



Research article

## *Krītadāsēr Hāsi* as a Pseudotranslation: Features of Foreignisation in an Original Bangla Novel

Md. Kamal Hossain Sharif<sup>1\*</sup> and Mehedi Hasan<sup>2</sup><sup>1</sup>*Institute of Bangladesh Studies (IBS), University of Rajshahi, Rajshahi-6205, Bangladesh*<sup>2</sup>*Department of Arabic & Islamic Studies, Rajshahi College, Rajshahi-6100, Bangladesh*

### ABSTRACT

The novel *Krītadāsēr Hāsi* (1962) by Shaukat Osman, a Bangladeshi novelist and short story writer, was published when Bangladesh, the then East Pakistan, was ruled by Ayub Khan, a West Pakistani military ruler. This political allegory was a form of protest against and a satire on the Ayub Khan regime in particular and the West Pakistani rule over Bangladesh in general. To make the novel's temporal and spatial settings – the caliphate of Harun al-Rashid and the city of Baghdad respectively – distant and dissimilar and thus to escape the eyes of the Pakistani military ruler, Osman employed a writing strategy generally known as pseudotranslation. This strategy is exploited in this novel to give the impression that the novel is translated from Arabic to Bangla and the story of the novel has nothing to do with the affairs of the then East Pakistan. Data collected through a textual analysis of the novel reveal that different features of foreignisation as a means of pseudotranslation are extensively used in this novel to create that particular impression. Along with using Arabic words and phrases, sometimes mixing with Bangla expressions, the novel has used such longer Arabic expressions, with or without clues, as are capable of challenging the readers' linguistic and cultural knowledge and experience. In addition, the language of the novel is not made lucid and fluent but something foreign to the readers. Every now and then the novel reminds the readers of its supposed origin in such linguistic and cultural settings as are different from the readers' and thus succeeds in carrying the readers of this Bangla novel to the language and culture of the supposed Arabic writer.

### Introduction

Coined by Venuti in 1995, the term “foreignisation” belongs to the field of Translation Studies and refers to a particular translation strategy that highlights source language (SL) and culture. Shaukat Osman (also spelled Shawkat Osman), the pen name of Bangladeshi novelist and short story writer Sheikh Azizur Rahman, used this strategy in 1962 – more than three decades prior to the coinage of the term “foreignisation” – not to perform the task of any inter-language translation but to write an entirely original Bangla novel titled *Krītadāsēr Hāsi* (meaning “the laughter of a slave”), a political allegory, in the form of a pseudotranslation. The novel is presented in such a way that it seems to be translated to Bangla from Arabic *Alif Layla wa-Laylane* (meaning “one thousand and two nights”) which is, as the frame story of the novel claims, mistakenly came to be known as *Arabian Nights* or *Alif Layla wa-Layla* (meaning “the thousand and one

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nights”). What people know about the last story of *Alif Layla wa-Layla* is the one that deals with Prince Habib (referring to the story “History of Prince Habib and What Befel Him with the Lady Durrat Al-Ghawwas”) but, as per the frame story of the novel, the story of Prince Habib is actually the penultimate story which is followed by another story titled “Jahakul Abd” meaning “the laughter of a slave” in English and “krītadāsēr hāsi” in Bangla. Osman has not only presented his novel as a translated work but also incorporated such features as are used by some translators while translating a literary piece following the strategy of foreignisation. The features of foreignisation are quite evident in the frame story, the inner story and the appendix of the novel. This paper investigates how the strategy of foreignisation as a means of pseudotranslation is used in the novel *Krītadāsēr Hāsi*

\*Corresponding author: [kamalsharif@gmail.com](mailto:kamalsharif@gmail.com)

to obscure the political allegory and what effects this particular strategy has on the reception of the novel.

### Pseudotranslation and Foreignisation

Toury (1995) defines pseudotranslations as “texts which have been presented as translations with no corresponding source texts in other languages ever having existed – hence no factual ‘transfer operations’ and translation relationships” (p. 40). Put simply, a pseudotranslation is “a text that is presented as a translation while it is in fact not a translation, but an original text” (Du Pont, 2005, p. 328). In the words of Venuti (1998/1999), a pseudotranslation is “an original composition that its author has chosen to present as a translated text” (p. 33). The main reasons why an original work is presented as a pseudotranslation, as pointed out by Toury (1995), are to introduce novelties into a culture avoiding antagonism and to reduce the author’s fear of sensorial measures (p. 41-42). As a pseudotranslation strategy, the concept that best serves the purposes of presenting a text as a translation is foreignisation. In other words, if an original text is written incorporating the features of foreignisation, it can introduce novelty into the receiving culture and avoid sensorial measures at the same time.

The concept of foreignisation was first specified in 1813 by Schleiermacher who suggested two possible ways of translation. He said, “Either the translator leaves the writer in peace as much as possible and moves the reader toward him; or he leaves the reader in peace as much as possible and moves the writer toward him” (Schleiermacher, 1813/2012, p. 49). Schleiermacher’s second strategy that moves the writer towards the reader is termed by Ortega y Gasset (1937/2004) as “an imitation, or a paraphrase of the original text” (p. 60). This particular strategy is termed by Venuti (2008) as “domestication” which he describes as “an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to receiving cultural values” (p. 15). As a target-culture oriented strategy, domestication follows a lucid and fluent style of translation and transmutes or changes unusual source text (ST) expressions into such familiar ones as are easily understood by the target readers (Wang, 2014, p. 2424). However, Schleiermacher showed his preference for the first strategy that tempts to move the reader towards the writer. It is the strategy that “deliberately breaks target linguistic and cultural conventions by retaining some of the ‘foreignness’ of the source text” (Hatim, 2014, p. 51). Promoting this strategy, Ortega y Gasset (1937/2004) states, “It is only when we force the reader from his linguistic habits and oblige him to move within those of the author that there is actually translation” (p. 60). Venuti (2008) claims that this strategy creates an ethnodeviant pressure on receiving cultural values to “register the linguistic and cultural differences of the foreign text” (p. 15). In other words, while reading a foreignised translation, the reader is made to enter a new environment that challenges the literary tradition they are familiar with. Bassnett (2011) states the reason why Venuti prefers this strategy of translation:

... translators should somehow highlight the foreignness of the texts they translate, so as to ensure that readers recognise that they are reading a work that originated somewhere else in some other culture. If a translation erases all traces of the foreign, ... the

translator will indeed become invisible and besides, the foreign texts will be appropriated by the receiving culture and its intrinsic other qualities will disappear. (p. 17)

Bassnett mentions that the strategy of foreignisation is closely related to both the visibility of the translator concerned and the appearance of the intrinsic qualities of the ST, especially its cultural aspects, in the translation.

As for the features of foreignisation, as pointed out by Munday (2009), this strategy involves the use of lexical and syntactic borrowings and calques in the translation, reflects on the SL norms, reminds the target readers of the fact that they are reading a translation, and tries to bring the readers close to the experience of reading the ST (p. 189-90). According to Van Poucke (2012), the elements of foreignisation may belong to two levels: the lexico-semantic and the syntactic-stylistic. The first level includes all forms of borrowing like retention, preservation, transcription, transliteration, loanwords, and loan-based neologisms, while the second level includes the retention of word order, phrase structure and clause structure (p. 145). Koskinen (2012) states, “... any translation method that unsettles fluency of reception and disturbs the reader can be considered foreignizing. Unfamiliar lexical items, complex structures disturbing easy readability, violated conventions, anachronisms, anything that makes the reader pause can be classified as foreignizing” (p. 16). He also draws attention to a particular condition that he deems necessary to ensure foreignisation in translation. Echoing Laaksonen, he states that even if any translation manages to retain all the foreign elements of the ST, still it cannot be considered a foreignised translation unless the elements retained in it do not seem foreign to the target readers (p. 15). That means that much of the effect of foreignisation depends on readers’ perception of the features or elements of this strategy. The present study examines what features of foreignisation Osman has used in his pseudotranslation *Kṛitadāsēr Hāsi* and how far he has succeeded in making the novel foreign to the Bengali readers.

### Story of *Kṛitadāsēr Hāsi* in Brief

The central characters of the novel are Tatari, an Abyssinian slave, and Meherjan, an Armenian maidservant. Begum Zubaida, a wife of Caliph Harun-al-Rashid, recognised the love of Tatari and Meherjan and, without informing the Caliph, arranged their marriage. With Zubaida’s permission, the married couple used to meet every night at a fixed place in the royal garden beside the palace wall, escaping the eyes of the palace guards.

After executing the death sentence of his sister Abbasa and Chief Minister Jaafar Barmeki for their cross-tribal love affair, Caliph Harun-al-Rashid was mentally very disturbed as he was haunted by their memories. As a way to erase those memories and to bring some mental peace to the Caliph, Masrur, the commander-in-chief, suggested him to spend some time strolling in the royal garden amid the fragrance of flowers and fruits. While wandering in the garden at night, the Caliph heard the merged sound of two types of laughter – one full-throated and the other high-pitched – that seemed to have sprung from the deep secret corners of two happy souls. The sound of that laughter instantly stirred him because he had a keen desire to laugh like that. After a few days, while searching for the source

of that laughter, he along with Masrur and Abu Ishaq first saw from a distance the nocturnal love scene of Tatari and Meherjan in a mud hut in the slave quarters and then they knocked at the door of the hut. Opening the door, Tatari and Meherjan became terribly frightened. The Caliph became astonished seeing the raw beauty of Meherjan. However, instead of punishing them, the Caliph declared them free to live as two free citizens of his kingdom. He also declared Tatari the owner of the garden-estate located to the west of Baghdad. He then sent Tatari to the garden-estate and, with a desire to give Meherjan a bigger reward, sent her back to Begum Zubaida. All that the Caliph wanted to get in return was to hear Tatari's hearty laughter whenever he felt sad and depressed.

Tatari started living in the new estate without Meherjan who was the source of his laughter. In absence of Meherjan, he could not laugh anymore, not even after getting repeated orders and requests by Harun. Harun felt insulted by this. Yet he gave Tatari enough time to regenerate that particular laughter. He sent Busaina, the most beautiful and attractive dancer of Baghdad, to him for his entertainment. But she failed to engage Tatari in any sort of enjoyment. Instead, defeated by Tatari's moral strength, she committed suicide. This suicide was shown as an act of homicide and Tatari was falsely accused of that homicide.

Failing to make Tatari laugh, the Caliph started torturing him. Even continuous torture failed to generate the expected laughter. Tatari remained silent in all forms of torture. He survived 3-4 years in the Caliph's prison with his body made mutilated by torture. During this long imprisonment, he did not exchange a single word with the Caliph. In the last scene, Meherjan, in the attire of a queen, was brought to Tatari to make torture more acute. Tatari's love for Meherjan remained intact but he was partially erased from her memory by this time. She was no longer Tatari's beloved; she was the Caliph's queen. She could not recognise Tatari at first. Although she did it later, she could not do anything to save him. The Caliph ordered the guards to drag Meherjan away and flog Tatari. As Meherjan started to leave, Tatari opened his mouth. He said to the Caliph, "šōn, hārunar rašīd. dīrhām daulat diyē krītadās gōlām kēnā calē. bāndī kēnā sambhab-! kintu-kintu-krītadāsēr hāsi-nā-nā-nā-nā-" (Osman, 1962/2017, p. 13) meaning "Listen, Harun-al-Rashid: Money can buy you a slave. It can buy you a slave-girl, but it cannot buy the laughter of a slave" (Osman, 1962/2008, p. 111). This quote is actually the philosophy that the novel highlights.

Beneath the surface story of Meherjan and Tatari, the novel actually presents the wretched condition of the suppressed people of the then East Pakistan and thus it turns out to be a successful political allegory. The way the West Pakistani ruling class suppressed and controlled the people of the then East Pakistan was similar to the way the Caliph in *Krītadāsēr Hāsi* wanted to keep Tatari under control and to make him laugh as and when he is directed to do so. That means that a link can easily be drawn between the West Pakistani rulers and Caliph Harun-al-Rashid. Similarly, a link can also be drawn between the

activities of the British rulers with the people of the colonial India and those of the Caliph with Tatari and Meherjan. In this way, the novel indirectly presents the West Pakistani dominance over East Pakistan as a continuation of the British rule over the then Bengal in particular and the Indian subcontinent in general. In this regard, Mohua and Mowtushi (2019) write:

In a deft stroke, Osman links the rule of West Pakistan over East Pakistan with British colonialism, a view that was widespread amongst many Bengalis. In many significant ways Osman's novel captures the struggle for cultural and political sovereignty of the people of East Bengal. (p. 535)

### **Foreignisation in *Krītadāsēr Hāsi***

The lexico-semantic and the syntactic-stylistic levels of foreignisation, as classified by Van Poucke, along with the impact factor that Koskinen deems necessary for foreignised translation are presented next with reference to *Krītadāsēr Hāsi*:

#### ***Foreignisation in Krītadāsēr Hāsi: Lexico-Semantic Level***

Among the forms of borrowing in lexico-semantic level mentioned by Van Poucke, three forms, namely transcription, transliteration and loan-based neologisms or calques are not shown in this study mainly because the novel concerned is not actually a translated work and hence it does not have any ST to follow. Yet it can be said that all the Arabic names (of places, dishes and people) used in the novel are the examples of transliteration as they are written not in Nastaliq scripts but in Bangla. Same is the case with the form called transcription. Even in absence of any ST, the other three forms of borrowing, namely retention, preservation and loanwords are identifiable by examining whether the words concerned are used and incorporated in Bangla. These three forms as found in *Krītadāsēr Hāsi* are presented next.

**Retention in *Krītadāsēr Hāsi*.** The novel extensively uses Arabic words or the supposed SL words as guest words that are easily identifiable as non-Bangla ones. Examples of Arabic words that seem to be retained in *Krītadāsēr Hāsi* as guest words are "jillullāh" (Osman, 1962/2017, p. 18), "khullā" (Osman, 1962/2017, p. 53) and "himākat" (Osman, 1962/2017, p. 76). The word "jillullāh" means "allāhar chāyā" in Bangla and "Light of the Heavens" or "Shadow of Allah" in English while "khullā" means "rākhdhāk chārā" or "free" and "himākat" means "āspardhā" or "obstinacy."

**Preservation in *Krītadāsēr Hāsi*.** The novelist has used such words as are not easy to identify as the items that originally belong to Arabic, the supposed SL, because they have already become a part of Bangla vocabulary and are included in Bangla dictionaries. The use of such words can be termed as the supposed translator's act of preservation. Examples of Arabic words that seem to be preserved in the novel are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Arabic Words Preserved in the Novel

Sl. no.	Arabic words preserved in the novel	Contextual meaning in Bangla	Contextual meaning in English
i	“kaōm” (p. 16)	banša, jāti	Tribe, Race
ii	“kārār” (p. 17)	pratijñā	Promise
iii	“kimaṭ” (p. 22)	dām	Value, Price
iv	“kimiṃyā” (p. 23)	rasāyanbid	The chemist
v	“ērādā” (p. 28)	icchā, abhiprāy	Hope, Desire
vi	“kasur” (p. 29)	aparādh	Offence
vii	“kaṛāl” (p. 29)	pratijñā	Promise
viii	“rubāyī” (p. 30)	cār lāinēr kabitā	Quatrain
ix	“naphar” (p. 34)	cākar, bhrtya	Slave
x	“mōhāphēj” (p. 37)	rakṣak	Keeper, caretaker
xi	“mākān” (p. 40)	dālān	building
xii	“kuōt” (p. 40)	śakti, sāmarthya	Strength, Power
xiii	“sākī” (p. 44)	madya paribēśankārī taruṇī	Female cup-bearer
xiv	“phatē” (p. 53)	kāukē jāy karā	To succeed in alluring somebody
xv	“madirā” (p. 62)	mad	Wine
xvi	“inkār” (p. 76)	ghṛṇā karā, parihār karā	Denial

Note: The word *kārār* is used in Bangla as *karār* or *kaṛār*, *mākān* as *makān*, and *madirā* as *mōdir*.

### Loanwords Used in *Kṛitadāsēr Hāsi*.

Loanwords having Arabic origin or words imported to Bangla from the Arabic language are used extensively by the author in *Kṛitadāsēr Hāsi*. Examples of such Arabic loanwords along with their contextual meanings both in Bangla and English are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Arabic Loanwords Used in the Novel

Sl. no.	Arabic loanwords used in the novel	Contextual meaning in Bangla	Contextual meaning in English
i	“katal” (p. 13)	hatyā karā	Beheading
ii	“khōśbu” (p. 17)	sugandha	Fragrance
iii	“tāmām” (p. 17)	śēṣ karā	To complete
iv	“śukriyā” (p. 18)	dhanyabād dēōyā	To thank
v	“khēlāphat” (p. 18)	rājatva	The rule of a Caliph
vi	“insān” (p. 23)	mānuṣ	Human being
vii	“mahal” (p. 27)	rānīr bhāban	Palatial building meant for a queen
viii	“ijjat” (p. 27)	sammān	Prestige, Honour
ix	“tāgad” (p. 42)	śakti	Physical strength
x	“phursat” (p. 42)	abasar, abakāś	Leisure
xi	“ōyākt” (p. 49)	samay	Time
xii	“maōj” (p. 55)	ānanda ullās karā	To spend time in rejoicing

Note: All the words except “khōśbu” and “phursat” are included in Bangla Academy Bangla-English Dictionary, 6th reprint, published in 1996 by Bangla Academy, Dhaka. The words “śukriyā” and “tāgad” are used in Bangla as “śōkar” / “śōkrānā” and “tākat” respectively. Though not found in Bangla dictionary, “khōśbu” (partly naturalised as “khuśbu”) and “phursat” are widely used by Bangla users.

Though most of the Arabic loanwords have already become an inseparable part of Bangla language, their extensive use in the novel along with the Arabic words retained and preserved in it succeeds in making the novel “foreign” or distant to the readers and thus contributes to presenting this political allegory as a translation.

### Foreignisation in *Kṛitadāsēr Hāsi*: Syntactic-Stylistic Level

The syntactic-stylistic level of foreignisation as identified in *Kṛitadāsēr Hāsi* involves the retention of Arabic phrases and sentences, use of both intra- and extra-textual glosses and the combination of Bangla and Arabic expressions. All these aspects are presented next.

**Arabic Phrases and Sentences Used in the Novel.** As *Kṛitadāsēr Hāsi* is not a translation, it has no ST and hence it is impossible to find out whether the word order along with phrase and clause structures used in the ST is followed in this novel. But this novel, apart from using isolated Arabic words, extensively uses Arabic phrases and sentences. Such phrases and sentences are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Arabic Phrases and Sentences Used in *Kṛitadāsēr Hāsi*

Sl. no.	Arabic expressions used in the novel	Contextual meaning in Bangla	Contextual meaning in English
i	“ujirē ājam” (p. 16)	sarkār pradhān	Chief Minister
ii	“āmīrul muminīn” (p. 20)	biśvāsīdēr nētā	Prince of the Believers
iii	“Taubāstāghphērullā” (p. 27)	āmi āllāhar kṣamā prārthanā karchi	I seek the forgiveness of Allah
iv	“hēkimī ilēm” (p. 31)	cikiṭsābīdyā	Medical science
v	“āhlān ōyā sāhlān iyā maōlānā” (p. 32)	susvāgatam, prabhu	Welcome, my lord
vi	“śān-śāōkat” (p. 33)	jāḱjamak	Glory, Pomp
vii	“mārhābā. mārhābā” (p. 36)	ucca praśansādhvani	Expression of jubilation
viii	“ālēmūl gāyēb” (p. 60)	gāyēbjāntā	The Knower of All Secrets

Note: “taubāstāghphērullā,” “hēkimī ilēm,” “hukum,” “mārhābā” and “ālēmūl gāyēb” are used widely by the speakers of Bangla. As regards “śān-śāōkat,” two different words (“śān” and “śāōkat”) giving the same meaning are combined.

Like the use of Arabic words, that of Arabic phrases and sentences shown in Table 3 imparts the feel of something “foreign” to the novel and thus heightens it as a translation and obscures its allegorical significance.

**Use of Intra-Textual Gloss.** Sometimes the Bangla meanings of some Arabic expressions are used side by side in the novel. Occasionally a comma or a hyphen or a full stop is used to separate the Bangla meaning from the Arabic expression and at times the Bangla meaning is put in the parenthesis so that the readers can understand the Arabic expressions. Such expressions as they appear in the novel are listed below:

- “mujurānī – nartakī” (Osman, 1962/2017, p. 15) meaning “dancing girls”

- ii. “āssāmāyō tāyātān (śrabaṇ artha pālan)” (Osman, 1962/2017, p. 15) meaning “to hear is to obey”
- iii. “mājī mājī – atīt atīt” (Osman, 1962/2017, p. 16) meaning “past is past”
- iv. “ālēmūl ālēm. paṇḍitēr paṇḍit” (Osman, 1962/2017, p. 16) meaning “the wisest of the wise”
- v. “sāphphāh – raktapipāsu” (Osman, 1962/2017, p. 18) meaning “blood-thirsty”
- vi. “halkum (grībādēs)” (Osman, 1962/2017, p. 28) meaning “neck”
- vii. “lā-hāōlā ōlā kuyātā, ālampānā, bāndār gōstākhi māph karbēn” (Osman, 1962/2017, p. 33) meaning “Please forgive this humble servant of yours.” Here, the Bangla meaning “bāndār gōstākhi māph karbēn” is given after “lā-hāōlā ōlā kuyātā, ālampānā.”
- viii. “māōlā (prabhu)” (Osman, 1962/2017, p. 34) meaning “master”
- ix. “mōjējā (alaukik)” (Osman, 1962/2017, p. 40) meaning “miracles”
- x. “ōyālēd (bāp)” (Osman, 1962/2017, p. 44) meaning “father”
- xi. “māiyōkēlā ājihil kālām illā ābu naōyās – ābu naōyās chārā kē ār ēman kathā baltē pārbē?” (Osman, 1962/2017, p. 46) meaning “Who but Abu Nawas could ever think of this?” In this expression, the part after the hyphen is the Bangla meaning of the part before the hyphen.
- xii. “āl khāmārō lī kāmārān. surā āmār kāchē ākāšēr cād” (Osman, 1962/2017, p. 49) meaning “Wine to me is the moon in the sky.” Here, “surā āmār kāchē ākāšēr cād” is the Bangla meaning of the Arabic expression “āl khāmārō lī kāmārān.” The Arabic expression and its Bangla meaning are separated by a full stop.
- xiii. “rōkkāsā (nartakī)” (Osman, 1962/2017, p. 50) meaning “dancer”
- xiv. “tāsīr (phal)” (Osman, 1962/2017, p. 56) meaning “result”
- xv. “laphj śabda” (Osman, 1962/2017, p. 60) meaning “instructions.” Here, Arabic “laphj” and Bangla “śabda” are placed side by side.
- xvi. “hālāk (dvamśa)” (Osman, 1962/2017, p. 66) meaning “destroy”
- xvii. “ālhākkō mōrrun – satya tikta padārtha” (Osman, 1962/2017, p. 67) meaning “Truth is something bitter.” Here, the expression “satya tikta padārtha” is the Bangla meaning of the Arabic expression “ālhākkō mōrrun.”

The Bangla meanings provided with the Arabic expressions serve the purpose of intra-textual gloss and act as an alternative to using footnotes, endnotes or marginal notes. Such a feature of *Krītadāsēr Hāsi*, no doubt, makes the meaning clear but, at the same time, unsettles the fluency of reception and causes a bit disturbance to the reader in order to generate the impression that the text is foreign in origin.

**Use of Extra-Textual Gloss.** In foreignised translations, it is sometimes found that the meanings of some ST words and phrases, especially culturally charged ones, are given in footnotes, endnotes, marginal notes (or

cut-in notes) or in the appendix. Sometimes the glossary of some ST terms is provided separately. In *Krītadāsēr Hāsi*, Osman has followed this practice. He has given the meanings of 91 non-Bangla words in the appendix so that the readers can take help from there if needed. The words include “āmīrul muminīn,” “kaōm,” “khōdaksī,” “mujurānī,” “nā-pharmān,” “sadriyā” etc.

**Use of the Combination of Bangla and Arabic Expressions.** In *Krītadāsēr Hāsi*, the author has sometimes used a Bangla word in combination with an Arabic one. For example, in the expression “gōtā insān – pūrṇa mānab” (Osman, 1962/2017, p. 44), Bangla “gōtā” and Arabic “insān” are combined to mean Bangla “pūrṇa mānab” which means “full/complete man.” Then, Bangla possessive form of Arabic “tarībat” is combined with Bangla word “saṅgē” in the expression “tarībatēr saṅgē” (Osman, 1962/2017, p. 38) which means “with proper care.” This combination of words succeeds in making the reading of the novel non-fluent, and thus, foreign to the reader.

#### Effect of Foreignisation in *Krītadāsēr Hāsi*

Taking the readers to a distant land is quite a common strategy followed by writers to bring willing suspension of disbelief among the readers and to make them believe what is quite unbelievable in normal setting and atmosphere. This strategy is employed by William Shakespeare in “The Tempest,” Samuel Taylor Coleridge in “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner,” Percy Bysshe Shelley in “Ozymandias,” and William Golding in “Lord of the Flies.” The same strategy is used in *Krītadāsēr Hāsi* by Osman. In this experimental novel, the spatial setting is Baghdad and the temporal setting is the period of the Caliphate of Harun al-Rashid who reigned from September 786 CE to March 809 CE. The readers are taken back to those spatial and temporal settings by the frame story featuring Maulana Jalal, Masud, Raufan, Shah Fariduddin Jounpuri and the unnamed narrator. In the frame story, Shah Fariduddin Jounpuri, Raufan’s grandfather, narrates the incidents through which the original manuscript of *Alif Layla wa-Laylane*, written in Nastaliq font, came to his hand. The frame story ends with the narrator’s claim to have translated the story “Jahakul Abd” from *Alif Layla wa-Laylane* for Bangla-speaking readers. The novel *Krītadāsēr Hāsi* is presented as the narrator’s translation of that story. The distancing – created by spatial and temporal settings and the incorporation of the frame story to make *Krītadāsēr Hāsi* a “story within a story” – is aided by the disguised strategy of foreignisation.

The reason why the novelist followed this particular strategy of translation can easily be guessed from the author’s purpose of writing this novel. The purpose was to bring out the autocracy of Field Marshal Mohammad Ayub Khan and the resistance of the independence-loving people of the then East Pakistan (Jahan, 2023). When a literary piece, especially a political allegory, is written to serve such a purpose, there is the “fear of censorial measures” (Tourey, 1995, p. 42) or the “fear of censorship” (Du Pont, 2005, p. 330) against the author. Pseudotranslation is an effective way to avoid these censorial measures because “[t]he translator of a text is not likely to be charged for introducing something that is potentially subversive” (Du

Pont, 2005, p. 330). The potentially subversive aspects of the novel were incorporated in its symbolic meaning. In *Kṛitadāsēr Hāsi*, Harun al-Rashid stands for Ayub Khan, Baghdad for East Bengal or the then East Pakistan, Tatari for the Bengalis longing for independence, and the laughter of Tatari for an individual's freedom of speech (Rafid, 2019). However, Osman's strategy of presenting the novel as a pseudotranslation in general and a foreignised translation in particular succeeded in giving the impression that the story does not belong to Bangladesh or the then East Pakistan but to Baghdad. Ayub Khan government could not figure out the novelist's intention of linking the rule of West Pakistan over East Pakistan with British colonialism. Osman was awarded the Adamjee Literary Award in 1966 for this novel. It implies that the government literally took this novel as a foreign text and missed its allegorical significance.

### Conclusion

The political allegory *Kṛitadāsēr Hāsi* appears as a successful pseudotranslation in which the strategy of foreignisation is exploited to obscure the novelist's intention of presenting the autocracy of Ayub Khan along with portraying the sufferings and the resistance of the people of the then East Pakistan. In the lexico-semantic level of the seeming foreignisation, the novel has used retention, preservation and loanwords. In the syntactic-stylistic level, it has used Arabic phrases and sentences along with intra-textual and extra-textual glosses. As for intra-textual glosses, Bangla meanings are provided with the Arabic expressions used in the novel. Different punctuation marks are used to differentiate the meanings from the foreign expressions. As for extra-textual glosses, the Bangla meanings of a total of 91 foreign words are provided in the appendix. Apart from these, combinations of Bangla and Arabic expressions are also used in the novel. In fact, foreign expressions – words, phrases and

sentences – in both lexico-semantic and syntactic-stylistic levels are used so extensively that the novel seems to be a mosaic of such expressions. The total effect is the Coleridgean concept of “willing suspension of disbelief” created among the readers. The novel succeeds in creating the impression that it is actually the translated version of a story from *Alif Layla wa-Layla*. The technique of using “a story within a story” also contributes to creating this impression. In consequence, the novel succeeds in obscuring the novelist's intention of presenting the condition of the people of the then East Pakistan under the surface story of Meherjan and Tatari. However, the findings of this study imply that not all the features of foreignisation are necessary to make a translation a foreignised one; what matters is Koskinen's condition that the features retained in translation should seem foreign to the audience. It is also not necessary to confine this strategy to the purpose of translation only; it can be used as a means of pseudotranslation. Osman's *Kṛitadāsēr Hāsi* appears to be an example of this. However, some lexico-semantic features of foreignisation – transcription, transliteration and loan-based neologisms or calques – are not shown in this study. Besides, the frequency of foreign expressions including Persian words and phrases used in *Kṛitadāsēr Hāsi* and the ratio of Bangla and foreign expressions in it are not brought out in this study. Studies to be conducted in the future can address these issues.

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### Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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