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A Study of Devdas by Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay through the Lens of Translation Studies

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ABSTRACT: Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay is the author of the Bengali romantic book Devdas (Bengali:, transliterated as Debdas). Devdas, an archetypal lover in viraha (separation), Paro, his forbidden childhood love, and Chandramukhi, a reformed prostitute, form a tragic triangle at the centre of the narrative. There have been 20 film adaptations of Devdas and 5 single song adaptations.

KEYWORDS- Adaptation, Translation, Language, Theme, Art, Non-Epic

About the Author and the Novel

Saratchandra Chattopadhyay was born on September 15, 1876 in Devanandapur, West Bengal's Hooghly district. Motilal Chattopadhyay was his father, and Bhubanmohini was his mother. Saratchandra spent the most of his youth with his mother in Bhagalpur, Bihar, where he passed the University Entrance Examination. He also attended college for nearly two years but was unable to complete his education. He moved to Burma at the age of 27 and got work as a clerk in a government office in Rangoon. In 1916, he left Rangoon and lived in Baje Shibpur, Howrah, near Kolkata. He subsequently moved to his own residence in Samtabed, a village on the banks of the Rupnarayan, around ten years later. He had built another residence in Kolkata some time before his demise. He died on January 16, 1938, in Kolkata. In 1903, he wrote his first short story and had it published under his uncle Surendranath Ganguli's name. In 1907, Baradidi, a novella or longer short tale, was published in Bharati under his own name. He continued editing the early draughts of several of his works that he had originally written in Bhagalpur when he was in Burma, and he also worked on new fiction. In fact, he modelled some of his most lovable characters—such as "Indranath" of Srikanta (1917) and "Lalu" of Chhelebelar Galpa—on either his friend Rajendranath Majumdar or Raju of Bhagalpur, who passed away three months after he did in 1938.

Saratchandra's renown has been well-established since 1913, especially after 1916. Since then, he has written books that are quite well-known. His books include Devdas, which was written in 1901 but published in 1917, Parineeta, Biraj Bou, Palli-Samaj, Srikanta (published in four parts in 1917, 1918, 1927, and 1933), Charitraheen, Grihadaha, Pather-Dabi, Shesh Prashno, and Bipradas. Numerous Indian languages have received translations of Saratchandra's writings. Numerous of these have also been effectively adapted for the big screen and theatre. One of the best authors to have written on current women in Indian literature is Sarat Chandra. Paro from Devdas (1917), Vijaya from Datta (1917–1919), Hemangini from Mejdidi, and Kamala from Shesh Prashna (1929) are a few of his well-known female characters. Additionally, he published pieces that were included in the anthologies Narir Mulya (1923) and Svadesh O Sahitya (1932). His most well-known works include Shrikanta, Charitrahin, Devdas, Grihadaha, Dena-Paona, and Pather Dabi. The British Government forbade Pather Dabi because of its revolutionary tone. Chhelebelar Galpa, Shubhada (1938), Sheser Parichay (1939), Sharat Chandrer Granthabali (1948), and Sharat Chandrer Aprakashita Rachanabali (1951) are among his posthumous writings

The sad story of Devdas by Saratchandra Chattopadhyay has come to represent an intense, passionate love that is not realised. Devdas and Paro, who were childhood sweethearts who were split apart when Devdas was sent to Calcutta by his father, the local zamindar, are the main characters in this tale. Paro proposes to Devdas when he returns to his hometown as an attractive young man of nineteen. Devdas, however, is unable to overcome parental objections to the relationship and declines the offer. Paro, who is shocked, decides to wed an elderly widower. Devdas leaves for Calcutta, but his thoughts are now consumed by Paro and his unmet love for her. He rushes to Paro, who is now married, and begs her to elope with him, but she declines. He is desperate to find a solution to the problem. He turns to booze and the courtesan Chandramukhi for comfort after experiencing heartbreak. Even when Chandramukhi falls in love with Devdas, he cannot help but think of Paro at all times. He must now continue



ferociously down the path of self-destruction since that is his fate. When Devdas travels to Paro's home to say goodbye to her before passing away from a liver condition brought on by drinking, his miserable existence comes to an end. He shows up in the middle of the night and passes away on her doorstep unnoticed and unattended. Only the next morning does Paro learn of his passing. For more than a century, Devdas has captivated both readers and moviegoers. For a brand-new audience of readers, this fresh translation brings the timeless story of star-crossed lovers to life.

Knowing that his time is running out, Devdas travels to Hatipota to meet Parvati and carry out his pledge. He passes away on a chilly, dark night at her door. When Parvati learns of his passing, she rushes to the door, but her relatives stop her from leaving the house. The novella vividly illustrates the social mores that were prevalent in Bengal at the beginning of the 20th century and which primarily prevented a happy conclusion to a sincere and emotional love tale. Many Indian languages, including Bengali, Hindustani, Hindi, Telugu, Tamil, Urdu, Assamese, and Malayalam, have seen the novel adapted into films. It is India's most often filmed non-epic narrative.

I. INTRODUCTION OF TRANSLATION

The theory, practise, and cultural ramifications of translation are all examined in the multidisciplinary discipline of translation studies. It examines the difficult process of meaning translation from one language to another and discusses the difficulties, solutions, and moral issues raised by this linguistic and cultural mediation. Using ideas from linguistics, literary theory, cultural studies, anthropology, philosophy, psychology, and other fields, translation studies span a wide range of viewpoints and approaches. By taking into account the dynamic interactions between languages, cultures, and people, it aims to comprehend the nature of translation as both a linguistic activity and a cultural practise. The study of translation examines many different facets of translation, such as the function of translators, the effects of translation on language and culture, the interaction between source and target texts, the impact of power dynamics, and the function of technology. It also looks at various translation techniques, including localization, audiovisual translation, technical translation, and literary translation.

The importance of context is emphasised in translation studies, which examines the social, historical, and cultural elements that both shape and are shaped by translation. It recognises the difficulties that come with translating meaning between languages, taking into account things like linguistic and cultural differences, idiomatic phrases, ambiguity, and balancing numerous points of view. Additionally, translation studies investigate the ethics of translation, including issues with integrity, openness, cultural appropriation, and the translators' obligations to represent and mediate many viewpoints and cultures.

Over the years, the study has developed tremendously, expanding from a merely language perspective to include larger cultural and social factors. The practise of translation has also been impacted by technological advancements like machine translation and computer-assisted translation technologies, which have opened new opportunities and difficulties. In general, translation studies aim to increase our understanding of translation as a complex and varied process, providing light on how translation plays a part in cross-cultural communication, knowledge transfer, and the creation of meaning in a globalised society.

II. DIVERSITY OF TRANSLATION

As a linguistic and cultural mediation process, translation takes on many different shapes to meet the many demands of interlanguage communication. There are multiple translation subfields that serve various target audiences, settings, and goals. In order to facilitate efficient cross-linguistic communication, this essay intends to examine and throw light on some of the major types of translations, stressing their traits, difficulties, and importance.

Literary Translation: Literary translation is the process of translating literary works from one language to another, including novels, poetry, plays, and short stories. It necessitates a thorough knowledge of the literary traditions, cultural subtleties, and linguistic quirks of both the source and target languages. The difficulty is in capturing the author's intent, style, and tone while retaining the core ideas and significance of the original material. Literary translators frequently struggle with the tension between faithfulness and originality, juggling the necessity for truth with the goal to generate an engaging and culturally appropriate target text.

Technical Translation: The translation of specialised materials in disciplines like engineering, medicine, computer technology, and law is known as technical translation. These translations call for a high level of terminological precision and subject area knowledge. Technical translators need to be well-versed in the vocabulary, jargon, and peculiarities of both the source and the destination languages. For a technical translation to be accurate and understandable by the target audience, precision and clarity are essential.

Audiovisual Translation: There are several types of audiovisual translation, such as subtitling, dubbing, voice-over, and audio description. The translation of audiovisual content, including films, TV series, documentaries, and



video games, is a part of it. While dubbing substitutes translated language for the original voices, subtitling entails translating the text and presenting it on the screen while maintaining the original soundtrack. For viewers who are blind or visually handicapped, voice-over includes the simultaneous translation of the original soundtrack, while audio description offers an extra audio track that describes visual components. Audiovisual translation is a highly specialised and difficult type of translation since it calls for synchronisation with the visual aspects, knowledge of cultural references, and time limits.

Legal Translation: The translation of legal materials, such as contracts, court papers, laws, and patents, is referred to as "legal translation." It necessitates a thorough and accurate translation of legal concepts and terminology while taking into account the legal frameworks and cultural quirks of both languages. To ensure that the translated language has the intended legal impact and validity, legal translators must have a thorough grasp of legal frameworks. A little typo or mistranslation in a legal document can have serious repercussions, underscoring the need of accuracy and subject-matter knowledge.

Localization: Localization is modifying a product, piece of software, or website to fit a particular target culture or region. Beyond simple translation, it takes into account linguistic, cultural, and technological factors to make sure the end result is acceptable and feels natural to the target market. In addition to language adaptation, localization entails modifying images, symbols, colours, and even functionality to conform to the target market's cultural preferences and user expectations. It is a crucial component of international marketing and communication since it calls for a thorough grasp of the target culture, customer behaviour, and market trends.

III. USE OF TRANSLATION IN LITERATURE

Translation plays a vital role in literature, serving as a bridge between different languages, cultures, and literary traditions. It enables the global dissemination of literary works, facilitating cross-cultural understanding and expanding the horizons of both authors and readers. This essay explores the multifaceted use of translation in literature, highlighting its significance in fostering literary exchange, preserving cultural heritage, and promoting intercultural dialogue.

Access to Diverse Literary Traditions: Translation serves as a gateway to diverse literary traditions, allowing readers to access works from different cultures and languages. It enables the exploration of literary masterpieces that would otherwise remain inaccessible due to language barriers. By translating literature, valuable and unique literary voices from across the globe are introduced to new audiences, enriching the literary landscape and broadening readers' perspectives.

Cultural Exchange and Understanding: Literary translation promotes cultural exchange by introducing readers to the customs, values, and perspectives of different societies. Through translated literature, readers gain insights into the history, traditions, and social issues of other cultures, fostering empathy and cross-cultural understanding. By immersing themselves in diverse narratives and viewpoints, readers develop a broader worldview and a deeper appreciation for cultural diversity.

Preservation of Cultural Heritage: Translation plays a crucial role in preserving cultural heritage by ensuring that literary works are not confined to their original language or cultural context. Translating classic and contemporary literature helps safeguard and transmit cultural knowledge, allowing future generations to access and appreciate the literary achievements of different cultures. Translations serve as a means of preserving and revitalizing endangered languages and literary traditions, contributing to the preservation of global cultural diversity.

Expansion of Literary Markets: Literary translation opens up new markets and readerships for authors and publishers. Translated literature allows writers to reach a broader international audience, extending their impact beyond their native language. For authors, translation can provide recognition, prestige, and opportunities for collaboration with writers from different linguistic backgrounds. Additionally, translated works contribute to the global literary canon, creating a more inclusive and diverse literary landscape.

Transcending Linguistic Barriers: Translation allows for the exchange of ideas, styles, and literary techniques across languages. Translators face the challenge of capturing the essence and literary nuances of the original text while adapting it to the target language. They navigate the intricacies of language, culture, and literary conventions, striving to recreate the author's unique voice and literary aesthetics. Translations strive to preserve the original work's emotional resonance, imagery, and literary devices, ensuring that the essence and impact of the original text are not lost in translation.

Translation serves as a powerful tool in the realm of literature, facilitating cross-cultural dialogue, preserving cultural heritage, and expanding literary horizons. Through the process of translation, literary works transcend linguistic barriers, allowing authors to connect with readers worldwide. Translations enrich the global literary tapestry, offering diverse perspectives and opening doors to new worlds of imagination. By embracing and supporting the use of



translation in literature, we foster mutual understanding, celebrate cultural diversity, and promote the universality of human experiences through the power of words.

Navigating the Challenges of Translation

Translation is a complex and nuanced process that involves transferring meaning from one language to another. While translation enables effective cross-linguistic communication and cultural exchange, it is not without its challenges. This essay delves into the difficulties faced by translators, exploring linguistic, cultural, and contextual obstacles and highlighting the strategies employed to overcome them.

Linguistic Challenges: One of the primary difficulties in translation lies in capturing the nuances and intricacies of language. Each language has its unique grammar, idiomatic expressions, and linguistic structures, making word-for-word translations insufficient. Translators must decipher and convey the intended meaning accurately, taking into account cultural and contextual factors. Ambiguities, idiomatic phrases, and language-specific metaphors pose particular challenges, requiring creative solutions to retain the essence and impact of the original text.

Cultural and Conceptual Differences: Translation encounters cultural and conceptual gaps between languages. Certain concepts, ideas, and cultural references may lack direct equivalents in the target language, demanding careful adaptation and cultural mediation. Translators must be adept at navigating cultural nuances, social contexts, and historical references, ensuring that the target audience comprehends and appreciates the text's intended meaning. Cultural sensitivity and deep cultural knowledge are indispensable in bridging these gaps and avoiding misinterpretations.

Multiple Meanings and Ambiguities: Languages often contain words and phrases with multiple meanings and shades of interpretation. Translators grapple with selecting the most appropriate meaning, contextually and semantically, when faced with such ambiguity. Contextual clues, careful analysis of the source text, and collaboration with experts or authors are vital in making informed decisions to preserve the intended sense of the text while managing potential confusion.

Subjectivity and Style: Translating subjective and stylistic elements, such as humor, irony, or wordplay, poses significant challenges. These elements are deeply rooted in the source language's cultural and linguistic fabric, making their transference to the target language intricate. Translators must navigate cultural nuances, linguistic devices, and reader expectations to recreate the desired effect. Striking a balance between preserving the author's style and adapting it to the target language requires linguistic finesse and an understanding of the target audience's cultural sensibilities.

Time Constraints and Deadlines: Translators often face time constraints and tight deadlines, particularly in the fast-paced world of publishing or localization. Limited time can impede the thorough research, reflection, and revision required for high-quality translations. Translators must employ efficient time management strategies, prioritize tasks, and maintain open communication channels to deliver translations that meet both linguistic accuracy and timely delivery requirements.

Translation is an intricate process fraught with difficulties stemming from linguistic, cultural, and contextual challenges. Translators are confronted with the task of transferring meaning across languages while preserving the essence and impact of the original text. Overcoming these difficulties necessitates linguistic expertise, cultural sensitivity, research, collaboration, and a deep understanding of the source and target languages. By recognizing and addressing these challenges, translators ensure effective cross-cultural communication, facilitate intercultural understanding, and contribute to the richness and diversity of global literary and linguistic landscapes.

Translation of 'Devdas'

A great Bengali novelist named Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay is the author of the well-known book "Devdas." The tragic tale of Devdas, a young man from a prosperous family, and his turbulent love affair with Paro, his childhood lover, is told in the book. As the story progresses, issues of love, social differences, societal expectations, and the disastrous effects of unsatisfied ambitions are explored.

Despite being written in Bengali at first, "Devdas" has been translated into many different languages, allowing readers from different cultural backgrounds to understand the profound emotions and societal criticism the narrative contains. In order to reach a larger audience and promote a cross-cultural discourse as well as a better comprehension of the issues and people depicted, translation is essential. The use of translation in "Devdas" helps readers who don't understand Bengali to interact with the tale by bridging the gap between the source language (Bengali) and the target language. The difficulty for the translator is to accurately convey the spirit and nuance of Chattopadhyay's work while adjusting it to the literary standards and cultural context of the target language.

The rich cultural and historical context of early 20th-century Bengal is one of the key parts of translating "Devdas" that must be conveyed. In order to ensure that the target audience understands the complex cultural allusions,



practises, and traditions that are woven throughout the story, the translator must traverse them. This includes cultural standards being shown, the zamindari system being explored, and traditional Bengali festivals and rituals being portrayed. Finding appropriate cultural parallels in the target language as well as a thorough grasp of Bengali culture and history are necessary for translating these features.

The intricacy and emotional depth of the characters' relationships must also be accurately translated by the translator. The movie "Devdas" is renowned for examining many human emotions, especially those related to love, desire, and hopelessness. In order to portray these feelings effectively, the translator must dive into the psychological undertones of the characters and find a way to appeal to readers of the target language via their inner anguish.

The translator must also be aware of Chattopadhyay's unique writing style, which frequently makes use of lyrical prose and poetic vocabulary. It takes linguistic dexterity and inventive adaptation to maintain the author's voice while guaranteeing readability and coherence in the target language.

In conclusion, translation is essential for bringing "Devdas" to a larger audience, overcoming linguistic boundaries, and promoting intercultural communication. The task for the "Devdas" translator is to translate Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay's work while maintaining its cultural background, emotional depth, and distinctive writing style. The global ideas and ageless core of "Devdas" may be enjoyed and understood by readers all around the world thanks to the process of translation.

IV. CONCLUSION

The discipline of translation is broad and complicated, with different subfields serving various functions and adapting to various circumstances. While technical translation promotes the interchange of specialised information, literary translation permits the spread of literature across cultural boundaries. Legal translation guarantees precise cross-border communication in legal situations, whereas audiovisual translation makes foreign audiovisual content accessible to audiences worldwide. On the other side, localization enables goods and services to connect with target cultures. Each sort of translation has unique difficulties and needs a certain set of knowledge and abilities. The environment of translation is always changing as a result of communication and technological advancements, which calls for constant creativity and adaptability. Effective cross-linguistic communication and cultural exchange may flourish through these many translation techniques, overcoming gaps and promoting understanding in our linked world.

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