CHAPTER I
CHAPTER I

Introduction

A Diachronic Study of Translation in the East and the West

While writing doctoral 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 begin with the diachronic study of Translation in the West and the East. Translation has been described variously as 'transference of meaning', 'carry over of meaning' from source language text to target language text, and linguistically 'substitution of meaning' in the Target Language text. According to Dr. Johnson the act of translation involves change into another language, retaining the sense which is the prerequisite. A.H. Smith asserts that "to translate is to change into another language retaining as much of the sense as one can" (8). Catford defines translation from the linguistic point of view. He states:

Translation may be defined as follows: the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent material in another language (TL) (20). Catford further stresses that the central problem of translation practice is that of finding 'TL translation equivalents.' (21)

Theodore Savory defines translation as an 'art' and Eric Jacobsen defines it as a 'craft' while Eugene Nida describes it as a 'science'. B.K. Das summarizes the major concepts and emphatically points out that "translation is more than all these
art, craft and science. It is a process of analysis, interpretation and creation which leads to a replacement of one set of linguistic resources and values for another. In the process part of the original meaning is lost but an easily identifiable core is kept. It is an act of adjustment and a compromising exercise." (2)

In the past some people took translation as a 'compromising exercise' as the process was conditioned by many compromises one way or the other. To others, it was 'traduttore traditore' (i.e. the translator is a traitor). The historical spectrum gradually underwent a sea-change with emerging theories. It is no more considered as a secondary activity, rather a creative process that explored new avenues and rendered new shape to existing redundant ideas. The history of Translation Studies is the history of the mental activity of at least 2,000 years, as expressed in writing. George Steiner points out, "Over some 2000 years of argument and percept, the beliefs and disagreements voiced about the nature of translation have been almost the same." (239)

Translation studies from the Roman system to the closing decades of the twentieth century have undergone several changes. In order to make a correct estimate of the development of Translation studies in the West, it is necessary to trace its history from the Roman system. The contribution made by the Romans cannot be ignored. I would like to echo Winston Churchill's words, who once complained about Romans that... my predecessors in this August office had 'forestalled all my best ideas'. The historical spectrum of Translation studies generate from the clear and forceful ideologies of the Romans. McGuire too points
out ... “No introduction to Translation studies could be complete without consideration of the discipline in a historical perspective.” (39)

When we trace the basic ‘lines of approach’ that influenced the function of translation at different point of time we find that since time immemorial there has been always an attempt to trace the growth and development of translation in terms of periods. The most significant contribution was made by George Steiner in his phenomenal book After Babel. The account of the ‘Tower of Babel’ in the Genesis can be considered as the key myth of translation. It telescopes the idea that had there been one common tongue then there wouldn’t have been any need for translation. Daniel Weissbort (ed.) in his book Translation – Theory and Practice presents an exquisite rendition of Greek ‘The Septuagint’.

It says ‘the entire earth used to be one lip and one voice to all’ (13)

Translation has emerged as an essential tool for establishing communication between human beings located across the length and breadth of the Globe. As,

‘The Lord dispersed them from that place upon the face of the whole earth’. (14)

Translation activity can be defined as the Herculean task undertaken to unite the world, the driving force being the undying desire to recreate and
reorganize the dispersed humanity. The entire process can be encapsulated as an act of ‘building a tower’ irrespective of multiculturalism and multiplicity of languages.

Steiner divides the literature on theory, practice and history of translation into four periods. Susan Bassnett points out that his ‘quadripartite division’ is highly idiosyncratic, but it does manage to avoid one great pitfall: periodization, or compartmentalization of literary history.

According to Steiner:

The first period begins from the statements of Cicero and Horace on translation till the publication of A.F. Tytler’s essay on the principles of Translation in 1791. The period is marked for its ‘immediate empirical focus’ i.e. the theories and statements about translation sprung directly from the practical work of translating.

The second period lasts till 1946 and was characterized as a period of ‘theory and hermeneutic enquiry with the development of a vocabulary and methodology of approaching translation’.

The third period starts with the publication of the first papers on machine translation in the 1940s and the introduction of ‘structural
linguistics' and 'communication theory' into translation study is its characteristic feature.

The fourth period co-exists with the third and is rooted in the early 1960s. The period is marked by 'a reversion to hermeneutic, almost metaphysical inquiries into translation and interpretation'. To be precise the broadening frame of translation included a number of other disciplines like – classical philology and comparative literature, lexical statistics and ethnography, the sociology of class speech, formal rhetoric, poetics and the study of grammar are combined in an attempt to clarify the act of translation and the process of 'life between languages'. (qtd. in Bassnett, 40)

Susan Bassnett has vehemently questioned this division of literature into periods on the basis of translation. She claims that "It is virtually impossible to divide periods according to dates". (41)

Apart from Steiner's periodization, there are also some other concepts of translation that prevail at different times. For example T.R. Steiner's analysis of English translation theory starts with Sir John Denham and ends with William Cowper between 1650-1800 to be precise. He examines the prevailing eighteenth century notion of the translator as 'painter' or 'imitator'. Andre Lefevere has traced the establishment of a German tradition of translation in his collection of statements and documents on translation. He begins with Luther then moves on to
Gottsched, Goethe, Schlegels, Schleiermacher and finally to Rosenzweig. F.O. Matthiesson's analysis of four major English translators of the sixteenth century namely Hoby, North, Florio and Philemon Holland is however less systematic and restricted to a particular time frame. Timothy Webb, on the other hand, makes an estimate of Shelley as an individual translator in relation to the rest of his compositions to prevalent concepts of the role and status of translation. Studies of this kind point out to the fact that it cannot be restricted to rigid notions of period. It is rather an analysis of changing concepts of translation.

In order to establish certain lines of approach, Susan Bassnett prefers to proceed by following a loosely chronological structure without making any attempt to set up clear-cut divisions. As we proceed, we will find the word for word vs. sense for sense featuring time and again with varied degrees of emphasis with relation to changing concepts of language and communication.

Eric Jacobsen claims that translation is a Roman invention. Though it is an overstatement, it is nevertheless a starting point. Cicero and Horace's views on translation had a great impact on the successive generation of translators. According to them, the two main functions of the poet in a wider context are:

(a) The universal duty of acquiring and diffusing wisdom.

(b) The special art of making and shaping a poem.

The ideal SL text (Source Language text) is there to be imitated and not to be crushed by the too rigid application of Reason. Cicero
observes: "If I render word for word, the result will sound uncouth, and if compelled by necessity I alter anything in the order as wording, I shall seem to have departed from the function of a translator." (qtd. in Bassnett, 43)

Horace and Cicero both feel that the art of the translation should be the judicious interpretation of the text of the source language so as to create a version of the target language based on the rule of expressing not word for word, but sense for sense and his sole responsibility was to the readers of the target languages. The pre-eminence of Greek as the cultural language and the ability of educated Romans to read the SL texts lend an extra dimension to the Roman idea of enrichment through translation. If we take these factors into account, the position of both the translator and the reader changes completely. Translation was considered as a meta text in relation to the original by the Roman readers. In a way, Roman translation can be termed as unique as it springs from a vision of literary production that follows an established rule of excellence across linguistic boundaries.

"With the spread of Christianity, translation came to acquire another role that of disseminating the word of God," (45) says McGuire. The history of Bible translation may be considered as the Western culture's history in microcosm. The sole purpose of Bible translation across the world was chiefly meant for the spread of Christianity. Translation of the New Testament was made quite early and St. Jerome's work which was commissioned by Pope Damasus in 384 A.D. had
considerable impact on the succeeding generations of translators. Echoing Cicero, he stated that he had translated sense for sense rather than word for word. The Bible translation continued to be a key issue well into the seventeenth century. The delicate line drawn between the 'stylistic licence' and 'heretical interpretation' remained a major deterrent for centuries. The Wycliffite Bible translated between 1380-1384 was the first rendering of the complete Bible into English. The Bible translation was neither literary nor spiritual exercises. They were mainly meant for political defence. The Bible translation all over the world was motivated by activities that led to the spread of Christian religion. The history of the translation of the Bible is in fact the history of the translation studies in the west in the sixteenth century. It was translated into a large number of European languages. John Purvey revised the first edition. The second Wycliffite Bible was composed between 1395-6 and McGuire states that the fifteenth chapter of the Prologue delineates the four stages of the translation process:

i. a collaborative effort of collecting old Bibles and glosses and establishing an authentic Latin Source text.

ii. a comparison of the versions;

iii. counselling 'with old grammarians and old divines' about hard words and complex meanings; and

iv. translating as clearly as possible the 'sentence' (i.e. meaning), with the translation corrected by a group of collaborators. (46-47)
Purvey's Preface states clearly that the translator shall translate 'after the sentence' (meaning) and not only after the words, 'so that the sentence be as open [plain] or opener, in English as in Latin and go not far from the letter'. The chief aim was an intelligible – idiomatic version that could be appreciated by the commoner.

In the sixteenth century we observe that the *Bible* was widely translated into a large number of European languages in both Protestant and Roman Catholic versions.

According to McGuire, the aims of the sixteenth century *Bible* translators may be collocated in three categories:

1. To clarify errors arising from previous versions due to inadequate SL manuscripts or to linguistic incompetence.
2. To produce an accessible and aesthetically satisfying vernacular style.
3. To clarify points of dogma and reduce the extent to which the scriptures were interpreted and re-presented to the lay people as a metatext (49).

The Renaissance *Bible* translators considered both 'fluidity' and 'intelligibility' in the TL text as important criteria. At the same time they were careful about the transmission of a literally accurate message.
A gradual development is observed in the field of translation work. Quintilien’s recommendation of translating from Greek into Latin slowly gave way to translation that involved the creation of a vernacular SL text. Translators used their skills to translate and enhance the status of their own vernacular. The Roman model of enrichment through translation developed in a new form.

In his article on vulgarization and translation, Gianfranco Folena suggests that medieval translation might be described either as vertical, by which he intends translation into the vernacular from a SL that has a special prestige or value (e.g. Latin), or as horizontal, where both SL and TL have a similar value. The distinction between horizontal and vertical translation is useful as it shows how translation could be linked to two different literary systems existing at the same time. McGuire asserts that “Translation, whether vertical or horizontal, is viewed as a skill, inextricably bound up with modes of reading and interpreting the original text, which is proper source material for the writer to draw upon as he thinks fit”. (53)

The invention of printing methods in the fifteenth century brought forth a radical change and it had a great impact on the role of translation. Etienne Dolet (1509-46), a French humanist formulated a translation theory and lay stress on the importance of the understanding of the source language text as the first requisite. He is of the opinion that a translator is or ought to be far more competent than a linguist. He also insists that translation involves a scholarly and sensitive appraisal of the SL text, so that the TL text would not be far removed from it. In the year
1540, Dolet published a short outline of translation principles. His five principles which serve as a guideline for translators are as follows:

1. The translator must fully understand the sense and meaning of the original author, although he is at liberty to clarify obscurities.
2. The translator should have a perfect knowledge of both SL and TL.
3. The translator should avoid word-for-word renderings.
4. The translator should use forms of speech in common use.
5. The translator should choose and order words appropriately to produce the correct tone.

Dolet's principles, ranked as they are in a precise order, stress the importance of understanding the SL text as a primary requisite.

(qtd.in Bassnett, 54)

George Chapman reiterates Dolet's views and lays emphasis on the role of translator who must 'observe the sentences, figures and forms of speech proposed in his author'.

Translation in Renaissance Europe played a pivotal role. As George Steiner puts it:
At a time of explosive innovation, and amid a real threat of surfeit and disorder, translation absorbed, shaped, and oriented the necessary raw material. (qtd. in Bassnett, 54)

During the Renaissance, in Europe, translation formed logic of relation between past and present and between distinct tongues and traditions which were divided under pressure of nationalism and religious conflict.

The role of translation changed in the middle of seventeenth century. In his preface to Ovid’s Epistles (1680) Dryden laid down three basic types of translation to tackle the problems of translations:

1. Metaphrase, of turning an author word by word, line by line from one language into another;
2. Paraphrase or translation with latitude; the Ciceronian ‘sense-for-sense’ view of translation;
3. Imitation where the translator can abandon the text of the original, as he sees it fit. (qtd. in Bassnett, 60)

Dryden prefers the second to the other for he considers it a balanced path. He says that for translating poetry, the translator should be a poet, should have a command over both the languages and should comprehend the ‘spirit’ of the original writer and confirm to the aesthetic laws of his own age. He compares the translator with the portrait painter maintaining that the duty of the painter is to
make his portrait resemble the original. The view of Dryden on translation was supported by Alexander Pope (moderate path). He stressed on close reading of the original to note the details of style and manner while striving to keep alive the 'fire' of the poem.

In the eighteenth century the moral duty of a translator towards his readers became a matter of prime concern. It gave rise to a flurry of literary activities that gave rise to massive rewritings of earlier texts to fit them to contemporary standards of language and taste. In this context Dr. Johnson while discussing the question of additions to a text through translation, comments that "if elegance is gained, surely it is desirable, provided nothing is taken away" and further states that "the purpose of a writer is to be read." (qtd. in Bassnett, 61) The comparison of the translator with painter or imitator was well established. The modes of literary creation changed as a result of important alterations. Goethe believed that every literature must pass through three modes of translation. They are as follows:

i. The first makes us familiar with foreign countries on our own terms.

ii. The second phase makes the translator absorb the sense of a foreign work but reproduces it in his own words.

iii. The aim of the third phase is perfect identity between the text of the SL and the text of the TL and the performing of this phase must be through the creation of a new 'manner' which melts the
uniqueness of the original with a new form and structure. This mode is regarded as the highest by Goethe. (qtd. in Bassnett, 62)

Towards the end of the eighteenth century Alexander Fraser Tytler published a volume titled *The Principles of Translation* in 1791, which was the first systematic study of the translation process. It laid down three basic principles.

i) The translation should give a complete transcript of the idea of the original.

ii) The style and manner of writing should be of the same character with that of the original work.

iii) The translation should have all the ease of the original composition. (qtd. in Bassnett, 63)

Tytler condemns Dryden's concept of 'paraphrase' that led to immoderately loose translations, though he agrees to the fact that the duty of the translator is to make clear the obscurities in the original, even where this entails omission or addition. He acknowledges the eighteenth century comparison of the translator with the painter, but with a difference, i.e. the translator cannot use the same colours as the original. However, the translator is supposed to give his picture the same force and effect. The role of a translator is to take the author's soul, which must speak through his own organs.
During the Romantic period, the ambiguous attitude of a number of major writers and translators can be observed easily. A.W. Schlegel, while declaring that all acts of speaking and writing are translations because the nature of communication is to 'decode and interpret' messages received, also demanded that the original form should be kept. Emphasis on the effect of the translation i.e. the target language resulted in a shift of interest away from the actual methods of translation.

Two conflicting attitudes can be seen in the early part of the nineteenth century.

i) One accepts translation as a class of thought and the translator is viewed as a creative genius enriching the literature and language into which he is translating.

ii) The other group considers translation as 'mechanical' activity of 'making known' a 'text' or 'author'.

In the post-Romantic period Friedrich Schleiermacher advocated the cause of the creation of distinct sub-language for use in translated literature only at the time when D.G. Rossetti declared the subservience of the translator to the forms and language of the original. Friedrich's theory of a separate translation language was shared by eminent English translators of the nineteenth century like Newman, Carlyle and William Morris. They all held the view that translator should keep 'every peculiar quality of the original.'
The primary concern of Victorian translators was to express the 'remoteness of the original in time and place'. Matthew Arnold in his first lecture On Translating Homer urges the lay reader to place his trust in scholars. He gives the following advice to the future translator.

Let not the translator, then, trust to his motions of what the ancient Greeks would have thought of him; he will lose himself in the vague. Let him not trust to what the ordinary English reader thinks of him; he will be taking the blind for his guide. Let him not trust his own judgement of his own work; he may be misled by individual caprices. Let him ask how his work affects those who both know Greek and can appreciate poetry (247).

He is of the opinion that the primary duty of the translator is to focus on the text of the source language, so that he can serve that text with complete commitment. H.W. Longfellow added another dimension to translation by outlining the business of a translator. "The business of a translator is to report what the author says, not to explain what he means; that is the work of the commentator. What an author says and how he says it that is the problem of the translator?"(qtd. in Bassnett,70). The translator has been assigned the position of a technician, neither poet nor commentator, with a defined but strictly limited task. The business of the translator is to report what the author says but not what he means.
In complete contrast to Longfellow's view, Edward Fitzgerald, who is best known for his version of The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam, made the famous remark that 'it was better to have a live sparrow than a stuffed eagle.'

In other words, the work of Edward does not try to lead the reader of the target language to the original source language; instead it tries to bring a version of the text of the source language into the culture of the target language as a living entity.

McGuire classifies the basic trends of translation typology up to the First World War in the following words:

i) Translation as a scholar's activity, where the pre-eminence of the SL text is assumed 'de facto' over any TL version.

ii) Translation as a means of encouraging the intelligent reader to return to the SL original.

iii) Translation as a means of helping the TL reader become the equal of what Schliermacher called the better reader of the original, through a deliberately contrived foreignness in the TL text.

iv) Translation as a means whereby the individual translator who sees himself like Aladdin in the enchanted vaults (Rossetti) offers his own pragmatic choice to the TL reader.
v) Translation as a means through which the translator seeks to upgrade the status of the SL text because it is perceived as being on a lower cultural level. (71)

McGuire's classification opens up the possibility of both 'literal' and 'free' translation. Hence, it is up to the translator to stick to any kind of translation.

The theory and practice of translation in the first half of the twentieth century are in continuation with the Victorian ideas of translation – literalness, archaizing and pedantry.

Ezra Pound's work is of great significance in the history of translation. He was a remarkable translator, critic and theorist. Pound laid emphasis on the rhythm, diction and movement of the words rather than on the 'meaning' of the words. Hilaire Belloc's systematic approach, highlighting the problem of the status of translation in his Taylorian lecture On Translation (1931) is relevant even today. He states:

The art of translation is a subsidiary art and derivative. On this account it has never been granted the dignity of original work, and has suffered too much in the general judgment of letters. This natural underestimation of its value has had the bad practical effect of lowering the standard demanded, and in some periods has almost destroyed the art altogether. The corresponding
misunderstanding of its character has added to its degradation; neither its importance nor its difficulty has been grasped. (qtd. in Das, 9)

Concept of translation and translator has undergone several changes in the last three centuries. This is due to the changes in the cultural history of the west. The view of the translator as a shadowy presence by Steiner and the view of Larbaud on the translator as a beggar at the church door is a post-Romantic view. When we closely examine, we observe that the gestures towards translation and the ideas of translation that prevail, belong to the age that produces them, and also to the socio-economic elements which shape that age.

The concept of translation has acquired a new dimension in the twentieth century – particularly with the emphasis on language and role of language, in literature, given by the New Critics I.A.Richards, Saussure, Levi-Strauss, Chomsky, Nida, Catford, Ronald Barthes, Derrida and Foucault. Translation of literature is possible only because it is written in a language. It is however, difficult to render SL text into a TL text as no two languages function alike.

For New Critics, 'text is an autonomous unity' and therefore, it becomes difficult to have an exact or accurate translation of the text since no two readings are identical, no translation can claim to have understood the author's meaning completely and accurately. The problem is how to get at the author's meaning.
The structuralists believe that a work can be peeled off to express a void at the centre and that makes translation difficult. Derrida and his followers have pleaded an absene of meaning. They say that words carry with them no definite meaning but they are characterized by an indeterminacy of meaning. Hence, the new theories of criticism have made the act of translation difficult. Till 1968 there was no translation centre or journals devoted to it in U.S.A. The process of acceptance of translation studies as a discipline was accentuated in the seventies. The introduction of translation courses and organization of translation workshops in different universities like Columbia, Iowa, Princeton, Texas, Yale, State University of New York etc. gave a fresh impetus to the growth of translation studies. As a result of this development the American Literary Translators Association (ALTA) was established in the late seventies. A journal called Translation was also founded for the Association. Paul Engle highlighted the urgency of translation in his Foreword to Writing from the World-II (1985) in the following words:

As this world shrinks together like an aging orange and all peoples in all cultures move closer together (however reluctantly and suspiciously) it may be that the crucial sentence for our remaining years on earth may be very simply:

TRANSLATE OR DIE.

The lives of every creature on the earth may one day depend on the instant and accurate translation of one word. (qtd. in Das, 109)
In this regard G.N. Devy remarks that most of the western studies of literary translation have been prescriptive in nature. They tell us what the translator should or should not do in order to arrive at a satisfactory result in his enterprise. J.H. Miller's observation that translation is the 'wandering existence in a perpetual exile' alludes to the Biblical myth of the fall, exile and wandering. In the Western metaphysics translation is an exile. Where as when we trace the history of translation studies in India we do not observe this kind of impediment in the path of literary pursuits. In G.N. Devy's words:

Fortunately for an Indian student of translation these binding constraints do not prevail. Indian metaphysics is not haunted by the fear of exile form the absolute right. (147)

Devy then cites one example from the first chapter of Bhartrhari's monumental work, Vakyapadiya. His exposition of the sphota theory is as follows:

Nadasya Karmajatavanna purvo na parasca sah,
Akramah Kramarupena bhedavaniva jayate.
Pratibimbam Yathanyatra sthitam toyakriyavasat,
Talpravrittimivanveti sa dharma sphotanadayoh.
Atmarupam yatha jnane sreyarupasca drsyate,
Artharupam tatha sabde svarupasca prakasate.

According to Devy, a crude translation would read:
Since the phonetic manifestation is sequential, language expresses itself in a sequentially graded body, though in itself it is without a sequence in terms of a 'pre' and a 'post' existence. The relation between nada (phonetic manifestation) and sphota (semantic realization) is like that between the reflection of something in flowing water and the stream, a reflection which is of a steady object but which acquires the movements of the stream. As knowledge reflects its own nature as well as the nature of the giver of that knowledge, so do phonetic signs reflect their own forms as well as the forms of significance. (147)

Devy further states that:

The image of meaning as a reflection in the current of phonetic expression is remarkably illuminating. No reflection is possible unless there is a substance which holds this reflection; yet the reflection in itself and by itself is a pure nothing. Meaning exists in language not as a positive presence but as an absence which reflects its independent presence. (148)

The Indian practice of translation is as old as the Western but there is a conspicuous absence of explicitly formulated theories. As far as translation theory is concerned, we may consider ‘sphota theory’ of language by Bhartrhari as the
major formal theory that has influenced the Indian practice of translation as new writing. The fifth century Indian Grammarian and philosopher observes:

"There is no cognition in the world in which language doesn't figure. All knowledge is, as it were intertwined with language" (Vakyapadiya, 1:123)

The term 'sphota' originates from the Sanskrit root, 'sput' which means to burst forth. This can be interpreted in two ways, as that from which meaning bursts forth and as an entity that manifests itself in the sounds of spoken language and letters of the written one. Iyer points out that “the term sphota in language is said to be like a two-sided coin uniting the signifier and the signified both conceived as conceptual in form. Bhartrhari, for the purpose of communication, puts forward three levels of language: 'Pasyanti', 'Madhyama' and 'Vaikhari'." (144 -146)

H. Panda further expounds by stating that Pasyanti is the most internal level of language characterized by a different experience of sphota as a noumenal whole. There is no distinction here between language and its meaning and temporal sequence is absent. The next level, Madhyama, is also internal and is mental being associated with intellect (budhi). At this level a variety of manifestations is possible resulting in different forms of the same Madhyama depending upon the language adopted for physical expression. Vaikhari, language as physical expression, is the most external and differentiated level in which language is articulated/written by the speaker/writer and received by its hearer/reader.
When we closely examine Bhartrhari’s sphota theory as explained by H.Panda we find that although he is not a theorist, his notion of levels of language may be adapted to explain the translation process. When a translator takes up a text, he makes a reverse journey to Madhyama as an act of translation requires understanding and mental interpretation. As a result the Madhyama of SL undergoes a change or ‘mutation’ in the mind of the translator. It is reinterpreted in the corresponding TL form and then finally expressed in the TL Vaikhari form. It is interesting to note how the Vaikhari differs in SL and TL, as the two languages differ from each other and the forms of Madhyama that buttress the total process are also different. The Madhyama therefore imparts “new life” to the SL text. In all probability Bhartrhari’s ‘sphota theory’ and his concept of the levels of language gave impetus to the Indian translators to convert their translated works into pieces of “New Writing”. These products were creative and innovative and not secondary and derivative as conceptualized by the rigid Western theorists. Bhartrhari’s theory interestingly converges with Derrida’s notion of translation as imparting “new life”.

Along with Bhartrhari’s theory we can juxtapose aesthetic principle of Anandavardhana as expressed in his theory of ‘dhvani’. It is a very carefully explored, examined, analyzed and systematically developed theory that exemplifies various kinds of poetic effect. At the core lies the idea of ‘Vyanjana’ or suggestion that carries the essence of the ‘dhvani’ theory. In the words of S.K.De, “the several expressed parts of a poem... reveal the unexpressed deeper sense; which is something singular and different from the denotative and indicative
elements both in order and in essence, and which is termed the dhvani...or Vyanjanaartha (suggested sense) in poetry" .(43)

The significance of Anandavardhana's theory can be encapsulated as: firstly the suggestive power of the poetry, secondly the role of word as played in the process and thirdly the reader-poet 'nexus' that plays vital role in making the 'dhvani' (suggestion) of a poem effective. The major schools of Sanskrit literary theory are namely dhvani, riti, vakrokti and alankara. Sanskrit theory from Bharata to Jagannatha roughly spans about fifteen hundred years and these theories point towards the fact that India has linguistics that can provide a good starting point for developing a theory of translation.

In G.N.Devy's words, the Indian context literary translations can be divided into three types:

(1) those interested in preserving the ancient literary heritage,
(2) those interested in 'westernising' Indian languages and literature, and
(3) those interested in 'nationalising' literature in modern Indian languages.

In correspondence with the different objectives of these three types their mode of operation differs. (149)
The modern languages of India have a long history of translations from Sanskrit as they have originated from Sanskrit. Sanskrit has been a lingua franca used chiefly by an influential group of speakers and historically translation from Sanskrit into the diversified vernaculars is of vital importance. Throughout much of India, Sanskrit was in fact the language of literature and scholarship, especially from 500 BCE to about 1000 CE. R. Parthasarathy upholds its unique position in the following manner:

Its prestige was unrivalled and has not been equalled since by any other language, including English. For Sanskrit embodies, as no other Indian language does, all that is best and finest in the genius of India. It was in Sanskrit that Panini (4th B.C.E.) wrote his definitive grammar of the language, Kalidas (5th C.C.E), his plays and long poems; Vidya (7th C.), her short poems; Vatsyayana (3rd C.), his manual on the art of love; Aryabhata (6th C.), his astronomy and mathematics; and Samkara (8th C.), his philosophy. (169)

Sanskrit was regarded as deva-vani or the language of the gods. It was a closely guarded secret and uninitiated people had no access to it. Under the circumstances, it was absolutely inconceivable to translate it into any mortal tongue. As a result the Rig Veda was not written for quite sometime. Almost for over 2000 years, it was communicated orally. It was a process that was executed by priestly families and all of its 1,028 hymns comprising about 21,200 lines was transmitted generation after generation till this day. The complete translation
began appearing only in the nineteenth century in French (1848-51), English (1850-88) and German (1876-77) respectively. It was a product of Europe’s fascination with Sanskrit. G.N.Devy has highlighted the unique position commanded by Sanskrit in the following passage:

Indian culture has been eclectic in the extreme. It has had a long tradition of receiving foreign influences. The earliest literary texts in the recorded history of India were written in Sanskrit which was a language brought to India by Aryan settlers from somewhere in the central Europe. The dominant philosophies and the more central schools of theology in India were shaped through the medium of Sanskrit, which was rarely used as the common Indian language at any stage of Indian history. The result of this acceptance of Sanskrit in the northern part of the Indian subcontinent was that while a pan-Indian tradition (marga) of Sanskrit Literature flourished, there also existed simultaneously numerous local/regional traditions (desi) of folk-literature in non-sanskrit based languages from roughly the fifth century B.C. to the tenth century A.D.

Indian literature encompasses everything that the word literature denotes in its widest sense: religious and secular, epic, lyric, dramatic, poetry as well as scientific and narrative prose. It is interesting to note that in the long literary history of Indian literature, translation has played a pivotal role. G.N.Devy rightly puts it:
About a thousand years ago, when the modern Indo-Aryan languages started developing into independent vehicles of literary expression, translation had acquired great importance. Most modern Indian languages initiated their respective literary traditions with translations of works from Sanskrit, either the epics *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* – or philosophical texts like *the Gita*. During the first four centuries of their existence – thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries – there were numerous translations from one regional language to another regional language, numerous instances of literary bilingualism as well as many important translations from Indian languages to Persian and Arabic, the two languages of political domination during these centuries. (117-18)

When we closely examine our literary tradition we find that various rendition of old classics like *Upanishads*, *the Gita*, *the Ramayana* and *the Mahabharata* are nothing but new writings. These classics have undergone translations into multiple regional languages and in each case the translation has been considered a new writing. For example, *the Ramayana* and *the Mahabharata* have been successfully translated (most often characteristically different) into several regional languages of India. These renditions were always acknowledged as 'new writings' rather than imitations. When we come to the modern Indian Literature of the vernaculars, we find a Tamil translation of the Sanskrit epic *the Ramayana* as early as in the eleventh century, and soon after follow translations in the vernaculars from the North to the South of India. Thus, we have Sarala Das' *The Mahabharata* in Oriya,
Kasiram Das’ version in Bengali, Viswanath Satyanarayan’s *Ramayana_Kalpa Vrukshamu* in Telugu etc. and the religious-philosophical Hindi poem *Ram-Charitmanas* based on the ancient epic (*the Ramayana*) by Tulsi Das has become almost a gospel for millions of Indians.

These translations did not care to follow a word for word and line for line rule. The conditions necessary for the study of these translations are not the target as source language or the ‘mother’ or the ‘other’ tongue. The poets or writers trying translations of Sanskrit texts considered both the languages as their ‘own’ languages. Any work of translation was free from theoretical mesh and translators merely wanted to free the scriptures from the monopoly of limited class of people. The chief aim of translators was to reorganize the society. Thus, the political importance of translation is clearly observed in the Indian tradition also.

K Ayyappa Paniker gives an interesting account of the evolution of translation and its status in our country in the following lines:

Talking about Indian perspectives on the translation of literature, it may be said that till the nineteenth century Indian ‘translators’ were not affected unduly by this anxiety of being true to the original in letter and spirit. All through the middle Ages, throughout the length and breadth of India, Sanskrit classics like the epics and puranas continued to be retold, adapted, subverted and “translated” without worrying about the exactness and accuracy of formal equivalence. When Kambar wrote
Ramayana in Tamil, he took all the freedom he needed to make his version of Valmiki’s Ramayana, a Tamil classic. He keeps close to the structure of Dravidian epic; he edits, cuts, condenses, elaborates, interprets, modifies etc., to suit his own taste as well as those of his immediate readers. The features of the target language and the tastes of the target readers at the time of translation are among the factors that promoted this free style translation. The twelfth century Malayalam version Ramacharitam, like Tulsidas’s Ramcharitmanas or Krittivas Ramayana, is almost a new creation with shift of emphasis and occasionally substantial modification of episodes. Even Adhyatmaramayana in Sanskrit is different in significant ways from Valmikiramayana. There are many versions of folk Ramayana like the Malayalam work Sitadu: kham which is almost a “feminist” version of the patriarchal text favoured by the elite. The impression one gets from all these multiple versions is that, not only was literal adherence to the original not insisted on, but that deviation was liberally tolerated, even encouraged and preferred.

He concludes by reiterating the fact that,

If the local/regional versions of Ramayana and Mahabharata became the classics of the regional literatures, the reason is not far to seek. These adapted translations were well received by the public in each region. There was nothing “alien” about them. (129 -130)
However, the modern Indian translators were influenced by the Western counterparts and insisted on exact equivalence and deviated from their path shown by their ancestors.

The advent of British into Indian political scenario generated a dichotomy in Indian cultural priorities. It resulted in a strong desire for westernization. It also produced an inclination to awaken the culture of the past and at the same time a desire for national unity. The above mentioned inclinations can be encapsulated as "westernization", "Revivalism" and "Nationalism".

There is a difference between the medieval translations (Sanskrit) and the translations of the colonial period. The aim of the medieval translations was to free the society, whereas the translations of the colonial period were 'reactionary'. They were either as a reaction to the colonial situation which challenged the patriotic feelings or as copies of Indological translations of Sanskrit by scholars like Charles Wilkins, Sir William Jones, Max Muller etc. The first Englishman who acquired knowledge of Sanskrit was Charles Wilkins, who had been urged by Warren Hastings to take instruction from the Pandits in Varanasi. As the first-fruits of his Sanskrit studies, he successfully translated Bhagavadgita in 1784. This was succeeded by in 1789 and 1794 by William Jones's translations: Kalidasa's Sakuntala and the Ring of Recollection and the Laws of Manu respectively. Sir William Jones went a step ahead and argued for a common ancestral bond. Madhav M. Deshpande gives him full credit for suggesting this in the clearest terms that a common bond existed between Sanskrit, Greek Latin, as well as Germanic,
Celtic and Iranian languages. Jones declared in 1786 before the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal in Calcutta:

“The Sanskrit language, whatever be its antiquity, is of a wonderful structure; more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin and more exquisitely refined than either…” (qtd. in Deshpande, 104)

Jones further adds and these words are particularly important “sprung from some common source, which perhaps no longer exists.” Jones was clearly working ‘under the Biblical ideas of dispersal of languages after Babel.’ (qtd. in Deshpande, 104)

However, it was not a politically innocent activity. Politics was the moving force behind these earliest translations of Sanskrit texts. Warren Hastings urged Wilkins and Jones in their translations, as a first-hand knowledge of Indian traditions would help them in governing India. R.Parthasarathy points out that the “relationship between England and India was a relationship of power and domination”. (170)

The English Education Act of 1835 institutionalized English as the medium of instruction in Indian education system. Throughout history, languages have been powerful tools in defining and shaping empires and within no time English too became an influential language in India. Indian literature at the juncture of this encounter was being written in more than a dozen living languages. Most of them had a great number of poetic classics of world-class with an extremely well
developed sense of metre, diction, symbolism. In the colonial era, the colonizer used translation as a weapon to oppress the colonized and the colonized used translation to maintain the indigenous culture and tradition. The growing familiarity of Indian readers with the works of European authors paved the way for translation. The changing socio-political scenario along with general awareness encouraged the translators of India to turn to European literature and the literature in other Indian languages. As a result, English texts were being rapidly translated into regional languages of India. In that period it was highly fashionable to translate the works of Shakespeare, Scott, and Bunyan etc. as it was believed that more and more translations from English will strengthen vernacular languages. During this period 'the anxiety of authenticity' was grafted into the system of translation activity and we observe a seismic shift in the entire translation process. Translators were governed by Euro-centric theories and paranoid with atavistic fears. K. Ayyappa Paniker establishes this indiscriminate translation activity in the following words:

A few decades after the works of Kalidasa were translated into European languages, they came to be translated into modern Indian languages – about the same time as the works of Shakespeare began to be translated into Indian languages. (130-31)

A new inclination is observed in the post-colonial era. Most Indian writers contend with each other to translate their works into English. This gave a fresh impetus to translators to translate from Indian languages into English. Indian
translators are seen oscillating between Indian norms and Western influence. Earlier, the notion of exactness or true to the original both in letter and spirit did not bother the Indian translators up to the nineteenth century. All of a sudden the craze and concern for western theories overshadowed the autonomous creation (Indian translations) which was equivalent to creative writing in status.

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 always enjoyed the status of 'New Writing'. The nature of translation (from Sanskrit into other regional languages) was free translation in the pre-colonial days but during the colonial period the exotic translations found demand and 'faithful translations' acquired prestige. In the post-colonial decade we find that the theoretical interest in literary translation is on the rise. Some of the eminent critics like Gayatri Chakravorty-Spivak, Sujit Mukherjee, A.K.Ramanujan, Dilip Chitre, Bhalchandra Nemade etc. have made transcendental observations on this subject. G.N.Devy makes a special mention of Bhalchandra Nemade who has pointed out in a brilliant article in Marathi that:

Every translation strikes linguistic compromises between the SL and the TL. Collectively many translations create a convention of linguistic compromises, which then becomes a sub-system within the TL. Depending on the cultural importance of the kind of works translated, such a sub-system or systems may come to occupy a
more central position within the dominant literary dialect of the TL (qtd, in Devy, 149).

If we critically analyze we will find that though political motivations of translation may not be observed on the surface, the motives become clear at the substratum when considered within the cultural context. Translation is not only a linguistic activity but a cultural act. Due to this, the nature of translation theory cannot be universally uniform. The national and cultural past governs the translation activity. Hence, the actual translation practice in a given culture and language is necessary for the formation of any theory of translation.

Remarkable progress has been made in Translation Studies since mid-sixties. It continues to grow inspite of the new theories of languages and the question of translatability of ‘literal texts’ raised by theoreticians in our time. The need for translation is palpable than ever before because we thrive in a multilingual and multi-cultural society. Interaction among people from different linguistic groups and cultures is highly necessary. Translation fulfils the ultimate goal of putting across the view of the cross-cultural people in a multi-lingual society. Thus, translation has carved a niche for itself in the highly-sophisticated techno-electronic age and as a discipline it is firmly rooted in practical application.

Western approach towards translation was more or less vertical – which again splits into two viz. the word-for-word technique as opposed to the ciceronian sense for sense method and Quintilion’s concept of paraphrase, whereas Indian
approach was essentially 'horizontal' which involves 'imitation' and 'borrowing'. The Western focus has to be reverted back to our cultural past. Our country has had a tradition of nurturing countless languages at any given point of time. Translation in this country was always given the status of new writing. Therefore, western theories based on 'anxiety about exile from the original home' may cause difficulties in self-perception.

To conclude this chapter I would like to stress that the diachronic study of translation reveals that as a discipline translation is firmly rooted in practical application. It is time to remind ourselves that no translation theory can ever generate creativity. It may only help us in shaping our perception of it. Translation activities in India (both theory and practice) can stand comparison with the West particularly in the field of literary translations i.e. translation of literature. Translation is power as it is a means to propagate religion and culture. Languages change (target language), readers change (target readers) but stories (source text) are kept alive through translation. We live in multi-lingual and multi-cultural society. Translation defines our literary and cultural landscape.
Works Cited:


