

Chapter 3

The Culture of Translation in Colonial Christianity in Gujarat

I have argued previously that the emergence of Christianity in colonial Gujarat was accompanied by the rise of print culture. In this chapter, I propose to show that, simultaneously the culture of translation was an integral part of this complex process of colonial Christianity and print. I will also discuss the early Christian translation and the role of translated material in the emergence of Christianity in colonial India and Gujarat. And I will focus more on the different translations of Christian concepts, and particularly on the issues such as problems while translating the hymns and prayers including the deployment of specific vocabularies while translating hymns.

The discussion of translation starts with the Bible translation. The Bible that most of us are familiar with is not printed in its original language it is a translation. Andreas J. Köstenberger, David A. Croteau in his *Which Bible translation should I use?* Says translation is a tricky business especially when it comes to translating ancient text (Köstenberger, Croteau, ix). The periods of the Bible translation as mention in *Historical periods of Bible translation: A survey* by Glenn J. Kerr can be summarized as follows:

1. The Targum and Septuagint Period (450 BC- 30AD)
2. New Testament Times to Jerome (30AD- 405AD)
3. The Vulgate and Ecclesiastical Language Translations (405 AD- 1453 AD)
4. Reformation Bible Translation (1453 AD- 1792 AD)
5. The Missionary Translation period (1792- 1881 AD)

6. The Modern Translation Explosion (1881 AD- present)

The Old Testament was written in Hebrew and Aramaic and the New Testament in Greek. All or parts of the Bible have been translated into more than two thousand languages and dialects (Köstenberger, Croteau, ix). The Old Testament was later translated in Greek. The New Testament was written in Greek, partly drawing from Aramaic sources, following which it was translated in many languages. The Syriac and Latin versions are generally considered the most important because they became the bases for many translations. Approximately for one thousand years, the Bible was read in Latin; the translation of St. Jerome, the Vulgate, gradually became very important. In the West, the Church primarily used Latin. However, after the end of the second century, unofficial translations were made. In the fourth century, Pope Damasus I invited St. Jerome to correct current Latin translations based on Hebrew and Greek manuscripts. Jerome completed the new translation after 18 years of work in Bethlehem. Jerome's translation came to be the accepted Bible and by A.D. 1200 was called the Vulgate, the official version for the Roman Catholic Church. From that the Bible was translated into many languages. But these translations were not being received positively by the people and translators often faced opposition. Harry Freedman in his *The Murderous History of Bible Translation* says when in 1535 William Tyndale translated the Bible into English he was hanged and burned in Belgium. A co-translator, John Rogers, was also burned (Freedman, 1). In the same year the translator of the first Dutch Bible Jacob Van Liesveldt, was arrested and beheaded. Not only these translators but many Bible translators to meet a grisly end but they are well known (Freedman 1).

Betlem Soler Pardo in *Translation Studies: An introduction to the history and development of (Audiovisual) Translation* mention the Babel myth, cited in *Genesis* (xi: 6-9) consist of the idea of having a unique language for mankind. However according to Pardo the idea of one language was not acceptable from the religious point of view since that would make humankind stronger, more powerful which would be intolerable by God (Pardo, 4). As a result, God gave people different languages. This is only a myth and the origins of languages have a more linguistic explanation. Douglas Robinson's definition as refer by Pardo, "the history of translation goes back to the ancient times with the distinction of << word-for-word >> (Literal translation or *verbum pro verbo*) and << sense for sense >> (Free translation or *sensum pro sensu*) employed for the first time by Marcus Tullius Cicero and translated by H. M. Hubbell (Emphasis in original Pardo, 4)". The scholar Peter Newmark claimed in the second half of the 20th century that the main problem of translating a text was whether to translate literally or freely (Pardo, 4). Eugene Nida defines the concept of translation in this way.

Translating consist in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style. But this relatively simple statement requires careful evaluation of several seemingly contradictory elements (Nida, 12).

It means translation is a process of reproduction of the message in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style in the language of the reader. Here translator does not struggle with the words but he/she have to take care of the style or emotions which is not visually there in the original

language. So, in the same way many translators of the Bible struggled with the translation of the Bible. Many people opposed this process¹. Not only this but the process of translation is itself very difficult process. There are many theories used by the translators.

Eugene Nida, a linguist who developed the Dynamic Equivalence translation theory, in his work *Theory and the Practice of Translation* says there were many methods of translation of the Bible (Nida, 1). First and foremost, and very important is that of literal translation. In this the translator keeps close to words and phrases of the original. It is very near to the original but it is very hard for the reader to understand. The King James Version and New American Standard Bible are the examples of this translation. Another method is dynamic equivalent translation in which the translator tries to keep all the historical detachments with regard to history and facts but changes the writing style and grammar, for example, this is the strategy used in the New International Version and Revised English Bible. According to Nida this method focuses on the messages (Nida, 1). In this, everything can be sacrificed words, grammar, and syntax. The third method that Nida describes is free translation; it can even be called paraphrase translation. In this, the translator translates the ideas from the original text without being controlled by the original words or language. It may be readable but not precise. The Living Bible is an example for this translation (Nida, 7).

Scott S Elliot and Roland Boar in the introduction of their work *Ideology, Culture and Translation* discuss some problems in Nida's theory of Dynamic Equivalence translation.

¹ There are many types of the Bible. Like the traditional Bible, Study Bible, Reference Bible, One Year Bible, Chronological Bible etc_ *Which Bible Translation should I use*

According to them, this theory uses what is regarded in certain circles, unfaithful translation technique in order to be faithful to the text (Elliot, Boar, 2). Susan Bassnett in *The translation studies* says that the center of the many theories of translation articulated by non-European writers are three recurring tricks: a redefinition of the terminology of faithfulness and equivalence, the importance of highlighting the visibility of the translator and a shift of emphasis that views translation as an act of creative rewriting (Bassnett, 6). According to her translator is a liberator who frees the text from the fixed signs of its original shape. Translators are using their creativity and create a new version of the original text the way the reader can understand it. The original language limits the text and the translator frees it and creates an independent version which others can understand too. The post-colonial approach to translation is to see linguistic exchange as essentially dialogic as a process that happens in a space that belongs to neither source nor target absolutely (Bassnett, 6). Polysystems theory was a fundamental development because it shifted the focus of the attention away from the debate about the faithfulness and equivalence towards an examination of the role of the translated text in its new context (Bassnett, 7). In 1995, Gideon Toury published *Descriptive Translation Studies and beyond* a book that reconsidered the polysystems approach disliked by some scholars because of its over emphasis on the target system. According to Bassnett polysystems theory filled the gap that opened up in the 1970s between linguistics and literary studies and provided the base upon which the new interdisciplinary Translation studies could build. Central to the polysystems theory was an emphasis on the poetics of the target culture (Bassnett, 7). In the view of Bassnett translation is a dangerous act, possibly rebellious and always significant (Bassnett, 9). In the 1990s the figure of the submissive translator has been replaced with the visibly manipulative translator, creative artist mediating between cultures and languages (Bassnett, 9). Further Bassnett refers Roman Jakobson that he in his article

“On Linguistic Aspects of Translation” mention the three types of translation (quoted in Bassnett, 9).

1. Intralingual translation or *rewarding* (An interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs in the same language)
2. Interlingual translation or *Translator Propper* (An interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs in some other language)
3. Intersemiotic translation or *transmutation* (An interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of nonverbal sign system)

With this framework, I will now discuss the Bible translation in India and then Gujarat specifically.

The first Bible translation in Indian languages was in Tamil (Varghese 662). As mentioned earlier, Bartholomew Zeigenbalg and some missionaries who were settled in Tranquebar studied Tamil and then in 1714 published the first Bible in Tamil. In 1772, J. B. Francis published an improved version of the Bible (Smith, 89). However, in Christian Indian history, the name of William Carey (1761- 1834) is probably among the most important; he translated the Bible into many Indian languages and principal dialects (Smith, 89).

William Carey was a Baptist missionary and had settled in Serampore. He translated the Bible in Bengali and published it in 1793 and 1801 (Varghese, 662). There were five revisions of the Carey Bengali Bible (Stringer, 7). The second revision was produced by Rev. John Wenger. Before Wenger, every translation was evaluated in reference to the King James Bible but by dispensing with this yardstick, he broke that tradition.

Following this, Carey and his associates translated The Bible into more than thirty Indian languages. The Malayalam translation of the Bible was published in 1806 by a committee headed by Bishop Mar Divannasios with Cladius Buchanan, a foreign missionary, Ramban Philipose of Kayamkulam and Pulikkottil Ittoop Ramban as members (Varghese, 662). After that the Protestant church and the Roman Catholic churches published more versions. The Catholic Church published the Bible along with 73 supporting books and Protestant Church published the Bible along with 66 supporting books in Malayalam (662).

Sanskrit was the “intellectual” language of India and early missionaries felt it was important to translate the Bible into the classical language of upper caste Hindus. The story of the translation of the Bible into Sanskrit is told in the biography *The Life of Rev. John Wenger, D.D.* by Edward Bean Underhill (Stringer, 46). William Carey and a group of native helpers released the New Testament in Sanskrit in 1808. It was translated from Greek. The Old Testament was released in 1822. It was translated from the Hebrew (Stringer, 46). A second edition was released in 1851. Henry Martin translated The New Testament into Urdu. It was published in 1814 by the British and Foreign Bible Society. The Old Testament was released in 1870. These translations are still used by evangelicals today (Stringer, 46).

The publication of Bible translations in vernacular Indian languages played a significant role in the context of conversion and in encouraging publications of early Christian materials. Fr. Carlos Suria S J in his *History of Catholic in Gujarat* said even prior to the print publications of translations it is clear that translation played a key part in the proselytizing effort of the early missionaries (Suria, 7). Robin Boyd for example, points out that the early fourteenth century

missionary efforts were enabled by his Russian companion Georgia who had some knowledge of native languages and helped translate the sermons preached by Jourdain in Gujarat (Suria, 7). The other significant missionaries in the emergence of Christianity in colonial Gujarat was Rev. Glasgow and after him Rev. Montgomery (Asthavadi, 25). He did not know Gujarati so Abdul Rehman Munsif of Porbandar became the translator of Rev. Montgomery. As I mention in my second chapter in the early times the missionaries take help of local pundits for the translations. The possible reasons for this may be that they were not able to use the language and they were not aware about the vocabulary; they were thinking that the translations with the help of these locals can easily arouse the interest of the people to whom they want to accept the new religion as he translated the preachings of the Bible, he started to develop faith in Christianity. Not only this but he also started reading the tracts which helped him to understand the religion and after that he converted to Christianity. The conversion leads the emergence of a new religion in a new public. And the printed version of the translation of this tracts leads the conversion in colonial times. As the print culture proves an important factor in the colonial times translation was also very important. The translation of Christian material gives the road to the emergence of new religion.

Translation of Christian Material in Colonial Gujarat

William Carey and his Serampore colleagues published a Gujarati translation of The New Testament in 1820, but this was not widely used. It was followed by the Bible translation of London Missionary Society (L.M.S.) which was published in 1821 and printed in the newly founded printing press Surat Mission Printing Press (Boyd "An outline" 43). Later, a more refined version of The Old Testament was published in 1823 and the complete Bible in 1829. The reason

that the Carey translation did not become widely popular was because it was printed in Devanagari script. This was the defining feature of the Carey Gujarati Bible. The Serampore Press had not developed a Gujarati font. L.M.S. published a good translation in Gujarati typeset in a Gujarati font. This translation is used till today (Chauhan, 8). As mentioned in the previous chapter, the Gujarati type had been developed in Bombay. A branch of the Bombay Bible Society that was started in 1813 began work on the Gujarati translation of the Bible. Rev. James Glasgow was the first member of Gujarati translation committee. Other members of the committee were Rev. Dhanji Navraj, Rev. Hormas Pastanji, and a Hindu Pandit, Macharam who was a helper (The Committee of History Collection, 5).

Along with the publication of the Bible, LMS missionaries also published many pamphlets, printed sermons, and tracts on the fundamentals of Christian doctrines; many of these publications were essentially translated or paraphrased materials from English and other European languages. This can be considered as the beginning of the circulation of new forms of writing in Gujarati.

Manaseh Bhurajibhai and his team gives the information that in 1815 Rev. William Fyvie and Rev. James Skinner were from the LMS and they both within two years have translated the New Testament and Moses 'Panchgranth (Five Volumes) into Gujarati. Those translated literatures have been considered as the first Gujarati prose literature (Bhuraji et al., 25). They wanted to print those early Christian tracts and books in Surat rather than in Mumbai so in 1820 they brought the machinery and started their own press (Bhuraji et al, 25). This was the first printing press in Gujarat. Not only this but these missionaries were the first of the printing of the Gujarati prose literature (Bhuraji et al, 5). Afterwards LMS surrendered their whole properties included printing

press to the Irish Presbyterian Mission (I. P. Mission). With the printing press the Gujarat Tract and Book Society's management office was also there in Surat. the Irish Missionaries looked after the management of the Gujarat Tract and Book Society at early time. Only at 1933 the Gujarati people had got the role in the management committee of the Gujarat Tract Book society (Bhuraji et al, 05). Vadil James Ukabhai was the first president of this committee. Rev. D. P. Makawana was the secretary and Miss L. A. Hist was a Treasurer. Then also the work of press and the publication was all in the hands of I. P. Mission. After the freedom of India, the missionaries disappear slowly. In 1950 the management of the religious Societies in Gujarat were surrendered to the local Christians. But due to lack of experienced staff and lack of required skills to run the hospitals, primary schools and printing presses in Surat has to be closed. In 1959 when the Surat Printing Press closed all the books and other infrastructure and machinery were taken at Ahmedabad (Bhuraji et al, 05). The Gujarat Tract and Book Society was established in 1852 and Mr. Lawrence Christian was the secretary of the tract society.

Carapeit Chater Aratoon, who arrived in Gujarat in 1813, translated a catechism in Surat which he took with him to Serampore for printing when he left Gujarat in 1818 (Boyd, 43). As mentioned before, Rev. Robert Montgomery and Rev. Glasgow arrived in Gujarat in 1842. They both continued the work of preaching about the Bible in Rajkot, Porbandar, and the Ghogha mission center (Bhuraji et al, 11-12). They chose to spread the words of God through a large number of tracts that were printed and translated in Gujarati language by the L.M.S. because of less work and big profit the printing and translations were increasing day by day. According to Glasgow, the tracts does not require authors present, easy to carry and read multiple times and it was visually appealing (Bhuraji et al, 20). And the establishment of the printing press in Surat

made their work easier. This became a turning point in the spreading of Christianity in colonial Gujarat. They started to print many tracts which were generally of twelve pages. Some titles of the tracts were: *Sarva Manushyo ne Dus Agna nu Palan Karvu* [Everyone have to Follow the Ten Commandments], *Uttpati*, [Origin] *Padati*, [decline], *Punrutthan* [Resurrection], and *Pavitrata* [Holiness] (Bhuraji et al, 12).

The establishment of the printing press by the I. P. Mission went hand in hand with the establishment of schools. The wives of the missionaries started to teach the children (Bhuraji et al, 23). They opened two schools for both girls and boys in Rajkot but they faced a serious problem of not having books in Gujarati language (Bhuraji et al, 23). With the help of other missionaries, Rev. Glasgow published the first text book in the Gujarati language in 1848 and these were used at the newly founded school. The money invested in printing these books were donated by the students of Sabbath School from Ireland (Bhuraji et al, 23).

In 1847 Rev Glasgow wrote *Christi Aacharan* [Conduct of the Christians] which was the first publication in the form of book by I. P. Mission, Surat (Bhuraji et al, 23). This marked the establishment of the Gujarat Tract and Book Society. The establishment of this society was a significant event in Gujarati Christian literature. In 1853 this society published the first yearly report and according to that report in the very first year of the establishment of the society it published thirty thousand and five hundred copies of fourteen tracts and thereafter seventy thousand copies each year (Bhuraji et al, 23). One of their first publications was the tract named *Ishurajani Agnao* [Commands of God] which was widely distributed by a missionary called Anton.

Asthavadi notes that Girdher Rupji from Aanklav and Kuber from Kanvad were so influenced by this tract that they traveled to Surat despite great difficulties and eventually got baptized at Vadodara in 1844 (Asthavadi, 32). Most of these tracts were translated in Gujarati language.

In 1844 William Flower translated *The Pilgrim's Progress* as *Yatrakari* (Boyd, 129). In 1851 Rev. J. V. S. Taylor translated *The History of Christian Provision by Garth* into Gujarati (Boyd, 129). In the same year Rev. Glasgow compiled book of 342 pages named *Scripture Extracts on Doctrine and Duty with Introduction and Explanatory Remarks for Believers and Inquiries* (Boyd, 129). Gujarat Tract and Book Society published books on Hinduism and Islam too (Boyd, 129). *Hinduism* by John Wilson was the first translation in 1834 (Boyd, 129).² Not only this but the book named *Balance of Truth* [Sachaina Mijan] by Dunlop Moore published in 1864 contained counter questions to Islam while *Divine Incarnation* [Ishwari Avtar] published in the same year contained a comparison between Jesus Christ and Krishna. This book was first written by Baba Padamanji in Marathi and then Chaganlal Bhagvandas translated it into Gujarati (Boyd 129). *Yohan ni Suvarta no Khulaso* [Explanation of the preaching of Yohan] by Rev. William Clarkson was translated and published in 1889 (Boyd, 130). In this same year Rev. J. F Still wrote *Suvar tao ane Prerito na Krutio no Parichay* [The introduction to the Preaching and the Deeds of Disciples] while in 1893 R. W. Sinkler published *Matthi ni Suvartao no Khulaso* [Explanation of the preaching of Matthew] (Boyd, 130). Apart from the tracts and translations of the Bible the contribution of the missionaries can be seen with reference to the materials in language studies as well as other translations. These and the emergence of magazines and newspapers related to

² There is limitation to this information because the source from which I got it does not inform about the original books from which these were translated.

Christianity contribute to the print culture and public sphere in Gujarati. In 1856 Rev. Glasgow started the monthly Gujarati magazine *Gyan Deepak* [The Flame of Knowledge] which continued till 1860, and in 1862 I. P. Mission began publishing a new magazine *Satyodaya* [The Rise of Truth] (Boyd, 131). Subsequently, after some year other missions published their magazine *Harshnad* [The Voice of Happiness] by Methodist, *Prakashpatra* [The Letter of Light] by Brethren, *Jangipokar* [the call of a war] afterwards *Mukti Samachar* [the news of Salvation] by Salvation Army, *Harsh Vartman* [The Contemporary Happiness] by Alliance, and *Dut* [Messenger] by Roman Catholic (Boyd, 131).

Rev. Fyvie and Rev. Skinner wrote books on the grammar and dictionary in Gujarati but they were not able to publish them (Bhuraji, et al 26). In 1847 Rev. Clarkson from L.M.S. wrote *The Grammar of the Gujarati Language* which was then printed in American Mission Press, Mumbai (Bhuraji, et al 26). In 1867 Rev. J. V. S. Taylor wrote *Gujarati Bhasa nu Vyakran* [The Grammar of the Gujarati Language] which has its base in Sanskrit grammar and is till now considered as the standard Gujarati Grammar. And because of that Taylor is considered as the ‘Father of Gujarati Grammar’ (Bhuraji, et al 26). Finally, in 1893 Rev, G. P. Taylor, son of Rev. J. V. S. Taylor, wrote *The Student’s Gujarati Grammar* in English (Bhuraji, et al 23). These grammars were put to use to both educate the missionaries in the vernacular as well as in the schools set up by various missions.

Alongside the question of grammar and syntax, missionaries in Gujarat also had to tackle the question of vocabulary. It is important to underline that the missionary intervention into language was largely driven by the desire to proselytize. Their involvement with translation too

was driven by the same purpose. In this context, the early missionaries were confronted with specific difficulties regarding the communication of Christian concepts. It seems that in the early phase the missionaries translated them into words familiar to the nineteenth century public in their own language. They therefore produced translations of Christian tracts and doctrinal literature not only in the familiar language but employing words to which they were accustomed. Thus, it became common to translate Christian concepts into concepts from Hinduism. For example, in the pamphlet like *Tran Lok: Swarg, Narg ane Manushaya Jivan* [*The Three Worlds: An Exposition of the Great Themes of Heaven, Hell and Human Life*] (1831) the idea of the three worlds was translated into the well-known Hindu concept of 'triloka' (Boyd "An outline" 44). Very soon, however, the missionaries began creating a vocabulary of Christian concepts in Gujarati. The translation committee of John Wilson, Rev. Hormazdji Pestonji and Rev. J. V. S. Taylor produced *Vocabulary of the Principal Words*, a glossary of words found in the Bible in 1857, with Gujarati equivalents for each of them. The Vocabulary contains 780 terms (Boyd, 43).

Against this background, it is now important to discuss the collections of hymns and prayer books at that time in order. The publication of Gujarati hymns started in the Mission press, Surat in 1834 (Bhuraji, et al 32). These hymns were composed in English measures or tunes. Some songs in those collection were taken and translated from the *Hindi Geetmala* (Bhuraji, et al 32). After that in 1851 Rev. J. V. S. Taylor published a collection of hymns written by Rev. Clarkson and himself, named *Dharma Geeta* (Bhuraji, et al 32). This collection was printed in Ahmadabad by the Gujarat Tract and Book Society. In 1856 Rev. Glasgow also compiled all the songs from the *Geet Shastra* in a new compilation titled *Geet Sanghrah*. From that collection twenty-eight songs are still sung by people today and they are also included in the *Bhajan Sanghrah*, the contemporary

collection of hymns (Bhuraji, et al 32). It can be noted that within the time span of 1842 to 1900 Rev. James Glasgow was a leading figure in every aspect of the print culture, so that this particular period in Gujarati Christian literature has been called ‘Glasgow Yug’ (Bhuraji, et al 27).

Kavyaarpan is again Taylor’s well-known collection of Gujarati hymns published in 1863 by Gujarat Book and Tract Society, Ahmedabad. It was printed in the I P Mission Printing Press, Surat. (Taylor 1). At the time when *Kavyaarpan* was used in the Christian community, there was another collection of prayer songs called *Dharmagita* compiled by Rev. Clarkson (Bhuraji et al 32.). J. V. S. Taylor, the author of *Kavyaarpan* helped Clarkson to produce *Dharmagita* which contained hymns in the English measures in 1851 (Boyd 132). Till 1936 these two prayer books were used by the Christian people but after that the Gujarat Tract and Book Society published a new collection of prayer songs compiled by a board of five presidents of five Christian communities. This board was compiled the songs of the two compilations *Kavyaarpan* and *Dharmagita* into one compilation *Bhajansanghrah* (Bhuraji et al, 32). There have been twelve editions of this book published by Gujarat Tract and Book Society, Ahmedabad till now. The twelfth edition of this book was published in 2010. In this compilation the committee added newer songs written by some recent authors to the hymns of the earlier compilations. This collection has today collected not only Gujarati hymns but English as well as Hindi hymns. According to the preface of the twelfth edition of *Bhajansanghrah* the earlier editions had a print run of 1,42,000 copies prior to the present edition and 20,000 copies of twelfth edition had been printed (Bhuraji et al, 32).

Questions of Translation in Colonial Christianity in Gujarati

When missionaries first came to colonial Gujarat, they brought new concepts with Christianity. Missionaries had to struggle to make the people understand the concepts like ‘mass’, ‘communion’ and ‘crucifixion of Jesus Christ’. The existing culture and beliefs of Hinduism posed a strong difficulty for the spread of Christianity. However, as elsewhere in colonial India and colonial Gujarat, certain conditions in the Hindu societies were proved to be a helpful to the establishment of Christianity. In this context, the caste hierarchy and restrictions on the ‘lower’ castes in Hindu society made the offer of equality in Christianity and upward mobility thereby very attractive, and enabled the expansion of new religion in colonial India and colonial Gujarat as elsewhere. The missionaries offered a relief from these restrictions to made the ‘lower’ caste people to accept the Christianity. Rev. Manaseh Bhurajibhai’s *Matina Patro ma Daivy Khajano* [The Divine treasure in the mud pot] is an account of the biographies of many early converts where he shows how the difficulties faced by them through caste structures was a central reason for conversion. In the first biography of Vadil Girdhar Rupjibhai he discusses the wide array of restrictions that they had to follow at the time. But after conversion they were allowed to enter the churches, worship Christ, and to touch the statue of God (Bhuraji, 32). The missionaries also addressed them as children and prepared them for Christianity. These social conditions shaped the nature of the print materials in early Christianity of colonial Gujarat.

In the colonial period, translation too became a site where one could read social tensions, language conflicts, social transitions and for identifying the plurality of linguistic expressions and

cultural experience. The culture of translations and print culture both were very impactful for the society. The early translators translated the contents for many reasons such as sharing ideas, imparting knowledge and consolidating the new Christian awareness of converts. There were many issues and problems which limited the effects of translation in the society. Both, the target language and source language were very important in this context;³ if translators were not aware of the cultural context of the community that they sought to transform, it would limit the impact of their translations. In a similar way, translators would need to be familiar with the host culture to enable meaningful translations. However, the enterprise of translation in the context of early Christianity in Gujarat were sometimes marked by missionary lack of knowledge of the target cultures and language and sometimes, the translations of early converts were undertaken without a clear sense of the source language. In the introduction to *Daud na Geeto* [The *Psalms of David*], Vahlji Bechar himself confesses that because he doesn't know the language in which the psalms were originally created the translations of this psalms have many limitations. If we think about Christian translations all the early translators were missionaries who are not natives. Their mother tongue was different and often, they did not know the native language well enough. So, the early translations are little confusing or sometimes difficult for the reader to understand. Not only this, in many early translations, the contents have some native words which are not in standardized language and that was also one of the limitations of early translations. Vahlji Bechar in *Daud na Geeto* [The *Psalms of David*] used some pure and impure words. The words like *Maj* [My], *Taj*

³ A good survey of the theories of translation is perhaps best furnished by E. Nida who avers that due to the fact that translation is a sense in which any and all theories of translation are linguistic (Nida, 66). He classifies these theories into three main categories: Philological theories, Linguistic theories and Socio- linguistic theories. Philological theories are mainly concerned with the comparison of structures in the native and foreign languages especially the functional correspondence and the literary genres in addition to stylistics and rhetoric. Linguistic theories of translation, according to Nida are based on a comparison of the Linguistic structures of the STs and TTs rather than a comparison of literary genres and stylistic features of the philological theories (Nida, 69). Sociolinguistic theories of translating emerged out of the dissatisfaction with linguistic theories of translating and growing interest in communication.

[Your], *Tam* [You] etc are used by Vahlji Bechar. Sometimes the understanding of the concepts is also big issue in these translations. In different cultures the understanding of different concepts is not similar. For example, the concept of confession of sins, Moksh (Salvation) etc are differently understood in different religions. So many times, it was misused by translators as well as misunderstood by the readers. The examples to understand these will be given below. If you have the lack of understanding of the original text, the translations have many limitations. The fonts are also one of the limitations of early translations. Though in some tracts, the whole text has Gujarati fonts others have only non-Gujarati fonts. *Daud na Geeto* [The Psalms of David] by Bechar is an example of this, where the type of the titles is in Hindi.

Walter Benjamin in his essay “The Task of the Translator” discusses translation as a mode. According to him, if we want to understand translation as a mode we must not go back to the original of that translation but need to look at the translated text. Here he discusses the parallel term translatability. He says that “...if translation is a mode... translatability must be an essential feature of certain works” (Benjamin, 16). In this context he further explains that many times when we evaluate a translation as good or bad, it may be only one opinion of its significance regarding the original (Benjamin, 16). Benjamin discusses the relationship between two languages: the language of the original and translation. According to him it is not always that the two languages have similarities. In this case how should we look at the translation of words which means different things in different cultures? Here Benjamin gives importance to the intention of the writer or the translator. With the same intended object, the two words could mean the same thing. Therefore, he says “While the modes of intention in these two words are in conflict, intention and object of

intention complement each of the two languages from which they are derived; there the object is complementary to the intention” (Benjamin, 18).

He further argues that “translatability of the original is closely connected with the translation; this connection is all the closer since it is no longer of importance to the original” (Benjamin, 18). Benjamin calls this connection a natural or a vital connection. In this context, the conventional connection between the source and the target language and the idea of a bad translation as something less than the original is changed. Rather, through Benjamin, it is possible to see the cultural implications of translation. Further, Benjamin says translation serves the purpose of expressing the central mutual relationship between languages. He wants to say that the languages are not strangers to one another but they are “a priori and apart from all historical relationships interrelated in what they want to express. The relationship of languages is brought out by a translation far more reflectively and clearly than the superficial and indefinable similarity of two works of literature” (Benjamin, 17).

It is possible to connect Benjamin’s ideas to the use of language in *Daud na Geeto* [The Psalms of David] and *Khristi Geeto* in the following ways. On the one hand, it is possible to see both *The Psalms of David* and *Khristi Geeto* as examples of cultural translation based on the idea that it brings into Gujarati new words and concepts from a new religion. On the other hand, this interconnection between the two different cultural contexts is carried out sometimes through substitute words and sometimes through totally new words. This creates questions about cultural interconnections.

It has been pointed out in the Introduction of *Daud na Geeto* [The Psalms of David] by Bechar, the community of early Christians in Gujarat comprised mainly of Hindu people. Therefore, the early missionaries used many concepts from Hinduism to familiarize people to the new Christian concepts. At the same time, it is also important to note the variety of Gujarati language adopted by the missionaries for popularizing their message. The discussion in this section considered these points with reference to some examples from the songs in *Daud na Geeto* [*The Psalms of David*] by Valji Bechar. I will compare these with Rev. Glasgow's *The Psalms of David* (1856). to look at the strikingly different modes of translation. In addition, I will also examine hymn books like *Kavyaarpan* (1863), *Subodh Garbavali* (1938), *Geetsastra*, to show how the site of translation in the context of colonial Christianity in Gujarat was a deeply complex space.

In the preface of *The Psalms of David* Vahlji Bechar mention that Daud na Geeto has translated and publish in more than 400 languages (Indian as well as International languages). And because of it we can say this collection is very well known. In this collection there are 150 songs. The collection is not only translated in poetry but it was also translated in prose. Becher himself accept that the collection is for local people and because he doesn't know Hebrew language there are many limitations of the translation. The songs in this collection are translated in Gujarati *chhand*. *Agra chhand*, *ajit chhand*, *ashrah chhand*, *jhulna chhand*⁴ etc. Below are some examples from this collection.

⁴ Chhands are Gujarati meters in which the poetry had written

(U-U-U-U-U-U-U-U-)

Adharmna kubodhma na chalse mane kari,

Rahe ubho na paap margma lagaar je fari (01),

I did not act in the knowledge of iniquity

Don't stay in the path of sin⁵)

(-UU-UU-UU-UU-UU-UU-UU--)

Kemaj lok kare huldo, amthi kalpi bahu vat nakami?

Rayajno sardar madi prabhu khrist virudh kahe badnami (02).

(Why people are shouting on the things which is not useful.

The chief of unsocial people was doing slander against Christ.)

(VV-U-,,VV,-U)

Jyare prabhuji uthase tyare ripu veray;

Tena mukhna tejthi, dhveshak nashi jay (105).

(When God will wake up, then Gold will fell down

By the brightness of his face the intruder flees).

The next translation of the same songs by Rev. James Glasgow in *The Psalms of David* published ten years before Vahlji Bechar's *Daud na Geeto [The Psalms of David]*. It was published in 1856 by Irish Missionary press, Surat. Both are translation of the songs of David but both are having difference in it. Which are those differences will be discuss in the next chapter.

⁵ The translations are done by me.

The first point regarding the kinds of words used in *The Psalms of David* by Bechar can be made with reference to the relation of the Gujarati language with the older languages in the region. Jayant Kothari, in *Bhasha Parichay ane Gujarati Bhasha nu Swarup* (Introduction to Language and the Nature of the Gujarati Language) discusses four kinds of words in the Gujarati language. (184-186) He states the relation between Gujarati and the classical language Sanskrit with reference to two categories of words. First the words which are directly taken from Sanskrit are called ‘Tattsam’ (same as) (32). The second category is ‘tattbhav’ (same birth). In this category though words are derived from Sanskrit they are used in a changed form in Gujarati (32). The third category is that of ‘deshya’ (native). This kind of the words were not derived from the classical language but they are from the older local language or dialects of Gujarati (33). The last category is of words called ‘parbhasi’ (other language) where words are taken from other languages like Arabian, Pharsi, European, etc, indicating the linkages between Gujarati and non-Gujarati languages (33).

On the basis of this it is possible to discuss the words in *Daud na Geeto* [The Psalms of David] by Bechar on three points. First, with reference to the words derived from Sanskrit language it is possible to see the linkages between the religious concepts with reference to Hinduism and Christianity. In the same category it is also possible to see the status of Sanskritized words in the print culture in Gujarati.

The use of Sanskritized words is one of the major characteristics of the language of *Daud na Geeto* [The Psalms of David]. There are many words which are directly taken from Sanskrit language. Words like nirvikar (unchangeable), timir (darkness), puratan (ancient), tarak (savior)

ishwar (ruler of the world), dravya (property), din (a day), anand (to rejoice), deen (poor) and nirdhan (poor) etc. These are tatsama words. Some words like stutya (fit to be praise) which is the adjective of Stuti (to Praise). In a similar way many tattbhava words also appear in *The Psalms of David*. Words like Mohit (fascinated) Bhuvan (the world), Loukik (popular) come in this category. Take for example, this passage:

Ishwar che maj dhalaj pote, sacha janne te tare che (7)

(God is mine, give salvation to them who thinks it true)

The Sanskrit word like *Ishwar* used here in this song. It can be seen that the tatsama and tattbhava words appear in Gujarati in this way. Following are some examples from not only *Daud na Geeto* [The Psalms of David] but from *Khristi Geeto* and *The Psalms of David* by Rev. Glasgow.

Ko din din dardri janto prabhuthi nahi visray,

Aash tale nahi dinjano ni, na kadi te dubay. (The Psalms. Bechar., 10)

(to day by day poverty beings do not forget the dominion,

The hope is that the poor will never be drowned)

Dev thase dukhino ashro, sankat madhye say;

Je tuj namaj jane teo aash dhare tuj may. (The Psalms ..Bechar, 09)

(God will be the refuge of grief in the midst of crisis

Those who know your name, they hope to be your)

Taran malyu aaj re mane taran malyu aaj...

Muj papi no taranharo malyo ishu aaj mane aaj (Khristi Geeto, 32)

(I got my salvation today, I got my salvation today

Me the sinner got my savior today)

Re strot gavu e saru che, Jehovahni stuti karo

Re stuti karvi e ghattu che, Jehovahni stuti karo (Khristi Geeto, 34)

(Source gone its good, praise Jehovah,

It is not enough to praise the Jehivay)⁶

Dev ni tatha khrist ni meher,

Teo kem kare che ver.

Emnu bandhan chodie,

Emna dora todiye (The Psalms..Rev. Glasgow, 02)

(the blessings of God and Christ,

Why they are doing enmity

Leave their connection

Break their threads)

He dev hu jiv chahdavu chu

Taro upkar janavu chu

Kahi ne tara chamatkar

Hu aanand pamis beshumar (23)

(Oh God, I am alive

Express your gratitude

Say your miracle

I will be overjoyed).

⁶ All translations mine unless otherwise mentioned.

From these examples it is clear that the poets used the Sanskritized words to give a different status to the language of Christianity⁷.

<u>Tatsama</u>	<u>Tattbhav</u>
nirvikar (unchangeable)	stutya (fit to be praise)
timir (darkness),	Mohit (fascinated)
puratan (ancient),	Bhuvan (the world),
tarak (savior)	Loukik (popular)
ishwar (ruler of the world)	
dravya (property)	
din (a day),	
deen (poor) and nirdhan (poor)	
anand (to rejoice),	

⁷ Table 1- Examples of some *tatsama* and *tattbhav* words.

More important are the examples where the Sanskritized words appear for theological words. In other words, there is need to see the examples of Hindu concepts used to translate Christian concepts. Sanjay Malaviya in his thesis “Theological Contribution of Rev. J. V. S Taylor, an Englishman through his Gujarati Hymns” also discusses the use of different Indian terms by J. V. S. Taylor, one of the well-known poets in Gujarati Christianity. One of them is the word *trilok* (Three worlds) in song number 49 in *Bhajansanghrah* has used this word.

- *Ko jan teno aadi na sodhe, tena gun che amit prakash;*
Trilok mandal tene kidha, agam prakash teno te vasi (Taylor 28)

These three worlds are created by God. According to Malaviya the reason behind the use of common Hindu phraseology by Taylor is to communicate the gospel to the masses in their own terminology and at the same time prove the sovereignty of Christian God over the whole universe (34).

Another example is where Taylor discusses the sacrificial offering of Jesus in song number 444 in *Bhajansanghrah* where he uses the word *karma* (Malaviya, 258). The aim is to make other people know about that so they can understand the real motive behind Jesus’ suffering, pain and borrow. This sacrificial act of Jesus by Taylor is discussed in the context of the early Church’s background. The new converts whose background is Hindu must have had the concept of *Karma* (deeds) in their thinking. According to Taylor, the concept of karma is closely attached with the concept of rebirth (Malaviya, 258). Another example in which a cultural translation occurs is with reference to the concept of Trinity. In Hinduism the trinity is Brahma, Vishnu, and Mahesh where

as in Christianity the trinity is represented by God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. However, Vahlji Bechar does not simply substitute one concept for the other; rather he combines the concepts in the words parameshwar and ishwar to represent God the Father and the Son. Similar to this in the hymn no 96 Bechar describes the trinity of Christianity. In song numbers 07, 14, and 19 Bechar uses the word Ishwar. In Gujarati Bechar uses the word *Pavitra aatma* for Holy Spirit. In hymn number 09 Bechar gives the idea regarding the concept of hell. For example

Sarve je je dushto honse, prabhune nahi smaray,

Mrut loko ne te jase sandha, pade narak mojhar (Bechar, 10)

(All who are wicked will not be ashamed of the lord

The dead people are haunted by hell)

Rev Glasgow translated the same song on the same theme like this.

Narak ma dubse gunhgar

Ne prabhu na sahu j visarnar

Pan jeo nirankar thay

Teo kadapi na bhulay (Bechar, 26)

(The sinner will drown in hell

And forgetful of God

But those who are unrepentant

They are never forgotten).

In this context Malaviya also discusses the philosophy of Karma which makes a person responsible for his troubles and distressful situation. Malaviya also discusses the mass movement in 1870s. Because of this the people from lowest castes or even outcast came to Jesus Christ. According to him these people were unloved by the higher caste. Their low social status and poor economic situation was seen as the result of their evil deeds in past life. No grace or love could be shown to them because it was believed that they deserved this treatment for what they did in past lives. Therefore, Malaviya says, that in this situation, the theology of the grace of God becomes an entirely a new experience for early Christians (Malaviya, 56).

This insight from Malaviya is very important for understanding the social reality of early conversion. However, it is also to be noted that Taylor's use of words from Hindu religion must have also attracted the attention of the upper caste people as they were familiar with the words used in the religious texts. Thus, it seems there is a double significance to the use of Hindu religious concepts and the sanskritized words used for them in *Daud na Geeto* [The Psalms of David]. The important point is the early missionaries also used people's language to make them understand the new concepts. Some of the ways in which *Daud na Geeto* [The Psalms of David] and *Khristi Geeto* achieves these are noted below.

The songs in *Daud na Geeto* [*The Psalms of David*] by Bechar and Rev. Glasgow has written in very old Gujarati language. The words used in the songs were different compared to the standard modern Gujarati of the day. When we compare some of the old words with the reprinted songs in *Bhajansanghrah* we can see the difference. Thus, in *The Psalms of David* words like *maj* and *amm* appear but they are replaced by the new standard form like *muj* (me) *ammo* or *amme* (we

are) in the same songs. They were replaced in the very 20th century where print can be used to standardized the Gujarati language. In every song where poet used these kind of words are replaced by standard Gujarati words like in song numbers 5, 6, 7 etc. The examples are as below

Examples:

Dev tu, kan de hu tani vat ne, lax tu rakhje muj dhyane. (Bechar, 4)

[Oh God, please listen to my words and keep attention what I am saying)

The songs collected in *Khristi Geeto* compared to *The Psalms of David* are in more clean and standardized Gujarati language. The songs which are taken from *Geetsastra* in *Khristi Geeto* have Latin titles too. This suggests that those songs were translated from original Latin songs. For example,

(Savarni prathnane mate)

(Benedicite Omnia Opera)

(Mara Prabhuna thambh sivay, hu to biju na janu kai-e rag)

Aapo prabhune dhanyavad, stavo, sada mano buland-tek

Prabhu na sakal krutyao, duto, aakash ne aakashi jal (Bechar, 4)

((For the morning prayer)

I don't know anything without my God's

Thanks to the God, worship him every time

God's every deeds, messengers, sky and water of the sky)

Khristi Geeto have 92 songs and it also has some prayers in prose. This collection is specially collected only for Sabarkantha missionaries. Additionally, we can also see that the words from Hindu context are changed to a general context in Bhajansanghrah.

Malaviya in his thesis also draws attention to the new words formed by Taylor. In his discussion, Malaviya refers to Taylor's song number 235 (Malaviya, 216). He says that in this song Taylor did not use the word 'church'. Instead, he uses words like bhaktasamaj (community of devotees), prabhu no suddh samaj (Lord's pure community), and khristana sant (Saint Christ). By this he emphasizes that Christian life is not just individual life. He also emphasizes community worship and also the need of brotherly love and single-mindedness among the community as they worship the living creator God (Malaviya, 61). This kind of religious community is a very new concept and it may not have been possible to find a cultural substitute. Thus, it can be seen that in the act of cultural translation the formation of new phrases out of the use of local words was important for the early missionaries.

The earlier discussion focused on the way in which language and concepts are used in the context of a new religion establishing itself in a different locale. Some of the instances showed that there were many substitutes, mixtures and new coinages in language in the process. How can this be understood in the larger context of colonialism and conversion?

One of the theoretical frameworks in which the above can be placed is that of the concept of Hybridity. Antony Easthope in “Homi Bhabha, Hybridity and Identity, or Derrida versus Lacan” discusses the meaning of hybridity in general and also in the view of Homi Bhabha. He says:

Hybridity can have at least three meanings - In terms of biology, ethnicity and culture. In its etymology it meant the offspring of a tame sow and a wild boar, hybrida, and this genetic component provides the first meaning. A second definition of hybridity might be understood to mean an individual "having access to two or more ethnic identities. (Easthope, 145)

According to Bhabha ‘hybridity is camouflage’ (193) and, he also discusses ‘hybridity as heresy’ (226), as a creative category. It is ‘how newness enters the world’ (Bhabha 227). And it is bound up with a ‘process of Translating and transvaluing cultural differences’ (Bhabha, 252).

Additionally, Bhabha says ‘Hybridity’ commonly means the creation of new transcultural forms within the contact zone produced by colonization (Bhabha, 8). Sudipto Chatterjee in the introduction of his work *The Colonial Staged* says that hybridity records difference and sameness, mimesis and alterity at the same time (Chatterjee, 11).

All the above definition and descriptions point to the idea that within colonialism the intermixture of cultures in a complex question of hierarchy of discourses. However, the question of hierarchy is not simple as to there are one high and the other low. From the study of both *Daud na Geeto* by Bechar and *The Psalms of David* by Rev. Glasgow and *Khristi Geeto, Subidh*

Garbavali, Gujarati Bhasha nu Vyakaran it is clear that while the songs in it were written for a popular audience they were also trying to create a conceptual language of Christianity in Gujarati. Similarly, it was also clear that while the actual number of early converts came from the castes considered lower in Hinduism the songs were written also to make the upper caste people to accept it who might be more familiar with the conceptual language. Additionally, the function of a book like *Daud na geeto* [The Psalms of David] is about conversion, which means the language of the songs would have to be persuading people to a new religion. But at the same time, Gujarati language cannot merely imitate the European theological language. Thus, it creates these complexities.

Some of these complexities can be further understood with the notion of imitation/mimicry as explained by Bhabha. According to Bhabha:

colonial mimicry is the desire for reformed, recognizable other, as a subject of a difference that is almost the same but not totally. In mimicry the self-desires to be like other but not totally. So Bhabha wants to say that “the discourse of mimicry is constructed around ambivalence in order to be effective (Bhabha, 122).

In mimicry we can say the subject tries to be like the other but cannot do so completely. There will always be a lack or an excess. The example given by Bhabha is that of the education of women in colonial India; eastern women imitated the western women when they were given the right to education but this imitation could never be total. In this regard the role played by nationalist thought in India is important. Bhabha further explains that during the time of colonialism, in the arena of mimicry and mockery, the dual face of people challenged the civilizing ideology of the

colonizers. The people were imitating the colonial people but only partially. They created or rather became parodies of the civilizing colonial figures. They were trying to imitate the colonial master while retaining their own personality and tradition thus creating a dual personality. According to Bhabha, this is central to the idea of nationalism.

How can this process be understood in the context of the early Christians in India? Gauri Viswanathan in her work *Outside the Fold* clarifies how people who convert manage to control and confuse the discourse of identity. She takes the example of Narayan Waman Tilak, an upper caste Marathi man who converted to Christianity much consciously. She states that in his creative writings he not only tested the principles of Hinduism but also that of traditional Christianity (Viswanathan, 40). On the same page Viswanathan notes that Tilak wanted the Indian Christians not only to leave casteism but also to be nationalistic; he wanted them to learn the English language and the principles of equality in Christian theology but also to study the Marathi saint poets like Jnaneshwar and Tukaram as they also gave the message against caste and propagated equality. More importantly, she notes how Tilak often launched a severe criticism against the “paternalistic attitude” of the European Missionaries (Viswanathan, 40).

Further it is very important to understand how these two cultures feeds into the new public sphere. In the next chapter I will discuss what were the impacts of print culture and translation on the construction of a Gujarati Christian public sphere. What were the reaction when public encounter the new cultures and what were the effects of the emergence of these two cultures.