Rebellious Spirits in the Poems of Hafiz Shirazi and Kazi Nazrul Islam: Exploring Unity in Variation

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Abstract This article attempts a comparative analysis of the selected poems of Hafiz Shams-ud-Din Muhammad Shirazi (1326-1390) and Kazi Nazrul Islam (1999-1976) from the perspectives and approaches of comparative literature outlined by the new comparatists Shunqing Cao and Steven Totosy de Zepetnek. It demonstrates that Hafiz and Nazrul share striking unity in their poetic spirits though they are from two different ages, geographies, and languages. The analysis, however, focuses on both similarities and variations, arguing that the study of variations is what makes comparative literature remain an ever-evolving discipline. Some kind of comparison between Hafiz and Nazrul can be traced in scattered write-ups in Bengali and Persian mainly through the influence study; however, they have not been explored in a *lingua franca* (e. g., English) through new comparative study such as variation theory and in terms of their rebellious spirits. Since this study sheds light on an unexplored terrain of the vast world of Hafiz, exploring his rebellious spirits, it would contribute to the existing scholarship of Hafiz and his position in world literature. Furthermore, it uniquely explores the rebellious spirits of Hafiz and Nazrul as constructive forces that could challenge oppression, inequality, injustice, bigotry, and dogmas of all types and promote freedom, justice, equity, inclusiveness, and pluralism at all levels. The article concludes that both the poets have left an indelible impact on literature and culture globally through their contributions to literature, their voice for humanity, their rebellious spirits, and their influence on subsequent generations of poets.

Keywords comparative literature; Bangladeshi poetry; Persian ghazal; resistance poetry; variation theory

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Introduction

Hafiz Shams-ud-Din Muhammad Shirazi (1326–1390) and Kazi Nazrul Islam (1999-1976) are regarded as two renowned poets of world literature originating from two different countries and contexts and belonging to two different eras. Nazrul was born in the greater Bengal, an occupied province of British India and used to write poetry in diverse forms mainly in Bengali, and Hafiz was born in Shiraz, a vibrant city of Persian Iran and used to scribble spiritual as well as revolutionary verses in Persian. The major themes of Nazrul's poetry are equality, justice, humanity, and resistance against invasion, occupation, and oppression. After the publication of his poem "Bidrohi" (The Rebel) in 1922, his fame spread all over British India, and since then he began to be known as a "rebel poet" though he protested against such categorisation (*The Path of the Comet* 84). Nazrul first encountered Hafiz and a treasure house of Persian verses in 1917, when he was employed as a soldier in the 49th Bengal Regiment of the British Army (*Rubaiyat* 7). Although Hafiz is not primarily known as a rebel poet, in this study, we argue that his poetry displays a subtle form of rebellious spirit. In fact, both Hafiz and Nazrul celebrate self-awareness, self-realisation and, of course, rebellious spirits in their respective poems. Along with inspiring many generations by inscribing hope and aspirations in them, both the poets are known for expressing their boldness, challenging social ills, and raising their voices to fight for freedom and uphold justice.

Kazi Nazrul Islam has been nationally as well as globally recognised as the

national poet of Bangladesh. However, when he was active as a poet, writer and editor, he encountered all types of hostility, proscription and even imprisonment from the then colonial establishment of the British Raj. Hafiz was mainly a court poet and was more or less patronised by various rulers of Shiraz. As a poet, Hafiz is often compared with great Greek poets such as Horace. A. J. Arberry, one of the great English translators of Hafiz, observes, "Hafiz is as highly esteemed by his countrymen as Shakespeare by us, and deserves as serious consideration" (2). Hafiz mostly composed verses in the literary genre of *ghazal*,[1] which conveys the joy of divine stimulation in the ethereal form of love poems. The major themes in his ghazals include belief, love, and various faces of hypocrisy. On the other hand, Nazrul contributed to several literary genres such as poems, short stories, novels, songs, and essays but is best recognised for his poems, especially for pioneering new forms of Bengali ghazals. Besides, Nazrul translated all 75 *Rubaiyat* of Hafiz in the form of Bengali Rubaiyat (Nazrul, Rubaiyat). Through this poetic journey with Hafiz, quite naturally, Nazrul in his spiritual poems, especially ghazals, could feel the poor, the beggar, and the destitute and celebrate the rise and force of life in the same way as Hafiz had done long ago, putting humanism on top. In this article, we demonstrate that the poetic spirits of Hafiz and Nazrul carry the same message of universal love and revolution regardless of time, geography and language. Moreover, we argue that while the rebellious spirit encompasses the world of Nazrul, that of Hafiz requires enquiry and explication.

Thus, by comparing the contexts, themes, and styles of the selected poems of Hafiz and Nazrul, the paper mainly focuses on the elements that express their rebellious spirits as constructive forces. The study also analyses some poems of Hafiz to show how he manifests his rebellious attitudes through different figures of speech and poetic devices. It aims to find out the reasons why Hafiz can also be considered a rebel. In our comparative analysis of the poems of Hafiz and Nazrul, we not only trace similarities but also variations and differences, especially in their diverse modes of rebellion. We draw on theoretical grounds from the "resistance literature" and the spirits of Sufi antinomianism, situating Nazrul and Hafiz in historical, cultural and political contexts. During our textual analysis, we would adopt the methods and strategies of comparative literature introduced by Shunqing Cao and Steven Totosy de Zepetnek in their ground-breaking books *The Variation Theory of Comparative Literature and Comparative Literature: Theory, Method, Application*, respectively.

1 In Middle Eastern and Indian literature and music, ghazal is a lyric poem with a fixed number of verses and a repeated rhyme, typically on the theme of love, and normally set to music.

Locating Hafiz and Nazrul in Existing Scholarship of Comparative Literature

Let us first review existing scholarship on Nazrul and Hafiz to identify how their rebellious spirits have been explored and to clarify the need for a systematic comparison. This will help focus our study on addressing the research gap concerning their expressions of resistance within their literary legacies.

Most studies on Nazrul and Hafiz have mainly been conducted discretely in Bengali and Persian. However, Kamal Uddin has recently published a book *Nazrul o Hafizer Kobita: Shilpo o Baishista* (Poetry of Nazrul and Hafiz: Art and Characteristics) in Bengali on Nazrul and Hafiz in which he studies the stylistic and artistic characteristics of their poems. In a comparative tone, the book explores parallelism between Nazrul and Hafiz despite their significant geographical and temporal disparities. It highlights how their poetry transcends boundaries of time, space, and language, resonating with similar expressions of human emotions. It argues that both Nazrul's songs and Hafiz's ghazals connect deeply with audiences and reflect a shared language of the heart. In general, the book analyses the parallels and distinctions between these two poets, exploring how their thoughts and consciousness converge and diverge in their poems. However, Uddin has not compared the poets in terms of the rebellious spirit they articulate in their poems. He shows how Nazrul himself was inspired by Hafiz's ghazals while translating them. Above all, this comparative study seems to have adopted "influence study" largely as a comparative method.

There are other works that point out how Nazrul was influenced by Hafiz. For example, in his essay "Nazrul o Hafiz" (Nazrul and Hafiz), Ahmed Kabir shows Nazrul as a bearer of Hafiz's poetic style and philosophy. He evaluates the originality of Nazrul's translation in the following manner—

> Nazrul's translation of Hafiz, which is tinged with the texture and flavour of Bengali language, is as original as Hafiz's original Persian verses. (58)

Nazrul is considered a unique translator of Hafiz by many as Pijush Kumar Bhattacharjee has mentioned in his book titled *Ananya Anubadak Nazrul* (Nazrul: An Unique Translator). On the other hand, some studies in English can be found that compare Nazrul with English and American poets such as Keats, Shelley, Byron, Yeats, Whitman, and so forth (Hasan 84). In those studies, an orientalist or Eurocentric approach and influence study as a comparative method are followed (for details, see Hasan 84-85). However, in his study, S M Hasan compares and

contrasts Nazrul and the Martinican poet Aimé Césaire, focusing on the themes of root, resistance, and revolution. His study shows how both the poets articulate their resisting voices powerfully "in their poetry in the context of colonial occupation and oppression" (81). As a whole, Hasan analyses the resistance poetry of Nazrul and Césaire through applying the methods of the "new comparative literature".

However, since no comparative study on the works of Nazrul and Hafiz has been done so far regarding their rebellious spirits, a noticeable research gap persists in this area. Though both poets espouse themes of defiance and resistance in their respective works, no comprehensive study has yet systematically examined the extent and nature of their rebelliousness. Therefore, this comparative study aims to address this gap by elucidating Nazrul and Hafiz as rebels within their respective literary traditions, shedding light on their shared as well as divergent ethos of dissent and subversion in varied contexts and dimensions.

Theoretical and Methodological Ground

Comparative study serves as an important tool for literary exploration. Comparative literature as a methodology analyses literary texts from different cultures, languages, and periods to identify similarities, differences, and influences. Comparative literature often examines themes, motifs, narrative structures, and cultural contexts of two or more literary texts to understand how literature transcends national boundaries and interacts with other works irrespective of geographical or territorial locale. In that sense, comparative literature is transnational as well as transcultural. It compares and connects across geographies, cultures, and civilisations and shows that the world is interconnected. It also combines elements of literary theory, cultural studies, translation studies, and linguistics to explore the connections and contrasts between diverse literary traditions. Thus, comparative literature not only studies texts across territorial boundaries but also incorporates theories and concepts across disciplines. According to Susan Bassnett, "comparative literature involves the study of texts across cultures, that it is interdisciplinary and that it is concerned with patterns of connection in literature across both time and space" (1). Shunqing Cao observes,

> In the field of Comparative Literature, cross-culture, cross-nation, cross-discipline, and cross-language have always been considered the basic ideas and methods of the conduct of comparison. (226)

On the other hand, influence study is considered a method in traditional comparative

literature, especially in the French School of comparative literature. It is one of the Eurocentric or Orientalist approaches to interpreting literatures in which the influence of a superior or European author or text on a non-European or inferior author or text is studied. Bassnett points out that this method "has always occupied an important place in comparative literature." (13). However, in our study of Hafiz and Nazrul, we have not considered one superior to the other. What we attempt to conceptualise as our method of comparison has been adapted from Cao's "variation theory", which is regarded as a significant breakthrough in comparative literature. In "The Crisis of Comparative Literature", Rene Wellek argues that comparative literature "has not been able to establish a distinct subject matter and a specific methodology" or theory though it is widely considered an academic discipline (162). Wellek describes this state of comparative literature as the "most serious sign of the precarious state" (ibid). In this context, variation theory, according to Cao, proposes to "solve the problem that there is no definite scope and objectives of Comparative Literature" (xxvii). Cao has outlined five aspects of variation theory. The first one is about "the Variation of literary phenomena across different nations." The "Variation of literary phenomena across different languages" is the focus of the second aspect. The third aspect outlines "the Variation on the level of literary texts" while the fourth aspect focuses on "the Variation on the level of culture." The last aspect of variation theory deals with "the Variation on the level of civilization" (xxxiv). In short, variation theory focuses mainly on differences, heterogeneity and variation among literary texts. It "not only highlights the differences among various civilizations but also promotes the dialogues and exchanges of civilizations, giving rise to a new era of human history of literature" (Cao xxxvi). In fact, this dialogue and exchange is what we would like to concentrate on while studying the poems of Hafiz and Nazrul comparatively.

Moreover, in this study, we consider some principles of comparative literature outlined by Zepetnek in his book. First of all, we focus more on "how" rather than "what." Secondly, our discussion and analysis would foster dialogues and exchanges across languages, literatures, and cultures on an equal basis. Then, we would maintain an inclusive approach regarding methodological, theoretical, and political aspects. Fourthly, we situate literary texts in cultural and political contexts to achieve a more nuanced understanding. Lastly, while conducting comparative study of the respective poets and their poems, we use English as a lingua franca or global language of communication and are aware that "the use of English should not represent any form of colonialism" (Zepetnek 16-17).

As for mapping a theoretical underpinning, let us conceptualise the "rebellious

spirit". A typical dictionary meaning of "rebellious" does not convey what we mean by the "rebellious spirit" in this paper. For example, *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* defines "rebellious" in the following way.

> Unwilling to obey rules or follow generally accepted standards of behaviour, dress, etc."; "opposed to the government of a country; opposed to those in authority within an organization (Hornby 1243)

According to *Collins English Dictionary*, "rebellious" means—

> If you think someone behaves in an unacceptable way and does not do what they are told, you can say they are rebellious." ("Rebellious")

However, by the "rebellious spirit" we do not just mean being "unwilling to obey rules or follow generally accepted standards of behaviour" or behaving in "an unacceptable way" or "opposing to the government or authority." When we refer to Nazrul's or Hafiz's rebellious spirit, we mean a spirit of their poetic persona that goes beyond the spirit of the so-called rebellious teen or rebellious movement by any political organisation or agency against a government or authority. It is not just violating rules and norms and being eccentric and weird. We would rather conceptualise the "rebellious spirit" as an all-encompassing and all-pervasive defiance and revolt against any discriminatory and exploitative system or authority, especially a colonial, imperialist, or neo-colonial entity beyond time, space and national or geographical boundaries. The spirit denotes not only destruction but also creation. This rebellious spirit is discursively and aesthetically formulated in the poetic aura of poets such as John Milton, Walt Whitman, Kazi Nazrul Islam, Aimé Césaire, and, of course, Hafiz Shirazi, among others. In *Paradise Lost*, Milton's Satan declares this spirit—

> All is not lost; the unconquerable Will,
> And study of revenge, immortal hate,
> And courage never to submit or yield: (8)

Whitman defiantly states this spirit—

> My call is the call of battle, I nourish active rebellion,
> He going with me must go well arm'd,

("Song of the Open Road", 14")

Or, Nazrul proclaims this spirit in his "Bidrohi" (The Rebel).

Oh, I am raving mad; I am the whirlwind!
I am the plague, the terror of this world,
The dread of rulers, their slayer, ever-restless!
[...]
I am creation, I am destruction;
I am human habitation and cremation ghat.
I am death, I am dawn.
(*Selections 1* 38, Translation: Kaiser Haq)

Césaire celebrates this spirit in the following manner.

make me into a man for the termination
make me into a man for the initiation
make me into a man of meditation
but also make me into a man of germination
make me into the executor or these lofty works (41)

And Hafiz transcends all worldly norms, beliefs and dimensions, and exults in this spirit.

The Truth has shared so much of Itself
With me
That I can no longer call myself
A man, a woman, an angel
[. . .]
And freed
Me
Of every concept and image
My mind has ever known.
(*The Gift* 42-43, Translation: Daniel Ladinsky)

Ralph Waldo Emerson justly evaluates the rebellious spirit of Hafiz when he declares,

> Nothing stops him [Hafiz]; he makes the dare-God and dare-devil experiment; he is not to be scared by a name or a religion; he fears nothing, he sees too far, and sees throughout. (417)

Thus, the transcendental spirit of Hafiz conveyed in the above lines is connected to the rebellious spirit of a group of Sufis who reject conventional religious rituals as well as socially established morality. Those Sufis display tenets of antinomianism, discarding established laws or religious precepts and transgressing moral, religious and social conventions and norms. Sufi antinomianism refers to radical and mystical trends within Sufism that challenge conventional Islamic laws and social norms, suggesting that direct spiritual experience with God transcends legal requirements. Some followers of antinomianism even disregard outer rituals, embrace extreme asceticism, and claim direct communication with the divine.

Some of the fourteenth-century Sufi poets who used to practise antinomianism are known as "Qalandar type." Qalandar is an antinomian sect of Sufism known for their eccentric behaviour and critique of religious hypocrisy. They live in solitude and seek spiritual freedom, denouncing worldly life and immersing in spiritual ecstasy and devotion. The themes of Hafiz's poetry are significantly inspired by Qalandar thought; however, he is not formally considered a Qalandar. *Qalandariyat* is a type of poem on "wine-drinking, gambling, profane love, and rejection of religion" (Karamustafa 33). In his book God's Unruly Friends, Ahmet T. Karamustafa mentions, "it was during a later phase of Persian Sufi poetry, beginning with 'Attar (d. after 618/1221-22) continuing through 'Iraqi (d. 688/ 1289) and Sa'di (d. 691/1291-92), and culminating with Hafiz (d. 792/1389-90), that the Qalandar type developed into a true literary topos" (ibid.). He further argues that ghazals was also developed from the Qalandar theme. One of the main features of the literary Qalandar is described as "deliberate and open disregard for social convention in the cause of 'true' religious love [...] in the imagery of the Qalandartopos: visiting the kharabat (tavern, gambling house, brothel), winedrinking, gambling, and irreligion" (ibid.). We will explore how Hafiz's ghazals reflect themes of *Qalandariyat* and antinomianism.

On the other hand, in the twentieth century, a particular type of literature, especially poetry, was produced on part of the liberation and independence movements of the colonised peoples, addressing neo-colonial control and cultural imperialism of Western Europe and North America. Barbara Harlow terms this literature "resistance literature" since it reflects the resistance and national liberation

movements. In her words,

> a particular category of literature that emerged significantly as part of the organized national liberation struggles and resistance movements in Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East, […] may be called resistance literature. (vii)

Thus, what we may call "resistance poem" is a particular body of poems written by poets from third-world countries such as Africa, Central and South America, South Asia, and the Arab Middle East (Harlow 38). Harlow, however, observes that through their creative works as well as activism, resistance poets involve themselves in resistance movements and undergo struggles and sufferings. They are even imprisoned by the colonial or oppressive governments for their revolting voices. For instance, Nazrul was imprisoned by the British Raj for his anticolonial writings and activism. Besides, "Dennis Brutus of South Africa, or Mahmud Darwish from Palestine, have suffered long periods of detention and torture in the prisons of the colonizer" (Harlow 39). Thus, resistance poetry is a politically committed form of literature, conveying political message. Nazrul is renowned for his anticolonial stance against the British Raj through his resistance poetry. For the first time in Bengali literature, he took up poetry as a performative mode of resistance not only to confront the colonial force but also to build national culture and consciousness. His revolutionary verses that serve as powerful tools to decolonise the subjugated minds of Bengalis[1] can be identified with Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's concepts of "decolonising the minds". Moreover, Nazrul demanded decolonisation of British India in the true sense; he was even critical of the Swaraj (the local self-government in British India) since he realised that it would act as a neo-colonial force. Hence, it is stated that "Nazrul was a postcolonial before the postcolonial theory came into being" (Hasan, "Poetics of Resistance" 299).

In the next section, we explore how the rebellious spirits of Hafiz and Nazrul interact with and intervene in the trends and traditions of Sufi antinomianism and resistance poetry, and how their modes of rebellion diverge. In our analysis, we apply the methods and approaches of comparative literature that we have outlined here. As textual references, we have used English translation of Hafiz's and Nazrul's poems by various translators.

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1 For details, see Hasan, "Poetics of Resistance and Revolution: Reading Nazrul in the Era of Neo-colonialism," *Nazrul Journal*, vol. 1, 2020, pp. 287-300.

Rebellious Spirits in the Poetry of Hafiz and Nazrul

Hafiz lived in fourteenth-century Iran, during a period of political unrest and cultural vibrancy under the Timurid dynasty. Sufi love and mysticism are the prominent themes of his poetry in which spiritual rebellion against societal conventions is subtly blended. Through metaphors of love, wine, and intoxication, Hafiz's poems express a passionate relationship with the divine. Hafiz critiques hypocritical clerics, upholding esoteric faith and spiritual freedom. Nazrul's works emerged in early twentieth-century Bengal when colonial oppression and social injustice were prevalent. His rebellious spirits always target the colonial persecution, established social norms, and religious dogmas. Nazrul's poetry indicates his deep-rooted revolt against hypocrisy, injustice, suppression, cruelty, and colonialism. However, Nazrul has not achieved his due place in world literature since his outstanding works have not been translated as abundantly and aesthetically as those of Omar Khayyam, Hafiz Shirazi or Rabindranath Tagore. On the other hand, Hafiz is considered a world poet and discussed along with poets like Horace and Shakespeare.

Love is one of the central themes and a driving force of the poems of both Hafiz and Nazrul. Their poetic world is vibrant with love of God, love of humans, and love of nature. Nazrul sings the songs of youth; Hafiz also sings the songs of vigour, vitality, and, of course, life. In their verses, both the poets manifest a blend of sadness, pain, laughter, and tears hidden in the curves of life. However, as a mystic, Hafiz is adept at unveiling the secrets of human life. His *Divan-e-Hafiz* has fascinated readers of all ages since its publication. The following lines from *The Divan* embody deep and divine love that leads the speaker to abandon every worldly thing in pursuit of his ultimate union with the divine.

> Arise, oh Cup-bearer, rise! and bring
> To lips that are thirsting the bowl they praise,
> For it seemed that love was an easy thing,
> But my feet have fallen on difficult ways.
> [...]
> "If at last thou attain the desire of thy life,
> Cast the world aside, yea, abandon it!"
> (*Poems from Divan* 67-68, Translation: Gertrude Bell)

Readers across cultures and civilisations travel through *The Divan* in search of spiritual bliss in order to quench the thirst of their hearts, but the thirst is intensified

further. Nazrul also first discovered Hafiz through his *Divan* (*Rubaiyat* 7). It is quite identical that Nazrul's songs express this insatiable thirst for ethereal love and divine satisfaction. His poem "Khodar Premer Sharab Piye" (The Wine of God's Love) is a typical example. Both Hafiz and Nazrul often reflect on themes of spiritual rebellion against religious orthodoxy by using vibrant figures of speech such as metaphors, paradoxes, and powerful images. Let us analyse some of their poems.

Nazrul believes that the Creator is present in His creations. In his poem "Ishwar" (God), he states,

> Who are you, my friend,
> searching for God in heaven
> and the underworld?
> Who are you—searching
> through the wilderness
> and mountain peaks?
> [...]
> The whole creation looks at you
> while your own eyes are shut.
> You search for the Creator
> instead of searching for your self.
> (*Poetry* 255, Translation: Sajed Kamal)

The above extract from Nazrul's *Samyabadi* is a classic example of self-realisation in which a universal quest for God is shown. It questions the traditional and ritualistic practices of religion. Everyone searches for God everywhere such as in the deep forest or in the mountains, but they do not search within themselves because they do not believe in themselves. Nazrul suggests that true spiritual enlightenment cannot be achieved through external rituals or actions, but through inner reflection and self-awareness. To God, every human has equal worth as God does not discriminate; people make the discrimination for their own interests. The imagery, such as "searching for God in heaven and the underworld", implies that everyone searches for God everywhere, but the irony is that his "own eyes are shut" during the search. That is to say, without searching within his or her self, one blindly follows the conventional religious practice. Nazrul attempts to awaken people by stating that if they search consciously, they can find spiritual as well as socio-political freedom because God, as an inspiration or impulse, lives within them. This poem emphasises the concept of self-realisation or self-awareness as

an essential aspect of the quest for freedom that everyone aspires to. This excerpt reflects Nazrul's inner philosophical engagement with themes of spirituality and self-meditation, transcending the conventional ways of observing religious precepts and searching for God. It also points out that despite people's outward actions, they hardly recognise the true essence of spirituality and thus fail to gain spiritual freedom. Thus, the essence of Sufi antinomianism is evident in Nazrul's verses as well. The following lines from "Khodar Premer Sharab Piye" (The Wine of God's Love) illustrate how the themes of Sufi antinomianism are assimilated into his verses.

> Drunk with tile wine of divine love
> I am oblivious of all.
> Abandoning the mosque my leader comes this way
> I hear him call.
> At the end of worldliness
> For my prayers and fasting
> I seek not of God
> Heaven's blessings.
> (*Poetry* 536, Translation: Kabir Chowdhury)

Through the Sufi metaphor of "wine", the speaker immerses himself in an ecstatic experience of divine love and union with God. He becomes "oblivious" of worldly concerns or conventional religious practices. The phrase "Abandoning the mosque" suggests the speaker's spiritual devotion that disregards the boundary of religious institutions such as "the mosque". "At the end of worldliness" denotes a goodbye to this materialistic world and an absolute commitment of the devotee to dissolve in the divine.

Throughout his poems, Hafiz celebrates individuality and conveys the message of spiritual freedom, discarding rigid forms of religious rituals. He believes that every individual has the potential to gain freedom through spiritual wisdom, not through the set-rules of religion. A person who is free from his own dilemma can rule in the divine world. Hafiz encourages readers to search for "truth" and embrace their inner strength; by this truth, they can find the strength to raise their voices against any authority or establishment that commits oppression and injustice. In his poetry, Hafiz emphasises the inner freedom and dignity of every human soul. He, in fact, attempts to revolutionise people's thinking, awakening their rebellious spirits by challenging their thoughts and beliefs. He announces—

Let me be slave to that man's will
Who 'neath high heaven's turquoise bowl
Hath won and winneth freedom still
From all entanglement of soul;
(*Fifty Poems* 89, Translation: Arthur J. Arberry)

In this poem, Hafiz shows the power of inner reflection and self-awareness. Through this power, one can get his spiritual and social freedom. He suggests that all individuals have the power to achieve both inner and outward freedom. Everyone has this freedom to nurture rebellious spirits within themselves. Hafiz's poetry frequently explores themes of spiritual enlightenment and the unity of all beings in the divine. The above lines also suggest that true freedom lies within one's inner self. Thus, true freedom is not merely external but involves a profound transformation of the soul. The lines—"Hath won and winneth freedom still" and "From all entanglement of soul"—suggest spiritual liberation that can make a man free from the burden of narrow thoughts. Hafiz shows that self-awareness and self-realisation are the main steps towards spiritual freedom.

Nazrul's verses are uniquely renowned for inspiring readers to awaken their rebellious spirits. His poetry reflects his vision of an inclusive society where people from all colours, creeds, castes, and religions could live peacefully. His revolutionary verses advocate social justice, equality, and human dignity. Upholding the empowerment of the oppressed and the marginalised, Nazrul's poetry often challenges established norms, which subtly or apparently promote inequality and injustice. His poem "Manush" (Human) conveys such message in the following way.

Of equality I sing—
There is nothing greater than a human being, nothing nobler!
Wipe all distinctions based on country, time and person,
Let all religions and countries be one.
In all nations, ages, and homes, let God be your companion.
(*Selections 1* 61; Translation Fakrul Alam)

The poem begins with a bold declaration of the central theme—the theme of equality. The phrase "Of equality I sing" suggests a poetic celebration of this theme. The poem emphasises the idea of unity and solidarity among people from diverse

nations, classes, and beliefs. It rejects disunity and promotes inclusivity. The poem goes on—

> And what if the one you hated as a peasant so
> Was King Janaka or Lord Balarama incognito?
> Prophets were once shepherds, once they were farmers,
> But they brought us news of eternity—which will forever be.
> (*Selections 1* 63-64; Translation Fakrul Alam)

Nazrul addresses the societal tendency to look down upon individuals based on their occupation. He invokes the Hindu deity Balarama, who is often depicted as a farmer or a cultivator. Suggesting that Balarama could be in the disguise of a farmer, Nazrul challenges derogatory perceptions prevailing in society regarding farming and farmers and implies that even revered figures might choose such a profession since farming has remained one of the noblest professions from the dawn of human civilisation. Moreover, Nazrul draws a parallel between shepherds/farmers and Prophets. He suggests that many Prophets and spiritual leaders throughout history had been engaged in manual labour or occupations associated with farming and rural life; nevertheless, they had delivered profound and enduring messages of wisdom and guidance. Nazrul underscores the value and dignity of all types of work and challenges social hierarchies, juxtaposing the efforts of the shepherds and those of the Prophets. Above all, these lines reflect Nazrul's broader themes of social justice, equality, and human dignity.

In the following lines, Hafiz sings the song of defiance boldly, addressing himself[1] not to be enslaved or overly devoted to someone who is beautiful or fair.

> But to the fair no longer be a slave;
> Drink, Hafez! Revel, all your cares unbend,
> And boldly scorn the mean dissembling knave
> Who makes religion every vice defend!
> (*Fifty Poems* 88, Translation: J. Richardson)

This can be interpreted metaphorically, suggesting not to be captivated solely by outer appearances or superficial qualities. Hafiz himself encourages indulgence and celebration ("drink" and "revel") as a means of letting go of worries and unwind. He bravely defies and scorns those who are deceitful or hypocritical ("mean

1 In Sufi ghazals, the poet addresses himself to engage in introspection.

dissembling knave"). This extract implies general admonishment against those who use religion as a cover for their immoral actions. Hafiz criticises individuals who twist or misuse religion to justify their vices or immoral behaviour. The excerpt also refers to hypocrites who outwardly profess religious piety while being engaged in unethical or dishonest practices. Thus, Hafiz promotes rebellious spirits, condemning hypocrisy and manipulation, particularly when done under the guise of religion.

Both Hafiz and Nazrul uphold the spiritual philosophy of Islamic tradition. They were vocal against ideological and religious bigotry and intolerance; however, they encountered severe opposition and intimidation from the ascetics and fanatics of their times. During his lifetime, Hafiz was accused of having heretical beliefs (Samali 2). Nazrul was frowned upon and even declared a "kafir" (an infidel) and "heathen" by both Muslim and Hindu religious leaders because he got married to a Hindu woman, wrote songs addressing the Hindu goddess Kali, and spoke against religious hypocrites. In the following lines, Nazrul himself describes such situations.

> Now the Hindus come after me—calling me a heathen.
> [...]
> The greedy maulvis and mullahs are up-in-arms.
> "The scoundrel utters the names of [Hindu] gods and goddesses—
> let's excommunicate him!
> We declare: 'Kazi is a kafir"
> (*Poetry*, "Amar Kaifiyat" 377, Translation: Sajed Kamal)

Nevertheless, both Hafiz and Nazrul continue to celebrate the rebellious spirit of youth, inspiring them to stay plumb in order to fight for upholding truth and justice. They would be ready to sacrifice their lives for safeguarding their motherland, their roots, and their ancestry. For example, in his poem "Kamal Pasha," Nazrul states boldly,

> Death they have conquered, why then weep on?
> Ab-Jam-Jam they brought, drinking from the pitcher of poison.
> Who died? Why you weep and fuss?
> Well they have done.
> To save the country they gave their lives precious.
> So they are true martyrs!
> The true heroes have sacrificed themselves in blood-attires.

They are true martyrs!
(*Poetry* 63, Translation: Mohammad Nurul Huda)

In the above lines, Nazrul upholds the concept of martyrdom and sacrifice made by those who die for their country. He uses the imagery of "Ab-Jam-Jam"[1] to illustrate the courage and fearlessness of the martyrs, who face death bravely like those who drink from the pitcher of poison. Nazrul unequivocally declares the martyrs as true heroes, praising their selflessness and courage in sacrificing their lives for their country. The repetition of the line—"They are true martyrs"—emphasises the poet's reverence for their sacrifice.

In his 53rd Rubaiyat, Hafiz retells an incident from Islamic history in which Ali ibn Abi Talib (R), the fourth Caliph of Islam and the first cousin and close companion of the Prophet (SM), displayed immense strength and courage during the Battle of Khaybar. Hafiz advises readers to seek strength from someone like Ali, who had valiantly encountered great challenges and emerged victorious.

Ask strength of him who plucked at Khaibar's door
The gift of giving from his slave implores.
O Hafiz, if for grace of God thou yearn,
Ask of the fount for wine of Kowsar's store;
(*The Rubaiyat of Hafiz* 52, Translation: L Cranmer-Byng)

The above lines convey a profound spiritual yearning, urging readers to seek strength, generosity, and divine grace through a sincere desire for divine favour. The wine mentioned in this poem is not a worldly one; rather, it indicates the water flowing from "Al Kowsar," the heavenly river or fount mentioned in the holy Quran. Its water or wine symbolises divine sustenance, spiritual knowledge, and eternal bliss. In Sufi tradition, wine is used as a metaphor that brings the devotee closer to the divine world in the quest for knowledge of God.

Nazrul's use of Persian words in his poetry reflects his deep appreciation for Persian literature, which also serves to visualise the themes of rebellion, love, and passion. Inspired by the great Persian poets such as Omar Khayyam, Rumi, and Hafiz, Nazrul incorporated a considerable amount of Persian words and phrases into his poetry, adding richness and diversity to the Bengali language and literature

1 It refers to the blessed water from the miraculous Zamzam Well in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. Muslims drink it for blessings and cure, believing that it has healing and spiritual properties.

and strengthening rebellious spirits. For instance, in his poem "Shat-el-Arab"[1], he instils a lot of Arabic-Persian words such as "shahid" (martyr), "lahu" (blood), "khun" (blood), "azad" (freedom), "dazla" (river), "azam" (great), "sahara" (desert), "dushman" (enemy), "zulfiqar" (the legendary sword of Ali (R)), "khanjar"(dagger), and so on to create a global unity of races, colours and nations who would fight and sacrifice together for demolishing oppression and establishing justice.

> For ever glorious, for ever holy,
> Your sacred beaches, Shat-el-Arab,
> Are bathed in gore, the blood of fighters
> Of many races, and diverse colours.
> Strewn on these sands lie the bones of Arab,
> Egyptian and Turk and Greek and Bedouin,
> Also of women, bold and daring,
> (Nazrul 85, Translation: Syed Sajjad Husain)

However, Nazrul was severely criticised by the then Hindu writers and critics for his unique blend of Persian-Arabic words in Bengali poems. In his words, "The Hindus, on the other hand, cast me aside/ as an accursed Muslim because I use Persian words/ in my poetry!" (*Poetry* 380). In an essay, he logically defends his blend of foreign words in Bengali language and literature, arguing that Bengali literature will not lose its beauty if he adorns it with a couple of Persian or Iranian words; rather, it would look more graceful and more cosmopolitan (*The Path of the Comet*, 57-66). Thus, in the above poem with such cosmopolitan consciousness, Nazrul underscores a spirit of victory for the whole of humanity. He is not restricted to any national, geographical, linguistic, or religious boundary as he is the poet of humanism and of all people. Verily, Nazrul, as a poet, differs from Hafiz greatly, but in "Shat-el-Arab," he pursues such feelings and convictions that his great predecessors had pursued throughout civilisations. The sandy bank of his "Shat-el-Arab" provides a strong ground on which the essence and spirit of "Arab,/ Egyptian and Turk and Greek and Bedouin,/ Also of women, bold and daring" meet and mingle for revolt and rebellion.

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1 "Shaṭṭ Al-Arab" is "a river in southeastern Iraq, formed by the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers at the town of Al-Qurnah. It flows southeastward for 120 miles (193 km) and passes the Iraqi port of Basra and the Iranian port of Abadan before emptying into the Persian Gulf." (Britannica, "Shaṭṭ Al-Arab")

Modes of Rebellion: Divergence and Variation

We have so far pointed out parallel themes in the poetry of Hafiz and Nazrul, which vivify their rebellious spirits. We will now explore divergence and variation in their poetic creations, focusing on different modes of rebellion such as Nazrul's explicit articulation and directness versus Hafiz's implicit enunciation and ambiguity.

Nazrul's poems often show solidarity with the oppressed and the marginalised, calling for revolution against authoritarianism and exploitation. Besides, his poems celebrate the courage of individuals fighting for freedom and justice, evoking political consciousness. Compared to Nazrul, Hafiz is not explicitly rebellious. Instead, his rebellion is more spiritual and philosophical than political. Throughout his poems, he fights against inner conflicts and socio-religious dogmas. Hafiz is one of the finest poets who reveals one's own cowardice and selfishness. He always challenges conventional morality and traditional ideas about the nature of reality, religion, and society and celebrates spiritual freedom. He also often writes against hypocrisy, duplicity, and superficiality. His spiritual and mystical verses express his revolt against established social practices that create discrimination between the rich and the poor, the elites and the commoners, and the sinners and the (so-called) pious. Thus, the following verses visualise the themes of Sufi antinomianism.

> Where is my ruined life, and where the fame
> Of noble deeds?
> Look on my long-drawn road, and whence it came,
> And where it leads!
> Can drunkenness be linked to piety
> And good repute?
> Where is the preacher's holy monody,
> Where is the lute?
> (*Poems from Divan* 80, Translation: Gertrude Bell)

Hafiz is renowned for his poetic, theological, philosophical, and aesthetic contributions; however, he is not commonly known for his political contributions. In this context, it is to be noted that through words as well as actions, Nazrul had confronted all sorts of oppression, discrimination, and injustice imposed by the British colonial rule. His poetry played a significant role in inspiring Bengali nationalist movements and brought up a spirit of resistance against colonial rule. He was, in fact, a poet-activist and actively involved in anticolonial movements

to attain independence for Indians. He used his poetry as a vital tool against the colonisers; the words of his poems are as powerful as weapons. He was sent to jail by the then British Raj for writing the poem "Anandamayir Agamone". In this poem, Nazrul makes a political satire, calling the goddess Durga to destroy the colonial tyrants and save India from them as they were eliminating Indian youths who were involved in the resistance movement against the British Raj. Some of his books and a bi-weekly magazine [Dhumketu (The Comet)] that he edited were proscribed for provoking anti-raj sentiments and upholding rebellious spirits.

Hafiz implicitly and ambiguously satirised political and social norms during the period of political unrest while the Timurid dynasty was in power. He was once summoned by the then ruler Timur for writing verses like "Oh Turkish maid of Shiraz! in thy hand/ If thou'lt take my heart, for the mole on thy cheek/ I would barter Bokhara and Samarkand." (Poems from Divan 71). Timur, who had conquered Samarkand and Bokhara, the two great cities of his kingdom by his sharp sword, got furious as Hafiz would give away those loveliest cities just for the mole on the cheek of a beautiful girl of Shiraz. However, Hafiz was not treated in a hostile way; rather, for his witty reply and the double meanings of his verses, he was released with valuable gifts. It is because the government was not a colonial or occupying force, and Hafiz's message was implicit and not politically charged. Besides, Hafiz's poetry touches upon wider issues of the then society and polity. His ghazals are open to safe mystical readings. Through satire and irony, his poems critique the two-facedness and hypocrisy of the governing as well as spiritual establishments of his time. Thus, Hafiz's spiritual and political message is symbolic and ambiguous. On the other hand, Nazrul's political message was interpreted literally, and he was treated harshly by the colonial rulers.

Nazrul believed that the colonised Indians would get independence from the British Raj only through an all-encompassing revolution. However, collective efforts were required to raise the spirit of revolution. Nazrul knew that when all the Indians, especially the youths, were able to decolonise their minds, become united and declare war against colonial subjugation, they would achieve an independent homeland. Unitedly, the young souls would bring about a deluge, a tempest or a *Kalbaishakhi*[1] storm to smash the chains of colonial occupation. Therefore, the poet asks the youths to shout "victory" repeatedly. This victory song announces an outburst of revolt and revolution—

1 It is a type of storm and downpours with strong winds that occurs in Bengal recurrently in March, April and May. It is also known as the Nor'wester and named after the Bengali month Baishak.

Come, make merry and rejoice.
There rages the summer storm [Kalbaishakhi storm]
flying the flag of the New and the Young.
There comes he who had not come so long.
Dancing merrily
drink we will the joy of destruction.
(*Poetry*, "The Ecstasy of Destruction" 4, Translation: Kabir Chowdhury)

Thus, in order to seek freedom of the oppressed, the colonised, and the exploited, the arrival of resisting forces and revolution is visualised through modern literary devices like metaphors, symbols and allusions, The poet refers to the revolution as "New" and "Young" ("flying the flag of the New and the Young") and implies that the worn-out old system of the British colonial rule would be destroyed by the arrival of the new and the young (e. g., anticolonial spirits of the youth). He expresses this newness through several symbols such as *Kalbaishakhi* storm and Mahadeva, the god of deluge. Mainly with the help of these two symbols, the poet implies the coming of revolution. When the Kalbaishakhi storm comes, it sweeps away the dust and filth of dry and worn-out nature and infuses new vitality through fresh rains. Again, Mahadeva, the god of deluge in Hindu mythology, would destroy the sin-filled world and set the stage for the creation of a new world. In the same way, Nazrul hopes that through anticolonial resistance and revolution, the colonial system of exploitation and oppression will be destroyed and a new society free from all discrimination and injustice will be built.

On the other hand, Hafiz's resistance and rebellion is spiritual, not political in nature. Unlike Nazrul, his resistance verses in the form of ghazals are renowned for their high polysemy and exquisite beauty. Through exotic language and style, he conveys spiritual insights. Tinged with metaphors and symbols, his verses often voice Sufi antinomianism in which there is no place for religious orthodoxy and no distinction among human beings on the basis of caste, creed and religion. The following verses vividly convey Hafiz's resolve to demolish the boundaries of caste and religion that divide humans.

I
Have
Learned
So much from God

That I can no longer
Call
Myself
A Christian, a Hindu, a Muslim,
A Buddhist, a Jew.
(*The Gift*, "I Have Learned So Much" 42, Translation: Daniel Ladinsky)

It is apparent from the bold message of the above lines that Hafiz's resistance is more than merely political, as his poetry upholds antinomian and transcendental spirits and all-pervasive power.

Nazrul's poetry is characterised by its fiery language, vivid imagery, and emotional intensity. He is known for adapting words, imagery, figures of speech, and even meters from Arabic, Persian, Sanskrit, Urdu, and other languages. Nazrul frequently uses metaphors and allegories to convey a sense of equality, considering human beings an organic whole that transcends the boundaries of caste, creed and religion. In this regard, let us have a look at the following verses.

Of equality I sing:
Where all barriers and differences
Between man and man have vanished,
Where Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists and Christians
Have mingled together.
(*Poetry*, "Of Equality" 249, Translation: Bashudha Chakravarty)

The above lines uphold the egalitarian status of human beings and promote socialist or Marxist views. That is to say, Nazrul speaks of a classless society where people are not discriminated against due to their religious identities. Though Hafiz and Nazrul value human worth in the same way, their modes of expression and forms of rebellion differ in terms of time, geography, and language. However, they satirise inequality and the absurdity of society, putting humanism above all aspects and issues of the world. Through figures of speech, Nazrul sometimes explicitly and sometimes implicitly confronts the authority, but Hafiz always subtly and obliquely comments on societal inequality by using symbols, metaphors and other literary devices. In the following verses from *The Divan-I-Hafiz*, Hafiz mocks the hollowness of the kings and the rich through vivid imagery.

Since, void of us, the world wisheth to be,

The being a beggar (is) much better than being a king.
(994, Translation: H. Wilberforce Clarke)

Pointing to the absurdity of momentary pomp and prosperity, in other verses, Hafiz scorns the transience of human life since death as an absolute truth levels all the distinctions between the rich and the poor, the beggar and the king, and the young and the old.

To none, is help of this stage (of death),—
On the part of the beggar, of the king, of the young, of the old.
(999, Translation: H. Wilberforce Clarke)

The word "beggar" is a metaphor here. However, "beggar", an English substitute for the Persian word "Fakir", does not make proper sense of the original word. By employing irony, Hafiz highlights the reality that no king or emperor can provide for the beggar or the destitute, even though he wishes to do so. That is why he stresses that "being a beggar (is) much better than being a king" as being a king in this temporary world amounts to nothing in the eyes of God.

At the King's door, a beggar made this subtlety in regard to work,
He said:—At every tray, whereat I sate, God, the Provider,— was."
(344, Translation: H. Wilberforce Clarke)

That is to say, God is present in the image of a beggar. To give alms to a beggar is to give alms to God.

Through imagery, Nazrul also criticises social inequality, though in a different fashion. We have already pointed out how his poem "Manush" illustrates the hypocrisy of religious elites who exploit religion and enjoy privileges; in contrast, when the poor and hungry people ask them for food, they refuse them outright.

Yesterday the mosque was full of sweets and meat and bread;
The sight of the leftovers makes the mullah glad!
Just then a hungry man comes in, sores on his skin,
He says, "Sir, I have been starving for seven days!"
(*Selections 1* 62, Translation: Fakrul Alam)

The mosque is a sacred place for prayers where no discrimination is allowed. All

classes of people become one when they pray in congregation. But the so-called religious elites create a class system even inside the mosque. The above lines state that a large amount of food was sent to the mosque yesterday as part of a charity food distribution to feed the needy. But the food was not distributed among the poor and the needy. When a hungry beggar comes and asks for some leftovers, he is asked whether he prays regularly. He is then driven out of the mosque as his reply is negative.

Hafiz mainly portrays rebellious spirits in his poetry through figures of speech. Satire is one of them. Satire is a literary device used to mock and critique people, organisations, social norms, or systems. It frequently uses humour, irony, exaggeration, or sarcasm to point out social vices, absurdities, or defects. Often subtle and infused with wit, rather than overt mockery, Hafiz's satire critiques societal ills and hypocrisy as well as shortcomings of individuals. He also uses irony and humour to bring out the contradictions and absurdities of society and human nature. For example, Hafiz satirises the ostentatious display of wealth and status among the elites. His satire serves as a reminder to question societal practices and values and seek deeper truths beyond the appearance of the world. The following verses proclaim his firm position against the hypocrites of various types.

> I've said it before and I'll say it again:
> It's not my fault that with a broken heart, I've gone this way.
> In front of a mirror they have put me like a parrot,
> And behind the mirror the Teacher tells me what to say.
> [...]
> Even though, to pious, drinking wine is a sin,
> Don't judge me; I use it as a bleach to wash the color of hypocrisy away.
> (*Drunk on the Wine* 17, Translation: Thomas Rain Crowe)

Hafiz clearly states that he does not maintain a double face by hiding the fact that he drinks wine; rather, he admits that he drinks wine, which is like a whitening or purifying bleach that can "wash the color of hypocrisy away." However, in Sufi ghazals, as a powerful metaphor, "wine" does not denote worldly wine or alcohol as we have already pointed out. Rather, wine embodies spiritual ecstasy, divine love, and divine union.

Nazrul's use of satire often involves sharp wit, irony, and humour, combined with a keen awareness of social and political issues. His poetry targets colonisers, oppressive rulers, religious orthodoxy, social inequality, and other forms of injustice.

His masterpiece "Bidrohi" (The Rebel) is satirical in its tone and texture. "Amar Kaifiyat" (My Answer) is another satirical poem that mocks socio-political issues of his time. In the following lines, he satirises both the colonial power and the Swaraj or the self-rule of the Indians.

> Why isn't there a touch of embarrassment
> In the faces of those
> who suck the blood of these hungry children?
> We know it well—by trying to bring *Swaraj*,
> we've ended up with a worthless pile of trash.
> By depriving crores (tens of millions) of hungry children of their food
> Came a crore (ten millions) rupees—but not *Swaraj*.
> [...]
> Pray—that those who rob
> thirty-three crore (three hundred and thirty millions) mouths their morsels of food
> meet their doom in my writings in blood!
> (*Poetry* 379-380, Translation: Sajed Kamal)

The lines—"Pray—that those who rob/ thirty-three crore (three hundred and thirty millions) mouths their morsels of food/ meet their doom in my writings in blood!"—portray Nazrul's explicit revolt and rebellion. Nazrul curses those neo-colonisers and oppressors who loot even the alms sanctioned for the destitute. His rebellious verses written in blood would doom all the oppressive forces.

Thus, Nazrul is always bold and outspoken in demonstrating his protest and revolt, whereas Hafiz's revolt is implicit and embedded in poetic imagination and divine union. Hafiz, with his message of spiritual freedom, and Nazrul, with his message of political freedom and national consciousness, inspire humanity as a whole. Their resistance poetry remains relevant to today's readers, providing a timeless reminder of rebellious spirits.

Conclusion

We have pointed out that both Hafiz and Nazrul express themes of rebellious spirits as constructive forces in their works from myriad perspectives and through various styles and poetic devices, although in different sociocultural, political, and historical contexts. This study has pointed out that their poetry exemplifies the power of literature to resist oppression and injustice, celebrating the spirit of resilience,

courage, and dignity of the human spirit and offering hope and empowerment to the oppressed and the marginalised. In spite of differences in their approach and style, Nazrul and Hafiz share common themes and messages in their poetry. Their works bring them to a threshold of unity, though they belong to different periods and different socio-political realities. They vary from each other on many grounds, but they display rebellious spirits as well as universal acceptance to almost the same degree. Thus, we have explored a certain nature of unity in a world of variation where Hafiz and Nazrul dwell in harmony. Moreover, we have shown that both the poets inspire young generations through their words and activism. Their poems are the weapons of liberation from oppression of all kinds: political, cultural, social, religious, or spiritual and inspire readers to build a better world on the principles of equity, compassion, and justice.

Since we have adopted concepts of comparative literature from Cao's variation theory, we have got a broader canvas and space to compare two poets from two different geographies and civilisations. While the traditional comparative study of Nazrul and other European poets is limited to the influence study and thematic and stylistic study, this article has offered a novel study of divergence and variation, in addition to exploring similarities. Undoubtedly, we can argue that variation theory as a nuanced methodological tool has opened a new vista for comparative literary study. At this point, Cao's claim that variation theory has been developed to address the lack of a systematic method or theory for studying literature comparatively is deemed to be well grounded. Generally, resistance poetry is placed on a postcolonial spectrum, but an earlier poet like Hafiz known for his spiritual and metaphysical contributions has been proven to be a poet of resistance as well. We have shown how his poems evoke defiance and express rebellious spirits.

Considering the differences and variations between texts, contexts, cultures, and civilisations, variation theory could also open the possibility of embarking on cross-cultural literary study. In this regard, Bengali and Chinese or Bengali and Japanese literature can be explored comparatively, applying Cao's variation theory. However, this study could have been expanded further by comparing terms or words such as "Fakir"[1] in the works of Hafiz and Nazrul with those of other Sufi poets such as Rumi or Omar Khayyam. How such words and phrases come to be diverse and divergent across different traditions and civilisations would be the focus of future enquiry. Thus, from this study, we have shown that if a comparative study is conducted by a robust theory such as variation theory and when it is free from

1 It is translated as "beggar" in English, but the English word beggar does not convey the broad and multiple connotations and concepts of the original word.

the influence study and Eurocentric and Orientalist approaches, it functions as a productive field and approach to new literatures. Upcoming researchers in the field will obviously find effective directions to contribute to the variation theory. Last but not least, this article has addressed the methodological and theoretical crisis in comparative literature, demonstrating the fact that comparative literature remains an ever-evolving discipline.

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