



MURTY CLASSICAL LIBRARY
OF INDIA

Murty Classical Library of India

Guide for Translators

October 2016

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I. General Aims and Scope

The Murty Classical Library of India (MCLI) publishes bilingual editions of the major works of South Asian literature and thought. For the purposes of this series, “South Asia” largely comprises the area now marked by the nation-states Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka; the chronological endpoint of MCLI is approximately 1800 CE.

MCLI books aim to provide original-language texts in authoritative editions with accurate and faithful English translations on facing pages. The audience we seek to reach includes general readers, undergraduate and graduate students, and professional scholars both within and outside South Asian studies. All three audiences must be kept in mind when considering questions of translation style, annotation, and the introduction.

The following “Guide for Translators” strives to provide essential information about MCLI style. It does not aim to be exhaustive; where necessary it may be supplemented by the *Chicago Manual of Style* (16th ed.).

II. The Edition

Each edition of the MCLI will have an introduction, a text in the original language and appropriate Indic script, with a facing English translation, explanatory footnotes, text-critical and exegetical endnotes, a glossary (optional), a bibliography, and an index.

A. The Introduction

The introduction typically ranges between 4000 and 8000 words. Its primary purpose is to open up the work to the non-specialist reader; it is not the place to carry on technical scholarly discussions. One should provide the reader with the most important facts concerning the life and works of each author treated in the volume, the date and context of each work translated, a summary of the volume’s contents (an extended synopsis is not desired), and a brief assessment of sources, models, significance, and influence.

If the original is divided into chapters, titles should be supplied, preferably those provided in the original or by a commentator, or that failing, devised by the translator.

When other Indic texts are referred to, they should be followed by English translations of the title without italics or quotation marks, e.g.: *Harsacarita* (The Life of King Harsha). The same principle should be followed when using Indic terminology. Generally speaking, if an Indic word is to be left untranslated in the book, the original should be given first and then the translation, e.g., *prema* (selfless love); otherwise, the reverse procedure should be followed, selfless love (*prema*).

For a multivolume work, a general introduction will appear in volume 1, individual book introductions in the succeeding volumes preceded by an abbreviated (3-5 page) version of the general introduction.

In most cases you will want to provide necessary information about your sources for the Indic text you are translating, in a final section of the introduction, e.g., “Note on the Text.” Translators who wish to discuss their principles of translation should do so briefly at the end of this section, and hence provide a “Note on the Text and Translation.” (In multivolume works a “Note on the Text” will appear in volume 1; translators of subsequent volumes may if they desire add a “Note on Translation.”)

Notes to the introduction will be endnotes, and will immediately follow the introduction. The format for references is as follows:

Jones 1993

Smith 1984: 223–255 [n.b. full style for page ranges and en-dash]

The same format will be used in the textual and exegetical endnotes. All references are to be in endnotes; there should be no references placed in the body of the text.

References to premodern Indic texts are to be in the form:

Kalidasa, *Raghuvamśa* 3.44 (or, where warranted, just *Raghuvamśa* 3.44),

and not by author and date of edition, e.g., Kalidasa 1977: 88.

Acknowledgements should be kept to a minimum, and should follow the introduction in a separate section. If there is a dedication, it should be included here.

B. Text, translation, and annotation

i. The Text

Contributors may offer new editions, but are not required to do so. Reprinted texts should be the best available, revised where necessary. Before making use of an existing edition, translators must consult the General Editor concerning the copyright status of the edition (or editions) they wish to use. MCLI will make every effort to secure the approval and cooperation of the institutes and publishers whose texts we wish to reproduce or adapt.

In cases where translators have not created an electronic text themselves or do not have access to an already-available e-text, MCLI will prepare one for them from a scanned or photocopied original supplied by the translator. *Please note that MCLI does not expect or desire camera-ready copy.* MCLI compositors will convert the e-text for publication. That said, those preparing e-texts themselves should follow MCLI conventions from the start. (Those for Sanskrit are described in a separate document, available upon request.)

MCLI frowns upon the use of Western punctuation in editing Indic texts. Exclamation points, semi-colons, dashes and the like are to be avoided. Question marks should be used in only the rarest of instances (such as complex Persian prose, where the text itself is unclear and the translator is effectively making an editorial judgment). If the modern scholarly tradition in question has consecrated the use of commas—as for instance in Hindi, to mark caesura, or in complex Sanskrit art prose to separate clauses—such punctuation will be permitted. (For texts printed in Roman script, such as Pali, periods will be used in place of *daṇḍas*.)

For poetical works, verse numbers should be placed at the beginning of the stanza, not at the end.

All variants are given in endnote annotation (see discussion below). A lacuna in a verse should be surrounded by brackets with a number of hyphens corresponding to the number of missing syllables: *mā niṣāda* [-----]*samāh*. For a plausible conjecture, use <----->. For irremediably corrupt passages, used a dagger on both sides of the passage: †*mā niṣāda*†. Material that is considered spurious should be enclosed in square brackets, [...]. A brief endnote to the text will be necessary in all these cases.

When short poems or other excerpts are being taken from a long work (say, *ghazals* from a *divan*), the poems should be through-numbered in the translation. A concordance must be appended to the translation showing the actual numbering in the main source.

ii. The Translation

It is expected that the translations will be new, and prepared in a register that is both idiomatic and enduring, given that MCLI books remain in print in perpetuity. For the same reason, prose rather than verse translation is typically preferred, though versified translations may also be acceptable. Translators are encouraged to discuss their choice of form and share examples of their translation with their regional subeditor at an early stage of their work.

MCLI books are not meant to be “ponies,” so translators should strive for fidelity as distinct from literalness. The English should serve as an accurate guide to the original while reading naturally and capturing as far as possible the style, flavor, and character of the facing text.

We do not permit square brackets for supplied words in the translation (except for supplied stage directions in drama). Material that is “understood” should be added into the translation; where there is real complexity, you may add an exegetical endnote (see below). For unfamiliar terms or names, an explanatory footnote may be used. The format of the explanatory footnote is as follows (*, †, etc., are to be used as reference marker; this is the last setting on MS Word “Footnote -> Options -> Number Format”):

Text: Bhava*
Footnote: *Shiva.

In many cases, however, such explanations can naturally—and often far preferably—be incorporated into the translation itself (e.g., instead of footnoting Purandara, one can write, “Indra, breaker of cities”). Only those items for which no reasonable English equivalent can be found should be left in their Indic form.

Identification footnotes must be kept to an absolute minimum, and can occupy in total no more than three or four lines of type per page. All footnotes, including one-word identifications, should be punctuated with a period.

Where it would be found necessary to repeat identification footnotes, the translator should consider adding a glossary (see further below). At all events, an identification footnote should be used *only the on the first occurrence of the term*.

There will be times where the original offers a verse or passage that cannot be translated effectively into English. There will also be cases where the translator believes the verse is either irretrievably corrupt or for some other reason should not be translated in the body of the work. Such passages should be relegated to the textual endnotes (see below), where tentative translations can be offered.

For (1) works translated as poetry or as prose-poetry, each verse should be numbered. For (2) narrative works that are in verse in the original, we often prefer that translations follow a natural flow of English, and hence advise that individual Indic verses be grouped into English paragraphs (with every fifth verse numbered in the left-hand margin, though paragraphs do NOT of course need to be restricted to five-verse segments) rather than to translate numbered verse by numbered verse. Hence we prefer the following:

10 So he spoke, and Rama replied with a word of assent. After reverently circling the sage, he and Saumitri prepared to set forth. Large-eyed Sita then gave the brothers their splendid pairs of quivers, their bows, and gleaming swords....

15 Strapping on their splendid quivers and taking up their twanging bows, Rama and Lakshmana left the ashram to begin their journey.

to this:

10. So he spoke, and Rama replied with a word of assent. After reverently circling the sage, he and Saumitri prepared to set forth.

11. Large-eyed Sita then gave the brothers their splendid pairs of quivers, their bows, and

gleaming swords....

15. Strapping on their splendid quivers and taking up their twanging bows,
Rama and Lakshmana left the ashram to begin their journey.

Note that in an extended quotation over a number of verses, inverted commas (“...”) should appear only at the start of the quotation and at the end, and not at the beginning of each new verse that continues the quotation.

For (3) works that are in prose in the original, all paragraphs should be numbered sequentially, both at the beginning of the paragraph of the Indic text and at the beginning of the paragraph of the translation.

iii. Annotation

All text-critical and other textual annotation, and all longer exegetical remarks will be placed in the endnotes. These will be divided between “Notes to the Text” and “Notes to the Translation.” A *textual* endnote will be indicated by means of an Indic numeral added to the edited text, and an *exegetical* endnote by means of an Arabic numeral added to the translated text. Numeration will be started afresh with each new poem or chapter (depending on the nature of the work).

“Notes to the Text” comprise the report of variants and discussion of textual problems, and should be as succinct and to the point as possible. MCLI books cannot include a full critical apparatus. The history of the text should be summarily described in the general introduction (in “Note on the Text”), and text-critical endnotes should be confined to recording variants and offering conjectures that significantly affect the translation or interpretation, omitting simple or well-established corrections as well as readings of purely text-critical significance. English (not Latin or an Indic language) is to be used for any editorial comments in a text-critical endnote, full words when they are short, such as “adds,” “lacks,” or when longer, abbreviations, such as “conj.” (“conjecture”); the variants themselves will be given in Indic script (citations of text in other parts of the text-critical endnotes will also be give in Indic script). The form of the text-critical endnote will typically be as follows:

(1) Where the reading adopted remains that of the base text but significant variants are offered:

Text:

रामो^१

Endnote:

1. रामो] रामा N; रहीम M

(2) Where the reading adopted is not that of the base text (here A):

Text:

रहीम^०

Endnote:

1. रहीम] M; रामो A; रामा N

In all cases the lemma must be given. As previously observed, the callout itself will be in superscript Indic numbers.

“Notes to the Translation” are not intended to serve as a commentary but are to be used to explain the translation to the general reader: to supply essential historical or cultural information, for example, or to identify rhetorical or other textual features that cannot be conveyed in the translation, and if necessary to make a scholarly point explaining the choice of translation. Endnotes are not the place to carry on scholarly arguments, or to go into grammatical, text-critical, or interpretative detail unless absolutely necessary (That said, when reference is made to traditional commentators, the commentator should be specified, and not referred to in a general way, e.g., “Commentators explain...”). Annotation should not constitute more than ten percent of the work.

All Indic words cited in the “Notes to the Translation” (except for proper names, see below) will be in italicized Roman font (*not* Indic font) with the necessary diacritics.

Endnote callouts should never be attached to a heading of any sort (a number in the case of numbered poems, the name of the speaker, etc.). Instead, place the callout at the end of the first complete sentence following the heading.

Wherever possible, endnote callouts in both the text and the translation should be placed at the end of a verse or paragraph. If there are several notes in that verse or paragraph, they should grouped together provided that clarity can be maintained in doing so. In the case of “Notes to the Text,” the annotations should be separated by a period and a double space. The lemma will make clear what each such annotation refers to. An example of a textual endnote that contains two annotations:

1. रामो] रामा N; रहीम M. रहीम] M; रामो A; रामा N

An example of a translation endnote that contains two annotations:

1. “Peacocks”: conventionally depicted as being stimulated by the rainy season. *paṭavāsa*: the illustrated cloth tableaus or screens employed by itinerant bards to enhance their storytelling.

C. Glossary

For a book that has a large number of recurring names that are likely to be unfamiliar to the general reader, it is helpful to provide a glossary. The glossary should include only significant names, epithets, and places. Names that are adequately explained by the narrative itself should not be included (hence, e.g., no Rama, Sita, Ravana, “Ten-Headed,” and so on in a Ramayana story), nor should items that appear only once (provide instead an explanatory footnote or an endnote, depending on the complexity of the identification). In short, the glossary is the place for the reader to look up the frequently occurring but otherwise unfamiliar name. It will be placed after the text/translation and before the index, which will simply list, and not identify, all proper names (and, occasionally, significant flora and fauna).

You may include, if you wish and if it is pertinent, etymologies and translations of the names, e.g.:

Ajatashatru (*ajātaśatru*, literally “whose conqueror has not been born”): Yudhishtira

You may also add diacritics to this glossary (as in the example just given), to assist in pronunciation.

In the case of a multivolume work, the glossary should be emended to conform to the needs of each particular volume.

MCLI books will not include an index of first lines.

D. List of Abbreviations

A list of abbreviations for manuscripts or texts used in the apparatus should precede the bibliography.

E. Bibliography

The bibliography should be divided into two sections, called “Editions and Translations” and “Other Sources.” The first section should include all major editions of the text and English translations, in separate sections, listing the books in chronological order, oldest to newest. “Other sources” should include whatever other primary works and translations have been consulted, along with the most important secondary literature on the work as well as the materials

cited in the introduction and endnotes. (Note that only materials actually cited should be included.)

Bibliographical citations should conform to the following examples:

Book:

Shulman, David. 1985. *The King and the Clown in South Indian Myth and Poetry*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

Bhavabhuti. *Rama's Last Act (Uttararāmcārīta)*. Edited and Translated by Sheldon Pollock. New York: New York University Press, 2007.

Article in Journal:

Sharma, Sunil. 2002. "Amir Khusraw and the Genre of Historical Narratives in Verse." *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East* 22, 1-2: 112–118 [not 112-18].

Article in Book:

Horstmann, Monika. 2005. "Why Ritual? An Eighteenth-Century Debate." In *Words and Deeds: Hindu and Buddhist Rituals in South Asia*, ed. J. Gengnagel et al. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, pp. 106–119.

Edition for which no Editor is known:

Sutantapitak khuddakanikay theragatha therigatha. 1959 (B.E. 2502). Phnom Penh. (Tripitaka Khmer).

When a publication date is originally given in Vikrama Saṃvat, Hijra, and other such notation, it should be preserved in the bibliography, and supplemented by the common-era date in brackets.

For materials published in South Asia, follow standard bibliographic practices: where books have English title pages in addition to the Indic, reproduce precisely the English-language information with respect to place-names as well as transliteration of author names; where printed books have only Indic title pages, Romanize author names and place names without diacritics, but use diacritics for book titles. For example,

Shukla, Ramchandra. 1994. *Hindī sāhitya kā itihās*. 29th ed. Varanasi: Nagari Pracharini Sabha. Original edition, 1929.

F. Index

An index of proper names (personal names, place names, and where appropriate significant things) will be generated in-house.

G. Miscellaneous

Maps are permitted in MCLI, but only if they are absolutely essential to following the translation. The same applies to genealogical or other charts. No other illustrations are permitted.

III. Style

A. Orthography

The orthography of our volumes follows American English. This applies to both spelling and punctuation. Therefore, use double quotation marks, end punctuation inside quotation marks, leave no space around dashes, and add the final comma in a series (thus: x, y, and z, and *not* x, y and z). Please set your spell-checker to “American English.”

We follow the *Chicago Manual of Style* in aiming toward a spare, “down” style in matters of capitalization. We therefore do not capitalize common English nouns such as king, queen, god, demon, etc. We also prefer “king of the gods,” “god of love,” rather than “King of the Gods,” “God of Love,” etc., unless lower-case usage would produce a real ambiguity. An initial capital for “king, princess, goddess” etc. appears only when the title prefaces a name, e.g.: “Queen Gandhari,” (contrast “the queen wept,” “king of Sinhala”). In direct address use capitalization, e.g.: “Your Highness.”

It is acceptable to employ commonly used Indic words in the translation, introduction, and notes. Thus, Brahman [sic], Kshatriya, Vaishya, and Shudra, karma, samsara (not sansara), Veda, yoga, lac, lakh, crore, bhakti, etc. Note that these are not italicized. When in doubt on this (and all other spelling and usage questions) consult *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*.

For **Indic proper names**, including the names of persons, places, doctrines, and the like, *no diacritics will be used*, whether in the introduction, the translation, or the footnotes or endnotes. Instead use quasi-phonetic forms (wherever possible adopt the Merriam-Webster spelling if there is one—although we require, as above, Vaishya and Shudra, contra Webster’s Vaisya and Sudra) and, if not, the spelling with the widest familiarity, difficult though it may be to determine this with any precision in every case). Thus sh (for ś) as in Shiva; sh (for ṣ) as in Vishnu; ch (for c) as in Chola (also, write chh for ch; cch both for cc and cch; thus, e.g. Chohara becomes Chhohara; Uccāṭinī becomes Ucchatini; Kaccha remains Kaccha); ri (for ṛ) as in Krishna; Kashi (not Kasi, though this may be a common southern pronunciation). Also, omit macrons, thus Azimuddin (not, Azīmuddīn). V should remain v: Sarasvati (not, Saraswati), Vishvamitra (not, Vishwamitra).

Wherever possible, English equivalents should be sought for Indic flora, fauna, and the like. Words for which no straightforward and idiomatic English translation is available, however, must be properly transliterated with requisite diacritics, in which case they are italicized (e.g.:

kuśa grass, *bakula* tree). The first occurrence of such words in the translation may be accompanied by an explanatory note; botanical or zoological names in Latin are to be avoided. In some cases, where an Indic term is used repeatedly and diacritics/italics would be jarring—say *gandharva* or *apsaras* in a play of Kalidasa—the term should be discussed in the introduction and/or annotation, and used as if it were an English term, without diacritics/italics. Note that English endings (e.g., the plural marker “-s”) will be italicized, e.g., *śāstras* (not *śāstras*, *śāstra-s*, etc.). All Indic literary genres should be given in lower case, with diacritics/italics (e.g., *śāstra*, *mahākāvya*, *ghazal*, *dāstān*, *qawwali*) unless they are found in Merriam-Webster (e.g., Purana [sic]); anglicized adjectives should not (puranic, shastric, etc.) Qua letters should be in italics, with ’s as plural (e.g., “two *kṣa*’s crown the verse”).

Titles of Indic texts should carry the appropriate diacritics. One exception: Ramayana and Mahabharata, when used in reference to a tradition, carry no diacritics and no italics (similarly Veda, Upanishads, Qur’an). By contrast we write *Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa*, etc.

Compounds should be given without segmentation, thus *Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa* (not *Mārkaṇḍeya-purāṇa* or *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*, etc.); *pūrvakaviprasaṃsā* (not *pūrva-kavi-prasaṃsā*), etc. When such a term is used in the introduction, always provide an English gloss on first occurrence, thus: *Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa* (Ancient Lore of Markandeya); *pūrvakaviprasaṃsā* (praise poems on earlier poets).

Indic place-names present a special challenge. In general, when identifying premodern toponyms in the introduction and annotations, translators should make use of the approved contemporary name (e.g., Avadh, rather than Awadh or Oudh; Thiruvananthapuram, rather than Tiruvananantapuram or Trivandrum; Mehrauli rather than Mehrauli); colonial-era usage is to be avoided. Helpful sources, which must still be used with caution, are the U.S. Board on Geographic Names site at <http://geonames.usgs.gov/> (this includes older name forms and clearly states the approved contemporary name); and <http://www.getty.edu/research/tools/vocabularies/tgn/>). In the translation, generally speaking, one should reproduce the toponym that is used in the text (thus, Ganga, and never Ganges; but Jumna, rather than Yamuna, in most northern vernacular and Persian texts). If there is a risk of grave confusion, one should gloss the toponym in a note, and consider adding it to the glossary.

B. Transliteration

Transliteration should be made according to prevailing scholarly standards (save for proper names and the like, as observed above). Consistency must be maintained across the volume. (Whether, to take a Hindi example, one chooses to write Dasharath or Dashrath will depend on context, metrical or non-metrical, see next. At all events, one version should be chosen

for the introduction and annotations, and used consistently.)

For Hindi, note that *anusvār* is to be transliterated as *m̐*, whereas *anunāsik* is to be transliterated by a tilde (~). When quoting from the original of a poetic text, syllable-final *-a-*, often mute in the spoken language, must be represented.

For Persian, we have chosen a modified Steingass system, but in a few instances we will not follow Steingass to simplify things, e.g., we will have *dīwān-i khālisa* instead of *dīwāni khālisa*, “Azimuddin” or “Azim al-Din” instead of “Azim ud-din.” For Urdu, we will follow a modified Library of Congress system.

When transliterating Indic names and terms, it is preferable to use the stem-form rather than the nominative, in accordance with general Western practice. Thus Kritavarman (not Kritavarma), Amshumat (not Amshuman), *apsaras* (not *apsarā*), Kesarin (not Kesari), Malyavat (not Malyavan). Deviation is possible if another form of the word is in common use, e.g. Hanuman (not Hanumat).

Where other questions of orthography arise, please consult the regional subeditor.

C. Names of languages

We refer to the languages as Sanskrit, Prakrit, Apabhramsha [sic], Braj Bhasha, and Persian; but Bangla, Kannada, Sinhala, Panjabi [sic], etc. Language names are abbreviated as per Turner’s *Comparative Dictionary of Indo-Aryan Languages* (except for Sanskrit, which is Skt., not Sk.)

D. Dates

All dates should be given in the Common Era. Where essential, Indic dating systems (Vikrama Saṃvat; Śaka Saṃvat, Hijra, etc.) may be added in parenthesis. Thus: 1157 C.E. (1100 V.S.); also B.C.E. (Before the Common Era). (See also under “Bibliography.”)

E. Abbreviations

For “verse” and “verses” when used before numerals we use v. and vv. respectively, and lettered rather than numbered verse quarters (where applicable), thus v. 18a, v. 22ab, vv. 35–38. Use p. and pp. for page(s), ms. and mss. for manuscript(s), and c. (instead of ca.) for “circa” in dates. Please refrain from using the abbreviations f. and ff.; specific pages or passages should be cited. And write “compare” or “see,” and not “cf.”

F. Indic Book Titles

Capitalize the first word in title and use lower case on everything else except proper names. Thus *Hindī sāhitya kā itihās* (rather than *Hindī Sāhitya kā Itihās*).

IV. Preparing and submitting the manuscript

Use a standard word-processing program, preferably Microsoft Word. **Create a separate computer file for each section of the work** and give it both a sequential number and name that identifies its content (e.g. “01-Introduction,” “02-Note on the Text and Translation,” etc.). If you are submitting the Indic text, it should be prepared in a Unicode Open Type compatible Indic font (not Roman). If the Indic text will not be in a Unicode Indic font, we will need to know that in advance, as it will take time to convert and proofread the converted text. Should other questions arise regarding the submission of the original-language text, please consult the regional subeditor for guidelines.

It is essential to use a Unicode Open Type compatible font for all the rest of the ms., introduction, translations, footnotes, and endnotes). Use Unicode diacritics when required (do not, for example, use the underline function for an *rr*).

Set the text-editor to check spelling for “U.S. English.”

In general, avoid trying to do any visual styling to your documents. The final manuscript submitted to the General Editor should be complete, double-spaced throughout, including block quotes and all endnotes, and assembled and paginated continuously in the following order:

- Title page, **with Indic author’s name in the appropriate Indic script.** (In the case of anonymous works, the work’s title, in Romanization, *without diacritics*, will be added in the title, e.g., *Therigatha: Poems of the First Buddhist Women*)

- Table of Contents (including where appropriate the chapter names of the translated text)
- Introduction (including section on acknowledgments, and dedication if used) and endnotes following the introduction
- Note on the Text [or, Note on the Text and Translation]
- Original-language text, with Indic numerals (if available) indicating textual endnotes restarting with each new section
- English translation, with special symbols (*, †, etc., indicating identification footnotes, restarting on each page, and Arabic numerals indicating endnotes, restarting with each new section
- List of abbreviations
- Notes to the Text

- Notes to the Translation
- Concordance (if used)
- Glossary (if used)
- Bibliography, consisting of:
 - Editions and Translations
 - Other Sources