

**PLANNING THE ENGLISH RENDERING OF *RAKTA TIRTHA ERAM* (ODIA, 1986)  
BY DR. JAGANNATH PATNAIK**

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**Context:**

This study intends to pursue the English rendering of *Rakta Tirtha Eram* by Dr. Jagannath Patanaik. This Odia critique on history by Dr. Patnaik describes the most ghastly massacre that took place at Eram in the Balasore district which is a memorable event in the history of India's Freedom Struggle and it can be fittingly called the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy in Odisha where 28 persons were killed and 56 persons were injured. It is true that nowhere in India so many people were killed in a single police action during the Quit India Movement for which *Eram* has been named as *Rakta Tirtha* by Prof. Patnaik.

Some valued Odia writings have not been able to receive global attention as they have not been translated into English. *Rakta Tirtha Eram* is one of them. Outlining the importance of this rare Odia aide-memoire, Prof. Amiya Kumar Pattanayak, former Vice-Chancellor, Utkal University of Culture, observes that "Prof. Patnaik's strenuous efforts in bringing the truth to limelight and to project it as an all India incident would have been amply rewarded had it been written in English for the readers outside Odisha. Nevertheless the book has provided the scope for others to follow the line and a number of books have been written in English basing on this well-researched writing. Prof. Patnaik had his own valid reasons in writing the book in Odiya and in giving it a catchy title, unlike a standard research-oriented title" (Pattanayak et al. 174-175). However the book has bagged Odisha Sahitya Academy Award for its academic brilliance.

Though labelled as a book on history, the literary value of the book is unmistakable- a fact for which it was awarded by Odisha Sahitya Akademi in 1986 under the category of 'Essay – Criticism'. According to Prof. Chittaranjan Mishra, "The author Professor Jagannath Patnaik has been known widely. His scholarship in language flair for writing history with equal ease, when combined with his long years of experience, equip him to be best suited for a work of this nature. To a casual reader the book provides entertainment, to a serious reader it is imbibed on purpose to a life beyond life, while to a researcher it provides useful material" (Mishra et al. 180-181).

Translation study as an academic research area has expanded massively in recent years. It was formerly studied as a language-learning. But over time the interdisciplinarity of the subject has become more evident and recent developments have seen increased specialization and the continued importation of theories and models from other disciplines. The theories of translation almost unanimously agree that the quality of a good translation is to be judged by the proximity of its receivers and message in its effect with that of the receivers and message of the original text. On the issue of ideal translation which is based on the principle of equivalent effect, Susan

Bassnett writes that “the relationship between the receiver and the message should aim at being the same as that between the original receivers and the SL message” (Bassnett 36).

### **Rationale of Translating *Rakta Tirtha Eram*:**

The book *Rakta Tirtha Eram* by Prof. Patnaik is an important contribution by the scholar. The book is written in Odia. Apart from being written in a popular reading form, it is well documented. In line with serious research work it has footnotes to corroborate events and appendices with copies of original documents. The work is based on British records, enquiry commission reports, confidential letters, reports of the officers, newspaper writings and above all on personal interviews with a number of freedom fighters, affected persons and government officials who were alive by the time the book was brought out. The approach has been totally unbiased and free from glorification. He has also given a review of literature in the preface. Hence, by all standards it is a serious research work, which has been highly praised by eminent scholars and historians like Dr. Harekrushna Mahatab and Professor Manmath Nath Das.

The book presents facts in simple spirited prose. It appeals to the readers for its lucid and scholarly presentation. Its readability has been widely acknowledged. Apart from its subject matter, the book is remarkable for its style and atmosphere it evokes. Every line of the book has the tinge of sincerity. Therefore, the rendering of the book in English will serve a larger audience in general and the researchers of history in particular.

### **Assessment of Current Studies (Review of Literature):**

“Literature reviews are designed to do two things: 1) give your readers an overview of sources you have explored while researching a particular topic or idea and 2) demonstrate how your research fits into the larger field of study” (Driscoll. purdue.edu).

The literature related to translation of Odia works has been reviewed herewith in order to explore the studies carried out by various researchers in the field of translation from Odia to English. A considerable amount of translation of iconic Odia novels has been done in the recent years. The major writers whose works have been translated into English are Fakir Mohan Senapati, Gopinath Mohanty, Surendra Mohanty, Pratibha Roy and Manoj Das.

*Chhaman Athaguntha* was translated into English by C. V. N. Das in 1967. It was an early translation of the book titled *The Stubble under the Cloven Hoof*. The translated version was an imaginary recast of the original. Another translation of the book was published by the Penguin India in 2006. However, the latest translation of the book is *Six Acres and a Third* by Rabi Sankar Mishra, Satya P. Mohanty, Jatindra K. Nayak and Paul St-Pierre in 2005.

Four of Gopinath Mohanty’s novels *Paraja*, *Danapani*, *Laya Bilaya* and *Dadi Budha* have also been translated into English. The major novels and the stories of Pratibha Roy have been translated into English. *Yajnaseni* was translated by Pradeep Bhattacharya in 1995. Roy’s *Adi Bhumi* is translated as *Primal Land* in 2000 while her *Moksh* was translated as *Salvation and Other Stories* and published in the same year.

*Yantrarudha* by Chandrasekhar Ratha was translated by Jatindra K. Nayak in 2003. Its English title was *Astride the Wheel*. Manoj Das’s stories and novels have been widely translated into English. This review of literature shows a research gap of translation of an Odia critique like *Rakta Tirtha Eram*.

All these literary translations provide a larger readability of a particular novel, but the National Translation Mission (2008) has a different approach. It has an initiative to make knowledge-based texts accessible in all major Indian languages listed in the VIII schedule of the

Constitution, through translation and therefore, to increase access to knowledge in many critical areas. From this perspective, translating *Rakta Tirtha Eram* by Prof. Patnaik would be effective for many non-Odia readers to access the knowledge of historical descriptions.

### **Objective of the Study:**

The objectives of this work are:

1. to make a detailed study of the issues relating to existing translation practices in our time;
2. to describe the reasons behind taking up this particular work, i.e. *Rakta Tirtha Eram* by Dr. Jagannath Patnaik for translation;
3. to critically evaluate the historical and literary importance of the work; and
4. to render the work into English.

### **Methodology:**

The method to be adopted in this study is based on Baker's taxonomy. Mona Baker (1992: 26-42) lists eight strategies, which have been used by professional translators, to cope with the problematic issues while doing a translation task:

1. Translation by a more general word
2. Translation by a more neutral/ less expressive word
3. Translation by cultural substitution
4. Translation using a loan word or loan word plus explanation
5. Translation by paraphrase using a related word
6. Translation by paraphrase using unrelated words
7. Translation by omission
8. Translation by illustration

All these strategies will be applied this study.

The primary source of my study is *Rakta Tirtha Eram* published by Nalanda, Binod Bihari, Cuttack, in 1986. The secondary sources comprise books and journals on Translation Studies and sources from the websites.

### **Chapters in Outline Form:**

This proposed Ph. D. study is divided into the following five chapters.

#### *Chapter One – Introduction to Translation Studies:*

While the practice of translation is long established, the study of the field developed into an academic discipline only in the latter part of the twentieth century. Before that, translation had often been relegated to an element of language learning. In fact, from the late eighteenth century to the 1960s and beyond, language learning in secondary schools in many countries had come to be dominated by what was known as grammar-translation. Applied to Classical Latin and Greek and then to modern foreign languages, this centred on the rote study of the grammatical rules and structures of the foreign language. The chapter will try to inquire into the evolution of translation practices till these days and the emergence of Translation Study as a mainstream discipline.

#### *Chapter Two - Concepts and Theories of Translation:*

The chapter seeks to explore the different concepts and theories associated with translation as Prof Himansu S. Mohapatra says, "... transcreation and transliteration are versions of translation and should be seen as belonging to a continuum of translatory practices with transliteration and transcreation belonging to the literal and free ends of the continuum and with translation proper somewhere in the middle stage" (p. 123).

Concepts like theory of equivalence and aberration in translation are very often discussed in academic circle. On the issue of aberration, Bassnett writes, “Any contracting or omitting of difficult expressions in translation is immoral. The translator has the responsibility of finding a solution to the most daunting of problems with regard not only to the meaning but also to the style and form” (p. 30).

*Chapter Three - Imperative to Translate Jagannath Patnaik's Rakta Tirtha Eram:*

This chapter thoroughly discusses the necessity of translating *Rakta Tirtha Eram* into English. The proposed chapter deals with the importance of the work for which this study assumes significance. *Rakta Tirtha Eram* is a micro level study describing in greater details a very significant event of Indian freedom struggle. But for the writings of Prof. Patnaik, probably the Eram firing would have gone unnoticed. The sacrifice of the people would have remained outside the pages of history. As a true historian, Professor Patnaik has highlighted this event and has successfully placed it in an all India context. The fact however admits no doubt that there have been a few other works on Eram firing. However, all the works done on Eram after 1986 have almost been based on this book. Professor Patnaik with the training of a skilled and professional historian has examined things with a scientific approach and methodological tools and the end product is a complete regional history with the lucidity of Odia language.

*Chapter Four - English Rendering of Rakta Tirtha Eram:*

This is the chapter around which the whole study revolves. It is the rendering of the original Odia work, i.e. *Rakta Tirtha Eram* into English under the title *Eram - The Blood-soaked Shrine to Freedom Movement*. The chapter aims at keeping the cultural and linguistic values of the work intact while going for its English rendering. There are certain terms in Odia which have no direct substitutes in English. This particular challenge will be addressed in this chapter with considerable care for making the new title an ideal translation work.

*Chapter Five - Conclusion:*

This chapter concludes the entire discussion of effective translation practices along with my experience of English rendering of *Rakta Tirtha Eram*.

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