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Periodical Kumar and Translation

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ABSTRACT:

History has many dark spots which need exploration. The translation is one such way of exploring history in an alternative fashion, especially in a country like India where different cultures amalgamate together. Since time immemorial, translation has been one of the strongest mediums to transmit ideas and traditions from one culture to another. Translations of ancient scripture have bestowed the modern generation with wisdom. It brought about the diversities in our social and cultural traditions in times of colonization. The involvement of multiple cultures and languages makes historiography of translation a complex endeavor. However, such rigorous and meticulous effort can help us understand in what fashion the translation was carried out, how it influenced the society, people, and culture around it, and how important it was as an activity itself during the specific period of time in India.

The periodicals of the 20th-century also carried the information of the contemporary social, political events to the readers and wrote around those events like the periodicals of any other time. The non-cooperation movement started by Gandhi on his arrival from Africa in 1915 has been discussed in detail in the periodicals of those times. Being one of the prominent mediums of knowledge and awareness, and one of a few too -unlike today's time among people, the periodicals also mentions the scientific discoveries in the West, they made people aware of industrialisation in European countries. They played the trumpet of Nation Building which prevailed prominently among the people of that time. The editors like Munshi and Ramnaran Pathak even went to jail due to their involvement in the national independence movement. Thus, the periodicals sometimes directly or indirectly carried the voice of the love for the nation to their readers. The ideas that nurtured the notion of national independence got reflected in different magazines in different forms. At some periodicals, they were voiced



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through the stories of Gandhi; in some, they were advocated by short novels or series of articles. However, as noted by Dr Kishor Vyas in his research thesis, these periodicals continue to keep up their literary tradition. They do not just become the mere carriers of the independence movement and rarely have commented or reflected critically on the Gandhian philosophy for the independence movement.

There are two types of translations observed in the periodicals of the 20th Century Gujarati periodicals, translations from regional languages into Gujarati such as Bengali, Hindi, Marathi and many more translations from English into Gujarati. However, some translations from other foreign languages have also been found, like German and Japanese and the translations from Sanskrit have also been found in these periodicals. The translations from the English language were primarily short stories, poems and informative articles. There was a period where there was hardly a periodical that got published without any translation. For instance, A Gujarati writer Kanaiyalal Munshi even advised the translators to publish translations righteously rather than translate them from another language and then climb a write-up as one's creation. This tells us that such practices may have prevailed among the 20th Century Gujarati writers. However, it can not be generalised for all. Munshi also suggested that the upcoming translators use their wisdom to bring meaning and quality to the translators to the works they translate from English. He states the example of Osmania University and urges the writers and translators not to waste their money in unworthy translations. However, we have only thin ideas of what he considers worthy in terms of translations and their publications in periodicals as well as in other publishing mediums.

The magazine *Vismi Sadi* was one of the prominent magazines of the time, and it was started by the writer and editor Haji Muhhamad Alharakhiya Shivji in 1916. The founder of *Kumar*,



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Ravishankar Raval, used to help Haji Muhhamad Alarakhiya Shivji in his work for the magazine. In 1944 with the demise of Haji Muhhamad Alharakhiya, the magazine was discontinued. This became a noteworthy incident for Kumar to rise. With the magazine's discontinuation, '*Visami Sadi*' Ravishankar Raval felt that some such periodicals must continue to spread wisdom to the people. This idea led him to start a periodical named *Kumar*.

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any other periodical of the time. Thus, the periodical made a distinct contribution to the development of the people of the given time period. Kumar used to get published every month with the volume of 40 pages. The development of the youth, who are the future citizens of the nation, is one of the greatest motivations behind the foundation and the development of the magazine. The magazine believed that the act itself is towards the welfare of the society in a larger frame. It further continued to fulfill its very purpose behind its foundation by instilling values, art, knowledge, inspiration, wisdom, and respect towards the society and character building among its readers. The editor of periodical 'Sahitya' notes that if it were for Ravishankar Raval, who was the founder and chief editor of Kumar magazine, he would make every youth of India a Mahatma Gandhi, Arvind Ghosh, Ravindranath Tagor, Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose, Professor Ramamurthy or a combination of all in mere ten years.

It is apparent that the editors have tried to give something new to the readers in every issue. There were few specific columns which were dedicated to specific things for instance in the column 'Mijlas' was the very strong platform to have dialogue with the readers, whereas column 'Madhukari' is dedicated to the inspiring and wise articles that motivate readers to learn from the great and successful people on every scale and field, the column 'Pucho Tantrine' was filled with fun facts and very short informative write ups, it also had the tradition of questions to the readers followed by the correct answer in the following issues. Apart from these regular columns Kumar published articles on a variety of subjects like geography, history, archaeology, science, astronomy, entomology, physiology, ornithology, botany, zoology, painting, music, dance, sculpting, photography, printing, sports, medicine, nutritional science, study of ancient scriptures, research and innovation and so on and so forth. Kumar not only displayed the diversity in its content but also had the equal variety of



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literary forms such as poems, short stories, plays, dramas, essays, biographical articles, puzzles, letters, caricatures and many more. However, all of these were published in simple and easy to understand language, Kumar always filled with alagoricalwords and pompous and lengthy sentences. Kumar has only welcomed the articles which are short but written in easy language and are genuine and direct with balanced and clear ideas, the ideas which reflect a specific wisdom and has given no place to the boiling or unsettling articles. Kumar took care to publish useful articles such as articles that gave information about less known inventions that had direct, immediate and profound impact on the life of people, the things they can relate with their everyday life like vitamins, camera, stove and to name a few; the informative things that widens the reader's perspective about the world around like the descriptions of birds which are not found in the local region, biographical articles about scientists, social workers, athletes; information about freedom fighters and their spirit for sacrifice and devotion to the motherland which helped a great deal in the intellectual and emotional development of the reader.

Almost all the prominent writers of the time have contributed some or other things to the kumar magazine some of these names are Dhumketu, Kaka Saheb Kaleljar, Nanhalal, Mahadevbhai, Navalram Trivedi, Botadkar, Tribhuvan Vyas, Thakor, Nanhabhai Bhatt, Umashankar Joshi, Sundaram, Mansukhlal Zaveri, Betai, Prahlad Parekh, Bal Mukund, Venibhai, Vijay Gupt Morya, Harinarayan Acharya, Ashok harsh, Kishansinh Chavda, Swami Anand and to name a few. The poem published in Kumar was enough to entitle its creator as a poet, so the writers wished to get a place in the pages of Kumar, on the other hand, Kumar's tradition of the detailed and critical analysis of every poem and article encouraged quality of work among the writers who were aspirant to publish their works in



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kumar. Apart from these famous writers, there were new writers who also found their place in Kumar. It is noteworthy that the writer Sri Dharani became poet at the young age of 13 years due to the publication of his poems in Kumar. The writer Rajendra Shah's first poem named '*Holi-Dhuleti*' was first published in the Kumar magazin under its very famous column named '*Budh Sabha*' which was started in the year 1937. The poet Venibhai Purohit who is a renowned poet now, his poems named '*Purano Divadao*' and '*Gandhi Bhavna*' were first published in kumar magazine. Umashankar's first poem was also published in one of the issues of Kumar in the year 1939. Kumar not only provided a tangible platform to the new writers and poets but also provided a platform to new forms of Gujarati literature which indirectly helped in shaping the literature in general in the regional language. In the late 19th century, magazines like Kumar reflected the novice approach to art and literature in their contemporary issues. New forms of poems were especially in trend and Kumar published such poems in abundance. Kumar contributed notably in the development of short stories as literary forms in Gujati language. Renowned poet Sundaram at one instance notes that Kumar is the only magazin which helped gradually evolve the form of essay in Gjarati literature through the publications of essays in the magazine. These essays were written for the teenage readers of Kumar which had the touch of literary imagination. This very act not only contributed to the development of for but also helped many writers achieve a prestigious place as an established writer in the world of Gujarati literature. Many famous writers wrote the series of articles in kumar which later got published in the form of book, some of such serieses are '*Jivannu Parodh*' by Prabhudas Gandhi, '*Smaran Yana*' by Kaka Saheb Kalelkar which was based on his childhood memories. Ravishanka Raval also started a series named '*Jivan Patna Smruti Chitro*' in Kumar magazine.



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Kumar magazine was enriched not only with quality dense articles, poems, essays and letters but it was augmented with photographs and paintings that had plenty of stories to tell their readers. There were articles in Kumar that enlightened their writers about the nuances of paintings and photographs, instruments of photography and many more. There were articles specifically dedicated to the art of photography, for instance the series 'Modern Review' not only introduces the readers with the beautiful pictures and photographs to the readers but educates its reader to the art of photography and painting in direct or indirect manner. One of the objectives of such articles in the magazine was to preserve the art of photography and paintings. This very act is also an effort by the magazine to promote the art itself which in turn creates the rich legacy of culture to the generations to come. Many famous and finest artists such as Ravishankar Raval, Pramod Chattopadhyay, Kanu Desai, Romalal Shah, Chaganlal Jadav, Avanindnath Thakur, Krushnlal Bhatt, Chandravadn Bhatt, Deviprasad Rai Chaudhari enriched the world of the readers of Kumar through their art. Ravishankar Raval always wished the literature of Gujarat to be pistorius like those of England, Europe and America. Ravishankar Raval, who was the editor and the Kumar magazine, wished that the youth of India must be introduced with the Indian as well as European arts and literature. Not only this, but he firmly believes that the fine arts are very important in one's integral development. He also wanted the people of every class to be interested in arts and for that he made sincere efforts. In Kumar's special Dipotsavi issue, we can find various pictorial arts related articles and pictures such as mono coloured pictures, multi coloured pictures, two coloured pictures, photos of wood carvings and cutting, paintings of water colours and oil paints, silhouette and to name a few.



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The pictures at the cover page of Kumar were also meaningful and suggestives of the message which was the driving force for kumar, for example in one of the cover pages of Kumar there's a man with a horse which looks like a kamel. The picture depicts that the teenagre's age is unripe and the heart is tender and his temperament is full of aspiration. The bright bridled jumping horse suggests the bubbling and passionate youngster, but the man holding the bridle suggests the patience and wisdom that guides the man to take the righteous path. The spear in man's hand suggests strength. The man holding the bridle in the picture is Kumar, who guides the passionate youngsters with wisdom and the spear is the strength to hit the aim which is here, to guide the youth of the nation which is tomorrow's citizens.

Kumar stood out from the other contemporary magazines of the time such as 'Navjivan', 'Sadi', 'Navchetan', 'Kaumudi', 'Gujarat', 'Mansi', and many more. Because periodical kumar is not for mere entertainment, it is for the development of the youth. Efforts of Ravishankar Raval who became full time editor for kumar in 1943 and Bachubhai to guide the young generation of promising tomorrow in the form of periodical has shaped the future of many people who became free from false educational pride and rigid dependence of medieval age. It drew the map of the development in painting and photography art in India. The special issues of Kumar are filled with the abundance of quality art and literature.

Kumar also started the tradition of honouring the writers in the form of 'Kumar Chandrak'. The award was given every year for the best literature published during the year. The ward 'Kumar Chandrak' gained huge popularity at that time. Some of the writers who received tjis honour were Rajendra Shah, Bhal Mukund, Ushnash, Niranjana, Priyakant, Labhshankar, Ramesh, Bakul Tripathi and to name a few.



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The initial years of 'Kumar' are marked by translations of various forms and from wide sources. Before we discuss translations published in 'Kumar' it is important to discuss the people behind the magazine. Ravishankar Raval and Bachubhai Raval were two visionaries who founded 'Kumar', nurtured it to enrich the upcoming generations with knowledge, social values, and flavors of arts. Ravishankar Raval founded 'Kumar' and Bachubhai helped him in his editorial tasks but later on, after the death of Ravishankar Raval, he took the responsibility of 'Kumar' and shouldered it single-handedly for quite a long time. Many literary articles and their content got a place in 'Kumar' under the careful and consistent efforts of Bachubhai. He always read every article sent to 'Kumar' and never published anything which he himself could not understand. In one of the articles written posthumously about Bachubhai Raval, Dhirubhai Parikh writes that Bachubhai used to say that if some reader is not able to make sense of something published in 'Kumar', and writes back to us, I should be able to explain it to him as it is published in 'Kumar' under my editorials. Thus, his sense of ownership and responsibility towards everything published in 'Kumar' leads us to believe that most of the content published in 'Kumar' was greatly influenced by the editors of 'Kumar', be it poems, articles, information, or translations.

Translations from various languages into Gujarati in 'Kumar' were deeply rooted with the view to aspire the youth to familiarize themselves with the arts, literature, science, and culture across the globe as Bachubhai himself had read pictorial magazines published in the English language which contributed to his own development. During his period of formation, he read plenty of English literature and magazines which helped him gain the knowledge equivalent to university education. education in the field of arts and literature, and thus 'Kumar' under his editorial ship became one such medium for its readers as envisaged by its



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founders. In the formative years of his job as a teacher in a college in Gondal, he came in contact with English people and aesthetics of English literature which later paved the path of translations of English into Gujarati through the platform of 'Kumar'. During his job as an educator in 'Sangramsinhji College', Gondal, he came in contact with Garden Superintendent Mr. Meerut, who was a regular reader of an English literary periodical 'The Bookman' (London). The periodical with the same name used to get published from New York which was a literary journal 'The Bookman' founded by Frank Howard Dodd in 1895. However, the magazine that cultivated Bachubhai's interest in English literature was the monthly magazine 'The Bookman' (London) which was published in London and was edited by William Robertson Nicoll, Arthur St. John Adcock, and Hugh Ross Williamson. In his article, which was published in 'Kumar' after Bachubhai Raval's departure from this world and the world of 'Kumar' Dhitubhai Parikh notes that he was quite impressed with the editor St. John Adcock and used to read him till late at night. St. John Adcock was becoming popular as a poet at that time and thus the reading of his works and the pictorial information of published books and novice writers published in 'The Bookman' ignited the spark of literary aesthetic in Bachubhai which later sculpted 'Kumar' in a specific way and continued to do so for several decades.

Later when he came to Ahmedabad, he became the reader of 'John o' London's Weekly', which published the interviews with the contemporary writers, the questions and answers between readers and editors. He was fond of the column 'Letters to Gog and Magog' in 'John o' London's Weekly'. He also appreciated light essays by Robert Lynd which used to get published in the middle pages of the magazine. Later when he became the editor of 'Kumar' the indirect influence of his readings of this magazine found its reflection in the



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column and content of 'Kumar'. These were the indirect guiding spirits to him. He has observed writing replies to the letters of readers as an editor in his editorial office till late at night. Apart from these, there were two major influences that cultivated the sense of poetry appreciation. As Dhirubhai Parikh writes, 'Literary Digest' was popular at that time which used to have a column named 'Current Poetry' where the poems of Edward Estlin Cummings will occupy one full page, Bachubhai's love for poems developed by the readings of these poems which was further fluttered by the reading of the magazine 'Poetry Review' which was subscribed by Deshalji Parmar. Another factor that nurtured his love for poetry appreciation was the magazine 'Poetry', published in Chicago and founded by Harriet Monroe. After the second world war, the British magazine 'The Athenaeum' received the zest of the new renaissance literature by the new writers, Bachubhai regularly read and kept himself updated with the old and new trends of English literature especially, poetry. All of these were the ideals of Bhachubhai, the editor of 'Kumar', and thus guided him in a particular way. So, since the inception of 'Kumar', the editors were themselves aware of the old and new literary trends in literature worldwide, especially, English literature and they were excited to introduce their readers with the same which in turn became a powerful reason for translations that published in 'Kumar'.



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