CAN THE GLOBAL SOUTH THEORISE? DEVELOPING AN ECO-TRANSLATOLOGICAL MODEL FROM INDIA

THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF

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by

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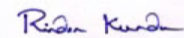
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This dissertation is dedicated to two wonder women

My Mother and my Wife

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Acknowledgement

They say a doctoral thesis is always a "work in progress," which will continue its journey in the postdoctoral phase till the publication of a monograph. *Phew*! For me, this thesis is a statement, maybe a feeble one, but a statement nonetheless. This thesis champions the cause of the Global South against the pervasive academic onslaught of the Global North. This thesis is also a paying back with gratitude to my department of Comparative Literature at Jadavpur University, the first ever Comparative Literature department established in Asia. and at the same time to Jadavpur University at large, the crucible of anti-colonial education in India. As a foot soldier of Comparative Literature, I humbly bestow this thesis to Buddhadeb Basu, poet, dramatist, scholar, essayist, and above all, a dreamer, who started the discipline of Comparative Literature in 1956 in a small room with four students and paved the path for the future.

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Chapter One

Introduction: Global South as the Centre

The present study stems from a contention about whether the Global South can theorise translation, a field that has long been dominated by the Global North. This research tries to trace the notion of translation and translational practices in the Indian subcontinent, thus, building an alternative discourse of theorising translation from the Global South. The intention is not to summarily dismiss/collapse the western paradigm of translation studies but to critically engage with the field of translation as practiced in the Indian subcontinent especially in the precolonial era and how it passes on to postcolonial times, thereby to create a balance in the knowledge generation especially in the broad field of translation studies, because in order to counter the hegemony of the Global North in any discipline, a researcher located in the Global South must present an alternative discourse within that discipline. This project examines the terminologies used to denote the exercise of translational activities in the subcontinent of India as much as possible and attempts to theorize them by creating different models of translation. However, the more significant portion of the present thesis devotes to developing an eco-translatological model from the Global South by analysing specifically two terms *rūpāntar* and *vivartanam* in the context of theatre adaptations by Ajitesh Bandyopadhyay.

What is the Global South? Where is the Global South? A Translation Studies Perspective:

> I recognise that we are gathered here today as a result of sacrifices. Sacrifices made by our forefathers and by the people of our own and younger generations. For me, this hall is filled not only by the leaders of the nations of Asia and Africa; it also contains within its walls the undying, the indomitable, the invincible spirit of those who went before us. Their struggle and sacrifice paved the way for this meeting of the highest representatives of independent and sovereign nations from two of the biggest continents of the globe.[1]

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[1] https://transperiphery.com/Sukarno-Speech-in-Bandung [Accessed 2022-02-14]

- Indonesian President Sukarno's opening speech at the Bandung Conference dated 18th April 1955.

In the midst of the Cold War between the West and the former Soviet Union, senior representatives from twenty-nine newly independent African, Asian, and Middle Eastern countries met in Bandung, Indonesia, from April 18th to 24th, 1955, to chart an alternative discourse for their peoples' social and economic development and to continue the process of political and economic decolonization. The coming together of these leaders resulted in the formation of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the concept of the Third World or South.[2] The notable point in this first large-scale Afro-Asian conference has been the search for "an alternative discourse," which has been synonymous with the objectives of the Third World.[3] The Bandung Conference ended with putting emphasis on the need of developing countries to reduce their economic reliance on the major industrialised nations via the interchange of professionals and technical help for developmental initiatives, which later has been resulted in South-South collaboration.[4]

Jonathan Rigg, while discussing the probable definition of the term 'Global South' has mentioned few other possible terms which can constitute the similar idea, i.e., 'the Les-developed World', 'the Majority World', 'the Non-Western World', 'the Poor World', 'the South', 'the Underdeveloped World' and 'the Third World'. Rigg further mentioned that, in contrast to the First (capitalist) and Second (socialist/communist) Worlds, the Third World was the world that did not adhere to any one political ideology, but the Third Globe swiftly became a convenient shorthand for the rest of the world in which people live in poverty.[5]

The areas of Latin America, Asia, and Africa, together are, in general, referred to as the "Global South". As mentioned before, the term 'Global South', also refers to the "Third World" and/or "Periphery", interchangeably because any geographic location outside of Europe and North America that is generally low-income and sometimes politically or culturally excluded is being included in the "Global South". By the first decade of the twenty-first century, the term

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[2] https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/collection/16/bandung-conference-1955/4 [Accessed 2022-02-14]

[3] Alfred Sauvy, a French demographer, anthropologist, and historian, created the phrase "third world" (tiers monde) on August 14, 1952, in an article published in the French journal *L'Observateur*. He was referring to nations that played a minor role on the international stage.

[4] See for further reference: https://www.southcentre.int/question/revisiting-the-1955-bandung-asian-african-conference-and-its-legacy/. Accessed 14 Feb. 2022.

[5] For a detailed discussion by Jonathan Rigg, please visit the Internet Archive of The Global South Centre, University of Köln, Cologne, Germany. https://web.archive.org/web/20160505210502/http://gssc.uni-koeln.de/node/458. Accessed 18 Dec. 2022.

'Global South' became a common parlance. The fictitious line representing the equator serves as a dividing line between the northern and southern hemispheres of the planet. However, it cannot claim to map the socio-economic situations of the whole world comprehensively. The countries that fall under the nomenclature of 'Global South' share a similar socio-economic status quo.[6] The positioning of the Global South is also dependent on the geopolitical relations of power with the First World[7] and Second World[8]. Having said that we should also be careful about the gross generalization of the terms. Certain areas that fall under the geographic region called Global North are not always richer and powerful and at the same time, not all the areas that fall under Global South are poorer and marginalised. Indeed, Antonio Gramsci, one of the first authors who launched the debate of the notion of the South, identified in his essay titled, "The Southern Question" ([1926] 1978) that the Southern portion of Italy has been oppressed by the Northern half of Italy, which eventually resulted in the concept of the north-south split[9].

> The Northern bourgeoisie has subjugated the South of Italy and the Islands and reduced them to exploitable colonies; by emancipating itself from capitalist slavery, the Northern proletariat will emancipate the Southern peasant masses enslaved to the banks and the parasitic industry of the North. (1978: 2)

In a similar line, eminent sociologist Judy Aulette has argued,

> North and South, on the one hand, quickly capture a critical cleavage within the global political economy, but they do not tell us about the gaps within the North and South by social class and among various nations within each category. Many people in the North are poor and oppressed, and every nation in the South includes those who are wealthy and powerful. (2012: 1547)

Therefore, the North–South divide is primarily a division based on socio-economic and political status of any state. The North–South division was popularised in the late twentieth century and the idea of categorising the countries into two divisions began in the Cold War era when there was a classification of the world since the germination of two blocks – East and West, where East contained the USSR and China, while the West block contained the USA and its allies. But it has also created another entity, namely, the 'Third World', which included all

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[6] Contexts, Vol. 11, No. 1, pp. 12-13. ISSN 1536-5042, electronic ISSN 1537-6052. © 2012 American Sociological Association. http://contexts.sagepub.com. DOI 10.1177/1536504212436479.
[7] a term used during the Cold War to describe nations that supported the US and NATO
[8] a term used during the Cold War to describe Soviet-influenced industrial socialism governments
[9] Text from Antonio Gramsci "Selections from political writings (1921-1926)", translated and edited by Quintin Hoare (Lawrence and Wishart, London 1978)

those nations that were not actively associated with either side during the Cold War. Heike Pagel, Karen Ranke, Fabian Hempel, and Jonas Köhler, in their collaborative presentation titled, "The Use of the Concept 'Global South' in Social Science & Humanities" Presented at the symposium titled, "Globaler Süden / Global South: Kritische Perspektiven", at the Institut für Asien- & Afrikawissenschaften, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin on July 11, 2014, has argued,[10]

> Since the end of the Cold War rhetoric in the 1990s resulting from the fall of the Iron Curtain, the division of the World into First, Second and Third World has become obsolete. Furthermore, the ubiquitous terms development and developing countries have equally lost some of their theoretical legitimacy, as the centre of global economic growth has been shifting to places outside the so called West (Europe, North America).

In the post-Cold War era, international relations have been characterised by an apparent contradiction. The apparent geographical imprecision of 'Global South' affords us the option for adaptability. In this context, the editor of the famous journal *The Global South*, Leigh Anne Duck, has uttered a fundamental issue,

> What remains paramount, from the perspective of The Global South, is to understand how forces that seek to impose exploitative and hegemonic economic and political forms have been and can be resisted, both in discrete geopolitical spaces and through broader collaborative networks.[11]

In this context, we may be reminded of the famous theory of Development Economics "North–South model' developed by Ronald Findlay, which explains the ecologically unequal exchanges between the core and periphery countries. (Findlay 1984:185-9) The binary structure of global differences was not a new theory. In Sociology, theorists from Auguste Comte and Herbert Spencer to Emile Durkheim and Lester Frank Ward has discussed about these distinctions in geopolitics while "drawing broad distinctions between "advanced" and "primitive" institutions and societies". (Dados and Connell 2012:12) The term "Global South" was probably coined by Carl Oglesby while commenting on Vietnam War, "dominance over the Global South … have converged … to produce an intolerable social order." (1969:90)

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[10] See https://www.academia.edu/7917466.
[11] See the entry titled, "The Global South via the US South" by Leigh Anne Duck.
https://web.archive.org/web/20160505210457/http://gssc.uni-koeln.de/node/456/#fu%C3%9Fnoteduck

Former West German chancellor Willy Brandt advocated a line representing this division in his 1980s report titled, *North-South: A Programme for Survival*, often known as the *Brandt Report*. Approximately 30 degrees north of the equator separates the "Core Nations" from the rest of the world. This line cuts through the United States and Mexico, north of Africa and the Middle East, up and over China and Mongolia, and then dips south to include the continents of Australia, Japan, New Zealand, and the island nation of Singapore. The "Zapatista uprising" in Mexico, the "African Renaissance", and the World Social Forum's inception in Brazil, the emergence of the BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India, and China) and then the joining of South Africa, thus making the group acronym BRICS, all supported the concept of a dominant Northern hemisphere and a defiant Southern hemisphere. To better understand the dominant vs. defiant narrative, I will quote from the invitation letter of a recent conversation titled "The Global South and the New Cold War" between Pankaj Mishra and David Malone at the United Nations University Headquarter in Tokyo on 25th November 2022.[12]

> Compared to the cold war of the 20th century, today's new cold war straddles increasingly muddled geopolitics, globalized economies, and deep resource dependencies. But as North-South inequality grows and the lines blur between democracy and autocracy, many global South countries are hesitant to take sides and firmly align with a Western alliance, China, or Russia.

The thesis argues that in today's world, to understand the dichotomy between the developed, core countries and developing, peripheral countries, the frequently used terminology West vs. East is not sufficient. Because the term West has gathered different meanings as geographer Martin W. Lewis and historian Kären Wigen have discussed in their book titled, *The Myth of Continents: A Critique of Metageography* (1997). They questioned the unconsciously held spatial frameworks that regulate our perception of the world and re-evaluated the fundamental geographical divides we use every day. Therefore, I argue that in the context of Translation Studies to delve into the complexities of power structure in the discipline, we need to come out of the false dichotomies between the West and the East and try to situate the divide on a large-scale geo-spatial construct. This thesis encourages us to adopt a more deliberate, spatially informed approach to the challenge of defining and comprehending the diversity towards understanding the act of translation across the globe, and it also prompts us to consider the

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[12] See https://unu.edu/events/archive/conversation-series/the-global-south-and-the-new-cold-war-a-conversation-with-pankaj-mishra.html#overview

significance of an approach towards the discipline of translation studies in order to realise that the defiant Global South can also contribute to the disciplinal study.

North-South Divide: Can Global South be the Centre?

"I am at war with my time"

- Julian Roosvelt [Manifesto (Kebria Woods) 2015-17]

The Brandt Line was designed in the 1980s to illustrate how the globe was physically divided between relatively wealthy and impoverished countries. As per this paradigm, the richer nations, with the exception of Australia, Hong Kong, Singapore, and New Zealand, are nearly entirely situated in the Northern Hemisphere. The majority of the poorer nations are situated in tropical areas in the Southern Hemisphere. Because many poorer nations have achieved tremendous economic and social progress, the globe is far more complicated now than it was in the Brandt Line's era of analysis. This is clear that, notwithstanding huge global development advances that already have lifted hundreds of millions of people out of poverty, the gap between both the world's wealthiest and poorest nations is growing. Europe's per capita income was three times more than Africa's in 1820, but by 2000 it was thirteen times larger. Oxfam also estimated in 2013 that the wealthiest 85 persons in the world held the same assets as the poorest half of the global population. However, inequality inside nations is increasing, and some commentators are increasingly referring to a 'Global North' and a 'Global South,' which refer to wealthier and poorer populations that may be found both within and across countries, respectively. For example, although India continues to have the highest proportion of disadvantaged people in a single country, the country also boasts a significant middle class and a wealthy elite. Some of the factors that cause this inequality are the scarcity of natural resources, disparities in access to healthcare, the quality of a country's educational and medical systems, and the nature of the country's manufacturing industries. Other contributing factors include the way countries operate and the nature of their global relations.

Since the late 1960s, a substantial quantity of literature has been produced in response to the discussion over the North–South split. South is a notion that deals with geographical representations of inequality. It is useful for assessing difficulties affecting peripheral civilizations, but it does not have much to say about issues affecting countries that are classified

as 'Northern' societies. Can the notion of the South be applied to areas of social life that are not directly related to development differences, such as those involving the formation of one's own identity? Regarding knowledge generation, the South has shown to be an excellent location to dump the theories of Humanities, and Natural/Pure Sciences from the Global North without considering the fundamental difference between these two halves. Can we, scholars from Global South challenge the unidirectional traffic of knowledge production and theorisation of it in the Global North and then setting it as a homogenous 'norm' in the Global South?

Due to the rise of European colonialism and Western capitalism, the North-South split has been employed to convey geographical representations of inequality in society since the 1960s. While the North is associated with regions of prosperity and progress, the South has become a symbol of poverty and marginalisation, as well as an illustration of life in peripheral areas. The question is, however, how the compartmentalization of the world around geographies of inequality affects the creation of knowledge. The geographical region that has been termed as 'Global South' has always been considered at the receiving end of 'theory' with no exception in the field of translation studies Translation Studies, like other disciplines of social sciences and liberal arts, has treated the Eurocentric ideas as universal and thereby homogenized the differences by non-recognizing the non-European ideas. When we discuss translation studies discipline in India or form syllabus, have we ever referred "Equivalence theory", "Skopos theorie", "Polysystem Theory" as Western translation theories. We have not because we have internalized these theories from Europe as universal and the concepts from the non-European space as 'other', as 'area'. The Global South in terms of knowledge production or if we think specifically from the context of the discipline of Translation Studies, has been non-recognised, silenced, disregarded, and marginalised. The idea of 'non-recognition' therefore, should be used as a weapon, political, social, racial, academic in order to challenge the subtlety through which the Global North operates and tags everything as 'global', 'universal'. The present thesis will try to encounter colonial politics of 'universalizing' the discipline of translation studies by putting forth theories of translation as practiced in India. It will wage a war with the colonial hegemony and strive to present 'global south' as an alter geo-centre of ideas in translation studies, thus will incorporate interactions between and within the 'global south' centres. It seeks to invert the north-south barrier by bringing together plurilingual translation traditions from the Indian subcontinent. The thesis will discuss the Global South's significance as a useful instrument for addressing the 'absence' of translation theories in this geographic space by shedding light on international disparities in the field of

translation studies. Finally, South will be addressed as a notion associated with geographies of inequality or critical positionalities, but also as an attitude: a Southern Attitude, which incorporates an invitation to magnify theories that address the infinitely complex notion of translation practices in the Global South.

Global South as the Centre: a Translation Studies Perspective

"Summer in the deep South is not only a season, a climate, it's a dimension. Floating in it, one must be either proud or submerged."

— Eugene Walter, *The Untidy Pilgrim*

Samir Amin in his book titled, *Global History: A View from the South* (2011) has cited André Gunder Frank's *ReORIENT: Global Economy in the Asian Age* (1998) and summarized Frank's argument:

> History is, from its inception, dealing with a system that has always been global, in the sense that the evolution of the various regions has never been determined by the interaction of forces internal to the societies in question but by forces operating on the global system, and that consequently, all efforts to write the history of a region of the world (Europe, China, or any other region) can only be illusory, since there is only one history, that of the one and only world system. (2011: 120)

The importance of diversity in a more complex spatial construction is important for the discipline of Translation Studies itself. Theories of Translation Studies must be questioned in order to be relevant to the South. The deparochialisation of theory is the essence of that difficulty. The thesis argues that the Translaton Studies as a discipline has been reluctant to decolonize itself although attempts to solve the issue via the criticism of the canon have, however, been made more recently. This thesis makes a contribution to the process of evaluating and broadening the discipline in order to make it less provincial in nature. The canon of translation theory, which is Eurocentric, demonstrates the narrowness of the discipline as it is now practised. The thesis then moves on to positing models of translation theories by taking Ajitesh Bandyopadhyay's adaptations of Brecht and Chekhov as case studies of theatre adaptations in South Asia to address biases of the Global North in the discipline's development and perception. The large section of the thesis suggests different frameworks for developing

translation theories from the context of the Global South which can harness the rich resources of alternative, non-Global North theories in the field of translation studies. Within the framework of Southern epistemologies, which represent a subaltern history, this thesis has developed theoretical models of conceptualizing translation around the knowledge(s), terminologies acquired from pre-colonial Indian practices – their genesis, etymologies, practices, and the politics of hospitality that surrounds them.

The world, be it the Global North or the Global South has constantly been engaging with European thought and the so-called European intellectual tradition extending back to the ancient Greeks to discuss and analyse any social development or practice in any part of the world. In fact, there is hardly any scholar in India who, when faced with the task of analysing the situation typical to the nation, alludes to classical Indian thinkers, philosophers, or linguists. It is because the heavy influence of the western discourse in Indian academia has led to the belief that the classical Indian tradition is after all, dead. Dipesh Chakrabarty, in his introduction to *Provincializing Europe* writes, "Postcolonial scholarship is committed, almost by definition, to engaging the universals—such as the abstract figure of the human or that of Reason—that were forged in eighteenth-century Europe" (2009:5). This universalization of concepts and discourses has been so imposing that there is hardly an easy way of dispensing it completely. This has led to what Chakrabarty would call "the temporal structure of the statement, "first in the West, and then elsewhere" (ibid 6). As such, if an Indian scholar wants to be abreast with contemporary research, s/he has to be acquainted with the works of all leading European theorists, historians and social scientists. However, the same is not the case with the Western world. If scholars in Europe and America want to be updated, they need not care what theorists or historians in India, China, Kenya, Brazil, or Iran are writing. They can easily ignore these works without concern about being regarded as provincial, parochial, or backward. They do not feel that they are missing out on something important if they do not read these works. This asymmetry of ignorance has made European discourse a referral point for analysing the situations arising in the rest of the world. The thesis, therefore, found the imposition of a westernised construction on the translation studies knowledge system constructed as universal and thereby applicable to every situation. This tendency has led to a one-size-fits-all style of translation studies education, grounded in westernised ideals. This thesis will attempt to put a dent on this 'universal' position forwarded by the Global North and reclaim the terrain of translation studies on behalf of the Global South. The North has always been obsessed with the

theories conceptualized in their academia and the implementation of them as universal phenomena. This creates an illusion and thereby creates opportunities to counter it.

Is there anything called the Indian theory/(ies) of Translation Studies?:

Judy Wakabayashi and Rita Kothari tried to engage in conversation towards an alternative discourse of translation studies in their edited book titled *Decentering Translation Studies: India and Beyond* (2009). The editors attempted to foreground discourses of translation practices in the non-Western traditions by looking at the historiography of European and Anglo-American theories of translation studies. The book has tried to broaden the Geo-conceptual periphery of the discipline by breaking away the monopoly of the West in the field. The book has also attempted to move beyond the Indian subcontinent, focusing on other cultures such as Korea and Japan from Southeast Asia, as well as South Africa as a representation from the African continent, in addition to India. In the "Introduction", jointly written by Rita Kothari and Judy Wakabayashi, the editors have argued,

> Although translation is often perceived as a cosmopolitan act bridging linguistic and cultural divides the discipline of Translation Studies is for the most part grounded in the relatively homogeneous and restricted experience of translation in Western Europe. This bias neglects the full richness of translational activities and discourses. In turn, contemporary discourses in the non-Western world sometimes tend to regard traditional on translation as 'backward' and to borrow theoretical principles from the West without fully evaluating their validity in the light of longstanding local practices and modes of self-articulation. and both western and non-Western discourses, derivative or otherwise, have largely failed to address the heterogeneity off practices and views *amongst* non-Western cultures. (2014: 2-3)

While reviewing the book for *The Translator*, Harish Trivedi has pointed out that, by reversing an age-old Indian hierarchy where the South of India felt controlled and culturally oppressed by the North, the editors get political correctness points for their editorial choices. (2014: 127) The first essay in the collection titled, "Caste in and Recasting language: Tamil in Translation" by G.J.V. Prasad has underlined the politics of translation and Tamil as a hybridised language through the classical, colonial and nationalist phase, thereby, challenged the notion of 'purity'.

E.V. Ramakrishnan in his essay, "Translation as resistance: The role of translation in the making of Malayalam literary tradition" has focused on the formation of Malayalam literary tradition between the fifteenth and eighteenth century encountering the leading traditions of Sanskrit and Tamil through exemplifying the process of translation as site for resistance. T.S. Satyanath in his essay, "Tellings and renderings in medieval Karnataka: The episode of Kirata Shiva and Arjuna" has established translation as retelling through evidences from mediaeval Kannada. V.B. Tharakeswar, through generic exploration of tragedy in modern Kannada, has investigated issues of the translatorial politics in the colonial and nationalist phase in his essay titled, "Translating Tragedy into Kannada: Politics of genre and the nationalist elite". "The afterlives of punditry: Rethinking fidelity in sacred texts with multiple origins" by Christi A. Merill has investigated the role of Sanskrit pandits as translators cum collaborators during the emergence of colonial period in Bengal. On the other hand, the next article titled, "Beyond textual acts of translation: *Kitab At-Tawhid* and the politics of Muslim identity in British India" by Masood Ashraf Raja has analysed the reception of Muhammad Ibn Abdul-Wahab in the early phase of colonial rule in India. Tridip Suhurd in his "Reading Gandhi in two tongues" probed into Gandhi's act of translating world literature in Gujrati and the self-translating his text from Gujrati. Rita Kothari in her paper "Being-in-translation: Sufism in Sindh" has spoken about the concepts like hybridity and migrancy in translation by probing into the travel of Sufism in Sindh. Conversely, in "(Mis)Representation of Sufism through translation", Farzaneh Farahzad has discussed representation of Sufism in English and its interpretation in the West. Theresa Hyun's article "Translating Indian Poetry in the colonial period of Korea" has brought the idea of relay translation and looked at how the Koreans under Japanese rule grew into translating the Indian poetry through English. Sherry Simon in her essay, "A.K. Ramanujan: What happened in the library" has looked at the figure of the translator in order to understand a translator's role as a cultural mediator. Judy Wakabayashi has looked at another aspect in the field, the etymological combing of translations of key Japanese terms in her essay, entitled, "An etymological exploration of 'translation' in Japan". Stanley G.M. Ridge in "Translating against the grain: Negotiation of meaning in the colonial trial of chief Langalibalele and its aftermath", the last essay of the edited book, has looked at the interpreting practice through the archives of nineteenth-century colonial trial to probe further the role of interpreting and translation to understand the mechanisms of societal factors during the colonial regime.

The book project, therefore, seems to chronicle certain hitherto unheard histories of translation and to relativize Translation Studies, possibly shaking the foundations of the field a

bit, until such a time when it is possible to rebuild it from the ground up. (2014: 5) Therefore, the book has given space to scholars who have worked on different traditions of translation practices primarily in Indian subcontinent. But this book has not attempted to put all these heterogenous tales of translation into theoretical models. Thus, the book ended with a compilation of micro narratives of different ways of translation in the non-Western cultures especially in India and with a very few exceptions in the Southeast Asia and Africa. This book of course has put forth a remarkable challenge towards "Unsettling the foundations" (2014: 3) but the editors themselves pointed out that there will be no "fully formulated alternative theories of translation" (2014: 3) for the readers. Hence, I argue. that in order to challenge the western hegemony over the production of translation theories, we should establish common grounds through the tales of translation practices in India and the larger field of global south and then develop theoretical models based on those chronicles, because encountering an institution requires the development of a counter institution.

G.J.V. Prasad edited a collection of essays titled, *India in Translation, Translation in India* (2019) which studies tales of translational practices ranging from Sachin C. Ketkar's essay on politics of translation of Dnyaneshwar's *Dnyaneshwari*; Gargi Bhattacharya's reading of Vidyasagar's contribution on legal translation in colonial India; Hiren J. Patel's work on Gujrati literary public sphere as a site of translation; Tara Menon's excellent study on translation as fraud through the translations of 'imagined' *bhakti* literature by the French Jesuit Missionaries; Soham Pain's work on the English translation of *Mahabharata* which addresses the age-old debate between western notion of accuracy versus Indian notion of agility; Luv Kanoi's take on the politics of colonial and postcolonial translations through reception of Virgil's *Aeneid* and Okakura's *The Book of Tea* in Indian languages; Priyada Shridhar Padhye's analysis of translation of children' literature by studying *Panchatantra* and *Grimm's Tales'*; Subhendu Mund's attempt to create a brief translational historiography in the colonial time; Amitendu Bhattacharya's work on Tagore's translation of Kabir as a *bhakti* reading of *sufism*; Fatima Rizvi's essay on comparative analysis of English translations of Faiz to the study of the politics of internationalization in the post-colonial India through translating French fiction in Hindi by Nipun Nutan; Runjhun Verma's examination of translations of Indian literature in French and the politics of anthologizing; Shinjini Basu's work on the construction of Bengali intelligentsia through the translation of Gramsci in Bengali; Samudranil Gupta's work on Bengali translations of Samuel Beckett as an edifice of world literature; Regiane Corrêa de Oliveira Ramos' intervention into underlining the importance of translation as making minority

communities visible; Someshwar Sati's argument about the role of translation in changing the linguistic prejudice towards disability and lastly Amrapali Saha's exploration of multiple Indias through the English translation of Kannada novel. This book is an excellent collection of case studies of textual receptions in Indian terrain but did not contribute to establish any methodology other than parroting the reception theories of the West.

Saugata Bhaduri in his edited book titled, *Translating Power* (2008) has taken up an important aspect in translation studies: the structure of power as the driving forces behind the act. In his 'Introduction', he has dealt with the function of ideological state apparatus and repressive state apparatus within literature and their role in translational act. Drawing on Marx, Engels, Gramsci, Althusser, Habermas and Nietzsche, Mukherjee has demonstrated how the "Questions of power are particularly relevant to translation" (2008:xxiii) He has argued that translation can be 'repressive', 'non-repressive' and can also generate 'resistance (2008:xxiii-xxiv) In his work, Harpreet Gill in his article, "Translation and Power: Contingencies and Revolutions" demonstrated how translation might become a revolutionary discourse by analysing a selection of Western philosophical books. Franson Manjali in his article, titled, "Translation and Power: Imagining the Other" examined the problematic link between translation and power by analysing the process of translation from a linguistics perspective, analysing the term's etymology, and associating Derridean discourse. Incorporating further references from Derrida and Fouccault, Simi Malhotra in her essay, "Translating Power: Empire, Language and the Postmodern Condition" has problematized the link between translation and power by demonstrating both the ways in which translation both as a subversive force to undermine authority and as an imperial instrument to control power. In "Power and the Case of Horizontal Translation", Meenakshi Mukherjee, reflecting on her own experiences translating a Hindi work into Bangla, discussed horizontal translation and the power status quo in such instances of translating between two languages in similar power position. In his piece, titled, "Translation and Power: A Reader's Perspective", Amiya Dev examined Sisr Kimar Das's translation of Greek literature to demonstrate how dependence on the original may be a significant role in deciding the power. This edited collection is an excellent example of accommodating actual translations with theoretical discussions, but it is limited as it has explored power only from the postcolonial and poststructural point of view, thereby did not address the issues of the status of the discipline in Indian soil.

In *Translation as Growth* (2010) a fascinating and ground-breaking book, famous linguist Udaya Narayana Singh has attempted an understanding translation as a creative act

which can be equated with writing. He argued that, translation is primarily a creative act that improves both the source and target languages and thereby used the metaphor of 'growth' in demonstrating the critical role of translation in the development of language. Singh further has demonstrated that the major modern Indian languages have developed not only through the "vertical" translations from the languages of power and knowledge, like English and Sanskrit, but also through the "horizontal" translations between *bhashas*, thereby ultimately contributing to the creation of a literature that is inherently pluralistic in nature. Singh further discussed the sociological, poststructural and postmodern theories of text and translation, thereby demonstrated the concepts of 'over-' and 'under-translation' as well as 'genetic' and 'structural' relationship between the source and target language. (66) In succeeding chapters, Singh discusses a number of theories from a western viewpoint that are not new to the Indian academic community, such as translation as communication, translation as interpretation, translation as rewriting, etc. Although the metaphor of growth offered several opportunities for exploration, Singh has not gone in that route.

The title of the joint edition, *Textual Travels*: *Theory and Practice of Translation in India* (2015) by Mini Chandran and Suchitra Mathur sounded promising in the field of theorising translation in the Indian context. Supriya Chaudhuri in the "Foreword" began saying,

> In India, as in the world today, translation is the air we breathe: not only in its original sense of 'carrying over' (*trans-latio*), the condition of meaning – of the conversion of words into signs – but a ceaseless process whereby we make sense of cultures, languages, institutions, and social practices. Yet, while Translation Studies has flourished as an academic discipline, there has perhaps been insufficient attention to the everyday life of translation as social necessity and public instrument. (vii)

The editors of this volume, Mini Chandran and Suchitra Mathur, also acknowledged,

> India has followed Anglophone translation theory with diligence, being quick to pick up on the cultural nuances that seem to answer its homespun issues of plurality and diversity. Anglocentric translation theory, for example, has proved useful to highlight the uneven development of languages in India, the lopsided governmental policies, and the irony of supremacy accorded to English. (xi)

G. N. Devy, in the inaugural essay of the volume, has devoted largely to the historiography of "various theories of the linguistic translations and semantic mutations involved in translation, as developed in Europe" (5) although the title of the essay is, "Translation Theory: An Indian

Perspective" and thereby has exposed the consciousness of 'exile' and 'anxiety' embedded in the theorizations of translation in the west by tracing the origin of the metaphysical crisis in the biblical story. He has argued that the western idea of 'translation as intrusion' is natural and 'desirable' for the monolingual cultures which we cannot equate in the Indian perspective as translation operates on an everyday level in a plurilingual and multicultural space, thereby, indicates, India's 'translating consciousness'. (2-3) Towards the last section of the essay, he has divided the literary translation from Indian context into three broad categories and thereby charted the differing methodologies to address these categories, i.e., "(a) those interested in preserving the ancient literary heritage; (b) those interested in 'Westernising' Indian languages and literature; (c) those interested in 'nationalising' literature in modern Indian languages." (16-7) and argued that, in a space which houses numerous cultures, languages, and traditions, western theories should not be accepted without discrimination. But the essay failed to provide any theoretical standpoints except defining 'translating consciousness' to understand translation from the Indian perspective. The rest of the essays in the volume have dealt with the literary contacts, reception, and appropriation by focusing on specific textual examples from few parts of India across time, for example, Chitra Panikkar's take on self-translation by O. V. Vijayan, Vijaya Guttal's essay on graphic adaptations of Feluda, Meena T. Pillai's take on the adaptations of the popular, K. M. Sherrif's piece on adaptation of Shakespearean drama, Mini Chandran's critical engagement with the translation market in India, Sowmya Dechamma's article on translation and script, Nikhila H's multimodal translation in TV advertisements in India and lastly P. K. Nayar's view on cultural translation and its consumption in reference to Indian Premier League. Therefore, the volume has not been able to justify the theoretical paradigms of Indian translation because the location of theories is always the European continent.

One of the earliest volumes on translation, its role, definitions, and politics from Indian perspective is *Translation: From Periphery to Centrestage* (1998) edited by Tutun Mukherjee. This edited work has attempted to focus on the theoretical parameters of translation studies in general as well as the praxis of translation. The essays in the book attempts to address the broad spectrum of theoretical, practical, textual, and contextual specifics in the world of translation in India.

This thesis deals with the translation terminologies in use in India from the precolonial time to come up with a proposition that it is possible to formulate a discourse of translation without falling back upon the globally dominating theories that evolved in the North. However,

this study of the particular has an analytical concern for a larger relevance for the entire territory identified as Global South. Anisur Rahman, while discussing translation theory and practice in the world of globalization in his book *In Translation: Positions and Paradigms* (2019), points out that, "While the individual fields may grow crops, the larger field may see sharecropping. This means that in the domains of translation theory and practice both the particular and the universal may bear upon one another with equal indulgence to each other" (Rahman 2019: vii). But this concept which sounds ideologically ideal and talks of creating a utopic space where the theories emerging from both the "centre" and the "periphery" can coexist and share equal space is fantastical in the present time where the North has created and successfully maintained a hegemony of its position and discourse. However, Rahman acknowledges that globalization which is "identified with modern capitalism, technological developments and new world order" can also be a "bane" as "it camouflages diversities presented by subcultures and less powerful languages in order to hegemonise and homogenise" (Rahman 2019:viii).

In *Translation: Poetics and Practice*, published as early as 2002, Anisur Rahman, the editor of the volume, states that India, being a multilingual nation is seeing an increased interest in the field of translation. He writes,

> …during all these consequential years, translational activities of good and bad quality have flourished, publishing houses have weighed the aspects of profit and loss and taken a step, government bodies promoting literature and culture have groped for policies and found some, and literature departments in the Universities have considered and reconsidered their curriculum, supposedly to their gain. With many a slip and success they have ultimately made way for what is now, justifiably enough, an eminently viable academic and market project. All of them seem to be in agreement now and they have joined hands, even without clearly acknowledging each other, in creating a condition for wider acceptance and appreciation of our literary capital. In short, the Translation "industry" has come to stay for good. (Rahman 2002: x)

It is true that a multilingual and multicultural country like India creates a profitable market for books translated from regional languages with pressing concerns. This has proved encouraging for writers from the peripheral regions of the country who, owing to the translation of their works, are now recognized and their works are being appreciated. It is both an academic social responsibility and the responsibility of the government to encourage plurality of voices to coexist and engage in cultural and literary exchanges. Academics in India have practices and

preached translation with an earnest responsibility for almost three decades now. The government, too, has shared its responsibility by introducing prestigious awards and recognitions for translators. However, a persistent problem that continued in Indian academia is that the Western theories of translation always remained a referral point. In fact, syllabus of all the courses of translation in the Universities and colleges across the country are either dealing completely with the western theories of translation or include a larger share of it with a few essays by Indian scholars as representative inclusions.

Methodology/ Theoretical Framework

This thesis has focused on the theoretical lack of translation studies as a discipline in India. The thesis has tried to develop four models, namely, translation as interpretation, translation as illumination, translation as evolution, and translation as fission. In order to do so, this dissertation has reviewed the existing literature on translation studies in India and translation studies as a discipline in the Global South. This research has used a deductive method in so far as it has taken into account the more considerable and normalized practice of analysing translation practice in India, in particular, and Global South at larger, to conclude how there exists a hegemonic prevalence of the epistemological theories of translation from the global north in this part of the world. Even the indigenous scholars of the region have accepted the discourse of the global north as the standard of evaluating translation, even when the translation is happening between two languages from the global south itself. Despite the fact that there exists a plethora of indigenous terms and even a distinct world view that has the potential to be developed into an alternate discourse from the global south, the north has dominated the thought process in the field so far. Therefore, the research proposes an inductive method of developing an indigenous theory of translation for India taking into account the translation terminologies that have been in use since the precolonial times. It is through the formulation of this theory, the thesis explores whether the global south that has always been regarded as the global consumer of discourses is at all capable of theorizing, thereby rejecting the hegemonic dominance of the theories from the global north.

This dissertation has also tried to conceptualise eco translatology in the Indian context by incorporating the concept of eco-translation by Michael Cronin and eco-translatology by Gengshen Hu. The dissertation has attempted textual analysis of the adaptations by Ajitesh Bandopadhyay in order to develop a case study of how we can analyze translations or

adaptations through the model of ecotranslatology developed in this thesis. The thesis has pointed out how Ajitesh Bandopadhyay's adaptations can fit into the model of translation as evolution. The larger methodology of this thesis is theoretical in nature and analysed the adaptations by Ajitesh Bandopadhyay as textual translations and not as a performative text in order to create an alternative theoretical framework from the Global South.

Whose Landscape is this? Clearing the Murky Terrain:

The opening chapter, the Introduction, has set the tone of the thesis by positing the field of translation studies in the Global South. The thesis attempts, amongst many of its other ventures, to situate where the Global South is and why understanding the metrics of the Global South is essential in order to re-orient the field of translation studies in India. In order to argue for using terminologies like Global North and Global South, Chapter One has also tried to discuss the limitations of the East–West discourse or First World–Third World narrative. In this globalized world, which has seen several power shifts after the Cold War, locating Global South vis-à-vis Global North is essential. The chapter has never argued that, like the previous binary positions i.e., East–West or First World - Third World, Global North, and Global South, is also a fixed static identity. Rather, it argues about the fluidity of the positions of Global North and Global South against one another and the continuous shift in power locations depending on the geopolitical, socio-economical, and eco-ethnical relationships. The continuous flux in the power status quo in the globe, the wartime exploitation of art and religion, the usage of ethnocultural currency in foreign relationships, the war against different types of terrorism, the continuous subversion of freedom, the constant surveillance by the states, the resource-specific diplomacy, the race in the space, the biological weapons, the differing notions of development and the exhaustion of natural resources and the harrowing end of the anthropocentric world, all these and many other situations in the world order together have contributed the continuous change in the definition of Global North and Global South and made it fluid as well as a continuous emerging concept. The first chapter of this thesis makes an attempt to posit the field of translation studies within the context of the ever-shifting order of the world, and it also discusses the necessity of resisting the unproblematic channel of receiving translation theories from the Global North in the Global South. In addition to this, it looks at whether or not India has contributed any translation theory to the countries of the Northern Hemisphere. In order to identify the areas where further research is needed in the field of translation studies from an

Indian viewpoint, it has conducted a comprehensive analysis of the available literature. This chapter also makes an effort to re-orient the Global South as the centre and, as a result, aims to transform those who are on the receiving end of information into knowledge producers. The first chapter comes to a close by elaborating on the rationale for selecting Ajitesh as a case study to illustrate the ecotranslatology model and demonstrate the approach used throughout the writing of the thesis.

The second chapter titled, "Alternative Notions of Translation from the Global South" has stitched together as many substitutive views as possible from the 'global south' as against the 'universal' notion of translation to explore various discursive practices and then, tried to foreground four different models through which I tried to liberate the discipline called 'translation studies' from linguistic and literary boundaries as propounded by the Global North, and thereby tried to think deeply and discursively about alternative discourses of translation as a field of study from Global South. According to the systematic poetics of Indian practices of translational act, best explained in the prefaces of pre-colonial Indian texts written in Sanskrit and other Indian languages, there was no such spatial concept of transference of meaning like translation, rather a multitude of terms denoting alternative practices in peripheral spaces i.e., *anuvād* (Sanskrit. 'retelling'), *rūpāntara* (Sanskrit. 'transplantation'), *bhāshāntaram* (Sanskrit. 'change of dialect') *vivartanam* (Malayalam. 'evolution'), *mozhipeyarttu* (Tamil. 'transmigration') *tarjumā* (Urdu. 'interpretation'), *chāyā* (Hindi. 'shadow'), *bhāngni* (Assamese. 'to break') which depicts the use of the concept in a variety of contexts, thus challenging the obligation of the singularity of 'translation' in 'Global North' and thereby promoting the plurisemiotic practices across the width and breadth of the Indian subcontinent. This chapter deals with each of these terms in details and thereby tries to propound independent theoretical models from the Global South which also highlights the presence of multiplicity of the translation activities. This chapter, therefore, has offered four theoretical models of conceptualizing translation studies from the Indian context, namely, "translation as interpretation" by looking at Sanskrit terms *anuvād* (retelling), *bhāshāntaram* (change of dialect) and Urdu term *tarjumā* (interpretation); "translation as illumination" by analysing the Hindi term *chāyā* (shadow) and Tamil term *mozhipeyarttu* (transmigration); "translation as fission" by looking at the Assamese word *bhāngni* (to break) and "translation as evolution" by interpreting the Sanskrit word *rūpāntara* (transplantation).

Chapter Three, titled, "Exploring Translational Movement between Spaces: Analysing Brechtian Adaptation by Ajitesh Bandyopadhyay through the Metrics of 'Geotranslation'", is

a detailed textual analysis of two significant adaptations of Brecht by Ajitesh Bandyopadhyay in order to propagate the model of 'geotranslation' from the Global Southern space. The chapter begins with the formation of the Indian Progressive Writer's Association (IPWA) and a short historiography of the initial days of the association. The chapter further delineates how the Indian Progressive Writer's Association impacted the germination of the Indian People's Theatre Association (IPTA) and, subsequently, how the Bengal chapter of the IPTA became one of the most functional and enterprising in terms of using theatre for the upliftment of the poor section of the society. Then the chapter proceeds toward the arrival of Brecht in the Bengal theatre stage and how Ajitesh has indigenized Brecht in the geography of Bengal. Before moving towards the detailed analysis of the adaptations, the third chapter also introduces Ajitesh Bandyopadhyay to the reader. The next section of this chapter is entirely dedicated to the detailed analysis of *Tin Paysār Pālā* (Adaptation of Brecht's *The Three Penny Opera*) and *Bhālomānuṣ* (adaptation of Brecht's *The Good Woman of Setzuan*). Using the Euclidean geometry and Federico Italiano's idea of "geographic re-orientation" as points of departure, this chapter has demonstrated how geometry and geography can be useful tools to understand the methodology of Brechtian adaptations by Ajitesh. Examining the Brechtian *verfremdungseffekt* (Alienation effect) and Ajitesh's use of *Jatra*, a folk-theatre form of Bengal, this chapter examines how the agency of adapter has played a major role in situating Brecht in Bengal keeping in mind the broader background of reception studies.

Chapter Four titled, "Theatre Translation as Transplantation into Target Language Ecology: Locating Chekhov in Post-Independence Bengal" proposes a dialectical reading of the adaptations of Chekhov by Ajitesh Bandyopadhyay. It explores how, while adapting Chekhov, he risks the de-familiarization of the linguistic nuances for the elite middle-class Bengali audience and allows his play to travel to the remote corner of Bengal and situate itself comfortably there. This chapter also tries to focus on the dialectal translation by looking closely at the Sanskrit term *bhāshāntaram*. The chapter endeavors to record the process of acculturation through a close analysis of different layers of dialects used in dialogues by different classes of people. The concepts of 'transfer' and 'reframing' have received much attention in adaptation studies from the context of "transference of sign system" and "resituating a text in a new habitus". This chapter, therefore, studies 'reframing' through the lens of transplantation through the adaptations of Brecht by Ajitesh Bandyopadhyay. Analysing Ajitesh's adaptations of Chekhov's plays i.e., *Manjari Amer Manjari* (Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard*); *Nanaranger Din* (Chekhov's *Swan Song*); *Shuvobibaha* (Chekhov's *The Wedding*); *Tamakusebaner*

Apakarita (Chekhov's *On The Harmfulness Of Tobacco*); *Sharater Megh* (Chekhov's *The Bear*); *Prostab* (Chekhov's *The Proposal*) this chapter aims to contribute to adaptation studies by investigating in-depth the methodologies of textual transplantation. In order to elaborate on the 'reframing' of world theatre in post-independence Bengal, I have drawn upon the reception of Brecht in Bengal, illustrating how the locus of the text or the textual ecosystem can be 'transplanted' from the microcosmic ecosphere and 'reframed' into another eco-environment keeping the eco-linguistic texture of the target intact.

In the Chapter Five, titled, 'Nature's Tale from the Global South: Indian Tryst with Eco-Translatology – A Beginning' what I intended to trace is, first of all, whether biology is a suitable metaphor that can be useful for understanding 'adaptation', and then going beyond the study of organic metaphors, which is very much present in the concept, can I study adaptation from a biological perspective and reshape 'adaptation studies' in terms of biological perspective. I am aware of the fact that metaphors can sometimes be helpful in improving an academic discipline like translatology by opening up new perspectives, although they do always have their limitations. Therefore, using the tools available from eco-linguistics, biosemiotics and eco-translatology, this chapter attempted to re-formulate *rūpāntar* and *vivartanam* as 'Eco-adaptology' from the broader spectrum of eco-translatological paradigm in the context of new territories in theatre adaptations especially by Ajitesh Bandyopadhyay who has referred all his adaptations as *rūpāntar* throughout. Reflecting on the Darwin's theory of 'Evolution and Adaptation via Natural Selection', as Bandyopadhyay described his Brechtian and Chekhovian adaptations as *swadeshi bhasai bideshi phool* (making a foreign flower blossom in native language) this chapter has tried to probe how theatre adaptation can maintain the eco-balance between two diverge ecosystems, their inhabitants and the theatres. Depending on the findings in the previous chapters, this chapter postulates that *rūpāntar* and *vivartanam* can be a framework to understand ecological perspective of translation studies – ecoadaptology. Keeping in mind the biological conceptualisations of 'natural selection', 'evolution', and 'survival', this chapter explores how we can then attempt to form an ecological model of the process of adaptation. The final chapter of this thesis has centred its primary attention on the heuristic potential of the South, as well as the influence that hegemonic agendas of 'translational ideas and conceptions' have on the field of study as a whole. Despite the hegemony of the Global North in the disciplinary study of translation, the thesis has posited itself instrumental towards re-orienting the Global South at the centre at least in the field of translation studies.

Chapter Two

Alternative Notions of Translation from the Global South

"Structure Matters"

- Andre Gunder Frank (1998: xvi)

The studies in translation in India has hardly attempted to form structures to reorient the field of translation studies. In this chapter, I will challenge the universality of 'theories' of translation studies by endeavouring alternative notions originated from the Global South, especially from the Indian subcontinent, as I do think that a new global paradigm necessitates an alternative worldview perspective. I have attempted to expand the field by incorporating alternate views into it, thereby contributing to the field changing and evolving with time and place. If we consider the field of translation studies as a living system, we need to be cautious of its health. The function of a living system depends on the replacement of the dead cells and the regeneration of the new. Therefore, in this chapter, I will try to invigorate the field of translation studies with new cells from the Global South, which will also interact with the system of the global north, as I believe that no field can sustain itself without taking the ecosphere and geospace into consideration. In this chapter, by defining each of these words, like, *anuvād* (Sanskrit. 'retelling'), *rūpāntara* (Sanskrit. 'transplantation'), *bhāshāntaram* (Sanskrit. 'change of dialect') *vivartanam* (Malayalam. 'evolution'), *mozhipeyarttu* (Tamil. 'transmigration') *tarjumā* (Urdu. 'interpretation'), *chāyā* (Hindi. 'shadow'), *bhāngni* (Assamese. 'to break') in-depth and positioning them into four models, namely, "translation as interpretation," "translation as illumination," "translation as fission," and "translation as evolution," I will show how the flow of new oxygen-carrying blood cells, I mean, new theoretical models from the Global South, will ensure the existence of diversity in translation studies.

"Translation as Interpretation": Theorising *anuvād*, *bhāshāntaram* and *tarjumā*

There are prevalent metaphors that have influenced the concept of "carrying across". One is translation as interpreting texts, cultures, ecologies, socio-political scenarios, economies, habitus, geographies, foods, etc. Mohit K. Ray, in his article titled "Translation as

Interpretation" has seen the process from a utilitarian point of view. Citing Rabindranath Tagore's poems and their diverse translations by different translators, Ray has argued how differences in the level of interpretations can lead to divergent translations (Rahman 2002:80). Tracing European history of theorizing translation in terms of interpretation, Matthew Reynolds states,

> 'Translation is a form of interpretation', says Umberto Eco, echoing Roman Jakobson, for whom translation is 'an interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language'. The philosopher Karl Popper tells us that 'every good translation is an interpretation of the original text'. We can read in the *Cambridge Companion to Ovid* that 'every translation of course is an interpretation', while a study of the *Old Testament* goes further: 'it is a truism that any translation is an interpretation'… The Latin *interpretari* could mean, simply, 'to translate', usage which hovers in the early centuries of the life of the word 'interpret' in English; and today we still speak of oral translation as 'interpreting' and oral translators as 'interpreters'. (2011:59)

The translational act has always been regarded as an interpretive act in India. We all know that the Indian knowledge system is constituted of *śruti* (listening) and *smṛiti* (remembering). When the *Guru* (teacher) narrates the text, be it *Veda*s or *Mahakavya*s, in front of his disciples, the disciples are free to interpret the texts from their perspective and re-narrate it in front of others. While explaining the interpretive tradition in India, Kapil Kapoor writes,

> The presence or absence of a powerful interpretive tradition is an index of the degree and extent of the liberty of thought and discussion available in a given civilization more so if the tradition has or hasn't produced and has or hasn't accorded respect to competing and even conflicting interpretations. India, on this count has a long and continuous interpretive tradition that has facilitated liberty of thought and expression. (2005:39)

Since the primary objective of the thesis is to form theoretical models through analysis of the terminologies used in the Indian subcontinent from the pre-colonial period[13], this section will start analysing *anuvād*, *bhāshāntaram*, and *tarjumā* and attempt to develop "translation as

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[13] Although these terms were in use in pre-colonial times, despite the colonial influence, these terms continued to be used and were prevalent in the discourse of the common mass. This proves that there is continuity, and no major rupture has happened, although the western epistemological understanding of translation pervaded the Indian literary scenario after colonialism and colonial lexicographers used the equivalence theory brought by the west while composing dictionaries. There has always been a latent presence of these terms, which continues to date.

interpretation. If we look at the practices in the Indian tradition, the word that has a presence in almost all the major Indian languages is *anuvād*. This practice of *anuvād* primarily originates from the interpretive tradition of language philosophy in India, which is 'hermeneutic' in nature. Now, if we look at the *śruti* tradition of India, it depends on *bhāṣya* (speaking) and *śruti* (listening), and lastly, *anuvād* (retelling). *Anuvād*, we all know, is constituted *anu* which means 'after,' and *vād*, which literally does mean 'speaking of or about,' 'speech,' 'discourse,' 'utterance,' 'statement,' 'speech,' 'argument,' 'doctrine,' or 'thesis.' Therefore, '*anuvād*' has been used for all kinds of 'reputation,' 'to speak after,' 'reiteration,' or 'retelling.' *Anuvād*, as Avadesh K. Singh in his essay titled, "Translation in/and Hindi Literature" has proclaimed, stands for the 'subsequent' or 'following discourse' (*anu* means 'following' and *vād* is equal to discourse). So, according to Singh,

> ...the term *anuvād*... means 'subsequent discourse' (target text) based on a *vād* (discourse, i.e., source text). It presupposes an existing discourse, i.e., *vād* or source text. The *vād* and *anuvād* lead to the third stage, which we can term as *saṁvāda* (dialogue) with one's own self and other(s) within and without. This dialogue or *saṁvāda* impacts the self and the other in more ways than one in different historical periods. Attendant political, ideological, and economic considerations notwithstanding, *saṁvāda* becomes an instrument for the transformation of the self and the other... (2006:206-7)

Radhavallabh Tripathi in a comprehensive entry in his book titled, *Vāda in Theory and Practice,* has noted,

> the word *saṁvāda* is used in *Mahabharata* in the sense of a highly profound discussion between two intellectuals. Vedic seers have used two terms *sampṛcchā* (inquiry) and *saṁvāda* (dialogue) in the context of man's quest for knowledge. Jamadagni Bhargava attaches a great value to *sampṛcchā* and *saṁvāda*. He requests Mitra and Varuna to protect him from such enemies who do not speak or utter questions and do not rejoice at a conversation. In this way, inquiry and conversation formed an integral part of the life and culture of ancient time and those who did not rejoice at sharing spaces through dialogues where unwelcome. (2016:69-70)

From the statements mentioned above, we can build an argument that the Indian tradition of knowledge system was heavily dependent on *vād* (dialogue, debate, speech or argument),

anuvād (repetition of speech/argument), *prativād* (counterargument/counterspeech) and *saṁvāda* (conversation or a dialectic). Therefore, the *bhāṣya* tradition and the *anuvād* tradition constitute essential to Indian thought, and both traditions, through their temporal connotation, establish the tradition of commentary explanation and exposition of interpretation, thus contributing significantly to the shruti tradition of the Indian knowledge system. The *anuvād* style approach has also given the interpreter and commentator much freedom to interpret, comment, and honour texts, offering a different perspective marked by original and creative insight. Therefore, unlike their western counterpart, translational acts in India never faced the anxiety of maintaining the original meaning. G.N. Devy, in his seminal article, titled "Translation Theory: An Indian Perspective," published first in *The Bombay Literary Review* (1989) and then in several books as chapters, has argued,

> In Western metaphysics, translation is an exile, and an exile is a metaphorical translation – a post-Babel crisis. The multilingual, eclectic Hindu spirit, ensconced in the belief in the soul's perpetual transition from form to form, may find it difficult to subscribe to the Western metaphysics of translation. The pre-structuralist basis of translation theory in the West has been metaphysical; and, owing to the institutionalised fear inspired by the myth of Adam unparadised, the literary traditions reared on Christian metaphysics have often viewed the act of literary translation with some embarrassment. (Mukherjee)

Therefore, the concept of 'exile' and the fear of falling from the Paradisal space had never been encountered by the translators in India before the British arrived and introduced Christianity and moulded the practice and conceptual understanding of translation through translations of *The Bible* in different Indian languages. (See Chakkuvarackal 2002; Israel 2010; Chatterjee 2020)

In order to understand the lexical meaning of the Sanskrit term *anuvād* or in Bengali version *anubād*, I will examine a few major dictionaries. I will start with William Carey's *A Dictionary of the Bengalee Language (Vol. I),* which has been considered as one of the most authoritative dictionaries in which the entire entry of the Bengali word *anubād,* and its related words like *anubādak*, *anubādakatā*, *anubādī* run as follows:

> *Anubād: a response, an abusive reply, a sentence which responds to some other sentence.*
> *Anubādak: speaking in consequence of a prior circumstance, replying; a person who quotes the words of another.*

Anubādakatā: the circumstance of quoting a sentiment or passage from

another. Anubādī: replying, responding, quoting. (1825:31-2)

Therefore, according to the entry, Carey is adhering to the fundamental sense conveyed by the term *anubād* when written in Sanskrit. It lends credence to the notion that *anubād* is a form of reaction, a reply in regard to something that has previously been spoken, an explanatory reiteration, and reproducing the speech or text of another person in a way that is correct. Because the early religious texts, known as the four Vedas, were passed down orally for over a thousand years without ever being committed to writing, people have referred to them as "*śruti*" which means "hearing," and a scholar of the four Vedas is known as a "*śrutidhor*." This entry is consistent with the oral tradition of Indian culture, in which the early religious texts were never committed to writing (capable of remembering whatever he hears). On the other hand, the fact that the phrase may also signify an offensive response is not something that can be ignored.

The act of translation is also interpreted in this article as a dialogical exchange between the writer of the original text and the translator of that text. This is a declaration against 'monologism,'[14] when read in light of Mikhail Bakhtin's notion of the dialogic, which may be found in the following. Therefore, translation gives rise to the possibility of many interpretations of the truth. It is via dialogic engagement that the creative potential of the translator is given the chance for renewal and regeneration. It is also through dialogic interaction that the translator's creative potential may speak and dispute with the authoritative discourse or the master narrative. A move of this nature confers authority upon the figure of the translator, who, in his capacity as a reader, interprets the text based on his own subjective reading of it. Subsequently, the translator, by means of his translation, questions the author and offers a response to a significant number of the questions that are posed in the source text. The act, as a result, adopts a dialogic form in which the translator takes up the discussion from where the author left off, in turn leaving place for another reader-translator figure to pick up from what he has left behind. The dialogue between the two competing voices of the author and the translator creates openings for the generation of new meanings from the previously existing text, which, although being taken from the original material, often extends beyond it.

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[14] The English terms 'dialogic' and 'dialogism' often refer to the concept used by the Russian philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin in his work of literary theory, *The Dialogic Imagination* (1975). Bakhtin contrasts the 'dialogic' and the 'monologic' work of literature. The dialogic work carries on a continual dialogue with other works of literature and other authors. It does not merely answer, correct, silence, or extend a previous work, but informs and is continually informed by the previous work.

When seen in this manner, the process of translation unquestionably accords a greater degree of significance to the subjectivity and receptiveness of the reader-translator, dealing a severe blow to the interpretation of the practise that is focused on the source text (or author). Therefore, we are in a position to claim that according to Carrey's interpretation, the term "*anubād*" as it relates to translation has greater potential than the word "translation." It is essential to be aware that under Carrey's epistemology of absolute and objective reality, there is no way to provide "space for various viewpoints on truth." Nevertheless, this is possible in the Indian languages due to a concept known as "the freedom to interpret."

Reverend William Morton published another dictionary in 1828 called *Dvibhasarthakabhidhan* or *A Dictionary of the Bengali Language with Bengali Synonyms and an English Interpretation*. In this dictionary, Reverend William Morton noted that the term *anubād* is synonymous with *punahkathan* in Bengali, and that in English, it means response, abusive reply, quotation. It is difficult to find a satisfactory response to this persistent connection to the concept of "abusive reply" as a method of deciphering the meaning of translation. Although the definition of the word in Bengali is *punahkathan*, which means "repetition" and refers to interpretation by repetition, the negative and, for that matter, unsettling English connotation continues appearing in succeeding dictionaries such as *A Dictionary, Bengali and Sanskrit: Explained in English and Adapted for Students of Either Language*, to which is appended an Index, serving as a Reversed Dictionary, compiled by Graves C. Haughton, records,

> *Anubād:* 1. *A reply, (particularly) an abusive reply.* 2. *Tautology or repetition.* 3. *An interpretation.*
> *Anubādak:* 1. *Answering, replying.* 2. *Quoting the words of another person.*
> *Anubādi:* 1. *Replying, answering.* 2. *Quoting or repeating the words of another person.* (1833:137)

Even in this case, we can see that there is no word that can be used as a direct translation for the term *anubād*; rather, G. C. Haughton chose to follow the meaning of the term as it is understood in Sanskrit. It is also important to note that Haughton is also proposing the meaning of "reply" for the word *anubād* here, but he is specifically proposing the meaning of "an abusive reply." Although other compilers, such as Morton and Carey, have made references to the abusive use of the phrase in the context of a conversation, it is most likely Haughton who believes this "abusive reply" to be the main meaning of the term *anubād*.

An additional lexicon Rev. William Yates created a dictionary in Sanskrit and English in 1846 called *A Dictionary in Sanskrit and English, Designed for the Private Students and of Indian Colleges and Schools*. In this dictionary, the word *anuvād* is defined as "abuse, coincidence, and tautology." The action may be understood in three different ways, according to these three interpretations of its meaning. The term "tautology" may refer to repetition, iteration, duplication, or the saying of the same thing over and over again in different words. Alternatively, it may also signify, statements that are true by obligation or by virtue of their logical form. "Abuse" of course indicates to the idea of degrading and reviling; "tautology" may refer to repetition, iteration, duplication, or the saying of the same thing repeatedly in different wordings. However, it is noteworthy to note that the activity makes use of the term "coincidence," which puts the concept of "time" into play. It might be making a reference to the fact that something is similar in nature, or in chronology; that a body of work that is comparable to that of the source text co-exists concurrently and concomitantly with full synchronicity. To be more specific, this connotation robs the word of all its splendour as a part of a conversation and transforms it into a danger to the original material. It places a higher value on the original source text, which it considers to be the sole truth, and it considers the activity of translation to be an act of debasement and dishonour that imperils the standing of the original source text while also misusing and offending it.

Monier Williams in his magnum opus *A Sanskrit – English Dictionary, Etymologically and Philologically Arranged with Special Reference to Greek, Latin, Gothic, German, Anglo-Saxon and Other Cognate Indo-European Languages* (1872) has provided a thorough definition of the word *anuvād* and its associated vocabulary. It follows as:

> *Anu-vāda*: saying after or again, repeating by way of explanation, explanatory repetition or reiteration with corroboration or illustration, explanatory reference to anything already said, translation; any portion of the Brahmanas which comments on, explains or illustrates an injunction (*vidhi*) previously propounded, and which does not itself propound rules (...); confirmation; report, rumour, *on dit*; slander, reviling. [emphasize mine]
>
> *Anu-vādaka(ikā)(am)*, or *anu-vādin(ī)/ini(i)*: *repeating with comment and explanation, corroborative, concurrent, conformable, in harmony with. (...)*
>
> *Anu-vādya(m)*: *to be explained by an Anuvāda, to be made the subject of one; (...)*
>
> *Anuvādya-tva(m)*: *the state of requiring to be explained by an Anuvāda.* (39)

The point to be noted here is apart from the erroneous inclusion of the term 'translation' as an equivalent to the term *anuvād*, Monier-Williams echoes the Sanskrit etymology of the term. According to Trivedi, no other cognate words listed by Monier Williams including the verbs *anuvāch* and *anuvād* or the nouns *anuvāchana, anuvāka* and *anuvākya* "specify in greater detail the main meaning of the word, "saying after or again, repeating..." (Hermans). The entry on *anu-vādika / anu-vādini,* for instance, starts with "repeating with comment and explanation". The entry on *anu-vać* adds: 'to repeat', 'reiterate', 'recite', 'speak after', 'reply'; the lexical entry on *anu-vaćana* archives: "speak after, repetition, reciting, reading; lecture; a chapter, a section; recitation of certain texts (mantra) in consequence of and in connection or conformity with injunctions (*parisha*) spoken by other priests." The lexical entry on *anu-rākā* augments, "saying after, reciting, repeating, reading; a chapter of the Vedas, a subdivision or section; a compilation from the Ṛig or Yajur-vedas" while the lexical entry on *anu-vāćana* echoes almost same with supplementary explanation: "the act of causing to recite; the recitation of mantras or passages of the Ṛig-veda by the Hotṛi in obedience to the injunction (parisha) of the Adhvaryu priest (Monier-Williams, 1872: 38-9). Harish Trivedi claimed that this "aberrant definition included by Monier-Williams: 'translation' "is wrong" and "unwittingly anachronistic" because none of the above cognate words, defined by Monier-Williams himself, "contain even a whiff of anything like 'translation'" (Hermans). According to him, "though *anuvāda* did not mean 'translation' in Sanskrit, it had ... been appropriated to mean that in the modern Indian languages by the time Monier-Williams compiled his dictionary".

One of the early monolingual Bengali lexicons of the twentieth century, *Adarsha Bangla Avidhan*, (1906) compiled by a Bengali lexicographer Subal Chandra Mitra chronicles the term *anubād* and other cognate words begin with a greater detail:

> *Anubād*: 1. *poschadkathan* (repetition after); *anukirton* (reiteration); *punah punah kathan* (saying or narrating again and again); *bhasantarkaran* (translanguage); tarjuma (paraphrasing); *anukaraṇ* (imitation), *apobād* (defamation); *nindā* (slander); *jonosruti* (hearsay); *kutsitārtho bākya* (vulgar sentence); *prasangshā* (praise); 2. *pratikūlatā* (hostility); *śatrutā* (enmity).

> *Anubādak*: *bhasantarak* (a writer who writes in another language); *poschadkathak* (who speaks after); *punah punah kathak* (who speaks again and again); *nindak* (slanderer).

Anubādito: *anubādjukto* (*anubad* added); *bhāṣāntorito: jahar anubād korā hoiāche –*
asuddha (suddha = anudito) (transferred into another language: where *anubād* has
already done – impure (pure – *anudito*).

Anubādī: *anubādkari* (person who does *anubād*); *sadrisyo* (likewise), *tulya*
(comparable), *anurup* (similar); *suchak* (indicator / index). (1906:96)

It is important to notice that the word "translation" is not included here as an equivalent of
anubād, even though it has previously been included in the dictionaries published by the School
Book Society and Monier-Williams. This is an intriguing fact. Therefore, Mitra has maintained
the "original" meaning in its entirety despite the fact that it has already been contaminated with
the colonial imposition of "translation" as a "prospective" equivalent.

According to Gyanendramohan Das's revised (Dictionary of Bengali Language), which
was first published in the year 1917, the prefix anu indicates "punah punah, sadrisha, manda
ityadi" (repetition in general, alike, evil, etc.), while the noun *vāda* means "bola" (to tell). To
put it all together, in the words of Das:

1. *bhasantar; tarjuma; ak bhasar artha ba bhab abya bhasay byaktokoron;*
translation. (translanguage; tarjuma; to reveal inner significance or meaning of
one language to another) 2. *anukaran.* (imitation) 3. *ninda; apobad.* (to defame;
to slander) 4. *dosharop.* (to blame) 5. *birombona.* (harassment). (1917:55-6)

Because of this, we can see that the word *anubād* may have a wide variety of diverse
implications, ranging from the translation of "tarjuma" to "translanguage" and from "other"
slander or defamation to "harassment." Given the breadth of its connotations, it would be
difficult, if not impossible, to place the Sanskrit and Bengali word anuvd inside the confines of
the concept of "translation" as it is understood in the West. Another interesting aspect is that
even at this point in history, the word anuvd may be interpreted as meaning "to slander," "to
defame," or "to harass" other people. In contrast to the history of the evolution of the term
"translation" in the Western concept, where it came to be associated with certain religious and
holy practises, in the Indian context the term had in it a negative sense of degrading, which, if
read cynically, can come to mean a process that demeans a text to an undignified position. In
the history of the evolution of the term "translation," in the Western concept, it came to be
associated with certain religious and holy practises. This might be due to the fact that the suffix
bād in Bengali combines with prefixes such as *apo* and *bād* to form words such as *apobād*
(which literally means "to accuse and slander a person") and *bibād* (literally means quarrel or

conflict). If this connotation is associated with the process of translation, then the figure of the translator emerges as that of a literary villain who unlawfully enters a discourse (*bād*) with the source text while keeping close association with it. As a result, the translator gets into a conflict with the author, and in the end, with the production of the translated text, defames him. If this connotation is associated with the act of translation, then the figure of the literary villain is associated with the act of translation

The journey through the several dictionaries enlightened us to the fact that if we travel beyond the colonial phase of the history of translational activities in India, we can perceive that the term *anuvād* is giving us enough space to establish the model of "translation as interpretation" from the Global South. Whether the term connotes to 'repetition' or 'saying after', we need to understand that in orality, since there is no definitive existence of the source, the *anuvādak* (who repeats) is repeating as per his/her subjectivity and can add and/or delete portions as per his/her choice and memory. Therefore, s/he will deviate knowingly/unknowingly from what s/he heard before and because of the ethereal nature of the knowledge system, the discourse and following the discourse or counter-discourse, everything will be fluid in nature. This fluidity or non-conformity towards the source is in a way encouraging the *anuvādak* to render freely and the diverse versions of the *Mahākavyas* i.e., The *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* are testifying this statement.

Another term *bhāshāntar*, which literally denotes the process of changing dialect or linguistic transfer between dialects (See Singh 2010:86), can also be helpful to justify the construct of translation as interpretation. This term also hints to the fact how in the precolonial period the horizontal transfer of texts were prevalent and how translators used to translocate the texts from one dialect to the other in order to reach every community who are on the same horizontal status linguistically speaking. The position of *bhāshās* and the transfers in between were ubiquitous, which is very much evident through the practice of *bhāshāntar*, as existed in the precolonial India. During the colonial period this term *bhāshāntar* became the closest possible equivalence to the term 'translation', as both have linguistic transfer in common. But since the term *anuvād* was more commonly used across al the language spheres, the colonial lexicographers have mistakenly used it as the equivalence of 'translation'.

The other terminology from Global South which will strengthen the model of translation as interpretation is the Urdu word *tarjumā*. If we comb the etymological meaning of the word *tarjumā*, we will find that the word means interpretation; *tarjamā karnā* is to interpret; *tarjamā-*

navīs an Interpreter; *tarjamā honā* is to be interpreted or translated[15]. The Persian-Bengali-English Dictionary compiled by Ali Avarseji has recorded that the term in Persian does also mean interpretation,

ترجمان(তার্জোমা'ন্/tarjomăn)
অনুবাদক; ব্যাখ্যাকারী; দোভাষী।
Interpreter.
ترجمه (তার্জোমে/tarjome) অনুবাদ;
তরজমা। Translation.   (Avarseji)

Harish Trivedi also pointed out while tracing the origin of the terminology,

> Beyond the Sanskrit terms described above and they are evolving using the modern Indian languages to describe the various modes of translation there exist a couple of other terms for translation which come from non-Sanskrit sources and are current in the sum of the Indian languages. The word for translation in Urdu (a language which became current in the 18th century as they argot of the street or the army camp out of an intermixing of Hindi on the one hand and Arabic and Persian on the other is *tarjama* or merely accurately *tarjamah,* which comes from add a big through Persian and it is available as a less common alternative to *anuvad* in some other languages as well, including Hindi, Bengali and Malayalam. (2006)

Therefore, we can presume that the Urdu term is hinting towards subjectivity of the interpreter/reader in the meaning making process. As against the strict adherence to the original text in the Western idea of translation, *tarjumā* is hinting towards a varied range of subjective analytical reading, thereby breaking the strict notion of hegemonic relationship that exists in the West. If we look at the oral tradition of India, we can infer that the term *tarjumā* can also hint to the art of interpretation which relies heavily on the skill of the interpreter who mediates between the speaker and the listener. S/he grasps the content which is spoken by the speaker and then transfers the content to the listener using the tools of the target language. K. Satchidanandan states:

> We do not even have a proper word for translation in the Indian languages, so we have, at different times, borrowed *anuvad* ('speaking after') from Sanskrit and *tarjuma* (explication or paraphrase) from Arabic…. Our predecessors used

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[15] https://www.rekhta.org/urdudictionary?&keyword=tarjuma

texts as take-off points and freely retold and resituated them, as was done in the case of many *Ramayanas*, *Mahabharatas* and *Bhagavatas* in different languages. (2014)

Mostly, interpretation happens impromptu, immediately after the "original" is spoken, therefore, technically, the interpreter's responsibility lies in delivering the message often in a condensed form but with a very judicious choice of language using his/her subjectivity. He is involved in "*paigam ka tarjumā karnā*". The presence of the term *tarjumā* can be seen in other Indian languages i.e., Telegu, Bengali, Malayalam etc. which hints towards the fact that in the pre-colonial time interpreters used to enjoy the liberty of interpretation without any kind of anxiety unlike their western counterpart. Translation Studies in the Global North has tried to differentiate the act of translation from interpretation and therefore began studying interpretation separately. Translation has always carried a strict sense of linguistic transfer where the translators were put under a surveillance. On the other hand, in Indian subcontinent, the translators were free to render as evidenced in these two terms. Interpretation was an inseparable act in the process of translation.

Translation as Evolution:

In 1994, a NASA group tasked with defining life in planetary systems proposed, in line with Carl Sagan's theory, that life is "a self-sustaining chemical system capable of growth, reproduction, and Darwinian evolution." According to this concept, living organisms undergo metabolism or chemical changes in an environment containing the necessary components, namely water, carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen, oxygen, phosphorus, and sulphur. According to the Oparin-Haldane theory, which was later confirmed by the Miller-Urey experiment, if the fundamental inorganic molecules present on the early Earth are given the right conditions, they can begin to interact with one another, form organic molecules, and eventually evolve into organisms. If we view author, language, culture, theme, genre, authorial intention, and other textual elements as organic and inorganic molecules that interact to form an organic text that lives and thrives in its own environment, can we then view its translation as an evolution and adaptation in the Darwinian sense, in which a transformed species will evolve in a completely new environment while mutating with new sets of elements (translator, target language)? Let's find out by uncovering two particular Indian phrases, *rūpāntara* and *vivartanam*, which, according to my argument, characterise translation as "evolution."

Taking cue from the Indian aesthetics best explained in Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra* (Dramaturgy), according to whom reconstruction of a well-known story is the higher form of creativity over original creation, and all these varied terms like *rūpāntara*, *vivartanam*, which are hinting towards the fact that translational activities in pre-colonial India were having the existential primacy as the version/renditions were enjoying the more important position than its 'original' form. The multiple renditions of Indian *Mahakavyas Ramayana* and *Mahabharta* in many languages of South and South-East Asia are proving this perspective of Indian plurisemiotic practices.

Rūpāntar, was constructed by combining two Sanskrit words *rūp* and *antar*. The word *Rūp* means 'form' and *antar* means 'change'; therefore, *rūpāntar* denotes 'transformation of a text' and would be corresponding to words like 'rendition', 'adaptation' and 'version'. This indicates that the text has not been subjected to a translation that is word for word; rather, the text has been subjected to a "changing of the form" and has been given a new shape. If we begin our journey through time by looking at dictionaries, we will notice that the word *rūp* in Monier-Williams' *Sanskrit to English Dictionary* (1872) not only does mean 'form,' 'figure,' and 'beauty,' but it also contains meanings such as *ropā* and *ropita*. If we continue our journey through time by looking at other dictionaries, we will notice that in the same dictionary, the word *ropā* means "the process of raising or putting up," yet the entry for *ropita* starts with "the act of planting (trees/saplings) or sowing." This fact makes for an interesting comparison.

> *rūp*: 1. ropā, 2 . ropita (connected with rt. I. *ruh*), Ved. the earth. (Monier-Williams, 1872: 850)

Since the term *rūp* has been equated with *ropā* and *ropoṇa*, therefore, it is essential to investigate the entries that are associated with these two terms in the same lexicon. According to him, *ropā* means in one word 'plantation' and *ropita* is 'planted':

> *ropā*: (fr. the Caus of rt. 1. *ruh*), the act of raising or setting up... (fr. the Caus of rt. 2. *ropoṇa*); the planting (of trees).

> *ropoka*, planter.

> *ropoṇa*: causing to grow, causing to grow over or cicatrize, ... putting or placing on; the act of setting up or erecting, raising; the act of planting, setting.

> *ropita*: planted, erected, raised. (Monier-Williams 1872: 855)

After that, we shall look at Haricharan Bandyopadhyay's herculean work, the *Bangiya Śabda Koś* (1932), which is a Bengali Dictionary. In this dictionary, we will find a thorough entry of the term.*rūp*, the root word of the term *rūpāntar*:

> *rūp*[1]: *rūpkaraṇa*, *rūpjuktakaraṇa* [adding attributes].
>
> *rūp*[2]: '*rūpjukta*' [added attributes], *sadṛśa* [similar]. 1. *ākṛti* [form), *mūrti* [effigy], *kāy* [figure]. 2. *saundarya* [beauty] 3. *cakkhurbishay mātra*, *drābya* [seen through eyes, object]. 4. *swabhāb* [characteristics], *prakṛti* [nature]*, biśeṣ dharma* [particular attributes]. 5. *pratibimba* [reflection], *pratikriti* [figure]. 6. *bhāb* [condition], *prakār* [types] ... 8. *sadṛśa* [likeness], *tūlyatā* [comparable]. 9. *pad-dhati* [method].
>
> *rūp*[3]: *ropoṇa kora* [to plant]. (Bandyopadhyay 1932: 1926)

Here, we get to see that in addition to the two most apparent entries such as "beauty" and "shape" given before, Haricharan Bandyopadhyay also states that *rūp* may also indicate *ropoṇa* (to plant/to sow). This is something that we come to realise here. These implications remind us of Shelley's metaphor of "transplanting the seeds" to describe the naturalisation process. Shelley used this metaphor to talk about how naturalisation occurs. P. B. Shelley, in his work titled *A Defense of Poetry* (1821 [1840]), is credited with coming up with the well-known concept of "transplanting the seed" while he was discussing how a poem may be transferred from one culture to another. According to Shelley, there is an uncertain association between poetry and music, since there is an attachment between ideas and sounds.

> Sounds as well as thoughts have relation both between each other and towards that which they represent, and a perception of the order of those relations has always been found connected with a perception of the order of the relations of thoughts. Hence the language of poets has ever affected a certain uniform and harmonious recurrence of sound, without which it were not poetry, and which is scarcely less indispensable to the communication of its influence, than the words themselves, without reference to that peculiar order (Shelley 1840).

According to Shelley (1820 [1840]), the words and sounds of a poem are so tightly related to one another that it is impossible to reproduce the poem with the same impact in another language. Shelley uses the analogy of a plant being ripped from one soil and planted in another. What is feasible in any other circumstance is transporting the seed, which is the idea that is imbedded inside the poetry, so that it may be planted in the ground of a different linguistic

universe. After then, it will be subjected to a totally different geographical globe and will produce the kinds of flowers and fruits that are feasible in that region of the planet. Shelley states:

> […] the vanity of translation; it were as wise to cast a violet into a crucible that you might discover the formal principle of its colour and odour, as seek to transfuse from one language into another the creations of a poet. The plant must spring again from its seed, or it will bear no flower—and this is the burthen of the curse of Babel. (1840).

In light of this, we are able to unearth the secret biological metaphor of 'transplantation' buried inside the word *rūpāntar*. Therefore, in this process, the entire text along with all of its characteristics and kernel is made to be adapted into a different cultural ecology, which has different requirements and can nourish the thought in a different manner. This process takes place in order to facilitate cross-cultural communication. The concept of translational act as an act consisting of 'loss and decay' in the Global North contrasts with the concept of translational act as an act that relates to 'change and new growth' in the Global South. Once transplanted, the plant thrives in another geographical situation.

The primary distinction between "transplanting seeds" and "plucking a plant from one soil and planting it into a different soil" is that in the first method, what is getting translated is the basic essence or thought and core characteristics of a text into the target culture, whereas in the second method, the entire text along with all of its characteristics and essence is made to be adapted into a different cultural environment that has different requirements and can nourish the thought in a different way. This is the primary distinction between "transplant

Lorna Hardwick, who is cited in Bassnett's article, titled "Culture and Translation," advocates that the act of translating also "involves translating or transplanting into the receiving culture the cultural framework within which an ancient text is embedded." Hardwick is therefore harping on the idea that translation does mean carrying across the seed of thought from one culture to another (Kuhiwczak & Littau 2007: 15).

> …[B]old claims for translation as an instrument of change, and in doing so alters the emphasis for today's student of classical languages. The task of facing the translator of ancient texts, she argues, is to produce translations that go beyond the immediacy of the text and seek to articulate in some way (she uses the organic metaphor of 'transplantation', which derives from Shelley) the cultural framework within which that text is embedded. Moreover it is the very act of

translation that enables contemporary readers to construct lost civilizations. Translation is the portal through which the past can be accessed (Kuhiwczak & Littau 2007: 15).

Bassnett argues that Lorna Harwick has emphasised the fact that a translation or adaptation is a tree that has grown out, albeit differently due to the difference in geographical factors, of a thought seed brought from another culture, and that retracing steps from the tree's apex to its roots can bring us closer to the classical culture of the past. Thus, a critical analysis of the adapted text involves not only assessing the adapted methods or the alterations that have been made, but also going back to the genesis of the seed, which will discuss the relationship between the two cultures and provide a comparative study of the two. In another article titled "Transplanting the Seed: Poetry and Translation," Susan Bassnett believes that translation might be compared to planting a seed (Bassnett & Lefevere, 1998: 57-75). Once transferred, the seed thrives in a different geographical environment. This kind of translation/adaptation research does not discuss the reductionist aspect of the procedure. When considered within the context of seed transplanting, the concept of "lost in translation" and the accompanying worry can never come to the fore. According to Bassnett, Shelley's imagery "refers to transformation and fresh growth" as opposed to "loss and decay" imagery. Shelley argues,

> ... [T]hough a poem cannot be transfused from one language to another, it can nevertheless be transplanted. The seed can be placed in new soil, for a new plant to develop. The task of the translator must then be to determine and locate that seed and to set about its transplantation (Bassnett & Lefevere 1998: 58).

Similarly, the process of *rūpāntar* can be located, besides being 'change in form' or 'change in beauty', in the organic metaphor of 'transplantation' and the process of acculturation can be explored through the close analysis of this botanical metaphor. But of course, the change in the habitat will lead to the changes in the biota. As Darwin puts it and has already been mentioned before, three main things can happen to the transplanted text or the biota: a) habitat tracking, b) genetic change or c) extinction. The first impact, i.e., habitat tracking in case of theatrical adaptation can be equated with the tendencies among theatre directors to use alien settings, foreign costumes and hunting for actors with physical features that can closely resemble the characters depicted in the source text. Such an endeavour is futile in the sense that when the author of the source text portrayed a character, he had in mind the physical features and personalities of men of his own land whose bodily features and personalities were nurtured in a particular climatic and geographical condition. The expectation of creating the same effect in

a land far removed from that of the origin of the text can never be fulfilled unless actor from foreign lands are imported. But in that case the spectators' response to the theatrical representation may vary significantly. The emotions that the staging is expected to give rise to among the spectators as a result of being identified with it, may not be perfectly achieved.

The third impact, i.e., extinction will allude to Shelley's metaphor of casting the violet into a crucible. This talks about the impossibility of the staging and representation of the theatre in a foreign habitat. This happens also because of the spectators' inability to receive the staging of an alien text with which they cannot identify and also questions the skill of the adapter who could just make the "*antar*" (change) but could not include the "*rūp*" (beauty or aesthetics).

The second and the most important impact is "genetic change" which is adaptation or *rūpāntar* proper. In this case the thought of the source text is adapted and is allowed to freely undergo necessary changes as is required in the new geographical terrain. The source text is given appropriate indigenous flavor so as to suit the taste of the target audience. The target text (be it performative) assumes a new *rūp* shedding the older one and is cultivated all over again according to the aesthetics of the land of the receptors.

Therefore, the process of *rūpāntar* can be located in the organic metaphor of 'transplantation' and the process of acculturation can be explored through the close analysis of it. But of course, the change in the habitat will lead to the changes in the biota. As Darwin puts it and I have already mentioned before, three main things can happen to the transplanted text or the biota: a) habitat tracking, b) extinction or c) genetic change. I argue that this Darwinian "genetic change" is *rūpāntar* proper. In this case the thought of the source text is adapted and can freely undergo necessary changes as is required in the new geographical terrain. The source text is given appropriate indigenous flavor to suit the taste of the target readers. The target text assumes a new *rūp* (form) shedding the older one and is cultivated all over again according to the aesthetics of the land of the receptors.

The Tamil term *mozhipeyarttu* denotes 'transmigration'. When a text is getting translated from one language to the other it can also be seen as a migratory action. This terminology hints towards the act of translation as a migratory action. *Mozhipeyarttu* therefore can be understood as a departure from one's native place to reside in another nation. a migration. It is a transition from one state of existence to another. This term has a connotation from the point of view of *sanātana dharma* as it also suggests migration of a soul from one body to another after death, which reminds us the famous *śloka* from the *Bhagavad Gita* (2.22), "The

atma (soul) loses an old, worn-out body in order to wear a new one, much as humans do with their old, worn-out clothing."

The next term *vivartanam* can be understood from the Darwinian point of view. The term *vivartanam* (literally indicates 'alteration'/ 'evolution'), which is a derivation of the Sanskrit word *vivarta* which according to the *Vedic* philosophy denotes the altered representation/condition of *Brahman* (the Ultimate Reality) as a serpent is an altered representation of a rope. *Vivartanam* (Sanskrit. 'alteration'; Malayalam. 'evolution') were used in pre-colonial time to convey the oblique and diversified idea of translational act as practiced in pre-European Indian literature(s). In accordance with the Darwinian paradigm, an organism sustains and evolves with the changing environment due to its natural selection and Darwin's principle of the 'survival of the fittest' is heavily based on biological evolution and adaptation of the organism through 'natural selection'.

Western notion of translation, especially inter-lingual and inter-semiotic translation practices belong to the field of spatiality where source and target both in terms of culture, text or language are divided into two circles separated from each other but the moment the process of translation takes birth, the distant circles started moving towards each other and ends with creating a mathematical plan of overlapping circles, a 'Venn diagram', thereby, creates an area, a 'transland', which belongs to both the circles. This process of bringing the circles closer to each other starts when the translator, who belongs to either source or target sphere, starts traversing the boundary. Now, if we move away from both the mathematical Venn diagram model and chorographical model of 'transland' developed by Pinto, Duarte & Carvalho (2017), we can interpret the meaning being carried across through the act of translation from a 'genetic' model. In this case, what is being carried across is information that originally was in the genome, enshrined in DNA, then gets transcribed into messenger RNA. And then that information is translated from the messenger RNA to a protein. So, we are taking the same information, but it's going from one form to another: a nucleic acid code to an amino acid code in a protein. That translation is done not in individual letters. It is very much like the human language or any other language that, in this case, all the words are the same length. They're all three words long, and the reader in this case is something called a ribosome, which is this big, multi-subunit molecular machine that travels along the mRNA, and it reads much like a person reading Braille does. It reads along, detects what are these letters underneath it, and when it detects what those three letters are, it decides what the amino acid is supposed to be that it adds to the growing amino acid chain, polypeptide chain, to become a protein. Those mRNA letters

are called a codon, and each codon codes for a different amino acid. And eventually those amino acids are all joined together to assemble a protein.

Keeping these two terminological explorations as a point of departure, I argue, that we should focus on building a new theoretical discourse system of translation studies based on ecological construction in the global south specially in the context of India. I argue that a careful reading of the dialectic between *rūpāntara* as transplantation and *vivartanam* as evolution can further offer crucial insights into the process of acculturation through exploring different layers of the botanic metaphors located into these two Sanskrit terms, thereby we can develop the concept of 'Eco-translatology' as Gengshen HU based on Chinese philosophy. Understanding these terminologies would also challenge the 'universal' notion of translation as morphing the other, and we can illustrate how the locus of the text, or the textual ecosystem can be 'transplanted' from microcosmic ecosphere to another eco-environment keeping the eco-linguistic texture of the target intact. to usher in an ecological paradigm of translation.

If we consider author, language, culture, theme, genre, authorial intention and other textual elements as organic and inorganic molecules which by interacting with each other can form an organic text living and sustaining in its own environment, can we then consider translation of it as an evolution and adaptation in Darwinian sense where a transformed species will evolve in a completely new environment mutating with new sets of elements i.e., translator, target language, target culture, translatorial purpose? The final chapter of the thesis will illuminate more on this perspective.

Translation as Illumination:

The term 'illumination' in the late 14th Century used to denote 'spiritual enlightenment' which came from the Late Latin term *illuminationem*, noun of action from the past participle stem of Latin *illuminare*. The term *illuminare* refers "to throw into light, make bright, light up;" figuratively, in rhetoric, "to set off, illustrate." Therefore, the verb 'to illuminate' will sense 'action of lighting', 'to brighten up' or 'to interpret'.[16] Translation, for obvious reasons has never been thought as an action to illumine or to enlighten in Europe. The continuation of negative associations i.e., 'loss', 'secondary', 'subsidiary' from the beginning of the western civilisation has never give room to consider it as an act to throw light on a text. Against this

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[16] See https://www.etymonline.com/word/illumination

background, I argue that if we analyse the Sanskrit/Hindi word *chāyā* we can generate a model of translational act as a process of illumination.

The term *chāyā* literally means shadow. Medieval India did not believe in literal translation even though Indian writers were familiar with the concept of a verbatim translation, known as the of Prakrit text into Sanskrit that is frequently found in Sanskrit drama. Indians preferred adaptation to verbatim translation. Unlike the other terminologies this concept *chāyā* has the linkage to the Indian *puranic* world. Chhaya is the Hindu personification or goddess of shadow, and she is the counterpart of Surya, who is the Hindu God of the sun. Rigveda states that once Surya's twin daughters are born, his wife Saranyu abandons him and escapes in the guise of a horse, but before she goes, she has installed a lady named Savarna in her place, according to the text. Savarna was the mother of Manu, according to a later (500 BCE) addition to the Rigveda by Yaska in his Nikuta. Manu (the founder of humanity, known as Savarni Manu in later Puranic texts) was the son of Savarna. When it comes to Savarna, although the original text reads "they" (which might be taken as the gods) swapped her for Saranyu, Yaksa's Nikuta explains that Saranyu produced Savarna and then substituted her. Nevertheless, the most important thing to note here is that the prototype of Chhaya as Sadrisha ("look-alike") was a lady who resembled Saranyu, which is also the case in the act of Chhaya as illuminative translation. According to mythology, Sanjana appoints Chhaya as her replacement to serve as the bride of the Sun God. The scriptures make no mention of whether or not Sanjana ever asked Chhaya's permission or provided her with a selection. Chhaya is placed in such situation and forced to pose as an impostor. Chhaya is not granted any authority at this place. She follows the instructions of the genuine wife and takes on the role of her replica.

This interpretation of the mythical Chhaya, as well as interpreting it as an analogue to translation, leads us to believe that translation does not come to operate on its own, but is instead installed by the original text. The "original" / "real" brings in a "duplicate" in order to protect itself from the scorching heat and intense energy of the Sun, which could be interpreted as the larger world that exists beyond the linguistic periphery in which the original was created, in order to save itself from the scorching heat and intense energy of the Sun. Because the genuine is fragile and cannot endure the severe treatment it receives from the rest of the world, it puts forth a replacement in its stead, which seems to be identical to the original but is not exactly the same. Now, this "duplicate" is not only capable of enduring those difficult circumstances, but it also adapts to them and boldly continues to execute its duty with such perfection that the rest of the literary world would be hard pressed to identify the difference. Because of this, when

a translation exceeds the borders of the language of its birth, it is more resilient to the linguistic brutality and horrors that are perpetrated against it. It effectively fools people who are unable to access or appreciate the original by presenting itself as such, and they are pleased. It is nonetheless branded an impostor, a deceitful, and treacherous as soon as its true status as a replacement is disclosed. In this sense, *chāyā* or the translation, despite the many services she / it provides, is always connected with darkness, which is finally rejected in favour of the original Sanjana, who is the bright light. The conclusion that can be drawn from this view of Chaya's mythical origin is that, as much the translation is similar to the original material and becomes its shadow, it is always given a second-order position and is connected with a negative connotation.

Let us now interpret the term *chāyā* from the theory of light. We all know that light travels in straight lines. In the case of a transparent item, when light strikes it, it may pass through the object without being absorbed. It may be reflected from a shining item, or it can be absorbed if the object is opaque, depending on the situation. When light strikes an opaque object, which stops the light beams from passing through, shadows are cast on the surface. When an item hinders the flow of light, darkness emerges on the opposite side of the obstruction. A shadow is the term used to describe this darkness. The sun is a source of light that casts shadows on objects as it strikes them. Each day, as the earth revolves, the sun seems to shift its location in the sky, and the shifting angles of sunlight influence the appearance of shadows on the ground. Take, for example, standing a stick on the ground and watching its shadow move and change form on a bright day. When the sun is low in the sky, the length of the stick's shadow increases.

If we analyse the concept from this scientific point of view, we may consider the Source Text as the object on which light falls and creates shadow of the object. Now if we consider the light as source of interpretation then with the change of the direction of the light / interpretation on the static object cum Source Text, the shadow will change its shape and position. Therefore, we can argue that the object or the source text can create multiple shadows depending on the direction of interpretation and analysis. Light becomes visible in space in various forms and is physically perceptible in different ways. The effect of the translational work depends on the process of looking at the primary version. Therefore, *chāyā* heightens the sensibility and potential of perception of the person who is perceiving / translating the text.

The model of translation as illumination can also be perceived through an Assamese expression recorded by Praphulladatta Goswami. The Assamese phrase "*cchä lai llkh*, indicates

to write following or imitating the shadow (of some story or book), indicates a free rendering or adaptation" (1970). Harish Trivedi in his seminal essay, titled, "In Our Own Time, On Our Own Terms: 'Translation' in India" noted that, "the word used for 'translation'… is chhaya, i.e., shadow, as if one of the languages is casting shadow on the other. (Hermans) The plurilingual nature of the practice in Indian subcontinent is self-evident to the fact that Global South can provide substitutive models which will create a counter hegemony to the Global North in the field of Translation Studies.

Translation as Fission:

"There's Plenty of Room at the Bottom" (Feynman 1959) This statement at the annual American Physical Society meeting at Caltech on December 29, 1959, by noted American theoretical physicist and Nobel laureate Richard Feynman, known for his work in the field of quantum mechanics, shook the world of science at that time and got published in popular science magazines. While discussing the "problem of manipulating and controlling things on a small scale"[17], Feynman, in his lecture, was trying to point out that it is time to go beyond the standard technique and laws to understand the nature and motion of nanoparticles which does not follow conventional laws of physics such as Newton's Law and therefore, he argued that we must go down and search around unconventional laws, i.e., Quantum Mechanics which will satisfy us to understand the behaviour of atoms and the possibility of their rearrangement in order to do wonders in future.

Conceptual understanding about Translation in the Global North has also suffered the hegemonic thought process of the global north. We, too, as Feynman pointed out, should go beyond the traditional ways of understanding the process of translation. For example, we have never thought about translation as a fission process because that will put an existential crisis on the very existence of the 'original' as something beyond any change, not to mention fission or breaking of the original. Original has always been given a sanctimonious status in Europe from the beginning. Any act to rupture or split the original into pieces to transform has been considered a sacrilegious act.

On the other hand, the Assamese term for translational act '*bhāṇgani*', literally means 'to breakdown', hints a splitting or fission of the *mūl* (original), therefore, challenging the

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[17] See http://calteches.library.caltech.edu/3479/1/Tale.pdf

supremacy of the 'original', as we have seen earlier during our discussion about other terminologies, i.e., *anuvād*, *vivartanam*, *rupāntar*. A deeper breakdown of the term can give us another opportunity to break away from the constructive notion of translation predominant in the global north. Analysing this terminology through lexicons and etymology may help us create a new model, namely 'translation as fission', which, I argue, can make a paradigm shift in the discussion of translation theories and models to comprehend the act.

We know that 'fission' occurs when a neutron hits a larger atom, forcing it to stimulate and fragment into smaller particles. With this splitting, a tremendous amount of energy gets released, used as sustainable and carbon-free energy. Thus, fission can be triggered by exposing the nucleus to a high level of energy. *Bhāṅgani*, the term too, was also used as a fission process where the translator acts as an external agent and forces the original to break into smaller particles so that it can be rearranged, made into another text that sustains in the new sphere. The process of *bhāṅgani* releases energy, which rewires the creative brain of the translator towards rekindling the text into something new. The structure of the original, which is very much embedded into its own linguistic, cultural, political, social, and environmental web, will be split into pieces through the fission process in order to rearrange the ingredients and combine the elements into another constituent text which bears the stamp of new surroundings. *Bhāṅgani*, therefore, involves molecular bond breaking and forming.

The root of the word *bhāṅgani* is *bhāṅg* which denotes 'to break' or 'to disrupt'. Praphulladatta Goswami, in his seminal article titled, "Translation- The Situation in Assamese", has stated while discussing the trajectory of the term that, "Pitambar, who rendered a section of the *Markandeya Purana* at the turn of the sixteenth century, used the verb bhang, to break. In modern Assamese, for noun we have *bhangani* from *bhang*, and *anubad*" (1970) This description hints towards a phenomenon in nature that to understand the networks and structures, we need to break it first. (Markowetz) This deconstructive mode of analysis applies from Biology to Physics, from Chemistry to Natural Philosophy. We observe the presence of symmetries or patterns everywhere, but at the same time, to comprehend nature's deep design, we need to recognise that new objects evolve from the broken translational symmetry.

> The symmetries that govern the laws of nature can be spontaneously broken, enabling the occurrence of ordered states. Crystals arise from the breaking of translation symmetry, magnets from broken spin rotation symmetry and massive particles break a phase rotation symmetry. (Wezel)

Any text, any composition forms a symmetrical pattern, and through the act of translation of that text or composition, I argue, new text ascends from the breaking of the previous symmetry; therefore, the new text becomes a product of translation symmetry. *Bhāṇgani*, the Assamese term is hinting towards the breaking of the symmetry or pattern. Translation, therefore, from this point of view, is an act of breaking down the equilibrium of the source text and creating a new text imposing another symmetry. The process of translation can be described as an act resulting from the spontaneous breakdown of unitarity or as a symmetry breaking act. It is not breaking the harmony of nature; instead redefines it through a translational move. Translation, using the model of Quantum Mechanics, is a process where we first change coordinates and displace atoms from their equilibrium positions and then introduce new coordinates and replace new atoms. (van Wezel and van den Brink)

Similarly, through *bhāṇgani*, we break down each word, phrase and sentence to such an extent where we can reach the meaning that lies hidden under the multi-layered structure of the pattern. *Bhāṇgani* refers therefore breaking away from an already existing structure or convention by introducing new vectors. When a text from a regional language gets translated into a majoritarian language, a parallel stem breaks away from a steady flowing literary tradition to venture into a larger world. Thereby *bhāṇgani* enables a text to cross over the threshold of its native literary tradition to now flow and merge into the global network of knowledge system, and this very act can only be possible when the translator localises the new symmetry in the new space by changing both the internal particles and external coordinates of the text.

The sixteenth century term *bhāṇgani*, hence, as a concept 'to breakdown', also brings in the negative notions of 'cracks', 'discord', 'gap', 'friction', 'difference', 'disruption'. Does this therefore allude to the notion of translation a violence which creates a crack in the indigenous sensibility inherent in a literary tradition. With the ambition of fitting in the bracket of Indian literature in translation, does literature mould itself to befit the reading expectation of the global readership thereby causing a disruption and a discord within the indigenous literary tradition? Since break or *bhāṇgani* also might refer to the gap in time, can we think of translation from a temporal point. It also, loosely though, hints towards the Derridean concept of translation as deconstruction. We know that language may speak for itself, and that words cannot be assigned a certain meaning. When we attempt, we inevitably clog it with a slew of other conceivable and different interpretations. The notion of translation is brought to the forefront when words are deconstructed from one conceivable interpretation. Translation enters

theory in the deconstructive endeavour to sweep away frameworks and be able to conceive by leaping over centuries of conventional thinking. Translation is defined as an action that allows us to return to thinking in terms other than those permitted by metaphysical thought(s). (Davis) *Bhāṇgani* too is sweeping away the conventional notion of translation as a meaning making process through replacement of equivalent words.

The term also reminds us of the 'piecemeal construction' of Kafka in his short story titled, "The Great Wall of China", where he has depicted the details of the construction process of the Great Wall. Analysing the great failure in the construction of Biblical Tower of Babel, Kafka suggested that this piecemeal construction process that the Chinese followed, should be the ideal way of construction. In order to construct the wall as a succession of pieces, a large number of employees were divided into many groups and scattered in various directions. Rawad Alhashmi pointed out,

> The gaze towards the façade of Kafka's portrait of "The Great Wall of China" mirrors the diversity of languages across the globe. And the wisdom behind building the wall as a system of "piecemeal construction" reflects Benjamin's perspective about translation. Namely, the fragmentary nature of Kafka's constructional project, as portrayed in "The Great Wall of China" parallels Benjamin's concept of translation as being fragments. In turn, Benjamin echoes Derrida's thought, insofar as both treat translation as a mode of fragmentation—echoes from a greater language. (2020)

Taking this as a point of reference we can describe the term *bhāṇgani* as a 'piecemeal' act of translation as stated by Kafka equals Benjamin's idea of translation as a patchy work. Walter Benjamin states,

> Fragments of a vessel which are to be glued together must match one another in the smallest details, although they need not be like one another. In the same way a translation, instead of resembling the meaning of the original, must lovingly and in detail incorporate the original's mode of signification, thus making both the original and the translation recognizable as fragments of a greater language, just as fragments are part of a vessel. (1955)

Benjamin has gone altogether to a different plane as he recognizes both original and translation as rubbles of a superior language, thereby the act of translation is to dismantle the fragments of a vessel and then pasted together in such a way that they should be recognizable as part of the

same vessel although should not bear a resemblance to the other. This, I argue, is possible if the translator while translating upholds the universal harmony tangled with form and aesthetics. The human quest to find the beauty embodied in the universe connects all scientific pursuit from Pythagoras and Plato on to Galileo and Newton, Maxwell, and Einstein. (Wilczek) Wilczek demonstrates how closely entwined our concepts of beauty and art are with our scientific understanding of the universe. Similarly, although *bhāṅgani* refers to break or splitting of the text but maintain the harmony of nature through preserving beauty and art.

The north-eastern part of India has long been neglected from all aspects, and there is an internal hegemony of the 'mainstream India' towards the north-eastern part of the nation. The region has been neglected for decades, and it is the least explored and understood part of India. Translation studies in North-East India too is a narrative of neglect. Most of the discussions on translation studies in India have silenced the translation practices from this culturally and linguistically diverse area. The representation of the North-East is a negligible factor tends towards an absence in the geopolitical space called India. I am aware that representing only the Assamese terminology used for the translational act may lead to another homogenization of the North-East. Still, due to my limitation of knowledge, I could not include all the linguistic variants of the practice in my discussion. I hope that the illustration of one term from the North-East region will boost the possibility of incorporating more instances of the translational methods in the centre table and "further bridge the gaps and misunderstandings between different communities in India and help us better understand the cultures that have remained relatively marginalized in contemporary India" (Dasgupta and Lama).

Conclusion: Erasing 'Universal' imagination of Translation Studies and Exploring Transdisciplinary Futures of Global South

> "Give me silence, give me water, hope,
>
> Give me struggle, iron, volcanoes."

- Pablo Neruda

The well-known, if somewhat notorious, turns in translation studies are indicative of a field of study that is still trying to find its boundaries. In subsequent turns, translation studies has expanded on the one hand, the ambit of its scholarly view from linguistics to pragmatics to culture to sociology to ideology / power – keeping in mind that some might arrange the list in different order or use different names for the turns. But on the other hand, these expanding

efforts failed in expanding the notion of translation itself beyond the hegemony of Global North. Many of the implications of the terminological explorations still need to be explored. But the key to the entire enterprise is to study the 'alternative' uses of the term translation. By alternative, I mean alternative to the idea universal 'translation' perpetuated by Global North. This chapter primarily focused on the heuristic potential of the South, and how hegemonic agendas of 'translational theories and concepts' impact on the studies as a whole. Though we have discussed about the disciplinal study of translation here but the larger focus, in order to nullify the hegemony of the Global North, should be on the importance of theoretical diversity, intellectual creativity, gender balance, the role of language, the variety of ontological beings and forms of conviviality, among other things, all of which have an impact on the present world.

According to the systematic poetics of Indian practices of translational act, best explained in the prefaces of pre-colonial Indian texts written in Sanskrit and other Indian languages, there was no such spatial concept of transference of meaning like translation, rather a multitude of terms denoting alternative practices in peripheral spaces i.e., *anuvād* (Sanskrit. 'retelling'), *rūpāntara* (Sanskrit. 'transplantation'), *bhāshāntaram* (Sanskrit. 'change of dialect') *vivartanam* (Malayalam. 'evolution'), *mozhipeyarttu* (Tamil. 'transmigration') *tarjumā* (Urdu. 'interpretation'), *chāyā* (Hindi. 'shadow'), *bhāngni* (Assamese. 'to break') which depicts the use of the concept in a variety of contexts, thus challenging the obligation of the spatial nature of 'translation' in 'global north'.

The theoretical framework I opened up in this chapter and the models drawn on the basis of the practices in Indian subcontinent in the pre-colonial time, which is inclusive rather than exclusive. I hope that through the various terminologies the chapter successfully strove to approximate various complex layers of understanding the translational activities in Global South. I feel that the need of the hour is to find suitable answers to these questions to venture into this field of alternative practices which are till date the least explored area in the Global South. The North – South uneven gap in the field of humanities has long been reinforced, with the 'universal' being formed by translation and adaptation of Northern / hegemonic objectives to Southern / peripheral contexts of knowledge production and circulation, as was the case in translation studies. This hegemony produces and reproduces academic dependency in close association with the consolidation of long-term inequalities, narrowing the horizons of scientific imagination and impairing intellectual creativity, thereby consolidating an inequitable regime in the production and circulation of scientific knowledge (Costa, 2011). This chapter tries to explore how a spatial terminology from the Global North has been forced on the

plurisemiotic practices of translation in Indian subcontinent through colonization and produced a long-term global disparity, with consequences of using the European theories of translation in the Indian context without problematizing the European notion and understanding the different reality of the Indian subcontinent.

When English and Anglophone goods predominate in global networks of power and knowledge production, inequities and asymmetries in power and knowledge production are reproduced as well. Many academics believe that Anglophone academic discourses are the 'latest' and 'most current', and that they are thus 'leading' in global knowledge creation. Other scholars, on the other hand, believe that they are 'following behind'. In the preservation of this epistemic imbalance, language plays a key role, with Standard English today occupying the dominant position. Most of the current scholars of translation studies except a few i.e., Sujit Mukherjee, P. Lal, Harish Trivedi, etc. did not try to explain the translational productions from the diverse categorization of the practice in India. Rather the majority examine the translated texts in the context of academic reliance and imperialism, as well as gate-keeping methods to sustain the hegemonic frameworks of the discipline as practiced and theorised in the Global North.

We have discussed the vital potential of the South in terms of accessing and resisting hegemonic agendas in translation studies. I hope that the chapter will be instrumental in understanding the Global South as a useful instrument for addressing and shedding light on international disparities in larger academia. At the end of the day, South will be addressed as a concept associated with geographies of inequality or critical positionalities, but also as an attitude: a Southern Attitude, which embraces an invitation for amplifying forms of ethical engagement that address social and scientific justice in general and create a South – South position.

<div align="center">**Chapter Three**</div>

<div align="center">

Exploring Translational Movement between Spaces:

Analysing Brechtian Adaptation by Ajitesh Bandyopadhyay through the Metrics of 'Geotranslation'

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"Art is not a mirror to reflect reality, but a hammer with which to shape it."

—Bertolt Brecht[18]

Turning the tide: IPTA and planting the seeds of a new theatre

In the back room of Nanking Restaurant, Denmark Street, London, a gang of young Indian students, Mulk Raj Anand, Sajjad Zaheer, Muhammad Din Taseer, Pramod Ranjan Sengupta, Hajra Begum, and Jyotirmaya Ghosh, met to discuss the possibility of forming the Indian Progressive Writer's Association in London.[19] Mulk Raj Anand was elected to serve as the Association's founding president, Sengupta was appointed to the position of secretary, and the members developed a manifesto outlining their goals and objectives. (Ramnath 2019) From 21st to 26th June 1935, Mulk Raj Anand and Sajjad Zaheer were present in Paris to participate in the International Symposium of Writers for the Defence of Culture against Fascism, wherein luminaries such as E. M. Forster, Maxim Gorky, André Gide, André Malraux, Henri Barbusse, and Bertolt Brecht made impassioned arguments for artistic freedom (Jalil 2014:205). After this symposium, Mulk Raj Anand left Paris for London to deliver a speech at the Conference conducted under the auspices of the International Bureau of the International Association of Writers for the Defence of Culture, which took place in London from June 19-23, 1936 (Coppola 1974:26). But Sajjad Zaheer moved to India from London in 1935, and on 9th April 1936, the All India Progressive Writers' Association was officially founded in Lucknow under the leadership of Zaheer and Ahmed Ali. On the 9th and 10th April 1936, at the first meeting of the newly formed association, presided over by Munsi Premchand, the following goals and objectives were outlined in their manifesto:

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[18] First recorded in Leon Trotsky, Literature and Revolution (1924; edited by William Keach (2005), Ch. 4: Futurism, p. 120)

[19] For further reference see, https://www.open.ac.uk/researchprojects/makingbritain/content/progressive-writers-association. Accessed 20 Dec. 2022.

1) To establish organization of writers to correspond to the various linguistic zones of India; to co-ordinate these organizations by holding conferences and by publishing literature; to establish a close connection between the central organizations and to co-operate with those literary organizations whose aims do not conflict with the basic aims of the Association. 2) To form branches of the Association in all the important towns of India. 3) To produce and to translate literatures of a progressive nature, to fight cultural reaction, and in this way to further the cause of India's freedom and social regeneration. 4) To protect the interests of progressive authors. 5) To fight for the right of free expression of thought and opinion. (Anand et al. 1936)

The All India Progressive Writers' Association reached its peak in the 1940s and gave rise to the cultural left in the Global South. At the same time, it played a significant role in India's people's theatre movement. During this time, several progressive organisations followed the footsteps of the All India Progressive Writers' Association. Amongst them, one of the most significant organizations was the Indian People's Theatre Association (IPTA), which borrowed "its name from Romain Rolland's book titled *People's Theatre*" and focused on "people's struggle for freedom, cultural progress, and economic justice" (Raha 153). The IPTA was formed in Bombay on May 25, 1943, and Homi Jahangir Bhabha, a prominent physicist and nuclear scientist, was one of the many enthusiasts who found inspiration in Romain Rolland's book after reading about the principles of People's Theatre. The IPTA arose from the inaugural Progressive Writers' Association Conference in 1936 and the establishment of the Youth Cultural Institute in Calcutta in 1940. The IPTA was formed spontaneously and on the initiative of many progressive cultural troupes, theatre organisations, and other progressive cultural workers. Since its inception, the members of the Indian People's Theatre Association were anxious about the spread of fascism worldwide and colonial domination in India. The history of IPTA is intertwined with the country's independence and anti-fascist campaigns, and the two are intricately linked. The potential of IPTA in terms of reaching out to the common mass and connecting with their sentiments, struggle for freedom and their desires was so massive that even Congress leader Jawaharlal Nehru, knowing IPTS's close connection with the Communist Party of India (CPI) could not resist addressing to the Association in 1944 favorably:

I am greatly interested in the development of a People's Theatre in India. I think there is great room for it provided it is based on the people and on their traditions. Otherwise it is likely to function in the air. 1 am glad to notice from your circular that you are laying stress on this People's approach. In China and Spain they had that atmosphere;

in India it is still lacking. Nevertheless, I think, an effort should be made in this direction and I wish your Association every success in this work. (Pradhan 1979:143)

The IPTA provided the Indian theatre with a new direction as it centred around the idea that theatre is a weapon for the common mass to fight against capitalism, subjugation, and bondage. It depicted the sufferings and tragedies of individuals, as well as their hopes and aspirations, in a new manner, breaking down current and traditional patterns. In terms of theatrical art, the IPTA brought in realism, folk elements like folk idioms, folk songs, folk music, *janasangīt* (people's music), folk dance, and minimalist set-up. It was clear to P.C. Joshi, General Secretary of CPI (1935–47), that if individuals of one language group were to learn about the folk traditions of other language groups, the resurrection of folk traditions would be imminent in the post-Independence period. Momentous events that shaped the nation's destiny, for instance, Gandhi's call to satyagraha, India's response to the rise of fascism, the Great Bengal Famine of 1943, communal tension, the second World War and its impact on India, the rise of trade union movements and formation of farmer's cooperatives, were all faithfully reflected by both progressive writers and those within the IPTA; at the same time, they drew the nation's attention to events outside the country (Jalil 2022:xxviii).

Among all the regional chapters, IPTA's Bengal chapter was one of the most active. It spawned the Calcutta Group Theatre Movement, which drew public attention when members of IPTA staged Bijon Bhattacharya's *Jabanbondi* at Star Theatre on January 4, 1944, followed by the epoch-making production *Nabanna*, written by the same author, at Sri Rangam Theatre on October 24, 1944 (Katyal 2001:242). "However," as Sushil Kumar Mukherjee pointed out, "the seeds of a 'committed' theatre were sown a few years earlier" (1982:358). In 1943, IPTA started its journey with Bijon Bhattacharya's *Agun* and Binoy Ghosh's *Laboratory*, then in the following year, Monoranjan Bhattacharya's *Homeopathy* (366). However, shortly after that, the Bengal chapter of IPTA began to break apart into several smaller sections. Along with this, pioneers began to leave IPTA and create their groups like Sambhu Mitra's group *Bohurūpī* (1948); Utpal Dutt's *Little Theatre Group* or *LTG* (1953), later renamed *People's Little Theatre* or *PLT* (1969); Tarun Roy's *Theatre Centre* (1954); Sabitabrata Dutt's *Rūpakār* (1955); Parth Pratim Chowdhury's *Sundaram* (1957); Biresh Mukherjee and Nibedita Das's *Shouvanik* (1957); Sekhar Chatterjee's *Theatre Unit* (1958); Ajitesh Bandyopadhyay's *Nāndīkār* (1960); Bibhas Chakraborty's *Theatre Workshop* (1966), and others. The journey of the Group Theatres in Calcutta thus commenced.

Brecht arrives in Bengal: an overview of his influence in Bengal after Independence

"In the late '70s and '80s, when Brecht fatigue had already set in the West, Calcutta was still deep in Brecht fever! So much so that at one point in time there were three groups performing their own versions of *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*! It was during this time that a strong wave of 'progressive,' 'leftist' movement was swiping the state."

- Rudraprasad Sengupta[20]

Bertolt Brecht (1898-1956), a German poet, writer, and theatre reformist whose epic theatre strayed from the traditions of theatrical illusion and created the theatre as a platform for communist ideals, became an icon whose works were translated, re-translated, adapted and re-adapted several times starting from the IPTA movement. Brecht's works stand as signposts in the trajectory of modern European theatre, starting from Ibsen and Strindberg and his significant plays, like, *Mother Courage*, *The Good Woman of Sezuan*, *The Life of Galileo,* and *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, written over a period between 1937 and 1945, have contributed towards forming a significant change in modern European theatre. Peter Brook, in *The Empty Space*, states, "Brecht is the key figure of our time, and all theatre work today at some point starts or returns to his statements and achievement" (1968:72). Brechtian theatre has an enormous impact on political writers and theatrical activists across the globe. The influence of Brecht on Indian adapters, writers, and directors can be traced in the extensive and repeated translations and performances of Brecht's plays in almost all of the major Indian languages, and even in the languages of specific minority populations. Post-Independent India's socio-political predicament made Brecht extremely pertinent to contemporary writers, and the Bengali theatre practitioners grabbed the opportunity of adapting Brecht to deliver the Brechtian theme and message to the contemporary audience. Nissar Allana, in his presentation titled "Brecht: Co-Author. Indian Modernism and Contemporary Theatre,"[21] has stated,

Brecht's work arrives in India at a very crucial moment and enters the theatre scene during the third phase of Indian modernism, which coincides, on the one hand, with a

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[20] During an interview taken by Zinia Sen, Rudraprasad Sengupta, has expressed his view on Brecht's adaptation in Bengal. See: https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/entertainment/bengali/theatre/rudraprasad-sengupta-on-adapting-brechts-the-exception-and-the-rule/articleshow/64050767.cms

[21] The presentation was made on May 23, 2010 under a panel titled, 'Brecht and Contemporary Indian Theatre' scheduled from 9:00 to 10:30 at Webster Hall 113 which was part of an international seminar titled, "Brecht in/and Asia" organized by International Brecht Society, hosted by the Department of Theatre and Dance, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.
For details see: http://manoa.hawaii.edu/brecht2010/program/paperabstracts/index.html

call for a "theatre of roots" in the 1960s, and on the other hand as an alternative to what could be loosely described as an attempt at Stanislavskian "Realism" in contemporary Indian theatre. (International Brecht Society 2010)

Brecht has revolutionized not only the dramatic content but also the theatrical form and staging as his plays are theatrical demonstrations of his idea of "epic theatre," which he discussed in his incomplete dramaturgy *Dialoge aus dem Messingkauf*, written between 1937 and 1951 and translated later by John Willet as *The Messingkauf Dialogues* (1965). Brecht challenged the Aristotelian notion of grabbing the audience by dramatic action and manipulating his/her emotion to attain *katharsis* or purgation, a word Aristotle loaned from the medical treatise of ancient Greece. For Brecht, art is not a mere reflection of reality, as Plato and Aristotle contended and followed by the realists and naturalism of late nineteenth and early twentieth century dramatists, rather Brecht believed that art had the potential to 'hammer' the reality to 'reshape' it. Raymond Williams noted,

> Brecht seized on was the exclusion, by particular conventions of verisimilitude, of all direct commentary, alternative consciousness, alternative points of view. At the simplest level, he is calling for their restoration: historically, these had been the conventions of chorus, narrator, soliloquy; or, in more complicated movements, the achievement of a dramatic design which was more than the design of the action… The alternative term, "open" theatre, is in some ways preferable to "epic". Essentially, what Brecht created, after long experiment, was a dramatic form in which men were shown in the process of producing themselves and their situations. This is, at root, a dialectical form, drawing directly on a Marxist theory of history in which, within given limits, man makes himself. (1969:278-9)

Therefore, Brecht pushed for a radical shift in dramatizing a tale. His departure from 'dramatic theatre,' which is suggestive and primarily aimed at evoking the audience's emotions by including them in the dramatic action, marked his entrance into 'epic theatre,' in which the audience is allowed to reason out the event by remaining outside from the performance. It was intended that 'epic' theatre would be a narrative type of theatre in which a narrative voice, as it were, would be heard continually, leading the process of *verfremdungseffekt* or *V-Effekt* between the events of the play and the audience (Speirs 1994:29). While clarifying the idea of 'epic theatre,' Brecht himself mentioned, "Epic. It must report. It must not believe that one can identify oneself with our world by empathy, nor must it want this" (2018:25).

Brecht piqued the interest of Bengali theatre practitioners who had Marxist political leanings. Many Brecht enthusiasts in Bengal were former members of the Indian People's Theatre Association (IPTA). Amal Allana, while recounting the popularity of Brecht amongst Bengali leftist intelligentsia, has mentioned that,

> IPTA's efforts had helped establish theater as a platform for political debate, giving modern Bengali theater its strong political orientation. Summing up the impact of Brecht in Bengal, the critic Samik Bandyopadhyay writes that although the early years of IPTA's work were not affected by Brecht, translations of Brecht published in Moscow had begun to circulate in Calcutta. After a hiatus of nearly two decades, that is, by the early 1960s, information regarding Brecht began to be available in India in English through, for example, *Brecht on Theatre* and *The Messingkauf Dialogues*, both translated by John Willett. (2010:31)

In the nineteenth-century Bengal, the reception of British literature played a crucial role in the emergence of modern Bangla literature. The reception of English literature has impacted the emergence of distinct literary systems in Bangla literature throughout the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century. However, if we analyse the changed literary dynamics of Bangla literature starting from the second half of the twentieth century, we can trace that the flows of influence were chiefly from European literature other than British literature. Bypassing British literature, a large section of the theatre directors during the post-Independence period started re-inscribing themes, ideologies, and genres from modern European literature, Latin American literature, African literature, Caribbean literature, Australian literature, and the like, but the medium of influence mainly was the English translations of these literatures since most of the translators lacked first hand knowledge of the source language. English served as a password for modern Bengali writers to enter the other continents of the world. Arundhati Banerjee pointed out,

> As modern Bengali theatre is largely a derivation of Western theatre, adaptation of Western plays has been a characteristic trend in its history from its very inception in the late eighteenth century. Now, as a natural consequence, the groups under the aegis of the group theatre movement turned to the adaptation of Western plays as there was a dearth of original plays in Bengali which could have given form to the complexities of modern life. This tendency accelerated in the late 1950s and early 1960s, when plays by important Western authors like as Ibsen, Chekhov, Pirandello, Sartre, Camus, Albee, and Beckett started to be translated and adapted. (1990:2)

This observation by Arundhati Banerjee indicates the formation of the idea of world literature surpassing the monopoly of British literature in Calcutta. However, the contribution of Ajitesh's adaptations towards the larger formation of world literature in the post-Indepence India as well as a resistance towards the capitalist frame of looking at the world as a homogenous entity leading to the emergence of 'Global South' as powerful analytical frame will be discussed in greater detail in the last chapter.

Ajitesh Bandyopadhyay (1933-83): a brief meeting with the adapter

Theatre and leftist politics have always been Ajitesh Bandyopadhyay's two most significant interests throughout his life. He was born on September 30th, 1933. After graduating from the University of Calcutta's Manindra Chandra College in 1957, he joined the Bharatiya Gana Natya Sangha or Indian People's Theatre Association. Since most of what was outstanding in Indian theatre in the twentieth century came from the Bharatiya Gananatya Sangha or Indian People's Theatre Association, it drew young and enthusiastic minds like Ajitesh into its fold. *Khadya Andolon*, of the late Fifties, has also pushed Ajitesh to join the united Communist Party of India, where he participated in the movement. As a result of this movement, the communists came into power in 1967. The Patipukur slum, a northern suburb of Calcutta, is where Ajitesh started his political and theatre activities as he was a resident of the slum then. He quickly became the centre of attention at street theatres and street corner meetups because of his baritone voice and charismatic presence. In Bengali theatre, Ajitesh's most significant contribution was the characters he played on stage. (Konar 2013:202-3)

If we examine the works of Ajitesh Bandyopadhyay closely, we will see that most of his theatrical career is based on his adaptations of modern European plays. He is considered one of the greatest adaptors in the Bengali theatre of all time. Although Ajitesh Bandyopadhyay never achieved the same level of success outside of Bengal as a distinguished actor as that of Shombhu Mitra, Utpal Dutt, and Badal Sircar, his contribution to Bengali group theatre is undeniable. Primarily, he is renowned for leading Nandikar successfully for almost two decades, popularising adaptations of plays by European playwrights like Pirandello, Chekhov, Wesker, Brecht, and Pinter in the Calcutta theatre circuit, and for his unusual acting technique. Since Ajitesh's 1969 production of *Tin Paysār Pālā*, an adaptation of Brecht's *The Three Penny Opera*, Bertolt Brecht has been Calcutta's favourite writer. Furthermore, Nandikar, despite its continued fragmentation over the years, has been one of the leading theatre groups of Calcutta.

Ajitesh Bandyopadhyay employed *jātrā*, an indigenous folk form, to adapt Brecht in Bengal. As Nissar Allana has argued that Brechtian adaptations had a connection with the folk performance tradition in India,[22]

> Adaptations of Brecht thus connect almost naturally with the folk genre in modern Indian theatre, where a "non-realistic," "demonstrative" and presentational style of performance takes precedence over the "naturalistic," where music and song are integrated into the structure of theatre performance, and where a performance style similar to Brecht's Verfremdung has already been practiced for a long time. (International Brecht Society 2010)

Ajitesh tried his best to indigenize Brecht by absorbing Brecht in his act of adaptation and integrated Brechtian 'epic theatre' with the local *jātrā* performance where similar composition methods like Brechtian 'alienation' can be traced. Moreover, Ajitesh believed that, "Bengali theatre has developed itself from the admixture of folk and foreign theatre." He had a special regard for the *jātrā* form because the *jātrā* teams "roamed from village to village to cater their piece of art". They could reach the remotest of villages and hence appealed to the larger population. He agrees that the *jātrās* "do not have much scope to become intelligent and educated" but this is owing to the lack of educated audience in the then Bengal. They were meant to cater to the popular taste and sometimes satisfy their revolutionary zeal. As such they chose topics accordingly (Bandyopadhyay 2010:66). It was this zeal of reaching out to the common people that made Ajitesh not only adapt Brecht in Bangla but also travel with his theatre group to the remotest parts of Bengal to showcase Brechtian theatre to the "not-so-intelligent" audience of rural Bengal. It is because Ajitesh believed in cultivating a theatre culture among the people of Bengal and expose them to the best forms of theatre practiced in the world.

The following sections attempt an in-depth analysis of the two Brechtian adaptations by Ajitesh Bandyopadhyay to demonstrate how Ajitesh has used the concept of geo-translation to transmigrate Brechtian 'epic theatre' into the folk *jātrā* form popular in the eastern part of the Indian subcontinent.

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[22] Quoted from the abstract of the presentation of Nissar Allana presented on May 23, 2010 in Webster Hall 113 as part of an international seminar titled "Brecht in/and Asia" produced by the International Brecht Society and sponsored by the Department of Theatre and Dance, University of Hawaii at Manoa. See: http://manoa.hawaii.edu/brecht2010/program/paperabstracts/index.html

Tin Paysār Pālā*: Ajitesh's Adaptation of Brecht's *The Threepenny Opera

The English version of Brecht's *Die Dreigroschenope* begins with a prologue where a ballad singer sings a 'moritat' of Mackie the Knife. A 'moritat' or a murder ballad is a ballad that describes the occurrence of a gruesome crime or a murder. Brecht's version, therefore, introduces the audience to an enterprising criminal whose accounts are recounted by a ballad singer with a mixture of awe and envy. Thus, Brecht creates an atmosphere of a society that is failing to balance between need and greed and constructing the figure of a romantic outlaw (Kramer, 2002: 221-2). Ajitesh's *Tin Paysār Pālā*, on the contrary, begins with "*Nayak Mahindrer gunakeerton.*" As such, here we have a eulogy instead of a moritat. Mahendra is introduced as the *nayak* or hero from the very beginning, and the song about him is meant to praise his actions without reflecting on their outcomes. Thus, Ajitesh changes his audience's perception of Mahendra by romanticizing him. This romantic perception of Mahendra continues throughout the play as Ajitesh insists in his stage direction that Mahin is an extraordinarily well-dressed and attractive young man. Moreover, the way Jyotsna calls Mahendra at the end of the *gunakeerton* (eulogy) has the touch of personal emotion which results from the direct acquaintance, thereby proving Mahin's popularity amongst young women and his capability of creating a lasting impression on them with his charm. On the other hand, in Brecht's version, Ginny Jenny screams, "Look! That was Macki the knife!" is far more objective and devoid of any passion. The change of a gruesome ballad into a romantic eulogy at the very beginning of the play hints at how Ajitesh has transformed *rasā* (aesthetics) while adapting to Bengal, keeping in mind the geo location of the Bengal which is known as a site of "romantic-nationalist construction of the past" as defined by Dipesh Chakraborty (2004:691) by citing Dinesh Chandra Sen's magnum opus *History of Bengali Language and Literature* (1911).

Ajitesh's stage directions are quite elaborate, describing not only the arrangements of the stage but also the costumes worn by the characters. For instance, in the very first scene of *Tin Paysār Pālā*, Ajitesh directs,

> *Thard beler songe songe prekkhagrihe ondhokar hoy. Drop othe. Gayokdoler opor samne theke alo pore. Majhkhane jyaket medel lagano, golay fuler mala, mul gayen: ekdike dhol, onyodike kansi. Jesab abhinetara abhinaya korben taderi modhye keu keu ete ongsho nite paren. Tara je poshak pore abhinaya karben tar oporei gerua chador, namaboli othoba rongin sari joriye neben; oi sob kaporer lungio porte paren, mathay pagrio bandhte paren. Ekjoner dari bandha. Mathay porchula nei; ekjoner dhopdhope*

porchular fank diye nijoswo kalo chul beriye ache. Ekjoner chokhe gonf, nak o chosmaola khelna. Ekjoner porone totkalin choshma. Ekjoner hate ekti postare lekha: Kolikata ing 1876 khri, arekjoner hate arekti postare Mahindranather nogno urdhanger unnotobokkho chobi – tate lekha: Nayak Mahindrer gunajirton. (2011:167)

[As soon as the third bell goes off, the theatre becomes dark. Curtains are raised. Lights fall on the singers from above. The main singer is in the middle with a medal on his jacket and a garland around his neck. On his one side is a *dhol,* and on the other is a cymbal. Some of the actors might also take part in this. They will wrap a saffron scarf, a namabali, or a colourful saree on top of their costume; they may even tie a lungi around their waist or wear a turban. One of them has their beard tied. One does not have a wig, while the other is wearing a white wig, but his black hair is showing from underneath it. One is wearing a huge toy spectacle with a moustache and nose. One of them is wearing contemporary glasses. One of them holds a poster in his hand on which it is written: Kolkata 1876 C.E., another one holds another poster with a picture of shirtless Mahindra showing his bust on which it is written: *The Eulogy of Hero Mahindra*.][23]

Bertolt Brecht's ideas have had a significant influence on people all over the globe. When the audience was to be reminded that they were watching a theatre and not an incident from real life, many approaches were utilised to invoke their thought process and encourage their active participation. Multi-rolling is an example of such a method. When an actor performs onstage as more than one character, it is called multi-rolling. The alterations in character are distinguished by changes in costume, voice, movement, gesture, and body language, yet the audience can discern that the same performer has played many roles. In other words, the audience is more conscious that they are viewing a depiction of events and not a slice of life. Due to this fact, the audience is not supposed to suspend their disbelief. Ajitesh, through the detailed stage direction absent in the English translation of Brecht, has tried to emulate this practice of estrangement. Moreover, his introduction of indigenous musical instruments, i.e., *dhol* and *kansi,* and costumes like *gerua chador* (saffron scarf), *namaboli* (a scarf with scriptures printed often worn by priests and religious heads), *rongeen sari* (colorful sari), *lungi* (a sarong like a garment wrapped around the waist extending to the ankles worn by men in Bengal and other parts of South Asia) and *pagri* (headgear) is an attempt to create a 'geomesh'

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[23] All translations are mine unless otherwise stated.

flexible enough to hold each of the elements which should be representative of the society and culture he is presenting and is relatable to his target audience. The idea of 'geomesh'[24] is important here as I will venture into modelling 'geotranslation' taking exaples from Ajitesh's techniques of Brechtian adaptation in the last chapter. We know that 'geomesh' is geosynthetic reinforcing fabric which has an open, flat construction and are made of extremely resistant and durable materials. 'Geomesh' is used in heavy construction in order to prevent the occurrence of cracks and fissures. Similarly, Ajitesh's mechanism of using indigenous musical items, costumes, accessories and above all the native *jātrā* form have culminated into a 'geomesh' which has concealed the fact that it is an adaptation of a foreign play. The indigenization, I argue, has synced with the natural surrounding of the target space in such a fashion that it is hardly discernible as a foreign body.

Another technique Brecht employed to create the *verfremdungseffekt* (alienation) is historicism. Even though the performance's *mise-en-scène* (stage environment) was modest, there was always a feeling of authenticity to the performance. Brecht depicted history as a dialectical process, with the importance of the human being in this process or the importance of the human being in the changeability of history, which is discernible throughout his writings. This impact highlights that everything we experience in our lives takes place as part of a historical process and that events, patterns of behaviour, and trains of thinking are all moulded because of the dialectical interactions between historical processes. Ajitesh, following Brecht, has also very specifically pointed out to his audience the time and place in which his play is situated using the poster mentioning the year 1876 and the use of period-specific props like "*Ekjoner porone totkalin choshma*" (one of the characters wearing spectacles of that specific time). In his essay on Brecht's alienation titled, "*Anway: Bertolt Brecht*" (Concord: Bertolt Brecht), first published in 1975 in the issue of *Bengali Club and Jugosomiti*, Ajitesh explains Brecht's stage directions which corresponds to Ajitesh's use of specific time and place in his adaptations of Brecht. Among the six methods that Ajitesh enlists, one says, "*Sabsamay ghotonatike oteeter bole grohon korbe*" (2010:84) [Always consider the event to have occurred in the past]. In another method Ajitesh notes, "*Amra jokhoni monche abhineta hisebe kotha boli, tokhon emonbhabe boli jeno seti amar nijeri kotha. Brecht bolechen – emon bhabe bolte hobe jeno, eti onyer kotha, onyo lok bolechilo, kirokom bhabe bolechilo seta ami abhinaya kore dekhacchi.*" (ibid:84) [Whenever we speak as actors on the stage, we speak as if those are our

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24 For further information please visit: https://texdelta.com/en/blog/geomesh-and-geotextile-membranes-to-prevent-pavement-cracking/

own words. Brecht said – we must speak in a manner to make it appear that this is someone else's speech; someone else has said it, I am just enacting it the way it was said]. Finally, and most importantly, he writes, "*Amra jokhon abhineta hisebe manche kotha boli, tokhon emonbhabe boli jeno ghotonati ei muhurta prothom ghotche. Brecht bolechen – abhinetake mone rakhte hobe je, ei ghotona age ghote gache, setai abhinaya kore dekhacchi*" (ibid:84) [When we say our dialogues as actors on stage, we say it out in a manner as if the event is happening here for the first time. Brecht has said – that the actor has to remember that this event has already happened before, and s/he is just enacting it before the audience]. Using the poster with a date reminds Ajitesh's actors and spectators that the events depicted on the stage have already taken place and are thus removed in space and time. The audience need not feel identified with the characters or what is happening in their life. Instead, they must reflect critically on what is depicted on the stage.

In *Tin Paysār Pālā*, Ajitesh uses a different time in history as the play's setting as a ploy to dissociate his audience from what is being staged before them. The introduction of a poster stating that the play's setting is Kolkata, but that of 1876 is one such strategy. Moreover, Ajitesh uses this dramatic technique of dressing his characters according to the contemporary fashion of the late nineteenth century to localize the play and make the characters and their activities relatable to his audience. As such, his hero, Mahindra, is dressed in silk *panjabi* and *payjama*, a fashion corresponding to the time that the play promises to portray. Ajitesh's stage direction to the future readers/ directors of his published play constantly reminds them of dressing the hero in fineries despite the social rung to which he belongs because he has to capture the ethos of the hero of the time and also portray the charm of a romantic hero who can attract the attention of all. Ajitesh attempts to create an eco-system where each element should represent the society and culture he is presenting and should be relatable to his audience. The time frame is also effectively used to localize the play's setting. The period corroborates with the sentiments and ethos depicted in Ajitesh's *Tin Paysār Pālā*. For instance, the description of the beggars' condition that may elicit kindness from the people provided by Jatindra, an aged man who runs an *ashram* for the beggars, is significantly different from the one described by Peachum in *Three Penny Opera*. Peachum talks about the ones crippled by traffic in a road accident, war victims, and the victims of the industrial boom (Brecht 1960:9). Jatindra does not mention any of these, perhaps because these are historically irrelevant in nineteenth-century Bengal and hence will not contribute to the localization of the play. Kolkata of 1876 neither had the traffic that could cripple a man nor the industry. Moreover, Bengalis are not warriors

who would lose a limb in a battle. Thus, the kind of beggar that Jatindra mention is "*janmapangu…janme theke andha-bikalanga-nulo-haba*" (Bandyopadhyay 2011:172) [crippled from birth… the ones that are blind-malformed-handicapped-dumb by birth]. Unadvanced medical conditions and lack of nutrition often lead to deformities among newborn children in Bengal. India started the Pulse Polio Immunization Programme on October 2, 1994. At that time, India was home to about sixty percent of all polio cases worldwide. India got the "Polio-free certification" from the World Health Organization on March 27, 2014. The last case of polio was found in Howrah, West Bengal, on January 13, 2011[25]. Therefore, the Bengali audience of Ajitesh was quite familiar with children born with deformities and disabilities.

Another instance is when Peachum complains that his wife must be drinking which leads to her confusion regarding the dress given to beggar no. 136, Jatindra, in the Bengali play, talks about his wife taking opium along with her regular habit of chewing on a beetle leaf. While opium was a household sedative in nineteenth-century Bengal and was often consumed irrespective of gender, consuming alcohol by a woman was unacceptable and would have been frowned upon by his audience. The rustic way of speaking of Jatindra and his wife at the very beginning of the play sets it in a rural background and relates it to the structure of the *jātrāpālā*. The term *jātrā* literally denotes 'journey.' In antiquity, *jātrā* referred to a procession during a religious celebration in which a specific group of followers danced and sang in several voices, perhaps while carrying idols, and therefore a specialised trip. The procession included a broader scope of activity as it dramatized events from the lives of popular avatars such as Krishna and Rama. Due to their operatic nature, these theatrical representations were also known as *jātrāpālā* (travel stories) and *pālāgān* (performing song) (Raha 2004:171). This traditional performance became a vital aspect of rural life, particularly in greater Bengal, which includes Assam, Bihar, and Odisha. Vaishnavism has significantly impacted this folk style. In the past, *jātrā* was played in an open venue with the audience seated all around the performance arena, leaving a narrow entrance and exit for the players. On one side, the musicians sat with their instruments. Slowly, *jātrā* began to shift from sacred space to somewhat secular presentations of mythological-historical narratives while simultaneously shifting its geographical centre to British Calcutta. During the second decade of the twentieth century, *jātrā* acquired a space in the metropolitan city and started addressing contemporary issues. In post-Independence

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[25] For more details about the history of polio eradication in India, see
https://www.who.int/india/news/feature-stories/detail/a-push-to-vaccinate-every-child-everywhere-ended-polio-in-india

Bengal, *jātrā* became an institutionalized form and commercialized by selling extreme melodrama and sensationalism. Rati Bartholomew, in her review article titled, "Jātrās: Theatre in Calcutta goes back to grassroots with folk forms,"[26] has stated,

> Against the pressure and atmosphere of highly commercialised theatre in Calcutta, where, as ever, in the northern part of the city, the revolve and ordinary theaters present only commercial shows, and where now, the current trend of going back to grassroots with folk forms, the traditional *jātrā* is being exploited and commercialized in proscenium settings, A few groups still survive presenting alternate and significant theatre. Of these- Badal Sircar's Shatabdi, Ajitesh's Nandikar, Utpal Dutt's P.L.T., Chetana with Arun Mukhopadhyay. (1976)

Although Ajitesh does not spell out any message from the stage through any of his dialogue, the characters he created and the plots of his plays are tools for spreading a message among his audience. Following Brecht, Ajitesh did not want his audience to relate to any of the characters depicted on stage, but he wanted his audience to reflect on their situation and to come to a conclusion where they could find a message themselves, not imposed upon them but organically coming from within themselves. *Tin Paysār Pālā* is no exception, as the characters that Ajitesh sketched and their dialogues drove home the fact that spreading a socialist message is one of the main agendas of the play.

In a world where men fail to fulfill their basic needs, love always finds a backseat. Ajitesh's play focuses less on the relationship than even the Brechtian version. Ajitesh's hero might be a charming young man, but he is not presented as a romantic hero. In the third scene, when Mahindra introduces himself to the audience, he calls himself a businessman who earns his living by robbing people. He introduces Parul, his newlywed wife, but with no hint of emotion for her. The way he talks to Parul proves he hardly has any affection for her; instead, he is also engaged with other women.

In contrast, the source text spares quite a few lines describing Polly's love for her husband Macheath, with whom she promises to spend her entire life. Especially the song that Polly and Macheath sing at the end of the second scene describes a romantic, intimate moment between the husband and the wife. They speak of the love between them and their promise of spending their life together "for love last forever" (Brecht 1960:31). This song of love is

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[26] (*A Significant Alternative - Society & The Arts News - Issue Date: Aug 15, 1976*) See: https://www.indiatoday.in/magazine/society-the-arts/story/19760815-jatras-theatre-in-calcutta-goes-back-to-grassroots-with-folk-forms-819261-2015-04-13 Accessed on 24/06/2022.

completely missing in the Bengali adaptation. Ajitesh, with the use of language, creates a class for both Mahindra and Parul where love is vulgarized, and marriage is portrayed as a profitable deal between a goon and the daughter of a rich man. Although there is a stress on the sanctity of the religious institution of marriage, the audience soon finds out that the vows hold no meaning for Mahindra as he finds his way back to the brothels and the women with whom he has shared intimate moments in the past. The emotionless exchanges between Parul and Mahindra are a potent tool used by Ajitesh to dissociate the audience. A romantic exchange between Parul and Mahindra would have aroused certain emotions among his audience, whose expectations would get thwarted when Mahindra is seen with prostitutes of Sonagachhi, the largest redlight area in the city of Calcutta.

Moreover, his exchanges with his other wife, Latu, and his refusal to acknowledge Parul as his wife to get favours from Latu would have deeply saddened Ajitesh's audience. As such, he restricts any romantic exchange between Mahindra and Parul at the outset. None of the characters in the play respect the relationships they share. Although this is a necessary trope to bring out the socio-political message that the play intends, it also prevents the audience from getting too invested in the characters and the relationships depicted on the stage.

The Bengali play introduces other social relationships too but does not develop them, and neither does the play depict any emotional attachment among the characters. Parul is Jatindra and Malati's only daughter who elopes with Mahindra, a criminal known to have robbed and killed people and raped women. The parents are not as worried about their daughter's future as much as they are about the prize money that they would receive if they can manage to inform the police about Mahindra's whereabouts. Money triumphs over love and emotion in the world that Ajitesh creates. Jyotshna, the sex worker who has a soft corner for Mahindra, also betrays him for a few coins. The song Mahindra and Jyotsna sing about their affair is a classic example in the play about how love is a luxury for people who struggle for survival. Jyotsna's part in the song enumerates how romance is only for the moneyed section of society. She sings,

> *Oi anekdin ager kotha, bahu bahudin age,*
>
> *Se anurag chhinna holo bhinnatara rage.*
>
> *Pockete poysa kame ele preme pare bhata,*
>
> *Je thotete khayre chumu, se thot dekhe fata.*
>
> *...*

Chha-mas bara sukhe chhilum, chhilum bara bhalo

Hay gariber bhalobasa du-dinei furalo…(Bandyopadhyay 2011:199-200)

[It is an old story; long ago, the affection that grew was broken into pieces. As the pocket emptied, the love waned off; the lips that were kissed now appeared cracked… I was very happy for the entire six months, but alas, the love of the poor—got over within a few days]

The audience is further informed that Jyotsna conceived during this time and gave birth to a still baby, which might be because malnutrition is quite common among lower-class people. She laments that although she found a lover, she could never become a wife, and even though she gave birth, she could never become a mother. As the play unfolds, her ultimate destination is the city's red-light area. Love here is the attraction for bodily love devoid of attachment and affection. Mahindra's relationship with Latu is a similar story of self-interest for the man who exploits the woman's affection to free himself from prison.

Tin Paysār Pālā is Ajitesh's comment on capitalism and the rising corruption in the society which reminds us of IPTA's agenda of using the medium of theatre as a weapon for the common mass to fight against capitalism, subjugation, and bondage. Mahindra calls his profession of robbing people a business. In scene six, he expresses his desire to open a factory to Parul and calls it a robbery in broad daylight. His explanation of a factory setup is a capitalist structure that exploits the labourers through coercion and consent, paying them much less than they deserve. Moreover, this business, although a bigger robbery, will protect him from any legal action against him (Bandyopadhyay 2011:192-3). Mahindra reiterates the same message in his long speech before capital punishment in the last scene. He says,

agami dine boro boro dakatera amader moto chhoto chhoto dakatder kheye felchhe. *Sei dakatera apnader rakta matite felbe na, karkhana khule, tate apnader chakri diye* *debe. Tara amader moto ekdine apnader shes karbe na, tara bahudin dhare afise, mile* *tile tile apnader rakta khabe.* (ibid:232)

[In the coming days, bigger plunderers will eat up smaller ones like us. Those bandits will not shed your blood. They will open factories and will employ you in them. They will not kill you in a day like us. They will suck your blood for many days in the offices and mills.]

Mahindra's gang of men introduced in scene three points toward the rise of hooliganism in the pre-communist era of Calcutta. Although the period depicted in the play is the nineteenth

century, it is used to dissociate the concerns projected in the play but depicted the issues of the contemporary times. The character of Batakrishna, the police officer, is a comment on the legal system of the time. Whereas in Brecht's play, the relationship between Macheath and inspector Brown is that of genuine friendship, which goes back to the time when Macheath was in the army serving in India with Brown, the relationship between Mahindra and Batakrishna is that of mere extraction, and exploitation. There are clear indications that the police is in the know of Mahindra's actions but remains quiet since he gets to share the profit. In scene nine, Batakrishna says, "*Mahiner theke taka pai, sab samay chesta kari or kiser bhalo hoy*" (Bandyopadhyay 2011:201). [I receive money from Mahin, I try to always look after his wellbeing]. In the very following sentence he also confesses that he gets a salary from the government for his service. However, about his duty, he says nothing. He finds it strange that his colleague Sukhen Sen is a fearless officer who refuses to accept bribe. According to Batakrishna, accepting a bribe is the *dharma* of a policeman. He says, "*osob adashya fadosya ekkale amaro chhila baba, dekhlum to o kichhutei kichhu na. je jemon paro lutepute khao, sobar opore amie satya tahar opore nai*" (ibid:201) [I too had all those principles once, but I realized those lead to nothing. Loot as much as you can. You are the truth above everything else, so please yourself]

Police corruption has been a constant factor from the beginning of the city's history. Sumanta Banerjee, in his introduction to his seminar work, *The Wicked City: Crime and Punishment in Colonial Calcutta* (2009) has mentioned a popular couplet from early-eighteenth-century Calcutta, "*Jal, juochuri, mithye katha / Ei tin niye Kolikata*" (Forgery, swindling and falsehood: these three make up Calcutta) (2009:9). He has also noted that "From the earliest days of the Calcutta police, successive committees and commissions set up by the government repeatedly complained about the ineptitude, corruption, and high-handedness of the local police cops, ranging from *darogahs* to the constables..." (ibid:438). Therefore, police corruption that has grown roots in the society as addressed by Jatindra after Mahindra's hanging in the last scene, has enmeshed into the complex society of Bengal and the audience shared certain belongingness to the situation. Jatindra says that antisocial elements like Mahindra should be hanged, which should be their ultimate destiny. Nevertheless, in most cases, such people escape all punishments because they have tremendous support. Often in some cases, they are essential personalities who roam around with pride and respect (Bandyopadhyay 2011:234). As such, Mahindra, the play's hero, is also pardoned of all his sins by the Gods from heaven. In his attempt to elevate his hero, the play, which began with a eulogy of the hero, finds

a full circle. However, it alludes to the fact that corruption has spread to such an extent that criminals do not die.

Bhālomānuş: Ajitesh's adaptation of Brecht's *The Good Woman of Setzuan*

In *Bhālomānuş*, too, Ajitesh uses the trope of dialect as a mode of indigenizing Brecht's *The Good Woman of Setzuan,* which depicts how influenced Ajitesh was by the ideology of the IPTA because one of IPTA's goals corresponds to the various linguistic and dialectical zones of India. The play was first staged in 1974 and produced by the Nandikar theatre group. The play follows the plot and storyline of the source text by Bertolt Brecht, yet the presentation is so indigenous that it no longer appears foreign to the audience. Here the water-seller is a poor man named Bankubihari who is known as Banka, a distortion of his real name, "…*amar naam bankubihari, loke chalti kathay bale banka*" (Bandyopadhyay, 2011a:196) [my name is Bankubihari, but people call me Banka]. Such distortion is indicative of his social class. His name has been shortened by society, which does not believe that a longer name suits a poor man who is a water seller. Since this is quite a common practice in rural Bengal, Ajitesh's audience would have easily identified with the practice. This Banka communicates directly with the audience and informs them that the supreme deities have descended on earth and are on an inspection mission regarding the quality of life on earth. He says,

> *bishoy ki? Na ei je amra sadher pithibire eto sadh kaire garechhi ta sekhane naki manushe manushe kebalei hanahani, khunokhuni, michhe katha, jal-jochhuri, chitingbaji chailtechhe. Bhālomānuş je bhalobhabe thaikbe emon kono abosthai naki pithibite nai. Ta bamha, bishno, maheswar jara pithibi ghuitte legechhen, buijhte perechhen to katta, mane thakurera enkoyari kaittechhen.*" (ibid:196)

> [the matter is— people of this lovely earth that we have so lovingly created are constantly engaged in violence, murder, lies, deceit, and cheating. There is no condition for a good man to live a good life. This is why Brahma, Bishnu, and Maheswar are roaming worldwide. Do you understand, sir? It means that Gods are on an inquiry mission.]

Although this is very similar to what Wong says to the audience in Brecht's version of the play, there are a few noticeable changes that Ajitesh consciously brings in to make it relatable to his audience, both urban and rural. Firstly, the diction in which Banka talks sans the proper refinement of the urban language used by the urban middle-class Bengalis indicates both his

class and place of residence. Considering his diction, Banka clearly belongs to the lower-class rural Bengal and this gets corroborated by his costume. The stage direction of the first scene tells us that Banka is wearing a dhoti tied relatively high showing a considerable portion of his legs, along with a *phatuwa* (a loosely fitted vest). He has a *gamchha* (local towel) on his shoulder and *maduli* (amulet) tied on his hand and around his neck. The amulet tells us that Banka is a believer (superstitious, believes not just in the existence of gods but also in magic) and connects this well with his chance meeting with the sage under the banyan tree. In Brecht's version, Wong learns about the coming of the gods from a cattle merchant who "travels a lot." By virtue of their experience of traveling and cultural interactions through exposure to many cultures outside their immediate social surrounding, merchants were revered in Europe as a repository of knowledge. Wong's merchant had brought the news from a faraway land; hence, Brecht's play has no hint of supernatural or magic. Brecht's gods are presented more in the fashion of high officials on an inspection tour being "quite disturbed at all the complaining" of the people regarding poverty. As against this, Ajitesh bases the plot on faith. Banka's *sadhubaba* knows about the gods' arrival by virtue of his supernatural vision.

Moreover, he imparts this knowledge to Banka because through his "spiritual" knowledge, he knows, "*tor kopale sulakshan ache. Tui Brahma, Bishnu, Maheswarer dekha pabi*" (ibid:196). [Your destiny holds good luck. You will get a glimpse of Brahma, Vishnu, and Maheswar]. Banka could not help but doubt the sage, thinking he might be speaking under the influence of *ganja* [cannabis]. Such addiction among the *sadhus* is quite a common sight in the rural parts of Bengal. Nevertheless, he has already developed a sense of reverence for the *sadhu*. His personality and *jota* (a topknot bun of matted hair) are enough to rouse devotion in the mind of Banka, a simpleton from rural Bengal. He finally declares that his belief in the words of *sadhubaba* brings him to that place in search of the gods.

Ajitesh's introduction of the gods is also considerably different from Brecht's play and plays a significant role in indigenizing the Bengali play. Instead of the unnamed gods who appear in Brecht's play, Ajitesh uses the three supreme gods of Hindu mythology, the powerful trinity of Brahma, Vishnu, and Maheswar. According to Hindu mythology, Brahma is the God of creation, Bishnu is the God who is the leveler, maintains and sustains the creation, and Maheswar is the great destroyer. Ajitesh also tries to make the gods appear as authentic as the imagination of a Hindu Bengali goes. According to Wong's description, Brecht's gods wore old clothes and had dust on their feet. Moreover, they spoke somberly and used the same language and diction as the water seller. In the Bengali adaptation, however, there is a detailed

description of the gods' appearance that matches how their image has been constructed in the Hindu belief system. He writes,

> *Brahmar sara gaye kamla rang, paka dadi, mathay chuda bandha, kapale o bahute fonta ebang hate sonar gahana, galay paite, pater dhuti, kapale padmer chinho, paye kharam. Bishnur baro baro chul, mathay sonar mukut, kapale baishnabder mato tilak, gaye anek muktor mala. Maheswarer sudhu kane ekta dhutro phool, parane baghchhal.*
> (ibid:196)

> [Brahma has orange colour all over him, a white beard, a bun on his head, white dots on his forehead and arms, gold jewelry on his hands, sacred thread around his neck, dhoti made of jute, a lotus symbol on his forehead and wooden slippers in his foot. Bishnu has long hair, a golden crown on his head, a *tilak* on his forehead like the *Vaishnavs,* and many pearl necklaces. Maheswar only has a *datura* flower in his ears and is wearing tiger skin]

The appearance is so vivid that everyone seated in Ajitesh's playhouse would recognize the gods without mentioning who they are. Nevertheless, the sombre tone of the Chinese gods of Setzuan has been given quite a hilarious representation in the Bengali play. Whereas Brahma is old and hard of hearing, Maheswar is impatient and loses his temper at the slightest instigation. This is a comic take on the popular belief regarding the deities. Moreover, to create a significant difference between the common human beings and the deities, Ajitesh makes them speak in Sanskrit, a classical language that Banka, an uneducated villager, fails to understand. As Maheswar explains in the play, Sanskrit is the "*devbhasa*" or the language of the deities. Although initially the gods speak in Sanskrit, soon they start speaking in Bengali, a sure dramatic technique to make them understandable for the larger audience who, much like Banka, are ignorant of the language even though their present language finds its roots in Sanskrit. However, the Bangla that the gods use is not the Bangla used by Banka. Instead, it is the Bangla of the elite Bengalis, the textbook Bangla. Even if the gods speak in the language of the common mass, this must be the language in its purer form and not an adulterated derivative with mispronunciation which marks the lack of class and education in characters like Banka. This is a consciously created difference to mark the inequality of the position held by the characters on the stage. In the mapping of several dialects of Bangla while adapting Brecht, Ajitesh has demonstrated the multidialectal cultural geo-space.

Some plot differences are also made to place the play suitably in the indigenous context. In the source text, although Wong tries to hide the fact that Shen Te is a prostitute, the gods show no reservation against her even when they come to know the truth. However, in the Bengali play, Banka confesses at the very beginning to the gods that the only house he could manage for the gods is the residence of a sex worker, Shanta. The reaction of the gods to this statement appears quite ungodly as they start judging her based on her profession without even knowing her. Their reaction challenges the idea that all humans are equal in front of god. Bishnu says, "*abasheshe beshyalaye ratrijapon!*" [at last, a night stay in a brothel!] Maheswar replies, "*E to kalir sandhye, dekho na aro ki ache kapale. Chhi ei prithibi*" (ibid:196). [this is just the beginning, wait and watch what all our fate holds. Shame on this earth.] The old wise Brahma tries to argue that "*Prithibito amaderei sristi*" [the earth is our creation], but the hot-headed Maheswar, enraged by the refusals of those who denied putting them up for the night, believes that the creation went wrong otherwise how could they not find a single good soul (ibid:199). However, impressed by Shanta's sense of hospitality, the gods change their minds and consider her the only remaining good woman on earth, giving her a stone from heaven. They ask Shanta to sell it and with the money thus earned, she should try to live a respectable life. However, as Brahma mentions, Shanta's trial of living the life of a good woman begins at this point, "*Bhalomansuh ekhono prithibite bhalobhabe banchte pare kina se pariksha adya haite tomake diye shuru hauk*" (ibid:201). [Today onwards a test begins with you about whether good people can live a good life on earth] This reference to a trial, much in line with *agnipariksha* of Sita, is not present in Brecht's original play, which makes the trial scene at the end of the Bengali version even more relevant.

Hereafter, Shanta is shown to be troubled by opportunist relatives and acquaintances who tries to exploit her financially and by the man in whom she finds love. Banka presents the report of her everyday living to the gods, which are presented as dream sequences. However, as in the plot of the source text, unable to handle the oppression of the people taking advantage of Shanta's kindness and good nature, she is compelled to dress as a man who claims to be Shanta's cousin Shantaprasad. Only when Shanta appears as Shantaprasad, a ruthless but savvy businessman, she realizes how the needy cling to one lucky person as their lifeboat. She realizes that the man she loves is only there for her money because he needs a substantial amount of money to go to Dhanbad and start his business as a taxi driver. Although Gobindo, the lover, promises to marry her, the marriage never gets solemnized as they keep waiting for the cousin to come and pay them the promised amount, which would fulfill his dream of going to Dhanbad,

leaving behind Shanta forever. Since Shantaprasad did not come with the money, the marriage was called off.

Later, disguised as Shantaprasad, Shanta establishes a successful tobacco business and makes Gobindo the manager. However, Shanta finds out that she is pregnant with Gobindo's child, but she decides to stay in disguise until she cannot hide her pregnancy. As the tobacco business flourished, the poor and needy people to whom Shantaprasad provided jobs and shelter became restless for Shanta to return since they missed the kind-hearted and generous Shanta whom they could easily milk. They, including the water seller Banka, began accusing Shantaprasad of murdering Shanta and getting him arrested. In the trial room, the three gods enter as the judges for the case, and it is in front of them that Shanta discloses the truth behind her disguise. She reveals that she was compelled to make a choice. The gods had asked her to remain good to all and live an honest life. So, she had preserved her Shanta self and let it remain untainted. Shanta is generous, and she is the giver. However, surviving as a generous and kind being is impossible in this cruel world. As such, Shantaprasad was born to function as her alter ego. Shantaprasad functions as a strong and tough man who can deal with the greed of the poor. Shanta exclaims,

> *Jokhon meye hayechi narom thekechi, tokhon amare keu banchte dite chayni. Sabai chhnire tukro tukro karte cheyeche. Jokhon koda hoyechi purusher besh niyechi tokhon amie sabar ghare chadechi. Tokhon ami benchechi,.. Bhalobhabe banchte gele anyera shose. Jodi tar the banchte jai tabe bhalotuku ube jay. Ami nije anyader shuse banchi...banchte gelei manda hate hay manushere.* (ibid:274)

> [When I have dressed like a woman and remained pleasant and polite, nobody wanted me to live. Everyone wanted to tear me apart. When I became stern and took on a man's dress, I dominated them all. Then I lived. If one tries to live the life of a good man, others will exploit you. If I try to escape that, then the goodness vanishes. Then I live by exploiting others… Humanity has to become evil in order to survive]

This sentiment is also evoked in the song that Shanta sings in Scene Eight. Although this is an adaptation of the "Song of Defencelessness" in the Brechtian version, Ajitesh makes considerable changes here. In the source text, Shen Te/ Shui Ta questions the gods and asks them why they do not intervene to change the situation (Brecht 1957:228-30). However, in the adaptation, Shanta never pleads to the gods to make amends or intervene on her behalf. She finds a way out to defend herself, to save herself from the society that sucks on her like a leech.

Thus, her song in the Bengali version is a remark on the brutal and heartless society that exploits polite and soft people. But those people become submissive and respectful when faced with a strong personality. The song says that the selfish society needs to be faced with a strong demeanour to survive.

Shanta declared that this was her step to clear out some space for the unborn child. She has stooped low so that her child does not have to bend. After carefully considering Shanta's case, the gods acquit her but only allows her to summon her Shantaprasad self once a month, as she must survive in this ruthless world with her child. The conclusion of the play does not leave the audience with much hope, as the gods themselves could not purge the earth of all its impurities. In the brief epilogue, one of the actors steps forward and addresses the audience regarding the rather hopeless ending of the play, which is not the usual practice. He says the audience must be shocked at the unworldly miracles in the story of a woman who dresses like a man and meets gods. He says that the characters are equally dissatisfied with the ending. However, the message he delivers after this gives meaning to the actions. He says,

> *bojhai to gelo prithibi paltate habe ar goratei dure karte habe arthanaitik baishamya. Naile Bhālomānuṣ e prithibite bhalobhabe banchte parbena kichhutei. Kintu e kotha to amra sobai spasta jani je swarga theke bhagobanera neme ese e bishoye kono bidhan karte parbe na.* (Bandyopadhyay 2011a:276-77)

> [So, it becomes clear that the world has to be changed, and the first thing that needs to be eliminated is economic inequality; otherwise, no reasonable man can survive on this earth with his goodness. However, we know that even if gods descend from heaven, they cannot make any provision for change.]

The character suggests that progressive theatre often addresses such issues and ends the play with a message. But this play will not follow suit because these theatre practitioners believe that theatre should shoulder more responsibility. Instead of giving a direct message from the stage, they want it to come from within the audience. It should germinate in their minds. This epilogue is Ajitesh's take on Brechtian theatre and his theory of alienation. His theatre asks his audience to reflect on their role in changing the world's situation. He says, "*amader dike takiye ektu bichar korun. Ei prithibike paltanor byapare apnar Bhumika kototuku? Apni nije ki karen?*" (ibid:277) [Look at us and consider a little. How much is your role in changing this world? What do you contribute?]. He declares that the artists of this theatre are men who want

to change the world and are against this economic inequality. If the audience joins them, then a day might come when they can gift the audience a play with a beautiful ending.

Bhālomānuṣ, as such, is another Brechtian adaptation that reflects a communist agenda. However, what is relevant here is how Ajitesh uses a play written in Germany and adapts it to voice the communist concern of the Bengal of the 1970s. When Banka, in his dialogue with the Gods in Scene Six, says, "*Garibera barai garib thaur… ekdine ki duniya sagga hai? Tabu gariber madhye—man benche ache bale duniya ekhono tike ache. Era jodi rege ghure dnaray tabe chhisti ekdine chharkhar haiye jabe. Takawala bape thekate parbena*" (ibid:221). [The poor are very poor, my lord… can the earth become heaven in one day? Just because compassion exists in poor men, the world exists. If they are enraged and turn around, this creation will burn away in a day. The moneyed men will not be able to save it], he is here voicing the concern and the pent-up anger of the masses in the then Bengal. The class struggle has already begun in newly independent modern Bengal.[27] As such, Banka's speech hints at the impending revolution of the proletariat, which, if it even happens, will topple the world as it existed then, and even the moneyed capitalists will be unable to save it. This is the time that the poor are dreaming of. Similar sentiments are reflected in the song of Gobindo in Scene eleven:

> *Ekdin asbe ekdin asbe*
>
> *Keu keu bhabe ekdin asbe*
>
> *jedin sabai unch galay joyadwani deba amra*
>
> *'joy raja joy raja joy raja'.*
>
> *Footpat theke eke bhikhirir chheleta*
>
> *Makhmal moda ek bedi opor singhasane basbe*
>
> *'jar ja ichha niye jao niye jao' balei hoho hasbe*
>
> *Sei adbhut dino swapner dino galper dino asbe.*
>
> *Duniyay sudhu bhalo thakbe mando kichhui thakbe na*
>
> *Gyanigunie kadar habe takaowalar habena*

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[27] The rage of the mob towards Shanta Prasad is also a representation of the implicit class struggle that is brewing. It is born out of a sense of deprivation. Although Shanta Prasad gave them job, food, and a right way of living, they were not satisfied. Shanta Prasad was different from Shanta because he maintained a class difference from the unwise poverty-stricken mob who has lost the practice of working wisely and building their life in an honest way.

'bhater abhab' abhab shunei loke h oho hasbe

Sei adbhut dino swapner dino galper dino asbe. (ibid:246)

[A day will come; we believe a day will come when everyone cheers for our king. The beggar's son from the footpath will sit on the throne covered with silk. The king will laugh and ask us to take whatever we want. That day of our dream will come. The world will only comprise good; no bad will exist here. People will learn to value the wise and not the rich. People will laugh at the mention of scarcity of food. Such a day of our dream will surely come.]

It is for this day that they are waiting. It might appear strange, impossible, and unbelievable at this moment, but the hope for this day keeps them going. Then, the goodness will resurrect, and all evil will be destroyed.

The play seems to represent the ugly face of a poverty-stricken world. Although apparently, it seems to be a parable of how the poor sucks life out of another poor, it is pointing at the fact that the expectation of goodness in a world where the government cannot provide for the basic necessities of human beings is futile. The goodness of the people is lost when faced with the challenges of existence. Shanta's dialogue in scene thirteen, which says, "*ami to cheyechhilam ami sat thakbo—bhalo thakbo. Kintu garib maa-bapera sat thakte parena*" (ibid:253) [I wanted to remain honest—to remain good. However, poor parents can never remain honest] points towards the fact that when a parent has to face a cruel world to fend for his/ her children, they cannot remain a good citizen of a state which demands them to be law-abiding but does nothing to uplift their situation. Social inequality creates the modern state, which always sides with the haves and considers the have-nots as the social outcast and excess. The policeman's character in the play representing the state always favours Shantaprasad because he is affluent. As such, the police never saw him in a negative light despite all the complaints lodged against him by the poor people around him. He shouted at the poor men and women and treated them as insignificant creatures who always created unnecessary hullabaloo.

It is not a godless world per se that Ajitesh is portraying but a world where gods, too, are rendered helpless and thus are in no position to make any functional changes. In scene seventeen, when Brahma and Bishnu feel frustrated at the loss of faith in humanity on divine presence, Maheswar's dialogue presents the accurate picture of a dystopic world that has no space for faith as it is struggling to survive with the bare minimum. He says, "*dubela khetei loker prananta tar opor abar deb-dwij, satkaj—pagol?*" (ibid:268) [they can barely manage

food two times a day, you expect divine reverence and honesty? —are you crazy?] A sense of peace, fulfillment, and devotion are a luxury in a world without food. As such, the Bengali adaptation of Brecht's *The Good Woman of Setzuan* goes beyond considering good/bad and the question of ethics and morality. It becomes a tale of a struggle for survival. Ajitesh shows that morality and poverty are incommensurable. No one is a villain in the play, and every character is a victim of their situation. Their actions might be hurtful, but they are not evil or malefic. They are all struggling to exist. The way they treat each other is because of their hunger and unfulfilled desires. Ajitesh, through his play, seems to ask his audience: what can change the world? Is it God, atheism, moral fortitude, or more decadence? The way Ajitesh has connected the adaptation with the target geography and its cultural, sentimental, political, social, and economic landscape, I argue, the adaptation has 'performed negotiations' between two disparate times and spaces and achieved a process of transformation and recodification of geographical imaginaries within one or across different media' (Italiano 2016:95-6).

Critique of Ajitesh's method of Adaptation:

Ajitesh Bandyopadhyay has often been accused of vulgarising Brecht[28] by scholars owing to his deviation from the somber tone of Brecht's original creations. However, if we look at him as a translator-author who caters to a live audience of his time, we will see how his adaptation of Brecht is based on his understanding of his audience. Based on the popularity and immense success of the productions of Brecht's *Three Penny Opera* as *Tin Paysār Pālā* and *Good Person of Setzuan* as *Bhālomānuṣ* by Ajitesh, it becomes clear that as a playwright, he knew what his audience desired, and he successfully touched them with his theatrical skills. His intention was certainly not to present Brecht aesthetically but to make a political and ideological point. According to Arundhati Banerjee, two factors motivated the Bengali theatre practitioners of post-independence India to adapt Brechtian plays. She writes,

> To some, the relevance of Brecht's plays to the country's sociopolitical situation has been paramount. That these producers have not paid much attention to Brecht's method and form becomes clear from an analysis of their adaptations as literary texts as well as performance texts… To other producers, Brecht's innovative form and novel idea of theatre have come foremost. (1990:7)

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[28] See Arundhati Banerjee, "Brecht Adaptations in Modern Bengali Theatre: A Study in Reception", *Asian Theatre Journal*, 7:1 (1990), pp. 4.

Banerjee places the production of *Bhālomānuṣ* in the first category as she argues that for Ajitesh, the importance of the Brechtian play was more about expressing the contemporary socio-political context than following the Brechtian "method and form" rigidly. In contrast, *Tin Paysār Pālā* falls in the second category, focusing mainly on the freshness of innovative ideas. However, whichever the case, Ajitesh Bandyopadhyay used the plot of Brecht's plays but molded them to make them relatable for his audience according to their "taste and appreciation" (ibid:7). However, Ajitesh was not following the instructions of the methods that Brecht propounded in his theoretical writings. Although he took up the challenge of staging Brecht's plays which were considered quite tricky by the Bengali intelligentsia, he took the liberty of presenting Brecht to his audience in a way that suited his political agenda and their aesthetics the best. His intention was not just to introduce this German playwright to the Bengali audience but use his plays to address the significant social and political upheavals that the country was passing through. His adaptations thus become a critique of the evils that have crept into society through capitalism and money-mindedness, where human relationships have lost value, and people are blinded by their profit-oriented motives. When Ajitesh Bandyopadhyay was questioned in one of his interviews regarding his choice of Brecht, he replied, "What kind of plays can Communists produce, plays where Communist propaganda would not be too loud and which would also have some aesthetic value? I found Brecht satisfying both these conditions at once" (8). Brecht's method of alienation, Ajitesh believed, is the root of deriving the absolute pleasure of theatre from knowledge. Unlike the widespread belief that an audience should identify with the characters and experience the same emotions as displayed on the stage, Brechtian theatre created a distance between the characters and the audience, and this, Ajitesh believed, led to the creation of an unprejudiced, disinterested and impartial position of the audience from which he can judge and analyse the characters. Ajitesh believed that Brecht wanted to make his audience honest critics, so this distance was necessary (Bandyopadhyay 2010:82-3). Brechtian theatre is epic theatre that goes to the characters' roots and thus makes an intellectual analysis of their historical, social, and political circumstances inevitable. Ajitesh writes, "According to Brecht, this extremely necessary point of view cannot be provided by any philosophy other than Marxism, and Brecht was strongly a Marxist himself" (ibid:83)

Brecht has been the choice of many Bengali playwrights, including Arun Mukhopadhyay, Sekhar Chattopadhyay, Rudraprasad Sengupta, and Utpal Datta. Almost all of them believed that Brecht's plays could encompass the political situation in Bengal in the 1960s and 1970s and could reflect contemporary reality. They used Brecht's plays like Arun

Mukhopadhyay points out, as "cultural weapons to fight the battle for the exploited in changing capitalist society to a classless world" (Banerjee 1990:8). Utpal Datta went to the extent of believing that without the knowledge of the political theory of Marx and Lenin, it is not possible to attempt an adaptation of Brecht. Thus, in the Bengali stage, Brecht's plays were not famous for the "Brechtian method" or "alienation" but for their ability to bring out the Communist political ideology.

The costume, too, was bright and colourful as against the kind prescribed by Brecht. As has already been mentioned, Ajitesh Bandyopadhyay particularly insisted that his hero Mahindra should never have a worn-out look, and as such, he appears in the jail dressed in a silk kurta and pajama. Arundhati Banerjee criticises the portrayal of Macheath's character as a "romantic rebel against the greater criminals of the social system with his colourful costume, swaggering attitude and sideburns" (ibid:16). She has similar complains regarding the staging of *Bhālomānuṣ* too. According to Arundhati Banerjee, the familiarization of the locale in the adaptation of *Bhālomānuṣ* has "robbed the play of its parable like quality" (ibid:14). She writes, "*Bhālomānuṣ*…exploited gross humour and slapstick in the name of entertainment. Too much colour and spectacle in production obscured the central message" (ibid:14). Banerjee believes that the adaptation has failed to establish the poignancy of the urge for an alternative social system in which a reasonable person may survive with integrity. She writes, "In *Bhālomānuṣ*, the transformation in personality is made so sensational that it detracts from the fact that Shen-Te's change is necessarily one of class attitude and social behaviour." The adaptation, she thinks, sentimentalises Shen-Te's dilemma (ibid:14).

Ajitesh, while describing his understanding of Brecht, has stated that Brecht considered theatre as the only medium that could capture the exchanges that have happened throughout human civilization. He says that theatre has the living stomach to digest all those social exchanges and critical discourses. He writes, "*sabhyata manusher parasparer madhye adanpradaner janya e parjanto ja kichhu dan karte perechhe, Brekhter mawte ekmatra thiyetar madhyamerei take grahan karbar paripurna khamata ebang sajib pakasthali ache*" (Bandyopadhyay 2010:83). [According to Brecht, all that the civilization has been able to offer humankind for exchange, only theatre has the capacity and a spirited stomach to receive it.] Adaption of Brechtian theatre fulfilled his political ideology because Ajitesh considered Brecht, a playwright who wanted to make his audience a critique-spectator. Brechtian actors were supposed to speak in such a way that they appeared to be speeches of other people. The actors were meant to enact what others had said or events that had already occurred (ibid:84).

Ajitesh Bandyopadhyay has also been criticised for making extensive use of songs and dance in his adaptation of Brecht in both *Tin Paysār Pālā* and *Bhālomānuṣ*. Critics are of the opinion that such use of song and dance is quite un-Brechtian in nature and were purely meant for the entertainment of the audience and was not provoking them to think. Nevertheless, his use of the song is intricately related to his subjective understanding of Brecht and his theatre. In fact, during his initial years, Ajitesh was confounded by Brecht's introduction of songs in his plays. In his essay titled, "*Brekht-er sange parichayer adiparba*" [My Early Years of Introduction to Brecht], he writes that he came to know that Brecht was influenced by Sanskrit plays which determined the way his plays were structured. This was not unnatural, thought uninitiated Ajitesh, since Germany has a vibrant culture of practicing Sanskrit. So, Ajitesh started reading Sanskrit plays. However, after reading more than twenty plays, he could not understand Brecht's introduction of songs in his plays. He writes, "*kintu bhablum, majhkhane gan dhokabar parikalpana to Brekht Sanskrita natok theke pete paren na. Sanskrita natakgulote majhe-majhe kabita ache bate, kintu gan kadacha noy. Barang ache jātrāy. Ar jātrā to Sanskrita theke dur, lokayat*" (ibid:88). [But I thought Brecht could not have gotten the idea of including songs in his plays from Sanskrit plays. There are poems in Sanskrit plays but never songs. Instead, songs appear in *jātrā*, but *jātrā* is far away from Sanskrit plays as it is a folk form]. Ajitesh could relate the introduction of songs to the tradition in Bengal's *jātrā*. However, he knew that a Bengali folk tradition could not have influenced Brecht. Ajitesh later found out that Brechtian songs were influenced by the opera tradition prevalent in the west. However, his initial association of Brechtian songs with the *Jātrā* tradition probably stayed with him, which was later reflected in his adaptations of Brecht. The songs of the conscience in the *jātrā* form were Ajitesh's indigenous way of approaching and understanding Brechtian alienation. Moreover, Ajitesh refrains from creating a magical atmosphere with the songs and music. In fact, he uses basic minimum indigenous instruments and lays them bare on stage to be played by the actors. The songs and their lyrics were far from creating an aesthetic effect. Instead, they were intentionally unmusical.

Ajitesh knew very well that Brechtian songs punctuated the actions in the play and provided his audience with the time to reflect on the actions. The songs reinterpret the Brechtian theatrical effect, and it does not supply the background of the events, pump up the actions, or stir the audience's passion. This was Brecht's way of alienating his audience. He writes,

> *Brekht gaan byabohar karechhen darshakder natoker natokiyota theke samoyikbhabe dure sariye rekhe tnader bisleshan karbar samay deben bale. Tini chaiten je, tnar*

darshak jena kakhano na bholen je, tnara natokei dekhte esechhen. Brekht tnar darshakder kono natake natakiyatay apluto kare mugdha karte chaiten na. tini natak ke janasadharaner toshonkari shilpa bale mane karten na. tini chaiten natak desh, kal, samaj…charitra sabkichhuke dhire dhre unmachita karbe darshakder samne. Nischoyi darshakera natyashilper gunei majhe-majhe apluta haben. Takhan Brekht chaiten keu egiye ese tnader gan shonabe. Darshakder sujog debe natok bisleshan karar, natakiyota theke samoyikbhabe mukto hoyar. (Bandyopadhyay 2010:88)*

[Brecht has used songs to momentarily remove his audience from the performativity of the play to allow them some time to analyse. He wanted his audience to never forget that they have come to watch a play. Brecht never wanted his audience to be overwhelmingly fascinated by the dramatics of the play, he never regarded theatre as art form meant to please the common mass. He wanted a play to gradually unfold place, time, society, and characters in front of its audience. Of course, the audience will sometimes be overwhelmed by the performance quality. At that very moment, Brecht wanted someone to come forward and sing a song to the audience. This will momentarily liberate the audience from the dramatics and allow them to analyse the play they are watching.]

Ajitesh, in his essay on his introduction to Brechtian theatre, reminisces how his ignorance regarding Brecht's actual theatre practice led to various misconceptions. This ignorance was due to the lack of practice and scarcity of materials available on Brecht in the then Calcutta. Although Brecht had become a popular name among theatre practitioners, none clearly understood what Brechtian theatre was all about. Ajitesh recounts the screening of *Mother Courage* in Calcutta Film Society in 1965, which invoked an interest in him for Brecht. It was not a film version. It was a video of the play *Mother Courage* taken when it was staged in Berliner Ensemble. Due to the technical problems of the videography, Ajitesh could not grasp the Brechtian techniques displayed in the play. He recounts,

kintu mushkil hocche je bhadralok chhabi tulechhen tini kichhu kichhu film technik byabahar karechhen nijer gyatasare athaba agyate. Jemon kichhu kichhu jaigai oyaip-er byabohar to amar ekhano spashta mane ache. Phale na puro theatre dekhar anubhab hay, na chhabir. Brecht-er natak ba projojanar ebang abhinayer baishisthya ebang mahaniyata kichhui dhara jayna. Antata ami to parini." (ibid:85)

[But the problem was that the gentleman who captured the video used some techniques associated with film photography, knowingly or unknowingly. For instance, I clearly remember the use of a wipe. As a result, it neither gave the feeling of watching a play nor a film. Neither could I grasp the characteristics and allure of Brecht's directions and actions].

Ajitesh remembered discussing with his teacher Chittaranjan Ghosh and his friend Professor Gurudas Bhattacharya how he could not grasp the use of Brechtian alienation in the production (ibid:85)

Another event that Ajitesh recounts was Soumitra Chatterjee's adaptation of Brecht's *Exception and the Rule* as *Bidhi O Byatikram*. This production, too, however, failed to bring Brecht home to Ajitesh. He writes, in another essay titled "Brechter sathe parichayer madhyaparba" "*Bishoy ba byabaharer janya ghatanati khub achena lage, Brecht- er rachanar sange sabishesh parichay na thakay natakti bujhte asubidha hoy, elomelo lage*" (ibid:90). [Because of the subject matter and the use of it, the matter appeared quite strange and unfamiliar. Since I had no acquaintance with Brecht's work, I faced trouble understanding it, and it was rather a baffling experience]. However, Ajitesh accepts that Chatterjee was one of the first playwrights of Bengal who introduced Brecht here.

When he watched *Caucasian Chalk Circle* for the first time, he realized that every actor performs particularly stylized manner, and every character follows a certain mannerism. Every character has a peculiar way of speaking. Every time the play reaches a high, a person on the stage starts singing, and the stage arrangements are made and unmade in front of the audience, yet they all sit watching, quite captivated by everything happening on the stage (ibid:87). Owing to his ignorance of Brecht's techniques and incomplete knowledge of Brecht's work and practice, many misconceptions initially crept into Ajitesh's understanding of Brecht. He remembers that one of the common misconceptions that were doing rounds among the theatre practitioners of Bengal was that Brecht's theatre required a meager budget. This information made Ajitesh believe that the lower the cost of production of a play, the higher will be the impact. This brought a momentary disregard in him for excessive light and stage decoration. But even then, he was unsure of the method, for he asked, "*…tahole ki konodinei amader deshe alo-manchasajjar unnati habena? Hoyar darker nei?*" (ibid:86). […will there be no development in lights and stage decorations in the plays staged in our country? Is it not necessary?]. It is because he knew that the lights and stage directions coming up in the amateur theatres of Bengal, although criticised by high-browed critics, were developing organically

based on the need of the production and reflected the point of view of the directors. He started believing that Brechtian theatre is against the naturalistic theatre tradition that existed in India: "*Tahole to Brechter mato karbar chesta karte gele theatre, bishesh kare amader ekhankar prachalita naturalstic theatre, bad dite hay, ebang swabhabatai er traditiono. Tahole Dinabandhu, Michael, Girishchandra theke adhunik kal parjanta sab natyakar ebang Girishchandra, Danibabu, Shishirkumarer abhinayer traditiono*" (ibid:87). [As such, if we try to do it the Brechtian way, then we will have to give up the naturalistic tradition prevalent here and as a result, its traditions as well. Then we will have to exclude all playwrights from Dinabandhu, Michael, and Girishchandra to those of the present time and the acting traditions of Girishchandra, Danibabu, and Shirishkumar]. At that time, his ignorance made him believe that theatre practitioners of Bengal could not practice Brecht.

Ajitesh knew the taste of his audience well. He knew that his audience required a particular pace in theatre. Any slow-moving play, whether based on Sanskrit or Greek theatre, would never become popular in Bengal. His audience was habituated with the simple lighting and stagecraft technique followed in the *jātrā* form.

One of Ajitesh's initial reactions against Brecht was sparked by the fact that although Brecht was a Marxist, he was not a member of the Communist party. As an active party worker himself, he had a general disliking against all those men who enjoyed social respect as communists but did not care about the party. He wrote,

> …*Brecht Marxbadi chilen, kintu Communist partir sadasya nan. Eta amar bhalo lagena. Ami takhan purodastur communist partir sadasya ebang motamuti dayitwoban sadasya. Ami lakshya karechi—jnara partir sadasyapad nen na, tnara partir subidhagulo bhog karen, kastogulo nay. Partir garbagulo, lajjagulo nay. Tnader ke bola hoto 'more than a party member*." (ibid:89)

[Although Brecht was a Marxist, he was not a member of the Communist party. I would not say I liked it. I was a full-time member of the Communist Party at that time and was quite a responsible member. I have noticed that those people who did not take the party membership enjoyed the benefits of the party but did not partake in its troubles. They share the glory of the party, not its humiliations. We called them 'more than a party member'].

Ajitesh initially considered Brecht one of such opportunist Marxists who considered being a dedicated party member too difficult as it eats away the time that could be invested in doing

one's own work. These people did not have to shoulder any responsibility yet enjoyed recognition from the party as progressive. As such, the initial reaction of Ajitesh towards Brecht was marred by many misconceptions and misinterpretations of Brecht and his practice. It took him quite some time to really get hold the form and practice of Brechtian theatre and then adapt it to the indigenous soil according the the taste of the local audience.

Ajitesh has divided the practice of Brechtian theatre in Bengal into two categories: a) *anubad projojana* (translated productions) b) *rupantar projojana* (transplantation where the translator takes much freedom) (ibid:92). Although his adaptations of Brecht fall in the second category, Ajitesh was quite grieved at how critics insisted on a faithful rendition of Brecht. The judgement of the critics depended on a) whether the playwright has watched a production in the Berliner Ensemble, b) whether the playwright had read all the works of Brecht and judged the production as Brechtian enough using their knowledge of Brecht, and c) to listen to the opinions of a Brechtian scholar (ibid:93). Ajitesh criticises how contemporary theatre critics considered Brecht the elitist and most intellectual of all playwrights and the epitome of the most complex scholarship. They could never bear to tolerate that such a complex play could be presented in a simplified manner before any audience. Ajitesh complains,

> *Prithibite sarbatrai Brechtke duruha jatil panditwer parakastha hisebe dekhanor ekta chesta ache panditmanya mahale. Theaterer bajare tnader ei sarbashesh khelnati eto sahaje janaganer samne pouchhe jabe eta tnader pakshe sajhya kara ektu mushkil hoye pare. Projojona janagrahya hale samalochakder ekta sadharan jhonk pare ei katha bolar: eta epic style hoini, alienation noy, ganer surguli brechter projojanay byabahrita swaralipi anujaiyi hoini, poshakpattar, alo, shabda, (emonki darshako) Brechtian noy".* (ibid:93)

> [Everywhere around the world, intellectuals have tried to establish Brecht as the epitome of scholarship. It becomes difficult for them to tolerate if their last toy of the theatre market reaches the common mass quickly. If the audience receives a production well, critics show a common tendency to opine: this did not follow the epic style, this was not alienation, the tune of the songs was not according to the notes used in Brecht's production, the costumes, light, words (even the audiences) was not Brechtian].

Only when a production failed to draw an audience and could not run long owing to economic, organizational, or any other reason would the critics consider the play truly representative of Brechtian aesthetics. This group of critics criticised Ajitesh for oversimplifying Brecht and

making it too sentimental and melodramatic. In a conversation with A. J. Gunawardane regarding problems and directions in the new theatre of Calcutta, Dharani Ghosh commented that,

> *Tin Paisar Pala*, supposedly an adaptation of Brecht's *The Threepenny Opera*, has one virtue-it attempts to bridge the gap between the commercial theatre and the new theatre. But it fails-very interestingly. The Bengali version parallels the original, but the two never meet. The Bengali play retains only the external structure; the play is Indianized. That's why it's a failure. I don't think Brecht should be Indianized. Moreover, the Bengali production takes everything political out of the original. "Innate vulgarity," a phrase used elsewhere by Bandyopadhyay, sums it up." (Gunawardana 1971:241)

In the same conversation, Samik Bandyopadhyay analyses Ajitesh's production as an attempt of drawing a large audience. He states,

> The director Ajitesh Bannerjee uses his popularity as a "star" of the theatre and all the other assets at his disposal- Brecht's name, well-known actors, and his group's reputation- to close the gap between the commercial theatre and the "other" theatre. I think it is too much of a compromise. The popularity of Tin Paisar Pala makes us somewhat apprehensive, for it corrupts and destroys the basis of the experimental theatre on the one hand and that of the strongly committed political theatre on the other. This production combines both styles but reaches only an audience attuned to commercial theatre. And that creates havoc and bewilderment in our theatre movement.

> We don't question anyone's right to modify Brecht, so long as such modifications preserve Brecht's ambivalence and meaning. But in this production everything is romanticized. Macheath becomes an idealized bandit- an image that Brecht tries to avoid. (ibid:271)

However, according to Ajitesh, the audience of Bengal was used to watching a particular kind of stage production and, as a theatre practitioner, one must understand that first. He writes, "*Sabcheye baro katha darshker to ekta abhyas ache, sei abhyaser sange parichita nan emon projojok banglar prabahaman theatre ebang tar darshakder na chinle bidesher kono adhunik natokke edeshe janagrajhya kare prajojona karben ki kare?*" (Bandyopadhyay 2010:93). [Most importantly, the audience has grown a habit. However, if a director is unaware of this habit, is uninformed of the convention of the current theatre practice or is unfamiliar with the kind of audience, how can he ensure that his production will be acceptable to his audience]. Ajitesh's

use of *jātrā* technique shows his knowledge about the taste of his audience. He knew the kind of melodramatic art form his audience was familiar with and wanted to present Brecht within that very model. It is because of this that his *Tin Paysār Pālā* and *Bhālomānuṣ* became a huge success. Ajitesh was aware that his audience requires dramatic elements, emotional excitement, and suspense instead of the rationality that Brecht portrays. He gave his audience a form with which they were acquainted enough to draw the message hidden within the plot of the play. However, unfortunately, the contemporary theatre critics were quite harsh on him. Ajitesh comments on their practice, "*durbhagyakrame amader theatre-e ekta dharona chalu ache, ja beshi loke dekhe ta taral o baje, ja alpa loke bhalo bale tai dami ebang intellectual. Ekathata je sarbakhestre thik noy, kono khstre thik, ekathata samalochak, projojok ebang darshakke jante habe*" (ibid:93). [Unfortunately, there is a prevalent belief in our theatre world that whatever is watched by more audiences is simplified and bad. Whatever is considered good by a few is valuable and intellectual. That this cannot be true in every context should be understood by critics, directors, and even the spectators].

He goes on to say that Brecht's adaptation in Bengal has encountered a troubled relationship between the director-critic-audience. Although neither every spectator reads the critical reviews, nor a critic ever inspires a director, this holy trinity determines the success, failure, progress, or deterioration of theatre. If the director and the audience are in good terms, then the production becomes a huge success, and if the director befriends a critic, the play fails miserably but is recognized as intellectual (ibid:93-4). However, as Ajitesh points out, "*theatre phuriye jai, darshak buriye jai, samalochona ta chhapano akshare theke jai*" (ibid:94)[theatre comes to an end, the audience gets old, but the criticism remains in printed letters]. The world of scholarship has always considered written documents significant in assessing the situation of the past. The live audience does not live to testify to the work of a director forever. What stays are the criticisms printed in journals and newspapers. Since Ajitesh could never satisfy the critics, he is always remembered as someone who vulgarized Brecht to please his audience.

Translation as a negotiation between spaces:

Translation is, after all, a cultural practice which is intricately connected to the idea of space. The detailed study of the plays in comparison with the source text, which this chapter indulges in, was required to understand Ajitesh's 'landscape of translation,' an idea promoted by Kershaw and Saldanha to refer to the 'environments in which translations are produced and

received' (2013:135). The textual traffic in the case of these translations was clearly from an urban to a rural setting. The difference in the portrayal of the characters, their costumes, and the use of rustic language indicates a conscious attempt at a new "orientation"[29] and provides the text with a new direction. The translated plays open space for "a negotiation of differences across languages, geographical imaginations, and identitarian ascriptions" (Italiano 2016:1). The text experiences what Federico Italiano would call "geographical re-orientation" which, according to him, is "a process of de- and reterritorialization that indissolubly links together location, language, and translation" (ibid 1). Michaela Wolf points out that translation is not only a matter of transfer between cultures but "a place where cultures merge and create new spaces" (as quoted in Italiano 4). Ajitesh aimed to circulate Brecht among a larger audience who might not be aware of the greatness of the playwright but should be able to derive the message conveyed through the play's staging. He wanted his audience to participate in Brecht's political discourse but from within the ambit of their existence. As such, the changes, often referred to as vulgarization, resulted from the geoscape in which the rendition took place.

Mona Baker, in her essay, "Translation as an Alternate Space for Political Action," writes, "Numerous real-life examples continue to attest the fact that translators and interpreters are not apolitical, that many hold strong beliefs about the rights and wrongs of (political) events in which they find themselves involved professionally, as translators and interpreters" (2013:23). She further adds that "in this respect, they have broken away from a long tradition of positioning themselves as neutral, unengaged professionals who stand in some 'liminal' space between cultures and political divides" (ibid:23). Ajitesh's translations were such political acts of re-writing Brecht's plays according to the taste of the audience, who were more accustomed to art forms of *jātrā*. The use of coarse humour, abusive language, melodrama, and excessive emotional outbursts are for the kind of audience who are not attuned to theatre practices commonly associated to the staging of Brechtian theatre. Ajitesh's plays become a space for producing cultural encounters where a new set of cultural realities get constructed for the *desi* audience through the re-narration of a foreign text in a very indigenous way. He is here constructing a new worldview for his audience. As such, his translation of Brecht transcends the "innocent act of disinterested mediation" but rather becomes "an important means of constructing [political] identities" (ibid:24). Ajitesh's re-telling of Brecht with a generous mix

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[29] Exploring the etymological understanding of the word "orient", which in Old French means East and in Latin means the part of the sky where the sun rises, Federico Italiano suggests that the word "orientation" is a complex metaphor "meaning to find one's way or pointing in a given direction" (Italiano 2). Thus the word orientation is associated with geographical reconstruction of a text in a new space and time.

of indigenous emotions, humour, and sensibilities, often verging on the coarse melodrama, is both a way of negotiating with the contemporary political situation and a tool to make significant changes in the world around him. His aim was not to achieve an intellectual approximation of Brecht in the Bengali language but to reach out to a group of audience who inhabit a different space, be it geographical, social, or political, and convey a political message to them. Thus, his translation is a kind of political activism that has, as Hernadi would suggest, a 'self-transcending commitment' to 'replace indifference by the social or cosmic commitment either to change the world or to change ourselves'(1987:199). The translator Ajitesh finds relevance in the theme of a play written for a German audience in rural Bengal and believes that it is possible to re-narrate a story so rooted in foreign soil for a group of indigenous audience to bring about a gradual change of consciousness that can have a lasting impact. He is thus re-narrating a world across linguistic and cultural boundaries through translation.

While reviewing a translation of Chekhov, seeing the abundance of translations of the same author, Donald Rayfield commented, "…does translation resemble medicine, in that 'a disease that has many cures is incurable'? Arguably each generation a new version…" (2011:408). Brecht has also seen too many versions and retranslations in the post-Independence period in Bengal as well as in India and lending Rayfield's words we can say that every translation of Brecht acted as a medicine to the marginalised, oppressed section of the society. Every adapter has tried to prescribe Brecht in their own way to address the helpless, deprived, poor people. Ajitesh, knowing his lack of German language, attempted Brecht through English translations and used the method of 'relay translation.' He has tried transporting Brecht from German landscape and re-orienting it in the Bengal. Interesting to note that 'retranslation' is a temporal act as it suggests a translation 'done again' whereas 'relay translation' is a spatial act where a translator works not from the original language but from another translation of the original, thus attaining the fusion of the horizons. The Brechtian adaptations by Ajitesh thereby hint towards a spatio-temporal re-coordinating, which, I argue, can contribute towards 'geo-translation,' adaptation between two different locales, a 'dislocation' and at the same time 'relocation' into an altogether different geo-space. By investigating the two examples of Ajitesh's adaptation of Brecht, I also argue that the 'spatiality' of translation, which primarily has been equated with the western concept, is also present in the Indian concept of *chhāyā*, as discussed in chapter one. Translation from the geographical and geometrical perspective alludes to the question of movement in terms of land or space. As discussed in chapter one, translation, as interpreted through Euclidean Geometry, an alternative vantage point to

understand the translational act from an alternative geometrical perspective, can be interpreted as adding a constant vector to every point, or as shifting the origin of the coordinate system. The translation process can be interpreted as a distance-preserving transformation between two metric spaces. At the same time contemplating loosely Einstein's gravitational argument may lead us to the idea of curvature on space and time and we can imagine theatrical adaptation, the spatio-temporal re-coordinating method used by Ajitesh has created a curvature on the landscape, which we usually define as influence and reception as outlined in early French Comparative Literature. Ajitesh's method of Brechtian adaptation on the Bengali stage could potentially model theatre adaptation as a site of geotranslation by coupling with the Indian notion of *chhāyā*. Further discussion regarding the metrics of spatiality will be discussed in the fifth chapter, where I will frame the model of 'geo-translation.'

Chapter Four

Can Foreign Flower Bloom in Native Soil?:

Ajitesh's Translation of Chekhovian Plays

"The role of artist is to ask questions, not answer them."

- Anton Chekhov[30]

Chekhov on Bengali Stage:

1960s and 70s were the time that saw a great range of adaptations of European theatre on the stage of Bengal. Chekhov became one of the European authors of interest because, as Bishnupriya Dutt , in her essay titled "Theatre and Subaltern Histories: Chekhov Adaptation in Post-Colonial India" points out, the focus of theatre in the post-independence phase was on "European naturalism, expressed in the form of relocalized Indian-language adaptations of Ibsen, Chekhov, Odets, Miller, and Gorky, and through these texts the probing of slices of life from contemporary Indian reality" (2013: 146). Ajitesh Bandyopadhyay is one of the leading playwrights of the period who adapted Chekhov abundantly to comment on the issues faced by contemporary society, disillusioned and struggling with government policies after independence. Ajitesh's adaptation of Chekhov was marked by his thorough knowledge of both English and Bengali literature. He used his insights to make pertinent interventions in the textual nuances and could adapt them in the Bangla language with subtlety. Ajitesh's translation of Chekhov using the sentimental language of a typical Bengali man was a way of deconstructing the myth that suburban audience crave melodrama and does not have a taste for serious theatre. Ajitesh, in his career as a playwright, soon realized that such an understanding of the audience of the suburban areas and the countryside is flawed. He realized that instead of discriminating among his audience, it was his responsibility to elevate the taste of the audience from all corners and all walks of life. Ajitesh states that although those people had no other option but to watch such sentimental melodrama, a sensible presentation of a Chekhov or a Tagore would touch their hearts in the same way (Champati & Mukhopadhyay, 2010: 8). He writes

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[30] Quoted in the *Introduction* to the *Research Handbook on Art and Law* (2020) edited by Jani McCutcheon and Fiona McGaughey (pp. 1).

that it was moreover the responsibility of the playwright, "*amader dayitwa je sudhu janaruchi sparsha kara nay, sange sange tader ruchi o chahidake unnata kara…*" (it is our responsibility to not just touch the popular taste, but also elevate their taste and demands at the same time) (ibid 8). Thus, with the Nandikar group, Ajitesh began his mission of developing the taste of his audience outside the Calcutta *rangamancha* (proscenium theatre). He began staging complex intellectual theatre from the city to the countryside and thus initiated his way of respecting the intellectual capacity of the common man. He wanted to reach out to all his audience, irrespective of their spatial existence, in the same manner: "*thik je nisthay saharer bidagdha darshakder kachhe upasthit karechhi kono natok, sei nisthay Durgapur kimba Asansoler sadharan darshaker kachhe jabo: ei chhilo amar niti…nana jane hayto nanan bhabe bujhechhe, kintu karo 'kathin' mane hoyni*" (the reverence with which we presented a play to the learned audience of the city, we will reach out to the common audience of Durgapur or Asansol with the same reverence: this was my principle… different people understood my work differently, but no one thought it was difficult) (ibid 8).

While adapting plays of foreign playwrights, Ajitesh was more concerned with the form and structure of the plays. He knew that neither the playwrights nor the audience or the actors were much concerned about the form inherent in the works of eminent playwrights like Chekhov and Pirandello. The commercial theatre was primarily concerned about the magic created by colouful lights on stage. Ajitesh wanted to educate and develop the theatre scenario in his manner. He was aware of the great tradition of Indian theatre and also acknowledged the existence of the folk theatre of Bengal. Ajitesh knew fully well that there exists a uniqueness in the Indian theatre. What concerned him was finding the right way to use those traditions and blend them with the form of European theatre to constitute what he understood as the "modern" theatre of Bengal: "*asal samadhan to form nirdharane. Form samparke ei sachetanata o atmasikshar janyai bideshi nataker anubad o rupayan eto proyojaniyo, amader nijeder janyao. Sange sange amader sanskrita classical natako abhinita hoya uchit.*" (the real solution is in the determination of the form. The need for the translation and implementation of foreign theatre is to increase the consciousness about the form and for our self education. Along with the translation of foreign plays, there should be performances of our classical Sanskrit plays as well) (ibid 9). For Ajitesh, there was no debate between the choice of staging original Bangla theatre and foreign adaptations. He believed classical Sanskrit plays might have elements of European theatre or adaptations of foreign plays might include indigenous elements. However, the lack of good content in the indigenous Bangla theatre was one reason he turned to

adaptations of foreign plays. Nevertheless, it was not just the content but also the form that excited him, and he believed an exercise of translation and adaptation of foreign plays on the stage of Bengal was a staircase to the development of theatre in Bengal (ibid 9). Commenting on Ajitesh's adaption of European theatre for his group Nandikar, Bishnupriya Dutt writes,

> His style of adaptations was extremely innovative, infusing the text with the essence of local and regional politics and reflecting the turmoil of the period. The use of language, nuances of local events, and interweaving of the larger and smaller narratives reflected his style. (2013: 148-9)

Ajitesh considered translation as the medium through which knowledge and philosophy circulate globally. He believed that it is through translation that the originality of the thoughts of great thinkers gets established and appreciated. Be it scientists, philosophers, or litterateurs, global recognition of great minds is the result of translation (Bandyopadhyay, 2010: 25). This holds true for the world of theatre as well. Plays by Shakespeare, Stanislavski, Pirandello, Brecht, Ibsen, and Chekhov gets staged all across the world and for people of different linguistic background only because their texts get translated. Ajitesh's understanding of the translation of theatre resonates with the "polysystem theory" of translation as propagated by Itamar Even-Zohar in his essay "The Position of Translated Literature within the Literary Polysystem"[31]. Even-Zohar states,

> What then are the conditions which give rise to a situation of this kind? It seems to me that three major cases can be discerned, which are basically various manifestations of the same law: (a) when a polysystem has not yet been crystallized, that is to say, when a literature is "young," in the process of being established; (b) when a literature is either "peripheral" (within a large group of correlated literatures) or "weak," or both; and (c) when there are turning points, crises, or literary vacuums in a literature. (2000: 193-4)

These three situations establish translation in the central position and allow experimentation with new genres or foreign literature. Similarly, Ajitesh writes, "*Anubad natakgulir projojonao manchake daiy natun bhab, riti, binyas, charitra, ghatona, chhanda o anubhab…durbal, aparinita o agyan natakbodhke sahajya kare. Anubad natakguli er bandhu, darshanik o parichalaker kaj karte pare.*" [The production of translated plays bring to the stage new spirit, forms, structures, characters, events, rhythm, and emotions… it helps weak, underdeveloped understanding of theatre and the ignorance thereof. The translated plays perform the role of a

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[31] originally published in 1978; revised in *Poetics Today* 11 (1990): 45–51.

friend, philosopher, and guide] (2010: 25). As such, as Even-Zohar points out, translated texts for Ajitesh help in the crystallization of the polysystem of theatre practice in Bengal. Thus, it takes the central position to deal with the "weakness" that exists in the original plays written in Bangla during his time. Ajitesh, moreover, thinks that translation and adaptation of foreign plays give us a sense that people of the world belong to the same family, and their life too, flows by the same stream full of diversity and bliss (ibid 25). However, turning to the indigenous concepts of translation existing in precolonial India, we are aware of two types of translation, viz., a) vertical translation between two languages positioned in an asymmetrical power position, for instance, between Sanskrit and other regional languages and b) horizontal translations that existed between two languages on the same plane for instance between two regional languages. Now, in the postcolonial scenario, English became the language of power owing to colonialism and replaced Sanskrit, Persian, and Tamil. Ajitesh was fully aware of the treasure trove of modern European literature but could not access them in their original language because of his linguistic restrictions. Therefore, English became a gateway through which he could reach out to modern European theatre and disseminate the form, structure, and concepts in Bangla theatre to upgrade it. He was using translation as a means to bring about growth in the world of contemporary Bangla theatre but indigenized it with elements that were typically Bengali in its cultural context. Because of this, people can relate to the concepts depicted in the plays wherever they might have originated. Bishnupriya Dutt writes,

> Texts in translation or adaptations are never a key area of interest in either theatre history or literary circles, which tend to concentrate on the small exclusively original repertoire. Thus the large body of translated or reworked texts in often ignored or underplayed, though it is absolutely impossible to construct and study post-colonial theatre history without taking them into account. These were the texts that helped to create a post-colonial modernity in parallel and contrast to a colonial modernity. (2013:146)

In fact, Ajitesh and his contemporaries had faced quite a lot of criticism for staging of more translated plays than original ones. Ajitesh, however, saw those criticisms as an expression of narrowness of the people who could not relate to the global exchange of ideas. Translation was not just required for developing modern theatre in post-independence Bengal but also to prove the originality of the content created in our own country. He encourages the translation of Sanskrit classical plays into Bangla for he thinks that it is important for the consolidation of the idea of national theatre (Bandyopadhyay, 2010:27). But, Ajitesh believed that if people could

laud the staging of a Bangla theatre in translation in Russia, they should be able to laud a translation of a Russian play in Bengal too (ibid 26).

However, Ajitesh understood the need of staging of plays adapted from foreign lands in Bangla so well that he moulded his adaptations in a way that they took roots in the Indian soil. He mixed the foreign texts with right amount of regional culture, local socio-economic problems and local dialects. Rajdeep Konar rightly points out that,

> Ajitesh's brilliant study of human nature, their physical and linguistic habits were infused into the character to the extent that losing their foreign garb they became regional. Neither were they poor mimicry of their originals nor fine parody: their distinctness as texts situated in Bengal was apparent. Ajitesh's adapted plays thus provide a very interesting overlapping space between Indian and foreign cultural traditions. (Konar, 2013: 211)

Bibhas Chakraborty, while reminiscing Ajitesh's theatre practice has commented that his adaptations were so part of the local culture that none of his audience ever asked whether they were original creations or not. According to Chakraborty, it was Ajitesh's extreme dedication to his work that enabled him to shape his work so flawlessly. He writes,

> *Ajitesh jakhan kono Natak rupantarer katha bhabten takhan sudhumatra oi ekti nataker madhyei tar bhabnachinta simabaddha thakta na. amra dekhei tnake kakhana Chekove peyechhe, kakhana Brechte, kakhana ba Tolstoye. Eisab natyakarer jiban, jibanbodh o byapak sristidharmer madhye dube jeten tini. Pouchhe jeten tnader marmamule. Tarpar sab kichhu magaje ebang hridaye niye, tnar dekha-jana jibaner pate ankten natun chhabi, natun ghatana, natun charitra, natun sanglap ja sahaje pouchhe jeta darshaker kachhe.* (Champati & Mukhopadhyay, 2010: 83)

[Whenever Ajitesh thought of translating and adapting a play, his thought did not remain confined within that one play only. We have seen him being preoccupied at times with Chekhov, sometimes with Brecht or Tolstoy. He used to dive into their biographies, their philosophy of life and the complete oeuvre of their creation. He tried to reach to the essence of their work. Then taking it all in his heart and mind, he sketched a new portrait on the canvas with new events, new characters, new dialogues which included the understanding of the life that he has seen and known for years. As such he could easily reach out to his audience.]

The following section of the chapter will attempt an analysis of select plays by Ajitesh, adapted into Bangla from the English translation of Anton Chekhov's plays. It is true that Ajitesh had no access to the original plays of Chekhov written in Russian, but he tried to reach to the core of the social and political issues depicted in those plays that corresponded with the contemporary socio-political situation in Bengal.

Chekhov's One-Act Plays in Translation: Ajitesh's *Ekanka Natak*

Nana Ranger Din

The title of the Bangla translation of *The Swan Song* is in itself a statement of how the approach of the translator is different from that of the author of the source text. Whereas the English translation of Anton Chekov's play from which Ajitesh adapted the play into Bangla, is titled *The Swan Song,* alluding to the final performance or activity in the life of the protagonist of the play, the Bangla translation is titled "*Nana Ranger Din*" [Those Colourful Days]. The title of the Bangla rendition suggests that it is a recollection of the bygone days. The protagonist takes a walk down memory lane and reminiscences the past. In the English translation, which is closely based on the original Russian, the protagonist, Vasili Svietlovidoff, a sixty-eight years old theatre actor, says,

> …but my life is really over now, I kiss my hand to the sixty-eight years that have gone by; I'll never see them again! I have drained the bottle, only a few little drops are left at the bottom, nothing but the dregs… The time has come for you to rehearse the part of a mummy, whether you like it or not. Death is on its way to you [Stares ahead of him]" (2).

Svietlovedoff is here waiting for his death, he is staring ahead od him and feels frustrated at the fact that he has not much time left. Although the Bengali protagonist, Rajanikanta Chattopadhyay too acknowledges the fact that he has become old and talks about the inevitability of death, what he laments the most is the loss of the colourful days of his youth. The Bangla title will immediately bring to an informed reader's mind the famous Rabindrasangeet "*din guli mor sonar khachai roilo na, sei je amar nana ranger dinguli*"[32] (my

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[32] For musical composition and background history of the song by Tagore please visit: https://www.geetabitan.com/lyrics/D/dinguli-mor-sonar-lyric.html

days did not remain confined in the golden cage, those colourful days of mine). The song explains how time is fleeting; how much ever one tries to stop it or preserve it in a golden cage, it whizzes past. What remains is the memory of the time that has passed and the painful reality of the present. Evoking the essence of Tagore's song, the protagonist, Rajanikanta questions, "*kintu ja gelo, se ki ar phirbe?*" (…but will the lost time ever return?) (Bandyopadhyay, 2011:349). He reminisces about those days of his life when he, a descendent of a *bhadra* brahmin family, joins the police force. As a well-built handsome man, he became popular in no time when he joined theatre. But gone are those days. He laments, "*tarpor sesab dino jena kabe—keman kare furiye gela, shes haye gela jibaner sab bhalo bhalo dingulo… ekebaare nihshes kare diye gela he amake—*" (Bandyopadhyay, 2011:352) (but then those days suddenly come to an end— no one knows when and how all the good days run out… they robbed me of everything). The extensive description of the woman he loved in the Bangla play is another instance of how this rendition is about the character's yearning for the days he has lost. The romance in the description of the lady, the way he talks about her smile, her fiery spirit, her abysmal eyes, and the waves of her hair, it seems that Rajanikanta is still living those days. He can see his lady love in front of him. No such elaborate description is there in the source text. The romanticization that Ajitesh indulges in here is the Bengali playwright's way of appealing to his indigenous audience.

The word '*rang*' (colour), in the title of Ajitesh's adaptation also alludes to the protagonist's life as a theatre performer. The colourful characters that he has played on stage, the colour lights, the colourful costumes defined his life in the world of theatre. But the colour is slowly fading with his age. He is now desperately trying to hold on to the colour by dyeing his greying hair and applying make up on his face. He mocks himself objectively saying, "*chhokrader moto dhong dhang karte paren, lamba chowra chehara ta ache, aro chaliye deben kichhudin. Lamba lamba chule daily half shishi kalap lagiye jerokom iyarki tiyarki maren, tate bayesta thik bojha jay na—kintu ja gelo, se ki ar phirbe?*" (Bandyopadhyay, 2011:349) (he has a fashion sense of the young boys, a tall and stout body, he will be able to pull up a few more days. The way he jests around dyeing his long hair with half a bottle of hair dye every day, his age….). As the play continues, the audience learns that behind the colourful lights, costume and make-up that encapsulate his life as a theater performer, the harsh reality of his lonely life lies hidden. Rajanikanta is a lonely man. There is no one to stand by his side outside the world of theatre. His life is as dark as the setting of the play. His habit of consuming alcohol and passing out under its influence is a way of escaping the harsh truth of his life (ibid 352). This

is why he does not want to leave the theatre house and go home. He says, "*Ki habe bari phire— ektuo bhalo lage na barite!... prithibite ami eka! Amar apanjan keu nei—bou nei, chhelemeye nei, sangisathi nei, keo kothao nei—ami ekdam eka—ekebare nihsanga…*" (ibid 351). (What shall I do after returning home?—I do not like a bit being at home!... I am alone in this world! I have no one to call my own—I neither have a wife nor children or friends, there is no one for me—I am all alone—desolate…). In the end of the play, he finds his happiness on the stage and in the art form itself. He understands his relationship with the stage and realizes his genius once again. In the excitement of reciting the monologues from the roles he enacted in the past, he says, "*Ekhon boyeshgulo kon chuloy giye dnariye ache he! Kothai gela atshattita bachharer shok! Kothai chitar anchta!—ami spasta bujhte parchhi Kalinath, amar Pratibha ekhono mareni… Pratibha jar ache, bayeshe tar ki ase jay!*" (ibid 357). (Where are the years now! Where are the sorrows for the sixty-eight years of age! Where is the heat of the funeral pyre!— I can very well understand Kalinath that my talent has not died…Age cannot make a difference in the one who is skilled). As an actor, he transcends age and overcomes the fear of death. He is no more lonely, his confrontation of his past self rejuvenates him and renews his spirit. However, the reality dawns soon. He realizes that he is no more that young energetic youth of the past. He tells Kalinath, "*amader din furiyechhe! Hayre Pratibha! Kothay gela boloto? Jibaner patra shunyatay rikta kare diye, kothay, kar kachhe, kon deshe gela Pratibha?*" (ibid 358)(Our days have come to an end! Alas talent! Where did it go? Emptying the vessel of my life where did my Talent go?). He finally accepts the reality of the present. Ajitesh's addition of the dialogues of Othello and Macbeth alludes to the tragic truth that even the greatest of heroes fall and also alludes to the influence and reception of Shakespearean drama in Bengal since the nineteenth century.

The major feature of this translation by Ajitesh is the way he presents his protagonist to his audience. Rajanikanta introduces himself, his life and habits through a conversation he has with himself as an alternate self outside the self. His informal lingo is that of an ordinary man quite relatable to Ajitesh's audience. Ajitesh had demonstrated a very keen sense of the kind of language and dialects his audience, mainly comprising of the middle class, would enjoy, through phrases like "*dudin badei to khate uthben* mashay" (you will take to the bed within a few days is a metaphorical expression which means that the said person is going to die soon) (ibid 350) or statements like "*…apnar moto bayes hayeche jader – atshattita bachhar, tnara samaymato mapjokh kare khawadawa kare—sakal sandhye berate jan, sandhyebela kettantettan shonen, bhagabaner naam karen…*" (those people of your age—of sixty-eight

years, they measure and eat their meals on time—they go for walks every morning and evening, listen to kirtans in the evening, pray to god…) (ibid 350). In his essay, "*Bangla Theatre o Madhyabitta*" (Bangla Theatre and the Middle-Class), Ajitesh mocks the middle-class mentality regarding the language. He says that the middle class prefers posing as the knowledgeable class of the society and hence appreciate the use of English words in theatre. Although they uphold the indigenous forms of knowledge, arts, and culture, use of English words are considered "smartness" by them. Adding a little humour to his analysis of the middle-class audience, Ajitesh writes, "*ragbar somoy duto hindi katha holo, gyandaner samay duto sanskrita katha…*" (They use Hindi when they are agitated but prefers Sanskrit while imparting knowledge) (2010:34). Use of abusive slangs also became a part of the theatre dialogues because, as Ajitesh points out, "*bastabatar khatire bibhinna charitrer mukh diye galagal deoyanota ekta reoyaj. Madhyabittara prakashye eisob galagal dite ba khete pachhondo kare na, kintu shunte pachhanda karen, tai natake kichhu galagal thake.*" (to make it appear realistic, it has become customary to make some characters speak the abusive language on stage. The middle class does not like to use those slang in public, but they like hearing them. As a result, such abusive language is used in theatre) (ibid 33). These elements feature in all of Ajitesh's plays to not only make his characters more believable but also to make them more appealing to his widespread and middle-class audience.

Moreover, the theatre that Rajanikanta performs in is the theatre presmise in which commercial theatres are performed. Ajitesh had known such theatres very well. The commercial theatre was very much a part of the middle-class existence in Bengal as it used to be performed every Thursday, Saturday, Sunday, and holidays. The commercial theatres were full of songs, dance, "coloured and magical lights" which the common audience found quite entertaining. The mention of the "balcony", "first box", "second, third and fourth box" situates the play in the atmosphere of the commercial theatre practiced in Bengal.

Ajitesh, in order to situate the character within the geographical space of the then Bengal and make him appear a true theatre actor, presents him with a psychology of a theatre practitioner which draws upon his own experience. In fact, in the excessive emotional outburst of Rajanikanta against the hypocrisy of the theatre audience, Ajitesh infuses the characteristics of the then Bengali theatre-goers and, in all probability, his frustration as a playwright. In the episode where Rajanikanta describes how his love was thwarted by his beloved, Ajitesh exposes the hypocrisy of the Bengali middle-class audience who would appreciate the actors,

and laud them for their performance but would never tie knots with them. Society regarded the theatre practitioners almost as an outcast. Rajanikanta says,

Abhineta mane ekta chakar—ekta jokar, ekta clown…are seidinei bujhlum pabliker asal charitrata ki!—tarpar theke osab faka hattalite, khabarer kagojer prashangshai, medel, sartifikete, 'natyabhinay ekti pabitra shilpa'—esab baje kathay ami biswas kari na. Pablik mahoday albat hattali deben—khub prashangsa karben—sab thik—kintu jei tumi stage theke namle—tumi tnader keu na—tumi theatrewala—ekta nakalnabish— ekta asprishya bhnar, ekta beshya!—ta bale ki tara tomar sange alap karben na, cha cigarette khawaben na? ta khawaben. Anek katha balben, alap- alochona karben, hasben, namaskar karben—… kintu kono samajik samman tumi pabena. Theatrer parichaye keu tar meye kimba boner sange biye debe karo? Kakkhana na. (Bandyopadhyay, 2011:354)*

[An actor is equal to a slave—a joker, a clown… I realized the true nature of the public (audience) that day!—Since then I do not believe those fake applauses, praises in the newspaper columns, medals, certificates stating 'acting in theatre is one of the purest form of art.' Mr. Public will surely applause—will praise an actor too—all of these are fine—but the moment you step down from the stage, you are no one to them—you are a theatrewala—a duplicate—an untouchable jester, a prostitute!—does that mean that they will not get introduced to you? Will not have a cup of tea with you or light up a cigaretter? That they will for sure. They will talk to you a lot, will have long discussions, will smile at you, will greet you—…but you will never receive any social recognition or respect from them. Will anyone marry of their daughter with someone from the theatre background? Never.]

Although this mentality underwent a gradual change when Ajitesh was performing, such an attitude was common in the earlier ages and continued to leave its trace. Ajitesh's audience was also familiar with this attitude, however uncomfortable it might be.

Tamaku Sebaner Apakarita

This play by Ajitesh is an adaptation of Chekhov's *On the Injurious Effects of Tobacco* but here too, Ajitesh provides the play with indigenous elements to make it palatable for his viewers comprising of both urban and rural population of Bengal. Ajitesh follows the last version of the play "On the Injurious Effects of Tobacco" written by Chekhov in 1902 and published in his

Collected Works, XIV, in 1903. The protagonists of both the source text and the translated texts are henpecked husbands but the issues of the Bengali husband are rooted in the Indian soil. He mentions in the very first dialogue that, "*stree amar hoye raji hoyechhen. Kajei ami ar jai kothay! Edike bishay thik, amio hajir, kajei amar ichhe anichhe ta kono bishoyei noy*" (Bandyopadhyay, 2011a:390) (my wife has consented on my behalf. What can I say now?! The topic has been selected, I am also present, thus, there is no place for my will and desire). This very first dialogue proves that he is a truly "*durdashagrastha*" (distressed) husband whose desires and wishes hold no importance. He informs his audience that for the last three years he has been lecturing on various issues continuously without paying any attention to his mood and supressing his own personality (ibid 390). This misery of the protagonist that gets highlighted in the Bangla rendition is somewhat disguised in the majestic presence of Nyukhin in the source text. Even if Nyukhin is controlled by his wife, he tries to maintain dignity through his majestic gesture. Moreover, Nyukhin has been doing his job quite seriously for the last thirty years, where he has not lectured on scientific topics but has also managed to publish his articles. There is an authority which Nyukhin speaks, "I propose that you treat my present lecture with proper respect, otherwise, I can't be held responsible for the way it turns out. Be there anyone here who is intimidated by the dry, scientific lecture, or who just doesn't like it, then that person need not listen and should leave at once." (252) He claims to have so much authority over the topic of his speech, that he even urges the doctors in the audience to listen to him carefully. In fact, his speech includes scientific terminology and information, although he digresses from the actual topic to talk about his life with his domineering wife.

As against this, the speech by the Bengali protagonist of Ajitesh is so frivolous that it appears like a parody from the very beginning. The protagonist after accepting the fact that he has no authority over science declares, "*ami sab somoy bhabi, Kalpana kari, baigyanik bishoy banai ebang baktrita diye thaki—iye, mane thik sabsamay 'baigyanik bishay' noy—jake bala jay 'pray baigyanik bishoy'*" (ibid 390) (I always think, imagine, cook up scientific topics and deliver talks on them—I mean, not always pertinent scientific topics—something you might call 'almost scientific topics'). That this man has no idea about scientific matters is clear from the fact that he imagines and creates topics in his mind that are 'almost science'. He is presented as a parody of a public speaker. However, the Bangla version becomes a comment on the conjugal relationships that exist in middle-class families. Ajitesh establishes the poor economic condition of his unnamed protagonist by mentioning the bedbugs that infest his house. Although this man lectures on scientific matters, he lives in a rather unhygienic condition. The

misery of the man is reiterated through his physical appearance when he says, "*amar dike takiye dekhun, ei kanchapaka chul, apusti jirna ei proura sharir…*" (ibid 390) (just look at me, this salt and pepper hair, this worn-out body suffering from malnutrition). Although the protagonist alludes to his practice of taking tobacco, the audience is soon made aware of how his misery is linked to the asymmetry in the conjugal relationship he shares with his wife. He says, "*ami kotha bolte shuru karle amar gaa bhisan ghame…much fyakashe haye jay…iye…dan chokhta anabarata pitpit kare. Amar hearter golmal ache. Ei golmalta amar shuru hay jebar ami nashyir koutoy…iye…sangsare prabesh kari.*" (ibid 391) (the moment I start talking, I sweat profusely…my face becomes pale… the right eye blinks continuously. There is a problem in my heart. This problem began the year I entered the snuff box…I mean, I entered my marital life). *Nashyir kouto* or a box of snuff is a very familiar object found among the middle-class *bhadralok* and hence Ajitesh's audience would instantly identify this small box that men would carry in the pockets of their shirts. What is interesting is his slip of the tongue in this dialogue. The audience is made to wonder whether it was really a slip of the tongue or a conscious choice of using the metaphor of the box of snuff to denote his marital world. He was speaking of what happens to a fly when it is captured in a box of snuff to explain the poisonous nature of tobacco to his audience. But when he compares his marital life with that very box of snuff, does he become the fly that enters the box of snuff and dies because of a heart attack caused by the effect of the poisonous tobacco?

The girl's hostel and "*shani- rabibarer gaaner school*" (music school held on Saturdays and Sundays) are familiar to Ajitesh's Bengali audience. It was common among girls of suburban areas to come to the main city to attend high schools and colleges. They would take up a place in the girl's hostels found in the localities of the city of Kolkata. Music schools for girls were also common in Bengal as every middle-class family would send their daughters to a local song master (preferably a woman) to learn how to sing. Singing was the most preferred extra co-curricular activity among the Bengali middle-class of the 1960s and 70s, who had strong reservations for dance. Learning to sing was considered a significant addition to the knowledge of sewing and other household chores, so girls were often asked to show off their singing skills when a prospective groom's family visited for an arranged marriage.

Although Chekhov names his protagonist, Ajitesh prefers to keep him unnamed. As such, Ajitesh's protagonist emerges as the "everyman" with whom his middle-class audience will be able to relate easily. He complains about his marital life and miseries, but like a middle-class man, who is afraid of losing respect in society due to separation, he sticks on to an unhappy

marriage. He has no money, no clothes on him. His wife barely feeds him. He does not earn but is dependent on his wife. As such, he becomes the butt of ridicule in a patriarchal society: "*sabai jane ami streer bashibhuto, streer kathai uthibasi chalifiri, tnar anna khai abar tnarei seba kari. Lokera amake dekhe hase…*" (ibid 393). (Everybody knows that I am an obedient husband, she controls even my movements, I eat her food and serve her. People laugh at me). The rants of an unhappy married man become a metaphor for the ill effects of consuming tobacco. When the protagonist says,

> *kintu baran karle keo shone na, loke khay, kheye thoke, takhan chharte chay, anutap kare. Kintu takhan ar kono upay thake na. eta pray sanskarer mato, lokeder kirokom ekta dharana je, jubak bayesh, nije rojgar karchhi, ebar tamakta dhara jak; mane janma ar mrityur majhamajhi, khub ekta jaruri byaparer matoi tamaku sebanta jena ekta apariharja byapar. Ar satyi hiseb karle dekhao jabe dharun amader bap-thakurdara sabai to ei kajti karechhen*. (ibid 392)

(Nobody listens, they consume, feels cheated and then want to get rid of it, repent their choice. But then they have no option left. This is more like a custom, people seem to have a belief that if a person is young and earning, they must start consuming tobacco. It is, as if, like an important juncture between birth and death, very significant and indispensable. And if you look at it properly you will see that all our forefathers indulged in this very practice).

The "*tamaku seban*" or consumption of tobacco becomes a metaphor for marriage. He wants to escape the harmful effects it is causing on his life. He says, "*asale amar icchhe karchhe…sabar mathar opar diye ure chale jai, eman kothao, eman kono jaygay jekhane stree bale kono padartha nei, biye name kono anusthan nei, chelepile name kono pratyasha nei*." (ibid 393) (In fact, I want to fly away, to such a place where there is nothing called a wife, no ceremony called marriage, no expectation called children). His only escape, however, is the house of his sister-in-law, whom he visits along with his daughters during the Durga Puja. She is the only one who seems to respect him and care for him. But most importantly, her house is happy because she is an unmarried woman who has not known the woes of marital life like the protagonist. It is in her house that he can walk down his memory lane and visit his happy days of childhood and youth. Ajitesh, here too, successfully creates a setting of Bengal of a moonlit night and coconut trees swaying in the wind. The accurate description of a Bengali wedding with images of *rajanigandha* (tube rose)*, Sanai* (Shehnai, a flute-like musical instrument)*,

dansamagri (gifts given during marriage from the bride's family to the groom's family), food and friends is a classic example of his indigenization.

Prastab

Prastab by Ajitesh Bandyopadhyay is an adaptation of Anton Chekhov's *The Proposal*. Here again, Ajitesh indigenizes the play by creating a setting typical of Bengali society and culture. He not only provides the characters with typical Bengali names but their attitudes, mannerisms, and behaviour are extremely rooted with whom his audience will be able to relate easily. However, Ajitesh keeps the basic plot very close to the source text. Thus, his play too begins with the meeting of two landowners, the young Prangopal Mitra and the aged Indrajit Chowdhury, the father of Rama. Prangopal is presented to the audience dressed in quintessential expensive zamindari attire: *dhuti*, *panjabi*, and *chadar*. However, Indrajit is surprised at Prangopal's sense of dressing in fineries on a common day. Having found it too festive, he says, "*tarpor amader barite ajke tumi eto sejeguje esechho keno? Jyano Bijoyar por ele. Panjabi, gaye chador, kothao beriyechhile naki?*" (Bandyopadhyay, 2008:42) (Why have you come to our house today all dressed up? As if you have come to visit us after *bijoya*. Dressed in *Panjabi* and *chador*, had you been anywhere else?). With the mention of the word *bijoya* (a custom associated with the Durga Puja when people usually visit friends and family to pay respect and exchange greetings wearing their finest of clothes, often newly bought for the festive season), a very culture specific custom, Ajitesh had already successfully transported Chekhov to Bengal and plants his play in the soil of this land.

Ajitesh keeps the style of speaking the father figure, Indrajit Chowdhury similar to Chekhov's character Stepan Stepanovitch Tchubukov. Indrajit too uses alliterative words ending with *eisab* (all that), much like Tchubukov, who ends his long-drawn sentences with "and all the rest of it". However, Indrajit switches between commonly used Bangla (*chalit bhasa*), more Sanskritized words of Bangla (*sadhu bhasa*), and also includes bits of broken Hindi like *burbak*. Ajitesh, hence, attempts to keep the central theme, ways of dialogue delivery, characters and their peculiarities very close to the source text. His adaptation, however, is infused with culture specific items which creates a subtle difference between the Bangla rendition and the Chekhovian version. For instance, Rama says that she is not dressed well enough to receive guests because, "*jhir sange boshe bodi dichhilam kina, tai*" (ibid 45) (I was laying out lentil dumplings to dry with the maid). Whereas in the source text, Natalya

mentions that the rain has soaked the balls of hay and expresses her concern about the fields, in Ajitesh's indigenous adaption, Rama talks of her *bodi* (dried lentil dumplings) soaking rainwater and getting spoilt. Moreover, the property over which Prangopal argues with Rama are farms yielding common vegetables used in every Bengali household (ibid 46). The use of the Bengali months to refer to the agricultural season (ibid 48), Bangla proverbs and phrases like '*hatabar fikir*' (an excuse to confiscate), "*ghoda dingiye ghas kheye chale jabe*" (to achieve a mission disregarding the rightful owner), abusive slangs like "*chor*", "*chhotolok*", "*badmaish*", "*nachchhar*", "*bnador*", "*marge byatar chhele*" are used not just to create a comic effect but to reach out to the audience who are not learned or urbane enough to enjoy and comprehend serious theatre.

Ajitesh, with all his attempts of indigenizing the play, however, has successfully brought out the satire in the play, that marriage is less romantic and more of social security. The lack of romance between Rama and Prangopal emphasises the economic advantage of marriage among some classes of people. Although the father, Indrajit babu declares that his daughter is desperate to tie the knot, "*biyer janye meyeta ekebare hanye haye achhe. Ekdam adh-pagli. Tar abasthata jake bale ekhan…ha-hutash, dakhina batash, hnasfnas…*", the play shows no signs on romance in her character. For Rama, however, marriage is a necessity not just because she is beyond the marriageable age for the Bengali women in the 1960s-70s but also as a measure to protect her property. The economic advantage is more emphasised by the fact that Rama is "*Chowdhury bangsher ekmatra uttaradhikarini*" (ibid 44) (the sole heir of the Chowdhury family). This practice of increasing economic stability and acquisition of land through marriage was quite common among the zamindars of Bengal. This play is a satire on the Bengali upper middle class or the landed gentry.

Sharater Megh

In his *Sharater Megh*, which an adaptation of Anton Chekhov's *Bear*, Ajitesh Bandyopadhyay, keeps the Bangla rendition very close to the source text but at the same time introduces cultural specificities to make the play more appealing to his indigenous audience. The setting of the play as well as the plot is comprising of elements with which Ajitesh's audience would be quite familiar. Unequal marriages among men and women were not uncommon in Bengal. Often young beautiful women were married off to wealthy elderly men who would die leading to a

long widowhood for the young woman. Moreover, it was also common among zamindars of Bengal to have illicit affairs outside marriage and hence when Aparna complains about her deceased husband's unfaithfulness, the audience would surely sympathize with her. The sudden arrival of Haripada, the "almost" zamindar from Safarganj Pargana requesting for the money that Aparna's husband had borrowed from him before his death is also quite fitting as it was a common custom of creditors dropping in after the demise of the debtor to get their money back. As such the larger plot of Chekhov's play would not be lost on Ajitesh's audience. However, to make it appear even more relatable to his very middle-class audience, Ajitesh sprinkles his text culture with specific items and dialogues which verges on the melodrama towards the end. For instance, there is an element of shame in the Bengali widow, Aparna. She says, "*ami ar konodino baire jabo na… kon mukhe jabo?*" (I will never go outside… how will I show my face?). This perhaps alludes to the societal shaming of women whose husbands passed away before them. Moreover, a widowed woman was supposed to give up wearing make-up and ornaments and was clad in one white piece of cloth. Aparna, being a beautiful young woman, was perhaps also concerned about showing her widowed appearance to the world. She was supposed to remain in perpetual mourning unlike the Russian wife of the source text. Madam Popov was wearing the mourning dress continuously for seven months to show her love and devotion for her dead husband. This was a fairly long time according to Luka, her old man servant. But for a Bengali widow, wearing the white one piece of cloth (*than*) was the norm. As such, even when Ajitesh increases the time period in the Bangla adaptation to one year and seven months, there was no question asked for being so clad. Nitai (the old man servant) was only concerned about Aparna being confined within the four walls of the house.

An atmosphere of conflict and tension builds up in the play for a while which involved both class and gender. Haripada, who had travelled 37 miles in his bullock cart to arrive at Aparna's to get his money back is adamant not to leave without his money. As class conflict seemed imminent between an almost zamindar in need of money and the widowed wife of a dead zamindar, it gets fueled up even more by Haripada's misogyny. A bitter lover, Haripada insults Aparna and her "*meyeli takko*" (feminine arguments) and calls her fake. Haripada makes rampant use of colloquial words and phrases like "*meyechhele-pheyechhele*" to denote feminine frailty, "*uchhemukhi kumropotash*" to refer to the feminine sentiments. Such phrases are used consciously to show how the elitism of the wealthy upper middle-class collapses when their interest is at stake. When the situation of a duel arises, Ajitesh's version introduces a duel with daggers, more common among the zamindars of Bengal as against pistols found in Chekhov's

source text. Ajitesh introduces this culture specific items because zamindars in Bengal would not have made use of pistols but daggers of various sorts to fight. Haripada, in fact, also explains various types of daggers used for fighting and while talking about *bhojali* mentions how they are used by the Nepali Gorkhas. (76) However, the duel never takes place and instead the plot takes a romantic turn. Ajitesh knew fully well that the major consumers of theatre in Bengal are the middle class. As such, being the director of plays targeted to the middle-class population of Bengal, he made a detailed study of what his audience preferred. In his essay, "*Bangla Theatre o Madhyabitta*" (Bengali Theatre and the Middle-Class), he lists out the elements in a play that the middle class expects and enjoys the most. He writes, "*madhyabittara kokhono samajik biplaber pakshapati nan. Biplab hale je golmal habe, raktapat habe, olotpalot habe, segulite tnader samarthan nei. Athacha tnara samajik sanskarer pakshapati—.... tai bangla nataker satyiakarer biplabi charitrake niye jathesta abeger srishti kara haye thake, kintu shesh paryanta jaminar o chasi bhai-bhai hisabe pashapashi bas kare. Nayto jamidarer biruddhe amaran larbar pratishruti diye natak shesh hay.*" (the middle-class is never in favour of social revolution. Because revolution brings chaos, bloodshed and turns everything upside down. The middle class will never support these. But they are in favour of social reformation. That is why in Bengali theatre sufficient emotions are evoked for a revolutionary character but at the end the zamindar and his peasants live peacefully as brothers or the play ends with the promise of a continued struggle against the oppressive zamindars) (*Gadyasangraha* 33). It is perhaps because of this that Ajitesh feels that the plays in Bengal are compelled to applaud the reformers but consider the revolutionary as aberrant.

The dialogues by Haripada gets more melodramatic towards the end as compared to Smirnov of the source text. He says, "*dangai tola machher moto abostha amar. Ami tomake amar hriday dilam. Balo, hya ki na? tumi amake chao na? Ami tin porjonto gunbo*" (I feel like fish out of water. I give my heart to you. Tell me yes or no. Do you not want me? I will count till three). He turns around after counting up till three and prepares to leave when Aparna stops him. Later Haripada says, despite being swamped with work, "*ami tomake chhere kothao jete parbona*" (I will not be able to go anywhere without you). Although such mushy dialogues do not appear in the source text, in Chekhov's version there is a prolonged kiss between the couple. Ajitesh, given his understanding of his Bengali middle-class audience, carefully omits it in the adaptation. Haripada only holds Aparna's hands which is equally scandalous to elicit a remark from Nitai "*He ma Brahmamayee, e ki dekhchhi ma*!!" (O mother of the universe! What am I beholding!!) However, Ajitesh believed that an important element of the Bangla theatre is its

experiment with is the concept of romantic liaison. According to Ajitesh, since in real life, the Bengali middle-class is compelled to marry people arranged by the senior members of the family, they find pleasure when such relationships get depicted on stage. However, there happens to be a restriction in that too, for Ajitesh feels that the notion of love among the Bengali middle-class is not clear enough. They cannot appreciate physical love depicted on stage. Thus, theatre has to maintain the "chastity" of the female characters who are then married to the noble hero in the play (*Gadyasangraha* 33).

Subho Bibaha

Ajitesh's strategy of transplantation and situating a foreign text in the indigenous soil reaches its pinnacle with *Shubha Bibaha* which is an adaptation of Anton Chekhov's one act play *The Wedding*. Ajitesh's stage direction creates a setting of a Bengali wedding venue of the 1970s and 80s. A bedstead with velvet clothes borrowed from a decorator for the bridegroom to sit is a scene that the audience will at once relate to. The sound of the *shanai* (shehnai, a musical instrument, the recording of which is mandatorily played in any Bengali wedding) and the mention of *basor jaga* (a post-wedding ritual among the Bengalis where the young members of the family celebrate with bride and the groom all night) by Hiranmayee are very common cultural specificities that act as a tool to easily situate a Russian play within the Bengali cultural milieu. Also, the way Ramen and Tapati flirts with each other is a common scene in a wedding where young men and women look for prospective partners and engage in flirtatious conversations.

The way a bride's family negotiated with the groom regarding the gifts to be offered to him is quite a common affair in arranged marriages, especially during the time when Ajitesh was writing. The groom Manmatha says that the bride's mother had promised him, "*baro bhari sona debo, nagad arai hajar taka deba, pater jor, dan samagri, radio, selaiyer kal, khat bichhana sab debo!*" (Bandyopadhyay 2008: 82). [we will give 150 grams of gold, 2500 rupees cash, fine clothes, household utensils, transistor, sewing machine, bed and bedding]. These are considered as gifts from the bride's family to the grooms, a concealed system of dowry prevalent and propagated as a naturalized cultural practice. These were means to tempt a bridegroom to accept the match. The less desirable the bride was, the more would be the gifts. In Ajitesh's play the mother of the bride did not give a bed in spite of promising one which enrages the groom. Moreover, she had promised that the wedding will be graced by some prominent personalities like "*hall kompanir boro babu, megatoner chhoto saheb, uttam kumar*" (83) [the superintendent of the film producing company, an officer from Megatone and Uttam

Kumar, the superstar of Bangla film industry], but none of them turned up. The arrangement for such individuals of prominence is to show off not just to the groom's family but to the distant relatives and neighbours of the bride's family as well.

The play also evokes the caste politics enmeshed within the social system which is so inimical yet accepted as a norm. The wedding between Ramen (the telegraph clerk of the post office) and Putul was called off by Hiranmayee because they belong to different castes: "*tomra kayet amra bamun, e biye habe na*" (90) [you are from a Kayastha family, and we are Brahmins, this wedding is not possible]. Yet Ramen did not protest. He accepted the decision as a societal custom that cannot be broken. Another significant addition to the Bengali rendition is the character of Ibharim, the Kabuliwala (a person from Kabul). Afghan traders in Kolkata wearing turbans and carrying a *jhola* (a big bag) was a common scene from around 1840 onwards. These men came from the distant Afghanistan and roamed the streets of Kolkata selling dry fruits, spices, attar, asafoetida and were known for lending money to the Bengali middle class. Since they went from door-to-door selling their goods, they often became quite close acquaintance of the local people. In the play, Ibrahim is a respected guest invited to the wedding by Abani babu, the father of the bride. The conversation between Abani babu and Ibrahim takes a humorous turn given the linguistic barrier, yet it shows the curiosity of a Bengali middle class man about the world outside his nation, a place which he will never be able to visit owing to his financial constraints and limited means.

Another significant difference that appears in Ajitesh's adaptation is the inclusion of the pseudo-actor in the wedding brought by Nutu, the cousin of the bride who happens to be a production manager in the film industry. Nutu promised the bride's mother Hiranmayee that given his close connection with superstar Uttam Kumar, he will bring him to the wedding. The audience watching Ajitesh's play in the 1970s is very well aware of Uttam Kumar's position in the film industry and is awed by his enigmatic personality as much as is Hiranmayee. However, the audience, unlike Hiranmayee could easily understand that Nutu has duped the family by bringing in Mr. Bhose, an old man who was at one point of time in life an insignificant production assistant of a production house. But Nutu introduces him as a hero of the erstwhile years to the family and guests attending the wedding. What follows in the play is a long section where Mr Bhose keeps talking about the technical aspects of film making in details. Although, the guests of the wedding do not enjoy his lecture, the audience of the theatre house knows fully well that this detailed knowledge regarding film making is owing to Ajitesh's connection with the film industry. As much as Ajitesh loved his theatre, he was a serious and popular actor

of the then film industry as well. From around 1964 till 1983, he had acted in almost fifty films which includes a few Hindi films as well. He was not just an actor but also a serious thinker who concentrated on the aesthetics and technicalities of film making. This proficiency gets reflected in the dialogues of the pseudo-actor in the play who talks vociferously about screenplay, casting, editing, playback singing, issues with shooting outdoor, back projection, dialogue dubbing and other such technical aspects of film making with a sense of authority. Such knowledge about film making shows that although theatre happened to be Ajitesh's first love, his sincere involvement with films gave him an expertise in this field too.

Manjari Amer Manjari: A Study in Localisation of Dialects

The play *Manjari Amer Manjari* is a translation of Anton Chekhov's *Cherry Orchard* into Bangla. It is undeniable that the Chekhovian text which originated in prerevolutionary Russia struck a chord with Ajitesh because of his ideological inclination to the Communist Party of India. The play has been discussed largely by scholars and critics as a comment on the change in the social system owing to the end of the regime of the landed gentry in Bengal. The play shows that it was a slow and agonizing process since Bengalis yearned for the good old days and the antique.

The popularity of this Bangla play rests on Ajitesh's skill of transporting a play set in Russia to Purulia, the westernmost and also the most underdeveloped and poorest district of Bengal. This is done through the use of the local dialect which is typical to Purulia. Since Ajitesh travelled with his theatre group to the far and wide places, he had to cater to multiple groups of audience with different dialectical background. The use of characters and their dialects from diverse places in Bengal was a way of including the socio-political and economic situation pertaining to the larger Bengal and not just the urban city space.

Another significant aspect about this play is that it marks a shift from the traditional proscenium theatre of the theatre district of Cultta to the more nontraditional "muktangan" or open space in South Calcutta. It was a political statement as pointed out by Bishnupriya Dutta. She writes,

> The space of the "muktangan", more than the actual architectural style, symbolized a protest against the colonial "proscenium" theatre. Muktangan would remain a new space for experimental theatre and would signify a new economic logic, namely, the group theatre's being able to sustain performances through ticket sales and pursue theatre as an amateur activity. The "amateur nomenclature came to mean in simple terms a noninstitutional and autonomous space. (Dutt 149)

Manjari Amer Manjari not only marks a shift in the space of staging theatre from the more central urban space to a more peripheral location, it also marks a shift in the dialect used in the play. Instead of using a more refined elitist Bangla used the urban middle class of Calcutta and its surrounding suburban regions, this play uses the dialect of the common men of Purulia. The shift in the geographic locale is significant since the plays with urban setting could only encapsulate the concerns of the people of those regions. But moving away from the centre, Ajitesh is trying to address the issues and difficulties faced by those who live in places far removed from the city and have to deal with infertility of soil and rough terrain. Although Ajitesh introduces a mango orchard in the play, quite uncharacteristic of the barren lands of Purulia, his larger concern is to "highlight the contrast between different segments of the population in India and break the myth of a new nation progressing and developing as a uniform geographical entity" (Dutt 149). Labanyaprabha, the owner of the Himsagar mango orchard says, "*sobai ek kothay bale na, ei anchale 100 mailer madhye sab cheye baro jinis holo himsagarer jamidarer* ambagan" (Bandyopadhyay, 24) [people univocally says that within 100 miles of this region, the biggest plantation is the mango grove of the zamindars of himsagar]. Labanyaprabha lives in the nostalgia of the past and is reluctant to let go of the glory of her family and her position as zamindars. Although the orchard does not produce enough to pay off the debts, yet it is the reminiscent of the past and the last flickering light of the feudal position held by the family. The setting of the play is of great importance because this background establishes the base of the narrative and paves for its continuity.

Use of local dialect in theatre is thought to cause problem among audience who are not particularly aware of that dialect. In case of a written text, the readers get time to read them slowly, or may be look up their meanings in glossary or a dictionary. But in the theatre, the words are spoken for once and if the audience fails to grab the meaning in the first instance, then it is lost forever. This is why Pabitra Sarkar, in his essay titled, "*Natake Upabhasar Byabohar*" (The Use of Local Dialect in Theatre), says that use of local dialects in theatre is much less as compared to written texts. He writes, "*Natak sadharanbhabe abhinita habe rajdhani ba pradhan saharer natyamanche, sekhankar darshak-shrota je bhasa bojhe natakke sei bhasar mukhapekshi thakte habe*." (Theatre is generally staged in the capital city or in main towns, hence it has to depend on the language which is understood by the audience of those places) (Sarakar, 414). But it is not possible for every playwright to situate the plot within the city in which the play is being staged. As such, often the setting of the play is a small village in a district which has a special dialect. The characters, in such cases, had to be fleshed out

according to the geographical setting in order to make them believable. Sarkar writes, "*nataker patrapatrider parichay sunirdista deshkaler madhye dhara, tader' name'-er cheyeo' local habitation'- ta beshi mulyaban. Rakta mangsher manush hisebe tader dekhte gele tader jathartha bhugol o bhasa tairi kare ditei habe.*" (it is important to capture the actual time period of the characters and their local habitations more than their names. If one has to present the characters as believable human beings of flesh and blood then it is important to situate them in their right geographical space and create a suitable language for them) (414). There is a need for realism which drives the playwright to include characters from diverse dialectical background. Each character brings to the stage a difference environment, geographical space and lived experience through the dialects s/he uses. Without the use of such dialects, the characters fall flat. Although we cannot disregard the asymmetrical power position between central dialects and peripheral dialects being aware of how dialects might reduce a character to a laughing stock or lead to their disregard and contempt. Dialects often lead to the creation of stereotypical stock character because of this asymmetry. Playwrights have used such dialects to create humour and comic relief. Therefore, it depends on the playwright to what effect and extent he uses the dialect since it impacts the message conveyed through it. For instance, Sarkar writes, "*gananatyer natake sadharan bhabe upabhasi charitra tar realismer adhikar ebang nayaktwer purna dabi niye upasthit hayechhe. Phale gananatyer natak theke upabhashar charitrake ar parihaser patra hate dekhina.*" (In the group theatre, characters with local dialects have presented themselves with their full right of realism and demands of a protagonist. Hence, in group theatre they are never reduced to a laughing stock) (421).

The playwright neither has the scope of describing his characters to his audience, nor can the audience have access to any glossary or lexicon. The only tool in the hands of a playwright is the dialogue and it is through dialogue that he creates characters, shapes and develops them. Language, therefore, is the means of communication and hence the audience has to make sense of the actions on stage through the form and content of the dialogues. Despite the difficulties, local dialects have formed a major part in the dialogues of Bangla theatre. Sarkar quotes Max Muller to point out that local dialects is the actual living language. Hence in order to represent the ethos of the time and to situate a play in a geo-territorial setting comprising of people from various dialectical background, the use of local dialects become inevitable in theatre. Dialect also becomes a tool to represent the class difference among the characters. Thus dialectical diversity on stage has become an inevitable tool to make the

characters believable in their social, geographical and economical position and make their dialogues more flexible and pliable.

Ajitesh was not writing his plays for the urban middle class only. He travelled far and wide with his theatre group. This was not just his humility that took him to the hinterlands but also his aim as a theatre practitioner as he wanted to reach out to as many people as possible with his message. Bibhas Chakraborty, in his essay "*Ajitesh Bhitore Agun, Baire Proshanti*" (Ajitesh: fire within, tranquility on the surface), points out that

> *Asadharoner ei sadharanata tnake prakriti arthe ganashilpi kare tulechhila. Banglar je kono jayga theke daak asto, chute jeten tini tnar natak niye. Pather kasta, parishramiker swalpata kokhonoi badha haye dnarata na. tini balten, jata paro jekhane paro abhinaya karo, loker kachhe jao. Eibhabe Chekov niye, Brecht niye tini bangladesher kothay na gechhen. Tnar dal Nandikarke kare tulechhilen Bharatbarsher byastatama dal. Mane rakhben, kono sarkari sahajya chhara, bideshi dutabaser sahajya chhara, kono rajnaitik daler preisthaposhokota chharai.* (*Prosongo Ajitesh,* 82)

> [The simplicity in excellence had made him a people's artist in the true sense. Whenever he received an invitation from any corner of Bengal, he rushed there with his theatre. The pain of the journey, the meagerness of the allowance was never a hindrance. He used to say, act as much as possible, wherever it is possible, reach out to the people. This is how he had taken Chekhov and Brecht to the remotest parts of Bengal. He made his group Nandikar the busiest group in India. Remember, without any support from the government or foreign embassy or any patronage from a particular political party.]

As such Ajitesh was catering to the people of diverse linguistic/dialectical background but attempted to create his plays in such a way that all could relate the actions taking place on the stage. Ajitesh was banking upon the "sociolinguistic competence" of his audience. He was not only planning to take his theatre to the countryside where his audience should relate to the content of his theatre as stories of their lives. But for his city bred audience, he was appealing to their daily practice of interacting with people from various parts of Bengal which builds within them a plurilingual competence and hence the content of the dialogues with local dialects are not lost on them. Hence, if the dialect is not extremely peripheral then it is not very difficult for people to understand the dialects of places which surround their geo-territorial location. Sarkar points out that some dialects grow as central dialects as compared to others because of

their proximity to the central dialect. He writes, *upabhashagulir bhougolik sansthaner madhye ekta dharabahikata (continuity) ache. Phale pashapashi upabhashar lokera parasparer kotha bujhte kono asubidha bodh karena.*" (There exists a continuity in the geographical positioning of the dialects. As such, people face no difficulty in understanding the dialects of the regions which surround them) (419). This is why he writes that, "*Kolkatar manusher pakshe nandikarer manjari amer manjari natake ajitesh bandhyopadhyay byabahrita puruliyar bhasa bujhte bishes asubidha hoyni...esob bhasa guli bangla upabhasagosthir kendriya britter antargata, se britter madhyei nana jaygay eder abosthan*" (The people of Kolkata faced not much difficulty in understanding the Purulia dialect used by Ajitesh Bandyopadhyay in his play *Manjari Aamer Manjari...*these dialects fall within the central circle of the dialects of Bengal, they are located at various places within the same circle) (419).

However, the use of the dialect is not uniform in the play. Characters show variations in the way they use the dialect depending on their location in the society marked by their class and caste. Geographical exposures and class/ caste divisions in the society creates a strong impact on the language used. Regarding the choice of language/dialect made by Ajitesh, Bishnupriya Dutt remarks,

> Language becomes a key marker of the regional, class and caste complexities of the time. The nuanced Bengali of the upper class is an urban phenomenon and historically connected with the modernization of the language under the colonial education and cultural system. Anima talks about her strict supervision academically in a Calcutta education institution. The local population speaks in the dialect used only by those living in the hinterland between Bengal and Bihar. Beyond class there are subtle nuances of the caste system operating. Mondol speaks in the dialect, but the orientation of the rustic nouveau-rich class is apparent in his speech. Despite their economic prosperity this class has no access to the elitist education system concentrated in the big cities. Geography and class distinction thus make divisions more complex than in any modern capitalist society, where transformation happens uniformly. Bandopadhyay's manipulation of language and dialect thus constitutes a strong critique of new and old class and caste divisions, which in the post-independence phase retain their hegemonic character unchanged. (Dutt 154)

Hence, the class hierarchy is associated with language hierarchy in the play. Whereas the feudal lords or the master-class speaks in standard Bangla, the other classes, not exposed to the modern education speaks the local dialect.

A Gardener who Transplants Plays: Some Concluding Remarks on Ajitesh's Adaptations

Ajitesh believed that although commercial theatre is very much a part of the middle-class existence in Bengal as they used to be performed every Thursday, Saturday, Sunday and holidays during his time, "real cultural work flows on outside these commercial theatres and in group theatres". The commercial theatres were performed by film artists who were not very busy. They invested their free time to commercial theatre "in lieu of handsome payment". The commercial theatres were full of songs, dance, "coloured and magical lights" but Ajitesh complains consisted of "trifling social subject with absolutely diluted political sermons" (*Gadya Sangraha*, 63). Ajitesh writes that it is in the group theatre the artists and technicians present the "very best plays of the country and abroad to our people" (*Gadya Sangraha*, 63-64). Commenting on the production of Tagore's plays by group theatre, Ajitesh writes, "...real practice of dramatic art in the real sense is practiced only in group theatre" (*Gadya Sangraha*, 65). Ajitesh's adaptation of Chekhov can therefore be referred to as "total" theatre (Dutt, 146) because it involved "balance of acting, sound and music, scenic design, and illumination, with the director committed to the text and its inherent values, in perfect control over an ensemble of performers and technicians" (Dutt 146).

Ajitesh gladly accepts the fact that most of the plays staged in the Bangla theatre during the 1960s and 70s are translations or adaptations from foreign and regional plays. These were the plays that were mostly successful. Only a few Bengali dramatists wrote original plays and Ajitesh writes, "...very many plays are written every year but those, frankly speaking, are not for discussion" (*Gadya Sangraha*, 64). Ajitesh was often criticized for being a playwright who only produced translated and adapted texts. But for him translations and adaptations gave Bangla theatre the most successful and quality productions which were consumed gladly by the contemporary audience. In fact, he had no high regards for the "original" productions of the time.

Along with this, Ajitesh was criticized for not being politically explicit in his theatre. However, Ajitesh had a different take on the staging of political theatre in Bengal. He believed that *Avigyanam Shakuntalam* has equal importance as a play even if it does not address the contemporary political issues directly. Ajitesh believed that psychoanalytical plays, plays about conflicts within individuals, ethical plays have been subject of theatre for the longest time and audience must be taught to understand the importance of all kinds of theatre and not just the ones that are overtly involved with institutional politics (*Theatrer Darshak: Atyalpa Abhijog*,

11). He was of the opinion that there are concerns in the society that needs to be addressed through theatre as well. Such concerns may be just social ones. The theatre goers and practitioners should realize that theatre does not begin or end with 'political theatre'. Ajitesh believed that for theatre to be relevant it might not adhere to a particular political ideology (Konar 204). In fact, Bishnupriya Dutt is of the opinion that Chekhovian adaptations came in a time in India when

> the euphoria of independence and the first shock of disillusionment was giving way to a new criticality that sought to explore in theatrical terms—more particularly in terms of theatrical abstraction—political, philosophical, and psychological issues left shelved in the years of nationalist struggle to be prioritized only after independence. (Dutt 148)

Although the contemporary theatre critics complained that Ajitesh's productions were apolitical, his adaptations of Chekhov and Brechtian theatre opens up a space for the scrutiny of the social and economic afflictions in a society which leads to moral and ethical degradation and required critical enquiry. In his essay "Ajitesh Badyopadhyay: In the Neighbourhood of Liminality", Rajdeep Konar quotes from one of Ajitesh's essays,

> I can accept this fact without reservations, that an art should always be influenced by a political philosophy or it will lose its essence amidst the cultural activities, at least that is my experience. Why I am doing a theatre? Which play would I like to do? How would I do it? If an artist is not politically clear about these things, I feel it is impossible for him to reach a certain degree of completeness. (Konar, 205)

Ajitesh's politics went way beyond adhering to one political party and its ideology. That is why, his theatre did not get confined to promoting a particular group or institution. Ajitesh, through his adaptations, tries to dive into a thorough diachronic analysis of the problems existing in the society. He is concerned with the larger population and not just a handful of people who shares his political ideology. Rajdeep Konar writes,

> 'Politics' for Ajitesh, has ethical dimensions too and politics to him does not mean a total control by a specific party or group. Politics happens in a continuous dialogue between the self and the community not to the exclusion or subjugation of any of these; but by finding ways of coexistence. Thus, politics for him always lie at the liminality of an individual ethics and a collective responsibility without compromising on any of them. Theatre as an art form however, again for him exists at a liminality of its being an art form and also an expression of ethico-political concern. (Konar, 206-7)

Ajitesh used translation as a tool of expressing his politics and reaching out to his audience. Ajitesh Bandyopadhyay, has several times voiced out about his choice of adaptation over 'original' plays. In his essay, "*Natak Moulik o Bideshi*" (Plays, Native and foreign), collected in his collection of essays *Gadyasangraha* has writes,

> When foreign plays are selected for performance solely for their commercial viability, or for quick fame, it shows an incompleteness of learning and motivation on the part of the producer. Proper Indianisation is only possible when the producer is able to relate meaningfully the awareness of his/her own land, theatre and audience to his/her knowledge of the foreign play. (20)

So for him, localisation of a foreign play is the most important factor because only then the soul of the foreign text will be mingled with the native soul. Ajitesh in his essay "*Anudito Natak*" (Translated Play) has mentioned that his adaptations can best be called as "*swadeshi bhasay bideshi phul*" (foreign flower in native land) which clearly refers back to the concept of transplantation discussed thoroughly in the previous chapter.

Chapter Five

Nature's Tale from the Global South: Indian Tryst with Eco-Translatology: A Beginning

"There's Plenty of Room at the Bottom"

(Feynman 1959)

This statement at the annual American Physical Society meeting at Caltech on December 29, 1959, by noted American theoretical physicist and Nobel laureate Richard Feynman, known for his work in the field of quantum mechanics, shook the world of science at that time and got published in popular science magazines. While discussing the "problem of manipulating and controlling things on a small scale"[33], Feynman, in his lecture, was trying to point out that it is time to go beyond the standard technique and laws to understand the nature and motion of nanoparticles which does not follow conventional laws of physics such as Newton's Law and therefore, he argued that we must go down and search around unconventional laws, i.e., Quantum Mechanics which will satisfy us to understand the behaviour of atoms and the possibility of their rearrangement in order to do wonders in future.

Conceptual understanding of translation in the Global North has also suffered from the hegemonic thought process of the global north. We, too, as Feynman pointed out, should go beyond the traditional ways of understanding the process of translation. Following Feynman's statement, I argue that we must descend and search for unconventionality that will challenge the compartmentalization of the world around geographies of inequality. In the Global North, conceptual comprehension of translation was impeded by the dominant cognition of obliteration of difference through translation. That would be an existential dilemma if translation can be seen as a 'recovery' as Sujit Mukherjee argued in his book *Translation as Recovery* (2004). This thesis from the beginning is trying to create an alternative theoretical space for Translation Studies in the Global South, so that it can breathe out its existence.

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[33] See http://calteches.library.caltech.edu/3479/1/Tale.pdf

Following Feynman, in this last chapter, this thesis will explore "translation as evolution" and will attempt to challenge the hegemony of the Global North.

Translation as Evolution: Towards framing Ecotranslatology

> Currently we can observe the proactive development of the greening trend of various branches of knowledge. Greening process in science leads to new hybrid fields of research. Thus, at the intersection of linguistics and ecology, a new interdisciplinary science — ecolinguistics — appeared. At present it is possible to distinguish three aspects of it: intralingual, interlingual and translingual… In this connection, it is postulated that within the ecolinguistics a new trend of the theory of translation — ecology of translation — is evolving. (Fedyuchenko 2012:88)

Green became the new colour of academia. As Fedvuchenko has stated, that Ecolinguistics was born at the intersection of linguistics and ecology, and the third aspect of ecolinguisctics, the translingual characteristics, has the potential to lead to hybrid intersectional research area. Arran Stibbe in his ground-breaking monograph, titled *Ecolinguistics: Language, Ecology and the Stories We Live By* (2021) has argued that it is the responsibility of ecolinguistics to investigate the uses of language that create our societies, particularly industrial and consumerist cultures, in order to expose the underlying tales that are environmentally damaging and to seek out new ecologically helpful narratives to live by. Words influence how we feel, behave, and view the world. When coupled with the term "climate," "change," and "emergency" have very different connotations. (Stibbe 2021) The model I will expand in this chapter, namely, translation as evolution, is not a bridge between ecolinguistics and translation studies. Rather, I draw the attention of the academia towards the simultaneous development of ecological paradigm in linguistics as well as in translation studies almost at the same time.

Michael Cronin in his seminal work, titled *Ecotranslation*: *Translation and Ecology in the Age of Anthropocene* (2018) has stated,

> When we think about the future of translation it involves inescapably the question of climate change which will leave no area of human and non-human being untouched. Translation studies as one of the human and social sciences cannot remain immune to the ecological shift in many humanities and social science subjects. (3)

The term 'ecotranslatology' may signal that the emphasis is on the meeting point of two seemingly distant notions, translation, and ecology. This last term, in particular, lends itself to confusion because, if it originally referred to the science that studies the relationships between living organisms and their environment or we may say "scientific ecology". At times, the association between living bodies and environment may also used to refer to the various movements that stress the importance of environmental protection which we may term as political ecology.

This ecological discourse is gaining increasing momentum in contemporary Western societies, both in physical spaces and on the Internet (increased attention to plastic pollution, climate change, etc.), resulting in a growing polarisation of public opinion across the globe. Michael Cronin defines the term as

> 'eco-translation' covers all forms of translation thinking and practice that knowingly engage with the challenges of human-induced environmental change.… Eco-Translation is an attempt to think through some of the assumptions we make about translation and how they may need to be radically re-thought on a planet that, from a human standpoint, is entering the most critical phase of its existence. (2017, p. 2-3).

Translation and translatology unquestionably play a role in environmentalist discourse. Several dimensions may be used to expand translation studies' consideration of environmental problems. Cronin cites, among other things, the concept of a slowdown in translating activity, referring to a "slow language movement" that is reminiscent of the larger trend toward a less frenetic way of life. It is also feasible to consider activist forms of translation associated with environmental topics. Is "translation ecocriticism" conceivable? If so, under what conditions? Finally, it will be feasible to concentrate on the study of (anti-) environmentalist arguments in translation.

The critics in the field of ecology, in general, are not interested about looking at translation studies, but in subsequent sections of the thesis I will look at the filed from ecological point of view as it has immense potential if I use the model of translation as evolution explained in the second chapter. The term "ecocriticism" in the "Environmental Humanities" filed, which brings together a number of disciplines (environmental history and environmental philosophy, literary studies and ecocriticism, cultural studies, anthropology, art and visual studies, political geography and ecology, etc.) whose "roots lie in environmental and climate issues" of our time. The term translation, I will demonstrate, can be interpreted metaphorically

from an ecological perspective closer to the original sense of the term ecology, which would see civilizations as ecosystems and their products as living organisms. thriving and expanding in a certain setting. In a prior paper, the same Michael Cronin discussed "translation ecology," alluding to the danger of extinction faced by minority languages and the role translation may play in ensuring their survival (2003, p. 165- 172).

However, it is conceivable to include into this perspective a variety of hypotheses that, using notions created in biology, assimilate cultural truths to biological organisms. Some of them have been imported with varying degrees of success into translation studies: memetics (Vermeer 1997, Chesterman 2016), eco-translatology (Hu 2003), and Cultural Darwinism (Regattin 2018). All of these perspectives hold that cultural facts "evolve," in the Darwinian meaning of the word, in a manner comparable to that of live organisms, being themselves susceptible to a sort of natural selection. Other methods give a "internal," and to some degree physiological, perspective on the same metaphor: they do not emphasise the "fight for survival" between various cultural truths, but rather the internal evolution of these facts. We might consider Kobus Marais' (2018) "bio-semiotic" approach, without ignoring a now-classic concept such as "semiosphere" (Lotman 1999). All of these techniques share a single question (though more suggestions will surely be evaluated): what function does translation play in these dynamic systems?

Fluidity of Translation

The process of translation and the status of the translator has been delineated from numerous viewpoints by different theoreticians over a span of several centuries. I consider myself extremely fortunate that I have been given a chance to share platform, although virtual, with some of the stalwarts who have outlined definitions of the process as well as defined the maker of the process. Today we all have assembled to share our thoughts in response to the significant publication by Professor Michael Cronin on Eco-translation. My chapter titled, "Nature's Tale from the East: Asian Tryst with Eco-translatology" has been divided into three sections, not necessarily connected to each other, but aimed to validate possibilities of future research in the direction set by Cronin and other theorists in this field like Gengshen Hu, and his idea of 'eco-translatology'; Jianzhong Xu and his concept of 'translation ecology'. Coming from India, a country where almost the entire population is polylingual, the process of translation is organically associated with our everyday experience. It is such an inevitable part of our

existence that translation as act was never approached theoretically by Indian scholars, until very recently where the scholars have either looked at it from the linguistic perspective or cultural perspective. Going beyond these two approaches, I am trying to develop an ecological/ biological model of looking at the practice of translation in India as it has so organically born, grown, and developed through adoption and rejection of the Western epistemological understanding of translation. Although this is a work in progress and I am in the initial stage of conceptualization, I thought this will be a great opportunity to bring my ideas to stalwarts across to world and garner their ideas and criticisms about it. Therefore, the first section of my chapter deals with the Cell Membrane, Fluid Mosaic Model and Cellular Signalling and through these apparently irrelevant topics outside the field of translation studies, I will try to connect biological model of cell structure and the signalling process with the course of translation and the figure of translator, thus try to explore the possibility of building 'alternative' models of translation through conceptualising a biological model of translation. The concept of expanding the notion of translation beyond interlinguistic translation and explore alternative models of translation has been hypothesised by Kobus Marais in his recent work.

We all know that the plasma membrane protects the cell from its external environment, mediates cellular transport, and transmits cellular signals. On the other hand, we are also aware of the fact how translation through enabling effective communication between people around the world serves as a courier for the transmission of knowledge and protects cultural heritage, which is essential to the existence of marginal community in the global village. The plasma membrane protects intracellular components from the extracellular environment. Moreover, it mediates cellular processes by regulating the materials that enter and exit the cell and carries markers that allow cells to recognize one another and can transmit signals to other cells via receptors. Similarly, the translator, acting like a plasma membrane between exterior linguistic-cultural environment and interior linguistic-cultural environment, thus behaving like a body lying on the border zone as well as transmitter-receptor who is regulating the entry and exit of language, culture, socio-political behaviour codified in linguistic message.

Larry D. Frye and Michael Edidin (1970) experimented to verify the lateral movement of membrane proteins by fusing mouse and human cells with mouse-specific and human-specific membrane proteins. This experiment was done in a controlled environment inserting the Sendai virus as an external agent which helps to produce a hybrid cell through a virus-induced infusion. This infusion is due to membrane fluidity. This historic discovery of diffusion of cell membranes under controlled conditions helped to construct a "fluid mosaic model"

(Singer and Nicolson, 1972) and facilitated the understanding of the importance of cell membranes surrounding all cells. Translation too is a channel through which different cultures flow towards each other; languages diffuse to make new combinations. Translation, therefore, I argue, keeping the biological 'fluid mosaic model' as lateral movement of membrane fluids, is a liquefied process which can create a hybrid target text where the qualities of the source and the target passes into one another "through a continuum of transformations" (Benjamin, 1923).
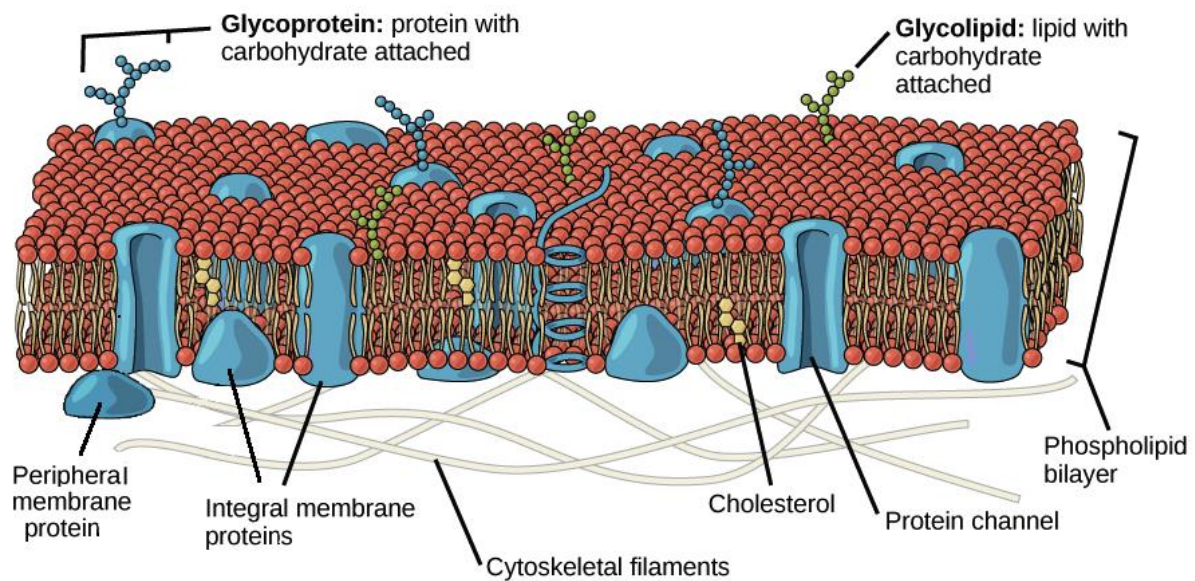

Figure 5.1 Position and Structure of Cell Membrane (Images Courtesy: OpenStax Biology)

The primary function of the plasma membrane is to protect the cell from its surroundings, as translator sometimes also regulates the coda of the textual transfer to protect the cultural sphere of the language s/he belongs to or have some ethical ground to protect. Composed of a phospholipid bilayer with embedded proteins, the plasma membrane is selectively permeable to ions and organic molecules and regulates the movement of substances in and out of cells.
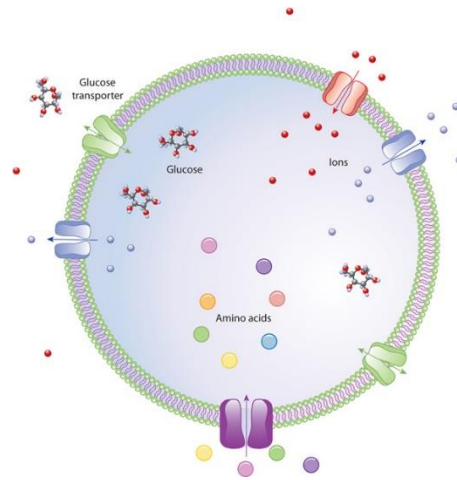
Figure 5.2: Position of Cell Membrane (Image Courtesy: 2010 Nature Education)

Translator too, we can study how, taking HU's theory of "selective adaptations and adaptive selections" as a point of reference, selectively finds the penetrable pores in the process of translation through which s/he can mediate and regulate the process of translational movement. Translator, as argued before, acts as a body lying on the border, flexible enough to allow the flow of culture and thus shaping and re-shaping the receptor language sphere, just as, plasma membranes must be very flexible in order to allow certain cells, such as red blood cells and white blood cells, to change shape as they pass through narrow capillaries, thus, plays a role in anchoring the complex, dynamic network of interlinking in order to provide shape to the cell. In short, if the cell is represented by a castle, the plasma membrane is the wall that provides structural safety for the buildings within it, regulates which people leave and enter the castle, and conveys messages to and from neighbouring castles. Similarly, the translator also acts as a regulator and in certain cases, as mentioned by the Polysystem theorists, it provides the shape to the receiving literature. Thus, just as the plasma membrane helps in forming the tissue and providing cell potential, the translator, too, form a potential literary culture and readership and helps in providing a matrix for a potential market for the emerging literature through translation.

Hu Gengshen also writes,

> A 'translational eco-environment' refers to the worlds of the source text and the source and target languages, comprising the linguistic, communicative, cultural, and social aspects of translating, as well as the author, client, and readers. Focusing on the activity of translation, especially in terms of the translational eco-environment', translation is here defined as 'a selection activity of the translator's adaptation to fit the translational eco-environment'. (2003:284)
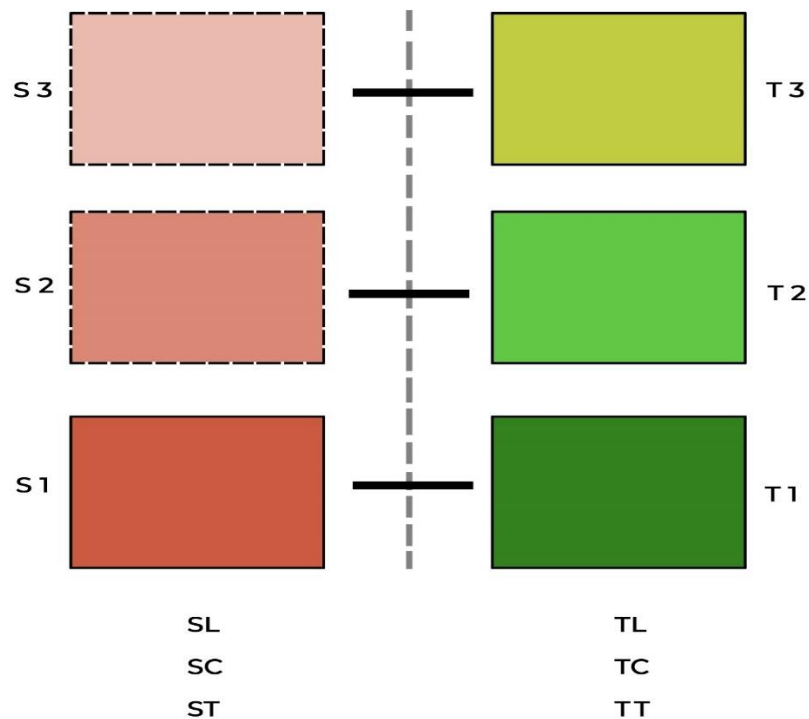
Figure 5.3: Translation Phenomena (diagram by self)

According to Gengshen HU, eco-translatology is an "interaction and interrelation between translational text, translator, and translational eco-environment; the research trinity of the macroscopic framework of translation studies, mesoscopic system of translation theory studies, and microscopic textual production" (2019: 6). Taking a cue from Gengshen HU's ecotranslatological model, I argue that the act of translation is a flow of meaning between languages and cultures, or more broadly flow of corporeality of human/non-human existence throughout human history. This research will further try to posit translation as a fluid process which the translator attempts to control but in reality, can never be controlled or halted, therefore, creates an illusion of control. The idea of 'fluidity' as a 'quality of flowing easily and clearly' (OED), I argue, is a core idea embedded in the act of translation, which the translator, through choosing either word-for-word or sense-for-sense – a set of oppositional structures for themselves as well as for the readers create an illusory mask of controlling the fluidity of translation. Finally, taking a cue from interdisciplinarity between natural sciences and social

sciences, the thesis will attempt to create an alternative model of translation in terms of the "fluid mosaic model" to conceptualize the perpetual fluidity of translational movement.

Exploring 'Geo' through Euclidean Metric and Translation Spaces: Redefining Spatiality

Scene 1: *Sun.*, *Jan.* 3. 1830. Weimar, Germany

Conversation between Goethe and Eckermann -

He himself had taken up the latest French translation of his "Faust," by Gérard. He praised Gérard's translation as very successful, although mostly in prose. "I do not like," he said, "to read my 'Faust,' any more in German, but in this French translation all seems again fresh, new, and spirited."

Scene 2: early June 1930, Geneva

Conversation between Tagore and HG Wells -

H. G. Wells: Today we are elaborating and perfecting physical methods of transmitting words. Translation is a bother. Take your poems—do they not lose much by that process? If you had a method of making them intelligible to all people at the same time, it would be really wonderful.

TAGORE: Music of different nations has a common psychological foundation, … The same thing is, in my opinion, probably true for literature.

The first conversation directs us to translation as a fresh lease of life. Translation becomes such a spirited one that the author does not want to reread his work in original rather prefers reading translation of his work. The second scene between Wells and Tagore directs us towards a difference of opinion regarding translation between two stalwarts. While Wells proposes a firmly united vision of civilization in which translation is considered as an impediment to be overcome, Tagore provides the tempered and ambiguous universal of a "common language" which is a means to move beyond national boundaries to integrate humanity within a universal spirit of culture through the power of imagination.

The scholars of humanities and liberal arts hitherto considered the term "translation" from the point of view of transference of meaning largely restricting it to the context of textuality. As such, the term has been perceived through the lens of the discourse of the Global North, as an act of rendering/decoding-recoding. This Eurocentric notion, through its politics

of colonialism and neo-colonialism has universalized and naturalized the concept. I will not counter the idea of 'spatiality' embedded in the western notion of the term from the political and geographical position of the Global South, rather I will venture into expanding the 'spatiality' rooted in the very term from within, thereby, will try to liberate the term by bringing into the field of Geometry, Botany and Chemistry. By liberating, I mean, exploring how the term 'translation' has been used in the field of pure and applied science, and how we can stitch together the usages of the same term from humanities and pure science.

While the concept of 'transfer' has received much attention in translation studies from the context of "transference of meaning from the source text to the target", the etymological root of the word 'translation' has probably been unexplored except Talal Asad (1995) who critically looked at the meaning 'removal of a saint's body or relics from one original site to another new place'. Since 'translate' and 'transfer' share the same etymological roots (Klein 1971), both the acts give a hint that the text that was rendered in another language/culture was perhaps considered as holy as the bones of a saint. Therefore, the act of carrying over might have come to hold importance equivalent to that of a religious act, which if acceptable is holy, and if unacceptable becomes blasphemy and therefore amounts to debasing of the source text. This notion of "removal to another place", much like that of the removal of the saint's bones and relics in the earlier periods, which I argue, immediately reminds us of the idea of 'transmigration' which also has quite a similar meaning, "the passing into another state". This similarity is further reinforced by the fact that both the word "translation" and "transmigration" have religious connotations. Where "transmigration" denotes "the passage of the soul after death into another body", "translation" signifies "removal of a saint's body or relics to a new place". So, the notion of movement, in terms of bodily and / or spatial, is inherent to the term 'translation' which thereby implies a 'dislocation' and at the same time 'relocation' into an altogether different geo-space. Therefore, it is very much clear, that the western idea is very much obsessed with the territoriality of the term which, thereby can be linked with their agenda to colonize "other" lands and thereby translating their ethos and ideologies in the colonized land. Re-production of the message in another land has always been laden with the weight of ideology and power of the original, the dominant / colonizer on the translated, the dominant / colonized. Then, the ideological and power turn will create the question of authenticity / fidelity in the translated text, which is again can be linked with the problematic history of Bible translation.
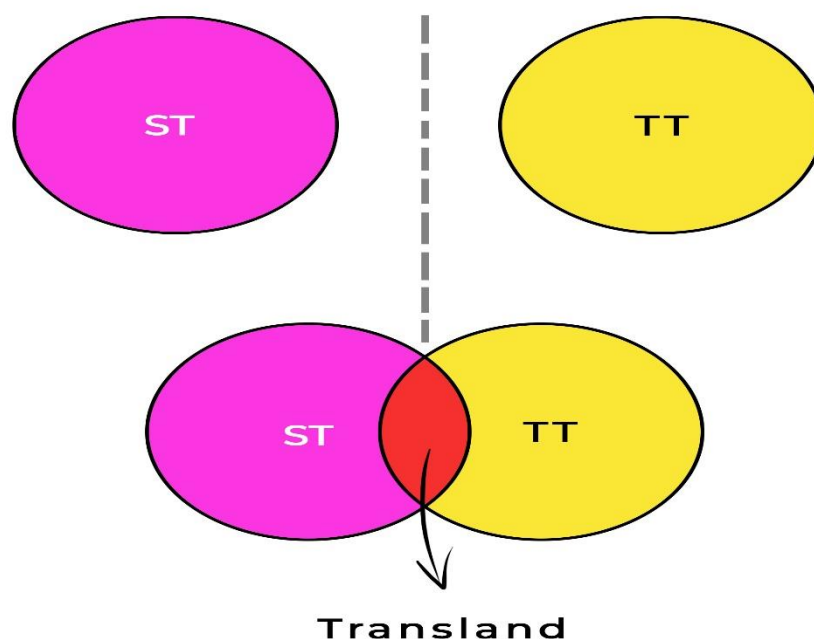
Figure 5.4 "Transland" (diagram by self)

In the introduction of the theme issue of *Cadernos de Tradução*, titled, "Moving Bodies across Transland" (37: 1, 2017), the editors, Marta Pacheco Pinto, João Ferreira Duarte & Manuela Carvalho have elaborated on the role of translators as moving bodies and translation as a cultural good or product. They have brought in three structuring axes of translation i.e., agency (bodies, subjective actors), displacement (trans-), and locus (land), thus conceptualized 'transland', a descriptive concept and spatial metaphor on which all these forces mentioned above are concentrated as well as an idea where translation flows have become a defining factor to understand movements in, out and across a globalized world.

This notion of "removal to another place", much like that of the removal of the saint's bones and relics in the earlier periods, which I argue, immediately reminds us of the idea of 'transmigration' which also has quite a similar meaning, "the passing into another state". This similarity is further reinforced by the fact that both the word "translation" and "transmigration" have religious connotations. Where "transmigration" denotes "the passage of the soul after death into another body", "translation" signifies "removal of a saint's body or relics to a new

place". So, the notion of movement, in terms of bodily and / or spatial, is inherent to the term 'translation' which thereby implies a 'dislocation' and at the same time 'relocation' into an altogether different space. Therefore, it is very much clear, that the western idea is very much obsessed with the territoriality of the term which, thereby can be linked with their agenda to colonize "other" lands and thereby translating their ethos and ideologies in the colonized land. Re-production of the message in another land has always been laden with the weight of ideology and power of the original, the dominant / colonizer on the translated, the dominated / colonized. Then, the ideological and power turn will create the question of authenticity / fidelity in the translated text, which is again can be linked with the problematic history of Bible translation.

The "nation-state" was an invention of the nineteenth century and one of the way the nation state created its sites he's through building monuments and the monuments in turn added new perceptions of the conceptual understanding of "nation-state". In many places there were bitter fights over participation in the creation of these monuments and over what kind of architectural pattern should influence their final form. Behind these fights lay the quotient of political power over space. Translation, as a political act is nothing different from situating monuments in a newly acquired land. Both the acts i.e., constructing monuments and translation are concerned with acquiring new territory to mark the beginning of new domination and to influence the ideology of the conqueror over the conquered. Translation, from this point of view, can be seen as a territorial confrontational war which often assisted the nation-state to mark their boundary as well as to designate the territory which they acquire as colony.

In the introduction of the theme issue of *Cadernos de Tradução*, titled, "Moving Bodies across Transland" (37: 1, 2017), the editors, Marta Pacheco Pinto, João Ferreira Duarte & Manuela Carvalho have elaborated on the role of translators as moving bodies and translation as a cultural good or product. They have brought in three structuring axes of translation i.e., agency (bodies, subjective actors), displacement (trans-), and locus (land), thus conceptualized 'transland', a descriptive concept and spatial metaphor on which all these forces mentioned above are concentrated as well as an idea where translation flows have become a defining factor to understand movements in, out and across a globalized world. The concept of 'transland' is relevant here because it helps us to understand the translation as a cultural product which is located in a specific context and perpetrate an ideological onslaught over the target sphere. Translation helps to execute asymmetrical exchanges in a globalised world and creates a flow, a flow which was feudal in nature in the West till the first half of twentieth century which

became a flow of capitalism from the second half of twentieth century in a reformulated space called global north.

The term 'Translation' etymologically meant 'removal of a saint's body or relics from one original site to another new place'. (Asad) which, I argue, immediately reminds us of the idea of 'transmigration' as it too has quite a similar meaning, "the passing into another state". This similarity is further reinforced by the fact that both the word "translation" and "transmigration" have religious connotations. Where "transmigration" denotes "the passage of the soul after death into another body", "translation" signifies "removal of a saint's body or relics to a new place" (Klein 1971). So, the notion of movement, in terms of bodily and/or spatial, is inherent to the term 'translation' which thereby implies a 'displacement' and at the same time 'transfer' into an altogether different space. If we probe into the etymological root of the word 'transmigration', we will see that it denotes a "change of residence or habitat, removal or transit from one locality to another, especially at a distance".[34] The term 'transmigration' has originated from the Latin term 'migrationem' (nominative migratio) which means "a removal, change of abode, migration," stemming from the noun of action from past-participle of 'migrare' meaning "to move from one place to another".

The spatiality embedded in the term "translation" as etymologically it meant 'removal of a saint's body or relics from one original site to another new place', which immediately prompts us to the idea of "transmigration" or "the passing into another state". Therefore, the term, necessarily incorporates two spaces and a movement in between. The idea of space has always attracted scholars from different disciplines, i.e., Geography, Mathematics, Astronomy, Theology, Environmental Science, Anthropology, Philosophy, Physics etc. and the discussion about space has ranged from geometrical plane to cultural space, from astronomical coordinates to environmental landscape, from abstraction of spatiality to concrete topography. Echoes of this can be heard,

> Of course, many geographers prefer to operationalize seemingly more encultured and embodied concepts, such as place, environment, landscape, region and locale, in their studies than the seemingly more abstract concept of space, but it is precisely the multiplicitous and heterogeneous nature of space and spatiality – as abstract and concrete, produced and producing, imagined and materialized, structured and lived, relational, relative and absolute – which lends the concept a powerful functionality that

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[34] See https://www.etymonline.com/word/migration

appeals to many geographers and thinkers in the social sciences and humanities. (Peter Merriman et al.)

Geometry and Translation: Flow over Axis

The etymological origin of 'geometry' traces back to the Greek word *geometria* which means "measurement of earth or land". At the same time, the origin of 'geography' takes us to the Greek word *geographia* which means "description of the earth's surface". On the other hand, the prefix trans- of 'translation' means 'to go beyond', 'on the other side'. Thus, when taken together, translation from the geographical and geometrical perspective alludes to the question of movement in terms of land or space. If we take the model of Euclidean Geometry, the western concept of translational act as a spatial flow can be understood clearly from a mathematical point of view. In Euclidean Geometry, the term 'translation' is defined by saying how much a point is moved to the left / right and up / down, thus simply means moving in a direction. If we consider the source text as a triangle where the three points would be "Source Text – Author – Source Text Geography" which shifting the coordinates of all the points can produce "Target text – Translator – Target Text Geography".
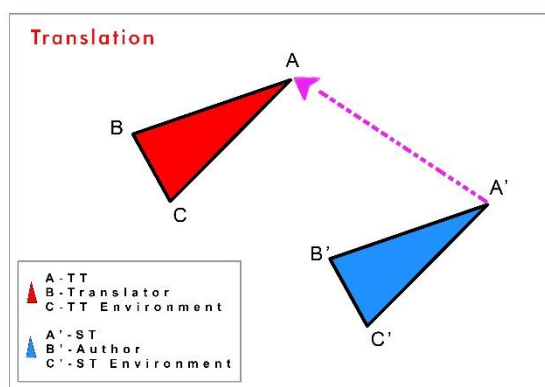

Figure 5.5: Translation Model derived from Euclidean Geometry (diagram by self)

An object that looks the same before and after translation may have a translational symmetry. Therefore, a translation can also be interpreted as the addition of a constant vector to every point, or as shifting the origin of the coordinate system, and the process of translation can be interpreted as a distance-preserving transformation between two metric spaces. The process of translation, therefore, can be interpreted as a distance-preserving/distance-altering transformation between two metric spaces/geography which points towards the core of the European notion of translation is nothing but space and spatiality.

Space and spatiality have long been included in humanities and social sciences by scholars like Edward W. Soja (1989); Warf and Arias (2009). Influenced by their work, the concept of 'translation' from the Global North can be seen as a change of coordinates on a geometrical plane. It enforces how the concept of "geo" features in translation and analyse translation as a point of intersection and relationality that redefines our concepts of spatial axis and territorial coordinates.

Translation, as a political activity, determines how communities are mapped by their cultural other and as such points out how the binaries of the centre and periphery construct our worldviews based on asymmetrical power relations. Michael Cronin (2000), while exploring the relationship between translation and geographical spaces, has meticulously considered movement both in the context of territorial and narrative space and analysed it through the lens of language. Federico Italiano (2016) has examined how Western spatial imaginations constructed through literary works have been translated across languages, media, and epochs and created the idea of the world through cultural differences.

The translation scenario in India got much affected when it encountered the European epistemological understanding of the process through colonial rule. It was during this time that the colonial world saw advent of European Enlightenment knowledge through the shipping of English books. These books were then translated into indigenous Indian languages to disseminate the knowledge among the common mass. It is during this confrontation with the English world that the Indians came across a new practice of translation that concentrated on the spatial movement than the temporal aspect of it. This practice of translation concentrating on the spatial cross over in terms of two languages where the message or the information remains intact can, I argue, be explained through the Eucleadian model of Geometry.

Translational Flow from the Brownian Motion: Biochemical and Biophysical Perspective

Let me move towards biochemical and biophysical perspective to the study of geo-translation and for that I will be adopting the idea of Brownian motion in nature. Brownian motion is the random movement of particles suspended in a liquid or gas media. This motion pattern is often composed of random fluctuations in a particle's position within a fluid sub-domain, followed by a migration to another sub-domain. With each move, there are greater oscillations inside the new limited volume. This pattern represents a fluid in thermal equilibrium at a certain temperature. There is no optimum flow direction in such a fluid. This motion is named after

botanist Robert Brown, who reported it in 1827 while examining through a microscope at pollen from a plant submerged in water. Nearly eighty years later, in 1905, theoretical physicist Albert Einstein released a paper in which he characterised pollen particle motion as being propelled by individual water molecules. The many-body interactions that produce the Brownian pattern cannot be described by a model that accounts for every individual molecule; instead, only probabilistic models applied to molecular populations can.
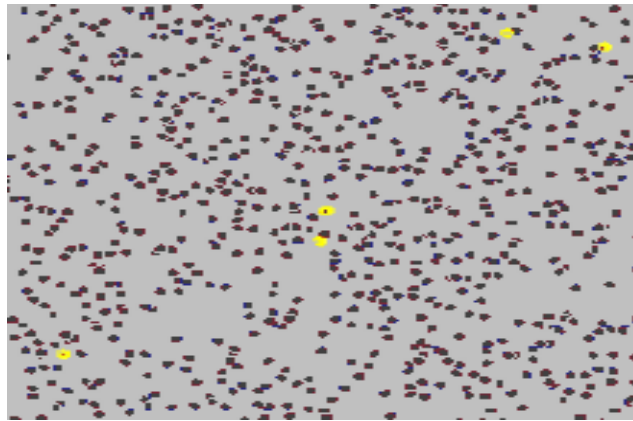

Figure 5.6: Translation Model derived from Brownian Motion (diagram by self)

If we consider author, language, culture, theme, genre, authorial intention, and other textual elements as organic and inorganic molecules which are in constant variation, for example we can think of Octavio Paz, who argued that the "original" has no fixed meaning/identity that can be aesthetically or scientifically determined but rather changes each time it passes into translation. Therefore, keeping Paz's idea of text as a cue, can we then consider translation of it as random fluctuations and there will be no particular direction the translations will move towards. Every time a text gets translated, because of the randomness of the rudimentary behaviour of the elements i.e., translator, target language, target culture, translatorial purpose, it will produce a new set, thereby a new text. So, I argue, keeping the biological / physical / chemical 'Brownian motion' as random movement of particles, translation too is a random process which can create a series of target texts where the qualities of the source and the target passes into one another "through a continuum of transformations" (Benjamin, 1921).

Lucretius, in his *De rerum natura* "On the Nature of Things" (c. 60 BC) has said, "the multitude of tiny particles mingling in a multitude of ways... their dancing is an actual indication of underlying movements of matter that are hidden from our sight… It originates with the atoms which move of themselves i.e., spontaneously." Now if we go back to the first scene mentioned

in the beginning, I argue that Goethe, like Roman philosopher-poet Lucretius did understand that his *Faust* became a new text, so fresh that the author enjoys more reading the translation because it gets new meaning which was hidden from his sight and gathers a spontaneity.

The second scene, to answer the shortcomings of translation by HG Wells, Tagore was referring to a universal psychological structure in music and associating the similar pattern in literature too, thereby, proclaiming that literature gains through a translational movement and that movement is not hampering the foundation. Here, we may find a translational symmetry that appears the same before and after translation. It is also possible to see the process of translation as an interpolation between two metric spaces, as we have seen in the Euclidian Geometry, in which a constant vector is added to each point rather than a shift in the origin of the coordinate system.

Spatiality of Translation in Global North: Nation-State, Body and Transland:

While the concept of 'transfer' has received much attention in translation studies from the context of "transference of meaning from the source text to the target", the etymological root of the word 'translation' has probably been unexplored except Talal Asad (1995) who critically looked at the meaning 'removal of a saint's body or relics from one original site to another new place'. Since 'translate' and 'transfer' share the same etymological roots (Klein 1971), both the acts give a hint that the text that was rendered in another language/culture was perhaps considered as holy as the bones of a saint. Therefore, the act of carrying over might have come to hold importance equivalent to that of a religious act, which if acceptable is holy, and if unacceptable becomes blasphemy and therefore amounts to debasing of the source text.

Alternative Notions of Translation from the Global South

The diverse interwoven battling co-existence of different notions of 'translation' in our planet can be approached from a comparative methodology. The geographical region that has been termed as 'global south' has always been considered at the receiving end of 'theory' with no exception in the field of translation studies. The aim of this thesis is to stitch together as many substitutive views as possible from the 'global south' exploring various discursive practices in the margins within South Asia as Cronin has pointed out that the centre for ecotranslation is global south.

Before I venture into these terminologies in different Indian languages, let me point out the spatial nature of western translation. While the concept of 'transfer' has received much attention in translation studies from the context of "transference of meaning from the source text to the target", the etymological root of the word 'translation' has probably been unexplored except Talal Asad (1995) who critically looked at the meaning 'removal of a saint's body or relics from one original site to another new place'. Since 'translate' and 'transfer' share the same etymological roots (Klein 1971), both the acts give a hint that the text that was rendered in another language/culture was perhaps considered as holy as the bones of a saint. Therefore, the act of carrying over might have come to hold importance equivalent to that of a religious act, which if acceptable is holy, and if unacceptable becomes blasphemy and therefore amounts to debasing of the source text. This notion of "removal to another place", much like that of the removal of the saint's bones and relics in the earlier periods, which I argue, immediately reminds us of the idea of 'transmigration' which also has quite a similar meaning, "the passing into another state". This similarity is further reinforced by the fact that both the word "translation" and "transmigration" have religious connotations. Where "transmigration" denotes "the passage of the soul after death into another body", "translation" signifies "removal of a saint's body or relics to a new place". So, the notion of movement, in terms of bodily and / or spatial, is inherent to the term 'translation' which thereby implies a 'dislocation' and at the same time 'relocation' into an altogether different space. Therefore, it is very much clear, that the western idea is very much obsessed with the territoriality of the term which, thereby can be linked with their agenda to colonize "other" lands and thereby translating their ethos and ideologies in the colonized land. Re-production of the message in another land has always been laden with the weight of ideology and power of the original, the dominant / colonizer on the translated, the dominant / colonized. Then, the ideological and power turn will create the question of authenticity / fidelity in the translated text, which is again can be linked with the problematic history of Bible translation. In the introduction of the theme issue of *Cadernos de Tradução*, titled, "Moving Bodies across Transland" (37: 1, 2017), the editors, Marta Pacheco Pinto, João Ferreira Duarte & Manuela Carvalho have elaborated on the role of translators as moving bodies and translation as a cultural good or product. They have brought in three structuring axes of translation i.e., agency (bodies, subjective actors), displacement (trans-), and locus (land), thus conceptualized 'transland', a descriptive concept and spatial metaphor on which all these forces mentioned above are concentrated as well as an idea where translation flows have become a defining factor to understand movements in, out and across a globalized world.

If we take the model of Euclidean Geometry, the western concept of translational act as a spatial flow can be understood clearly from a mathematical point of view. In Euclidean Geometry, the term 'translation' is defined by saying how much a point is moved to the left/right and up/down, thus simply means moving in a direction. If we consider the source text as a triangle where the three points would be "Source Text – Author – Source Text Environment" which shifting the coordinates of all the points can produce "Target text - Translator – Target Text Environment". An object that looks the same before and after translation may have a translational symmetry. Therefore, a translation can also be interpreted as the addition of a constant vector to every point, or as shifting the origin of the coordinate system, and the process of translation can be interpreted as a distance-preserving transformation between two metric spaces.

According to the systematic poetics of Indian practices of translational act, best explained in the prefaces of pre-colonial Indian texts written in Sanskrit and other Indian languages, there was no such spatial concept of transference of meaning like translation, rather a multitude of terms denoting alternative practices in peripheral spaces i.e., *rūpāntara* (Sanskrit. 'transplantation'), *vivartanam* (Malayalam. 'evolution'), *tarjumā* (Urdu. 'paraphrase'), *bhāṅgani* (Assamese. 'breaking'), *chāyā* (Hindi. 'shadow'), which depicts the use of the concept in a variety of contexts, thus challenging the obligation of the interlingual nature of 'translation' in 'global north' and together ushering an ecological paradigm of translation. The thesis aims to classify these five Indian terms to denote the notion of eco-translation into two broad categories, namely translation as 'evolution' (*rūpāntara* and *vivartanam*) and translation as 'abridgement' (*tarjumā*), 'illumination' (*chāyā*) as well as 'fragmentation' (*bhāṅgani*). Adopting the Indian notion of translation as *rūpāntara* (transplantation) and *vivartanam* (evolution) and combining them with the Chinese theory of 'Eco-translatology' (Hu Gengshen 2002), let me try to explore the methodologies of textual transplantation by illustrating how the locus of the text or the textual ecosystem can be 'transplanted' from microcosmic ecosphere to another eco-environment keeping the eco-linguistic texture of the target intact. Understanding of these terminologies would also challenge the 'universal' notion of translation as morphing the other. Taking cue from the Indian aesthetics best explained in Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra* (Dramaturgy), according to whom *nātaka* (reconstruction of a well-known story) is the higher form of creativity over the *prakaraṇa* (original creation), and all these varied terms like *rūpāntar*, *vivartanam*, *tarjumā* which are hinting towards the fact that translational activities in pre-colonial India were having the existential primacy as the version/renditions were enjoying

the more important position than its 'original' form. The multiple renditions of *Ramayana*, *Mahabharta* in many languages of South and South-East Asia are proving this perspective of Indian plurisemiotic practices.

Anuvādtatwa: Towards a temporal paradigm of translational practices in India

The term which has almost become an icon to represent South Asian translational practice is the Sanskrit word *anuvād* which literally denotes 'saying after', 'repetition' or 'reiteration'. Starting from Sujit Mukherjee (1981), Tejaswini Niranjan (1992), Avadesh K. Singh (1996), Ayyappa Paniker (1998), Harish Trivedi and Susan Bassnett (1999), Ganesh Devy (1999) to I.N. Choudhuri (2010), Brian A. Hatcher (2017) all have discussed and problematized the complicated Indian concept of *anuvād* and zeroed on the situating *anuvād*, a temporal metaphor vis-à-vis 'translation', a spatial construct to grasp the colonial politics of meaning making through print capitalism. Since this term has been dealt at length by most of the scholars let us investigate a few other terms related to the translational practices in India.

Rūpāntar, as a translational practice has been equated with the concept of adaptation by the British lexicographers during the nineteenth century, is constructed by combining two Sanskrit words *rup* and *antar*. The word *Rup* means 'form' and *antar* means 'change'; therefore, *rupantar* denotes 'transformation of a text' and would be equivalent to words like 'rendition', 'adaptation' and 'version'. This means that the text has not undergone a word for word translation; rather it has undergone a 'change of the form' and has been given a new shape.[35] In Monier-Williams' *Sanskrit to English Dictionary* (1872), *rup*, the root word of *rupantar* not only means 'form', 'figure' and 'beauty' but also contains meanings like *ropa* (the act of raising or setting up), *ropana* (the act of planting), *ropita* (the act of planting trees/saplings or sowing' and *ropaka* (planter). (Monier-Williams, 1872: 855) In Haricharan Bandyopadhyay's *Bangiya Sabda Kosh* (1932) – a Bengali Dictionary, we see a

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[35] It will be fascinating to note that the word *rupantar* does not exist in the dictionaries/lexicons/vocabularies published in the nineteenth century Bengal. Though the dictionaries published in between 1800 to 1900 do mention *rup* and *antar* in separate entries but the composite word *rupantar* is completely absent. None of the dictionaries for example, Henry Pitts Foster's *A Vocabulary in Two Parts, Bongalee and English, And Vice Versa (Part II)*, published in 1802, or William Carey's *A Dictionary of the Bengalee Language (Vol. II, Part 1 & 2)* published in 1825, or Tarachand Chukruburtee's *A Dictionary in Bengalee and English*, printed at the Baptist Mission Press in1827, or *A Dictionary, Bengali and Sanskrit: Explained in English and Adapted for Students of Either Language to which is added an Index, Serving as a Reversed Dictionary*, a Bengali-English bilingual dictionary published from London in 1833 and compiled by Graves C. Haughton, or Rev. William Yates' *A Dictionary in Sanskrit and English, Designed for the Private Students and of Indian Colleges and Schools* (1846), or *Bengali and English Dictionary, for the Use of Schools* (1856) published by School Book Society, Calcutta, have given place to the composite term *rupantar* in between their jackets.

comprehensive entry of the word *rup*. Along with the two most obvious entries like 'beauty' and 'form' mentioned above, he also mentions that *rup* can also means *ropon kora* (to plant/to sow). In this very brief attempt, therefore, we can excavate the organic metaphor of 'transplantation' hidden in the term *rūpāntar*.

The next term *vivartanam* can be understood from the Darwinian point of view. Darwin, in his *Origin of Species* (1859) has argued that, with the climate changing, the habitat changes, and as the habitat reshapes, the organism mutates with the environment. When the environment changes, there are three things that may happen to a living organism, e.g., a) habitat tracking[36], b) extinction[37] or c) genetic change[38].puts it and has already been mentioned before, three main things can happen to the transplanted text or the biota: a) habitat tracking, b) extinction or c) genetic change. Darwin in his first infused an organic sense into the term 'adaptation' as "modification of a thing to suit new conditions" or "evolution". With this understanding, let us turn towards the term *vivartanam* (literally indicates 'alteration'/ 'evolution'), which is a derivation of the Sanskrit word *vivarta* which according to the *Vedic* philosophy denotes the altered representation/condition of *Brahman* (the Ultimate Reality) as a serpent is an altered representation of a rope. *Vivartanam* (Sanskrit. 'alteration'; Malayalam. 'evolution') were used in pre-colonial time to convey the oblique and diversified idea of translational act as practiced in pre-European Indian literature(s). Keeping these two terminological explorations as a point of departure, I argue, that we should focus on building a new theoretical discourse system of translation studies based on ecological construction. I argue that a careful reading of the dialectic between *rūpāntara* as transplantation and *vivartanam* as evolution can further offer crucial insights into the process of acculturation through exploring different layers of the botanic metaphors located into these two Sanskrit terms. If we wish to employ *rūpāntara* and *vivartanam* as tools for revisiting the concept and practice of intersemiotic translation in Indian subcontinent we must first unearth the botanical metaphor underlying the terms. The transition of meaning of these two terms from pre-colonial era to the colonial time can enrich our understanding of South Asian translational practices in general.

Ecological turn in translatology

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[36] See Eldredge, Niles. *Reinventing Darwin: the great evolutionary debate*. Wiley, N.Y. (1995): 64. Print.

[37] See Koh, Lian Pih; Dunn, RR; Sodhi, NS; Colwell, RK; Proctor, HC; Smith, VS. "Species Coextinctions and the Biodiversity Crisis". *Science* 305.5690 (2004): 1632–1634.
Web. http://www.sciencemag.org/content/305/5690/1632

[38] See Orr, H. "The genetic theory of adaptation: a brief history". *Nature Reviews Genetics* 6 (2) (2005).: 119-127.
Web. http://www.nature.com/nrg/journal/v6/n2/full/nrg1523.html

In the past three decades ecology has lit a greening fire across disciplines, from environmental history to environmental management, from ecofeminism to green economics. Greening artistic values have spawned land-art, site-specific dance, nature writing, and music with whales. This sea change has renewed both the praxis and theory of literature, visual arts, music and dance. (May, 2005:84)

While formulating the definition of Life in the planetary systems, a committee assembled by NASA in 1994, suggested, following Carl Sagan's idea, that life is, "a self-sustaining chemical system capable of growth, replication and Darwinian evolution". According to this definition, living species go through metabolism or chemical transformations in an environment filled with the right ingredients i.e., water, carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen, oxygen, phosphorus, and sulphur. As stated by Oparin-Haldane theory and later ratified by Miller-Urey experiment if the fundamental inorganic molecules present on early earth are given the right conditions, they can start interacting with each other and form organic molecules and thereafter evolves into an organism. Now, in accordance with the Darwinian paradigm, an organism sustains and evolves with the changing environment due to its natural selection and Darwin's principle of the 'survival of the fittest' is heavily based on biological evolution and adaptation of the organism through 'natural selection'. Keeping in mind this biological conceptualisation of 'natural selection', 'evolution', and 'survival', can we then attempt to form an ecological model of the process of translation? Does the translator attempt to carry out both "adaptive selection" and "selective adaptation" in terms of adapting his/her body into the target socio-lingual and politico-cultural environment as well as selecting the text for the translational eco-environment?

If we consider author, language, culture, theme, genre, authorial intention and other textual elements as organic and inorganic molecules which by interacting with each other can form an organic text living and sustaining in its own environment, can we then consider translation of it as an evolution and adaptation in Darwinian sense where a transformed species will evolve in a completely new environment mutating with new sets of elements i.e., translator, target language, target culture, translatorial purpose? Further, borrowing John Bowlby's idea of "Environment of Evolutionary Adaptation", can we argue that often conditions present in the target environment allow a species or text to adapt into it for which that species/text is naturally selected for? And can we extend "Encoding/Decoding" (Nida, 1964; Hall, 1973) beyond the linguistic realm of transferring message to the field of genetics as transformation of genetic information resulting in mutation. How should we maintain an eco-balance between two

diverge ecosystems while performing the translational act? Or does the act of translation inevitably imbibe imbalance due to distinct unequal geographies bound up with asymmetrical power relations between their respective nation-states?

Conclusion or a Beginning:

In the conclusion, the thesis argues that a theoretical position will possibly force us to think if author, language, culture, theme, genre, authorial intention and other textual elements as organic and inorganic molecules which by interacting with each other can form an organic text living and sustain in its environment, can we then consider the adaptation of it as an evolution and adaptation in the Darwinian sense where a transformed species will evolve in a completely new environment mutating with new sets of elements, i.e., adapter, target language, target culture, translatorial purpose?

Further, borrowing John Bowlby's idea of "Environment of Evolutionary Adaptation", can we argue that often times conditions present in the target environment allow a species or text to adapt into it for which that species/text is naturally selected for? And can we extend "Encoding/Decoding" (Nida, 1964; Hall, 1973) beyond the linguistic realm of transferring message to the field of genetics as transformation of genetic information resulting in mutation. How should we maintain an eco-balance between two diverge ecosystems while performing the adaptation? Or does the act of adaptation inevitably imbibe imbalance due to distinct unequal geographies bound up with asymmetrical power relations between their respective nation-states? Finally, the thesis tries to formulate the ecological turn in adaptology which may chart new territories in adaptation studies.

> "Give me silence, give me water, hope,
>
> Give me struggle, iron, volcanoes."

> - Pablo Neruda

The well-known, if somewhat notorious, turns in translation studies are indicative of a field of study that is still trying to find its boundaries. In subsequent turns, translation studies has expanded on the one hand, the ambit of its scholarly view from linguistics to pragmatics to culture to sociology to ideology / power – keeping in mind that some might arrange the list in different order or use different names for the turns. But on the other hand, these expanding efforts failed in expanding the notion of translation itself beyond the hegemony of Global

North. Many of the implications of the terminological explorations still need to be explored. But the key to the entire enterprise is to study the 'alternative' uses of the term translation. By alternative, I mean alternative to the idea universal 'translation' perpetuated by Global North. This thesis primarily focused on the heuristic potential of the South, and how hegemonic agendas of 'translational theories and concepts' impact on the studies as a whole. Though we have discussed about the disciplinal study of translation here but the larger focus, in order to nullify the hegemony of the Global North, should be on the importance of theoretical diversity, intellectual creativity, gender balance, the role of language, the variety of ontological beings and forms of conviviality, among other things, all of which have an impact on the present world.

The theoretical framework I opened up in this thesis and the models drawn on the basis of the practices in Indian subcontinent in the pre-colonial time, which is inclusive rather than exclusive. I hope that through the various terminologies the chapter successfully strove to approximate various complex layers of understanding the translational activities in Global South. I feel that the need of the hour is to find suitable answers to these questions to venture into this field of alternative practices which are till date the least explored area in the Global South. The North – South uneven gap in the field of humanities has long been reinforced, with the 'universal' being formed by translation and adaptation of Northern / hegemonic objectives to Southern / peripheral contexts of knowledge production and circulation, as was the case in translation studies. This hegemony produces and reproduces academic dependency in close association with the consolidation of long-term inequalities, narrowing the horizons of scientific imagination and impairing intellectual creativity, thereby consolidating an inequitable regime in the production and circulation of scientific knowledge (Costa, 2011). This thesis tries to explore how a spatial terminology from the Global North has been forced on the plurisemiotic practices of translation in Indian subcontinent through colonization and produced a long-term global disparity, with consequences of using the European theories of translation in the Indian context without problematizing the European notion and understanding the different reality of the Indian subcontinent.

When English and Anglophone goods predominate in global networks of power and knowledge production, inequities and asymmetries in power and knowledge production are reproduced as well. Many academics believe that Anglophone academic discourses are the 'latest' and 'most current', and that they are thus 'leading' in global knowledge creation. Other scholars, on the other hand, believe that they are 'following behind'. In the preservation of this epistemic imbalance, language plays a key role, with Standard English today occupying the

dominant position. Most of the current scholars of translation studies except a few i.e., Sujit Mukherjee, P. Lal, Harish Trivedi, etc. did not try to explain the translational productions from the diverse categorization of the practice in India. Rather the majority examine the translated texts in the context of academic reliance and imperialism, as well as gate-keeping methods to sustain the hegemonic frameworks of the discipline as practiced and theorised in the Global North.

We have discussed the vital potential of the South in terms of accessing and resisting hegemonic agendas in translation studies. I hope that this thesis will be instrumental in understanding the Global South as a useful instrument for addressing and shedding light on international disparities in larger academia. At the end of the day, South will be addressed as a concept associated with geographies of inequality or critical positionalities, but also as an attitude: a Southern Attitude, which embraces an invitation for amplifying forms of ethical engagement that address social and scientific justice in general and create a South – South position.

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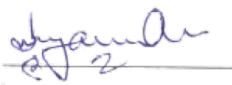Sarkar, Pabitra. *Natmancha Natyarup*. Dey's Publishing, 2019.

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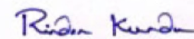
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