

## The English Language and Non-Native Writers of Fiction\*

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**Abstract:** *Although fiction in English by non-native authors is one of long standing, there has been in the last two decades a surge in novels and short stories written by individuals whose native language is not English or by bilingual authors whose native command of a language other than English has been used to advantage in furthering the stylistic effect of their works.*

*This paper explores the actual (and potential) contribution of four such writers (two Arab: Ahdaf Soueif and Ibrahim Fawal, and two Indian: Rohinton Mistry and Arundhati Roy) to the English language in terms of words, phrases, idioms and fixed expressions as well as broader elements of tone and emphasis. Extensive reference is also made to other Arab as well as African and Chinese novelists. The paper finds that longer strings are more readily recognizable as additions to English than single words, notwithstanding the legitimacy of many word-additions. It also looks into some practical considerations like the need or otherwise of textual glossing, glossaries as appendices and italicization.*

### I

In "Politics and the English Language," George Orwell (1963: 531) claimed that there was in English "a huge dump of worn-out metaphors which have lost all evocative power and are merely used because they save people the trouble of inventing phrases for themselves." His condemnation of the "decadence of [the English] language" applied not only to metaphors but also to words, fixed expressions and proverbs. Fortunately, he believed that this decadence was "probably curable" (ibid: 537). Whether one agrees with Orwell's diagnosis, it is axiomatic that language needs to be continually reinvigorated and injected with fresh means of expression in both the lexical and discursal domains. Although some languages revel in the regurgitation of clichés, English has been historically associated with renovation, inventiveness,

acceptance of alien elements and reconfiguration of lexis in its various manifestations. It was the potential loss of some of these features of English that Orwell was lamenting in his famous essay.

The historical receptivity to change by the English language will define the general framework of the present paper. T. S. Eliot's "historical sense" in "Tradition and the Individual Talent," although meant to refer to poetry and art in general, is, it seems to me, equally applicable to language. Like "the existing monuments" of art (Eliot, 1953: 15), the vocabulary, idiom, proverbial stock, trove of fixed expressions and indeed clichés can be argued to "form an ideal order among themselves," which is then "modified by the introduction of the new" elements into the language. Traditionally, these elements came in part from the inventiveness and boldness of native speakers and writers over centuries of drive and innovation, aided by the mechanics of coinage, compounding, derivation, blending, clipping, back formation and creation of acronyms. Lexically, the most prolific source of enrichment of English has, of course, been borrowing—from every available and at times exotic language known to man. The process of borrowing, however, has been mostly confined to words and phrases. Although one can detect influences by contemporary English on other languages in the areas of style, turns of phrase and longer discourse, the reverse is certainly not true. The question is whether this situation is beginning to change, even if ever so slightly. Are we beginning to see a different type of influence on English, where discourse is affected as much as vocabulary?

Historical interaction by English writers with other cultures has until recently been a family affair. This is, perhaps unconsciously, borne out by Eliot when he avers, again in "Tradition and the Individual Talent," that "the historical sense compels a man to write not merely with his own generation in his bones, but with a feeling that the whole of the literature of Europe [emphasis mine] from Homer and within it the whole of the literature of his own country has a simultaneous existence and composes a simultaneous order" (14). Eliot's point here is that a poet or an artist needs to be thoroughly attuned to the literature of Europe, not necessarily of the world (although Eliot himself broke out of this mould through appealing to non-European cultures in his own poetry). Even when non-native speakers of English wrote fiction in English, they were mostly Europeans working within the European tradition. The most notable example in the last century and a half has been Joseph Conrad who, despite his treatment of African and other non-European themes, remained a staunch European. "Conrad's audience was European, and his

fiction had the effect of confirming that fact and consolidating consciousness of it..." (Said, 1994: 66).

It is becoming increasingly clear that the give-and-take among cultures, certainly in the realm of fiction, is now on the rise. Call it cultural extension, language diffusion or reverse globalization, a new generation of writers of fiction in English has arisen, notably in the last quarter of a century, who have non-European literature in their bones and who are flaunting their linguistic and cultural backgrounds through the medium of English with remarkable swagger and confidence. I am here referring primarily to novelists and short-story writers of an Arab, Indian, and Pakistani, Chinese or African background. Although now over forty years old, Chinua Achebe's (1959) *Things Fall Apart* will serve as a benchmark in the present survey.

Non-native writers of current or recent fiction include Ahdaf Soueif, Ibrahim Fawal, Jamil Nasir, Fadia Faqir, Rohinton Mistry, Arundhati Roy, Michael Ondaatje, Salman Rushdie, Hanif Kureishi, Amer Hussein, Amy Tan, Jung Chang and Ha Jing, to name but a few. These are novelists and short-story writers whose native languages are not English or whose native affinity with a language and culture other than English has been used to advantage in furthering the stylistic effects of their works of fiction. In similar vein, it is perhaps not a coincidence that Arabic and Indian music in particular (as well as musical instruments once regarded in the West as almost cacophonous) is now beginning to invade the mainstream of musical performance in Europe and the United States. Thirty or forty years ago, other features of Arab, Indian and Chinese cultures were rarely displayed in the English-speaking world except in museums and special exhibitions. Now they permeate Western culture and range from museum artifacts to food, dance, haute couture and cinema. Even a thoroughly American novelist like Barbara Kingsolver (2000) has a few expressive Arabic words in *Prodigal Summer*. Also, more active political and cultural activity by non-European ethnic groups in the United States and elsewhere is beginning to have a linguistic impact. On the very first page of James Zogby's (2002) *What Arabs Think*, one comes across the Arabic word *majlises* [councils] in the context of a survey of Arab public opinion published jointly in the Arab world and the United States.

This paper will make a tentative exploration of the potential impact on the English language of writers of English fiction of foreign extraction. Because of the recentness of the material and the dearth of critical literature on the subject, some of the conclusions will be tentative and will

be meant to open up avenues for further research rather than be definitive in themselves. An investigation of all or most of the writers involved would be too daunting a task, particularly for the purposes of a paper of limited scope and ambition. Hence, analysis will be confined to two cultural backgrounds, Arab and Indian: Arab because the circumstances of this author's birth and upbringing allow easy access to the shades, nuances and cultural values informing the work of Arab writers of English; and Indian because of valuable help by sensitive and willing informants. The scope will be further narrowed down to two authors from each culture, the first represented by four works of fiction and the second by one:

Author	Title & Year of Publication
<b>Ahdaf Soueif (Arab)</b>	a. <i>Aisha</i> , 1983 b. <i>In the Eye of the Sun</i> , 1992 (henceforth <i>IES</i> ) c. <i>Sandpiper</i> , 1996 d. <i>The Map of Love</i> , 1999 ( <i>ML</i> ).
<b>Ibrahim Fawal (Arab)</b>	<i>On the Hills of God</i> , 1998 ( <i>OHG</i> ).
<b>Rohinton Mistry (Indian)</b>	a. <i>Tales from Firozsha Baag</i> , 1987 ( <i>TFB</i> ) b. <i>Such a Long Journey</i> , 1991 ( <i>SLJ</i> ). c. <i>A Fine Balance</i> , 1995 ( <i>FB</i> ) d. <i>Family Matters</i> , 2002 ( <i>FM</i> )
<b>Arundhati Roy (Indian)</b>	<i>The God of Small Things</i> , 1997 ( <i>GST</i> ).

This is a self-imposed delimitation due to the need for close textual analysis. Reference will of course be made to writers from other cultures for purposes of comparison or elucidation. Areas of investigation will include words, phrases, figures of speech, fixed expressions and proverbs as well as broader elements of style, tone and emphasis. Every attempt will be made not to burden the presentation with technical terms or linguistic erudition but to look at the evidence with a critical eye, albeit with a certain latitude in interpretation.



## II

The question may be asked: What is English today? Strange as it may seem, this question raises an issue that warrants serious reconsideration. As English invades other languages and influences other cultures and, consequently, as more and more people resort to the use of English -- willingly as in fiction or because of the absence of a generally or readily available alternative as in the language of aviation, the Internet, etc. -- English cannot continue to be defined by the parameters of the past. A growing number of speakers and writers with language backgrounds other than English are claiming the English language as their own. And as they do so, they are bringing a new mindset to English expression, along with new vocabulary and idiom. They are also employing new elements of style and emphasis. In short, they are infusing English with their own linguistic heritage.

In this context, one is reminded of the Anglo-American debate in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries on the legitimacy of the contribution of American English to "original" English. Part of this contribution was made through "Americanisms," a term coined by John Witherspoon in 1781, which he defined as "the use of phrases or terms, or a construction of sentences...different from the use of the same terms or phrases, or the construction of similar sentences in Great-Britain" (qtd. in Read: 2002, 14). This definition was later expanded by the *Edinburgh Review* of October 1809 to include "...a great multitude of words which are radically and entirely new...utterly foreign... [a] perversion of a still greater number of English words from their proper use or signification" (ibid: 61). But despite these and similar reservations, the fate of American contributions had already been sealed as legitimate, enriching and revitalizing elements of the English language. In a sense, the present state of foreign elements in English is an extension of the Anglo-American situation and will, in all probability, meet with the same fate.

A quick look at the blurbs of some of the novels by non-native writers is revealing. Quoted from the *Sunday Times*, Victoria Glendinning claims that "the most confident British fiction is being written by people of mixed cultures." On his part, Galen Strawson, quoted from the *Times Literary Supplement*, speaks of Soueif's gift for "combining the style that her English experience elicits with the peculiarly Arab or Egyptian literary style in which she is already so accomplished a practitioner." Then there is the *Philadelphia Enquirer's* assertion that Mistry's *SLJ* is

written in a "glorious foreign accent" and that Mistry is joining the growing list of Indian writers who are doing extraordinary things with the language." On the blurb of *The Bridegroom*, *USA Today* claims that Ha Jin's stories show "he could teach some native-born writers a few things about the beauty of spare prose and the power of a few well-chosen words."

But is the end product of these writers' works English? It is an obvious fact that the novels and short stories themselves are already part and parcel of contemporary English fiction. Can the language they are written in, though often culture-specific, be divorced from this central fact? Can the entire discourse, foreign elements and all, be anything but English? To argue otherwise is to say that Eliot's *The Waste Land*, with German, French, Hindi and Italian worked into the text, is not fully English. Or that Ezra Pound's "interweaving of so many voices, diverse languages and citations" (Bernstein, 1985: 20) casts doubt on the Englishness of Pound's poetry, particularly *The Cantos*. The weaving of foreign elements into the text simply makes it more difficult, as is evidenced by the fact that native readers of Eliot and Pound, among other poets, need to do some homework in order to fully absorb the poets' intent. On the other hand, foreign readers of English have to grapple with the complexities of English, merely because to them it is a foreign language. This of course applies to any effort involving the learning of a new language, but what we are seeing today is a reverse process. Native speakers of English are now required to make a strenuous effort in order to fully apprehend some of the fiction written in their own language.

As an example, fiction written in English by Arab novelists and short-story writers has not posed a problem for me personally because as a native speaker of Arabic I have the advantage and the good fortune of being able to immediately grasp the thrust of the Arabic references, which has immeasurably enhanced my appreciation not only of the meaning but also of the light-hearted banter and humour of the text. How exhilarating it is, for example, to relish the exquisite exchange in Soueif's (1999) *ML* between Dr. Ramzi and Mahgoub as they cross swords over a game of chess:

- "Sallim silahak ya 'Urabi," Dr. Ramzi says in a low singsong.
- "Lessa, ya Bey, lessa," Mahgoub demurs, moving his wazir to protect the king. "Mafish lessa," Dr. Ramzi says triumphantly, moving his horse. "Kesh malik!"
- "Lek yom ya Doctor!" (220)

But comprehending some of the finer points in the English works of, say, Indian or Chinese writers has required on my part a painstaking but

ultimately extremely rewarding effort, including recourse to more than one informant. The "difficulty" thus posed, in this case to native English speakers, is an obvious but relatively small price to pay as a result of their native language becoming an international medium of expression. But it must, and does, remain English to the core.

This is not to say, however, that English is expected to tolerate infringements on the language at the hands of unskilled foreign writers. Folk etymology may be an agent of change in language, but it should always remain the prerogative of native speakers. Even highly sensitive foreign writers can make real mistakes in English, as indeed Fawal does when he refers to English as "British" (*OHG*:1998: 147) and to Britons as "Britishmen" (14), or when he speaks of a "travesty on logic" (279) or calls Dante's famous work "The Human Comedy" (436). (Of the authors under consideration in this paper, Fawal is the most "foreign" as he does not seem to have acquired his English at near-native standards as a child but had to perfect it after he moved to the United States. Under similar circumstances, Mistry (1992) did much better on this score(1). What we will be looking at here are foreign influences which are not accidental or based on incorrect usage but are deliberate, conscious, artful, confident and hence yield fully legitimate candidates for joining the family of English. Further research will be needed to develop a methodology and a set of criteria to determine what constitutes a genuine addition to this family, but this lies beyond the scope of the present introductory paper.

### III

The potential impact on the English language of fiction in English by foreign writers is of course not easy to measure. Although there are respectable precedents for inter-language influence through literary works and written texts (the impact on English of Greek and Latin through scientific and literary works and the impact of French on English through Chaucer, to take only two examples), the influence comes more easily as a result of colonization, daily oral interaction, political and cultural dominance and, more recently, through advertising, theatre and cinema. Arab (particularly Egyptian, but also North African, Lebanese and Palestinian), Chinese and Indian (Bollywood) films and television programmes are increasingly being seen in European and North American cinemas and on television stations. According to a *Newsweek* sub-article by Power et. al. (2000:56), the Indian comedy series on British television "Goodness Gracious Me" has become a mainstream hit. 'Kiss my

chaddis,' the catch insult of two Asian homeboys on the show, is schoolyard slang". The sub-article goes on to say: "In the '80s, London-based writers Salman Rushdie and Hanif Kureishi wrote about Asian exclusion from British culture. The new generation is weaving the two worlds together" (ibid: 57). The main article is aptly entitled "Bollywood Goes Global," a good example of globalization in reverse.

Linguistic impact, if not caused by overwhelming cultural dominance (of English, for example), evolves slowly, almost imperceptibly, especially when not reinforced by the traditional dynamics of language contact. One has to tread carefully, avoiding sweeping statements or generalizations. But one is on legitimate ground in pointing out interesting features that could constitute genuine additions to the stock of the English language.

The situation decried by Orwell with regard to the staleness of English words, phrases and metaphors bears examination. Certainly, Orwell, was not implying that those elements were inappropriate in themselves but rather that their repetition ad nauseam had relegated them to a hackneyed state of meaninglessness. What Orwell calls "dying metaphors" were once new, expressive and very much alive. "Achilles' heel," "swan song," "hotbed," "no axe to grind," "stand shoulder to shoulder" are not objectionable in themselves; rather, they have "been twisted out of their original meaning" (in Martin and Ohmann, eds., 1963:531). There is nothing wrong with adjectives like "epoch-making," "epic," "triumphant" except that they have been overused.

Words, phrases, metaphors and proverbs may become stale clichés within their own language milieu but, transferred to another language, they become fresh and appealing. Although Orwell also attacked "foreign words and expressions," it was because, among other things, they "are used to give an air of culture and elegance" (ibid: 532). These, however, do not run that risk when they come from Arabic, Gujarati, Hindi or Mandarin, as their introduction is not associated with "an air of...elegance," but with a down-to-earth contribution to English expression. When a Chinese person calls another an "egg of a tortoise" (in, 2000: 6), he may be using a phrase that has lost some "evocative power" in his own dialect but is refreshingly new in English. There is the danger, of course, that a repetition of styles by successive "foreign" writers may lead to a new staleness, as witness the strictures by Aparisim Ghosh (2003:68) (himself Asian) on the Bangladeshi author Monica Ali's characters "[spouting] the requisite quirky homilies" in her first novel *Brick Lane* (2003). But this has not happened to any remarkable extent in novels so far.

A few examples of actual or potential contributions to English by non-native writers of fiction may be in order here. Arabic *hatta* and *iqal* (*OHG*, p. 200, but *uqal* in *ML*, p. 192) are excellent potential replacements for the elaborate (and often misguided) English paraphrases for this type of headgear. At least *iqal* could join *kufiyya* (*ML*, 192), already in English, as the second and indispensable component of traditional Arab male headdress. Indian *biriani* (*FB*, 734) and *tandoori* (*GST*, 125) may now be regarded as part of English, and *chapati* (*FB*, 439) is well on its way to becoming so, but other words for Indian food are beginning to creep into English, particularly *dal* (*FB*, 633) and the ubiquitous *masala* in all its combinations (*SLJ*, 81, 333; *FB*, 492, etc.). Other candidates are: *puri* (*FB*, 487), *broon* (*SLJ* 91), *paan* (*SLJ* 127) and *dhansak* (*SLJ*, 21, 202). Although Indian restaurants may be credited with the introduction of many words for Indian food, reinforcement through the written word gives their use the legitimacy they need in order for them to become candidates for adoption by monolingual English dictionaries.

Other items pertaining to Indian clothes and footwear in general are beginning to appear in English-speaking circles. Examples are:

*chappal* (*TFB*, 51; *FB*, 439), *dhoti* (*SLJ*, 1; *FB*, 501; *GST*, 103), *sudra* (*SLJ*, 18, 313, 346; *FB*, 711; *FM*, 107), *choli* (*FB*, 651), *dupattas* (*FB*, 683), *pugree* (*TFB*, 71; *FB*, 60; *FM*, 10, 401; also appearing as the past participle *pugreed* (*TFB*, 134), surely a sign of Englishness), *kusti* (*SLJ*, 18, 99; *FB*, 711; *FM*, 432), *dugli* (*TFB*, 4; *SLJ*, 297), and *mundu* (*GST*, 137, 174, 175, 248),

all of which occur with such great frequency in the works of Indian writers that they soon become as familiar as English words.

Words of general interest have had a mixed history. The word *ayah* (*TFB*, 46 and in every one of the novels) is now English. But *bai* and *seth* (*TFB*, 51) are not, though one suspects they are good candidates for eventual adoption. A *dustoorji* (*TFB*, 54 and passim) is indispensable in certain religious rites and will soon become current in English. And so will *navotje* (*TFB*, 4 and frequently elsewhere) and *Divali* (*FB*, 501; but *Diwali* in *GST*, 207). While *sahib* is now English, *yaar* (scores of occurrences in all the Indian texts) cannot be far behind. Also, *arré* (again occurring with great frequency) sounds like another attractive candidate for inclusion. The hybrid *fishwalla* (*TFB*, 70) and *oilwalla* (*TFB*, 71) are increasingly being heard, as are many other hybrids with *walla*. The rolled local cigarette called a *beedi* (*FB*, 484, but *bidi* in *TFB*, 219) has begun to replace the awkward English paraphrase "...women puffing on bidis..." And the political *morcha*, which occurs regularly in the works of



Indian writers (cf. *SALJ*, 368, *FB*, 66, 692), is a word one cannot do without in the Indian political arena. So is a lathi (*SLJ*, 11; *FB*, 648) as an instrument of police suppression. Bevda (*FM*, 41) is a candidate for a place alongside Arabic arak (*OHG*, 34, 177) and Greek ouzo. Kathakali dancing (*GST*, 47, 137, 275 and *passim*) is surely now part of English, whether already found in dictionaries or not, following in the footsteps of Japanese kabuki. Like the names of other trade castes, Chamaar (*FB*, 115, 116) is now certainly English.

In Arabic, falafel and hummus (both in *OHG*, 11, but houmous in *ML*, 80) have already been acquired by English through Arabic restaurants but are certainly being reinforced by their inclusion in English fiction. The word kinafeh (*OHG*, 24, but kunafa in *ML*, 175) is well on its way to joining the growing list of Arabic food names in English. Arabic maza (*OHG*, 11, 357, but spelled mezzeh in *IES*, 142) is also now in use in restaurant menus in Britain and elsewhere, often appearing as mezze. Another word gaining currency on menus is labneh (*IES*, 345). The word tarbush (*ML*, 134, 274, but tarboush in *IES*, 100) is an Arabicized word for fez. Salaam (*ML*, 275 and elsewhere) occurs with great frequency in English fiction by Arab writers, often included in As-salamu 'alayyikum (*ML*, 274, but Salamu Aleikum in *IES*, 119 and As-salamu alaikum in *IES*, 123). Whereas salaam is a noun in Arabic, Ahdaf Soueif occasionally uses it as a verb:

- "Sheikh Zayid salaams him politely" (*IES*, 66)
- "...or just to salaam as you went by..." (*IES*, 249)
- "...the new doorman salaams her from his bench" (*IES*, 783)

She makes a similar conversion in English while translating from Arabic:

- "You'll evil-eye your brother" (*IES*, 6).

Words like the following are already part of English and their strong showing in the works of fiction will go a long way towards reinforcing and legitimizing their place in the English lexicon:

Mufti, souk, muezzin (*OHG*, 47; 67; 356) inshallah (*OHG*, 54 but Insha'Allah in *ML*, 299), hijab (*IES*, 17, 749), 'oud; fellaheen; jihad (*OHG*, 83; 29; 231; 404; ), sheikh (*OHG*, shaykh 103), wadi (*OHG*, 404), syce (Arabic sayis) *ML*, 89), henna (*IES*, 704, also used as the past participle hennaed, in *Sandpiper*, 40), Iblis, Djinn (*Aisha*, 96; 97, (but jinn in *IES*, 306) and kohl (*IES*, 102)

New candidates for accession into English are the following which occur frequently in *OHG*, *Aisha*, *IES*, *ML*, *Sandpiper* :

saha; tabouleh (also spelled tabbouleh) the Arabicized shawirma; galabiya (also galabiyya, jalabiyya); afreet; halawa (Arabic origin of Turkish halvah or halva), rabab; mulukhiyya; fatta (to go with hummus), 'imshi; baba ghanoush; ma'alesh; and tarab.

The word ustaz (*OHG*, 91 and *passim*), meaning teacher, appears in *Time* as ustad (Zabriskie, 2003: 40), albeit in a slightly different context.

The adoption of foreign words—and, occasionally, phrases—by any language may be the subject of controversy. When does a foreign word become a “loanword” in the recipient language? What are the adoption criteria? Certainly, inclusion in one or more monolingual dictionaries is one criterion, but no agreed system has been developed for such inclusion, as witness the widely varying policies of the most notable of English dictionaries on this subject. The words I have included may thus be challenged, but they represent an educated decision in light of the evidence, at times circumstantial, in each case.

For a number of reasons, translated fixed expressions are a wholly different matter. First, these are loan translations (phrasal calques, if you like). The words out of which they are made all exist in the recipient language. It is their stringing together in a new or unfamiliar way that constitutes an addition to that language, in this case English. Second, unlike words, and occasionally phrases, they are not awaiting their turn to be included in a general dictionary. True, dictionaries of idioms or proverbs do from time to time include items of foreign origin but this is rare in the case of longer expressions. Finally, as soon as a translated fixed expression occurs in a recipient language, regardless of the source language, it becomes *de facto* part of that language if only because almost every word in it is already part and parcel of its vocabulary.

It is in the area of fixed expressions, particularly idioms, figures of speech and proverbs, that one finds the richest contribution of foreign writers of English fiction. When in *ML*, Amal al-Ghamrawi threatens a bunch of soldiers that she will “...turn [their] day black” (438) or, a few lines down, that she will “...bring [them] a catastrophe,” Soueif is translating two fixed expressions from Egyptian Arabic, but she is speaking English, and if the reader has no idea where they came from they are there in the language willy-nilly. In *Aisha*, Tante Safi laments that nobody “fills her [daughter’s] eye” (43). “Marriage,” in *Sandpiper* “is the half of religion” (78) and this is reiterated in *ML* when Sharif Basha’s father too says, “Marriage is half of religion” (277). In Ha Jin’s (2003) *The Bridegroom*, we come across two or three extremely expressive proverbs:

- “You cannot squeeze any fat out of a skeleton” (23)
- “...they had ordered more than they could eat” (11) [cf. “They had bitten off more than they could chew”]
- “an old bull wants to chew tender grass” (72).

In Mistry's (1987) *FB*, the following proverbs and expressions stand out:

- "...they sit on my head" (340);
- "If you are nice to them, they sit on your head" (445);
- "If you fill your face with laughing, there is no room for crying" (539);
- "The almsgiver is always right" (557) [cf. "The customer is always right"];
- "I'll bless your mouth with sugar if that ever happens" (567);
- "The bent stick may straighten, but not the government" (567).

Fawal's (1998) *OHG* has:

- "Tell them blood will run in the streets as high as their knees" (196);
- "May all their life be a nightmare" (197)
- "...you stretch your legs according to the size of your mattress" (240)
- "Sometimes the winds blow against the wish of the ships" (275).

In *Things Fall Apart*, Achebe (1959) had given us a taste of the flood to come: cf.

- "...the outsider who wept louder than the bereaved" (170) [cf. "more royal than the king"]
- "...an old woman is always uneasy when dry bones are mentioned in a proverb" (13)
- "I cannot yet find a mouth with which to tell the story" (48)
- "When mother-cow is chewing grass, its young ones watch its mouth" (68);
- "Living fire begets cold, impotent ash" (143);
- "An animal rubs its itching flank against a tree, a man asks his kinsmen to scratch him" (154)
- "The clan was like a lizard; if it lost its tail it soon grew another" (157).

In a different vein, Jamil Nasir (1999), in his science-fiction novel *Tower of Dreams*, gives us the honorific "your presence" (55-56), which is a direct—and literal—translation from Arabic. On p. 66, Yusef, referring to the dinner, says, "Good health," upon which Blaine Ramsey, by now well-attuned to Egyptian manners, replies, "Upon your heart." Again, Blaine, addressing the air taxi pilot, oscillates between "God keep you" (189), "God give you strength" (190) and "Damn your father and your mother" (190).

The ubiquitous contribution of foreign fixed expressions to English warrants fairly long lists of examples. A few may overlap with well-known English expressions, but their inclusion is intended to indicate their separate existence in the source languages. A few others will be repeated under different novel titles (cf. **Appendix 1** and **Appendix 2**

below) No attempt will be made to list idioms or proverbs if they occur untranslated, as it is extremely unlikely that long strings can be transferred to other languages. Indeed, even when they are translated, the expectation is that in many cases only parts of longer strings will be incorporated into the recipient language.

#### IV

It may be interesting to note that both Arabic and Indian writers bring in words and phrases not only from their own languages but also from other—often unrelated—languages. French influence in Egypt (and Lebanon) is one of long standing, and this is reflected in abundance in Soueif's novels, which are dotted with French words. This is not, one should hasten to say, an act of ostentation on her part (of which Orwell would have strongly disapproved) but a close reflection of how these words (and phrases) are used in colloquial Egyptian Arabic. A comprehensive account of this incidental influence is not necessary here, but a few select examples will serve to show the extent of this practice.

Aisha is first introduced to Soupe à l'onion gratinée in a Beirut hotel (*Aisha*, 10). Returning to her old Cairo apartment after a long absence, she admires the curtains made by her aunt, "with their...white broderie anglaise trimming" (16). Her first pair of high-heeled shoes were of a style called le talon bébé (36). Mimi's mother begs:

"Mais, chérie, parle...Elle est ton amie, n'est-ce pas? Elle doit choisir, n'est-ce pas? Really, chérie, je ne sais plus que faire" (43) (note the mixture with English).

Tante Safi speaks of their having les mains sour le cœur (44). Madame Nadia decides on a rebellious coup [sic] de garçon" and was enjoying a massage révilisant (124). The apprentice hairdresser at Salon Romance owned by Monsieur Hassan is a "born coiffeur," we are told on p. 131, while a customer there complains that a certain man loves to frapper les femmes (131).

In *IES*, Soraya is referred to as Tante in most instances. A Cairo pharmacy is the Nouvelle Pharmacie Victoria (47). The neighbours' son, Asya suspects, is with the Frères Jesuits (47). At Simmonds, she treats herself to a chocolat glacé (54) and in the evening she sits with the iced sherbet and the Oeuvres choisis (55). In one of her famous singing performances, Umm(u) Kulthum is wearing a gown of French dentelle and the audiences shout "Tani [Arabic], Encore, Bis" (63). At the university, Asya describes the ugly face of the Professor of Poetry as his

beauté mal (92). Mimi tells Noora that "Bassam is very nice, mais enfin, you will always be your family's daughter" (218). She confides in Chrissie "he sat, chérie, in the middle of the sofa..." (310) and addressed her as Mademoiselle Mimi (310). However, as the scene shifts from the female-dominated environs of middle-class Cairo to England, French words and phrases tend to recede, almost to stop, even when Asya is engaged in conversation not with the Englishman Gerald but with her husband Seif. The same obtains when she is in dialogue with her mother, particularly when they are together in England.

French terms run riot in *Sandpiper*, perhaps because it is often regarded as a "woman's book." There is a chiffonier in the female narrator's room (33). She would like to "start on those Aubusson tapestries...for Lucy's trousseau" (34). The title of the third story is "Chez Milou" (37), "Shameelu" to the locals. Like Asya's neighbour, the young man Philippe whom Milou might have married, went to school with the Jesuit frères (44). "Enchanté, Mam-selle," he says as he bows over Milou's hand (46). Bonsoir is the greeting he makes to her on the staircase (49). Her bodice is made of green tulle (49). Chérie is the way Milou addresses Athène (50), and Farah introduces herself to Theo Vasilakis with "I'm Farah, M'sieur" (51). "What about you, ma petite?" asks Milou of Athène (54). Milou speaks of a man having a tendresse for her (61). But all this is Cairo with its grands magasins (45) living side by side with Faheema and her Egyptian "melayah" and 'Am Sayim recommending "fatta" for lunch while urging Sitt (variant: "Sett") Farah not to worry about a régime ("you're as thin as a stick," he says on p. 52). Elsewhere in *Sandpiper*, whole French sentences are interspersed throughout the English discourse. In "Satan," Souma Hanim, Mira's mother, after everybody have said their Bismillah, wonders why her daughter is fidgeting over her food:

- "Mais qu'est-ce que tu as, chérie?" "Nothing, Maman..." "...C'est un bon potage, ça," she urges. "Tu dois manger, chérie. Tu dois. Même pour le petit" (122).

In contrast, *ML*, a political novel dealing with an older era and imbued with Egyptian nationalism, has a negligible number of French terms. There is mon ami (417, 497), spoken in an almost disparaging tone in the course of a political discussion between Sharif Basha and Ya'qub (Artin) Basha. There is also the cry of Vive l'indépendance (435, 447), À bas les hypocrites and Vive la constitution (457), all spoken (or chanted) in a political context. And there is the peignoir (65), which Anna Winterbourne wears with aplomb. Also free of French influence is Fawal's *OHG*, which describes the Palestinian scene in the run-up to the



creation of Israel and the dispersal of the Palestinians. French influence in Palestine was limited to an extremely small segment of the population, mostly in Jerusalem, which has not figured so far in fiction. Even when Fawal refers to the "salon" (240), it is now, for all intents and purposes, an Arabic word meaning the room in the house where visitors are entertained. And so is kazoze (French gazeuze) (11). In both Fawal and Soueif, there is a sprinkling of Turkish words and even (particularly in Soueif) Italian. Turkish examples are:

baklava (*OHG* 64), nergileh (*OHG* 69); shish kabab (*OHG* 189), sofragis (*Sandpiper* 48; *IES* 79), shisha (*IES* 290, 315 and passim), the Turkish-Arabic hybrid haramlek (*ML* 10, 110, 132), effendis (*ML* 970), tarbush (*ML* 138), firmans (*ML* 150), the Egyptian Arabic plural of Turkish Bey (bahawat) (*ML* 226), and hanim (*IES* 362).

An Italian example is when Tante Adeela teaches Asya how to make pasta al forno along with the indispensable Arabic mulukhiyya (*IES* 158).

Then there is the phenomenon of language mixture. In "Chez Milou" (*Sandpiper* 46)), Philippe says "Enchanté, Mam-selle, a most happy opportunity," where the English segment is a direct translation from Arabic. In Soueif's novels, "Tante" is ubiquitous with Arabic names: Tante Asya, Tante Soraya, Tante Rasmiyyah, etc. And so are "Madame" and "Monsieur". When it comes to paternal uncles, they are generally referred to as either Arabic 'Am ('Am Ali in *IES* 11), 'Am Abu el-Ma'ati in *ML* 421) or English "Uncle" (Uncle Sidki in *IES* 346), although his wife is Tante Muneera three pages down. However, in *IES* and a couple of other places in Soueif's fiction, Farhana is referred to as "Aunt" Farhana (307), while on the same page it is Tante Sunny and Tante Soraya, for no reason I can detect except that Aunt Farhana's niece is Chrissie and thus may be regarded as belonging to the small Anglophile segment of society. *ML* has rue al-Maghrabi and rue Imad El-Din (320). In *OHG*, the use of "Aunt" is more standard ("Aunt" Imm Marshood 190) and "Aunt" Hilaneh 305), and "Uncle" is used quite often ("Uncle" Rasheed, 304 and passim). This reflects the greater influence of English in Palestinian society at the time.

The mixture of English (and generally European languages) and Arabic is further seen in *IES*, where, for example, the upholsterer who brings up the rear in the funeral of Asya's grandfather is called Muhammad Bismark [sic] (307). Asya and Chrissie stroll in Midan el-Opera (199), and there is a private maternity hospital on Shari' Finney (280). The elderly guard outside Tora prison is addressed as 'Am Sergeant (744). Structurally more revealing is the morphemic mixture in el-Prof [the professor] (741, 743). Also, Lord Cromer in *ML* is

sometimes styled merely as el-Lord [the Lord] (p.70).(2) In longer strings than a morpheme or a word, there is the superb mixture in *ML* (329), when Amal imagines her brother Omar cutting in with "...No, ya habibti, no. Cousin walla ma cousin" [No, my dear, no. Cousin or no cousin].

To a much lesser extent, Arabic words and phrases occur in Mistry's novels, particularly when the characters involved are Muslim. This is most noticeable in *FB*. "Ya Allah," cries Mumtaz, wife of the Muslim master tailor, as she realizes they would have to leave their town in the wake of sectarian violence (157). Mumtaz itself is an Arabic word, though not usually used for a woman's name in the Arab world. A few lines up, Mumtaz' husband Ashraf; hoping things will get better, says "Inshallah" as he watches his youngest play with a rag doll he had made for her. The word "mullahs" appears on p. 181 in the same context of sectarian unrest. "Salaam alaikum" appears two pages down and Salaam again on pp. 194, 321 and 607. On p. 195, Nawaz speeds Ishvar and Omprakash on their way to Dina Dalal's with "Khuda hafiz", where "hafiz" is an Arabic word meaning "protector." In *FM*, salaam appears on p. 222, again in connection with a Muslim character, Husain, and is later on used as a verb ("salaamed", p. 370). On p. 390, the same word appears with "sahib", itself a word of Arabic origin. Inspector Masalavala picks up his glass with Salaamati (400), obviously the equivalent of English "Cheers." The word "sabun" (456) is probably of Arabic origin (the *OED*, under the entry *soap*, is not definitive on this score); at any rate, it is of extremely frequent occurrence in Arabic. Not specifically in a Muslim context, Dilnavaz in *SLJ* (169) wishes that Major Bilimoria would burn in "jhaanum", Arabic for hell. In similar vein, she refers to Bilimoria's envoy as a "sataan" (275).

It is sometimes difficult to tell whether a phrase in English is a translation from Arabic, since it may sound equally native in both languages.(3) In certain cases, however, there is a degree of certainty that the author is using an Arabic phrase. For example, in *IES* (310) Mimi describes a prospective suitor as "Tall and broad", which is perfectly colloquial in English but is a definite echo from Arabic. Similarly, Saif is described in *Sandpiper* (124) as a person who would only do "what he has already inside his own head," again, barring the inversion of "already has" to "has already," a perfectly fine English expression but one that is a current and immediately recognizable phrase in many Arabic dialects. In *ML* (187) some of the landowners, we are told, "know God," a direct translation from Arabic but perfectly acceptable in English. One is not quite sure about the following:

- "And what's in our hands to do?" (*ML* 223)

- "The near one is more deserving than the stranger" (ML 445), but a native-born Arab knows that they are Arabic. The question is: does a native English speaker regard them as "foreign"? For example, how does an English speaker react to Rayissa's playful:

- "I'd slit his throat and drink his blood" (ML 446)?

More difficult is the following sentence which is), where the sentence is recognized as a fixed expression in both languages:

- "You can wipe the floor with them" (ML 264)

The same may apply to the anguished exclamation by Amin's mother in *OHG*:

- "I wish it were my arm instead of yours" (30).

By and large, this is an aspect that requires further research and perhaps a methodology enabling a more objective determination of what should be regarded as a definite contribution by Arabic to English. What is clear, however, is that right through Soueif's fiction and Fawal's novel, there are long passages, particularly involving banter and repartee, that are deeply ingrained in Arab culture and the Arabic language but which sound perfectly English. It is the ability to strike this delicate balance that makes the work of outstanding non-native writers of fiction in English such a joy to read.

A striking feature of some of the longer novels under consideration here is that native references tend to recede as the novels move on. It may be that the writers start off with a degree of exuberance for their culture which then begins to wane. But in many cases, there is a structural relationship between the plot and the use of native terms. Language, so to speak, is made to fit the scene. Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* is a case in point. As long as events revolve around native African culture, there is an abundance of words, phrases, fixed expressions and proverbs that are distinctly African. With the introduction of some form of Christianity and its attendant ramifications, native expression becomes less marked and Achebe's delicious proverbs become something of the past. Similarly, in Soueif's *IES*, while the action in the earlier segments takes place in Egypt, the text is rife with Arabic echoes, allusions and translated expressions, but when the scene shifts to the north of England, English holds sway until almost the end of the novel. The 45-page Epilogue takes us back to Egypt, and back to the linguistic interaction which had made the earlier part so appealing. Fawal's *OHG* becomes somewhat less bi-cultural as the mood of the novel darkens, as if there was no longer much room for deliberate artifice when lives were at stake

and Palestine was being usurped. No such regression is seen in *ML* because of its alternating rather than linear structure.

Mistry, on the other hand, shows a more sweeping kind of regression across his entire work. A clear movement away from native expression is detectable from one novel to another. From *SLJ* (1991)—not to mention *TFB* (1987) through *FB* (1995) to *FM* (2002), Mistry's language progressively becomes more mainstream, less "Indian," more "English," although the themes remain Indian. In *FM*, Indian characters mostly speak without a foreign trace at all. A typical example is:

- "In fact, no matter where you go in the world, there is only one important story: of youth and loss, and yearning for redemption. So we tell the same story over and over. Just the details are different" (221).

Even names become more English: Yasmin Contractor (9), Villie Cardmaster (101). Converted sentences are far fewer than in the previous works. "And yet not a single word can I read" (134) is a rare example, unlike *SLJ*, for example, where such sentences were almost the norm. So is the use of the present progressive instead of the simple present and the dropping of the article, which is also extremely rare, as in the following two examples respectively:

- "Every time I am telling you..." (139)
- "But shop name must definitely change..." (373).

Mr. Burdy is given to proverbs, but they are English, not Indian, proverbs:cf.

"Better late than never;" // "...fortune favours the bold;" // "...the fruits of patience are sweet;" // "all's well that ends well" // "As you sow, so shall you reap,"

In more ways than one, *FM* is a less impressive novel than *SLJ* or *FB*, one reason being the dilution of the "Indian" personality without a decisive movement towards universality.

The manner in which writers of fiction bring their own languages to bear on English also differs from one author to another. In Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, conversation is conducted in a formal style, where proverbs, similes and other devices are introduced almost deliberately:

- "...his voice rang out clear as the o'gene" (11);
- "When the moon is shining the cripple becomes hungry for a walk" (14);
- "...an old woman is always uneasy when dry bones are mentioned in a proverb" (23);
- "When mother cow is chewing grass its young ones watch its mouth" (68);
- "...like learning to become left-handed in old age" (121).

These are often introduced by statements like the following emphasizing the deliberate nature of the exercise:

- "As the Ibo say..." (14)
- "...as the saying goes..." (23)
- "As our people say..." (68)

With Soueif, on the other hand, words and expressions intermingle with the English text almost effortlessly. Where the context requires it, Soueif writes English as Egyptians speak Arabic. In other words, she "translates" (for lack of a better word) Arabic discourse into English, using only those Arabic terms which are necessary to bring out the flavour of a given situation, usually during conversation or discussion. The end product is English which is grammatically correct but is interspersed with Arabic which may be idiomatically alien. She makes no attempt at reproducing English as spoken by Egyptians, with one notable exception when in *IES* the hapless Mahrous confronts, much to his woe, Dr. Mostanser on the question of the Unities:

- "But, Doctor, zis unity now not necessary" (157).

On the whole, Fawal uses the same technique, but his Arabic references do not mesh in with the English as expertly as in Soueif, perhaps because he tends to gloss more terms than she does, except when the meaning is patently obvious. The tone is set in OHG as early as p. 12:

- "Mabrouk, they all said, smiling. "Congratulations."
- "Thank God my father kept his karamah (15) —his dignity.;
- "They call it kersh el-wajaha...The bulge of the rich." (39)

But even when there is a translation with no Arabic original affixed, as in the following example, the tone is somewhat ponderous and the style deliberate:

- "A man who could produce only girls was shamed like someone who was childless" (311),

If Soueif writes as Egyptians speak Arabic, Mistry writes as Indians speak English. This is how he earned the "glorious foreign accent" accolade by the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. In most cases, the "Indian" and "English" styles coincide, but, unlike Soueif, Mistry's specifically Indian phrases are often (deliberately) neither grammatical nor idiomatic in English. A random check of *SLJ* produces:

- "But don't forget there are causes of sickness for which doctor can do nothing" (178)
- "So much of your time I've taken" (179)
- "Please, sir, in exactly five minutes with the food I will return" (208)
- "So much trouble I am giving" (224).



In *TFB*, as indeed in every one of Mistry's works, one comes across converted structures like:

- "Nariman Uncle" (*TFB*, 151, 162 and passim).
- "Come, food is ready, later we can talk" (*FB*, 151).
- "I don't want marriage...How many times to tell you." (*FB*, 341)

However, as Mistry seeks to join the mainstream in *FM*, with better educated protagonists and a somewhat more sophisticated theme, this feature becomes less prominent, and the influence one detects becomes closer in nature to Soueif's.

Mistry also makes an impact through interesting devices which, though not major, warrant passing mention. These are: the use of English brand names, the inventive use of English words, and anachronisms. In *FB*, one encounters:

"Murphy transistor" (173), "Singer [sewing machine]" (229), "Flit [insect spray]" (290, 611), "Sloane's Liniment" (390), "Kolynos" (474), "Cinthol Soap" (476), "Shikakai Soap", "Tata's Perfumed Coconut Hair Oil" (590), etc.

*TFB* contains:

"Lifebuoy Soap", "Johnnie Walker Scotch" (15), "Criterion" wicks (112).

These are used much more extensively than in Soueif, who has "Arabisco biscuits" and "Corona" chocolate (*IES* 51), or in Ha Jin, for example, who speaks of "Great Gate" cigarettes (*The Bridegroom* 31). In a strange sort of way, Mistry's use of brand names emphasizes the Indian climate within which he is operating. Similarly, perfectly English words are often used in such a way as to make them sound almost Indian. This is particularly apparent in *FM*, where in response to "Is she all right now?" Edul says "Champion" (340), and Mr. Kapur answers Husain's query of "Okay, Sahab?" with "First Class" (352). In *FB*, there is "Of course you must do your matric" (32-33) [cf. "Matric" in Fawal's *OHG* 86]. In the same novel, the "Controller of Slums" (367) sounds much more ominous in the context it is used than it would in a European setting. Then there is the use of anachronisms to highlight the technological divide between things Western and Indian realities. "He crumpled the cyclostyled list..." (*FB* 288) is one example. But there are many others.

The nature of Roy's contribution in *GST* is entirely different. Her language is not specifically related to the culture of India but to a universal inventiveness. From a language standpoint, Roy makes only a rare concession to her Indian roots. For example, on p. 130, Comrade Pillai says, "One is must." "Cake's come" (178) announces Kochu Maria, but even this could be an instance of English ellipsis rather than a

dropping of the article characteristic of English speech by Indians. Other nods in this direction are the following all spoken by Comrade Pillai again, presumably because he was insisting on speaking to Chacko in English (273):

- "My sister Sudha met with fracture" (p.274)
- "...she is alone at in-laws' place" (274)
- "He is genius" ( p. 274)
- "Design is same. Only difference is in text" (276)

He mixes things up a few pages further (279) on when he says:

- "For you what is a nonsense, for Masses it is something different"

Also, although she does not have a separate glossary, Roy is careful, when necessary, to gloss Indian phrases in the text itself. This is apparent on p. 131, where "Aiyyo paavam" is glossed as "Poor fellow" and on p. 179, where "Sundarikutty" is explained as "little angel" (179). Whole lines or stanzas are glossed interlineally on pp. 206, 219 and 220. These examples should suffice, demonstrating as they do, that Roy was careful to make her intention clear when the contexts required it.

But by and large, Roy's linguistic inventiveness has a universal character which could just as well be the product of a native English writer. There is nothing specifically Indian, for example, about Roy's bent for compounding, which is a hallmark of her style and which endows her writing with ethereal appeal. An exhaustive list of Roy's compounds would be too cumbersome here, but a number of selected examples will demonstrate their authentic ring:

"dustgreen, mossgreen" (1); "Furrywhirring, sariflapping" (6); "sea-secrets" (92); "far-apartness" (93); "slipperoilily" (94); "longago" (97); "sweetsinging" (99); "Shutup or Getout" (100); "Thiswayandthat" (101); "Orangedrink Lemondrink Man" (102 and passim); "Porketmunny" (102); "lemontoolemon" (105); "filmactor" (144); "Pleasetomeetyou" (212); "mydearjudges" (271); and "Trainrumbles" (323).

In an area other than compounds, Miss Mitten's "gnickers" (156) and Rahel's hatred of her afternoon "gnaps" (183,198, 200) are simply delightful.

This is not to say, however, that *GST* is not about things Indian. It is that, and it is imbued with a terminology which is quite culture-specific. Chacko splashes around "his ample uncle stomach" in the river (203). From the communist "patcha" (27), to the wealthy "zamindars" (39), to the "kathakali" dancers (46 and passim), to the rhythm of a bus "bhajan" (61), to the ever-present "mundu" (97 and passim) and "dhoti" (103 and passim), to the "kunukku" earrings (130, 170), to the new "Bajaj" scooter (131, 134), to the oft-repeated "Dum dum" (163 and passim), to "Aniyan

the dhobi" (169), to Rahel's "pallu" and the "bindis" (189), to the clay "koojah" (209), to the leaking "vallom" (210), to the colonnaded "kuthambalam" (229, 236), to the white "churidar" and black "shervani" (240), to being wrinkled as a "dhobi's thumb" (251)—there are hundreds of Indian references that ring loud on almost every page. But these are made to serve the universal aspect of the theme, not to bring out the Indian character of the text. Perhaps because of this, many of Roy's Indian terms seem to be better candidates for adoption by English than those of other Indian writers.

## V

On a practical note, two or three issues seem to require comment. The first is whether foreign writers of fiction in English need to gloss native words and phrases either within the text itself or in an appendix. In the editions I have used, only one of the four authors under consideration, Ahdaf Soueif, uses a glossary in appendix form, and only in *IES* and *ML*. A glossary, it seems to me from observing Soueif's example, serves at least two purposes. One is to relieve the writer of extensive textual glossing. And the other is the obvious one of reducing the homework required of readers from other cultures by enabling them to grasp the nuances embedded in native references. In Soueif's two novels, the elimination of the need to do too much glossing within the text lends an air of confidence to her writing as well as a measure of authenticity to the conversational aspect of the novels. However, at times, particularly in *ML*, she resorts to long passages to explain Arabic terms which show derivational ingenuity ("Umm, Abb" 164), semantic complexity ("tarab" *ML* 332) or extensive (2) phrases and longer strings in *ML*.

As noted earlier, Ibrahim Fawal prefers to gloss within the text. The examples already cited are sufficient to show that this practice makes the text somewhat artificial and cumbersome. To his credit, however, Fawal makes a clear distinction between his treatment of individual words and longer strings. It is the longer strings that are consistently glossed, while words are explained as needed and are often deftly woven into the text:

- "...two portions of red-colored cheese-filled kinafeh" (*OHG* 24)
- "Over this he sprinkled a cup of pulverized fenugreek they called hilbeh" (*OHG* 33).

Mistry feels no obligation to gloss, either within the text or separately in an appendix. In this respect, he is at once the most authentic and the most aggravating of the authors in question—authentic because he presents an unapologetic take-it-or-leave-it text, and aggravating because he demands

strenuous homework on the part of readers unfamiliar with the Indian dialects or languages he uses, particularly Gujarati. In a sense, his work is a specimen of globalization in reverse, where it is English readers who are invaded by a text at once culturally distinctive and universally applicable. We have seen above that Arundhati Roy strikes a happy balance on this score.

An associated practical issue is whether to mark non-English words and phrases through italicization or any other means. Again, our authors differ widely in this respect both among themselves and within the framework of their individual works. In *Aisha*, Soueif is inconsistent. She italicizes Arabic words extremely sparingly (e.g. galabiya 5 and melaya 109), but French terms are consistently thus marked (les mains sur le coeur 44, robe de chambre 52, etc.). She also italicizes book titles (*Fanny Hill*, *The Perfumed Garden*, etc.) in addition to using italics for purposes of emphasis. So she is not very helpful in this regard. She follows the same practice in *Sandpiper* in connection with Arabic (jalabiyya, tarha 30) and French words and phrases (chérie, C'est dommage ça 52), but there are no cases of emphasis or book titles. *IES* is not much more helpful. Again, some Arabic words are italicized e.g. hijab 17, tarha 36), and italics are used for emphasis, newspaper and book titles, some foreign terms (e.g. pasta al forno, 158). Long passages are also italicized to represent the thoughts of an individual speaker, usually Seif. In *ML*, italics are used for emphasis, a magazine title, long passages representing Anna Winterbourne's letters to England, but not for Arabic words. Fawal is much more consistent. Arabic words and phrases are almost uniformly italicized (e.g. makloubah 35, masbaha 190, but not Ya Jarat al-Wadi 35, most probably because it is a song title, or baklava 64, perhaps because it is of Turkish origin, although nergileh on 176 is). In addition, italicization is used for emphasis (e.g. Palestine 207, They've killed Mitry Freij and Hani Mahmoud 207, etc.), magazine and newspaper titles (e.g. Falastin and Ad-difaa' 367) and the occasional long quotation.

In *TFB*, Mistry always italicizes words from Indian dialects (but not "sari," probably because it is already regarded as English), newspaper and film titles. He follows a similar pattern in *SLJ*, together with the use of italicized passages for written correspondence (100-101). He then changes course in *FB*, where Indian words are not marked at all (with the exception of phthoo! 711 and the similarly onomatopoeic tring-tring 227). On the whole, *FB* is free of italicization. And the same applies to *FM*, where italics are only used for longer passages containing Nariman Vakeel's reminiscences (11-16 and passim), musical titles and names on a brass plate (441). Mistry's practice in the last two novels is another



indication of his tendency to move from the Indian milieu to a more universal culture. Roy uses italics for all sorts of purposes which are too many to list here, but very rarely (Aiyyo kashtam 177) for words of Indian origin.

Marking words of a native origin in books of English fiction, coupled with an end-glossary, is a practice well worth considering. Whether through italicization or any other means, highlighting such words (and of course longer strings) would be helpful in drawing attention to their role in the text. It would also enable readers not familiar with the language in question to make a rapid visual connection between the words or phrases and their meanings in the glossary. A careful distinction will have to be made between words which are clearly foreign and those which are now part of English (ayah, sari, wadi, sheikh, etc.). In the editions I have used, some such distinction is occasionally made, but the process needs to be more rigidly formalized.

A further comment is required on spelling. In *ML* in particular, Soueif makes some interesting distinctions between spellings of Arabic words used in an "English" context and of those used in an Egyptian context. Soudan (31, 32) and Sudan (41, 42) seem to be used indiscriminately since they are all used by English speakers. But Arabic for "clover" appears as bersim (56) when Anna Winterbourne uses the word but more correctly (in terms of pronunciation) as "barsim" (59) when used by the Egyptian Amal. The honorific title Pasha is spelled Pasha by Anna (99) but Basha by Amal on the very next page. Sharif says Pasha on p. 153, but only because he is in conversation with Anne and is surmising what she would have said. When Isabel, an American, has spent enough time in Egypt, and because she is talking to Amal, she says, "I want to see Sharif Basha's house" (203). In describing her life with her Egyptian husband, Anna too refers to him as "Sharif Basha" (350). The Sinai monastery of St. Catherine is called and spelled precisely that in the context of a conversation between Sharif Basha and Anna Winterbourne (143) but is Deir Sant Katrin as far as the local manservant is concerned (112). Although not a question of spelling, a similar phenomenon is observable when it comes to the names of Arab towns and villages. In *ML*, Nazareth is referred to by its Arabic name of al-Nasira (258) and Jaffa by Yafa (277). In *OHG*, Fawal calls Jerusalem El-Quds (108), al-Quds (111) and Al-Quds (372).

It is perhaps appropriate at this stage to mention the Arabic practice of often calling or addressing people not by their names but as "father," "mother" (usually of the eldest son but occasionally, in the absence of a



son, of the eldest daughter), “son” and “daughter” of so-and-so: Abu, Umm (or Imm), Ibn (or Bin) and Bint: cf.

- *OHG*: Abu Amin ; Imm Amin ; Imm Akram; Abu Raji; Imm Marshoud.
- *IES* : ‘Abu Muhammad; Ummu (a variant of Umm) Hasna: Ummu Karim; Ummu Salma ; “His Majesty King Hussein Bin Tallal [sic]” (207, 209)
- *Aisha* : Om (another variant of Umm) Sa’d
- *ML*: Ummu Aya (but Umm Aya on the same page); Abu Fudeil ; Sheikh Salim ibn Husayn (208).
- Jamil Nasir’s *Tower of Dreams* (*TD*): Abu Yusef ; Abu Malik ; Abu Tayib

Similarly, there are many Arabic names with ‘Abd el, Abd al or Abdul : cf. ‘Abd el-Nasser, *IES* ; Abd al-Qadir, *OHG* 227; and ‘Abdel Halim, *Tower of Dreams*. (4)

When these appellations occur in English, especially in the media, Abu, Umm and Ibn are frequently thought to be first names and hence are very often dropped in any second or subsequent reference to the name. For example, Giles Tremleth in the *Guardian* (28 Oct. 2000: makes a first reference to the Muslim cleric Abu Qatada on the second line but on the tenth line calls him Mr. Qatada, assuming that Qatada is a surname:

- “Spanish judge keen to question Qatada”

On the BBC News (114) text of BBC WORLD television (6 June 2003), a first reference is correctly made to the Palestinian Prime Minister as Abu Mazen, but a subsequent reference calls him Mazen and so does the caption:

- “Palestinian Groups Split on Mazen Plea”.

The confusion is partially cleared up by Martin Daly of the *Melbourne Age* (18 Jan. 2003:

- “Jihad may be the wrong man: lawyer”,

where a certain Jack Jihad Thomas was mistaken for a Melbourne man called “Abu Jihad” because of the problem of dropping “Abu” from the name. The same applies to Abd el or Abdul. In an article entitled “The Other War,” Tim Mc Girk in *Time* (10 Feb. 2003) speaks of Hafiz Abdul Rahim; then in a later reference he uses what he assumes to be the surname Rahim (60). Incidentally, this is how Egypt’s late President Gamal Abd el-Nasser came to be generally known in the West as Nasser. In *Travels with a Tangerine*, Tim Mackintosh-Smith, an Englishman who has lived for years in Yemen and who understands Arab culture remarkably well, draws attention to this erroneous practice when a Russian lady interlocutor enquires about the famed Arab traveller Ibn Batutah . “How is Battuta [sic]?” she asks, upon which Mackintosh-

Smith feels compelled to state that "strictly, Nina is incorrect to drop the 'Ibn'" (4).

To close, it is perhaps not too fanciful to draw a comparison among writers from different cultures on a term of opprobrium which occurs with a certain consistency in the novels of non-native writers of English fiction. I refer here to the equivalents of the age-old "son-of-a-bitch" phrase in English. To Achebe, people who qualify for this designation are "...sons of wild animals" (*Things Fall Apart*, 15). To Arab writers, they are

- "...sons of dogs" (*OHG*, 79, 96).
- "I told you to go to the airport; son of a dog" (*TD*, 175);
- "You've cheated me, you son of a dog" (*TD*; 190).
- "Wake up, you donkey son of a dog" (*Aisha*, 118).
- "'ya kalb ya ibn el-kalb'" [you dog, son of a dog] (*ML*, 440).

The crook in Ha Jin's *The Bridegroom* mumbles "foreign dogs" (210) and hurries away. But the guard is a little bit more magnanimous when he calls the "man in the backyard" an "arrogant son of a rabbit" (12)—a neat variation on Mr. Chiu's earlier use of "egg of a tortoise" as a mental curse (6). I may have missed some allusions to dogs in Mistry or Roy, except "you stinking dog" on the heels of "you witless animal" (*FB*, 127) and another instance of "stinking dogs" (711). But Edul's instructions to the three men maneuvering the steel girder into Nariman's room:

- "This way, not that way, sunta hai kya. Sadanter idiot chhe, saalo" (*FM* 379),

whatever they mean, sound eerily close.

**\* This piece of research was done during a sabbatical leave granted by the University of Jordan.**

## Notes

1. Soueif makes the occasional mistake but in reverse. In *ML* (95), she speaks of "turcomans," meaning interpreters, when she must have meant "dragomans." Sometimes on things non-Egyptian pertaining to the Arab world, Soueif is not on very solid ground. The Jordanian/Palestinian song "Wein ?a Ramallah" [Where? To Ramallah] becomes "*Weinha Ramallah?*" [Where is *Ramallah?*] (*ML* 344, 345). In *IES*, she refers to King Hussein of Jordan as "His Majesty King Hussein Bin Tallal," (207, 209), when the spelling more accurately representing his father's name is "Talal." Also, the name of the United Nations

Middle East representative Gunnar Jarring is incorrectly spelled as Gunar Jareng (*IES* 205).

2. It may be useful to note that the Arabic definite article *el* or *al* is generally used redundantly by non-Arab, particularly Western, writers. A recent example is “the al-Haramein Foundation” (Michael Elliott 33), where it would suffice to say “al-Haramein Foundation” or “the Haramein Foundation.” Note the correct use in *IES*: “El-Ataba [not “the El-Ataba] has filled with light” (198). The same applies to the redundant use of the indefinite article. Jessica Stern writes: “An alleged al Qaeda spokesman...” (27), when “an alleged Qaeda spokesman” would have been linguistically more appropriate. Also, “Some al Qaeda members” (29) would be better represented by “Some Qaeda members.”

3. I am certain the same applies to phrases by Indian writers, but I am on shaky ground here, as a determination of this aspect requires almost equal competence in both languages.

4. I though this tradition is not Indian, we do come across: “Listen, mother-of-Narayan” (*FB* 145), but this is almost impossible in Arabic as Narayan is the younger son. An example more compatible with Arabic is: “Father-of-Ishvar, make up your mind” (*FB* 163), where Ishvar is the elder son.

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## Appendix (1): Arabic

**Fawal (OHG):** "May your son fill your house with grandchildren" (12) // "The bulge of the rich" (39) // "...the fact that their arms crossed...means someone is going to get engaged" (68) // "Telling them otherwise is like trying to hide the sun with a forefinger" (71) // "You kill a person and walk in his funeral" (117) // "One hand cannot clap" (126) // "Bitterness is the quality of the small" (133) // "The earlier I can step on their necks, the better I'd like it" (136) // "The year of the disaster" (160) // "...being an in-law is better than being a relative" (166) // "We can't find a girl like Salwa every day" (170) // "...opening his right hand and blowing at his palm to show how the church hospital had gone up in smoke" (188) // "May they never see the face of God" (229) // "The gates of heaven await those who defend themselves" (231) // "May God send them the plague" (232) // "Beware of the one you've been good to" (255) // "A man who left behind a son like you did not die" (300) // "...a male cousin had the right to force his female cousin off a white horse as she rode...to her wedding" (340) // "May God make all their wives widows" (434) // "Lucky is he who sleeps with an old worry" (443).

**Soueif (Aisha):** "You fill the house with light" (6) ; "Nobody fills her eye" (43) // "Clever Hassan" (74) [*<Arabic Al-Shater Hassan*] // "...curse his cheek" (95) // "...the shade of a man is better than that of a wall" (98) // "What is wrong with me that he should marry on top of me?" (98) // "...curse cloths" (99) // "May God lengthen your life and give you good health" (102) // "...may God preserve him from evil" (110) // "...so that I can find him and drink his blood" (112) // "...a dinner of okra that you'll devour your own fingers after" (113) // "Wake up, you donkey son of a dog" (118) // "Go in safety" (119) ; "God keep you safe" (119) // "...hairdressers make gold" (120) // "May God increase and bless it" (127) [more often heard in Arabic as "May God bless and increase it"] // "He'd look a sugar in a gold chain" (127) // "They know I'm not dirty. And I have sisters" (152) // "May God increase your kindness" (159) // "...because you're the daughter of a 'family' and he's a butcher" (168)

**Soueif (IES):** "Oh brother of my mother" (5) // "May his hand be steady and his eye be straight" (15) "...home of the child" (20) [*<Arabic "beit al-walad"—womb*] // "Cleanliness is a component of faith" (23) // "...God is generous" (23) ; "...empty talk" (24) // "...you could not find a hole to pass a needle through in Cairo today" (26) // "...A cup of Turkish coffee medium sugar" (30) // "Praise God and thank him..." (65) // "Houses and lands in the palm of the devil" (115) // "Praise God for your safe return" (119) // "You would drag the Tarabulsi name in the mud?" (121) // "...until God widens the path for them..." (160) // "...blessing his mother's hand" (161) // "El-Ataba has filled with light..." (198) // "I...have burnt up my blood in these last days to protect you" (212) // "This is a precious step" (237) // "With Happiness and Progeny" (245) [a wedding wish] // "...I'll lighten my hand as much as I can" (250) // "May God complete it well for you tonight" (253) // "Early in your life!" (266) // "The name of God protect you and keep you safe" (267) // "Children are the ornament of life" (267) // "...may evil stay away from us..." (268) // "...the name of the Prophet guard her" (269) // "[He is] twenty-five in the face of the enemy" (270) // "But [she] had had her 'habit' four times..." (272) // "...Cairo—the Mother of the World—..." (274) // "...by the command of God..." (274-275) // "...--three young men like roses..." (275) // "...to put shame in the eye of the Evil One..." (276) // "May the rest be in your life" (287, 289, 293, 294,

295, 300) // "May your life be long" (287, 289, 293, 294, 295, 311) // "[He] was a grain of salt that had dissolved" (289) // "The flesh on your shoulder is from his bounty and you don't shelter him in his death?" (291) // "It's his time, God have mercy on him" (297) // "May God forgive his transgressions and lighten for him the torment of the grave"(300) // "(far from you)" (301) [i.e., "May it never happen to you"] // "May God never show you" (301) [i.e., "May God never subject you to..."] // "Tall and broad..." (310) // "With safety" (311) // "God gives earrings to those without ears" (313) // "...I swear on the heads of my children" (338) // "The one with the honoured eye?" (371) [i.e., the one-eyed person] // "God's name protect him" (373 and passim) // "...may your bounty be increased" (419) // "...the near is better than the far" (438) // "...even if I'd been sitting on his heart..." (438) // "...kiss her hand palm and back in gratitude" (439) // "I've fallen out of the bottom of the basket?" (440) // "The empty space you leave is big" (447) // "He made the whole department walk on dough and not leave a mark" (476) // "Your luck is from the sky..." (476) // "Long live he who sees you" (482) // "May you pray in the Sacred House!" (549) // "Together in sha' Allah" (549) [In response to the above] // "I don't know where to put my face" (550) // "I swear by the head of my mother" (550) // "What are we? Brought up in the streets?" (668) // "Have done with empty talk..." (670) // "God give you health" (740) // "...reaching in the big basket of mercy" (741) // "Patience is good" (743) // "...I swear on the head of my father..." (744) // (447) // "Have mercy on yourself" (745) // "The boy—may my eye be cool on him—is beautiful and his face is like the moon" (746) // "...there is no embarrassment in knowledge" (756) [more often occurring as // "There is no embarrassment in religion"] // "...there's no offence between women" (756) // "...God opens it in their faces" (759) // "Her husband climbed on the shoulders of her uncles..." (768) // "[They] each carry a basket empty of mercy" (768)

**Soueif (*Sandpiper*):** "...a boy would always end up 'belonging' to his wife while a girl was // 'her father's daughter forever'" (9) // "God grant him long life" (51) // "The Prophet (the blessings and peace of God be upon him) commanded us to seek education even as far as China" (72) // "...marriage [is] protection for a woman" (72) // "...as he prayed at the head of his friends" (76) // "...marriage is the half of religion" (78) // "...I'll not enter a home of his unless..." (107) // "Told me what and didn't tell me what?" (121) // "[He] will not do anything except what he has already inside his own head" (124) // "God curse your father" (125) // "All things are in the hand of God" (135) // "Peace be upon you" (142) // "And upon you peace and the mercy of God and His blessings" (142) // "May God increase your bounty" (142)

**Soueif (*ML*):** "And they'll be five in the eye of the enemy" (78) // "...refuse to put their minds in their heads and fear God" (109) // "By the head of our master" (111) // "...and he said look after her like your eyes" (111) // "There's light upon you" (112) // "Cairo is filled with light" (121) // "It's lit up by its people" (121) // "A precious step" (122) // "May He make your standing be ever more precious" (122) // "Lives are in the hand of God" (124) // "May he put good in your path, pray God" (125) // "Will he put his children on his shoulder and leave the land?" (126) // "God give you light" (127) // "Smell the air of the countryside?" (128)<sup>4</sup> // "...the son of a duck is no mean swimmer" (152) [literally 'the duck's offspring is a floater] // "A thousand welcomes" (168) // "The name of God guard and protect her" (174) // "No stranger but the Devil" (175) // "Strong on the weak" (176) // "The price...has become like fire" (176) // "Complicated or not



complicated, we're here..." (176) // "Youth is the youth of the heart" (221) // "And what is in our hands to do?" (223) // "You cannot get out of your history" (228) // "May God give you light..." (257) // "Marriage is half of religion" (277) // "You have to clear your heart towards him" (278) // "A subject we are forbidden to open" (279) // "May God do what brings good" (p. 280) // "...the monkey, in his mother's eyes, is a gazelle" (281) // "You women! A bean does not have time to get wet in your mouths" (284) // "Welcome and a hundred times welcome" (294) // "May the name live long" (295) // "Paradise...is at the feet of mothers" (295) // "And enter the houses by their doors" (296) // "You bring us good company...Stay in comfort. The house is your house" (297) // "I leave you in good health" (297) // "My hands need no light" (299) // "His heart gives him enough light, the name of God bless him" (299) // "May God set your heart at ease..." (299) // "God will compensate your patience..." (299) // "Can one be desired by the moon and say no?" (299) // "Ask one with experience and do not ask the physician" (300) // "And now you must hurry and give us a bride for..." (310) [to a newly-wed woman] // "...and marrying with his own head as if he has no kin" (333) // "What's in my hands I'll do" (339) // "...if [she] had asked for bird's milk he would have brought it to her" (392) // "...my neck is for you" (396) // "...May God bring this to a good end" (401) // "My heart on their children and their people" (408) // "...perfumed greetings" (417) // "May He lengthen your life, insha' Allah" (421) // "Lives are in the hand of God, insha' Allah" (421) // "God give you good health" (421) // "Each one goes with his own head" (423) // "May He preserve you for her,...and you see her a bride" (436) // "The knowledge of what's hidden is with God alone" (436) // "Listen you and him" (438) // "There's nothing called forbidden" (438) // "I shall call...the Governor...an turn your day black" (439) // "...I'll bring you a catastrophe" (438) // "...your favour will hang all around our necks" (440) // "...insha' Allah tomorrow good will happen" (441) // "The near one is more deserving than the stranger" (445) // "I'd slit his throat and drink his blood" (446) // "May your hands be saved" (446) [more accurately "May your hands be preserved"] // "Praise God for your safety" (449) // "By the grace of your hand" (449) // "You've brought light to the village" (462) // "It's lit by its people" (462) // "May evil stay outside and far away" (446) // "God is forgiving and merciful" (473) // "God have mercy on him" (474) // "God forgets nobody" (474) // "May He write down happiness for you wherever you go" (476) // "...may He keep you safe" (478) // "May God bring this matter to a good end" (478) // "Your safety" (492) [usually in response to "Do you want anything? Or said to someone who is unwell"] // "Your excuse is with you..." (496)

## Appendix (2): Indian

Roy (GST): "He squatted on his haunches..." (15) // "...weaving sullen circles around mounds of red chillies..." (47) // "You can't dictate what she does with her own spit" (85) // "The world became angry-coloured" (85) // "Big Man the Lantern. Small man the Tallow-stick" (89) // "Just like a laddoo one pice two (150) [in response to "How do you do?"] // "The Air was waiting" (166) // "Jealous people go straight to hell" (185) // "Hey Mr. Monkey man, why's your bum so red?" "I went for a shit to Madras, and scraped it till it bled" (196) // "With a Thaiy thaiy thaka thaiy thaiy thome. And a jeweled Jesus watching" (211) // "Lord have mercy upon this poor leper" (249) // "Sprung from his loins and hers" (256) // "Little Man. He lived in a cara-van. Dum dum" (294, 319)

**Mistry (TFB):** / "Go, be frank with the whole world; go, be unhappy" (11) // "...believe or don't believe" (44) // "...a stench powerful enough to rip to shreds the hardy nostrils of a latrine basket collector" (65) // "...the man barely digested by vultures..." (74) // "...with the help of prayers, the soul usually crosses over after four days" (74) // "...wear it in good health" (76) // "No one will peck me to pieces..." (126) // "First you are setting a fire, then running to dig the well" (131) // "...it must have sizzled their arses" (132) // "Sometimes a lawyer's letter gives the best laxative" (132) // "...middle-class people like us get the bamboo, all the way" (133) // "...no remedy is the best remedy" (162) // "...what are you doing here on your lonesome?" (167) // "I am not going to tolerate your ifs-bifs" (205) // "A mother does not need any rights" (207)

**Mistry (SLJ):** "...what goes in chicken stomach, at the end comes back to our stomach" (23) // "I am walking around with them on top of my head" (41) [in response to "Where are they?"] // "A hundred years you will live, we were just talking about you" (42) // "...just a little woman trouble" (43) // "What can you say to idiots?" (45) // "Don't give me any idiotic-lunatic talk" (47) // "...the donkey song" (48) // "My right hand I will cut off and give you..." (49, 234) // "Serenading a mule..." (51) // "Slow with that beer, it can climb quickly to your head!" (52) // "The sound came and went, like a maraca played and silenced simultaneously" (63) // "Please don't take it to mind" (74) // Tears have all been cried long ago" (75) // "...you saw how right my lizard's tail was" (76) // "The curse of the death-scream stayed under your roof" (76) // "Why is that one grinning like a donkey?" (80) // "I can eat walking-walking. Good for stomach and digestion" (86) // "What to do with such low-class people?" (87) // "An empty stomach is not good to see blood" (89) // "The dogwalla idiot will say anything!" (94) // "People keep pissing on the wall as if it was their father's lavatory" (94) // "...change your face" (101) // "The pockets of the Camas only You will fill!" (105) // "There goes your express train brain" (110) // "Bazaar is happening" (118) // "By the light of the sun, in the shadow of the mosque, I tell you honestly..." (123) // "...please don't mention" (128) // "...so we could buy almonds to sharpen his brain" (145) // "...your feet I will touch..." (164) // "...there are causes of sickness for which doctor can do nothing" (178) // "All dirty collects inside" (181) // "Doctor need to check if all machinery in good condition" (192) // "...[they would not] hire him to clean their toilets even" (210) // "So much trouble I am giving" (224) // "Would have been a hundred times better..." (230) // "Swear," he said, pinching the skin under his Adam's apple to validate the oath" (257) // "It's all right if the crying comes" (279) // "A single-paasri weakling" (284) // "I was thinking that by mistake-bistake you forgot..." (289) // "Coming to a place of prayer without prayer cap. To collect what dust, I am asking" (292) // "Wash properly or every huddi I will break" (303) // See, fighting-bighting I am not interested in" (309) // "Goes to the very top...the dirty work" (317) // "...the wall's fragrances wrapped their rich veils over him and made him forget" (366) // "Bad habit I have, speaking mc-bc all the time" (390) [mc=maader chod].

**Mistry (FB):** "So, when are we going to meet this Father Forty-Lakhs of yours?" (43) // "It was our duty" (48) [in response to "Thank you;" cf. Arabic "No thanks for doing our duty;" cf. English "It's our pleasure"] // "...the private garden of intimacy" (73) // "Horrible. Like fighting cats" (76) [in response to "How will it sound"] // "...the whole jing-bang trio arrived..." (85)

"If government kept their promises, the gods would come down to garland them" (96) // "Swaying from side to side, like a pot without an arse" (101, 163) // "Stop doing your kutt-kutt" (103) // "To kick at wages is sinful" (103) // "...to convert adultery into rent increases" (106) // "It was a sound to wake the dead and stun the living" (108) // "...you witless animal!" (127) // "...you stinking dog!" (127) // "...untouchability poisons Hinduism as a drop of arsenic poisons milk" [MahatmaGandhi] (131) // "Shameless little donkeys" (133) // "What to do?" (164, 204, 433, 471, 495, 654) // "We feed them milk... when they are babies, but we cannot feed them good sense" (164) // "What-all wonderful things it can do" (167) // "What-all do you understand...?" (168) // "...my poor little laughing-playing child" (171) // "...shall I do some more chumpee for you feet?" (172) // "For politicians, passing laws is like passing water" (175) // "What kind of rascality is this?" (181) // "We're very happy to have you for our guru" (206) // "Monkey-man's dog" (208) // "The reedy notes of his instrument...were rich as a golden flute" (213) // "I will make you remember your grandmothers!" (219) // "Where is your mind?" (229) // "Poor boy is finished" (231) // "Liquid lizards keep swimming into [his] thoughts" (233) // "...the slow coach gets left behind" (258) // "Sharp as a bayonet" (270) // "How to afford fifty rupees?" (275) // "What to do, clumsy mistakes happen when you have only one good leg in a world of two legs" (283) // "I think the veg food is the same as the non-veg, but minus the gristle and bone" (292) // "Monkey-man" (333, 347, 680) // "...they'll sit on my head" (340); "If you are nice to them, they'll sit on your head" (445) // "Actually speaking..." (395, 398) // "The dal is almost water" (407) // "Old hands are clumsy hands" (433) // "Bilkool crazy" (517) // "Bilkool correct" (521, 553) // "...if you fill your face with laughing, there will be no room for crying" (539) // "—the almsgiver is always right" (557) // "...I'll bless your mouth with sugar if that ever happens" (567) // "The bent stick may straighten; but not the government" (567) // "Sour-lime face" (568, 744) // "...human beings are not meant to select their time of death. For then they will be allowed to pick their moment of birth" (582) // "...your eyes are generous" (630) // "The devil held his umbrella over us" (63) // "...bilkool nonsense" (640) // "...one tight shot on your face I'll give" (648)

**Mistry (FM):** "...a father's love [is] sunshine" (2) // "...fresh water without which a daughter [cannot] bloom" (2) // "My heart is going dhuk-dhuk" (3) // "When the naughty boy at last becomes a good boy, it's a double delight" (13) // "You cannot plough the stubble of the crop one day, and expect cream the next" (14) // "I need to do number one" (17) // "This boy of mine is becoming a rascal-and-a-half" (21) // "The usual theatrics and keech-keech..." (22) // "From where to where are you jumping...?" (28) // "Paatiyo has to be hot, or it doesn't deserve the name pf paatiyo" (36) // "I'll show you what's behind my fist" (41) // "Better to be on the safe side than on the sorry side" (56) // "What about me, my back is in pieces" (68) // "I can see the whole world in these eyes. Better than any cinema" (87) // "Quiet, or I'll give you each a big dhamaylo" (115) // "Memento-femento I don't believe in" (p. 121) // "What to do?" (134, 203) // "Stop the philosophy and do what needs doing" (169) // "Without housewife there is no home; without home, no family" (175) // "There's only one way to defeat the sorrow and sadness of life—with laughter and rejoicing" (179) // "...we had no intention of jumping the queue between you and God" (183) // "...[his] brain is as soft as a pickled mango" (185) // "You listen to his bak-bakaat, then come to accuse me? (185) // "With loud busy teeth, batchar-batchar, the bastard ate everything" (197) // "...happy as a goat in a garbage dump" (197) // "What times have come" (198) // "Myths create the reality"

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(205) // "Bureaucracy...[the] wa wa worst enemy of mankind" (242 // "There's some gotaalo in my accounts" (249) // "Sub kootch hai. But no ball only" (268) // "Preparing is three quarters of repairing..." (303) // "If you hurry, you'll spoil your curry" (303) // "Gardeners have green thumbs, handyman have black-and-blue ones" (304) // "Hammers are slippery things" (305) // "A good handyman never blames his tools" (305) // "Never disturb the sleeping snake, nor tease the crouching tiger" ( 314) // "Don't walk khassar-khassar...lift your feet" (328) // "Second opinion leads to a mountain of confusion" (344) // "Smells like the Motilal masala shop" (361) // "...good thoughts, good words, good deeds..." (364) // "...grass-eating ghatish" (373) // "I have drunk the milk of Punjab!" (373) // "I'll break your faces if you act smart with me" (373) // "This way, not that way" (379) // "Rest of the country is breeding like rabbits" (401) // "You [should not be] in the prayer space in your impure state" (451) // "After a haircut, you are unclean till you shower and wash your head" (451) // "...he'll be eighteen complete, nineteen running" (470) " "Fourteen...fifteen running" (475) // "Too much pride we acquire with our years" (481)