

SHAKESPEARE IN AMHARIC TRANSLATIONS:
JULIUS CAESAR IN FOCUS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	
Abstract	
1.0 INTRODUCTION	
1.1 Objective of the Study.....	1
1.2 Methodology.....	3
1.3 Scope of the Study.....	5
1.4 Significance of the Study.....	8
1.5 Literary Translation and the Translation of Play Texts.....	10
2.0 SHAKESPEARE IN ETHIOPIA	
1.1 Biographical Writings.....	20
2.2 Literary Translations.....	24
2.2.1 The Plays.....	24
2.2.2 Prose Tales.....	34
2.2.3 The Sonnets.....	36
2.3 Critical Writings.....	37
3.0 SHAKESPEARE'S TRAGEDY OF JULIUS CAESAR: THE ORIGINAL VERSUS THE TRANSLATIONS	
3.1 The Original Text.....	44
3.2 <u>Julius Caesar</u> in Ethiopia.....	49
3.3 The Four Translations of the Play.....	51
3.3.1 General Remarks.....	51
3.3.2 Omissions and Condensations.....	56

3.3.3 Additions and Interpretations	66
3.3.4 Change in the Style: Prose to Verse and Vice Versa	70
3.3.5 The Language of the Texts	77
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION	86
BIBLIOGRAPHY	92

ABSTRACT

Of all playwrights in the English-speaking world, the most translated into Amharic is William Shakespeare. At least ten of his plays have appeared either in print or on stage, or both, since 1933 E. C.* Among these ten, the tragedy of Julius Caesar has been translated four times by four different translators - most likely due to its thematic relevance. The critical analysis in this thesis discloses that successful work has not been achieved in two of the target texts. Quite the opposite holds true in the other two.

Despite Shakespeare's early introduction to Ethiopia, not much study or research has been done on him. This thesis attempts to examine the difficulties involved in translation work in general, and in translation of Shakespeare in particular, by focusing on Julius Caesar. It is hoped that it will pave the way for future researchers to follow suite and shed light on the bard in the Ethiopian context.

* All years are given in Gregorian Calender unless otherwise explained as in this case.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Objective of the study

It is an undeniable fact that the practice of play translation, in the context of literary genre, has been, and will naturally be, making great contributions for a cross-cultural communication among the countries of the world. Play translation activity has not been common in Ethiopia as compared to the translation of other literary genres- novel translation in particular. Nonetheless, one can see from an overall observation and investigation that there is a promising perspective in the area. Nowadays, the practice of translating plays seems to be conducted relatively in an increasing rate. Hence, it is possible to find out various Amharic translations ranging from Greek classical works to twentieth century modern plays.

This is to say that vis-a-vis their original productions, Ethiopian playwrights have been translating mostly English plays so that the audience have been sharing the theatre experience of the English - speaking world. Unfortunately, no one has yet given due consideration to the study of play translation in particular in our country except Getu Mulatu. A literature student who graduated in 1990, Getu in his M. A. thesis entitled "Amharic Adaptations of English Drama", gives an inspiring analysis of how some English plays have been adapted into Amharic. In this regard he is the only person, as far as my reading allows me to know, to take the

subject seriously and bring the idea for further research at a higher level. In fact, as his title suggests, the main discussion area of Getu is play adaptation. But, on his way, he also assesses the problem existing in the area of translating plays. Apart from trying to distinguish and clarify the confusion that exists between these two literary terms- translation and adaptation- he forwards a suggestion that the translation of plays is another area of interest in the Ethiopian context.

Inspired by such an incipient attempt of Getu, the central objective of this research work, then, is to present a general literature review of Shakespeare's plays in Ethiopia and, secondly, a critical analysis of four Amharic translations of (the tragedy of) Julius Caesar.

This thesis is composed of three main parts. The first one is the introductory chapter under which the general structure and organization of the thesis is explained in the first four sub-sections. In the fifth sub-section, some concepts of literary translation in general and drama translation in particular are given as background information. Chapter two comprises a survey of Shakespeare's plays and the sonnets in Amharic translations as well as various critical works by Ethiopian writers both on the source and target texts.

The third chapter is totally devoted to the critical analysis of the original Julius Caesar versus four of the existing Amharic translations. The chapter begins with a subsection dealing with necessary background information of the play both in the original and the translations followed by an overall analytical survey of the translations in the light of the original text.

Chapter three is followed by the conclusion which takes up the highlights of the foregoing sections and forwards general remarks with regard to the prospect of Shakespeare's plays in Ethiopia. There are also some other related points included which are deemed to be relevant for researchers in the future. Among these are the importance of introducing more plays from Shakespeare to Ethiopia, the role to be played by play critics in connection with play translation and the relevance of Shakespeare as a whole.

1.2 Methodology

The thesis is entirely based upon primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include those texts and scripts of the Amharic translations, which were accessible to the researcher, and the English originals. The secondary sources comprise of various critical writings in books, magazines, newspapers, etc., which have due relationship with the texts in the source and target languages. Many articles and essays by diverse authors are also reviewed.

One method of approach in finalising this project was to conduct interviews with the translators, directors, or other individuals in the theatre world concerned in one way or another with Julius Caesar. The main aim of the interview was to find out the reasons behind the translators' choice of this play for translation, the exact time when their translation had terminated. It was also to discuss with the translators the particular difficulties, that they encountered when translating Shakespeare and what solutions they found to overcome them. It was also intended to have a first hand information as regards their personal opinions about the practice of drama translation. The translators' replies to such questions would, in one way or another, touch upon the problems and general characteristics of translating creative works into Amharic. Unfortunately, it was impossible to trace the whereabouts of two of the earlier translators of Julius Caesar namely: Fasil Gebre Kiros and Bekele Tegegn. Only very little and inadequate pieces of information or personal data were available. It was also very difficult to interview Nebiy Mekonnen. Though very cooperative, he was always running out of time. I was very lucky when I met him for a little more than five minutes at a time. Only my interview with Ato Assefa Gebre Mariam Tessema was successful. With his inviting approach, this man took as much time as I needed and cooperated with me in every way possible. But in order to avoid inconsistency, the major part of the interview is left out except for important instances here and there.

The researcher watched the recent stage productions of Hamlet, Twelfth Night and A Mid-Summer Night's Dream (by Belayneh Abune) and observed the differences that exist between the original translations and the actual texts used in the performances. The results of this observation on these particular plays are not, however, mentioned in this thesis for some reason or another. Secondary source or data are used as far as the stage productions of the other translations are concerned.

1.3 Scope of the Study

It is stated in the beginning of this introduction that the practice of play translation has remained uncommon in Ethiopia. A lot more is still expected in this area as a whole. Though the study and practice of play translation in this country is an important issue, this paper is limited to the study of the Amharic translations of Shakespeare's plays exclusively. But why Shakespeare and why only in Amharic? At least the following reasons can be mentioned.

In the first place, of all the Amharic translations and adaptations, the plays of Shakespeare are greater in number. Until now, for instance, A Mid-Summer Night's Dream, Hamlet, Julius Caesar, Macbeth, The Merchant of Venice, Othello, Romeo and Juliet, The Tempest, Twelfth Night and King Lear are translated or adapted into Amharic by different persons. The availability of Shakespeare's plays in Amharic clears the way for a researcher to study them independently.

Secondly, all of these translations, except the adaptation of The Tempest by Sara Workneh, were staged at various times and places. Hence, Shakespeare's plays are familiar to Ethiopian audiences.

Thirdly, most of the Amharic translations or adaptations are either published, a rare case in the history of play publication in Ethiopia, or preserved as type-scripts in the library of The Institute of Ethiopian Studies. Among these, Hamlet, Julius Caesar, Macbeth, Othello, Romeo and Juliet, The Merchant of Venice and The Tempest are published in Amharic. The Amharic scripts of Twelfth Night (by Fikre Dingel Beyene), Julius Caesar (by Nebiy Mekonnen and the first draft By Assefa Gebre Mariam Tessema) and A Mid-Summer Night's Dream (by Belayneh Abune) are preserved in the library of the Institute of Ethiopian Studies. Their publication or preservation in various forms is an obvious advantage. Besides many other uses, they are valuable for cross-checking and for immediate reference by the researcher.

Fourthly, some of the plays of Shakespeare, as it will be seen in chapter two, are translated by more than one person. This opens the way for a comparative and contrastive study of the translations.

This study is restricted to the Amharic translations only. The reason is very simple: the researcher knows only Amharic and none of the other Ethiopian languages. However, he

is aware of the existence of Shakespeare in Tigrigna translations. Any one who is interested can contact the published translated texts of Romeo and Juliet by Yoseph Haile Michael in 1961 E. C. and by Ockba Habte Mariam in 1978 E.C., and The Merchant of Venice by Ockba Habte Mariam in 1981 E. C. Shakespeare in any of the other Ethiopian languages is yet unknown, at least to this writer.

As can be observed from its title, this thesis is divided in two major parts. The first section deals with the historical survey of Shakespeare's plays in Ethiopia. Although Shakespeare is the most translated playwright in the Amharic language, no Ethiopian researcher, except Getu, has yet attempted to study them. So this paper would probably be the first of its kind. This first section, which is the second chapter, however, has its own limitations. In the first place, it is deliberately made to be informative and descriptive rather than an indepth analysis. This is because of the shortage of time to dig out all the required data. It needs separate investigation in the future. But, for the time being I would like to refer readers to Dr. Richard Pankhurst's extensively collected and elaborately described data on "School and Amateur Performances and Visits by Professional Actors" and "Films" in Ethiopia (1986: 171-178). On the other hand, the Amharic scripts of Romeo and Juliet (by Bassie Habte and Million Neqniq), A Mid-Summer Night's Dream (by Hailu Desta), King Lear (selected scenes by Tsegaye Gebre Medhin) and the text of The Merchant of Venice (by Merid Mekonnen) are

simply mentioned without further explanation because of text or script unavailability. However, at least the titles are mentioned here just in case readers might have a chance of coming across those texts or scripts. Besides, their inclusion here has at least historical relevance.

Many publishing agencies throughout the world have been editing the plays of Shakespeare for many years in the past and the present. Hence, one can find excessive editions of each play. This excessiveness puts the researcher in a dilemma as to which edition to use. This complicates the study of translation in particular because the researcher may not find out the exact edition upon which the translator based his work unless and otherwise the latter confirms it to the researcher. To overcome this difficulty, in my case, I have used four different editions of Julius Caesar which are mentioned in the bibliography. This selection is based upon accessibility and for the detailed editing notes in each text. For the other translations, The Complete Works of William Shakespeare by Clark and Wright is chosen. As mentioned earlier, primary and secondary sources are consulted for the purpose of comparison.

1.4 Significance of the Study

Risking redundancy let me once again repeat that the study of Shakespeare in Amharic translation by Ethiopian researchers is almost non-existent. Even in the department of

Theatre Arts, where a great deal is expected, there are only two senior essays relating to Shakespeare. One of them is a "comparative study" of the Amharic translation of Hamlet with the original and the other one is on the social significance of Othello and Romeo and Juliet to the Ethiopian audience. Unfortunately, both of these senior essays are descriptive and far behind what their titles connote.

Most of the translators lack the intellectual background for play translation in general and the translation of Shakespeare in particular. Many of them prefer adapting rather than translating the plays without sufficient justification-literary or otherwise for such a choice. They fail to take into consideration the structure of the original plays and make unnecessary omissions, transpositions or additions to the original texts.

Play reviewers in magazines or newspapers also seem to have their own shortcoming. While reviewing a certain translated play, be it Shakespeare or any other, they simply comment on the production as a whole; whether or not the story is appealing to an Ethiopian audience and refrain from considering the significance and quality of the translation.

Given such limitations as a whole, the researcher believes that this paper may have great relevance for those who are interested in play translations in general and Shakespeare's plays in particular. The historical data of

Shakespeare's plays in Ethiopia, which is elaborated in the second chapter, may also instigate scholars to do further work.

1.5 Theoretical Background: Literary Translation and the Translation of Play Texts

The fact is that many theories have been raised, discussed and debated upon in connection with the term 'translation'. It would not be surprising therefore to find various opinions as to the definition of the word itself, its emergence and history, its types and branches, the problems encountered in it and the solutions forwarded, its significance as a career, its future prospects, and so on and so forth. Because of this vastness, it would obviously be 'impossible' to give a complete review of what has been written about the profession. Besides, it is beyond the scope of this paper to do so. Nevertheless, it is relevant to remark briefly about literary translation in general and drama translation in particular.

To begin with, the theoretical and practical application of translation is not limited only to literary outputs. It rather covers many other disciplines incorporating, in each case, many types and branches. Literary and non-literary translations, among others, are the two major divisions in the history of translation of which the former is in focus here.

Trying to trace the exact period of time for the emergence of translation as a whole is futile. Undoubtedly it is among one of the oldest professions. It cannot be attributed solely to a single genius but to a cumulative product of the efforts of many personalities shaped and reshaped at every course of time.

As far as the definition is concerned the widely applied one to the term "translation" in the context of literary genre is that it is the process which:

involves the rendering of a source language (SL) text into the target language (TL) so as to ensure that (1) the surface meaning of the two will be approximately similar and (2) the structure of the SL will be preserved as closely as possible but not so closely that the target TL will be seriously distorted (Bassnett-McGuire; 1980: 2).

In other words it is a process of transferring a message in a certain text of a source to another as accurately and naturally as possible so that the target language audience for whom the translation is intended may have basically and fundamentally the same information as the source language audience irrespective of the existence of difference in the formal linguistic units and patterns of the two languages involved (Getu; 1990: 7).

In the process of literary translation almost a complete loyalty is demanded on the part of the translator. His freedom of deviation, subtraction, addition, as well as alteration of the original is suspended except under special circumstances.

The prime objective of the translator must be a mirror like reproduction of the original with all its contents and charms intact. For some translators, however, a complete reproduction of the source text is difficult. Many have their doubts about the undertaking. It is a difficult business, they generally claim. The main difficulty for Friedrich Schlegel (as quoted in Zuber; 1984: 3), for instance, is because of "its 'irrationality', i.e., "the fact that not every thing has an equivalent in another language: the origination of each work of art is dependent on its own language, culture and author". For Louis Nowra, too, any practitioner of this profession :

is a bit like one of those night club impersonators who in aping the walk or mimicking the voice of someone else, can only suggest the obvious and in so doing merely caricatures the original (Zuber: 13).

It is natural for difficulties to be encountered in any given discipline. Translation is not an exception. So such theory of the 'impossibility' of an exact transference bears a certain hampering factor in the case of translation. However, it remains a discipline without which vast area of the world of literary productions would be lost to people everywhere. It is also becoming more and more developing and, from time to time, is becoming more and more systematised.

After glancing at the definition of literary translation in general, we can now come to the specific form of translation in the genre of drama. One of the very first problems that translation theoreticians have been arguing

about is whether or not there should be theories of translation with regard to dramatic texts. Some of them claim that "plays are not open to the idea of a particular theory of translation". This is because "each play has a new set of problems which center around its performability or stage worthiness" (Bassnett-McGuire; 1984: 120). That is why, for her there are almost no written materials which specifically deal with rules of translating plays. Actually play translation as a field of study is a very young phenomenon. Nevertheless, researchers are becoming interested in this area and are trying to formulate or distinguish specific rules of translating plays.

A play text is only one of the many varieties of products in the field of literature such as the novel, the short story or poetry with which it shares certain elements in common. The general translation methodology used in these categories can be applied to it or vice versa. Drama translation, as characterised by Louis Nowra in Zuber's Page to Stage: Theatre as Translation (1984: 14), comprises of three types. The first among these is the "literal translation" about which the writer does not give much attention because of its "little relevance to the stage". The second one, what he calls "the direct translation", is "an attempt to translate the original as if it had been written in the translator's language and yet the structure of the play is not altered, or the meaning of the words, to such an extent as to have distorted, for good or bad, the original". According

to his further comment, this type of translation is the most difficult of all and the translator has to constantly decide between recording the words of the original or giving their meaning. The third type and "an easier way out as compared to direct translation" is "free translation". This is a kind of translation "where under the demiurgic impulses of knowing what the author is trying to say, one provides the meaning rather than recording the original words". Free translation, as analyzed by Nowra, is a sort of reinterpretation coming close to literary adaptation where the translated text has a vague but undeniable connection with the original.

Zuber in her introduction to the book mentioned earlier gives a summary of the types of translations forwarded by such theoreticians in the field as Julaine House, Andre Lefevere, Reba Gostand, Katharina Reiss, Franz H. Link, Marilyn Gaddis Rose Wolfgang Schadewaldt, and some others whose definitions and theories of literary translation can alternatively be applied to many of other literary varieties including drama. Even after considering its similarities with other literary genres, translating a play text still demands a different approach. There are specific difficulties attached only to dramatic texts due primarily to the nature of the genre itself.

There are many factors which give drama its distinctive quality. First and foremost, a play is written with the intention of it being performed on stage rather than for it

being read only. Hence a play text reaches its full significance only in performance and only after passing through many hands. Consequently, a theatre translator is required to do something different from the translator of another type of text because he is faced with the added criteria of the text's playability as a prerequisite. These can be elaborated as follows.

To begin with, the performance of a play is necessarily a multiple participation of the playwright, the director, the designer, the players, the technical crews to mention only some. In order to convey the message in the text to the audience, linguistic signs, visual and auditory codes, socio-cultural components etc., are also indicated. The text of the play, in contrast with that of the novel or poem, is then only one element in the totality of theatre discourse. It is much more than a sequence of words being always open to be defined and redefined at every juncture. When transposed on to stage, the text will become a totality of systems of verbal (which include linguistic and acoustic signs, i.e., voice, facial expression, rhythm, projection, pitch. etc.) and non-verbal or allusive signs that are foregrounded through visual and musical codes. Such a complex system of allusive signs is exploited by most playwrights so that it might be possible to transfer the message incorporated in their texts. Non-verbal allusive signs of accentuation and association are added apart from such theatrical elements as dramatic action and dialogue for an idea in a play text to meet its proper perception by

the audience. So a drama translator in addition to the translation and transposition of the linguistic as well as acoustic signs (the verbal system of signs) faces a task of translating non-verbal signs within or outside the play text to be translated.

On stage it is not only words that actors/actresses utter. There lies the subtext or, terminologically speaking, the gestural-text within the text itself. The gestural-text is the coded patterning which accompanies the language for dramatic effect. To put it the other way, the words in a play text are linguistic signs expounding body movement and gesture on stage. Almost every word in a text is an expression of body movement accompanying it. From here it follows that there exists a complete harmonisation between the language or the word and body during a performance. Language-body is then nothing but a totality of word and gesture or the union of spoken text and the gesture accompanying it, or the specific link that a word in a text establishes with gesture or body movement - a dramatic unity between language and action.

This interrelationship between words and gesture in drama necessitates on behalf of the drama translator to first of all take into account the "gesture" of the language. That is to say, it is not only the words that he translates but also an equivalent body-movement accompanying that particular word. Any drama translator who ignores this runs a serious risk. Since the language-body of the source text obviously

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depends upon the language, culture, and gesture of the original, the translator must also have a clear visual and gestural picture of the language-body of the source language and culture in order to produce an effective translation.

Another peculiarity of dramatic texts is the existence of stage directions which, however, are different from gestural-texts. Stage directions are additional background information. A playwright, for instance, may give further explanation about the setting, costume, make-up, set design, the various props, etc., apart from the dialogue. Stage directions, expressed usually in parenthesis, should be given due attention by the translator.

Another characteristic of a play text is the use of paralanguage such as dramatic pauses, mumbling, stuttering, grunts, laughs, cries, etc. These, as Newmark writes, "can be used for various dramatic purposes as, for instance, indicating confusion, drunkenness, embarrassment, hesitation, physical handicap, etc." (1993: 96,97). This is also another area to be heeded by drama translator.

Apart from some of the above mentioned dramatic elements there are additional ones peculiar to play text translations. Among these are a) the changing concept of performances b) the relationship of the source text to the established conventions of the translator's day. This is particularly true if there is a significant time-gap between the source text and the target

language. A twentieth century translation and production of one of the Greek classical plays, for example, might perhaps be determined by new trends in for example acting styles, playing space, the taste of the audience, etc. This varies not only from period to period but also from place to place. The acting style in China may emphasise an extensive exploitation of symbolic body-movements and gestures while the Ethiopian tradition may stress strongly the text and the "poetic language" and expressions. So, whatever the difference in cultures, this is yet another element for the translator to be conscious of. Much depends on a detailed research on the translator's part even before selecting a particular text for translation. The type of audience to whom the translation is intended for also plays an important part whether it is for children or adults, for the common rabble or the elite.

The further requirement for a translator is his general experience or know-how in the field of his choice, be it the novel, poetry, the theatre or any other. It is preferable for a translator to have a prior acquaintance, besides linguistic skill, with the genre of literature both in the source and the target languages so that his reproduction will reflect as closely as possible the original.

Within certain limitations, a drama translator is granted a certain amount of "freedom" in the process of translation. He has the right to make use of omissions, additions, substitutions, adaptations or may use other

relevant techniques. But he/she should extremely be aware of how, why, and when to make such changes. Non-justifiable changes to be made to the source text in the target might be considered as an abuse of this "freedom".

The fact that the study of play translation is a very recent phenomena in Ethiopia makes quite difficult to present it in a clearly demarcated theoretical background at this level. Despite this, the preceding discussion sheds light on at least some major points in the area of translating dramatic texts. Even though the attempt of analysing the four translations of Julius Caesar should have been from the theoretical point of view of play translation, it is here discussed specifically from selected terms. These are from the point of view of omissions and condensations, additions and interpretations, the change in the style and, of course, the language of the target texts. The main reason behind this approach is that these terms are the major and most recurrent features that characterize most, if not all, of the translations of the play under discussion. An attempt to judge the target texts from other than these technical factors would result in an enforced imposition. However, it should be noticed that the presentation or inclusion of those theoretical backgrounds in general, even if not applied to the analysis of Julius Caesar, is to initiate researchers to conduct their works from these points of view in the future.

2.0 SHAKESPEARE IN ETHIOPIA

2.1 Biographical Writings

Apart from the Amharic translations of the works of Shakespeare either in prose or in poetry, there are articles and essays which deal with his biography as well as the historical survey of the original plays. These writings are found in books, magazines and newspapers. Among the various articles in Ethiopia those by Kebede Michael, Ayalneh Mulatu and Tekle Mariam Fantaye are chosen for discussion here.

One of Ethiopian literary pioneers exposed to foreign literature with sufficient reading is Kebede Michael. As a great reader of many classical literary works, this celebrated poet/scholar has published more than twenty-five books on various issues among which Talalak Sewoch (Great Men) is one. In this book the biographies of Homer, Damosthenes, Cleopatra, Peter the Great, Napoleon, Wolfgang Goethe and, of course, that of William Shakespeare are included.

The controversy among Shakespeare's earlier biographers as to his educational status and family background is a point given due consideration in Kebede's book. He firmly stands against those who claim that Shakespeare was from the lower class and with poor education. Shakespeare is described as a man of extraordinary poetic genius, unrivalled poet and

playwright outsmarting any of his predecessors, and successors for that matter, such as Christopher Marlowe, George Peele, John Lily and Thomas Kyd. Ato Kebede on the other hand does not deny the fact that there is no complete biography of the Bard. The reason for this is: "because historians or biographers appeared several hundred years after Shakespeare had passed away" so that they could not gather reliable and actual information. Kebede, however, reminds that the absence of adequate biography does not impede Shakespeare from being the leading poet and playwright among those this world has ever produced.

Kebede's book was primarily intended to be used as a text for elementary and junior secondary school students and there are questions at the end for students to answer. The questions are derived from the passages and focus mainly on his family background, education, his birth place, the kind of scandals spread against him, etc. Following these questions is a detailed description of Macbeth the man as well as the plot summary of the play itself. The plot narration is supplemented with translations of selected lines from the text. His selections include lines from the scene in which Lady Macbeth motivates Macbeth to commit murder, Macbeth's soliloquy after the assassination and his dialogue when he comes face to face with Banquo's ghost are translated in prose and included.

Ayalneh Mulatu's Yesnetsihuf Qignit (Survey of Literature) published in 1977 E. C. also deals with

Shakespeare. Besides surveying the literary history and traditions of Germany, France, Africa, Ethiopia and Russia from the socialist point of view, Ato Ayalneh also devotes some pages to discuss the literary history of English literature from the Renaissance to the end of the 18th century. Much of it deals with the life and works of Shakespeare. The plays are classified into "comedies" and "histories". The four periods of Shakespeare's literary career are pointed out and the power and role of money in some of the plays such as The Merchant of Venice and Timon of Athens is discussed. Shakespeare's attitude towards the ordinary people, his immortality as a poet and playwright are lauded.

The author's socialist leaning is obvious in the book. He arms himself with the propagandist conceptions of socialist literature and advocates many distorted ideas which make the book defective. The part dealing with Shakespeare is not an exception. He says of him:

ሼክስፒር ፊውዳሊዝምን በጥብቅ ይቃወማል። በአንጻሩ ደግሞ በዘመኑ የሚያቆጠ ቁጠው ካፒታሊዝም አደገኛነቱንና መጥፎነቱን ይጠቁማል። ሼክስፒር የዘመኑ ተራ ሕዝቦች በፖለቲካ ያልበሰሉና ያልተማሩ መሆናቸውን በሚገባ ያውቃል። ሆኖም ግን ሼክስፒር የታሪክን ሂደት ወደፊት የሚያራምድ ዐቢይ ሃይል ሰፊው እዝብ መሆኑን በተጨማሪ ገልጿል። ያለሰፊው ሕዝብ ተሳትፎ ምንም ነገር ለመንቀሳቀስ የማይቻል መሆኑንም ሼክስፒር አስረድቷል።

(Ayalneh;

1977: 107-08)

Shakespeare was a type of person strongly opposed to the feudal system as well as to the emergent capitalism. Shakespeare knew pretty well that the ordinary people of the age were uneducated and politically immature. However, Shakespeare objectively clarified that the broad masses were the main power that move history forward. Shakespeare also proved that nothing was able to move without the

participation of the broad masses.

Nowhere in the book are the above statements substantiated. He only lists the plays: Henry VI, Richard II, Richard III, Julius Caesar, Coriolanus and Henry V as examples. But listing titles is one thing; supporting one's argument by justifiable quotations is another. There are sweeping generalisations like: "all comedies of Shakespeare are written in simple verse and prose" and "most of the historical plays have comic rather than tragic atmosphere" (103. my emphasis) not perceptible by any standards of Shakespearean criticism or scholarship.

The third book which contains a short piece on Shakespeare's life is Yegelem Sewoch (Men of Letters), one of the series of text-books prepared for junior school students. In it are included the biographies of famous musicians, writers, and artists. All the stories were collected by Meaza Bekele and edited by Tekle Mariam Fantaye. Shakespeare's biography is given priority and is presented first. The text follows closely that of Kebede's, and it concludes remarkably thus:

የሼክስፒየርን ትያትር ለምታነቡበት ጊዜ እያንዳንዱ ተጨዋች በአዕምሯችሁ ውስጥ ይቀረጻል። እንደ ሼክስፒየር አድርጎ የሰውን ጠባይ በትያትር ለመግለፅ የቻለ ከቶ ማንም ደራሲ አልተነሳም።ሼክስፒየር እነዚህን ሁሉ ሲጻፍ በአነጋገሩ ዓለምን አስደንቆታል። ለዓለምም ባበረከተው ቅኔና ትያትር ጥበብ የሰው ልጅ ሲያመሰግነው ይኖራል።
(Tekle Mariam; 1955: 68)

When you read Shakespeare's plays each character prints itself on your mind. No writer has managed to portray the human character as did Shakespeare in his plays. Shakespeare by writing all these plays has aroused the wonders of the world. Generations

participation of the broad masses.

Nowhere in the book are the above statements substantiated. He only lists the plays: Henry VI, Richard II, Richard III, Julius Caesar, Coriolanus and Henry V as examples. But listing titles is one thing; supporting one's argument by justifiable quotations is another. There are sweeping generalisations like: "all comedies of Shakespeare are written in simple verse and prose" and "most of the historical plays have comic rather than tragic atmosphere" (103. my emphasis) not perceptible by any standards of Shakespearean criticism or scholarship.

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የሼክስፒየርን ትያትር ለምታነቡበት ጊዜ እያንዳንዱ ተጨዋች በአዕምሯችሁ ውስጥ ይቀረጻል። እንደ ሼክስፒየር አድርጎ የሰውን ጠባይ በትያትር ለመግለፅ የቻለ ከቶ ማንም ደራሲ አልተነሳም። ...ሼክስፒየር እነዚህን ሁሉ ሲጻፍ በአነጋገሩ ዓለምን አስደንቆታል። ለዓለምም ባበረከተው ቅኔና ትያትር ጥበብ የሰው ልጅ ሲያመሰግነው ይኖራል።
(Tekle Mariam; 1955: 68)

When you read Shakespeare's plays each character prints itself on your mind. No writer has managed to portray the human character as did Shakespeare in his plays. Shakespeare by writing all these plays has aroused the wonders of the world. Generations

will continue praising him forever for his contributions to the world of poetry and the theatre arts.

Unlike Kebede's text, however, no play of Shakespeare is selected and discussed in this book. Only his biography is presented in a clear and precise manner.

2.2 Literary Translations

2.2.1 The Plays

It is interesting to note that the very first introduction of Shakespeare in Ethiopia was made by a woman. This lady, "a daughter of an Ethiopian Minister to Britain and one of the first Ethiopian woman to receive a modern education abroad prior to the Italian invasion" (Pankhurst: 178) was called Sara Workneh, and was the first Ethiopian to adapt and publish Shakespeare's The Tempest in Amharic fifty five years ago, i. e., in 1941. The story of the adaptation is very simple and follows the spirit of the original text: Abraham, the right Duke of Tigray, who lives in a cave on an unknown island, reveals to his only daughter Mentiwab how his brother, Solomon by name, overthrows him from the throne and expels him out of his kingdom. Fortunately Abraham's life is saved by one of the generous Shoan princes known as Wosenyeleh . By his spiritual power of commanding the airy spirit, Ariel, Abraham raises thunder and storm that wrecks the ship which his brother Wondifraw, Solomon and Mekbib have boarded. By doing so he manages to separate the son of the Shoan King called Mekbib from the others and brings him to the island. The

moment Mentiwab and Mekbib see each other, they fall in love and decide to marry immediately. Hiding behind them, Abraham listens to all that goes on between these two lovers and approves their decision. Later on Abraham orders Ariel to bring Wondifraw, Wosenyeleh and Solomon to the cave. When Ariel brings these three "criminals" before Abraham, they beg his pardon and receive it. All those separated become finally reunited and every thing ends quite happily. Ariel also gets his freedom from Abraham.

The whole text of this story is summarized into eight scenes and covers only seven pages. Most of the dialogue in the first three scenes of Sara's adaptation is selected from the second scene of the original text, the fourth one from Act II scene ii, the sixth scene from Act III scene i and the seventh and eighth from the only scene in the last Act. The fifth scene in the adaptation is simply a stage direction in one sentence: two princes and three mariners in tiredness enter on the stage and cry out shouts of hunger and thirst. The Amharic adaptation is entitled Me'abel and is written in a simple and plain prose with relevant stage directions. The names of the characters, the setting and the costumes are all Ethiopianized.

The adapter of The Tempest, Sara Workneh, should be commended for being the first person to introduce play translation practice, Shakespeare's in particular, in Ethiopia. The other important merit to be attributed to her is

that she was at least conscious of the difficulty of translating or adapting a foreign text. As she admits in the preface:

ይህ ትያትር በ16ኛው መቶ ዘመን ውስጥ በንግሥት ኤልሳቤጥ ዘመን በውልያም ሼክስፒር ተጻፈ። በእንግሊዝ መጽሐፍ ከዚህ ከአማርኛው ይረዝማል። ነገር ግን ለመጫወት እንዲያመች ብዙውን ጭቃ ቆርጫ አሳጠርኩት። ከጭቃው ላይ ነገሩ ለሕዝባችን እንዲገባ በጭቃው ውስጥ ያሉትን የሰዎች ስም የአማራ ስም አደረግሁት። ስለዚህ መጽሐፉን ከመተርጎም ሌላ ብዙ የማደራጀት ሥራ ተሠርቶልና ከእንግሊዙ ድርሰት በጣም ይለያል። በዚህ ምክንያት ከድርሰቱ ጉድለት ቢገኝበት ሐላፊነቱ የኔው ነው እንጂ ታላቁን የትያትር ጸሐፊ ውልያም ሼክስፒርን አይነካውም። (Sara; 1933: n.p.)

This play was written in the 16th century in the reign of Queen Elizabeth by William Shakespeare. The English original is much longer than this Amharic translation. But I cut out most parts for acting convenience. I changed the names into Amhara names in order that the play be understood by our people. Apart from translation a lot of adaptation has been made. Hence there is much difference between the English and the Amharic works. If there is any shortcoming in this work, the responsibility lies upon myself but not on the great playwright William Shakespeare.

This type of awareness and literary honesty is not a common practice even in present day Ethiopia. Regrettably, this adaptation, as reported by Pankhurst (178) was not staged for it did not seem "politically desirable" to perform a play of this sort at that particular time. Presumably the story of the overthrow of an existing ruler was felt to be too sensitive in the immediate post war period. No other translator or adapter has attempted to translate or adapt it into any of other Ethiopian languages yet.

Chronologically, Million Negniq was the second person to translate Romeo and Juliet but his translation was neither performed nor published but was simply read at manuscript level (Pankhurst: 178). Million's Romeo and Juliet was soon followed by Kebede Michael's. It was published in 1953/54 under the title Romeona Juliyet Te'ater (Romeo and Juliet: A Play). Regarding Kebede's adaptation, I agree in general with the comments by Getu (188) and Richard Pankhurst (179). The whole work is designed to appeal to local audiences just as it were any other story of Ethiopian origin. It has a local flavour in its overall spirit. Kebede's adaptation is written in an easily understandable language retaining the adapter's own style of a high poetic quality. The play immediately after its publication and performance gained great popularity among students and theatre goers. That is why some people of those times can still recite passages from the text today. This adaptation can be considered as the real introduction of Shakespeare to an Ethiopian audience. Another translation of Romeo and Juliet was made by the late Bassie Habte in 1993. This version, directed by Seyoum Teferra, was performed at the Addis Ababa City Hall Theatre for a little less than a year. The play was not warmly received due probably to the failure in its directing.

Besides the three translations of Julius Caesar in the 1950s, the other plays of Shakespeare which appeared in Amharic after Kebede's Romeo and Juliet were Othello, Macbeth,

and Hamlet by the leading Amharic translator of Shakespeare-Tsegaye Gebre Medhin. An established poet and playwright, Tsegaye, in the words of Pankhurst, is "the leading Amharic translator of Shakespeare" and "the first Ethiopian Shakespeare translator to be professionally committed to the theatre" (181). He translated Othello in 1962, Macbeth in 1963 and Hamlet in 1965. The Amharic text of Othello was also the first to appear in publication in 1964 followed by Hamlet and Macbeth in 1972. Tsegaye's Otelo was performed for the first time in July, 1963 and Hamlet in the Spring of 1963, both at the National Theatre. A full performance of the Amharic Macbeth is not known except for a few excerpts. Othello was revived successfully in 1980 at the Municipality Theatre. Hamlet, "which had not been seen on the professional stage for close to seventeen years" from its first performance (Pankhurst: 180) was staged at the National Theatre directed by the translator himself in March 1976. But it stopped after a single performance due to the political atmosphere in the country prevailing at that time. After an absence of eleven years it is now running at the Ethiopian National Theatre. The present production is directed by a young and promising director, Ato Manyazewal Endeshaw.

Apart from these three tragedies, Tsegaye translated selected scenes from King Lear around 1960. Based on the report by Pankhurst (184), Tsegaye's translation of this play entitled "Lir Negasi" (King Lear), does not start at the beginning but with the Third Act, the scene on the heath.

Pankhurst also added that this translation together with other selected excerpts from Othello, Macbeth and Hamlet was staged at the Haile Sellassie Theatre in August 1968. The production of this play:

though popular in some quarters, ran into the Ministry of Information disfavour and after only three performances was cancelled for technical reasons and patrons who had purchased tickets for a fourth staging had their money refunded (Pankhurst: 184).

To comment on Tsegaye Gebre Medhin as translator of these tragedies is not an easy task. It requires a great deal of research. But it might be possible to forward a few points as passing remarks. A close analysis of the Amharic texts reveals that Tsegaye applies the direct translation approach as opposed to his claim of literary "adaptation" in the prefaces to these translations. In fact he makes various omissions (of words, lines, passages and scenes), additions or elaborations, condensations and utilises adaptation techniques. Such techniques, however, are permissible with a certain degree of limitation as far as they make contributions to the quality of the text as translation.

The poetic genius of Shakespeare as reflected in his best tragedies mentioned here is almost exactly transmitted into the target texts. Tsegaye's translations of these plays show how he is a master of the Amharic language as Shakespeare was of his own. Reading Hamlet in Amharic, for instance, one cannot help but feel that, were it not English in the original, this were the Amharic that Shakespeare would have

composed it in. Tsegaye's choice of words, his grammatical construction and his unique style of versification are some of the qualities that distinguish him as translator. In the light of his sublime poetry as well as his rhythmical prose, the Amharic translations of Shakespeare's plays by other Ethiopian translators, save for Kebede Michael's, Bekele Tegegn's, Mesfin Alemayehu's and Nebiy Mekonnen's, are a devastating banality. He is supreme in rendering the corresponding rhythms, sounds and images of the originals.

Another translator of Shakespeare was Merid Mekonnen who published The Merchant of Venice in 1972. According to Pankhurst (184), this text entitled Yevenis Negade is an abridged version bearing "a portrait of the translator with the exceptional slogan 'Peace on Earth', Good Will to Men'".

Mesfin Alemayehu who previously involved himself in translating short stories moved to the area of drama and translated The Merchant of Venice in 1985. His yet unpublished translation was staged at Hager Fikir Theatre the following year and was directed by Sahlu Assefa. Debebe Eshetu played the part of Shylock and gave memorable performance. So was Alemtsehay Wodajo's portrayal of Portia.

Mesfin's translation of this play can be taken as the first successful Amharic translation among the comedies of Shakespeare, preceding Twelfth Night and the second A Mid-Summer Night's Dream. What has already been said about

Tsegaye's talent as a Shakespeare translator can be applied to Mesfin Alemayehu. The ideas conveyed, the message transmitted and the effect produced in the translation is fairly comparable to that of the original text. The poetic language Mesfin used in his translation as well as its flavour is quite commendable. There is almost a one-to-one correspondence between the source and the target languages. As it is the case of Tsegaye, there are a few omissions, condensations, transpositions and elaborations made to some parts of the original. But that does not basically alter the structure or content of Shakespeare's play.

A Mid-Summer Night's Dream was among the comedies of Shakespeare to attract the attention of two Ethiopian translators: Hailu Desta and Belayneh Abune. The earlier translation was by Hailu Desta in 1963 with the Amharic title "Yebega Lelit Ra'ey" (A Mid-Summer Night's Vision). According to an article in the weekly newspaper Yeitiopia Dimts (May 14, 1957 E. C.), His Majesty Haile Sellassie attended the performance of this first translation that run for "exactly three hours from 3:00 a. m. - 6:00 a. m. local time at the Haile Sellassie Theatre". It is also stated in this same review that Tesfaye Gessesse was in charge of its directing. There is also another similar commentary in the daily Addis Zemen (June 6, 1957 E. C.) that A Mid-Summer Night's Dream or Shakespeare's dream", as the reviewer named it, was on show at the same theatre house. This anonymous writer briefly summarizes the whole production as a success and further

comments on "the magical power or adventure of the fairies; how, for instance, Tesfaye Sahlu who played the part of Bottom" found himself transformed into an ass because of the fairies' mysterious power to do so. Unfortunately, this translation has neither been published nor its copies deposited in the libraries.

The second and the very recent translation of this same play appeared in June 1995 by Ato Belayneh Abune who is a university lecturer in Theatre Arts Department and a frequent practitioner of play translation mostly for the university society. His mimeographed text entitled "Yemeher Lelit Hilm" (A Summer Night's Dream) was staged at Amist Killo auditorium with satisfactory acting mostly by graduating students from the department. The performance run for three consecutive days for three hours without an interval. The costumes for this production were supplied by the National and Hager Fikir Theatres; the lighting system and the flats by the New Theatre Club and the seating banks by the Sandford English Community School here in the capital. Miss Fran Leighton who directed the play, most likely in collaboration with the translator, used the round and proscenium stages simultaneously.

As to the translation, Belayneh seems at his best in the prose parts as it is usual in his translations of other plays. A close examination of the Amharic script unfolds that the translator exploited all his best so as to preserve the entire message and spirit of the source text except for the inferior

simplicity of his language in the verse part and the general weakness in the tone and flavour of the original play.

Still another comedy of Shakespeare's rendered in Amharic is Twelfth Night. The first translator of this play was Fikre Dingel Beyene who accomplished the task of the translation within the range of two years in 1961. He gave a literal translation of the title of the original "Asrahuletegnaw Lelit" (Twelfth Night). The Creative Arts Centre mimeographed and preserved it in the Institute of Ethiopian Studies library. It is, however, unfortunate that this translation has neither been published nor performed.

Twelfth Night again appeared in Amharic by two other co-translators, Chanyalew Wolde Giyorgis and Solomon Tessema, in 1993 i. e., thirty two years after the first translation. Chanyalew and Solomon used the literal translation approach except the song parts which they painted a local colour. The language of the Amharic script entitled "Wazema" (Eve) is rendered mostly in prose with quite simple, direct and easily understandable language though with less of the poetic touch in the original. This translation, directed by Haimanot Alemu, a man of celebrated and genuine talent in acting and directing, and performed by outstanding actors/actresses has preserved its popularity among the public and proven itself one of the greatest box office hits at the National Theatre.

2.2.2 Prose Tales

The first Amharic translation of Shakespeare in prose or tale form was that of The Merchant of Venice which came out in three consecutive issues of the daily Addis Zemen (September 26, 27 and 28 1953 E. C.). As acknowledged in the introductory paragraph to this prose translation by the anonymous translator, the story is directly taken from Lambs Tales by Mary and Charles Lamb.

Three years after The Merchant of Venice followed the translation of Twelfth Night this time by Teklu Tabor in the December 18; January 2 and 9, 1956 E. C. issues of Yezareitu Itiopia with a brief introductory paragraph on Shakespeare's life and the original text. The translator commented on how Shakespeare came to give two alternative titles and the various opinions forwarded by subsequent scholars. The translator leaves the choice for the reader as to which title is more suitable in relation to the story of the play.

King Lear in tale was the third translation in Amharic. The translator, Berehanu Tessema or Berehanu Desta as it is written in the second part, states in the introduction to this translation that he was very much impressed by the poetic faculty of Shakespeare, the beauty and power of his language and the thought-provoking nature in his literary productions. Ato Berehanu also underlines the significance of translating

Shakespeare in Amharic especially for adults. His two-part prose translation of this play is found in April 13 and May 5, 1957 E. C. issues of Yeitiopia Dimts.

As Tsegaye Gebre Medhin in translating the plays of Shakespeare, and Ato Wondimu Negash Desta in translating Shakespeare's tales, outscores the other translators. Ato Wondimu translated and published in two volumes thirteen tales from Shakespeare. The first volume came out in 1987 and contains eight of the thirteen tales and has three pages of introduction. The introductory note is a satisfactory background information about Shakespeare's life and work. The controversial biography of Shakespeare; some of the major themes in Romeo and Juliet, Othello, The Merchant of Venice and Hamlet; Shakespeare's skilful transmutation of the histories of Italy, Egypt, Greek, Rome and England; the periodical classification of his literary career; the significance of translating the plays in the form of tales; the role of the translator and difficulties he might face in the actual process; the possible ways to overcome translation difficulties and the various ways he applied in translating the tales are the major points raised. This is followed by his abridged translation of The Merchant of Venice, The Taming of the Shrew, Julius Caesar, King Lear, Macbeth, Much Ado About Nothing, As You Like It and Twelfth Night. Ato Wondimu used simple and direct language in his translation which gives the volume a pleasurable reading.

The second volume was produced two years later, in 1989, with the title of Fitsamew Siamir (All is Well That Ends Well). It has a six pages long introduction containing interesting Shakespearean lore. The five tales that follow are Romeo and Juliet, A Winter's Tale, Othello, Hamlet and All is Well That Ends Well in this order of appearance. Introductory lines are also quoted from Kebede Michael's Romeo and Juliet and from Tsegaye Gebre Medhin's Othello and Hamlet to usher in the tales. As it is true to the first volume, Wondimu employs a very simple language in volume two but preserves the general flavour of the original language of Lamb's tales.

2.2.3 The Sonnets

The only translator of Shakespeare's sonnets known to this writer is Ato Tesfaye Gessesse who is now finalizing his work for publication. Among thirty of the sonnets he translated, around five appeared in the monthly Amharic magazine Ifoita and two others in the quarterly bi-lingual (Amharic and English) magazine Tele Negarit with the explicit motive to see how they would be received by the target audience.

Based upon his own article in the October 1993 issue of Ifoita, Ato Tesfaye translated the sonnets with two main objectives. Firstly, with the aim of introducing this side of Shakespeare so that the target audience may enjoy him. Secondly, to familiarise himself with the style of Shakespeare's versification and ready him for further work -

possibly on his plays. On the basis of an overall observation the translator seems to achieve both of his objectives as far as the Amharic equivalents of these published sonnets show.

It is a general characteristic of poetry translation that the words are not simply reworded into the target language. But using interpretive approach, even additional issues can be inculcated without, of course, basic changes to the message and spirit of the original. In sonnet 46 and 129, for instance, the translator employs native poetic forms ("Mugit" - dispute - for sonnet 46 and "Enqoqlish" - riddle - for sonnet 129) with the sole purpose of intensifying the message by giving it a local touch and flavour.

It is beyond the limitation of this paper to go further into details of a yet unpublished work. Suffice it to remark that the published sonnets show great promise of quality workmanship (as has been manifested in his acclaimed rendition of the Rubaiyats of Omar Khayaam). It is fairly possible to conclude that despite the limited licence of additions and localisations in both form and content Ato Tesfaye's work will be both edifying and inspiring.

2.3. Critical Writings

In addition to many reviews and commentaries in the daily or weekly papers on the text or performances of Shakespeare's plays in Ethiopia (either in the translations or

in the originals) there are several senior essays and a single M.A.thesis produced by graduating students mainly from the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature.

As already stated in the introduction, it is only Getu Mulatu who studied play adaptation and translation practice in Ethiopia. A very well and deep analysis of the Amharic adaptation of Romeo and Juliet by Kebede Michael is given an entire chapter in this thesis. It discusses the historical background and contrasts the Amharic text with the original. In his opinion Kebede's adaptation "draws upon the language and culture of the Amharic society to such an extent that it appeals to the local readers as would any other story of Ethiopian origin" (118). The adapter's versification, he concludes, adds greatly to the typical touches and echoes contained in the original. Though it is foreign in origin, the adaptation still remains Ethiopian in its overall atmosphere or spirit.

As far as the senior essays are concerned, five assess the various dramatic elements in the tragedy of the original Hamlet. Among these three were produced in the years 1986 and the rest in 1988 and 1989. The first, by Berehanu Gerima, is a description of the dramatic conflict in Hamlet. The second essay is by Etsehiwot Demissie dealing with the nature of "Plot in Shakespeare's Hamlet". The writer concentrated mainly in describing and analysing the exposition, rising action, climax, the falling action and the catastrophe in the play.

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The third senior essay is "Character Analysis of Hamlet, Claudius and Gertrude in Shakespeare's Hamlet by Fasil Yitbarek.

The tragic flaw in Hamlet's character is studied by Shimeles Gizaw in his essay "The Hero's Flaw in Hamlet". The last senior essay on Hamlet with a some what different subject matter from the rest is presented by Sossena Alemayehu under the title "A Study of Cross-Cultural Communication Barriers to the understanding of Hamlet by Ethiopian Audience". This paper, deals with "the unintelligible parts" in the original play for Ethiopian audiences. Basing herself on her interviews, the researcher recommends that Ethiopian readers should abandon superstition and should try to widen their horizons and appreciate the traditional practices, beliefs, values and customs of societies belonging to other cultures.

The only critical work or senior essay upto the completion of this thesis on King Lear is Tsegaye Amenu's "Lear as a Tragic Character in Shakespeare's King Lear" written in May 1984. In discussing this theme, he tries to unfold the concept of tragedy as depicted by Aristotle and as exemplified by shakespeare.

Six other senior essays, almost all focusing on characterisation, on Shakespeare's Macbeth appeared between 1986 and 1991. These were "The Role of Ambition and Fear in Macbeth" (Kifleyesus Ocbazghi: June 1986); "Tragic Flaw in

Shakespeare's Hero Macbeth" (Mahlet Tsegaye: June 1986); "Character Analysis of the Hero and the Heroine in Shakespeare's Macbeth" (Melaku Wakuma: June 1986); "Plot Analysis of Shakespeare's Macbeth" (Tesfaye Nuressa: June 1988); "Character Analysis of Macbeth" (Sirgut Yadeta: June 1990) and "Major Character Analysis in Shakespeare's Tragedy: Special Reference to Othello and Macbeth" (Tsehay Kassa: November 1991).

The senior essay by Mahlet, save the first two chapters which deal with the concept of hamartia and the historical background of Macbeth, is a discussion of the very same subject matter in the essay by Kifleyesus. The other work by Tesfaye Nuressa is also very much similar, both in form and content, to that of Etsehiwot Demisse's "Plot in Shakespeare's Hamlet" except that Tsegaye's is on Macbeth. The writer again, like Etsehiwot, following the chronological order as outlined by Freytag, generalises that the plot in Macbeth is a good example of the five-act structure. The remaining three, as each title suggests, are all about character analysis of the source text.

"The study of Cross-Cultural Communication Barriers in Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice to the Ethiopian Audience", by Mekia Mohammed is an essay more or less synonymous to that of Sossena's on Hamlet both in form and subject matter. The only difference is that Mekia gives much more emphasis to the marriage custom, the nature of Shylock's

usury and the court trial as they are regarded by an Ethiopian audience. However, Mekia's analysis seems a one-sided argument for she does not explain how the original concept would be affected had those changes she forwards were made to the source text.

Another critical writing on this play is "Analysis of the Major themes in The Merchant of Venice" by Awoke Shiferaw. The themes of religion and of love are the two major issues discussed in this study. Awoke identifies Antonio as a "kind, sympathetic, christian" and Shylock as a "satanic, vengeful, and greedy Jew". The last senior essay on this play by Mengiste'ab Kabsay came out in 1991. Mengiste'ab concludes his essay by saying that "Shakespeare deliberately made Shylock a loser in order to fulfil his own desire; that is to let Shylock lose everything, to see Shylock a shattering defeat". But his paper lacks cogent argument that support this conclusion.

Other B. A. senior essays on Shakespeare's plays include Tekeste Tekle's "The Significance of Soliloquy in Shakespeare's Othello" (1986) and Tsehay Kassa's "Major Characters in Shakespeare's Tragedy: Special Reference to Othello and Macbeth" (1991). In the former paper a considerable attempt is made to disclose the dramatic significance of soliloquy as a vital instrument in character revelation as well as its contribution in unfolding the major theme and developing the plot of the play. In the latter the focus again is on characterisation as in most senior essays.

Still another essay on Shakespeare's original text is Fikre Gebre Kidan's "Romeo and Juliet as a Tragic play of Fate" (1992). Fikre's generalization as a whole is that the only villain in the play is fate.

Nearly all the preceding senior essays reviewed so far deal with the dramatic elements in the original texts. There are only two other essays which directly deal with the Amharic translations of a) Hamlet, b) Othello and Romeo and Juliet. The first one is "Shakespeare's Hamlet in Amharic" (1992) by Zekeria Mohammed and the second one "Translations of Two Plays of Shakespeare and Their Social Value" (1994) by Hailu Tamrat both from the Department of Theatre Arts. These works resemble each other especially in simply going around the bush and in not treating their actual topic.

"The Nature of Shakespearean Tragedy as Exemplified by Shakespeare" is presented by Ephrem Teressa in 1987. The paper is relatively different from all other essays in that it does not examine any particular play of Shakespeare either in the original or in the translation as such. Instead it is a general survey in which the writer attempts "to elucidate the nature of Elizabethan tragedy through an examination of both theoretical and practical aspects of contemporary tragedy".

The whole survey leads Ephrem to conclude that "Shakespeare exemplifies the ideas and assumptions about tragedy of the Elizabethan stage"

3.0 SHAKESPEARE'S TRAGEDY OF JULIUS CAESAR: THE ORIGINAL VERSUS THE TRANSLATIONS

3.1 The Original Text

It is mentioned in many editions of Shakespeare's play under discussion (Dorsch; 1965: XIX; Wood; 1901: XIX; Houghton; 1979: 9) that the story of a dictator called Julius Caesar had been told and retold in such literary forms as poetry, play, tale, etc., even long before the time of Shakespeare. The dramatic story of Caesar's rise and fall was a popular subject exploited by literary men. Therefore, numerous plays on the subject (most of which are not extant) were reported to have been written in Latin, Greek, French and English languages before and after Shakespeare.

Among the pre-Shakespearean compositions, which are also supposed to have a possible influence on Shakespeare's text, were the Latin play entitled Julius Caesar by Mark Antoine Muret published in 1563, Jacques Grivins's Caesar in 1561 and Cornelie in 1574 by Robert Garnier which was translated into English by Thomas Kyd in 1594 with the title Cornelia. Quoting Stephen Gosson's Players Confuted in Five Acts, T. S. Dorsch (XIX) states that a play entitled The History of Caesar and Pompey was registered in 1582 "which may have been staged at The Theatre". Stanley Wood (XIX) dated the composition of this same play three years back around 1579.

Dorsch also mentions that "the children of Pawles" played "a storie of Pompey" at the court on Twelfth Night, 1581, in England: "a performance which may perhaps include Caesar's part in Pompey's downfall" (XIX). Another probable text on the same subject before Shakespeare's was "the epilogue (in Latin prose)...of a play called Caesar Interfectus which was probably acted at Christ Church, University of Oxford, in 1582". Richard Edes, of Christ Church, "was most likely to have written this epilogue and was responsible for the play as a whole" (Dorsch: XIX; Wood: XIV)

Post-Shakespearean dramatic texts on the story of Caesar also exist inspired most likely by the success of Shakespeare's composition. The first play entitled Caesar's Fall was written in the first decade of the 17th century (around 1602) by four poets: Munday, Dryton, Webster and Middleton. Unfortunately, there exists no recorded account on the production of this play. The next was by the Earl of Stirling, Sir William Alexander, who printed his The Tragedy of Julius Caesar in 1607. The third play in the seventeenth century was Tragedy of Caesar and Pompey, or, Caesar's Revenge by an anonymous writer. This play, on the account of T. S. Dorsch (XX), had been privately acted by the students of Trinity College in Oxford with "its marks of an academic origin in tone and in the profusion of classical references".

Caesar and Pompey was composed by Chapman around 1613 but printed eighteen years later in 1631. Other compositions

following Shakespeare's text include The False One by Fletcher and Beaumont and Julius Caesar by Orson Wells. The former play was printed in 1647, though written much earlier in 1620, and describes "the impression made by Cleopatra in the girlish state upon Caesar " while the latter was "an early instance of modern adaptation and production of Julius Caesar [of Shakespeare] in 1937" (Wood: XIX; Dorsch: XX). According to David Bevington (1980: 1665), the production of Orson Wells is an attempt to draw "an analogy between the Caesar of the play and Benito Mussolini but the interpretation of the play was of necessity one-sided, it allowed for no ironic perception of both good and evil in Caesar's one-man rule".

Shakespeare's strong interest in the story of Caesar can be seen through the references he makes to the dictator's name as well as events associated to his deeds in at least eight of his plays before Julius Caesar and in around seven of the plays written after it (Houghton; 1979: 9-10).

Many Shakespearean scholars, basing themselves on internal and external evidences of the text, agree that he composed the tragedy of Julius Caesar between 1599 and 1600 relying, for the story, much on Sir Thomas North's translation of Plutarch's Lives particularly on those parts of Marcus Brutus, Julius Caesar and Marcus Antonius. Despite the condemnation of Shakespeare by Hudson (1979: 244) for his failure to reduce "the scattered events of history to artistic consistency" in Julius Caesar, the play has generally been

accepted as one of the best examples to prove Shakespeare's talent in the transmutation of historical facts into dramatic episodes, of prose narrative into the language of poetry with much fidelity to the original source. As it is clearly stated in Stanley Wood (XIV), to mention only him, Shakespeare in this play shows his dramatic genius "in his selection of the source material, in what he added, omitted or changed and above all in his imaginative treatment" of the famous and rather complicated period of Roman history into a skilfully compressed and best constructed dramatic plot.

Thematically, the tragedy of Julius Caesar has been approached from different angles by many critics. For John Peck and Martin Coyle (1985: 41-43), for instance, the drama of Julius Caesar focuses on the gap between the ideal of the ordered society and the complicated reality of life which brings people into conflicts with their leaders. These writers share the idea that Shakespeare offers the audience an impression of the complex reality of political and social life, showing how men always create discord in society and at the same time aspire towards a better society "or life will deteriorate into anarchy and violence" (49).

Stanley Wood (XIV-XV) on the other hand approaches the central idea of the play from two points of view: as a political play and as a tragedy of character. As to the former, it is the decay of Republicanism in Rome, i. e., the transition from the republic of equals to an empire dominated

by great individuals and the rise of Caesarism, while in the latter case, to quote his brief statement: "Good cannot come out of Evil". One can observe through the text how violent revolts against an established order and system of society bring immeasurable suffering and disaster.

Characterisation in a play contributes much more to its excellence than do formulas like the three unities - time and place for instance. Shakespeare gives much more attention to characterisation than other dramatic techniques. As William Henry Hudson expresses it:

Characterisation is the really fundamental and lasting element in the greatness of any dramatic work. We have only to turn to Shakespeare to find a telling illustration. No one would contend that his plays owe their permanent place in literature to the quality of his plots. The interest which keeps them alive is the interest of the men and women in them. (186)

In this play Caesar, Brutus, Cassius and Mark Antony are the most fully developed characters. This is how their characterisation is described in Cole's edition:

Brutus the protagonist, is a man of remarkable goodness but (he has a great weakness), he is too idealistic and quite impractical. From this weakness derives his tragedy. Cassius at the beginning of the play is envious and dishonest, (but towards the end of the play) has taken many admirable qualities. Caesar the great has enough weaknesses to invite his downfall. Antony is the mixture of the good and the evil (Coles Publishing Company; 1967: 12).

Among Shakespeare's qualities, his power of language is the most remarkable. Following the tradition among the Renaissance literary giants, he was an innovator and experimenter in the English language. Shakespeare managed to express the inexpressible (feeling, thought, idea, emotion or whatever) by partly going against the structural rules of the English language. He balanced word against word, phrase against phrase and sentence against sentence. If he needed a verb and had none, he made one from a noun; if he needed a noun and had none, he made one from a verb and so on. This power of Shakespeare's language will be reconsidered in more detail later on in this chapter.

3.2 Julius Caesar in Ethiopia

The very first introduction of Shakespeare's Julius Caesar to Ethiopia came through schools. History discloses that Ethiopia and Britain developed their closer link particularly after the former was liberated from the short-lived invasion by Italy. Among various fields of cooperation between the two countries was education. Many existing schools in Addis Ababa were headed by teachers from England who brought text books from their country. According to Pankurst's article as well as the information supplied by Ato Assefa Gebre Mariam, Ethiopian students in the late 1940s and early 1950s E. C. were prepared for the London University Matriculation at the end of their secondary school education. The examinations included questions on English literature.

Hence examination questions from Shakespeare's Julius Caesar along with Twelfth Night and along with A Mid-Summer Night's Dream appeared in 1950/51 and in 1950/53 respectively.

The first-known Shakespearean performance in the country took place around 1952, at the General Wingate School in the presence of His Majesty, the Emperor Haile Sellassie. It was presented by British teachers and Ethiopian students. The play was Julius Caesar. Seven years later, in 1959, Lynn Martin, an American teacher at the American School in Addis Ababa, gave a public lecture on Julius Caesar along with Macbeth and the Sonnets. In 1963, a group of British actors performed this play and Antony and Cleopatra at the English School under the title "The Might of Rome" (see Pankhurst: 173-74). According to an article in the weekly Yeitiopia Dimts, Julius Caesar in the original language was staged by students of the Addis Ababa Commercial School on the 22nd and 23rd of March 1959 E. C. It is reported in this newspaper that "the actors used costumes usually wore by Ethiopian War Lords as well as Princes". Illustrated by the players' pictures taken from the stage performance (first scene of the First Act) the reviewer admired in this article "the extraordinary role playing" of the two "naturally-gifted actors" - Teshome Betru and Getachew Nigatu who played Caius Cassius and Mark Antony respectively.

Julius Caesar was also performed in post revolution Ethiopia. At the end of October and the beginning of November 1980, together with excerpts from Romeo and Juliet, Twelfth Night, A Mid-Summer Night's Dream, The Tempest and Macbeth, it was performed by two British players, Eleanor Thomas and Gareth Armstong, at the Italian Cultural Institute. Two years later, in 1982, a troupe of four players was sent to Addis Ababa by the London Shakespeare Group. The troupe presented adapted excerpts from four of Shakespeare's plays among which was a forty-minutes performance of Julius Caesar. Later on an arrangement was made for a theatre workshop and scenes from this play were rendered and discussed by some members of the troupe "so as to evaluate the Theatre Arts Students in the University" (Pankhurst: 191).

3.3 The Four Amharic Translations of Julius Caesar

3.3.1 General Remarks

Coming to the play of Julius Caesar in Amharic, it is quite clear to observe why it lent itself to translation. In the first place, as mentioned earlier, it was one of those plays included in the set-books for the London Matriculation in the late 1940s and early 1950s E. C. Secondly, it had always been among the plays of Shakespeare from which excerpts were performed and lectures and discussions were held by members of both visiting troupes and Ethiopian students. Based on these backgrounds, one may easily conclude that the play must have been read a lot in its original. Such



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popularity probably led the four Ethiopian translators to translate it into Amharic. The first three translations appeared within a couple of years one after the other.

The first literal translation of Julius Caesar in Amharic was made by Bekele Tegegn who was a graduate of Menelik Secondary School, and who later on joined the Ethiopian Air Force and Ethiopian Air Lines. His work was not accepted for staging because of government policy regarding the assassination of Caesar. The translator, however, was fortunate in that he managed to get it printed in Asmara where censorship was less stringent than at Addis Ababa. The book came out in 1956/57 under the title Yejulyos Oesar Asazzagn Amomu'at Te'ater (The Tragic Death of Julius Caesar: A Play).

The published text of Bekele starts with a scene-by-scene plot summary. In his preface he gives the reasons for translating the text - which, according to him, is to make an experiment or an exercise in literary career. His long introduction includes an investigation of Roman history and the rise and fall of its generals and rulers; Pompey and Caesar in particular. Except for one part, the drama of Julius Caesar is rendered in verse. Names of characters, places, and deities are transliterated. Neither characters nor episodes are eliminated. No transpositions or shifts of scenes are made nor any additions of the translator's own devising. There is no attempt to simplify the language or

paraphrase the obscurities which arise from puns or allusions. As a result, the fine stylistic quality of Shakespeare's play is retained.

The use of metalanguage is evident in the work. Ge'ez words are utilized as complements or substitutions of Amharic words. At the end of the translation he singles out wrongly printed words throughout the text and renders their correct forms. There is no indication of which edition he used for his translation.

The second translation was made in 1956 by Assefa Gebre Mariam Tessema. Born and raised in Addis, he translated Julius Caesar at the age of eighteen while attending secondary school education at the General Wingate school. His first unrevised attempt is mimeographed and preserved in the Institute of Ethiopian Studies library. It bears the title "Yewilliam Shekspir Juliyes Qessar Tarikawi Assazagn Tewnet" (William Shakespeare's Julius Caesar: Historical Tragic Play). Ato Assefa told this writer that he started translating it during the semester-break of 1956/57 so that it could be performed on graduation day by members of the school Drama Club. This translation, however, was not performed because it was outshone by the newly adapted play of Romeo and Juliet by Kebede Michael.

Though the translation failed to be performed, the translator revised it for the second time assisted by his

friend Million Negniq. He tried to publish this revised text but still another problem followed while printing was under way. Ato Assefa, rather than portraying the Emperor's photograph, preferred that of the Emperor's son, Prince Mekonnen, with an accompanying poem. This action was considered by the government censors as against the convention. As a result the Printing was suspended at Act V, sc. iii.

Assefa's translation is supported by a thorough research. Much of the lengthy introductory part of the text is devoted to the history of Rome and the Romans including the rise and fall of Julius Caesar in history. The biography of Shakespeare, the source of the original play and some points on the translation are also there.

The text is generally characterised by eliminations or condensations of words, lines, passages and scenes. The translator, as he admits in the introduction, tries to avoid difficulties both to the actor and the audience particularly in diction. Therefore his translation is a more simplified one. The translator does not aim for the literal accuracy as a scholarly text but at readability. Assefa also renders the prose parts of the original in verse in his translation.

The third work, though the first to be published, is by Fasil Gebre Kiros who was a commercial school graduate who later on studied Shakespeare with Hyden T. George. Fasil

started working on the translation in 1954 and completed it in a year or two. As usual, his translation faced publication difficulties in Addis Ababa. So like Bekele, he had to arrange its printing in Asmara. According to Pankhurst "five hundred copies were printed, but quickly disappeared from the bookshops, and rumour had it that they had somehow been purchased by the authorities to withdraw from the sale" (181).

Unlike the texts by Bekele and Assefa, the translation by Fasil is almost devoid of any historical or textual account of the source text. Fasil also seems to concentrate on the target language than the source. Hence priority is given to the comprehensibility of the Amharic translation. Retaining the frame work of the story, he removes or leaves out legitimate obscurities, necessary ambiguities or complexities. In other words, extensive application of omission, condensation and simplification are the characteristics of this translation as a whole. He deviates especially when faced with difficult metaphors or puns. It is also characterised by the use of prose much more than Shakespeare's in the source text. Like Bekele Tegegn, Fasil gives a scene-by-scene breakdown or summary of the play at the end of the text.

A new translation of Julius Caesar in Amharic was made quite recently, October 24, 1991, by Nebiy Mekonnen. This translation was staged at the Addis Ababa City Hall Theatre two years and a half ago and was directed by Manyazewal

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Endeshaw. It stayed on the stage for almost a year. The young translato also has translated and staged Lessing's Nathan the Wise as well as part of Margaret Mitchell's famous novel Gone With the Wind into Amharic. To quote his own words, Nebiy translated this play motivated by "the entire issue in Julius Caesar which does appeal to almost everybody irrespective of time and place".

Nebiy closely follows the original text. His approach is a line by line literal translation. Names of characters, places and deities are simply transliterated. Because of complete adherence to the original, complexities arising out of allusions, puns and linguistic complexity are neither excised nor substituted by something else more familiar to the local audience.

As a final remark, what is common to all of these translations is that none of them use annotations, footnotes, or excerpts from critics on the text, or on the characters. In the absence of such footnotes their methods of translation are hard to find.

3.3.2 Omissions and Condensations

In general terms the idea of absolute exactness or replica in translation or stage performance is practically impossible. Within this restriction of impossibility, however, the translator is under obligation to transmute the

original to the best of his ability. As pointed out in the first chapter, a message in the source text should be transferred to the target as accurately and as naturally as possible. In practical terms the translator is expected to cover fundamentally all the information found in the source language. The effectiveness of a certain translation is judged not only by its success in transmitting the message but also by the impact the target text produces. The target text has to make almost the same kind of impression on the audience to whom it is addressed just as the original text does on the source audience.

Unlike adaptation, translation does not have room for changing, shifting, remodelling or restructuring the original text. This implies that always absolute loyalty or fidelity is expected on the part of the translator to the original text.

The question of fidelity is much more strict in literary works than in others. The translator is granted a certain freedom for facilitating his work. To use or not to use this "freedom" is upto him and it depends much on the purpose of his translation.

Among the translator's freedoms is literary omission or elimination. This is when the translator is left free, under special circumstances of course, to cut out certain elements from the source text. This freedom is granted when

and only when it can generate a required and relevant effect. In other words, whatever cuts or omissions are to be made to the original, there must necessarily be a corresponding significance or necessity to the target audiences. The translator is free to leave out what seems to him unnecessary provided that the required message gets across. The device of cutting, however, is very risky and a great danger when it comes to the plays of Shakespeare.

As far as Julius Caesar is concerned, this technique of omission and condensation is exploited by Nebiy Mekonnen to some extent but mostly by Assefa Gebre Mariam and Fasil Gebre Kiros but not by Bekele Tegegn. Of the various omissions that these translators made from the originals, only those worth discussing are considered here.

Nebiy left out the first forty lines of the third scene in the First Act and the whole of Act V, sc. ii, but to mention only the major cuts. Three whole scenes are not included in Assefa's translation. These are the third scene in Act One, the fourth scene in Act II and the first scene in Act IV. Besides these, Act I, sc.ii; Act II, sc.i; Act III, sc.i and Act IV, sc.iii are severely paralysed due to the elimination or condensation of important passages. The most abundant cuts are found in the Amharic text of Fasil Gebre Kiros: Act I, sc.ii, Act II, sc i & ii, Act III, sc.i & ii, Act IV, sc. ii & iii are reduced almost to travesty. Only Act V, relatively speaking, is preserved as it is in the original.

There are four scenes which are totally left out in the translations of Assefa and Fasil. They left out the whole of the third scene in the First Act while Nebiy omitted the first forty lines only. This is the scene in which Cicero, the superstitious Casca, Cassius and later on Cinna meet in the streets "on a night made terrible by thunder and lighting". Immediately after Cicero's departure, Cassius comes to induce Casca to join the rising conspiracy against Caesar. Towards the end of this scene comes Cinna the conspirator and the three of them take measures to win over Brutus to their party. Structurally this part of the play is important in advancing the plot. It is one of those episodes which shows the psychological insight and skill of Cassius in manipulating or handling men for his ends. This scene also foreshadows the meeting of the conspirators in Brutus' orchard. Its total elimination, therefore, leaves the audience entirely ignorant of these facts. In addition (because of the cutting out) there is no way of proving who actually prepares and sends the forged letter that Lucius finds in Brutus' house in the following scene.

More than its structural significance, this scene has a great deal of dramatic effect. One of Shakespeare's skills as a playwright is his power of creating the desired dramatic atmosphere. That particular night "Rome is shown to be full of portents and alarms. ... All the sway of earth/ Shakes like a thing uniform. There is thunder and lighting, and "tempest dropping fire. ...Men all in fire walk up and down

the streets, ...the bird of night...hooting and shrieking". These forty lines draw a very vivid picture of the natural phenomena that accompany the sinister activities of the character. In the words of Wood (92), this tormenting description of the prodigies and lighting deepen the growing conviction of his approaching murder in the mind of the audience. They also serve as a corrective to Cassius' estimate of Caesar for such kinds of omens do not happen for a commoner, but, in the words of Calpurnia, for "the death of princes" (Act II, sc.ii).

Though descriptions of the natural and the supernatural is abound in other scenes of the play, this particular scene has more dramatic significance in creating a tormenting atmosphere and forecasting a ruthless catastrophe. So, unless otherwise compensated or substituted by other means, a total elimination of such a scene is obviously disadvantageous. In Assefa's translation, there is no attempt to substitute this omission. Only Nebiy tries to do this to some extent. He explains the general atmosphere by means of stage directions at the beginning of the scene. At least he is aware of the dramatic significance of the prodigies in the original text. The target audience is therefore supplied with the general, if not the detailed, mood of the scene. It also seems deliberately omitted because the desired mood can be created in the modern theatre by technical means which were not available in the time of Shakespeare.

The two other scenes excluded from Assefa's translation are Act II, sc. iv and Act IV, sc.i. In the first case, Portia is seen in a state of uneasiness at home. Because of her strain, she sends her servant to see how affairs are going on at the Capitol. This is a scene the main function of which is to further heighten the audience's suspense. That is to make the audience eagerly await whether or not the soothsayer and Artemidorus can save Caesar's life.

Act IV, sc.i, is a relatively brief episode where Antony, Octavius and Lepidus are seen marking down their private enemies for execution or for exile. In this meeting of the Triumvirate, Antony is shown as the more dominating character with a calculating personality already scheming his future. He is also depicted as a man "brought down to the human level, part good, part evil, of the other persons in the play" (Coles: 81). This aspect of Shakespearean characterisation is excluded in Assefa's translation.

These are very brief episodes the elimination of which may not bring a serious damage to the structure or content of the original. However, it would have been better if somehow they were included in a report form or in narration rather than total elimination. In the absence of any justification, therefore, it is impossible to accept their omission as valid.

The shortest scene in Julius Caesar, Act V, sc.ii, is left out in the translation by Nebiy. This is the scene of the battlefield in which Brutus sends off Messala with dispatches to bring Cassius' forces against Antony's wing. In this scene, we are shown Brutus' inability as a war general. That is, he is depicted as a poor tactician or strategist because he orders a premature attack on Antony by Cassius, a mistake which later on enables the latter to encircle the former's army.

Although a very short scene, rendered only in six lines, it reveals the character of Brutus as a poor military strategist. In addition it is an episode by which Shakespeare's technical skill of presenting battle scenes is revealed. Therefore the target audience [as reader] may not easily understand this side of Brutus because of its omission. However, such a short scene is hardly noticed by the audience as spectator. So, its elimination may not be such a serious damage to the original.

Apart from total cuts of scenes, omissions and condensations of passages are recurrent in Assefa's translation. Among these omissions or condensations are the physical and mental descriptions of Caesar where a list of his infirmities are supplied by Cassius and Casca. For Cassius, Caesar is arrogant and physically unfit. He describes this "physical unfitness" to Brutus in association with the swimming incident into "The Troubled Tiber" and Caesar's fever while in Spain (lines 102-28). Casca also, in his report of

the Lupercal celebration to Brutus and Cassius, mentions those sad incidents that happened to Caesar in front of the Roman crowd (lines 223-79). Both these passages are, however, omitted in Assefa's translation. Here the translator failed to transfer how Shakespeare purposefully belittled the historically mighty Caesar by the statements of Casca and Cassius.

In this long scene, Cassius endeavours "to probe Brutus' feelings about Caesar and to win him to lead a conspiracy against Caesar's life" (Fienklstien: 100). To achieve this Cassius has to utter statements that degrade Caesar's personality morally or physically. And it is a pity that Assefa left them out. Because it is a real disadvantage to the target audience to miss this kind of dramatic speeches and information.

The other scene subjected to a significant number of omissions of lines, words, or condensations of paragraphs in Assefa's translation is the first scene of the Second Act where Portia asks to share the anxieties of her husband. Since this episode is almost eliminated in his text, one cannot get the actual clear image or personality of Portia as a devoted and tender wife - proud of her husband's character and conduct. Because of the disastrous condensation made to this domestic scene one misses, as noted in Coles (58), "the gentler side of Brutus's nature and the quality of the woman who is the wife entirely worthy to stand beside him" in the target text.

As pointed out earlier, plenty of eliminations and condensations occur in the translation of Fasil Gebre Kiros. Almost all the scenes, except the last four in Act v, are subjected to deletions and shortenings. The worst of such cases are found in Act II, sc.i; Act III, sc.i and Act IV, sc. iii.

In the first case, Fasil unjustifiably condensed [and altered] Brutus' soliloquy in his orchard (lines 10-34). Hence, he unduly emphasises the hostile attitude of Brutus towards Caesar. The good feelings of Brutus towards Caesar are entirely overshadowed by his hostility. Because of this shift of emphasis "one effect of this scene to give the audience a very high opinion of Marcus Brutus personally" (Coles: 59) is altered. In the same scene the speech by Brutus while making the oath with the conspirators (lines 114-140) is also drastically condensed. Hence, the best part of that opening soliloquy, regarded as "one of the first in Shakespeare's plays to show a mind coming to grips with a difficult problem" is regrettably caricatured (Coles: 59).

One of the most important speeches of Brutus, which is the second case, is his refutation of Cassius' proposal for the killing of Mark Antony in the opening scene of Act Two (lines 162-183). Though it brings about his own defeat in a dramatic reversal, Brutus' speech [in these lines] reveals his humanity and sense of personal pride and honesty. This is a part where the audience sympathize with him. The target

audience in Fasil's translation, however, is deprived of this liberty because of his unnecessary and unjustified omission as well as condensation of such a memorable passage.

The conversation among Cassius, Brutus and Antony, after the assassination of Caesar (lines 148-242) is also another episode in which Fasil made omissions and condensations of many lines. The interrelationship between Antony with the rest of the conspirators in the source text is attempted to be transmitted in the translation. But it is done in such a way that it is a sort of scattered piece of information hardly connected with each other. The same is true to the third scene of Act IV. There are innumerable words, lines or/and passages excluded in Fasil's translation.

The quarrel scene is one of the most admired and appreciated scenes in the original text. Shakespeare here displayed his power of creating a fierce "cold war" between the two great personalities. The innermost souls are revealed here than anywhere else in the play. The violent clash between Cassius and Brutus is no less than gun-shots at the actual battlefield. Nowhere is witnessed a real dramatic conflict between characters of honourable position than in this remarkable episode. Omission or condensation inevitably impoverishes the dramatic impact of this arresting scene in the translation.

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The only skilful cut condoned in Assefa's and Fasil's translations is the last scene of Act IV (lines 182-96). In this scene Brutus replies to Messala that he has had no letter of any kind from Portia. This reply is usually taken as an apparent inconsistency in Brutus because he has already told the news of Portia's death to Cassius in the same scene (lines 148-58). This actually arises a kind of confusion in the reader [For more information on this subject see the notes in Houghton: 144-45; Coles:88-9; Dorsch: 106, and Rosser:143-44]. So it may be better to leave out these lines in translation. Hence, the translators' elimination of these confusing lines between Messala and Brutus can be considered as advantageous.

Actually Fasil and Assefa, in their respective introductions, confess that their attempt is to present a simplified version to the target audience. This means that they had to make various modifications to the original text. In spite of this, except for the episode mentioned in the preceding paragraph, the omission of other parts, which contribute great dramatic effects both to the form and content of the play is unjustifiable in both translations.

3.3.3 Additions or Elaborations

It is very difficult to have an exact equivalent of literary texts in the process of translation. But to have a more or less closer similarity with the source text, the translator is given a certain amount of licence of deviation, addition and/or elaboration. Generally speaking

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this is not characteristic of the three translations of Julius Caesar. Only some parts of the text are added to or elaborated by Nebiy, Fasil and Assefa.

Nebiy, for instance, adds some lines of his own in Act I, sc.ii. In this scene Cassius concludes his soliloquy of the inception of the plot against Caesar thus: "And after this let Caesar seat him sure/ For we will shake him, or worse days endure" (lines 318-19). These are elaborated in the following seven lines:

ያኔ የልብ ልብ አግኝቶ መደላደል ሲታይበት፥
 ለማንም ሰው ግልፅ ይሆናል የሥልጣን ጥም እንዳለበት።
 ከዚያ ስሩን እያናጋን እስኪወድቅ ተንኮታኑቶ፥
 ወይ ቁም ስቅሉን እያየ እንዲማቅቅ ምጡ ጠንቶ፥
 በምን ቀን እስልጣን ወጣሁ እስከሚል ሱባዔ ገብቶ፥
 ዕረፍት እንነሳዋለን በቅቶት እስኪተኛ ከቶ።
 ወይ እሱ ይሙት ይቀጣ፥ ወይ የኛ ክፉ ቀን ይምጣ

(Nebiy: 15)

And when, in confidence, he settles himself,
 His lust for power will be much clear
 We will shake his firm base until it falls
 into ramshackle
 Or force him to languish in pain,
 And witness his own suffering
 Until he curses the day of his ascendance to
 the throne,
 We will leave him, to his eternal sleep.
 Either he is punished and dies, or else
 Let our worst days come!

In the context of the target language, the translator added these final lines to show Cassius' deep hatred of Caesar. His evil character, taking advantage of Brutus's weak personality wins Brutus to his side and uses him in the plot to overthrow the dictator. These additional lines do strengthen the evil personality of Cassius.

In the first scene of the Second Act, Metellus Cimber tries to justify the importance of having Cicero on the side of the conspiracy in his six- lines speech. Nebiy extends his argument with two extra lines in the translation. These extra lines in the Amharic script are however a wasted endeavour except that they improve his eloquence a little bit.

Of the minor additions in Assefa's translation, one is to the "anonymous exhortations" to Brutus (Act II, sc. i). This is a short message rendered only in three lines in the original: "Brutus, thou sleep'st; awake and see thyself/ Shall Rome etc...speak, strike, redress/Brutus,thou sleep'st; awake!" (lines 46-8). The translator elongated these in six lines of additions:

አትተኛ ብሩተስ ታጠቅና ንቃ፥
 ያለህበትን ተመልከት አትተኛ በቃ፥
 አንተ አይደለህም ወይ የሁሉስ ጠበቃ፥
 የድሆች ፀሐይ የሮማ ጨረቃ።
 አገርህ ሮማ እርዳኝ ትልሃለች፥
 በጭቆና በጎይል በጣም ተበደለች።
 ተናገር! ልክ አድርግ እጅህንም አንሳ፥
 ተኝተሃል ታጠቅ ብሩተስ ተነሳ።

(Assefa 62-3)

Sleep not, Brutus, awake and beware,
 Search where you stand, sleep no more.
 Aren't you the guardian of us all?
 The sun of the poor, the moon of Roma?
 Wronged by exploitation,
 Your country Roma seeks your action.
 Speak! raise your hands,
 You are asleep, arise, Brutus!

In the words of Brutus himself " such instigation have been often dropped " to his house where he has "took them up".

Unless by implication the audience of the source text does not know the contents of those previous letters. Obviously it is only Brutus who knows them well. In the translation, deliberate or not, Assefa unfolds what is supposed to be written in those reported letters to Brutus. What is implied in the source text is simply realized in the target.

Another minor addition made by Ato Assefa is found in Act II, sc.ii. Caesar is speaking, or rather philosophising, about two important phenomena - fear and death in front of his beloved Calpurnia: "It seems...most strange... that men should fear/ Seeing that death, a necessary end/ Will come when it will come". These brief lines are elongated or rather paraphrased in Assefa's Amharic text thus:

አስደናቂ ሆኖ ትንግርት የሆነብኝ፥
 አስፈላጊዋን ነገር መልካሟን ገላጋይ፥
 ሕይወትን ከሥጋ ከዚች ዓለም ላይ፥
 ድንገት ሳያስቧት ላንዳፍታው ዕንግዳ
 ሆኖ ለምትመጣው ሞት ለሚሏት ዕዳ።
 ስሟ ገና በዝና ሲነሳ ሲጠራ፥
 እያየሁ ብቻ ነው የሰው ልጅ ሲፈራ!
 ምንም ግን ቢፈራት ወይዘራት ሞት አውቃ፥
 አይቀርም መምጣቷ ያው ቀኗን ጠብቃ።
 ስለዚህ የምፈራው ምንም ነገር የለኝ፥
 መዓት ታምር ቢታይ እኔ ምን ቸገረኝ።

(Assefa: 72)

What is surprising and a miracle to me is
 that,
 An inevitable and a good end,
 Of separating the flesh from this life,
 By sudden and unexpected
 Death that would come as debt
 The moment its name is mentioned,
 I see people in fear.
 Whatever it is feared, however;
 It still comes at the right time.
 Hence, I do not bother whatever may come,
 For nothing is there that I am afraid of.

This addition is a kind of supplement to Caesar's famous principle that "It was better to die once, than always to be afraid of death". It is nothing but the subtext lines that the translator brings to the surface level.

As a matter of fact expansion or addition of words, lines or passages, necessary or unnecessary, to the source text may go against the principles of play translation in some instances. This is because it would make the translation longer than the original particularly when it comes to stage performances. Some scholars have doubts that it will even make a difference to the transposition of a rich density and conciseness of the poetry of the original playwright (Zuber: 15). So, the translators are advised to work within the constraints of their target languages. Shakespeare's Julius Caesar in the Amharic translations does not face these problems. Because additions or elaborations are made in a very limited way in the two translations (by Assefa and Nebiy) mentioned while they are almost absent in the other two.

3.3.4 Change in the Style: Prose to Verse and Vice Versa

One of the characteristics of Shakespeare's dramatic style is his use of dramatic prose. Probably Milton Crane's comment on this subject may serve as a condensed summary of Shakespeare's prose style:

His prose is the richest and most various in the language: it draws greatest strength and suppleness from the fact that it was written to be spoken by characters in plays. At its best, it contributes enormously to the depiction of personality, and it is an indispensable element in the creation of atmosphere. And even at its least interesting, as in the journeyman's scenes of exposition it is less obtrusive than the purely utilitarian verse which can range from neutral to downright distressing (1951: 1)

The tragedy of Julius Caesar is exceptional in that there is very little prose as compared to other plays by Shakespeare. It is only in five scenes of the first three Acts that prose is employed. The first is in the very opening scene where it is used by the Cobbler, or the "Second Citizen" in some editions (Rosser, Wood and Houghton). The second is in Act I, sc. ii in which Casca, after Caesar's exit, is induced by Brutus and Cassius to present the ceremony of Caesar's crowning. Here Casca replies to their verse questions with prose. Prose is also rendered in one of the play's very shortest scenes (Act II, sc.iii) in which Artemidorus is seen reading over a warning letter he wants to deliver into Caesar's hands. Artemidorus' prose dialogue is also a very short one with less than ten lines.

The longest prose in Julius Caesar is found in scene two of Act One where Brutus delivers his forum speech to the Plebeians. Cinna also uses prose to respond to the questions by the rushing Plebeians in the following scene.

All the translators of Julius Caesar, but Nebiy, changed Shakespeare's prose into verse to a varying degree. Assefa Gebre Mariam Tessema translated all the dramatic prose into poetry. Bekele changed all of the prose conversation in the opening scene of Act One into verse as well as part of Brutus' Forum speech. Fasil changed the whole of Brutus' Forum speech into verse. This change of style in the target texts cannot be justified on any ground.

As stated earlier, Shakespeare's use of prose has its own definite dramatic function. The translators are therefore expected to be aware of the function of prose in these particular scenes or episodes. In the opening scene for instance, the Cobbler is deliberately made to speak in prose. His comic personality is contrasted with the high nobility of the Tribunes - Marullus and Flavius - and this is done through the medium of his language. As Crane writes (142) it is in "his senseless joking" in prose "with the Tribunes" that his total irrationality is revealed. Shakespeare skilfully exploits prose as one of the dramatic devices in unfolding his characters. Unfortunately the target text reader is obliged to miss this in the translations of Assefa and Bekele for they changed the prose into poetry. Both translators should have known that in the literary conventions of the time of the original playwright, and in real life too, common characters in plays did not normally speak in verse unless under special circumstances.

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Quite a similar demerit is revealed in changing Casca's prose to poetry in Act I, sc.ii. In this scene Casca, returns, after attending the crown offering ceremony, and recounts to the conspirators all that happened during the ceremony. Crane seems more than right when he writes that "No formal oration in verse could achieve this more effectively than Casca's rough prose" (143). He also further suggests that this speech which so thoroughly reduces Casca's heroic dimensions shows Shakespeare's exploitation of prose for satire and denigration. This is the general dramatic atmosphere of the prose dialogue in this particular episode that the target audience loses partially in Bekele's and totally in Assefa's translations.

One might wonder why Shakespeare made such a noble character as Brutus speak in prose in his Forum speech. Once again, it is definitely with a calculated purpose in mind. One of the most frequent uses of prose in the plays of Shakespeare is to contrast between two parallel scenes or episodes. Hence, prose is essential for Brutus' "oratorical devices of parallelism, antithesis and climax" in contrast to Antony's "emotional use of pathos, emphasis, apostrophe, expostulation, and the telling repetition of honourable men, which necessarily finds rhythmical form in verse" (Coles: 35). In other words if Brutus uses prose, Antony's eloquence will seem all the more impassioned" (Rosser: 33). Secondly, since Brutus is about to be weighed on the political scales against Antony, the contrasting media will do much to bring out their

qualities as popular leaders. Lastly, it is probably prose and prose alone which will best show Brutus for what he really is - a man so inhumanly in control of himself that he can reason at a time when other men have almost lost their reason.

Given this, then, it is purely a disadvantage to translate Brutus' prose speech into Amharic poetry. In both verse translations the target reader totally loses one of the most skilfully crafted dramatic effects of Shakespeare's prose: the clear cut opposition of Brutus' prose to Antony's verse.

The last piece in prose in Shakespeare's Julius Caesar is found in the concluding scene of the Third Act. In this brief episode, the Plebeians butcher Cinna the Poet, mistaking him for Cinna, the conspirator. Here the question-answer dialogue, save the first four lines by Cinna, is in prose. Both Bekele Tegegn and Assefa Gebre Mariam rendered it in verse in their translations. Their approach goes against the literary convention before and after the time of Shakespeare as characters at the lower plane of the society used unpolished language to thereby emphasise the height of the feeling of the main characters. The Roman crowd is made to speak in prose as one of dramatic devices in character portrayal. Given this the two translators should have taken this into consideration and translate it likewise.

As prose is changed into verse in these translations so is also poetry changed into prose. Here we shall examine two episodes, the first in Act I, sc.ii (lines 291-318) and the second in Act II, sc.i (lines 6-76) where much change is made by the Ethiopian translators.

The last twenty-nine verses (291-318) that conclude the second scene of the First Act show Brutus leaving the stage after assuring Cassius that he will consider his suggestion of conspiracy and promising to come back next day for further discussion. Cassius is left alone soliloquising about his satisfaction which he derives from influencing Brutus and his plotting against Caesar. Both Cassius and Brutus are from the nobility and, therefore, speak normally in verse. Moreover, it is also common for Shakespeare to impress his audience by making his characters soliloquise in verse of the highest quality.

The power of verse in a dramatic soliloquy also unfolds itself in Act II, sc. i (lines 6-76) In these lines, Shakespeare chooses verse to prose to clarify the decision of Brutus to join the conspiracy and his fallacious justification to kill Julius Caesar.

Both of these soliloquies are translated in prose by Fasil. Though Fasil's prose is relatively fine in its style

the approach remains a disadvantage particularly as regards these two soliloquies. This is because, although the general effect is produced in his prose translation, it still lacks the mood or spirit of Shakespeare's elevated poetry that is infused with charm.

Other minor changes of verse lines into prose in Fasil's translation are found in Act I, sc. iii (lines 134-52) and Act II, sc. iii (lines 9-14). Likewise, Nebiy changed seventeen lines in Act III, sc. i (lines 19-35), ten lines in sc. ii of the same Act (lines 264-73) and the first eleven lines in Act IV, sc. i (lines 1-11) into prose. The fact that Shakespeare's Julius Caesar is written for the most part in verse, these brief episodes which Fasil and Nebiy rendered in prose are minor and should not be exaggerated as devastating changes. In fact, there is no clear cut justification as to why the translators preferred prose to verse in these particular episodes. The "impossibility" of Shakespeare's verse in Julius Caesar is not, however, the motivation behind the change of style in this case. On the contrary, the play, relatively speaking, is "one of the simplest of Shakespeare's text to study.... Much of it is free and colloquial, whether in prose or in verse" (Coles: 34). Probably the change is not intentional, and there is no concrete reason to say that they are deliberate. In any case the most important aspect is that the change of style made to these brief episodes is so minor that it does not affect the original text.

In this speech Antony manipulates the conspirators into a position where they are only too anxious to show him good will. Through his crafty language he proves himself a subtle and an accomplished flatterer. He succeeds in making Cassius and Brutus miss his actual desire. They fail to detect the irony within this rising avenger. In his speech of inquiry to know what measures would be taken against him, he is actually trying to gain their sympathy in an indirect way. He achieves this by the power of his language.

As far as the language of the target texts is concerned, it is beyond the required parameter to go far into details. But it is quite possible to present the major features. In general terms, each of the translators try to apply a kind of language that may substitute the fine poetry or prose of Shakespeare. However, there are clearly demarcated differences in each of the target texts as far as the language is concerned.

The fact that the translations of Fasil and Assefa are intended for the common reader, and are primarily oriented towards the target text, various modifications, including those discussed above, have been made to the original text. Modifications seem to have lead these translators to an inevitable amendment in the language too.

In the translation of Antony's first speech before the conspirators, though an effort is made to preserve the general

mood and tone in both texts, the language is clarified, direct and straightforward to a greater extent. Playing with words as opposed to the original is avoided as much as possible. Both translators rendered a language that is totally free from complications arising from poetic imagery. Shakespeare's poetic flavour is rather subjected to much simplification. Their Amharic by no means substitutes the source text and is far below one's expectation. To know this fact objectively just a simple run through of their passages is enough:

ክቡራን አላውቅም ምን እንደሆነ ዕጣዬ
አድርባችሁ እንደሆነ ቂም በቀል በኔ ላይ
ግደሉኝ እባካችሁ ነፍሴ ዛሬ ትለይ።
እንደዛሬዋ ቀን ያለ ቁሣር እንደሞተባት፥
ለኔ ሞት እንደሆነ ዕድለኛ ሰዓት፥
እንደዛሬዋ ቀን ክብር የተጎናፀፈች፥
ምንም ጊዜ አትገኝ የዛሬዋ ካለፈች።
እንደዛሬው መሣሪያ ከበሬታ ያገኘ፥
በንጹሐ ሰው ደም ገብቶበት የዋኘ፥
ዕድላም መሣሪያ ክብር የተጎናፀፈ፥
በዓለም አይገኝም የዛሬው ካለፈ።
የክብር ሞት ነው ለኔ እንካችሁ ይኸው ልቤ
ትልቁ ሰው ዛሬ በሞተበት ጩቤ
ሸቅሽቁት ግደሉኝ ሰዎች እባካችሁ
ፈፅሎ ተወጡ ይድረስ ፈቃዳችሁ።
እዚህ!

ከቁሣር አጠገብ ክብር ካለው ሥፍራ፥
ወግ ይድረስኝ ልሙት ከትልቅ ሰው ጋራ።

(Assefa: 84-5)

ትሰሙኛላችሁ ቁሣር አይመልስም
እኔ እንድከተለው አታስፈቅዱትም
ትፈልጉ እንደሆን ደስ ላሰኛችሁ፥
እኔም ከቁሣር ጋር አሁን ልጥፋላችሁ፤
ሌላ ቀን አይደለም አሁን እባካችሁ።
በሉ አሁን በሉ ብዙ ጨምሩለት፥
ካራችሁ ደም ቀምሶ ጥማት ለቀቀበት።
እንደእኔ ከሆነ ልንገራችሁ ስሙኝ፥
ዕድሜዬ በርክቶ ሺ ዓመትም ቢሆነኝ
ካሁን የተሻለ ጊዜም ከቶ አላገኝ።

(Fasil: 49-50)

The case is quite different with Nebiy and Bekele. It is clearly evident from their translations that they have no difficulty in managing or commanding of the Amharic language. This is disclosed in the selection and application of words which are closest and most equivalent to those of the original text both in conveying the message and in keeping the poetic flavour:

አላውቅም መኳንንት ምን አስባችኋል?
 ገና ማን ይደማል ምን ሹም ቀርቷችኋል?
 እኔ ራሴ እንደሆንሁ፥ ከዚህ የተስማማ
 ሌላ ጊዜም የለ
 ቄሣር የሞተበት ሰዓቱ መሣሪያው በ'ጃችሁ
 እያለ፥
 ዓለም ያከበረው ያንዱ ጨዋ ሰው ደም
 በነካው ጎራዴ፥
 የክብር ክብር አለው እኔም መታረዴ።
 ትይዘኝ እንደሆን በክፉ አምርራችሁ፥
 ደም በተበከለው በጠፈው እጃችሁ፤
 ያሻችሁን አርጉኝ አሁኑን 'ባካችሁ።
 ከእንግዲህ ወዲያ እኔ ሽህ ዓመት
 ብቀመጥ፥
 ምንም ጊዜ አይገኝ ለእኔ ለአሟሟቴ
 ከዚህ የሚመረጥ።
 ባገሩ ምልምሎች በዘመኑ ህይወት
 በነፍሳቱ ጌቶች
 በናንተ 'እጅ ብቆረጥ፥ከቄሣር ጎን
 ብወድቅ ለእኔ እንደምን ይመች?
 ሥፍራም የሞት መጥሪያ ከዚህ
 የተሻለ አይመጣም አስደሳች።

(Bekele :81-2)

ጎበዝ እኔ በበኩሌ አላውቅም የልባችሁን፥
 አልተነብይም ታራጁን፤
 አላውቅም ባለተራውን።
 የማውቀው ግን አንድ ነገር ባለተራው እኔ ብሆን
 እንደዚች እንዳሁኒቷ፥ ሰዓትና ወቅት የሚሆን፥
 ምንም ምቹ ጊዜ አላገኝ ከቄሣር ጎን ለመሆን።
 በንፅህናና በጥራቱ ምርጥ የሆነውን ከዓለም፥
 ያንን መሳይ ክቡር ቀይ ደም፥
 ባጠቀስ ሰይፍ ስለት፥
 ታሪዱ ወይ ተወግቶ ቢሞት፥
 ከዚያም በላይ ፀጋ የለ ከዚያም በላይ ብፁዕነት።
 እናም እማፀናለሁኝ፥
 ለኔም ሞትን ካስባችሁ፥
 ሳይቀዘቅዝ ትኩስ ሳለ በደም የራሰው እጃችሁ፥
 እነሆ አለሁላችሁ።
 ብኖር እንኳ አንድ ሽ ዓመት
 ለመሞት ዝግጁ አልሆንም ልክ እንዳሁኒቷ ሰዓት
 ከሞቶች ሁሉ የምመኘው ሞቴ በእናንት እጅ
 ሲሆን
 ከበታ ሁሉ እምመርጠው እዚህ ከቄሣር ሬሣ ጎን።
 ከገዳየ ሁሉ የማደንቀው የዚህን ዘመን ምርጥ
 እጆች፤

የአካል የመንፈስ አዛዦች የነፍስ ከበርቴ
 ጌቶች፥
 ምረጥ ካላችሁ ምርጫዬ ይህ ነው ለእኔም
 የሚመች።

(Nebiy: 49-50)

Antony's speech of lament and prophecy in front of Caesar's body right after Brutus and Cassius leave him alone is the second passage by which the poetic ability of the four translators can be compared and contrasted in the light of the original. Antony, left alone with Caesar's body, reveals himself as a man of moving eloquence, sincere grief, passionate loyalty and admiration for Julius Caesar:

O! pardon me, thou bleeding piece of earth,
 That I am meek and gentle with these butchers.
 Thou art the ruins of the noblest man
 That ever lived in the side of times.
 Woe to the hand that shed this costly blood!
 Over thy wounds now do I prophesy,
 Which like dumb mouths do ope their ruby lips,

To beg the voice and utterance of my tongue,
 A curse shall light upon the limbs of men;
 Domestic fury and fierce civil strife
 Shall cumber all the parts of Italy;
 Blood and destruction shall be so in use,
 And dreadful objects so familiar,
 That mothers shall but smile when they behold
 Their infants quarter'd with the hands of war;
 All pity chok'd with custom of fell deeds:
 And Caesar's spirit, ranging for revenge,
 With Ate by his side come hot from hell'
 Shall in this confines with a monarch's voice:
 Cry 'Havoc!' and let slip the dogs of war;
 That this foul deed shall smell above the earth
 With carrion men, groaning for burial.

(lines 254-75)

As Dorsch writes, Antony in this speech:

prophesies a period of fierce civil strife, blood and destruction that shall end only when a terrible vengeance for the foul murder has been exacted. There is no dissembling in this speech of Antony. It is impossible to doubt here the depth and sincerity of his love and grief for Caesar, or the fury and tenacity with which he will hound the murderers to their doom (xliv).

Once again, this is a passage where Shakespeare's command of the English language is revealed. Here Antony's deep and sincere love and grief for Caesar is drawn by Shakespeare's crafty verbal painting. The internal emotion of a character is picturised and brought out to the surface.

It is only the two translators - Bekele and Nebiy - who try their best to transport their target audience to this world of Shakespeare's language. Both endeavour to exploit their linguistic ability in Amharic to render Shakespeare's English. With almost an equal number of lines to the original passage Bekele, for instance, succeeds in bringing the Amharic text as close to the level of language in the source text. One

can safely say that his rhythmical Amharic verse measures up to that of the original:

ይቅር በለኝ እባክህ ደምህ የሚዘንበው አንተ ያፈር ክፋይ፥
 ከኒህ ሥጋ አራጆች፥ ስለማመጥና ስሸናገል ስታይ፥
 ፍጥረት ሲፈራረቅ በጊዜ ማዕበል፤
 እነሆ ፍራሹ፥ ቀሪና ትራፊው የምርጡ ሰው አካል።
 ያንን እጅ ወዮለት ይህንን ክቡር ደም ወግቶ ላፈሰሰው፥
 አፍና ምላሴን ትንቢት በል በል አለው፤
 የተዘጋው አፋ ከንፈሩ እንደረታ፥ እንዳንድ ዱድማ ሰው፤
 ባቁሳይህ ላይ ትንቢት ልናገር ነው።
 በሰው በግሩ በእጁ እርግማን ይወርዳል፤
 በምድረ ኢጣሊያ የርስ በርስ ፍጅት ሁከት ይወለዳል።
 ደምና ጭፍጭፍ ከማየሉ ብዛት፤
 ነገር ሁሉ ከፍቶ ይሰለጥንና ፍርሀትና ጭንቀት፤
 እናት ልጅዋን አይታ ሲገነጣጥሉን ነጥቀው በጦርነት፤
 ትንኮሳታላች ይግብን ሣቅ ይዞአት፤
 አታውቀውምና ምን እንዳደረጉት።
 ሐዘን ርኅራሄ በርኩስ ግብር ታፍኖ፤
 የቁሣር መንፈስም፥ ለተበቅሎ አዕራር ባድባራቱ ገኖ፥
 እንጦኒን ደርቦ በአንደኛው ወገኑ፥ ከሲኦል የወጣ እሳት ትንታግ ሆኖ፤
 በየኅራው ዘልቆ በነጋሲ ቃሉ፥
 "ትሰዳለህ!" ብሎ የጦር ውሻዎቹ በአንድ ይለቀቃሉ።
 ይህም ግብረ አመፅ ምድርን ያሸታታል፥
 የሰው ግንብ ተክቦ፥ የቀባሪ ያለህ ሲል ሟች ያቃትታል።

(Bekele: 85-6)

The same is true of Nebiy. His Amharic, in the light of this passage, even surpasses that of Bekele Tegegn's in its clarity, directness and simplicity. In Nebiy's translation, one cannot help but say that poetry can also be written in easily understandable words in a skilful poetic structure without losing the charm and flavour of the original text. The more one reads his lines, the more one feels the power of the Amharic language and the greater need to translate Shakespeare. The language of the original passage with all its charm and flavour intact is almost substituted thus:

አቤቱ ይቅርታ አርግልኝ፥ አንት የደም አፈር ገላ
 ፈሪ ገራም ሆኜ ቆምኩኝ ከነፍስህ በላዎች ጋራ።
 በጊዜ በዘመን ጎርፍ ውስጥ፥ ታይቶ የማያውቅ ክቡር ሰው፤
 አላቂ ፍርክስካሹ ነህ፥ የመጨረሻ ማክተሚያው።
 ይህን ባለውድ ዋጋ ደም፥ ላፈሰሰው እጅ ወዮለት፤
 ዲዳ አንደበቱን ሲፈታ እንደሚናገረው አይነት፤
 እንድናገር ጮክ ብዬ፥ በኔው ምላስና አንደበት፤
 በሚማጠነኝ ቁስልህ ላይ፤
 ሆኜ ነው የምተነብይ።
 ያገሬው የፋመ አመፃ፥ ከባድም የህዝብ ቁጣ፤
 በመላው የጣሊያን ክፍሎች ላይ አይበገር ጎርፉን ያምጣ።
 ደምና ጥፋት አበሳ፥ ከእንግዲህ የሚለመድ ነው፤
 አስፈሪ ነገሮች ሁሉ፥ ተራ መሆን ነው እጣቸው።
 እናቶችም ልጆቻቸው በጦርነት ሲላመጡ፤
 እጅግር አጥተው ሲመጡ፤
 ፈገግ ከማለት ሌላ አንዳችም እንባ ይጡ።
 በርካታ ተግባር ሲኮላሽ፤
 አያሌ ሥራ ሲበላሽ፤
 ሀዘን እንደ ሣቅ ተለምዶ፥ በልማድ ብዛት ሲሟሸሽ፤
 ከሳጥናኤል ጋር ተማክሮ፥ ለእልቂት ነበልባል ሲያሰጣ፤
 የቄሣር የበቀል መንፈስ፥ ከሲኦል ግሎ ሲመጣ፤
 እንደንጉሥ የቁጣ ቃል፤
 "አውድም፥ ፍጅ፥ ጣለው" እንደሚል፤
 የጦር ሜዳን አዳኝ ውሾች፥ ፈትቶ ለጥፋት ውጡ ሲል።
 እናም ይህ ክፉ ተግባር፥ ከምድር በላይ ዘልቆ ሲሸት፤
 የጠነባ ሰው ሬሳ፥ ቅበሩኝ ሲል ነው የሚሞግት።

(Nebiy: 54)

The strength of these translators can also be seen in their rendering of such passages Cassius' tirade against Caesar (Bekele: 37-8; Nebiy: 9-10); Caesar's analysis of Cassius (Bekele: 40; Nebiy: 11-2); Brutus' soliloquy of self-questioning (Bekele: 53-4; Nebiy: 20-1); Portia's appeal to Brutus (Bekele: 62-5; Nebiy: 31-3); The Forum speech of Brutus (Bekele: 88; Nebiy; 57); Brutus' farewell to Cassius (Bekele: 101; Nebiy: 91); Antony's eulogy to Brutus (Bekele: 132; Nebiy: 102) and is many more others.

In comparison with Bekele and Nebiy, the poetry of Assefa and Fasil is obviously much inferior. This inferiority is due to, most probably, an insufficient management of both the source and target languages. Their language lacks a touch of the poet. As young men at that time, both under twenty, they were not exposed to the literary traditions of the world at large. Contrary to Bekele and Nebiy, their language lies somewhere between less understanding of the source and an immature commanding of the target languages. At this juncture, what Dryden writes, as quoted by Henry Giffor, exactly coincides with the subject:

a man should be a nice critic in his Mother Tongue, before he attempts to Translate a foreign Language. Neither it is sufficient that he be able to Judge of Words and Stile; but he must be a Master of them too; He must perfectly understand his Author's Tongue and absolutely command his own so that, to be a Thorow Translator, he must be a thorow poet (1965: 55-6).

This is exactly what is lacking in Assefa and Fasil- of being the "Thorow Poet". In some cases, regrettably to say this, lack of rhythm and inconsistency between lines compel the reader to close down the texts with no intention of picking them up again.

As some experts in literary translation attest (Bell: 24), it is probably essential in verse-drama translation for the translator to be a poet himself so as to produce a more or less accomplished work. The poetry of Assefa and Fasil, unfortunately, has no appeal as poetry. Even though they

endeavour to transfer the message, the melodic effect and the poetic quality of Shakespeare's Julius Caesar, is lacking in their language.

In fact the other two translators - Nebiy and Bekele - are not essentially poets. Bekele has never published poetry. And neither has Nebiy. Despite this, their translations clearly manifest that they possess a certain natural poetic gift. That means that they have to be appreciated for their linguistic skills in both languages - the source and the target.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Exactly twenty-seven years ago, an interesting issue about translation (as to whether or not it is necessary and whether or not it is an art in itself) was raised and commented upon by Solomon Deressa (Solomon; 1969: 18-20). As this Ethiopian scholar comments, there is no doubt that the field of translation, as one of the oldest professions, is an essentially necessary task and will naturally remain so throughout the world. Peoples of various nations must use it to communicate among themselves in order to share basic knowledge or information in any field of study.

It is also unquestionable that the field of translation is an art in itself. Its practical application obviously requires a great deal of skill on the part of the practitioner. We have now reached the age whereby it is possible to translate a certain message by applying a programmed or adjusted machine which makes this profession a science as well. The translation of literary productions undeniably is very crucial for a nation as equally as the translation of other fields of study. Therefore, one can read the world's literary giants in one's own language without great difficulty thanks to the practitioners of literary translation.

Among literary giants that are most translated, William Shakespeare stands first. The universality of Shakespeare is phenomenal. He is a German for the Germans, a Chinese for the people of China, "Sheik-Asbir" in the Arab world, and so on

and so forth. Tsegaye Gebre Medhin, as interviewed by Teklu Tabor in the August issue of Ethiopian Review, "sometimes wonder[s] whether Shakespeare, theologically speaking, is African first and Briton only second" (1993: 14). Wherever one might travel in the world, Shakespeare is "our Shakespeare" there.

As explained in the second chapter, Shakespeare is not only the very first among foreign playwrights to appear in Amharic but also the most translated and published one. Ethiopians are fortunate in that they have the chance of reading or watching at least some of his tragedies as well as his comedies. But this by no means implies that Shakespeare is adequately introduced to this country. On the contrary, he remains for the most part untranslated yet and our audiences are not fully familiarised with him yet. It is only to a very limited number of his works that Ethiopian audiences are introduced. Statistically speaking, only twenty-seven percent of the plays and four and half percent of the sonnets and poems are translated. As a whole, and in principle too, all of Shakespeare's plays have to be translated. It is only then that one can confidently say that Shakespeare is introduced to this country in the true sense of the word.

Sidney Finkelstien published a book with an interesting cover title: Who Needs Shakespeare? in 1973. This question invites us to ask whether Shakespeare is needed at all times. In the words of Finkelstien:

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The perception and grasp with which he met the challenge of his own times made him a giant among artists. Later ages could not ignore him for they, too, were confronted by many of the questions he raised; and today; when the answers are finally at hand, he still remains a constant source of inspiration (1973: 11).

For Paul N. Siegel the significance of Shakespeare lies in "the emotional experience he gives us through his plays" (1968: 13). He enables the audience of any age to know himself and his time better. For some Ethiopian translators like Tsegaye Gebre Medhin, the relevance of Shakespeare seems more in his universal treatment of political situations than any other. Shakespeare in the eyes of Tsegaye is the "most disciplined student of the world's dynastic races" and "the unbroken link ofmankind [bringing] the world's cultural heritage very much together through the mighty pen of Shakespeare" (Teklu: 16). Furthermore:

The world's daggers in the cloaks, the terrifying intrigues, the rituals of poisons, and the new royal pens always calling back the world to order...is very Ethiopian. Who but Ethiopia is the master-nation of terrifying intrigues of daggers in the cloaks, of rituals of poisons, of turn coat Judas, of court questing and clowning moral eunuchs of blood crowns of betrayals rolling in dust, of necks cut and stuck on stick to dance with, of royal and militaristic pens always calling back the people to absolute order (Teklu: 16).

The significance of Julius Caesar in the political life of Ethiopian people can also be justified in the fact that all the translators, except Nebiy, were unable to get government approval for the staging of their translations. In the political tradition of Ethiopia, any kind of conspiracy

directed against a head of state or a governor was strictly forbidden. Every war lord or member of government was strictly required to remain loyal to the Emperor's opinions. So any kind of dramatic piece, like the one under discussion, with an issue contrary to the country's political policy was naturally undesirable. In this regard, the translators' choice of this particular play for an Ethiopian audience is really appreciable. All of them are conscious of the thematic grain in the source text and the impact it would have on the target audience.

Though not much deviating from the original story, Assefa and Fasil made very many subtractions of words, lines, passages, scenes, and changes of Shakespeare's prose into verse or vice versa. Both of them extremely simplified Shakespeare's language. They avoided imageries as much as possible too. Their deviations, however, are by no means justifiable. They generally do not seem to be aware of which parts of the source text to modify or to deviate from. For this reason, the source text, in general terms, is reduced to an inferior level both in form and content in the target texts. Their translations are hardly acceptable as genuine or equivalent renderings of the original text.

In strong contrast to Assefa and Fasil, Bekele and Nebiy translated the play with due respect and attention. They remain faithful almost to the very small details of the original. Omission in Bekele's translation is almost non-existent. The

same is true of Nebiy except for two episodes which are either compensated by means of substitution as in Act I, sc.iii or structurally justified as in Act V, sc. ii. Other modifications are done for good effect as they are based on a clear understanding of the source text. Their linguistic skill and poetic expression is apparent in their Amharic which approximates with the source language in its poetic charm and flavour. This enables them to transfer the entire message, mood and spirit of the original play to the target audience.

In conclusion, one can say that the four translations, are done in two relatively different forms. The first form is the abridged, simplified, modification-centred and target-oriented approach of Assefa and Fasil while the other is a literal or line-by-line, interpretive, source-centred and faithfully closer translations of Nebiy and Bekele.

Although many foreign plays, apart from Shakespeare, have been translated into Amharic, only very limited research is conducted on the subject as a whole. Almost no one has given due consideration either to the theory or the practice itself. Play reviewers in magazines or newspapers do not actually assess a certain translated play from the point of view of literary or play translation theories. Most of the time they focus on reviewing its story, plot, performance or production.

The problem arises due to the absence of well trained translators or interpreters. In the history of Ethiopian

literature, literary translation in general and play translation in particular was done for the most part by individuals having nothing to do with the field of literature. This is a fact revealed largely in senior essays by graduates of Foreign and Ethiopian Languages and Literature, Theatre Arts and in other related articles in magazines and newspapers by concerned individuals.

The senior essays and various articles on translation studies are filled with shortcomings too. This is because the researchers themselves are equipped with insufficient theoretical or intellectual knowledge. As a result, whenever a research work on this subject is produced it is nothing but a mere repetition of what has been said in earlier related works. This is therefore an area that really needs a special attention on the part of literary personalities at home. If not, reading the translators' own versions as opposed to the actual texts of the original literary works will continue to dominate in the future as it used to in the past. Unless and otherwise a translator is equipped with the required theoretical background in literary translations, it will hardly be possible for him/her to translate minor authors let alone Shakespeare into Amharic or any other Ethiopian language for that matter.

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university. And all the information taken from other sources have been duely acknowledged.

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