

# LITERATURE IN TRANSLATION

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Any work of art-**be it** literature, cinema **or** theatre, has been of utmost preference to all the realms of society. When a novel or film gains popularity in a particular region, there happens to be a tendency to diversify it multi-linguistically. During the process of translation, the originality often is disrupted while many critics opine that literature shouldn't be essentially restricted to the educated and semi educated mass. If metamorphosed to a translation, it could be feasible to the rural folk, who could derive pleasure and pain in their native language. Indian writers have widened their arena of importing ideas from Western literature and thereby adding a perfect blend to Indian context. Whatever may be the reason, needless to say, the plethora of translation remains unbound, keeping in view the rules of plagiarism.

Of late, Chetan Bhagat's works, after securing the highest popularity among masses found further foray into Hindi translation. The same is applicable to a controversial yet entertaining author, Shobha De. **Hence** 'Starry nights', 'Sandhya's secret' have been translated into 'Sitaron ki Raatein' and 'Sandhya ka Secret' to make them reachable to the 'not so' elite class. Consequently, translations do mar the essence of the work but undoubtedly we cannot deprive the commonest man from the genre of it. Every Indian citizen would desire to get a hang of the scandals and gossips embroiled in De's collection and perhaps the publicity and profit is directly proportional to the number of translations done.

Now let us retrospect our olden and golden era of Indian Literature which was translated in both the print and non-print medium. The cerebration involved, portrayed richness, authenticity and a plot where millions of middle class minds could relate to. Tagore had a broad perspective of life and his works depicted all strata of society. He perhaps kindled human thoughts to touch the sky and hence many dared to translate his immortal masterpiece. Starting from a short story or a poem or even a 'rabindrasangeet' for that matter, none of his achievements have retained virginity. Many including the famous poet and lyricist, Gulzar remarked that the Nobel Laurette's deeds have undergone tremendous disparity as compared to the original transcript. Even Gurudev's own translations lack the serenity, intrinsic component and crux without which an author or a poet remains incomplete.

A glut of other regional authors also found their existence in vernacular books and movies. Sarat Chandra Chatterjee's 'Parineeta' and 'Devdas' are fondly cherished memories as translations not only in Hindi accomplishment but also a make and remake of the same. Consequently the 'not so bookworms' or even the rural folk could enjoy the fervour of literature on the silver screen. The producers too lined their pockets by dint of the author's drudgery. It is here where I believe plagiarism peeps in and we require to introspect into the nitty-gritty of our thought process.

Bangladesh is very close to my heart and I like to share her essence, culture and vibrance from time to time. One of the popular Bengali writers is Humayun Ahmed who depicted the pathos and misery oozing from the daily struggle of the underprivileged sections of the beautiful nation. The lush green charming landscape has tinges of poverty, clutches of beurocracy and dreams unfold. The author has rightly suggested the title 'Nondito Norok e' which after a huge acclaim got translated into 'A blissful hell'. One can never forget the name of Taslima Nasrin, embroiled in controversy. Almost all her literary works have been translated into English. 'Lajja', a book on the Bangladeshi riots stirred a storm in international languages like Spanish, Dutch, French etc apart from regional English languages.

Is it the titillation of forbidden fruits that promote translation for the huge mass? Hence, in spite of her exile, her works have received applauses.

Now the eminence of Indian or Bangladeshi authors in the western world could have far-reaching outcomes. On one hand, we become famous and also we tend to expose only the negativities whereas the luminous and the radiant aspects go unnoticed.

Padma river is not only fruitful but also a matter of sentiment for the Bangladeshis. The ripples and the gurgling spin yarns of latent thoughts, judgements, cessations etc. Possibly that cannot be imbibed through other languages. The nitty gritty of a story is comprehended by the reader who recognises the core and quality at a similar strata. The perils of the river Padma, the humdrum life of the rustics-their dialects, pangs, subtle humours can never for sure bear the same eloquence and passion as the original Bengali novel can.

When I scrutinised the film, '1084's Mother' or even 'Hazaar Chaurasi ki maa', I found it hard to believe that it was a transliteration of Mahashweta Devi's 'Hazaar Churashir Maa'. The savouriness, the social unrest under the Naxalite Movement, the pain of a mother who is informed of the death of her prisoner son-probably the nucleus of the story has been tarnished in the process of imitation.

Do our native authors fail to devise novelty in their work that they are still reliable on popular accomplishments on co-generation creators?

During my years of sojourn as an Asst Professor, I have come across a wide range of translations in Indian vernacular languages. It goes beyond denial that one must be content with the plot and story, but as far as soul and spirit is taken into account, they are sadly missing. 'Kabuliwallah' is perhaps the most prevalent instance one could cite to illustrate this. To visualize a Kabuliwallah treading through the serpentine lanes selling his wares of Old Calcutta one needs to be essentially a Bengali or a native 'Calcutian'. On a similar note, 'The Home and the World' (Tagore: Ghare Baire) contains singing notes composed by Tagore himself. Others might concur with me that quintessence of Rabindra Sangeet can never be obtained by a mere rendition. Songs anywhere are not just a culmination of words but an innate flow of emotions, tradition and much more unexplicable.

'You can win' stands apart in every way. Following Shiv Khera's success as a motivational writer, several vernacular writers instantly moulded the structure in their own conventional form, sprinkling flavour wherever pertinent. Yet, many may be unaware of the vital fact that Shiv Khera was accused of plagiarism by Amrit Lal for emulating his novel 'India Enough is Enough'.

The petty stories in 'You can win' contain moralistic lessons and it is our onus to instil the exact usage. Shiv Khera has been successful in managing to procure substantial copies of his masterpiece.

The international novels, plays and even poetries have also endured the scissor touch of imitation. When Bernard Shaw wrote 'Pygmalion', little did he predict that this novel would be staged as 'My fair Lady', a marvellous musical. Later, many playwrights made their fortunes by embracing the scheme.

During a candid discussion with some of my students, I realised that translations to some extent was necessary and must be promoted. Sadly enough book reading and book keeping is a lost art nowadays. Technology has been capable to replace books. Students and youngsters find solace in other forms of entertainment and there might be a day when no more books would be published. Honestly speaking, I do not come across the crowd I witnessed at Book Fairs before. Even children find it feasible to capture a story in audio-visual medium. Browsing a book seems tiresome and monotonous. E-books are in vogue and that too only for a handful of book lovers. Craving for creative writing is rapidly diminishing amongst the current generations and there is an enthusiasm to opt for computer science and management degrees. We, the book lovers need to infuse reading habit amidst the upcoming generations. So, let us put aside the nuts and bolts of language, essence etc.

As I draw the curtain, let me end with a positive note. If translations could impart some sort of cosiness to a novice reader, that would foray some light of hope amongst the generations to come. I look forward to more libraries and more heads in Book Fairs in the approaching days.

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