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राष्ट्रीय अनुवाद मिशन

NATIONAL TRANSLATION MISSION

Editors

Awadesh Kumar Mishra

V. Saratchandran Nair

Editorial Policy

Translation Today is a biannual journal published by National Translation Mission (NTM), Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL), Manasagangotri, Mysore. A peer-reviewed journal, it proposes to contribute to and enrich the burgeoning discipline of Translation Studies by publishing research articles as well as actual translations from and into Indian languages. Translation Today will feature full-length articles about translation- and translator-related issues, squibs which throw up a problem or an analytical puzzle without necessarily providing a solution, review articles and reviews of translations and of books on translation, actual translations, Letters to the Editor, and an Index of Translators, Contributors and Authors. It could in the future add new sections like Translators' job market, Translation software market, Notes from the Classroom, and so on. The problems and puzzles arising out of translation in general, and translation from and into Indian languages in particular will receive greater attention here. However, the journal would not limit itself to dealing with issues involving Indian languages alone

Translation Today

- Seeks a spurt in translation activity.
- Seeks excellence in the translated word
- Seeks to further the frontiers of Translation Studies
- seeks to raise a strong awareness about translation, its possibilities and potentialities, its undoubted place in the history of ideas, and thus help catalyse a groundswell of well-founded ideas about translation among people.

Contributions: Translation Today welcomes contributions of articles and other suitable material as elucidated above for its issues in the following areas:

Annotated and original translations of all literary genres, translated excerpts from novels are accepted where they stand on their own, glossaries in any subject in any language-pair (Indian Languages TO Indian Languages or Indian Languages TO English or English TO Indian Languages), specialties in the translation profession: religious, technical, scientific, legal, commercial, specialities in the interpreting profession: court, conference, medical and community, multimedia, terminology, localization, translation technology: HAMT, translation memory softwares, translation teaching softwares, papers on translation as a category of or a significant dimension of thought, pieces relating translation to society, to culture, to philosophy, to poetics, to aesthetics, to epistemology, to ontology, to movements like feminism, subalternism, to power and so on, translation universals etc., to awarenesses like civilisational space, nationalism, identity, the self, the other and so on, on translation pedagogy, translation curriculum, translation syllabus etc., ethics, status, and future of the profession, translator-related issues, translator studies: legal, copyright issues etc., squibs and discussion notes which are short pieces throwing up an interesting problem or analytical puzzle, reviews of translated texts, dictionaries and softwares, letters to the Editor.

Submission:

All submissions, contributions and queries should be addressed to :

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Contributors are requested to contact Prof. V. Saratchandran Nair on behalf of the Editorial Board with a brief summary of their submission so as to avoid duplication. Articles submitted for consideration of the Board will have to be in English. Translation Today will consider seriously the possibility of publishing material in Indian languages, or a multilingual edition of the journal in future. There's no size limitation on articles except that they may preferably be within 40K to avoid slow downloading for the electronic version. Articles should, however, be preferably and optimally between 2000 and 3000 words in length for the print-based version. Unpublished contributions will be preferred. While submitting pieces already published elsewhere, the author must mention the fact as well as get permission to reproduce the same. Your initial submission should be in typescript or by e-mail, or in a three and half inch floppy disk. For electronic submissions, use Microsoft Word (6.0) (.doc or .txt) format. Graphics could be in JPEG, GIF, Photoshop or BMP format. Electronic submissions should come in two forms: a) one with the author's name, address, institutional affiliation, contact info and any major academic achievements. b) one which has no trace of the author's identity, ready to be despatched to the peer-reviewer. All articles shall be accompanied by a 100-word abstract.

If it is the paper version two copies of the typescript must be submitted. Only the last page should include the author's name, position, affiliation and contact information (postal address, fax and telephone numbers and e-mail). The other copy could be on both sides of the page. Submissions should be double spaced with generous margins.

A colour photograph of the author(s) is needed in electronic and hardcopy form. Endnotes, where essential, shall precede bibliography at the end. Superscripted references within the text to endnotes and bibliography may be hyperlinked in the electronic version.

Contributors would get ten offprints of their contribution.

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References should follow the system as exemplified in this journal. In the typescript, references should be indicated by giving the author's name and year of publication (with page references where necessary). References should be listed in full at the end of the article, in alphabetical order and withzout abbreviating journal title. References to more than one publication by an author in the same year should be distinguished alphabetically with small letters. For example: According to Nida (1994a, 1994b). Please don't club notes with references

Diagrams and figures should be suitable for photographic/scanner reproduction. Drawings should be in black ink or stiff white paper. Lettering should be of draughtsman standard and large enough to remain legible where the figure requires reduction in size. Tables should be typed on separate sheets. Indicate in the text where tables should be placed.

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BOOK REVIEW

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Editorial

A year passed by after the resumption of the publication of Translation Today (TT), Vol.8.1 and 8.2 were published and released. It was very rewarding as far as TT was concerned as we were in a position to revamp and consolidate the journal. Reviving a journal in the field of Language and Linguistics is a hard task and in particular in the field of Translation and Translation studies. But we are deeply impressed that several scholars have given us immense support and they have come forward to chip in their best efforts and we humbly present before you to have a wonderful experience, while meandering through the articles. Please bear with us for any oddities. The views expressed in the articles are solely of the authors and the Editors or members of the Editorial Board are in no way responsible. We are also extremely thankful to the anonymous peer reviewers and all the supporting staff who helped us to get it printed.

Dash's paper on POS tags is the most illuminating for its readability and content. POS tagging is an important step in the process of Machine Translation, which Dash was able to demonstrate using empirical data from Bangla, the tag set prepared, though highly incomprehensible for human beings, it would be highly suitable linguistic information and data asked by a computer system. Sushumna in her paper on "On what unites India and the role of Translation", brings up an alternative view of Indian writing in English Translation in addition to critically examining "Indian" in Indian literature and Indian writing in English. She discusses about the homogenising factors, the role of translation of Indian literature, issues of identity and India being a land of multiplicity of languages and cultures, how translation could forge and unite. Debarshi Nath accounts for the inequalities among the languages and more so among Indian languages that seldom well known writers in regional languages have been translated to English and other European languages and across

Indian languages, particularly citing evidences from a language like Assamese. Further he raises certain pertinent questions of ideology, politics and power. Sreedevi Nair discusses on various aspects of re-texting. Primarily it is a case of transcreation, which involves a complex process of recreation of one or more original texts or selected parts of them to produce a target text, which has its own independent existence. At times certain recreated texts are far better than the original. Next is the article entitled "Philosophical affinity between Tagore and Sufi poets of Iran" by N.A. Khan, who has unravelled the intricate philosophical connection that existed between Tagore's poems and that of the Persian poets such as Hafiz Shirazi and Jalaluddin Rumi. Though Tagore and Sufi poets lived in different times and in different geographical regions, they spoke the same language of love. Shakeera highlights the importance and the significance of languages listed in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution from the perspectives of multilingualism and translation. It also brings forth the mandate of the National Translation Mission and discusses about the relevance and implication of the policies at the higher education level as an outsider's view. Rizwan Khan outlines the reader sensibilities of the translated text, citing a study on "Dawn of Dreams" from the original text in Urdu. He has conducted an empirical study (though the percentile is less) cutting across continents, which adds flavour to his research work, instead of simply theorising on the aspect of translation vis-à-vis readability, an aspect, which is significant to translation. He has also traced the theoretical developments on various aspects of translation. An introduction to the world of Manoranjan Byapari by itself is a world of its own, of the world of the underprivileged in the Indian Society that Sayantan Mondal narrates vividly and explicitly that one can only experience after reading it. Identity crisis is one of the serious issues faced by the Nepali community of the hill regions of Darjeeling and Divya Pradhan narrates through her article the vacuum created due to the identity crisis and how translation could be used as a tool to fill this blank. There have been several protests for preservation and protection of their identity. It also deals with the power relations within the socio-

political-cultural-linguistic contexts in which these translations are created. Ubaid deals with another important aspect of translation of certain words such as "hijab", "Zinat" etc., terms in Qura'an and the semantic interpretation of these terms. At times, it erupts as a serious topic of discussion and in this article, it is presumed that a proper interpretation is rendered. M. Sridhar and Alladi Uma analyse in their paper, how a reader, who does not know the original language evaluates the translated text "Dawn of Dreams" from Urdu. The questions, does the translation becomes the "original" when the readers do not know the original language and how do we look at the author of the English text, Mehr Afshan Farooqui. The pre-dawn language of Dawn of Dreams by Sudhakar Marathe is yet another discussion on the same translation as the previous one. He alludes to the fact that as a translation of the original novel in Urdu, it is a failure. Aditya Panda illustrates the historical development of the tradition of translation in Odia language, which has been taken up as one of the projects by National Translation Mission.

30ᵗʰ June, 2015   Prof. Awadesh Kumar Mishra

                                    Prof. V. Saratchandran Nair

Marking Words with Part-of-Speech (POS) Tags within Text Boundary of a Corpus: the Problems, the Process and the Outcomes

Niladri Sekhar Dash

Abstract

A natural language text stored in a corpus database in electronic version can be tagged at the part-of-speech (POS) level manually or automatically. In both cases, it has to be done carefully starting with the lowest level of hierarchy of tagset meticulously devised for a language or a language group. Once the lower level tag is selected and assigned to words, the higher level tags will be automatically identified and assigned. Although tagging of words may be done with a focus on the part-of-speech of words used in a piece of text, the long term goals should also be envisaged for developing a generic scheme that may be useful for incorporating various kinds of linguistic information easily at the later stages of text annotation. This paper argues for taking a judicious decision for tagging words with different types of information within a text following the universally accepted principles, maxims and rules adopted for part-of-speech tagging. It describes the strategies, rules and methods adopted for manual tagging of a Bengali written text corpus at the part-of-speech level following the guidelines and methods proposed in the Bureau of Indian Standard (BIS) suitable for the language.

1. Introduction

Part-of-speech (POS) tagging is a process of *grammatical annotation* of words used in a piece of text in which one aims at assigning – automatically or manually – part-of-speech tags to each and every word used in the text after the word has passed through

the stages of morphological analysis and lexico-grammatical interpretations (Garside 1995). Usually, a set of specially designed codes carrying grammatical information are assigned to the words to indicate their POS with regard to their usage in a text (Leech and Garside 1982). In usual cases, a well-defined set of rules and strategies are used to identify and assign the POS tags to the words to determine and fix their lexico-semantic identities as well as their syntactic and grammatical functions within a given text. We can perhaps visualize the advantages of POS tagging at three levels of a word in the following ways:

(a)   Lexical level: It allows analysing morphological structure of words represented in their surface forms.

(b)   Orthographic level: It makes some distinctions in semantic roles of homographic words used in the same text or similar other texts.

(c)   Syntactic level: It tries to identify the syntactico-grammatical functions of words to assign their appropriate POS entities

In general, POS tagging is treated as a common form of text annotation, which is invoked to start more comprehensive text annotation tasks where multiword expressions such as *compound words, reduplicated forms, lexical collocations, idiomatic expressions, fixed phrases, proverbial expressions, etc.* are assigned with chunking markers leading to eventual assignment of phrase markers to each of the sentences used in a text (Sag *et al.* 2001).

Although the application of POS tagset on a piece of text makes the text difficult to read and comprehend for human beings, it becomes highly suitable for linguistic information and data asked by a computer system for differentiating words used in different part-of-speech (Leech and Eyes 1993). From application point of view, POS tagging is a highly useful method, which increases specificity in the work of data retrieval from language corpora and provides essential grammatical information of the

words required in sense tagging, discourse tagging, rhetoric tagging, parsing, dictionary compilation, grammar development, language teaching, language cognition, etc.

This paper is the outcome of the attempt made for manually tagging a Bengali written text corpus. While engaged in the task, it identifies the stages of POS tagging (Section 2) following which it tries to explicate the process of marking metadata in a text (Section 3), process of marking paragraphs, segment and sentence boundaries (Section 4), process of marking words within text (Section 5), discusses the outcomes of a tagged corpus (Section 6), and reveals problems and ambiguities found in POS tagged text (Section 7). Finally, it identifies utilities of a POS tagged text in various works of applied linguistics, language technology, and descriptive linguistics (Section 8). The data and information presented here may be considered as an attempt for designing a well-formed strategy to be followed for developing POS tagged corpus for Bengali and for other Indian languages to be utilized in different domains of linguistics and language technology.

2. Stages of POS Tagging

From hand-on experiences gathered in manual tagging, it has been understood that the process POS tagging on a piece of text, in a systematic manner, should be carried out through the following eight steps:

1. Identification of a word within a piece of text.

2. Identification of its orthographic appearance and form.

3. Analysis of its morphological structure and formation.

4. Identification of its syntactic (i.e., grammatical) function in a sentence.

5. Determination of its grammatical role as well as part-of-speech.

6. Identification of its semantic role within the sentence of its occurrence.

7. Assignment of POS tags – either manually or automatically.

8. Verification and validation by experts.

Following the steps stated above the process of POS tagging on the Bengali text corpus was carried out at the following three stages:

(a) Stage 1: Sanitation and pre-editing of the text.

(b) Stage 2: Tag assignment to the words.

(c) Stage 3: Post-editing of the tagged text.

At the pre-editing stage, the entire Bengali text database was converted into a suitable format in digital form for carrying out the tagging tasks. At this stage, the whole text database was meticulously checked to verify if there was typographical and/or orthographical error of any kind within the text, and if there was any, it was manually corrected in accordance with the physical source text before the digital text was made ready for POS tagging (Dash 2004). Also, the selected texts were passed through the processes of **normalization** and **tokenization** to make the text maximally suitable for error-free POS tagging.

The tag assignment stage was initiated with the assignment of just one and only one POS tag to each word used in the sentence after proper consideration of its morphological, syntactic, and semantic roles in the sentence (Leech, Garside and Bryant 1994). For achieving greater accuracy at this stage, we had to consult, for reference purposes, a separate lexical database where the words were previously assigned with possible parts-of-speech. This lexical database was an open-ended resource in the sense that, time-to-time, it was up-dated with addition of new words obtained from various new sources and are assigned with possible POS tags. To deal with the new words, which were not

available in the previously made lexical database, we had to adopt some new methods such as including lists of common affixes and case markers with their possible part-of-speech identities of words for achieving greater accuracy in POS tagging (Biber, Conrad & Reppen 1998: 258-259).

At the stage of manual post-editing, the entire tagged text database was post-edited manually to examine if words were rightly tagged, and if there was any error made in POS tag assignment. In case of large corpus, where manual verification of the text database is highly time-consuming, tedious, and error-prone, it is better to adopt **probability matrix,** which may be devised from a text already tagged at POS level to deal with the problems of ambiguous tagging and dubious tag assignment (Leech, Garside and Atwell 1983). This strategy can help to specify **transition probabilities** that underlie between the adjacent tags. For instance, in Bengali, if a particular word is tagged as a noun (W[N]), the probability of its immediately preceding word to be an adjective (W[JJ]) is very high.

Usually a human annotator, who is engaged in assigning tag to words manually, can do the work quite successfully, if (s)he is well-acquainted with the grammar of a language. Also, a computer can do this work automatically, if it is properly trained with adequate amount of linguistic information, data, and rules for POS tag assignment. However, it needs to be trained properly beforehand to do the work with less percentage of errors. What it implies is that a system designer who is engaged in designing a computer system for automatic POS tagging should be well-equipped with adequate morphological, syntactic, and semantic knowledge of a language so that (s)he can develop a robust and accurate system to assign correct POS tags to the words, terms, and other lexical items used in a piece of text (Kupiec 1992).

However, before POS tagging was executed on the written Bengali text corpus database, there was an urgent need for a hierarchically well-defined and standard POS tagset, which would be used in a uniform manner by human annotators engaged or to

be engaged in POS tagging of words.

3. Marking Metadata in a Text

Since the Bengali written corpus contained texts of various types, it was important on the part of the annotators to maintain and preserve some meta-level information for each text document included in the corpus. Thus, various extratextual meta-information regarding *title, author, language, source, domain, text type, creator of text document*, etc. was marked on each text within a **Header File** as **metadata**. At the initial stage, this had been done manually in the following manner (Table 1).

<Header File>	Information
<Language >	Bengali
<Genre >	Written Text
<Category>	Aesthetics
<Subcategory>	Literature-Novel
<Text Type>	Imaginative
<Source Type>	Book
<Title>	ভুত আর ভুতো
<Volume>	Single
<Issue>	NA
<Edition>	First
<Headline>	ভুত আর ভুতো
<Author>	শুধাংশু পাত্র
<Publisher>	Dey's Publishing
<Pub. Place>	Kolkata, India
<Pub. Date>	1993

<Index No.>	B0035
<Creator Code>	61802
<Date of Creation>	12. 09. 2006
<Data Collector>	Anami Sarkar
<Proof Reader>	Aprakash Gupta
<Proofreading>	16. 08. 2007
<Total Words>	5017

Table-1: Header File with Metadata

The information stored in the Header File was actually related to various kinds of extralinguistic information that are considered necessary and useful for maintaining records of the text documents as well as for dissolving issues of copyright of the text materials used in generation of the corpus. One can also visualize the functional utilities of information stored in the Header File for carrying out innovative research works in *sociolinguistics, ethnolinguistics, ecolinguistics, geolinguistics, discourse, stylistics, language education,* and *language planning*, since all these sub-domains of linguistics require not only words and terms tagged at the POS level but also ask for appropriate linguistic data and information related to various socio-cultural issues and aspects for investigating the nature and patterns of language use controlled by various demographic factors and sociolinguistic variables.

4. Marking Paragraph, Sentence and Segment

After the completion of metadata preservation in the Header File, the next stage started with the act of marking paragraphs, sentences, and segments used in the text. Paragraphs were manually marked with </p>, both at their beginning and their end in the following manner to indicate their unique linguistic identities (Fig. 1).

<p>	ভূতো - আমাদের ভূতো বাবু!	</p>
<p>	ঐ যে ছেলেটা - যার দুষ্টুমিভরা ডাগর দুটি চোখ, যার মুখে সব সময় কথার খৈ ফোটে, যার হাত পায়ের বিরাম থাকে না কোন সময়, যে ছড়া বলতে খুব ভালবাসে, গপ্পো শুনতে আরও ভালবাসে, ইস্কুলে রিণা মিনা নান্টু-মিন্টুদের সাথে ছবি ও ছড়ার বই পড়ে, সেইই ভূতো - আমাদের ভূতোবাবু।	</p>

Fig.-1: Paragraph Boundaries marked in a Text

The second part of this stage was the marking of sentences and segments with some special boundary markers, which was carried out in the following manner (Fig. 2). While complete and fully formed sentences were marked with a tag <sentence>, both at their beginning and at their end, the incomplete sentences as well as isolated phrases were marked with a tag , both at their beginning and their end, in the following manner (Fig. 2).

আপনার দাঁতের যত্ন   <sentence>তাজা শ্বাস আর ঝকঝকে দাঁত আপনার ব্যাক্তিত্বকে আকর্ষণীয় করে ।</sentence>
দক্ষিণ ভারত ভ্রমণ   <sentence> দক্ষিণ রেলওয়ের চেন্নাই স্টেশন থেকে ধনুষ্কোট যাওয়ার পথে প্রধান লাইনে চেন্নাই থেকে ৩৫ মাইল দূরে চঙ্গলপেট স্টেশন পড়ে। </sentence>

Fig.-2: Marking of Sentences and Segments

Marking fully well-formed and grammatically accepted sentences with boundaries within a piece of text is highly important, as it helps in automatic identification of sentences as well as counting the number of sentences used in a piece of text. Also, it simplifies the process of generating parsed sentences and tree-banks of different grammar formalisms.

5. Marking Words in Texts

After marking all paragraphs, sentences, and segments

within the Bengali text corpus, effort was made to mark POS tags to words used in the text. Following the standards of the *Bureau of Indian Standard* (BIS), the written Bengali text corpus has been POS tagged in the following manner (Fig. 3).

<p><sentence>যদি\CC_CCS\আমরা\PR_PRP\কোনো\DM_DMQ\মানুষকে\N_NN\অপারেশন\N_NN\টেবিলে\N_NN\অজ্ঞান\N_JJ\করে\V_VM_VNF\করাতের\N_NN\দ্বারা\PSP\তার\PR_PRP\মাথার\N_NN\উপরের\N_NN\ভাগটা\N_NN\ধীরে\RB\ধীরে\RB\কেটে\V_VM_VNF\আলাদা\N_NN\করে\V_VM_VNF\দিই\V_VM_VF\তবে\CC_CCS\আমরা\PR_PRP\নিজের\PR_PRF\চোখে\N_NN\একটা\QT_QTC\জ্যান্ত\JJ\মস্তিষ্ককে\N_NN\দেখতে\V_VM_VINF\পাবো\V_VM_VF\।\RD_PUNC\</sentence></p>

Fig.-3: POS tagging of Words within a Text

At the time of manual POS tagging it had been observed that there could be the cases where a piece of text had included words from a language other than the matrix language. For example, a Bengali text composed in the Bengali script contained many English words which were actually written in the Roman script. From tagging and processing point of view, it was highly necessary to mark these words at the level of **vocabulary tagging** with information related to the respective languages.

All the above information of POS tagging can also be marked automatically to a certain level of accuracy in a text and without error of any kind if a computer system assigned with the task is put to rigorous training with a corpus tagged manually. In spite of this, there is surely to have some errors and ambiguities in POS tag assignment, which have to be checked and corrected manually (Dash 2005a: 124-129). How these problems may arise and how these have to be solved are discussed in some details in the following section (Section 6).

6. Outcomes of a Tagged Corpus

After initial assignment of possible POS tags to words the

Bengali tagged corpus was available for manual verification for POS tag validation as well as disambiguation (Leech, Garside and Atwell 1983). We had to depend on the probability matrix for this purpose as it was capable to specify the transition probabilities underlying between the adjacent tags. For example, when a given word (W1) was tagged as adjective (W[JJ]), its immediately succeeding word (W2) was mostly tagged as a noun (W[N]). This kind of probability measurement was an open matrix that could be updated with data collected from corpora of different text types (Biber, Conrad and Reppen 1998: 258-259). After completion of open matrix of probability measurement we could carry out post-editing manually to examine if all correct outputs were obtained from the tagged database.

At the time of manual verification of the tagged corpus database, we had found three broad types of words within the corpus:

- (a) Rightly tagged words,

- (b) Ambiguously tagged words, and

- (c) Wrongly tagged words.

6.1 Rightly Tagged Words

Since most of the words used in the Bengali text corpus are inflected, most of the nouns, verbs (finite and non-finite), pronouns, adjectives, and adverbs, which are used in their inflected forms, are found rightly tagged. The basic reasons behind their right tag assignment are as follows.

a) Almost all the inflected nouns and pronouns are rightly tagged due to their inflectional elements. Various word-formative properties, such as, case markers, particles, and suffixes, etc. have worked here as distinctive marks for part-of-speech identification of the words. In fact, suffix elements of inflected words are vital clues for determining the grammatical roles of words in the sentence.

b) The majority of finite and non-finite verbs are also tagged rightly because of their inflectional elements. Based on the inflections we could easily identify if a word was used as a verb or not in the text, although in some cases it was difficult to determine if the word was used as a finite or non-finite verb, e.g., করে (kare), করতে (karte), করলে (karle), বলতে (balte), নিলে (nile), etc. Also, required information retrieved from the root and suffix lists used for this purpose helped to identify the right POS for words.

c) For adjectives and adverbs, the above process was followed with certain amount of accuracy, as most of the adjectives and adverbs are found to be used in the text in their inflected forms.

d) For indeclinables, there was high percentage of accuracy, since these forms were never found to be tagged with formative element, which is used with words of other parts-of-speech. Moreover, since these words are highly limited in number in Bengali, these are stored in a separate lexical database. At the time of POS tagging, once a perfect match was found in the lexical database, an indeclinable was identified and tagged. Thus, Bengali indeclinables like কিংবা (kiṃbā) 'or', এবং (ebaṃ) 'and', কিন্তু (kintu) 'but', বা (bā) 'or', তথাপি (tathāpi) 'yet', বরং (baraṃ) 'rather', আর (ār) 'and', যদি (ýadi) 'if', etc. are tagged rightly, because these words are usually fixed in their part-of-speech and they hardly use inflection or case markers.

6.2 Ambiguously Tagged Words

Ambiguity is bound to happen in POS tagging because ambiguity is a common feature in all natural languages and identification of actual POS of a word does not always depend of its form, but on its meaning and function it exerts in a piece of text. Moreover, contexts, discourse, intralinguistic and extralinguistic information that are embedded within a text also play crucial roles for making a word ambiguous. That means a single lexical item, based on the context of its use in a text, may convey more

than one meaning, event, or idea, vis-à-vis, part-of-speech (Dash 2005b). From experiences gathered in manual tagging of the Bengali text corpus, it has been understood that uncertainties in part-of-speech of words are quite frequent: not merely because of failures of human understanding, but because of the prototypical and/or fuzzy nature of most of the linguistic categories (Leech 1993: 280).

What is also understood from such hand-on experience is that efficiency and adequacy of a POS tagset comes from the way it succeeds in handling the feature of lexical ambiguity. In POS tagging, ambiguity arises at the lexical level, because most of the lexical items can allow more than one reading triggered from sense variation they generate. Thus, a word may be associated with a dozen different readings if all its idiomatic, figurative, proverbial, and contextual usages are taken into consideration.

At the time of initial POS tagging and manual verification, two types of ambiguity are found in the Bengali text corpus:

(a) Structural ambiguity, and

(b) Sequential ambiguity.

Structural ambiguity, which was noted at the lexical and sentence level, happens for inflected and non-inflected words where an inflected form or non-inflected root, stem or base, due to its homographic form appeared to belong to different parts-of speech. For instance, let us consider the underlined word of the example taken from the Bengali text corpus:

(1) আজ তোমাকে ছাড়া হবে না।

(āj tomāke chāṛā habe nā)

1st reading: "You will not be released today"

2nd reading: "Today it is not possible without you"

In the example given above we can have two different POS for the word ছাড়া (chāṛā). It can be a gerund if 1st reading is taken into consideration. On the other hand, it is a postposition if the 2nd reading is taken into consideration at the time of tagging of the word. Thus it became a problem for an annotator to decide in which part-of-speech this word should be tagged in the sentence.

Moreover, some inflected words, due to close structural similarities in their roots and suffixes, could also become ambiguous and these were very difficult to be sidelined to one or the other part-of-speech. For instance, the word করে (kare), at the time of POS tagging could be tagged as a non-finite verb, a finite verb, an indeclinable, or a noun. In the same manner, the word ছাড়া (chāṛā), based on the context of its use and its semantic function in the sentence, could be tagged as an adjective (chāṛā[JJ]) 'freed', a postposition (chāṛā[RB]) 'without', a noun (chāṛā[N]) 'a female calf', or as a gerund (chāṛā[V]) 'releasing'. What all these examples mean is that identification of actual part-of-speech of a word is not a trivial task; it seriously asks for information from various levels before it is fixed in its proper semantico-syntactic role and is tagged accordingly.

The indeclinables, due to their one-dimensional linguistic entities, are usually assigned with single POS tag, but postpositions and adjectives are highly ambiguous and are often prone to double POS tags. For instance, the word সুন্দর (sundar) can be tagged as adjective (sundar[JJ]) 'beautiful' as well as noun (sundar[N]) 'beauty' based on its use in sentence.

On the other hand, sequential ambiguity was usually caused due to the presence of immediately following word, which if tagged together with the word under investigation, would produce a part-of-speech, which differed from the individual parts-of-speech of words. For instance, when বিশেষ (biśeṣ) and ভাবে (bhābe) were POS tagged separately, বিশেষ (biśeṣ) was tagged as an adjective (biśeṣ[JJ]) while ভাবে (bhābe) was tagged as a finite verb (bhābe[V]) or a postposition (bhābe[PSP]).

But when they were treated as a single word unit বিশেষভাবে (biśeṣbhābe), they were combined together to be POS tagged as an adverb (biśeṣbhābe[RB]), which was different from respective independent parts-of-speech of the words.

Similar ambiguities arose for detached compound words, reduplicated forms, collocations, idioms, set phrases, and proverbs, such as, বেদনা প্রসূত (bedanā prasūta) 'generated through pain', জীবন কল্প (jība n kalpa) 'like life', ভ্রমর কৃষ্ণ (bhramar kṛṣṇa) 'black as a bumble bee', ভাব গম্ভীর (bhāb gambhīr) 'serene with dignity', রৌদ্র দগ্ধ (raudra dagdha) 'burnt with sun rays', সরকার নিযুক্ত (sarkār niýukta) 'appointed by government', চোখের মণি (cokher maṇi) 'apple of one's eye', আষাঢ়ে গল্প (āṣāṛhe galpa) 'cock and bull story', দেওয়াল লিখন (deoyāl likhan) 'writing on the wall', উভয় সঙ্কট (ubhay saṅkaṭ) 'horns of a dilemma', উঠে পড়া (uṭhe paṛā) 'rise', শুয়ে পড়া (śuye paṛā) 'lie', চলে যাওয়া (cale ýāoyā) 'going', ফেলে আসা (phele āsā) 'leaving', দেখে নেওয়া (dekhe neoyā) 'seeing', গিলে ফেলা (gile phelā) 'swallow', etc. Since the BIS tagging scheme designed for Bengali and other Indian languages works for only single word unit using information of words at the lexical level, such ambiguities are bound to take place.

6.3. Wrongly Tagged Words

In the Bengali tagged text corpus, we have come across some words, which were assigned wrongly with inappropriate tags. The basic reasons behind this phenomenon are possibly the followings:

a) Erroneous identification of POS for a word. It often happens for those words, which belong to more than one part-of-speech. For instance, the Bengali word কি (ki) can be a pronoun or an emphatic particle. If the syntactic function of the word in a piece of text is miss-read, it can be tagged as a pronoun in place of an emphatic particle or vice versa.

b) In case of non-inflected verbs, wrong tagging has happened

due to non-availability of roots in lexical database or due to non-acquaintance with the forms by the annotators.

c) For some nouns, pronouns, and adjectives it is noted that wrong tagging is mostly caused due to non-acquaintance with the forms or due to wrong identification of POS of the words.

d) For some adverbs, wrong tagging is caused due to a different reason. In most cases, space given between the two formative parts of an adverb puts a barrier for its proper analysis and tagging (discussed in 6.2). The other reason may be the same problems faced for the words of other POS categories.

e) Some nouns, which are used as verbs within a piece of text, are not tagged rightly.

f) Proper nouns (e.g., person names, place names, item names, etc.), transliterated foreign words, dialectal vocabularies, etc., due to their unique lexical entities are usually undefined in their part-of-speech and are tagged wrongly.

These issues are, however, mostly related to linguistics and these may be resolved with proper training to the annotators. In case of a computer system for automatic tagging such problems may be dissolved by regular up-gradation of lexical database and by modification of the algorithms used for the purpose.

7. Dissolving Problems of POS Tagging

To resolve lexical ambiguities in POS tagging in Bengali corpus, we propose to adopt the approach of delayed tagging, which in principle, is based on information extracted from the immediate context of the local contextual environment of a word under consideration. For instance, consider the Bengali word ভাল (bhāla), which can be tagged as a noun or an adjective in a sentence. When we encounter the word in a particular position in a given sentence, we shall not try to tag the word until and unless we finish reading the entire sentence and take into account the

actual role of the word with regard to its semantico-syntactic function in the sentence. What we argue is that a full and complete reading of the sentence is indispensable as it will supply necessary information to understand in which part-of-speech the word is actually used in sentence. After knowing the role of a word in a sentence, we can tag the word accordingly – as noun or adjective. In our view, the implementation of this approach will invariably minimise the problems of wrong and ambiguous tagging. In case of automatic tagging, however, we have to think of a method, which can act in the same manner.

The problem of ambiguity in POS tagging is also related to some higher level ambiguities, such as, attachment ambiguity, assignment ambiguity, referential ambiguity, etc. In all these cases, sense disambiguation and POS tagging have to be done after understanding the nature of association of the lexical items, analysing internal structure of words, investigating contextual occurrence of words, and understanding intralinguistic and extralinguistic information embedded in a sentence or a piece of text. Only then we can think of adopting a principled way of disambiguation (Dagan and Itai 1994).

Since POS tagging relied heavily on various kinds of information to different extents, we had to put together different information to identify rightly the POS tag of a word (for the ambiguous lexical items) or to make the best guess based on the information available to us. In all these cases, we had to wait till information from the syntactic and semantic levels were acquired and combined with extralinguistic knowledge (Justeson and Kats 1995).

Moreover, we had to access a dictionary, which had listed up the part-of-speech to which a particular word could belong. This dictionary helped us to identify the POS of some of the fixed expressions, e.g., যাচ্ছেতাই (ýācchetāi) 'simply worthless', নাহলে (nāhale) 'if not', etc. In case of automatic tagging, one can use machine-readable dictionary that also lists up the words, which usually exercise certain grammatical constraints in conditional

statements, such as, যদি (ýadi) and তবে (tabe) 'if…then', etc.

Also, we had to use probabilistic information acquired from the previously tagged text. It had guided us about how likely it is that a given word can belong to one part-of-speech or the other. For instance, although the Bengali word কর (kar) is used as verb or noun, information from previously tagged corpora showed that it had much higher probability of occurring as a verb than as a noun.

Furthermore, we had used another innovative method developed with information of grammatical uniformity of words used in Bengali. For instance, it was noted that indeclinables were tagged easily and accurately as these were mostly non-inflected in form and less in number. Similarly, the conjugated finite and non-finite verbs were tagged with limited errors, because with a fixed number of suffixes we could easily identify these forms and tag these forms accordingly with least knowledge of grammatical agreement between roots and suffixes. On the other hand, in case of nouns, pronouns, adjectives, and adverbs, we had to toil very hard as most of these forms were used with or without inflection markers. Besides, these forms tended to change their lexical roles and identities within a text based on contexts of their occurrence. Therefore, their ambiguity had to be dissolved first with reference to their usages in the sentence before these were tagged to any part-of-speech.

Finally, it can be argued here that each word used in a piece of text can be sidelined to a fixed part-of-speech or lexical class if we can analyse its role and meaning in the context of its use. For example all proper, common, material, collective, abstract, human, and non-human nouns can be brought under the single head category: noun (N) while all relative, reciprocal, definite, indefinite, reflexive, emphatic, interrogative, others may be brought under the head category: pronoun (PR). Similarly, all adjectives (JJ), adverbs (RB), finite and non-fine verbs (V), postpositions (PSP), etc. can be grouped and put under single

head. It can reduce multiple parts-of-speech of words into one as well as can simplify the process of POS tagging.

Although there is every possibility for tagging additional information regarding the grammatical properties and semantic sub-classes of words to a POS tagset, it requires detailed investigation into the formal and functional aspects of the words. If it becomes possible, then a POS tagging scheme can be robust and useful for next levels of tagging and processing.

Even then the completely error-free tagged text was not possible to generate due to difference in opinions of the human annotators. However, the problem of lexical ambiguity and its solution in the domain of POS tagging is separate area of research, which is just hinted here.

8. Utilities of POS Tagged Corpus

A text corpus tagged at the POS level is a useful resource for research and development in language description, language processing, and language technology. It is the most common resource, which has established it functional relevance in chunking and sense tagging (Leech and Smith 1999). After the generation of an error-free POS tagged corpus, it can be used for chunking as well as for extracting suitable patterns, rules, and features to be used for various NLP activities.

In the area of natural language processing a POS tagged corpus may be used for developing systems for grammar checking, recognition of the named entities, text understanding, parsing, word sense disambiguation, query addressing, lexical mapping, machine translation, and machine learning. A POS tagged corpus is also useful for extracting linguistic items and terms, in information retrieval, language modelling, and other works.

In descriptive and applied linguistics, a POS tagged corpus is useful for frequency calculation of words, type-token analysis, lemmatization, lexical sorting, primary vocabulary compilation, dictionary compilation, language teaching, etc.

Although one can visualize many applications of a POS tagged corpus for the Indian languages, till date not much effort is initiated to develop this highly useful linguistic resource. So far whatever tagging is done for Indian languages corpora, the rate of accuracy is far behind than expected if compared with POS tagged corpora made in English (Dandapat 2009). It implies that we sincerely need to take serious initiatives in this direction to develop POS tagged corpora for Indian languages with two basic goals: design maximally accurate tagset to increase the rate of accuracy of POS tagged corpora, and develop POS tagged corpora in a large scale covering all text types. If accurately POS tagged corpora of different types of text are made available for the Indian languages, may unaccomplished goals of language processing and language technology can be accomplished within a short span of time.

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What Unites India?: On the Role of Translation and Culture in Producing the Nation[1]

Sushumna Kannan

Abstract:

The Two-Worlds theory is a specific result of postcolonial grids of thought that provoke us to rethink the role of English as opposed to that of the vernacular languages of India. All too often, arguments take the form of defending the vernacular and questioning the role of English. Significantly enough, a connection is drawn between the role of English and its function as a proxy for nationalism. This paper examines the theoretical frameworks that articulate such connections and raises some questions with regard to the Two-Worlds theory in Literary and Translation Studies, while charting the current intellectual milieu. Methodologically, the paper discusses underlying assumptions about concepts of culture, nationalism, colonialism and Orientalism.

Keywords: Nation, Postcolonialism, Two-Worlds Theory, IWE, Indian Literature.

Introduction:

The Two-Worlds theory in Translation Studies is made up of various anxieties about the increasingly strong position of English in changing times and the status of the 'endangered' native, regional, vernacular language and Bhasha literatures. The theory concerns itself with far deeper historical questions of how and why English came to pervade in India and other postcolonial contexts and what we should do with it. The inequality that persists between English and the vernacular languages of India is increasingly a marker of class, gendered ways of being as well as modernity.[2] It is as a result of English, so to speak, that many

Indians have emerged; its acknowledgement entering popular parlance. Consequently, scholars in the area have attempted to solve the puzzle of why English is the language into which translations from vernaculars take place when indeed other vernaculars have a better translatability. Although postcolonial Translation Studies begins with a dyad of recognition—English is both colonizer and native, desirable and yet dominating—equalizing the disparity between English and world of vernaculars has remained a challenge.

Indian writing in English as well as translations from vernaculars to English, it could be argued, increases the expressive possibilities of the language as well as its conceptual possibilities that could be for the better. That is, expanding English to suit the realities of India will, so to speak, push against the limits of thought as well. In the final run, it could lead to a deeper understanding of India both within and without, in India and the west, thus somewhat reversing colonialism or speaking back. Yet, it could be argued that we are growing English at the cost of our vernaculars. This latter argument could hold some truth despite the fact that there is great respect for Indian writing in English and its translations today, across the global literary scape.[3] Again, it could be argued that while English continues to be the dominating language and this has given rise to protests and demands for the preservation and nurturing of vernacular languages and literatures, English itself has also been domesticated and internalized. 'Indian English' is thus seen today as legitimate in its own right.

Perhaps the only consensual starting point to address the realities of the Two Worlds is to acknowledge that a generation of people are comfortable with English more than any other vernacular. That said, it is a fact that more and more Indians are bilingual today (Devy, 1995:13) with one language being the regional language or mother-tongue and the other being English. Often, due to migration as well as urbanization, the mother tongue is a language that one does not know how to read and write in, but can speak, leaving English as a language for written communication.[4]

The Two Worlds theory invokes a discussion of nationhood in at least two ways, within the area of Translation and Literary Studies, both sufficiently interesting for the questions we will raise in the forthcoming sections. One has to do with the nomenclature Indian Literature, its content, reference and relevance. The second has to do with the role of translation in unifying India. With reference to the first nomenclature of Indian Literature, scholars have borrowed from critiques of nationalism, viewed the nation as an imagined community, related it to the division of states in India on linguistic basis and pointed to the violence of homogenizing disparate linguistic cultures into one. As for the second issue of unifying India through translation, scholars have pointed out that the very idea of one nation, India, became possible with English and translations into it.

In both the historical account of how English came to dominate in India and in contemporary discussions on the issue, several scholars point to how nationalism invokes the idea of a national language and trace how Hindi, although is the largest spoken language in India, came to be only ceremonial rather than communicative. We are told that urban centers with their upper class leanings ensured that English was seen as the language of sophistication as opposed to the vernacular ones.[5] An important part of these discussions claim that nationhood is itself made possible by translation. We are told that

> …translations into English from the regions have become a major means of representing, embodying and concretizing the abstract notion of one 'India' in a multilingual, multicultural and multiethnic society. The task of narrativizing the nation using 'homogenized' English translations seems to have become one of the primary agendas of translation in the country. A prioritizing of such translational processes poses a grave threat, the threat of eradicating multiplicities and destroying regional flavours and variety. Such translations would enable English to become an assimilating front for the regional languages

and literatures of India. (Concept note of the seminar, *Translating India into English*, 2008).

In this paper, I will respond to ideas of nationhood and translation, and accompanying accounts of colonialism and Orientalism as articulated in the Two Worlds theory and Translation and Literary Studies in general. I will argue that some of the assumptions in the connections drawn between translation and nationhood are the results of weak accounts of Indian history. Then, by arguing for a deeper understanding of the culture concept, I aim to show that an alternative view of 'Indian Literature' 'Indian Writing in English' as well as 'Indian Writing in English Translation' is possible. This alternative view hopefully allows us to make different sense of our current anxieties about English 'taking over' and also helps us to reconstruct our own past better.

Translation and the Nation:

a. The Indian in 'Indian Literature'

A critique of the 'Indian' in Indian Literature is more often than otherwise borrowed from critiques of nationalism in theoretical disciplines such as History and Cultural Studies. This is most evident in Literary writing in Amitav Ghosh's novels. His subsequent essay in one of the Subaltern Studies volumes confirms the role of theory informing literary writing. As I discuss critiques of nationalism in the following sections, I use Ghosh, but praise for his *Shadow Lines* often misses an assessment of the theoretical influences that shape his literary writings and an analysis of the final result. In larger literary discussions, however, the role of ideology in literary writing is increasingly questioned and/or defended. Before I articulate what I see as the issue at stake in borrowing critiques of nationalism for critiquing the category of 'Indian Literature in the next section,' I will cull-out a few issues of importance here.

Firstly, critiques of nationalism or the Nation-State,

associate it with constitutive issues while they are capable of acting as merely effective organizational entities. Attributing constitutive violence to the Nation-State can be problematic since some of our best pro-people movements, like The Narmada Bachao Andolan, by experience have acknowledged the possible usefulness of working with the Nation State. Consequently, anyone thinking about nationalism today needs to factor in the nature of technological advancements, capitalism, free market economies as well traditional thought that viewed the world as one or practiced filial piety. New political developments and citizen activism along with traditional NGO activism needs to be accounted today before we conclude on the ineffectiveness of the Nation-State *per se*.[6] My contention with attributing homogenizing tendencies to the Nation-State as constitutive of it, is the same. With a continued practice of identity politics, while its limitations are taken into account, over time, it could be possible to fight the homogenizing and labeling tendencies Nation-States are known to practice. More importantly, it can be argued that nationalism has a relative value is not an absolute evil. As the rhetoric goes: Countries have the governments they deserve and in democracies, people get the leaders they deserve. We also have to remember that nationalism in India also coincides with postcolonialism and effective responses to colonization. It encompasses a genuine indigenous response to the event of colonialism although this urgency may have caused it to overlook a number of crucial issues. The question then is whether we can rectify these issues, perhaps not of attributing constitutive violence to it.

Secondly, in Europe, language played an important role in the creation of identities as well as nations. This phenomenon is somewhat different in India with multiple identities playing a role, language being just one among them. For India, nationhood along linguistic lines was impossible and was reworked. At best, an ill-fitting import, nationalism was once-removed from the true preoccupations of Indians. It would be a fallacy to assume that Benedict Anderson's theses on Europe can unproblematically hold true for India. Even where the nationalist discourse played itself

out in India, a number of other values were emphasized upon, rather than the singular discourse of nationhood dominating. For example, even a writer such as Bankim Chandra wrote very few nationalistic works and more romances in the corpus of his entire literary output. Also, ecological concerns, Gandhian notions and other contending positions captured the imagination of the people, and nationhood was an aim to self-govern, a task understood to be too complex for mere patriotic sentiments.

Hence, as I see it, the important issue in debates about Indian Literature and the problematization of the contents of the 'Indian,' (who and what qualifies to be slotted under this category) is that our critical practice leaves the creative writer defensive. That is, determining the Indian-ness of a certain work becomes an issue because of the postcolonial theoretical project to figure out the power imbalances in writers of different languages and locations and their literary stances. Instead, what should be addressed is that we are yet to develop a mid-point or approach that does not devalue either the creative writer or the critic. In fact, the divide between these two is so magnified that some years ago, I experienced firsthand how students of two different departments Literature and Cultural Studies, within the school of Humanities, at CIEFL found it impossible to engage in meaningful dialogues. This experience though not fully unpacked reached a debating point when Vikram Chandra wrote "Cult of Authenticity" responding to Mukherjee's "The anxiety of Indianness." In this now well-known essay, Chandra critiques Mukherjee for excessive preoccupation with Indian-ness and the location of authors instead of assessing their work *sans ad hominem* references and for their worth as a work of art. He articulates his predicament by saying: "To delight in the mundane is what an artist does…" and asks: "How should a writer work, in these circumstances? What must an Indian artist do?" ⁷ Ghosh too addresses this issue, though he leans more towards a politically engaging model of creative writing:

> We who write fiction, even when we deal with matters of public significance have no choice, no matter how lush and

or extravagant our fictions, but to represent events as they are refracted through our characters. Our point of entry into even the largest of events is inevitably local, situated in and focussed on details and particulars. To write of any event in this way is necessarily to neglect its political contexts… what then are the contexts that we, as writers of fiction, can properly supply? It seems to me that they must lie in the event itself, the scene, if you like it must be in some part the reader's responsibility to situate the events within broader contexts to populate the scene with the products of his experience and learning. A reader who reads the scene literally or mean spiritedly must surely bear some part of the blame for that reading. (Ghosh, 2001: 282-3).

Again, issues herein appear to arise from an acceptance of specific critiques of nationalism and postcolonial theory. But we must note that both Chandra and Ghosh, by drawing our attention to the writing process seem to be questioning the long-assumed validity of post-structuralism as applied to literary works. That is, the collusion of postcolonialism and post-structuralism create theoretical frameworks that cannot sit with the processes of creative writing practices. Post-structuralist understandings of language and meaning-making are used somewhat simplistically, deploying the work of scholars such as Derrida in strategic ways that do not correspond to the original contextual intentions and arguments. So we are faced with a situation where, universalism remains to be a virtue, worthy of aim and achievement in art and literature, post colonialism questions it in a manner that cripples it. The validity of even a Pollock's definition of the classic as "what gives access to radically different forms of human consciousness for any given generation of readers, and thereby expands for them the range of possibilities of what it means to be a human being." (2011: 36) remain somewhat irrelevant in our current critical practices. This is indeed the sad state of affairs that Pollock formulates as "Crisis in the Classics" as well. Dharwadker addresses the predicament of the creative writer, writing about A K Ramanujan that clarifies my point with regard to anxieties about

the Indian in both Indian Literature as well as Indian writing in English:

> In contrast to Ramanujan's way of thinking, post-structuralist thought is so context-centred … that it divorces theory from practice, makes practice on the basis of such theorizing impossible (or, for Ramanujan at least, inconceivable), and makes theory hostile to 'mere' practice. In most types of poststructuralist theory, context invades, disrupts and mangles whatever actual practice it finds, and theory itself usurps the place conventionally given over to practice. The theorist's suspicion of the 'theoretically naive' practitioner, possibly still grounded in the former's unacknowledgeable envy of the latter, is of course very old: as Wordsworth put it, alluding to Plato, the true opposite of poetry is not prose but philosophy. But in conversations about post-structuralism Ramanujan chose to say simply, 'I don't know what to do with it'. The statement is disarmingly simple, but it carries a peculiar weight in Ramanujan's thought. (Dharwadker, 1999: 130)

Thus, my argument about the Indian in Indian Literature, in general, and IWE, in particular, is that the issues have been formulated as they have been, due to a strong belief in post-structuralist modes of criticism. Furthermore, if we were to seriously consider critiques of post-structuralism such as the following Bo Pettersson offers, our approach to literature as well as criticism may itself change.[8] Listing his issues with current trends in Translation Studies, Pettersson criticizes excessive reliance on post-structuralism thus:

> As yet I have not even mentioned the well-known fact that in many other academic quarters, such as philosophical and empirical aesthetics, historiography and sociology, the very underpinnings of poststructuralism have been severely criticized for more than two decades (despite the fact that poststructuralism - at times broadly termed postmodernism - has had a foothold in some niches of

these fields). This critique has - as far as I know - never been adequately answered (and, most likely, cannot be). In brief, poststructuralism mainly rests on:

1. a conservative notion of language and a misreading of Saussure (see Tallis 1988/1995);

2. an (elitist) exaggeration of indeterminacy in meaning-making;

3. an autonomous, agentless textuality and intertextuality;

4. an untenable anti-humanism (neglect of actual author and actual reader/s); and

5. a constructionist view of man (emphasis on nurture, neglect of nature)." (Pettersson)

Thus, the nomenclature 'Indian Literature' should not be seen as a claim to homogeneity, for there is no debate about contesting the homogenizing tendencies of any institution, but as simply a classifying node free of conceptual power and baggage. That is, Indian literature should be the corpus of literature produced in India, but also any literature that is about India and is relevant to the students of Indian Literature. This allows for the play of identification in literature, the simple literary act, which is crucial for any reading to occur. Identification as well as distance with names, places, emotions, and situations leads to a reading strategy that ultimately works up the faculty of imagination as well as cognition involving a free association process that ultimately leads to an experience of literature. Discussions of the Indian in Indian Literature is more a practical decisionist question for association meetings and conference proceedings. Let us now examine the second aspect of the Two Worlds theory

b. Does Translation unite India?:

In her essay on the "Nation and English Translation" N Kamala says that "…in translating Indian literary texts into English

in India, [the aim is] …to make the entire nation what we wish it to be—that is, unified." (Kamala N, 2000, 248). Similarly, Rukmini Bhaya Nair asks us the classic question about how the nation is produced and provides the answer as well. "How does a common 'idea of India' make itself available to a Bengali, a Kannadiga, or a speaker of Metei? Only through translation." (2002: 7)[9] However, such answers proceed from some assumptions. Nair seems to assume when saying the above that India's different geographical spaces are so different linguistically, culturally and in other ways that they *need* translation. And they need translation in order for India to be a nation. Nair, of course, is not alone in making these claims about nationhood *needing* production. It is part of a larger consensus in our current intellectual milieu that allows her to do this conclusion. This consensus, however, relies on the work of a few scholars who may or may not label themselves as postcolonial scholars explicitly. In any case, as I see it, one of the chief characteristics of this consensus is an understanding that the Indian nation is a derivative discourse; an entity that follows European models of nationhood and systems of governance but one that has nevertheless negotiated modernity on its own terms (Chatterjee, "Our Modernity", 1997). This thesis is generally seen as extending to the 'absorption' of culture, democracy and other institutions of the nation and the state and other institutions, like Law. It is a thesis that is also popular amongst those who believe in celebrating 'agency' or 'resistance,' in the face of false-consciousness and against a hegemonic nation-state. However, this thesis is not always pushed further to either actually elucidate how it is we function, given that we have absorbed these institutions in an 'Indian'/'our' way. On the contrary, we have as part of the same consensus, scholars who claim that the reason for India's backwardness, socially, culturally and economically lies in its slow approach towards modernity and in its incomplete attainment of nationhood. There are yet others to whom there is nothing Indian at all to be found and that to suggest so would amount to essentialism. In any intellectual forum today, one can only lay claim to an 'I' and make subjective statements and almost never can say 'our'. The goal here is to abstain from representing

others inaccurately. One is challenged with questions about who one is 'speaking for', what violence the act of representation involves and so on. While I see this as amounting to a *trivialization of the real concern* for the underrepresented or the wrongly represented within India and of India abroad, the graver problem is that all these different positions of both claiming 'Indianness' and abstaining from doing so, co-exist. Such an intellectual milieu has other corollaries that are problematic.

It occasionally works with a Spivakian anti-theory position[10] that results in either no representation at all or a 'strategic representation'. And then again we are at a dead-end when we ask who can decide how 'strategic representation' should be done. There is also an unclear premise about reality and representation that is frequently referred to, leading only to increasing ambiguity. In such an intellectual milieu, reality is supposedly inaccessible and each person can only speak for him/herself and that would constitute only his/her reality. Also, one wonders if the 'our' in Partha Chatterjee's "Our Modernity" refers to the same aspects as the word 'Indian.' To say 'Indian' or 'Indian culture' today is more than an ordinary taboo; it immediately bestows the burden of being a right-winger, commit the unforgivable sin of essentialization! In actuality, feminists, Marxists, developmentalists need forms of essentialization, strategic or not, to practice their philosophies.[11] That is, not all essentialization are wrong; neither are they fallacious or unnecessary.

That there is nothing Indian, and that Indian culture does not exist, because India was formed only in 1947 is yet another politically correct form of anti-essentialist assertions in postcolonial scholarship. Yet, there are simply too many Indians who believe too much in 'Indian culture.' This prompts us to look for concepts that allow for a reworking of current critiques of nationalism and nationhood and rework their dynamic in the case of India. It is my belief that we have alternatives in Ashis Nandy's concepts, ahistorical and memory-based cultures. Instead of concluding that Indians need an attitudinal change or a new

social reform programme, perhaps we should make our concepts work for us and account for realities and phenomena.

Take the other crucial aspect of the current scholarly consensus, colonialism. We are told is that it has had deep effects, psychological, subtle and is not easily decipherable. Homi Bhabha (1994) claims that the slave becomes 'like the master, but not quite' and that the slave is caught in an inescapable act of mimicry. This claim is a psychological one and is excessively theoretical and abstract; entrenched largely in disciplines of Philosophy and Psychology to be evident. While our intellectual milieu mostly functions from Bhabha's thesis, alternate ideas of the master-slave relationship have always been available. See for instance, Ajit Chaudhury's work on colonialism that suggests a collaborative aspect to the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. Ashis Nandy's *The Intimate Enemy* is another good example. Here, Nandy locates a number of responses on the part of the colonized, many extending from practical attitudes to deeply philosophical ones. In this light, even the Subaltern Studies project can be seen as recording the agency of the natives, a move away from Bhabha's own somewhat linear position. The history of "prose of counter-insurgency" by Ranajit Guha has an air of negotiation and active resistance, not imitation of the colonizer. Other responses to the colonizer include shaming the colonizer through everyday acts of naming the toilet as London or America, for being administrative or cultural oppressor.

The question we need to ask here is whether mimicry took over in such proportions that the native ways of being were completely lost and if yes, exactly how. Instead of inquiring into the precolonial past to seek answers for such questions, most studies see 'tradition' as something to be disdained, be embarrassed about, and disowned even. Much is pre-decided and vague and there is an ambiguous stance about the nature of pre-colonial India. Often, a straight-forward question about the nature of pre-colonial India simply dissipates into an elaboration of the complexities in such a question that then lead to meta-

level discussions that are tangential to the basic line of enquiry. Questions about India's precolonial past quickly get termed as reactionary or 'a quest for origins' that can only be driven by nostalgia. Pollock articulates this predicament aptly while tracing the history of the diminished state of research on classics in India:

> Those who could not or would not try to understand the past wound up either stipulating the very enterprise to be conceptually impossible—colonialism, we were told, imposed an epistemic barrier whose untranscendability was somehow known a priori—or condemning it as inevitably reactionary. It took years before a serious history of colonialism was understood to presuppose a serious history of precolonialism, but by then the greater part of a generation of scholars was lost to the study of historical languages." (2011: 32)

That disciplines like History, Sociology and Cultural Studies work with simplistic[12] understandings of power is yet another problem.[13] Our current intellectual milieu views history as driven by a quest for power and engages in the analysis of the powerful and the subjugated. Foucauldian ideas are used in specific ways for this. Yet a deep enough contextualization of Foucault's work would reveal that his formulae on subjecthood and power were almost entirely an analysis of Europe. Foucault's theory for India or Asia is almost completely asymmetrical to the one he proposed of Europe.[14] Furthermore, ideas are freely taken from Hegel, Althusser and Derrida, and are used to produce a mixture of ideas about language and statehood as if their analyses can indeed be taken freely from the disparate fields they were engaging with, without qualifiers; Philosophy, Political Science and Literature. This happens despite critiques engaging in an elaborate questioning of how Hegel and other European gurus can be relevant to analyze India.[15] Quite evidently, European scholars were not only talking of different continents but also at times of different centuries. The usage of these ideas *freely* has resulted in the production of an unsusbstantiable, but, difficult-to-challenge web of ideas and

concepts each intricately made to relate to the other so that it is not only epistemologically unstable but also politically precarious. That the aforementioned European scholars rarely refer to Indian society, yet are 'applied' independent of their contexts.

For instance, how do we account for this verse that is recited every time a ritual is performed? "Jambudveepe bhaaratavarshe kumarikakhande, aryavartaikadeshe…srisvetavarahakalpe … manvantare astdvinsatitame kaliyuge prathamacharane…" This verse indicates the exact area of one's physical location, country, year, heritage and history in very specific ways that though lead to an identity, is not similar to that offered by nationhood. Also, there are verses that recite the names of the rivers of India on all sides, and literally map the geography of India. How do we account for these verses and still claim that there is no cultural self-understanding of 'India' as a whole, emerging from pre-colonial India? Pollock is probably a rare scholar who can explain this.

> . . . the conceptual order of Sanskrit geography in its mature form, focusing on Bhāratavarṣa, was uniform, stable, and, most significant of all, subcontinental [my emphasis], and this limit, once achieved, marked the boundary of geographical concern. But this was a boundary unlike any other. If in some important respects it excluded many spaces . . . the excluded [peoples] often claimed inclusion by the very act of naming wherever they lived with the names of India. 'India' was moveable and multiple. (2009: 193).[16]

What I am proposing is that we could view *bharatvarsha* as different from the imagined community of India, the nation. To formulate it as a question, we would have to ask: How can we be sure that the earlier India or *bharatvarsha* has been replaced by India, the nation? Could not *bharatvarsha* persist in some forms in the memories of people, if not in histories and through common practices, ideas and rituals?[17] Can we thus question the following consensus in Literary and Translation Studies?: "While various notions of India—indeed, various Indias—may have pre-existed British colonization, this one monolithic nation, India, was

constructed only in English translation." (Kamala, N, 2000: 245)

Irrespective of the different sub-theses proposed, most theorizations of the nation and its avatar in India tell us that contemporary India and pre-colonial India both lack unity and lead us to believe indirectly that 'centralizing' is the best form of governance. In fact, the pre-colonial history of India is reconstructed in such a way that we can only see warring tribes and small kingdoms throughout.[18] This is not only anachronistic; it is a conclusion guided by European-Western notions of statehood and governmentality and is Orientalist in nature. What we see in the Sanskrit verse quoted above is an assertion of a certain kind of heritage that could accompany localized governance and have been the order in pre-colonial India. The question that we should to ask is, what might have sustained the kinds of assertions that we see in the verse? That is, what enabling conditions allowed a person to identify himself or herself based on his/her regional location as well as, in other contexts, lineage. Why were these identifications considered important in contexts of the performances of ritual?

The discussion of language and nation-formation in conjunction also follows the discussion in Europe in the 1930s and earlier. In other words, the peculiarity of nation formation in India remains under-researched in independent terms. Hence, we could safely conclude that Rukmini Bhaya Nair's understanding that 'the idea of India becomes available only through translation' could be a debate derivative of the context wherein English Literature was made to represent Britain as superior in comparison to European nations while each of the European nations competed with the other to create their identity.[19] Since the contents of 'the Indian way of nation-building' remain lost to us in such understandings as Nair's, it is as if there is no difference between India and Europe and the problems of the two geographically and culturally distinct places were all just the same. All these oversights and derivative discussions actually amount to Orientalism. They exhibit a logical sophistication but lack intelligibility.

The scholarly consensus on nationhood ignores the role

of 'jaati relations' that guided social life in both pre-colonial and present India. Much of our intellectual milieu is preoccupied with assessing the social value of 'jaati' or caste system. The importance of these relations emerges better when one takes into account, usages such as "Kannada Brahmin" or "Telugu Shree Vaishnava." What is revealed in these usages is the multiplicity of identities that involves region, language as well as jaati. Perhaps the complexity of these usages eludes us because we assume that all cultures have religion[20] and that these identities have originate from religion. Our assumptions that Hinduism is a religion and that the caste system is an evil that needs eradication, because the priests disallow access to God lead us to draw analogies exactly like the priests of the pre-renaissance church in Europe. These, in reality, amount to more examples of Orientalism. The continuation of such analogies and the accompanying problems become clear when one reads travel accounts, even from as early as the 13th century. See for instance, Duarte Barbosa's accounts of India.[21] In order to account for the differences that India, its culture and society displays, the jaati scheme of things must be studied seriously without an assessment of its value as an institution and our current understanding of plurality reexamined. Although scholarship is limited in this area, one sees very relevant analysis emerging in the writings of Ashis Nandy[22] and Dharampal's five volumes of writings that explicate his understanding of village society and economics before and during British administration. What is lacking in scholarship, interestingly enough, is available in literary writings. This refers us back to issues about literature and theory raised earlier. Examples of fiction accounting for the complexity of cultural issues can be found in the work of Sadat Hasan Manto. An example from regional literature would be Shridhara Balagara who views jaati scheme of things, not as caste system *per se* but as identities formed through migration.

The scholarship on nationhood and colonialism are so rift with problems that we may have to rework this train of thought if we want to understand the position and presence of English in India, its gaining popularity in translation or understand

the accompanying anxieties for our vernacular languages, as expressed in the Two-Worlds theory. What also becomes suspect is the claim that translation produces nationhood. The claim that nationhood needs to be produced through translation ignores the social relationships that were not based upon knowing the same language or on notions of unity or affiliation. Could it not be the case that commonalities and differences that exist inseparably in one's consciousness are less spoken about, are unacknowledged and unrecognized even, which when probed through current derivative concepts appear non-existent or as achieved through a specific production processes?

Is there not after all a relationship that still sustains in the face of another who may speak a different language and follow different practices and customs: a relationship that recognizes the other as the other?

Furthermore the claim that it is translation that enables a Kannadiga and Metei to relate to each other is fraught with more problems, since the notion of translation implied here is not clear. If we have a linguistic translation in mind, then the point is trivially true. But if it is cultural translation that is being referred to here, then even more lack of clarity takes over. It is probably a claim that is made with the understanding that there are too many different cultures and different language in India for any communication or fellow-feeling to become possible. But we should note that the notion of culture used here assumes that culture lies in differences of language, cuisine, dressing, practices, customs and so on. Even the definition of culture as 'a way of meaning making' only refers us back to these categories. In fact, culture is increasingly seen as a creation of the nation so that the nation can sustain itself. Culture is seen as the space where politics is played out and this is noted in *Interrogating Modernity*.[23]

> …culture as 'a site of convergent interests rather than a logically or conceptually clarified idea'. The field of culture is seen as 'a constant battlefield' where there are no victories to be gained, only 'strategic positions to be won and lost'.

> Cultural practices become real where one engages with and elaborates a politics. (Introduction, *Interrogating Modernity*)

Interestingly enough, it is only in literary writings that we find a somewhat broad notion of culture. Here, there is chance of referring to culture as the 'inner life of human beings' and as 'what sustains humans in times of calamity'.[24] If we had a different, more substantive notion of culture, would it shed different light on the Two-Worlds theory? Would our anxieties about the native vernacular languages be any different or any less? I think that this is an important question. Let us examine a different understanding of culture now to probe further.

Culture:

"Neither the word, nor the text, but the culture becomes the operational 'unit' of translation" (Lefevere and Bassnett 1990: 8). This is the claim of the cultural turn in translation. Yet, as we saw above culture can often be restricted or left vague. The definition of culture as ways of meaning-making appears more like an exposition of social constructionist theories rather inquiring deeply into, 'what sustains humans in times of calamity.' If one allows for this understanding of culture then, there is an intertextual and intra-textual relationship among the languages as well as the culture of India. Other modes of signification and subjectivation, such as ritual observances, cultural practices and myths cut across different languages and customs. Thus, if the nation-state was a recent entity, the linguistic division of states was one as well. Differences in Indian regions could thus also be similar differences. For instance, streedharma in Rajasthan is different from that of streedharma in Tamil Nadu but that streedharma is an object of thought, debate and response is itself a fact that unifies Indian regions. As Pollock's quote earlier indicated, this logic could be extended to identify aspects unique not just India but also Asia. Similarly, the attitude with which menstruation is traditionally held, is exactly opposite, in different parts of India. While it is a taboo in certain regions, it is auspicious in others. Yet, that menstruation was seen as an occurrence demanding some

kind of structured response, making sense and so on, is somewhat unique to experience of Indian living.

Such understanding of culture give us a sense of things always being in the middle, with no narrative to bind events. I find Dharwadker's critique of Niranjana useful in articulating this. According to Dharwadker, Ramanujan uses a different starting point:

> Unlike Homi Bhabha, for instance, who is concerned with demonstrating that all identities are ineluctably ambivalent and hybrid in the end, Ramanujan accepted the hybridity of languages and cultures as a starting point and tried to show, instead, how different degrees and kinds of hybridization shape particular languages, and how, despite the universal fact of mongrelization, no two mongrels are actually alike. (1999: 128)

The hybrid notion of culture that Ramanujan draws from is also notion of culture that Amitav Ghosh's work explores. Though Ghosh writes novels, they are well-researched and often based on archival evidence that is then weaved together. In a novel like *Shadow Lines*, Ghosh's point is not merely that the nation is new and imagined but more. He views geographical and cultural spaces as necessarily porous, unbounded and continuous. In both Ramanujan and Ghosh's understanding, there have been ongoing conversations between cultures forever. It appears that the absence of a historical record to demonstrate this is irrelevant since all events need not be recorded in historical cultures even and ahistorical cultures only work with memory.

Cultures, nations, civilizations, however we may term the object of 'what sustains humans in calamity,' we do seem to remain in the middle of things, with no necessary point of origination or conclusion. Only in stories of a certain narrative structure or order may we see a false sense of order imposed on the fluidity of things. In strong contrast to western narratives, Indian stories lose this sense of order while they journey within or without a

regional space. The many *Ramayanas* and *Mahabharatas* are possibly the best illustration for this. If, even hypothetically, we view the journey of texts like the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* as acts of translation, we perhaps arrive at an indigenous theory of translation. Of course, the texts and their contexts would be as peculiar as to their times and contexts. I believe that we should view Mini Chandran's introduction to the Macmillan series in this light; a work that has been critiqued as patriotic in sentiment.

Balagangadhara (1994) theorizes *culture as a configuration* of learning. His essay "Notes Towards a Study of the Caste System" elucidates a theory of culture thus:

> The configuration of learning organises (or structures) the going-about of individuals with one another, and their goings-about the (salient diversities in the) natural environment…Even though this is but a partial explication of the notion of 'configuration of learning', it already helps us realise that there is a significant difference between 'learning' ('the process of creating a habitat'; 'that which makes the environment habitable') and 'a configuration of learning'.

Balagangadhara further suggests that we think in this vein:

> Human individuals are born simultaneously into cultural and natural environments. Both these environments are incredible storehouses of differences. We can look at these environments as 'spaces': a natural and a cultural space. However, what the human child learns, also through the process of teaching, are not mere 'differences' in these two 'spaces', but salient diversities. That is to say, through a process of selection, some differences are bracketed away, some differences are clustered, some are emphasized, etc. These are structured sets of differences that we may call *salient diversities.* A configuration of learning helps individuals to cope with salient diversities. (ibid)

And,

Since any group that has lived for any significant period of time survives only as a culture (i.e., as 'a configuration of learning'), each one of us in the world encounters only *salient diversities*. (ibid)[25]

This theory of culture talks about learning, teaching and the mechanisms involved in this process. It resonates with Bo Pettersson's objections to post-structuralism. Understandings of culture as something that helps us cope with salient diversities indicates that culture is made up of at least two levels of reflective processes. From definitions of culture that see it as 'a way of meaning making' to this one, we see a shift that shows two levels of a process of reflection and learning and teaching. Instead of wondering how or what notion of culture is applicable to the specific geographical space of India, we can now think of culture in broader, formal terms and as a structuring. This allows us to adopt a somewhat content-less mode, rather than a set of principles about a certain geographical space. A set of principles about a certain geographical space would sooner or later run into problems, because it would not be able to accommodate changes as quickly as they occur and would render the culture and its people stagnant—an orientalist stance—according to Edward Said.

Within the above charted theory of culture, differences can sustain, because learning-teaching methods abound in quantity to suit the temperament of both learners and teachers and the general reflective process. While mere learning would refer to making the environment habitable, doing so in a systematic manner or identifying the salient diversities of natural or cultural environments is culture. It is thus that culture thus is a configuration of learning. We could, with this understanding of culture account for variant traditions, versions of plurality or the 'many cultures' of India.

In a simplistic understanding of culture, one would

presume that simply coming from a certain culture contributed to one's identity, or that a language, cuisine, dressing or climatic condition contributed to one's identity. While these entities may be seen as shaping our identity, if we do indeed get habituated to them, the theory of culture explored above only yields more information. A configuration of learning does not *necessarily* produce an identity. Its interest lies elsewhere. The following quote should add clarity:

> …Its [Asian culture/India's] way of going-about solves the problem of 'How to live' not by building a world view but by developing among their members *an ability* to try and live the best way they can. That is to say, such is their way of learning that it teaches one *how to live*. Not by imparting knowledge *about* the world, but by imparting *practical knowledge*. (Balagangadhara, 1994:461)

In such a scenario, practices abound, and does not lay claims over identity, instead of struggles. The notion of practical knowledge renders the 'word as mantra' system of Indian languages meaningful, but we cannot go into the details for want of space. With the theory of culture as a configuration of learning, we are presented with the possibility that what unites the geographical space that is India is a configuration of learning and that translation may be only secondary in such a process (as in translation from one language to another or linguistic translation). If a configuration of learning preserves itself in multiple ways and its social organization is in such a way that practices appear contrary, then we now know why there exist many traditions in India, and why we sometimes perceive them as 'paradoxical.' If a configuration of learning is far more than a language, a custom or practice, and is a *how*, then the question I would formulate is: why should we be so anxious about a language and its status?

Much of our discussions about languages and the anxieties of the Two-Worlds theory are based in our understanding of Structuralism and Post-Structuralism's notions of language and thought and their relationship. With an alternative understanding

of culture, we could instead say, that a language may house a configuration of learning, and that it cannot itself be the configuration of learning. If such is indeed the case, then the diminishing power of a language is a problem of a different order.

Mainstream theories of language and culture work from the understanding that languages represent or house a culture and that a loss/extinction of a language necessarily indicates the loss of a culture as well. Here is where perhaps Derrida's correction of Sausserian theories and his subsequent pointing to the East as a place where language follows different rules might finally become useful.[26] In fact, language in the Indian culture, one could say, is not bound or shaped by the cultural, in the same way in which meaning-making (which is based on a transcendental signified) is in the West. Meaning-making and truth, both because of the direct relationship between language and culture in the West, it could be argued, became intricately attached to Christian history and ultimately became fully derivative of it. So, what I am pointing out is the possibility that the death of Sanskrit, to suppose that, has not and will not lead to the death of what may be called 'traditional or Indian ways of being'.

Let us now return to the question of English translations or even the issue of English language 'taking over' and leading to the suppressed state of the vernacular languages. Although the demise of vernacular languages is definitely undesirable, it is not undesirable anymore *because* there is a subsequent loss of culture. While we need to fight the hegemony of English as strongly as possible, our feeling of anxiety may be unnecessary even if English does receive a lot of attention. This is because, as we noted earlier, English has been domesticated and Indianized, giving rise to the peculiar form of 'Indian English.' In other words, English has been made to bend to suit descriptions and accounts of Indian experiences. However, the politics of domination cannot be overlooked, and more so because there is a strong narrative of humiliation written into the history of the English language, its history and its presence in India. Here again, Balagangadhara

provides a useful theory of colonialism of which I will only share one important point here.

> However, the … perception [about colonialism] does not emerge from a scientific study of colonialism but from the *rhetorical force* of another question: "if colonisation is not an expression of weakness, what else is it? An expression of strength?" Even though every historian can routinely assure us that 'higher' civilizations can be conquered and overrun by 'barbarians', the studies of colonial history do not appear to have moved away from this rhetorical question. On the contrary, they try to provide 'insights' into the Indian weakness, and tell us what the latter were. Of course, the strengths of the coloniser appear obvious. There is the emergence of the natural sciences that predates colonialism; and then there is the industrial revolution that postdates colonialism. The *popular consciousness* has telescoped both these events into a single state of affairs: the scientific, technological and the military might of the West. The consensus (more or less) is that colonialism expresses the 'weaknesses' of the colonised and the 'strengths' of the coloniser. (Balagangadhara and Bloch, "Colonialism, Colonial Consciousness, and Political Theory," 2008)

So, the seeing of a rhetorical question as a literal one has led us to anticipate and even accept a certain weakness, or effeminateness (as our colonizers would put it) on our part. It was possibly such humiliation that led to giving undue importance to the English language in the initial years after independence. With the postcolonial understanding of English as a conqueror's language or the language of the powerful, it seems to have had an overbearing influence upon us. It was possibly this same strain of humiliation that led India's upper class and privileged to pretend that English was somehow liberating. Steered clear of the narrative of humiliation and its other effects, it should be possible for us to view English as just another language, minus current. English then can be seen simply as a language for communication

and for the first time can be assessed for its appeal or the lack of it and for its effectiveness in describing Indian life-experiences.

In conclusion, we could say that Nair's statement about translation producing India relies on *certain* theories of nationhood, colonialism and limiting definitions of culture. We could hypothesize that what produces or unites India is its cultural realm, which finds different expressions in its social realms. In extension, we can perhaps see 'Indian Literature in English Translation' and the trends emerging in relation to it as representing the fact that we have learnt and made, another language our own. And that the spur in English language activity possibly only indicates an increased awareness about the unique place of India and its Literature in relation to the world. This realization is probably what produces the demand for more translations and with time, these translations will also clear the confusions that persist about India in Western minds without leading to textualization. Thus, with alternative understandings of concepts and phenomena like culture, colonialism, and Orientalism, the anxieties represented by the Two-Worlds theory change and diminish and can aid us in arriving at new ways of addressing some very crucial issues in Translation and Literary Studies.

NOTES:

1. This paper was presented in Tiruvananthapurm in 2008 under the broad area, 'Indian Literature in English Translation and Nation building' indicated in the concept note for the seminar *Translating India into English* organized by the University of Kerala. I thank Dr. Giridhar P P for his valuable comments on the presentation.

2. One has to only remember the song, "Why this kolaveri, kolaveri di…" English as a gender marker is crucial given the statistics that reveal that girls do better at exams and in general school and studying across India.

3. Salman Rushdie's praise for Indian writing in English as opposed

to the vernacular writings of India in his introduction to *The Vintage Book of Indian Writing* is significant in this context. It became controversial and raised concern in the literary world. Rushdie's remarks saw a response in Amit Chaudhuri's work.

4. Since travelling to the Unites States of America, I have developed some faith in the usefulness of audio books for people who speak but cannot read or write in a certain vernacular or mother tongue. In most parts of the USA, local community libraries have at least one audio copy of the books they hold. Perhaps awareness that plays and novels are better heard, with intonation, helps. But such an awareness, market and audience needs to be created in India through the technological expertise.

5. See Meenakshi Mukherjee (1993), Kothari (2003).

6. Madhu Kishwar's "Obstruction as Ideology" in Outlook is relevant here (http://www.outlookindia.com/article/obstruction-as-ideology/231135). Sasheej Hegde too critiques Partha Chatterjee for the understanding of nation as constitutively possessing qualities.

7. Similarly, Amit Chaudhuri points out how authorial choices remain important for drawing the boundary within which meaning-making occurs. This is a position that asserts that the author is not unimportant, not, 'dead.'

8. For more on critiques of post-structuralism, see this link: http://www.brocku.ca/english/courses/4F70/poststruct.php

9. Cited in Rita Kothari, 2003.

10. See: Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. *The Post-Colonial Critic: Interviews, Strategies, Dialogues*. Ed. Sarah Harasym. New York & London: Routledge, 1990.

11. An informative gloss here is Susie Tharu's position on the role of ideology. See her essay on Women Writing in India in

Journal of Arts and Ideas for this.

12. They are based on one essay by Foucault, Michel. 1980. *Power/ Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings*, 1972-1977. Ed. Colin Gordon. New York: Pantheon.

13. Different understandings of Foucault like that of Donald Davidson are completely ignored by these scholars. See: Davidson, Arnold I. 2001. *The Emergence of Sexuality: Historical Epistemology and the Formation of concepts*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. For a complete elucidation of the problem with such a thesis about power, see: Ramaswamy Krishnan et al. Eds. *Invading the Sacred: An analysis of Hinduism Studies in America*.

14. See his *History of Sexuality* volumes.

15. See Chakrabarty, Dipesh. "Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History: Who Speaks for 'Indian' Pasts?" *Representations* 37 (1992): 1-26.

16. For a quick glimpse of similar ideas, refer to Pollock's talk in the Jaipur Literature Festival on the recently inaugurated Murthy Classical Library of India.

17. Furthermore, the development of a number of vernaculars in the 10th century is a mystery few can claim to have solved. In my doctoral dissertation, I contest the idea that the vernaculars emerged to dislodge the high position of Sanskrit through an analyses of Bhakti literature that borrows freely and wherever necessary from Sanskrit. See Kannan (2011).

18. See Romila Thapar's *Early India*.

19. For an elaborate discussion of the debate in France and other European countries, see: Lecercle, Jean-Jacques and Denise Riley. 2004. *Force of Language*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

20. For a very original elucidation and argumentation of this, see: Balagangadhara 1994.

21. See: ML Dames (1989), *The Book of Duarte Barbosa*, 2 Vols, ASEA, Indian reprint.

22. Nandy, Ashis. "History's Forgotten Doubles." *History and Theory* 34 (1995): 44-66.

23. For an interesting understanding of a related problem of taking from the past what we want and its violence, See: Tharu, Susie. 1991. "Women Writing in India". *Indian Journal of Arts and Ideas*. Dialogue on cultural practice in India: Inventing Traditions. Numbers 20-21. March.

24. See Amit Chaudhuri's edited volume on Indian literature, *The Picador Book of Modern Indian Literature*, for glimpses of this definition of culture.

25. This essay is uploaded and freely available on the web for those who register with yahoo group that discusses Balagangadhara's book. To access this essay, follow this link: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/TheHeathenInHisBlindness/

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Inequality of Languages and the Question of Choice in Translation

Debarshi Nath

Abstract

The paper looks at the practice of translation in the context of the continuing cultural-linguistic hegemony of the West. Drawing on insights presented by Talal Asad and Prasenjit Gupta, the paper looks at the different manifestations of inequality that are obvious in the process of translation. The paper contends that translation studies as a discipline must take into account the socio-political context of literature and engage in greater self-reflexivity. Finally, the paper pleads for an ethical turn in translation practices.

Keywords: translation, politics, globalization, language, power

This paper examines the act of translation in the Indian context against the backdrop of issues of power and the cultural-linguistic hegemony of the West. It is now accepted that though we live in a world of competing truths aided by the internet and the media, there is a greater consciousness and even, resistance to the explicitly Western as well as exclusive nature of academic thought. This paper, however, should not be seen as an attempt to look at the West uncritically as a homogenous entity nor is it a plea to discard all that is Western. The writer is aware of the fact that the West in itself can never be a monolithic entity and also that there is a lot that the West has offered us in terms of values and principles which we continue to live by and adore, such as secularism and democracy. The argument in this paper needs to be seen more against the limited backdrop of the practices of translation that are in vogue in our country right now. In this context, it is particularly appropriate to consider the effects of linguistic inequality on the process of translation. Taking into

account the agency of the translator, the choice of texts and the search for equivalence is an ideological issue. While there can be no prescription regarding the choice of texts or equivalents, I do believe that an analysis of translation trends brings to the fore the politics of appropriation of ideas for extra-academic gains. In fact, the trend of translation at a given point of time reflects the hegemonic tendencies that are at work.

Before I begin, let me make explicit my ideological footing. I am a teacher of cultural studies and thus by virtue of my disciplinary standing, I am concerned with the inequality of power that pervades different cultural practices and as a person committed to justice and equity in the world, I find it necessary to begin my paper by asking some fundamental, if not rudimentary questions about translation. What is the relationship of translation with ideology, politics and power? What purpose did translation serve in the colonial times? How has globalization impacted translation practices? To what extent will the inequalities of power, resources and technologies lead to a situation where translation will lead to a unidirectional adoption of Western or dominant international standards by people all over the world? Considering the given situation, what, if any, are the ethical responsibilities of the translator?

Let me start off by looking at the past. When we look back at the late 18th and 19th centuries, the encounter with the West resulted in a complex, relatively bidirectional, cultural-intellectual relationship between India and the West. In the fields of science, engineering, and in new disciplines such as politics and economics, English was the donor language for translations into Indian languages. In the fields of philosophy, religion and linguistics, Sanskrit assumed the role of donor language for translations into English and other European languages. By 1820, all the major universities of Europe had a space for Sanskrit studies and it came to enjoy immense prestige. Some of the greatest thinkers of the 19th and early part of the 20th centuries were, by their own admission, deeply influenced by Indian thought –

Humboldt, Hegel, Goethe, Kant, Nietzsche, Ferdinand de Saussure, Roman Jakobson (Sareen, 2010; 78). The situation has changed in recent times. While there have been numerous translations within and into Indian languages, the dominant trend has been of translations from European languages into modern Indian languages, and these too chiefly from English. This has become a unidirectional flow, leading to the emergence of a recipient-donor relationship. Notwithstanding the growth of postcolonialism as a theory of import in recent times, modern Indian languages "have been placed in a recipient role with European languages, particularly English as the donor. There is in this trend an implicit recognition of the source language as the intellectual reservoir along with an acceptance of the relatively impoverished state of the target language" (Kapoor, 1995: 20). This trend is a reflection of what Kapoor calls "a part of the general attitude of uncritical subordination to the western ideas" (1995: 20).

I think there is hardly any dispute today about the imbalance of power in the relationship between languages. This being the case, the linguistic inequalities at work when texts are translated from 'lesser' languages like Assamese into more 'rich' languages like English, is something that needs to be looked at. Following Talal Asad, Prasenjit Gupta (1998: 172) identifies three kinds of linguistic inequalities: 'political', 'surface' and 'deep' inequalities.

1. 'Political inequality' refers to the imbalance of linguistic power arising out of the economic power of the US and of English.

2. 'Surface' inequalities is about differences in size of vocabulary, grammar, syntax, phonology, and surface features; 'surface inequalities', include the relative sizes of languages. This imbalance between source and target vocabularies has obvious implications for lexical choices made in translation and their stylistic and other effects. The differences in vocabulary size also have implications for linguistic lending and borrowing: words are more likely to travel from English into Assamese than the other way around. The bottom line

is that in all kinds of transactions the weaker language is transformed more than the stronger. Following Lawrence Venuti (2004: 42), retaining 'foreignness' in translated texts has almost become a matter of principle – a question of political correctness, in so far as translations into English are concerned. What happens to the question of retaining 'foreignness' in a text when texts are translated into the regional languages? In translation between European languages, native words can be retained without any fear of obfuscation. Repeated use of words like *zeitgeist, déjà* vu in English provide examples of this.

3. 'Deep' inequalities are about differences in the internal workings of different languages. Asad's category of 'deep' inequalities is related to Walter Benjamin's concise analysis of the differences between languages in terms of 'mode of intention' in 'The Task of the Translator' (2000: 18): the words 'pain' and 'dukh' (Assamese) may "intend" the same object but the 'mode of intention' may be different. This, in turn, is related to Spivak's use of the three-tiered notion of language (as rhetoric, logic, silence) in 'The Politics of Translation' (2000: 399):

> She (the translator) must be able to confront the idea that what seems resistant in the space of English may be reactionary in the space of the original language (2000:404).

It is the particular interactions among these various attributes of language that differ from one language to another, which cannot easily be reproduced in translation. This is linguistic inequality at the most fundamental, most innate, most difficult-to-verbalize level (and characteristics of language exist in ways that cannot be communicated, they exist outside language itself). This inequality of language which exists outside language is what Asad refers to as deep inequalities and it is this form of inequality that is the most politically vibrant.

Asad talks of the political power of languages: "because the languages of Third World societies … are "weaker" in relation

to Western languages (and today, especially to English), they are more likely to submit to forcible transformation in the translation process than the other way around … Western nations have the greater ability to manipulate (Third world countries) … Western languages produce and deploy desired knowledge more readily than Third World languages do (1986: 157).

This reminds us of the debate between Krishna Kanta Handique and Kaliram Medhi, the then president of the Assam Sahitya Sabha regarding the propriety of translating texts from English into Assamese (2001: 98). While Handique, a renowned scholar, thought that translation at that point of time in history was a preparatory process leading to the final flowering of Assamese literature, Medhi felt that translation would be the harbinger of the intrusion of 'alien' thoughts and ideas into native culture.

However, at this point of time I would like to distance myself from Asad and Sareen's argument and admit that it would be a fallacy to refer or treat the West as a homogenous entity churning out "dangerous" texts readily swallowed by gullible readers from India. But I do contend that examination of translation trends that prevail during specific periods brings about an understanding of the larger cultural forces at work. Indian theoreticians like Tejaswini Niranjana have taken up this issue really well to highlight the ways in which translation figured prominently in the project of orientalism (1922:2):

> Translation as a practice shapes, and takes shape within, the asymmetrical relations of power that operate under colonialism. What is at stake here is the representation of the colonized, who need to be produced in such a manner as to justify colonial domination, and to beg for the English book by themselves.

Tejaswini Niranjana highlights the interpellative (in the Althusserian sense) aspect of colonial translation projects. In fact, as she rightly argues, translation was effectively used as a tool for the creation of "willing" colonial subjects in the texts of orientalists

like William Jones.

Let us take up an example of the present state of affairs in the translation scenario of Assam. I believe that most Assamese readers are aware of the fact that today, on an average, a Dale Carnegie translation sells better than most books written in Assamese. Why do such self-help books sell so well? Is this trend a manifestation of a new system of values?

James English, author of The Economy of Prestige (2005), amply demonstrates that "the global market for cultural prestige" will "impose its increasingly transnational system of values" and thereby shift both monetary and symbolic success and energy away from the local stage and make forms valuable "only to the degree that they may be repackaged or recontextualized for mainstream consumption" (quoted in Iyer and Zare, 2009: xxvi). Thus in this age, profit-motive and political correctness decide many of the policies of the publishing houses.

It is painfully obvious that the so-called 'global marketplace' is a Western-dominated place: it is clear that only a tiny percentage of non-English original works trickle slowly into English translations, and even then are much more likely to be circulated if deemed immediately user-friendly to Western readers (xxvii).

Many works of the regional literatures of India have not received the promotion and larger audience they deserve even within, let alone outside of, India. Iyer and Zare (Iyer and Zare, 2009: xxvii) cite the example of Indira Goswami (also known as Mamoni Raisom Goswami), the Assamese writer who is probably the most well known outside Assam. In spite of this, Indira Goswami is yet to be an internationally visible writer and this is proved by Iyer and Zare on the basis of their analysis of the copies of her books available at the World Cat database.

Thus, given the inequality between the languages, it is important to keep in mind that the West has the larger share of

'truths' in the world. To return to Talal Asad once again:

> The translation is addressed to a very specific audience, which is waiting to read *about* another mode of life and to manipulate the text is read according to established rules, not to learn to *live* a new mode of life (ibid 159).

There are instances when translators have tried to forcefully fit a foreign word into a native context or consciously or subconsciously appropriated a foreign word for other interests. Consider the case of the almost unthinking use of the word 'tribe' which has nearly entered the vocabulary of the regional languages. We are aware that anthropologists like Lewis Morgan subscribed to the 19th century view of tribe as representing not only a particular *type of society* but also a particular *stage of evolution*. It worked best where the tribe was in fact an isolated, self-contained, and socially homogeneous group to a large extent, but this was not the case everywhere. The problem assumed a chronic form in South Asia, where tribes had cohabited and shared space with other types of social formations for centuries. The officially approved "Scheduled Tribe" skirts the issue of a formal definition and merely stands for a set of communities listed in an official schedule.

To cite another example, while today there is a recognition of the translator as fully engaged in the literary, social and ideological realities of his or her time, what has often been missing from translation studies accounts is a clear definition of what "culture" means. While "culture" is recognized as one of the most difficult and over determined concepts in the contemporary human and social sciences, it often appears in translation studies as if it had an obvious and unproblematic meaning (Simon, 1996:x).

Translators are generally aware that he/she must understand the culture that informs the text; in fact, it is said, and rightly so, that texts are "embedded" in culture. Thus, it is argued that the more "embedded" a text is, the more difficult it is to translate. However, this is where we get into a problem; to quote

Sherry Simon

> The difficulty with such statements is that they seem to presume a unified cultural field which the term inhabits; the translator must simply track down the precise location of the term within it and then investigate the corresponding cultural field for corresponding realities. What this image does not convey is the very difficulty of determining "cultural meaning" (1996: 130).

In India, for example, the term 'sanskriti', which translates as 'culture', is emblematic of a system of representation that calls 'Indian culture' into being. Here, "the culture question is an intimate part of the formation of a national(ist) modernity, but culture in modernity tends to be represented as something that remains outside of modernity" (2007: 211). In other words, while the idea of nation is a gift of modernity, the idea of a civilizational (traditional) culture is evoked to counter modernity (Nath and Dutta, 2012: 12). It would be well to remember that the translation of culture as 'sanskriti' happened at a definite moment in history: it was the product of a nationalist discourse that tended to depict the East as the source of spiritual culture and the West as the source of material or scientific Western culture.

Thus, translation studies needs to problematize the understanding of concepts such as culture and tribe. Secondly, translation studies must also be made accountable for the confusion surrounding such terms today. Rudolf Pannwitz makes a very pertinent observation regarding the need for translators to test the tolerance of their language for incorporating unaccustomed forms:

> Our translations, even the best ones, proceed from a wrong premise. They want to turn Hindi, Greek, English into German instead of turning German into Hindi, Greek, English. Our translators have a far greater reference for the usage of their own language than for the spirit of the foreign works. . . . The basic error of the translator is that

he preserves the state in which his own language happens to be instead of allowing his language to be powerfully affected by the foreign tongue. Particularly when translating from a language very remote from his own he must go back to the primal elements of language itself and penetrate to the point where work, image, and tone converge. He must expand and deepen his language by means of the foreign language. (quoted in Benjamin, 2000:22)

But this is easier said than done. It is largely something the translator cannot determine by individual activity (any more than the individual speaker can affect the evolution of his or her language) – it is governed by institutionally defined power relations between the languages/modes of life concerned.

The issue of translation is also related to the status of English in India. Is English an Indian or a foreign language? Though the use of English has grown exponentially in India over the last few decades, it is indubitable that it is not the language of the majority. Questions remain regarding the ethos of the language. There is a strange irony at work here: on the one hand we say that English is an Indian language but we cannot seem to manage without translation of English.

I believe that the agency of the translator and the tremendous political potential of the act of translation are accepted facts today. In this context, is translation from English into Indian languages an attempt to undo historical wrongs? Is this a part of a postcolonial civilizing mission? Is it a reflection of the plains man's burden? Having said this, "Harish Trivedi (1997) has demonstrated how Premchand's translation of Anatole France's *Thais* was a political act in the sense that the very selection of the text was of one which was not part of the literature of the colonial power and that it attempted a sort of liberation of Indian literature from the tutelage of the imperially-inducted master literature, English" (quoted in Ketkar).

So to conclude, translation helps to create and maintain

cultural hierarchies. Translation obviously contributes to the ability of different groups of people to understand each other. But, while translation can definitely go a long way in bridging the gap between cultures and languages within India and beyond, even in ideal circumstances it cannot function as the ever-preferred alternative. More and more works of translation are welcome, but the economic and political might of a few nations can and will ensure that only certain books and films in certain languages are available to a global citizenry. Already we are well on the path of wiping out indigenous languages of the world. In such a situation, translation can be both a threat as well as a blessing for "minority" languages. "Translation into a dominant monoculture such as English can lead to an eventual situation of fewer works being composed in tongues other than English" (Nalini and Zare, 2009: XXX). In such a case, we will be involved in the task of figuratively reconstructing the monolingual mythical tower of Babel once again.

To conclude,

> The global dominance of English has been accompanied by a growing demand for translation, as people's own language continues to be the preferred language for access into informational goods. Translation is not just important in quantitative terms, it is also key to understanding current processes of cultural globalization, which are characterized by inequality and asymmetry (Bielsa, 2009: 14).

In such a scenario, translators as individuals and as groups are ethically responsible for, different uses of translation. Translators therefore need to adopt a more self-critical approach to translation. The need of the hour is "to facilitate cultural interface that is multidirectional rather than oriented to the unilateral dissemination of Westernized cultural forms, thus displacing local cultural forms elsewhere in the world, translators must be realistic about the material conditions of translation and cultural exchange under globalization" (Tymoczko, 2009: 183). The exchange of culture is never free of material interests. China

has been able to resist and counter the threat of unidirectional flow of knowledge, in which, the East very often finds itself in the receiving end. Apparently, Chinese readers do not have to wait very long to have access to the latest inventions, discoveries and advances in the field of research in any language of the world. To cite an example, when I randomly surfed the net for Chinese translation agencies, I discovered 299 such in a single website (http://www.translationdirectory.com/translation_agencies_in_ china.php). This indicates that on an average even the relatively less-educated Chinese have more ready access to the current pool of knowledge than the Indians**.**

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Re-texting as Translation: A Study Based on *Ramayana* Translations in India

Sreedevi K. Nair

Abstract

The purpose of this article is twofold. The first is to draw attention to a category of texts like Sita Dukham which position themselves between original texts and translations – just below original creations and much above translations (translation is used here in its restricted sense of linguistic transfer). The second is to analyze the process of re-texting which results in the formation of such texts, to establish the validity of this process and to mark its contours. The article is consequently organized in two parts. The first part fixes the context of the study and details the special aspects of the selected text, namely Sita Dukham. The second section discusses the process of re-texting.

The Context of the Study and *Sita Dukham*

The literary tradition of Malayalam as well as all the other Indian languages is replete with creative retellings of ancient literature. *The Ramayana and The Mahabharata* are the two Indian master narratives that have been rendered into a multiplicity of languages and in a variety of ways, down the centuries. Such intra-cultural rewritings stem from an ideology which recognizes the parity of the source and the target languages; the source culture and the target culture; the original author and the translator; the source text and the rewritten text; the creative talent of the author and the individual preferences as well as uniqueness of perceptions of the translator; the genius of the source language and the specificities of the target language. There is, in such cases, no dominant cultural discourse or any assumption of textual essentialism, no dislocated centre or margin. What exists in the

practice is only an open recognition of plurality and difference within cultures. For example, though *Valmiki*[1] Ramayana is considered to be the *Aadi Kaavya*[2] or the first poem, each region in India has its own version of the epic which holds sway over the mind and imagination of the people there. Such regional versions which teem with local imagery, customs and ways are known by the name of the translator and not by the name of the original writer. Thus, Kerala has *Ezhuthacchan*[3] *Ramayana*, Tamil Nadu has *Kamba*[4] *Ramayana*, the Hindi-speaking northern states have *Tulsi*[5] *Ramayana* (also called the *Ramacharit Manas*) and so on – Ezhuthacchan, Kamban and Tulsi referring to respective translators.

The text chosen in this article for case study is *Sita Dukham*, a short, simple narrative written in the early decades of eighteenth century in Kerala. The work is largely 'original' though the outline of the story, the characters and the major incidents remain almost the same as in many earlier texts. The writer hasn't made major changes to the framework of the story but has made very skilful and artistic twists and turns to rewrite it. No new characters are created either only fresh dimensions are added to existing characters. Thus *Sita Dukham* which runs to just a few pages only, re-writes the original to present yet another version of it which reads refreshingly original.

Some of the significant changes made in *Sita Dukham* are the following. The whole long section of *Uttara Ramayana*[6], i.e. the latter half of the *Ramayana* is compressed into eleven and a half pages. In the original *Ramayana*, the king's messenger brings the news that Rama's subjects suspect the chastity of Sita who has for several months lived in the kingdom of Ravana and that compels Rama to abandon his wife in the forest. In *Sita Dukham*, it is the ploy of her mother-in-law that gets Sita into trouble. When Rama is gone hunting, the uncles -in-law make Sita draw the imposing image of Ravana on a wooden seat. Sita sketches the glorious ten-headed Ravana – one of his faces chanting the Vedas, another enjoying music, yet another face meditating on Sita, another face challenging the Sun God, so on and so forth and the mammas-in-

law revel looking at it but when Rama comes, they purposefully give him that very seat to sit on. When he sits on it, the picture of Ravana shirks him off. Rama looks to see what is wrong and sees the gorgeous image of Ravana staring back. Then the Mammas–in-law narrate to him how Sita entertains herself regularly by drawing pictures of Ravana. Enraged at this, Rama asks his younger brother Lakshmana to take Sita to the forest and to kill her.

Secondly, when Lakshmana comes back supposedly after doing the deed, the Mammas-in-law insist on seeing Sita's blood in the sword. This is unthinkable from the part of the noble mother-in-laws figuring in the original. In *Sita Dukham* however, when Lakshmana produces his sword smeared with the blood of python, they send him off to the forest saying they can distinguish animal and human blood; a second time they tell him that they can identify male and female blood. So the third time, Lakshmana returns to the forest, cuts off Sita's finger and stains his sword with her very blood.

Another interesting change is also introduced in the narration of the birth of Sita's twin boys. In the original, Sita who was five months into pregnancy at the time of her abandonment, gives birth to twin boys, Lava and Kusa. In *Sita Dukham*, Sita gives birth only to Lava. One day, she goes to pluck flowers for the evening rites leaving her little one with the Valmiki. But the child moves away and goes to his mother without the sage noticing. The sage could not find him anywhere and so creates his likeness from a blade of grass and breathes life into the form. Thus he becomes Kusa – *Kusa* being the name of the grass from which he was created.

Thus there are various alterations in this eleven and a half page story and the old story is retold from a very different perspective. This marvelously transforms the story. It is like looking at the same mountain from a different angle of vision –the whole appearance, the stature and the elegance, the pinnacles touching the sky, the foam-like clouds floating around and even the play of light and shade on the peaks, alter and change. It is the same

mountains in the very same setting but an amazing transformation of view occurs.

Several other interesting alterations assure *Sita Dukham* a rightful place as an original text. Besides, not even a single sentence in *Sita Dukham* is a faithful rendering of any original text. Each and every sentence thus being 'original', the work cannot be termed a translation in the conventional sense of the term. At the same time, the story, the characters and the plot being largely borrowed, the book is unfit to be regarded a full-fledged original either. The making of such an 'original' text from an existing source text or a multiplicity of texts built around the same story, involves a complex process almost similar to the creation of a new text. The central event or the frame work of the story is all that is borrowed while all or most of the textual elements and procedures are new or are transformed drastically. What occurs during the process is not simply translating but re-texting which facilitates presentation of familiar matter using novel textual features and texting techniques. The works thus created claim an independent space and stature in the target language and culture. Very often, they turn out to be intra-cultural textual negotiations which enjoy parallel existence vis-à-vis their source texts.

Re- Texts (Re- Texted Texts) & the Process of Re-Texting

Re-texting is a case of translation which involves a complex process of re-creating one or more original texts or selected parts of them to produce a Target Text which enjoys sovereign existence in the target language. The Source in *re-texting* need not necessarily be a single text. Several Sources, popular notions and ideas surrounding Source texts, cultural, social and historical significances read into it - all these together form the composite corpus received and handled by the translator. Thus, instead of a single source text, there is *Source Composite* in *re-texting*. The Source Composite acts as a kind of *Seed Text* from which *Re-Texts* stem forth.

The Concept of the *Seed* Text

Shelley says in his *Defence of Poetry*, 'The plant must spring again from its seed, Or it will bear no flower.' As plants grow from seeds, so do *Re-Texts* from *Seed Texts*. The *Seed Text* is the assortment of embryonic details selected by subsequent authors from canonical originals to create new texts which share storylines, themes, characters and maybe ideas but are original and unique in themselves. The *Seed Text* acts as the nucleus around which the new text takes shape. Details, emotions, specificities which best befit the purposes of the author are added; his imagination works on it, his words give expression and a new text gets formed. The adding, deleting, mixing and moulding processes set in motion a series of new meanings and as the new text takes form they reach a fresh equilibrium.

Accepting just a bunch of bare details provides immense scope for writing new. The plot and the setting are partially retained but most other textual features get transformed in a major way. Partially retained plot and setting, constitute the *Seed Text* which each writer develops into more or less a new text, unique in form, diction, thought and action. This phenomenon of subsequent texts relating to prior texts in differing ways and maintaining relationships among themselves was referred to by Ramanujan in his article titled 'Three Hundred Ramayanas' included in *Many Ramayanas* edited by Richman . Ramanujan likens the Ramayana tradition to a pool of signifiers that include plot, setting, characters and the like and says that each new *Ramayana* is a 'crystallization' created out of it. He says,

'These various texts not only relate to prior texts directly, to borrow or refute but they relate to each other through this common code or common pool. Every author, if one may hazard a metaphor, dips into it and brings out a unique crystallization, a new text with a unique texture and a fresh context.' (p. 46)

The metaphor of the pool of signifiers is beautiful and telling but crystallization is not a culmination point beyond which moving is frozen. Generations of subsequent texts can result from such crystallizations which may all share similarities among

themselves.

The *Seed Texts* provide a grid with a number of evocative gaps and suggestive silences. The way the gaps and silences get worked upon, decides the nature of the new text. *Seed Texts* of the same story selected by different authors need not correspond with each other. From the hundreds of versions of a story that are extant, each writer accepts a bunch of details full of possibilities and potentialities and suited particularly to his purpose. This serves as the *Seed Text* for his narration. Just as the multitudinous seeds of a tree carrying inherited similarities grow out to sport different forms and figures under new skies, under different climatic conditions and in new growing mediums, the seed texts branch out to fresh textual formations which relate backwards to prior texts in some way and forwards to possible future texts. Endless generations of *Re-Texts* thus become possible.

Re-Texting: A Western Example

The case of Milton's *Paradise Lost* can be cited as an example of *Re-texting*. For the central event described in *Paradise Lost*, Milton's authority is the first few chapters of the 'Genesis'. For the rest, he draws freely upon the Old Testament as well as legends and stories that have accumulated round the biblical story which act as his *Source Composite*. However, for most of the elaborations, his mainstay is his own power of imagination. The original which is a few pages of *The Bible* thus swells to the proportions of an epic of twelve books.

Alteration of text as well as texting techniques transforms the work completely. The language of *The Bible* which is a kind of poetic prose turns to pure poetry in the target text. The structure of *Paradise Lost* and the arrangement of events too are Milton's. He begins the story in the middle. In Book 1, Satan rises with Beelzebub from the burning lake of Hell where he has been cast. He rouses his stupefied legions, tells them of Earth and its new inhabitants and exhorts them to fresh efforts against the Almighty. The story of the creation of the world with which

the 'Genesis' opens, is described much later in Book 7. What is more striking is the way Milton infuses the biblical story with his personal feelings. There is a strange analogy between the author and Satan. This makes him put into the mouth of Satan some of the most passionately lyrical passages in the poem. Like Milton, Satan too is a rebel. He too had known a mighty past, had dreamt beautiful dreams and reached with all his might for a great venture. He lost miserably but struggled on valiant and undismayed against hopeless odds. Milton who carved Satan in his own likeness invested him surreptitiously with such noble traits that he turns out to be a splendidly lovable criminal and the very hero of *Paradise Lost*. The work which was written to 'justify the ways of God to men', ultimately ends up glorifying Satan. Thus, in *Re-texting* the translator ceases to be a faithful transmitter of the author's meaning and becomes the co-creator of the new text in every sense. The relationship between the original and the target text very often develop into a two way alliance in which each work upon the other, transform and get transformed reciprocally. The case of *Paradise Lost* exemplifies the phenomenon. Critics point out that many people attribute to the details of the Bible , which do not figure in the Holy Book at all. In his introduction to Milton's *Paradise Lost*, D.C. Somerveli says, 'The narrative of Paradise Lost has itself become a part of our popular tradition and probably many a man attribute to *The Bible* itself details that belong only to Milton.' Such reciprocity is a characteristic feature of re-texted works.

The practice of *Re-texting* allows the translator to add, delete, subvert, critique or transform text/ textual elements. Such enormous freedom becomes possible as the unit of translation is not words, sentences or even larger textual components. The unit of translation in *re-texting* is the whole text which renders itself to revision, reinterpretation and re-creating. Hence, conventional yardsticks for judging translation such as faithfulness to the original or the creation of equivalent effect cannot be applied for re-texted works. What is aimed at through *re-texting* is not the production of a text 'equivalent' to the Source Text but the

creation of a parallel text of autonomous standing in the target language and culture. The worth or worthlessness of the re-texted text is judged irrespective of its allegiance to the source. *Re-texting* is possible not only in the case of classical or legendary literature but also modern literature and it could be intra-lingual or interlingual.

A Case for Re-texts

This newly identified category of in-between texts (between original texts and translations) can best be termed ***Re-Texts*** – i.e. Re-Texted texts. The name *Re-Text* is self-explanatory. At one level, it is the re-presentation of a text. At another, it is a re-textable text –i.e., a text which functions like any other text and can lend itself to further translation or *re-texting* and thus get *re-*presented as a fresh *Text*. A *Re-Text* is the creative reconstruction of a source text produced through the process of *re-texting* which involves re-interpretation, re-ordering and re-writing of the original. They enjoy parallel existence vis-à-vis their source/sources and receive praise or blame as any original text in the target language. Epics in general are many dimensional magic canvases which afford myriad views at the touch of an inspired hand. The moment the canvas is so adjusted that a particular character or incident is centered, all the other characters move as in a fluid medium and the whole picture gets re-adjusted to project a new structuration. The canvas and the forms and figures in it remain age-old but the picture, color, value, texture and formation will be new. The newly projected pictures though original, will be a pointer to all those myriad pictures that flashed and faded off in the past; they also lend a hazy view of the many possible pictures that may come alive in the future at the ingenious stroke of yet another mastermind. Same canvas, same setting, same characters yet countless new visions and texts!

Mona Bakerwrites in her introduction , 'One of the most fascinating things about exploring the history of translation is that it reveals how narrow and restrictive we have been in defining our object of study, even with the most flexible of definitions.' The

creation of the terms **Re-Texts** and **Re-texting** are necessitated by this predicament. Re-texted works positioned very close to original writings and leading a parallel existence in the target language and culture deserve a name and in-depth study. The case of texts like *Sita Dukham* and *Paradise Lost* is not an isolated one. There are treasured, Re-texted classics in all the languages. They remain invisible for lack of an individuating name. As texts that owe their existence to previous texts, they merit a place in the broad spectrum of translations, more specifically so among intra-cultural translations.

NOTES

1. A celebrated poet in Sanskrit Literature who wrote the epic *Ramayana*.

2. Works supposed to be the first literature in Sanskrit.

3. Thunchaththu Ramanujan Ezhuthachan- a Malayalam devotional poet and linguist from around the 16th century, also known as the father of Malayalam language

4. Kamban/ Kambar - a medieval Tamil poet and the author of the *Ramavataram*, the Tamil version of *Ramayana*.

5. Goswami Tulsidas - a Hindu poet-saint, reformer and philosopher.

6. The *Uttara kanda/ Uttara Ramayana comprises of a later addition to Valmiki Ramayana which mostly concerns about* the final years of Rama, Sita, and Rama's brothers.

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Philosophical Affinity between Tagore and Sufi Poets of Iran

Niaz Ahmed Khan

Abstract

India and Iran have centuries' old bond of socio-cultural, philosophical and mystical pursuits firmly deep rooted in the socio-ethical lives of both the countries. They have ever been a potential breeding ground for spiritual endeavours and philosophical reflections. With the advent of Islam there upon the genesis and development of Sufi movement in Iran side by side the Bhakti movement here in India brought both the nations close to each other to interact and share their spiritual gains. These two countries produced many luminaries throughout the ages immemorial. Among them Hafiz, Rumi in Iran and Tagore in India outshined their predecessors in their philosophical outlook and humanistic approach. The present article is a humble attempt to trace, find out and correlate the thread of common elements much pertinent to their works.

Key Words: *Mysticism, humanism* and *Philosophy*

شکر شکن شوند همه طوطیان هند
زین قند پارسی که به بنگا له می رود

All the parrots (poets) of India will be overwhelmed
By the sweetness of this sugar candy of Persia that goes to Bengal

Some centuries ago a ruler of Bengal once invited Hafiz Shirazi the divine tongued Persian poet of Iran but owing to his advanced age thereupon strenuous journey involved in he could not venture out and just sent a ghazal in response to that containing this famous couplet. Down a trail of centuries later a sun rose from

the eastern horizon of Bengal and gradually soaring high reached his zenith to spread luminosity throughout the world whose poetic attainment name and fame made every Asian country to be proud of and consider him to be their own. The zephyr bearing the fragrance of his poetic excellence reached and overwhelmed the Iranian people as well and subsequently prompted the king of Iran Reza Shah Pahlavi to extend an invitation not only to acknowledge and felicitate him for his literary achievements and humanistic reflections but also to see the legacy of their own poetic genius getting embodied in the form of an Indian poet known as Rabindranath Tagore. The emotional and intellectual affinity could be seen through these words of the poet expressed subsequent upon his journey to Persia in the year 1932, "Persians have a passion for poetry, a genuine affection for their poets and I have obtained a share of this affection without having to show any thing for it in return[1]…so they are looking on me as a blood relation, on top of that the rumor has gone forth that my poems have an affinity with those of their favorite mystic poets of old.[2] Once I got acquainted with Iran from distance in my childhood days. The image of Iran was a land of poets, reflections, and of imaginations. Its language was Persian and the message was altogether for the whole of humanity. My father was a passionate fan of Hafiz. He used to recite the couplets of Hafiz and explain it to me. The image of Iran was drawn through these verses on the canvas of my mind.[3] Sitting at the tomb of Hafiz suddenly I realized a flash of light releasing from the gleeful eyes of the poet of Shiraz and having travelled through many ages reflected upon my heart. It seems as if we both were co-drinkers in the same tavern savoring many cups of the wine of Gnosticism.[4]

This is a known fact that Maharishi Devendranath Tagore who was a staunch follower of the social reformist movement of Brahmo Samaj started by Raja Ram Mohan Roy had a great interest in the mystic poetry of Hafiz Shirazi. His liking for Hafiz was so deep that every day he used to recite some couplets of Hafiz's ghazal side by side the hymns of Upanishad in his morning prayer. It may also be noted that Raja Ram Mohan Roy was himself a great

scholar of Arabic, Persian and an author of 'Tohfatul Movahedin' (The gift of monotheists). Thus there was a congenial atmosphere conducive to mystic pursuit both in and outside Tagore's family ambit. In such a favorable surrounding of mystic cherishment the young Rabindranath Tagore was nourished, educated and trained under the proficient patronage of his father who himself had a mystic bent of mind, "My father was a great scholar .He was intoxicated with Hafiz 's verses. When I was a boy I often used to listen to his recitation of those poems and he translated them to me with a fervor of enjoyment that touched my heart…It brings to my mind once again how my father to the end of his days derived deep consolation from your poet's songs assimilating them in his devotional life."[5] And thus he developed longing inclination towards Persian poetry especially those of Sufi poets of Iran like Hafiz and Rumi who were great exponents of the philosophy of unity of being and monotheism. Tagore in his offering songs has explicitly shown his monotheistic outlook and he believes that God is not separate from us. He is not confined to any particular place nor can His presence be evidently seen in places of worship rather he can be realized in the temple of man's own existence and everywhere on earth. So he says:

"O God you are crystallized in the fire and even dwell in water

You have encompassed everything and I before such a God bow

my head and prostrate in submission"

And again he says:

Thou art the sky and thou art the nest as well

O thou beautiful, there in the nest it is thy love

That encloses the soul with color, sounds and odour.[6]

Such monotheistic ideas are found in some of the verses of Baba Tahir the Persian poet:

به دریا بنگرم دریا ته وینم   به صحرا بنگرم صحرا ته وینم

نشان از قامت زیبا ته وینم[7]   به هر جا بنگرم کوه و درودشت

I look at the desert I find the vastness of you

Where ever I look at mountain, plains or forest

I behold the manifestations of your beauty.

The human soul has ever been craving for union with the eternal soul ever since its separation at the time of creation. This pang of separation has ever been a moving spirit behind expression of every tender feeling:

"It is the pang of separation that spreads throughout the world and gives

birth to shapes innumerable in the infinite sky.

It is the sorrow of separation that gazes in silence all night from star to

star and becomes lyric among rustling leaves in rainy darkness of July.

It is this overspreading pain that deepens into loves and desires, into

sufferings and joys in human homes; and it is this that ever melts and

flows in songs through my poet's heart."[8]

Jalaluddin Rumi expresses the same feelings in an allegorical way:

ز جدائیها شکایت می کند	بشنو چون نی حکایت می کند
از نفیرم مردو زن نالیده اند	کز نیستان تا مرا ببریده اند
تا بگویم شرح درد ا شتیاق	سینه خواهم شرحه شرحه از فراق
باز جوید روزگار و صل خویش	هر کسی کو د ور ماند از اصل خویش
هر که این آتش ندارد نیست باد	آتش ست این بانگ نای و نیست باد

آتش عشق است کاندر نی فتاد

جو شش عشق است کاندر می فتاد[9]

Listen to this flute that spreads melody when played

It is rather moaning on its separation from its bed

Ever since I am cut off from the reed bed

Men and women have come to tears on my bewailing

I want a chest torn off with pang

To listen to my woeful tale of longing and pain

Everyone who is separated from his source of origin

Ever looks for a chance to get united with the aimed

The melodious wind blown off the flute is not the wind but fire

Every breathing soul devoid of this fire is worth of no existence

It is the fire of love ignited in the flute

It is the surge of love blended with the bubbling wine.

The glowing shine of Rumi's thoughts not only illuminated his time and region but also surpassed the barrier of time and space to spread over throughout the world attracting the people of vision and pursuers of truth the omnipresent, omniscient ever swaying to and fro engulfing the whole of creation but still hard to perceive.

By going through the songs of Tagore it is evident that there is a strong bond of similarity between the two exponents of mystic pursuits based on their belief in the unity of being, love, music, exploring the infinite silence of inner self, the melody of flute and jiate mora (annihilation to the eternal truth)

One of the most striking similarities between Rumi and Tagore is their perception of love. Both of them consider the love as a seminal factor of creation, the basic element of existence and a moving spirit to keep the world in motion. Tagore says: "Yes, I know, this is nothing but thy love, O beloved of my heart- this golden light that dances upon the leaves, these idle clouds sailing across the sky, this passing breeze leaving its coolness upon my

forehead. The morning light has flooded my eyes- this is thy message to my heart. Thy face is bent from above, thy eyes look down on my eyes, and my heart has touched thy feet."[10]

Strikingly similar ideas are expressed by Rumi too in a different way:

عشق ساید کوه را ماند ریگ   عشق جوشد بحر را ماند دیگ

عشق لرزاند زمین را از گزاف   عشق بشکافد فلک را صد شگاف

او ز حرص و جمله عیبی پاک شد   هر کرا جامه ز عشق چاک شد

ای طبیب جمله علتهای ما   شاد باش ای عشق خوش سودای

ای تو افلا طون وجا لینوس ما[11]   ای دوای نخوت و ناموس ما

It is the love that simmers the sea like boiler

It is the love that grinds the mountain unto sand

It is the love that tears sky into hundred parts

It is the love that tremors the earth with its extravagance

Whose ever garment is torn in some one's love

He gets purified from greed lust and all ills

Be happy O the jubilant love-mania

O the physician of all ailments

O the remedy of pride and prejudices

O you the Plato and Galen of us

     And Tagore said, "My life is derived from love. This world is mortal but the love is ever lasting. Everything will perish except love which will ever remain in its original shape to train human soul to reach his goal" and further he says, "The world of mine is sustained with the fire of love"[12]

     Silence is another way of expression. At many instances in Mathnavi of Jalaluddin Rumi we come across a juncture where the incredibility of speech and tongue in expressing concealed

reflections of heart as well as poet's own unwillingness to bank upon word and articulate sounds are evidently seen. He believes that accomplishment of love lies in its inexpressive tongue. So he says:

گرچہ تفسیر زبان روشن گر است

لیک عشق بی زبان روشن تر است

حرف و صوت و گفت را برهم زنم

تا کہ بی این ہر سہ با تو دم زنم¹³

Though the eloquence of language is expressive

But inarticulate love is more explicit

I put aside letter, sound and the word

So as to talk to you without all these aids.

Tagore too is in search of the language of heart and is willing to compose such a song that could be listened to by the ear of soul not by the ear of physical body; "My real tongue is engrossed in creating art somewhere in the depth of spell bound silence of soul and it lies in a realm where inarticulate imagination is wandering to find some expression." ¹⁴

 "It is the will of my Lord not to sing any ringing song.

So I henceforth got on to compose silent song"

Love for humanity is one of the basic traits of Sufism. Likewise the very teaching of Tagore is based on love for human beings.

Leave this chanting and singing and telling of beads!

Whom dost thou worship in this lonely dark corner of a temple?

With doors all shut

Open thine eyes and see thy God is not before thee.

He is there where the tiller is tilling the hard

Ground and where the path maker is breaking stone

He is with them in sun and in shower and

His garment is covered with dust

Put off thy holy mantle and even like him come down

On the dusty soil.[15]

In the same vein a great Sufi poet of Persia Sk. Sa'adi Shirazi says:-

<div dir="rtl">

بنی آدم اعضای یکد یگر اند   که در آفرینش ز یک گوهر ا

چو عضوی بدرد آورد روزگار   دیگر عضوها را نماند قرار

تو که از درد دیگران بی غمی   نشاید که نامت نهند آدمی

</div>

Human beings are the limbs of each other

As they are created from a single essence

If unfavorable time inflicts harm on any part of body

The other parts do not remain at rest

If you are indifferent to the woes of others

You don't deserve to be called man.

Tagore not only explored and experienced the inner world but also paid attention to the materialistic world of deeds and reasons. Such vision of Tagore brought him close to Islamic teachings that decreed in the Quranic verse, ‘‘وان یسن للا نس ء لا ما سعی‘‘ And that man can have nothing but what he does (good or bad)"[16] Tagore believes that the work gives man purity and piety and brings him close to his creator. This belief of him reminds the mystical spirit of Rumi who is immensely influenced by that Quranic verse. Tagore is endowed with a talent superfluous with art and aesthetic taste blended with ethical virtues that make the man come close to the world of humanity. He has mastery over music and art. Music to him is the language of soul and art is the mean to get close to the nature. Religion to him is based on ethics (doing good to humanity) the seminal philosophy of Sufism.

The mysticism in Iran since the fourth century AH onward interacted with prevalent religious traits like the religion of Sun worship, dualism of Zoroastrianism the doctrine of Manichaeism especially in Khorasan by coming across with the world outlook of Taoism of China, Buddhist and Hindu mystical pursuits of India as well as the new platonic philosophy of Alexandria. Thus it becomes more florid more comprehensive. 'Love to eternal truth, the basic principle of Sufism, roots through love to human being' is believed to have been derived from the religion of Sun worship. Likewise the practice of yoga subscribing for the purification of self and to break the fetters of materialistic bondage so as to be able to discern the metaphysics through character, asceticism and spiritual pursuits. The Buddhist teachings not only influenced the Mani religion in Iran but also gave color to many Islamic beliefs and convictions.[17] The concept of Jeyete mora (die before death) propounded by bouls of Bengal an outshoot of Sahajia movement of Buddhism is reflected in the verse of Sanai a great Sufi poet of Iran,

بمیر ای دوست پیش از مرگ اگر می زندگی خواهی

که ادریس از چنین مردن بهشتی گشت پیش از ما[18]

O friend die before it the death comes if you want to live long

That Idris got salvation through such a death before us.

An thus Jalaluddin Rumi defines the Hadith, ''مو تو قبل ان تمو تو''

In the following verses;

مرگ پیش از مرگ امن است ای فتی   ایچنین فرمود ما را مصطفی

گفت: موتوا کلکم من قبل آن   یاتی الموت تمو تو بالفتن[19]

It is safe to die before death O generous man

So told us the Prophet in these words

You die all before the death comes

And thus puts you on trial

The voluntary death in Sufism is like the Nirvana of Buddhism. The Sufis have classified the death in two categories the voluntary and the compulsory and again the voluntary death is divided into four kinds as Haji Mulla Hadi Sabzwari said;

<div dir="rtl">

ای که انواع مرگ پرسیدی   ایزد انواع زندگیت دهاد

اضطراری موت معلوم است   اختیار ی او چهار افتاد

موت ابیض که هست جوع و عطش   در ریاضیات با شروط رشاد

موت اخضر موقع اندوزی   در زنی چون درعه زهاد

موت اسود که شد بلای سیاه   احتمال ملامت است و عناد

موت احمرکه رنگ خون آرد   باشد اینجا خلاف نفس جهاد[20]

</div>

O people that enquired the kinds of death

May God bless you with the variety of life

The Compulsory Death is known to all

The Voluntary Death comes of four kinds

The White Death is to sustain hunger and thirst

For self mortification with firmness indeed

The Green Death is to mend patches of rag

And to put on like a shield of ascetics

The Black Death is nothing but dark omen

That involves reproaching and perverseness

The Red Death bears red color

That is to go on crusade and fight against passion.

There is a common agreement between Indian philosophy and that of Islamic mysticism.

Tagore and Rumi believe that the eternal truth is not an external entity but an internal vitality. He is not to be sought for anywhere

outside but within oneself. Rumi on the line of

Quranic verse نحن اقرب عليه من حبل الورید "We are closer to him than (his) jugular vein", says:[21]

ای قوم به حج کجا ئید کجا ئید   معشوق همین جا ست بیا ئید بیا ئید

آنانکه طلبکار خد ائید خد ائید   حاجت به طلب نیست شمائید شمائید

O people where are you up to for pilgrimage

The beloved is here come on and come forth

Those of you who long for God

You need not to go wrong it's you it's you only.

The sect of Boul whose discernment had a great effect on the poetic vision of Tagore too believes in the conscientious existence of God in the form of 'Moner Manush', the Man of Heart.

With the realization of self

One can realize God

The formless God

In the shape of this form

Plays a continuous play

The God of gods is not separate from

The citadel that Master of sublime throne

Is this heart alone

One who realizes self so he realizes God

As it is known to all

In words of Nabi

Be attentive holding breath

With soul and heart together

 In the presence of that formless form

Where the lovers having been annihilated

Ever move around

Fakir Lalan Shah says

This is the way to worship God.22

       Tagore believes in the unity of being so he looks for the eternal beloved in paddy field in season's changes, in rain drops, in the sun light, in nature's manifestations and melody of flute that gives traces of dancing presence of Bideshani the unknown beloved ever shying away but intimately close to heart and soul. The omnipresent the omniscience being is not confined to any particular place of worship rather prevails upon everything and is very close to heart. So to find him one need not go and search outside but within him where he resides. The only need is to pull down the curtain of ego which hinders the glimpse of Him.

اندر دل من درون و بیرون همه اوست

اندر تن من جان و رگ و خون همه اوست

اینجا چگونه کفر و ایمان گنجد

بیچون باشد و جود من چون همه او

Within and outside my heart there is nothing but him

Within my body the soul the vein and blood He

How faith and infidelity find a place there

When the whole of my existence is nothing but him

       Life is not a mere culmination of breathing in and out rather it is a continuous process of evolution of this earthly body to attain the state of divinity the cherished goal of every longing soul. Rumi says he passed through many stages of life to get on to the other one so as to reach the higher one until the blissful state of divinity. Thus death is not the end of life but a juncture is a continuous process of evolution towards getting accomplishment

by being Fina-fillah, the total annihilation of self into the eternal truth called Nirvana, the salvation.

از جما دی مرد م و نامی شد م   و ز نما مردم به حیوان سر دم

مرد م از حیوانی و آد م شدم   پس چه ترسم کی ز مردن کم شدن[23]

I died of inanimate to become enliven

I died of animate to get into animal sphere of life

I passed through animal life to become man

So why should I be afraid of death that makes me of no less

Tagore also expresses the same thought in a different way.

Thou hast made me endless, such is thy pleasure

This frail vessel thou emptiest and again

Fillest it ever with fresh life…ages pass and

Still thou pourest and still there is a room to it.[24]

The whole of universe is created and governed by love. Everything whether it is dust particles, light particles', dewdrops, the vast ocean on earth or the whole of celestial bodies and beyond everything is under the sway of love. So we the human being created out of these elements inherit the same characteristics.

جز عشق نبود هیچ دمساز مرا   نی اول و نی آغاز مرا

There was nothing but the love ever with me

So I have no beginning or end as such (Rumi)

Thou art the sky and thou art the nest as well

O thou beautiful there in the nest it is thy love

That encloses the soul with colors and sounds and odours[25]

Tagore believes that the manifestation of God is everywhere in everything whether it is cultivation of field, the blossoming of spring time, the light spread over the whole of

universe or tin the melody of flute whose thrilling song enchants not only the man and animals but inanimate plants too.

The same thought is expressed by Sk. Sa'di of Shiraz in the following couplet:

برگ هر گل در نظر هشیار

دفتریست ز معرفت کرد گار

Every petal of rose in the eyes of a wise

Is a complete book of insight for about God

Thus both Tagore and Sufi poets of Iran though lived in different times in different geographical regions and in different socio religious ethos sang their love songs in different lingual expressions but however they spoke in the same language, the language of love and divinity rooted through eternity. Thus in the words of Tagore;

"The spring time is hospitable. Her birds in their music, her flowers in their fragrance speak a language which is universal needing no translation to explain them. They make no discrimination in favor of their own land of origin and their call of beauty which is God's own voice of love comes direct to my heart even though I am a traveler from far away shore.

The poet also represents the eternal springtime of hospitality. His message is in his music which invokes the harmony of perfection for all humanity; his invitation is to the comradeship in a festival of love's union."[26]

NOTES

1. Journey to Persia, p-37

2. Ibid

3. Parasya yatri, p-60

4. Ibid, p-43

5. Ibid, p-130

6. Gitanjali poem No.LXVII

7. Diwan of Baba Tahir Uryan Hamadani

8. Gitanjali poem No.LXXXIV

9. Masnavi Manavi book-I, p-I

10. Gitanjali verse No. LIX

11. مولوی مثنوی، دکتر استعلامی، دفتر پنجم، ص-133

12. Rabindranath Tagore and the growth of monotheist thoughts in India, KarimNajafi Berzger, Especial Tagore's edition of Qand-e- Parsi, p-47

13. مولوی مثنوی، دکتر استعلامی، دفتر پنجم، ص - 14

14. Parasya Yatri, p-123

15. Gitanjali verse No. XI

16. Quran, 53/39

17. ۱۳۷-

18. سنائی دیوان،1925-1923م، ص - ۵۲

19. مولوی مثنوی، ۱۹۳۳-۱۹۲۵م ،ج ۴، ب ۲۱۱۷

20. حاج وملا هادی سبزواری، دیوان، ۱۳۷۲ ه.ش. ص- ۴۷۹

21. Quran, 50/16

22. وجود وجدانی، سرود های عرفانی باول های بنگاله، ب۱۳ ، ص- ۵۶

23. مثنوی مولوی، چاپ نیکلسون، دفتر سوم، ص-۲۲۲

24. Gitanjali verse No. I

25. Gitanjali. p-LXVII

26. Journey to Persia and Iraq, p 140

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Reading the Eighth Schedule – As a Text on Multilingualism

Shakira Jabeen .B

Abstract

This paper attempts to read the VIII Schedule (ES) of the Constitution of India. This is an attempt to find out the criterion for entry into the VIII Schedule and the incentives offered to the languages that are listed. The paper attempts to capture the implications of this Schedule on the multiple languages of India. The paper endeavors to find the underlying vision behind enlisting languages under this Schedule.

This hermeneutic study of an appendage of our Constitution begins with the hypothesis that the VIII Schedule reflects the multilingual mind set of the people of India in general and the framers of the Constitution in particular. The text is the VIII Schedule. Primary and secondary sources are referred to read the text. The method is based on both inductive and deductive logic.

The key words are ' Eighth schedule' and 'language/s'.

Introduction

There are Twelve Schedules of the Constitution of India. Of them, the Eighth Schedule (hereafter ES) goes under the heading *'Languages.'* **Articles 344 (1**) and Art. 351 are mentioned in parenthesis. Under this heading there is a list of languages. The foot notes are the Amendments that added languages to the ES. There is nothing else. The Oxford Advance Learner's Dictionary gives the meaning for the word *'schedule'* as 'written list of things'. The Oxford Thesaurus lists the synonyms of the word- calendar, list, programme, register…' Hindi and Kannada use the word *'Pariched*/a', a Sanskrit word for Schedule and the Subhash Kannada

x English Dictionary gives the words- 'chapter' and 'section' as the English equivalents of the word. "Schedules appended to statutes form part of the statutes. They are added towards the end as their use is made to avoid encumbering the sections in the matters of excessive details"[1]. So, the ES is an elaboration of the Articles mentioned above. Of the two Articles that the Schedule refers to, **Art. 344 (1**) is about 'Commission and Committee of Parliament on official language' and **Art. 351** deals with the 'Directive for development of Hindi language'. It is **Art. 343 (1)** that states the Official Language of the Union- 'shall be Hindi in Devanagari script.'[2] Art. 343 (2) provided for the continuation of English for official purposes of the Union. The two articles mentioned in the ES have a direct reference to all the clauses of Art. 343.

In legal parlance 'schedule' is defined to "mean a schedule to the Act or Regulation in which the word occurs". There by, the ES is connected with every Act where the word 'language' occurs.[3] But, "In case of a conflict between the body of the Act and the Schedule the former prevails.[4]

The caption of the ES - **'Languages'** refers to the languages chosen to be included in the ES of the Constitution of India. In its singular form, the term 'language' encompasses the structure, pragmatics, semantics and the resultant Discourse. "Discourses in this sense, are more than just language, they are ways of being in the world, or forms of life that integrate words, acts, values, believes, attitudes, and social identities."[5] If each of these forms of life is explained in multiple volumes, it would still be inadequate to capture the full meaning of language. However, to draw a premise to begin a reading of ES as text, one cannot but agree that language as a shared code is necessary for communication between individuals, groups, communities and nations. The human speech organs, ears, the brain, together with language processing capacity, capacity to produce infinite sentences with finite grammatical structures, memory, collective consciousness coupled with emotions have made language the most potent form of human expression. Language "is perhaps the most important

thing which society has evolved, out of which other things have taken growth".[6] Language is inseparably connected with thought and meaning. The modern education has connected language with employment opportunities. The modern nation states, at least some of them have assimilated the antiquity of languages to claim a historical sense of continuity for the idea of nation state. The ES is a list of 'Languages'.

The genesis of the ES is traced to the Constituent Assembly Debate[7] and the Munshi- Ayyangar formula. This formula was a compromise- "two aspects of the compromise, however, included for the benefit of regional language speakers, deserve special comment. They are: the listing of regional languages in the Constitution and the reference to the interest of non- Hindi speakers in regard to the public services."[8]

The Purpose of ES: The functional purpose of ES was twofold. It was recognition granted to 14 languages for being developed enough to be used in multiple domains. Jawaharlal Nehru explained the purpose of the ES- "Our country has a number of highly developed languages and several scripts. We have decided to encourage these great provincial languages".[9] By its reference to the Articles 344 (1) and 351, the ES was a source to draw members to the Official Language Commission and a source of assimilation for the enrichment of Hindi. "It is important to note that no language has sought its inclusion in the Eighth Schedule to enrich Hindi by lending its linguistic resources, but intends its own development through inclusion because of direct accessibility of resources due to enhanced status."[10] Such being the reality, it is necessary to ponder as to what the framers of the Constitution meant by 'enrichment'. 'Enrichment' as used in the article 351 refers to the unique vocabulary resource that a people develop to express their lived experience through language – '…the forms, style and expressions used in Hindustani and the other languages specified in the Eighth Schedule…".[11] It would be naïve to conclude that vocabulary is the be all and end all of language enrichment. Vocabulary reflects a people's ideas, beliefs

and worldview. It is this worldview that represents methods of resolving conflict, concern for environment, means of preserving natural resources, the myths and stories that should move from generation to generation and people to people through language/s.

The Profile of ES: The languages in the ES are referred to as Provincial languages, Modern Indian languages, National languages and Recognized languages- nomenclatures that do not have constitutional validity. Chapter II of Part XVII of the Constitution of India uses the term- 'Regional Languages.' The Kothari Commission Report of 1964 referred to the languages of ES as ' Modern Indian Languages' which was repeated in the Three Language Formula of National Education Policy of 1968.

The ES has grown to a list of **22 Languages**. The number has almost doubled since the Constitution came into being. The 22 languages in the VIII Schedule are-

1. Assamese 2. Bengali 3. Gujarati 4. Hindi 5. Kannada 6. Kashmiri 7. Konkani. 8. Malayalam 9. Manipuri 10. Marathi 11. Nepali 12. Oriya 13. Punjabi 14. Sanskrit   15. Sindhi 16. Tamil 17. Telugu 18. Urdu 19. Bodo 20. Santali 21. Maithili 22. Dogri.[12]

These 22 languages can be grouped under the language families they belong to, which goes to prove the uneven representation of languages belonging to various families. Belonging to any one of the language families seems to be one of the criteria for languages to be included into the ES.

	Language Family	No of Languages
1	Indo Aryan	15
2	Dravidian	4
3	Tibeto-Burman	2
4	Munda	1

This categorization reflects only the tip of the linguistic diversity of India. "The 1961 Census reported as many as 1652

Mother tongues classified into two hundred and odd languages belonging to four distinct families". This linguistic diversity is unique to India. These languages in turn have their dialects. There are language isolates- languages that stand alone without belonging to any of the families.[13] There are 'ten major writing systems and a host of minor ones.'[14] Among the 22 languages listed in ES, three languages- Nepali, Bengali and Urdu also happen to be the national languages of our neighboring countries- Nepal, Bangla Desh and Pakistan. Sanskrit, Sindhi and Urdu are not region specific languages of the Union. Kashmiri is not the official language of Kashmir. English is not listed but is the Associate Official Language of the Union as well the official language of States of Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram. English is also the official language of the Union territories. Hindi finds a place in the Constitution as well as in the ES! Konkani that was added to the ES with the Seventy-first Amendment of the Constitutional Act and Santali with the Ninety-second Amendment are written in multiple scripts. The representation of States in the ES is uneven – some states have two or more of their major languages in the Schedule. In terms of collective demography, majority of Indians speak the languages listed in the ES. "In 1981, the percentage of the speakers of the 15 Scheduled languages had risen to 95.58% of the total household population".[15]

What is left out of the Schedule is 1300 Mother tongues. The 22 languages listed under the ES + English that finds a mention in the Constitution are a minuscule minority. However, the list is a move towards acknowledging the linguistic diversity of India. The ES by listing 22 languages out of this linguistic diversity shifts the focus on two issues- the unscheduled languages are given a benchmark and a direction for growth. There is an unstated but underlying objective in bunching the languages together under the ES. The idea of an open ended Schedule to begin with should be viewed as a move in the direction of recognizing multilingualism on the one hand and facilitating a symbiotic growth oriented relationship between languages on the other.

More and more languages can join the bandwagon to help each other grow.

Criteria for Selection: To a poser as to how languages are selected to be included in the ES or what is the criterion on which the list was expanded to 22 languages, there isn't any authentic, authorized document as answer. The Constitution does not mention any qualifying criteria for a language to be included in the ES. P. Chidambaram told the Lok Sabah that there is "no criteria for inclusion in the VIII Schedule".[16] There is room for flexibility and the criteria seem to have emerged out of precedence. This was a sure way to encourage the languages that had not found a place in the ES to develop. Apart from other variables, the languages had to be readied to claim an entry into the Schedule. They had to be used in the domains that modernity had chartered.

In the absence of clear cut criteria for languages to find an entry into the ES, the possibility of the emergence of pressure groups cannot be brushed aside as a collateral. The 71st Amendment to the Constitution included Manipuri, Konkani and Nepali to the ES. This was challenged in the petition- Kanhaiaya Lal Sethia and another v. Union government.[17] The Supreme Court dismissed the petition stating- "whether to include or not a particular language in the VIII Schedule is a matter of policy of the Union and in such matters the court would not exercise the power of judicial review".[18] In the absence of clear cut criterion, political arm twisting cannot be written off. But, The demands for inclusion of languages to the ES has been on the basis of readying the languages to be used in multiple domains.

The road map that the speech communities have followed to develop their languages should reflect the unwritten criteria for selection. The statement of objects and reasons for the inclusion of Sindhi into the Schedule says- "Although at present Sindhi is not a regional language in a well-defined area, it used to be the language of a province of the undivided India and, but for partition, would have continued to be so. The Commissioner for Linguistic Minorities has also recommended the inclusion

of Sindhi in the ES to the Constitution. On 4th November, 1966, it was announced that Government had decided to include the Sindhi language in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution. The Bill seeks to give effect to this decision".[19] It can be concluded that languages could also find an entry in the ES due to historical reasons. It is also clear that the Commission of Linguistic Minority has to recommend the inclusion of a language into the ES and the Government includes a language through an Amendment.

A Memorandum dated 17th December, 1999, submitted by the members of the Santali Bhasha Morcha to Mr. Vajpayee, the then Prime Minister of India, more or less explains the requirements of a language aspiring to enter the ES. As the Santali language did find an entry into the ES, through the 92nd Amendment in 2003, w.e.f. 7-1-2004, the claim can be treated as near authentic but unwritten guidelines to be followed. The points mentioned in the memorandum are-

• The representatives having the support of cultural associations and various other organizations.

• The language having large number speakers in a number of States.

• Language having a large Corpus of literature.

• Recognition of Literature by the Kendra Sahithya Academy.

• Language belonging to a particular language group.

• Publication of News Papers, Magazines and Journals in the language

• Language having its own scientific script- developed or designed

• Language being used in Mass Communication

• Language being taught in schools and colleges.[20]

Not having a criteria makes language communities shout

the loudest to be heard. Responding to the demand by the people, Home Minister Shivaraj Patil said - "… the Sita Kant Mohapatra Commission was set up to evolve a set of objective criteria for inclusion of more languages in the ES. Since the Commission was constituted to submit a report on the feasibility of including Bhojpuri in the Schedule. The Government had asked the UPSC too to submit a report on the same issue."[21]

Inclusion of multiple languages under the ES is exactly what the framers of the Constitution desired. Languages that were oral grew to be written languages. Those languages that did not have a script, took professional help to design a script (OlChiki of Santali for example). The ES is more relaxed about script when compared with the Constitution that specified a single script for the official language of the Union. ES reflects the desire of the framers of the Constitution to see languages to develop from oral to textual so that they can be used in multiple domains of modern life. Jawaharlal Nehru, in a write up spells out how languages should develop- "Language must base itself on its ancient roots and, at the same time, vary and expand with growing needs and be essentially the language of mass of people and not of a select coterie." [22] The languages listed under the ES receive incentives of many types- some only emotional and some other more concrete.

The incentives given to languages under ES: There is a clamor to be listed under the ES. There is a drive to develop languages and bring it to the notice of all as there is prestige attached to languages of the ES. There is a belief that the desire to get languages included in the ES is due to the fact that there are incentives extended to the listed languages. The incentives extended to the listed languages are-

a. Cultural Incentives

b. Employment opportunities

c. Monetary benefits

d. Pedagogic Implications

e. Membership of the Official Language Commission.

f. Benefits in the Parliament

g. Translation Benefits

a. Cultural Incentives: The listed languages get recognized by the Sahithya Academy. Before the advent of National Translation Mission, recognition from the Academy was a sure reason for translation of the recognized literary work into multiple languages of India. The films produced in these languages get included for the national film awards. These incentives instill a sense of pride among the people of speech communities. National Translation Mission situated at Mysore plays an important role in getting translation of knowledge text from English to 22 Indian languages included in ES, from one Indian language to another Indian language and it is expected to translate from various foreign languages to Indian languages of ES as per its mandate. If such a feat is achieved knowledge gets democratized and common people of India would have an exposition of knowledge in their mother tongue.

b. Employment opportunities: The languages of the ES get Included in UPSC exam. The Parliamentary resolution of 1967 allows UPSC aspirants to answer in the listed languages. This benefit would enhance a candidate's chances of clearing the exam- provided s/he belongs to these speech communities. The languages in the ES also become the medium for a few papers of the UPSC examinations. Citing the immediate effect of including a language in the VIII Schedule P. Chidambaram said -"the inclusion of a language in the VIII Schedule has at present a direct link to the examinations conducted by the UPSC".[23] This provision is disadvantageous to the aspirants of non-scheduled languages. The UPSC "allowed candidates in 1969 to write the Essay and the General Knowledge papers in English or any other language included in the Eighth Schedule."[24] Apart from the Civil Services, a large number of examinations are conducted only in English or Hindi and English. The high level panel set up by the UPSC

made commendation for the delinking of the language of UPSC examinations and the inclusion of languages in the ES.

c. Monetary Benefits: The states of listed languages receive Central grants. This includes rupees One crore grant for the development of listed languages. The languages with a Classical language status get huge amounts for their further development.

d. The pedagogic Implications: The pedagogic implications of any language can only be judged by the cognitive theories of learning which prescribe education in the mother tongue. The Mother Tongue as a Medium of Instruction at any level is a pleasurable and participatory experience for the pupils. If the language under the ES is a Minority Language, then it can be the Medium of Instruction even if the official language of the state is different. There is provision in Art. 350-A which directs the state to provide 'instruction in the mother –tongue at the primary stage of education to children belonging to linguistic minority groups'.[25] The members of the minority language communities are free to start private educational institutions.

e. Membership of the Official Language Commission: This is a coveted position. The enormous power vested with the Commission, is an added attraction for the desire to get the language enlisted in the Eighth Schedule. According to the Art. 344 –(1) "The President shall...by order constitute a commission which shall consist of a Chairman and such other members representing the different languages specified in the Eighth Schedule as the President may appoint, and the order shall define the procedure to be followed by the Commission".[26] It is the duty of the Commission to make recommendations to the President as to-

a) the progressive use of the Hindi language for the official purposes of the Union;

b) restriction of the use of the English language for all or any of the official purposes of the Union;

c) The language to be used for all or any of the purposes mentioned in Article 348;

d) Any other matter referred to the Commission by the President as regards the official language of the Union and the language for Communication between the Union and a State or between one state and another and their use;[27]

The same Article stipulates that the Official Language commission would 'have due regard to the industrial, cultural and scientific advancement of India and the just claims and the interest of persons belonging to the non-Hindi speaking areas in regard to the Public Services.'[28] The Article is aimed at three things-

i. Develop Hindi to be used in all domains.

ii. Thwart the use of English in the domain of administration.

iii. Show linguistic sensitivity to the non- Hindi speech communities by providing a level playing field in employment opportunities.

f. Benefits in the Parliament: The languages of the ES have the facility for simultaneous translation in Parliament leading to better participation by the parliamentarians in the discussions. People of the listed languages have the "opportunity for submission of petitions in the listed languages for redressing the grievances under Art. 350".[29]

g. Translation Benefits: The Committee on Parliament of Official Language as laid down in Art. 344, has to ensure progressive use of Hindi for Official purposes by making necessary recommendations to the President of India. The Official language of the Union-Hindi is to be enriched by drawing from the languages of the ES. But the idea of listing of multiple languages under one heading is to allow these languages to enrich themselves by drawing vocabulary, ideas and knowledge from each other. Translation from Hindi to these languages and from these languages to Hindi would ensure enrichment of all the languages on one

hand and engineer national integration on the other. Translation from English to the listed languages would create accessibility of global knowledge to the various speech communities. Translation of knowledge texts would result in creating a level playing field to every seeker of knowledge. This has huge implications in the area of Medium of Instruction at Primary, Secondary and Higher education. Availability of quality texts and reading material for the post-primary level would encourage mother tongue medium at all levels. This would be a great leveler between the urban and the rural, the privileged and the underprivileged. The National Translation Mission is a huge project to make reference/knowledge texts available in all the listed languages. To a question in the Lok Sabha, the Union Human Resource Development Minister, in a written reply said- "The mandate of National Translation Mission is to translate Knowledge Text Books from English to 22 Indian languages of the VIII schedule of the Indian Constitution".[30] The languages of the ES are a part of the knowledge revolution in India leading to a pedagogic shift from rote learning to comprehension. "The NTM will concentrate on facilitating research and teaching of different disciplines at colleges and universities, which like to use both printed and online texts and reference materials in all languages in the 8th schedule."[31] The benefits accrued through the availability of translation include methods and materials of teaching.

With these details, the ES opens itself to multiple layers of reading. "Fredrick Jameson's (1987) assertion that 'third world' texts are necessarily national allegories …[32], is an apt description for the ES. The text of the ES, with 22 languages listed under it, is nothing less than a Discourse. **The ES is an effort to accommodate multilingualism. It is also an effort to take knowledge systems beyond linguistic diversity.** Read under this light, it opens possibilities of many more languages finding an entry into this open ended list and the creation of many more inclusive categories. So, it can be deduced that -

• The ES, as an exercise in Language Planning, was an attempt

to resolve a confusing state of linguistic diversity purely from the point of view of administration.

- It was an exercise in creating a list of languages that were developed enough to be used in all domains.

- It was also an invitation to other languages to grow from orality to writing.

- It is a way creating corpora of languages to be used at the regional and national levels.

- It was a sure way to make languages draw from one another to the enrichment of all languages.

If the choice of an Official language for the Union Government was a need of the modern nation state, this pragmatic exercise of drawing the ES is a master stroke that only a multilingual people could pull off. Here is a chance for every language to grow. If the choice of Official Language was within the paradigm of monolingualism associated with the Western framework of a nation state, the ES is a reflection of the multilingual Indian mindset. It is a demonstration of accepting the inevitability of Language Planning for the new nation state and at the same time, making room for multiple official languages through this innocuous looking list of fourteen languages. It is a structural change of the Western, monolingual paradigm to suit the linguistic areas that are 'pieced together like a patchwork quilt or a pastiche.'[33] It is through the ES that the framers of the constitution created as level playing a field as possible for all the languages of the nation.

ES in Future: At present, there are demands for inclusion of 38 more languages in the ES to the Constitution. They are-

(1) Angika (2) Banjara (3) Bazika (4) Bhojpuri (5) Bhoti (6) Bhotia(7) Bundelkhandi (8) Chhattisgarhi (9) Dhatki (10) English (11) Garhwali (Pahari) (12) Gondi (13) Gujjar/Gujjari (14) Ho (15) Kachachhi (16) Kamtapuri (17) Karbi (18) Khasi (19) Kodava (Coorg) (20) Kok Barak

(21) Kumaoni (Pahari) (22) Kurak (23) Kurmali (24) Lepcha (25) Limbu (26) Mizo (Lushai) (27) Magahi (28) Mundari (29) Nagpuri (30) Nicobarese (31) Pahari (Himachali) (32) Pali (33) Rajasthani (34) Sambalpuri/Kosali (35) Shaurseni (Prakrit) (36) Siraiki (37) Tenyidi and (38) Tulu.[34]

It is a dream come true for a linguist with a multilingual mind set to see hundreds of Languages developed enough to find an entry into the ES. It is a dream come true for hundreds of languages to graduate from orality to technology driven writing.

The Union Governments have to have a two pronged approach for further development of languages-

i.   To be prepared to accommodate many more Mother Tongues under the ES.

ii. To coin new strategies to coax people to further develop their languages that is already there in the ES.

iii. To connect the growth of language with each other by making their knowledge systems accessible to all.

The 38 languages waiting to be included in the ES need an entry. On the issue of coaxing speech communities of ES to further develop their languages, the newly coined category of Classical Languages can also be viewed as an up gradation. A look at the Classical Language Tag given to Sanskrit, Tamil, Kannada, Malayalam, Odiya and Telugu shows that these are the languages that are already in the ES. If the ES is a benchmark and a prerequisite criterion for the classical language status, it can be concluded that the classical language tag is the next step for the languages that are listed under ES. With so many categories being created for the development of languages in India, there could be one more category- Orally Rich Languages. The technological development would make preserving the spoken/oral languages an easy task. If at all the languages in the ES want to assimilate and grow, then these orally rich languages are treasure trove to draw from.

"The Eighth Schedule (ES) …. has given rise to a new hierarchical ordering of languages. There is English that transcends and is above the ES and may be termed supra ES language ranking higher than any Indian language".[35] The Constitutional provision made to Hindi as the Official language of the Union and English as the associate official language of the union, is an answer to the problematizing the functional need for a link language in multilingual federal democratic set up. A set of human translators in the past and machine driven translation in future would solve this administrative difficulty. Trade, education, employment opportunities and travel are thinning the lines between languages not only in India but all over the world. The need of the hour is to find a cure for a monolingual mind set. Accepting multiple languages as the official languages of the states is within the framework of multilingualism that the multiple speech communities in India practice in their day today life. "In India, the multiplicity of languages is largely a product of long and composite development of 5000 years. History demonstrates that, from times immemorial, India has been a multilingual country, each language having a certain region in which it was supreme, but none of these regions truly constitute unilingual kingdom or principality."[36] The practice of establishing any one language on the polity is again a product of Western way of looking at language within an administrative set up. This mind set can be called hegemonic, colonial and imperial. The manifestation of this mind set is an uncontrollable desire to impose one single language in all domains of life. Nehru displayed linguistic sensitivity when he argued that "it was no service to a language to introduce the element of compulsion, which would be resented and which would thus lead to continuous conflict…"[37]. It is not so much the language of the colonizer that has to be dreaded but the monolingual, colonial mind set. In concrete terms, if the Union Government imposes Hindi or English on the states and if the states impose one single language in all domains within the state, both represent a mindset that is not multilingual and hence not based on the Indian ethos.

The Underlying Vision: The languages listed under the ES have received recognition and status. ES is an exercise in creating a level playing field for the regional languages. ES is a rainbow of new vocabulary, ideas, ways of going about this world without conflict and the only ray of hope for national integration. The framers of the Constitution accommodated multiple languages under ES. It is imperative that the same nature of accommodation be shown to the multiple languages in the state by the state. The linguistic accommodation and the linguistic sensitivity the states receive from the Union Government, needs to be translated into sensitivity towards the other languages of the state – not as an extension of charity but as a recognition of the legitimate linguistic right of the people of various speech communities. ES is not an exercise of preserving those languages but a means to preserve all our languages – as the binary of our language v/s their language itself is a remnant of the Colonial/Imperial/Western mindset. "The fundamental principle which holds a multilingual society together is recognition. Recognition of the existence of the other gives a sense of protection of the other's rights, a sense of being part of a mosaic. Recognizing one dominant language in a multilingual milieu is denying equality of opportunity of growth to the many unrecognized ones. It is denying their very existence. Ethnicity and culture related language maintenance movements are the result of such non- recognition."[38] In a country with 1657 mother tongues, the ES is the first step towards bunching multiple languages together. ES is an invitation to harmony between languages and people. This is the message the framers of Constitution impart through the open ended ES.

Conclusion: The Eighth Schedule is a benchmark for the languages to prove that they are developed enough to be used in multiple domains. The framers of the constitution left the Schedule open ended to encourage all the languages to develop according to the requirements of modern times. There is no way languages can develop as watertight compartments. They can grow only by drawing from each other. Languages need to translate their 'thisness' to each other. Hindi, English, Twenty two languages

under the ES, Thirty eight languages waiting in the wings for an entry into the ES and Six languages with the Classical language status – what does this reflect? It is a step towards celebrating the linguistic diversity of this country. The framers of the Constitution altered the framework of a nation state to accommodate multiple languages. They exhibited linguistic sensitivity even on the face of stiff resistance. It was their vision that got expressed through the ES of the Constitution that all languages should be encouraged. All languages need that little help to survive. When languages die, Speech communities adopt a new language for communication to survive. But it is the world view that they had carried with them through the language that dies leaving a void behind. It is this worldview that had nurtured diversity not by professing but by a symbiotic existence with everything in the world around. It is that worldview which had been handed down through generations. Who knows if this is the often quoted but elusive 'unity' that has held the diversity together. Imposition of one language to be used in all domains of life would go contrary to the multilingual ethos of India and the ES. Hence, the ES is less of a list of languages than a prophylactic prescription of a worldview.

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Issues of Reader in Translation Studies:
A case of *Dawn of Dreams*

Md. Rizwan Khan

Abstract

The reader response paradigms in the last century have rendered radical interpretations and theorizations to the literary pursuits. The culmination of the same was witnessed in the death of the author. The reader's issues have always also held a significant position in the deliberations of translated studies. But the translations studies have always been approached through the positions of translation as a process wherein lay the translator's connection and role exposed to analyses with an assumption of that the reader is position and involvement is fully understood and correctly estimated by the theorists. But this positioning of the reader does not emerge through verifiable sources which is not the case with reader-response practices. The present paper takes up this insufficient positioning of the reader in the translation studies through the analysis of Dawn of Dreams which is Mehr Afshan Faruqi's translation of Abdus Samad's Urdu novel Khwabon Ka Savera. The paper surveys the theories and paradigms of translation studies and reader-response in order to foreground the need for a strengthened and proactive interface between the two. For the paper a survey was conducted among the readers and responses were solicited through a questionnaire. The findings, suggestions and conclusion supplicate the research questions wherein lay the need to signify the reader's role in translation studies.

Post 1970s has witnessed a surge in the reader-oriented paradigms in language and literary studies. This includes perspectives of translation studies too. Although the readers in the business of translation, notwithstanding the important stake

that they have, have not had any radical and vocal representations in the theoretical quantum. This quantum eventually appears to be working on the nuances, methods and impacts of translation based in the understanding where the theorists, critics and translators work with an assumption that they all understand and know the reader. Even a simplistic assertion of the process of translation signifies the place of reader. The success and failure of a translated literary text depends primarily on readers. Once a text is translated, it goes to the readers of the target language (TL). In this process a translator acts as a medium to shift a text in the Source language (SL) to another text in the TL. Source Text (ST) now differs significantly from the Target Text (TT) in order to suit the readers / users of the TL. The readers now, become the evaluators of the text whether analyzing it consciously (like in the case of reviewers, critics, etc., a small number, but major voices) or unconsciously (common readers looking for leisure reading). In other words the success and failure of the translator and his/her manner and mode becomes directly proportionate to the level of perception of the translated text by the readers. The better is the perception and understanding of the text by the reader, the superior is the quality of translation. Reader thus occupies central position in the process of translation. Besides, it is assumed that a translation is purported to extend its readership with an intention of transferring the message/thought, the point of views, and the culture and tradition of the ST thus signifying the reader's position.

Research Questions

The present paper will reflect upon the following dynamics of translation as part of the research questions case study of *Dawn of Dreams:*

- What place for readers do the theories and practice in translation studies reflect?

- Whether the present translated text *Dawn of Dreams* successfully attracts a wider readership?

- Whether the new readers (who cannot read the source language, Urdu, and can reach the text only in the target language, English, in the present case) are able to read, comprehend and enjoy *Dawn of Dreams* as a literary text?

- If no, then why? Is it because of a massive presence and availability of the lexis, situations, and culture of the source text into the English text, *Dawn of Dreams?*

- Is it that the presence (due to the postcolonial and post modern canonical notions) of local issues (partition/zamindari), diction (terms that are used to address kinship in a Muslim family) and culture of a country (Indo-Pak) prove to be a barrier in the general comprehension of the new readership at global level?

- Whether *Dawn of Dreams fulfills* these expectations or simply remains a text for the limited purposes like specialized studies on translation, culture etc.

Aim of the Present Study

- The present paper is aimed at considering the text as an end product;

- The paper intends to list and study the extent of joy, comprehension and perception by the readers -both familiar and unfamiliar to the linguistic, cultural and socio-political aspects of the text.

- The paper is not aimed to be judgmental about the text/translator; or about the levels of problems; or even the strengths and weaknesses of *Dawn of Dreams* as a translated literary text

Methodology

For the present purpose the researcher designed a questionnaire and sent it to the subjects (readers) along with a-soft copy of *Dawn of Dreams*. The readers were sent the soft

copies with a request to read it (not like a reviewer or critic) and fill in the questionnaire with their observations. A total number of ten respondents from different countries were contacted, but only seven responded. One each from India, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia failed to give their responses until now.

Subjects. These readers belonged to India (two), Pakistan (Two), Arabs (four) (Saudi Arabia -2, Iraq -1, and Egypt -1), European (two) (one from Russia and one from Italy). These subjects are English teachers in their respective countries. Due to paucity of time, the researcher could not contact any native speaker of English. However, readership at international level is emphasized here because the present text has been translated from Urdu (a language of the Indo-Pak subcontinent) into English (a global language). The English readership both in India and abroad were taken into consideration.

The tenets of translation involve a text, a translator, source language, target language and readers. The permutations and combinations that emerge from these four tenets focus on varied perspectives that involve language, culture, psychology, sociology, linguistics and other disciplines. In literary translation the translator plays the role of the creative artist (writer, author, poet etc.) and there have been attempt in galore in order to critique/analyze/understand/clarify the role of the translator, and not the reader. It is often said, " ... Translator is the central figure in any translation activity as it is s/he who interprets and selects the method of translation taking into account various textual and contextual factor ... that vary from context to context, translator to translator and language to language". (Lakshmi 2007)

I focus on the other half of the translator/reader duality which seems to have been less or not much talked about. Following brief discussion about the types, methods, approaches, and theories postulated so far for various aspects of translation foreground the fact that majority of theorizations involve a passive positioning of the reader wherein the active stakes of the translator, text and language are analysed. The reader remains

an assumed entity since not too many studies are based on the responses of the actual readers. Somehow the reader-response paradigms have not inspired the reviews of the translated works as have been the case with literature in general.

Approaches to Translation

1. Translation studies so far have witnessed the shifts in approach to translation from 'linguistic' to 'textual', and to 'cultural; (which is still going on).

Linguistic approach of translation prevailed in the 1960s. According to this approach, Translation may be defined as "the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL)". (Catford 1965, 20)

The text was then seen as linear sequence of units, and translation was merely a transcoding process involving the substitution of a sequence of equivalent units. This is clearly expressed in Werner Koller's definition of 1972. (Koller 1972, 69-70, also see Goodenough 1964)

According to the textual approach that prevailed in 1970s the text is viewed not simply as a sequence of sentences as each sentence in itself is a string of grammatical items. Thus textual analysis proceeds from the macro to micro level-from 'top down' -, its aim being to trace a web of relationships, the importance of individual items being decided by their function in the text. Nor should the text itself be studied in isolation, but rather as a part of a given situation against a particular sociocultural background (Kussmaul 1986; Honig and Kussmaul 1982; Robert de Beaugrande 1978).

This postulates the basis of the cultural approach (that popularized in the 1980s onwards) whereby language is viewed, not merely as a code, as in linguistic approach, but as an integral part of the living world, and translation is not simply a matter of equivalent items or even an equivalent text, but is essentially "TT-oriented" (Toury 1981 (1980:35-50); see also Honig and Kussmaul

1982), and concerns the interplay of language, text, situation and culture. This approach gives a space to the readers in the name of culture and situation.

In cultural approach thus translation is no longer seen as code switching, but as a form of action, which is integrated into a complex of related actions and which is dependent on the specific function prescribed by those related actions. (Vermeer 1986; Holz-Manttari 1984 and 1986; Reiss and Vermeer 1984 also Kussmaul 1982)

2. In the history of translation studies various formulations have been laid down from time to time but almost all of them are premised within the perspective of the translator or the text.

- Bible translation

- Education and the vernacular (8th century-15th century)

- Early theorists like Dolet, George Chapman (*Epistle to the Reader* of his translation of *The Iliad*)

- The Renaissance like Edmond Cary (translator acts as a revolutionary activist and translation being the primary activity rather than the secondary activity)

- Seventeenth century like Sir John Denham, Descartes, Abraham Cowley and John Dryden (stress on close reading of the original by the translator to note the details of style and manner)

- Eighteenth Century like Dr. Johnson, Alexander Fraser Tytler (concerned with the problem of recreating an essential spirit, soul or nature of the work of art)

- Romanticism like Shelley, Coleridge, Schlegel-Tieck (translation of poetry and problems• concerned)

- Post Romanticism like William Morris

- The Victorians like Longfellow, Fitzgerald (translator as a

skillful merchant offering wares to the discerning few).

3. The types of translation pose a picture where it is difficult to entail reader as thinking and responsive figure:

- Text based approaches and methodologies

- Word-for-word translation

- Literal

- Faithful

- Semantic (close to semantic and semantic of the original)

- Free (where addition, deletion, and modifications are possible)

- Communicative (Newmark 1981, Communicative and Semantic translation, produces on its readers an effect as close as possible, smooth and fluent)

- Adaptation

4. Only such Methods as Domesticating (Author to Reader) and Foreignizing (Reader to the Author) (Schleiermacher 1813 in Lakshmi 17 and 116; Venuti 1995) take the readers into consideration.

5.   To evaluate translated literary text twelve parameters are suggested by H. Lakshmi 2007). Here items i, vii and viii focus on the readers.

i   Closeness to the original

ii   Readability and fluency

iii   Effectiveness of the translation

iv   Authority of the original

v   Credibility of the translation

vi   Purpose of the translation

vii   Intended readership of the translation

viii   Acceptability of the text in the Target Language

ix   Place and status of original in the source language

x   Current literary trends

xi   Relationship between SL and TL

xii   Likely place and status of the translated text in target literature

Translation Typology: Some Representation of the Readers

- Translation as a scholar's activity, where the pre-eminence of the SL text is assumed *de facto* over any TL version.

- Translation as a means of encouraging the intelligent reader to return to the SL original.

- Translation as a means of helping the TL reader become the equal of what Schleiermacher called the better reader of the original, through a deliberately contrived foreignness in the TL text.

- Translation as a means whereby the individual translator who sees himself like Aladdin in the enchanted vaults (Rossetti's imaginative image) offers his own pragmatic choice to the TL reader.

- Translation as a means through which the translator seeks to upgrade the status of the SL text because it is perceived as being on a lower cultural level.

Reader -Related Issues in Translation Studies

Studying the average reader, Lotman (1970) determines four essential positions of the reader:

- Where the reader focuses on the content as matter i.e. picks out the prose argument or poetic paraphrase.

- Where the reader grasps the complexity of the structure of a work and the way in which the various levels interact.

- Where the reader deliberately extrapolates one level of the work for a specific purpose.

- Where the reader discovers elements not basic to the genesis of the text and uses the text for his own purposes.

Major Reader Response Paradigms

At the base of the centralizing of the reader in literature studies lay the researches that were initiated in the early half of the last century when the formalistic approaches to language and literature studies emerged. The New Critics worked "to secure the text objectively with verifiable results in the critical process" (Lang, Web) and the Reader-Response critics paved the way for the reader to focus on processes of mental orientation in the act of reading. Wolfgang Iser says

> The phenomenological theory of art lays full stress on the idea that, in considering a literary work, one must take into account not only the actual text but also, and in equal measure, the actions involved in responding to that text… The convergence of text and reader brings the literary work into existence. (1972)

Stanley Fish (1970) asserts on a radical approach to reader-response criticism in the tradition of neo-pragmatism and conventionalism. "His assertion is that the reader manufactures the sense or meaning of the text. Meaning no longer inheres in the text, but is fully located within the reading community. Thus the reader's presuppositions are not something to be overcome, they are inescapable. The "interpretive community" is a reading public that shares a strategy or approach to interpretation. The text is not an object that can be approached and examined from

the outside." (Lang, Web)

Roland Barthes (1974) sees the place of the literary work as that of making the reader not so much a consumer as a produce of the text. Julia Kristeva (1970) sees the reader as realizing the expansion of the work's process of semiosis. The reader then translates or decodes the text according to a different set of systems and the idea of the one 'correct' reading is dissolved. At the same time, Kristeva's notion of intertextuality that sees all texts linked to all the other texts because no text can ever be completely free of those texts that precede and surround it, is also profoundly significant.

The above survey shows that the reader's position is not at par with reader response theorizations in literature studies. The reader is taken for granted in translation studies. All the guidelines / norms / suggestions / clarifications / analyses are centered on the translator. Despite the fact that in modern literary studies reader-oriented approaches are considered more relevant the translation studies have not been guided by these phenomena.

Reader-oriented or reader-centered approach in translation studies should not just remain confined to a translator's note to the readers. One of the basic beliefs of literary translation is that it is done to make a text available for those readers who are not able to read the text in SL and it is not done for the translator (this may not be true in the case of creating a literary piece because the aesthetic pleasure and reason to write may not always be guided by the readers' choice for the writer/novelist/poet etc. But a translator only translates for the reader and never for himself/ herself.) Thus by not taking into consideration this guiding tenet of literary translation the theorizing in translation studies remains an erroneous phenomena. For this reason I have chosen to take up the following discussion of *Dawn of Dreams* from the point of view of the readers.

Data Analysis. An analysis of the data gathered through the questionnaire (Appendix) suggests the following about *Dawn of*

Dreams:

1. Item 1: All find it to be an "interesting" text due to i) lucid and coherent use of simple language; and ii) (European view) exploring a totally new issue.

2. Except the readers of the Indian subcontinent, all say that "the language used in the text is distinct from their own variety of language"

3. Readers of the non Indian subcontinent found the text sufficiently loaded with features of Indian variety of English.

4. These readers said that such features created problems "To Some Extent" in the general enjoyment and comprehension of the text.

5. Majority (the Arabs) found it to be a "Difficult" text, but the Europeans call it "tolerable" as it is study of a distant exotica for them.

6. Words and expressions that generally created problems are listed as follows: Apa, Dulhabhai (name), (Ragho) Bhaiyya, Miyan, Haveli (Europeans only), Bade sarkar, Patwariji, Gumashtaji, Zamindari, etc, etc.

7. All except Indo-Pak readers found the text to be problematic due to social, cultural, and political background of the text; some cultural aspects exclusively related to AMU were problematic even for the Pakistani readers to a certain extent.

8. The Europeans found themselves "totally alien", while most Arabs found themselves "distantly familiar"; one Saudi says he is "familiar to some extent".

9. While One Saudi and the Iraqi reader found the text to be challenging due to "handling the language used" in the text; the others (European, Egyptian, and a Saudi), except Indo-Pak readers, found• it difficult to comprehend mainly due to not "understanding the context" (social, political, and cultural

aspects).

10. While Indo-Pakistani and the Europeans found it "comfortable" in dealing with the context, the rest found it "Difficult". They found difficulty in handling with such socio-cultural aspects as "abolition of Zamindari" and its impact, "Partition", "Aital kursi", "AMU" episodes, etc.

11. Almost all refused to accept that "such a literary text with typically localized Indian context can be sufficiently enjoyed and comprehended by a culturally distant reader too". As a reason for this, the majority calls it so due to "the backdrop / context of the story", while the Russian calls it so due to "the language in general".

12. *Dawn of Dreams* is identified by all the readers as translated text on the basis of the language, expressions, culture etc.

Findings / Inferences / Conclusion / Suggestions

Findings/Inferences. Being translated in English, the *Dawn of Dreams* promises to attract the English knowing readers in general. The subjects who belong to the context of English as Foreign Language (where English is neither used as the mother tongue, nor for interpersonal purposes in their everyday life, like the ones from Egypt, Italy, Russia, and Saudi Arabia) face problem in tackling the use of the Indian variety of words, expressions and jargons and the Indian social, cultural and political instances. Such linguistic and cultural features became reasons for obscurity and barriers in communication for such readers. It is important to mention here that the readers from India and Pakistan do not find such features as obstacles either in enjoyment while reading or in comprehending the text, while the others do face a problem. This suggests that mere change of language -from SL to TL -is not enough for proper comprehension of the text. Certainly there is something more beyond the linguistic aspect of a language that needs to be perceived by the readers. For this a translator may provide with footnotes, references etc more, even though such

efforts apparently take away the challenge from the readers, but a translated text is definitely not free from its own challenges to offer to the readers and sometimes it is advisable to minimize the intended challenges in reading in order to increase the readability of the text. A literary translation, thus, is a device of art used to release the text from its "dependence on prior cultural knowledge" (Herzfeld 2003 in Albakry). However, it is not an easy task to transplant a text rooted in one culture into another and this is the reason that a translator cannot stop the loss in translation but at the same time a translator needs to keep in mind that which loss is less damaging from the point of view of the readers. Thus a translator has to pick between providing for a better comprehension of the text as cultural carrier or letting it remain a text true/close to its SL and making compromises at the cost of readers' share of comprehension of the text.

These aspects make a point in case for some measures that needs to be taken in order to minimize such obstacles / barriers faced by readers who are unfamiliar to the localized linguistic and cultural aspects. Scholars and translators need to work on the agenda of reaching out to the maximum readers otherwise such translated texts will remain confined to the Indian subcontinent. Such translated text will not be suitable for the English knowing users of the world. In order to meet this lacunae, Popovic (1970) has advocated the freedom for the translator 'to differ organically, to be independent', provided that independence is pursued for the sake of the original in order to reproduce it as a living work for the readers. Meenakshi Mukherjee in H. Lakshmi (2007) voices the same when she talks of the following two problems:

- Difficulty of expressing the cultural and sub-cultural nuances of Indian life.

- Problem of addressing a heterogeneous group of readers with varied backgrounds and experiences.

Keeping in mind Popovic's concept of 'independence' and Mukherjee's 'problems' as cited above, in *Dawn of Dreams* the

following aspects could have been more reader friendly in order to extend the readership in India and abroad.

- Chapter 3 reflects upon the inadequateness and abruptness in the novel. This is certainly on the part of the novelist, but may be mended for the extended readership.

- The context of AMU chapters 13-20 shows assumption, as if all readers are aware of the AMU lifestyle.

- Linguistic features like Gumashtaji, Patwariji, mohajirs, miyan chapter 3, 32; cultural aspects like sine die at AMU chapters 16-17, Thursday/Friday being the alms day at mosque; Muslim-Hindu tension and its subsequent impact as the biased behavior in Afaq's admission to college chapter 12 , getting a room in the government guest house chapter 37etc. are too rooted in the milieu.

    Conclusion and Suggestions. In this way such texts will successfully be the carriers of native culture and will not merely end up becoming the case studies in culture and translation studies. I have attempted to create space for the readers' position in translation studies by looking at various dynamics of *Dawn of Dreams* as a translated text, through readers' point of view. The theoretical aspect remains to be documented as this paper simply analyses the responses of the readers and draws the inferences. I have not surveyed my sample among various Indian readers for the reason that entirely different paper and entirely different foci are needed to deal with the dynamics of the text because the readers in India have different issues with the familiarity, culture, language, syntax etc. of *Dawn of Dreams*. The translation studies going on in Israel, Russia, Germany etc are examples to inspire the Indian context to standardize the issues of translation studies in India. India being the country of multilingualism and multiculturalism has a lot to offer to the global quantum of literary translation studies because the problems / challenges / clarifications / findings / analyses of the Indian context are going to be based on the uniqueness of the Indianness.

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Appendix

Questionnaire

This questionnaire is intended to collect your views regarding some aspects of the text *'Dawn Of Dreams'* that you recently read. The researcher assures you that your feedback will be kept confidential and will be used purely for research purposes. Do not hesitate to add any (number of observation) observation that you made while reading the text, but have not been raised in this questionnaire.

1. How do you evaluate the text *'Dawn of Dreams'*?

Very Interesting/Interesting/Just acceptable/Dull

Please give reason for your response by mentioning a holistic opinion on the basis of your reading:-

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

2. Did you find the language (for instance, diction, jargons, usage, syntax) used in the text distinct or distant from your own variety of English?

Yes   /   No

3.   Did you find the text heavily loaded with features (for instance, diction, jargons, usage, syntax) of Indian Variety of English?

Yes   /   No

If 'Yes' did such a presence of Indian variety of English create a problem in the general enjoyment and comprehension of the text?

Yes   /   No

If 'Yes', to what extent did you find the text to be difficult?

Very difficult   /   Difficult   /   Tolerable   /   Intolerable

4.   Please mention, in the space provided below, some instances from the text, justifying your response for the previous question:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

5.   Did you find some problems of comprehension due to the typical Indian (Social, political, and Cultural) background of the text?

Yes   /   No

6.   How familiar did you find yourself to the context (social, political, and cultural) of the text?

Very Familiar / Familiar to some extent / Distantly familiar / Alien

7.   From the point of view of comprehension, which one of the following was more challenging? (Please rate your response with **'1' as the most challenging;** and **'4' as the least challenging).**

   i.   **Handling the Language used**

ii. **Understanding the Context (social, political, and cultural aspects)**

iii. **Getting at the message**

iv. **Comprehending the author's point of view / the issue dealt with in the text**

8 How do you evaluate your level of difficulty while dealing with the context?

Very difficult / Difficult / Tolerable / Intolerable

9 Please mention, in the space provided below, some instances from the text justifying your response to previous question:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

10 Do you think that such a literary text with typically localized Indian context can be sufficiently enjoyed and comprehended by a culturally distant reader too?

Yes / No

11 While reading this text did you ever feel that it is a translated text from some Indian language? Yes / No

If 'yes', what made you feel so:

i   Some expressions in the text

ii   The language in general

iii The backdrop / context of the story

Any other aspect, please specify:_____

An Introduction to the World of Monoranjan Byapari

With a translated excerpt from *Itibritte Chandal Jiban (Prathama Khanda)*

Sayantan Mondal

Abstract:

Can an introduction to a text become an appeal, a warning or perhaps a statement on its own? Can it become a site of foregrounding certain uncertainties which the text stands for? This is an attempt of such an introduction to a world of words and actions, to a life which can hardly find a parallel. The paper proposes to do so by taking out three aspects of Monoranjan Byapari's writing. First, it attempts to delve into the recent debate about the primacy of identity politics and by not trying to be judgemental about this seemingly never-ending debate, this paper will try to reflect upon it from the perspective of the novelist Monoranjan Byapari's world. Second, this paper will focus on the complexity of identity itself by taking registered clues in the writing of Byapari where instead of the restriction of a single tone what looms large is a spectrum of identity and a man's breaking into all of them equally. And third, this paper will be an attempt to dissuade attempts of easy linear meaning making by dissecting layers of linguistic complexity that crowds Byapari's world of letters and imagination.

An introduction may remain as a cluster formal words catered in the beginning of the process of knowing something or someone. But, it hardly remains so. Introduction has often crossed that boundary of formality and tended to be something more – an appeal, a warning or perhaps a statement on its own. The act of introducing, thus, has always been tentatively definite in its nature. It has become a site of foregrounding certain uncertainties which the text or the object, which is being introduced, stands for. This is an attempt of such an introduction to a world of words and

actions, to a life which can hardly find a parallel.

Monoranjan Byapari, a rickshaw puller, a coolie, a waiter, a helper and so many other things by occupation, has made a miracle one day by starting to write. It is a miracle, atleast, to our eyes which is accustomed to expect certain ways of writing when we read. It is a miracle to our eyes which is accustomed to expect a balance of suspense and relaxed space made of words when we read. It is a miracle to us who are accustomed to see a rickshaw puller pulling a rickshaw but not seeing him asking meaning of difficult words, writing stories, sitting in conferences and publishing. Indeed, it is needless to say, Monoranjan Byapari is a miracle man whose love for life has driven him from close encounters with death to a shabby corner of his shanty home where he wrestles with words, memories and writes life.

Itibritte Chandal Jiban or Chandal Life in Memoir, is a testament of a dalit life by Monoranjan Byapari. In his own words, it is a naked, unornamented truth of life which had supplied resources for his writings. Apprehending our customary apprehensions, Monoranjan Byapari has gone on length to explain why then another autobiography. No doubt, he has answered the questions to perfection. But, the fact that he himself raised the question before anyone of us asking, points to a few noteworthy aspects of his world, of his life. In this introduction, I will try to bring forward and focus on these aspects which the author's introduction plays with.

Section I: A Dalit writer and his self :

In recent times we have encountered a debate in different aspects of our social, political life. The debate is about the primacy of identity politics. While one side claims that identity centric politics divides, singles out people and distances them from all other primary political sloganing like class, the other side has clinged to it often recognising that as their last resort. This is not a platform to be judgemental about this debate, nor is this an attempt to solve this riddle which seems neverending. Rather,

my attempt will be to read Monoranjan Byapari and about his self-identity, his 'me' which is at the centre of his autobiography *Itibritte Chandal Jiban*.

My first entry point into this complex calculation will be the equation between the self of the author and the question of self identity. Western theorisation has equipped our reading abilities to an extent that we are well aware of the author function and its limits. We know well the text and its seamless boundaries. And we know how to process 'doxa' (received knowledge) and go beyond it by contextualising it or by so many other means. However, in today's copyrighted world letters and sentences and their curious combinations are safeguarded to the extent that thought, meaning and words are hardly separable. And therefore, when a writer starts writing about the self, the readers though credit his attempt and recognise the stamp of his self identity do contextualise it with other similar attempts. This is where we have our first point of departure. If Monoranjan Byapari is to be contextualised what will be the context. The text at hand, *Itibritte Chandal Jiban*, has limited that scope for us. In fact, one of the greatest author of this generation, Maheswata Devi testifies this fact through her letter of introduction.

Author Monoranjan Byapari is known to me for years, whom I have seen growing up as an author. Author becomes through the process of writing. Monoranjan has established this saying in his life and works....To be recognised in today's society whether one is by birth brahmin or chandal, that thinking, that mentality is no more. But, if someone is by birth a chandal, the path of his progress is not covered with flowers....it is difficult to build one's own identity in society only on the basis of his abilities. Who has no identity by birth or through family, for him it is more difficult to build an identity, recognition on the basis of his self-identity. Monoranjan Byapari wants to be recognised only through his self-identity. This is a welcome claim. My request, all of you read his autobiography and make others read.

- Introducing letter from Maheswata Devi published

along with the autobiography.

It may be true that the process of writing, editing, revising makes a writer and Monoranjan Byapari is the product of similar hard work; it may be true that his yearnings to be known for his literary work, for his 'me' will find reflection in countless authors, poets, artists, but it is only a conditional truth. And the conditions separate his claims from thousand other writers and bring him closer to them who has similar life, the lives of dalits. Monoranjan Byapari and his 'me' is the representative of that mute section of the society who were never heard of, never expected to become vocal or write.

Section II: The Fractured self and the imprints of dalit life:

From 1981 to 2012, as a matter of time it is thirty-thirty two years. If I am asked – what have I written by wrestling with pen and paper all these years! Story? Novel? My answer will be – "none of that, I have written life." Only one life; its moving on, receeding, loosing, making others loose, getting lost, finding, getting bloody wounds and injuries, falling flat in the ground and struggling to stand up relying on the same ground, an intense yearning to touch the sky, etc. Therefore, it will not be illogical to say – my whole life is scattered in each of my story....That rickshaw puller named Naba, that truck helper named Lathkhor, that angry chandal named Jiban, that drunkard named Gurjal, that thief named Bhagaban, that coolie named Sripada, that dacoit named Aguntuk, that writer named Bangal – that's all me. All these are my fractured being.

- Monoranjan Byapari, Two Words from the Author,
Itibritte chandal jiban.

Following our point of departure, recognising that the voice of Monoranjan Byapari is perhaps the voice of mute millions, one encounters the fractured self of the author in the beginning of this autobiography. The subjective position of the author is neither limited to nor in any way restricted by his professional

identity. Rather, Monoranjan Byapari looms large in a spectrum of identity. Interestingly, the spectrum is constituted of the lowest strata of our society which is composed of rickshaw pullers, thieves, waiters, helpers, coolies, of people who dwell far below the poverty line. The self, thus, is not only torn among occupational identities, but among identities that moor one in specific caste and class categories simultaneously. And this provides the author the license to dictate terms, atleast in his writings, over a number of conflicting ideas – caste, class, regionality, nationality and so on. Monoranjan Byapari moves through the complex web of identities smoothly and with ease and mocks at the battle of theories as he asserts that the battle is after all for the class called have-nots which is invariably located at the cross section of all sorts of identities, groups. Itibritte Chandal Jiban, thus perhaps, earns the rights to have a laugh about the falling apart of the centre which could not hold the author's queries in a predetermined, specific category or zone; and, the fractured self by the strength of its fractured nature thus redefines what has been so long comfortably labelled as dalit and widens the path for future debates.

Section III: Of Language, Humbleness and of Writing:

As no ornament can be prepared without mixing impurity to the gold, likewise to steer stories, novels towards a fulfilment of some metaphors, alamkaras, similes, examples are sought to construct its body and its make up. Some additions and some deletions to the main event are also required. Past is passed as present and present is pushed towards future. Space, time and characters are altered. A lot of artistry is to be done. In an idol made out of all these tricks, the artist's artistry becomes the main factor. And the real material gets covered in these artistry – the husk-soil-wood or that 'truth'....Once a lengthy writing, titled "Saman Sakashe Tindin" was published on three horrific incidents of my life. A lot of readers read that with the pleasure of reading detective stories, praised the writer's skill. But no one could accept it as truth. Because that was a story. Whatever, stories are never true. To present that truth – that hard, rough, merciless, horrible

reality in a trimmed, unornamented body, to present myself in the time-society-peoples' court for justice, this self-organic writing is created.

> \- Monoranjan Byapari, Two Words from the Author,
> *Itibritte chandal jiban*.

It would a sweeping statement to call Monoranjan Byapari's language difficult. A language that has a history of atleast two hundred years of modern grammatical development and evolution where it went through the creation and later merging of separate writing and speaking language, has been put to contain the life of a fractured self in this autobiography. And, the author who has never crossed the threshold of a school but learnt the language and its nuances from his daily life in station, in hotels, in prison when writes the language, it becomes more enriched with a curious mix of a colloquial and formal tones and vocabularies. Monoranjan Byapari has weaved a complex web of language with unforeseen use of punctuation to remain true to his emotions and challenges every reader who translates his writing for his or her own understanding. However, when this language is translated can it retain the local flavor of everyday life, can it strike the reader for its staggering movement, can it remind the reader of the self of the author at every period (.) - these questions are yet to be answered. And I hope the answer which we are going receive in future comes in affirmative so that Monoranjan Byapari does not lose his self in translation.

Before putting an end to this short introduction to the world of Monoranjan Byapari, let me focus on two very significant aspects which will perhaps help us to closely associate with this autobiographical writing; one, the art of writing and two, humbleness. *Itibritte Chandal Jiban*, atleast some parts of it will remind any careful reader of Sharan Kumar Limbale's *Towards An Aesthetics of Dalit Literature*. Not only the parts in which the author explicitly talks about the art but also his craft carries strong reminder for us. No reader is left at ease through his writing. And, the writing bears numerous stamps of a life unknown in the world

of letters. This takes us to the next aspect, the author's humble attitude. Monoranjan Byapari sounds overwhelmingly humble in his autobiography. To his readers he never issues authoritative claims but pleads and begs and speaks in a language replete with sadness, shame, pity that our social structure imposed on him. However, one can only wish that his humble tone take frequent turns to haunt the readers, even when he acknowledges his inspirations humbly:

A lot of people helped me in lot of ways to reach here. They are so many in number that counts cannot count that....I am grateful to that back tearing stick which steered me towards future like a cow. Grateful to that light post too, to which I was tied. That helped me understand how sinful it is to be poor. I convey my gratitude that netted black van which sent me to the best university of the world – the prison. And I am most grateful to that rickshaw whose tyres one day became my fortune-wheel.

- Monoranjan Byapari, Two Words from the Author,
Itibritte chandal jiban.

Section IV: Translation from Bengali to English

Chandal Life In Memoir

(Itibritte Chandal Jiban)

(Paragraph divisions and quotations have been done in accordance with the source text)

This is me. I know that I am not completely unknown to you. You have seen me so many hundred times in so many ways. Even then if you deny to recognise me, if I elaborate it to make you understand, then it will not seem so anymore. When the dark of the all unknowns will be removed you will think, yes I know him, I have seen this person.

Human memory is very weak. So to remind you of the old I will not insist on putting pressure on your memory. Just take a

look at the green ground infront of your window. You will see a bare bodied *rakhal*[1] boy behind goats and cows running with a stick in his hand. You have seen this boy for years. The face, that's why, almost known to you. That is me. That is my boyhood.

Now come little out of your house. Where the alley of your's merge with the big road[2], take a look at the junction tea-stall. Rough hair, smelly, torn *genji*[3] worn, beaten at the hands of the owner, the boy that cries and washes the glasses – that is my adolescence.

Youth follows. Carrying *mote*[4] in rail stations, balancing a load of bricks on the head and climbing bamboo *bhaaras*[5] to second or third floor roof, driving rickshaws, watchmaking at night, *helpering*[6] in long distance trucks, *methor, dom*[7] – this way my youth had passed. In one or the other stage of this, in the roads, *ghats*, fields in some occassions or other you have definitely seen me. One cannot say, perhaps you have seen me in that decade of seventies[8], running in the *para*[9] alleys with bombs and pipeguns. Or police beating handcuffed me and picking up in a van.

Life kept mustard under my feet[10]. That's why nowhere, in no role I could stay for two days. I have slipped again and again. I am making audible that lagging behind, retreating lifestory. In my whole life, life has made me do so many things, even if I want, can I write all of them? This is a big disadvantage of autobiography- there is no cover. That cover is available in Novels. So there is no problem in disclosing a lot of things frankly.

Another problem of writing autobiography is, one has to beat one's own drum. Every human is beautiful in his own eyes. Their work is praiseworthy for them. That's why I am afraid, the toneless, rhythmless beating of my torn and tattered drum will irritate you. Because the picture of the society I am going to draw, is the same society, same time that you belong to. Who knows my complaining finger may also be raised in your direction!

I am not sure, someone has called life a theatre. From

birth you proceed to death by each step - wounded and damaged with injuries and failures – sprinkling blood on turns of the road, searching the touch of immortality which glorifies life, makes it great, gives it immortality.

Not all can get that ambrosia. Few get that. The one gets it, his/her birth is a success, death is a success, life is a success. If you do not think I am arrogantly proud then let me tell you humbly that I have been touched by that ambrosia. Therefore, it will not be an audacity perhaps to utter that even if my life cannot be called a success it cannot be called a failure. Of course, I have no clear idea about what is truly success and failure.

I am born in an untouchable dalit family notified as criminal by birth. Whose life begins with grazing goats and is driven by the search of two morsels for the two ends of the day to so many types of "lewd, dirty abominable occupations." Though no opportunity to go to school came across but going to jail happened a few times. That man whom people wanted to kill quite a few times considering a nuisance on the earth, today when he is made to sit on a platform and garlanded, he is entitled to think that life has not deprived him completely.

Never crossed the threshold of a school; used to drive rickshaw in front of Jadavpur University; when his life and literary achievements are discussed in the journal of comparative Literature of the same university- vol. no. 46/2008-2009, covering twelve pages from page 125 to page 137, he must be feeling gratified. When so many famous, respected people write about him with their powerful pens; J*ugantar, Bartamaan, Anadabazar, Pratidin, Aajkaal*[11], E.P.W, *Kathadesh, Notun Khobor, Dinkaal*, The Hindu, Statesman, Times of India, *Dainik Jagoran*, Hindustan Times – in such main stream newspapers and magazine his name-idenity gets published; when in popular television programme like *'Khaskhobor', 'Sadharon Asadharon'* and *'Khonj Khobor'* in Akash Bangla, in *Tarar Khobor* in Tara news, in 24 Ghanta, ETV news programmes feature him, he is entitled to think – his life is successful.

Once I was going to Hyderabad invited by respected Tutun di (Professor Tutun Mukherjee), Head of the Department of Comparative Literature, University of Hyderabad. From station I was going in an auto rickshaw. I told the driver to take me to the university guest house. The auto driver was knowledgeable. He keeps a tab of a lot of news of near and far. Knowing that I came from Kolkata, he asked – whether I know the rickshaw puller of Kolkata, who has never been to a school and now an established author!

I told him - I know him. And it is not even slightly wrong that noone knows him like me. I know him much more than the Alka didi who wrote a novel about him. That makes me. My me.

In extinct East Pakistan, I was born in a poor dalit family of Turukkhali Village near Pirich Pur of district of Barishal. That was a Sunday in the month of scorching *Baishakh*.

On that night, there was a powerful *kalboisakhi*[12] storm. The sheds of the huts of so many poors flew away in that storm. Thick branches from huge trees broke down. People were crying, lamenting, getting scared of the horrible sound of thunder. My mother saved me from that fiery rage of the angry nature with the cover of her bosom.

I have heard from my mother, that day we did not have a single grain of rice to cook in our house. My father who used to rear his family through contract-labour[13] – who could supposedly toil like a buffalo, had no job on those days. As a consequence, firing the stove in the kitchen stopped since last three-four days. People around, who were of the same caste, relatives were all poor like us – they eat what they earn. In those households kindness was still not extinct. That's why some of them used to provide my mother with handful rice from their own share. In this way an unfortunate housewife somehow survived with the child in the womb.

That day in the morning my father was out on the road from home without even drinking water, if some rice can be managed

from somewhere. In this area the most well to do people were Bhattacharya babus[14]. I have heard from my mother that after the harvest four heaps of paddy used to be thrashed in their granary. The heaps of paddy used to be so high that if women tried to look at the top of it, their veil would have dropped from their head. My father went to that house in the hope to borrow some rice.

They lend rice, cash money to the village people in difficult times. One has to repay that by working in the field during harvest season.

But now the time is different. Only four-five years back country has been partitoned. This is a time when people are leaving for India in groups. Some members of *Bhatchaj*[15] family meanwhile had already left. The rest are also eager to go. But it is not an easy task to do a proper management of all that land before one leaves. If one lends now, none knows whether one will be ever able to collect it back. Therefore, in exchange of rice they thought it to be wise to make my father do some work right then and made him cut a mango tree into small wooden strips – which could be used for cooking.

This is like Munshi Premchand's another story in another context[16]. But unlike the main character of that story my father did not have to lose his life in hunger, thirst and labour. He managed to return home tying some rice in *gamcha*[17] after finishing his work. After the end of the day when he reached back home it was already evening. And the hints of kalboisakhi has started galloping by darkening the whole sky. That will begin its tandava over the whole place in a few moments.

I am the first born of my parents. After me two more brothers and sisters were born. In those days it was the rule that the wife will give birth to the first child in her mother's house. Women used to be married of at a very young age. And lot of women used to die while giving birth at that tender age. And that's why the rule; lest they are accused that the people in the in law's place have not taken care of the mother. Unfortunately, my mother had

no mother's house[18]. My grandmother was a child-widow. She married at the age of twelve and became a mother at the age of sixteen. After a few days my maternal grandfather passed away. Since there was no one else to take the responsibility of feeding and clothing my mother, she came back to her mother's house with a baby girl. Where already five of her widow sisters were staying. For this reason, in that locality that house was known in the name of "widow house". Of these six sisters there were only two children, my mother and her cousin brother.

My grandmother somehow managed living by keeping my mother in the safe custody of her aunts and by preparing puffed rice, *muri*[19], sewing wraps and quilts and earning whatever little she could from the well to do houses of the village. When her girl was around eight or nine, my paternal grandfather was going in a boat through the river that flowed in front of the house. Suddenly his eye caught a small girl with flowing dark hair filling water in a small pot. He stopped the boat immediately and got down. Searched whose girl was that. And after that he finalised things talking with the guardians of the girl. And one day by paying twenty and one rupees as dowry he took her as daughter-in-law to the famous "eight brothers' house" in Turukkhali village – to the Byapari house.

Our earlier surname was Mondal. It got shaded because of our grandfather. Once he fancied to take up business. Thinking so he took a boat load of beetle nut to Barishal city. However, the business was not bad. Consequently, while returning back from the city he purchased a ten rupee saree for his wife. The look of the saree bewildered all the villagers. One of them asked – "how much did you spend to buy the saree?" Grandfather became very cautious while disclosing the price. People say, "if he sells something – he would lose half. If he buys, he will lose it all." Remembering those words grandfather was hesitating to disclose the actual price. Who knows, perhaps he had been fooled this time as well. At last thinking a lot, he told - "the shop owner asked for eight rupees. After bargaining I got this in seven and half. That

son of my brother-in-law[20] not at all agreeing in anything less than that." Others said – "aren't you lying?" Grandfather answered with confidence, "what is there for me in lying! If I say I have brought that in 10 rupees, is there anyone who will believe?" At that moment a village person smiled and asked, "can you bring me one in the same price." "one! I can get ten", grandfather replied. As usual, when grandfather was getting on his boat at the time of his next visit to Barishal with beetle nuts, he found, someone is coming to him with seven rupees, someone with fifteen. Everyone wants one or two sarees. They were many in number.

Proverbs document that – bullet from the gun and words from the mouth, once they are out they cannot to be returned. Once grandfather has given his words, there was hardly anything for him to do. Therefore, after subsidising each purchase of saree with 2 and half rupees from his pocket, exhausting all his capital he came back from Barishal never to return again.

The story of grandfather's smartness did not remain a secret for long. One or two more Byaparis[21] also visit the Barishal market. When they got to know of our grandfather's business deal they had a round of laughter and added the surname Byapari behind his name. For that reason I am not Monoranjan Mondal but Monoranjan Byapari. This is the real story behind becoming a Byapari.

In this country there may be many Monoranjan. Even one or two Byaparis can also found if searched. But no other Monoranjan Byapari is to be found. I am one and unique. I am the beginning and the end.

NOTES

1. Rakhal: Rakhal is the Bengali word denoting young boys who graze cows and goats.

2. Big road: This is a curious colloquial marker of road division in Bengali. Big road, in general, means main road which are used for buses, taxis and other transport. It is often interchangeably

used with main road.

3. Genji: Meaning the underwear worn by men on the upperpart of their body, it is loan word into Bengali language. It, however, maintains an etymological connection to the island of Genji

4. Mote: Mote stands for the load that are carried over head by the coolies, porters and mootes (another bengali term for coolie). Mote is unique in its sense as it technically reduces stuff to be carried to a total dead weight. And perhaps on that ground distinguishes itself from load.

5. Bhaara: A huge makeshift ladder made of bamboo. It differs from common place ladder in terms of the distance between two consecutive steps which is roughly around 4 feet. It is used mostly by the masons for construction works.

6. Helpering: Derived from helper, i.e. the person who helps,this word helpering is commonly used in Hindi and bangla. It means the job of assistant in trucks. However, it has a number of other usages in other places and broadly stands for the profession of helping in such unorganised and casual sector.

7. Methor and Dom: Both these are known to be caste marker or names attached to the low caste people involved in the profession of scavenging and burning funeral pyres respectively.

8. Decade of seventies: Refers to the period of Naxalbari Movement in Bengal and parts of Bihar.

9. Para: an intimate locality centering alleys, mostly one or two alleys. It is a small stretch of place where people identify each other as a social unit and differentiates from others on the same basis. It has been a centre of flourishing sports club, religious, cultural activities where different paras engage each other in a friendly competition of glory and pomp.

10. Keeping Mustard under feet: It is a bengali proverb meaning

restlessness.

11. These are bengali newspapers.

12. Kalboisakhi : It is the Bengali name for North Eastern storm which is frequent during summer in different parts of India.

13. Contract labour: This term is used to translate the Bengali Jan- Majoor. Jan or jana which means public also used to denote labour. It is interesting to note that this category of labour which emerged as a labour identity stands for all sorts of casual contract labour who can be found gathered at a particular place in cities and towns and ready for any kind of job offered in exchange of money.

14. Bhattacharya is a Bengali Hindu brahmin surname. It has often become a prestigious caste identity marker and been commonly used without the first name to denote a group of people or even a particular person.

15. A common colloquial and altered pronunciation of Bhattacharya.

16. Sadgati is a short story with remarkably similar storyline by Munshi Premchand which depicts the cruel death of a dalit villager as a result of inhuman exploitation of the caste system. Manoranjan Byapari makes a reference to this famous story which also had been cinematised in 1981 by Satyajit Ray.

17. Gamcha is a cotton made piece of cloth, approximately 6 feet in length and 2 feet in width. It is used like a towel for all the same purpose. However, gamcha has a history of nationalism linked to it and it has a well deserve place in everyday life as it serves innumerable purposes other than the obvious ones. For example, one can think of using it as a cushion under head as a replacement of pillow or over head for carrying bricks or any load.

18. Mother's house is not a very common usage in Bengali.

Though the parents' house left by a woman due to marriage is often referred to as 'baper bari' (Pitri griha in sadhu language), i.e. father's house, rare occasional usage of mother's house or 'matri griha'   points at an emphasis on this fact and simultaneously hints at interesting ritualistic practices like the mother going to mother's house during childbirth.

19. Muri, a Bengali word is a common staple food, made out of rice, in large parts of India known in different names like *murmure* in Telangana and Andhra region.

20. *Saala* literally meaning brother in law has long liberated itself from this relational usage only and became a part of slang. It would be wrong to translate *saala* as brother in law except in cases like this where it is used along with other markers of relational terms such as son, daughter, etc.

21. Byapari literally means businessman. Derived from vyapar or byapar which mean business.

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Filling in the Blank

Divya Pradhan

Abstract

Minority communities tends to draw a blank in the national imagination. The paper explores the problems of identity crisis and the use of translation to mitigate it. A translated text like Gorkha's Imagined: I.B.Rai in Translation, becomes a means of communicating with the 'Other' through literature the visibility of the Nepali community of India and thereby placing it as an integral part of the Indian nation. For the unrecognized minority, narrating becomes of fundamental importance. Translation and communication of minority texts is instrumental in restructuring the asymmetrical power relations among nations in India.

Agha Shahid Ali wrote a poignant poem called, "Country without a post office". The poem talks about the angst faced by Kashmiris during the political turmoil in Kashmir in the 1990s. A seemingly innocuous effect was that, mountains of mail remained undelivered. One may ask here how the absence or the presence of a functioning post office is related to pain. The post office is an important metaphor in the life of the marginalized communities. It represents permanence, fixity of identity and also a legitimacy of the identity it symbolizes. One cannot concoct addresses and pin codes and hope that the letters will be delivered. The system works only if the your address and home are acknowledged by the others to be yours. And that there is consensus that you as an entity live there and your existence there is rightfully recognised. As nations within India the minority communities share this lack of a Post Office.

For minority communities this Absence of their Presence is what gives rise to feelings of insecurity, alienation and dislocation. In literature and politics these feelings have manifested itself into

a major theme - Alienation. This position has arisen from a distinct historical, social, political context and must be understood within that very context and not within a broad pan-Indian nationalistic discourse.

It is within this framework that I will be reading *Gorkha's Imagined: I.B.Rai in Translation*, (2009) as my entry point to substantiate my position. I.B Rai is one of the leading writer, critic, philosopher and academician among the Indian Nepalis. This translated text is a collection of short stories and essays. About the collection the editor Prem Poddar writes, "The mixing and merging of ambivalent ethno-national narratives is central to his articulation...which are collected and translated here provide an insightful albeit not definitive, sense of his preoccupation with our 'troubled' time." (Poddar 13).

The most important issue that the Nepali community has had to deal with is the issue of identity. "Caught in the spaces between Nepal, Darjeeling, Sikkim, Bhutan, North-Eastern India, Burma, and the various theatres of war around the world, Rai's characters dramatise the in-betweenness of longing and belonging".(Poddar 18). Historically Darjeeling district and its contiguous areas were always inhabited by the Nepali Community. 68 years post independence Nepali community in India has been facing varying degrees of alienation. This alienation by and large arises out of the glaring absence in the National Imagination which translates into an absence also in terms of social, political, economic and developmental issues. As I. B. Rai writes in 'Indian Nepali Nationalism and Nepali Poetry', "As a result of uneven development in the country, some units if the Indian nation have fallen behind the others, and these facts, together with the attendant feelings, have to be reflected in their literature. And one has to admit the possibility of their being as many manifestations of nationalism as there are stages of societal development." (Poddar 173) From the year 1907 under the leadership of Hill Men Association there has been a demand for a separate administrative unit from the rest of Bengal. Time and again the demand for a

separate state has been raised. This issue is primarily seen as a solution to the "identity crises" faced by the Nepali community. Very often they are erroneously thought to belong to Nepal a country with which Darjeeling district shares its borders and a country with which the Nepali community of India share cultural and linguistic affinity. (Incidentally this crisis is also faced by the madhesias of Nepal who share cultural and linguistic affinity with the Indians living across the border.) This confusion arises from the tendency to confuse between ethnicity and citizenship. This is the historical context in which the text *Gorkhas Imagined* has to be studied.

The vacuity created due to the identity crisis and the use of translation as a tool to fill this blank is the main concern of this paper. Here the Blank which has to be filled, is present in what I would like to call the National Imagination. I use the term National Imagination to denote the Indian mindscape. It is the mindscape of the majority, the mainstream, those who occupy the center that is India, those whose voices count. By equating the national with the mainstream I am not excluding the marginal, the minority from the national. But most of the marginal voices have remained but blanks and gaps that are continuously overlooked, potholes in the Indian nation, whose presence is jarring, as they impinge upon the national imagination as death counts, strikes and political unrest in newspaper reports.

Deriving from Michel Foucault's notion that any regime of normalcy engenders exclusion, Poddar says, "In similar fashion, the category 'Indian citizen' presupposes the category 'non-Indian citizen', and in the discourses of modernity the former is assigned a positive connotation at the expense of the latter. The same is true of a discursive opposition that sets up terms such as 'non-Bengali' or 'non-domicile', or even 'non-Gorkha'. 'non-Nepali'. The intellectual challenge would be to interrogate how the oppositional term has been produced historically and further to explain how power is distributed in constituting and reproducing the opposition. The matrix of the 'national' here is over determined

as the 'Nepali' or 'Gorkha' seeks to locate and relocate." (21-22)

The translated text, a collection of short stories and critical essays is used as a means of communicating with the 'Other' through literature the visibility of the Nepali community of India and thereby placing it as an integral part of the Indian nation. For the unrecognized minority, narrating becomes of fundamental importance. Translation and communication of minority texts is instrumental in restructuring the asymmetrical power relations among nations in India. Here (re)claiming becomes very important and the translator/writer is as important as the political activist.

"Etymologically speaking, the word translation comes from the Latin *translatus*, 'carried over', serving as past participle of *transferre*, 'to bring over, carry over, from trans+latus, 'borne, carried', from *tlatos*."(Poddar 13-14) Poddar further says that in the translation process salvaging remains at the core and that there is no nostalgia for the lost original but rather a gesture towards an afterlife. It must also be remembered that " Translation is not an innocent, transparent activity but is highly charged with significance at every stage; it rarely, if ever, involves a relationship of equality between texts, authors or systems. " (Bassnett &Trivedi 2)

Translation has been likened to archeology in its ability to retell, rewrite and thus communicate. I will therefore be looking at translation as a tool for the much needed communication with the 'Other' and how it simultaneously also becomes a tool for intervention in the ongoing political demand for a separate state.

The stories which have been translated are one of the finest works in Nepali literature. Most of them are written in the realistic mode and depict the lives and times of the Nepalis. Displacement, dislocation, deprivation are some of the general themes. Some stories like "Jarr" are culture specific and one needs to understand the social practices of the community. I will not be dealing with the stories per se as the paper focuses on the theoretical underpinnings of the act of translation among the marginalized. "

A sensitive texturing of the voice of the other, whoever the other maybe, in a performative (as opposed to a pedagogical) English translation of a Nepali text would re-imagine and rewrite a more inclusive nation"(Poddar 25).

Octavio Paz claims that translation is the principal means we have of understanding the world we live in.(Bassnett &Trivedi 3). Translation as a tool of cultural exchange has been around since time immemorial. So has the study of the linguistic process of translation. However the communicative and socio-cultural approach to translation was developed by José Lambert, André Lefevere, Susan Bassnett etc. Over the last three decades the influence of post colonialism and post modernism has made translation studies more complex. Influential theorists like Andre Lefevre, Susan Basnett, Tejaswini Niranjana and others have mainly dealt with translations where the focus remains issues related to representation by and for the West in translated texts.

In the Indian universities where courses are being offered in Translation Studies, texts that form a part of the syllabi are texts belonging to the mainstream cultures - Tagore, O.V. Vijayan, Sadat Hassan Manto, Premchand and Ismat Chugtai. Just as the minority is absent from the Indian imagination its literature is also absent in the field of translation studies. "If contemporary cultural theory has questioned notions of identity and belonging in the recently decolonised areas of the globe, it has also identified the need to raise similar questions in areas conventionally located in the metropolitan centre, as well as to examine the prevalence of what has been called internal colonialism within a decolonised state. Internal colonialism is an issue that needs to be thrashed out well beyond the rubric of politics of identity, more is required than ethnic self assertion alone". (Poddar 20)

It was once assumed that the original text is, "de facto superior to the translation, which was relegated to the position of being merely a copy, albeit in another language". (Basnett & Trivedi 2) But now the translated text is being seen as an entity in itself and not necessarily subservient to the "Original". In this

context Harish Trivedi talks about the impossibility of applying western notion of faithfulness to a text like *Ramayana*. The numerous versions of *Ramayana*, "clearly and substantially based on the Sanskrit original, it repeats or retells, but with sufficient indisputable originality for it to be regarded by everyone as an autonomous freestanding creative work of the first order" (Bassnett &Trivedi 9-10).

With the translated text no longer being seen as inferior to the source text , it acquires a degree of legitimacy and can act as a free agent. Translation is not simply a creative exercise unlike other works of literature. It arises out of a certain need, and the intent behind its process becomes very important. Quoting Peter Hitchcock, *Dialogics of the Oppressed* Poddar writes that translation can " either ...domesticate the foreign text or otherwise ... ameliorate its disruptive potential'...while also raising the prospect of transnational narratives or articulations which might recognise and even celebrate- the multiple and different voices within and across communities"(24-25)

In *Nation, Language and the Ethics of Translation*, Sandra Berman writes, "There has probably never been a time when issues of nation, language, and translation have been more important or more troubling than they are today. In a world where individual nation-states are increasingly enmeshed in financial and information networks, where multiple linguistic and national identities can inhabit a single state's borders or exceed them in vast Diasporas, where globalization has its serious—and often violent— discontents, and where terrorism and war transform distrust into destruction, language and translation play central, if often unacknowledged, roles." (Berman 1)

The nation-state as it stands today is a site of contestation for social, political, cultural and economic control. The world remains deeply fragmented in terms of ethnicity and race. The global village remains an ideal at best. Translation as a medium thus helps to bridge these gaps and divides. To signify the importance of translation, Ilan Stavans writes that modernity is not lived

through nationality but through translationality. Sandra Berman further writes, "Only a more deeply nuanced understanding of these linguistic ligatures, and a heightened awareness of their relationship to the national as well as to the "postnational," and "subnational," can begin to parse the painful dialectics of local and global, past and present, that cross the contemporary world. … and urge, in the process, a very different, more reflective, and more culturally variegated "global consciousness."(Berman 2)

Translation no longer remains a simply a literary tool. It is cultural, social and political and must be understood as thus. Language has become a very powerful tool in the assertion of identities. Ngugi Wa Thiongo gave up writing in English as a first step towards the decolonizing process and began writing exclusively in Kikuyu. However for most marginalized community such an extreme act will only lead to further exclusiveness when the call of the hour is inclusiveness, even if you have to impinge yourself on the national imagination. "Homi Bhabha , a multiply-displaced theorist , foregrounds the transnational-translational nature of our times: the time for " 'assimilating' minorities to holistic and organic notions of cultural value has dramatically passed", he upbraids us, and insists that the , "very language of cultural community needs to be rethought".(Poddar 20). English no longer remains the language of the colonizers. But in fact has become an important linguistic tool in the asymmetrical power relations between national and regional languages. So in such a case, criticisms which center on the use of English and not a bhasa language when only a certain percentage of the population speak English doesn't really hold much ground, primarily because of the impossibility and also the political unfeasibility of making any other language a link language.

What the text *Gorkhas Imagined* seeks to do is to reclaim a space for itself in the national imagination. One needs to look at both these term Gorkhas and Imagined. Gorkhas refer to the Nepali community of India, Imagined here could be seen either in terms of the Nepali nation as being imagined, along the lines

of Benedict Anderson's thesis of the nation as an imagined community or the need for the Indian nation to itself start imagining the Nepali community which has hitherto been just a blank. It is the 'Other' who has to imagine the Nepali community, as mediated by the translated text.

In his essay *Indian Nepali Nationalism and Nepali Poetry* I.B. Rai writes,"...to correct a misconception that still persists and which is rather deliberately fostered regarding the genesis of Indian Nepalis. Those who claim to be delvers into the past and yet describe Indian Nepalis as 'settlers' or 'immigrants' betray their blatant ignorance of the history of this region. After the Anglo-Nepalese War, through the Treaty of Sagauli of 1816, Nepal was made to cede lakhs of square miles of Nepalese territory to the British East India Company, together with the Nepali people living thereon. These were the forefathers of today's Indian Nepalis."(Poddar 173-174)

In the year 2006 Laura Bush launched the "Global Cultural Initiatives" to enhance and expand America's cultural diplomacy. The first phase of the programme was to, "sponsor, translation and publications, thus affording Americans and readers in other nations access to the best of each other's literature." (Flowtow 189). Here we see how translation as a practice is being used as a complement and to give legitimacy to political action. *Gorkhas Imagined* as a translated text occupies a similar position wherein the text becomes an integral part of the ongoing political movement for a separate state. Translators translating texts from the margins shoulder a lot of responsibility. The contemporary world with its competing interests calls for engagements at several levels from both the mainstream and the minorities. Exclusiveness only engenders alienation and violence. Translation as a unit of culture becomes a potent tool of communication in the Babel of human languages. Other units of culture like handicrafts and handloom products only perform the role of exoticizing the minority, it does not bridge gaps. Translated texts as acts of intervention are more real and powerful and fundamental in cultural diplomacy.

As Prem Poddar aptly sums up, "As I see it, Rai's reflections on the Nepali language, the Gorkha/Nepali language, the Gorkha/Nepali community and his own writing practice can be read in two ways. The first is in terms of *telos*: that writing will strengthen the nation or ethnie. The other way is the more troubled interrogative reading, that raises the same question of cultural identity, through textual elisions and ambivalences *inter alia*, about writing and the Gorkha/Nepali community... We await the arrival of such a translation, such a liberating history, a futuricity, a place where the received and assertive vocabulary of cultural community is recast. for now, we welcome the present collectanea of translations of Rai's shorter works as a step in that direction." (36-37)

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Translating the Qur'ān: An Analysis of Discourse on *Hijāb* in Selected English Translations

Ubaid.VPC

Abstract

Translation of a text from its original language to another requires not only great skill in both languages, but also in depth knowledge of the background and culture as well. A scripture, particularly the Qur'ān, which proclaims itself as a linguistic marvel, presents a higher level of difficulty. Translating Qur'ān is different from all other texts and scriptures. The Words of God cannot be presented in any human language and it is difficult to have the formal and   dynamic equivalence. A comparative analysis of different versions of translation of the Qur'ānic verse Al Nūr 24:31 related to Hijāb is attempted here. The selected translations for the study are those rendered by Yusuf Ali (apologetic and pseudo-rational), Hilali and Muhsin Khan (salafi), Abul Ala Maududi (traditional), Muhammad Asad (apologetic) and Tarif Khalidi (modern). The paper aims to explore the differences of translating the selected verse in five representative English translations. The paper looks at the various aspects of translation like ideological insertion, discourse and translation, culture and translation and formal and dynamic equivalence.

Key Words: the Qur'ān, English Translations, Discourse on Hijāb

1.   Introduction

A large number of the Qur'ānic verses refer to women. Islam gives a proper position to women in the socio-cultural domains of life. Women, being a social individual, occupy a particular stance in all civilizations of the world. Different viewpoints of different societies and cultures towards women are subjected to discussion

in modern cultural discourses.

In education, according to Islamic tradition, a number of women among the early believers had a role in the transmission of the text of the Qurʾān and *Sunnah* and through the centuries women learned the Qurʾānic text.[1] In the spiritual realm, women and men are regarded in the Qurʾān as equal in the eyes of the God, having similar religious duties. A large number of verses are addressed to the believing men and believing women and the hypocritical men and hypocritical women as well as the idolatrous men and idolatrous women.[2] For instance in *Al Aḥzāb* 33:35 Allah says:

> God promises forgiveness and a great reward to the men and women who surrender to God, the men and women who have faith, the men and women who are obedient, the men and women who are truthful, the men and women who are patient, the men and women who humble themselves (before Him), the men and women who give in charity, the men and women who fast, the men and women who guard their chastity and the men and women who remember God much.[3]

A.R. Kidwai observes:

> While the Qurʾānic address to man being generic covers both men and women, at places the Qurʾān specifically mentions both men and women separately. For example, in this verse (33:35)[4] God has addressed both pious men and women, promising them His forgiveness and great reward. This underscores the note of gender parity and equality in Islam.[5]

Both men and women are advised to believe in God and do good works in order to enter Paradise. Allah says:

> He who does evil is punished equal to it. But one who does good, man or woman, and is a believer, will enter paradise. They will get there provision without any measure. (*Ghāfir* 40:40)[6]

In the socio-economic spheres too, Islam has provisions for their betterment. Malladi Subbamma writes:

> Muhammad (pbuh) did not only reform this (the practice of infanticide) but made provision for bettering the position of women in respect of inheritance and succession. He has laid down definite and specific rules in respect of the same.[7]

The marital relationship is most succinctly expressed in a phrase that has been widely quoted throughout the centuries. Allah says:

> Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, for God has given excellence to one over the other, and because men spend their wealth on supporting them. So the pious women are obedient and guard and the rights of men in their absence under God's protection. If you fear their rebellion, (first) advise them, (next) refuse to share their beds, and (at last) beat them (lightly). If they return to obedience, do not look for ways to harm them. God is Most Exalted, the Greatest. (*Al-Nisā' 4:34*)[8]

Naseem Ahmad opines regarding the meaning of this verse that the headship of the husband should on no account be abused as a license for dictatorship: it does not signify absolute freedom on the part of the person in charge; if the husband misuses or abuses his status, the wife has the right to interfere to rectify the situation. After all, the whole issue of being a chairperson is to ensure the smooth running of the family.[9]

These are some of the concerns regarding the socio-cultural background of women in the Qur'ān. So, to understand women and their dress code without internalizing these various concerns may mislead readers. The gender discourse of the Qur'ān can be understood by taking into account the context, co-text, history, comparative literature, sociology, ethnography, and biology where all creatures are created in pairs. The format of discourse to understand the women and their place in the Qur'ān

can be diagrammatically represented thus:
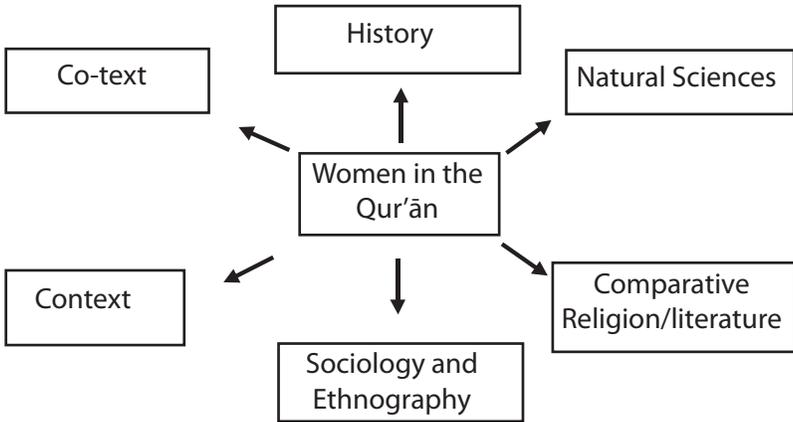
2. **Etymology of the Word *Hijāb* and its Meaning**

The Arabic word *Hijāb* is derived from the root Hajaba which means to cover or to screen. Thus *Hijāb* means partition, veil or curtain.[10] It refers to a device that creates separation or privacy.[11] The word appears seven times in the Qur'ān and has a common semantic theme of separation. The Qur'ān uses the word *Hijāb* to refer to a sense of separation, protection and covering that has both literal and metaphorical connotations.[12] In the verse *Maryam*19:17, *Hijāb* is used for a kind of seclusion. Allah says:

> She [Maryam] placed a curtain, screening herself from people. God sent her His spirit which appeared before her as a human being in every respect. (Maryam 19:17)[13]

In the verses (17:45) and (41:5) *Hijāb* is used in its metaphorical sense to denote an invisible barrier. Allah says:

> When you recite the Qur'ān, God places an invisible barrier between you and those who do not believe in the Hereafter. (*Al Isrā'* 17:45)[14]

The term *Hijāb* came to refer to the proper attire for modest Muslim women when they are in public, and rationale

for the "dress code" is anchored in the interpretation of a number of Qur'ānic verses that apply to the Prophet's wives as well as to believing women in general.[15]

At the time of the crystallization of Islamic law, Qur'ānic Commentators were not certain what parts of the body a woman was supposed to cover. This imprecision and difference of opinion among exegetes continued for centuries: whether *Zīnat*[16] which draws attention to a woman encompasses the whole body or not. The dominant opinion among the jurists requires Muslim women to conceal their entire bodies with the exception of their feet, hands and faces.[17]

The ambiguity of the Qur'ānic text on the issue of *Hijāb* leaves room for a multiplicity of social, cultural, economic and geographical factors to define a precise code of behavior for Muslim women at a given time and place.

3. **Methodology**

For making a comparative analysis the verse *Al Nūr* 24:31 is selected. Its translations and commentaries rendered by Abdullah Yusuf Ali (1872-1953),[18] Taqiuddin al Hilali (1895-1990) and Muhammad Muhsin Khan (1925--),[19] Muhammad Asad (1900-1992),[20] Abul Ala Maududi (1903-1979)[21] and Tarif Khalidi (1938--)[22] are selected.

3.1 The Rationale behind selecting this verse:

The rationale behind selecting this verse is that the identity of woman in Islam is a hot topic of discussion in almost all parts of the world. Islam is often criticized for its stance towards woman.

3.2 The Rational behind selecting these translations:

These translations are chosen for conducting this study as representatives of various schools, viewpoints and methods of interpretation. Yusuf Ali represents the apologetic and pseudo-rational mindset[23]; meanwhile Taqiuddin al Hilali and Muhammad Muhsin Khan stand for Salafi tradition[24]. Abul Ala Maududi

is traditional in approach and viewpoint[25], at the same time Muhammad Asad is apologetic[26] and Tarif Khalidi is modern[27].

3.3 Paradigm of Analysis

Analysis will be made based on following:

a) Lexical level analysis: at this level emphasis will be given to only the morphemes/ phrases/ clauses that are crucial to discuss the message of the verse.

b) Discourse level analysis: at this level the discourse of the verse will be analyzed.

4. **Comparative Analysis**

The verse *Al Nūr* 24:31 and its various translations are affixed at the end.[28]

4.1 Lexical Level Analysis

The following key morphemes/phrases from the verse are needed to be analyzed.

1. *Yaḥfaẓna furūjahunna*

Yusuf Ali and Muhammad Asad take the sense of the phrase and translate it as 'guard their modesty' and 'to be mindful of their chastity' respectively. Yusuf Ali comments that modesty is needed for both men and women, but a greater amount of privacy is required for women.[29] Hilali and Khan, Maududi and Tarif Khalidi take the phrase in the literal sense and render it as 'protect their private parts', 'guard their private parts' and 'safeguard their private parts' respectively. Hilali and Khan limit its meaning into sexual acts by giving parenthetical statement: 'from illegal sexual acts'.[30] Maududi takes the phrase in the sense of *Satr*[31] and he states that it includes both illegal sexual urges and exposition of *Satr* before others. He summarizes that believing women are asked to shun any illegal gratification of their sexual urges and to refrain from exposing their *Satr* before others.[32]

2. *Zīnat*

Zīnat is translated by Yusuf Ali by employing two words: beauty and adornments. He explains that '*Zīnat* means both natural beauty and artificial ornaments'. He adds that 'I think both [natural beauty and artificial ornaments] are implied here, but chiefly the former'.[33] But, it is not clear that why he puts the emphasis on natural beauty. Hilali and Muhsin Khan use the term 'adornment' which means, according to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, something used to make somebody or something look more attractive by decorating them or it with something.[34] So, the word 'adornment' occupies a sense of artificial beauty. Muhammad Asad goes for the word 'charm' which is idiomatic. Maududi renders it as 'adornment' and says that 'adornment' includes any means used by women to make themselves look attractive: good dress, ornaments and other cosmetics.[35] 'Attraction' is the word used by Tarif Khalidi. 'An attractive thing' is something draws the attention of others. So *Zīnat* is considered as something draws the attention, hence it possesses a semantic relation to the earlier phrase of the verse, 'not to expose'. Tarif Khalidi's rendering as 'attraction' includes the sense of the word *Zīnat* i.e. natural beauty, ornaments, cosmetics etc. 'Adornment' highlights artificial decoration, 'charm' is idiomatic, 'beauty' is something abstract and 'attraction' (in the sense of the attraction of a thing) is anything (natural, or artificial) that draws attention. So, women are not allowed to expose anything, including their natural beauty and artificial adornment, which draws attention of others. Hence, 'beauty (both natural and artificial)' is the more appropriate rendering. The verse and its translations are affixed.[36]

3. *Illā mā ẓahara minhā*

The phrase is easy to translate but difficult to specify what body parts it refers to. Yusuf Ali translates it as 'except what (must ordinarily) appear thereof', without any comments. Hilali and Muhsin Khan render the phrase as 'except only that which is apparent' and specifies it thus 'like both eyes for necessity to see the way, or outer palms of hands or one eye or dress like veil,

gloves, head cover, apron etc.'[37] But it is not clear what criteria are used to specify these body parts. Muhammad Asad uses the phrase 'beyond what may (decently) be apparent thereof' and goes forward to state that 'the deliberate vagueness of this phrase is meant to allow for all the time-bound changes that are necessary for man's moral and social growth'.[38] Maududi uses the phrase 'except that which is revealed of itself' as similar to earlier renderings and points out to the ambiguous nature of the verse in his commentary. Maududi argues:

> Obviously, the intent of the verse is what women themselves should not intentionally display their charms and beauty. However it is possible that certain attractive objects about them might nevertheless be revealed: for example, the outer garment might be blown up by the wind causing some of a women's adornments to be exposed. When such things happen, the women concerned are not to be blamed. This meaning of the Qur'ānic verse is ascribed to Abd Allah ibn Masud, Hassan al Basri, Muhmmad ibn Sirin and Ibrahimal Nakhai.[39]

So, to Maududi, the phrase *Illā māẓahara minhā* signifies the occasional or accidental case of 'revealed of itself' and he strictly affirms that 'it is not a permission to uncover that which is customary to keep uncovered' [40]. Tarif Khalidi renders it as 'except what is visible'. Tarif Khalidi points to the visible part of the body. His rendering does not disclose what are the parts indented. Almost all renderings are one and same but the semantic range cannot be fixed only by these renderings. Maududi and Hilali and Khan speaks of that the phrase suggests the injunction of covering the faces of women. They consider the traditional mainstream viewpoints regarding *Hijāb*, where as Asad takes the phrase as a token of liberalization and argues that it allows for time bound changes in the dress code of women. Yusuf Ali stresses the ways and customs of the society. Hilali and Khan and Maududi are traditional where as Asad is reformative in translating the phrase. Tarif Khalidi's rendering is ambiguous.

4. *Khumur* (singular *Khimār*)

'Veil' is used for *Khumur* by Yusuf Ali, Hilali and Muhsin Khan and Maududi. The meaning of the word 'veil' is yet to be fixed. According to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, a veil refers to a covering of very thin transparent material worn, especially by women, to protect or hide the face, or as part of a hat, etc..[41] So the English word 'veil' clearly includes a cloth which covers the face, but Arabic word *Khumur* does not. Muhammad Asad renders it as 'head coverings'; this is close to the original. He comments that the noun *Khumur* denotes the head covering customarily used by Arabian women before and after the advent of Islam. More user friendly word 'shawl' which means, according to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, a large piece of cloth worn by a women around the shoulders or head,[42] is used by Tarif Khalidi. The question of its link with the next phrase *"lā juyūbihinna',* also arises while using the word 'veil'. Because 'veil' denotes a cloth that covers face, where as *Juyūb* means bosom. Yusuf Ali, Hilali and Muhsin Khan and Maududi translate *Khumur* as 'veil' to promote the covering of the face as an injunction of the verse. Tarif Khalidi and Asad do not consider that the covering of the face as an injunction of the verse.

5. *'lā juyūbihinna*

Yusuf Ali, Muhammad Asad and Maududi use the word 'their bosoms', where as Hilali and Muhsin Khan keep the original Arabic word and explain the meaning as 'their bodies, faces, necks and bosoms'. Hilali and Khan expand the meaning of *Juyūb* from 'bosoms' to face, neck and even to the entire body. To Tarif Khalidi, it is 'breast lines'. His rendering does not take the sense of the word because he limits the meaning to the breast lines. Here Hilali and Khan commits the mistake of expanding the meaning of *Juyūb* from 'bosoms' to face, neck and even to the entire body, as Asad does in restricting the meaning of *Juyūb* to 'breast lines'.

4.2 Discourse Level Analysis

The following questions arise regarding the issue of *Hijāb*.

1. Is there difference, in dress code of women and men?

2. What parts are referred to in the phrase *'Illā māẓahara minhā?*

3. Does the covering of the face come under the semantic range of this verse?

To Yusuf Ali modesty is needed for both men and women but in terms of privacy there are differences. He says that 'on account of the differentiation of the sexes in nature, temperaments and social life, a greater account of privacy is required for women than men.'[43] Other two questions are not addressed by Yusuf Ali whereas Hilali and Muhsin Khan concentrate on the rest. They state that face should be covered as per the injunction of the verse and provide two *Hadīth* to emphasize the point.

> Narrated Aishah (RA): 'May Allah bestow His mercy on the early emigrant women. When Allah revealed: "And to draw their veils all over *Juyūbihinna* (i.e. their bodies, faces, necks and bosoms)" - they tore their *Murūt* (a wooden dress, or a waist-binding cloth or an apron etc.) and covered their heads and faces with those torn *Murūt'*

> Narrated Safiyyah bint Shaibah: 'Aishah used to say: 'When the verse "And to draw their veils all over *Juyūbihinna* (i.e. their bodies, faces, necks and bosoms)" (v.24:31) was revealed, (the ladies) cut their waist sheets at the edges and covered their heads and faces with those cut pieces of cloth.' (*Sahīh Al-Bukhārī,* Vol.6, *Hadīth* No.282).[44]

The Arabic text of *Hadīth* that they 'covered their head and faces with those cut piece of cloth', is *'Fakhtamarna bi hā'* or 'made *Khimār* from it'. The *Hadīth* therefore means that the women tore their sheets and made *Khimār* from the cut pieces. The word

'faces' does not even appear in the original Arabic text of *Hadīth*. Here it is very clear that Hilali and Khan deliberately expand the meaning of *Juyūb* from bosoms to 'to face, neck and even to body'. According to the Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic, Juyūb means breast or bottom.[45] So, formal equivalency of the term is distorted. Hilali and Khan provide the parenthetical description of the phrase '*Juyūbihinna*' as 'their bodies, faces, necks and bosoms' in the translation of the verse and also in the translation of the *Hadīth* provided. So, it is a deliberate and conscious attempt to include 'face' under the term *Juyūb*. To them the verse includes the injunction of *Niqāb* i.e covering the face of women in public, and only the minimum, like the eyes are exception.

Muhammad Asad argues that the Islamic scholars tried to restrict the meaning of *Illā māẓahara minhā*[46] to the face, neck and sometimes less than that and he goes to the extent that it is allowed to decide the meaning of *Illā māẓahara minhā*[47] as per the custom and socio-cultural background. He says:

> Although the traditional exponents of Islamic Law have for centuries been inclined to restrict the definition of "what may (decently) be apparent" to a woman's face, hands and feet - and sometimes even less than that - we may safely assume that the meaning of *Illā māẓahara minhā* is much wider, and that the deliberate vagueness of this phrase is meant to allow for all the time-bound changes that are necessary for man's moral and social growth.[48]

He points out that the main injunction in the verse is to keep modesty and it will change according to place, time and custom. He argues:

> The pivotal clause in the above injunction is the demand, addressed in identical terms to men as well as to women, to lower their gaze and be mindful of their chastity.[49]

He holds an open ended view, with respect to socio-cultural and geographical change, regarding *Hijāb*.

Maududi gives a detailed discussion on these four points: 1) Rules regarding women's looking at men and men's looking at women, 2) *Satr*, 3) The additional injunctions to women in terms of modesty, and 4) The body parts which come under the exception.

He provides a detailed account of rules about women's looking at men and men's looking at women by citing several *Hadīth*. But it is clear that such a discussion does not directly come under the verse. He says:

> When we bring all these traditions together, they suggest that the rules regarding women looking at men are not as strict as those regarding men looking at women. For example, women are not allowed to look at men in close proximity, say sitting in an assembly, but they can look from a distance, or look at men who are taking part in a lawful play or show. Additionally, if there is genuine necessity, they may look at men even if they are in the same house.[50]

He takes 'private parts' as *Satr* and provides a detailed discussion on it. Actually *Satr* is a different concept and that is not the subject matter of this verse. The injunction regarding *Satr* is applicable even in the case of men with whom marriage is forbidden. The injunction regarding Satr features in the verses 70:29-30[51] and 23:5-6 [52]. He opines that the modesty of women is different from that of men and states:

> It is worth noting that the requirement of the *Sharīʿt* with regard to women is different to what it requires of men. The *Sharīʿt* requires men to keep their looks away from the opposite sex and to guard their chastity. Women, however, are required to abide by some additional rules as well. This makes it quite clear that in this particular regard the sexes are not alike.[53]

He takes the word *Zīnat* in a wider sense. For him, it consists of 'those means used by women to make themselves look attractive: (i) good dress; (ii) ornaments, and (iii) other cosmetics

used by women the world over to beautify their heads, faces, hands and feet.'[54] While referring to what parts are included in the exception, he states that 'the intent of the verse is that women themselves should not display intentionally their charms and beauty.'[55] He, like Hilali and Muhsin Khan, includes 'the face' in the semantic range of *Juyūb*. Tarif Khalidi takes the sense of the verse. To him 'attractions' of any kind, natural or artificial, that draws attention of others come under the discussion. So, women are not allowed to expose anything, including their natural beauty and artificial adornment, which draws the attention of others.

In my opinion, the correct meaning of this verse can also be understood in the light of following points:

1. Both women and men have to follow modesty.

2. In terms of privacy, there is difference between women and men.

3. Women themselves should not intentionally display their charms and beauty.

4. The face does not come under the term *Juyūb*.

5. 'Veil' is an ambiguous word to translate *Khumur*.

6. *Zīnat* includes both natural beauty and artificial adornment.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Differences in translating the term *Zīnat*

'Adornment' (Yusuf Ali, Maududi, Hilali and Khan) highlights artificial decoration, 'charm' (Asad) is idiomatic, 'beauty' (Yusuf Ali) is something abstract and 'attraction' (Tarif Khalidi) (in the sense of the attraction of a thing) is anything (natural or artificial) that draws attention. The point is that as far as the differences in rendering the term into English, the semantic range of the verse varies.

5.2 Differences in translating the phrase *Illā māẓahara minhā*

Hilali and Khan and Maududi consider the traditional mainstream viewpoints in translating the phrase, where as Asad takes the phrase as a token of liberalization and argues that it allows for time bound changes in the dress code of women. Yusuf Ali stresses the ways and customs of the society. Hilali and Khan and Maududi are traditional where as Asad is reformative in translating the phrase. Tarif Khalidi's rendering is ambiguous.

5.3 Differences in translating the term *Khumur*

Yusuf Ali, Hilali and Muhsin Khan and Maududi translate *Khumur* as 'veil' to promote the covering of the face as an injunction of the verse. Tarif Khalidi and Asad do not consider that the covering of the face as an injunction of the verse.

5.4 Differences in the viewpoints of translators

Hilali and Khan stand with traditional viewpoint and argue that the verse includes the injunction of covering the face of women in public. For proving the same, they mistranslate the term *Juyūb* and *Khumur*. Like them, Yusuf Ali and Maududi also speak for the orthodoxy. Asad is different from others and he takes the verse as a sign of liberalization and argues that dress code of women should be decided according to the prevailing culture and customs. So he is reformative in approach. Tarif Khalidi does not believe the covering of the face of women in public as an injunction of the verse.

In short, Modification of the Qur'ānic terms, negation of the semantic coherence of the Qur'ānic verse, mistranslation of Qur'ānic terms etc. are found in various translations. Translators find room for accommodating their ideologies and viewpoints in their translation of the Qur'ānic verse.

Appendix I

The verse (*Al Nūr* 24:31) related to *Hijāb* and its translations without commentary that are used in the study

The Qur'anic Text

Verse (*Al Nūr* 24:31)

وَقُل لِّلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَغْضُضْنَ مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِنَّ وَيَحْفَظْنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا ۖ وَلْيَضْرِبْنَ بِخُمُرِهِنَّ عَلَىٰ جُيُوبِهِنَّ ۖ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا لِبُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ آبَائِهِنَّ أَوْ آبَاءِ بُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ أَبْنَائِهِنَّ أَوْ أَبْنَاءِ بُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ إِخْوَانِهِنَّ أَوْ بَنِي إِخْوَانِهِنَّ أَوْ بَنِي أَخَوَاتِهِنَّ أَوْ نِسَائِهِنَّ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُنَّ أَوِ التَّابِعِينَ غَيْرِ أُولِي الْإِرْبَةِ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ أَوِ الطِّفْلِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يَظْهَرُوا عَلَىٰ عَوْرَاتِ النِّسَاءِ ۖ وَلَا يَضْرِبْنَ بِأَرْجُلِهِنَّ لِيُعْلَمَ مَا يُخْفِينَ مِن زِينَتِهِنَّ ۚ وَتُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّـهِ جَمِيعًا أَيُّهَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ (١٣)

The Translated Texts and Commentary

1) Yusuf Ali 24:31[56]

      And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard (*2984) their modesty; that they should not display their beauty and ornaments (*2985) except what (must ordinarily) appear thereof; that they should draw their veils over their bosoms and not display their beauty except to their husbands, their fathers, their husband's fathers, their sons, their husbands' sons, their brothers or their brothers' sons, or their sisters' sons, or their women, or the slaves whom their right hands possess, or male servants free of physical needs, or small children who have no sense of the shame of sex; and that they should not strike their feet in order to draw attention to their hidden ornaments. (*2986) And 0 ye Believers! Turn ye all together towards Allah, that ye may attain Bliss. (*2987)

2) Hilali and Muhsin Khan 24:31[57]

      And tell the believing women to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things), and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts) and not to show off their adornment except only that which is apparent (like both eyes for necessity to see the way, or outer palms of hands or one eye or dress like veil,

gloves, head-cover, apron, etc.), and to draw their veils all over *Juyūbihinna* (i.e. their bodies, faces, necks and bosoms) and not to reveal their adornment except to their husbands, or their fathers, or their husband's fathers, or their sons, or their husband's sons, or their brothers or their brother's sons, or their sister's sons, or their (Muslim) women (i.e. their sisters in Islam), or the (female) slaves whom their right hands possess, or old male servants who lack vigor, or small children who have no sense of the feminine sex. And let them not stamp their feet so as to reveal what they hide of their adornment. And all of you beg Allah to forgive you all, O believers, that you may be successful (*1).

3) Muhammad Asad 24:31[58]

And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and to be mindful of their chastity, and not to display their charms [in public] beyond what may (decently) be apparent thereof; (*37) hence, let them draw their head-coverings over their bosoms. (*38) And let them not display (more of) their charms to any but their husbands, or their fathers, or their husbands' fathers, or their sons, or their husbands' sons, or their brothers, or their brothers' sons, or their sisters' sons, or their womenfolk, or those whom they rightfully possess, or such male attendants as are beyond all sexual desire, (*39) or children that are as yet unaware of women's nakedness; and let them not swing their legs (in walking) so as to draw attention to their hidden charms (*40) And (always), O you believers -all of you -turn unto God in repentance, so that you might attain to a happy state! (*41)

4) Abul Ala Maududi 24:31[59]

And enjoin believing women to restrain their gaze (*31) and guard their private parts (*32) and (*33) additionally not to reveal their adornment (*34) except that which is revealed of itself; (*35) let them draw their veils over their bosoms, (*36) and not to reveal their adornment to any save (*37) to their husbands, or their fathers, or the fathers of their husbands, (*38) or of their own sons, or the sons of their husbands, (*39) or their brothers, (*40) or

the sons of their brothers, (*41) or the sons of their sisters, (*42) or the women with whom they associate, (*43) or those that are in their bondage, (*44) or the male attendants in their service free of sexual desire, (*45) or children that are yet unaware of private parts of women. (*46) Nor should they stamp their feet on the ground in such manner that their hidden ornament becomes revealed. (*47) Believers, turn together, all of you, to Allah in repentance that you may attain true success. (*49)

5) Tarif Khalidi 24:31[60]

Tell believing women to avert their eyes, and safeguard their private parts, and not to expose their attractions except what is visible. And let them wrap their breast lines, and reveal their attractions only before their husbands and fathers, or fathers- in –law, or sons, or sons of their husbands, or brothers, or sons of brothers, or sons of sisters, or their womenfolk, or slaves, or male attendants with no sexual desire, or children with no intimate knowledge of private parts of women. And let them not stamp their feet to reveal what they hide of their ornaments.

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14. Ibid., p, 160.

15. Ruth Roded, 'Women and the Qur'ān', in *Encyclopedia of the Qur'ān*. Ed. Jane Dammen McAuliffe, Leiden Boston: Brill, 2006. Vol.V. p.526.

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26. A.R. Kidwai, *Translating the Untranslatable, A Critical Guide to 60 English Translations of the Qur'ān*. New Delhi: Sarup Book Publishers, 2011. p.70.

27. Ibid., p.158.

28. Appendix I

29. Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *The Holy Qur'ān, Text, Translation and Commentary*. Brentwood, U.S.A.: Amana Corporation, 1989. p.873.

30. Appendix I

31. The literal meaning of the Arabic word *Satr* is something that is hidden or something which should be hidden. When used in the Islamic context, *Satr* means the parts of the human body which are obligatory on the believers to be hidden from everyone except his/her partner in marriage.

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46. *Al Nūr* 24:31

47. *Al Nūr* 24:31

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51. The Qur'ān Al Ma'ā rij 70: 29-30

52. The Qur'ān Al Mu'minūn 23: 5-6

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57. Muhammad Taqiuddin Hilali and Muhammad Muhsin Khan, *Translation of the Meanings of The Noble Qur'ān*. K.S.A: King Fahad Complex for the Printing of the Holy Qur'ān, 1427 A.H. pp. 395-396.

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Between Being Readable and Being a "Translation": A Study of *Dawn of Dreams*

M. Sridhar and Alladi Uma

Abstract

How do we as translators who do not know the "original" language, Urdu perceive Dawn of Dreams? To us then the English text becomes the "original". How then do we look at the author of the Urdu text, Abdus Samad and the translator/ author of the English text, Mehr Afshan Farooqi? Are we to look only at the themes in the text and their relevance to contemporary India? Abdus Samad wrote the book in 1991. Mehr Afshan Farooqi translated it in 2001. We are given to understand that she has edited the text, even omitting chapters. We cannot but read the text aware of this fact and wondering what has been left out and why. Would her choice have been determined by notions of readability, about the balancing act of a translation being readable and reading like a translation? Would it have been determined by her location as a Muslim woman in the 21st century? We have no answers to these directly as we know no Urdu. We have to depend on others' views on these—but those are just their readings. So we have no option but to go by the English text, even as our reading may be coloured by other people's views. At a time when we are bombarded with images of Muslims being equated with terrorists, this text becomes all the more significant. The text is not just a re-visiting of Partition, but a re-locating of Partition in the present context. It is the translating of the experiences of Muslims who are trying even today to assert their "national" identity. Our paper attempts to come to terms with some of the above issues.

How do we as translators who do not know the "original" language, Urdu perceive *Dawn of Dreams?* To us then the English

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Reader: What a translation! It reads so smooth you don't feel like putting it down. It reads like an original.

Theorist: Don't tell me! How can it read smooth and like an original? There's something wrong. Don't you know a translation must read like a translation?

Translator: I have put my heart and soul into it. I have been as close to the original as I can possibly be.

Publisher: The translation has come out great. It can reach an international audience.

Theorist: If the translator has indeed been very close to

the original, the translation cannot read
smooth. It is sure to be rugged. Why should it
read smooth at all? Doesn't the reader
know when he picks it up, that it is a translation?

Translator: When I say I have been very close to the original,
I am talking about being close to the spirit of the
original. Not the word. How can I not think of
my own readers and my own audience?

Publisher: There you are. The translation is meant for
another set of readers and is done as you know,
at another time period. We need to take this
into account. It reaches another linguistic group.

Theorist: You are talking as if the linguistic group is so
homogenous that they all speak one kind
of English. Don't we talk of Englishes now?

Writer: Where am I in all this? Is it my book you are
talking about or somebody else's?

Translator: It is of course your book. I have utmost respect
for the writer. That's why I try my best to bring
the flavour of the original into my translation.
There is a need to take the best works of
my language to a wider audience. To ensure a
wider reach and a greater readability, I may need
to sometimes edit the source text.

Publisher: That's fair enough. Also, don't forget we need to
keep its marketability in mind.

Writer: Flavour—it's icing on the cake, is it?

Translator: Isn't a translation a re-creation? In India we have
always had the tradition of translation as
rewriting. We have added to the source,
subtracted from it, deviated from it etc.,

without ever feeling disrespect to the original author or bothering about the so-called "fidelity" principle.

Writer: Isn't translation also supposed to be a labour of love? Is it not a result of a translator's complete surrender to the force of the original? Don't bring in all these new fangled ideas of activism in translation and so on and so forth.

Reader: Stop it. Enough of all your discourses on translation. All we readers need is an engaging text.

<p align="center">* * *</p>

We read *Dawn of Dreams*—it was indeed a "dream" reading for both of us. So smooth and so gripping! But the reality of the issues and the relevance "dawns" even to those of us who have not directly been affected by it. At the end of 2009, a decade and a half after the Urdu text by Abdus Samad was published and eight years after its translation into English by Mehr Afshan Farooqi the issues are ever present. As two outsiders, outsiders to the language, religion and to the traumatic Partition and its after effects, how do we view such a work? Are we to view it only as a story of Anwar who decides to stay back in India and is hopeful of the Nehruvian "dream" of secularism? Isn't also the story of Afaq who goes through varied stages of life even to be muted by the unspoken third degree practices of the police but finds his voice through the inspiration of the activist Kulsum? It is here that the statement of Taqi Ali Mirza in his review of the English translation becomes relevant. He compares the text to Attia Hossain's *Sunlight on a Broken Column:* "The closest parallel that the reviewer can think of is Atia Hossain's extremely well-written, but largely forgotten novel, Sunlight on a Broken Column."

While acknowledging the comparison that the two texts draw in terms of the effects of the partition on a family, what

distinguishes the two would be that Attia Hossian's text is surely a woman's text. It is Laila's. It is not fair to expect a man like Abdus Samad to view partition through a woman's perspective. But when he has portrayed a character like Kulsum who becomes an inspiration to Afaq and makes him the man he is at the end of the novel, we wonder how to understand the following. While appreciating the work Kulsum is doing to rehabilitate destitute women, Afaq offers her "delicate" shoulders his "support":

"You are very brave Kulsum. I respect your dedication. But this world is a practical place, your shoulders are delicate, they do need support. When you find a compatible companion, this world will seem a different place. Think about it Kulsum."

Kulsum looked at him bashfully, and lowered her eyes. (Samad 305)

How would a woman translator have responded to such a description in the original? If a woman of an earlier generation like Attia Hossain had been able to create a woman's perspective (and we must make a reasonable guess that she [Mehr Afshan Farooqi] must be aware of Attia Hossain and her work), how would a woman translator have dealt with such an ambivalent attitude in Samad's text towards women? Taqi Ali Mirza in his review mentions that "she [Mehr Afshan Farooqi] has, one likes to suggest, enhanced its total effect by slightly reducing its size by omitting several passages and occasionally, whole chapters, to give the narrative greater vigour." We wonder why the translatorial intervention did not come in the instance of the reading of the text (if we agree that translation is also a reading of the text) as far as the woman is concerned? At least a reference to the way she reads this issue in the text must have found its way into the translator's note which may have made a difference to our reading of the English text. One would expect the translator to not only indicate the portions that have been edited out from the source, but to account for them.

The translation appears in 2001, three years after Urvashi

Butalia published *The Other Side of Silence: Voices from the Partition of India*. It is quite possible that Mehr Afshan Farooqi may not have been unaware of this work. Urvashi Butalia says that she undertook to re-visit Partition after the assassination of Indira Gandhi in 1984 and the riots that followed it:

It took the events of 1984 to make me understand how ever-present Partition was in our lives too, to recognize that it could not so easily be put away inside the covers of history books. I could no longer pretend that this was a history that belonged to another time, to someone else. (5)

She further goes on to add that there is a "human dimension to history" (6) (something that Abdus Samad's text addresses too) and that she has "come to this work through a political—and personal—engagement with history, contemporary communalism, and a deep and abiding belief in feminism" (Butalia 9). While the last part, i.e., "abiding belief in feminism" may not be attributed to Abdus Samad, we know that, as Mehr Afshan Farooqi puts it, "It [*Dawn of Dreams*] shares with us the agony of a generation whose parents chose to stay back" (ix). Recording voices, selecting them, translating them (in the case of Urvashi Butalia) and editing them—these processes in an oral narrative indicate that the compiler/translator/editor's perspective comes through in the work. So we have one more (and many more of those recorded voices) giving us a chance to understand a "time past" and a "time present" through the reading/s of the "time past". What we have in Mehr Afshan Farooqi's translation of Abdus Samad's text is such an instance. If we were to go by the translator's note that she wanted to retain the flavour of the original yet allow the text to reach out and put it alongside with Taqi Ali Mirza's statement that portions of the source text were left out, we wonder how the woman's angle comes in or why the woman's voice does not problematise the issues relating to the women including Aliya Khatun and Fakhru Chacha's wife.

All of us are aware of Alok Bhalla's enormous contribution to the study of Partition. His introduction to this translation

attempts to place the text in its historical and literary contexts. Concentrating on Anwar, he discusses how Anwar accepted the abolition of the zamindari system and wanted to go ahead with the new Nehruvian notions of secular democracy. He views Abdus Samad's text as one that "disrupts the grand historical narratives constructed by Pakistani scholars like I. H. Qureshi, K. K. Aziz, Aziz Ahmed and Muhammad Umar Memon, who see the emergence of an Islamic state" (xvii) and "offers a sharp rebuke to the Hindu communalists" (xviii). He has also provided us a way of viewing Fakhru Chacha with reference to characters in works like Saadat Hasan Manto's *Toba Tek Singh*, Bhisham Sahni's *Tamas* and Krishna Baldev Vaid's *Guzra Hua Zamana*. We wish he had also read this text alongside the works of K. A. Abbas, Attia Hossain and Urvashi Butalia. Maybe we would then have been able to understand how leftist writers (Progressive Writers Association), women writers and feminist writers dealt with these issues. We have commented on the introduction because we view this as also the translator's note as part of the text.

Coming back to the main text, we find it puzzling why Parvez's relationship with the young boy (hinting at a homosexual relationship) finds place in a text which does not seem to be concerned with this issue. We wonder whether an answer was hinted at or explained in the edited pages of the original. Another perplexing issue in the book deals with the questions of "good blood". A text that challenges fundamentalism of any kind seems to legitimize "good blood" in the way it treats characters like Sabir and Jabir and the next generation, Wasim. While they can make it big in the material world, they can never be thought of as "good blood" and the only way this can be rectified is through a marriage, that too of a girl (Kulsum) with a boy (Afaq) of "good blood"!

* * *

Let us now return to the imaginary conversation between the reader, the theorist of translation, the translator and the publisher with which we began our paper. Questions of readability of a translation, the unique quality of a translation as translation

vs. the so-called "fidelity" to the source text, the inevitability of a target-oriented translation, its marketability, and finally the right to edit the source vs. the author's copyright are complex questions that involve several players who approach the end product with their own specific location. But the problems become more complicated when the translation pertains to an issue based text such as Abdus Samad's *Dawn of Dreams* on the question of Partition. Such a text raises serious questions on the ethics of translation, questions that involve not only the translator's right to edit out portions of the source text, but even of the author's right to permit any editing.

Rights of course must go with their corresponding duties. All of us—writers of works to be translated into another language, translators, publishers and readers—are aware of the fact that translation is not a simple transfer of the linguistic material from one language to another, but that it entails an enormous responsibility on all the players. Mehr Afshan Farooqi herself refers to this novel by Abdus Samad as "a timely sequel" to several anthologies of already published Partition stories (ix). Naturally, we expect the translation too to locate itself in the context of Partition literature or Paritition-like contexts obtaining in the present. Similarly, when the text moves in the direction of Kulsum, the woman protagonist in the novel, a novel that specifically mentions the Prime Minister being a woman, we expect an empathy to the woman's cause both on the part of the male writer and the woman translator. We are not suggesting that as a translator, Mehr Afshan Farooqi should have "re-written" the source to satisfy our expectations. We are only wondering if a direction towards the way she would have wanted us to read the text could have been provided in a longer translator's note. But all this is not to take away from the theme/s of the novel, the relevance of the text to the present day or the fact that this novel in Urdu is made available precisely because of a very readable translation to non-Urdu speakers in India and outside.

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The Pre-Dawn Language of *Dawn of Dreams*

Sudhakar Marathé

There are two kinds of translations, literary translations and business, other kinds of content related translations, such as telling someone what directions appear on a packet of instant noodles. There may be a few instances in which the types seem to merge. But by and large, given access to the original, one can make out the difference beyond quibble. The second type is done only in classrooms and during an introduction to a piece of writing or in business contexts where information matters and nothing else does, for someone who does not know the original language. That is more or less literal translation, which does not have to satisfy any rigorous linguistic criteria regarding acceptability in the target language. Communicating the gist or a particular twist of the original is the motivation for such translation. The first kind of translation comprises rendering a whole text with *significant* human or experiential content into another language so as to become a genuine *counterpart* of the original in the target language and literature. There is no doubt at all that Dawn of Dreams aspires to become a translation of the first type. In fact it appears that while the original Urdu novel adopts a simple and at times even literal style of narration, the "literalness" of Dawn of Dreams is minimal and unintentional, clearly arrived at from inability to exploit or employ idiomatic English.

Although its original was written in Urdu, Dawn of Dreams *expects* to be read at least as a pseudo-novel in English. Therefore one is justified in expecting it to become *more* than minimally readable in English, never mind the occasional effort the translator may have made to retain the flavour of the original. Whatever one may say about conveying the "flavour of the original language", there is an essential expectation from literary translation: that by and large it will conform to the idiom of the target language-literature. Here idiom means the 'grammar' or

patterns of acceptability in English at every level: punctuation, speech, vocabulary, phrasing, sentence construction, elisions and even metaphor and other literary devices. I am afraid Dawn of Dreams fails to fulfil this expectation utterly. Consequently, its literary achievement and integrity as a *human* text to be read in English are highly doubtful. Needless to say, in innumerable places the language of translation not only lets English down but it also lets down the undemanding Urdu of the original.

The original novel is probably a worthwhile document in historical, cultural and political terms, and that *as a document* the translated version *may* supply an *intellectual* counterpart of that relevance. However, if one merely wishes to convey information about characters and themes, why bother to write a novelistic translation when an article can convey the necessary "information"? In my paper I shall support my claim—that Dawn of Dreams fails as a translation—by means of a thorough examination of many aspects of the language of Dawn of Dreams. For this purpose, I shall examine the first **16** or **17** perfectly representative pages of the translated text in as much detail as is necessary. The rest perpetuates the same kind of shortcomings and flaws as the portion I examine. However, first let us identify the translator's task in translating the language of the original into the target text.

The first thing to appreciate about any novel as an object of perusal and an object of translation is that it constitutes an extended series of *narrated* incidents that somehow communicate the drama of experience: that comprises *dramatic* description of time, place, person, season, etc., *dramatic* dialogue and *dramatic* action. The more emphatic or charged the drama in the original, the more difficult it is to translate it in measured language. But even in the most linear-sounding narrative, nothing is either merely simple or straightforward. In the most innocent looking narrative at some level everything moves back and forth and laterally, quickly or slowly, almost ceaselessly, and the language is meant to convey human experience far *beyond* words. The

translator must notice, understand, appreciate and render in the *target* novel all the paths and techniques that perform the work of narration in the *original* text. Translation of a novel can fail because its narrative is too un-dramatic to hold readers' interest, because it fails to communicate the flavour of the felt experiences of characters. So a translator's essential task is to render what I have called the *dramatic* or felt quality of the original. I must confess that I have not read in many years a narrative as un-dramatic as Dawn of Dreams.

A novelist needs to strive to the utmost of his ability to overcome this constraint so that he can use the advantages of narration and also milk the maximum value of dramatisation. Add to this the fundamental, essential and historically primary motivation for *any* self-conscious narration: that it wishes to dramatise something so as to capture and hold the audience's interest. Here is a classic explanation of the phenomenon of narration, the human voice, whether spoken or written. I quote a passage from a "Preface" of Rudyard Kipling. In it an English *writer* of short stories has become friendly with Gobind, an ancient Sadhu who had been a well known story *teller* in his time. He asks Gobind's advice about narration. Gobind spells out, typically *via* a story, the art and craft a narrator (and by obvious implication a translator) *must* manifest:

> 'A tale that is told is a true tale as long as the telling lasts. And you know how Bilas Khan, that was the prince of tale-tellers, said to one who mocked him in the great rest-house on the Jhelum road: "Go on, my brother, and finish that I have begun," and he who mocked took up the tale, but having neither voice nor manner for the task came to a standstill, and the pilgrims at supper made him eat abuse and stick half the night.'1

The unavoidable implication is serious: the translator must experience as much of the overt or hidden drama of the original novel as possible, winkle out and identify the techniques used to create it and render them in his translated version of it. The

techniques include ways of making the narration sound out of the ordinary or true to the ordinary in especially interesting ways and of making the dialogue sound natural to the circumstances and characters involved in it. The drama of a narrative lies in part in the incident or action—but written language is a mere indication of the full language, most of which lies in the *heard* narrative, not the flat and lifeless black and white narrative. So the translator must also discover or create means or techniques of doing so that would be considered *appropriate* and *idiomatic* in the *target* language in its written as well as heard shape. A translation that aspires to literary quality cannot merely be a make-shift, rough or lackadaisical *representation* of the original dramatic material and techniques.

T. S. Eliot said in an early twentieth-century essay on vers libre or free verse2 that such verse is *not* literally free at all and that indeed in art it is impossible to achieve freedom without first being subjected to some essential constraint. Indeed one might even claim that the urge to create arises from a desire to confront the challenges of constraints. The chief constraint on translation is that it must reproduce, in a form recognizable *and* acceptable in the *target* language, as *much* of the original artefact as possible and not merely the gist *or* surface sense of the original. In the present instance the translation fails because the translator has simply ignored these attempts or is incapable of producing the requisite expression in English. This expectation relates to every level and aspect of language no matter how insignificant it may seem. Dawn of Dreams flouts this expectation at every step.

Let us begin with the most innocent looking and sounding subject of punctuation. The sound pattern of every language is unique. At the same time, its unique writing system cannot even remotely represent its sound system. The *only* means by which, when transcribed, a language may *barely* hint at the sound and interpretation of grammatical structures beyond words is its punctuation. Just as importantly, while for sheer convenience and because of colonial and other influences most languages

today use the same punctuation signs, their implication for how the narrative *sounds* is different in each language. Our translator seems to have been unaware of both these facts: that punctuation is a poor yet *crucial* vestige of spoken language, and that it follows different rules and sets up different expectations in English from Urdu. Consequently, Dawn of Dreams is littered with punctuation errors, chiefly errors of omission of crucial punctuation. Consequently, the English version is poor and uninteresting. Here are some examples of this problem with Dawn of Dreams:

An apparently trivial instance comes on page **3**, "there has been destruction on the other side too; though you may not feel its pain." But sentences beginning with though are dependent clauses and cannot be connected to main clauses with the semi-terminal sign ;. Look at the following sentence on page **12**: "Sarkar you know, don't you huzoor?" What sense is it supposed to make? Is it to be read as "Sarkar, you know", or without the comma, meaning "you know the Sarkar"? And one needs a comma in "don't you huzoor?" to help read the sentence, as in "don't you, huzoor?" On the same page you have, "Employers never glanced at it let alone sat on it". It ought to be, "Employers never glanced at it, let alone sat on it". Similarly, on the same page you have "Let it be Ghaffar Miyan don't bother", which ought to be "Let it be, Ghaffar Miyan, don't bother". On page **13** you have "But what about us Ragho Bhai?" which ought to be "But what about us, Ragho Bhai?" At the beginning of page **14** you have "Gumastaji was proud of his mane of white hair which incidentally hadn't been bleached by the sun". Just as one needs commas to help separate items to allow one to use the right intonation in all the previous examples, so does one need two commas here to set the parenthesis apart from the rest of the sentence, both for its understanding and for its utterance, like this: "Gumastaji was proud of his mane of white hair, which, incidentally, hadn't been bleached by the sun". The original sentence indeed makes no sense at all, while clearly the intended

sense is that the hair was not *merely* bleached by strong sun but was a clear mark of seniority.

A similar problem with a parenthesis comes further down page **14**: "Anwar cast a cursory look at * faces before him and in his own way, comprehended what was writ large upon them." This ought to be "Anwar cast a cursory look at <u>the</u> faces before him and, in his own way, comprehended what was writ large upon them." When a parenthesis occurs in the *middle* of a sentence, it needs punctuation on *both* sides to mark it. Further, in the middle of page **15** you have Aliya's admonition that ends with this: "…what will happen now? But as if you care?" The context makes it abundantly clear that the last tag is *not* a question but an exclamation and ought to be written as follows: "…what will happen now? But as if you care!" Finally, I shall cite just one more quite extreme example on page **15**: "He alone is our provider, what is this zamindari, God forbid, is that our God?" In fact the sentence makes *no* sense mainly because its punctuation is haywire and a wrongly chosen pronoun also helps increase the confusion. The sentence can at best be printed as follows: "He alone is our provider. What is this zamindari? God forbid! It is not our God!" I shall not flog the matter further but instances of confusing punctuation or confusing absence of punctuation mar the whole text from beginning to end, defying the expectations natural to the English language, instead of fulfilling them so that the reader can make quick *and* rounded sense of what he reads. The text is most carelessly and also erroneously punctuated.

Next let us look at what for most people constitutes language, vocabulary. Unfortunately, there are three fundamental problems with vocabulary also that virtually no one seems quite aware of; certainly, teachers of English by and large remain ignorant of them and so do many indigenous translators: first, that no dictionary meaning is ever really useful; words *only* acquire meaning only when they are used in specific contexts;

until then words only have potential meanings. In a given context one must pick the word with the most appropriate sense. Second, even such applicable senses have stylistic restrictions on them, can be used only in certain conditions and *not* in others; so merely because a word seems to have the meaning one is seeking one cannot proceed to use it without considering contextual and other restrictions on usage. And third, even when a word with an appropriate sounding sense is chosen, one must check very thoroughly indeed whether it fits idiomatic expectations or whether an alternative must be sought for use in given conditions. Let is consider some examples of problems with vocabulary and phrasing in Dawn of Dreams.

> The very opening of the novel is inauspicious. The original reads like this: *ghadi ki tik tik udasi ka khamosh eilan kar rahi thi*. But the English translation reads like this: "the ticking of the clock was like a mute declaration of gloom." The original khamosh eilan means *unspoken* declaration, or that it happened when no one was saying a word, while the word mute is merely a crude contradiction in terms: "ticking" is most definitely a *sound* and cannot be "mute". The same page presents us with "The question concerns the rest of your life". The original does not say that. It says, *"abhi apki sari umra padi hai",* which means "you still have the rest of your life before you". Again, the translation says at the beginning of page **2**: "Do you imagine *Dulhabhai* will listen to us?" But the original does not include the notion of imagining: *"bhala hum logonki bat dulhabhai sunenge",* which is a *rhetorical* utterance, *not* a question at all: "But dulhabhai isn't likely to listen to us, is he!" On the same page the translation says, "Such opportunities don't come **everyday**." But in English everyday is *not* an adverb of time at all, it is an adjective that means daily; for instance, commuting to work is an everyday experience for many urban Indians; the expression ought to be every day. Moreover, everyday is spoken with stress on the *first* syllable; but every day is spoken with stress on the *second* syllable. And it is such hints, which the translation

carelessly misses, that communicate the intended meaning in any language. On page **1** the translation says: "His **people** and relatives have property worth lakhs." But the original does *not* say <u>people</u>, it says "gharwale", so the translation ought to have said, "His family, his relations have property worth lakhs." Just at the end of page 1 the translation says, "Today you are alone", but the original says "aj ap tanha ho", and I believe that here "tanha" cannot be rendered as "alone" (after all, she does have a husband) but as childless. Further, in English it will sound crude to say "today you are childless"; so the idiomatic choice is, "today you have no children"; or even better, "you have no children yet".

 At the beginning of page **2** we have "Aliya khatun used a hand-fan to make him feel cooler". That is not English at all. Nor was he cool already to become "cooler"! Of course one fans someone to cool them. So in English one need *only* say, "Aliya khatun fanned him with a hand-fan". Next, in the same paragraph on page **2** we have "A servant brought a glass of water, which he drank thirstily. He asked for more. After two glasses, he smiled…". That is not idiomatic either. It ought to be "after the second glass, he smiled". On page **3** of the translation Anwar Ahmad says, "No one will blame you now for not observing the customary <u>procedure</u> of saying 'good-bye'." No one will use the word <u>procedure</u> in such a context except a pompous Foreign Ministry bureaucrat. The idiomatic expression ought to be something like this: "You have only come here to say the usual / customary good-bye". Again, at the start of page **4** we have "Yes, these men are lucky fellows. They don't suffer from such weaknesses". Regardless of what it is in the original, this is not really idiomatic English. It ought to be rendered as "These chaps / men / fellows are lucky—they don't suffer from such weaknesses." Later on the same page the brothers invite Aliya Khatun and Anwar to visit them in Pakistan: "…you and Apa are welcome any time". Anwar replies: "Thank you indeed for <u>this</u> warm invitation". Never

will in idiomatic conversation one say "<u>this</u> invitation". The expected expressions are: "Thank you for inviting us" or "Thank you for the warm invitation".

Chapter Two begins with leave-taking. Aliya Khatun's brothers are taking her leave. The translation says, "The tonga is here, our luggage has been <u>stacked</u>." This is pure dictionary violence. Of *course* one of the dictionary meanings of the original term is likely to be <u>stacked</u>. But dictionaries do not always tell you where *not* to use a word. In English no one will ever use the verb <u>stacked</u> in this context. One <u>stacks</u> things in a place to leave them there, for instance, the luggage has been loaded in the lorry and stacked properly: for instance, <u>the boxes have been **stacked**</u> at <u>the back of the godown</u>. Here the only sense is that their luggage has been <u>put</u> in the <u>tonga</u> or <u>loaded</u> on or into the tonga. On the same page we have "Don't cry, Apa, this was God's will <u>that we should be thus separated</u>." Because that we should be thus separated follows, the pronoun <u>this</u> will never be used in English. It has to be <u>it</u>: "it was God's will that", etc. At the beginning of page **7** we have "All this jewellery belongs to his mother. She gave it to me, but I haven't even touched it yet". This may be fine in Urdu—perhaps meine hath tak nahi lagaya hai—but *not* in English. Why would one want to "touch" jewellery? One either *examines* it or *wears* it. So it ought to be rendered as "I have never really looked at it" or "I have never even worn it yet". Then we have, "how many women are far-sighted enough to <u>spot</u> the darkness in the <u>impending future?</u>" The phrasing <u>impending future</u> is odd enough; the future is *always* impending; but one <u>spots</u> a specific object, such as an animal, a mosque dome, etc., in the distance. One cannot <u>spot</u> "darkness". It ought to be phrased as "to see the darkness". This is followed by "your **tears** will **darken** our path". How? Here, as elsewhere, the translator has done injustice to both the original and the target language.

Chapter Three brings us this: "its beautiful décor, expensive <u>furnishing</u>, the expensive clothes…". The word <u>furnishing</u> is *never* used in the singular to mean the furniture and appointments of a place; it *has* to be in the plural form <u>furnishings</u>. Then, "but a subtle fading, <u>pallor</u> > < <u>shadowed</u> it all". First, what is the comma after <u>fading</u> doing here? Incidentally, the word <u>pallor</u> is *normally* used to describe a *face*. But in any case, it means *paleness*. How can *paleness* "shadow" anything? On page 9 once again we find **<u>everyday,</u>** where <u>every day</u> is required. Next comes "thank your lucky stars that Bade Sarkar didn't make you apologise". But the idiomatic expression is "thank your stars", because *here* "stars" *means* luck. Grammatical-idiomatic errors also occur in the translation. For instance, "Bade Sarkar's bread and butter <u>have</u> been snatched away". This error comes from unfamiliarity with how the idiom "bread and butter" *sounds*. It is *not* two separate items, **bread** and `<u>butter,</u> but one, always uttered as one: `<u>bread</u>-and-<u>butter</u>. Therefore, the verb must be in the *singular* form, "bread and butter <u>has</u> been snatched away". Another instance on page 10 misuses the past tense of the verb "linger": "<u>Come what may</u>, the taste of his employer's salt still <u>lingered</u> in his mouth". The phrase "come what may" *always* and invariably relates to the *future*; so the verb ought to be "will linger". Next on the same page the verb <u>should</u> and the phrase <u>by ourselves</u> are erroneously used: "We <u>should</u> not quit <u>by ourselves</u>". The translator means, "we must not *quit* (our jobs)", let them dismiss us if they want to. <u>Should</u> does *not* carry the sense of <u>must</u> in such contexts; it is a verb much misused in India. The verb required here is must. And one always "quits a job *oneself*"; use of the word <u>ourselves</u> is poor. I shall only cite one more instance of misplaced vocabulary (from page **11**): "Anwar Ahmad with his democratic ideas had hurt Patwariji's influence and authority". Influence and authority are not sentient or live, therefore they cannot be "hurt".

And then there are larger linguistic structures that have their

uses but that also have their own "rules" of grammar and stylistic restrictions that must be respected. If one fails to do so one begs the question whether the work is indeed in the target language or in some sub-standard and unacceptable approximation of it. Dawn of Dreams exemplifies this phenomenon constantly as well. Let us consider several examples from the same early pages of Dawn of Dreams:

> Once again, examples occur on every page. On page **10**, for instance, we find "'We are not paid salaries for six months at a stretch… and what a salary,' Patwariji said." The same sentence uses plural and singular forms of the *same* noun, without any excuse whatever. Besides, the expression is *not* a query but an exclamation; yet there is no exclamation mark after it. The concluding expression *ought* to have been, "and what salaries!" **(Urdu text, page 16:** *"Chhe chhe maheene to hamlogoN ki tankhwaah ke ho jaate haiN, jabki tankhwaah hi kiya hai",* Patwarji ne kahaa). Mixed metaphors also abound. Here is an instance from page 11: "This had disheartened the loyal worker. Nevertheless, the strength of his employer's salt still tied him securely to his master's post". In *such* contexts <u>salt</u> refers to a reason *for a human being* to be loyal to someone; but "tie to a post" refers to an animal; so the metaphor turns away from human loyalty to animal loyalty. Page 10 gives us "we <u>people</u> have some work <u>ethics</u> too". Here we is more than adequate in English, while <u>we people</u> is *unidiomatic* even if the original says hum log; in this context <u>ethics</u> is quite unacceptable; the plural term is used *only* to refer to the science of morality, the discipline of philosophy that studies morality; here the singular form is required, **ethic**; and **a** might suit the case better than some. **(Urdu text, page 17**: *"jaanta hooN bhaai----------tumheiN to wah Aaj bulaa rahe haiN, merey peechhe to wah barsoN se paRe haiN, kiya kiya laalach naheeN diyaa, achhi tankhwaah, jaaedaad---------lekin bhai, hamlogoN ki naukri ke bhi kuchh osool hote haiN,----*). The following sentence on page **11** mucks up a relative clause: "There was no trace of

any special emotion on his face, which could be attributed to some new or vital information". This sentence in fact *means* the *opposite* of what it is intended to mean. The sense ought to be <u>his face showed no expression that may be caused by "some new or vital information".</u> But because of the *intrusive* comma, the sense that comes is: he showed no expression, and *that* was because of "some new or vital information"! **(Urdu text, page 18:** *"unke chehre par door door tak kisi aham jaankaari ke aasaar naheeN the").*

Sequences are often mucked up also. For instance, on page **13** we have this: Anwar Ahmad says, "'Ghaffar Miyan, that won't be of any help. He owes his identity to the zamindari system, not to any caste or community'." Then the narrator glosses this speech as follows: "Anwar Ahmad's <u>comments</u> left both employees speechless…". However, Anwar Ahmad has made *only* one comment. Sentences like the following confuse many ideas and figures: "Patwariji was trying to soften the sting Anwar Ahmad's slap had inadvertently planted on their cheeks just now". In fact, there has been *no* slap; slaps cannot be planted; how can a sting be "softened"? and why "inadvertently"? Tenses seem to cause the translator serious difficulty, too, especially expressions appropriate to tenses. Here is one instance: "Now the bread they <u>are going</u> to eat will not be made of <u>simple</u> wheat, it will be mixed with their sweat". In fact at this point in the narrative *no one* is "going to eat" anything at all. The reference is to an abstract condition *in the future*; so the phrasing ought to be, "the bread they eat now" or "the bread they eat hereafter". And what does "<u>simple </u>wheat" mean? Surely the sense requires "pure" or "unadulterated" used in an ironic sense? The translation denies its reader normally expected kinds of help in a variety of ways. Here is an instance from page **12**: "That is how I, Anwar Ahmad will survive… what will happen to my children, how will I manage the household expenses? Then listen…". Once again, the initial sentence is unclear because a comma is *missing* after <u>Ahmad</u>; there has

to be a comma after <u>Ahmad</u> *because* there is a comma after <u>I,</u> and a noun phrase in apposition such as <u>Anwar Ahmad</u> that follows a comma must also *end* with a comma. Further, the two questions he utters are *supposed to be* those that bother Patwariji. And <u>how will I</u> needs to become <u>how I will</u> in the reported speech format used here. So the whole sentence ought to have run like this: "That is how I, Anwar Ahmad, will survive… **you want to know** what will happen to my children, how I will manage the household expenses? Then listen…".

   One of the crucial things the translation fails to manage is conversational language; but unfortunately the original novel contains numerous dialogues. Therefore, this weakness becomes significant. Here are a couple of examples. On page **15**: "Your ideas are **beyond my comprehension**; just tell me in simple language how we will run the house…". <u>Beyond my comprehension</u> clashes with "just tell me in simple language". Another sentence on page 16 goes, "why don't you just sit back and offer prayers and find money under the prayer mat. <u>Why are you bothered about earning it through employment?"</u> This is the language of a poorly written paper in sociology. How can one "sit back" and "offer prayers"? Next, mat ought to be followed by a question mark to end the question asked. And Why are you bothered about earning it through employment is simply monstrous! No ordinary person speaks like that in any language. Something like "Why bother with a job, then!" was required. On page 16 again we find this: "They were also zamindars. But they threw **it** away, they are happy, aren't they? They aren't being eaten up with <u>worries like</u> > < <u>I am</u>". There are four different problems here: first, there is no noun before **it** for which it can do duty as a pronoun; its use is simply poor syntax; then the comma after <u>away</u> is unidiomatic; there ought to be either a full stop there or a conjunction; also in such contexts <u>worry</u> is used in the singular in English (even if there are numerous causes of it), *not* in its plural form; and

given the use of <u>like</u>, "I am" is quite unlikely to occur; <u>me</u> is what will occur in its place: <u>They were also zamindars. But they threw all that away. They are happy, aren't they? They aren't being eaten up with worry like me.</u>

In these and other extremely numerous locations the translation mixes up formality with informality, conversational language with pompous and inappropriately erudite language, poor punctuation with involved constructions, mixed metaphors, mixed registers of idiom, poor grammar with ambiguous construction, and so on and so forth. For instance on page **17** we find "But Anwar Ahmad's story of these repasts", where in fact the sense requires <u>version</u> in place of <u>story</u>; on the same page, Aliya Khatun is supposed to be saying, "Oh my God how will we go through all this? It's all very well to theorise but…". Now, not only is a crucial comma missing after "Oh my God" that a reader requires to realise her utterance; but "go through" is also an inappropriate choice; what was required was <u>manage</u>, or <u>live through</u> or <u>survive</u>. And who on earth would expect a person like Aliya Khatun to use the word "theorise"! As though this was not bad enough, this sentence is followed by this: "She took a deep breath and was <u>probably</u> muttering to herself because it was some time since Anwar Ahmad had gone to his room, to <u>sleep</u>". Once again, the comma before to sleep at the end is utterly uncalled for; but far more importantly, whatever can the word <u>probably</u> mean in this context? Anwar *has* left the room and there is no cause for uncertainty. Whether it is such inane choice of words or simply poverty of expression in usages such as "Sabir and Jabir were experts at this game of giving loans", the language of Dawn of Dreams remains far from becoming English. In such constructions, for instance, <u>experts</u> is unacceptable, <u>expert</u> is idiomatically required; and far more importantly <u>giving loans</u> is a ridiculous way to refer to <u>lending money</u> or <u>money lending</u>!

In this paper I have not attempted to provide exhaustive examples for you from the entire text of Dawn of Dreams, although I could easily do that, because there simply is not enough time

in a seminar presentation to do that. But I have not done so also because what I have brought before you is more than adequate to substantiate my point. Mistakes, infelicities, poor choices, inability to manage levels of language use in diction or style, simply mount throughout the narrative—its distance from the original and from whatever one might have expected as a *reasonable* version in English is a serious disappointment. As I indicated at the beginning, Khwabon ka savera provides plenty of food for serious thought. However, of course we can and need to analyse the events of the novel, the characters in it, its themes and their relationship to historical facts, its relevance to our social and political situation today and our future as a society. It is obviously worthwhile to do so. However, we may be able to do so even on the basis of a prosaic factual summary of all of these in an article. But to speak of Dawn of Dreams as even a moderately successful *fictional* version of Khwabon ka savera seems unfair to me. The translation has treated the original with scant respect—whatever the fictional achievement of the original may be.

NOTES

* Dr. Rizwana Moin, Reader, Department of Urdu, University of Hyderabad, kindly transliterated the first chapter of Khwabon ka savera into Devanagari for my edification.

All references to Dawn of Dreams cite the Chennai: Macmillan edition of 2001.

1.   Life's Handicap, 1890.

2.   "Reflections on vers libre". New Statesman, VIII, 204 (3 March 1917) 518-19.

Translation in Odia: A Historical Survey

Aditya Kumar Panda

Abstract

History of translation in Odia could be studied either by surveying the major translated works in Odia chronologically or by reflecting on the development of Odia literature through translation socioculturally and politically, although both the approaches are not mutually exclusive. Translation is central to the development of Odia literature like that of any modern Indian literature. If one goes through the history of Odia literature, one can find that the quantum of Odia literature is more through translation. This essay deals with the historical account of the translation into Odia.

Keyword: History, Odia, translation, adaptation, transcreation,

1. Introduction:

Every history has an oral tradition of which a complete record does not exist. Whatever is recorded becomes the part of a history. A history is never a perfect history. It is biologically impossible on the part of human beings to write a perfect history which should count for each minute of the past. Therefore, history of translation is possible, if there exists written records of translation work in a language. In this historical account, "translation proper (translation of a Source Language text to a target language with fidelity to SL form and meaning)" has not only been taken into account, but also broadly interpretation, retelling, adaptation, transcreation.

1.1. Periodization:

A history can be studied by dividing it according to time or place or the medium of writing. Chronologically, History of

Odia translation could be classified into 5 periods. They are:

A. Age of Pre-Sarala and Sarala (till 15th century)

B. Age of Panchasakhaa and Bhanja (from 16th to 18th century)

C. The Colonial Age (19th to mid-20th century)

D. Age of Satyabadi and Pragatibaadee and Early 20th Century (upto 1947)

E. Modern Age (20th to 21st century)

But these five chronological periods could also be classified under two categories by considering the medium of writing: 1. Palm leaf tradition (from pre-Sarala to till the beginning of the Colonial period), 2. Print (technology) tradition (from the colonial period to till date). Although there is a period before palm leaf tradition which can be called as inscription literature period (from 300 BC to 1500 AD), but the recorded inscription reveals that those were not of translation. Another division can be made on the basis of types of translation in the history of Odia language. One will be counting the literary translation which includes mythological, religious translation and another could be non-literary translation which includes the texts related to the domain of Astrology, Astronomy, Mathematics, Medicine, Economics etc. Based on the collected 40,000 palm leaf manuscripts in the Odisha State Museum, it is found that there were writings on Veda, Tantra, Jyotisha, Dharmasastra, Ayurveda, Ganita, Silpasastra, Samgita, Abhidhana, Vyakarana, Sanskrit Purana, Sanskrit Kavya, Alamkara etc.

2. Age of Pre-Sarala and Sarala (till 15th century)

History of translation in Odia before 18th century could be perceived through retelling, adaptation, transcreation more than that of translation proper. Translation was recognized as a writing. It is nowhere written in Sarala *Mahabharata* that Sarala translated the Mahabharata but it has been written that it is a writing done

by Sarala Das (it is Shudramuni Sarala Dasnka Kruta Mahabharata in Odia). Translation as it is grounded in 19th and 20th century as a faithful rendering of a source text in a target language seems to be an approach imported to India. Before 19th and 20th century, translation was a writing in India (as it is evident from Sarala Das's Mahabharata). There was no demarcation between the original text and the translated one. It was not classified as a separate domain as it is at present. As far as the earliest record goes, the History of Odia Translation dates back to 15th century when Sarala Das wrote *Odia Mahabharata*.

There was an oral tradition which contributed to the early development of Odia literature of which no written record exists. Sanskrit was the dominant language at that time. The earliest record of history of translation in Odia reveals that the available literature in Odisha was in Sanskrit and Sanskrit literature gave an impetus to the development of early Odia literature. The kings and the pundits were giving importance to Sanskrit literature and Odia was considered as the language of shudras (untouchables). The Brahmins had the access to Sanskrit literature. It was in this period, the First Poet (Aadikavi) Sarala Das was born and all his talents were for creating Odia literature and establishing Odia language through transcreation. At the time of reign of Kapilendra Dev, Sarala Das, a non-Brahmin, thought to recreate Mahabharata that would be meant for all. And he thought that the language of the pundits should not be the language of this Mahabharata. Therefore, he added many colloquial Odia words in his retelling of Mahabharata. Sarala Das's Mahabharata was to democratize the restricted domain of knowledge. He could have created a new writing instead of retelling the Sanskrit Mahabharata, but he took the available source text and created a parallel Odia text to bridge the gap between the Brahmins and non-Brahmins. This *Mahabharata* cannot be considered as a translation proper, but it qualifies to be included as the earliest translation that established Odia literature. Why should it be considered under translation is that it has a Source Text, events and proper names are also from the Source, the main story and theme are also from a source. While

translating Mahabharata, he used the technique of additions and deletions and adaptation.

3. Age of Panchasakhaa and Bhanja Yuga (from 16th to 18th century)

Next phase of translation could be seen in the literature of Panchasakhaa Yuga. Panchasakhaa Yuga includes the writings of five Odia poets during the late 15th and 16th centuries: Balaram Das, Atibadi Jagannath Das, Achyutananda Das, Ananta Das and Jasobanta Das. They are considered as the pioneers of Utkaliya Vaishnavism and they were also influenced by Jay Dev's Gita Govinda. Balaram Das did a free translation of Valmiki's Ramayana and entitled it as Jagamohan Ramayana. "In the Jagamohan Ramayana he creates a parallel ideological structure by alternating between breaking with the original text, closely following it and at other times inventing new narratives. This was the third phase of the translation process. (St-Pierre & Kar, 2007)". The greatest contribution of Panchasakha Yuga to Odia literature through translation is Jagannatha Dasa's Srimad Bhagabata. It is one of the most popular and widely read texts in Odia. Like Sarala Dasa's Mahabharata in Oriya, Srimad Bhagavata of Sri Jagannatha Dasa is not a literal translation of the Sanskrit original. But all the same, the Oriya translation of the Srimad Bhagavata by Sri Jagannatha Dasa is a marvel of creation with its sparkling originality and scintillating clarity (Das & Sahoo, 2009). Achyutananda is famous as a saint poet of Odisha. Achyutananda Das's Lahari Harivamsa is also a transcreation from the Sanskrit original. According to Mayadhar Mansingh, the Lahari Harivamsa of Achyutananda is an original work retaining only the framework of the Sanskrit model.

Sarala's *Mahabharata* and Jagannath's *Srimad Bhagabata* were the literary pieces which were transcreated from the Sanskrit original to be read by the people who had no access to the same texts ritually owned by the Brahmins. These were the attempts to break the closed Sanskritic tradition prevailed at that time in Odisha. *Translations from Sarala Das to Jagannath Das were radical attempts at vernacularization and coincided with the founding*

of a powerful Oriya empire by Kapilendra Dev and its subsequent consolidation by his inheritors. The aesthetic evident in these works can be said to mirror the sociopolitical by subverting the dominant pan-Indian Sanskritic-Brahminical hegemony.(The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics, 2012).

Yashovant Das is popular all over Odisha for his memorable song, "bhajukinaarama". It is a part of his writing *Govindachandra Teekaa*. He translated the Sanskrit "*Swarodayalesha*" into Odia and named it '*Shiva swarodaya*'. It is not a translation proper but an adaptation in Odia.

Sixteenth century poets also translated the *Gita Govinda* into musical Odia. Dharanidhar, Brindaban and Trilochan Das translated the *Gita Govinda* into Odia. Dharanidhar translated it in his navakiyaani form (9 syllables) and Brindaban translated it with Odia raga and raginis and Trilochan Das translated and named it as *Govindagitaa*. (Encyclopedia of Indian Literature, Sahitya Akademi, 1988)

Translation activity also flourished in seventeenth-century Odisha: Mukul Das translated *Betala Panchavinsati*, and a portion of Rupa Goswami's *Bidagdha Madhaba* was translated by the poet Gopalakrishna Patnaik. Other notable translations of that period include Krishna Singh's *Mahabharata*, Haladhara Das's *Adhyatma Bhagabata*, Balabhadra Mangaraj's *Kshetra Mahatmya* and Balaram Das's *Gita*. (Pattanaik, 2002)

Among those who translated Sanskrit puranas in verse form during 17th and 18th centuries, the names of Krishnacharan Pattanaik who translated *Bhagabata, Vamana purana, Kalki purana, Ramayana*, Jayasingha who translated *Bhagavad Gita* and *Dronaparva* of the Mahabharata, Haladhar Pattanaik and Suryamani Chayu pattanaik, translators of *Adhyatma Ramayana* deserve special mention. (Encyclopedia of Indian Literature, 1988)

All these translations from Sarala Das to 18th century aimed at freeing knowledge from the clutches of Brahmins.

Many discrepancies which were created by Brahmins on the basis of caste, class, religion were overthrown. Knowledge of Vedas, puranas which was only accessible to elite class became available through translation in a language that common people could comprehend.

4. The Colonial Age (19th to mid-20th century) - Technology Period

Till the advent of the printing press in Odisha, it was the palm leaf tradition which was dominant in writing literature. Printing press came to Odisha in early 19th century. Printing technology started replacing the palm leaf tradition. Missionaries established Odia Mission Press in Cuttack in 1837 to print Odia books. Before this establishment, books were printed in the Serampore Mission Press in Bengal. The Bible was translated into Odia in 1814. J. Carey translated Hebrew poems into Odia in 1814. *The Bible* was the first printed book and the first printed translation in Odia. The first printed Odia book brought out in 1809 was the New Testament (Srujanika, 2010).The primary aim of the Bible translation and publication was to preach and spread Christianity in Odisha. A. Sutton translated John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's* Progress into Odia. During this period, English was the dominant language and it was the language of the English authority. Printing press was another weapon of this authority to reach the masses through multiple copies of the Bible. Lacey and Sutton translated the Jewel Mine of Salvation into Odia in 1827.

The first Odia story book 'Phulamani O Karuna' was written by Rev. Stubbing in 1857. It was a translation of the Bengali book of that time. (Choudhury, Odisha Review, 2013).

In 1866, Cuttack Printing Press was established by the people of Odisha. Many books were published by Viswambar Vidyabhusana, Fakir Mohan Senapati, Bichhanda Patanaik and Govinda Chandra Pattanaik. Gouri Shankar Ray launched the first periodical, *Utkala Dipika* during this period. Subsequently, many printing presses were established in Cuttack, Bamanda, Ganjam,

Puri, Baleswar.

Fakir Mohan Senapati, Radhanath Ray and Madhusudan were the great Odia writers at this period whom a great deal of translated literature was attributed. Much of their writings appeared in the last quarter of the 19th century. This was the formative period of the statehood of Odisha. There were attempts by the Bengali elite to suppress Odia as an independent language. But such attempt was discarded and Odia literature was strengthened through translation and original writing by the great Odia writers: Radhanath Ray, Fakir Mohan Senapati and Madhusudan Rao.

Radhanath Ray had the talent of mixing the elements of Sanskrit classics and English classics. He was the one who introduced the blank verse in Odia poetry. This could well be justified in his *Meghanathbadha* and *Usha*. The story of Meghanathbadha is based on Vyasa's *Mahabharata* and presentation is like that of Homer's *Iliad* or Virgil's *Aeneid*. He took the elements of Ovid's stories, William Morris's *Atlanta's Race* and the mythological story of Usha and Aniruddhha. Radhanath also followed Greek mythical stories completely in some of his writings. His *Chandrabhaga* and *Nandikeshwari* could be cited as the examples which would be thought up as the imitation of the love affair of Ovid's *Apollo and Daphne and The Seylla*. Radhanath's most popular literary piece on the line of adaptation/imitation of Greek and English play is *Parvati* which he wrote in 1890. The plot construction of Aeschylus's Agamemnon (imitation of Homer's Iliad) and Shakespeare's *Hamlet* could be found in *Parvati*. The character of Parvati (queen of Utkala) reminds us of Shakespeare's Gertrude (queen of Denmark) and Aeschylus's Chlytemenestra (queen of Argos). Likewise the character of Gangeswar (king of Utkal) could be compared to Agamemnon (king of Argos) and Senior Hamlet (king of Denmark). Koushalya, the princess of Utkal reminds us of Ipheginia, the daughter of Agamemnon. To quote a popular critic, Ratnakar Chaini's appreciation for Radhanath Ray: *The monument of poetry which Radhanath has erected, its*

foundation being Sanskrit literature, its bricks and stones are Greek and English literature, its cementing bonds are the history and legends of Orissa. (Chaini, 1984). Radhanath's *Italiyajuba* and *Meghadoot* could be considered as translation proper. *Italiyajuba* is the Odia translation of an English translation of an Italian story. It is a prose piece. Radhanath is the first Odia translator of the Sanskrit classic *Meghadoot*. Translation of the *Meghadoot* is a popular work which also became a text book in a vernacular school in Cuttack. Another Odia writer, Radhamohan Gadnaik appreciated his translation of Meghadoot and wrote that Radhanath has achieved no less success in the translation of *Meghadoot* as he has done in his own poetic creation (Makers of Modern Odisha, 1993). Radhanth wrote *Kedar Gouri* in 1886. It was an adaptation of Pyramus and Thisbe. In this adaptation, he added the episode of King's dream and building up of a temple.

Late 19th century was the period when the consciousness of Odisha as a nation which has its own language, culture and literature began to emerge. There were attempts to suppress Odia as a unique language. The colonial authority had already started English education. Text books were being written in English and Bangla. During this period, Radhanath Ray, Fakir Mohan Senapati, Madhusudan Rao became influential and wrote translated published books in Odia. In 1866, Fakir Mohan Senapati translated a biography, entitled *Jibancharit* written by Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar. It was a prescribed text book for scholarship examination. It was a text book which wrote about the scientists like Copernicus, Galileo, Newton and also like William Jones. Fakir Mohan Senapati translated the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata* and the *Chhandogya Upanishad, Srimad Bhagabat Gita, History of India, Khila Haribamsa* into Odia. He was translating from Sanskrit classics as well as from Bangla like Ishwarchandra *Vidyasagar's Jivan Charita. Sita Banabasa*, another text by Vidyasagar was translated by Bichhanda Charan Patnaik.

Madhusudan Rao is another famous Odia writer who is a contemporary to Radhanath and Fakir Mohan. He is famous

for his *Chhabila Madhu Barnabodha* (the A.B.C Primer in Odia). He translated *Sitabanabaas, Ramabanabaas, Baala Ramayana, Uttara Ramacharita* from Sanskrit to Odia. He transcreated William Cowper's *The Solitude of Alexander Selkirk* in Odia and named it as Nirbaasitara Bilaapa. *Nirbaasitara Bilaapa* reads like an original poem. There is no reference of Alexander Selkirk in the Odia poem Nirbaasitara Bilaapa. The translation from English to Odia in the late 19th century was initiating *a process of cultural empowerment on the part of Odia language and literature in its colonial history* (Mohapatra, RJLCS, 2011).

Another popular Odia writer of this period is Ramsankar Ray who wrote 14 plays in Odia and he also authored *Soudamini*, one of the early Odia novels. Out of his 14 plays, *Banabaalaa* is an adaptation of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. He wrote this play in 1882.

Jaganmohan Lala was a social reformer and another well-known dramatist. He translated Toynbee's *A Sketch of the History of Orissa* (1803-1828) into Odia and entitled it as *Odisha Vijaya* in 1876. He also translated Thomas Parnell's *The Hermit* into Odia as *Bhramabhanjana.*

Towards 1870s, many books of general interest were translated. Vidyasagar's *Jibancharit* which was a translation of Chamber's Biography could be cited as one. Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar's *Jibanacharit* can be considered as a scientific text, not technically, as it deals with the biographies of many scientists. This is the first biography to be translated into Odia by Fakir Mohan Senapati. A. Sutton authored the first science writing, *'Padartha Bidyasara'* in Odia which was published in 1832. It was a text book on natural science. This book was not a translation but it could be seen as an initiative to promote science writing in Odia. In the mid-19th century, there came a number of Odia periodicals like *Prabodh Chandrika* where scientific topics in Odia were published. Viswanath Kar's *Utkal Sahitya*, a periodical, published many scientific articles regularly. There was a science magazine, named *Bigyan Darpan* from Kolkota, specially dedicated for science

writing in Odia.

5. Age of Satyabadi (20ᵗʰ century)

This period is known as Satyabadi yuga in the history of Odia literature as it refers to the establishment of Satyabadi Vanavidyalaya by Gopabandhu Das. Nationalism, social service and social reformation were the main skopos behind the translation of Satyabadi Yuga in Odisha. Along with Gopabandhu, Pandit Nilakantha Das, Godavarisha Mishra and Acharya Harihara were the chief exponents of the school. In the history of translation of this period, these names come as the translators to strengthen Odia literature, nationality and bring empowerment for the women and downtrodden people of Odisha.

Pandit Nilakantha Das (1884-1967) translated Alfred Lord Tennyson's *The Princess* and *Enoch Arden* into Odia. As an important promoters of the Satyabadi Vanavidyalaya, he was to remove the social evils prevailed then in Odisha. Victorian period was a period of women empowerment. Nilakantha wanted to motivate women of Odisha and wanted to change the attitude towards Odishan women. This is why he translated *The Princess* into Odia as *Pranayeenee* and *Enoch Arden* as *Dasanayak*.

Godavarisha Mishra (1886-1956) adapted R.L. Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* as *Ghatantara* in Odia. He also translated Victor Hugo's *Les Miserable* as *Abhaaginee* and Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities as Athara Sa Satara* in Odia. Both Nilakantha and Godavarisha's translations cannot be classified under translation proper but adaptations. Another translation *Daasatwara Mochana* from Washington's *Up from Slavery* by Godavarisha Mishra is a translation proper.

Acharya Harihar Das (1879-1972), an another influential members of the school, was famous as an English and Mathematics teacher. His *Child's Easy First Grammar* has been famous for ever. His translation of the *Bhagabat Gita* is a remarkable translation work. Alexander Dumas's *Count of Monty Cristo* was adapted by

Kanhu Charan Mohanty as *Baliraja* which was published in 1926.

5.1. Contemporary to the Satyabadi translators or other early 20th century Translation

The tradition of translation activities in early 20th century Odia was a continuing tradition of Odia translation from Sanskrit and English. Sanskrit classics and English classics became dominant on the translated literature. Many 20th century writers translated from Sanskrit and English. It was William Shakespeare from English and Kalidas from Sanskrit who became the source for many Odia translations. Balakrushna Kar (1887-1963) imitated Shakespeare's *King Lear* and wrote *Shivadasa*. Bharatchandra Nayak translated Kalidas's *Kumarasambhabam* into Odia. Nayak also translated Hiuen Tsang's *Visits to India* in Odia.

As many of the translators of early 20th century were influenced by Victorian English poets and Scottish novelists, they translated Tennyson, Arnold and Stevenson, Walter Scott and many others. We have already discussed about Nilakantha and Godavarisha who translated Tennyson and Stevenson. Paramananda Acharya (1893-1971) translated Matthew Arnold's *Sohrab and Rustum* into Odia as *Soraabarustam*. Radhamohan Gadnayak (1911-2000) also translated *Sohrab and Rustum* into Odia. Chandrasekhar Mishra (1900-1986) translated Sir Walter Scott's *Lady of the Lake* into Odia as *Sarasundaree* and Ajaya Chandra Das translated Scott's *The Lady of the Last Minstrel.* Chandramani Das translated Goldsmith's *The Deserted Village* and Govinda Tripathy translated Cervantes's *Don Quixote*.

Translation was not limited to Kalidas's writing; it was also happening with the Srimad Bhagabat Gita and many other Sanskrit mythologies. Baisnav Charan Das (1890-1961) translated *Lingapurana* and *Brahmapurana* into Odia. Chintamani Acharya (1891-1957) translated the *Srimad Bhagabat* Gita by following both the Sanskrit and Jagannath Das's Srimad Bhagavata. Translation of Sanskrit classics in various styles was going on. The translator was not always following the style of the source text.

Gopinath Singdeo (1893-1956) did poetry translation of *Naisadha, Kumarasambhaba, Raghubamsa, Bhattikabya, Shishupala Badha, Keeraatarjuna* in Odia. Likewise, Harapriya Devi (1915-), famous as a renowned translator, translated the Srimad Bhagabat Gita poetically.

During this period, there emerged a group of women translators in Odisha. They were popular as creative writers and they have contributed much to the Odia literature through translation. Narmada Kar (1893-1963) and Prativa Kar (1898-1951)translated many stories from foreign languages to Odia, Sulochana Dei (1895-1947) imitated Kalidas's *Nalodaya* in her Damayantee in Odia and translated five Shakespearean plays into Odia (it was a sense to sense translation),Vanalata Dei translated Kalidas's *Nalodaya* and named it *Nishidharaaja* in Odia.

5.2. Translation in Pragatibaadee Period (1935-1947)

There were many sociopolitical events during this period which influenced Odia literature. It was the influential time of Marx, Gandhi and other revolutionary leaders. India was moving towards independence. There was the disastrous impact of the Second World War. Autocracy had already been discarded and democracy was being established. Middle class already became the dominant class. The aim of the writers of this period was to awaken the exploited and poor people. At this period, Bhagabaticharan Panigrahi formed the Utkala Communist Party and resigned from the Congress Socialist Party. Chintamani Mishra (1904-1980) translated *Mahatma Gandhi Jeebani, Hindu Dharmara Jaati O Taara Gati* and *Aama Durgatira Dina*.

During this period, translation was happening not only from English to Odia, but also from Odia to English. Ganesh Prasad Singhdeo translated Brajanath Badjena's *Samara Taranga* into English as *War Waves*. Harendranath Chottopadhyaya translated Sachi Routray's *Baajirout O Anyaanya Chaalishiti Kavitaa* into English as *The Boatman Boy* and *Forty Poems*. Kunjabihari Nayak(1918-) translated Radhanath's *Chilika* and Gopabandhu's

Bandeera Aatmakathaa into English lyrical poetry.

One could get translation in early 20th century not only from English, Sanskrit and Bangla to Odia but also from Tamil to Odia. Nityananda Mohapatra translated *Kamba Ramayanam* into Odia. He also translated Ramana Maharshee, Swarajya Sanghitaa into Odia.

6. Modern Age (20th to 21st century)

Government initiatives for the promotion of translation activities started in mid-20th century. Various national institutions and state institutions were established to encourage and promote translation activities. Commission for Scientific and Technical Terminology (CSTT), Sahitya Akademi, National Book Trust (NBT) and many state organizations were established to work for translation. Odisha became a state in 1936. Odisha Sahitya Academy was established in 1957. It has been one of their mandates to encourage translation from different Indian languages and foreign languages to Odia and vice versa. Officially making translation as a mandate of an institution accelerated translation work into Odia. Sahitya Akademi instituted translation award in 1989. From 1989, it has been selecting the best translation in regional languages of India and conferring the award. Odisha State Bureau of Textbook Preparation and Production (OSTB) was established in 1970 by the government of Odisha to prepare and promote textbooks in Odia. It has been publishing Odia translations of many classics and fundamental books from many subjects. During this period, the Odia translation of books from other subjects which are non-literary in nature took place and OSTB played a key role here. It is not that non-literary translations were published by government organization only, there were private publishers like Cuttack Trading Co who were publishing science translation.

Mid-20th century and the last decade of 20th century witnessed a new trend of translation emerging in Odisha. Masterpieces of Odia literature started getting translated into

English. Towards this enterprise, publisher like Four Corners, Grassroots, Oxford University Press started publication of English translation in 20th century. Kalindi Charan Panigrahi's *Matira Manisha* was translated by Lila Ray into English as A House Undivided that was published in 1973 by Four Corners. Grassroots has already published the Odia classics in English right from Fakir Mohan Senapati's works. Oxford University Press published Gopinath Mohanty's *Paraja* in English translated by B.K. Das. Chandrasekhar Rath's *Yantrarudha* was translated into English by Jatindra Kumar Nayak as *Astride the Wheel* which was published by OUP in 2003. University of California Press published *Six Acres and a Third* in 2005 which was an English translation of the Odia classic, Chhamaana Aathaguntha by Fakir Mohan Senapati. It was translated by Rabi Shankar Mishra, Satya P. Mohanty, Jatindra N. Nayak, Paul St.-Pierre. In 21st century, there came another publisher named Rupantara who also started publishing English translation of the Odia classics. Rupantara's translations are of non-fiction genre.

Post-independent Odia literary translation is a period where T.S. Eliot's writings influenced many Odia writers to bring a new style and a new theme to Odia literature through translation. Guru Prasad Mohanty wrote *Kalapurusha* in Odia following T.S. Eliot's *The Wasteland*. Bhanuji Rao was also influenced by T.S. Eliot's writings. Post-independent Odia writers started using free style. Most of their poetry is in free verse with myths and symbols. Some of these writers are Ramakanta Rath, Sitakant Mahapatra, Soubhagya Kumar Mishra, Rajendra kishore Panda,Prativa Satpathy,Mamata Dash, Haraprasad Das.

Ananta Charan Sukla, a renowned professor of English and Comparative Literature who did his research on the concept of imitation in Greek and Indian Aesthetics, translated four Greek dramas, namely *Prometheus Bound* (Aeschylus), *Oedipus the King* (Sophocles), *Medea* (Euripides) and *The Frogs* (Aristophanes). These Odia translations were staged in various colleges and universities of Odisha. His translation of Aristotle's Poetics into

Odia as *Aristotlenka Kabya Tatwa* with commentary and notes which was published in 60s is an outstanding translation. Many of Tagore's lyrics have been translated into Odia by him which is available in CD form also (sung by Trupti Panda).

In 70s and 80s, there was a group of Odia writers who were writing Odia fiction where individual became the protagonist. Some of them are the famous established Odia authors. They are Gopinath Mohanty, Surendra Mohanty and Manoj Das. Gopinath Mohanty translated Tolstoy's *War and Peace* (Yudhya O Shanti) in three volumes (published in 90s) and Tagore's Jogajog (published in 70s) into Odia. Gopinath Mohanty's *Paraja, Danapani, Laya Bilaya* were translated into English by B.K Das. *Danapani* was translated as *The Survivor* in English by B.K Das, was published by Macmillan India Limited in 1995. Lark Books published the English translation of *Laya Bilaya* as High Tide, Ebb Tide by B.K Das. Sahitya Akademi published the English translation of *Dadi Budha* as The Ancestor by Arun Kumar Mohanty.

Translation of science fiction emerged in mid-20th century. Godabarisha Mishra, a noted Odia writer, educationist wrote two science fiction around 1950. He wrote *Ghatantara* being inspired by R.L. Stevenson's *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* and also wrote *Nirbaasitaa*. Other popular science book like Stephen Hawking's *A Brief History of Time* has been translated in Odia by Sri Batsa Nanda in early 21st century.

Odisha State Bureau of Textbook Preparation and Production published translations of many fundamental subject specific books in 80s and 90s. **Plato's** *Republic* was translated into Odia by Ganeswar Mishra and published by OSTB in 1974. He also translated A.J Ayer's *The Problem of Knowledge* into Odia which was published by OSTB in 1977. The classic book of P.H. Nowell Smith, entitled, *Ethics* was translated into Odia by N.Durzie and published in 1976 by OSTB. C.K.Ogden and I.A. Richard's *Meaning of Meaning* was translated by Nityananda Durzie and published by OSTB in 1980.

Knowledge Text Translation published by OSTB in 20th

Subject	Title	Translation
Physics	F.A. Jenkins and H.E. White's Fundamental of Optics	Moulika Aaloka Bingyaana by B.S. Mohanty
Physics	Fundamentals of Physics by Halliday and Resnick	Padaartha Bingyaana by H.Mishra
Physics	R.L. Weber, K.V. Manning, M.W. White's College Physics	Mahavidyalaya Padartha Bingyaana by H.K. Pattanaik
Education	Modern Philosophy of Education by J.S. Brubacher	Aadhunika Sikhyaa Darshana by S. Nath
Anthropology	Structure and Function in Primitive Society by A.R. Radcliff Brown	Aadima Samaajara Swarupa O Prakaarjya by M.M. Mohapatra
Economics	International Economics by C.P. Kindeberger, Foundations of Economics by Silverman, EA.G.Robinson's Monopoly has been translated by B.K. Bal as Ekaadhikaara in Odia,	

Mathematics	R.J.T. Bell's An Elementary Treatise on Coordinate Geometry of Three Dimensions	Trimaatrika Sthaananka Jyaamiti by N.Tripathy
Mathematics	E.Askwith's	Shankuchhedara Bislesanaatmaka Jyamiti by S.C Das
Botany	A.W. Glaston's Life Processes in Plants	Sabuja Paadapa Jibana by B.B.Padhi
Botany	Cari's The Cell	Kosha by B.Samantrai
Political Science	Ivor Jennings' The Queen's Government	Raaninka Shaasana by S. Dash
Political Science	Machiavelli's the Prince	Narapati by S.C. Das
Aesthetics	Edmund Burke's A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful, a treatise on aesthetics	Mahaan O Sundara Dhaaranaara Mulautsa Eka Taatwika Jingyaasaa by S.N. Barik
Geology	L.G. Berry and Brian Mason's Mineralogy	Khanija Bingyaana Tattwa by M.N. Satapathy
Geology	F.H.Lahee's Field Geology	Khetra Bhubingyaana by B.Dash

Along with the Knowledge Text translation, OSTB has also published literary translation. A Berriedale Keith's *A History of Sanskrit Literature* has been translated by B.Kar into Odia as *Sanskruta Saahityara Itihaasa*. Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* was translated by Gadadhar Mishra as *Lohita Akhyara* which was published in 1989 by OSTB.

Shakespeare and Kalidas have been influencing throughout the 20th century. Mayadhar Mansingh (1905-1973), an outstanding Odia writer who did his Ph.D on a comparative study of William Shakespeare and Kalidas from Durham University. He is famous for his translation of Shakespearean plays into Odia. He translated *Macbeth* into Odia in 1960. Towards mid-20th century, Akshaya Kumar Chakravarti and Mayadhar Mansingh introduced the works of Shakespeare to Odia audiences; indeed, Chakravarti's *Hamlet* and Mansingh's *Othello* stand out as brilliant pieces of translation (Pattanaik, 2000). Basant Kumar Satpathy translated Charles and Mary Lamb's *Tales from Shakespeare*. Pranatha Mohanty (1907-1991) translated Kalidas's *Rutusanghaara, Meghadutam* and *Kumarasambhabam* into Odia.

The influence of Gandhi and Vinoba continued in this period. Their works were being translated into Odia. Annapurna Maharana translated Vinoba's *Geeta Pravachane*, Gandhi's *Buniyadee Sikhyaa*, Narahari Parikha's *Taruneekanya Prati* and S*tree Purusha Maryaadaa* into Odia.

Translating children's literature emerged as a new genre in Odia. Udayanath Sarangi (1905-1999) is a popular writer for children literature in Odia. He translated the American author Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* into Odia. He named it as *Tomkaakaanka Kuteera*. Ramkrushna Nanda translated Upendra Kishore Roy Chowdhury's *Tuntunir* Boi from Bangla to Odia. Raghunath Das (1914-1984) translated *Alice in Wonderland as Ajabadeshare Alice* into Odia.

Fitgerald's *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* is a classic in the field of translated literature in English and it has been hugely

translated into most of the world's languages. It was translated into Odia in 20th century. Ananta Prasad Panda translated selected poems of Omar Khayyam and named it *Omar Chayanika*. There was another famous translator named Gopalchandra Kanungo who also translated Edward FitzGerald's *The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám* into Odia.

20th century Odia translation could also witness the voice of social reformation and revolution against the capitalist attitude. The October Revolution of Russia had a far reaching impact and Odia writers were influenced by the revolution. The Odia translation of Gorky's *The Mother* by Ananta Patnaik could justify the fact stated above. Ananta Patnaik (1912-1987), was a revolutionary Odia poet; he got Soviet and Nehru Award for his Odia translation of Maxim Gorky's *The Mother*. Apart from this translation, he also translated *Bhaagyara Kheea, Sikhyaanibaasa and Manishara Swapna Sata Helaa*.

Jnanendra Verma (1916-1990) translated Eliot, Ezra Pound and Walt Whitman's poetry into Odia; Emily Zola's *Nana* (1880) and Maurice Maeterlinck's *Blue Bird* (1908) into Odia as *Nana Metarlinka Neela Bihanga*, Tennyson's *Enoch Arden, Kalidas's Meghadutam* into Odia. He got award for his translation of Ezra Pound's poetry into Odia.

Among the 20th century influential philosophers, Sri Aurobindo has a remarkable space and he has become an institution through his philosophy and works. 20th century Odia literature is greatly enriched by the translation of Aurobindo's works. Chittaranjan Das, the great educationist, translated Sri Aurobindo's *The Human Cycles, Life Divine, Synthesis of Yoga and War and Self-Determination* into Odia and also Mother's collected works into Odia. He was associated with two NGOs, namely Sikhyasandhan and Agragaamee. He translated many important books on education into Odia such as Vasily Sukhomlynsky's *To Children I Give My Heart translated into Odia as Mo Hrudaya Pilanka Pai*, Leo Tolstoy's *Yasnaya Polyana* and *Letters* to a Teacher and A.S. Neil's Hearts Not Heads in the School translated into Odia as

Jane Sikhakanku Chithi and *Bidyalayare Mastika Nuhe Hrudaya*. In the last two decades of his life he had contributed to the field of Odia literature and education much through translation. He is an outstanding translator who has strengthened Odia literature through translation in 90s and in the last decade of 20th century. He translated Etienne De La Boitie's on The Discourse of Voluntary Servitude into Odia as *Agya Palanara Rajaniti* and Kakuzo Ozakura's *The Book of Tea* into Odia as *Chaahaara Kahani*. *Chaahaara Kahani* can be considered as a transcreation as he brings many comparisons between having tea in Japan and having tea in India. In Japan, having a cup of tea means one has to be alone and in India it means togetherness. Antoine de Saint-Exupery's *The Wisdom of Sands* translated into Odia as *Saudha Sandesha*, Barrows Dunham's *Man Against Myth* translated into Odia as *Mithya Birudhare Manisha* and Ananda K. Koomaraswamy's *Living Thoughts of Gotama The Buddha* translated into Odia as *Gautama Buddhanka Amara Bicharachaya* . He has also translated nobel prize winning novels into Odia; Karl Gjellerup's *Pilgrim Kamanita*, Wladyslaw Stanislaw Reymont's novel *The Peasants* as *Chashi*. Translated Ivan Turgenev's *Rudin* in Odia . He translated Iswara Chandra Vidyasagar and Tagore into Odia. Selected poems of R.N. Tagore have been translated by him as Rabindra Katipaya. Tagore's *Education: The Religion of Man* was translated by him as *Siksha: Manushyara Dharma* in Odia. Some of Tagore's novels are also enlisted in his huge work of translation. His other translation works in Odia include: Boris Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago*, Francois Mauriac's *Galigai* as *Sammohini*, Antoine de Saint-Exupery's *Little Prince* as *Rajkumar*, Khalil Gibran's *Prophet* as *Mahabanab*, Ashapurna Devi's novel *Prathama Pratishuti* in Odia. He is the skilled translator without having any formal degree on translation who has translated works from many disciplines. Amit Bhaduri's *Development with Dignity* was translated by him as *Sammanara Saha Vikasha* and Harsh Mander's *Unheard Voices* as *Kehi Suni Nahanti* in Odia. From all his translations, one could state that he has contributed to the field of literary translation as much as to the field of Knowledge Text translation.

Sikhya Sandhan, a voluntary organization, has been publishing seminal educational books in Odia through translation. It has published Vasily Sukhomlynsky's *To Children I Give My Heart* translated into Odia as *Mo Hrudaya Pilanka Pai* by Chittaranjan Das, Tolstoy's *Letters to a Teacher* and A.S. Neil's *Hearts Not Heads* in the School translated into Oriya as *Jane Sikhakanku Chithi* and *Bidyalayare Mastika Nuhe Hrudaya* by Chittaranjan Das, Sikhya/ Manusyara Dharma Original by Rabindranath Tagore, Translated by Chittaranjan Das John Holt's *How do the children learn?* translated into Odia by Sumitra Chadhuri, Vasil Sukhamnilasky's *Educational Judgement* (Sikhya Bichara), translated by Anil Pradhan & Prafulla Behera, Vinoba Bhabe's *Ahinsara anwesana* translated into Odia by Shanti Devi.

Grassroots, a publishing house, has a good deal of English translation of Odia classics. It includes: Fakir Mohan Senapati stories translated by Paul-St.Pierre, Leelavati Mohapatra and K.K Mohapatra, published in 2003. Sachidanand Raut Roy stories translated by Paul-St.Pierre, Leelavati Mohapatra and K.K. Mohapatra, published in 2003. The same group of translators translated Santanu Kumar Acharya stories, Kishoricharan Das stories, Gopinath Mohanty stories, Chandrasekhar Rath stories into English. Embers and Ashes: Odia stories of matrimonial blues and bruises was an anthology of stories translated by Paul-St. Pierre, Leelavati Mohapatra and K.K. Mohapatra and published by Grassroots in 2007. Laxmikanta Mohapatra's *Kanamamu* was translated into English as *Uncle One Eye* by the same group of translators, published by Grassroots in 2008.

Thomas Carlyle's *The Hero and Hero Worship* was translated into Odia by Amar Ballav Dey. Lala Nagendra Ray's translation of Melville's *Moby Dick*, Krushna Mohan Mohanty's translation of *The Prisoner of Zenda*, Subodh Chatterjee's translation of Richardson's *Pamela*, Panchanan Pati's Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, Ghanashyam Samal, Bansidhar Das translated Stevenson's *Treasure Island* and some of Jule Verne's works, Pravash Satpathy translated *Crime and Punishment* in Odia. Shakuntala Baliarsingh translated

Thomas Hardy's novels into Odia. Prativa Satapathy is a famous writer in 20th century Odia literature who has translated many world classics into Odia. Pratibha Satapathy got Sahitya Akademi Award in 2001. Under the translation scheme of Central Sahitya Akademy, she translated *Kalhana Charita and Nagara Manthan*. Under the National Book Trust translation scheme, she translated Subramanium Bharati. Other than her translation works under such government schemes, she translated Pearl S. Buck's *The Hidden Flower* into Odia as *Arana Swapnara Rati*, published by Prachi Sahitya Pratisthan in 2004. Isaac B. Singer's *The Slave* was translated by her as *Kritadas* in Odia. Chinghiz Aitmatov's *The Crane Fly Early* was rendered into Odia by Satapathy as *Sahasara Shikha* and Latvian poetry by Maris Caklais & Raison into Odia as *Bhinna Deshira Muhan*. Apart from Tagore's popular fiction and short stories, his *Gitanjali* had a huge readership in Odia. Tagore's *Gitanjali* was translated into Odia by the Sahitya Academi Award winner, the famous Odia writer, Hara Prasad Das.

Holocaust literature has also influenced many Odia writers who brought the feel of holocaust to Odisha through translation. Holocaust refers to the mass genocide of the Jews from 1941 to 1945 by the Nazi regime. Elie Wisel's *Night*, Jona Oberski's *Childhood* and Graham Greene's *The Tenth Man* are the famous novels on holocaust experience. Jona Oberski, a Dutch writer, wrote about his holocaust experience in his famous Dutch writing, *Kinderjaren* in 1978. Ralph Manheim translated this into English in 1983. Mausumi Acharya, a professor in Psychology, translated the same English into Odia as *Pilaadina* which was published in 2000. Elie Wisel records his experience in the Nazi Germany concentration camp in his writing, Night. Graham Greene's *The Tenth Man* is another famous writing on the same. Mausumi Acharya has translated all these three important novels into Odia on holocaust reality at the turn of the 20th century.

Sahitya Academi and National Book Trust have a long list of Odia translations that one can get from their catalogues. Private Publisher like New Age Publication (AK Mishra Publication), Friends

Publisher, Vidyapuri, Orient Blackswan have been publishing Odia translation. National Translation Mission is another government of India scheme to make knowledge texts available in Odia through translation. It has already published Romila Thapar's *Early India : From the Origins to AD 1300* and Hiriyanna's *Outlines of Indian Philosophy* in Odia.

7. Conclusion:

History of Odia translation is not a homogeneous entity. In early days, texts were translated or transcreated into Odia from Sanskrit. The skopos of early translation was to make knowledge accessible and available to the people. It was a strong weapon to fight against the Brahminical attitude. Medieval period was a continuation of the same tradition. Texts were of religious, mythological and astronomical nature. From 19th century onwards, English became the dominant language and translation was going on from English to Odia which is a tradition still continues. Translation was a tool to establish Odia as an independent language. In early 20th century, translation was to empower women which could be witnessed from the translators of Satyabadi period. Non-literary translation took place visibly from 60s and 70s onwards. Post-independent era witnessed the institutionalization of translation by various government institutions like OSTB (for non-literary translation), Sahitya Academi and National Book Trust. From 80s onwards, a new trend of translation from Odia to English took place. There were women translators who translated Shakespeare's plays and Kalidas's plays in to Odia. Odia translation of four major Greek plays was a huge success and these plays were staged in many colleges and universities in Odisha. Science fiction, holocaust literature, popular science books, religious books from major religions were translated by both govt and non-govt organization. Recently, National Translation Mission started bringing out non-literary translation (Knowledge Text translation) in Odia.

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The Tangled Mesh of Words and Worlds: The Inbetweenness of Language in the Literature Classroom

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Abstract

This essay examines the imperatives of the English literature classroom in a non-metropolitan milieu and contends that bilingualism in such a setting is intellectually empowering and helps fashion, in the true spirit of literature, the empathy between the global and the local without which cultural cosmopolitanism is impossible.

Key Words: Language proficiency, Indian classroom, bilingualism, text, pluralism, translation

The stark reality of teaching in an at once socio-economically semi-rural and culturally semi-urban setting has changed my standards for appraising academic merit. I have come to privilege literary sensibility over literary articulacy. I have persuaded myself to see reticence caused by language in-proficiency or inadequacy as a pardonable disability that does not reflect adversely on the kind of unique "reading" skills that the literature classroom helps inculcate. In the literature classroom, the language acquired through and requisite for formal literature studies is implicitly distinguished from the common communicative skills that are prized in the world outside. In a world where the accidents and vagaries of history have helped some languages to sideline others, where language acquisition is largely contingent upon economic prospect, where disinterested mastery of any language, even one's vernacular, is largely a wistfully deferred goal, where lapse and error and deviation have somehow been historicized in terms of a natural progression or

regression of a language towards either proliferation or extinction, my own imperfect command over my acquired, first language, English, has made me more consciously indulgent towards those who have had significantly smaller scope for acquiring it and are nevertheless attracted towards pursuing degree studies in the literatures available in that language. Grammatical standards are as fluid and contingent upon quirks of subjective usage, particularly at moments of accelerated global contact and exchange, as to render stringency problematic.

My second rationale for cultivating such relativism on the question of language proficiency draws upon my own by no means linear but perennially ongoing process of language acquisition. It is true that children who come up to college or university with a pre-acquired proficiency are at a distinct advantage. However, this same advantage may be viewed as a disadvantage if it has been acquired at the expense of her vernacular language and culture. I do not say this from any sentimentalism. The nature of cultural and literary enquiry in academics globally today and, therefore, in today's globalised India no less, is such as to empower multilingual or at least bilingual human resources more readily, more flexibly, more creatively than a monolingual one. So that, the Nepali-speaking student in my department who is also fluent in English and has picked up Bangla over a year or two spent in Birbhum is likely to have more to offer to an ethnographically oriented cultural studies department interested in reaching out to and translating long-neglected and marginalized language and culture spheres of India. An elite English-speaking student with an exclusively metropolitan upbringing with relative discomfort in her vernacular is likely to have a narrower field of play.

For that matter, literature academics of past generations, those who had gone to school in colonial or post-colonial Kolkata and Bengal, had been naturally bi- or trilingual in terms of their cultural universe. A late professor of Jadavpur University, Visvanath Chatterjee, and I am sure there were and are still many like him, was linguistically empowered by his education to straddle Shakespearean drama, Sanskrit literature and Greek

poetry effortlessly. So, I do not think English literature studies as a formal university discipline was ever monolingual in the truest sense of the term. In *Provincialising Europe*, Dipesh Chakrabarty (4-5) rues the way in which post-colonial India had continued to assimilate European thought into its cultural discourse to the neglect of its own cultural ancestry:

> Faced with the task of analyzing developments or social practices in modern India, few if any Indian social scientists or social scientists of India would argue seriously with, say, the thirteenth-century logician Gangesa or with the grammarian and linguistic philosopher Bartrihari (fifth to sixth centuries), or with the tenth- or eleventh-century aesthetician Abhinavagupta. Sad though it is, one result of European colonial rule in South Asia is that the intellectual traditions once unbroken and alive in Sanskrit or Persian or Arabic are now only matters of historical research for most—perhaps all—modern social scientists in the region. They treat these traditions as truly dead, as history. Although categories that were once subject to detailed theoretical contemplation and inquiry now exist as practical concepts, bereft of any theoretical lineage, embedded in quotidian practices in South Asia, contemporary social scientists of South Asia seldom have the training that would enable them to make these concepts into resources for critical thought for the present. And yet past European thinkers and their categories are never quite dead for us in the same way. South Asian(ist) social scientists would argue passionately with a Marx or a Weber without feeling any need to historicize them or to place them in their European intellectual contexts. Sometimes—though this is rather rare—they would even argue with the ancient or medieval or early-modern predecessors of these European theorists.

While this continues to be true of many of us to this day, I wonder if the literature classroom of the past had somehow been able to surmount this selective cultural myopia or blindness, and that too by virtue of the very nature of literature. Literature or

sahitya, which Tagore associated with the preposition, "sahit", has this remarkably self-effacing and unobtrusive way of being with us, keeping us company, infiltrating boundaries, however carefully conserved. Further, what globalisation has made possible and indeed necessary is a greater institutionalisation of this cultural cosmopolitanism, perhaps a more promising way of collectively addressing the lacuna that Dipesh Chakravarty alerts us to and that many, including my own self, are guilty of. On one occasion, in my first undergraduate year at Jadavpur University, My point is that many students of English departments today may be found addressing Dipesh Chakravarty's concern. Today's academic aspirant would be ashamed of disowning her vernacular roots in her academic milieu. Reading Byomkesh stories in Bangla and writing a dissertation on it in English, under the aegis of a nominally English literature department, does not raise eyebrows, nor call for elaborate procedural justification.

I look forward to a time when the Bangla, English, Comparative Literature and other Indian language and literature studies departments are allowed to merge into a Languages, Literatures and Cultures department that will, and I cannot but think in terms of the at once converging and diverging spokes of a moving wheel, afford a genuine pool of exchange of reading skills and insights from all its constituent linguistic and literary loci of specialization.

I often toy with the idea of moving to an IIT in order that I may teach a mixed array of texts, some literary, mostly cultural, to budding engineers whom I can bank upon to communicate with me in more correct English, ask more intelligent questions about the texts, thanks to better reading habits, and challenge me by throwing at me ways of looking at reality that only an exposure to higher studies in science or engineering is able to inculcate. First of all, the extreme specialization towards which competitively structured secondary and even higher secondary education has for some time been moving means that all my affirmative assumptions about the all-round merit of the IIT student may well be belied. The strongest reservation I come up with in this

intermittent dialogue with myself is that I would not be able to speak to them over any sustained period of time in the kind of language that my reading practices have geared me towards. I would, sooner or later, be assimilated within a technological discourse that privileges precisely the kind of exactitude and monolithic meaning-formation upon which scientific enquiry is founded and which operates through the kind of word-registers that leave texts "closed" rather than "open". I understand that it would be dangerously ignorant to brand scientific discourse as inherently monologic. From Ludwig Wittgenstein to Kurt Goedel to Karl Popper, twentieth century philosophy of science has progressively questioned scientific, even mathematical certitude. However, the plurality or the inscrutability of truth, either historical or scientific, is unlikely to be the axiomatic basis of the undergraduate or postgraduate engineering studies classroom. Engineers need material truths, however theoretically open they might be to the discursive plurality of truth as a concept. That is not to say that I do not, by virtue of my neocolonial burden of debt, value the momentous contribution of the Royal Society of Science in the 1660s towards the fashioning of a functional, modern, transparent English language. I admire the English language of many writers who wrote "scientific" English. But I am concerned here not with functional minimalism as a strategy in the usage of any language but with what I see as the differing philosophies of language informing different knowledge disciplines.

In acquiring one kind of language, I would probably have to leave behind a way of writing, of speaking, that is very empowering and very enlightening within the confines of the literature classroom. I am sure I will also gain something over time to compensate my loss. There would be the comfort of knowing that reason and logic and, maybe, dialectics, can get us, if we combine the pursuit of these with a clearer understanding of the cosmic reality. But, the point, of course, is that the world has and should continue to have room for a rich plurality of language-systems, for mathematical language, for the language of music, for that of the paintbrush, and for that imaginative and

critical writing. In this, I am inspired by a famous essay by Walter Benjamin, 'The Task of the Translator' in *Illuminations* (74), where he reminds us how no word in any one language finds an exact equivalent in another. So that, the meaning of "bread" can only be arrived at, cumulatively, out of all near-equivalent variants of that concept in all languages: so, "bread" in English, "Brot" in German, "pauruti" in Bangla, and so on:

> Wherein resides the relatedness of two languages, apart from historical considerations? Certainly not in the similarity between works of literature or words. Rather, all supra historical kinship of languages rests in the intention underlying each language as a whole-an intention, however, which no single language can attain by itself but which is realized only by the totality of their intentions supplementing each other: pure language. While all individual elements of foreign languages-words, sentences, structure-are mutually exclusive, these languages supplement one another in their intentions. Without distinguishing the intended object from the mode of intention, no firm grasp of this basic law of a philosophy of language can be achieved. The words *Brot* and *pain* "intend" the same object, but the modes of this intention are not the same. It is owing to these modes that the word *Brot* means something different to a German than the word *pain* to a Frenchman, that these words are not interchangeable for them, that, in fact, they strive to exclude each other. As to the intended object, however, the two words mean the very same thing. While the modes of intention in these two words are in conflict, intention and object of intention complement each of the two languages from which they are derived; there the object is complementary to the intention. In the individual, unsupplemented languages, meaning is never found in relative independence, as in individual words or sentences; rather, it is in a constant state of flux-until it is able to emerge as pure language from the harmony of 'all the various modes of intention. Until then, it

remains hidden in the languages.

This is the precisely the kind of inclusiveness that exposure to the languages of literatures fosters and makes imperative.

So, there is a problem of language in the literature classroom beyond the distinction between English and Bengali. It is the difference between the scientist's language and the literary critic's language. There is the further inflection of classroom usage by diachronic difference between the literary critic's language of earlier decades and that of the literary theorist-aspirant today. Those amongst us engaged in literature studies are fascinated by the rich, irreducible multiplicity of language, even the changing language of academic discourse. This fascination is obviously shared by those pursuing, say, social linguistics, and certainly, language trainers. The difference in our respective approaches maybe that of texts used as tools as well as of ultimate discursive/conclusive objective. For instance, a sociolinguist may study the changing usage of the English language among the youth, using smart phone Whatsapp or Facebook as her data bank. She will probably then go on to apply select statistical strategies to process her data and then analyse them in deference to theoretical texts on socio-linguistics, past and present. Where her language and that of a literature academic might meet would be at a further level, where the broader conclusions they both draw about cultural history will be mediated through a pool of theories of knowledge, culture, politics and society, with de Saussure, Barthes, Bakhtin, and Derrida's philosophies of language, that has closed the gap among disciplines within humanities beyond reversal. Beyond that, though, the literature academic will part ways with the socio-linguist, not just in the proportionate presence or absence of literary or imaginative, as opposed to discursive texts from their respective pools of material, but also the differing ways in which they allow their readings of language cultures to be mediated by the cultural or literary texts from one or more spatio-temporal context that they have sampled.

The language skills prioritised by the literature academic,

over and above or sometimes in lieu of basic communicative efficiency, are more complex, nuanced, inclusive and relaxed than the grammarian's. At the same time, there is a different kind of rigour to it, an academic slant not in sync with the laxities common in everyday spoken language. Journalese, on the other hand, formalizes the language of the everyday according to a yet different set of norms and objectives. So, the literature academic's rigour, the grammarian's rigour and the journalist's rigour are three distinct fashionings of the same language. One can argue towards further denominations within these broad categories: there is a Statesman brand of English and a Telegraph brand of English within journalistic English. The latter was tellingly brought home to us in our childhood with the help of that flagrantly post-modern, ungrammatical, pop coinage: "unputdownable". The literature academic round the world today is acutely sensitive to these pluralities and varieties or variants in language usage. Indeed, the fluidity of imaginative writing, both in terms of its global variety and spread at any given point of time, and of its mutations and reconfigurations across time, has taught us to accept more than one reality, more than one truth, and by extension, more than one language as the exclusive register in terms of which reality is engaged and truth is conveyed, to be plausible. Engagement with imaginative texts impels a certain expansion of the experiential universe, a certain humility, a slackening stringency over binaries such as right and wrong, good and bad, correct and incorrect, acceptable and unacceptable. I am sure that a mathematician or a physicist or an engineering student at IIT does not have his own unique route to the same spirit of tolerance towards other ways of thinking and being. Our goals may well be identical, but our respective points of departure in analytical enquiry, our methodological routes and our diction choices are happily different. Earlier, I spoke of the not so distant future in Indian academia when multiple literature and language departments merge under one overarching umbrella. For genuinely pathbreaking interdisciplinary research on culture, we ought to be envisioning collaboration across languages, literatures, linguistics, the social sciences *and* the natural sciences.

The simultaneous liability and possibility afforded by this acute sense of the relativity of language is what informs my negotiations with various levels of English language competence in the English and Western literature classroom. Bilingualism, in my case, is a part-conscious, part-spontaneous, performative strategy in the non-metropolitan literature classroom of an institution that has historically privileged cultural transmission and transaction through the vernacular and which also serves increasingly as an outreach centre for higher studies aspirants from a fairly extensive rural hinterland beyond the political boundaries of West Bengal as a province.

Bilingualism is *not* an explanatory mode on demand, nor a merely illustrative one. Nor is it a capitulation to classroom populism. I call it performative and strategic, because throwing in the Bangla lyrics of a song by the contemporary Bengali urban rock band in a nonsense literature discussion, or remarking upon how in Birbhum "besh" ("fine"), a more refined version of the Kolkatan words, "achha" ("okay") or "theek achhe" ("all right") is current, or that the word "chikchiki" for plastic bag, or "kaani" for rag, in course of a discussion of how "fond" meant foolish in Shakespeare's English, "brave" meant beautiful, and "clown" was a pejorative for a farmer, are my gradually evolved ways of transforming the classroom into a space and moment where all space- and time-zones can converge and mingle. It is my way of contemporanising texts geographically and chronologically distant, of bringing them "home" to myself and those sharing that fertile, epiphanic, magical moment of "recognition" with me. Recognition of sharings amidst the expected difference of cultures and cultural texts far apart in time and place can be a profoundly reassuring humanistic experience. Recognition of difference amidst apparent sameness is far more unsettling, though equally illuminating.

Bilingualism in the classroom is not a means of making a text merely intelligible. In my case, often, the text in question is three times removed from the classroom reality – in English translation, but not originally an English text, and from four five centuries past and a European country. It is not a regular teaching

aid, so to speak. It is a way of mediating the space between the

student and the text in such a way as to expand it at both ends. It often proves to be a service to the text and its reception beyond literal understanding no less than as a persuasion of the student to enter the text's universe. In a sense, it adds ephemeral, contingent Benjaminian afterlives to the text every day.

The literature classroom is in any case already multilingual, in the sense of our awareness of the impossibility of a pure language, unmediated by the currents of other languages with which it has been historically thrown into contact. No one can read Amitav Ghosh's fiction, particularly *The Sea of Poppies*, without being impelled to recognise the persistent and irresistible cross-pollination of languages. From Tagore's novella, *Shesher Kobita (The Last Poem)*, to the standard feature story in the Bengali daily *Ananda Bazar Patrika's* Saturday supplement testifies to the continued currency of bilingualism. Here, I agree with Dipesh Chakrabarty's admission (20-21):

> For one of the ironies of attempting to know any kind of language in depth is that the unity of the language is sundered in the process. One becomes aware of how plural a language invariably is, and how it cannot ever be its own rich self except as a hybrid formation of many "other" languages (including, in the case of modern Bengali, English).

However, today, when in the literature classroom I use "juggernaut" or "bandobast", I do so not in a gesture of blind ahistorical appropriation, but in shared awareness of the linguistic cross-fertilisation of all cultural encounter, even one between the coloniser and the colonized. When I use "Zeitgeist" or "Lebensraum" or "Weltanschauung" or "sprezzatura" or "juissance" or "chiaroscuro", I do indeed corroborate Dipesh Chakrabarty's claim (Preface xiii) about neo-colonial educated, middle-class Bengal's modernity being founded upon a provincialisation of the idea of Europe. He calls it the

the silent and everyday presence of European thought in Indian life and practices. The Enlightenment was part of

my sentiments. Only I did not know it as such. Marx was a household Bengali name. His German upbringing was never commented upon. Bengali scholars translated *Das Capital* without the slightest hint of any philological concerns. This recognition of a deep—and often unknown— debt to European thought was my point of departure; without that there could be no "provincializing Europe."

But I do so in at least an attempted historicisation of the specific socio-economic and socio-political context that allows both the emergence and propagation of an Italian term or a French phrase or a German one as well as of the caution with which equivalences may be sought from contexts closer home.

At another level, I would submit that all texts from all ages are contemporary anyway, even as they emanate from and engage with a historically specific moment and site. I have always found the factor of pertinence or relevance a curiously unpredictable one. It is eminently possible that Sidney's *Arcadia* or Sir Thomas More's *Utopia* speaks to a Santiniketan classroom more vitally than Jhumpa Lahiri's *Namesake*. It is equally possible that Robert Greene's Coney Catching Pamphlets, written early in the 1590s, with its elaborately laid out para-language of petty crime and its amoral representation of criminal lives and minds should strike a chord of recognition in today's youth in the literature classroom, fed on Bollywood gangster movies.

Philosophically, then, the literature classroom is a Tower of Babel, but a happy one.

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BOOK REVIEW

A Book Review of NABAL JOMI, the Bengali Translation of Jhumpa Lahiri's Diasporic Novel

THE LOWLAND

Chandreyee Bhattacharjee

(*Nabal Jomi* (Translated): Poulomi Dasgupta, Date of Publication : 2014

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The Bengali Diaspora of the West largely structures it's sensibilities on the tradition inherited from their Asian origin , but when it comes to pre-dominantly talking about them , the diasporic authors fall short of expressions that would often appear inadequate to their brethren on the other side of the globe. The non-translability of a Indian Bengali mindscape into a language (English), linguistically ill-equipped for the purpose, constantly and obdurately remains protuberant even where the authenticity of the landscape of Calcutta (now officially Kolkata) mesmerizes, in Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Lowland*.

What intervenes, is the double inheritance of their institutionalized Western upbringing that largely eclipses the Asian mode of self-expression. Lahiri appears to have conformed to this unanimously accepted tradition.

Although *The Lowland*, entwines cultures across different time frames, yet Lahiri's reframing and representation of a Bengali mindscape and sensitivities of the last decades of the preceding millennium is but an assortment of objective informations, that documentations had to offer. It had hardly anything to contribute in constructing psyches or subjectivities, leaving inadequately represented characters, an average Indian Bengali, if not an American would consider allegedly inappropriate for the time and space they represented. Perhaps the best explanation to counter this allegation, would be to consider the fact , that Lahiri was herself

into a rigorous process of translating a Bengali culture to meet the demands of her readers across the globe. The transnational appeal of *The Lowland* had little to delve into the deeper Bengali psyche and culture, that English as a language failed to express, having no cultural equivalence or even relevance.

To a Bengali reader, however, this lacunae was filled with a translation of the same by Poulomi Dasgupta , titled *NabalJomi* that literally translates the English one. The Bengali translation brought into the text an appropriateness of expression inspite of the gaps and fissures that Lahiri's content betrayed.

Had the English text been a diasporic saga , in the first place, solely, it would have escaped a critical eye , but , perhaps Dasgupta's translation replenished the text with a linguistic appropriateness that contributed to it's authenticity, as a historical text. The complete comprehension of the socio-political context, coupled with the social conditioning it requires behind its structuring, demands in the first place a nurturing, which growing up in a place that had been the witness to the historical events *The Lowland* has documented, can afford us, rather than a institutionalized study. The authorial views were insufficient to culturally translate subjectivities, which however the Bengali translation coloured the content with. Language can be carried over to other cultures and context, but often a lack of equivalence between the source and target languages leads to failure at explicitness, meanings remaining understated. Dasgupta's translation *Nabal Jomi* reconnects Lahiri's text to it's roots, with its linguistic tool, lending it more palatable to Indian Bengalis, who would prefer movements like Naxalism to be rendered in a tongue that was instrumental in channelizing the movement itself. Lahiri cannot and must not be castigated for what she failed at, given the content that had a transnational appeal, but a textual translation brought our expectations to fruition , offering multitudinous ways of considering the facts in Bengali. Lahiri's reading of the female of her novel, Gauri, widowed and living under social constraints in her first husband's home, which is also that of her second husband's,

and her mother-in-law's silent retaliation to their elopement and the eventual death of her second son Udayan, Gauri's first husband, in no way matches Lahiri's dextrous handling of Bela's character, in a Westernized ambiance, she herself being more familiar with it.

Lahiri has tried to explore womanhood with its different shades, where each individual experience is taken into account, with all its contradictoriness and tried to redefine it in the light of an Indian indigenous and a diasporic experience, an attempt in which Dasgupta's Bengali translation has corroborated the former which could be best explicated in Bengali. The Bengali translation of Lahiri was instrumental in authentically depicting the cultural atmosphere in which the tale was rooted and here a translator's social conditioning outweighed what would only remain stunted in a Diasporic author's half-expressed rendition. Having a critical undertone, this review does not aim to underestimate a Booker Prize Awardee, but the inadequacy of a language in being the cultural expression of another. The source language, structures a content best sculpted and represented in the target language which is Bengali, in which case, *Nabal Jomi* has an edge in its style over *The Lowland*. The historicity of the novel, one of the causes why it reached out to strengthen its grip over the intelligentsia across nations, failed but narrowly to satisfy the *gourmei* Bengali reader whose recognition was obtained by the linguistic reconstruction of the novel in Bengali. The translation surmounted the original in leaving an impact on the Bengali mindset, searching those identifiable individuals in the text, who had previously escaped a thorough study that a competent linguistic rendition of the original, availed. The broken edges received a finesse through this translation of *The Lowland*, that excelled in content, if not in the linguistic medium applied. Lahiri was more at ease in sketching the Americanized Indians with whom she shared a common inherited cultural expression. Dasgupta's translation was absorbed into the Bengali homes in India who are otherwise unaccustomed to the blatant superficiality in the characterization of an average Bengali, they themselves identify with---an alleged flaw, they

judged/mis-judged to be culpable in the original text. A scrutiny of the translation tells that, it concretized the characterization which, otherwise eluded a reader expecting a more wholesome presentation. *Nabal Jomi* consequently is more Bengali in its appeal, than the transnational original text which is inadvertently a milestone for the Indian Diaspora of the West.

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