Translation Today

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TARIQ KHAN

Publication Policy

Translation Today (TT) is a double-blind peer-reviewed, indexed and refereed journal of the National Translation Mission (NTM). This has been listed in the UGC approved list of journals. It follows the standard publishing norms and therefore, invites original and unpublished submissions in the following categories:

- Research articles
- Academic interviews
- Translations
- Disciplinary dialogues
- Book reviews
- Annotated bibliography

Vision

- 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.

Submission

Translation Today welcomes submissions in the following areas (but not limited to): 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.

For submissions and queries, please write to:

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Translation and language are so intertwined that they seem to be synonymous and coterminous in multilingual settings. From historical and evolutionary standpoints, translation could not have preceded language, however, from communicative and typological perspectives translation must have coexisted with the use of languages. The formal study of translation is though recent but a vigorous phenomenon. Consequently, translation has come of age to become not merely an academic discipline, but also an institution of its own. In the process, translation has also acquired the well-deserved prominence in policies.

The Government of Indian recently announced the National Education Policy 2020. It is heartening to note that the new policy has given an adequate emphasis on the sustenance of linguistic diversity, promotion of multiculturalism and restoration of weakening languages, which cannot be possible without the active involvement of citizens skilled in translation, interpretation and adaptation activities. Perhaps, for this reason, the new policy has also recommended the setting up of Indian Institute of Translation and Interpretation (IITI). These developments augur well for translators, interpreters and adapters as well as the students and researchers of Translation Studies, Interpretation Studies and Adaptation Studies. Other stakeholders, especially in a plurilingual country like India, may benefit too. With such proposals in the offing, the acceptance and actualization of ideas like "India as a translation/interpretation/adaptation area" and "India as a translation/interpretation/adaptation industry" will gain the due momentum. In consonance with these ideas, Translation Today assigns to itself some new goals while maintaining the target and tempo envisioned earlier. The efforts are also on to index Translation Today in various databases. This journal endorses the idea of free access to

knowledge. Therefore, all its contents have been made available for free access and are licensed under Creative Commons.

The scholarship of Translation Studies and related disciplines is expanding gradually and substantially towards establishing itself on par with other disciplines that are canonized in the international arena. The recent surge in writings on translation has necessitated the creation of a wide network to maintain the best publishing standards through a robust evaluation mechanism. Translation Today receives quantitatively huge and qualitatively diverse contributions. Consequently, the journal has an enormous challenge of reviewing all the submissions received for an issue. The journal is able to meet the reviewing challenges primarily due to the voluntary services of the subject experts. However, this process is at times very tedious and time-consuming. A survey by Joe Salmons reveals that numerous journals of international scope are also facing the problem of the shortage of reviewers. It is commonly observed that some reviewers who respond well go on to receive more review requests than they can handle or more requests than they are interested in. Reliability of the reviews (i.e. to say the review is not a superficial one) has also emerged as a big problem in addition to the shortage of reviewers.

When Translation Today tried to figure out why such problems were arising and interviewed some reviewers personally, the response was highly worrisome. It appeared that on most occasions the reviewing task is voluntary in nature. The reviewers may receive a complimentary copy of the publication, but they do not have any financial benefit or academic recognition that would act as an incentive. Reviewing is an academic task and a good reviewer contributes to the work academically. However, the reviewers

being anonymous their contributions also become unknown and invisible. For obvious reasons, it may not be practical to mention the names of the reviewers in the publication. However, there is a need to devise a system by which the reviewers can get some incentives. Since reviewing tasks are as global as publishing, there can be an initiative to make a platform to maintain the database of potential reviewers based on their specializations and certified association with the journals that are publishing regularly. Such platforms can function online and issue badges/identification numbers to the reviewers of a given discipline.

Translation Today would like to invite suggestions from its valued readers to overcome the shortage of quality reviewers. The journal would also like to invite recommendations and nominations of subject experts, who are qualified and willing to review the submissions received for its regular as well as special issues. With these words, it is the pleasure of the editor to present the second issue of volume fourteen of Translation Today.

In this issue, the first paper titled '*Bonanza of Translation Studies: Students' Attitudes towards the Emerging Discipline*' by Nabaraj Neupane offers an empirical study on students' attitude towards Translation Studies courses. He finds that the students' attitude towards the discipline is very positive and proposes that TS resources and materials should be student-friendly, informative, interesting, and accessible to the students. The second paper titled, '*Translation and Translation Criticism: Probing a Reciprocal Interrelation*' by Viraj Desai investigates various issues surrounding Translation Criticism especially in the context of Gujarati-English translation. This paper tries to propose that translation criticism is not limited to passing binary judgments about a translation. Instead, it focuses on providing all-encompassing, detailed and rather

objective critiques of translations. The third paper titled '*From Theory to Praxis: Film Theories Translated*' by Anwita Maiti and Udaya Narayana Singh discusses the inter-semiotic translation and argues that this discourse has to take much stuff from feminist film theories. They also question the applicability of Western feminist film theories in the context of Indian films. The fourth paper titled '*Cultural Issues in the English Translation of Satish Alekar's Play Mahanirvan*', is a critical assessment of the English translation of Satish Alekar's trendsetting play Mahanirvan (The Dread Departure) in terms of the cultural issues in translation. He critically examines the translation strategies with specific reference to this play and concludes that the foreignization translation strategy would have kept the cultural ethos of the source text intact. The fifth paper titled '*The Art of Translation: On Translating Sukumar Ray's Abol Tabol in English*' by Uma Ray Srinivasan unearths the difficulties of translating Sukumar Ray's Abol Tabol into English. It has two parts; Part I discusses the challenges of translation in general with existing theoretical analysis and Part II studies these challenges with regard to the translation of *Abol Tabol*. The sixth paper titled '*The Future of Indigenous Languages: Challenges of Translating Mavilan Songs*' by Lilykutty Abraham discusses the challenges a translator faces while translating the oral songs of the Mavilan tribe in English. It also proposes some solutions to the problems of translation. The seventh paper titled '*Translating Roald Dahl's Fantastic Mr Fox to Hindi: A Case Study of Translated Children's Literature*' by Sushmita Pareek delves into the debate of foreignization, domestication and fidelity with special reference to the Hindi translation of Roald Dahl's novel Fantastic Mr Fox. The eighth paper titled '*Adapting Fiction into Film – Rashomon*' by Preethamol M. K. is a comparative study on how the genre of short stories can be translated into a completely different medium of visual expression that is film

with an analysis of the movie Rashomon. She analyzes the distinctiveness of Rashomon and tries to study the deviation (if it exists) from the original while critically engages herself in the discussion of adaptation of fiction into a film.

In addition to routine articles this issue also has a translator's note titled '*Women Translators in Urdu: A Survey*' by Faheemuddin Ahmed and S. M. Fasiullah. This entry surveys women Urdu translators and their literary contributions in various genres.

The interview section offers three interviews. In the first interview, K. M. Sherrif interacts with E. V. Ramakrishnan on the themes like prospects of translation in India, Indian Literature in English translation, media and translation. In the second interview, K. Mansi interacts with Udaya Narayana Singh on issues like the problem of poetry translation between Indian languages and between Indian and foreign languages, untranslatability and translation as a theory and practice in the Indian context, self-translation and the translation based on target readership. In the third interview, Umesh Kumar interacts with Dipti Ranjan Pattanaik on the historicisation of translation practices in Odia and translation as an academic pursuit.

This issue also features two book reviews. The book review section has *Researching Cognitive Processes of Translation* reviewed by Obed Ebenezer S. as the first entry. The other one is Sujit R. Chandak's review of *Kisson Ki Duniya*, titled as 'Translating Children's Literature between Indian Languages: A Case for Critical Understanding of Indian Children's Literature'.

Translation Today strives to provide high-quality research to the field of Translation Studies and adjacent fields of inquiry. This issue exemplifies the trend that this journal has set and intends to continue. While the ongoing pandemic has adversely

affected all walks of life everywhere and slowed down the flow of academic works, the editorial team took it as an opportunity to not only bring out this issue on time but also offer quality readings to all the stakeholders of Translation Today. All subscribers of Translation Today are invited to enjoy this issue. The subscribers are also encouraged to cite the papers and recommend the journal wherever possible.

As the year 2020 is drawing to close, Translation Today hopes that the prevailing global crisis will also come to an end very soon. Wishing all readers a happy and prosperous new year ahead.

Thank you!

<div align="right">Tariq Khan</div>

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Bonanza of Translation Studies: Students' Attitudes towards the Emerging Discipline

NABARAJ NEUPANE

Abstract

Translation has been mandatory for global communication and Translation Studies (TS) as a distinct discipline has been of paramount importance in the current context of linguistic and cultural hybridity elsewhere. TS has been introduced as a teaching subject at different Universities of Nepal. Therefore, it is the right time to evaluate the tendency of the major stakeholders, i.e. students towards the discipline. In this context, this study aimed to observe the students' attitudes towards it. For obtaining this, a survey research design was used. The tool for collecting data was a close-ended questionnaire consisting of fifteen statements, which represented cognitive, affective, and behavioural attitudes. The subjects were 105 students who had already passed B. Ed., majoring TS course. The findings indicated that the subjects had positive attitudes towards the TS course. The results also proved that TS resources and materials should be student-friendly, informative, interesting, and accessible to the students.

Keywords: Affective, Attitude, Behavioural, Cognitive, Translation Studies.

Introduction

Students' attitudes play a key role in the formation of educational materials and resources of the emerging discipline like *Translation Studies*. With this presumption, this article explores the students' cognitive, affective, and behavioural stances towards the nascent discipline. Thus, a brief acquaintance to the bonanza of the discipline and the concepts

of attitudes are indispensable before entering the main entrance of this research.

Translation practices may have begun when different linguistic communities came into contact. In such situations, translation could have been an intermediate tool of communication but it was not given due importance that time. For example, the Greeks met other peoples and cultures in the 6th and 7th centuries B. C.; however, there is no discussion of either the practice or the process of translation throughout ancient Greek literature (Connolly & Bacopoulou-Halls 2011). Therefore, it is axiomatic to say that history of translation is as old as the history of human civilization in the sense that inter-linguistic communication necessitates translation, a tool for the cultivation of human civilization. This echoes the mythology of the Tower of Babel as mentioned in the *Bible*. In the past, translation was a random practice as it was carried out without any systematic principles and theories. Yet, there are traces of the fact that a host of honourable writers wrote well, translated well and wrote about translation as well (Newmark 1981). In those days, translation was taken as a literary activity. However, it was viewed to be a mechanical rather than a creative task. Therefore, it did not receive much public and academic interest. Yet about fifty years before, scholars thought of discussing all translational activities under a single discipline, which they called *Translation Studies* (Holmes 1972/2004). Since then, it emerged as a discipline and it has occupied a vital position in academic and public spheres.

The mixing up of diverse communities now has resulted in multilingualism, in which, "Nothing moves without translation […]. No change in thought or technology spreads without the help of translation" (Bates 1943 as cited in Ordudari 2008: 4). In addition to this, Paz (1971) has rightly conceded, "All texts, being part of a literary system descended from and related to

other systems, are 'translations of translation of translations'" (as cited in Bassnett 2005: 44). Therefore, translation is essential to enter into the treasure house of knowledge. Moreover, translation is crucial to safeguard and promote linguistic and cultural diversity in the changing geography of globalized societies (Ceramella 2008). Likewise, Cronin (2010) has added, "The hegemony of English in the fastest growing area of technological development means that all other languages become, in this context, minority languages" (254). Therefore, for assimilation as well as resistance, translation has been an integral part of modern life. Further, the exhortations like "No global communication without translation" (Newmark 2011: 55); and "Translate or die" (Engle & Engle 1985, as cited in Neupane 2017: 22) prove the dire need of translation in the present world. Showing the significance of translation in the technically narrowed down world, Shastri (2012: ix) has asserted:

> Globalization has made the world a small place. It is inhabited by hundreds of communities with different languages, social set-ups, cultures, attitudes, and their own specific world views. The technological boom has opened up the possibilities and opportunities of interaction/ communication among these communities. Translation is the only means to meet this need.

The theoretical foundations of *Translation Studies* became strong along with the groundwork of the theorists like Nida (1964), Catford (1965), and so on. The burgeoning field got its name as *Translation Studies* only in 1972 with the debut of Holmes' seminal paper (Hatim & Munday 2004: 126), which became "the manifesto of today's discipline" (Snell-Hornby 2006: 40) and "the founding statement for the field" (Gentzler 2010: 93). Although it is still nascent, *Translation Studies* (TS) has been a bonanza for researchers currently.

The above-mentioned delineations give me an impetus to conceptualize that translation has been the most wide-ranging and the most far-reaching discipline of the day and will remain so in the future, too. Thus, it is the right time to dig into the needs and prospects of translation and *Translation Studies* as a separate discipline.

As a burgeoning discipline*, Translation Studies* (TS) has occupied a vital space in publications and university curricula. TS has been introduced at Bachelor, Masters', M. Phil., and Doctoral Levels at different universities of Nepal. In Tribhuvan University (TU), it was assigned at B. Ed., as a full credit course, i.e. 100 full marks and six periods a week till 2018 and at M. Ed. fourth semester as a 3 credit course and is allocated three hours a week. The course entitled *Translation Theories and practices,* assigned for B. Ed., aimed to provide an introduction to the theoretical and practical facets of the discipline *Translation Studies* (Faculty of Education 2009). In this context, this study aimed to investigate students' attitudes towards TS course, along with these parameters: cognitive, affective, and behavioural (adapted from Ajzen 1987; Kalengkongan 2012; Yamashita, 2013; & Chien and Yu 2015). This study is significant firstly because any study in the domain of TS is important as translation has been a means for trans-communicating across cultures home and abroad; and secondly because students' attitudes reflect views, thoughts, and perceptions of the major stakeholders of the discipline. Further, the students' success and participation rate depend upon their attitudes towards the course they are assigned to. Attitude also plays a crucial role in pedagogical processes and hence it is one of the significant psychological factors that influence students' achievement (Farooq & Shah 2008). Therefore, it is reasonable and rational to explore the students' attitudes towards TS.

Review of Literature

Translation, since antiquity, has been practised by a name or the other into different academic spheres. However, to put in Gentzler's (2010) words, "It has existed only since 1983 as a separate entry in the *Modern Language Association International Bibliography"* (1). However, this burgeoning field got its name as *Translation Studies* in 1972. In this connection, Hatim and Munday (2004) have conceded, "It was in the translation section of the Third International Congress of *Applied Linguistics* that James S. Holmes, an Amsterdam-based lecturer and literary translator, presented his famous paper *The Name and Nature of Translation Studies* in August 1972" (126). This declaration came in such a setting that translators and translation researchers needed outlets to accumulate the related tasks. This seminal paper was considered to be "the manifesto of today's discipline" (Snell-Hornby 2006: 40) and "the founding statement for the field" (Gentzler 2010: 93).

Currently, *Translation Studies* has been a discipline of the day. Therefore, Baker (2011, 2018) has rightly claimed, "Translation has become a highly attractive career for young people with a love for languages and for engaging with other cultures, as well as a growing area of research" (2).

The next key term of the study, 'attitude' refers to a way of thinking and behaving towards something. It is the way one thinks and feels about some entity and behaves toward it positively, neutrally, or negatively. It affects one's tendency towards some facts, beliefs, feelings, and reactions one shows. For Kerlinger (1984), "Attitude affects people to have a certain tendency toward things around them such as environment, issues, and different kind of ideas" (as cited in Kalengkongan 2012: 2). It implies that attitude connotes one's viewpoint, thought, feeling, emotion, belief, or opinion towards certain

entities. This view is also evidenced in Ajzen's (1987) assertion in these words, "Attitude is a disposition or respond favourably or unfavourably to an object, person, institution, or event" (15). Similar view echoes in Mager (1986, as cited in Kalengkongan 2012), who has divided attitudes as favourable (positive) and unfavourable (negative). The former attitude attracts whereas the latter distracts someone toward something.

For Berstein, Roy, Srull, and Wickens (1991), attitude is "a tendency to respond emotionally, cognitively, or behaviourally, to a particular entity in a particular way toward anything whether the response is positive or negative" (as cited in Kalengkongan 2012: 3). Hence, attitude can be emotional, cognitive, or behavioural. Further, Matthewson (1994, as cited in Yamashita 2013; and Chien and Yu 2015) has forwarded the three components of attitude, based on Lewis and Teale's (1980) tri-attitudes model. Accordingly, affective component, which corresponds to emotions/ feelings/ opinions, can be good/ like/ favourable or bad/dislike/unfavourable. Likewise, the cognitive component, which corresponds to beliefs/thoughts/evaluations/rational arguments, is based on the ways one thinks/behaves/judges an object or concept. Similarly, behavioural (also called conative) component corresponds to intentions, actual reactions, performances, or behaviours shown by someone toward something. For example, if one reads books on TS extensively, it is his positive conative response towards the subject. Although the sense is the same, Lohithakshan (2007) has presented different terms in this claim, "Attitude is cognitive, judgemental, and emotional […] Attitudes have both a cognitive and emotional content and this complex organization is a pre-disposition for a specific response when confronting the specific situation" (31). This implies three types of attitudes such as cognitive, judgemental (like behavioural), and emotional (like affective). This definition also confirms that a specific response can be

positive or negative. Therefore, Kalengkongan (2012) has summed up this way, "Attitude is a special tendency, thought, or opinion that people have in facing problems or viewing certain matters" (2). The similar conclusion has been drawn by Chien and Yu (2015). In this juncture, Adhikari (2016) has conceded, "Attitude refers to how we think, feel about, and act towards our fellow human beings and how they think, feel about and act towards us" (14).

Of many, some studies have been presented in this study. Farooq and Shah (2008) used a set of 47 statements to test 685 respondents' attitudes towards mathematics. They found out that there was no gender biasness in the attitudes towards mathematics. However, they have indicated the importance of positive attitude in achieving success in the pedagogical domain. Likewise, Hanna (2009) conducted a study, which aimed to identify and reflect students' attitudes to the theory and practice components of translation. In an action research design, Hanna interviewed three respondents; and conducted informal discussions on the topic. By using the respondents' responses and his reflexivity, the researcher concluded that he achieved a little about the students' attitude towards translation theory and practice although he has demonstrated students' positive attitude towards the issue he raised. These two studies focus on the specific subject area. However, Bhargava and Pathy (2014) associated their study on student teachers' attitude with the teaching profession. Basing their research on 96 respondents' responses, they have concluded that attitude is affected by variables like age, experience, beliefs, gender and stream of education. Their research has also exhibited that a positive attitude is liable to bring the desired quality. Thus, students' positive attitude lies at the heart of the success of any educational institutions.

These delineations give me the impetus to develop a theoretical framework that students' attitudes can be measured by the instances like positive, neutral or negative, which subsume the three facets of cognitive, affective, and behavioural dimensions of attitudes

Methodology

The study followed a survey research design because its purpose was to obtain a snapshot of students' attitudes (Nunan 2010) towards TS. The respondents of the study were 105 M. Ed. English (I and II Semesters) students of Prithvi Narayan Campus, Pokhara. Those samples were selected because they had completed a full credit TS course at B. Ed. and were convenient to the researcher.

The instrument for collecting data was questionnaire comprising 15 close-ended questions, assuming that each of them had "equal value, importance, or weight in terms of reflecting an attitude towards the issue in question" (Kumar 2006: 145). The questions consisted of three components of attitudes, like cognitive (1-5), affective (6-10), and behavioural (11-16) (Appendix A). Before administering them to the subjects, the researcher had given the first draft to his ten colleagues/experts for judgement, based on which the questions had been re-formed. The questionnaire used a three-point Likert scale with these options: agree, undecided, and disagree to represent the three dimensions of attitudes like positive, neutral, and negative respectively.

One hundred and five questionnaire sheets were distributed to the subjects to obtain responses, which were grouped and calculated in percentage for analysis and interpretation of the results based on cognitive, affective, and behavioural components of attitudes.

Results and Discussions

This section caters for analysis, interpretation, and discussion of the obtained results from the questionnaire filled up by 105 subjects, studying at M. Ed. first and second-semester students of Prithvi Narayan Campus, Pokhara. There are holistic presentation and discussion of the results followed by the component-wise analysis of the results.

One hundred and five subjects responded on fifteen questions, dealing with the three components of attitude, namely, cognitive, affective, and behavioural (Table 1). Their responses have been counted and converted into a percentage for the ease of analysis and discussion. Table 1 reveals that most subjects believe that TS course enriches vocabulary across languages (94.28%), and they enjoy reading translated texts provided that they can choose for their interests (88.57%). They also prefer TS course as it offers the readers with bilingual/multilingual flavour (88.57%). Further, they read translated literary texts enthusiastically (85.71%). Therefore, they argue that students of B.Ed. should be encouraged to read TS course (91.42%). Most importantly, they favour translation as a good technique of teaching second/foreign language and promise in using this in their teaching career (85.71%). However, some of them (20%) disagreed translation as an important subject and 14.28% of subjects did not take translation as a useful tool in daily activity. Similarly, some of them showed neutral attitudes in responding translation texts rewarding (25.71%); whether their translation skill has been developed after completion of TS course (31.42%), dislike reading translated texts (25.71), and so on.

S. N.	Statements	Agree		Undecided		Disagree	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
1	I think translation is very important for everyone.	84	80	-	-	21	20

2	I find translating texts rewarding.	78	74.28	27	25.71	-	-
3	I believe that TS course enriches vocabulary in two/more languages.	99	94.28	-	-	6	5.71
4	Students of B. Ed. should be encouraged to read TS course.	96	91.42	9	8.57	-	-
5	I feel my translation skill has been developed after completing TS course of B. Ed.	60	57.14	33	31.42	12	11.42
6	I enjoy translating texts if I can choose the texts.	93	88.57	12	11.42	3	2.85
7	For me, translation is very useful in daily activity.	75	71.42	15	14.28	15	14.28
8	I prefer TS to other courses because it gives me bilingual/multilingual flavour.	93	88.57	9	8.57	6	5.71
9	I don't favour TS as it hampers in developing ELT skills.	33	31.42	33	31.42	39	37.14
10	I like TS because it gives glimpses of multicultural assets.	75	71.42	24	22.85	6	5.71
11	I usually translate academic, literary, and technical texts intralingually or interlingually.	63	60	30	28.57	12	11.42
12	I read translated texts (poems, stories, etc.) enthusiastically.	90	85.71	12	11.42	-	-
13	When I get access to the Internet, I read out translated texts if they are easy, interesting and informative.	81	77.14	24	22.85	-	-
14	I dislike reading translated texts and so I try to read original texts as far as possible.	27	25.71	18	17.14	60	51.14
15	Translation can be a	90	85.71	9	8.57	6	5.71

	good technique of teaching second/foreign language, so I will use it in my teaching career.					

Table 1 Subjects' Responses to the Questionnaire

These data (Table 1) imply that students have mixed attitudes towards TS course. The positive attitude (72.22% on average) is followed by neutral one (16.18% on average), and a negative one (11.40% on average). This holistic analysis confirms that students prefer, enjoy, believe, and favour TS course.

Similar results are observed in component-wise analysis and interpretation. At first, the cognitive component has been discussed. There were five statements in the questionnaire to cater for cognitive component and the subjects' responses were almost all positive (Figure 1). For the first statement, 80% agreed; 20% disagreed, but nobody showed the neutral attitude. It means most subjects thought that translation was very important for everyone. Likewise, 74.28% agreed; 25.71% were undecided, but nobody disagreed the second statement. It shows that some subjects could not decide whether translation texts were rewarding, albeit most of them reacted positively to the statement. The third statement was the one for which most subjects (94.28%) responded positively; only 5.71% reacted negatively. It shows that the TS course is highly beneficial for the enrichment and extension of vocabulary across languages. For the fourth statement, too, most subjects (92.42%) agreed that the TS course at B.Ed. was fruitful and so students should be encouraged to read it. Comparatively, fewer subjects (only 60%) agreed that their translation skill had been developed. It implies that they had acquired theoretical knowledge but had remained undecided towards their practical skills. As a whole, subjects were found having a positive cognitive attitude towards TS course (83.4% on average).
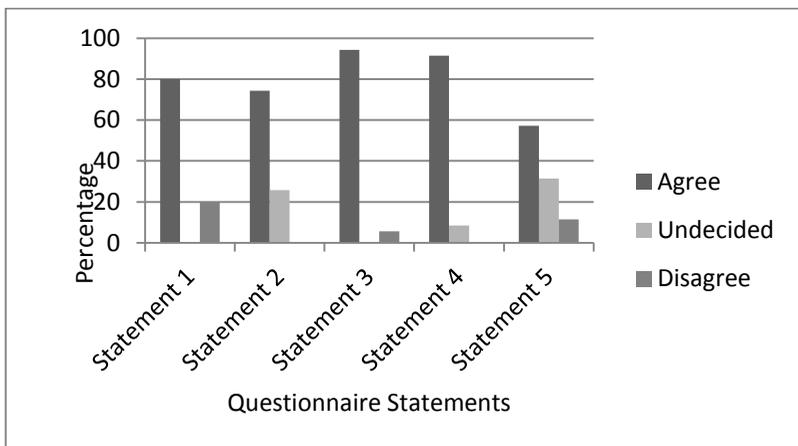
Figure 1 Cognitive Attitudes of the Subjects

As the responses to the cognitive component, the subjects showed a tendency towards the affective component, too. For the five statements, the subjects exhibited a positive attitude in general (Figure 2). They showed a strongly positive attitude to the 6th and the 8th statements (88.57% each). This proves that they favour translating texts of their choice. This data also confirms that they give preference to TS course since it gives them multilingual flavour. Therefore, students should be provided with the texts of their selection. Similarly, for the 7th and 10th statements, they have a positive attitude (75% each), which implies that translation is really useful in daily activity. TS course also enhances multilingual knowledge in the learners. They also agree that translation helps develop ELT skills (Statement 9). Despite this, they opined that translation hampers ELT skills (31.42%) and they seemed undecided to this statement (31.42%). This reveals that the subjects were not confirmed whether the translation is facilitative of enhancing ELT skills or not. Concisely, the subjects showed a favourable affective attitude towards TS course. However, the course

needs to focus on developing ELT skills and the texts should be student-friendly.
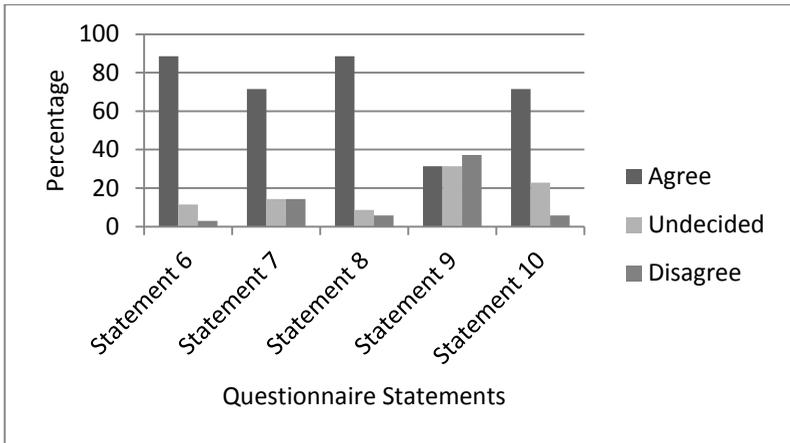
Figure 2 Affective Attitudes of the Subjects

The third component of attitude, i.e. behavioural, consisted of five statements as to give equal focus on all the three components of attitudes. The positive attitude was expressed by the subjects in general (Figure3). The 11th statement was agreed by 60%, disagreed by 11.42%, and neither agreed nor disagreed by 28.57%. It refers to the subjects' uncertainty about doing practical translation activities despite their theoretical knowledge. They equally agreed for the 12th and the 15th statements (85.71% each). It means they read translated literary texts delightfully. They also accept translation as an effective technique of teaching second/foreign language and they decide to use it in their teaching career. This justifies the implementation of communicative teaching approaches, which allow the judicious use of translation in second/foreign language classes (Harmer 2008a & 2008b). The subjects also showed interest in reading translated texts on the Internet if they are in the subjects' "comfort zone" (Neupane 2016: 88). This is revealed in the 13th statement. Finally, the subjects

disagreed the 14th statement. This implies that they have a more positive tendency (51.14) towards reading translated texts than in reading original ones (25.71%). Even for the behavioural component, the subjects expressed their positive tendency.
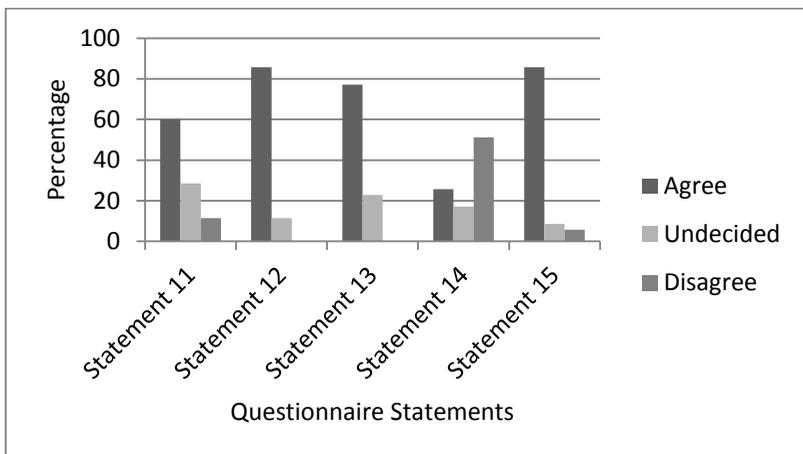
Figure 3 Behavioural Attitudes of the Subjects

In this way, out of the 15 statements, 13 were straightforward ones. Two of them (9th & 14th) were made tricky to cross-check the subjects' awareness in responding to the questionnaire. Even for these two statements, they responded positively, which shows that the students are positive towards TS course. These findings corroborate the conclusions drawn by Farooq and Shah (2008), Hanna (2009), and Bhargava and Pathy (2014). Thus, the students' positive attitudes towards the *Translation Studies* course entail the necessity of continuation of the course.

Conclusion and Implication

The study aimed to dig out students' attitudes towards TS course. The findings indicated that the subjects had positive attitudes toward the course. Three scales of attitudes, namely,

positive, neutral, and negative were envisaged in terms of three components like cognitive, affective, and behavioural. For all the three components, the subjects revealed their favourable tendency. This verifies students' positive attitudes towards the TS course.

The results of the study showed that the resources and materials for translation should be student-friendly, easy, interesting, and informative. Then, the students would prefer, enjoy, and favour reading translated texts from online and offline sources. TS course should be oriented towards enriching vocabulary stores across languages and enhancing multilingual/multicultural assets so that knowledge of the different languages conglomerate in the readers' minds. The results also verified that translation could be a good teaching technique for developing ELT skills. Therefore, TS course should make provision for the discussion of the judicious use of translation technique. It should also aim to develop learners' practical skills in translation of different types of texts. For this, even the practical examinations, on the regular basis, should be allocated for the students.

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Appendix A

Questionnaire for Students

Dear Students

The following is a survey questionnaire to explore students' attitudes towards *Translation Studies* (TS). There is no right or wrong answer to any question. Your responses will remain anonymous/confidential but be used only for research purposes. Please take time to read these questions carefully, select your response thoughtfully, and tick the option you choose cautiously.

Name:…………………………………....

Student Number: …………………………

S.N.	Statements	Agree	Undecided	Disagree
1	I think translation is very important for everyone.			
2	I find translating texts rewarding.			
3	I believe that TS course enriches vocabulary in two/more languages.			
4	Students of B. Ed. should be encouraged to read TS course.			
5	I feel my translation skill has been developed after completing TS course of B. Ed.			
6	I enjoy translating texts if I can choose the texts.			
7	For me, translation is very useful in daily activity.			
8	I prefer TS to other courses because it gives me bilingual/multilingual flavor.			
9	I don't favour TS as it hampers in developing ELT skills.			
10	I like TS because it gives glimpses of multicultural assets.			
11	I usually translate academic, literary, and technical texts intralingually or interlingually.			
12	I read translated texts (poems, stories, etc.) enthusiastically.			
13	When I get access to the Internet, I read out translated texts if they are easy, interesting and informative.			
14	I dislike reading translated texts			

	and so I try to read original texts as far as possible.			
15	Translation can be a good technique of teaching second/foreign language, so I will use it in my teaching career.			

Note: 1-5 Cognitive; 6-10 Affective; and 11-15 Behavioural.

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Translation and Translation Criticism: Probing a Reciprocal Interrelation

Viraj Desai

Abstract

In the contemporary times, the horizons of knowledge are no more confined to a singular language but encompass a variety of knowledge systems; existing in the form of different literature(s), languages, and the cultures represented through them. "Knowledge has become plural *now", notes A K Singh, and translation is increasingly perceived as an essential facilitator to access this multitude of knowledge(s). Translation, then, is shouldered with a two-fold responsibility of representing the source language/culture and of introducing new concepts and ideas to the target language readers. In that case, it becomes extremely important to explore and understand the crucial role played by Translation Criticism in the negotiations of literature(s), cultures, and ideas between two languages through translation. Going beyond the rather limiting ideas of evaluation and analysis, Translation Criticism attempts to discuss a translation essentially* as a *translation. Considering the above arguments, this paper sets out to explore the complex relationship of Translation, Translation Criticism, and the Translation Critic. Furthermore, it also attempts to fathom the ways in which Translation Criticism enriches translation by initiating a constructive discourse around it and vice versa. The paper also addresses various issues surrounding Translation Criticism especially in the context of Gujarati-English Translation. The last part of the paper consists of a holistic critique of a Gujarati short story in English translation. The short story selected for the critique is titled "Nā Kauṁs maaṁ, Nā Kauṁs Bahār" by Saroj Pathak and translated into English as "Neither Within Parantheses Nor Without" by Rita Kothari.*

Viraj Desai

Keywords: Translation Criticism, Translation Studies, Indian Literature in English Translation, Gujarati Literature in English Translation.

Introduction

In the twenty-first century, two extremely common yet juxtaposing views of translation have emerged: one is that of translation as an extremely casual and uncomplicated process that hardly requires any expertise and the other is of translation as an extremely crucial component in understanding the contemporary World; where culture(s), literature(s), belief systems and ideologies are travelling and conversing with each other rapidly; much more than at any point in the past.

The advent of online translation tools and other technological advances have created the perception of translation as a highly mechanical and uncomplicated process which can be carried out by anyone with knowledge of two languages, with the help of various online translation tools available. And thus, "the layman's view of translation is that it involves a simple process of linguistic transfer, whereby whatever is written in one language…can be transferred unproblematically into another language" (Bassnett: 02).

The spread of the first view, which is highly problematic, owes a lot to the fact that the scholarly discussions around translation have remained confined to a very small section of the academia. And the academia too was not attentive towards theorising translation as a discipline for a very long time. In translation, as in any other discipline, theory and practice go hand in hand. On one hand, where the practice of translation has been going on for hundreds of years in English and other European languages, the need to theorise translation and establish it as a discipline was not felt up until the late Twentieth century. In the Indian context, the practices of *Bhashanar, Rupantar* and *Anuvad*, which come closest to what

the West calls 'translation', have existed for centuries now. In India, translation acts as a point of contact between the speakers of different languages and hence becomes a necessity for surviving the multilingual culture of India. Thus, for Indian scholars, translation somehow became "an everyday affair, hardly worth theorising" (Kothari 2006: 38). And even though there have been various commentaries on translation in the Indian languages through centuries, "no homogeneous or even systematic translation theory has emerged from these academic notes on translation" (ibid.).

When there have been no or very little efforts made towards systematically theorising translation in a language, it can obviously not be expected to have developed a practice of critiquing translations from/into that language. For example, in the case of Gujarati, there seems to be a general apathy towards critiquing translations and especially towards the texts translated from Gujarati into English. The absence of this critical practice leads to two major problems. First is that of the unavailability of the critiques of translations resulting into very poor or inappropriate translations being accepted as good translations.

Here, it is to be noted that the practice of reviewing translations is very well established in Gujarati. However, in such reviews, "the critics' focus is entirely on the source text" (Soni: 155) (Translation Mine) and hence, very little attention is paid towards various aspects of translation- both as a process and a product. This problem is to be found across the reviewing practices in various Indian and European languages and something that Translation Criticism intends to address.

The second problem is that of the lack of importance or credit attributed to the translator. In order to encourage the practice of translation furthermore, there is a dire need to problematize

the role of the translator itself. Anisur Rahman calls translation "essentially an act of collaboration…with the translator playing the role of a prime collaborator" (52). Thus, the very practice of translation is centred on the translator who is constantly negotiating between not only two languages but also two cultures and literatures. It is the translator who carries the entirety of a text into an alien language and appropriates it in the linguistic, cultural, and literary realm of that language, all this while remaining loyal to the original text, its writer, and the source language.

Although being so crucial to the act of translation, translators are often neglected by both – the readers and the critics. A translation is rarely perceived as a product of the efforts of both – the author and the translator. Neglecting the collaborative nature of translation, the translator's name is seldom put next to the author's. In a scenario where the translator himself is so marginalised, the survival of the translation critic seems like a far-fetched dream. As the noted Gujarati translator/critic Raman Soni argues, "the translator will be less valued than the original writer and the critic criticizing that translation will be even less valued. In reality, we have imbibed such mentality" (155) (Translation Mine).

Thus, there is a rather urgent need to not only recognise the pivotal role of the translator in the process of translation but also to acknowledge the existence of a translation critic who is focused on producing comprehensive commentaries on translated texts by examining the act of translation from a holistic and objective point of view. The following parts of the paper would endeavor to discuss the issues surrounding Translation Criticism, especially in the context of Gujarati-English Translation and also present a specimen critique of a Gujarati short story in English translation.

Translation Criticism: A Few Perspectives

Before initiating a discussion around the nature of Translation Criticism, it is important to address seemingly similar terms such as *analysis*, *evaluation*, *assessment,* and *reviews* of translations. The common factor among all these concepts is the inherent tendency of judging translations and thereby assigning some kind of a value to it. What are often lacking in such concepts are an in-depth scrutiny of a translation and the various aspects of it. Translation Criticism, on the other hand, focuses on probing a translated text by focusing on the elements, contexts, and process of translation from an objective perspective in order to produce comprehensive critiques of translated texts. Translation Criticism aims to go beyond the binary of either "trashing a translator's work on the basis of isolated errors" (Baker & Saldanha: 237) or applauding a translation without any logical or substantial evidences in the text or judging a translation from a singular theoretical stance. It tends to strike a balance that can make the critiques of translation more holistic and credible. Apart from analyzing the translated text in the context of and in comparison with the source text, Translation Criticism should also aim at analyzing a translation as a text in its own right, fulfilling a certain purpose and performing a certain function in the target language, literature and culture at large.

One of the crucial roles that Translation Criticism plays is of providing comprehensive commentary about the nature and other aspects of translation which is scarcely available. While discussing the information available on translations, reviews of translations must be discussed. One of the major issues regarding the available reviews of translations is their indifference towards a translation as a *translation*. In Gujarati literature too, "the practice of examining translated works from the point of view of translation skills is rare", notes Sanjay

Shripad Bhave (164) (Translation Mine). The primary task of a reviewer is to recognise the status of a translation to which majority of the reviewers are indifferent.

Another issue with the reviews of translations is that, "most reviews in dailies or periodicals are commissioned, either by publishers of the books or by the publications which carry the review. Apart from the pressure on the reviewer to promote the book, there are problems of space" (Sheriff: 28). It is evident that the reviewers are not always indifferent to translations but are often bound by such external factors. However, even when a reviewer of translation is not indifferent to the process and nature of translation, the comments on translation generally tend to be negative and downgrading. Most of the times, there seems to be a lacuna of an objective criteria of evaluation or criticism employed by such reviewers and hence, the reviews end up being limited to generating value judgments. Another issue entailing the objective criticism of translation is the selection of the corpora for such reviews. Majority of the times such reviews are based on randomly selected paragraphs or phrases which may or may not represent the translation adequately. As Lance Hewson rightly points out, "scholars point to weaknesses in translated texts by using *ad-hoc* and unsystematic criteria which give limited insight into short passages of a text, but which hardly serve to understand the general impact of translational choices" (02).

There are various approaches and theories of Translation Criticism that deal with one or the other aspects of translation. However, "given the large number of variables that any process of translation needs to contend with, no general theory of translation that takes into account all problems of linguistic and cultural transfer of meaning can be evolved", argues E. V. Ramakrishnan (167). It is evident that the lack of a single framework or theoretical approach to Translation Criticism is

deeply rooted in the absence of a general theory of translation. Agreeing with Ramakrishnan, it can be argued that the entire proposition of propounding a general or single theory of translation seems a bit too ambitious and to an extent, impossible. The reason being that translation is not a singular phenomenon occurring in a void. Rather, it is dependent on a variety of factors such as language, literature, culture, society, history to name a few and has different participants attributing to its being at various levels such as an author, a translator, a reader, a reviewer, a translation critic, etc. Considering such a vast nature of translation, one single theory or framework of Translation Criticism that can deal with it seems impractical and even limiting. Each translated work, having its unique identity and characteristics, demands its own set of approaches of criticism pertaining to its peculiar aspects. There cannot be an ideal set of approaches to critique a particular translation. The set of approaches would depend on the criteria set in the critic's mind. For example, a cultural critique of a translation would obviously deal with a different set of approaches than those of a semantic critique. Whatever the tools and the criteria may be, it is extremely important for a critic to choose his/her set of approaches wisely as it not only lays a strong foundation to a critique but acts as a compass for a translation critic to navigate through the complex and intricate labyrinth of a translation, especially a literary translation.

Gujarati-English Translation and Translation Criticism: A Specimen

This section of the paper consists of a critique of the English translation of the short story titled "Nā kauṁs maaṁ, nā kauṁs bahār" by noted Gujarati short story writer, Saroj Pathak, translated by Rita Kothari as "Neither Within Parentheses Nor Without".

Before talking about the practice of Translation Criticism with reference to Gujarati-English translation, it is important to have a cursory look at some undercurrents of the contemporary translation practices in Gujarati. Gujarati has been enriched by a stupendous number of celebrated and key texts translated from English and the other European and Indian languages. However, this activity of translation has majorly been unidirectional, i.e. the number of texts translated from Gujarati into English is almost nonexistent in front of the number of texts that have come to Gujarati from English and other European languages via English. "The regret of this flow of translation being one-way would be there in our hearts. It is a reality that excellent works of Gujarati Literature have not reached other languages to the extent that they should have", opines Late Bhagwatikumar Sharma (02) (Translation Mine). However, not much has been done towards overcoming this regret or guilt. Undoubtedly, some of the greatest works of Gujarati literature are available in English translation today, such as Dhruv Bhatt's *Akūpār* translated by Vishal Bhadani, or K. M. Munshi's *PāTan ni Prabhutā, Gujarāt no Nāth and Rājādhirāj* translated by Rita Kothari and Abhijit Kothari, Joseph Macvan's *āngaliyāt* translated by Rita Kothari or Gowardhanram Tripathi's *Saraswatichandra* translated by Tridip Suhrud to just name a few among many other such works. However, even after such timely and much needed efforts, only a drop from the vast ocean of Gujarati literature has been able to reach English through translation. While it is indeed important to commend such efforts, keeping a check on the quality of such translations is equally important. As Himanshi Shelat has noted:

> We are generally apathetic towards studying and scrutinising translations. The inclination towards the same is very less. Resultantly, we often tend to accept

the amateur (translations) (Shelat 164) (Translation Mine).

Such apathy is further fuelled by the apprehension of not many translators coming up with Gujarati-English translations in future due to the fear of a strict scrutiny. However, Translation Criticism is pivotal to the survival of not only the practice of Gujarati-English translation but also to Gujarati language. For translations represent the source language and culture in another language and thus, it becomes extremely necessary to keep a check on such representations, especially in contemporary times when the number of English-Gujarati translations are significantly low in comparison to the vast pool of the works of Gujarati literature. And, with the possible increasing number of Gujarati-English translations in future, the role of Translation Criticism as a gatekeeper would become even more crucial in order to maintain a certain standard of quality in translation.

Coming back to the present critique, the first step of this critique shall be gathering and discussing all the primary and ancillary data about the text. The discussion of the primary data of a text is an important step as it clarifies the structure of the critique. Such a discussion of the primary data of both, the source and the target text, forms the first step of some coveted models/frameworks of Translation Criticism such as Lance Hewson's Model of Translation Criticism (2011) and Juliane House's Model of Translation Quality Assessment (1977, rev. 1997). In Hewson's model such primary survey and discussion is the first step of his six-step method of Translation Criticism whereas in House's model it constitutes certain parts of the 'Tenor' and the 'Mode'. Talking about the short-story under consideration, the source-text was first published in a collection of short-stories by Saroj Pathak titled *Virat Tapakuṁ*, published in 1966 by Sahitya Sangam, Surat. Saroj

Pathak (1929-1989) was an eminent post-modern short-story writer in Gujarati. The translation by Rita Kothari is published in a collection of Gujarati Short-Stories in English Translation titled, *Speech and Silence: Literary Journeys by Gujarati Women,* published in the year 2006. No other translation of the concerned short story has been published in any other language in the knowledge of the writer of this paper. Saroj Pathak was a celebrated novelist, short-story writer, and essayist of Gujarati Literature. Opining about Pathak's remarkability as a short-story writer, Rita Kothari opines that "Saroj Pathak experiments with the short story form and the possibilities of handling psychological complexity through it." (Kothari "Introduction", xiii) This characteristic style of Pathak's work comes across in the story under consideration in a brilliant manner. The story, although woven around a particular event, focuses more on the emotional and psychological universe of its protagonist, Shuchi. A significant portion of the story is written in a very conversational form of language and the other half is in the stream of consciousness. Thus, the treatment given to the subject in the story completely justifies the subject matter.

Talking about the narrative structure of the story, it is noteworthy that even though the majority of the narrative consists of conversational language in incomplete sentences, the overall structure of the narrative holds the subject very well. The translator, too, chooses to retain this rather conversational structure the narrative in order to bring the core of the original text in the translation. The story talks about Shuchi, a housewife living a happy and prosperous life with her husband and her four daughters. Shuchi comes across as a very loving and cheerful wife and mother, binding the entire household together with her love. Shuchi's husband, Divya, is used to hosting lots of guests every now and then, and Shuchi happily hosts all of them with a lot of enthusiasm on all

occasions. However, her enthusiasm is replaced by sheer anger as she discovers about the probable visit of her ex-lover. Majority of the story's focus is on depicting Shuchi's anger on the surface and an unconscious eagerness to see him who remains unnamed throughout the story. The story ends with depicting how the resentment of him not visiting Shuchi remains unrealised even by her. In most parts, the translation is a literal one with sentences or structures modified only to suit the English language best.

On analyzing the text, one of the first things that a critic may notice is the translator's decision to retain certain phrases in Gujarati/Hindi and not translate them. Colloquial words such as *chālo, pallu, pretbhojan, guvār, tamāśā*, etc. have been transliterated in the translation. Though these words help in retaining the authenticity of the translation; it can become difficult to read for the readers not acquainted with Gujarati/ Hindi. Such choices in translation are always debatable because they have both – pros and cons attached to them. However, a strong argument against such a decision can be that translation is essentially carried out for the readers who cannot read the original and such a choice can lead to a rather fragmented understanding of the text in translation. Though the translator's decision aids in retaining the cultural authenticity of the text, providing an explanation/ translation of such colloquial words in form of footnotes or in some other way would have contributed towards the effective transfer of meaning in translation. Following is another example of how the absence of the explanation of the transliterated colloquial words can hinder a non-native reader's comprehension of the text. For example, the following sentence:

> Oh! āvo rameshbhāī, ā jarā chākho to, sūraṇanuṁ rāītuṁ! Bāphelā sūraṇano chhūṁdo karīne… ne emāṁ mārā nāmanī rāī…śuṁ tame ne! māro dimāg…

This sentence has been translated as:

> Oh! Come along Rameshbhai, taste this, *Sooran nun Raitu*! You boil the *sooran* and mash it…a little rye…what, oh no please! My mind...

Colloquial words/concepts such as 'Sūraṇ' (a type of yam frequently used for cooking in India) and 'rāītuṁ' (a dish made of yogurt mixed with spices and vegetables) have not been explained. As a result, the reader gets digressed from understanding and appreciating the text completely. Another error of mistranslating a word becomes evident here where the Gujarati word 'rāī'; meaning 'mustard seeds', has been confused with 'rye' in translation which is a type of grain. Such negligence on the part of the translator completely distorts the meaning of the sentence.

The translation, however, succeeds to large extent in retaining the meanings and emotions conveyed not only through language but also by the structure of the narrative, especially the parts written in the stream of consciousness. One example can be the sentence stated below:

> Hāsya-ānand nī divālo māṁ taDa paDī. īṁT, chūno, dhūḷano kachro suṁdar sajāvelā beThakakhanDa māṁ khari kharine verāvā maānDyā.

It has been translated as:

> A crack in the wall of joy and laughter, Bricks, cement, dust spilled into the beautifully designed and decorated living room.

This sentence is very crucial to the story as the crack in the wall is symbolic of the turmoil created in Shuchi's mind upon knowing about her ex-lover's arrival. And the essence of the same has been beautifully captured in the translation. The

following paragraph further establishes the merit of the translation under consideration:

> Shuchi mahemāno ne ramūj mām̐ pret kahetī ane tene jamāDavānī vātanā ThaThārāne 'pretbhojan' eTale āvā mahemāno māTe banatum̐ khās bhojan kahetī. Pharī vātanā pravāhamām̐ jhukī javā taiyār thayelī Shuchi ne hāth vaDe khem̐chato hoy tem potānā taraf vāḷine Divya e kahyu:

This paragraph has been translated as:

> Shuchi jokingly referred to the guests as 'spirits', and the elaborate spread made for such guests was *Pretbhojan* in her words. Eager to merge with the stream of conversation once again, Shuchi was pulled back physically by Divya who told her:

These specimens stand as the testimony to the appropriate stylistic and vocabulary choices made by the translator in order to transfer the meaning of the text in an appropriate and befitting manner. However, the translator's decision of translating the word '*pret*' as 'spirits' and transliterating '*pretbhojan*' on the other hand, seems a little contradicting and puzzling.

In the end, it can be said that the translation by Rita Kothari conveys the meaning of the source text in the translation successfully to an extent. The overall impact of the source text gets adequately reflected in the translation as well. The translation successfully carries the meaning and emotions of the source text; mostly written in conversational language and fragmented or incomplete sentences. One outstanding instance establishing the merit of the translation is when the translator chooses to paraphrase a sentence in order to transfer the meaning properly rather than translating literally, which would have distorted the meaning completely in this case. The

sentence is "āṁbalīnāṁ peTanāṁ khāTāṁ chhe, kahī chho moṁ machkoDato". Had this sentence been literally translated, the meaning would have been entirely lost in the process of translation. Thus, the translation by the translator, "Let him make a face" seems appropriate. Though simplified, it comes across as a befitting translation in this case. Another fact worth mentioning is that there is only one translation available of the text under consideration. Hence, this translation can act as a reference point for other translators attempting to translate this text in future. The translators should keep both the merits and demerits of the translation and eventually come up with a more appropriate translation while attempting to translate the same text. For one of the most crucial aims of Translation Criticism should be to establish a reciprocal interrelation with the practice of translation that enriches both these practices simultaneously.

Conclusion

In spite of the difference in the approaches that the various models or theories of Translation Criticism take; what lies at the core of all these theories/models of Translation Criticism is the aim to provide critiques of translations based on a comprehensive interpretation and analysis of both the source text and the target text. Thus, Translation Criticism does not confine itself to passing binary judgments about a translation which is generally the case with translation reviews. Instead, it focuses on providing all-encompassing, detailed and rather objective critiques of translations. Availability of such trustworthy and enlightening critiques of translations can act as guidelines for other translators attempting translations of the same or some other work. It can also help preventing future translators from committing some common and obvious errors pertaining to a particular text which ultimately can result in the availability of better translations – the ultimate aim of

Translation Criticism. Hence, at the core of the Translation Criticism, lies the concern of the constant betterment of the translation and of the best possible transference of meaning from the source-text to the target-text. Translation is shouldered with the crucial responsibility of making not only a text but also an alien culture, language, and literature available to the readers. And Translation Criticism can play a pivotal role aiding the transference of the meaning of words and other extratextual elements such as culture, literature and language, disguised in the cloak of words.

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From Theory to Praxis: Film Theories Translated

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Abstract

The paper will explore the products and processes in intersemiotic transfers to start with. These instances in 'Transculturation' become interesting as they give rise to further theoretical debates. For example, one could raise another question as to whether the 'Feminist Film Theories' of the West could be applicable in the context of a different culture where textual translations happen from the verbal to the visual forms. For instance, one could test if the propositions espoused by the likes of Laura Mulvey (1975), Teresa de Lauretis (1987), and Kaja Silverman (1988) as under a feminist approach would be applicable while studying the trajectory of Indian movies. Intercultural translations being perhaps most prevalent and readily evident in the commercial films today, have numerous examples in Bollywood movies, art-house parallel movies, and the low-budget new Indian movies. The other category presents a blend of the two polarities, borrowing features of commercial and art-house films, yet, not strictly confined to either. The only thing common among them is making a text fit into another cultural context or any other culture. The facilitation of viewing a film text in any or many languages (on multiple platforms) has thrown up a new kind of challenge to those engaged in the intersemiotic transfer. We argue here that a discourse on intersemiotic translation has much to draw from feminist film theories. Translating a critical approach that originates in one culture and to let it gain entry into another culture is a challenge in praxis. In the process, we offer a few observations on how the degrading standards of commercial

Indian movies could change if we can implement some universally acceptable positions on gender equity.

Keywords: Intersemiotic Translation, Feminist Film Theory, Gender Equity, Transculturation.

1. Introduction

How disciplinary boundaries overlap and criss-cross is challenging to keep track of today. The purists and pundits engaged with translation as a process and product are stuck with ideas that created this inquiry field, whereas the broader field of Translation has taken a different course. In a recent essay titled 'Intersemiotic Translation as Resemiotisation: A Multimodal Perspective,' O'Halloran, Tan, and Wignell (2016: 119) made a fascinating comment about a niche area of translation today – 'Intersemiotic Translation' which is the focus of this paper. They write: "Today, Jakobson's (1959) definition of intersemiotic translation has been broadened to include translations across non-linguistic semiotic resources (e.g., Kourdis & Yoka, 2014). This development seems inevitable, given the proliferation of different forms of multimodal texts in today's digital environment, where semiotic resources (e.g., language, image and sound resources) "coexist, cooperate, and get translated" (Kourdis 2015: 311) on a regular basis." Both for students of film studies and intersemiotic translation, it is increasingly clear that the way contents and expressions get remodelled in the verbal to visual transfer, there is a lot to learn from these texts.

It is an undeniable fact that films are a popular source of entertainment in India because they "speak" to us in our language. In a vast country with a significant degree of illiteracy, visual texts fill the space of verbal and printed books available in other cultures. With the far-reaching and extensive scope of cinema, people do get affected by what they see on screen and the kind of expressions they hear. The speech forms

as well as the deviations from the standards become a norm for the impressionable. What spreads as a trend is not just the frozen expressions, semi-sentences or the syntax, but also the semantics. One generally tries to understand, after seeing a film, what exactly has been objectified or depicted. The visual texts do better commercially if a woman has been a matter of 'objectification.' The 'woman question' and objectification in novels have been a matter of debate in the 1970s when the gender treatment had not been balanced. The matter gets aggravated in the visual texts. If they are positive depictions, we find the protagonists or characters respected for their quality of mind and individualities. There had been negative depiction of women even in the western world and in the cinema emanating from there even though there had been many attempts to raise awareness. The discussions on gender issues world-wide, however, have not had much impact on Indian film-making. Whereas the anti-obscenity movements that gained momentum in 1970s against certain printed and published texts resulted in a general restraint later. While transferring texts into films, the distortions have surfaced again and again. Thus, the verbal and visual texts in the same socio-cultural contexts speak in different languages.

In this paper on 'Transculturation', we look into the ideas about gender imbalance as in the works of some critical feminist theoreticians to explore if the inevitable cultural clashes that happen when a target and a source culture confront each other give rise to a 'neoculturation' in the sense of Fernando Ortiz (1940/1995). There are two levels at which transculturation is in operation here. Ideally, a change in the 'outlook' and 'approach' should bring in a change in the mindset of authors of verbal and visual texts in a post-colonial set up that has received both technologies of transfer as well as methodologies of 'viewing' the 'Other'. However, the intersemiotic transfers in these cultural spaces do not reflect

the phenomenon of merging and converging cultures fully. Transculturation in the Indian space shows a transition from one kind of culture to another by acquiring only some traits of another culture by way of acculturation, while showing uprooting of an existing cultural tradition by way of partial deculturation. When films and visual texts from another culture have invaded our 'reading' or 'viewing' spaces (thanks to sub-titling and dubbing as well as plurilingual versions) unlike the earlier situation where one had to wait for a verbal text to be textually translated by a bilingual translator, one would expect a cultural hegemony through these processes. However, what has happened in the instances of intersemiotic transfers in making of Indian cinema has been very different.

In this context, a few important developments have been noticeable. The first among these is the rise of critical feminist film study in the works of the western theoreticians such as Laura Mulvey (1975), Teresa de Lauretis (1987), and Kaja Silverman (1988). The second aspect has to do with the methodology that could be adopted to study films as translations of texts through a feminist angle. The third possible viewpoint could be as to how the feminist film theories could be translated or brought into praxis in studying Indian movies. The emergence of Parallel Cinemas in India and how they attempted to transform our society by representing women with respect and regard offers a fourth point to look into. The fifth point is that the new Indian films that have taken up women's cause very seriously raise a lot of hope that ultimately perhaps the feminist theories about gender equity are getting translated into practice, although not in the mainstream movies. In the concluding thread, we also discuss how a few positive steps vis-à-vis making women-centric movies could ensure that theories and movements towards gender equality could be translated into action in the Indian context. In brief, the paper focuses on 'Translation' in two

ways: (i) It focuses on how translation of fiction into films get a kind of distortion that comes from a typical manipulation, and we are all aware of the stand 'Translation as Manipulation' (See Singh); and (ii) how - metaphorically speaking, theory to practice 'Translation' or 'Transmigration' suffers in cultural/ textual creativity.

2. Feminist Film Theories and Theorists of the West: Foregrounding the 'Woman' Question into Perspective and its Further Implementation

2.1. The Theories

In the context of 'Feminist Film Theory' as it evolved in the 1960s with the advent of second-wave feminism and with the arrival of Simone De Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1949), Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (1963), and Kate Millet's *Sexual Politics* (1970), many changes were observed in all kinds of cultural productions. These had had a serious impact on both approaches to fiction and films. We see new products and positions emerging from both 'American Sociological and Historical Theory' and the 'British Critical Theory.' Whereas many studies under the former analyse the role played by women in different narratives and genres and the screen time and space given to them, the latter problematized this issue in critiquing fictions and films. In that context, Marjorie Rosen's book *Popcorn Venus: Women, Movies, and the American Dream* (1973) talked about how many movies depict women as oppressed beings and also glorified this pattern of depiction. Similarly, in *From Reverence to Rape: The Treatment of Women in Movies* (1974), Molly Haskell studied if the representation of women in Hollywood during the '70s was realistic portrayals. Claire Johnston's essay *Women's Cinema as Counter Cinema* (1973) opined that films did not reflect women's reality at all. Instead, they gave rise to myths

constructed by a patriarchal society, structured for gratifying male desires. She remarked:

> As the cinema developed, the stereotyping of a man was increasingly interpreted as contravening the realization of the notion of 'character'; in the case of a woman, this was not the case; the dominant ideology presented her as eternal and unchanging, except for modifications in terms of fashion, etc. (Johnston 1973: 2).

Film theorists in England like Claire Johnston, Laura Mulvey, Pam Cook and Annette Kuhn drew perspectives from psychoanalysis, poststructuralism, semiotics and Marxism. Critical Theory was later referred to and absorbed into the American sphere as well. In her *Notes on Women's Cinema,* Claire Johnston (1973) focused on the tenet of iconography in cinema, examining how women were framed, glorified, and attired in movies solely to cater to male desires. In the fictions of 1960s and 1970s, such descriptions of women occupied some space in the verbal texts, too. However, the effect of a visual text was more impactful in comparison to their literary counter-parts.

Feminist film theory highlighted the following aspects: 'representation,' 'production,' 'spectatorship,' 'psyche' and 'body' where the methodology of representation questions how the director as auteur had placed women on the screen, the ratio of screen space given to men as compared to women, and whether the portrayals were realistic reflections of society. 'Representation' thus pointed out the sexism involved where patriarchal mentalities showed up women in an inferior light. Women were depicted as easily tameable alluring objects whose attitudes could be moulded according to the wishes of men. The concern with 'Production' reflected on how Feminist counter cinemas could be made more in number and could become more expansive. How such parallel texts reached out

to viewers through the 'Feminist Film Festivals' held in the US, Britain, and Canada in the early 1970s was a case I point in this regard. 'Spectatorship' focused on 'audience reception' and wanted to know the ideas viewers formed about the women characters when they watched movies. The concept of 'Psyche' was based on psychoanalytic theory, especially those propounded by Jacques Lacan and Sigmund Freud, where feminist film theorists sought to understand the role cinema played in constructing a viewer's sense of 'self,' about how they engaged with their sexual identities. As for their view on the last point, the feminist filmmakers discuss the 'Body', focusing on the indispensable connection between mind and body where the sense of touch is not just limited spatially to the screen, but it evokes an array of feelings and emotions in the viewers' minds as well.

In the 1980s, some film theoreticians extended this scope by focusing on 'class,' 'queer theory,' 'postcolonial theory' and 'critical race theory.' Feminist film theory then took a turn toward Cultural Studies in the 1990s where the realization dawned that sociological and psychological analyses weren't enough, but also the response and reception of the audience were essential. It was equally important to critically view the film texts in comparison with their source products, literary texts. The 'audience reception' was already included in pedagogy. Yet, it followed a two-pronged approach: (i) *text-oriented study-* focusing on the film's narrative, and (ii) *audience studies and reception theory-* focusing on the polysemy aspect of the movies.

2.2 The Theorists

Elisabeth Lenk, a German sociologist spoke out on how women have to "bear the brunt of the ideal beauty" (Ramanathan 2006:11) and the Art Historian David Summers pointed out the extent to which aesthetics is controlled mostly

by men, and women simply function as figures to be fetishized and obsessed about, by remarking, how,

> …our understanding of women and our understanding of art are in dialectical relation to one another that our idea of art positively excludes the idea of women at the same time that it is absolutely dependent upon the idea of women for its definition (Summers 1993: 253).

As a movie maker, Jonathan Schroeder noted, "Film has been called an instrument of the male gaze, producing representations of women, the good life, and sexual fantasy from a male point of view" (Schroeder 1998: 208), he stated how the gazer is considered as superior, and the gazed as inferior. In the book *Imaginary Signifier* (1982), in the chapter "The Passion for Perceiving" Cristian Metz said, "The practice of cinema is only possible through the perceptual passions: the desire to see (= scopic drive, scopophilia, voyeurism), which was alone engaged in the art of silent films…" (Metz 1982: 58).

Laura Mulvey, Teresa de Lauretis, and Kaja Silverman have pointed out this fact of representation of women in a subservient light. Mulvey and Silverman's work on Hollywood movies and Laurentius' on Hollywood and Italian movies have all resulted in the overall conclusion that women are indeed much underrepresented and are mainly projected as objects of male desires, and not as their subjects. The 'Male Gaze' remains a contentious topic in film studies. In her essay, *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema* (1975), Mulvey borrowed Freud's psychoanalysis to explain how men watch movies to gaze at female bodies and gratify their sexual desires, or what is otherwise called 'Scopophilia.' She drew examples from classic Hollywood movies of the 1950s and 1960s which exposed women to men as objects to be looked at to derive satisfaction. She listed the two instances of the male gaze that

underplay: the first being *voyeuristic* where the woman is only an image for viewing at, and the second is *fetishistic* where men gratify their sexual desires by gazing at women. Mulvey mentioned how "The cinema offers several possible pleasures. One is scopophilia" (Mulvey 1975: 10). She commented:

> The magic of Hollywood style at its best (and of all the cinema which fell within its sphere of influence) arose, not exclusively, but in one crucial aspect, from its skilled and satisfying manipulation of visual pleasure. Unchallenged mainstream film coded the erotic into the language of the dominant patriarchal order (Mulvey 1975: 9).

She underlined how women are the image and men are the bearer of the look and also brought to notice the fact that women are always bogged down with the task of being available objects of desire that hold "appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact" (Mulvey 1975: 10).

In her book *The Technology of Gender* (1987), Teresa de Lauretis pointed hegemony of the male gender over the female and how this notion has been incorporated in films as well, by drawing on Foucault's opinion on how the male gender is always inevitably seen in a higher position in hierarchy almost everywhere in societies and hence the assumption is automatically induced into media as well. De Lauretis reflected:

> Gender has the function (which defines it) of constituting concrete individuals as men and women. That shift is precisely where the reflection of gender to ideology can be seen, and seen to be an effect of the ideology of gender. The shift from "subjects" to "men and women" marks the conceptual distance between two orders of discourse, the discourse of philosophy or political theory and the discourse of "reality" (Lauretis 1987: 6).

Kaja Silverman, in her book *The Acoustic Mirror* (1988), brings to notice how women's voices and speeches are "unreliable, thwarted, or acquiescent" (Chaudhari 2009: 45). Often, we see women speaking in a submissive manner in a low or a feeble voice in comparison to men. Their views do not seem self-assured. The movies glorify scenes where women are crying, panting, or screaming, but rarely do they allow women to talk boldly.

3. Analysis: A Methodology for a Feminist Study of Films

What we observe is how the feminist film theorists have sternly expressed their disappointment with how the filmmakers depict women in a demeaning manner. They made it clear that one should analyse and establish if women's representation in the movies is positive or negative. Because people are prone to get hugely influenced and affected by what they see on screen, they should in no way form belittled ideas and notions about women in their minds. To take up women's causes is to consider human values and hence, the aforementioned Western Film Theories and Film Theorists' works have been discussed, in order to approach at study of the making of women-centric movies, and for that, the following points, which on being inferred from the postulations of the film theorists, could prove with compelling feminist insights, while researching any movie, and these are:

a. **Screen' Space and Time' allotted to Women Characters**- whether movies for the majority period centre around men, with women sidelined and are presented sporadically for entertainment or are the women characters equally valued as the men characters, where they both have equal rights to share the screen.
b. Representation of Women on Screen- whether they exist as the only addendum in the story that circles around men or are presented as individual entities.

c. Audience Reception- how people react to the way women are presented on screen. As cinema is an 'industry', it caters to the audience's wishes too, as their verdicts often affect the fortune of a movie. After all, all producers aim at money-making, where pleasing the consumer remains a critical criterion.

d. Inclusivity- a diversion from 'heteronormativity' to be more gender fluid, where the idea is to be non-conforming, non-binary, and to be inclusive of the third gender people. Forced heteronormativity imposes assertion of men over women and exalts 'Phallocentrism,' where the focus is about appeasing the male audience.

4. The Issue of Lack of Reality in Indian Movies and Translation of Texts into Visual Narrative that has Socio-Cultural Repercussions

A common criticism against the mainstream movies is that they do not show the real world. These films often deviate from the truth and project a fantasy world to the audience. They also carefully select dance sequences and songs to present actresses in skimpy clothes to show their bodies. In short, these movies engulf the viewer's mind by entertaining the person's visual and hearing senses, by situating women in a detrimental context.

If we need to test reality and pragmatism, we need to put the very own, popular Bollywood movies to the litmus test. By the term of Bollywood movies, we refer to the commercial Hindi language films made in Mumbai. Bollywood has been an extremely profitable industry in India, producing around eight hundred films every year. The audiences are not only Indians, but they also include viewers from South Asia, the Middle East, and East Europe. It becomes essential to study the representation of women in Bollywood movies, as they are

much responsible for the translated image they have outlined in the world about Indian women. A majority of the Bollywood films are not only unreal, but also abnormally shrewd in distorting the representation of women characters to make them look only as objects that exist solely for appeasing the senses of the male audience. Bollywood movies are very prone to represent women as dutiful daughters, lovers, wives, mothers, aunts, and grandmothers. Since women are often held as the repositories of culture and tradition, the burden of age-long patriarchal and misogynistic practices weigh on them, and movies glorify that. The idea of a modern woman comes only with the change in her attire, especially when she is in western clothes. But the moviemakers project a 'fixed' mentality of the women protagonists to give the message that they are the same women just like their mothers and grandmothers were, which is, they submit before male dominance, gleefully.

It is the responsibility of movie directors to make meaningful movies because the masses lack clear judgment or conscience and is willing to gulp thoughtlessly any available film, which they can watch easily for sheer entertainment. As long as the movies are visually captivating and colourful, and exhibit the tensions in the appealing storyline, they will watch anything that comes in movie theatres or on the internet. The audience will take these shallow movies seriously, and the most severe lesson they will learn is that women are just objects, and men should always control women. Indian filmmakers are not cautious about the negative influences their movies give out to society and its people. Instead, they have turned cinema into an industry and have also brought down the standards of storytelling. Thus, they have done injustice to the original idea that films can also be beautiful and meaningful, and an organ of socio-cultural change. That cinema's visual translation can influence people positively, and act as social reform is forgotten now.

In their work on Culture Industry, Adorno and Horkheimer (1944) projected their disapproval and concern about how films being a part of culture were bringing upon ruination in society. While the scholars were trying to bring to focus the extent of harm films were doing to the community, moviemakers, on the other hand, were reaping benefits because they knew that a majority of the common masses could not reason or argue. This trend continued from 1950s to 1990s when the authors or film-makers did not have to face a barrage of social media outburst as audience-reactions. As long as readers and audiences were captive in some ways, this cultural ruination continued. In the context of Bengali literature, the debasement that was brought in by a group of fiction writers led by Samaresh Basu proved this point. The debasement in Bengali poetry during this period was pointed out very aptly by Singh (2010) in a longish piece. These film-makers knew that despite formal education, the large group of movie watchers was ignorant and would not aim at refining themselves or their taste.

5. Parallel Cinemas in India and Attempts to Transculturation

In the Indian sphere, the Parallel Cinema Movement from the 1970s to the 1980s that made pragmatic movies had given a voice to women. Produced in different languages across different states of India, the movies differed from the typical commercial movies made in Bollywood where male-centrism was an overriding tenet. Many of these new breed of filmmakers sincerely believed in the validity of the critical feminist theories and how they should be implemented in our cultural contexts. Deriving inspiration from the *avant-garde* films, which paved the way for changes in the American film industry, and signalled the rise of Italian 'Neo-Realist Cinema', their choice of literary texts to render into films and

depiction of characters on celluloid deviated much from the mainstream commercial films. This move sent across a powerful message to the masses.

With a focusing on depicting women's issues, they meet the criteria of allotting screen 'space and time' to women characters, and represented women on screen in a positive and empowered light. For them, voicing women's concern was of seminal importance. They did show concern over what gets read and what is viewed by the audience, because for them, social and cultural harmony was important. In some ways, social reform was also their concern, rather than achieving monetary success. The commercial world, film producers, as well as publishers of fiction both would still want to see male-favouritism reflected in their products. Lastly, the parallel movies also deviated from assumed heteronormativity where power relations often came into play with the need to assert men's control over women.

In promoting powerful and parallel cinema, the NFDC (National Film Development Corporation) had a major role in being the chief funding agency for these low-cost idealistic moviemakers. It had helped around 300 productions in repertoire in both National[1] and Regional[2] spaces. Parallel moviemaking had a downturn in the 1980s where there was a slump in the production because of the scarcity of money with NFDC. Also as the colour television was introduced in 1982 and eventually film-making and television-productions began to be in sync, it made people get more attracted to colourful and entertaining media in the comfort of their home. The challenge intensified with the advent of the internet in India in 1995, whereby people wanted to see more of the western

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[1] National Movies are primarily the Bollywood movies.
[2] Regional Movies are the movies made across different states in India apart from the Bollywood industry.

world, and even movies from the Asian film industries. Of course, the satellite television opened up more western movies and soaps, which enthralled and entertained Indians.

With the onset of parallel movie making and its influences, many influential films came into production that depicted women's place in the Indian society. These include Shyam Benegal's *Ankur* (1975), *Nishant* (1975) and *Bhumika* (1977) from the National sphere, Satyajit Ray's *Aranyer Din Ratri* (1970) from Bengal, Adoor Gopalkrishnan's *Elippathayam* (1982) from Kerala and Girish Kasaravalli's *Ghatashraddha* (1977) from Karnataka. Many of them also depicted the changes that were coming with the empowerment of women.

Not to feel deterred, Parallel movies had their resurgence in the early 2000s in Mumbai, where a group called 'Mumbai Noir,' began making real-life movies pivoting around urban life stories of ordinary people in Mumbai. Few examples of such filmmakers include Nagesh Kukunoor[3], Manish Jha[4], Kalpana Lajmi[5], Madhur Bhandarkar[6], Sudhir Mishra, and Anant Balani.[7] Raj Kumar Gupta's *No One Killed Jessica* (2011), Milan Luthira's *Dirty Picture* (2011), Nishta Jain's *Gulaab Gang* (2014), Aniruddha Roy Chowdhury's *Pink* (2016), Nitesh Tiwari's *Dangal* (2016), Vikas Bhal's *Queen* (2014), or *Kahani* (2012) made by Sujoy Ghosh, and *Piku* (2015) by Shoojit Sircar also fall into this type. In all such instances of intersemiotic transfers, the source texts were often a series of newspaper and media texts that allowed the film-makers to access a story.

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[3] *3 Deewarein* (2003), *Dor* (2006) and *Lakshmi* (2014)

[4] Matrubhoomi (2004)

[5] *Rudaali* (1993), *Darmiyaan* (1997), *Daman* (2001) and *Chingaari* (2006)

[6] *Chandni Bar* (2001), *Satta* (2003), *Page 3* (2005), *Corporate* (2006), *Fashion* (2008) and *Heroine* (2012)

[7] *Chameli* (2003)

Soon thereafter came the Indian moviemakers who transcended globally and made feminist and women-oriented movies. One could mention here Deepa Mehta's trilogy of *Fire* (1996), *Earth* (1998), and *Water* (2005) and Meera Nair's *Monsoon Wedding* (2001) and *The Namesake* (2006). There are several regional film directors, too – such as Aparna Sen[8], Kaushik Ganguly[9] are Rituparno Ghosh[10] from Bengali film world, Aashiq Abu[11] and Martin Prakkat[12] from Kerala, Nag Ashwin[13] from Andhra Pradesh, Nelson Dilipkumar[14] from Tamil Nadu, Sameer Vidwan[15] from Maharashtra and Bhaskar Hazarika[16] from Assam whose choice of the literary source texts and their visual depiction changed the film audience tastes.

6. Concluding Thread: Borrowing Translation to Reach at Possible Solutions

An intersemiotic translator faces two challenges at the same time. One is in the choice of literary texts to base the film on depending on how realistic they were. The other is in the process of transculturaion, or in translating cultural theories in general, and feminist film theories in particular into practice while making a cultural product. They are to be aware that great literary texts are those that reverberate in the minds of their readers. It is often the case that they feel as if these texts were their own life-stories. How truly these texts could be taken into a resulting visual texts is the challenge. The need to

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[8] Paromitar Ek Din (2000), Iti Mrinalini (2010) and Goynar Baksho (2013).
[9] Kaalbela (2009) and Shunyo Awonko (2013)
[10] Chokher Bali (2003)
[11] 22 Female Kottayam (2012)
[12] *Charlie* (2015)
[13] *Mahanati* (2015)
[14] Kolavamu Kokila (2018)
[15] Anandi Gopal (2019)
[16] *Kothanodi* (2015)

ensure that visual narratives of the cinematic text have a positive socio-cultural influence on viewers' mind, irrespective of their gender or class affiliations, is important. Today, when many in the other culture take up the case of equity and egalitarianism, so much so that there were interesting and empathetic depiction of the third gender and the cultural and political minorities in societies, there was no reason why the Indian authors of verbal and visual texts would remained caged in an outdated mode of cultural production.

Laura Mulvey urged for an alternative and didactic course to movie making that would allow building a story around women and situate women in her social context. The idea was to dismantle traditional movie making, which prioritized men and men's desires. She further advocated for the complete rejection of mainstream cinema and the sexist pleasure they offered by building on a fantasy. However, many feminists did not agree that it would be a feasible option since people were still hugely attracted to the popular commercial movies, film stars and big production banners. Because of the market-forces, a total dismantling of popular commercial films would neither be possible nor useful. There had to be a compromise because the audiences were, after all, the 'consumers' in the end. A mere polemical technique without the power of story-telling technique in movie-making would not receive their attention. It has been rightly observed by many scholars, such as Soumya Nandakumar (2011) that the mainstream commercial Hindi film upheld the traditional patriarchal views of society which was always fearful of female sexuality. In these films, we find glorification of the image of ideal Indian woman. They must accept injustice and violence meted out towards them by men-folk and social institutions. Thus, violence against women has always been one of the standard components of the Hindi commercial formula cinema (Dasgupta & Hegde 1988).

However, the rise of feminist media studies has paved the way for feminist film making and parallel cinema movement. We do see an increase in the number of feminist movie directors these days. Even though popular commercial movies are still the ones that keep entertaining audiences and generate a lot of revenue and profit, the important contribution of feminist movie directors cannot be denied. With the emergence of a large number of female fiction-writers, or writers with conscious attempts to foreground the cause and condition of women, these texts are also getting into film versions with great success. As Srijita Sarkar (2012) of the University of Loiseville argues, with the growth of number of women-centred movies in India, more and more spectators are becoming aware of the socio-cultural, economic, and political stances of women in society. In many societies, women still occupy a lower position in the social hierarchy in comparison to men. However, the trend of depiction of strong women protagonists acts as triggers to revolutionary changes bringing in a positive influence on the viewers.

In recent times in India, what is interesting to note is the gradual blending of the Art House or Parallel Cinema and Commercial Cinema since mid-2000. We note that this new set of films captivates more audiences. Along with imparting messages on social reform, they also have the capability of entertaining the audience through songs, dance, and choreography sequences. Many Art House movies appear to be strict and boring to most viewers as they fail when it comes to popular entertainment, and Commercial films are shallow and deceptive, as they mistreat women and underrepresent them.

By proposing unique ideas with reformist goals that challenge patriarchy and male-centrism, the feminist movie directors did find initially that their movies were unwelcome as they were humanistic in the way they liked to depict women. But as

director and actor Aparna Sen opined, "Women's issues are to be part and parcel of humanism itself- something that I believe in and try my best to live by" (Kabir 2008: 3). The underrepresentation or misrepresentation of women in cinema makes it important to take up women's causes and give space to them in movies. Unlike mainstream commercial films that undermine women and send a wrong signal to the masses about how women should be treated, these film-makers have ensured that their cinema is not only entertainment, but must make the audience think about the reality and move away from an unreal world.

The changes in attitude will come only from cultural movements in societies. 'Make Meaningful Movies', or 'Triple-M' could be a joint effort made by the Movie Makers, including actors, directors, story-writers, and screen-playwrights as a gender-sensitive authors, just as any other popular move such as @*MeToo*. Since most production houses dealing with films and television products aim at earning huge profits, the move could serve as a social force to prompt them into thinking constructively about sending a message across society and people. On their part, the government of the day could invite them to take up joint projects, or fund proper act of intersemiotic transfers just as NFDC had once done – which is where the role of state-funded organizations could come across as a great impetus. The alternate, non-commercial movies made by students, faculty and newcomers should receive great support through a planned move.[17] Conducting more International and Regional Film Festivals where the movies often deal with Women's Issues is another way to bring in change.

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[17] The FTII (Film and Television Institute of India), Pune, and SRFTI (Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute), Kolkata could take the lead in this direction with government patronage as part of their advocacy.

There have been numerous instances of intersemiotic transfers in India in the recent times that paid adequate attention to the gender balance. The following translations into film that pay attention to women's issue is only a brief list:

a. 'Paar' (The Crossing) (1984), Director- Goutam Ghose **---** based on Samaresh Basu's short story 'Paari' (Journey)

b. 'Nagamandala' (Serpent Ritual) (1997), Director- T. S. Nagabharana **---** based on Girish Karnad's 1988 play by the same name

c. 'Rudaali' (1993), Director- Kalpana Lajmi **---** based on Mahasweta Devi's short story 'Rudali' (1993)

d. 'Bhalo Theko' (Take Care) (2003), Director **---** Goutam Halder - based on Leena Gangopadhyay's story Janmadin (Birthday) (2003)

e. 'Goynar Baksho' (The Jewellery Box) (2013), Director- Aparna Sen **---** based on Shirshendu Mukhopadhyay's short story 'Rashmonir Sonadana' (Rashmoni's Gold)

f. 'Aami Doghi' (The both of us) (2018), Director- Pratima Joshi **-** based on Gauri Deshpande's short story 'Paus Ala Motha'

g. 'Umrao Jaan Ada', perhaps the first Urdu novel by Mirza Hadi Ruswa, published in 1899, depicting the life and story of a courtesan and poet by the same name from 19th century Lucknow, made into a film by Muzaffar Ali in 1981. There were four films made on the same novel, showing the popularity of the text.

h. 'Parineeta', a 1914-Bangla novel by Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay, made into seven different films in several Indian languages – a 2005-film in Hindi by Pradeep Sarkar, which had been a commercial success. But with the same name, it appeared as a film text in 1942 made by Pashupati Chatterjee, re-made by Bimal Roy in 1953 and by Alamgir Kabir in 1986. Parineeta in Bangla appeared in visual text

directed by Ajay Kar in 1969, and in Tamil – Manamalai (1958) made by Narayana Rao.

If one adds Tagore's fictions such as 'Chokher Bali' (1903) or 'Ghare Baire' (1916) or 'Gora' (1910) and numerous short fictions such as 'Kshudhita Pashan' (1895) made by Tapan Sinha in 1960 or 'Nashtanir' (1901) – made into Charulata (1964) by Satyajit Ray, the list will seem endless. Similarly, there were also regional films that highlighted the social problems with patriarchy, as in 'Ara Nazhika Neram' (Half an Hour Only), Kerala Sahitya Academy award winning Malayalam novel by Parappurath in 1967, made into a powerful film by K. S. Sethumadhavan in 1970. The story focused on an orthodox Christian family from Travancore - headed by Kunjenachan, an old patriarch in his 90s who lived his life in his own terms. Many other current social issues also came up through many other films such as 'Chemmeen' – a Malayalam novel by Thakazhi Sivasankara Pillai in 1956, made into a film, adapted into a screenplay by S. L. Puram Sadanandan and directed by Ramu Kariat in 1965. The film raises the issue of female sexuality and chastity and tells the story of the relationship between Karuthamma, the daughter of a Hindu fisherman, and Pareekutti, the son of a Muslim wholesaler of fishes in the coastal Kerala region. The depiction of the lives of fishermen by Thakazhi was captured with great emotional detail in the film.

It is clear that changes in the mindset about sourcing appropriate stories to translate into visual texts had also set in early on in the post-70s period. It is true that after the focus has shifted from a mere economic development to human development, gender parity in several areas could be seen. That included equal rights to vote or equal access to education, or right to parental property etc. However, one cannot anymore pretend not to know that in terms of a World Bank estimate -

"in no region of the developing world are women equal to men in legal, social and economic rights" (World Bank 2001: 1). The issue is not if the translated visual texts paint an unreal universe, as many commercial film-makers re-emphasize that they drew their stories from the real life. However, as Nudrat Raza (2015: 74-75) argues: "Portrayals of men changed with time, adapting to the development discourses". However, women are still, with a few exceptions, portrayed through the nationalist project view. It can then be said that the contradiction between the portrayal of women, and the women's empowerment development discourse is, on a broader level, a contradiction between the development approach of women empowerment and Indian state's version of the 'ideal Indian woman'. Although many regional films are very positive, and address these issues well, but people from other parts of the country could hardly get to see them, as many of them had been rarely dubbed in other Indian languages. The discussion on these regional movies is therefore limited to their linguistic boundaries.

What we see is a definite turn towards gender equity as women's issues are taken up by many directors now, both male and female movie-makers. Even though popular and stereotypical films are those where women are still commodified, the new generation films are changing the perspective. As more women-centric films emerge, the viewers become more aware of women's issues.

In the Indian context, in order to make more women-centric movies, what are to be kept in mind are the aforementioned parameters of:

a. Changes in the screen space and time allotted to female characters.
b. Representation of women with voices and opinions on screen.

c. Audience reception and turn against objectification and commodification, and

d. Inclusivity, to encourage representation of people from the third gender community, or LGBT community.

With the above, the negative representation of women in commercial Indian films could be curbed. But it is equally important for film-makers to look for appropriate literary texts that are well-received in society and are not gender-biased. These cannot be imposed from the top as the stricter censor rules in screening and filtering of media images could end up in protracted legal fight and politicisation of the issues. The themes such as women's liberation may not be to the taste of such official watchdogs. They might rather let go the media files that devalue women. The problem was with the small screen releases; as such debasements could enter into television screening and reach family viewing spaces. In this way, the cultural value-system will take a beating. Otherwise, filmmakers will keep making misogynistic art products as they know it will be the easiest way to capture the market. Some may appear to be progressive and egalitarian, but deep down they may still want to keep up with their idea that only men should rule the world. Hence, for women's emancipation to come to fruition, the effort should be made by the powers that would include the movie industry leaders and the alert masses. In that context, a greater number of successful intersemiotic translations would perhaps have a lasting impact.

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Cite this Work:

Cultural Issues in the English Translation of Satish Alekar's Play *Mahanirvan*

PRASHANT MANNIKAR

Abstract

The translation is essentially a cultural activity. The instrument of translation is language and a language can't be dissociated from its culture. The inter-language translation poses various challenges to a translator especially when it is a literary translation. The chief among these is locating cultural equivalence in the target language. Another significant challenge is to select a proper approach to translation, that is, translation strategies. The present paper attempts a critical assessment of the English translation of Satish Alekar's trendsetting play Mahanirvan (1974) (The Dread Departure) in terms of the cultural issues in translation. For this purpose, the concepts in Translation Studies such as equivalence, literal and liberal translation, domestication, and foreignization have been critically used as these terms essentially focus on the cultural dimensions of the translation process. The focus of the article, however, is on the experiences of a reader of reading the text in its source language, that is, Marathi, and its target language, that is, English.

Keywords: Language, Culture, Translation, Equivalence, Domestication, Foreignization.

Introduction

The basic insights and the concepts in the Translation Studies are concerned with the nature, process, and function of translation. Since the subject matter of the present article is a literary translation, the concepts related to the literary translation have been taken into consideration to study the translation process in light of the relevant concepts. The literary translation differs from non-literary translations in

many ways. A literary work of art contains a heavy load of cultural ethos. There is much implicit, more unsaid than explicitly said, in a literary work, and hence a reader has to read in between the lines. Moreover, a play having visual dimensions and performative idioms requires multiple perspectives for its appreciation. Since a literary work of art is essentially culture-specific and the languages are not equipped with compatible equivalences or substitutes, the translator has to face various challenges in transferring the text from a source language to the target language. He has to serve the two masters – the ST author and the TT recipient. This dichotomy has resulted in the debate over the nature, process, and function of the translation activity since Cicero of the Roman antiquity to the present and this date offers no conclusive solution to the issues in translation. Mary Snell-Hornby in this regard poignantly notes, "and what is not yet adequately recognized is how translation (studies) could help us communicate better – a deficit that sometimes has disastrous results" (2006: 166). The translation is essentially a cultural activity. Language can't be dissociated from its culture. The interlanguage translation poses various challenges to a translator. The chief challenge is finding cultural equivalence in target language for the expressions in the source language. The culture-specific expressions from the Marathi play *Mahanirvan* (1974) by Satish Alekar have been sorted out and compared with the equivalences in the English text. The English text *The Dread Departure* has been rendered by the noted Marathi and English author Gauri Deshpande. The researcher owes reverence to the translator for the painstaking effort of translating a literary text heavily loaded with a cultural ethos and by no means carries an authority to find faults with the text. However, a close reading of the original text in Marathi and its English version tossed up certain issues that prompted the researcher to carry out a comparative study

of the two texts. The focus of the paper is on critical engagement with the central issues in inter-lingual translations related to the cultural aspects and the aesthetic taste of the texts both in the source language and in the target language. The paper is structured into three sections. The section I takes a historical survey of the emergence of Translation Studies as a discipline and explicates the concepts and strategies related to Translation Studies. Section II carries out a comparative study of the source language (Marathi) and target language (English) texts of Satish Alekar's play *Mahanirvan.* Section III puts the researcher's experiences as a reader of the SL and the TL texts.

I

Translation as an activity and a process has a long-standing history dating back to ancient times. The texts of the classic languages like Sanskrit, Greek, Roman/Latin, and Hebrew, just to name indicative few continued to be translated into the contemporary vernacular languages for the benefit of the masses. But the Translation Studies as a discipline consciously emerged during the latter half of the 20th century. Mary Snell-Hornby (2006) in her scholarly work the *Turns of Translation Studies: New Paradigms or Shifting viewpoints,* has sketched the historical development of Translation Studies as an independent discipline. In this work, she points out that 'many basic insights and concepts in Translation Studies today go back to the German Romantic Age, which forms our historical starting point' (16). The process of translation hinges on the dichotomy between the Source Language author and the Target Language reader and the discourse of the Translation Studies revolves around addressing the issues emanating from this dichotomy. Werner Koller defines translation in the following words:

> From a linguistic and text-theoretical perspective, translation can be understood as the result of a text-

> processing activity, by means of which a source-language text is transported into a target-language text (1995: 196).

The first and foremost of the issues in translation is that of 'fidelity' or 'loyalty'. Whether the translator should keep his/her fidelity to the SL author or should he serve the TT recipient? This basic insight and practical concern have initiated discussions on the procedures of Translation Studies. Munday (2008: 19) has succinctly put the contentions of Cicero that have cleft the translation discourse in two halves:

> Very early in the history of translation, the dichotomy of obligations (ST-oriented) and desires (TT-oriented) of translators led to the discussion of literal vs. free translation that has split the world of translation theory ever since (quoted in Fassbender 2009).

This debate got a theoretical framework during the German Romantic Age. The German authors and scholars have made a remarkable contribution toward the framing of Translation Studies as an independent discipline. Friedrich Schleiermacher in 1813 was arguing about not having 'a theory of translation that is based on solid foundations, that is logically developed and completely worked out,' and emphasizing on 'and yet, just as there is a field of scholarship called Archaeology, there must also be a discipline of Translation Studies' (quoted in Mary Snell-Hornby: 2006). The basic contentions of Goethe and Schleiermacher provided the necessary framework for the rise of Translation Studies. Goethe's two maxims in translation opened up the discourse on the multilevel relationships in the players of translation – the author, the translator, and the reader. Lefevere puts the argument of Goethe in the following words:

> There are two maxims in translation: one requires that the author of a foreign nation be brought across us in

such a way that we can look on him as ours; the other requires that we should go across to what is foreign and adapt ourselves to its conditions, its use of language, its peculiarities (39).

The two maxims theory of Goethe serves as the base for Venuti's (1995) much discussed and debated distinction between 'domestication' and 'foreignization'. Yet another potent source for this distinction and the ensuing debate is Friedrich Schleiermacher's observation of the translation procedure. Like Goethe's two maxims, Schleiermacher came with the two roads open to the translator:

> In my opinion, there are only two. Either the translator leaves the author in peace, as much as possible, and moves the reader towards him; or he leaves the reader in peace, as much as possible, and moves the author towards him (Lefevere 1977: 74).

The debate that continues without a conclusive statement is whether a translator should 'move a reader to the SL author' or 'move SL author to the (TL) reader'. Lawrence Venuti (1995) codified this fundamental dichotomy in the translation process as 'domestication' and 'Foreignisation' strategies. 'Foreignisation' promotes keeping the culture-specific expressions of the SL text intact in the TL text whereas 'domestication' emphasizes naturalizing or neutralizing the culture-specific expressions in the SL text by replacing them with the expressions of the TL cultural terminologies. 'Foreignisation' makes a translator maintain fidelity to the SL author and to take the reader abroad; 'domestication' offers him loyalty to the TL reader and to take the author to the reader. If Schleiermacher (1813) preferred 'moving the reader to the author', Jakob Grimm (1847) was advocating the need for 'moving author to the reader.' He maintained that 'no longer must the target language be bent to do justice to the source

text, now the translator must accept that in the world of target language 'another breeze is blowing' (quoted in Mary Snell-Hornby: 30). And before Grimm, A. W. Schlegel (1798) was categorically asserting that 'We look on foreign author as a stranger in our company, who has to dress and behave according to our customs, if he desires to please' (Lefevere: 50). The modern-day companion of Grimm and Schlegel, Eugene A. Nida advocated 'moving author to the reader'. In his article 'Principles of Correspondence', Nida (2000) observes:

> Since no two languages are identical, either in the meanings given to corresponding symbols or in the ways in which such symbols are arranged in phrases and sentences, it stands to reason that there can be no absolute correspondence between languages. Hence, there can be no fully exact translations. The total impact of a translation may be reasonably close to the original, but there can be no identity in detail (126).

The argument of Eugene Nida empowers a translator in creating a new text close to the original but may not be identical in detail with it. For exacting translation, a translator has to work with the equivalences – the substitute signs for the source language. The substitution in the target language can never be similar to the source language but must have near equivalence as put aptly by Constance B. West, 'not with the same money but the same sum'. Nida puts forward two types of equivalences – formal or literal and dynamic or functional. The formal equivalence would retain the foreign elements in the SL text in the TL text, whereas the dynamic equivalence would substitute the culture-specific elements of the SL text with culture-specific expressions in the target language. He duly accords the role played by culture in the act of translation by admitting that differences between cultures may cause more severe complications for the translator than do differences in

language structure. He described language as an integral part of a culture, words being symbols of cultural phenomena:

> Translating consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source language, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style (Nida & Taber 1969: 12).

Languages are steeped into the cultures from which they emerge. The relationship between language and culture is reciprocal. Languages are never sufficiently similar to express the same realities 'reality cannot be assumed to exist independently of language. The distinguished critic Lotman rightly figures out that no language can exist unless it is steeped in the context of culture; and no culture can exist which does not have at its center, the structure of natural language. While Mona Baker points out that 'Languages are never sufficiently similar to express the same realities,' and that 'reality cannot be assumed to exist independently of language' (8). Elaborating on the inextricable relationship between language and culture, Susan Bassnett poignantly asserts, 'Language is the heart within the body of culture' (13). Bassnett further warns, 'the translator must tackle the SL text in such a way that the TL version will correspond to the SL version. To attempt to impose the value system of the SL culture onto the TL culture is dangerous ground' (23). While keeping the translation strategies as the points of reference, the article attempts a comparative close reading of the Marathi and English texts of Satish Alekar's play *Mahanirvan*.

II

Satish Alekar belongs to the second generation of Marathi playwrights after the modernization of the Marathi theatre by the renowned playwright Vijay Tendulkar. The veteran playwright Vijay Tendulkar (1928-2008) played a phenomenal role in the shaping of modern Marathi theatre and also

attributing it to Pan-Indian and Inter-national recognition. The Tendulkar phase proved to be an epoch-making event in the Marathi theatre. Tendulkar freed the Marathi theatre from the taboos and inhibitions both of the content and the form. He paved the path for the playwrights and theatre artists of the succeeding generations. Satish Alekar further experimented with the Marathi theatre in terms of subject matter and the stage performance. His play *Mahanirvan* first performed on 22 November 1974 took the Marathi audience and critics by storm with its subject matter and exquisite theatricalities. The subject matter of the play *Mahanirvan* is death and the rituals and rites that follow it. Death and the rituals related to it are sanctimonious on one hand and serious and of grave concern on the other. This entire affair in human life is tragic, woeful, and grave in nature. This could rarely be a matter of theatrical representation. Alekar chose and handled this taboo subject with genuine dramatic deftness. He disrobed the death rites and rituals from its serious and grave demeanor and brought the humour and laughter out of them through his characteristic slant view to look at the things around him.

The play *Mahanirvan* enacts the story of death and its aftermath of Bhaurao, an ordinary resident of Chwal in Pune city. The Chwal is a characteristic residence of Pune and Mumbai cities like today's apartments. But the Chwal differs from the modern-day apartments in terms of individual privacy. The residents of a Chwal usually belonged to the lower and lower middle classes. They shared many common amenities. They had a strong bond of relationships. The public and private affairs of the homes used to have a very thin line of demarcation. The Marathi literature of the 1950s onwards fruitfully used the Chwal and its residents as the subject matter. Especially P. L. Deshpande and V. P. Kale resourcefully exploited the locations and relationships in and around Chwals in Pune and Mumbai. Alekar uses this locale

and its people as the subject of his play. Another significant aspect of the play is also related to the cultural dimensions of Pune city. There are a large number of temples in Pune city. *Kirtan* was and is a popular form of entertainment for the public. The *Kirtan* takes up a devotional subject for its narration. But it could be conveniently exploited for the explication of any subject or topic. The *Kirtan* could run into theatrical performances by the narrator and his aides that would include songs, allusions, metaphors, similes, pun, humour, hyperbole, anecdotes, and digressions, and so on. This form serves the purpose of dissemination of ideas as well as the correction of social follies through criticism of the ills of the society. A *Kirtan* may begin with a moral from the devotional writings and dive into the contemporary issues of the social, moral, religious, and political life of contemporary society. Alekar deftly used the *Kirtan* mode as the narrative technique for the play *Mahanirvan*. The twin aspects, the death rites, and rituals and the *Kirtan* mode of narration/action are essentially culture-specific. This poses a significant challenge to a translator translating into another language. If it is English then the translation task is quite tough as there is hardly any equivalence in the cultural practices either of the subject matter or the narrative treatment.

Alekar's play *Mahanirvan* is woven around the death of Bhaurao, a middle-aged ordinary resident of a Chwal. The play opens with the death of Bhaurao and proceeds with the post-death rites and rituals. The other important characters in the play are Rama, Bhaurao's wife, and Nana, their only son. Apart from these, there are neighbors of Bhaurao referred to as 'Chwalkari' in the play. The play enacts the preparations for the funeral procession of Bhaurao, the cremation, and the rites after the cremation with many accidental digressions that take place in the course of the play. The mood of the play is to produce tongue-in-cheek humour out of a grave subject. It is a

scathing criticism of some of the awkward rites practiced in the Hindu faith. The play may be treated as a comedy with black humour. It heavily uses the rich resources of the local and cultural expressions to add to the hilarious mood of the play. The *Kirtan* form of narration incorporates at a large scale the devotional songs and expressions. These aspects of the play put heavy challenges on a translator.

Satish Alekar denies any overt message intended in his plays. He conceives plays in strict relations with its medium, that is, its performance worthiness. Alekar shuns away from any didactic messaging through his plays. So any attempt of straining down some message from his plays, especially from *Mahanirvan* would be a gross mistake and an injustice to the play as well. Like a classical satirist, Alekar lay bares the dichotomies and pretentiousness in human transactions. His plays like *Micky and the Memsahib* (1973), *Mahapoor* (1975), *Begum Barve* (1979), and *Atireki* (1979) stand testimony to this aspect of Alekar's worldview. The play *Mahanirvan* epitomizes this worldview of Alekar. Hence, the translation of *Mahanirvan* in terms of the nature of the message and the purpose of the author stands no water. The third factor, the type of audience for whom the text might be translated, matters significantly. The play is translated into English obviously for the non-Marathi audience. Now, this readership could be either pan-Indian or it may accommodate the pan-Universal readership. Assuming that the reader or viewers of *Mahanirvan* get the least chance to read or watch its performance in the source language, that is, Marathi, the translation has been excellently and meticulously transacted. But for a reader from a Marathi speaking world, the English translation of the play poses certain issues in terms of the transaction of the cultural load of the text as it is communicated in the source language. Of course, this is not the problem of the translator. Rather, it is the problem of

finding cultural equivalences that are rarely available for translation.

The first point of departure in the English translation of the play begins with the title of the play. The word *Mahanirvan* in the Indian context has deeply religious, social, and cultural overtones. *Nirvan*a in general parlance evokes a place of perfect peace and happiness. It is synonymous with *moksha* - salvation. In Hinduism and Buddhism, nirvana refers to the highest state of a being, a state of enlightenment consciously and rigorously achieved through practicing detachment and willful shunning away from all kinds of attachments either of the body or mind, matter or spirit. The suffix *Maha* refers to something great in status or stature. *Mahanirvan* evokes the willing departure of someone like a great yogi or karmayogi from the day to day commerce of life. Such a person transcends himself from the mundane busy world of desires and wishes and attains perfect bliss like the Buddha or the Mahanirvan. The word Mahanirvan in its general implication refers to the physical death of such an enlightened person. Alekar uses this heavily over toned expression for the death of an ordinary middle-aged, lower-middle-class man, Bhaurao. This leads to the parody of the word and the situation. The play assumes the stature of a mock-heroic episode. The tone of the play becomes extremely hilarious and comic. The play exploits many dramatic gimmicks like the telling the story of one's death by the dead himself, the use of extended soul, and allusions to the classic tragedies like Shakespeare's Hamlet. The play in the source language nowhere indicates anything grotesque, fearful, or ghastly in the proper sense of the words. There is nothing to be dreaded or to be afraid of about the situations or characters in the course of the play. The retaining of the title as *Mahanirvan* would have served the purpose of communicating the essential humour and irony in the play. The English translation of the play as 'The Dread Departure'

misses the essential pun achieved by the large-scale expression *Mahanirvan* in the source language.

The play incorporates a minute detailing of the ordinary routine lives of the people in general. In every Indian household, there are specific salutations and addresses used by the husband and wife. In Marathi speaking world, as it is in other Indian language communities, addressing husband and wife by their names is usually avoided. Instead, language and culture-specific expressions are used, especially in the public context. In Marathi, a wife usually addresses her husband as 'Aho' [a-ho]. This address is honorific as well as shows respect and love for the husband. Likewise, the husband addresses his wife as 'Aaga' [a-ga] in private and refers to her as 'Mandali' [man-da-li] in public talks. In the opening scene of the play, Rama, Bhaurao's wife addresses him with a characteristic 'Aho' as he doesn't come out of bed even at the noon. The English expression 'Come on' can't carry the tenderness and other cultural overtones of the expression 'Aho'. The Indian married life has many intricate terminologies that are deeply associated with the social, religious, and cultural behavioral patterns of the society. A married woman carries many cultural and social artifacts with her that distinguish between a married, unmarried, and widowed woman. Some of the identity markers of a married woman are ornaments like 'Mangalsutra' and a 'Kumkum' mark or 'Bindi' on the forehead. The husband is reckoned with as the lord of the Kumkum mark, *Kunkawacha Dhani* [kunkawa: cha: dhani]. As per the marriage rituals, the husband and wife take seven circles around the holy fire known as 'Saptapadi' [sapta-padi]. When Bhaurao expresses his concerns over his untimely death and thus leaving the conjugal life with Rama halfway, he utters these culture-specific expressions. The translated text skips these expressions. In the Indian context, a husband is treated as a god, a common term being 'Patidev'. Bhaurao assures Rama

that he is her 'Patidev'. The translation of this expression goes like 'Your one and only husband'. The 'one and only' falls short in evoking the pun in the expression 'Patidev'.

The notion of 'Sutak' [sutak] is a characteristic feature of the Indian way of social and cultural life. The 'sutak' refers to observing untouchability on certain occasions especially such as death. In the event of the death of a person, the blood relatives of the deceased observe 'sutak'. Society refrains from having any form of physical contact with them. It is mutually carried out in social practice. It is not like the practice of untouchability in the social order observed once upon a time in Indian social life. Bhaurao refers to this 'sutak' after his death in warning his wife against her touching of his dead body. The translation 'if you touch now, I'll become untouchable too; in mourning for myself' can't fetch the cultural associations of the specific untouchability. Another culture-specific example in the play is that of a song sung addressing Rama, now a widowed wife of Bhaurao. Bhaurao assumes that in his absence the male folk of the society may take the undue advantages of his beautiful and comparatively 'young' wife. He imagines that Rama is eating an apple, clad in red 'saree', and kumkum on the forehead and the neighbours encircle her and sing a song. The song in the source language is a folk devotional song in praise of the goddess of 'Shakti' known as 'Ambabai'. 'Ude ga Ambe Ude' is a traditional devotional song sung in praise of the goddess. Alekar rewords this song as 'Ude ga Rame Ude'. The English translation 'Wake up, Rama, wake up' could not carry the intended pun in the song of the source language. Another expression from the song 'We're upright folk and neighbourly, who will be eating their bread with honey' in the English text misses the social and cultural idiom 'we're pious morally keen people, and eat chapatti (*Poli*) with ghee (purified butter) (*Tup* Marathi word for ghee or purified butter). The expression eating 'poli with tup'

(chapatti with ghee) refers to the elite class of people on the social ladder. Eating 'bread with honey' is still not a social, cultural pan-Indian practice.

Some of the social and cultural connotations add challenges to the translation in English. For instance, the dry vomiting by women, particularly young and married, in the Indian context is indicative of the early signs of pregnancy. The pregnancy of the unwed woman is still a taboo and a social and cultural offense in the Indian social set up. Bhaurao mentions that the long preserved Ganga-water poured on his lips as a part of the death ritual made him sick and almost vomit it out. He makes a hypothetical instance that instead of him, had there been an unwed young woman who died and started making dry vomiting like him people would have turned the natural death of the woman into a suspicious suicide owing to social stigma. The translation of this hypothetically humorous narration goes like 'A poor young unmarried girl who'd died in her sleep will be branded as suicide if you could hear her dry rattle, trying to throw up the basil-leaf and Ganga water!' The translated text misses the socio-cultural invocations of the expression of the dry vomiting associated with the social stigma of the pregnancy of the unwed woman. Bhaurao is rumored to have an extramarital relationship with one of the neighbours named as Bandu Joshi's mother. In the absence of Nana, Bhaurao's son, it is assumed that Bandu Joshi offers to light the pyre of Bhaurao. The women folk discuss that Bandu Joshi's face is similar to that of Bhaurao. This is how the expression goes in the source text. Its English version runs as 'Nana and Bandu are as likes as peas in a pod'. The pleasure sourced out of the hints dropped by the expression that Bandu's face resembles Bhaurao is punctured by the direct reference to Bandu and Nana being fathered by Bhaurao.

Yet another classic example of the untranslatability of the cultural ethos is the traditional game of singing songs by the groups during which the participants have to take up the last alphabet of the song and begin a song with that alphabet. It continues in this way till one group or its member declares that they or he cannot find a song beginning with the last alphabet of the preceding song. This popular game is known as 'Bhendya' in Marathi. The neighbours of Bhaurao awaiting the arrival of Nana for taking the funeral procession to the crematorium decide to play this game to pass off the boredom of waiting. The entire episode phrased as 'Last letter starts the rhyme' runs as follows:

Left Group: Come all ye faithful,
                Joyful and triumphant,
                Come, all come to Bethlehem.
                M! M!
Right Group: Michael, row the boat ashore.
                Hallelujah!
                Michael, row the boat ashore, Hallelujah!
                Sister, help us with the oars, Hallelujah!
                A! A!
Left Group: Hark, the herald angels sing
                A new king born today.
                Mary's boy child Jesus Christ
                Was born on X' mas Day
                Y! Y!
Right Group: You are my shepherd, Lord!
 (*And the other group joins in*.)
                    You are my savior,
                    You are my shepherd, Lord,
                    You'll gather me in.

Now such a game is out of context at the grave occasion of death. The obvious intention of using this dramatic prop is to

produce laughter. The neighbours from the Chwal who have come for the preparations of Bhaurao's funeral procession divide themselves into two groups and start playing this game of songs. The songs they sing are the devotional rhymes and prayers attributed to the Hindu deities like Lord Datta, Lord Krishna, Lord Rama, and Lord Vithala or Panduranga. The English text skips these references and attributions to the Hindu deities and instead does away with the Christian rhymes, rather hymns.

III

The substitution of the religious and cultural rhymes or rather hymns with the hymns of another cultural or religious faith could be well justified supposing the international readers or audience as the target audience. It could also be justified by applying the argument by Constance B. West that a translator may pay the debts 'not with same money but the same sum'. However, this attempt and other instances referred to in the article exemplify the use of Domestication strategy in translation. The sense and the candor of the cultural ethos have been happily sacrificed for the appropriation of the target language, target text, and receivers. In the event of the performance of this text in the English speaking world, such kind of strategy would be a welcome initiative. But this could have been avoided keeping in view the Indian receivers of the non-Marathi speakers. Moreover, there are many instances where the source-language culture-specific instances have been kept intact in the target language text. The mixture of Domestication and Foreignization strategies have resulted in the implications recorded in the visionary wise words of Schleiermacher:

these two paths ['moving the reader to the author' and 'moving the author to the reader'] are so very different from one another that one or the other must certainly be followed

as strictly as possible, any attempt to combine them being certain to produce a highly unreliable result and to carry with it the danger that writer and reader might miss each other completely" (Lefevere 1977: 74).

The application of the Foreignization translation strategy would have kept the essential cultural ethos of the text intact even in the target language. The retaining of the culture-specific aspects in the text even at the expense of the candor and decorum of the target language conventions would have rendered the better reading experience of the translated text.

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The Art of Translation: On Translating Sukumar Ray's *Abol Tabol* in English

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Abstract

This essay is primarily an attempt to lay out the intricacies of the process that have been experienced while translating in English what is perhaps the best-known nonsense verse of our country, Abol Tabol (containing fifty-three poems) by Sukumar Ray written in Bengali. This analytical process also reflects upon similar difficulties one may encounter in translating nonsense verse in general. The short Part I of the essay considers the challenges of translation, which critics have always pronounced and which has been experienced by this writer. Part II specifically discusses how these challenges are encountered in translating Abol Tabol. It considers the linguistic eccentricities of Bengali that make the translator's task difficult, but also rewarding; and it also considers other nuances of verse translations such as the use of rhyme, rhythm, vocabulary, proverbs and idiomatic expressions, word coining, etc. each of which is assessed especially in the context of Abol Tabol translation. This article also presents a few samples of individual pieces of translated poems by this author wherever they help amplifying the points discussed.

Part I: Preliminary

The Act of Translation

Saussure, among others, foregrounds the untranslatable nature of a literary text in a given language, which is a product of a certain cultural and temporally circumscribed entity. For language is not merely a naming system, but a system of

carrying and communicating cultural values. Since different cultural groups think about the world in different ways what is expressed in one cultural context may not be axiomatic in another context. Language thus has an important role in 'realizing reality' (Kate McGowan, 'Structuralism and Semiotics,' *The Routledge Companion to Critical Theory,* 5). This poses a serious difficulty in all kinds of translation exercises. In McGowan's words, 'If you speak more than one language, you will already be familiar with the impossibilities of translating conceptually from one language to another' (ibid. 5). A translator's anxiety about authenticity is, therefore, a very real issue, impeding her very act of translation.

Abu Said Ayub, in his Introduction to his remarkable prose translation of Galib's Gazals, expresses this anxiety when he admits that, even a reasonably 'good verse translation' is bound to diverge from the original (10), so his Bengali translation of the Gazals is not attempted in verse. In this context Ayub mentions the notorious instance of Rabindranath Tagore's grossly inadequate translation of John Donne's lines, 'For god's sake hold your tongue and let me love' – 'দোহাই তোদের একটুকু চুপ কর,/ ভালবাসিবারে দে আমারে অবসর।' ('Dohai toder, ektuku chup kor, / Bhalobasibare de amare abosor'). Ayub, however, says in the same context that he has read the very best translation also in Tagore (11). Recalling the paradigmatic failure set before us by Ayub may not be the most encouraging beginning for someone set to explore the prospect of translating Sukumar Ray's *Abol Tabol.* But it is a useful or even a necessary caveat that a translator might bear in mind. Taking up a piece of text and translating it in another socio-cultural-lingual sector should not be allowed to end up as an uncalled for transmutation of the text which to others might appear an unwarranted distortion.

And yet, the best ideas expressed by a writer in her own language would remain confined to her own lingual group and the text would remain just 'a symbol, with mystical or magical properties in itself,' and not 'a messenger conveying meaning' as Fiona Sampson says in her essay 'Creative Translation,' *The Cambridge Companion to Creative Writing* (121). So it has to be translated and transmitted in other languages to make it accessible to all. This is the rationale behind all translations. According to Willis Barnstone, 'The act of translation is the other Babel, that impossible tower,' that is needed to break the 'solitude of difference' (3). The translation act is this precise aqueduct, though artificial, yet necessary, for conveyance of ideas from one side to the other, connecting the different peoples of the world.

Translation, therefore, is a worthy exercise, a necessary exercise. Yet this desirable exercise perhaps is one of the most challenging one, for there are two sides to all translation works: it has to meet the standard of authenticity of the original work while it has to be authentic to the requirement of the language in which it is translated. A translation in the first place is naturally expected to be an honest representation of the original. A mirror is expected to produce an exact reflection of the object placed in front of it. The better the quality of the mirror the better the impression it produces. But still the mirror metaphor is not wholly satisfactory. The translation work is not as mechanical a process as placing an object before a mirror intended to reflect it. A translation which attempts a very close representation of the original work, literally seeking to present it in another medium might fail to bring it alive in the medium in which it is presented. The demands of the new medium must be addressed, too. Being authentic without being stiff, being accurate, without being mechanical, and getting the content, without missing the spirit is a feat which is difficult to achieve. This takes us to the question of the difference between

the verbatim translation of a piece and translating its innate spirit. The former is expected, or, even necessary, when legal or business matters and matters of subjects like science are translated into another tongue; this may not, however, be the ideal mode to be practised when it comes to translating a literary piece. Maintaining a proper balance between the two is the achievement of the best translation when we deal with literary texts.

It is necessary to remember that translation is the best translation that does not read like one. To make this possible some liberties must be granted of course. The permissibility of the liberties taken by the translator will naturally depend on the factor that no outrageous changes are wrought to distort the content and essence of the original. In other words, a translation should better not turn itself into a transgression. The translator who bears these in mind is the most successful translator. Explaining the efficacy of Shelley's translations of some of the masterpieces in Greek, Latin, Italian, Spanish, German, and French R. B. Woodings says in his 'Editor's Note' on Joseph Raben's 'Shelley as Translator,' that Shelley in these works was 'not merely concerned to find verbal equivalents for the original, but also sought to express the dramas as he understood them' (196). These problematic aspects of translation activity have been borne in mind by me in seeking to translate Sukumar Ray's *Abol Tabol* and which I have laid down in Part II of this discussion.

Part II

Translating Sukumar Ray

1

'The vanity of translation' should, therefore, give way to the fullest appreciation of the sensitive nature of the text which is delicate as 'violet' and its 'colour' and 'odour' are as easily

lost in the process of translation, as Shelley warns us in his *A Defence of Poetry* (7). Translation of a verse piece necessarily has this additional challenge of negotiating the subtle nuances of the medium such as metre, rhyme, rhythm, texture of the words used, the pace and such other unique poetic features. The famous instance of the radical, yet *unintentional* change that underwent in the process of translating and recreating the Petrarchan sonnet in English in the Renaissance England may be recalled. The felicity of rhyming words in Italian language was countered by the paucity of rhyming words in English language – a serious factor that left its indelible mark in the three decades of sonneteering history in England – 1580s to 1600. Writing a fourteen-line poem in a matter of five-rhyme-pattern for an entire sonnet cycle comprising a hundred sonnets, proved more of a task in English than in Italian and the former converted the latter to a seven-rhyme-structure giving birth to the English sonnet structure ending in its powerful epigrammatic couplet. The couplet ending in the sonnet structure is regarded, however, as an extraordinary stroke of serendipity than anything else, something to which we owe the rich treasure-house of sonnets of Shakespeare and his contemporaries. This once again confirms, as Fiona Sampson says, the 'linguistic resources which make rhyme easier, (more organic) or more difficult' differ in different languages (Sampson, 122). What this note emphasizes is that felicity of two languages differs considerably – what is expressed in one language may not be matched exactly in the same terms in another language.[1]

And in undertaking the translation act if one has the misfortune of not being included in Eliot's category of 'good poets' one should at least try to have the consolation of not being

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[1] The English language, however, we all know, contains the very best sonnets in Petrarchan form written later.

relegated to his category of 'immature poets' and 'bad poets' (125).

2

The difficulties of translation exercises, discussed in the previous section of this essay, are magnified many times over when it comes to translating nonsense verse. In translating nonsense rhymes the translator's job is complicated by multiple factors: a) Nonsense rhyme is born in and is nourished by the specific scope of an individual cultural lingual group. b) Consequently, the sense, or paradoxically, the non-sense, which goes to build a specific body of non-sense rhyme may in all likelihood generate no response in another alien set up. c) This genre of literature, more than any other, frequently uses idiomatic expressions and proverbial sayings on which the very point of the fun in the context depends, which is difficult, and perhaps even impossible, to translate[2] d) Nonsense rhyme, in any language, is sure to generate its own breed of nonsense words either already existing in the language, or freshly manufactured by the writer to fulfil the need of the immediate context. While the original creation is already an acclaimed and accepted masterpiece, there is the danger of anyone challenging the legitimacy of these nonsense words generated by the translator.[3] e) And finally, the success of a nonsense rhyme depends on its content and its spirit of fun that is intricately connected to rhyme, rhythm, metre, vocabulary, sound pattern and pace all of which comes as a single package, and to get the entire composite package

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[2] The noted scholar, Sukanta Chaudhuri mentions this point in his 'Translator's Preface' in his translation of Sukumar Ray's *Abol Tabol, The Select Nonsense of Sukumar Ray*.

[3] Nirmal Gupta, in his Preface to his translation of Sukumar Ray says: 'Whereas nonsense writers have the liberty to freely coin words giving sonic and imaginary effects, a translator has not,' 5.

translated into another medium is a task, that in all probability, is doomed in its very inception. Sukanta Chaudhuri mentions this difficulty in his essay, 'Sukumar Rayer Anubad,' ('Translation of Sukumar Ray') *Sukumar Parikrama* (142)[4]. Pratap Chandra Chunder states: 'To translate an ordinary poem or verse into another language is itself a difficult task. More difficult is to translate a nonsense verse or satirical story, as one has to retain the sense of the original nonsense or satire in translation.... But a nonsense verse loses much of its charm if the original lilt, jingle and play on words are absent in translation. To be appealing nonsense verse must stick to rhyme but not reason. To a translator this is another difficult hurdle (Foreword, *Whymsy Wave,* Nirmal Gupta). For the texture and typicality of a language is so unique that a simulacrum of the exact texture may be defied by those of another language. Just as science affirms that water boils at different temperature levels at different altitudes, similarly the fun evoking or fun provoking elements and components may not be the same in two or more different mediums.

Since the nonsense rhyme defies sense one cannot translate it into another medium – for only a matter that conveys sense could be translated, if at all. So what one may at best attempt is not translating the sense (or, the nonsense), but transporting the spirit of a set of nonsense rhymes in another language. This has already been pointed out in Part I of this essay and now we may demonstrate it by citing what may be taken to be the best

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[4] As Sukanta Chaudhuri points out, it is not a translator's primary responsibility to meet the reader's expectation that a specific word or expression in the original be transported in the translated medium. The translator has to bear in mind the overall impact of the passage – its rhyme, rhythm, speed, the syntactical structure and its phonetic impact – and in this activity the translation of individual word constructs no more than one step taken in that direction. 'Sukumar Rayer Anubad,' *Sukumar Parikrama* (142).

instance of translation of a nonsense verse in modern Bengali — Satyajit Ray's তোড়ায় বাঁধা ঘোড়ার ডিম (*Torai Bandha Ghorar Deem,* i.e. *A Bouquet of Horse's Eggs*) where Ray never claims to have 'translated' either Edward Lear or Lewis Carroll; but, he says in his brief introductory to the book that his non-sense rhymes are inspired by the masters (7). Thus we find that his Bengali limericks are his own adaptations and recreations of their works, not translations. In some instances he re-creates from the ideas suggested by Edward Lear's drawings. Some of Ray's translations[5], one may even venture to say, adds to the fun of the original; they are not mere translations in this sense. We may take for example, Lear's

There was an Old Man who supposed
That the street door was partially closed;
But some very large rats,
Ate his coats and his hats
While that futile old gentleman dozed.[6]
This limerick gets a new twist in Ray's

চোরের ভয়ে রামনারায়ণ খোট্টা

ঘুমোয় ব'সে বন্ধ ক'রে দোরটা,

এই সুযোগে দুই ইঁদুরে

দিব্যি খেলো পেটটি পুরে

ঝোলানো তার সাধের হ্যাট আর কোটটা ।

Chorer Bhoye Ramnarayan Khotta
Ghumoi bose bondho kore dorta,
Ei sujoge dui indure
Dibbi khelo pet ti pure
Jholano tar sadher hat ar coat ta.

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[5] All Ray translations of Lear are cited from *Toray Bandha Ghorar Deem.*
[6] Parrott, 25.

 Again, we may take the piece, 'There was an old man with his owl,' which has been entirely recreated by Ray in his 'কে জানে এ নিশাচর দেখে মোরে কি চোখে,' ('Ke Jane E Nishachor Dekhe More Ki Chokhe') where the vestige of the original is not found anywhere except in Lear's drawing. We may place the pieces side by side:

There was an Old Man with an owl,
Who continued to bother and howl;
He sat on a rail
And imbibed bitter ale,
Which refreshed that Old Man and his owl.[7]

'কে জানে এ নিশাচর দেখে মোরে কি চোখে!'

মোর পাশে দেখে যদি ভাবে অবিবেচকে

এ আমার কেউ হয়,

আমি বলি মোটে নয় –

কোনোখানে মিল নেই মানুষে ও পেচকে।'

'Ke jane e nishachor dekhe more ki chokhe.

Mor pashe dekhe Jodi bhabe abibechoke

E amar keu hoi,

Ami boli mote noi—

Konokhane mil nei manushe o pechoke.'

In fact, কোনোখানে মিল নেই, রায়ে ও লিয়রে! (konokhane meel nei Ray-e o Lear-e), that is to say, Ray clear sweeps past Lear!

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[7] Lear, http://lear200.com/there-was-old-man-owl

From this we may conclude that a literal translation of a nonsense verse is neither desirable, nor possible.

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We may now consider some of the unique difficulties encountered in translating *Abol Tabol.* There are specifically at least four kinds of difficulty one encounters in translating *Abol Tabol* owing to the essential difference between the syntactical practices (alone) of the two languages, the uniqueness of English and Bengali: (a) Bengali is devoid of the accessories like articles — definite and indefinite articles. Hence when a given content is translated from Bengali to English the inclusion of these articles in English, a necessary grammatical and structural requisite of the language, adds to the extra syllables making the expressions wordier. This, in fact, is one of the factors that affect the characteristic metrical propensity of the two languages: while the falling rhythm of trochees and dactyls is more spontaneously practised in Bengali, the opposite is true of the English verse, which is prone to take to rising rhythms of iambs and anapaests.[8] This point is taken up again in this article in discussing the metrical pattern of Sukumar Ray and its translation in English. (b) In Bengali, the practice of using a single syllabic unit as a suffix at the end of words enables one to use less syllables in conveying more meaning. In English at the least a preposition must serve the purpose. For instance পায়স (payash) becomes পায়সে (payashe); আফিস (office) is changed to আফিসে (office-e); কালচুল (kalochul) could be কালচুলে (kalochul-e); আমিষ (amish) is changed to আমিষেতে (amishet-e); বর্ণনা (barnana)is converted to বর্ণীতে (barnit-e); সাবান (saban) can be সাবানের (sabaner);

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[8] See Sukanta Chaudhuri on this point in 'Sukumar Rayer Anubad,' *Sukumar Parikrama*, 144.

বালিশ (balish) can be changed to বালিশে (balish-e); দেয়াল (dewal) can be দেয়ালে (dewal-e)[9]. All these are instances taken from the single poem 'ট্যাঁস গরু,' 'Wow Cow'. Yet if we seek a parallel English expression it requires a whole new word to be tagged. For example, we may take the last of the word mentioned here from 'ট্যাঁস গরু,' 'Wow Cow,'— 'দেয়ালে' ('dewale') in the phrase 'ঠ্যাস দিয়ে দেয়ালে' ('thyesh diye dewale') which has to be translated as '*lean against the wall*' (used by me); '*crouched by the wall*' used by Sukanta Chaudhuri, *The Select Nonsense of Sukumar Ray,* 41; '*propped up against the wall*' by Niladri Roy, 48; '*resting* weary *against a wall*' by Sampurna Chattarji, 40 (italics in cited lines are mine). (c) Onomatopoeic words are far greater in number in Bengali and many other Indian languages than in English and which have been profusely used by Sukumar Ray for their fun-evoking quality. For instance, if we consider 'ট্যাঁস গরু,' 'Wow Cow' again, we find the following words: 'ফিটফাট' (fit fat), 'লটখটে' (lot khot-e); 'খটখট্' (khot khot); 'ল্যাগব্যাগ্' (lag bag); 'থকথক্' (khok khok); 'ঘিনঘিন্' (ghin ghin); and 'ঠক ঠক' (thok thok). (d) There is a technical snag, to use Fiona Sampson's words, 'English is not derived from a single root, then garnished with loanwords. Because it's split at the root by Germanic and Romance origins, it's relatively difficult to unify with matching sounds.' (123).

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[9] 'পায়স' (payash) is a sweet dish the chief ingredients most commonly used are a special variety of fine rice and milk, 'আফিস' is the Bengali version of 'office'; কালচুল (kalochul)stands for 'black hair'; আমিষ (amish)refers to all kinds of non-vegetarian dishes; বর্ণনা (barnana)stands for 'description'; সাবান (saban)is 'soap'; বালিশ (balish) means 'pillow' ; দেয়াল (dewal) stands for 'wall'.

Uma Ray Srinivasan

I cite my translation of Sukumar Ray's poem here, which will fully amplify my point:

ট্যাঁস গরু (Tyansh Goru) The Wow Cow

The wow-cow is not a cow, but it's a bird,
In Haru's office is it seen, I've heard.
Its eyes are dozy, but its face is flossy.
Its hair is done in a bun so stylish 'nd glossy.
This horny creature's tail is twisted 'nd crooked.
You only touch it— lo! a horrid racket!
A pathetic rachitic creature, bony 'n' rickety,
It'll tumble down if only you flick at it.
My feeble words, alas, do fail to describe it,
This drawing is the only means to depict it.[10]
The wow-cow like other cows will not say moo,
It leans against a wall and says boohoo!
At once it yells and shouts and makes much fuss,
The reason though for doing so one can't guess.
It dislikes green grass and peas, or hay and fodder,
The sight of other food can make it dodder.
To slurp soap soup, to lick a candlestick,
Is its modest pick which, if refused, it falls sick.
It shakes and coughs on any food substitution.
You see it has a sensitive constitution.
Once when it tried to eat a piece of rag,
It fell into such a lag; its spirit did sag,
And for three full months it remained half-dead in bed.
A creature prized for its features, so they said.
The wow-cow is indeed a truly worthy pet,
You may come purchase it at a discounted rate.

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[10] Sukumar Ray's remarkable illustration of his *Abol Tabol* is a true complement to the nonsense verse. The text here makes a humorous reference to his illustration.

In a poem like শব্দকল্প দ্রুম ('Sabdakalpa Droom'), which I call 'The Wordy Anarchy', there is no way one may convey the Bengali verbatim in English; for it is essentially a play with the sound of Bengali words and the fun is generated out of the inappropriateness of the sound and the sense. Sukanta Chaudhuri states that these are 'untranslatable' poems ('Sukumar Rayer Anubad,' *Sukumar Parikrama*, 147) and does not include them in his translation.

শব্দকল্প দ্রুম (Sabdakalpa Droom) The Wordy Anarchy

It banged and then it burst and how it boomed!
Not a cracker, only a flower just now bloomed!
It is a swoosh and a whoosh— a deluge primeval?
Don't panic, just the scent of the rose does travel!
Such a thump and what a thud! Oh, very scary?
But it's only the dew that drops, no need to worry.
Just hearken – what a splash and a smash and a pop!
Oh, only the moon sets – gob, and glob, drop, drop!
There is such a lot of rustle and bustle and tussle,
The day dawns at last without so much of a hustle.
Then such a lot of buzzing along with chirping!
O, it's only the ideas in my mind get churning.
You may listen to all those notes tra la la, hula la,
My mind is in a mood to dance at the gala.
With tinkle, tinkle, clank it gives such pain,
 My heart breaks, it rumbles — truly, I do not feign.
There's such a noise, what a fright! Do they fight? Will they hit?
Do I sit? Or split? That's it. At once I quit.

4

One may wish to have a look at the stanzaic structures of the poems in *Abol Tabol* which are interestingly diverse. I have tried to follow Sukumar Ray's varied stanzaic structures.

Sometimes even within the same poem I have used different line length, using a combination of short and long verse lines. In 'খুড়োর কল,' ('Khuror Kol'), 'Uncle's Device,' for example, the pentameter verse lines have been brought down to tetrameter ones at a point where the Uncle's engine gathers speed (see lines 21 to 26 in the poem below). The change is intended to capture this speed.

This is how I present Sukumar Ray's poem:

খুড়োর কল (Khuror Kol) Uncle and his Wonder Engine

The uncle of Chandidas has invented an engine,
With it uncle's name wins fame in the whole regime.
As a babe this uncle showed early signs of mettle.
He cried out, 'Gunga,' his first childhood prattle.
Gagga, pappa, mamma're known childish babble,
When a babe says, 'Gunga' it does indeed so baffle.
All said when he grew to be a man in his station,
His brains would surely be a boon to the nation.
The uncle's device now adds a zest to travel,
You cannot but admire this outstanding marvel!
A distance that took you sev'n long hours,
The uncle's machine in half the time covers!
The working of the device is straight and easy,
I needed only five hours to learn it! There, see!
This is all you have to do, and I give you a clue,
Allow the device to attach itself to you,
Then from the device you hang the choicest of goodies
One loves to eat, and those that appeal to foodies,
From luchies[11] to cutlets, dhosas to pizzas to burgers,
The mouth at once begins to water; the engine triggers.

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[11] A thin and hollow, deep-fried round bread made of wheat-flour, a special favourite of all Bengalis.

The more and more and more you run
To reach the goodies and have the fun,
The less and less and less may you
The goodies catch and eat them too.
But what you never did foresee,
You are soon there you wanted to be!
All admit the uncle's device is truly a marvel,
He's the greatest inventor that on earth did dwell.

In the last poem, আবোল-তাবোল ('Freakish Gibberish') the last four lines, unlike the preceding tetra meter lines, are written in pentameters. The pace is arrested here to convey the seriousness of the content of the poem that becomes heavy at this point. I cite the poem here:

আবোল তাবোল (Abol Tabol) Freakish Gibberish

In the cloudy expanse of the hazy night,
In the sprinkled hue of the rainbow light,
My mind at once does take a random flight.
I sing the song of my heart's delight.
Today I'm free from all injunctions,
And gone with the wind are all compunctions.
The sky is touched with tinge so pure
The air is charged with the magic lure,
The fountain flows with exciting notes,
The dream-flower blooms in the wind and floats.
The eyes must catch the hue of the skies,
The mind, it's touched with the dye! It vies!
Today my dear before I bid goodbye
My mind and thoughts'll take off and fly.
I care not if it is meaningless.
I care not if it goes quite heedless.
My fancy from myself shall I set free,
To take its course in a whimsy spree.
My heart now hearkens to the sound

Of drums, with that of thrill it's wound,
Tanta ratan ghatang ghach[12]
With words on words today I patch.
Now darkness is enfolded with light,
The bell-sound is heard with perfumed sight.
The secret envoy from dream-lands comes,
With the elements five I dance to the drums,
My partners are the greedy elephants
Quite upside down and I join their chants.
The queen of bees and the horse with wings!
The noisy brat to silence clings!
My bouquet is made of eggs from the mare's nest furled.
The dew-oozing moon now takes me to olden world.
At last my eyes are heavy with gentle sleep,
It is time for my song to recede in silence deep.

5

The sound management in the poems – the syllabic pattern, rhyme scheme and assonance and alliteration of *Abol Tabol* – is also full of variety. And, as explained in Part I of this study, this aspect may pose serious difficulty for a translator. One might take for instance, 'কিম্ভূত,' 'All in One': the longer lines contain 14 syllables, while the shortest ones have only 9 or 10 syllables; in between there are quite a few 11, 12 and 13 syllable lines. But whoever counts or notices these syllabic units in reading this masterpiece! Interestingly the shorter lines are composed of words which take the same time to articulate as the words contained in the long lines, thus creating the necessary rhythmic balance. Time substitutes for syllables.

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[12] This acephalous nonsense verse line is taken verbatim from Bengali, which has no sense either, and its comic effect is in sharp contrast to the rather serious last lines of the poem.

In this poem, 'কিম্ভূত,' 'The Monstrosauraus' we find that in each couplet there is a midpoint alliteration and rhyme created regularly in each pair of lines throughout the thirty-six-line poem by the poet in addition to the very regular rhymed couplets, creating a music magic that sweeps over the irregular number of syllables in lines which range between 10 and 14 syllables! Thus here we have *janoar* (line 1, middle) matched by *dhore tar* (line 2 middle) while the rhymed ending of the two lines are as obvious – *kimbhut* and *khutkhut*.

Here is my version, with its sound patterns highlighted:

কিম্ভূত (Kimbhut) The Monstrosauraus

For sure, this is the **strangest** of all the **creatures**,
It **grudges** all it sees and all their **features**.
The whole day **long** it keeps on sulking and **fretting**,
'I'm all **wrong**,' thus it sighs in the fells and hills, **regretting**.
'I **want** this, I **want** that,' my needs're indeed so **many**,
They **haunt** and **haunt**! Alas! I can't choose **any**—
'The cuckoo has such a splendid singing **voice**,
O giv'n a **choice** I'd change its voice with my **noise**.
I envy the birds having **fun** as they race in the **air**,
I must right now **run** and get me wings in a **pair**.
The elephant's trunk so **dangles** all the way to the **ground**,
Would anyone hear my **grumbles** if one for me I **found**.
The kangaroo's secret's **contained** in its long hind **legs**,
I wish I had **obtained** them, my god,' it **begs**.
'The Lion's-mane's the seat of its **valour** and its **splendour,**
With mine I'll display my **glamour,** and cause such **wonder.**
The iguana's tailpiece makes it a creature **superior,**
I must get a **designer** tail for my **posterior**.'
It keeps on sulking and **nagging**, fretting 'nd **moaning**.
At last it gets all it was l**onging** on one June **morning**.
It sits quite still, **ov'rcome** with awe and **thrill,**
Yet grave confusion, **unwelcome,** its mind does **fill.**

'Would **elephants** prefer to hop and glide and **fly**?
Can Kangaroos on **plantains** manage to **thrive**?
Won't people **jeer** that all that cuckoo **sound**
They **hear** are made by a snub-nosed face that is **round**?
They'd **scoff** when they see a tubby old elephant **flying**,
They'd tug at my tail, and **laugh** and chase me **booing**,
"Hey, who **goes** there, quite nameless 'nd also home**less**!"
This **shows** that I am now in a hopeless **mess.**
I'm not a horse or a **frog,** or a fly or a **spider**,
Nor am I a **dog**, a butterfly, or a **tige**r,
Nor am I a **flea** or an elephant, or a **tree,**
I'm not a bumble **bee** or an elk, I **agree.**
I can't be ev'n a poor old **shoe** or a **wave**,
Boo hoo! I'm just a nobody,' thus does it **rave.**

'হঁকোমুখো হ্যাংলা,' (Hookomukho Hyangla) 'Hookah-Faced Gluttony' likewise introduces sound jumble that nearly defies all translation. The poem has four-line stanzas. The mid-line sound is picked up by the last word in lines one and three: *hyangla* and *bangla* (line one); *mane ki* and *jane ki* – (line three). This pattern is thus used for lines one and three, while line 2 and line 4 have end rhymes (*dekhecho* and *thekecho*). And this intricate verse pattern is followed throughout. This sound scheme is so crucially important to the final effect of the poem that a translator cannot ignore it. Here is the translated version of the poem fully cited with its sound patterns highlighted:

হকোমুখো হ্যাংলা (Hookohmukho Hyangla) Hookah-Faced Gluttony

Hookah-Faced **Gluttony**   Is a proper **Bangali**[13].
        Why does he look so dull and grim and **grave**?

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[13] 'Bangali' would be the proper spelling of the local pronunciation of 'Bengali', a native of Bengal.

Does anyone know the **cause**?   Does anyone think and **pause**?
        He was ever so cheerful, affable, gentle, and **brave**.
His uncle is **Shyamadas**   The chief of opium **storehouse**,
            He never had any other kith or **kin**,
Oh my poor little **dearie**   He looks so very **teary,**
        So haggard and pale, so woebegone and **thin**.
With a hop and a bop, **flip-flop**,   And a ramba and samba **non-stop**
        He loved to waltz without pause all day so **mirthfu**l.
In a voice that's hoarse and **husky**   He'd sing doh-re-mi[14], **ti-pi-pi.**
                He was so carefree, jolly and **gleeful.**
It was only at mid-**day**   we saw him all quite **gay**,
        Relishing 'nd munching mashed banana **raw**.
Why then does he lie and **sigh**?   Did the uncle suddenly **die**?
            Or did he break his maw, or toe or his **paw**?
'Tut tut,' says Hookah-**Face**,   'It's truly a grim **case**,
        It's a fly-smacking and thwacking **strategy**.
It takes away my day**light**,   It keeps me awake all **night**,
        If I solve it you may call me a giant **prodigy.**
If a fly does sit on my **right**,   Advises my fore**sight,**
        At once go smack it with the tail on your **right**;
If it sits on my **left**,   I am the least **upset**,
        I know I can crush it with the tail on my **left.**
But what about the **bugger**   That goes and sits at the **centre**?
        I can't think which of my two poor tails do I **try.**
Just see what a hopeless **impasse**!   How may I overcome the **morass**.
            Alas! I have no more than two tails. **Fie!**'

Dissection is not the best approach to reading poems, we all know. Yet only a closer scrutiny can bring out the intricate process and planning that go into each creative work which,

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[14] Indian notes are 'sa re ga ma'.

after all, is not in a literal sense 'a spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings'. The source of fun and enjoyment in Sukumar Ray's *Abol Tabol* lies, among other things, also in its remarkable play with sound, which, for a translator or a critic, is an indispensible study; which, for a reader, is necessarily a process of enriching her experience and deepening her appreciation and admiration of the mastery of the poems. It is with this intention that I included here this closer reading of the intricacies of sound pattern in some poems of Sukumar Ray.

The veteran Bengali poet, Sankho Ghosh, analyses the intricate use of sound, metre and rhythm in some of the poems from *Abol Tabol*. He compares the earlier versions of these poems, which first came out in *Sandesh*, the children's magazine that the Ray family brought out in the early twentieth century, and the stringently revised versions that were prepared by Sukumar Ray from his deathbed for his *Abol Tabol* ('Atyukti O Atmanistha,' 'Over Statement and Dedication', *Sukumar Parikrama,* 15-22). This revision shows how austere were the standard of perfection that Sukumar Ray set himself.

6

In Part I of this essay it has already been pointed out that the falling rhythm of Trochee and Dactyls are more commonly found in Bengali, while English verse is prone to take to the rising rhythm such as Iambus and Anapest (also mentioned by Sukanta Chaudhuri, (*Sukumar Parikrama*, 144). In translating Sukumar Ray in English a basic Iambic pattern rather than the falling rhythm of trochee and dactyl would appear more natural. Among the very few exceptions I allowed myself in using the falling rhythm, I wish to cite 'বাবুরাম সাপুড়ে,' 'Baburam the Snakeman':

বাবুরাম সাপুড়ে Baburam the Snakeman

Baburam, snakeman, whither are you bound?
Get me please two snakes all safe 'n' sound.
Snakes those're tame and also quite sane,
Feed on milk rice and are limp 'n' lame.
Those that sting not, spring not, bite or spite,
Those which're truly ashamed to fright 'n' fight,
Bring only Snakes those're stingless, toothless,
Hornless, clawless, hoodless, harmless,
Snakes that hiss not, fizz not're blind 'n' kind,
Race not, run not, please go and find.
I will catch them, teach them, preach them too!
Box them, bash them, beat them black 'nd blue.

7

Finally, in this last section of the essay, we take a quick glimpse into one aspect of the complications raised by the process of translating the content of Sukumar Ray's *Abol Tabol* in English. Our observation will include only a brief sample of what could be a book length discussion, for expectedly, the process involves complications of a widely different nature. Along with its stylistic features the subject matter of the nonsense verse necessarily poses a serious challenge to the translator. Nonsense is generated through not only how it is said, but also what is being said. And translating what makes sense is far easier than what goes to make nonsense.

The fun evoked in the nonsense world of Sukumar Ray is inextricably embedded in the eccentricity of the Bengali lingual practices. The 'nonsense' is generated often by using and sometimes twisting the sense in which ideas, words and phrases and sayings are familiarly used in the Bengali lingual corpus. We shall cite two instances from *Abol Tabol*.

In Sukumar Ray's poem, **গোঁফ চুরি** (Gomph Churi) – 'The Stolen Moustache' the boss at the head office is said to be shot with a spell of uncontrollable anger when the clerks in his office try to persuade him, contrary to his notion, that his moustache is not stolen. To describe the angry boss, Sukumar Ray, uses a typical expression popular in local parlance: that of using the image of frying the eggplant in a pan full of hot oil – **রেগে আগুন তেলে বেগুন** – 'rege aagun, tele begoon'. This association of one's expression of anger and the actual act of frying the vegetable called the **বেগুন** (begoon) or eggplant is typically born out of a Bengali socio-cultural context. The behaviour of an angry person and that person's flushed angry face are described in terms of ideas that take one to a typically favourite culinary practice of Bengali cuisine and not without some humour in it. And this association is not nonsense per se, as it is already available in the current usage, and Sukumar Ray has not coined this expression. At page 1058 of the *Bangiya Sabdakosh,* Vol. 1, we find an entry for this expression, which was already in currency when Sukumar Ray used it. This association between the two unrelated acts, therefore, need not have to be decoded to a native of Bengal. But it needs an absurdly elaborate explanation in any other language. These are indeed untranslatable eccentricities of Bengali speech act, a product of Bengali socio-cultural context, no less typical than any other alien context which surely generates its own set of such elements.

We may take such another expression typical in its Bengali association and simply not found and therefore cannot be translated in English. The poem entitled **নেড়া বেলতলায় যায় কবার** – Neda Baeltolay Jaay Kobaar – is a nonsensical and literal extension of a Bengali saying which really means 'once bitten twice shy'; but it is rooted in the comical notion that when a man with a shaven pate is struck with a 'bael' a fruit

(also known as wood apple or marmelos) that has a very hard outer rind and can badly damage if it falls on one's head. A ripe bael often drops from its stem with shell and all. The popular saying tells us that a man who is hurt by the bael when it drops on his head from the tree is cautious not to go beneath the tree a second time. This very explanation shows how absurdly preposterous and unnecessary elaboration of the saying can be; only the enterprising King in the poem is frustrated that no wise man has ever specified as to the number of times a clean shaven man may go beneath a 'bael' tree. The nonsense, therefore, is not in the saying, which is a Bengali proverb, but in the ridiculous act of the King in exploring the entire retinue of all his available human resources to find an answer to the query.

8

Translation of *Abol Tabol* can indeed be termed as a daunting task. And, therefore, we may also claim that *Abol Tabol* is one of those extraordinary books which any translator would be proud to have successfully translated. The honour of the first ever attempt of translating some of Sukumar Ray's poems from *Abol Tabol* naturally belongs to his celebrated son, Satyajit Ray, who translated ten poems from *Abol Tabol* which was published in 1970. After Satyajit Ray broke the ice with his 10 poems there have been quite a few good translations, which are mentioned in the books cited section of the this essay. But the work continues, for more and more people are taking interest in Sukumar Ray studies; it is only expected that more and more translations of the great master will be written in English and other Indian and non-Indian languages. It would

be a matter of regret indeed if Sukumar Ray's *Abol Tabol*, remained confined to the Bengali readers[15].

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[15] In 2023, we are going to see the death centenary of the great master. We can only expect that new works, including translations, will appear to mark the occasion in a befitting manner. All Bengali quotations by scholars and critics have been translated from the original by the writer.

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Cite this Work

The Future of Indigenous Languages: Challenges of Translating Mavilan Songs

LILLYKUTTY ABRAHAM

Abstract

This paper attempts to look at the challenges and problems faced while translating the oral songs of Mavilan tribe into English. Mavilan community, an indigenous group, settled in Kannur and Kasaragod districts of Kerala has unique oral songs that reveal their way of life. These oral songs replete with cultural references are loaded with specific meaning to the tribe. These songs are a cultural tool to study about the tribe. In order to disseminate their rich cultural heritage it is necessary to translate their language. However while translating the songs into English, it is found insufficient to convey the rich cultural meaning intended. Against this backdrop through the analysis of the select oral songs of the tribe, this paper delves into some of the challenges faced during the translation and proposes some possible solutions that might augment the preservation and dissemination of their language.

Keywords: Indigenous Language, Mavilan Tribe, Oral Songs, Translation, Culture.

Introduction

Indigenous languages are unique and loaded with rich cultural implications. These languages manifest the indigenous people's life as holistic and continuous in a cyclic way of existence. Mavilan tribe settled in Kannur and Kasaragod districts of Kerala has a unique language that indicates their specific way of life. In addition to their usual modes of exchange of ideas, their language can be identified in their oral tales and songs, proverbs, riddles and rituals. While trying to understand these utterances and to disseminate them through

translation, English language is found inadequate to convey the meaning intended. Hence, in this paper, an attempt is made to delve into some of the issues encountered while translating their utterances particularly their oral songs into English.

Methodology

The songs were collected during the fieldwork in Mavilan hamlets in Kannur and Kasaragod districts ranging from the year 2013 to 2017 as part of research work for the author's Ph.D. in ecocriticism. The songs were videotaped during the oral recitation by the informants. These songs were transcribed and doubtful words were clarified with the help of experts. Interviews and discussions were held to study the songs in detail.

Mavilan Tribe

The people of Mavilan tribe mostly inhabit Kannur and Kasaragod districts of North Kerala. They are a minority group. According to the census of the year 2011, their total population was 30,867 of whom 14,972 were males and 15,895 females. Mavilan tribe was once hunter-gatherers who relied solely on forest produce and wild life for their sustenance. During the course of time, when the landlords encroached their habitats they had to leave their traditional way of life and eventually they became agricultural labourers.

Language of the Tribe

The language the tribe spoke in the past was Tulu. However, currently Tulu is spoken only in their hamlets in Kasaragod region. They have their own colloquial language which is rhythmic and musical and similar to Malayalam. In both Kannur and Kasaragod regions Malayalam is the common medium to communicate with outsiders. The transcribed text employed in this paper is translated from Malayalam to English by the author.

Significance of Songs as a Cultural Tool

Songs were integral to the rhythmic and ceremonial way of life of Mavilan community. Their life was interwoven with oral songs. They had songs for every occasion in which they came together as a community and they celebrated life by singing and playing *thudi,* their musical instrument. These songs had many functions in the collective life of the tribe in the past. For instance, songs functioned as an expression of collective memory, a medium to preserve customs and traditions, a means of transmitting cultural values, a medium of catharsis in their oppressive context of being the agricultural labourers of the landlord, a mirror of the socio economic reality, satire of the oppressive social set up and protest against the caste system. Since the oral songs of the tribe play a vital role in any attempt to study the tribe, faithful translation of these songs are of paramount importance.

Challenges Faced while Translating the Songs

The signified is loaded with cultural implications for the indigenous community as the utterances reflect their lived experience of their holistic worldview. Therefore, what a term signifies in the source language calls for an understanding of the culture of the community when it is translated to the target language. As Susan Bassnett and Harish Trivedi point out, "translation does not happen in a vacuum, but in a continuum; it is not an isolated act, it is part of an ongoing process of intercultural transfer" (1999: 2). In the indigenous context, it is true that "the act of translation always involves much more than language. Translations are always embedded in cultural and political systems and in history" (6). In the case of Mavilan tribe too, the songs cannot be treated in isolation as they came into being in their particular history. Therefore, they have to be viewed in the context of the social reality of the time.

Mavilan community experiences life as a continuous flow, a continuum of relations with the ancestors, the present generations and the generations yet to be born. Hence, while translating the songs, the culture of the tribe plays a vital role. Nevertheless, these songs were not composed for any audience. They emerged from the direct experience of the tribe especially in the context of the oppression they had to endure under the landlord. In this context, these songs evolved as part of their cultural existence and as a means of survival. In other words, these songs were the self-expression of the collective existence of the community. However, since these songs are a cultural tool to be familiarised with the history and the culture of the tribe, they need to be translated for a wider audience. A non-Mavilan endeavour to translate their songs is possible only from the information received from the informants. It is not the same experience as that of the first speakers in the particular context. The challenge is how far that experiential knowledge of the community can be translated at the experiential level that the community had intended. Even by employing the para-textual commentary, can the reader be led to such an experiential level? A reader of the translated work gets to know only what is translated. Therefore, the role of the translator in the indigenous context is more challenging than that of other languages. Vladimir Ivir claims that translation means translating cultures and not languages (1987: 35). If so, how far can an indigenous culture be truly translated in the context of the Mavilan community? Can the translated text adequately unravel the intricacies of their rich culture?

The fidelity of the translated text to the source text must be taken into consideration in this context. Maria Tymoczko observes, "The translator is faced with the dilemma of faithfulness…in obscuring or muting the cultural disjunctions, the translator ceases to be 'faithful' to the source text" (1999: 21). A. K. Ramanujan offers another approach in such

situations. He postulates, "A translator hopes not only to translate a text, but hopes (against all odds) to translate a non-native reader into a native one. The Notes and Afterword are part of that effort" (1978: viii). Even in such attempts, can a non-native reader be fully translocated to the native? It must be admitted that it is not likely. Hence, a translator attempts to make the meaning as close as possible. Just as Ganesh Devi points out, "Translation can be seen as an attempt to bring a given language system in its entirety as close as possible to the areas of significance that it shares with another given language or languages. All translations operate within this shared area of significance" (1999: 186). The oral songs of Mavilan community must be viewed against this backdrop.

Mavilan community maintains a well-knit kinship. They followed matrilineal system of inheritance in the past. A person is closely associated with the son or daughter of his or her mother's brother or brothers in this socio cultural set up. The term that denotes this relationship for a boy is *machunan* and for a girl is *machunachi*. This relationship can even lead to marriage. In such cases, the prefix *ner* added to these terms denotes the specific relation between the two cousins. The children of the tribe grow up in such a custom and they maintain a very close relationship between the two. The term *ner machunan* occurs in the following lines of "*Adichuthalippattu,*" one of the nuptial songs of the tribe recorded from Umpichi Kanathumoola of Banam in Kasaragod district:

Eni penne eni penne	Get up, girl; get up, girl,
Neeliyottu Makke.	Neeliyottu Makke.
Mooli murandondu-	Grunting and snoring
Rangunnoru pennu.	Sleeps the girl.
Koottathilundu polum	There among them is
Ner machuniyanmaru,	The direct cousin,

| *Adiyennu mudiyolam* | From bottom to top |
| *Thappiyunarthunnu* | Groping, wakes her up. |

In order to understand the action of groping by the cousin, the cultural background of the tribe especially their kinship relationship must be known to the reader. Therefore, the translator needs to add footnotes to describe the term *ner machunan*. 'Cousin' is the only word in English to signify the relationship between a person's uncle's son or daughter and himself or herself. Cousin denotes both genders. Therefore, when the term 'cousin' substitutes *machunan* it has to be specified that it is a male. *Ner machunan* also means that though there are many cousins of direct relations as first cousins, the person mentioned is a sort of fiancé or her future husband. He is the son of her mother's brother and not any other cousins. Unless the term is not clarified the meaning of this wedding song remains ambiguous.

The song "Chonodum Kannan" sung by P. M. Karichi of Kolangara settlement of West Elery panchayat in Kasaragod district has the description of different rites of passage the eponymous hero undergoes. If the term '*enangan*' used in the song has to be understood well, the reader needs to know the customs and traditions of the tribe. Mavilan tribe followed the custom of a few *ex officio* members administering and assisting at their different rites of passage. These members known as *enangan* (male) or *enangathi* (female) are not kin but are closely related as same family members. A non-Mavilan would find it hard to relate to the specific nature of this 'kinship.' Hence, even a footnote would not suffice to describe the cultural meaning implied. The following is an excerpt of the song:

Ezhu vayathunni	At the age of seven
Thirikkathu kuthanam.	Ears are to be pierced.
Tirikkathu kuthanaru?	Who is to pierce the ears?

Oreerenangamaru.	Two *enangan* each.
..………………….	………………
Kayalin kana kothi	Cutting a twig of bamboo
Mullum cheranti.	shaped into a thorn.
Kaathinu mullanakkunnu	Pierce the earlobes
Reerenangamaru.	Both the *enangan*.

A reader cannot relate to the meaning of terms without the background knowledge of the agricultural slavery and exploitation the tribe endured. *Orakkuzhi* where the paddy was pounded or de-husked was an outhouse in the household of a landlord. The existence of such spaces has to be looked at from the perspective of the sociocultural context of the agricultural slavery of the past. Although the landlord strictly observed untouchability and unapproachability, the lower caste women were allowed to enter this area. Mavilan tribe that experienced harsh treatment and sexual exploitation could not but vent their emotions through the medium of songs. While translating such songs, mere explanation of the term *orakkuzhi* does not suffice to transmit the cultural meaning and experience implied. An excerpt of the song sung by Kakkoppuram Kunhiraman from Payyavoor panchayat of Kannur District is given below:

Aa…oo…ee...uu..	Aa…oo…ee...uu..
Onnu parayathundu	Thus says
Kaithari Nambyar.	Kaithari Nambyar.
Karincholakkanni pennu	Karincholakkanni girl
orakkuzheelu Varanam.	Must come to the *orakkuzhi*.
Onnundu kelkku nambyare	Please listen, Nambyar
Kaithari Nambyar,	Kaithari Nambyar,
Aa…oo…ee...uu...	Aa…oo…ee...uu...
Thodalum theendalum	Untouchability and unapproachability
Ningakkille nambyare?	Don't you, Nambyar, observe?
Pinnengana nambyare	How can then, Nambyar
Nhanaduthu varunnu?	I come near to you?

'*Nhakkalu kathi*' refers to the knife used only for cutting the umbilical cord. While translating the song "Chappa" sung by Kanathumoola the term needs to be explained. However, the term is loaded with the cultural practice of the past when the delivery took place at home itself. Unless the tribe's socio cultural life of the past is not known, the reader may be perplexed. An excerpt of the song is given below:

Pennungale -	Women,
Pennungale -	Women,
Kutti- Thalu-	Kutti, Thalu.
Pettu-	Delivered
Ngyavoo- Ngyavoo-	Ngyavoo- Ngyavoo
Ey – pennungale -	Ey, Women,
Nikku- nikku-	Stop, stop
Vaymaranhu- nikku-	Turn back and stop,
Vaymaranhu- nikku-	Turn back and stop.
Pokka- Netta-	Pokka, Netta,
Pokkalu-	Umbilical cord
Murikkunna-	For cutting
Nhakkalu - kathi-	*Nhakkalu* knife
Kondu- vay-	Bring.

In the past, when a large quantity of paddy had to be de-husked, it was not pound inside the mortar; instead, it was pounded on the floor. The term '*nilakkuthu*' denotes this cultural practice. Therefore, though in the following excerpt sung by Kunhiraman, the term is translated, it calls for a detailed description:

Iniyenthu paniyenthu	What is the next work
Tharamenthu amme?	To be completed, mother?
Innale onanginoru	(The paddy that) dried yesterday,
Nellathu kutheela	That paddy is not de-husked
Kuthumpam kuthunnu pennu	While pounding, pounds, the girl
Nilakkuthu kuthunnu	Pounds on the floor.

Ecological knowledge is another challenge faced while translating the songs of the tribe. The term '*kooran*' is used in the oral song of hunting, recorded from Karichi. While the animal is extinct, it is difficult to identify the animal referred to. Resorting to NBS Malayalam English Dictionary by C. Madhavan Pillai, the term is identified as "the abrus plant; a species of deer; (hog-deer); dog; a dwarf" (283). *Kerala Bhasha Nighantu* also defines the term as "a kind of pig, a small animal in the species of deer, small musk deer, dog, dwarf, a type of paddy, wild hare, kooran grass" (609). The informants are of the view that it is like a wild hare sans large ears and is similar to the mongoose. Therefore, while translating the song into English, the translator is perplexed as to which word can be used for the exact meaning of the term. Employing the para-textual commentary seems a fairly faithful way of translating the word *kooran* to English.

The measuring units the tribe used in the past, recurs in the songs signifying the culture of barter of the paddy cultivation. When *nazhi* is translated as a 'measuring unit of old equivalent to approximately 200 grams' as footnote, can the reader relate to such a culture? In the following lines of the song "Purli," sung by Karichi, *nazhi* represents the unequal wages the tribe received for their tireless hard labour in the field of the landlord:

Moonnadam Moorunnittu Purli   Having harvested for three days, O Purli,
Monnazhi nellu kitti   (We) received three *nazhi* paddi.

The text above cannot be understood with all its implications unless the reader can relate to the agricultural slavery of the past. Therefore, there arises the need to introduce the reader to some basic knowledge of their socio cultural life of the past.

Considering the specific nature of the language of Mavilan tribe in particular and the indigenous languages in general, the challenge is the survival of these languages. In the context of global culture how much of the regional will be safeguarded? Since the quickly progressing world tends to promote a few dominant languages, the question remains a challenge. As Andrew Dalby had already foreseen, "A time will certainly come when English, French, Spanish and the other national languages of the world somewhere around two hundred in total are the only languages still in use, each dominant within its own borders" (2003: 277). He proposes that this time "will be reached in less than two hundred years from now" (279) and adds, "By then it will be easy to foresee the speed with which the last milestone will be attained, the point at which only English is spoken. It is closer than you think. And no more bilingualism then" (280). It is appalling to realize that in India too, the scenario is not very different. In such a context, where will the place of indigenous languages and culture be?

Possible Solutions

In this frightening scenario, despite the challenges, the endangered languages need to be promoted to keep them alive along with the culture of the community. Hence, it is vital that the art forms of the indigenous groups be recorded and disseminated to other cultures as well. The art forms like the oral songs, dance, proverbs, sayings, and their medicinal knowledge can contribute to the mainstream community and enhance life in general. It is the responsibility of the mainstream community who has the technology and the know-how of the ways of preservation, to encourage the indigenous communities to maintain their language. It calls for mutual give and take from both the communities. They need to be approached with openness and respect and not with an attitude of superiority of 'saviours;' instead, the mainstream

community can learn many superior ways from them. This can effectively reduce the distancing of the 'other.' It is important to realize and recognize the contribution the indigenous communities can make for the well-being of the cosmos. Efforts have to be taken to translate the indigenous languages to other regional and national languages and make them available to a greater audience.

Conclusion

To summarise, an attempt is made in this paper to look at the challenges faced in translating into English the oral songs of Mavilan tribe. It is clear from the discussion that the language of the indigenous community cannot be translated fully unless the cultural implications too are not made clear. For an indigenous community, particularly for Mavilan community, language is part of their holistic way of life and hence cannot be isolated from the culture. In a translated work of their utterances how much of their culture too can be transferred is still a question not answered fully. Therefore, will these languages remain alive in the long run? Can indigenous languages survive in a global culture? These alarming questions call for responsible response from the intelligentsia.

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Cite this Work:

Translating Roald Dahl's *Fantastic Mr. Fox* to Hindi: A Case Study of Translated Children's Literature

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Abstract

Children's Literature has been marginalised because of the reading audience's age. Translation and Translation Studies suffer from a similar fate due to the concept of authorship and originality that has governed the field of arts and aesthetics. Children's stories serve not only to enhance the reader's language skills but also plays a role in the development of empathy and other moral values which has been identified as major didactic role of this genre. Since the reading audience is still learning the language, a word-to-word rendering of the source language will transform the word play, jingles, cultural proverbs and jokes into incomprehensible content.

This paper is a working model of translating children's literature and discusses the problems of translating from English to Hindi. For the present research Roald Dahl's novel "Fantastic Mr. Fox" was translated from English to Hindi. The author's official website states that his stories have been translated into 58 languages around the world including Marathi, Tamil and Bengali[1]. Hindi is one of the most spoken languages in India, but since there was no translation of Roald Dahl's stories available in Hindi (to the author's best knowledge), the first objective of research was to translate his novels. The paper addresses the debate between foreignization and domestication, between fidelity towards the author and fidelity towards the readers. It also discusses the quality of anthropomorphism which is special to children's stories but

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[1] roalddahl.com: The official website of the author contains information regarding publishing houses, publishing years and translation of the author's works in different languages.

represents the cultural symbolic meaning attached to animals. The questions raised by the study are: how does the translator bridge the gap between the foreign text and his readers? Does domestication strategy do justice to the author's imagery and topographical descriptions? Is foreignization essential in order to introduce the readers to far off lands?

Keywords: Children's Literature, Translation, Fidelity, Cultural Symbolism.

Introduction

A very unique quality of texts for children is that they are read aloud by the adults for children who cannot read and are still learning the language. The texts contain special features like rhymes, songs, repetition (and echo terms), frequent line breaks, smaller sentences and illustrations. Keeping in context the above features, a translator decides the variations in tempo, word stress, rhythm, time, and pauses. The complexity of the text is its aesthetic quality that communicates and helps the reader/listener draw images with restricted sentence lengths and vocabulary (which is comprehensible by the youngsters). The willingness of the youngsters to read a text is governed by the comprehension factor, many a times the texts are separated into different genres based on this factor.

For a long time, children's literature was assumed to be simplistic and lacking literary aesthetic quality compared to the larger canon of literature classics. Natalie Babbitt (1973: 157) discusses the language use by questioning this assumption:

> "A children's book uses simple vocabulary geared to the untrained mind? Compare a little Kipling to a little Hemingway and think again. Opening sentence of *A Farewell to Arms*: 'Now in the fall the trees were all bare and the roads were muddy'. Opening sentence of *How*

the Rhinoceros Got His Skin: 'Once upon a time, on an uninhabited island on the shores of the Red Sea, there lived a Parsee from whose hat the rays of the sun were reflected in more-than-oriental splendour'. So much for that!"

Works like *Alice in Wonderland* by Lewis Caroll (first published in the year 1865), German text first published in 1816, *Nutcracker and the Mouse King* by E. T. A. Hoffman (2007) from the Modern Age contradict the assumption. Texts by Jane Austen, Charlotte Bronte, Charles Dickens and other major writers of English Literature are widely read by children (abridged version of the classic texts, which is another field of enquiry in the genre). Thus, the presumption that children's literature lacks the literary qualities is incorrect.

It is important to note that the genre has rich use of vocabulary in the forms of word play, rhyme and rhythms which not only showcase skilful use of language but also phonetic quality. For example; Roald Dahl's novels contain a vast number of denominal verbs which render onomatopoeic qualities denoting actions, terms like tunnelled, foggiest, crunched, chortled and chuckled. The word play is not only to make reading interesting for children but also renders additional vocabulary and phonetic delight that helps them in acquiring the language skills. The pedagogical function of the literature especially read by children denotes learning of the language (as they are still acquiring linguistic working knowledge) and learning of life lessons (as they lack experience of the socio-cultural setting they are a part of).

Riita Oittinen (2014: 35) draws a difference between texts being translated for young readers and the ones aimed for adult readers on the basis of the style the translator adopts on the levels like; vocabulary, sentence structure, setting and image of 'child' (depending on the translator's understanding of the

term and age). The translated text hence, is a product of the choices that the translator makes on the above denoted levels, adapts a strategy for his 'marked audience'.

There have been numerous ways in which critics, readers, librarians and publishing houses distinguish the genre of children's literature but the boundaries are porous and criteria for judgement ever changing. As David Rudd (2012: 19-29) remarks in his introduction to Routledge companion to Children's literature:

> "this being (child) can be reduced to a psychological profile or even to its biological and anatomical features but such depictions fail to capture the fact that children exist only within particular sociocultural contexts, and these might envisage children as innocent and godlike, or as innately evil, or simply as pint sized adults. The artefacts produced for these children will vary accordingly."

Following is an example of the impact translation can have, as *Aladdin* and *Ali Baba and Forty Thieves* have become frequently represented stories in films and stage adaptations. The stories from *Thousand and One Nights* have numerous cartoon adaptations for children recurrently translated and represented. For instance, the movie *Aladdin* directed by Guy Ritchie which released in 2019 was a 'live-action adaptation' of the 1992 *Aladdin* movie by Disney Production house whose fan base mostly comprises of children.

Thousand and One Nights commonly known as *Arabian Nights* is a set of folk tales in Arabic which belongs to the Islamic Golden Age (8th to 14th century). Antoine Galland translated the text to French in early 18th century. Interestingly rather than the core text which was Arabic and had Indian and Persian roots, translators that followed Galland chose to read his version for reference. Which meant that many oral tales

that he remarked of having heard, while in the city were not part of the *Hazar Afsane* (literally meaning 1000 tales in Arabic) but were included in his French version of the text. For example, the tale of *Aladdin* which has a Disney cartoon series based on it besides movies and shows in different languages was not a part of the actual *Thousand and One Nights*. *Ali Baba and Forty Thieves* was also added by Galland in his copy, they are now referred to as 'orphan tales'. Jorge Luis Borges (2000: 34-48) discusses in detail all the translated versions of *Thousand and One Nights* in English in his essay *The Translators of Thousand and One Nights.* The Orphan tales added by Antoine Galland have become recurrently represented, the translation made an everlasting impact on the representation of 'Oriental' and 'East', introducing the 'foreign' to the English readers (especially children through cartoon productions).

The Intended Reader

What lies at core to the topic, is the idea of what is a 'child'. It is an ever evolving term which not only addresses the biological age but also mental and emotional age of beings.

The literary movement, New Historicism puts such definitions, texts and terms in contexts, it seeks to understand the hierarchy of literature and where different genres lie at a particular point of time in history. It thus follows; there is always a gap between what was historically understood as a part of such literature and the contemporary texts that constitute the canon. Few texts have crossed the boundaries of adult literature to become a part of children's literature. A classic example is the abridged versions of canonical texts by English authors like Charles Dickens, Jane Austen, and Charlotte Bronte etc.

The image of the child 'the intended reader' (in context of the writers who write for children) is different in different parts of

the world at different points of time in history. This becomes the key to understanding how the author views the intended reader (child) while writing for them. The evolution of the genre is based on the development of this idea of child and childhood as a separate stage in human life.

Historically, the concept of childhood is a very recent one (English), during late 17th century John Locke (1860) introduced the concept of Tabula Rasa. It considered the 'mind' as a blank state at birth, this blank state was then filled with social and cultural norms and code of conduct during the course of growing up. The age category gained special attention and recognition during and after Enlightenment and romanticism in England (18th century).

There was a divide between the practise of child labour and exploitation during the booming period of Industrialization and the high ideals of childhood as an age of innocence. The poetry of William Blake creates a clear distinction between the state of children in England and his own idea of 'age of innocence'. His *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* was an illustrated copy of poetry subtitled in its second edition as *Shewing the Two Contrary States of the Human Soul*. The songs were written to create a contrary image between the child and the adult, heaven and hell, innocence and sin of knowledge (experience), nature and industrialisation.

In India the legal age to vote is 18; the age varies from 15 to 21 in different countries. This age of cross over can be used as a tool of assessing the ideals of childhood in the society. The age has varied through the last century and also varies based on the region and historical background of the countries. The age bar is a legal means to understand 'childhood' images in different cultures. For further specifications, countries have age bar on consumption of alcohol, marriages and sexual consent. All these aspects are important to understand the varying degrees

and factors that govern the genre. Irrespective of language differences across the world, there is a common belief according to which children's literature as a genre is defined on the basis of use of language and writing style for the intended readers.

The Text

"Fantastic Mr. Fox" by Roald Dahl was first published in the year 1970. The 1996 edition was published with illustrations by Quintin Blake whereas earlier editions had illustrations by Donald Chaffin and then by Jill Benett. The publishing house; George Allen &Unwin published the 1970 edition, Puffin books by Penguin Group published it in 1974. The text translation has been done directly from the 2007 edition by Puffin books with illustrations by Quintin Blake. The story was also adapted by Wes Anderson into a film which released in 2009 by the same title.

The plot of the novel revolves around a fox who steals livestock from three evil farmers to feed his own family. The character of the fox is anthropomorphic, in fact all the animal characters in the novel attribute humanly emotions and character. This use of anthropomorphic animals is what especially makes the text a children's novel. The story is an adventure tale of Mr. Fox's battle against the three farmers; Boggis, Bunce and Bean who seek the fox and his family to kill them.

Especially important to note was the author's contribution to the genre in weaving stories that don't necessarily confirm to the grammatical framework of English language but make complete sense to the young readers. An initial concern is aroused regarding the non-conformation to the grammatical rules by the author. As the readers are still learning how to read and write in the language, the text might misdirect their

linguistic skills. Nevertheless, the stories inherit a phonetic quality that catches the attention of the youngsters, the use of fiction and fantastical further enhances their imagination.

Foreignization and Domestication: Addressing the Cultural Turn

Expressive forms for instance; music, art, dance, ritual and technological forms like clothing, cooking, tool usage, shelter are common forms of assessing culture and cultural differences. Roald Dahl's novels for children draw fictional, fable like worlds but the allegorical undertone inherits heavily from his British heritage. The illustrator of his novels, Quentin Blake draws a picture of the protagonist fox, dressed in a coat and bow tie. The cultural references are not limited to language, the costume, and culinary experiences, geographical landscape are all European.

In the context of children's literature where the texts are didactic, the 'foreignness' of translated text is additionally helpful for the readers. But the 'foreignization' technique might go to the length of transforming the text to an extent where the child readers suffer from lack of relativity affecting their comprehension and understanding. A balance between the domestic and foreign needs to be achieved where the reader not only understands the text but also learns the differential cultural practises and values.

In 1995 Lawrence Venuti described the translation practice which defined and gave prior attention to the 'cultural dynamics' of the text. The translation strategy of domestication and foreignization was discussed in his book The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation.

 Riita Oittinen (2014) explains the strategies in the light of Children's texts:

"While domestication assimilates texts to target linguistic and cultural values, in foreignization some significant traces of the original text are retained" (35).

Domestication strategy aims to minimize the 'foreignness' of the source text in its translated form for the target readers, it is contested by theorists like Eugene Nida that it also reforms the text to serve the 'purpose' of the text.

Venuti on the other hand insisted on retaining the 'foreignness'. The propagators of 'foreignization technique' aim to not only to retain the 'foreign' but also the author's impression of the source text instead of transforming the text. Susan Bassnett (1990), a Comparative literature scholar remarked that Lawrence Venuti's translation strategy is 'translator-centred'. His idea of translation strategy aims to 'send the reader abroad'. Instead of adhering to receiving culture's value system for a fluent translated text, foreignization highlights the cultural and linguistic differences.

Domestication also implies a 'fluent' text which adheres to the contemporary language usage (of the time the text is being translated) of the target language. The criticism of domestication is based on translation of texts to English, which according to Venuti (2017) is based on 'submission'. The translation erases the traces of source text and transforms it to a text based on the 'receiving' culture's values.

The ambivalent nature of early literature in Hindi, aimed to reach audience of all age groups. In plays like Raja Harishchandra, children and adults enjoyed and learned based on their ability of comprehension. A similar ambivalence is integral to children's literature, which tries to appeal first to the 'guardian' filters like parents, teachers, guides, publishers before reaching the younger generation. Translation of such texts requires an understanding of this 'ambivalent' feature

integral to the genre. A translator who wishes to bridge the cultural gaps between two linguistic systems using language tools aims to rewrite the foreign text into a relatable text for target audience. The 'hidden' readers as Isabel Pascua Febles (2006: 111-121) discusses in *Translating Cultural References* requires implementation of not one strategy but multiple tactics because of the contextual elements that define the genre.

The key to understanding the different approaches in adapting domestication and foreignization in Children's literature translation is how the translator looks at the 'reading audience'. Based on their assumptions and understanding of the target readers, they tend to choose retention or rewriting or adapting terms and taboos too. Hence, the cultural impact on the translator also governs the choices he/she makes in order to translate. The translators who do choose to retain and preserve the 'foreign' do so in order to introduce the readers to the cultural differences and bring them into contact with the 'newness' via the process of translation, as Jan Van Collie also notes in the case of Character name translation. Isabela Pascua (2006) calls this kind of translation strategy 'intercultural education'. Such translations encourage the youngsters to accept differences and diversity in separate cultures and provide a platform where there is exposure to the 'international' literary cannon. Pascua (2006) calls it a new educational policy…needed to overcome so much hostility toward the foreign, the strange, 'the other'.

Translating Food

Food is an integral part of one's cultural identity; it highlights not only the region's flora and fauna but also the history and economic condition. Roald Dahl in the story describes big, ceiling touching sections of meat and vegetables in underground storage houses which can be sufficient for the

Fox's family and his friends for a lifetime. He draws a rather enticing picture of excellent pieces of meat in abundance and unlimited storage of apple cider. Food is the theme of this novel; it is the fight to feed ones' family. The descriptions of British cuisine are not completely alien to the readers from other parts of the world nonetheless translating food is challenging as the meat cuts are not part of majority diet in the target language reading audience's region.

The three farmers in the story own big farms where they raise livestock like chickens, turkey, ducks, geese and pigs. The food described is not familiar to the Indian culinary practises. It is English cuisine that the author derives his reference from. At the very outset, one notes that the three characters, Boggis, Bunce and Bean are called farmers. Literal translation of farmer in Hindi is *kisan*. However, if one was to ask what *kisan* means to any Hindi speaker, the direct reference is reduced to cultivator of crops. For the lack of better umbrella term for the occupation the term used was '*kisan*'. While translating the items, the translation can either choose to provide equivalents of food which are prevalently relished in the Indian subcontinent or to replace it with a single term; 'meat' is used as an umbrella term in modern Hindi and borrowed directly from English. Another way of translating the terms could be transliteration, retaining the foreign-ness of the source text.

Children's literature is known to have a didactic function, in fact, the genre's literature function was limited to this before the twentieth and twenty first century philosophical discourse seeped into criticism and study of children's literature. As a source of knowledge in the allegorical form of a fantastical tale, children's literature not only imparts the knowledge of unknown regions around the world, it is a rich source of cultural and linguistic understanding.

The strategy of foreignization was adapted; edibles in the text were retained and transliterated in the Hindi script. Instances where there was an equivalent present in Hindi conversational language, it was used.

S. No.	Food Item : English Source text	Translation: Hindi	Transliteration
1	Dumplings	डम्प्लिंग्स (मैदा, मीट और सब्ज़ियो की पिंडियाँ जो भाप में पकाई जाती हैं)	ḍampliṅgs (maidā, mīṭ aur sabziyo kī piṅḍiyāṅ jo bhāp meṅ pakāī jātī haiṅ)
2	Doughnuts	डोनट्स (गोल आकार का आटे से बना पकोड़ा जो आम तौर पर मीठा होता है)	ḍonaṭs (gol ākār kā āṭe se banā pakodā jo ām taur par mīṭhā hotā hai)
3	Boiled chicken	उबला चिकन	ubalā chikan
4	Smoked hams	हेम (अंगारे के धुएं में पकी सूअर की टांग)	hem (aṅgāre ke dhueṅ meṅ pakī sūar kī ṭāṅg)
5	Sides of bacon	बेकन (सूअर के कुक्ष का मीट)	bekan (sūar ke kukṣ kā mīṭ)
6	Apple cider vinegar	सेब का सिरका	seb kā sirakā
7	Plucked chicken	चिकन अथवा मुर्गी (पंख साफ़ करके, पकाने के लिए तैयार मुर्गी का मीट)	chikan athavāmurgī (paṅkh sāph karake, pakāne ke liye taiyār murgī kā mīṭ)
8	Plucked goose	गीज़ का मीट (पंख साफ़ करके, पकाने के लिए तैयार गीज़ का मीट)*	gīz kā mīṭ (paṅkh sāph karake, pakāne ke lie taiyār gīz kā mīṭ)*

| 9 | Plucked duck | बत्तख का मीट (पंख साफ़ करके, पकाने के लिए तैयार बत्तख का मीट) | battakh kā mīṭ (paṅkh sāph karake, pakāne ke lie taiyār battakh kā mīṭ) |

Table 1: Translating food items to Hindi

The text, Fantastic Mr. Fox was first located and categorised based on the genre, writing style and reading audience. The task of locating the text was the first step in order to understand the use of language, literary devices and socio-cultural setting. It simplified the translation process by identification of similar tropes and trends in the categorised 'children literature' genre in Hindi language. Analysis of 'chronotope-ical' (as understood in Bakhtin's time-space context) of the text as published first in England show the change and difference with its translated Hindi text. The Hindi target text is translated roughly half a century later for young readers mainly from northern region of India (including Rajasthan, Haryana, and Uttar Pradesh where Hindi is the lingua franca).

The vast difference between socio-cultural settings of the two linguistic groups (the speakers and readers belonging to different continents); introduce the 'foreign' through translated texts. Hence, Lawrence Venuti's approach of 'sending the reader abroad' which concentrates on introducing and teaching target text readers about the 'foreign' is used as a didactic form for the text translation (in Hindi). While, the strategy of foreignization and domestication is utilised with the aspect of 'foreignness' highlighted as the two languages in the present study belong to very different backgrounds. The two terms are used as a scale to analyse the retention and replacement factor in the text. The strategy is especially important in analysing the translation of cultural universals like food which is generally

unique to the region the language belongs to. Out of ten food items in the text, only the term apple cider vinegar called 'Seb ka Sirka' was a part of culinary vocabulary in Hindi.

Although the names of the dishes and ingredients are cooked in certain parts of the non-vegetarian regions where Hindi is the lingua franca. The dishes are described in form of its procedure of preparation or ingredients that are used. For example, smoked hams and sides of bacon are just described as the meat of pig (with body part specifications) that is; 'Suar ka meat' or 'Suar ka Mans'. 'Suar' is the Hindi term for pigs. Lawrence Venuti's strategy is helpful in cultural analysis of translated text. The term meat has been directly adopted in Hindi vocabulary from English language. Another term used for meat is 'gosht' which is Urdu and regularly used in Hindi as well. Similarly, Chicken is an English term which is used for the meat of hen, cock, a little chick hatched from hen's eggs and cooked dishes prepared using meat of hen or cock. The term has been adopted in Hindi dictionary although the literal translation is hatchlings of hen. However, in case of geese and ducks the term in Hindi is *battakh* for both. Since, both have been described separately in the book the term Geese was retained in Hindi to separate it from Duck meat (battakh ka meat).

Conclusion

Children's literature in translation tops the list of most translated texts in the world, signifying the importance of special translation theoretical framework for such texts. Topping the list of most translated works is; The Adventures of Pinnochio (1881-83) by Carlo Collodi which was originally written in Italian, it is closely followed by Alice's Adventure in Wonderland by Lewis Carol (originally written in English in 1865) and Adventures of Asterix by Rene Goschinny and Albert Uderzo (originally written in French in 1959).

The cultural and linguistic challenges of translating Roald Dahl's novel from English to Hindi are numerous from differing literary forms of the two languages to the differing status of the languages within the world history. The study cannot be limited to the text and its translation, the histories of the two languages, the concept of childhood and children's literature have an important role in how the target text is translated, published and received. In Location of Culture, Homi Bhabha (2012), remarks "the emerging global reality, a new international space where great numbers of people have come to live in a state of in-betweenness, endlessly negotiating between the familiar and the unfamiliar, the unknown and the other." The research locates the translation as not a complete domestication or foreignization but the translated text as a part of the "in-betweenness" a "hybrid" of the history of the cultures and languages.

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Cite this Work:

Adapting Fiction into Film – *Rashomon* (1950)

PREETHAMOL M K

Abstract

Akira Kurosawa the Japanese film director is perhaps one of the most influential of filmmakers in the history of cinema. Rashomon (1950) directed by him is perhaps the best known Japanese film outside Japan. The film is an adaptation of two short stories by Akutagawa, the father of Japanese short story, namely In a Groove and Rashomon. My paper proposes to do a comparative study on how the genre of short story can be translated into a completely different medium of visual expression called the film by analysing the movie Rashomon. Has Kurosawa done a complete makeover with the original short stories? If yes, how far has he deviated from the original? What makes Rashomon such a special film and Kurosawa an ace moviemaker? These will be some of the basic questions under discussion in the paper.

Keywords: Fiction, Film, Intertextuality, Adaptation, Translation.

Introduction

Cinema always has the ability to transfer what is in the mind of the writer to a wider canvas. The versatility of the world of cinema from the point of view of a writer is extensive. What a work of fiction can do in terms of transferring it to another medium, especially the medium of cinema is brilliant. Thus, adaptation is a field, which makes critics all eager to discuss the extent to which one genre is faithful to the other. For such a topic of discussion, the article opines on the famed adaptation of *Rashomon* by Akira Kurosawa from two short stories by Akutagawa. The article begins with a discussion of the interdisciplinarity of novels, films and other genres of literature. It moves on to point out how adaptation and

translation are considered subsections of intertextuality. The ensuing sections deal with *Rashomon* and how it owes its origin to two short stories. It goes on to discuss how the movie changed the future of Japanese movies and the pivotal role of Kurosawa in the realm of world cinema. The article ends with references to how adaptation is a specific process, which involves modification and alteration.

The confluence between cinema and literature is as old as the medium of cinema itself. Since cinema, in its development stages was considered as a low form of entertainment and in its urge and stint to get upgraded to and influenced by a larger and a more elite audience, films drew heavily from other arts like music, theatre and literature. Thus, there are cinematic translations of literary works and numerous other studies relating to the relationship between a literary work and its adaptation. Adaptation is the successful execution of a part or whole of a work that is written to a film. Twentieth century has several theories, which speak about the relationship of literature and film. Backed by cultural theories, film studies became legitimized in the academic circles as an academic discipline alongside literary and translation studies. It also strengthened the idea of interdisciplinarity of films, novels and other genres of literature. Such intertextual studies trace the route where stories are always derived from and how it has its basis in other stories.

Along with intertextaulity, translation is another means of exploring how art creates an art or how a creation could be greater than the original. The more an academic or student reads, the more will he be able to identify parallels and echoes in the main creations that he has encountered. Julie Sanders in her work *Adaptation and Appropriation* credits Robert Weimann who calls this process of works creating other works as 'reproductive dimension of appropriation' (1983: 14). It is

noticeable that some translated works score better than their original ones and vice versa. When we talk of translation, the idea of fidelity is never far behind. It was Robert Stam, who brought a dialogical approach to film and literature. He was instrumental in exposing to a certain extent the concerns regarding the notions of fidelity between novels and films. Stam opines his ideas on fidelity in his article Beyond Fidelity: "The Dialogics of Adaptation that the shift from a single track, uniquely verbal medium such as film – makes fidelity in adaptation virtually impossible" (2000: 56).

Adaptation can be traced back to the early Greek playwrights like Euripides and Sophocles who based their stories on myths and legends, which the people of Greece already knew. Thus, it is not a new trend. Considering the various theoretical practices which emerged in the 1960s like structuralism and post-structuralism, we have theorists like Barthes who declared that 'any text is an intertext'. He argues further in his seminal essay *Death of the Author* that texts are not solely dependent on its authors for the derivation of meaning but a reader can create his own intertextual works. In this context, an acknowledgement is due to Julia Kristeva who formulated the term 'intertextualite' in her essay *Word, Dialogue and Novel* to mean the permutation of texts which she credited as a form of intertextuality. Adaptation involves cultural relocation, updating of a form or what is the focus in this paper as a movement into a new generic mode or context. Similar to adaptation, translation can be considered a subsection of intertextuality. Sometimes this shift can be less palpable, or at times more entrenched. But this does not mean that we are undermining the power of the original text. One thing, which is highlighted, is that adaptation, translation and intertextuality are constantly being affected by recent movements, readings and interpretations in the academic area. Homi Bhabha suggests how ideas are "repeated, relocated and translated in

the name of tradition" (Bhabha 1994: 35). Thus, the correlation among adaptation, translation, intertextuality, postmodernism and even to the postcolonial notion of 'hybridity' is not strange and bizarre. Therefore, the whole genre is in a state of flux and the reproductive capacity of a work that is original can never be underestimated. Texts should generate other texts and should indulge in diverse forms of creativity, be it in literature as by way of translations or other creative genres like film or even performing arts. There will be a steady tension and dynamics between the original and latter creation. Thus, the term intertextuality should never be restricted to debates around literary arts.

Intertextuality as a theory gained popularity owing to the development of adaptation studies as a new academic discipline. We can trace the origin of adaptation studies to the film's intertextual relationship to that of literature. There will be not any harm if we link it to cultural studies even. Since we live in the multimedia environment of iPods, gaming consoles, smart phones, Kindles and High Definition television sets, intertextuality and adaptation studies become more part of our critical, cultural and academic deliberations. Texts are made available to us on the video and on computer screens and this opens up newly revealed arenas of the foregrounding of intertextuality of texts. It can also mean a pattern that is interdisciplinary which cuts across time, space and borders. It would not be wrong to assume in this context that nothing can exist on its own and there is similarity between texts and authors from different social and cultural contexts.

Rashomon has all the elements associated with translation, adaptation and intertextuality. *Rashomon* is a classic movie by the renowned Japanese filmmaker Akira Kurosawa that came out in the year 1950. It received the Grand Prize of the Venice Film Festival and the USA Academy Award for the best

foreign film in 1951. It was based on two short stories by Akutagawa – *Rashomon* and *In A Grove*. These two stories give the film *Rashomon* its basic plot/plots (Encyclopedia Britannica). The script is based on and adapted from the short story *In A Grove*. Both the short story and the movie enumerate varied descriptions of a particular incident but is told from different perspectives. Kurosawa adopted the basic idea from the short story but thought it better to expand it and hence made use of Rashomon another story by Akutagawa. The film in its current version is a merging of the two. In *Rashomon* the story, we have a discharged servant who waits under the gate or the Rashomon for the weather to clear. He sees an old woman there who tries to steal hair from the corpses lying around, who aimed at making wigs with them as by way of living. The servant who has decided to become a thief knocks the old woman down, steals her cloths and runs away. Here we have the end of the story. In *In A Grove* we have multiple testimonies before the police about an incident and the story ends with no conclusion. In the film *Rashomon* we have Kurosawa making additions like introduction of a Commoner and the crying baby towards the end. He did not make a complete makeover with the short stories. Kurosawa renovated and adapted the content that he already had, transferring it into another form of personal expression that ultimately became the first film to gain an international recognition.

Akutagawa always questioned the values of morality but never gave answers. Kurosawa is also concerned with the ultimate truth and questions the reality about it. But he was also like Akutagawa never one to give answers to the truth he seeks. Both artists hurled their questions without the answers concerning truth and morality to the world they were offering their works to. We can say that the film rather dealt over with the existential despair over truth and morality, the tendency in

humans to lie, matters concerning loss of faith in fellow beings and so on. Dealing with such themes during the 1950s, the film rose to an elevated level, which was powerful enough to harbor a special place in the realm of human mind.

Analyzing what makes *Rashomon* a masterpiece is directly linked with what makes Kurosawa an ace film director. *Rashomon* is deemed an iconic film mainly because of its novel treatment of its narrative orientation. It is a movie that is totally progressive in its nonlinear approach to narration – a crime involving four unreliable characters. Also the sequential takes of various scenes (like the woodcutter moving through the forest, the ruined old city gate of Kyoto through the haze of the heavy downpour of the torrential rains to name a few) was considered outstanding and hitherto unheard of in the history of cinema. What makes Kurosawa an ace director is he was courageous enough to take the risk and plunge into an unheard of film narrative style in the 1950s. The film brought Japan to the map of world cinema. In addition, the cinematography was iconic in that it made use of light and shadows to bring the desired effect.

The impulse in man to narrating stories is as old as language itself. There is a psychological impulse in all human beings of all cultures to create stories. The task of translating/adapting from a literary work to that of a screen acquires wider perspective when the original text is a short story as opposed to a novel or play. A novel needs omission or editing when transformed into a film. But the case of translating a short story into film, the brevity of the genre makes the film director expand the basic story. Considering the film *Rashomon*, the success of the film owes to Kurosawa the genius who reconfigured the language of cinema by his story-telling legacy.

The film *Rashomon* is set in twelfth century Japan when famines and civil wars had devastated the capital. The focus is on the three characters – a Woodcutter, a Priest and a Commoner who are waiting under the Rashomon or the city gate for the rain to clear. The story then unfolds when the Woodcutter enumerates an incident he had witnessed in the forest that is about the murder of a Samurai. The Priest joins in when he mentions that he too had seen the Samurai and his wife in the forests some days afore. The rest of the story unfolds in flashbacks when we have the technique of multiple perspective narrative structure (for which the story is famous for) unfurling in black and white under the undeniable craftsmanship of the ace Kurosawa. Same incidents are repeated four times from four different angles, but rather than the story becoming clear, it only takes us to the labyrinth of confusion as to who is responsible for the murder of the Samurai.

Curiously enough, Kurosawa never gives us a logical conclusion as to who the real culprit is behind the murder of the Samurai. Thus, we have Kurosawa being indebted to Akutagawa in offering no conclusion to his story. Here Kurosawa is being faithful to his source of the story. To add a little bit of spice we have the wife of the Samurai being sexually assaulted by one of the narrators – the bandit, Tajomaru. The real reason why we have this alternate narration technique or better termed nonlinear narration, is may be to highlight the philosophical questions relating to reality and truth. Finally, we have the movie ending with an exclusive open closure giving us no clue as to ascertain the reality behind the murder of the Samurai, which seems to be the prime incident in the movie. What makes the film such a tantalizing experience is its refusal to endorse any of the witnesses account as a true one.

Let us look at two prominent terms connected with the analysis of films and explore it in relation with *Rashomon* – the Montage and the mise en scene in the film. Montage is the juxtaposing of different images by editing. The Russian film director Sergei Eisenstein is considered to be one among the pioneers in this field of film aesthetics. He considered montage to be the essence of filmmaking. The best example for this in *Rashomon* is the Woodcutter's walk through the forest, with the shots of the rays of the sun falling on him through the trees, a close up shot of his axe – all in a sequence of equal duration, shot in different shots, set to the back ground of a brooding score which upholds the overall effect of the montage shots in contrast. We find the effect of the metric montage more appealing. In common man's term montage refers to having a series of shots which are edited and sequenced in a series for a variety of purposes ranging from condensation of time, space and information. Again, montage is a style in which two or more independent shots are juxtaposed to create a new idea that did not previously exist. It is the latter method that made Kurosawa and his movies special and *Rashomon* is no exception.

What makes *Rashomon* such a special film is its then novel experiment with form and narration. The presentation of the story in distinct visual motif makes it such a brilliant example for considering film an apt medium for storytelling. The film did a laudable task in trying to delineate the relativity of truth. Any feature that contributes to the visual element of a film can become part of what is termed as the mise en scene of the film. They work together to weave the story. In *Rashomon* we have scenes of mise en scene depicting the innermost turmoil of characters. It provides a depth that goes beyond the scope of an ordinary narrative. Mise en scene helps in creating scenes, which go a step beyond ordinary narrative. Let us look at the final scene in the film, where the Woodcutter is pacing back

and forth. Torrential rains reflect the inner most disturbance of his mind. Techniques like this go a long way in storytelling. Multiple narrative techniques and methods can thus be rolled into one and be exhibited in a single piece like film.

No art form can stand without mutual borrowing and lending. The arena of film is no exception. The inane thread of a film can most of the times be traced back to another film, a book or another art form which appeals to the general public because of its popularity. If we analyze a great number of films, their original source can be a literary text from where the writer has actively or passively, consciously or unconsciously borrowed. Kurosawa borrowed for his *Rashomon* from Akutagawa. Instead of being limited to one medium, borrowing from other sources and thus being indebted to other sources gives films the status of blending with other media and art forms.

Conclusion

As by way of conclusion, there exists a vibrant relationship between the world of cinema and literature. There is no doubt that adaption of literary texts is one of the most popular forms of film making that gives rise to intertextual reading of films. One genre gives the other a chance to adapt and adopt itself to the nuances of the other. Adaptation is a specific process, which involves a multitude of routes comprising of modification and alteration of one genre to another: novels into films, prose narrative into prose fiction or even the transition of a drama into narrative. The popularity of this field is so much that we have modules in higher education programs which analyses the different genres of literature and films and what all consorts to the difference between them. Adaptation should never be about making polarized judgments. We should never judge if the original was good or the adapted version better. It should be about analyzing the processes, ideologies and methodologies involved in this intertextual relationship.

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NOTE

Women Translators in Urdu: A Survey

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Abstract

Like any language that relies on translation for its own enrichment, Urdu also benefitted from translation. In its journey of evolution, Urdu not only witnessed production of great works but also an influx of significant works that were translated from various languages into Urdu every now and then. Besides men who created literary works in Urdu while displaying their talents in various genres, women played their part too and translated many works of fiction and non-fiction. This paper surveys women Urdu translators and their literary contributions in various genres.

Keywords: Women Translators, Urdu Translation, Indian Women Writers.

Introduction

Translation is rightly considered a cumbersome process. In this process, meaning contained in a text of source language is rendered into target language (Bassnet 2002: 22). For some researchers, it is an "all-pervasive yet problematic medium" (Klitgard 2006: 11). In essence, translation actually serves as a bridge between two languages whereby the text of a language is transferred to another language, with all the features of its style, idea, thought, subject and technique. If literature becomes static and does not change over time, it would lose its sheen. So it must change with time. In this process of change, translation plays a very important role. Through translation, new trends in the literature of a region are created and new horizons are opened for the writers. A wide variety of topics comes up before them. Thus, not only new genres of literature but also new styles and topics are introduced in Urdu through

translation. Though translation is looked at as secondary activity, it is in fact a creative endeavor not less than original composition. It makes cross-linguistic and cross-cultural communication possible (Mukharjee 2009: 12). It is through translation only that cultural transactions between different civilizations of the world had been possible. Translation enriched world literatures (Baig 2005: 7). It is due to translation that different languages of the world became acquainted with *Arabian Nights*, *Rubaiyat* of Omar Khayyam, *Hikayat* of Shaikh Saadi and plays of William Shakespeare. Because of it, speakers of different languages of the world were able to use the Quran, the Gospel and the Vedas. With the help of translation, the world became enlightened with the philosophies of Aristotle and Plato. It is because of translation that the world is more accessible.

Naturally, like any major language of the world, the Urdu language too began benefitting from translation right from its evolutionary phase. As the language moved towards its maturity, the translation activity progressed as well (Baig 1998: 1-3). Despite the obvious difficulty in accessing the layers of hidden-meanings of the text in a foreign language and modeling it into another language linguistically while retaining its essence, the translation activity continued in every language including Urdu. Various scholars went across the realms and tried to enrich the Urdu language and literature with many precious words, expressions and thoughts. In the journey of Urdu literature's evolution, besides men who created literary works while displaying their talents in various genres, women played their part too. The Romantic Movement has greatly influenced Indian writers, and the subsequent rise of Progressive Movement after the rise of Marxism brought literature closer to realities of life. However, the role of women in creation of Indian literature is minor than their male counterpart. Although women writers have made their

existence felt in various genres of Urdu literature, their presence in the field of translation is apparently low.

The way women are portrayed in Western literature was not only a source of comfort to them, but also a dream to build their future in the literature. In December 1932, a collection of fiction in Urdu was published under the title "Angare". This collection had works of four authors, including woman writer Rashid Jahan. This book of fiction was in fact a rebellious attempt against the then Indian society. Ever since many women writers—inspired by this realism and modern cultural values of Western literature—have translated various genres of Western literature, especially from English, Russian and French literature into Urdu. Notable among such translators are Qurratulain Hyder, Ismat Chughtai and Khadija Mastoor.

In the wake of dearth of research study on women Urdu translators, this paper attempts to explore women translators of Urdu and their translation works with regards to various genres including novel, short story, play, etc. As far as the linguistic and translation analysis of the translated works referred for this study is concerned, it goes beyond the scope of the article. So, we have conducted a brief survey of female translators with the hope that this survey will help researchers working on analysis of women's translations.

Women have produced literary works in almost all genres. Their contribution in Urdu literature is significant. At the same time, their presence in translation is far from significant except for a few notable writers such as Qurratulain Hyder.

Novel and Novella

Novel as a genre in Urdu has developed under the influence of the West. Translations from various European languages played a very important role in it. Among women Urdu translators of novels, Fatima Begum's name appears on top

(Baig 1988: 192-251). She translated Henry Sharp's novel *Hashishin* into Urdu, which was published in 1928 from Lahore, the capital of Punjab. She is also the first known female translator of English novels in Urdu. Another women translator of novels is Syeda Nasim Hamdani, who had translated some works of French novelist Balzac into Urdu through English. Among them is *Old Goryo*, a well-known novel translated as *Budha Goryo*. This novel was published in 1953 from Modern Lahore. In addition, she translated Nathaniel Hatharan's English novel as *Lal Nishan*, which was published from Sawera Art Press, Lahore. Mumtaz Shereen is also an important translator who translated John Steinbuk's English novel *The Pearl* into Urdu as *Durru Shehvar* and published it from Karachi in 1958. Razia Sajjad Zaheer translated an English novel of Brune into Urdu as *Phool aur Samoom,* which was published in 1965 from Aaina-e-Adab, Lahore. In addition, she translated Mulk Raj Anand's novel *Seven Summers* as *Saat Saal* into Urdu, which was first published from Maktaba Jamia Ltd., Delhi in 1962. Shahid Begum translated Sir Walter Scott's novel *Ivon Hoe* as *Rubina*. Khadija Azeem published an Urdu translation of Russian national poet Alexander Pushkin's romantic novel *The Captain's Daughter* as *Kaptan Ki Baiti* from a publishing house in Russia. Altaf Fatima translated Harper Lee's English novel *To Kill a Mocking Bird* as *Naghmay Ka Qatl*, which was published from Lahore in 1969.

Urdu's leading novelist Qurratulain Hyder had been instrumental in the translation, especially of novels. She translated famous Belarusian novelist Vasil Bykau's novel *The Alpine Ballad* (1964) as *Apls ke Geet*, which was published from Maktaba Jamia, Delhi. She also translated James Henry's novel *Portrait of a Lady* into Urdu as *Hamien Charag, Hamien Parwane*. It is a 600-page long novel in which the novelist has used the stream of consciousness technique. Further, she

translated Chinghiz Aitmatov's Russian novella *Mother Earth* as *Maa Ki Kheti*, which was published in 1966 from Maktaba Jamia Ltd. In addition, she translated Vera Panova's *Yevdokia* (1965) and published it from Maktaba Jamia Ltd. She also rendered Truman Capote's novella *Breakfast at Tiffany* into Urdu as *Talash*. To her credit are also translations of a Russian novel into Urdu as *Khayali Pulao* (1967) and Ruvim Isaevic Fraerman's English novel *The Dingo*.

Qurratulain Hyder has not only translated several English works of various genres into Urdu but also some Urdu works into English. For example, she translated *Nishtar*, a series published in Awadh Punch into English. In fact, *Nishtar* itself was brought into Urdu from Persian by Sajjad Hussain. In addition, Hyder has translated her own works into English (Zeba 2012: 365-66). Among such works are: *Patjhar ki Awaz* (1965) as *The Sound of Falling Leaves* (1994), *Aag Ka Dariya* (1959) as *The River of Fire* (1998), *Aakhir e Shab kay Hamsafar* (1979) as *Fireflies in the Mist: A Novel* (1994), and *Mere Bhi Sanam Khane* (2004) as *My Temples Too*. She also translated her novelette *Chai Kay Baagh* as *The Garden of Sylhet*. It was known about Hyder that she would not allow anyone to translate her novels into English. The only exception in this case was CM Naeem, whom she allowed to translate *Sita Haran*. Hyder's translation of her own Urdu fiction into English is an interesting topic for researchers to critically explore and analyze self-translation from the point of view of art of translation.

Short Story

Like novel, short story as a genre in Urdu has its direct connection with the Western literature. In this genre, Mumtaz Shirin stands out as a prominent translator. She is a Pakistani author who translated the German fiction through English into Urdu. Her translated collection of short stories such as *Phoot*,

Moti Bacchi, and *Ham Asr German Afsane* were published by Froze Sons, Lahore. The latter collection is jointly translated by Mumtaz Shirin and Mohammad Saleem ur Rehman (Baig 1998: 192-251). Another major translator of short stories is Qurratulain Hyder. She translated Mikhail Sholokhov's short story *Fate of a Man* as *Aadmi Ka Muqaddar* (1965). In her early days as writer, she translated Bengali writer Syed Waliullah's short story *Nav* (1958), which was published in Karachi based monthly magazine *Mahe Nau*. She also translated *Jila Watan* as *The Exiles* which was published by Pun Pakistan in 1955 (Zeba 2012: 365-66).

Plays

Plays or drama is an established genre popular across literatures and ages. Many plays have been translated into Urdu from the Western languages, particularly English. Among the translators of plays are Abdul Halim Sharar, Shahid Ahmed Dehlavi, Majnun Gorakhpuri and Saadat Hasan Manto. One of the notable woman translators of the plays is Shahida Hameed Khan. She translated Greek playwright Sophocles' play *Oedipus* from English into Urdu (Baig 1998: 192-251). Besides her, Qurratulain Hyder translated T S Eliot's lyrical drama *Murder in the Cathedral* into Urdu as *Kalisa Me Qatl*. Henrik Ibsen's trendsetting play *A Doll's House* was also translated into Urdu as *Gudiya ka Ghar* by Qudsia Ansari. It was published in 1957 from Azad Kitab Ghar, Delhi. In addition, Shaheena Badar Ansari translated Chekhov's Russian play *Ward No. 6* into Urdu from English. It was published by Maktaba-e-Shahkar, Lahore. In modern drama, George Bernard Shaw is a major name. His play *Arms and Man* was translated as *Mohabbat aur Jang* by Khurshid Nighat.

Biographies and Autobiographies

Biographies and autobiographies are popular as genres in Urdu too. Many biographies and autobiographies of prominent

people were translated into Urdu from different languages. Bano Qudsia translated a biography of Jacqueline Kennedy (Baig 1998: 192-251). The book *Jacqueline Kennedy*, which was compiled in English from the 31st American First Lady's private letters, photographs, journals and newspaper clippings, was translated by Qudsia and published in 1966 from Aaina-e-Adab, Lahore. Razia Sajjad Zaheer translated Maxim Gorky's biography as *Zindagi Ki Shahrah Par*. In this biography, Gorky describes his life conditions from 1868 to 1936.

Children's Literature

In children's literature, some women writers have made important contribution. For example, the Urdu translation of Eleanor H. Porter's story *Pollyanna* was translated by Fahmida Niaz Ahmed. It was published from Lahore in 1964. A Russian novelist Lazar Yosifovych Lagin's children work *Starik Hottabych* was translated into Urdu by Qurratulain Hyder as *Jin Hassan Abdur Rahman*. It was published in 1962 by Maktaba Jamia Limited (Zeba 2012: 413-460). Further, Syeda Nasim Hamdani not only translated a book of stories in English as *Sacha Khwab Aur Doosri Kahaniya* but also Leonard Weisgard's work as *Nat Khat Hathi Bacha*. The works of Weisgard was compiled by the Child Study Association of America.

Religious Texts

Religious translation is an important field of translation. The translation of religious books, especially the *Quran*, is a very delicate, important and challenging task. The translation of the *Quran* into Urdu has a long history. Right from Shah Abdul Qadir, there have been numerous translators of the scared book but a few of them are women. Though many women may have undertaken the task of translating the *Quran* into Urdu, two women successfully completed the translation of the whole *Quran* in their lifetime. Mahmuda Begum stands out as the

first woman who translated the *Quran* in a very sophisticated and easy language. It is considered as the first translation of the *Quran* by a woman. She belonged to a respected scholarly family of Hyderabad Deccan. This translation was completed in 1943 and published by *Darul Tabã Sarkar Aali*, Hyderabad Deccan (Huda 2017: 75). Another woman translator of the *Quran* is Suraya Shehna, who hails from the Indian state of Karnataka. Her Urdu translation is also simple and came out in 2012. Of more than 1,000 Urdu translations of the *Quran*, these are the only two translations done by women.

Conclusion

In the field of Urdu translation, women have contributed significantly in various genres of literature even though they are less in number. The study reveals that women translated important works from Greek, French, Russian and English cultures into Urdu. They also translated sacred texts. A detailed review of the services of the women Urdu translators could be an important research area with the potential to add value to the history of translation in Urdu. In addition, there is a strong need to highlight services of contemporary women in the field of Urdu translation.

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INTERVIEW

An Interview with E. V. Ramakrishnan

K. M. SHERRIF

E. V. Ramakrishnan (hereafter EVR) is presently Professor Emeritus at Central University of Gujarat, Gandhinagar, Gujarat. He has published poetry and literary criticism, in Malayalam and English namely *Being Elsewhere in Myself* (1980), *A Python in a Snake Park* (1994), and *Terms of Seeing: New and Selected Poems* (2006), *Indigenous Imaginaries: Literature, Region, Modernity* (2017), *Locating Indian Literature: Texts, Traditions and Translations* (2011) and *Making It New: Modernism in Malayalam, Marathi and Hindi Poetry* (1995).

K. M. Sherrif (hereafter KMS) is Associate Professor and Head, Department of English, University of Calicut, Kerala. Among his better known works are *Ekalavyas with Thumbs,* the first English translation of Gujarati Dalit writing, and Kunhupaathumma's *Tryst with Destiny*, the first study of Vaikom Muhammed Basheer's fiction in English.

KMS: As a teacher who has worked among different linguistic communities, literary critic, bilingual writer and multilingual literary translator all rolled into one how you do look at the possibilities in translation among Indian languages and from Indian languages into English and foreign languages?

EVR: We are yet to comprehend the potential of translation between Indian languages in its totality. Apart from literature, there are several other resources in each language that need to be carried across languages. Unfortunately, in the post-Independent period, political boundaries have come to define the cultural boundaries in India. The minor languages within a linguistic territory and the bilingual communities across linguistic boundaries have come to be marginalized. Recently I read about the three tribal languages that are spoken in

Attappadi tribal belt. None of the teachers in the Malayalam medium schools there speaks or understands these languages. Thanks to a concerned lady- teacher's efforts, the problems faced by tribal students have been noticed by the administration and society. They have appointed 'translators' to help students. I have taught in South Gujarat, which has a large tribal population. While interacting with tribal students there I came to understand that their mother tongues are not Gujarati or Marathi but local languages, which are not understood by the majority. Professor Ganesh Devy has done considerable work to promote tribal languages. Bhagavan Das Patel's translation of Bhili Mahabharat is a major contribution towards understanding our oral heritage. Translators have to reach out to minor and marginalized languages and also build bridges between communities speaking marginalized languages and mainstream languages. In a couple of generations, most of these languages may be extinct.

KMS: Three decades ago, Sujit Mukherjee described Indian literature in English Translation as a link literature for India. Was it a tenable argument in his time? Has the situation changed?

EVR: His point is well taken. Hindi has failed to evolve as a link language though it had the advantage of numbers, compared to other languages. English has emerged as a language of power with its vast resources in terms of global reach, command of technology and business. Indian writing in English scaled heights unthinkable in the 1950s or 60s in subsequent decades. All this has redefined the equations of power between languages within India. Literature produced in Indian languages has found international audience through translation in English. O. V. Vijayan or Anantha Murthy may not be as much known as Salman Rushdie or Arundhati Roy, but discerning readers in Europe and America have access to

their works, thanks to global editions of their translations. Fiction and poetry from Indian languages have circulated widely through translation in English. While fiction has the advantage of big publishers and attractive literary prizes, poetry seeps through many boundaries to infiltrate cultural spaces. A recent translation of Urdu ghazals into English by Anisur Rahman has been a best-seller. In literary festivals across India and abroad, writers from Indian languages are attracting attention of readers through translations. I would say English has become a mediator, interpreting India for an international audience which includes a new generation of Indians who do not 'read' any Indian language.

KMS: Do you think the classification "Indian Literatures" a little fuzzy? There is a larger perspective of the Indian subcontinent as a cultural area, which would include countries or territories, which speak languages other than what is spoken in the political unit called "India" There is a presence of writers and artists from the SAARC countries, besides Afghanistan in major cultural events in India. Amateur organizations devoted to translation of literature include languages like Dari and Pashto also in their translation projects.

EVR: 'Indian Literature' as a category was constituted in the singular during the Orientalist phase of colonial period. In the post-Independence period, the nation-state uses its integrationist ideology to justify its unitary orientation. In reality, Indian literature is an eco-system of vast cultural imagination that includes multiple traditions from the oral to the written, from the tribal to the metropolitan, from the folk to the scriptural and from elitist to the subaltern. Unless we keep an eye on this vast diversity, we may idealize 'Indian Literature' to an imaginary universal status that will erase the lived realties it embodies. India shares many languages with its

neighbours, and let us remember that South Asia is home to more than a quarter of the total languages of the world. Sanskrit and Tamil both of which have literary traditions going back to the era before Christ have preserved their works of great antiquity till today. The world is fascinated by this heritage and we have every reason to feel happy about its great worth. Tamil, Punjabi, Bengali, Urdu, Hindi, Telugu and Malayalam are spoken by large number of expatriates that constitute the Indian diaspora in present day's globalized world. Recently I met an Afghan student studying in Maulana Azad National Urdu University at Hyderabad. He was critical of the visibility accorded to the works of English works by Afghan authors at the total exclusion of Afghan writing in Afghanistan-based languages. There are several cultural markers that unify South Asia and we need to look into the linkages between languages and cultures across the region from Afghanistan to Cambodia. Comparative Literature Association of India (CLAI) has devoted some of its recent international conferences to South Asian Literatures and Cultures and the response from neighbouring countries has been good.

KMS: Has the role of the media been a promising factor in translation in India?

EVR: Visual media in English pay attention only to celebrities. They will highlight an author or a book when the book wins international acclaim. Or when an author is victimized as the case of Perumal Murugan illustrates. There are a few who understand the dynamics of regional literatures and their traditions among the English print media journalists. I remember how Times Weekly from Mumbai edited by Dileep Pedgaonkar (it ceased publication long ago and Pedgaonkar is no more) brought out a special issue on Marathi Dalit Writers in the mid-1970s. The Illustrated Weeekly of

India serialized *Samskara* making it the first major successful modern Indian novel translated in English. Many political commentators who write in national media are bilinguals who are aware of the literary culture of the Indian languages. What is singularly missing is a national literary magazine that can showcase the best that is written and thought in Indian languages. *Indian Literature* by Sahitya Akademi is a bimonthly, which can hardly cope with the varied and prolific literary productions of India. The real constraint lies in getting good translations of major works. We have not paid attention to the teaching of translation in our curriculum. A language like Turkish is much smaller than Malayalam or Marathi but it has excellent translators. A writer like Pamuk got Nobel Prize mainly because Turkish has a translation culture that goes back centuries. At the Bogicazi University in Istanbul, I found that the Translation Studies department has more than fifty faculty members. They publish a world-class journal in translation. In Italy, I am told, (I have not verified this) there is an entire University only for Translation Studies. Every language department in our colleges and universities need to incorporate a component of Translation Studies. We need at least a couple of Universities in each state with Departments of Translation Studies. It will greatly help disciplines like Media Studies, Theatre Studies, Film Studies and Culture Studies not to mention Comparative Literature Studies.

KMS: How do you look at author translation? Has it proved effective in translation from Indian languages? Or has it run into issues of appropriation and manipulation?

EVR: Self-translation has a tendency to rewrite the original. This can 'corrupt' and misrepresent the text. This has happened with the best self-translations. O. V. Vijayan is a good example. Issues of appropriation and manipulation can be brought out only through close readings of translated texts.

Unfortunately, we are yet to have Translation Studies as a major programme in our universities. Readers fail to distinguish between translations by authors and other professionally trained translators. The remedy is better theoretically-sound detailed studies on translations as a cultural process.

KMS: What role do you foresee for digital technology in translation? The limitations of computer aided translation or machine translation has already been acknowledged both by the academia and by the techies in the field. Yet, translation memory as a growing corpus, which accretes with translators working online, appears to be quite promising. What are the indications?

EVR: Digital translation has progressed much and it can take care of several public requirements of listings and documentations etc. However, when it comes to creative writing or texts with dense intellectual arguments, machines will not be of much help. Maybe artificial intelligence will keep making progress and take over some of the functions of translation. But I feel strongly that the inventiveness of language cannot be matched by any digital technology. Yes, translation memory as a growing corpus can be enabling. It will enlarge the choices available for the translators. For instance, when you translate from a dialect of Hindi or Malayalam, the English equivalents are hard to come by. It may be helpful to have resources for such contexts of translations. Words and registers dealing with specific profession or life experience may also have to be expanded slowly though accretion. Digital humanities should address problems of translation as well.

KMS: How promising are translations between Indian languages as opposed to translations from Indian languages into English?

EVR: Unfortunately, Indian languages drifted apart in the post-colonial period due to their politics of culture. Despite there being several Tamil-knowing scholars in Malayalam, how many good translators have we produced in that language? From Hindi or Bengali we have been translating into Malayalam for a long time. Even here, the number of good translators is dwindling. On the other hand, there is greater demand for international best sellers and award-winning English authors. This has created a good market for translations from English. However, there is another side to this issue. Translations do not occur in a vacuum. Whenever the literary sensibility reinvents itself or the hegemony of prevailing aesthetics and ideology is challenged from the margins, as in Dalit writing or Women's writing, the pace of translation accelerates and it is an indicator of cultural transformation. Dalit writers from Marathi got translated into Hindi in the 1980s as part of the Dalit movement in the Hindi belt. Women's writing in Malayalam also was greatly enabled by translations from Indian as well as foreign authors. If there is a genuinely original voice in any Indian language, it will soon be translated into other Indian languages. The growing popularity of translators at Literary Festivals is an indication that Indian writers have more opportunities now to meet and listen to regional writers from other languages.

KMS: Two of your books, *Making it New* and *Locating Indian Literature* offer highly motivating insights into parallel instances of canonization, emergence of literary movements and linkages between literary and political movements in Indian literatures. How do you look at the role of translators in facilitating comparative literary studies involving Indian literatures?

EVR: I could undertake these studies because good translations of representative writers of the modernist

movement were accessible. My understanding of these languages also helped. Translations are essential for comparative literature studies to flourish. We know that it was migration of European scholars to the U.S. during the 1940s that paved the way for the emergence of Comparative Literature Studies in American universities. In a world where migration has increased many folds, translation is essential to make sense of reality. There is evidence to suggest that the othering of certain countries and communities is the result of inadequate understanding of their cultures and traditions. Translators give access not to a mere text, but a whole culture. Subtitles in films, write-ups on foreign authors and new titles, commentaries or accounts of cultural events, interviews with authors from other countries etc are also modes of translations that have gained currency. I have used interviews with authors in my book, *Making It New* as a means of accessing their creative worlds. Theoretical writing in Indian languages often use of concepts of western theory in translated form. Ideas of Marx, Freud, Gramsci etc got disseminated in India through academic writing that has strong content of translation. The fact is translation exists in many forms in contemporary culture. When an Iranian film director is interviewed by a Malayalam weekly that is translation.

KMS: What kind of translation would you advocate between Indian languages? Domesticating? Foreignizing? Of course one has to apply slightly different yardsticks than what Lawrence Venuti employed when he formulated his domestication-foreignization binary. Is building bridges a more important criterion than offering highly readable texts?

EVR: You are right in saying that it is a binary that may not be totally relevant to us. For instance, between Tamil and Malayalam, one can use a mode of translation that is reader-friendly and author-friendly at the same time. This question

becomes relevant when Indian language texts get translated into English. English translations insist on 'fluency' as a quality and this forces the translator to make translation domesticating. However, there are core issues in a text that need to be retained in a translation either by using words in the original or retaining the tone of the original. English tends to universalize experiences erasing the local and the regional. This can be an act of cultural violence in the context of translation. We need more studies of translations between English and Indian languages.

KMS: It has been observed that Translation Studies is one of the weakest branches of literary study in all Indian literatures. Europe or America does not have the history that translation has had in the Indian subcontinent over the last two millennia or more. Yet few studies have offered discussion, either theoretical or descriptive, on them. In contrast, Translation Studies has taken big strides in countries like Belgium and Israel with populations of just a few million. Although seeking to fashion home-grown theoretical paradigms on translation in India may be justified, wouldn't it be resourceful to use Western translation theory also to study translation in India?

EVR: Translation is basic to the constitution of the category called "Indian Literature". Around 1000 A.D. modern Indian languages from Assamese to Telugu made a transition from being mere spoken languages to literary languages through the creation of powerful literary texts, and all these literary texts were translations from Sanskrit. We have never studied this phenomenon with the seriousness it deserves. In Malayalam, from *Ramacharitam* to *Nalacharitam,* all the major works are translations from Sanskrit puranas and epics. Of course, there are oral traditions which are local and indigenous. Even they use translations in different ways. These acts of translations were attempts to negotiate power relations between the

local/indigenous and the universal/pan-Indian. We need a vigorous discipline of Translation Studies to explicate and analyse the complex ways in which texts were constituted in Indian translation traditions. From Parsi Theatre to modernist theatre, much of modern Indian drama freely borrowed themes, styles and modes from foreign traditions, often masking their sources. We need to devise new theoretical categories while studying these phenomena. The compulsion to theorize translation was absent for two reasons: it was native to the literary traditions of 'vernacular' imagination and secondly, writers who practiced translation were not self-conscious about it. Theorizing begins when we step out of the frame and reflect on the process from an outsider's perspective. This was not available to Indian scene till colonial modernity made its appearance. Yes, we need to borrow insights from theories already in circulation. Your examples of Belgium and Israel are very relevant. I cited the example of Turkey. Latin American scholars have come up with the idea of translation as cannibalism. Maybe, we can talk of translation as 'parakayapravesam' or 'reincarnation'? In fact, the large numbers of terms we have for translation, such as 'anuvad', 'paribhasha', 'tarjama', 'mozhimattam', 'vivarthanam' etc. carry the seeds of theory, which can be developed.

KMS: Do you consider creative writers the best translators of literature? Have translations in India generally offered evidence for this? Can one consider translation creative writing? Is the translator a 'secondary creative writer'?

EVR: I have often felt that poets make good translation of poetry. But even here, I would argue that translation needs as much creativity as original writing and cannot be considered a second-rate cultural activity. A. K. Ramanujan's translations of ancient Tamil or medieval Kannada poems mark a breakthrough in the history of translation of Indian poetry but

they have been criticized for falling into a trap. Hence, translations need to be constantly evaluated and discussed. Classics will require multiple translations. Tagore's *Gitanjali* has had more than twenty translations in Malayalam and also in Gujarati, but each translation captures some facets of the original which were missing in earlier translations. Tagore's own translation of his poems has been severely criticized for what they make of the original. Translation is as much a critical activity as a creative act. Recently I translated a series of poems that speak of freedom and justice, into Malayalam, and it was as painstaking as composing original poems. The important thing is it satisfied something deep in me. In that sense, it was a creative act.

KMS: How effective have been the efforts of the Sahitya Akademi and National Book Trust to bridge the languages and literatures in India through translation?

EVR: I have been a member of the Advisory Board of the Sahitya Akademi for English for two terms. I know how difficult it is to locate good translators. Both the Akademi and NBT have a list of translators and they do make every effort to translate the best works of each language. But, somewhere along the line, they fall behind the private publishers in bringing out the best translations of reputed works. The questions of meticulous editing and commitment to the cultural role of translation are not sufficiently understood by these state bodies. They also have to pay translators better if they are to get the best translators. An OUP edition of translation goes through many stages of scrutiny that ensures quality. No such painstaking editing is visible in Sahitya Akademi or NBT translation projects.

KMS: Do you think the syllabi in universities and colleges in India have given sufficient representation to Indian Writing in

Translation, whether into English or other Indian languages? Is a paradigm shift necessary?

EVR: I was recently a resource person in a University where they were trying to introduce regional writing in English translation. The selections were good but the larger objectives of the syllabus were vague. The act of translation was never addressed as part of the syllabus. The undergraduate classroom should be the space for creating awareness about the complexity of the process of translation as a cultural activity. This can be done using short films or interviews or subtitles in films or reading the original followed by translation. Translation cannot be taught. It is a collaborative activity. Hence it demands a workshop model of participation and sharing. How many teachers will be able to lead such activities? Finally, when we teach a story in translation, attention is not on how 'translation' as a process constituted the text, but as a story in English. Our examination system focuses on objective skills where mastery of skills of translation are not seen as desirable goals. This needs to change. A graduate has to possess some basic skills of translation into English or some other Indian language.

KMS: *Masterpieces of Indian Literature* is a monumental work which introduces works in India's literatures to readers in English in India and abroad. Do you think a more contemporary compilation is now necessary – especially in view of the fact that more literatures like Bodo, which have not been accessed in the book, are now being translated profusely into English and other Indian languages? There have also been noticeable changes in the ways in which literature is read and discussed.

EVR: Yes, we need a revised version of many such compilations. In Indian literatures, the possibilities are endless. Once, Dilip Chitre and I discussed how we could edit a series

of anthologies of Indian poems on such themes as love, death, travel, memory, dreams etc. We need several such anthologies. We also need intellectual biographies of authors, biographical dictionaries, dictionaries on cultural phenomena that have shaped texts etc. Instead of writing a dissertation a candidate can either translate a text with a critical introduction or write an intellectual biography of an author which can be considered equivalent to a thesis. Such innovative approaches are part of research in many foreign universities. In order to read Perugmal Murugan or Sarah Joseph we need to know several things about religion and rituals in India. Where do we seek them?

KMS: Movements and trends like Progressive Literature, Dalit Writing and Women's Writing have made indelible marks in many literatures in India. Often the same movement or trend appears in different forms and with different levels of intensity in different literatures. As a writer who has documented such movements in India's literatures, do you think such documentation has kept pace with the appearance of such movements and trends? Do you think a more comprehensive and precise recording of literary history is necessary to account for such movements and trends, and more sensitive translations to take it across to other literatures?

EVR: We have not kept pace with the changing nature of such cultural phenomena. For instance, we hardly have any idea about the environmental movements in Hindi or Marathi though I have come across many works in these languages dealing with such issues. As you said above, languages like Bodo and Santhali have an altogether different take on ecological issues as they have rich oral traditions. We have not even documented their literary traditions going back to many centuries. Trends have a tendency to move across Indian languages through creative osmosis. This has not been studied

in detail. We tend to follow the West in tracking literary movements. Hence, we insist on finding a post-modern phase here, though our 'modernist' phase is yet to be defined. In finding synonyms for Romanticism, Modernism, Postmodernism etc. we have not bothered about their contents. Is there an Indian way of being romantic or modernist? That will raise many issues. Nirmal Verma or Puthumaiputhan are not modernists in the same manner.

KMS: Can we think of more vigorous student-exchange programmes in universities and states across linguistic communities to facilitate more prolific and sensitive translations between Indian literatures?

EVR: That is the way we should move forward bringing multiple traditions face to face. Translation can flourish only in an atmosphre of difference and a context of relating to the other. Students who are capable of speaking more than one or two languages should be encouraged to take up translation. There should be occasions where successful translators meet them and introduce them to the craft and art of translation.

KMS: Works like Harish Trivedi's *Colonial Transactions* try to look at the interface between Western and Indian literatures. It is undeniable that without this interface few literatures in India would have developed the way they have. Do you think this interface has been given its due in critical writings in Indian literatures?

EVR: This interface has not been sufficiently understood by us. Recently I have been working on literary historiography and I found that none of the literary histories in Indian languages ever take translations seriously. From late 19th century, new literary forms such as the novel, the short story, autobiography, travelogue etc made their appearance through a series of translations. But we fail to document the process that resulted in the production of the massive cultural

transformation. There are several trajectories that need to be mapped in detail to get a comprehensive view of Indian literary transitions. Anantha Murthy wrote his *Samkara* while in England. Nirmal Verma, the Hindi novelist, spent ten long years in Prague and when he came back to India he was deeply disillusioned with communist ideology. Something similar happened to O. V. Vijayan when he was writing the novel, *The Legends of Khasack*. The relations between India and the West need to be understood not in terms of master and servant, but in the context of reception. It is the dynamics of Indian socio-cultural context that decides what will be received or rejected. Influence studies have to give way to reception studies, and here let us underline that translation is an important mode of reception.

KMS: Jawaharlal's designation of English as India's window to the world was realized in several ways. One of them was the entry of texts from languages other than English indirectly through English translation. In Malayalam for instance, almost all translations from Russian and French (there are quite a few) before 1947 came through English. Indirect translations continue to arrive in Indian literatures through English. What are the good, bad and ugly of this process?

EVR: I think this process has something to do with the colonial context of our history which cannot be wished away. The British hegemony ensured large-scale dissemination of English in the subcontinent. It was inevitable that it cannot be dismantled over a few decades, despite the strong decolonising impetus that drove our politics. We continue to access other literatures of the world through English translations. This is true of many cultures in Eastern Europe just as Spanish has become the language of South American countries. Many African countries use French for the same reason. The best part of this scene is that we have a tradition of teaching English in

this country which makes it accessible to large number of people. The bad or ugly side of it is that English translations carry their own cultural baggage and we are often unaware of it. An author like Paulo Coelho has nothing to offer to Indian audiences but he is sold in millions even when translated into Indian languages. A lot of cultural garbage is marketed very successfully by the efficient system of global capitalism which promotes English. Translation Studies along with Cultural Studies have a crucial role in shaping the process of reception as a critical activity by providing informed criticism.

KMS: The National Translation Mission's efforts to translate knowledge texts in English and foreign languages into English constitute a huge translation project. How do you look at the project in terms of its impact on India's linguistic communities?

EVR: I am aware that it is a major project, which will make the Indian knowledge system available to a larger audience. For instance, we have hardly any translations of literary criticism in Indian languages into English. It is important to take stock of our achievements in our thought systems and the manner in which we have devised our critical vocabulary or discourse. I am sure it will alter the way in which we view Indian languages and their knowledge systems.

KMS: The National Translation Mission has consistently given proportional representation to regions and languages in India in its workshops and other programmes. Have other national or regional organizations followed this model?

EVR: NTM has followed an inclusive policy in organising workshops and seminars etc. In a vast country like India, there is acute shortage of resources when it comes to organizing programmes of this kind. I strongly feel regional and local initiatives in organizing translation workshops or seminars with one or two resource persons from outside are still a viable

idea. I have been part of many such programmes in many parts of the country. At the same time, we are lucky to have an institution like CIIL where NTM is located. They are able to bring together experts from all over the country to meet and discuss important issues related to Translation Studies in India. We should ensure that their publications have greater circulation to create an impact on the higher education system.

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Cite this Work:

An Interview with Udaya Narayana Singh

K. MANSI

Udaya Narayana Singh (hereafter UNS) is a world-renowned poet, linguist, essayist and translation theoretician. At present, U. N. Singh is the Dean of Faculty of Arts & Humanities, Amity University Haryana. U. N. Singh has authored 26 books in Bangla, Maithili and English, and published over 180 research papers besides editing 21 volumes and translating nine other books. For his tremendous academic contribution, U. N. Singh has been awarded various national and international awards.

K. Mansi (hereafter KM) is working as an Assistant Professor (French) at Amity School of Languages, Amity University Haryana. She is the Coordinator for French language and Quebec Studies program at Amity School of Languages.

KM: You are a distinguished linguist, an acknowledged poet-playwright, an eminent translator and a renowned scholar in the field of Applied Linguistics and Culture Studies. You have held high profile administrative posts in various prestigious organizations like Visva-Bharati, Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL), University of Hyderabad, University of Delhi – to name a few, where you established translation related projects like National Translation Mission and Anukriti (at CIIL), National Testing Service and Linguistic Data Consortium (at CIIL), and Centre for Applied Linguistics and Translation Studies (University of Hyderabad). It was your vision to make translation, especially translation of knowledge texts into various Indian languages, a national mission. What was the motive behind such a vision? Please tell us something about the background of NTM.

UNS: The context of 'National Translation Mission' or NTM has to be understood in terms of former Indian Prime Minister

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Manmohan Singh's idea of several other missions like 'National Library Mission', as part of whole set of working fora under the guidance of Sam Pitroda. You may recall that 'National Knowledge Commission' (NKC) was set up at that particular time and Translation was one of its 10 or 12 focus areas, such as Knowledge Applications in Agriculture, Health Information Network etc. The interested can look up the NKC Report 2006-2009. Jayati Ghosh, a well-known academician from Jawaharlal Nehru University, who was also one of the members of the NKC approached me based on the inputs from other sources to act as a key person who could start thinking what nation could do about translation. When I looked at the statement of Manmohan Singh, I found that he had this dream of making translation as an important industry. The point that was in our discussion with NKC was: 'Can there be a Translation industry?' We know that Foreign Language translation has been there in India for long time – especially in the business and industry, and that there are many who join various universities to learn foreign languages so that they could find employment in various companies and even in government set-up as translators. But the question is "Can this become an industry on a large scale" so that a large chunk of advanced knowledge could percolate down to our languages? The idea was that this percolation would have twin effect: Enrich our Indian languages, which would then find newer domains of use, and draw up a large number of talented young people in to science, and technology research who might have been educated through regional languages medium. The second question was this: Although there are a lot of knowledge texts in India which have never reached the West, this would be a time to alter the situation. The translation traffic should flow both ways. There was a time when people looked at India as an enigma, and "discovered Sanskrit" and the knowledge it has produced long ago. But the fact is that in

the Indian context the tradition of such knowledge text production has been a continuous process. And it is also the case that many of these knowledge texts are so original that they had nothing to do with the Western debates going on. Some of the more modern Indian texts are a reflection of Western theoretical endeavors. Yet, some of these may also have been making interesting additions and contributions to the western discourse. Some may, of course, be derivatives but many of these knowledge discussions are not derivatives at all. They are true to the context of India or Indian literature, sciences and other Indian concerns. Therefore, these can be made available in the Western languages translation. Thus, this was another question he had raised.

Also, as soon as an important discovery is made and a paper is published abroad we see, if a paper is published in a foreign language like Russian, immediately English, French and German translations are made available. Similarly if a paper is published in French, English, German and Russian translations are available. Something like that can be done in Indian context. The idea was knowledge, how facilitation of knowledge text transfer can take place. The other important point was, there are many translational tools required for making such large-scale translations possible, such as Translators' Dictionary, Subject Special Technical Glossary, or Thesauri, or some small devices to facilitate the translators, like machine-aided tools. All these could also be a part of the activities of National translation mission. We started thinking in these terms.

Although we did not eliminate literary translation at all because a lot of knowledge is actually reflected, preserved, continued and propagated through creative writing, we did float yet another project – jointly with Sahitya Akademi, titled 'Katha Bharati' under which so many titles were eventually

published by the Akademi jointly with CIIL. You might have noticed that many of our creative writers have been talking about such times and spaces on which nothing else was available. No historical evidence is available till date. This has been happening since time immemorial, because even our epics such as the *Mahabharata* are only a collection of such tales. Therefore, literary text cannot be completely excluded from the domain of 'Knowledge texts'. So we thought we would sit down and draft out a base document for National translation mission. That was the time when I actually engaged my friend and fellow author-translator, K. Sachidanandan, the former Secretary of Sahitya Akademi (who was also the former editor of Indian Literature journal – the most important literary translation journal in India), as consultant before we drafted out the final version of Translation Mission document. That is how the whole documentation process began.

I always had this idea of doing something on a large scale for translation ever since 1986 document from the Ministry of Education, which talked about the New Education Policy. There was a whole page on translation in this document, thanks to P. V. Narsimha Rao (the then Minister of HRD) who was also a well-known translation theoretician and in a way a linguist with working knowledge of 17 plus languages. He later went on to become the Prime Minister of India in 1991. His idea was also similar to ours, namely, that there should be a full-fledged discipline of Translation Studies within the University Grants Commission (UGC) network in Indian universities, which was missing at that time. Thus it so happened that from 1986 onwards, I was chosen to set up the Centre for Translation in the University of Hyderabad, because the decision at government level was that one of the central universities would be given all the necessary manpower as well as money to set up the national center of translation. That is how I ended up shifting from the University of Delhi to the

University of Hyderabad (HCU) to design and establish this centre. I considered this to be a much-needed task and a great opportunity. Fortunately, Bh. Krishnamurti was the Vice Chancellor of HCU at that time. Popularly known in the academic circle as "BhK", he has been in linguistics and literature both. He was a Professor of Telugu literature and language who joined Ph.D. program in linguistics in the USA, did his post-doc, and published in the best possible places. He has now passed away but he was indeed the most eminent linguist of India at that time. He was also a literary critic and translation studies person. He reposed this faith in me and gave a completely free hand. I thought I would set it up easily but there was also a problem. On the one hand you have the discipline of 'Comparative Literature' under which translation was taught those days, on the other hand, you had the discipline of 'Linguistics' under which some departments had courses on translation and lexicography. Both these discipline actually overlap with translation studies. So I had proposed in the University of Hyderabad to establish "Centre for Applied Linguistics, Translation Studies and Comparative Literature" together. Later on, in the Academic Council of the university, it was decided that although Comparative Literature did talk about translation studies, but its point of view or concerns on translation are different, and also that at the University of Hyderabad, there ought to be a separate centre for CL as well. Further, the discipline of Applied Linguistics would gel well with Translation Studies because there were so many aspects of translation, such as Lexicography, Machine Translation, and Interpretation, or even Inter-Semiotic Transfers usually taught within Applied Linguistics that could be related to Translation Studies. Therefore, we established different centers, one "Centre for Applied Linguistics and Translation Studies" (CALTS) and another one called the "Centre for Comparative Literature" (CCL). There were some common courses in

Translation Studies. The CCL was designed by me and S. Nagarajan. Initially, at CALTS, we started with two Ph.D. programs – in Applied Linguistics and also in Translation Studies, but later on – after the Ph.D. and M.Phil. programmes got established, we also created a "PG diploma in Translation Studies". Later, these diploma courses with their modules were bought over under the NTM. So, that is how the whole thing got started, from much earlier days. I hope the motive behind this mission is clearer now.

KM: "My philosophy aspires for a feeling, neither stated nor translated as yet" is what you believe in. From being a linguist and a poet to being a translator, how far this philosophy of yours fits in?

UNS: (Lughter!) This is not fair. You have picked up a line from my poem to frame this question. A poet is not necessarily the best person to be a translator of her or his own poetic lines. I don't know how this will relate to this particular Maithili text that I wrote in my 1986-anthology. The deep essence of this line, here, is that there are areas in our belief system, which cannot be transposed into another culture. The belief system of a poet or an author or a writer is quite rooted in one's own culture. Taking it out from that culture and making it bloom into another culture, which is what a translator does, is not easy, nor is it quite often feasible. A text can be modified, and there can be a *bhashantaran* (भाषांतरण) of the text but this language transfer (of the text) is not merely transferring the form of the text from one language to another person's cultural expression system, or language. It does not make it possible for all the philosophical aspects of the text to be taken care of in the recipient language. Sometimes that is possible, perhaps if languages are genetically related or genealogically related, or at least culturally related, i.e. when two languages sharing the same cultural spaces. For example, languages of former

Yugoslavia, Croatia and Serbia were sharing the same cultural spaces, which gave rise to a greater degree of translatability between them. Another example may be from Pashtu to Uzbek because of shared cultural geography. In the Indian context, Assemese to Bangla, Telgu to Kannada could provide such instances. Lot of philosophical give and take has occurred between these pairs. But these are exceptions. When you are talking about transposing the philosophy into completely unknown language and unrelated languages, that makes it difficult. That's what I wanted to say here.

KM: You are a poet as well as a translator of poems. What is your take on 'Poetry is lost in translation'? Secondly, do you feel that 'untranslatibility' exists or is it a misrepresentation?

UNS: The question of losses in translation sounds to me, like a businessperson talking in terms of loss and gain. Can we talk about translation being a profit or a loss business? It is very difficult to say. It is like giving up the body's structure and entering another body structure and becoming something or somebody else, a Yayati. That something else may not behave in the same manner as the person from whose body the soul has moved out. Therefore, from this what would result cannot be anybody's guess, because no one can really predict. It can be more acceptable or less acceptable; it can be more enjoyable or less enjoyable. I really don't know if one should talk about such losses or gains in translation. This is my take on it. I really don't know. It sounds good both in the film and in theory but I don't know how far we could go about discussing these issues.

As far as the second question about "untranslatability", frankly, I don't know, and I have not faced a text that is completely untranslatable. If everything can be translated into another language then there is no purpose of writing in different languages. Then we can all agree in United Nations to

forget about all other languages and write in only one language since everything can be translated. But that does not happen because there are certain texts which are imbued into certain languages and cultures so much so that they cannot be disentangled from their languages and cultures of origin. Yes, there is lot of facilitation in transferring which has happened because of immensely powerful tools created by lexicographers. There are very good tools that have come about, many interpretations of same text have also happened. In this context, the knowledge texts are particularly easier to decipher as compared with literary texts, which are more difficult as each one can have so many interpretations. What is available in one interpretation is "absent" of is "lost" in another interpretation. Which one is real will be often difficult to say. So, impossibility of translation or untranslatability is not the real crux of the problem. Yes lot of it is translated today and lot more can be translated. Yet, not everything is possible to transfer without making compromises with the essence of original or without losing the shine of original or in comparison with the acceptability of the original, or its intended ambiguity. While translating you can actually interpret or you can make it easier but translating with all the senses intact, with all the multiple ambiguities intact, all the references intact is not easy because a lot of things being referred into the source language may not be available in the corresponding language, or it could be that they are very redundant in the target language. Well you may make them available, and there can be a whole book or dissertation or dictionary on it, but by the time they are popular and people read these translations, it will take time. For example, in the Greek tradition, there are different set of Gods and Goddesses who do no behave in the way our Gods and Goddess behave. So, if the Greek text is translated into our language we need to recontextualize, or you will need to train our reader in India in

Greek mythology so that they are able to appreciate what is happening in these texts. Therefore, there are intrinsic problems. It is just like imposing American presidential system on Indian (parliamentary) political system. Perhaps it may fit but we do not know.

KM: Generally, translation is defined as 'transfer' of meaning, sense, or information from one language to another. Do you agree with this definition? Do you really think there is a 'transfer'?

UNS: There is an element of transfer. Not everything can be transferred. The attempt is made by the translators to transfer but it is not exactly the transference of everything. There cannot be wholesale transfer. What we mean by the term 'transfer of officials' from one place to another can be a good metaphor here. You can actually theoretically transfer one official from one ministry to another or from one place to another, but you may notice that the person, who may have been effective in one place, may not be effective in another. While transference is purely an official decision in such cases, the result of transfer (in this case, translation) may not be as appreciable as in case of the actual transfer of meaning or sense of the text. Because you try to transfer a meaning assuming that particular meaning and concept is available in both languages. But if not, it has to be created in one of them, the whole category has to be created. Then a mere transfer will not work because what you do then is that you choose an equivalent, a near equivalent but that near equivalent may not represent all the semantic features. So that becomes a problem. So this definition is both good and bad, right and wrong at the same time. It is not a full proof definition of translation.

KM: What is your definition of translation?

UNS: I don't think translation can really be defined. What is the definition of mind? Somebody may ask a philosopher, how

do you define mind? It is not easy for a psychologist or a philosopher to define their prime area of investigation: 'Mind'. 'Translation' is so basic that it decries all attempts to define it in precise terms. There is one interesting thing about this act: You will notice that translation has not emerged. Many people think translation is an activity, which has emerged only in the recent times. I would say that translation has been one of the most important and original ways of looking at sense, looking at lines, looking at sentences, looking at texts right from the beginning of humankind. I have a paper named "In Other Words" where I have explained that even within the same language we are restating our sentences all the time – especially if somebody does not understand my words because my level of statement may not match the recipient's level of understanding the same statement. The recipient may not have the right kind of background to understand what I am saying. So, I might have to restate; or say in other words. This is one of the basic fundamental activities of human communication from the beginning. I would say that 'translation' is one of the important features which Charles Hockett has missed out during his Design Features of Human Language. It has been there in our speech right from the beginning. It is and should be a part of defining what a speech is. Except that I can always say that I am using vocal-auditory channel but it has also been demonstrated that there are people who are not able to speak because they are differently abled, either dumb and deaf, yet they come up with the excellent propositions/texts in writing. That means if you have another channel of communication, you can win over the speech channel, the spoken channel, and come up with several ways of saying the same thing. So it is not the speech or the "spoken word" that is important. Language is beyond speech, beyond writing. So, that is the interesting thing about the human language which is one of the defining features of human beings.

I would say translation is an equally important feature of what makes us "human beings". Anybody speaking in any language can speak in other words; can interpret his sentence with different set of words in any other language, or in the same language. It means people in all societies are natural translators. When you do that between two languages, it attracts attention. That is what we are talking about in different translation theories. Therefore, 'Translation' may be easy to describe but is difficult to define.

KM: A true polyglot, who has not only mastered his 'mother-tongue' (Bangla) and his 'father-tongue' (Maithili), but has also translated between these two language pairs, apart from English – that's what you are. What motivated you to translate within or between Indian languages when you had the option to translate from other European languages (primarily English) into Indian languages, and vice-versa?

UNS: No, I have translated from English and French into Maithili and Bangla both. I have also translated among various Indian languages. The reason for preferring translating from IL-to-IL, or from Indian languages into other Indian languages is that these tasks are 'doable' because of the common cultural features. That is the only reason. Otherwise, you are always tempted to bring out some well know English text or through English some Russian, German, or French texts into your language. There are many intermediary languages. In India Hindi is fast becoming an intermediary language even within our own Indian languages. Because in India there are Dravidian languages and Aryan languages, which are quite apart but quite often, they are mediated by Hindi. But then it all depends who has translated it from, say for example from Telugu to Hindi and how good his Telugu or Hindi was and how good the result has been. For example, take the instance of a task of translation of *Kavisekhara* Guruzada Apparao and

his plays in Bangla. Translating Gurazada Venkata Apparao's '*Kanyasulkam*' (1892), given his dialectal background and Telugu styles which are not standard Telugu, the task will not be easy. Then you must have corresponding Bangla stylistic variation away from the standard Bangla to be able to do justice. So, this is the problem. The matter is not easy but yet it is still easier than doing it into English. In English I would have perhaps done with my inadequate knowledge of Cockney but I will not know whether that will be a correct decision while transferring the sense of such dialectal texts. So if you get to do it in Hindi, which variety of Hindi will you pick up? It is not easy to decide if you would like to choose the 'Bazaar Hindoosthani' of Suniti Kumar Chatterji, where Hindi and Marathi get enmeshed. There are many decisions like that which can still be difficult but it is easier than doing it between one European language into another. That is the reason why I emphasized on translating from Indian languages to Indian languages.

KM: Can you throw some light on the traffic of translation in Indian context. Which way is it going according to you?

UNS: In the Indian context, if you clearly go by the statistics, any standard Indian library of Hindi would have half the books written in original Hindi, and the other half would be translations. Perhaps, Hindi has the largest number of the translated books. The reason is simple: In comparison to other languages, translations into Hindi sell more. It is a much bigger market. People would like to know more about what is going on in other languages and cultural spaces but there are no means to know, except for reading translations into English and Hindi. Since a lot of people know Hindi because of various reasons, this is bound to happen. First, Hindi is being spoken in eleven states so that is a very wide market area for publishers to explore. Second, there are always people who are

bilingual outside the core Hindi belt so that becomes a further attraction for the publisher. However, I would still say that there are two or three other Indian languages, which are catching up very well with Hindi; in particular, Malayalam is an example. Anything which is controversial, which is useful and which is being discussed in media, or which may be selling very well elsewhere, I am not talking about the media in Kerela, but media in West Bengal or Maharashtra, it catches the attention of the Malayali translators and you have this book immediately available in Malayalam. In fact, I was once invited by the coveted poet-translator, Ayyappa Paniker, a well-known translation theoretician himself to read out my translated poetry in Thrissur organized by the Kerala Sahitya Academy in the 1990s. On the margins of this poetry reading festival, they had also organized a translation exhibition. He took me to the exhibition and showed me that there were so many of books translated from Bangla to Malayalam. He asked then: "But do you think you have translated so much from Malayalam into Bangla?" I was so ashamed. The truth is that we have not done it in Bangla. So these languages have their biases. In Bangla, lots of works have been translated from the European languages; not from Indian languages. It is not because that Bangla do not think about Indian languages but it is because of the market. Kolkata Book Fair is one of the biggest book marketing exercises in West Bengal. They have the biggest sales point for the Spanish, French or German authors into Bangla. But translating a well-known Hindi author about whom there have not been much discussions in the regional media or among creative writing circles in Kolkata and Dhaka, it would be difficult to find their books on the shelves here. Hence, that kind of translation is not taking place. So I will say Marathi, Malayalam and Bangla are catching up but Hindi has been doing better than all these three. It all depends on the size of the market.

KM: How do you identify yourself, a theoretician of translation or a practitioner of translation?

UNS: Both. I started as a literary theorist and a practitioner of translation in mid-1960s but when the chance came about twenty years later to set up whole center for Translation Studies, I started picking up translation theories and looking at the debates in translation. To my surprise, I realized that I had been missing out a lot by not reading up these interesting debates. Although a lot of people say that you don't need to know theories of translation to be able to function as a good translator, it is actually true. A good translator, according to me, is an accident. Good translators are also a product of complex intercultural situations. This is because translation is an act, which can be perfected with more exposure and experience. Take, for example, the case of cricket. You don't need a theory of cricket to be able to be a good batsman. It is an act; either you are a good batsman or a bad one. But then there is no harm in knowing about the theory of cricket or about its history or about field placements and bowling strategies used by earlier cricketers, because then you will be a good leader. You can teach others what to do in a difficult situation, or in difficult pitch condition, or what happened earlier. So, theory can always help but as for myself I began as practitioner and developed my theoretical interest and acumen later. At this point of time, however, it is difficult to divide myself and say if I am a theoretician or a practitioner. I keep on publishing. In last five years I have published three very major works in translation myself. One from Maithili into Bangla[34], one from Kannada into Maithili[35] and one from

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[34] 2013. *Dhvase Jay Shanti Stup* (Translated from Maithili) Sahitya Akademi.
[35] 2017. *Vachana – Maithili translation of 2500 Vachanas from Kannada*.

Bangla into English[36]. So you see here various pairs of languages are being talked about.

KM: Can you please elaborate about your recent work on translation, which you just mentioned?

UNS: These include the following:

2013. *Dhvase Jay Shanti Stup* (Translated from Maithili into Bangla; Keertinarayan Mishra's poems); Kolkata: Sahitya Akademi.
2017. *Vachana – Maithili translation of 2500 Vachanas from Kannada*. Bangalore: Basava Samithi. Co-translated with 10 other Maithili poets.
2013/16. *The Other Gitanjali*. Andorra: AnimaViva multilingüe SL, Escaldes – Engordany, Principat d'Andorra [www.animaviva-publisher.com]. ISBN 978-99920-68-26-7; E-Book: ISBN 978-99920-68-24-3 2016c, Indian Edition. *The Original Gitanjali*. Kolkata: E-Lekhan & AnimaViva multilingüe.

KM: What do you think about theories of translation? While translating in different language pair, do you apply the same theories? Based on your experience, do you think there is any one translation theory that can be applicable across language and culture?

UNS: As a critical theory cannot take precedence over creative writing, the same thing applies to Poetics and Poetry-writing. The theory of poetry can only follow the poets. As students of literature, critics look at how the poets, novelists and authors create, and then set up their theoretical framework because no novelist will read the theory first and start writing. That's not possible. Similarly, a translator will not read theory and then start translation. But we need is to teach Translation Studies, to

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[36] 2013/16. *The Other Gitanjali*.

do research in and on translation, and to look at the original text and original culture as I would say that the translation studies is a part of a much bigger project, namely Cultural Studies. So to that extent, Translation theory is relevant but not necessary for a practicing translator. Yes, a practicing translator can understand various possible strategies available, if the translator happens to be not a born grassroot bilingual in the two languages or is a translator who is slowly becoming a capable translator. You know there are people who are born poets and those who become a poet. Poetizing and penning poetry are different. Similarly, if large-scale translations are to be done you have to become the professional translator, and you will have to train many people into this act of translation. So people across streams, like medicine, engineering, sciences etc need to be trained as translators. Their services are required. So in a way, the leadership in Translation Studies must act like *Bhagirath*, to bring the Ganges of knowledge of different sciences into their own culture. Take for example, Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis, the founder of Indian Statistical Institute, who had given so much thought to the translation theories. S. N. Bose, the physicist, had talked so much about use of indigenous languages for science writing and teaching as a part of translation. This was so, because they wanted to have Indians thinking in Indian languages about Physics or Statistics. So that is altogether a difficult project, a different project altogether. There are many other reasons as to why Translation Studies must be taken up seriously, how it has to be done and should be done. But it is not always necessary for a practicing translator to be a Ph.D.s in translation studies before she begins to practice.

KM: since you have translated from different language pairs, from European languages to Indian languages and within Indian languages, can you highlight the most prominent problems and challenges any translator face? Can you also

suggest how to deal with such problems while undertaking the 'task of translator'?

UNS: There are three major problems, first, the problem of equivalence. How do you find the exact equivalent, or even near equivalent? It is not an easy task. There are many theories of equivalence. Second, the problem of cultural connects or disconnect between the original and the resultant texts. It is almost like a Sacchidanandan-poem where he writes:

> *"Poetry translation is*
> *the embarrassing head-*
> *transposal of the Vikramaditya tales.*
> *The translator*
> *supports another poet's*
> *head on his trunk."* (Tr. by Ramakrishnan, E.V. 1984.)[37]

It is as if you have to fit the head of one onto the head of another. It should not become a Ganesh syndrome, if you are not finding the right head, put the elephant's head. Third, authors play a game. Words and authors are good in playing a game. They are ever creative and they keep on experimenting with meanings and their carriers, i.e. words. To match that creativity in another language is a challenge. It can be matched by an equally great poet or author in the other language, and not by an average or mundane translator who has been paid rupees per page to translate it. When Ramdhari Singh Dinkar translates Tagore in Hindi, it seems as good as the original in Bangla. Not everybody can do this. There are 45 or more translations of Tagore's Geetanjali in Hindi but not all are as good as that of Dinkar's translation of Tagore's poems. When the poet-laureate Andre Gide translates Tagore in French, it becomes very different. So, you have to be equally great poet

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[37] 'Poetry Translation.' Translation of K. Satchidanandan's Malayalam poem. *Chandrabhaaga* II, Vol. 11: 39-40.

to be able to translate. This is the problem. Tagore translated Kabir Das into Bangla, and it was very good. But it may not always be the case.

KM: You have done lot of work on Tagore. Do you think as a poet he is exalted in English? He himself has confessed that while translating himself, he always remained target-oriented. In doing so, do you think he has not been faithful to his own creation and somewhere diminished its value? Should a translator be target-language oriented?

UNS: Yes, I think Tagore made a lot of compromises. His compromise was prompted from his target-orientation. You are right about that. In my own translation of Tagore, in the book 'The Original Gitanjali' with a translation of 157 poems, you cannot compare 104 of them, as they were never done attempted by Tagore. He did not render his 1910-Gitanjali into English. But 53 of them were picked up by Tagore for his English version along with 50 others from other anthologies. But you can easily compare my translation of those 53 and his rendering. My translation focused on the original but his was focusing on the readership. What readers would like to read was important for him. That is a strategy quite often, but that is the prerogative of the poet-translator who translates his/her own poem. I am no one to criticize him but I would never do it for my poems. I can only say that.

When I have translated my poems into English or when they have gone into German or some other languages like Tamil, they remained as close to the original as possible. I will give you an incidence when I met a German translation specialist during the inauguration of German version of my poems in Bonn. I met with a group of 40 different translators and theoreticians and German Translators' Association personnel. I was surprised to know that some of them remembered my lines in German and quoted from memory. I said this is about a rural

landscape in Mithila; how is it that you like this poem more than the others do? I thought you would like the urban kind of poems and feeling more than this culturally imbued text. They said no, our village set up reflects quite well into the original, and therefore, these poems have also come up very well in German.

So sometimes even without compromise, you can achieve. As for Tagore, he was somebody who was always willing to shift from one version of his play to another more than a times, if need be, or from shift from one building to another. He had five buildings built during his lifetime (Udayan, Pratichi, Shyamali, Punascha, etc) in the Rabindra Bhavana complex, never satisfied with one building. If you look at his plays, same plays have 13 versions, and his poetry pages are full of changes and criss-crosses. Bangladeshi poet Jasimuddin, student of Shantiniketan and close to Tagore, said even before going on to stage, Tagore as director would say could I change your dialogue? So, if you talk about faithfulness, he is not faithful to his own texts. Depending upon his target audience, he would modify his texts. He has been doing it not just because of the translation, but also as a matter of strategy. So, if you look at the Vichitra website, run by Jadavpur University, 13 different windows of the same play will come up; each window highlighting the changed text. This is the special feature of Tagore. He has been constantly modifying himself, changing himself. May be if he is asked to do it again, he will do it in a different way. I think that is a strategy. That is why when Satyajit Ray translated Tagore's stories into film; he takes the liberty, which Tagore would have taken. But the result is fantastic. If he would have struck to the Tagore's style of writing, the result would have been disastrous. So this is a very peculiar situation. You don't know. The creative mind decides how the resultant text must be done.

KM: To what extent should we prejudge our audience?

UNS: It can only work on the basis of our intuitions.

KM: Does it have the same result? Does it click every time?

UNS: Not necessarily. It might not click every time. Some of his translations are outrightly bad. He misjudged the audience. He is not successful everywhere. Some places he been successful but the strategy he has used have not led to success everywhere. What he does at the age of 50 and what he does at the age of 70 when time has changed are not the same as by 1930s, the parameters had also changed. In addition, by 1916 the entire poetic diction in Bangla had changed. There is a big shift from archaic style (Saadhu) to the modern colloquial (Calit) style, thanks to Pramatha Choudhary and the whole group of authors called the '*Kallol*' group of poets. The advice given by Budhhadev Bose, a well-known expert on Tagore himself, to his fellow poet was that do they should not read Tagore at all – to come out of his influences. Write independently, think independently, and do not be blinded by the aura of Tagore – was his advice. There were other creative authors who came up in our cultural scenario differently. So, Tagore cannot be invincible always. He cannot always be successful. As a translator, he had his own limitations.

KM: The traditional translation talks about the concept of fidelity for the source text and there has been a long debate on politics of translation and whether one should translate faithfully or freely. What is your advice, a translator should be faithful to original text or the target audience? Where should his/her faithfulness lie?

UNS: This has been a major debate in China as well. If you look at ancient Chinese translation theories, you will find faithfulness vs beauty have been major concerns for them as well. I would say that translators should not start as Fitzgerald

did. His take was an extreme position, namely, that Persians did not know how to write poetry and he would teach them. So, in his translation of Omar Khayyam's *Rubaiyat* he would do the real Omar Khayyam. Fitzgerald wanted to better Omar Khayyam. That is a wrong strategy. Although, his translation happened to be very good but not necessarily better than the original Persian text in comparison. I would not say that original text is sacrosanct as there will be a necessity to tweak it a bit when you are taking it to another culture.

Same is the case when you are taking the literary text into media. The language of television and film is very different from the language of literature. That conditions of the other language forces you to rethink and reorder the element, which might completely change the order of the event sometimes. There is a theory of the real time and the apparent time in fictional analysis; this theory talks about the real time of the event and how does the author manipulate it. The filmmaker manipulates it in a completely different way. So I would say original is very important, bring as much emphasis and focus on original as much as possible but depending on what you are doing and where you are taking it, for what purpose you are translating it, you may have to make changes, compromises, modifications etc. Nothing is a crime. If you look at Aijaz Ahmed's experiment, a group of 25 American poets looked at Ghalib's work. The rendering was done in 25 different ways. The way Adrienne Rich translated, Thomas Fitzimonnes or others will not translate it that way. It could be different interpretations altogether. It is possible to have multiple good translations. How you will go about is a call taken by the translators and a good translator will always do that.

KM: Do you believe that there is a good or bad translation or wrong or right translation?

UNS: Not right or wrong translation but yes there are certainly good and bad translations. Who is right and who is wrong is an endless argumentation but good and bad will always be there. You are easily read and find out how good a translation has come about.

KM: What according to you are the competencies that a good translator must possess?

UNS: Well, I would say that it is very complicated task. Because, it is almost like a cubist painting: You dismantle the original shape and when you reassemble, it becomes a very different entity. It is not easy to say how one should do it but yes, there is a lot of intuition, which works in these renderings. At each point it is like a many different lanes that are open, many choices would be there. Moreover, depending on what choice you make, it will take your text to a different alley. Translation functions in that way. I have done multiple translations of the same text just for practice to see what happens if I take this route and what the result is if I take another route. It turned out that both are good but not comparable. So it is possible to use a Group translation method here which is one of the many ways to do this. Sometimes this method takes care of many things. For example, Shankha Ghosh has done Ghalib translation with about 20 different poets. They sat in a group, exchanged notes and modified accordingly. So, this method was different from what others have done and when the book came all the 20 names were there as each one of them have contributed to other's translation in some way. The group translation is a very complicated task.

KM: Translation Studies has emerged as a new discipline, which most agree, in 1976 at a colloquium at Leuven, Belgium. The translation theories have also been influenced by the contemporary explosion in literary theory, like

postmodernism, post-structuralism, post-colonialisms. Can you underline major revolution in this field in Indian context?

UNS: The major contribution of the Indians engaged in translation and creative writing has been to position a translator on par with an author because transmigration of texts, legends, stories, fables, and myths have been a part of 'authoring' in all our languages for a long time. *Kambaramayna* or *Ramcharit-Manas* by Tulsi Das, or three hundred other Ramayana texts are an example of what I am saying. The same thing happened with many other texts and epics. The literary theories you point out are western theories the influence of which on Indian theories of translation is yet to be assessed. In future, when someone evaluates contribution of some of us practicing this theory-building now that the discipline of 'Translation Studies' made a beginning in Indian universities since the mid-'80s, the comments will perhaps show where we stand.

KM: In your book, *Translation as Growth,* you assert all original literary work is translation and all translation, original creation. Kindly elaborate as many may get confused with the superficially contrary nature of the statement.

UNS: The second part of this comment, namely, all translations are like original works of literary art flows from the tacitly accepted position on 'translation' and 'transcreation' as I have argued in reply to the earlier question. However, the first part of the statement in my book, namely, that all creative writing is – in fact, twice-removed, and is a 'translation' of the 'mental' or the 'logical text' that an author has somewhere in his consciousness is a stand I sincerely believe in. That also explains the statements we often hear from some writers and poets, namely, that she/he had been trying to write the same fiction again and again in all his novels, or penning the same poem again and again. That poet-critics like Octavio Paz

would also be thinking independently in the same way is not a surprise to me.

KM: Can you please elaborate on "Translativity model" as the fastest way of language development?

UNS: This is fairly simple, if we follow the processes of 'standardization' of new literary languages. They would have a number of 'successful' models before them as to how Bangla or Hindi languages/literature progressed over a period of time to arrive at their current literary standards. If we insist that the new languages must also go through a few hundred years of trial and error, and then achieve what they require to do as early as possible, that may be unfair. Instead, they may follow the 'Translativity' model and see which of the routes, or moves, or decisions match with the genius of their own language, and adopt them or a combination of them as a matter of strategy of standardization.

KM: Sooner the translation is naturalized, faster the language will grow. Please comment.

UNS: Some theoreticians believe that a translation does and must look different from the original writings of the target language, whereas some of us believe that an all out attempt must be made of the translators to see that the resultant text looks and reads like an original text − for which some compromises and changes or deletions and additions may have to be done so that they are 'naturalised'. If that is possible to do, and we are aware that it may not be possible or profitable, or even desirable, to do that all the time, the effect should be positive.

KM: Only tool to keep a text away from destruction is translation. Translation can save text from destruction. Can you cite some examples?

UNS: Let me give you a concrete example. There was an important regional epic: 'Kanchi-Kaberi Kavya', an epic in Odia and Telugu, based on a local legend not very well-remembered (See Sen, Sukumar & Sunanda Sen. 1958. '*Kanchi-Kaberi Kabya,*' Kolkata: University of Calcutta). This one was preserved in the Jagannath Temple archives as a part of *Madala Panji* – authored by the Karana-Caste writers of Puri. In translation, the text became popular in Bengal. It was transcreated by the 19th Century scholar-poet, Rangalal Bandyopadhyay - who is considered to be the pioneering modernist. Thus, the text lived on in South Bengal, in the adjacent areas of Odisha. The story is of the period of the King Kapilendra Deva (1435-1470) who had won over Kanchi in the south, but had lost much of it which his son, King Purushottam Deva (1470-1497) had won over again after he defeated the King of Vijayanagara in 1480. The Karnata King as shown in the literary text is perhaps Salur (sic? Saluva?) Narasimha, whose daughter Padmavati or as known as Rupambika in some Telugu manuscript is the heroine in this kavya. Similarly, survival of a few Charyapada (9th Century AD) songs of oldest Bangla specimen in Tibetan version is another case.

KM: We have heard you say that the 'Mithila region' and its language, culture and society have not been properly explored by scholars. Could you elaborate?

UNS: We have very little scholarship in the economic and cultural historiography of Mithila. That is a fact. Attempts have been made to publish books on linguistic histories or literary histories, although many of them are biased to some extent as they allot very little space for the subaltern texts, such as 'Naika Banijara'or 'Raja Salhes'. Further, any study on Mithila Region must also consider the entire cultural space including the then Bengal, Nepal and Odisha, if not also

K. Mansi

Assam and Nepal – to make a complete sense of the Regional Studies.

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An Interview with Dipti Ranjan Pattanaik

UMESH KUMAR

Dipti Ranjan Pattanaik (hereafter DRP) holds Professorship at the Department of English, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, India. A well-known name in contemporary Odia short story, the Government of Odisha has awarded him the State Sahitya Akademi Award recently. His essays and short stories have appeared in Journal of Commonwealth Literature, MELUS, and Weber Studies among others. He has published four volumes of translation and seven volumes of short stories.

Umesh Kumar (hereafter UK) teaches English studies at the Department of English, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, India.

UK: Professor Pattanaik, first thing first how you entered into the field of translation and when?

DRP: (Smiles) you will be surprised to know that I got my first lessons in translation purely because of mercenary reasons. When my father died, the days were still early for me in the college. His demise had left my family and me in great financial distress. To compensate the lack of money, I started translating the radio scripts for All India Radio (AIR). I translated many radio scripts while still at college. Later, these translations also supported my university education, as I had no other source of income. In those days, AIR used to organize a national competition in which the scripts from Indian languages needed to be translated into English accompanied by a synopsis. I remember to have spent sleepless nights translating from Odia to English in the month of December for early January used to be the submission deadline. In those youthful days, I took this task of translation very seriously because it was bread and butter for me. I put my soul in this exercise. In life, most of the tasks undertaken by us are fallouts

of our innate desires. The desire to satisfy my hunger compelled me to consider translation more than just a job. If I talk about translation *per se*, I was not aware of various modes of translation at that time. I used to be an instinctive translator engaged in iconic mode of translation. Instinctively, through this model, I would recreate the text in the target language. From early days, I had a flair for rhythm within the language. This helped me to translate poetic pieces from Odia into English. With ease I started to evoke the rhythms of English language in order to assimilate the message of the source (Odia) text in my translation. I must also mention that the only recognition I used to get for these translations was in the form of money. Many of the scripts translated by me went on to win prizes but my importance, as a translator was never mentioned. Later on, through the sophisticated theories of translation I learnt the concept of *invisibility of translator*! My baptism as a translator was characterized by invisibility sans limelight. However, interviews like this will break that ceiling.

UK: So, something that started as a material need also percolated in your pursuit as an academic? I had a detailed look into your CV and found that along with creative writing, translation in terms of practice, thought and theorization seems to linger as an academic 'obsession. Any specific reasons for such a stance?

DRP: When I entered in the academe as a teacher, for a very long time I was worried by the fact that most of the academic activities undertaken by us (especially) in English Departments were rather mercenary in nature. On the top of it, this approach gets coupled with the psycho-mental slavery imported from the West. For example, the research that was undertaken at that time, the buzzwords circulating among the scholars was the discarded stuff from the western academia. These discarded stuffs reached the academic metropolis of India fifteen years

after they were abandoned in the West. And to people like us, who were working in the semi-urban, urban colleges of the country these terminologies and academic trends would take another fifteen years to reach. Whenever, I used to visit these metropolis academic centers, I used to feel very strange and disturbed by the kind of language they would use. Let me exemplify this predicament. By the time we got trained in *New Criticism,* mastered it and thought it to be a religion, I realized that those things had already been discarded thirty years ago by its own proponents. It was not very difficult for me to realize that somehow we will not be able to catch up and be equal either with the metropolitan academic centers of India or with those operating in the West.

It was but natural that I was looking for meaning both in my life and the academic work that I was doing. And then I realized that long ago, when I was a student at Ravenshaw there was a *unique* Chair Professor. The name of this Chair was Sonpur Chair. The queen of Sonpur had donated money for this particular Chair. Through her intervention, she ensured that this Chair Professorship is reserved for an English Professor. Similarly, she instituted a Chair in Odia language at Calcutta University at the same time. For me, this was lesser a work of charity and more a matter of symbolic significance. In pre-independent India Calcutta was *the* metropolis of India. Perhaps the queen had sincere insight into a process through which the local can be connected with the global and vice-versa. She wanted that Odia episteme should be showcased in the capital (Calcutta), in the centre and the margin (Odia) should be irrigated with English (the 'global' knowledge).

And from that day, I also realized that I should also contribute in this process of connecting the local with the global. Subjectively also, I was in a privileged position. I had studied English seriously to earn my bread and was deeply rooted in

Odia language as most of us are with our own language and culture. Having almost equal competence in both the languages pumped my resolve. With such a stance, I could bring the global academic capital in Odia and at the same time showcase whatever was worth knowing in Odia episteme to the global. I could actually work as a bridge between these (two) different ontologies. Translation seemed to me the only method through which I could serve these purposes. I realized that this is a more meaningful work in terms of my ability, my expertise, and my political necessity rather than looking for some theoretical role, paradigms and the pursuit of making myself conversant with things looking 'alien' to me at that point of time. However, in the later years because of the arrival of the computer and Internet, knowledge started to reach us much faster. I could have made efforts to keep myself abreast with what was going on in the Western academia but I made no serious efforts in that direction. By that time it became clearer to me that it is futile to propagate others' agenda. Rather, I should make an attempt to remain to my social reality, my people and my language. What I started to do is to translate the influential ideas having high currency in the Western thought into Odia language. At the same time, I started to write on/about Odia episteme in English.

UK: Professor Pattanaik, it compels me to ask a related question at this juncture: How the Odia episteme has historically responded to the idea and practice of translation?

DRP: An important trope of knowledge production, which I think is peculiar to Odia episteme, is its diverse translational practices. I shall exemplify this for you. In Odisha, after the spell of missionary translations during the colonial period, we have almost made a religion out of the iconic translations. We, from then onwards, began to think that the norm for any translation is to be extremely faithful to the source text.

Conversely, I must mention here that (t)his norm is not only applicable to Odia episteme alone but percolated to all Indian languages. It became a universal practice, so to speak.

However, such 'faithfulness' wasn't the norm in ancient and especially, medieval Odisha. Translations were done even during these periods. Speaking historically, the first indigenous Odia Empire was established by Kapilendra Deva in the early fifteenth century. I realized that whenever there is an empire building activity, the process of epic writing takes place simultaneously. The same happened in Odia language when Sarala Das wrote its first major epic. And it was a translation of Vyasa's *Mahabharata*. He not only translated *Mahabharata* but also translated *Bichitra Ramayana* and *Chandi Purana* among others. Further, according to me the choice of these texts was not innocent but informed by Sarala Das' own ideology. Das was a *shakta* and therefore, he found in *Bichitra Ramayana* a very liberatory agenda for women. Similarly, *Chandi Purana* is also a text about powerful women. In *Mahabharata* also, the potent treatment that he gives to its women characters is again influenced by his *shakta* worship culture. In fact, while translating Vyasa's *Mahabharata* into Odia he has made several additions, deletions and mutilation of the text. Let us cite an example to understand this.

In the time of Sarala Das, only *Pauranik* texts were getting translated and not the 'knowledge' texts. As a result, he refrains from translating the *Bhagwat Gita* in Odia *Mahabharata* though it is contained in Vyasa's original work because the *Bhagwat Gita* was supposed to be a knowledge text. But within the *Bhagwat Gita* there is a concept called *Bishvaroopadarshna*. The concept itself is so powerful and dramatic that Sarala Das could not afford to drop it in his version of the *Mahabharata*. To accommodate it, he introduced a new theme *nabagunjara* in which Krishna was

able to show his *Bishwaroopa* without going into the abstract and philosophical theorization that happens in the *Bhagwat Gita*. Now, these were the kind of moves, which I think we need to bring to the mainstream of translation theory in the contemporary times.

UK: Just to push you a little bit further is there a relationship between these diverse translational practices and structures of power?

DRP: You are right. In fact, this relationship was inseparable and thrived on each other. Sarala Das himself was a foot soldier in Kapilendra's army. Since Kapilendra had won a huge territory, which went beyond the Odia speaking people to Marathi and Telugu speaking geographies there are more than five translations of Sarala's *Mahabharata* in Telugu language! Balarama Das repeated a similar model and a new kind of translational practice that was later introduced by Atibadi Jagannatha Das, had its seeds in path undertaken by Sarala. This shows us how structures of power inevitably impact the ongoing translational practices in any given time. And I firmly believe that these varieties and diverse moves of translational practices should not only be shared among our Indian languages but also with the larger world. At the risk of being polemical, I shall argue that such a transaction would show us the channels of alternative modernity (if one thinks that modernity is THE important signpost for circulation of knowledge). It, then, will also puncture a popular myth that modernity was primarily mediated by the western presence both in south Asia and elsewhere.

UK: Then, with your notion of alternative modernity are you suggesting a careful historicization of translational practices?

DRP: Exactly. In fact this is what I have been trying to do in my own work quite religiously. While trying to engage in actual practical translation one should also be sensitive

towards historicizing the elements that informed the diverse translation practices at a given time in history. When we attempt to negotiate the translation moves undertaken by writers like Sarala Das, Balarama Das and Atibadi Jagannatha Das etc. it is not hard to infer that they constitute 'new knowledge' for our field (of translation). For me this new knowledge is also the base for an alternative modernity. If modernity means circulation of knowledge, among many other things how can one ignore the fact that in medieval Odisha more than one hundred and sixty five texts were translated either from Sanskrit to Odia or from Odia to other Indian languages.

UK: Are you, then, also suggesting that historicizing translation practices from the past will help us construct an alternative history of the region itself?

DRP: Yes, but unfortunately not much institutional work has been done in this area though some scholars have been pursuing it quite diligently in their own way. You must be aware that once *Sahitya Akademi* had this project in mind to come up with the history of translation in major Indian languages. I don't know what happened to that project. Recently, National Translation Mission also came out with a book on a similar subject. We need more of such initiatives. I also feel that there is a great dearth of committed scholars to pursue these types of studies.

Another serious problem that has crept in our academia is the scarcity of bilingual skills. Today, most of the teachers/scholars are trained in such a way that they are extremely competent in one language and not much in the second. This was not the case earlier. In my growing years, I witnessed friends and seniors being equally at ease in English and also in their own mother tongues. We have to 'blame' our contemporary needs for this linguistic extinction. People in the

past learnt languages with equal proficiency because it was their need. We learn languages because of our need. Today, the kind of social engagements that we make, we can live 'meaningfully' with one language only. But I still believe that for the sake of creating meaningful intellectual capital we need more and more scholars who are conversant in one global language and at the same time deeply rooted in the culture and literature of their own language. Unfortunately, the tribe of such scholars is shrinking day by day.

UK: The way I see it, your analogy of the global and the local seems to put English Departments of our country in a very privileged position?

DRP: Absolutely! But it is again unfortunate that our English Departments have not realized their true mandate. We have been obsessed with the models imported from the western academia and looking for approval from the expatriate scholars belonging to the subcontinent. As an aside, let us take a quick example: most of the scholarly enterprises in India are informed by West can be understood by the example of what happened to the fate of comparative literature departments in our country. May be twenty years ago, the western academy realized that comparative literatures departments are no longer useful to them and they discarded them. Indian academy followed the suit almost immediately. G.N. Devy has written powerfully on this episode of blindfolded imitations and its repercussions for our society. Similarly, how many English teachers are writing and researching in their own languages? Or how many of them are trying to bring the best of regional literature in English? A quick scrutiny of the profiles of English Departments in India will fetch you an answer. In Indian context, English could be our instrument to showcase to the world the best of our regional literatures. Sadly, we have done so little on this front.

UK: But these transactions are also missing in a major way among Indian languages as well?

DRP: This is a crucial question. One line of thinking on this argues that the proliferation of English language is responsible for the non-communication among Indian languages. However, I would argue for a different turn here. The association of state power with the promotion of a particular language has always been our linguistic reality. And languages promoted so will attempt to spell a hegemonic hold over the other languages. In such a scenario, *bhasha* languages may themselves become threat to other *bhasha* languages. The cases of Hindi and Bengali can be cited as examples. After independence, supported by state power, Hindi is promoted to take the role of monologic/monolingual hegemonic role as the language of India. This is the reason that India's southern states have always supported English for they have a fear that otherwise Hindi would come to cannibalize' their languages. Same thing had happened in the case of Bengali. It attempted to cannibalize the eastern languages such as Odia and Assamese and 'indologists' like Raja Rajendralal Mitra played a huge role in it. Because of Bengal's proximity to colonial power and an early access to print technology, it had taken lead in spreading literacy, book production and holistic' knowledge production primarily by engaging with the European models. This early access to knowledge made it easier for Bengalis to channelize and rally available economic opportunities. Thus, Bengali, one of the first languages to translate European renaissance into Indian renaissance began to belittle and marginalize other linguistic groups definitely those who were in its proximity. I have argued elsewhere that the Bengali sub-national hegemony became so invasive that it compelled Odia elite to get united and resist it in a protracted identity struggle. Fakirmohan Senapati was the face of that struggle.

Instances like these make me assume that the 'subaltern' languages in order to protect themselves, from the hegemonic spell of 'power' languages, had to invariably resort to the idea of rigid linguistic nationalism. And this rigid nationalism blocked the free porous exchange that was happening among *bhashas* languages earlier.

UK: Prof. Pattanaik, before we close our discussion, it would be interesting to know how translation has impacted you. Usually in translation studies, we seem to be carried away with the idea of translator impacting/ manipulating the text. It can very well be the other way round?

DRP: Your question reminds me my negotiation with Dostoevsky's *Notes from Underground* as a translator. The translation made me shameless and daring as an author. The epic self-abomination and self-hatred displayed by the protagonist in the *Notes from Underground* personally liberated me from my own shame and discomfitures. That experience changed the very fabric of my thinking about myself. So I cannot agree more. Translation also affects the translators. At times, in a big way!

UK: Thank you Prof. Pattanaik!

DRP: Smiles!

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Book Review

Researching Cognitive Processes of Translation

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Reviewed by OBED EBENEZER. S

"Cognitive approaches to translation and interpreting may be considered the oldest empirical research area of modern Translation Studies (TS)", according to Ricardo Muñoz Martín (2017: 555). James S. Holmes, in his foundational paper, "The name and nature of translation studies" (1972), characterised descriptive translation studies (DTS) into three kinds: product-oriented, function-oriented and process-oriented DTS, where "process-oriented DTS concerns itself with the process or act of translation itself" (2001: 177). However, systematic translation process research (TPR) as an area of study was established only in the early 1980s. Beginning with the rationalist approaches, and progressing on to observational methods, think-aloud protocols (TAPs) began to be used in TPR. With the advent of IT and medical technology, techniques such as key-logging, screen recording, eye tracking, and neuroimaging began to be applied in order to understand the process of translation.

Researching Cognitive Processes of Translation attempts to address the challenges and issues that have risen up during the span of around 40 years of TPR, and also to present new and innovative methods that can provide deeper insight into what Holmes designated as the "'little black box' of the translator's 'mind'" (2001: 177). This volume edited by Defeng Li, Victoria Lai Cheng Lei, and Yuanjian He, is divided into 8 chapters in 2 parts, with three chapters in Part 1 based on theoretical models, and five chapters in Part 2 which focus on methods and applications.

In chapter 1 titled, "Suggestions for a New Interdisciplinary Linguo-cognitive Theory in Translation Studies", Juliane House calls for a renewal of interest in the linguistic focus of a text and what takes place in the mind of the translator during the process of translating a text rather than concentrating on external elements such as socio-cultural, ideological, historical factors and the reader. House then proceeds to examine critically the validity and reliability of the methods currently used in TPR. She questions the premise that mental process can be verbalised, which is the fundamental assumption behind the methodology of TAP.

In examining translation-behaviour research, which has commonly used eye-tracking, keylogging, and screen recording, House asserts that these methods can only measure observable behaviour. While they can be useful indicators of translation difficulties, they cannot be taken as substitutes for mind-processes. The ecological validity of neuro-imaging studies, which rely on word-and-sentence based tasks, is called into question, as translation is a largely text-based activity. In addition, House points out that most of these studies have not been replicated. She asserts that before plunging directly into experimental studies, a theoretical framework with sufficient descriptive and explanatory potential needs to be identified, and cites the neurolinguistic theory of bilingualism posited by Michel Paradis as being highly relevant for Translation Studies.

Yuanjian He, in the next chapter, "Translating and Interpreting as Bilingual Processing: The Theoretical Framework", takes up from where Juliane House leaves off. He presents an integrated perspective to language processing by combining the theories of Noam Chomsky's universal grammar, Steven Pinker's computational theory of language processing of the mind, Annette M. B. De Groot's neurocognitive bilingualism,

and Michel Paradis' theory of neurofunctional control in the bilingual brain. The hypothesis that memory and computation are two processing mechanisms that compensate and complement each other especially in simultaneous interpreting and in translation is also put forward.

The third chapter, "Outline for a Relevance Theoretical Model of Machine Translation Post-editing" by Michael Carl and Moritz Schaeffer elaborates a computational framework based on Sperber and Wilson's relevance theory (RT) and Roger Levy's noisy channel model for post-editing machine translation (PEMT). Wilson and Sperber state, "The central claim of RT is that the expectations of relevance raised by an utterance are precise and predictable enough to guide the hearer towards the speaker's meaning" (2006: 607). When applied to translation, it becomes that the goal of a translation is to achieve adequate contextual effects for the target text reader without unnecessary processing effort. Because MT systems do not have access to the context of the texts, nor can they take into account the intentions and implications of the source text or the target audience, it results that the source and target share the same context, which allow for the same implicatures in machine translation. This effectively reduces the task of post-editing to checking the similarity of explicatures of the source and the target texts.

Arnt Lykke Jakobsen, in chapter 4, "Segmentation in Translation: A Look at Expert Behaviour", points out that translation occurs in short bursts or segments, rather than continuously. The greater the continuity of the produced text, the greater is the indication of the optimal performance of the translator. Cognitive processing, on the other hand, is indicated by the amount of pauses. Jakobsen suggests the use of key-logging softwares to record the typing behaviour of the translator, which can then be used to study the cognitive

processing activity. This information can be combined with gaze data from an eye-tracker to identify what segments of the text was read at specific points of time by the translator. Jakobson asserts that this data provides evidence of segmentation at a deeper level than what has most often been assumed in TPR. He also suggests that the segments identified from gaze data have the appearance of being closer to the way translation takes place in the brain, which is through the cognitive processing of minimal translatable units.

In the next chapter, "Explore the Brain Activity during Translation and Interpreting Using Functional Near-Infrared Spectroscopy", Fengmei Lu and Zhen Yuan make a case for the greater application of fNIRS in TPR. Functional Near-Infrared Spectroscopy (fNIRS) functions on the principle that neural stimulus results in a local increase in the blood flow, blood volume and blood oxygenation in the brain, and measures the change of absorption coefficient of the near-infrared light between 650 nm and 950 nm. Compared to other neuroimaging techniques such as functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) and positron emission tomography (PET), fNIRS has the advantages of portability, convenience and low cost. More importantly, it offers unsurpassed high temporal resolution and quantitative information that can identify rapid changes in the dynamic patterns of brain activities. In addition, continuous and non-invasive monitoring of brain activity in real life conditions and in everyday environments is possible using fNIRS. It has to be also noted that in addition to the immense potential it offers to the field of Translation and Interpreting Studies, fNIRS promises greater ecological validity in comparison with other neuroimaging techniques like EEG, fMRI and PET. However, the research study using fNIRS (Quaresima et al. 2002) discussed in this chapter consisted of translating a small set of very short sentences. This brings up the question of artificiality that was

discussed in the first chapter of this volume, but this can be rectified in future studies.

Chapter six, "Translation in the Brain: Preliminary Thoughts About a Brain-Imaging Study to Investigate Psychological Processes Involved in Translation", by Fabio Alves, Karina Szpak and Augusto Buchweitz, seeks to present some ideas regarding the possibility of incorporating neuro-scientific and behavioural data in the study of the inferential nature of the translation process. The theoretical framework is drawn from the pragmatics of Paul Grice, relevance theory of Sperber and Wilson, metarepresentation of Ernst-August Gutt and on the theory of mind by Baron-Cohen et al. The authors also propose an experimental setup with 40 participants made up of 20 professional translators and 20 students, who would be presented with two types of stimuli in both eye-tracking and fMRI conditions: the first a set of complex clause-sentences where the dominant clauses present two distinct propositional forms of the same message, and the second, a set of suprasentential elements where critical main clauses are repeated in implicatures or in explicatures. Using this experimental setup, the authors expect that the inferential nature of the translation process can be investigated through an interdisciplinary method.

Sanjun Sun, in chapter 7 titled, "Measuring Difficulty in Translation and Post-editing: A Review", begins by clarifying conceptual issues such as difficulty, mental workload, cognitive load and other related terms. The article then proceeds to examine studies on difficulty in human translation and in the post-editing of machine translation (PEMT), with special attention given to the measurement of cognitive effort in post-editing. Translation difficulty can be defined as the amount of cognitive resources consumed by a translator for a translation task. Post-editing of machine translation, "involves

a human editor revising an MT output up to an acceptable level of quality" (Kit and Wong 2015: 225). The author cites Krings (2001) who identified three dimensions of post-editing effort: temporal effort (time), technical effort, and cognitive effort. The author acknowledges that not all the studies cited in the review are equally valid due to factors such as small sample size, text type, domain, language directionality, and professional experience. The need for these studies to be replicated is also highlighted.

In the final chapter of this volume, "Translation Competence as a Cognitive Catalyst for Multiliteracy – Research Findings and Their Implications for L2 Writing and Translation Instruction", Susanne Göpferich studies how L2 writing is influenced by translation competence. The rejection of the grammar-translation method and the assumption that the use of L1 can have a negative impact on L2 development has resulted in the dismissal of L1 to L2 translation in the foreign-language pedagogy. The author reviews empirical investigations that show that translation has both advantages and disadvantages for L2 writing pedagogy, and that the suppression of L1 can have adverse effects on the epistemic function of writing and stunt creativity. The advantages include the minimising of cognitive overload, greater critical evaluation and derivation of meaning from the L2 text. However, for those with lesser translation skill, this can result in fixedness upon the source-text. Göpferich also puts forward the concept of "transliteracy", which refers to the fact that academic writers often read and draw on materials from more than one language.

Translation competence is a major factor in transliteracy, and its lack can hamper adequate comprehension of source material in different languages. The chapter closes with a call for more focus on the development of translation competence, which is

a must, given that our societies are becoming increasingly multicultural and multilingual.

Researching Cognitive Processes of Translation is one of the latest volumes from an area that promises great scope for further development and growth in the future, fuelled by both the rising interest in the functioning of the human brain and the technological advances in the field of Medicine and Information Technology. The sooner this book becomes outdated, the greater the progress achieved in the area of Translation Process Research, which can be considered to be, in fact, the objective of this book.

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Translating Children's Literature between Indian Languages: A Case for Critical Understanding of Indian Children's Literature

PRAMOD PADWAL & UMESH KUMAR. (trans. & eds.). 2019, *Kisson Ki Duniya*. Marathi Bal Kahaniyon Ka Pratinidhi Sankalan. New Delhi: Vani Prakshan.

<div align="right">Reviewed by SUJIT R. CHANDAK</div>

Translation in the Indian context is usually seen as translation from the English language to the Indian languages and vice-versa. Translation and the related movement of literature, contexts and cultural significances from one Indian language to other Indian languages are not that common. There are some translations but translation from one to another Indian language is not a 'regular' activity. This lack is more evident in the case of Children's Literature; coupled with this is the fact that there is a lack of academic attention towards the genre of 'Children's Literature' in the Indian languages. So much so that while considering the category of children's Literature the Indian academia necessarily keeps in mind the development in the notion of the 'child' in the western world and at the same time, although it has the understanding for the need of critically differentiating the way in which the child was constructed in the Indian context, it is hindered by the dearth of critical studies of Children's Literature in the Indian languages. It finds itself restricted in having a critical understanding of the child and of 'Children's Literature' in India as there has been a lack of any serious and continued interest in studying Indian Children's Literature. One prime reason for the insufficiency of a critical understanding of the child in literary texts is an absence of translation of Children's Literature between Indian languages. Hence, this book *Kisson Ki Duniya* which contains translation of Children's Literature

(short stories & short character sketches) from the Marathi language into the Hindi language is relevant and timely.

Pramod Padwal and Umesh Kumar, the translators and editors of the book, *Kisson Ki Duniya*, aim to fulfil the lack of translation between Indian Languages. It present an opportunity for adding literary pieces from different Indian languages in the language textbooks of other Indian languages, which enable possibilities for installing comparative approach of understanding Indian Literature at the school level that could arrest the narrowness of thought process which is a wider pedagogical problem being faced in India. They aim to do this work by including short stories across the spectrum of over hundred years of the rich tradition of publications for children in Marathi and by including inspiring character sketches of great historical figures of Maharashtra that have inspired generations of Marathi populace.

The translations of the Marathi short stories and character sketches into Hindi presented in the book have a natural flow. The Maharashtrian cultural context is very aptly and smoothly presented in Hindi. While reading the short stories in Hindi one does not feel in any way being distanced by the cultural context. For the readers in Hindi there are no jerks and the translation is evidently successful as it does not make the reader feel that they are reading a work in translation. The stories deal with the everyday world of the children and their approach, mentality and psychology of dealing with the day-to-day affairs are the subject matter of these stories. Stories such as 'Gachak Andhari', 'Namak ki khoj' and 'Chatur Kisan' are uniquely creative pieces that would be of great interest to Hindi readers; these stories create imaginary situations that have a captivating power to engage the minds of children and young adults. 'Chhota Recharge', 'Aaba ki Kahani', 'Main Amir hun' and 'Vidyalay ke Din' present the

world of the school and the events that take place therein. These stories not just bring out the inherent innocence of childhood but also the self-respecting and resilient nature of children in hardship. Other stories present the innocence and the truthfulness of children and the way the adult world often has a misunderstanding about these issues. Among the character sketches, some figures are generally known across India. However, the stories of some others are not that well known, particularly the character sketches of Sant Gadge Baba, Khashaba Jadhav, Sane Guruji, Rajashri Sahu Maharaj will be of special interest to the Hindi readers.

The book is subtitled 'A Representative Anthology of Children's Literature in Marathi'. However, the translators and editors have made it clear that the book does not follow any chronological or formal structure in selection of the stories. Hence, it can safely be said that it is 'randomly' representative of the flow of Children's Literature in Marathi. There are 13 stories and 11 inspiring character sketches of great figures. All the short stories chosen present various aspects of children's world from both urban and rural parts of Maharashtra. Out of the 13 authors of the selected short stories only 3 are born in pre-independence India, at least 3 authors are born in post-1975. The stories by 3 writers born in pre-independent India have a modern outlook and focus on the basic and raw emotions and turmoil that children face. All the short stories hence are contemporary and would be of great interest to children and the young adults. The book also includes pieces that are not originally in Marathi – one short story by Sudha Murthy and at least one character sketch by A. P. J. Abdul Kalam. The reason for including these in a 'Representative anthology' of Marathi is a bit cryptic on the part of the editors. Similarly, there are 3 character sketches (Graham Bell, Stephen Hawking, A. P. J. Abdul Kalam) which are not the figures from Maharashtra. May be the editors felt that there are

no good writings in Hindi on these topics and included it; one felt that this space could have been given to contexts and figures from Maharashtra. Every story as well as character sketch has been fore-grounded by providing a short introduction to the context. It would have helped propel the scholarship in this area if the editors would have attempted to provide the year and place where these works appeared for the first time.

The book has a foreword by eminent scholar Maya Pandit, a great translator and someone who has large body of work in translation from Marathi. This foreword presents some of the thoughts of Maya Pandit on translation and interesting aspects of children's literature in itself and its development in Marathi. This immensely adds to the value of the book. Pramod Padwal and Umesh Kumar's ideas on translation and the ways in which they link the importance of translation of Children's Literature with the need for introducing primarily a comparative methodology in the pedagogical practices at school level in India is presented in the translator's note. Both the editors present a case for comparative method in pedagogy and argue that such a method will work as a break on the narrowness that has crept into the educational set-up. They bring out the need to include more material in the language textbooks from contexts outside the native one in a multi-cultural, multi-lingual country like India.

The book successfully does what it sets out by providing a range of Children's Literature pieces from Marathi to the Hindi readers. It certainly presents an opportunity for Hindi language textbooks and ready material for the important work for including in the Indian language textbooks, material from diverse cultural contexts. It also works as a starting point for discussions on comparative methods. This is an important book for it presents to the Hindi consumers of Children's

Literature a different world from within the country and it makes a case for more such translations.

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