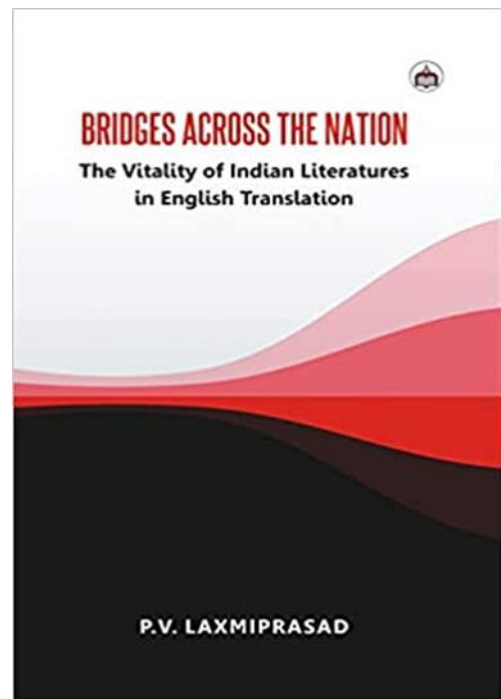


**Bridges Across the Nation: The Vitality of Indian Literatures in English Translation. Edited by P. V. Laxmiprasad, New Delhi: Authorspress, ISBN-13: 978-9391314460, 2021, pp. 290.**

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The Editor, P. V. Laxmiprasad, spells out two reasons in his elaborate Preface for having brought out this compilation of twenty four essays encompassing critical analyses of works translated into English from regional languages including Assamese, Bengali, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Odia, Tamil and Telugu. One reason is that he wants to bring Indian regional literatures to a wider readership, and the other reason is that he wants to address the hitherto unexplored themes in Indian regional literatures in English translation. By way of justifying the title of this critical anthology, he further says, “Translation is the natural extension of anything verbal and valuable



we wish to communicate, and it crosses three bridges – personal, linguistic and cultural. Hence I have titled the anthology so” (page 6). In his Preface, he has also briefly traced the origin, growth and development of the art of translation in India, especially the translation boom accelerated by the colonial rule in India. The Christian Missionaries that had come into the pre-Independence India gave a spur to this new-found art of translation which as a most powerful tool paved the way not only for better understanding among Indian cultures but also for opening the window to foreign cultures and stores of overseas knowledge.

India represents a multi-linguistic and also a multi-cultural society. In a way regional literatures enrich one another and seek to share and synthesize various thoughts and feelings expressed and experienced by writers of regional languages in order to create a collective consciousness through either mutual translations in regional languages in India or translations in English. The genre of translation thus serves as a bridge that connects all the regional literatures in India.

Nehru holds the view, “By languages we are many, but as a nation we are one.” This quote epitomizes the spirit of oneness in diversity. No doubt, translating works from one regional language into another regional language is the ideal means of promoting the very same spirit of oneness. The translator is the pivot of the task and so has to be well-versed in bilingual potentials. His job lies in two languages.

Twenty three scholars have contributed to this anthology. Basavaraj Naikar has contributed two: one essay deals with the colonial resistance in the Kannada novel Madi Madidavaru by Basavaraj Kattimani translated as Do or Die. The other one takes up for analysis the Kannada historical novel Kartarana Kammata by H. Tipperudraswamy translated as The Maker’s Mint that documents the socio-religious revolution spearheaded by Basava in the context of an emerging new egalitarian religion known as Virasaivism in the remote Karnataka history. Breez Mohan Hazarika analyses the Assamese short stories of Bhabendra Nath Saikia translated as The Mistake and Other Stories with reference to the issues affecting the average Assamese lower-middle-class society. Tamali Neogi critically examines two Bengali stories of Mahasweta Devi, translated as Breast Giver and Draupadi, to show how Devi deconstructs old myths and reconstructs myths centred on subaltern/marginal women. Saikat Kumar Ghosh highlights the caste dominance in Bengal and its social ill-effects through his examination of the Bengali novel, Bamuner Meye by Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay. S. Malathy’s paper dwells at length on the plurality of native Tamil women’s voices in the select short stories of Ambai (C. S. Lakshmi) in the collection translated as In a Forest, a Deer, asserting their inner liberty in a world of conventional restraints. Lily Arul Sharmila examines A. K. Ramanujan’s expertise as a translator in persuading the readers with greater fidelity to the original through his translation of Tamil Sangam poetry to seek and acknowledge the multiple wisdoms of a bygone Tamil culture. Geethu Vijayan’s paper analyses the English translation of a Telugu work The Parable of Lost Daughter Luke 15:11-32 by a Dalit writer M. M. Vinodhini to present the view that in the process of modernization, people compulsively adopt an imitative attitude and have failed to realize themselves and understand others. Purabi Goswami goes deep into the intricacies of the translating process with reference to the translation of an Assamese work titled Daatiparor Manuh by Mamang Dai. Prasaja V. P. takes up a Malayalam novel by K. R. Meera translated as Hangwoman to prove how one could subvert gender binary through the language men and women use in their day-to-day life.

R. Karthika Devi in her paper explores the significance of cultural, philosophical and religious knowledge for translating two poems of Tamil Bakthi tradition, namely Thiruppavai and Nacciar Thirumozhi by Andal known for her bridal mysticism by which she longs to marry Lord Krishna. Sajna Raj's paper is a critical study of social isolation and seclusion in the Malayalam novel Aadu Jeevitham by Benyamin translated as Goat Days. Shaleen Kumar Singh's paper deals with the theme of love in the poetry of Swami Ramatirtha who belongs to the Sufi spiritual tradition and propagates the philosophy of love and its multidimensional experiences. Basava Naikar's translation of Royappa Pattar's Kannada folk play Sangya-Balya: Betrayal deals with the elemental passions of love and betrayal as they interweave with the destinies of ordinary mortals, points out S. John Peter Joseph classifying the play as a folk tragedy. Sheeba S. Nair makes a comparative study of some select stories of Rabindranath Tagore and Cho Dharuman translated from Bengali and Tamil respectively to conclude that with their authentic portrayal, Tagore represented the elite class whereas Cho Dharuman represented the Dalits. Sumathi Shivakumar looks at the linguistic and cultural challenges in translating the Tamil classic Thirukkural, the immortal document of human life covering all possible perspectives physical, moral, psychological and philosophical, by indulging in a comparative analysis of two translations of Thirukkural, one by G. U. Pope and the other by Rajaji. Irudaya Mary M. critically examines the Kannada short story translated as "Gauri" within the ambit of Peter Newmark's Theory of Translation.

Sandra Sophia in her paper speaks about the Tamil revolutionary poet, Bharathi's zeal to establish a society free from gender bias and holds that to Bharathi, the role of womanhood in the fabrication and upholding of culture is cardinal. D. Geraldin treats Perumal Murugan's Tamil novel translated as Ponnachi or the Story of a Black Goat as a fabulous beast fable that takes the reader down the ages to the time when man learned certain qualities from animals and elements of Nature. A renowned literary work in any Indian regional language cannot be fully grasped when it is studied in isolation from the great Indian literary tradition embodying the whole gamut of Indian history and culture spanning several regional polarities. This is what Durga Sai Kiran Saripalli ascertains in her study of Raamaa Chandramouli's Telugu novel translated as Suryuni Needa. Gobinda Sahoo looks at Gopinath Mohanty's Odia novel translated as Paraja, as a socio-anthropological account of the oppressed tribal communities of Odisha. Sanjib Kumar Sahu examines two Odia short novels Patadei and Rape by the two women writers Binapani Mohanty and Sarojini Sahoo respectively, as realistic portrayals of the condition of women in the contemporary society. Lingaraj Patra analyses a short story

“Rebati” from Odia literature written by Fakir Mohan Senapati to conclude that it unravels a microcosmic view of gender discrimination in the 19th century Odisha and serves as a harbinger of women empowerment. Palakurthy Dinakar says that a translator should be faithful not only to the surface text but also to the sub-text. With this criterion at the back of his mind, he studies Raamaa Chandramouli’s collection of Telugu short stories in translation, *Essence of Life and Other Stories* to reveal that the writer is in anguish when he witnesses the depleting levels of human values in society. The compilation of all these 24 critical essays has been attractively packaged between aesthetic covers, and the print is reader-friendly.