

VISUAL – VERBAL NARRATIVE STRATEGIES IN *THIS SIDE THAT SIDE*

The visual-verbal narrative strategies are an analysis of one-to-one relationship of the visuals on a graphic page with the texts of the same narrative. The analysis of one-to-one relationship is done to find out the tensions that are created when there is a difference between the story and the discourse i.e. between the words and the images on a graphic page. This analysis will be applied into the stories of *This Side That Side* to achieve the result of its hypothetical statement made in Chapter 1. The research is done to ascertain the traces of narrative tensions in the anthology so few stories were singled out as the researcher is only interested to know how the graphic take on partition has made it a simplified reading or a complicated one, and that could be ascertained by reading and examining more than half the stories presented in the anthology. The anthology was divided into three different forms for its analysis which were categorized as:

- (1) Autobiography or the ‘autography’
- (2) Photo Story and,
- (3) Laprek and Dastangoi

Selected narratives of “autography” contains the story of ‘Noor Miyan’ by Vidrohi and Tina Rajan, ‘The Exit Plan’ by Khademul Islam, ‘Know Directions Home’ by Nina Sabnani, ‘Tamasha-e-Tetwal’ by Arif Ayaz Parrey and Fariha Rehman, ‘Water Stories’ by Arundhati Ghosh, ‘Making of a Poet’ by M Hasan and Sukanya Ghosh, ‘A Good Education’ by Vishwajyoti Ghosh, ‘The Red ledger’ by Ankur Ahuja, ‘I Too Have Seen Lahore!’ by Salman Rashid and Mohit Suneja, ‘Profit and Loss’ by Mahmud Rahman and Pinaki De, ‘The Taboo’ by Malini Gupta and Dyuti Mittal, ‘The Last Circus’ by Priya Sen and Deewana, ‘An Afterlife’ by Sanjoy Chakraborty.

Narratives of the “photo story” presented in the novel are The News by Bani Abidi, ‘90 Upper Mall’ by Ahmad Rafay Alam and Martand Khosla, ‘Welcome to Geneva Camp’ by Maria M. Litwa and ‘Making Faces’ by Orijit Sen.

‘Which Side?’ by Ravish Kumar and ‘A Letter From India’ by Mahmood Hasan are the translated version of short ‘Hindi’ and ‘Urdu’ fables respectively. The technique of visual-verbal narrative will be applied to examine their narratives.

Since each and every writers and illustrators of the anthology has represented their story with a very different approach and style, the reading to these narratives are not as simple as one might presume. Analepsis, propounded by Gerard Genette for the narrative order is found in the ‘selected’ narratives of ‘autography’. ‘Analepsis’ in narration means the narrator recounts and event that took place earlier than the present point of time in a story. It is one of the most common narrative features in an autobiographical account.

“Noor Miyan” by Vidrohi, who happens to live in the wilderness of JNU, is the writer of the story. It is a memoir of author’s childhood. The story is about the affectionate bond that her grandmother shared with the ‘surma’ seller Noor Miyan. The author recounts how her grandmother never forgot to buy the ‘surma’ from Noor Miyan. She was a fan of his ‘surma’ which was made from the cow’s pure ghee and her eyes sparkled whenever she wore it. She was cheerful and full of life and felt young after wearing the Surma by Noor Miyan. The illustrated visual narrative, when Noor Miyan is about to depart initially contradicts with the textual narrative on the same page which talks about the vantage of Noor Miyan’s surma on her grandma’s eyes. “And his Surma is Chyawanprash, the life-herb that revitalizes your eyes. Your eyes are not just eyes, they are the divine, And that Surma, an offering made by Noor

Miyan”(63) But The last line on the same panel concludes with “This was Noor Miyan, and then he went away to Pakistan”(63) which is supported by the visual narrative of the footsteps highlighted on the panel which is coming out towards the lower frame on the page. The which the readers can discern the illustrations in dual ways as it has not used speech bubbles for the textual narrative between the characters present on the panel which either holds true for the narratives highlighted on the page. The silence of the words points to the closed ‘bond’ that her grandma shared with her favorite surma seller Noor Miyan and the silence of Noor Miyan ‘departing’ the country.

The author recalls the time when everything changed with the Partition of India and Pakistan, Noor Miyan being a muslim left for the land of Muslims i.e. Pakistan and with his departure from India a pale of gloominess pervaded into grandma’s life. She no more wore ‘surma’ since she only loved ‘surma’ sold by Noor Miyan. Her grandmother died after few years but the author noticed the fact that her grandma shared a special ‘bond’ with the ‘surma’ and all her gloominess surrounded her once Noor Miyan left for Pakistan. Few years later, her grandma passed away. The author, who was very close to her, vividly remembers the last days of her gloomy life which was a consequence of her lovelorn for the famous ‘surma’ by Noor Miyan.

The textual narrative on the last page of the story which happens after the cremation of her grandmother has been narrated in a metaphorical form,

“As I scattered her ashes into the river, I felt, This River is no longer a river but has turned into her eye

And the ashes in my hand are the surma that will line those eyes

And in this way, for one last time, I applied Noor Miyan’s Surma to my grandmother’s eyes(66-67)

The story ends with metaphorical textual descriptions of author's deep emotional attachment towards her grandma and her favorite 'surma'. He imagines her 'ashes' to be her 'surma' and the 'river' in which he'll scatter her ashes to be her 'eyes' and in this way he'll apply the surma (ashes) to her grandmother eyes (river) for the last time. The author is seen on the panel of the last page of the novel where the river has the image of the 'eyes' and ashes are shown as 'flowers' which makes the visual precise for the readers to infer the metaphorical narrative of the story. Thus, the metaphorical textual narrative compliments with the visual narrative which makes the readers to easily make a connection with the actions illustrated on the panel.

"The Exit Plan" is a memoir written by a Bangladeshi writer Khademul Islam, and the cartoonist Sarbajit Sen has designed the visuals of the narrative. The story is an autographic narrative of the writer when he was a young boy in the year 1971, after the creation of Bangladesh. The first visual on the page begins by highlighting the skyline of Pakistani city of Karachi on 16th December, 1971. The visual narrative in this story mainly relate to the moods of the city of Karachi which was yet to be grappled by the news of the defeat as is evident from the text: "A sunlit Karachi betrayed no sign of a War or Surrender ...A thousand miles away" (86)

The textual narratives imply that the life was normal and the illustrations that follow compliment the visual narrative. The writer belonged to a Bengali family of Bangladeshi ethnic, and after the partition of Pakistan the whole Bangladeshi community was terrified living in Pakistan and most of them planned an early exit from the country with any means. The story takes place in the city of Karachi. After the news of the defeat that gripped the whole country, the writer recalls the time when whole city has come down to standstill with desperation running high over the minds of the people. The Pakistani citizens are not coming to terms with the loss of

East Pakistan. Emotions are running high; the city remains sleepless whole night through weeks. There are anti-army protests being held on the streets of every Pakistani city “down with the army!!”(86) The special-effect lettering used by the illustrator is enough to grasp the sentiments of the citizens of Pakistan to the readers and this is what scares the people of Bangladeshi ethnic living in Pakistan.

The dialogues between the characters on the page takes place in the speech balloons but the visual representations of the speech balloons ‘connects’ the two panel overlapping the gutter have more significance to it. The readers could either infer it to the pace of the events that are taking place in quick succession or he /she be refer to the anxiety of the characters.

“Know Direction Home” by Nina Sabnani narrates about the forced displacement of a community from a border area of ‘Adigaam’ in Pakistan to India during the Indo-Pak war of 1972. It was the time when war had been broke out between India and Pakistan. As the writer lives very close to the border in a village in Pakistan the people of the village began to escape to India as they were the only communities (Hindus) living in that village. Here, the writer has utilized the dotted lines which traverse through the pages that divide and regroup the people into segments, crowd and places. The pages are filled with these figures that represent people. The voice that tells us the narrative starts with ‘we’. The textual narrative is interlarded with a woman who speaks about herself and her family says, “I don’t know why they were fighting but India took the land we were on. They were there for 12 months and that is when shifting about happened” (100)

In the visual narrative the frames and the panels are missing which makes the reading in a temporal sequence a little cumbersome. But the readings of the visuals would solely depend on the reader familiarity with the comic literacy that he or she might read it from left to right or top

to bottom. The writer is representing a single voice in the narrative but the surprising element is that it is the large number of people that are being transported from one place to another. The story deals with the lives of the displaced community from across the border being settled in a much unknown place where they develop their own culture and tradition. The border-less and the panel-less narratives of the story provide a unified typography to its readers. The story ends with a postal address :“Raniben Ratilal Bhanani,...Kala Raksha, Parkar Vas,...Sumrasar Sheikh,...Bhuj Taluka, Gujarat” – thus signifying the confirmation of Indian citizenship to one of the displaced lady that came to India during the war (100)

“Tamasha-e-Tetwal” by Arif Ayaz Parry is the story of a village that is set in Kashmir near the border of Indian and Pakistan. Tetwal is a village located at the Line of Control (LOC). The border has been defined by a river that cut across the mountains in between. The writer who also happens to be a reporter visits Tetwal in the wake of a killing of a young boy in Tetwal. There is a bridge above the river that connects Indian and Pakistan. The army guard the bridge and keep a vigil on it. The writer sits among the villagers and is interested to know the ongoing state of affairs of Tetwal after the killing of the boy. The textual and the visual narrative come to the fore when the villagers asked him for what purpose he has come to Tetwal to which he replies “nothing important”(116), though a newspaper with the headline of Kashmiri boy who has been shot dead in ‘Tetwal’ is visualized at the background, thereby hiding the real motif of the reporter here. Loudspeakers are played on higher volume on both sides of the border near the bridge, each resonating to the patriotic slogans of the respective nation. In the third panel of the page, two loudspeakers are highlighted atop the bridge across the river. The loudspeakers have been drawn partially out of the frame and the illustrator seems to have deliberately magnified the images and has put it in the foreground of the panel so that the loudspeakers displayed occupy

significance to the readers. Voices exalting slogans of respective nations are depicted in ‘Urdu’ and ‘Hindi’ signifying the language of Pakistan and India respectively. The montage of the loudspeakers captures the essence of propaganda that has been fuelled by the respective government agency to create hatred among the people across the border.

He then goes to meet Haji Saheb. Haji Saheb is disappointed with the whole idea of partition of the two nations and blames the Britishers for the current mess for he believed that a unified India never existed in the history and it was only the British with their cunningness who made India a unified country for their own profit. He believed that the Union of India was made by coercion and confusion which brought no goodwill to the people. Haji Saheb recalls the good olden days when the sound of the silent river was music to his ears that has now been replaced by the noisy loudspeakers on both the sides. At the end of the conversation he says – “They have made us forget the art of the whisper and for that we are not going to forgive them”(120)

The reportage throws light on how propaganda is used to create hatred among people on both sides of the border.

“Water Stories” by Arundhati Ghosh display a very fanciful employment of panels through the narratives of the story. The story begins with an old man telling stories to her daughter about the good old days that he enjoyed growing up in unified Bengal. He shares many of his anecdotes to her only girl child but whenever he is reminded of his mother he becomes sad as she is no more. It is interesting to note that the illustrator has reshaped the anecdotes of the old man in the form of water droplets signifying the water connections to all his anecdotes. Though her mother was drowned in the river Padma and died, the old man blames himself for her death and says it was the curse of the Padma, “I think the Padma knew we were leaving for another land. She stole my mother” (132) the textual narrative is supported by the visual narrative on the

page illustrating the event that led to the death of his mother. The story ends with panels drawn like waves of the ocean shows the graphiateur presenting himself as the implied author.

Salman Rashed's "I Too Have Seen Lahore" is a touching tale of man named Darshan Singh who has spent his Childhood in Pakistan. He was born in a village Klasswala near Pasrur in a well off family. The story opens with the narrator wandering through the by lanes of Jalandhar with his wife looking for an old home that probably belonged to her father. The narratives shift from the house hunting of the narrator to Darshan Singh's childhood days when the events of partition compelled his family and villagers to leave from Pakistan. When the narrator was walking through the Rainak Bazar , his friend Kuldip said somebody wanted to speak to him and there he saw Darshan Singh. He approached towards him and took him by the elbow and said, "I too have seen Lahore! I once went to the zoo there with my father and brothers" (209) the childish demeanor of Darshan Singh left a lasting impression on the narrator. The textual narrative reads "the happiness in his smile and the emotion with which he had delivered that simple sentence stayed with me" (209)

The textual narrative about the childhood days is narrated by the writer himself. The visual narrative changes the color of the panels from white to dark as the story of Darshan Singh's childhood shifts from his normal childhood life and schooldays to the impact of Partition on his life that changed everything. "Then one day, young Darshan's world exploded into flames – an event whose cause and meaning his young mind failed to fathom" (211)

The visual narrative changes color from white to dark when the narrator talks about his world exploding into 'flames' thereby complimenting the textual narrative and the 'dark' color of the panel remains till the horrors of the night of fleeing Pakistan by Darshan Singh's family and villagers comes to an end in the narrative.

After listening to the story of Darshan Singh, the writer wishes to photograph Darshan Singh's house when he's back in Pakistan. "But the house is gone. Gone too are the childhood friends of his memory. When I return to Jalandhar, I will not have the promised photos of the double - storeyed house that Darshan Singh remembers in Klasswala" (219) The visual narrative then shift to the writer who has a camera slung around his neck is clearly Salman Rashed who can be identified by the photograph that is printed before the story commences.

'Profit and Loss' is a story which is written by Mahmud Rahman. The writer reminiscences his childhood days when East Pakistan was still a part of unified Pakistan before the creation of Bangladesh. He recalls how his grandfather celebrated the 1947 freedom by lighting a cigarette when he was not even born at that period of time. The visual narrative show his grandfather litting a cigarette to mark the celebration for the freedom .The same image is also highlighted on the first page of the story along with the title of the story marking the 'celebration' .After the independence, the writer narrates that his father and grandfather started a business to mark the birth of Pakistan. His father opened a Car dealership and named it 'Pak Motors' which was later changed to 'Bangla Motors' after the creation of Bangladesh in 1971. His grandfather opened a pharmacy and named it 'Azad' Phramacy, for he loved the independence of his country from the British so he chose the name 'Azad' which means freedom in 'Urdu'. The writer's father complete his college education from Calcutta and later joined Calcutta Police. In the year 1942, his father quit the job because of the national movement and moved to Dhaka as it was the call of his inner 'Desh Taan' that brought him back to his Bengali homeland. The writer articulates how the business of his father and grandfather collapsed after few years and because of it their shops were put on rent as storefronts. The narrative then shift to the days of migration posts the Partition when the refugees fluxed across

the borders, “There would continue to be riots afterwards, big ones in 1950 and 1964. A vivid image from the second one stays in my mind: Hindu families running through our neighbourhood with mattresses on their heads”(227) The textual narrative is complemented by the visual narrative which illustrates men and women carrying their belongings on their head depicting the migration across the border.

Then the narrative shift to the incidents of the Bangladesh Liberation War which was also a result of linguistic ignorance of Bengali by the majority Urdu speaking Pakistani government. The visual narrative highlights in bold fonts that points to the slogans and rebellion with raised arm ‘fists’ highlighted in dark color with the textual narrative that reads “ your language”(229) in bold white fonts highlighting the struggle or the “mukti juddho”(229) The story ends with a textual narrative of the writer that reads :

With liberation in 1971, We undid the new chains imposed on us, removing one hateful legacy of 1947. When will we put behind us that other legacy of Partition; of people forced out of their homes carrying memories of neighbours turning on them in hate ? It would help if we talked about it more. When the subcontinent’s monsoon anniversary of that day just came by, we acted as if August 1947 only mattered to India and Pakistan, “not to us” ... How so far from the truth”. (233)

The visual narrative, when compared with the textual narrative, might confuse the reader here. The textual narrative have been situated on the visual narrative that suggest the roots of the trees which forms the foreground of the panel have taken the shape of a cricket stump on the ground instead of the branches that should have been a proper representation. The stumps have Bangladeshi flag on its background. This may produce a conflicting analysis of the visual narrative as compared to its textual narrative. Thus, the reader may have a conflicting analysis of

the visuals and the text which makes the reading of this narrative difficult to comprehend sometimes.

“Making of a Poet” has been written and presented by M. Hasan who is a poet and activist and Sukanya Ghosh who works as an artist and an animator. The story begins on the day of Bengali New Year. The date mentioned on the top left of the panel is 15 April 2009, Dhaka. The writer has come all the way from Bangladesh to meet the poet who used to live in East Pakistan and moved to India in the year 1957 and “life was never easy thereafter” (140) When the writer meets the old man who has now become a poet he is astounded to know that the Poet has not forgotten his good old days that he spent in erstwhile East Pakistan. “This man was living Bangladesh, If not living in Bangladesh. The latter was not possible as he didn’t have a passport. Nor did he have any papers to prove that his birthplace was in Bangladesh.”(144) The poet has a collection of his poetry and shows his book ‘UNFULFILLED TRAVELLING SERIES’ to him. The collections had poems on the places that now belongs to Bangladesh ‘Mymensingh, Dinajpur, Lalmonirhat...’(145) The textual narrative is followed with the concerning line on the next page that reads “These are the places I always wanted to go to, but never could..” quips the poet (146) Although there are no speech balloons for the dialogues he speaks, the illustrator has used the picture-specific strategy of the verbal narrative to underline the conversation. Through the textual narrative the readers get an idea that It is the longing for his roots that made him a poet. The visual narrative is formed through a mixture of drawn sketches and photographs. The first page has the imagery of the Indo-Bangladesh border. The illustrator has employed the word-specific strategy of the visual narrative. Sketches such as of table fan, palm lines, spectacles, boats, empty chair forms the additive of the visual narrative. The visuals points to the mundane life of the poet who always longed to go back to his roots i.e. East Pakistan, now Bangladesh.

His imaginary emotions and desires let him fly and this way he visits his 'motherland' whenever he wishes to.

"A Good education" is a memoir of the chief curator of this anthology Vishwajyoti Ghosh. The textual narrative contains first person narrative by Vishwajyoti Ghosh while the letters of her grandmother which she wrote when she was posted as a counselor at Mana Camp in Dandakaranya, Madhya Pradesh, form the parallel narrative of the story, So this story is a set of two memoir i.e. the life of Ghosh's childhood at Kasturba Niketan, Delhi which was a rehabilitation home for the refugee and the memoir of her grandmother when she was posted at Mana Camp in Dandakaranya. The textual narrative of memoir of Vishwajyoti Ghosh is written in bold 'calibri', while the textual narrative of her grandmother is written and highlighted in bold 'times new roman', So, the visual narrative generated by the textual representation of the narrative distinguishes the two separate narrative and makes the reader to comprehend the story without much difficulty. The textual narratives of the post memory are without the frames on the panel.

The story is about the time the refugees of East Pakistan came to India and settled at Mana Camp in Dandakaranya in Madhya Pradesh. Mana Camp housed around 35000 refugees, which mostly consisted of women who came from Bangladesh. Her grandmother was the counselor to these refugee women. It was here at the camp that her grandmother decided to provide 'a good education' to the children of these refugee women. She offers her goodwill to the women which required to send their kids to be sent to Delhi, at the Kasturba Niketan, for good education and can take a time of over 15 years to make them well educated. The women initially relented but agreed at the end winning her heart. Then these kids were sent to the Kasturba Niketan in Delhi .It was here that Ghosh became friends with these children and

recounts his days spent with them. The visual narratives on the last page present a photograph of Ghosh with the group of the refugee kids. Ghosh can be recognized being held by one of the children all “suited-booted”(161)

“The Red Ledger” By Ankur Ahuja is a memoir of author’s childhood. It is an emotional tale of the narrator’s grandfather who had migrated from Pakistan to the new ‘Promised land’ i.e. India. The narrator recalls how his grandfather used to buy bulk of red ledgers when he was a child. He’d no idea for what they were but he used to notice that his grandfather always was very much attached to the red ledger. The author gives a short description about the red ledger “Bound in red cloth, stitch with white thread, it was his daily diary of profit and loss”(170).The visual narrative compliment the textual narrative here. He narrates how every night after dinner his grandfather used to hunch over the red ledger. There is a shift of the narrative in the other page and the focus now shifts to Delhi when his grandfather migrated to India after the partition after leaving a thriving business in Bahawalpur, Pakistan. The panel following the description showcases the settlements in Delhi. The visuals represent the congested colony of Mori Gate at that period of time. There a statute at coronation park welcomes him. The speech balloon reads “welcome to Delhi”(172). The panel on the next page shows a huge shop that probably belonged to his grandfather, the address in the frame read “Bada Bazar” “Bahawalpur,Pakistan”(173) though separated by two frames on the panel. The author elaborates that it wasn’t the shop and properties that his grandfather left behind in Bahawalpur Pakistan but also his friends ‘the exemplary brotherhood of Hindus and Muslims’(173) He further narrates that the “story of his life always ended there when he left Pakistan and he didn’t had the courage to ask him anything about his past as he didn’t want to see him cry”(174). Many years after the death of his grandfather the author comes to know about the dark past of his life. The verbal narrative reads

‘Brought up by a blind uncle he lost his parents to an epidemic in his early childhood. One of his sisters was abducted during the journey from Bahawalpur to Delhi. She found her way back much later but my grandmother refused to discuss what had happened to her’(174).The visual narrative that follows the textual narrative highlights his grandfather sitting on a bench with birds hovering around him. The illustrations are picture-specific. Then on the last panel the readers see a refugee slip issued by the ministry of Relief and Rehabilitation which covers the whole panel of the visual narrative on the last page of the story which signifies his identity in this new ‘promised land’ of India for he was always attached to his old home at Bahawalpur, Pakistan. His waist coat clunged on a hanger is illustrated on the foreground of the panel.

“The Taboo” by Malini Gupta focuses on the eroding social life at one of the largest refugee transit camps in West Bengal and by the look of it on the graphic page, has one of the most complex visual narratives in this anthology. The panels are totally missing from the visual narrative and make it difficult for the readers to read to grasp its imagery. Although speech balloons appear in temporal sequence which helps the reader to comprehend its textual narrative. The visual imagery fluctuates in its representation of the sequences. The journey towards Duttaphulia from Ranaghat has been illustrated in multiple fragments of images where an entire road journey is depicted on a single page. The taboo is a story about a woman called Lily. She has left her husband who now lives in the Cooper’s camp. When she meets Malini, she says

Make no mistake Malini di ! More than him, it was Cooper’s Camp I left. If he had left Cooper’s, maybe I would not have left him. But he did not. Our dreams were about leaving the nightmares of Cooper’s Camp. He doesn’t get it Malini-di, Cooper’s is not a transit camp anymore. It is permanently there. Forever.(246)

Though the verbal narrative explains about the life at Cooper's camp, the visual narrative of Cooper's Camp has not even once represented through the narrative of the story. The imagery of Cooper's Camp is missing from the entire story though it is integral to the entire narrative of the story. Lily's leaving her husband at Cooper's Camp and staying alone at Dattaphulia is 'the taboo' that she is now been associated with. For Lily "that taboo (living in Cooper's camp) is greater than living alone" (246)

The story clearly suggests how the refugee camps were slowly becoming the den of anti social activities. The Cooper's Camp was created in 1950 after the Partition of India for the refugees but now has become a permanent settlement. This is not the only camp in India that became a settlement, there are many like this which highlight one of the serious consequences of the Partition. These places became a den of smugglers and criminals who were involved in crimes like drug smuggling and human trafficking.

"The Last Circus" has written by Priya Sen who works with video and sound narratives as an artist, editor and sound designer and also occasionally teaches experimental film and practices. Kanhaiya Lal Prem Deewana has designed the visuals of the story. The story narrates the life of an old man who was born in a circus in Unified India and reminisces about his olden days. Opens up at Parade Ground, Bangalore and the year is 2012. There's a man called Dasrath who dreams of his brother. Dasrath's real name is 'Don Emanuelle Stanislav' and his family is from Manila. He was born in circus in Lahore before the Partition of India. After his birth even the circus was also partitioned. He recalls he'd to cross the border and leave the circus as the circus also felt apart when the owner of it died. The old man recalls the time when he fell in love with a circus girl 'Jaanu' who could 'rode around the ring in whirled of dust and glitter'. He recounts how he came across the border with several co-artists, trainers, clowns, fire eater,

African, Nepalese and Russian artists in a packed truck without any right papers. He longs to meet his brothers now. He dreams of them. The whole story is narrated to the readers with the montage of circus forming the backdrop of the panel showing each and every elements of the circus.

The textual narrative is more dominant here as what he recalls can't be narrated through the visual narrative. He thinks of his friends and say, "They must still be in the closing act – the most phenomenal, most agile, magical flying, duo who at the end of the show, would let themselves fall as the audience cheered and wept because they know the grand old circus was moving somewhere else the next day, to a faraway city in a not so familiar country." (281) the narrative ends with these lines "Tomorrow we leave for Shimoga" reads the texts in speech balloons, another city in Karnataka (281)

"An Afterlife" is written by Sanjay Chakraborty in Bengali and has been translated into English by Bhaswati Ghosh. Sanjay Chakraborty is a painter, performance artist, art writer and illustrator. He is a full time lecturer at Dhaka University and also teach part time at Pathshala, South Asian Media Institute Dhaka.

Recounts the days he spent his childhood in Chittagong where he was Called as 'Dandi' – a metaphor for a Hindu living there. He was fondly called 'Akash' at home and 'Akkudandi' outside since Akash was a 'dandi', so the name 'Akkudandi'. This relates to the cultural narratives that highlights the people's notion about the 'others' who have settled in the partitioned nation. The young boy felt marked among his people. After 10 years, he got a chance to study at Rabindra Bharti University in Kolkata. As we are aware of the author's name, Sanjay discovered that even in Kolkata the people from East Bengal (Now Bangladesh) were referred as 'Bangaal'. During his days in college he meets Madhu who was also a 'Bangaal' now settled

in India. She also explained to him the difference between 'Bangaal' and 'Ghoti'. 'Ghoti' was a term used for the people of West Bengal. Their friendship grows and love blossoms. She too have a desire to visit Chittagong one day, her ancestors home which they'd to leave after the Partition. Both love each other but Sanjay being a single child it's difficult to leave his parents and Madhu already came from Bangladesh so her parents would never send her again. Both of them wish for an afterlife and desire for a borderless world. The panels shows both of them sitting for hours near the river with visual narrative highlighting the river at the background. The textual narrative reads "If there's anything like an afterlife, I would like to be a river "(290) which shows Madhu's deep love for him. Then Sanjay leaves for Kolkata and it is after 2 years that Sanjay gets to know about Madhu through a common friend that she is married and happy. Though he is not in touch with her, he felt it would have been a different story if there was no 'border'. The visual narrative of the last panel of the story has city buildings at the background which probably is Dhaka with Sanjay standing on the road whose new address along-with his profession is highlighted in the frame of the panel.

Visual – Verbal Narrative Strategies in Photo Story of *This Side That Side*

Photo story are essentially the photographs that convey a story. In *This Side That Side* photo story have been presented in the narratives contributed by Bani Abidi, Ahmad Rafay Alam, Maria M.Litwa, Mehreen Murtaza and Orijit Sen.

Bani Abidi's "*The News*" is a photo story that showcases the National Newsroom of Both India and Pakistan distinctly separated by a single panel on each pages. Ironically the dialogues displayed on the News Broadcasting Television on both sides are same which points out to the non-meaningful state of affairs on both side of the once an unified country. Their resembling attitudes basically points to the common underlying traits that are shared by both the people of

respective countries reminding the readers how the shared outlook has not been diminished by the demarcation of the borders. The visual narratives are word-specific and the textual narratives signify the propagandist attitude of the respective governments across the border.

Ahmad Ray Alam's "90 Upper Mall" has also been presented in the photographic style along-with the sketches forming the foreground of the panel. '90 Upper Mall' is the name of the House on which Ahmad resides in Lahore, Pakistan. The readers get to see the photograph of the house which is made in a typical European style Bungalow eliciting the aristocrisity attached to it. The writer recalls the days when he used to study Law in the United Kingdom. He used to stay at William Goodenough House or 'Willie G' in London's Mecklenburgh square while prepping for the bar qualification as a student barrister. It was here while staying at Willie G that he became friend with Martand Khosla who was a student of architecture from India. He felt it would be good enough to know the other part of the border through his friend as he knew India only through TV or magazines. He later came to know that Khosla's grandfather and his father shared the same alma mater i.e. Lahore Govt. College and part of Khosla's family was also from Lahore who had left for India during partition. But a greater coincidence was in store for him when he came to know that the house Ahmad's family has been in Lahore i.e. 90 Upper Mall happened to be Khosla's before the partition

Maria M.Litwa's "Welcome to the Geneva Camp" is the Photographic tale of the Geneva Camp in Dhaka, Bangladesh where the refugees took shelter during the Partition of India in 1947. Geneva Camp is the largest refugee camp in Bangladesh where the Urdu speaking Bihari Muslims forms the major portion of the inhabitants. There are roughly 25,000 people living in this camp which is not bigger than the area of three football grounds. Rina, a 14 year old housewife, her photograph is shown in the first panel of the page where she is sitting quietly in a

small room. The texts on the upper right of her photograph in the panel reads , “I’ve been living in Geneva Camp for three months now, But I’m not a Bihari and I don’t speak Urdu” (252) Rina is a Bengali and is married to a man who is a Bihari migrant. She stays there with her in laws and is a housewife although she wants to study but has relinquished the idea. She hates to be at the Geneva Camp. The reason for this hate is the outcome of the virtual ostracization of the people living in the Geneva from the outside world. The Bihari migrants who came and settled at Geneva Camp in 1947 were Urdu speaking people. For the Muslims of India, Pakistan was the ‘promised land’ and was to be their homeland after the Partition of India and Pakistan. They migrated to Dhaka for the ‘Promised land’ (then East Pakistan) since it was closer to them from the Indian state of Bihar. They came there with new hopes and dreams but all that changed after the formation of Bangladesh from East Pakistan. Since they didn’t speak Bengali which was the official language of Bangladesh, they were socially ostracized which made the feeling alienated in their once ‘Promised Land’. Pakistan too didn’t accept them since there was no cultural link with them. This alienation is what hurts Rina, The 14 year old Housewife and this is why the texts describe her inner ordeal where she says ‘I’m not a Bihari and I don’t speak Urdu’(253) where she is trying to make a connection to her own ‘Bengali’ roots.

“Welcome to the Geneva Camp” has other Photo stories that include the story of Shabnam, a 20 year old student who wants to study for her better tomorrow. The Photograph on the third panel of the page shows her with sewing machines. These pictures itself convey the message of her inner aspirations. She aspires to get a better job after her studies.

Then there is Putul who is 24 year old School teacher. That second last panel which shows three children are looking outside from the window(probably of the school).The upper

right corner of the panel reads , “I’m afraid the school will shut down if the teachers stop coming. The camp’s children might not get educated” (255).

The last panel shows a photograph of a child carrying bricks. The visual narrative itself is too meaningful here. Geneva Camp has a primary school where the 24 year old Putul teach. The dialogues mentioned on the panel itself are a proof of her sincerity towards her job. She is a responsible teacher who wants her student to have a better future since the outside public schools discriminate with the children of the Geneva Camp.

Orijit Sen’s ‘Making Faces’ is a Photo story of multiple faces transforming into another. The textual narratives are missing throughout, while the pictures are horizontally cut into three parts with each shifting part converting the face on the page. The visual narrative of the interchanging faces signifies the changing ‘ethnicity’ and ‘culture’ of the people. It tries to convey the meaning that deep inside we are one, we all is humans first. It is just that the ‘borders’ have divided us all. We should live peacefully and love each other.

Visual-Verbal Narrative Strategies of ‘Laprek’ and ‘Dastangoi’ :

These are the literary narratives of the vernacular culture that has been presented in a graphic format. ‘Laprek’ in hindi means ‘Laghu Prem Katha’, if we translate this in English it can be called as fable of short love stories. Laprek has been contributed by Ravish Kumar of NDTV and has been illustrated by Ikroop Sandhu in a graphic format. Another narrative of short storytelling has come from a writer across the border in the form of ‘Dastangoi’ which is an ancient art of Urdu storytelling. Mahmaood Farooqui has contributed a work of his Dastangoi which has been illustrated by Fariha Rehman.

“Which Side?” by Ravish Kumar is the only story of this anthology which has a title with a ‘question mark’? The ‘side’ here refers to the ‘country’ that has been created after the Partition.

The presentation of this short narrative is creative and most of the time the visual narrative doesn't follow the textual narrative which can confuse its readers though the language remains simple. There is a conversation between a boy and a girl who are sitting beside the bank of the river Yamuna at old fort in Delhi. Both are sad and share the same feelings for the partition and show their anguish on the political leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru and Muhammad Ali Jinnah. 'Laprek' are short stories but they convey larger meanings. The visuals are decorated with creative imagery that doesn't exactly go in flow with the textual narrative. The visual narratives are not in sync with the presentation of the textual narrative on the graphic page, like on the second page of the story, the textual narrative reads "It isn't some ancestor's land Jinnah and Jawahar are deliberating over"(53). But the visual narrative that follows with these doesn't showcase any figures of Jinnah or Jawahar. The visuals on the page are of a tree and a umbrella. The other visuals too illustrated in the depiction in the 'Laprek' bring out the tension between the visuals and the verbal which may not be easy for the readers to grasp the meaning at one go.

"A Letter from India" by Mahmood Farooqui is essentially a narration of a 'letter'. The visual narrative of the letter is unique and is filled with illustrative figures like the envelope of the letter that points out to the letter that has been sent, the letter talks about the relatives of the narrator who has now been settled in Pakistan. The business seal of Rajju Qasai's son who has now become Sayyed, has been highlight on the foreground of the panel which reads 'Sayyed Traders Private limited Karachi'. There are symbolic references of the imagery on the page with the texts in the letter, like the "old congresswala"(76) can be related to the 'charkha' on the graphic page, "one minaret mosque"(77) with the image of the mosque in the background which also has one minaret, death of the family members with the graves highlighted on the page, "lonely mourner of leaves" with the empty chair. The verbal narrative is supported by the visual

narrative in its symbolic representation of the images on the page. After reading the letter, which was actually written by his 'chacha' Qurban Ali from Pakistan, Kamran the narrator decides to get in touch with him but in vain as the communication lines between India and Pakistan were cut off.

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