

BILINGUAL LITERACY 1

DEV VIRAHSAWMY

THE CLOD AND THE PEBBLE

BY WILLIAM BLAKE

'Love seeketh not itself to please,
Nor for itself hath any care,
But for another gives its ease,
And builds a heaven in hell's despair.'

So sung a little clod of clay,
Trodden with the cattle's feet,
But a pebble of the brook
Warbled out these metres meet:

'Love seeketh only Self to please,
To bind another to its delight,
Joys in another's loss of ease,
And builds a hell in heaven's despite.'

This poem is found in Blake's book of poems 'SONGS OF INNOCENCE AND EXPERIENCE', in the first part i.e INNOCENCE. It is about the existence of two types of love: selfless and selfish love.

The first stanza (verse paragraph) is the voice of the clod of clay, the giver, the selfless lover, singing of a love which aims at giving comfort and care, building heaven in hell's despair.

The third stanza reveals the voice of selfish love (the pebble), the taker, thinking of its own delight, building hell in heaven's despite.

The second stanza is the voice of the narrator who tells us that the clod of clay does not give up its stand although it is going through a tough time (trodden with the cattle's feet). On the other hand the pebble is enjoying a life of comfort (lying in the brook) and yet it seeks 'only Self to please'.

The imagery used by Blake is very powerful. The clod of clay is soft and fertile while the pebble is hard and sterile. Christians could easily build a link between the clod of clay and Jesus and between the pebble and Pontius Pilate washing his hands of Jesus. I am sure that devotees of other religions could find similar links in their own religions.

The symmetrical structure seems to suggest that the forces of goodness and evil are equally balanced or at a point of equilibrium and may topple over one side or the other. The future may not be rosy. It all depends on what we do.

The apparent simplicity of the language hides great depths of thoughts.

Now read the Morisien version and make up your own mind about the translation.

ENN PLOT LATER EK ENN KAYOU

TRADIKSION-ADAPTASION PAR D.V

"Lamour pa rod so prop bienet.

Li pa pran kont so prop lavi

Me pou lotla li kas latet

E fer lanfer vinn paradi."

Samem sante enn plot later

Ler lapat bef pil-pil lor li

Me enn kayou dan bor dilo

Sant enn sante zis bon pou li:

"Lamour nek rod so prop bienet,

Ansenn lezot pou so nisa,

Ar larm lezot li ranz so fwet,

Fer lanfer aval Nirrvana."

BILINGUAL LITERACY 2

YONI & LINGA

DEV VIRAHSAWMI

Mo tantinn veritab lera legliz,
nam kalimay, sanbrani, tanbalon
kontan dir chichi kan lisien krwaze,
zenes anbrase ou kares lekor
- tousala bisagn, sime perdision.
So program virzinite eternal
dan rwayom Bondie modi ar lakras
pese ek pianter dan lekor imen.
Sa gran Endou la ki priye Buddha
finn pas akote - finn refiz gete? -
sazes oryantale dan zarden zepis,
plezir parfime, erotism tantrik.
Finn tro tar pou li konn adorasion
dan lalians sakre Yoni ek Linga.

This poem ridicules prudery and religious hypocrisy. Yoni is the female sex and linga the male one (Shakti and Shaktiman). Sexuality is at the centre of life and culture and Hinduism does not consider sex as a taboo or shy off it. The Khajuraho erotic sculptures, Tantric Yoga or The Kama Sutra are clear examples of this.

This poem is a sonnet (14 lines); each line has 10 syllables and there is no systematic rhyming. It is divided into 2 main parts: an octet (8 lines) and a sestet (6 lines). The octet describes a negative situation with ironic touches (lera legliz; nam kalimay, sanbrani, tanbalon; virzinite eternal). The sestet which is divided into a quartet (4 lines) and a couplet (2 lines) gives a different positive picture echoing the Perfumed Garden and ends with the celebration of sexuality between Shakti and Shaktiman, Parvati and Shiva, the passive principle (Shiva) and the active principle (Parvati).

This is finally a religious poem which condemns prudery and hypocrisy and celebrates true sexuality (not sex merchandising) as a path to liberation (moksha).

Now what follows is an attempt to translate the sonnet into English. Readers should feel free to comment or better still, should attempt a transcreation of the text.

YONI & LINGA

My aunt's very church-mouse
ritual faithful and shrine worshipful
spits disgust when dog-bitch crudely mate
when youths kiss, cuddle or pet
- disgusting! the road to perdition.
Her Eternal Virginity Programme
in God's kingdom cursedly spits on
sins and stench of the human body.

This genuine Hindu who worships Buddha
has chosen to miss or ignore
Asian wisdom in the perfumed garden
of erotic bliss and tantric orgasm.

Too late for her to worship
the Sacred in the Yoni-Linga Alliance.

BILINGUAL LITERACY 3

Ben Jonson's COME, MY CELIA

Come, my Celia, let us prove,
While we can, the sports of love;
Time will not be ours forever;
He at length our good will sever.
Spend not then his gifts in vain.
Suns that set may rise again;
But if once we lose this light,
'Tis with us perpetual night.
Why should we defer our joys?
Fame and rumor are but toys.
Cannot we delude the eyes
Of a few poor household spies,
Or his easier ears beguile,
So removed by our wile?
'Tis no sin love's fruit to steal;
But the sweet thefts to reveal,
To be taken, to be seen,
These have crimes accounted been.

This text comes from Ben Jonson's satirical play 'Volpone'. It is the song sung by the eponymous hero/villain Volpone to seduce Celia, a married woman.

What may appear as a song of love is in fact a song of lust. Note the images used: sports of love; fame and rumour are but toys; love's fruit to steal etc.

The song rejects all values on which our civilisation is built: truth, fidelity, trust etc. Volpone believes in using deceit to enjoy the forbidden fruit. Rape of morality precedes rape of integrity. For him sin exists only if one is caught.

The regular lines and rhyming couplet create an overall effect of a prayer but this is a prayer concocted by the devil himself.

The Morisien version aims at creating the same effect. Readers can now decide if such an exercise helps in the development of our national culture.

POU SELIA

(Tradiksyon par D.V)

Vini Selia, anou vit-vit
Tank nou kapav fer koustik brit;
Zegwi letan pa pou chombo,
Okontrer li tay nou palto.
Napa gaspiy letan presie.
Soley kouse li releve
Me si nou far bril so bobes
Lalimier net ris so kales.

Kifer pa zwir maja bel-bel?
Repitasion enn bagatel.
Difisil sa kouyonn lizie,
Anbet gardien fidelite?
Pa fasil sa trik so zorey,
Fer dime vinn kouma lavey?
Pa pese sa, souk fri lamour,
Li vinn pese kan tap tanbour;
Les zot kone, les zot may nou,
Sa li enn krim pli pir ki tou.

BILINGUAL LITERACY 4

THE LOVE SONG OF J. ALFRED PRUFROCK

by T.S. Eliot (1888-1965)

(AN EXTRACT)

Let us go then, you and I,
When the evening is spread out against the sky
Like a patient etherized upon a table;
Let us go, through certain half-deserted streets,
The muttering retreats
Of restless nights in one-night cheap hotels
And sawdust restaurants with oyster-shells:
Streets that follow like a tedious argument
Of insidious intent
To lead you to an overwhelming question ...
Oh, do not ask, "What is it?"

Let us go and make our visit.
In the room the women come and go
Talking of Michelangelo.

The yellow fog that rubs its back upon the window-panes,
The yellow smoke that rubs its muzzle on the window-panes,
Licked its tongue into the corners of the evening,
Lingered upon the pools that stand in drains,
Let fall upon its back the soot that falls from chimneys,
Slipped by the terrace, made a sudden leap,
And seeing that it was a soft October night,
Curled once about the house, and fell asleep.

And indeed there will be time
For the yellow smoke that slides along the street,
Rubbing its back upon the window-panes;
There will be time, there will be time
To prepare a face to meet the faces that you meet;
There will be time to murder and create,
And time for all the works and days of hands
That lift and drop a question on your plate;
Time for you and time for me,
And time yet for a hundred indecisions,
And for a hundred visions and revisions,
Before the taking of a toast and tea.

In the room the women come and go
Talking of Michelangelo.

.....

No! I am not Prince Hamlet, nor was meant to be;

Am an attendant lord, one that will do
To swell a progress, start a scene or two,
Advise the prince; no doubt, an easy tool,
Deferential, glad to be of use,
Politic, cautious, and meticulous;
Full of high sentence, but a bit obtuse;
At times, indeed, almost ridiculous--
Almost, at times, the Fool.

I grow old ... I grow old ...
I shall wear the bottoms of my trousers rolled.

Shall I part my hair behind? Do I dare to eat a peach?
I shall wear white flannel trousers, and walk upon the beach.
I have heard the mermaids singing, each to each.

I do not think that they will sing to me.

I have seen them riding seaward on the waves
Combing the white hair of the waves blown back
When the wind blows the water white and black.
We have lingered in the chambers of the sea
By sea-girls wreathed with seaweed red and brown
Till human voices wake us, and we drown.

This extract is from the famous Prufrock poem, a well-known dramatic monologue in free verse.

WHAT IS A DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE?

According to <http://www.britannica.com/> a dramatic monologue is: "a poem written in the form of a speech of an individual character; it compresses into a single vivid scene a narrative sense of the speaker's history and psychological insight into his character. This form is chiefly associated with Robert Browning, who raised it to a highly sophisticated level in such poems as "My Last Duchess".

WHAT IS FREE VERSE?

Free verse is an open form. It does not use consistent patterns, or any other musical pattern. It thus tends to follow the rhythm of natural speech.

ON ELIOT'S PRUFROCK

(From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia)

"The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock", commonly known as "Prufrock", is a poem by T. S. Eliot, begun in February 1910 and published in Chicago in June 1915. Described as a "drama of literary anguish," it presents a dramatic interior monologue, and marked the beginning of Eliot's career as an influential poet. With its weariness, regret, embarrassment, longing, emasculation, sexual frustration, sense of decay, and awareness of mortality, "Prufrock" has become one of the most recognized voices in modern literature.

INTERPRETATION

Because the poem is concerned primarily with the irregular musings of the narrator, it can be difficult to interpret. Laurence Perrine wrote, "[the poem] presents the apparently random thoughts going through a person's head within a certain time interval, in which the transitional links are psychological rather than logical". This stylistic choice makes it difficult to determine exactly what is literal and what is symbolic. On the surface, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" relays the thoughts

of a sexually frustrated middle-aged man who wants to say something but is afraid to do so, and ultimately does not. The dispute, however, lies in to whom Prufrock is speaking, whether he is actually *going* anywhere, what he wants to say, and to what the various images refer.

The intended audience is not evident. Some believe that Prufrock is talking to another person or directly to the reader, while others believe Prufrock's monologue is internal. Perrine writes "The 'you and I' of the first line are divided parts of Prufrock's own nature", while Mutlu Konuk Blasing suggests that the "you and I" refers to the relationship between the dilemmas of the character and the author. Similarly, critics dispute whether Prufrock is going somewhere during the course of the poem. In the first half of the poem, Prufrock uses various outdoor images (the sky, streets, cheap restaurants and hotels, fog), and talks about how there will be time for various things before "the taking of a toast and tea", and "time to turn back and descend the stair." This has led many to believe that Prufrock is on his way to an afternoon tea, in which he is preparing to ask this "overwhelming question". Others, however, believe that Prufrock is not physically going anywhere, but rather, is playing through it in his mind.

Perhaps the most significant dispute lies over the "overwhelming question" that Prufrock is trying to ask. Many believe that Prufrock is trying to tell a woman of his romantic interest in her, pointing to the various images of women's arms and clothing and the final few lines in which Prufrock laments that the mermaids will not sing to him. Others, however, believe that Prufrock is trying to express some deeper philosophical insight or disillusionment with society, but fears rejection, pointing to statements that express a disillusionment with society such as "I have measured out my life with coffee spoons" (line 51). Many believe that the poem is a criticism of Edwardian society and Prufrock's dilemma represents the inability to live a meaningful existence in the modern world. McCoy and Harlan wrote "For many readers in the 1920s, Prufrock seemed to epitomize the frustration and impotence of the modern individual. He seemed to represent thwarted desires and modern disillusionment."

As the poem uses the stream of consciousness technique, it is often difficult to determine what is meant to be interpreted literally or symbolically. In general, Eliot uses imagery which is indicative of Prufrock's character, representing aging and decay. For example, "When the evening is spread out against the sky / Like a patient etherized upon a table" (lines 2-3), the "sawdust restaurants" and "cheap hotels," the yellow fog, and the afternoon "Asleep...tired... or it malingers" (line 77), are reminiscent of languor and decay, while Prufrock's various concerns about his hair and teeth, as well as the mermaids "Combing the white hair of the waves blown back / When the wind blows the water white and black," show his concern over aging.

I have attempted a translation of the Prufrock poem. Readers may now decide on the success of this transcreation.

ROMANS J. ALFRED PRUFROCK

T.S. Eliot

(ENN EXTRE)

Be twa ek mwa, les nou ale.
Kan labrim lor lesiel pe tale
Kouma enn malad lor latab operasion;
Anou mars-marse dan bann sime demi-vid,
Bann kwen preske lib
Pou pas lanwit exitan dan lasam san lafnet,
Dan labivet korn-frir ek lasann sigaret:
Bann sime ki deroule kouma enn long palab
Fite kouma enn sab
E finalman kestion tom kouma enn bom ...
Eta, pa sey kone, "Ki ete sa ?"

Anou ale, nou'al zwenn bannla.
Dan salon laba bann madam piso
Pe koz-koz Michelangelo.

Brouyar zonn ki frot-frot so ledso lor vit lafnet,
Lafime zonn ki frot-frot mizo lor vit lafnet,
Pas so lalang dan bann zwen tanto
Kas poz lor dilo sal dan kanal,
Les dinwar lasemine tom lor so ledso,
Glis dan lavarang, pran lelan, sote
E ler li trouv lanbians douser Oktob
Ploy lakaz la dan so lebra, ferm lizie, dormi.

Sirman pou ena letan
Pou lafime zonn ki glis lor sime
Frot-frot so ledso lor vit lafnet;
Pou ena letan, pou ena letan
Pou aranz figir pou fer fas ar seki ete;
Pou ena letan pou touye, pou ranze,
Letan pou tou travay ek lazourne bann seki
Lev ek larg enn kestion dan to manze;
Letan pou twa, letan pou mwa
E letan reste pou san fwa tike,
Pou san vize ek revize
Avan manz dipen ek bwar dite kikfwa.

Dan salon laba bann madam piso
Pe koz-koz Michelangelo.

.....

Non! Mo pa Prens Hamlet, pa mo program;
Preske enn figiran, enn ti bout rol
Parsi-parla, parsi-parla enn ti parol,
Konsey prens la; samem, enn enstriman,
Montre respe, fer plezir,
Vey tonbaz, fer atansion, pran prekasion;
Koz bel-bel koze, selman enpe gopia,
Parfwa mem mari bachara -
Preske, parfwa, Boufon lerwa .

Mo pe vinn vie ... Mo pe vinn vie .
Mo pou bizen konn abiye.

Si mo met enn perik? Eski gagn drwa manz enn vanienn?
Mo pou met enn bermida anfler, lor laplaz kas enn yenn.
Mo finn tann bann sirenn sante sakenn pou sakenn.

Mo sir zot pa pou sant pou mwa .

Mo finn trouv zot mont dadak lor vag kot brizan,
Tres seve blan bann vag ki flote dan divan
Kan dilo voltize blan e nwar, nwar e blan.
Nou finn tini-tini dan bann lespas marinn
Kot bann sirenn met kouronn alg rouz ek maron
Me ler lavwa kas nou konte, nou koul dan fon.

BILINGUAL LITERACY 5

opening scene - Macbeth

SCENE I. A desert place.

Thunder and lightning. Enter three Witches

First Witch

When shall we three meet again
In thunder, lightning, or in rain?

Second Witch

When the hurlyburly's done,
When the battle's lost and won.

Third Witch

That will be ere the set of sun.

First Witch

Where the place?

Second Witch

Upon the heath.

Third Witch

There to meet with Macbeth.

First Witch

I come, Graymalkin!

Second Witch

Paddock calls.

Third Witch

Anon.

ALL

Fair is foul, and foul is fair:
Hover through the fog and filthy air.

Exeunt

HOW EFFECTIVE IS THE OPENING SCENE?

The setting is made clear: a desert place. In the minds of the Elizabethan audience, this would be the opposite of the king's castle. There is thunder and lightning which suggests disorder in the sky and in nature. The 3 witches suggest the presence of evil.

Normally Shakespeare uses blank verse – iambic pentameter without rhyming. Here the witches use rhyming couplet and the lines are shorter than blank verse. The impression created is that some kind of devilish prayer is being made. Graymalkin and Paddock are creatures associated with Satan according to beliefs in the days of Shakespeare,

When the hurlyburly's done,
When the battle's lost and won.

Disorder is not present only in nature but also in the world of humans. Note the use of paradox: "When the battle's lost and won"; "Fair is foul, and foul is fair". Paradoxes suggest a world gone haywire.

The witches have planned to meet Macbeth which means that the eponymous hero is vulnerable.

This very short scene prepares us for events to come.

Now readers may decide whether a Mauritian audience would respond positively to the opening scene in the Morisien version.

OUVERTIR PIES LA

Tradikzion-adaptasion par Dev Virahsawmy

AK 1 SENN 1

Enn laplenn abandone. Loraz ek zekler. Trwa sorsier rantre.

SORSIER 1

Kan nou trwa nou pou rezwenn
Dan garrbarr pou kas nou yenn?

SORSIER 2

Kan violans finn rans manze,
Kan lager finn gagn ase.

SORSIER 3

Kan soley pre pou kouse.

SORSIER 1

Kotsa?

SORSIER 2

Dan karo lalwes.

SORSIER 3

Laba mem pou zwenn Makbes.

SORSIER 1

Oja mo la!

SORSIER 2

Viv rachas!

SORSIER 3

Laverite!

TOULETRWA

Kler vinn som ek som vinn kler,
toul'de bengn dan movezer. [*Zot sorti*]