

# The Northwind and the Sun: An Ayeri Translation, Revisited

## 1 A Few Introductory Remarks

The Aesopian fable, “The North Wind and the Sun,” was one of the first texts – if not *the* first text – I translated into Ayeri, back in 2004. Ayeri was still very young then and looked a little different from today. Just compare a sentence from the old translation (i) to its current reinterpretation (ii):

- (i) “Viarilea ang macubriyañ Temihin nusatyō nay Perinin, sang luga samnoea ang engongiyānin numicyo, nay edauiyēa loasanoin ang masahaiyē sasanoea, sang manaiconisaiyē cong metovaea eimato.” (Becker 2004: 1)

*Viaril -ea ang ma-cubra -iy<a>n Temihin nu-satyō nay Perin-in, si -ang*  
sometime-LOC AT PST-quarrel-3PL<1> north.wind A- cold and sun -TOP, REL-A  
*luga sam-no -ea ang eng -ong-iy<a>n-in nu-micyo, nay edaui -ea*  
among two-NMLZ-LOC AT be.more-IRR-3PL<1>-TOP A- strong, and this.time-LOC  
*lo- asano -in ang ma-saha -iy<e> sasano-ea, si -ang ma-naiconisa -iy<e>*  
INDEF.A-traveler-TOP AT PST-come-3SG<2> way -LOC, REL-A PST-be.wrapped-3SG<2>  
*cong me- tova -ea ei- mato.*  
inside INDEF.P-cloak-LOC OBL-warm.

‘Once upon a time the cold North Wind and the Sun quarreled, who among the two would be stronger, and at this time a traveler came on the way, who was wrapped into a warm cloak.’

- (ii) Ang manga ranyon adauyi Pintemis nay Perin, engyo mico sinyāng ton, lingya si lugaya asāyāng si sitang-naykonyāng kong tovaya mato.

*Ang manga ran -yon adauyi Ø= Pintemis nay Ø= Perin, eng -yo mico*  
AT PROG argue-3PL.N then TOP=North Wind and TOP=Sun, be.more-3SG.N strong  
*sinya-ang ton, ling -ya si luga-ya asāya -ang si sitang=naykon-yāng*  
who -A 3PL.GEN, while-LOC REL pass-3SG.M traveler-A REL self= wrap -3SG.M.A  
*kong tova -ya mato.*  
inside cloak-LOC warm.

‘The North Wind and the Sun were then arguing which of them is stronger, all the while a traveler passed by who had wrapped himself in a warm cloak.’

The updated version of the Ayeri text which I am presenting here has been translated completely from scratch. Whereas I used a rendering of the text in German as the basis of my 2004 version, I am now using the English translation as provided by the *Handbook of the International Phonetic Association*, which has some notoriety as a parallel text in the linguistics community (see e.g. Cysouw and Wälchli 2007: 97). As in previous write-ups on translating texts into Ayeri, I will progress through

the text sentence by sentence. The translated sentences will be broken down by interlinear annotation, and I will comment on passages in terms of structural or lexical details that caught my attention while translating them.

## 2 The Text in English

The North Wind and the Sun were disputing which was the stronger, when a traveler came along wrapped in a warm cloak. They agreed that the one who first succeeded in making the traveler take his cloak off should be considered stronger than the other. Then the North Wind blew as hard as he could, but the more he blew the more closely did the traveler fold his cloak around him; and at last the North Wind gave up the attempt. Then the Sun shined out warmly, and immediately the traveler took off his cloak. And so the North Wind was obliged to confess that the Sun was the stronger of the two. (International Phonetic Association 2007: ???)

## 3 (Re-)Attempting an Ayeri Translation

We have already seen the newly translated version of the first sentence of the text above, but I will repeat it here again:

- (1) Ang manga ranyon adauyi Pintemis nay Perin, engyo mico sinyāng ton, lingya si lugaya asāyāng si sitang-naykonyāng kong tova ya mato.

*Ang manga ran -yon adauyi Ø= Pintemis nay Ø= Perin, eng -yo mico*  
 AT PROG argue-3PL.N then TOP=North Wind and TOP=Sun, be.more-3SG.N strong  
*sinya-ang ton, ling -ya si luga-ya asāya -ang si sitang=naykon-yāng*  
 who -A 3PL.GEN, while-LOC REL pass-3SG.M traveler-A REL self= wrap -3SG.M.A  
*kong tova -ya mato.*  
 inside cloak-LOC warm.

‘The North Wind and the Sun were then arguing which of them is stronger, all the while a traveler passed by who had wrapped himself in a warm cloak.’

The 2004 version here uses a verb in the first clause, *ꨀꨣꨣꨣ*: *kubra* ‘quarrel’, which I rendered as *ꨀꨣꨣꨣ*: *ran* ‘argue’ here. It may be noted that *ꨀꨣꨣꨣ*: *kubra* still exists, however, the dictionary gives it as ‘get into a conflict’ these days, without further explanation. Like in my translation of a medieval deed (Becker 2015: 9), I rendered the “when” clause not just with the plain preposition *ꨀꨣꨣꨣ* *ling* ‘on (top of), while’ used as a temporal adverb, but as a preposition proper with the complement rendered as a relative clause, so literally this *ꨀꨣꨣꨣ* *lingya si* means ‘on top, where ...’, though in context it might be better translated as ‘all the while (that)’.

- (2) Sakantong, engongyo mico danyās palung menanang sirī ang pahongya asāya tovaley yana.

*Sakan-tong, eng -ong-yo mico danya-as palung menan-ang si -ri<i> ang*  
 Agree-3PL.N, be.more-IRR-3SG.N strong one -P other first -A REL<-A>-INS AT  
*pah -ong-ya asāya -Ø tova -ley yana.*  
 remove-IRR-3SG.M traveler-TOP cloak-P.INAN 3SG.M.GEN.

‘They agreed that the first one due to whom the traveller would take off his cloak would be stronger than the other.’

I think that this sentence at least counters the claim that stories like this one would “deliberately evade complex linguistic constructions” (Cysouw and Wälchli 2007: 97). In the English version, it is pretty complex in containing a subject noun phrase that contains a relative clause that in turn contains a causative construction which gets nominalized, which is then followed by a verb phrase containing a verb whose complement is formed by a predicative noun phrase which consists of a comparative construction. This combines all of the things that Ayeri is ridiculously baroque about, which is why I could not just translate the English sentence in a very straightforward way, but had to rephrase things a little. The success brought about by making the traveler take off his cloak is thus implied by context in my Ayeri translation.

- (3) a. Gihayo ang Pintemis minganeri-hen yona.

*Giha-yo ang=Pintemis mingan-eri =hen yona.*  
 blow-3SG.N A= North Wind ability -INS=all 3SG.N.

‘The North Wind blew with all of his might.’

- b. Gihayong mico nay mico-eng, nay ang da-naykonya rado nay rado-eng asāya tovaley yana.

*Giha-yong mico nay mico =eng, nay ang da=naykon-ya rado nay*  
 blow-3SG.N.A strong and strong-COMP, and AT so=wrap -3SG.M tight and  
*rado=eng asāya -Ø tova -ley yana.*  
 tight=COMP traveler-TOP cloak-P.INAN 3SG.GEN.

‘Harder and harder did he blow, and the traveller so wrapped his cloak tighter and tighter.’

- c. Subryo ang Pintemis panganya.

*Subr -yo ang= Pintemis pangan-ya.*  
 give.up-3SG.N A= North Wind end -LOC.

‘The North Wind gave up in the end.’

There is an article on my blog that deals with correlative conjunctions (Becker 2012), but unfortunately, that leaves out a discussion of strategies to deal with ‘as ... as ...’ and ‘the ... the ...’. I racked my brain for a while and came to the conclusion that I could as well paraphrase the respective passages.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Searching the internet for “correlative conjunctions” or variations of it proved pretty useless, by the way. Almost only exercise sheets for English classes came up, but nothing that looked like typology papers discussing it.

I suppose that it could be possible to shoehorn the ‘blew as hard as he could’ part into a construction using *kama*- ‘be alike, be as ... as ...’, but I was feeling a little uneasy about something like:

- (iii) Gihayo kamayam mico mingyong ang Pintemis ...

*Giba-yo kama -yam mico ming-yong ang= Pintemis ...*  
 blow-3SG.N be.alike-PTCP strong can -3SG.N A= North Wind ...

‘The North Wind blew as strongly as he could ...’

This seemed just too nested to be comfortable, even though it should be unproblematic, as far as grammaticality is concerned.

- (4) “Then the Sun shined out warmly, and immediately the traveler took off his cloak.”

...  
 ...  
 ...  
 ‘...’

- (5) “And so the North Wind was obliged to confess that the Sun was the stronger of the two.”

...  
 ...  
 ...  
 ‘...’

## 4 The Text in Ayeri

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Ang manga ranyon adauyi Pintemis nay Perin, engyo mico sinyāng ton, lingya si lugaya asāyāng si sitang-naykonyāng kong tovaya mato. Sakantong, engongyo mico danyās palung menanang sirī ang pahongya asāya tovale yana. Gihayo ang Pintemis minganerī-hen yona. Gihayong mico nay mico-eng, nay ang da-naykonya rado nay rado-eng asāya tovale yana. Subryo ang Pintemis panganya. ...

## Abbreviations

3	Third person	IRR	Irrealis	PROG	Progressive
A	Agent	LOC	Locative	PST	Past
AT	Agent topic	M	Masculine	PTCP	Participle
COMP	Comparative	N	Neuter	REL	Relative
GEN	Genitive	NMLZ	Nominalizer	SG	Singular
INAN	Inanimate	OBL	Oblique	TOP	Topic
INDF	Indefinite	P	Patient		
INS	Instrumental	PL	Plural		

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