

Harishchandra: *Dillī darbār darpan* (1877)

Despite the artificial boost given to Khaṛī Bolī Hindi by the activities at Fort William College, little real advance in its use had been achieved by the mid-nineteenth century. The time was ripe for the arrival of writers who would lend credence to the new style of Hindi by using it for a wide range of purposes, and by so doing establish it as a genuine vehicle of communication rather than a mere literary plaything such as the Braj dialect had effectively become.

This renaissance was led by Harishchandra of Benares, who in his brief lifespan (1850–85) devoted enormous energy to the fostering of new literary developments, including journalism, travelogue, drama, the essay and satire. As a devout Vaishnava he also maintained the old traditions by composing prodigious amounts of devotional verse in Braj Bhāṣā, and as a broadly-educated man of catholic tastes he also wrote in Urdu, and translated into Khaṛī Bolī Hindi many classics of Bengali and English literature. The title 'Bharatendu' or 'Moon of India' was bestowed on him in recognition of his distinguished career — or, according to anecdote, because of his somewhat rakish moral character (tainted, like the moon).

Harishchandra's education embraced English, Persian and Sanskrit, and he accordingly had a large linguistic arsenal at his disposal. He was opposed to the wholesale Sanskritization which was at an incipient stage in his lifetime, and which he rejected as elitist, and his Hindi contains a free and eclectic mixture of vocabulary. Any lack of stylistic polish in his prose is more than made good by his verve, his wry wit, and his unmistakable enthusiasm for his subject-matter.

Though Harishchandra was a tireless critic of British rule, and consequently never won official patronage, he nevertheless had an innate respect for aristocracy and royalty. A description of the Delhi Darbar of 1877, at which Queen Victoria was declared Queen-Empress of India, (and on which occasion Harishchandra acted as the Prince of Wales's guide to Benares) was therefore a natural choice of subject for him.

The tone of this passage shows Harishchandra as identifying closely with the patrician attitudes of the Viceregal party rather than with the comically described supplicant rajahs who came for audience with the imperial power. The first paragraph describes rather unkindly the provinciality and lack of finesse of those received at the Darbar, and their difficulties with the English protocol and language; one unfortunate is lampooned for his obsequiousness, another for his unfounded confidence in his own proficiency in English. Nor is the Viceroy's diplomatic but condescending air lost on Harishchandra. The passage ends with a description of the Maharani of Tanjore and her interpreter.

The text is from *Dillī darbār darpan*, presumably first published in one of the Hindi journals published and edited by the author, but now collected with other essays in Kesarinarayan Shukla, *Bhāratendu ke nibandh* (Benares: Sarasvati Mandir, 1951), pp.78–91.

The linguistic and literary background is covered in R.S.McGregor, *Hindi literature of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1974); for a more anecdotal account of Harishchandra's life see Madan Gopal, *Bharatendu Harishchandra* (New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1971).

बहुत से छोटे छोटे राजाओं की बोल चाल का ढंग भी, जिस समय वे वाइसराय से मिलने आए थे, संक्षेप के साथ लिखने के योग्य है। कोई तो दूर ही से हाथ जोड़े आए, और दो एक ऐसे थे कि जब एडिकांग के बदन झुकाकर इशारा करने पर भी उन्होंने ने सलाम न किया तो एडीकांग ने पीठ पकड़ कर उन्हें धीरे से झुका दिया। कोई बैठ कर उठना जानते ही न थे, यहां तक कि एडिकांग को "उठो" कहना पड़ता था। कोई झंडा, तगमा, सलामी और खिताब पाने पर भी एक शब्द धन्यवाद का नहीं बोल सके और कोई बिचारे इन में से दो ही एक पदार्थ पा कर ऐसे प्रसन्न हुए कि श्रीयुत वाइसराय पर अपनी जान और माल निछावर करने को तैयार थे। सब से बढ़कर बुद्धिमान हमें एक महात्मा देख पड़े जिन से वाइसराय ने कहा कि आप का नगर तो तीर्थ गिना जाता है। पर हम आशा करते हैं कि आप इस समय दिल्ली को भी तीर्थ ही के समान पाते हैं। इस के जवाब में वह बेधड़क बोल उठे कि यह जगह तो सब तीर्थों से बढ़ कर है, जहां आप हमारे "खुदा" मौजूद हैं। नौबाब लुहार की भी अंगरेजी में बात चीत सुन कर ऐसे बहुत कम लोग होंगे जिन्हें हंसी न आई हो। नौबाब साहिब बोलते तो बड़े बेधड़क धड़ाके से थे, पर उसी के साथ कायदे और मुहाबरे के भी खूब हाथ पांव तोड़ते थे। कितने वाक्य ऐसे थे जिनके कुछ अर्थ ही नहीं हो सकते, पर नौबाब साहिब को अपनी अंगरेजी का ऐसा कुछ विश्वास था कि अपने मुंह से केवल अपने ही को नहीं बरन अपने दोनों लड़कों को भी अंगरेजी, अरबी, ज्योतिष, गणित आदि ईश्वर जाने कितनी विद्याओं का पंडित बखान गए। नौबाब साहिब ने कहा कि हम ने और रईसों की तरह अपनी उमर खेल कूद में नहीं गवाई बरन लड़कपन ही से विद्या के उपार्जन में चित्त लगाया और पूरे पंडित और कवि हुए। इस के सिवाय नौबाब साहिब ने बहुत से राजभक्ति के वाक्य भी कहे। वाइसराय ने उत्तर दिया कि हम आप की अंगरेजी विद्या पर इतना मुबारक बाद नहीं देते जितना अंगरेजों के समान आप का चित्र होने के लिये। फिर नौबाब साहिब ने कहा कि मैं ने इस भारी अवसर के वर्णन में अरबी और फारसी का एक पद्य ग्रंथ बनाया है जिसे मैं चाहता हूं कि किसी समय श्रीयुत को सनाऊं। श्रीयुत ने जवाब दिया कि मुझे भी कविता का बड़ा अनुराग है और मैं आपसा एक भाई कवि (Brother-Poet) देख कर बहुत प्रसन्न हुआ, और आप की कविता सुनने के लिये कोई अवकाश का समय अवश्य निकालूंगा।

२६ तारीख को सब के अन्त में महारानी तंजौर वाइसराय से मुलाकात को आई। ये तास का सब वस्त्र पहने थीं और मुंह पर भी तास का नक्राब पड़ा हुआ था। इसके सिवाय उन के हाथ पांव दस्ताने और मोजे से ऐसे ढंके थे कि सब के जी में उन्हें देखने की इच्छा ही रह गई। महारानी के साथ में उन के पति राजा सखाराम साहिब और दो लड़कों के सिवाय उन की अनुवादक मिसेस फर्थ भी थीं। महारानी ने पहले आकर वाइसराय से हाथ मिलाया और अपनी कुर्सी पर बैठ गई। श्रीयुत वाइसराय ने उन के दिल्ली आने पर अपनी प्रसन्नता प्रगट की और पूछा कि आप को इतनी भारी यात्रा में अधिक कष्ट तो नहीं हुआ। महारानी अपनी भाषा की बोलचाल में बेगम भूपाल की तरह चतुर न थीं, इसीलिये ज़ियादा बातचीत मिसेस फर्थ से हुई, जिन्हें श्रीयुत ने प्रसन्न हो कर "मनभावनी अनुवादक" कहा। वाइसराय की किसी बात के उत्तर में एक बार महारानी के मुंह से "यस" निकल गया, जिस पर श्रीयुत ने बड़ा हर्ष प्रगट किया कि महारानी अंगरेजी भी बोल सकती हैं, पर अनुवादक मेम साहिब ने कहा कि वे अंगरेजी में दो चार शब्द से अधिक नहीं जानतीं।

Harishchandra's vocabulary register is very much dictated by the circumstances of the Darbar he is describing. On the one hand, descriptions of the rajahs' finery necessarily borrow heavily from the PA vocabulary of the courts of Northern India, while on the other the H rendering of E speeches gives a free reign to Harishchandra's Sanskritizing tendencies, such that even a Muslim Nawab is made to use such S expressions as *paṇḍit* and *kavi*.

1 *choṭe choṭe rājāḥ*: 'petty princes' (542a).

1 *jis samay ve...āe the*: the change in grammatical subject from *bol cāl kā dhaṅg* to *rājā* causes a disjunction from the remainder of the sentence, and exemplifies the awkwardness of carelessly drafted subordinate clauses.

1 *vāisrāy*: this spelling of E '-roy' suggests its H cognate *rāy*.

2 *saṅkṣep ke sāth*: 'with brevity', an expression now generally replaced by *saṅkṣep meṅ* 'in brief'.

2 *hāth jore*: 'with hands joined' (532b), i.e. performing the *namaskār*.

2 *do ek*: 'a few'. *ek* following a number gives the sense of 'approximately'; cf. 7 *do hī ek*, 'just a couple or so'.

3 *edikāṅg*: 'aide-de-camp'. The nazalized final vowel of the French term, transmitted through E, is realized not as a simple nazal *āṅ* but with a velar consonant; the modern preference would be for the initials 'A.D.C.'.

4 *koī baiṭh kar uṭhnā jānte hī na the*: 'some didn't even know to get up once they had sat down'.

5 *yahān tak ki*: 'to the extent that, such that finally'.

5 *uṭho*: the *tum* imp. indicates the A.D.C.'s view of the rajahs' status.

5 *jhaṇḍā, tagmā, salāmī aur khitāb*: the tinselled trappings of royalty which the British in imitation of their Mughal predecessors dispensed to the native states in return for loyalty.

6 *ek śabd dhanyavād kā*: 'a word of thanks', calqued from the E (923).

8 *sab se barḥkar buddhimān*: 'the cleverest of all'; *sab se barḥkar* is an adv. expression qualifying adj. *buddhimān*. Cf. adv. *barḥkar* in 10 *sab tīrthoṅ se barḥkar* 'superior to all sacred sites'.

8 *mahātmā*: 'noble soul', here used sarcastically.

8 *dekh paṛe*: a rare usage of *dekhnā* as intransitive (= *dikhnā*).

9 *ham āsā karte haiṅ ki āp... pāte haiṅ*: 'We hope that you find', both verbal expressions no doubt calqued from the Viceroy's E reported here.

11 *naubāb luhāru*: 'the Nawab of Loharu' (a hundred miles to the west of Delhi). The title immediately precedes the place name, as E 'Lord': cf. 26 *mahārānī tanjaur* and 33 *begam bhūpāl*.

12 *bolte to baṛe bedharak dharāke se the*: 'he rattled away unhesitatingly': the disjunction of *bolte* from its auxiliary *the* suggests sarcastically that the speed of the Nawab's speech, which this word-order emphasizes, was not matched by its idiomatic accuracy.

13 *khūb hāth pānv torṭe the*: 'did grievous damage to...'.
 14 *jinke kuch arth hī nahīn ho sakte*: *arth* is p. here — cf. p. *māne*.

16 *īśvar jāne kitnī vidyāḥ kā paṇḍit bakhān gae*: 'praised... as authorities in God knows how many disciplines'. The joint object is 'himself' and 'his two sons', but as the object is marked with *ko*, the referent *paṇḍit* is singular. For the expression *īśvar jāne*, with subj. verb, cf. the similar *xudā jāne* and *nā jāne*. In *bakhān gae*, *jānā* gives a sarcastic emphasis of thoroughness — 'praised fulsomely'.

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17 *khel kūd*: 'fun and games' (524), here with a derogatory tone.

18 *vidyā ke upārjan meṅ citt lagāyā*: 'applied my mind to the acquisition of knowledge': notice the effective contrast of register with the colloquial *umar khel kūd meṅ nahīn gavāī* 'didn't fritter my life away in fun and games'.

- 19 *rājbhakti ke vākya: vākya*: *vākya* here has its primary meaning of ‘statement, utterance’, to which its more common modern H sense of ‘sentence’ is secondary.
- 21 *citra*: apparently meaning ‘appearance’ here.
- 21 *bhārī avsar*: ‘momentous occasion’; cf. 32 *bhārī yātrā* ‘onerous journey’.
- 24 *āpsā ek bhāī kavi* (brother poet) *dekh kar*: ‘seeing a brother poet like you’; non-honorific s. *āpsā* catches the Viceroy’s patronizing tone. Use of an E parenthesis is a common (if typographically awkward) way of glossing an unfamiliar expression such as the calque *bhāī kavi*.
- 25 *samay avaśya nikālūngā*: ‘I will certainly find the time’, subtly intimating a social pecking-order, with the Viceroy agreeing in a concessive tone to fit the Nawab into his busy schedule.
- 28 *sab ke jī meñ... icchā rah gāī*: ‘the desire remained in everyone’s heart’, i.e. was unfulfilled.
- 29 *un kī anuvādak mises pharth*: ‘her interpreter Mrs Firth’. m. forms are often retained for f. subjects in occupational designations such as *anuvādak*; cf. the androgynous *pradhān mantri*. In the case of occupations in which females figure more commonly, S f. forms are preferred: *adhyāpikā* ‘schoolmistress’ (m. *adhyāpak*), *kavayitri* ‘poetess’ (m. *kavi*) etc.
- 30 *mises pharth*: note the HU realization of E *misez* (91).
- 31 *apnī prasantā pragaṭ kī*: ‘expressed his pleasure’. The spelling *pragaṭ* has been replaced by *tatsama prakaṭ* in standard H, and now has a rather archaic or rustic ring.
- 33 *begam bhūpāl*: the Begam of Bhopal was an Urdu poetess who wrote under the *taxallus* ‘Rūp-ratan’, and who was much favoured by Harishchandra.
- 33 *ziyādā*: the standard H spelling is now *zyādā*, with conjunct *zy*.
- 34 *manbhāvnī anuvādak*: ‘charming interpreter’; the H expression is rather forced in its formal register, but is of course a translation of the Viceroy’s formulaic E expression.
- 35 *mahārānī ke muñh se ‘yas’ nikal gayā*: ‘the word ‘yas’ popped out of the Maharani’s mouth’. The Nagāri spelling perfectly catches the familiar H-speaker’s pronunciation of the one E word that everybody knows.