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## **Translators' Voices in the Paratext: A Comparative Analysis of Three Prefaces to the English Translations of Iqbal's *Shikwah* and *Jawab-e-Shikwah***

### **ABSTRACT**

This study analyses three translation prefaces to English Translations of Iqbal's *Shikwah* and *Jawab-e-Shikwah*. The study focuses on what information has been given by the translators regarding their translational strategies. Moreover, the study explains as to how far these prefaces are helpful to the readers in understanding the translational norms. In the context of Pakistan, research in the area of Translation Studies has been conventionally focused on the analysis of texts, including the source text(s) (ST) and the target text(s) (TT). However, little attention has been paid to the analysis of the prefaces. Given the paucity of research in this area, and keeping in view the significance of prefaces in making translators visible to the readers in terms of translational norms and strategies in translation, the present research is an attempt to bridge up this gap. In order to analyse these prefaces, Toury (1995) model of translational norms has been used. The study has shown that these prefaces function as paratexts which provides useful information to the reader regarding the choices and strategies used by the translators in their translations. Moreover, it also helps in comprehending the translators' awareness of the norms of translation. The study concludes with the understanding that translation prefaces foreground the translators' strategies used in the translations and they help the readers understand the translational norms. Therefore, they should be given due consideration in the analysis of any future research in the field of translation studies.

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## **Introduction**

It is generally understood that a translator is the link between the original text and the translation. As a matter of fact, the translator must be considered as a key figure in creating better comprehension between the two different cultures. And when it comes to the understanding of the translators' stance, prefaces may at best, offer a good starting point. Preface is the voice of translator and is a key to the translated text or even a window to the world of the translator. In its literal meaning, preface means "to say beforehand". Its content includes more personal account and opinion of translator. Prefaces fulfil the function of increasing ordinary readers' understanding of the translator's role and follow-on effects from that, such as, increasing cross cultural understanding. Therefore, a translator is required to "write a separate preface" to explain his treatment of the ST, his interpretation of any contentious key-terms. Thus, a translated work without a translator's preface must be considered obsolete and it must be regarded by the reviewer on the same strength as the work itself.

According to Venuti (1995) a translator should be visible to the reader and prefaces provide vital information about the books and about the authors of the books. In prefaces, translators try to explain as to how and why they decided to make translations. Moreover, it is through preface, they aim to express their personal voice, their knowledge and experience about the topic and their professional adeptness to address such a topic. Sometimes, it also happens that they acknowledge those who inspired their work. But it is important to note here that any translator must have the basic knowledge of translation norms.

## **Translation Norms**

According to Chesterman (1997) a translator must have a theory to translate or translate blindly. He is of the view that theory is of practical use and generally linked to accepted norms. So, it is necessary that the translator should have internal motivation for the work (translation) that he is going to do. This will provide the basic foundation on which the Source Text (ST) and the translation process stand. Moreover, since the translated work will not only be restricted to a single reader, but different readers with different responses. Therefore, the readership of the subsequent target text also should also be considered. The translator, at first, reads/understands the text closely, and on the basis of his understanding as well as intuitive

guesses, creates an imaginary reader. Moreover, his idiosyncratic understanding of the target text enables him to expect the possibilities of different evaluations by readers as well of the TL community competence as a whole.

Halverson (2001) argues that a translator should know the norms of accuracy, reliability, loyalty, acquisition of translation and translation equivalence. He holds that translation equivalence is the most puzzling concept, but is widely used in every day's translation work. The translator is a person with his own feelings, likes and dislikes, which will consequently impact the course of translation, but he should not go entirely out of range. He should be faithful both to the source text and the target audience. Moreover, not only the semantic content of the text is important, but equally valuable is its form and style. It is generally understood that a translation never achieves absolute equivalence with original fact, but the source language community, at large, should be taken into consideration while making translation. With these issues in mind, we have selected three prefaces written by different translators of Iqbal's **Shikwah and Jawab-e-Shikwah** for analysing as to how they reflect the voice of translators. The first preface is taken from the translation of A. J Arbury, the second preface is associated with the translation of Khushwanth Singh and the third one relates to the rendition of Sultan Zahoor Akhtar.

### Research Questions

1. What information have the translators given in the selected three prefaces?
2. How far are the three prefaces useful for the readers in understanding these translations?

### Literature Review

Generally speaking, no discipline can develop in true sense without an explicit theory of its own. Same goes for translation as research in this particular field is also subjected to rules, regulation, theories, strategies as well as methodologies for different types of texts, which provides the precise context for helping translational analysis, criticism and review (Newmark as cited in Ayaz, 2009, p. 7). It is possibly due to these reasons that translation is reckoned as a norm governed activity. As Toury (1995) argues that translation activities are not created in isolation, but sociologists and social psychologists have considered them as general values or norms, shared by a community. In other words, what is right and wrong, adequate or inadequate, prescribed or forbidden, is dependent on a certain

behavioural dimension. Basing his arguments on Geest's (1992) study, he states that this behavioural dimension is rooted in the famous 'square of normativity' (p.15). Translation is a norm governed activity, because it is constrained by certain rules and regulations which exist in the socio-cultural environment (Toury 1995, p. 15). Toury seems to concur with Hermans (1991, p. 162) who is of the view that norms always exist as a system and even non-compliance to them do not invalidate them, rather deviation from them would normally result in paying the price for such non-deviant kind of behaviour. Toury notes that translation is a kind of activity which inevitably involves two or more languages and cultures as well as two sets of norm-systems on each level.

The present study also deals with two famous Urdu poems, selected from the poetry of Allama Iqbal. The first poem is *Shikwa* (1909) which lauds the legacy of Islam and its role in history as civilizing humanity, but it laments the fortune of Muslims in the modern times. *Shikwa* arises from the anguish of the poet's heart complaining to Allah for letting the Muslims down, and *Jawab-e- Shikwah* is Allah's answer to the forceful voice of the poet. *Shikwah* which constitutes the first part of the two poems, was published in (1909). The publication of *Shikwah* gave rise to an uncertainty amongst Muslim scholars, mainly because they thought that the poet is being impolite, inconsiderate and unthankful to God for His blessings. But later on, when the second part i.e. *Jawab-e-Shikwa* (1913) was published, all confusions were removed and everyone admired him for his useful contribution to Urdu Poetry as well as to the Islamic literature. The focal point of the present work is the comparative study of the three English translations of the subject poems which were composed four years after Iqbal's return from Europe. About the poems, Arbury (1987, p. iii) argues that "they mark the beginning of that remarkable career as philosopher and poet which brought Iqbal ever-increasing renown, until long before his death in 1938...".

Zohar (1990) states that norms do not necessarily apply to the same or all segments in a society. Moreover, it is indeed less likely for a norm to be applicable across cultures and most importantly, 'sameness' is a mere coincidence, which may result from a continuous contact between entire cultural systems. Halverson (1997) is of the view that translation equivalence is very problematic concept from theoretical point of view, but he holds that it is still very much part of everyday translation work. He argues further that it is perhaps here that theory and practice meet – or have an uneasy clash. Moreover, he notes that a state of spontaneity and ad hoc decisions are not professional approaches, though at times, one can visualize it leading to the splendid TL rendering. According to Halverson (1997) refuting importance of faithfulness and loyalty in translation is trespassing the boundaries of translation studies. Similarly, Martin (2001) highlights the importance of

accuracy in translation in published translations. He states that accuracy is associated with representation of ST in conformation with the publisher's demand and the public expectations. Moreover, it has also to do with the mutual contract, signed between the publisher and the translator. Therefore, the rendition should be done with great care and without too much additions or omissions. Similarly, accuracy and reliability should always be considered significant in the act of translation. Martin (2001) argues that most of the professional translators adhere to the semantic aspect of the text, in addition to its form and style. This involves issues such as searching for expressions of the same frequency and register, and evading anachronisms and idiosyncrasies.

Martin (2001) supports the view of Levý (1967) who states that translators in general have to work with many limitations and the practice of translation has various loyalties involved on the part of the translators, including faithfulness to both the ST and its author. Moreover, it also involves the translator's loyalty to the target audience and target culture, as well as to the quality of the TL, and to the translator himself. He states that all of them are significant in the sense that being more loyal or less to readers, not necessarily means that there is a need to be more or less so to the author. In other words, getting all the strands together and producing a good work is the translator's utmost right and duty.

The researchers are of the view that translation in the present era may be a demanding job, as compared to the earlier times. But if the translator is aware of the various loyalties involved, he can be in a better position to translate. Finally, it is not surprising to refute that there is only one or a single correct translation, but it is to be accepted that not all probable ways of stating the same thing, are equally appropriate in each context. Restrictions posed by differing loyalties also help to reduce the number of alternatives, thus saving the translator from struggling in the sea of language. As Levý (1967, p.1172) says, "The choice is more limited ('easier'), if the number of possible alternatives is smaller, or if it is restricted by context."

### **The importance of analysis of Preface in the Context of Translation Studies**

The Significance of analysing paratextual elements have been discussed in several studies. These studies have particularly emphasised the role and function of the preface in a translated work. Kovala (1996) for instance studied the prefaces to the Finnish renditions of the Anglo-American literature from 1890-1939. His analysis concluded with the findings that

prefaces and other paratextual elements like titles, author's and translator's names reflect a religious conventional ideology.

Para-textual elements of the Turkish translations of English classics were also examined in another study carried out by Gurcaglar (2002). Both these studies are significant in the sense that they emphasised the importance of analysis of translation prefaces in the historical translation research. Another study which highlighted the significance of prefaces was carried out by Domine (2003) who, by examining the prefaces of British and American renditions of a Catalan novel, showed the role played by the prefaces in influencing the way in which the target text is received by the target audience.

Paloposki (2010), carried out her research on additional information given by the translators in the form of footnotes. She examined the function of the footnotes in Finnish translations between the years 1870-1929 from sociological point of view, focusing on the agency of the translator. She found that footnotes are "the one spot in the translation that is clearly the translator's own voice", and their study would be helpful for the later translators and translation researchers (2010, p. 87).

Buendia (2013) in her study on translator's notes found that in terms of their functions, paratextual elements are of two types: (1) those which contains information about the text (2) those which are concerned with the translator's opinions as well as his attitudes (Buendia, 2013, pp. 156-161). The analysis of notes in the form of preface has also been the area of interest with other scholars such as Dimitriu (2009) and Norberg (2012) who examined translators' prefaces to literary as well as non-literary translations. Dimitriu (2009) in his study of 65 prefaces to the different translations published in Romania found that the translator's prefaces perform three types of functions: (1) they are an explanatory, (2) they are normative/prescriptive, and (3) they have informative/descriptive function. Moreover, translators use the preface in order to explain their choice or strategies for certain inadequacies in rendering the text. Moreover, the prefaces also give an opportunity for the translators to communicate certain guidelines employed during the act of translation. Also, the translators use prefaces to inform the readers about the ST as well as its socio-cultural context. About the pragmatic aspects of the translators' remarks in the preface, both Norberg (2012) and Dimitriu (2009) are of the view that they provide the opportunity for the translator to write about the translation task, strengthen his/her position, in order to avoid the chance of being challenged or criticised by reviewers/ readers. But Norborg (2012) also notes that this point is a double-edged sword, as on one hand, it may enable the translator to prevent criticism by discussing his translation procedures and principles, and on the other hand, it exposes his translation strategies, which

may invite criticism from reviewers and others. The two studies also found that the translator's prefaces may also enable the translation researchers to infer the norms of translation, used by the translators which prevail at a certain time but they argue that it may only be possible with a large number of prefaces compared with their actual translation. Lastly they conclude that the analysis of prefaces may be useful for the translator trainees to adopt the guidelines provided in the preface.

## **Theoretical Framework**

We have used Toury (1995) model of 'the nature and role of norms in translation'. He argues that the translation phenomenon has explanatory power in text linguistics and contrastive textology and the translator's role cannot be confined merely to the creation of utterances. Translation activities have cultural importance and therefore, translatorship means the ability to perform a social role that a community gives to the activity, its practitioners and the products in an appropriate way (Toury, 1995, p.15). According to Toury (1995, p.53), in its socio-cultural aspect, translation can be subject to constraints or norms of several types and varying degrees. These constraints or norms extend beyond the range of the ST, as it encompasses the differences between the textual traditions of the two languages involved in the act of translation. Toury further argues that socio-cultural factors may also impact or even modify the translator's cognition. Therefore, translators, who are supposed to translate under different conditions usually apply different strategies, which consequently lead to remarkably different products.

## **Collection and Analysis of Data**

The researchers have selected three prefaces to the three English translations of Iqbal's Urdu Poems—Shikwah and Jawab-e-Shikwah. These poems were rendered by the two foreign translators i.e. by Khushwanth Singh in 1981 and AJ Arbury in 1987 and by one local translator Raja Sultan Zahoor Akhtar in 1998.

## **Methodology**

The researchers have used qualitative strategy in order to analyse the text of the three selected prefaces using Toury (1995) model of translation norms. Textual analysis of the three prefaces has been done in order to find out the views of the translators regarding their strategies in the translations through the mirror of translation norms. Moreover, explanation and interpretation has been done, keeping in view the translators' remarks and logics about

their choices, as mentioned in the prefaces to the three translations of Shikwah and Jawab-e-Shikwah.

## **Analysis**

### **Preface No 1**

The first analysis relates to the preface of A. J. Arbury. According to Britannica Encyclopaedia of Islam, he was a British orientalist. He was born at Portsmouth on May 12, 1905, he went to Cambridge University in 1924 where studied Persian and Arabic with R. A. Nicholson and other renowned scholars. According to his complete bibliography, he wrote as many as ninety books, and translated, or edited, the same number of scholarly articles and reviews. His writings also include edited texts of Arabic and Persian works, renditions of classical Persian and Arabic poetry. Moreover, he also wrote on Koranic studies, Islamic theology, philosophy and Sufism. He engaged himself with famous works on a variety of subjects like modern Islam, 'Omar Ḳayyām and Fitzgerald, British orientalism and most importantly, the English translation of Quran which superseded all his works. He also translated several of Iqbal's poems and Shikwah and Jawab-e Shikwah is one of those poem.

The very first requirement for any translator is to engage himself with the work which he is going to translate. In other words, the translator should be rightly motivated for the literary piece that he is going to translate. In this context, the translator, by acknowledging the significance of the poem states that ' The Shikwah and the Jawab-i-Shiwa, of which a new verse translation is offered in the following pages, are among the most popular Iqbal's poems, they are deservedly celebrated, for they were among the first to bring their fame as an advocate of Islamic reform and rebirth' ( Arbury,1987 p. iii). This statement highlights the importance and popularity of the poems in the mind of the speaker, in the sense that they revealed the poet as a supporter of Islamic revolution and revival. In the next few lines the translator adds that "they mark the beginning of ... Iqbal ever increasing renown", and until long before his death in 1938, he was recognised as the leading thinker of Islam in India and the greatest figure in Urdu literature" (Arbury, 1987 p. iii). Furthermore, translators generally inform the readers about the strategy of translation to be used by them. The above statement also makes it clear that the translation is going to be verse to verse translation and not verse to prose translation or of any other type.

Secondly, any work of serious literature like poetry, is not only the creation of the author's mind, but also the social and historical events that

contribute to the production of that specific work. By giving the evidence of his historical knowledge of the time in which the poems were written, the author comments, the date of their composition can be fixed very accurately by a reference to contemporary events contained in the second part of poem; when Iqbal wrote—“Now the onslaught of the Bulgars sounds the trumpet of alarm” he was remembering the invasion of Turkey by Bulgaria in the late autumn of 1912, an attack which threatened at one time to penetrate as far as Constantinople, the capital of Ottoman Empire and the last home of the Caliphate” (Arbury,1987 p. iii). From these lines, it becomes clear that the translator is aware of the developments of the socio-political events that were taking place, and the poet’s response to those events in the sense that “these poems were produced four years after his return from Europe” (Arbury,1987, p. iii).

Thirdly, to have a complete understanding of the author, it is necessary to have a sound knowledge of his other works, in addition to the one which is meant to be translated. In the present case, the translator seems to have a knowledge and awareness of the later works and specifically, his philosophy which became visible in the last phase of his poetic career. The translator writes: “It is all the more interesting to find him adumbrating in these early pieces that theory of Selfhood (Khudi) which later played such an important part in his religious and political philosophy” (iii-iv).

The next point relates to the comments of the translator about the poems, particularly about its theme. The translator is of the view, “The central theme of both poems is the decay of Islam from its former greatness, and the measures to be adopted if it was to re-establish its authority and regain its vitality” (Arbury,1987, p. iv). This shows the translator’s knowledge of key issue which became the starting point for the poet to write these two important poems. Moreover, the translator states that the subject was not unknown, but the way the poet handled the subject with, what he calls “arresting directness”, was something which no one did before him. Moreover, he also appreciates the other technical aspects of the poems such as the speaker which was the poet himself who is the “spokesman for Muslims.... and God”. Next is the form chosen for the presentation of the poem which “made an immediate and compelling appeal to Iqbal’s public, an appeal... which has lost nothing of its force in the intervening years” (Arbury, 1987 p. iv-v). These points become crucial for any translator, especially the one who is going to translate poetry.

1. The final part of the preface is about the act of translation. coupled with the translator’s remarks about the challenges involved in the practice of translation. Keeping in view the language of poetry, it is not an easy task to translate a poem into other language. The same

seems to apply to the present case as the translator writes: “To make a worthy translation of these poems into English is certainly no easy task” (Arbury, 1987 p. v). The translator further highlights his limitations, especially his confession of the insufficient knowledge of Urdu which was possibly not adequate enough to understand the deeper meaning of Iqbal’s poetry. The translator’s acknowledgment comes from his remarks, “To begin with, the present translator has to confess to a very inadequate knowledge of Urdu, the language used by Iqbal on this occasion”. However, he is thankful to the Publisher who helped him in procuring for him a literal translation into English prose. Another challenging task faced by a translator is his comprehension of the ST which is usually embedded in the source text’s culture, characterised by local idioms and metaphors, which could be familiar to those who are associated with the same language and culture, but not easily understandable to someone who is from other clime. In the present context too, the translator appears to be mindful of this issue as he notes “Iqbal naturally illustrated his discourse with metaphors and references familiar enough to those accustomed to read Urdu poetry, but in many instances, utterly strange, indeed outlandish, to an English audience.” In the concluding lines of the preface, the translator describes his overall strategy which he has used in rendering those poems. He claims, “Rather than impose on the poet transformations, of which he would certainly and justly have disapproved, the translator has preferred to reproduce his model as closely and as faithfully as he could...” ( Arbury, 1987, p.v). This shows that the translator has used the strategy of what Schleiermacher calls leaving the writer in peace and moving reader toward him (as cited in Kumar, 2008).

Moreover, the term ‘faithfully’ suggests that the translator’s strategy is focused on further explaining and interpreting those areas which the TT reader would not have been able to understand. In general sense, what the translators do is to provide footnotes for the purpose of adding more explanation to those areas which they think would not have been comprehensible merely through simple translation. This is what Arbury does as he has provided “appending notes” in order to highlight some of the passages wherever they are found (p.v).

#### **Preface 2**

Khushwant Singh was born in Hadali (now in Pakistan) on February 2, 1915. He contributed to the promotion of English writing in India and his writings demonstrate his sharp wit and humour and satirical tone. He also wrote

about serious issues like partition. He was a prolific writer and wrote on diverse topics. He was a commentator, a journalist who later became an information officer in Canada where he performed his duties as a press attaché and public officer for the High Commission in the UK and the Embassy in Ireland. Later on, he founded *Yojana*, the Planning Commission's journal and started his writing career with it. He worked as the editor of the now-defunct *Illustrated Weekly of India*, the *National Herald* and the *Hindustan Times* (*Hindustan times*, March 20, 2014). He wrote the history of the Sikhs, and non-fiction books on different topics and Urdu poetry and a number of translations including Iqbal's two famous poems i.e. *Shikwah* and *Jawab-e- Shikwah*.

The 'foreword' of his book *Shikwah and Jawab-e- Shikwah*, "Complaint and Answer, Iqbal's Dialogue with Allah" highlights the nature of Iqbal's poetry in these words: "Iqbal defies translation", and that his poetry, whether written in Urdu or Persian has "both historical and spiritual overtones" which could only be translated if the translator has the "proper knowledge of the Muslim heritage" (Singh, 1981, p. 7). The author of the 'foreword' (not the translator himself) further comments on the previous translations in which the first to come is Nicholson. About his translation of *Asra-e-Khudi*, the author writes that it was 'commendable because the translator was not only well versed in English, but he has got the prestige of being Iqbal's teacher. Similarly, he also acknowledges the merits of Kiernan's translation of Iqbal's early poems, but he strongly criticises Arbury's renderings of *Shikwah I* and *Jawab-e-Shikwah*. He adds that Arbury's translation was 'a disaster' because he 'did not know a word of Urdu' and the idea to 'undo the wrong' of Arbury appealed to Mr. Singh also notes that Khushwanth Singh had read these poems was aware of the 'appeal' that they had for Muslims(p.7).

In the initial lines of the 'Preface' to his translation, Khushwanth Singh acknowledges his limitations as he describes that he has 'no pretensions to being a scholar of Urdu or of Iqbal' (p.15), as he 'had almost forgotten the little Urdu' that he knew in the past till the time he began to relearn it during his appointment as the editor of *The Illustrated Weekly of In India* in 1969. These lines show that the first barrier which he overcame was the language. But the most important for trigger for any translator is motivation. In this context, the translator writes: "Amongst the many innovations I introduced in the journal was to provide Indian Muslims a forum to express their point of view on national problems" (p.15). As far Iqbal, he acknowledges the 'exquisite skill' with which he handled Urdu language as well as the way he made it a 'medium for expressing hopes and aspirations of Indian Muslims' at that time. This indicates that the translator not only appreciates the mastery of the poet in the language, but it also shows that the translator and

the poet were struggling for the same cause i.e. the representation of the Muslims of, the former in the capacity of an editor of the journal and the latter as a poet.

Coming specifically to Iqbal's poetry, the translator argues that it was a great source of motivation as the 'fiery music' of some of the 'lines of these poems rekindled his dead love for the language and also kept his flame of his interest 'alive' (Singh, 1981, p. 15). Moreover, he is all praise for Iqbal as the translation of was actually the result of paying his gratitude to the poet for offering him, what he calls, 'the priceless gems of the Urdu language' (p.15). This clearly reveals the translator's high level of motivation, not only about the theme of the two poems which he translated, but also their language which was interesting in every sense.

The next point which is discussed is the untranslatability of good poetry into another language especially when the two languages are strange such as 'translating verse into a European language'. He continues further that it is not uncommon that a language has 'words and concepts' which may have no counterparts in other languages. This issue becomes even more challenging in case of Oriental poets who invest words 'with meaning not recorded in dictionaries (p.15). These remarks on the part of the translator reflect his understanding of the intricacies involved in rendering poetry. The translator supports his argument by giving a few solid examples which needs to be discussed. The first example he gives is that of the word joban which is commonly used in Urdu-Hindi poetry and its closest equivalent which English language offers is 'youthfulness', but actually the word specifically refers to the 'youthfulness of a young girl with burgeoning bosoms' (Singh, 1981, p.15). Similarly, he gives the example of the word angdaee apparently means the 'stretching of limbs', but, in Hindi-Urdu poetry, the action of stretching of limbs is associated with 'a distinctly amorous gesture'. This gives a clear picture of the translator's knowledge of the deeper understanding of how particular words are used in the linguistic and cultural environment where they acquire a certain meaning which is understandable to those who are part and parcel of that language and culture.

The translator then mentions a few examples of those words which do not intrinsically Urdu language, but have been borrowed from some other languages such as Persian and Arabic and are 'liberally used by the poets'. What the translators do is to focus on the 'institutionalised concepts', but they ignore the extended function of those words which they acquire in actual usage. The list includes words like zahdi ( derived from zuhd, pure for a religious mentor), vaiz (from vaz, admonishment, for a preacher), naseh, (adviser) and qasid (message bearer, for one who acts as a go-between lovers). Another significant example, which is abundantly used in Urdu poetry is the saqi (wine-server). A saqi who can be either male or female, is

often the sweetheart in both heterosexual sense. Likewise, the word bulbul which 'in real life only emits an unmusical chirp and shows no preference in its choice of flowers is made into a nightingale in order to endow it with a melodious voice and also assumed to address its love-lorn lament to the unresponsive rose'. Besides bulbul and 'rose' example, the word parvana gets the attention of most of Urdu poets as it is associated with its intense love and passion for the flame (shamma) due to which it 'happily immolates itself in the fire' ( p.16). These examples show that the translator has a comprehensive knowledge of not only the etymological aspects of the prominent words, but he has also got the awareness of how the writers (poets) assign them meaning. This meaning can only be understood by a translator if he knows the pragmatic or contextualised use of words of language, in addition to the dictionary meaning.

Before coming to concluding lines of his preface, the translator focuses on the theme of the poems which according to him was 'Islam'. He states that since 'Islam' was the 'dominant theme' in much of Iqbal's poetry, therefore, it is natural that his poetry is laden with 'allusions' to the life of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.), His companions, the Caliphs and Islamic history'(p.16). He further states that the translator cannot do justice if he is content with the simple translation without adding more explanation in the form of footnotes. This point is significant in the sense that the translator actually has actually added footnotes to some of the expressions which he deems necessary for the understanding of the readers.

Finally, he shares his feelings with the readers as to how he got motivated before he started the translation of these poems. According to him, his interest was aroused when he heard his friend reciting some of the passages from the poem to his children. And the more he listened to those passages, the more he felt 'inadequate' in his capacity to render them in English (Singh, 1981p.16). Perhaps the most significant about any literary piece of work is that when it is translated by different translators with their own logics behind their translations. This also holds true to the present work as the same was rendered by several translators. As far Khushwanth Singh, he was the third to translate these poems after AJ Arbury and Altaf Hussain. About the former, he argues that he 'had failed to capture the musical resonance of Iqbal's words'. As far Altaf Hussain, he claims that he 'had taken more liberties with the original than is legitimate for a translator' (Singh, 1981, p. 17). These lines not only show the translator's comments on the renditions of the previous translators coupled with his awareness of the translation norms, but also implicitly indicates that he is going to bridge up those gaps. Lastly, the best part of any translator is not to make big claims about his own work and to acknowledge his own limitations. For Khushwanth Singh, the major shortcoming was his lack of sufficient

knowledge of vocabulary of Urdu language for which he had to consult dictionaries and also to consult those whom he knew to have the knowledge of Urdu. This process continued for more than a year 'at dinner and cocktail parties, casual meetings and even on the tennis court as much as in seclusions of his study that he worked on the subject translation (p.17).

### **Preface 3**

Unlike the previous translations, this translation by Sultan Zahoor Akhtar has two prefaces: the first contains the information about the translator himself, including 'his childhood', his father who was a close friend of Allama Iqbal and how this relationship paved the way to become the translator of Iqbal and to "imbibe the ideas and message of Iqbal's poetry" (Akhtar, 1998, p.1). Sultan Zahoor Akhtar continued his studies under the able guidance of his father who inculcated in him a sense of the sacred, love for this religion and for his homeland (p.1). These qualities became the chief source for his interest in literary activities throughout his professional career. The author of the preface is of the view that the translator 'has written in Urdu, Punjabi, Potohari and English'ha but Iqbals' poetry has been a matter of great interest for him (p.1). Moreover, the author of the preface acknowledges that there 'have many translations of Iqbal' (Akhtar, 1998, p. 1 ), but Zahoor's translation is unique in the sense that it 'provides a transliteration of the Urdu text as well which caters to the needs of large readership, living in the west, who are no longer able to read the Urdu text.

The next preface is titled as 'Translator's Preface' in which the translator discusses at length, the personality of Iqbal as a 'poet, thinker and philosopher of Islam'. The translator writes that he is the 'originator', and staunch supporter of 'the ideology of Pakistan. He argues further that Iqbals' poetry initiated with 'romance' which afterwards developed into 'Indian Nationalism and then through study and immense love for the Prophet of Islam, was Islamicised'. At the final stage, his revolutionary ideas turned into 'Pan-Islamism' (p.vii). In the next lines, he discusses the constructive thinking, revolutionary spirit, futuristic perspective and universal elements present in the poetry of Iqbal.

The translator then proceeds to give a detailed information about his family's connections with Iqbal which finally culminates into the poet's death. As for the translator himself, he states that he was named by Allama Iqbal. Moreover, he informs the reader that he 'remembers Iqbal to be a very kind and considerate person full of love and feeling for the children and the youth of Islam' which he called 'Javid, Shaheen and Falcons in his works (ix).

Coming towards his own experience he says that he has been the member of Markazia Majlis-ilqbal and at present (i.e. 1996, the time the

preface was written) the President of Majlis-i-Tehri-Pakistan, Islamabad and Rawalpindi Divisions. Moving on to the reasons behind translating these poem, he states that he had “attended several conferences and seminars abroad due to association with Iqbal and Pakistan” and at times, he was asked to preside over Iqbal days. Therefore, ‘a reference to Iqbal’s poetry’ became essential to recite. When the ‘younger generation of Pakistanis, born and living outside the country, complained that they could easily understand the ‘Urdu poetry of the masters’ like Iqbal, but were not able to read in Urdu Script, expressed their desire that ‘if someone could transliterate Iqbal’s and other master’s poetry and works, so that it could be beneficial to them (xi). These lines suggest that the one of the reasons for translating these pomes was to make the Urdu text understandable through transliteration in Roman Urdu which according to the author was the ‘first venture’ as nobody before him had done that.

Before embarking upon the project of translating these poems, the translator expresses his views about the three translations that were already done by Mr. Altaf Hussain in 1943, by Arbury in 1955 and by Khushwanth Singh in 1981. Now the question arises that what were the other reasons for translating these poems for the fourth time? The translator tries to address this question in the next few lines. He argues that he has ‘read all the three versions with devotion’ and he found the ‘style’ of the three translators ‘different from one another.

While acknowledging that all the three translators were ‘learned personalities with sentiments’ and they have done a ‘salient job’ for which he does not consider himself ‘qualified to comment’. He argues (p. xii) further that his own style is Char Harfi or Rubā’i which is ‘more expository’. Secondly, he notes that the ‘idiom’ used by the previous translators ‘is not Urdu as a result of which ‘at many places the spirit and words of expressions of the verse in their noble thinking appears to be lacking. He points out:

I can humbly point out about them that their idiom is not Urdu. Mr Altaf Hussain is a Bengali, Mr. AJ. Arbury is a British, Mr. Khushwanth Singh is a Hindi. All these noted souls might have read Urdu but have limited erudition in it. In fact, during their noted work, they must have taken help of someone who converted Iqbal’s verses of Urdu into their dialect before they could translate it. (p. xii)

These lines suggest that the translator knows the importance of being indigenous as those who rendered these poems were from different languages and cultures and these factors also impact their practice of translation. Moreover, the translator points out that he has ‘an edge on all of these learned dignitaries because of, naming by Iqbal, education, age, consistent study, knowledge’ (p. xii) and also some other fact which are as under: -

- a. Being 'a Pakistani' and with Urdu as his 'national language'
- b. As a 'youngster, he 'heard verses of Iqbal, their necessity and meanings' from his father.
- c. He 'had read Shikwah and Jawab-i-Shikwah, many times at home' which enabled him to understand 'the spirit and the emotion in these verses
- d. He was well versed with Urdu language being educated at Muslim University, Aligarh and thus he knew 'the message of this language'.
- e. He had an 'immense study of Urdu and English poetry of the mavens' and 'had also have written in both... (x.iii)'

### **Conclusion**

This study was concerned with the analysis of three prefaces to the English translations of Iqbal's Shikwah Jawab-e-Shikwah. The investigation of the data has shown that the three prefaces appear as metatexts, with different titles and in varying lengths. As for the content, they offered the translators, the opportunity to express their gratitude to the poet as well as his poetry, to provide information regarding their own work as translators, to give particular details about their knowledge of the source text (ST) and the difficulties they faced in translating these poems. Moreover, the translators acknowledged and expressed their thankfulness to certain individuals who helped them in the successful completion of their important tasks. The study shows that the prefaces are informative and explanatory as they contain the information about the key terms of the Urdu poetry in general and about the themes of the poems in particular. Likewise, they also provided the translators' personal account and opinions about their translations. This vital information in turn, increases the ordinary readers' critical understanding of the translation process.

In exploring these prefaces, the study has found that the study and analysis of the paratexts may be useful to translator trainees, especially in terms of the knowledge regarding the inadequacies, the challenges faced by the translators and their choices or strategies that they make during the act of translation. Finally, the study concludes that translation prefaces make the translator visible in front of the reader and, therefore, a close analysis of a translation preface generally proves to be a very helpful tool for the translation analyst in making intelligent guesses about the translations that will follow. We concur with Dimitriu (2009, p. 204) who argues that "the investigation of prefaces as a document placed between abstract theory and the actual practice of translation, should find a higher place up on both the scholar's and the practitioner's agenda".

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