

TISRI QASAM
The Third Vow

Phanishwar Nath Renu

A Hindi short story
in transliterated, morphologically glossed and translated form

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INTRODUCTION

This text is a sentence-by-sentence version of Phanishwar Nath Renu's short story *Tisri Qasam* (The Third Vow). The text used comes from *paaNe lambii kahaaniyaaN* (Five Short Stories), edited by Mohan Rakesh, and follows the pagination of that version. The goal of this transliteration with glosses and translation is to make available a Hindi narrative text which can be useful to those who do not read Hindi as well as to those who know the language well.

This story is a well-known and much loved work originally published in the 1950s, and then collected in a volume of short stories (Renu 1959) and a later collection by Mohan Rakesh, the version used here. The story and several others by Renu was published in 1985 in an English translation by Kathryn G. Hansen. The story was also made with some additions to the plot into a very popular film released in 1966, and directed by Basu Bhattacharya. The two main characters, Hiranman and Hirabai, are played by two stars, Raj Kapoor and Waheeda Rahman. The script of the film is available in Devanagari with a glossary from the Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of California, Berkeley).

The narration begins with Hiranman the ox-cart driver in the area of Bihar south of Nepal; he has just picked up a mysterious and exotic lady passenger and is feeling that something important has happened. There are flashbacks to his life as a cart driver, in which he comes to grief hauling smuggled goods, and bamboo. He swears two vows, not to carry either of them in the future. Finally he retrieves his fortunes by hauling a tiger cage for a circus, with the help of the two bullocks, which figure almost as human characters in the story. The narrative describes the journey through the late winter landscape to the fair where the vaudeville company will perform, the star of which is his passenger. Hiranman the rustic and naive cart driver gets to know his passenger and to shine in telling her a story. The last part of the story describes Hiranman's adventure at the vaudeville show and his growing infatuation with Hirabai the show-girl, a very perceptive and tough woman who understands his feelings. His heart is broken when she leaves by train for the next show. He swears the third vow.

The story is told as a spoken narrative, with actual dialogue and Hiranman's unspoken interior thoughts. It is written in standard Hindi, with some Bihari dialect, and some rural mispronunciations of both Hindi and English, fitting the uneducated rural characters of the story. According to M.K. Verma (p.c.), who comes from the general locality where the story is set, the writer has conveyed a sense of uneducated country people and their Bihari language using standard Hindi, with some regional words (see below) and some actual Bhojपुरi quotes in the snatches of songs.

Organization of the transliteration and glosses

I have transliterated the Devanagari text using a fairly standard system which requires no special keyboard characters. See below for a description of the transliteration. Each word is glossed for

INTRODUCTION

the stem meaning and verbal affixes, in the case of verbs. See below for the abbreviations used for affixes and some notes on specific words and affixes which are treated in a special way.

The pages in the story are numbered 0-35, and within each page, the sentences are numbered. To refer to a specific sentence within the story, these numbers can be used: eg. 32.23, for sentence 23 in page 32. The actual page number in the published version are given at the beginning of each page of the Hindi text.

Stems are separated from affixes by hyphens, allowing a 'Find' command to search for a given stem, and to locate all forms of the stem, by entering either the Hindi form or the English equivalent. There is small number of exceptions, in which the Hindi verb form is not easily identifiable as it conflates the stem and the suffixes, such a *loo* 'take-imper', which combines the stem *lee* 'take' and the *-oo* 2p familiar imperative form. In such cases, the English equivalent can be substituted.

The transliteration makes the text accessible to linguists interested in natural text in a language like Hindi, as well as to those who know Hindi well and are interested in samples of actual word usage or variations in sentence form. The transliterated text was first conceived of as tool for my own research on the verb lexicon and on the syntax of Hindi. I wanted to do a close and careful reading of this very expressively written short story in order to find natural examples of usage. Some of the categories of usage which can be found in this text are:

Reflexive and null pronouns

Verbs and their nominal or clausal arguments, with choices of postpositional case

Complex predicates and V-V compounds

Tense and aspect usage in narrative text

Subordinate clauses, including the conjunctive participle

Preposed objects and postposed subjects or objects

Correlative causes and participial relatives

Interrogatives: yes no questions indicated by an interrogative particle, questions with in situ interrogative words.

Negative polarity construction consisting of an indefinite and negation or other environment.

Devanagari transliteration

Originally, I planned to tag the sentences for syntactic structure, making it a 'tree bank', as I have illustrated in pages 3 and 4. This tagging proved too time-consuming for me to extend it to the whole text, however, and I feel the present form will be useful for many kinds of analysis, especially as the sentence categories are identifiable from the glosses and translation. I have kept the sentence translations as close to the Hindi sentence as English idiom allows, occasionally adding clarifications of what is elided in Hindi..

This text was created with the help of several Hindi speakers, Ms Rashmi Gupta from Lucknao, U.P. Mr. Rajiv Sahay, from Bihar, both graduate students in the University of Iowa School of Business, and Mr. Manish Shrivastav, from Madhya Pradesh. Mr. Shrivastav was a Fulbright

INTRODUCTION

Teaching Fellow for Hindi in the Department of Asian Languages, University of Iowa in 2003-4. I transliterated and glossed the first approximately ten pages, and checked the translation with Ms Gupta. Mr. Sahay continued the transliteration and glosses under my supervision. As he is from Bihar, he was well qualified to translate the Bihari dialect in the story, and to translate certain regional Hindi forms. I went through the entire text with Mr. Shrivastav. I read the transliteration aloud to Mr. Shrivastav, so that I could check and proofread the transliteration and glosses, and he could check the accuracy of the transliteration against the Devanagari text (which actually contains some typographical errors, corrected here). I have found McGregor 1997 extremely helpful in finding appropriate English equivalents for Hindi stems. I also checked the accuracy of the translation with him, especially where the Hindi text is structurally far from the English translation, or where elements are elided. A final proofreading has just been completed. Nevertheless, I am sure some errors and inconsistencies remain. I will be glad to hear about them from readers or users so that they can be corrected.

Transliteration

The transliteration follows the Devanagari spelling in the Renu text fairly exactly; the exceptions are noted below.

Vowels and diphthongs

	front		back	
	short	long	short	long
high	i	ii	u	uu
mid		ee		oo
low	a	ai		au

The difference between short and long vowels is indicated by single vs double vowel symbols. The inherently long mid vowels are represented as long, as are the contrastively long high and low vowels. Vowels are pronounced without the English vowel-shift values; in other words as in Spanish or Italian. The a vowel is used for the short low vowel with a schwa pronunciation. The diphthongs have variable pronunciations, either as a diphthong consisting of a schwa + glide (y, w), or as a low vowel. front unrounded or back rounded low vowel.

Nasalized vowels are represented by the vowel symbol followed by N (see the comment below).

Consonants:

h represents aspiration/murmur when it follows a stop or flap.
Retroflex consonants are represented by capital letters.

stops

INTRODUCTION

(velar) k kh g gh q = voiceless uvular stop
(palatal); c ch j jh
(retroflex) T Th D Dh N (see note below) R = retroflex flap Rh = aspirated retroflex flap
(dental) t th d dh n
(labial) p ph b bh m

liquids and glidea

y r l w/v

sibilants and fricatives

sh S s

h= glottal fricative x =voiceless velar fricative G =voiced velar fricative

The word spelled vah is transcribed as it is pronounced, as woo.

Note: The N is used for vowel nasalization. I have chosen this symbol for typographical and phonetic clarity, in spite of some potential ambiguity. Some other systems use capital letters for nasalized vowels, others with a tilde ~ following the vowel. If the vowel precedes a stop, the N may include a consonant with the same position as the stop. If there were Sanskrit borrowings used in this Hindi text, there could be ambiguities about whether the N represents vowel nasalization or a retroflex nasal. Practically speaking, this is not a problem here.

No capital letters of the kind used by convention in English are used here in the transliteration. I want to avoid confusion with the retroflex consonants represented by capital letters.

Syntax and morphology

Hindi is an Indo-European language (Indo-Aryan family), with verb-final sentence structure.. Kachru 1980 is a very clear and accessible overview of the components of the sentence. The normal order of phrases within the sentence is:

Subject Indirect Object Direct Object Verb

Adverbs may precede or follow the subject and direct object. Some freedom of phrase order is possible, so that for stylistic reasons or for expressing emphasis, phrase may precede the subject or follow the verb. The lexical categories, Verb, Noun, Adjective and Postposition all follow their objects. Nominative case is expressed by the absence of a postposition.. Other cases are marked by postpositions, either ones which mark specific case functions or have lexical meaning. The language is consistently head-final within the sentence. The objects of postpositions have oblique form, often lexically realized or expressed in the forms of inflectional suffixes. Conjunctions, some adverbs and markers of finite sentence complements precede their objects. See Masica 1991 for a detailed comparison across these categories with the other Indic languages.

INTRODUCTION

There is also person-number and gender agreement within nominal phrases and between the verbal phrase and a nominative argument. I have not glossed all the oblique and agreement morphology in this text, partly to make the glosses more compact, partly because the agreement is generally predictable and not subject to the interesting kinds of variation found in word order, tense/aspect use, etc.

Morphological categories-definitions

caus causative suffix

cont contingent/subjunctive

dat dative postposition

emph emphatic form of pronoun

erg ergative subject postposition

excl exclamation

fut future tense

gen genitive postposition

hon honorific

imper imperative

impf imperfective aspect

inf infinitive

pf perfective aspect

pl plural

pres present tense

prog progressive aspect

prt perfective participle

s singular

INTRODUCTION

self reflexive pronoun

self's possessive reflexive pronoun

Number-gender agreement on verbs and oblique morphology on nouns are not glossed.

Some special words

Some words are not glossed in the transliterated text. They are words without any consistent or accurate English counterpart.

too - This particle has many uses. It can be a prefix indicating sentence connections, like English 'then'. It can be a clitic on a preceding word marking a sentence topic or phrase with some discourse link to previous context.

waalaa This stem combines with words of many categories to form an adjective-like form. Combined with a verb infinitive, it can indicate futurity 'one who will V'. With a noun or adjective, it creates an adjective 'having the property of N or Adj'. It is not easily equated with anything in English.

Other words are given glosses, but are translated in several different ways in English.

baat This word is translated as 'matter', but more specifically it means 'what someone said, what someone did.' Sometimes it stands for a whole proposition, the news or fact that (sentence).

kooii, kabhii, kuch are translated as indefinite 'someone, sometime, something'. In negative and other contexts, they correspond to 'anyone, ever, anything' and 'no one, never, nothing'.

Some words in this story are specific to the region in which the story is set. For example, the verb *cuniyaa-naa* (6.4) means 'to fan out, like the folds one makes in putting on a sari' (Awadhesh Misra, p.c.). Another important word is *pheenuu-gilaas* (5.24), describing Hirabai's soft attractive voice. It means something like 'soft and foamy as the new toddy fermenting in a glass' (Rajiv Sahay, p.c.).

The representations of noises, like drums, loudspeakers etc (such as 29.24, 31.32) are not translated into English..

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INTRODUCTION

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