



**V. RAGHAVAN'S SANSKRITISATION  
OF  
RABINDRANATH TAGORE'S LYRICS IN THE PLAY NAṬĪ PŪJĀ**

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**Abstract:** *V. Raghavan(1908-1979) was a great Indologist and a Sanskritist per-excellence. He has shown sufficient interest in the literature of Rabindranath Tagore, so much so that he edited and compiled numerous pieces of Sanskrit translations of Tagore in the volume Samskrita- Ravindram published by Sahitya Akademy, New Delhi in 1966. In this volume he himself has translated into Sanskrit two plays of Tagore- Vālmīki Pratibhā and Naṭī Pūjā. Raghavan is a sound Sanskrit poet himself. He was famous as an instant poet. Hundreds of original verses in Sanskrit in the form of stotras and supravāta prayers to his credit prove his poetic heart. He has also Sanskritised some poems of the West. Therefore it would be interesting to see how he translates the lyrics of Rabindranath used in his plays and poems. At present we take Naṭī Pūjā , a play of Rabindranath and see how the Sanskrit translation of Bengali lyrics in it are capable of going parallel with the art and idea of Rabindranath.*

**Key words:** *Indologist, Sanskritisation, lyrical expression, classical language, lucidity*

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#### V. RAGHAVAN'S LYRICAL EXPERIMENT WITH NAṬĪ PUJĀ:

In the beginning of the play the mendicant Upāli comes to the stage and reflects on the sunrise in the morning. She sings a lyric of three lines which seems to be a lyrical expression but not exactly a metered lyric. As we find Raghavan has then very close in his translation with the original expression-

पूर्वगगनभागे दीप्तं जातं सुप्रभातं तरुणारुणरागे।

शुभशुभो मुहूर्तोऽद्य, सार्थकं कुरु तम्, अमृतेन पूरय तम्॥<sup>1</sup>

Here most of the words are found in the original Bengali. Therefore, Raghavan's translation has been very smooth. Here 'यातम्' was 'हड़ल' in Bengali. Bangla 'आजि' is done as 'अद्य' and 'के जागे' has been 'को जागर्ति'. Rest of the words are found in the original writing. Thus we feel that if any modern language uses highly Sanskritised words then it is easy to make its Sanskrit translation. In another place the character Śrīmatī sings a lyrical verse-

निशीथे किमुक्ता रहस्स प्रयातः

न जानाम्यहं तत् न जानाम्यहं तत्।

तदासीन्नु सुप्तौ तदासीन्नु बोधे

न जानाम्यहं तत् न जानाम्यहं तत्॥<sup>2</sup>

Somebody has told her something and has gone away but Śrīmatī does not remember his words. She also does not know whether she was sleeping or was awake when he left. Here the meaning of the verse vibrates with a soft and lyrical feeling. Raghavan has been able to catch that feeling beautifully in Sanskrit but still the original Bengali verse has a different grandeur and serenity. Here the word 'रहः' in Sanskrit is used for the Bengali word 'मने'. The rest has been an exact translation. But still the translation seems more labored for a simple Bengali expression -

निशीथे की कये गेल मने

की जानि की जानि ।

से कि घुमे से कि जागरणे,

कि जानि कि जानि।<sup>3</sup>



Same is the case in another verse where the beauty of the spontaneous expression of Tagore has been thwarted a bit in Raghavan's exercise in Sanskrit when Rabindranath writes-

वाँधन केन भूषणवेशे तोरे भोलाय  
हाय अभागी !  
मरण केन मोहन हेसे तोरे दोलाय,  
हाय अभागी !<sup>4</sup>

Raghavan translates it as-

बन्धो भाति कुतस्ते  
भूषणवेषेण हन्त मुग्धदुर्भाग्ये ।  
मरणं मोहयति त्वां  
डोलायां ते स्मितेन दुर्भाग्ये॥<sup>5</sup>

However here Rabindranath's word 'अभागी' has been creatively translated as 'मुग्ध-दुर्भाग्ये'. The simplicity of the word 'अभागी' has been majestic with the word 'दुर्भाग्ये'. Tagore's word 'दोलाय' is an action of the Death. But Raghavan has changed it tactfully as a noun – 'डोला' in locative singular.

However in another scene Śrīmatī sings a lyric of five verses where Raghavan has successfully tried to reflect the mind of the original poet. We present here the last one. Tagore writes-

से कि वाजे वुके मम,वाजे कि गगने,  
कि जानि,कि जानि !<sup>6</sup>

Here Raghavan translates it-

किं तद् ध्वनति मे चित्ते किन्नु तद् गगने तथा ।  
ध्वनतीह,न जानामि,नैव जानामि किन्नु तत्॥<sup>7</sup>



Here Raghavan not only makes a beautiful and exact translation but he also fills a gap in the second line on the demand of the *anuṣṭup* meter. Buddhist religion and philosophy is accepted as the background of the play *Naṭi Pūjā*. So very befittingly Tagore used Pāli phrases in some lyrical expressions. Lokeśvarī-a character in the play says in the first scene-

‘महाकारुणिको नाथो हिताय सव्वपाणिं  
पूरेत्वा पारमी सव्वा पत्तो सम्बोधिमुत्तमम्॥<sup>8</sup>

It is translated by Raghavan as follows-

महाकारुणिको नाथः सर्वप्राणिहिताय सः।  
सर्वपारमितापूत्र्या प्राप्तः संबोधिमुत्तमाम्॥<sup>9</sup>

Tagore’s lyrics are artistic but pouring of the human heart. It is therefore not very easy to translate them into another language and yet preserve the same feeling with the same depth. However, Raghavan has to many extent been successful in preserving those feelings in Sanskrit. Vāsavī, a character in the play ,says about the kindness of the Lord Buddha in the following verses-

तुमि कि एसेछ मोर द्दारे  
खुँजिते आमार आपनारे?  
तोमारि ये डाके  
कुसुम गोपन हते वाहिराय नग्न शाखे शाखे,  
सेइ डाके डाको आजि तारे ।  
तोमारि से-डाके वाधा भोले,  
श्यामल गोपन प्राण धूलि अवगुण्ठन खोले ।  
से- डाके तोमारि  
सहसा नवीन उषा आसे हाते आलोकेर झारि,  
देय साडा घन अन्धकारे ।<sup>10</sup>

Raghvan translates it in the following manner-

द्वारं त्वमागमः किं मे मार्गयन् हृदयं मम।



येन ते ध्वनिना पुष्पं गोपनाद् बहिरागतम्।  
नग्नशाखासु तेनैव ध्वनिनाद्य समाह्वय ॥  
यस्य ध्वनेस्ते बाधायां हरितप्राणगोपिनी ।  
धूलिर्मुखं विवृणुते तवाह्वयति स ध्वनिः ॥  
आलोकधारां वर्षन्ती करैरपहरन्त्यपि ।  
अन्धकारं समायाति नवीना सहषा ह्युषा ॥<sup>11</sup>

Tagore's 'आमार आपनारे' has been creatively translated into Sanskrit as 'हृदयं मम'. However the second line has much more excellence in the Bengali original. 'श्यामल गोपन प्राण,' in Bangla should be 'हरित प्राण गोपिनी', 'आलोकेर झारि' in Bangla is a noun which cannot be exactly translated in the form of verb like 'आलोकधारां वर्षन्ती'. However, it must be reminded that Sanskrit has many limitations in expressing the thoughts present in the local languages.

Similarly in the second Act Śrīmatī pays benediction to the Lord Buddha in Pāli –

यो सन्निसिन्नो वरवोधिमूले  
मारस्स सनं महतिं विजेत्वा  
सम्बोधि मागच्छि अनन्तञ्जाणो  
लोकुत्तमो तं पणमामि बुद्धं ।<sup>12</sup>

It is beautifully translated into Sanskrit. In closeness of such translation is probably because Pāli is closer to Sanskrit than Bengali.

On the other hand when there is the use of Sanskrit words in the Bengali lyrics there Raghavan is very smooth in his Sanskrit expressions. In the same Act Śrīmatī leads a song-

वाँधन-छँडार साधन हवे।  
छेडे याव तीर माभैः रवे।  
याँहार हातेर विजयमाला



रुद्रदाहेर वह्निज्वाला,  
नमि नमि नमि से भैरवे।  
काल-समुद्रे आलोर यात्री  
शून्ये ये धाय दिवसरात्रि ।  
डाक एल तार तरङ्गेरि,  
वाजुक वक्षे वज्रभेरी  
अकूल प्राणेर से उत्सवे ।<sup>13</sup>

It is Sanskritised by Raghavan in the following way-

बन्धच्छेदाय संप्राप्तं साधनं सांप्रतं मया ।  
तीरं सन्त्यज्य यामद्य कृत्वा सांराविणं महत्॥  
जयमाला करे यस्य रौद्री दाहकरी तथा ।  
वह्निज्वाला, नमस्तस्मै भैरवाय नमो नमः ॥  
आलोकयात्रिको याति दिवसेषु च रात्रिषु ।  
शून्याभिमुखमेतस्मिन् समुद्रे कालनामनि ॥  
आहवानं तारमायाति तरङ्गेभ्यः, तथा ध्वनिः ।  
वज्रभेरीवक्षसो असौ , अपारो जीवनोत्सवः ॥<sup>14</sup>

Here Raghavan uses the same words but not in the place used by Tagore. But still the rhythm and the meaning are protected to a satisfactory level.

However, it is very much true that the lucidity of expression and the depth of meaning in many lyrics of Tagore cannot be matched by any translation. A translation cannot reach the deepest feelings seated in the original writing.

Here we give an example of another lyric sung by Śrīmatī in the Third Act. V. Raghavan tries his best in its translation—

पथि गमन आहवयो मां पश्चाद्विलम्बमानां, कथं यामि ।  
आयाता निबिडनिशा पथि रेखा बत गता तिरोधानम् ॥



अपसारय घोरतमो भयंकरं भवति तद् द्रष्टुम् ।  
यावत्कालं यामि प्रयामि तावत्--यदि मनस्तेअस्ति ॥  
एहि मया सह पार्श्वे, भयं यतः पृष्टतो यायात् ॥  
अयमहमागच्छामि त्वं नासि श्वो दिने रात्रौ ॥<sup>15</sup>

But its Bengali original is far more heart touching-

पथे येते डेकेछिले मोरे,  
पिछिये पडेछि आमि याव ये की करे !  
एसेछे निविड निशि,  
पथरेखा गेछे मिशि ,  
साडा दाओ,साडा दाओ आँधारेर घोरे ।  
भय हय पाछे घुरे घुरे  
यत आमि याइ तत याइ चले दूरे ।  
मने करि आछ काछे,  
तवु भय हय पाछे  
आमि आछि तुमि नाइ कालि निशिभोरे ।<sup>16</sup>

However this does not prove that Sanskrit language cannot match the simplicity and lucidity of modern languages. Let us go to another lyrical expression of Śrīmatī in the Third Act, where Rabindranath writes in five lines-

परशरतन तोमारि चरण,  
लइनु शरण लइनु शरण,  
या-किछु मलिन, या-किछु कालो  
या-किछु विरूप होक ता भालो,  
घुचाओ घुचाओ सव आवरण ।<sup>17</sup>



Here V. Raghavan equals Tagore's lyrical majic-

चरणंस्पर्शरत्नं ते शरणं यामि,याम्यहम्।  
यत्किञ्चिन् मलिनं क्रूरं सर्वं विलयमेतु तत् ॥  
यद्यद् विरूपं भवति तत्तत् सम्यक्त्वमेति च ।  
धुनीहि विधुनीहि त्वं सर्वमावरणं मम॥<sup>18</sup>

In this way we can also go to many other lyrics in Naṭī Pūjā to show that although Sanskrit is a royal, classical and majestic language. It has enough power to catch up to the deeper and simpler feelings expressed in modern languages like Bangla if the translator is a Pundit as well as a dexterous poet like V. Raghavan.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES:

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