

Allusions in Kipling's "Just So Stories" and Their Armenian Interpretations

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Abstract

Kipling's stories, often referred to as 'a great chronicle of primal fables' (Green 1971), are very expressive due to the unique style of the author. Among various stylistic devices and expressive means, allusions used in the stories are of great interest from the point of view of analysis of both source and target texts. The point is that almost all the allusions are indirect and are engaged in a unique language play. This technique, obviously, poses difficulties for transferring the text from one language to another.

The article is devoted to the investigation of allusions and their interpretations in three of Kipling's "Just So Stories", namely "How the Whale Got His Throat", "How the Leopard Got His Spots" and "The Crab that Played with the Sea".

Key words: R. Kipling, language play, allusions, translation problems.

Introduction

Kipling's stories are valuable first of all because of the unique language he uses. It may seem to be childish at first sight, but as we go deeper and investigate it in more detail, it becomes clear why the story attracts the attention of so many readers. Kipling plays with language so well that the reading becomes a source of pleasure.

The translation of these stories is not an easy task since the translator will have to possess the appropriate knowledge, that is, he needs to know not only the TL but the language of children, their psychology to be able to guess how they will react to the words and intonation that the translator chooses for his translation. Besides he should show creative approach to the translation and be a person with vivid imagination at the same time not straying away from the original.

Allusions and Their Interpretations in "How the Whale Got His Throat"

Once upon a time the Whale ate fishes of all kinds and sizes. At last there was only one left in the sea, a small astute fish that hid behind the whale's ear and advised him to eat a shipwrecked mariner, to be found at latitude 50 North and longitude 40 West. The Whale swallowed the mariner and the raft he was sitting on. But once inside, the Mariner jumped about so much that the Whale asked him to come out. He answered that he would not, unless he was taken to the shore of his home. So the Whale took him to the beach and the mariner came out.

According to some Kipling scholars (Lewis 1995), the adventure described alludes to the story of Biblical Jonah. Jonah was a prophet. God wanted him to preach to the Ninevites, who were enemies of the Jews. Rather than preach to the Ninevites, Jonah fled to Israel and headed in the opposite direction of Nineveh. He boarded a ship. The ship was involved in a

big storm. Jonah realized that he was the cause of the storm (because he had refused God's calling) and asked to be thrown off the ship into the ocean. A large fish swallows Jonah:

But the Lord provided a large fish to swallow up Jonah.

(Jonah 1:17 New Revised Standard Version)

Though the name 'Whale' is not mentioned, the large fish is supposed to be a Whale. The relevant episode in the Bible reads:

*So God created the great sea monsters,
and every living creature that moves,
of every kind, with which the waters swarm...*

(Genesis 1:21)

In the Hebrew text of the Bible "tan" (plural "tannin") is used instead of sea monsters. The word translated as "great monsters" = "great whales" is the regular word for "dragons". The mentioned passage of Genesis in King James Version is translated as follows:

*And God created great Whales,
and every living creatures that moveth,
which the waters brought forth abundantly...*

In New Revised Standard Version we read: "Am I the Sea, or the Dragon, that you set a guard over me?" (Job 7:12) The sentence in King James Version sounds as follows: "Am I a sea, or a whale, that thou settest a watch over me?"

In New Revised Standard version we read:

*King Nebuchadrezzer of Babylon has devoured me
he has crushed me,
he has made me an empty vessel,
he has swallowed me like a monster
he has filled his belly with my delicacies
he has spewed me out.*

(Jeremiah 51:34)

In the book of Matthew (New RSV) the story about Jonah says he "was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster" (Matthew 12:40).

The comparison of different versions can help to form the succession:

tan – dragon – whale – great sea monster – great whale – large fish

So, finding himself in the dark belly of the large fish, that is the whale, Jonah repented and started to pray to the Lord, saying,

*I called to the Lord out of my distress,
and he answered me;
out of the belly of Sheol I cried,*

and you heard my voice.
 You cast me into the deep,
 into the heart of the seas,
 and the flood surrounded me;
 all your waves and your billows
 passed over me...
 Those who worship vain idols
 forsake their true loyalty.
 But I with the voice of thanksgiving
 will sacrifice to you;
 what I have vowed I will play.
 Deliverance belongs to the Lord!

(Jonah 2:2)

Melodious and honest prayers pleased God. The Lord spoke to the fish, and it spewed Jonah out upon the dry land.

Kipling's modern Mariner, who was 'a man of infinite-resource-and-sagacity', put into practice another method:

he jumped and he thumped and he bumped, and he pranced and he danced, and he banged, and he clanged, and he hit and he bit, and he leaped and he creeped, and he prowled and he howled, and he hopped and he dropped, and he cried and he sighed, and he crawled and he bawled, and he stepped and he lepped. (p.33)

The Armenian translation is as follows:

*խփեց – շոփեց, քիկացրեց – քիկքիկացրեց, ցափեց – ցափկո-
 փեց, շիկացրեց – շիկշիկացրեց, կծեց – կծոփեց, սողաց – սողս-
 ողաց, ոռնաց – կռնկռնաց, ելավ – ընկավ, բառաչեց – հառաչեց, շո-
 քեց – պպգեց, թռավ – թռվոաց:* (S. Seferian, p. 7)

In the Armenian version both semantics and rhythmic patterns are preserved. Translation strategy of replacing the word of the SL by a TL item is used. The word *cried*, for instance, is translated as *բառաչեց* which could hardly be justified in another context.

Rhythmical movement made the Whale hiccup. Shrewd Mariner ordered the Whale to take him home and then let out.

Allusions and Their Interpretations in “How the Leopard Got His Spots”

Long ago, the Zebra and the Giraffe used camouflage to hide from the Leopard, who had no spots, and a light-skinned Ethiopian hunter. However, Bavian the Baboon suggested the Ethiopian should change his skin to black and the Leopard should have spots.

Leopards were believed to have the power of changing the colour of their skin in order to lead humans astray or into their gasp, an ability comparable to the devil's tendency to put

on a pretty disguise and deceive humankind. In the Song of Solomon, the mountains of Amana, Senir, and Hermon are called “the mountains of the leopards” (Song 4:8).

Leopard skins are associated with Hebrew stories of Nimrod, a mighty warrior, and builder of the Tower of Babel (Gen 10:8-12; Gen 11:1-9). According to the Jewish legend, Nimrod possessed the leopard skins which conferred great power upon their wearer, making Nimrod able to command wild creatures to come to his aid in battle.

In ancient times, the leopard was not thought of as a separate species but was believed to be the result of the mating of lions with panthers; hence its name “leo-pardus”, or “lion-panther”. As a result this misunderstanding, Early Christian mythology sees the leopard as a symbol of the offspring of unlawful or unwholesome intercourse, while its spots made this animal a symbol of sin.

*Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard its spots?
Then may you also do good who are accustomed to do evil.*

(Jeremiah 13:23)

Kipling raises the same question in his Leopard story: “Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard its spots?” This direct allusion should be translated in accordance with translated Bible version of the given language. For the Armenian translator it would not be difficult to look into the Armenian version of the Bible which reads:

*Մի՞թե Եթովպացիս կփոխե իր մորթը, կամ ինչը՝ իր խաչադուցաները:
(Երեմիա ԺԳ:23)*

The translator can take this direct allusion from the Bible, but the problem is that Kipling’s text includes a pun based on two meanings of the word ‘spot’: spot as a small mark on the skin that has a different colour, and ‘spot’ as a particular area or place. Here is an extract from Kipling’s tale:

So he changed his skin then and there, and the Leopard was more excited than ever; he had never seen a man change his skin before.

“But what about me?” he said, when the Ethiopian had worked his last little finger into his fine new black skin.

“You take Baviaan’s advice too. He told you to go into spots.”

“So I did,” said the Leopard. “I went into other spots as fast as I could. I went into this spot with you, and a lot of good it has done me.”

“Oh,” said the Ethiopian, “Baviaan didn’t mean spots in South Africa. He meant spots on your skin.” (p.66)

In the Armenian version the translator succeeded in keeping the structure and the meaning of the Biblical allusion and created an interplay between two rhymed words within a text. She used *բծեր* as a small mark on the skin that has a different colour and *զծեր* as path, direction:

Եվ այսպես, նա տեղնուտեղը փոխեց մաշկը: Ընչառյուծը, որ առաջին անգամ էր տեսնում մաշկը փոխող մարդու, իրեն լրիվ կորցրեց:

– Իսկ ն'ս, իսկ ն'ս, – անհանգստացավ նա, երբ Եթովպացու վերջին ձկույթը ծածկվեց փայլուն սև զույնով:

– Դու էլ հեպտեր Օնագլուխ Կապիկի խորհրդին: Նա քեզ սասց, որ գնաս ուրիշ զծերով և ծածկվես բծերով:

– Ես հենց այդպես էլ արեցի, – արդարացավ Ընչառյուծը, – քեզ հեպ հնարավորինս արագ գնացի ուրիշ զծերով, և լավ էր, որ եկա:

– Օ՛ ֆ չես հասկացել, – սրտնեղեց Եթովպացին, – Կապիկն ի նկատի ունի ոչ թե Հարավային Աֆրիկայի զծերը, այլ մաշկիդ բծերը:

Եվ այսպես՝ նա տեղնուտեղը փոխեց մաշկը: Ընչառյուծը, որ առաջին անգամ էր տեսնում մաշկը փոխող մարդու, իրեն լրիվ կորցրեց:

– Իսկ ն'ս, իսկ ն'ս, – անհանգստացավ նա, երբ Եթովպացու վերջին ձկույթը ծածկվեց փայլուն սև զույնով:

– Դու էլ հեպտեր Օնագլուխ Կապիկի խորհրդին: Նա քեզ սասց, որ գնաս ուրիշ զծերով և ծածկվես բծերով:

– Ես հենց այդպես էլ արեցի, – արդարացավ Ընչառյուծը, – քեզ հեպ հնարավորինս արագ գնացի ուրիշ զծերով, և լավ էր, որ եկա:

– Օ՛ ֆ չես հասկացել, – սրտնեղեց Եթովպացին, – Կապիկն ի նկատի ունի ոչ թե Հարավային Աֆրիկայի զծերը, այլ մաշկիդ բծերը:

(S. Seferian, p.24)

The analyzed version is a good example of a translation with minimum change and also extra allusive guidance is added in the text. In the SL text we have a sentence - *He told you to go into spots*, where the translator adds some guidance in the TL text to show the meaning of the sentence – «*Նա քեզ սասց, որ գնաս ուրիշ զծերով և ծածկվես բծերով*» Besides, in the Armenian version the pun used in the original text is preserved owing to the interplay of words within the text.

Attention should be focused also on the finale of the story and its Armenian translation:

Oh, now and then you will hear grown-ups say, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the Leopard his spots?" (p.68)

Ժամանակ առ ժամանակ մեծերն ասում են, «Կարո՞ղ է Եթովպացին մաշկը փոխել, կամ Ընչառյուծը՝ բծերը», կամ էլ՝ «Կարմիր կովն իր կաշին չի փոխի»:

(S. Seferian, p.26)

In the translation the extra guidance addition strategy is used. The translator, being skillful and proficient, added a proverb to the allusion «*Կարմիր կովն իր կաշին չի փոխի*» – an appropriate explanation for Kipling's allusion.

Allusions and Their Interpretations in "The Crab that Played with the Sea"

At the beginning of the story the Eldest Magician gave all the animals their games to play, all but one great Crab who played with the sea and caused problems for Man. The

Eldest Magician used his magic to make the Crab small and able to live and hide in the ocean and on land; also he used the moon to put the waters twice a day, what we now call tides. Kipling based this story on the Malaysian legend and Biblical Book of Genesis. From Malaysian legend Kipling borrowed the character of the Crab who was the "First and only Crab" and existed long ago. This huge crustacean lived in a deep hole in the sea and was so large that its coming and going caused the ocean tides. The Eldest Magician alludes to the character of Lord God in Biblical Genesis. Though there are no direct Biblical allusions, parallels with Creation are obvious:

Before the High and Far-Off Times, O my Best Beloved, came the Time of the Very Beginnings; and that was in the days when the Eldest Magician was getting Things ready: First he got the Earth ready; then he got the Sea ready; and then he told all the Animals that they could come out and play. (p.162)

It is obvious from Kipling's text that he refers to the Creation when God makes the Earth, the animals and the Man. In the Bible we read:

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth.

(Genesis 1:1)

And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. (Genesis 1:9)

God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. (Genesis 1:10)

And the God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind. (Genesis 1:24)

The Armenian version of Kipling's allusion is as follows:

Անցած-գնացած օրերից շատ առաջ, Միրելի՛ Փոքրիկ, Սկզբնական Վաղ Ժամանակներում էր, երբ Մեծն Հրաշագործն արարում էր Առարկաները: Սկզբում նա արարեց Երկիրը, հետո արարեց Ծովը ու հետո ասաց բոլոր կենդանիներին, որ կարող են դուրս գալ և խաղալ: (S. Seferian, p.66)

In the text the strategy of a standard translation is used. Though the translation is not word for word, the sense is preserved and the maximum effect is achieved. The translation produces an effect on the TT readers similar to that of the original passage on the SL readers.

In the story the Son of Adam alludes to Adam.

But towards evening, when people and things grow restless and tired, there came up the Man (With his own little girl-daughter?) – Yes, with his own best beloved little girl-daughter sitting upon his shoulder, and he said, "What is this play, Eldest Magician?" And the Eldest Magician said, "Ho, Son of Adam, this is the play of the Very Beginning; but you are too wise for this play." And the Man saluted and said, "Yes, I am too wise for this play; but see that you make all the Animals obedient to me." (p.163)

In the Armenian version we have:

*Երեկոյան դեմ, երբ մարդիկ ու կենդանիները ուժասպառ եղան-
հոգնեցին, եկավ Մարդը (իր սեփական դստրիկ-աղջնակի հետ), այո՛,
իր սեփական-անչափ-սիրելի-դստրիկ-աղջնակին ուսերին նստեց-
րած ու հարցրեց.*

– Այս ի՞նչ խաղ է, Մե՛ծն Հրաշագործ:

– Հե՛յ, Ադամի՛ Որդի, սա ամենակզրի խաղն է, քայց դու չափա-
զանց իմաստուն ես, և այս խաղը քեզ համար հեշ քան է:

– Այո՛, ես չափազանց իմաստուն եմ, և այս խաղն ինչ համար հեշ
քան է: Այնպե՛ս արա, որ բոլոր Կենդանիներն ինչ հնազանդ լինեն, –
ողջունեց Մարդը Մե՛ծն Հրաշագործին: (S. Seferian, p.66)

The Bible says that the Lord God created animals and birds of every kind and Adam gave names to them:

*The Lord God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air,
and brought them to the man to see what he would call them;
and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name*

(Genesis 2:19)

When God created humankind, he decided to

*let them have dominion over the fish of the sea,
and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle,
and over the wild animals of the earth,
and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.*

(Genesis 1:26)

So, Kipling's Man comes to the Eldest Magician in order to know if all the creatures are obedient to him. Crab slips away deciding to play his own play. When all the animals received their orders "*the Eldest Magician wiped the fine dust off his hands*". Magician's hands were in dust because "*out of the ground the Lord God Formed every anim*" (Genesis 2:19). Crab tries to escape from any duty and in the result he becomes a small creature, the most inconspicuous constellation.

Conclusion

To sum up, allusions in Kipling's stories are mainly indirect and, thus, pose a great difficulty for the translator to recognize them. Besides, these allusions are often engaged in language play or puns, and in such cases the main objective of the translator becomes not only to recognize the allusions, but also to create a wordplay which is typical of Kipling's style. To understand allusions the translator should be aware of them. To be able to analyze and translate allusions of any piece of verbal art one should be aware of the author's intention as well as his/her global context (i.e. biography, worldview, etc).

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Գրական անդրադարձը և դրա հայերեն մեկնաբանության/թարգմանության խնդիրը Ռ. Քիփլինգի «Պատմվածքներ հենց այնպես» ժողովածուում

Բազմազան ոճական հնարների ու արտահայտչամիջոցների կողքին գրական անդրադարձը առանձնահատուկ տեղ է զբաղեցնում Ռ. Քիփլինգի «Պատմվածքներ հենց այնպես» ժողովածուում ընդգրկված պատմվածքներում, որոնցում դրանք միահյուսվում և ընթերցողին ներքաշում են մի յուրօրինակ լեզվախաղի մեջ:

Սույն հոդվածը ներկայացնում է գրական անդրադարձի մեկնաբանության/թարգմանության խնդիրը երեք՝ «Թե ինչպես վերափոխվեց Կեստի կոկորդը», «Թե ինչպես ընձառյուծը դարձավ բժավոր» և «Մովի հետ խաղացող խեցգետինը» պատմվածքների սկզբնաղբյուր և թիրախ տեքստերի քննալերությունը:

Проблема армянского перевода/интерпретации литературной аллюзии в “Сказках просто так” Р. Киплинга

Данная статья посвящена исследованию проблем интерпретации/перевода литературных аллюзий на материале сказок Р. Киплинга. Для анализа избраны три сказки, в которых аллюзии, наряду с различными стилистическими приемами, превращаются в уникальную игру, тем самым вызывая особые трудности в процессе перевода.