a person with a sudden heart attack in an emergency. Some people know the basic emergency procedures and can save a life, but the person is not able to offer the optimal assistance that a cardiologist can offer.

Translation studies thus becomes part of the broader discourse on translation that is labelled “translation knowledge”. D’hulst and Gambier (2018) concentrate on 7 processes that make up the history of modern translation knowledge, namely generating, mapping, internationalising, historicising, analysing, disseminating and applying knowledge. To function optimally Bible translators need this knowledge provided by translation studies.

But the other side of the coin is also true – translation studies needs Bible translators. In their work in translating the Bible into a multitude of languages, Bible translators encounter a plethora of fascinating situations. These need to be studied and incorporated into the discussion of translation studies as a discipline.

3.4 The source text

Drew Maust: Some speak of “dethroning the source text.” This might make some Bible translation practitioners uncomfortable, leading us to ask, like Tertullian, “What has Athens to do with Jerusalem?” He wrote in *The Prescription Against Heretics* “What indeed has Athens to do with Jerusalem? What concord is there between the Academy and the Church and between heretics and Christians? Our instruction comes from ‘the porch of Solomon,’ who had himself taught that ‘the Lord should be sought in simplicity of heart’”.

Jacobus Naudé: The phrase “dethroning the source text” was used in 2014 in an article by Edwin Joseph Mohatlane in the *Journal of Social Sciences* entitled “‘Dethroning’ The Source Text: A ‘Skopos’ Theoretical Perspective in Sesotho Translation.” Edwin was the head of the Department of African Languages at our university.

At first sight, to speak of “dethroning the source text” may be misinterpreted. His paper challenges the traditional view that the source text serves as the norm against which the target text is modelled. Note that the source text is still vitally important. What has changed, however, is the older view that the target text can mirror the source text so that it is absolutely equivalent. This is ultimately impossible. Instead, the translator must choose aspects of the source text to represent in various ways using various strategies in the target text according to the skopos (communicative function) of the translation (see Van Rooyen & Naudé 2009, 251-275).

Let us focus on the notion of skopos theory with respect to the source text. What skopos theory means is that there is no single way to represent the source text in the target text. Instead, the translator must represent the source text in the way agreed upon in the translation brief so that there are satisfied clients that is individuals in the language community who read and use the translation (Nord 2010, 120-128). In skopos theory, the translator is an agent who insures that the source text is functionally rendered in the target text in a way that is loyal to the source text (the original authors) and loyal to the purpose of the text (the initiators) so that there are satisfied clients/readers of the text (target receivers) (Nord 2016, 566-580; 2018, 113-117). The skopos may be to produce a “source-oriented translation” in which as many features of the source text as possible are conveyed in the target text. The skopos may be to produce a dynamic equivalent translation in which many of the features of the source text are domesticated to the target language and culture. The skopos may be to provide a translation for the deaf, or for a Muslim majority context, or many other purposes. In each case, the source text is critically important – what differs are the strategies that are employed so that the target translation serves the purpose for which it was commissioned with the result that the readers of the translation are satisfied with it.

Because of the importance of the source texts for Bible translation, our MA Bible Translation at the University of the Free State requires prospective students to have two years of Hebrew or Greek before beginning so that they can work from the source texts. We also have worked in the department to make the study of Hebrew available by Zoom so that Bible translators world-wide can study Hebrew and have firsthand access to the source texts.

The question of the source text can be viewed from other angles as well. With respect to the Old Testament, the question of the source text ultimately must consider the textual history of the Hebrew Bible. In the end an absolute source text is an unattainable ideal. What we currently have is a text edition of the Hebrew Bible (*Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*) that is primarily based on one manuscript, Codex Leningradensis. *The Biblica Hebraica Quinta*, the next generation of the critical edition of the Hebrew Bible, is now in progress. There is also an effort to produce a purely eclectic text, for example, by Michael Fox on Proverbs in which the Hebrew text is one that he has retroverted from a consideration of all of the available sources and which he thinks represents the earliest version of the text – this is highly speculative and would not be an appropriate version to use for a Bible translation.

The same problems exist in determining the source text for the New Testament. A new approach in which the text and critical apparatus are verified against the manuscripts themselves culminated in 1963 with the 25th edition, known as the Nestle-Aland Greek New Testament. Nestle-Aland reached its 28th edition in 2012. The other standard critical edition of the Greek New Testament is the one prepared by the United Bible Societies 5th edition published in 2014. The United Bible Societies editions of the Greek New Testament provide a rating of each disputed reading in four categories ranging from the editor's virtual certainty about the text to an indication of a high degree of doubt. These two critical editions (Nestle-Aland and United Bible Societies) contain essentially the same Greek text, with only minor differences of format and punctuation.

Another issue relates to the fact that some Christian traditions accept a particular source text as canonical rather than another one. For example, the Textus Receptus ("Received Text") also known as the Majority or Byzantine text, which is based on manuscripts copied between 1000 and 1540, reflects an accumulation of centuries of copying errors (Hodges & Farstad 1982). The translator must be sensitive to all of these questions in considering the source text.

Concerning the source text a new view is provided by Marais (2019b, 123-125) within complexity and semiotic theory of translation: The emergence of the source text or incipient text. As part of the stream of semiosis, the incipient sign system entails many streams of meaning from a variety of sources and is thus not "a source" but rather a complex incipient system, hence the notion of "translation complex". The process of translation is never linear as a transfer from incipient system to subsequent system. Rather, the process is recursive and subsequent meanings of existing translations of the Bible may feed back into the interpretation of the incipient system (Marais 2019b, 122-137).

3.5 Bible translation as purposeful activity

Drew Maust: Under the heading "Bible translations for specific purposes," you wrote in 2002: "As it now stands, the functionalist approach (combined with results of corpus translation studies) is the most appropriate for translation." Do you still believe this?

Jacobus Naudé: The contribution of corpus translation studies was the discovering of so-called translation universals, namely that a translation represents a so-called third code – it is not similar to a source text and it is also not similar to a text written in the target language. Translation shows the following universals in the target text: simplification, explication, normalisation and “shining through” of the source language/text – these concepts are handy information to know.

As explained in the previous answer the contribution of the functionalist approach is that each translation has a specific purpose, the process of doing a translation from a formulated translation brief is still valid.

However, translation studies (and academia) have moved on since the 2000s when the article was written. Since 2008 there is a move to complexity thinking in linguistics and applied linguistics as well as in translation studies (see Marais 2014, 2019b, 11-46). The move is by breaking with the reductionist way of viewing translation from a single perspective or reductive lens. The implication is that the results/knowledge/information of corpus translation studies and functionalist approaches must be combined with other perspectives (see also Marais 2019a).

Drew Maust: Briefly summarise the functionalist approach for us.

Jacobus Naudé: The translation process according to functionalist model can be simplified as follows (Nord 2005, 2010, 2018): An initiator (= client) approaches a translator with a brief, which is analysed by the translator. The source text is analysed with the brief in mind. The translation is done with the brief and source text features in mind (some aspects of the source text are kept and others are disregarded). The translation of the target text may be similar or differ completely from the source text. The ideal result is a satisfied customer.

The initiator – who may be a client, the source text author, the target text reader – instigates the translation process by approaching a translator because he or she needs a certain function (or *skopos*) in the target culture (Nord 2005, 6). This *skopos* is contained in the translation brief, which is the set of translating instructions issued by the client when ordering the translation. Ideally, the client would give as many details as possible about the purpose, occasion, medium, etc. the text is intended to have. A translator begins by analysing the translation *skopos* as contained in the initiator’s brief. Then s/he finds the gist of the source text enabling him/her to determine whether the given translation task is feasible.

The next step involves a detailed analysis of the source text. It is necessary to “loop back” continually to the translation *skopos*, which acts as a guide to determine which source text elements can be preserved and which elements will have to be adapted. The target text should therefore fulfil its intended function in the target culture.

Any translation *skopos* may be formulated for a particular original and there are no limits on the translator’s licence to move away from the source text. Nord (2016) therefore modifies the conventional *skopos* theory by adding the concepts of loyalty and convention thereto in this way limiting the variety of possible functions or *skopos*. Loyalty towards both the author and the readers of the translation compels the translator to specify exactly what aspects of the original have been taken into account and what aspects have been adapted (Nord 2016). According to the functionalist approach of translation criticism, a translation is viewed as adequate if the translated text is appropriate for the communicative purpose defined in the translation brief, e.g. accessibility of the translated text.

Drew Maust: What is this in contrast to?

Jacobus Naudé: It is in contrast to equivalence as formulated by the linguistic-oriented approaches. The dominating concept was equivalence. Nida and Taber (1974, 12) view translation as reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source language first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style.

As already said in previous answers, in the past a translation was only acceptable in so far as it was seen as equivalent to the source text. A translation is judged to be good, bad or indifferent in terms of what constitutes equivalence to the source text which is the yardstick/criterion against which translators should judge their translations.

3.6 Binary oppositions

Drew Maust: It seems that talk about translation often tends toward binary oppositions. For example, in 2002, you wrote, “A distinction worth considering is the one between a translation that brings the text to the reader (i.e. target-oriented), and one that requires the reader to go to the world of the text (i.e. source-oriented). A source-oriented translation makes far greater demands on the reader, but is of enormous value to some of the readers” (Naudé 2002, 64).

Jacobus Naudé: The most familiar theoretical move of translation studies is a choice between translation cultivating pragmatic equivalence so that it is immediately intelligible to the receptor, i.e. sense-for-sense translation (dynamic equivalence (Nida 1964, Nida & Taber 1974), functional equivalence (De Waard & Nida 1986), communicative translation (Newmark 1988), covert translation (House 1981)) and translation that is formally equivalent, designed to approximate the linguistic and cultural features of the foreign text, i.e. word-for-word translation (formal equivalence (Nida 1964, Nida & Taber 1974), semantic translation (Newmark 1988), overt translation (House 1981)).

As already mentioned (in the answer in 3.1 above) Venuti (2008 [1995]) describes translations on the basis of Schleiermacher (1813) as either *domesticating* or *foreignising*. A domesticating translation attempts to present the target text as if it were an indigenous text within the receptor culture. A foreignising translation, by contrast, attempts to preserve elements from the source text in the target text, even when they are “foreign” within the target text. For Venuti, a source text from a minority culture should be translated into a majority culture using foreignisation, whereas a source text from a majority culture should be indigenised when translated into a minority culture. Similarly, Marais (2008) suggests that Western texts translated into non-Western cultures should rather be indigenised as a way of mitigating or subverting Western influence.

To handle the foreign/the other in religious translation, we (see Makutoane, Miller-Naudé & Naudé 2015; Naudé & Miller-Naudé 2018; Miller-Naudé & Naudé 2019) utilise the views of the philosopher Emmanuel Levinas (1906-1995) of alterity (Levinas 1999 [1995]; 2006 [1972]; see also Zimmerman 2013, 15-16, 49). His account of alterity is based on the irreducibility of the other human person and is an otherness that cannot be circumvented, but must be respected. Levinas argues that human life of the being or self takes place in the uncontrollable face of the Other and is determined by how the space between face and face is bridged, for example by a caress, a blow, a touch of consolation or compromise, etc. Levinas provides a way to interpret or translate Biblical texts with a fresh perspective. According to Levinas the narratives of religious texts can only be read authentically in the light of their own logic and coherent with their original contexts which implies the avoidance of contemporary

interferences when reading these texts (Zimmerman 2013, 35). In this way the hearer/reader meets a religious performance in the text in the same ethical significance as Levinas' invocation of the face-to-face (Ibid). The Levinasian turn towards the concrete face-to-face moment privileges the existence of the text to its interpretation, that is, the concrete form of the text over its interpretation. He emphasises a simple but close reading of religious texts that acknowledges an authentic meeting with alterity; a meeting with God through the proximity of the other person (Zimmerman 2013, 110). To construct an authentically ethical community, it is necessary to study and interpret the biblical texts in the form of continual liturgical activity which is a means by which alterity is broken open to the simple believer. In effect, Levinas is not arguing for foreignisation *or* for domestication of the text but rather for the face-to-face quality of the text. It is, then, the responsibility of the translator to *present* the face of the Other in as many facets as possible in order to *awaken* the face of the Other in the reader.

3.7 Equivalence

Drew Maust: What then is the best way to think (and talk) about translation?

Jacobus Naudé: In contemporary translation studies there is a move away from reductionistic viewpoints. Any new translation constructs a representation of the alterity (otherness) of a foreign text and culture, which simultaneously relates to intelligibility (see for example Alter 2019a, 2019b).

This view is a clear steering away from the modernist tendency to reduce the sole or main explanatory principle of the nature of translation in terms of a single dimension or modality of reality, that is, to define translation in terms of only one of matter. Such explanatory one-sidedness or reductionist practice characterises translation studies throughout its history. Though effective as an explanatory tool, it does not suffice to explain all translation phenomena. Viewing translation as changing and adapting to new uses, the complexity viewpoint also steers away from the modernist view of translation as static. At the same time, the complexity viewpoint sets itself apart from postmodernism, whose response is also a reductionist practice of reality by fragmenting it and denying wholeness by making it multiple, hybrid, and difficult to grasp. In contrast to modernist and postmodernist tendencies, complexity theory embraces complexity, interconnectedness, and dynamism, and makes translation central to theory and method (see Marais 2014, 2019b).

Drew Maust: Has “equivalence” become a dirty word?

Jacobus Naudé: I do not see “equivalence” as a dirty word. It is, however, critical to understand that equivalence is not absolute in a translation – a target text can be equivalent to the source text in certain respects but it can never be equivalent to the source text in every respect. One must therefore be careful to nuance equivalence with respect to Bible translation – in which respects does one want equivalence in accordance with the translation brief and skopos (Naudé 2019c).

3.8 Translation Quality Management

Drew Maust: Comment on your statement, “A descriptive instead of a normative analysis of Bible translations.”

Jacobus Naudé: Translation studies scholars now do not perform normative analyses of translations as “good” or “bad” but instead they perform descriptive analyses of translations to understand the use of translation strategies.

Mona Baker (2006) has helpfully described the descriptive process as being separated into narrative frames. One can, for example, describe a translation with respect to the organisation frame (how was the translation organised and what persons were involved), the translational frame (what was the skopos, what was the source text, translation strategies were used, etc.), the sociological frame (what is the sociological context within which and for which the translation was produced, etc.). All of these frames provide concrete ways to look at completed translations. However, in producing a translation, there can be “good” translation, that is ones with few errors, and “bad” translation, that is one with errors. This does not relate to how the source text might be represented in the target text but whether or not the source text IS represented in the target text.

Drew Maust: Coming into the Wycliffe and SIL BT world and training as a consultant I have been surprised at the extent to which we mostly assume that we already know what a “good” translation is: clear, exact, natural, acceptable. How do we know when we have a “good” translation? Is this even a question we should be asking?

Jacobus Naudé: The notion that a “good” translation is clear, exact, natural, and acceptable would also be true of any literary translation. However, this definition of a “good” translation does not remove the importance of describing the skopos (communicative function) of the translation in terms of the translation brief. What is acceptability? Is it what the clients of the translation (the readers) want in a translation? What is “natural”? What is “clear”? How should the information of the source text be conveyed “exactly”? All of these are choices that the translator must make in choosing translation strategies in accordance with the skopos following from the analysis of the translation brief.

Drew Maust: As a Bible translation consultant, I like to view my role as that of a sous-chef (rather than head chef), helping local language communities accomplish *their* goals for *their* projects. And so if I am honest, I often feel uncomfortable in my role: to think that I’m providing “quality control” for a meal that I won’t eat. Nevertheless, I recognise that stakeholders (local and global, including Bible translation organisations) are not just looking for me to describe the translations for which I provide consulting services.

What’s more, for some time I have been preoccupied with the question of quality in translation. I would like to know with the shift in translation studies from being prescriptive to being descriptive, what is the proper role of a translation consultant?

Jacobus Naudé: Your role is not just to describe the translation – descriptive translation studies relates to the analysis of finished translations and not to the process of the production of translations. Certainly as a translation consultant you are providing quality control of the representation of the source text within the target text. And you also are assisting the team in insuring that they are following the translation brief according to the skopos of the translation project. In the end, you want readers who will use the Bible translation enthusiastically and extensively.

3.9 Consultancy role in Bible translation

Drew Maust: You’re a consultant for a Dinka translation project in South Sudan. Talk to us about your philosophy of consulting.

Jacobus Naudé: It is true that translation studies has shifted from being prescriptive to being descriptive. However, being a translation consultant for a Bible translation project is

not precisely the same as being a translation studies scholar. A translation consultant will have many different roles, depending upon the precise situation. In some cases, a translation consultant will be a source language expert who assists the translation team with issues of quality control especially in instances where the team is, unfortunately, not working from the source texts of the Hebrew and Greek. In other cases, a translation consultant will be more like a translation studies scholar who will assist the team with working out the analysis of the translation brief for their translation project and to determine the skopos of the project in consultation with the churches, the language community and all of the relevant stakeholders.

In my mind, what is of primary importance is that a translation consultant is not the “big boss” who says what is right or what is wrong, but rather someone who comes alongside the team as a resource person to assist them, someone who deeply respects the knowledge that the team has of their language and their community, and who can work with them to solve the problems that are hindering their progress in the translation.

Drew Maust: What is your role? What are you doing as a consultant? (Do you tell people how to translate?)

Jacobus Naudé: I am working as a consultant only with the Dinka Cam project and not with the other Dinka translations in South Sudan. The Dinka Cam have recently completed their Old Testament and are revising their New Testament in order to update it with respect to spelling, language and key terms. The complete Bible will be published in the coming few years. While the Old Testament was in progress, my wife and I worked with the translation team in the checking of various Old Testament books. Because they translated without access to the Hebrew, they used the RSV, the Good News Bible, the NIV and various Arabic versions to draft their translation. Much of our time then was spent in discussing how they translated, especially with respect to the alterity of the Old Testament text and its rendering in Dinka. We are now working on checking the New Testament revision, especially with respect to Old Testament quotations in the New Testament and key terms.

Drew Maust: Is there any analogue for translation consultant in sacred Scripture tradition?

Jacobus Naudé: In the translation traditions of other religious traditions, I do not know of any analogue to a translation consultant as the term is used in the Bible translation movement. In the first place, this is because in the other religious traditions, translators always knew the source languages of the sacred texts that they were translating. There was therefore no need for someone who knew the source languages to exercise a kind of quality control for the translation. It is my hope and goal for Bible translators, especially in Africa, to know the source languages so that they can work directly from the source texts and this aspect of translation consulting will also become obsolete or at least dramatically reduced.

3.10 Shortcomings in Bible translation

Drew Maust: In what ways has Bible translation lagged behind developments in translation studies?

Jacobus Naudé: As indicated earlier (see 3.1) in the early history of translation studies, Bible translation was at the forefront. This is certainly true with the extensive contributions of Eugene Nida, which had an enormous impact on the field of translation studies. In the years after Nida, there was far less impact from Bible translation onto the field of translation studies, with a few notable exceptions. It is amazing to attend the largest translation studies conferences

in the world and find very few Bible translators in attendance or presenting papers. This is very unfortunate, first because Bible translators could learn much from translation studies scholars, but even more importantly because Bible translators have a wealth of experience from an enormous array of interesting languages and cultures – it would enrich the field of translation studies to have Bible translators actively involved in the field. Familiarity with the trends in translation studies would also provide Bible translators with new ways of thinking about Bible translation and new tools for working on Bible translation. Bible translation is, after all, the translation of a literary text and it is the translation of a sacred text.

One area in which Bible translators are currently making an important contribution to the broader field of translation studies involves orality. The Bible provides an important text for oral translation because of its oral history. But more importantly, many of the target cultures of Bible translations are oral cultures. Bible translators therefore have an enormous amount to offer this area of translation studies.

Drew Maust: With reference to the case of the Panare who killed Jesus as described in Hartman (2013), what sins does BT need to answer for?

Jacobus Naudé: The situation of the Panare described in this article is heart-breaking in that well-intentioned Bible translators went very wrong in their approach to Bible translation. By placing the Panare inside the New Testament narrative of the crucifixion of Jesus, the translators contextualised the text in a theological way to highlight the guilt of the Panare. This is a prime example of lack of respect for the people who speak the target language and their culture.

4. CLOSING

Drew Maust: What idea in translation studies, Bible translation, or biblical studies in general ought to go away?

Jacobus Naudé: In my view, the following are shifts that need to take place in Bible translation:

1. Respect the source text. Because the source text is so critically important, each and every Bible translator should be provided with the time and resources to study the source text languages and cultures.
2. Respect the alterity of the source text. Regardless of the kind of translation that is produced, the alterity of the source text and its culture needs to be respected and conveyed.
3. Respect the persons in the target language and their culture. The translation is theirs and they must be empowered to determine the kind of translation that is done. They must have ownership of the project and the process. Empowering the language community dramatically increases the likelihood that the translation will be accepted and used.
4. Avoid an insular approach in which Bible translators only speak with and learn from one another. By avoiding isolation from the translation studies community, there can be cross-fertilisation and enrichment between the two communities of translation.
5. Avoid reductionism and prescriptivism. Translation requires a complexity approach in which there are multiple, interacting, and emergent paths for solving problems.

In biblical studies, it is important for scholars of the ancient Bible translations (the Greek Septuagint, the Aramaic Targumim, the Syriac Peshitta, the Latin Vulgate etc.) to view those

documents in the first instance as translations. They therefore must be studied and analysed as translations using the same techniques that would be used to describe any other literary translation. They must not be seen only as a possible avenue to find a different Vorlage (source text) of the Hebrew OT or Greek NT. Rather, they are translations and their translators may have used a variety of translation techniques, which means that they do not necessarily point to a different source text behind them. In this regard, some Bible translators who have studied the ancient Bible translations have provided important insights – for example the research of Martha Wade and Theo van der Louw on the Septuagint, but much more can be done.

5. QUESTIONS FROM THE BT LIST AND ELSEWHERE

5.1 Question 1 -- Dr. Sameh Hanna

- a. In the Bible translation world, there has been a kind of heated debate around contextualised translation of the Bible. Have we been asking the right questions in this debate? How can translation studies help us run this discussion along more productive lines? What questions do we need to ask? What answers does translation studies provide to help us to better understand what “context” is?

Jacobus Naudé: One of the most heated controversies concerning contextualised translation of the Bible relates to translations employing so-called “Muslim idiomatic translation” for Muslim-majority communities. Such translations indigenise (or, domesticate) various aspects of the Bible to make the translation more acceptable to Muslim audiences. For example, such translations may use the Qur’anic names for persons known in the Bible, such as Isa for Jesus, Ibrahim for Abraham, and Miryam for Mary. Most controversial, however, is the indigenisation of the divine familial metaphors of the Bible (especially, “Father” and “Son”), which are offensive to Muslims, by employing other descriptive terms, especially those known from the Qur’an. In my view, the saddest aspect of the controversy was the fact that donors to Bible translation projects wanted to control the kind of translation that was permitted. In this regard, translation studies, provides two important perspectives. First, the functionalist approach of Nord emphasises that the kind of translation should be determined by its *skopos* with respect to those for whom the translation is intended, that is, its readers. Second, there are two sides to the coin in this controversy, both involving censorship (Naudé & Miller-Naudé 2013; Miller-Naudé & Naudé 2016). On the one hand, indigenised Muslim idiomatic translations, in effect, censure the Bible in the sense that they do not convey to Muslim readers some of the central theological metaphors of the Bible involving divine familial language. On the other hand, when donors or Bible translation agencies prevent Muslim-majority communities from having indigenised translations, they are also censoring the Bible in the sense that the meaning of the divine familial metaphors remain opaque. One way out of this impasse is to have foreignising translations with indigenising paratexts for Muslim-majority communities, as illustrated by the United Bible Societies edition of the New Testament, *The Holy Gospel*, which uses the standard Today’s English Version translation with paratextual features (cover, page-layout, introductory essays, marginal notes, and glossary) to make the translation accessible to Muslim readers (see Naudé & Miller-Naudé 2019d).

- b. What implications does the “multi-modal” turn in translation studies have for the world of Bible translation through non-print media?

Jacobus Naudé: In modern times, Bible translation has been viewed as primarily a print-based endeavour. But that is changing now with the emphasis on oral Bible translation (especially for predominantly oral societies) and on inter-semiotic translation (for example, audio-visual translation) especially with respect to sign language communities. Each of these endeavours with non-print media is very important. However, when viewing the entire spectrum of the media history of the Bible, we can see that these so-called “new” endeavours actually have a long history (see Makutoane, Miller-Naudé & Naudé 2015; Naudé & Miller-Naudé 2016). At the time of the composition of the Bible (both Old Testament and New Testament), the broader societies were hearing-dominant cultures; writing was known but the dominant means of communication was oral rather than written. The earliest components of the Bible were oral; when the Bible was written, handwritten manuscripts were used, first in the form of scrolls and later in the form of codices (books). With the advent of printing, a text-dominant era began in which print communication became in the mode in which the Bible was communicated. We are now in a digital-media interpretive culture, in which oral and visual aspects are again important media for the communication of the Bible (see Van Rooyen, Miller-Naudé & Naudé 2019a, 2019b).

5.2 Question 2 -- Jim Harries

- a. Is the fact that religious texts are to be translated particularly “problematic”, or is it normal? (Translation of “not-religious texts” is relatively recent in history.)

Jacobus Naudé: As I indicated in the interview (see 3.2) the translation of religious texts is no different from the translation of other kinds of literary texts in terms of the strategies to be used. Just a comment as well that the translation of “not-religious texts” is not relatively recent in history but goes back to the earliest times. For example, in the ancient Near East, we have numerous bilingual texts, treaties between kings with versions in each of their languages, and scribal “vocabulary lists” providing the multi-lingual key terms needed for producing and translating texts in multiple languages (see McElduff & Sciarrino 2011 for translation in the ancient Mediterranean and Robinson 1997b for ancient translation in the West).

- b. What constitutes equivalence in translation?

Jacobus Naudé: Equivalence in translation refers to the degree of similarity between the source text and the target text. It is impossible for any target text to be precisely equivalent to its source text in every respect. As a result, there are many kinds of equivalence in translation (see Naudé 2010, 387-411; 2019c, 415-522). One may describe the equivalence as similarity of form, meaning, or function. Or, one may describe the equivalence with reference to the semiotics of icon, index and symbol. Notions of equivalence have also differed in normative, functionalist, descriptivist, hermeneutical, and semiotranslational approaches to translation. Equivalence, then, is a complex phenomenon that may operate on multiple levels and in multiple ways (see Naudé 2019c, 415-522).

- c. Is a “plain meaning” as derived by modern Western scholars necessarily the “plain meaning” intended by original authors? If not, may not an intercultural translation of it presuppose a context that may be absent?

Jacobus Naudé: It is important in translating the Bible to recognise that it was written within and for a cultural context that is very different from our own. This is often referred to as the “alterity” or “otherness” of the text as I indicated in the interview (see 2.1 and 3.6). One of the most important considerations in translating the Bible is to determine how best to convey

the alterity of the text to contemporary readers. One way is by performance (see Makutoane, Miller-Naudé & Naudé 2015; Naudé & Miller-Naudé 2018) or by the use of metatexts or paratexts (see Naudé 2012; 2013; Naudé & Miller-Naudé 2019c; 2019d).

d. To what extent, when you say “religion”, do you mean “Christianity”, and how important is this co-identity, if at all?

Jacobus Naudé: I use “religious translation” to mean the translation of any sacred text that is recognised by a religious community. The translation of sacred texts and their functions within religious communities can be studied in fruitful ways without limiting the study to Christianity (see for example Naudé 2011a, Naudé 2018, Naudé & Miller-Naudé 2019b, Naudé forthcoming).

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