

# Arun Kolatkar's 'Sarpastra': Issues in Translation and Bilingual Study

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**Abstract:** Bilingualism is the inherent feature of the most writing in India since the history of innumerable invasions. Since the time of British it has become more so as if the writers are the pencil sharpened at both the ends which could write from both the ends. In literary writings it is a matter of curiosity to find out what happens if an author writes in two languages, prolifically and with equal ease. What impact does his writing in one language leaves over the other and vice versa? It becomes even more interesting if the writer is self translator as well. Each time one cannot just think in terms of losses in translation. Writing in two languages becomes a creative need for poets like Arun Kolatkar. Hence the drafts of poems in two languages, Marathi and English invite the reader's attention as separate poems and not as translation. The paper draws the attention towards the phenomenal bilingualism and the consequent process of translation in poems of Arun Kolatkar. It attempts a close comparative-linguistic

study of a long poem, 'Sarpasatra', with an intention of studying close impact of each language over other.

Though, Kolatkar started writing poems in the decade of sixties, most of his poetic oeuvre has been published during 2003 and 2004, slightly before his death. Hence he keeps a strong claim over being a poet after 1980s both in Marathi and English.

"The pluriform world we know speaks multilaterally but very often it is received and understood in a uniform manner that is crafted by the dominant language. Once translation theory instills 'loss' at the very heart of language and moreover insists that each language is a translation into and within itself then it becomes possible to appreciate and respond honestly to the heterogeneities of the world and its many words. Such an understanding of the cultural politics of translation, as a matter of fact, is part of larger thesis that argues that the colonial modern condition itself is

an effect of an uneven incomplete and an insufficiently multilateral translation.”<sup>1</sup>

Translatability depends on the culture specificity of a work. More culture bound a work less the translatability. Kolatkar has translated few of his small surreal pieces like ‘Irani’, ‘The Hag’, ‘Alphabet’, ‘Seventeen lions congealed in a carpet’ etc. These poems, as has been noted by Vilas Sarang,<sup>2</sup> are surreal in nature and surrealism being part of western poetic tradition they proved more successful in translation. The poet could recreate almost every possibility of meaning in target language. There are comparatively less number of losses in these translations. At places the poet even adds more ambiguity, more possibilities of meaning in a target language version of these poems. But a poem like ‘Sarpasatra,’ because of its histo-mythic content, its length and culture- specificity that occurs due to Vedic terminology, an exact translation of it becomes a difficult task. Hence, instead of attempting an accurate translation, the poet creates a new version with approximately same basic meaning. And as Vilas Sarang <sup>3</sup>has stated, in case of self translations, the author should not be blamed for his taking liberty and not adhering to original. It's making changes invite it's evaluation as an independent poem. Any criticism over not adhering to original is irrelevant.

Self translation is not at all a neglected species. At list two Nobel Prize winner writers, Samuel Bakett and Ravindranath Tagore were self translators. Even Russian writer Vladimir Nobkov often translated his works from Russian into English. In case of Bakett translation was a chance to revise and correct (Brain Michel as quoted by Sarang) <sup>4</sup>. Thus, the self translation is just a part of author's total creative process.

Dr. Bhalchandra Nemade<sup>5</sup> in his essay on bilingual poetry makes a stand that total quantity of meaning of Marathi version of Irani has much more than translated version. He claims that the complexity and richness of meaning in Marathi is not / can not be brought successfully in foreign medium. He further accuses Kolatkar being populist and blames him for writing poetry in English. In spite of the culture specificity of the content, there remains the basic meaning (one which is same in two or more paraphrases of poem) as against the surface meaning (one which is decided by linguistic medium, the form of the poem). If deep meaning is translated, the medium of target language may add its specific surface meaning to a poem. There is no point in calling Kolatkar as populist for he didn't give any of his later English collections (Kala Ghoda, 'Sarpasatra') to

any of the international publishing houses in spite of their repeated request.

Who is an intended reader of Kolatkar's English poems? Even this is one of the allegations by Namade<sup>6</sup> that he writes for foreign reader. In a changing linguistic scene, English is neither a foreign language nor does he write for the foreign reader. English is a single language that connects the different parts of India from South to North. Even in cities, there are a considerable number of people whose mother tongue is Marathi but they don't read in Marathi. It is this group which may be an expected reader and not necessarily the foreign (British, White, European) reader in colonial – imperial conditions. Besides, to express the message in another language may also be a creative need of the author as it had been case of Backett. For Backett as it had been cited, translation was a chance to correct and to revise. Even in Kolatkar's poetic sensibility, he assumes complete objectivity and absence of emotions and sentiments as an aesthetic strategy. Foreign language as a medium helps de familiarize local emotion. So Kolatkar's writing in English is his attempt of achieving objectivity. Still another allegation put forth by Namade<sup>7</sup> is, 'none of the characteristics of Marathi poems by Kolatkar are found prominent in his English poems'. Viewing the total poetic canvas of Kolatkar's poetry, regardless of

language, we find that even his poems in Bhijaki Wahi, Chirimiri, as compared to his first collection 'Arun Kolatkarchya Kavita' are very different in character. In English the poems in 'Jejuri' are much different in character from poems in 'Kala Ghoda'. But we even surprisingly observe that his poems in 'Jejuri' and that of 'Chirimiri' are much closer in character.

The last point is regarding the criticism of translated literature in general. How to evaluate translated literature? Which value system and aesthetic principles should we apply for it, one that of source language or that of a target language? Due to lack of a concrete paradigm regarding the issue, a bilingual student has to rely on comparative study of a work, in finding out what is more and what is less. But such a study provides an opportunity for intertextual analysis of the translated text, provided that the translated text is an intertext.

Traditional idea of translation related to an inevitable process of loss and compensation. Such traditional concept have been linked by post-structuralist thinkers as Jaques Derrida to the notion of logocentrism. According to Derrida (1995) logocentrism, within traditional philosophy, underlies man's search for unique truth through reason and this search for truth influences conceptions of the subject, language and translation.

The post structuralist thought has sought to redefine and reflect up on such long standing notions of language and translation, especially in the context of deconstruction. Jaques Derrida, “by denying the existence of truth, origin and center, also denies the possibility of semantic transport between languages, believing instead in recognition , a play of meanings linked to context and subject to space and time factors. According to Derrida (1995:232), “in the absence of centre or of origin, everything turns into discourse, i.e. a system in which the central, original or transcendental meaning is never absolutely present outside of the system of differences.” Such notion calls into question the actual status of the original text and underlying idea that its equally original meanings-devised by the author’s genius- serves as an unquestionable basic for translator’s work. Therefore, the relation between the translated text and the original is redefined in terms of an intertextuality that presupposes mutual debt. In this new light, a translation helps the original to enjoy renewed life in later generations and the never ceasing production of meanings justifies the notion of translation as a new text, a reading offered by a socio-historical and cultural subject who is part of given community. Although this new status of translation has now been widely studied in

scholarly research, the old logocentric assumption still dictates many contemporary analyses of translations and their effects. This is especially true in case of poetry translations, in which the combination of sound and meaning is considered solely responsible for the poeticity of a text. This is important for the present analysis, as the idea of translation as a never ending process of loss and compensation is still extremely vivid.

Inevitably this analysis is also of a comparative nature. However, such comparison does not aim to detect equivalences with the original Kolatkarian text. This aims to verify how the author makes his choices which reveal underlying ideologies. Calling attention to certain linguistic and literary details we aim to identify specific aspects of translation which make a claim of the translated text as the separate version in other language i.e. English.

The article attempts a comparative study of Marathi and English versions of a poem "Sarpasatra" by Arun Kolatkar. According to R. S. Kimbahune,<sup>8</sup> Kolatkar himself calls the English version of the poem as a separate poem and not the translation. This study is an attempt to find out reasons why the poem should not be called a translation? What are the factors that invite the attention of reader to view it as an independent poem? What are the

comparative linguistic (Semantic, Syntactic and phonological) features of each version of the poem. It is also an attempt to find out whether a shared knowledge of one's mytho-historical background adds to the depth of meaning of a particular poem.

Structure of the poem:

The apparent structure of both the versions is similar one. The poem is divided into three parts:

a. The first part opens with a monologue by Janamejaya who proclaims his plan of revenge by demolishing the whole species of snakes for one killed his father Parikshita. He announces the plan of 'Sarpasatra' in order to fulfill his vicious will. Total number of Stanzas in Marathi is twenty two, while in English it is nineteen.

b. The second part of the poem opens with Jaratkaru speaking to her son Aastika. The title of second part is merely 'JARATKAU' in Marathi while as it is 'Jaratkaru Speaks to Her Son Aastika' in English. This second part has two sub divisions in English and three in Marathi.

c. In the third part the voice behind the whole drama appears telling the happenings after the yajnya is over. The title of this part in Marathi is 'avabhritsan' and 'The Ritual Bath' in English.

In both the versions a consistent pattern of three line stanzas in free verse is followed. It uses a first person narrative throughout.

Janamejaya, son of late Parikshita opens the poem by telling his plan of revenge of his father's death who died of snakebite, by removing each and every snake from the surface of the earth. He even talks of arranging 'Sarpasatra', a snake sacrifice for the purpose. Its narration in Marathi is quiet leisurely. He expresses himself the way any common man, in his angry mood will do. He does not follow any restraint that is suited to the king of some country. The narrator fully enjoys his story telling stance. English version on the contrary is more compact and to the point. The sequence of stanzas as it appears in both the version is very different. In Marathi version, the reason why Janamejayas father died is delayed purposely. The syntax of this version creates suspense in the mind of a reader for a While. It goes:

*'Maze Bap Kasa Mela*

*Mala bilkul mahit navata kahi*

*Kalpanach navati iteke divas*

*Mi far lahan hoto a tenva,*

*Pan eka sapane marla mhane tyala*

*Muddam dukh dharun.*<sup>9</sup>

The first stanza, talks of the fact that he didn't know how his father died. But as he had known the reason recently, it is placed in the second stanza. Thus, there is a division of reader's attention through syntax:

1) The thing that Janamejaya did not know the reason of his father's death for long time.

2) He had known the reason recently that he died of snakebite when he was too small.

In English version of the poem, the reason of his father's death is disclosed in the opening stanza itself:

*'it was a scheming snake, I'm told,  
with a grudge against my great  
grandfather that killed my father  
killed him with venom  
that now gained in potency  
through years of patient waiting.'*<sup>10</sup>

In English version, Janamejaya's does not know the cause of his father's death and his knowing the fact lately comes in stanza 14 to 17. The stanza which describes, Takshaka distributed sweets after death of Parikshita comes in parenthesis in English while Marathi version doesn't use any parenthesis for the same. Janamejaya after initiating the subject further explains his plan of vengeance Marathi version takes four bare lines for it.

*'pan ata Janamejayashi gath ahe mhanava  
kadravanna  
tya eka krityabaddal  
kiti mothi kimmat majavi lagnaray aplyala  
yachi ajun kalpana nahi tyanna'*<sup>11</sup>.

In spite of being so short it makes use of casual, colloquial style of ordinary speech which is unsuitable for a king / prince or any hero of an epic. It is a deliberate deviation from the original high frowned style of epic. By using the colloquial language of contemporary people, the poet makes the problem of Janamejaya the problem of every contemporary person. What is so swift, precise and effective in Marathi takes an elaborative and a very blatant expression in English:

*my vengeance will be swift and terrible  
I will not rest  
until I've exterminated them all*

*'they will soon discover  
that no hole is deep enough  
to hide from Janamejaya.'*<sup>12</sup>

After Janamejaya explains his plan of revenge, the first part closes and in the second Jaratkaru appears speaking to her son Aastika. She tells the complete history before 'Sarpasatra' to her son. The title given to this part in Marathi is simply 'Jaratkaru'. It is only when the reader

actually reads the poem comes to know that she is talking to her son Aastika. A reader is left to himself to find out to whom Jaratkaru speaks and what her relationship to Aastika is. But the title of the English version is 'Jaratkaru speaks to her son Aastika'. Due to self explanatory title, a reader feels comfortable with all necessary information at hand that helps interpret the poem.

Both the versions of this part are characterized by the use of subtle irony and humorous expression. But the proportion at which each of these features found their expression is different. The tone of Marathi version is highly colloquial and relaxed while in English it is still formal, in spite of its being ironic and conversational. The comparison of few opening stanzas will make the point clear. In Marathi we read:

*“sap chawala  
ni maza bap mela  
kenva  
tar mhane mi far lahan hoto tenva  
mala athawat pan nahi  
pan tyacha badla  
mhanun jagatlya yachayat saglya  
sapancha  
sarsakat sanhar karayacha  
asa tharawalaya me  
ekalahi jiwant sodayacha nahi  
asa jar kunitari mhanaya lagla*

*kunitari Mhanje arthat  
manusach ekhada  
karan Manus ha ek prani sodla  
tar ha asla vichar ankhi kunachya dokyat  
yenar?  
pan asa jar kuni mhanaya lagla  
tar kay karu aapan  
tyawar kay pratikriya hoil apli  
ha maskari kartoy apli  
asach vatel suruvatila bahutek  
kunalahi:  
mag jamel aapla  
de tali  
mazya aaila pan ek mungi chawali hoti  
mhanun disel ti mungi  
chirdayacha vrat ghetlaya mi  
prithwi mungihin hoiparyant te hotach  
rahil.”<sup>13</sup>*

Such an elaborate gesture full with irony, satire and humor! It takes an opportunity to place a good humored comment on the general human temperament. She (Jaratkaru) makes fun of Janamejaya's crazy plan of revenge. If satire is the literary art of diminishing a subject by making it ridiculous and evoking towards it attitudes of amusement, indignation and scorn, the passage is purely satiric.<sup>12</sup>

It not only derides but questions the saneness of King like Janamejaya. When the same passage occurs in English the use of irony and satire is less pungent. Even

the hilarious expression in Marathi becomes much serious. We read:

*'what would your reaction be?  
if someone were to come up to you and  
say,  
my father died of snakebite  
when? Oh, I was too young then  
I don't even remember  
but I'm going to avenge his death by killing  
every single snake that lives  
yes,  
by wiping out the whole species  
from the face of the earth  
or tell him about your own plan  
to cleanse the earth of all ants  
because one bit your mum.'*<sup>14</sup>

Thus, the English version achieves precision, makes use of rhetoric strategies, satire, humor etc. but at limited extent. The elaboration, colloquial usages, subtle irony brings healthy sportiveness in Marathi version. But the English version in spite of all these devices maintains a solemn serious tone with few exceptions.

Janamejaya announces the 'Sarpasatra' and the preparation for it gets started. Different people are allowed different responsibilities. All his friends and counselors support Janamejaya for his act regardless of its consequences. Marathi version elaborates many Vedic rituals, names of rishis, roles played by them

during the yajnya etc. It is full with specific Vedic jargon with words like hota, udgata, Ardhvayu, Sthapati Ritwij etc. Even the description regarding it is completely deleted from English Version. There are many stanzas in Marathi whose semantic substitutes are dropped from English version for e.g. the stanza like:

*'Chandabhargav hota hotoya mhane  
ani jaimini udgata  
acha? aani Ardhvayu?  
Pingal asa aikala mi.'*<sup>15</sup>

is completely deleted from English version. Even in English, there are certain parts which are specific to English version and they do not have any substitute in Marathi. For e.g. a stanza in which Lohitaksha advises:

*'that Saturn in asterism  
of uttasphaguni  
does not lead well for the project'*<sup>16</sup>

Or even a stanza which talks of the magnitude of Vyasa's epic:

*'I mean 2400 verses,  
lord have merci what it needs  
is good editor'*<sup>17</sup>

does not find any place in Marathi. The sequence in which the semantic substitutes



of each stanza occur is changed to suit the rhythmic possibilities of each language at places, Marathi Version uses carefully selected diction in which words borrowed from Sanskrit are in abundance. But at places he deliberately breaks this solemnity by using foreign words which are part of contemporary conversation. He also uses certain words and phrases of a layman's speech of modern time. They juxtapose the past and present and the time boundary disappears. What is true of the past is true of this time also. The whimsical and inhuman decisions of the rulers like Janamejaya destructed the masses in the past and the same has been happening in present time. Thus, the poem transcends the temporal conditions and comments on the contemporary human situation. We state a few stanzas of this type:

1.... " *yadnyamandapacha contract kunala milnar?*  
*hach ek jikdatikda*  
*deshbhar, nakyanyakavar, gavogav,*  
*samanya lokanchya*  
*charchecha vishay houn basto".* <sup>18</sup>

2.... " *udya samja ekhadya'*  
*randukarala '*  
*Aplya pilachi munja karayachi asel'*  
*tari kahitari shasradhar*  
*nakki Shodun kadhatil he lok'*

*No problem"*<sup>19</sup>.

3.... " *kharach ahe te pan pratikasha*  
*apli aai Nagawanshachi ahe ha vichar*  
*to aplya earrerchya*  
*add yevu det nahi* <sup>20</sup> etc.

In a dramatic structure of a poem, such a deliberate break in solemnity of diction helps achieve what Brecht calls alienation effect. It doesn't let the reader forget that they are listening to dramatic character which is just an illusion.

After killing Parikshita, Takshaka visits Jaratkaru and boasts about his bravery and Jaratkaru expresses her indignation and disapproval on what he had done. In English her disapproval limits merely to asking him why he did not take revenge on Arjuna himself and why did he wait for his grandson to grow up, she asks:

*'why did you wait?*  
*for his grandson to grow up*  
*to give him a taste of your terrible poison*  
*instead of Arjuna*  
*don't you know?*  
*that true revenge accepts no substitute'.* <sup>21</sup>

Marathi version just doesn't end with that. It gives a prolonged list of when, where and how revenge can be taken according to the Holy Scriptures. It goes:

'dukh Dharne  
he pavitra kartavya ahe pratyek nagacha  
nagdharma ahe to

pan jyana divachala asel  
tyachyavarach dukh dharta yeto  
vatel tyachyavar nahi.

yachi tula athavan karun dyayachi pali  
mazyavar yavi  
yachya sarkhe durdiva nahi Takshaka.

vatel tyala chavala tar nag  
aani veda kutra  
yat farak kay rahila mag

yadnyat eak vel pistpashu chalel,  
shunashep chalel,  
pan dukhat pryayi purusha chalat nahi

ekavar dharalela dukh  
tyachya mulachya, natawachya kinwa  
ankhi kunachya tari navawar

transfer nahi karata yet  
dukh : ekagrah:  
he pahilecha sutra ahe

kal dnatachya dukh sutratata  
ani dukhe vyabhichra: nisshiddha:  
he dusara

nishiddha eiwaji  
akshamyas:

asa path bhed adhalto kutha kutha.

ekachya gunhyasathi  
hajaroncha sarasakat hurada karana  
kitapat kshamyas ahe kinva nahi

yabaddal matra kaldanta kahich mhanat  
nahi

asa kadhi koni karel  
he tyachya swapnatahi ala nasanar  
bahutek

hi sarvaswi navin kalpana  
Janmejaya sarakhya  
ekhadya manasalacha suchu shakate' <sup>22</sup>.

Jaratkaru further goes on describing the actual 'Sarpasatra', a snake sacrifice organized by Janamejaya as a part of revenge on Takshaka for he killed his father. Marathi version splits the part in a new section but English poem is continuation of earlier part. While describing the atmosphere of 'Sarpasatra' special Vedic jargon from Sanskrit is brought into use. It uses the words like hota, udgata samagan, adhidevan, som, dashapavitra, yap, rashana, shamitsa, pasha, alabhan, havirbhag, pashushrapni, ardhvayu, ritvij, yag etc. which obviously have no substitute in English, for they are specific to Vedic Culture. In Marathi, they help creating proper setting for yajna. English version doesn't create any effort to

create such a setting nor does it use such specified jargon. The shared knowledge of the yajnya procedure creates many more layers of meanings in Marathi while the reader of English version is deprived of them.

Janamejaya makes a misuse of Agni for the sake of revenge during Sarpasatra. Even Gods had not been invited for this sacrifice. Sequentially the fact that Gods had not been invited for yajnya comes much earlier in English version and it then talks of the dishonor of Agni and the whole institution of yajnya. In Marathi, we read of the misuse of Agni and deliberate degeneration of yajnya at the earlier part and Gods not being invited comes as one of the signs of the overall dishonor.

During the Sarpasatra, snake after snake is being dragged to put in to the fire. The smell of snake flesh is pervaded in the atmosphere of Takshila. Jaratkaru makes a very mocking reference of the same:

*'soon will start thinking of fresh air  
as something unindian, alien  
and antinational.'*<sup>23.</sup>

Lines in Marathi are not so sharply mocking. She simply says:

*'ani aplyia Rastriya  
paryawarnacha  
ek bhag houn baslay.'*<sup>24.</sup>

The description of the snake flesh is very elaborate in Marathi:

*'ani naganchya jalnarya mansacha vas  
tarpentinemadhe  
purya taltana yava  
tasa kahisa  
haluhalu deshbhar pasarto  
ahe.'*<sup>25.</sup>

The olfactory imagery which makes the reader to smell the burning flesh is scarcely present in English. It is merely reduced to verbal description. In Marathi there are at list five stanzas which describe how people are busy in discussing the number of snakes being killed by far and expressing happiness over their own being humans and not shakes. English version glides over to the part where Jaratkaru says that people forget one thing that the earth after all rests on a hood of snake called Shesha. She expresses her proud that Shesha is her respected brother to whom she sends Rakhi every year. The 'Rakhi' in English becomes 'Bhaubij' in Marathi. 'Rakhi' and 'Bhaubij' are the cultural signs of brother-sister relationship. 'Bhaubij' of course is exclusively Marathi while Rakhi has its historical tradition in other regional cultures. Jaratkaru is worried about the future of the world. If Shesha gets the slightest idea of what's happening under name of 'Sarpasatra' he will give a toss to

his head in anger and then there will be the end of everything. This part of Jaratkaru's Speech makes use of code switching from English to Hindi:

*'khatam  
that's what I'm really  
worried about  
and once that happens  
then what?'*<sup>26</sup>.

Such a code switching is absent from Marathi version which uses colloquial expression in order to maintain the sportive, hilarious tone. The rhetorical style in Marathi leaves an everlasting impact of its own.

*'prithwichach adhar gelyaalvar  
To ni:shesh zalyawar'  
kasla domblacha rajya karnar ahes  
ani kuthachya dheklawar  
te tari kalu de baba  
ase vicharayala pahijel ahe konitari  
swatahala prithipati mhanun ghenarya  
ya Parikshitachya porala,  
ya majalelya bharatkulotpanna bailala'*<sup>27</sup>.

In the final part, the voice behind the drama appears to narrate the happenings after the snake sacrifice. The Marathi version depicts these happenings in a very swift manner spending some eighteen stanzas. English version consumes about twenty four stanzas for the same. Certain

stanzas in English are merely elaborative in manner. A very precise expression in Marathi risks verbosity when it appears in English for e.g. the phrase 'Ritwik Ani sadasya', containing three words becomes 'officiating priests honored guests and Vedic wizards and other intellectual supporters of the show' consist almost a complete stanza and single line.

Further when we read in Marathi :

*'Yadynamadapatil torana  
Bhandikundi, khamb, vita,  
Milel te lutun*

*Bajarbunge Brahman  
Tupacha chikhal tudavat  
Apaplya ghari jatat'*<sup>28</sup>.

For these two stanzas, in English we read:

*'Bands of brahmins'  
hangers on  
and assorted free loaders  
strip the place  
of everything that isn't nailed down  
and make off.  
with whatever they can lay  
their hands on.  
sacrificial vessels; furniture, deerskin  
bricks'*<sup>29</sup>.

In spite of such elaboration in three stanzas, the phrase 'tupacha chikhal tudwit' finds no place in English version. At places, the poet makes few additions in Marathi and we read:

*'Satra band padatat  
Ani lokana itar vishay shodhave lagatat  
Karamanukisathi'*<sup>30</sup>.

The same single stanza gets elaborated in two more and we read:

*'When these things come to an end  
people find  
other subjects to talk about  
than just  
the latest episode of the Mahabharata  
and the daily statistics of death:  
rediscover simpler pleasures  
fly kites,  
collect wild flowers make love  
life seems to return to normal  
but do not be deceived.  
though sooner or later  
these celebrations of hatred too,  
come to an end'.<sup>31</sup>*

After spending four complete stanzas, he enters to the description of fire produced for destruction of Bhrigis. Same addition of two stanzas has been made while talking

of the fire that Parashar produced for the massacre of Rakshasas which add nothing significant to the content of the poem. But throughout the poem the poet does not confirm to exact translation and at places there are new additions and permutations. And hence the poem in English invites the reader's attention as a separate poem.

To quote Lawrence Venuti, "The translator's interpretation is usually performed in and influenced by a cultural situation where values, beliefs and representations as well as the social groups to which they are affiliated are arranged in a hierarchical order of power and prestige. And the intertextual relations established by the interpretation affect both the source text and the text in the translating culture. The intertextuality is created by reproducing a preexisting word, phrase, or text in the translating language, whether specifically through quotations or more generally through imitations of graphemes and sound, lexicon and syntax, style and discourse. In a translation as in an original composition, quotation and imitation do not produce sameness or a simple repetition of the preexisting text. As soon as the reader recognizes the intertextuality, a difference also becomes apparent because of what Jaques Derrida has called the 'iterability' of language: the meaning of any signifier can change because it "can break with every given context and

engender infinitely new contexts in an absolutely nonsaturable fashion". A translation then recontextualizes both the source text that it translates and the translating language text that it quotes or imitates, submitting them to a transformation that changes their significance."<sup>33</sup>

Hence the intertextual relations that a translation establishes are not merely interpretative, but potentially interrogative: they describe forms and meanings that invite critical understanding of the quoted or imitated texts, even the cultural traditions and social institutions in which those texts are positioned, while simultaneously inviting the reader to understand the source texts, on the basis of texts, traditions and institutions specific to translating culture.

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3. Sarang Vilas, 2000, 'Marathi Padyacha Engraji Avatar', Ibid.

4. Brion Michael, 'Art in Microcosm: the Manuscript of Baketts Come and Go', quoted by Sarang, 2000.

5. Nemade B. V. 'Arun Kolatkar and Bilingual Poetry', Indian Readings in

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6. Nemade, *ibid*.

7. Nemade *ibid*.

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