(UN)TRANSLATED GENIUS: A STUDY OF THE 'ENGLISH' PREMCHAND

Dissertation submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the award of the degree of

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

RAJENDRA PARIHAR

CENTRE OF LINGUISTICS AND ENGLISH
SCHOOL OF LANGUAGE, LITERATURE & CULTURE STUDIES
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI – 110 067
INDIA

2004

(UN)TRANSLATED GENIUS: A STUDY OF THE 'ENGLISH' PREMCHAND

Dissertation submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the award of the degree of

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

RAJENDRA PARIHAR

CENTRE OF LINGUISTICS AND ENGLISH
SCHOOL OF LANGUAGE, LITERATURE & CULTURE STUDIES
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI – 110 067
INDIA

2004

Centre of Linguistics & English
School of Language, Literature & Culture Studies
जवाहरलाल नेहरू विश्वविद्यालय
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi-110067, India

CERTIFICATE

December 30, 2004

This is to certify that this dissertation titled **(Un)translated Genius: A Study of the 'English' Premchand**, submitted by **Rajendra Parihar**, of the Centre of Linguistics and English, School of Language, Literature & Culture Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, under my supervision for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy, is his original work, and has not been submitted, in part or full, for any other degree or diploma of this or any other university/institution.

This dissertation may, therefore, be placed before the Examination for evaluation for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy.

(Prof. Makarand Paranjape)
(Supervisor)

(Prof. Santosh Sareen)
(Chairperson)
Prof. Santosh K. Sareen
Chairperson
Centre of Linguistics & English
School of Language, Literature & Culture Studies,
Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi-110067

Gram : JAYENU **Tel:** 26704231 **Fax:** 91-011-26165886

DECLARATION BY THE CANDIDATE

This dissertation entitled **(Un)translated Genius: A Study of the 'English' Premchand**, submitted by me to the Centre of Linguistics and English, School of Language, Literature & Culture Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy, is a record of my *bona fide* work.

It has not been submitted so far in part or full, for any other degree or diploma of any university/institution.

New Delhi: 30/12/2004

(Rajendra Parihar)
Centre of Linguistics and English,
School of Language, Literature &
Culture Studies,
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi-110067

Contents

Acknowledgement

I take this opportunity to express my humble gratitude to Professor Makarand Paranjape, who has been a guide and a well-wisher ever since I first opted for a course with him. Without his valuable suggestions, guidance and encouragement my dissertation would not have been completed. He has been exceptionally patient and supportive with me and has always acknowledged my shortcomings. I cannot help mentioning how thankful I am to him for providing me his computer to use for typing my dissertation.

I would also like to thank Professor R.S. Gupta and Professor Harish Narang, whose translation courses formulated my basic understanding of the theoretical and practical aspects of translation studies.

My special thanks to Dr Asaduddin (Jamia Millia), Dr Anand Prakash (Hans Raj College), and Professor Harish Trivedi, for their valuable suggestion, and encouragement for this project.

My dear friends Quisar and Abbas, who are like brothers to me, have always shown great interest in this project and have helped me formulating my ideas and language throughout this work. I would also like to thank my friends Aneeta, Preeti and Surit for their considerable support in the completion of this work.

A special reference to Mr B. Parmar and Manisha Didi who have always been my well-wishers, and been a source of inspiration in life.

I thank the library staffs of JNU, Sahitya Akademi and Hindu College for their support.
A big thank for Rawatji at CLE office for his support.

Last but not the least I am ever indebted to my parents who supported my decision of further studies and to whom I much to them.

R.P

List of Abbreviations

AL: Premchand: A Life by Amrit Rai (Translated by Harish Trivedi)

LB: Premchand: A Literary Biography by Madan Gopal

QS: Qalam ka Sipahi by Amrit Rai

Preface

My acquaintance with Premchand's writings dates back to my childhood. I was an avid reader of his short stories back then, and never quite knew what it was that attracted me to these stories. As I grew older, his novels kept me enchanted. After joining English Literature, I became interested in reading appreciations and critical reviews of his work, as well as translations of his works in English.

However, the available translations of his works were rather a disappointment to me. Having read most of his writings in their originals, I realized, the translations fell somewhat short in conveying the eloquence of Premchand that I had received earlier. After being trained in translation studies at the M.Phil. level, I was quick to perceive that the reason for this was the cumbersome nature of the translations available to the English reader, rather than a problem in the general *tectonics* of translating texts from Hindi to English. I remember in many instances, it would chuckle at the inappropriate usage of language and expression selected by the translators, at times even fuming with frustration at the sloppy translations.

I realized a reassessment of the available translated literature of his work was needed to recreate Premchand for the English reader – the Premchand I had read in Hindi – or at least begin this process. The structure of an M.Phil. course at JNU provided me the freedom, as well as the necessary stimulus and resources needed to undergo such a process.

In this project, I have not taken up the available translations of his texts and re-translated them. Such a task befits a much-seasoned editor, nor would the short length of an M.Phil. program allows such a project. Here I have, accumulated the existing literature and presented a chronological survey of the English translations of his works, highlighting the variations introduced by translators and publishers, their discrepancies and shortcomings, as well as their strengths. Premchand's own relationship with English language and literature is also of interest to me, and I have dealt with it at length. Premchand with his complex love-hate relationship with *English*- with English language, English literature, English people, English translation, and above all wit Englishness (*Angreziat*) has been an interesting study, and I hope just it can adds something to the critical study of a writer like Premchand, and enhance a new dimension to the reading of writer in *English* perspective.

In this year of Premchand's 125th birth anniversary, a retrospective view of Premchand and his illustrious contribution to Indian literature could not have found a more suitable date. Given the backdrop of the importance of translation studies, and Indian writings in English, such a work is just the start of a much more rigorous process awaiting.

R.P.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Why Premchand in English?

Fiction is among the most translated of genres in literature today, and many fine translations have shown that the barriers of language are not as formidable as they might seem. Literary translation in India has emerged as an important activity in recent years. It has promoted publications of regional writings into other Indian and foreign languages. Therefore, it is through translations that the *remote* is brought closer and made available for those who may choose to read beyond their linguistic confines.

If translation is deemed important, then the question 'what is to be translated?' deserves an immediate response. Should *everything* be translated and made available for all? Certainly! But, however wonderful this may sound, it remains impossible, or at least financially depleting. If literature is read not only for pleasure but also to expand human understanding – of one's own society and culture – then the literary texts that expound the latter most effectively, become a valuable resource. It is the first task of translation to select this valuable resource and make it available to the *linguistic Other*, in order to give *Them* a glimpse of what it means to be *Us*, and also to enrich the *Other* by *Us*. Therefore the necessary compulsion is to begin by translating this valuable resource. This is tantamount to the posting of "literary envoys" to another "literary ambience" in the name of "cultural exchange".

The writings of Munshi Premchand have always been a valuable resource for both Hindi and Urdu readerships. It is in his works that one can identify the ideals that constitute the idea of India, and of what it means to be an Indian. His works deal with class aggression and suppression, gender inequalities, and the socio-economic conditions of India. His settings are of the local or the common, and draw a vivid picture of India's cultural nuances. His texts also contain both nationalistic and revolutionary undertones of anti-colonialism. All this makes him a Humanist Indian Nationalist writer. Therefore his works are not only a valuable resource for the student of literature, but can also be appreciated by the student of Indian history, with its

elements of historical fiction, (like the text of the German novel, *All Quiet On The Western Front*). With its socio-cultural elements, his novels become vital for the student of Sociology and even a student of Anthropology, and certainly for the serious Student of Indology. Therefore, Premchand can also be valued by the non-Hindi and non-Urdu reader or the *linguistic Other*, who feel the need to grasp an understanding of India through Premchand's *mind's-eye*. An *English Premchand* becomes desirable for such an audience.

The history of Premchand in English dates back half a century. Till date, four of his fourteen novels[1] and half of his short stories have been rendered into English by a host of translators. However, despite this considerable translation into English, the results have been far from satisfactory. Translation of his work has had a sluggish history; it has suffered for a variety of reasons: the politics of translation, and also simply because of being "bad translations". Therefore, Premchand remains under-represented in English. Premchand, considered as one of the greatest writers in Hindi/Urdu, does not enjoy the same status among his English language readership. Is this the failure of translation – the vehicle meant to spread his writings into other audiences at the national and international levels? Or is it the translators who are to be blamed? There are certainly some other factors that cannot be ruled out for such a situation. However, the situation reflects that no sustained effort has been made to exploit the medium of English to sell his treasures in the *English Reading World*, with the result that one of the greatest writers of Hindi and Urdu fiction has not received proper recognition beyond some linguistic peripheries.

Such a situation has prompted me for taking up my present study – the "English Premchand" – Premchand's work translated into English. It is broadly an evaluation of Premchand's relationship with English, and the existing literature of Premchand in English. One cannot deny the fact that the readerships of these literatures do not find a thorough and evaluative database on the quality of the existing translated-into-English works. A sustained review of Premchand in English has never been attempted before. My review of the existing literature of Premchand in English will argue that though there is a considerable literature available on

[1] *Premchand Rachana Sanchayan* lists fifteen novels including the two incomplete ones. A list of Premchand's novels has been given in Appendix I. Also see Appendix II for translated novels.

Premchand today, it is not coherent. Premchand's works have been translated from time to time. Some have appeared, and abruptly forgotten, without many acknowledgements. It is time to reinstall this important writer's works in English and make him available to a wider audience that feels the need for such a writer.

The review of Premchand's work in English translation will enrich the critical readings of Premchand's writings, subjecting it to the critical theories that have emerged in today's literature. Literary tools and techniques like New Historicism, New Criticism and Deconstruction, and of course the new translation theories, which were non-existent in his time, can all be used to re-read and re-interpret Premchand, and to subject him to a modern literary inquest. This will also bring some of the best minds of India and of the world to focus on the writings of Premchand in order to enrich their understanding of India.

However, 'English' and 'translation' being my main topics, I shall begin with Premchand and English. The second chapter *Premchand and English* will examine the complex relationship between Premchand and English and the role of the English language and literature in formulating Premchand's own literature. In addition to his literary genius, Premchand's role as a literary translator is also an aspect that requires some serious consideration, as we know that apart from a writer, he remained a practitioner of literary translation throughout his career. He translated or adapted over a dozen Indian and western texts into Hindi and Urdu. A brief discussion on Premchand- the translator will show his complex position concerning English. We will see that in the beginning he amply translated from English literature, but then turned to other European literatures to counter the hegemony of English literature. The role of Premchand as a translator in promotion of one Indian literature comes instantly while discussing these topics. Premchand's role as a translator will substantiate my study when I will go on to analyze the various translations of Premchand's work and the contemporary translation scenario in my later chapters.

My third chapter will propose a study of Premchand's works translated into English in order to examine what happens to 'Premchand' when translated into English. I will present a critical analysis of some of the translated works, which will discuss the problems of translating his novels and short stories. Apart from presenting a history of Premchand's translated work in translation, it will also discuss the

untranslated works. It is noteworthy that Premchand is one among the widely translated writers in Indian literature; besides English, his works have also been translated into most Indian languages and many foreign languages. These include Russian, Chinese, Japanese, German, and a few others. A brief reference of them will comprehend my current study of Premchand in English.

A comparative study between the two translated texts of Premchand's novel *Nirmala*, and between some important short stories will be presented in Chapter Four. Such a study will bring out the translation strategies, the politics of translation, the issue of the subjectivity of translation, and the discrepancies made by translators. The final chapter *Conclusion* will summarize my study, with a discussion on the contemporary scenario of Premchand in English, its challenges and so on.

Much has been said and written about Premchand. According to Dr. Karan Singh, he is a towering figure in modern Indian literature and a pioneer of the Hindi novel and short story (Shultz 11). Popularly hailed as *Upanyas Samrat* (Emperor of novels), the "Tolstoy of India" and the "Father of Modern Hindi and Urdu fiction"[2], Premchand is among the pioneers of the genre called *afsana* or the Urdu short story. However, he received these distinctions for his exploits in Hindi and Urdu fiction. Do they live up to the English readers' expectation when Premchand's work is rendered into English? On the other hand, how does it matter, if his reputation is established in an altogether new linguistic medium? My study will address this and other such points.

What is the need for translating Premchand's texts into English, which were written almost a century ago? How does it matter that Premchand should be translated into English, and a study of his English translated works be done? These vital questions need to be addressed before this work may legitimately begin. The translation of any writer in a particular language depends on both the writer's position and the significance of the target language. Here, the target language – English – cannot be confined to a geographical locale. Hindi may be the language of a large section of India, but it is English that is the link language. One cannot deny the fact

[2] President Neelam S. Reddy in his address at the International Conference for the Defence of National Culture and Education for Peace and Disarmament, March 20, 1980.

that English enjoys the status of India's *lingua-franca*, despite not being the national language of India.

It can be argued that English still remains the imperial language, but no one can deny the importance given to English in India, and the status it has received as one of the *Indian* languages. Critics and theorists like G.N. Devy argue that English has enjoyed a high status in Indian academia and continues to do so. He writes:

> "English does not belong to any specific geographical region and has no status as a regional language. The result is that it is used [as], on the one hand a language of 'status' and, on the other hand, as a 'static' language. The fact that it is an international language, the only one at India's disposal at present, adds to it its status as a 'status language; but also, and because of its not being an Indian language, it is more leant than spoken in India, and attitude of not violating the received norms of the English language comes from the respect it enjoys as an enormously resourceful language that it has been elsewhere" (Devy 15).

The debate regarding the hegemony of the English language, English literature, and *Angreziat* (Englishness) brings interesting contrasts to this study, and this issue will be explored in detail in the chapter ***Premchand and English***. However, in the English Premchand, the English language will play the role of a link language, a vehicle to re-emphasize the greatness of Premchand, not only as a Urdu and Hindi writer, but as a writer of Indian Literature for the west. English-knowing readers in India and abroad will not only become aware of Premchand's writings, but will also acquire a better and more meaningful understanding of India's variegated pattern of culture and behavior. Premchand's literature, of course, will inculcate a sense of national than regional unity.

Premchand's emergence in Hindi and Urdu literature, his influence on Indian Literature, and his position as a representative *Indian* writer are also some factors that highlight the significance of his work, and subsequently decide the need of his English *avatar*.

Emergence of Premchand

Hindi and Urdu fiction attained a new dimension at the beginning of the twentieth century, when Premchand marked a transition from the erstwhile popular didacticism to a more realistic mode of narrative presentation. At its earliest stages, Hindi and Urdu fiction was a web of exotic tales of magic and romance, which continued to be a popular practice among the "literati". However, the credit for the development of Hindi/Urdu fiction cannot be attributed solely to Premchand. Some of his predecessors like Bhartendu Harishchandra, Ratan Nath "Sarshar", Abdul Hadi "Sharar", Mirza Hadi Ruswa, Kishorilal Goswami and Devki Nandan Khatri popularized it with a diversity of themes in their writings. However, a majority of their writings was confined to the "historical-fantastical-political" form (Trivedi, *Urdu Premchand* 108). With the exception of Bhartendu, most of them celebrated more than anything the past glory, and the aesthetics of pristine religiosity, and could not escape the world of "fantasy" and chimerical characters.

He introduced a trend unprecedented in Hindi and Urdu fiction by breaking off from the earlier worn-out themes. In the hands of Premchand, fiction underwent a tremendous reformation. For him, the purpose of literature was not simply to evoke moments of aesthetic pleasure. Rather, he believed it to be the vehicle through which the social consciousness of readers could be "raised". Like Matthew Arnold, for Premchand too, the foundation of literature was in the "criticism of life", and its chief function was to present an upright critical view of life. It is the "mirror of society" (Rahbar 356). It is at the same a powerful means of educating people and building public opinion. He believed in a social evolution through literature which was to provide equal opportunities for all.

He could not accept literature as mere entertainment. Perhaps, the merit of Premchand as an author lies in the fact that his writings, while keeping his readers entertained, also serve as social critiques.

Premchand broke the mould of Indian literature that had percolated and hardened over centuries. No longer was it only concerned with the lives of the aristocrats, kings and *nawabs*, suitors and princesses. Before him Hindi/Urdu fiction was unable to comprehend or represent the panoramic view of the Indian village, the

cultural diversity of the peasantry and working masses. In other words, he brought into the ambit of literature the lives of the ordinary people of India – the rural stock, the urban masses – of whom he was a part. The common Indian man and his life were now perceived as significant enough to be dealt with in literature. His writings have a deep social commitment, concern with the human condition, empathy for the downtrodden, and criticism of the hypocrisy and exploitation in society, which establishes him among the greatest figures in modern Indian literature.

The world of Premchand's writings is vast. In all, he wrote fifteen novels, around three hundred short stories[3], three plays, seven children's books, scores of essays, memoirs, and articles. According to Kamal Kishore Goenka's encyclopaedia, Premchand has a total of 2,000 writings to his credit which include novels, short stories, plays, editorials, essays, book reviews, prefaces, translations, adaptations, and children's literature. He created around 3,000 characters, many of which are 'types' that can be found in human society the world over. Premchand's versatility is evident from the fact that his works deal with over three hundred distinct topics (Vol. 1, 8-9). His erudition derived not only from his reading of books of Urdu, Persian, English or Hindi literature, but also from the great store of knowledge that he gathered from his experiences with the *book of life*. Together they provide an impetus for the creation of lively characters entangled in the predicaments of social norms.

Apart from being a writer, Premchand was also a social reformer. He adopted the political and social works of Mahatma Gandhi, and supplemented the themes of his own writings with the latter's radical and formative ideas. For his contribution to Indian literature, and its overall influence on generations of readers, Goenka has declared Premchand the "Gandhi of Indian literature" (93). Premchand was not a *neta* in the mold of Gandhi and Nehru, rather he was a modest soldier in the battle for freedom, a soldier whose weapon was the pen (QS 2).

When Premchand arrived at the Indian literary and socio-political scenario, it was an age of Idealism and Romanticism. If on the one hand Pant, Prasad and Nirala represented Hindi literature with their romantic depiction of individual experiences, on the other hand Gandhi and the Congress Party spearheaded the political arena

---

[3] *Qalam Ka Sipahi* (1962) lists 224 stories; *Premchand Rachana Sanchayan* (1994) 286; *Premchand ki Vichar Yatra* (1995) 288; while *Premchand Rachanavali* Vol. 2 (1996) has a list of 302 short stories.

(Sahni, *Short-story Writer* 9). The influence of Gandhi and his methods, inspired Premchand during his early career to shift his pen from the romantic tales of patriotism and historical legends to the ground reality of the society, and he chose the depiction of the lives of the dispirited and downtrodden Indian men and women as his themes. With such themes, he pioneered radical social fiction in Indian writings. It was perhaps the material provided by that era which gave him the impetus to attempt an honest and critical representation of his days.

Life and *Letters*

Although a biography of Premchand is not necessary to appreciate his works, it adds an interesting edge to the thematic growth of his creative genius. An introductory knowledge of Premchand's life will enable his readers and scholars to plot a parallel between the chronology of his works with the events of his life. Premchand-the-man and Premchand-the-writer are closely interrelated; there are clear autobiographical juxtapositions in his short stories and novels. Moreover, to go through his life and literary journey is a highly stimulating experience of its own kind. From a lonesome boy, to an ordinary schoolteacher, to a freedom fighter, a social reformer, an editor, and most important of all, an author of immense literary skills, Premchand's life presents a *Bildungsroman* of its own. He lived and wrote during a time when India was waking up to a new identity, and when hundreds of thousands of Indians were joining hands in the struggle for Independence – a movement in which he was closely associated. Amrit Rai's *Qalam Ka Sipahi* (1962), translated into English by Harish Trivedi as *Premchand: A Life* (1982), and Madan Gopal's *Premchand: A Literary Biography* (1964) occupy a significant place in the canon of Premchand literature, because these are the two most authentic biographies of the author. Shivrani Devi's book, *Premchand Ghar Mein* (Premchand at Home) also provides interesting glimpses of Premchand's personal and literary life. This book gives an account of how the writer conducted himself at home where he wrote most of his books. A brief biography of Premchand will only emphasize the significance of a writer like him for any reader – Hindi, Urdu or English.

Dhanpat Rai Srivastava, whom today the world knows as Premchand, was born on July 31, 1880 (samvat 1937)[4] in a village called Lamahi, about four miles

[4] Date recorded in the Education Department of Uttar Pradesh is 10 August 1881. (Gopal, 1944)

from Banaras (today's Varanasi) to an ordinary *Kayastha* family. His father, Munshi Ajaib Lal, was a farmer who later became a clerk in the postal department. At the age of eight, Premchand lost his mother Anandi; the grandmother, who took the responsibility of raising him, also died soon. Meanwhile, his father re-married, depriving the young Dhanpat of paternal endearment too. According to the biographical sketch *My Life Story*, Premchand was only fifteen and in his ninth grade when his father "pushed" him into marriage (Gopal, *The Shroud* 7). His father died the next year, and after his matriculation, circumstances compelled him to leave studies and start searching for a job. Thus, his difficult childhood thrust him into the maturity of an adult much ahead of its time. In his troubled and lonesome childhood, books turned out to be his only and true companions. The rough treatment from his stepmother, his childhood marriage, wide-spread superstitions in all sections of society, the upper class dominance in the religious and the social order, the second rate status of the lower class, unsatisfactory plights of the peasants and the clerks – he saw, experienced and observed all this at a young age. Later, these experiences amalgamated with stern realities to brighten his fiction.

Despite limited facilities and the lack of resources, Premchand managed to receive a relatively good education. He received his primary education at a *madarsa* under a *maulvi* (Muslim priest), where he learnt Urdu and Persian. However, in those days, the young Premchand preferred playing in the fields to studying, glimpses of which can be seen in the stories he wrote on childhood themes. Because of his father's frequent transfers, he had to shuffle from one place to another accompanying his father, and subsequently had to study in different schools. After the early schooling done mostly in villages, Premchand moved to the Mission School of Gorakhpur, where he passed his eighth grade; then at the Queen's College at Banaras, he matriculated in 1898. His ambition to become a lawyer led him to apply for admission to Hindu College at Banaras, but all in vain, as he could not clear the entrance examination due to his weakness in mathematics. However, his keen interest in higher education remained intact, and he passed the Intermediate examination in 1910 from Basti. Nine years later, at the age of thirty-nine, he passed his B.A. examination in 1919 from Allahabad University. Meanwhile, as early as 1905, Premchand had secured a teaching position in a primary school at Chunargarh, and later served as the same at Pratapgarh, Allahabad, and Kanpur. After a series of promotions, he became

the Deputy Inspector of Schools in 1909 and served in this capacity until 1921, when he resigned from this government post in order to join Gandhi's Non-Cooperation Movement. Afterwards and for the remaining part of his life, he suffered from economic problems and chronic illnesses. After leaving government service, Premchand became more active in the literary and social fields. In order to evaluate Premchand's work critically, it is necessary to look at the books and the writers that he read. It will also enable us to assess the inspiration he drew from them. The way in which these writings formulate his literature and the some questions concerning his originality can also be addressed through such an assessment.

From his childhood to the end of his life, Premchand remained an avid reader. Much of his early readings were of Persian and Urdu writers. He read *Tilism-e-Hoshruba*, *Chahar Darvish* and similar works, besides the encyclopaedic tales of romance by W.G.D. Reynolds that regularly appeared in Urdu translations. In Persian, Mirza Hazi Ruswa and Maulavi Mohammad Ali of Hardoi were his favorites. He read *Fasana-e-Azad* and the writings of Devaki Nandan Khatri. Critics have criticized Premchand claiming that he neglected Sanskrit and was prejudiced against ancient Indian literature. It is true that he did not receive a traditional learning of Sanskrit, but he had the knowledge of important Sanskrit texts. According to Ram Vias Sharma, owing to his inefficiency in Sanskrit language, Premchand read various voluminous translations of the *Puranas* and *Upanishads* in Urdu (*Premchand aur Unka Yug* 19). The influence of the Indian historical legends can be traced in many of his short stories.

He read numerous fictional works from other Indian and western literatures, including the writings of Bangla writers such as Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and Rabindranath Tagore. Most of these writings came to him through translation, mostly English translations. A full-length discussion of his readings of English and other European literatures, and their influence on Premchand's life and work will be done in the second chapter *Premchand and English.* Meanwhile, the essence of this intensive and extensive reading embedded itself like a seed in Premchand's eager and fertile psyche, and later sprouted and blossomed prolifically in his emergence as a phenomenally talented creative writer.

Premchand took to literature when he was a teenager. It has been mentioned that right from his childhood, he was a keen observer of events and human behavior. He garnered rich material from actual life events, from its oddities and realities. His mind was etched indelibly by them, and therefore he incorporated them with remarkable effect in his writings. At the age of thirteen, he wrote a burlesque about the romance of a distant uncle who is beaten up by low-caste *chamars* for his daring. This is regarded as Premchand's first literary creation.

"Which was Premchand's first novel?" is a question that has many different opinions. There is considerable confusion regarding the names and correct publication dates of his novels and short stories. Even Premchand's own statements do not complement one another in this regard, and he never kept note of such facts. According to Premchand, his stint with writing novels began when he started "dabbling in fiction" at the age of nineteen, and wrote his first novel in 1901[5] which was serialized in a Banaras magazine from 1903 to 1905. According to his wife Shivrani Devi, his first novel *Kishna* was published from Allahabad, and the second was *Prema*, (later called *Vibhav*) which came in the year of their marriage (LB 33). No copy of *Kishna* is available today, but according to a review in the August 1907 of *Zamana*, it was a satire on the over-fondness for jewellery among Indian women, and the problems such tendency caused. Among others, Premchand's son, Amrit Rai, considers *Shyama* (later distorted to *Suvama*), a critique of the British rule, as his father's first novel. Jageshwar Nath Verma says that *Pratapchandra* in Urdu was Premchand's first novel, whereas Pyarelal 'Shakir' claims *Hum Khurma-o-Ham Sawab* to be the first (ibid). Meanwhile, two things are unanimously accepted – that his first novels and most early writings were written under the name of Babu Nawab Rai Banarasi, as 'Nawab' was Premchand's nickname in the household. On the basis of available sources, *Asrar-e-Maabid* (Mysteries of a Temple) can be considered as Premchand's first novel. It was serialized between October 1903 to February 1905 in a Banaras weekly called *Avaz-e-Khalq*. It is a caricature of the degradation of the priestly class, certainly a bold theme for its time and even today. However, it is by no

[5] Premchand writes to Taj in 1921 that *Hum Khurma-o-Hum Savab* and *Kishna* were his earliest novels written about 1900. In 1926, he wrote to Nigam that he got *Prema* published in 1904. According to an autobiographical essay, written in 1932, he claims his first novel came in 1902; whereas in 1935, he wrote to Inder Nath Madan that his fist novel appeared in 1903.

means a well-constructed novel, and is evident of Premchand's inexperience during his early phase. Later, the novel was published in Hindi as *Devasthan Rahasya.*

Distressed by the sad plight of widows, who were condemned to a traumatic and lonely life of drudgery and suffering, Premchand dexterously wove their story into his next novel *Hum Khurma-o-Ham Sawab*, which came in Hindi as *Prema* in 1907. Prema is a desolate child widow, who like others of her ilk, accepts her harsh destiny unquestioningly, but whose life is metamorphosed into a happy and zestful one after her coincidental tryst with an idealistic hero, who marries her. Meanwhile, Premchand not only enunciated the reformative precept of widow remarriage in those conservative times, but also set an example by following it in his personal life. After the failure of his first marriage, he chose to marry a child widow, Shivrani Devi, in 1906.

As far as short stories are concerned, Premchand never wrote one before 1907. The first, *Duniya ka Sabse Anmol Ratan* (The Most Precious Jewel of the World), was published in 1907 in a Kanpur monthly *Zamana* (*Chitti Patri*, 77). When his first short story collection *Soz-e-vatan* (Lament of the Motherland) came out in 1908 and became a remarkable success, the British government was infuriated and terrified because of its nationalistic fervor. They confiscated the book as he had therein exhorted his compatriots to join the battle for the country's freedom. As punishment, the authorities debarred him from writing anything further without prior permission. However, the ban did not deter him from writing; he started writing under the pseudonym "Premchand" (suggested by Banarasi Das Chaturvedi), which became his *Nom-de-plume,* which he eventually hold achieving permanent literary recognition. The first work to be published under this new identify was a story called *Bare Ghar ki Beti* (Daughter of a Big House), which came out in *Zamana* in December 1910. However, it was not before December 1915, with his story *Saut* (Husband's *Other* Wife) appearing in *Saraswati* a Hindi journal, that his works began to appear originally in Hindi. *Sapt Saroj* was his first collection of short stories in Hindi, published in June 1917.

Premchand's short stories were published under various collections: *Soz-e-Vatan, Navnidhi, Khwab-o-Khayal, Agni Samadhi, Sapta Suman, Galp Ratna, Prem Panchami, Prem Pachisi, Prem Prasoon, Prem Battisi, Prem Prabhakar, Firdaus-e-*

Khayal, *Prem Chaturthi*, *Prem Tirtha*, *Panch Phool*, *Prem Chalisi* and so on. Posthumously, these stories have been compiled and published in an eight-volume series titled *Mansarovara*. *Rangabhumi* (1925), which is Premchand's most voluminous novel, shows Premchand as a superb social chronicler and a Gandhian. A blind beggar, Surdas becomes the tragic hero, perhaps for the first time in Indian literature. *Kayakalp* (1926) is a 'Premchandian' take on Franz Kafka's *Metamorphosis*. Here, Premchand delineates a physical as well as a spiritual metamorphosis. In addition to fiction, his writings also include three plays *Sangram* (1923), *Karbala* (1924) and *Prem Ki Vedi* (1933), a screenplay *Majdoor* (1934), and some critical writings. He also wrote short biographical sketches of great personalities like Raja Man Singh, Swami Vivekananda, Ranjit Singh, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Bharatendu Harishchandra, Kalidasa, and the great Italian nationalists, Mazzini and Garibaldi. In his stories and novels, Premchand highlights the social, financial, and cultural sufferings of India under the British Raj. He also delineates the condition of those segments of society that have long been paralyzed due to the age-old evils of caste hierarchies, untouchability, and superstitions. Still, he wanted a larger medium to propagate his views about the ongoing freedom movement, and the literary and social reforms taking place in and outside the country. Therefore, after giving up his government job, with limited financial resources, he set up his own printing press named *Saraswati Press* at Banaras.

Premchand launched two Hindi literary journals – *Hans* (Swan) in 1930 and *Jagaran* (The Awakening) in 1932. His sovereign aim in these endeavors was to educate and inform Hindi readers as some English journals, like *Young India*, were already doing it among the English-knowing Indians. However, it is another story that his incursion into the field of publication never brought him commercial profits as both his magazines ran into rough weather, incurring huge debts. Due to losses, he had to place his own novels and short story collections with other publishers, like Ganga Pustakmala and Bhargava; he was obliged to do translations, editing for other journals, and even had to venture into films. On an invitation in 1934, he shifted for a year to Bombay, where his story *Mill ka majdoor* was made into a feature length film renamed as *Majdoor*. He wrote the screenplay, and also made a cameo appearance in the film. Nevertheless, his stint with filmdom remained unsatisfactory and hence very brief. Disillusioned with the film world, he returned home. Despite his forays into

editing, publishing, and films, writing was always his "first love", and he chiefly dedicated himself to creating purposeful literature even in his final days. After his return from Bombay, he went back to *Godan* (Gift of a Cow), a work he had been postponing for long.

Godan is Premchand's *magnum opus*. In this novel, he outlines the story of the sufferings and the tragic death of an honest and God-fearing peasant, Hori. Premchand depicts in graphic details the widespread system of exploitation of the poor villagers by the rich and the powerful. While finishing *Godan*, he had already started an autobiographical novel *Mangalsutra* (Auspicious Thread) whose protagonist was a poor but famous writer. The book, however, remained unfinished as he passed away on October 8, 1936, after prolonged illness, ending an extraordinarily active life.

Thus, with the help of a biographical account we see that it is the adversity of circumstances and the magnitude of his writings that make him such a great writer. His life and literature prove that a great writer is one who can play a significant role in changing and remodeling the emotions, values, and thought patterns of his readers. His contribution as a litterateur goes well beyond its limitations as a writer because he consciously tried to overcome the narrow vision of man and society. According to Kedar Nath Singh, who compares him with Tolstoy, the great contribution of Premchand is in "rescuing literature from the utter chaos of catchpenny romanticism, diffuseness and verbosity" (P.Lal 4). In addition, he brought those people, who were marginalised for centuries, to the front. Moreover, he bestows them with their due heroism.

A chronological study of Premchand's work, both thematically and ideologically, also charts the growth of Premchand from a novice to a *kaaljayee* (somewhat *avant-garde*) writer. In the early phase of his writings, we find him quite orthodox and didactic. For instance, in *Ruthi Rani* (Offended Queen), there are acclamatory references to the practice of 'Sati', with views on divorce that are quite decadent. The glowing patriotic lines in some of these stories become a stereotypical expression. In stories of the following years, like *Bade Ghar ki Beti*, and *Namak ka Daroga* (Salt Inspector), the overall stress, despite their commendable plots, remains in support of retrogressive traditional values. For example, he could create a Miss

Padma (in *Miss Padma*), who is educated, and a self-respecting modern woman, but who eventually succumbs to the "stereotype" of the Indian housewife – whose sole motive in life is to serve her husband. In such stories, we find a tendency to sermonize that tantamounts to redundancy. This however is adroitly curbed in the later works published in last two decades of his career.

With his maturing as a writer, Premchand's narration becomes increasingly serious, dramatic, and objective; his characterization becomes subtle, and the characters in general become less idealized than in his earlier works. He discards the utopian solutions found in some of his earlier novels. The areas of conflict now become more complex, suggesting that there are no easy explanation to the problems of either the village or of the city. However, there are sign of feasible improvement for a better social order. The novel *Seva Sadan* (1919) raises the tough question of prostitution and the fate of a prostitute's daughter in a society that is too narrow-minded and has double standards. *Nirmala*, written at the end of 1925, marks Premchand's final and most successful period as a writer. In it, there is no sudden transformation of character, or any idealistic conversation. With the portrayal of Nirmala's pangs and of her sad plight, Premchand emerges as a torchbearer of women's voices. In *Premashram* (1922), he is extensively concerned with peasant life, whereas in *Rangbhumi* (1925), he intertwines certain social concerns with political issues.

Conversely, once Premchand's fame was established, his works, and especially his last novel, *Godan* became the yardstick for social/fictional realism. "The greatness of *Godan*", says Trivedi, "lies in its unmatched, authentic, and insightful description of the traditional rural life – in all its suffering, sorrow, fun, vitality and pathos. Unlike in *Rangbhumi* and *Karmabhumi*, Premchand's force here is not on the political and nationalist struggle of contemporary India, but rather on its economic and social condition, as it affected the peasant and the worker alike" (*Masterpieces* 410). However, *Godan* also concerns the mechanism of urban life; its advantages and drawbacks that are generally overshadowed under the apparatus of larger bona fide rural attributes. As a consequence, his other works are often deemed "not realistic enough", and the non-realistic features in them (in terms of melodramatic characterization, the role of chance, etc.) are seen as "weaknesses" and

"faults". The effect of such categorization is also seen the publication of his novels in English translation, where we see that *Godan* remaining the only novel to rendered in English during the first for fifty years of post-Premchand era.

Critics have tried to compartmentalize Premchand by labeling him a "rural Indian writer", which is a shallow and insipid assessment, not to mention ignorant of a finer analysis. Yes, Premchand was certainly a rural Indian writer; and much, much more as well. The d*ehaat* (Indian village) is the chief domain and richest inspiration of his stories, however, these village stories offer vignettes which seem to be preparations for the bigger novels. These villages with their social regulations that had functioned more or less unchanged for centuries offered him an endlessly fascinating stage for the interplay of diverse personalities. The rigid, efficient, and often cruel social system, the orthodoxy of Brahmins, and deeply rooted caste snobberies became the target of his pun and satire. The widely spread superstitions in almost every section of the society, the yearning for sons for family inheritance, the shame of widowhood, the proverbial conservatism of the peasant class make the fabric of his portrayal of the village. Adding to it, Premchand does not eliminate the inevitable ties between the rural and the urban in order to present a holistic view of Indian society. We see that the range of his later works expand beyond the locus of a village to the vastness of the world, where young intellectuals and emancipated women make their presence felt. Overall, he presents a balanced view of Indian society – rural and urban alike. Though the stories continue to be preoccupied with social problems, their tone and technique are more refined and its impact much more far-reaching. His fiction addresses issues in a certain "way", which in literature, has come to be known as "modernist".

Premchand's fiction has at times been criticized for its overbearing influence of North India and especially Uttar Pradesh life. Many great writers of the world, like Jane Austen, Dickens, Hardy and R.K. Narayan, have woven their stories on a particular *ivory line*. A geographical setting cannot hamper its impact or universality. On the contrary, the setting of Uttar Pradesh provides a milieu which covers not only Hindi and Urdu languages, but also Hindu and Muslim cultures, thus projecting the theme of unity in diversity. Such texts can be a an appropriate example for the audience – Indian well as western audience, who have constantly been offered an

"untrue" and "stereotypical" picture of India. Texts like *Panch Parameshwar*, *Mandir Masjid* are examples to refute such untrue notions, and those who think that India belongs to a particular sect or religion, can be made to realize some important things about Indian society.

Premchand's literary resume reflects that he was skilled in three languages – Hindi, Urdu/Persian, and English. He wrote in all three with a "firm and set hand as befitting the title of "Munshi", which means a recording clerk" (AL 215). Starting with Urdu, Premchand later in his career switched to Hindi – the vehicle of most of his literary fame. His first five novels including *Rangabhumi* were written originally in Urdu and the others from *Kayakalp* to the unfinished *Mangalsutra*, were penned first in Hindi. Urdu, after having witnessed a golden period during the nineteenth and the early twentieth century, was drastically undergoing a crisis in the publishing scenario. In the meantime, Hindi was fast emerging as the language of the national movement. Therefore, he found it easier to get his work published in Hindi than in Urdu. However, there was not the least trace of any linguistic chauvinism in his mind as he kept contributing to Urdu simply because of his love for the language and its rich literary legacy. His support and efforts to promote a *Hindustani* language, a mixed bag of Hindi and Urdu is a proof of this point. He also supervised and translated most of his works from Urdu to Hindi and vice-versa.

Premchand is often called a 'classic' writer in Hindi and Urdu. However, classic can be a double-edged sword, says Francisca Orisini. She writes that "he comes packed with all the right definitions: realist, humanist, secularist, social reformist, politically engaged" (*Oxford India Premchand* vii). The classicism of Premchand's work, perhaps, remains in its long-lasting effect and contemporary significance. It compels us to think that despite all the progress in modernization, many things are the same, and there is no way to think blindly that we have come a long way. It is not only pre-Independent India that Premchand writes about, but also post-Independent India of the twenty-first century. Translation of his works can be a medium for more people to realize this.

However, it is not his life, but his work that should be the yardstick of his greatness. The current study of Premchand in English will certainly be a fruitful

endeavor in order to examinee (or "re-examine") the worth of his literature, and to see what happens to his work when they are translated into English.

Premchand being read and studied in English will undoubtedly enhance the significance of the modern vernacular texts. In fact, such studies can directly propose the "*vernacularization of English* in India"[6]. The assessment of Premchand in Hindi and Premchand in English will inquire after such needs. Through a study of Premchand, one realizes that it is not just Premchand whose reputation in English is low, there are many other great writers like Nirala, Prasad, and so on who have had a similar fate. The lack of interest in such great writers reflect the grave concern that it is not only these writers, but the Hindi language itself is losing momentum. A proposal of vernacularization of English, through which such writers and literatures can be restored, therefore becomes a serious consideration in today's time.

[6] Makarand Paranjape,'s paper "Postcolonial Preposition and Cultural Logic of Vernacular India" presented on 25 Oct. 2001, at Deptt of English, Ball State University, Muncie, USA

Chapter 2

Premchand and English

Some of the greatest writers of the last hundred years have been people educated in English even if they did not necessarily seek creative expression in English.

– R. Srinivasa Iyenger, *Indian Writing in English*[7]

Premchand's literature appeared during the time when India was under British rule. The English people and their language were the two important governing bodies of the administration. English, the imperial language, became the official language of all governmental and educational affairs. Though the institution of English education was introduced as early as in 1830s, it was only in 1857 that with the establishment of various Universities in India that English, for all practical purposes, became an "Indian language". Thus started the reign of the English language in India whose effect can be felt strongly even today.

Soon after, English literature became a major constituent of the university curricula for Indian students. It was not long after that Indians began to emerge as competent writers in English. Michael Madhusudan Dutt, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, Ranglal Banerjee, Rabindranath Tagore, Mulk Raj Anand – were among the stalwarts. The impact of English was, in Sisir Kumar Das' words, "a blinding glare in tremendous tension if not bewilderment for sometime within the Indian literary community, but was widespread all over India affecting the major languages of the country irrespective of their antiquity and opulence" (19). One can notice the impact of English and its attachment with many early twentieth-century writers who wrote in vernacular Indian languages, among whom Premchand is the exemplar.

It is a noted paradox in history that the English language – originally thought to be one of the most powerful weapons of colonization – would prove to be an equally powerful weapon of *decolonization* in the hands of the Indian intelligentsia. Similarly, in Premchand it can be found that while on the one hand, he was an avid reader of English literature, on the other, he viewed it with a skeptic's eye vis-à-vis Indian writings. This

---

[7] Quoted from Sisir Kumar Das' *Indian Ode to the West Wind: Studies in Literary Encounters* (p. 19)

skepticism is in no way a prejudiced rejection of "English"; Premchand was too complex and brilliant a thinker to forgo anything in such a simple manner! His intentions were rather to spread his own conviction in Indian languages and its literature to his readers, and to testify that once the political power upholding the eminence of English is stripped, it's status becomes that of *just* another language. In other words, he tries to nip the superiority of English that had been constructed through British, imperial rule. Therefore, in the hands of Premchand, even English language and literature became a tool in his nationalist endeavour. Even at the height of his nationalistic zeal, Premchand never rejected the use of English language. He even used it for the progress of the tradition of Hindi and Urdu writing with his translations of English works into them.

It has become a well-known fact that Premchand wrote with great skill in both Hindi and Urdu, but it also needs to be discussed that he was well read and versed in English too. Not only was he efficient in speaking English, but he also wrote in it, albeit occasionally. In the current chapter, I propose to explain the complex relationship between Premchand and English. I shall discuss his views on the English language, literature, and his confrontation with Angreziat ("Englishness"). In due course, the influence of other western European literatures, and his role as a translator and a promoter of translation of Indian as well as foreign texts will be discussed. The chapter also seeks to uncover the extent to which he favoured the use of the English language and the education policy of the British Empire. The role of translated literature in the formulation of Premchand's own writing will be examined; whether he approved of the English translation of his own work or not; and the factors behind his outwardly paradoxical mindset with English will also be brought into discussion.

Premchand was an ardent learner. Although his early education in English was only rudimentary, he took immense interest in educating himself in English. After reading almost everything available to him in Persian and Urdu, he moved towards the literatures of the west. He wanted to improve his English for many reasons; primarily it was his eagerness to grasp the best of the literary world from the west – English, Russian, French or any other language – whih he would read in their English translations. Through the English language, he sought to reach the wider world of knowledge. He saw it as a vehicle, to inform the common Indian mind about the outside

world – in not only literary, but also in political, social, economical and cultural matters. In other words, he viewed English as a powerful instrument for the "transference" of knowledge. Another reason for his "affinity" towards English was that, being the language of the Imperialist, he believed a thorough understanding of it to be a prerequisite in understanding the "true face" of the British rule. Moreover, by that time, English had already attained a dominant stature given the far reaches of the British Empire throughout the world.

However, Premchand's keen interest and wide readings kept improving his language, diction, and the knowledge of western life and literature. It is not surprising that among his first published works are essays on Oliver Cromwell (*Awaz-e-Khalk*, May 1903), and Queen Victoria (*Zamana*, August 1905) both prominent English figures (Verma and Goenka 10). Having stated that, Premchand's relationship with English can neither be introduced nor summarized in elementary terms. To say the least, his relationship with English was a very practical one. It ought to be viewed from different perspectives – Premchand as a student of literature, as a writer, as a freedom fighter, a social reformer, and above all, Premchand as an Indian.

Premchand's English Education

The early life of Premchand reflects that he received his primary education in Urdu and Persian (as discussed in the first chapter). Persian was the language of the office during the Mughal Dynasty in India, and English replaced it in the 1830s in almost all levels of administration and later, following closely, in education too. The impact of Persian on Premchand's literary career can be clearly seen in his early stories, but these writings suffer from mediocrity with their glorified themes of love, adventures, and high patriotism. Subsequently Premchand himself deterred from considering such practices as the *leit-motif* of literature. Unsurprisingly that he is generally not known for these early writings.

Premchand's upbringing in a middle-class *kayastha* family played an important role in the matter of his learning. Although he was a member of a Hindu community deeply rooted in their caste, culture, and tradition, there was never an objection from his family to receive education from various schools – *madarsa* or missionary. It contributed in building in him a perspective on life that was wider and more liberal than most others

of his community. The family was not rich enough to afford an English education for the young Premchand; yet, his father provided him a relatively moderate environment, which offered the facility to attend English classes.

Premchand was first introduced to English when his father was transferred to Gorakhpur in 1890. There, at Rawat Pathshala, he read the first few chapters of English. On passing the eighth grade, he entered Queen's College at Banaras, where he matriculated in 1898 (LB 29). English, for an average Indian student in those days, was like climbing Mount Everest. Not surprisingly, it is quite the same even today in the majority of rural India. Meanwhile, with his growing interest in reading books in English, Premchand had improved his language skills to a remarkable extent that when he applied to a college in 1897, his English teacher took notice of him. Whenever he was required to pass a test, he was confident of passing only in English (QS 35). He later used his "above average" ability in English to seek financial independence – by taking tutions and selling copies of "keys" and "notes" on English books to his fellow classmates. The small sum he earned, apart from paying for his expenses, was also used to purchase second-hand books from booksellers.

With the inclusion of English, Premchand's education and personal interest took him to a meeting point of two cultures – eastern and western – through Persian and English. Persian culture was adopted by the so-called aristocratic Indian society of the time; whereas the new emerging society of the English-educated Indians favoured the "modern" western lifestyle. They read, wrote, and spoke English. Many of them went to the extent of overlooking their mother-tongues and traditional educational systems, and even looked down upon the simplistic Indian lifestyle. However, Premchand was a unique amalgam of both cultures without being hypocritical and prejudiced towards either. He learned both Persian and English, admired the merits of their literatures, and preferred both the languages in his own literary expression. In fact, he adopted that which enticed him in the contemporary context making sure it suited the cause of social welfare.

English remained Premchand's favorite subject as a student, and as a teacher. Apart from clearing the special vernacular test of Allahabad University in Urdu and Hindi, he also passed the Permanent English Teacher's Examination with a first division in April 1904 (LB 29). It was due to his early interest in English literature that he always fared well in this subject. He took English as one of his optional subjects during

matriculation as well as Bachelors examination in 1919. Not only did he do well as a student of English, but also as a tutor and a teacher of this subject, he earned a reputation from his pupils. At the school in Pratapgarh, he was highly regarded by his students for his teaching skills in English and Urdu. He, too, greatly enjoyed teaching them these subjects (AL 35).

Premchand's romance with the English language can be traced through the pages of the manuscripts of his novels. It is very interesting to know that Premchand, who received accolades as a top-notch writer in Hindi and Urdu, wrote the synopsis and outlines of some of his novels in English. It not only expresses his dexterity in the language, but also reveals his affinity towards it. Within the pages of the manuscripts of some of his novels, like *Rangbhumi*, we can find notes in English. One of the synopses goes like this:

> "Two aspects – an unhappy married life due to difference in outlook and mentality. There is enthusiasm, sacrifice, devotion, but also a longing, a yearning for love. The heart is not awakened. There is no spiritual awakening. Wife's sacrifices create love. Spiritual awakening also comes. Then whole outlook changed. The whole atmosphere is purified" (LB 289).

He even goes on to divide this synopsis into eight chapters, all in English. The manuscripts of *Kayakalp* has details of the main characters of the novel, interestingly enough, in English:

> "Ideas, trials and troubles mould the human character; they make heroes of men; power and authority is the cause of humanity; even the highest fall of a victim to power and lose their character. Chakradhar rose morally while struggling for existence; his fall began when he came to power" (ibid 230).

Premchand constructs small sentences in English: "Vibhuda is Yash Narain Upadhyay– crafty, parsimonious, selfish, but serviceful, tactful. Vishal Singh

Bechanlal– simple, honest; Kalyan Singh is Chakradhar....Chakradhar is J. Prasad– very shy"(ibid).

Such examples along with their sentence patterns are suggestive of how English played the role of a "first drafter" for his novels. Around three dozen of his letters, written to various literary personalities and friends, are written in chaste English (Bandopadhyay 85). The following is a formal letter to his friend Daya Narain Nigam 1905:

> 'It is over two months that I had the privilege of sending to you the manuscript of my novel for you to have a look at, in the hope that you may arrange for a publisher for it. If I recall correctly, it was on 8 December that I had sent you the book" (AL 47).

In fact, the author's friendship with Nigam, and their correspondence speaks of their 'English-centrism,' as even their letters in Hindi and Urdu are full of English phraseology. Another letter written after twenty-five years to one Hariharnath in January 1930, gives us glimpses the maturity of an English prose writer:

> "A creative writer should create – what? Situations to illustrate characters. A young man should write in an optimistic mood, his opinion should be infectious, it should infuse the same spirit in others. I think the highest aim of literature is to uplift, elevate. Even realism should not lose sight of the fact" (ibid 211).

His acquaintance with English in correspondences is evident through a telegram, written in English, which he sent to his son. During his editorship days, many a times he corresponded with the contributors in English. For example, when Jainendra sent his first story to *Madhuri*, Premchand's remark was "Please ask if it is a translation?" (LB 184). However, his son Amrit Rai explains that he (Premchand) did so probably because of the facility of writing (typewriter) in English (AL 218). Nevertheless, there are many handwritten letters in English, which are available in reproduced forms in the writer's biographies and memoirs.

It is another evidence of his lifelong endearment with English literature that after years of government service, and after establishing himself as a reputed writer in Urdu and Hindi, Premchand considered earning an M.A. degree in English. At the ripe age of forty, he deposited the required fees, and prepared a bit for the examination (LB 29). However, the possession of this degree at this stage of life cannot be linked with his young-age wish alone. Perhaps such a degree could improve his prospects in the education department, and could bring with his reach a professorship that would enable him to retire with a handsome pension. It was important to ensure this, for at the age of forty, he was already feeling old, tired, and sick. However, he abandoned the idea to further his academic qualification perhaps realizing that these degrees would not be of any use in the path he had chosen – the service of the nation through his contribution in literature.

Meanwhile, if he gave up the idea of a further degree in English, he engaged himself in yet another, but definitely a more meaningful one. Rather than completing any higher degree, he chose to critique the education system as he was fully aware of the drawbacks of the British education policy, especially its unfair attitudes towards Indian students. In an article on primary education in Uttar Pradesh, he compared conditions of Indian school students with its counterparts in America, and found the Indian students much below the standards (LB 44-45). As a teacher, he would quote from the authorities, and tell his students how and why the textbooks were written in a biased manner. According to him, the sole purpose of such texts was to demoralize and bring a division between different sections of the Indian society (ibid 115).

However, in the light of the fact that he criticizes the English education policies, one cannot jump to the conclusion that Premchand underrated the importance of an English education in India. Here Premchand's position is identical with that of Tilak, who considered British rule "a predatory foreign incubus rather a blessing"(Schulz 16), but called the English language "a healthy diet, like the lioness' milk" (QS 84). Tilak believed that Independence could not be achieved without an English education; therefore, spent the first eleven years of his public life promoting the latter. Premchand also acknowledges the rewarding aspects of an English education for Indians, and follows this approach. If keeping with such an opinion could establish Tilak as a nationalist, the same would inevitably place Premchand at

the pinnacle of the same league – one who believed in the progress of the nation through fair means of fighting the imperial forces. Countering British imperialism with the support of their very own language becomes one of Premchand's crucial strategies.

The important point in Premchand's affair with English is that to him it was never a mere language – English – that is learnt; with it, a whole apparatus of thought is imbibed (Pandey 13). Thus, the influence of a thought system is always inherited along with a language and subsequently its literature. His affair with "English" extends from the confines of English as an imperial language to the literature in English, which becomes a key to other great literatures, like French, Russian, and so on.

"English" Literature and Literature in English

Commenting upon the influence of English literature on the literatures of Indian languages during the British rule, Sisir Kumar Das writes:

> "Most of our literatures felt the impact of English literature in varying degrees and responded to it in different manners depending upon various factors ranging from the existing state of literary production in the respective language areas involving the role of the intermediaries, the social composition of audience/readers, the rate of literacy, the authority of the traditional patrons of arts and so on" (17).

This influence is all-pervasive on most of the Indian writers of the pre-Independence period, and Premchand is no exception. The value given to English literature over the literatures of the vernacular languages made it imperative and obvious that the common Indian student regarded it to be the supreme one in the world. Premchand is, however, silent on this point. Though he gracefully admits the influence of reading many great English writers, there is no evidence that in comparison to Indian writings or other European literatures he considered English to be the best. For Premchand English was essentially a "link language" to approach world literature.

The birth and growth of modern Indian fiction was enlivened by English literature, and especially the novels of the later half of the nineteenth century. In addition, the novels and short stories translated from English and from some other European languages, popularized this genre in Indian languages – first in Bangla, and then later in Hindi and Urdu. Premchand played a pivotal role in popularizing Hindi and Urdu fiction. He has the distinction for the development of modern short story writing, which previously was limited to a quagmire of romantic tales. With him, it reached the level of realistic narratives comparable to some of the best ever written in any language. Some of the world's great fiction writers of the pre-Premchand era are Balzec (1799-1850), Flaubert (1821-80), Emile Zola (1799-1850), Chekhov (1828-1904), Maupassaunt (1850-93), O'Henry (1862-1910) and Tolstoy (1882-1910). Another great writer Gorky (1868-1936) was Premchand's contemporary.

How does Premchand take the Hindi short story so close to its counterparts in the west? How does he make his language competent in the sense of the western definition of "literary language"? How does he emulate the best storytellers in the world? The answers lie partly in the fact that he acquainted himself with some of the best literatures written in the world through his unconditional love for literature. He had a voracious appetite for reading literature no matter what language it was written in. However, the main concern of this chapter is to show and examine the role of English and other European literatures in comparison to the one that Premchand wrote. With no credit taken away from his born genius, it would be no exaggeration to state that English played an important role in the emergence of Premchand as an epoch-making writer in both Hindi and Urdu. The Russian and other European works that he read in English made him more sensible and critical in his perception of issues, such as religious intolerance, nationalism, the plight of women in society, political corruption, and above all, poverty – the common 'disease' that was all-pervasive in India.

As a young boy, he not only read Urdu translations of W.G.D. Reynolds' *Mysteries of the Court of London*; but also read almost every novel of Dickens and Scott. According to Madan Gopal, he was so impressed by them that he used to speak voluminously on the characterization in these novels. Sarju Narayan Tiwari, impressed by this, suggested to young Premchand, "Why don't you uplift the Indian literature by writing novels yourself?" (LB 46) Premchand wrote rich adventurous and historical

stories in his early career, which are patterned on Reynolds, Dickens, and Scotts. His following remark on the popularity of Reynolds during his early days shows the drastic variation that came into his taste of literature in his formative years as a writer:

> "There was a time, when the novels of Reynolds created an uproar in Hindi. Both Hindi and Urdu translators considered themselves blessed by translating books of Reynolds. Nobody even cared about Dickens, Thackeray, Lamb, Ruskin etc; but today the taste of the masses has changed [...] the literary taste has improved. People are taking interest in Russian literature too" (*Udbhavna* 16).

Later, he read a lot of theosophist literature by Madame Blavatsky, Annie Besant, Sir Olivier Lodges, Leadbeater and others (LB 219). He also enjoyed reading some noted French writers. After reading the five-volume epic novel *Les Miserables* by Victor Hugo, he was so deeply impressed that he wrote to his editor-friend Nigam to find out whether it had already been translated into Urdu or not, evidently expressing his ardent desire to translate it himself (ibid 127).

Premchand experimented in various directions and forms of writing, and subsequently formed his own style. He read the works of great European writers, such as Thomas Hardy, Dickens, Arthur Conan Doyle, Thackeray, Galsworthy, Goldsmith, Chesterton, Ibsen, Kipling, George Eliot, Garibaldi, Jane Austen, Roman Rolland, and George Bernard Shaw. Besides these, he also read Indian English writers like Mulk Raj Anand. While reading Russian writers, Tolstoy, Gorky and Chekhov, and some French writers, he studied and devoured their techniques, gradually modifying his own style after them.

As far as poetry was concerned, Premchand never showed much attachment with it. According to him, poetry contained far too many sensuous images. "He admittedly could not appreciate Shakespeare's sonnets, and Urdu-Persian *ghazals*" for they were more or less based on imagination and lacked reality at the surface level (QS 174). Nonetheless, he was aware of the strength of drama as an instrument to influence the masses, and therefore, had an ambition to write drama. With a growing affinity towards drama, he could not resist the temptation of reading Shakespearean plays, publicized to

be the best by none other than the British Raj! In a postscript to a letter to Nigam, he asked for a copy of the *Twelfth Night* (LB 84). Later, he wrote *Sangram* – the first of his three plays. However, there is neither any comparison between the two plays, nor is there any other evidence to show that he read other plays of the great dramatist.

Premchand, when asked about the foreign writers who influenced him the most, explains that the Russian short stories had the greatest impact on him: "We have few adventure stories so far. The detective stories are also very few. And those that are there, are not original. They are mere imitations of Conan Doyle or some other" (LB 347). He considers Chekhov the best storywriter in the world, and calls Turgenev a "pigmy" in comparison with Tolstoy. He picks Tolstoy's story about "two pilgrims", and Chekhov's story "where a mother stitches a wedding dress and also mourning veil for her daughter", as the best stories he read. However, from his standpoint, Indian vernacular writers were no less competent in their story-telling capacity as he favorably rates Tagore's *Drishti Dan* to be as good as the best in the world. To him, the portrayal of the Indian women's character in this story is "unparalleled". He considers *Kabuliwala* a first-rate story for its universal appeal. Though he finds some of Maupassaunt 's stories as "good", he does not like the sexual content in them (ibid). We can see the avoidance of such contents in his writings, and this lack has proved a assenting point as well as sometimes it becomes 'not so attractive' factor for the modern reader.

Several comments have been made on Premchand's credibility as a writer, who for the first time in Hindi literature brought new techniques into practice. These techniques are derived from his readings of the great writers of the time. Even with his first big success as a novelist, reviewers encouragingly compared him to the likes of Thackeray, Dickens, Scott, and Rabindranath Tagore (ibid 133). Consequently, we see that Russian, French, and English writers have made a significant impact on Premchand's creativity. However, Tolstoy, Hugo, Roman Rolland, and Tagore remain the writers that influenced him the most. It was inevitable that he would be compared to the above stalwarts; however, due to his open acceptance of their influence on him, his creativity is unfortunately held suspect by some critics. Hindi and Urdu literature required a blend of western techniques with a soul of Indian traditions, and ideas that were centuries old could be changed. Such an admixture can be traced in Premchand's works, and therefore,

the role of his creative genius is far more important as the inspirational support he derived from English and other literatures.

Premchand: the Translator

After the introduction of English in the second half of the nineteenth century, a number of eighteenth century classics of English literature were translated into Indian languages. However, for the next half-a-century, there was hardly any work from the west other than English literature available in Hindi and Urdu. Premchand becomes one of the pioneers in moving beyond the bounds of English literature, when he introduces the non-English European works of fiction to Hindi and Urdu readers. Translation is the major activity in his endeavor.

Translation was one of the prominent forms of literary exchange, which, besides imparting entertainment, also provided Premchand a platform to perceive thoughts and ideas for his own writings. All his readings of non-Hindi/Urdu/Persian and non-British writers was through translations. Therefore, it was natural that he fully realized the importance of this form; from the beginning, he favored translations of other works into Indian languages, and he actively participated in translation activities. Premchand's first translation of any work was in Urdu. In the December-January 1910 issue of *Adeeb*, a translation of a book by Vivekananda was serialized under the title *Rehnuma-e-Hind*, and Premchand was the translator (LB 74).

The list of Premchand's translations of the western writings is comprehensive. He translated George Bernard Shaw's *Methuselah* into Hindi, titled *Sristhi ka Aarambh*. For the Hindustani Academy, he did the Urdu renderings of John Galsworthy's three plays – *Justice*, *Strike*, and *Silver Box* into *Insaaf*, *Hartaal*, and *Chaandi ki Dibiya* respectively. However, being extremely occupied with his own writings and other translation assignments, he required Babu Har Prasad Saxena's assistantship in this assignment. *Nyaya*, the Hindi translation of *Justice* appeared in 1931. He translated Charles Dickens' *The Story of Richard Doubledick* into Urdu *Ashk-e-Nadamat* (Tears of Shame), besides translating Oscar Wilde's *Centreville Ghost*, and Hendrik Van Loon's *The Story of Mankind* into Hindi. On a request from Acharya Narendra Dev, he translated parts of Jawaharlal Nehru's *Glimpses of the World History* (popularly known as *Letters from a*

Father to His Daughter) into Hindi titled *Pita ke Patra Putri ke Naam*. The first few pieces, says Madan Gopal, were approved by Nehru himself (LB 227).

A conscientious and gifted translator, Premchand strove to introduce the Hindi and Urdu reader to the best of other Indian writings that he had read for his own pleasure and knowledge. An example of his efficiency as a competent translator is *Azad Katha* (1926), the thousand-page Hindi translation of Ratannath Sarshar's massive work *Fasana-e-Azad*. Apart from translating Sheikh Saadi's *Gulistan*, he also translated Gauri Shankar Ojha's three famous speeches on Indian culture into Urdu (LB 183). Premchand carried out the Urdu translations of Tagore's short stories that he read in English due to his lack of sufficient Bangla (Sharma 19). His commitment with translation is evident from the fact that even after establishing himself as an eminent writer, he spared time for translation activities. He translated most of his Hindi novels and stories into Urdu and vice-versa, or assisted the translators in doing so. Such activities also gave him some diversion from his regular writing.

He set out to translate some of the best works of French and Russian literature into Urdu and Hindi. He began with the translation of Belgian writer Maurice Maeterlinck's French work *Les Aveugles* (1890; English translation *Sightless* by L.A. Tadema in 1895) into Urdu as *Shab-e-Tar*, which appeared in 1917. To the Hindi readers, He introduced French dramatist Anatole France's play *Thais* in the form of a novel entitled *Ahankar* (1923). The same year he translated British novelist George Eliot's *Silas Marner* under the title of *Sukhdas* (Bandopadhyay 146). However, *Sukhdas* cannot really be considered a translation, it is rather an adaptation of the original into a fifty-nine page book. The book does not claim to be a translation of *Silas Marner*. It is said that "the story is disrobed of its British clothing, and is dressed in Indian attire" (LB 165). Premchand retains only the "bare bones" of the story and tailors it into Indian culture. However, unlike the original, he colored every aspect of the novel in the "nationalistic" palette. There are some stories that are but adaptations of some English or other European works. In *Ishq-e-Duniya aur Habbe Watan*, Premchand presents Mazzini's biography in the form of a story. *Sig-e-Leila* is also a translation or an adaptation of some English short story (ibid, 81).

Premchand's translations are marked by his excellent grasp of idioms and cultural equivalence. Though he has "Indianised" and attempted to reign in many of these works

keeping in mind the interest of the Indian audience of the time, he has shown a tremendous sense of maturity in rendering the spirit of the original text. He reinforced a "juice and mildly pornographic" story like *Thais* into *Ahankar*, which is a "unique blending of *Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram*"(Trivedi, *India, England, Fance* 259). Another distinct quality of Premchand – the translator – is that he tends to explain and justify through a 'Preface' or an a introductory *nivedan*[8] to express his motive behind the undertaking of a particular translation and the strategies he chooses to adopt. For example, in the introduction of *Sukhdas*, he declares the original novel as "a unique portrayal of the workings of the human heart". Praising Eliot's artistry in the portrayal of characters and the subtlety of thought, he calls it "one of the best English novels" (ibid 165). Thus, Premchand displays the responsibility of a translator towards the original text and the author, unlike today where many translators hesitate to take the responsibility for offences that they commit in their translations. Such lapses are not considered pardonable in the present research area of Translation Studies.

As has already been mentioned, Premchand was immensely influenced by Russian literature: the stories of poor peasants, of exploitation and retaliation, such as the writings of Tolstoy, had deeply inspired him. Premchand goes on to highlight in his novels the exploitation and suppression of peasants, who constitute the very foundation of the agrarian set-up of rural India. He translated some twenty-three stories of Tolstoy into Hindi and published them under the title *Prem Prabhakar*. These include instructive tales like, *"That whereby man live", "Neglect a fire and it will be quenched", "Where love is, there God is also", "Children may be wiser than their elders", "How much land does a man require?", "The grain that was like an egg", "The Godson"* and so on (QS 165). The Russian Revolution also influenced Premchand's literary career and life. In *Premashram,* he contextualises the historical event while dealing with a social system in which rich zamindars exploit poor peasants. Shortly after the Revolution, in 1919, he wrote an essay *Daur-e-Qadim: Daur-e-Jadid* (Old Epoch and the New). It exposes a system under which the honest worker becomes a slave to the capitalist who has harnessed the machine, whereas the poor have to fight bloody wars launched by the rich. At the same time, the author was reading Tolstoy's works, which perhaps in some measures, inspired him for these translations.

---

[8] Galsworthy, John. *Chandi ki Dibiya.* Trans. Premchand. Prayag: Hindustani Academy, 1930 (p. 1-4).

Premchand did not want the locus of translation to be fixed on one language-English, so he wanted to shift the attention from English to the literature of other non-European languages. His translating French and Russian, can be seen as an act of "counter-translation"– a term coined by Shantha Ramakrishna (Simon and St-Pierre 19). It is a deliberate attempt to shift attention from canonical English literature confined to British writers. To retain their colonial legacy, the British introduced very little literature other than their own to India, and it was primarily British literature that was translated into Indian languages. Premchand's translation of French and Russian works is (even if not deliberately) a promotion of non-European literature to counter the English hegemony, and a contribution to cultural transmission for a more diversified Indian culture. Harish Trivedi gives a remarkable account of how Premchand used translation of literature other than English, as a "small gesture towards the liberation of Hindi (and Indian) literature from the tutelage of the imperially inducted master literature, English" (*India, England, France* 249). Thus his choice of taking French and Russian masterpieces of literatures breaks the hegemonic concept of English as master literature. Trivedi considers Premchand's choice of translating the French work *Thais* into Hindi *Ahankar*, "an extra-literary charge which turned it, among its other virtues, also into a small gesture towards the liberation of Hindi (and Indian) literature from the tutelage of the imperially-inducted master literature, English" (ibid 249). Such translations should not be viewed as acts of "subversion against English literature" (ibid 261). Rather it is a silent protest against the latter.

Despite the modification in the translations (that Premchand also acknowledges), he has succeeded in creating a wide readership of his translations and adaptations. In doing so, he strikes a balance on the contemporary translation scenario, which was erstwhile dominated by English.

Premchand's journey as a translator is not confined to literary translation alone. At one point, he even contemplated a career in professional translation. When Osmania University at Hyderabad set up a bureau to arrange for translators, Premchand also applied for a position. Financial difficulties were not the sole reason for his application, as his genuine interest for translation activities was also an important factor. Although nothing came of it, it however shows his keen interest in translation. He always considered translation as a serious literary practice, as is reflected by the fact that he

presents a detailed scheme for setting up a Translators' Circle in the May 1933 issue of *Arjun*. Such was his interest that not only the estimates of income and expenditure, lists of source journals and the articles to be translated were drawn up, but also the smallest details, like the estimated expenditure on postage, were worked out (AL 296). He discussed the same at length during his Aligarh visit in 1934 (Bandopadhyay 115). However, the project could not progress beyond this due to the lack of time and financial resources. When Chaturvedi planned to bring out a short-story issue of *Vishal Bharat*, Premchand advised him to also include translations from contemporary short stories from Europe and America (QS 345). His own journal *Hans* regularly published Hindi translations of various Indian and foreign languages, like French, German, Dutch, Russian, Greek, Italian, English, Chinese, Japanese, etc. In its first six years, while Premchand was the editor, *Hans* published around fifty stories from major languages of the world, including writers like Thomas Burke, Hardy, Dostoevsky, Wilde, and so on (Panday, *Patrakar Premchand aur Hans* 288-89).

However, another reason for Premchand's undertaking of the translation of his own works was that he was not in a position to invest money in others to translate his books. He hoped to save some of the expenditure, in order to spend on other recurring costs. It can also be reasoned that he did not want anyone else other than himself translating his work, perhaps thinking that the painstaking task would challenge the patience of most and that anyone else doing it would not do justice to his work. Moreover, he was a competent translator himself, and had excellent command over both Hindi and Urdu, and therefore started translating most of his works himself. At one point, he was such a busy translator that in the evenings, he would translate *Kayakalp* and *Ghaban* from Hindi into Urdu, and in the mornings, he would write the Hindi original of *Karmabhumi*.

It is imperative at this juncture to have a brief discussion on Premchand's translation of his own works. While translating from Urdu into Hindi, he takes some liberties of adding or dropping a character or some lines. For example, he adds a *doha* (stanza) by Tulsidas at the end of *Prema*, which is the Hindi rendering of *Hum Khurma-o-Ham Sawab*. Perhaps, assuming that most Hindi readers are Hindu people, and Tulsidas being a household Hindu poet, he found it appropriate to bring the

concluding message of the novel at an apt *doha* by Tulsi. In instances like this, he displays the creative freedom that a translator should be qualified to.

However, there are some unusual domains of these translations, which demand a close analysis. It intrigues one to find that neither he makes a distinction between a translation and adaptation, nor does he mention the source of the text. Researchers and scholars have a tough time working out such discrepancies. For example, after toiling hard, Mmadan Gopal found out that *Ashk-e-Nadaamat* (1920) was but a translation of *The Story of Richard Doubledick* by Dickens (LB 134).

There has always been a paradigm to evaluate and judge translated literary texts. However, the evaluations simply label them as "good" and "bad" translations. Premchand's translations of his own works into Hindi and Urdu have been unanimously well received, and rarely give the impression of being "secondary copies". They are widely read as their originals. However, to say the same in the case of his translations of English works would be an overstatement. There are instances that question his competency as a translator of English texts into Indian languages. Imtiaz Ali Taj told Madan Gopal in 1941 that Premchand's translation of Oscar Wilde's story *De Profundis* was "so bad" that he (Taj) rejected it. The translation of Wilde's *Ghost of Canterville* was never published for the same reason, and even the Hindustani Academy found some of his translations "poor" (LB 134-337). Premchand had even at times, indulged in some unprofessional deeds. In some instances, he drifts from his customary introductions and declines to credit the original author. His conduct becomes "questionable" when he requests the editor Taj not to mention his name on the Urdu translation of the Oscar Wilde story. The Urdu translations of Bangla stories also do not contain his name as the translator. Even his saying that after *Aab-e-Hayat* and *Ashak-e-Nadamat*, he had taken a vow not to translate anymore, (ibid) does not seem a plausible reason. However, while he subsequently did translate some plays, he did not translate any other story afterwards, and wrote only original ones.

Was it a self-acknowledgement of his failure as a translator of English texts into Indian languages that Premchand began to concentrate entirely on his own writings, or was it merely a choice to concentrate on original writings? Before jumping to a conclusion, one has to look through other reasons, and other assignments

the author was engaged in. His commitment to his original writings, translations of his own works, the job of an editor, his prolonged illness etc., are also some factors that hampered his translations.

Premchand vs *Angreziat* (Englishness)

In the early portions of this chapter, is has been argued that Premchand's relationship with the English language was the result of a conscious effort to serve Indian literature and the ongoing national movement. Therefore, it would be an exaggeration to charge him for patronizing the English language. Here, the current research finds it interesting to compare and contrast Premchand with Rabindranath Tagore. Tagore, undoubtedly a great writer, appears to be accepting the hegemony of the English language when he translates his *Gitanjali* into English for the Western readership, an endeavor which brings him laurels and recognition in the West. Interestingly, Tagore's establishment in the West became an incentive for many other writers to get their works translated into English. Krishna Baldev Ved, a Hindi writer himself translated all his works into English. On the contrary, despite his modest knowledge of English and great appreciation for English literature, Premchand does not have any eagerness to see his works in English, and he does not became an "anglicized" Indian writer. Translation of his work into English never becomes a priority for him, and we shall see in the third chapter that hardly any of his works appeared in English during his life.

However, such a comparison brings forth another issue, which is whether a writer should translate his own work. Premchand never attempted any translation of his work into English or any foreign language for the western audience. His position is unlike that of Tagore's. The latter translates his Bangla writings into English, and especially *Gitanjali* becomes an archetypal example, where an original writer translates his own work into English and wins accolades and subsequently the most prestigious literary prize in the world – the Nobel. Ironically, the very same translation today has the dubious distinction of being a poor translation of the original book.

Rather than translating or inviting translators to render his works into English for the western reader, Premchand chooses to project the oddities of English people in

his writings and especially in the forms of ironies and satirical stories. For, example, in the story "*Lekhak*", the character of an Indian writer with great pride accepts the invitation of a king. Reaching there, he is introduced to some English *intellectuals* like lawyers, doctors, and other socialites. Seeing their attitude and behavior, the writer realizes that the whole atmosphere was created to make him pity himself. Disillusioned, he leaves the meeting, returns home, and experiences heartfelt contentment in his own indigenous space. Premchand satirizes the blind aping of English culture and their 'modern' life style. In the story *Baz Yaft,* a simple, rustic woman is married to an English-educated Indian lawyer. The husband wants her to imitate western manners and read English writers rather than Indian religious books. When they move in the town, she becomes 'westernized'– plays tennis, goes to a club and begins to read Oscar Wilde. After a while the husband is disillusioned due to this drastic switchover, and with great difficulty he persuades her to give up her new western lifestyle, and return to the simple Indian ways.

Contrary to his appreciation of English literature, Premchand realized that the English-educated well-to-do section of the Indian society had a cruel attitude towards the layman. He not only portrays this in his works, but also rectifies it in his personal life by discarding the English way of life. If on the one hand he criticizes the English colonial rule, its faulty educational policies and cultural imperialism, on the other he severely attacks those Indians who acutely collaborate in their business. In his personal life too, the author did not like flattering English officials for petty favors. When he found out that his friend Nigam invited English officials to his daughter's wedding party, he angrily scolded him. It is interesting that though he wore formal dress like the English coat occasionally, he did not like western clothes and smelt *Angareziat* (Englishness) in them (Verma and Goenaka 14). He followed the same conduct in practice when it came to speaking English.

The English-educated Indians in Premchand's times can be divided into two broad categories. The ones, who belonged to the bourgeoisie– the "elite"; they read, spoke and even behaved like the English. In the course of their western education, they increasingly cut themselves off from Indian traditions and culture. The others were those who despite their English education chose to be "indigenous". They occasionally spoke

and wrote in English, but preferred Hindi or vernacular Indian languages in the public sphere. Premchand belonged, of course, to the latter category.

Along with criticizing the English education policies, he attacks those who blindly follow the English culture and life-style for their own petty selfish reasons. He ridicules the snobberies of the English speaking elite who aped Western culture indiscriminately. This may raise many eyebrows because Premchand himself was not very rooted in the so-called Indian "traditional" Sanskrit education. In the first place, Sanskrit scholarship is not, and cannot be the parameter of one's Indianness. Even if it is considered in the absolute sense, Premchand had a sound knowledge of Sanskrit texts, which he read in translation. One can find striking similarity between him and Ram Mohan Roy that both started with Persian, and preferred English along with their mother tongues for the vehicle of their thoughts in public life. Such linguistic conduct was probably the bilingualism in colonial India. Critics who dismiss Premchand on the ground of his indextirity in Sanskrit, his forte in Persian, and preference of English, actually do injustice to the writer's prolificacy. In fact, he should be in the category of the likes of Rai, Tilak, Sardar Patel, and Rajendra Prasad, all of whom were educated in English and also received indigenous learning (Pandey 12). His English learning was merely the need, and vehicle to succeed in his professional and public life, that is why he made special efforts to learn it.

Premchand always supported the cause of the integrity of Indian languages and literatures; most importantly, his mission for the promotion of Hindi as the national language also makes his stance clear. Premchand's position on the issue of "indigenous Indian learning" versus "English education", though, might seem confounding at times, yet remains upstanding. Gitanjali Pandey clears this seemingly "dualism" in Premchand's persona:

> "Premchand moving "upward" as the prevailing elite values would define it, from villager to town and from indigenous to English education, may have lacked the bursting confidence of the glib 'elite' school boy who had been lucky enough to be born in the 'right' place as it were. But Premchand had an advantage over him as a writer - he was less cut off from his roots" (12-13).

Premchand was not content with the response of the English-educated Indian student fraternity. Whereas in other countries, students were leading freedom movements, here in India, they were treating the British as their gods (*Vividh Prasanga Vol. II* 4). Premchand also accuses the English-educated middle class, being a collaborator of the British to some extent. Some of his most pungent charges are made on them. Here is an example of one.

> "These English educated people are the epitome of ambiguity and hypocrisy. They often keep one of their feet planted in the nationalistic movement, from where they pretend to represent people; but the other foot remains within the colonial establishment" (ibid 4).

Premchand's novels are filled with such attacks on English education and its products. He also used the metaphor of "traders" to describe the British rulers, whose prime objective in India was business. In cautious terms, he blames the "deracinated" middle-class who speak English more fluently than their own language, as having nothing to do with the "dust and heat" down below where the real people are (AL 352). He declares, in Sadan's words in *Seva Sadan*:

> "All these (English-speaking Indians) are the tools of selfishness. They learn English only to strangle the throats of the poor, and feed their own stomachs. They all are the slaves of fashion, whose education has taught them how to flatter the English. Those who do not love their own language, are not worth alive" (Gurtu 167).

The same attack blazes in many letters written in English. In another article, he satirizes the reckless craze for the English language and literature among Indians.

> "We may be obliged to use English in offices, but we have become such devotees of the power of the language that we depend on it even for writing personal letters and for conversing at home; for writing dairies we use English again. Ah! .....what a language! How supple it is! How poignant it can be and how fully expressive of ideas, how vast a

> vocabulary it has and how valuable and refined a literature, how touching its poetry is and how significant its prose! Everyone falls flat for English, everyone swears by it!" (AL 264).

These oft-quoted lines and some others that are quoted in this research, are indeed self-refractory, and contradictory. They obviously draw a convoluted stance and present the writer in an ambiguous manner. Therefore, it is important here to explain this ambiguity in Premchand's ideal and conduct. Premchand, relatively well educated in English, read it to meet his literary ends, and uses it more often than not for his nationalistic objectives (discussed earlier). When he criticizes the very same language and its followers, his aim is to stop the propaganda of 'Englishness' that the Raj brought along with it. In the midst of the hoopla over the English language, which he himself could not resist in his personal life, perhaps it was this self-realization that prompted him to resist this linguistic hegemony by critiquing it. Premchand therefore satirized the nationwide craze for a foreign language. He studies its modernistic social tendencies and its literary models. His English was better than most of his contemporary fellow Hindi and Urdu writers. However, despite his crusade for liberation from the slavery of a foreign tongue, and the establishment of a national language, he could not free himself from the practice of that very language.

He realized that even our nationalist activists suffered from the disease of English slavery. The conversion of Indians into "Englishmen" was a direct sign of a "slave mentality". At that time, when most Indians were highly fascinated and attracted towards England, Premchand turned down an offer of a trip, missing the opportunity of gaining a firsthand experience of English society.

Premchand acknowledged that without a national language, the formation of a nation-state was only an illusion. He was clear in his mind that so long as the English language dominated, India could not become a nation in the true sense. He regarded the English language and its increasing propaganda as the "greatest impediment" in the path of the national language. He condemned the lack of self-respect among Indians as "obnoxious as the shame of slavery" (LB 323). According to him, even the Indian Council, which was formed to fight for freedom, was not free from "English slavery". "When all the written and spoken works are done in English, then the Indian Council is a

child of the British authorities only" (ibid). The promotion of Indian language and literature came to figure, thus, as a prominent and potent tool.

> "I cannot recall a single instance of a nation having won independence on the strength of a foreign language. The basis of a nation is the national language"(ibid).

Premchand was among the first notable figures, who endorsed a national language for India, which however was not to be English. English was rapidly becoming the language of the highly educated and the aristocrats in India. However, Premchand strongly felt that the language of the imperialist's should not get the honor of being the national language of India. In his address at the convocation of the *Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachara Sabha* at Madras on 29th December 1934, he dwelt on the problem of a national language, and emphasized that Indians need a language which could be understood and spoken all over the country. His great emphasis was on the most commonly shared language, which had a potential to emerge as a strong *lingua franca* to resist the dominance of English language, that is 'Hindustani'– an amalgam of the Hindi and the Urdu registers.

Thus we see that Premchand's relationship with English was not so plain. His experience with English rule and life and English literature is different, complex, and sometimes fractured. We find contradictions, suspicions, likes, and dislikes. It needs to be seen from a colonial outlook, and from a nationalistic point of view. He explains the notion of 'Swarajya' through breaking away from the dominance of the English language and forming a national language of India's own. In Postcolonial Studies, one can observe a similar stance being taken for the establishment of a national literature in native languages by African writers like Ngugi Wa Thiongo who prefers writing in his native language Gikiyu than in English. Premchand's stance can be viewed as stopping India from becoming a Brazil, which has become a Portuguese speaking nation today. Though he was never against the flourishing of regional languages, for the purpose of communication amongst Indians, Premchand picked *Hindustani*, which alone, according to him, had the capacity to be called the Indian national language. In fact Premchand's idea was to form a *Hidustani Sabha* to promote and compile a kind of Hindi that was a common unifying language that could welcome all the languages in the country, even

English. Thus, we see how he wanted a Hindustani language as powerful as English to counter the English hegemony.

Another trait of Premchand's relationship with the English language can be seen from the point of view of India's multilingual position, and the necessity of an optional bilingualism. He was conscious of the priority and patronization English was enjoying at that moment, so he stressed on the knowledge of at least one Indian language along with English. "People would sacrifice fifteen years of their life acquiring English, cannot they spend even a month or two on learning a script and literature on which may depend not only the progress of our nation but its very existence" (AL 353). The hint is towards "Hindustani" language, which he wanted to use as a tool against, not a foil to English. On the one hand, Premchand conscripted the English language for his literary understanding in his day to day life (discussed in the first part of this chapter); on the other, when it came to the notion of a national language, he was all against the strengthening position of English. To break this stronghold of English, he urged the strengthening of the Indian languages, and especially one national language.

Now , it becomes clear and important for us to note that Premchand's indictment of 'Englishness' or westernisation, does not necessorily makes him an "English-phobic", nor does his fascination with English and other European literatures prove him someone 'anti-national'. His stories and novels speak highly of great Indian traditions, and the people who held its glory intact. For example, the character of Vinay in *Karmabhumi* is created on the inspirational life of Swami Vivekanand. Therefore, if he brought western elements and seriousness in his work, he did not ignore at any point the Indian glorious past and its present that held its future. He managed a balanced and matured association with both- the Indian and the western, the past and the present, and finally Indian literature was atop his priority.

Premchand's Originality

The study of *Premchand and English* would be incomplete without examining another important aspect of his writing. It deals with the various kinds of criticism that his work has received, especially vis-à-vis comparative study with other works in English literature. His work has been under scrutiny of critics from their first publications until date. Unfortunately, the speculations regarding the form and content adopted by him have

been commented on with the intention to vandalize his reputation. The accusations vary from the doubts of suspicions of plagiarism: he was accused of copying the content and styles of some of the great writers from the west like Thackeray and Tolstoy.

One critic, Avadh Upadhyay, in his series of articles entitled *Premchand's Originality: Parallelism in Premashram and Resurrection, and Rangbhumi and Vanity Fair* (appeared in *Sarswati* Aug.-Dec. 1927), declares that *Premashram* is a mere copy of Tolstoy's *Resurrection*, whereas *Rangbhumi* is a copy of Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*. According to Upadhyay, Premchand has drawn heavily on European literature and attempted to transplant something that could not strike roots in Indian soil. However, Premchand responded to the critics in his very own way. According to him, he created most of his characters from his personal experiences. As far as *Resurrection* is concerned, Premchand had not read it. But along with it, he also says that, in writing *Seva Sadan*, although his reading of *Vanity Fair* certainly inspired him, he neither took cue from Thackeray's novel, nor copied it to any extent whatsoever. Here, it is noteworthy that Upadhyay has charged *Rangbhumi* as a copy of *Vanity Fair*, while Premchand links his reading of *Vanity Fair* with *Seva Sadan*. The outlooks of the two bear resemblance, but the two are of very different types (LB, 132). The similarities between Vinay and Osborne, and Amelia and Sophia are mere "statistical" resemblance, and cannot be denoted as constructed plots. In fact, the character of Sophia is modeled on Annie Besant, a fact which Premchand himself acknowledges in a letter (AL 201-3).

Upadhyay also alleges that Premchand's novel *Kayakalp* and the story *Vishwas* are copies of Hall Caine's *The Eternal City*; whereas another story *Abhushan* resembles a story by Hardy (ibid). The July 1926 issue of *Avdesh*, compares *Rangbhumi* with Tagore's *Chokher Bali*, and attempts to prove it a clever copy of the latter. Another critic Schultz compares *Godan* with Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities*, and *Hard Times*. Though there can be some resemblance between two works, there should be nothing surprising in two authors arriving at the same observations independently. Sometimes, two works may reflect some resemblance, obviously because one author is deeply impressed by the other's work. However, there is much in these works that is Premchand's own creation. Nonetheless, such criticism has been proved superficial and ridiculous, as these critics have applied the criterion of a mere "resemblance" and they lack any thematic basis to support their views.

Comparisons are always fascinating, but often fortuitous. However, the similarity between the genius of some writers prompts critics and readers to discover similarities in their works. It seems that in the similarities between the works of Premchand, Thackeray and Dickens, there lie products of such temptations. Moreover, the rave reviews that some of Premchand's work received invited such comparison. For example, one of these reviewers of *Seva Sadan* characterized Premchand as among the few "lonely pioneers" who showed the seeds of literature on their "quiet unknown corner," and hoped that Hindi literature possibly could take pride that it too had "Thackeray, Dickens, Scott and Rabindranath Tagore" (ibid 133).

Premchand's *Kayakalpa* (1926), which exactly translates into "Metamorphosis", apparently brings comparisons with Franz Kafka's famous work of the same title. Besides the "transliteral" similarities of the title, the two novels execute their themes very differently. Moreover, Premchand could have hardly been familiar with Kafka at that time. On the other hand, Siegfried Schulz claims that in this novel, Premchand betrays some of Anatole France's relentless and forbidding moralism (Schulz 18). Premchand wrote *Kayakalp* while translating France's *Thais* into Hindi, and some events in *Kayakalp* are too contrived to be convincing (ibid). Schulz produces some facts regarding borrowings and adaptations, he believed Premchand took the basic structural elements from Dickens. According to him, Premchand had a sturdy structural frame on and around which to build a literary edifice of his own. When he borrowed certain characters and events, he transformed them into genuinely Indian people and occurrences (ibid 33).

However, there are important traits, which set Premchand apart from his erstwhile preceptor Dickens. Premchand differs greatly from the way in which Dickens treats his subjects as well as his circumspection and honest compassion. The poor are not the objects of pity as they are with Dickens, but of profound love. Whimsical behavior is reserved for the satiated urbanities; there is some good-humored bantering and taunting, but also realistic brutality prevalent among the villagers. Premchand is not a great moralizer, not at least in his novels; he is not as garrulous as Dickens is in his copious observations, Premchand is very economic, and he cautiously applauds the cowardly acts of the urbanities, a subtle form of irony and alienation (Schulz 33).

However, such studies of the influence of English on Indian literatures would be an "exercise in trivialities" because they are restricted to textualities (Das 27). In all,

Premchand does not necessarily regard English texts of great importance, and it is not English literature alone, but other literatures that held some influence on him. His reception of the English and the resistance to the hegemony of English language and literature remain the most significant aspect of his personality and literature.

Conclusion

Like all great authors in the world, Premchand was also influenced by his predecessors and contemporary greats. He accepts that he looked up to these writers, as well as some Indians, like Bankim Chandra, and Azad (Bandopadhyay 24). It is also true that he studied and assimilated the best techniques and styles of these great writers. However, he developed his own individual style and identity in his novels and short stories. Undoubtedly he learnt a lot from the great English novelists, writers of French realism, and from the Russian precursors of social realism, but he kept his feet firm on Indian soil. His deviation from original Sanskrit and other literatures, and his appreciation of European literature, is an appreciation for imaginative freedom.

If influence and inspirations from the western writings are made out as subordinate methods, Premchand is neither the first nor the only Indian writer to do so. English and other European literatures have influenced many Bangla writers and early English writers in India. Premchand's predecessor Maulana Sharar wrote rich historical and sociological adventurous novels, which are deeply influenced by Walter Scott's novels. Kishorilal Goswami, a pioneer in the Hindi novel with Devaki Nandan Khatri, drew heavily from the English novels of their times, let alone from Sanskrit literature. Premchand, though he seeks inspiration and influence from them, does not pattern his works upon their plots. Rather, he takes one important leap – going beyond them – by making his literature one of its own kind. He brings originality of character and theme; he moves beyond clichés; and brings an Indian perspective – an "Indianness" in all his writings.

Thus we have seen how under the apparatus of "English"– the language as well as literature, Premchand, a native Indian, emerges as a prolific writer capable of influencing a large section of Indians. In the process, he counters the purpose of the very agency of "English rule" with his love-hate relationship with English. Premchand's early patriotism also strove to contrast the lofty ideals generated by Indian culture with western values

brought into India by the British. There is no doubt that Premchand accepted much that was English or western. He learnt English, he read voluminously in English, he used a primary press, he translated from English, wrote stories and discussed their qualities in western terms. In spite of himself, he was caught in an atmosphere that had admitted and absorbed much western custom and technology (Swan 61-62).

Nevertheless, there remained within him a stubborn strain of resistance to social and cultural imports from the west. His writings are full of satirical remarks about the people who copied English ways. He could be international where universal moral truth was concerned, but he desired that the social and economic by-products of western life, if some must come in, should be filtered through an Indian judgement. His relationship with other European literatures is remarkable because under English rule, our response to English and other literatures, was relegated by a power-struggle which was so different from those that made the encounter among European literatures possible.

Premchand may have been considerably influenced by these western writers, which helped him achieve a wider intellectual and social horizon. However, ultimately, the greatest influence upon him is not of any English writer or not of any of his predecessors in Indian literature. It was a domain entirely Indian and indigenous; his birth and growth in a rural Indian set-up, when this influence entered his works, it gave them their "Premchandness" (Swan 77). The representation of the life of English characters in his work expresses the Indian experience of the colonial rule – from both extremes. If he exposes the abhorrent pictures of English Raj in his works, he also makes us have access to its delightful mien. An English girl Miss Sophia (of *Rangbhumi*) is more Indian than most of us born Indian. Similarly, his employment of English language never ascertains that Hindi and Urdu, his mother tongues, were inadequate to express his sensibilities and experience. The expertise with his writings in English is ultimately an Indian enterprise.

Premchand certainly acknowledged the greatness of English literature, but never showed an "anglicist's enthusiasm" in it (Das 26). His relationship with English, was moreover, a "mental connection", which only furthered a deeper understanding of Indian society, and gave a worldview to his literature. He disproved a servile admiration for anything English, and never shared the idolatry of the English. Premchand's literature, although inspired by many other European languages, was English - not the language owned by the colonial Raj, but English as a language - an Indian method that becomes

the expression of his national aspirations. It offers a genuine picture of Indian sensibilities in a colonial context. To sum up, Premchand was against *Angrezat* (English mentality) rather than the English language and literature. On this note, we can say that he responded to English with maturity.

Chapter 3

Premchand in English

> "An ideal short story, must throw light on some aspect of life; it must examine critically, and courageously, the conventions of society; it must deepen the inherent instinct in man for the good, the true and the beautiful; it must quicken his sense of curiosity and must be based on a psychological truth"
>
> – Premchand

Need of Translation

"Translation is an art", says R. Raghunath Rao, "through which, an author's ideas are transferred vividly from one language into another to affect the mind of the reader in the same way as the original itself affects him" (2-3). However, this is a very idealistic definition at least when we talk about literary translation. The effect one derives from reading Premchand in Hindi or Urdu cannot really be the same as a reading of him in English.

To begin with the question of the translation of Premchand's work, it is important first to examine the need of translation itself. Translation is not only desirable but also indispensable for attaining a multicultural world. It is simply impossible to learn all the major languages of the world, let alone enjoying their literature. Therefore, translation is useful and perhaps the most potent vehicle for those who do not have access to the literature of another language or culture. The gap existing between two cultures and even languages within cultures is a large one, and as Premchand himself believed, translation is the only available tool that can strive to bridge that cultural and linguistic gap.

The history of Premchand translation dates back to the early days of his success as a short story writer. It was during this time that various publishers in both Indian vernaculars and some foreign languages began to show a keen interest in translating his short stories. Initially, only a Hindi or an Urdu version would appear of his work, depending on the language in which it was originally published. These translations were conducted either by Premchand himself or under his supervision. Given the popularity of these works with the Hindi and Urdu readership, a demand for

their translations in other Indian languages was felt. Even Rabindranath Tagore repeatedly insisted on the necessity of translating some selected short stories of Premchand into Bangla (Gurtu 44).

The overwhelming success and critical response received by his first Hindi novel *Seva Sadan* inspired publishers to translate it into other Indian languages. At the end of 1919 or early 1920, its Gujarati translation appeared, followed by the Urdu edition of *Bazaar-i-Husn* by himself. The Gujarati version of his short story collection *Prem Battisi* had appeared as early as December 1919. At the same time, some of these stories appeared in their Bangla renderings as well (AL 137). *Jagacha Bazaar*, the Marathi edition of *Rangbhumi*, had come by 1926, even before its Urdu version. In January 1928, Anand Rao Joshi asked Premchand for a list of his favourite stories for their Marathi translation. The same year Jagmohan H. Parikh sought permission for the Gujarati translation of *Nirmala* (Verma and Goenka 12). In 1929, A. Anantachari translated some of Premchand's works into Tamil. Soon, Telugu translation of his works followed with K.Suryanarayan Shastri translating *Nirmala* and *Prem Ki Vedi*, and S. Somyajilu translating *Seva Sadan* (Bandopadhyay 155). Adding to this, his works were also being experimented with in the cinematic medium with the Hindi and Tamil rendition of *Seva Sadan*. Thus, the success of his works led to its translations into other Indian languages, and together with some of their cinematic production, generated a great deal of interest for English and other foreign language publishers.

Whenever a successful and popular literary work from a regional or national language is translated into English or a foreign language, it brings laurels and recognition not only for the writer, but also for his nation and his original language. The translation of a work is also the translation of its culture, its people and society, and hence, the translation of a nation. With this one can assume that with the possibility of Premchand's work being translated into English and other foreign languages, Hindi literature was about to gain recognition and prestige on the world literary stage. Prominent Hindi intellectuals were "dreaming" of the day when a Hindi short story writer would be translated into English, Russian, German, French, and so on. They thought that by doing so "the head of Hindi Literature could be raised even higher" (Verma and Goenka 12).

Today, the fact that almost all of his novels and short stories have been translated into Tamil and Malayalam is a proof of Premchand's popularity in these South Indian languages. (Bandopadhyay 155) These translations led writers in many Indian vernaculars to write novels and short stories on Premchandian social themes. Writers in all these languages extended his approach of portraying woes of the oppressed class, protesting against dogmatic religious and social values, and depiction of rural milieus. However, Premchand's reception in English language is altogether a different history than that his works in Indian languages.

The English Translation of Premchand: A History

During the initial stages of this research, the existing gamut of literature on Premchand in English was composed of no more than three novels, with the fourth appearing a few months later. In today's world of a "translation boom", such a situation, is in fact a "crying shame" (Trivedi "Changed"). On the other hand, there is a relatively large store of his short stories in English. They have been translated by a host of translators over more than half a century. Although this is a comprehensive quantity, the quality nevertheless leaves a lot to be desired.

The process of translating Premchand into English has been sluggish, if not to say "unenthusiastic", if we compare this situation with the works of Rabindranath Tagore, another giant figure of Indian literature. Tagore has been translated frequently and perhaps the most (almost all his nine novels have appeared in English). Six of Tagore's seven novels had been translated into English in his own lifetime, while none of Premchand's novels were translated into English even two decades after his death.

In English, a few scholars like Madan Gopal, Gordon Roadarmel, Harish Trivedi, Alok Rai and David Rubin, have not only translated Premchand's writings, but also have engaged with the entire corpus of Premchand literature including criticism of the translations. Madan Gopal, who can be considered the 'Boswell of Premchand', wrote the first ever book on Premchand in English – a monograph titled *Premchand*, published in 1944. It was, in fact, the first book in English on a contemporary Indian-language writer. Gopal first took the task of collecting Premchand's letters from his correspondents scattered over many places, and after the

hard work of over a quarter of a century, in 1964, published *Premchand: A Literary Biography,* a full-length biography of Premchand. Gopal is also a translator of many of Premchand's short stories into English. *Premchand: A Life* (1982), Harish Trivedi's translation of Amrit Rai's award winning biography *Qalam Ka Sipahi* (1962), is a very helpful book for the English readers of Premchand. Trivedi, apart from regularly writing on Premchand, has translated some works, and reviewed many translations of Premchand's works. Jai Ratan, P. Lal, Gordon Roadarmel, David Rubin, Madan Gopal, Madan Gupta, Gurdial Mallik, Nandini Nopani, Christopher King, P.C. Gupta, Rakhshanda Jalil, Anupa Lal, R.C. Verma, are some of the notable names who have translated Premchand's novels and short stories. There are some others, including writers like Khushwant Singh and Bhishma Sahni, who have occasionally translated a story or two.

The birth of Premchand in English can be traced to the translations of his work into non-Indian languages in the later part of the writer's life, with 1928 being a defining year. That year, the Japanese translation of his story *Muktimarg* was published in *Kaizo*, a prominent journal with a circulation of one lakh copiesat that time. Japanese became one of the first foreign languages, besides Russian, in which Premchand's works were published. The Japanese readers expressed their desire to read more translations of Premchand's work, and in return, Premchand expressed his modest gratitude by a letter to the translator (QS 81). The same year, Keshoram Aggrawal, a Tokyo-based Indian, translated another set of Premchand's stories into Japanese. These stories were so well received that they became a sensation during those months among the Japanese readers. The same year, a Berlin University professor, Tara Chand Rai, approached Premchand for the German translation of his stories (Verma and Goenka 12). On another occasion, when Bahadur Chandra Chhabra asked the author for a Dutch translation of his stories, flattered, Premchand wrote to Chhabra:

> "You are a very fortunate person for you are shining the name of India in foreign countries.... If the Dutch people like my stories even to some extent, then you can translate at your ease, whatever you want to translate"(QS 196).

However, Premchand was very conscious regarding the language of these translations. He wanted the target text to be perused by an expert of that particular language, so that it did not bring him (Premchand) a bad name (Verma and Goenka 12).

The history of translations of Premchand into English translation also began sometime around 1928. After his works started appearing in Indian as well as some foreign languages, publishers were toying with the idea of translating his stories into English too. Pandit Chaturvedi was already pressing the author to let his stories appear in English. First, the story *Actress*, edited by Chaturvedi and C.F. Andrews, appeared in *The Modern Review* of June 1928 (Verma and Goenka 12). However, it was an altered adaptation, not exactly a translation, and Andrews himself thought he did not do justice to Premchand's reputation in his attempted translation (AL 235).

Banarasi Das Chaturvedi planned a meeting of Premchand with Andrews, who had agreed to edit the English translation of some of Premchand's stories. Andrews was anxious to meet him, but Premchand could not go to Calcutta due to some personal reasons. He was sceptical of the extent of these stories' exact renderings into other languages and feared that there might be distortion of the original. Because he attached due importance to translation and knew the demands and difficulties of a translation of excellent quality, at times, he was hesitant to allow his writings to be translated into English. This letter, which he wrote to Chaturvedi, explains this:

> "I feel very much obliged to receive your letter and the kind interest you take in my work. However, unless I secure a competent translator, it is no good to trouble Father Andrews for nothing. The time is not yet, perhaps. When the time will come, helpers will spring up" (Nagendra 43).

The story *Tara* was perhaps the first professionally English translated work of Premchand's. No year of publication is known, however, it is known that Rajeshwar Prasad Singh, a relative of Shivrani Devi did this English translation, which appeared under the title, *The Actress*, in the journal *The Leader*. Premchand enjoyed the translation and kept its cuttings and other translated publications arduously. Thus during his lifetime, no serious English translation of Premchand's was published.

Novels in Translation: A Chronological Overview

Godan

Of the fifteen novels that Premchand wrote, his last complete novel *Godan* (*Gaudan* in Urdu) is the most widely read and appreciated. It also has the distinction of having been the only Premchand novel available in English translation for almost half a century. Jai Ratan and Purushottam Lal (generally known as P. Lal) were the first to translate *Godan* into English in 1956 as *Godan: A Novel of Peasant India*. The well-known Hindi poet and novelist Sachchidanand Heeranand Vatsyayan 'Ajney' turned his hands to translating the same novel into English. However, he could only complete the rural plot of the novel and an American student of his completed the remaining urban plot. The student was Gordon Roadarmel, who published his translation of *Godan* under the title *A Gift of Cow*, and interesting enough, he was assisted by none other than P. Lal! Besides these, a couple of abridged English versions have also been published, among which Anupa Lal's *Godan by Munshi Premchand* is significant.

"Godan" is the ancient Hindu practice of presenting a cow to a Brahmin on someone's death, following the popular belief that if you donate a cow in this world, it will come to help the donor's soul in crossing over the vast ocean after death. In many parts of India, the offering a cow is also performed at the *Kanyadaan* ceremony of one's daughter. However, the novel works on other levels besides being a symbolic effect of such rituals. The novel can be alternatively read as Premchand's recognition of the deep allegiance that a character like Hori owes, without any thought of protesting, to traditional religious and social values – an uninterrogated internalisation that proves to be a greater burden for him than any external instrument of exploitation (Trivedi, *The Progress of Hindi* 1010).

In fact, *Godan* was among the first novels in Hindi literature to be translated into English. The reason was obvious, as Gordon Roadarmel reasons; his decision to translate was to introduce Hindi literature to the West; and Premchand, regarded as *the* Hindi novelist, became his obvious choice. Hence, *Godan*, regarded as Premchand's masterpiece, became Roadarmel's first choice and thus the first novel to be translated into English (Roadarmel v). The book was felt to be made accessible to

English readers whose impression of India, being based almost entirely on works written by Indians in English, was likely to be inaccurate (ibid). The India that was projected by the Indian English writers before *Godan*, was a pole apart in their treatment of India and Indian culture. Most of those writers in their fiction or poetry had talked about an ancient India at the peak of its cultural and spiritual glory. Only a few novels, like Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchable*, or Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* touched other issues like societal discrimination or the pangs of Partition. On the larger scale, the "other side" of India, poverty-stricken India, the India full of economic and social diversities, was continually being overlooked. Perhaps, the translation of *Godan* in the first decade of India's independence, could act as a revelation that, despite gaining Independence, not much had changed in the plight of the poor peasants and workers.

The question of the need for any new translation of *Godan*, when a competent English translation by Jai Ratan and P.Lal already existed, may arise. Perhaps the existing translation was not western-English-speaker-friendly due to its lacklustre choice of vocabulary and its much too Indian flavour! Roadermel's translation was assigned under the UNESCO collection of Representative Works, a part of the promotion of regional literatures internationally, and perhaps, a native Englishman's approach and sensibility could bring elements that would appeal to his fellow non-Indian readers. However, being a student of Alahabad University, Roadarmel was well-read in Hindi literarure and Indian society.

Nirmala

Nirmala is one of Premchand's most popular novels. It was first published serially in the magazine *Chand*, from November 1925 to November 1926 and in book form in 1927. *Nirmala* is the tragedy of a young girl married to a widower old enough to be her father. It describes the circumstances under which the young Nirmala, unhappy and disturbed, befriends one of her three stepsons, and it causes suspicion in her jealous husband's mind. She dies a tragic death after a series of misfortunes of which she was the least responsible. *Nirmala* is one of the most widely translated works of Premchand. As of 1980, there were ten editions of the novel in Hindi whereas it had been translated into seven Indian as well as eight European languages earlier, which included two Russian translations (Rubin 5).

It stands apart from Premchand's other works owing to its unity of structure and plot. It is closer to the individualistic novels, where the story revolves around the events of a protagonist. For readers, its' fewer characters than in *Godan* or in *Rangbhumi*, makes it more comfortable reading, and is often studied from a feminist point of view. The theme of *Nirmala* plays a major role in its signification and popularity among readers. The text becomes an obvious example for translators for its portrayal of the social and psychological condition of the Indian woman, stereotypically portrayed in literature before Premchand. He brings out the psychological plight of young Nirmala, subduing her sexuality and finally falling a victim to the orthodoxy of the social set-up. The contrast between voiced argument and unspoken desire, the valorisation of self-sacrifice and acceptance of human weakness is brought out to the surface.

The extraordinary popularity of *Nirmala* prompted a rush of translations, and it was incorporated into many school curricula. However, it was as late as in 1988, that David Rubin first resurrected it in English in under the title *Nirmala: A Novel.* Sripat Rai, Premchand's son, and S.P. Nirash gave valuable suggestions to Rubin in this translation (ibid 9). For next eleven years, no other novel appeared in English, until in 1999, when Premchand's grandson Alok Rai came up with another translation titled *Nirmala* again. Notably, in between, the novel was serialized in a television avatar. Meanwhile the latest is that the novel is being made into a film too (Chokse, *Munshi Premchand aur Bhartiya Cinema*).

Ghaban (or *Gaban*)

Ghaban is one novel by Premchand which has never been compared with any other work from either Indian or western tradition. Apart from its very Indian theme (the passion for jewellery in Indian womenfolk), it has the originality of plot and a strong characterisation. How Jalpa's passion for jewellery involves Ramnath into increasingly complex financial and personal relationships after his committing the crime of embezzlement is dealt with maturity and an outstanding theme. *Ghaban* is not only the story about the domestic problems in lower middle class, but also it has a strong sympathy with the then revolutionary movement in India.

Christopher R. King, a professor of history in Canada translated *Ghaban* in 2000, as *Gaban: The Stolen Jewels*. It is amusing enough how he has translated the original Urdu title *Ghaban* into *Gaban*, which is as much an offence as spelling Ghalib as Galib. Even the subtitle does not reflect to the main theme of "embezzlement" – the literal translation of the Urdu term "Ghaban", and rather reflects a story of theft. However, the translation is "readable" as the translator has researched on the text (used both the Hindi and Urdu as his source texts) and on the Indian societal set-up (King vii). He has employed the device of a glossary to explain to western readers the meaning of Hindi or Urdu terms cumbersome to translate, and made changes in narration again to avoid confusion and awkwardness in English readers. He has kept note of the consistency of the time, with most of the narration in past tense rather than the Hindi narration, which intermittently takes the reader in past and present. However, for him dialect is "bad Hindi", which he "reproduces" in English (ibid).

***Bazaar-e-Husn* (Seva Sadan),**

Bazaar-e-Husn though written in the first quarter of the last century, with its bod theme and characterisation, is a very modern novel. It always remained one of Premchand's famous novels; however, it has only recently been translated, depriving generations of English readers. It is a unique novel among Premchand's works because of its having only one story line; its not having any sub-plot, which keeps the reader engaged with only one story line, becomes a positive point for Enlish readers. Finally after eighty-five years of its first publication in Hindi, at the end of 2003, the novel was published in English transaltion under the title *Courtesan's Quarter*. The transaltor is a Pakistani scholar Amina Azfar, whose source text was the Urdu *Bazaar-e- Husn*.

Interestingly, the English title, though not an exact translation of the Urdu ("The Beauty of the Market"), still highlights the amorous beauty of the market place than the solemnity and the idealist concept of social service as the Hindi 'Seva Sadan' (House of Service) suggests. Such titles promise a response from the readers because the lives of courtesans have been a popular theme, liked by readers of all eras. The Urdu title highlights that the fall of the woman, whereas the Hindi title highlights the redemption of a woman, and thus they are "widely symptomatic of their respective

literary cultures" (Trivedi "The Power of Premchand"). We also see that the translator cannot keep aside her national prejudice. She translates the Hindu *quom* as "the Hindu nation" (and not the Hindu community), a choice which may seem coloured anachronistically by the so-called two-nation theory which the Muslims were to advance in support of their claim for Pakistan (ibid).

These four novels have been among the most popular of Premchand's works. However, the remaining available novels have not been published in English rendering. This is odd, as a famous writer of Premchand's stature ought to have been made fully available decades ago. Both *Nirmala* and *Seva Sadan* are based on women as their protagonists, which brings an obvious feminist interpretation to them. In fact, *Nirmala* is a novella, a relatively short novel, which makes it easier for the readers to concentrate on one story, removed from a complicated web of sub-plots. The story straight away tells of the tragedy of its protagonist Nirmala and saves itself from complications of sub-plots. The well-built story lines of these novels make them desirable for translators as well as for its readers. The problems in *Seva Sadan*, *Ghaban* and *Nirmala* are domestic social ones, which appeal to all classes, rather than themes like class struggle or people's movement, which only portions of society may be concerned with.

When we lookat the transaltions of Premchand's novels, we realise that it refutes the stereotypical categorised as a rural writer, because mostly these novels have urban settings. Except in *Godan*, which also has half the story revolving around the town, the three others have exclusive urban settings with middle class people and their problems inside and out of society. Here it becomes a misnomer that the greatest of Premchandian novels are based on rural themes. In fact, the rural setting cannot be set as a parameter of the greatness of a work of literature.

Untranslated Novels

The response to the English translations of *Godan*, and then *Nirmala* have not triggered much interest in the fraternity of translators and publishers. While reasoning out why the remining novels have not apeared in English, we will also come to acknowledge thatthere are some which certainly deserve their "English birth' butsomehow due to certain reasons and neglience have been left out. Novels, like

Rangbhumi, *Premashram*, and *Karmabhumi*, despite their great success and popularity among readers of many Indian languages, are still waiting for their "English delivery".

Some novels have not been translated because publishers, seeking profits, have lacked the courage to have them translated. Although for a Premchand aficionado, this maybe a solemn basis for disillusionment, market forces has more effect on dictating publications than the zest for reading. Most of these novels are Premchand's earliest and have always been the lesser-known ones, written originally in Urdu, for example *Asraar-e-Maabid* and *Hum Khurma-o-Ham Sawab*. These novels, despite bold themes, are by no means a sign of Premchand's excellence. They are evident of the writer's early experimentation with the form of the novel. On the other hand, a few novels have the same story line extended and the characterisation developed. If anything like *Prataphcandra* is a novel by Premchand, it is nothing but an extension of *Vardaan* or *Jalwa-i-Isaar* with a dissimilar ending. Similarly, *Pratigya* is a "pale reworking" of *Prema* with only its language polished and events altered. Their Urdu versions are *Hum Khurma-o-Ham Sawab* and *Bewa*. If the earlier versions lack the quintessential perceptive depth of his later works, this is no reason for the unavailability of their translations. These novels, apart from tracking the growth of the author have path-breaking themes in their own dimensions. Some novels are comparatively shorter in length than that of a *Godan* or *Rangbhumi*. Madan Gopal terms both *Vardaan* and *Pratigya*, as actually being "long short stories" (Gopal *Premchand* 461). However, if the length of a text decides the translator's interest and approach to it, then the brevity of these novels can make the translators' task easier. Hence, their translation into English is imperative.

Rangbhumi, which was Premchand's personal favourite till the publication of *Godan*, remains the best work of his that is not translated into English. It is Premchand's most voluminous novel, with the Hindi text comprising two books. The novel which has an "unmistakably powerful and moving impact" and which is "a strong example of the artistic indirection by which political nationalism is rendered more effectively as cultural nationalism" has so far not appeared into its English avatar (Trivedi, *The Progress of Hindi* 1009). Perhaps its great length becomes a challenge as well as a hindrance for the translators. However, Harish Trivedi and

Richard Allen have translated some important excerpts from the novel for the book *Literature and Nation: Britain and India 1800-1990.* The novel should be strongly recommneded for English transaltion as it is not only a critique of industrial revolution, but also raises issues of political slavery, inter-caste/religion marriage, which are issues that are more relevant today.

Kayakalpa, is fundamentally Premchand's "weakest novel" (Ram Vilas Sharma 134). Its non-materialist story is difficult for the masses to grasp, and perhaps that is why the publishers have brought shortened versions of the lengthy novel under the title *Manorama.* However, the novel also depicts forthrightly the Hindu-Muslim communal riots, so it is untrue to consider it merely a "twaddle of rebirth" (Trivedi, *The Urdu Premchand* 115).

Another novel popular novel *Karmabhumi* (Ground of Deeds) has been condemned by some critics for its nationalist background. However, one forgets that almost all the great novels have some social purpose or some great movement as their setting. Novels such as *A Tale of Two Cities*, *War and Peace*, or even *Train to Pakistan* are but a few examples of this tradition. In *Karmabhumi,* Premchand makes the freedom movement live in the pages of his work. Above all, it is the development of the character, an insight into human nature, and a depiction of a sensitive mind that takes the novel into a league of its own.

Perfection and popularity do not go together all the time, at least when we review the publication scenario of Premchand's work in English. Many of Premchand's contemporary critics, including Avadh Upadhyay, regarded *Premashram* and *Seva Sadan* as Premchand's best works, leaving out *Nirmala.* Premchand himself did not consider *Nirmala* among his bests. However, *Nirmala* has always remained the most popular (even controverisial) novel after *Godan. Rangbhumi, Karmbhumi,* and *Seva Sadan* certainly deserve tobe there with *Godan, Nirmala, Gaban,* and *Bazaar-e- Husn*, published in English transaltions.

Short Stories Translated

Choosing between Premchand-the novelist and Premchand-the short story writer, can be a difficult task. Some critics including Ram Vilas Sharma favours that Premchand- the novelist and not the short story writer achieves a permanent place in

literature (Sharma 114). However, Inder Nath Madan (112) and Ganga Prasad Vimal (18) do not agree with such opinion. Premchand's work as a novelist is certainly an achievement; however, with almost three hundred short stories to his credit, Premchand's world has become all the more richer and fuller for his readers. There are around a hundred and fifty short stories of Premchand, made available in English from many noted writers and professional translators. These translations are done by a variety of people including noted writers in both Hindi and English.

However, we may may wonder that why English translations of Premchand's stories did not come out during his own lifetime. The reasons have been many. One is that though there was an emerging Indian middle class that would have read them, the British would never have appreciated his works due to their nationalist fervour. Even the efforts of moderate Englishmen like C.F Andrews who wanted to translate Premchand's stories were very cautious. He chose stories like *Tara*, and purposely neglected stories thematically more nationalist. Even the stories written under the influence of the Arya Samaj, and which sire Hindu nationalism, like *Sarandha*, *Paap ka Agnikund*, *Vikramaditya ka Tega*, *Raja Hardaul*, *Maryada ki Vedi*, were less preferred for translation. However, such stories are being avoided even today, understandingly for some other reasons.

Short Stories of Premchand, an anthology of eleven stories translated by Gurdial Mallik, was the first collection of Premchand's short stories in English. It was published by Nalanda Publications of Bombay in 1946. The same collection was reprinted by Hind Pocket Books in 1967 as *The Chess Players and Other Stories*. In 1951, *God Lives in the Panch*, a transaltion of *Panch Parmeshwar*, done by Manmohan Saksena appeared in a volume called *Indian Shrt Stories*, published by Oxford Univerity Press. In 1955, People's Publishing House published fifteen stories, translated by P.C. Gupta under the title *A Handful of Wheat and Other Stories.* This became the second collection of Premchand's stories in English. Thereafter many translators have ventured in the translation of his stories, some done quite eloquently while others "hastily". This no doubt makes a remarkable comment on the significance of these works.

A Premchand Reader (1962) contains nine stories by Premchand and has N. H. Zide, Colin P. Masica, K. C. Bahl and A. C. Chandola as translators and editors.

However they can hardly be called translations in the usual sense of the term. With excerpts translated into English, it particularly contains notes on the stories and an annotated glossary to assist the western reader in appreciating Premchand. The importance of this collection, however, cannot be undermined. Though these stories are in no sense representative of Premchand's output, they have been selected on the basis of different conflicting criteria of their literary quality, and their depiction of Indian life. At one time, the book was prescribed in the curricula of the University of Chicago.

David Rubin's *The World of Premchand* (1969), a collection of Premchand's 39 short stories, also have two biographical sketches. He attempted those stories that had not been translated previously. These stories can be classified into three categories: stories of village life, stories from the town, and stories from the world. Another collection by Rubin, *Widows, Wives and other Heroines* (1988), has women for its central characters, and the stores delineate the values they embody. He has also included a few unknown stories in this collection such as *Desire*, for what they reveal of Premchand's understanding of women. The reader, whichever country and linguistic region he may belong to, can realise how radical these stories were in the India of Premchand's time. Thereafter we have about sixteen[9] collections of Premchand's short stories that have been published fromverious publications.

Premchand wrote short stories on a variety of themes and locales and concerning all walks of life. *Qafan* (Shroud), *Poos ki Raat* (A Winter Night), *Shatranj ke Khilari* (The Chess Players), *Sava Ser Gehun* (A Handful of Wheat), *Mukti Marg* (Salvation), *Sadgati* (Deliverance), *Idgah* (Festival of Eid) are considered his finest. These are considered his best stories, because he keeps his "ideological and moral enthusiasm in check and furnishes vignettes of social life in the village or the home" (Sharma 147). These stories have been widely translated and appreciated by the Hindi as well as the non-Hindi readers. It has been translated more than five times into English. It is considered that Premchand's most successful stories are written on rural life. This is true; however, apart from their setting, their themes and plots have been important factors for their success. A study of the most translated stories will reveal how they become an important factor in a translator's choice.

---

[9] See Apendix IV

Panch Parmeshvar (Urdu tilte *Panchayat*) has by far been translated under the most number of times under various titles, as *The Almighty Pancha* (Amir Mohammad Khan); *The Voice of God* (Gurdial Mallik); *God Lives in the Panch* (Manmohan Saksena); *The Village Judge* (P.C.Gupta) *Panchayat* (Madan Gopal); *The Panchayat is the Voice of God* (Nopaly and P.Lal); *Holy Judges* (M. Asaduddin) and *Heavenly Justice* (Pratibha Nath). However, most of these titles refer to the belief of the Indian rural system that *Panch* are the voice of God. The story is not only have a good plot, but also the theme of communal harmony attracts the transaltors and readers alike.

Shatranj ke Khilari (The Chess Players), although based on medieval Indian history, it attracts readers for reasons beyond its historical set-up. It is not only a significant historical portrayal, it is also a good example of Premchand's humour and satire. Nevertheless, the distinct aspect of *Shatranj ke Khilari* is that instead of projecting it as a source of inspiration, Premchand exposes the decadence and corruption of the ruling class like the Nawabs of Oudh. He exposes the corruption that "made India fall like an overripe fruit in the foreigner's lap" (Sharma 145). This story recounts a time when Britain as an imperial power steadily expanded its grasp over India while the native Indian rulers indulged in fruitless activities. Chess becomes the metonymy of such pastimes and activities, conducted at the neglect of more important and urgent state affairs. It has been extensively translated and has even been made into a film. Given its distinctive story, it illustrates Premchand's use of history for a cathartic effect. Despite its rich Urdu vocabulary and historical plot, generally considered not an easy choice for translation, the story has enjoyed considerable success in its English translation. Translators have employed some footnotes for some unfamiliar words. The popular story was also made into a film by the legendary filmmaker Satyajit Ray.

Qafan (The Shroud) has the distinction of being translated more than seven times. Written in his last year and regarded by many as Premchand's best story, it is a tale of a night and the morning after. Two *chamars*, a father and a son, carelessly pass their time while the son's wife is dying of severe labour pains. They collect money to pay for her shroud (*Qafan*), but squander it on liquor. *Qafan* has a unique amalgam of empathy and humour as well as a pertinent message on psychology. The pangs of

poverty curbed their human sensitivity and fellow feelings. In such a story, it is difficult to decide whether human folly or insensitivity are the greater antagonists of mankind or poverty.

Sawa ser Gehun (A Handful of Wheat) is regarded as a sketch for the novel *Godan*. It is a glimpse of the vicious system of usury through which a higher caste moneylender entraps naive and unsuspecting peasants into a situation of eternal serfdom. In *Dudh ka Dam*, translated under the title *The Price of Milk*, a harijan woman, neglecting her own son, feeds an upper caste child with her own milk. When she and her husband die, her orphan child is severely punished because he is caught playing with his upper class "brother". This is how the high caste family pays him for his mother's milk. *Sadgati* or "Deliverance", which has also been translated as "Salvation" is the story of a *chamar* who is exploited by a Brahman to the extent that he dies of hunger and thirst. In *Mandir*, an untouchable woman is kicked out and her child killed when she tries to enter the temple to pray for the recovery of the sick child. *Thakur ka Kuan* (Thakur's Well) is the story of an untouchable who dies of drinking putrid water as the higher caste people would not allow his wife to get water from their well. Interestingly every translator has followed the original title *Thakur's Well* in their translations. 'The word 'Thakur' does not represent a caste proper, however it becomes a symbol of the people who are blind with their caste based superiority.

Poos ki Raat is another story, translated several times under different titles such as *January Night*, *January Winter* or *A Winter Night*. Though only related to peasant life, it draws attention due to its particular plot. There is only one event, and the action is limited to a single night. The "chill penury" of the peasant who shivers in extreme cold as he could not afford a blanket. The cold was so intense that he could not even go out and look after his crops, which is ravaged by wild cows and aggravates his poverty and misfortunes. Such phrases as "the stars in the sky were shivering" and "the breeze fanned the night chill" (translated by Madan Gupta) draws a moving picture of the biting cold in the reader's eye. The story has a comparative unity of time, of place and of action, and its impression is very strong. *Bade Bhai Saheb* (The Big Brother) is a tragicomedy for its melodramatic and moral thesis. A potentially ludicrous situation is developed with pathos, although the touch remains

light along with a happy ending. Another trait of these stories is that they revolve around a very short span of time and events. *Qafan* revolves around a few hours, from late night to early morning; *Poos ki Raat* is the events of a single night.

Garib ki Haai (Power of the Curse), can be seen as an example of a harmonious blend of Premchand's compassion, humour, and psychological understanding of the villagers. *The Daughter of a Noble Family* is a sharp departure forms the earlier stories in maturity of treatment, as also in the language, which he uses. This story began purposive literature and gave rise to the critical habit.

Qafan and *Sadgati*, though clearly village stories, transcend the limitations of the earlier village tales, and attain a universality of theme. *Sabhyata ka Rahasya* (The Secret of Culture) is a pungent satire on hypocritical contemporary society - a society that passes off as civilised society with its uncivilised, uncultured skills.

There are a number of stories exploring relationships between communities of India. They represent the "composite culture" of India with a message of communal harmony and brotherhood. These stories hail the author as a champion of Hindu-Muslim unity. Stories like *Panch Parmeshwar* (The Holy Judges), and *Mandir aur Maszid* (The Temple and the Mosque), interrogate the stereotypical notions of Muslims widely prevalent throughout the world. There are stories also attack the evils of casteism and communal hatred. The general message of these stories is that for the formation of a free and better society casteism and communalism must be obliterated. Some of Premchand's earliest stories, including his first, *Duniya ka Sabse Anmol Ratan*, have not been received enthusiastically in English, perhaps because of their "pan-Islamic" settings, and didactic tone.

Thus, a brief study of these stories reveals that they were written about peasantry, communal relationships, childhood, joint family, the conflict between the old and new order, and other themes that have prompted translators to take them up. The selection is not purely on the basis of their rural setting. Although the setting of most of these stories is rural life, they are also backed up with vital characterisations and exemplary themes.

Handling the titles of a story is an interesting trait. Different translators have used different approaches in translating the titles of stories. A survey of Premchand's

translated short stories brought out some fascinating aspects. *Qafan* and *Sahtranj ke khilari* have been translated under the titles *The Shroud* and *The Chess Players* respectively in almost all translations. However, *Mandir* and *Masjid* could be retained rather than turning them into 'Temple and the Mosque', which though is a correct translation. The act of putting the two words *Mandir* and *Masjid* together itself brings out a sense of communal harmony and communal clash at the same, something that their English translations do not.

The story *Bade Ghar ki Beti* has also been translated under various titles as *Daughter in Law, Rich Daughter-in-Law*, and also *Daughter of a Noble Family.* The variations in the title themselves suggest various meanings. For instance, a rich daughter-in-law can suggest the prosperity of her in-laws' household, and not necessarily her own affluence. On the other hand, *Bade* has been translated as both rich and noble. The first of course suggests financial prosperity, while the second suggest a high social stature. These differing titles certainly provide the reader with varied "first impressions". If it is said that "a book should not be judged by its cover" then it ought to be added, that a translated piece of work should not be judged by its title.

The titles of Premchand's stories can be translated from many perspectives as well. For example, the Hindi title *Shanti* can be translated as "Eternal Peace", "Tranquillity" or even "Peace That Passes Understanding" (Prakash 2). The nomenclature of Premchand's novels and short stories are distinct. Most of Premchand's novels have abstract-nouns as titles, like *Godan, Gaban, Vardaan* and so on, which refers to a situation or a ritual that is central to the story. Only two of his novels, *Nirmala* and *Prema* are named after its protagonists. The tittles of the stories are more ironical and suggest their themes, for example, *Dudh ka Dam, Garib ki Haai* and so on. The translated titles strive to embody the satiric tone of the original titles.

Apart from the usual difficulties and peculiarities that translators face while translating Premchand's work, they at times must also deal with occasional errors in the writings of his stories, which subsequently lead to even more confusion in their translations. For example, in *Widow with Sons*, the reader is told that all four brothers are married, but later it is learnt that the Sitanath, the youngest, is not and does not want to marry. In *The Prostitute*, it is said that Singar Singh, a Sikh, has cut his long

hair (which constitutes a grotesque violation of his faith), but later his long hair is commented upon, and that he is without moustache or beard. In such cases the translator (Rubin) emended the text as seemed necessary.

A translation from Hindi into English can not be quite as precise unlike as it may be from French or German, which are languages of the same family. There is also the problem of alluding to subjects which are immediately clear to an Indian reader but which require special explanations to anyone from another culture. Similarly, translation between Indian languages of the same family, for example, Hindi into Gujarati or Bangla, can almost retain the sameness of its original text stylistically and vocabulary-wise. Most importantly, it will retain its *Indianness*.

Because many of Premchand's stories revolve around an extended family structure, it is comparatively difficult for a weestern reader to relate himself to the events and situations of such societal set-ups, as the nuclear family structure is more prominent in their societies. Abstract characters like Moteram in *Satyagraha,* a very obese character as the name itself suggests will hardly arouse laughter for an English reader, as it naturally may do so for its Hindi audience.

Therefore, we see that over one hundred and fifty of his three hundred short stories have been translated into English.Today the English speaking audience is no longer only English, there is a very large section of Indian English-speaking audience today. Keeping this in mind, several of the remaining stories which have not been translated thinking that they may not appeal to an western audience may now be translated in English for an Indian English speaking audience. Many of these untranslated works can be used. For example, a story about the game of *Gulli-Danda*, may not attract the western reader, yet being a part of the rural Indian childhood, almost each Indian is familiar with it. More over, *Gulli-Danda* is not a story about the game but rather about the steadfastness of friendship and a strong message of harmony and brotherhood. A story as this is in no way less delightful than R.K. Narayan's *Malgudi* tales, which also bring nuances of simplistic lives. Such stories should be made a part of children's literature in India.

Budi Kaki (The Old Aunt), another untranslated story is full of irony. It is a beautiful portrait of helplessness in old age, and the psychology of an old woman.

Permchand writes: "Old age is the last stage of covetousness, when all the desires are concentrated at one point. For the old aunt this was the palate" (*Mansarovara* VIII 160). Other untranslated stories include *Baasi Bhaat mein Khuda ka Sanjha*, *Naiashya Lila*, *Cricket Match*, *Jwalamukhi*, *Kusum*, *Nasihato ka Daftar*, *Haar ki Jeet*, *Unmaad*, *Sohag ka Shav* etc.

In the 'hazardous' field of translation, especially when a major writer like Premchand is translated, it is always worthy to examine the manner in which different translators go about their work. According to Lawrence Venuti, the most important and general method of judging different translations of the same text ought to be "fluency" (2). This refers to the naturalness of expression in translation. Another criterion of such judgements can be the expertise in handling language and culture. The translator must be a person who can draw aside the curtains of linguistic and cultural differences of the original message (Nida 14). In the case of Premchand's writings, how far a translator succeeds in bringing the beautiful blend of Hindi/Urdu into English can becomes a parameter of assessing the effectiveness of the translation. However, at the same there is no distinct standard for such assessment.

Premchand in English: *Who* Translates for *Whom*, and *How*?

According to R.S. Gupta, the central theme of any translation studies should be "*who* translates *what*, for *whom*, *where* and *why*" (Ramakrishna 185). A translator of Premchand's text, as explained earlier, can be an Indian as well as a foreigner. Christopher King, with his scholarship in Indian society and language, has shown his interest and maturity in handling Premchand's texts. However, his language and socio-cultural background may make a difference in bringing out the cultural nuances. David Rubin, an American, has been a scholar of Indian literature; has taught at Columbia University, while another translator Roadarmel has taught at Sarah Lawrence College. The translation of Premchand into English, with the exceptions of native English translators like Rubin, Roadarmel and King being most notable, are done by Indian scholars. This shows that the English language, for all its inevitable "colonial" associations, remains an important medium for disseminating Premchand's literature through all the complexities.

However, bilinguality should be the first condition for anyone taking up a Premchand text. The availability of Premchand text in both Urdu and Hindi provides a choice to the translator as far as the language is concerned. Rakhshanda Jalil, the translator of *The Temple and the Mosque and Other Stories*, despite her good command over both Urdu and Hindi, chooses the Hindi text as the source, in spite of the fact that the story was originally written in Urdu by the author.

Who are the readers of Premchand in English? Identifying the Premchand readers in English is a difficult task. Ideally the readers would be those who are not familiar with Premchand in Hindi, but who want to read and study him. To state it in Sujeet Mukherjee's words, a dependable reader is the one who has already read an Indian text in Hindi or Urdu, and thus can enlarge his acquaintance with the literary culture surrounding him, and sometimes even renew his enjoyment of the text he had already read in the original (132).

Before taking up a translation, the translator is expected to identify a readership of his translation. The readers of Premchand in English can be broadly divided into three categories: (a) Non-Hindi/Urdu knowing Indians (b) Non-Hindi/Urdu knowing foreigners and (c) Hindi/Urdu as well as English knowing Indians. The last readership will be the least difficult to translate for; and this reader will have less difficulty in understanding the translated text. However, this reader will always prefer to read Premchand in Hindi or Urdu.

Translators take particular texts from different points of motivations. The translators of *Godan* are from two diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Roadarmel is an Englishman, whereas the other two are Indians. For P.Lal, the co-translator of *Godan*, and two other short story collections, translation into English arises out of a desire to "grant himself" more fully in the source Indian culture. To him, *Godan* represented Indian values – the practices that most Hindus valued. The translation enables him to know what this *Indianness* means. However, to present *Godan* as a Hindu Indian text certainly was not the author's intention. On the other hand, Roadermel's motive was simply to introduce the best of Hindi literature to the west (Roadarmel v). Some translators undertake the translating of Premchand's works to rebuff any political categorisation of the author, such as a Marxist, or a nationalist

or even an anti-nationalist. On the other jhand some translators, like Neeraj Rai have attempted translation for purely personal reasons ("*Aap-Beeti*").

Talking about *How* Premchand is translated, a translator like P.Lal has "translacreated"[10] Premchand texts into English. It is a method of seeking maximum readability within the confines of faithful rendering (Mukherjee, *Translation as Discovery* 6) Attempts to use Hindi words are made in most of the translations, which is a welcome note. Words like *panchayat* and *chillum* have replaced by their English equivalence "village-council" and cigar in some of the new translations. Footnotes are not required for these words, as they have appeared in *Webster's New International Dictionary*. Some of the terms of personal relationship, which so commonly replace personal names in Hindi conversations have been retained, such as words like *kaki, Bhai saheb.* However, they have been omitted in some places lest they seem unnatural in English. Special care is required to capture the atmosphere of the rural and the urban. Aspects like omission of words or phrases, attempts to skip, evade or bypass a phrase or sentence by giving an approximate version of difficult and obscure idiomatic lines or words in dialect. Translating localised language rooted in its soil is more difficult job. In fact, dialect, in general is "a headache for translator" (Rannen 7). However, any effect to improve becomes a temptation; for instance, could the Bhojpuri dialect be replaced by a cockney English accent?

Equivalence is the most important factor in translation. Equivalence is needed because only literal translation would be meaningless. However sometimes, the borrowing of equivalence "unhappily" sacrifice the salty character of the original" (Rubin 7). According to Anand Prakash, a verbal equivalence works as hindrance before a constructed-constructing narrative. It requires the selection of any expression, fresh (since emerging from the context) or banal, irrespective of the weight given by the author to specific expressions in Premchand's work (Prakash 4). At times, a minute error in equivalence can ruin the whole sense of the remark. For example in *Godan,* at the arrival of the spring, Hori, forgetting all his worries and scrrows, starts singing some happy songs. He starts flirting with the *zamindarni* calling her *bhabhi.* Roadermel's translation extinguishes the erotic by making Hori say "you look really young today, sister" (*Godan* 299). He translates the word *bhabhi* (sister-in-law) into

[10] Term used by P.Lal in his *Transcreation: Two Essays.* Calcutta: A Writer's Workshop, 1972.

sister, and closes every hint of a flirting relationship. The translator also has to bring out the rhythm of the expression and the tempo of the lives of the villagers in the English language.

Problems in translating Premchand

The process of translating Premchand begins with confusion at the primary stage – the selection of a source text (ST) – as there are Urdu and Hindi versions. This is further complicated by the fact that two editions of the same volume may not complement each other. Which is an authentic text of Premchand? His Urdu and Hindi versions may differ on a number of grounds. Many editors and publishers have created their own texts of the short stories and novels published under Premchand's name. This is the same problem faced by translators as well. We can further cateogories the problems in translating Premchand into cultural and linguistic ones. Most of his works, especially stories are rooted in Indian culture, and carry information about Indian socio-cultural milieu.

To be true to a sense of culture, an Indian translator will not have much difficulty, and his Indian reader will find it easier to relate to the intended meaning. However, and conversely, it is not justifiable on the part of a translator for a western reader (where they do not explain these words with the help of a footnote or glossary) who is left puzzled. Thus, the translator avoids Peter Newmark's reader/scholar friendly suggestion that a translator should not hesitate to explain his methods (81). Though Roadarmel has taken care of this point and has provided meaning either in the line itself or with the help of an endnote, he still fails at places. Then there are urban 'Englishized' Indian characters, as there we a few typical *Lucknawi* Hindi speaking gentleman, to transcreate the gimmicks of their language is also a difficult job for the translator. His novel even written in Urdu, most of them have Hindu names, characters and rituals, so the ignorance of Hindu culture and Hindi language often jeopardize the translations.

One must analyse not only the parts of the source text and source culture that are present in translated texts, but also the parts that are left out. In traditional models for the analyses of translators, scholars assume that the translator had knowledge of

both the language and cultures in question, and that the translator translated in a linear fashion from the source to the target text. Tutun Mukherjee writes:

> "A translator [is] always faced with difficult choices: whether to privilege the text of the source culture or the reader of the receiving culture. It is not easy to strike a balance" (*Mindscape* 4).

Another aspect to be taken into consideration is that in India translations are done primarily for two reasons - by "ulterior end" and by self-aggrandisement, when the author and his followers get going (Mukherjee, *Translation as Discovery* 23). The first certainly does not produce desirable results. While translating Premchand, the translator will not only have to maintain the distinction between the characters, he will also have to maintain the consistency of each character's dialogue, as 'Premchandian' novels not only have sub-plots, they also have a range of characters. It is a difficult task because the storywriter employs the same dramatic device of revealing the character through the quality of speech. When translating stories like *Qafan*, which contains dialectical folk language, the method of expression has to be a dialect which, to put in Raja Rao's words, will some day prove to be as distinctive as the Irish or the American (Prasad 116). Hindi prose narrative frequently falls into pattern of short sentences, and therefore Rubin, in his stories have sometimes combined sentences and merged paragraphs with the help of subordinating conjunction.

One of the primary aims of undertaking the translation of a literary text from one language into another is to 'bridge' the cultural gap between the two societies involved (Narang 131). However, in the case of Premchand's translation, it is not always a parameter, because in this process sometimes the "English" hardly represents an "English culture" anymore; rather it may even represent an Indian culture in the English language. Therefore, the translator need not run for an English cultural equivalent all the time and should take care of both his target readerships – the native Indian reader as well as western reader.

Another problem in translating Premchand is the handling of idioms and proverbs. A Hindi idiom is at times transferable into English with ease. For example, the English "digging up something from the past" is commensurate with the Hindi digging up "from the grave". In such instances, literal translations convey the original

tone and colour. However, the number of untranslatable idioms is naturally outnumbered by the transferable ones, and a substitute for the idiom are at times "invented". If proverbs, idioms and folksongs or sayings are not rendered with delicacy and accuracy, the reader fails to understand the nuances of the story. Premchand primarily wanted to show the remote rural life of India with its language and culture. Sometimes a particular language or dialect is related to a particular class or caste, and demonstrates the behaviour patterns of the people. Premchand's original texts *immemorialized* such factors in Indian literature. The translator's greatest challenge lies in recreating this. To his credit, Premchand has given *uncouth dialects* and expressions a literary niche in literature.

Chapter 1V

Translations of Some Select Texts: A Comparative Study

> The comparison of the multiple translations of a Premchand text can be viewed as a practical cognition of translation study as a branch of comparative literature.
>
> – Gordon Roadarmel[11]

We have so far looked into the debates regarding Premchand as a writer and the different aspects of his works vis-a-vis English. It is to substantiate and further explore the issues involved in translation in the current scenario with respect to Premchand's works that I have taken up a comparative study of multiple translations of some of Premchand's major works. However, it is not possible in a short dissertation like M.Phil. to present a detailed comparative study of all of Premchand's literature in English. Therefore, I have selected *Nirmala*, a short, but very important novel of Premchand and the two translations of the novel that appeared between the span of a decade. Then I am comparing a few short stories, which have been translated by different translators. Finally I have taken some excepts form *Godan* to elaborate this study. The choice of short stories is made based on their themes and popularity among Hindi readers. Specific socio-cultural signifiers from the original texts have been taken up for analysis in order to find out how they either retain or lose their nuances in English translations.

Case File 1: *Nirmala*

Nirmala is one of Premchand's most popular novels. First published serially in *Chand* between November 1925 to November 1926, then in book-form in 1927, it is Premchand's widely translated novel. As of 1980, there were ten editions of the novel in Hindi and translations in seven other Indian languages and eight European languages, including two into Russian (Rubin 5). Right from its publication in Hindi, *Nirmala* has remained a favorite among readers of both Hindi-Urdu and other Indian languages. It was subsequently translated into half a dozen European languages. However, even after sixty years of its publication, English readers were bereft of it. In

[11] In introduction to *The Gift of a Cow*

1988, David Rubin first resurrected it in English under the title *Nirmala: A Novel.* Sripat Rai, Premchand's son, and S.P. Nirash gave valuable suggestions to Rubin in his translation (ibid 9). After eleven years, it was Premchand's grandson Alok Rai, who came up with another translation in the year 1999 titled *Nirmala.*

Nirmala is the tragedy of a young girl, who owing to her mother's inability to pay dowry is married off to Munshi Totaram, a widower old enough to be her father. He has three teenaged sons, the eldest being Mansharam, is of Nirmala's age. Totaram tries his best to woo the young bride Nirmala, but she in turn is altogether disinterested in him sexually. However, she finds benevolent comfort in Mansharam's company, which the old man starts looking from another perspective. He sends the son to a hostel, where he dies after prolonged illness and depression. Nirmala's life thereafter is a long journey of misfortune, of which death becomes a destination.

Nirmala stands apart from Premchand's works on many grounds. It epitomizes the agony and suffering of women's life in a way that Premchand was not able to achieve in any other work of his, whether before or after. Though the novel is short, but it has unity of structure and plot. It is closer to the individualistic novels where the story revolves around the events of a protagonist. For readers, its lesser number of characters than *Godan* or *Rangbhumi*, is a comfort zone.

It certainly becomes a difficult choice for a reader to choose between two translated versions of a text available in the same language, or even in different languages provided the reader knows them. How can one judge and evaluate which translation is a better, or closer to the original. Hence, the quality of the translation remains a mystery to the reader who has no idea of what might have worked behind the making of a particular translation – the translator's choices, decisions and other subject-positions enrobed.

Interestingly and intriguingly enough, Alok Rai does not explain his motive of translating *Nirmala* for a second time for the English readers, as already Rubin's translation is available. We can not find any reason for it even from the 'Forword', the 'Translator's Note' to his translation, nor even the 'Afterward' provided by Rai gives any hint. In fact, neither he mentions Rubin's name nor does he give any hint that he is 're-translating' *Nirmala* for English readers. In any case, for the comparative study

of the two translations of *Nirmala*, our reading both the versions – Rai's as well as Rubin's – alongside will not only be a "double pleasure" but also "an instructive exercise in deconstructing translation"(Trivedi, "Changed").

This comparative study of *Nirmala*'s translations is divided into some categories, which are selected on the problems that we face in a literary translation. The cultural signifiers in the language such as idioms along with other terms related to basic amenities of life form the major category. Along with the discussion on the treatment with the chain of these signifiers, the researcher has also taken several examples which refer to certain changes that a translator brings or can bring about in the basic structure of the translated version, thus deviating from the original text. Additions and deletions form the vital sections here. However, is it only by error that a translator does so? Or, are there some other reasons behind it? The study attemps to look into the possibilities that underlie these structural changes. Such analysis brings out several other issues related to the socio-cultural milieu of those to whom the text is addressed and the current scenario in which the task of the translation is operated upon. The ideology of the translator also becomes an important part of the discussion here. At times, the translator is critical about a certain issue, which is reflected in his translation. A few examples of such kind are also taken into consideration. Other examples include the errors where they seem to be only linguistic. Such errors also form the lapse while we review and judge the translated work. Though the notion of authenticity is an illusive perception, yet certain yardsticks are taken to evaluate the different versions.

While we analyze these two versions, the similarities and differences go hand in hand. It is hard though to comment on the specific methodology adopted by the translators, yet the possible analysis is done to see through some of the critical issues that come under the rubric of translation studies.

Source Text

David Rubin produced the first English translation of *Nirmala*, which was published by Vision Books in 1988. Alok Rai published his translation of *Nirmala* in 1999 by Oxford University Press. The introduction of the Rubin's book does not give any information about his source text. The only information provided regarding his

source text is that he translated *Nirmala* from the Hindi original. In fact, both the translators do not refer to the source texts, leaving the reader puzzled.

As far as the title is concerned, both the translators have retained the name of the protagonist Nirmala in their English titles. However, Rubin, the first translator has added a subtitle *A Novel*, perhaps to help the western reader who is unfamiliar with a common Indian name like Nirmala. Both the translators have followed the chapterization of the original Hindi texts.

1. Material culture:

This category includes terms related to food habits, clothing and residence. Food items are an important expression of a culture. It has certain connotations attached with it. So is with clothing and houses.

Source Text	T1(David Rubin)	T2(Alok Rai)
Halwai	Sweet/halwa-maker	halwai
Ghee	Ghee	ghee
Sookhee rotiyan	dry piece of bread	plain rotis
Kurta	Kurta	kurta
Sherbat	Sherbet	sharbat
Phalahari meetha	Fruits and sweets	sweets
Besan ke laddu	Laddu	besan ladoos
Phalahari	Fuits	phalahari
Paan	Pan	paan
Khichri	Kichri	khichri
Baatis	Fried bread	baatis
Daal	Lentil	daal
Two Phulke	Two phulkas	barest of bread
Halwa	Halwa	halwa

Table: 1

1. Social Culture:

The category includes work and leisure. It include the religious and social gatherings along with the customs, ceremonies that are associated with different sects of the society. As far as the kinship and relations are concerned, on the first page of the texts, T-1 has 'scores of relatives' (11) living in the household of 'Udaybhanu' while in T-2, it is 'Babu Udayabhanulal' who has 'dozens of people' (1) living with him. Among them are 'maternal and paternal uncles' in Rubin, who correctly become

'cousins maternal and paternal' in Rai; the foreigner is predictably fooled by our kinship terms.

3. **Proper nouns and the addressing terms:**

This category includes naming of certain characters, the titles according to their occupation and the way to address each other, which is specific to a certain culture in terms of familial relations and the other relations in society.

Source Text	T1	T2
Vakil	lawyer	Vakil/vakil-sahib/ Lawyer Sahib
Bhaiya	bhaiya	Brother
Raees	gentleman	Rais
Sahji	my dear fellow	Sahji
Maharaj	Maharaj	Maharaj
Babu Sahib	babu sahib	babu sahib
Kahaar	Servant	Personal servant
Randiyon	Whores	Prostitutes
Sarkar	Sir	Sarkar

Table: 2

4. Objects: Inanimate objects like tools, instruments and utensils also play an important role in depiction of a culture. Thus, treatment to these objects also affects the translation of a text.

Source text	T1	T2
Buggi	Buggi	Carriage
Laalten	Lantern	Hurricane lamp
Lathi	Lathi	Stout stick
Charpai	Charpoy	Bed
Hukka	Hookah	Carriage

Table: 3

From the above tables, one can observe the disparity in the treatment of cultural nuances in both the translations. At times, David Rubin (T1) has restored the cultural nuances, which shows that he realizes the significance of providing the reader with a cultural experience which may be unfamiliar to him. But simultaneously, the change of nuances according to the availability of the English equivalent reveals

inconsistency in the strategy of translation. For example, translation of food item like 'roti' into 'bread' by Rubin somehow brings confusion. For if he has no problem in restoring the other food items (given in the first chart) then translating this one seems to be doubtful about the consistency on the part of a translator. Similarly, Alok Rai (T2) also swings in between the two methods, restoration of nuances and/or translating them into English equivalents.

These inconsistencies sometimes seem to be personal choice also. In Rubin's translation, most of these restored nuances appear in italicized-form but in Rai's translation, italics are comparatively found less in numbers. Interestingly though is the fact that Rubin doesn't provide any glossary but Rai has given one at the end of the text to help the readers. Given the fact, English translations of Indian texts have now acquired an orientation of different sort, which is so to say political in the intellectual academic circle, certain paradigms are used to evaluate and judge the work. Under such measurements, certain acts are considered lapses in the work. These paradigms may shift in accordance with the changes in the other theoretical spheres. For example, in the current scenario, it is the method of "foreignization", propounded by Lawrence Venuti, which is seen to be the most favorable. He suggests:

> "In so far as foreignising, translation seeks to restrain the ethnocentric violence of translation, it is highly desirable today, a strategic intervention in the current state of world affairs, pitched against the hegemonic English language notions an unequal cultural exchanges in which they engage their global others" (Venuti 17).

Under such methodology, the restoration of cultural nuances is seen as one of the tool to propagate such methodology. Therefore, such a translation is preferred that underlines the differences between the source culture and the target language, and translating them in a manner that emphasizes these differences, i.e. by foreignising the target language. It has thus become essential to complicate the (western) target culture's image of the source culture, to provide some representation of the complex nature of the source culture. And, here this method of providing glossary to the restored words

forms one vital part of this methodology. Providing glossary or not is another debatable issue.

It is not merely words but also other linguistic features such as idioms, idiomatic expressions that are signifiers of a specific culture. Therefore, translating them is also seen as a challenge for the translator. Let us observe the treatment given to them:

Idioms and idiomatic expressions:

Both the translators have attempted at translating the idioms and idiomatic expressions in their own ways. The several characters who belong to the rural background, of different classes, age and sex utter the words which have implications in the socio-cultural sphere of which they are a part. They speak them at various occasions and situations. The idioms as we know are condensed in the meanings that they provide, thus, pose problems for the translators to be tackled. In a text like *Nirmala*, one may find ample use of such idioms and thus the researcher has taken them for the analysis. The following examples can be taken for reading the differences and similarities in both the translations in methodology of both the translations:

- Source Text: *dayee se pet chupaate ho?* (Premchand, *Nirmala* 38)

The above idiom is translated in T1 as:

"Hiding pregnancy from the midwife?" (30)

Whereas in T2, it is translated as:

"You want to pretend with me now!" (24)

- Source Text: *ek hee thaali ke chatte batte ho* (40)

Above famous idiom in Hindi language is translated in T1 as:

"Two chips off the same block" (32)

Whereas, in T2, it is translated merely into a phrasal expression:

Completely alike (27)

- Source Text: *dudharoo gaay ki laat kise buree maloom hoti hain*! (40)

This idiom is translated in T1, as:

"If a cow gives a lot of milk who minds if she kicks?" (31)

And in T2, it is translated as:

"After all, who minds being kicked by the cow one is milking" (26)

- Source text: *jaane kis manhoos ki surat dekhi thee ki yeh vipattee gale padee* (45)

is translated in T1 as:

"Who could say what inauspicious face he'd seen for such a calamity to befall him?" (36)

And in T2, it is translated as thus:

"He wondered what had brought this misfortune upon him" (31)

- Source text : ...*Chahe faansi hee kyon na ho jaaye* (33)

This sentence is translated in T1 as

"...even if I'm hanged for it"(25)

Whereas in T2, it is translated as

"... no matter what the consequences be"(19)

- *Source text: yeh kya ki kanya ke pita ka gala retiye* (33)

is translated in T1 as

"And what is this now, when they go murder the girl's father"(25)

Whereas in T2, it is translated as:

"Why make the poor girl's father pay?" (19)

- Source text: *Hansee khushee kanya ka paanigrahan kara lijeeye* (34)

is translated in T1 as:

"Be consoled and joyfully see that this girl is married"(26)

Whereas in T2, it is translated as:

"Be firm and go ahead with the wedding ceremonies as planned"(20)

- Source text: *pet hain ya shaitaan ki kabr?* (43)

is translated as:

"Did the man have a stomach or the very pit of hell" (34)

Whereas in T2, it is translated as:

"What a devil's appetite he has!" (29)

- Source text: *ladke hal ke bail he.*(p.47)

is translated as:

"Boys are the bullocks" (38)

And in T2, the translation is:

"Her sons are the prized draught animals" (34)

- Source text: *yeh kahar nahee yamdoot he, jab dekhiye sar par sawaar* (23)

is literally translated in T1 as:

"These servants aren't servants but fiends from hell, they never leave you in peace" (16)

While in T2, the translation is not literal.

"O these servants, they're so oppressive" (8)

In above instances, it is noticeable that in T1, the translations of several idiomatic expressions are literally done to restore the nuances in the source text. To restore the expressions, either nuances are themselves kept intact without change, or else an English equivalence is found to replace the nuance which conveys the similar meaning. Whereas, in T2, the meanings are interpreted from the source text, and then translated according to the context provided in the original. At times, even while the English equivalent is available, translator avoids the literal translation. However, even in T1, at times the sentences with idiomatic expressions are translated contextually and not literally. Here is an example:

Source text: *jaan boojhkar makkhee nahee niglee jaatee* (35)

Is translated in T1 as:

"One doesn't deliberately do something that's wrong" (26)

Whereas in T2, it is translated as:

"One cannot swallow a fly with cold deliberation" (20).

Additions:

At times, translators add a word, a phrase, or even a sentence either to provide a piece of information in explaining a cultural nuance or just to embellish the text. This is considered as a serious lapse if not justified by the translator. Let us study few examples and see the reasons behind the additions.

- Source text: *bas ab aap hee ubare to hum ubar sakte hein* (34)

Above idiom is translated as follows in T1:

"Only if you rescue us we'll be saved" (25)

Whereas in T2, it is translated as:

"Now you can deliver us from the difficulty into which we have been cast by misfortune" (19).

In T2, the words, 'deliver' and 'misfortune', emphasize the sufferings of the characters involved that are referred to in the dialogue.

- Source text: *nahee to aaj kaun bina dahej ke vivah kare* (34)

The above dialogue is spoken within such a socio-cultural in relation to the marriage of a male where taking dowry from bride's family is the forgranted concept. Thus, the dialogue reefers to the marriage of a son for dowry, but that it is a marriage of son is not explicit in the source language because for an Indian reader, such a custom is familiar and thus there isn't any need of explanation any further. In T1, translation does not provide any such explanation. It is translated as follows:

"For otherwise, who would have agreed to a marriage without a dowry" (25)

However, in T2, the translation is as follows:

"Who else would have agreed to give son in marriage and asked for no dowry" (19)

In T2, we can notice the addition of merely a word 'son' makes the custom explicit to the reader thus it makes reader familiar about the culture that he is reading. This addition also refers to the question of address, i.e. to whom the translation is addressed.

There is another instance where an additional explanation in the body of the text itself is provided to explain a cultural term. Nevertheless, it is now T1 where this addition is noticeable.

Source text: *vichaar bhee yehee tha ki triveni ka snaan karoonga* (44).

is translated in T1 as

"I'd intended to have a dip at the Triveni" (35).

But in T2, the translation is as follows:

"In fact, I'd had it in mind to take a ritual bath where the three rivers come together" (30).

One can notice the deletion of the word 'Triveni' and the substitution with the addition of the words "where three rivers meet" thus, explaining the significance of the river, Triveni.

At times, translators within their translations provide the ideas that follow in the story before the actual happening. For example, In one instance, pandit was told by Kalyani to convey to Bhalachandra about the selection of few guests to be brought to the wedding. The idea, which is not conveyed in the source language, is carried by one of the translations (T2).

Source text: *is tarah to baraat mein jitne sajjan ayenge,unka seva-satkar hum karenge hi;lekin paristhiti ab bahut badal gayee hain sarkar,koi karne-dharnewala nahee hain* (34)

In T1, the above lengthy sentence is translated as:

"We shall of course offer hospitality to the gentlefolk coming to the wedding: but the situation is now much changed, sir, as there's no one to manage it all" (25)

In T2, the situation is such:

"Of course we will provide all the hospitality we can to all the wedding guests you choose to bring with you, but the situation is very different now, sir. There's no one there to take care of things" (20)

Thus, the phrase "you choose to bring with you" is the idea that is conveyed beforehand with certain method of translation. Such instances prove the variations that can be provided with the different translations and hence the need to study the various translations arises.

Another instance of such type occurs which can help in reading. It is as follows:

- Source text: *abhagin ko accha ghar kahan se milta*? (47)

T1: "How could the unlucky girl find a match in a well placed family?" (38)

T2: "An unfortunate widow could not even hope for such things" (34)

One can notice the difference between 'unlucky girl' and 'unfortunate widow'. The original word 'abhagin' does not carry the idea of unfortunate widow. But unlucky in the context is of course, a widow.

There another such example where the expression in translation provides an extra information which though is linked with the story but it establishes a fact beforehand.

- Source language: *use kuan mein dhakelna tha* (47)

T1: "ruin her life with a poor match" (37)

T2: "throw her into a well" (34)

In T1, the idea that she will be suffering in her near future by this bad match is provided here.

Inadequate Translation:

Though translators translate the work under some strategies, but at times some of their translations appear to be so incorrect that it cannot be justified anyhow. In our comparative study, we can find few examples of this sort which cannot be ignored while discussion.

- Source text: *yahan kuch tazee cheez hain?* (42)

is translated in T1 as:

"Tell me, are there any free items here?" (33)

And in T2, is goes like this:

"Is there something fresh cooking here?" (28)

It is clearly visible that 'taaza' in English has to be 'fresh' and not 'free'. Thus, the translation in T1 is incorrect.

In another example of such kind, we can find the similar confrontation. A character named Bhalachandra talks about giving some money as an offesring to Panditji.

- Source text: *abhee to kuch de dilakar razee karna padega*(p.45)

Is translated in T1 as:

"Now we'll have to give him something to appease him (36)

Whereas in T2, there is an addition of the word "bribe" which has a negative implication on the occupation of Pundit, an ecclesiastical figure and the prominent one in the little space of the village. It is as follows:

"Now I'll have to bribe him somehow" (32)

Any reader can observe the implications of the word 'bribe' as against the simple word 'give'. Here one can also figure the translator's perspective getting reflected within the act of translation. Infact, reading translator's subjectivity has now become a part of the Translation studies.

There is another instance, which can be studied on the similar plane which we shall deal with in the next section under the title 'manipulation'.

- Source text: *ajee jao weh doosree auratein hoti hain, jo mardon ko pehchanti hain* (39)

The above sentence is translated differently in terms of linguistic structure in the two translations:

T1: "come off it, are there any women who understand men?" (30)

T2: "Go away there might well be some women who can see through men"(p.25)

Among the above two translations, the T2 seems to be better one. T1 translation confuses the meaning that is conveyed by the dialogue of a character. Usage of the determiner 'some' indicates the meaning better than the determiner 'any'. For a translator to do such a linguistic error is an unpardonable act.

Manipulation:

In the process of translation, with minute alterations, the suggestion can be passed on with the different interpretation as that provided by the source text. It is within the space of merely a single word or a sentence or even a structure of a sentence that such manipulation can be brought about. Here is an example:

- Source Text (ST)*: Bahut hee sayah unche kad ke aadmee the, aisa malum hota tha kei koi kala dev hain ya koi habshee Africa se pakadkar laya hain. Sar se paon tak ek hee rang tha. Kala chehra itna sayaha tha.malum na hota tha ki maathe ka ant kahan hain aur sar ka aarambh kahan.bas, koyle ki ek sajeev murti thee*

T1:"He was a tall, very corpulent man who looked like a black giant or a Negro brought from Africa. From head to toe he was of one single colour. His black face was so dark that one could not tell where his forehead ended and his hairline began. Enough to say that he was the living image of a piece of coal"

T2:"He was tall, massive man. He seemed like some dark god or some Negro lately recruited from darkest Africa. He was one colour from top to toe-black. His face was so dark that it was difficult to tell where his forehead ended and his hairline began. He was one live coal-black image"

One can observe that in the T1, the translation of "kaala dev" is "black giant", whereas, in T2, it is "dark god". The difference is visible. The difference is not only in the translation of word but the perspective of the translator. Here one can see the ideology of a translator working behind the process. Further, the phrase "koyle kee ek sajeev murti"is translated as "living image of a piece of coal" in T1. On the other hand, in T2, it becomes, "live coal-black image" which seems to convey a less harsh statement on the black body of Negro which is referred to heighten the black-ness of a character. May be translator in T2 does not want to get into controversy as negritude has now become an important issue in the discourse of resistance.

Conclusion

It is very difficult to make a decision between two translation as to which is a better one, howevder, from the above examples, various questions emerge on the

judgement of both the translations. We can make some conclusions: In AlokRai (T2) we have noticed, the translaiton is not literal at times, which seems to reduce the the imaginative quality of the original text. The idioms, which are culture-specific, are transformed to mere gists of the idioms, as if one is not translating but summarizing by oversimplifying. The result is that Rai produces an unimaginative piece of work. He does not follow any policy in transliterating the nuances. He does not make explanations in making radical transformations in the structure. Oveall he gives the nocel athe form of a play with his narrative structure,which is quite changed form the Hnditext.. While Rubin tries to keep with a prosaic pattern. Deletions and additions follow to make reading more smooth eradicating the complex nature of the language that Premchand renders to his novel. Moreover, the dramatic impact of the novel is reduced by such changes. In a comparison, David Rubin retains the element of story telling by many a times providing literal translation. He even justifies his liberties at times when he makes some changes. In his introduction, he states:

> "Every translator aspires to a rendering of the original that will be as faithful, as literal, as possible. In the case of a work like *Nirmala* some liberties are unfortunately necessary for the work to be comprehensible in another language" (6).

Though both the translators suffer form some errors, I would say that David Rubin's translation is still better than Rai's. Considering that Alok Rai was translating the novel almost a decade after the appearance of the first translations, he disappoints the readers and scholars alike. The expectation of a new more faithful translation has not been fulfilled. It seems he merely wanted to be different from the earlier transslation. Alok Rai though being an Indian and a Hindi speaker first, renders *Nirmala* with confident ease and flair, but seems trying to thrust his *Indianness* on readers. Above all, he suffers from inconsistency, like sometimes, he calls Totaram as Munshiji, the other time "Vakil Sahib", and sometimes "Lawyer Sahib"! It is difficult to know for whom is he translating.

On literal translation, Rubin modestly mentions that translation cannot be achieved in complete literal sense and equivalents have to be searched by a translator. Rai on the other hand reveals two major issues in his introduction

(6). First, that his translation methodology also takes care of the international reader. Second, the incapacity on the translator's part to translate "cultural baggage" that is implied in the various expressions. Within the examples provided in the analysis, one can observe the explanations that Rai provides in explaining what"Triveni" is: where three rivers come together. For sure, such translation is not for an Indian reader but an international. Rai explains this dilemma of a translator but the work that he produces is damaging and misleading. Perhaps, his intention of trying to project *Nirmala* as "a monster of pessivity" has made him select such languave, while Rubin treats Nirmala as a girl interupted in misfortune. The liberties are taken in both the versions, yet Rubin does not in any way attempts at diluting the texture of Premchand's *Nirmala.*

Case file II: Short Stories

As far as Premchand's stories are concerned, there are many stories that have been translated at least four-five times, for example *Shtaranj ke Khelari* (The Chess Players), *Panch Parmeshwar* (The Almighty Judges), *Qafan* (Shroud), *Thakur ka Kkuan* (Thakur's Well), *Sadgati* (Deleverance), *Pus Ki Raat* (Wintry Night). These stories thrive with contemporary themes and plausible plots, besides short in length. No reader of a translation, who has read the original work, should expect to be wholly satisfied with the translation. However, a comparative study of multiple number of translations can be helpful in examining the extent a translator taking liberty, the relationship between the translation and the original. Such expertise can not bring a final word on 'how true' the translation, but it can definitely explore the areas of literary understanding, which the process of translation often enters. Since no single translation can ever be acclaimed as having the definitive last word, we can experiment here with are some excerpts from different translations of Premchand's major stories.

Panch Parmeshwar

Eight translators under different titles have translated the story *Panch Parmeshwar*. Gurdial Mallik as *The Voice of God*, P.Lal and Nandini Nopany as *Voice of God*, and Asaduddin under the title, *The Holy Judge*. The titles are very much reflective of the translators' understanding of Indian socio-cultural

history. All the translators have retained the theme that the voice or judgement of 'Panch' is the voice of God.

- The opening line of the story introduces the two friends, with: "*Juman Sheikh aur Algu Chaudhry mein ghari mitrata thi* (*Premchand Rachnavali*, 66).

P.Lal and Nandini Nopani: "There could not be friend close to each other than Jumman Sheikh and Algu Chaudhry" (46)

Malik: "Jumman Sheikh and Algu Chaudhry were fast friends" (7)

Asaduddin: "Jumman Sheikh and Algu were close friends" (28)

Premchand believed that the very first sentence of a story or novel should be gripping and it should hold out interest till the very end (LB 370) While Mallik and Asaduddin simply translate the sentence with 'close' and 'fast' to show the closeness of the friendship, P. Lal and Nopany have extended the simple affirmative statement into a longer complex sentence, perhaps to put more emphasis on the closeness.

- *Mitrata ka mool mantra bhi yehi hain* (66)

Asadduddin: "meeting of minds which united them and cemented this friends" (29)

Lal & Nopany: "a meetings of minds which, of course, is the real cost of friendship" (46)

Mallik: " they shared in the same likes and this, indeed is friendship's real foundation"(8)

In the same story, whereas all the other translators have plainly translated *Burhee khala* into old aunt, Asaduddin, has added the word *khalajan*, which reflects that he is trying to appropriate the translation with the cultural milieu (In a Muslim family *khala* is addressed as *khalajan* to show love and respect). It also reflects his commitment to the title tof the volume, which is related to Muslim lives in India.

In a simple sentence like, *Rupaye kya yahan phalte hain*? (67), while others have simply translated *rupaye* into money, Mallik has changed money into silver (8). On other instances, the word, *Chillum* has been retained as *chillum* only, Mallik has gone to the extent of 'hubble-bubble', an funy expression for any reader.

- The two most important lines in the story: *Panch ka hukm allah ka hukm hain* (69), and *Panch Parameshwar ki Jai* (75) which also contain the theme of the story have been translated as follows:

  P.Lal & Nopany: "The voice of the Panchayat is the voice of Allah"(50); "Long live the panchayat*! Panch- Parameshwar ki Jai!*" (57)

  Mallik: "The decree of the Panchayat is the decree of God"(11); " Hurrah! Victory to the Panchayt! (19)

  Asaduddin: "The Panchayat's voice is the voice of Allah" (31); "Panch-Parmeshvar ki Jai- long live the Panchayat" (37)

In these sentences, Mallik has again extended to Englishize the Muslim term *Allah* into God. However, all the three translators define the term *hibbnama* in their translated sentences, rather than retaining it in its original Muslim term.

- In translating an idiom, like *dudh ka dudh* aur *paani ka paani* (71), while Asaduddin, and Lal & Nopany, simply translate it into "separating milk from water", Malik does it with a reference to the mythical swan, who could separate water- "like a swan it separates water from milk, milk from water, truth from falsehood" (14), which though, is informative, however the explanation becomes redundant.

***Sadgati* (Salvation):**

The story has been translated by David Rubin, under the title *Deliverance*, while Madan Gopal, P. Lal & Nandini Nopany, Madan Gupta and Rakhshanda Jalil has titled it as *Salvation*. The title salvation probably gives a more satirical vein to the theme of the story. In the opening scene of the story

Madan Gopal: "Dukhi, the tanner was sweeping the country yard in front of his house. His wife, Jhunia was plastering the rooms. When they had both finished their respective jobs, the wife said, "You had better go to the Pandit Baba"

"Yes, in a minute", said Dukhi

P.Lal & Nopany: "Dukhi, the low caste leather worker was sweeping near the door of his hut and his wife Jhunia was plastering the walls with cow dung paste.

Taking a brief respite, the chamar's wife said "Why don't you go right now and tell the Pandit Baba? Or you might miss him"

Dukhi I'll go. But have we got anything for him to sit on?"

Rubin: "Dukhi, the tanner was sweeping in front of his door while Jhuniya, his wife, plastered the flour with cow dung. When both found a moment to rest from their work, Jhunia said, 'Aren't you going to the Brahman to ask him to come? If you don't he's likely to go somewhere'

Yes, I'm going', Dukhi said,

'But we have to think about what he's going to sit on"

In the above three translations, the second is nearer to original, and retains the rural feeling quite well. The word 'tanner' explains the low class chamar's status very little. Madan Gopal has shortened Dukhi's dialogue, in which he is worrying about what on the Brahman will sit; and it shows how poor the couple is that they don't have a carpet to sit on. The mere plastering the room does not refer that it is done by cow dung, hence a rural practice is removed from the reader's (perhps urban) knowledge.

- The closing lines of the story ***The Shroud***

Lal & Nopany: "The drunks stare at father and son singing away in wanton intoxication. Then both start dancing, leaping, jumping. They tumble, they

teeter, they fall. They gesticulate, they make faces. And then, in drunken torpor, they collapse on the ground".

Rubin: "The eyes of all the drunkards were glued on them and the two of them became intoxicated right to their heads. Then they started to dance, they jumped and sprang, fell back, twisted, they gesticulated, they mimed their feelings and finally they collapsed dead drunk"

Mallik: "Then under influence of liquor they danced, they got up again, gesticulated and eventually dropped down on earth."

In the above lines, Mallik has concluded the long passage in very few words; while the others have described each an every activity the father and son did before falling down. To convey a psychological state, every act of insanity makes the reader understand.

While translating a song, translators have applied their own intelligence, for example, in the Shroud, when both father and son, heavily drunk, start singing. The original Hindi is: "*Aur dono khare hokar gane lage- 'thagini kyo naina jhamkave! Thagini...!*

They both stood up and started singing,

" O deceitful one! Why make ever at us?" (P.C. Gupta)

Both of them suddenly started singing lustily,

" O world-siren, O world-siren, why dost thou wink at us?" (Gurdial mallik)

"The two stood up and began to sing

"Why this witchery of the eyes, 0 false charmer!" (Madan Gopal)

"And then two of them stood up and began to sing

"Deceitful world, why do you dazzle us with your eyes? Deceitful world" (David Rubin)

Two stand up and started singing,

"Enchantress of the glittering eyes! Enchantress..." (Nopany and Lal)

All the above translations fails to bring the nuances of the "*thagini naina..*" kind of rural song, and words like 'enchantress' 'fase charmer' etc can notmatch the the aura of the word 'thagini' or 'maaya'. Pehaps, because there is no concept of 'maaya' in English. Even 'mirage' would not be a proper personification.

Case file III: *Godan* (few excerpts)

And finally, in this very brief study of the two translations of *Godan*, with the help of a few excerpts, I intend to derive that P. Lal and Jai Ratan's translation is more directed for Indian readers than Roadermel's which addresses the western audience. Roadarmel provides an 'Introduction' to introduce the principal characters of the novel, whereas Lal and Ratan do not do so. Roadarmel finds it necessary to introduce the earthen Indian rural names, like Gobar, Dhania, Hori or Bhola, as, because for a western reader it might be confusing to identify particular character, their gender, and their relationship. Roadarmel also introduce the places. Lal and Ratan do not feel it necessary to introduce these character and places, considering that the average Indian reader is familiar with such names and places. It is also interesting to note that Roadarmel, an American scholar translating a Hindi text has found more appropriate equivalence for some Hindi idioms. For example:

- *Tu jees baat ko nahin samajhati, usme taang kyo adati hain bhai!* (*Godan*, 5).

  While Roadarmel brings an equivalent idiom for "*taang daalna*" which is "poking one's nose into something" and translates:

"Why do you go poking your nose into things that you don't understand!" (15).

Where as the Indian translator duo simply translate without searching an English equivalent idiom: "Why do you meddle with things which are beyond you? (5).

If on the one hand, Roadarmel has used a phrase very common in English, however not much in vogue today. On the other hand, the Indian translators have used "meddle" which is more of an idiomatic verb rather than a proper idiom. Roadarmel often italicizes Indian words, and then employs explanation in the glossary given at the end of the book. For example, words like *Zamidar*. Understandably, for the Indian translators, such words are very common, hence do not need any footnote or glossary. However, words are translated though correctly, but still some explanations are left.

Finally, while debating upon which version of a text is faithful, or which translation of a Premchand text is close to the original text, one can expect the Premchand text itself be a tochstone for a translated at text. As Roadarmel famously stated:

> "It seems wise to let Premchand speak for himself as much as possible, leaving him as the judge of what he wanted to say and how he wanted to say it" (Roadarmel xi).

It can however, be noted that faithfulness to the original is a mirage. Each translator has his flaws, which needs to be kept in check. Translation must not loose what it is intended to do, to put forward its purpose into front and not forget that it is a representation for those who cannot have access to the original. In that case, translators bear ethical responsibility towards their readers. And in such a case, the act of translation becomes far more complex an activity than writing an original text.

Chapter 5

Conclusion:

When a text is translated into English, the English language itself becomes *translated English.* Not only is the source text (ST) converted into the target text (TT) but also it is converted into Indian English or to be more precise "Premchandian" English. This fifth and concluding chapter will highlight the need for *Premchand in English,* and will discuss the various challenges related to publication, reader-reception, and the factors concerning the the over all reputation of Premchand in Hindi and in English. It will argue that the situation is not limited to Premchand only, but many other leading writers in Hindi/ Urdu are also underrepresented too. Is this decline of interest in Premchand's writings, limited to English readers only? How this decline of the leading Hindi writer suggestive of the decline of vernacular literatures in India. Can the English translations resurrect these writers and literatures? Does the literary fortune of Premchand rely only on translation?

Translation has been a major instrument in the dissemination of great works of literature. The history of translation studies recounts how under the apparatus of translation, writings from all ages and all languages have survived. From religious scriptures like the *Bible*, *Quran*, *Bhagwadgita*, to classical writings of Homer, Ovid, Virgil, Kalidasa, Goethe, Firdausi, Dante, to the innumerable works of modern writers have all been "renewed" through translation. If the use of translation is to counter language and cultural barriers, and is to promote national unity, Premchand can be regarded as an ideal example.

Every text – original or translated – is the product of a purpose. Similarly, Premchand's works translated into English are done for some purpose or the other. These purposes can be manifold, and can be viewed from different perspectives. There are translators who have done it as a professional obligation, while there are others who have first been drawn to his work and then wished to make it available for others. The purpose of the translation of Premchand is simply for the people who have no access to the language of the original text and so they can read them in a more accessible language.

Today, Hindi, despite having constitutionally been declared the national language of India, does not enjoy a hegemonic status (not that it intends to) like English whereas English becomes *the* official language of a common Indian Territory. Therefore, reading Premchand in a link language – English – becomes an alternative to acknowledge the importance of reading him in acknowledging the prosperity of Hindi, and Indian literature in general. His work represents one of the richest phases of Indian literary excellence; and which is very different from the "typecast" romantic and self-glorifying writings. The pictures portrayed in his novels and stories are not all pleasant and attractive, but truthful. Premchand who, with his work, has carved a niche for himself in Hindi and Urdu literature is no longer an unknown entity outside the linguistic confines of Hindi-Urdu. However, he deserves a broader and wider international and *interlingual* audience.

Translating the works of an important writer like Premchand, who was distinctively attached to the national movement through his works and his personal conduct, can be read as a useful historical account. It becomes a potent vehicle to promote both the national literature and subsequently becomes a part of World Literature.

However, translation is not an upright activity, free from thematic, textual, and even socio-political engagements. It brings with it numerous socio-political issues and biases. "It is not a transparent activity but is highly charged with significance at every stage, it rarely, if ever, involves a relationship of equality between texts, authors or systems" (Bassnett and Trivedi 9). Since there is no faithful likeness of an original text, almost every translator of Premchand comes with a different text. However, each translation creates a place for itself in the domain of literature.

Premchand's works highlight the problems of both rural as well as urban societies of India – problems, which do not have any easy solution. Premchand is critical of those customs and traditions of the society that make life a bed of roses for some and miserable for others. However, he does not blame the society entirely for its state. He comes as a reformer-critic of his social settings. He insinuates the altering of an individual, through his writings, from within, rather than being critical of the system throughout.

In recent years, English becoming the largest *lingua-franca* has been boosted by the role played by translation activities. English has become the link language in many multilingual societies of the world. Given this situation, English as a link language with the aid of translation can best serve the purpose of an integrated *Indian Literature*, and can promote a national literature with publication of work of writers like Premchand. However, this proposal might sound intriguing and contradictory with the argument that I made in *Premchand and English*, and *Premchand in English.* It is ironical, if Premchand countered the hegemony of English language in his lifetime, then why his works were continuously rendered into English?

The irony of the translation scenario in relation to Premchand is that his larger than life image of a representative Hindi and Urdu writer looms heavily on other perspectives. The presence of the 'Hindi Premchand' in the literary memory and experience, is a constant challenge to the "English Premchand". Premchand, as we have examined in earlier chapters, through his conduct with English language and literature, countered the hegemony of English. He always preferred the promotion of national language and national literature. For this, he remained skeptical about the English translation of his works, and rather, he promoted the translation of them into other Indian languages. However, in today's context, when the English language no longer remains a *colonizer's* language, but has become a part of Indian language, and perhaps the most powerful part, given its wide readership and use in all walks of life; translation cannot be seen simply to reproduce the source text into target language, but also should be an accurate interpretation of the original.

However, there are other important factors that make translating Premchand all the more significant. He is also called a *kaljayee rachanakar* (a somewhat *avant-garde* writer)- a writer whose writings are ahead of its time, and 'timeless.' With his writings, he broke into the common existing literary structure of his time, and set new trends in Indian literature. It is not only the originality of a text and the circumstances under which a text was written that destined its universality, but also its relevance in the contemporary world as well as for future generations. Reading Premchand is unlike reading *any* other Indian writer. His literature in itself is a rendezvous with the socio-political-economic history of the India of the early twentieth century, and even today. According to Dr. Ratankar Panday, if the Indian history of the period of 1920-

1936 is destroyed, it can be recovered with the help of the background of Non-Cooperation movement, and emotions of freedom and national struggle seen through the history of Indian society, studied from the works of Premchand (Panday 5).

Premchand has been criticized by critics on ethnic grounds, claiming that the range of do not stretch beyond the West of Kanpur and the East of Banaras, which is true, but a misnomer. By, examining Premchand's literature with such narrow parameters is limiting the writer's impact on literature. Great writers, like Jane Austin, Charles Dickens, or R.K. Narayan too have been critiqued on similar grounds.

The Power of (*English*) *Premchand*

When an English work of Shakespeare or Shaw is translated into Hindi or any major Indian language, it initiates a debate of westernizing Indian literature. So if an Indian writer like Premchand is translated into English, does it present the opposite facet of modernization? A Premchand text becomes "English Premchand", who reminds the modern English-educated Indian to come to terms with mass poverty, superstitions in rural India, problems of women in both rural and urban India, and so on. He entails the representation of an original culture for a more powerful national culture or world culture. It broadens and represents a national culture for a still more powerful international/cosmopolitan audience.

Translation has been an activity of enrichment and empowerment. Through the process of translation of Premchand from Hindi and Urdu literature, not only these languages find recognition in literary horizon, but it is a triumph of Indian Literature as well. The Indian national Literature gets a cultural identity.

It can be argued that Premchand's writings bring not so "favorable" and beautiful pictures of Indian society. However, the criticism of life from both angles is the major aim of literature, and that in no way should be discouraged. Moreover, his works, by exposing the evils and ills of the society, reformative favors to Indian society. In this process, it promotes, more than anything, humanity, compassion, equality, and a conscious effort to change the unequal human environment.

It is true that Premchand, despite having been considerably translated into English, has not reached a wider audience. He does not enjoy the status of *the* most

translated writer among his likes. If in today's world Agatha Christie is translated more than Shakespeare, does that mean that Shakespeare's work is less great than her's? (Bhatanagar 11). Here, it is to be noted that western scholars have shown considerable interest in translating Premchand's works. Foreign scholars have translated three of his four translated novels (the fourth translator being a Pakistani). This is an encouraging fact, and signifies how the number of translation is not the only mark a writer's greatness. On the contrary, it is to be noticed how many different knids of people are taking interest in him.

Sujeet Mukerjee divides translation of literary texts into three broad categories – based on their backgrounds – texts of a particular region, texts of a nation, and texts, which are beyond national boundaries (33). Premchand's literature can be studied in terms of the literature of his region–north India; literature of a country–Indian Literature; and as a part of World Literature too. In fact, restricting him into any one category will be injustice to his caliber. Even if such a scheme of studying literature is adopted, the name Premchand should come among the first, and translation of his work will definitely bring justification for those who can not afford to read him in original. Premchand is being read in many western universities not only in the department(s) of South East Asian Literature, but also in the departments of Sociology and Economics. Ironically, whereas he has regularly been studied in the curricula of many foreign universities, in India he is at times, is kept outside the canon of Hindi literature. Premchand's works, contrary to the recently politicized controversy, are truly a part of Dalit literature, or subaltern writings. Many of his novels and stories, *Sadgati*, *Dudh ka Daam*, *Rangbhumi*, strongly manifest their trails and troubles, with a strong appeal of changing the age-old discriminatory mindset. In his encompassing of revolutionary elements, he not only exposes the orthodoxy of Indian society, but also mirrors the changing set up. However, categorization of Premchand's works into any 'type' of literature, only limits its influence. His is a literature of the people.

The relevance of Premchand's work is not confined to mere entertaining pieces of fiction; they are socio-cultural, economic texts wrapped in literature. *Godan* can be read as a "text of economic nationalism" and even as a "Marxist critique of bourgeois nationalism" (Trivedi, *The Progress of Hindi* 1010). Translation of Premchand can be

read and studied as a machinery to capture and resist the subjugation of the 'colonized' as well as the 'underprivileged.'

Today, 'who will translate, and which text?' is generally decided by the publishing house or the commissioning agency, at times by the credentials of the translator and the 'reputation' and 'success' of the source text. The text may be chosen because of its immense popularity in source language because of its native socio-cultural context, or because it represents a new trend, new experience in form and technique, and possessing the potential to become a 'classic'. Or else, it may be chosen because it represents a literature belonging to a part of the world hitherto isolated from the 'mainstream' of world literature. Texts by Dante, Shakespeare, Tagore, Tolstoy, Dickens, Achebe, and Premchand might be selected for translation for a different set of reasons (R.S. Gupta 185-6). However, the role of publications and other politics have become important factors in the *translation business* today.

The role of publishing houses also is an important issue in the current situation. Of late, comparatively there have been a plethora of anthologies of Premchand's stories, as well as stories published in various categories as *Best Indian Short Stories*, *Stories by Premchand* and so on. Such collections come and go without any trace. One cannot neglect the fact that fascinating titles do matter in the publication and marketability of a translated text. For example a title like "Courtesan's Quarter" is more bankable than the translation of the Hindi title, "House of Service". The titles of translated version reflect the nature of a text. Roadermel's *The Gift of a Cow* refers to traditional practice of the gift of a cow, which is more of a Hindu tradition, Lal and Jai Ratan's title reflects India as a peasant nation and Village folk. Where as a literary texts like *Godan* which is so rooted in Indian culture, flows into the stream naturally and is able to avail of the contextual richness of literary tradition and contemporary socio-cultural environment, its translated text does not do the same.

Oxford University Press has recently published an anthology of Premchand's works translated into English under the tile, *Oxford India Premchand.* What makes the choice of the translated work all the more stranger is that Premchand's most famous work *Godan*, which has twice been translated into English does not find a place in this voluminous collection. Another discrepancy made by the publishers is

that they publish their own earlier publications, without any improvements, and therefore with the previous mistakes. Publishers have made discrepancies regarding the title of a translation. The original title of Lal and Ratan's translation of *Godan* was *Godan: A Classic of Peasant India*, which was misprinted by the publishers from its 7th edition onwards as *Godan: A Novel of Peasant India* (Sharma 88). However, in the recent editions, they have retained the first one.

The issue of a translator's identity is also one factor that effects the appeal (marketability) of a work in translation. Which work will attract readers? Whose name can stir some enthusiasm for reprinting the same old work? Considering the growth and importance of English today, reading Premchand in English should sound more practical than what it was three or four decades ago. The lack of recognition of the real translator has almost become a lacuna, which is often noticed by the researchers. Many anthologies and even volumes do not mention the name of the translator or an editor at all, which is not only perplexing for the readers and scholars, such a disorder also questions the authenticity of the translated texts. For example, *Oxford India Premchand*, a thick-size volume does not mention the name of an editor.

Thus we see that for a variety of reasons, there has been a perceptible decline in Premchand's readership, however that should not be taken as a sign of the decline of his literary appeal. What also needs to be considered along with this, is the decline in general of Hindi readership. With this decline, Indian writings in English have received an impetus. However, it would be unjustifiable to blame the growth and popularity of Indian English fiction, or the fiction written by Indians in English as an adversary to the path of the success of Premchand in English.

Today most literary translations are done either in the presence of or under the consent of the original writer. However in Premchand's case, this was not possible. A translation is not only meant for appreciating the thought process of an author and his age, but also conveys his ideas into an entirely different medium and by doing so it further enriches other literatures. However, we see how the translator's own ideology breeds into the translation.

The translator seeks to not only establish and transmit shared sets of inter-cultural experiences but also define the basic need of complexity. Consequently, this

can become a process of cultural understanding and Premchand's work in English can serve this purpose exceedingly well. Translation of similar texts are always welcome and would rather be a lot easier when the translator has read and studied an earlier existing translation well, so that he/she can correct errors, mistakes and fine-tune the existing complexities. This however is more of an editing task rather than a new translation work. Therefore, translators ought to strive to translate texts that are yet to be translated rather than *polishing* again and again those works which have already been translated.

Politics of Translating Premchand:

Without going into a further scrutiny of the topic, it is necessary that we mention the politics of translating Premchand or reading him in the vernacular. It is a fact which cannot be denied that Premchand has been politicized for various purposes, and is being done even today. A kind of propaganda about whether or not Premchand should be made available to readers especially students, or not is being made in recent times. On the contrary, we see that there has been a sudden and successive interest in Rabindranath Tagore's work like *Chokher Bali* in its centenary year, when its translations plus a film version came a couple of years ago. Nothing of this sort happened in Premchand's centenary in 1980. The flooding of translators, in Premchand's case should be linked to the 'publish and perish' propaganda. Many of these translators seem to be affected by market forces. Publishers now want to *use* Premchand for profit. A name like Jai Rattan, a veteran in the field of translation for over half a century, is known to draw readership value, and therefore any book associated with his name is certain to be a profitable venture for publishers. According to Amitav Ghosh, a country as multilingual as India is doomed without good translators, hense the need of good-commited translatrs. However, a complete assessment of the positions of readers of English translation is not possible by merely looking at the number of translations being done. There is a need for a thorough assessment of the readership in Hindi, Urdu, and in English. Nothing harms Premchand or for that matter any other author than a bad translation of his work.

In an astoundingly embarrassing experience, I found out that the translator's name that the 2003 Jaico edition of *Selected Short Stories by Premchand* had published was wrongly printed. It can not be excused as merely a printing mistake.

When enquired, Jai Rattan told this researcher that, he never translated those stories. A sub-editor later fumed that the reader should be concerned about *reading*, not about *who the translator is* and which is the original, or whatever! If such is the state of professionalism in translation and publication than the legitimacy and integrity of authors and writers in this country remain in a hazardous and bizarre position.

The translator's failure to incorporate the indigenous Indian (or North Indian) folk cultures in target languages, as in the case of *Kafan*, is a result of the failure to understand that Premchand was a 'son of the soil' besides being a writer. When folk idioms and proverbs are not rendered in the true spirit, the reader automatically fails to understand what the author wanted to show. It does not create an imagery of the exact rural folk life of India. On the other hand, the translator's avoidance of folk languages (Lal and Ratan's translation of *Godan* is exemplary) is negligent of the indigenous Indianness of the original text. Despite all the limitations, a faithful translation remains a milestone in the genre of Premchand translations.

Translation can be seen as an act of reciprocal correction through a study of the various translations of Premchand. Translators re-translating a text often claim the existing title to be misleading and unsatisfactory. Nevertheless, most of them do not explain this in their introductions. In a sense, they continue committing the same mistakes.

The scarcity of journals that write on Hindi writers like Premchand or publish his translated works is also a factor that is responsible for the decline of Premchand readers in non-Hindi languages. In Hindi, Premchand's own journal *Hans* has been one of the most circulated journals for seven decades till date. At one point, it had the circulation of twenty thousand copies. However today it would be very difficult to create a similar effect among English readers.

Critics and readers in general have dubbed Premchand in some artistic or political categories, which is an injustice to him. However, to fit a writer of Premchand's caliber in a distinct artistic role is very difficult, because of his complexities as a person, as an ideologist and as an author par excellence. Before summing his literature in one word, it is imperative to classify his literary career in three-four phases. He comes as a different person at different phases. His earliest

works are tales of 'romanticized patriotism' where he is the champion of the motherland. Next, he is a reformist, writing for Indian values and character on the line of Dayanand's Arya Samaj. Then he is a 'Gandhi' talking about social realism; and finally, he is a progressive writer–bringing socio-economic and psychosocial realities to the front.

Premchand's relationship with English literature is radically in contrast with that of the English rule in India. He was not from those Indian writers or politicians who thought that British rule had done favors to us. In his early phase, he admired extremists like Tilak, who regarded British rule as 'a predatory foreign incubus rather than a blessing'. He wrote stories full of chivalry, romance, self-sacrifice and patriotism to remind the people who seemed to have forgotten how to live and die for the nation. Nevertheless, his breaking away from such themes should not be meant that he no longer wanted the pride of the nation. However, he became more realistic, and realized that rather relying on the glorious past, it was the need of the hour to expose the cryptogram of the society, which were even greater issues.

Siegfried Schulz mentions an important factor in Premchand's personality and ideology that ceases his literature from being at a spontaneous reach of the western audience. Unlike Tagore and Mohammed Iqbal, who had traveled and even studied in the West, understood the Western mind and, in a good sense became their own by responding to Western poetry and literature 'intellectually'–Premchand remained reserved, and literally an indigenous Indian (Schulz 41). He never wrote for the Western audience. No wonder that Tagore and Iqbal found many admirers in the form of prominent literary figures, like W.B Yeats, Hermann Hesse and others, while Premchand did not find any such personality to promote him in the West. The role of government publications like National Book Trust (NBT) has not been much encouraging. Established in 1957 with a mandate among others to produce good translations, NBT has published a biographic handbook under its national biographies project (Nehru Bal Prakashan), and only one story (*Festival of Eid* by Khushwant Singh), while NCERT's lone collection of his stories (*Premchand:The Voice of Rural India*, 1981) is unavailable in new prints perhaps due to poor response to the earlier editions.

Since the expiration of the copyright of Premchand's writings, anybody can translate Premchand's work now. If on the one hand it has been a fruitful serious practice, while on other hand it has been done as an infantile pursuit by translators as well as publishers; Jaico incident is just one of them. In today's world, one would say that the literary fortune of an author depends not only on the translator, but also on readers, and publishers. Finally, literary fortune of Premchand does not depend on his English translations.

What all has been published in the last fifty years in the field of English Translation of Premchand, clearly nails out some basic assumptions: One, that translation not always does justice to Premchand's greatness as an iconic (if not *the*) Hindi writer partially meets to its expectations. The reason why his great novels and short stories have not enjoyed their rightful love and admiration in English, can be found in the fact that the translation appeared lately or they are very poor, and a lot of discrepancies are made in this process. According to Shulz, it is the fault of the people with some literary training and a closer understanding of issues involved who have not been active enough, who have contended themselves with the writing of articles and essays in learned journals, who have not utilized scientific research regarding certain sociological facts and made them, in a simplified form, available and accessible to the broad slow-moving public (Shulz 40).

There are some obvious inconsistencies and confusions that spring up in western reader's mind while reading Premchand, unlike an Indian reader who can recognize and comprehend the information and explanation so unobtrusively hidden right on the surface of the narrative. The reason is that Premchand never had the Western reader in mind and never catered to his sensitivities. It is somewhat similar to the fate of *Mother India*, the classic Hindi film, which narrowly missed an Oscar trophy. Almost every second member (of course, western) of the jury criticized "why this stupid woman (Nargis Dutt's character) is so stubborn; does not accept the rich old man's marriage proposal to provide her starving children a better future?" Almost every member missed out the importance of *Suhaag* and self-respect of an Indian woman. Similarly, for the western reader Hori's preoccupation with the honor of his family, and his *dharam* concept becomes confusing, and it alienates the western reader (Shulz 38). Premchand often, and especially in his novels brings allusions to

classical Indian literature and mythology. For example, in *Godan*, he refers to mythical 'Kamdhenu' and *Bhagavd Gita*'s teachings, and it may become harder for the Western reader to appreciate the entire depth and beauty of the novel.

The response of the translations by the audience via materials like reviews, critiques, work shops etc. all render the circulation of information which enables the translators to set the paradigms of the translations, which however, is an arbitrary nature of translation. A bad translation is not much badsly translated but badly 'Englishized'. However, in India, as Sujeet Mukherjee says, we have learnt to expect translations to adhere to the original as closely as possible (59). One remembers AlokBhalla's urge that there ought to be, however, a minimum ethic for every translator (20).

There is no single authentic translation either; each translation can only be *one* translation, and not *the* translation, since there is no pre-existed meaning but meaning depend upon an interventionist reader creating his/her own text (Satchidanandan 127). It is observed that in western universities, where Indian literature is being studied, it is more with a socio-anthropological interest, without regard to the universal values, or the importance of understanding the continuity of Indian literature (Chaudhuri 2). Another noteworthy and puzzling thing that I have experienced during my research is that many of these translation collections is that they do not mention the Source Language (SL), whether the stories were translated from Hindi or Urdu original. And if one informs about the SL, the edition of the used source text will be missing. It is often left unmentioned whether their source text was a *Shataranj Ke Khilari* (Hindi) or *Shatranj Ki Baazi* (Urdu); *Kafan* (Hindi) or *Qafan* (Urdu).

Finally, however, despite all the problems and challenges in the field of Premchand trnaslaitons, Premchand survives.

> "But such is the power of Premchand that through all the inevitable (and some evitable) distortions and obfuscations of translation, he shines through not only with his irresistible story-telling magic but also with his abiding contemporary relevance" (Trivedi, *Power of Premchand*)

It can be argued that there are writings by Premchand that are "weak" and suffer from mediocrity. Not all of Premchand's stories are great, but who has been a writer, whose all writings been great! Premchand made stories a product of soil, from airy- imaginative tales to ordinary men and women engaged in their struggle for existence. He imparted to the stories, originality, a sharpness, a verity and a sympathetic treatment, with his pleasing narration and local coloring. To confine his works to a limited linguistic, or national miliew would not be justice to his genius nor to the very foundation and principal of literature. Premchand's work despite the zig-zag progress in his English transaltion, is read in the world either in original Hindi/Urdu, or in various translations. The need of an English translation is just an aproach to his genius, an experiment. One needs to accept that translating Premchand is not subordinating to the target language, but is again a process of empowering the source text and source language also. It can be only through translations of his writings, that the English-speaking world knows what is specifically Indian in the aesthetics of a given work. As the greatest Hindi and Urdu writer of pre-Independence India, he deserves to be much better known outside his regional and national milieu.

The main purpose of my study was to compile a history of Premchand's work in English translation, which so far none had done. New dimensions of Premchand's relationship with English language, English literature, and other European literatures have brought many aspect of Premchand's literature. Finally, in this whole affair of the 'English Premchand' we come to know that Premchand did not dislike English language or literature, however it was the *Angrezi mansikta* (English mentality) that he countered, and which is even today needs to be countered for the benefit of vernacular literatures, and for the restoration of our great literary writers. At the same, in this process we have to identify that English despite its colonial history, is important today for manifold purposes in the study of Indian literatures. We have seen through the study that there is a great discrepancy between the reception of Premchand in Hindi/Urdu and Premchand in English. The strategic placement of Indian writers in English is important, and if the Indian literature in vernacular languages has to be

highlighted at the world level, we require the aid of English languages, hence translation. And, Finally, if translation is propagation, then Premchand in translation- *English Premchand* is a propagation of some of the best literature ever written in India

Appendix I

Premchand's Novels

No.	Name of the Novel	First Publication and other details
1.	*Asrar-e-Ma'abid* or *Devasthan Rahasya*	October 1903-February 1905, Serialised in *Awaz-e-Khalq*, Banaras
2.	*Hamkhurma-wa-Ham-Sawab/ Prema*	1906, Indian Press, Allahabad ; Hindi version *Prema* in 1907 also from Indian Press
–	*Kishna* (or *Kisna*)[13]	1907(?) Medical Hall Press, Banaras
3.	*Ruthi Rani*[14]	1907 (April-August), Serialised in Zamana, Kanpur
4.	*Jalwa-e-Isaar / Vardan*	1912, Indian Press; Hindi *Vardan* in 1921 from Granth Bhandar, Bombay
5.	*Seva Sadan / Bazaar-e-Husn*	1919, Ganga Pustak Agency, Calcutta; *Kahkashan,* Lahore serialised the Urdu version in 1920, in book form in 1924
6.	*Premashram / Gosha-e-Aafiyat*	1921; Urdu version in 1928
7.	*Rangabhumi / Chaugan-e-Hasti*	January 1925; Urdu version in 1927
8.	*Nirmala*	Nov. 1925 to Nov. 1926, Serialised in 'Chand', Allahabad; In book form in 1927 by 'Chand'; Urdu version by *Gilani Electric Press*, Lahore
9.	*Kayakalp / Parda-e-Majaz*	1926, Sarswati Press; Urdu version in 1932 by Lajpat & Sons, Lahore; The manuscript is in Hindi
10.	*Pratigya / Bewa*	1927 (Jan.- Nov.), serialised in 'Chand'; Urdu version *Bewa* in 1932
11.	*Ghaban*	1931, Sarswati Press; Urdu version by Lajpat & Sons
12.	*Karmabhumi / Maidan-e-Amal*	1932 (August), Sarswati Press; Urdu version by Jamia Millia, Delhi
13.	*Godan / Gaudan*	June 1936, Sarswati Press
14.	*Mangalsutra*	1948, Unfinished novel

[13] Though no copy of *Krishna* is available, a critique of it was published in *Zamana* in 1907.
[14] *Ruthi Rani* is generally considered a novella.

Appendix II

Premchand's translated Novels

No.	Year	Novel	Translation	Translator/s
1.	1956	Godan	Godan: A Novel of Peasant India	Jai Ratan and P. Lal
-	1968	" "	The Gift of a Cow	Gordan C.Roadrmel
2.	1987	Nirmala	Nirmala: A Novel	David Rubin
-	1999	" "	Nirmalas	Alok Rai
-	2000	Godan	Godan by Munshi Premchnad (Abridged)	Anupa Lal
3.	2000	Ghaban	Ghaban: The Stolen Jewels	Christopher R. King
4.	2003	Bazaar-e-Husn	Courtesan's Quarter	Amina Azfar

Abridged Versions: *Godan by Munshi Premchand* (2000) abridged and Translated by Anupa Lal, (Delhi: Ratna Sagar)

Appendix III

Stories Published in Journals

Following is the list of the short stories, which appeared in journals, or in independent book form, for example NBT published Khushwant Singh's translation of *Eidgah.*

1. *God Lives in the Panch.* Trans. Manmohan Saksena. In *Indian Short Stories.* London: Oxford UP, 1951.

2. *The Almighty Panchas.* Trans. Amir Mohmmad. In *Hindi Review*, Vol. II: No. 3; April 1958.

3. *Masquerade.* Trans. Tahira Naqvi. Columbia UP. Spring 1987.pp.

4. *The Test.* Trans. John Roberts. In *Mehfil.* Vol. 1, No. 2, 1965.

5. *Retribution.* Trans. Gordon C. Roadarmel. In *Mehfil*, Vol.2; No.2, 1966.

6. *A Feast for the Holy Man.* Trans. David Rubin. In "Mahfil", Vol. 4; No.2; 1968.

7. *Resignation.* Trans. D.Anand. In *Stories from India.* Ed., K. Natwar Singh. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1971.

8. *Festival of Eid.* Trans. Khushvant Singh. New Delhi: National Book Trust of India, 1980.

9. *A Special Holi.* Trans. Harish Trivedi. In *Literature and Nation: Britain and India 1800-1990.* Routledge, 2001.

Appendix IV

Collections of Premchand's Translated Short Stories

	Year	Name of the collection	Stories	Translator/s	Publishers
1.	1946	Short Stories of Premchand	11	Gurdial Mallik	Nalanda: Bombay
2.	1955	A Handful of Wheat and other Stories	15	P.C.Gupta	People's Pub. House: New Delhi
3.	1960	Secret of Culture and other Stories	20	Madan Gupta	Jaico: Bombay
4.	1965	A Premchand Reader	9	N.H. Zide and others	U of Chicago: Honolulu
*	1967	The Chess Players and other Stories	10	Gurdial Mallik	Hind Pocket Books: Delhi
5.	1969	The World of Premchand	23	David Rubin	George Allen & Unwin: London
6.	1972	The Shroud and 20 other stories	21	Madan Gopal	Sagar: New Delhi
7.	1980	Twenty four Stories	24	Nandini Nopany & P.Lal	Vikas: Delhi
8.	1981	Premchand: The Voice of Rural India	7	Pratibha Nath	NCERT: New Delhi
9.	1982	A Bunch of Stories	10	Madan Gupta	Parimal: Bombay
10.	1983	A Premchand Dozen	12	Nandini Nopany & P.Lal	A Writer's Workshop: Calcutta
11.	1988	Widows, Wives and Other Heroines	12	David Rubin	OUP: New Delhi
**	1988	Deliverance and Other Stories	29	David Rubin	Penguin: New Delhi
12.	1992	The Temple and the Mosque	12	Rakshanda Jalil	Indus: New Delhi
13	1994	Mansarovara Vol.1		Surajit Mahalanabis	Diamond Pocket Books: New Delhi
14.	1997	The Best of Premchand: A collection of 50 Best short stories (Vol. 2)	50	Madan Gopal, Madan Gupta, and others	Cosmo: New Delhi
15.	2003	Thakur's Well and Other Stories	5	Anupa Lal	Rupa: New Delhi
16.	2003	Famous Short Stories from Premchand	24	J.C. Joshi	New Delhi: Sahni Publication

* *The Chess Players and other stories* (1967) is a reprint of *Short stories of Premchand* (1946) with *My First Composition*) excluded

** *Selected Short Stories by Premchand* (1993), and *Secret of Culture and other stories* (1960) are the same collections with different publications.

Pratigya/ Bewa (1927) is a remodelled version of Prema/ Hamkhurma-wa-Hamsawab (1906)

Appendix V
Most Translated Stories

Hindi Title	No.	Various Translations with titles
Thakur ka Kuan	8	*The Village Well* (Gurdial Mallik); *The Thakur's well* (P.C. Gupta; Pratibha Nath; P.Lal and Nopany; David Rubin; Madan Gopal; Jalil), *Thakur's Well* (Anupa Lal)
Panch Parameshvar	8	*The Almighty Panchas* (Amir Mohammad Khan); *Heavenly Justice* (Pratibha Nath); *The Voice of God* (Gurdial Mallik); *God Lives in the Panch* (Man Mohan Saksena); *The Village Judge* (P.C. Gupta); *Panchayat: The Voice of God* (Madan Gopal); *Panchayat is the Voice of God* (P. Lal and N. Nopany), *The Holy Judge* (M. Asaduddin)
Qafan	5	*The Shroud* (Gurdial Mallik; Madan Gopal; P.Lal and N.Nopany; David Rubin; Rakhshanda Jalil; P.C. Gupta)
Shataraj ke Khilari	5	*The Chess Players* (Gurdial Mallik; Gopal; Bhishm Sahani, P.Lal and Nopany; P.C. Gupta)
Mukti Maarg	4	*Path of Deliverance* (Madan Gopal); *The Road to Salvation* (David Rubin); *The way to Salvation* (Madan Gopal; Rakhshanda Jalil)
Pus ki Raat	4	*January Night* (David Rubin); *A Winter Night* (P.C. Gupta; Madan Gopal; Rakhshanda Jalil)
Sadgati	4	*Deliverance* (David Rubin); *Salvation* (Madan Gupta; P.Lal and N. Nopany; Rakhshanda Jalil)
Bare Ghar ki Beti	4	*Daughter of a Noble Family* (P.C. Gupta; B.A. Bhandarkar); *Daughter in Law*(Gurdial Mallik); *Rich Daughter-in-law* (P.Lal and Nopany)
Do Bailo ki Katha	4	*Two Bullocks* (Madan Gopal); *Story of the two Bulls* (Gurdial Mallik); *A Tale of Two Oxen* (P.Lal and N. Nopany); *A Tale of Two Bullocks* (Pratibha Nath)
Idgah	4	*Idgah* (P.C. Gupta); *Festival of Eid* (Khushwant Singh); Eidgah (J.C. Joshi) *A Toy for Hamid* (Roadarmel)
Bare Bhai Saheb	3	*Big Brother* (David Rubin); *Elder Brother* (Madan Gupta; Pratibha Nath)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Premchand. *A Bunch of Stories*. Trans. Madan Gupta. Aurangabad: Parimal, 1982.

---. *The Best of Premchand: Collection of 50 Best Short Stories*. 2 Vols. Trans. Madan Gopal et al. Delhi: Cosmo, 1997.

---. *The Chess-players and Other Stories*. Trans. Gurdial Malik. Delhi: Hind Pocket Books, 1967.

---. *Chitti Patri*. Comp. and eds., Madan Gopal and Amrit Rai. Allahabad: Hans Prakashan, 1962.

---. *Deliverance and Other Stories*. Trans. David Rubin. London: Allen & Unwin, 1969; New Delhi: Penguin Books, 1988.

---. *Famous Short Stories from Premchand*. Trans. J.C. Joshi. New Delhi: Sahni Publication, 2003.

---. *Festival of Eid*. Trans. Khushwant Singh. New Delhi: National Book Trust of India, 1980.

---. *Gaban*. Patna: Anupam Prakashan, 2002.

---. *Gaban: The Stolen Jewels*. Trans. Christopher R. King. New Delhi: Oxford UP, 2002.

---. *The Gift of a Cow*. Trans. Gordan C. Roadarmel. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1968.

---. *Godaan*. New Delhi: Rajkamal Paperbacks, 2000.

---. *Godan: A Novel of Peasant India*. Trans. Jai Ratan, and P.Lal. Bombay: Jaico, 2001.

---. *Godan by Munshi Premchand*. Abridged and Translated by Anupa Lal. Delhi: Sagar, 2000.

---. *Gupt Dhan*. 2 vols. Comp., and ed. Amrit Rai. Banaras: Hans Prakashan, 1962.

---. *A Handful of Wheat and Other Stories*. Trans. P.C. Gupta. New Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1955; 1962.

---. " The Holy Judges." In *Image and Representation: The Stories of Muslim Lives in India*. Ed. Mushirul Hasan, and M. Asaduddin. Delhi: OUP, 2002.

---. *Mansarovara*. Vol. I- VIII. Allahabad: Saraswati Press, 1966-71.s

---. *Mansarovara*. Vol 1. Trans. Surajit Mahalanobis. New Delhi: Diamond Pocket Books, 1994.

---. *Nirmala*. New Delhi: Rajkamal Paperbacks, 2003.

---. *Nirmala: A Novel*. Trans. David Rubin. New Delhi: Vision Books, 1988.

---. *Nirmala*. Trans. Alok Rai. New Delhi: Oxford UP, 1999.

---. *Premchand Rachanavali*. Comp., and ed. Ram Vilas Sharma. Delhi: Janvani, 1996.

---. *A Premchand Reader*. Trans. N.H. Zide, et al. Honolulu: Publication for South Asia Language & Area Centre, U of Chicago, 1965.

---. *A Prem Chand Dozen*. Trans. Nandini Nopany, and P. Lal. Calcutta: Writer's Workshop, 1983.

---. *The Secret of Culture and Other Stories*. Trans. by Madan Gupta. Delhi: Jaico, 1960.

---. *Selected Short Stories by Premchand*. Trans. Madan Gopal. New Delhi: Crest Publishing House, 1993:2003.

---. *Short Stories of Prem Chand*. Ed., and trans. Gurdial Malik. Bombay: Nalanda, 1946.

---. *The Shroud and 20 Other Stories*. Trans. Madan Gopal. New Delhi: Sagar, 1972.

---. *Stories from Premchand*. Ed., and trans. R.C. Verma. Delhi: Surya Prakashan, 1989.

---. *The Temple and the Mosque*. Trans. Rakshanda Jalil. New Delhi: Indus, 1992.

---. *The Thakur's Well & Other Stories*. Trans. Anupa Lal. New Delhi: Rupa, 2003.

---. *Twenty-four Stories by Prem Chand*. Trans. Nandini Nopany, and P. Lal. Delhi: Vikas, 1980.

---. *Vividh Prasanga*. Comp., and ed. Amrit Rai. Banaras: Hans Prakashan, 1962.

---. *The World of Premchand: Selected Stories of Premchand*. Trans. David Rubin. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1969.

Secondary Sources

Anand, Mulk Raj. "Humanism in the Novels of Premchand." *Premchand: A Tribute*. Eds., Bhishm Sahni, and C.P. Paliwal, New Delhi: Premchand Centenary Celebration Committee, 1980.

Balin, Victor. *Kahanikar Premchand (Premchand the Storywriter)*. Trans. Ishwar Sharan. Delhi: Apratim Prakashan, 1993.

Bandopdhyay, Manohar. *Premchand: Life and Works*. New Delhi: Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Government of India, 1982.

Bassnett, Susan, and Harish Trivedi. *Post- Colonial Translation.* New York and London: Routledge, 1999.

Bhatnagar, Y.C. *Theory and Practice of Translation.* Delhi: Ajanta, 1993.

Chandra, Sudhir. *Premchand: A Historiographic View.* In Economic and Political Weekly,.....

Chokse, Jai Prakash. "Munshi Premchand aur Bhartiya Cinema." In *Dainik Bhaskar* 15 Jul. 2004, Jaipur ed.

Choudhury, Inder Nath. "Videshon Mein Hindi Sikshan" *Navbharat Times* 10 October 1993.

Coppala, Carlo, ed., "The Chess Players: From Premchand to Satyajit Ray" *Journal of South Asian Literature.* 22, 2. Summer-Fall 1986, pp. 65-78.

Das, Sisir Kumar. *Indian Ode to the West Wind: Studies in Literary Encounters.* Delhi: Pencraft International, 2001.

Dekha, Vijaidan, ed., *Premchand ki Basti.* Delhi: Janavani, 1998.

Galsworthy, John. *Chandi ki Dibiya.* Trans. Premchand. Prayag: Hindustani Academy, 1930.

Gopal, Madan. *Kalam ka Mazdoor: Premchnad.* Delhi: Raj Kamal, 1965, 1984.

---. *Premchand.* Lahore: The Book Abode, 1944.

--. *Premchand: A Literary Biography.* Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1964; New Delhi: Criterion Publications, 1990.

Goenka, Kamal Kishor. *Premchand Vishva Kosh (Encyclopaedia).* 2 vols. Delhi: Prabhat, 1982.

Gupta, Chandra Prakash. *Premchand.* New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1975.

Gupta, Charu. " Portrayal of Women in Premchand's Stories" In *Social Scientist.*19:5-6, 1991.

Gupta, R.S. "Translation: A Sociolinguistic Perspective." *Translation and Multilingualism: Post Colonial Contexts.* Ed., Shantha Ramakishna. Delhi: Pencraft International, 1997.

Gupta Santi Swarup. "Premchand's Work: A Chronological Survey" *Premchand: An Anthology.* Ed. Dr. Nagenadra. Delhi: Bansal, 1981.

Gurtu, Sachirani. *Premchand aur Gorky.* Delhi: Rajkamal, 1955.

Iyenger, K.R. Srinivasa. *Indian Writing in English.* 5th ed., New Delhi: Sterling, 1985.

Kumar, Ajey. ed., *Premchand Visheshank.* Spec. isue of *Udbhavana.* 19.64, October 2003.

Kumar, Jainendra. *Premchand: A Life in Letters*. Trans. Sunita Jain. Agra: Y.K. Publishers, 1993.

---. *Premchand: Ek Kriti Vyaktitva*. Delhi: Rajkamal, 1987.

Lal, Anupa. *Munshi Premchand: The Voice of Truth*. Calcutta: Rupa, 2002.

Lal, P. *Transcreation: Two Essays*. Calcutta: A Writer's Workshop, 1972.

Madan, Indar Nath *Premchand: An Interpretation*. Lahore: Minerva Book Shop, 1946: Delhi: Vikas, 1968.

Misra, Shiv Kumar. ed., *Premchand: Our Contemporary*. New Delhi: National Publishing House, 1986.

Mukherjee, Sujeet. Translation as Discovery and Other Essays on Indian Literature in English Translation. Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 1994.

Mukherjee, Tutun. Introduction. *Mindscape* by Premendra Mitra. New Delhi, Sahitya Akedemi, 2000.

Nagendra, Dr., ed., *Premchand: An Anthology*. Delhi: Bansal, 1981.

Narang, Harish. "Roasted Chicken versus Tandoori Murga." *Literary Transaliton*. Ed., R.S. Gupta. New Delhi: 1999.

Narain, Govind, *Munshi Prem Chand*. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1980.

Naravane, Vishvanath S. *Premchand: His Life and Work*. New Delhi: Vikas, 1980.

Newmark, Peter. "Translation and Culture." *A Textbook of Translation*. London: Prentice Hall, Hemel Hempstead, 1988.

Nida, Eugene A. *Towards a Science of Translating*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1964.

---, and Charles S. Taber. *The Theory and Practice of Translation*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1969.

Nopany, Nandini, and P. Lal. Introduction. *A Premchand Dozen*. Calcutta: A writer's Workshop, 1983.

Orsini, Francesca. Introduction. *The Oxford India Premchand*. New Delhi: OUP, 2004.

Pandey, Geetanjali. *Between Two Worlds: An Intellectual Biography of Premchand*. New Delhi: Manohar, 1989.

Panday, Ratnakar. *Patrakar Premchand aur 'Hans'*. Delhi: Rajesh Prakashan, 1977.

Prakash, Anand. "Translating/ Creating Space: Reading of Select Hindi Texts." *National Conference on Translation and Socioliterary Space*. Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi. February 12-14, 2004 (Unpublished Paper)

Prasad, G.J.V. "The Untranslatable Other: The Language of Indian English Fiction" *Literary Translation.* Ed., R.S. Gupta. New Delhi: 1999.

Rabhar, Hansraj. *Premchand: Jeevan, Kala aur Krititva.* Delhi: Atma Ram & Sons, 1962.

Raees, Qamar. *Premchand Ki Vichar Yatra.* Trans. Janki Prasad Sharma. New Delhi: Information and Broadcasting Dept., 1995.

Rai, Alok. "A Kind of Crisis: Godan and the Last Writings of Munshi Premchand." *Journal of the School of Languages, J.N.U.*, Monsoon, 1974.

Rahman, Anisur, ed., *Translation: Poetics and Practice.* New Delhi: Creative Books, 2002.

Rai, Amrit. *Premchand.* Illustrated by Siddhartha Banerjee. New Delhi: National Book Trust, 2003.

---. *Premchand: Qalam Ka Sipahi.* Allahabad: Hans Prakashan, 1962; 1976.

---. *Premchand: A Life.* Trans. Harish Trivedi. Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1982.

Ramakrishna, Shantha., ed., *Translation and Multilingualism: Post Colonial Contexts.* Delhi: Pencraft International, 1997.

Rannen, Actis. "On the Treatment of Elements that have to be Left Untranslated" In *International Journal of Translation.* II 1-2:1-12.

Rao, Raghunath. *The Art of Translation: A Critical Study.* New Delhi: Bhartiya Anuvad Parishad, 1990.

Raza, Zafar. *Premchand: Urdu Hindi Kathakar.* Allahabad, 1983.

Roadarmel, Gordon Charles. Introduction. *The Gift of a Cow.* London: George Allen & Unwin, 1968.

Rubin, David. Introduction. *The World of Premchand.* London: George Allen and Unwin, 1969.

Sachdev, Gautam. *Prem Chand: Kahani Shilp.* Delhi: United Book House, 1982.

Sahni, Bhishm. "As Short-story Writer" *Premchand: An Anthology.* Ed. Dr Nagendra. Delhi: Bansal, 1981.

---, and C.P. Paliwal, eds., *Premchand: A Tribute.* New Delhi: Premchand Centenary Celebration Committee, 1980.

Satchidanandan, K. Authors, Texts, Issues: Essays on Indian Literature. Delhi: Pencraft, 2003.

Sharma, Govind Narain. *Premchand: Novelist and Thinker.* Delhi: Pragati, 1999.

Sharma, Ram Vilas. *Premchand: Alochanatmak Parichaya* (Critical Introduction). Banaras: Sarswati Press, 1989.

---. *Premchand Aur Unka Yug*. Delhi: Rajkamal, 1993.

Sharma, Suman. "A Comparative Study of the Translations of Godan by Jai Ratan & P.Lal and Gordon C. Roadarmel." Diss. Jamia Millia Islamia, 1998.

Shulz, Siegfried A. *Premchand: A Western Appraisal*. New Delhi: Indian Council for Cultural Relations, 1981.

Simon, Sherry and Paul St-Pierre, eds., *Changing the Terms: Translating in the Postcolonial Era*. New Delhi: 2002.

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. "The Politics of Translation". *Outside in the Teaching Machine*. New York and London: Routledge, 1993.

---. *Munshi Premchand of Lamhi Village*. Durham, N.C.:Duke UP, 1969.

Thukral, K.B. *Mind and Ideology of Munshi Premchand*. Delhi: Vitosha, 1995.

Trivedi, Harish. "The Urdu Premchand, The Hindi Premchand" In *Jadavpur Journal of Comparative Literature* Vol. 22. Ed. Amiya Dev. Calcutta: Deptt. of Comparative Literature, Jadavpur U, 1984.

---. Introduction of "Godan." *Masterpieces of Indian Literature Vol.1*.Ed. Dr. K.M. George. New Delhi: National Book Trust, 1997.

---. "India, England, France: A (Post-)Colonial Transnational Triangle." In *Translation and Multilingualism: Post-Colonial Contexts*. ed., Shantha Ramakrisha. New Delhi: Pencraft International, 1997.

---. "The Power of Premchand." Revs. of *Oxford India Premchand*, and *Courtesan's Quarter*, trans. Amina Afzar. *The Hindu* 3 Apr. 2004, New Delhi ed.

---. "The Progress of Hindi Part 2" *Literary Cultures in History: Reconstructions from South Asia*. Ed., Sheldon Pollock. New Delhi: OUP, 2003.

---, and Richard Allan. Eds,. Literature and Nation: Britain and India 1800-1990. Routledge, 2001.

Tyagi, Suresh Chandra, ed., *Premchand*. Meerut: Meerut UP Hindi Parishad, 1981.

Vajpayee, Nand Dulare. *Premchand: Sahityik Vivechan*. New Delhi: Rajkmal, 1982.

Venuti, Lawrence. *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation*. London and New York: Routledge, 1995.

Verma, Nirmal, and Kamal Kishore Goenka., eds., Introduction. *Premchand Rachana Sanchayan*. New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1994.

Vikram, Kumar. "Premchand in Our Times" In *NBT Newsletter* September 2004.

Vimal, Ganga Prasad. *Premchand.* Delhi: Rajkamal, 1986.

Electronic Sources

Malhotra, B.M. *Munshi Premchand: Quintessential Urdu and Hindi Litterateur*.22March2004.<htpp:/www.meadia.nic.in/photogallery/perspec/aps2001/premchand.htm>.

Premchand. *Aap-Beeti.* Trans. Neeraj Rai. 23 March 2004. <htpp:/ www.cse. iil.ernt. in/~ rah u l/home/aap-beeti.html>.

Trivedi, Harish. "Changed in Rebirth" Rev. of *Nirmala.* trans. by Alok Rai. *Outlook* (31 May 1999) 20 June 2004.<http://www.outlookindia.com/full.Asp?fodname=19990531&Fname=booksc&sid=1>.