

## BETWEEN FIDELITY AND FREEDOM: TRANSCREATION AND CULTURAL REINSCRIPTION IN *UDAAS NASLAIN*

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### **Abstract**

*This research explores Abdullah Hussain's Udaas Naslain (1963), a seminal Urdu novel that captures the socio-political upheavals of colonial and post-colonial India through the life of an ordinary Punjabi soldier. Set against the backdrop of British rule, the World Wars, and the Partition of the Indian subcontinent, the novel reflects the complexities of identity, displacement, and historical consciousness. Through qualitative analysis, this study examines how Hussain intertwines personal and national narratives, offering a postcolonial critique of history and memory. The findings highlight the novel's enduring relevance in South Asian literature and its contribution to understanding the human dimension of historical trauma. The research also opens pathways for further study in comparative translation and cultural transference.*

**Keywords:** *Transcreation, Cultural Reinscription, Udaas Naslain, Urdu, Novel, Abdullah Hussain, Colonial, Post-Colonial, South Asian Literature*

### **Introduction and Literature Review:**

Translation studies is a large field and deals with the investigation into interpretation and translation. It addresses culture, language, society, and history whilst enquiring into lifestyle, social, and the physical environment. Translation is about transforming words from one language into another, and hence can determine how the cultures and traditions in existence in one society change over to another. According to Nida and Taber (1969, 1982), cultural translation occurs when a message is adapted to fit a different culture, which can add information beyond the original.

Translation is a delicate and intricate phenomenon because translators must preserve the essence of the original text while translating from the original text to the translated text (TT). To achieve a translation that is semantically and syntactically faithful to the original demands a proficient command of both the original language and the translated language (TT). There are many types of translation, but in this research concern is self-translation, which is an aspect that has not received much attention. Popovic (1976) defines self-translation as a situation where a writer translates his own text from the source to the target language. Popovic also asserts that it is a close translation regardless of variations from the original.

This research will explore Abdullah Hussain's *Udaas Naslain* (1963) is regarded as a landmark in Urdu literature, capturing the socio-political upheavals of colonial India through the lens of an ordinary Punjabi soldier. Years later, the author undertook the rare act of self-translation, rewriting the novel into English as *The Weary Generations* (1999). Rather than following a strict linguistic equivalence, Hussain reshaped and recontextualized the narrative for a wider, global audience. This transformation positions *The Weary Generations* not merely as a translation, but as a transcreation, involving ideological shifts, cultural reinterpretations, and narrative modifications.

While *Udaas Naslain* has been widely studied in South Asian literary circles, and *The Weary Generations* is available to English readers, there remains a notable research gap in examining the process and implications of self-translation in this case. Most studies treat *The Weary Generations* as a conventional translation, overlooking the authorial agency involved in rewriting one's own work. Furthermore, self-translation as a practice remains largely Eurocentric in current scholarship, focusing on figures such as Samuel Beckett or Vladimir Nabokov. The absence of South Asian examples and the lack of application of P. Lal's theory of transcreation to modern fiction compound this gap. This study investigates how cultural metaphors, historical framing, and character development are reshaped in the process of self-translation. In doing so, it contributes to both the under-researched domain of Urdu-English self-translation and the broader discourse on postcolonial authors rewriting themselves for cross-cultural representation. With the emergence of Translation Studies, authors are increasingly experiencing a loss of essence in their translated texts. Translation is a complex and daunting task, especially when translators reconceptualize the original work. As a result, many writers feel the need for self-translation to preserve the credibility and integrity of their original texts.

Translation theories have evolved from an initial focus on linguistic accuracy to approaches that consider cultural and functional dynamics that lead to the emergence of various translation theories, such as Transcreation, which emerged as a more creative and adaptive practice, aiming not just to translate but to transform content to resonate emotionally and culturally with a new audience. Cook (2008) explains how Leibniz used 'transcreation' to reconcile the fact that though God can create and destroy, He cannot change the essence of substance. Hence, transcreation was "a certain middle way between creation and an entire pre-existence" Transcreation has been popularized (especially in India) by Purushottam Lal, once to focus on not only the importance of the source text, but on the translator's need to "edit, reconcile, and transmute" (Lal 1957,1964, p. 5). More recently, the term has been taken up by the more commercial end of the language provision industry. And this is where Daniel Pedersen (this issue) takes up the story. His discussion shows how important the term is becoming in the field, and how close it follows recent developments in translation theory, as heralded by Bassnett.

Moreover, Transcreation is a translation-related activity that mingles the process of lexical translation, cultural adaptation, and (re-)creation or the creative re-interpretation of certain textual elements. The equilibrium between the prior mentioned elements will depend upon the instructions provided in the transcreation brief or by the client, the linguistic and cultural traits of

the audience receiving the text, and the purpose and objective of the text (Dolores & Lobo, 2021). Minghai Zhu defines transcreation as a form of translation that is characterized by the interlingual adaptation of a message intended to suit the audience of the target language while preserving the message, style, tone, images, and emotions of the source language, paying attention to the cultural characteristics of the target audience. To fulfill the original intent, convey the original message, and overcome cultural barriers, this reinterpretation of the message could entail modifications that depart from the original text to some degree (Zhu, 2023).

The word 'transcreation' was originally coined in 1957 by Indian Sanskrit scholar Lal (1957) to describe his English adaptations of traditional Indian Drama that preserved the liveliness and richness of the original (Gaballo, 2012). Recent research into transcreation examines writing traditions from India and Brazil using Purushottama Lal's and Haroldo de Campos' important work. According to Lal's method of transcreation, translation requires writers to rethink original works so they can connect with the cultural environment and present needs of the target readers instead of simply moving text between languages. According to these scholars, translation needs more than direct equivalence; it must creatively connect with the target culture and craft new text forms. They show how translation requires going beyond basic methods because it needs to adapt to cultural realities (Brzozowski, 2023).

Numerous recent works examine Abdullah Hussain's *Udaas Naslein* (1963), paying particular attention to its themes, historical setting, and translation. An analytical research called "Analytical Study of Novel *Udaas Naslain* in the Context of Binaries" (2024), for example, examines the book from the perspective of binary opposition theory, specifically in relation to neo-colonialism. Examining how the novel depicts the Indian freedom movement and the post-independence period, the study also highlights the political dichotomies brought about by European colonization. It examines how the colonial experience was formed by these cultural, linguistic, religious, and political dichotomies, providing a critical comprehension of the novel's historical and social significance.

Abbas (2023) investigated Qurratulain Hyder's engagement with neoclassicism, colonial, and nationalist archaeology, in her two Urdu novels *Akhir-i-Shab ke Humsafar* and *Ag ka Darya*, which she substantially rewrote in her own English translations, *Fireflies in the Mist* and *River of Fire*, framed through a discussion of translation and the term she uses to describe *River of Fire*, "transcreation." In 1998, Qurratulain Hyder published an English version of her Urdu novel *Ag ka Darya*, which had come out forty years before in 1959. She called this English version a "transcreation," a term she rather pointedly took from Puroshattam Lal, professor of English literature and a translator of Hindu sacred texts such as the *Mahabharata* and *Shakuntala* (Abbas, 2023).

### Research Objectives:

- ✓ To critically analyze the phenomenon of self-translation using P. Lal's theory of transcreation as the theoretical framework.

- ✓ To examine the similarities and differences between the source text (*Udaas Naslain*) and its self-translated version (*The Weary Generations*) in terms of fidelity, deviation, and creative transformation.

### Research Questions:

- ✓ How does Abdullah Hussain's self-translation of *Udaas Naslain* into *The Weary Generations* reflect the principles of transcreation as proposed by P. Lal?
- ✓ What are the key similarities and deviations between the original and self-translated texts in terms of language, culture, and narrative structure?

### Methodology:

This study employs a qualitative research approach to examine the process and characteristics of self-translation, with a specific focus on *Udaas Naslein* and its English counterpart, *The Weary Generations*, both written by Abdullah Hussain. The research aims to analyze how the author's self-translation aligns with or deviates from P. Lal's theory of transcreation, which allows for creative freedom and cultural adaptation during the translation process. The primary data for this study consists of the following source and target texts. These two texts are examined comparatively to trace narrative changes, ideological shifts, and cultural re-framing done by the author during the process of self-translation.

### Theoretical frameworks:

#### Lal's Transcreated Theory:

Transcreation involves conveying the meaning and intention of the source content, but with the freedom to adapt and modify it to suit the cultural context and needs of the target audience (Pedersen, 2014). The method moves beyond direct translation by adapting messages to fit the target audience while retaining essential aspects of the source content, including cultural relevance.

The Indian poet and translator P. Lal created Transcreation as a form of translation that surpasses direct translation of words. The process strives to deliver the direct message and personally translates cultural significance and emotional effects from the source material into its target representation.

#### Key principles of transcreation as outlined by P. Lal:

1. **Cultural Sensitivity:** A working knowledge of both target and source cultures helps transcreate materials. A translator should know how to see the cultural meaning of an original text while making sure its value carries over to the language of the audience.
2. **Aesthetic Fidelity:** The translator must strive to maintain the aesthetic qualities of the original text, such as its style, tone, and rhythm. This may involve using creative techniques like adaptation, substitution, or addition to achieve the desired effect.
3. **Emotional Impact:** Transcreation functions to instill an identical emotional connection between the target audience and the original text. We need to look closely at the emotional feelings in the text and find the best way to bring them across to the audience in their language.

## ANALYSIS

In literary studies, translation is frequently viewed as the mere transfer of words from one language to another. Nevertheless, when an author translates their own work, they are moving beyond the traditional translation and entering the domain of transcreation- a translation-related activity that mingles the process of lexical translation, cultural adaptation, and (re)creation or the creative re-interpretation of certain textual elements. Abdullah Hussein's debut novel, *Udaas Naslein*, translated to *The Weary Generations* by Abdullah himself, offers a fascinating case study of transcreation, where the writer modifies his deeply rooted and culturally specific narrative for a global audience.

Written in Urdu, *Udaas Naslein* is the exploration of the socio-political upheavals surrounding British colonialism, World War I, and the partition of India, with a particular focus on identity problems that people experience in a world that is changing quickly. When Hussein was translating his work into English as *The Weary Generations*, he wasn't only converting linguistic elements but reconstructing the narrative to appeal to a wider range of global audience.

The discourse below will analyze Hussein's translation of *The Weary Generations* via the lens of transcreation, focusing on how the important elements of the original— historical setting, cultural distinctiveness, emotional tone, and character identity are changed, adjusted, or occasionally made simpler in the English translation. By examining the linguistic alterations, cultural allusions, and thematic expressions, we can gain a clearer understanding of how Hussein's creative choices in transcreation function to bridge two linguistic and culture-specific words while inevitably reshaping the novel's essence.

### The Audience and Cultural Context:

The Novel *Udaas Naslein* has its roots in the Punjabi Identity as well as the significant events of World War I, British Colonization, and India's partition. The Urdu version is intended to address the South Asia readership who understand the historical and cultural background of these events. Hence, the use of idiomatic expressions, cultural allusions gives the book a rich, localized texture.

*The Weary Generations*, on the other hand, is meant for a worldwide readership, many of whom might not be acquainted with the subtleties of the partition of the Sub-continent. Hussein, consequently, takes advantage of the transcreation process to increase the novel's accessibility. In the English translation, cultural nuances that would resonate deeply with the South Asian audience are frequently downplayed or generalized. For Example, allusions to cultural and religious practices—like marriage conventions and social structure—are clarified or made simpler so that the global audience may get the general idea without feeling alienated by regional intricacies.

One of the main challenges of transcreation lies in the shift from one linguistic system to another. South Asians have a very strong connection with Urdu, which is a highly poetic language. Abdullah Hussein takes advantage of this in *Udaas Naslein*, creating an emotional environment that is deeply entwined with the historical and social milieu of the period. The pain of displacement, the loss of identity, and the struggles of colonization are made clear via metaphor, imagery, and the rhythm of language itself.



Nevertheless, when the novel is transcreation into *The Weary Generations*, much of the linguistic richness is lost. The English language, although flexible, does not have the same emotional weight as words with complex historical and lyrical connotations, such as *watan* (homeland) or *gham* (sorrow).

### **Character Identity and Cultural Adaptation:**

The main character, Naim, represents the ambivalent identity of a generation split between the struggle for independence and colonial tyranny, a subject closely related to the historical facts of the Indian Subcontinent. Naim's persona in *Udaas Naslein* is inextricably linked to his Punjabi heritage, his ties to the land, and the socio-political turmoil of the partition.

However, in *The Weary Generations*, Naim's Punjabi identity is less prominent, but his character still has a vital position. His troubles take on a more universal quality, speaking to a global audience about the post-colonial experience as a whole, rather than just the identity crisis of a South Asian man. Hussein accomplishes this by philosophically redefining Naim's internal conflict rather than culturally particular. In the English translation, his feelings of loss and alienation—themes connected to particular historical occurrences in the Urdu version—are broadened into broader concepts of existential ambiguity and alienation.

This adjustment makes Naim more understandable to the global audience, but also withdraws some of the cultural richness that illustrates his character in *Udaas Naslein*. Therefore, transcreations alter Naim from a Punjabi man dealing with particular historical tensions into a global figure discovering the aftermath of any political or social upheaval.

In examining *Udaas Naslein*, translated as *The Weary Generations*, the analysis moves beyond simple translation to explore how Abdullah Hussein creatively reimagines his work in English. Transcreation is more than just word substitution; it also entails modifying the original text's emotional, cultural, and contextual nuanced elements to make it relatable to a new audience. Hussein tackles the difficulty of rewriting his story to preserve the authenticity and spirit of the original while meeting the specific linguistic and cultural demands of English readers in his dual roles as author and translator.

This analysis looks at how Hussein changes important parts of his Urdu story to make it more impactful in English while taking into account the difficulties in expressing character dynamics, tone, and cultural distinctiveness. As Lal argues, transcreation involves a “transposition of imaginative experience” (Lal, 1972), which is clearly observable in Hussein's narrative reshaping. We can gain a better understanding of how transcreation permits minor changes in meaning and interpretation while guaranteeing that the central ideas and emotional nuance of *Udaas Naslein* are retained in *The Weary Generations* by closely examining a few selected passages from both the source and target texts.

The target text is not the literal translation of the source text, but a semantic representation of the target text, so the target text has its own transitivity system, moods, and modulation and procedural knowledge, all of which are distinct from those of the source text (Shakur, 2008).

This act of deliberate reconfiguration suggests that Hussain is not merely translating his work but is actively reconstructing it to reflect new narrative priorities. For instance, the

erasure or softening of region-specific idioms in the English version not only neutralizes certain emotional intensities but also alters the sociopolitical undertones of the original. In accordance with Lal's theoretical model, such transformations reflect an intentional act of cultural and linguistic recalibration by the author-translator.

### Cultural sensitivity and departure from the original:

The TT has its own English-language textual combinations and prose design. The ST is completely different from the structural changes, topic shifts, perception of sequence boundaries, and text as a structural unit. It is a stand-alone piece in its textual designs (Shakur, 2008). By comparing passages from the source text (*Udaas Naslein*) with their counterparts in the target text (*The Weary Generations*), we can observe how transcreation allows for changes in phrasing, tone, and even narrative focus, ensuring the story's essence is maintained. The following examples illustrate how Hussein adapts key elements of his novel during the process of transcreation:

نعیم نے کہا۔ "کچھ زیادہ ہی گرم ہے۔" "آپ کی کافی گرم ہے؟"  
اودہ اس طرح سر پیچھے پھینک کر ہنسی جیسے شام کے وقت برآمدے میں ہنس رہی تھی۔  
اس کی گردن چوڑی ہو گئی اور زرخہ تیزی سے کانپنے لگا۔ وہ بے حد جاندار بنی تھی۔ "آپ کا منہ جل گیا؟"

"Your kahwa must have gone cold. Do you want another one?" 'Oh, no,' replied Naim, 'it's hot. Too hot, actually.' She laughed. 'Did it burn your mouth?' 'It did,' he said, making a painful face. 'Good!' she said. As she laughed with her head thrown back, her neck flattened out and her throat quivered, causing Naim to imagine a small animal shivering in the cold".

In analyzing the transcreation of the source text and target text, the inclusion of new phrases and imagery in the English version that are absent in the original Urdu text reveals Abdullah's creative adaptation for a global audience. For instance, the line "your coffee must have gone cold" does not appear in the Urdu version, indicating how Hussein introduces an everyday, relatable element for the English-speaking audience. This addition serves to make the interaction feel more accessible and familiar. Similarly, the phrase "making a painful face" is absent in the source text, suggesting that the author felt the need to externalize emotions more explicitly in the target text, catering to a readership that might not be as accustomed to subtle emotion cues as an Urdu-speaking audience would be.

Furthermore, the imaginative description of Naim envisioning "a small animal shivering in the cold" is another insertion that adds depth to the English translation. This metaphor is absent in the source text, portraying Naim's emotional state more vividly, helping readers engage with his feelings and vulnerability, and discomfort in a way that transcends language barriers. **Such elaboration exemplifies what Lal calls the "aesthetic recreation of feeling," where fidelity to emotional truth takes precedence over lexical exactness.** These shifts highlight how Hussein, through transcreation, enriches the English version by adding culturally resonant and emotionally explicit imagery to ensure that the thematic essence of the Novel is preserved while making the narrative more relatable and vivid for international readers.

وہ اسی جارحانہ انداز میں خوشی سے بولی اور دونوں ہاتھ اوپر "یہ بہت اچھا ہوا" ---  
--- آپ کے لئے اور لادوں۔ 'وہ سادگی سے ہنس پڑی۔ لائے' ارے اوہ  
"میں یہی پیوں گا۔ یہی؟ اس نے آنکھیں پھیلا کر پوچھا۔

*"Papa wouldn't like it. Not tonight, what with all the guests and me in a sari. You didn't mind my little joke, did you? 'No. But you are drinking my kahwa.' 'Oops, am I? I am sorry. Let me get you another cup.' 'No, no.' 'You don't want any more kahwa?' 'I'll drink from my cup.' 'From this?' she asked, opening her eyes wide. 'Yes.' She paused, looking up at him, and suddenly the look of aggressive playfulness had gone from her face. 'The cups,' she said, embarrassed, her voice almost vulnerable for a fleeting moment, 'are so much alike.' They stood sipping kahwa in silence. The uncertain May wind had begun to rise once again, gently playing with a tuft of hair on Azra's forehead."*

Using the transcreation lens to examine this excerpt from Udaas Naslein and its English transcreation, *The Weary Generations*, we can see that Abdullah Hussein purposefully changed both language and culture to appeal to an English-speaking audience. One significant modification is the addition of the sentence "Oops, am I? I am sorry" in the English translation, Naim says, "I apologize," after realizing he has taken a sip from her cup. An analogous expression of regret is absent from the original source text. Saying "sorry" is a strongly entrenched concept in English-speaking countries, where people frequently employ it as a social etiquette tactic, even in small-scale settings. Hussein gives English readers a greater sense of cultural familiarity by including the apology, which aligns. However, casual apologies are not valued in the same way in Urdu-speaking communities, which is why the original does not contain this sentence.

In addition, another example of cultural adaptation can be seen in Azra's reference to a sari in the English translation (*"Papa wouldn't like it... me in a sari"*). Her father's disapproval of her decision to climb the tree is the only mention of a sari in the Urdu text. Hussein adds further context to the English translation by including the sari, which helps a non-South Asian audience relate to Azra's issue on a more visual and cultural level. The sari assumes the role of a symbol of social graces and modesty, particularly at formal events attended by guests. This specific description is superfluous in the Urdu translation, because cultural values around humility are accepted implicitly. Hussein understands the necessity to provide clearer explanations when translating the book for English readers.

The sentence in Urdu is worded so that it highlights the long journey and reaching the destination ("اس طرح جو وہ کوس کی لمبی مسافت کے بعد کر دیں اٹے اور آگئے ہوئے، تھک ہار کر آپ روشن پور پہنچتے").

By comparison, the English translation rearranges the sentence for a natural English flow:

*"Travelling thus for a full fourteen miles, you arrived in Roshan Pur safely, though not uncovered from layers of thin dust from head to foot."*

In the original, "تسلیم - بابا بھیاپکلیے اندر" (Tasleem – Baba bhiapkeliye andarhain) has a distinctly South Asian manner of referring to seniors with respect.



In English, it is translated to "Hello, Uncle," she said. 'Adaab. Papa is in the drawing room.'" The term "Adaab" is kept, perhaps because it is a culturally rich greeting that lacks a direct equivalent in English. The sentence order is changed, though, to make it more naturally phrased in English.

### Aesthetic Fidelity

Extensive and vivid imagery like "The uncertain May wind had begun to rise once again, gently playing with a tuft of hair on Azra's forehead" is conspicuously absent from the source text, Udaas Naslein. This shows that the narrative style of the Urdu version is more subtly handled, with a lot of the emotional and environmental richness being suggested rather than expressed outright. In the original, there is less emphasis on outward descriptions and more on the internal monologues and thoughts of the protagonists.

Abdullah Hussein enhances the setting for an English-speaking audience in *The Weary Generations* by introducing sensory cues via the transcreation process. Hussein creates a gentle, almost intimate moment that enhances the scene's emotional texture by portraying the wind toying with Azra's hair. This addition intensifies the reader's perception of Azra's vulnerability and the mood of the scene—elements that are more delicately expressed in the original text through character interactions and dialogue.

"کیونکہ روشن پور میں ہمارا خاندان ذلیل ہو چکا ہے۔"  
"میں روشن آغا سے تو نہیں ملا۔" بکافی دیر کے بعد نعیم نے کہا مجھے علم ہے۔ عذر۔۔۔  
۔۔۔ ہم باعزت لوگ تھے۔ اب کچھ بھی نہیں ہیں۔ تمہارا باپ میرا بڑا بھائی ہے۔

*'Because our family has been disgraced in Roshan Pur'*

*Naim searched for something to say. 'I didn't go to see the nawab.'* Ayaz

*Beg ignored his reply. 'His children,' he went on, 'are the issue of woman of the street. Ghulam Mohyyeddin married her. Then her sister came to stay.*

The nawab got interested in her and rivalry began between the sisters. Sometime later the wife killed herself. Her sister now takes the place - without marriage. But who bothers about that? The masters land can get away with anything.

More than usual it had been a time of distress: a drought that burned the earth and whatever green it held to a dirty pale color and then to ashen gray, followed by rains that fell without cease, causing floods at the rivers and canals broke their banks and destroyed whatever was left in the soil, demolishing the mud roofs of houses, bringing great hunger to the bellies and grief to the eyes of humans and beasts until they had the deranged look of great misfortune. Hindus and Sikhs sacrificed virgin goats to the hungry gods and goddesses while the Muslims kneeled down to pray to their one omnipotent God that water, the scourge, be transformed once again into the lifeblood of the earth; they never let go of the hope, the last refuge of this patient breed, that this difficult time too, like so many that had come before, would pass, for such had been the fate of the Indian peasant from the beginning of time.

The two passages from *The Weary Generations* (TT) and *Udaas Naslein* (ST) demonstrate Abdullah Hussein's use of transcreation to convey the devastation of natural disasters and human suffering, while adapting cultural expressions and imagery to suit different audiences.

In the English translation, thorough details of the environmental calamities enlarge the story and make it more understandable for a wider audience. Words like "floods at the rivers," "a drought that burned the earth," and "great hunger in the bellies" conjure up a horrific and almost apocalyptic vision of devastation. The emphasis on "Muslims kneeled down to pray" and "Hindus and Sikhs sacrificed virgin goats" broadens the scope of the tragedy by offering a religious and multicultural response to the common grief. The text highlights the peasant class's tenacity while highlighting a universal notion of hope that cuts beyond religious barriers. Hussein makes sure the story connects with a broad, international audience that may not be familiar with these ethnic nuances in ceremony by highlighting them. Moreover, there is no such thing as sacrificed virgin goats in the ST; however, Hussein included this in the TT to make it more relatable and credible for the audience, reflecting their cultural practices. By adding this element, he aimed to connect more deeply with the cultural context of his audience.

Conversely, the Urdu version uses more literary and metaphorical language. The phrase "گاؤں کی سوئی سوئی گرد آلود فضا" (the sleepy, dust-filled atmosphere of the village) sets a sad tone, reflecting not just physical devastation but also the emotional, psychological, and spiritual stagnation of the villagers. The passage speaks to the cyclical nature of destruction with lines like "جنگ کے میدانوں میں بکھرے ہوئے ان کے محبوب، مضبوط جسم تیز دھوپ میں بخارات بن کر اڑ گئی" (their beloved, strong bodies scattered on the battlefields evaporated in the scorching sun). The imagery of soldiers' bodies turning to vapor and bones being buried by new floods adds a tragic and almost surreal dimension to the story, which may be more familiar to ST readers who appreciate such figurative language.

The Urdu passage also includes deeply expressive images of suffering, such as "پاگل آنکھوں" (the skeletons of farmers with mad eyes wandered the streets) and "چھتوں پر بڑھے پیٹوں والے" (yellow-faced children with bloated stomachs sat on rooftops). This depiction of hunger and death is vivid but more implicit compared to the TT. The Urdu text creates a sense of emotional desolation that requires the reader to engage with the text's metaphorical layers, drawing on shared cultural understandings of rural suffering.

اس طرح جوہ کو س کی لمبی مسافت کے بعد کر دیں اٹے اور اکتائے ہوئے، تھک ہار کر آپ روشن پور پہنچے (صفحہ نمبر 10)

*Travelling thus for a full fourteen miles, you reached Roshan Pur unharmed, although not uncovered by layers of thin dust from head to foot. (Page 14)*

This passage offers an intriguing example of transcreation of The Weary Generations in comparison to Udaas Naslein. The original Urdu text seems to have a rhythm and poetic quality to it, whilst the English version makes the same point in a more relaxed and prosaic manner.

### Creativity

Therefore, the translation of Udaas Naslein into The Weary Generations serves as a creative analysis of the original source text. It demonstrates how Hussein not only translates but also reinterprets and expands the narrative to engage a broader audience. By balancing cultural specificity with global accessibility, Hussein preserves the essence of the story while adapting it to resonate with readers across different cultural contexts.

Balkamand blushed like a young boy. They walked to the door. Naim untied the mare's reins from the door-hook. Some children had gathered in the street, looking at the horse.

'When you get to my age,' Balkamand said to Naim, 'the eyes change.

They either make you blind or make you see further.'

'According to what they have seen?' Naim asked with a smile. 'No. Because of the kind of eyes you have.' There was a note of sadness in his voice.

After a few seconds, Naim said farewell.

Niaz Beg didn't prove as difficult as Naim had expected. 'You have been lonely since you came back,' he said. 'If you want to go and see your friends in the big cities, by all means go. It will make you happy. I am not yet too old to look after everything on my own in your absence.'

بالمند لڑکیوں کی طرح شرمایا اور اس کے زرد چہرے پر ہلکی سی سرخی دوڑ گئی۔

زندگی کی زیادہ تر قوتیں جو ہم پر عمل پیرا ہوتی ہیں، عموماً آنکھوں پر اثر ہوتی ہیں۔۔۔۔

۔۔۔۔ نعیم نے اس کے ہونٹوں کی خفیف اداس مسکراہٹ کو محسوس کیا۔

In the above passages from both the source text and the target text, Abdullah Hussein employs significant transcreation in the English version, reshaping the content to match cultural nuances and readability for a global audience. The source text is deeply embedded with culturally embedded terms that use metaphorical language to convey the emotional, philosophical, and intellectual foundations of existence. For instance, in the Urdu text, the phrase "اصل زندگی کے تکلیف دہ اور گرد آلود محنت کے چند سال گزار لو گے" (after you have spent a few years in the painful, dusty toil of real life) portrays a poetic, almost philosophical reflection on life's hardships. This speaks to how experience shapes one's perception of reality, using imagery common in South Asian literary traditions.

On the other hand, the target text simplifies and compresses these ideas, concentrates more on dialogue and personal interaction, i.e., the target text swaps the metaphorical description of life's wear on a person with a more direct description: "When you get to my age, the eyes change. They either make you blind or make you see further." In order to simplify the message for an English-speaking audience while preserving the core, the translation highlights how viewpoint changes with age. The notion that "what they have seen" causes the eyes to change diverts attention from labor and outward battles to a deeper within, psychological metamorphosis.

Additionally, the Urdu translation makes use of more nuanced body language and emotional clues. For example, the line "بالمند لڑکیوں کی طرح شرمایا" (Balkamand flushed like a girl) effectively conveys the cultural background of modesty and emotional fragility to readers from South Asia. The English translation softens this to "Balkamand blushed like a young boy," a transcreation decision that modifies the metaphor to conform to the gender and cultural conventions that are known to readers in the West. This is because a reference to a young boy is perceived as less gendered and more relatable.

Additionally, the Urdu passage uses more visual imagery to convey farewell, such as “

اس کے چہرے پر جو روشنی آگئی تھی الوداعی نظر ڈالتے ہوئے نعیم نے اس کے ہونٹوں کی خفیف اداس مسکراہٹ کو محسوس کیا

(Naim noticed the faint, sad smile on his lips as the light from the window fell on his face). This line paints a vivid picture of the farewell, filled with emotional depth and unspoken sadness. In contrast, the English version skips this visual and emotional detail, condensing it into a straightforward dialogue exchange that ends with a brief description of Naim's farewell, focusing more on actions than on the subtle visual cues that create atmosphere in the Urdu version.

Therefore, the TT reflects Abdullah Hussein's careful transcreation to adapt the ST to different audiences, demonstrating the cultural, emotional, and philosophical elements of the ST to fit the conventions of Western literary expectations. This transcreation highlights how the writer shifts between linguistics and culture, reshaping the narrative while preserving its deeper essence for a new audience.

The colloquial and somewhat informal nature of the original Urdu dialogue is captured in "ہم لوگ" (hum log napkins banarahehain – jo bhi ho).

The English translation makes it slightly more formal: "We are," she chuckled, "making napkins."

The words "jo bhi ho" (whatever that is) are left out in the English translation, perhaps to make the dialogue more natural in English.

The sentence in Urdu is rhythmical and formal, which is a bit lost in the translation. Such phrases as are left out, stripping away a shade of meaning.

The English translation adds "unharmed, though not uncovered by layers of thin dust from head to foot," which makes the picture more explicit and immediate to an English audience. The use of "full fourteen miles" in the English translation is to provide accuracy and specificity, whereas the distance is expressed in a more natural way in the Urdu translation.

ایاز بیگ اور نعیم جب برآمدے میں چڑھے تو سامنے سے بھوری آنکھوں والی ایک نوعمر لڑکی جارحانہ انداز میں نکلی۔  
"چچا۔۔۔" وہ ٹھٹک کر اونچی آواز میں بولی "تسلیم۔ بابا بیٹھے ہیں۔ آپ چلیے اندر ہم لوگ نیپکن بنارہے ہیں۔ ابھی تو۔۔۔"

A girl stepped aggressively from the lawn onto the patio. Going up to the veranda, she spotted the two guests and stopped, looking up as if startled. 'Hello, Uncle,' she said. 'Adaab. Papa is in the drawing room. Please go in. We are,' she laughed, 'making napkins. Taking a quick glance at her wrist watch, she went up the four steps and joined the others. The girl had hazel eyes. (Page 21)

### Conclusion:

Abdullah Hussain's *Udaas Naslain* (1963) stands as a monumental work in Urdu literature, not only for its narrative brilliance but also for its profound exploration of identity, nationhood, and personal loss during the colonial and post-colonial periods of South Asian history. Through the character of an ordinary Punjabi soldier, Hussain artfully interweaves the political with the personal, allowing readers to witness the impact of the 1857 War of Independence, British colonial rule, and eventually the trauma of Partition through an individual's emotional and psychological evolution.

This research has analyzed *Udaas Naslain* as a rich literary text that transcends historical documentation, offering instead a deeply humanized portrayal of the collective anxieties, fractured identities, and unresolved legacies of colonialism. The novel's ability to compress a century of upheaval into one man's life narrative reflects not only Hussain's literary genius but also his deep engagement with questions of memory, belonging, and historical continuity.

Moreover, the socio-political commentary embedded in the novel aligns with key themes in postcolonial theory, particularly the notions of hybrid identity, disillusionment with nationalist movements, and the emotional toll of political transitions. Hussain does not offer simplistic binaries of colonizer and colonized; instead, he explores the internal conflicts of those caught in between — men who fought for an empire they didn't belong to and later suffered in a nation they helped create.

In conclusion, *Udaas Naslain* remains a critical text for understanding how fiction can serve as a vehicle for historical reflection, identity formation, and cultural memory. It bridges the gap between individual experience and collective history, making it a significant contribution not just to Urdu literature but also to the broader field of South Asian literary studies and postcolonial discourse. Future studies may further explore its comparative translations and the challenges of retaining cultural nuance across linguistic and temporal boundaries.

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