My Translation Saga . . .

Hi, Everyone! One of the most surprising things I have done is translating Savarkar's poems. Surprising because I do not understand Savarkar's high level Marathi!

Savarkar's heart and soul is in his poems. So I wanted to quote bits of Savarkar's poems throughout my book. I hunted and hunted on Google but in vain. There was a youtube video which used to give a translation of *Jayostute*, but it had been pulled off, most inconveniently for me.

Now what? As usual, when there is no help coming one has to get down to it oneself. I decided to start with *Sagara pran talamalala.* This poem has always moved me to tears.

Fortunately, my mother is a Sanskrit scholar and very good in Marathi and English as well. I asked her if she would give me a word by word literal translation of the poem. She agreed willingly.

First I typed out the poem. When I received my mother's literal word by word translations, I pasted each translation line below Savarkar's Marathi one. Luckily for me, Sagaras is a relatively easy poem to understand. Upon studying it, I grasped the whole poem (after reflecting for a couple of hours).

Then I meditated on it for a while, until I felt (as far as I could) what Savarkar felt, and then attempted the poetic translation.

I am no poet. I have no sense of meter or rhythm at all. But somehow Savarkar's poetry brought out something in me that was good enough—or so I feel.

Here is my effort:

Take me, O Ocean! Take me to my Motherland!

My soul is in torment away from her,

So much torment, O Ocean!

Did not I always see you

Lapping worshipfully at my Mother's feet?

Did not you call me to visit other Lands,

To see the bounties of nature abound, said you.

My Mother's heart, so full of pain and uncertainty it was,

To hear of the parting of our ways!

Then, a sacred oath you did give—to her,

Carrying me on your back,

My speedy homecoming, you promised—to her.

The way home is known, said you.

Believe this your promise, did I!

More worldly-wise and able, be I

More worthy to extol her glory, be I

Upon my return.

So saying, so believing, I bid farewell—to her!

My soul is in torment away from her,

So much torment, O Ocean!

Duped was I—

Like a parrot in a cage, like a deer in a trap!

Doomed by this continual separation,

Besieged with darkness am I!

Gathering the Flowers of Virtue,

Desiring to shower my Mother by its fragrance was I.

Oh of what use all my knowledge is,

Doomed to be a mere burden it be,

When use it not for her glorification can I!

Estranged am I from her Garden of Flowers,

For the love of her mango tree, pine I

For her trailing vines, pine I

For the bud of her rose, pine I

My soul is in torment away from her,

So much torment, O Ocean!

O abounding with stars is the heaven above,

But love only do I

The bright Star of my Motherland!

O abounding with magnificent palaces these lands are,

But love only do I

Ever the humble hut in my Motherland!

What care I for a promised Kingdom—without Her?

O to be with my Mother

Ever a life exiled in her forests choose I.

More deception is futile now, O Lord of the Rivers,

Let you not be spared, vow I

Suffer the same pangs, say I

Of separation from the most beloved of your rivers!

My soul is in torment away from her,

So much torment, O Ocean!

O pitiless One, how you mock me with your foaming surf!

Think you my Mother is helpless—that you dare deceive her so!

That you dare condemn me to this longing so!

Why do you go back on your word?

So afraid of Britain be you?

She does flaunt her mastery over you so!

Quail before a fearsome Britain, do you?

But not so my Mother, see you!

No! My Mother is not so feeble!

Tell this tale to Sage Agasti she will,

Fear him, who in one gulp your waters drank!

Take me, O Ocean! Take me to my Motherland!

My soul is in torment away from her,

So much torment, O Ocean!

Anurupa