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*Some Gleanings from Al-ilorys Poems
 presentation, translation and comment*



Abstract

Human beings, throughout history, have made an effort to take advantage of various methods of communication with the intention of utilizing the knowledge of other nations and endeavoring to preserve this knowledge for the coming generations. As the most effective methods of communication, language has been employed to satisfy the very need of communication. The predicament that may emerge as an obstacle in the way of communication seems to be the fact of dissimilarity of languages throughout the world. In today's world of globalization, communication between different nations with different languages is feasible through translation⁰¹. However, Sheikh Adam Abdullah Al-ilory was a literary icon who left behind a host of publications written in fluent Arabic language on various aspects of life. These publications have become areas of concentration for researchers from after his death till recent times. Despite the exhaustive studies, few had been done on the translation of his prose works, while very little or no attempt had been made to translate his poetic works to the best of the writers of this paper's knowledge. This work is a translation and comment on some work in Al-ilory's Anthology titled: *Some Gleanings from Al-ilory's Poems*. Nigeria as a multilingual country has adopted English Language as her Lingua Franca and this has won it more population of speakers than the indigenous languages and other foreign languages. Therefore, the Arabic language in which the works of Al-ilory are written, denies the Non-Arabic users in Nigeria and outside the opportunity to share from the didactic lessons taught in the publications. The present researchers therefore conducted a comprehensive translation and comment on part of the anthology, treading the path of the modern poets by placing less emphasis on end rhymes in the bid to break every obstacle that could stand against achieving the intended meaning in the poetic verses. The work reveals that Sheikh Adam, in addition to being a prose writer was also a poet, whose poems contain admonitions, evocations of Allah, elegies, eulogies etc. which are worthy to be read by all and sundry. The research will fill the vacuum of the

translation of Al-ilory's poems and thus give Non-Arabic users the opportunity to share from the lessons covered within the pages of the anthology.

Translation defined

Since antiquity, translation has everbeen vital in human life to the transmission and exchange of human knowledge and communication among different languages throughout history at all level. Now, translation has become still more vital than before in this age of technology and communication and highly complicated interrelations and interactions among peoples.⁰² However, the definition of translation according to Kenny (cited in Adedimeji & Ayuba, 2012 : 235) is "central" but controversial and "differs radically"⁰³ Translation, as Bell (1991 : 8) asserts, involves the transfer of meaning from a text in one language into a text in another language. Nida (1984:83) points out : "translation consists of reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style. V. Komissarov considers that "translation is a complicated and many-sided kind of human activity. Though usually people speak about translation "from one language on another", actually, it is not simply a replacement of one language with another. The different cultures, people, ways of thinking, literatures epochs, levels of development, traditions and world vies clash with each other in translation"⁰⁴.

According to M. Brandes, "translation is a kind of language mediation where the content of the foreign text (original) is transferred to other language by way of creating a communicatively equivalent text in this language"⁰⁵.

According to Larson (1984 : 15) translation is classified into two main types, namely *form-based translation and meaning-based translation*. Forms-based translation attempts to follow the form of the source language (SL) and it is known as literal translation, while meaning-based translation makes every effort to communicate the meaning of the SL text in the natural forms of the receptor language. Such translation is called idiomatic translation. A literal translation sounds like nonsense and has little communication value (Larson, 1984 : 15). The literal translation can be understood if the general grammatical form of the two languages is similar. Larson (1984 : 16) says that idiomatic translations use the natural forms of the receptor language both in the grammatical constructions and in the choices of lexical items. A truly idiomatic translation does not sound like translation. It

sounds like it was written originally in the receptor language. Therefore, a good translator will try to translate idiomatically. This is his/her goal.⁰⁶

Theoretical frame work

Several theories of translation can be used to examine the possibility of poetry's translatability. However, to put this discourse in perspective, two related theoretical frameworks namely : Translation ranking and purpose of translation theories, readily provide anchorage for this discussion.

In terms of rank, translation is divided into:

01. Rank-bound translation, it means that the selection of TL text equivalent is limited at only one rank, such as word-for-word equivalence, morpheme-for-morpheme equivalence, etc.

02. Unbounded translation unlike Rank-bound translation, it can move freely up and down the rank-scale.

Based on the purposes of translation, Brislin in Choliludin (2007: 26-30) categorizes translation into four types, namely:

a. Pragmatic translation: it refers to the translation of a message with an interest in accuracy of the information that was meant to be conveyed in the SL form and it is not conveyed with other aspects of the original language version. Example: the translation of the information about repairing a machine.

b. Aesthetic-poetic translation: it refers to translation in which the translator takes into account the affect, emotion, and feeling of an original version, the aesthetic form used by the original author, as well as any information in the message. Example: the translation of sonnet, rhyme, heroic couplet, dramatic dialogue, and novel.

c. Ethnographic translation: its purpose is to explicate the cultural context of the SL and TL versions. Translators have to be sensitive to the way words are used and must know how the word fits into cultures. Example: the use of the word 'yes' versus 'yeah' in America.

d. Linguistic translation: is concerned with equivalent meanings of the constituent morphemes of the SL and grammatical form. Example: language in a computer program and translation machine.⁰⁷

The researchers used Unbounded translation theory which is aimed to freely moving up and down in translating the work in order to bring about meaning-based translation however, as mentioned above,

the meaning based translation makes every effort to communicate the meaning of the SL text in the natural forms of the receptor language.

On the purposes of translation, the researchers consider all categories propounded by Brislin namely: Pragmatic, Aesthetic-poetic, Ethnographic and Linguistic translation; this will take care the concept pragma-semiotic approach to translation proposed for translation activities from Arabic to English however, it is worth to put on record that Aesthetic-poetic prominently characterized the translation methods adopted because of direct correlation.

Brief Biography of Shaykh Adam Al-Ilory

Shayhy Adam was born in 1917 of a Nigerian father, a native of Ilorin from Omada Quarters, Balogun Ajikobi ward. His father, though an indigene of Ilorin, has his root in Oyo-ile, His mother, a princess was a native of Ponde in Wasa province of Dahomey, now Republic of Benin. Shaykh Adam was born in his mother's country in Wasa, a town near Djougou. His father Abdul Baqi travelled far and wide being an itinerant scholar and preacher. It was in the course of his proselytization that he chose to settle in Ponde where he got married, gave birth to Shaykh Adam and also became the chief Imam of the town⁰⁸.

Shaykh Adam started his early Qur'anic education from his father in Wasa. He later studied under different Mallams while sojourning at Ibadan, Lagos and Kano. He later went to Cairo in 1946 where he wonderfully showcased exceptional brilliance at Al-Azhar University and was awarded the institution's certificate in Arabic and Islamic Studies. He also travelled far and wide to different places and this afforded him the opportunity of meeting some Muslim scholars of International repute⁰⁹.

Shaykh Adam was a great teacher. His Markaz at Agege has produced several great scholars of repute who have held and are still holding important post in their places of work¹⁰ Apart from being a teacher, the Shaykh was an Imam of his central mosque located within the premises of his Markaz in Agege. He was an eloquent preacher and exegete whose tafsir class used to be flocked by a large audience drawn from different parts of the country. upon all, he was a prolific writer whose books covered a wide range of specialties like Islamic jurisprudence, Logic, Tafsir, philosophy, Grammar, history, poetry¹¹ and other topical issues that touch virtually all aspects of human endeavors. These books were taught to his students in the Markaz and other institutions in Nigeria and the West African sub-region¹². Indeed, his works according to R. Ibrahim Adebayo were so popular, educative and

academic that quite a good number of doctoral theses, dissertation, long essays and academic articles had been and still being written on them by different scholars. Shaykh Al-Iloryi breached his last at princess Grace Hospital in London on 3rd May 1992.

محامده لرب العالمين قالها عام 1962م.

لقد جال فكري إلى أصل أمري ** فما أب إلا بأمر عجيب
 فلا ينبغي لي سوى حمد ربي ** على نعم فوق حصر الأريب
 لأنني كنت على صخرات ** فما عشت إلا بحفظ الرقيب
 فأنتبتني الله من غير ماء ** بأرض العراء وجو عصيب
 وكنت الفقير وكنت الحقير ** وكنت الأسير بوادي الكروب
 وكنت الجهول وكنت الكسول ** وكنت السذيل بقلب كئيب
 فما لي مرب عليه اتكال ** ولكن ربي تولى الدروب
 فضائل ربي أتتني تباعا ** بغير عناء وهذا غريب
 وما نلت علما وفضلا بكيد ** وما ذاك إلا بفضل الحسيب
 وما كنت إلا كما شاء ربي ** من الطفل حتى أوري التريب
 عذرت أناسا من أهل الدهاء ** وأهل الشقاء ورين القلوب
 يربدون إطفاء نور الإله ** فما ساغ قط بنفخ الهبوب
 فراش يحومون حول السراج ** فضاعوا جميعا بشر اللغوب
 كـم من حسود وكم من حقود ** وكم من عنود سعى للخطوب
 فـمما أب إلا بخسران دنيا ** وخسران دين وجني الذنوب
 لك الحمد ربي على ما مننت ** وأنت السميع وأنت المجيب
 (2) فلا تسلبني ولا تخـذلي ** على عظم ذنب وكيد الغضوب

Thanksgiving composed in 1962

I meditated about my past
 Then found it so amazing
 Nothing is expected of me but to thank my Lord
 For some blessings so uncountable.
 For I was like a plant on the hills
 I survived but with the guard of the guardian
 Was made to germinate without water
 On a barren land and harsh weather
 I was poor and so was ignoble

I was a slave in the land of trouble
 I was ignorant as well lazy
 I was debased with a mind moody
 I had no guardian to rely on
 But my Lord took control of the course
 The favor of my Lord visited me
 One after another stresslessly
 This is indeed quite surprising!
 I got no knowledge through craftiness
 But with the grace of the All-sufficient
 I became as wished my Lord
 From infancy to maturity
 I pity some people of the cunning class
 The ill-hearted class and misfortuned
 Planning to put off God's Light
 Never will that be possible with a blow of air
 Spreading their fans around the lamp
 Eventually they were all lost
 With the evil of their labour
 So many an envious man
 So many a grudge bearer
 So many a stubborn man
 Trying to cause atrocities
 The aftermath of their attempts
 Was the loss of here and hereafter
 As well as accumulation of sins.
 To you be the praise
 My Lord on your grace
 No one hears and answer a call as you
 Do not rip me off your favour
 As well don't forsake me
 For the heftiness of my sin
 And the slyness of my foes.

Thanksgiving

The poem is written by the poet to show his sincere gratitude to Allah over the inestimable favors that had been done to him. Thus, he took himself back memory lane and the aftermath of his thought gave rise to this poem.

The simile given by the poet in line 3 is not in any way exaggerating and not far from the tenable, because weeds grow on mountains without having any source of water. The only questionable aspect of this simile is how could the background of the man born of a princess and a renowned business man and Islamic cleric be so debased to the point of likening it to that of a mountain-top plant?

مناجاة الإلوري التي يبث فيها شكواه لربه

يا من يراني ولا أراه ** وهو يجيب المضطرين
يا خالق الأرض والسماء ** يا رازق الطير والجنين
يا واهب العمر بالحياة ** يا قابض الروح بالمنون
يا خالقني يا رازقي ** إختارني في العالمين
لأن أقوم بدينه ** من بين قوم منكبين
أصبحت أتعب في حياتي ** لأنني من عصاميين
حتى علوت سبعين عاما ** قضيت جملتها لديني
منها انقضى أربعون عاما ** في بث علمي للطالبين
كم من بلايا كم من خزايا ** كم من رزايا كم ما هيين
حلت علي من الأعادي ** من كافرين وحاسدين
ومن نصارى ومسلمين ** رجوت ربي على اليقين
في دفع كل بلية ** وشماتة من شامتين
فوجدت ربي كما رجوت ** يؤتي سؤالي كل حين
كنت جهولا صرت فقيها ** بكشف أعلم العالمين
كنت ذليلا صرت عزيزا ** بفضل أكرم الأكرميين
كنت فريدا صرت عديدا ** ياليت قومي يعلمون
بأن ربي أعزني ** لعلهم يتذكرون
إن نبذوا كل آية ** فإنهم سوف يسألون
ولم أزل ثم ارتجني ** زيادة الخير كالمرصين
من عند ربي ذي الجلال ** مفيض خير للمرتجين
دعوته ودعاه لي ** أهل التقى من رجال ديني
بطول عمر وصحة ** لنفح أبناء المسلمين
وإن عمرت عمرا طويلا ** يسعد مليون الصالحين
ولم أكن بدعاء ربي ** شقيت يوما كالمجرمين
ما كان ربي يخيب راج ** ولا يرد السائلين
بل كان ظني جازما ** بالله رب العالمين
إذ هو أرحم الراحمين ** بل هو أصدق القائلين
قد قال ادعوا استجب ** كذاك ننجي المؤمنين

وأنا في حسن ظن عبدي ** كذاك نجزي المحسنين
 وكل هذا بمن ربي الـ ** منان ذي القوة المتين
 فكم رأينا من لم يصلوا ** ولم يصلوا في الأولين
 لكنهم سعدوا أخيرا ** وحوسبوا في الصالحين
 لزال ذكراهم دواما ** تتلي بقرآنا المبين
 منهم حبيب النجار يدعو ** يا قومي اتبعوا المرسلين
 ورجل مؤمن بغافر ** وامرأة فـرعون ذي فتون
 صاروا من السعداء حقا ** على الأرائك ينظرون
 ما ذاك إلا بفضل ربي ** بلا حساب من الثمين
 فامنن علي بمثل هذا ** فضلا بسـاطنك القمين
 يا رب حقق لي حسن ظني ** كما فعلت للسابقين
 ولا تضيع أجر فعالي ** إن كنت في ضمن المحسنين (6)

Silent Conversation to his Lord on Challenges he faces

O He that sees me but I see not!
 And He is who answers the distressed.
 O the creator of heaven and earth!
 O He who provides for the fetus and birds!
 O He who grants ages with life!
 O He who takes soul with demise!
 My creator! My provider!
 Who selected me among the world
 To shoulder the spread of His Religion
 Amidst those who refuted Islam.
 I eventually turned feeble in life
 For I've been myself and self-made.
 Till I grew above seventy years
 I spent it all on my religion
 Forty from it for knowledge spread
 Spreading my knowledge to the seekers.
 So much disgrace; so much tribulations
 So much catastrophes; so much humiliations
 Befell me from my foes
 The unbelievers and those who grudge me
 Among the Christians and the Muslims too.
 In certainty I looked up to my Lord
 To save me from every tribulation and schadenfreude
 My Lord disappointed me not

He constantly granted my requests.
 I was ignorant but became knowledgeable
 With an exposure from the Omniscient
 I was debased but became honored
 With the favor of the most generous.
 I was all alone but turned multiple
 How I wish my people knew
 That my Lord was He who honored me
 So that they may remember
 That if they deny every sign
 Verily, they shall all be asked.
 Still I'm hoping for more blessings
 Just like the needy in suffering
 From my Lord the greatest
 Who rains favor on those who hope
 I beseeched Him and He was on my behalf beseeched
 By the pious men of my religion
 For a life so long and health
 For the benefit of the Muslims
 If I be granted a long life
 A million of the do-gooders will be lucky
 I never became unfortunate
 Like a culprits for supplicating to my Lord
 Neither does my Lord disappoints who seeks
 Nor does He denies who asks
 Rather my thought is positive
 Of Allah, the Lord of the world
 As He is the most merciful
 And also the best truth-sayer
 He had said: "call me and I shall answer
 As such we save the believer".
 "Optimism is all I demand from a servant
 So we reward the do-gooders"
 The whole of this is by the grace
 Of the gracious and Almighty
 How many a person we have seen
 Who neither prayed nor even fasted
 But at last they were so lucky
 And were counted as being righteous
 They shall never be forgotten
 As long as the clear Qur'an is read
 Of them is HabeebNajar
 Who called: oh my people! Follow the messenger
 And a man-believer in SuratulGaafir

And the wife of Fir'aon the oppressor
They indeed became among the lucky ones
Who will look at others from pleasant shades
That was but with the favour of my Lord
Without having any valuable in return
Favour me as you have done them
By the grace of your standard authority
O Lord let my dream come to reality
As thou hath done with the fore-beings
And not deny me of the reward
Of my good deeds if I be of the do-gooders.

Silent Conversations.....

It is an evoking and supplicating poem written by the poet to evoke the Most High, Allah (SWT). The poem sounds like one of the last, if not the last written by the poet, as it gives the synopsis of all that the poet had gone through during the period of calling to the path of Allah. Lines 5-8 of the Arabic text and lines 8-16 of the translated text.

The supplications in the poem are fortified with an exospheric reference to those who neither bowed for Allah in prayer nor fasted, but by the grace of Allah were counted at last as being righteous. The first of whom (as stated by the poet) is Habeeb bin Mura(7) An-Najjar (the carpenter), who, having learnt the plot of the unbelievers against the three messengers of Allah sent to the people of a village, ran to them and preached as well as pleaded with them to accept the message of the messengers and not kill them. Allah says in his tongue:

"وجاء من أقصى المدينة رجل يسعى قال يا قوم اتبعوا المرسلين، اتبعوا من لا يسألكم أجرا وهم مهتدون" (8)

The second is a believer amongst the men of Fir'aon who believed but never disclosed his faith in Allah. He said out of his compassion for the messenger of Allah Musa to Fir'aon when he deemed it fit to kill Musa:

"أتقتلون رجلا أن يقول ربي الله وقد جاءكم بالبينات من ربكم وإن يك كاذبا فعليه كذبه وإن يك صادقا يصبكم بعض الذي يعدكم" (9)

The last is the wife of Fir'aon who never had a hand in the oppression and atrocities committed by her spouse.

The presentation made by the poet of these trio sounds like they never did anything to warrant being counted as righteous people or being admitted into Jannah, whereas, the only thing these people never did was Islam, which wasn't even in vogue during their time, but they had a solid and rigid faith that never was adulterated by the hypocrisy which spread its tentacles during their era.

منجاته على بحر الكريم

خالق البرايا الله ** واهب العطايا الله
 دافع المصائب فاستجب دعائي الله
 أنت ذو الجلال الله ** أنت ذو الكمال الله
 أنت ذو الفضائل أنت ذو النوال الله
 أنت من تراني لله ** تسمع كلامي الله
 تعلم مكاني ثم لا تنساني الله
 استر العيوب الله ** اغفر الذنوب الله
 لا تؤاخذني فضلا منك يا إلهي الله
 ارحم الفقير الله ** اجر الكسير الله
 اطلق الأسير لطفًا يا مجيب الداعي الله
 أوصّل السلام الله ** لأهمل السلام الله
 بدار السلام تحية وسلاما لله (14)

The porter of the world

The Porter of the world, O God!
 O ye who grants gifts, O God!
 O ye who prevents from atrocities
 Accept my prayers, O God!
 Thou are the most majestic, O God!
 Thou are the most perfect, O God!
 Thou are the most gracious
 Thou are the one full of blessings, O God!
 Thou are that who sees me, O God!
 Thou hear my words, O God!
 Thou know my spot
 Forget me not, O God!
 Protect my shortcomings, O God!
 Forgive my sins, O God!
 Punish me not; I beseech your favor, O God!
 With the poor be merciful, O God!
 Assist the defeated, O God!
 Free the slaves with your kindness
 O ye! Who answers the supplicants, O God!
 Extend peace
 To the class of peace
 In the home of peace

Peacefully, as greetings

Lord of the creatures

The poem is a free verse as it has no specific end rhyme. The repetition of 'Allah' at the end of every line is thus an additive to the poem. Nevertheless, there are internal rhymes embedded in the poem as can be seen in 'Baraya', 'ataya', as in line 1 of the Arabic text; 'uyub', 'zunub', as in line 4 and 'faqeer', 'kaseer' as in line 5.

The reason behind the violation of the law of end rhyme is the theme of the poem which is supplication and evoking Allah. This theme calls for a free mind and absolute expression of one's thought without any restriction or hindrance. But still, a completely rhymed poem could still be written for the purpose of supplication as done by the poet in other poems of same theme.

رب الخلاق

ربنا رب الخـلاق ** ربنا رب الخـلاق

نجنا من شر الزمان

وأعـطنا منك السلامة ** وأعـطنا منك السعادة

والرضى مع نيل الأمانى (13)

Lord of the Creatures

Our Lord the Lord of the creatures

Our Lord the Lord of the creatures

Save us from the evil of the epoch.

And give us from you security

And give us from you felicity

Be pleased with us and please

Help actualize our dreams.

The Porter of the World

This poem is an all-encompassing and evocative poem as it encapsulates all that a man could desire here on earth and in the hereafter; for him to be saved of the evil of the epoch, granted peace, made to succeed in all of his endeavors, granted all of his desires and aspirations and finally for Allah to be pleased with whatever he does are indeed all that a man needs to survive in life and life after death. This quality has turned the poem to what virtually every Markaziy (an Alumnus or student of Markaz) sings during their individual prayers.

Conclusion

From the foregoing, attempt was made to reproduce Al-ilory's poem in English version. Arabic language in which the works of Al-ilory are written,

denies the Non-Arabic users locally, nationally and internationally the opportunity to share from the didactic lessons taught in his works. The study has shown that al-Iloryi is not only a Historian or Islamist but also an Arabic poet whose poems explore some prominent themes of poetry in Arabic; it was discovered that his poems is of high quality and can compare with the acceptable standard in the Arab world. On the basis of this, we wish to offer the following recommendations:

- The works of Shaykh Adam should be continuing translated to English, Yoruba and other local languages, so that his message could reach the grass-roots.
- The Shaykh's works should be recommended for students of Arabic and Islamic Studies in Colleges of Education and Universities for them to appreciate the vast knowledge of this International scholar of repute.

Notes

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