

## ***Shehe! Don't go there!: AC Jordan's Ingqumbo Yeminyanya (The Wrath of the Ancestors) in English***

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**Abstract:** As the title suggests, this article highlights some of the translation strategies used by Archibald Campbell Jordan to transfer ideas and aspects of culture from isiXhosa into English in *Ingqumbo Yeminyanya*. *Ingqumbo Yeminyanya* is a classic novel in isiXhosa which was published in 1940 by Lovedale Press. It was translated into English by the author with the help of his wife, Priscilla Phyllis Jordan, and was published as *The Wrath of the Ancestors* in 1980 by the same publisher. The article begins by giving a brief outline of the story and the author's biographical sketch. Thereafter it looks at the question of translation norms, as the norms dictate strategies the translator employs in the translation process. Some of the translation strategies which are analysed in the article are: transference/foreignisation, using a cultural equivalent, using a pure loan word plus explanation, and translation by descriptive phrase. In discussing the translation strategies, the authors provide explanations of the cultural concepts transferred from isiXhosa into English and also give meanings of idiomatic and proverbial expressions which are translated literally in the target text. Examples cited from the source text [ST] are taken from the 1974 edition of *Ingqumbo Yeminyanya*.

### **Introduction**

In this section, the story is first outlined and it is followed by Jordan's biographical sketch. The biographical sketch serves to shed light on Jordan as a writer and as a translator of his own work. Some of the information shared here, comes from the correspondence between Priscilla Phyllis Jordan and the second author of this article, Bulelwa Nokele.

### **A brief outline of *Ingqumbo Yeminyanya (The Wrath of the Ancestors)***

This novel is embedded in isiXhosa culture of the Mpondomise tribe. The story takes place in the outskirts of the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa and centres around Zwelinzima, a young Mpondomise prince who reluctantly leaves the University College of Fort Hare before completing even one semester and goes back to the land of his ancestors to take his place as king of the Mpondomise. Conflict arises as his ideas prove to be too advanced for the traditionalists he has to lead. Tension mounts in the story because neither group yields and each wants to triumph over the other. This leads to a tragic end of Zwelinzima's reign. Peteni (in Jordan 1980: iii), writes in the preface to the translation:

The original story written in what I regard as perfect Xhosa, is one of the most powerful I have read in any language. The author has a keen eye for detail, a delightful sense of humour and a dramatic style. But a translation, at best, can only be a poor imitation. The power and the soul of the original cannot be recaptured in the English version. Xhosa is rich in proverb, flexible in its turn of phrase and wide in vocabulary.

In the next paragraphs information about Jordan's life and education as well as the position he occupies in the isiXhosa literary system is provided.

### Jordan's biographical sketch

AC Jordan was born on 30 October 1906 at Mbokothwana in the Tsolo district in the land of the Mpondomise, Eastern Cape, South Africa. Jordan attended St Cuthbert's Primary School in his home town. After training as a teacher at St John's College, Mthatha (then Umtata), he taught at St Cuthberts in Tsolo for a year. He was awarded an Andrew Smith bursary which enabled him to proceed to Lovedale where he obtained his Junior Certificate. From Lovedale he went to Fort Hare, where he obtained the College Education Diploma of Fort Hare in 1932 and a BA degree in 1934. He taught for ten years at the African High School, Kroonstad, and in 1942 he obtained his MA in African languages from the University of South Africa. In 1945 he was appointed lecturer in African languages at the University of Fort Hare, and in 1946 he became a lecturer in the Department of African Languages, University of Cape Town, and in 1963 he went to the University of Wiconsin as a fellow at the Institute for Research in the Humanities. In 1964 he was awarded a professorship, a post he held until he died on 20 October 1968.

By the time Jordan had completed his degree he had developed a great interest in English literature, classical literature and history. During this time he was writing poetry for his college student magazine and later for an African newspaper, *UMthetheli waBantu*. His Xhosa poem on the invasion of Abyssinia by Mussolini was popular amongst the students at Fort Hare and amongst those who were politically inclined in the country. He published a number of his poems in the newspaper *Imvo Zabantsundu* in 1936 and some in *Ikhwezi Lomso* in 1958. His most famous work is *Inqumbo Yeminyanya*, which was published by Lovedale Press in 1940 (Gérard, 1971; Ntuli & Swanepoel, 1993). A number of critics hailed this novel as a classic in the literatures of the Southern African Languages.

In the introduction to *The Wrath of the Ancestors*, Peteni writes this about *Inqumbo Yeminyanya*:

Jordan's knowledge of the Mpondomise people is the main spring of his novel. He increased his store of personal knowledge of this people by doing research into their history, and produced a scholarly, informative historical novel. Jordan has created living men and women and woven their experiences into a story as convincing as, and more thrilling than, a life story. (Jordan 1980: i)

The novel was only translated into English under the title *The Wrath of the Ancestors* in 1980. When asked why the translation appeared such a long time after the original, Phyllis Jordan replied: 'Even before his illness and death, AC had been working on the translation for he wanted to introduce the other English-speaking South Africans to African culture and philosophy of life as seen by an African. The Lovedale Press, the publishers of the Xhosa book, got to know that he had been working on the translation and asked for it as they wanted to publish it' (Jordan, 2004).

Before analysing the strategies adopted by the translator in his translation, it is necessary to look at the question of translation norms. This is important because norms dictate the strategies the translator employs in the translation process. Chesterman (1997) asserts that norms regulate the process whereby communication can take place in a situation where it would otherwise be impossible. These norms are discussed in terms of Toury (1995) and Chesterman (1997).

### Translation norms

Toury (1995) distinguishes between three types of norms: preliminary, operational and initial. Preliminary norms are concerned with translation policy in a given culture and the directness of translation. Operational norms direct actual decisions made during the translation process. These are the norms that affect modes of distributing linguistic material in the text and the actual verbal formulation of the text. Operational norms are product norms regulating the form of a translation as a final product. Initial norms have to do with the translator's basic choice between two polar alternatives: subjecting him/herself either to the original text with its textual relations and norms expressed by it and contained in it, or to the linguistic and literary norms active in the target

language (TL) and in the target literary polysystem or a certain section of it. Toury (in Venuti, 2000) asserts that if the translator adopts the first stance, the translation will tend to subscribe to the source text norms and through them to the norms of the SL and culture. If the second stance is adopted, the translation will tend to subscribe to the norms of the target language system.

Chesterman (1997) goes further and includes expectancy and professional norms. He maintains that the expectancy norms concern the area covered by operational and initial norms, but from a different angle. These norms are established by the expectancies of the target readers concerning what a translation should be like. They can also be influenced by ideological factors, economic factors and power relations within and between cultures. Chesterman's expectancy norms can therefore be seen to overlap, to a degree, with Toury's notion of the initial norm. For example, Jordan's initial norm (to bring the source culture to the new reader) is influenced by a particular understanding (or imposition) on Jordan's part of ideological and cultural translation practice and of his target audience. The other type of norms, viz. the professional norms, are subordinate to the expectancy norms. These are the kinds of norms that exist in the culture to which any translator belongs. They also help to account for translational behaviour. In other words, these are the target norms which guide the selection of words or variants during the translation.

Professional norms comprise three types: accountability, communication and relational.

### ***Accountability norms***

These norms stipulate that a translator should act in such a way that the demands of loyalty are appropriately met with regard to the original writer, the commissioner of translation, the translator him/herself, the prospective readership and any other relevant parties. Translators should behave in such a manner that they are able to accept responsibility for their translations. We suppose that, given that Jordan is translating his own writing, what needs to be considered here is primarily the accountability to the target readership. We have already indicated his understanding of this accountability in terms of his initial norm.

### ***Communication norms***

A translator should act in such a way as to optimise communication, as required by the situation between all parties involved. This norm specifies the translator's role as a communication expert, both as the mediator of the intentions of others and as a communicator in his/her own right. It also emphasises the fact that translation is a communicative process which takes place within a social context (Hatim & Mason, 1990). The communication norm could be aligned with Gutt's relevance theory, which specifies that it is the responsibility of the translator to produce a target text with the intention of communicating to the audience the same assumptions that the original communicator intended to convey to the original receptor (1991). Here we would assume that, Jordan, in communicating 'African culture and philosophy of life as seen by an African' to his readership, would also intend the readership to be able to understand what he is attempting to communicate to them without too much difficulty.

### ***Relation norms***

A translator should act in such a way that an appropriate relation of relevant similarity is established and maintained between the source text and the target text. This also relates to Gutt's relevance theory of translation. Relation norms also emphasise the translator's responsibility towards the other partner in the translation process, i.e. the reader. In Jordan's role as both writer and translator, this norm should not be problematic.

In conclusion to this brief discussion of norms in translation, it is believed that it is safe to infer, therefore, that Jordan wished to carry out a source-oriented translation as opposed to a target-oriented one; and by extension to adopt an overall foreignising translation strategy rather than a domesticating one.

## Translation strategies

As has been mentioned before, translation norms guide translation strategies. In other words, strategies are ways in which translations seek to conform to norms. Translators use various strategies in order to produce an optimal translation. Williams (1990: 55) states that there are three standard questions that must be addressed when approaching a translation. They are:

- Who commissioned the translation and what are his/her requirements?
- Who generated the text, and for what purpose?
- For whom is the translation intended?

Answers to these questions will enable the translator to decide on translation method. The translator's decision to use certain translation strategies will depend mainly on how much licence is given to him/her by those who commissioned the translation. Kruger and Wallmach (2004: 98), who view the author's style as very important in literary translation, write:

Literary translators are obliged to reproduce the effect as well as the content of the literary text. In other words, they are forced to write in a style not their own, and make it good, but they must also translate, completely, the meaning of the author's words as represented in a literary work of art.

In this case, where Jordan is both author and translator, one may assume that the translator did not have a problem with regard to the author's style. The above critics also state that, as literature plays an important role in the culture of the country, and is viewed as an art that must be preserved, the same can apply to great literary translations.

In the following paragraphs the translation strategies used by Jordan when translating ideas and some aspects of culture from isiXhosa into English, are examined. The translation strategies which have been identified are:

- transference/foreignisation;
- using a cultural equivalent;
- using a pure loan word plus explanation;
- translating by a descriptive phrase;
- translating by verb plus adverbial phrase;
- translation by paraphrase;
- literal translation of idiomatic and proverbial expressions;
- translation by omission; and
- translation by condensing.

## Transference/foreignisation

According to Williams (1990) transference means the transference of a source-language word to a target-language context. He goes on to say that the decision to apply the transference procedure to a term must be based on the assumption that all readers will understand it. Chesterman and Wagner (2002) refer to the strategy of directly transferring a source-text item into the target text as foreignisation; that is, a text retains its foreignness for aesthetic or cultural reasons. These authors see this strategy as being used often in the translation of literature. In the examples cited below, culture-specific terms and interjections have been transferred from isiXhosa into English. The culture-specific terms are discussed under indigenous food and utensils, dwellings and related terms, cultural activities or practices and indigenous trees/plants.

### **Indigenous food and utensils**

*amarhewu* > *marhewu*

ST.4: *UMamiya weza nebhekilana yamarhewu wayinika uMphuthumi.*

*'Hayi ma, ungazikhathazi ngeti. Amarhewu ndiyawathanda kakhulu.'*

TT.6: Then Ma-Miya brought a small can of *marhewu* and gave it to Mphuthumi.

*'Please do not worry yourself about tea. I am very fond of marhewu.'*

*Amarhewu* is non-intoxicating drink made out of maize meal. In *The Greater Dictionary of Xhosa* (Pahl *et al.*, 1989), *amarhewu* is defined as 'a pleasant, non-intoxicating drink made from a thin porridge of maize meal with little wheat flour and some fermented *amarhewu* added to initiate fermentation, nowadays yeast is added for this purpose'. In a traditional set-up visitors were welcomed by being offered traditional beer or *amarhewu* instead of tea, as is the case in modern society. Since Mphuthumi was a teacher, and therefore a Westerner, MaMiya was prepared to offer him tea.

*ilala* > *lala*

ST.3: *Wabuya wesuka wakrweca umfazi, baya kutshona endlwini, baphuma nelala lotywala.*

TT.5: Mzamo stood up and signalled to his wife, who followed him into a hut. She came out a moment later carrying a *lala* full of beer.

*Ilala* is a small beaker from which people drink traditional beer. When amaXhosa drink their traditional beer, *umqombothi*, they drink it from a small or medium-sized beaker. They all share the same beaker, taking turns.

*umphothulo* > *mphothulo*

ST.85: *Khonkotha, ntlok'w'enja, ngokuhlwa ndakuph'umphothulo*

TT.87: Howl away, dog's head, and tonight I'll feed you on *mphothulo*.

The above example is the last line of praises sung by Mphuthumi to his horse. Singing praises to animals can be regarded as a cultural practice among amaXhosa. For example, Ntsikana, a well known praise singer and orator who lived in the 1800s used to sing praises to his oxen every morning when he woke up. *Umphothulo* can be defined as cooked sorghum, wheat or maize ground to make *umvubo*, which is a mixture of ground grain and *amasi*. It is interesting to note that in a collection of folktales (whose date of publication is unknown), entitled *Iintsomi-Bantu Folk Stories*, translated from isiXhosa into English by Agar-O'Connell and Bangeni, the term *mphothulo* is retained in the English version, as shown by the example that follows.

ST.17: *Uthe ke ngoko uNtombembi wawutya umphothulo abewulungisile.*

TT.17: Therefore Ntombembi ate the *umphothulo* she had prepared.

It is also worth mentioning that in this collection of folktales, all cultural terms which refer to indigenous food are transferred from isiXhosa into English.

### **Dwellings and related terms**

*iphempe* > *phempe*

S.T.7: *...wavalelwa ephempeni, latshiswa iphempe lixhwele ngaphandle. Latsha iphempe nqu, lamshiya uMhlontlo engenawo nomda.*

TT.10: ...he was locked up in a special *phempe* which was then burnt down completely. But lo and behold! Mhlontlo emerged unscratched, without a mark on his body.

*Iphempe* is a small hut in a garden to afford protection or a small hut for initiates. In the story, *iphempe* refers to the small hut where King Mhlontlo was put when he underwent the ritual of protecting him against witchcraft. In *The Greater Dictionary of IsiXhosa* (Mini *et al.*, 2003), *iphempe* is described as a 'temporary shelter, e.g. the small beehive grass hut built for children who drive away birds and monkeys from lands or hunters in the wild, for cattle-herds at cattle outposts; nowadays extended to any temporary shack, e.g. on a site where a house is being built'.

*inkundla* > *nkundla*

ST.1: *...zaya kuthi gubu phesheya kwentlambo, zaqingqa enkundleni kumzi omkhulu, phezu kwamanzi eThina.*

TT.3: ...ascended the opposite slope and came to a halt in the *nkundla* of an imposing homestead overlooking the waters of the Thina River.

*Inkundla* is an area between the cattle kraal and the bare yard of the hut or huts of isiXhosa

homestead. Men gather at this place for meetings, discussion of important matters, court cases etc.; hence the visitors on arrival at Mzamo's homestead, dismounted and unsaddled their horses in the *nkundla*. *Inkundla* should be respected by married women. A young woman married into the family (*umakoti*) is prohibited from walking in this area except on the day of the wedding (Mini *et al.*, 2003).

### **Cultural activities or practices**

*lobolela* > *lobola*

ST.233: 'Tyhini ezi nkomo zezi ziya kulobolel' inkosi?'

TT.260: 'So these are the cattle that are going to *lobola* for the Chief?'

*Lobolela* is a verb formed from *lobola* by suffixing the applied extension *-el* to the basic root and followed by the terminative vowel *-a*. The noun is *ilobola*.

*ikhazi* > *khazi*

ST.143: *Waba ke ngoko uZwelinzima uyazeka kwaKhalipha, ikhazi likhethwa kwezikaZanemvula zomthonyama.*

TT.152: Thus it was that marriage negotiations with the Khaliphas were immediately made, the whole of the *khazi* consisting of cattle from Zanemvula's original stock.

The explanation given by Kropf (1915) which says *lobola* or *ikhazi* is a dowry or cattle given to a parent in compensation for a loss of his daughter on marriage is not satisfactory. According to Moropa and Kruger (2000), *ilobola* is not payment for the bride. It forms the basis of building a relationship between two families, and that is why there are negotiations between the two families before *ilobola* is agreed upon.

*umkhwelo* > *mkhwelo*

ST.147: *Umkhwelo wawuyiphahle indlela yeemoto waya kuphumela kuMqunya, yathi yakuza imoto yabatshati uyiphahlile, yada yaya kungena koMkhulu.*

TT.157: The *mkhwelo* formed a long avenue extending as far as Mqunya River, and when the bridal car at last drove to Ntshiqo, the *mkhwelo* moved steadily along, forming a guard of honour all the way to the Royal Place.

*Umkhwelo* is the racing of horses by young men a day before the wedding or on the wedding day. On the day of Thembeke and Zwelinzima's wedding, *umkhwelo* made a beautiful scenario. The noun *umkhwelo* is formed from the verb *-khwela* which means to ride or climb on.

*inkwakhwa* > *nkwakhwa*

ST.8: *Le mbali yenyoka yabangela ukuba amadodana afune ukwazi ubunyani bale yakwaMajola inyoka, inkwakhwa. Wawaxelela uNgxabane ukuba inkwakhwa sisilo sakwaNgwanya sakwaMajola.*

TT.10: These legends made the company eager to know the true story about the *nkwakhwa*, the snake of the House of Majola. So Ngxabane told them that the *nkwakhwa* is the spirit of the House of Majola.

The *inkwakhwa* is a snake known as the spirit of the House of Majola. It is respected by both men and women and should not be killed. The spirits of the ancestors confer blessings through it.

*bayethe* > *bayethe*

ST.32: *Bayethe, Ngwanya kaMajola!*

TT.33: *Bayethe, Offspring of the House of Majola!*

*Bayethe* is a greeting used mainly for royal people. In the story it is the first line of a praise song (*isibongo*) by Mphuthumi in honour of Zwelinzima.

*uNkosazana* > *Nkosazana*

ST.44: *Ndiithi mna uNkosazana wabasela ngokwakhe loo ti, akathumela nokuthumela.*

TT.44: Believe it or not, *Nkosazana* actually took the tea to them herself.

Here, *Nkosazana* is used to refer to the matron who was the head of the female residence. *Nkosazana* can be used as a courtesy title to refer to an unmarried woman. It also refers to a princess or daughter of a chief or king.

*induna > nduna*

ST.115: *Phambi kokuba ahambe wawisa ihlahla elikhulu lombhongisa walinikela enye yeenduna.*

TT.120: Before moving forward, he felled the huge *mbhongisa* bush, handed it over to one of the *indunas* and then spoke and said...

In Kropf (1915) an *induna* is defined as 'a person who by birth or otherwise is a degree above the commonality; one in authority; a chief councillor or minister of the chief; a head, leader of the army'. The *nduna* in the story refers to Dingindawo's councillors.

### **Indigenous trees/plants**

*isiphingo > siphingo*

ST.30: *Kananjalo lalisithwe yimithana yesiphingo.*

TT.32: ...there were also some *siphingo* thorn-bushes to provide further shelter.

*Isiphingo* is a thorny bush (with edible black berries) used for building cattle folds. The place which was covered by *siphingo* thorn-bushes was known as Black Hill, a spot where Zwelinzima and Mphuthumi used to study, relax and chat.

*umhlontlo > mhlontlo*

ST.103: *...obo budyidi-dyidi bamasi yabubukrakra bomhlontlo.*

TT.108: ...and the abundance of milk had become the bitterness of the *mhlontlo* juice.

*Umhlontlo* is the euphorbia tree used for cancer and blistering. Here, *umhlontlo* is used in a figurative sense to describe how Zwelinzima felt when he had to leave Sheshegu and go and take his rightful place as the king of the Mpondomises.

*mbhongisa > mbhongisa*

ST.115: *Phambi kokuba ahambe wawisa ihlahla elikhulu lombhongisa walinikela enye yeenduna.*

TT.120: Before moving forward, he felled the huge *mbhongisa* bush, handed it over to one of the *ndunas*...

After handing the *mbhongisa* bush to one of the *indunas*, Dingindawo instructed his men to keep their eyes fixed on it as it would guide them on what action to take. *Umbhongisa* is a tree with two shrubs. The fruit of the larger shrub is used as a spinning-top, and the smaller shrub has pinkish-yellow fruit (Kropf, 1915: 88–89).

As already mentioned in the introduction to this article, this novel is embedded in isiXhosa culture of the Mpondomise tribe. It is therefore not surprising that some terms which refer to indigenous food, dress, cultural activities, etc. do not have equivalents in English. There is a big cultural gap between isiXhosa and English. Again, the translator may have realised that describing or explaining some of these cultural concepts could have been cumbersome. Even translation by substitution, where a culture-specific item or expression is replaced by a target-language item which does not have the same propositional meaning, but likely to have a similar impact on the reader (Baker, 1992), does not seem to have been a solution to this problem of lack of equivalents. Transferring cultural concepts from isiXhosa into English may be viewed as a norm in both original and translated English texts which are embedded in isiXhosa culture. Jafta's unpublished MA thesis (1978) entitled 'A Survey of Xhosa Drama', where cultural terms such as *intlombe*, *inqoloqho*, *umguyo*, *intonjane* etc. are used, serves as a good example.

### **Interjections**

An interjection expresses emotion and has no grammatical influence on the rest of the sentence. The following are examples of interjections which have been transferred from isiXhosa into English.

*Tyhini! Tyhini! > Tyhini! Tyhini!*

ST.113: *Bathi besithi 'Tyhini! Tyhini!' abalindi yabe imkile.*

TT.118: ...and by the time the scouts were able to say '*Tyhini! Tyhini!*' it was gone.

*Tyhini* expresses surprise. For instance, the scouts who were sent to monitor Zwelinzima's movements on his arrival from Sheshegu, were surprised to see him gone without them noticing.

*Tyhu! > Tyhu!*

ST.170: *Kube kusithiwa, kwath' uMajola kwath' uMajola, ngeenyoka eziza kutya abantwana bethu. Tyhu!*

TT.184: '*Tyhu!* Our children are in danger of being bitten to death by snakes, and all these people can do is shout, "Majola, Majola!" all the time!"

*Tyhu* can express surprise, fear and disappointment. In the story, Thembeke seems to be surprised and disappointed by the people's friendly attitude towards the snake, 'the so-called Majola', whilst to her the whole situation was frightening and dangerous.

*Shehe! > Shehe!*

ST.176: '*Shehe! Ningay' apho, Yizani ngapha!*

TT.185: '*Shehe!* don't go there! Come this way!'

*Shehe* indicates that the people were struck dumb by Thembeke's behaviour. The interjection also called people to move away from the royal house as there was a problem.

In Kropf (1915) some of the above interjections have been paraphrased or described. For example *Tyhini!* is paraphrased as 'What's this!' *Tyhu!* is described as an interjection of surprise and *Shehe!* is translated as 'Hallo! Ho!' It is important to note that interjections are discussed further in this article under paraphrase and omission strategies.

### Using cultural equivalents

Cultural equivalents are an approximate translation where a source-language cultural word is translated by a target-language cultural word (Newmark, 1988). Williams (1990) finds cultural equivalent to be of great importance because it can render a translation more 'readily acceptable and comprehensible to the readership'. For example, in English the terms 'uncle' and 'cousin' can be viewed as approximate cultural translations in the examples cited below. In the isiXhosa culture a different word is used for each relationship denoted by the term uncle or cousin. Compare *ubawokazi* (young father) and *umntakwabo* (ones' brother) in the following examples.

*ubawokazi > uncle*

ST.117: '*Hayi myeken' angen' ubawokazi'. Andilwi naye.*

TT.123: 'Please let my uncle come in.' I have no desire to fight him.

*Ubawokazi* refers to Dingindawo, a younger brother of Zwelinzima's father, who according to isiXhosa culture is a father to Zwelinzima. Zwelinzima spoke these words when some of Zwelinzima's supporters were reluctant to allow Dingindawo to come in the house and meet him, as they feared that Dingindawo would harm him.

*umntakwabo > cousin*

ST.127: *...uVukuza yena wayengaziva ngomntakwabo uZwelinzima;*

TT.133: ...Vukuza on the other hand did not want anything to come between himself and his cousin.

Vukuza loved and supported Zwelinzima, while on the other hand, his father, Dingindawo, was planning Zwelinzima's downfall. In isiXhosa culture Vukuza and Zwelinzima were brothers, not cousins.

Mandela (1994: 9) explains kinship amongst Africans as follows:

In African culture the sons and daughters of one's aunts or uncles are considered brothers

and sisters, not cousins. We do not make the same distinctions among relations practised by whites. We have no half-brothers or half-sisters. My mother's sister is my mother; my uncle's son is my brother; my brother's child is my son, my daughter.'

From the above discussion, one can conclude that the degree of cultural loading in kinship terms is higher in isiXhosa than in English. The Indigenous African languages in South Africa display an elaborate kinship term system which reflects a specific cultural perception of family relations.

### Using a pure loan word plus explanation

In the following examples the translator has used a pure loan word plus explanation in translating other culturally-related concepts, months of the year and proper nouns which refer to organisations. The explanation precedes or follows the loan word and it is often put in brackets. Baker (1992) says that it is helpful to follow a loan word with an explanation, especially when it is repeated several times in the text. After it has been explained, the loan word can be used on its own without any further explanation so that the reader is not distracted by lengthy explanations when reading the text.

*isidlokolo* > particular head gear, skin turban — *isidlokolo*

ST.98: *Bonke ke aba balindi bakwiindawo ngeendawo babethwele izidlokolo, beqabile ebusweni khona ukuze bangaziwa.*

TT.102: All the scouts in the various sectors wore a particular head gear, skin turbans with long hair, called *izidlokolo* and their faces were painted so that they could not be recognised.

*Isidlokolo* was used as a form of disguise by the men who were sent by Dingindawo to block Zwelinzima from entering Mpondomiseland. *Isidlokolo* is a head gear made out of a baboon's skin. It is also used by traditional *imbongi*.

*kweyoMqungu* > month of the *mqungu* grass — January

ST.95: *...apho kuya kudityanwa khona kuseGcuwa ngomhla wesibini kweyoMqungu ngoLwesithathu.*

TT.99: ...they were all to meet at Butterworth on Wednesday, the second day of the month of the *mqungu* grass (2 January).

*Umqungu* is a long grass used for thatching, and it comes into ear in January.

*yeyoMsintsi* > flowering month of the *msintsi* tree — September month

ST.145: *Wathandabuza wathandabuza ke uMthunzini wada wazincama ngeholide yeyoMsintsi waya kukhumbuzwa uDingindawo ngesithembiso sakhe.*

TT.154: Mthunzini at last summoned up courage and in the month of the flowering of the *msintsi* tree (September month) when the school holidays were on, he went to remind Dingindawo of his promise.

The flowering of the *msintsi* tree serves as one of the signals for sowing corn and maize. The red seeds are worn as beads around the neck. In isiXhosa the names of the months are linked to plants and trees.

In cases where a loan word appears more than once in the source text, as is the case with the examples cited below, the explanation is given in the first instance only.

*Fela-ndawo-nye* > *Felandawonye* — inseparables to-the-death

ST.90: *Kwangobo busuku lo mbutho wazithiya igama lokuba ngama 'Fela-ndawo-nye'.*

TT.93: On the same night this group took the name of 'Felandawonye', 'inseparables-to-the-death'.

Compare

TT: 95: Finally, he decided to report the matter to the 'Felandawonye'.

*ILiso loMzi* > *ILiso loMzi* — The Eye of the People

ST.149: *Umanyano olo lwabizwa ngokuba liLiso loMzi.*

TT.159: It was to be called *ILiso loMzi* (The eye of the people).

Compare:

TT.160: The President of the organisation was a commoner, as in the case of *ILiso loMzi*.

The use of the above translation strategy is supported by Trew (1994: 95) when he says that 'short and immediate explanations can be inserted into the text (between brackets) at the point where an unfamiliar term is first used'.

### Translating by a descriptive phrase

The translator has used a descriptive phrase to translate repeated verbs and repeated ideophones. The use of repetition is common in isiXhosa in both oral and written literature. Here are some examples:

*wacinga wacinga* > thinking over this matter

ST.22: *UMthunzini wacinga wacinga waginga ekubeni indlela yokuphinda amsondeze kuye uThembeke kukuba amthembise...*

TT.25: After 'thinking over this matter' Mthunzini came to a conclusion that the only way to win Thembeke back to him was to offer her marriage...

*wacinga wacinga wacinga* > deep in thought

ST.81: *Wade ngelikade waziqqiba, waziqokelela ngokuzola okukhulu, wazifumba, wagoba umnqonqo, wabambelela ebunzi, wacinga, wacinga, wacinga.*

TT.83: When at last he had finished reading the letters, he gathered them together quite calmly, bowed his head and put his hand on his forehead, 'deep in thought'.

*walikhangela walikhangela* > gazed at him for a long time

ST.36: *UZwelinzima walikhangela walikhangela walifumana lilungele kanye le ngxaki akuyo.*

TT.37: Zwelinzima 'gazed at him for a long time' and finally decided that the bishop was the man to whom he could readily go for advice in his dilemma.

*wahleka, wahleka, wahleka* > burst into a fit of laughter

ST.233: *Wasuka waqhuzuka wahleka, wahleka, wahleka, woma waya kuwa phantsi.*

TT.260: Like one demented, Nobantu 'burst into a fit of laughter' and fell violently on the ground.

*wahleka wahleka wahleka* > peal after peal of laughter broke from her lips

ST.233: *Wahleka, wahleka, wahleka abantu baxakeka ngoku baya kuphatha ngezandla.*

TT.260: 'Peal after peal of laughter broke from her lips', striking fear into the hearts of all who heard her.

*kwathi cwaka kwathi cwaka* > a long interval of silence

ST.184: *Kwathi cwaka kwathi cwaka bephumile...*

TT.196: 'A long interval of silence' followed their departure.

Authors often use repetition for emphasis or to depict the length of time taken. The translator has avoided repetitions by employing descriptive phrases, as illustrated above.

### Translating by a verb plus adverbial phrase

The strategy of translating by a verb plus adverbial phrase has mainly been used to translate ideophones. An ideophone is a word which has verbal properties and which could be said to give vivid description to actions or states in respect of manner, colour, sound, etc. This part of speech is

not found in English and in most cases the English equivalent is a verb. Jordan has used a verb plus an adverbial phrase to translate ideophones. The general function of an adverb is to modify or define verbs, adjectives and other adverbs (Aitchison, 1994). In the examples cited below, the adverb is placed before or after the verb.

*thaphu* > suddenly appeared

ST.1: *Enkalweni kwathi thaphu iinkabi zamahashe ezimalunga neshumi, zathambeka intaba, zanqumla amathunzi, zenjenjeya, zibetha kuhle, zaya kuthi gubu phesheya kwentlambo, zaqingqa enkundleni kumzi omkhulu phezu kwamanzi eThina.*

TT.3: A group of ten horsemen 'suddenly appeared' on the horizon. They descended the slope at a steady pace, crossed the evening shadows, ascended the opposite slope and came in the *nkundla* of an imposing homestead overlooking the waters of the Thina River.

ST: [one sentence]

TT: [two sentences]

*nqwadalala* > sat at their ease

ST.2: *Ahlala ke amadoda ee nqwadalala, eqhumisa iinqawa, kwada ngelikade wavela umfazi...*

TT.4: The men 'sat at their ease' smoking their pipes until at last a woman approached...

*gwiqi* > turned abruptly

ST.9: *Watsho wathi gwiqi waya kutshona endlwini, esula iinyembezi.*

TT.11: Having thus spoken, Mzamo 'turned abruptly' and went straight into a hut, secretly wiping a tear.

*gwiqi* > turn sharply about

ST.20: *Wathi gwiqi ngokuzimisela uThembeka waya kuMphuthumi.*

TT.22: 'Turning sharply about', Thembeka walked with decision out of the dormitory and went to see Mphuthumi.

*gqada* > walked quickly

ST.11: *Wazenza umntu owothuswe kukugadlela kocango ukuphuma kukaDabula, wagushu-gushuza, wee gqada phandle esiya kuqinisekisa ukuba ezi zinto uzive ngeendlebe zakhe na.*

TT.13: So he moved on his bed, pretending that his sleep had been disturbed by the banging of the door as Dabula went out. Then he 'walked quickly' out of the hut. He simply had to make sure that he had not dreamt all these things, but had actually heard them.

ST: [one sentence]

TT: [three sentences]

*xhamfu-jwii* > flung it far away

ST.174: *Watsho wayithi xhamfu-jwi-i kude loo nkwakhwa, wathabatha usana lwakhe ekhala, wabaleka nalo ejikeleza egxwala...*

TT.183: And seizing the snake, she flung it far away, picked up the child and ran hysterically this way and that, still crying.

*gquzu* > roared with laughter

ST.85: *Gquzu iititshala. Umgcini sihlalo waba selelibala nokumngxolisa ngokungagcini ixesha engunobhala wemanyano.*

TT.88: The other teachers 'roared with laughter' and the president forgot even to reprimand him, as secretary of the association, for being late.

*shwaca* > drawn together

*tshawu* > opening and revealing an ominous gleam

ST.81: *lintshiyi zazithe shwaca, amehlo evaleke mba, emana ukuvuleka ngamaxesha athile, athi ukuthi tshawu kwawo abe ngathi ngawengonyama.*

TT.83: His face had a terrifying expression, the brows 'drawn together', the eyes mere slits, but occasionally 'opening and revealing an ominous gleam' like a lion in anger.

*nty-nty-nty* > clear piercing cries echoed and re-echoed

ST.115: *Wawuhlaba umkhosi umfazi waseMbokothwana! Wathi ntye-nty-nty!*

TT.121: Thereupon the women of Mbokothwana raised the alarm. Their 'clear piercing cries echoed and re-echoed' through the silent hills.

ST: [one sentence]

TT: [two sentences]

*Qingqi!* > stand firm and confident on your feet

ST.250: *Qingqi Mntwana!*

TT.277: 'Stand firm and confident on your feet', young boy!

What is also noticed in some of the above examples is that some information which is contained in one sentence in the ST is expressed in two or three sentences in the TT. The translator has made complex syntax simpler by splitting sentences.

### Translation by paraphrasing

In discussing the above mentioned strategy, idioms, ideophones and interjections are considered. According to Baker (1992), this strategy is commonly used to translate idioms when one cannot find a matching idiom in the target language or 'when it seems inappropriate to use idiomatic language in the target text because of differences in stylistic preferences of the source and target languages'. The following are examples of idioms which illustrate the paraphrase strategy.

*oNongqawuse* > fantastic *Nongqawuse* tales

ST.15: *'O! Kazi oNongqawus' aba boze baphele nini na kule Afrika?' Waqhawulisa watsho uThembeka.*

TT.18: 'Oh, heavens!' interjected Thembeka. 'When are these "fantastic *Nongqawuse* tales" ever to end in the Africa of ours?'

The expression means something which is hard to believe, something like a folktale. *Nongqawuse* was a young Xhosa girl who claimed to have met the ancestors and they promised the people of the resurrection that was to come. In order for this to happen, people had to kill their cattle and burn their food. The Xhosas did as they were told but the promise never came true. People died of starvation. This idiom has a historical background (Mesatywa, 1969).

*waqina isibindi* > mustering up the little courage

ST.80: *Waqina isibindi ngoku naye, waphendula wathi,*

TT.82: So, 'mustering up the little courage' that was left, he spoke. (Meaning: To be bold)

*behliza impuku* > talking in confidential tones

ST.61: *Yaqiniswa le nto zezi kanye zasemishini, kuba zazisithi soloko beqwalaselene, behlinza impuku.*

TT.62: It was asserted particularly by the teachers in the mission that these two always had their heads together, 'talking in confidential tones'. (Meaning: to take secret council together.)

*xa lithi 'ndithenge'* just when the sun was about to set

ST.82: *Kwada kwathi xa lithi 'ndithenge' kwafika isigidimi size kumxelela ukuba uyabizwa yinkosi.*

TT.84 ...but at length, 'just when the sun was about to set' a messenger came to tell him that he was wanted by the chief. (Meaning: At sunset)

*Qabu uNoqolomba efile nje* > A sigh of relief

ST.82: *Wazithi hlasi, khatha engxoweni kwa oko. Qabu uNoqolomba efile nje!*

TT.84: It did not take Mthunzini a moment to grab them and thrust them into his pocket. 'A sigh of relief!' (Meaning: A relief)

*amade ngawetyala* > (I) say no more

ST.93: *'Loo Zwelinzima ngaba uya kuhla eNcembu eze ngoJenca. Amade ngawetyala.'*

TT.92: But perhaps this Zwelinzima will come down Ncembu and through Jenca. I say no more!' (Meaning: Too many words lead to trouble)

*eyinkungu nelanga* > countless in number

ST.115: *Aphuma avumbuluka amadoda kwaDabula — eyinkungu nelanga!*

TT.121: Then from around the home of Dabula arose a host of men — countless in number — as if springing out of the earth. (Meaning: A great number, multitude, a crowd)

*ngumtya nethunga* > as close as a thong and pail

ST.184: *Aba bafana ngumtya nethunga hi!*

TT.196: These two young men are 'as close as a thong and pail', aren't they? (Meaning: Close friends)

The meanings of the following ideophone and interjection are unpacked as Baker (1992: 38) states that paraphrase may be based on 'unpacking the meaning of the source item' if the item referred to is semantically complex.

*Vr-r-r-r-r-r!* > revved up the car

ST.113: *Vr-r-r-r-r-r! Yemka imoto!*

TT.118: The driver revved up the car...

*Yho-o-o!* > cried helplessly

ST.175: *Abanye abafazi babethwele izandla entloko bekhala, 'Yho-o-o!'*

TT. 184: Thereupon all the women put their hands on their heads and cried helplessly...

The advantage of paraphrase as a translation strategy is that it gives a clear meaning of the item in question. Translation by paraphrase is common where there are cultural gaps between the SL and the TL.

### **Literal translation of idiomatic and proverbial expressions**

Literal translation refers to a translation that is close to source-language form but nevertheless grammatical (Chesterman & Wagner, 2002). An idiom carries meaning which cannot be deduced from its individual components. When translating idioms the ideal strategy is to find an expression of similar meaning and form in the target language. This is not always possible. Let us look at the following expressions:

*waziqinisa isibindi* > hardened his liver

ST.33: *Kodwa waziqinisa isibindi, wayambula ingubo awayezigqume ngayo uZwelinzima, wathi...*

TT.33: But he 'hardened his liver' and, assuming a firm tone, he uncovered Zwelinzima, and said:... (Meaning: To summon courage)

*ezityanda igila* > to cut his gizzard open

ST.58: *Waqonda ke ukuba makasel' ezityanda igila, achaze ubuhlungu bentliziyo yakhe ngenxa yokuphoswa yintombi kaKhalipha.*

TT.59: So now he decided 'to cut his gizzard open' and confess his mortification at being unable to win Khalipha's daughter. (Meaning: To be transparent about one's feelings)

*Deda mhlangala endaweni yenyhwagi* > Mongoose, get out of the way of the genet

ST.70: *...aze aqabuke yena uDingindawo xa sekusithiwa, 'Deda mhlangala endaweni yenyhwagi'!*

TT.71: ...and he would discover the true position only when the order, 'Mongoose, get out of the way of the genet' was given. (Meaning: The young one must pave the way for the elderly)

The mongoose and the genet are animals that look alike except for their colours and bodies. It is difficult to differentiate between them. But it is understood that the mongoose is defeated by the genet and when the genet arrives the mongoose goes away.

*Uthikoloshe makaphume ezingcongolweni* > the *thikoloshe* must come out of the reeds

ST.80: *Uthikoloshe makaphume ezingcongolweni.*

TT.82: 'The *thikoloshe* must come out of the reeds'. (Meaning: The secret must come out)

There is a belief amongst amaXhosa that *thikoloshes* are kept in the reeds by those who have them. They belong to the witches. If a *thikoloshe* is caught it is said 'the *thikoloshe* has come out of the reeds'.

*makatshaye isaqhuma* > smoke while the pipe was burning.

ST.53: *Wabona uMthunzini ukuba makatshaye isaqhuma ukuzibika kule ntombi yamalayo...*

TT.53: Mthunzini decided to take advantage of the present situation and 'smoke while the pipe was burning'. (Meaning: To do something whilst time permits)

*nyuka nengalo* > climb up your arm

ST.83: *Ke kaloku sendinyuka nengalo kuwe, ukuba siwusingathe sobabini.*

TT.85: And now I want to claim your assistance, aye, to 'climb up your arm' and ask you to let us handle this matter together. (Meaning: To hold on to a person)

*ngolwemivundla* > the prowling-time of the hares

ST.83: *Emva koku yavalwa ingxoxo, wanduluka uMthunzini ngolwemivundla ukuphindela eNgcolosi.*

TT.85: The interview was at an end and Mthunzini made his way to St Cuthberts at 'the prowling-time of the hares'. (Meaning: Early evening. It is said the hares come out of their shelters at this time to go and look for food)

*wayesukile egadeni* > well separated from the clod

ST.25: *Lo mfana wayesukile egadeni, ephakathi ngesiqu, phofu enamathambo, kubonakala ukuba uya kuba nesiqu xa selenendawo yakhe ukuba uyahlutha.*

TT.27: He was a young man of good height, 'well-separated from the cold'. It was obvious that under favourable circumstances he would one day develop into a man of great physical strength and stature (Meaning: This expression is used to describe a tall person)  
*sigxwal' emswaneni* > bellowing and raving over the scattered chyme from the stomachs of the slaughtered ones of their kind

ST.208: *Namhlanje sesigxwal' emswaneni.*

TT.223: Now, today, when it is too late, we are like a herd of cattle, 'bellowing and raving over the scattered chyme from the stomachs of the slaughtered ones of their kind'. (Meaning: To cry over something that cannot be changed)

To conclude this section by citing Peteni in Jordan (1980: iii) seems to be appropriate, as he comments about the literal translation of idiomatic and proverbial expressions in *The Wrath of the Ancestors* as follows:

In giving literal translations of Xhosa images, idioms and proverbs, the aim is to transport the reader, as does the Xhosa version, to the Tsolo district to make him feel he is listening to the memorable speeches of Mpondomise counsellors. This effort has been made so that the English-speaking reader may be given a peep into the treasure-house bequeathed to humanity by Jordan in his *Ingqumbo Yeminyanya*, 'The Wrath of the Ancestors'.

### Translation by omission

Baker (1992) mentions that this strategy may appear to be extreme, but it is not harmful to omit a word or expression in some contexts. If the meaning conveyed by a particular item or expression is not crucial to the development of the text, it is unnecessary to confuse the reader with long explanations. The following are examples of omitted interjections and idiomatic expressions.

#### **Omission of interjections/exclamatory expressions**

ST.44: *Ish! Akuziyeki? Uthi ndiyakhathala?*

TT.44: Do so by all means. Do you think I care?

*Ish* means 'Go away! You tire me out!' (Kropf, 1915: 167)

ST.44: *Whosh! Inene niphucukile, ndinincamile.*

TT.45: How you two have gone up in the world!

In the above example *Whosh!* expresses admiration. This interjection can also be used to express despair, irritation or resentment.

ST.170: *Hhe-e-e! Xa nditshoyo ke ndifun' ukukubonisa ukuba abantu bakuthi abantsundu bakholelwa kakhulu kwezi zinto.*

TT.179-180: Now I'm telling you all this because I want to impress the fact upon you that our people believe implicitly in these things.

'*Hhe-e-e!*' can mean 'Well! Right!'

ST.222: *Awu! Lafa elesibini ikroti lasemaMpondomiseni, ebe likade lingaqondwa yinkosi yalo kwada kwayizolo.*

TT.244: So died the second of the heroes of the Mpondomise! He was a man whose point of view had never been understood by his chief until the day before his death.

'*Awu!*' expresses pain, surprise, sympathy, regret or calamity.

#### **Omission of idiomatic expressions**

ST.56: *Waqonda ukuba makasel' eyeka; uxam waphusile.*

TT.56: Thereupon Mphuthumi wisely decided not to ask him any more.

The above idiom is used to refer to a person who has been generous and then all of a sudden changes, and is no longer helpful.

An idiom may be omitted completely in the TT if it has no close match in the target text or its meaning cannot be paraphrased or it may be omitted for stylistic reasons (Baker 1992: 77). In the above example, the idiomatic expression may have been omitted for stylistic reasons.

### Translation by condensing

Although some paragraphs, sentences, phrases etc. have been condensed in the entire target text, translation by condensing, as discussed here, focuses only on the structure of the novel. In the table of contents one observes that the novel is divided into phases and each phase comprises a number of chapters as illustrated below. In his translation, Jordan did not translate the phases. He referred to them as Book I, Book II, etc. as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Condensing of phases

Xhosa	English
(I) <i>Ukuphuma kwekhwezi</i> (8 chapters) 'Dawn'	Book 1 (5 chapters) (condensing)
(II) <i>Ukuqina kwemini</i> (12 chapters) 'Before noon'	Book II (12 chapters)
(III) <i>Imini emaqanda</i> (8 chapters) 'Noon'	Book III (6 chapters) (condensing)
(IV) <i>Ukujika kwelanga</i> (11 chapters) 'Turning of the sun'	Book IV (10 chapters) (condensing)
(V) <i>Ukutshona kwelanga</i> (5 chapters) 'Sunset'	Book V (5 chapters)

In books I, III and IV the translator has condensed chapters. For example, information found in chapters 1 and 2 of Book 1 in the source text is condensed into one chapter in the target text. Compare the number of chapters in Phase/Book I, as shown in Table 2:

**Table 2:** Condensing of chapters

<i>Ukuphuma Kwekhwezi</i>	Book 1
<i>Isahluko 1: Ixhego lakwaNgxabane</i>	Chapter 1: The Old Man of Ngxabane
<i>Isahluko 2: "Ntsomi yakwaBani!"</i>	<i>Ixhego lakwaNgxabane</i>
<i>Isahluko 3: Kazi oNongqawuse aba boza baphele nini na kule Afrika."</i>	Chapter 2: What a Fairy Tale! <i>Nongqawuse</i>
<i>Isahluko 4: "Baya kwahlulwa ziiNdudumo."</i>	Chapter 3: Hail, Son of Zanemvula!
<i>Isahluko 5: Bayethe Ngwanya kaMajola!</i>	<i>Bayethe! Nyana kaZanemvula</i>
<i>Isahluko 6: "Kazi uthi yaluswa yiNtengu na!</i>	Chapter 4: Zwelinzima and Thembeke
<i>Isahluko 7: UWelinzima eMzana</i>	<i>UWelinzima noThembeke</i>
<i>Isahluko 8: EyiNkosi nje uyiNkosi</i>	Chapter 5: Sheshegu <i>ESheshegu</i>

In the condensed chapters of the target text, one observes that the translator focused on the main message of the story.

### Conclusion

Looking at the manner in which *Ingqumbo Yeminyanya* has been translated, it can be argued that Jordan's initial norm in the translation was to adopt the norms of the source language and culture. Since his motive, according to Phyllis Jordan (2004), for translating *Ingqumbo yeminyanya* was to 'introduce the English-speaking South Africans to African culture and philosophy of life as seen by an African', he adopted the norms of the source culture. There is no better way of making his target

readers aware of the norms and values of amaXhosa than using the language he used. It can also be said that Jordan was addressing himself to the African reader who can identify with some of the cultural practices found in the novel. From the analysis done, it is evident that Jordan adhered to the norms of the source language and culture by adopting foreignisation and literal translation strategies, which also made him visible as a translator. It may also be argued that Jordan found it easy to adopt the source-oriented approach to the translation of *Ingqumbo Yeminyanya* because he was translating his own work. Perhaps the translation could have taken another form if it was translated by someone else.

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