In the wake of the twentieth century, translation became a hot issue of debate when the need for establishment and promotion of a proper understanding among various people of the world was felt more than ever before. This Babelian urge to communicate amidst divergent linguistic and cultural set up gave rise to translation. In a time of rapid and revolutionary social changes, the focus of translation has shifted from mere linguistic code-switching to complex cultural interaction. Translation has come a long way from mere imitation of the original to a ‘compound act of reading and writing’ simultaneously. Ludicrous epithets and adages like “traddutore - traditore” or “les belles infideles” implicitly refer to the controversial status enjoyed by the body of translation since time immemorial. But theories and ideas inherited from the past no longer seem to suit the new global generation.

The concept of translation differs from age to age and country to country. It dates back to centuries of the past when both in the East and in the West, translators had made efforts to translate literary texts from one language to another. The history of the translation of the Bible is the history of the translation studies in the West (in the sixteenth century). Bible translation has provided the western world with an infinitely rich wealth of practice in translating an older text where as Modern Indian languages originating in Sanskrit have a long history of translations from Sanskrit. Its literary traditions are full of instances of renderings of the Sanskrit epics and other literatures. However, a diachronic study of
translation reveals that there is a fundamental difference between Western and Eastern attitude to translation when translation was considered as 'subsidiary and derivative' in the West, in the East, it was traditionally considered as 'New Writing'. For example, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata have been rendered into a number of regional languages of India, yet all these renderings have been well absorbed in the target language and considered as 'new writings'.

The translators of the East with their knowledge of linguistics and literary criticism view Translation as Creative Writing and the translator as a co-creator. Translation is an integral part or indispensable device of language learning. It enriches one language (target language) by opening insight into another language (source language). Not only age old assumptions about the marginality of translation work have been emphatically challenged, the study of translation has been relegated to a sub-category of Comparative Literature.

While writing the dissertation on "Trends in Translation in the East and the West in the Twentieth Century: A Comparative Study" it is imperative on my part to examine critically and compare the various theories of translation that has developed particularly in the West. In India, there is a conspicuous absence of formulated translation theories. In ancient India, eminent scholars had excelled in their translation work without being perturbed by purposeless debates on 'fidelity' or 'originality'. The need to have a viable theory of literature was felt in modern India only after the spread of British education system. My purpose is to establish the fact that though scientifically formulated theories help the translator to take the
first step but in the entire process, he is chiefly governed by his intuition or creative
instinct. Stringent rules cannot alone make him 'carry out' the translation act and
get the desired result in the recipient culture. I also wish to reiterate the fact that we
need to lose the Euro-centric focus at the earliest and trace back our roots to the
rich Indian literary legacy. As the world is shrinking 'like an aging orange' (Paul
Engle's coinage), translation has become both necessary and useful in bringing
different literatures of the world together despite linguistic and cultural disparity. In
a way it helps in nation building as well as linguistic bridge building. It is through
translation we read the literature written in a language which we do not know and
therefore it enriches the target language and ensures the survival of the source
text. I also intend to explore the place of translation in contemporary world and deal
with the future prospects of translation in the twenty first century.

The thesis is divided into six chapters. The first chapter is introductory in
nature. It outlines the history of translation studies in the East (India) and the West
and its relevance in the post-colonial situation. I have touched upon the theories of
translation in the West at different times that extends from Cicero to the present.
The word for word vs. sense for sense concept can be seen emerging again and
again with varying degrees of emphasis. Along with different concepts of
translation, the function and role of the translator has also radically changed.
Disparaging description of the translator as 'a beggar at the church door'
(Larbaud) or as a shadowy presence is dated. The translator is now viewed as a
co-creator who re-creates the source text in the target language. In ancient India,
the role of a translator was always celebrated and the translated text was always
hailed as the original. With the advent of British rule, there was a shift in literary priorities. Suddenly, Indian literary critics and translators began to concern themselves with 'authenticity' and 'originality'. I have dealt with this Eurocentricism and analyzed how Indian translators can forge a distinct tradition by unearthing our roots.

In chapter II, entitled "Types of Translation", I have examined the broadening base of translation and its subsequent division into different types. Traditional translation theorists broadly divided translation into two types, i.e. literary and non-literary translation. In literary translation, i.e. the translation of literature, the translators are concerned with both 'sense' and 'style'. Since the language of literature is metaphorical, the translator first decodes the motive of the SL text and then re-encodes it in the TL text. The non-literary translation mainly takes place in the realms of Economics, Physical Science, Law, Journalism, Social Science, Medicine etc. In this case, the content gets precedence over form. With the help of a few excerpts from my translation from Bengali (Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay's Parinita) into English, I discussed the problems encountered in the two types of translation. Apart from these, there are other types of translation like "phonological", "graphological", "total", "restricted", "full", "partial", "rank-bound", "free", "literal", "transliteration" and "transcription" etc. In this chapter, I offer a survey of different types of translation by quoting observations made by eminent theorists and literary critics.
In chapter III titled "Problems of Translation", my main focus is the major problems (such as linguistic and cultural) encountered in literal translation. In this chapter, an attempt has been made to outline the problems faced by translators in general particularly of poems, prose and drama. I have cited examples from Gitanjali to show how Tagore took liberty with the form and content to make his poem palatable to the Western reading. If a self-translator is free to take liberty with his work then why can’t other translators? Even the various renditions of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata are characteristically different from the original Sanskrit version. There are manifold problems but a translator ‘can make his own poem out of it’ (Aurobindo). My analysis shows, that the challenges faced by a translator inadvertently makes his literary journey more gratifying.

In chapter IV titled "Translation as Creative Writing", I have made an attempt to consider translation as Creative Writing. The western contemporary concept like ‘intertextuality’ has resulted in the loss of originality of the original text. Also, there are now two texts to consider – the author’s text and another the reader’s text. Text is not apprehended the way author, thought it to be, rather, it is what the reader sees in it. The translator who is also a reader of the Source Text re-creates it in another language to suit the readers of that cultural community. Thus, the translator becomes a creator and translation – a creative activity. In ancient India, translation was always accorded the status of New Writing. There was nothing alien about it. I wish to point out here that a translator is no more caught in a jargon of ‘fidelity’ or ‘betrayal’. In the West too the erosion of
conventional form has paved way for renewed study from a new perspective, in the process accepting translation as creative writing.

In chapter V titled “Theories of Translation in the East and the West”, I make a conscientious analysis of the contemporary translation theories namely Deconstructive Translation Theory, Poly-system Theory, Feminist Translation Theory and Cannibalistic Translation Theory. The study demonstrates how far the discipline has moved as each theory celebrates the role of translator. The theories also erase the power relation that featured earlier between the source text and the target text. We can see very clearly the developing lines within the overall discipline of Translation Studies. I wish to posit that among all the theories the Cannibalistic Translation Theory is likely to gain currency in the near future. I slightly deviate from the original theory here and suggest that a translator must draw nourishment from both the source language and target language and enrich the translated text unlike the original theory where the translator draws nourishment from the source text by ‘devouring’ it and then enriching the target text. It is both an ‘intralingual’ and ‘intracultural’ activity.

In the concluding chapter (i.e. chapter VI) I have made an attempt to highlight the status of translation and the role of the translator in the light of developments in linguistics and cultural studies in the twentieth century. Translation as an independent field was always explicit in the West but implicit in the East. A meticulous examination of the history of translation in the East and the West, attitudes to translating, role of a translator, contemporary translation
theories and pertinent observations made by translators/theories reveal that old normative discussions have begun to die away. In the Indian multilingual and multicultural context, translation plays a vital role for the cause of nation building. In the global context translation will play a major role in bringing the literatures of the world together and serve as an indispensable tool of studying Comparative Literature. In the modern context, translation is not mere reproduction but recreation; it is not a product rather a process of discovery normally associated with an original work. It is high time to accept that translation does not depend on the source text alone; it only serves as an idea which is aesthetically realized in the target language. Instead of establishing rules and theories that subjugate the text and question the role of translator, a translator must aim to open up new ways of seeing a text by subverting specified ways of reading. The only aim of a good translator should be to recreate aesthetically rich slice of literature in the target culture.

****