

World Literature and the Rise of Sub-nationalisms in Indian Vernaculars: British Romantic Poets in Gujarati Translation

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Abstract

This paper focuses on how world literature played a crucial role in shaping a sub-national Gujarati identity. Narsinhrao Divatia (1859-1937) – the well-known Gujarati poet, critic and linguist presented partial or complete translations of British Romantic poets like Wordsworth, Keats, Shelley and Byron from the fourth part of F.T. Palgrave’s Golden Treasury (1861) in his seminal poetry anthology Kusummala (1887). This translation played a significant role in redefining Gujarati poetics and Gujarati identity. It also elevated the cultural status of Gujarati literature by introducing Sanskrit poetics in the Gujarati translations. However, in the Gujarati literary tradition, Divatia’s translations of the British Romantic poets are treated as ‘nakal’ (copy) and derivative of Western poetry. This paper argues that the Gujarati translations of the British Romantic poets in Kusummala (1887) cannot be dismissed as cheap copies, but have to be read as refractions, a kind of rewriting elaborated by André Lefevre. Kusummala is an example of an interliterary text where Gujarati translations of the British Romantic poets are mediated with the help of Sanskrit poetics. This paper also argues that the sub-national Gujarati identity goes beyond the dichotomy of Vishwa and Rashtra, as proposed by Vinay Dharwadker.

Keywords: Sub-nationalism, World Literature, Translation Studies, Kusummala, British Romantic Poets, Narsinhrao Divatia.

Introduction

Starting with Goethe, scholars such as Ezra Pound, Rabindranath Tagore, and David Damrosch have attempted to define the category

of world literature. Goethe's notion of world literature relied on the idea of an international exchange where Germany would serve as a translator and mediator among different cultures (Damrosch 2014: 1). It aimed to create an international critical standard/paradigm through which any literary work, irrespective of its time or country, could be judged using the same criteria (Bulson 2017: 8). But Goethe has never attempted to define the category cohesively. What should be included in this all-encompassing category of world literature? What criteria/elements are needed in a literary text to qualify it as world literature?

David Damrosch, in *What is World Literature?* (2003) argues that the shifting landscape of world literature offers new opportunities for readers to encounter writers located well beyond the select few Western European countries whose works long dominated worldwide attention. He tries to define world literature as the literature which "encompasses all the works that circulate beyond their culture of origin" (2003: 4). It is an important definition because it allows us to go beyond the age-old notion of world literature as 'world classics'. Therefore, world literature is not simply a set of few works or writers that form a canon, but every text that moves beyond its culture of origin can be considered as world literature. This definition allows us to study Shakespeare, Milton, Chaucer, Eliot, Beckett, Goethe, Chekov, Tagore, Ghalib, Rumi, Kabir, and Suresh Joshi, as world literature.

Such a conception of world literature also allows us to read British Romantic poetry and its Gujarati translations as world literature. Narsinhrao Divatia (1859-1937) – the well-known Gujarati poet, critic and linguist is credited for translating the English poems of British Romantic poets like Wordsworth, Keats, Shelley and Byron into Gujarati from the fourth part of F.T. Palgrave's *Golden Treasury* (1861) in his seminal poetry anthology *Kusummala* (1887). The British Romantic poems circulated outside their culture of origin, that is, the English literary system through Gujarati translations, forming a part of world literature. The Gujarati translations of British Romantic poetry brought new literary sensibilities to Gujarati literature. It played a significant role in redefining Gujarati poetics and identity. These translations also

elevated the cultural status of Gujarati literature by introducing Sanskrit poetics in the translated poems. Therefore, these Gujarati translations can be studied as world literature as they circulated outside their culture of origin, that is, the Gujarati literary system based in Mumbai and impacted the Gujarati literary tradition. This paper focuses on how world literature played a crucial role in shaping a sub-national Gujarati identity.

The idea of a culture of origin of a text is associated with a systems approach to literature. Such an approach rests on the view that “literature is a system embedded in the environment of a culture or society” (Lefevre 1982: 5). Hence, any literary text has to be studied by contextualising its literary system. To understand and contextualise the literary system that produced the Gujarati translations of British Romantic poetry, we need to take into account two crucial aspects/events – 1) Macaulay’s Minute of 1835 and 2) the formation of the first fully formed, multilingual print culture in India. In the Minute of 1835, Macaulay advocated for educating the Indian natives through English. He vehemently argued that the worth of one shelf of European books is much more than the native literature of India and Arabia. English, according to Macaulay, was the language of science and reason. According to Macaulay, the sacred books and literature of millions of Hindus and Muslims residing in India were composed in Sanskrit and Arabic, respectively. Both languages still had small intrinsic value. The British Government paid regular stipends to students to learn Arabic and Sanskrit, while on the other hand, the natives who aspired to gain English education paid fees to the British Government to learn English.

Macaulay’s following statement about the Indian vernaculars is of utmost importance as it highlights the status of Indian dialects in the 19th century. “All parties seem to be agreed on one point, that the dialects commonly spoken among the natives of this part of India contain neither literary nor scientific information, and are moreover so poor and rude that, until they are enriched from some other quarter, it will not be easy to translate any valuable work into them. It seems to be admitted on all sides, that the intellectual improvement of those classes of the people who have the means of

pursuing higher studies can at present be affected only by means of some language, not vernacular amongst them” (Macaulay *Minute*, Point 8). This statement highlights the declining status of the Indian vernaculars and the desperate need to refine them by both the Orientalists and the Anglicists as Indian vernacular literature is dismissed as unscientific, non-literary, and having lower status than Sanskrit and Arabic.

Macaulay aimed to create a “class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; - a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinion, in morals, and in intellect”. The Indian upper caste were the first to receive English education, so they formed this class of Indians who were Indian by birth but British by taste. Macaulay also mentioned the role that these upper-caste Indian elites were required to play after getting an English education – “To that class we may leave it to refine the vernacular dialects of the country, to enrich those dialects with terms of science borrowed from the Western nomenclature, and to render them by degrees fit vehicles for conveying knowledge to the great mass of the population.” Therefore, the onus of educating fellow Indians, who were located further down the social ladder, and the task of refining the Indian vernaculars was on the Indian upper caste, as elaborated by Macaulay. Interestingly, the upper-caste Indian elites across India responded differently to all the social, political, and cultural changes taking place during the mid-nineteenth century.

With the spread of English education in India, the publication and circulation of European works in English also gained prominence. The Indian sub-continent consolidated the first fully formed, multilingual print culture outside Europe in the opening decades of the nineteenth century. The Serampore Mission Press printed almost 2,12,000 items in forty languages, which included books in thirty Indian languages and dialects. Interestingly, there were books in Arabic, Armenian, Burmese, Chinese, Persian and Thai, among others. One must remember that the annual budget allocated for English education in India (in response to the *Minute* of 1835) remained at £10,000. But the print trade in the colony doubled in value from £148,563 in 1850 to £313,772 in 1863–64. Hence, there

was a massive circulation of texts from different parts of India and the world during the mid 1860s (Dharwadker 2012: 477). As a response to the massive infrastructural change centred on print culture during the nineteenth century, two new categories *Vishwa* and *Rashtra* replaced *marga* and *desi* – the all-inclusive categories for all the literature in India until the eighteenth century.

According to Dharwadker, *marga* refers to the classical Sanskrit-centered traditions and classical Sanskrit lyric or *kavya*, which had achieved a canonical status before the existence of the modern nation-state. *Desi* refers to land, country, province, or region along with the post-classical literatures in various local or regional languages in India. Dharwadker states that the *marga* and *desi* were the all-inclusive categories for all the literature of India until the eighteenth century. The Indian critical discourse was chiefly concerned with these two categories. However, these categories – *marga* and *desi* and their associated dynamics- were modified irreversibly by two reconfigured master concepts, *Vishwa* and *Rashtra*, in the nineteenth century.

Vishwa means “the entire enchanted universe.... and the contemporaneous cosmopolitical order of nations and places around the planet”. *Rashtra*, on the other hand, is a technical term. It refers to territory, country, kingdom, empire, and the people or subjects of a realm in political and legal discourse (Dharwadker 2012: 476-477). *Rashtra* also became the signifier of the modern nation-state. The categories of *Vishwa* and *Rashtra* became pre-emergent or emergent categories by the middle of the nineteenth century. *Vishwa sahitya*; ‘world literature’ and *rashtriya sahitya*; ‘national literature’ became a part of the lived reality, pre-given and already existing. *Vishwa sahitya*, against the background of the voluminous circulation of texts from different parts of India and the world, then came to denote the literature of the world. It meant the best works of different kinds of literature across the globe. *Vishwa sahitya* is world literature, universal literature, and cosmopolitan literature. On the other hand, *rashtriya sahitya*, referred to India’s national literature in the nation’s formal languages.

The English-educated Indian elites accessed the canon of world literature through English translations. In the context of Gujarati

literature, the first generation of English graduates, such as Narmad (1833-1886), Navalram Pandya (1836-1888), Nandshankar Mehta (1835-1905), and Mahipatram Nilkanth (1829-1891), got a chance to study English and British literary traditions from the newly appointed English professors. This interaction helped the first generation of English-educated Gujarati elites to refine the prose, poetry and drama in Gujarati literature. For example, Navalram Pandya adapted the theoretical frameworks of studying Western poetry and used them to present a critical inquiry into Gujarati poems. Nandshankar Mehta, encouraged by the Education Inspector of the province, famously known as Russell Sahib, wrote the first historical novel in Gujarati – *Karan Ghelo* (1866), based on English romance novels (Thakkar 2022: 13). The British also encouraged the translation of textbooks into Gujarati; hence, Nandshankar also translated an English textbook on trigonometry into Gujarati. The first-generation English-educated Gujaratis started the development of prose in Gujarati literature.

It is noteworthy to understand that such interaction between English and Gujarati literature goes beyond the dichotomy of *Vishwa* and *Rashtra*, as propounded by Dharwadker. *Rashtriya sahitya* or national literature would mean that the literature represents the entire nation, but here Gujarati literature represents a sub-national or regional Gujarati identity subsumed under the homogenous conception of a nation. According to Anderson (1983: 6), a nation is defined as an “imagined political community”. He argues that nations in Europe and across the world are imagined. Anderson believes that ‘print capitalism’ helped the ‘imagined community’ acquire a concrete shape. However, he has failed to account for multilingual print cultures in countries such as India. Hence, the conception of Indian literature becomes difficult but not impossible. Aijaz Ahmad argues that national literature (in this case, Indian literature) cannot be defined as the sum of its regional constituent parts. Such a definition further complicates the idea of unity theoretically. Indian literature is spread across many languages and regions with overlapping histories and ever-changing boundaries. When we say that Indian literature is the sum total of its regional literature, we privilege some regional literatures over others

for different reasons, such as commercial success and a large reading public (Ahmad 1992: 244-245).

Aijaz Ahmad argues that it is possible to think of a category called - 'Indian Literature'. Every book written by an Indian, within India or abroad, can be considered a part of - 'Indian Literature'. The problem in constructing this category is not that it is spread across multiple languages with histories of uneven development. The problem lies in the narrativisation of Indian literary history that has privileged "High Textuality of a Brahminical kind" as a means for its unification. The narrativising process has also emphasised the history of the central texts of particular languages to obtain unity through the aggregative principle (Ahmad 1992: 244-245). Such techniques have equated - 'Indian Literature' - to Sanskrit or Persian literature from colonial times. The process of writing a literary history of Indian Literature should account for regional and temporal variants, the oral and performative aspects, and overlapping histories of Indian vernaculars. Dharwadker, however, has not elaborated on the question of Indian vernaculars in the context of the category *Rashtra*. What is the place of Indian vernaculars in such a conception of the nation? Does such a conception subsume the already homogenised Indian vernaculars, or does it provide a space to address their uniqueness? The sub-nationalism or regional nationalism goes beyond the binaries of *Rashtra* and *Vishwa*.

To conclude, the spread of English education gave birth to a new class of English-educated upper-caste elites; in this case, Gujarati elites; and the consolidation of a fully developed print culture in India gave rise to the categories of *Vishwa* and *Rashtra*, wherein the canon of world literature is accessed through English. However, this doesn't mean that Sanskrit and Arabic/Persian were sidelined completely. After the first generation of upper-caste Gujaratis acquired an English education, the Universities in India underwent structural changes as Sanskrit and Persian were officially included in the higher education curriculum along with English. Professors such as H. H. Wilson, who translated *Rigveda* into English, taught at universities along with regional experts/intellectuals such as Bhimacharya Zalkikar, who is known for revising the Sanskrit treatise - '*Nyayakosha*' - or '*Dictionary of Technical Terms of Indian*

Philosophy.' (Thakar 2022:14). Govardhanram Tripathi(1855-1907), Manilal Dwivedi (1858-1898), Balashankar Kantharia (1858-1898), Narsinhrao Divatia (1858-1973), Ramanbhai Neelkanth (1868-1928), Kant (1867-1923), Kalapi (1874-1900), Keshvalal Dhruv (1858-1938), Anandshankar Dhruv (1869-1942), Balwantray Thakore (1869-1952), Nanalal Dalpatram Kavi (1877-1946), and Krishnalal Jhaveri (1868-1957), – the second generation of English-educated Gujaratis learnt the literary traditions of English, Sanskrit and Persian under such stalwarts (Thakar 2021: 4). They translated sonnets, lyrics, biographies, novellas, critical essays, narrative poetry, and drama into Gujarati and contributed to developing prose, poetry and drama in Gujarati literature.

World Literature and Sub-nationalism in 19th-Century Gujarati Literature

As discussed in the previous section, the relevance of Sanskrit and Persian/Arabic did not fade due to the arrival of English in university education. Interestingly, Sanskrit was achieving centre stage towards the end of the nineteenth century due to the attempts made by the Gujarati elite to reform the Gujarati language. The upper-caste English-educated Gujaratis attempted to define a regional Gujarati identity through the standardisation and reformation of the Gujarati language in the later part of the nineteenth century. The upper-caste Hindu literati began to speak on behalf of the people of Gujarat based on their shared experience of English (colonial) education. Sanskrit, the language of classical literature and religious texts, became the first choice of the upper-caste English-educated Gujaratis to reform and standardise the Gujarati language. Their attempts to standardise and reform the Gujarati language was a move towards establishing their strand of Gujarati language as the dominant, standard one while craftily sidelining other forms of Gujarati such as “Parsi Gujarati” and “Musalman Gujarati” (Isaka 2002: 4). As a result, one can clearly say that the upper-caste English-educated Gujarati elites mediated the representation of Gujarat and Gujarati.

The English-educated Gujaratis felt the need to reform the Gujarati language due to the rising influence of English. It was now

the language of higher education, government service and business activities. Isaka argues that the urban elites all over India, while getting the knowledge of English (tradition), began to assert the value of their own language (Isaka 2002: 6). Hence, the question of language becomes inextricably linked with creating a regional identity. In an attempt to assert their identity through language, the same Gujarati elites began experimenting with English forms and tried bringing English traditions and sensibilities into Gujarati. The translation of English texts and poetics into Gujarati with the help of Sanskrit poetics was crucial in facilitating this exchange. For example, Manilal Dwivedi wrote the play *Kanta* (1882) based on the historical event of the killing of King Jayshikhari of Patan by King Bhuvad of Panchasar. *Kanta* has elements of Sanskrit drama and Shakespearean tragedy in its plot construction. Ramanalal Neelkanth, influenced by Dwivedi's play *Kanta*, wrote a play titled *Raino Parvat* (1914), highlighting social reforms by using traditions of Sanskrit drama and Shakespearean techniques of tragedy. He also composed *Bhadrambhadra* (1900), a satirical novel in Gujarati, after reading *The Pickwick Papers* (1836) by Dickens and the English translation of the Spanish novel *Don Quixote* by Cervantes. Therefore, it can be said that the upper-caste English-educated Gujaratis used Sanskrit poetics to mediate the exchange between English and Gujarati literary traditions (Thakar 2021: 68).

In a similar zeal, Narsinhrao Divatia (1859-1937), the famous poet, critic and linguist, translated the poems and poetics of British Romantic poets like Wordsworth, Keats, Shelley and Byron from the fourth part of F.T. Palgrave's *Golden Treasury* (1861) into Gujarati in his seminal poetry anthology *Kusummala* (1887). It was his first anthology where Divatia presented partial translations of Romantic poetry in Gujarati. He aimed to bring Romantic sensibilities to Gujarati literature. It is important to note that the upper-caste English-educated Gujaratis were introduced to many English texts as a part of their syllabus. The fourth part of F.T. Palgrave's *Golden Treasury* was frequently prescribed as a textbook in schools and colleges. The English-educated Indian elites translated English textbooks into the Indian vernaculars, such as Gujarati, Marathi, and Bengali, to enrich the Indian vernaculars. Ranchodbhai Girdharbhai

played an important role in drafting textbooks in Gujarati. Gujarati textbooks were also often translated from Marathi. For example, Khemji Harhivan Joshi translated a Marathi textbook on geography by Gangadhar Shastri into Gujarati in 1847 (Thakar 2022: 8).

Narsinhrao Divatia belonged to the second generation of English-educated Gujarati graduates. This was during the second half of the nineteenth century when Sanskrit and Persian had become a part of the university curriculum along with English. Apart from this, Narsinhrao Divatia came in contact with eminent personalities, such as Ranchhodlal Chhotalal (pioneer of the textile industry in Ahmedabad), Manilal Jashbhai (Dewan of Kutch and Baroda State), Satyendranath Tagore (poet, civil servant and a member of the Brahmo Samaj), Navalram Pandya (critic, playwright, essayist), Ambalal Sakarlal (writer, translator, lexicographer, and judge) due to his father – Bholanath Divatia who worked as a government servant in the Kheda district during the British rule in India. Narsinhrao Divatia came to Mumbai in 1875-76 to join Elphinstone College, and he completed his graduation in Sanskrit, securing the first rank in the college. For this achievement, he became the first Gujarati student who was honoured with the Bhau Daji Lad Award (Bhau Daji Lad was an Indian physician and Sanskrit scholar who was an alumnus of Elphinstone College) (Mehd 1958: 7-8).

Narsinhrao Divatia stayed out of Gujarat for most of his life due to his government job in southern India, but he never lost touch with Gujarat and Gujarati literature. He retired in 1912 and settled in Mumbai. He soon joined Elphinstone College as a professor of Gujarati. It is noteworthy that Narsinhrao Divatia's nature poems were inspired by the natural beauty and landscapes of Southern India as well (Mehd 1958: 8). With this background/literary system, Narsinhrao Divatia produced Gujarati translations of British Romantic poetry, an important work from the canon of world literature. It is crucial to mention at this juncture that Narsinhrao's *Kusummala* cannot be regarded as the first text with poems based on the theme of nature. Medieval Gujarati poetry had already talked about the themes of nature in greater detail, but such poems focused their description on specific elements of nature, such as trees and flowers. Such a characteristic of Gujarati poetry can be traced back

to Sanskrit poetry's description of nature in texts such as *Ritusamhara*, where the classical Sanskrit writer Kalidasa gives a detailed description of different seasons of India along with descriptions of trees and flowers. *Meghadūta* can also be regarded as another example where different elements of nature are described in detail. Divatia's *Kusummala*, for the first time in Gujarati literature, brings in a new perspective wherein nature is regarded as a living and mystical force. It has a moral and emotional connection to human subjectivity. For the first time in Gujarati literature, imagination is viewed as a unifying and mediating principle that can bridge the gap between sensation and reason.

It is important to note British Romanticism and Gujarati Romanticism developed under different circumstances. British Romanticism developed due to the Industrial Revolution and the French Revolution. The French Revolution (1789) and the Industrial Revolution were the two single most important events of the eighteenth century that saw the emergence and growth of British Romanticism. The French Revolution displaced the power of the king and the nobility with the power of the bourgeoisie or the new middle class (traders, business people, and members of the liberal profession). The Industrial Revolution led to urbanisation in England, with people flocking in huge numbers to cities such as London in search of jobs and better standards of living. As a result, there was mass unemployment, poor working conditions, lower wages, and diseases. All these themes became the key concerns of British Romantic poetry (Habib 2006: 349). However, Gujarati Romanticism was mediated through the translation of British Romantic poetry into Gujarati. The themes of unemployment, lower wages, poverty, disease, etc. that highlight the adverse effects of Industrialisation are scarce in Gujarati Romantic poetry. The feudal structure in India had not collapsed entirely due to the arrival of the British. Still, it had undergone structural changes due to the rise of the English-educated Indian elites across India during the second half of the nineteenth century. The educated elites aimed to function as mediators between the state and the people of their region. Veena Naregal (2001: 106-111) notes that the upper caste Marathi colonial intellectual focused on dictating the norms of a 'high' vernacular

literary canon of Marathi writing instead of its dissemination during the later part of the nineteenth century. It was an attempt to carve out a collective but homogenous Marathi identity on behalf of the entire modern Marathi community. This process was similar to the Gujarati elites who wanted to reform and standardise the Gujarati language and hence carve out a distinct but homogenous Gujarati identity (Isaka 2002:1). Therefore, Romanticism in Gujarati is heralded by Gujarati elites, such as Narsinhrao Divatia, in an attempt to create a sub-national Gujarati identity.

The British Romantics emphasised originality and genius instead of imitating classical authors, a key feature of Neoclassicism. The focus on “originality” can also be traced in the Preface of *The Golden Treasury* (1861) by F.T. Palgrave. “This little Collection differs, it is believed, from others in the attempt made to include in it all the best original Lyrical pieces and Songs in our language (save a very few regretfully omitted on account of length) by writers not living,—and none beside the best” (Palgrave 1919: 9). Palgrave clearly states that he has attempted to include all the “original” lyrical pieces and songs. This idea of originality and genius becomes crucial when Divatia translates British Romantic poetry into Gujarati, and different Gujarati critics dismiss his works, stating that the text had no original thought. The noted Gujarati critic, Mansukhlal Jhaveri (1907-1981), regards Divatia’s translations as *anukriti* - ‘imitation’ and a lack of individual talent (Desai 2006: 278). Writers such as Manilal Dwivedi (1858-1898) and Balashankar Kantharia (1858-1898) opposed Divatia’s translations of British Romantic poetry. Many contemporaries of Divatia in the nineteenth century criticised his translations of British Romantic poetry for various reasons. One of the important reasons was the monotony of motifs/symbols based on nature found in *Kusummala*. The critics also observed that Divatia had used elements such as the moon, stars, the river Sindhu, etc., so frequently that such elements of nature are present unnecessarily in many poems of *Kusummala*. The readers also lose interest because of such repetitive words. Divatia tried to introduce British Romantic poetry to Gujarati readers through examples as mentioned in the Preface of *Kusummala*. But he ended up creating a formula for writing poems

similar to British Romantic lyrics – a poem structure that began with the description of nature and then involved a memory of human experience towards the end (Mehd 1958: 29-30).

However, critics such as Umashankar Joshi, in the later part of the twentieth century, reassessed Divatia's translations and were able to find their relevance within the larger Gujarati literary system. Umashankar Joshi tried to highlight the importance of Divatia's translations by asserting their importance in establishing the form of lyric poetry in Gujarati literature after Narmad (Thakar 2021: 57). Critics such as Anandshankar Dhruv (1869-1942) believed that Divatia's translations had created a new form of poetry in Gujarati literature, and that it had impacted his heart deeply. Ramanbhai Neelkanth (1868- 1928) believed that Divatia had successfully brought the emotional appeal of British Romantic poetry into Gujarati by craftily using the linguistic aspects of Sanskrit (Mehd 1958: 13). Therefore, Divatia's translations cannot be dismissed as 'imitations' lacking originality in the Gujarati literary tradition. The Gujarati translation of British Romantic poetry has impacted poets such as Khabardar and Kalapi, who followed Divatia's style for composing nature-based lyrical poetry. Khabardar produced *Vilasika* (1905), and Kalapi composed *Kamalini* following the poetic style propounded by Divatia in *Kusummala*. Govardhanram Tripathi included Divatia's poem *Chanda* (moon) in the first part of his masterpiece Gujarati novel *Saraswatichandra* (1887) (Thakar 2021: 56).

Translation as Refraction: Unraveling Interliterariness in Kusummala

This paper reads *Kusummala* as a trope for interliterariness. As elaborated by Dionyz Durisin, literariness, that is, that which makes the given work a literary one, is the key essence of any literary text. It highlights all the "relations within the literature, their intensity, amount, and manner of their conditionality within the framework of various individual literatures". If these mutual relations, similarities, resemblances or affinities transcend the boundaries of individual literatures, then "literariness", according to Durisin, transforms itself automatically into "interliterariness." (Galik 2000: 2). In *Kusummala*,

we find mutual relations, similarities, resemblances or affinities with the Sanskrit and English literary traditions. It crosses regional as well as national boundaries by incorporating the elements of British Romantic poetry, and hence, it becomes an interliterary text.

Interliterariness can be studied with the help of genetic relations and structural typological affinities. Genetic contact relations exist when contact between literatures becomes necessary for their development. There are two types of genetic contacts, namely – external and internal. External contacts are those that never leave any traces in the structure of the receiving system. In contrast, internal contacts trace can be established and proved as they can be easily spotted in the receiving system. This phenomenon of interliterariness becomes prevalent during significant upheavals in the development of literature when the fundamental structures and characteristics of individual literary traditions undergo substantial transformations due to changes in ideology, aesthetics, literary types, genres, or forms. Such a process is particularly evident in the emergence of numerous new literary movements in Asia and Africa during the latter half of the nineteenth century and throughout the twentieth century, influenced greatly by the profound impact of the Euro-American world (Galik 2000: 3). *Kusummala* (1887) is also a result of an upheaval caused by the introduction of English education in India, specifically to the Gujarati elites, the need to reform the Gujarati language and the changing political, social and economic terrain of India as a whole during the second half of the nineteenth century. The internal genetic contact in *Kusummala* is evident as Divatia uses Sanskrit metres and traditions to translate British Romantic poetry into Gujarati. The poetics of three different traditions, English, Sanskrit and Gujarati, can be seen in *Kusummala*. Divatia uses Sanskrit metres such as *shardulvikridit* and *totaka*, among others; the poetic form of a lyric and the themes of love for nature; symbols such as the ocean and the moon from British Romantic poetry; the cultural history of Gujarat along with metaphors and motifs from the Gujarati poetry of that period.

Another kind of interliterariness found in *Kusummala* (1887) is structural-typological affinities. In this context, the significance lies not in the tangible and physical proof itself (as is the case with

genetic contact relations) but in the importance of studying affinities or parallels in *Kusummala* within the context of the history and development of Gujarati literature. *Kusummala* uses the lyric form, themes, and style, among others, of British Romantic poetry. If we study such similarities in the interliterary process across various literatures from the same period or different time periods, even if they are geographically distant, within the realm of structural-typological affinities, it can potentially uncover advanced forms of interliterariness, leading to a deeper understanding of this phenomenon. To further understand the interliterary process in detail, this paper studies *Kusummala* as a refraction of British Romantic poetry.

André Lefevere (1945-1996), one of the prominent scholars of Translation Studies, has theorised that translation is a form of rewriting produced and read within the target language's political, cultural and ideological factors. Lefevere's idea of translation as a kind of refraction becomes an important tool in Translation Studies. All kinds of rewriting of texts from one language to another or from one system to another can be considered refractions. It includes all types of cinematic, T.V. or comic book adaptations of the text. It also includes various glosses, summaries, commentaries, historiography, etc., of the text in other or the same languages (Lefevere 1982: 4). In his essay 'Mother Courage's Cucumber – Text, System and Refraction in a Theory of Literature' (1982), Lefevere studies different English translations of the German play 'Mother Courage's Cucumber' by Bertolt Brecht. The play by Brecht was first translated into English in America by H.R. Hays. Then, Eric Bentley and Ralph Manheim also translated this German play into English for the American audience. All these translations, Lefevere argues, 'refract' Brecht for the American audience. Similarly, all translations of British Romantic poetry, including the Gujarati translation *Kusummala*, refract the British Romantic poets, in our case, for Gujarati readers. Lefevere argues that if we see translation as refraction, we will be able to understand the larger cultural politics of the period and various other social, political and economic constraints which might have affected the translation. He states that there are always certain constraints of the receiving

system (here, Gujarati literature). Hence, a translated text has to be read by analysing the various translation strategies adopted by the translator in the context of these constraints.

As discussed earlier, any literary text has to be studied by contextualising its literary system. Lefevre regards literature as a part of a system which exists in a specific environment of a culture or society. It includes texts and people, who write, refract, distribute and read those texts. Such a literary system possesses a regulatory body with different components. Therefore, *Kusummala* is part of a system, the Gujarati literary system, and it exists in a specific environment: English education and the reformation of the Gujarati language and literature. The first essential component of any literary system is patronage – the person, persons, and institutions that provide patronage to the translator for translating the text. We don't have information about whether the translation of *Kusummala* was commissioned by the British or any other persons or institutions, as textbooks from English and other Indian vernaculars were frequently translated into Gujarati. Patronage can be of two types – differentiated, where different people or institutions with different, conflicting ideologies support the translator/translation and undifferentiated, where patronage is provided by a single person, group, or institution characterised by the same ideology.

Kusummala was first published in 1887, followed by six subsequent editions in 1902, 1907, 1912, 1915, 1918, and 1953. Different people and publishing houses published all these seven editions of *Kusummala*; hence, it is the case of differentiated patronage. The publication details of the first three editions of *Kusummala* cannot be found. Jivanlal Amarshi Mehta, the manager of Printing Work and Book Agencies, published the fourth and sixth editions of *Kusummala*. The fourth edition was printed at The Ahmedabad Union Printing Press Company Limited in Ahmedabad Tankshala by Motilal Shamaldas. On the other hand, the sixth edition was printed at Shree Ambika Vijay Printing Press by Laxmichand Harichand in Ahmedabad. The fifth edition of *Kusummala* was published by C.N. Brothers Book Sellers and Publishers, owned by Chandravadan Ishwarlal Khansaheb. Matubhai Bhaidas printed the fifth edition at The Surat Jain Printing Press,

Khapatia Chakla, Surat. Shambhulal Jagdishbhai Shah of Gurjar Grantharatna Karyalaya published the seventh edition of *Kusummala*. Govindlal Jagdishbhai Shah printed it at Sharda Printing Press in Ahmedabad (4th, 5th, 6th editions available on archive.org).

Despite limited information about the publication history of *Kusummala*, one can clearly understand the role of cities such as Ahmedabad and Surat in facilitating Gujarati scholarship, particularly in translation. Gurjar Grantharatna Karyalaya, situated in Ahmedabad and started in 1927, has remained a crucial publication house in publishing various books in Gujarati, such as histories of Gujarati literature (for example, Dhirubhai Thakar's books on the history of Gujarati literature - *Arvachin Gujarati Sahitya Ni Vikasrekha*), novels (e.g. Munshi's Patan trilogy), children's literature (the well known *Bakor Patel* by Hariprasad Vyas), cultural histories (the history of Charan community by Zaverchand Meghani), poems (for example Niranjan Bhagat's *Antim Kavyo*) and Gujarati translations by Niranjan Bhagat of texts such as Tagore's *Chitrangada*, among others.

Patronage can be understood with the help of three essential components – an ideological one, an economic one and a status component (Lefevre 1982: 6). One of the most important elements is the ideology of the translator. Divatia mentions his ideology or aim behind translating British Romantics into Gujarati in the Preface (Divatia 1953:9) of the first edition of *Kusummala*. He uses the word *sangeetkavya* (lyric) for the poems and states that he will comment on the translated poems' aim, structure, form, and arrangement. Divatia further says Western poetry differs from this country's (India) poetry. Western poetry is written with a different method; hence, Divatia wants to acquaint the 'imagined community' of Gujarati readers with Western poetry through examples and not through abstract critical discussions. His main aim was cultivating a taste for Western poetry in the minds of the "*Gurjar Praja*" ('the people of Gujarat'). The word *Gurjar*, used in the Preface, invokes the cultural history of Gujarat as it refers to the *Gurjaras*, probably a subtype of Huns, who ruled the region during the eighth and ninth centuries. It is noteworthy that the name 'Gujarat' is derived from

the word *Gurjar*. So, the term addresses an ‘imagined Gujarati community’ in the Preface, hence highlighting the sub-national Gujarati identity right from the Preface.

The economic component assures the writer’s livelihood. Seven editions of *Kusummala* clearly indicate the wide readership enjoyed by Divatia’s Gujarati translations of British Romantic poetry. However, we do not have sufficient data to trace the readership and circulation of different editions of *Kusummala* across the Gujarati reading public. Another essential component of the Gujarati literary system is the status of the writer/translator – as in what position the writer and the translator achieve in the society after the text is translated as per the norms of the receiving culture. Many women Romantic poets, such as Anna Laetitia Barbauld (1743-1825), Anna Seward (1742-1809) and Helen Maria Williams (1759-1827), among others, also composed poems in the Romantic period (Poplawski 2018: 342), but the fourth part of F.T. Palgrave’s *Golden Treasury* (1861), which contained the poetry of Wordsworth, Keats, Shelly, Coleridge, Blake and Byron, was often prescribed as a textbook in schools and colleges. The Gujarati translation of the above-mentioned British Romantic poets further assures their canonical status in the Gujarati literary system as well. The second generation of English-educated Gujarati elites modelled the form, themes, styles, symbols, and metaphors of Gujarati Romantic poetry based on the British Romantic poets. Furthermore, *Kusummala*, the Gujarati translation of British Romantic poetry, established Divatia as the harbinger of a new form/style of poetry in Gujarati literature and also shaped the Gujarati canon. As discussed in the earlier section, Divatia’s translation also influenced other Gujarati Romantic poets such as Khabardar and Kalapi.

Another important aspect associated with any translated text is its poetics, i.e. the different strategies employed by the translator in an attempt to bring the source text to the receiving culture/system. According to Lefevre, “poetics is a kind of code of behaviour with two components – an inventory component which includes genre, certain symbols, characters, prototypical situations and a functional component - an idea of how literature has or may be allowed to function in society” (Lefevre 1982: 6). The inventory component

aims to study the changes made by the translator in the genre, symbols, characters, and situations according to the needs and requirements of the receiving system. Palgrave begins his text with a Dedication to the poet laureate of the period – Alfred Tennyson (1809-1892). He begins his dedication by remembering his close friend – Henry Hallam (1811-1833), who was the subject of Tennyson’s poem, “In Memoriam A.H.H” (1850). Palgrave invokes the idea of patriotism and nationalism by stating that - “It would have been hence a peculiar pleasure and pride to dedicate what I have endeavoured to make a true national Anthology of three centuries to Henry Hallam” (Palgrave 1919: 7 ‘Dedication’). He regards Henry Hallam as having “just judgement and high-hearted patriotism”. Palgrave further thanks Tennyson for invoking his interest in compiling the poems while they were “traversing the wild scenery of Terryn Dinas” and also advising and assisting him throughout the project.

On the other hand, Divatia dedicates his *Kusummala* to the well-known Gujarati autobiographer, translator and critic Narayan Hemchandra (1855-1904). He is credited with bringing Bengali literature to Gujarati through various Gujarati translations of Bengali texts (Das 1993: 230). Interestingly, Divatia has composed an entire poem dedicated to Narayan Hemchandra. In this poem, the speaker states that a river of poems has risen from the deep trenches of his heart. The flow of this river is sometimes slow, often fast, and it passes through various types of arid and semi-arid areas, but the river never dries. He then dedicates this river of poems to Narayan Hemchandra in the poem’s last lines. It is important to note that the poem is composed in the Sanskrit meter – *shikharini*, highlighting the interliterary tendencies right from the beginning of the text.

In the Preface of the *Golden Treasury*, Palgrave clearly mentions that his anthology is different from any other anthologies as he has attempted to include “all the best original Lyrical pieces and Songs” of the English language. Palgrave then goes on to define lyrical poetry. He states that he hasn’t relied on a strict and exhaustive definition of lyrical poetry. According to Palgrave, *Lyrical* implies “that each Poem shall turn on some single thought, feeling, or situation” (Preface, Page 3). The poems in the *Golden Treasury*

(1861) have been divided into four books by Palgrave. Book I corresponds to ninety years, closing about 1616; Book II covers the period between 1616 to 1700; Book III corresponds to 1700 to 1800; and Book IV covers the period from 1800 to 1850s. Palgrave also stresses the Romantic ideals of genius and originality in the Preface as a parameter for excluding poems. Divatia, in the Preface of *Kusummala* (1887), states that he intends to introduce a new form of poetry to the Gujarati readers with the help of examples. Still, he doesn't make any attempts to define lyrical poetry. As a result, he created a formula for composing lyrical poetry in Gujarati, as discussed in the earlier section. We also do not find any discussion about the book's structure or the ideas of genius and originality.

Interestingly, Divatia mentions the aim of the *teeka* ('commentary') section present at the end of the book, towards the end of the Preface of *Kusummala*. He states that the *teeka* will provide a clear understanding where meanings or interpretations become vague for the readers. This *teeka* is similar to the Palgrave 'Notes' section towards the end of the *Golden Treasury* but does not find a mention in the book's Preface. The Notes of Palgrave describes the poem's author, style, form, and publication details. It also tries to explain difficult words and phrases so any reader can read and interpret the poem based on the details provided in the 'Notes' section. This is not the case with the *teeka* section of *Kusummala*. However, it is crucial to note that Divatia has mentioned the various source texts (or names of the poems) that have been translated into Gujarati. For example, Divatia states in the *teeka* section that the poem *Avsan*, which is the last poem of *Kusummala*, has been based on the last poem of the fourth book of the *Golden Treasury*, Shelley's "Music, when soft voices die". He further comments that he hasn't translated the poem word by word but has retained the core idea and theme of the poem in *Avsan*. Hence, we can say that Palgrave's 'Notes' section differs from Divatia's *teeka* in *Kusummala*.

All seven editions of *Kusummala* have a separate Preface section with essential details. The second edition was published in 1902, fourteen years after the first edition's publication. In the Preface of the second edition, Divatia states that the *Kusummala* was in high

demand among readers, and hence, he has happily published a second edition with no major changes, but he has improved the spellings and changed certain words. It hints towards the standardisation of the Gujarati language prevalent during the first half of the twentieth century. The third edition was published in 1907, where Divatia, similar to the first edition's Preface, used the word "*Gurjar Praja*", the Gujarati community, invoking the sub-national Gujarati identity. There were no major changes in the third edition as well, but Divatia changed the names of some poems to increase the accessibility to Gujarati readers. By the time the fourth edition of *Kusummala* came out in 1912, many writers had started criticising Divatia's translations of British Romantic poetry. Therefore, in the preface of the fourth edition, Divatia sarcastically targets his critics, followed by a discussion on the name – *sangeetkavya*, coined by Divatia for lyrical poetry. He also used the term "*Gujarat Ni Praja*" (the people of Gujarat) for the first time instead of "*Gurjar Praja*", directly invoking the state of Gujarat, which was yet to be formed geographically. The fifth edition came out in 1915, and in its Preface, Divatia declared that *Kusummala* had been introduced as a textbook in high school education. It highlights the entry of *Kusummala* into the Gujarati canon through the refraction of British Romantic poetry. In the Preface of the sixth and the seventh editions, published in 1918 and 1953, respectively, Divatia talks about the high prices of paper, due to which the selling price of *Kusummala* had to be increased until Gurjar Grantharatna Karyalaya agreed to publish the seventh edition of *Kusummala*.

After the Preface, all four books of the *Golden Treasury* (1861) begin with a 'summary' section, after which the first poem starts. This section serves as an introduction to the particular period of the poems and the major tendencies of that period. In the 'Summary' section of the fourth book, Palgrave states that he is happy with the progress of poetry in the last 30 years, from the beginning of the nineteenth century. The poets have advanced the major characteristics of the Restoration period and "renewed the half-forgotten melody and depth of tone which marked the best Elizabethan writers" (Palgrave 1919: 194). Palgrave praises the Romantic poets by stating that "In a word, the Nation which, after

the Greeks in their glory, has been the most gifted of all nations for Poetry, expressed in these men the highest strength and prodigality of its nature”. This hints towards Romantic nationalism, translated into Gujarati sub-nationalism when Divatia translates British Romantic poets into Gujarati. It is important to note that *Kusummala* has no corresponding section on ‘summary’.

After the Preface in *Kusummala*, the first poem is titled “Manglacharan” (Divatia 1953: 1) – a regular/standard feature of any Sanskrit treatise. This verse aims to seek blessings from a specific deity and to ask for the removal of any obstacles while narrating/writing poetry. We also find a similar tradition in epic poetry. It usually begins with the invocation of the Muse, from whom the poet asks for inspiration and knowledge. A similar appeal can be seen in “Mangalacharan”. Divatia here invokes the goddess *Sharada*, another name for the Hindu goddess *Saraswati*. She is the goddess of knowledge, music, art, speech, wisdom and learning. Divatia requests goddess *Saraswati* to give him a small drop of knowledge from her vast ocean/stream of knowledge so that he can write poems without difficulty. The medieval Gujarati poets used similar invocations before the poem’s start, and this tradition was eventually sidelined by the modern Gujarati poetry that began from Dalpatram and Narmad. Such features highlight the interliterary tendencies of *Kusummala*.

It is important to note that Divatia has not translated all the poems word by word into Gujarati, but has used different strategies for translation. For example, Divatia has translated a few lines (usually the first 6 - 10 lines) from poems such as “The Primrose of the Rock” (Wordsworth), and then composed an entirely different poem based on a different theme, “Asthir Ane Sthir Prem” (‘Unsteady and Steady love’) (Divatia 1953: 28). Here, the poetry in translation takes the theme of a stable and unstable relationship, the satisfaction and peace one experiences when in a steady relationship with one’s beloved and the dissatisfaction and no peace when there is an unsteady relationship with one’s beloved. Notably, “The Primrose of the Rock” is based on Wordsworth’s spiritual belief concerning death and renewal/rebirth. Poems such as “Koel” (1953: 81) and “Megha” (1953: 95) remind us of Wordsworth’s “To the Cuckoo”,

“To the Skylark”, and Shelley’s “The Cloud”. However, it is essential to note that Divatia has summarised Shelley’s “The Cloud” in its Gujarati translation “Megha”, but the translated poem uses different meters and rhyme schemes.

Apart from the translations, one can also find poems based on the theme of nature, written originally in Gujarati. For example, in the poem “Avataran” (1953: 1) (it literally means inverted commas, but here it highlights the descending of the stream of knowledge as Divatia requests Goddess *Saraswati*, in the first poem “Mangalacharan” (1953: 1), to provide him with a tiny drop of knowledge/wisdom from her vast stream of knowledge for writing poetry), Divatia justifies the title *Kusummala*, through the metaphor of a garland or a wreath. *Kusum* refers to a ‘flower’, and *mala* refers to a ‘garland.’ The speaker begins the poem by describing how he collected flowers (a metaphor for poems) from a forest and will now offer these flowers (poems) to the readers. In the second stanza, the speaker further states that the flowers are divine and have not withered but bloomed. With the wisdom and intelligence of the speaker, he will weave a garland (a metaphor for poetry anthology) out of the divine flowers (poems). In the third and the fourth stanzas, the speaker describes the different types of smells (strong, mild, etc.) and colours (bright, dim, etc.) of the divine flowers, referring to various kinds of poems with multiple nature-based themes in the anthology. In the fifth stanza, the metaphor of the garland is accentuated as the speaker states that he has collected the divine flowers throughout the different seasons of the year, and he will now weave a wreath for his readers. Therefore, in the last stanza, the speaker states that the garland (anthology) is full of different flowers collected throughout the year in different seasons. The flowers (poems) have different smells and colours. However, they have still been woven together as a single unit without any opposition. The metaphor hints at the different traditions of poetry, such as English, Sanskrit and Gujarati, knitted together like a garland in *Kusummala*, without any opposition. Therefore, *Kusummala* serves as a trope for interliterariness.

According to Lefevre, the final constraint in a literary system is language. The formal side of a language represents the use of

grammar and meters, among others, while the pragmatic side is associated with the culture. The formal side of language is relevant in *Kusummala* as it combines traditional and folk meters, rhythm, and classical Sanskrit meters to mediate the translation of British Romantic poets into Gujarati. “Mangalacharan” is composed in a classical Sanskrit meter – ‘*shardulvikridit*’, one of the longest meters in Sanskrit. It consists of 19 letters in one line. “Avtaran”, the following poem, is composed in the ‘*totaka*’ meter. It is a rhythm-based meter and has four feet containing twelve syllables each. Other Sanskrit meters, such as *shikharini* and *vasant-tilaka*, are also used in “Kartavya Ane Vilas” (Divatia 1953: 50) and “Unadana Ek Pahrodnu Smaran” (Divatia 1953: 67). Along with using Sanskrit classical meters, Divatia has used meters associated with the Prakrit language such as *rodavruta* in “Sahastralinga Tadavna Katha Uparthu Patan”, *chaupai* in “Asthir Ane Sthir Prem”, *visham harigeet* in “Madhyratnae Koyal” (Divatia 1953: 71), *dindi* in “Tahri Kanti, Prem Ane Aatma” (Divatia 1953: 60), *mahideep* in “Lagnasamayae Ek Kusumpatrani Bhet Mokalta” (Divatia 1953: 56). It is interesting to note that Divatia also uses traditional Gujarati meters that can be sung, such as *garbi* in “Nadikinare” (Divatia, 1953: 11) and *sitana mahinani chal* in “Saritsangam” (Divatia 1953: 16).

The pragmatic side of the language associated with the culture invokes the cultural history of Gujarat, focusing on the sub-national identity of Gujarat. The poem “Sahastralinga Tadavna Katha Uparthu Patan” (‘Patan from the banks of Sahastralinga lake’), the very first poem after “Mangalacharan” and “Avataran”, invokes medieval Gujarat for the ‘imagined Gujarati community.’ The speaker is standing at the banks of Sahastralinga Lake and contemplating the city of Patan, a town now erased from the memory of the ‘imagined Gujarati community’, as hinted in the poem’s first few lines. He points towards the Sahastralinga Lake and says that the lake lies there. Then, the speaker points towards Patan to highlight that the city lies there as if both Sahastralinga Lake and Patan are buried deep in their tombs. It is important to note that the Chalukya king, Siddharaja Jayasimha, built Sahastralinga Lake in the eleventh century, and his capital city was Anhilapataka, present-day Patan. In

the following lines, the speaker points to *Ran Ki Vav* ('The Queen's Stepwell'), commissioned by Udayamati, the wife of the Chalukya king Bhima I and says that the *haada* ('bones') of *Ran Ki Vav* are lying there, hinting towards the silting of the stepwell, as believed by many, because of the floods in the *Saraswati* river.

In the second stanza, the speaker directly addresses the 'imagined Gujarati community' through the words *Gujaratno Puta* ('the son of Gujarat'). The speaker poses a rhetorical question to the son of Gujarat, standing at the banks of the Sahastralinga Lake: can any son of Gujarat not have tears in his eyes after observing the structures mentioned above in ruins? He believes that the important rulers and monuments associated with the cultural identity of Gujarat have been erased from the collective memory of the 'imagined Gujarati community.' The third stanza also describes the now-extinct, ancient Saraswati River's uneven flow. The speaker describes how the Saraswati River flows through Patan. It is important to note that the Saraswati River is considered sacred and finds mention in the Rigveda. In this way, the poem refers to the cultural history of medieval Gujarat, a territorial space different from present-day Gujarat, and addresses the 'imagined Gujarati community'. It is important to note that Patan will remain the anchoring point in forming a Gujarati *Asmita* ('self-consciousness') during the twentieth century as well with Kanaiyala Munshi Patan trilogy - a set of three Gujarati historical novels, namely, *Patan Ni Prabhuta* (The Glory of Patan, 1916), *Gujarat No Nath* (The Lord and Master of Gujarat, 1917) and *Rajadhiraj* (The King of Kings, 1922). The Patan trilogy also invokes the cultural history of medieval Gujarat. Therefore, the pragmatic side of the language here serves as an anchor for invoking a sub-national Gujarati identity and reforming Gujarati literature through translation.

Conclusion

This paper traces the literary system that produced the Gujarati translation of British Romantic poetry, *Kusummala* (1887). As elaborated by Isaka, the English-educated Gujarati elites, in an attempt to reform the Gujarati language, moved towards the standardisation of the Gujarati language and tried to carve a distinct

Gujarati identity by making their strand of Gujarati the dominant one. Similarly, the second-generation English-educated Gujarati elites such as Narsinhrao Divatia translated the British Romantic poets from the canon of world literature into Gujarati in an attempt to enrich Gujarati literature and also carve a subnational Gujarati identity. However, many critics regard *Kusummala* as *nakal* or 'copy'. The study of *Kusummala* as an interliterary text has clearly highlighted internal genetic contact and structural-typological affinities. The arguments mentioned above in patronage, poetics, and language show that Divatia was not attempting a word-to-word translation of the British Romantic poets in *Kusummala*; instead, he was refracting the text in Gujarati as per the need of the receiving culture, that is, Gujarati literature and Gujarati literary system.

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