

Investigating Mukarovsky's Structuralist Aesthetics in the Translations of Dylan Thomas' "Light Breaks Where No Sun Shines" and "Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night"

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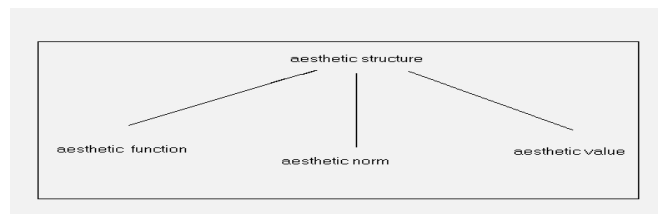
Abstract

A basic requirement in the translation of poetry is not to have the aesthetic value lost. This can be achieved by different means as there are different sources for this value on the levels of reception and production. In poetic texts translators should be aware of the aesthetic sources that make such texts valuable. Two of Dylan Thomas' poems ("Light breaks Where No Sun Shines" and "Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night") are approached using Mukarovsky's structuralist aesthetics to analyze the aesthetic sources in the poems and their translations. This approach pursues the aesthetic function, norm and value of texts. The analysis of the translation of the first poem (translated by Rabi' Tarbus 1995) reveals the aesthetic function, norm and value the translator presents while a translation of the second poem is presented in this research relying on these aesthetic components (of function, norm and value) in an attempt to produce an adequate translation that enjoys an equal value in the receiving culture.

1. Mukarovsky's Model

Jan Mukarovsky (1891-1975) is a Czech member of Prague Linguistic Circle who was influenced by Jacobson's emphasis on poetic function of language. He distinguishes between the standard language and poetic language and studies the norm and norm violation. He states that the poetic language is not a brand of the standard though they are closely connected. In poetry the standard language is the background against which the aesthetically intentional distortion of the linguistic component of the work (i.e., the norm of the standard) is reflected (Mukarovsky in Adams, 1971: 1050). This systematic violation is what makes the poetic utilization of language possible and without which no poetry would take place.

He defines the aesthetic structure as a "complex of aesthetically actualized components, grouped in a complex hierarchy, which in turn is unified by the dominance of one component over others" (Winner in Odmark, 1979:6). He formulates complex interrelationship of function, norm and value as shown in this diagram:



1.1 Aesthetic Function

The aesthetic function is autotelic and oriented upon the expression. It is only one

of a multitude of functions within a work of art, but it has dominance. Functions are never absolute and change with different time periods or cultures in the decoding or encoding processes because art is not abstracted from its social context rather it has dialectical interrelationship with other sectors of the social structure.

Aesthetic function is a series of situations in which specific intentions and responses combine to produce true range of specific facts and effects (Williams, 1977: 154). It is highly relational and depends upon the intention of the receiver. Mukarovsky gives an example of a sentence that can be perceived as a message and, in a different semantic orientation, as a poetic quotation from an imaginary text.

The sentence: 'Dusk is approaching' manifests different semantic aspects. If it is considered a message, the perceiver's attention will be focused on the relation between the designation and reality signified whether the sentence is erroneous or whether it is really getting dark or as an example from grammar devoid of relation to an immediate material situation. But, he adds, if the sentence is taken as a poetic quotation, the perceiver's attention would be directed to the surrounding context without which he would be at a loss (Winner in Odmark, 1979:14). Thus, the aesthetic function is autotelic and oriented upon the expression. It is only one (dominant) of a multitude of functions (subordinated) within a work of art.

For aesthetic function, Mukarovsky concludes the following: first, the aesthetic function is not a property of an object or explicitly connected to some of its properties. Second, it is not totally under the control of an individual, although from a purely subjective standpoint, the aesthetic function may be acquired by anything

regardless of its organization. Third, stabilizing the aesthetic function is a matter for the collective and is a component in the relationship between the human collective and the world. Thus, the distribution of the aesthetic function in the material world is tied to a particular social entity (Mukarovsky 1936 quoted in Selden, 1988:262). It has an isolating power to isolate undesirable associations of things or persons. It is a socially differentiating factor that serves in 'prestige' in addition to that it evokes pleasure and intensifies it (ibid:264).

1.2 Aesthetic Norm

Norms are seen as the underlying principles of the architecture of artistic texts as the grammatical principles organize the natural language. These norms do not have the force of legal rules; rather they are changeable. In fact, the aesthetic norms are more changeable than other norms because they are forever being challenged while other norms of other systems remain more stable. The violation of the norm of the standard is systematic violation and this makes the poetic utilization of language possible. Thus, "the more the norm of the standard is stabilized in a given language, the more varied can be its violation, and therefore the more possibilities for poetry in that language" (Mukarovsky in Adams, 1971: 1050).

1.3 Aesthetic Value

As for the aesthetic value, Mukarovsky regards it as the necessary but not the sole value for a work of a verbal art. Other values that are existential, intellectual and ethical may coexist within a work of art that it is possible to evaluate a work of art from the point of view of a variety of extra-aesthetic values. The text is a collection of extra-aesthetic values, but the artistic nature of the work of art is seen only in terms of aesthetic evaluation. The aesthetic value

dissolves into individual extra-aesthetic values and becomes a general term for the dynamic totality of their mutual interrelationships.

This abolishes the distinction between form and content because all the elements are components of form and all components are equally the bearers of meaning and extra-aesthetic values and thus components of content. Being an aesthetic value or non-aesthetic is something relational and variable and depends on the changing temporal and spatial contexts (Winner in Odmark, 1979:12). Like functions, values are never absolute and change with different time periods or cultures in the decoding or encoding processes.

For Mukarovsky, aesthetic function, norm and value change with time and place, social rank and with history and social strata; though he abandons the concept of aesthetic value in referring to it as being an assembly of extra-aesthetic values and nothing else. The aesthetic value, for him, has evaporated into extra-aesthetic values.

Aesthetic components of function, norm and value are investigated in two poems of Dylan Thomas that are mentioned below.

2. The Poems and Their Translations

Dylan Thomas (1914-1953) is a Welsh poet who has his own imprint on modern poetry. His poetry is carefully crafted with complicated structure. His understanding of poetry lies in defining it as record of the individual struggle from darkness towards light. He believes that poetry must cast light upon what has been hidden for long time (Thomas in Ackerman, 1957:25). He held an apocalyptic view to poetry reflected in biblical allusions and mystical imageries he uses. These aspects in his poetry are best reflected in his *Collected Poems* from which two poems are chosen below for analysis.

2.1. Light Breaks Where No Sun Shines

Thomas' poetry dominated a long period in English poetry extending from the late 1930s and 1940s and afterwards. Therefore, there has been always a great interest in translating it into different languages.

"Light Breaks Where No Sun Shines" is one of his collected poems translated into Arabic by Nazir AL-Azama in Si'r journal in 1959. Another translation (into Arabic as well) for this poem has been produced by Rabi' Tarbus (1995:131-152) with a critical analysis on the former translation.

Here is the poem and Tarbus's translation:

Light breaks where no sun shines;
Where no sea runs, the waters of the
heart
Push in their tides;
And, broken ghosts with glow-worms
in their heads,
The things of light
File through the flesh where no flesh
decks the bones.

A candle in the thighs
Warms youth and seed and burns the
seeds of age;
Where no seed stirs'
The fruit of man unwrinkled in the
stars,
Bright as a fig;
Where no wax is, the candle shows its
hairs.

Dawn breaks behind the eyes;
From poles of skull and toe the windy
blood
Slides like a sea;
Nor fenced, nor staked, the gushers of
the sky

Spout to the rod
Divining in a smile the oil of tears.

Night in the sockets sounds,
Like some pitch moon, the limit of the
globes;
Day lights the bone;
Where no cold is, the skinning gales
unpin
The winter’s robes;
The film of spring is hanging from the
lids.

Light breaks on secret lots,
On tips of thought where thoughts smell
in the rain;
When logics die,
The secret of the soil grows through the
eye,
And blood jumps in the sun;
Above the waste allotments the dawn
halts.

(Thomas,1966:21)

نور ينبثق حيث لا شمس تشرق
نورٌ ينبثق حيث لا شمس تشرق
حيث لا بحر يسجرُ،
مياه القلب.. مدٌ وجزرُ؛
و سراج الليل في رؤوسِ الرؤى المنكسرة،
أشياء الضوء
تحزُّ الجسد.. حيث لا يكسو العظم لحم.

شمعةٌ في الأفخاذ
تُهيجُ الحبةَ و الشبابَ و تُحرق بذورَ العمرِ
حيث لا حب ينمو
فاكهةُ الرجلِ في النجومِ مسترسلة
نظرةٌ مثل تينة؛
حيث لا شمع ، تبدي الشمعةُ شعرها.

ينبثقُ الفجرُ خلف العيون
من صواري الجمجمة والإبهام
ينهال الدمُ العاصف مثل بحرٍ؛
آبارُ السماءِ على العصا تنهمرُ
مبتسمةً تتنبأ بزيت الدموع..

يدورُ الليلُ في المحاجرِ
مثل قمرٍ قيري، مثل أعماق المناجم؛
نهار يشعل العظمَ ؛
حيث لا برد، تفك الرياح القاشطة
أثواب الشتاء
فعلى الجفون صورة الربيع معلقة.

ينبثقُ النورُ على أقدار مبهمةٍ ،
على ذرى الفكرِ
حيث تفوح الأفكار في المطرِ ،
عندما تموت المنطقيات،
يكبر سرُّ الأرض أمام العين ،
الدمُ يقفزُ في الشمسِ
وعلى المزارعِ الخاوية يقف الفجرُ.

(Tarbus,1995:151)

Taking the poem and its translation as aesthetic structures reveals the aesthetic components of function , norm ,and value they are colored with. The last line in the first stanza of the poem contains the word “flesh” being mentioned twice with two different meanings, though not very far from each other:

File through the flesh where no flesh
decks the bones.

Tarbush (ibid:141) translates the first
“flesh” as الجسد in the sense it is used with

in the Bible(the English and Arabic versions) ;while he translates the second "flesh" as لحم. This line is translated as :

تحز الجسد ..حيث لا يكسو العظم لحم

The reason behind producing such a translation, Tarbus (ibid:142) states, is to reflect the religious implications associated with the word "decks" which is used in the Bible. Such a translation stirs religious emotions in the Moslem readers as well and instigates thinking of the Quranic verses:

فخلقتنا العلقة مضغة فخلقتنا المضغة عظاما ففسونا العظام

لحما ثم أنشأناه خلقا آخر

(The Believer or AL_Mu'minoon Verse 14);

وانظر الى العظام كيف ننشزها ثم نكسوها لحما

These verses show the Almighty's omnipotence in creation.

Moreover, the word "bones" carries connotations of Old Testament .It may refer to the dry bones that are derived from Ezekiel (ch xxxvii) in which the prophet predicts the resuscitation of the Jewish nation which had been split up and dispersed into Ten Tribes. These scattered bones are the bones of those tribes. Ezekiel prophesizes that these bones would be miraculously get joined in flesh and blood and stand up as living men(Mundra, 1996:110) The same sense of collecting the bones of human beings in general and reviving them is used in the Holy Quran in these verses : (قال من يحيي العظام وهي رميم " وقالوا أإذا كنا عظاما " (Jaseen Sura, verse 78); "ورفاتا أننا لمبعوثون خلقا جديدا" AL_Israa Sura (verse 49); وقالوا أإذا كنا عظاما ورفاتا أننا لمبعوثون " (AL_Israa ,verse 98); " خلقا جديدا " ليعدكم "قالوا أإذا كنا ترايا وعظاما لنا لمبعوثون" Verses أنكم اذا متم وكنتم ترايا وعظاما انكم مخرجون"

82 and 35 ,The Believers or AL_Mu'minoon Sura); "انذا متنا وكنا ترايا وعظاما لنا لمبعوثون"

"أإذا متنا وكنا ترايا وعظاما أننا لمدينون"

" و كاتوا (verses 16,53 AS-Safaat Sura);

يقولون أإذا متنا وكنا ترايا وعظاما لنا لمبعوثون "

"انذا كنا عظاما نخرة" (Verse 47 AL-Waqia Sura);

(Verse 11 AL_Naziat Sura)

(Verse 3 The Doomsday or AL_Qiyama Sura); which show the omnipotence of Allah The Almighty for Moslems.

The translation reveals that the aesthetic function intended by the poet is rendered because such a translation creates also a religious stimulus, though not identical with the original, since this function is relational and depends upon the intention of the receiver. Associations with the word "bones" in the English culture differ from the Arabic because Aesthetic function changes with cultures in the decoding and encoding processes. Yet, they convey one message that only Allah is the Omnipotent Supreme Being behind creation.

Aesthetic norm is reflected in the last line of the poem and its translation:

Above the waste allotments the dawn halts.

This line is translated (ibid:151) as:

على المزارع الخاوية يقف الفجر

The line shows a violation of the norm of the standard language .The standard norm of this line is : subject + verb + adverbial phrase .In this sense, the line would have been :

he dawn halts above the waste allotments

The violation of the norm is transposed into the target text to make aesthetic translation possible by raising the style

above the ordinary and making the translation starts with adverbial phrase.

Aesthetic value searches for the artistic nature of the work .Thomas' poem exhibits some artistic aspects that are reflected in the translation as well .The poem and its translation are coloured with parallelism, metaphor, repetition and personification.

The poem contains parallel structures like "where no sun shines"(l.1),"where no sea runs"(l.2)in the first stanza in addition to "where no seed stirs"(l.3)in the second stanza. These parallel structures are rendered correspondently as :

حيث لا and حيث لا بحر يسجر، حيث لا شمس تشرق
حب ينمو . Other parallel structures are "where no wax is " (l.6) in the second stanza as well ;and "where no cold is "(l.4) in the fourth stanza. Parallelism in these structures is rendered as : حيث لا برد , حيث لا شمع :

There are some examples of simile in the poem and its translation .Lines 5,3 and 2 in the second ,third and fourth stanzas respectively are translated with the same device as in : مثل ,ينهال.....مثل بحر ,نظرة مثل تينة: . قمر قيري .

Personification is another device(in the last line in the second stanza) which is mixed with metaphor .Other examples of personification are presented also in the two lines of the last stanza. Such personification is translated respectively as : الشمعة تري :

. يقف الفجر and الدم يقفز في الشمس , شعرها

2.2 Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night

This is another poem for Dylan Thomas approached by structuralist aesthetics in this paper. Here is the poem and its translation:

Do not go gentle into that good night,

Old age should burn and rave at close of day;
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Though wise men at their end know dark is right,
Because their words had forked no lightning they
Do not go gentle into that good night.

Good men, the last wave by ,crying how bright
Their frail deeds might have danced in a green bay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Wild men who caught and sang the sun in flight ,
And learn, too late ,they grieved it on its way,
Do not go gentle into that good night .

Grave men ,near death ,who see with blinding sight
Blind eyes could blaze like meteors and be gay,
Rage ,rage against the dying of the light.

And you ,my father, there on the sad height,
Curse, bless ,me now with your fierce tears, I pray.
Do not go gentle into that good night.
Rage ,rage against the dying of the light.

(Thomas,1966:159)

لا تمضِ الهوينا في عتمة ليل وظلام
لا تمضِ الهوينا في عتمة ليل وظلام،
لا بد للعمر في آخره من عصف و احتدام؛

حين يدنو النهار من كف الفناء، ثر و انتفض عند موت الضياء.

في خريف العمر يدرك الحكماء أن الظلمة حق،

فلا نور يجدي ما عنوا من كلام

و لا يمضوا الهوينا في عتمة ليل و ظلام.

الصالحون ، آخر من جاء ومر

يصرخون يا لروعة مآثرهم الخرساء لو أنها رقصت على

ساحل أخضر،

يثورون ضد موت الضياء.

أهل البرية بالشمس امسكوا وغنوا لها ساعة في الفضاء،

و لم يعرفوا حين فات الأوان كم اسرجوا فيها نار الشقاء،

فلا يمضوا الهوينا في عتمة ليل و ظلام .

أهل الوقار حين الموت يرون الأشياء وراء حجب

لكن العيون العمياء قد تتوهج مثل الشهب،

فثوروا ضد موت الضياء.

وأنت يا أبتاه في اعاليك الحزينة،

العني ، أتوسل إليك ، وباركني الآن بشجي دموعك.

لا تقض الهوينا في عتمة ليل و ظلام.

واغضب و ثر عند موت الضياء.

Although the aesthetic function is tied to particular social entity in the material world (Mukarovsky:1936 in Selden ,1988:262),the idea of death as right is something that is agreed upon in Eastern and Western cultures .In Islam Moslems believe that death is right ,and Psalm (90:12) says "We are created by God .Both living and dying are part of the created order ,which biblical faith affirms as being good" ,and this shows that death is right for non-Moslems as well. The translation as الظلمة حق reflects this

aesthetic function and conveys the idea that death is right since both darkness and الظلمة refer to death .

An example of aesthetic norm could be detected in the title of the poem, which is repeated as a refrain, "do not go gentle into that good night".The poet uses an eccentric structure of grammar and syntax deliberately because he wants his poem to proceed by repetition rather than by proper syntactic arrangements ,as Cox (1957:3) maintains .The use of this structure :v + adj "go gentle" and not: v+ adv (go gently) is an eccentric use of a language and represents a deviation from the norm ,which makes the text more aesthetic .Such a feature is lost in the translation and the translated text uses another structure الهوينا to make the text endowed with aesthetic enhancement in the target language .

Aesthetic value of the work is reflected in its artistic nature. This value also changes with time periods and cultures. The poem is written in villanelle which is a French poetic form used for pastoral, simple and light verse. The form of the villanelle is five three-lined stanzas or tercets and a final quatrain .The first and the third lines of the first tercet recur alternately in the following stanzas as a refrain and form a final couplet(Cuddon,1984:748).Thomas employs this form for the serious subject of death to enhance the irony of beseeching a dying person to rage against death and not to give up easily.

Although this form does not represent part of the receiving culture, this chainlike quality of rhymes of verse is considered in the translation; though partially and with different rhyme scheme, in an attempt to preserve the force, beauty, and tenderness the villanelle has .The original poem is rhymed as :

aba aba aba aba aba abaa

while the translation is rhymed as:

abb caa ddb bba eeb ffab

Thus ,the translation does not represent a villanelle (which is a restrictive form) but shows interference of rhymes "a" and "b" within other rhymes in an attempt to preserve the chainlike quality the original poem has .

“Good night” is a metaphor and pun translated as عتمة ليل وظلام . The punning aspect is lost in the translation .Line 13 contains another pun represented by the word “grave”. This word is translated as أهل الوقار in which the punning aspect is lost again. Yet, this aspect is produced in the translation of line 18 as: لاتقض الهوينا in which the word تقض has a punning aspect in being playing on two meanings .

The metaphoric expression “dying of the light” in line 3 is translated as : حين يدنو which is a metaphor for the daylight since night is death so the dying of light means night again (which is death).Line 5 also is metaphorical:

...their words had forked no lightening

it is translated as : فلا نور يجدي ما عنوا من كلام

Both lines 10 and 11 contain metaphor and exaggeration .This is reflected also in their translation :

Wild men who caught and sang the sun in flight

اهل البرية بالشمس امسكوا وغنوا لها ساعة في الفضاء

and ...they grieved it on its way

اسرجوا فيها نار الشقاء.

Personification in lines 2 and 8 is rendered as well in the translation as in:

Old age should burn and rave at close of day

لا بد للعمر في آخره من عصف واحتدام

and ...how bright

heir frail deeds might have danced in a green bay

يا لروعة مآثرهم الخرساء لو أنها رققت على ساحل اخضر

Simile in line 14 is translated by means of using مثل:

Blind eyes could blaze like meteors

العيون العمياء قد تتوهج مثل الشهب

The paradox in line17 is rendered in the translation showing that the father's revolt against death is a bless for the son. Seeing a nearing death father screaming, yelling and crying out is a bless for the son because it reminds him of a militant man the father once was.

Moreover, translating the last line as : وأغضب وثر عند موت الضياء: enhances the aesthetic value of the translation which comes from variation of diction that stands for "rage" to create unity in variety.

3. Conclusion

The aesthetic aspect is the soul of any literary work .This aspect should be the first thing considered in literary translation .Thus, the translator of any literary work should always look for strategies to preserve this aesthetic aspect. Mukarovsky's structuralist approach of aesthetics is applied in the analysis and translation of two poems of Dylan Thomas to arrive at the components of the aesthetic aspect of these poems and consequently translate them aesthetically. Components of aesthetic function, norm and value are considered in the translation to preserve the aesthetic aspect of the poems and produce valuable translations with the least loss.

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الخلاصة

استقصاء البنيوية الجمالية لمكاروفسكي في ترجمة قصيدتي ديLAN توماس "ضوء ينبثق حيث لا شمس تشرق" و"لا تمض الهوينا في عتمة ليل وظلام" إن أحد الجوانب الأساسية في ترجمة الشعر هو أن لا يكون هناك فقداناً للقيمة الجمالية فيه.ويمكن التوصل إلى هذا بوسائل كثيرة كثر الموارد المختلفة لهذه القيمة على مستويي التلقي والنتاج.فعلى مترجم النصوص الشعرية أن يعي هذه الموارد الجمالية التي تعطي للنصوص قيمتها أدبية.يضم البحث تحليلاً للموارد الجمالية في قصيدتي "ضوء ينبثق حيث لا شمس تشرق" Light Breaks و"لا تمض الهوينا في عتمة ليل وظلام" Where No Sun Shines Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night وترجمتهما باستخدام الجمالية البنيوية لمكاروفسكي Mukarovsky إذ يتبع هذا النموذج الوظيفة الجمالية، والقاعدة والقيمة الجماليتين للنصوص. تبين ترجمة القصيدة الأولى (التي ترجمها ربيع عامر عام ١٩٩٥) كيف تبع المترجم الوظيفة والقاعدة والقيمة الجمالية في ترجمته بينما توظف هذه الوظيفة والقاعدة والقيمة الجمالية في تقديم ترجمة كافية للقصيدة الثانية تتمتع بقيمة جمالية مكافئة في الثقافة المترجم لها.