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S.L Bhyrappa's Kannada Classic PARVA translated into Chinese

With the objective of sharing Indian literature with the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Nations, Sahitya Akademi translated ten Indian literary classics into the SCO languages, Chinese and Russian. The Chinese project was coordinated by Professor B. R. Deepak, who in tandem with Sahitya Akademy constituted a team of translators and completed the project well within the time. The project was envisaged in 2019 and completed by the time the SCO held its November 2020 summit in Moscow. The list of 10 Indian classics in Hindi and regional languages is as following:

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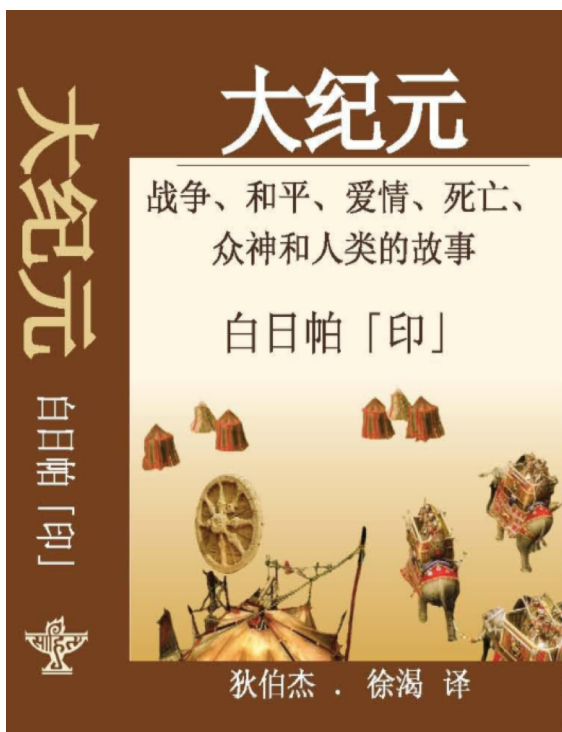
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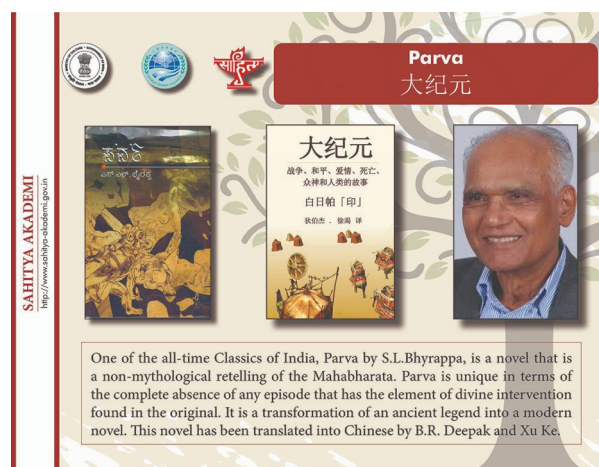
Kahini, Parva, Marhi Da Diva, Sila Nerangalil Sila Manithargal, Illu, Ek Chadar Maili Si. Of these, Parva was translated by Prof. B. R Deepak, *Kavve Aur Kala Pani* by Dayawanti, *Ek Chadar Maili Si* by Madhurendra Jha and *Surya Mukheer Swapna* by Saheli Chattaraj, all products of the Centre for Chinese and Southeast Asian Studies



translation of Parva by B. R. Deepak and Xu Ke

Chinese

Surya Mukheer Swapna, Arogyaniketan Vevishaal, Kavve Aur Kala Pani, Manoj Dasanka Katha O



Parva was the bulkiest running into 950 pages in English and about 600,000 Chinese characters. The classic is based on the *Mahabharata*, one of the great epics of India. Its importance lies in the fact that the Indian epics not only are valuable collections of the great literature of the Indian people, but are also priceless treasures in the repository of world literature. These are not just literary works, but at the same time, are religious canons, political and ethical texts, and has had an invariable and immense impact on the thought, philosophy, culture, art, customs, social life of the Indian nation.

Interestingly, dissemination of the epics beyond India started quite early. In the 6th century AD, a stone tablet found in Cambodia makes mention of the *Mahabharata*. This is proof that the epic had spread to Cambodia by late 6th century. The dissemination of the epics into China occurred at the same time as the eastward spread of Hinduism and Buddhism during the first century AD.

References to this effect could be found in Buddhist sutra translation in China. For example, Kumarajiva's translation of the *Kalpanamanditika* has a precise summarization of the storyline of the *Mahabharata*. In scroll 5 of this text, it is said that: "In every kalpa, many Brahmans, who were privy to the king has said quoting *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* that those who die in battle field will go to heaven after death." After the 9th century AD, countries like Thailand, Myanmar, Java, Malay etc. had already begun translating the epics in the native languages one after the other. Temples in many places have art reliefs based on the epics. In the 16th century AD, under the patronage of Emperor Akbar, the two epics were translated into Persian.

The translation of the two epics in China occurred after the founding of the People's Republic of China. The *Two Great Epics of India* written and published by MiWenkai in 1950 is probably the earliest Chinese translation. This was followed by *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* (1962) written by Sun Yong. But these were translated from English to Chinese, and they are not really full translations. The full translation of *Mahabharata* was initiated by JinKemu, and was completed and published in 2005 by his student Huang Baosheng. What is amazing is that it is directly translated from Sanskrit. After the complete Chinese translation of *Mahabharata*, China has made new progress in the study of the two epics of India, especially the study of *Bhagavad Gita*.

The two great epics are eternal fountains of the Indian literary creation. Since ancient time, there are countless instances of poems, plays,

stories and novels which were written or composed on the basis of these two epics. *Parva* by acclaimed Kannada writer Dr. S. L. Bhyrappa is also based on the story of *Mahabharata*. The *Parva* is the result of Bhyrappa's study and research based on the two great epics of India, the Vedas, Upanishads and other classics. The author spent nearly thirty years researching these classics and conducting field investigations on the names of the places that appear in the two epics. In order to trace some of the customs prevalent during the times of *Mahabharata*, the author travelled across India, even in remote areas in the Himalayas so as the truth is established.

One of the important characteristics of the *Parva* is that the author takes us back into the history and narrates the stories of war, peace, love, death, gods and humans in minute detail and ingeniously. The story is well written in almost chronological order, because it faithfully reproduces the original appearance of all kinds of characters in society at that time, and has created a large number of life size characters with colourful artistic techniques and rich imagination. It could be pronounced as an amalgamation of history, geography, ethnicity, statecraft and literary romanticism. This is visible in the powerful description and characterisation of Kunti, Bhima, Arjuna, Krishna, Karna, Duryodhna etc. and has vividly and skillfully revealed their personalities amidst intricate contradictions and conflicts through major events like *svayamvaras* and battle scenes.

As regards its Chinese translation, it was done from its English version. It wasn't difficult as far as the storyline and larger value systems were concerned, for I believe that the core values of the Indian and Chinese civilisations are strikingly similar. Though *Mahabharata* predates the formation of Chinese value system during the Axial Age but core components such as the priority of responsibility to freedom, the priority of duty to individual rights, the community being higher than the individual, and harmony being higher than conflict etc. macro concepts are quite similar. Other facets

such as filial piety, righteousness and the spirit of sacrifice could be easily discerned throughout the story. If the *Dharma Yuddha* reflects these values in the *Mahabharata*; the same is mirrored in the *Romance of the three kingdoms*, a Ming Dynasty vintage novel that is based on wars between the Wei, Shu and Wu of the Warring state period in China.

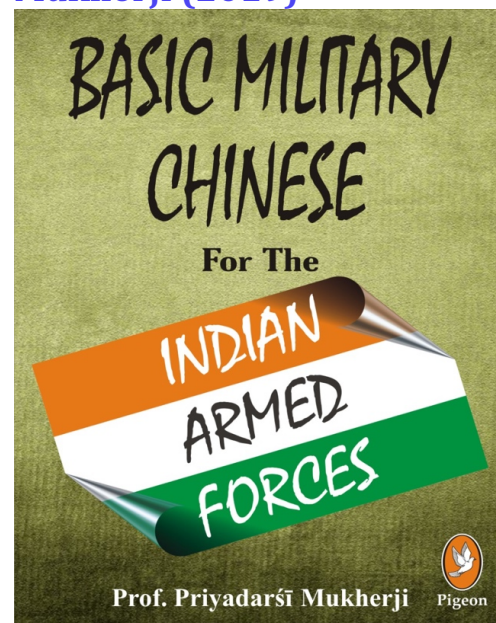
However, at micro level, it would have been impossible to render the cultural concepts such as *niyoga* tradition of marriage and many others into Chinese had there not been any dictionary of these concepts. The *Dictionary of Indian Culture* compiled by Professor Mao Shichang, a Professor of Lanzhou University who happens to do his doctorate in Indian epics from Jawaharlal Nehru University was extremely helpful. In the Dictionary, a large number of Sanskrit/Hindi/Buddhist-Chinese equivalents and introductions of relevant characters, names of the places, and customs have been provided, which greatly helped me in the translation work. Moreover, since China produced the translation of the complete *Mahabharata* in 2005, there are various annotations and glossaries of proper names available on the internet. Still not all the names could be found, therefore, at some places I have transliterated the names in line with the Chinese practice and have provided their Indian variants in the brackets throughout the Chinese edition.

The only constraint I faced was that of time. I was approached by Dr. Srinivas Rao of the Sahitya Akademy in late February 2020 about this project. He apprised me that Sahitya Akademy wishes to render ten representative modern and contemporary Indian works into Chinese and Russian, and the publication should be complete before the Shangahi Cooperation Organisation summit in Russia, as Prime Minister Modi wishes to present these works to China and Russia during the side-line of the summit. Since *Parva* was the bulkiest, running into almost 600,000 Chinese characters, he expects me to take the responsibility. I was a little hesitant in the beginning, however, in view of the importance of the national project, I

agreed and immediately constituted a team. The team I selected for *Parva* was well versed in Chinese, Indian culture and philosophy, and since we have the dictionary for ready reference, the team accepted the assignment. I spent almost 9-10 hours daily to finish the task in time, and by the end of August we handed in the manuscript for peer reviewing in China. The feedback was excellent and quite encouraging.

This is perhaps the first time that the government of India has translated representative Indian works into Chinese, and Bhyrappa's *Parva* definitely deserves appreciations for its outstanding plot, characterisation, language, and aesthetics. As a translator, I believe the Chinese translation of *Parva* reflects truthfulness, expressiveness, and elegance. I hope readers at home and abroad like this translation. At the same time, I hope this translation can play a positive role in enhancing mutual understanding, mutual trust and friendship, and promotes cultural exchanges between India and China. Finally, I express my gratitude to all the people who were associated with the translation, proofreading and publication of *Parva* into Chinese.

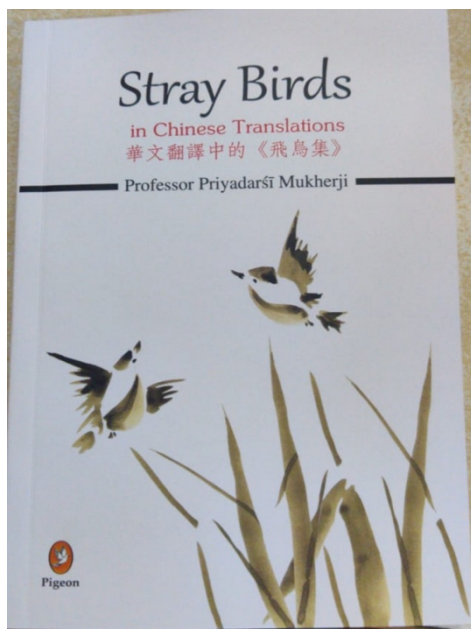
***Basic Military Chinese for the Indian Armed Forces* by Prof. Priyadarśī Mukherji (2019)**



The objective of the handbook is to educate people in India how to correctly read and write the Chinese sounds and syllables. Cross-cultural communication and interactions between the people of India and China have greatly increased in recent years. Yet errors in transliteration and misrepresentations of various types have been noticed in newspaper reports as well as in academic and business circles. Therefore, a proper guideline is being offered so as to assist the Indian readers in pronouncing the Chinese syllables correctly.

The current edition contains Chinese sounds and syllables in **eight different languages of India** [*Hindi, Bengali, Malayalam, Punjabi, Gujarati, Kannada, Oriya, and Telugu*]. Readers capable of reading eight different scripts of India can acquaint themselves with not only the Chinese sounds but also with daily expressions in Chinese, along with varied aspects of knowledge about China. This edition is focused upon providing a series of military terminology used in Chinese for greater understanding among the Indian Armed Forces. The book would benefit ordinary learners of Chinese in general and the armed forces personnel in particular.

***Stray Birds in Chinese Translations* by Prof. Priyadarśī Mukherji (2020)**



Stray Birds by Rabindranath Tagore has inspired many generations of poets in many countries, especially in China, since aphorisms that Tagore had created during his mid-fifties. The charm of those adages are embedded in Tagore's profound philosophy of life and his unique poetic flavor. There has been a number of translations of *Stray Birds* in both China and Taiwan.

This edition is an effort to bring out all such major versions in translation from the original English into Chinese — in order to offer to the readers the aesthetics as well as the artistry in trans-lingual renditions. The book also incorporates the controversy and criticisms around a type of translation that shook the Chinese academia in the recent times. Annotations have been added wherever necessary in order to highlight the errors and lacunae that emerged in the course of translations. The book presents a variety of Chinese expressions used in translating *Stray Birds*—spanning across a century.

Faculty participation in conferences

Prof. B. R. Deepak

1. “Perception of images in India-China relations” lecture delivered at a webinar on “Salience of History, culture and language in India-China Relations” organized by Central University of Gujarat on 30 September 2020
2. “China’s National Security Policy: Threats and Challenges” invited lecture at a Webinar organized by Indian Institute of Contemporary Studies, Chennai Centre for China Studies and Press Institute of India on 29 September 2020
3. “Know yourself and know your enemy: State of China studies in India” invited lecture at a two day webinar on “National Education Policy 2020: Language teaching, learning and translation” on 11 September 2020

4. "Why do we study China" an invited lecture to Postdoc China study Fellows, Ashoka University on 13 August 2020
5. Deepak, B. R "Sinology and Current State of India-China Relation" in a webinar organized by the Central University of Jharkhand on 17 July 2020
6. "India-China and Nepal" invited online lecture delivered at the Nepal Institute for International Cooperation and Engagement (NIICE) on June 6 2020
7. "Post Covid -19 India-China relations." Lecture delivered during a one day Webinar titled "Perspectives on India-China developmental dynamics (1949-2019)" organized by Institute of South Asian Studies, Sichuan University China on 29 May 2020

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