

Bridging the Gaps: Towards a New Paradigmatic Interface of Translation Studies and Comparative Literature

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Abstract

The paper explores the possibilities of new theories in comparative literature through the tenets of translation studies. In doing so, it looks into the turbulence in the relational space between translation studies and comparative literature. There have been prior attempts to incorporate the praxis of translation into comparative literature. The present study seeks to approach Comparative Literature through theoretical ideations from translation studies. In the given academic scenario, both the disciplines need to explore newer avenues of knowledge as a means of sustenance. The paper argues that the inversion of the traditional academic relationship, that subverts hegemonic knowledge-formation shall expand the boundaries of both fields of studies through theoretical interrelations as well as text-based examples.

Keywords: translation studies, comparative literary theories, poly-system and comparativism, new theoretical tenets of literary criticism.

Introduction: The Relationship: Past and Present

Comparative Literature has always had a relationship characterized by turbulence with Translation Studies, as another distinctive field of knowledge. While ostensibly both group of academicians, comparatists and translation theorists, deal with the juxtaposition of literary compositions from various cultural spaces, there can be perceived an essential difference in the modalities of their knowledge formation. The early years of Comparative Literary Studies require the original texts to be read in the original languages, and translated texts could only be of secondary readability as “translation means carrying over a piece of foreign language into one’s own” unlike “comparison” which allows “to step into the other’s language without carrying it across, and thus respecting the otherness of languages and cultures” as Stanley Corngold (2005) writes.

This belief gained ground in the early years of comparativism which employed a binary model of research: it would require the original texts to be read in the original languages, and translated texts could only be of inferior readability. Translation studies was, as Bassnett puts it, “a poor relation” of comparative literature. It was in the 1970s that the attitude began to change, due to certain scholastic endeavors: In “Translation Theory Today” (1978), Itamar Even Zohar was one of the firsts to suggest a systematic approach in thinking about the praxis translation:

[W]e [have] been tortured by clichés ... that translation is never equal to the original, that languages differ from one another, that culture is ‘also’ involved with translation procedures, that when a translation is exact it tends to be ‘literal’ and hence loses the spirit of the original, that the meaning of a text means both ‘content’ and ‘style’, and so on. (5)

In fact, the offensive against the rather incoherent critique of translation as the producer of the spurious provided a ground for looking into the methodologies of translation studies so that it could be constructed into a discipline as much as comparative literature. With the rise of feminist critique of language in the 1980s, concepts of 'fidelity' to the language or 'betrayal' of poetic senses in translated texts were questioned. Lori Chamberlain drew an analogy between the patrilineal kinship system and the superiority of the source text over the translation. Barbara Johnson writes about 'rereading' through translated texts and subverting 'certainties' upheld by the original text. Subsequently poststructuralist critics also determined the fallacy of believing in the single, conclusive reading of the texts which began to acquire semantic plurality. The "death" of the author had already been proclaimed by Roland Barthes so that the ownership of all original texts were challenged; finally, Derrida's *What Is a Relevant Translation?* (2001) had validated the ethics of translation in the untranslatability of the text i.e. admitting the lack of the language a text is being translated to and hence deriving the functionality of the text from this lack: "As a matter of fact, I don't believe that anything can ever be untranslatable or, moreover, translatable." (258)

Meanwhile, Comparative Literature, too, with its share of skeptic criticisms, had grown into a methodized field of knowledge; it has also undergone multiple but gradual changes in structures as a field of knowledge: the 'connection' that Mathew Arnold spoke of, in his Inaugural Lecture at Oxford in 1857 (quoted in *Comparative Literature: A Critical Introduction*) as universal was still Euro-centric in application; constricted definitions of comparative literature bears the evidences of the 'white' solipsism even in the twentieth century when Paul Van Tiegham (1931) spoke of the discipline as "the mutual relations between Greek and Latin literature" (57) or even Rene Wellek (1970) could define the historicity of Comparative Literature in terms of "the influence of Walter Scott in France and the rise of the historical novel" (17). A shift in comparative models occurred, as in the translational literary phenomenon; post-structuralism had dismantled any form of semantic-cultural superiority: the post-colonial modalities of understanding also began to invade literary criticisms; hence, Comparative Literature that developed outside the Europe and United States began to derive from its indigenous cultures and hence, look beyond its national boundaries, rather than to begin with European models of literary understanding and then look within: Suasan Basnett quotes the founding objective of Indian Comparative Literature Association in 1981 as to "arrive at a conception of Indian literature which will not only modernize our literature departments but also take care of the task of discovering the greatness of our literature and to present a panoramic view of Indian literary activities through the ages" (39).

Thereafter, comparatists tried to maintain a balance between propagating literary understanding and cultural superiority so that the new agenda was to compare texts with new readings across cultures "the mutual illumination of several texts, or series of texts, considered side by side; the greater understanding we derive from juxtaposing a number of (frequently very different) works, authors and literary traditions" (Praver 102). Another rather ironic situation was the growth of comparative literature as an academic discipline through the nineteenth century with a parallel shift towards monolingualism in Europe and the rest of the English speaking worlds which denigrated the traditional binary model of literary comparativism which required proficiency of multiple languages and the reading of original texts:

Whereas a Browning or a Pushkin had read works in various languages without thinking twice about it, a century later the ability to read in several languages was beginning to be

considered as a sign of exceptional intelligence and education. Where once knowledge of Greek and Latin was fundamental for any educated European, so by the 1920s the pattern changes radically and by 1990s the knowledge of Greek and Latin is limited to a small specialist group. Moreover the status of modern European languages in the nineteenth century is completely altered today. French, once regarded as probably the most European language, widely used across Central and Eastern Europe and throughout Africa and the Middle East, has fallen into second place behind English, the new world language of commerce ... this spread of English, combined with decline of classical languages has also had an impact on comparative literary studies." (Basnett 42)

Subsequently, the methodologies that developed in comparative literature could no longer insist on linguistic difference as a condition for comparing literatures. Translation, thus, became an important tool in the very act of comparison. In fact, Basnett does not mention the growing popularity of literatures that have often been considered 'non-canonical' – Indian, African-American, Latin-American etc. Vernacular modernisms or Multicultural feminisms are studies based on texts that often read in translation as well as in comparison.

Hence, it is necessary to look into the theoretical paradigms of each of these disciplines and then, look into the ways in which the translation studies, as the second to gain academic legitimacy can benefit its predecessor.

The Extent of Comparative Literary Theories

Now, comparative literary theories are not coherent knowledge bodies available prior to the practice of Comparative Literature: comparative studies with reference to literature may be said to have initiated in 1598 with Francis Meres' "A Comparative Discourse of Our English Poets with the Greek, Latin and Italian Poets"; as early as 1753, Bishop Robert Lowth attempted at theorizing modes of comparative studies while propounding on the additive values of juxtaposing the cultural-intellectual framework of the British-English and Hebrew writings:

We must see all things with their eyes [i.e. ancient Hebrews]: estimate all things by their opinion; ... We must act ... with regard to that branch of ... science which is called comparative ... in order to form a perfect idea of the general system and its different part, conceive themselves as passing through, and surveying, the whole universe, migrating from one planet to another and becoming for a short time inhabitants of each. (113-4)

Almost, three centuries later when comparative literature had already become a discipline, comparatists still actualized theories based on the similar values for understanding literatures, presumably divided: juxtaposition of different cultural contexts through literature with a view to cognitive advancement and the entire praxis governed by a holistic sense, to create a rather comprehensive body of knowledge about the concerned literatures.

The chiefly binary model of comparative literary theory has been functional for a prolonged period and is yet to be made obsolete, though the hegemonic nuances have declined in the formulation of theories: for instance, national boundaries gained importance for theorists after the 1940s: "Comparative Literature ... will make high demands on the linguistic proficiencies of our scholars. It asks for a widening of perspectives, a suppression of local and provincial sentiments, not easy to achieve." (Wellek 44)

Therefore, comparative literary theories developed based on the notion of discerning intertextual and intercultural mutuality by juxtaposing texts, originating from various cultures. There, hence, can be discerned three schools of theorists:

- a) The French school of theory derived from a positivistic approach with a great emphasis on historicizing literature as is expounded in the seminal texts *La Litterature comparee* named by Paul Van Tieghem (1931) and by Claude Pichois and Andre M. Rosseau (1967); nationalistic notions were supreme and with most theorists assuming the greatness of French literature as: “[the] backbone of the universal literary system, and the task of comparatist consisted in examining how and why the English, German, Spanish, Italian and Russian ribs were attached to it.” (Joist 25)
- b) The American school is characterized by a multiplicity of theories, given the academic freedom and the complete aversion to the nationalistic instinct, given the immigrant background of the nation; therefore, the chief tenets of the theorists like Rene Wellek, Harry Levin in his *Grounds for Comparison* are cultural tolerance and eclectic approach to comparative studies where it is, as Wellek said, “possibly, it would be best to speak simply about literature”.
- c) The likes of Shklovsky, Zhirmunsky or Jakobson propounded theory based on social realism as was the Russian order of the day; but tried striking a balance with aesthetic aspects of culture. Inter-literariness (synchronic and diachronic, typological contacts and analogies) was the primary component of the theoretical writings but it also derived from historicism vis-à-vis, the cultural situations and the institutional conditions creating frameworks literary pieces.

It should be however, remembered that these theories developed based on certain attitudes of academically viable comparatists and are neither infallible nor exclusive in application. Rather, it is possible in a comparative study to refer to these as valid modes of understanding, rather than approaching comparisons exclusively through one of these theories. Moreover, most of these theorists have been criticized for being Euro-centric; with the advent of postcolonial studies and proliferation of minoritarian discourses, such theoretical dictums have been modified to suit comparative literatures as practiced in Latin-America, Japan and India. Comparative theory of literature has reached an age of dialogics, dialectics and globalectics that brings under considerations, the machinations of economic and political forces creating sociocultural spaces that are glocal (characterized by both global and local values). Therefore, comparative literary theories are in a state of flux with certain constant and rather irreplaceable denominations.

- a) Cross-cultural studies (often the traditional binary model); b) Historicity; c) Temporal dimensions (synchronic, diachronic); d) Spatial dimensions (inclusive of the Non-Geographic); e) Linguistic dimensions; f) Literary tools (themes, motifs, genres)

The attempt here is to extend the boundaries of comparative literary theory without being incongruous with the extant but remaining open to the possibilities of the new theoretical extent through tenets of translation studies.

The Extent of Theories in Translation Studies

Like Comparative Literature, the practice of translation precedes the advent of Translation Studies, though acts of translation precedes acts of literary comparison. Translated texts date back to 2100 B.C., and then, Etienne Dolet of France (1509-46), was said to have propounded one of the first translation theories that instructed the translator to be completely faithful to the original in understanding as well as in rendering. In fact, until the last century, all theoretical frameworks developed under source-oriented approaches were concerned with what a translator must or must not do. The principle focus was on the closeness to the source text as regards both meaning and form. It acquired religious validity through the Evangelical tradition with Biblical translation. Later, the likes of

George Chapman, who famously translated Homer, or Alexander Pope with his translation of *Illiad* was faithful to this source-oriented principles. Even, a century later, *The Principles of Translation*, the first systematic work on translation studies by Alexander Frazer Tytler referred to translation as a complete transcript of the original, even in style and manner of writing. Mathew Arnold in his lectures published as "On Translating Homer" in 1861 upholds the superiority of the source text and writes a translation of Homer's *Illiad* from Greek to English should be judged based on whether the translated text has the same effect as the 'original' text.

However, Saussure's 1916 publication of *Cours in General Linguistics*, there was rethinking about the "original" essence of a language and the changeable relationships of syntactic patterns with semanticity. These linguistic norms were developed by Roman Jakobson in his "On the Linguistic Aspects of Translation" where he introduced inter-lingual, intra-lingual and inter-semiotic principles of translation: besides translation theory was regarded as a part of linguistic communication based on Information Theory, source-oriented, normative, synchronic and focused on the faithfulness of process as in the previous period. Then, the likes of Eugene Nida (who drew from Chomsky's idea of the surface and deep structures of the language) came to conceive of translation studies as an empirical study, constituting in a target-oriented approach. James Holmes propounded several theoretical principles under the two broad categories of pure translation studies and applied translation studies. The current tenets of translation studies derive mostly from the former, and is more relevant to any literary research and hence, to comparative literary theory. Pure Translation Studies is classified into Descriptive Translation Studies and Theoretical Translation Studies. The aim of Descriptive Translation Studies is concerned with the process that underlies the creation of the final product of translation. The objective of the Theory of Translation Studies, deriving from the empirical conditions of the former, tries to establish general principles by means of which these phenomena can be explained: these explanations can be formulated as theories a few of which are medium restricted (theories of written versus oral translation), area-restricted (theories relating to specific language communities), rank-restricted (theories dealing with language as a rank or level system), text-type restricted (theories relating to particular text categories such as poems, technical manuals, etc.), time restricted (theories dealing with contemporary texts or those from an older period), and problem restricted (for example theories concerning the translation of puns, titles, idioms, proper names, metaphors, etc.

Finally all these theoretical elements were brought together in the 1970s when Itmar Even-Zohar produced a synthesis of "structuralism," "Russian formalism," the "Communication theory," and semiotics to create the "Polysystem theory", of literature and culture. Polysystem Theory, which deals with all cultural, linguistic, literary, and social phenomena, does not consider translations as single texts, but regards them as a system functioning within a polysystem governed by the literary system in which translations are done: "The polysystem is conceived as a heterogeneous, hierarchized conglomerate (or system) of systems which interact to bring about an ongoing dynamic process of evolution within the polysystem as a whole. [The hierarchy] is the means by which translations were chosen, and the way they functioned within the literary system" (Even-Zohar 162).

Subsequently, Giden Toury construed the target-oriented theory from Zohar's polysystem as a complete subversion to the normative, synchronic, and Source-System Oriented theoretical frameworks, arguing that "the object - level of translation studies consists of actual facts of 'real life' - whether they be actual texts, inter-textual relationships, or models and norms of behavior - rather than the merely speculative outcome of

preconceived theoretical hypotheses and models, it is undoubtedly, in essence, an empirical science" (16). The central argument governing this theory was that a translation is a translation in the target culture, not the source culture. The studies should be more diachronic than synchronic. It also derives from the poststructuralist context of dissemination of knowledge. There is a shift in the balance of power from phonocentrism (sound and speech) to graphocentrism (writing); the so called "metaphysics" of the original as compared to the degradation of the 'other' holds no sanctity. Therefore, the translated text, till now considered only of derived, secondary importance, acquires a position of its own. And so the position and function of a translated text, is determined by considerations initiating in the culture which hosts them. Toury also felt that centralizing the role of the target text enabled a combination of the applied, pure and descriptive translation studies that makes any hypothesis, explicable and also verifiable. This also leads to the widening of stable research methodologies: product-oriented based on individual translations, process-oriented based on the thought processes that take place in the mind of the translator while she or he is translating and function-oriented deriving from the function or impact that a translation or a collection of translations has had in the socio-cultural situation of the target language.

Gradually, language as a concept, was no longer associated with a monolithic geographical space but multiple power structures: for instance, the language of the colonized as opposed to colonizers, or the language of the female as against phallogocentrism. Thus, the concept of inter-literary reception was derived from to explain the effects of one culture coming into contact with another are validated by translation. The likes of Andre Lefevre have proclaimed translation as 'rewriting': "[T]ranslation is a channel opened often without a certain reluctance, through which foreign influences can penetrate the native culture, challenge it and even contribute to subverting it" (2). The theories of polemical translations, free translations and carnival translations have come into being, widening not only the practical application of the translator praxis but also its theoretical repertoire. Hence, though the likes of Susan Bassnett, reportedly went back on their words about translation studies as one of the saviors of comparative literature, the scope of refurbishing comparative literary theory through translation studies is a viable option. My aim here is to apply the resources of the latter to explore *new* territories (and not invalidate older ones) without affecting any hierarchization with the fields of knowledge.

Rethinking Comparative Literary Theory through Concepts from Translation Studies

Dissociating linguistic identities from strict cultural specifications:

National cultures, as of now, consist of linguistic identities; languages, therefore have a validity of the national culture. Hence literary works produced through these languages will always have nationally sanctioned cultural validities. Comparative theories of literature have followed, hence, a dual policy of subsuming boundaries yet being very conscious about the existence of these boundaries. Even when a comparatist uses translated texts, a binary model (or multi-pronged model) of study is generally based on the cultural specifications of the source-text. For instance, the comparisons between Pushkin and Byron by Zhirmunsky contributing to the theory of typological analogies and inter-literariness or the study of inter-semiotic translations of Shakespeare through the application of the same theoretical principles derives from the linguistic vis-à-vis the cultural vis-à-vis the national boundaries of such creations. However, the target-oriented polysystem theory in translation studies shifts the emphasis on to the "translated" text

which leads to a state of flux in the linguistic identity of the text; thus, the semanticity of the target language is used to express a different set of cultural values, and in the process of internalizing it:

[The] linguistic systems between which translations move are designated as 'natural' or 'national' languages. However, these terms are anything but precise or satisfactory The imprecision of these terms is in direct proportion to the the linguistic diversity they seek to subsume. ... The difficulty of finding a generic term that would accurately designate the class to which individual languages belong is indicative of the larger problem of determining the principles that give those languages their relative unity or coherence – assuming, that is, that such principles really exist. (Weber 66)

In such a situation no language can solely belong to certain cultural specifications, validated by national boundaries. And therefore, one language can be differentiated from another not merely through the basis of its spatial associations but through under parameters like gender, age-group, social strata etc. The vestiges of this notion are available in the Derridian notion of translation and can be extended to the non-nationalism of translation:

Derrida's aporia of deconstructs the nationalist nominalism of language games by locating an always prior other within mono-lingual diction. The aporia loosens the national anchor from the language name of a nation and the name of a language. ... The contingency of the subject suggests here that French speakers who are French nationals constitute one possible world of French speakers among many. Once the national predicate is dislodged, no speaker maintains exclusive ownership of language properties. . ." (Apter, 247)

Comparative literary theory, through the utilization of the above principle, can look beyond the solipsistic cultural connotations of a linguistic identity. This will broaden horizons towards comparative studies of texts in a critical paradigm that is more concerned with the personal rather than the cultural dimensions of the text: for instance, a comparison of George Eliot and Sharatchandra Chattopadhyay's texts will derive from socio-cultural connotations placed in a given Victorian and post-independent social milieu that dominates the technique and the purpose of their usage of language as cultural identity; this will, make inevitable the comparisons of the colonized and the colonizer's socio-cultural circumstances by virtue of their linguistic identities. But through this new theoretical formation, the variant gender of the two authors and their gendered aesthetics may gain in emphasis, and the differences in treating a theme dissociated from its contemporary social value may become viable.

This can be perhaps better understood in certain culturally enunciated situations where national boundaries are not applicable; for example, comparative theories applied to literatures in tribal language will always emphasize on the 'tribal' capacity of the language and its aesthetic values in relation to this tribal understanding. However, the translator praxis through the target-oriented approach will focus on the literary aesthetics and other concerns without the tribal context in mind. Therefore, comparisons between a poem in any of the languages of the Indian tribes or the Australian 'aboriginals' with a mainstream writer can be based on the stylistics of each language, the impact of the stylistics on the thematic, rather than approaching the stylistics as a part of the cultural validation. However, the attempt here is not to negate socio-political values of literary understanding but explore other avenues of comparison; or rather this new possibility can be theorized as a subversion of the accepted norms where the cultural connotations are not at the helm; rather, the hitherto 'consequences' of culture like poetics, thematics or even stylistics, to a certain extent are considered as the primary concerns.

The possibility of a reception-oriented comparative theory:

This theoretical possibility extends from the strictly critical paradigm of comparative literary theory and the chances of its modifications through the emphasis on the receptive functionality of polysystem theory of translation studies. In the context of translatory praxis, the reception-oriented approach takes into account the needs of the target culture-system and how the translator's independent agency fulfils the needs of the system:

[The] translator's *skopos* [is] a decisive factor in a translation project ... [T]he *skopos* is a complexly defined intention whose textual realization may diverge widely from the source text as to reach a 'set of addressees' in the target culture. The success of the translation depends on its coherence with the addressees' situation. Although the possible responses to a text cannot be entirely predicted, a typology of essential guidelines may guide the translator's labor and the historical study of translation." (Venuti, 229)

The above theoretical context bears affiliations with the readers-response criticism that derives hugely from the aesthetics of reception; thus, understanding of a text is liberated from the prescriptive formats; this was also enabled by the post-structuralist literary position that dismantled the particularity of meanings of a text or rather the approaches to the meanings of a text. In translation studies, comparisons between the source-text and the target-text lose the parameters of measuring accuracy and also the shift of cultural-ideological values. This leads to a cross-cultural interchange without any hierarchical strengthening of the source-culture; rather the target culture comes into academic focus; the translated texts are studied not through the changes initiated through translation but through the merit of the re-created aesthetic values of the text. The autonomous functionality of the translated texts opens new avenues of interpretation, which is otherwise hinges on the shift and its causative intermediaries. This leads to a comparison of translated texts without reference to the source-texts and the literary merit of the translator becomes the central concern. Similarly while comparing multiple translations, the source-text is merely a reference point and not a critical parameter.

Thus, comparativism vis-à-vis translated literature is greatly enriched by this stand point. However, when applied to the theoretical position of borrowing of motifs, themes or ideas or even matters of stylistic between authors, mostly in a diachronic (but also synchronic manner), the texts of the author who borrows assumes an independent functionality. A film inspired by a novel will assume its own artistic value and the comparison will be in equilibrium, rather than between the master and the borrower. It will also not look into the faithfulness of the inspired texts to the inspired ones but appreciate both bodies of aesthetic endeavors as originals deserving a similar critical understanding. For example, Christie's *The Mirror Cracked From Side To Side* (1962) inspired Rituporno Ghosh's *Shubho Mohorot* (2003), a National Award Winning Bengali film based on Miss Marple story. Ghosh borrows the revenge motive and the central characters but transforms the nineteenth century British situation with Victorian remnants to a twentieth century Kolkata with modern urban complexities in the personal space. The Bangla film problematizes the concept of inter-semiotic translation. Ghosh does not merely create a celluloid version of the crime thriller but was more interested in the human relationships that often go beyond the mundane into the dramatic. Thus, a comparative theoretical position will depend on the differentiated treatment of a similar story-line. However, an advancement in this theoretical position will be through the comparison of the stylistics say of story-telling where Ghosh's interpretation is not a response to Christie's whodunit but a being of its own: rather the wronged murderess can be taken as a motif to

which Christie and Ghosh based on the dominant narrative factors respond to rather than modification of the former by the latter. Hence, genealogical considerations are detached from the artistic image and comparative literary theory is based on the reception of the image rather than its origin and usage as was previously.

The detachment from the origin and reverting to the consequences as a mode of comparativism, hence, requires conscious theorizing as it has often been merely seen as a possibility. Re-writing, rather than borrowing comes into focus through reception theory; the phenomena is more complicated, with more researchable insights than presumed:

Rewriting ... is a very important strategy which guardians of a literature use to adapt what is 'foreign' (in time and/or genealogical location) to the norms of the receiving culture. As such, rewriting plays a highly important part in the development of literary systems. On another level, rewritings are evidence of reception, and can be analyzed as such. These would appear to be two perfectly good reasons to give the study of rewriting a more central status in both literary theory and comparative literature. (Lefevre 89)

So rewriting vis-à-vis reception theory is a mode of theorizing the subversive. Hence, that which was hitherto considered secondary, duplicate, derived or imitated gains in aesthetic validity. Therefore, the comparative theory, thus, formulated will create a balance of power and a text will not be considered a response to its chronological predecessor because of certain similarities. Rather, the challenge is in inverting the structures of comparison by approaching the hitherto original through what is considered derivative.

Comparative literature and its theoretical positions have long been concerned with complementary synthesis of horizontal general literature and vertical history of ideas. The use of reception theory envisages a different aesthetic avenue through which the physical reality of a literary text is conceived, as if in a state of flux, so that each comparative study has an internal logic that refers to material reality of the text but is not constructed in its entirety from it. For example, a comparison between *Jane Eyre* (1847) and *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966) will be governed by the notion of the latter as a response to the former, especially in the matter of usage of the "mad woman in the attic" motif. This is not to say that Meyer's work has not been acknowledged for its literary merit but in relation to Brontë's work it is always construed as a response. Hence, the alternative is to see how *Jane Eyre*, too, is a possible Euro-centric response to *Wide Sargasso Sea* and how Rochester has not been vilified in the later work but rather white-washed in the former; or how feminist ideologies have not grown to be multi-cultural but rather was initially white-middle-class like Jane; Bertha Mason is not therefore, an interpretation as such but a creation. Thus, this theoretical position of Comparative literary theory is more flexible as in it seeks both universal through particular, and vice-versa. On the other hand, it also lends functionality to a triadic model of reciprocation that preserves historicized aestheticism, universalized artistic possibilities as also possibilities exploring through subverting existing norms.

Process-oriented comparativism or the motivations of a comparative study:

This arises from the process-oriented translation praxis theorized by James Holmes in his Descriptive Translation Studies and later extended by Zohar's Polysystem theory where it had important implications in understanding the hierarchy discerned in the heterogenous literary structure. For example, instead of, merely focusing on the thought processes of the translator during the translational praxis, the focus hence shifts to the means by which translations were chosen, and the way they functioned within the liter-

ary system. Therefore, theorization of translation is very conscious about the cultural and political implications of the translational process.

“Translated literature fulfills the needs of a young literature to put its renewed tongue in use in as many literary genres as possible in order to make it functional as a literary language and useful for its emerging public. Since, when it is young and in the process of being established, a young literature cannot create major texts in all genres until its polysystem has crystallized, it greatly benefits from the experience of other literatures, and translated literature becomes, in a way, one of its most important systems.” (Even-Zohar, 1981, 117)

Evidently then process-oriented translation praxis delves into the political connotations of translation. This can be applied to the praxis of comparativism which hitherto has generally been concerned with the end-product: the comparative study as a critical-aesthetic paradigm of exploring literary values without much reference to the socio-political implications of bringing together texts, the objective being: “the mutual illumination of several texts or series of texts, considered side by side; the greater understanding we derive from juxtaposing a number of (frequently very different) works, authors and literary traditions.” (Praver 102)

Comparative literary theories, has hitherto, not been conscious to the power structures implied in a comparative study between two writers deriving from their cultural specifics. There is a sense of globalization that subsumes all national boundaries, but only for the purpose of aesthetic merits of a text.

In many ways, the rush to globalize the literary canon in recent years may be viewed as the “comp – lit – ization” of national literatures throughout the humanities. Comparative literature was in principal global from its inception Comparative literature necessarily works toward a non-nationally defined disciplinary locus, ... especially in an extremely globalized economy... . (Apter 42)

However, as shown earlier these national boundaries, often geo-political mostly exist, often deliberately made invisible with the emphasis on literary sensibilities. This is, therefore, another possible theoretical position that is contrary to the one formulated in 3.1 and derives from the existence of national boundaries, rather than through its negation. Hence, through process-oriented comparative study, the hitherto non-recognized factors like the political motive behind a comparative study or the effects likewise, the power structures in juxtaposing two cultural structures or even a study solely focusing on such effects rather than the aesthetic values of a literary text can be ordained. So, for instance, the concerns of a comparative study between a modernist poet of a regional language in India heralding the ers of ‘New Poetry’ in the Post- Tagorean Era, say Bishnu Dey, and that of T.S. Eliot will inevitably be dominated by the ideas of debt incurred by the former from the poetics of the latter. Hence, the balance of power will always be tilted towards the European predecessors; any negation of the European modernism will be perceived as a form of subversion by the Non-European recipient, especially through the post-colonial positions in comparative literary theory. On the other hand, a tribal writer will be perceived through all the tribal social structures as opposed to a mainstream writer. Now, what process-oriented approach derived from translation studies does is makes the comparative study not only aware of the power structures as an influence over the aesthetic elements but makes this power structures itself an object of study.

So the theoretical formulations will reflect how a certain comparative study affects the academic position of a text, regional or marginalized through comparisons with a main-

stream literary piece. Again, the various modes of comparative study can be analyzed and theories formulated on not just the functionality of these methods but the effects it has on the academic validity of the texts especially in relation to each other. Thus this comparative literary theory deals with more with effects of a comparative study rather than its modes. Thus, a new space is created for the functionality of comparative studies that is more in sync with the recent nature of literary studies beyond pure aestheticism to aestheticism vis-à-vis power structures to power structures vis-à-vis aestheticism, implying a change in focus. Evidently, "the literature around us is now unmistakably planetary system. The question is not really what we should do – the question is how. What does it mean studying ... literature? How do we do it?" (Moretti 148). This does not however mean that the traditional elements of a literary work are discounted or devalued. Rather they are re-evaluated as the load-bearing units of the politicized trends within the academia. This, therefore, initiates a structural alternative in actualizing comparative literature where the socio-political subject is located not outside but inside the comparative study of literature.

Metaphorics of gender in Translation studies for a gender-based comparative literary theory:

With the onset of the twentieth century, translation theories have come deconstruct (and sometimes reconstruct) hegemonic systems especially in relation to linguistics, semantics and socio-cultural connotations of language. The growing number of Feminist translation scholars has hence structured a sexualized terminology of translation: Lori Chamberlain, Susan Bassnett, Sherry Simon have repeatedly used metaphors of "infidelity" or alternative marriage contract while theorizing about translation (a detailed explanation is provided in the Introduction). The consequences of reading fidelity to an original/husband as a metaphor for translation led to reinterpretation of several models of translation theories through the binary model of gender. For example Lori Chamberlain offers a re-reading of the hermeneuticist model of George Steiner, specifically as an exchange in a man-woman relationship. This creates a semantic/cultural situation where there is overt sexual politicization of 'language', which makes it a tool of gender expression: "Writing within the hierarchy of gender ... the [gender] paradigm becomes universal and the male and female roles ... are essential rather than accidental" (Chamberlain 313). So, the tenets of translation studies are conscious to the differences between the male and the female language or rather the usage of language: a number of translation theorists have based their studies of language on inferences drawn from differentiating genders. Moreover, the metaphorics of translation as mentioned earlier reveals a tension between an anxiety about the myths of paternity (or authorship and authority) and a profound dichotomy in the role of maternity (as the secondary or the reproduced). Thus, translation theorists reveal a remarkable consciousness about the binary constructions of gender, with language as the means of articulation and exemplification. On the other hand, the praxis of translator also distinguish between usages of language with reference to gender. Thus, George Steiner (1975), for example, vindicates a difference in choice of phrases: "[W]omen's speech is richer than men's in those shadings of desire and futurity known in Greek and Sanskrit as optative; women seem to verbalize a wider range of qualified resolve and masked promise. ... Certain linguistic differences do point towards a physiological basis or, to be exact, towards the intermediary zone between the biological and the social." (41-43) This differentiation between the male and the female language is not primarily in anti-thesis to the feminist studies but rather develops in a different direction. Now, comparative literature though influenced to an extent by Feminist

discourses, is not really conscious to the binary model of comparing the gender values of writing. Thematic comparative studies have explored representations of women or works of women writers in relation to cultural and temporal dimensions. Susan Bassett, in "Gender and Thematics" has expounded on the contributions of feminist literary theory in comparative literature but theoretical perspectives hardly ensure the comparison between gendered expressions. From the tenets of translation studies, hence, comparatists can devise means of juxtaposing literary works as gendered expressions beyond a feminist standpoint. Therefore, comparativism can be devise a means of interrogating the masculinity as a construct as much as femininity through comparative analysis of literary pieces with reference to the gender of the writers. This may not be limited to a non-heteronormative framework and extend to 'queer' writings as well.

Evidently, the, this theoretical development is heavily dependent on the gendered usage of language as validated by translation theorists: but the exploration of the linguistic usage can also be extended to the analysis of a differentiated treatment of a same situation or similar emotions or social concern by two different authors. This is different from other comparisons based on gender because it does not derive from gender as a socio-culturally produced matter but rather from the linguistic productions of gender/sex itself. This theoretical perspective investigates language as a biologically-sociologically constructed choice: this helps in the reflections on the implication behind the usage of synonyms that still retain elements of differentiation. For example the usage of the words "puberty" and "adolescence" to denote the beginning of teenage vindicates different authorial intentions. While comparative literary theory has other modes of studying the above observation, it is not specifically compared through the gender of the author; or rather linguistic behavior is never solely explored through the medium of gender/sex not through the exclusion of socio-cultural contexts but through exploring those areas specifically in relation to biological identity of the body. This will enable comparative studies of texts that require detailed reading not only for narratological or thematic concerns but also the semantic aspects and the space between similar semantic entities. Moreover, gender/sex is to an extent dissociated from socio-cultural or political concerns, this creates a space of negotiation through which comparative literary theory creates a critical paradigm that provides a representational space for both male and female, without being in contradiction to each other. Also, it provides newer avenues of looking at gender as a means of production whereas the existing critical paradigm is primarily concerned with gender as a produced space.

Conclusion: The Relationship: Future

In the given academic scenario, where both the disciplines need to explore newer avenues of knowledge as a means of sustenance, an inversion of the academic relationship such as this, is an attempt to contribute towards that very direction. Comparative Literary theories, while in application, has become a rather heterogeneous episteme leading to the convergence of several modalities of knowledge like area studies, gender studies, modes of reading cultures etc. The relationship with Translation studies, certain aspects of which has been explored in this paper, is a mutually enriching one. The battles between mono-lingualism and multi-lingualism are slowly becoming outdated: as Apter argues the challenge of comparative literature in the contemporary world is to find a way to reconcile untranslatable alterity with the need to translate nevertheless, rejecting both the false pieties of not wanting to mistranslate the other, which result in monolingualism,

and the opposite globalism that “translates everything without ever traveling anywhere” (Apter 91). Instead the theoretical developments of both the disciplines acquire more potential when the methodologies of one are often applicable to the other. This will also create the possibility of a more balanced relationship between the two disciplines. Instead of a power struggle, the equilibrium between two disciplines can counter hegemonic formations of cultural politics that impede the study of connections between language and literature.

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