

DANAM CONFERENCE 2006

SESSION CT

Theme: Challenges in Translation of Classic Hindu Texts

Graham M. Schweig, Christopher Newport University, *Convener and Presiding*

ABSTRACTS

Laurie Patton, Emory University

Challenges in Translating Works from Early India

Abstract unavailable at the time of printing.

Graham Schweig, Christopher Newport University

Challenges in Translating the Bhagavad Gita

In this presentation, I will briefly review some of the challenges in my journey of translating and interpreting this great text. Themes such as deriving the meaning of the text by construing the narrative and philosophical content together; preserving words in the original Sanskrit and the use of “exploded” translations; words for and expressions of “love” in the text; the advantages of presenting the verses in “dedicated free verse translation”; the key theme and climactic expression of “secrecy” in the text; and perhaps others, will be reviewed.

BVK Shastry, Hindu University of America

Pāṇinian Grammar Rules Governing Compound Words Formed with ‘Ārya in Bhagavad-Gita (2-2)

This presentation addresses the challenges in the interpretation and translation of the technical Sanskrit term ‘anarya’ present in the classical Hindu Text Bhagavad-Gita (chap2- verse 2). The current period challenges in interpretation of texts and terms in classic Hindu texts (which may be referenced from 1800 CE onwards to be more specific and in English language) are a result of failure to understand Hindu classical traditions in at least two critical stages, leading to: (a) inaccurate comprehension of the traditional methodology (*shastra – paribhasha, anvaya – samanvaya*) (b) indiscriminate and preferential mountings of assumptions (*apa-vyakhya, dur-vyakhya*) in interpreting the texts and contexts, which are express violation of the conventions of language, grammar, dictionary, technicality and practices. These are augmented by additional factors like – (i) difficulties in imprecise mapping of meaning and concepts of the source language terms in the target languages (ii) preferences and prejudices of the interpreters and (iii) a host of unconnected influences. The paper discusses the challenges in the translation and interpretation of reference Bhagavad-Gita text (2-2) in the above light.

Ithamar Theodor, Haifa University, Israel

Looking into the Structure of the Bhagavad Gita as a Precondition for its Translation

In general, translation involves the rendering of the meaning of a text from one language into another. In translating the Bhagavad Gita, I considered the primary challenge to be its translation from its own language into the academic language, whereas the translation from Sanskrit into Hebrew I considered secondary. As such, I tried to articulate its structure in a way which will be accepted by both traditional practitioners and western academics, and the result being what I call, "The Three Storey House Model."

Prabhavati C. Reddy, Northwestern University

Text and Context: Making the Sense of the Srisailakhandamu

This paper focuses on the problems of translating and interpreting a fifteenth-century Sanskrit text, the *Srisailakhandamu* (*SKh*), one of the sections of the *Skanda Purana*. This unpublished manuscript in Telugu contains 64 chapters, and provides the *tirthamahatmya* of Srisailam, a famous Saiva pilgrimage center in south India. The text will be discussed with regard to the following matters: 1) textual composition and content ambiguities; 2) translation and critical analysis of some passages; 3) finding solutions through the contextualization of the text.